




What's Happening in Pennsylvania's Downtowns?

Julie Fitzpatrick, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Downtown Center



“...in a world where people and capital are footloose, the quality of the community is of critical new importance in economic development.”

- Ed McMahon, Board Chair Emeritus,
Main Street America, “New Life for Small Cities”
Richmond Times-Dispatch, May 16, 2022

WHO are we?

- Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) is the only statewide nonprofit dedicated solely to the revitalization of the commonwealth's core communities.
- PA State Coordinator for the National Main Street Center – Main Street America, subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation



WHAT do we do?

- In partnership with DCED, PDC provides outreach, education & technical assistance to support the Keystone Communities Main Street & Elm Street programs
- As a membership-based organization, PDC's role is to build and support the capacity of local non-profit organizations, municipalities and individuals to enhance the overall well-being and sustainability of Pennsylvania's central business districts and surrounding residential neighborhoods.





*“Stay Safe, Support Our Community –
by Living, Investing, and Shopping Locally”*

Designing *for* Distance



Pennsylvania
Historical & Museum
Commission

*“Could there be a way to rethink the ‘return to normal’,
in this way building upon the lessons of the pandemic
to solve immediate needs for social distancing, while
improving the public realm long term?”*

- EASTON “DESIGN FOR DISTANCE” PRESENTATION

.....
Easton Bacon Fest | November 7-8

- Need to create more public outdoor spaces
- ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION:
 - Need to connect Riverfront to Downtown for pedestrians & bicyclists
 - Need to create more/safer walkways, crosswalks and bicycle lanes

