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

Column 1:

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

Column 2:

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

Column 3:

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 | Paulsboro Borough, NJ

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.

Paulsboro's downtown has a relatively small but demographically diverse residential population. It also has a number of civic and cultural uses. However, it lacks the walkability that other downtowns have, has one of the highest vacancy rates in the region, and the share of Neighborhood Goods & Services (NGS) retailers is one of the highest shares in the region. These qualities are why Paulsboro received a Diversity Score of 46, which indicates the downtown is slightly more diverse than average.

Although the downtown is slightly more diverse than average, it received a Pandemic Impact Score of 58, which indicates a higher than average impact.

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46

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

58

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

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).*

In general, more typologies equated to a lower Pandemic Impact Score. Paulsboro, along with four other downtowns, was not considered to be any of the identified typologies.

Downtowns that were not considered to be one of these typologies had an average Pandemic Impact Score of 52.

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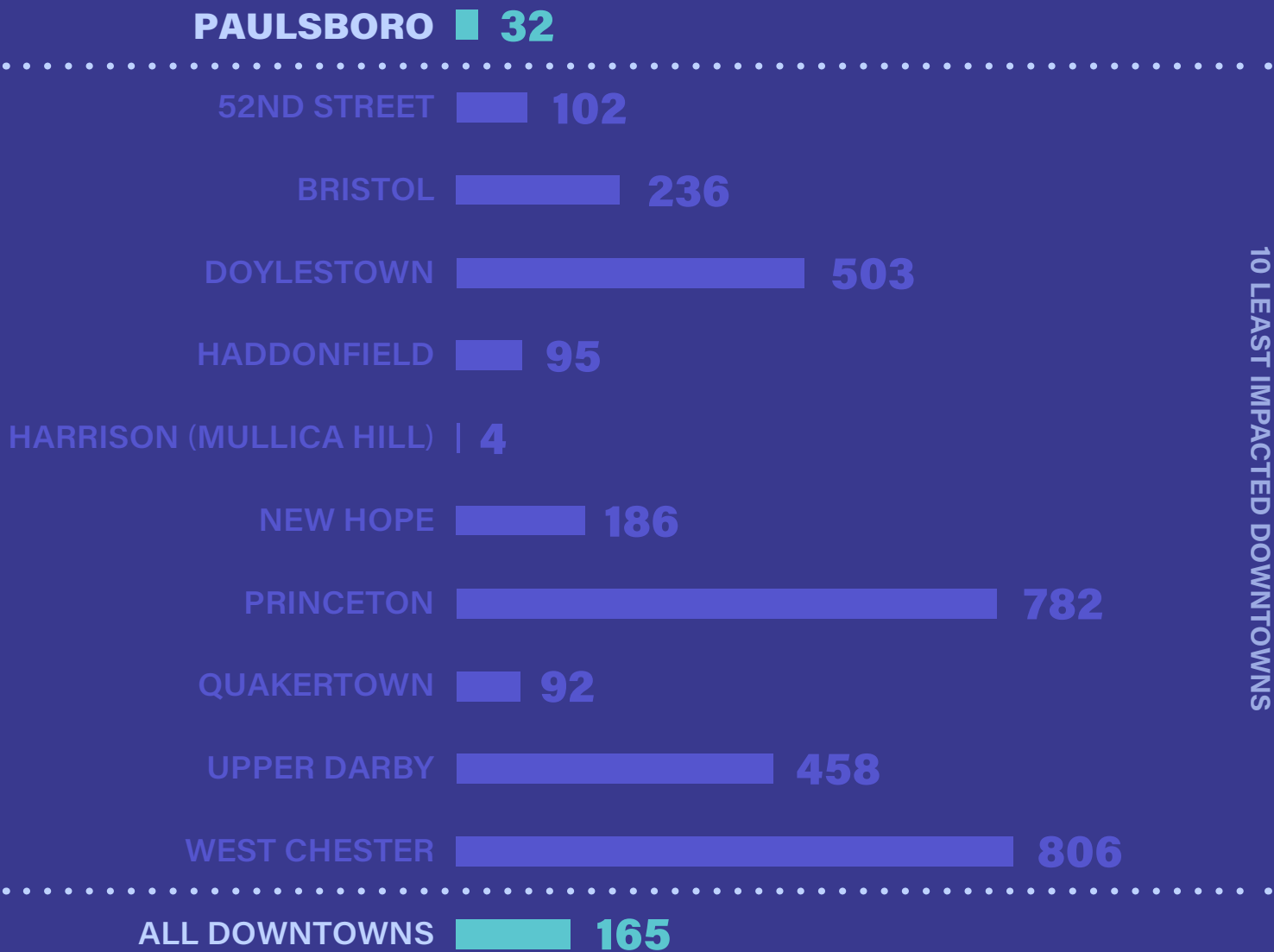| Typology	Score
BREWERY	45
CIRCUIT	48
CLASSIC	46
COLLEGE	50
CORE	43
EXPANDING	42
HISTORIC	47
OPPORTUNITY	45
TRANSIT-ORIENTED	50
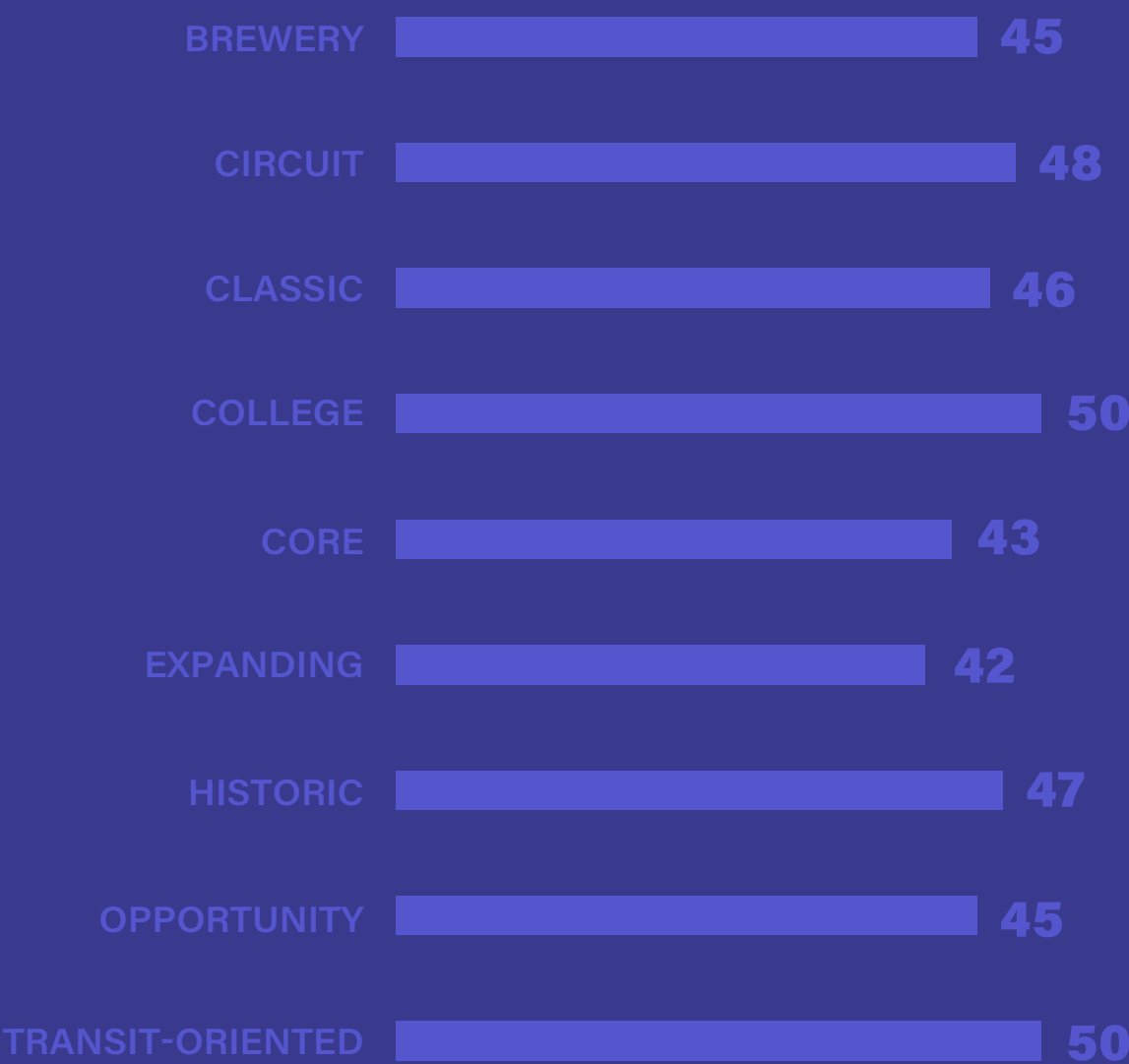
Downtown Population

