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# Building Business in Alabama: How Business-Friendly Are Alabama's 50 Largest Cities?

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Building Business in Alabama:  
*How Business-Friendly Are  
Alabama's 50 Largest Cities?*

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction	1
Alabama's Most Business-Friendly Cities	1
Alabama's Least Business-Friendly Cities	1
Economic Vitality	2
Business Tax Burden	2
Community Allure	3
Transportation Infrastructure	3
Conclusion	4
The Business-Friendly Formula	5
Appendix A: Overall Business-Friendly Ranking	6
Appendix B: Economic Vitality Ranking	8
Appendix C: Business Tax Burden Ranking	10
Appendix D: Community Allure Ranking	12
Appendix E: Transportation Infrastructure Ranking	14



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## INTRODUCTION

In order to excel in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, Alabama must be as attractive as possible to businesses looking to establish or grow operations in the state. While Alabama's business-friendly image is usually assessed at the state level, Alabama must also consider how its individual cities compare against each other with respect to economic, social, and educational factors attractive to businesses.

The Alabama Policy Institute (API) has collected data on Alabama's 50 most populous cities and ranked them based on criteria that both ensure business success and protect the entrepreneurial spirit.<sup>1</sup> The four categories in which data are ranked are Economic Vitality, Business Tax Burden, Community Allure, and Transportation Infrastructure.

This report looks at a number of factors: What cities have the best tax policy? Which have low costs of living and crime rates? What cities have experienced the most year-over-year population and job growth? What type of economic vitality do cities have, including the average incomes for local residents? API answers these questions in this report.

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## ALABAMA'S MOST BUSINESS-FRIENDLY CITIES

So what city takes the prize? After careful analysis, the results are in: Prattville is Alabama's Most Business-Friendly City. Located in Autauga County, this city finished second in Economic Vitality, third in Community Allure, eighth in the Business Tax Burden category, and fifth in the less-weighted category of Transportation Infrastructure, for a composite score of

76.98 out of 100 possible points, edging out Foley (75.57) and Fairhope (69.33).

Foley, the sister city of Daphne and Fairhope in Baldwin County, finished second because of its first-place ranking in both Economic Vitality and the Business Tax Burden category. It failed to top Prattville in Community Allure (34th) and Transportation Infrastructure (40th) because of its higher cost of living, lower-than-average standardized test scores, and distance to rail services and major interstates.

Fairhope barely edged out Athens (69.07) for third place. It placed 8th in Economic Vitality because of its above-average short- and long-term population growth and 9th in Business Tax Burden for its competitive millage and local business sales tax rates. However, the city had mediocre scores in Community Allure (22nd) and Transportation (35th) because of its above-average cost of living and distance to a variety of transport hubs.

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## ALABAMA'S LEAST BUSINESS-FRIENDLY CITIES

With every best there is a worst, and the dubious honor of being Alabama's least Business-Friendly City belongs to Prichard, with a total score of 29.22. Simply put, Prichard possesses unfavorable rankings in three of the four business-friendly categories. Its last place showing in Economic Vitality is the result of a rapidly declining population, shrinking job pool, and the lowest per-capita income in Alabama. The city's ranking of 48th in Business Tax Burden category is largely due to its having some of the highest business property taxes and local business sales taxes in the state.

A final reason for the city's abysmal ranking is its Community Allure score of only 32.94 out of 100 possible points (49th). In 2010, Prichard had a violent crime rate four-and-a-half times higher than the average of its sister cities. Educational outcomes are also depressed, with significantly smaller proportions of students scoring well on standardized tests. The city's workforce is also less prepared than much of the rest of the state, with

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<sup>1</sup> In developing those rankings, the Alabama Policy Institute (API) looked to the Beacon Center of Tennessee's annual report, "How Business-Friendly are Tennessee's Cities?" See JUSTIN OWEN & RYAN TURBEVILLE, BEACON CENTER OF TENNESSEE, NO. 11-05, HOW BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ARE TENNESSEE'S CITIES? (Nov. 14, 2011), available at [www.beacontn.org/wp-content/uploads/How-Business-Friendly-are-Tennessees-Cities-in-2011.pdf](http://www.beacontn.org/wp-content/uploads/How-Business-Friendly-are-Tennessees-Cities-in-2011.pdf).

significantly fewer adults age 25 or older possessing a high school diploma or better.

