

WHY REVITALIZE WEST READING





Why invest in West Reading

or your Main Street





5th & Penn Street







DeSoto Plymouth Dealer







GoReadingPerks







New generation of entrepreneurs goes west

Young retailers add to business revival in West Reading

By Karen L. Miller
Business editor

Business owner Rebecca Simmons and other young merchants may be the future of entrepreneurship in West Reading.

Simmons, 34, owner of Firefly on Penn, a children's clothing, women's clothing and gift store at 508 Penn Ave., and her husband, Mike, 36, looked at West Chester and Wilmington, N.C., before deciding on the 800-square-foot shop in West Reading.

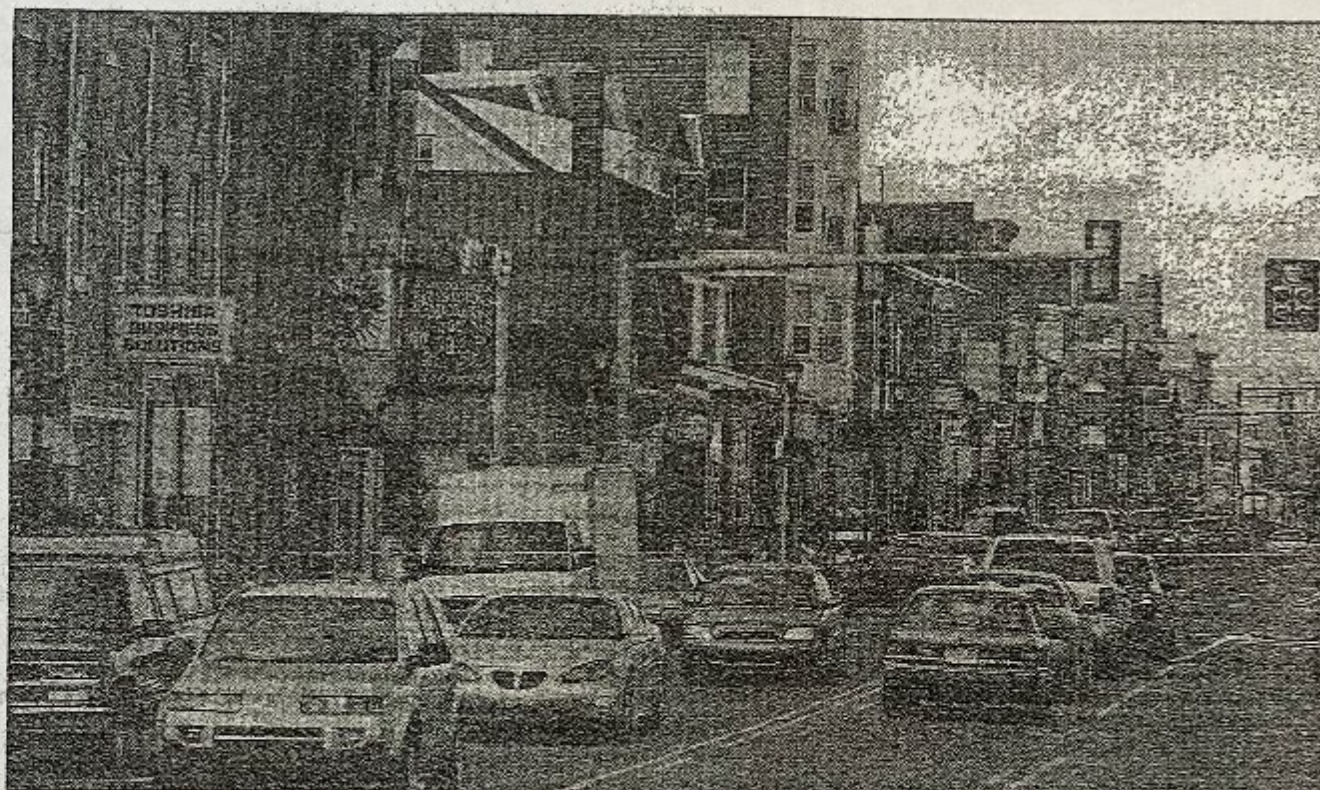
The Simmons family bought the former Village Hobby site and live above it with their daughter, 16-month-old Gracie Bell, because of the success of West Reading and Mike Simmons' family ties to Shillington where he grew up.

Rebecca Simmons, who plans to open Friday, is one of a handful of business owners opening or planning to open shops on Penn Avenue.

Sam Loth, manager of the West Reading Main Street program, an extensive multiyear downtown-revitalization project, said he sees a trend.

A few of the new entrepreneurs are young and have had a choice of places to settle, and they chose West Reading, he said.

"Some of the older businesses are fading away," he said. "They were here for



Reading Eagle: Matthew J. Scola

With the West Reading Main Street Program nearly complete, a handful of new businesses have decided to open in the borough, with each of the blocks between Fourth and Seventh avenues getting new businesses.

New businesses

years. She will rent what had been an empty storefront where Encompass Media had been located.

A familiar face to the area is Donald Z.









