

Planning Matters

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Great Streets: What Makes Them Special?

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Take a walk with us down 10 of America's "great streets," as they were designated in October by the American Planning Association. The street designations are part of a larger APA program intended to recognize great places in the U.S. In all, 10 streets and 10 neighborhoods, narrowed down from some 100 nominations, were selected according to how well they met the criteria for great places—devised by a committee of planners convened by APA.

Factors taken into account include maintenance, sustainability, and safety. A key element of a great street is connectivity: whether it is linked to a larger street network. Great streets are those that take advantage of natural features and bow to fine architecture. They encourage social activities and take all types of users into account, not just drivers. Most important, great streets have some memorable feature—tall trees, pleasant houses, a row of small shops, a popular café.

All of the streets pictured on these pages are unique, but they are alike in one way: They exhibit the qualities of good planning (although some of them predate organized planning efforts). The evidence of good planning ranges from sensitive traffic-calming measures to thoughtful placement of street lights to signs of green infrastructure.

Shopper's delight

Several of the streets share a retail focus. Chicago's North Michigan Avenue, the "Magnificent Mile," is at the high end of the consumer scale, but it's also a window shopper's paradise. Many of the shops are in vertical malls, although an increasing number are in stand-alone buildings. The mixed use skyscrapers lining the avenue (which replace several architectural treasures) are softened by rows of trees and seasonal sidewalk planters and medians. For decades, the street has been looked after by the greater North Michigan Avenue Association, whose members help to fund the greenery. "Oftentimes, you will find various property owners engaging in a little

friendly competition to see who can 'out-beautify' the other in these mini urban gardens," say Sarah Fleming, the association's planning manager.

In New York, check out 125th Street—Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Harlem's main crosstown thoroughfare bustles with activity—and traffic. It's an African American mecca that is gradually changing, adding more retail and housing of all sorts. A zoning update is now under way, according to Edwin Marshall of the New York City planning department, along with other activities intended to help Harlem's Main Street develop its identity both as a regional business district and as a cultural, arts, and entertainment district.

Ocean Drive at the south end of Miami Beach offers a change of pace—a 10-block art deco blockbuster. Years of citizen activism resulted in Ocean Drive's designation as a national and local historic district. Its small hotels have been transformed for a trendy new clientele with abundant shops and cafes situated along a 15-foot-wide sidewalk. A zoning plan for the street won an APA national planning award. Across the way is a palm-lined ocean beach and promenade.

On the avenue

Other of APA's great streets are special as residential settings.

Grand 19th and early 20th century homes line Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1997, the avenue is widely known (and sometimes criticized) for the 11 statues at intersections along its 40-foot-wide median—all but one recognizing Confederate figures. The exception is tennis champion Arthur Ashe, a Richmond native. Here, too, local advocacy made a difference: In 1968, a resident stopped a paving machine from covering the avenue's original asphalt paving blocks. The boulevard is one of the city's most popular pedestrian spaces, says Richmond planner T. Tyler Potterfield, "It's just a very grand space, but people feel very comfortable with it."

Characteristics of a Great Street

1. Provides orientation to its user and connects well to the larger pattern of ways.
2. Balances the competing needs of the street — driving, transit, walking, cycling, servicing, parking, drop-offs, etc.
3. Fits the topography and capitalizes on natural features.
4. Is lined with a variety of interesting activities and uses that create a varied streetscape.
5. Has urban design or architectural features that are exemplary in design.
6. Relates well to its bordering uses — allows for continuous activity, doesn't displace pedestrians to provide access to bordering uses.
7. Encourages human contact and social activities.
8. Employs hardscape and/or landscape to great effect.
9. Promotes the safety of pedestrians and vehicles and promotes use over the 24-hour day.
10. Promotes sustainability through minimizing runoff, reusing water, ensuring groundwater quality, minimizing heat islands, and responding to climatic demands.
11. Is well maintained and capable of being maintained without excessive costs.
12. Has a memorable character.

A streetcar ride to New Orleans's Garden District by way of St. Charles Avenue is a memorable trip. The oak-lined avenue, well on its way to recovering from Hurricane Katrina, is a living museum of antebellum houses. For six miles, this stretch of St. Charles Avenue passes two universities, a great city park, and an inspiring collection of lushly landscaped houses, marred only occasionally by incompatible development.

continued on page 2

Great Neighborhoods *(continued from page 1)*

Small is beautiful

Streets in smaller cities and towns have their own special qualities.

