

**Appendix 13**

# **Hamilton County Treasures**

## **Community Assets and Strengths**

Hamilton County benefits from many and varied treasures, assets and strengths as the central county of a major metropolitan region. Many of these assets are long-standing arts, cultural and recreational organizations and venues located in the central city, Cincinnati. However, other recreational, natural and economic-oriented strengths are located though out the County. Presented below are the treasures as identified by Hamilton County citizens during the Community COMPASS Community Forum meetings. Also presented are recent national rankings for the area and a compilation of livability and economy accolades.

### **Community Forums:**

In October 2001, Community COMPASS held eleven Community Forums throughout the County at various high schools. These meetings of approximately 100 people were based around small group interaction and encouraged citizens to discuss ideas and issues concerning their desired future for Hamilton County. Each meeting was identical in format, however various locations and times were provided to facilitate the greatest amount of citizen participation.

Citizens were asked their ideas and opinions, but most importantly to give voice to what they saw as the vital issues and priorities for the future of Hamilton County. They were promised that all their ideas would be placed in a database, organized by categories and used throughout the planning process. The categories of ideas were used to draft overall goals for Community COMPASS. At all the Community Forums, participants were asked to complete Treasure Cards that listed what they thought were the most important treasures and/or assets of Hamilton County. The complete listing of the 295 responses are presented in *Community Forums Report Supporting Documentation: COMMUNITY COMPASS REPORT NO. 4.1 Hamilton County, Ohio November 2001*. Presented below is a table from the Report 4.1 that lists the general themes and the number of responses for each treasure theme.

### **Hamilton County Treasure Card Themes**

(Numbers represent frequency out of the 295\* Responses)

- The Beauty of the Wooded Hillsides, the Combination of Nature & City in One County (82)
- Hamilton County Park System (55)
- Independent Communities & Neighborhoods with Distinct, Historic Architecture (52)
- The Ohio & Surrounding Rivers (30)
- The Culture & History – theatres, museums, art, entertainment (27)
- Big City Benefits with Comfortable, Small Town Feeling (19)
- Quality of Life with a Low Cost of Living (10)

- Hamilton County and Cincinnati Public Library System (7)
- Diversity of People, Diversity of Economy (5)

*\*Some of the 295 responses covered multiple themes. Overall, approximately 95% of the responses fall into these themes.*

## Recent National Rankings:

Hamilton County and the Cincinnati metropolitan area has been recognized recently by national publications and organizations.

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Ranking Organization</b>
Most Livable City	April 2004	Partners for Livable Communities
Top Metro Area for New & Expanded Facilities	March 2004	Site Selection Magazine
Top 10 "Cities that Rock"	April 2004	Esquire Magazine
Cincinnati USA - No. 5 U.S. arts destination	Summer 2004	American Style Magazine
Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park – 2004 Regional Theater Tony Award	Summer 2004	Tony Award Productions
Cincinnati USA - No. 1 College Basketball City	August 2004	Sporting News
Newport on the Levee - No. 1 family friendly shopping centers and malls	Summer 2004	Zagat Survey: Zagat's Top 50 National Attractions
Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden - No. 13	Summer 2004	Zagat's Top 50 National Attractions
Newport Aquarium - No. 25	Summer 2004	Zagat's Top 50 National Attractions
Cincinnati Art Museum-best art museum (tied with four museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Art Institute in Chicago)	Summer 2004	Zagat's Top 50 National Attractions

## Livability Accolades:

- Greater Cincinnati is ranked in the top ten by Fortune magazine as a great place to live and work.
- Paramount's Kings Island ranked #4 overall in "child appeal" category by the Zagat Survey. Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal and Great American Ball Park received top rankings as well.
- "Worth the Trip" – Endorsed by the first lady of daytime talk, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, calls attention to Cincinnati's "urban renewal" citing such attractions as the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, the Cincinnati Opera, the Cesar Pelli-designed Aronoff Center for the Arts and the nation's latest gem, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. The JeanRo Bistro is noted for its renowned chef, Jean-Robert de Cavel and Rookwood Pottery Restaurant for its ambiance.
- Special Millennium Edition of Places Rated Almanac ranked Greater Cincinnati eleventh - the top 3% of metro areas.
- "Top Fun City" In a list compiled by Bert Sperling, creator of Money magazine's annual "Best Places to Live" placed Cincinnati among the top 20 fun cities in the United States. The list based the ranking by reviewing "fun" characteristics of top U.S. cities such as the number of sports teams, restaurants, types of retail, arts performances, and city budget spent on recreation.
- Dubbed the "Queen City of the West" by Longfellow and called "America's most beautiful inland city" by Churchill.
- Study found that the average buying power in Cincinnati was eighth best in the nation.
- Cincinnati's Fine Arts Fund, the oldest in the nation, ranks among the top three in the country for total dollars raised by a united arts campaign.
- The Maisonette has achieved the five-star rating for 41 consecutive years, the longest of any restaurant in North America.
- World-renowned symphony orchestra, fifth oldest in the nation.
- Cincinnati Opera – internationally acclaimed second oldest company in the U.S.
- The May Festival, oldest choral music event in the Western Hemisphere.
- One of the top five zoos in the U.S. and the second oldest. Renowned for breeding exotic animals and recently added Manatee Springs. Nation's first and largest Insectarium. Most gorilla births of any zoo.
- Paramount's Kings Island – one of the top ten amusement parks in the nation.

