

2009 RANKINGS

Austin Most Secure Large Metro.

The Central Texas area is the most secure U.S. community among large metro areas (population of 500,000 or greater) in which to live. The ranking took into consideration crime statistics, extreme weather, risk of natural disasters, housing depreciation, foreclosures, air quality, terrorist threats, environmental hazards, life expectancy and job loss numbers. Austin, which was 15th among large metropolitan areas in the 2008 Farmers study, "is a center for technology and business and is attracting more and more pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. Such Fortune 500 companies as Dell, Whole Foods Market and Freescale Semiconductor are headquartered there, with Austin serving as the state capital and home to the University of Texas. A high job growth rate and minimal housing depreciation contributed to its top rating in the study." (Farmers Insurance Group, 12/18/09)

Austin 7th on list of Cities with the Best Water.

The Environmental Working Group recently released a database of water quality for cities with 250,000 people or more and Austin ranked 7th best of 100 cities. EWG rated big city (population over 250,000) water utilities based on three factors: the total number of chemicals detected since 2004; the percentage of chemicals found of those tested; and the highest average level for an individual pollutant, relative to legal limits or national average amounts, including for the most common pollutants (disinfection byproducts, nitrate and arsenic). (Environmental Working Group, 12/12/09)

Texas ranked as Top State for Entrepreneurs.

The Small Business and Entrepreneurial Council ranked Texas in the top three states for small business and entrepreneurship in their Small Business Survival Index 2009. The index intends to help business owners and investors understand the public policy burdens placed on entrepreneurship and small business, with the states ranked accordingly. The factors included in the index include taxes, various regulatory costs, government spending, property rights, health care and energy costs, and more. "When companies look at Texas, they're discovering that we've fostered an environment that encourages people to pursue their dreams, build businesses and create jobs," Texas Governor Rick Perry said. "This index is further proof that our conservative fiscal principles, low taxes, predictable regulatory environment and educated workforce have made Texas the best state in the nation to build a business and create jobs." (Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, 12/1/09)

Austin No. 5 Lowest Crime Rate.

Austin, Texas has the fifth lowest crime rate ranking among 34 U.S. cities with 500,000 or more population. CQ Press' 2009-2010 crime rate rankings are calculated using six crime categories: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. (CQ Press, 11/25/09)

Austin ranked 17th Fittest City.

Austin came in at 17 among 2009's fittest cities in *Men's Fitness'* annual sorting out of major metros into top 25 fittest and top 25 fittest cities lists. The survey used a wide range of indicators. The ones that Austin scored A or A- on included fitness centers & sport stores, sports participation, air quality, commuting, city recreation facilities, access to healthcare, and motivation. (*Men's Fitness*, 11/25/09)

Austin metro ranked 3rd among Fastest Recovering Cities.

Texas' four major metros are in the top ten fastest-recovering cities nationwide, according to *Forbes* magazine. *Forbes* ranked Omaha first, San Antonio second, and Austin third, with Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston coming in sixth and eighth, respectively. Diversified industry and relatively stable housing give residents in these metros a measure of economic security. *Forbes* ranked the country's 100 largest MSAs according to each area's unemployment rate, as well as foreclosures, gross metropolitan product, and home prices and sales rates. (*Forbes*, 11/19/09)

Austin No. 1 on Milken Institute Best Performing Cities Index.

Leaders in the 2009 index, which ranks the 200 largest U.S. metros based on their ability to create and sustain jobs, the quality of jobs being produced, and overall economic performance, are all metros that succeeded in avoiding the worst of economic declines driven by falling housing markets and job losses in manufacturing and global trade. The authors aim for the index, which they have been producing since 1999, to provide a tool for understanding consumer markets and business expansion opportunities, and in today's recessionary climate, help determine which regions present the lowest risk. The index balances recent performance with that of the latest 5-year period, in order to adjust for the extreme variations in business cycles. Austin is one of only two metros to make top 10 showings for job growth over both the recent and the long-term views. The unique combination of stability afforded by being the state capital and home to a major research university, plus the dynamism of a thriving technology cluster and professional services sector, are cited as the secret of Austin's stellar success. It is the first metro to ever be ranked number one twice on the index, the last time being in 2000. (Milken Institute, 11/11/09)

Austin ranked as 4th Least Toxic City.

To determine which cities are most toxic, *Forbes* looked at the country's 40 largest metropolitan areas in the country using data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Forbes* counted the number of facilities that reported releasing toxins into the environment, the total pounds of certain toxic chemicals released into the air, water and earth, the days per year that air pollution was above healthy levels, and the number of times the EPA has responded to reports of a potentially hazardous environmental incident or site in each metro area's principal city. (*Forbes*, 11/6/09)

Texas No. 2 in State Business Climate Ranking & No. 1 in Corporate Survey.

Fifty percent of *Site Selection* magazine's annual business climate ranking comes from a survey asking corporate decision-makers to rank their top 10 states for ease of doing business. For the third consecutive year, Texas has topped that poll of more than 100 respondents. The only thing keeping the state from topping first ranked North Carolina is, paradoxically, its large and rapidly growing population, since per capita calculations govern other elements of the ranking. Then again . . . the editors note that the relatively robust picture in Texas is represented, by those very population trends. Texas' natural resources, high tech firms, and banks' conservative lending practices have helped the state economy to outperform the rest of the country so far in this recession and low cost of entry coming into Texas as a new or start-up company is noted to be one of the state's big selling points. (*Site Selection*, 11/09)

Austin No. 2 Strongest Metro Economy.

Business Week, with data from the Brookings Institution, ranked the nation's top 40 economies based growth trends in employment, unemployment, gross metropolitan product, and home prices. Austin, a high-tech center and home to the University of Texas, ranked 2nd for both employment and GMP growth performance. Austin ranked 16th for change in unemployment (the unemployment rate in June was 7.1%, up 2.6 points from a year earlier) and 18th on home price change (Home prices grew 2.5% in the second quarter compared with the same period a year earlier). (*Business Week*, 10/26/09)

Austin 2009 No. 15 Safest City.

To determine the list of America's safest cities, *Forbes* looked at the country's 40 largest metropolitan statistical areas across four categories of danger. They considered 2008 workplace death rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; 2008 traffic death rates from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and natural disaster risk, using rankings from green living site SustainLane.com. *Forbes* also looked at violent crime rates from the FBI's 2008 uniform crime report. (*Forbes*, 10/26/09)

Austin ranked 11th Best Place to Raise a Family.

The editors of *Children's Health* wanted to find where in America parent's ideals are met—communities that are safe, nurturing, stimulating, and economically sound and neighborhoods where parents raise children with shared values on education, health and fitness, concern for the environment. The analysis ranked 100 noteworthy American cities scattered across the country according to more than 30 factors that parents deem vitally important, including crime and safety, education, economics, housing, cultural attractions, and health. Austin placed 11th among the cities that best complemented family life. (*Children's Health*, 10/20/09)

Texas ranks No. 2 in tech exports in 2008.

Texas' high-tech exports were \$39.8 billion in 2008, up \$117 million, or 0.3%, from 2007, solidifying the state's status as the nation's second-largest "cyberstate" in terms of total tech exports, according to a TechAmerica Foundation report. The study looked at manufacturing of computers and peripheral equipment, communications equipment, consumer electronics, electronic components, semiconductors, industrial electronics, electromedical equipment and photonics. Texas is the leading exporter of communications equipment and of electronic components. It is second in computers and peripheral equipment exports and semiconductor exports. High-tech exports supported more than 1 million U.S. jobs and Texas led the nation in the number of jobs supported by high-tech exports in 2008, with some 253,600 jobs. (TechAmerica Foundation, 10/20/09)

Austin named one of 79 metros Where the Recession has Ended.

October is the first month this year when any metro area has moved from the recession to the "recovering" category, indicating that the economy grew from six months earlier. Out of 384 metro areas in the nation, 79 are in recovery, according to the August data on jobs, manufacturing and housing. Another 270 areas have a "moderating recession," meaning their economies were not contracting as severely as earlier. Among the 79 in recovery, seven of them are in Texas. (Moody's Economy.com & MSNBC, 10/15/09)

Austin ranked 8th Best Place to Launch a Business.

Austin is 8th among large places with all the features entrepreneurs need to thrive: growing economies, affordable workers, stable housing markets, low crime. Entrepreneurial ventures and small businesses have thrived in Austin, which has a number of angel investment groups that focus on startup businesses. The state capital, like the rest of Texas, is known for its business-friendly tax structure—no state personal income tax, no corporate income tax—and support for business development, particularly in the technology sector. The Austin metro area, which has doubled its population growth in the last 20 years, is often used as a test market by national companies because its large minority population reflects the nation's future demographic mix. With University of Texas college students in residence, the area offers entrepreneurial opportunities for the youth market and skilled workers for local businesses. One-third of the area's payroll is related to technology jobs, contributing to Austin's reputation for having one of the most educated workforces in the nation. While the summers can be scorches,

residents enjoy outdoor activities year-round. Austin is home to a vibrant music, film, theater and arts community, and is known for its annual SXSW and Austin City Limits music festivals. (CNN Money, 10/14/09)

Austin No. 1 Healthiest Housing Market.

Austin happens to be the only market on *Builder's* list of the 75 largest home building markets that is genuinely close to healthy. Home prices, which rose in 2008, finally declined this year—they are down 4.6% through September—as this Texas metro ended a long run of employment growth and lost some jobs. But its population has expanded by 4.3% during the first half of 2009, which should add housing demand and help firm up home pricing. Unemployment in this progressive city is significantly below the national average. Austin continues to draw population with its low cost of living, inexpensive housing, and warm-weather climate. (*Builder*, 10/6/09)

Texas & Austin among Most Popular Places Where Americans would Choose to Live.

The Lone Star State is one of the most attractive in the nation, according to the latest annual Harris poll. Texas came in at No. 4 on the poll that looked at where people want to live. The top 3 states were California, Florida, Hawaii. “The most popular states and cities where large numbers of people would like to live tend to attract tourists and business,” according to a release from Harris. “They are places where people like to take vacations and where companies like to have their offices and factories.” Among the most popular cities that people would choose to live in or near Austin comes in at 11th. The top 5 cities are New York, Denver, San Francisco, San Diego and Seattle. (Harris Interactive, 10/5/09)

Austin ranked as No. 1 Job Market.

No section of the country has been immune to the recession's ravages. But a few areas are still doing reasonably well, notably Texas, which includes four of America's five hottest labor markets, according to a new bizjournals/Portfolio.com study. The four Texas markets, Austin, San Antonio, Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth each have fewer private-sector jobs than a year ago. The Texas markets, despite their recent losses, still have 589,500 more jobs than they did a half-decade ago. That works out to a five-year growth rate of 10.8%, compared to the national decline of 0.7% over the same period. (Portfolio.com, 10/2/09)

Austin ranked 5th Youth Magnet City.

