

What Are America's Top AI Cities? Micro Center Ranks 85 U.S. Cities

New analysis ranks 85 U.S. cities based on AI jobs, startups, data centers, internet access, and AI interest.

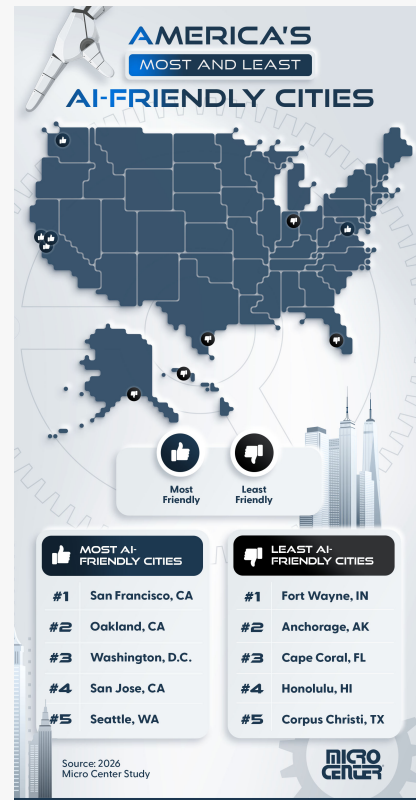
COLUMBUS, OH, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into everyday life, some U.S. cities are emerging as clear leaders in the technology. New research from Micro Center ranks 85 major U.S. cities to identify which communities are best positioned for AI growth, analyzing AI-related jobs, startup activity, data center infrastructure, internet access, and public interest in AI.

San Francisco, California, ranks as America's No. 1 AI city, followed by Oakland, California; Washington, D.C.; San Jose, California; and Seattle, Washington.

The findings show that while established technology hubs continue to dominate the overall AI landscape, different cities are leading in specific areas of the AI ecosystem.

See Micro Center's full America's AI Cities ranking

America's Top AI Cities



America's most and least AI friendly cities



America's AI Cities

Micro Center's analysis found that the top five AI cities are:

San Francisco, California
Oakland, California
Washington, D.C.
San Jose, California
Seattle, Washington

The ranking also reveals that AI leadership isn't defined by one factor. Different cities stand out for different components of the AI ecosystem:

Oakland leads in AI-related jobs, with 21,416 jobs per 100,000 residents.

San Francisco leads in AI startups, with 599 per 100,000 residents, compared with 157 in second-place Washington, D.C.

Richmond, Virginia, leads in both operating and planned data centers, with 3.85 operating and 2.99 planned per 100,000 residents.

Newark, New Jersey; Jersey City, New Jersey; and New York, New York, lead in business access to gigabit internet, with 97% of businesses having access.

At the same time, significant infrastructure gaps remain. 35 of the 85 cities analyzed have no operating data centers, while 46 have no planned data centers. Four cities, Corpus Christi, Anchorage, Fresno and Bakersfield, have zero AI startups per 100,000 residents.

America's AI Landscape Is Growing Alongside Everyday Adoption

The growth of AI infrastructure comes as Americans increasingly incorporate the technology into their own lives.

In a separate survey of 1,000 Americans, Micro Center found that 54% use AI to polish their work, while 39% use it for medical guidance, even though only 30% say they trust AI for medical advice. 57% said they were confident they could identify AI-generated images, but only 55% correctly identified an AI-generated image when tested.

The findings provide another perspective on the country's AI transition: while cities are building the jobs, startups, and infrastructure needed to support AI, consumers are already determining how and how much they will rely on the technology.

[Read Micro Center's full AI Trust survey](#)

About Micro Center

Micro Center operates 30 large computer and electronics stores in major markets nationwide. Founded in 1979 in Columbus, Micro Center is designed to satisfy the dedicated computer and electronics user. Uniquely focused on computers and related products, Micro Center offers more computers and related items (more than 20,000 items in stock) than any other retailer.

Micro Center is passionate about offering a high level of customer service, with a knowledgeable and tenured sales team. Customers can visit Micro Center's 30 stores (with more locations coming soon) from coast-to-coast or microcenter.com for thousands of computer-related items, electronics, and other technology products.

Micro Center stores are located in: Atlanta (2), Baltimore, Boston, Chicago (2), Charlotte, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York (5), Philadelphia, Phoenix, St. Louis, Washington, D.C. (2), Santa Clara, and coming soon, Austin.

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