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13, 2010**

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We are currently working on a project involving the new Omaha entertainment tax and would appreciate your feedback. Please take a moment to complete [THIS 10 QUESTION SURVEY](#). Thank you.

**Media
Information**

If you are a member of the media and would like more information on anything in this e-newsletter, please email Berk Brown at: Berk.Brown@PlatteInstitute.org or call (402) 452.3737. Members of the media may use any or all

PLATTE CHAT

Nebraska's Best and Worst Cities for Property Tax Collections

By Berk Brown
Platte Institute

In Nebraska, property taxes are collected at the local level. As a result, local government entities control exactly how much taxpayers pay for the privilege of owning their own homes.

As Thomas Jefferson once said, "The purpose of government is to enable the people of a nation to live in safety and happiness. Government exists for the interests of the governed, not for the governors." Yet, a quick glance at how much cities in Nebraska collect in property taxes from their residents clearly shows that some communities feel like their residents should pay much more for that safety and happiness than other communities do.

The following data is reflective of only the property taxes collected by the city government. Total property tax bills in each community also include other taxing authorities, but for this collection of data, only the money which goes directly to the city was used. We took a look at all 54 Nebraska cities with populations of at least 2,000 to determine which cities most require the least contributions from tax payers to provide services and which are getting the most in revenue from their citizens on a per-capita basis.

According to the rankings, if you truly want to experience Nebraska's "Good Life," in the form of less property taxes on a per-capita basis, then you need to live in the central of northeast portion of the state.

The top five cities all collect less than \$100 per person:

- 1.) York - \$66
- 2.) Kearney - \$81
- 3.) Lexington - \$94

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Send a Letter to the Editor

The Platte Institute strongly believes in the importance of citizens participating in the public dialogue on issues important to Nebraska. Writing a letter to the editor is an outstanding way to partake in the discussion and have your voice heard by thousands of people. To make the process easier, the Platte Institute has assembled a list of links which allow you to submit a letter to the editor to nearly all Nebraska newspapers. Simply [CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of the newspapers and follow the appropriate link to submit your letter.

Contact Us

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4.) Madison - \$98

5.) Norfolk - \$99

Four of the bottom five cities all brought in more than \$300 per person in their community from property taxes. Why it costs the governments in these cities so much more to provide the happiness and safety Thomas Jefferson spoke of is a question only the officials in the cities can answer:

50.) Bellevue - \$292

51.) Wahoo - \$302

52.) Ralston - \$307

53.) LaVista - \$315

54.) St. Paul - \$323

Nebraska's two largest cities a large difference in what they collect from residents with Lincoln ranking 30th at \$190 per resident and Omaha ranking 48th at \$283 per person. Below is a complete ranking of all 54 cities:

City	2009 Population	2009 Taxes Levied	Per Capita
York	7638	504,978.87	66
Kearney	30744	2,517,215.75	81
Lexington	10275	973,336.25	94
Madison	2208	216,814.84	98
Norfolk	23272	2,320,050.06	99
Scottsbluff	14886	1,586,152.70	106
Schuyler	5339	575,893.09	107
Chadron	5437	670,494.12	123
McCook	7410	940,007.81	126
Geneva	2030	261,262.82	128
Wayne	5346	720,379.26	134
Falls City	3933	533,074.21	135
Grand Island	46861	6,410,721.85	136
Gothenburg	3703	510,984.35	137
Gering	7738	1,087,788.97	140
Beatrice	12564	1,816,971.63	144
Alliance	8002	1,207,955.95	150
Cozad	4296	655,819.22	152
Central City	2813	438,353.09	155
Auburn	3230	518,957.06	160
Columbus	21914	3,706,514.48	169
Valentine	2534	430,792.80	170
Holdrege	5121	878,102.77	171
South Sioux City	12213	2,136,637.79	174
Fremont	25007	4,531,264.89	181
Gretna	6736	1,263,572.24	187
Nebraska City	6869	1,295,002.31	188
Plattsmouth	6867	1,303,315.77	189
Seward	6742	1,280,399.50	189
Lincoln	254001	48,380,959.07	190

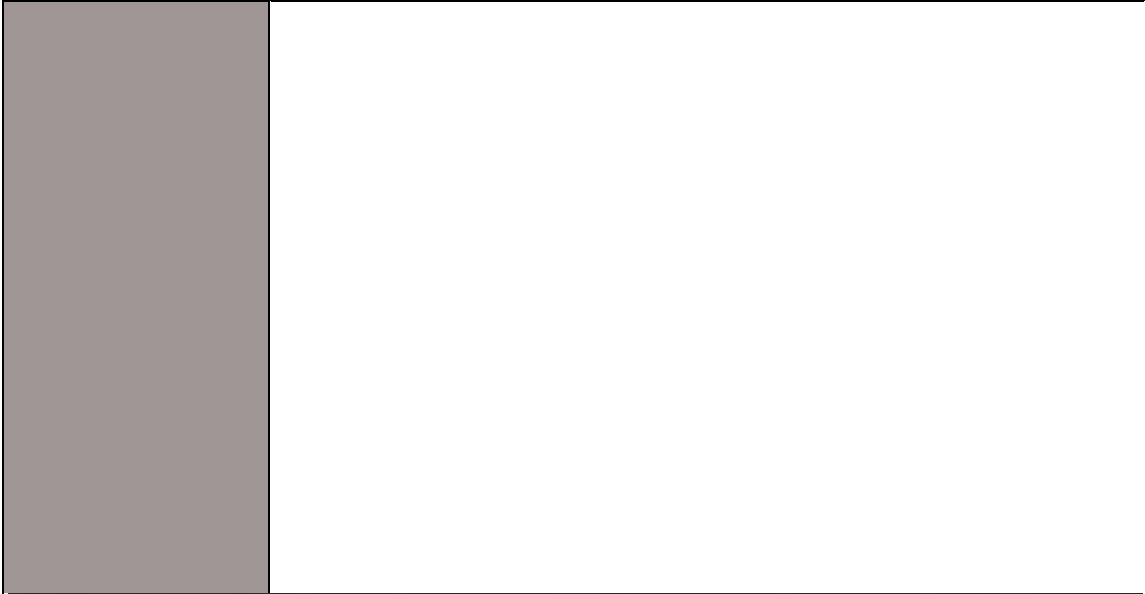
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Hastings	25370	4,973,667.22	196
Kimball	2222	442,486.20	199
Ogallala	4391	887,076.00	202
Fairbury	3663	754,466.15	205
Crete	6290	1,315,950.47	209
David City	2504	524,756.91	209
Blair	7700	1,632,843.77	212
Papillion	24280	5,277,373.15	217
Broken Bow	3139	695,518.40	221
O'Neill	3249	750,078.38	230
West Point	3290	780,310.34	237
Sidney	6331	1,565,841.27	247
Milford	2052	525,200.87	255
Aurora	4196	1,103,988.47	263
North Platte	24137	6,594,873.79	273
Minden	2788	774,518.82	277
Waverly	3302	920,852.91	278
Omaha	454731	129,127,747.40	283
Ashland	2656	758,653.65	285
Bellevue	51044	14,946,292.04	292
Wahoo	4167	1,261,788.42	302
Ralston	6124	1,882,872.56	307
La Vista	16887	5,334,152.43	315
St. Paul	2133	690,108.59	323



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