Diverse Downtowns

75 of the region's downtowns were analyzed, and each were assigned a Diversity Score and a Pandemic Impact Score on scales of 1—100, with one being the most diverse and least impacted.

This effort found that more diverse downtowns were generally less impacted by the economic shutdown related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

All 75 of the downtowns that were analyzed are listed, along with their Pandemic Impact Scores, in order from most to least diverse.

DELAWARE VALLEY
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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Princeton | 33
West Chester Borough | 34
Norristown Borough | 37
Burlington City | 46
Collingswood Borough | 45
Upper Darby Township | 32
Lower Merion Township (Ardmore) | 38
Glassboro Borough | 39
Phoenixville Borough | 44
Haddonfield Borough | 35
Woodbury City | 43
Lansdowne Borough | 49
Trenton (State Street) | 58
Bristol Borough | 26
Lansdale Borough | 54
Doylestown Borough | 29
Bordentown City | 52
Riverside Township | 59
Mount Holly Township | 48
Kennett Square Borough | 48
Chester City (Avenue of the States) | 41
New Hope Borough | 14
Swarthmore Borough | 60
Media Borough | 40
Gloucester City | 50

Pottstown Borough | 39
Coatesville City | 56
Moorestown Township | 54
Paulsboro Borough | 58
Swedesboro Borough | 43
Pitman Borough | 50
Lower Merion Township (Bryn Mawr) | 54
Quakertown Borough | 35
Philadelphia (52nd Street) | 33
Radnor Township (Wayne) | 50
Ambler Borough | 61
Palmyra Borough | 47
Marcus Hook Borough | 57
Malvern Borough | 45
Narberth Borough | 59
Downingtown Borough | 42
Haddon Township (Westmont) | 38
Merchantville Borough | 52
Pennsauken Township | 49
Camden City (Federal Street) | 42
Sellersville Borough | 75
Darby Borough | 55
Maple Shade Township | 58
Harrison Township (Mullica Hill) | 27
Langhorne Borough | 52

Newtown Borough | 42
Berlin Borough | 61
Norwood Borough | 67
Hightstown Borough | 55
Haddon Heights Borough | 58
Hatboro Borough | 47
Ridley Park Borough | 69
Perkasie Borough | 53
Audubon Borough (Merchant St.) | 58
Pine Hill Borough | 59
Jenkintown Borough | 52
Lower Merion Township (Haverford) | 75
Riverton Borough | 70
Cheltenham Township (Glenside) | 55
Yardley Borough | 49
Souderton Borough | 73
Haverford Township (Oakmont) | 59
Morrisville Borough | 60
Telford Borough | 59
Westville Borough | 64
Wenonah Borough | 58
Barrington Borough | 74
Haverford Township (Brookline) | 66
East Lansdowne Borough | 60
Laurel Springs Borough | 81

Characteristics that reduced the pandemic's impact:

Downtowns with the following characteristics were generally less impacted by the pandemic than their peers.

Development

Recent mixed-use, residential, and retail developments within the downtowns increased diversity as well as resiliency.

Diversity

Downtowns with diverse built environments, demographics, local economies, mix of uses, and transportation options, were less impacted.

People

Diverse and permanent residential populations located within the downtowns provided retailers with customers even as people stayed close to home.

Trails

Existing Circuit Trails connected downtowns with open space and enabled alternative modes of transportation.

Walkability

Historic downtowns with more pedestrian-friendly built environments had greater resiliency.

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Characteristics that exacerbated the pandemic's impact:

Downtowns that lacked the characteristics found to reduce the pandemic's impact, or that were more greatly defined by the following characteristics, were generally more impacted by the pandemic than their peers.

Cars

Auto-oriented downtowns with lower Walk Scores and more cars per household were more impacted by the pandemic.

Colleges

Downtowns that are overly-reliant on these anchor institutions were less resilient during the pandemic.

Goods & Services

As the share of Neighborhood Goods & Services (NGS) retailers increased in a downtown, so did the pandemic's impact.

Transit

The pandemic significantly reduced transit ridership, and this impact had a ripple effect in transit-oriented downtowns.

Vacancy

The pandemic had a greater impact as downtown vacancy rates increased.

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Diverse Downtowns | Bristol Borough, PA

For the 75 downtowns analyzed, each were assigned a Diversity Score and a Pandemic Impact Score on scales of 1—100, with one being the most diverse and least impacted. The more diverse downtowns were generally less impacted by the pandemic.

Bristol's downtown scores 39 with regards to diversity, which makes it the 14th most diverse downtown in the region. This is due to the downtown's relatively walkable built environment, robust and diverse residential population, diverse mix of uses, and its location along a completed Circuit Trail.

As a result, Bristol's Pandemic Impact Score of 26 was the second lowest in the region behind New Hope with a score of 14.

