



BEND CHAMBER

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Impact Conference



Bend ET Social



Leadership Bend



Biz & Bevs

Bend**NEXT**
FOUNDATION
The nonprofit arm of the Bend Chamber

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Bend Chamber Staff

The professionals that make up the Bend Chamber team are dedicated to our mission of creating an environment where businesses, their employees and our community excel together through collaboration, advocacy, resources and leadership to meet Bend’s business challenges.



Talena Barker

VP of Leadership
Development



Emily Boyd

Government Affairs
Manager



Robin Cooper Engle

Sponsorship & Development
Manager



Chris Hart

Executive Director,
BendNEXT Foundation



Shelley Junker

Membership Manager



Julia Keyes

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Ande Munro

Accounting &
Data Specialist



Lisa Nielsen

Marketing &
Communications
Director



Sara Odendahl

CEO



Colleen Prinster

Events & Community
Impact Manager



Kathleen Quinney

Leadership Programs
Lead

As we enter the Bend Chamber’s next century, our focus remains clear: strengthening connections, advocating for a healthy business climate, supporting resilient employers and ensuring Bend remains a place where businesses, employees and our community continue to thrive.

—Sara Odendahl,
CEO, Bend Chamber



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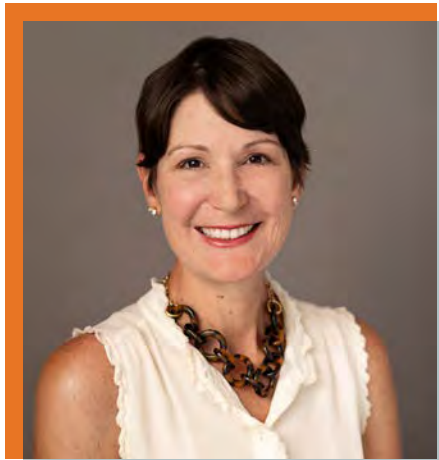
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LEADERSHIP BEND

BEND EMERGING TALENT



Sara Odendahl

CEO, Bend Chamber

Dear members, partners and community leaders,

Early in my first few months as CEO, I attended our signature Bend Chamber event, the Impact Conference, and was struck by something simple but powerful: the room was filled with business owners, nonprofit leaders, educators and public officials all in conversation about how to solve challenges facing our community. It was a reminder that the Bend Chamber's greatest strength has always been its ability to bring people together around shared goals.

That spirit of collaboration has defined the approach to my new role and reflects the legacy built by leaders before me. I'm especially grateful to Katy Brooks for her years of leadership and dedication to the Chamber. Katy elevated the organization's voice on critical business issues and strengthened its role as a trusted advocate for Central Oregon employers. I'm proud to build on the foundation she helped establish.

2026 also marks a historic milestone as we celebrate the Bend Chamber's 100th year serving the business community. For a century, the Chamber has helped businesses navigate change, advocate for smart public policy and strengthen our regional economy. Today, our work continues to be guided by the priorities captured in our strategic framework, CARLI: Connections, Advocacy, Resources, Leadership and Initiatives.

Connections remain at the heart of the Chamber's work. Through events, programs and partnerships, we bring together business and community leaders to share ideas, build relationships and collaborate on solutions that strengthen Bend's economic future.



Advocacy also remains central to our mission. In 2025, the Chamber represented Central Oregon employers at the local and state level, working with policymakers to promote economic vitality and a competitive business climate. This year the Chamber led the creation of the Regional Business Alliance, a new partnership designed to strengthen the collective voice of Central Oregon businesses at the state capitol and ensure our region's priorities are clearly represented in Salem.

The Chamber also continues to provide valuable resources to support employers navigating a complex and evolving economy. From workforce insights and policy updates to programs that help businesses connect and grow, we are committed to ensuring members have the information and tools they need to succeed.

Through programs like Leadership Bend and Bend Emerging Talent, the Chamber continues to invest in leadership development as we prepare the next generation of community and business leaders to guide Central Oregon through the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Finally, our initiatives focus on the issues that most directly affect employers and the workforce that powers our economy. Chief among these is housing. The high cost of living continues to impact employees' quality of life and employers' ability to recruit and retain talent. The Chamber's Workforce Housing Initiative continues to advance awareness, partnerships and policy solutions aimed at expanding attainable housing opportunities across our region.

At the same time, we are prioritizing business resiliency, helping employers adapt to rising costs, workforce changes, technological shifts and environmental realities that increasingly shape how businesses plan for the future.