The *Wall Street Journal* asked a panel of demographers, economists, geographers and authors on urban issues which 10 cities will emerge as the hottest, hippest destinations for highly mobile, educated workers in their 20s when the U.S. economy gets moving again. Where young adults settle is no small thing. People 18 to 29 are the most mobile age group, and their past migration patterns have defined the future of regions, from the long rural exodus of the 1900s to the Silicon Valley boom of the 1990s. Youth-magnet cities gain an enviable cultural allure and a labor-market edge. Austin was chosen as the 5th best youth magnet city in the U.S. A state capital and the site of a big University of Texas campus, Austin has become a gathering place for tech- and arts-minded young adults. The city has significant high-tech, computer and electronics sectors, helping make it a model for a thriving 21st-century knowledge-based community. Its SXSW media and arts conference and its Austin City Limits music festival draw hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. The cost of living is well below other cultural hot spots. (*Wall Street Journal*, 9/30/09)

Texas places 1st for Economic Climate in Best States for Business Ranking.

Forbes ranks all 50 states based on costs, labor supply, regulatory environment, current economic climate, growth prospects and quality of life. Business costs, which include labor, energy and taxes are weighted the most heavily. Texas ranks No. 1 in the land for overall economic climate and third for growth potential. Texas ranking overall is 8th. (*Forbes*, 9/23/09)

Austin among Best Performing Metro Economies.

Austin and San Antonio will be the first two U.S. cities to recover from the recession, according to a new national forecast from IHS Global Insight. The forecast from the Lexington, Mass. economic research firm suggests the two Texas cities will bounce back to their pre-recession job levels sometime next year. (*Austin Business Journal*, 9/15/09)

Austin school district is 8th Largest Green Power Purchaser.

The Environmental Protection Agency reports that the Austin school district is the eighth largest purchaser of green power among all U.S. local government entities—and the only public school district in the nation on the EPA's Top 20 “Green Power” list. The Top 20 Local Government list represents the largest purchasers among local government partners within the Green Power Partnership. The combined green power purchases of these organizations are equivalent to the electricity needed to power more than 180,000 average American homes annually. (Environmental Protection Agency, 9/9/09)

Austin among 15 Coolest North American Cities.

From mountains to majesty—MSNTravel aimed to collect the 15 cities where visitors enjoy a diversity of attractions and vibrancy. Famous for Tex-Mex food and its eclectic music scene, bustling Austin is also the capital of the Lone Star state. Many visitors find its laid-back atmosphere especially appealing. (MSN Travel, 9/8/09)

Austin among Best College Towns.

Cities recognized on this list put together by Bing Travel are both home to a major college and feature outstanding potential for visitors. Austin's Capitol building, just a mile from the University of Texas at Austin, is the largest in the country. Football's big, too—you'll never find a football experience to rival UT's, where the Longhorns are practically a religion, and the people-watching is an event in itself. Austin is also

home to North America's largest and best-known colony of urban bats, which like to hang out under the Congress Avenue Bridge downtown. (MSN Travel, 9/4/09)

Austin ranked 4th among Best U.S. Cities To Earn A Living.

For the exasperated job-seeker to whom employment opportunities seem bleaker than ever, salvation may lie in the Lone Star State. When taking into account the cost of living, strength of industry, economists' predictions for the future state of employment and, of course, salary, Austin is of the best U.S. cities in which to take home a paycheck. (*Forbes*, 9/3/09)

Austin one of 3 metros showing signs of Full Recovery from the Recession.

The Brookings Institution's MetroMonitor is a quarterly, interactive barometer of the health of America's 100 largest metropolitan economies. It examines trends in metropolitan-level employment, output, and housing conditions to look "beneath the hood" of national economic statistics to portray the diverse metropolitan trajectories of recession and recovery across the country. Besides Austin, McAllen and Washington are the other most recovered metros. (Brookings Institution, 9/09)

Austin ranked 6th "Next City."

Next Generation Consulting (NGC) has made a discovery: Young knowledge workers say that where they lived is more important than where they work, and cities that can attract and retain these highly mobile young knowledge workers will reap economic gains. Next Cities™ are places with the assets and amenities that attract and retain a young, educated work force. They have bustling city centers, walkable neighborhoods, diverse career opportunities, and vibrant art and music scenes. Based on surveys of what is important to young professionals in choosing where to live, NGC assembled data on 44 indicators related to issues including affordability, employment opportunities, income, city's overall health/vitality, places to go and things to do after work and on weekends, educational opportunities, mobility, and social capital. Austin ranks 6th among large cities have the assets and amenities that the next generation of knowledge workers value. (*Area Development*, Aug-Sep/09)

Austin among Top 10 Cities for Hispanics.

From the 100 largest cities in the country, *Hispanic* magazine identified the metropolises come closest to fulfilling the editors' wish list of community ideals: Hispanic population is thriving, unemployment is low to average, the cost of living is manageable, Latinos are an active part of city leadership, environmental issues are on the city agenda, resources for Hispanic entrepreneurs are available, and the arts, media and cultural institutions serve the community. With its world-class academic, scientific and artistic communities, there is a lot to admire in this Texas capital. As the home of the University of Texas at Austin, the city attracts scholars from all over the world to take part in ground-breaking work in everything from astronomy to filmmaking. As the Live Music Capital of the World, Austin has developed a reputation as a mecca for musicians—who sing in English, Spanish and more. It's also home to a renowned Latino theater company. A lower than average cost of living, relatively low unemployment rate, manageable home prices and a health-wise and environmentally conscientious lifestyle add to the appeal. (*Hispanic*, Aug-Sep/09)

Austin Energy named nation's No. 2 Smartest Grid.

Intelligent Utility magazine and IDC Energy Insights gave Austin Energy a "near genius" rating based on revenue per employee; sales of renewable energy such as wind and solar; energy efficiency; technology investment; and "smart initiatives" that allow, for example, utilities to automatically detect a power outage and reroute electricity to minimize it. Austin Energy expects to finish installing this month nearly 400,000 smart meters across the city. The city is also planning to spend about \$230 million over the next five years on other smart technologies. (IDC Energy Insights, 8/26/09)

Austin named the Top City for Your Career.

SalesHQ.com put Austin at the top of this list because of its robust projected growth and one of the lowest changes in unemployment rate since the onset of the recession. Austin has enjoyed a recent explosion of high-tech entrepreneurship, and its two largest employers — the state government and the University of Texas — are expected to add a couple thousand jobs this year. (Sales HQ, 8/25/09)

Austin No. 3 on list of Top 10 Cities for Live Music.

The Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), the world's largest organization of professional travel journalists and photographers, recently polled its members to come up with the "Top 10" best North American cities for live music. Only in Austin, Texas can you go for super-delicious and inexpensive barbecue, sit outdoors at a picnic table and hear decent live rock at no additional charge. It is also noted that during the yearly South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Festival nearly the entire city becomes a music venue for a week—hundreds of live shows each day make Austin just as fun for locals as for industry executives. (SATW, 8/25/09)

Austin Least Stressful Metropolitan Area.

Austin ranks as the least stressful of the nation's 40 largest metropolitan statistical areas. It has a year-over-year median home-price drop of only 1%, and an unemployment rate of 7.1% as of June. It also had the lowest population density. (*Forbes*, 8/20/09)

Texas ranked No. 2 for Cleantech.

Texas has been ranked second among cleantech states because of its wind farm technology. Texas boasts the world's largest wind farm, and generates more electricity from wind than any other state. Moreover, Texas attracted more than \$716 million in cleantech-related venture capital funds between 2006 and 2008. (Cleantech Group, 8/17/09)

Austin No. 2 Best City for Working Moms.

ForbesWoman's first ever list of the "Best Cities for Working Mothers," ranks Austin second, just behind New York City in a study that examined the 50 largest cities in the U.S. "There are numerous considerations for what working moms want in their choice of a city," said ForbesWoman writer Heidi Brown. "We based our rankings on the premise that different mothers have different needs. Beyond good healthcare and safety, mothers who work want a city which offers plentiful jobs, high salaries and abundant daycare options." So how did New York and Austin end up as Nos. 1 and 2 of the same list? Austin does have a reputation for offering a high quality of living for all age groups, but New York is a playground for grownups, not a sanctuary for kids and their moms, right? Answer: Austin and New York each shine in different categories of what a working (or job-seeking) ForbesWoman reader wants in her city of choice. *Forbes* says Austin offers loads of reasons for scoring second on this list. Austin parents love their schools. The city's unemployment, at 6.1%, is one of the lowest of the cities on the list. Like New York, it also boasts plenty of outdoor places for the kids to work off steam. Both cities score high for plentiful childcare options. Austin's massive Zilker Park and Town Lake, which dominates the city, is a year-round resource for recreation and education. Professional moms have their pick of career paths, including academics at the University of Texas, state government and big tech outfits like Dell and Samsung. (*Forbes*, 8/4/09)

Austin a Top 10 Start-Up City.

Entrepreneur ranks Austin among 10 cities that embody the entrepreneurial spirit. These cities are characterized by an openness and energy that permeates the whole culture, an infectious enthusiasm throughout the small-business community, and a faith that any problem can be overcome through dedication and smart decisions. The magazine's look at business-friendly cities addresses issues such as government incentives, population growth, affordability of commercial rents and openness to new ideas. *Entrepreneur* calls Austin the "cross-pollinator" among the top 10 cities. "Theoretically, people here are competing, but the opposite is happening," Bijoy Goswami, founder of Bootstrap Austin told *Entrepreneur*. "Part of that Texas ethos has percolated into the entrepreneur scene: People in Austin just treat each other well." (*Entrepreneur*, 8/09)

Austin No. 11 for Volunteering.

Austin has the nation's 11th highest rate for volunteers, with more than 30.7% of the population donating their time over a year-long period. In Austin, residents contributed an average of 42.6 service hours and contributed \$1.2 billion in services. Austin's number of service hours per resident ranks 9th out of 51 large cities. Nationally, the volunteer rate was 26.2%, with 60.8 million Americans giving 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service worth \$158 billion. Texas was 36th among the 50 states and Washington D.C. with 25.2% of all residents volunteering. (Corporation for National & Community Service, 7/28/09)

Austin 11th Best City for Singles.

From March's annual South by Southwest music, film and media festival to the city's ever-growing creative community of artists, musicians and designers, Austin ranks high on the coolness scale. It also gets points for job growth; the number of jobs in the city will increase by 17.5% over the next five years. (*Forbes*, 7/27/09)

Austin named one of 23 Cities Where the Recession is Moderating.

The economy may finally be nearing the bottom of the recession in 23 of the nation's metro areas, according to the latest Adversity Index data on jobs, manufacturing and housing from Moody's Economy.com and msnbc.com. Although not a single metro area in the nation was "in recovery," 23 out of 381 showed a "moderating" recession, meaning their economies were not contracting as severely as six months earlier. (msnbc.com, 7/17/09)

Austin is the No. 3 Best City for High-Paying jobs.

Forbes bases this list on trends in "business and professional services" as the fastest growing sector in the high wage economy. Employment in other sectors that pay their employees well, such as technology and manufacturing, have remained stagnant or even fallen. The business services sector, on the other hand, seems to have weathered the current recession better than other high-wage sectors. Looking at both short term and long run growth trends, *Forbes* found Austin to be the No. 3 business services hot spot following the Washington and Northern Virginia metros. Austin's local economy has continued thrive not only during the current recession but also over the last decade. The local economy is governed by technology. Major industries include wireless technologies, semiconductors and software; Dell calls Austin its home. The number of major corporations in this region provides many job opportunities in the professional and business services sector. (*Forbes*, 7/14/09)

Austin is near the top for Most Job Postings Per Capita.