39

Diversity Score
Built environment, mix of uses, population, transportation, and types of downtowns

26

Pandemic Impact Score
Visits and trade area pre-pandemic, and during the shut-down and reopening periods

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Downtown Typologies

Nine downtown typologies were identified and the average Pandemic Impact Score was determined for each: *Brewery (45), Circuit (48), Classic (46), College (50), Core (43), Expanding (42), Historic (47), Opportunity (45), and Transit-Oriented (50).*

On average, the more typologies that a downtown fell into, the lower the Pandemic Impact Score. Bristol is considered to be four of these typologies: *Circuit, Classic, Historic, and Opportunity* (designated as an Opportunity Zone by the federal government).

Downtowns that are considered to be four typologies on average had a Pandemic Impact Score of 44, which is 18 points higher than Bristol's score of 26.

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BREWERY — 45
CIRCUIT — 48
CLASSIC — 46
COLLEGE — 50
CORE — 43
EXPANDING — 42
HISTORIC — 47
OPPORTUNITY — 45
TRANSIT-ORIENTED — 50
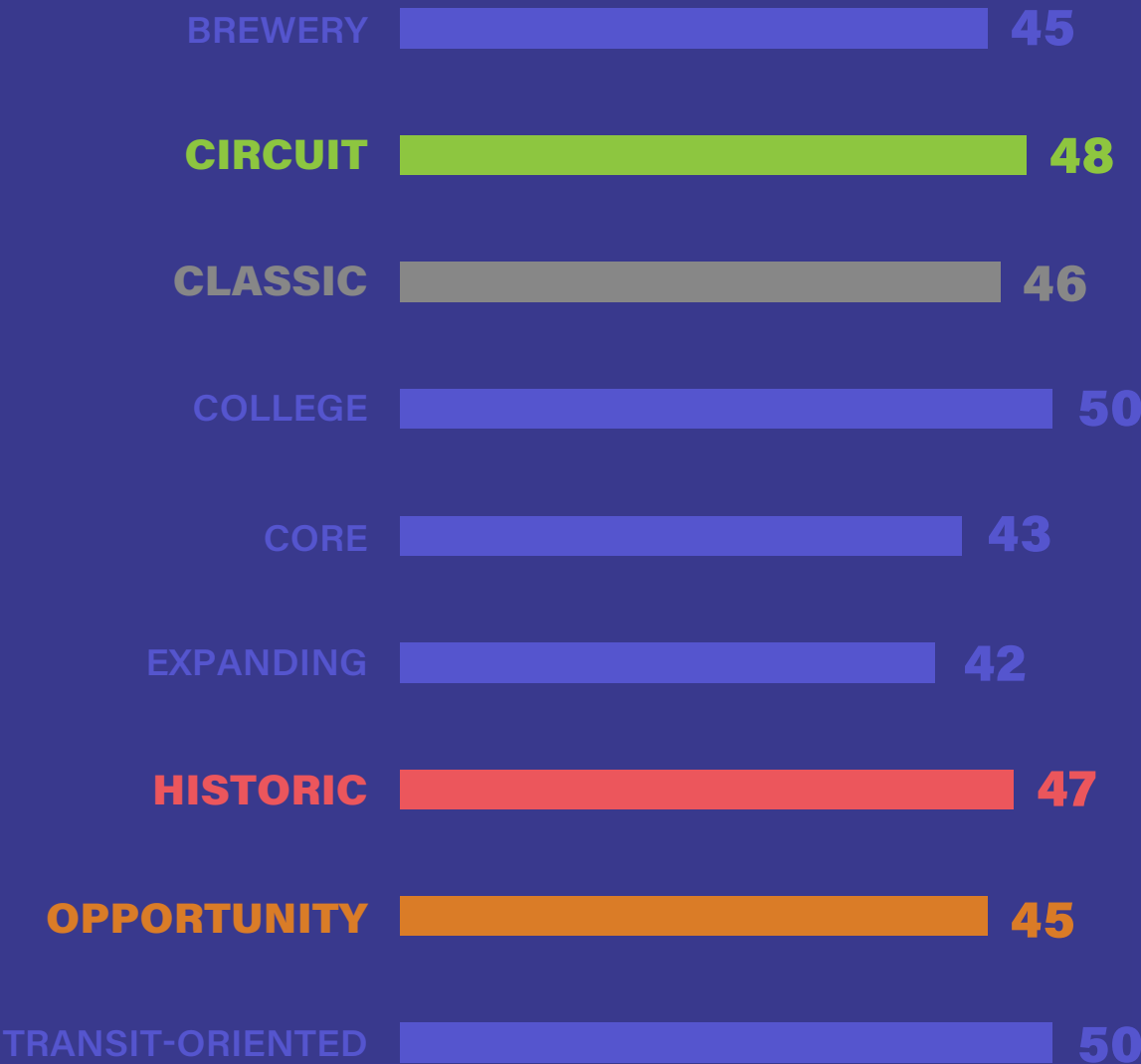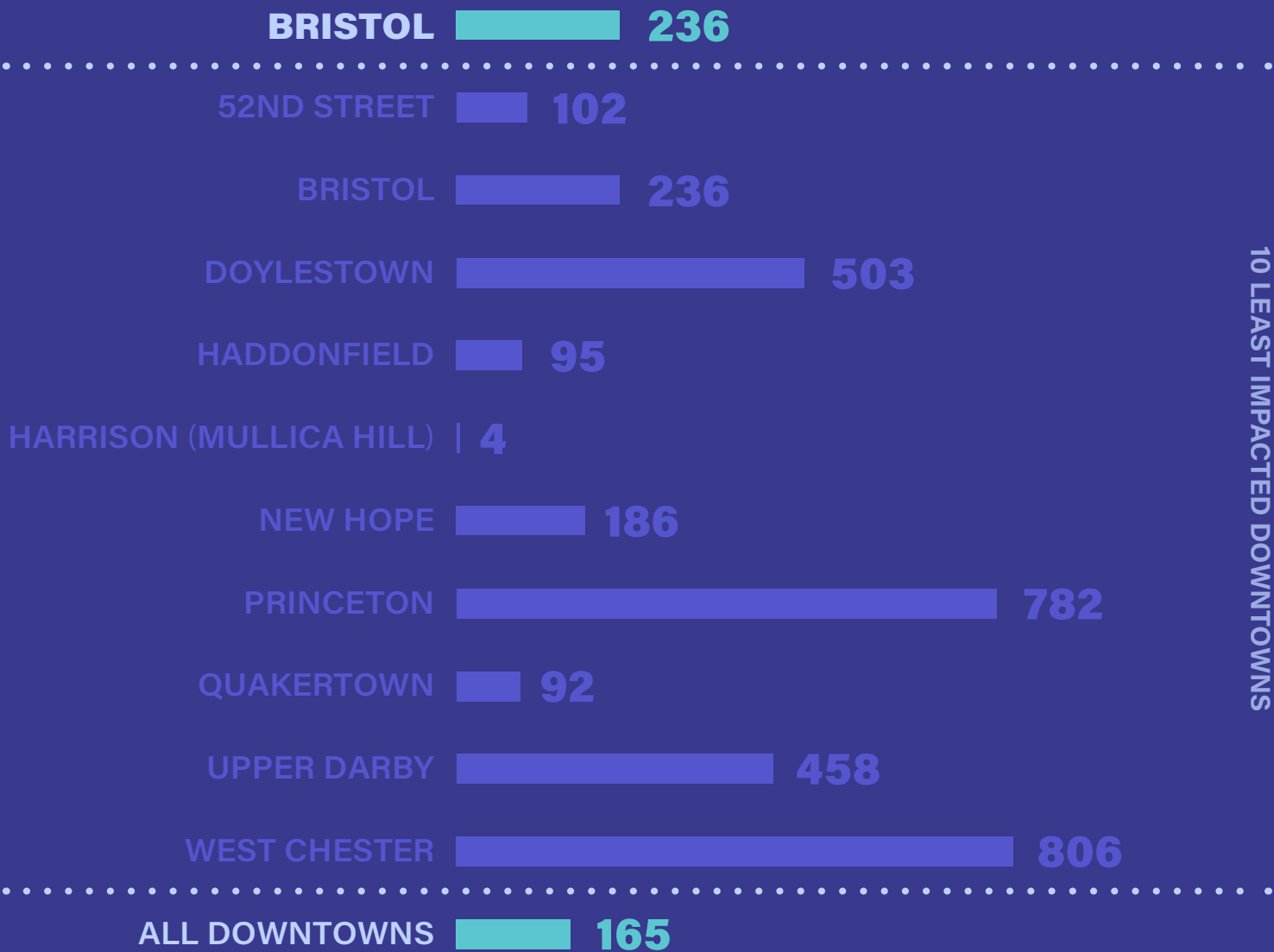
Downtown Population

