

# VISIT BEND<sup>OR</sup>

STRATEGIC PLAN + BUDGET

DRAFT

**FY2026**  
JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

[BUSINESSPLAN.VISITBEND.COM](http://BUSINESSPLAN.VISITBEND.COM)



Under contract as the City of Bend's destination management and marketing organization, Visit Bend works to serve our community, our city, and the people who make Bend an exceptional place to live and visit. We are stewards of 35.4 percent of the total annual room-tax collections and thoughtfully funnel those funds into initiatives that enrich local culture, aid the Bend economy, and strengthen and sustain the places we all cherish. The remaining 64.6 percent is allocated to the city's general fund and public safety.

Through engaging marketing campaigns, strategic grant funding, impactful research, and welcoming visitor services, Visit Bend ensures tourism supports and enhances our entire community. Our goal is to create lasting, positive outcomes that benefit residents now and in the future.

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# ACKNOWLEDGING HISTORY

Indigenous people fished, hunted, and recreated on these lands for generations before any of us donned skis or dipped a paddle in the Deschutes. This history is not lost. We recognize we're inhabiting and recreating on the traditional lands of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Wascoes, and Paiutes. We acknowledge their experiences and their relationship to this land.

DRAFT



# INTRODUCTION

Visit Bend contributes to the strength and well-being of our community with attentive initiatives that span economic, social, and environmental areas so tourism grows as a positive force. The City of Bend recently prioritized tourism as a target sector that contributes significantly to economic diversity and resilience. Visit Bend is actively supporting the city's efforts to create its first comprehensive economic-development strategy.

Our approach is grounded. We build genuine relationships, engage diverse community voices, and responsibly serve as advocates for the natural resources that define our region. Tourism is a powerful means to support essential city services, enhance local infrastructure, and promote inclusive and equitable access. Visit Bend facilitates this by strategically redirecting visitor-generated tax revenue into meaningful projects that benefit residents and visitors alike.

Visit Bend's role continues to evolve through partnerships with local organizations, active community engagement, and a focus on equity and accessibility. By leveraging our team's human capital, we work to ensure tourism's benefits are shared widely—fostering a welcoming, balanced Bend for today's residents and future generations.

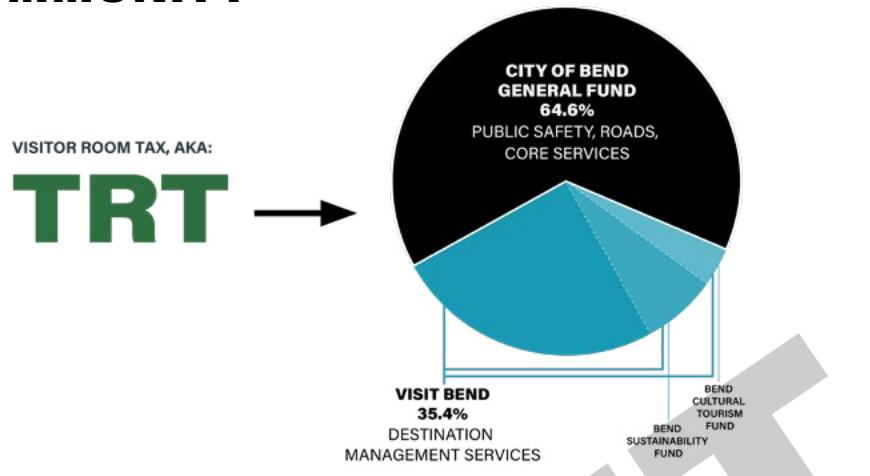


## COMMUNITY VOICE

*Visit Bend continues to go beyond the role of a typical destination marketing organization. While they remain industry leaders in marketing and programming aimed at attracting and enhancing visitor experiences, their true distinction lies in their role as community stewards. Their focus is not only on promoting tourism but also on making Bend a better place to live, and, in turn, a better place to visit.*

— Brandon Tyler, Board Chair, Visit Bend

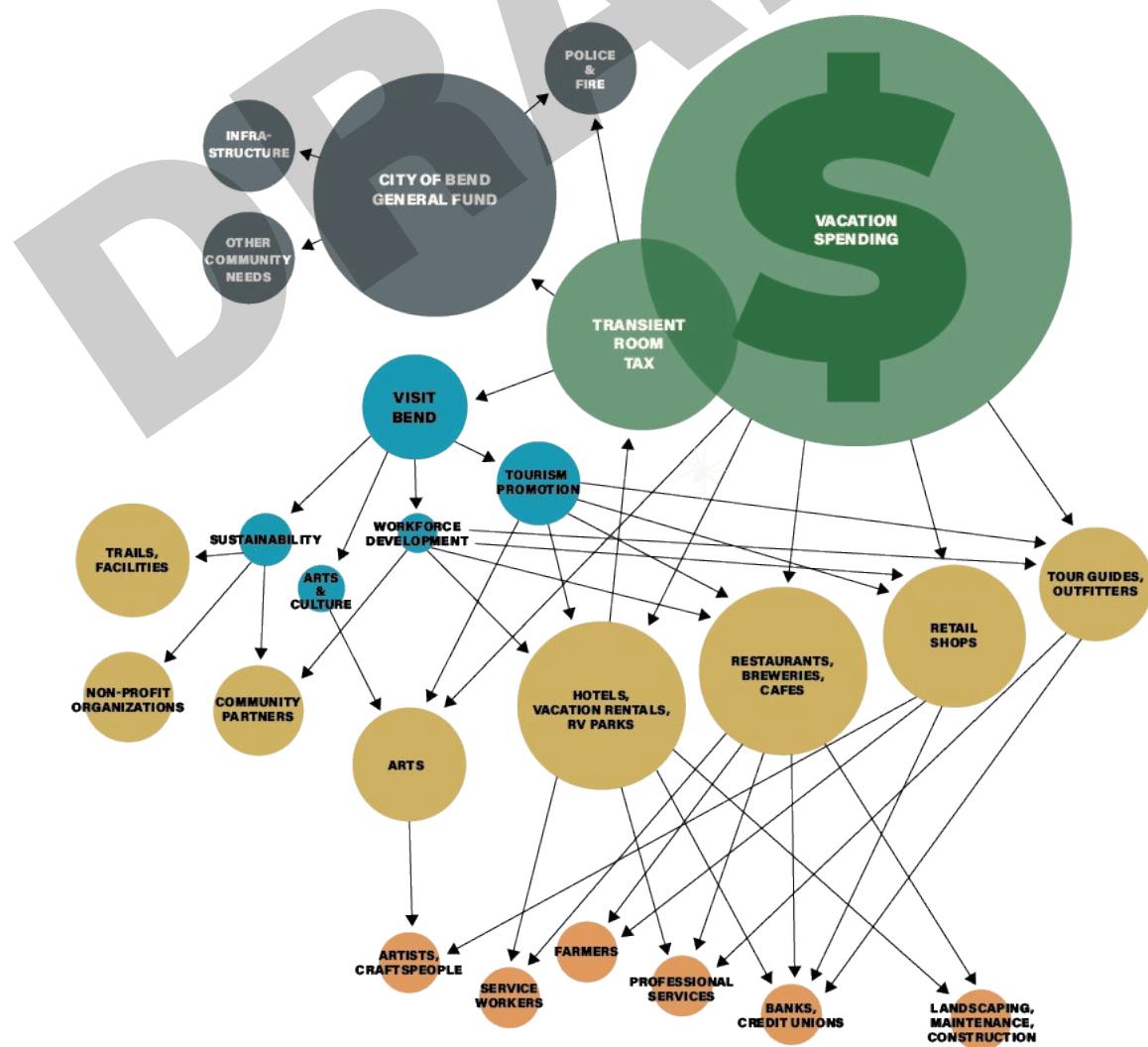
# VISIT BEND'S FUNDING + REINVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY



## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

## **ECONOMIC**

We inspire visitors to engage with local businesses and the community, generating returns to the city's general fund to support vital city services.