Austin's job market is one of the best in the country, based on new data on job postings per capita from Indeed.com, an online job posting service. Austin had 56 job postings per 1,000 residents in the second quarter, making it the 4th healthiest big-city job market in the country, the company said. That was up from a 7th-place ranking in the first quarter. Washington remained the top market, with 133 postings per 1,000

residents, followed by Baltimore (90) and San Jose (80). Dallas ranked 20th, San Antonio was 23rd, and Houston was 34th. (USNews.com/Indeed.com, 7/10/09)

Austin is 2nd most affordable city in *Forbes'* Best Cities for Families.

Austin places among the 10 most family-friendly cities in *Forbes'* assessment of the best and worst cities for families among the nation's 40 largest metropolitan areas. *Forbes* used the Economic Policy Institute's Basic Family Budget Calculator to determine what families of various sizes around the country spend, based on the combined costs of essentials like housing, child care, food and taxes. The magazine calculated the budget for a two-parent, two-child family for each city, then divided the results into the annual income for a two-parent family with minor children in that city, as reported for 2007 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Austin was the second most affordable city on the list, helped in part, by Texas lack of an income tax. For Austin, the median family income is \$66,064, the average family budget is \$47,238, and budget as percent of income is 72%. (*Forbes*, 6/29/09)

Austin is the 3rd Strongest Metro Economy in the Country.

The Brookings Institution's inaugural release of MetroMonitor identifies Austin as the 3rd strongest performing metro area. San Antonio and Oklahoma City place 1st and 2nd and Houston, Dallas and McAllen follow Austin on the list. MetroMonitor is a quarterly, interactive barometer of the health of America's 100 largest metropolitan economies. MetroMonitor examines a series of metropolitan-level indicators regarding changes in employment, wages, output, and housing conditions. It aims to enhance understanding of the particular places and industries that drive national economic trends. "All metropolitan areas are feeling the effects of this recession, but the distress is not shared equally," stated Alan Berube, research director of the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings and co-author of the report. "While some areas of the country have experienced only a shallow downturn, and may be emerging from the recession already, people living in metro areas that are now performing weakest economically should prepare themselves for a long recovery period." (Brookings Institution, 6/16/09)

Austin ranked Best City for Recession Recovery.

Forbes named the Austin metro as the best poised for recovery in its list of the 10 U.S. cities poised for a rebound (and the 10 cities with a long slog ahead). Many Texas cities are poised for swift recovery according to *Forbes*. Texas' economy is diverse, with heavy growth coming from education and health care in recent years and did not see the massive real estate bubble that formed in states like California, Nevada and Florida. *Forbes'* analysis also shows the importance of a city's economic make-up. Cities with robust technology sectors are poised for stronger recoveries than manufacturing or finance centers. Austin's diverse economy, home to Dell, the University of Texas and the Texas state government, has kept the economy strong. *Forbes* examined estimates from data provider Moody's Economy.com of the projected gross domestic product of metropolitan areas across the U.S., as well as unemployment figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and home prices, incomes and affordability data from the National Association of Home Builders. (*Forbes*, 6/10/09)

Austin one of *U.S. News'* 10 Best Places to Live.

In selecting its Best Places to Live for 2009, *U.S. News* took a thrift-conscious approach, looking for affordable communities that have strong economies and plenty of fun things to do. The cities selected are as distinct as America itself—ranging from a quaint suburb to a live-music mecca. If you're a free spirit, music junkie, or barbecue lover—or if you simply have what it takes to "keep Austin weird"—Texas's state capital is for you. Considered ground zero for live music, this city of 716,000 residents is home to legions of musicians and nearly 200 performance venues. In addition, Austin hosts the always popular South by Southwest festival. Since its inception in 1987, the event has mushroomed from a local gathering to a 1,800-band, 80-stage extravaganza of music, filmmaking, and interactive activities featuring performers from all over the world. The city's warm climate offers plenty of sunshine, while the open green spaces don't provide any excuse for staying indoors. Austin is also a high-tech hub, with companies like Dell and IBM, which employ thousands of residents. (*USNews.com*, 6/8/09)

Austin ranked in the Top 20 High Tech Metropolitan Areas.

North America's High-Tech Economy: The Geography of Knowledge-Based Industries ranked the top high-tech centers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico in their ability to grow and sustain thriving high-tech industries. There are 19 individual high tech industries included in the analysis and metros are scored based on both the concentration of technology in the local economy and each metro's relative share of aggregate North American high tech activity. Austin's total high tech LQ of 1.8 shows that the high-tech industry is 80% more concentrated in Austin than in North America overall. Austin placed 20th and San Jose and Seattle are 1st and 2nd respectively. (Milken Institute, 6/2/09)

Texas Ranked No. 1 For Business.

Texas has been named the country's No. 1 state for business once again, this time by *Directorship*, a publication that caters to corporate boardroom leaders. Texas nabbed the No. 1 spot due to its ability to attract Fortune 500 companies, its solid economy, affordable cost of living and its pro-business tax climate. The magazine names major corporate relocations and expansions—such as Comerica's move from Detroit to Dallas, Caterpillar's decision to build a new assembly plant in Seguin, and communications equipment maker Setcom's decision to pick up stakes and move from its longtime home in Mountain View, California to Austin—among the reasons for Texas' ranking. (*Directorship*, 6/1/09)

Austin projected to be among 5 Fastest Growing Metros.

Bizjournals is issuing its own population projections for the nation's 250 largest metropolitan areas, looking as far ahead as 2025. Bizjournals analyzed recent county-by-county growth patterns within each state, and then used that information to predict metropolitan growth at five-year intervals between 2005 and 2025. Seven metros currently in the top 50 will climb at least five places, led by Austin. Raleigh barely missed

the top 50 in 2005, ranking 51st in metropolitan population. It's projected to reach 38th place by 2025. Austin is the only top 50 market that will match Raleigh's upward mobility during the 20-year span, climbing 13 notches from 38th to 25th. Six metros including Austin and Raleigh will grow by more than 80% between 2005 and 2025. Bizjournals projects Austin's growth will be 87% and that population will be over 2.7 million in 2025. (bizjournals, 6/01/09)

Austin ranks 9th on American Fitness Index.

Austin ranked ninth for health and fitness among the nation's 50 largest metros. The western United States dominated the top 10, with only three cities lying east of the Mississippi River. Scoring for the index reflects a composite of preventive health behaviors, levels of chronic disease conditions, health care access, as well as community resources and policies that support physical activity. Austin's strengths included lower percentages of population with chronic health problems, lower death rates due to certain diseases, lower unemployment, high percentage of parkland, swimming pools and dog parks per capita, and higher state requirements for PE classes. (American College Sports Medicine, 5/26/09)

Austin the nation's Best City for a Fresh Start

Austin is the best city in America to get a fresh start, according to a new report from Relocation.com. The online moving marketplace ranked Austin No. 1 on its list of the best cities to start over and seek out new economic opportunities. Relocation.com used the following elements to create its list: city "popularity" based on consumer requests for moving quotes to move to that city, economic-growth prospects, home affordability, and the strength of a community as reflected by volunteerism rates. Austin achieved the top spot with its high ranking on each of those criteria. Buoyed by a vibrant tech community and anchored by government institutions such as the University of Texas and the state capitol, Austin ranked in the top 10 for popularity, job growth and its volunteerism rate, and a higher ranking for home affordability. (Relocation.com, 5/21/09)

Austin ranked 11th Best City for the Outdoors.

With the emphasis on mild weather and plentiful park land, *Forbes* used research on the 40 largest cities from the nonprofit organization Trust for Public Land, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Trust for Public Land provided data on spending and park land, which it collected from city municipalities. Data on the weather were collected from historic averages maintained by NOAA. *Forbes* looked at air quality in each city's county seat between 2000 and 2007 and averaged the number of unhealthy days during that time. Cities that topped the list offer residents a mix of outdoor activities, including community gardening, access to urban forests and miles of hiking trails. (*Forbes*, 5/12/09)

Austin no. 7 Tech Center.

With a high-tech workforce of more than 54,500, Austin ranks 7th on bizjournals' list of the nation's biggest tech cities. Texas' Capital City is home to over 2,660 tech companies, which employ an average of 20 employees each. Austin also has a relatively educated populace—11% of residents have a master's degree or higher. State government and the University of Texas also help make Austin a dynamic tech market. (bizjournals.com, 5/11/09)

Austin Chosen as one of Top 20 Places to Thrive.

BestBoomerTowns.com has chosen Austin, Texas as one of its top places in the U.S. to thrive in retirement. Factors taken into consideration were quality of life, cost of living, education and workforce development, weather, healthcare and entertainment. (BestBoomerTowns.com, 5/7/09)

Austin Best Bargain City in the U.S.

To determine which U.S. cities are the best bargains, *Forbes* looked at the country's 50 largest U.S. metropolitan statistical areas and metropolitan divisions. Austin earned high marks across the board. "They have the triple-whammy of being a university town, a state capital and a technology center," said Al Lee, director of quantitative analysis at PayScale.com, a salary data aggregator based in Seattle. "It makes for a very robust economy and a great place for people to work." (*Forbes*, 5/09)

Austin named one of the 10 Best Cities of 2009.

Austin ranks No. 8 on *Kiplinger's Personal Finance's* 10 Best Cities of 2009. This year, *Kiplinger's* selected boomtowns offering solid employment opportunities and the talent to create new, well-paying positions. While most cities around the country posted job layoffs in the past year, Austin added 3,300 jobs, the biggest bump in the country. The increase covered a broad swath, from professional services, education and hospitality to health care and government. Gains in those sectors more than offset losses in manufacturing and IT—though the unemployment rate in the area has crept up. (Kiplinger.com, 5/09)

Texas one of Top 7 Tax-free Havens.

Starting a company in one of these business-friendly locations can save proprietors big bucks: these 7 states have no individual income tax, and some have no corporate income tax. Although petroleum refining is one of Texas' primary industries, the state's economy relies on a wide variety of fields, including manufacturing, agriculture and aerospace. Exxon and Citgo are headquartered in Texas, as are Dell, Texas Instruments, Raytheon and Mary Kay. Manufacturers produce clothing, chemical products, food, automobiles, computers and more. Recently, the governor's office identified 6 industries in which Texas wants to promote future growth: advanced technologies and manufacturing, aerospace and defense, biotech and life sciences, IT and computers, oil refining and chemical products, and energy, including new energy

sources such as wind. The government is cultivating these sectors by connecting businesses with federal and private grants, providing state funds for research, and increasing job training programs. (CNNMoney.com, 5/09)

Austin named no. 1 Big City for Jobs.

