ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS · A METRO STATISTICAL AREA COMPARISON

11TH EDITION

NINE INDEXES · TWENTY-FIVE METROS · FIFTY-ONE DATA POINTS

2026 BAROMETER

An economic scorecard of the Omaha region.

GREATER OMAHA CHAMBER

Produced in partnership with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Bureau of Business Research

OmahaChamber.org

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Greater Omaha has much to be proud of. We have built a region known for its strong business community, exceptional quality of life, and willingness to work together to solve challenges. These strengths have helped generations of families and businesses succeed here. They also give us a strong foundation for the future.

But the 2026 Barometer makes one thing clear: Greater Omaha needs to grow faster.

While our region continues to perform well in quality of life, innovation, and entrepreneurship, we are losing ground to communities competing for the same businesses, investment, and talent. Our greatest challenges are in the areas that will shape our future: wage growth, job creation, and attracting and retaining young professionals.

Other regions are moving aggressively to capture new opportunities. We must be equally ambitious about our own future.

At the Greater Omaha Chamber, we are turning that urgency into action. Our economic development strategy focuses on accelerating business growth, strengthening our talent pipeline, and making Greater Omaha a destination of choice. Through our Omaha COMPETES public policy agenda, we are advocating for the modern economic development tools, infrastructure, and workforce investments Nebraska needs to compete and win.

These efforts are essential to building an economy that creates more opportunities for everyone. But our success also depends on something much broader: how we see our community, how we invest in its people, and how we tell its story.

Every day, Greater Omaha offers opportunities that too often go unrecognized beyond our region. We have remarkable employers, innovative entrepreneurs, thriving neighborhoods, and a quality of life that many communities aspire to achieve. We need to make sure people considering where to build a career, grow a business, or raise a family know what Greater Omaha has to offer.

That is where each of us has a role to play.

Through the All In Omaha initiative, we are bringing employers together to create more local career opportunities, invest in workforce development, and actively promote our region. Every business can contribute, regardless of size. And every resident can help tell the story of a community with tremendous potential.

The Barometer gives us an important measure of where we stand. Our responsibility is to use these findings to shape where we go next.

I believe Greater Omaha's best days are ahead of us. Getting there will require greater urgency, stronger partnerships, and a shared commitment to growth. We have the people, the determination, and the foundation to succeed.

Yours in service,

Heath Mello

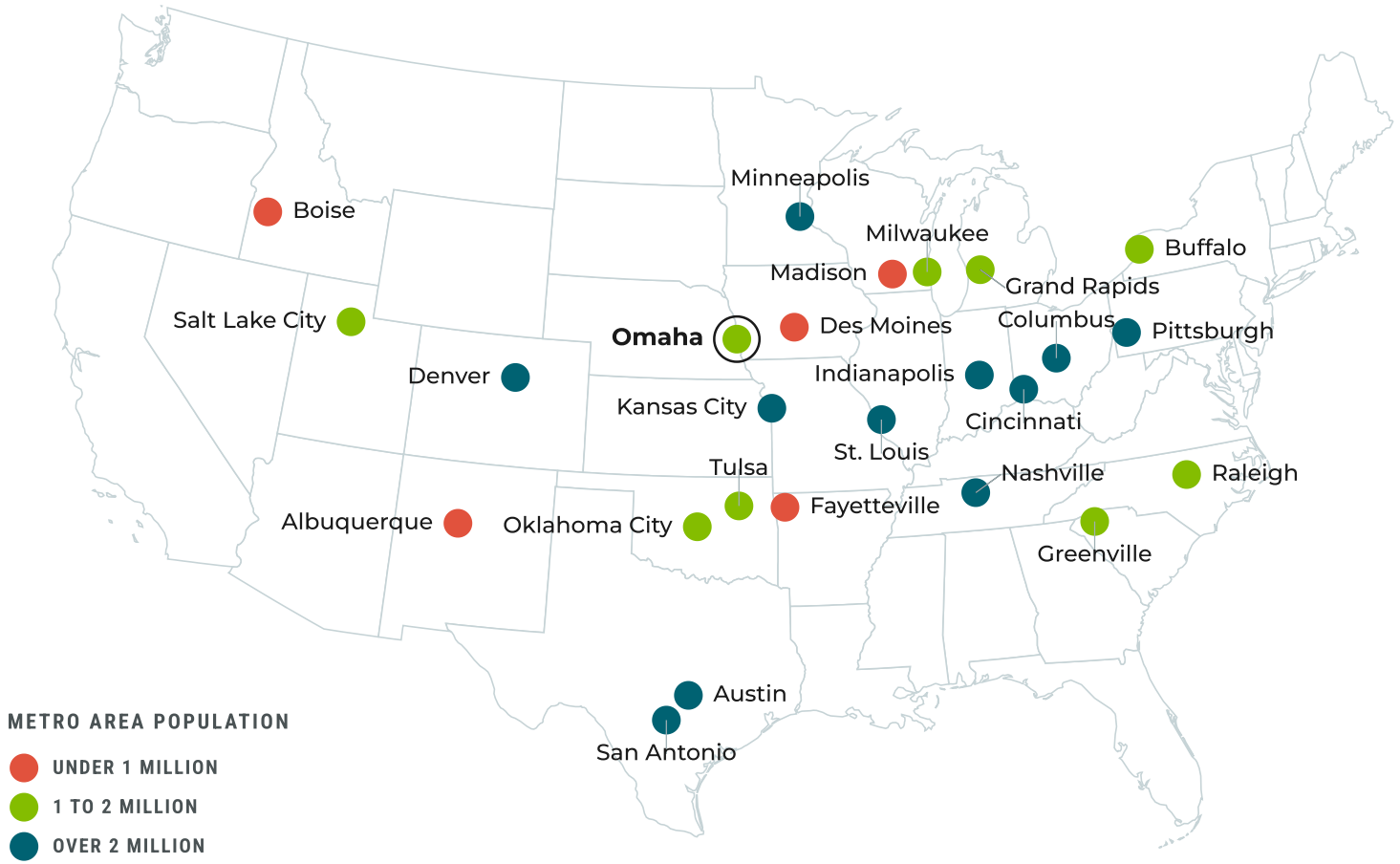
PRESIDENT & CEO, GREATER OMAHA CHAMBER

Comparison Cities

Economic competitiveness is shaped by how a region performs relative to the markets competing for investment, businesses, and talent.

The 2026 Barometer evaluates the Omaha metropolitan area alongside 24 other U.S. metros, including established Midwestern economies and growing markets across the South and West. St. Louis and Albuquerque join the comparison group this year, expanding the analysis from 23 to 25 metros.

The comparison provides a consistent picture of Omaha's economic position, where the region has advantages, and where other markets are moving ahead.



2026 Results

OMAHA RANKS

#18

OF 25 METROS

98 INDEX VALUE
U.S. average = 100

15th ONE YEAR AGO
Slipped this year

Omaha ranks 18th among 25 metropolitan areas in the 2026 Barometer, down from 15th last year. Its overall index value of 98 falls slightly below the national benchmark of 100.

The results reveal a region with notable advantages in quality of life, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Omaha places among the top ten comparison metros in all three categories. Other areas present a more difficult picture. Human capital remains the region's lowest-ranked index, while growth and several measures of earnings continue to trail stronger-performing markets.

The comparison group is wide. Denver leads at 130 and Des Moines finishes at 85, a spread of 45 points. Omaha sits close to the middle of that range, ahead of Greenville, Cincinnati, Albuquerque, Buffalo, Grand Rapids, Milwaukee, and Des Moines, and just behind Kansas City, Columbus, and Tulsa.

Three indexes improved this year: entrepreneurship, quality of life, and cost of doing business. Three declined: growth, inclusivity, and private capital. The remaining three held their position. The decline in growth, five places, accounts for most of the change in Omaha's overall rank.

THE FIVE HIGHEST RANKED METROS

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Denver, CO	Nashville, TN	Salt Lake City, UT	Austin, TX	Raleigh, NC

RANK ON EACH OF THE NINE INDEXES

Growth	Inclusivity	Human Capital	Innovation	Entrepreneurship	Infrastructure	Cost of Doing Business	Quality of Life	Private Capital
17th	16th	21st	10th	9th	14th	16th	7th	16th
SLIPPED	SLIPPED	HELD	HELD	IMPROVED	HELD	IMPROVED	IMPROVED	SLIPPED

Rankings Over Time

Omaha's position has remained below the midpoint of the comparison group over the past five years. The metro ranked 16th five years ago, 15th in the previous edition, and 18th this year.

The latest change was driven by lower rankings in growth and inclusivity. Meanwhile, Denver, Nashville, Austin, and Salt Lake City have consistently held the top four positions.

These rankings measure Omaha's performance relative to the same group of 25 metros over time. A change in position can reflect shifts in Omaha's performance, changes among competing markets, or both.

	2026 VALUE 100 = U.S. AVERAGE	2026 RANK	PREVIOUS YEAR	FIVE YEARS BACK
Denver, CO	130	1	1	1
Nashville, TN	123	2	2	2
Salt Lake City, UT	121	3	4	4
Austin, TX	121	4	3	3
Raleigh, NC	119	5	6	6
Madison, WI	117	6	5	5
Indianapolis, IN	107	7	9	11
San Antonio, TX	105	8	7	10
Boise, ID	105	9	12	7
Fayetteville, AR	104	10	14	13
Oklahoma City, OK	103	11	13	15
St. Louis, MO	103	12	8	8
Pittsburgh, PA	103	13	11	14
Minneapolis, MN	103	14	10	9
Tulsa, OK	100	15	19	20
Columbus, OH	100	16	17	18
Kansas City, MO	99	17	16	17
Omaha, NE	98	18	15	16
Greenville, SC	97	19	20	12
Cincinnati, OH	96	20	18	19
Albuquerque, NM	91	21	21	22
Buffalo, NY	89	22	23	23
Grand Rapids, MI	86	23	22	24
Milwaukee, WI	85	24	24	25
Des Moines, IA	85	25	25	21

Where Omaha Leads and Lags

WHERE OMAHA LEADS

Some of Omaha's most compelling advantages are found in the everyday experience of living and working here.

The region has the shortest average commute among the comparison metros, ranks second for arts and cultural activity, and ranks second for its lower violent crime rate. Low unemployment, strong labor force participation, health care access, and proprietor income also place Omaha near the top of the group.

5th unemployment rate	**5th** earnings gender gap	**6th** labor force participation rate	**1st** commute time	**2nd** arts and cultural activities
2nd violent crime rate	**6th** health care access	**6th** proprietor income per person	**6th** proprietor's share of income	**6th** labor costs

WHERE OMAHA LAGS

The greatest challenges emerge in the measures that reflect how the economy is changing.