## SOCIAL

We strive to nurture a safe and supportive community that is inclusive and welcoming.



## ENVIRONMENTAL

We partner with community organizations and actively work toward environmental responsibility and sustainability.



### COMMUNITY VOICE

*Visit Bend is leading with a proactive, thoughtful, and data-informed approach to understanding how tourism shapes both the regional economy and community culture. By examining impacts on residents and visitors alike, they're establishing one of the most solid foundations I've seen for a comprehensive and sustainable tourism strategy. Their use of empirical research enables strategic planning, especially critical in a place like Bend. And with the ability to deploy grant funding toward capital and program investments, Visit Bend is well-positioned to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of our rapidly growing community.*

— Mark Buckley, Senior Economist and Partner, ECONorthwest

# SUCCESSES FROM FISCAL YEAR 2025

## MARKETING

Strategic marketing and compelling storytelling featuring local organizations and inclusive experiences played a key role in helping Visit Bend maintain steady room-tax collections despite certain economic headwinds. Highlights included long-form videos showcasing Oregon Adaptive Sports athletes and Indigenous fly fishing guides, the launch of a trust-based sponsorship program, and a streamlined group business RFP portal.

Adventure travelers remained closely aligned with Visit Bend's strategy, showing higher travel budgets, strong interest in cultural events, and a commitment to sustainability. They relied heavily on social media, influencer insights, and Visit Bend's digital tools, helping support ongoing economic vitality.

Bend Sustainability Fund investments laid the groundwork for future economic impact through projects like new adaptive mountain biking trails, Skyliner Lodge upgrades, and lighted pickleball courts. Stronger partnerships with Oregon Adaptive Sports and Wheel the World further elevated Bend's reputation as an inclusive, accessible destination.

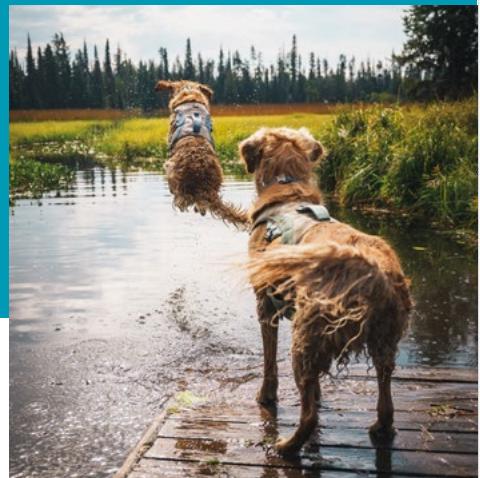
### COMMUNITY VOICE

*Visit Bend has been a catalytic partner. Their honesty about challenges, generosity with hard-won insights, and visible successes in sustainable destination management have raised the bar for every member in our network, accelerating our shared mission to make tourism a driver of sustainability and community prosperity. The trust and knowledge-sharing show what's possible when forward-thinking destinations lift each other up. Everyone wins.*

— Rodney Payne, CEO, Destination Think

DESCHUTES NATIONAL FOREST

THIS IS  
**BEND** OR



The trails are sunny, the river is running, happiness is happening.  
Must be summer. Must be nice.

[ VISITBEND.COM ]

CATEGORIES  
Community  
Fishing  
Organized Tours

UPDATED  
January 10, 2025

READ TIME  
1 minute



ALL POSTS

# MATT MENDES: A LEGACY FORGED IN THE CURRENTS OF THE DESCHUTES

The Deschutes River runs deep through Matt Mendes' veins, an unbreakable bond forged by generations on these waters. As a Warm Springs tribal member and a seasoned guide, Matt brings reverence and passion to every cast, every ripple. He first took up the fly rod right here, at his grandfather's side—a Native guide who, years ago, opened up miles of this pristine river for others to experience.

## HIGH-LEVEL METRICS FROM FY25

\* based on preliminary data from 10/1/24 through 4/12/25

**52,266:** Number of trips that were attributed to Visit Bend advertising efforts.

**\$13,732,683:** Estimated economic impact of those trips.

**27.4 percent:** Increase in engagement time, per session, year-over-year, with Visit Bend's new website.

**28 seconds:** Increase in average time spent on the website. Organic searches, direct traffic, and social media referrals primarily drive traffic, an 18 percent increase year over year.

**23.95 percent:** Increase, year over year, in traffic to visitbend.com from organic searches, according to Semrush.

**30.6 percent:** Increase in click-through rates for organic searches, year over year, despite rise in AI search-engine use.

## BEND SUSTAINABILITY FUND + DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

In FY25, the Bend Sustainability Fund (BSF) awarded \$561,832 to six new projects and celebrated the completion of several others funded in earlier rounds. Since its launch, BSF has reinvested \$3,383,094 in visitor-generated tax dollars into 31 projects that support sustainable experiences in and around Bend.

One standout project, The Catalyst—now Dogwood at the Pine Shed—opened this year to strong community enthusiasm. Backed by Bend Central District business owners, urban planning nonprofits, and the City of Bend, the project has already sparked increased economic activity and new housing projects. The Catalyst exemplifies how Visit Bend uses Transient Room Tax (TRT) to bring together diverse industry partners for shared community goals. In short, BSF-funded projects create substantial economic impacts as well as long-term value for residents and local businesses.

[Find a list of Bend Sustainability Fund projects here.](#)

## BEND CULTURAL TOURISM FUND

During FY25, the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund (BCTF) invested \$300,000 in cultural events and projects. Each grant helped local organizations tap into marketing resources to attract more cultural tourists during the off-season. Doing so also enhances Bend's arts and culture offerings. The program started awarding grants in 2015 and historically funds between \$200,000 and \$400,000 per year. This round of awards pushed the total BCTF funding to more than \$2.5 million for local organizations.

[See all of the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund projects.](#)

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Visit Bend invested \$115,500 into seven organizations in FY25, providing substantial financial support to vetted groups dedicated to Bend's future as a sustainable, economically vibrant, livable, and inclusive destination.