Of the 10 large cities with the best employment prospects, Austin is the leader. Job growth between 2004 and 2008 was a whopping 14.8%—and even between 2007 and 2008, overall growth remained in the black. Austin also was named the 6th best city for jobs in the overall ranking. Seven out of the top 10 cities on that list are in Texas, proving that Texas is the place to be for business in 2009. Austin jumped 13 spots up the list this year from last year's overall ranking of No. 19. Author Joel Kotkin notes "Understanding what makes this attractive, fast-growing city tick can tell us much about what urban growth will look like in the coming decades. Austin's success is not surprising since, in many ways, it starts on third base. Two of its greatest assets result from the luck of the draw; it's both a state capital and home to a major research university." (*Forbes*, 4/12/09; also *New Geography*, 4/15/09)

Texas is Tops in Production of Wind Power.

Year-end numbers for 2008 show Texas leading in wind capacity (with 7,118 MW) and largest wind farms installed (6 of the nation's top 10). Texas once again installed the largest amount of new capacity in 2008—2,671 MW—moving it into a league of its own. More new wind capacity was added in Texas during the year than in any country except China and the U.S. If Texas were a country, it would rank sixth in the world, behind Germany, the rest of the U.S., Spain, China, and India. (American Wind Energy Association, 4/13/09)

UT's McCombs ranks 18th among nation's Best Business Schools.

According to *U.S. News & World Report*, 82.4% of McCombs' 2008 graduates were employed full-time as of graduation. And for Texas students, McCombs' in-state tuition of \$24,200 a year is a relative bargain compared with the \$40,000-and-up annual tuition among many of the other top business schools. Other schools in Texas to rank highly were Texas A&M (33rd), Rice University (38th), Southern Methodist University in Dallas (47th) and the University of Texas-Dallas (49th). *U.S. News* surveyed 426 MBA programs to formulate this year's ranking of top business schools. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 4/12/09)

Texas ranks 13th Happiest State.

The Happiness Index, which looks at household income, debt, employment and foreclosures, is a fresh take on the old and tired Misery Index, made popular in the 1970s and is all about which states are best weathering the current economic storm. Nebraska tops the list, followed by Iowa and Kansas. Texas is ranked No. 13. The Lone Star State avoided extreme high or low rankings in any one category, but achieved better than average ratings in debt and unemployment. Oregon is ranked No. 51 on the Happiness Index, putting it in last place. (Mainstreet.com, 4/6/09)

Austin is a City of the Future.

fDi Magazine's North American Cities of the Future 2009/10 shortlists, which took more than 6 months to research and involved the data collection of nearly 400 North American cities, ranks Austin No. 5. Numbers 1 to 4 are New York, Chicago, Houston and San Francisco. Seven categories were used to determine the winners: economic potential, human resources, cost effectiveness, quality of life, infrastructure, business friendliness and promotion strategy. (*fDi Magazine*, April/May '09)

Texas is the nation's 2nd Largest Cyberstate.

The *Cyberstates 2009* report—which details national and state trends in high-tech employment, wages, and other key economic factors for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico—shows that Texas saw the largest high-tech employment gains in the nation in 2007, a designation usually reserved for California. The addition of 14,700 high-tech jobs brought the industry total to 474,100 in 2007—the most current year for which state data are available. Texas remains the second-largest cyberstate by tech employment, behind California and ahead of New York. Additionally, the high-tech industry in Texas paid out \$39.8 billion in payroll in 2007. The Texas average tech industry wage in 2007 was \$83,900—84% higher than the state's average private sector wage. (TechAmerica, 3/31/09)

Austin comes in 2nd in the top 10 Cities Where Americans are Relocating.

Unemployment is on the rise, credit is tight and consumers aren't spending — which means they aren't picking up and moving much, either. Very few places in America saw significant population growth in 2008. The places on *Forbes'* list are still growing because instead of building an economy that relies heavily on one industry, most of these metros serve as headquarters for a diverse range of companies. For example, Austin's biggest employers include the University of Texas, Advanced Micro Devices and Dell. That wide range might have something to do with the area's relatively low January 2009 unemployment rate of 6.4%. *Forbes* also nods to the metro area's thriving music, film and fine arts scenes as contributing to its popularity streak. (*Forbes*, 3/30/09)

Austin 8th Best Place for Business & Careers.

Forbes' ranking looks at the 200 largest metropolitan areas and is based on 11 different criteria including job growth, business and living costs, income growth, migration trends, educational attainment, crime rates, local colleges, and cultural and recreational opportunities in the area. New criteria in this year's rankings including projected job growth and subprime mortgages as a percentage of total originations helped boost several metros in the rankings, most notably Austin, Texas. Austin ranked 8th this year, up from 47th last year. Austin's projected annual job growth rate of 2.3% is fifth fastest in the country, and its subprime mortgage exposure clocked in at 13th. The city has a fan in the Charles

Schwab Corp. "The city of Austin is extremely business-friendly. They have bent over backwards to accommodate us," says Glenn Cooper, head of real estate at Schwab, which expanded its Austin presence in 2007 when it purchased the 401(k) Co. Cooper highlights the political environment, culture and cost of living as draws for Schwab to Austin. (*Forbes*, 3/25/09)

Texas voted Best for Business by *Chief Executive*.

Texas was ranked No. 1 on the magazine's list, based on surveys done by 543 CEOs, for the fourth straight year. The magazine says states that perform well in the rankings tend to have lower taxes and low rates of unionization. (*Chief Executive*, 3/25/09)

Austin & Raleigh are Fastest-Growing Metro Areas.

Raleigh-Cary, N.C., and Austin-Round Rock, Texas, were the nation's fastest-growing metro areas between 2007 and 2008, according to July 2008, population estimates for the nation's metropolitan statistical areas and counties released by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Austin metro saw its population climb 3.8% between July 2007 and July 2008, to 1.7 million. Raleigh experienced a 4.3% increase to 1.1 million. These two large metro areas were among 47 of the 50 fastest-growing areas located entirely in the South or West. The Austin metro area was the location of the sixth fastest growing county (with over 10,000 population), Williamson, as well as 10th-ranked Hays County. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 3/19/09)

Austin-Bergstrom International among Top Performing Airports.

Airports Council International announced the top performing airports in its Airport Service Quality Survey for 2008. Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) ranked 3rd in North America (the top 2 being Canadian airports). Additionally, ABIA ranked 3rd for its size (5-15 million passengers) among airports around the globe. (Airports Council International, 3/10/09)

Austin 10th Best City for Moviemakers

Each year *MovieMaker* surveys the country to find the areas you'll be happiest to call home if you call yourself a moviemaker. This year's focus is on those places that offer the perfect combination of employment opportunities, reasonable costs of living, strong quality of life, affordable home prices and, of course, financial incentives. Variables considered included cost of living, average salary, unemployment rate, job growth, median home price, and crime rate; as well as the number of film schools, festivals, movie-related vendors and local movie theaters.

MovieMaker factored in the current production scene, i.e. production days, size of talent pool, financial incentives for shooting in a particular area, and extra credit was given for cities doing something unique—like special "green" efforts. Austin is once again one of the cities that offers moviemakers the best all-around chance of finding success with their art during these tough economic times.

(*MovieMaker*, 2/18/09)

Austin named no. 2 Healthiest Housing Market for 2009.

Builder, in conjunction with Hanley Wood Market Intelligence, debuts its metric for determining markets with the best and least potential based on based on population trends and job growth, perennial drivers of housing demand and other key factors. Austin has become the sixth largest home building market in the last year, mainly due to job creation. While other markets lost employment, Austin added 17,400 jobs last year, 2.3% growth rate. It helps that Austin is home to both a major university, The University of Texas, and the state capital. Existing homes cost a little bit more in Austin than other Texas markets, roughly \$188,600, but that's still below the national average. Also, Austin is one of the few metro areas in the country where median prices actually rose in 2008—2.7%. Amazingly, Austin now generates more home building activity than Chicago, which has six times more people. (Builderonline.com, 2/17/09)

Austin named one of America's Top 30 Most Wired Cities.

Since 2007, *Forbes* has measured cities' wired quotient by computing the percentage of Internet users with high-speed connections and the number of companies providing high-speed Internet. Since many urban residents access the Internet by wi-fi, we also measure the number of public wireless Internet hot spots in a particular city. Our formula remains the same as previous years with one exception: the addition of broadband penetration data from Scarborough Research. The change was made to complement similar data from Nielsen Online. (*Forbes.com*, 1/22/09)

Austin named one of 15 Coolest North American Cities.

Mountains to majesty: Whether you're looking for world-class museums, breathtaking architecture, lush parks and gardens or vibrant nightlife, take your pick of these cities and enjoy the diversity that each has to offer. Famous for Tex-Mex food and its eclectic music scene, bustling Austin is also the capital of the Lone Star state. Many visitors find its laid-back atmosphere especially appealing. (MSN Travel, 1/22/09)

Austin named one of America's 25 Strongest Housing Markets.

Forbes worked with Moody's Economy.com to compile a list of the country's real estate markets that are nearest to recovery. Moody's looked at the country's Census-defined metro areas with populations over 500,000, and prepared forecasts through 2011. They then compared them to prices in the second quarter of 2008, which were the latest figures available, to calculate how far prices will likely fall before reaching bottom. Not one metro area will see prices increase before the end of this year, according to Zandi's forecasts. The strongest metro areas will be flat at best—but that's better than the 15% drop Moody's expects on average in the U.S. Texas markets are in the best shape. Housing values were rising in many Lone Star State towns until oil futures collapsed and agricultural commodity prices fell. But the bottom doesn't look very deep. "Texas has the best large-state economy in the country right now," says Mark Zandi, chief economist for Moody's Economy.com.

"Employment is slowing, but it's still growing." (*Forbes*, 1/7/09)

Texas ranks 4th on a new list of Best States to Start a Business.

The Lone Star State won praise for having “the most globe-focused manufacturing sector in the country, with export sales at \$69,268 per worker—the highest of any state.” *U.S. News* also cited Texas’ lack of income or capital-gains taxes for individuals and the state’s low worker compensation costs. The newsmagazine took a comprehensive look at the business climates for entrepreneurs in all 50 states. As the basis for their report, *U.S. News* used the 2008 New State Economy Index from the Kauffman Foundation and the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation as well as the Small Business Survival Index 2008 from the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council. Texas’ fourth-place ranking fell behind No. 1 Washington, followed by Virginia and Colorado. Rounding out the top seven were Nevada, Utah and Florida. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 1/6/09)

2008 Rankings

Texas ties for 3rd in business location rankings.

Economic development publication *Site Selection* magazine has ranked Texas the third best state to operate a business in its latest list. The annual business climate rankings are determined 50% by the state's economic performance in Conway Data's New Plant Database, which tracks new and expanded business facility activity, and 50% by a survey of corporate site selectors across the country. (*Site Selection*, 11/08)

Austin ranks 4th in analysis of the nation's Current Growth Centers.

Bizjournals analyzed recent performances to identify the nation's current growth centers — the metros entering this recessionary period with the most positive momentum. Leading Bizjournals' new rankings of America's growth centers are: Las Vegas; Raleigh, N.C.; Cape Coral-Fort Myers, Fla.; Austin; Phoenix; McAllen-Edinburg; Houston; San Antonio; Dallas-Fort Worth; and El Paso, Tex. The publisher looked at five years of demographic and economic data for the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas, looking for markets that have been experiencing strong, steady growth. Bizjournals found that the 10 fastest-growing metros in the prosperous 1990s have continued expanding in the present decade, despite the erratic nature of the economy and they believe that recent growth trends offer an advance look at the markets best positioned to weather the current economic downturn. (*Austin Business Journal*, 11/14/08)

Texas ties for 3rd in Top State Business Climate rankings.

