

An Activation Plan for Downtown Camden

Studio I | Final Review

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Agenda

- 3** Our Team
- 4** Welcome to Downtown Camden
- 11** Downtown Camden Today
- 27** Challenges
- 43** Opportunities
- 57** Vision & Goals
- 60** Recommendations
- 115** Implementation & Conclusion

Our Team



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Instructor

Welcome to Downtown Camden

Welcome to Downtown Camden



Camden Waterfront

Welcome to Downtown Camden



Welcome to Downtown Camden

Location

In the Camden Business Improvement District (BID) downtown boundary:



8,000
residents

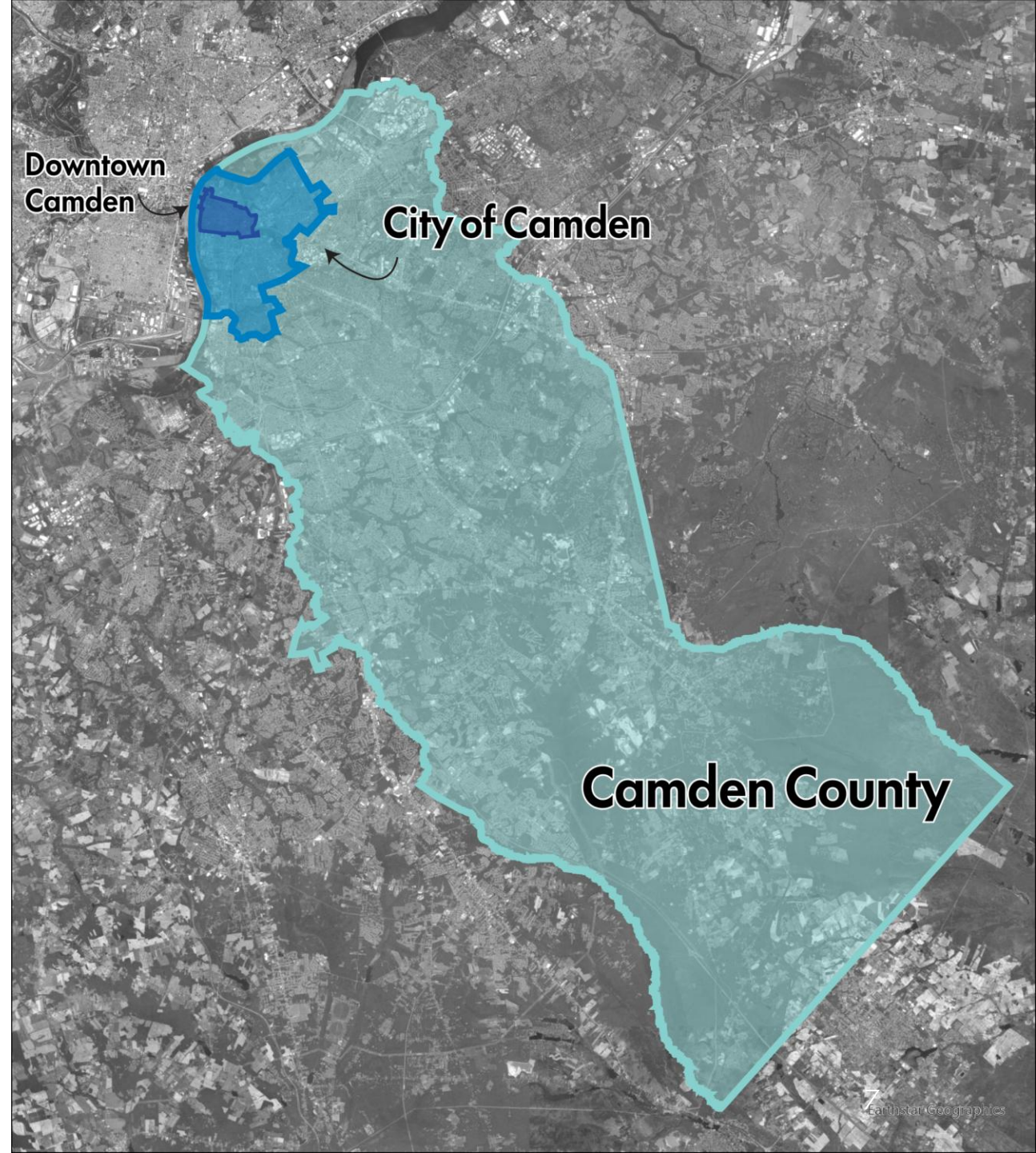


25,500
jobs



6,000
students

Welcome to Downtown Camden



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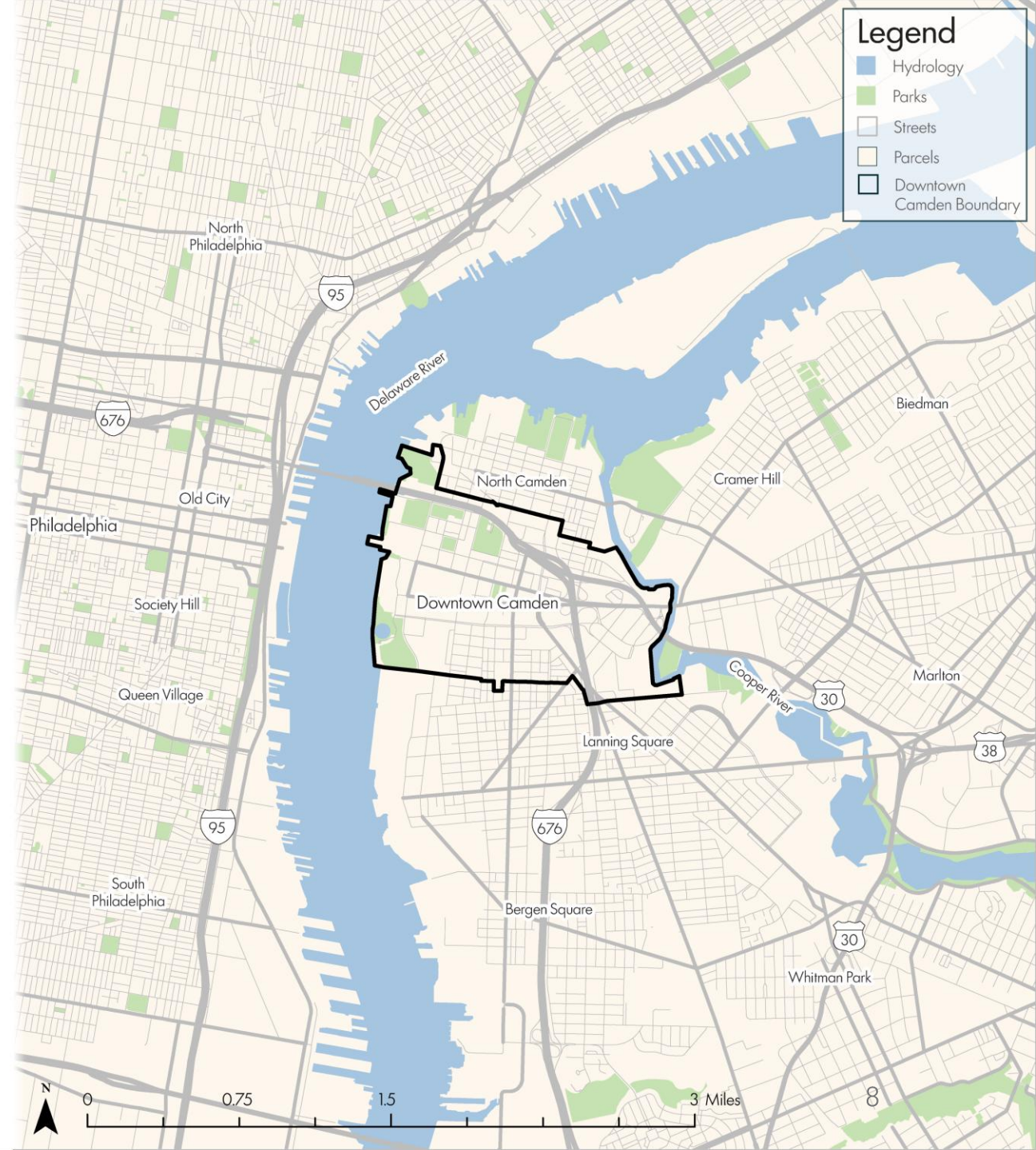


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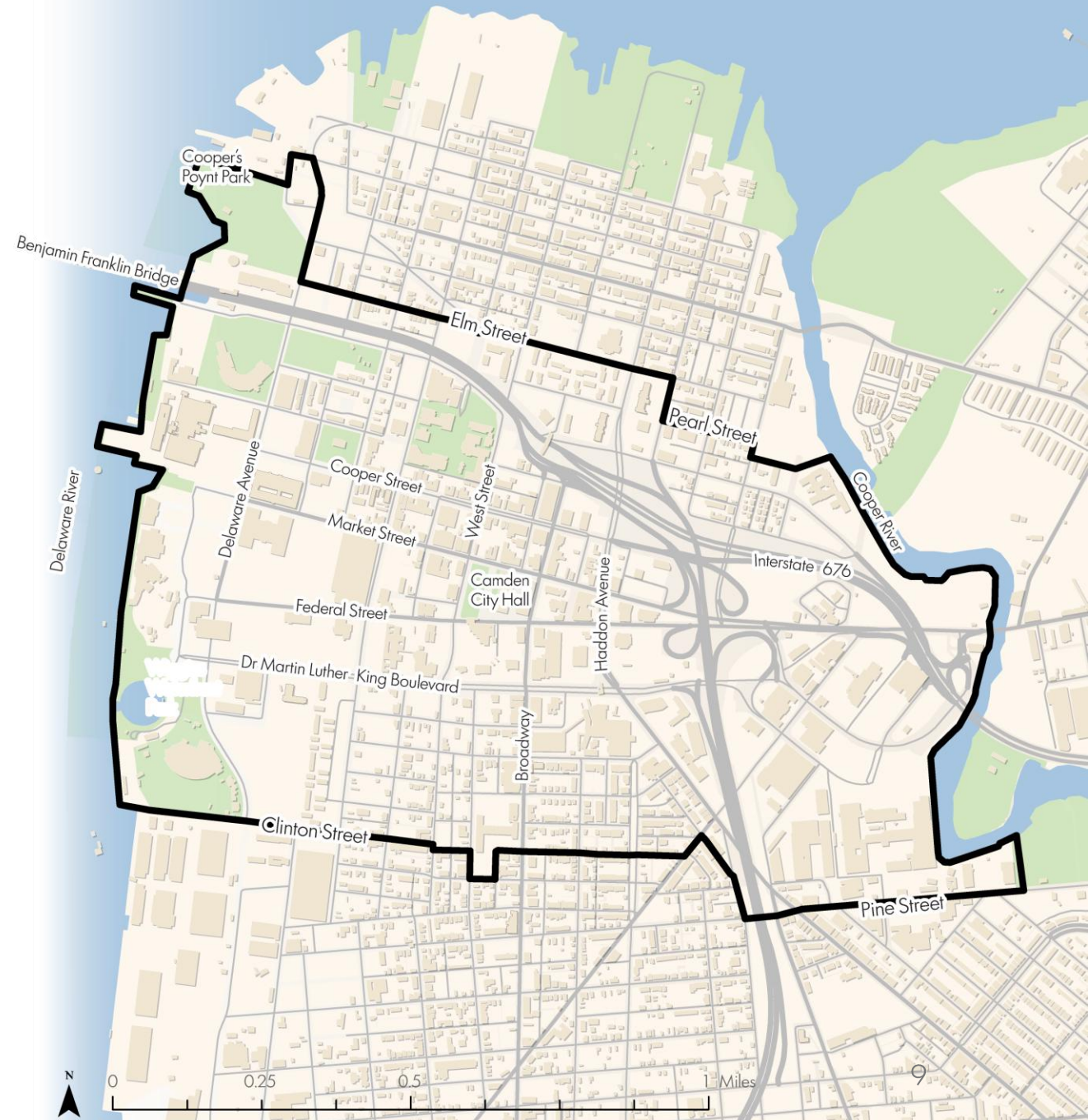