Looking ahead, Bend's economic outlook remains strong even as businesses navigate growing complexity. Our region continues to attract talent, innovation and entrepreneurial energy, and maintaining that momentum will require continued collaboration across business, government and community partners.

As we enter the Bend Chamber's next century, our focus remains clear: strengthening connections, advocating for a healthy business climate, supporting resilient employers and ensuring Bend remains a place where businesses, employees and our community continue to thrive.

Thank you for your partnership and for helping carry the Bend Chamber's mission forward into its next hundred years.



Tia Lewis

Shareholder, Schwabe

Chair, Bend Chamber
Board of Directors

Dear chamber members, partners and community,

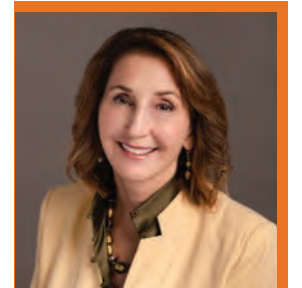
Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Chair of the Bend Chamber Board of Directors for the past year. And wow, what a year it has been! From the Workforce Housing Initiative to the Regional Business Alliance and our role in the Central Oregon Caucus, we have been busy and have accomplished a lot. Through all of this, we also had a leadership change, with Katy Brooks leaving and the search and installation of our new CEO. We could not be more grateful to Katy for her innovative, collaborative, and impactful leadership at the Chamber. Katy provided the foundation for the transition in leadership to a trusted advocate and demonstrated community citizen, Sara Odendahl. Sara garnered the trust of the community partners and business leaders through her commitment to tackling tough community-wide issues and building collaborative partnerships. We are all proud to have her lead the Chamber through the next chapter of advocacy, strategic initiatives and tangible community solutions.

I am proud to have been part of this dynamic organization for the past six years and to have served as Chair for the past year. I look forward to continuing to be a part of it in the future and am excited to celebrate the Chamber's 100th anniversary serving Bend's business community.



Honoring a Legacy, Embracing a New Chapter

In 2025, we celebrated a meaningful leadership transition as Katy Brooks concluded nearly nine years of extraordinary service as President and CEO. Katy's leadership helped elevate the Bend Chamber into one of Oregon's most dynamic and influential business organizations, expanding its voice in advocacy, strengthening leadership programs, and deepening partnerships across the region. Her vision, energy, and commitment to Bend's business community leave a lasting legacy and a strong foundation for the future.



Katy Brooks

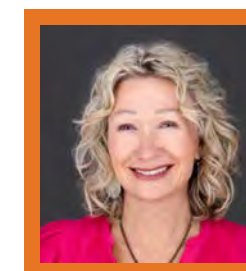
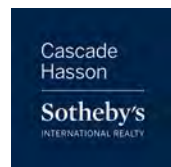
Following Katy's departure, Sara Odendahl stepped into the role of interim CEO on June 30, providing steady leadership and continuity during an important moment for the organization. While also continuing as Director of Government Affairs and Strategic Initiatives, Sara helped maintain momentum on key legislative priorities and ensured the Chamber continued to move forward with confidence, purpose, and focus.

That momentum became even more meaningful in October, when after a national search and competitive selection process, we announced Sara had been selected as CEO, effective November 3, 2025. Her selection was a powerful reflection of the confidence placed in her leadership by the Bend Chamber Board of Directors, business leaders, and community stakeholders. The unanimous decision to appoint Sara underscored both her proven impact within the organization and the bright future ahead for the Chamber.

Sara's appointment marks an exciting new chapter for the Bend Chamber. Since joining the organization in 2023, she has played a key role in advancing our policy and advocacy work and helping lead important regional efforts, including the Workforce Housing Initiative and Regional Business Alliance. As we look toward our 100-year milestone, Sara's leadership represents both continuity and opportunity—building on Katy's remarkable legacy while inspiring a bold and promising future for Bend's business community.



2025 SPECIAL CONTRIBUTORS



We couldn't offer the programs and events we do without our chamber members, sponsors, and the incredible business community behind us — thank you for showing up, year after year, with your time, your support, and your generosity. Every milestone we've hit is a reflection of you.

Robin Cooper Engle
Sponsorship and Development Manager
Robine@bendchamber.org



MEMBERSHIP



RESOURCES

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT



Sara Odendahl & Tia Lewis

Businesses were subjected to yet another challenging year in 2025 marked by rising costs, economic uncertainty, workforce challenges, and supply-chain and tariff pressures. We understand and recognize that our members—both new and longtime—make a purposeful decision to invest in the Bend Chamber. With so many options for where to invest your resources, we are sincerely grateful for your continued support.