Visit Bend's sustainable-tourism initiatives—like the Leave No Trace program developed in partnership with Travel Oregon and Visit Central Oregon—advanced regional responsible tourism efforts.



### COMMUNITY VOICE

*Through the Catalyst Project, supported by the Bend Sustainability Fund, we are not only establishing a vibrant community hub at the restored Pine Shed, but also driving significant changes in the Bend Central District. The transformation of the Pine Shed into the artistically-reimagined home of local icon Dogwood represents a notable development, bringing Dogwood's creative flair to the BCD and indicating a deliberate shift of a downtown establishment to the emerging Bend Central District. The BSF's funding helped facilitate additional investments to fund the Hawthorne Street Crossing and other efforts to revitalize 2nd Street and Franklin Avenue streetscapes.*

—Kurt Alexander, co-founder, Bend Central District Business Association

## COMMUNITY SENTIMENT

In FY25, community sentiment toward tourism continued its positive trend, according to insights from our partnership with Oregon State University's Sustainable Tourism Lab. Recent findings show growing resident awareness and appreciation of tourism's role in funding essential services, improving infrastructure, and supporting environmental stewardship.

While there's still room to educate residents on how visitor-generated taxes benefit the community, the data confirms meaningful progress. Visit Bend remains committed to advancing these gains through clear communication, responsive engagement, and continued investment in projects that align tourism with Bend's broader priorities.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Travel spending in Bend increased from \$386.0 million in calendar year 2023 to \$386.3 million in 2024.

Tax receipts generated by travel spending increased to \$25.9 million, up from \$25.7 million in 2023.

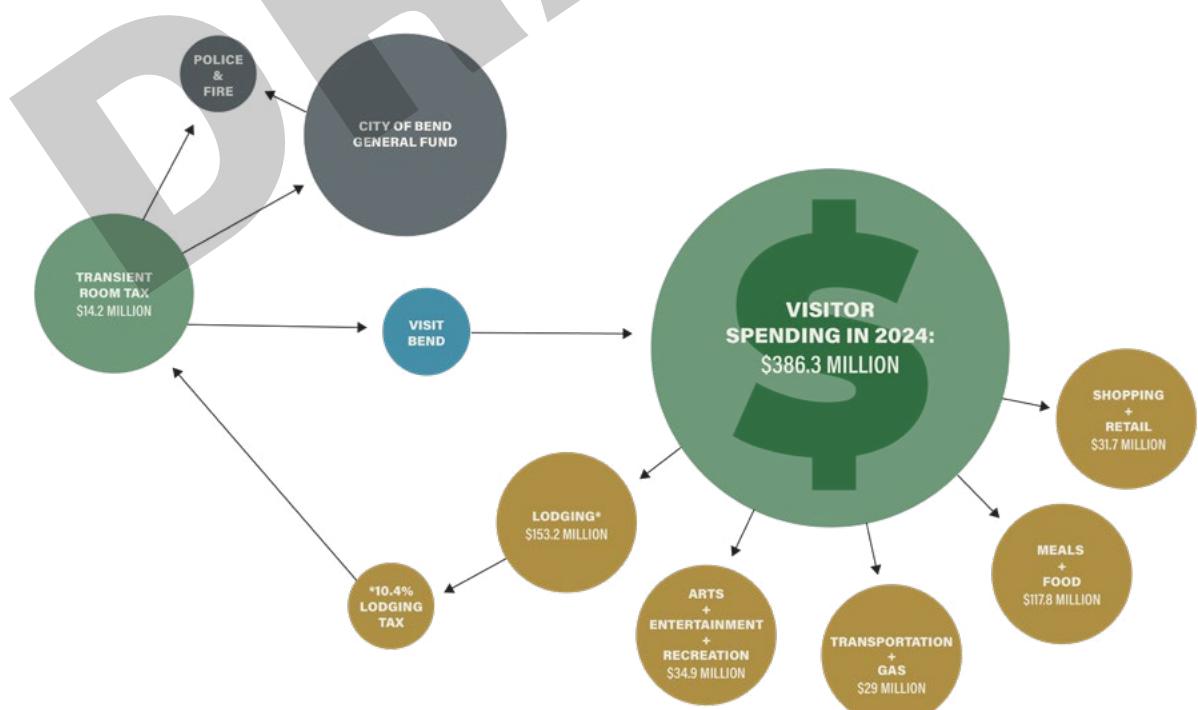
Direct travel-generated employment grew to 3,500 jobs, a 2.6 percent increase over 2023.

Direct travel-generated earnings increased to \$124.4 million, a gain of 5.9 percent compared to 2023.

### COMMUNITY VOICE

Through our partnership at Oregon State University's Sustainable Tourism Lab, Visit Bend has demonstrated unparalleled leadership in ensuring tourism benefits the Bend community meaningfully. Among the hundreds of destinations we engage with globally, Visit Bend stands out as an influential example, inspiring communities worldwide to rethink tourism's role in enhancing local quality of life.

—Todd Montgomery, OSU Professor, Director of OSU Sustainable Tourism Lab



# BALANCED BEND: VISIT BEND'S ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY MODEL



Visit Bend is powered by a small, committed team united by a deep love for a unique city blooming in an idyllic swatch of Oregon, where the legendary Cascades meet the airy expanses of the American high desert. Working behind the scenes with modesty and authenticity, we see our role as one of service and stewardship with actions guided by close ties to the local community. Rather than centering on promotion, we've chosen to lead with purpose and to prioritize what's best for Bend. Through meaningful storytelling, informed research, and effective partnerships, our work focuses on elevating the visitor experience while protecting what makes Bend special. We're committed to ensuring tourism contributes meaningfully to residents' lives, and we embrace a broader vision of well-being that welcomes everyone who feels a connection to these lands we're fortunate to share.

The Balanced Bend approach represents our vision for regenerative tourism, thoughtfully connecting economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and social well-being. Visitors contribute significantly to our economy, creating a foundation that allows Visit Bend to invest directly into the community's social fabric and environmental conservation.

This visitor-generated revenue supports essential city services, infrastructure improvements, and initiatives enriching Bend for both residents and visitors. By nurturing our environment, supporting our workforce, and enhancing community well-being, we sustain and regenerate a thriving destination. A Balanced Bend ensures ongoing positive impacts for the community, fostering long-term resilience and shared prosperity for everyone who calls Bend home.



## VISIT BEND'S ADAPTABILITY IN SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Over the years, Visit Bend's adaptable, community-focused team has continually evolved to redirect resources and recalibrate priorities to meet the needs of residents, local businesses, and city leadership. With nearly two-thirds of room taxes going to the City of Bend's general fund, Visit Bend strategically manages the remainder to maximize community well-being and economic pep.

As Bend embraces tourism and recreation as a target economic sector, Visit Bend is committed to supporting the city in developing and executing its first comprehensive economic development strategy. Tourism has long helped diversify our economy, which helps position Bend to successfully attract a broader range of industries, businesses, and talent.