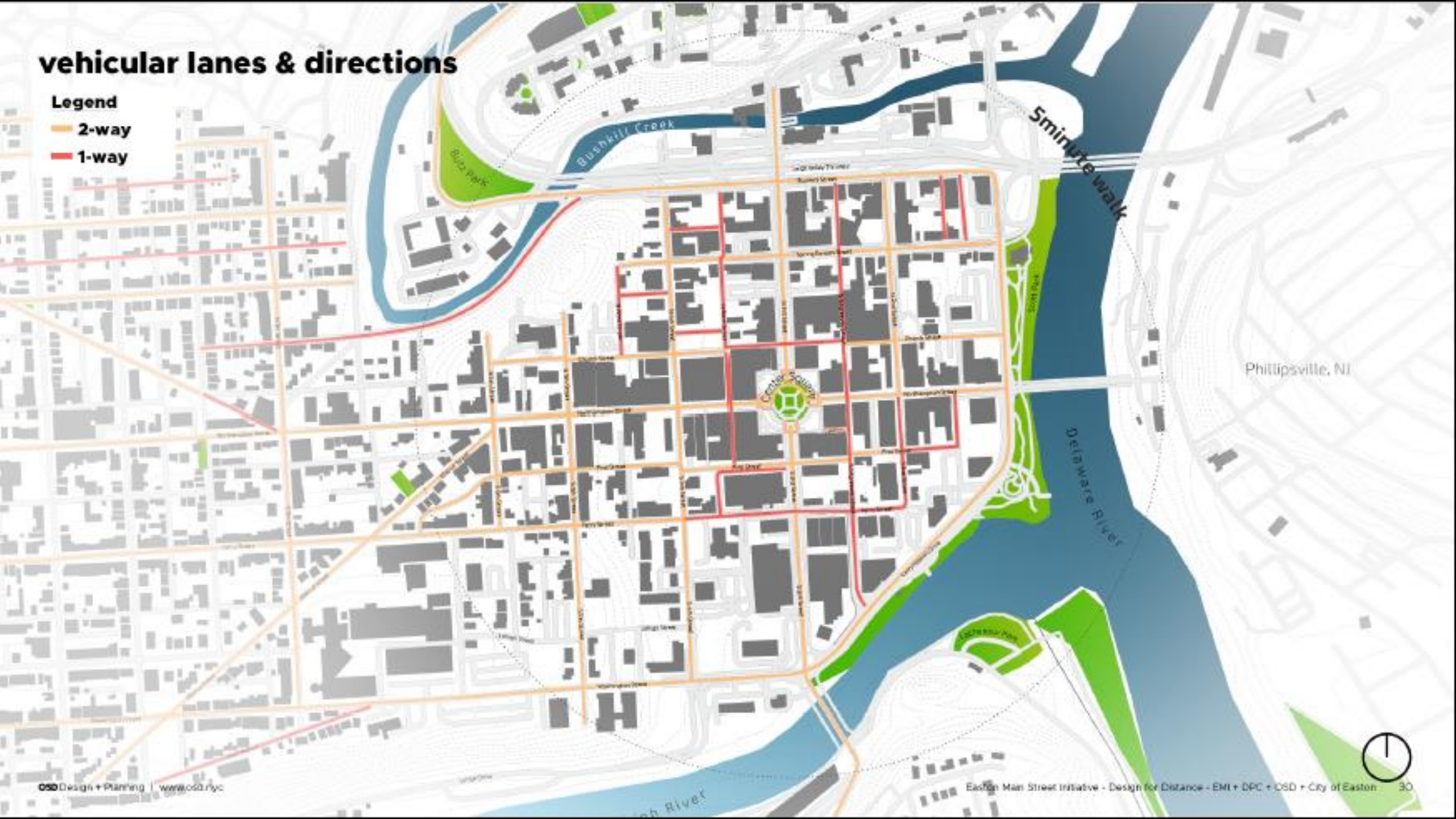


vehicular lanes & directions

Legend

2-way

1-way



Northampton + Sitgreaves - existing



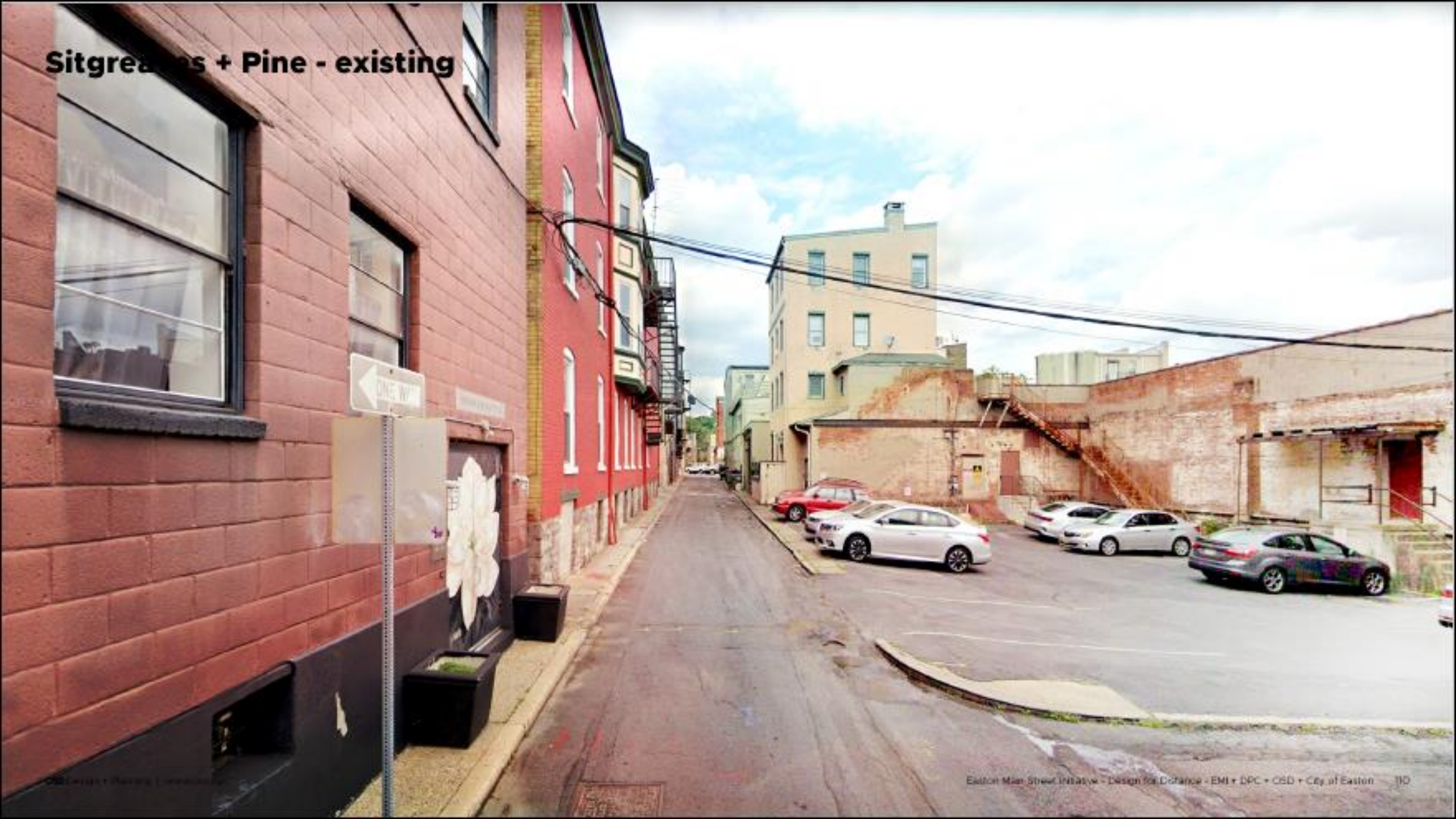
Northampton + Sitgreaves - proposed



Northampton + Sitgreaves - proposed



Sitgreaves + Pine - existing



Sitgreaves + Pine - Art Walk



Sitgreaves + Ferry - Existing



Sitgreaves + Ferry - Proposed



Sitgreaves + Larry Holmes Drive - Existing



Sitgreaves + Larry Holmes Drive - Proposed



TACTICAL INTERVENTION IDEAS

MASLOW'S
HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

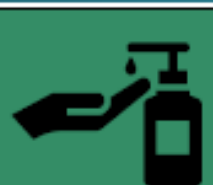
PHYSIOLOGICAL

SAFETY NEEDS

LOVE & BELONGING

ESTEEM

SELF-ACTUALIZATION



Sanitation



Food



Seating and
Shelter



Gathering



Storytelling



Art & Delight



Giving Back

- ● Restrooms
- Handwashing
- PPE Stations
- Food Lockers

- ● Lighting
- Warming Pods
- Wind Screens

- ● Moveable Seating
- Charging Stations
- WiFi

- ● Murals
- Games
- Wayfinding

- ● ● Operations
- Donations



Covid Response



Activity/
Programming



Education



Equity/ Dignity

KIT OF PARTS / IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

MASLOW'S
HIERARCHY OF NEEDS




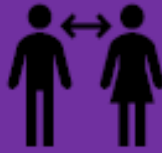



PHYSIOLOGICAL

SAFETY NEEDS

LOVE & BELONGING

ESTEEM

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Tools:	 Sanitation	 Food	 Seating and Shelter	 Gathering	 Storytelling	 Art & Delight	 Giving Back
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable Toilet • Hand washing • PPE Dispensers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Lockers • Lunches from Mission • Urban garden • Vending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warming pods • Wind screen • Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome in all languages • Seating • Games • Pre/post game/show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murals • Cultural kiosks • Know your neighbor - photobooth (ask questions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piano/Music • Painted surfaces • Seasonal installations • Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving tree • Little Library • CARE Teams
Temporary/Permanent							
Maintenance/Responsibility							
Cost							
Location/Site							