Growth in the number of college graduates ages 25-34 is particularly weak, ranking 24th. Private wage growth and growth in wages per job also lag behind many competing metros. Additional challenges appear in business formation, the share of employment in business services, educational attainment disparities, and household internet access.

24th change in college graduates age 25-34	**22nd** growth in private wages per job	**21st** households without an internet subscription	**21st** business services employment share	**20th** private wage growth
20th climate	**20th** non-farm proprietors per person	**20th** establishment birth rate	**19th** education attainment gap	**19th** minority entrepreneurship

OMAHA RANKS

#17

OF 25 METROS

SLIPPED down from 12th

Omaha's economy continues to add jobs, and unemployment remains low. The broader growth picture, however, is less favorable.

The region ranks 17th for growth, down from 12th in the previous edition. Employment growth has improved relative to competing metros, but slower growth in private wages and wages per job continues to weigh on overall performance. Omaha's real GDP growth ranking also declined substantially.

THE FIVE MEASURES, RANKED

Unemployment Rate	STRONGEST 5th
Real GDP by Metro	14th
Total Employment Growth	16th
Private Wages	20th
Private Wages per Job	WEAKEST 22nd

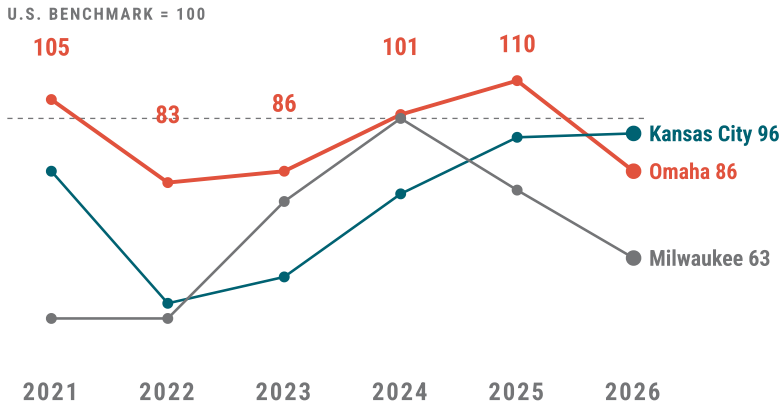
86 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

The 2026 index value is below the U.S. benchmark, reflecting weaker overall growth performance relative to national trends.

GROWTH INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

Omaha's growth index has fluctuated over the past five years. It generally performed ahead of Milwaukee during the period, while Kansas City moved ahead of Omaha in the latest results.



METRO COMPARISON Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Growth Index

14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th
Kansas City	Albuquerque	Madison	Omaha	Minneapolis	Pittsburgh	Buffalo
96	87	87	86	83	73	71

01 Growth

The Barometer examines employment, wages, unemployment, and inflation-adjusted economic output. Together these measures separate the availability of jobs from the pace at which wages and output are growing.



01 Growth

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Total Employment Growth	3.8% OMAHA	3.9% UNITED STATES	16th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 24th	Austin LEADS AT 9.6%

Employment growth has strengthened relative to Omaha's comparison markets. From 2022 through 2025, the metro added jobs at nearly the national rate, moving up eight places in the rankings. The measure captures employment across both the private and public sectors.

Private Wages	9.0% OMAHA	16.3% UNITED STATES	20th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Boise LEADS AT 34.0%

Total private wages reflect hourly pay, hours worked, and employment levels. Omaha's growth has fallen short of the national pace, leaving the region in the lower tier of comparison metros. The result shows that employment expansion has not been matched by equally strong growth in total private-sector earnings.

Private Wages per Job	5.4% OMAHA	12.3% UNITED STATES	22nd OF 25	SLIPPED down from 18th	Boise LEADS AT 25.1%

This measure separates changes in earnings per job from overall employment growth. Omaha's comparatively weak performance is an important part of its growth challenge, particularly when evaluating the economic gains associated with each job.

Unemployment Rate	3.2% OMAHA	4.3% UNITED STATES	5th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 4th	Madison LOWEST AT 2.6%

Low unemployment remains one of Omaha's strongest labor-market indicators. The metro's rate is well below the national average and has consistently placed Omaha among the leading comparison markets.

Real GDP by Metro	5.7% OMAHA	5.8% UNITED STATES	14th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 3rd	San Antonio LEADS AT 9.3%

Inflation-adjusted GDP measures the value of goods and services produced in the metropolitan economy. Omaha's output grew slightly below the national pace between 2022 and 2024. A substantial drop in its ranking on this measure contributed to the decline in the overall growth index.

SOURCES

Source: Current Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed May 2026

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed May 2026

Source: U.S. Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Accessed May 2026

OMAHA RANKS

#16

OF 25 METROS

SLIPPED down from 13th

Omaha's inclusivity results reflect uneven economic outcomes across the region.

The metro compares favorably with many peers on overall poverty rates and the earnings gap between men and women working full time. Greater disparities remain in educational attainment across racial and ethnic groups, and a comparatively high share of households lack an internet subscription.

Omaha ranks 16th overall, down from 13th last year. The findings illustrate the importance of examining how economic opportunity is distributed, alongside the region's broader economic performance.

THE SEVEN MEASURES, RANKED

Earnings Gender Gap	STRONGEST 5th	Poverty Rate Gap	18th
200 Percent of the Poverty Rate	8th	Education Attainment Gap	19th
Poverty Rate	10th	Share of Households without An Internet Subscription	WEAKEST 21st
Education Adjusted Income Gap	11th		

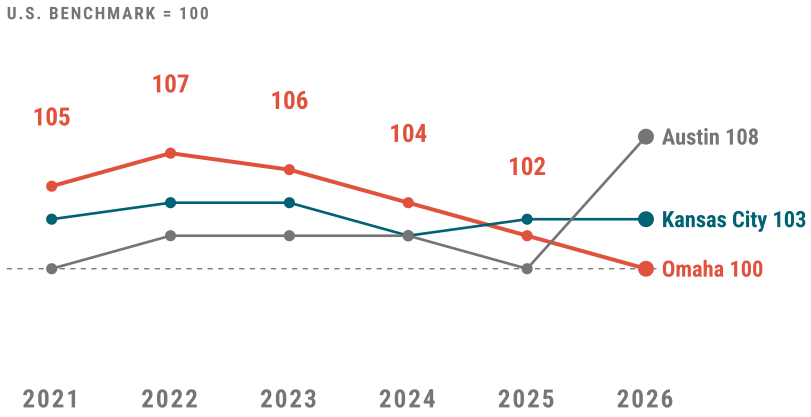
100 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's inclusivity index has gradually declined from its earlier levels and now stands at the national benchmark.

INCLUSIVITY INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

Austin has gained ground over the period, while Kansas City also finishes ahead of Omaha in the latest comparison. The results show how Omaha's relative position has changed as other markets have improved.



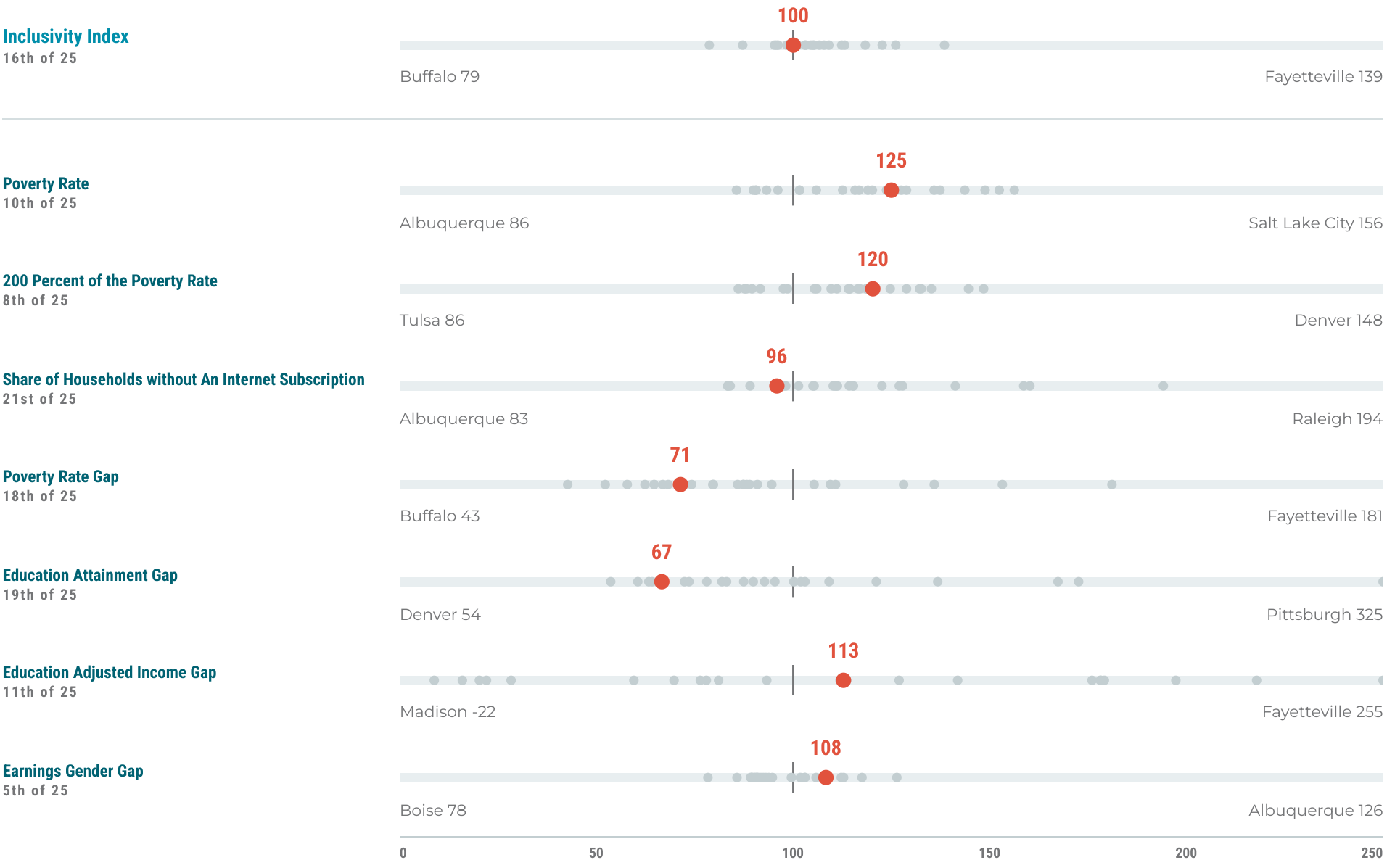
METRO COMPARISON

Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Inclusivity Index

13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th
Kansas City	Nashville	Greenville	Omaha	Indianapolis	Madison	San Antonio
103	103	101	100	99	99	99

02 Inclusivity

The inclusivity index considers both the prevalence of poverty and disparities in earnings, income, and education across racial, ethnic, and gender groups. It also examines household internet subscriptions, an increasingly necessary means of reaching education, employment, and services.