Meandering Main Street in Northampton, Massachusetts, is a bustling commercial and civic center for this New England college town. On a Saturday afternoon, Main Street is jammed with shoppers and strollers, and residents of upper level apartments. A five-level parking structure hides behind a commercial building. Besides its walkability and eclectic mix of styles, Main Street has a distinctive sense of place, says Gene Bunnell, AICP, author of the APA Planners Press book, *Making Places Special*.

Art is the hallmark of a 1.5-mile stretch of Canyon Road in Santa Fe where galleries and related businesses attract 1.5 million visitors a year. The one-story buildings hugging the street and the narrow sidewalks give Canyon Road "an intimate feel," says retired Santa Fe city planner Jerry Porter. To maintain the

enacted two powerful tools: the historic style ordinance and a zoning ordinance establishing the residential arts and crafts district.

Potpourri

Mixed use is becoming the rule along many of the great American streets.

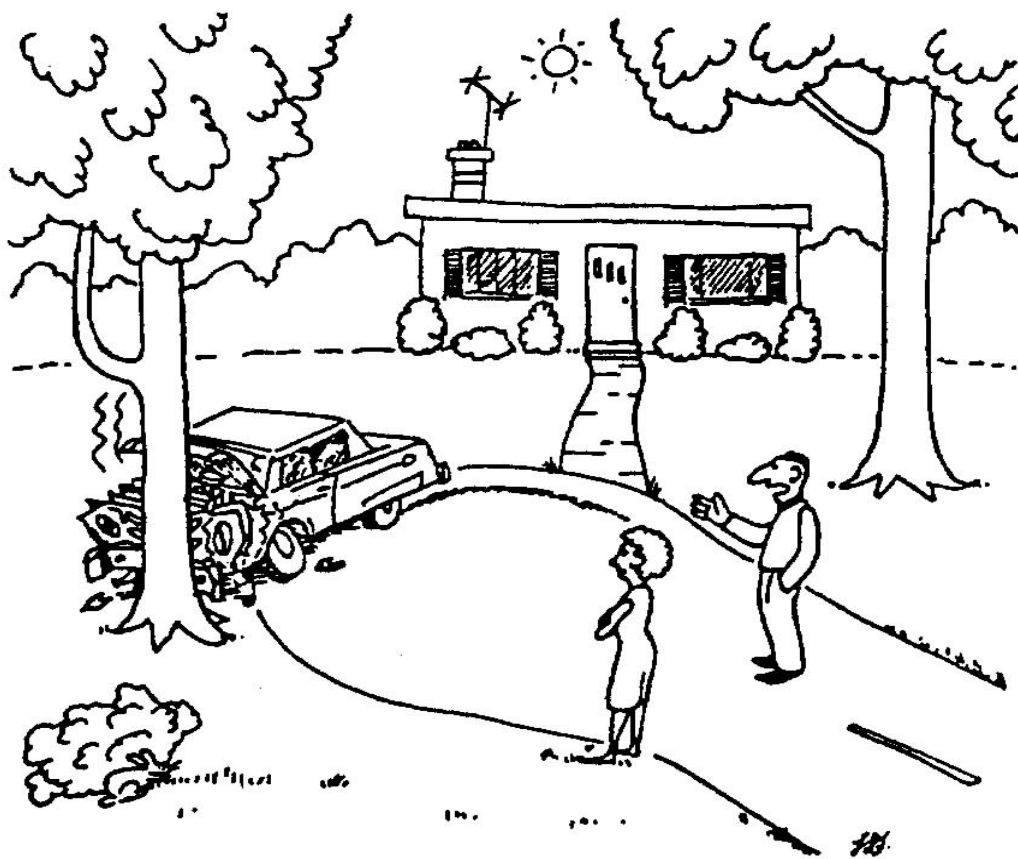
For 18 blocks, South Temple Street makes its mark on downtown Salt Lake City, as it has since it was envisioned by Joseph Smith in the Plat of Zion of 1833. For much of its length, it is mixed use district: historic homes, churches, offices, and shops. Historic district designation spurred a revival in the 1970's. "South Temple Street tells the great story of our city's past," says Salt Lake City planner Ana Valdemoros. It's also a statement "about the efficient combination of historic preservation and modern planning tools."