The Economic Resiliency of Pennsylvania's Main Street Communities

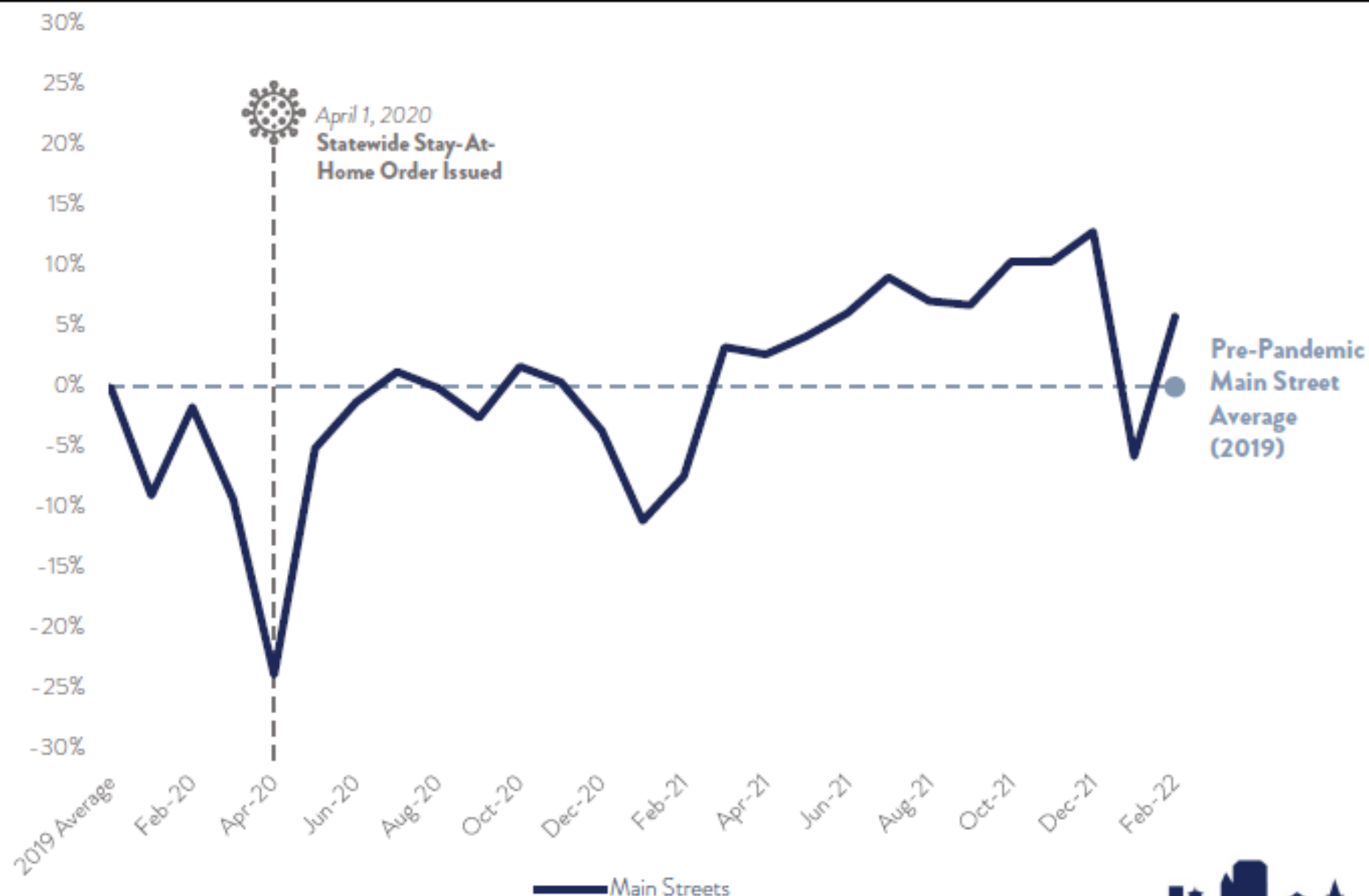
Pennsylvania's Main Street leadership and programmatic efforts played vital roles in supporting our local economies towards resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, average retail spending in Main Street Communities surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 12%. This percent, higher than the statewide average, highlights the economic strength of Pennsylvania's communities with Main Street Programs.

At the onset of the pandemic in April 2020, retail spending in Main Street Communities dropped to around 24% below the pre-pandemic average. Most of these local economies have not only recovered but have become stronger than before the pandemic.

After COVID-19 caused a decline in consumer activity, Main Street Communities demonstrated strong economic resilience by bringing spending up to pre-pandemic levels by summer 2020.

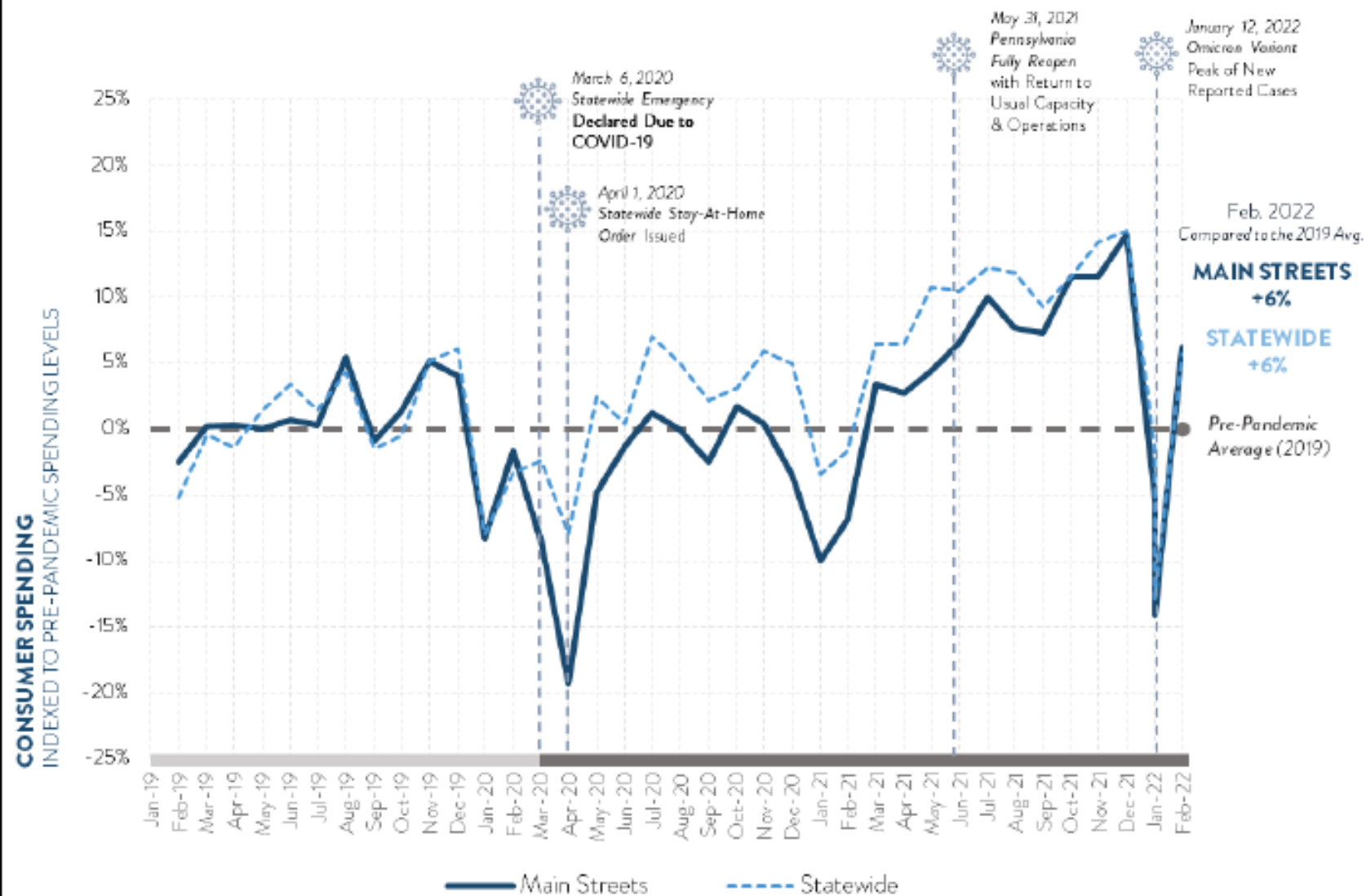
CONSUMER SPENDING INDEXED TO PRE-PANDEMIC SPENDING LEVELS



The above figures are adjusted for inflation and represent consumer spending trends indexed to pre-pandemic conditions in 2019. Findings are preliminary and subject to change. Data Source: MasterCard Retail Location Insights (2021)

Analysis conducted by Jon Stover & Associates. The full report of this study will be made available during the summer of 2022.