Our Clients

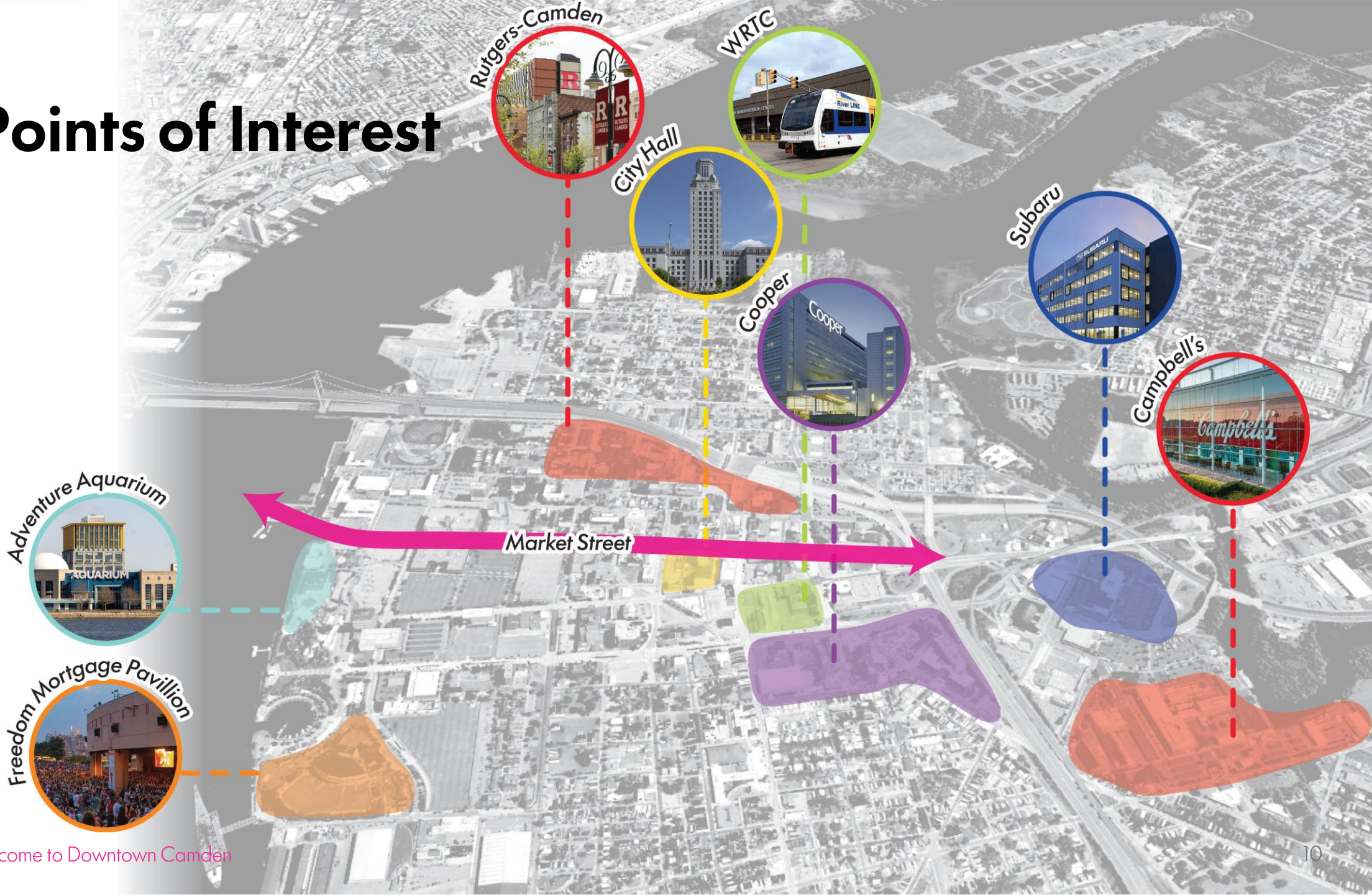


**CAMDEN COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP**
DRIVEN BY PROGRESS | FOCUSED ON EQUITY

Welcome to Downtown Camden

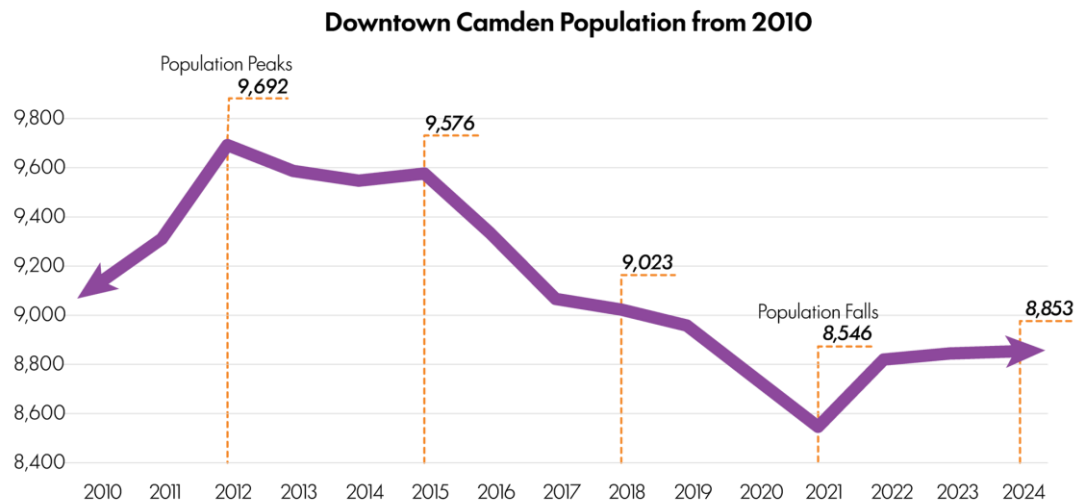


Points of Interest

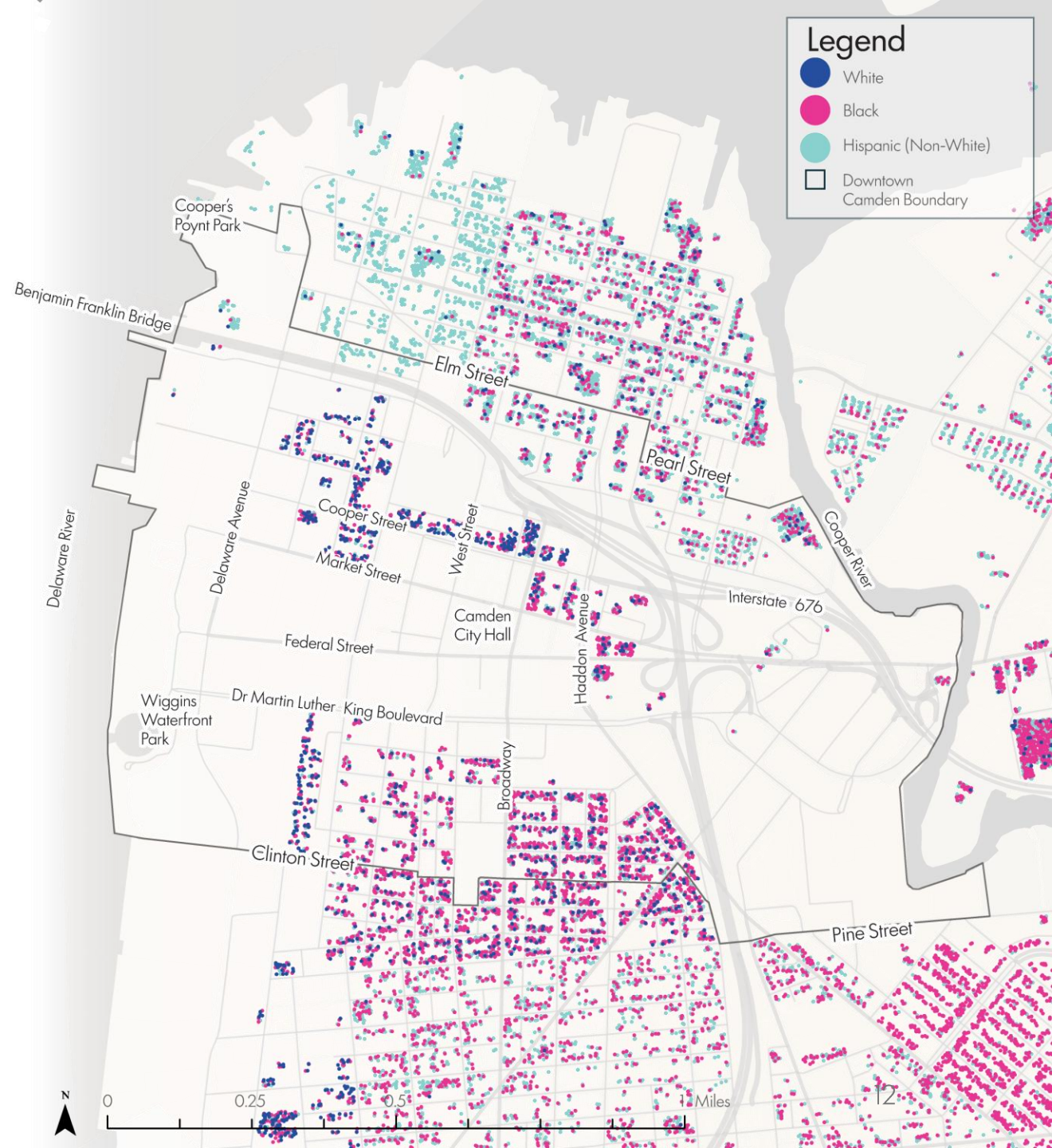


Downtown Camden Today

Residents

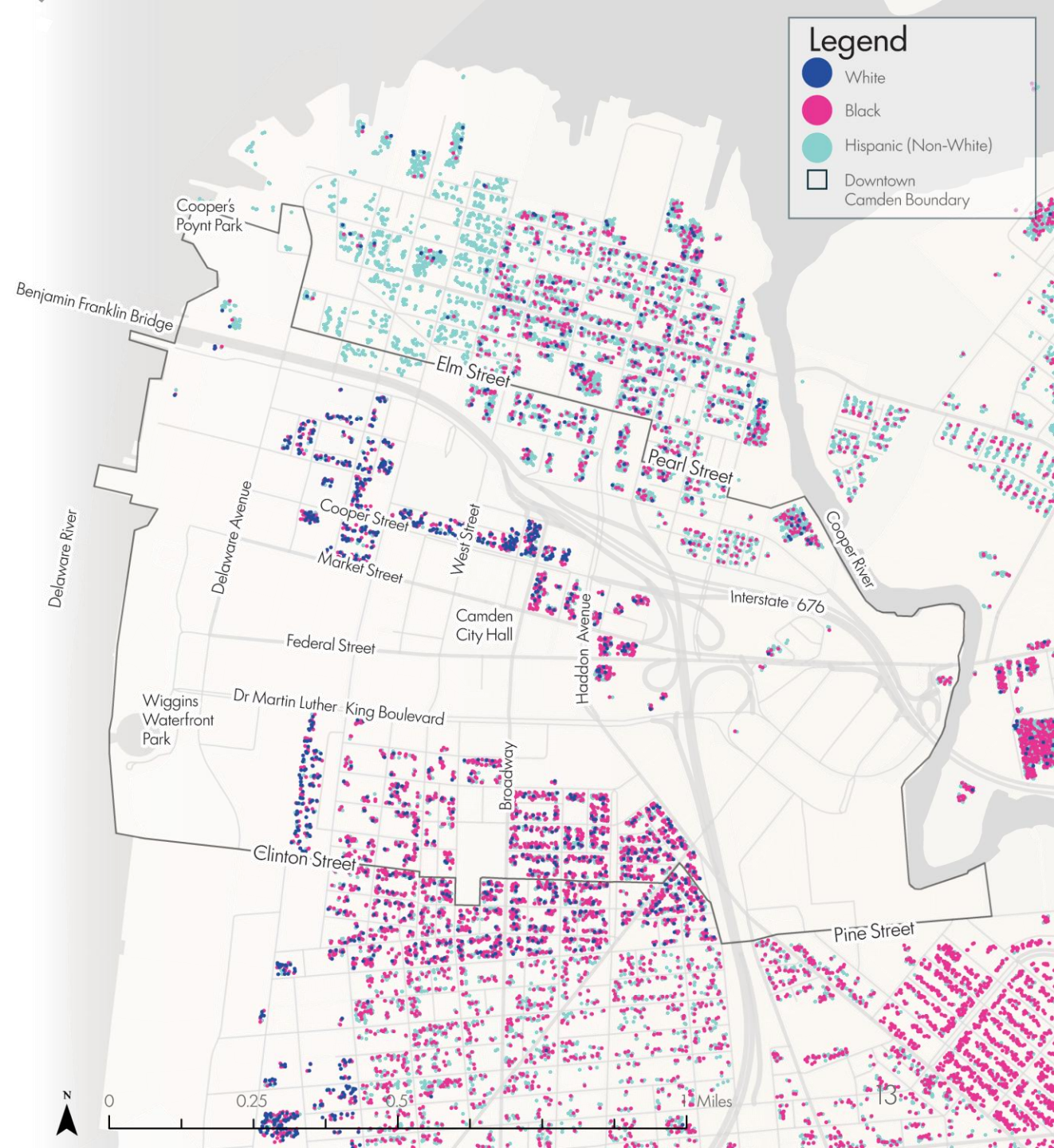
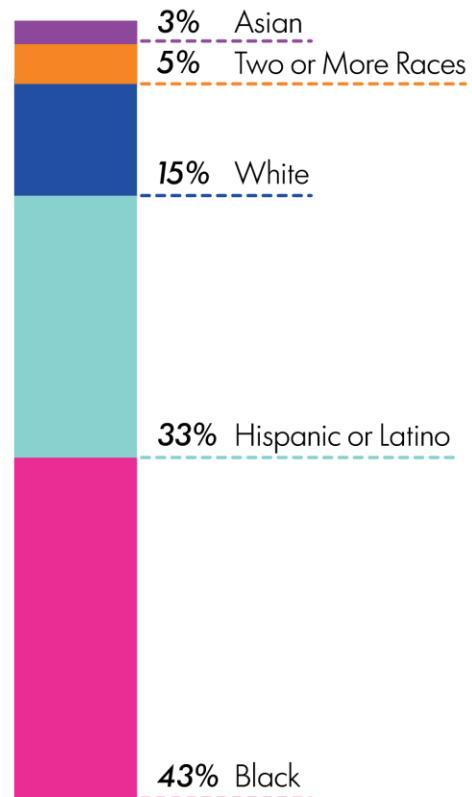


Downtown Camden Today



Residents

Racial Distribution



Residents

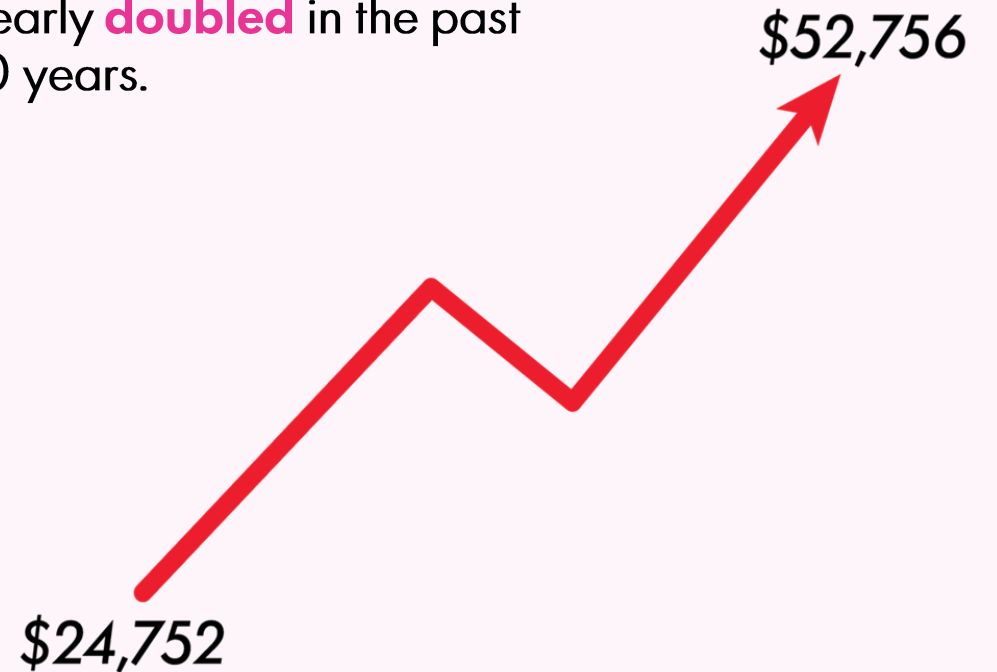
Median Household Income:

Downtown Camden: **\$52,000** > City of Camden: \$40,000

Unemployment in Downtown Camden:

Dropped from **22%** to **14%** in ten years

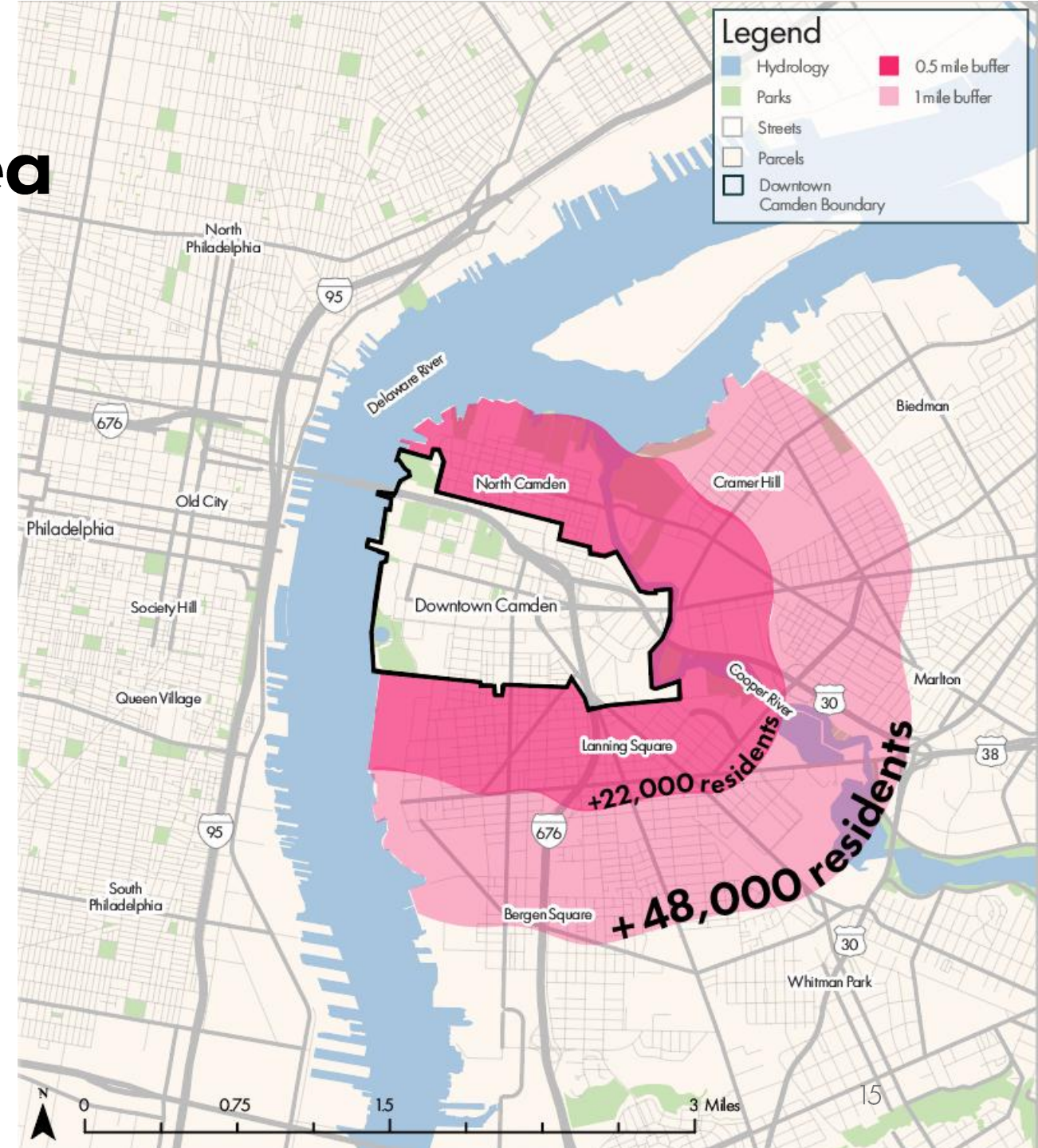
Median Household Income nearly **doubled** in the past 10 years.



Greater Residential Area

Downtown Camden population is stabilizing after pandemic around **8,000**

Attracts **48,000** more residents in the surrounding neighborhoods



Housing

3,640

housing units

16%

vacancy rate

11%

of the total land area in
Downtown Camden is
housing



Housing in Cooper Grant



Housing in Lanning Square
Homes.com

Industry & Economy

37% growth in jobs in the past decade

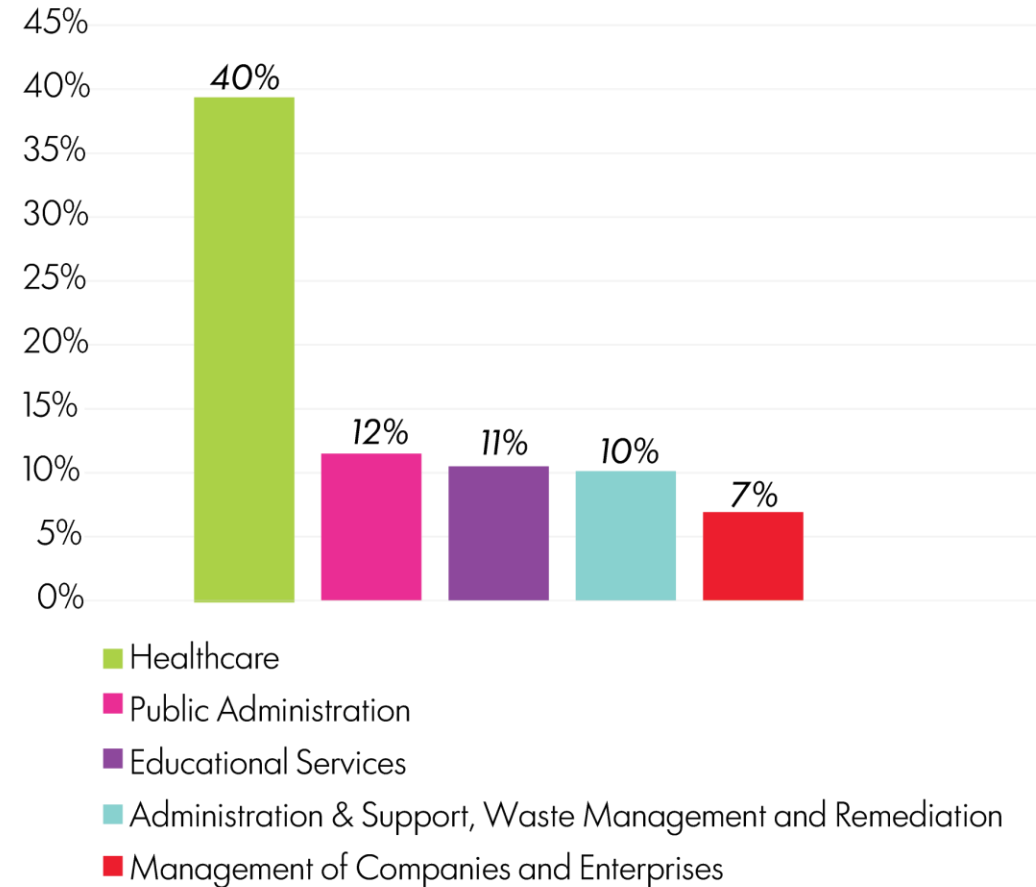
98% of workers commute from outside Downtown Camden

