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ONWARD

PIERCE COUNTY MEANS BUSINESS

June 2025 | No. 302 | ChooseTacomaPierce.org



Paris Air Show Wrap Up

Held every other year, the 2025 Paris Air Show is a barometer for the airline industry. As a vital element to the Pierce County economy, a delegation of Pierce County officials and staff again attended this year's show. Led by EDB President, Michael Catsi, included in the group were County Council Member Dave Morell, Pierce County Director of Economic Development Betty Baublits, retired aerospace CEO and current Mayor of Eatonville, David Baublits and EDB Tacoma Pierce County VP, Maddie Merton. The entire State of Washington delegation was a record setting 78 people, representing 24 companies, and six economic development and trade association

groups. Meetings were held with over 20 companies from eight countries (USA, Germany, France, Czech Republic, Poland, Netherlands, Italy, and Ukraine) by members of the Pierce County delegation.

These meetings included Business, Retention and Expansion visits with existing Pierce County companies and meetings with recruitment prospects. According to Catsi, "given the uncertainty in the global trade and finance markets, insecurity around foreign policy and multiple conflicts around the world, conversations were somewhat subdued."

While the Pierce County delegation team met with several warm recruitment leads, they expect these leads to be long-term plays due to the lack of confidence surrounding the global economy. The companies visited by the delegation represented multiply supply chain aspects including aircraft design and construction, e-planes, drones and autonomous vehicles, stratospheric balloon technology, switches, wiring, complex metal part manufacturing, structural composite components, software development, complex assemblies, and testing equipment. "We will follow up and maintain relationships to

ensure these leads keep us in mind as their expansion plans come more into focus,” said Catsi.



Paris Air Show by the Numbers

The 2025 Paris Air Show, held in Le Bourget, France, is a major international event for the aerospace industry.

Exhibitors and Visitors:

- 2,453 exhibitors
- 49 countries.
- 316,470 unique visitors
- 500,000 entries
- 141,000 trade visitors: (40% international)
- 176,630 general public visitors

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Quality of Life in Pierce County



Tourism isn't just about fun events, hotel stays, and busy restaurants, it's also a key driver of long-term economic development. When people visit Pierce County, they get a firsthand look at what life here has to offer. That experience often sparks interest in relocating, whether for personal reasons or as part of a business decision to move or expand into the region.

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Recap of 2025 AgTC Meeting

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition, the principal voice of agriculture exporters in US transportation policy, held their 37th Annual Meeting in Tacoma last month. The largest annual gathering of Ag shippers sourcing and delivering to foreign markets, the Annual Meeting had a record setting attendance of over 600 participants. Held at the Tacoma Convention Center from June 16-19th, the AgTC Annual meeting was filled with networking dinners and receptions, vital industry presentations, and activities like a Climb Container Crane at Husky Marine Terminal and Wine & Spirits Run Walk. The event culminated with a member-only closing session.

Learn more about the impact of this year's event on Pierce County from Steve Balaski, Director of Business Development for Northwest Seaport Alliance.

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City Spotlight - Fife

Fife is a small city with a big-city feel—entirely located on Puyallup Tribal land and intersected by I-5, it plays an outsized role in the region's development. "Fife offers a plethora of opportunities for planners," says Community Development Director Chris Larson. Its strategic location near the Port of Tacoma and the upcoming Sound Transit Light Rail Station is accelerating its transformation from a car-centric area to a more connected, walkable city center.

What makes Fife unique? Fife is one of only three cities in Washington fully on tribal land, resulting in a patchwork of city and tribal jurisdictions. I-5 splits the city into a bustling commercial north side and a quieter, residential south side. With a strong retail tax base, Fife offers exceptional public amenities, including an aquatic center and robust parks like Dacca Park and the new Old Cannery Splash Pad.

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including certifications and degree pathways — all designed to build a stronger, more capable workforce.

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Export Accelerator Registration

The Greater Seattle Export Accelerator is a fully sponsored program designed for businesses with developed export strategy in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties in Washington state. From September 8 to November 17, 2025, cohort 4 participants will benefit from 4 in-person sessions, 13 online webinars, and receive expert guidance to strengthen their international business strategies. In 2024, 33 companies from sectors like aerospace, cleantech, food processing, IT, life sciences, manufacturing, maritime, and retail graduated from the program. These businesses are projected to see annual revenue growth of \$350K to \$1M within one to three years.

Applications are open until August 25, 2025.

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Onward is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington, USA.

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