

The 10 Best Cities to Move to in 2015

POSTED BY ELLENA FORTNER NEWSOM ON **MAR 12**

Oh, what a difference a year makes.

[Last year](#), we examined the Best Places to Move in 2014, with Boise taking the top spot in a list that included Seattle, Orlando, Minneapolis, and Houston.

This year, we have several newcomers, and we say goodbye to a few who made last year's list but didn't make the cut this time. Additionally, just like last year, cities had to beat the national average to be up for consideration, and — great news here — the bar was higher this year. The national median income is higher. The unemployment rate is lower. Gee, *thanks Obama!*

For the more detail-oriented among you, the next section describes the factors we took into consideration to select and rank these cities. **If that sounds really boring, and you just want to get to the juicy stuff, [click here](#) to jump down to the list.**

Selection Factors

We crunched hard numbers from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Forbes.com, the National Association of Realtors, Zillow.com, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to come up with this list. Here are the individual criteria we took into consideration :

Median Income

To make the list, a city must have a median income — that is, 50% of the residents make more than this number, and 50% of the residents make less — higher than the national median income of approximately \$53,000 (up from \$44,000 last year).

Best City for Median Income: Provo, Utah at \$83,000

Lowest in our Top Ten for Median Income: San Antonio, Texas at \$55,000

Projected Home Value Growth over the Next Three Years

To be up for consideration, the projected home value growth in a given city had to be positive. A negative projected value growth rate could indicate that a growth cycle is coming to an end, or at least stagnating, for that community.

Highest Projected Growth: Austin, Texas

Lowest Projected Growth: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Home Affordability Index

We looked at the median income and the average household sale price to determine which communities offer the most bang for your buck when it comes to buying a house. After all, if you purchase a house but can't afford to purchase food, that's not affordability.

Best City for Home Affordability: Provo, Utah

Worst City in our Top Ten for Home Affordability: Salt Lake City, Utah

Unemployment Rate

In case of a tie, the unemployment rate determined the final winner. Just like in golf, low score wins the match. To make the list, a community had to be lower than the national unemployment rate of (approximately) 5.7% (down from 6.5% last year).

