

Great Places in America Easy Suggestion Form

Suggesting neighborhoods, streets or public spaces for a Great Places designation is easy. Fill in answers and return first page to GreatPlaces@planning.org to be considered for the next or a subsequent designation year.

Name of suggestion: _____ ☐ Street ☐ Neighborhood ☐ Public Space
(***Check current designations list to avoid suggesting candidates already selected.***)

Location of suggestion (city, state): _____

For streets, start and end points: _____

List four or five salient features or reasons that, in your opinion, make the suggestion outstanding and worthy of a Great Places in America designation (please be specific; see accompanying list of things to consider. More information about criteria and current designations at www.planning.org/greatplaces):

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

Person to contact for questions or follow-up: _____

Tel. # _____ E-mail address: _____

APA will follow-up with suggestions deemed of interest and request 10-12 digital images showing the suggestion's outstanding qualities. Suggestions of interest with satisfactory photos are then reviewed by the Great Places in America candidates committee to determine if they merit further study and consideration.

What make Great Places in America great?

What makes a neighborhood, street or public space a unique, memorable place that works not only for the community, but also as a model others would want to emulate? Great Places in America single out places of exemplary character, quality and planning; places with a unique identity, cultural interest, community involvement, and a sustainable vision for tomorrow.

How can a Great Places designation benefit your community?

Great Places in America is a way to recognize and honor your community's ongoing commitment to planning and plan implementation, and the role elected officials, community leaders, institutions and citizens play in creating communities that enrich people's lives and offer better choices for where and how people work and live.

Great Places in America are located in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. To have streets, neighborhoods, public spaces -- or all three categories -- designated in your community is a way to gain national attention about the benefits, outcomes and lasting value of planning in your community.

Suggest your Great Place in America

APA needs your local expertise, area knowledge and planning perspective to help suggest neighborhoods, streets and public spaces in your community or places you've visited or otherwise know about that you consider outstanding. Local knowledge is especially important since such details aren't easily found or discerned through Google or other internet-based keyword searches.

This guidance is designed to help you think about those features, characteristics, qualities and details that separate an ordinary neighborhood, street or public space from one that is extraordinary. Additional information about Great Places in America, including a list of current designations, is available at <http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/index.htm>.

Neighborhoods: Aside from what is mentioned on the APA website, consider more modern neighborhoods. Although historic neighborhoods and streetcar suburbs meet many of the Great Places criteria, APA is equally interested in more modern and sustainable neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that incorporate infill development or adaptive uses are also desired. If the neighborhood is in a rural or suburban setting, is there any type of public transit nearby? Is there a school located in your neighborhood? Has revitalization of the neighborhood benefited the community economically?

The Pullman Neighborhood, Chicago, IL

Designated in 2011, Pullman was singled out its innovative approach during the late 19th Century to providing workforce housing; its park-like plan and intriguing architecture; and on-going efforts by today's residents to protect and restore their neighborhood.



Streets: When considering a street, ask yourself if it accommodates all users -- not just motorists but also cyclists and pedestrians? Is the street designed to manage an influx of tourists or other heavy seasonal use as well as local traffic? Designations may involve just a few blocks or something longer, however, there should be few if any vacant lots or buildings in the area suggested. Streets should be connected and vibrant with public spaces nearby. Also consider the architecture of adjoining buildings, density, streetscape improvements, everyday activity level, Smart building codes, mixed zoning, design guidelines and how the street contributes to the local or area economy.



Market Street and Market Square, Portsmouth, NH

Market Street, Market Square and segments of Pleasant and Congress Streets were designated in 2011 given their role as the hub of community life, for having some of the best 18th and 19th century commercial architecture in the U.S., and for serving as a place for both national and international special events and local festivals.

Public Spaces: Consider what makes the space you are suggesting stand out over the others in the same city, or why one community's outstanding public spaces might stand above those in a neighboring community? Can the space be reached by public transportation, biking or walking, and is it accessible to persons with physical disabilities? Consider if the space is located adjacent to or in a downtown setting or neighborhood, if it safe throughout the day and evening, and contributes to the local economy. Is the suggested space used not only for special events but also everyday activities and goings-on? Different types of spaces are eligible for designation -- plazas, pocket parks, public gardens, even buildings with public spaces (spaces with an admission charge are not eligible, however).

Milwaukee RiverWalk, Milwaukee, WI

Designated in 2011, the RiverWalk was a unique public-private partnership that successfully linked neighborhoods with commerce and culture, led to reinvestment in and revitalization of downtown and adjoining neighborhoods, initiated efforts aimed at restoring a forgotten and abused segment of the Milwaukee River.



Some Possible Characteristics

These lists are not comprehensive, but include some of the characteristics that define Great Places.

<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Public Space</u>
Can be based on a specific plan or the result of a more organic process; must be at least 10 years old; neighborhoods of all kinds eligible — downtown, urban, suburban, exurban, town, small village	Comprises entire 3-D visual corridor, from pedestrian realms to arterial roadways with a definable beginning and end; consider adjacent land uses	Gathering spot or part of a neighborhood, downtown, waterfront, special district, etc.; helps promote social interaction; qualities make space stand out
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Receive everyday use
<input type="checkbox"/> Infill	<input type="checkbox"/> Infill	<input type="checkbox"/> Encourages social interaction
<input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment	<input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a sense of comfort and safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Transit Oriented Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation route/stop	<input type="checkbox"/> Reflect community's local character
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed housing stock	<input type="checkbox"/> % of Locally-owned businesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a sense of community
<input type="checkbox"/> Brownfield vs Greenfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardscaping/Landscaping	<input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent to monumental buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> Public School(s) located within	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Calming/Wide Sidewalks	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Involvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Park(s) located within	<input type="checkbox"/> On-street parking	<input type="checkbox"/> Multigenerational
<input type="checkbox"/> College/Public Institutions within	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Lanes and Racks	<input type="checkbox"/> Convenient Location
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> No Admission Charge
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Visual Experiences	<input type="checkbox"/> Hours of Operation
<input type="checkbox"/> Retail Located within/nearby	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilize sustainable infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> New/Innovative Public Features
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Transit runs through or nearby	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial and Residential	<input type="checkbox"/> Local and City Involvement

Example of Gray's Lake Park salient features (2011 Public Space, Des Moines, IA):

- 1) Is heart of city's park and trail system; trails extend in all directions, access to downtown and 500-plus miles of Central Iowa Trail System
- 2) Gateway to Des Moines that attracts one million visitors annually; uses include cycling, walking, canoeing, jogging, yoga classes, picnicking, dog walking
- 3) Affords skyline views of downtown Des Moines; 167-acre park includes colorfully illuminated 1400-foot, \$1.5 million bridge, sandy swimming beach, picnic area, playground
- 4) Private donation makes construction of bridge possible; more than \$2 billion in downtown Des Moines development and investment inspired by success of Gray's Lake Park redevelopment
- 5) Historic sand and gravel silos preserved as reminder of lake's origin as a gravel quarry; park originally dedicated 1977; new park master plan approved 1997; renovations begun in 2000