

Improving Walkability and Bikeability in Small Boroughs

Tara Grunde-McLaughlin, Newtown Borough

Christina Arlt, AICP, McCormick Taylor

APA-PA Conference: Scranton, PA

October 15 – 17, 2023



Session Outline

- Learning a little bit more about you
- Boroughs in PA
- Newtown Borough
- The Planning Process
- Recommendations
- Roundtable Discussion

What type of municipality do you live in?

- City
- Borough
- Township (First Class or Second Class)
- Town
- Outside of PA

Why type of planner are you?

- Work for a government agency (e.g., local government, County, MPO/RPO, State, etc.)
- Work for a consultant
- Work for a non-profit
- Other



Boroughs in PA

How many local governments are there in Pennsylvania?

2,560

Of these, how many are boroughs?

956

(37%)

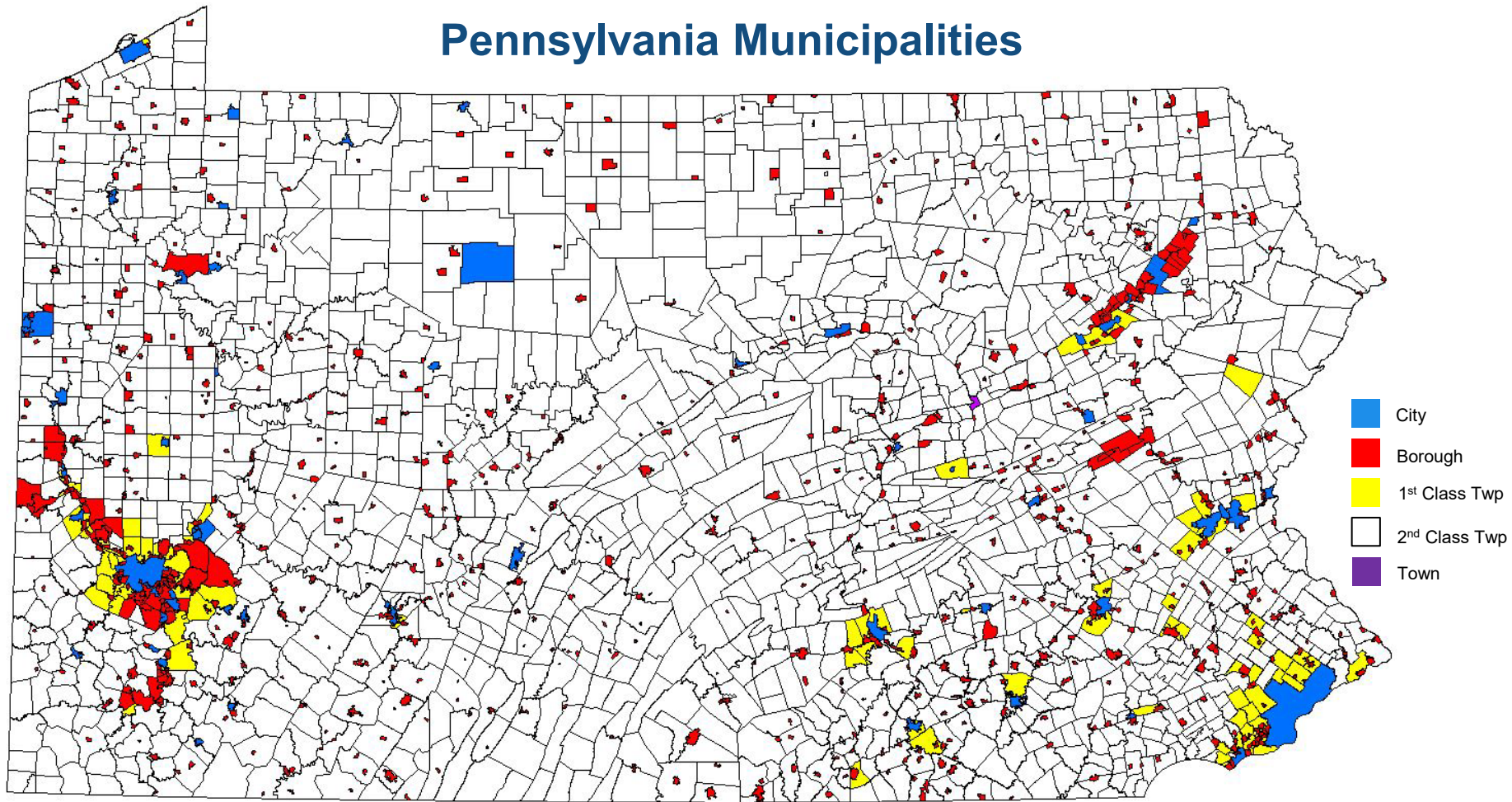
Which County has the highest number of boroughs?