With a new CEO, leadership team, and the addition of a destination stewardship director, Visit Bend is deepening its commitment to responsible, meaningful service. Programs like the Bend Sustainability Fund and strategic partnerships reflect our ongoing focus on environmental and social responsibility. As flexible partners, we will continue supporting sustainable growth and enhancing quality of life for all Bend residents.

Visit Bend's FY26 priorities align with City Council goals around equity, sustainability, economic development, and livability. Through our Balanced Bend approach—integrating people, place, and economy—we collaborate with city leadership to ensure visitor dollars not only fund essential services but help build an inclusive, resilient, and future-ready Bend.

# MARKETING STRATEGY

## [ ECONOMY ]

Visit Bend has expanded its focus to a broader scope of work that benefits everyone as we pursue a more balanced Bend.

Visitors contribute significantly to our community—especially through their economic impact. When they stay in hotels or short-term rentals, they pay an overnight tax that becomes unrestricted funding for the City of Bend. This past year, those dollars supported essential services like police, fire, roads, and other core infrastructure.

This economic activity, along with the goal of maximizing returns to the general fund, drives the economic aspect of Visit Bend's regenerative model. A strong visitor economy, strengthened by Visit Bend's grant programs and strategic partnerships, supports the city's vitality. Our updated marketing strategy reflects this focus and aims to attract new guests while keeping Bend top-of-mind for return visitors.

Visit Bend also recognizes tourism's role in diversifying Bend's economy. Our data-driven marketing and branding help position Bend to attract new businesses and the workforce needed to grow key industries.

In FY26, the marketing team will build on current strengths, going deeper into the funnel to attract and inspire visitors. With visitation patterns shifting due to climate change, Visit Bend must remain nimble yet effective to maximize tourism-tax revenue for the city.

### COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

*Visit Bend's marketing and economic strategies are central to supporting the city's broader economic development goals. By targeting responsible growth in visitor spending, supporting diverse local businesses, attracting group business, and amplifying "culture-forward" tourism through grant programs like the BCTF, Visit Bend helps build a resilient, year-round economy while advancing Bend's cultural and workforce development priorities. The FY26 marketing strategy aligns with the following City Council goals:*

- *Maintain public safety service levels to keep pace with increased demand*
- *Support development of the citywide economic development strategy, including tourism as a key sector*
- *Advance economic diversification and support workforce development*
- *Develop marketing strategies that align with seasonal and economic needs*
- *Support creative placemaking and cultural vibrancy*

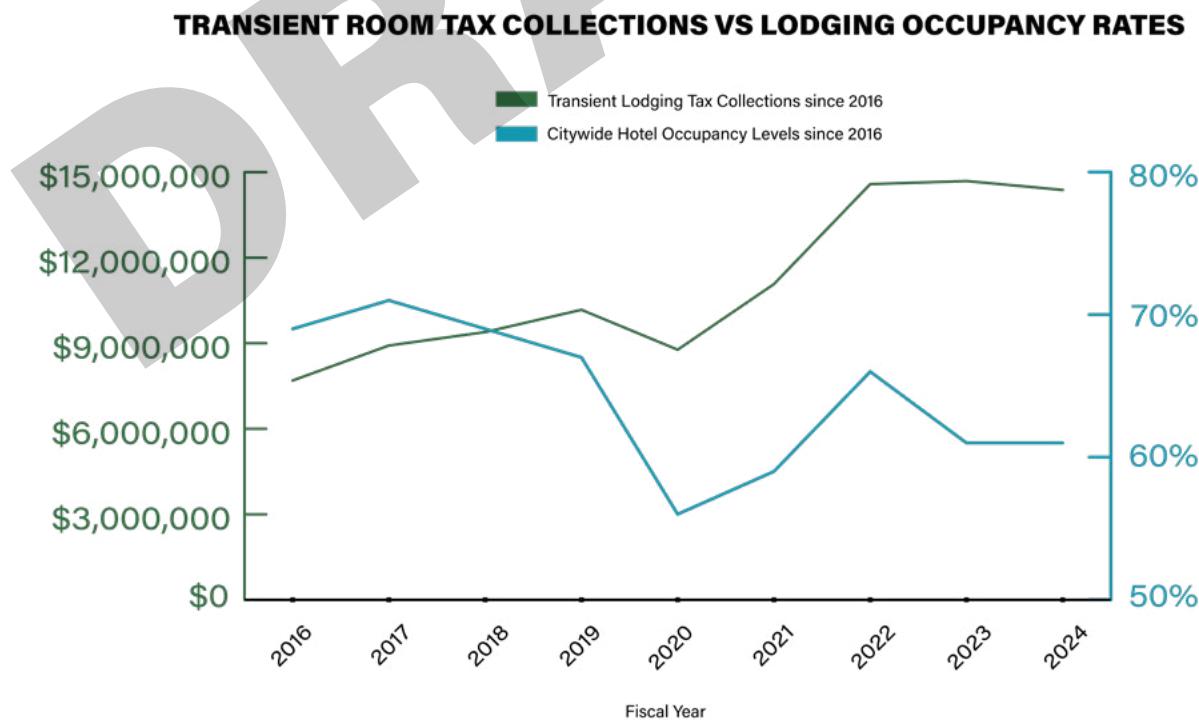
#### **Strategic action item:**

Proactively support the development of Bend's first, citywide, economic-development strategy, and actively represent tourism and recreation as a recognized target sector. Position Visit Bend as a key collaborative partner, while emphasizing tourism's role in economic diversification, workforce attraction, and importance in generating revenue for the city.

After six years of paused summer marketing efforts followed by an 11.6 percent decade-long decline in occupancy and, most recently, a dip in TRT revenue, Visit Bend will strategically reintroduce summer campaigns in FY26. The time is right. Drawing on insights from OSU's Sustainable Tourism Lab, Visit Bend will be agile in its efforts to:

- Drive economic gains while minimizing community impact by promoting visits during lower-demand periods.
- Use targeted midweek campaigns to spread visitation and ease peak congestion.
- Cultivate stable, low-impact group business that supports the local economy without overburdening infrastructure.
- Shift to destination-management tactics that leverage our in-house expertise to address potential community strain during high-demand periods.
- Strengthen partnerships / host events that welcome visitors from underrepresented groups.

These efforts support Visit Bend's mission to use smart, responsible marketing to drive economic impacts that enhance the visitor experience and improve community well-being. Nationwide enthusiasm for travel remains strong. Future Partners data show 37 percent of travelers plan to spend more on leisure; nearly 60 percent are prioritizing travel in their budgets. Our core audience—the adventure traveler—is eager to travel more often, aligning with Visit Bend's goals. With nearly 85 percent of visitors coming from Oregon, Washington, and California, Bend remains well positioned to draw tourism dollars even in a downturn.





## [ ECONOMY ] PRIMARY MARKETING GOALS + ACTION ITEMS

### **01** Elevate + diversify Visit Bend's marketing + content strategy to increase TRT collections

- Strategically diversify content and advertising assets to target specific audiences, leveraging data to match distinct travel and booking behaviors.
- Thoughtfully reintroduce summer marketing to boost TRT during low-occupancy periods.

