



# 2024-2025 Report of Activities

Thurston Economic Development Council

## MESSAGE FROM EDC BOARD

Economic development is the implementation of a strategic plan to improve and support our economy. The Thurston Economic Development Council is recognized by Washington State Commerce as the Associate Development Organization (ADO) for our county. This designation carries significant responsibilities – we recruit investment and employers, work to retain businesses and commercial activities, and expand market access and opportunities. Combined, these efforts create a strategic plan to build wealth and opportunities while fostering a vibrant, inclusive economy.

This past year, we continued the work begun in 1981 when the EDC launched. For over 43 years, we have evolved and worked to build a strong, resilient economy. Within this annual report, you'll find the numbers and results of our work. What I ask of you, as a stakeholder, is to view the local economy differently. When you see a restaurant sign, look beyond the menu – consider the network of employees, suppliers, and utilities behind it. When you see a manufacturing facility, don't just see the finished product; think about the multiplier impact – from logistics to materials, employees to engineered processes. When you see a medical facility, consider the workforce and technology required to operate. That's what economic developers do – we work behind the façade to ensure a complete, competitive, innovative operation functions here.

We are proud of our work and prouder of our community. Thurston County continues to change and evolve with state, national, and international markets. You have our commitment to continue providing strategic actions and initiatives that ensure a prosperous future. At the EDC we say with enthusiasm: Thurston Forward!

*Malcolm Miller, President, EDC Board of Directors, CrossCountry Mortgage*

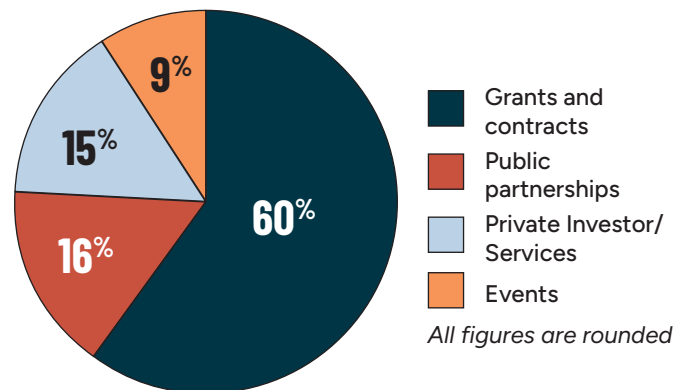
## FINANCIALS

Funding comes from four sources: grants and contracts tied to our priorities, partnerships with public entities like cities, the county, the Port, and the Washington State Department of Commerce, income from annual events, and support from private businesses and individuals committed to building a strong community.

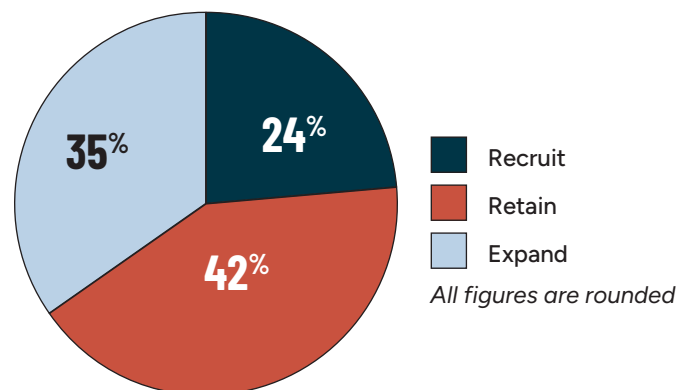
The EDC (501c4) and CB&I (501c3) run an annual program focused on three goals: keeping existing jobs, expanding market opportunities, and attracting new employers and resources to strengthen the regional economy.

NOTE: The timing of this report is focused on the work program year, which is different than the fiscal year program. This difference results in expenses being larger than income. This will change when considering the fiscal year end.