A negative correlation between the estimated population of the region's downtowns and the Pandemic Impact Score was identified. In other words, the larger the downtown population, the smaller the impact.

In 2019, Bristol's downtown population was estimated to be 236, which is higher than the average for all downtowns (165 residents) and lower than the average for the least impacted downtowns (326 residents).

Bristol's downtown population is relatively diverse with regards to demographics, with the White, Black, and Hispanic populations accounting for 76%, 10%, and 15% respectively.

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

BRISTOL ▬ 236

52ND STREET	102
BRISTOL	236
DOYLESTOWN	503
HADDONFIELD	95
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	4
NEW HOPE	186
PRINCETON	782
QUAKERTOWN	92
UPPER DARBY	458
WEST CHESTER	806

ALL DOWNTOWNS ▬ 165

Mix of Uses

Retail Mix:

24%
Food & Beverage (FB)

31%
General Merchandise,
Apparel, Furnishings,
& Other (GAFO)

46%
Neighborhood Goods
& Services (NGS)

52%
Retail

2%
Civic

1%
Cultural

0%
Institutional

21%
Office

15%
Residential

9%
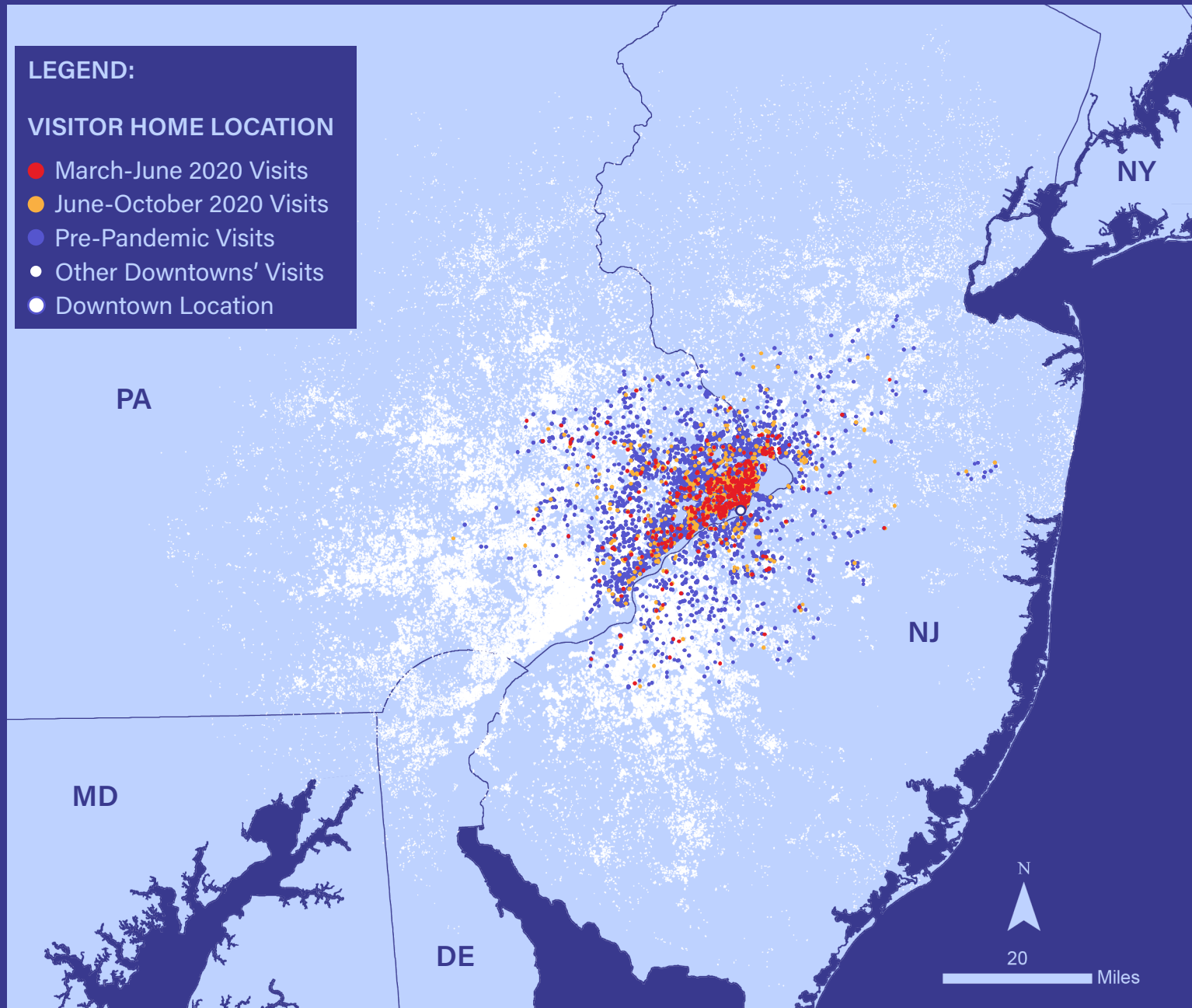Vacancy

Retail accounts for 52% of the uses in Bristol's downtown, which is lower than the averages of 57% for all downtowns and 60% for the least impacted downtowns.

Additionally, in the least impacted downtowns, *Food & Beverage* (FB) and *General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings & Other* (GAFO) retailers made up larger shares of retail on average at 30% and 38% respectively. Conversely, *Neighborhood Goods & Services* (NGS) retailers made up a smaller share at 30%. On average as the share of NGS retailers increased so did the Pandemic Impact Score, and Bristol's downtown has one of the highest shares of NGS retailers in the region.

A correlation between increased vacancy rates and the Pandemic Impact Score was also identified, and at 9%, Bristol's vacancy rate is higher than nearly 2/3 of all downtowns.