INDEXED VALUE · U.S. = 100 · VALUES ABOVE 250 PLOT AT THE SCALE END

02 Inclusivity

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Poverty Rate	10.0% OMAHA	12.5% UNITED STATES	10th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 7th	Salt Lake City LEADS AT 8.0%

A smaller share of Omaha residents lives below the poverty line than the national average. Although the region's comparative ranking has declined, its overall poverty rate remains relatively favorable. The measure uses American Community Survey estimates for the population.

200 Percent of the Poverty Rate	23.5% OMAHA	28.2% UNITED STATES	8th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Denver LEADS AT 19.0%

The federal poverty threshold does not capture every household experiencing financial strain. This broader measure includes residents with incomes below twice that threshold, offering another perspective on economic vulnerability. Omaha continues to perform better than the national average.

Share of Households without An Internet Subscription	7.0% OMAHA	6.7% UNITED STATES	21st OF 25	SLIPPED down from 13th	Raleigh LEADS AT 3.4%

Internet access is increasingly important for employment, education, and essential services. Omaha's share of households without a subscription now exceeds the national rate, and its position among the comparison metros has weakened considerably.

Poverty Rate Gap	10.5% OMAHA	7.5% UNITED STATES	18th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 17th	Fayetteville LEADS AT 4.2%

Overall poverty rates do not reveal how economic hardship differs across populations. This measure compares poverty among non-White and/or Hispanic residents with poverty among non-Hispanic White residents. Omaha's gap exceeds the national figure, indicating that economic outcomes remain uneven.

02 Inclusivity

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Education Attainment Gap	16.5% OMAHA	11.0% UNITED STATES	19th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 20th	Pittsburgh LEADS AT 3.4%

Educational attainment differs substantially across racial and ethnic groups in the Omaha metro. The gap remains above the national level, even after a modest improvement in Omaha's ranking. The measure considers both high school and bachelor's degree attainment among adults.

Education Adjusted Income Gap	12.8% OMAHA	n/a NO NATIONAL BENCHMARK	11th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 12th	Fayetteville LEADS AT 154.7%

Educational differences contribute to income disparities, but they do not tell the whole story. This measure examines the remaining difference in per capita income after accounting for variations in educational attainment. It provides additional context for understanding economic outcomes across demographic groups.

Earnings Gender Gap	22.2% OMAHA	24.0% UNITED STATES	5th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 6th	Albuquerque LEADS AT 19.0%

Omaha has one of the smaller earnings gaps between full-time male and female workers among the comparison metros. The region's position has improved over time, although the measured difference in average earnings remains substantial.

SOURCES

Source: American Community Survey (Table S1701), 2019-2023 Average, Accessed July 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S2801), 2024, Accessed July 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S1701), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed July 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S1501), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed July 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S1902), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed July 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S2001), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed July 2026

03 Human Capital

OMAHA RANKS

#21

OF 25 METROS

HELD unchanged

Omaha has a strong foundation of educated residents and active workforce participation. The challenge is building the talent base needed for future growth.

The metro ranks 21st in human capital, unchanged from the previous edition. High school attainment, associate degree attainment, and labor force participation are among its stronger measures.

The weakest result is growth in the number of college graduates ages 25-34, where Omaha ranks 24th. This finding points to a significant challenge in expanding the region's population of younger, college-educated workers.

THE TEN MEASURES, RANKED

Labor Force Participation Rate	STRONGEST	6th
High School Attainment		8th
Community College Attainment		8th
College Attainment		11th
Share of Manual Workers		11th
Share of Knowledge Workers		12th
Growth of Population Age 20+		13th
Sales and Income Tax Rates		16th
Percent Minority Workforce		18th
Growth of College Graduates Age 25-34	WEAKEST	24th

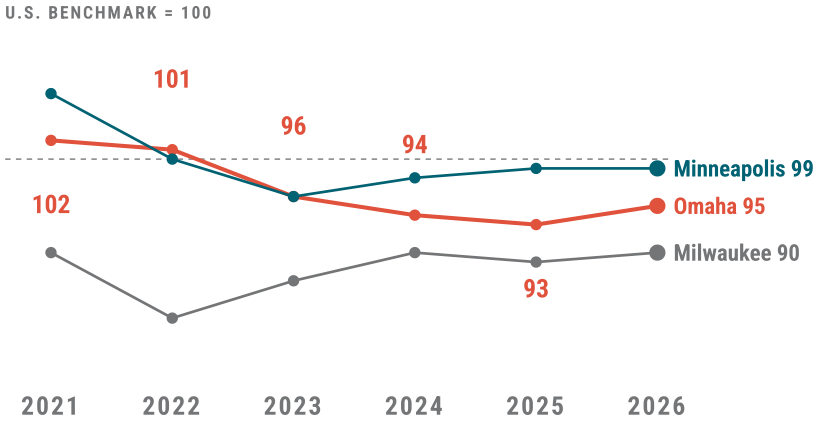
95 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's human capital ranking has declined from 17th five years ago to 21st today.

HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

The figure below compares Omaha with Minneapolis and Milwaukee, two metros with similar rankings. Minneapolis has seen a similar decline, while Milwaukee's index value has not fallen. Even metros near the bottom of the rankings can move in either direction.



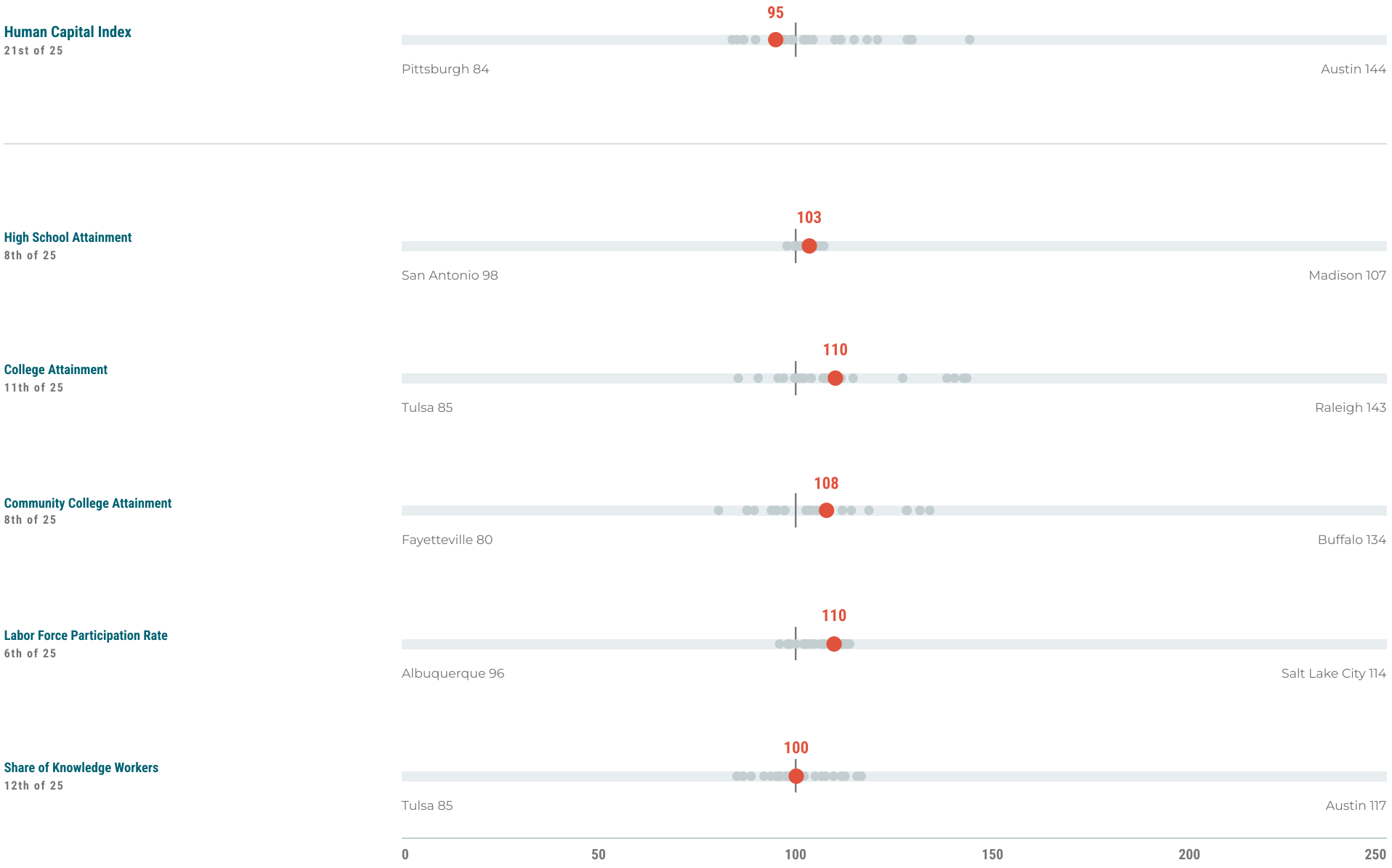
METRO COMPARISON

Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Human Capital Index

18th	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th
Columbus	Kansas City	Oklahoma City	Omaha	Milwaukee	Buffalo	St. Louis
97	97	96	95	90	87	85

03 Human Capital

The human capital index examines educational attainment, labor force participation, occupational composition, workforce diversity, population growth, and selected tax measures. The 2026 edition adds associate degree attainment and the share of workers in manual occupations, recognizing the range of skills required across the economy.