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, the population in Paulsboro's downtown was estimated to be 32, compared to the average of 165 for all downtowns and 326 for the least impacted downtowns.

Paulsboro's downtown population is relatively diverse compared to other downtowns with regards to demographics, with the Black, Hispanic, and White populations accounting for 77%, 12%, and 14%, respectively.

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

PAULSBORO — 32
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:

13%
Food & Beverage (FB)

38%
General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings, & Other (GAFO)

50%
Neighborhood Goods & Services (NGS)

29%
Retail

9%
Civic

9%
Cultural

0%
Institutional

13%
Office

7%
Residential

34%
Vacancy

Retail accounts for 29% of the uses in Paulsboro. This is the lowest share in the region, and it is significantly less than the averages of 57% for all downtowns and 60% for the least impacted downtowns.

In the least impacted downtowns, *Food & Beverage* (FB) retailers accounted for a much higher share at 30%, while the share of *General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings & Other* (GAFO) retailers was equal at 38%. On average, as the share of each of these increased the Pandemic Impact Score decreased.
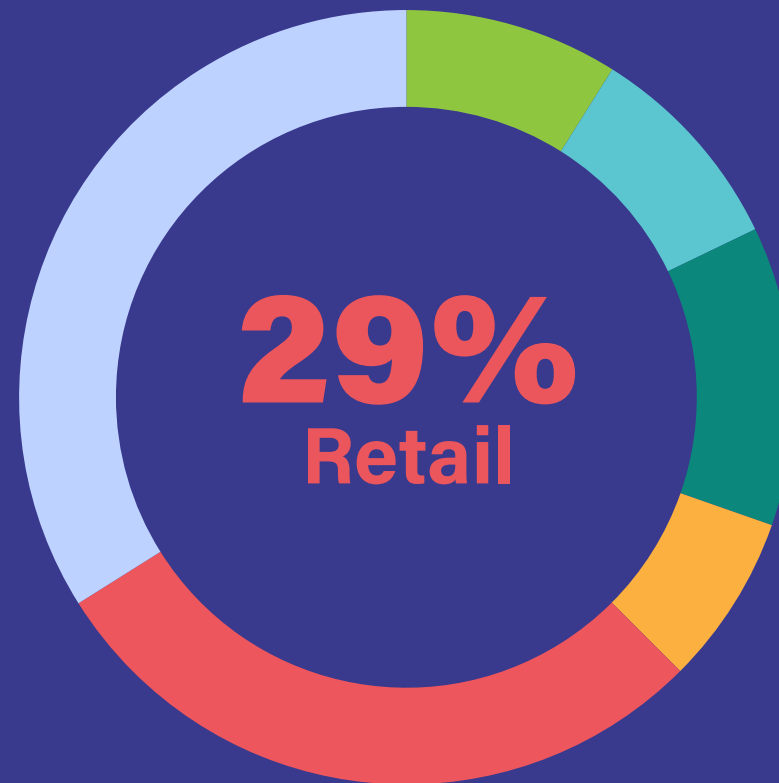
Conversely, *Neighborhood Goods & Services* (NGS) retailers made up a much smaller share of 30% in the least impacted downtowns. Paulsboro also has one of the highest vacancy rates in the region. In general, as the share of NGS retailers or the vacancy rate increased, so did the Pandemic Impact Score.