### **02** Maximize visitor spending in the local economy

- Expand storytelling and content partnerships with local influencers, creators, and businesses to boost authentic visitor engagement and spending at locally owned establishments.
- Generate targeted content to emphasize sustainably-focused travel that keeps money in the community.

### **03** Leverage new partnerships throughout the region to grow economic impacts

- Strengthen partnerships with underrepresented groups to highlight authentic, inclusive experiences through storytelling. Continue featuring local voices—such as Indigenous guides and adaptive-sports leaders—to inspire diverse visitation and broaden Bend's appeal.
- Strategically work with venues and meeting planners to showcase Bend's unique offerings to attract corporate retreats and appropriately sized events that work to mitigate traditional periods of low demand.

# SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGY

## [ PEOPLE ]

Visit Bend is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive Bend, where every person feels valued and accepted, be they a first-time visitor or resident. It is through this lens that we aim to meet the evolving needs of the community and build connections between visitors, residents, and tourism partners.

### **EQUITY + ACCESS**

In FY26, Visit Bend will continue its efforts to make Bend a more welcoming and inclusive place. We believe our community's strength lies not just in its natural beauty but also in how we support and care for each other. Building on the meaningful conversations we've had in FY25 with local organizations, tourism partners, elected officials, and educational institutions, we'll keep working together to identify and remove barriers. Our goal is to ensure that every visitor and resident feels a genuine sense of belonging in Bend.

We're committed to building a culture of hospitality that recognizes and supports underrepresented groups—especially those who haven't always felt safe or included here. By embracing "cultural-forward" tourism practices that honor diverse histories, uplift local voices, and celebrate cultural expression, we aim to create a destination that reflects the values of equity and connection.

### **COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT**

*Visit Bend's focus on accessibility, equity, and community engagement supports the city's commitment to inclusive development and responsive governance. By using marketing assets that feature a more diverse audience, by engaging residents on a deeper level, and by making investments in cultural and accessibility projects, we're building a more welcoming and connected Bend—where all voices are heard, and the benefits of tourism reach across the community. Visit Bend's FY26 Social strategy complements and aligns with the following Bend City Council goals:*

- Develop new policies to support sustainable development, including those responsive to community concerns*
- Strategically invest in the Core Area to spur private development*
- Develop and implement a language access policy and program*



## STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Visit Bend's Strategic Partnership program focuses on making Bend more sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant—benefiting both visitors and locals. By teaming up with local and national organizations, we invest in projects with long-lasting benefits that promote environmental responsibility, economic vitality, and community well-being.

While many of our current partners remain active, we're excited to welcome new collaborators who share our vision of a thriving, welcoming Bend.

[Learn more about our current strategic partners here.](#)

## BEND CULTURAL TOURISM FUND

Without cultural events and the people who make them happen, Bend wouldn't have the robust and captivating arts and culture scene it's known for across Oregon. That's the value of the BCTF, a grant program operated by Visit Bend and funded through transient room tax dollars.

With a focus on inclusive events that diversify Bend's cultural landscape, the BCTF was one of the first DMO-operated arts and culture grant programs in the state. From musical productions to art exhibits to film festivals and more, the BCTF supports cultural opportunities that draw visitors to Bend, while also providing enriching programming for residents.

### COMMUNITY VOICE

*This strategic partnership between Oregon Adaptive Sports and Visit Bend strengthens Bend's identity as an inclusive destination by expanding access to transformative outdoor recreation for individuals with disabilities. Together, we're building a more welcoming community where everyone can experience the beauty and adventure of Central Oregon.*

— Pat Addabbo, Executive Director, Oregon Adaptive Sports



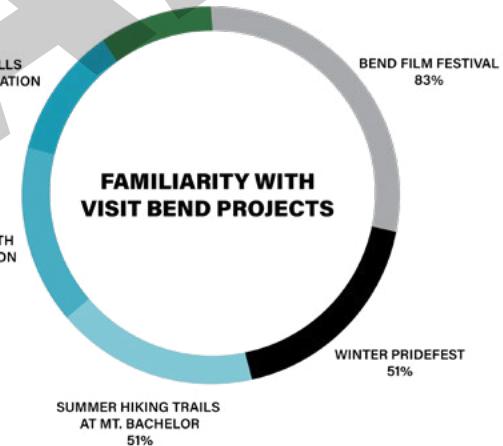
## COMMUNITY SENTIMENT

In FY26 Visit Bend will remain focused on strengthening the connection between tourism and the local community, with resident sentiment guiding our approach. A recent uptick in the Community Sentiment Index—thanks to our work with Oregon State University's Sustainable Tourism Lab—shows our efforts are making a difference. This data-driven strategy helps shape smart investments and community-focused initiatives like the Bend Sustainability Fund, all aligned with what residents value most.

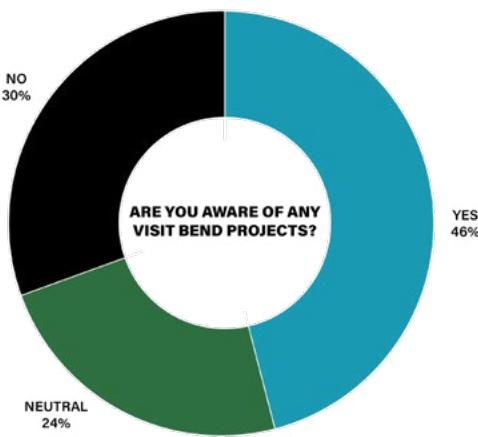
Looking ahead, we'll deepen ties with the community and use public-opinion polling to shape more inclusive and regenerative-tourism strategies. Our goal is clear: Ensure tourism remains a force for good that supports economic growth and enhances the quality of life that Bend offers. By continuing to invest in meaningful projects and honest conversations, we're working toward a future where tourism supports a sustainable, vibrant, and welcoming city for all.



*Which of the Visit Bend funded projects are you familiar with?*



*Are you aware of any resident or visitor projects Visit Bend has funded in the last 3 years?*





## COMMUNITY VOICE

*Our community is more vibrant and resilient thanks to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund and the Bend Sustainability Fund. They help ensure greater access to rich, meaningful experiences for visitors and for area residents alike. At the High Desert Museum, the Cultural Tourism Fund has supported exhibitions that uplift Indigenous voices, inspire with immersive art experiences, and share the stories of this high desert region we call home. And the Sustainability Fund was vital in creating for young children the opportunity to learn through play in our new Ponderosa Playscape. We're grateful for Visit Bend's commitment to investments that help our community thrive.*

— Dana Whitelaw, Ph.D., Executive Director, High Desert Museum

## [ PEOPLE ] PRIMARY SOCIAL IMPACT GOALS + ACTION ITEMS

### 01 Promote equity and accessibility within Bend's tourism ecosystem

- Identify and implement initiatives to make Bend's tourism experiences more accessible and welcoming for people of all abilities and backgrounds. This includes working with facilities, businesses, and services to ensure inclusivity for both visitors and residents.
- Amplify diverse representation in marketing and storytelling to show visitors from various backgrounds, abilities, and experiences that Bend "sees" them and strives to create a community that is authentic, inclusive, and inviting.

