

Fort Collins ranked 5th by Forbes

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Paper Bird performs in August 2010 at the Bohemian Nights at NewWest Fest in front of a packed audience. COLORADOAN FILE PHOTO

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BEST PLACES LIST

1. Raleigh, N.C.
2. Des Moines, Iowa
3. Provo, Utah
4. Lexington, Ky.
5. Fort Collins
6. Nashville, Tenn.
7. Austin, Texas
8. San Antonio, Texas
9. Denver
10. Dallas, Texas

30. Colorado Springs
42. Greeley
44. Boulder

BY THE NUMBERS

- » Fort Collins metro area population: 301,000
- » Cost of doing business rank: 67
- » High-tech employment: 9.6 percent
- » Median home price: \$148,000
- » Median household income: \$53,279
- » Net migration: 2,170
- » Projected annual job growth: 2.4 percent

Fort Collins seems to be a Forbes favorite.

The city and its surrounding area captured the fifth spot in Forbes' list of Best Places for Business and Careers, the third year in a row the city has been in the top five.

Fort Collins slid one spot from last year when it was fourth on the list.

Forbes.com, which released its list Thursday, cited the number of high-tech companies such as Hewlett Packard, Intel, AMD and Avago that have moved to Fort Collins to take advantage of the resources at CSU and its research facilities, up-and-coming industries including clean energy, bioscience and agri-tech businesses.

The large college-age population supports the local music circuit and a number of well-known microbreweries, www.Forbes.com said, "which give the city its college-town atmosphere.

It also singled out the Downtown Business Association and the number of large festivals it sponsors in Old Town each year, including NewWestFest.

The recognition, the latest in a long list of "best lists," is another "jewel in our crown," Mayor Karen Weitkunat said. "How can it not be to be singled out as a city in a nation of cities? she said. "We do things right."

Weitkunat said it all goes back to local residents. "I would hope our government reflects our people and that people set the tone, the stage, direction and character that makes Fort Collins so special.

"If we shine, we shine, and I'll polish the crown because they're all little jewels that add to it and reaffirm what believe we are."

The majority of Forbes' numbers were taken from the research firm Moody's www.Economy.com, as well as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and census data, according to the report.

Fort Collins led five Colorado cities, including Denver, Colorado Springs, Greeley and Boulder, on the list of 200 places.

Raleigh, N.C., Des Moines, Iowa, Provo, Utah, and Lexington, Ky., were the top four cities, followed by Fort Collins.

Fort Collins has made numerous Forbes' lists including the Best Place to Live in 2006, and it consistently ranks among the best places for businesses and careers.