



A Business Journals Exclusive by G. Scott Thomas

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Oklahoma City leads heartland's sweep of Economic Index

The Business Journals by G. Scott Thomas

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The American economy is strongest in the heartland.

Oklahoma City, Austin and Omaha are the highest-rated markets in September's version of [the On Numbers Economic Index](#), which measures the economic health of 102 major metropolitan areas.

The top eight metros, in fact, are far from the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. All eight lie within a triangle that has Houston, Pittsburgh and Denver as its endpoints.

No. 9 Boston is the strongest market on either coast. Only four other coastal metros -- Charleston, S.C. (13th), Portland, Maine (16th), San Jose (17th) and Honolulu (20th) -- are in the national top 20.

The [On Numbers Economic Index](#) is generated by an 18-part formula that assesses private-sector job growth, unemployment, earnings, housing-price appreciation, and construction and retail activity. [Here is the detailed methodology.](#)

September is the first month [the index has been publicly released](#), though an August version was previously calculated. Oklahoma City was No. 1 on both lists.

The latest rankings for all 102 markets can be found in the database below. Click View Details to see a breakdown for the metro of your choice.

1. Oklahoma City: Workers' earnings have grown faster in [Oklahoma City](#) than in any other market during the past year (11.9 percent), and [the unemployment rate](#) (4.8 percent) is lower than anywhere but Omaha.

2. Austin: [The Texas capital](#) is setting the pace for private-sector job growth, boosting local employment by 7.1 percent since 2007.

3. Omaha: The jobless rate in [Omaha](#), as noted above, is the best among all 102 metros, 4.7 percent. Compare that to [the national rate of 8.3 percent](#).

4. Pittsburgh: The value of a typical home in the [Pittsburgh area](#) has risen 5.5 percent in half a decade. Only Houston (5.8 percent) has done better.

Rank	Metro	Overall score	
1	Oklahoma City	91.042	View Details
2	Austin	85.869	View Details
3	Omaha	78.740	View Details
4	Pittsburgh	76.859	View Details
5	Denver	75.819	View Details
6	Houston	75.523	View Details
7	Columbus	74.656	View Details
8	Tulsa	74.432	View Details
9	Boston	73.072	View Details
10	Little Rock, Ark.	71.338	View Details
11	San Antonio	70.844	View Details
12	Durham, N.C.	69.136	View Details
13	Charleston, S.C.	68.814	View Details

14	Dallas-Fort Worth	67.849	View Details
15	Cincinnati	67.651	View Details
16	Portland, Maine	67.601	View Details
17	San Jose	67.404	View Details
18	Louisville	66.735	View Details
19	Nashville	65.943	View Details
20	Honolulu	64.655	View Details

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