

100 LEADING LOCATIONS for 2011

DESIRABLE PLACES
FOR DOING
BUSINESS

As business populations shift and site selection continuously evolves, smaller regional and metro areas are emerging as desirable locations for companies of all sizes. This year, in concert with *Area Development's* annual state-level Gold and Silver Shovel Awards, we also examined the performances of these locales.

We based our findings on 14 highly regarded location surveys from sources including *Forbes*, *Newgeography*, *Brookings MetroMonitor*, *Fast Company*, and *CNNMoney*. We used the findings of the Milken Institute's Best Performing Cities 2010 as the primary criterion. Each of the 100 Leading Locations on our list must appear within the top 100 rankings for large and small cities on Milken's report.

We also considered the results of our own Select Regionals Survey as a criterion to select the 100 locations that made the final cut. This survey, sent to nearly 300 U.S. regions and metros, considered the areas' top three greatest project investments of 2010, unemployment rates, and total capital investment pledged over the past year.

While our list does not rank the locales, we have chosen to highlight five that appeared on most of the lists we considered. With a total of 10 mentions across the 14 lists in our review, Austin, Texas, was the most named Leading Location. Regardless of how many lists an area appeared on, they all represent some of the best-performing locations during this recession-to-recovery period.

Please use the key below to match the cities to the respective lists on which they appear.

KEY to SURVEYS

- a** *Milken Institute: Best Performing Cities 2010*
- b** *Brookings MetroMonitor*
- c** *CIO: Top 10 Cities for Technology Jobs*
- d** *Forbes: The Best Cities for Jobs*
- e** *GigaCom: Top 10 Cities with the Best Broadband*
- f** *Fast Company: Fast Cities of 2011*
- g** *Newgeography: America's Biggest Brain Magnets*
- h** *Forbes: Best Places for Business and Careers*
- i** *Relocate America: Top 10 Recovery Cities for 2010*
- j** *Newgeography: Best Cities for Job Growth (Top 25)*
- k** *Forbes: America's Most Innovative Cities*
- l** *CNNMoney: Best Places to Live*
- m** *Forbes: Most Wired Cities*
- n** *Area Development: Select Regionals Survey*