*With so many options for
where to invest your resources,
we are sincerely grateful for your
continued support!*

1728

Total Active
Business Members

7.4%

Membership Dues
Revenue Increase

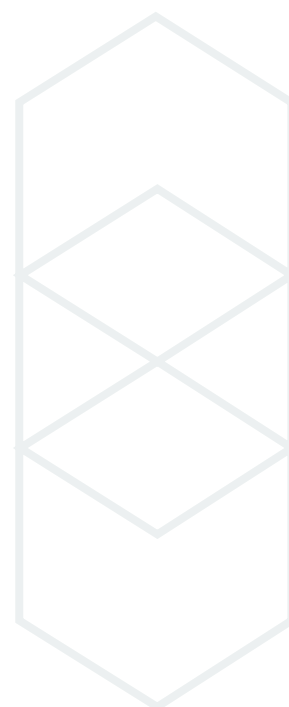


351

Business Members
Active for 10+ Years

138

Business Members
Active for 25+ Years



VALUABLE RESOURCES TO HELP OUR MEMBERS SUCCEED

HEALTH INSURANCE



Finding affordable, high-quality health coverage can be difficult for small businesses. Since 2010, we've provided access to cost-effective, comprehensive health insurance built specifically for small employers.

Our top priority is serving our members — small businesses — and continually strengthening this essential benefit.

With more than 100 agents statewide offering the Chamber Association Health Plan, businesses across Oregon are gaining access to a trusted resource that supports both employees and employers.

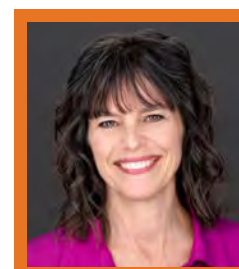
Learn more about [Bend Chamber Health Insurance](#) at [bendchamber.org/resources/chamber-health-insurance](#)

MEMBER TOOLKIT

An online hub designed to help you maximize your Chamber membership. Access valuable insights, marketing opportunities, practical tools, and connections to local businesses and the community—all in one place.

View the [Member Toolkit](#) at [bendchamber.org/membership/member-toolkit](#)

Thank you for your support of the Bend Chamber! I'm here as a resource for you and would be happy to connect.



Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can assist you in making the most of your membership.

Shelley Junker
Membership Manager
[Shelley@bendchamber.org](#)

FINANCIAL SAVINGS

Member-to-member discounts on products and services continue to be a benefit of Chamber membership. It's a powerful opportunity to support fellow members while gaining visibility for your own business.

Members may post an offer at no cost. If you'd like to have your business included, please contact Shelley Junker at [shelley@bendchamber.org](#).

View [Member to member Discounts](#) at [bendchamber.org/membership/member-to-member-discounts](#)

16,000+

LIVES COVERED BY THE CHAMBER HEALTH PLAN

975+

ACTIVE BUSINESS MEMBERS ON THE BEND
CHAMBER ASSOCIATION HEALTH PLAN

20

MONEY SAVING "MEMBER-TO-MEMBER" DISCOUNTS

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MEMBER TOOLS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
YOUR MEMBERSHIP

“More than 2,300 direct engagement touchpoints in 2025 highlight the Chamber’s role as a convener, connector, and catalyst for Bend’s business community.”

WHERE BUSINESS CONNECTS AND MOMENTUM BUILDS

In 2025, Chamber events were defined by packed rooms, vibrant conversations, and a business community eager to show up and engage. Across programs and industries, members demonstrated a strong appetite for connection, insight, and collaboration, consistently filling venues and contributing thoughtful perspectives to the discussions shaping Bend’s future.

Our networking programs, including Biz & Bevs and Commerce & Coffee, continued to be among the Chamber’s most popular offerings in 2025, with events consistently selling out and generating strong momentum throughout the year. Hosted by Chamber member businesses at venues such as Currents at the Riverhouse and the Willamette Valley Vineyards Tasting Room, these gatherings provided welcoming, high-energy environments where professionals could build authentic relationships, spark new partnerships and expand their visibility within the business community. Designed to be accessible and relationship-driven, these programs play a vital role in strengthening Bend’s interconnected business network. Across the region, we also celebrated 25 ribbon cuttings, recognizing new and expanding businesses and reflecting the continued confidence, investment and growth shaping Bend’s dynamic economy.