INDEXED VALUE · U.S. = 100 · VALUES ABOVE 250 PLOT AT THE SCALE END

03 Human Capital

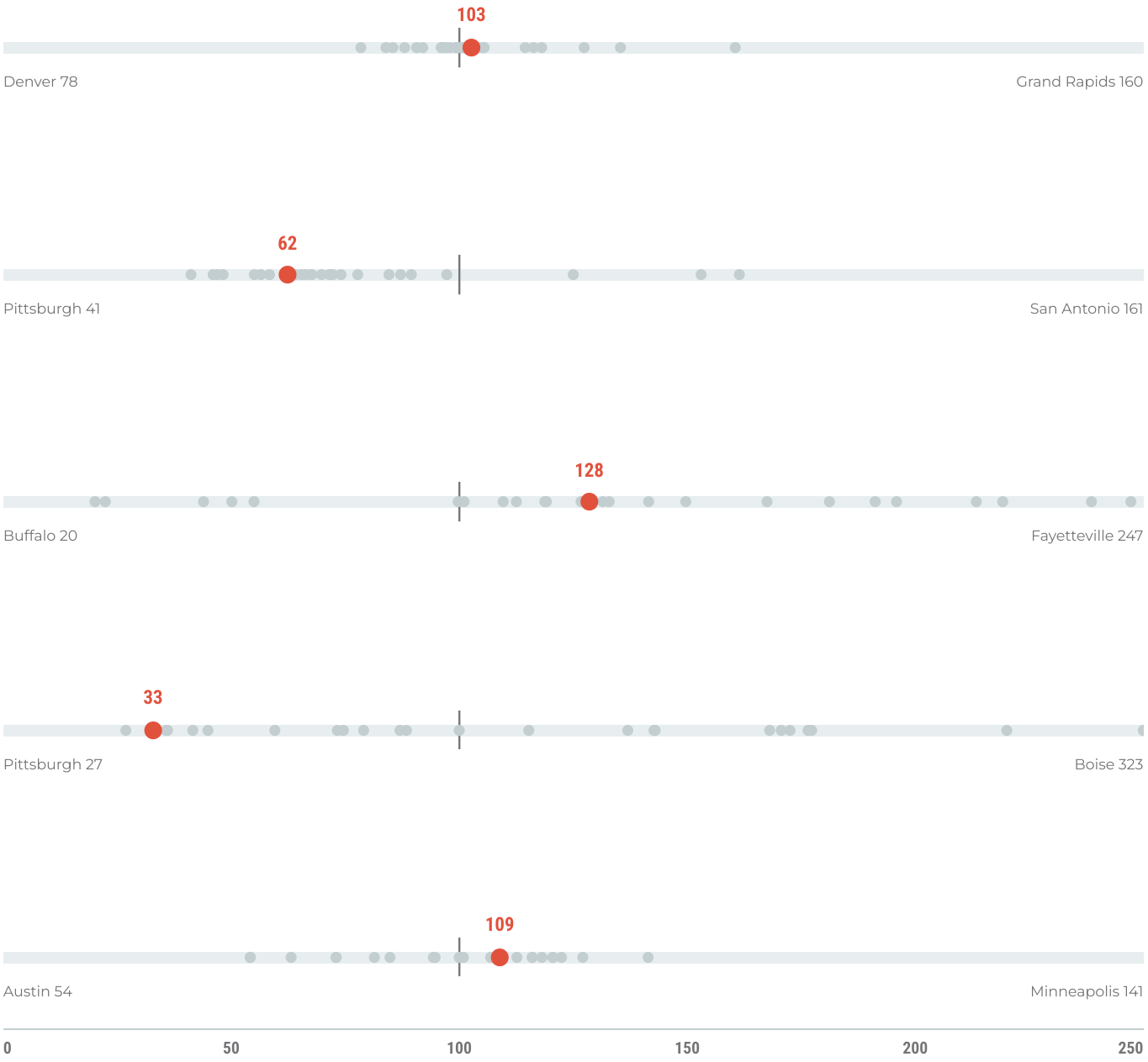
Share of Manual Workers
11th of 25

Percent Minority Workforce
18th of 25

Growth of Population Age 20+
13th of 25

Growth of College Graduates Age 25-34
24th of 25

Sales and Income Tax Rates
16th of 25 · LOWER IS BETTER



INDEXED VALUE · U.S. = 100 · VALUES ABOVE 250 PLOT AT THE SCALE END

03 Human Capital

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
High School Attainment	92.7%	89.6%	8th	HELD	Madison
	OMAHA	UNITED STATES	OF 25	unchanged	LEADS AT 96.0%

Omaha continues to rank among the stronger comparison metros for high school completion. The measure includes adults ages 25 and older who have earned a diploma or equivalent credential and reflects a stable element of the region's educational foundation.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
College Attainment	39.3%	35.7%	11th	SLIPPED	Raleigh
	OMAHA	UNITED STATES	OF 25	down from 8th	LEADS AT 51.2%

The share of Omaha adults holding at least a bachelor's degree exceeds the national average. Its ranking has nonetheless declined in recent years, reflecting the region's position relative to other highly educated metropolitan populations.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Community College Attainment	17.6%	16.3%	8th	IMPROVED	Buffalo
	OMAHA	UNITED STATES	OF 25	up from 9th	LEADS AT 21.9%

Associate degrees provide an important pathway into skilled occupations across the economy. Omaha's attainment rate exceeds the national average, making community college education a relative strength in the human capital index.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Labor Force Participation Rate	69.7%	63.5%	6th	HELD	Salt Lake City
	OMAHA	UNITED STATES	OF 25	unchanged	LEADS AT 72.2%

A comparatively large share of Omaha residents participates in the labor force. The region has maintained its sixth-place ranking, reflecting a consistent strength in labor market participation.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Share of Knowledge Workers	35.7%	35.6%	12th	SLIPPED	Austin
	OMAHA	UNITED STATES	OF 25	down from 10th	LEADS AT 41.6%

Knowledge-based occupations include management, financial services, science, education, and health care professions. Omaha's employment share is close to the national average, although its comparative ranking has slipped.

03 Human Capital

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Share of Manual Workers	14.1% OMAHA	13.7% UNITED STATES	11th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Grand Rapids LEADS AT 22.0%

Manufacturing, construction, installation, maintenance, and repair rely on workers with specialized hands-on skills. Omaha's share of employment in these occupations is slightly above the national average, reflecting another component of the region's workforce.

Percent Minority Workforce	24.9% OMAHA	40.0% UNITED STATES	18th OF 25	HELD unchanged	San Antonio LEADS AT 64.5%

Workforce diversity contributes to the range of backgrounds and experiences represented in the labor market. The share of racial and ethnic minority workers in Omaha is below the national figure. This indicator measures workforce composition rather than differences in earnings or career advancement.

Growth of Population Age 20+	3.1% OMAHA	2.4% UNITED STATES	13th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 14th	Fayetteville LEADS AT 5.9%

Omaha's adult population grew faster than the national average during the measurement period. This growth expands the potential labor supply, although population increases do not necessarily translate directly into equivalent employment growth.

Growth of College Graduates Age 25-34	4.2% OMAHA	12.7% UNITED STATES	24th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 25th	Boise LEADS AT 40.8%

This is one of the most consequential findings in the human capital index. Omaha's population of young college graduates grew much more slowly than the national average between the two measurement periods, placing the region near the bottom of the comparison group.

The measure tracks changes in the number of graduates. It does not distinguish migration from other demographic or educational changes.

Sales and Income Tax Rates	n/a NOT REPORTED AS A RATE	n/a NO NATIONAL BENCHMARK	16th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 23rd	Austin RANKED FIRST

The index also considers how state sales and income tax rates compare across markets. Omaha's ranking improved significantly in the latest edition as Nebraska's tax position changed relative to other states. The measure reflects applicable state tax rates rather than a complete assessment of household tax burdens.

SOURCES

Source: American Community Survey (Table S1501), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed May 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table S2301), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed May 2026
Source: Occupation Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed May 2026
Source: Occupation Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed August 2026
Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators (2023-2025), U.S. Bureau of Census, Beginning of Quarter, Accessed May 2026
Source: Bureau of Census, Population Estimates, Accessed August 2026
Source: American Community Survey (Table s1501), 2015-2019 to 2020-2024, Accessed September 2026
Source: 2025 Facts and Figures, National Tax Foundation (Tables 18 and 11) (Rates as of January 1, 2025 for sales tax and March 15, 2025 for income tax)

OMAHA RANKS

#10

OF 25 METROS

HELD unchanged

Omaha's innovation economy has a notable strength in information technology employment.

The region ranks tenth overall for innovation and seventh for the share of jobs in information technology industries. Its concentration of workers in technology occupations across the broader economy is less competitive, ranking 15th.

Biomedical research funding and science-related graduate education place Omaha near the middle of the comparison group. The results show an established innovation base with different levels of strength across industries, occupations, and research activity.

THE FOUR MEASURES, RANKED

Share of Jobs in the Information Technology Industries	STRONGEST	7th
NIH Awards per Worker		11th
Science Related Graduate Students per Workers		11th
Share of Jobs in Technology Positions	WEAKEST	15th

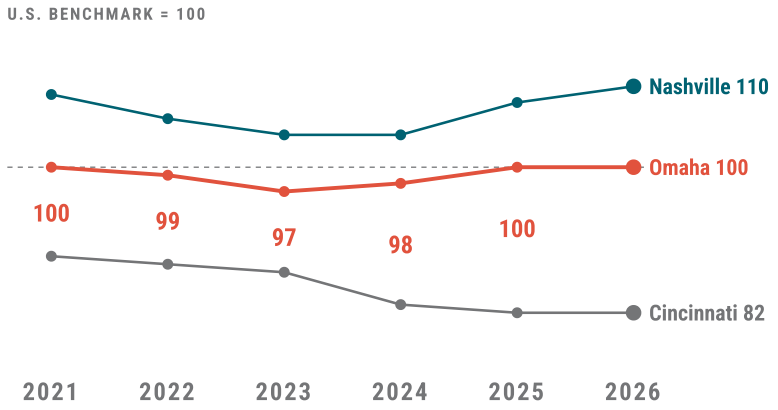
100 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha has held its tenth-place ranking for two consecutive years, improving slightly from five years earlier.

INNOVATION INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

This year's index value is at the national benchmark, placing Omaha ahead of Cincinnati but behind Nashville in the latest comparison.



