

Release Date: January 23, 2018

Contact: William H. Fruth
POLICOM Corporation
772-781-5559
www.policom.com
fruth@policom.com

DATELINE: Palm City, FL

POLICOM's 2018 Economic Strength Rankings for 933 Communities Announced

For the second year in a row, Austin, Texas ranks as the strongest Metropolitan area economy in the United States in POLICOM's annual community "economic strength" rankings. With a diversified economy, the area has enjoyed consistent economic growth for a very long time.

Bozeman, Montana jumped to number one among the Micropolitan areas, which are smaller economies, as a result of rapid growth in professional services and manufacturing.

POLICOM annually ranks the 383 Metropolitan Statistical Areas and 550 Micropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States for "economic strength" which is the long-term tendency for an area to consistently grow in both size and quality.

"The top rated areas have had rapid, consistent growth in both size and quality for an extended period of time," William H. Fruth, President of POLICOM. POLICOM, located in Palm City, FL, specializes in analyzing local and state economies and advising communities on how to improve them.

"The rankings do not reflect the latest 'hotspot' or boom town, but the areas which have the best economic foundation," Fruth continued.

The study measures twenty-three different economic factors over a twenty-year period. The formulas determine how an economy has behaved over an extended period of time. Data stretching from 1997 to 2016 was used for this study. POLICOM has created this study each year since 1997.

According to Fruth, the rankings reflect "how" an area has behaved, but not "why." Each community has its own economic characteristics and can grow or decline for different reasons.

When asked "How can a community improve its economy?" Fruth responded, "A local economy will grow and expand in direct proportion to the amount of money flowing into the area. For the most part, money is imported to a community by way of the business activity of the primary or contributory industries. These enterprises sell their goods or services outside the area, thus importing wealth to the economy."

Fruth continued, "A vast, vast majority of the businesses in the community such as retailing, healthcare, most services, and even local government, are dependent upon the money being imported to the area by the primary industries. The strongest economies have nurtured and caused their primary businesses

to grow and expand, causing quality economic growth enjoyed by everyone. Unfortunately, in the weakest areas, the primary businesses have faltered causing the overall economy to decline.”

Defined by the Federal government, a Metropolitan area must be at least one county and have a city with a population of at least 50,000. Most are composed of multiple counties.

Micropolitan areas are smaller areas. They also must include at least one county and must have an urban center of at least 10,000 but fewer than 50,000 people.

The following are the ten strongest Metropolitan and Micropolitan areas. For the economic strength rankings for all 933 areas, go to www.policom.com.

383 Metropolitan Areas
2018 Ten Strongest Metropolitan Areas

- 1 Austin-Round Rock, TX (MSA)**
- 2 Napa, CA (MSA)**
- 3 Seattle-Tacoma, WA (MSA)**
- 4 Nashville-Davidson, TN (MSA)**
- 5 San Jose-Sunnyvale, CA (MSA)**
- 6 Indianapolis-Carmel, IN (MSA)**
- 7 Dallas-Fort Worth, TX (MSA)**
- 8 Salt Lake City, UT (MSA)**
- 9 Raleigh, NC (MSA)**
- 10 Denver-Aurora, CO (MSA)**

550 Micropolitan Areas
2018 Ten Strongest Micropolitan Areas

- 1 Bozeman, MT (McrSA)**
- 2 Lewisburg, PA (McrSA)**
- 3 Truckee-Grass Valley, CA (McrSA)**
- 4 Traverse City, MI (McrSA)**
- 5 Wooster, OH (McrSA)**
- 6 Andrews, TX (McrSA)**
- 7 Durango, CO (McrSA)**
- 8 Edwards, CO (McrSA)**
- 9 Kapaa, HI (McrSA)**
- 10 Dickinson, ND (McrSA)**