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North American Cities of the Future 2009/10

Published: April 21, 2009

New York, San Francisco, Tampa and Greenville are the top cities in the 2009/10 North American Cities of the Future competition. **Jacqueline Hegarty** reports on the leaders among the major, large, small and micro cities.

Although New York did not feature in the top rankings of the previous competition in 2007, this year it has pipped Chicago to the top spot to become **fDi Magazine's** North American City of the Future 2009/10.

This is primarily due to the high economic potential of New York attributed to the large number of FDI projects into and out of the city and the number of megaprojects associated with the city, according to fDi Markets' database, as well as its large base of post-secondary students.

Although Chicago has been pushed down to second place in the major city category, it still maintains the top position in terms of FDI promotion strategy and it scored highly in the categories of economic potential and infrastructure.

Mexico City is the highest ranking major Mexican city, in 12th position. Although it has performed well in terms of cost effectiveness, with the cheapest town office rental costs according to Regus, and in the human resources category, with the largest number of postsecondary students, the areas of quality of life and infrastructure have curbed its score.

fDi Magazine's North American Cities of the Future 2009/10 shortlists, which took more than six months to research and involved the data collection of nearly 400 North American cities, ranks San Francisco, California, as the top large city of the future, followed closely by Austin, Texas. Of the large cities surveyed, San Luis Potosí in Mexico ranks top for cost effectiveness, while Charlotte, North Carolina, ranks top for FDI strategy according to the judging panel.

The small cities category comprised of the most cities surveyed this year, with Tampa, Florida, coming out in top position followed by Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Canadian city of Halifax has received the highest small city score for FDI strategy, while Raleigh in North Carolina ranks at number one position in terms of economic potential.

Richmond, Virginia, ranks ninth overall in the small cities category, primarily due to a high scoring in terms of its FDI promotion strategy.

The top micro North American City of the Future 2009/10 is Greenville, South Carolina, due to its strong economic potential, good human resources and high scores in business friendliness. The top Canadian city in the small city category is Victoria, British Columbia, ranking third overall, helped by high scores in both infrastructure and FDI promotion strategy.

Note

In April 2008, the Financial Times Ltd acquired fDi Markets and fDi Benchmark. fDi Markets is an independent database which tracks global FDI on a realtime basis whereas fDi Benchmark is an independent database which benchmarks global locations on how appealing they are to foreign investors. This division compiled the majority of the data for the Cities of the Future competition, with the exception of the FDI promotion strategy which was submitted by individual cities and assessed by the judging panel. These changes have made the competition even more objective.

Methodology

fDi Cities of the Future shortlists are created by the independent collection of data by fDi Benchmark, across nearly 400

North American cities. This information was set under six categories: economic potential, human resources, cost effectiveness, quality of life, infrastructure and business friendliness. A seventh category was added to the scoring – FDI promotion strategy. In this category, 128 North American cities submitted details about their promotion strategy and this was judged and scored by the independent judging panel as well as **fDi**'s research team.

This year, cities were categorised by their city population only – not the metro area – in order to make the data collected more comparative across city levels. The categories were as follows:

- Major cities have a population of more than 1,000,000.
- Large cities have a population greater than 500,000 and smaller than 1,000,000.
- Small cities have a population greater than 100,000 and smaller than 500,000.
- Micro cities have a population of less than 100,000.
- Cities could score up to a maximum of 10 points for each individual criteria, which were weighted by importance to give the overall scores.

THE JUDGING PANEL

Carlos Angulo-Parra

Partner, Baker & McKenzie Abogados

Don Holbrook

Board member, International Economic Development Council

Daniel Malachuk

View from America columnist, **fDi**; and an adviser on global direct investment strategies

Miguel Noyola

Partner, Baker & McKenzie LLP

Mark O'Connell

Chief executive officer, OCO Global

NORTH AMERICAN CITIES OF THE FUTURE 2009/10

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8	Miami	Florida	US
9	Charlotte	North Carolina	US
10	San Jose	California	US

[For the full rankings please click here](#)

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NEW YORK, SAN FRANCISCO, TAMPA AND GREENVILLE ARE THE TOP CITIES IN THE 2009/10 NORTH AMERICAN CITIES OF THE FUTURE COMPETITION. JACQUELINE HEGARTY REPORTS ON THE LEADERS AMONG THE MAJOR, LARGE, SMALL AND MICRO CITIES