92% of jobs in knowledge-based sectors

Top Employers



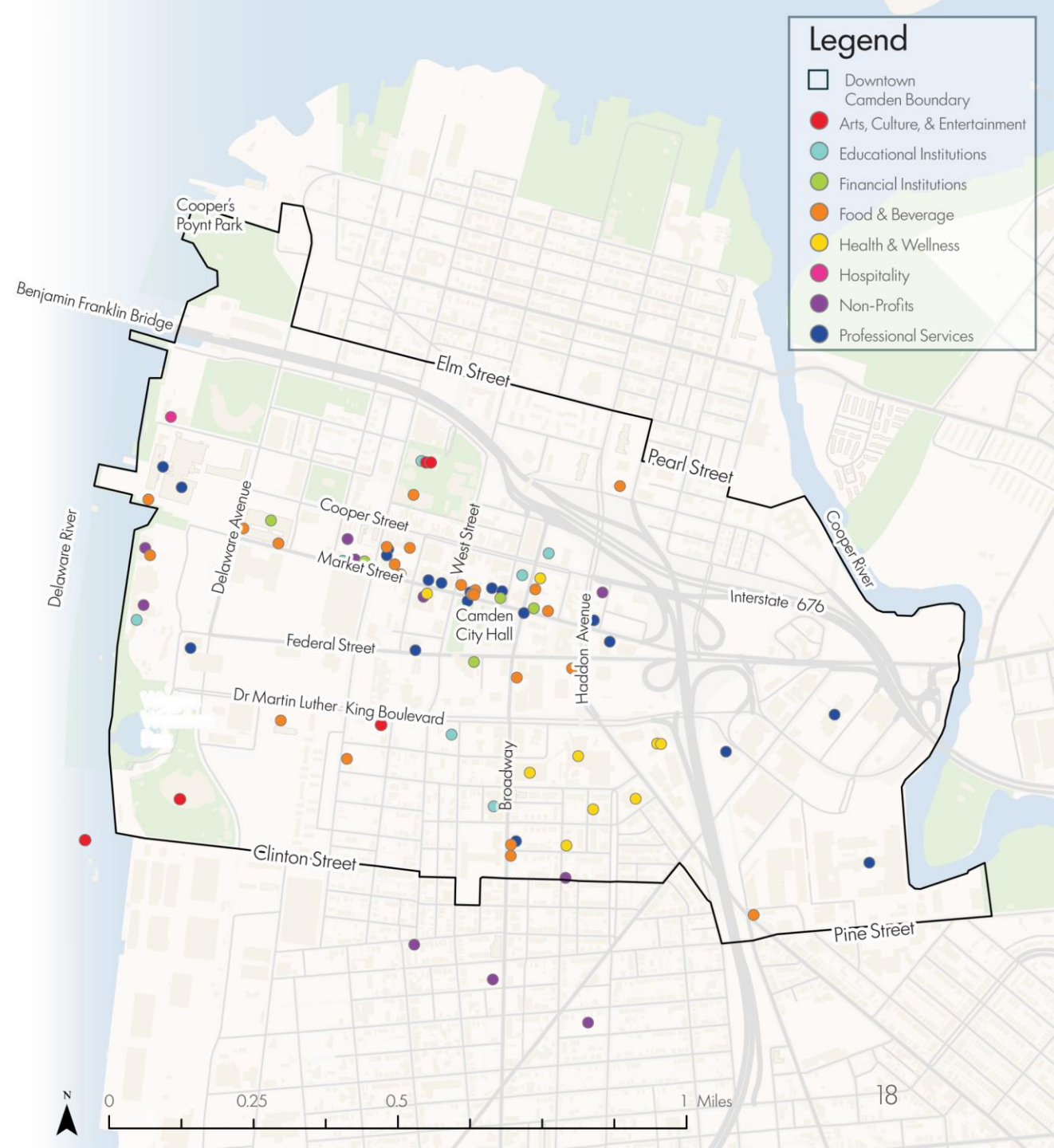
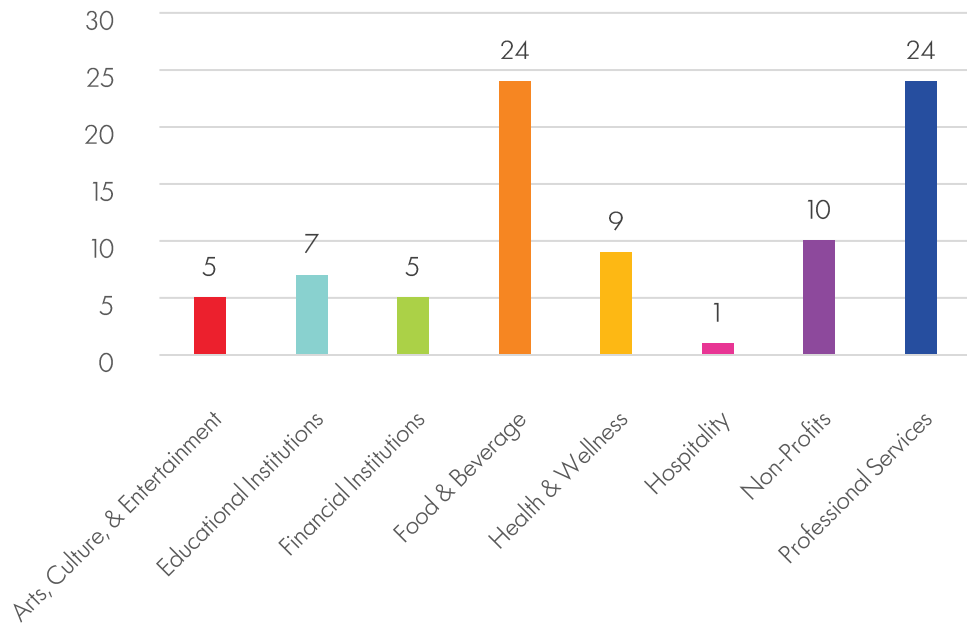
Largest Industries in Downtown Camden



Industry & Economy

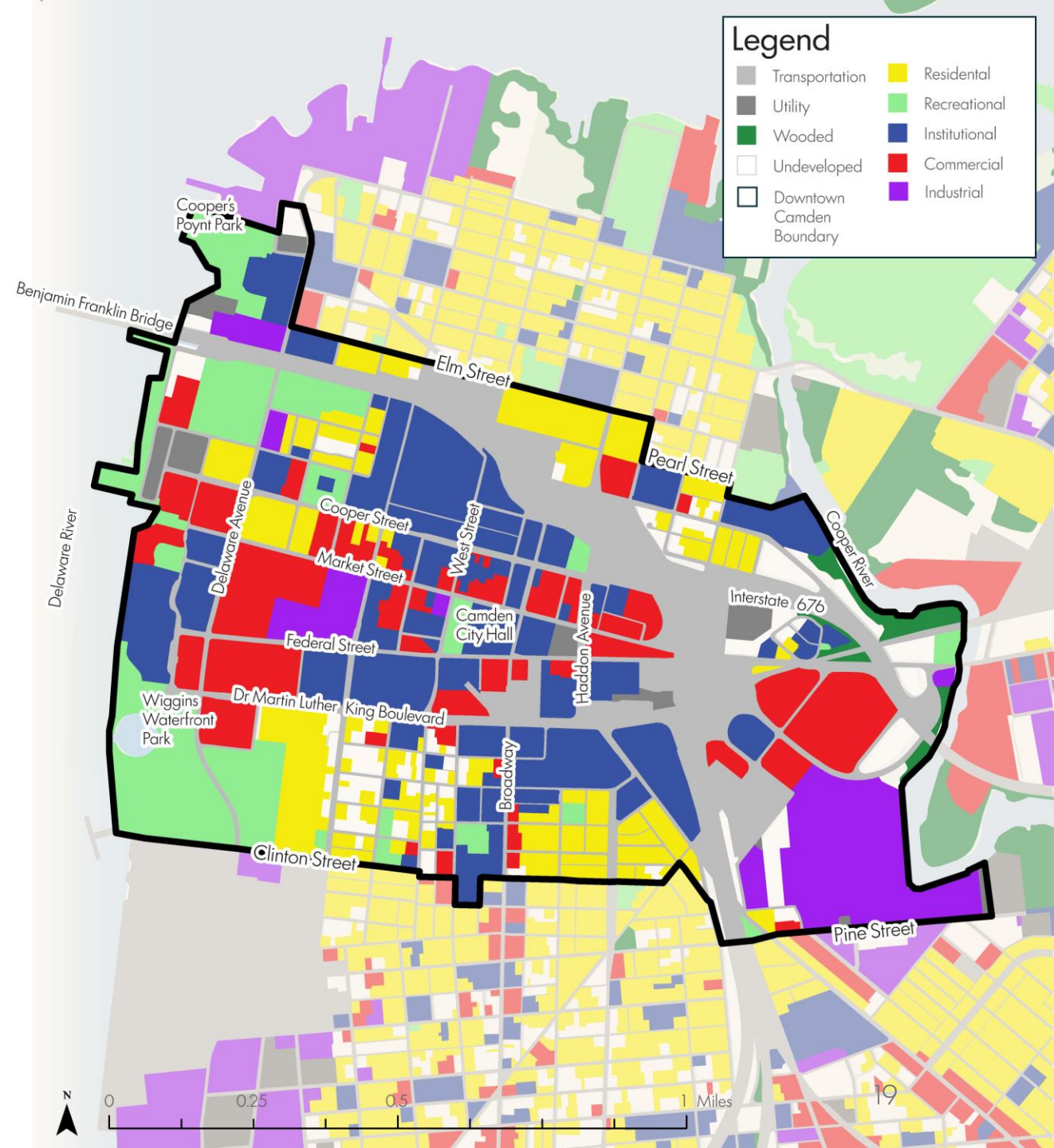
Businesses Within the BID

Establishment Count



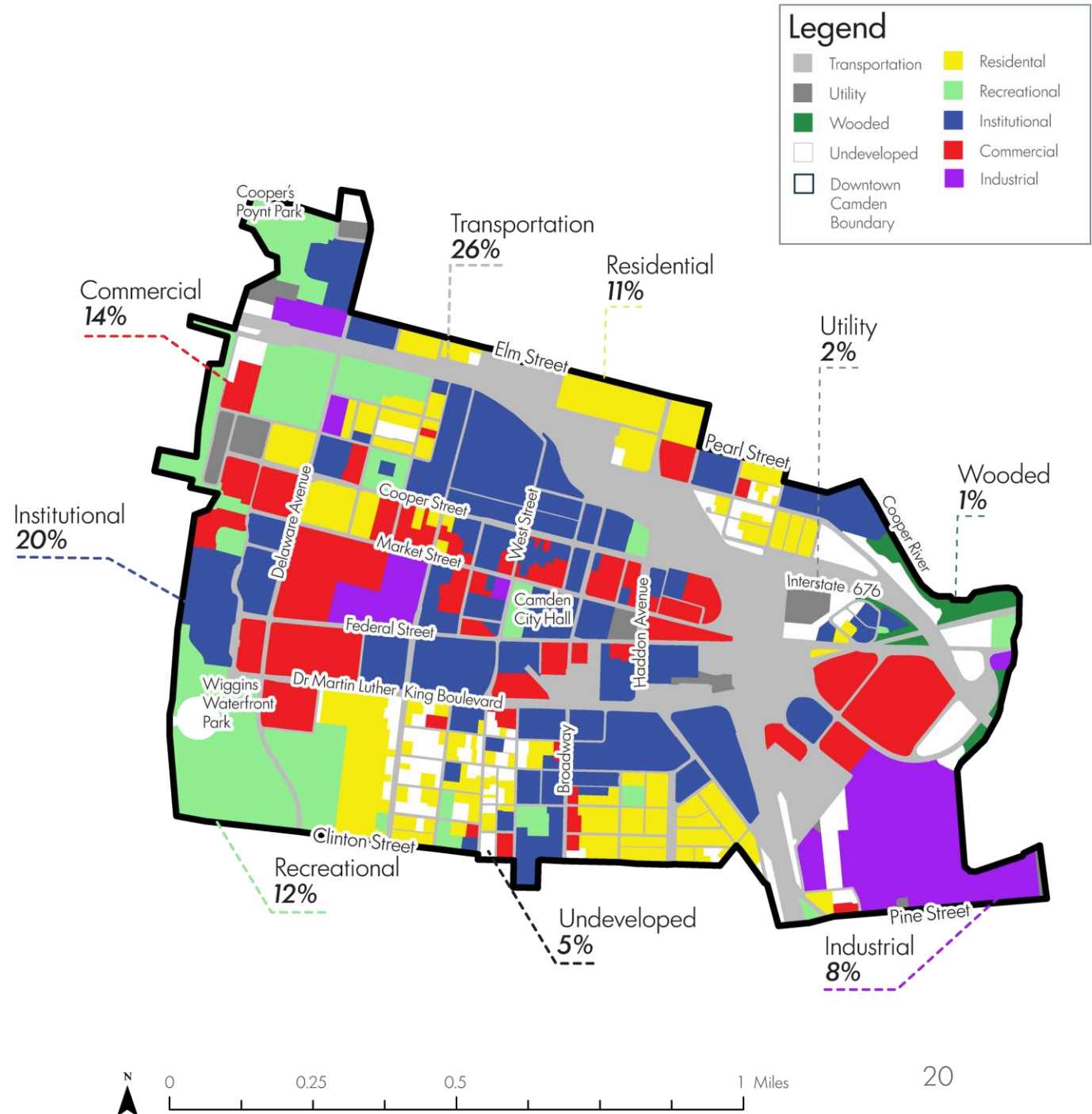
Land Use

Almost **50%** of land is for transportation and institutional uses, resulting in confined residential, commercial, and recreational spaces.



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Transportation

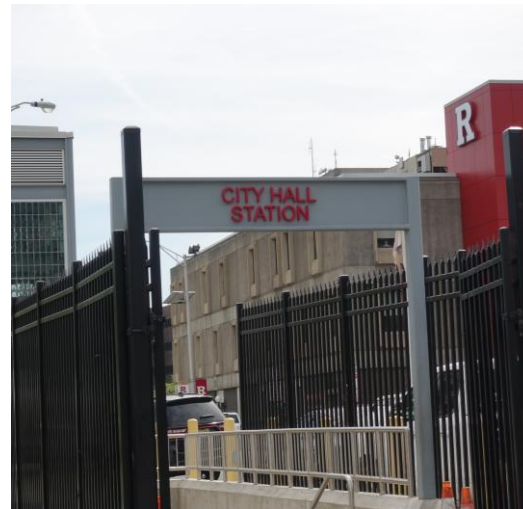
2 stops on PATCO

4 stops on the River Line

2 proposed stops on the GCL



River Line station



PATCO station

Downtown Camden Today



Historic Decline

Historical Camden, Camden County Historical Society



1950s

Departure of prominent employers such as Campbell's and RCA



1961

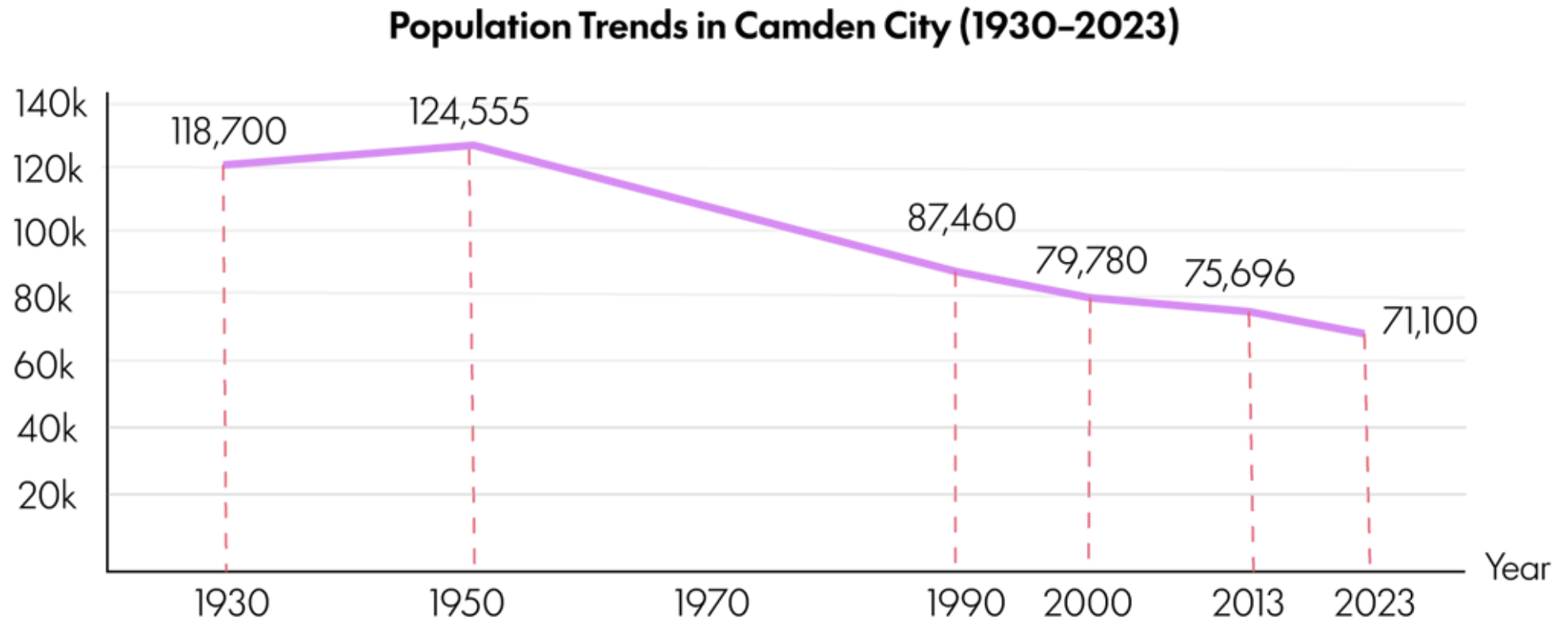
Shopping and commercial competition from new suburban malls



