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2026 BEND ECONOMIC PROFILE

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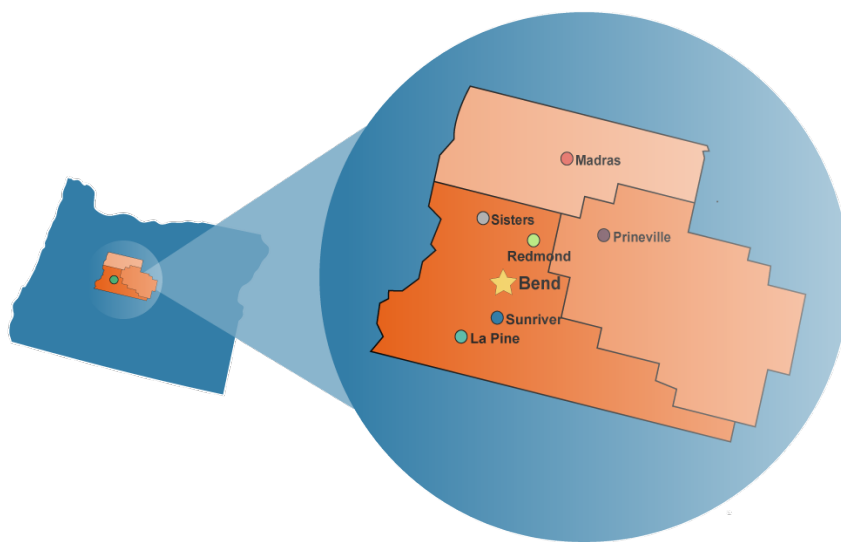
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BEND OVERVIEW

Ranked #4 in the Milken Institute's 2026 Best Performing Small Cities Report, it hosts Bend Venture Conference (BVC), the largest angel investment conference in the Pacific Northwest. Tourism is a vital component of the local economy, with visitors drawn to world-class skiing, hiking, fly fishing and mountain biking, supporting a robust hospitality and service sector. Bend's vibrant craft beer scene is a key economic factor, with its breweries earning national recognition.

Bend has been recognized as one of the best mountain towns to visit in America, drawing in many new residents from the 4.5 million annual visitors who wish to make it their home. Along with its stunning views and family-friendly recreational activities, Bend offers a vibrant mix of arts and cultural experiences, quality healthcare, a growing education system, and ample economic opportunities for those looking to build a life there.

Higher education plays a pivotal role in Bend's economic landscape. The town boasts a creative startup environment and a burgeoning tech industry, making it an appealing destination for entrepreneurs and professionals alike.



ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Bend's thriving and diverse economy makes it an ideal place to enjoy a fulfilling career without sacrificing quality of life. It blends big-city opportunities with the advantages and accessibility of a smaller community. Key industries fueling Bend's growth include bioscience, aviation, specialty food production, craft brewing, technology, outdoor gear and apparel, and advanced manufacturing. The city benefits from a strong and expanding

education sector, with institutions like Oregon State University-Cascades, Central Oregon Community College and Leading Edge Aviation Flight School playing a crucial role in developing a skilled workforce. Bend continues to outpace both larger and smaller metropolitan areas in Oregon when it comes to year-over-year wage growth, making it an increasingly attractive destination for professionals and entrepreneurs alike.

COMMUNITY & BUSINESS ASSETS



GEOGRAPHIC ACCESSIBILITY

An expanding regional airport provides convenient daily direct flights to 10 destinations, enhancing connectivity for both business and leisure travelers. To meet the region's rising demand, the Redmond Municipal Airport has begun a major terminal expansion anticipated to complete in early 2028. Bend's location at the intersection of key state highways allows for easy and scenic drives to the Willamette Valley, Portland, Seattle, Boise, and south to California. Within the city, Bend's well-planned road system prioritizes traffic flow and safety, using an extensive network of roundabouts to reduce congestion and keep traffic moving efficiently. Bend is investing millions in capital improvement projects, as well as expanding bicycle and pedestrian routes, ensuring the city's infrastructure supports continued growth without increasing commute times.

DOG TOWN, U.S.A.

Bend, Oregon, is a paradise for dogs and their owners, offering endless outdoor adventures and a dog-friendly community. With eight off-leash dog parks, over 50 miles of trails in town and access to the Deschutes River, pups can run, swim and explore to their heart's content. Crowned Dog Town USA by Dog Fancy magazine, many local businesses, breweries and restaurants welcome four-legged friends, often providing water bowls and treats. Bend's mild climate and outdoor lifestyle make it easy to include dogs in everyday activities.

TOP U.S. CITY FOR BEER DRINKERS

Central Oregon boasts a vibrant craft beverage scene, with breweries and cideries of all sizes contributing to its reputation. Deschutes Brewery and AVID Cider Co. lead the way in national distribution. Nearly one-third of Oregon's largest 30 breweries by volume are located in Central Oregon, and Bend consistently ranks among the top U.S. cities for beer enthusiasts. The city also holds a top position nationally for craft breweries per capita. Residents and visitors enjoy annual beer and cider festivals celebrating local producers.