### INCOME - \$6,146,074

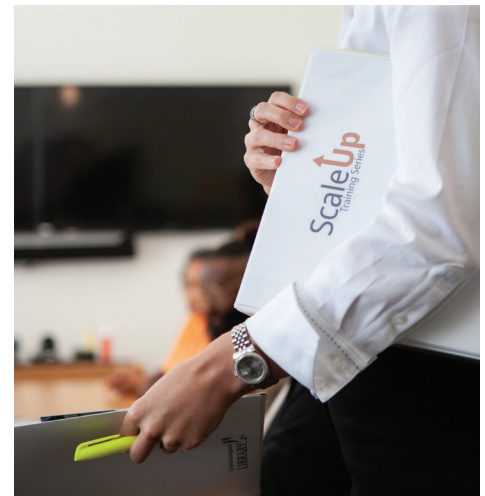


### EXPENSES - \$6,501,222





# ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

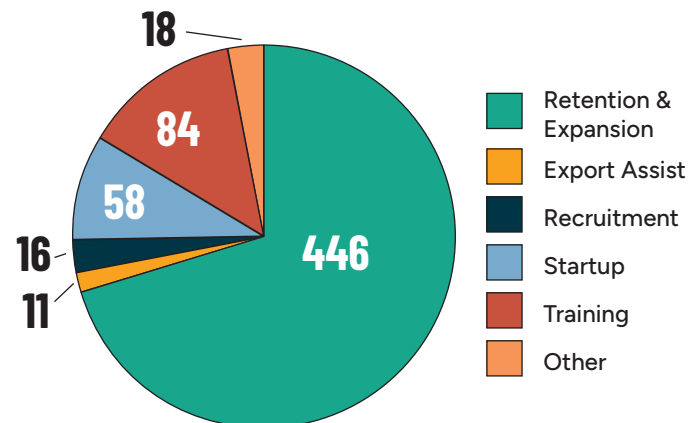


## Driving regional growth through partnerships and innovation

Thurston EDC plays a key role in growing the local economy through strong partnerships and grant funding. Working with public agencies, businesses, and community organizations, we help create opportunities that support job growth and business development. These collaborations allow us to deliver programs that strengthen the region and build a foundation for long-term success. This year, we also worked closely with ADO partners to help launch the Evergreen Coast Economic Development District, a major step toward aligning resources and strategies for long-term regional growth.

Despite challenges from economic uncertainty and reduced revenue, Thurston EDC continues to make an impact. Our programs provide hands-on technical assistance to businesses and support a thriving entrepreneurial network. By connecting people to resources and expertise, we help startups and small businesses adapt, innovate, and bring new ideas to market. Even in difficult times, Thurston EDC remains committed to driving growth and resilience in our community.

This chart shows the total number of individual support and technical service activities offered at the EDC/CBI.



**\$44.12M**  
TOTAL OUTPUT

**\$17.8M**  
LABOR INCOME



**271**  
JOBS



**6.79**  
MULTIPLIER PER  
DOLLAR INVESTED  
IN THURSTON EDC

# CENTER FOR BUSINESS & INNOVATION

## SCALEUP TRAINING

During the 2024–2025 program year, ScaleUp delivered two full training cohorts with four comprehensive classes each, including two offered entirely in Spanish to broaden accessibility for Washington’s diverse business community. The program also introduced a specialized Deep Dive Marketing course, bringing total attendance across all offerings to 170. The 2025 Spanish-language ScaleUp class marked a major milestone, graduating four times more participants than previous cohorts—thanks in large part to ScaleUp Watch Parties. These collaborative sessions, hosted with the Yakima County Development Organization and Tri-City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, created community-centered

learning environments that dramatically boosted engagement. Graduates represented one of ScaleUp’s most geographically diverse groups to date, coming from 53 cities across Washington and demonstrating the program’s reach from rural towns to major urban centers.

[businessresources.thurstonedc.com/resources/scaleup-training](https://businessresources.thurstonedc.com/resources/scaleup-training)



**170**

GRADUATES



**53**

GRADUATE CITIES

## LACEY MAKERSPACE

Lacey MakerSpace saw impressive growth this past year, expanding from 170 to over 360 active members. This surge reflects strong local interest and a widening regional reach, with members traveling from communities as far as Seattle, Yakima, and Aberdeen for tools, training, and collaboration. Participation in classes more than doubled, fueled by an expanded lineup of hands-on courses in woodworking, welding, digital fabrication (3D printing, laser cutting, CNC machining), textile arts, and glass arts. Rising demand underscores the value of accessible, skills-based education for hobbyists, career-seekers, and creative professionals alike.

The MakerSpace also experienced a notable increase in use by local entrepreneurs who depend on its equipment and expertise for merchandise production, product development, and prototyping. This engagement highlights its role as a vital resource for innovation, supporting business growth and helping new ideas move from concept to market.