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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

NY

NJ

MD

DE

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 Paulsboro were as follows:

● **Pre-Pandemic**

Delaware: 2.1%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.1%	Pennsylvania: 6.5%
New Jersey: 91.2%	

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

Delaware: 1.9%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 6.2%
New Jersey: 91.9%	

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

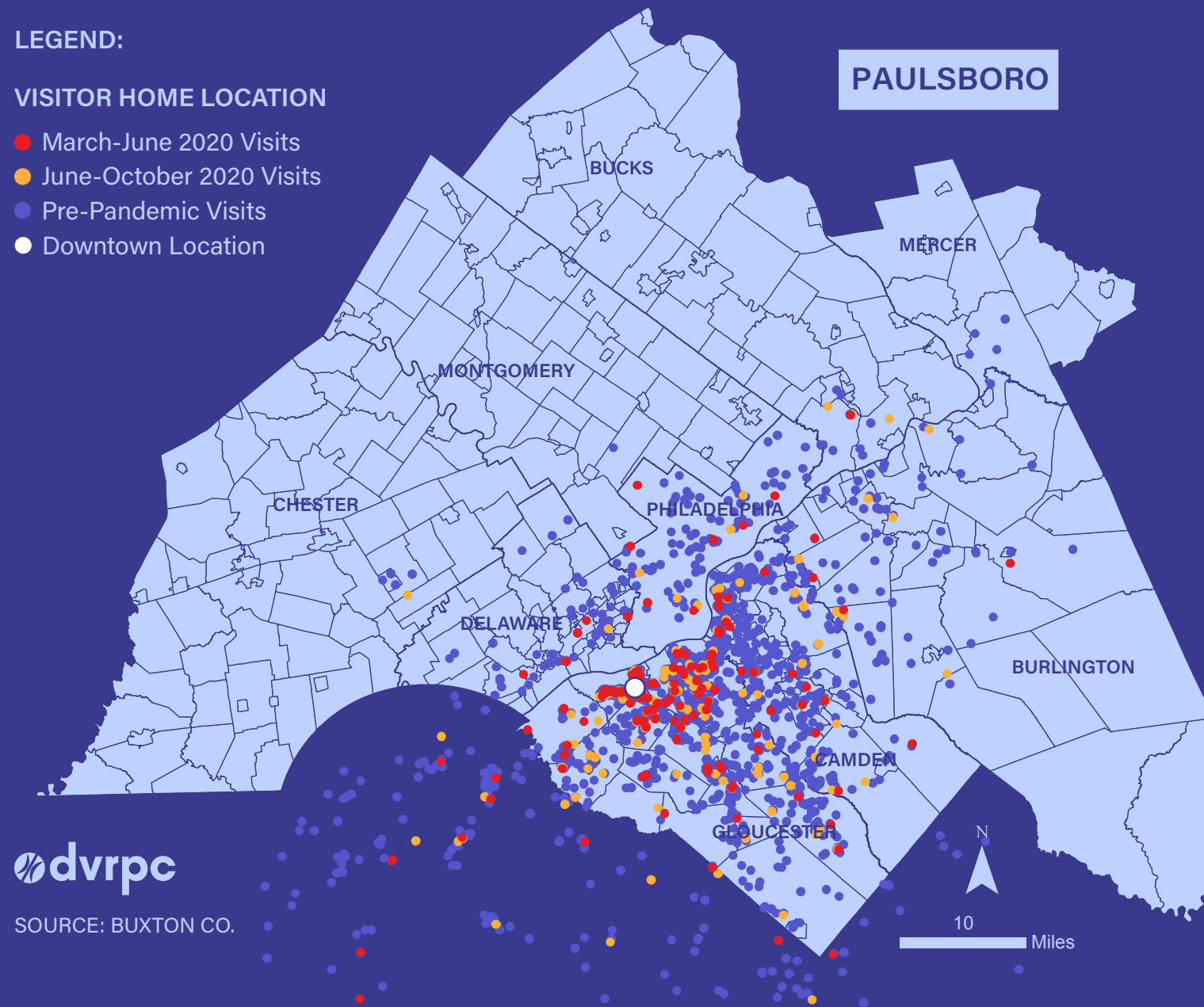|	
Delaware: 0.9%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 4.5%
New Jersey: 94.5%	

