

THE SOUTH'S  
**10**  
BEST

# COMEBACK NEIGHBORHOODS

We've scoured the South to find these neighborhoods that were once down on their luck but are now resurging with community pride. Learn from their inspiring stories.

by **REX PERRY**

## **1** **SPRINGFIELD** **JACKSONVILLE, FL**

### Where Hip Meets History

The great fire of 1901, which destroyed most of downtown Jacksonville, spared the Springfield neighborhood. However, what fire didn't do, poor zoning and suburban flight almost accomplished in this historic area north of downtown. But today you can see potential. Prairie-style and gingerbread Queen Anne homes, some lovingly restored and others waiting their chance, share the streets with trees draped in Spanish moss. Springfield's stunning architecture is tempered with a gritty side, but

where some see blight, locals see opportunity. "We have flavor," says resident Tony Allegretti, who writes a blog called The Urban Core. "We still have problems and the economy hasn't helped, but great projects are beginning every day. We enjoy an urban quality of life with local arts, culture, and neighbors we know by name."

Families, empty nesters, executives, and creative hipsters come looking to plug in to the energy of the community. "New homes that blend seamlessly with historic ones are bringing in buyers who lack renovation skills," says Mack Bissette, CEO of SRG Homes & Neighborhoods. "We've had passionate renovators here in the past, but this latest wave is lining up with a new generation of buyers." [sparcouncil.org](http://sparcouncil.org)

### Our Picks

We chose 10 places where revival isn't just about fixing up old houses. It's about working together to rebuild traditions and save the soul of a place.

1. Springfield—Jacksonville, Florida
2. North Chattanooga—Chattanooga, Tennessee
3. Wilmore/South End—Charlotte, North Carolina
4. Crescent Hill—Louisville, Kentucky
5. Patterson Park—Baltimore, Maryland
6. Historic Fairmount—Fort Worth, Texas
7. Phelps Grove—Springfield, Missouri
8. Viola—Greenville, South Carolina
9. East Nashville—Nashville, Tennessee
10. Holy Cross—New Orleans, Louisiana



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