



CONTACT: Kimberley Baker
Director, Marketing/Media Relations
(713) 844-3638 – Office

NEWS RELEASE

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GREATER HOUSTON REGION NAMED #1 METRO BY *SITE SELECTION* MAGAZINE FOR SECOND YEAR IN A ROW

HOUSTON – For the second consecutive year, *Site Selection* magazine has named the Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area (Houston MSA) as the 2012 “Top Metro” in the nation for corporate relocations and expansions. The magazine released its ranking of the top states and metros in its annual “Governor’s Cup” issue earlier today.

The number one metro ranking considers criteria that are key factors for job growth and retention. This is the third time in four years the Houston MSA has taken the number one spot. The Houston region logged 325 new or expanded facilities to garner the honor. Last year, the Houston MSA had 195 facilities considered for the ranking.

The Chicago-Naperville-Joliet metro followed at number two with 311 projects, and the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro, with 224 projects, in the third spot.

“The number one metro award presented by the corporate site selection standard bearer, *Site Selection* magazine, will greatly enhance our region’s stature as a great place to attract and grow business,” said Bob Harvey, President and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership. “One of the greatest strengths of doing business in Houston, and in Texas as a whole, is that we provide the resources and environment to help any company succeed. We intend to continue to make Houston the most attractive place to locate or expand a business in the United States.”

In addition to the greater Houston metro being named the “Top Metro,” the state of Texas earned the top spot in the magazine’s state rankings.

“I’m proud to see Texas claim the top spot for new and expanded corporate facilities over the last year. This is further proof that Texas continues to be a beacon of opportunity for entrepreneurs and job creators looking for a skilled and competitive workforce and freedom from over taxation, over regulation and over litigation,” Gov. Rick Perry said. “We’ve worked hard to make Texas the best state in the nation to live, work, raise a family and own a business, and we’ll continue strengthening the economic pillars that have helped us become a national example of job creation and economic strength.”

(MORE)

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1200 SMITH, SUITE 700, HOUSTON, TX 77002 | PHONE: 713-844-3600 | FAX: 713-844-0200
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“Greater Houston has demonstrated for many years that it is an economic powerhouse when it comes to landing new and expanded corporate facility projects,” said Ron Starner, Executive Vice President, *Site Selection* magazine. “By ranking first among all metros in the U.S. yet again in 2012, Houston has shown that it is not slowing down. In fact, it was the nation’s fastest-growing job market last year, and much of that job growth is coming from companies that are investing heavily into large facility projects in Greater Houston.”

Baytown, the third largest city in the Houston Metropolitan Area, points to the ranking as a result of its long-term economic development and job creation strategy.

“This is an outgrowth of Baytown’s long standing approach of working with units of local and state government as well as with elected officials and other stakeholders to embrace a philosophy of sustaining an integrated infrastructure and incentives framework to spur growth,” said B.J. Simon, Associate Executive Director, Baytown-West Chambers County Economic Development Foundation. “Our collaboration with other economic development allies in our region is also key to optimizing site selection synergies.”

Sugar Land, an award-winning master-planned community 20 miles southwest of Houston, has achieved its sustainable, strong local economy through a strategically focused and aggressive economic development program creating new wealth and jobs.

“Quality job growth and corporate expansions are high priorities in Sugar Land’s development goals and objectives, which has been the catalyst for recent successes. In addition, having regionally aligned goals has strengthened both Sugar Land and the Houston region’s ability to grow the Houston MSA’s economy through these collective efforts,” stated Regina Morales, Director of Economic Development, City of Sugar Land.

Among the nation’s 20 largest metro areas, Houston leads the nation in employment growth, creating 84,500 jobs in 2012, and a 3.2 percent growth rate. The Greater Houston Partnership forecasts the region to create 76,000 jobs this year.

Site Selection’s New Plant database does not track retail and government projects, schools or hospitals. New facilities and expansions included in the analyses must meet at least one of three criteria: involve a capital investment of at least \$1 million; create at least 50 new jobs; or add at least 20,000 square feet of new floor area.

Site Selection Governor’s Cup award, which the 59-year-old Atlanta-based magazine has awarded annually since 1978, goes to the state with the most new and expanded corporate facilities. *Site Selection*’s yearly analyses are regarded by corporate real estate analysts as “the industry scoreboard.” The magazine’s circulation base consists of 44,000 executives involved in corporate site selection decisions, most at the CEO/President/COO level.

To read the top metro article, visit www.siteselection.com. For more information on the Houston region or to become a member of the Greater Houston Partnership, visit www.houston.org.

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The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of Houston’s business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller. *Opportunity Houston* is an aggressive five-year marketing and lead generation program that will help grow jobs, increase capital investment and expand foreign trade for the region by the end of 2015. Visit the Greater Houston Partnership on the World Wide Web at houston.org.

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