The saving grace Prichard possesses in terms of being business-friendly is its proximity to transportation infrastructure. Having the second-highest score in this category, though (96.74) was not enough to keep the city from being the worst for business in Alabama.

Following Prichard as the worst cities for business in Alabama are Anniston (29.98) and Bessemer (30.51). Both cities scored near the bottom on Economic Vitality (49th and 47th, respectively), and both also ranked poorly on their Total Business Tax Burden scores (38th and 49th). The Community Allure of both cities was also disappointing on account of their above-average crime rates and low SAT 10 reading and math scores.

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## ECONOMIC VITALITY

The economic vitality of a city is important to businesses because factors such as its job growth, population growth, and median per-capita income reflect its ability to survive during an economic downturn. "Population growth indicates that an area has a solid consumer base that can attract and support commerce."<sup>2</sup> Job creation or lack thereof has a clear impact on a city's business climate, and income levels reveal a city's ability to invest in its own business marketplace.

The five best-performing cities in the category of Economic Vitality are Foley (83.68 of a possible 100), Prattville (76.39), Vestavia Hills (74.37), Northport (73.59) and Mountain Brook (73.36). Within each subcategory, Foley had the most job growth (1.61%) and long-term residential population growth from 2000 to 2010 (9.26% per year), Athens had the largest short-term growth from 2010 to 2011 (3.16%), and Mountain Brook had the highest per-capita income (\$76,763).

Prichard was the poorest scoring city in Economic Vitality, earning only 8.61 points. It was followed by Anniston (11.71), Talladega (11.96), Bessemer (19.79) and Mobile (21.47). Each of these cities has suffered serious declines in job growth, most have seen their populations shrink, and all of them have per-capita incomes well below the state average.

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## BUSINESS TAX BURDEN

The Business Tax Burden category employs two key tax components for each city: property tax rates and general sales tax. Property tax rates are expressed in millage (mills), which are equal to one-tenth of one cent. The average property tax rate in Alabama is 50.8 mills, with municipal rates ranging from 30 mills in Millbrook to 99 mills in Mountain Brook.<sup>3</sup> General sales taxes in Alabama are from 0.5% to 5%, with 4% being the most common rate.

The five best-ranking cities in Alabama in terms of their Business Tax Burden are Foley (90.83), Cullman (86.50), Northport (84.65), Jasper (82.52), and Athens (82.52). Each of these cities has a millage rate of 40 or less, plus a general sales tax of 2% or less.

On the other hand, Birmingham (14.53), Bessemer (15.21), Prichard (17.04), Mountain Brook (20.31), and Vestavia Hills (20.40) are the five worst cities in Alabama when it comes to the tax burdens placed on their businesses. Each of these cities has a property tax rate of at least 60 mills and a sales tax of at least 3%.

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<sup>3</sup> In Alabama, businesses are assessed at a rate of 20% of the business' appraised value, so the formula for calculating property tax is as follows: Tax Amount = Appraised Value × Business Rate (20%) × Millage Rate. Source: ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, *Property Tax Incentives*, <http://revenue.alabama.gov/Taxincentives/proptaxincentives.html> (last visited May 7, 2012).

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<sup>2</sup> BEACON CENTER OF TENNESSEE, *supra* note 1, at 4.



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## COMMUNITY ALLURE

The factors that make up the Community Allure category count for a smaller percentage of the rankings than Business Tax Burden and Economic Vitality. Nevertheless, indicators such as the cost of living index, education performance, and crime rates all play a key role in any city's business climate.

With its reasonable cost of living, safe neighborhoods, and decent education system, Florence takes the top spot in the Community Allure category (68.66). In a very close second place is Hartselle (68.29), with a significantly lower violent crime rate and slightly better education scores than Florence but a higher cost of living. Prattville (66.32), Muscle Shoals (65.91), and Athens (65.13) round out the top five in Community Allure.

