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Greenville's Main Street makes national 'great streets' list

BY BEN SZOBODY • STAFF WRITER • OCTOBER 7, 2009

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A community planning association listed Greenville's Main Street as one of 10 "great streets" in the country Wednesday, ranking downtown's epicenter in the company of scenic corridors in places such as Alaska and Maine.

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Downtown Greenville (FILE/Staff)

The recognition puts Greenville on the radar of thousands of planners across the country and readers of the American Planning Association's magazine, city leaders say.

The 15-block stretch from Academy Street in the north to Pendleton Street in the south was hailed by the association as a corridor that accommodates a range of people and activities within a historic framework and a vibrant economy.

Skagway, Alaska's, Broadway Street at the foot of the Coast Mountains; Bath, Maine's, Front Street on the Kennebec River; and Traverse City, Mich.'s Front Street on the Boardman River, were among the other city streets recognized for their social function, design, cultural events and green strategies.

Many of the streets on the list are situated next to scenic vistas, though the planners focused on the deliberate creation of a complete corridor.

Mayor Knox White said Main Street anchors such as downtown's Falls Park "changed forever how we define our city."

City Manager Jim Bourey said the award will serve to expand the number of people who know about Greenville to thousands of planners and interested people.

The association describes Main Street as a place that features "bustling foot traffic seven days a week, day and night" and the culmination of 30 years of redevelopment work that is oriented around activities, scenery and history.

Specifically noted by the association was Main Street landscaping that began in 1978, the new Fluor Field baseball stadium, special events that cover 320 days a year, the pedestrian focus, the boom in restaurants and residences and the riverside vistas, among other keys.

Paul Farmer, the association's chief executive officer, said in a statement, "The street demonstrates just how important it is to Greenville's social vitality and economic prosperity."

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E-mail the reporter at bszobody@greenvillenews.com

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Carnivore wrote:

I've also been to one of the others on this list in the last few weeks. We are in good company!

10/8/2009 10:02:48 AM

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Carnivore wrote:

Replying to thevrwc:

Rents are bad, but lack of shoppers are killing downtown. You all say it's a great place to walk, but when's the last time you actually bought something from a downtown retailer?

Last Sunday. And the week before that.

10/8/2009 10:00:41 AM

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Trojans wrote:

If there were a Barnes and Noble book store there it would produce more traffic and likely retailers. There should also be a convience store somewhere down there too.

10/7/2009 11:52:30 PM

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picasso wrote:

Replying to thevrwc:

Rents are bad, but lack of shoppers are killing downtown. You all say it's a great place to walk, but when's the last time you actually bought something from a downtown retailer?

Raises a REALLY good point. Realistically, what kind of businesses can and cannot survive down there? It'll never be a replacement (or competitor) for Wally World or the strip malls; but there's likely shops and other businesses that can be of interest to the traffic that is likely to be there. I enjoyed some shops down there which have, unfortunately, succumbed to the rent. I really wish the rent and access (parking) were conducive to a good book store down there. Open Book consolidated years ago, and the mega stores have reduced local sellers to an endangered species.

10/7/2009 10:49:31 PM

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taylorsc wrote:

Replying to 2Mannings1Cup:

Replying to thevrwc:

Rents are bad, but lack of shoppers are killing downtown. You all say it's a great place to walk, but when's the last time you actually bought something from a downtown retailer?

I'll buy from downtown retailers when they sell a product a desire at an affordable price point.

0 for 2 so far.

AMEN!!! The stores downtown dont sell anything worth buying. Some of the restaurants are good, but the stores are mostly "speciality" shops that dont appeal to the broader market.

10/7/2009 10:20:06 PM

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