Delmar Boulevard Loop in St. Louis and University City is the story of a rebirth.

was lined with vacant storefronts. Today, it's an electric arts and entertainment district mixed with new housing. The loop refers to a onetime streetcar turnaround, and the boulevard is still accessible by a rail line, the MetroLink. Last year, voters approved a sales tax increase, earmarked in part for Delmar Boulevard improvements—possibly including a new trolley.

Savannah's Bull Street connects five of the city's famous public squares, part of Oglethorpe's 1733 plan. Today the 10-block stretch of downtown Bull Street, zoned for mixed use, includes stately homes, government buildings, shops, and restaurants. The city's height and design standards help to ensure that infill development is compatible with the old.

To learn about APA's 2007 Great Places in America or for more information on this APA program, visit www.planning.org/greatplaces/



"I GUESS THE SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS DIDN'T CALL FOR A WIDE ENOUGH CUL-DE-SAC."

**2008 Zoning Compliance Permit Analysis
January—June 2008**

	City of Bardstown		Nelson County		Total	
	Permits	Est. Cost (\$)	Permits	Est. Cost (\$)	Permits	Est. Cost
Agricultural Structures	0	\$0	25	\$334,700	25	\$334,700
Agricultural Additions	0	\$0	4	\$6,000	4	\$6,000
<i>Agricultural Subtotal</i>	0	\$0	29	\$340,700	29	\$340,700
Accessory Additions	1	\$500	0	\$0	1	\$500
Accessory Structures	36	\$91,400	93	\$989,609	129	\$1,081,009
Demolitions	0	\$0	4	\$0	4	\$0
Duplexes (4 units)	0	\$0	2	\$340,000	2	\$340,000
Manufactured Homes, double-wide	0	\$0	6	\$325,120	6	\$325,120
Manufactured Homes, single-wide	0	\$0	12	\$154,900	12	\$154,900
Manufactured Home Additions	0	\$0	4	\$20,100	4	\$20,100
Modular Homes	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Multi-Family Structure (0 units)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Single-Family Additions	14	\$192,919	39	\$689,813	53	\$882,732
Single-Family Dwellings	23	\$2,822,816	68	\$8,985,344	91	\$11,808,160
Single-Family Alteration/Remodeling	11	\$228,103	17	\$319,400	28	\$547,503
Townhouses/Condominiums (17 units)	4	\$720,000	0	\$0	4	\$720,000
<i>Residential Subtotal</i>	89	\$4,055,738	245	\$11,824,286	334	\$15,880,024
Commercial Accessory Structures	1	\$2,400	0	\$0	1	\$2,400
Commercial Additions	6	\$2,964,500	2	\$115,292	8	\$3,079,792
Commercial Alteration/Remodels	13	\$285,000	1	\$500	14	\$285,500
Commercial Demolitions	0	\$0	1	\$0	1	\$0
Commercial Structures	10	\$1,743,900	4	\$1,145,000	14	\$2,888,900
Commercial Tenant Fit-Ups	5	\$199,000	1	\$12,000	6	\$211,000
<i>Commercial Subtotal</i>	35	\$5,194,800	9	\$1,272,792	44	\$6,467,592
Industrial Accessory	1	\$15,000	0	\$0	1	\$15,000
Industrial Additions	5	\$1,615,000	2	\$178,000	7	\$1,793,000
Industrial Alterations/Remodels	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Industrial Demolitions	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Industrial Structures	0	\$0	1	\$65,000	1	\$65,000
<i>Industrial Subtotal</i>	6	\$1,630,000	3	\$243,000	9	\$1,873,000
Public Structures	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Public Additions	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Public Alterations/Remodeling	2	\$639,300	2	\$9,000	4	\$648,300
Telecommunications Facilities	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Telecom. Accessory Structures	0	\$0	1	\$24,000	1	\$24,000
<i>Public Subtotal</i>	2	\$639,300	3	\$33,000	5	\$672,300
<i>Total Permits Issued</i>	132	\$11,519,838	289	\$13,713,778	421	\$25,233,616