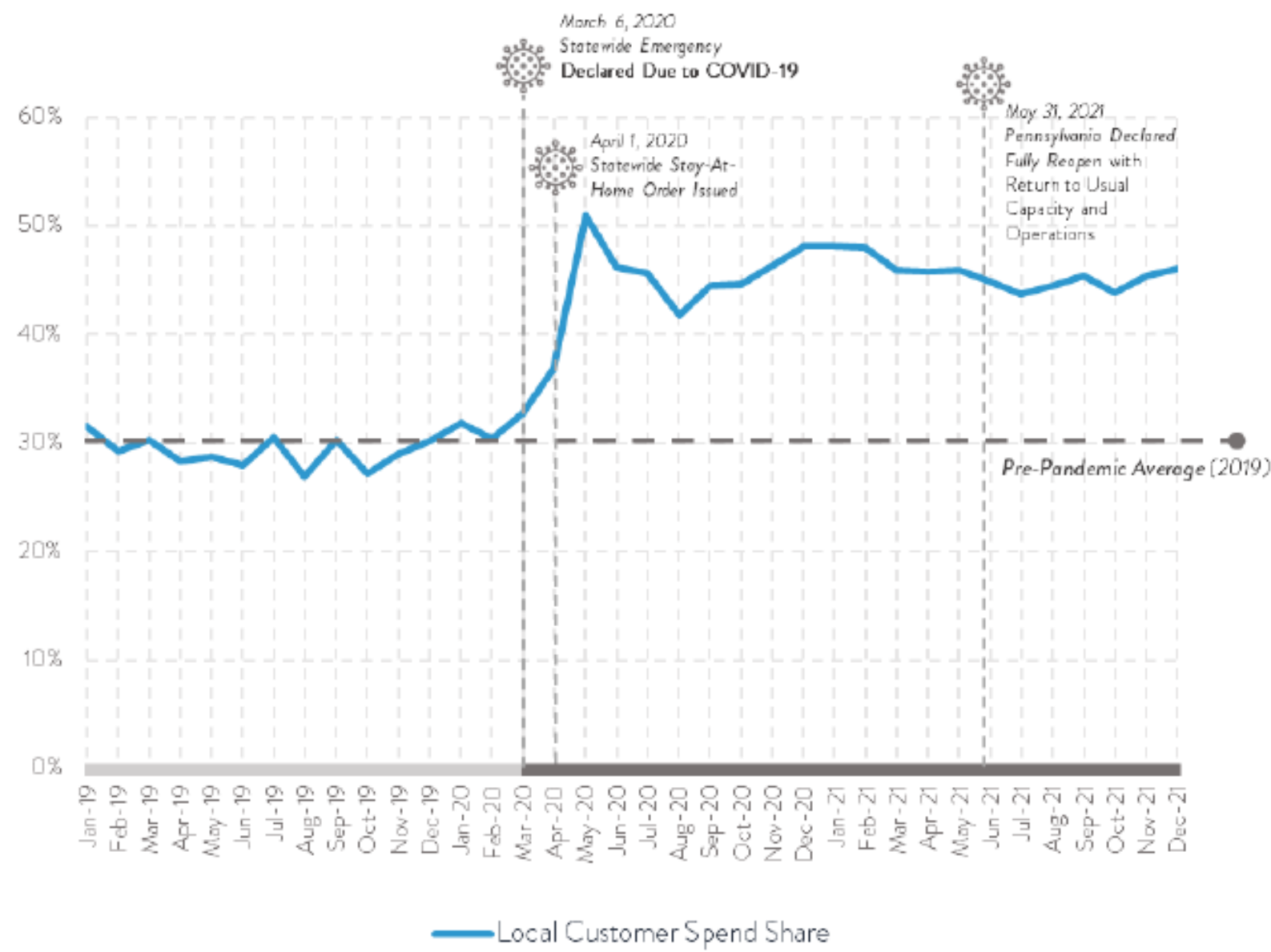
MAIN STREET CONSUMER SPENDING TRENDS



- Customer spending in Main Streets dropped 20% at the onset of the pandemic
- By the spring of 2021 Main Street consumer spending trends show the importance of PA's Main Streets in generating resiliency for the local business community

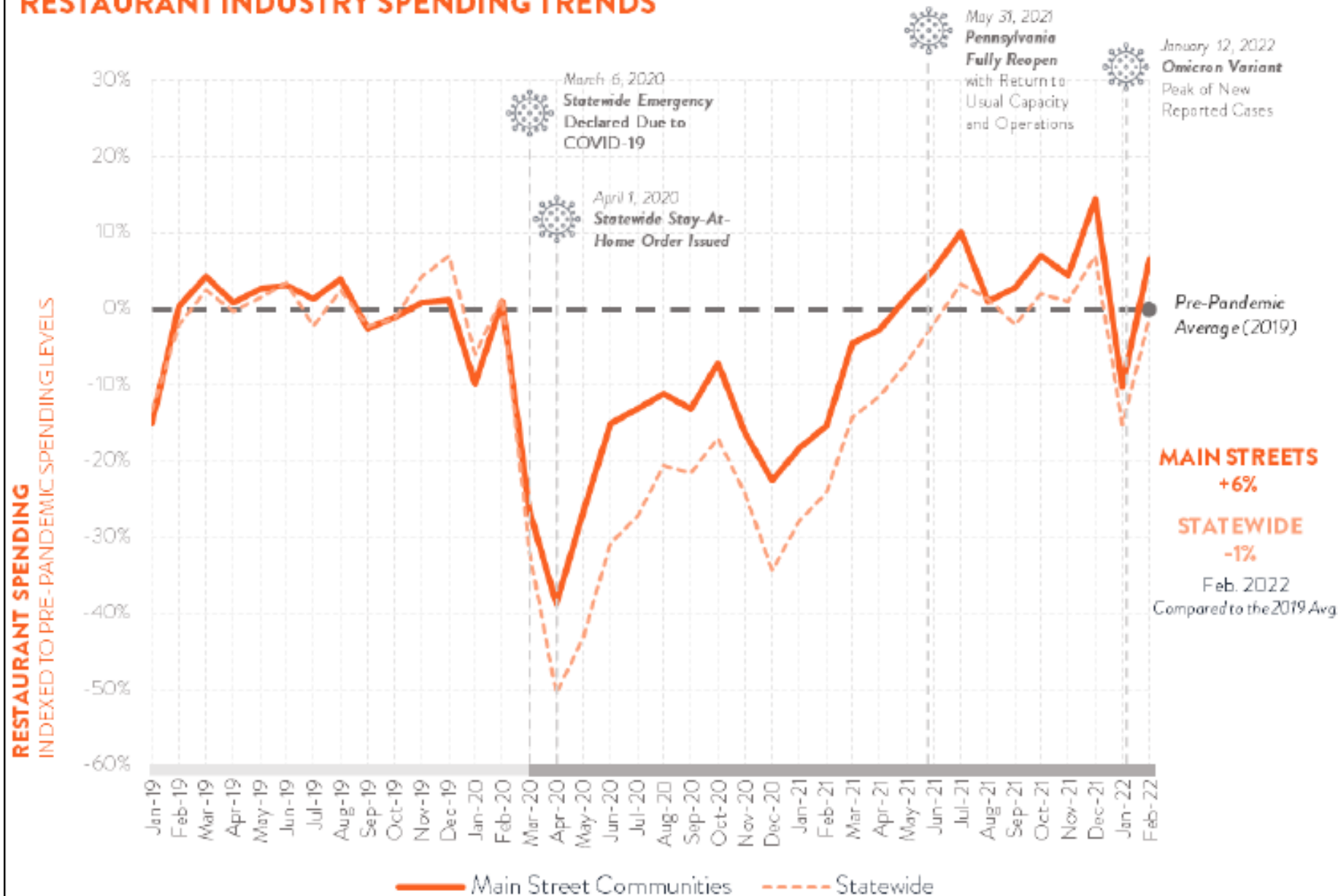
LOCAL CUSTOMER SPENDING TRENDS IN MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

