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ChetanChicago Named Top Design City in RMJM Hillier Study

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Chicago is the best city for architecture and design according to an independent study conducted by RMJM Hillier, the North American division of the worldwide architecture firm RMJM.

Looking at ten criteria including architecture awards, "green" design and public transit systems, RMJM Hillier, selected 10 cities leading the way in design policy and practice. Then the firm commissioned public opinion and research firm Zogby International to interview over 1000 residents of those cities on architecture and design issues and incorporated those results into the research to determine the final rankings.

To identify, study and rank the ten best cities for design in the U.S., RMJM Hillier conducted the study in four sections: Data Collection, which included secondary research from primary sources; Interviews with residents of each city, executed by Zogby International; Anecdotal Data gathered via interviews with AIA representatives in each city; and, finally, rankings as determined by the data and opinions of in-house experts.

RMJM Hillier selected to study the largest cities in the United States – those with a population greater than 500,000, as determined by the U.S. Census – as its study group. The study looked at the following ten criteria: public transit systems, LEED certified buildings, LEED registered buildings, art and design universities, museums, sustainability rankings, architecture awards, employees in creative industries, housing and community design awards, and buildings on the National Historic Register.

Zogby International conducted a telephone survey of adults in the 10 large cities (New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, Washington DC, Boston, Denver). The sample is 1024 interviews with approximately 22 questions asked. Samples are randomly drawn from telephone cd's of national listed sample. Zogby International surveys employ sampling strategies in which selection probabilities are proportional to population size within area codes and exchanges.

Chicago came out on top with New York and Boston taking second and third place respectively.

Eighty-seven percent of Chicago residents polled think that the architecture in their city is excellent or good, versus 63 percent of New Yorkers and 64 percent of Bostonians, according to the Zogby poll which was one of the factors that determined rankings.

The Top Ten Cities for Design:

1. Chicago, IL

2. New York, NY
3. Boston, MA
4. Los Angeles, CA
5. Portland, OR
6. San Francisco, CA
7. Seattle, WA
8. Denver, CO
9. Philadelphia, PA
10. Washington, D.C.

"Good design makes better communities by boosting the economy, creating jobs, and, particularly today, sponsoring environmental strategies," says Peter Schubert, AIA, design director of RMJM Hillier. "We conducted this study to see which cities are the most forward-thinking in their planning and development strategies and to applaud those that are doing it right."

"Architecture and design are such significant parts of Chicago's business and cultural communities; walking down the street, you hear people talking about buildings just as often as you hear them talking about the Cubs or Sox," says Zurich Esposito, executive vice president of AIA Chicago. "Studies like this compel us to learn more about what people are doing in other cities - across the country or around the globe. It's all part of learning from each other and creating an international design dialogue."

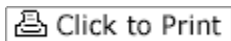
The study also names three "Cities to Watch:" Minneapolis, Minnesota; Baltimore, Maryland; Phoenix, Arizona.

To request a full copy of the report, or to get more in-depth analysis from architects in RMJM Hillier's Urban Studio, please contact Linda Crites at lcrites@rmjmhillier.com or Melinda Sherwood at msherwood@rmjmhillier.com, or 212-629-4100.

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