### 02 Enhance resident sentiment and engagement

- Launch community-engagement initiatives, including forums and targeted campaigns, to share and discuss outcomes from the ECOnorthwest carrying-capacity study. Develop clear strategies for balancing tourism growth, community livability, and environmental sustainability.
- Invest strategically in community projects through the Bend Sustainability Fund and Bend Cultural Tourism Fund that directly benefit the community, economy, and environment.

### 03 Ensure industry representation in community-development conversations

- Broaden the reach of Visit Bend's grants and investments to support cultural events and programs.
- Develop more effective communication strategies to ensure tourism and recreation partners are accurately represented.

# ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

## [ PLACE ]

Visit Bend's environmental strategy is closely tied to our economic and social sustainability efforts rooted in our Balanced Bend model. A thriving community depends on maintaining that balance and protecting the natural beauty and qualities that draw people here. With nearly 90 percent of visitors coming for outdoor recreation, our rivers, trails, lakes, and mountains are not just amenities—they're a foundation for Bend and our tourism industry. Protecting these resources requires meaningful teamwork and investments in local partners equipped to address our community's evolving challenges.

In FY26, we will keep strategically reinvesting transient room tax dollars through programs like the Bend Sustainability Fund. These funds back projects that protect natural resources, support sustainable experiences, and help keep Bend a premier destination.

Our marketing and brand stewardship efforts will stay focused on promoting responsible tourism, encouraging sustainable use of the wild and urban spaces residents and visitors love. With global insights from Destination Think, we'll continue growing as a mindful leader in destination stewardship, collaborating with international partners along the way.

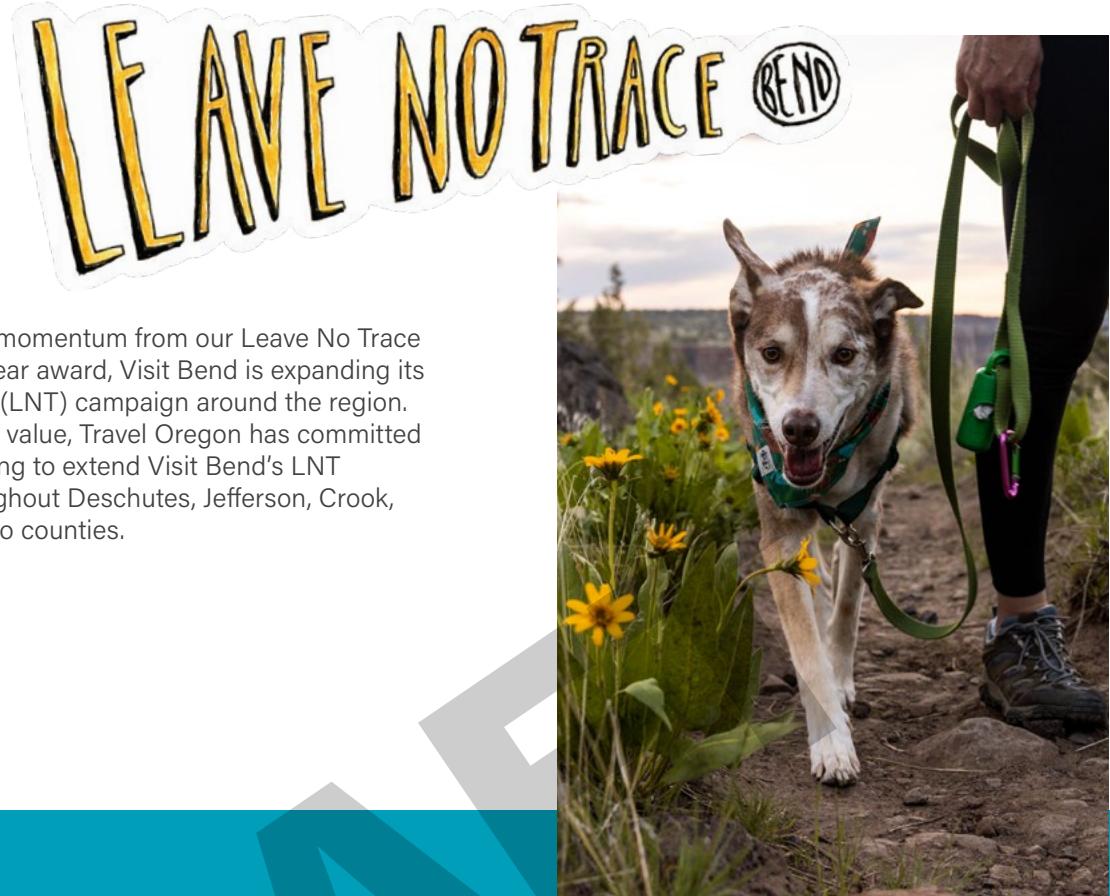
Aligned with the City of Bend's Climate Action Plan, we're also moving beyond carbon offsets to explore more impactful ways to reduce our footprint. By carefully managing tourism's environmental impact, Visit Bend is working to protect the ecosystems that define our community and way of life we all share.

### COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

Visit Bend's environmental strategy aligns with the city's climate and sustainability goals. From wildfire and smoke communications to funding environmentally focused projects through the Bend Sustainability Fund, we prioritize resilience, promote responsible outdoor recreation, and reduce tourism's carbon footprint—all in support of a thriving and sustainable future. Visit Bend's FY26 environmental strategy complements the following Council goals:

- *Plan and build facilities to meet the needs of a growing city with a lens of sustainability and a reduced carbon footprint*
- *Continue implementation of the Climate Action Plan and prioritize reduction of GHG emissions*
- *Increase wildfire resilience and protect the community from smoke events*





Building on the momentum from our Leave No Trace Partner of the Year award, Visit Bend is expanding its Leave No Trace (LNT) campaign around the region. Recognizing the value, Travel Oregon has committed significant funding to extend Visit Bend's LNT principles throughout Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook, and south Wasco counties.

## [ PLACE ] PRIMARY ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS + ACTION ITEMS

### **01 Enhance environmental resilience and sustainability**

- Prioritize initiatives that align with the city's Climate Action Plan by sourcing 100 percent renewable energy through Pacific Power's Blue Sky program, investing in energy-efficient workplace solutions, and expanding composting, recycling, and eco-friendly visitor services within the hospitality sector.
- Expand Visit Bend's role in building citywide resilience by working closely with local partners to develop communication strategies and tools that allow us to counteract natural disasters and environmental challenges like wildfire and smoke.

### **02 Promote engagement in outdoor recreation, education, and conservation efforts to all who spend time in Bend**

- Diversify visitor engagement strategies by leveraging Visit Bend's authenticity and expertise through innovative programs to encourage responsible outdoor recreation.
- Deepen work with existing partners like Oregon Adaptive Sports and Wheel the World, and explore new ways to collaborate with others on inclusive outdoor experiences.