Pumpkin Festival



West Reading Criterion



Art on The Avenue





Craft Pretzel & Beer Fest



Santa Run



DeSoto Plymouth Dealer



A to Z Vacuum



West
Reading

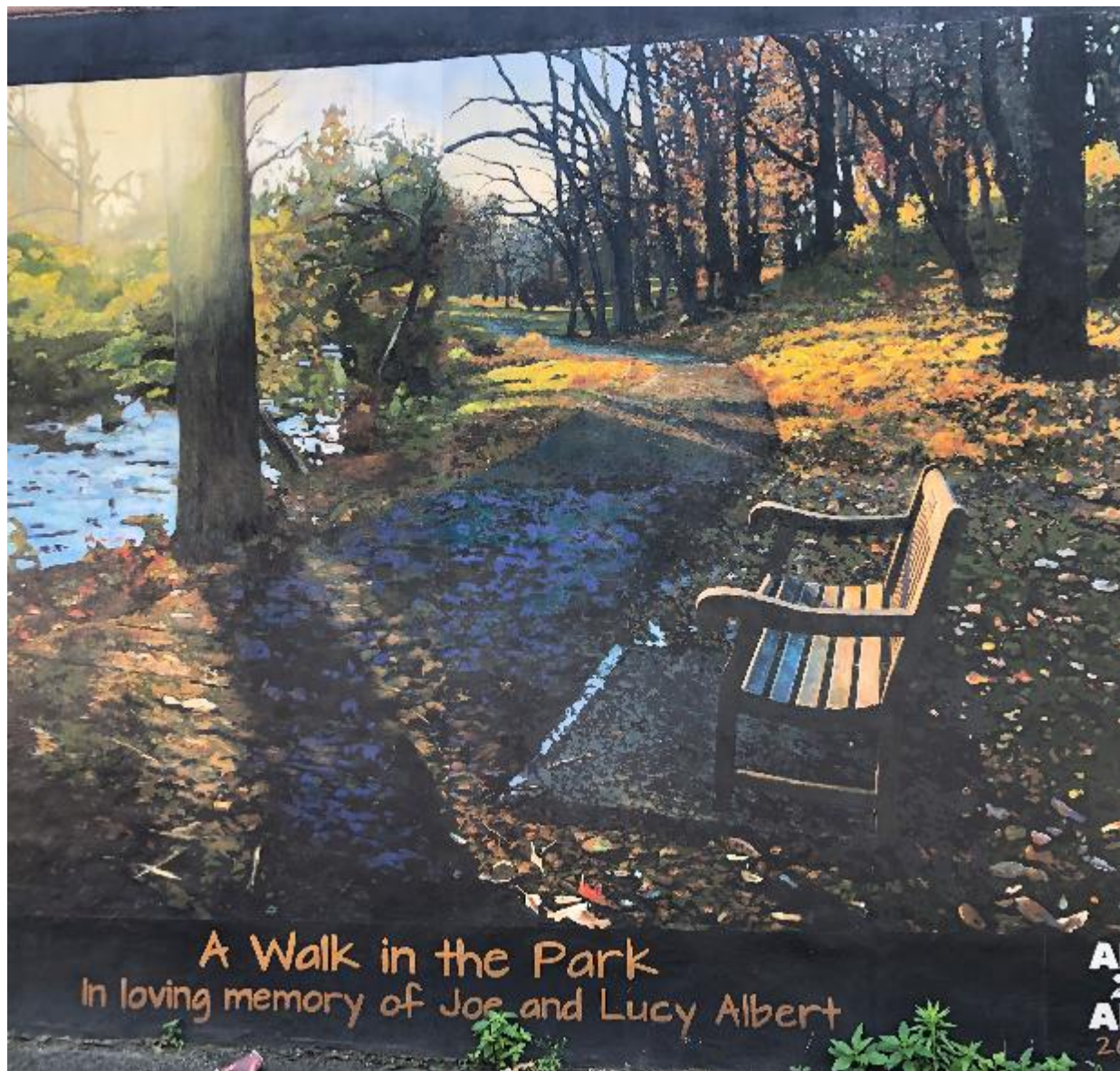
Motor Club



Elm Street Program



Cherry Street



Cherry Street



fifty years of steady growth, 1906-1956

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 1908—Building 101, the first structure erected by Berkshire with two stories added in 1914 | 6 1923—Building 201, acquired from Narrow Fabric Company | 11 1927—Dispensary |
| 2 1916—Extension to Building 101 | 7 1925—Berkshire office building | 12 1927—Recreation building |
| 3 1925—Concrete addition to Building 101, acquired from Narrow Fabric Company | 8 1925—West Garage for employee parking | 13 1927—Gate house |
| 4 1925—Building 108, the first finishing building | 9 1925—East Garage for employee parking (now Wyoming Polytechnic Institute Laboratory) | 14 1927—Wyoming Polytechnic Institute |
| 5 1922—Building 108, the second finishing building | 10 1926—Cafeteria | 15 1928—Building 201, acquired from Narrow Fabric Company |
| | | 16 1930—Building 201, linking building |
| | | 17 1951—Power house |







Narrow Fabric





"A thriving West Reading can be a catalyst in our efforts to attract new talent and revitalize our community,"

"The next step will be to spread that success to Reading and surrounding communities,"