Allegheny

82 boroughs

64% of municipalities

Pennsylvania Municipalities



Boroughs in Pennsylvania

Total Square Miles of Land in Boroughs in PA: 1,471 Square Miles

Average Square Miles of Boroughs in PA: 1.53 Square Miles

Total Population Who Live in Boroughs in PA: 2,528,922

Average Population Per Borough: 2,623

Average Year that Boroughs were Founded: 1870



Newtown Borough

Newtown Borough, Bucks County: At a Glance

- 2,268 Population (2020)
- 0.55 Square Miles
- Established 1682
- Founded 1838



How the Study Came About



Walk Friendly Communities (www.walkfriendly.org)



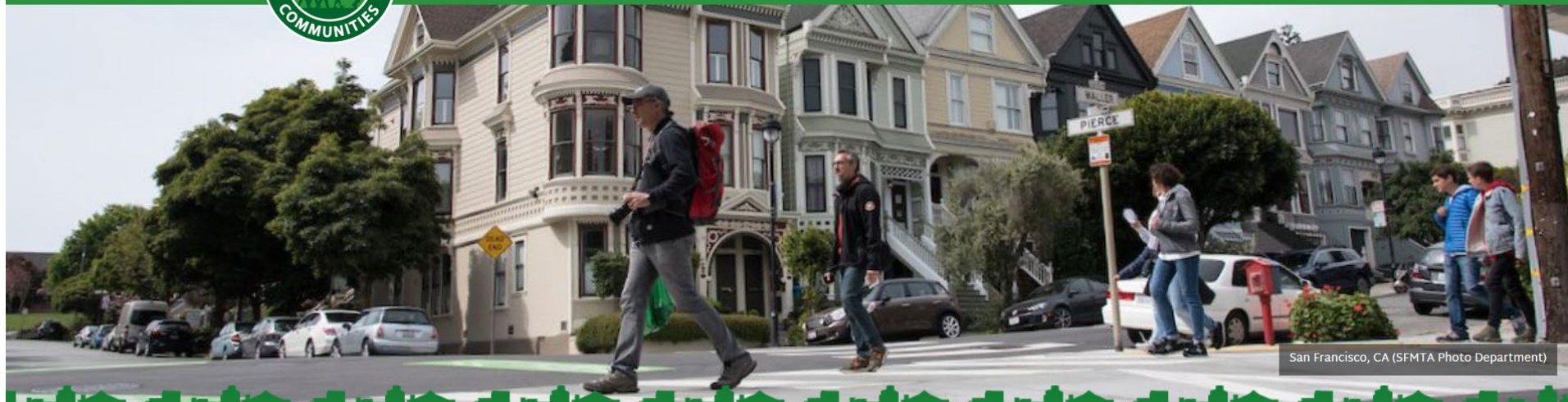
BENEFITS

COMMUNITIES

STRATEGIES

APPLY

LATEST



Encouraging U.S. towns and cities to support safer walking environments. [LEARN MORE](#)

New Communities Recognized

23 communities were recognized in June 2022 for their commitments to creating safe, walkable communities. Learn more about them [here](#).



WFC on Twitter



Walk Friendly Newtown Committee

The "Walk Friendly Newtown" Committee is a standing committee, established to address concerns related to traffic and pedestrian safety within Newtown Borough. Its mission is to improve the quality of life in Newtown Borough for residents and visitors by ensuring the ability to safely walk and drive throughout the borough.