LOCAL ZIP CODE SPEND SHARE
IN MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES



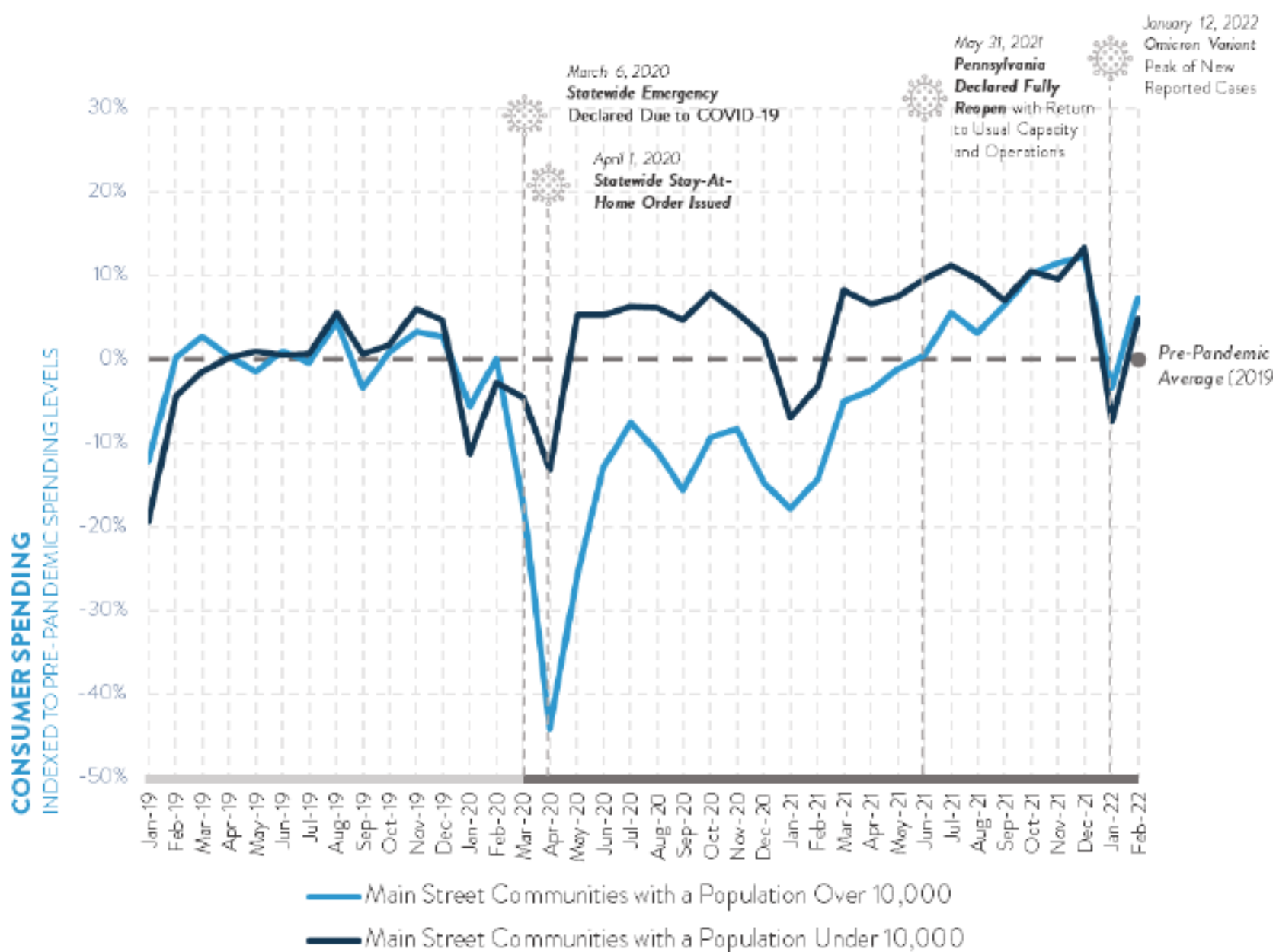
- Local customer support for Main Street businesses increased since the onset of the pandemic
- Support has continued showing longer term shifts in downtown business loyalty
- Local customers accounted for 30% of sales & transactions pre-COVID
- In 2021, local customers made up 46% of total customer base

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY SPENDING TRENDS



- PA's restaurants mirrored state industry trends pre-COVID, but outperformed throughout the pandemic
- Communities with Main Streets generated more restaurant spending than other areas of the state
- In Feb. 2022, Main Street restaurant sales were up 6% compared to pre-pandemic sales & above the industry as a whole

MAIN STREET CONSUMER SPENDING BY POPULATION SIZE



- Main Streets located in bigger cities/borough, 10,000+ were hit worse economically at the start of the pandemic than smaller Main Streets communities
- Now both are beginning to perform similarly in most places
- Nationally, larger cities with high concentrations of office workers faced stronger disruptions in their local economies as more people started to WFH & downtown businesses faced significant disruptions to their operations and customer base

