

## American Planning Association Designates Wydown Boulevard One of Top 10 Great Streets for 2010

Linear Park Welcomes Mix of Uses among Historic Neighborhoods



**Clayton, MO** – The American Planning Association (APA) today announced the designation of Wydown Boulevard as one of 10 Great Streets for 2010 under the organization’s Great Places in America program. APA Great Places exemplify exceptional character and highlight the role planners and planning play in creating communities of lasting value.

“We are proud to receive this award and honored to be part of an impressive list of honorees,” said Clayton’s Mayor Linda Goldstein. “Wydown Boulevard symbolizes characteristics that have become Clayton’s trademarks. Through the enduring traditions of collaboration, hard work and community

involvement, Clayton maintains its exceptional quality of life. The recognition from the American Planning Association encourages our commitment to these traditions.”

APA singled out Wydown Boulevard for its historic origins reflecting innovative planning concepts espoused by Henry Wright, Lewis Mumford and the Regional Planning Association of America. These planners advocated a new approach to urban development by synthesizing earlier concepts including the Garden City and City Beautiful movements, amongst others. APA also noted the design of Wydown, with a wide, verdant median and marked bike lanes acting as extensions of Forest Park and accommodating all types of travelers and recreational uses.

Through Great Places in America, APA recognizes unique and authentic characteristics found in three essential components of all communities – streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces. APA Great Places offer better choices for where and how people work and live every day and are defined by many things including planning efforts, architectural styles, accessibility, and community involvement.

“We’re very excited today to name Wydown Boulevard as one of this year’s Great Streets,” said APA Chief Executive Officer Paul Farmer, FAICP. “The City of Clayton really has an aesthetic and practical masterpiece here. Cars, bikers and walkers coexist seamlessly along what is not just a street, but a linear park that is recognized in the 2007 Clayton Parks and Recreation Plan. It is an iconic example of the balance of preservation and planning,” he added.

Since APA began Great Places in America in 2007, 40 Neighborhoods, 40 Streets and 30 Public Spaces have been designated in 47 states and the District of Columbia.

Wydown Boulevard links six neighborhoods listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Characterized by multi-acre lots, traditionally-designed residences, shared green space and native plants, the subdivisions reflect sensitivity to the natural landscape, a concept touted by the Regional Planning Association of America, Henry Wright and Lewis Mumford. Majestic

Georgian, Tudor, Spanish, Italian, and French Eclectic homes are set back on well-manicured lawns and dot the majority of the streetscape. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century style, low-rise apartments situated towards the west terminus of the boulevard add variety to Wydown's housing stock and accommodate a wider range of residents.

"Wydown Boulevard is the striking visual corridor in Clayton, connecting one of the nation's largest urban parks to distinguished historic neighborhoods, notable academic and religious institutions, popular shopping and dining destinations, a bustling business district and vital St. Louis County and local government functions," said Judy Goodman, Clayton Ward I Alderwoman. "The boulevard's design is simple and stately, reflecting the historic nature and active culture of our community."

Connecting the neighborhoods is a wide, planted median spanning the entire length of the boulevard. Originally a streetcar right-of-way, the median features a popular footpath and is recognized as a park in the 2007 Clayton Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Also in 2007, a partnership between the City of Clayton, the Clayton School District, Fontbonne University, and Washington University was formed to help maintain and irrigate the lush strip.

Rather than seeking privacy and exclusivity like many upscale neighborhood streets, Wydown Boulevard invites travelers of all types. Bike lanes were installed in 2009 as part of Bike St. Louis, a 77-mile on-street biking network throughout the region.

"Wydown Boulevard's most unique feature, the full-length landscaped median that acts as linear park, serves as a gathering place in the sense that it fosters social interaction and vitality through transit, walking, biking and an array of recreational opportunities," said Michelle Harris, Clayton Ward II Alderwoman. "Wydown inspires community involvement by offering a place for neighbors to socialize, school children to walk and visitors to experience the beauty of the landscape."

The nine other APA 2010 Great Streets are: 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in San Diego, CA; Broadway Avenue in Red Lodge, MT; Massachusetts Street in Lawrence, KS; Spring Street in Eureka Springs, AR; Washington Street in Hoboken, NJ; Bank Street in Wallace, ID; Middle Street in New Bern, NC; Washington Street in Middleburg, VA; and Liberty Street in Franklin, PA.

For more information about these streets, as well as lists of the 2010 APA 10 Great Neighborhoods and 10 Great Public Spaces, and designations between 2007 and 2009, visit [www.planning.org/greatplaces](http://www.planning.org/greatplaces).

This year's Great Places in America will be celebrated as part of APA's National Community Planning Month in October 2010; for more about the special month, visit [www.planning.org/ncpm](http://www.planning.org/ncpm).

*The American Planning Association 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. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, Ill. For more information, visit [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org).*

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