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 dvrpc 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 | Burlington City, 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.

Burlington's downtown has a walkable and historic built environment, with a diverse residential population. There are also a number of civic, cultural, and office uses, which add to the downtown's overall diversity. This is why Burlington is considered to be one of the most diverse downtowns in the region, and it earned a Diversity Score of 28.

Despite its overall diversity, Burlington's downtown has one of the highest vacancy rates in the region, and the retail use makes up a relatively small share of the downtown's mix of uses. These characteristics most likely exacerbated the pandemic's impact, which is why Burlington recieved a Pandemic Impact Score of 48.

28

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

48

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).*

In general, more typologies equated to a lower Pandemic Impact Score. Burlington is considered to be six typologies: *Brewery, Circuit* (although the trail is not existing), *Expanding, Historic, Opportunity* and *Transit-Oriented*.

Of note, *Circuit* downtowns that have not yet built their trails had an average score of 53 compared to 48 for those with existing trails. Although Burlington is considered *Expanding*, the development is currently under construction, which most likely did not benefit the downtown during the pandemic.

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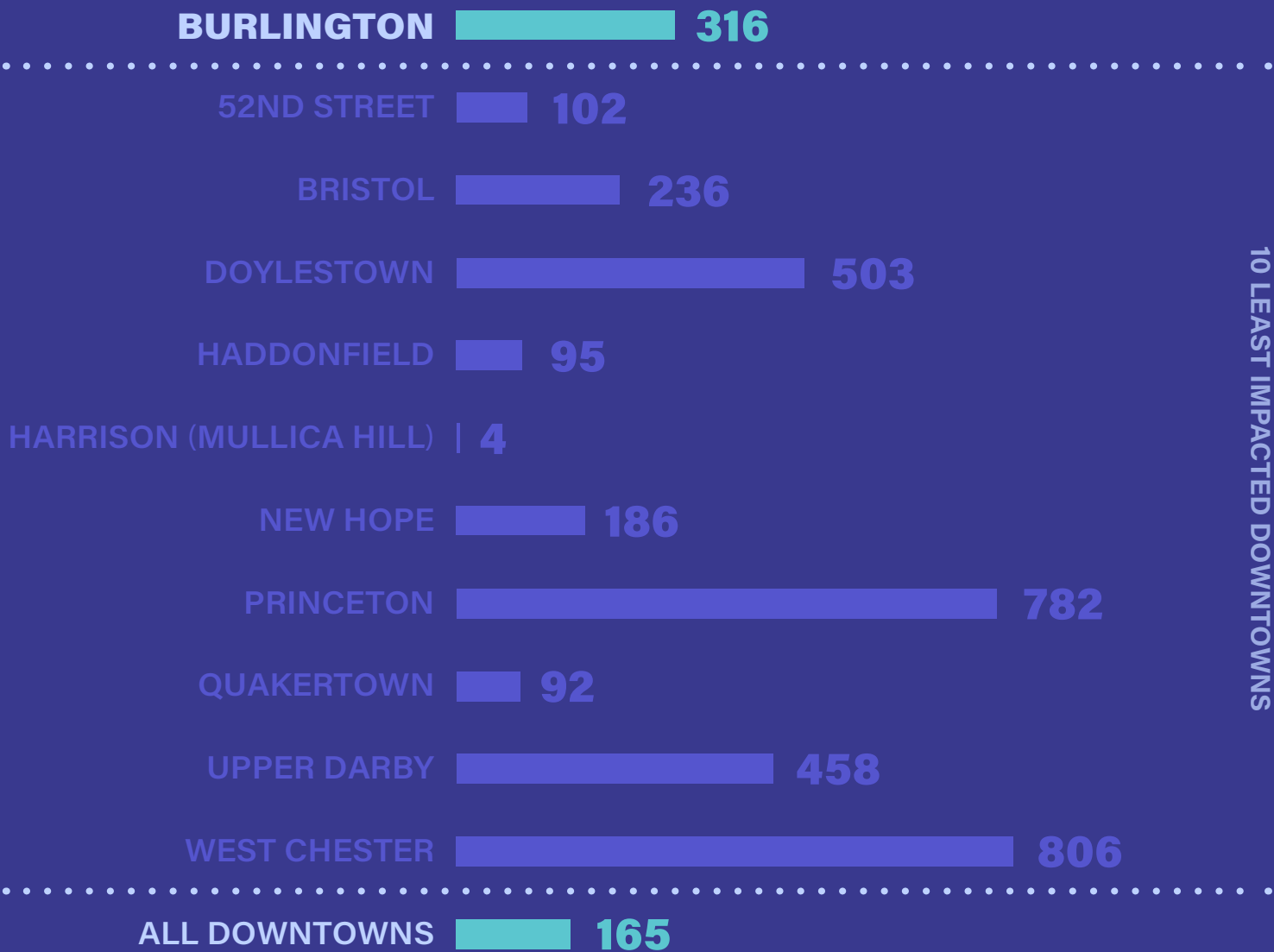| Typology	Score
BREWERY	45
CIRCUIT	48
CLASSIC	46
COLLEGE	50
CORE	43
EXPANDING	42
HISTORIC	47
OPPORTUNITY	45
TRANSIT-ORIENTED	50
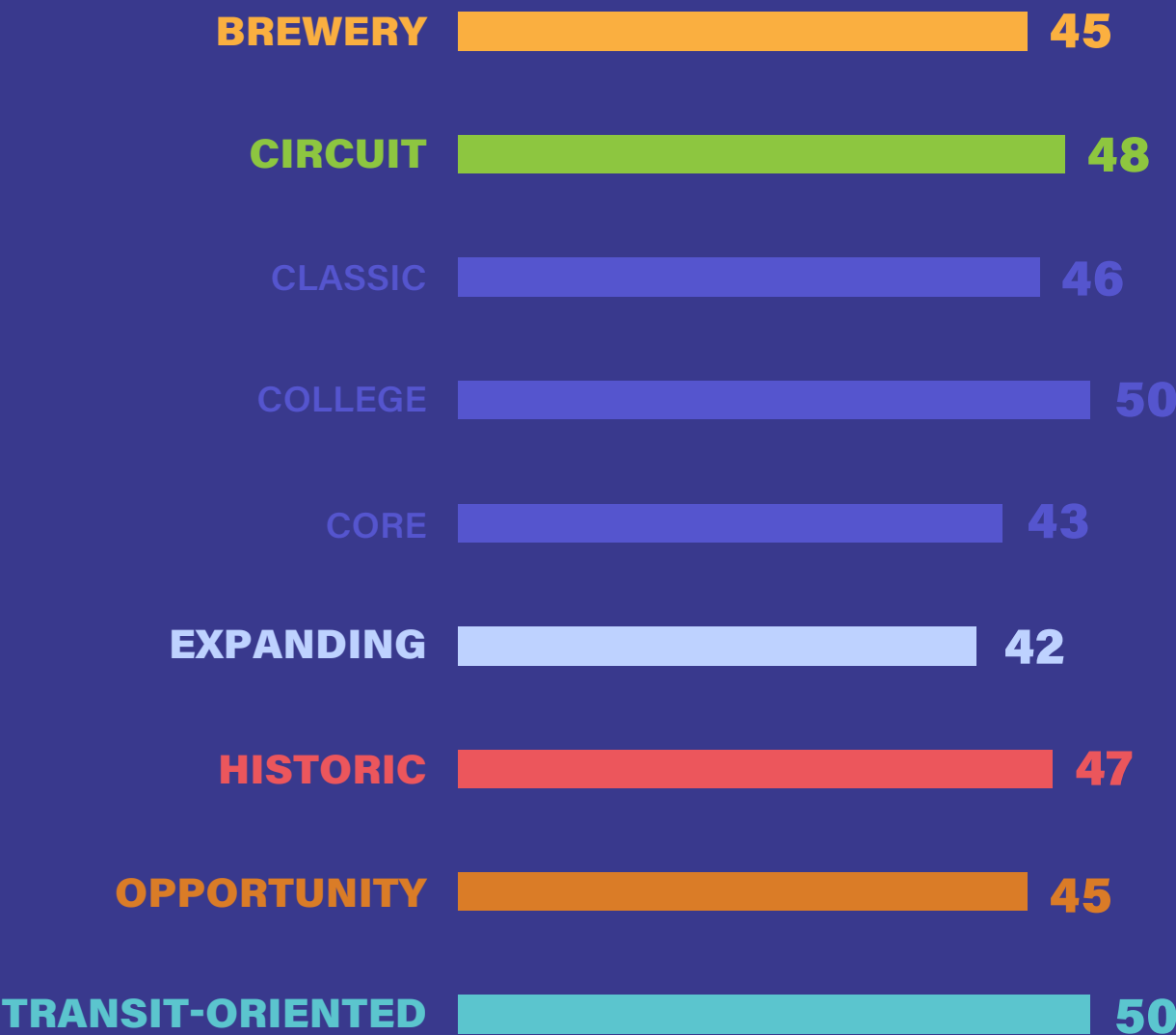
Downtown Population

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, Burlington's downtown population was estimated to be 316, which is higher than the average for all downtowns (165 residents) and nearly equal to the average for the least impacted downtowns (326 residents).