Co-Chairs:

Courtney Lang & Don Hayden

Members:

Jean Bohr

Sam Cler

Emily Heinz

Amy Lustig

Jillian Mabin

Ron Sabo

Gregg Taylor

Scott Williams

Cheryl Wood

Borough Liaison, Dennis O'Brien



Courtney Lang



Don Hayden

DVRPC Transportation & Community Development Initiative Grant (TDCI)



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Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

The Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) is a grant opportunity that funds local planning initiatives that also advance the goals of the region's long-range plan, [Connections 2050: Plan for Greater Philadelphia](#). TCDI focuses on linking land use, transportation, and economic development planning that:

50% of all trips made by car in the US are under 3 miles and could easily be covered on a bike or on foot.

Benefits of Walking & Biking

- Reduces health disparities
- Provides access to employment
- Lowers air and noise pollution
- Improves mental health
- Improves community cohesion
- Significantly lowers household transportation expenses



Challenges of Improving Walking & Biking in Boroughs

- Narrow Right of Way
- Mature Tree Canopy
- Historic Resources
- Aesthetic Concerns
- Traffic Signals Controlled by Adjacent Municipalities
- Brick Sidewalks
- Narrow, Historic Bridges
- Speeding
- Failure to Yield to Pedestrians

Challenges: Narrow Right of Way



Challenges: Mature Tree Canopy



Challenges: Historic Resources



Challenges: Aesthetic Concerns



Challenges: Traffic Signals Controlled by Adjacent Municipality



Challenges: Brick Sidewalks



Challenges: **Narrow, Historic Bridges**



Challenges: Speeding



Challenges: Failure to Yield to Pedestrians in Crosswalks



**What are some walking and biking challenges
that your community faces?**

Opportunities: **Walk Friendly Newtown**



Opportunities: Children and Seniors Walking



Opportunities: Destinations People Want To Walk and Bike To



Opportunities: Former rail line that will become a Rail Trail



Opportunities: Newtown Heritage Walk



Opportunities: Residents walk and ride bikes in the cemetery because it feels safe



Opportunities: Non-residents come to the borough to walk



Opportunities: Funding Under IIJA



Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

IIJA: Frequently Asked Questions

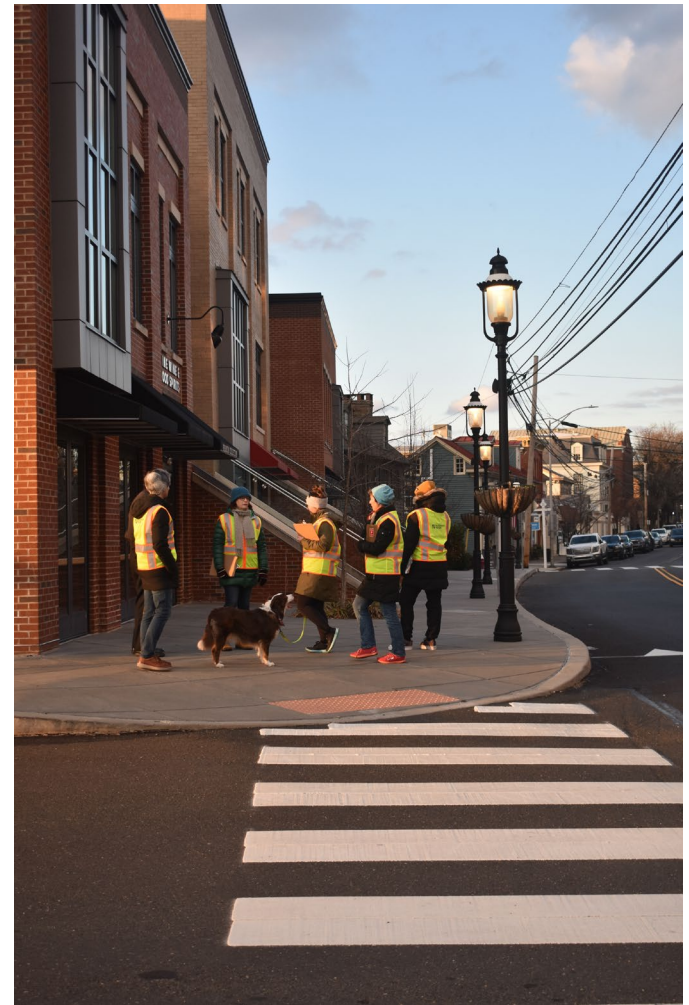
DVRPC can assist local governments in applying for competitive grants under the IIJA by providing **application data**, **support letters**, and coordinating activities and applications for regional initiatives.