Lowest Unemployment Rate: Salt Lake City, Utah at 3%

Highest Unemployment Rate: Orlando, Florida at 5.5%



#10 - Fort Worth, Texas

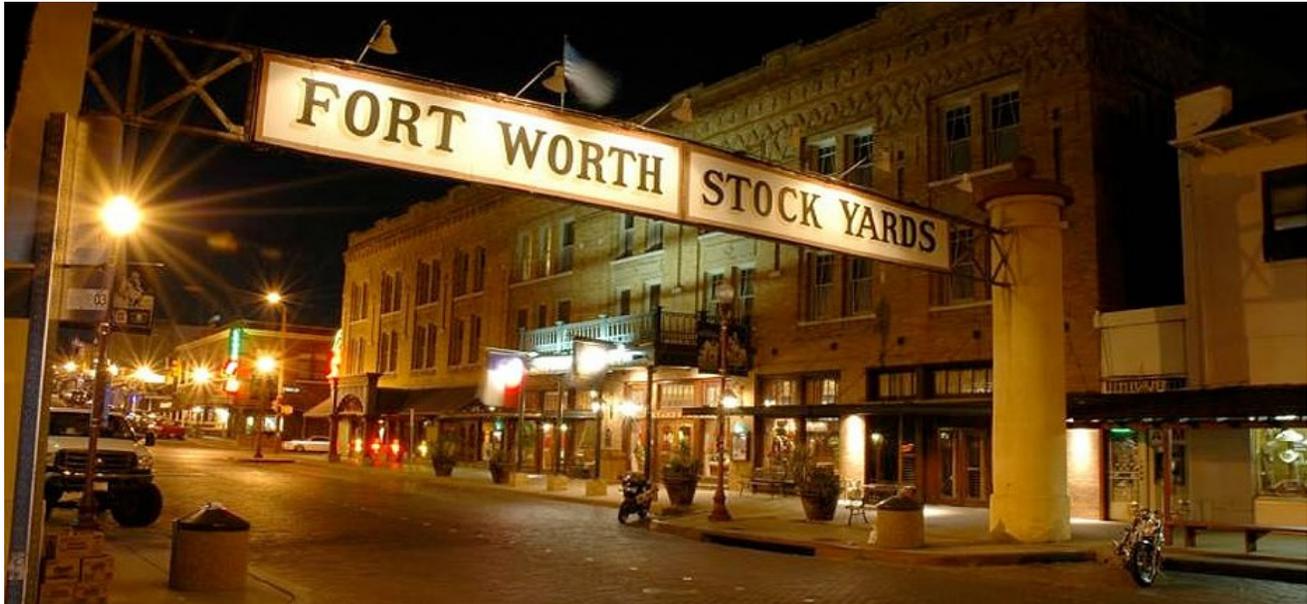


Image courtesy FortWorthStockyards.org

About Fort Worth

Fort Worth, Texas often gets lumped in with Dallas, but it deserves a spotlight of its own. Sure, its historic cowboy and cattle rustling roots mean you may have to buy a cowboy hat or, at least, some tight-fitting jeans, but Fort Worth is much, much more than that. The Kimbell Art Museum, farmers markets, and historic neighborhoods blend with a vibrant Sundance Square in downtown (with affordable parking!) and a growing economy.

Fort Worth's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #7

[Average](#)

Median Income #5

[Average](#)

Home Value Growth #7

[Excellent](#)

Home Affordability #3

Fort Worth Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~800,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~5.1%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$180,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 7%

Median Income: ~\$63,000

This is a drop for Fort Worth, which was ranked 7th last year.

#9 - San Antonio, Texas



Image courtesy TheSanAntonioRiverwalk.com

Hope you aren't tired of reading about Texas yet, because San Antonio is only one of four Texas towns to take a top spot. Although the *Huffington Post*

recently compared the Alamo City to Austin, we couldn't disagree more. San Antonio sets its own course with an abundance of restaurants, the family-friendly and shopper-friendly Riverwalk, the Alamo, numerous U.S. military facilities, and Fiesta, a party the entire city attends.

San Antonio's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #6

[LAST](#)

Median Income #10

[Average](#)

Home Value Growth #6

[Average](#)

Home Affordability #7

San Antonio Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,400,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~4.7%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$189,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 8%

Median Income: ~\$55,000

San Antonio is new to the Top Ten list.

#8 - Houston, Texas



Image courtesy HoustonAgentMagazine.com

We promise, the list isn't rigged. Texas is just awesome. Houston takes the 8th spot, rising from 10th last year. It remains one of the most populous cities in Texas, but, thanks to its immense size, it doesn't feel like you're stacked on top of each other (at least, if you ignore the traffic.) Houston's proximity to the coast has served it well, bringing in new trade, people, and delicious, delicious seafood. The museum district receives visits from more than seven million people a year. Throw in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, the Greek Festival, and the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, and you'll have plenty to do on any given weekend.

Houston's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #8

[Average](#)

Median Income #9

[Excellent](#)

Home Value Growth #2

[Average](#)

Home Affordability #9

Houston Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~2,100,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~5.1%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$214,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 12%

Median Income: ~\$58,000

Houston rose two spots this year, and was ranked tenth on last year's list.

“Houston is the most diverse city in the nation and that diversity is our strength. We are a city that asks what you have to offer rather than where you come from. We have an entrepreneurial spirit that defines just about everything we do. If you can dream it, you can achieve it in Houston. Whether you are looking for the foodie experience, Tony award winning theater, world class museums, shopping, the largest medical center in the world or a leisurely stroll or bike ride along one of our beautiful bayous, Houston has it all. We are hip and cool. Come visit, or better yet, come live here. We can't wait to meet you.” — *Houston Mayor Annise Parker*

#7 - Salt Lake City, Utah



Photo: By Utah Images - Douglas Pulsipher

Image courtesy Nationalwood.com

If you love winter sports, Salt Lake City may be the place for you in 2015. Well-known for its historic and current association with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and Brigham Young, the community benefits from having the Wasatch Mountains to the east and eight ski resorts within 50 miles. Home to the Utah Jazz basketball team and a growing arts district, Salt Lake City's low unemployment rate is sure to draw new residents in the next year.