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

LEGEND:

VISITOR HOME LOCATION

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

PAULSBORO

BUCKS

MERCER

MONTGOMERY

CHESTER

PHILADELPHIA

DELAWARE

BURLINGTON

CAMDEN

GLOUCESTER

N

10 Miles

Visits to Downtown

Before the pandemic, visitors to Paulsboro primarily came from Camden and Gloucester Counties, somewhat from Philadelphia and Delaware Counties, and beyond the region. During the pandemic, most visitors came from nearby portions of Gloucester County.

Between August 2018 and March 2020, 2,751 people visited the downtown, which was significantly less than the average of 8,800 visits for all of the downtowns.

During both the shutdown (March 13 - June 15) and reopening (June 16 - October 31) periods there were 248 visits to Paulsboro.
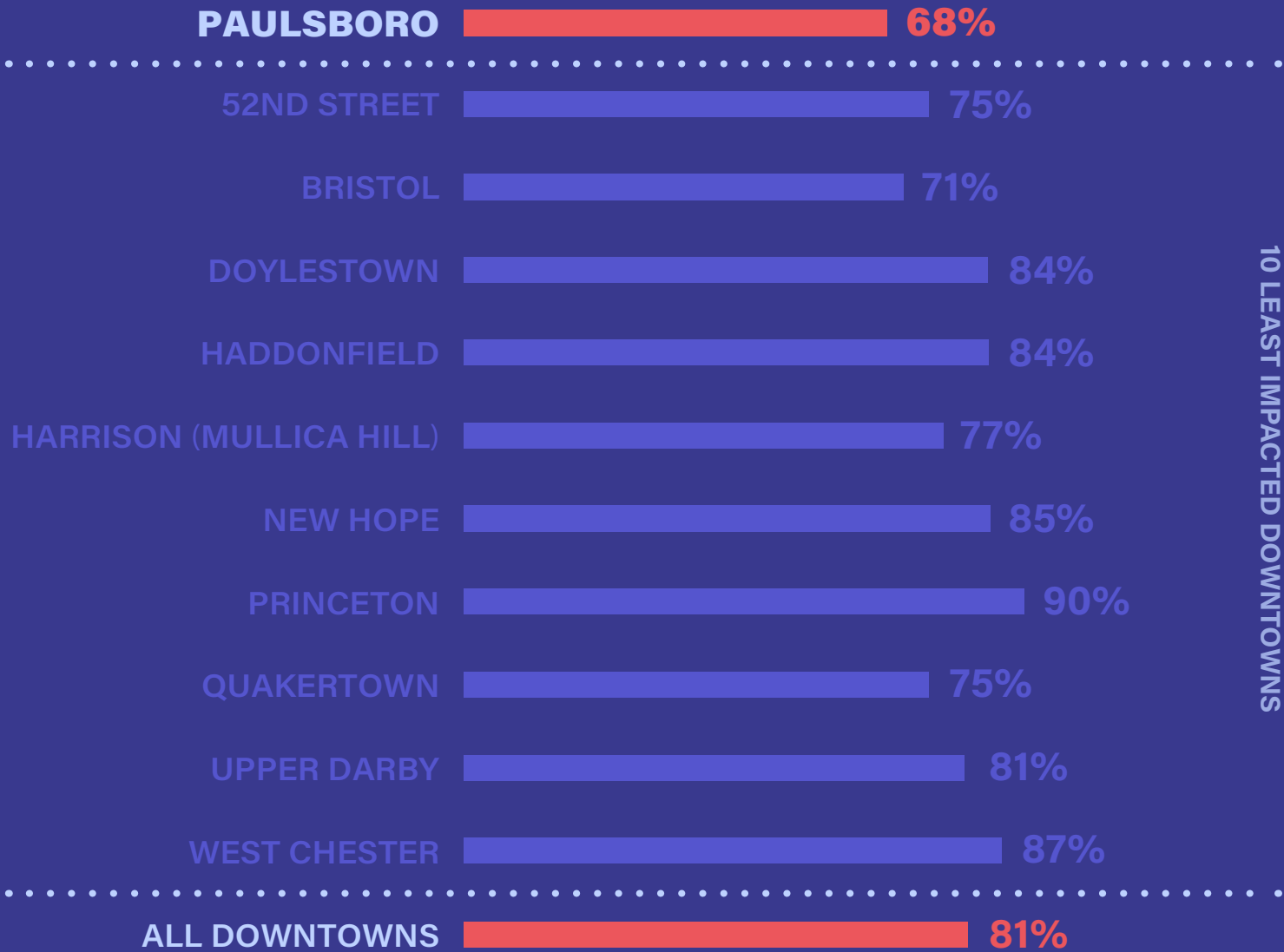
Shutdown Impact