What are some walking and biking opportunities that your borough is taking advantage of?



The Planning Process

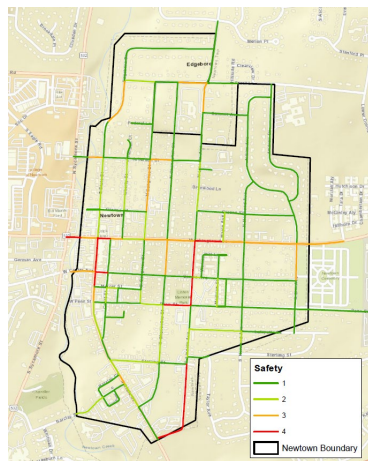
Site Visit



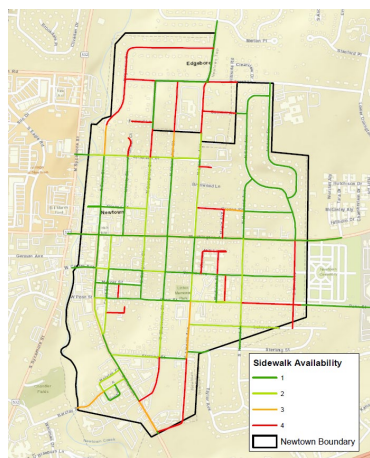
2023 Project Schedule

[illegible]

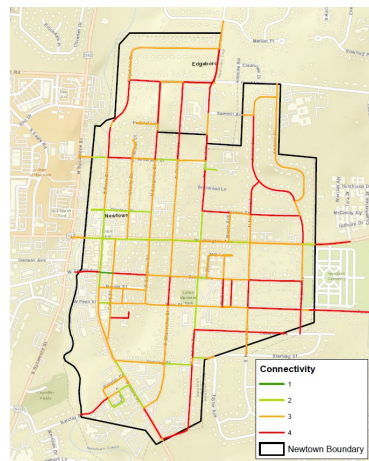
Mapping



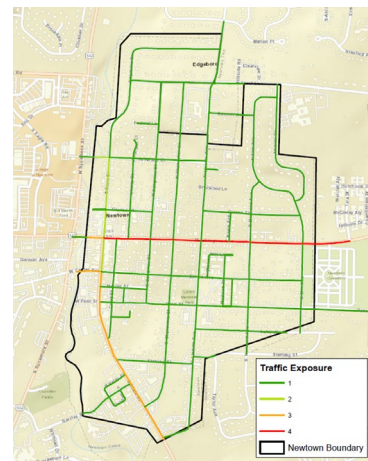
Safety



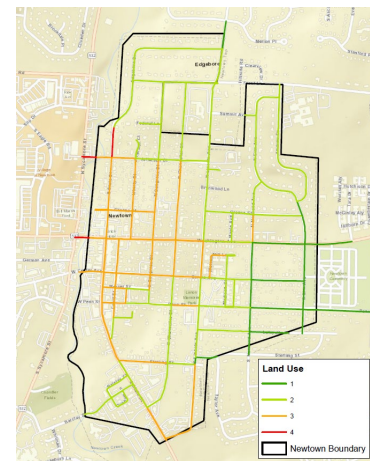
Sidewalk Availability



Connectivity



Traffic Exposure



Land Use

Online Survey

Newtown Borough Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Survey

Please share your thoughts on pedestrian and bicycle safety in Newtown Borough by filling out the survey below.

What are your top three reasons for walking in Newtown Borough?

