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Amarillo named one of West's best places

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Amarillo's authentic Western appeal has earned it recognition from a leading Western lifestyle magazine.

American Cowboy placed the city on its list of 20 Best Places to Live in the West.

The fourth annual list is featured in the publication's current edition, which hit newsstands Tuesday.

Amarillo is featured on Page 60 of the bimonthly publication.

The distinction was announced locally at a Wednesday afternoon news conference at the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum.

"Amarillo is a hub of Western lifestyle activity, which makes it a great choice for this list," said DeAnna Jarnagin, associate publisher of American Cowboy.

American Cowboy editors base their selections for the list on a city's outdoor appeal, historical significance, regional ranching activity and tourism. Factors also considered include a city's population, average land price, average household price, median age and the number of Western events it hosts.

"Amarillo is a true gateway to the West," Jarnagin said. "When you get to Amarillo, there's no doubt you've arrived in the West."

The list, which is not ranked, includes cities from five regions: Texas and the Plains, California and Nevada, the Rockies, the Southwest and the Northwest.

Amarillo is the only Texas city on the 2011 list, and it also is the largest in terms of population.

"Amarillo is a perfect pick because we have so much to offer that reflects that Western heritage," said Amarillo Mayor Debra McCartt.