1980s

White out-migration to the suburbs

Historic Decline



Comeback City



2012

Cooper Medical School of Rowan University opens



2018

Subaru new headquarters opens



2019

Joint Health Sciences Center opens collaborative hub among education institutions

A Downtown of Many Uses



Tourist attractions on the waterfront



Small residential neighborhoods



Corporate offices



Educational and medical institutions

Ben Franklin Bridge to Philadelphia

North Camden

Cooper Grant

Rutgers Camden

Residential

I-676

City Hall

Parking Lot Belt

US-30 to Cherry Hill

Cooper Hospital

Subaru

Campbells

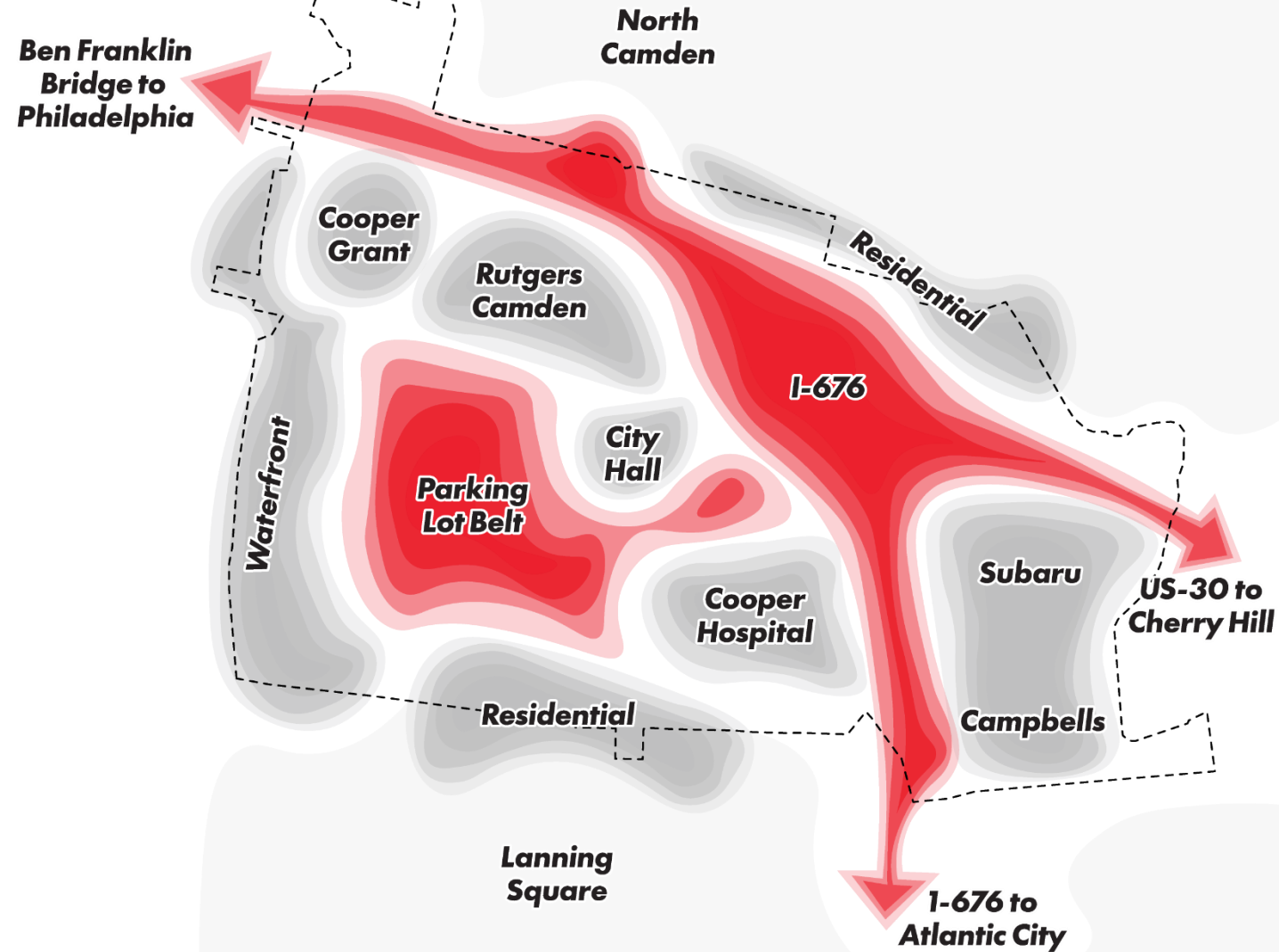
Residential

Lanning Square

I-676 to Atlantic City

But A Downtown of Disconnection

Downtown Camden **does not** function as a cohesive and connected place



Challenges

Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

1. Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together



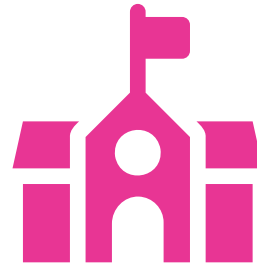
Residents

Residents feel isolated from the downtown core.



Workers

Most office buildings and hospitals have their own cafeteria, so there's no need to leave.



Students

Rutgers students are advised not to go beyond campus as a safety measure.



Visitors

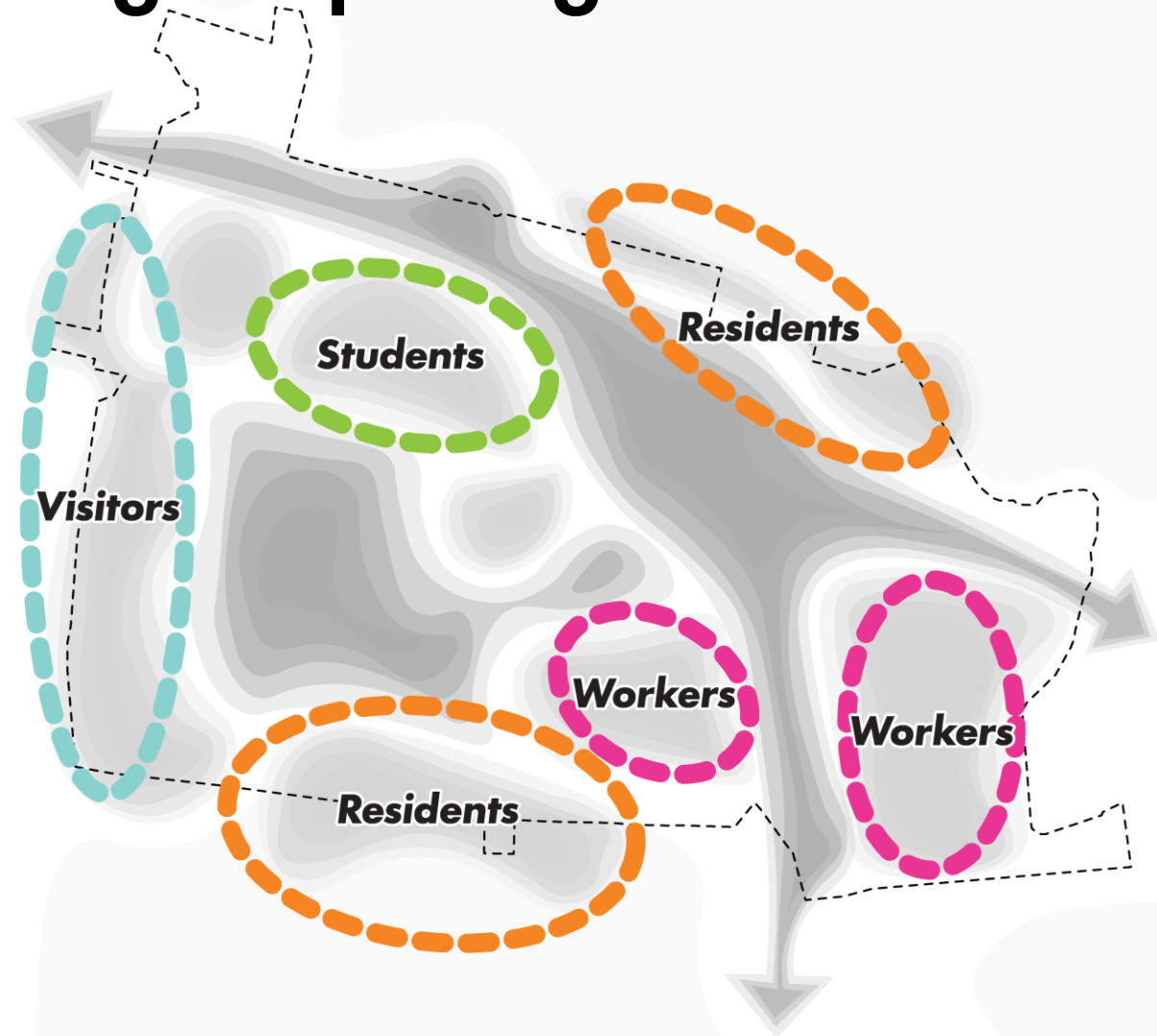
The waterfront is the main tourist attraction, which is only busy on the weekends.

1. Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

CBS NEWS
Camden Ranks Most Dangerous City In The Country
The crime-ridden metropolis came in number one on the list, which was compiled using FBI data from 2012. February 10th, 2014

COURIER POST
Camden's homicide count keeps climbing
A man was fatally shot on a city street early Wednesday, pushing Camden's homicide total to 16 this year. May 11th, 2016

NEWS 12
Camden makes top list of most dangerous cities
Camden came in on the list at No. 14., where one out of every 64 residents could become a violent crime victim. April 25th, 2022



Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

Shortage of Accessible Amenities

2. Shortage of Accessible Amenities



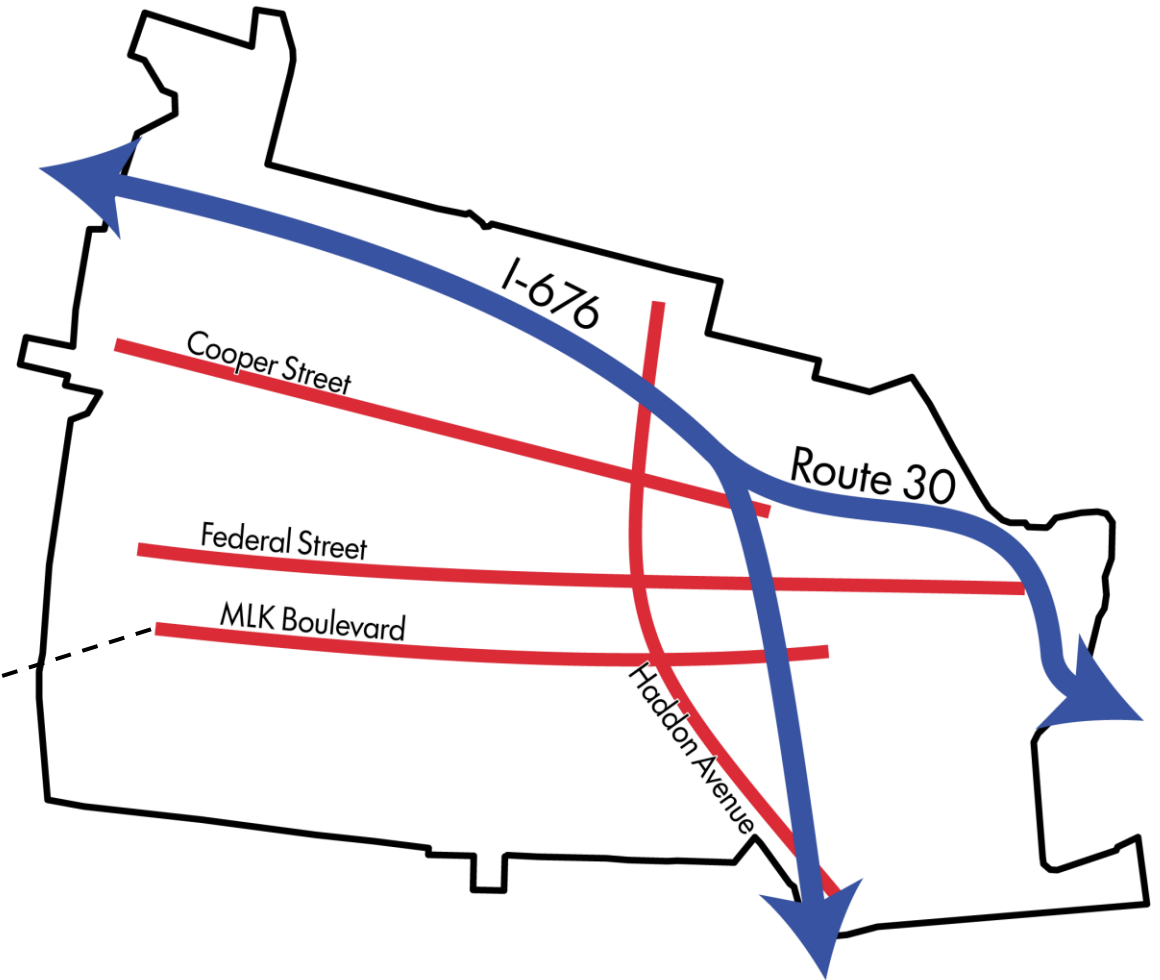
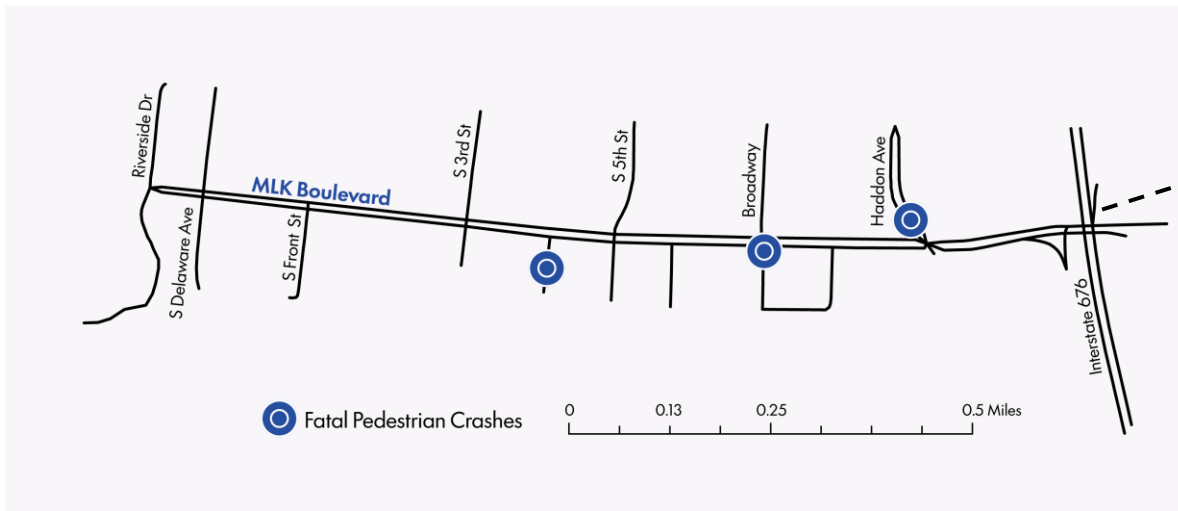
Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

Shortage of Accessible Amenities

Lack of Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure

3. Lack of Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure

High-speed and high-volume highways and arterials



Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

Shortage of Accessible Amenities

Lack of Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure

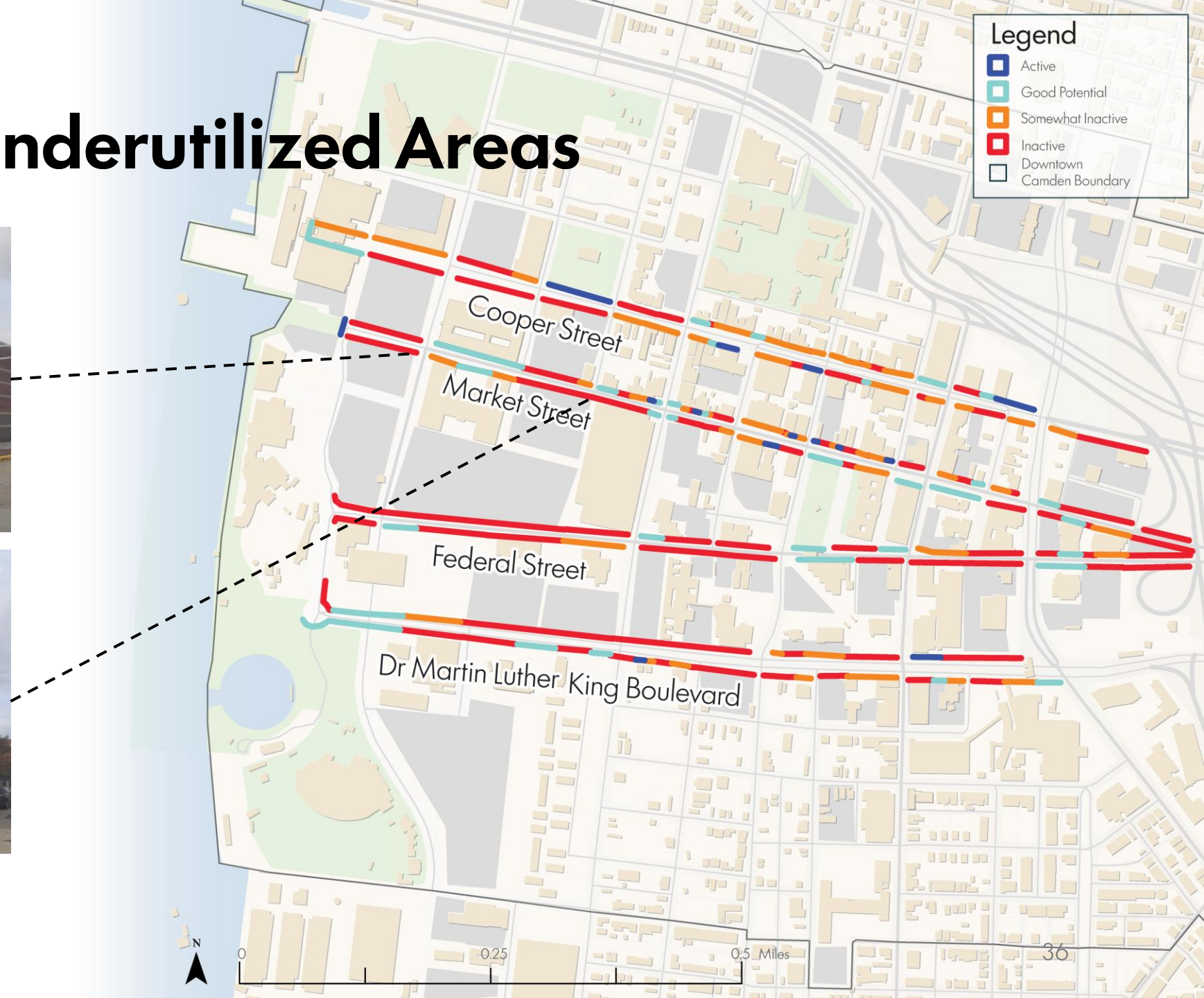
Excessive Underutilized Areas

4. Excessive Underutilized Areas



Inactive street frontage on Market Street
Google Earth

Challenges



Legend

- Active
- Good Potential
- Somewhat Inactive
- Inactive
- Downtown Camden Boundary