### **03 Support and partner with organizations working to find solutions to the challenges Bend faces as a sustainable destination**

- Expand the reach of Visit Bend's grant programs by strategically allocating transient room tax revenue—15 percent to the Bend Sustainability Fund and 7.5 percent to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund—to support local organizations that enhance the visitor experience, cultural vitality, and environmental stewardship.
- Create innovative programs and clear messaging that can guide visitors toward sustainable decisions by making those choices easy, attractive, and aligned with their values, thereby narrowing the "say-do" gap.

# LOOKING FORWARD

Visit Bend flourishes on the leading edge of what it means to be a destination management organization. Never satisfied with the status quo, we strive to match the magic in our work with the magic of this place we call home. While lodging-tax revenue will always be a measure of our success, we are more than numbers.

Our organization remains deeply committed to the long-term success of our town, industry, and community—a process that starts from within. Visit Bend attracts the best and brightest talent with competitive packages and a supportive work environment, and has created a top-notch team that is professional, passionate, and authentic. We live, work, and play here, and each of us believes whole-heartedly in a common mission: to serve Bend's people and places as local and state statutes allow. By challenging what is and by asking what could be, we work to foster a truly sustainable destination rooted in a thriving community.

We are not alone. Shaping Bend's future is a job for everyone. We lean on partners and experts in climate resilience, social equity, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship to help make Bend the best version of itself. We strive for a future that balances short-term desires with long-term priorities.

Bend's course has changed dramatically since the days when early settlers needed Pilot Butte to find their way, but an enviable, unmistakable lodestar now shines clear and true over this high desert oasis: A community desire to protect, respect, and enjoy this place safely and responsibly. Disagreements over our route choices may arise but we remain united in our destination—a future where Bend is a livable, inclusive community and a beacon of sustainability and economic vibrancy for all.



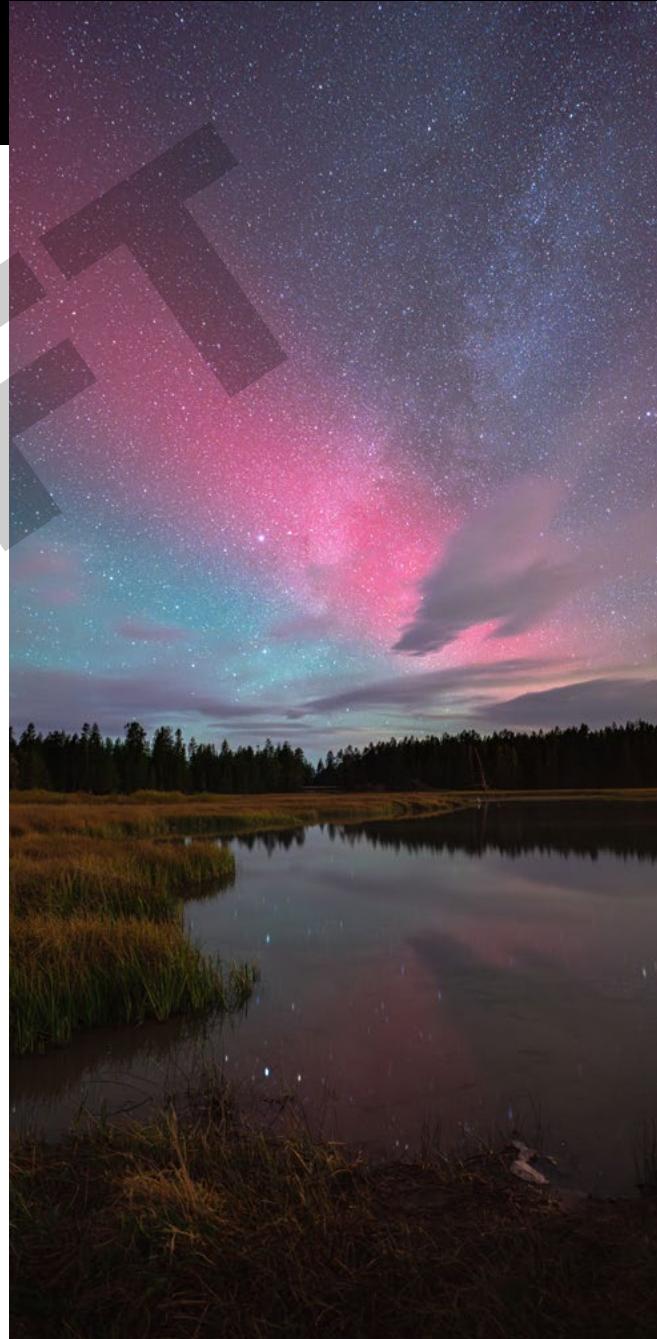
# APPENDIX

Visit Bend is currently operating under a contract with the City of Bend to provide the following scope of work, defined as:

*Visit Bend is responsible for the deployment of City of Bend room tax funds designated for tourism promotion and tourism related facility development via Visit Bend as defined in the contract.*

*Operating as a full-service destination management organization (DMO), Visit Bend is tasked with creating and placing tourism promotion content, developing Bend as a tourism destination, administering grants, performing research on industry trends, and operating a visitor center. These efforts seek to meet the needs of the local lodging industry in enhancing Bend's tourism industry while maximizing room tax revenue for the City of Bend.*

The supporting data below is what guides Visit Bend as an organization in doing work that has a positive impact on the industry and community.



## BUDGET FY26

Visit Bend and the City of Bend's finance department forecast flat year-over-year Transient Room Tax collections, based on the current fiscal year's collections to-date and forecasted collections for the remaining months of current year. This year's budget balances needs across all three pillars of the organization's work.

In FY26, the City of Bend anticipates total Transient Room Tax (TRT) collections of \$14,377,302. The portion allocated under contract to Visit Bend is to be \$4,976,200 which will be reinvested in accordance with Oregon state statute and Bend city code into tourism promotion and tourism-related facilities. The remainder of the collections are allocated to the city's general fund and public safety. Total revenue for the organization, which also includes advertising sales, retail sales, and interest income totals \$5,041,800.

As a not-for-profit organization, Visit Bend operates its profit and loss (P+L) budget on a break-even basis. In FY25, Visit Bend is budgeting \$5,090,108 of expenses, ending the fiscal year with a deficit of \$48,308, which will be made up using prior year savings.