Greater Reading Chamber Alliance President



future

a five year plan for
west reading & its downtown

why revitalize

protect existing historic character

repair the “missing teeth” in urban fabric

innovate or decline

need for green & public places

downtown grocer & arts anchors

coordinated plan for infill mixed use/ public places

rehabilitate with newer residential living choices



how

look at the big picture
assess the opportunities

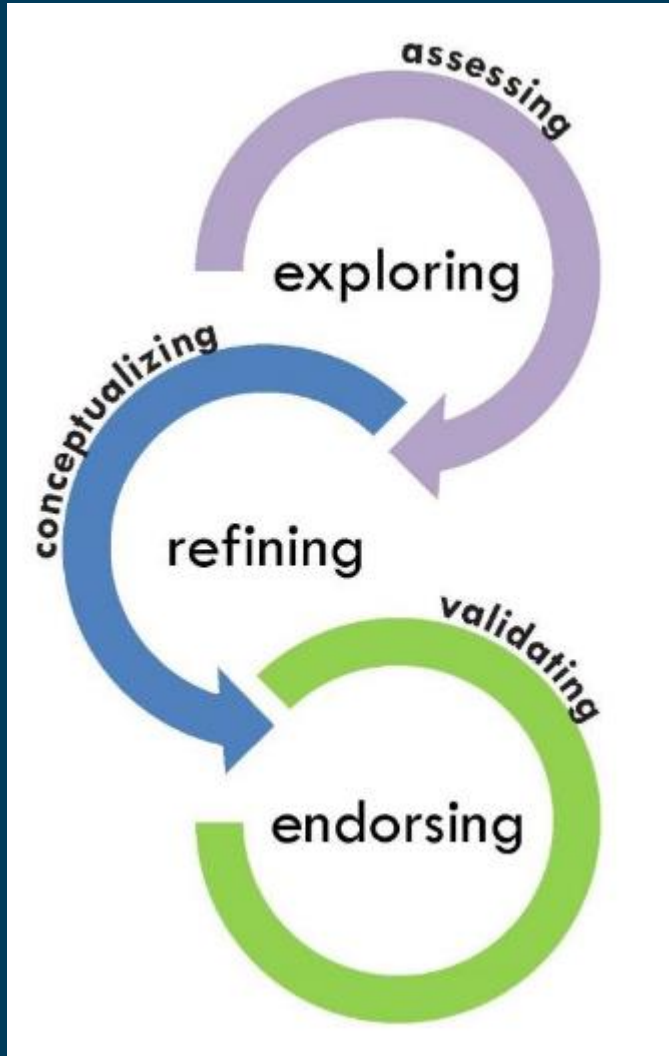
define success

engage, survey & listen

conceptualize & calibrate design standards

project study area





Task 1: Data Collection

- Assessing & Exploring

Task 2: Land Use & Analysis

- Conceptualizing & Refining

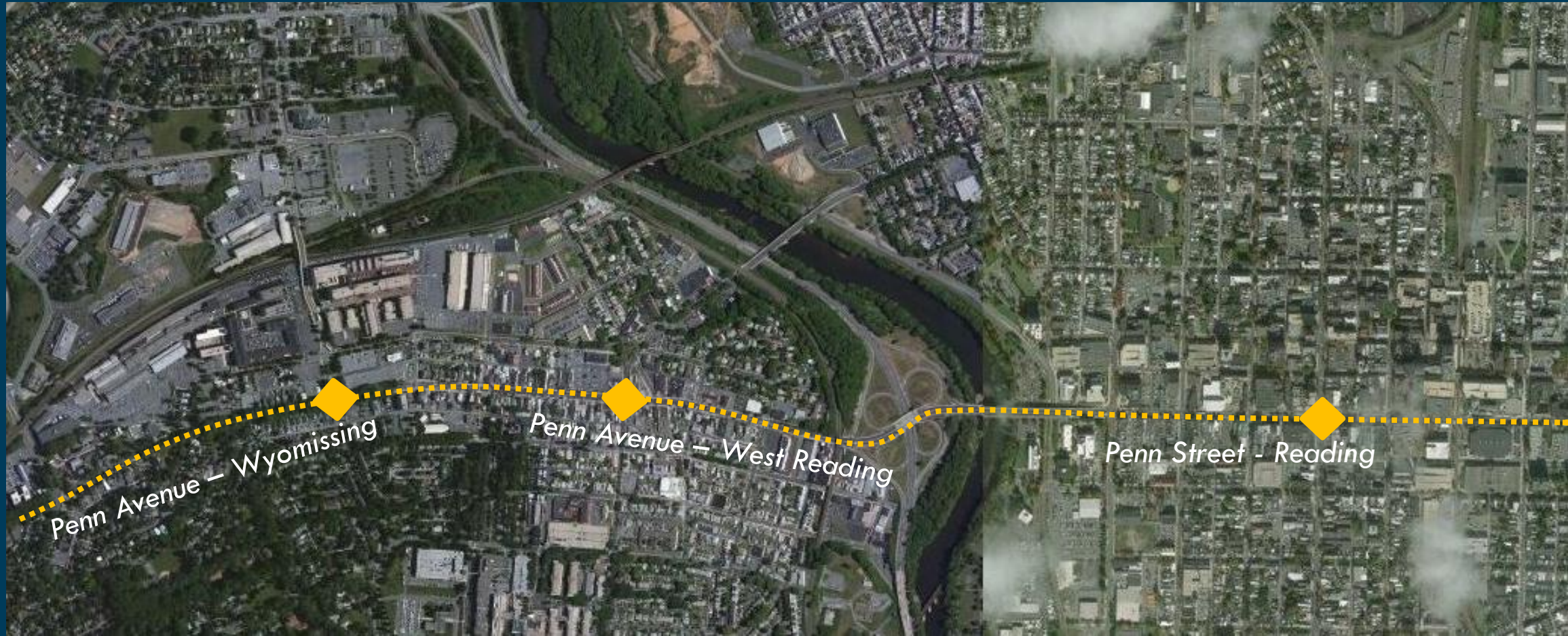
Task 3 & 4: Design Standards & Report

- Validating & Endorsing

1 look at the big picture



Penn Corridor a regional economic development opportunity



