

## **A few pats on Ogden's back**

### **Standard Examiner Editorial Thursday, May 11, 2006**

One of Ogden's great ironies is that some of its most severe critics are the people who've lived and worked in the city the longest. We're not sure why, but maybe it has something to do with familiarity breeding contempt.

Whatever the reason, they should take an opportunity to see the city through another's eyes -- actually, three others -- for a change: Forbes magazine, Inc. Magazine and Kiplinger's Personal Finance. Those journals recently ranked Ogden among the top cities in America, for a variety of reasons.

Inc. Magazine says Ogden is its 18th favorite midsize city in America. The publication based its ranking on job growth over the past decade, its reputation as a growing ski-industry hub and called the Ogden area an "outdoors paradise."

Using much of the same statistical information from the Ogden-Clearfield Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Layton and has a population of 486,000, Forbes says Ogden is 33rd when it comes to the best places to do business. That includes a combination of crime rate, being close to colleges and universities, cost of living, cultural considerations, leisure amenities and job growth.

Kiplinger's places Ogden 49th on its list of "smartest places to live," based on many of the aforementioned criteria, including housing prices. On its Web site, Kiplinger's says it was on the lookout for cities with "well-diversified economies that are good places to start or expand businesses." Indeed, Utah scored four places in the Top 50 on Kiplinger's list: Logan (15th), Provo (21st) and St. George (11th) joined Junction City -- a stellar performance for the Beehive State.

These rankings blend objective information with the subjective attitudes of magazine editors and writers. Given Ogden's unfortunate history of self-doubt and some neighbors' habit of badmouthing the city, this trio of plaudits should provide a booster shot for any lagging self-confidence.

We've always said Ogden is a city with a soul, and now it's being recognized nationally. No city is perfect, and Ogden has its share of challenges. But this will make the city's economic development task a little easier, and that's welcome news.