Burlington's downtown population is relatively diverse with regards to demographics, with the White, Black, and Hispanic populations accounting for 33%, 55%, and 9% respectively.

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

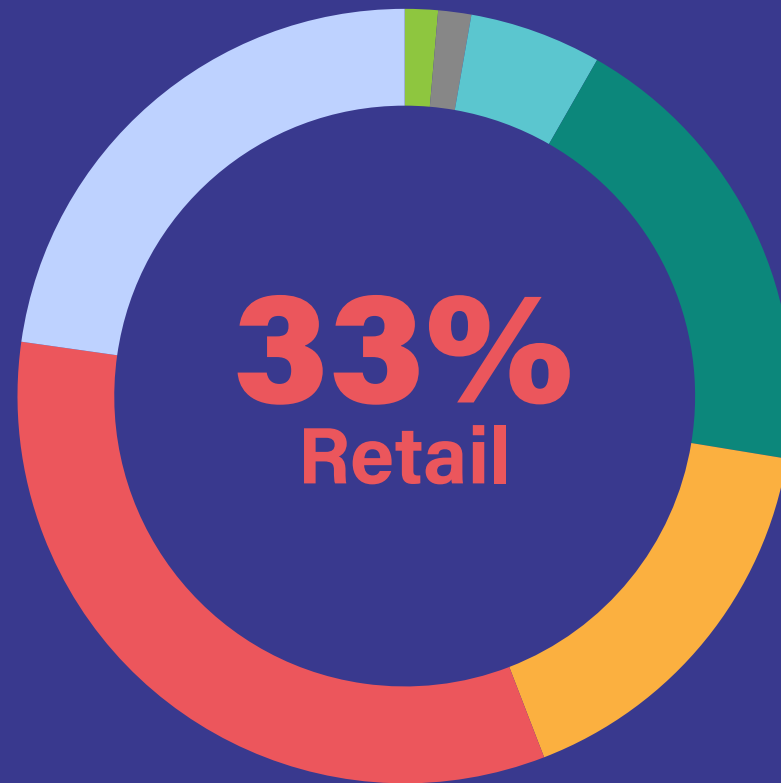|	
BURLINGTON	316
52ND STREET	102
BRISTOL	236
DOYLESTOWN	503
HADDONFIELD	95
HARRISON (MULLICA HILL)	4
NEW HOPE	186
PRINCETON	782
QUAKERTOWN	92
UPPER DARBY	458
WEST CHESTER	806
ALL DOWNTOWNS	165

Mix of Uses

Retail Mix:

17%
Food & Beverage (FB)

44%
General Merchandise,
Apparel, Furnishings,
& Other (GAFO)

2%
Hospitality (HOSP)

38%
Neighborhood Goods
& Services (NGS)

33%
Retail

1%
Civic

1%
Construction

6%
Cultural

0%
Institutional

19%
Office

17%
Residential

23%
Vacancy

Retail only accounts for 33% of the uses in Burlington's downtown, which is the lowest share in the region. The average for all downtowns was 57% and 60% for the least impacted downtowns.

Additionally, in the least impacted downtowns, *Food & Beverage* (FB) retailers made up a much larger share at 30%, and *General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings & Other* (GAFO) made up a smaller share at 38%. In general, as the share of each of these increased, the Pandemic Impact Score decreased.

