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## **PA CHAPTER OF APA RECOGNIZES THE ARC COMMUNITY GREENSPACE IN MEADVILLE, CRAWFORD COUNTY AS A 2023 GREAT PLACE IN PENNSYLVANIA**

**Harrisburg, PA** -- The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-PA), through its Great Places in PA Program, annually designates Great Places. For 2023, the Great Places categories were Public Spaces and Transformations. Four nominations achieved a Great Places designation, bringing the total Great Places in PA to 55 as the Program celebrates a ten-year milestone (2014-2023). Great Places have a sustainable vision for the future and serve as a model for other communities. These high-quality examples of successful planning efforts that build healthy and vibrant communities throughout the Commonwealth help to achieve the Chapter's mission and vision.



APA-PA is proud to announce the designation of The Arc Community Greenspace in Meadville, Crawford County, as a 2023 Great Transformation in Pennsylvania. The Greenspace, located adjacent to the Arch Street Gateway into downtown Meadville, was previously a blighted lot occupied by a dilapidated building, which posed a threat to the community. In response, The Arc, City of Meadville, and Art & Environment Initiative began collaborating in 2018 to address these issues. Stakeholder meetings and a series of community engagement events resulted in a community-inspired vision for the site.

Subsequently, a myriad of in-kind services, together with public/private funding, brought the site design to fruition. The outcome is a vibrant community gathering place that incorporates native landscaping, streetscape improvements, a performance stage, benches, colorful shade umbrellas, solar-powered umbrella tables that provide free WiFi and evening lighting, and an ADA-accessible walkway. Unique to the design is that the painted walkway has the appearance of a stream to highlight historic Mill Run that runs underneath. It has also spurred improvements to neighboring properties and strengthened stakeholder synergies. The Arc Community Greenspace clearly demonstrates how several years of strategic planning and collaboration can result in transforming a once-blighted property into a cherished community asset and economic development driver.

The Arc Community Greenspace, together with Downtown Pittston in Luzerne County, comprise the slate of 2023 Great Places in PA in the Transformation category. Additionally, two Great Public Spaces (McDade Park in Lackawanna County & Pearson Park in Lawrence County) were designated. These Great Places demonstrate the rewarding results that occur through community partnerships, planning, and dedication. In recognizing the 2023 Great Places in PA, the Chapter also celebrates the many community leaders, officials, professionals, and residents who contribute to making the designated places "great." For information on previously designated Great Places, please visit [www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org).