

Rankings, surveys combine to make Southern Nevada, Henderson a business magnet

If the business climate in Southern Nevada were a movie, it would be considered critically-acclaimed.

They may not be the Golden Globe or Academy Awards, but report after report is recognizing the Las Vegas Valley – including the city of Henderson – as one of the top places for businesses to operate.

This past December, a survey of 458 chief executive officers from across the country – conducted by the publisher of *Chief Executive* magazine – ranked Nevada as the second friendliest state in which to do business. In contrast, Nevada's bordering state, California, ranked as the worst state, just below New York, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.

"Obviously, reports and surveys can be subjective from issue to issue," said Bob Cooper, manager of the Economic Development Division of the City of Henderson, the second-largest city in the state behind Las Vegas. "However, time after time Nevada, the Las Vegas metropolitan area and Henderson are being ranked as top places in which to do business. After a while, you see a trend and understand that this definitely is an attractive place for a business to relocate or to be established."

The trend is easy to see.

The Tax Foundation ranked Nevada among the top 10 states with the most business-friendly tax systems at the beginning of 2003.

In March 2004, *Inc. Magazine* ranked the Las Vegas metropolitan area as one of the best locations for doing business. "The area is creating jobs in high-end sectors and even manufacturing, in large part because of an exodus from more expensive locales on the Western Seaboard," explained the magazine.

In November 2004, the *Milken Institute Best Performing Cities Index* ranked Las Vegas as the second best metropolitan area in the United States based upon its economic performance and its ability to create, as well as keep, the greatest number of jobs in the nation. According to the report, the top-ranked cities were those with low costs, growing

populations and reliable and stable sectors such as health care and government.

The 2004 *Kosmont-Rose Cost of Doing Business Survey* rated Henderson as a "Low Cost City," analyzing six types of taxes including business license levies, property tax, sales tax and utility taxes in 314 cities nationwide.

All of the findings from the reports and surveys were made tangible earlier this

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*- Warren Hardy
Nevada State Senator*

month as the Henderson Development Association, in conjunction with the City of Henderson, honored more than 30 new and expanding companies in the city.

One of the companies recognized was Southwest Steel.

"I have been impressed with the help and assistance from Henderson's Economic Development Division in arranging meetings and helping get our plans and permits approved on what I feel was an expedited basis," said Tom Collins, vice president of Southwest Steel. "Every time I called a representative and asked for 'help' he was quick to put me in touch with the 'right' people and took a personal interest in getting 'hitches' resolved. The division and the City of Henderson truly want to help businesses get established and re-located and they don't just 'talk the talk'... they get results."

Henderson – known for its master-planned communities and high-quality of living – has been at the front of the

growth spurt of Southern Nevada, growing from just 60,000 people in 1990 to currently over 225,000. That population would make Henderson the 14th largest city in the state of California – larger than such cities at Irvine, Glendale and San Bernardino.

Over the past six years, the Henderson Economic Development Division has been instrumental in recruiting 102 non-hospitality, non-retail firms to Henderson which have created more than 6,500 jobs while occupying nearly four million-square-feet of space. The economic impact of the efforts is estimated at more than \$478 million.

And Henderson will continue to grow with more raving reviews coming in about the area's business climate.

This past December, The Boyd Co., a New Jersey-based location consulting firm, rated the Las Vegas area as one of the least expensive cities for business. The study was based on a technical company employing 125 workers and occupying 35,000-square-feet of Class A office space in 30 metropolitan areas in the U.S.

"In our view Las Vegas is well-positioned," said The Boyd Co. president John Boyd in a December 2004 interview with the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. "Executives stand to save a lot of money with the lack of personal income tax. They also have the ability to buy more house for less money compared with what they would get in Connecticut, Chicago or Orange County (Calif)."

And finally, the "Small Business Survival Index 2004" – published by The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council – ranked Nevada as one of the most entrepreneur-friendly states in the nation. The index tied together 23 major government-imposed or government-related costs impacting small business and entrepreneurs across a broad spectrum of industries and types of business.

All in all, the community – including

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its lawmakers – is committed to making Henderson a place to do business.

“Companies across the nation are quickly realizing how beneficial doing business in Southern Nevada is,” said

State Senator Warren Hardy, whose district includes much of the city of Henderson. “As lawmakers, it’s crucial that we understand the importance of a thriving economy to the entire community and work to protect and grow that economy. At the end of the day, a

diversified economy is the key to maintaining the high quality of life we enjoy in Southern Nevada.”

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