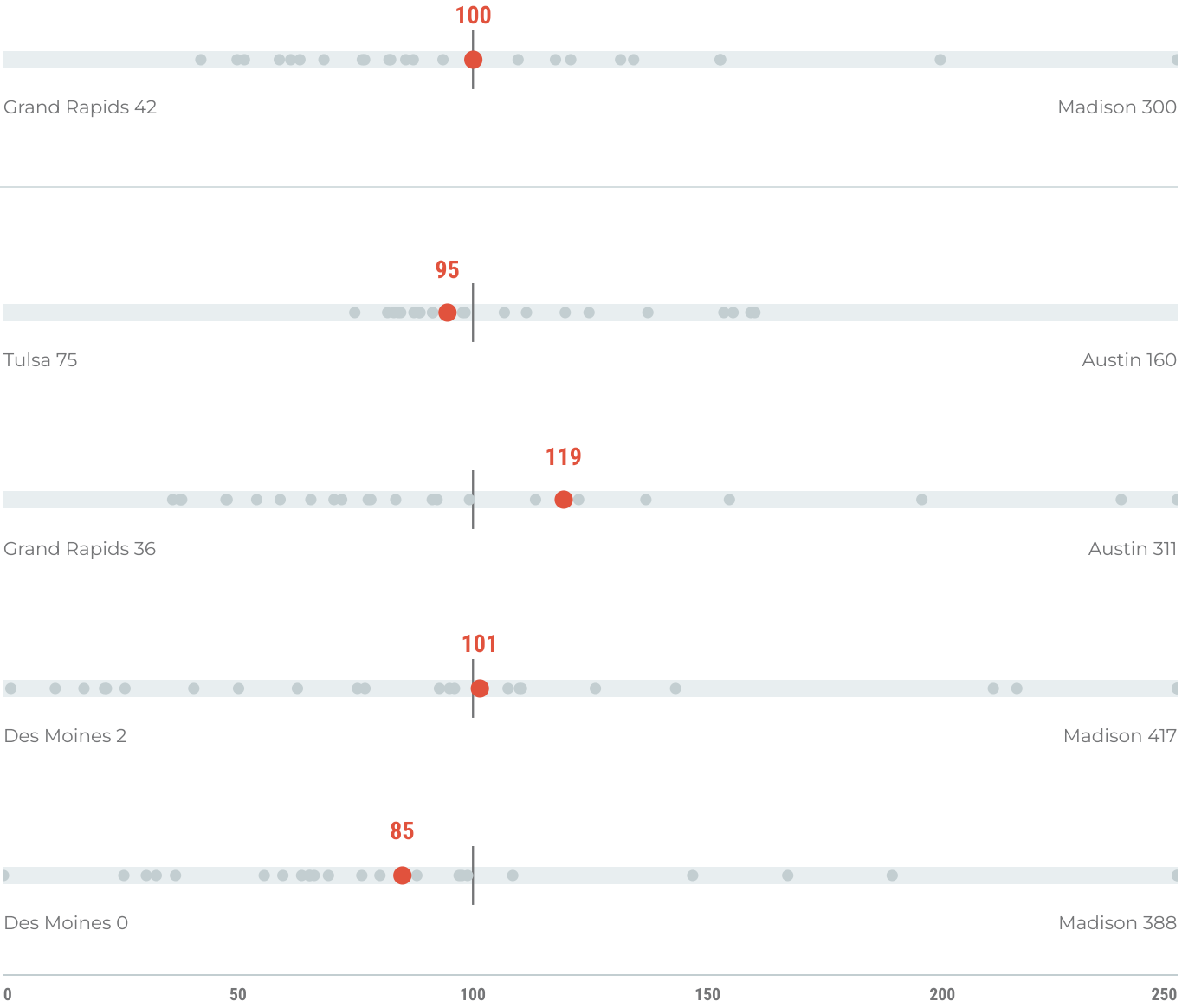
METRO COMPARISON

Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Innovation Index

7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th
Denver	St. Louis	Nashville	Omaha	Columbus	Minneapolis	Albuquerque
121	118	110	100	100	94	87

04 Innovation

The Barometer examines employment in technology-intensive occupations and industries, biomedical research funding, and graduate education in scientific fields. Patent activity is no longer included because comparable local and state data are no longer available in the required format.



	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Share of Jobs in Technology Positions	5.7% OMAHA	6.0% UNITED STATES	15th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 11th	Austin LEADS AT 9.6%

Technology occupations extend across industries, from computing and engineering to the physical and life sciences. Their share of Omaha employment remains slightly below the national average, and the region's ranking has declined.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Share of Jobs in the Information Technology Industries	3.5% OMAHA	2.9% UNITED STATES	7th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 8th	Austin LEADS AT 9.0%

Omaha has a higher concentration of jobs in information technology industries than the nation overall. The measure includes software publishing, data processing, hosting, and related computer services. This remains one of the metro's strongest innovation indicators.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
NIH Awards per Worker	$241 OMAHA	$238 UNITED STATES	11th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Madison LEADS AT $992

National Institutes of Health funding supports biomedical research at universities, research organizations, and private businesses. Omaha's awards per worker are close to the national level, placing the region near the middle of the comparison group.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Science Related Graduate Students per Workers	5.0 OMAHA	5.9 AVERAGE	11th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Madison LEADS AT 23.0

Graduate education in science and technical disciplines provides another indicator of research capacity. The measure uses graduates in selected fields relative to the workforce, giving context to the region's advanced research talent base.

SOURCES

Source: Occupation Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023-2025 Average, Accessed May 2026
Source: County Business Patterns, U.S. Bureau of Census, 2022-2023, Accessed July 2025
Source: Awards by Location and Organization, National Institutes of Health, Accessed June 2026
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, 2023-2024 Graduates, Access June 2026

05 Entrepreneurship

OMAHA RANKS

#9

OF 25 METROS

IMPROVED up from 11th

Entrepreneurship is one of Omaha's stronger indexes, and the reason is narrower than the ranking suggests.

The region's standing rests on the earnings of its proprietors. Income per proprietor and the share of regional income generated by proprietors both place Omaha sixth among the comparison metros.

Participation is a different story. Omaha sits in the lower portion of the group for nonfarm proprietors per person, minority entrepreneurship, establishment birth rates, and employment in business services. Fewer residents own businesses here, and fewer new establishments open, than in most of the metros Omaha competes with.

THE SIX MEASURES, RANKED

Non-Farm Proprietor Income Share	STRONGEST 6th
Proprietor Income per Person	6th
Minority Entrepreneurs per Person	19th
Non-Farm Proprietors per Person	20th
Establishment Birth Rate	20th
Business Services Share	WEAKEST 21st

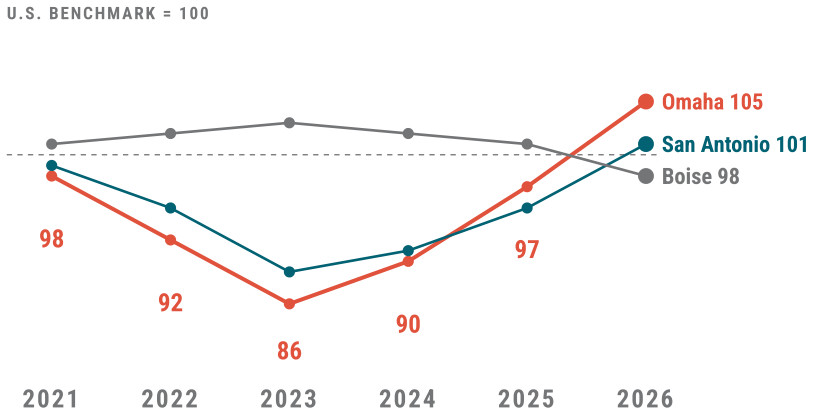
105 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's entrepreneurship ranking has improved over the past five years.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

Its index has recovered from lower levels earlier in the period and now stands ahead of San Antonio and Boise in the comparison shown. The improvement reflects a stronger relative position within a category that includes both business ownership and income measures.



METRO COMPARISON

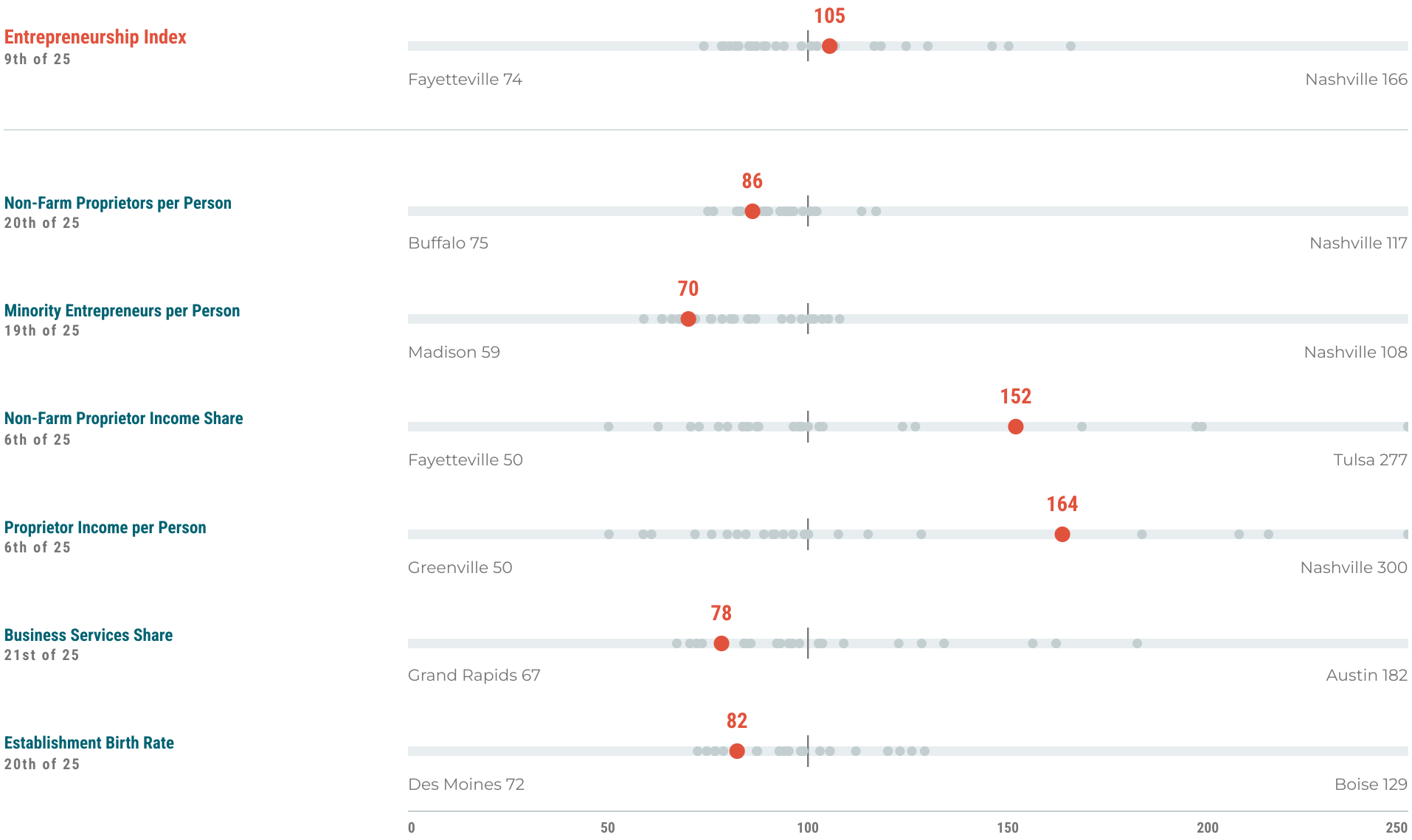
Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Entrepreneurship Index

6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Austin	Salt Lake City	Raleigh	Omaha	Kansas City	San Antonio	Boise
118	117	107	105	102	101	98

05 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship contributes to economic activity through business ownership, new establishments, and the income generated by proprietors.