Conversely, *Neighborhood Goods & Services* (NGS) retailers made up a smaller share at 30%, and Burlington's vacancy rate is one of the highest in the region. On average as a downtown's share of NGS retailers and vacancy rate increased, so did the Pandemic Impact Score.
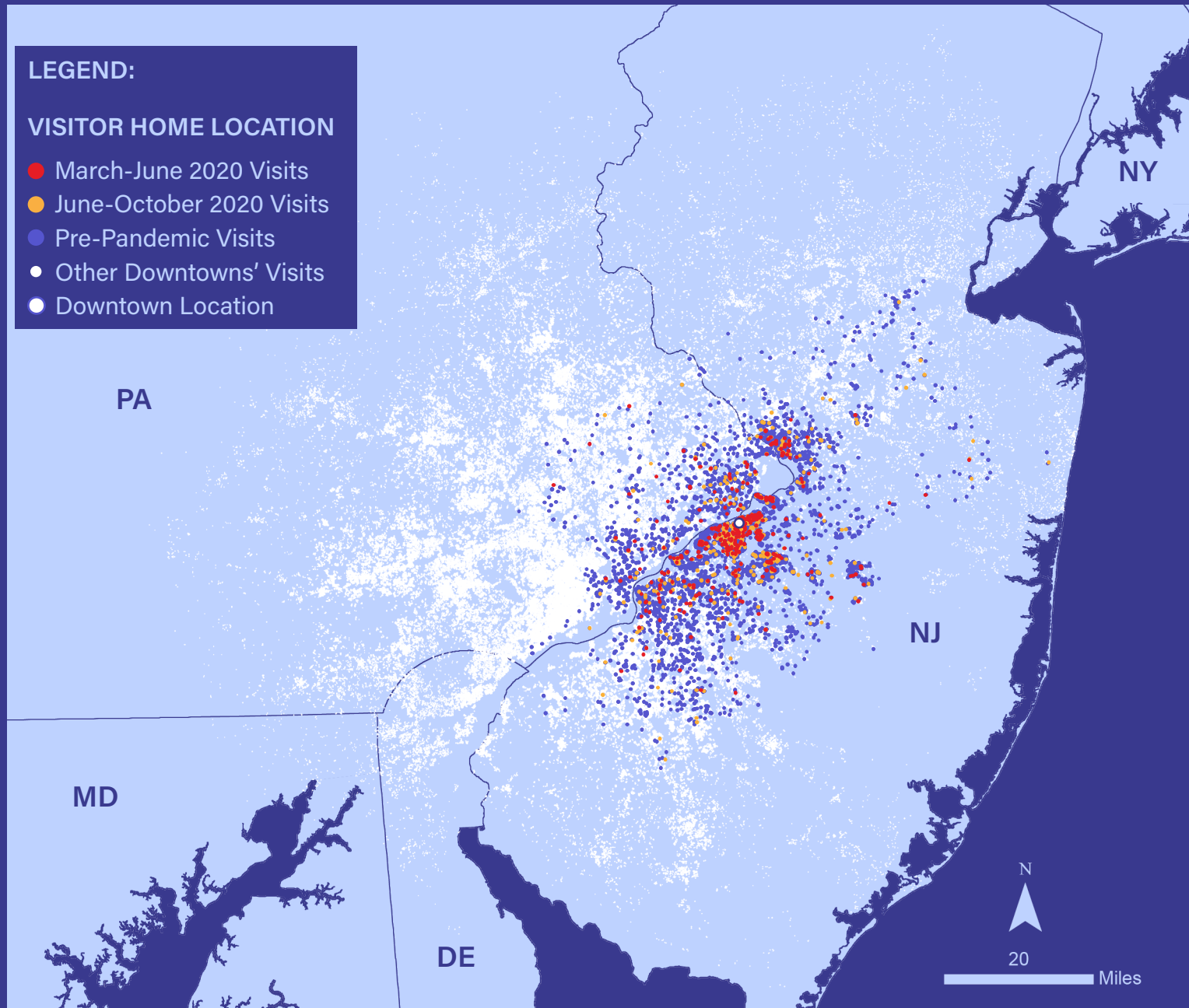
Visits to Downtown

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 Burlington were as follows:

● Pre-Pandemic

Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 12.3%
New Jersey: 87.7%	

● Shutdown | March 13 - June 15, 2020

Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 10.5%
New Jersey: 89.5%	

● Reopening | June 16 - October 31, 2020

Delaware: 0.0%	New York: 0.0%
Maryland: 0.0%	Pennsylvania: 10.5%
New Jersey: 89.5%	

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SOURCE: BUXTON CO.

