

BEST PLACES TO LIVE *Money's list of America's best small cities*

2008 ▾

Rochester, NY Population: 208,100

Financial

| | City stats | Best places avg. |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| Median family income (per year) | \$37,732 | \$93,313 |
| Family purchasing power (annual, cost-of-living adjusted) | \$47,641 | \$84,802 |
| Sales tax | 8.00% | 6.60% |
| State income tax rate (highest bracket) | 6.85% ¹ | 5.22% |
| State income tax rate (lowest bracket) | 4.00% ¹ | 2.42% |
| Auto insurance premiums (Average price quotes, for the state) | \$2,566 | \$1,854 |
| Job growth % (2000-2007) | -0.76% | 18.60% |

Housing

| | City stats | Best places avg. |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| Median home price | \$59,000 | \$293,712 |
| Average property taxes (2005) | \$3,377 | \$4,072 |

Education

| | City stats | Best places avg. |
|--|------------|------------------|
| Colleges, universities and professional schools (within 30 miles) | 12 | 40 |
| Junior colleges and technical institutes (within 30 miles) | 6 | 20 |
| Test scores reading (% above/below state average) | -24.3% | 17.3% |
| Test scores math (% above/below average) | -33.0% | 16.6% |
| % students attending public/private schools (located within town limits) | 86.8/10.1 | 89.5/10.5 |

Quality of life

| | City stats | Best places avg. |
|---|------------|------------------|
| Air quality index* (% of days AQI ranked as good) | 82.7% | 76.0% |
| Personal crime incidents (per 1,000) | 13 | 2 |
| Property crime incidents (per 1,000) | 61 | 25 |
| Median commute time (in minutes) | 16.9 | 23.0 |
| % population with commute 45 mins. or longer | 6.2% | 15.8% |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| % population walk or bike to work | 7.7% | 3.0% |
| Leisure and culture | City stats | Best places avg. |
| Movie theaters (within 15 miles) | 26 | 51 |
| Restaurants (within 15 miles) | 1,560 | 4,141 |
| Bars (within 15 miles) | 168 | 338 |
| Public golf courses (within 30 miles) | 139 | 242 |
| Libraries (within 15 miles) | 50 | 90 |
| Museums (accredited by AAM; within 30 miles) | 4 | 11 |
| Ski resorts (within 100 miles) | 21 | 13 |
| Arts funding (Dollars per person of state funds spent on arts) | 2.7 | 1.5 |
| Weather | City stats | Best places avg. |
| Annual rainfall (inches) | 33.37 | 36.31 |
| % clear days in the area | 17 | 30 |
| High temp in July ° F | 81.4° | 87.8° |
| Low temp in Jan ° F | 16.4° | 22.9° |
| Health* | City stats | Best places avg. |
| Has health plan (% of residents) | 89.7% | 88.2% |
| Body mass index (avg. for residents) | 27 | 27 |
| Diabetes rates (% of residents diagnosed) | 10.3% | 9.6% |
| Hypertension rates (% of residents diagnosed) | 35.1% | 27.3% |
| Meet the neighbors | City stats | Best places avg. |
| Median age | 33.4 | 36.0 |
| Completed at least some college (% of residents) | 50.9% | 73.6% |
| Married | 28.1% | 57.5% |
| Divorced | 11.1% | 8.3% |
| Racial diversity index (100 is national average; higher numbers indicate greater diversity) | 323.5 | 104.0 |
| Amount spent on vacations (domestic and foreign, household avg. per year) | \$5,786 | \$8,012 |

From the August 2008 issue

Notes: * County data, ** State data

(I) Income tax notes: For joint returns, the taxes are twice the tax imposed on half the income.

ROCHESTER RANKINGS

BUSINESS

Best Quality of Life Ranking

The Rochester Region was ranked [#1 for Overall Quality of Life](#) among metros with a population of more than 1 million. Source: Expansion Management, May/June 2007

TECHNOLOGY

"Overall Innovation Capacity"

- Ranked 5th for "Overall Innovation Capacity" upon the basis of 1. Jobs in high-tech industries 2. Degrees granted in science and engineering 3. Number of patents 4. Academic research and development funding 5. Venture capital invested.

Metropolitan New Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the Nation's Metropolitan Areas, 2001

Ranked 1st among 125 for Patent Registration

- Ranked 1st among 125 world regions for Patent Registration.

World Knowledge Competitiveness Index 2003-2004: Benchmarking the Globe's Leading Knowledge Economy Regions, Robert Huggins Business and Economic Policy Press

HEALTH

"Least Stressful City"

- Ranked 11th among 100 Metro Areas for "Least Stressful City". Sperling Stress Index criteria includes: unemployment rate, divorce rate, commute time, violent and property crime rates, suicide rate, alcohol consumption, self-reported "poor mental health", and number of cloudy days.

Sperlings's Best Places, 2004

"One of America's Best Hospitals in the Nation"

- Strong Memorial Hospital, consistently recognized in U.S. News and Reports as "One of America's Best Hospitals in the Nation," is widely known for its cardiac care. It operates the only heart transplant program in Western New York and is also nationally recognized for neurosurgery, urology, gynecology, cancer and pediatric specialties.