The Barometer examines these dimensions separately. It considers how widespread business ownership is, how frequently establishments are created, and the role proprietor income plays in the economy. The measures help distinguish the scale of entrepreneurial earnings from the breadth of entrepreneurial participation.



05 Entrepreneurship

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Non-Farm Proprietors per Person	9.9% OMAHA	11.5% UNITED STATES	20th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Nashville LEADS AT 13.4%

The share of nonfarm proprietors relative to Omaha's population remains below the national average. This measure indicates how common proprietorships are within the economy, rather than the financial performance of individual businesses.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Minority Entrepreneurs per Person	6.6% OMAHA	9.4% UNITED STATES	19th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 20th	Nashville LEADS AT 10.2%

Minority business ownership is another indicator of participation in entrepreneurship. Omaha has improved slightly in the rankings, but the number of minority-owned businesses relative to the minority population remains below the national rate. The measure includes both employer and nonemployer businesses.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Non-Farm Proprietor Income Share	12.1% OMAHA	8.0% UNITED STATES	6th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Tulsa LEADS AT 22.1%

Income generated by nonfarm proprietors represents a larger share of Omaha's economy than it does nationally. This is an established strength of the region's entrepreneurship profile and reflects the contribution of proprietor income to overall nonfarm earnings.

05 Entrepreneurship

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Proprietor Income per Person	$9,078 OMAHA	$5,549 UNITED STATES	6th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Nashville LEADS AT $16,659

Omaha generates substantially more proprietor income relative to population than the nation overall. This measure helps explain the region's strong entrepreneurship ranking, even as other indicators show lower rates of business ownership and formation.

Business Services Share	5.4% OMAHA	6.9% UNITED STATES	21st OF 25	SLIPPED down from 20th	Austin LEADS AT 12.5%

Business services include industries such as information technology, consulting, science, and engineering, where entrepreneurial activity can play an important role. These sectors account for a smaller share of employment in Omaha than nationally, and the region's ranking has declined over time.

Establishment Birth Rate	3.0 OMAHA	3.6 UNITED STATES	20th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Boise LEADS AT 4.7

New establishment activity provides a measure of business formation. The rate used for Omaha is drawn from Nebraska statewide data, as comparable metropolitan-level data are not available for this indicator. Nebraska ranks below the national rate, and the relative position has weakened over the past five years.

SOURCES

Source: County Business Patterns and Non-Employer Statistics, 2022-2024, Accessed May 2026

Source: Statistics for Employer and NonEmployer Firms (https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/abs/data/nesd.html, and American Community Survey (Table S0101 and Table B01001H), Accessed June 2026

Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA4), Accessed May 2026

Source: Regional Economic Information System, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA4) and Bureau of Census, 2022-2024, Accessed May 2026

Source: Current Employment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022-2025, Accessed June 2026

Source: Business Employment Dynamics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (state level) (https://www.bls.gov/bdm/), Accessed June 2026

OMAHA RANKS

#14

OF 25 METROS

HELD unchanged

Omaha's location and transportation network support a significant range of business activity, from freight movement to passenger travel.

The region ranks 14th overall for infrastructure. Its strongest measure is the share of employment in transportation and warehousing, followed by interstate highway mileage. Passenger enplanements rank lower relative to the larger metropolitan markets in the comparison group.

These results place Omaha near the middle of its peers across the infrastructure measures evaluated in the report.

THE THREE MEASURES, RANKED

Transportation Services	STRONGEST	10th
Miles of Interstate Highway		13th
Passenger Enplanements	WEAKEST	16th

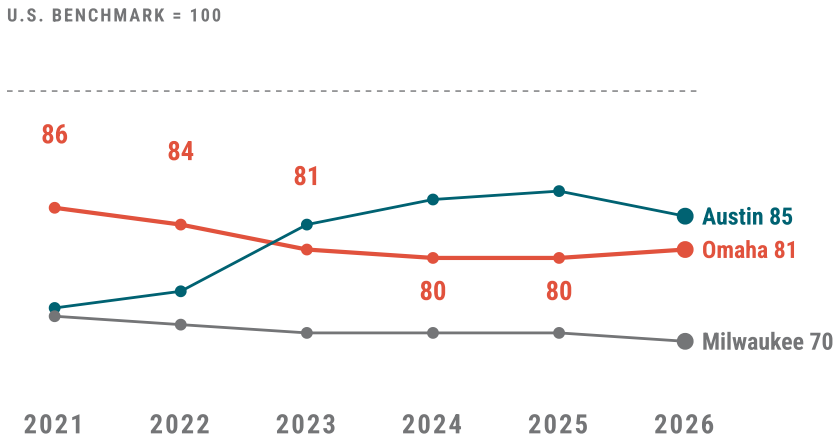
81 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's infrastructure ranking has been relatively stable over the past five years.

INFRASTRUCTURE INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

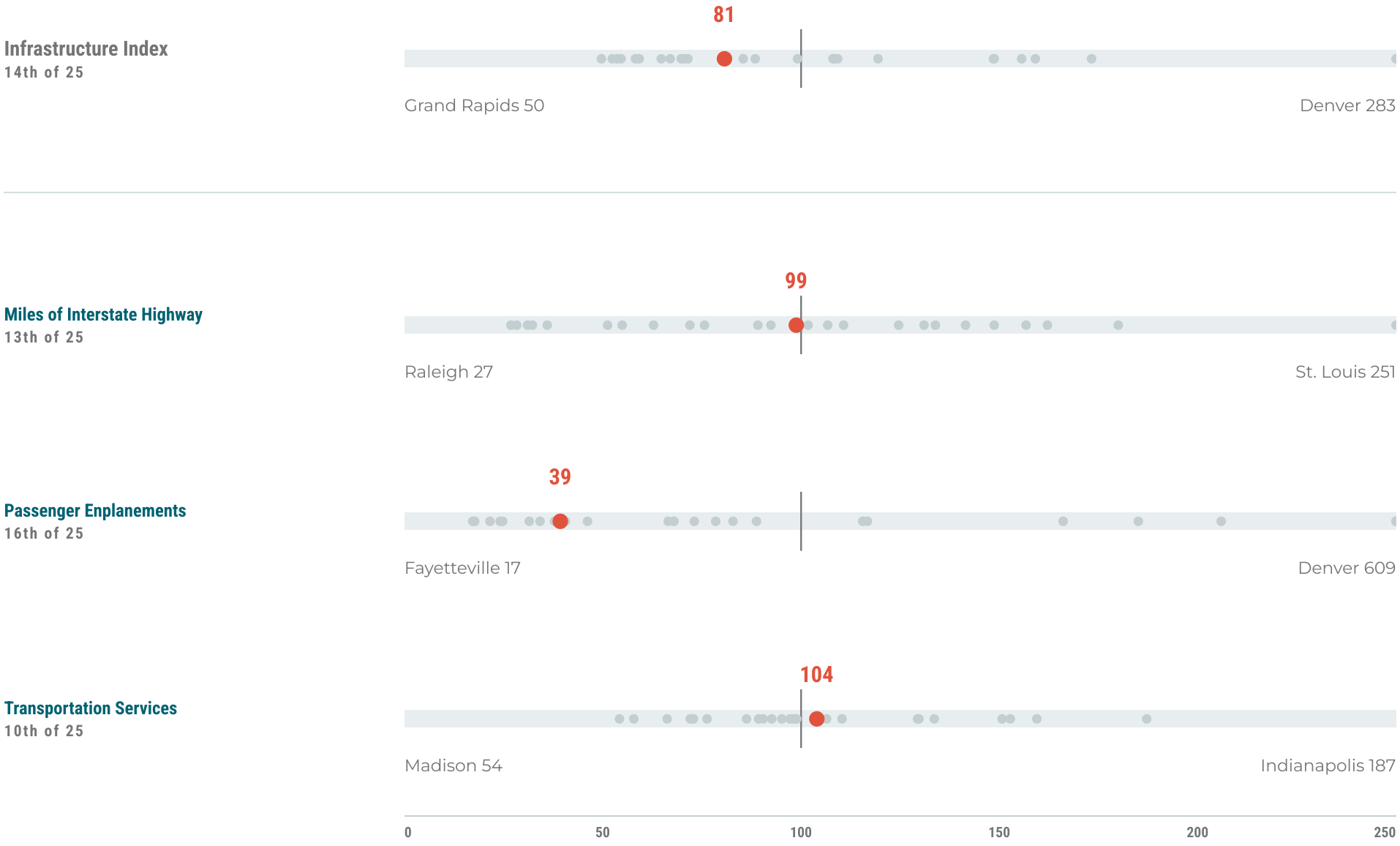
The index value has declined modestly, while Austin has moved ahead in the comparison shown. Omaha remains above Milwaukee on the latest index.



METRO COMPARISON Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Infrastructure Index

11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th
Pittsburgh	Oklahoma City	Austin	Omaha	Raleigh	Milwaukee	Albuquerque
99	88	85	81	71	70	70

The infrastructure index measures three things: interstate highway mileage, commercial airline passenger activity, and transportation services employment. Each reflects activity and capacity rather than the condition or quality of the infrastructure itself.



06 Infrastructure

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Miles of Interstate Highway	199 OMAHA	201 AVERAGE	13th OF 25	HELD unchanged	St. Louis LEADS AT 506

Interstate highways provide important routes for freight movement and regional travel. Omaha's interstate mileage is close to the comparison-market average, placing it near the middle of the group. The measure includes interstate highways, not every major roadway or expressway.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Passenger Enplanements	2,536,563 OMAHA	6,454,803 AVERAGE	16th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Denver LEADS AT 39,284,519

Passenger enplanements measure the volume of travelers boarding aircraft at commercial airports. Omaha has a smaller passenger base than major airline hubs such as Denver and Minneapolis. The ranking measures passenger activity rather than the availability or quality of individual air routes.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Transportation Services	4.4% OMAHA	4.2% UNITED STATES	10th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Indianapolis LEADS AT 7.9%

Transportation and warehousing account for a slightly larger share of employment in Omaha than nationally. This industry presence is the region's strongest component of the infrastructure index, reflecting the role of transportation services in the local economy.

SOURCES

Source: Maps of State Transportation Agencies

Source: Federal Aviation Administration, https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/passenger_allcargo_stats/passenger/, Accessed August 2026

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor, Accessed August 2026

OMAHA RANKS

#16

OF 25 METROS

IMPROVED up from 17th

Business operating costs vary significantly by industry, workforce needs, and location.

Omaha ranks 16th overall for cost of doing business, improving from 17th last year. Labor costs are the region's strongest component, followed by industrial energy costs. Commercial space costs and business tax rates place Omaha closer to the middle of the comparison group.