What’s Brewing convened business and community leaders for four dynamic sessions in 2025, drawing an average of 93 attendees to the Deschutes Brewery Mountain Room, a local favorite, for timely and thought-provoking conversations on entrepreneurship, strengthening business resilience, visionary growth, and legislative insights. Several sessions reached capacity, reflecting strong demand for meaningful dialogue on the issues shaping our region.

Bend 101 complemented this work through three engaging programs designed to serve as a gateway into Bend’s business ecosystem, helping participants build context, confidence, and connection. Sessions explored essential community systems such as water and

waste, highlighting where resources come from and where they go, as well as outdoor recreation, featuring partners like the Deschutes Land Trust and public lands experts. The largest Bend 101, hosted at OSU-Cascades’ Ed Ray Hall, focused on growth in Bend, with City leaders presenting the City’s growth plan. That momentum carried directly into the Fall What’s Brewing on Visionary Growth, demonstrating strong alignment between the programs and reinforcing the Chamber’s role as a trusted convener of informed, forward-looking community conversations.

Bend Emerging Talent (Bend ET) experienced an exciting year of growth, engagement, and impact, continuing to facilitate and inspire personal and professional development with a strong focus on community. Bend ET Expert Labs explored forward-thinking topics such as neuroscience for restoration and adapting for resilience, while Bend ET Socials, including a standout Holiday Party at Webfoot Garage, strengthened meaningful connections among career-oriented professionals across industries.



CONNECTIONS continued

The Bend ET Summit welcomed 140 attendees, with that same energy carrying into a highly successful after party at JDub. Additionally, the NEXTUp Leaders program launched in 2025 with a strong inaugural cohort of 20 participants, guiding them through seven sessions, including a full-day retreat at the Hanai Foundation, further deepening leadership development and investment in our community’s future.

The 2025 Impact Conference, powered by Providence Health Plan, welcomed 450 business leaders, decision-makers, and community builders for a day of insight, connection, and forward-looking conversation. Guided by emcee Diana Cutaia, the program organically embraced a theme of optimism that resonated throughout the day. Attendees gained perspectives from U.S. Representative Janelle Bynum, respected state and national economists, and regional leaders, along with a fast-paced Power Round exploring AI, policy, and the future of Central Oregon’s economy.

In 2025, our events did more than convene. They fueled leadership, strengthened relationships, and elevated the collective success of Bend’s business community.

BEND 101

3 EVENTS, AVG. ATTENDANCE 107

BIZ & BEVS

5 EVENTS,
AVERAGE 111 ATTENDEES

COMMERCE & COFFEE

5 EVENTS, AVG. 107 ATTENDEES

RIBBON CUTTINGS

25 EVENTS, AVG. 20 ATTENDEES
PER EVENT

WHAT’S BREWING

4 EVENTS, AVG. 93 ATTENDEES
PER EVENT

BEND ET EXPERT LABS

4 EVENTS, AVG. ATTENDANCE 25

BEND ET SOCIALS

5 EVENTS, AVG. ATTENDANCE 52

BEND ET SUMMIT

1 EVENT, 140 ATTENDEES

BEND ET SUMMIT AFTER PARTY

1 EVENT, APPROXIMATELY
140 ATTENDEES

NEXTUP LEADERS

7 SESSIONS, COHORT-BASED PROGRAM
OF 20

IMPACT CONFERENCE

1 EVENT, 450 ATTENDEES

KEY INITIATIVES

In addition to its policy and advocacy work, the Bend Chamber advances targeted initiatives that address some of the region's most pressing economic challenges. Through partnerships, pilot programs, and regional collaboration, the Chamber develops practical solutions that strengthen Central Oregon's business environment, expand workforce housing opportunities, and amplify the region's voice on key policy issues.



ADVANCING THE BEND CHAMBER'S WORKFORCE HOUSING INITIATIVE

The Bend Chamber's Workforce Housing Initiative continued to gain momentum in 2025 as the organization expanded partnerships and advanced practical solutions to increase housing supply in Central Oregon. Bend continues to produce more housing units per capita than most cities in Oregon, but the gap between supply and demand remains significant. The Chamber remains focused on advancing policies, partnerships, and tools that support housing options for the region's workforce.