☐ Walk to work or a bus stop

☒ Walk children to school or playgrounds

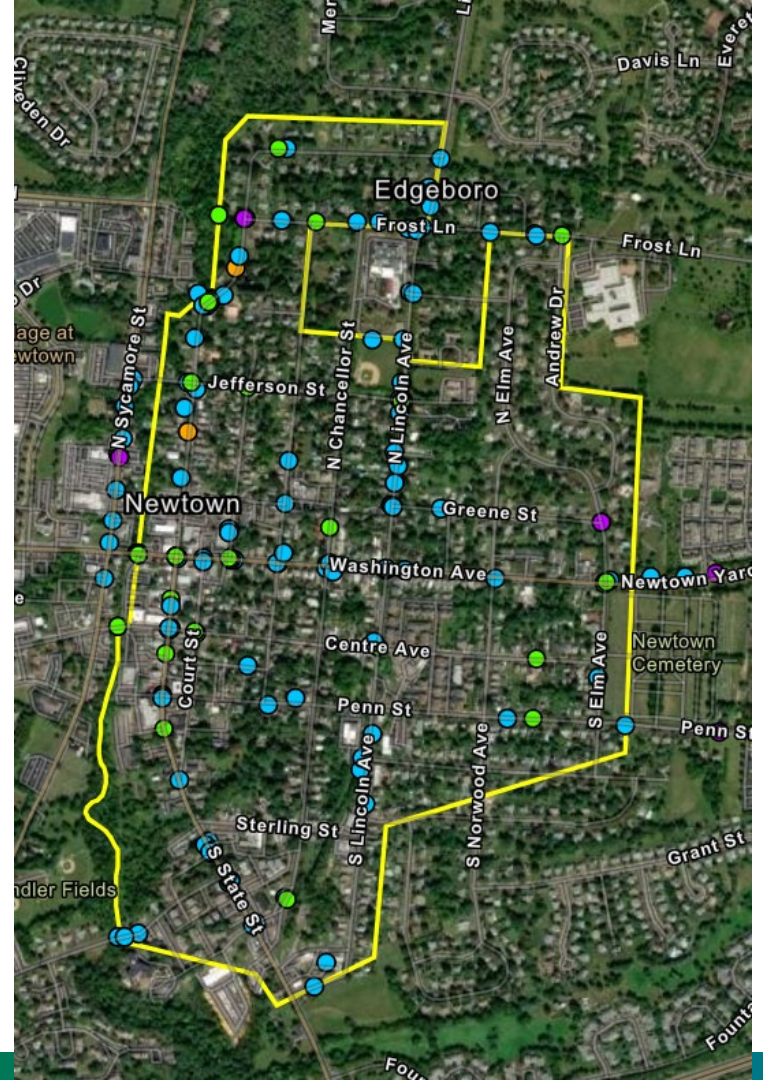
☐ Walk to shopping or dining

☐ Walk to appointments or to run errands

☐ Walk for exercise

☐ Walk a dog

☐ Other



Advertising: Borough Newsletter

WALK FRIENDLY NEWTOWN (WFN)



Walk Friendly Newtown (WFN) is a standing committee focused on enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors in Newtown Borough by improving the ability to safely walk, cycle and drive throughout the Borough. During 2022, WFN placed "Slow Down for Newtown" signs in various Borough locations, helped improve visibility of existing road signage, engaged in a series of community education initiatives (car magnets, stickers, armbands), and worked with Borough Police to secure and place "Yield to Pedestrian in Crosswalk" sentinels near high-volume crosswalks, as well as support other

Borough Police pedestrian safety initiatives. WFN is also providing input into and coordinating efforts with those involved in the development and implementation of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan.

WFN plans to expand these efforts in 2023, while also aligning its work with the comprehensive Newtown Borough Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Study to be completed by September 30, 2023. Please contact Don Hayden (dhaydenjr@aol.com) or Emily Heinz (ehein@boroughofnewtown.com) if you would like further information on Walk Friendly Newtown's activities or if you would like to become involved in the work the group is doing.



Newtown Borough would like to make it safer, easier, and more convenient to walk, bike, and roll in town. As part of the Safety & Walkability Review for Multimodal Improvements study, Newtown Borough and Walk Friendly Newtown have released a survey to understand people's concerns about walking and biking. The feedback will be used to prioritize future improvements. Access the survey at <https://arcg.is/18OSCa1> or via the QR code. We appreciate your feedback!