LEGEND:

VISITOR HOME LOCATION

● March-June 2020 Visits
● June-October 2020 Visits
● Pre-Pandemic Visits
● Other Downtowns' Visits
● Downtown Location
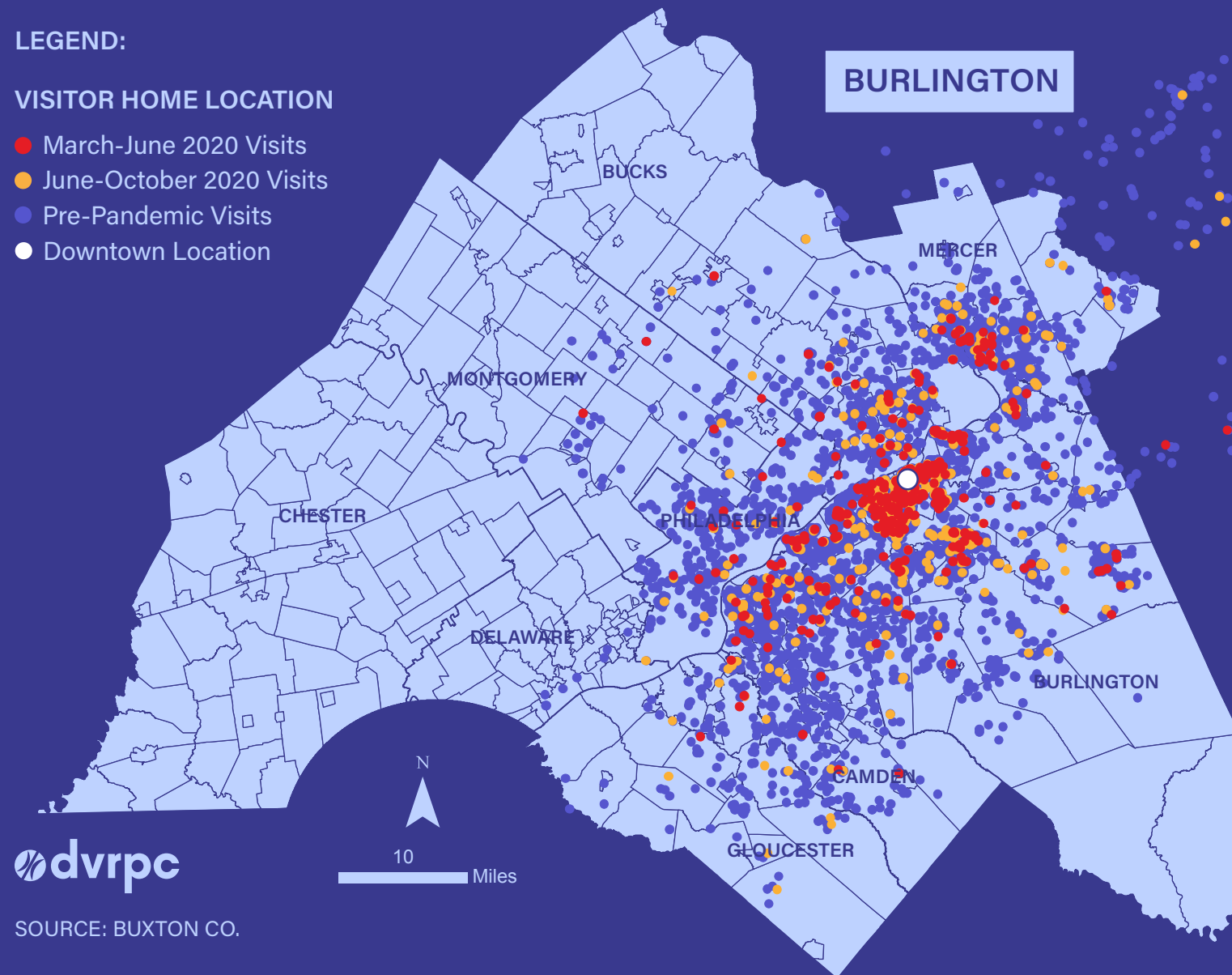
LEGEND:

VISITOR HOME LOCATION

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

BURLINGTON

BUCKS

MERCER

MONTGOMERY

CHESTER

PHILADELPHIA

DELAWARE

BURLINGTON

CAMDEN

GLOUCESTER

N

10 Miles

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Visits to Downtown

Pre-pandemic, the majority of visitors to Burlington's downtown came from Burlington, Camden, and Mercer Counties in New Jersey, and somewhat from lower Bucks and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania. During the pandemic, most visits came from the areas immediately surrounding the downtown, as well as from the cities of Camden and Trenton.

