




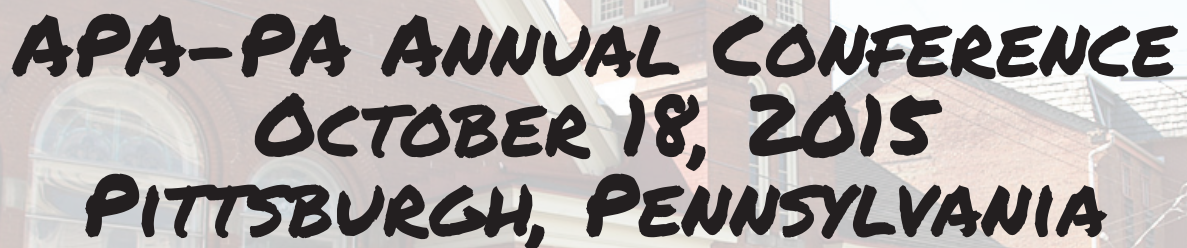
EMERGENT MILLVALE



HOW DIVERSE, CITIZEN-LED
PROJECTS CAN COLLECTIVELY
CREATE EFFECTIVE PLACE-MAKING



APA-PA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA



ROUTE





Millvale Community Library

"More than a Library - an agent for positive change." Initially housed in the Millvale Community Center, the MCL was launched in 2008 by a small group of dedicated residents. To fulfill its broader mission of sustainability, it purchased two abandoned buildings which were renovated by volunteers and opened three years later in 2013 as the borough's first library. This grass-roots community asset, now hosting many programs and activities, was built on the values of education, sustainability, love of community, and commitment of character.



The Murals of Maxo Vanka

Maxo Vanka, a Croatian immigrant to Pittsburgh, was commissioned in 1937 to decorate the walls of St. Nicholas Catholic Church. Given extraordinary artistic liberty, Vanka mixed religious symbolism, traditional Croatian imagery, and his anti-war sentiment into stunning works of art. After the murals were damaged by the elements, the Society to Preserve the Millvale Murals of Maxo Vanka was formed in 1990 to raise awareness, educate the public, and raise funds for the murals' restoration and preservation.



The Gardens of Millvale

An offshoot of the Millvale Borough Development Corporation's Clean, Safe, and Green committee, the Gardens of Millvale brings together residents and business owners to teach the art of horticulture and to make greening and growing projects happen. The program manages six plots throughout the borough, provides classes and workshops, and connects local growers to farmers markets and other businesses.



Project Journey

ACTION-Housing was formed in 1957 to improve the state of the housing stock in Western Pennsylvania by focusing on the provision of decent, safe, and affordable housing. Partnering with the Veterans Leadership Program in a program called "Project Journey," ACTION-Housing redeveloped a two-family home on Evergreen Ave as emergency housing (30 to 60 day stays) for women veterans and their families.



Mount Alvernia Bioswale

A cooperative project among the Sisters of St Francis, the Borough of Millvale, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's TreeVitalize program, the bioswale along Hawthorne Rd is one of the largest in the nation at 400 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 6 feet deep. Designed to look like a natural creek bed, the bioswale's plants and staggered pools can capture any stormwater that would otherwise rush down the road, flooding nearby homes.

BASIC MILLVALE FACTS AND FIGURES

Millvale's History

Founded in 1868, Millvale Borough was incorporated from parts of Shaler Township and Duquesne Borough and named after its industry and location—mill and valley. With a population of 668 in 1870, it quickly expanded after the Civil War and prospered upon connection with Lawrenceville via Ewalt Covered Bridge and a narrow gauge railroad that would become part of Pittsburgh's famous trolley system. By the turn of the century, Millvale had annexed the Third Ward from the Shaler Township and had three schools, three breweries, an opera house, a grocery store, a candy store, and a Masonic lodge.

Millvale Today

Today, Millvale is once again home to two craft breweries, as well as an authentic French bakery, a used record store, and a music venue in a former Catholic church. It is also the site of an eco-district, a residential solar panel initiative, a rain barrel project, and many other cutting edge urban planning practices.

This walking tour explores how multiple, community-driven projects can collectively make great places happen. Organizers and advocates from around the Borough of Millvale will share how they founded the borough's volunteer library; restored murals of social, historical, and artistic significance inside a Croatian church; installed one of the country's largest bioswales; provided women veterans and their children with safe places to live; and much more. Learn about the organic and emergent place-making that can only happen in a quirky mill town in southwestern PA.

Population = 3,739

Median household income = \$35,776 (\$52,548 in PA)

Median age = 40.6 (40.3 in PA)

Millennials (~20-34 year olds) make up 22.9% of the Millvale population
(19.1% in PA)



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Ali Mabel brings almost ten years of experience in business and economic development to Fourth Economy as its Director of Innovation Strategies. Prior to joining the firm, Ali worked as Program Coordinator at the University of Illinois Research Park. Ali has a Master of Urban Planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Masters of Business Administration and a BA in German from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

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ARTEZ is a community economic development agency serving the needs of seven municipalities on the north bank of the Allegheny River across from the city of Pittsburgh.

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