The Chamber collaborates with public and private partners to identify infrastructure funding opportunities, support housing productivity policies, and launch pilot programs that accelerate housing production. Through this initiative, the Chamber is working to ensure Bend remains a community where local workers and families can live and thrive.

EXPANDING WORKFORCE HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A core component of the Workforce Housing Initiative is the Chamber's investment in pathways to homeownership. In partnership with Mid Oregon Credit Union and other private sector investors, the Chamber supports a revolving loan program that helps local housing developers build homes for Central Oregon's workforce.

The loan fund provides low interest financing to partners developing entry level and workforce housing. Homes supported through the

program are deed restricted to ensure long term affordability and to preserve attainable homeownership opportunities for future buyers.

The revolving loan program supports projects led by organizations such as Bend Redmond Habitat for Humanity and other regional housing partners. These collaborations help reduce financing costs and create attainable homeownership opportunities for local employees and families.

KEY INITIATIVES continued

LAUNCHING THE PRE-APPROVED ADU DESIGN LIBRARY

In 2025, the Bend Chamber launched the [Pre-Approved ADU Design Library](#) in partnership with [Simplicity by Hayden Homes](#) and the [City of Bend](#). The online resource provides homeowners with a curated collection of architecturally reviewed, permit ready accessory dwelling unit plans designed to streamline the building process and reduce permitting timelines.

Accessory dwelling units are an important tool for addressing housing shortages. They make use of existing infrastructure, support intergenerational living, and create attainable housing options for workers and families. The Design Library allows homeowners to explore pre-approved plans that align with local building codes and simplify the building process.

The Chamber continues to maintain online resources that help property owners understand how to finance, build, and manage ADUs. These resources provide another pathway to increase housing supply in the community.



Through dedicated advocacy efforts, the Bend Chamber strengthens relationships that elevate the collective voices of Central Oregon businesses. In 2025, the Chamber remained actively engaged in state policy discussions, regional collaboration, and local advocacy efforts to advance priorities that support economic vitality, infrastructure investment, workforce development, and housing availability.



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 2025 Oregon Legislative Session presented a complex environment for the business community, with nearly 3,400 bills introduced during the 158-day session. The Bend Chamber tracked more than 190 bills and budget items and engaged directly on 51 pieces of legislation through testimony, coalition advocacy, and direct engagement with lawmakers.

The session began with optimism for bipartisan progress on several major statewide issues, including transportation funding, housing supply, and economic development. While some proposals aligned with Chamber priorities, others raised concerns due to potential regulatory burdens on Oregon employers.

Housing policy saw several advancements designed to streamline development processes and expand housing

190

BILLS AND BUDGET ITEMS TRACKED

options across the state. Key legislation included HB 2138, which expands middle housing requirements, and SB 974, which establishes clearer timelines for reviewing residential development plans. Additional measures supporting housing production included HB 3746, which reduces the statute of limitations for construction defect claims, and SB 1129, directing updates to land use planning rules to help bring new land into development pipelines.

Infrastructure investments also advanced during the session. HB 3031 established a program allowing the Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority to provide financial assistance for infrastructure projects that support housing development, including a \$10 million appropriation to help communities prepare land for new housing.



Another major development was the formation of the Central Oregon Legislative Caucus, co-chaired by Senator Anthony Broadman and Representative Vikki Breese-Iverson. The caucus brought together lawmakers representing the tri-county region to advocate for regional priorities. Their work helped secure nearly \$30 million in appropriations for initiatives including the CORE3 emergency response center, industrial site readiness, and behavioral health infrastructure.

At the same time, several proposals raised significant concerns for the business community. Measures such as SB 426, which expands liability for unpaid wages, and SB 916, which modifies unemployment insurance eligibility during labor disputes, were vigorously opposed due to their impact on employers statewide.

51

PIECES OF LEGISLATION ENGAGED ON

ADVOCACY INITIATIVES continued

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING & SPECIAL SESSION

One of the most significant unresolved issues of the 2025 session was transportation funding. Late in the session, lawmakers introduced SB 2025, a sweeping proposal that would have raised more than \$14 billion in new taxes and fees over ten years to fund Oregon's transportation system. The proposal ultimately failed to gain sufficient support before the Legislature adjourned.

The collapse of the transportation package left the Oregon Department of Transportation facing a significant budget shortfall and set the stage for continued negotiations and the potential for a special legislative session.

In response, the Bend Chamber partnered with Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) to provide comments on proposed transportation funding concepts, emphasizing the importance of accountability and fiscal sustainability while opposing new payroll taxes that would increase costs for businesses.