Pennsylvania Main Street Reinvestment Statistics During COVID

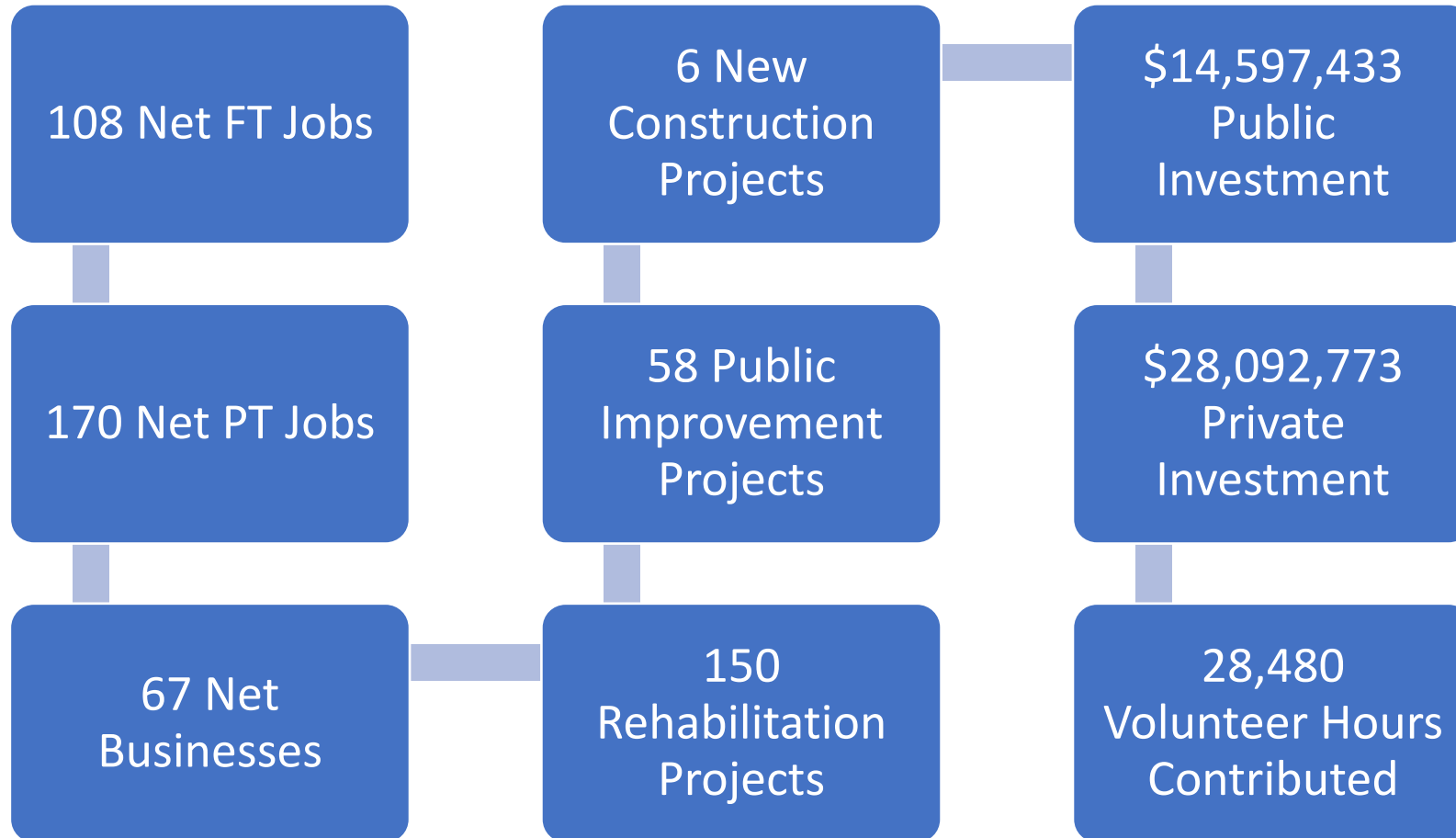
2020 REINVESTMENT STATS

- **243** Net FT Jobs
- **152** Net PT Jobs
- **167** Net New Businesses
- **118** building rehab projects
- **42** public improvement projects
- **\$16.2+ million** public investment
- **matched with over \$24.8 million in private investment = \$41 million**

2021 REINVESTMENT STATS

- **178** Net FT Jobs
- **252** Net PT Jobs
- **71** Net New Businesses
- **176** building rehab projects
- **41** public improvement projects
- **\$64.78+ million** public investment
- **matched with \$16.4+ million in private investment = \$80.78 million**

2022 Community Reinvestment Statistics



1. Focus on Upper Floor Housing & Housing Diversity: higher density = more local customers



What is the current state of upper-floor housing in your downtown?



Is it occupied?

- * Market rate?
- * Accessible Housing?
- * Affordable housing?
- * A variety of options?



It is up to code?

- * Fire suppression/sprinklers?
- * Accessible?

2. Updates to Planning

Appropriate Land Use

- Is the current planning: subdivision and land development ordinances, building codes, etc. supporting the kind of community you want now and in the future?

Updates to Zoning

- Does your municipality have zoning?
- Are the current zoning ordinances supporting the types of businesses and uses of buildings that you want now and in the future?

New & Inventive Uses: Parking Lot = Outdoor Seating

- Create outdoor dining options
- Bring the inside outdoors:
 - Furniture
 - Plants
 - Music



Downtown West Chester

- GAY STREET
CLOSED
BETWEEN
MATLACK &
DARLINGTON
STREETS FOR
FOOT TRAFFIC,
DINING AND
SHOPPING



3. Focus on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Disproportionate amount of small & small diverse businesses (SDB) received COVID relief compared to non-SDB
 - What is needed?
 - Outreach
 - Technical Assistance, training/coaching, etc.
 - Peer-to-peer support
 - Translation services
 - Additional funding opportunities
- Increased awareness around nonprofit boards representing the community they serve.

4. Needs of Nonprofit Organizations

Funding events and activities
postponed

Volunteering halted or shifted

Needs and services have increased
- but capacity has decreased

5. Focus on Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystems & New Consumer Habits



Utilization of upper floors – live/work-spaces



New Services

Local Food Delivery Services

Shared B to B Services & Support for E-commerce sales



Business Incubators/Shared Workspaces – Restaurants Shifting

Commercial Kitchen/Small Scale Production

Prepared Foods/Take-home meal kits



Flex space?