Salt Lake City's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

FIRST!

Unemployment #1!

Average

Median Income #8

Average

Home Value Growth #9

LAST

Home Affordability #10

Salt Lake City Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,140,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~3%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$250,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 6%

Median Income: ~\$58,000

Salt Lake City rose one spot this year, and was ranked eighth on last year's list.

"I'm frequently asked what makes Salt Lake City such a great place to live. It's not one factor. And a great livable city means many different things to different people. We've focused on making our City one of the greenest, most accessible, most inclusive and most economically viable municipalities in the country. Residents, City employees, neighborhood and civic advocates, business owners and organizations, religious and social institutions and many others in our community have worked together to advance our common goals: social equality, public safety, access to and protection of natural areas and recreational opportunities, ease of mobility, efficient and accountable use of taxpayer money, urban agricultural opportunities, strong education systems, a healthy downtown and neighborhoods, and diverse arts and cultural offerings. Identifying shared goals, and working together to achieve them, is the best formula, I believe, to make any City a truly great place to live." — *Mayor Becker*

#6 - Orlando, Florida



Image courtesy Thomas Grim

Home to the Mickey Mouse empire, Orlando receives more than its fair share of tourists, but it might just be the perfect place to call home in 2015. The University of Central Florida certainly thinks so, with the second-largest university campus in the country calling the "City Beautiful" home. That's not Orlando's only nickname, earning the nomenclature of "Hollywood East" for its vibrant music, theater, and movie productions. Orlando also attracts a number of high-tech companies, a strong economic supporter for years to come.

Orlando's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

LAST

Unemployment #10

Average

Median Income #8

Average

Home Value Growth #5

Average

Home Affordability #5

Orlando Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~2,100,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~5.5%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$187,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 9%

Median Income: ~\$59,000

Orlando fell one spot this year, and was ranked fifth on last year's list.

#5 - Austin, Texas



Image courtesy Angie's List

Austin benefits from a divergent base that includes politics (it's the state capital), education (home to the University of Texas) and technology (a high-tech corridor). Throw in some really great weather, a rockin' local culture, and an abundance of outdoor activities, and it's not difficult to picture yourself moving there in 2015. Billed as the "Live Music Capitol of the World," Austin puts on a great show, including the long-lived Austin City Limits, SXSW, and "Fun, Fun, Fun Fest."

Austin's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Excellent](#)

Unemployment #3

[Excellent](#)

Median Income #3

FIRST

Home Value Growth #1!

Average

Home Affordability #8

Austin Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,800,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~3.8%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$261,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 12%

Median Income: ~\$72,000

Austin is new on this year's list.

“In Austin, everyone is good enough and nobody is too good. We have a high-tech economy, beautiful natural features, the best live music in the world, and great barbecue and breakfast tacos!” —

Mayor Adler

#4 - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Image courtesy David Waldo

Oklahoma City is a community of wildly opposite cultures. First, it's home to the largest livestock market in the world. People live the authentic ranch life in OKC. Additionally, its longstanding roots in the oil and petroleum industry perfectly position it to become the country's energy and aerospace capitol. Companies including Chesapeake Energy, Devon Energy, and SandRidge Energy headquarter in OKC. However, if you need a little refinement in your life, the Oklahoma City opera, Museum of Art, and ballet have your back.

Oklahoma City's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #6

[Average](#)

Median Income #4

[LAST](#)

Home Value Growth #10

[Excellent](#)

Oklahoma City Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,400,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~4.4%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$166,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 4%

Median Income: ~\$65,000

This is the first year that OKC has made our list.

#3 - West Palm Beach, Florida



Image courtesy Kiely Real Estate

West Palm Beach has been around a looong time. It's two years older than Miami. However, 2015 is a great year to move to this established community. Tourism and recreation tend to be its top draws, but West Palm Beach — home

to ION Media Network, Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne, and General Dynamics — includes a very active business community. SunFest draws large crowds in late spring, and families enjoy visiting Rapids Water Park, South Florida Science Museum, and Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park.

West Palm Beach's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #9

[Average](#)

Median Income #9

[Excellent](#)

Home Value Growth #3

[Average](#)

Home Affordability #6

West Palm Beach Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,000,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~5.4%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$260,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 11%

Median Income: ~\$77,000

West Palm Beach is new to the list.

#2 - Boise, Idaho



Image courtesy Bob Young

Boise is an education city, so if you want to attend or work for Boise State University, the area's largest employer, this is the community for you. However, it's also an outdoor community, with more than 28 miles of pathways and easy access to mountains, deserts, and rivers. Throw in a reputation for friendliness and affordable living, and it's pretty easy to see why so many people love to call Boise home.

Boise's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Average](#)

Unemployment #4

[Average](#)

Median Income #6

[Average](#)

Home Value Growth #4

[Excellent](#)

Home Affordability #3

Boise Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~616,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~4%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$183,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 9%

Median Income: ~\$59,000

Boise fell one spot on this year's list, and was ranked first on last year's list.

#1 - Provo, Utah



Image courtesy Jaren Wilkey / BYU

The City of Provo has been making itself known as a great place to live for a few years now, based on its majestic views and reputation for encouraging entrepreneurs. Safe streets and low business taxes are drawing crowds. Of

course, it doesn't hurt to have two major universities and Robert Redford's Sundance Resort, either. The city has strong ties to the Church Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and the country's third-largest university, Brigham Young University, calls Provo home.

Provo's Ratings

(Compared to the other cities on this list)

[Excellent](#)

Unemployment #2

[FIRST](#)

Median Income #1!

[Average](#)

Home Value Growth #8

[FIRST](#)

Home Affordability #1!

Provo Facts and Figures for 2015

Population: ~1,000,000 (metro)

Unemployment: ~5.4%

Median House Sale Price: ~\$260,000

3-Year Home Value Growth: 11%

Median Income: ~\$77,000

This is the first year that Provo has made our list.

“Provo offers something for just about everyone. We are a community surrounded by some of the best mountains in the world that give residents largely unmatched recreation opportunities.

Almost each and every decision we make, the first thing we ask is how it will impact the quality of life of the residents. That line of questioning has helped build a reputation that's translated to job growth, a friendly atmosphere, and residents that really care and look out for one another.” — *Corey Norman, City of Provo Public Information Officer*

Author



Ellena Fortner Newsom

Ellena is the Content Specialist for SML. She's a social media junkie, Dr. Who fanatic, customer service advocate and writing guru. Between parenting a two year old, binge watching already-cancelled shows with her husband and prepping for the next 5k race, she spends (too much) time thinking about metrics and public relations. She's moved herself, her friends, and her family members many, many, many times.

Filed Under: [Moving](#) **Tags:** [San Antonio](#), [Fort Worth](#), [Houston](#), [Salt Lake City](#), [Orlando](#), [austin](#), [oklahoma city](#), [west palm beach](#), [Boise](#), [provo](#), [Texas](#), [utah](#), [florida](#), [oklahoma](#), [idaho](#)

More from the Moving Forward blog...

[\(Video\) The 10 Best Cities to Move to in 2015](#)



[The 10 Best Cities to Move to in 2014](#)

[\(Video\) Austin - The #5 City to Move to in 2015](#)

[\(Video\) San Antonio - The #9 City to Move to in 2015](#)

NEVER MISS ANOTHER ARTICLE
SIGN UP FOR THE MOVING FORWARD MONTHLY E-MAIL
TODAY!

We guarantee your privacy.