March 13 - June 15, 2020

During the economic shutdown, there were 248 visits to Paulsboro compared to 769 visits during the same period in 2019. This equated to a 68% reduction, which was the fourth lowest reduction observed.

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%, and the average for the least impacted downtowns was 81%.

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10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

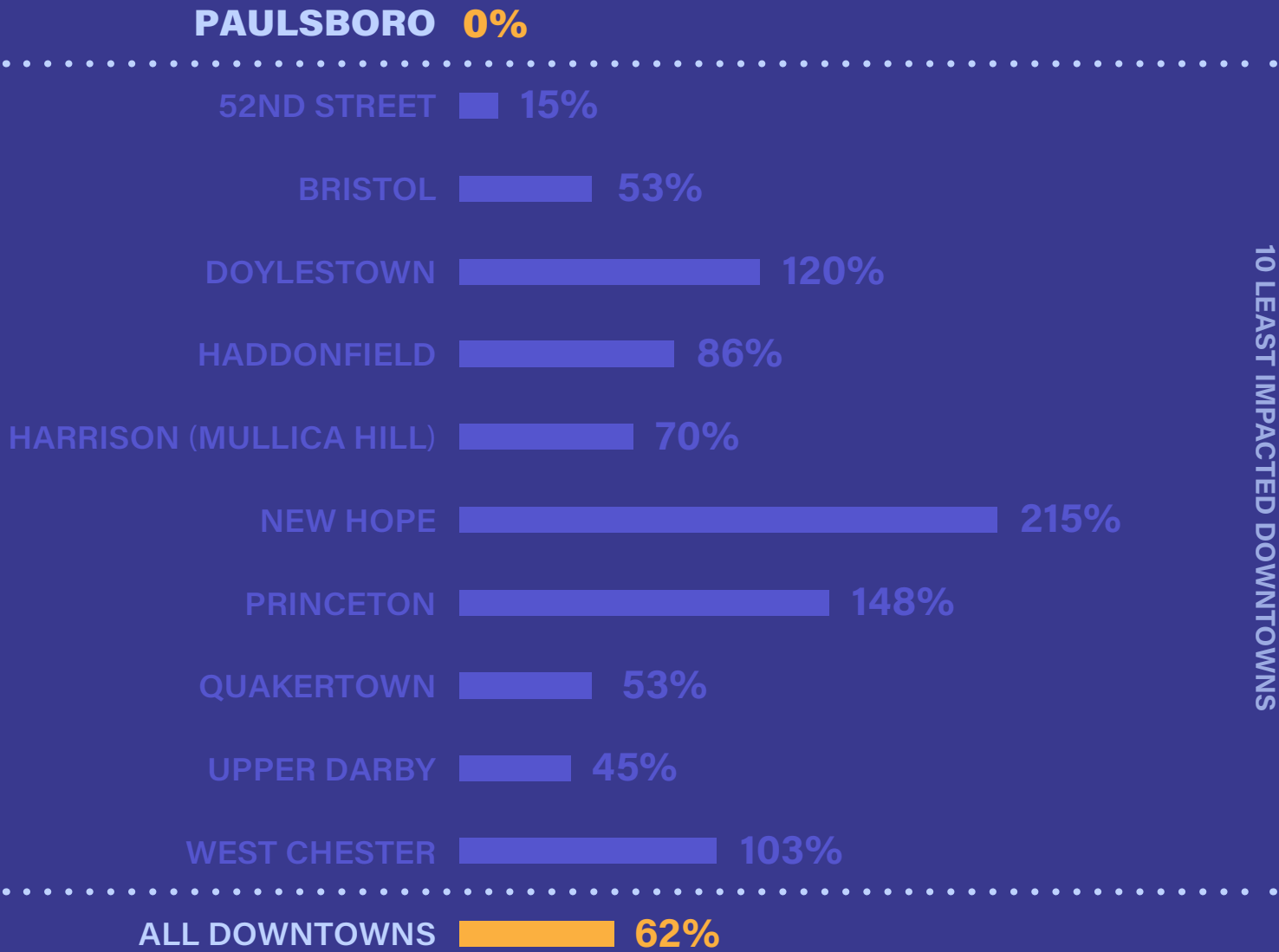|	
PAULSBORO	68%
52ND STREET	75%
BRISTOL	71%
DOYLESTOWN	84%
HADDONFIELD	84%
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	77%
NEW HOPE	85%
PRINCETON	90%
QUAKERTOWN	75%
UPPER DARBY	81%
WEST CHESTER	87%
ALL DOWNTOWNS	81%

Reopening Rebound

June 16 - October 31, 2020

Visits to Paulsboro remained at a total of 248 during reopening, which represents a 0% increase. Only one other downtown had a 0% increase during reopening, and the 248 visits were 74% fewer than the 959 visits that occurred during the same period in 2019.

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.