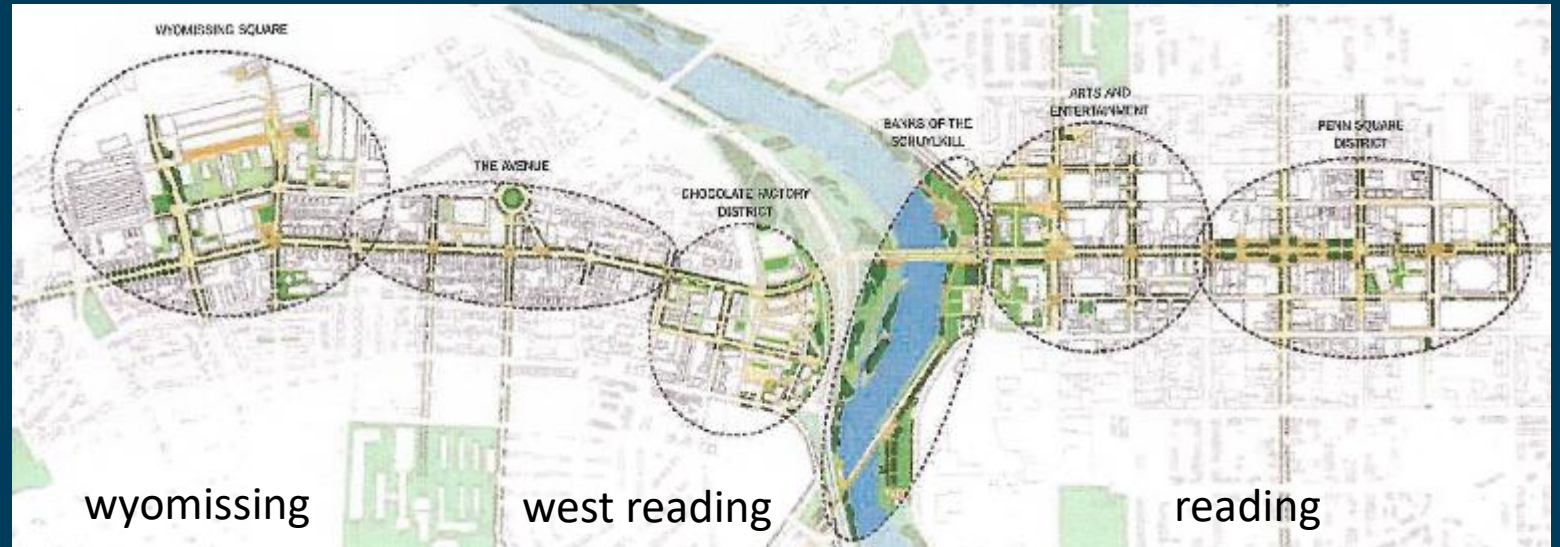
Seek regional partnerships

Municipal Investment in
Public Places &
Infrastructure



Private Investment in
Buildings and Businesses

regional economic development & urban strategy
to link the Penn Corridor from Wyomissing to West Reading to Reading



Source: Sasaki Associates - 2007

2 demographic & site assessment



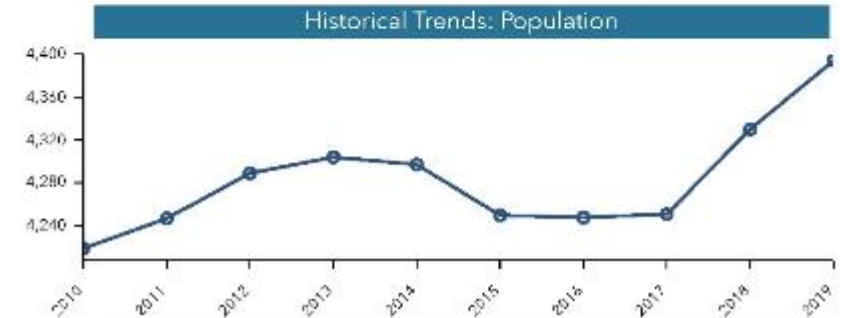


POPULATION TRENDS AND KEY INDICATORS

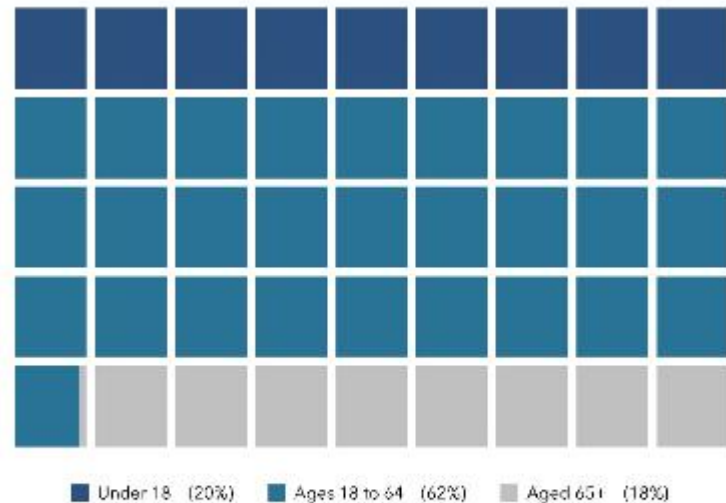
West Reading Borough, PA

4,394	1,671	2.39	38.9	\$47,803	\$127,796	42	151	73
Population	Households	Avg Size Household	Median Age	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Wealth Index	Housing Affordability	Diversity Index

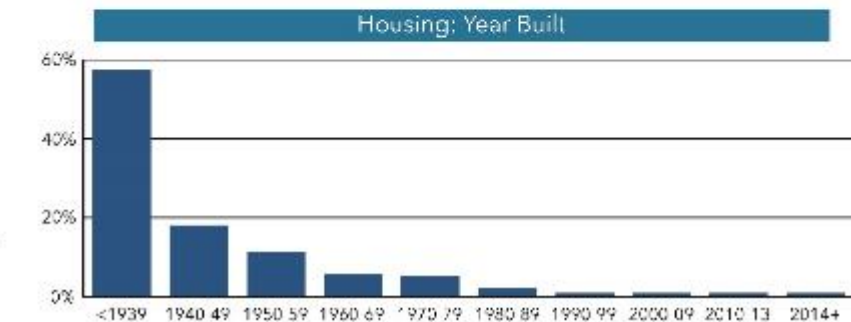
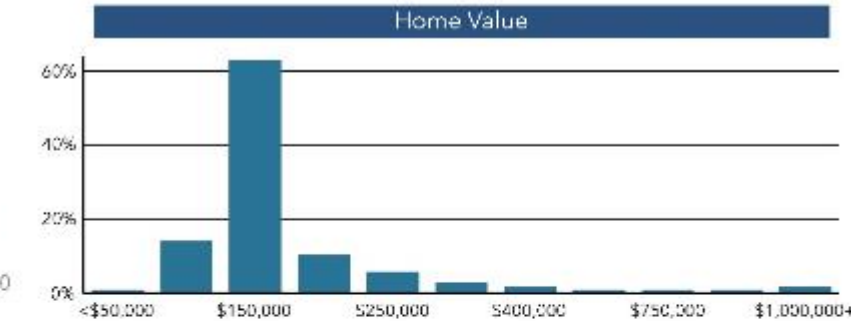
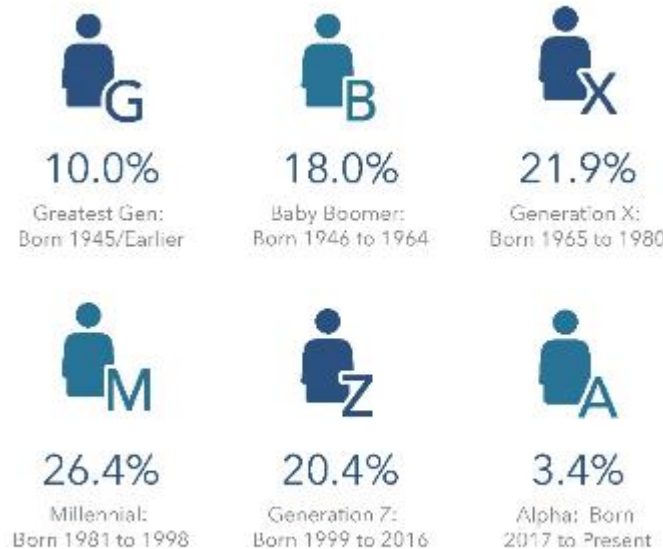
MORTGAGE INDICATORS