[laceymakerspace.org](https://laceymakerspace.org)



**360**

MEMBERS



**1,385**

CLASS  
PARTICIPANTS



**5**

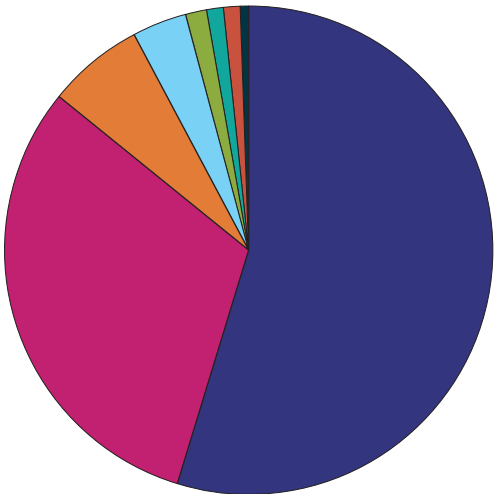
NEW INVENTION  
PROTOTYPES

**105 businesses use the MakerSpace**

# WASHINGTON CENTER FOR WOMEN IN BUSINESS (WCWB)



## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



- Woman owned
- Undefined
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- WBE certified
- EDWOSB certified
- Other
- Entity owned

## Empowering women entrepreneurs

In 2025, WCWB delivered impactful programs that advanced opportunities for women entrepreneurs and professionals. The INSPIRE Women's Business Conference, held May 22 at Great Wolf Lodge, brought together more than 545 attendees for a day of learning, networking, and inspiration. In July, we partnered with SPSCC, the Thurston Chamber, and MultiCare to host a 32-hour Doula Training led by Diksha of Doula Olympia. Eighteen graduates earned state certification and launched careers as independent practitioners, strengthening access to maternal care in our region.

We also created spaces for women-owned businesses to thrive through two successful pop-up markets at Capital Mall, featuring over 50 vendors. These efforts were recognized nationally: we earned the Women's Business Center for Excellence Award from AWBC and were named the Pacific Northwest Region's 2025 Women's Business Center of Excellence by the US Small Business Administration (SBA).

[wcwb.org](http://wcwb.org)



**358**

INDIVIDUALS  
COUNSELED



**19**

TRAINING  
EVENTS



**33**

BUSINESSES  
LAUNCHED



**30**

BUSINESSES  
CERTIFICATIONS



**\$241K**

IN CAPITAL  
INFUSIONS



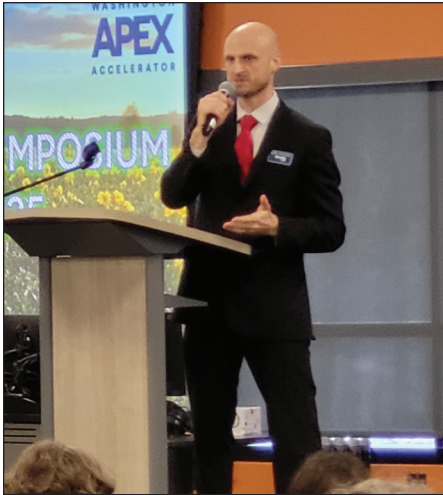
**148**

BUSINESSES  
SUCCESS STORIES

The Washington Center for Women in Business is funded, in part, through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.



# WASHINGTON APEX ACCELERATOR



## Connecting government buyers to businesses

Powered by the Thurston EDC and its partners, the APEX Accelerator team of 17 advisors plays a vital role in strengthening the economic vitality of our communities. Through quality one-on-one advising services, training, and events that connect government buyers with businesses, we help Washington companies diversify their client base to include federal, state, and local agencies. This work opens doors to new opportunities and ensures businesses are prepared to compete in the public sector.

In the past year, the Washington APEX Accelerator supported **2,335** clients and achieved an outstanding **98% client satisfaction rate**. Our network of subcenters hosted **180** training courses designed to guide businesses entering government contracting, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to succeed.

*"Washington APEX Accelerator helped our company so much throughout the contract process. I learned so much on each call. Just having someone explain the terminology and process in plain English is priceless". - Rouxbe (client)*



**\$47.6M**

INNOVATIVE  
BUSINESS AWARDS



**\$462**

ROI FOR EVERY  
DOLLAR INVESTED



**5,542**

JOBS  
CREATED STATEWIDE



**\$839M**

CONTRACTS  
AWARDED



**2,335**

CLIENTS  
SUPPORTED



**\$6M**

CONSTRUCTION  
RELATED PROJECTS TO  
LOCAL BUSINESSES

This APEX Accelerator is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense.