Site Selection magazine has ranked Texas the third best state to operate a business in its latest list. The annual business climate rankings are determined 50% by the state's economic performance in Conway Data's New Plant Database, which tracks new and expanded business facility activity, and 50% by a survey of corporate site selectors across the country. (*Site Selection*, 11/08)

Fourteen Austin companies make Deloitte Texas Technology Fast 50 list.

The list, which the consulting firm compiles each year, ranks companies based on 5-year revenue growth. Austin, with a population of 1.6 million, has a higher concentration of these companies than any other metropolitan area in Texas. Houston, with a population of 5.6 million also has 14 companies in the list, while Dallas-Fort Worth, with a population of 6.1 million, has 21 companies in the list. The fast growing Austin technology businesses recognized are Anue Systems, Convio, Medical Present Value, NetQoS, Perficient, QuantumDigital, QuickArrow, SolarWinds, Surgient, Troux Technologies, Valence Technology, VI Technology, Zebra Imaging, and Zilliant. (*Deloitte*, 10/31/08)

Austin is America's Best Bang for the Buck City.

The economic storm sweeping the country has left Americans with few places to hide. But *Forbes'* latest calculations indicate that those looking to hunker down might want to head to Texas, where they can get the best value for their dollar. Austin leads *Forbes'* list of places where your money goes farthest (San Antonio, Dallas & Houston also make the top 10). Residents enjoy affordable housing and promising prospects for job growth in coming years. "Texas, as a whole, is one of the few economies performing extremely well because of the energy and technology sectors," says Andrew Gledhill, an economist at Moody's Economy.com. The factors that make the cities on the list valuable—affordable housing, relatively low gas prices, sluggish inflation, a job market that's more vibrant than most—are more than an indication of cheap deals. *Forbes* says they are the cities that are likely to offer value. (*Forbes*, 10/10/08)

Austin Chamber Top 5 Award for Excellence in Biotech.

These awards recognize development organizations which have shown exceptional progress and potential in the development arena—by successfully recruiting, retaining and assisting growing businesses. The award recognizes Austin as well on its way to becoming a leading hub for biotechnology R&D. Austin has fostered successful business development by bringing together a combination of venture capital, top notch universities, a highly-talented workforce and expert community leadership. The Austin Chamber intends to see Central Texas take a position as a biotech hot spot by bringing together world-class innovators and entrepreneurs in a business-friendly environment. *Expansion Solutions* notes that this approach has already brought in some of the nation's leading biotechnology and life sciences companies and the number of start-ups continues to grow. This year's list also included Augusta, GA, Baltimore, Kannapolis, NC, and San Diego. (*Expansion Solutions*, 10/11/08)

Austin: No. 4 Best Performing Cities.

Even in a tougher economy Austin is still outperforming many other areas of the country in creating and sustaining jobs and economic growth. The Austin region ranks 4th among the country's 200 largest metropolitan areas on the Milken Institute and Greenstreet Real Estate Partners' 2008 Best Performing Cities list. That's a dramatic improvement from Austin's 20th place ranking on last year's list. The list ranks cities according to a series of metrics such as job creation and salary and technology growth. (Milken Institute, 9/08)

Austin Ranks high in America's Favorite Cities.

Austin got high marks for people: they came in 2nd place for friendliness and athleticism, and 3rd place for intelligence and attractiveness. The city also has great bands and live music (No. 2) and a buzzing singles/bar scene (No. 4). (*Travel+Leisure*, 9/12/08)

America's 2nd Hottest Labor Market is Austin.

Bizjournals used a 9-part formula to analyze employment trends in the nation's 100 largest labor markets — looking primarily at job growth and unemployment numbers. The formula was fueled by midyear data compiled since 2003 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Houston, Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth are 1-2-3 in the latest employment rankings of the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas. Austin's consistency is its most important quality. Texas' capital ranks among the best markets for 5- and 1-year rates of job growth (3rd and 5th place, respectively) and unemployment rate (7th place). No other metro qualifies for the top 7 in all of these key categories. (*bizjournals.com*, 9/8/08)

Twelve Austin companies make Inc. 500 list.

Inc. magazine named a dozen local companies to its annual Inc. 500 list. The compilation of the country's fastest-growing privately held companies, which was based on revenue growth from 2004 to 2007, included the following Austin companies: Genesis Today, On Time Electric & Air, BabyEarth, Zebra Imaging, C&Z Enterprises, Adlucent, C.L. Carson, Austin GeoModeling, Apogee Search, Intelligent Logistics, ProfitFuel, and Ascendant Technology. The Inc. 5,000 list, published online, highlights 68 additional Austin-area firms. Some of the notable Inc. 5,000 companies are Sweet Leaf Tea, Convio, Netspend Corp. and CreditCards.com. (*Inc.*, 8/18/08)

Round Rock is No. 7 in America's Best Places to Live ranking of cities with population under 300,000.

Once merely a bedroom community of Austin, Round Rock, no. 7 in *Money* magazine's ranking, today is very much its own city thanks largely to three things: affordable housing, excellent schools and computer maker Dell, whose headquarters is located there. (*Money*, 8/08)

Texas is top state in U.S. in Renewable Energy.

According to Ernst & Young, the U.S. had the most attractive location on the planet for renewable energy investments as of the first two quarters of 2008. Among countries, the U.S. ranks first, with a score of 70 (out of 100), followed by Germany (69), India (66), China and Spain (tying with 64). Within the U.S., Texas is the most attractive state for renewable energy investment (scoring 80), followed by California (71), Colorado & New Mexico (tying with 70). (Ernst & Young, 8/08)

Texas' tax burden among the lowest.

Texas has one of the nation's least-burdensome tax climates, according to an annual report from the Tax Foundation. Texas ranks 43rd on the list of state-by-state tax environments, with No. 1 being the worst. The Tax Foundation assesses tax burden based on residents' taxes paid to own state and taxes paid to other states. On a per capita basis, Texans paid \$2,082 in state and local taxes to their own state and \$1,498 in taxes to other states (a total per capita tax burden of \$3,580). Texans paid 8.4% of their income in state and local taxes while the national average tax burden is 9.7%. (Tax Foundation, 8/08)

Austin ranked 6th Best City to Live, Work & Play.

Factors in choosing the best 10 cities included population growth, income growth, job growth, percentage of workforce in the creative class (workers, such as engineers and entertainers, that inject both economic and cultural vitality into a city and help make it a vibrant place to live), quality of jobs and cost of living. Austin and the surrounding region's strong economy, solid and moderately priced housing market, growing population and natural beauty helped achieve its high rank. (*Kiplinger's Personal Finance*, 7/08)

Austin is the 5th most active Volunteering in America city.

According to a new report from the Corporation for National & Community Service, 35% of Austin residents serve as volunteers every year. Collectively, Austinites donate about 56.6 million hours of their time annually, for an estimated \$1.1 billion in economic impact. (Corporation for National & Community Service, 7/28/08)

Austin is ranked the 12th strongest metro area for brainpower.

Austin ranks among nation's brainiest a recent study shows. Austin is known as a weird and great place to live, but it's also one of the smartest places in the nation. Austin was ranked the 12th strongest metro area for brainpower, according to a study by American City Business Journals. The study looked at the nation's largest 100 metros and 6 measures of residents' educational attainment. The rankings top 5 metros were Madison, Wisc., Washington, D.C.; San Jose, Calif.; Bridgeport-Stamford, Conn.; and Boston. (*Austin Business Journal*, 7/11/08)

Austin ranked 10th among 66 Places Where Owning a House Makes Sense.

With house prices falling around the country, many renters are wondering if this is the time to jump in and score a deal. The answer depends on where you live. In much of the U.S., you're better off buying despite falling home values, say new data compiled by the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the Center for Economic and Policy Research. Out of the 100 largest U.S. markets, 66 offer homebuyers the opportunity to build enough equity to be in the black in 4 years should they buy a low-priced home today. In Austin, if you bought a low-priced home today, by 2012 the amount of equity you would have for a 6% loan is \$70,007, a 7% loan is \$68,530 and an 8% loan is \$67,251. (MSN Real Estate, 7/08)

Texas is No. 1 in 2008 Top States for Business ranking.

Fueled by a dynamic economy and supported by an abundance of natural resources, and diverse population and geography, Texas is America's Top State for Business in 2008. It is not a huge climb, Texas was number two last year. Just like last year, the study shows Texas has the best all-around economy in the nation. But the Lone Star State made strides this year in transportation, where it went from no. 5 to no. 1, as well as business friendliness, cost of living and quality of life. The states following Texas in the ranking were Virginia, Utah, Idaho and Colorado. States were scored by CNBC based on 40 different measures of competitiveness. (CNBC.com, 7/08)

Austin ranked 13th among Best Cities to Build Personal Wealth.

Austin ranks 13th among 69 US cities as a place to build wealth, according to Salary.com's 2008 Salary Value Index. In compiling its survey, Salary.com took into account local salaries, the cost of living and unemployment rates from cities with 250,000 or more residents. Additional second-order measures taken into consideration included diversity of industry, education level of the cities' population, proximity to post secondary institutions, percent of population below poverty level and median travel time to work. (*Austin Business Journal*, 6/30/08)

Austin ranked 2nd among U.S. cities for opportunities for young adults.

According to an American Cities Business Journals study of 67 cities, large metropolitan areas with high concentrations of young adults are more likely to prosper. In markets where more than 25% of the population is 18 to 34 years old, the study found that population growth, job growth and personal income are all higher than cities with older populations. People between the ages of 18 and 34 account for 29% of Austin's population, more than any other city surveyed. The city's annual population growth rate was listed at 3.4% and the annual employment growth rate for the city is a healthy 2.8%. (*Austin Business Journal*, 5/23/08)

Austin: Most "Digital Savvy" City.

According to a new analysis from consumer and media research firm Scarborough Research, 12% of Austin adults are Digital Savvy, and they are almost twice as likely as the national average to be in this leading edge consumer segment. Scarborough's assessment of higher level of technological orientation and adoption is based on 18 high tech characteristics comprising higher-than-average ownership of certain hi-tech items, greater likelihood to engage in certain Web 2.0 behaviors, and use of leading-edge cellular device features. (Scarborough Research, 5/13/08)

Austin No. 3 Recession-Proof City.

One of the hippest cities in the country has one of the lowest unemployment rates along with high rates of job growth. The Austin region is home to Dell, and many tech companies from Apple to Sun Microsystems also maintain a significant presence. One difference between "Silicon Hills," as some call Austin's tech sector, and Silicon Valley? In Austin, the median home price is still under \$200,000. *Forbes* examined the country's 50 largest metros. (*Forbes*, 5/7/08)

Austin among Top 10 Greenest Places to Retire.