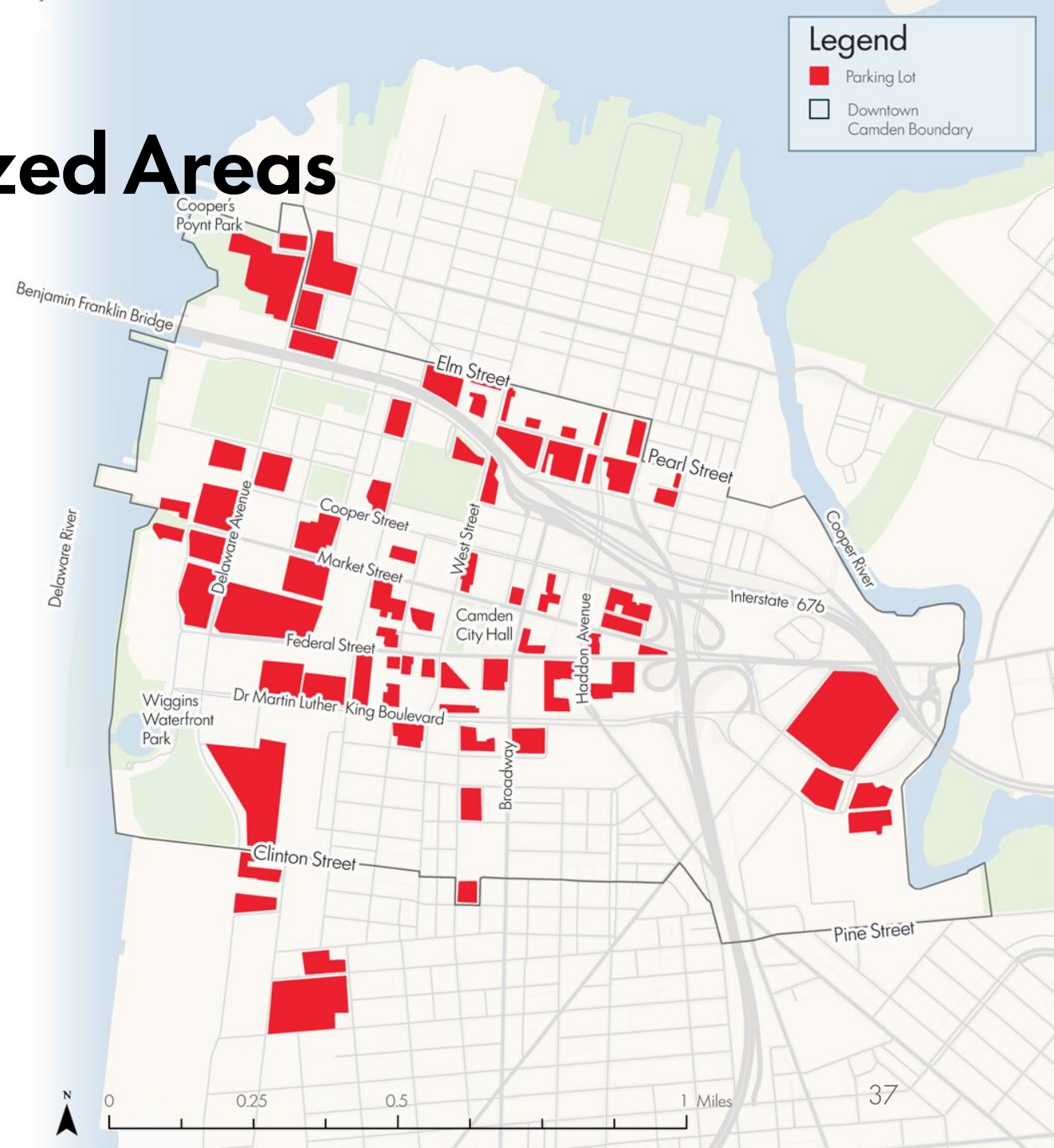
4. Excessive Underutilized Areas

100 acres of parking (17% of total land)
= 14,000 parking spaces



Parking lot near the waterfront

Challenges



Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

Shortage of Accessible Amenities

Lack of Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure

Excessive Underutilized Areas

Incentives with Limited Impact

5. Incentives with Limited Impact

\$1.4 billion

in tax breaks and financial incentives

19 companies

have received these tax breaks

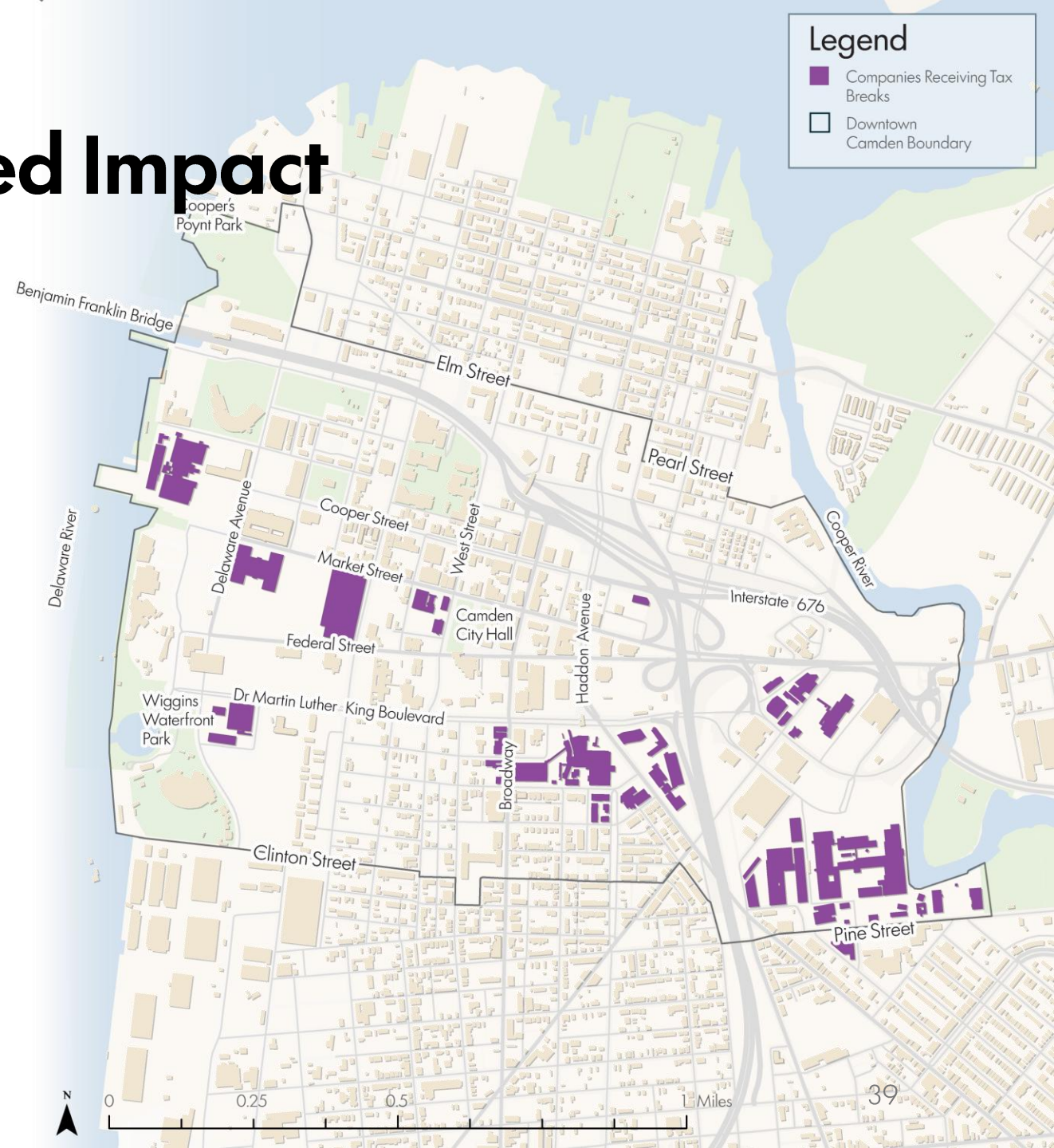


SUBARU.



Campbell's

Challenges



5. Incentives with Limited Impact

\$1.4 billion

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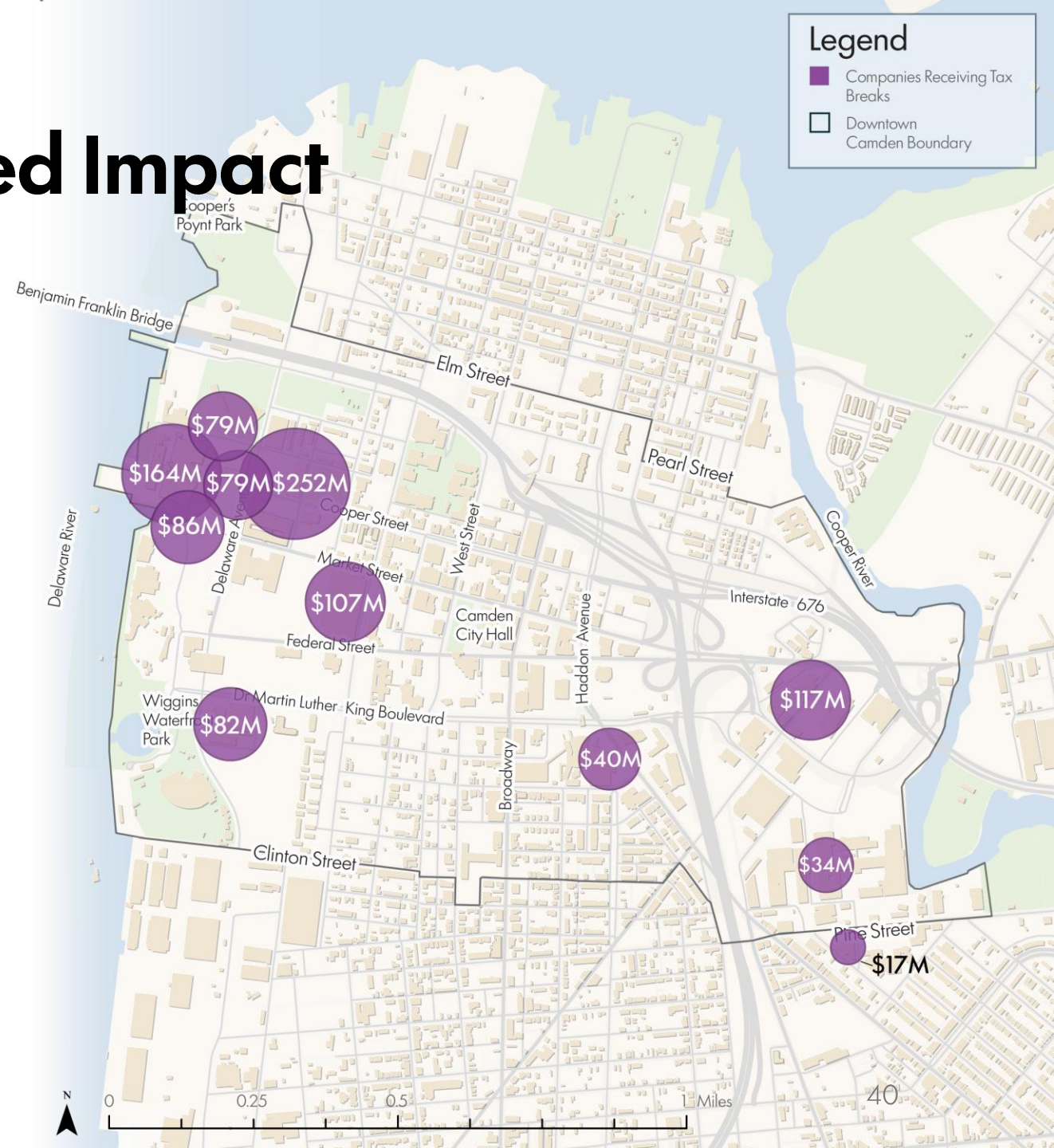


SUBARU.

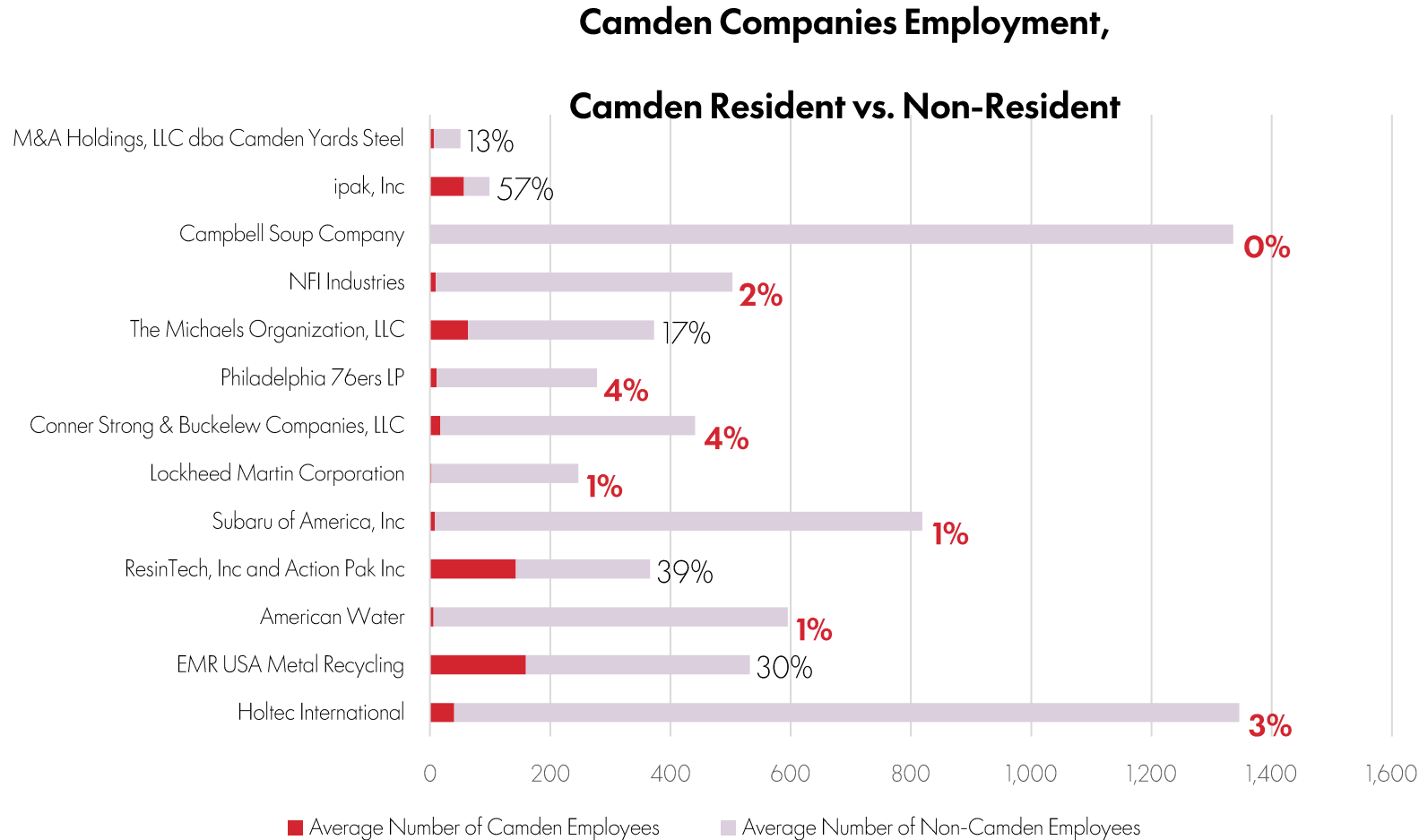


Campbell's

Challenges



5. Incentives that Don't Drive Impact



9%
of total employee base
are Camden residents

83%
of Camden-based
employees make less
than \$50,000

Downtown Camden Challenges

Limited Opportunities to Bring People Together

Shortage of Accessible Amenities

Lack of Pedestrian Friendly Infrastructure

Excessive Underutilized Areas

Incentives with Limited Impact

Opportunities

Strong Existing Community Partnerships

1. Strong Existing Community Partnerships



CSSD Weekly Street Cleaning



Lunchtime Concerts



Public Space Activation



Outdoor Summer Activities



Night Gardens



Community Murals

Strong Existing Community Partnerships

Robust Transit System

2. Robust Transit System

Camden Loop public rideshare service

Proposed Glassboro-Camden Line

Walter Rand Transportation Center centralizes transit



Walter Rand Transportation Center

Opportunities



Strong Existing Community Partnerships

Robust Transit System

Thriving Waterfront

3. Thriving Waterfront

14

aquarium attractions

11 out of 17

summer weekends have events at Freedom Mortgage Pavillion

500,000 visitors

visit the waterfront during the summer



Adventure Aquarium



Freedom Mortgage Pavillion

Strong Existing Community Partnerships

Robust Transit System

Thriving Waterfront

Anchor Institution Involvement

4. Anchor Institution Involvement



Cooper University Health Care

Community Health Workers
Health Needs Assessments
Clinical health screenings
Cooper Sprouts' Community Garden

Cooper University

Opportunities



Virtua Health

Eat Well Initiative
Mobile clinics
Affordable housing with on-site healthcare

Virtua Health



Rutgers University – Camden

Civic Scholars program
Afterschool volunteering
Non-profit partnerships
Urban Innovation Fund

Rutgers University – Camden

Strong Existing Community Partnerships

Robust Transit System

Thriving Waterfront

Anchor Institution Involvement

Large-Scale Investments Paired with Small-Scale Interventions

5. Large-Scale Investments Paired with Small-Scale Interventions



Roosevelt Park



Food Kiosk in Roosevelt Park

Camden Community Partnerships ensured local restaurants & vendors could have a food kiosk in Roosevelt Park, the central outdoor public space in Downtown Camden.