Despite having a low cost of living, Anniston's very high crime rate and mediocre scores in education put it in last place for Community Allure (31.20). Prichard (32.94), Bessemer (34.78), Northport (36.63), and Birmingham (36.74) finish out the bottom five in this category.

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## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

While the components of the Transportation Infrastructure category comprise the smallest percent of the ranking system, they are important because businesses of all sizes need quick, convenient access for their customers, employees, and suppliers. Moreover, those businesses need access to a variety of transportation hubs to ensure that their products are able to make it to broader markets quickly and affordably.

Because it possesses a major airport, rail service, interstate access, and Alabama's only container-ready commercial port, Mobile takes first place in Transportation Infrastructure with a perfect score. Prichard and Saraland, both suburbs of Mobile, placed second (96.74) and third (94.88) because of their proximity to the coast and Mobile's airport. Montgomery and Prattville placed fourth (94.40) and fifth (89.79), respectively, in this category.

The five cities with the lowest scores for Transportation Infrastructure tended to be located considerable distances from both commercial airports and major ports. Florence scored lowest in the state (40.70), followed by Muscle Shoals (40.95), Scottsboro (43.60), Albertville (43.98), and Alexander City (52.19).

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## CONCLUSION

Alabama's most business-friendly cities possess responsible, limited governance, reasonable tax rates, quality school systems, low crime, access to transportation infrastructure, and a thriving economy despite significant economic challenges over the last several years. Most of the state's top 10 business-friendly cities look like Prattville and Foley, which possess small but growing populations, access to transportation, and room to grow geographically.

This does not mean, though, that larger cities cannot compete against smaller, nimbler ones. Montgomery (6th place) and Dothan (10th), for example, both have populations well above 50,000, yet they already possess vital transportation hubs, low business property taxes, average costs of living, and better-educated populations.

Local policymakers seeking to make their cities more business-friendly should follow the path of these cities by maintaining low tax rates on businesses and families, focusing on education and public safety, and making sound investments designed to attract prospective businesses. By making simple adjustments, many cities across Alabama could be on their way to becoming Alabama's Most Business-Friendly City, and in the process, help establish Alabama as a destination for growing companies.

A word of encouragement to the cities whose scores are not where they want them to be: every city surveyed, from the worst to the best, has considerable room for improvement. Even Prattville, the best city in Alabama for business, scored only 76.98 out of a possible 100 points. While a perfect score is highly unlikely, an improvement of only 10 points could move a lagging city to the center of the pack, or a middling city to the top 10.

Cities at or near the top should not rest on their laurels. On average, less than one point separated the rankings from each other, and less than three points separated first and second place. If several cities made even small changes to improve their business climate, next year's rankings could be dramatically different.

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## THE BUSINESS-FRIENDLY FORMULA

### Economic Vitality (35% of overall score):

- Recent job growth (50% of Economic Vitality category)<sup>4</sup>
- Residential population growth from 2010 to 2011 (12.5%)<sup>5</sup>
- Population growth from 2000 to 2010, divided by 10 (12.5%)<sup>6</sup>
- Median per capita income (25%)<sup>7</sup>

### Business Tax Burden (30% of overall score):

- Business property taxes (70% of Business Tax Burden category)<sup>8</sup>
- Local sales tax (30%)<sup>9</sup>

### Community Allure (20% of overall score):

- Cost of living index (35% of Community Allure category)<sup>10</sup>
- Per capita violent crime rate (35%)<sup>11</sup>
- Percent of adults age 25 or older with at least a high school diploma (15%)<sup>12</sup>
- Average SAT 10 scores for 8th grade math and reading (15%)<sup>13</sup>

### Transportation Infrastructure (15% of overall score):

- Distance to primary commercial service airport (25% of Transportation Infrastructure category)<sup>14</sup>
- Distance to commercial rail service (25%)<sup>15</sup>
- Distance to port capable of handling container shipping (25%)<sup>16</sup>
- Distance to Interstate Highway System (25%)<sup>17</sup>

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4 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN FACT FINDER, Table S2301: Employment Status (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for 2006-2010 and 2005-2009), [www.factfinder2.census.gov](http://www.factfinder2.census.gov) (last visited June 4, 2012).

