

Attleboro one of 'the best'

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ATTLEBORO - The city's long hard fight has a long hard way to go, but the effort to rebuild its vitality and once renowned industrial might has put it on the verge of success, according to Boston Magazine, which has recognized Attleboro as one of the best places to live in the Boston area.

"After decades of manufacturing declines this once thriving industrial outpost is battling back," said the magazine which hits newsstands today. "Attleboro may be poised for another heyday."

The article, by Katherine Bowers, identifies the development of a \$60 million downtown revitalization plan, the construction of an industrial business park and a downtown facelift as key components in the magazine's decision to label the city as one of the best places to live and invest for the future.

The theme of this year's "best places to live" edition was "Smart Buys in a Scary Market."

Under that theme, the city was identified as a good place to invest now, despite the downturn in the real estate market, said editor Jennifer Johnson.

"(Bowers) identified Attleboro as good possibility for buyers who are new to the market, though it's tagged a 'gamble' because its attractions are in development, rather than fully

established," she said in an e-mail to The Sun Chronicle.

And Bowers noted that the city needs to continue to improve its school system to realize its potential.

Mayor Kevin Dumas, who was interviewed for the piece, said he was quite pleased by the magazine's recognition of the city's progress.

"Not accepting the status quo and pushing forward creates results like this," he said. "It's positive for the city and comes from the hard work on all our initiatives and the hard work of all our departments to make the city what it is."

With regard to the schools, Dumas said he's confident that the system will continue to make strides under the leadership of Superintendent Pia Durkin.

A commitment to build a new downtown, bring in more industry, improve fire, police and school services combined with existing attractions like parks and the zoo, means the city is a good deal for young families, Dumas said.

"We have an excellent package for all people, especially for those looking to start out," he said.

Pret Stevenson, chairman of the Attleboro Redevelopment Authority said the article in Boston Magazine is "a great thing" and has been hard earned.

"It's nice to be recognized for all the hard work the ARA has done and all the hard work the city has done," he said. "We're moving in the right direction."

Meanwhile, a North Main Street resident who was taking a walk in Capron Park on Monday, said labeling the city as one of the best places to live is exciting, but that the real excitement for Attleboro is in the future.

"The downtown needs a pulse," said Meredith Silva. "But I have hope. I'm optimistic. It's a slow process."

But on the other hand, Silva said there are already a number of attractions.

"We have the park, the museum and LaSalette," she said. "And we have good access to Boston and Providence."

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