- \$373,200 to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund
- \$746,500 to the Bend Sustainability Fund
- \$1,721,270 to Marketing + Visitor Development
- \$371,192 to General + Administrative
- \$ 1,877,946 to Personnel

### YEAR TO YEAR COMPARISON

REVENUE	FY26	FY25	\$	%
City Funding - Current Year	4,976,200	4,946,900	29,300	1%
Retail Sales	50,000	78,000	(28,000)	-36%
Advertising	4,800	4,800	-	0%
Interest Income	10,800	6,000	4,800	80%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>5,041,800</b>	<b>5,035,700</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>0.12%</b>

EXPENSES	FY26	FY25	\$	%
Personnel	1,877,946	1,493,356	384,590	26%
Grant Programs	1,119,700	1,113,000	6,700	1%
Marketing + Visitor Development	1,721,270	2,043,974	(322,704)	-16%
Overhead Expenses	371,192	311,892	59,300	19%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,090,108</b>	<b>4,962,222</b>	<b>127,886</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(48,308)</b>	<b>73,478</b>	<b>(121,786)</b>	

## BUDGET BREAKOUT

	TOTAL \$		TOTAL \$
<b>REVENUE</b>		<b>OVERHEAD EXPENSES</b>	
City Funding - Current Year	4,976,200	Bank Fees	6,000
Retail Sales	50,000	Building Lease	79,200
Advertising Sales	4,800	Building Maintenance	18,000
Interest Income	10,800	Depreciation & Amortization	18,000
<b>TOTAL</b> \$ 5,041,800		Dues & Subscriptions	10,800
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSES</b>		Education & Training	53,000
Base Pay	1,331,896	Equipment Lease & Maint.	4,800
Incentive Pay	108,650	Hiring Expenses	3,600
Payroll Taxes	115,200	Insurance	9,500
Employee Benefits	322,200	Interest Expense	7,692
<b>TOTAL</b> \$ 1,877,946		Licenses & Permits	6,000
<b>GRANT PROGRAMS</b>		Network & Telco	25,200
Bend Cultural Tourism Fund	373,200	Office Supplies	19,200
Bend Sustainability Fund	746,500	Professional Fees	72,000
<b>TOTAL</b> \$ 1,119,700		Travel & Meals	26,300
<b>SALES &amp; MARKETING EXPENSES</b>		Utilities	11,900
Audio	30,000		
Blog	6,000		
Brochure Distribution	35,000		
Collateral	60,000		
Content (Production)	77,200		
Digital Marketing (Online)	295,000		
Influencer Marketing	150,000		
Marketing Software (Dues & Sub-	39,570		
Photo	25,000		
Postage	7,200		
Print	43,000		
Production	100,000		
Promotions	25,000		
Public Relations	40,000		
Research	280,000		
Social	105,500		
Travel & Meals	6,000		
Video	130,000		
Visitor Development	160,000		
Website Development & Maint	73,200		
Retail Purchasing	33,600		
<b>TOTAL</b> \$ 1,721,270			

TOTAL \$ 371,192

**TOTAL FY26 EXPENSES**

**\$ 5,090,108**

**TOTAL FY26 DEFICIT**

**-\$48,308**

**TOTAL RESERVE FUND**

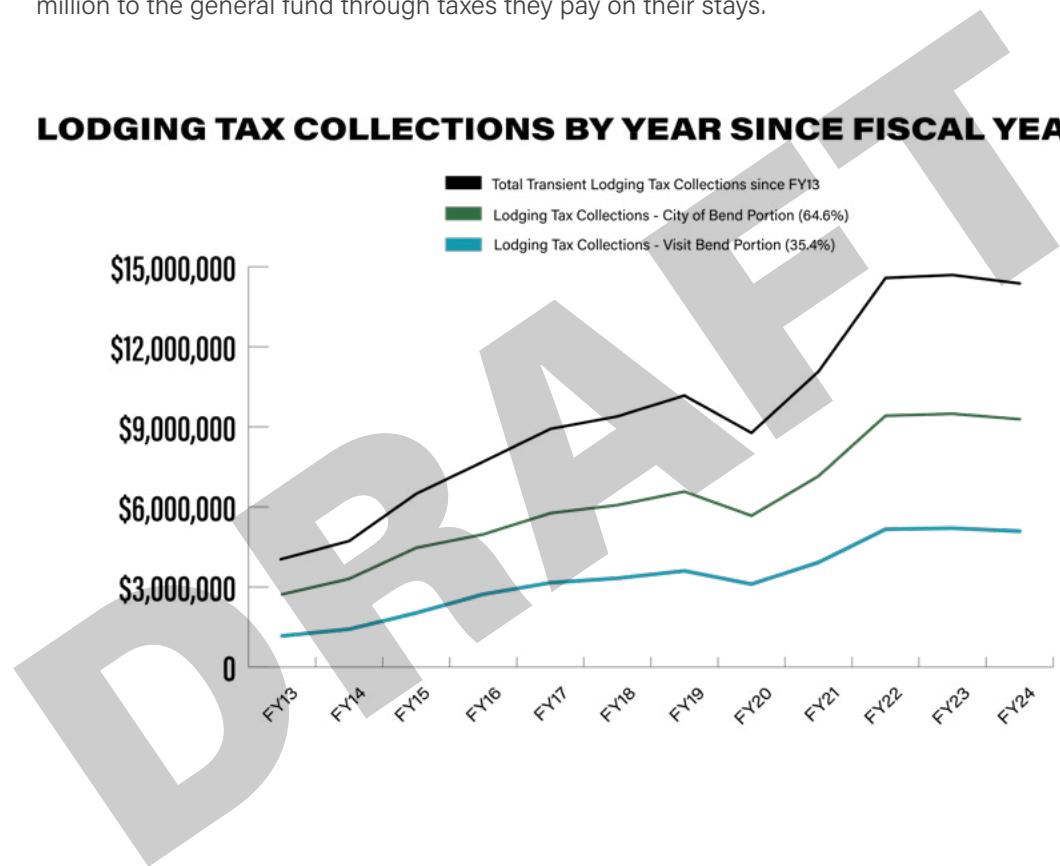
**\$506,793**

## TRANSIENT ROOM TAX COLLECTIONS

Transient Room Tax (TRT) serves as the primary measurement of the ebbs and flows of the tourism industry. Because our demand-driven industry is heavily impacted by economic and environmental disruption, TRT is a blended metric of rate and occupancy, effectively approximating the overall demand for the destination's lodging inventory.

In the city, lodging properties collect a 10.4 percent transient room tax on all overnight stays of less than 30 days. Approximately 35 percent of that money gets reinvested through Visit Bend into tourism promotion and tourism-related facilities. The remaining 65 percent goes to the city's general fund to pay for police, fire, roads and other core services. In FY26, visitors will contribute nearly \$10 million to the general fund through taxes they pay on their stays.

## LODGING TAX COLLECTIONS BY YEAR SINCE FISCAL YEAR 2013



## **ADDITIONAL DATA SOURCES TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE:**

**OSU Sustainable Tourism Lab:** A partnership with Visit Bend establishing a benchmark to track resident sentiment of tourism through annual community surveys over the coming years.

**Smith Travel Research:** Transformative data software that delivers weekly and monthly insights within the hotel and motel industry.

**AirDNA:** Statistically valid data delivered monthly providing insights to track the health of the short-term rental industry in Bend.

**Dean Runyan Associates:** Annual, city-level economic impact data relevant to travel and tourism in Bend.

**Datafy:** Comprehensive data analytics, strategic advertising DSP, and campaign measurement with attribution to measure impact of visitation

**DRAFT**