Advertising

How can we improve walking and biking in Newtown Borough?

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

SURVEY ENDS JUNE 30



How can we improve walking and biking in Newtown Borough?

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

TAKE OUR ONLINE SURVEY

bit.ly/NewtownSurvey



SURVEY ENDS JUNE 30



Help Newtown Borough
and Walk Friendly Newtown
spread the word!

Share the link with your
neighbors!

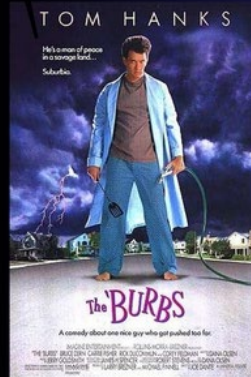
Advertising

MOVIES IN THE PARK

Linton Memorial Park
Movies begin at sundown

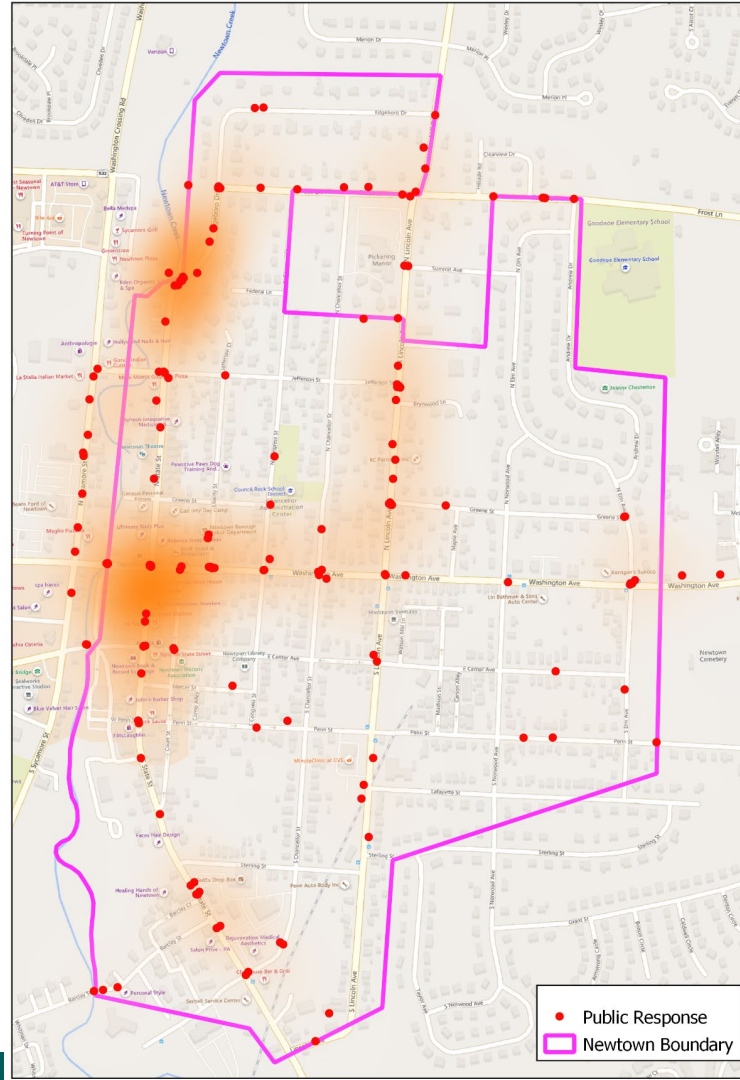


June 7: The Burbs
June 21: Up
July 12: SuperPets



Public Engagement

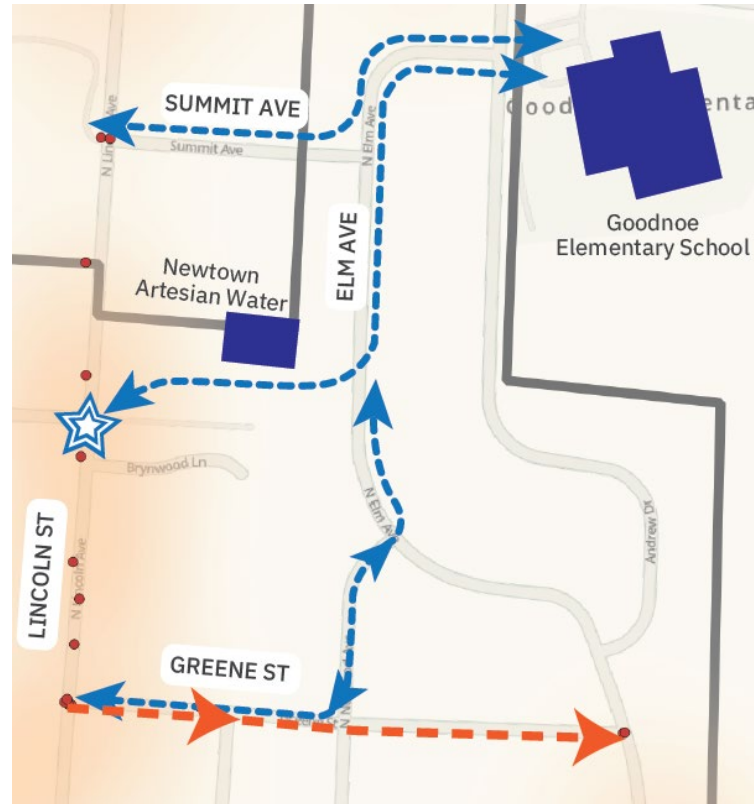






Recommendations

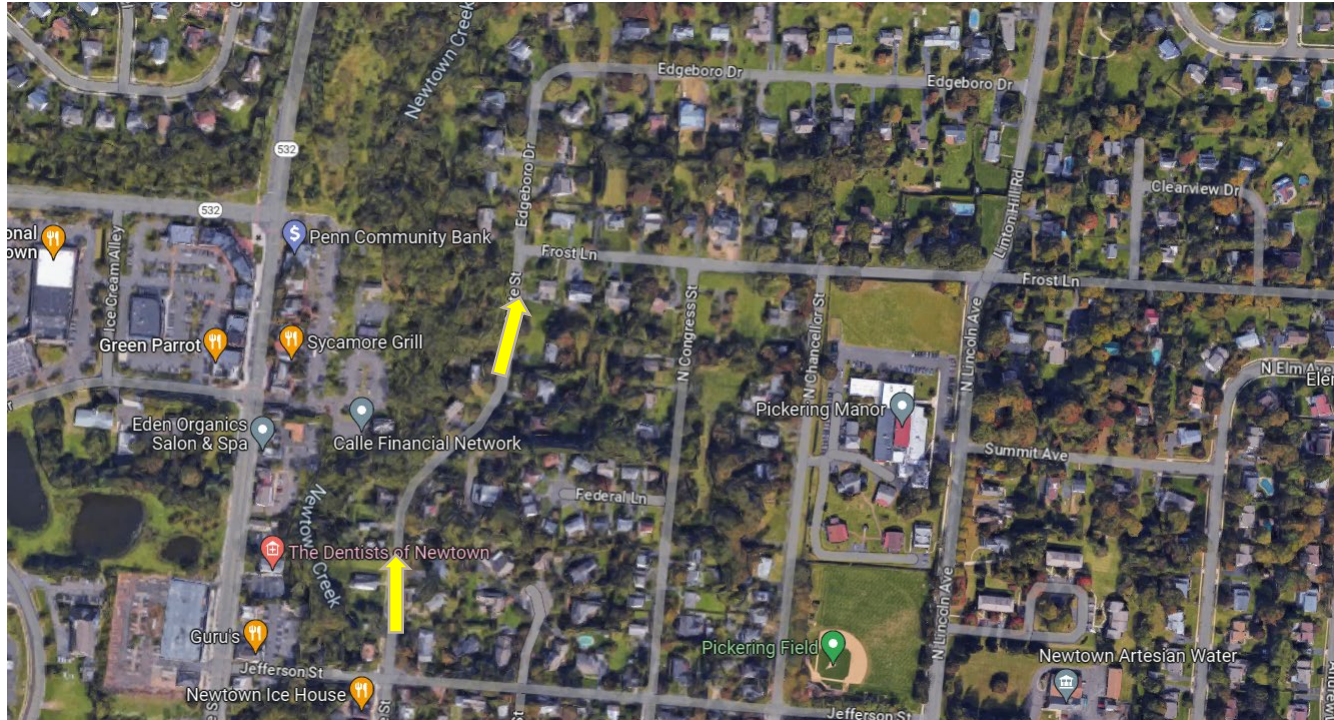
Getting Students Safely To and From School