5 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, STATE & COUNTY QUICK FACTS, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html> (last visited June 28, 2012).

6 *Id.*

7 *Id.*

8 PROPERTY TAX DIVISION, ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, [www.revenue.alabama.gov/advalorem/MILLS11.pdf](http://www.revenue.alabama.gov/advalorem/MILLS11.pdf) (last visited May 7, 2012).

9 ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, ALABAMA CITIES THAT LEVY SALES, USE, LODGINGS, AND RENTAL TAXES, <http://revenue.alabama.gov/salestax/sales/index.cfm?Action=City> (last visited May 7, 2012).

10 SPERLING'S BEST PLACES, [www.bestplaces.net](http://www.bestplaces.net) (last visited June 4, 2012).

11 ALABAMA CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM, CRIME IN ALABAMA 2010 (2011), available at [www.acjic.alabama.gov/cia/2010\\_cia.pdf](http://www.acjic.alabama.gov/cia/2010_cia.pdf).

12 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, STATE & COUNTY QUICK FACTS, *supra* note 5.

13 ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, [www.alsde.edu/html/reports\\_menu.asp#](http://www.alsde.edu/html/reports_menu.asp#) (last visited May 7, 2012).

14 TRAVELMATH.COM, NEAREST AIRPORT, [www.travelmath.com/nearest-airport/](http://www.travelmath.com/nearest-airport/) (last visited June 2, 2012).

15 Distance to rail service and Interstate Highway System calculated using GOOGLE MAPS, [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com) (last visited June 4, 2012).

16 Distance between cities and commercial ports—Mobile, AL, Panama City, FL, and Pensacola, FL—calculated using DISTANCEBETWEENCITIES.NET, [www.distancebetweencities.net/](http://www.distancebetweencities.net/) (last visited June 2, 2012).

17 GOOGLE MAPS, *supra* note 15.

**APPENDIX A: OVERALL BUSINESS-FRIENDLY RANKING**

	<b>Economic Vitality</b>	<b>Business Tax Burden</b>	<b>Community Allure</b>	<b>Transportation Infrastructure</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
1 Prattville	76.39	78.37	66.32	89.79	76.98
2 Foley	83.68	90.83	49.49	60.92	75.57
3 Fairhope	69.37	77.75	56.73	69.18	69.33
4 Athens	58.73	82.52	65.13	71.53	69.07
5 Northport	73.59	84.65	36.63	69.63	68.92
6 Montgomery	62.88	73.10	50.67	94.40	68.23
7 Cullman	49.48	86.50	64.52	67.07	66.23
8 Enterprise	69.65	62.80	54.54	69.82	64.60
9 Daphne	52.85	74.84	54.60	76.24	63.31
10 Dothan	55.03	70.74	48.66	82.42	62.58
11 Millbrook	35.61	79.08	62.56	89.41	62.11
12 Madison	69.94	42.50	58.46	76.34	60.37
13 Fort Payne	56.12	66.40	59.27	56.96	59.96
14 Alexander City	54.92	71.87	52.88	52.19	59.19
15 Tuscaloosa	61.04	61.70	38.49	70.19	58.10
16 Alabaster	65.74	36.73	60.46	79.82	58.09
17 Eufaula	47.32	70.76	56.50	59.73	58.05
18 Florence	60.99	52.54	68.66	40.70	56.95
19 Helena	51.60	46.54	62.87	80.85	56.73
20 Pelham	55.71	41.62	62.73	81.15	56.70
21 Albertville	68.09	51.37	52.55	43.98	56.35
22 Gardendale	49.85	44.38	63.56	83.25	55.96
23 Mountain Brook	73.36	20.31	58.42	78.74	55.26
24 Jasper	23.67	82.52	55.20	70.24	54.62
25 Vestavia Hills	74.37	20.40	57.89	72.31	54.58