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LEGEND:

VISITOR HOME LOCATION

- 🔴 March-June 2020 Visits
- 🟠 June-October 2020 Visits
- 🟣 Pre-Pandemic Visits
- ⚪ Other Downtowns' Visits
- ⚪ Downtown Location

PA

MD

DE

NJ

NY

N

20 Miles
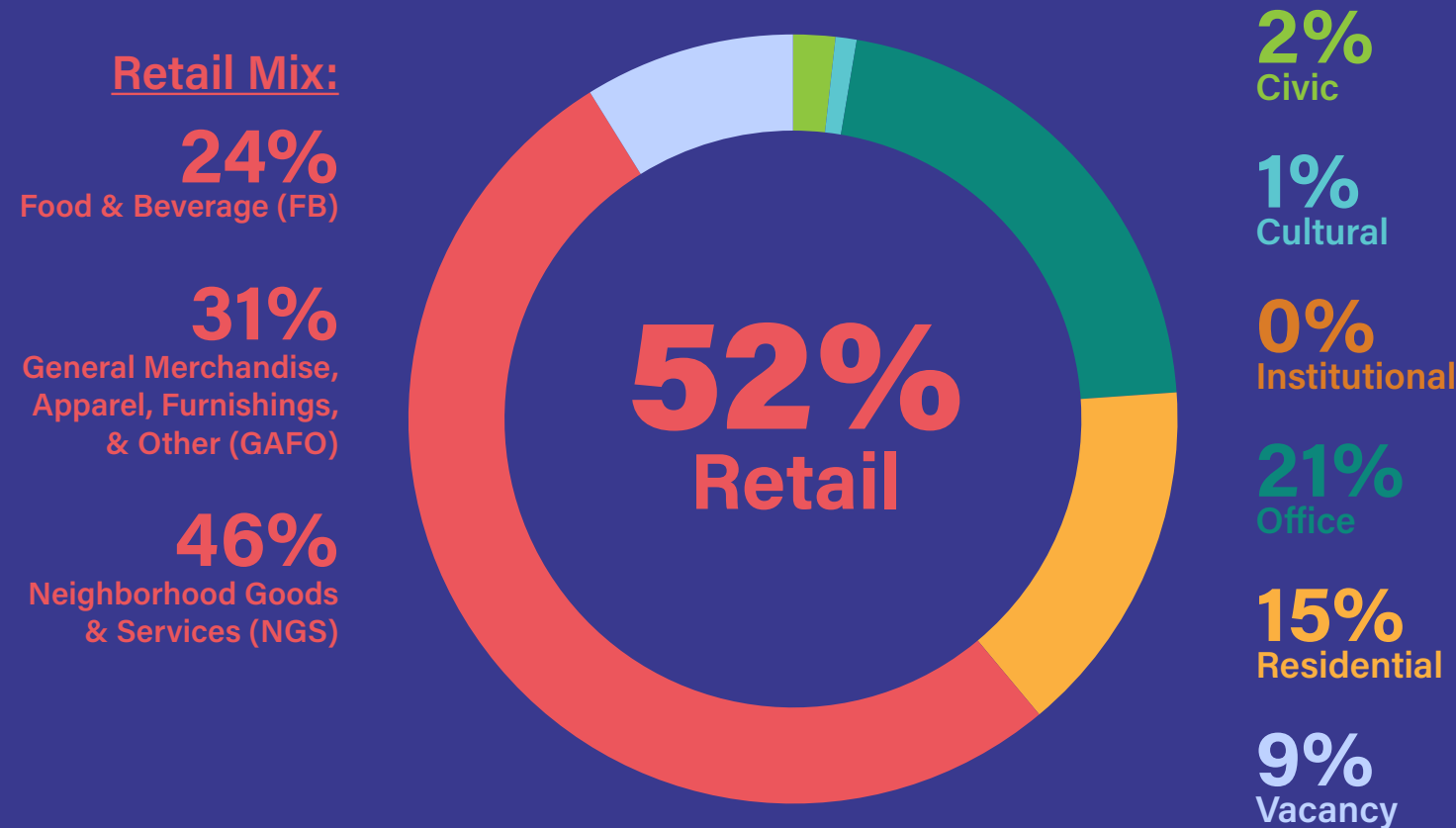
Visits to Downtown

Geolocated, deidentified cellphone location data was analyzed to determine the pandemic's impact on visits to the region's downtowns and their trade areas. Visits to Bristol were as follows:

● **Pre-Pandemic**

Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 87.2%
New Jersey: 12.8%	

● **Shutdown** | March 13 - June 15, 2020

Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 90.7%
New Jersey: 9.3%	

● **Reopening** | June 16 - October 31, 2020

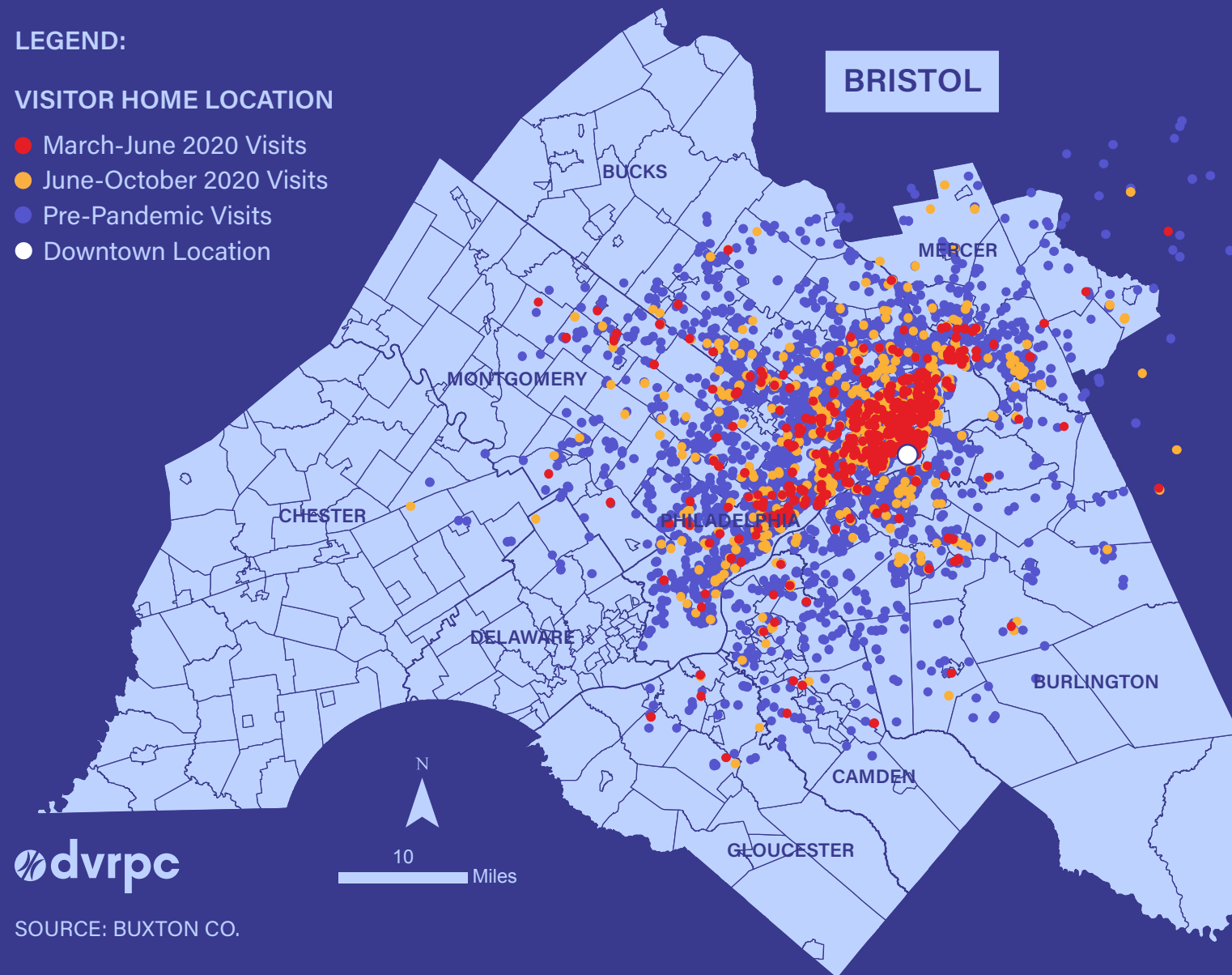|	
Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 88.2%
New Jersey: 11.8%	

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

Visits to Downtown

LEGEND:

VISITOR HOME LOCATION

● March-June 2020 Visits
● June-October 2020 Visits
● Pre-Pandemic Visits
○ Downtown Location

BRISTOL

BUCKS

MERCER

MONTGOMERY

CHESTER

PHILADELPHIA

DELAWARE

BURLINGTON

CAMDEN

GLOUCESTER

N

10 Miles

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Prior to the pandemic, people visiting Bristol lived in all nine of the region's counties and beyond, but the majority of visitors came from Lower Bucks, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties.

Between August 2018 and March 2020, 8,040 people visited the downtown. This was slightly fewer than the average of 8,800 for all of the downtowns.

