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**American Planning Association Designates
Campus Martius Park One of Top 10 Great Public Spaces for 2010**
Revitalized Urban Park Brings Life to Downtown Detroit

Detroit, MI – The American Planning Association (APA) today announced the designation of Campus Martius Park as one of 10 Great Public Spaces 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.

APA singled out the renovated Campus Martius Park for its role in helping attract nearly \$750 million in new investment to Detroit, as well as for the first-class public space that has been created here. Today, Campus Martius is a bustling, urban Eden in the heart of downtown, providing citizens with a public space that delights them year-round.

“Campus Martius is the heart of downtown Detroit,” said Detroit Mayor Dave Bing. “It is a place where Detroiters of all walks of life come together in one of America’s most beautiful and accessible urban parks. We are honored to be among the American Planning Association’s 10 Great Public Spaces for 2010.”

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.

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.

“We’re very excited to name Campus Martius Park as one of this year’s Great Public Spaces,” said APA Chief Executive Officer Paul Farmer, FAICP. “Detroit has a real gem here. The redesigned space brings a sense of vitality and recuperation to downtown Detroit. All those involved in its renovation are to be commended for their hard work and excellent planning,” he added.



Campus Martius Park grew out of a plan by Judge August Woodward for rebuilding Detroit after a devastating fire in 1805. Although his plan was never used, his idea to create a central public gathering space inspired by those in Ancient Rome shaped Campus Martius, which was created in 1847.

In the early 1900s, Campus Martius Park's centrality threatened its very existence. The confluence of Detroit's busiest streets – Michigan Avenue and Woodward Avenue - and its location in the heart of downtown turned the space into the city's busiest intersection. High volumes of traffic rendered the park virtually unreachable to pedestrians. A wave of suburban flight in the 1960s left the already-flailing park derelict.

The effort to revitalize Campus Martius Park was led by Mayor Dennis Archer beginning in 2004. Approximately \$20 million was gifted to the city by the Detroit 300 Conservancy – a non-profit corporation backed by some of Detroit's largest private enterprises – for renovation of Campus Martius. The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation manages the ongoing development efforts and led the infrastructure efforts to change traffic patterns to flow circularly around the 2.5-acre park..

Other changes were based on principles espoused by William H. Whyte to create public spaces that people wanted to use and felt comfortable using. Moveable chairs, a café, an abundance of seating areas and an array of activities popularize the park.

Utilizing unique retractable stages, Campus Martius Park is host to over 200 concerts, events and festivals each year. The northern parcel of the park is transformed into an ice rink for five months, providing entertainment and access even during Michigan's frigid winters.

“Campus Martius Park has become the heart of Detroit's development story, as it has transformed a once desolate area into the most thriving district downtown,” said the Park's Conservancy President Robert F. Gregory. “The Park continues to exceed expectations in attracting throngs of people year round and providing a positive image of Detroit daily. We are very proud that the APA has recognized Campus Martius Park as a national role model of good planning.”

The nine other APA 2010 Great Public Spaces are: Bryant Park in New York City, NY; Charles W. Ireland Sculpture Garden in Birmingham, AL; Fountain Square in Bowling Green, KY; Percival Landing Boardwalk and Park in Olympia, WA; Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, PA; Emerald Necklace in Boston, MA; Main Plaza in San Antonio, TX; Plaza Real in Boca Raton, FL; and the Ferry Building in San Francisco, CA.

For more information about these public spaces, as well as lists of the 2010 APA 10 Great Neighborhoods and 10 Great Streets, and designations between 2007 and 2009, visit 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.

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.

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