



American Planning Association
Missouri Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

For Immediate Release: 2020 Great Places in Missouri Announced by the American Planning Association, Missouri Chapter

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The Missouri Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) has announced the designation of two Great Places in Missouri in 2020: Downtown and Drake Harbor Recreation Area Trails, Warsaw; River Market Neighborhood, Kansas City.

The Great Places in Missouri program was started in 2014 to recognize neighborhoods, streets, and public spaces throughout Missouri that demonstrate exceptional character, quality, and planning that enrich communities, facilitate economic growth, and inspire residents and visitors alike. The Great Places in Missouri program was modeled after APA's Great Places in America Program that has recognized 303 neighborhoods, streets, and public spaces around the country since 2007.

"The 2020 Great Places in Missouri set strong examples of good planning in both large and small communities," said Jason Ray, AICP, APA Missouri President. "This year's honorees display exciting public spaces that enable connections between people and communities to be expanded and celebrated. Both awardees have robust planning stories with years of work to become the excellent spaces we see today. We congratulate Kansas City and Warsaw on this well-deserved recognition!"

APA Missouri will recognize the 2020 Great Places in Missouri designees at a ceremony on March 4, 2020 at 11 a.m. in the State Capitol Rotunda in Jefferson City.

2020 Great Places in Missouri

Downtown and Drake Harbor Recreation Area Trails (Warsaw, MO)

Downtown and Drake Harbor Recreation Area Trails in Warsaw, Missouri is honored as a Great Public Space in Missouri. This charming downtown area and nine miles of trails creates a recreational haven for residents and visitors alike. Beginning with a Downtown Revitalization Plan in 1997, Warsaw has experienced over twenty-years of continuous planning and improvement. Progressive planning efforts such as a 2003 ADA Transition Plan, 2006 Trail Master Plan, and more recently the 2015 update of the City's Comprehensive Plan-Building on Success to Capitalize on the Future, provide clear examples for other communities to follow. Following the four P's: Planning, Partnerships, Personnel, and Public Input, planning was the integral key to over \$17.8 million in federal, state, and local investment, with nearly \$9 million in downtown and recreation area improvements. The downtown enhancements, combined with improvements to the boat access, led to more businesses in part because of the increased opportunity of water and land customers. Visitors also flock to the numerous annual events hosted in the downtown or recreational areas, such as Jubilee Days, the Ozark Cigar Box Guitar Music Festival, and Heritage Days



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which draws crowds of over 10,000. With so much success tied to strong planning efforts, it is no surprise that Warsaw was named one of the 12 best communities in the nation by the National Complete Streets Coalition and received the 2019 Governors Tourism Award for Innovation. Continued persistence and good planning guarantee that downtown Warsaw and Drake Harbor Recreation Area Trails continue to provide a quality public space for all to enjoy.

River Market Neighborhood (Kansas City)

The River Market Neighborhood in Kansas City is a Great Neighborhood in Missouri. This neighborhood has a historic legacy as the birthplace of Kansas City, serving as the first downtown district in 1838. Over time the neighborhood experienced decline before revitalization efforts began in the early 1980's. The Market Area Development Corporation was formed and various redevelopment plans, tax incentives, and zoning controls were put in place to encourage redevelopment in the neighborhood. In 1989, The City of Kansas City Planning Department renovated the popular City Market to create a centerpiece of the River Market Neighborhood. The City Market serves as a gathering place and vibrant asset for all of Kansas City, and hosts a farmer's market which has been in this location since 1857. Year-round tenants are diverse local family-owned small businesses from all parts of the globe who will surpass \$18 Million in 2020, and weekend markets can attract nearly 19,000 daily visitors. The revitalization of City Market sparked investment in the area and spurred residential and retail development in adjacent warehouse buildings, which is continuing today. Since 2000 there have been 742 new residential units (both new construction and conversion of historic commercial buildings), 1,231 new residents and 200,000 square feet in new commercial and office development. The City has planned new transit-oriented development and made several recent transportation improvements, including adding three stops in the neighborhood for Kansas City's streetcar. A parking strategy for the area was recently completed, along with a Streetscape and Wayfinding Plan. Additionally, the 2019 Greater Downtown Area plan identifies a long-term plan for the physical development of the neighborhood. Years of planning efforts have turned the River Market Neighborhood into one of the most desirable and sought-after urban neighborhoods in Kansas City. Renovated historic buildings, variety of housing, restaurants, bars, shopping, attractive and comfortable streets and public spaces in a walkable and bikeable setting, and the anchor of the historic City Market create a truly great neighborhood for all.

Photos: Downtown Warsaw Main Street and Drake Harbor Area Trails, courtesy of City of Warsaw; KC Downtown Streetcar and City Market, courtesy of City of Kansas City

The Missouri Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) represents more than 600 professional and emerging planners across the state of Missouri. The APA 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. For more information, visit www.planning.org and www.apamissouri.org.