During the shutdown (March 13 - June 15) there were 656 visits to Bristol's downtown, and during the reopening period (June 16 - October 31) there were 1,003 visits.
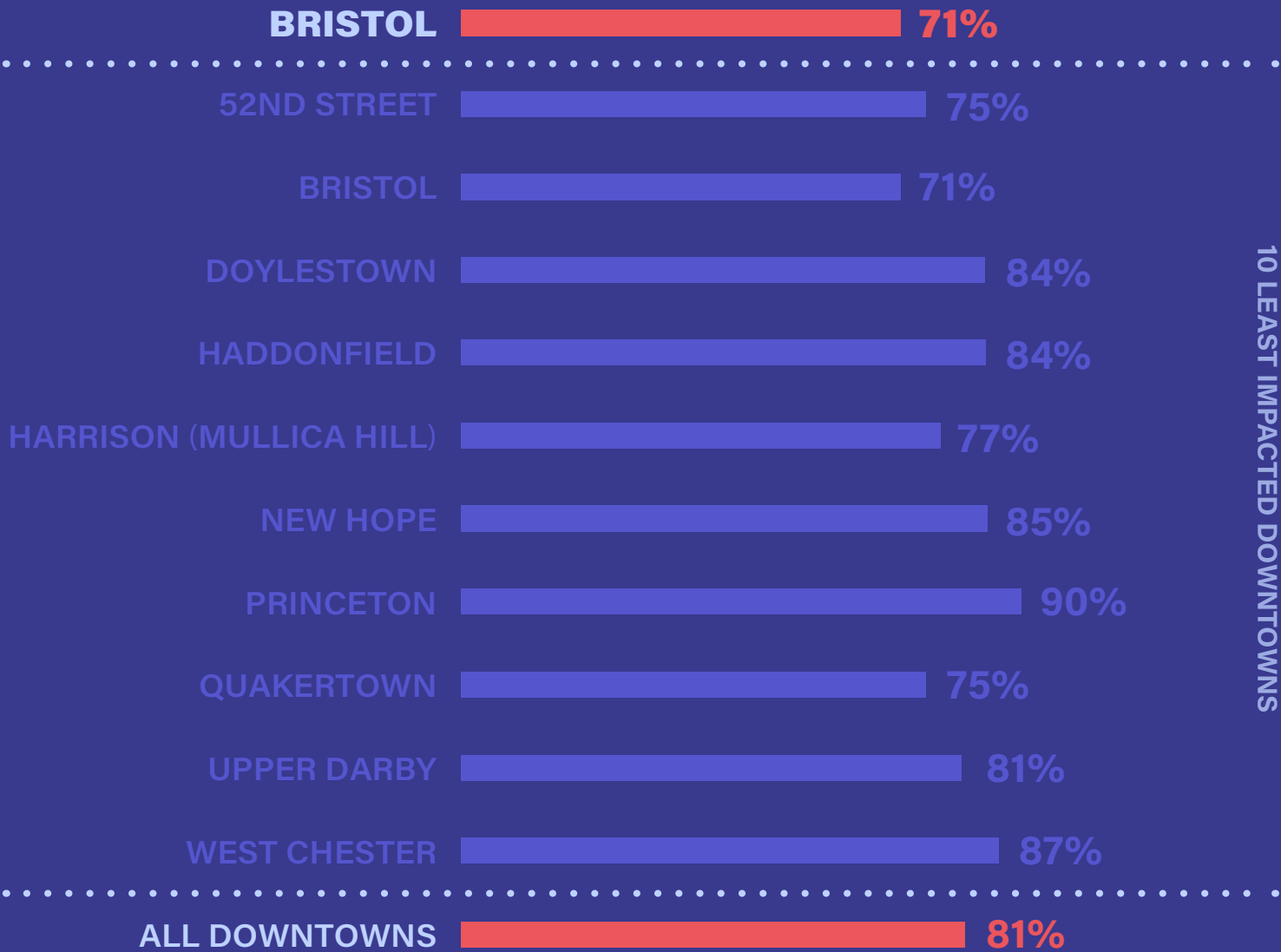
Shutdown Impact

March 13 - June 15, 2020

During the economic shutdown, there were 656 visits to Bristol's downtown compared to 2,244 visits during the same period in 2019. This equated to a 71% reduction, which was the seventh lowest impact for all downtowns and one of the reasons that Bristol was one of the 10 least impacted downtowns.

The average number of visits during the shutdown period was 439 compared to 2,450 visits during the same period in 2019, which equated to an average reduction of 81%.

Gloucester City's downtown had the smallest reduction in visits at 66%.

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10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

BRISTOL	**71%**
52ND STREET	75%
BRISTOL	71%
DOYLESTOWN	84%
HADDONFIELD	84%
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	77%
NEW HOPE	85%
PRINCETON	90%
QUAKERTOWN	75%
UPPER DARBY	81%
WEST CHESTER	87%
ALL DOWNTOWNS	**81%**