Transportation infrastructure remains essential to Central Oregon's economy, supporting workforce mobility, supply chains, and regional connectivity.

LAUNCHING THE REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE



Recognizing the importance of regional collaboration, 2025 also marked the launch of the Regional Business Alliance (RBA)—a partnership among Central Oregon chambers of commerce and Economic Development for Central Oregon, led by the Bend Chamber. The RBA was created to strengthen coordination among business organizations across Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties and to amplify the region's voice on key policy issues including housing, transportation, workforce development, and infrastructure investment.

The RBA also works closely with the Central Oregon Legislative Caucus, a bipartisan group of lawmakers representing the region. This partnership creates an opportunity for two-way communication between policymakers and the business community, allowing regional legislators to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing local employers, while giving business leaders direct insight into emerging policy discussions and legislative priorities.

Through this collaboration, the Regional Business Alliance helps ensure that Central Oregon's economic priorities are clearly communicated, while also creating a forum where businesses

can provide feedback that informs policymaking at the state level. As part of this new regional collaboration, the Regional Business Alliance hosted the Central Oregon Economic and Policy Summit on October 24, 2025, at Redmond City Hall. The summit brought together business leaders, policymakers, and regional stakeholders to discuss the state of Oregon's economy and identify shared policy priorities for the region. The agenda included presentations on the state of Oregon's business climate, Central Oregon workforce trends, and roundtable discussions focused on economic development, housing and infrastructure, transportation, and workforce development. The summit concluded with a policy discussion focused on preparing regional priorities for the upcoming 2026 legislative session.



2025 POLICY PRIORITIES

The Bend Chamber’s advocacy work during the 2025 legislative session focused on advancing policies that support business growth, workforce development, and a strong regional economy.

KEY PRIORITIES INCLUDED:



Increase the Supply of Attainable Housing—Support policies that accelerate housing production and infrastructure investment to expand workforce housing opportunities across Central Oregon.



Invest in Infrastructure for a Growing Region—Advocate for transportation and infrastructure investments that improve mobility, strengthen supply chains, and support economic growth.



Promote Economic Development and Innovation—Support policies that strengthen industrial land readiness, attract new industries, and foster innovation and entrepreneurship.



Support Workforce Development and Education—Promote investments in education, access to childcare, and workforce training to help employers recruit and retain talent.



Balance Environmental Sustainability and Economic Health—Encourage policies that advance climate and natural resource goals while maintaining a competitive environment for Oregon businesses.

PREPARING FOR THE 2026 SHORT SESSION AND ELECTION SEASON

Following the close of the 2025 session, the Legislature shifted into its interim period with informational hearings scheduled during Legislative Days in September, November, and January. These meetings will help shape the policy landscape leading into the 2026 short legislative session, which begins in February.

The upcoming year will also bring a significant election cycle across Central Oregon and the state. Locally, the 2026 election will determine who fills the newly expanded seats on the Deschutes County Board of County Commissioners. Several Bend City Council positions will also be on the ballot, and two of our local legislative seats will be contested at the state level (House District 54 in the May Primary, and House District 53 in the General Election.) In addition, a host of potential statewide and

local ballot initiatives may appear before voters, many of which could influence Oregon’s regulatory and economic landscape.

As policymakers and voters consider these decisions, the Bend Chamber will continue working with lawmakers, regional partners, and the business community to advance solutions that strengthen Central Oregon’s economy and address the region’s most pressing challenges.

Through continued engagement, policy education, and regional collaboration, the Chamber will help ensure the voice of the business community remains part of the conversation heading into both the legislative and electoral cycles of 2026.

ADVOCACY INITIATIVES *continued*

2025 LOCAL ISSUES

While much of the work of the organization’s advocacy program focuses on state-level policy, the Bend Chamber remains deeply engaged in local issues impacting the business community. The Chamber works closely with the Bend City Council, the Deschutes County Commission, and key advisory bodies including the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board (BEDAB) to ensure the voice of business is represented in local policy discussions.

Economic Development Strategy In 2025, the Chamber partnered with BEDAB and City leadership to support the creation of Bend’s first formal Economic Development Program and the development of the Invest Bend economic development strategy, led by former Chamber CEO Katy Brooks. This work represents an important step toward aligning economic development priorities, supporting local business growth, and strengthening Bend’s long-term economic resilience. The Chamber played an active role in helping shape the strategy to ensure it reflects the needs of employers, entrepreneurs, and the broader regional economy.

