



GFDA Quarter Index 2026Q1

Numbers to Celebrate

Number of presenters at Ignite 2026: 30
Number of businesses which have opened in West Bank Landing: 19
Number of businesses that opened in Downtown Great Falls in 2025: 34
BHE Montana investment in 75 MW Glacier Battery System: \$100 million
Size of Amazon delivery facility opened during quarter: 35,000 SF
Great Falls MSA (Cascade County) 2025 population growth (July 1, 2024-July 1, 2025): 361
Great Falls MSA net migration in 2025: 433
Great Falls MSA net migration 2020-2025: 1,109

GFDA Quarter Numbers

Primary sector business attraction prospect site visits to region: 2
Proposals submitted to state-generated primary sector leads: 5
Housing developer prospect site visits to region: 1
Active housing developments we helped clients with: 20
GFDA gap and bridge loans closed: \$479,780
Additional private investment leveraged by these loans: \$2,642,826
More gap and bridge loans approved: \$1,040,476
Additional private investment to be leveraged: \$7,501,111
SBA 504 loans approved: \$769,000
Additional private investment to be leveraged: \$1,737,500
Entrepreneurs and small business (SBDC) clients advised: 175
Rural clients advised: 63
Total client advising hours: 354
Rural client advising hours: 109
Capital secured by small business advising clients: \$451,000
Entrepreneur and small business trainings: 10
Number of training participants: 64
Government contracting (APEX) clients advised: 115
New government contracting clients advised: 15
Government contracting advising sessions: 280
Active government contracting clients at end of quarter: 346
Government contracts won by clients: \$7,112,261
Government contracting trainings: 5
Number of training participants: 170
Companies served by our Food & Ag Development Center: 69
Food manufacturing trainings: 2
New ag processing prospects pursuing projects in region: 2
Brownfields assessments provided: 2

Community participants in first two Data Center Task Force meetings: 111
Consecutive years GFDA has earned Candid's Platinum Seal of Transparency: 7
Miles walked at SHOT Show prospecting for business attraction leads: 78

Recent Economic Data

Great Falls apartment rental rate median increase in 2025: 6%
Great Falls median apartment rates compared to Montana median: 85%
Great Falls median apartment rates compared to national median: 75%
Estimated unmet childcare demand in Great Falls commute shed: 502-858
Great Falls childcare survey respondents who reported difficulty finding childcare: 63%
Military-affiliated respondents who reported childcare needs are not met on base: 80%
Survey respondents who feel they are paying too much for childcare: 79%
Respondents who would use a new facility if more affordable options were available: 70%
Growth of Cascade County GDP in 2024: 3.5%
Size of Cascade County economy at end of 2024: \$4.4 billion
Personal income growth in Cascade County in 2024: 5.8%
Dollar value of personal income growth in Cascade County in 2024: \$297 million
Average annual wage increase in Cascade County in four quarters ending 2025Q3: 6.3%
Dollar amount of average annual wage in Cascade County: \$3,381
Cascade County average annual wage in 2025Q3: \$56,955
Increase nationwide during same four quarters: 4.1%
Total wage earnings increase in Cascade County for those quarters: \$124 million

Interesting Factoids

Spending by nonresident visitors to Montana in 2024: \$5.6 billion
Share visitors spent on food and beverage: 24%
Share visitors spent on shopping: 12%
Montana GDP generated by outdoor recreation industries: 4.9%
Anticipated 2026 CAPEX of largest data center firms: \$750 billion
Planned U.S. data center capacity that will incorporate behind-the-meter energy: 30%
New solar generating capacity expected to come on-line in U.S. in 2026-2027: 70 GW
Solar portion of all new U.S. generation capacity additions in 2026: 51%
Expected increase in battery storage by end of 2027: 22 GW
Forecasted drop in solar energy costs by 2035: 30%
Forecasted drop in battery storage energy costs by 2035: 25%
Forecasted drop in onshore wind energy costs by 2035: 23%
National ranking of Montana in technical wind development potential: 2nd
Americans who support changes to zoning if it meant housing would become more affordable: 65%
Americans who think that increasing missing-middle housing would have a positive impact on housing affordability: 61%
Industrial robots installed in China: Nearly 300,000
Industrial robots installed in United States: 34,000



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