- The Newport Aquarium – in Newport, KY., with 11,000 creatures, the nation’s largest air shark viewing area and largest King Penguin collection.
- Krohn Conservatory - one of the nation’s largest public greenhouses.
- One of the largest municipal park systems of a major U.S. city.
- Waynesville – the antique capital of the Midwest.

Source: Cincinnati USA web site, accessed November 17, 2004  
<http://www.cincinnatiusa.org/pdf/living/accolades.pdf>

The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County is the nation’s third-oldest library and nationally ranks:

- #1 in holdings per capita
- #1 in circulation per card holder
- #2 in annual circulation per capita
- #3 in total circulation
- #3 in size of holdings with 9.6 million items.

Source: Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

## **Economy Accolades:**

- Home to ten Fortune 500 headquarter firms. In addition, another 400 Fortune firms have operations in Greater Cincinnati.
- More than 1,000 firms engaged in international trade - ranking Greater Cincinnati 22<sup>nd</sup> nationally in total exports.
- *Fortune* Magazine ranked Cincinnati 7th among the Top 15 Cities as Great Places to Live and Work.
- *Forbes* Magazine calls the region one of the "Best Places for Business and Careers".
- Business Development OUTLOOK Magazine names Cincinnati one of the top 25 "2000 Choice Cities" for business expansion or relocation.
- *The New York Times* says, "Cincinnati exemplifies the cities driving the U.S. economy".
- *Employment Review* and *Outlook* both listed Cincinnati among the Top 20 Best U.S. Cities in which to Live and Work.
- *Inc. Magazine* ranked Cincinnati among the top 25 Large Metro Areas to Start a Business in Now.
- *Entrepreneur* Magazine ranked Cincinnati 16th for entrepreneurship and #1 for “Lowest Failure Rates”.
- *Yahoo Internet Life* says Cincinnati is one of the Top Wired Cities in 2000 - ranking it 25<sup>th</sup> out of 50.

- *Sprint Business* ranked Greater Cincinnati on their list of "Most Productive Cities in America" based on economic productivity composite index.
- *Sales & Marketing Management* ranked Cincinnati 10th in its Top 20 Hottest Markets for Selling and Doing Business. Factors considered included population increases, retail sales, effective buying income, increase in building permits, unemployment rates, job growth, mix of industries, tax rates, number of corporate relocations and number of new corporations.
- *Dun & Bradstreet* and *Entrepreneur Magazine* ranked Cincinnati 16th among large cities in its "Best Cities for Small Business."
- *Dun & Bradstreet* and *Entrepreneur Magazine* ranked Cincinnati 1st with the Lowest Business Bankruptcy Rates.

Source: Cincinnati USA web site, accessed November 17, 2004  
<http://www.cincinnatiusa.org/pdf/eco/accolades.pdf>

## Education Accolades:

- **UC Medical Center in Top Tier**  
 UC's Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences are among the nation's best according to the April 2003 *U.S. News & World Report's* graduate school rankings:  
  
 Top Specialty Programs - Pediatrics - UC College of Medicine #4  
 Top Nursing - Anesthesia - UC College of Nursing #16
- **UC Cooperative Education**  
 Fourth in the nation (fall 2002)
- **UC College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning**  
 Interior Design Program: 1st in U.S. (for the fifth straight year)  
 Architecture (undergraduate) Program: 1st in U.S.  
 (DesignIntelligence 2004 annual survey of design employers)
- **UC School of Design** was named among world's top ten, the only public institution to make that list. (October 2002 I.D. Magazine)
- **UC Music and Arts Programs** (spring 2001)  
 Opera/Voice: 3rd in the U.S.  
 Musical Conducting: 5th in the U.S.  
 Music: 6th in the U.S.  
 Music Composition: 9th in the U.S.  
 Orchestra/Symphony: 9th in the U.S
- **UC Science and Engineering Programs**  
 Paleontology: 9th in the U.S.  
 Environmental Engineering: 20th in the U.S.

Source: U.S. News & World Report

- **External Funding**

- In 2003, UC led all universities in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana in patent income for the fourth-straight year, according to the Association of University Technology Managers.
- The university's position in the national rankings rose to 27th nationally out of 151 research institutions in the survey.
- In fiscal-year 2003, UC and its affiliates earned more than \$300 million in grants and contracts, an 18.6 percent increase over the prior year.

- **Entrepreneurial Education**

- In the April 2003 issue, UC placed in the top tier (13 colleges) of all regional entrepreneurial education programs, out of a field of more than 700 such program across the country.
- UC was one of only three regional entrepreneurship programs ranked in the top 10 by both entrepreneurship program directors and entrepreneurship faculty. (Entrepreneur Magazine)
- In October 2002, UC's Economics Center for Education & Research was singled out from among 250 centers of its kind around the nation to receive the first-ever outstanding performance award. (National Council on Economic Education)

Source: University of Cincinnati Web site, accessed November 17, 2004  
<http://www.uc.edu/ucinfo/ranking.htm>

## **Community Planning Accolades:**

- In 2004, the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission / Planning Partnership was recognized for having the best program for Citizen Involvement (for large jurisdictions) in the world – Community COMPASS and the Community Results Accountability Framework. (International City/County Management Association)
- In 2003, the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission / Planning Partnership was recognized for having the best Community Planning Initiative in the nation – the Community COMPASS Countywide Town Meeting. (National Association of Counties)
- Between 2002 and 2004, the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission / Planning Partnership has been recognized for excellence and innovative programs, receiving 2 state awards, 18 national awards, and an international award.