	<b>Economic Vitality</b>	<b>Business Tax Burden</b>	<b>Community Allure</b>	<b>Transportation Infrastructure</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
26 Hartselle	30.67	63.31	68.29	73.53	54.41
27 Opelika	66.69	36.73	40.06	79.97	54.37
28 Center Point	34.73	64.47	50.99	83.11	54.16
29 Auburn	55.66	36.73	59.02	76.66	53.80
30 Muscle Shoals	38.75	67.69	65.91	40.95	53.19
31 Scottsboro	44.75	61.71	60.29	43.60	52.78
32 Phenix City	53.12	30.53	45.59	89.04	50.23
33 Hoover	52.80	24.58	57.17	83.94	49.88
34 Decatur	34.83	53.60	51.69	74.45	49.78
35 Troy	21.54	78.81	45.61	59.68	49.26
36 Hueytown	45.20	25.88	64.84	83.20	49.03
37 Saraland	36.71	36.30	54.49	94.88	48.87
38 Gadsden	49.65	46.54	42.25	59.12	48.66
39 Trussville	39.88	34.63	56.88	82.87	48.15
40 Huntsville	50.03	35.37	42.36	77.02	48.15
41 Ozark	36.30	44.58	51.93	74.23	47.60
42 Oxford	35.84	42.77	61.31	61.41	46.85
43 Selma	57.48	30.24	36.80	60.52	45.63
44 Homewood	40.76	23.32	46.94	84.80	43.37
45 Talladega	11.96	57.87	45.15	63.63	40.12
46 Birmingham	36.36	14.53	36.74	86.63	37.42
47 Mobile	21.47	20.92	39.61	100.00	36.71
48 Bessemer	19.79	15.21	34.78	80.45	30.51
49 Anniston	11.71	34.93	31.20	61.09	29.98
50 Prichard	8.61	17.04	32.94	96.74	29.22

**APPENDIX B: ECONOMIC VITALITY RANKING**

	<b>Recent Job Growth: 2009-2010</b>	<b>Residential Population Growth: 2009-2010</b>	<b>Residential Population Growth: 2000-2010</b>	<b>Median Per-Capita Income</b>	<b>Total Economic Vitality Score</b>
1 Foley	98.57	96.13	99.97	39.51	83.68
2 Prattville	87.34	71.06	85.55	52.57	76.39
3 Vestavia Hills	70.75	28.64	84.84	99.25	74.37
4 Northport	93.45	74.25	56.95	41.84	73.59
5 Mountain Brook	83.98	28.80	22.14	100.00	73.36
6 Madison	51.49	84.40	91.31	88.93	69.94
7 Enterprise	81.93	66.92	66.17	48.21	69.65
8 Fairhope	58.07	95.46	61.77	82.73	69.37
9 Albertville	94.31	70.28	61.57	17.81	68.09
10 Opelika	81.23	94.09	43.81	35.33	66.69
11 Alabaster	62.75	77.60	79.13	59.08	65.74
12 Montgomery	79.51	68.35	26.37	45.14	62.88
13 Tuscaloosa	75.65	71.04	49.96	32.34	61.04
14 Florence	87.96	29.15	36.43	35.24	60.99
15 Athens	54.50	99.08	48.75	52.00	58.73
16 Selma	98.18	4.78	25.07	18.63	57.48
17 Fort Payne	71.77	64.75	36.22	30.44	56.12
18 Pelham	34.49	77.93	92.77	68.53	55.71
19 Auburn	49.02	92.88	64.10	46.11	55.66
20 Dothan	62.82	54.32	45.16	44.73	55.03
21 Alexander City	83.14	26.54	22.20	29.03	54.92
22 Phenix City	56.60	98.59	49.96	25.02	53.12
23 Daphne	25.06	95.80	73.46	76.64	52.85
24 Hoover	31.04	42.52	73.46	91.12	52.80
25 Helena	24.92	71.80	98.26	71.53	51.60