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4	San Francisco	California	US
5	Austin	Texas	US
6	Tampa	Florida	US
7	Los Angeles	California	US
8	Miami	Florida	US
9	Charlotte	North Carolina	US
10	San Jose	California	US



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Cities could score up to a maximum of 10 points for each individual criteria, which were weighted by importance to give the overall scores. ■

JUDGING CRITERIA

ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

- Population
- Population forecast
- GDP (\$bn)
- Unemployment rate
- Number of FDI projects out of the city from 2003 to present
- Number of crossborder FDI projects out of the city from 2003 to present (US only)
- Number of FDI projects into city from 2003 to present
- Number of crossborder FDI projects into city from 2003 to present day (US only)
- FDI within high-tech service sector
- FDI within high-tech manufacturing sector
- FDI within knowledge-based sector
- Number of megaprojects
- Number of indigenous global companies

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Number of world top 200 universities
- Number of colleges and universities by city
- Number of colleges and universities by state
- Total number of post-secondary students
- Number of people employed within high-tech manufacturing by metropolitan statistical area (MSA)
- Number of people employed within high-tech services by MSA
- Number of people employed within knowledge-based sector by MSA

COST EFFECTIVENESS

- Town centre office rental costs
- Factory/industrial rental costs
- Labour cost for specific range of job functions – clerk
- Labour cost for specific range of job functions – senior engineer
- Labour cost for specific range of job functions – business unit manager
- Petrol prices (November 2008)
- Average retail price of electricity to ultimate customers by end-user sector, by state
- Industrial gas prices by state

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Average residential property price
- Crime per 100,000 residents by state
- Crime per 100,000 residents by city
- Number of International Baccalaureate world schools

- Number of international tourists by state
- Number of international tourists by city

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Upload speed (kilobytes per sec)
- Download speed (kilobytes per sec)
- Airports serving the city
- Number of locations served
- Number of ports
- Size of port
- Type of port
- Number of freight rail stations

BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS

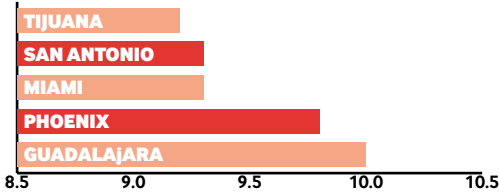
- Basic level of corporation tax on highest tax bracket by country
- Basic level of corporation tax by state
- Number of companies within the high-tech manufacturing sector
- Number of companies within high-tech service sector
- Number of companies within knowledge-based sector
- Number of companies within high-tech manufacturing sector since 2005
- Number of companies in high-tech service sector since 2005
- Number of companies in knowledge-based sector since 2005
- Growth of companies within high-tech manufacturing sector
- Growth of companies within high-tech service sector
- Growth of companies within knowledge-based sector

FDI PROMOTION STRATEGY

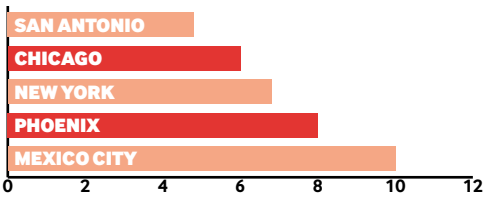
- Number of staff dedicated to promoting and facilitating inward investment and any key initiatives being implemented to attract more investment
- Information on high-growth sectors/sub-sectors in the city which offer excellent potential for inward investment
- Description of incentives which are available to inward investors, outlining where possible the typical size of incentives
- High profile, world class property/sites available in the city suitable for investors to move into, with basic information on each property if available

Note: Information collected by **fDi** Benchmark except for final judging criteria – this information was provided by the cities and assessed by the judging panel.

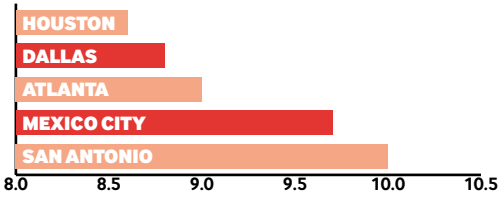
MAJOR CITIES: LOWEST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



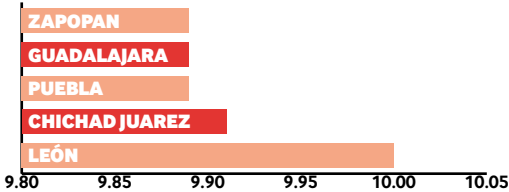
MAJOR CITIES: LARGEST NUMBER OF POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS



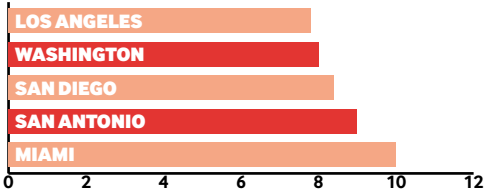
MAJOR CITIES: REGUS' CHEAPEST TOWN CENTRE RENTAL COSTS



MAJOR CITIES: LABOUR COSTS FOR LOW-WAGE JOBS



MAJOR CITIES: HIGHEST GROWTH OF COMPANIES WITHIN KNOWLEDGE-BASED SECTOR



MAJOR CITIES OF THE FUTURE 2009/10

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	New York	New York	US
2	Chicago	Illinois	US
3	Houston	Texas	US
4	Los Angeles	California	US
5	Miami	Florida	US
6	San Diego	California	US
7	Toronto	Ontario	Canada
8	Atlanta	Georgia	US
9	Dallas	Texas	US
10	Phoenix	Arizona	US

MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	New York	New York	US
2	Chicago	Illinois	US
3	Atlanta	Georgia	US
4	Toronto	Ontario	Canada
5	Houston	Texas	US

MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST HUMAN RESOURCES

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	New York	New York	US
2	Los Angeles	California	US
3	Chicago	Illinois	US
4	Mexico City	Distrito Federal	Mexico
5	Houston	Texas	US

MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST COST EFFECTIVENESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Mexico City	Distrito Federal	Mexico
2	Chichad Juarez	Chihuahua	Mexico
3	San Antonio	Texas	US
4	Guadalajara	Jalisco	Mexico
5	Tijuana	Baja California	Mexico

MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Toronto	Ontario	Canada
2	New York	New York	US
3	Los Angeles	California	US
4	Montreal	Quebec	Canada
5	Miami	Florida	US

MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST INFRASTRUCTURE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	New York	New York	US
2	Los Angeles	California	US
3	Chicago	Illinois	US
4	Houston	Texas	US
5	Toronto	Ontario	Canada

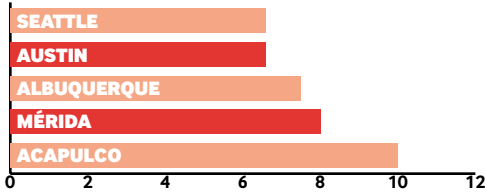
MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Houston	Texas	US
2	New York	New York	US
3	Miami	Florida	US
4	San Diego	California	US
5	Los Angeles	California	US

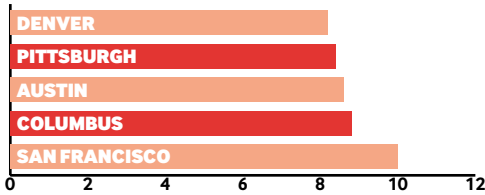
MAJOR CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST FDI STRATEGY

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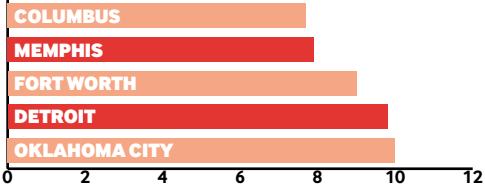
LARGE CITIES: LOWEST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



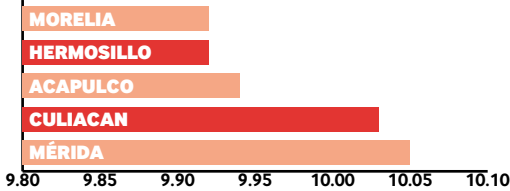
LARGE CITIES: LARGEST NUMBER OF POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS



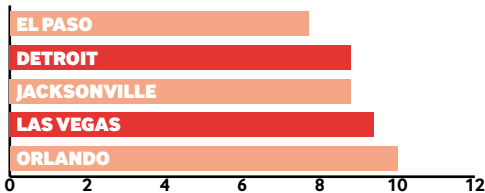
LARGE CITIES: REGUS' CHEAPEST TOWN CENTRE RENTAL COSTS



LARGE CITIES: LABOUR COSTS FOR LOW-WAGE JOBS



LARGE CITIES: HIGHEST GROWTH OF COMPANIES WITHIN THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED SECTOR



LARGE CITIES OF THE FUTURE 2009/10

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	San Francisco	California	US
2	Austin	Texas	US
3	Charlotte	North Carolina	US
4	San Jose	California	US
5	Jacksonville	Florida	US
6	Seattle	Washington	US
7	Orlando	Florida	US
8	Denver	Colorado	US
9	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	US
10	Detroit	Michigan	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	San Francisco	California	US
2	Charlotte	North Carolina	US
3	Austin	Texas	US
4	Detroit	Michigan	US
5	San Jose	California	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST HUMAN RESOURCES