Workforce Housing Addressing Bend’s housing shortage remains one of the Chamber’s highest priorities. In 2025, the Chamber continued its leadership in housing policy discussions through the HOME (Housing Options Made for Everyone) Committee. Chaired by Chamber CEO Sara Odendahl, the committee brings together housing developers, financial professionals, and community partners to explore innovative financial tools and strategies that can accelerate housing production.

The committee advanced early recommendations in December 2025, focused on new financial tools and incentives designed to spur both rental and ownership housing production. These efforts complement the Chamber’s broader advocacy work to reduce barriers to development while supporting long-term housing affordability.

The Chamber also continues to collaborate with the Partners for Affordable Housing coalition, a regional partnership working to



advance policies and investments that expand housing options across Central Oregon. Through this collaboration, the Chamber helps ensure the voice of the business community is included in conversations about housing production, land-use policy, and infrastructure investments that are critical to meeting workforce housing needs.

Thoughtful Energy and Housing Policy As the City of Bend evaluates potential electrification policies as a part of its Community Climate Action Plan, the Chamber has remained actively engaged with city leaders, community development partners, and housing advocates to ensure a thoughtful and balanced approach. The Chamber supports data-informed policy solutions that preserve housing affordability, encourage innovation in building technologies, and recognize the current capacity limitations of our electric utilities as Central Oregon continues to grow.

Looking ahead, the Bend Chamber will continue partnering with local leaders and stakeholders to shape policies that support a strong business environment, sustainable growth, and a vibrant regional economy.



BendNEXT FOUNDATION

Board of Directors

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Skanska

PRINCIPAL/ARCHITECT
Renée Alexander
BBT Architects

SHAREHOLDER
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St. Charles Health System

VICE PRESIDENT/DISTRICT
MANAGER
Sherry Jones
U.S. Bank

BENDNEXT FOUNDATION INITIATIVES



In 2025, BendNEXT experienced a year of growth, transition, and opportunity across its programs.

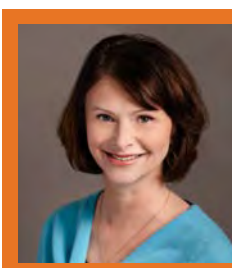
Bend 101 marked its fifth year of connecting residents—both new and long-time—with the history, context, and dynamics that shape Bend today. The program surpassed 1,000 total participants, each encouraged to become more informed, engaged citizens and to personally contribute to a vibrant, civically active community.

Following a period of transition, BendNEXT welcomed Chris Hart as Leadership Programs Manager in November. Chris brings extensive nonprofit management experience and a strong commitment to leadership and workforce development. In just a short time, he has built meaningful connections with community partners and is well positioned to help guide BendNEXT's continued growth and impact.

Amid shifts in the funding landscape and broader economic uncertainty, BendNEXT took proactive steps to ensure program sustainability. By year's end, the organization had stabilized operations, strengthened its foundation, and assembled the team needed to launch a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2026.

The BendNEXT staff and board remain deeply grateful for the continued support of our partners, stakeholders, program participants, and the community at large.

To learn more and to become a contributor, please visit: BendChamber.org/BendNext and bendchamberofcommerce.growthzoneapp.com/ap/contribute/yr4eXwpl.



Talena Barker
VP of Leadership Development

The BendNEXT Foundation, is the nonprofit arm of the Bend Chamber and works to strengthen our businesses, economy, and broader community. We do this by advancing workforce development and retention, cultivating leadership, and activating partnerships to address the region's most pressing challenges.

LEADERSHIP BEND INITIATIVES

Leadership Bend (LB) is a nine-month community leadership development program designed to provide dedicated members of the community with the education and connection needed to thrive in leadership roles. LB is supported by Taylor Northwest, Taylor Development and local businesses committed to promoting a healthy and robust community through their investment in leadership.

With the 2025 cohort marking 32 years of impact and engagement, the alumni network stands at 728 leaders serving Bend through elected office, board service, volunteerism, and mentorship.

This Leadership Bend Alumni Association (LBAA) is guided by an all-volunteer advisory group of graduates. This body organized charitable events, social gatherings and educational opportunities to strengthen the connections between alumni and continue the impact of LB across the community. Learn more at: bendchamber.org/bendnext/leadership-bend.



