Washington Department of Commerce & Regional EDOs: Reactive vs. Proactive Out-of-State Recruitment

Pillar: WA Council & Record | **Basis:** Commerce / EDO Record vs. Lapsa Testimony | **Primary Source:** WA Dept. of Commerce / Regional EDOs | **As Of:** As of Nov 16, 2026

While regional economic development organizations such as Economic Alliance Snohomish County and Greater Seattle Partners supported expansions like Portal Space Systems ($350K SRF) and Cowboy Space, Stoke Space CEO Andy Lapsa stated in September 2026 that six competitor states proactively contacted him while he 'never received the same in Washington state.'

Documented Policy & Site-Selection Record

• Lapsa's Outreach Comparison: In September 2026, Stoke Space CEO Andy Lapsa stated that economic development teams from South Carolina, Texas, Florida, Ohio, Idaho, and Illinois contacted him within weeks, and he 'never received the same in Washington state.'

• Commerce's Current Role: Rather than a standalone space commission with dedicated grant staff, Washington places space coordination inside the Department of Commerce, which now staffs the 23-member Space Council under EO 26-04.

• Regional EDO Activity: Local groups—including Economic Alliance Snohomish County (Portal Space $350K SRF) and Greater Seattle Partners—actively market talent density and process targeted local expansions.

• Structural Difference: Competitor states operate dedicated spaceport or space-commission sales teams with pre-authorized grant pools, whereas Washington relies on general Commerce/EDO channels.

Institutional Recruitment Comparison

Dimension	Washington State (Current)	Competitor-State Pattern
Lead State Body	WA Dept. of Commerce + advisory Space Council (EO 26-04)	Dedicated Space Commission (TX) or Space Florida
Proactive Outreach	Lapsa (Sept 2026): 'never received the same in Washington state'	6 states (SC, TX, FL, OH, ID, IL) proactively pitched Stoke
Local EDO Channel	Economic Alliance Snohomish County, Greater Seattle Partners	Paired state + municipal/county abatement packages (AL, CO)

Founder, Staffer & Site-Selector Takeaways

• Founder Takeaway: In Washington, founders typically initiate contact through regional EDOs (Snohomish, Greater Seattle) to access SRF or permitting support rather than receiving inbound state-commission pitches.

• Staffer Takeaway: Creating EO 26-04 addresses visibility, but proactive retention requires dedicated account management and statutory tools.

Cross-Cluster Links & Primary Sources

• **WA Space Cluster Hub (#1382):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-census/

• **Stoke Space WA Profile:** https://bcesg.org/stoke-space-washington-space-cluster-profile/

• **Portal Space Systems WA Profile:** https://bcesg.org/portal-space-systems-washington-space-cluster-profile/

• **Cowboy Space WA Profile:** https://bcesg.org/cowboy-space-washington-space-cluster-profile/

• **Bothell WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/bothell-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Washington State Department of Commerce:** https://www.commerce.wa.gov/

• **WA Governor Executive Orders (EO 26-04):** https://governor.wa.gov/office-governor/office/official-actions/executive-orders

• **GeekWire Aerospace Coverage:** https://www.geekwire.com/

Provenance Note: Combines WA Commerce SRF records with dated Sept 2026 founder testimony. Non-advocacy brief.