

2014

Live. Work. Play. Rankings

In 2010, the Board of Directors for Anchorage Economic Development Corp. (AEDC) adopted a vision for Anchorage. By 2025, Anchorage will be the #1 city in America to Live, Work and Play. To accomplish this vision, quantitative metrics were selected to measure how Anchorage compares against the largest city in each state and the District of Columbia. The metrics are categorized into three categories: Live, Work and Play. Each year AEDC updates the metrics and determines where Anchorage ranks in each category.

All three categories, Live, Work and Play, fell in their rankings for 2014. Anchorage was not affected as severely by the Great Recession and has recovered more rapidly than most areas. As other city's conditions improve, maintaining our competitive strengths in these rankings will become more challenging. The LWP leaders and partners recognize this and will continue to work on improving Anchorage's LWP rankings by supporting initiatives and policies that address these critical metrics.



CATEGORY: 16 (-8)

THE "LIVE" RANKING FELL BY EIGHT PLACES IN 2014 – THE BIGGEST DROP OF THE THREE CATEGORIES, SEVERAL CHANGES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS DROP.

TWO METRICS MODIFIED

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents changed to "Violent crimes per 1,000 residents % Change, 2010 versus 2012"

Property crimes per 1,000 residents changed to "Property crimes per 1,000 residents % Change, 2010 versus 2012"

The Federal Bureau of Investigation makes it clear that due to reporting differences, city to city comparisons are not advised. By utilizing the percentage change in a community, we can compare the city to its own statistics and rank the 51 areas accordingly. This change was determined to be appropriate and a more accurate comparison through a collaborative process between the Live.

Work. Play Steering Committee and members of the local law enforcement community.

ONE METRIC CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY, -24:

% of population reporting health status as "good" or "better." The CDC recently improved their methods of sampling and weighting, resulting in a more accurate representation of health behaviors. It now seems that previous surveys produced inaccurately optimistic information, which has been corrected by this new data.

ONE NEW METRIC

Tolerance Index

The Live. Work. Play. Steering Committee decided to include this metric after Richard Florida spoke at the AEDC 2013 Economic Forecast Luncheon. Taken from his book (*Rise of the Creative Class*), 2010 edition, the index incorporates data from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey undertaken by the Census Bureau to illustrate the level of community acceptance of different cultures and lifestyles.

| LIVE | 2013 | 2014 | SOURCE |
|--|----------|-----------|---|
| Violent crimes per 1,000 residents | 26 | * | Federal Bureau of Investigations |
| Violent crimes per 1,000 residents % Change, 2010 versus 2012 | * | 19 | Federal Bureau of Investigations |
| Property crimes per 1,000 residents | 9 | * | Federal Bureau of Investigations |
| Property crimes per 1,000 residents % Change, 2010 versus 2012 | * | 22 | Federal Bureau of Investigations |
| 8th grade reading proficiency | 7 | 8 | New American Foundation |
| 8th grade math proficiency | 14 | 11 | New American Foundation |
| High school reading proficiency | 8 | 12 | New American Foundation |
| High school math proficiency | 12 | 17 | New American Foundation |
| Share of homes affordable for median income households | 25 | 21 | National Association of Home Builders |
| % of population reporting health status as "good" or "better" | 1 | 25 | Center for Disease Control & Prevention |
| % of respondents with any kind of health coverage | 22 | 34 | Center for Disease Control & Prevention |
| Cost of Living Composite Index | 42 | 41 | Council for Community & Economic Research |
| 2 BR, 1 Bath 900 sq. ft. Rental Cost | 33 | 33 | Council for Community & Economic Research |
| Diversity Index | 27 | 24 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Tolerance Index | * | 17 | The Rise of the Creative Class, 2010 ed. |
| LIVE Rank | 8 | 16 | |

*No appropriate comparison can be made; the data does not match the past or present metric.

CATEGORY: 5 (-2)

AEDC EXPECTED THE WORK RANKING TO DROP. ANCHORAGE WAS NOT HIT AS HARD BY THE RECESSION AS OTHER CITIES AND WAS ABLE TO RECOVER MORE QUICKLY. THE COMPETITION IN THE WORK CATEGORY CAN EXPECT TO BE MORE CHALLENGING IN THE FUTURE.

