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## ***CITIES RANKED & RATED* DECLARES A SURPRISING LIST OF TOP U.S. CITIES TO LIVE IN**

***The Highly Anticipated, Updated Best-Selling Sourcebook in Stores Now!***

**HOBOKEN, NJ, May 7, 2007**—Ask people which city they consider to be the best in the U.S. and Gainesville, FL, probably isn't going to be the first place that comes to mind. But Gainesville is the surprising number-one city in the newly published *Cities Ranked & Rated, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Wiley; April 2007; 850 pages; \$24.99), written by Bert Sperling and Peter Sander and published by Frommer's. Close on its heels are Bellingham, WA in the number-two slot; Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA as number three; **Colorado Springs, CO as number four**; Ann Arbor, MI as number five; Ogden-Clearfield, UT as number six; Asheville, NC as number seven; Fort Collins-Loveland, CO as number eight; San Luis Obispo-Paso Robles, CA as number nine; and, rounding out the top 10, Boise City-Nampa, ID.

So why do you live where you do? Is it your hometown you never left (statistically, a rare occurrence) or a dream destination you worked hard to get to? Maybe you moved for your family (the top reason nowadays cited for relocating), your career (a close second, nationally) or for affordability issues. Whatever your reason, the fact is Americans are on the move with 40 percent of relocations happening between states or counties, not neighborhoods.

What, then, do the one-in-seven people who move each year look for? That's precisely what *Cities Ranked & Rated* quantifies. Analyzing more than 400 metro areas in the U.S. and Canada by using dozens of variables, it is the ultimate sourcebook for anyone looking to find the best place to live – or who's hungry to know how his hometown compares. This valuable resource has been completely revised and updated, giving readers the power to find the location that's truly right for them. Each city is ranked on the following 10 major criteria:

- **Economy and Jobs:** Personal and household income, employment, job mix, and the proximity of large industries.
- **Cost of Living:** Overall cost of living, including taxes and housing, with U.S. averages and expected income levels.
- **Climate:** Temperature ranges, precipitation, cloud cover, humidity, and weather-related health hazards.
- **Education:** Academic achievement, at both primary/secondary and post-secondary levels.
- **Health and healthcare:** Levels of health care available in each city, taking into account such variables as air and water quality.
- **Crime:** Violent and nonviolent crime rankings over several years.
- **Transportation:** Each city's commuting times, commuting methods, availability and utilization of public transportation, intercity transport services, and automobile costs.
- **Leisure:** Opportunities for taking advantage of free time, including shopping, entertainment, and outdoor recreation

- **Arts and Culture:** A comparison of performing arts venues, museums and other cultural activities.
- **Overall quality of life:** Overall physical attractiveness, heritage, and ease of living – intangible factors that contribute to the general quality of life.

Where magazine surveys only show the big picture, *Cities Ranked & Rated* lets you get at the detailed reasons why one city might be preferable to another. Each metro-area profile includes statistics on white- versus blue-collar jobs, the number of below-zero days each year, the cost of an average doctor visit, and even its total number of Starbucks coffee shops. Extensive tables paint a fuller picture by showing America's most literate cities, the best states for long summer evenings, and the places with the cheapest car insurance.

The number-one city, Gainesville, has “gained popularity among northern migrants seeking a Florida climate and intellectual stimulation without the high prices, tourist bustle, and stigma most commonly associated with the state,” according to the authors. The book also highlights Gainesville's recreational opportunities, arts venues, opportunities for small businesses, and small-town Southern feel.

The nation's least desirable place to live, according to the authors, is Modesto, CA, which scored a zero on the book's 100-point scale. Modesto's lack of things to do, high cost of living, and high unemployment rate contributed to this ranking. In addition, the authors write that crime is a problem in Modesto and it was recently noted as having the highest auto theft rate in the nation.

The book isn't just for people looking to move, though. *Cities Ranked & Rated* is an indispensable resource for journalists, too. Packed with easy-to-read lists of statistics offering apples-to-apples comparisons of hundreds of North American cities, it can provide the backbone for a slew of local, national, or travel stories. Entrepreneurs also stand to benefit from its wealth of information – it explores business and tax climates in various destinations and names places where prospective customers are going and why.

Since 1957, Frommer's has given travelers the inside scoop on what to do when they're away from home. With *Cities Ranked & Rated*, Frommer's is making sure travelers have the best possible place to come home to.

#### **About the Authors**

**Peter Sander** is a professional author, researcher, and marketer. He has written numerous books concentrating in the areas of business and personal finance. Aside from *Cities Ranked & Rated*, his other titles include *Frommer's Best Places to Raise Your Family*, *Value Investing For Dummies*, *Niche and Get Rich*, and *The 250 Personal Finance Questions Everyone Should Ask*. Before starting his writing career, Sander worked for 20 years in business and program management at the Hewlett-Packard Company. He has traveled in all 50 states and has appeared in major print, radio, and television media, including NBC's Today Show, FoxNews, CNBC, NPR, and Business Talk Radio. Sander lives in Granite Bay, CA.

For more than 20 years, **Bert Sperling** has appeared in print, on radio and television programs, and at conferences speaking about cities and quality-of-life issues. He developed the methodology for the Best Places to Live software, which is now the standard for studies in this area. His data forms the basis of such national articles as *Money* magazine's annual “The Best Places to Live in America.” He is the CEO of Fast Forward, Inc., which produces his popular website, [www.bestplaces.net](http://www.bestplaces.net). Sperling lives in Portland, OR.

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