'A very nice place to be'

Niceville tops SmartTravel's list of places to live in Florida

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NICEVILLE — A once well-kept secret is now out: Niceville is a pretty great place to live.

You don't have take city officials' word for it, either. A travel website called SmartTravel.Tips has placed the small Okaloosa County city on Boggy and Rocky bayous at the top of its "10 Best Places to Live in Florida" list.

The city of about 14,000 people was the only Northwest Florida location to be included on the list, which measured criteria such as cost of living, home prices, crime rate, school grades, available amenities and graduation rates.

"It would be tempting to include Niceville on our list ... based on name alone, but luckily Niceville has more than earned its place for other reasons," the website states. "Niceville is simply a very nice place to be."

The website praised the city for its low crime rate and livability, calling it a "great place to raise a family." While not explicitly mentioning the city's proximity to the Emerald Coast's beaches, the photo accompanying Niceville's write-up on the website shows a sugar white beach.

City Council member Judy Boudreaux wasn't a bit surprised to hear about Niceville's selection.

"I think it's good that we're being recognized for what we already knew as a fact," she said. "The people of Niceville are what make it nice. The quality of life we enjoy, the sports programs we have for young people and our churches are all great."

Boudreaux was quick to praise the city's employees as well.

"They do a great job keeping our city beautiful," she said.

THE TOP 10

Niceville topped the list of SmartTravel.Tips 10 Best Places to Live in Florida.

Also on the list are:

2. Naples
3. Winter Springs
4. Palm Beach
5. Coral Springs
6. Dunedin
7. Cape Coral
8. Jupiter Inlet
9. Weston
10. Celebration