POPULATION BY AGE



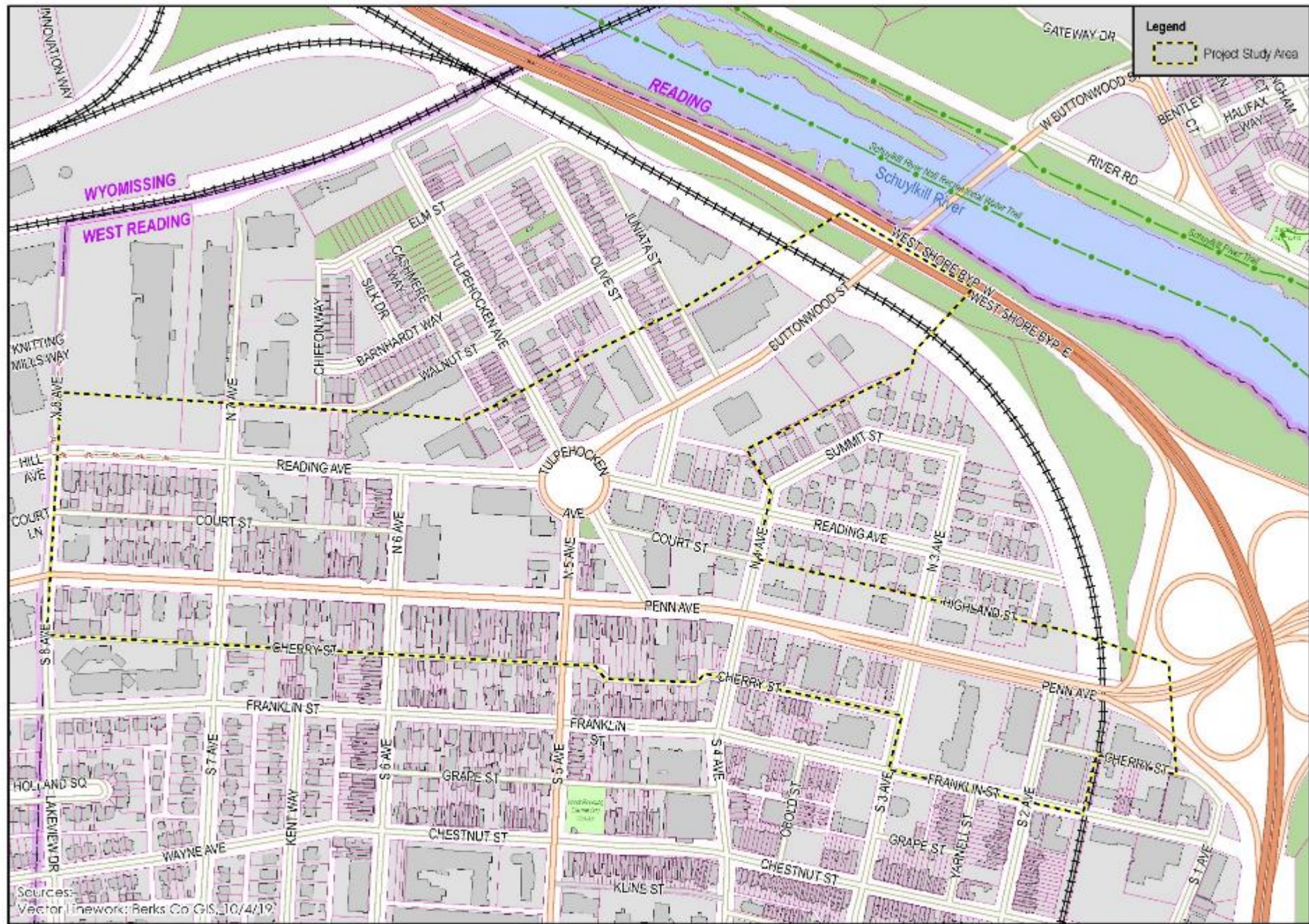
POPULATION BY GENERATION



THE SCIENCE OF WHERE™

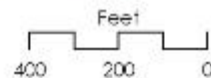
U.S. Census Bureau, FBI Incomes for 2019 and 2024, FxVintage 2019 Time Series

site assessment



West Reading Master Plan Study:

West Reading Borough, Berks County, Pennsylvania - 10/9/19

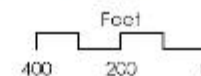


DERCK & EDSON
CONSULTING ENGINEERS & ARCHITECTS

Legend

- Project Study Area
- Existing Land Use
 - Residential Low
 - Residential High
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Institutional
 - Recreation
 - Open Space
 - Agriculture
 - Transportation
 - Water