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	San Jose	California	US
2	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	US
3	Austin	Texas	US
4	Columbus	Ohio	US
5	Seattle	Washington	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST COST EFFECTIVENESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	San Luis Potosí	San Luis Potosí	Mexico
2	Chihuahua City	Chihuahua	Mexico
3	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	US
4	Reynosa	Tamaulipas	Mexico
5	Mérida	Yucatán	Mexico

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Orlando	Florida	US
2	Ottawa	Ontario	Canada
3	Hamilton	Ontario	Canada
4	Las Vegas	Nevada	US
5	Denver	Colorado	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST INFRASTRUCTURE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Seattle	Washington	US
2	San Francisco	California	US
3	Detroit	Michigan	US
4	Jacksonville	Florida	US
5	Cleveland	Ohio	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Las Vegas	Nevada	US
2	Austin	Texas	US
3	Orlando	Florida	US
4	San Jose	California	US
5	San Francisco	California	US

LARGE CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST FDI STRATEGY

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Charlotte	North Carolina	US
2	Austin	Texas	US
3	Jacksonville	Florida	US
4	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	US
5	Mississauga	Ontario	Canada

SMALL CITIES OF THE FUTURE 2009/10

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Tampa	Florida	US
2	Minneapolis	Minnesota	US
3	Raleigh	North Carolina	US
4	St Louis	Missouri	US
5	Irvine	California	US
6	Sacramento	California	US
7	Louisville	Kentucky	US
8	Tulsa	Oklahoma	US
9	Richmond	Virginia	US
10	Salt Lake City	Utah	US

SMALL CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Raleigh	North Carolina	US
2	Tampa	Florida	US
3	Louisville	Kentucky	US
4	Durham	North Carolina	US
5	Greensboro	North Carolina	US

SMALL CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST HUMAN RESOURCES

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Pasadena	California	US
2	Long Beach	California	US
3	Minneapolis	Minnesota	US
4	St Louis	Missouri	US
5	Tempe	Arizona	US

SMALL CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST COST EFFECTIVENESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Brownsville	Texas	US
2	Kansas	Kansas	US
3	Des Moines	Iowa	US
4	Wichita	Kansas	US
5	Mobile	Alabama	US

SMALL CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Windsor	Ontario	Canada
2	Kitchener	Ontario	Canada
3	St Catharine	Ontario	Canada
4	London	Ontario	Canada
5	Tampa	Florida	US

SMALL CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST INFRASTRUCTURE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Oakland	California	US
2	Tacoma	Washington	US
3	Newark	New Jersey	US
4	Tampa	Florida	US
5	Norfolk	Virginia	US

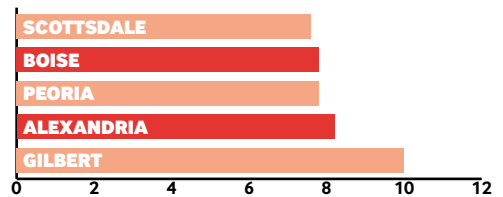
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RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
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3	Minneapolis	Minnesota	US
4	Irvine	California	US
5	Salt Lake City	Utah	US

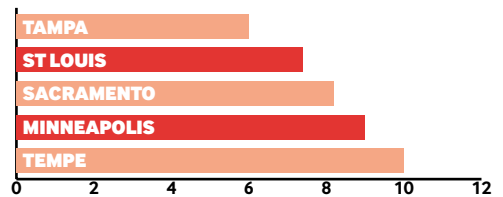
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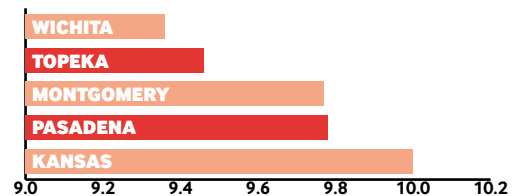
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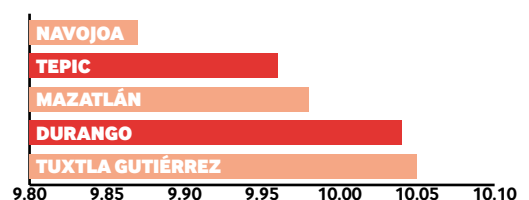
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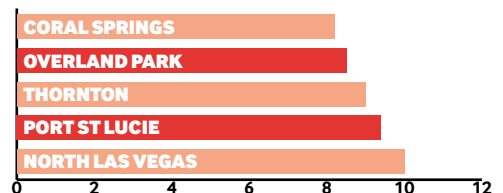
SMALL CITIES: REGUS' CHEAPEST TOWN CENTRE RENTAL COSTS