Downtown Camden Opportunities

Strong Existing Community Partnerships

Robust Transit System

Thriving Waterfront

Anchor Institution Involvement

Large Scale Investments Paired with Small Scale Interventions

A lot of plans, limited implementation

DOWNTOWN CAMDEN STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN
March 2004
Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects
Real Estate Solutions
CLARKE CATON HINTZ
NJ TRANSIT
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Greater Camden Partnership
Camden

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES
A NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN FOR COOPER-GRANT/CENTRAL WATERFRONT
PREPARED BY: INTERFACE STUDIO LLC
FOR COOPER'S FERRY PARTNERSHIP AND THE COOPER-GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
CITY OF CAMDEN, NJ
JULY 2007

City of Camden Access Study

NORTH CAMDEN WATERFRONT STUDY AREA
AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT REPORT
Prepared for the City of Camden Department of Planning and Development and the Camden Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

The Camden GreenWay Design Guide
2017
NV5

North CAMDEN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
2022 NRTC Neighborhood Plan

DOWNTOWN CAMDEN MASTER PLAN

camden county

Why our plan is different

Our scope and action plan is to create a 10-year, **people-focused strategy** for Downtown Camden. The plan **builds on existing initiatives** and programs within the Business Improvement District and introduces **new community-centered ideas**.

Vision & Goals

A Vision for Downtown Camden

Downtown Camden is a thriving urban center where all aspects of life occur, evolving into an **active core** that prioritizes its **local community**.

Over the next ten years, Downtown Camden will become a place that fosters **sustained activity** in the public realm, **connection** across the built environment, and **equitable economic growth**.

Goals

1

An Active Downtown Beyond the Workday

Limited Opportunities to Bring
People Together

Shortage of Accessible
Amenities

Strong Existing Community
Partnerships

Shortage of Accessible
Amenities

2

A Unified Downtown without Barriers

Lack of Pedestrian-Friendly
Infrastructure

Excessive Underutilized Areas

Robust Transit System

Thriving Waterfront

3

A Growing Downtown that Benefits Camden

Incentives that Don't Drive
Impact

Anchor Institution Involvement

Large Scale Investments Paired
with Small Scale Interventions

Recommendations

Focus Areas

1

**Visible
Interventions
People Will Notice**

2

**A Distinct
Downtown Camden
Experience**

3

**Policies That Lock In
Long-Term Change**

Recommendations Structure

Recommendation

1

Recommendation

4

Recommendation

7

Recommendation

2

Recommendation

5

Recommendation

8

Recommendation

3

Recommendation

6

Recommendation

9

Recommendations Structure

Recommendation
1

Recommendation
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7

Recommendation
2

Recommendation
5

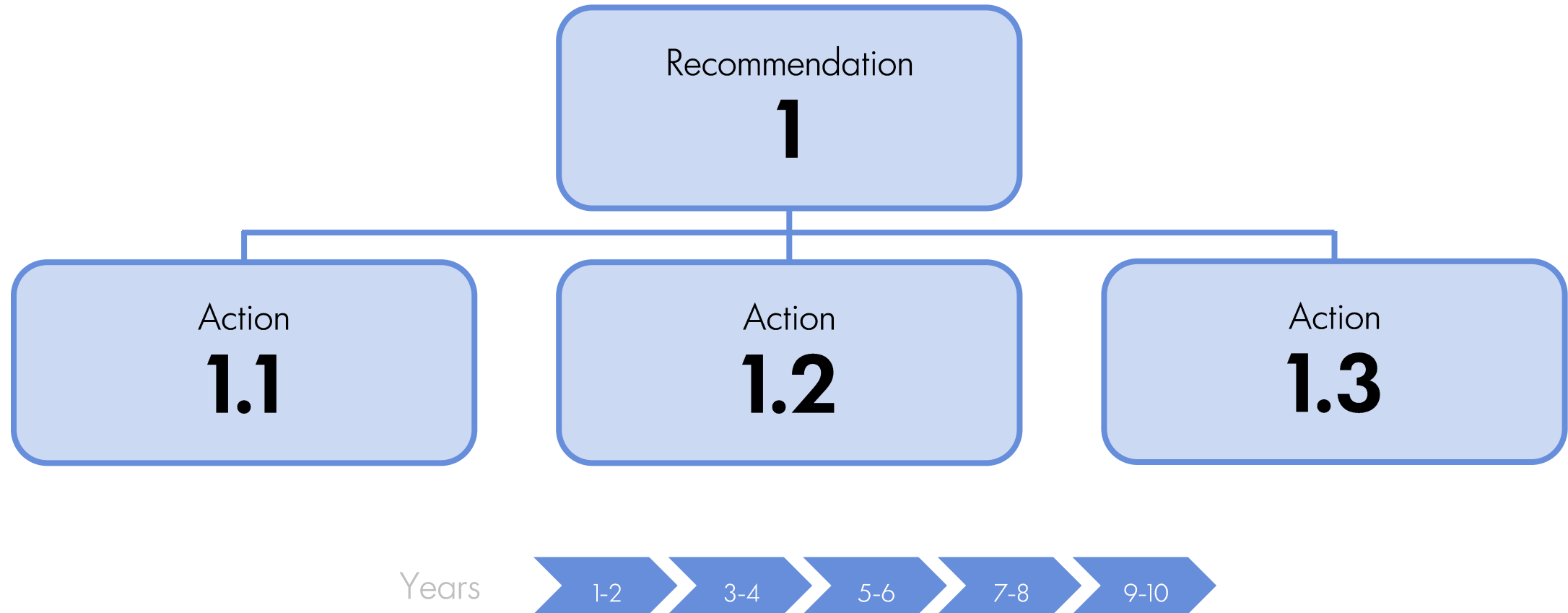
Recommendation
8

Recommendation
3

Recommendation
6

Recommendation
9

Recommendations Structure



FOCUS AREA 1

Visible Interventions People Will Notice



Establish Market Street as Camden's Main Street

1 Establish Market Street as Camden's Main Street

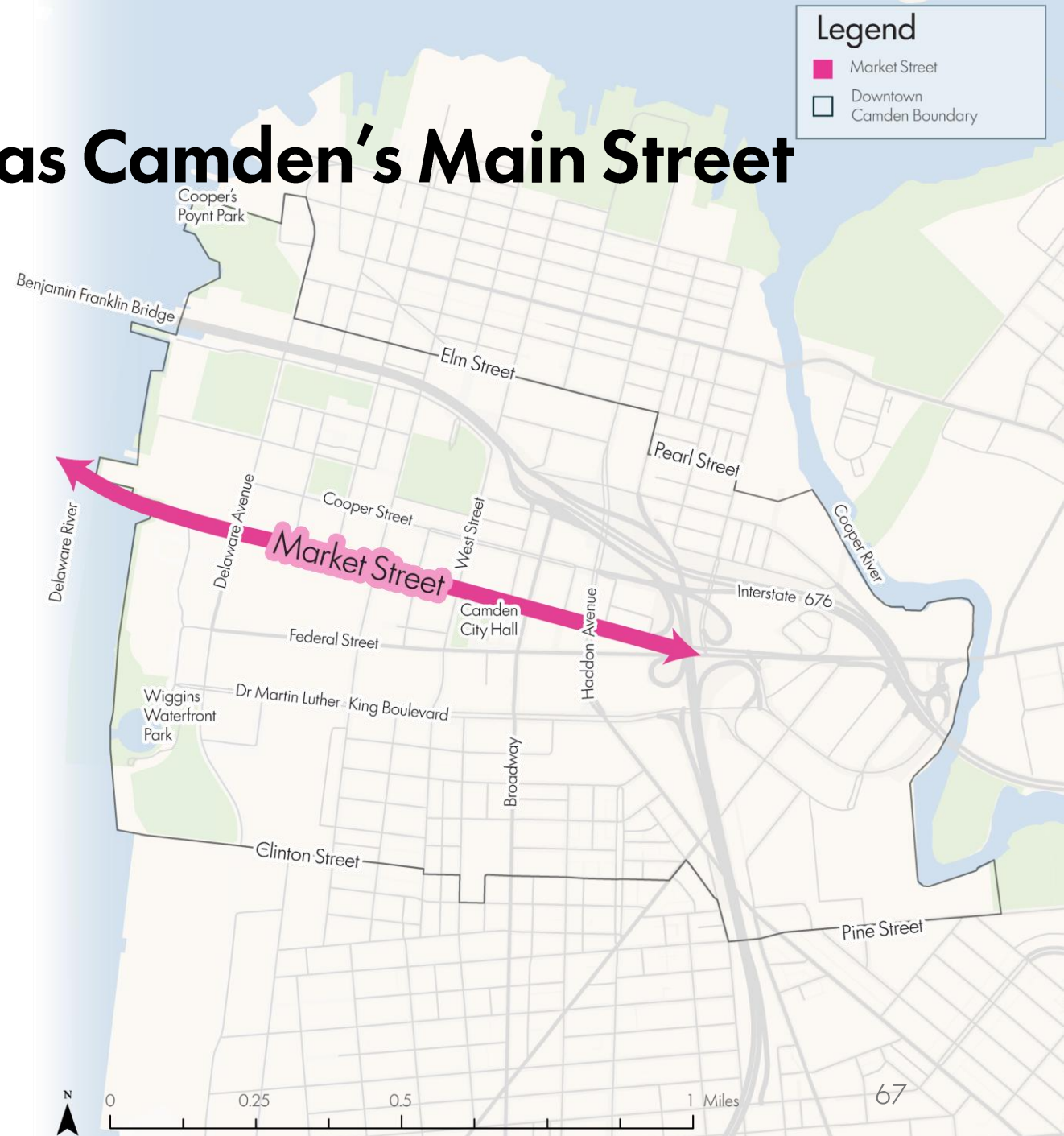


Vacant storefront on Market Street



Vacant land on Market Street

Recommendations > Visible Interventions People Will Notice

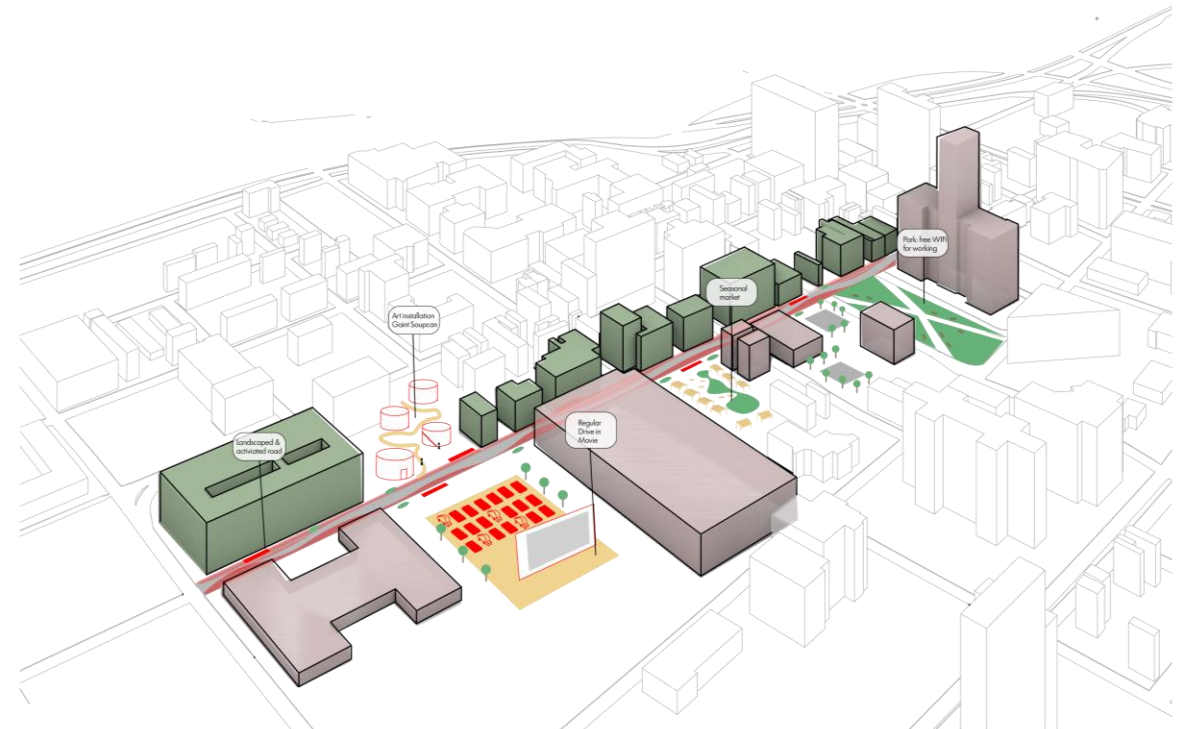


1 Establish Market Street as Camden's Main Street

1.1 Activate underutilized parking and vacant lots to create new green spaces and enhance street frontage

1.2 Improve storefronts to create a visually appealing streetscape

1.3 Utilize sidewalks and street parking in front of businesses to support temporary outdoor seating and dining



Rendering of potential activities along Market Street

Years

1-2

3-4

5-6

7-8

9-10

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Rendering of improved storefront on Market Street

Years

1-2

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Outdoor seating in Jersey City, NJ