Sources
Vector Linework: Berks Co GIS 10/4/19

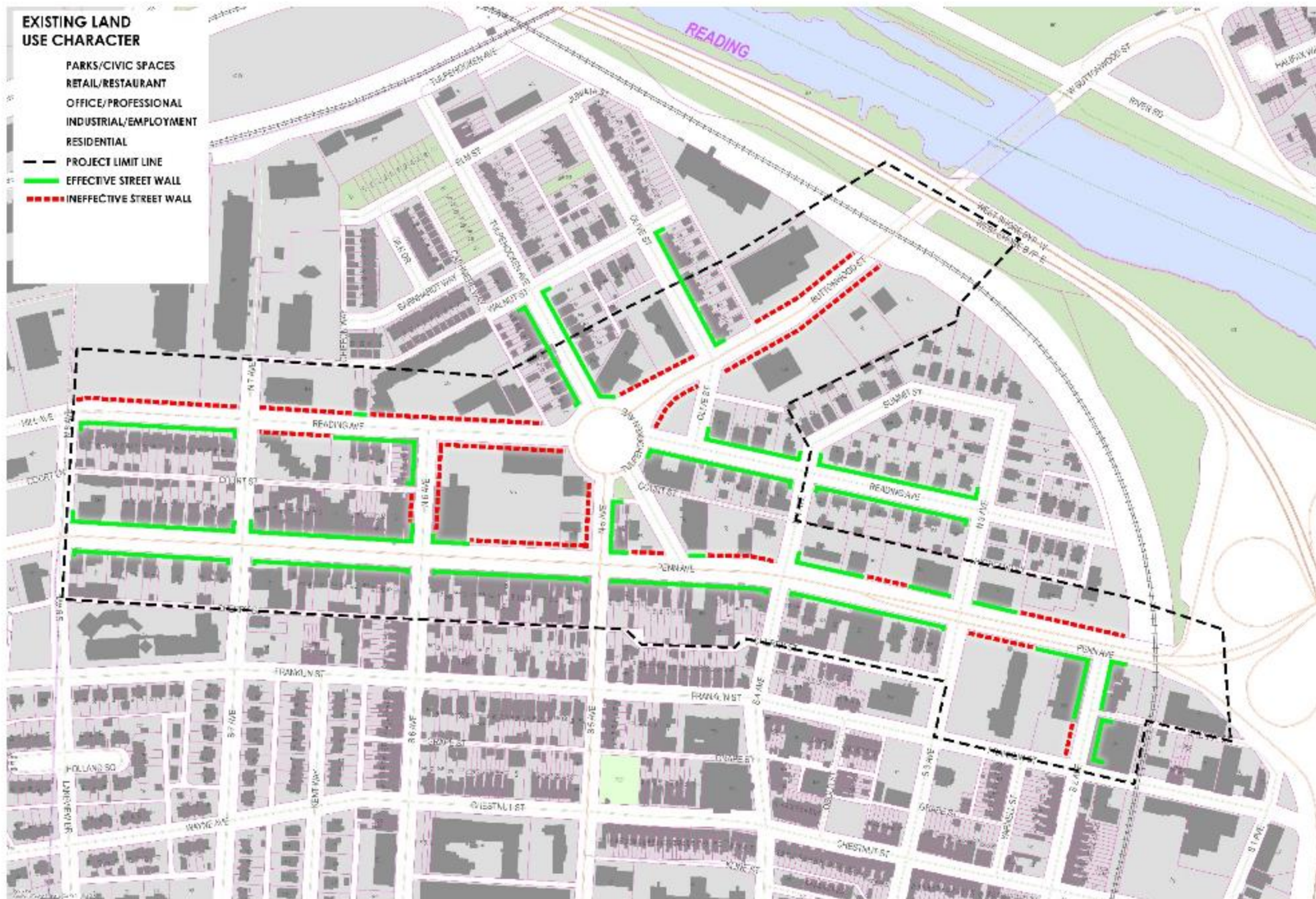


DERCK & EDSON
COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY & ARTS

EXISTING LAND USE CHARACTER

PARKS/CIVIC SPACES
RETAIL/RESTAURANT
OFFICE/PROFESSIONAL
INDUSTRIAL/EMPLOYMENT
RESIDENTIAL

--- PROJECT LIMIT LINE
--- EFFECTIVE STREET WALL
--- INEFFECTIVE STREET WALL



classic “main street” with storefronts at the street

Penn Avenue

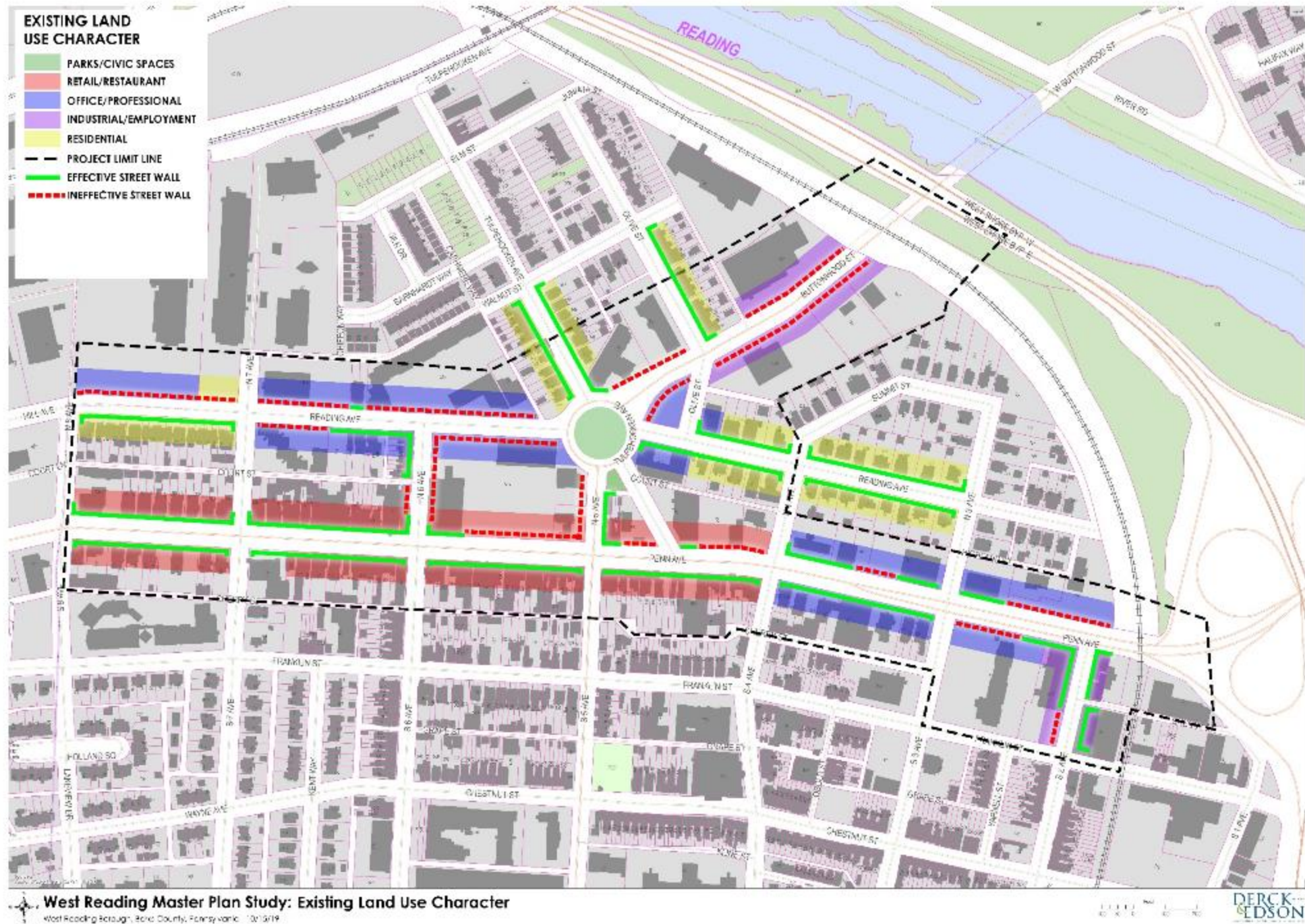


suburban style shopping center



Penn Avenue

site assessment



Weekday Private Parking Occupancy

Figure 4: Weekday Private Parking Occupancy



Source: Walker Consultants, 2017

Weekday Public Parking Occupancy

Figure 3: Weekday Public Parking Occupancy

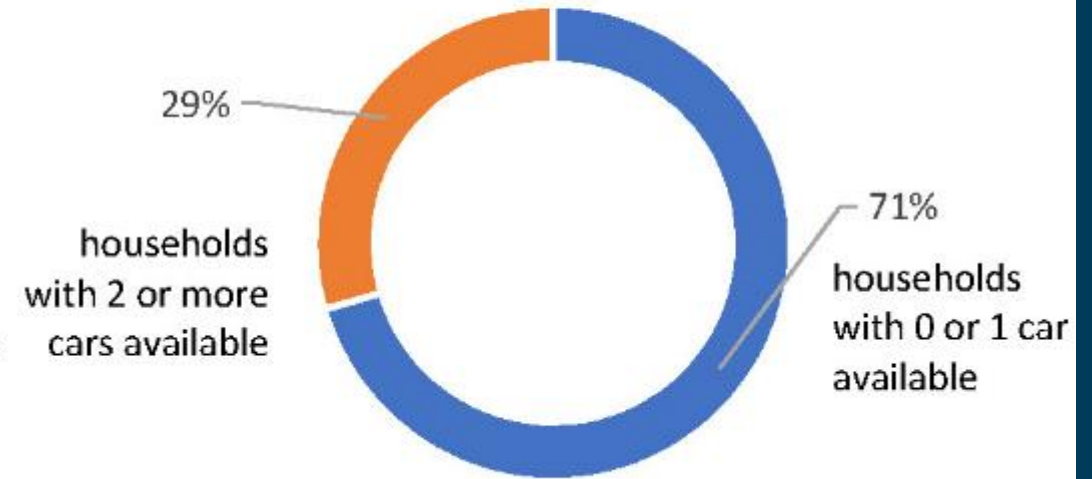


Source: Walker Consultants, 2017

Cars available per households in
West Reading Borough when owner occupied



Cars available per households in
West Reading Borough when renter occupied



Retail/ Service Businesses

- 22 Clothing & Jewelry Stores
- 4 Gift Stores
- 31 Restaurants & Eating/ Drinking Places
- 9 Health & Personal Care Stores





3 define success

Sixth Avenue as Plaza for Events

opportunity area






Eastern Industrial/ Riverfront District



Preliminary goals





4 engage, survey & listen

The background image shows a sunny day on a city street. On the left, a brick building houses 'Say Cheese! RESTAURANT & CHEESE', with a sign that also says 'DINE IN • TAKE OUT' and the phone number '610.406.5390'. Further down the street, a sign for 'WEST READING avery' is visible. A green street sign for 'S SIXTH AVE' is mounted on a utility pole. Pedestrians are walking on the sidewalk, and cars are on the street. Orange traffic cones are placed on the right side of the road. The text '4 engage, survey & listen' is overlaid in large white font across the lower half of the image.