	<b>Recent Job Growth: 2009-2010</b>	<b>Residential Population Growth: 2009-2010</b>	<b>Residential Population Growth: 2000-2010</b>	<b>Median Per-Capita Income</b>	<b>Total Economic Vitality Score</b>
26 Huntsville	36.39	80.59	45.87	64.11	50.03
27 Gardendale	43.73	28.83	55.99	69.51	49.85
28 Gadsden	77.36	22.86	16.59	24.16	49.65
29 Cullman	62.82	31.57	31.73	40.63	49.48
30 Eufaula	79.44	2.56	16.48	20.89	47.32
31 Hueytown	54.70	28.48	30.54	41.88	45.20
32 Scottsboro	59.42	32.03	23.48	32.42	44.75
33 Homewood	33.91	28.33	24.09	69.00	40.76
34 Trussville	8.40	28.70	95.66	80.56	39.88
35 Muscle Shoals	38.95	33.55	39.55	40.55	38.75
36 Saraland	38.52	28.92	37.56	36.56	36.71
37 Birmingham	49.05	28.95	9.82	27.94	36.36
38 Ozark	45.19	15.69	21.51	36.23	36.30
39 Oxford	26.51	11.60	91.24	38.92	35.84
40 Millbrook	6.89	67.65	86.77	51.47	35.61
41 Decatur	31.70	39.69	28.11	42.02	34.83
42 Center Point	48.57	30.30	2.99	25.13	34.73
43 Hartselle	19.66	42.50	54.40	34.90	30.67
44 Jasper	6.76	17.80	26.44	59.05	23.67
45 Troy	5.06	24.98	72.45	27.31	21.54
46 Mobile	13.23	23.31	20.85	37.35	21.47
47 Bessemer	18.74	28.51	14.43	20.20	19.79
48 Talladega	6.92	9.95	28.52	14.76	11.96
49 Anniston	0.62	10.85	17.30	31.51	11.71
50 Prichard	5.11	23.42	4.81	10.11	8.61

**APPENDIX C: BUSINESS TAX BURDEN RANKING**

	<b>Business Property Taxes</b>	<b>Local Business / General Sales Tax</b>	<b>Total Business Tax Burden Score</b>
1 Foley	89.58	93.75	90.83
2 Cullman	80.75	99.92	86.50
3 Northport	80.75	93.75	84.65
4 Jasper	77.71	93.75	82.52
5 Athens	77.71	93.75	82.52
6 Millbrook	92.92	46.78	79.08
7 Troy	83.60	67.64	78.81
8 Prattville	91.91	46.78	78.37
9 Fairhope	70.90	93.75	77.75
10 Daphne	70.90	84.03	74.84
11 Montgomery	84.38	46.78	73.10
12 Alexander City	82.62	46.78	71.87
13 Eufaula	72.10	67.64	70.76
14 Dothan	89.58	26.80	70.74
15 Muscle Shoals	76.64	46.78	67.69
16 Fort Payne	65.87	67.64	66.40
17 Center Point	51.92	93.75	64.47
18 Hartselle	78.96	26.80	63.31
19 Enterprise	69.67	46.78	62.80
20 Scottsboro	59.17	67.64	61.71
21 Tuscaloosa	47.97	93.75	61.70
22 Talladega	80.75	4.50	57.87
23 Decatur	65.09	26.80	53.60
24 Florence	55.01	46.78	52.54
25 Albertville	61.89	26.80	51.37



	<b>Business Property Taxes</b>	<b>Local Business / General Sales Tax</b>	<b>Total Business Tax Burden Score</b>
26 Helena	55.01	26.80	46.54
27 Gadsden	55.01	26.80	46.54
28 Ozark	52.20	26.80	44.58
29 Gardendale	51.92	26.80	44.38
30 Oxford	59.17	4.50	42.77
31 Madison	31.72	67.64	42.50
32 Pelham	30.47	67.64	41.62
33 Auburn	40.99	26.80	36.73
34 Alabaster	40.99	26.80	36.73
35 Opelika	40.99	26.80	36.73
36 Saraland	46.56	12.36	36.30
37 Huntsville	30.47	46.78	35.37
38 Anniston	47.97	4.50	34.93
39 Trussville	37.99	26.80	34.63
40 Phenix City	28.04	36.32	30.53
41 Selma	31.72	26.80	30.24
42 Hueytown	25.48	26.80	25.88
43 Hoover	6.13	67.64	24.58
44 Homewood	4.33	67.64	23.32
45 Mobile	18.41	26.80	20.92
46 Vestavia Hills	0.15	67.64	20.40
47 Mountain Brook	0.03	67.64	20.31
48 Prichard	22.41	4.50	17.04
49 Bessemer	10.24	26.80	15.21
50 Birmingham	9.27	26.80	14.53

**APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY ALLURE RANKING**

	<b>Cost of Living</b>	<b>Per-Capita Violent Crime</b>	<b>High School Graduation Rate</b>	<b>SAT Averaged Reading &amp; Math Scores</b>	<b>Total Community Allure Score</b>
1 Florence	80.38	69.73	46.19	61.30	68.66
2 Hartselle	54.29	81.45	58.94	79.59	68.29
3 Prattville	51.62	66.67	75.24	90.85	66.32
4 Muscle Shoals	69.51	56.95	54.73	89.60	65.91
5 Athens	66.07	75.00	33.32	71.74	65.13
6 Hueytown	70.18	75.44	55.26	37.26	64.84
7 Cullman	57.32	74.97	26.36	95.11	64.52
8 Gardendale	50.09	70.53	76.90	65.36	63.56
9 Helena	35.87	81.94	91.40	52.83	62.87
10 Pelham	41.74	75.38	86.39	58.51	62.73
11 Millbrook	54.29	69.80	80.41	47.09	62.56
12 Oxford	68.50	61.86	32.84	71.74	61.31
13 Alabaster	33.39	78.16	76.08	66.68	60.46
14 Scottsboro	73.10	61.13	23.39	65.36	60.29
15 Fort Payne	76.17	74.37	1.05	42.82	59.27
16 Auburn	24.88	74.98	87.52	72.95	59.02
17 Madison	14.20	72.41	93.32	94.33	58.46
18 Mountain Brook *	0.00	82.99	96.87	98.94	58.42
19 Vestavia Hills	1.72	81.64	95.03	96.40	57.89
20 Hoover	5.71	79.25	92.02	90.85	57.17
21 Trussville *	16.47	76.02	86.96	76.40	56.88
22 Fairhope	5.82	80.90	92.41	83.43	56.73
23 Eufaula	71.49	75.74	14.73	18.37	56.50
24 Jasper	67.12	46.25	36.80	66.68	55.20
25 Daphne	14.42	75.81	92.21	61.30	54.60

	<b>Cost of Living</b>	<b>Per-Capita Violent Crime</b>	<b>High School Graduation Rate</b>	<b>SAT Averaged Reading &amp; Math Scores</b>	<b>Total Community Allure Score</b>
26 Enterprise	56.94	49.33	45.12	70.51	54.54
27 Saraland	62.50	55.63	34.80	52.83	54.49
28 Alexander City	68.83	55.52	12.40	49.96	52.88
29 Albertville	79.85	56.73	2.20	29.42	52.55
30 Ozark	73.41	47.90	28.60	34.56	51.93
31 Decatur	56.94	56.91	30.45	48.52	51.69
32 Center Point **	61.77	56.14	61.53	3.31	50.99
33 Montgomery	62.14	56.34	51.00	10.36	50.67
34 Foley	39.51	63.15	64.57	25.81	49.49
35 Dothan	65.37	35.44	43.53	45.66	48.66
36 Homewood	7.29	50.55	91.19	86.76	46.94
37 Troy	66.77	31.92	32.35	41.41	45.61
38 Phenix City	66.07	48.31	29.06	7.99	45.59
39 Talladega	82.93	39.39	4.54	11.02	45.15
40 Huntsville	44.37	27.92	59.46	54.26	42.36
41 Gadsden	86.11	18.53	15.05	22.45	42.25
42 Opelika	52.38	38.65	29.98	24.66	40.06
43 Mobile	64.66	17.97	53.13	18.12	39.61
44 Tuscaloosa	38.04	46.72	45.65	13.19	38.49
45 Selma	84.12	12.93	12.40	6.51	36.80
46 Birmingham *	81.68	4.53	36.80	6.98	36.74
47 Northport	32.01	27.18	59.46	46.60	36.63
48 Bessemer *	85.47	0.04	20.61	11.72	34.78
49 Prichard *	84.80	0.01	4.29	17.43	32.94
50 Anniston	77.34	0.91	23.39	2.00	31.20

\* Because city did not provide 2010 crime data or only reported data for part of the year, 2009 data was used.

