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Heart of Missoula Named One of 15 Great Places in America by the American Planning Association

APA Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Program, Recognizes 15 Great Neighborhoods, Streets, and Public Spaces

Washington, DC— The American Planning Association (APA) today named the Heart of Missoula in Missoula, Montana, as one of five Great Neighborhoods on APA’s annual [Great Places in America](#) list, which marks the kick-off of the organization’s National Community Planning Month celebration.

APA’s Great Places in America program, celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, recognizes streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces in the United States demonstrating exceptional character, quality, and planning—attributes that enrich communities, facilitate economic growth, and inspire others around the country. The Great Neighborhoods, Great Streets, and Great Public Spaces of 2017 are places that are unique and exemplary in their amenities and infrastructure, cultural identity, and use of sustainable and innovative practices.

“The neighborhoods recognized this year are proof that planning creates more vibrant, equitable, healthy neighborhoods,” said Cynthia Bowen, AICP, president of APA. “Through dedicated, community-wide engagement efforts, this year’s designees are creating better places for all, and setting an example for other neighborhoods nationwide. Congratulations to these exceptional neighborhoods.”

A difficult feat for mid-size Western cities, the picturesque Rocky Mountain town of Missoula has made great strides in bringing people back to its downtown with a mix of pedestrian-oriented interventions in the built environment, like bike lanes and wider sidewalks, as well as an abundance of public events that draw people from surrounding areas. In addition to the Heart of Missoula, APA also recognized the following neighborhoods this year:

- Over-the-Rhine – Cincinnati, Ohio
- Seward – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- The Pearl – San Antonio, Texas
- Uptown Greenwood – Greenwood, South Carolina

“Great cities create great neighborhoods,” Missoula Mayor John Engen said. “Great neighborhoods have real, distinct identities, and the Heart of Missoula neighborhood is another piece of the public puzzle that makes our city memorable and meaningful.”

Since launching the Great Places in America program in 2007, APA has recognized 275 neighborhoods, streets, and public spaces around the country. Designees are selected annually and represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement, and a vision for the future.

For the fourth year, members of the public can suggest their additional favorite public space, neighborhood, or street to earn a “People’s Choice” designation. Throughout October, individuals can offer suggestions via APA’s social media channels using the hashtag #APAgreatplaces. APA will select five finalists that the public can vote on via APA’s website. The “People’s Choice” winner is announced in early November 2017.

For more information about these neighborhoods, as well as APA’s Great Public Spaces and Streets for 2017 and previous years, visit www.planning.org/greatplaces.

For more information about National Community Planning Month, visit www.planning.org/ncpm.

The American Planning Association is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning -- physical, economic and social -- so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. Members of APA help create communities of lasting value and encourage civic leaders, business interests and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago. For more information, visit www.planning.org.

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