THE FOUR MEASURES, RANKED

Labor Costs	STRONGEST 6th
Industrial Energy Costs	8th
Space Costs	16th
Business Taxes	WEAKEST 16th

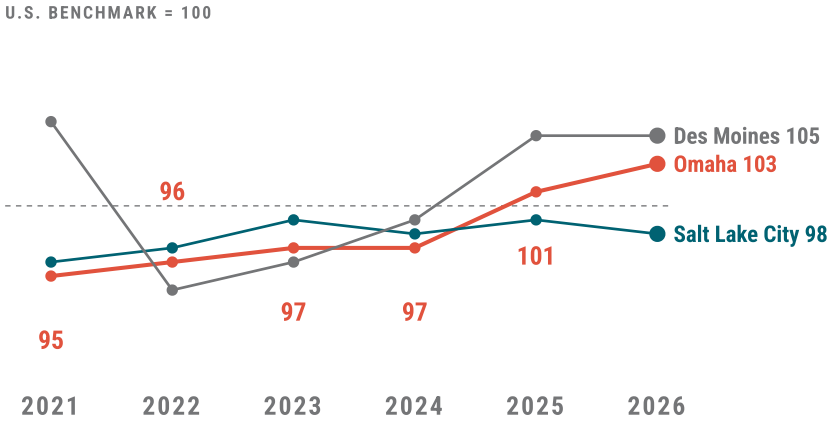
103 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's cost of doing business ranking has gradually improved over the past five years.

COST OF DOING BUSINESS INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

The latest index places Omaha near Des Moines and ahead of Salt Lake City in the comparison shown. Changes in Nebraska's income tax rates have been one factor in the region's improved position.



METRO COMPARISON Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Cost of Doing Business Index

13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th
Des Moines	Fayetteville	Albuquerque	Omaha	Columbus	Boise	Salt Lake City
105	103	103	103	102	101	98

07 Cost of Doing Business

The Barometer compares costs using standardized occupations, commercial property asking rents, industrial electricity and natural gas rates, and state tax measures. Costs differ among industries and individual employers, so the index is a broad comparison rather than a quote for any one business.



07 Cost of Doing Business

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Labor Costs	$38.32 OMAHA	$44.21 UNITED STATES	6th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 9th	Oklahoma City LOWEST AT $36.66

Labor costs are one of Omaha's clearest advantages in this index. The report compares wages across seven occupations representing different industries and educational requirements, rather than the average wage of every employee. Omaha's costs for the selected occupations are below the national level.

Space Costs	$17.20 OMAHA	$17.47 AVERAGE	16th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Tulsa LOWEST AT $13.28

Commercial property costs differ across office, retail, and industrial uses. The Barometer compares asking rents per square foot across these property types. Omaha's result is near the middle of the comparison group and reflects advertised rents rather than every lease negotiated in the market.

Industrial Energy Costs	$0.07 OMAHA	$0.08 UNITED STATES	8th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 6th	Austin LOWEST AT $0.07

Electricity and natural gas are significant operating inputs for manufacturers and other energy-intensive businesses. This measure combines industrial electricity rates with state-level natural gas prices to compare energy costs across markets. Omaha ranks eighth among the comparison metros.

Business Taxes	n/a NOT REPORTED AS A RATE	n/a NO NATIONAL BENCHMARK	16th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 20th	Austin RANKED FIRST

The business tax measure compares state corporate and top personal income tax rates, which affect different business structures. Omaha's ranking has improved as Nebraska's rates have changed relative to other states. The index does not represent the effective tax burden of every individual business.

SOURCES

Source: Occupational Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2022-2024, Accessed June 2026

Sources: 1-Cushman and Wakefield/Matthews, 2-Colliers, 3-Cushman and Wakefield, 4-Cushman and Wakefield, 5-Cushman and Wakefield/Lee and Associates, 6 - Cushman and Wakefield/Matthews Real Estate Investment, 7-Cushman & Wakefield/Lee and Associates, 8 - Cushman and Wakefield/CBRE, 9 - Cushman and Wakefield (Sage Partners), 10 - Colliers/NAI Wisinski of West Michigan, 11 - Cushman and Wakefield/NAI Earle Furman, 12 - Cushman and Wakefield, 13 - Cushman and Wakefield/Newmark Grubb Zimmer, 14 - Cushman & Wakefield/Lee and Associates, 15 - Cushman and Wakefield, 16 - Cushman and Wakefield, 17 - Cushman and Wakefield/Lee and Associates, 18 - NAIRed Commerial Real Estate, 19 - NAI NP Dodge, 20 - Cushman & Wakefield/Colliers, 21 - Cushman & Wakefield/Lee and Associates, 22 - Cushman & Wakefield, 23 - Cushman and Wakefield/CBRE, 24 - Cushman & Wakefield/Partners Real Estate, 25 - Cushman & Wakefield/CBRE, Accessed June 2026

Source: Competitive Market Study (2021-2024), Lincoln Electric Systems and Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy (http://www.eia.gov/naturalgas/data.cfm#prices) (2022-2025), Accessed June 2026

Source: 2025 Facts and Figures, National Tax Foundation (Tables 14 and 11) (Rates as of March 15, 2025)

08 Quality of Life

OMAHA RANKS

#7

OF 25 METROS

IMPROVED up from 8th

Quality of life remains one of Omaha's strongest competitive advantages.

The region ranks seventh overall, improving from eighth last year. Omaha leads the comparison group for shortest average commute, ranks second for arts and cultural activity, and has the second-lowest violent crime rate under the report's measure.

Strong results in cost of living and health care access add to that position. Omaha ranks lower for some natural amenities, climate, and transportation choices beyond driving.

The combined results reflect the practical advantages that distinguish daily life in the region.

THE NINE MEASURES, RANKED

Commute Time	STRONGEST 1st	Air Quality	11th
Violent Crime Rate	2nd	Other Mobility	18th
Arts and Culture	2nd	Natural Recreation Amenities	18th
Health Care Access	6th	Climate	WEAKEST 20th
Cost of Living	7th		

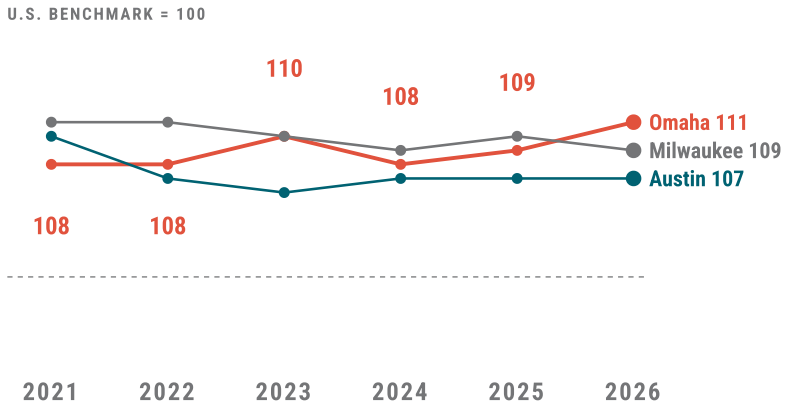
111 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's quality of life position has improved from 11th five years ago to 7th today.

QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

Improvement in the region's relative cost of living and violent crime rankings has contributed to our improved ranking. Omaha now ranks ahead of Austin and Milwaukee in the comparison shown.



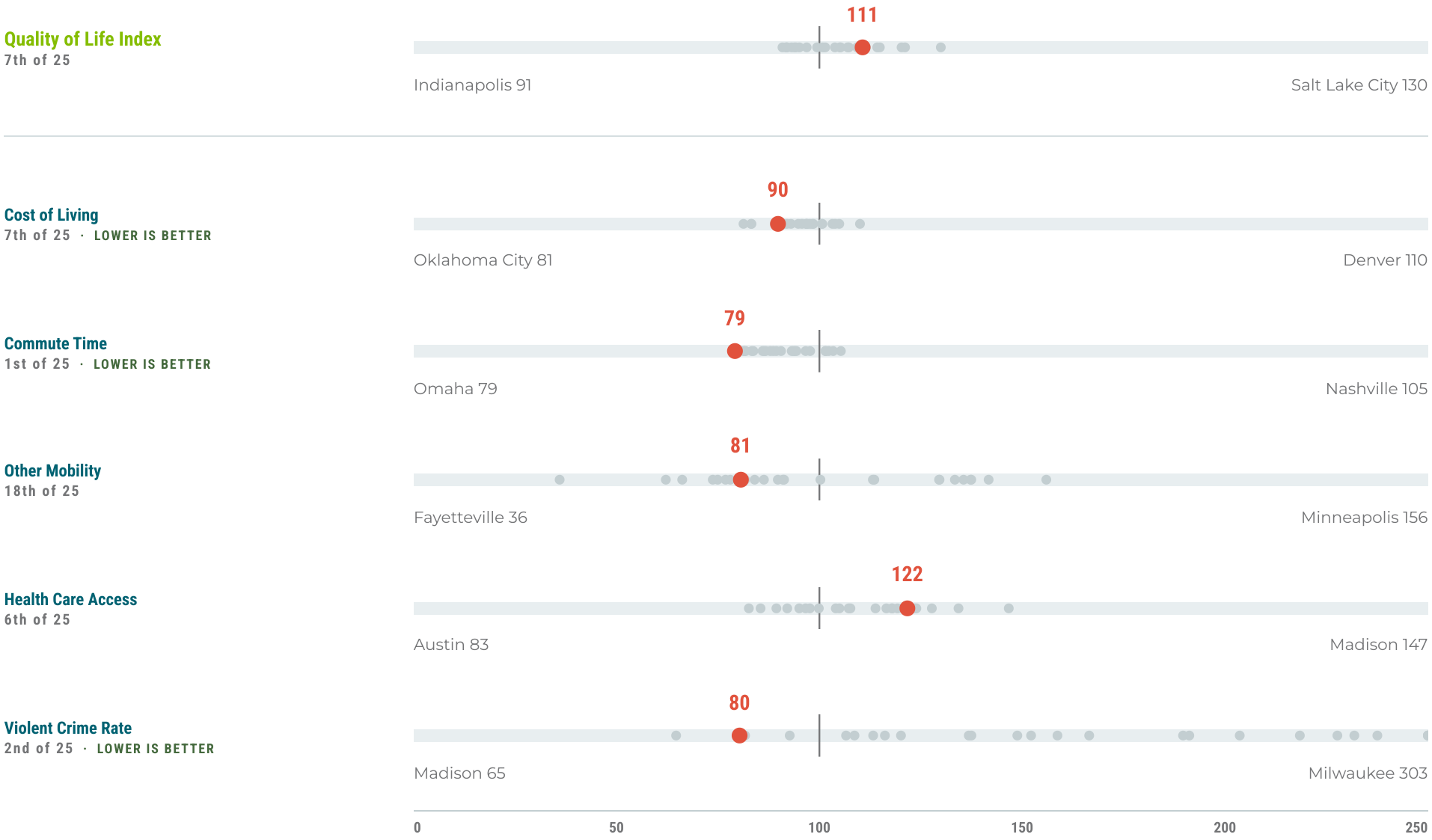
METRO COMPARISON

Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Quality of Life Index

4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Nashville	Denver	Buffalo	Omaha	Milwaukee	Austin	St. Louis
115	114	111	111	109	107	107

The daily experience of living in a region is an important consideration for residents and the employers competing to attract and retain them.