Between August 2018 and March 2020, 8,328 people visited the downtown. This was just shy of the average of 8,800 for all of the downtowns.

During the shutdown (March 13 - June 15) there were 493 visits to Burlington, and during the reopening period (June 16 - October 31) there were 675 visits.
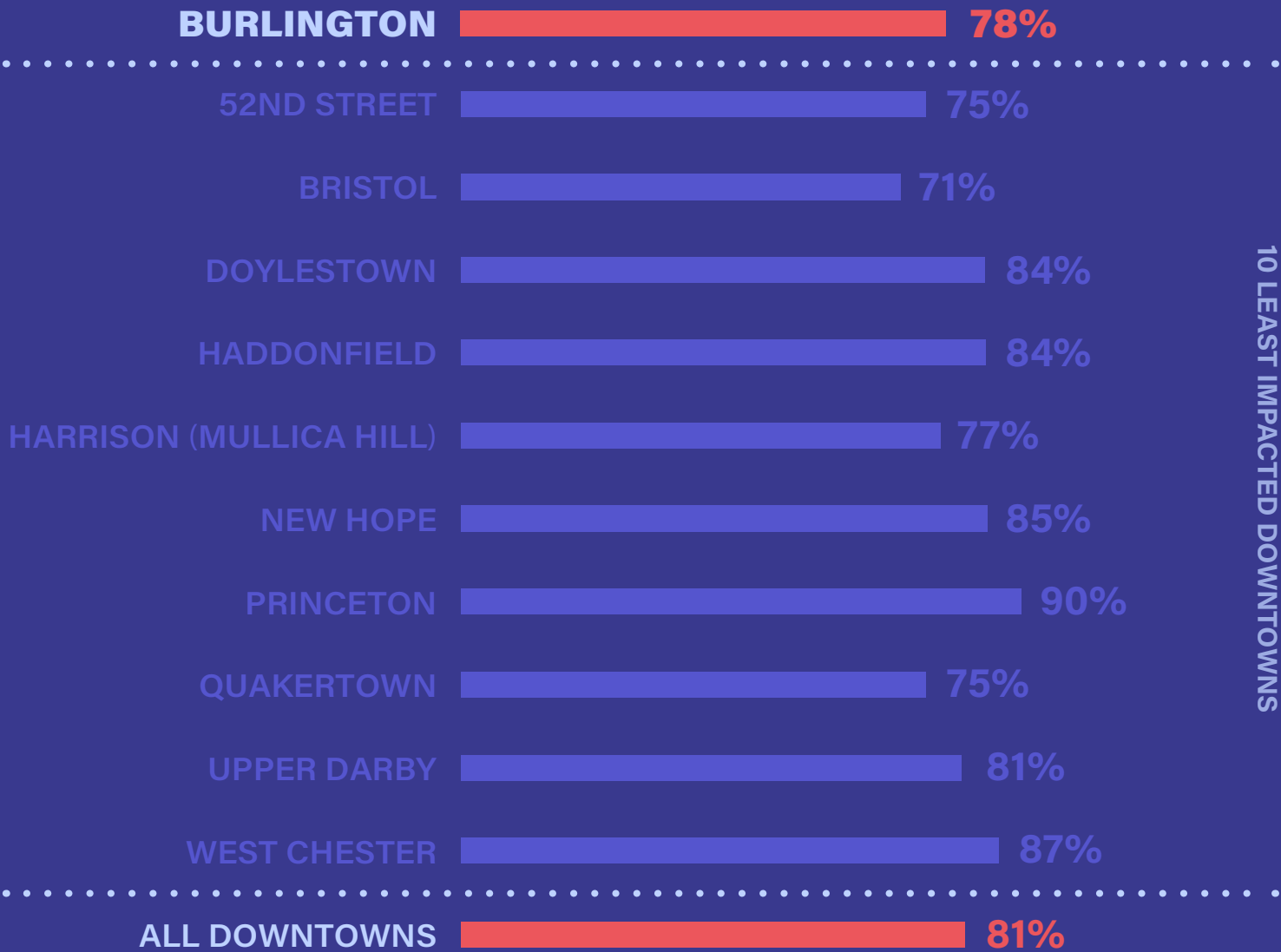
Shutdown Impact

March 13 - June 15, 2020

During the economic shutdown, there were 493 visits to Burlington compared to 2,216 visits during the same period in 2019. This equated to a 78% reduction.