WHY BEND AND EDCO?

Bend combines a dynamic economy with exceptional livability, attracting both talent and innovation. EDCO ensures that growth translates into long-term opportunity by connecting businesses with the resources they need to succeed.

Population: **107,079**
(2025 estimates from [PSU Population Research Center](#))

Regional Labor Force: **142,794**
(2025 estimates from [Oregon Prospector](#))

Median Household Income: **\$93,564**
(2025 estimates from [Oregon Prospector](#))

Bend is one of six small cities in the U.S. that ranked highest of all 1,334 cities for the most startups per capita.

- TheStreet, 2023

RESOURCES

- [Carl Riccadonna, Oregon Office of Economic Analysis](#)
- [Beacon Appraisal Group, Beacon Report and Market Overview](#)
- [Compass Points Commercial and Industrial Market Report](#)
- [Central Oregon Economic Indicators \(OED\)](#)
- [Statewide Economic Data](#)
- [Redmond Airport Flight Statistics](#)
- [City of Bend Permit Center Portal](#)
- [Deschutes County Permits](#)

Central Oregon (Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson counties) stands out as the region's employment powerhouse, driving most of the employment growth seen in the East Cascades. The sub-region is projected to grow the fastest, with an 8.6% increase that will add nearly 9,900 new nonfarm jobs by 2033.

- [2023-2033 Industry Projections in the East Cascades, Oregon Employment Department](#)

The Bend Venture Conference has been run in Bend for twenty years and brings entrepreneurs and angel investors together. Efforts to foster new local businesses also include regular Central Oregon PubTalks - networking events for people interested in entrepreneurship. These longterm efforts have borne fruit, with Bend ranking No. 17 for young firm employment share.

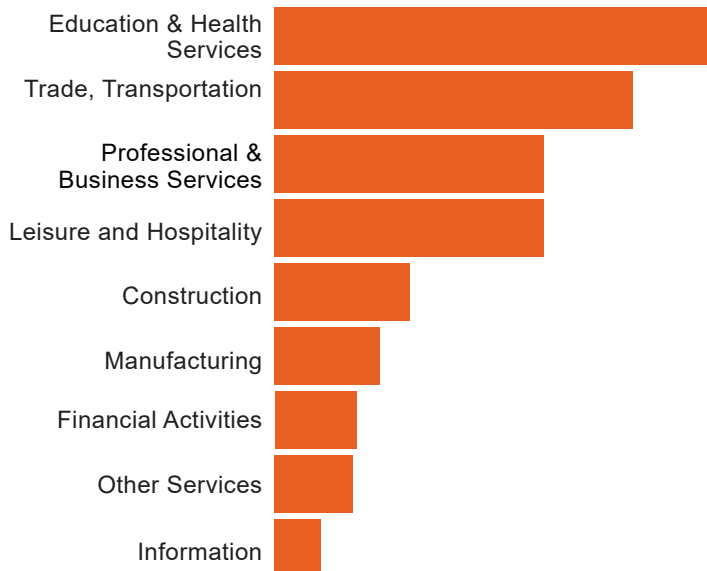
- [Most Dynamic Metros 2024, Heartland Forward](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES



TOP EMPLOYERS

2025 Bend Industry Composition Private by Employment



Source: Oregon Employment Department Geocoded 2025 QCEW

Bend-Redmond's robust labor market is a key factor in its continued success, with five-year job growth ranking 14th and five-year wage growth placing fifth in the U.S. among small cities. The region's technology industry is flourishing, with significant contributions to Bend's high-tech GDP from software publishing, which has risen an impressive 40% since 2018.

Rank		2026 Bend Largest Employers (Private and Public)	Employees	
2026	2025		2026	2025
1	1	St. Charles Health System	4,528	4,213
2	2	Bend-La Pine School District	2,256	2,385
3	4	Mt. Bachelor	1,311	1,094
4	3	Deschutes County	1,087	1,334
5	5	City of Bend	783	783
6	NL	Almost Family	731	600
7	9	Summit Medical Group Oregon	655	527
8	6	Central Oregon Community College (COCC)	631	761
9	10	Epic Aircraft	544	510
10	12	Costco	513	463
11	NL	U.S. Forest Service/Deschutes National Forest	480	NL
12	11	Les Schwab Headquarters & Tire Centers	465	465
13	13	Lonza, formerly Bend Research	367	427
14	14	Central Oregon Radiology Associates (CORA)	347	328
15	17	Mosaic Medical	330	311
16	16	OSU-Cascades	315	323
17	18	Deschutes Brewery	289	268
18	19	Fred Meyer	283	260
19	T-23	Juniper Preserve, formerly Pronghorn Resort	275	250
20	22	TDS Telecom	250	250

NL = Not Listed | T = Tied

ECONOMIC FOUNDATION