TWO NEW METRICS

The Live. Work. Play. Steering Committee decided to include two new metrics. Both metrics were taken from Richard Florida's book *Rise of the Creative Class*, 2010 ed.

Technology Index includes three variables: a measure of high-tech industry concentration, patents per capita and average annual patent growth. The data is collected from the Census Bureau's 2009 County Business Patterns statistics and the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Talent Index is based on a city's percentage of occupations in the "Creative Class," a group of professions that Mr. Florida considers key to the development of new ideas, innovations and businesses. The classification and count of occupations in the United States is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' annual Occupational Employment Survey.

| WORK | 2013 | 2014 | SOURCE |
|--|----------|----------|---|
| Average monthly earnings _____ | 15 | 14 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Median household income _____ | 2 | 2 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| % of population high school graduates or higher _____ | 6 | 7 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| % of population with bachelor's degree or higher _____ | 28 | 22 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| % of commuters that use public transportation to get to work _____ | 34 | 35 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Mean travel time to work _____ | 15 | 15 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Average new hire earnings _____ | 5 | 8 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Per capita personal income _____ | 5 | 5 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Taxes as a % of income (for 50,000) _____ | 5 | 5 | Washington DC Office of CFO |
| % of population above the poverty level _____ | 1 | 1 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Unemployment rate _____ | 17 | 10 | Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics |
| Net job flows _____ | 38 | 42 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Technology Index _____ | * | 47 | The Rise of the Creative Class, 2010 ed. |
| Talent Index _____ | * | 24 | The Rise of the Creative Class, 2010 ed. |
| WORK Rank _____ | 3 | 5 | |

*No appropriate comparison can be made; the data does not match the past or present metric.

PLAY

CATEGORY: 14 (-2)

THE "PLAY" RANKING DROPPED BY TWO PLACES THIS YEAR. THIS IS MOSTLY DUE TO ONE MODIFIED METRIC AND THE ADDITION OF TWO NEW METRICS. OVERALL, THE METRICS REMAINED STEADY AND DID NOT FLUCTUATE SIGNIFICANTLY.

ONE METRIC MODIFIED

The Center for Disease Control & Prevention modified their metric, "Have you had 20 or more minutes of vigorous physical activity three or more days per week?" to "During the past month, did you participate in any physical activities?" Due to this modification, it was not appropriate to compare the new and old metrics. In an attempt to continue to measure communities' level of exercise and activity, we will continue to use the data collected in this ranking.

TWO NEW METRICS

of Arts Related Businesses per 1,000 residents

of Arts Related Jobs per 1,000 residents

The data is collected and analyzed by the Western States Arts Federation, using Census Bureau and Department of Labor statistical reports, and will better track the arts community's impact on the local economy.

Footnote: In January of 2013, AEDC reported Anchorage's "Play" ranking as 11th of the 51 cities. During preparation of the 2014 rankings, a computational error was discovered and corrected, thus changing the rankings. The correct 2013 "Play" rank for Anchorage was 12.

| PLAY | 2013 | 2014 | SOURCE |
|--|-----------|-----------|--|
| Library visits per capita _____ | 45 | 44 | Institute of Museum & Library Services |
| Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents _____ | 1 | 1 | The Trust for Public Land |
| Number of playgrounds per 10,000 residents _____ | 9 | 9 | The Trust for Public Land |
| Have you had 20 minutes or more of vigorous activity three or more days per week? _____ | 1 | * | Center for Disease Control & Prevention |
| During the past month, did you participate in any physical activities? _____ | * | 11 | Center for Disease Control & Prevention |
| Performing Arts establishments per 100,000 residents _____ | 20 | 23 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Full service restaurants per 100,000 residents _____ | 25 | 21 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| Museums, historical sites, similar per 100,000 residents _____ | 3 | 6 | Dept. of Commerce Census Bureau |
| % of population neither overweight nor obese _____ | 45 | 48 | Center for Disease Control & Prevention |
| # of healthy days for being active outdoors _____ | 1 | 1 | Environmental Protection Agency |
| # of Arts Related Businesses per 1,000 Residents _____ | * | 14 | Western States Arts Federation |
| # of Arts Related Jobs per 1,000 Residents _____ | * | 25 | Western States Arts Federation |
| PLAY Rank _____ | 12 | 14 | |

*No appropriate comparison can be made; the data does not match the past or present metric.