According to a recent *U.S. News and World Report* study, the nation's retirees agree: Austin is one of the 10 "greenest" retirement destinations. With its plentiful urban parks and wilderness preserves, Austin was cited as an ideal city to help raise grandchildren. Zilker Park, in particular, was cited for its mix of recreation and natural settings, including the hike-and-bike trails, hillside theater, swimming holes and botanical and sculpture gardens. (*US News & World Report*, 4/25/08)

Green power program of Austin Energy ranks 1st in the nation.

The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory released its annual ranking of leading utility green power programs (more than 800 utilities across the United States offer these programs). Ranked by renewable energy sales, the green power program of Austin Energy is first in the nation, followed by Portland General Electric, PacifiCorp, Florida Power & Light, and Xcel Energy. Austin Energy's green power sales topped 578 million kWh in 2007. (National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 4/22/08)

Austin ranks 2nd among Best Cities for Clean Drinking Water.

The "Live Music Capital of the World" is one of the top metropolitan areas (out of 77) with some of the cleanest water on tap. After examining data from consumer confidence reports provided annually by community water systems and compiled by University of Cincinnati researchers in 2006 in its "United States Drinking Water Quality Study Report," the Austin region was among the top 10 metropolitan statistical areas for lowest levels of lead, turbidity and haloacetic acid. (*Forbes*, 4/14/08)

Texas ranks No. 1 for its wind power development.

Texas holds the top positions in rankings for total installed capacity and for new capacity added in 2007, according to the latest rankings by the American Wind Energy Association. Texas increased its installed capacity by 60% over 2006. Based on numbers compiled at the end of 2007, Texas' total wind power installed capacity is 4,446 mega watts, up from 2,768 in 2006. The rest of the top 5 for installed capacity includes California, Minnesota, Iowa and Washington. For new capacity added, Texas is followed by Colorado, Illinois, Oregon and Minnesota. "Texas is the nation's leader in wind energy thanks to our long-term commitment to bolstering renewable energy sources and diversifying the state's energy portfolio," said Texas Gov. Rick Perry. "Wind power plays an essential role in providing Texans clean, affordable and reliable energy, and we hope to continually expand our generation capacity far into the future." (American Wind Energy Association, 4/08)

Texas named one of top 5 Economic Development Regions for Biotechnology in the world.

For the first time, Texas has been named as one of the top global economic development efforts for biotechnology in *FierceBiotech's* annual list. Texas and the other states singled out have "stepped up to the plate with offers of significant financial support designed to spawn a new generation of drug developers." In addition to Texas, the 2008 rankings include New York, Massachusetts, Florida and California as having state programs that are "driving the development of new facilities that will likely have a profound impact in determining where the industry will find its most fertile soil for future growth." The Washington, D.C.-based newsletter chose Texas because of its landmark, voter-approved \$3 billion investment in cancer research. (*FierceBiotech*, 2/08)

Austin tops *Forbes'* list of America's Fastest Growing Metros.

Austin is the winner among the country's most economically healthy large metros, with Atlanta, Seattle, Orlando, Houston and San Jose also appearing high on the list. The magazine observes that the common denominator among these cities is that they are tech hubs with proximity to universities and a healthy increase in population. Austin's population, for example, is expected to increase by nearly 15% by 2012. The metro is also expected to see an estimated 32% GMP growth between 2007 and 2012. Computer manufacturer Dell and The University of Texas are among the anchors of Austin's tech community. Innovation, human capital, infrastructure and quality of place, as well as economic growth were said to measure the pulse of a metro area. *Forbes* used data supplied by Moody's economy.com and Global Insight. (*Forbes*, 1/30/08)

***Forbes* ranks Austin 3rd among Best Cities for Jobs in 2008.**

According to *Forbes*, based on the latest forecast data from Moody's Economy.com., "The Lone Star State shines brilliantly in a list of the best places to work in the U.S. when some economists peer into their crystal balls for 2008." *Forbes* based its ranking of the largest 100 metropolitan areas on five variables: unemployment, job growth, income growth, median household income and cost of living. Austin ranked No. 1 for income growth and No. 2 for employment growth. The top five in the ranking are Salt Lake City, Wichita, Austin, Atlanta and Fort Worth. (*Forbes*, 1/10/08)

Austin is named No. 1 among the Top Ten U.S. Cities to Live, Work & Make Movies.

Austin has ranked among the top three cities on the list for seven consecutive years. One reason the state earned the top slot was because of its statewide incentive program that provides rebates for filming in Texas. In the past year, Austin has hosted the production of dozens of films and television shows, including *Grind House*, *Teeth* and *Friday Night Lights*. (*MovieMaker*, 1/08)

2007 Rankings

Texas named State of the Year by *Business Facilities* magazine.

Texas is getting top economic development honors from a publication that informs and tracks corporate relocations. Based on a state-by-state survey of economic development deals over the last 12 months, *Business Facilities* magazine named Texas—with a total of \$15.4 billion in investment and 9,335 jobs to be created from new projects—its State of the Year for 2007. The 5 projects Texas entered based on job creation were Rackspace Managed Hosting with 5,000 jobs; Fidelity Investments, with 1,535 jobs; Maxim Integrated Products, with 1,000 jobs; Fluor Corp., with 1,000 jobs; and Dimensional Fund Advisors, with 800 jobs. Dimensional Fund Advisors located in Austin. Texas' nominated projects for investment were Motiva Enterprises, with an astounding \$7 billion; NRG Energy, with \$5.4 billion; Eastman Chemical, with \$1.6 billion; Microsoft, with \$985 million; and CitiCorp, with \$450 million. (*Business Facilities*, 12/07)

Austin ranked in the Top 10 Preferred Metropolitan Areas for Job Relocation.

A research study, *Talent Markets: The Importance of Location in the Competition for Human Capital*, named Austin the 6th most desirable city for relocation out of more than 30 cities examined in the United States. The study examines the role community characteristics play in workers' decisions about where to settle and where to seek their next job opportunity. The "brand," or perception of a city, is a critical factor in the decision-making process for job candidates. The most powerful factors in attracting talent to a particular region are job opportunities, clean and safe communities and cost of living. The study was co-sponsored by the Human Capital Institute and Monster.com. (Human Capital Institute, 11/07)

Austin is one of America's Favorite Cities.

Travel + Leisure and CNN Headline News have named Austin one of the top 25 travel destinations in the country. The annual survey of "America's Favorite Cities" rates cities in the categories of after-dark, characteristics, cityscape, culture, food/dining, people, shopping and type of trip. Travelers voted for their favorite cities online CNN.com's I-Report. Austin placed highest in 4 of the "overall" categories: after dark (4th), characteristics (2nd), food/dining (3rd), and people (2nd). Singles scene (1st), live music (2nd), as well as clubbing and cocktail hour accounted for Austin's high After Dark ranking. Affordability, environmental awareness and safety were Austin's top rankings in the Characteristics category. Barbeque (1st) and cheap eats (2nd) contributed to Austin's placement in Food/Dining. Fun (2nd) as well as athletic/active, attractive, and friendly placed Austin high for People. Other subcategories like vintage shopping, wild weekend, underground arts scene, cleanliness, and public parks/spaces round out Austin's attributes most well regarded by visitors. (*Travel + Leisure*, 11/07)

Austin leads among top markets for people who read or contribute to blogs.

Scarborough Research, the leading local market research firm for identifying consumer and retail behaviors in the United States, finds that Austin, TX, Portland, OR, San Francisco and Seattle are the top markets for people who read or contributed to blogs. Fifteen percent of adults in Austin are bloggers, compared with 8% nationally. The top cities for bloggers have tech savvy and youth in common. Thirty-seven percent of Austin adults are between the ages of 18-34; they are 20% more likely than the national average to be within this age range. Adults in Austin and Portland are attracted to new technology. (Scarborough Research, 10/07)

Austin ranks high among Best Cities for Relocating Singles.

In an annual survey, two relocation companies have named Austin one of the top 10 cities in the U.S. for relocating singles. Worldwide ERC, based in Washington, D.C., and Primacy Relocation, based in Memphis, Tenn., teamed with survey company Sperling's BestPlaces. The survey used statistical profiles of the 100 largest U.S. metro areas to weigh criteria including male to female ratios, job growth, higher education costs and the prevalence of bars, clubs and restaurants. (Worldwide ERC & Primacy Americas, 9/07)

Austin Companies Among Fastest Growing, According to *Inc.* Magazine.

Austin companies led the way in a recent list of *Inc.* magazine's 500 Fastest-Growing Private Companies in the U.S. Forty-one Texas businesses appear on *Inc.* magazine's list. The rankings measure privately held companies according to averaged revenue growth from 2003 through 2006. To qualify, businesses have to be U.S. based and independent, with at least \$200,000 revenue in 2003 and \$2 million in 2006. Austin's Ascendant Technology, ROME Corp., Anue Systems, CreditCards.com, Teksavers, Coast to Coast Tickets, Medwing.com, Mercury Mambo, Bulldog Solutions, PeopleAdmin, RenewData, and Wintegra all made the list. (*Inc.*, 09/07)

UT schools get nod in *Hispanic Business* magazine.

University of Texas' business, law and engineering schools all earned a spot on *Hispanic Business* magazine's lists of top 10 schools for Hispanics. The University of Texas' McCombs School of Business ranked No. 2 on the list of top business schools and UT's law school ranked No. 3 on the list of top law schools. In a list of top engineering schools, The University of Texas at Austin College of Engineering placed No. 6. The schools recognized on this year's list set themselves apart by cultivating a diverse student body "where Hispanics students can thrive," according to *Hispanic Business*. (*Hispanic Business*, 09/07)

Austin is a great place to retire.

Austin is one of the top four cities to watch as a retirement-friendly community, according to *AARP The Magazine*. The magazine's annual list of top 5 places to live in the United States for anyone over 50 years old were: Atlanta; Boston; Chandler, AZ; Milwaukee and Portland, OR. The

magazine also featured handful of other cities that are starting to address the challenges of an aging population: Austin; Burlington, VT.; Mankato, MN; and Traverse City, MI. The selections are based on features that make a community livable, including new urbanism, smart growth, mixed-use development and easy-living standards. (*AARP The Magazine*, Sep-Oct/07)

Austin named No. 1 among Cities Where Business Opportunity is Greatest for Growing Companies.

For the second year in a row, the Austin metropolitan area leads *Expansion Management's* 2007 Mayor's Challenge—a best-of-the-best ranking based on seven research studies the publication has put out in the last year. Each year, *Expansion Management* publishes a series of ratings that evaluate the business potential of U.S. cities comparing everything from public-school quality to business health care costs among the 362 metropolitan areas. "Most metros have at least one area of strength when it comes to attracting business," says Bill King, chief editor of *Expansion Management*. "The metro areas that made this list are strong across the board. For employers looking for the best location for a new manufacturing facility, distribution center or regional headquarters, these cities represent an excellent value." (*Expansion Management*, 8/07)

Austin is No. 1 for Business Vitality.

Austin is the best place for business in the U.S., according to Moody's Economy.com. Moody's, an independent economic research firm, reported that the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) earned the top spot over almost 400 metropolitan areas tracked by the company's economic vitality index. The index evaluates current economic conditions, expected trends, and potential risks, taking into account factors such as employment growth, household income, productivity, net migration, industrial diversity, and cost of doing business. (Moody's Economy.com/*Austin Business Journal*, 8/6/07)

Austin is America's Best City for Hispanics.