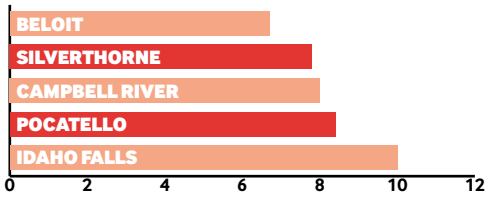
SMALL CITIES: LABOUR COSTS FOR LOW-WAGE JOBS



SMALL CITIES: HIGHEST GROWTH OF COMPANIES WITHIN KNOWLEDGE-BASED SECTOR



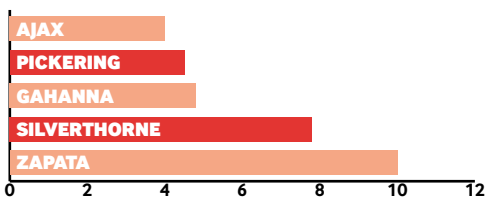
MICRO CITIES: LOWEST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



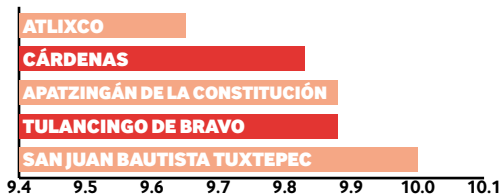
MICRO CITIES: LARGEST NUMBER OF POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS



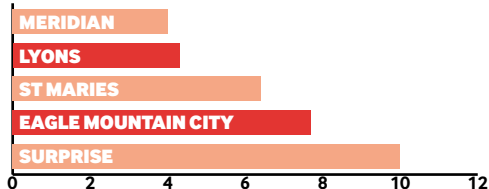
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MICRO CITIES: LABOUR COSTS FOR LOW-WAGE JOBS



MICRO CITIES: HIGHEST GROWTH OF COMPANIES WITHIN KNOWLEDGE-BASED SECTOR



MICRO CITIES OF THE FUTURE 2009/10

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1	Greenville	South Carolina	US
2	Wilmington	Delaware	US
3	Victoria	British Columbia	Canada
4	Surprise	Arizona	US
5	Ogden	Utah	US
6	Idaho Falls	Idaho	US
7	Pocatello	Idaho	US
8	Fargo	North Dakota	US
9	Danville	Virginia	US
10	Santa Fe Spring	California	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Greenville	South Carolina	US
2	Pocatello	Idaho	US
3	Waterloo	Ontario	Canada
4	Danville	Virginia	US
5	Wilmington	Delaware	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST HUMAN RESOURCES

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Santa Fe Spring	California	US
2	Greenville	South Carolina	US
3	South Gate	California	US
4	Clovis	California	US
5	Waterloo	Ontario	Canada

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST COST EFFECTIVENESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	San Juan Bautista Tuxtepec	Oaxaca	Mexico
2	Tulancingo de Bravo	Hidalgo	Mexico
3	Apatzingán de la Constitución	Michoacán	Mexico
4	Cárdenas	Tabasco	Mexico
5	Silverthorne	Colorado	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Bismarck	North Dakota	US
2	Poughkeepsie	New York	US
3	Fargo	North Dakota	US
4	Danville	Virginia	US
5	Pocatello	Idaho	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST INFRASTRUCTURE

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Victoria	British Columbia	Canada
2	Wilmington	Delaware	US
3	Nanaimo	British Columbia	Canada
4	Ogden	Utah	US
5	Greenville	South Carolina	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Wilmington	Delaware	US
2	Greenville	South Carolina	US
3	Surprise	Arizona	US
4	Santa Fe Spring	California	US
5	Cheyenne	Wyoming	US

MICRO CITIES: TOP FIVE BEST FDI STRATEGY

RANK	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
1	Surprise	Arizona	US
2	Victoria	British Columbia	Canada
3	Clovis	California	US
4	Sarnia	Ontario	Canada
5	Kamloops	British Columbia	Canada