

The Telegraph

Nashua is Best: Money Magazine ranks city best place to live in N.H.



Staff photo by Mathew Plamondon

NASHUA – Featuring an eclectic and growing mix of employment, housing, dining, entertainment and education options, Nashua is once again the best place to live in New Hampshire, as rated by the national publication, Money Magazine.

In a downtown where one can dine on homemade crepes for breakfast and lobster macaroni and cheese for dinner, drink at any one of numerous breweries and coffee shops, live in hip loft apartments, and play one of multiple public pianos along the sidewalks, it seems little wonder Nashua ranks so high.

“Residents enjoy the perks of being an hour’s drive from the cultural and educational hub of Boston, but arrive home to a charming town with no sales tax and a rich history,” Money states of Nashua.

The national recognition is nothing new for Nashua. Twice, it has been rated the best place to live in the U.S.

“Money Magazine has recognized what many in Nashua already understand – that Nashua is the best place to live in New Hampshire.” Mayor Jim Donchess said. *“The quality of life is created by many, many people working together. Here, our community is very strong on all fronts; our schools, our hospitals, all the nonprofits. Our business community is very strong, as well.”*

The magazine states Nashua’s population estimate is now 89,960. The median household income is \$72,007, while the median home value is \$300,000.

Another upside to the city of Nashua, according to the magazine, is the up-and-coming nature of the downtown area. This includes the 1800s mill buildings being converted into living spaces at Clocktower Place, the Cotton Mill and Lofts 34. There is also the 1.6-mile Nashua Riverwalk, providing residents easy access to historic landmarks in the city.

Money also cites Nashua’s commitment to addressing the opioid epidemic with its task force aimed at the problem, while trying to get those affected by the epidemic into treatment as a major plus for the city.

Residents and those who work in the city generally share positive views of Nashua, whether they find its greatest strength to be businesses, education or something else.

“A lot of that has to do with its proximity to literally everything. We probably have one of the most happening downtowns in New Hampshire,” Nashua resident Racheal Dougherty said about the city’s ranking. *“There’s always something going on that draws out people into the city. There’s a lot of community stuff.”*

Dougherty, who was making her way to the Nashua Public Library on foot, said that the ability to get places without using a car is a definite plus to living in the city. She also said the school system is a major strength for Nashua.

“I think we have a lot of opportunities for students,” Dougherty said of Nashua’s educational strengths. *“You can learn things at a college level while you’re still in high school, so you don’t have to necessarily pay as much for it.”*

Brenda Davis, a Derry resident who was born and raised in Nashua and currently works for SquareTail Advisors on Main Street, shared similar thoughts on the educational strength of the city.

“The education is second to none,” Davis said.

Davis also said the people and the attitude of the city is a very important part of what makes Nashua so great, especially when it comes to the nonprofits, and how much the community helps those in need. Through her workplace, which deals with nonprofits such as Marguerite’s Place, Granite State Children’s Alliance, and the United Way of Greater Nashua, as well as many others, she sees a lot of good in community members.

“We see a lot where the good goes on,” Davis said of the nonprofits in the city.

Other residents see the same value in the community’s heart that Davis sees.

“I’ve noticed, in this city alone compared to where I’m from, there’s a lot more heart in this city. A lot more people seem to care, which is what I like,” said Mark Arabia, a relatively new resident to the city.

Arabia, who found time to play the piano located in front of the future performing arts center on Main Street – formerly Alec’s Shoes – recently moved to Nashua from Rochester, New Hampshire. He said he has met many good people since moving. He knows a lot of people who are struggling with addiction and that the city offers great resources to those individuals.

“They’ve got some great meetings to go to, as far as recovery goes,” Arabia said. *“A lot of people are struggling with that, and a lot of people have found their way.”*

Arabia also said he is impressed with how much there is to do in the city, as well as the relative ease of navigating the area. He said the ability to make his way around town on foot lends an endearing quality to the city.

MONEY MAGAZINE’S RANKINGS

Best places to live in each New England state, as ranked by Money Magazine:

State City Median Home Value Median Income

New Hampshire Nashua \$300,000 \$72,007

Massachusetts Newton \$1.47 million \$132,258

Maine South Portland \$355,800 \$56,472

Vermont Colchester \$389,033 \$69,181

Connecticut West Hartford \$349,900 \$100,355

Rhode Island Cranston \$229,900 \$66,177