Hispanic magazine has named Austin the best city in America for Hispanics to live and work. This is the third time Austin has taken the No. 1 spot and the sixth time it's appeared on the list. The magazine ranks cities according to cost of living, population, housing, wages, safety, schools and unemployment. In addition to these categories, Austin's cultural heritage, educational opportunities and political activism help to set the city apart. (*Hispanic*, 08/07)

Newsweek Names UT one of the Hottest Schools in America.

The University of Texas' ability to churn out quality classroom teachers has earned it a few more bragging rights. UT was named to the list of "The 25 Hottest Schools in America" in the 2008 Kaplan/Newsweek "How to Get into College" guide. The university, the only one in Texas on the list, was recognized for contributing to the pool of elementary and secondary education professionals and for faculty contributions to education reform. (*Newsweek*, 8/20/07)

Cedar Park ranks as a Top Town for Families.

Family Circle magazine has named Cedar Park, located 25 miles North of Austin, one of the best communities nationwide for families. For its August 2007 issue, the magazine partnered with New York-based research firm On Board to look at 1,850 cities and towns across the country with populations between 15,000 and 150,000 and a high concentration of households with an average income of \$65,000. The 10 small cities singled out are ones where living costs, commute times, and crime rates are low, and the educational and cultural scenes are way above average. (*Family Circle*, 08/07)

Austin named a "Startup Hub" among world's 30 Fastest Cities.

Austin has been named a "Startup Hub" by *Fast Company* magazine's annual 30 Fastest Cities in the World list. Cities were selected based on three basic criteria: a culture that nurtures creative action and game-changing enterprise, innovation and energy. The magazine judged cities in nine categories ranging from "Creative-Class Meccas" to "Green Leaders." Austin was singled out as a Startup Hub for a young population fueling a white-hot entertainment industry. The result: a host of young media and related technology companies. (*Fast Company*, 07/07)

Williamson County named in the Top 10 for Best Public Schools for the Buck.

With property taxes rising across the country, *Forbes* took a look at per-pupil spending in public schools and weighed it against student performance—college entrance exam scores (SAT or ACT, depending on which is more common in the state), exam participation rates and graduation rates. Williamson County spends \$7,163 per pupil with an average college entrance exam of 1066 and graduation rate of 89%. (*Forbes*, 7/5/07)

Austin is No. 1 for Business Vitality.

Moody's Economy.com's Business Vitality Index rates overall economic vitality of 379 metropolitan areas according to current economic conditions such as household income growth, factors that affect prospective economic conditions including labor availability and regional cost structure, and potential risks such as employment volatility. (*Wall Street Journal*, 6/11/07)

Austin named one of the 10 Greenest Cities in America.

MSN has named the 10 cities doing the most to realize a sustainable metropolis and says that Austin's energy portfolio could make it known as the ray of sunshine in the field of oil pumps. Austin's growing list of proactive energy maneuvers is, to say the least, striking. Not only does Austin lead the country in wind power and biodiesel production, but it has built advanced plug-in hybrid vehicles into its energy strategy. The article also singled out the impact of UT-Austin's Clean Energy Incubator on budding startup green tech companies. (MSN City Guides, 06/07)

Fifteen area schools make Newsweek's "Top of the Class" list.

Of 1,300 top U.S. schools, 15 from the Austin area were ranked according to the number of Advanced Placement, Intl. Baccalaureate and/or Cambridge tests taken by all students at a school divided by the number of graduating seniors. All of the schools on the list are in the top 5% of public schools measured this way. The 15 high performing high schools are distributed through 8 different metro area districts: **Austin ISD:** Akins H.S., James Bowie H.S., LBJ H.S., Anderson H.S., McCallum H.S., & Reagan H.S.; **Dripping ISD:** Dripping Springs H.S.; **Eanes ISD:** Westlake H.S.; **Lake Travis ISD:** Lake Travis H.S.; **Leander ISD:** Cedar Park H.S.; **Pflugerville ISD:** Pflugerville H.S.; **Round Rock ISD:** Round Rock H.S., Stony Point H.S.; & **San Marcos CISD:** San Marcos H.S. (*Newsweek*, 06/07)

Austin is a Top 5 Market for Relocation.

Austin is the fifth-best large city for relocating families. Worldwide ERC and Primacy Relocation revealed the 2007 Best Cities for Relocating Families list which is based on long and short-term factors that determine the likelihood of a successful relocation. The ease with which a family can relocate to a new city is impacted by a series of measurable factors such as cost of living, crime rates, education and climate. To complete the ranking those are combined with more abstract factors such as a city's arts and culture scene and focus on diversity. This year's study also placed a special emphasis on the housing market of individual cities--a significant aspect of an employer's ability to transfer employees. (Worldwide ERC, 05/14/07)

Austin ranked among Top 10 New "Silicon Valleys" of the clean technology sector worldwide.

In *Clean Tech Revolution: The Next Big Growth and Investment Opportunity*, authors Clint Wilder and Ron Pernick list Austin with Copenhagen; Chicago; Freiburg, Germany; New York; Hyderabad, India; Portland, Ore.; San Francisco, Shanghai and Vancouver as the world's top "clean tech" centers. They describe clean tech as "any product, service, or process that delivers value using limited or zero nonrenewable resources and/or creates significantly less waste than conventional offerings." (Clint Wilder and Ron Pernick, *The Clean Tech Revolution*, 05/07)

Site Selection names Austin in Top 10 Deals of 2006.

Site Selection magazine recognized the \$4 billion Samsung expansion in Austin as one of the Top 10 North American Deals of 2006. In evaluating the top economic development projects of the year, the editors of *Site Selection* took into account total capital investment, number of jobs created, regional economic impact; value of jobs created; creativity of the deal, role of incentives in the deal, competition for the project to locate elsewhere, and speed to market. (*Site Selection*, 05/07)

Austin ranked No. 16 Best Place to do Business.

Austin moved up from 26 to 16 in *Inc.* magazine's for Best Place to do Business (Large Cities). Texas' strong showing in the ranking is attributed to several factors, including relatively low business costs, a recovery in technology--and most important, the thriving energy sector, which is attracting a new cadre of highly paid professionals to an increasingly sophisticated high-tech business. Job growth in Austin, hit hard by the dot-com bust, is now more than triple that of rival high-tech centers like Boston (No. 56) and San Jose (No. 60). (*Inc.*, 04/07).

Green power program of Austin Energy is No. 1 in the nation.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory annual ranking of leading utility green power programs, Austin Energy's GreenChoice is first in the nation. The ranking is based on renewable energy sales. (National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 04/03/07)

Austin-area companies in Fortune 500.

Dell, Whole Foods and Temple-Inland are among the public companies listed on this year's the Fortune 500 list ranking at spots 34, 411 and 414 respectively. Other Fortune 500 companies that are based elsewhere but have a significant Central Texas presence include IBM (15th), Progressive (159th), Applied Materials (274th), and Advanced Micro Devices (407th). Austin's Freescale Semiconductor has been in the Fortune 500 in the past, but was taken private in a 2006 buyout. (*Fortune*, 04/30/07)

Austin tech sector will remain hot.

Growth in Austin's technology industry is likely to continue apace this year, with semiconductor and software companies leading the way, according to a study conducted by Simon Management Group. The biggest finding is that all the large semiconductor and software companies will be adding a surprisingly large number of people. Average growth in employment among engineers and programmers in those areas is likely to be 20 percent as local companies continue to increase their research and development spending, the study shows. (Simon Management Group, 04/07)

Austin named in Top 5 Places to Embrace Urban Life.

Men's Journal's annual "50 Best Places to Live" feature includes Austin in its Top 5 Places to Embrace Urban Life category. (*Men's Journal*, 4/07)

Austin ranked No. 8 in Top Metros for College-Educated Workers.

Expansion Management magazine ranked each metro according to the percentage of adults with at least a bachelor's degree, the percentage with at least a master's degree, the percentage with a Ph.D., and the percentage of adults possessing professional degrees. (*Expansion Management*, 04/07)

Austin ranked in Top 10 US Cities for Renewable Energy.

SustainLane Government (www.sustainlane.us) determined the percentage of each city's electricity that comes from renewables such as solar, wind, geothermal, and small-scale hydro energy. Austin made the list with its leading residential and business green choice programs as part of city-owned utility service offerings. (SustainLane.us, 04/07)

Austin ranked No. 7 among Hottest Jobs Markets for Young Adults.

Twenty-nine percent of Austin's residents fit in the 18-34 age range. That's the highest concentration of young adults in any of the top-10 markets. Many are attracted by the healthy economy. Austin has added 62,100 jobs in the past five years, roughly 1,000 every month. "University towns like Raleigh and Austin are still seeing a lot of job growth," says Hugo Sellert, research manager for Monster Worldwide, Inc., the parent company of Monster.com, an online employment service. "Biotechnology, IT (information technology) -- those sectors remain strong. And research firms in those fields typically set up close to universities." (bizjournals.com, 04/07)

Austin named No. 2 in Best Walking Cities.

Prevention magazine and the American Podiatric Medical Association named Austin the second best city in the country for fitness and walking. This is the second year in a row Austin has topped the list of American cities best suited for walking. Elements include safe streets, beautiful places to walk, mild weather and good air quality. Specific criteria used included portion of the population that walks for exercise, use of mass transit, parks per square mile, points of interest per square mile, winter/summer temperatures, and prevalence of athletic shoe buyers. (*Prevention*, 4/07)

Austin-Bergstrum International Airport Named Best Domestic Airport.

ABIA was named No. 1 as the Best Domestic Airport by the Airports Council International with the ranking based on responses to a survey of passengers conducted throughout the year. The surveys found that frequent flyers look for swift and hassle-free airport experiences with minimum of contact with staff. Conversely, leisure or infrequent flyers place considerable emphasis on friendly and courteous staff. Leading factors with regard to customer satisfaction are the ambience of the airport and the cleanliness of the terminal, followed by feeling safe and having comfortable waiting areas. (Airports Council International, 03/07)

Austin named one of Top 10 Places in the South for the Creative Class.

"When the technology industry accounts for a third of your workforce and 41 percent of your community's payroll, it's hard not to be an attractive place for the creative class. Austin is home to Dell, IBM, AMD, AT&T, Selectron, Apple . . . and the list goes on and on. It's also home to numerous programs that foster entrepreneurship, such as the Central Texas Angel Network and the Emerging Technology Fund. *Men's Journal* ranked Austin the second-best place to live in the nation, and with a low cost of living, excellent higher educational opportunities and a mild year-round climate, it's easy to understand. Austin is also nicknamed 'The Live Music Capital of the World' with hundreds of different places offering entertainment." (*Southern Business & Development*, Winter 2007)

Austin, Texas & Samsung cited as one of the "Great Corporate Love Affairs in the South."

Austin's efforts to court Samsung and offer incentives resulted in the largest investment by a foreign company in the U.S. Samsung, in return, has contributed millions of dollars to regional nonprofits and to the local school district in the form of a math and science program. (*Southern Business & Development*, Winter 2007)

Samsung's new chip plant in Austin named a Top 10 Story of 2006.