LIVING AND CULTURE

"10 Best Cities to Raise a Family"

- Ranked 7th among the "10 Best Cities to Raise a Family" based on pediatric health characteristics and services, cost of living, economic strength, quality of life, education and environmental quality criteria.

Child Magazine, 2003

Named 6th most livable city in the U.S.

- "Rochester named [6th most livable city](#) in the U.S."

Places Rated Almanac 2007

Affordable Homes

- At \$119,200, the median home sales price is 57.7% lower than the national average. And 81.5% of area homes are affordable for our region's median income. National Association of Realtors (Q2, 2008), NAHB Housing Opportunity Index (Q2, 2008)

Easy Commute Time -- Under 20 Minutes

- Average daily commute time of 19.7 minutes - Monroe County, NY. US Census, 2006 American Community Survey

10 fastest growing real estate markets

Rochester, N.Y.

2 of 10

Back

Next

12-month forecast: 2.7%

Median home price: \$121,000

One year price change: 3.4%

Five year price change: 20.1%

Change in foreclosure rate: 5%

 [Homes for sale in Rochester](#)

NEXT: [Birmingham, Alabama](#)



COURTESY: VISITROCHESTER

Oak Hill Country Club

- Oak Hill Country Club tied for 1st among "Best of the Best Private Facilities in *Golf World*, October 17, 2008. It also ranked 2nd for course condition, 9th for food & dining, and 1st for overall value.

Rochester is one of the cleanest cities in America

- Reader's Digest recently rated Rochester as the 7th cleanest city in America. *Reader's Digest*, July 2005

Rochester (Finger Lakes) 10 Best places to Vacation

- Rated as a Top 10 "Perfect Place," Money magazine states "Everywhere land meets water, vacation activities are plentiful." *Money Magazine*, 2002

RECREATION

Best Minor League Sports Market In America

- Rochester, NY was rated the best minor league sports market in America by *Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal*, July 2005.

Rochester Named One of the 10 Best Golf Cities in America

- Golf Magazine and the National Golf Foundation named Rochester one of the 10 Best Golf Cities in America. (*Golf Magazine*, Nov. 2007)

Pittsford, Brighton home to the educated

Towns make state top 10 list for college degrees

Bennett J. Loudon, Staff writer

If you live in Pittsford, you're surrounded by some of the best-educated people in the nation.

The wealthy Monroe County suburb is 51st on a list of American communities ranked by the percentage of residents older than 25 who have at least a bachelor's degree. The ranking is from data collected by the Census Bureau over three years, from 2005 to 2007, for communities with at least 20,000 residents.

Statewide, Pittsford is second behind the town of Ithaca, near Cornell University in Tompkins County. The city of Ithaca, which is next to the town, is fifth. Brighton is seventh. When advanced degrees — anything beyond a bachelor's, such as MBAs, law degrees, medical degrees and doctorates — are factored in, Pittsford is third in the state, behind the town of Ithaca, in first, and the town of Mamaroneck, Westchester County, in second. Brighton is fifth. Like many communities high on the list, Pittsford is home to many faculty members, administrators and scientists from area colleges and universities, along with a large number of executives from local companies.

"You have a lot of university people there, be it UR, RIT, Nazareth or Fisher," said Michael Haymes, owner of ReMax Realty Group in Pittsford, referring to the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, Nazareth College and St. John Fisher College. A well-educated community translates into a wealthy community. At \$94,344, Pittsford has the highest median household income in Monroe County and education is likely a major factor in that distinction. According to the Census Bureau, the median annual earnings for high school graduates is about \$27,000. For a person with a bachelor's degree it's about \$47,000. And for someone with an advanced degree, it's about \$61,300.

Many Pittsford residents are drawn there because of its highly regarded public school system. And two of the area's most highly regarded private schools are in Pittsford and Brighton. The Harley School is in Brighton, and Allendale Columbia School is in Pittsford. "Pittsford has long been a place that attracted the executives from Kodak and Xerox and Bausch & Lomb, and having a world-class school system has a lot to do with that as well. Our Pittsford schools are a lot of reasons that people choose to live in Pittsford," said town Supervisor Bill Carpenter. When Drs. Dina and Gary Markowitz moved from Philadelphia in 1994, their real estate agent steered them immediately to either Pittsford or Brighton.

"Probably some of it had to do with the significant number of professionals and UR faculty," said Dina Markowitz, 46, an associate professor of environmental medicine at the University of Rochester Medical Center. Gary Markowitz, also 46, is a pediatric ophthalmologist. "You could fill a hospital with the professionals in my neighborhood. My neighborhood alone has at least 50 families, many professionals, MDs, lawyers, engineers, and a lot of people who own their own businesses," said Dina Markowitz. They have two children, Rick, a high school senior, and Sarah, a ninth-grader.

"We definitely wanted a town where the public schools had a good reputation," she said. Dr. Leway Chen, 41, his wife, Dr. Marilyn Ling, 46, and their three children, said they also were steered toward Pittsford and Brighton when they moved from Seattle nine years ago. Chen said his street to be home to Kodak and Xerox executives, but now the majority are doctors and lawyers.

"It starts with the schools. The first thing we looked at was the school districts," he said. The well-educated residents and their incomes make Pittsford a target of marketers.