

For Immediate Release:
March 3, 2015

For more information or to request an interview with winners, please contact:
Erica Allison, ADG
828.698.6918; or APA-NC contact:
Jason Burdette, 704.940.9621



Jefferson Avenue in West Jefferson Named Great Main Street

North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association's Great Places Initiative announces Great Main Street Award Winners.

(March 3, 2015 – West Jefferson, NC) – Anyone who has enjoyed the classic charm of a Main Street knows intuitively when it's a "great" place to be. It's often the "heart of the downtown" and the place where people go to gather and enjoy an evening out. The people of West Jefferson will be glad to know that Jefferson Avenue has officially been recognized as a "Great Main Street" in the 2015 Great Places in North Carolina awards program, sponsored by the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-NC).

West Jefferson's nomination highlighted the transitioning role that Jefferson Avenue plays as the backbone of a railroad community to a destination with improved streetscapes, public art, public spaces, and local festivals embodying the local work ethic and community spirit. It was the combination of existing vitality and proactive dedication of the Town and community to the success of Jefferson Avenue that led the Expert Panel to select it as a 2015 Great Main Street in the Professionals' Category.

The awards are designed to help celebrate the great communities throughout the state and were given in both Professionals' and People's Choice categories. The professionals' category includes a detailed nomination process that requires in-depth descriptions of the work and partnerships that went into creating the main street. Every great main street has a story and this contest allows those involved to tell that story.

"All of these 'Great Main Streets' represent excellent examples of community-based planning at its best," said John Morck, President of APA-NC. "Through this program, we celebrate great places in our state and the local partnerships that have worked collaboratively to make these places great."

An expert panel selected three other North Carolina main streets for recognition in the Professionals' Category. From dozens of nominations submitted, the panel recognized Sunset Avenue in Asheboro, Main Street in Belmont, and Middle Street in New Bern as "Great Main Streets." In addition, the panel selected Center Street in Goldsboro as a "Great Main Street in the Making." In the People's Choice category, where the winners were chosen by popular vote in an online contest, Roanoke Rapids' Roanoke Canal Trail won "People's Choice: Great

Greenway” and the 200 North Queen Street in Kinston was recognized as the “People’s Choice: Great Historic Rehabilitation.”

In addition to being featured on the GreatPlacesNC.org website and the NC Chapter of the American Planning Association website, winners are provided marketing materials to use in their business and economic development efforts, receive an award at a special presentation in their community, and will be recognized at the upcoming APA-NC Annual Conference in October.

The program’s goal is to celebrate Great Places in North Carolina, recognize the hard work and partnerships that created them, and provide examples of successful places to the rest of the state. Building on the success of the previous three years’ Great Places in North Carolina initiatives, APA-NC is pleased to recognize these great communities in North Carolina. To learn more about each of the selected communities, folks can visit www.greatplacesnc.org, where a photo gallery and list of the winners will be available.

The Expert Panel

The expert panel of judges includes John Morck, Planning & Community Development Manager for the City of Wilson and APA-NC President; Ben Hitchings, Planning Director for the Town of Morrisville and past APA-NC President; Mary Joan Pugh, Chief of Staff, North Carolina Zoo; Rodger Lentz, Planning Director, City of Wilson and member of the board of directors of the American Planning Association; H. DeWitt Blackwell, Jr., Executive Director, Western Piedmont Council of Governments; Kim Fleming, Economic Development Manager for the Town of Davidson, Jason Epley, Executive Director of the NC Downtown Development Association; Bob Mosher, Transportation Planner at NCDOT; Bruce Naegelen, Downtown Development Manager at the Town of Clayton; Zak Pierce, President-elect of the NC-ASLA; Beth Poovey, Landscape Architect with LandDesign in Charlotte; and Rodney Swink, Landscape Architect.

The 2015 Great Places Initiative Program Chairs were Jason Burdette, Planning Director at the Town of Davidson and Ben McCrary, Senior Planner with Toole Design Group.

About APA – NC

The North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association is an organization of 1,500 professional and citizen planners dedicated to preserving and creating great communities throughout North Carolina. The annual conference for the APA – NC will be October 21-23, in Raleigh, NC. For more information, please visit www.apa-nc.org.

###