

Study: Crestview one of best places for manufacturing plants

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CRESTVIEW — The Hub City is the seventh best small city for high-tech manufacturing companies to expand or relocate, according to a national study.

The Boyd Co. a Princeton, N.J.,-based consulting firm that provides location recommendations for companies around the world, recently completed the study of 45 cities that compares the cost of operating a high-tech manufacturing facility. The study determined the cost in each city to operate a 250,000-square-foot production plant that employed 300 hourly workers.

It would cost a little more than \$20.97 million a year to run a business of that size in Crestview, the study concluded.

“(Crestview) certainly has a major concentration of aerospace industry,” said John Boyd, the company’s founder. “It’s the type of market now that really is on the radar screens for not only expansions, but for relocations.

“Wage pressures here are competitive, especially with some of the northeastern markets and the larger markets in the Midwest,” Boyd added. “There’s an abundant workforce. There’s tremendous turnover and linkages between the presence of the military and the private sector. There’s a large labor market and it tends to keep wages attractive.”

Lenoir, N.C., was the top-ranked small city, with a total estimated cost of \$19.97 million a year to run the business. Although Lenoir’s total cost was lower, Crestview’s average estimated employee wage was \$17.57 an hour, compared to Lenoir’s \$18.91.

In addition to wages, the low cost of energy was another reason Crestview ranked so high. Boyd said Gulf Power Co. provides abundant energy at a lower cost than many other similar companies.

“In the real estate world, it’s all about location, location, location,” Boyd said. “In the site selection business, the big issue is energy, energy, energy. Energy is the most important thing when it comes to manufacturing operations right now.”

The study ranked Lynn Haven in Bay County as the eighth best small city for a manufacturing plant to locate.