2

Enhance Downtown Camden's Visual Identity and Accessibility Through Wayfinding

2 Enhance Downtown Camden's Visual Identity and Accessibility Through Wayfinding

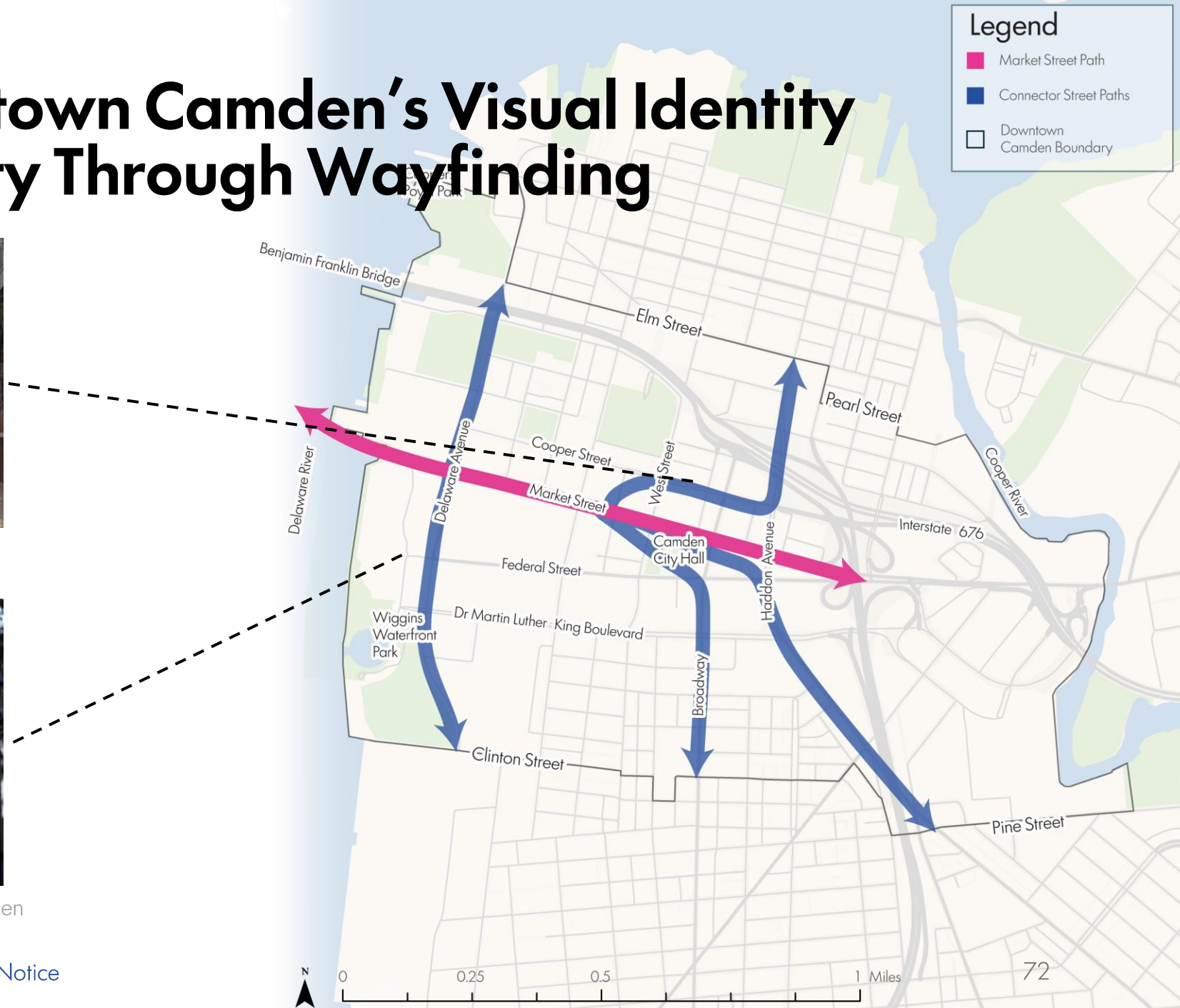


Current Wayfinding in Downtown Camden



Current Historical Marker in Downtown Camden

Recommendations > Visible Interventions People Will Notice



2 Enhance Downtown Camden's Visual Identity and Accessibility Through Wayfinding

2.1 Redesign unique wayfinding systems for high-traffic areas

2.2 Paint a distinct pathway on Market Street to encourage movement from City Hall to the waterfront

2.3 Improve historical markers and interpretive signs to provide context for attractions and points of interest

Existing wayfinding signages in Downtown Camden

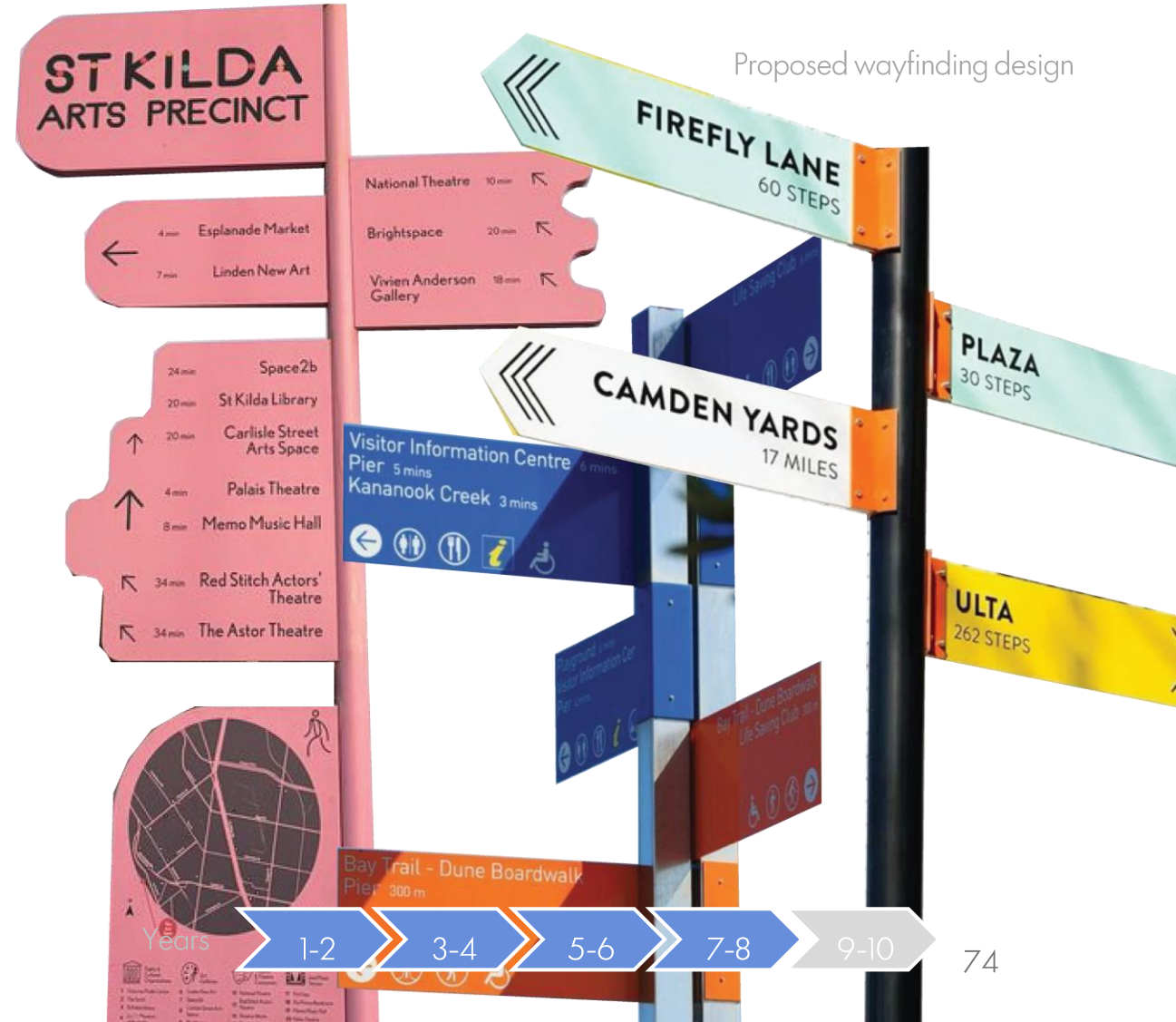


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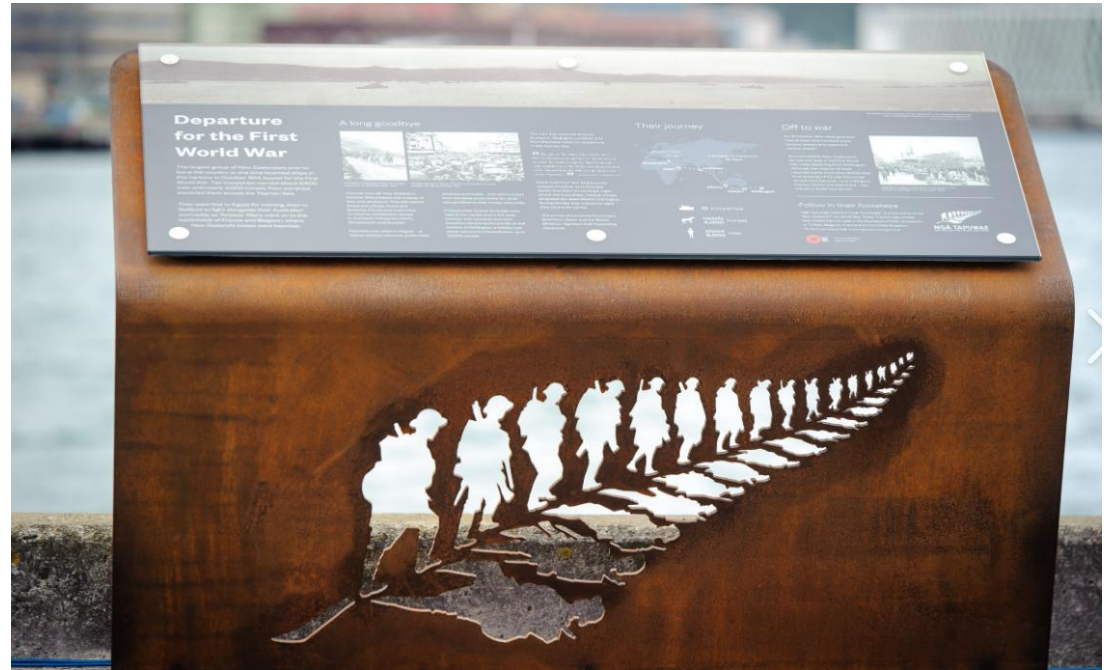
Rendering of proposed wayfinding path on Fourth and Market Street

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Historical marker in Wellington Harbor, New Zealand

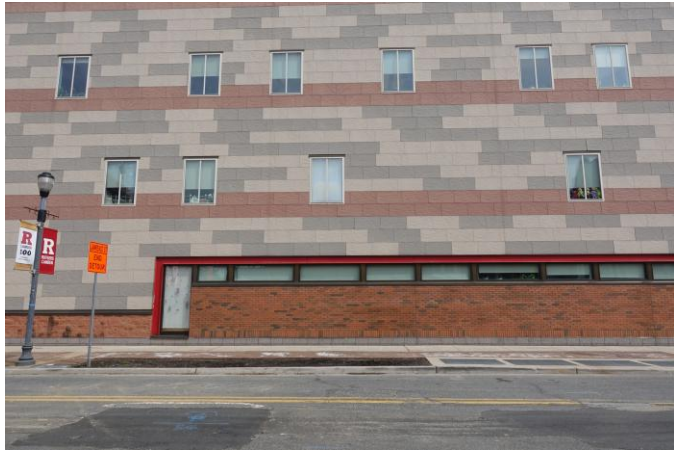
3

Utilize Low-Cost and Temporary Initiatives to Improve the Physical Infrastructure

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Currently Vacant Sidewalks in front of the businesses

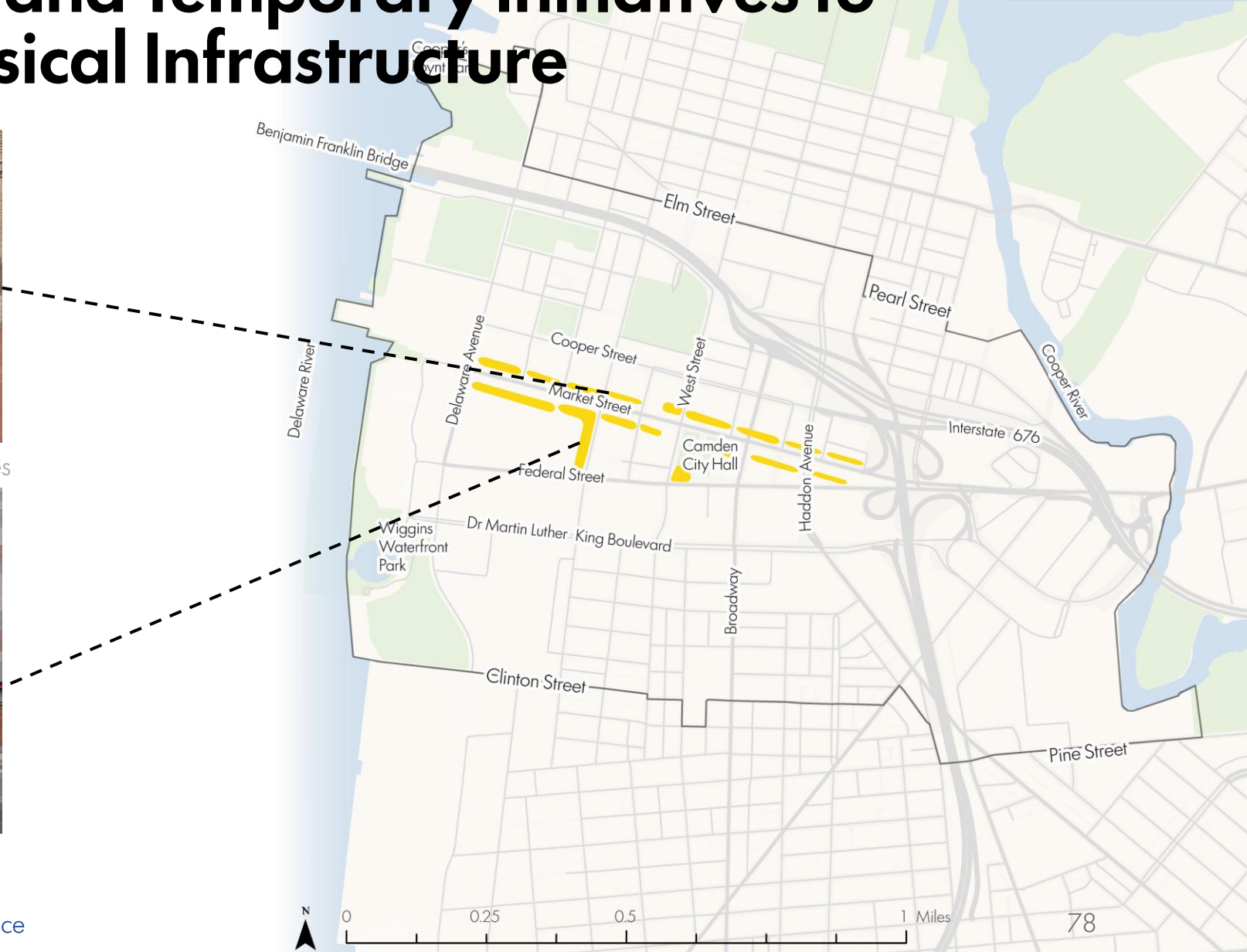


Long and Continuous Street Walls

Recommendations > Visible Interventions People Will Notice

Legend

- Temporary Improvements
- Downtown Camden Boundary



3 Utilize Low-Cost and Temporary Initiatives to Improve the Physical Infrastructure

3.1 Make a more welcoming pedestrian-level experience with murals

3.2 Upgrade the sidewalks on Market Street with pilot projects

3.3 Build structures for rotating art installations



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Existing



Proposed sidewalk pilot project rendering

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Years 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10

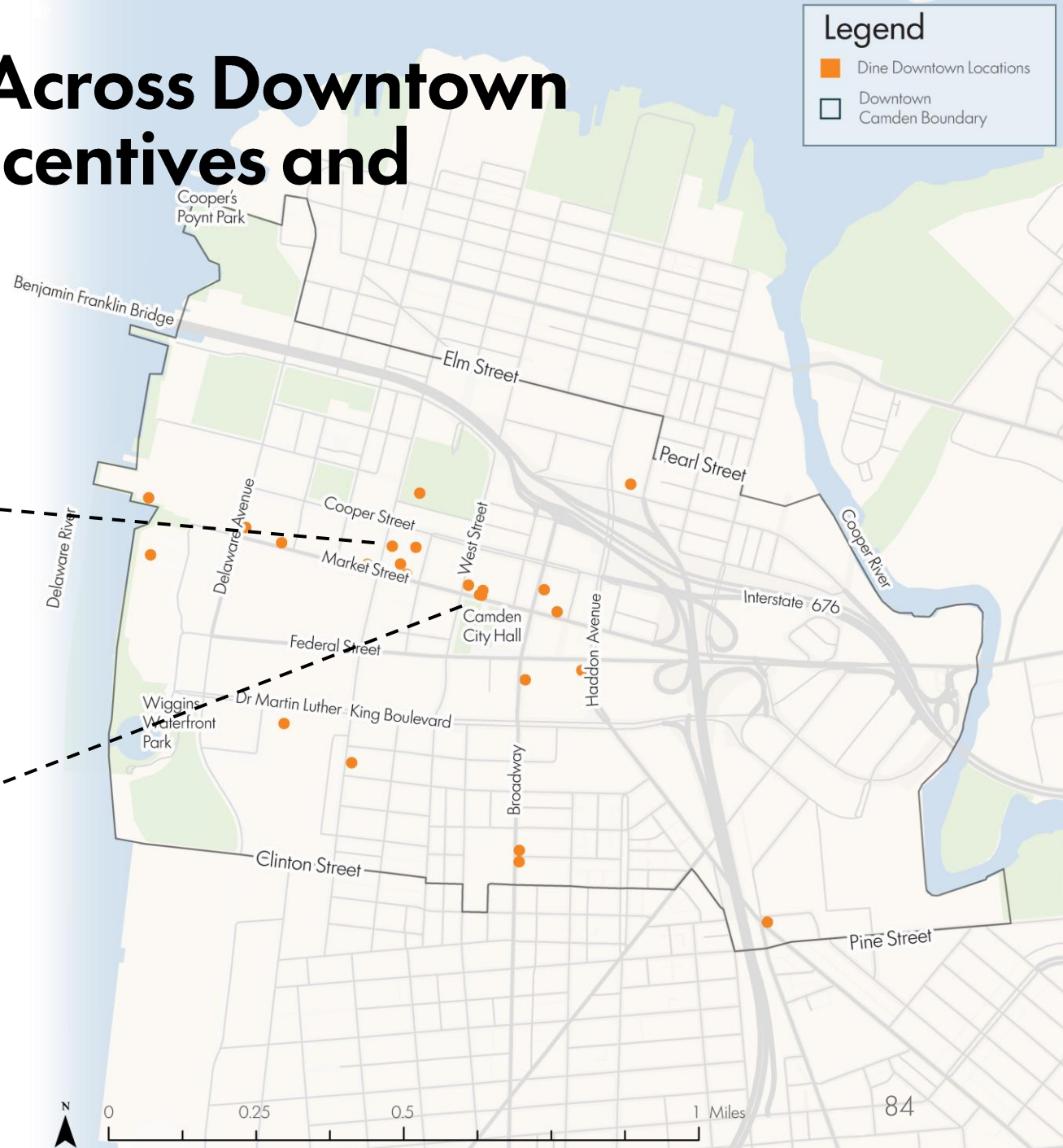
FOCUS AREA 2

A Distinct Downtown Camden Experience

4

Encourage Exploration Across Downtown Through Coordinated Incentives and Connections

