

Community Planning and Economic Development News Release

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Minneapolis Seward Neighborhood 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

Wednesday, October 4, 2017 (Minneapolis, MN) - The American Planning Association (APA) announced today that the Seward Neighborhood was one of five Great Neighborhoods on their annual [Great Places in America](#) list. Seward was named along with 14 other great places marking the kick-off of the organization's National Community Planning Month celebration.

"The residents, businesses, and communities of Seward are intentional about making sure that everyone — truly everyone — is welcome in this diverse, creative, and inspiring neighborhood. They are putting that intention into practice: they are striving to build a community where everyone thrives, and they are succeeding," said Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges. "Seward is showing us what One Minneapolis can look like. I am thrilled that Seward is gaining this much-deserved recognition, and know that it can inspire neighborhoods around the country to do the same."

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."

Seward has established itself as a diverse, inclusive, green neighborhood. Affordable housing developments, food co-ops, and connections to regional parks and trails demonstrate how a community can improve the quality of life for all. Recognizing that community residents represent a variety of ideas and backgrounds, Seward takes immense pride in supporting and cultivating diversity, which is reflected in its Affirmative Inclusion Statement — "All are welcome here." In addition to Seward, APA also recognized the following neighborhoods this year:

- Over-the-Rhine – Cincinnati, Ohio
- Heart of Missoula – Missoula, Montana
- The Pearl – San Antonio, Texas
- Uptown Greenwood – Greenwood, South Carolina

“Seward is an incredible neighborhood, one that I have been fortunate enough call home for almost thirty years along with a wonderfully diverse mix of neighbors with different backgrounds, incomes and cultures, and a unique and treasured blend of different businesses and institutions,” said Council Member Cam Gordon. “The welcoming, caring and deeply engaged community in Seward is one of the reasons it is such a healthy, sought out and thriving place to live. Its natural assets, including the amazing river gorge and its connected community where people authentically care about one another are equally priceless.”

“I am thrilled to know that the Seward Neighborhood has been selected as one of five Great Neighborhoods in America. When I first moved to Minnesota, I was a proud resident of this thriving and vibrant community,” said Council Member Warsame. “Seward became my home as it is today for more than 1,000 new East African immigrants. Its strong sense of community and its commitment to diversity and inclusion make Seward one of the most welcoming neighborhoods in the region.”

“The Seward neighborhood’s history of creative placemaking and diverse, inclusive culture has made it a wonderful place to live, work and play,” said Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Commissioner Scott Vreeland, who represents the Seward neighborhood. “It has a bright future as an urban community that works well for everyone.”

Seward will officially receive its Great Place award at the Seward Neighborhood Group Annual Meeting on Wednesday, November 8th during the Taste of Seward. The event takes place at the Seward Montessori School from 6-9 p.m. It is free and open to the public and all are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

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. This is the five designation for the Minneapolis St. Paul area. [The Grand Rounds](#), [Rice Park](#), [Summit Avenue](#) and the [Kenwood](#) neighborhood of Minneapolis have also all received Great Places designations.

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 the Great Places [website](#).

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