**New Construction Permit Comparison
2006 - 2008 (to date)
(#) denotes dwelling units**

Permit Type	2006		2007		January—June 2008	
	# Permits (Units)	Est. Cost	# Permits (Units)	Est. Cost	# Permits (Units)	Est. Cost
Duplexes	12 (24)	\$552,000	10 (20)	\$1,027,000	2 (4)	\$340,000
Multi-Family Structures	8 (25)	\$845,000	1 (3)	\$110,000	0 (0)	\$0
Townhouses/Condos	16 (39)	\$3,620,000	9 (33)	\$1,860,000	4 (17)	\$720,000
Single-Family Dwellings	252 (252)	\$34,653,512	200 (200)	\$27,124,864	91 (91)	\$11,808,160
Commercial Structures	18	\$8,740,876	17	\$3,604,933	14	\$2,888,900
Industrial Structures	2	\$9,978,390	6	\$10,020,250	1	\$65,000
Public Structures	12	\$5,726,000	2	\$1,502,558	0	\$0
Total Permits	1,011	\$82,423,600	944	\$70,493,140	421	\$25,233,616

**Conventional Single-Family Dwellings
1995—2008 (to date)**

Year	# Dwellings	Year	# Dwellings
1995	397	2002	391
1996	380	2003	429
1997	351	2004	377
1998	474	2005	390
1999	427	2006	252
2000	402	2007	200
2001	406	2008 (Jan—June)	91

**Conventional Single-Family Dwelling
Data Analysis
2006—2008 (to date)**

Construction Cost			Size—Living Space		
<u>Range</u>	2006	\$7,500-\$600,000	<u>Range</u>	2006	448-7,080 sf
	2007	\$18,000-\$1,987,000		2007	156-14,676 sf
	2008	\$2,344—\$500,000		2008	756-49,37 sf
<u>Average</u>	2006	\$132,510	<u>Average</u>	2006	1,783 sf
	2007	\$135,624		2007	1,671 sf
	2008	\$130,789		2008	1,793 sf
<u>Median</u>	2006	\$115,000	<u>Median</u>	2006	1,500 sf
	2007	\$100,000		2007	1,436 sf
	2008	\$105,000		2008	1,503 sf
<u>Mode</u>	2006	\$60,000	<u>Mode</u>	2006	1,350 sf
	2007	\$80,000		2007	1,350 sf
	2008	\$70,000		2008	1,250 sf

**Conventional Single-Family Dwellings
by Subdivision
2008 (to date)**

Subdivision	# Units
Bridgepointe (Urban)	6
Early Times (Urban)	5
Big Springs (Suburban)	4
Corman's Crossing (Village)	4
Wildwoods (Rural/NSA)	3
Beech Fork (Urban)	2
Castle Cove (Suburban)	2
Copperfields (Suburban)	2
Forest Springs (Village)	2
Locust Grove (Suburban)	2
Mallards Landing (Suburban)	2
Parkway Village (Urban)	2
Pembrooke Place (Suburban)	2

Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County

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 Alicia Brown, Court Reporter

**FY 2007-2008 Financial Report
 Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County
 as of June 24, 2008**

	FY 2005-2006	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008	% Change	% Change
	Actual 6/30/06	Actual 6/30/07	Actual 6/24/08	FY 06 & FY 07	FY 07 & FY 08
Revenues					
Previous Fiscal Year Carryover	\$10,558.07	\$21,652.69	\$9,719.31	104.78%	-55.11%
KY Rural Heritage Development Carryover	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	-33.33%	-50.00%
Local Government Contributions	\$132,672.57	\$136,248.23	\$136,248.23	2.70%	0.00%
Fees & Miscellaneous Revenues	\$136,376.82	\$98,518.85	\$99,765.08	-27.76%	1.26%
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$294,607.46	\$266,419.77	\$250,732.62	-9.57%	-5.89%
Expenditures					
Personnel Expenses	\$161,547.57	\$165,123.23	\$166,015.19	2.21%	0.54%
Office, Rent, Utilities & Janitorial Expenses	\$11,125.00	\$11,125.00	\$11,125.00	0.00%	0.00%
General Operating Expenses	\$39,816.15	\$38,871.96	\$36,075.86	-2.37%	-7.19%
Legal, Accounting, & Insurance Expenses	\$50,466.05	\$36,580.27	\$32,409.48	-27.52%	-11.40%
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$262,954.77	\$251,700.46	\$245,625.53	-4.28%	-2.41%
<i>Excess revenues carryover to next fiscal year</i>	\$31,652.69	\$14,719.31	\$5,107.09	-53.50%	-65.30%