The quality of life index looks beyond household expenses to include commuting, mobility, public safety, health care access, arts and culture, and natural and environmental characteristics. These measures capture different elements of life in the Omaha metro and allow comparison with competing markets.



Air Quality
11th of 25



Climate
20th of 25



Natural Recreation Amenities
18th of 25



Arts and Culture
2nd of 25



INDEXED VALUE · U.S. = 100 · VALUES ABOVE 250 PLOT AT THE SCALE END

08 Quality of Life

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Cost of Living	89.8 OMAHA	100.0 UNITED STATES	7th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 8th	Oklahoma City LOWEST AT 81.3

Affordability remains an important part of Omaha's appeal. The region's overall cost of living is below the national benchmark, and its ranking has improved. The index provides a regional comparison of household costs, which can vary by family and spending needs.

Commute Time	20.9 OMAHA	26.4 UNITED STATES	1st OF 25	IMPROVED up from 2nd	Omaha LOWEST AT 20.9

Omaha has the shortest average commute among the 25 comparison metros. The result reflects a meaningful difference in the time residents spend traveling to work and is one of the region's most distinctive quality of life measures.

Other Mobility	41.0 OMAHA	50.8 AVERAGE	18th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Minneapolis LEADS AT 79.2

Transportation choices extend beyond driving. This index combines public transit access with measures of walkability and bicycle accessibility. Omaha ranks lower on these measures, indicating that travel options are more limited relative to many comparison markets.

Health Care Access	3.4% OMAHA	2.8% UNITED STATES	6th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 9th	Madison LEADS AT 4.1%

Omaha has a relatively high concentration of professional and technical health care workers, supporting a strong ranking for access to care. The indicator measures health care employment relative to the workforce; it is not a direct assessment of patient outcomes, wait times, or medical costs.

Violent Crime Rate	283 OMAHA	352 UNITED STATES	2nd OF 25	IMPROVED up from 3rd	Madison LOWEST AT 228

Public safety is another area where Omaha performs well in the comparison. The region's ranking has improved considerably over the past five years. For consistency across metros, this measure uses reported violent crime rates for the four largest cities within each metropolitan area.

08 Quality of Life

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Air Quality	97.2% OMAHA	96.6% AVERAGE	11th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Greenville LEADS AT 99.7%

Omaha records a slightly higher share of days with good or moderate air quality than the comparison benchmark. The region remains near the middle of the rankings, based on Environmental Protection Agency measurements.

Climate	56.1 OMAHA	100.0 UNITED STATES	20th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Albuquerque LEADS AT 200.0

The climate index evaluates natural conditions such as seasonal temperatures, humidity, and sunshine. Omaha ranks lower than many comparison markets under this measure, which reflects natural climate characteristics rather than the full range of community amenities.

Natural Recreation Amenities	92.0 OMAHA	100.0 UNITED STATES	18th OF 25	HELD unchanged	Salt Lake City LEADS AT 253.6

The natural recreation measure focuses on geographic characteristics, including topography and access to water. Omaha ranks below many comparison metros on those factors. The measure does not capture the full availability or quality of developed parks, trails, or recreational facilities.

Arts and Culture	1.53 OMAHA	0.84 UNITED STATES	2nd OF 25	HELD unchanged	Nashville LEADS AT 2.15

Arts and cultural activity is a particularly strong part of Omaha's quality of life profile. The region ranks second among the comparison metros using an employment-based measure of arts and cultural activity relative to population. This provides a consistent indicator across markets, though it does not directly measure attendance or the quality of cultural experiences.

SOURCES

Source: Council for Community and Economic Research, 2025 annual average
Source: American Community Survey (Table S0801), 2020-2024 Average, Accessed May 2026
Sources: AllTransitTM Performance Score, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Accessed May 2026; Walk Score and Bike Score, Walk Score, Available at: https://www.walkscore.com/cities-and-neighborhoods/, Accessed May 2026
Source: Occupation Employment Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Bureau of Census, 2023-2025, Accessed May 2026
Source: Unified Crime Reports, Crime Data Explorer, Accessed May 2026
Source: Air Quality Index Report, Environmental Protection Agency (https://aqs.epa.gov/aqsweb/airdata/download_files.html#Annual), 2023-2025, Accessed May 2026
Source: Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture
Source: County Business Patterns, U.S. Bureau of Census 2023-2024, Accessed June 2026

09 Private Capital

OMAHA RANKS

#16

OF 25 METROS

SLIPPED down from 15th

Businesses rely on facilities, equipment, and intellectual property to produce goods and services.

Omaha ranks 16th overall for private capital per worker, down from 15th last year. The region's strongest result is private structures, where it ranks sixth. Equipment per worker is also above the national average, while intellectual property products rank lower.

The findings reflect differences in the types of capital supporting the regional economy.

THE THREE MEASURES, RANKED

Private Structures	STRONGEST 6th
Private Equipment	11th
Intellectual Property Products	WEAKEST 18th

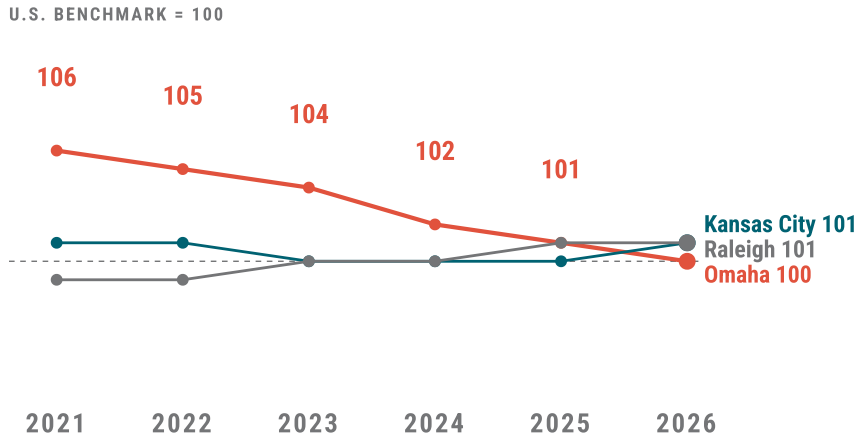
100 INDEX VALUE

U.S. average = 100

Omaha's private capital index has gradually declined from its earlier levels and now stands at the U.S. benchmark.

PRIVATE CAPITAL INDEX VALUE, FIVE YEARS

Raleigh has gained ground during the period, while Kansas City has remained relatively steady. Both metros finish slightly ahead of Omaha in the latest comparison.



METRO COMPARISON

Metro areas immediately above and below Omaha on the Private Capital Index

13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th
Raleigh	Greenville	Kansas City	Omaha	Fayetteville	Pittsburgh	Tulsa
101	101	101	100	100	100	99

Private capital includes the buildings, machinery, equipment, software, and other intellectual property businesses use in their operations. The Barometer measures these assets per worker, so economies of different sizes can be compared, and it reflects the stock of capital in place rather than new investment announced or completed in a single year.

Private Capital Index
16th of 25



Private Equipment
11th of 25



Private Structures
6th of 25



Intellectual Property Products
18th of 25



INDEXED VALUE · U.S. = 100 · VALUES ABOVE 250 PLOT AT THE SCALE END

09 Private Capital

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Private Equipment	$58,679 OMAHA	$58,237 UNITED STATES	11th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 13th	Salt Lake City LEADS AT $64,447

Equipment includes machinery and other productive assets used across industries. Omaha's equipment value per worker is slightly above the national average, although its comparative position has declined over the longer term. Differences in industry composition influence the amount and type of equipment businesses use.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Private Structures	$127,068 OMAHA	$120,509 UNITED STATES	6th OF 25	IMPROVED up from 8th	Oklahoma City LEADS AT $142,176

Private structures include factories, warehouses, offices, and other buildings used for business operations. Omaha's value per worker exceeds the national average and represents its strongest private capital measure. The result reflects the stock of structures supporting the region's industries.

	OMAHA	BENCHMARK	RANK	MOVEMENT	LEADER
Intellectual Property Products	$30,792 OMAHA	$32,381 UNITED STATES	18th OF 25	SLIPPED down from 16th	Madison LEADS AT $45,522

Intellectual property products include software and other intangible assets used in production. Omaha's value per worker is below the national average, and its ranking has declined in recent years. The measure reflects an established category of capital assets, not simply the number of patents or new technologies developed locally.

SOURCES

Source: National Income and Production Accounts, U.S. Bureau of Economics Analysis and Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2021-2023, Accessed June 2026

Source: National Income and Production Accounts, U.S. Bureau of Economics Analysis and Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2021-2023, Accessed July 2026

Methodology

WHAT THE BAROMETER IS

The Greater Omaha Chamber established the Barometer in 2014 to provide a consistent assessment of the Omaha region's economic performance.

In 2015, the Chamber partnered with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Business Research to develop a research-based methodology for comparing Omaha with other metropolitan economies.

The 2026 Barometer is the 11th edition. This year's report expands the comparison group to 25 metropolitan areas and examines performance across nine economic indexes.

The findings offer a consistent framework for understanding Omaha's competitive position and changes over time.

HOW THE INDEXES ARE BUILT

The Barometer draws on government and other established data sources to examine nine dimensions of economic competitiveness: growth, inclusivity, human capital, innovation, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, cost of doing business, quality of life, and private capital.

Each index combines measures relevant to that category. The analysis generally uses data from 2022 through 2025 where available, with earlier periods or multiyear estimates for selected indicators. American Community Survey data typically use five-year averages covering 2020 through 2024.

The same methodology is applied across the comparison group to produce index values and rankings.

READING THIS REPORT

Index values

Measures are converted to indexes using the relevant national benchmark, generally set at 100. The interpretation of a higher or lower value depends on the measure. The overall index is constructed to reflect the relative performance of the category.

Rankings

Rankings compare Omaha with the other 24 metros included in the Barometer. They do not represent Omaha's position among all U.S. metropolitan areas. Some measures include ties, which follow the research team's published ranking method.

Measurement windows

The report draws on the latest comparable data available for each measure. Reporting periods vary by source and may include multiyear averages. Readers should refer to the detailed indicator pages for the underlying dates.

11TH
EDITION OF THE BAROMETER

25
METROS COMPARED

51
DATA POINTS

9
INDEXES

PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

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