Samsung's massive expansion in Austin translates into \$5 billion of spending to produce DRAM memory chips on 300-millimeter wafers. 1,000 new employees added to Samsung's Austin payroll, with the average salary of \$60,000. While every Southern state has long targeted recruitment of computer chip plants, Texas is the only place in the South where a significant fab investment and operation has been announced in the region this decade. (*Southern Business & Development*, Winter 2007)

UT-Austin ranked one of the Top 10 Universities that Drive Economic Development.

The University of Texas was chosen because of the Austin Technology Incubator, which has assisted more than 150 start-up companies in becoming successful high-tech business. These efforts have generated \$1.5 billion in revenue (1989-2004) and created 3,000 jobs. Larger companies have acquired 25 ventures and four have become publicly traded. Companies that have spun off from UT Austin include Molecular Imprints, Tracor, Radian, National Instruments and Evolutionary Technologies. Economic impact of UT's research/expenditures: \$1.2 billion annually. Collaboration between UT and the Austin Chamber is crucial to attraction business and retaining talent. (*Southern Business & Development*, Winter 2007)

Austin ranks as Top U.S. Cities for Cleantech.

SustainLane Government analyzed US cities to see which led in combining Cleantech investments, infrastructure and supportive policies into a physical "cluster." The ideal existing model for a Cleantech incubation cluster combines start-up or advanced stage venture capital and investor network access, including mentoring, Academic or federal research lab collaboration and active state or local government participation (field testing, prototyping, and pilot programs) and incentives. (Sustainlane Government, 2/07)

Austin named one of America's 50 Hottest Cities.

Austin was named by 80 prominent site location consultants who were asked to list the nation's best cities for expanding and relocating. Austin's reputation as a high-tech hotspot with an involved university community, as well as the planned Southwest Academy of Nano-Technology, put Austin on the list. (*Expansion Management*, 2/07)

Austin-Round Rock ranked in Top 25 Best U.S. Cities for Jobs.

Austin came in at 23rd (moving up 28 spots from last year's number 51 spot) thanks to the city's income and job growth. The city has a strong outlook, thanks to the University of Texas, a good state revenue outlook, and an outstanding quality of life. (*Forbes*, 2/07)

Austin companies among the EPA's Top 25 Green Power Partners.

Three Austin companies, Whole Foods Market (no. 2), Cisco Systems (no. 11) and IBM Corporation (no. 16), were named to the list of the top 25 partners whose annual green power purchase is the largest nationwide. The City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District are no. 2 and no. 4 respectively on the Top 10 Local Government Partners list. The Green Power Partnership is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Green Power Partnership is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1/07)

Austin ranks No. 2 globally for per capita employment in IT & computer manufacturing.

Coming in behind Silicon Valley and ahead of Singapore, Austin ranked number 2 in per-capita employment in information technology and computer manufacturing according to the 2007 Silicon Valley Index, produced by Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, a public-private partnership. (Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, 01/07)

2006 Rankings

Austin ranked No. 2 for Festivals.

The Urban Institute produced the first known metropolitan rankings of cultural celebrations, culling data from the National Center for Charitable Statistics database. The Institute counted nonprofit organizations that put on fairs or festivals and have budgets exceeding \$25,000. The ranking acknowledges metro areas with the highest number per capita of large nonprofits organizing festivals and fairs. The study also ranks the 50 largest metros on several other indicators of cultural vitality. Austin also places high for arts establishments (13th), arts nonprofits (13th), and artists jobs (11th). (Urban Institute, 11/06)

Austin ranked No. 2 among Best Cities for Relocating Singles.

According to relocation industry groups Worldwide ERC and Primacy Relocation, Austin is among the best cities for relocating singles. The groups used statistical profiles of the largest 100 U.S. metro areas, focusing on criteria most relevant to singles, to define the rankings of cities with the highest probability of a smooth transition and a successful relocation. (Primacy Relocation, 10/11/06)

Austin ranks 5th Best Large City for Entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneur and the National Policy Research Council's annual entrepreneurial Hot Cities rankings of the nation's best places to start and grow a business ranked Austin high on the list for its diverse, highly trained and readily available workforce, eight regional universities with renowned academic programs, no personal or corporate state income tax and minimal union activity. Others in the top five large cities list were Phoenix, Charlotte, Raleigh-Durham and Las Vegas. (*Entrepreneur*, 9/06)

UT System takes top billing in Patent Index.

The University of Texas System was ranked first among more than 400 major research universities internationally in a study analyzing the ability of universities to produce patents from their biotechnology research. (Milken Institute, 9/06)

19 of Texas' 50 fastest-growing tech firms in Austin.

Of the 50 fastest-growing technology companies in Texas, 19 are based in Austin, according to a report released by Deloitte and Touche. 2006 saw a jump in the number of Austin-based companies making the list. Ranking near the top are Molecular Imprints, which was listed as the fourth fastest growing company; 360Training ranking as sixth; NetQoS ranking as seventh; and Zilliant ranking as eighth. (Deloitte & Touche, 08/23/06)

Austin named top metro for future business locations.

The *Expansion Management's* 2006 Mayor's Challenge ranking used criteria including overall secondary school districts, the greatest concentration of workers with post-secondary advanced and technical degrees, high quality healthcare at a reasonable cost, a place where employees can enjoy exceptional quality of life at a reasonable salary, logistics infrastructure, and business climate. (*Expansion Management*, 8/06)

Austin ranked third among most inventive cities.

Austin ranks high among U.S. cities when it comes to innovation with the third-highest number of patents in 2005—1,705. Austin is the only city outside of California in the top 7. ("The Most Inventive Towns in America," *Wall Street Journal*, 8/22/06)

Austin in Best Big Cities ranking of *Money's* Best Places to Live.

Money magazine ranked Austin second among the top10 Best Big Cities in its Best Places to Live ranking. (*Money*, 7/17/06)

Austin ranks one of top ten Best Cities for Singles.

Forbes ranked Austin number 8 among 40 large metropolitan areas judged on nightlife, culture, job growth, number of other singles, cost of living alone, online dating and coolness. (*Forbes*, 7/25/06)

Austin ranks 4th in best overall standard of living.

Austin was sited as one of the best places due to median family income, per capita income and per capita disposable income levels combined with cost of living, state and local tax burdens, family and individual poverty levels and unemployment rates. (*Expansion Management*, 6/12/06)

Austin ranks as 3rd smartest city.

Austin jumped from number 26 to number 3 as one of the top communities with the highest concentration of brainpower. The study analyzed the educational level of adults in nearly 16,000 cities and towns with criteria that included the number of college graduates and the resident's abilities to innovate, create, compete and make money. (Bizjournals.com, 6/06)

Austin ranks in top 14 of sustainable cities.

Austin came in 14th among America's 50 largest cities. The group lauded Austin's green building pioneering during the late 1980s and early 1990s, Mayor Will Wynn's call for renewable energy, and its highest use of consumer-choice renewables of any U.S. metro area. (SustainLane.com, 6/06)

Austin Ranks in top 5 "Smart Places to Live."

Austin was chosen as a smart city based on cost-of-living, housing market, access to quality health care and a strong economy. "Strong community support for the public schools and the lure of jobs has fueled population growth. Austin is a sophisticated salsa of culture, history and politics." (Kiplinger's Personal Finance, 6/06)

Austin ranks 2nd for school quality among mid-size metros.

Rankings were determined by using the 2006 Education Quotient data and weighing each district's scores according to its total enrollment as a percentage of the metro-wide total student enrollment. (*Expansion Management*, 5/06)

Austin ranks as number 2 city for filmmakers.

For the second straight year, Austin earned the second spot in the nation on *MovieMaker* magazine's list of the "Top 10 American Cities to be a *MovieMaker*." (*MovieMaker*, 2/06)

Austin one of the hottest spots for wireless.

Austin ranks second in the nation based on availability of free wireless "hot spots." (*JiWire*, 1/06)

Austin ranks 7th for annual growth of U.S. metro area economies.

The Austin metro grew 7.9% from 1994 to 2004 jumping from a \$27.5 billion economy to \$58.7 billion in ten years. (Prepared by Global Insight for the United States Conference on Mayors, 1/06)

2005 Rankings

Austin Ranks 19th among 125 global regions on World Knowledge Competitive Index 2005.

The World Knowledge Competitiveness Index is an integrated and overall benchmark of the knowledge capacity, capability and sustainability of 125 regions across the globe, and the extent to which this knowledge is translated into economic value, and transferred into the wealth of the citizens of these regions. (*World Knowledge Competitiveness Index*, 12/05)

Austin one of Kiplinger's Top 7 Cool Cities.

Kiplinger's Your Money named Austin one of 7 "locations that are perfect for young professionals." About Austin, it quoted former New Yorker Nicole Cloutier, 24, who said, "Austin is a great college town filled with musicians, margaritas, swimming holes, cute neighborhoods, laid-back people and cheap rents." (*Your Money*, 10/05)

Austin No. 9 Among Hottest Cities for Entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneur.com and the National Policy Research Council used criteria including the number of startups, young companies and companies experiencing rapid growth. (www.entrepreneur.com/bestcities, 9/05)

Austin ranks No. 4 among tech towns.

Austin's moderate traffic and affordable housing helped it stand out in a survey by the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, an economic development organization. Austin was fourth based largely on comparatively low traffic congestion and more affordable housing than gridlocked and expensive markets such as San Jose, San Diego, Chicago, New York and Boston. Silicon Valley finished last in an annual ranking of 12 U.S. technology hubs because of its notoriously high housing costs, traffic congestion, unemployment rate and other quality-of-life problems. (Silicon Valley Leadership Group, 9/01/05)

Austin Rated Best Place to Live for Hispanics.

For the second year in a row, *Hispanic* magazine rates Austin the best place to live in America. The magazine cited low crime rates, median home prices of \$154,000 and a "happening cultural scene" that embraces the city's 30 percent Hispanic population. Albuquerque, Los Angeles, San Jose, San Antonio, Las Vegas and El Paso ranked behind Austin. (*Hispanic*, 8/05)

Austin is the Most Wired City in the Nation.

Forrester Research, a technology consulting firm, selected Austin as the most wired city in the U.S. The index measured personal computer ownership, the proportion of residents who go online and those who use broadband connections at home. (www.forrester.com, 7/05)

Austin No. 3 Best Place for Business and Careers on *Forbes'* List.

For the third straight year, Austin ranks in the top three places among the 150 metro area ranked by *Forbes* magazine on such criteria as Business Costs, Living Costs, Number of Engineers, Crime Rates, Job Growth and Employment Rates. (*Forbes*, 5/05)

Austin Ranked No. 2 Large Market for Families to Relocate.

The Worldwide Employee Relocation Council and relocation services provider Primacy Relocation ranked Austin as the Number Two best site to which families could relocate among cities over 500,000 population. Among the criteria considered were cost of living, taxes, home costs/appreciation, schools, climate, commute times, out-of-state tuition rules at local universities and regulation of long-term care facilities. (www.erc.org, 5/05)

Note: The version of these rankings on our web site and the electronic version of this MSWord or PDF document provide direct hyperlinks to the original items wherever available.