\*\* Because Center Point does not report its own crime data, the average for Jefferson County was used.

**APPENDIX E: TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE RANKING**

	<b>Distance to Commercial Service Airport</b>	<b>Distance to Rail Service</b>	<b>Distance to Containerized Shipping Port</b>	<b>Distance to Interstate Highway System</b>	<b>Transportation Infrastructure Score</b>
1 Mobile	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
2 Prichard	87.18	100.00	99.79	100.00	96.74
3 Saraland	80.07	100.00	99.45	100.00	94.88
4 Montgomery	100.00	100.00	77.59	100.00	94.40
5 Prattville	83.75	100.00	75.42	100.00	89.79
6 Millbrook	81.94	100.00	75.70	100.00	89.41
7 Phenix City	94.51	100.00	71.92	89.74	89.04
8 Birmingham	100.00	100.00	46.50	100.00	86.63
9 Homewood	91.80	99.22	48.18	100.00	84.80
10 Hoover	85.50	100.00	50.25	100.00	83.94
11 Gardendale	90.33	100.00	42.68	100.00	83.25
12 Hueytown	76.15	100.00	57.42	99.23	83.20
13 Center Point	100.00	100.00	40.96	91.46	83.11
14 Trussville	88.79	100.00	42.68	100.00	82.87
15 Dothan	100.00	100.00	92.91	36.77	82.42
16 Pelham	69.92	100.00	54.69	100.00	81.15
17 Helena	69.92	100.00	53.49	100.00	80.85
18 Bessemer	76.15	100.00	45.66	100.00	80.45
19 Opelika	52.40	100.00	67.47	100.00	79.97
20 Alabaster	63.41	100.00	55.87	100.00	79.82
21 Mountain Brook	95.75	73.24	46.92	99.04	78.74
22 Huntsville	100.00	100.00	8.08	100.00	77.02
23 Auburn	41.90	100.00	64.75	100.00	76.66
24 Madison	94.51	100.00	10.85	100.00	76.34
25 Daphne	65.60	40.16	99.22	100.00	76.24

	<b>Distance to Commercial Service Airport</b>	<b>Distance to Rail Service</b>	<b>Distance to Containerized Shipping Port</b>	<b>Distance to Interstate Highway System</b>	<b>Transportation Infrastructure Score</b>
26 Decatur	83.75	100.00	14.05	100.00	74.45
27 Ozark	78.13	100.00	89.74	29.03	74.23
28 Hartselle	76.15	100.00	17.99	100.00	73.53
29 Vestavia Hills	90.33	49.50	49.42	100.00	72.31
30 Athens	76.15	100.00	9.97	100.00	71.53
31 Jasper	36.16	100.00	44.81	100.00	70.24
32 Tuscaloosa	14.62	100.00	66.12	100.00	70.19
33 Enterprise	59.00	100.00	88.75	31.52	69.82
34 Northport	14.62	100.00	65.44	98.45	69.63
35 Fairhope	61.21	38.98	98.84	77.67	69.18
36 Cullman	41.90	100.00	26.36	100.00	67.07
37 Talladega	30.97	100.00	48.60	74.96	63.63
38 Oxford	14.62	100.00	31.02	100.00	61.41
39 Anniston	14.62	100.00	29.74	100.00	61.09
40 Foley	45.99	38.97	98.15	60.58	60.92
41 Selma	32.63	100.00	78.63	30.83	60.52
42 Eufaula	23.75	100.00	84.00	31.18	59.73
43 Troy	25.05	100.00	83.57	30.11	59.68
44 Gadsden	14.62	100.00	21.86	100.00	59.12
45 Fort Payne	16.68	100.00	11.16	100.00	56.96
46 Alexander City	15.94	100.00	61.54	31.30	52.19
47 Albertville	26.42	100.00	16.51	33.00	43.98
48 Scottsboro	25.05	100.00	4.72	44.64	43.60
49 Muscle Shoals	15.94	100.00	18.36	29.49	40.95
50 Florence	15.25	100.00	16.88	30.69	40.70







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