



NEWS RELEASE

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Market Square Named One of 15 Great Places in America by the American Planning Association

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

The American Planning Association (APA) today named Knoxville's Market Square as one of five Great Public Spaces 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.

"Public spaces serve a number of functions within a community, from gathering places to recreational venues, and to satisfy these varied community needs requires thoughtful collaboration and planning," said Cynthia Bowen, AICP, president of APA. "These places demonstrate how to effectively create a sense of place that enhances the lives of all residents and visitors. Congratulations to this year's designees."

Located in the heart of Downtown Knoxville, Market Square is a testament to the effectiveness of community-driven planning and how a diversity of uses and historic preservation can work together to revitalize an area. The Square is deeply rooted in the history of Knoxville and, despite a devastating fire and multiple economic downturns, continues to flourish today. The mix of these distinctive buildings with the activity taking place in the Square truly makes it Knoxville's front yard.

"Market Square, long a center for commerce and culture in Knoxville, had fallen victim to abandonment and disrepair by the end of the 20th century," said Knoxville's Bill Lyons, Chief Policy Officer & Deputy to the Mayor. "Today's thriving Square was revitalized through an extensive community process that incorporated the vision of property owners, stakeholders, and the general public."

In addition to Market Square, APA also recognized the following public spaces this year:

- Mill Creek Linear Park – Bakersfield, California
- Rosa Parks Circle – Grand Rapids, Michigan
- County Home Complex – Greenville, North Carolina
- San Angelo River Walk – San Angelo, Texas

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 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 public spaces, as well as APA’s Great Public Spaces and Streets for 2017 and previous years, visit www.planning.org/greatplaces.

You can also find more information about National Community Planning Month at www.planning.org/ncpm.

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Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

The Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) was established in 1956 by Knoxville and Knox County as the agency responsible for comprehensive county-wide planning and administration of zoning and land subdivision regulations and remains so today (except for the town of Farragut). Funding for MPC activities comes primarily from city and county appropriations and from federal grants for specific studies. The Commission prepares and adopts a general plan, reviews subdivision regulations and site plans, prepares and recommends zoning ordinances and maps to the Knox County Commission and Knoxville City Council, reviews proposed zoning amendments, and prepares a capital improvements plan for the City of Knoxville. For more information, visit www.knoxmpc.org.

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.