North State Street (Curve)



North State Street (Curve)



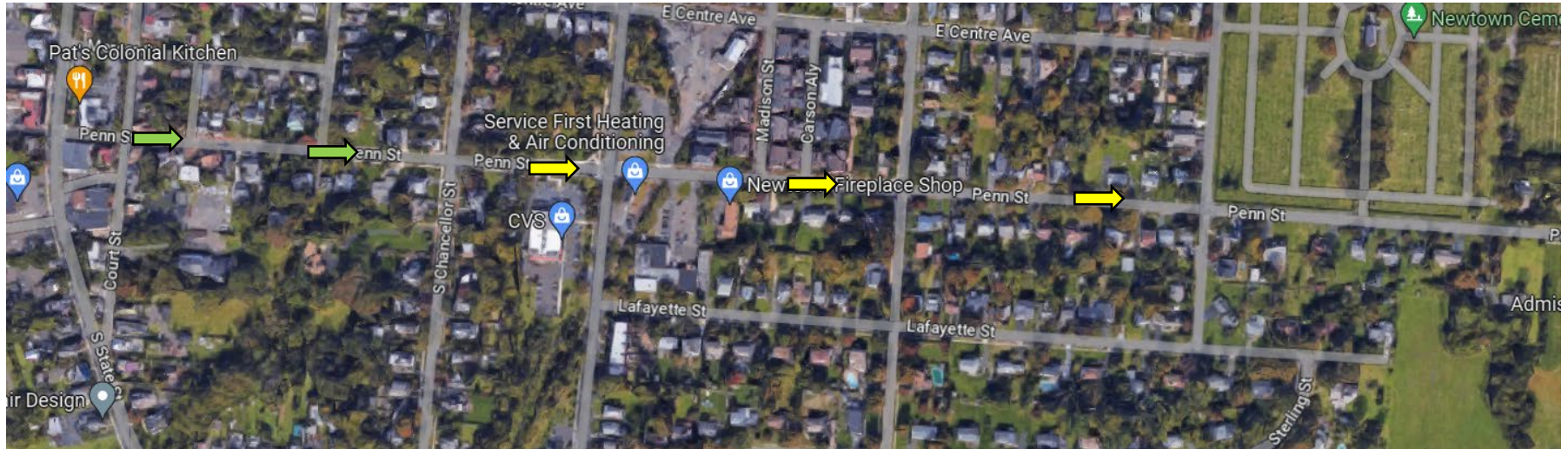
Penn Street – continued one-way



Penn Street – continued one-way



Penn Street – continued one-way



Penn Street – one way – at Elm Ave intersection



Lincoln Ave - Traffic Calming Measures



Lincoln Ave - Traffic Calming Measures



Lincoln Ave - Traffic Calming Measures



Flashing Pedestrian Beacon (FPB)

[Weblink - FPB](#)



NEWTOWN BOROUGH SAFETY AND WALKABILITY REVIEW



DRAFT

September 2023



Equity Considerations

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same—regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need—understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.





Questions?



Roundtable Discussion

Roundtable Discussion

- What difficult problems have you have with walking and biking in your community?
- What creative solutions have you used to improve walking and biking in your community?
- What funding sources have you used to improve walking and biking in your community?
- How have you included equity considerations in your walking and biking work?

Thank You!

- **Christina Arlt, AICP**
 - Manager, Planning & Communications
 - McCormick Taylor
 - carlt@mccormicktaylor.com
 - 267-546-5070
- **Tara Grunde-McLaughlin**
 - Council President
 - Newtown Borough
 - tgrundemclaughlin@boroughofnewtown.com