# RURAL INITIATIVES

## Strengthening economic growth in south Thurston County

### TENINO AGRICULTURE INNOVATION PARK



Phase I of park development is complete, with three lots prepared and two buildings constructed. Both buildings are fully occupied, hosting six tenants and creating 19 jobs. The park is open for business, featuring Simply Organics Café, Colvin Ranch Provisions, and the Stone City Event Center, along with Hot Babes Hot Sauce's production kitchen, Gondola VC/Dragonwheel Investments, and the EDC's rural business center. Phase II is underway, focusing on subdividing the remaining lot and designing the future regional meat processing facility.

### SOUTH THURSTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (STEDI)

In June 2025, we opened a new STEDI office-business and information center at the Tenino Agriculture Innovation Park. Monthly STEDI meetings brought together more than 35 organizations to support Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, Tenino, and Yelm. We hosted a Funding Strategies Workshop connecting businesses and nonprofits with local, state, and federal resources, and partnered with the City of Tenino to host the Washington State Arts Commission Creative District Convening bringing 50+ representatives of the state's 18 certified creative districts to Tenino.

STEDI also provided support for major community events to increase attendance and attract regional

### SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON FOOD HUB

Hub farmer membership grew by nearly 50%, strengthening the network of local suppliers. Overall sales through the SW WA Food Hub increased by more than \$1.4 million. Over the last year, utilizing a USDA LFPA grant, the Nisqually Indian Tribe purchased 2,860 boxes of food for its tribal members, which generated over \$1.29 million in sales to support Food Hub farmers.

Valley View Medical Center also began a wellness program to provide Hub food boxes, improving patient access to fresh, local foods. A WSDA Infrastructure Grant funded the purchase of a refrigerated truck and walk-in freezer, enhancing Hub operations, and expanding delivery capacity and efficiency.



**47**  
MEMBERS  
& VENDORS



**\$1.4M**  
INCREASE  
IN SALES

visitors, including Rochester's Swede Day, Tenino Holiday and Spring Markets, Tenino Arts Stone City Arts Festival, Tenino Family Fun Day, Oregon Trail Days, Tenino Young-At-Heart Theatre, Rainier Bluegrass Festival and Boo-Coda Spook-Tacular. We assisted Bucoda, Tenino Community Service Center, and We Love Rainier in securing capacity-building grants and continue to support local chambers and leadership meetings with state agencies.





# ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACTS 2024-25 BY THE NUMBERS

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$44.12M**

TOTAL OUTPUT

**\$17.8M**

LABOR INCOME

**271**

DIRECT & INDIRECT  
JOBS CREATED

**6.79**

MULTIPLIER PER  
DOLLAR INVESTED  
IN THURSTON EDC

## ENTREPRENEUR IMPACT

**279**

INTRO TO BUSINESS  
ATTENDEES

**223**

BEST TRAINING  
ATTENDEES

**62**

ATTENDEES, SBA  
MEET THE LENDER  
EVENT

**19**

BUSINESSES IN  
GROWTH TRAINING

## WASHINGTON APEX ACCELERATOR

**\$839M**

CONTRACTS  
AWARDED

**\$462**

ROI FOR EVERY  
DOLLAR INVESTED

**5,542**

JOBS CREATED

**2,335**

CLIENTS SUPPORTED

## WASHINGTON CENTER FOR WOMEN IN BUSINESS

**358**

INDIVIDUALS  
COUNSELED

**33**

BUSINESSES  
LAUNCHED

**30**

BUSINESS  
CERTIFICATIONS

**\$241K**

IN CAPITAL  
INFUSIONS

## LACEY MAKERSPACE

**105**

BUSINESSES USE  
LACEY MAKERSPACE

**1,385**

CLASS  
PARTICIPANTS

**360**

MEMBERS

## SOUTHWEST WA FOOD HUB

**47**

MEMBERS  
& VENDORS

**\$1.4M**

INCREASE  
IN SALES

**2,860**

FOOD BOXES PURCHASED  
BY NISQUALLY TRIBE FOR ITS  
MEMBERS

Thurston EDC investments fuel growth, spark innovation, and create quality jobs that strengthen Thurston County's economy.

CONTACT US OR  
BECOME A SUPPORTER  
[thurstonedc.com](http://thurstonedc.com)