

Not many couch potatoes here: City is No. 1 in fitness

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After years in the running (and running and running and running), Colorado Springs has won the title of fittest city in America for 2008 from Men's Fitness magazine.

The sunny town with miles of trails, the Olympic Training Center and an unusually trim waistline has been near the front of the pack for years, ranking No. 3 behind Albuquerque and Seattle in 2007, and No. 6 in 2006.

Has the city been collectively gulping raw eggs and sparring with sides of beef to reach the top spot? Hardly. The magazine praised the city for the Trails, Opens Space and Parks tax which made places like Red Rock Canyon Open Space possible, easy access to the mountains, sunny weather and the population's zeal for taking advantage of them all.

The label of fattest city goes to Las Vegas.

The process for awarding the title is hardly scientific. It is based on a statistical survey of everything from weather patterns to traffic patterns and the abundance of open space to the abundance of fast food joints (for a complete list, go to mensfitness.com). In 2006, the honor of fittest city went to Baltimore, which made that city's residents spit out their Utz potato chips and say "You gotta be kidding."

Still, you can't deny Colorado Spring has certain fitness Nazi tendencies. Where else does a weekly running club like Jack Quinn's attract hundreds on a frigid Tuesday night? Where else does the chance to pay \$85 to run up Pikes Peak sell out in 9 minutes? Where else is the most widespread civil disobedience act trespassing up the 2,500 steps of the Mount Manitou incline?

And the city better keep at it, because Denver was ranked No. 4 this year. And it may try to make a move.

To read the entire Men's Fitness Magazine article, please visit: http://www.mensfitness.com/city_rankings/462