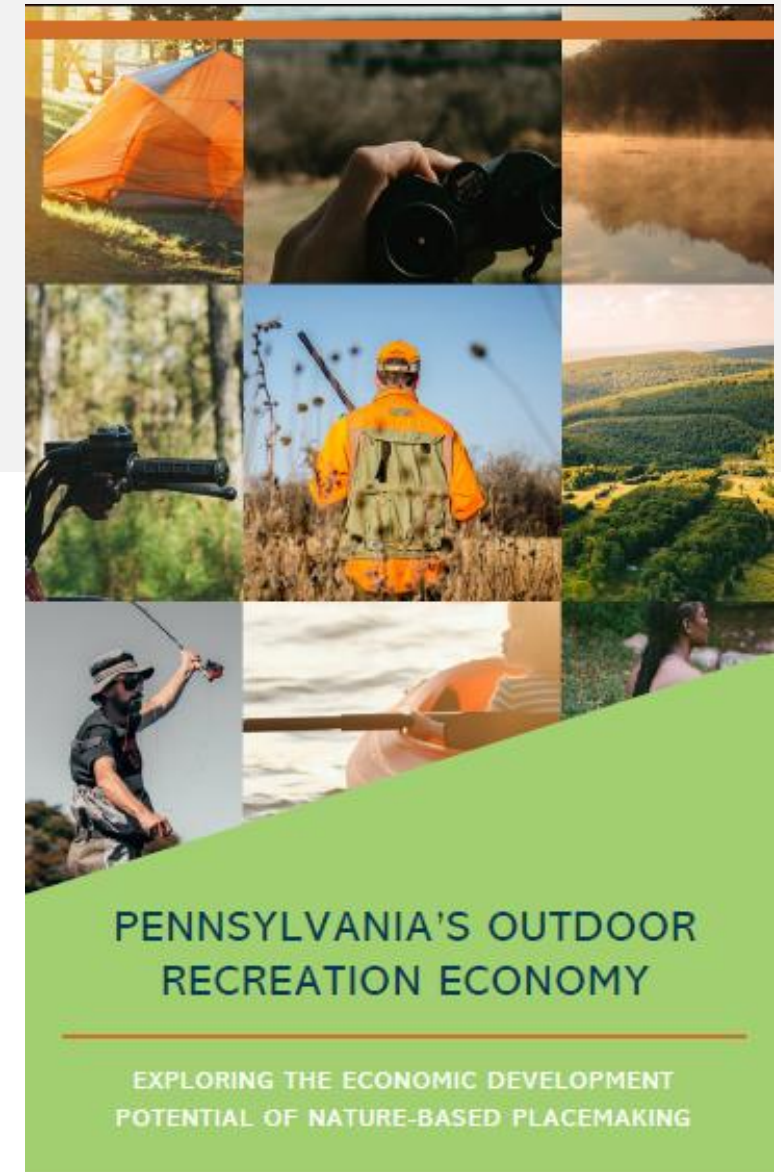
Occasional Office Spaces – by the day/week/month


Maker Spaces, Meeting/Training Spaces, Event Spaces



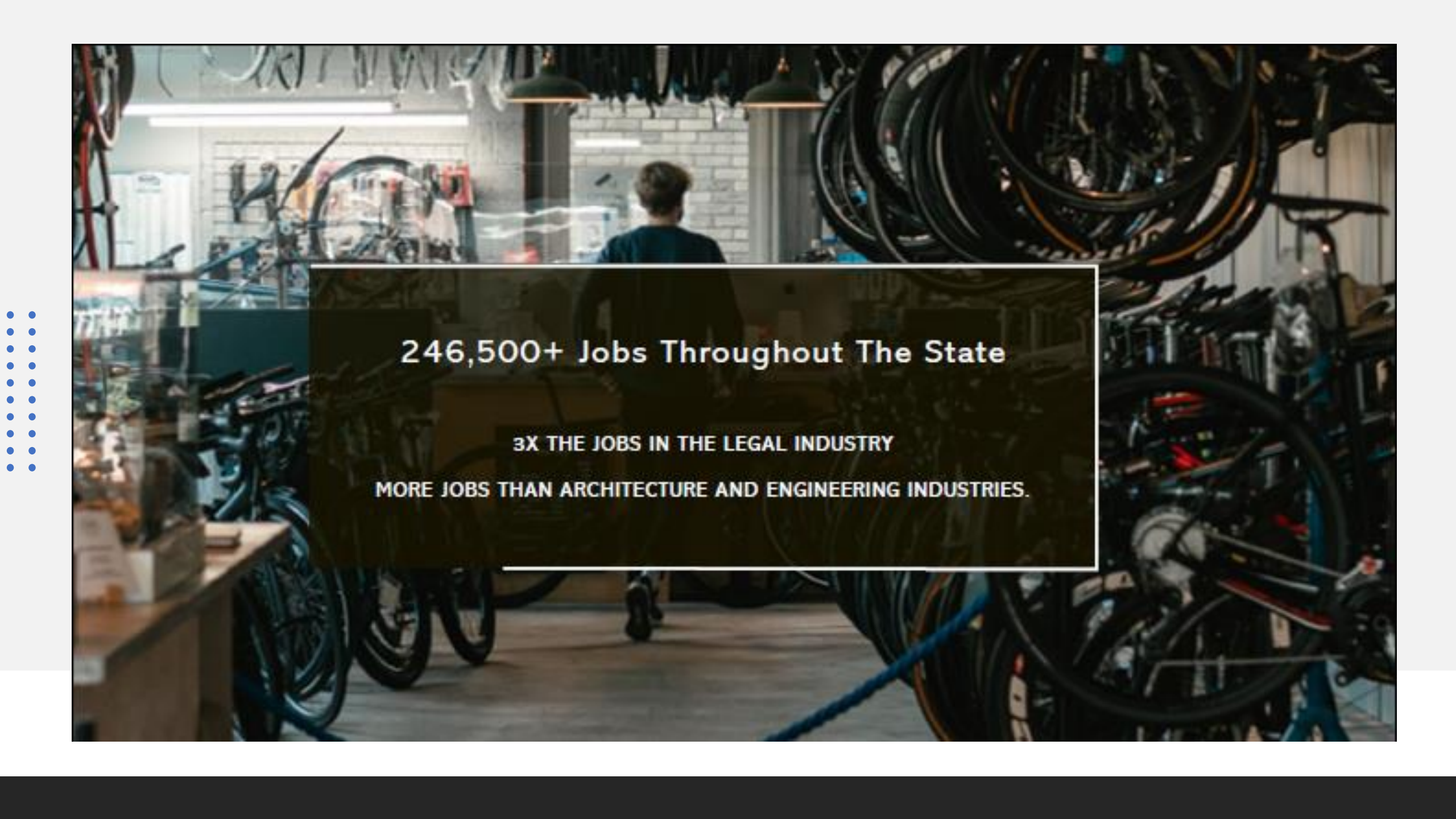
6. Connect to Outdoor Recreational Assets

- Nature-Based Placemaking improves & enhances your community's
 - Attractiveness as a place to live
 - Attractiveness as a place to work
 - General health & wellness
 - Economic health & wellness



A scenic view of a lake with houses and a slide in the background. The water is calm with gentle ripples. In the background, there are several houses nestled among dense green trees. A wooden slide is visible on the right side of the shore. The sky is clear and blue.

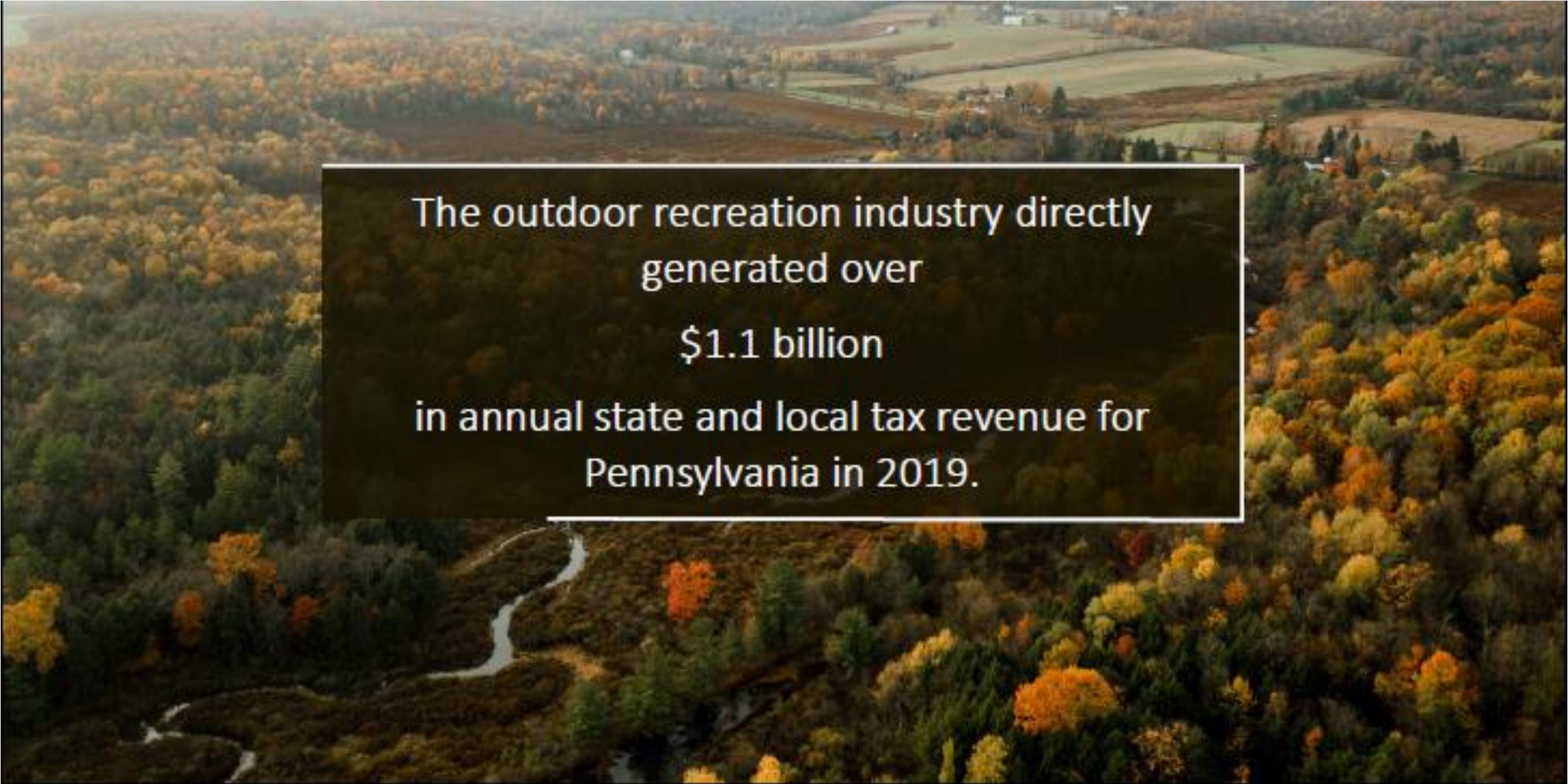
Outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania
contributed \$28.5 Billion to the
state's economy in 2019.

A person is seen from behind, working in a bicycle repair shop. The shop is filled with numerous bicycles hanging from the ceiling and on stands. The background shows a brick wall and various tools and equipment. The lighting is warm and focused on the work area.

246,500+ Jobs Throughout The State

3X THE JOBS IN THE LEGAL INDUSTRY

MORE JOBS THAN ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES.



The outdoor recreation industry directly
generated over
\$1.1 billion
in annual state and local tax revenue for
Pennsylvania in 2019.

Main Streets play a big role in generating these impacts...

VISITORS COME TO YOUR MAIN STREETS TO EXPLORE NEARBY NATURE-BASED ASSETS.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND SUPPORTED BUSINESSES ARE LOCATED IN OR NEAR YOUR MAIN STREET DISTRICTS.

MANY OF YOUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS' JOBS ARE SUPPORTED BY THESE INDUSTRIES.





Nature-Based Placemaking Helps Generate More Economic Impacts for Main Streets by...

TURNING NATURE VISITORS INTO LOCAL CUSTOMERS FOR YOUR BUSINESSES.

LENGTHENING VISITS, CREATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO CAPTURE SPENDING DOLLARS.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY BRAND IDENTITIES AND UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS FOR YOUR MAIN STREET DISTRICT.

Moving Forward/Looking to the Future:

What to expect?

1. Continue to be impacted by supply chain disruptions



2. Workforce shortage



3. Competitive environment for workers & residents (at every life stage)



What can we do to prepare/support?

**1.
Strengthen**

Strengthen local workforce by developing Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

**2.
Partner**

Partner with local college or municipality to create incentives for local employees

**3.
Promote**

Promote safe & livable communities by being more walkable & bikeable



Advocacy for Keystone Communities Main Street & Elm Street Programs

- In 2009, there was \$56 million available - \$5.00 for each person in the commonwealth
- In recent years Keystone Communities has about \$6.4 million - \$.54 for each person
- Decrease of almost 90%

To learn more
about PDC:
our annual
conference,
membership &
free resources

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Thank you!

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