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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BURLINGTON	**78%**
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%**

10 LEAST IMPACTED DOWNTOWNS

Reopening Rebound
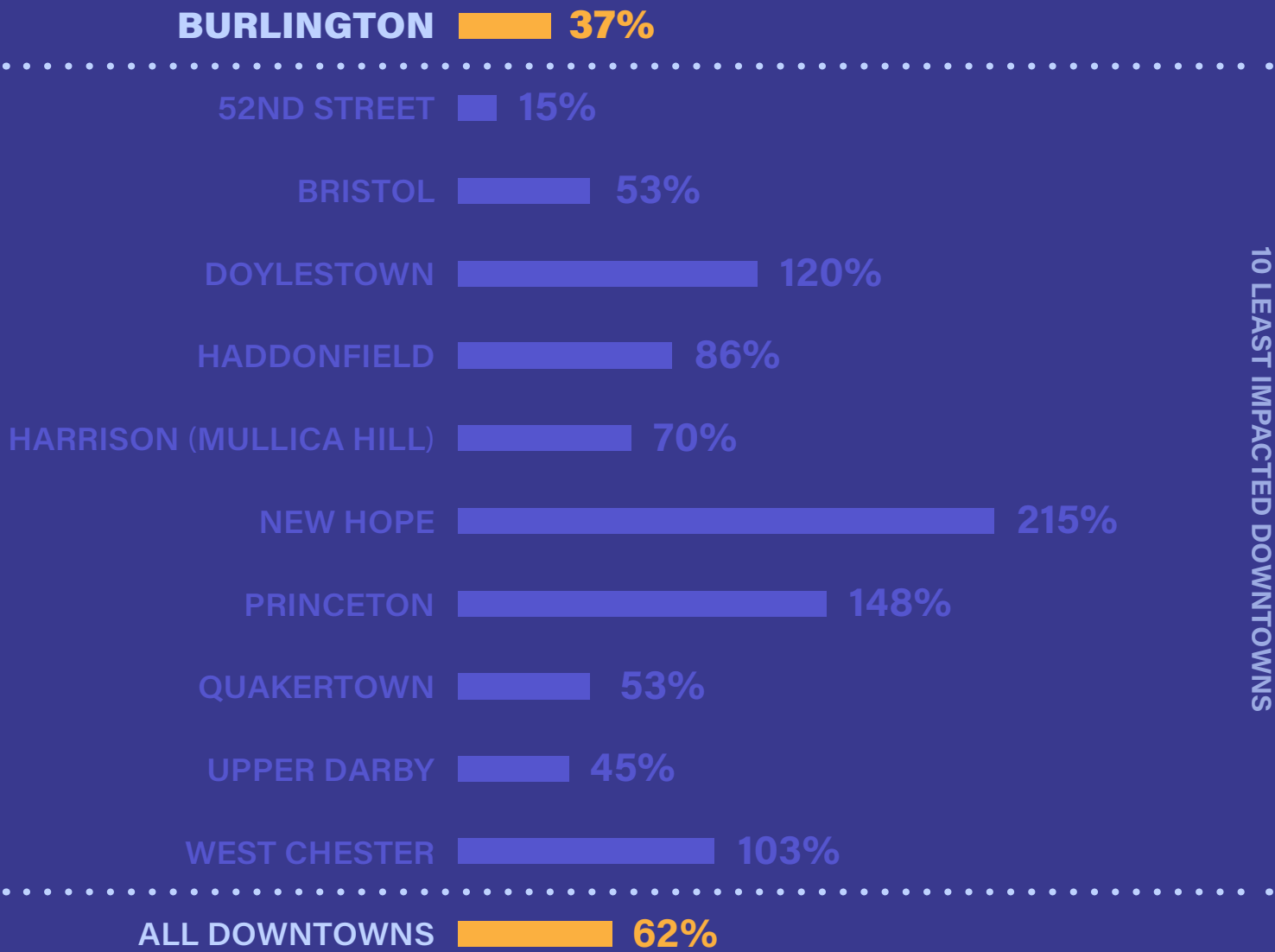### June 16 - October 31, 2020

Visits to Burlington increased by 37% during the reopening period to a total of 675 visits, which was 78% fewer than the 3,000 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.