Enhance the quality of the streetscape & building frontages

1



2



3



4



Traffic calmed and pedestrian friendly streets

5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

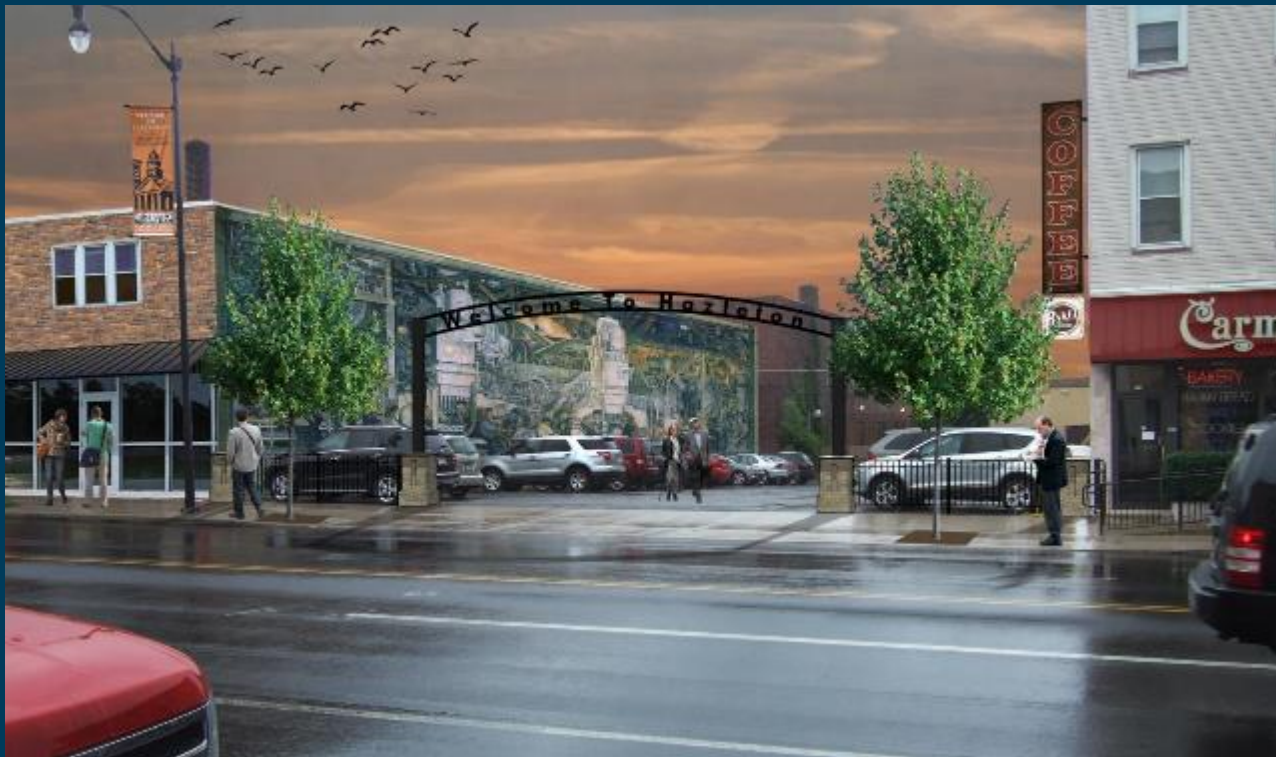






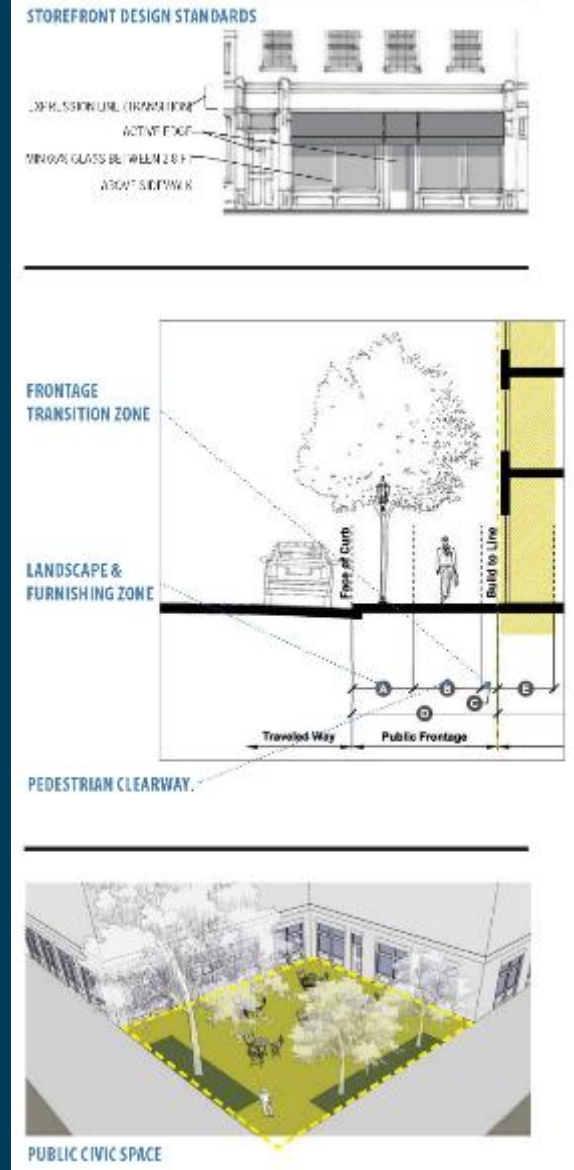
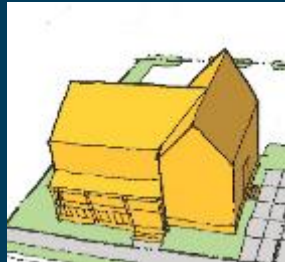
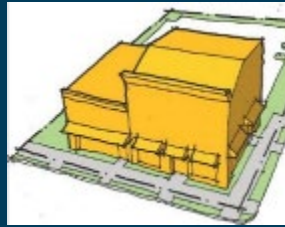
**5 conceptualize &
calibrate design standards**

visualizing west reading's new places



design standards/ form-based codes

- Community Preferences
- Design Standards
- Form Based Codes
- Zoning ordinances & overlays





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