10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

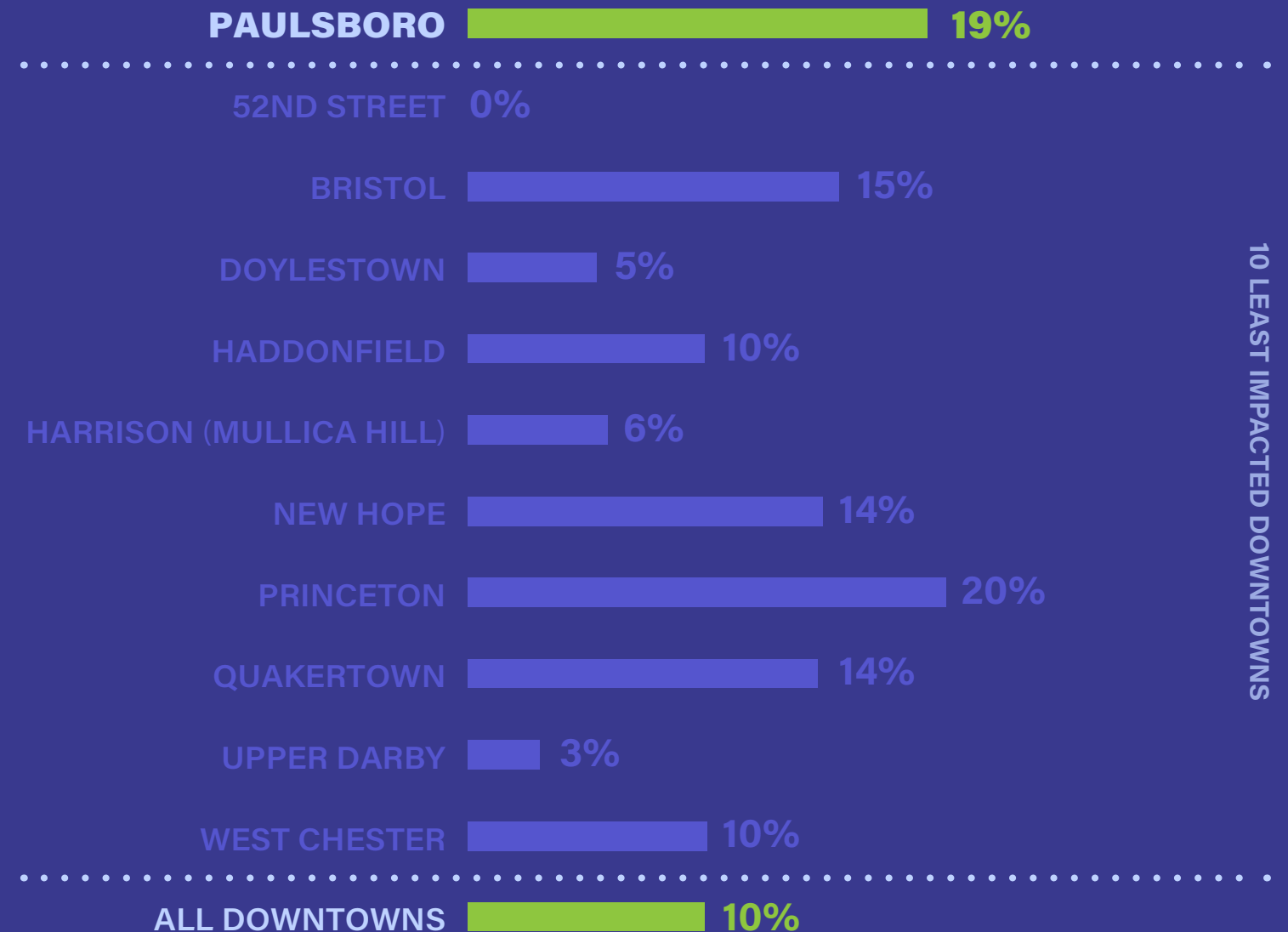|	
PAULSBORO	0%
52ND STREET	15%
BRISTOL	53%
DOYLESTOWN	120%
HADDONFIELD	86%
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	70%
NEW HOPE	215%
PRINCETON	148%
QUAKERTOWN	53%
UPPER DARBY	45%
WEST CHESTER	103%
ALL DOWNTOWNS	62%

Trade Area Recovery
(Drive Time in Minutes)

Paulsboro's pre-pandemic trade area was a 32 minute drive time, and the trade area shrank by 31% during the shutdown to 22 minutes. During reopening, the trade area had a 19% recovery to 28 minutes.

The average pre-pandemic trade area was 31 minutes, with a 23% reduction during the shutdown down to 24 minutes. The average recovery was 10% for all downtowns up 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.

dvrpc

SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

Downtown	Recovery
PAULSBORO	**19%**
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%**