

MEDIA CONTACT:

Barb Neilan, director@destinationmissoula.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Missoula Ranked in Top 100 Best Cities, Top 20 Small Towns in America

Missoula Ranked 17th in America's Best Small Cities and 88th Out of 393 in Resonance Consultancy's 2026 America's Best Cities Study

MISSOULA, Mont.—Missoula ranked in the top 100 best cities in America and among the top 20 small towns in America in Resonance Consultancy's 2026 America's Best Cities report, Destination Missoula announced today.

Missoula came in at #88 out of 393 communities evaluated and #17 out of the top 100 small towns in America, which looked specifically at cities with fewer than 500,000 people. Missoula's impressive rankings reflect high scores in the three main categories measured in the 2026 study: livability, lovability and prosperity.

Livability factors included quality of daily life, including walkability, public transit, air quality, cost of living, health care and life expectancy; lovability looked at cultural vitality and visitor amenities, including restaurants, arts, nightlife and social media engagement; and prosperity assessed economic strength and opportunity, including GDP per capita, labor force participation, innovation, education and corporate presence.

"This recognition is a testament to what makes Missoula special: our stunning natural setting and outdoor recreation, vibrant arts and culture scene and genuine warmth of our community," said Barb Neilan, executive director of Destination Missoula and the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID). "We're proud to share what Missoulians already know: Missoula truly is one of the best places in America."

Resonance Consultancy uses both statistical data and survey research methods, including a perception survey of over 2,000 U.S. households, to determine its Best Small Towns in America list, which is now in its 10th year. According to the report, "America's Best Cities measures what it actually means to be a competitive city in the modern era — not just whether residents can reach a park or afford housing, but whether the city resonates: whether people want to be there."

Missoula was also recently named a “Best Budget-Friendly Mountain Town for a Summer Escape” by [Cheapism](#), one of the “Best Trail Running Towns” by [RUN Magazine](#) and landed the #2 spot on [CNN’s “Best Towns to Visit”](#) in 2025.

Read the full Resonance study [here](#), and find more ways to celebrate Missoula at [DestinationMissoula.org](#).

###

About Destination Missoula

Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District serve as the community’s destination marketing and stewardship organizations, dedicated to elevating Missoula as a welcoming place to visit, meet and explore. Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District are committed to promoting responsible and sustainable tourism for the Missoula community. From floating down the river to enjoying a concert downtown, Missoula shines as Montana’s cultural and recreational heartbeat.