Reopening Rebound

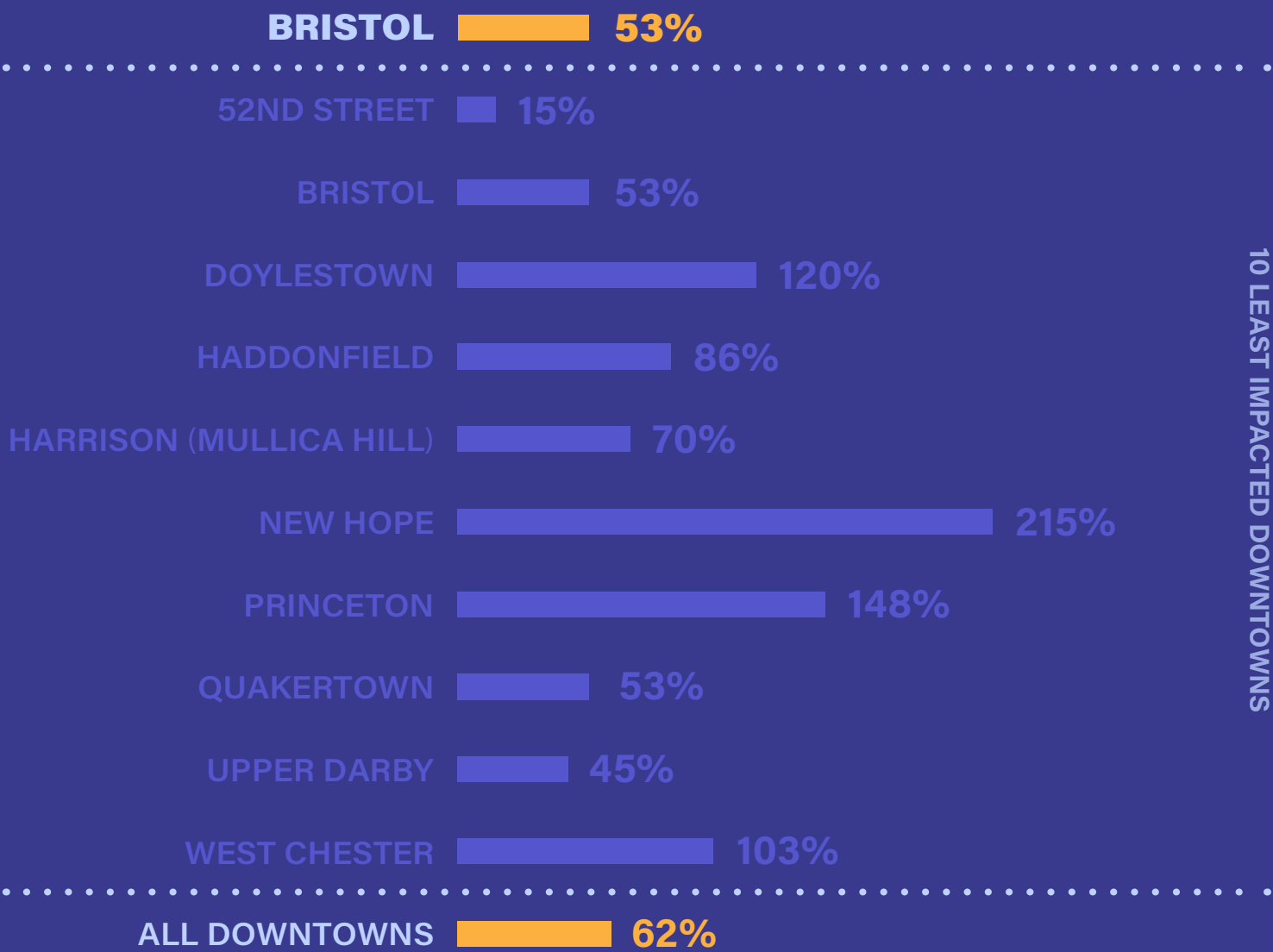## June 16 - October 31, 2020

Visits to Bristol's downtown increased by 53% during the reopening period to a total of 1,003 visits, which was 67% fewer than the 3,072 visits that occurred during the same period in 2019. Although Bristol saw one of the smallest rebounds, it was the least impacted when compared to the previous year.

On average, visits increased by 62% for all downtowns, to approximately 700 visits, and by 91% for the least impacted downtowns, to approximately 1,700 visits.

New Hope observed the greatest increase at 215%, with more than 2,800 visits during that time.

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BRISTOL ▬ **53%**

10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

52ND STREET	15%
BRISTOL	53%
DOYLESTOWN	120%
HADDONFIELD	86%
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	70%
NEW HOPE	215%
PRINCETON	148%
QUAKERTOWN	53%
UPPER DARBY	45%
WEST CHESTER	103%

ALL DOWNTOWNS ▬ **62%**

Trade Area Recovery
(Drive Time in Minutes)

Bristol's pre-pandemic trade area was a 33 minute drive time, which shrank by 21% during the shutdown to 26 minutes. During reopening, the trade area recovered by 15% to 31 minutes.

The average pre-pandemic trade area was 31 minutes, with a 23% reduction during the shutdown down to 24 minutes. The average recovery during the reopening period was 10% to 27 minutes.

At 69 minutes, New Hope was the only downtown with a trade area that extended beyond an hour. It was also the only downtown to have a larger trade area during reopening (72 minutes) than it did pre-pandemic.

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BRISTOL 15%

52ND STREET 0%

BRISTOL 15%

DOYLESTOWN 5%

HADDONFIELD 10%

HARRISON (MULLICA HILL) 6%

NEW HOPE 14%

PRINCETON 20%

QUAKERTOWN 14%

UPPER DARBY 3%

WEST CHESTER 10%

ALL DOWNTOWNS 10%

10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS