

# Naperville makes another 'best' list

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Naperville has been named to yet another prestigious list. In its April 2008 issue, Fortune Small Business magazine ranked Naperville No. 29 on its "100 Best Places to Live and Launch" list.

The news thrilled Richard Greene, Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce CEO. "I've said before that Naperville is the jewel of the Midwest, and I think that continues to apply," he said. "It is a great place to live, and we've known that for a few years. ... And now, after that, it is one of the best places in the Midwest, if not the best place in the Midwest, to start a business."

Naperville is the only Illinois city that made the list, and is just one of roughly a dozen selected from the Midwest. Among Naperville's pros is good school and cons bad traffic, according to the magazine.

"Well known for its family-friendly culture, Naperville attracts a mix of Fortune 500 companies and small busi-

nesses," Fortune Small Business says on its Web site. "The city boasts the lowest municipal property tax rates in the Chicago metropolitan area, and Naperville entrepreneurs benefit from a number of state tax incentives targeting small business. ... In 2007, the city fielded 116 start-ups."

The magazine also credits Naperville for being home to "beautiful" architecture and Centennial Beach, which attracts more than 100,000 visitors a year.

Fortune Small Business determined its rankings by examining 296 regions designated by the U.S. Census Bureau as "Metropolitan Statistical Areas," or metro hubs that consist of a cluster of neighboring cities and towns that share many of the same economic and recreational resources. Each hub earned points based on business factors such as tax rates, job growth and the number of airline flight connections within a 60-mile radius. It also assessed lifestyle factors, such

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as the number of parks and arts venues within a 15-mile radius, health infrastructure and average temperatures.

It also picked towns within each hub that demonstrated the strongest population growth and lowest crime rates, with housing costs no greater than 120 percent or less than 80 percent of the median area cost.

The magazine interviewed entrepreneurs, local officials

and business experts to identify towns with the strongest small-business programs, such as tax incentives or favorable zoning regimes, and the most appealing leisure resources, such as a lively downtown or beautiful parks.

In recent years, Naperville has popped up on a number of similar lists. Money magazine designated Naperville the No. 2-best place to live in 2006 and No. 3 in 2005. RelocateAmerica named it the No. 1 city in America that people would choose when they are relocating, and one of "America's Top 25 Places to Live to

Go to School." AARP named Naperville among the top 10 small cities for seniors.

Walking magazine placed Naperville on its list of 10 best walking towns, and the American Library Association has named the public library system as the best library for a city its size for several years running.

The trend began in 1997, when the Washington, D.C.-based organization Zero Population Growth put Naperville at the top of its list of "kid-friendly" cities with populations of more than 100,000.