

Indicators often used to reflect economic well being and life quality of a county

1. A low percent of unemployment (e.g. less than the state average and less than the national average which is about 5.7% currently and predicted to rise)
2. Number of high school graduates attending college
3. Low percent of high school drop outs
4. Low percent of teen pregnancies
5. Number of A, B, C, D, and F schools as rated by state board of education.
6. Number of high school and college graduates that return to county to find employment or settle
7. Number of new jobs created in various sectors such as manufacturing, retail, farming, services
8. Percent of high skills jobs and entry level jobs in current workforce
9. Presence of an active and experienced economic development office and director (typically a county employee reporting to commissioners or county manager)
7. Literacy level of general population
8. Major employers in the county
9. A low number of jobs from prison employment (absence of prisons as employers)
10. A balance of natural resource industries in a county (e.g. pine forests) and other types of industry (e.g. cement plant)
11. At least one local newspaper which reflects a mix of policy and politics and which reports the news primarily and editorializes (with equity and balance) on the Op Ed pages.
12. Access to internet and communications services
13. Access to reliable and efficient health care providers
14. One or more libraries
15. A heterogeneous population of elderly, youth, racially diverse, all income levels and political party affiliations
16. A system of justice (the judges) and law enforcement (the sheriff and the police dept) that is fair and equitable without regard to race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.