This experience with Leadership Bend will forever shape how I think about our community. For anyone who has ever been looking for an opportunity to create a foundation for how to become more involved, to learn more about this amazing place we all get to call home, and to meet truly incredible people, I cannot recommend Leadership Bend enough. Thanks to the Bend Chamber for everything you do to make this a reality and I can't wait to see the great things LB 25' goes on to do

Cory Loomis
Project Executive
Pence Contractors

It's not often that, as an adult, we get a chance to participate in something that is educational, fun, builds professional connections and helps the community. The combination of these things is what makes Leadership Bend so unique and so valuable. I'm grateful to have been in the class of 2025 and love that even after graduating there is the alumni network and opportunities to go back and revisit sessions. I'd highly recommend LB to anyone in town who wants to understand what makes the community tick and wants to build a long term career in town

Quinn Hanson
Division Manager
G.A. Rogers & Associates

Leadership Bend was a transformative experience for me. The connections I made have grown into meaningful friendships and valuable business opportunities, continuing to enrich my life long after graduation. Being part of a community that shares this unique journey has unlocked incredible opportunities for me to contribute to Central Oregon. From serving on my first board to stepping into public speaking roles, Leadership Bend equipped me with the skills, relationships, and understanding to better serve and make a lasting impact on our community.

TJ Murphy
Owner/Partner
Hite Digital



ALUMNI TO DATE
728
2025 CLASS MEMBERS
32



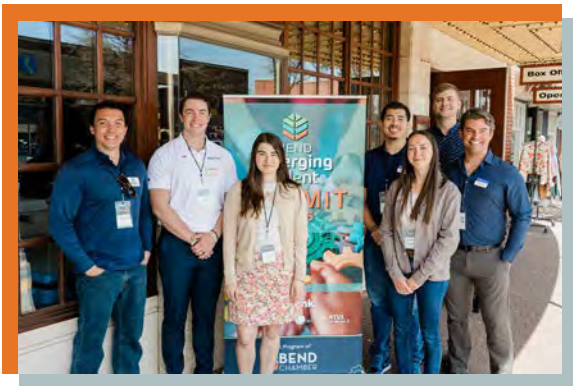
BEND EMERGING TALENT



**BEND
emerging
talent**

**Ambassador &
Advisory Council**

- Jimmy Clark**
Touchmark
- Cody Cloyd**
Ablis
- Savanna DeLuca**
Wild Heart Therapy
- Orlando Garcia**
Mass Mutual
- Kirsten Habermann**
Riley Wigle CPAs
- Tanner Hupka**
Columbia Bank
- Kyle Johnson**
EHS Support
- Helen McDonald**
OCCC CBIPD
- Ally Randels**
Therapy with Ally
- Sam Terrell**
Northwestern Ranch Group
- Sarah Wavers**
Heffernan Insurance
- Chad Young**
Skanska



Bend Emerging Talent (Bend ET) provides opportunities for rising professionals across the region to engage in professional development, personal growth and meaningful relationship-building to empower the next generation of leaders.

Bend ET receives support from an all-volunteer Advisory Council that helps

voice the priorities and vision of early to mid-career professionals throughout Central Oregon. Their guidance and employer collaboration helps outline programmatic needs to match emergent trends and leadership gaps.

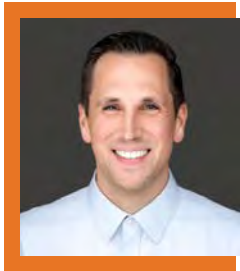
Throughout 2025, Bend ET programming engaged over 580 participants at 16 events equipping participants with new perspectives and skills to thrive as their career progresses. Attendance and learnings directly propelled leaders forward through promotions, expanded responsibilities at work and involvement in local organizations championing connect and development of emerging leaders.

16
EVENTS

580
PARTICIPANTS

“I joined Bend Emerging Talent to network, but what it has brought me has been amplified more than I initially expected. It has allowed me to form deeper connections for networking; forming relationships with those in a range of stages of their careers, but each passionate about growing, has been very fulfilling. The ET Expert Labs have been one of my favorite benefits and is filling a desire of mine for professional growth. My confidence from attending those labs, betting open and myself with others, has been just what I’ve needed at this stage in my career. You get out of it what you put into it, and if you just put yourself out there, I think you’ll be surprised what can happen.”

Maggie Keynton
Partners In Care



To learn more about Bend Emerging Talent and to get involved, please contact:

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Executive Director, BendNEXT Foundation
ChrisHart@bendchamber.org



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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