

Thursday, October 22, 2020

NATIONAL SURVEY RANKS CITIES BASED ON AMENITIES

Oceanside Stands Out as Suburb with Urban Feel

By Ray Huard (/staff/ray-huard/)

Tuesday, October 20, 2020

Oceanside has been tagged by a recent national survey as the best little suburb with an urban feel in San Diego County.

Zillow, an online home listing service, and Yelp combined to come up with an index ranking cities based on their amenities and cost of housing – their “city-ness” as Zillow and Yelp called it.

Oceanside was the only city in San Diego County to make the list, ranking 15th among the 25 urban metro regions surveyed.

“In some way, this was trying to find suburban towns where you could get the biggest bang for your buck,” said Jeff Tucker, an economist with Zillow. “These are towns where, according to Yelp, there is an abundance and diversity of commercial and retail destinations, places like restaurants and bars and nightlife.”

Oceanside was picked for its active lifestyle and relative affordability of housing, Tucker said.

Affordable

“It certainly won’t stand out as an affordable place to live in a national context but it does sort of remain a relatively affordable place to live in the context of the San Diego metro area,” Tucker said.

As of August, the latest month for which Zillow had figures, the company pegged the median cost of a home in Oceanside at \$581,217 compared to \$695,184 in San Diego.

Those figures include condominiums and townhomes in calculating median costs along with single family homes.

When it comes to housing costs alone, El Cajon had the lowest in San Diego County, according to Zillow, with a median cost of \$563,196.

“If you’re trying to get a really good bargain in terms of living costs, you’ll still have to look outside of San Diego County entirely,” Tucker said. “This is sort of the best bargain we could see for San Diego County.”

Nightlife

Oceanside got a boost in the ratings partly as a result of the relatively new redevelopment of downtown, with several new hotels and restaurants.

“It scored well on the city-ness score where we took information on Yelp looking at the restaurants, nightlife diversity as well as information on arts venues,” Tucker said.

Oceanside’s economic development manager, Michelle Geller, said she was “super excited and not surprised” that Oceanside made the Zillow/Yelp list of top suburbs with that city feel.

“We have some amazing restaurants that represent diverse cooking,” Geller said, from Mexican fusion to Polynesian.

“Obviously, with the pandemic, it’s really tough on restaurants. A lot of our restaurants have been super nimble,” Geller said. “We’ve allowed them to do outdoor seating on the sidewalks and in the parking lots.”