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BURLINGTON ▬ **37%**

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%**
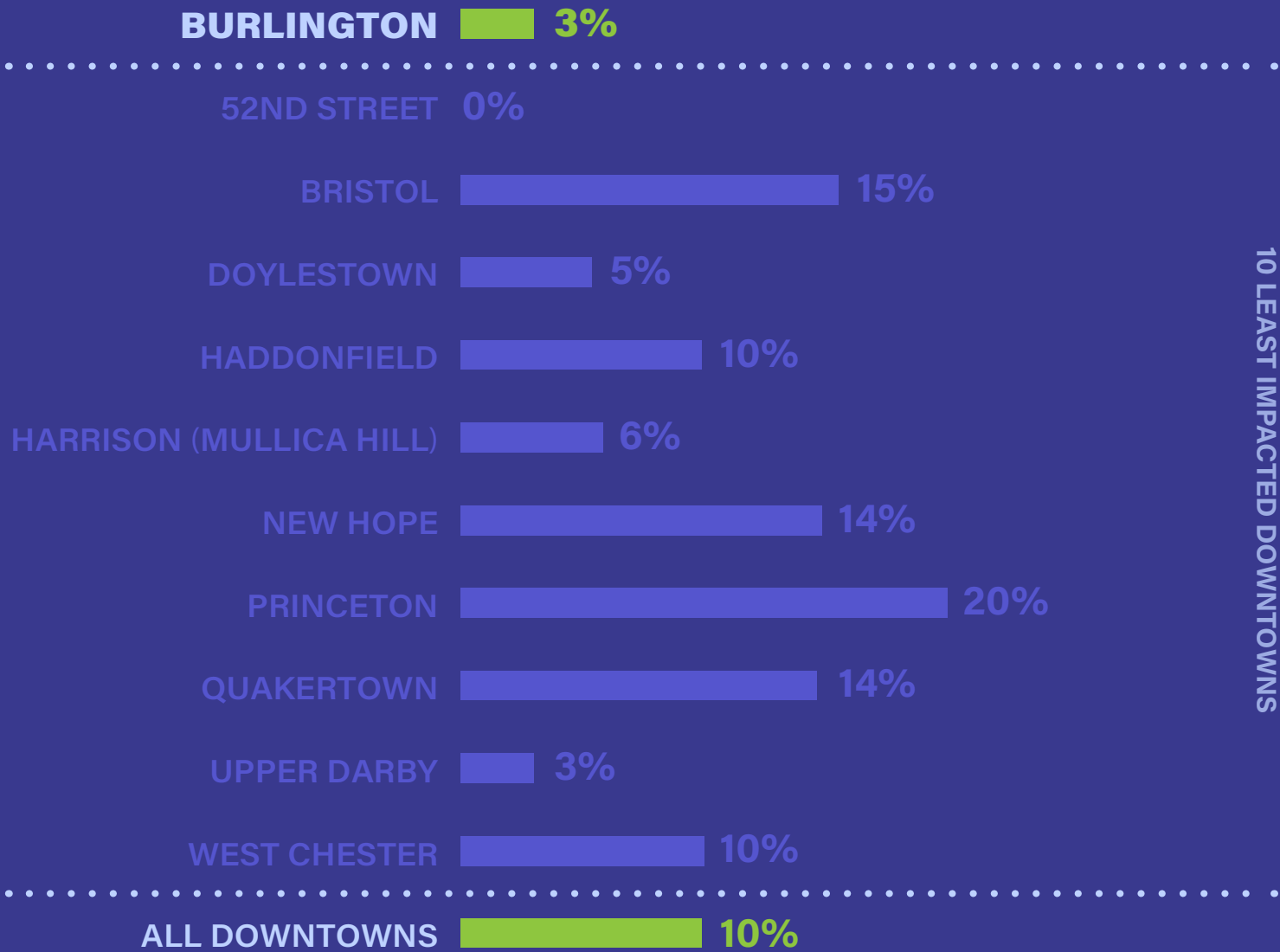
Trade Area Recovery
(Drive Time in Minutes)

Burlington's pre-pandemic trade area was a 33 minute drive time, which shrank by 18% during the shutdown to 27 minutes. During reopening, the trade area recovered by 3% 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% 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

BURLINGTON	3%
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%