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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **CONGRESS STREET NAMED ONE OF 15 GREAT PLACES IN AMERICA BY AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION**

The American Planning Association (APA) today named Congress Street in Tucson, Arizona, as one of five Great Streets on APA's annual [Great Places in America](#) list, which marks the kick-off of the organization's National Community Planning Month celebration.

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 year's designees demonstrate that a well-planned street can stimulate the economy, create a sense of place, and energize an entire community,” 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 communities nationwide. Congratulations to these exceptional communities.”

Congress Street speaks to the value of connecting cultural resources to the larger city. The city successfully redeveloped Congress Street around several existing cultural anchors, like the Historic Hotel Congress, Rialto Theatre, and Fox Tucson Theatre, and then made these accessible by widening the sidewalks and building the Sun Link streetcar line that connects the University of Arizona, Main Gate Square, the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Business District, downtown, the Tucson Convention Center, and the Heritage Gateway/Mercado District. Tucson's two-pronged approach of capitalizing on historical and cultural assets and greatly enhancing multi-modal accessibility has brought Congress Street back to life as a vital economic hub. In addition to Congress Street, APA also recognized the following streets this year:

Lincoln Avenue – Chicago, Illinois  
South Grand Boulevard – St. Louis, Missouri  
Main Street – Waterloo, New York  
Park Lane – Kirkland, Washington

“The story of Congress Street is the story of downtown Tucson. From boarded-up buildings less than 10 years ago, we've brought back a vibrant downtown, with arts, entertainment, office and residential space,” said Tucson Mayor Jonathan Rothschild. “People are seeing the potential and that makes for a pretty optimistic outlook.”



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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.

For the fourth year, members of the public can suggest their 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 streets, as well as APA’s Great Neighborhoods and Public Spaces for 2017 and previous years, visit [www.planning.org/greatplaces](http://www.planning.org/greatplaces).

You can also find more information on National Community Planning Month by visiting [www.planning.org/ncpm](http://www.planning.org/ncpm).

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