

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Effective August 23, 2021

Contact: Pamela Shellenberger, AICP, Chair, Great Places in Pennsylvania Program
PA Chapter of the American Planning Association
Phone: 717-824-7132; Email: pshellenberger@ycpc.org

**PA CHAPTER OF APA RECOGNIZES
WARWICK TO EPHRATA RAIL TRAIL IN LANCASTER COUNTY
AS A 2021 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 2021, the Great Places categories were Greenways/Trails, Public Spaces, and Streets. Eight nominations achieved a Great Places designation, bringing the total Great Places in PA to 46. Great Places have a sustainable vision for the future and serve as a model for other communities. Having high quality examples of successful planning efforts throughout the Commonwealth to share and promote helps to achieve the Chapter's mission and vision.



APA-PA is proud to announce designation of the Warwick to Ephrata Rail Trail (WERT), which connects five communities in northeastern Lancaster County, as a 2021 Great Greenway/Trail in Pennsylvania. This 7.2 mile regional trail travels through many landscapes, from farmland, woodlands, and rural villages to historic urban neighborhoods and downtowns. With many trailheads and access points, it is easily accessible to thousands of residents. The trail is a popular, safe, and practical alternative transportation route between the Boroughs of

Ephrata, Akron, and Lititz for people to walk/bike to school or work, as well as shopping and dining destinations. It is also used by residents and visitors of all ages and abilities for recreation. Additionally, the WERT serves as host for many charity bike rides, marathons, and other events coordinated by the Warwick Recreation Commission. Among the many amenities are restrooms, solar powered pedestrian lights at crossings, bike share program, access point car charging stations, and handicap accessibility. The five municipalities in the corridor formed the WERT Committee to oversee trail planning and construction. They worked steadfastly over a period of eight years to see the project through to fruition and continue to coordinate maintenance of this regional asset. Much support was provided by the County Commissioners and Planning Commission, PA DCNR, municipal officials, and the community. The WERT is a prime example of the success that can result from intergovernmental cooperation, partnerships, and community engagement. This success is demonstrated not only in trail usage, but also the economic activity it has stimulated.

The Warwick to Ephrata Rail Trail, together with the Cherry Creek Crossing Trail Network/Monroe County, Lackawanna River Heritage Trail/4 counties, Lehigh Parkway/Lehigh County, and Phoenixville Portion of the Schuylkill River Trail/Chester County, comprise the slate of 2021 Great Places in PA in the Greenways/Trails category. Additionally, one Great Street and two Great Public Spaces were designated. These Great Places demonstrate the rewarding results that occur through community partnerships, planning, and dedication. In recognizing the 2021 Great Places in PA, the Chapter also celebrates the many community leaders and officials, professionals, and residents who contribute to making the designated places "great." For information on previously designated Great Places, please visit www.planningpa.org.