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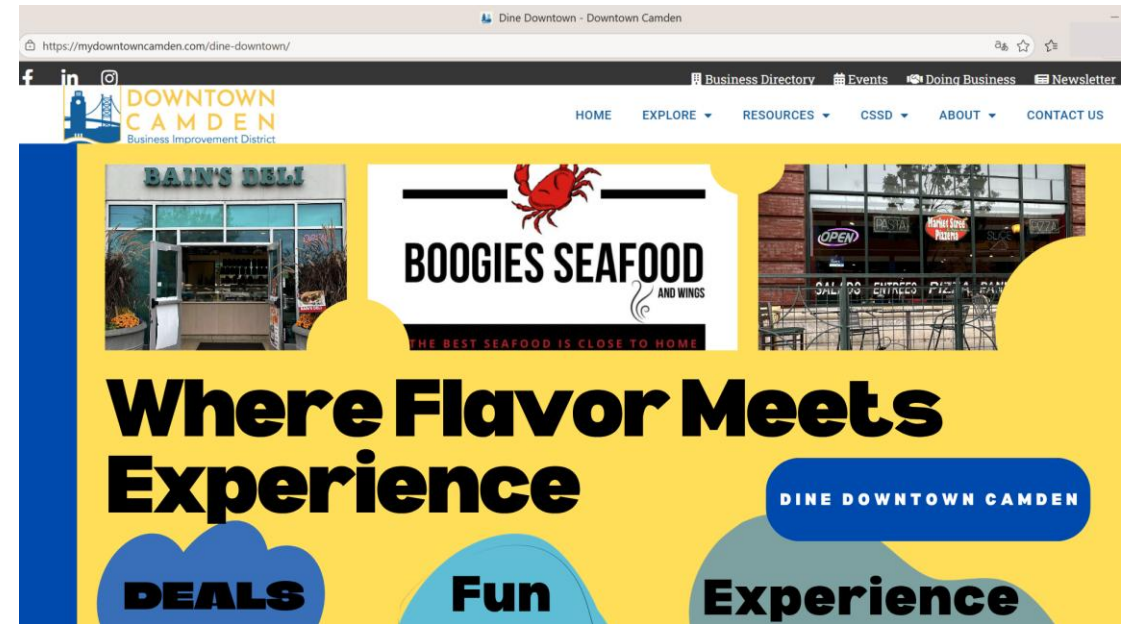


4 Encourage Exploration Across Downtown Through Coordinated Incentives and Connections

4.1 Uplift local businesses through enhanced Dine Downtown website

4.2 Organize promotional events for restaurants in the BID to offer routine deals

4.3 Launch a “Work From Here” campaign that encourages office workers to experience downtown beyond their desk



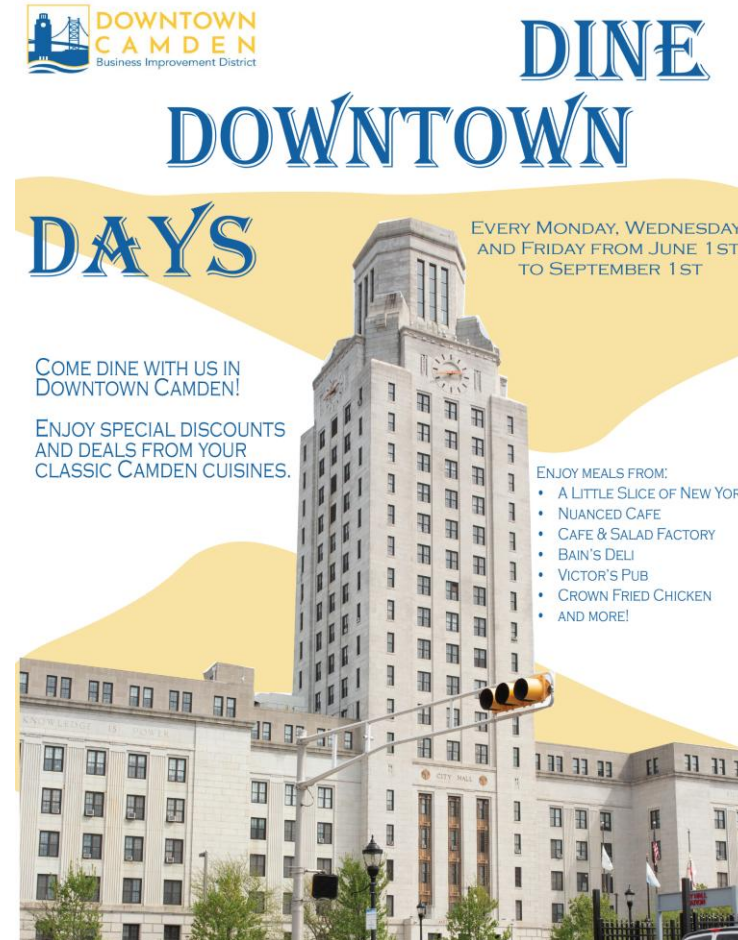
New Dine Downtown website render

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Restaurant activity flyer render

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“Work From Here” campaign render

5

Plan Consistent, Year-Round Programming to Activate Streets and Parks

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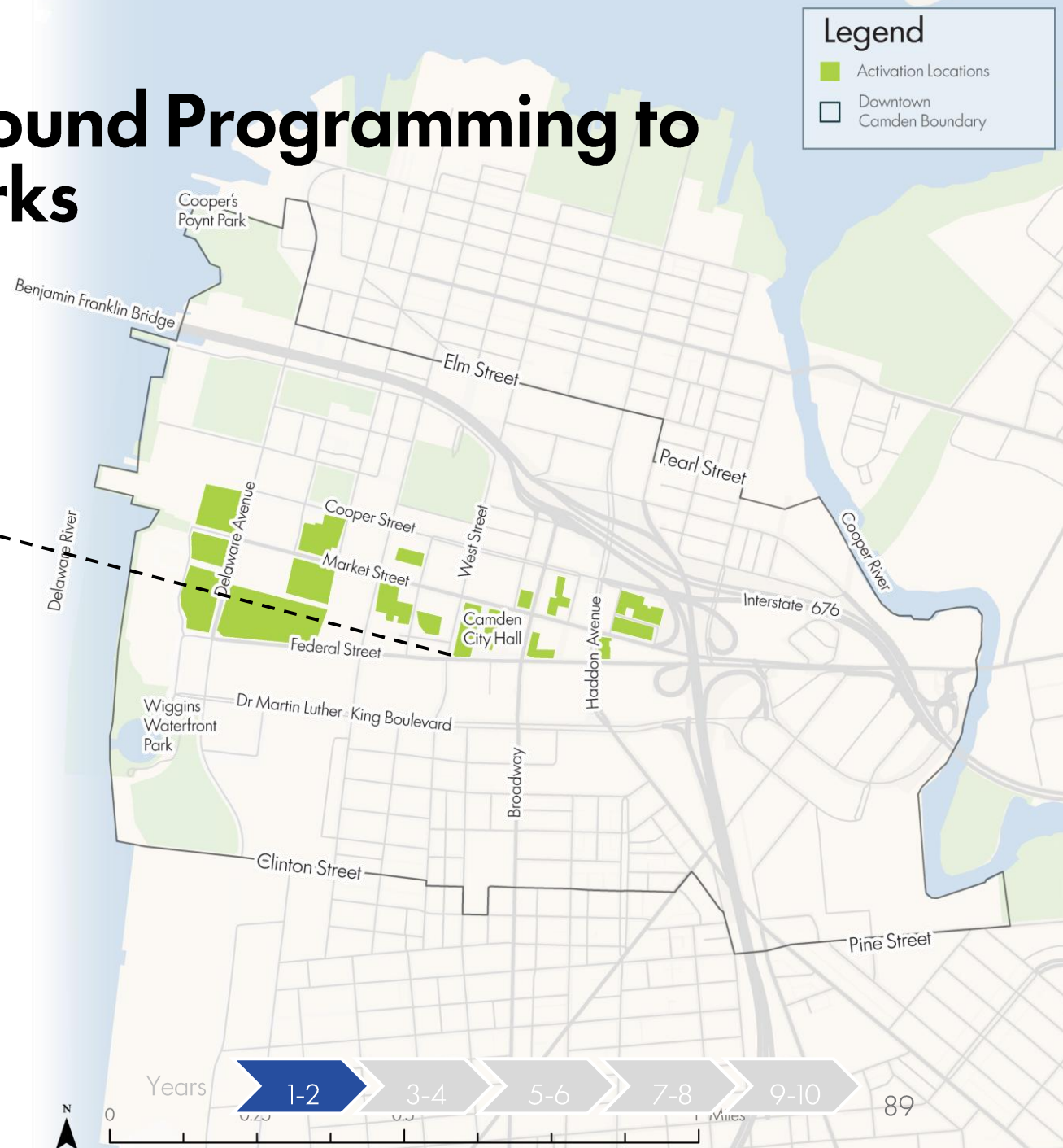


Existing



Proposed

Recommendations > A Distinct Downtown Camden Experience



5 Plan Consistent, Year-Round Programming to Activate Streets and Parks

Weekly

Monthly

Yearly



Lunchtime concerts



Park DJs



Trivia

5 Plan Consistent, Year-Round Programming to Activate Streets and Parks

Weekly

Monthly

Yearly



Pop-up concerts



Pop-up ice skating



Drive-in movies

5 Plan Consistent, Year-Round Programming to Activate Streets and Parks

Weekly

Monthly

Yearly



Campbell's Soup Festival



Subaru sponsored car show



Pride Walk & Festival



Develop a Unified Marketing Strategy to Spotlight the Culture and Current Wins of Downtown Camden

6 Develop a Unified Marketing Strategy to Spotlight the Culture and Current Wins of Downtown Camden

COURIER POST

Camden's homicide count keeps climbing

A man was fatally shot on a city street early Wednesday, pushing Camden's homicide total to 16 this year.

May 11th, 2016

CBS NEWS

Camden Ranks Most Dangerous City In The Country

The crime-ridden metropolis came in number one on the list, which was compiled using FBI data from 2012.

February 10th, 2014

NEWS 12

Camden makes top list of most dangerous cities

Camden came in on the list at No. 14., where one out of every 64 residents could become a violent crime victim.

April 25th, 2022

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6.1 Brand downtown with a social media campaign to highlight the people and places

6.2 Publish a calendar of activities and exhibits across organizations and businesses



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JULY' 2030 CAMDEN CALENDAR

KIDS-FRIENDLY
 PET-FRIENDLY

ART
 ACTIVITIES
 FOOD

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	01	02 BAR CRAWL	03
04 COMMUNITY MURAL PAINTINGS	05	06	07	08 A DOLLAR TACO NIGHT	09 TRIVIA NIGHT	10 FLEA MARKET
11	12 Strawberries	13 WATERFRONT CONCERT POPUPS	14	15	16 BAR CRAWL	17
18	19 \$20 PASTA AND WINE	20	21	22	23	24
25 ICE STAKING IN ROOSEVELT PARK	26	27 Children walking	28	29 A DOLLAR TACO NIGHT	30	31 MARKET STREET OPEN STREETS

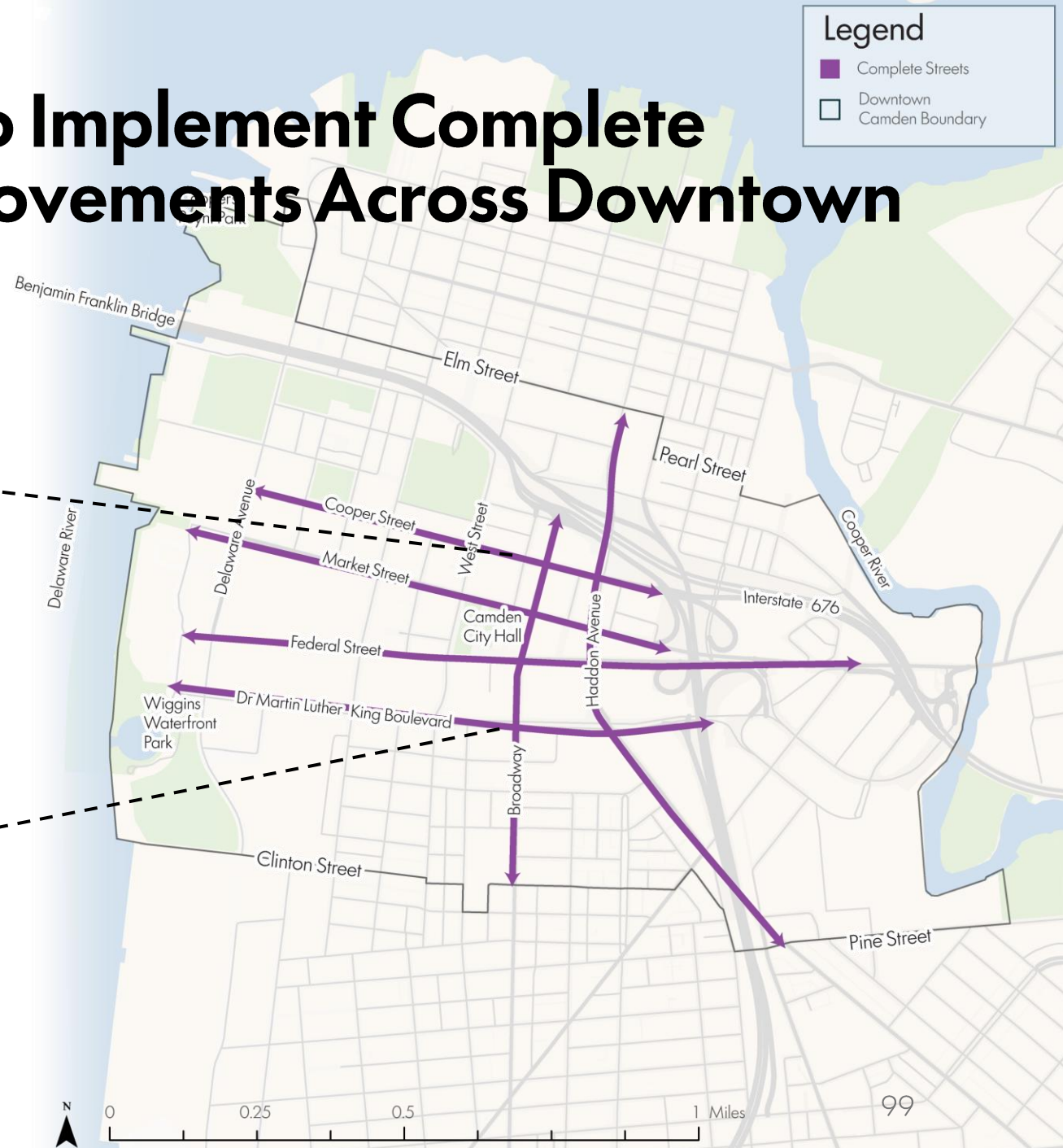
FOCUS AREA 3

Policies That Lock In Long-Term Change



Develop Groundwork to Implement Complete Streets and Safety Improvements Across Downtown

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7.1 Collect updated traffic counts on vital corridors and at major intersections

7.2 Conduct a qualitative survey about safety perception from pedestrians

7.3 Advocate for an updated complete street policy



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Complete street render on Market Street

8

Remove Barriers in Creating Future Residential, Commercial, and Mixed-Use Development

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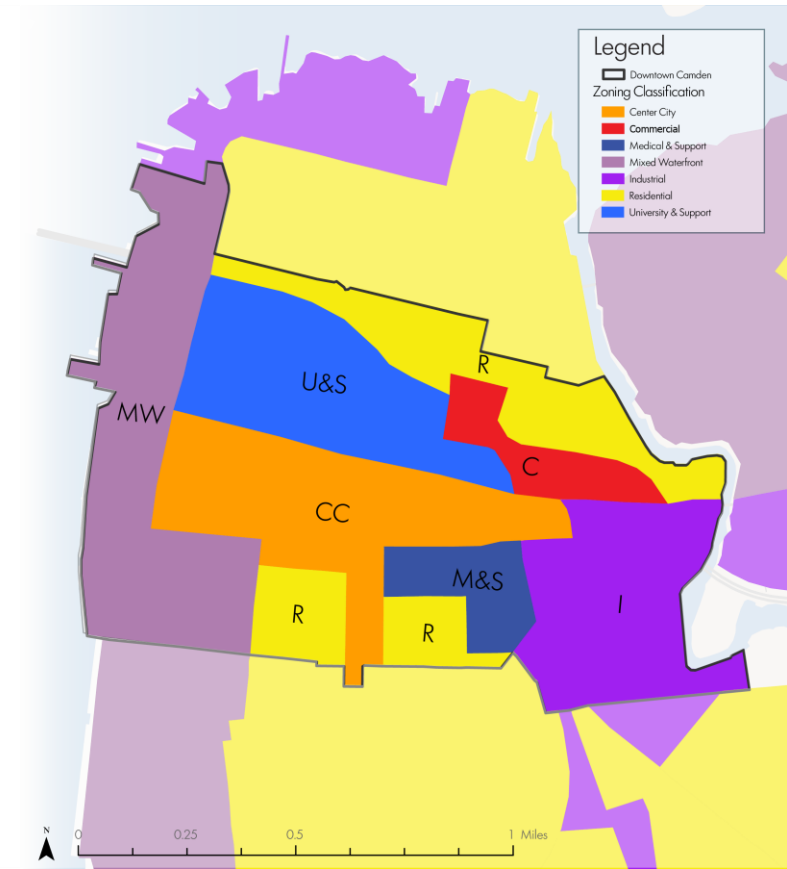


8 Remove Barriers in Creating Future Residential, Commercial, and Mixed-Use Development

8.1 Research updated zoning regulations to guide future development and land use changes

8.2 Identify locations and lots before developing pre-existing templates that fast-track approval processes

8.3 Bridge for development with nearby residential neighborhoods through a neighborhood land trust



Current Zoning, City of Camden

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Lot development templates, Opticos Design

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NEIGHBORHOOD OWNERSHIP:



Intergenerational Wealth



Locally Owned Businesses



Preserves Affordability



Preserves Community Culture

[Kensington Corridor Trust Website](#)



ASSET CONTROL

We tackle the acquisition, development, and activation of permanently affordable housing and commercial spaces.



COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP

We are building a replicable and scalable model that prioritizes neighborhood control and self-determination.



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

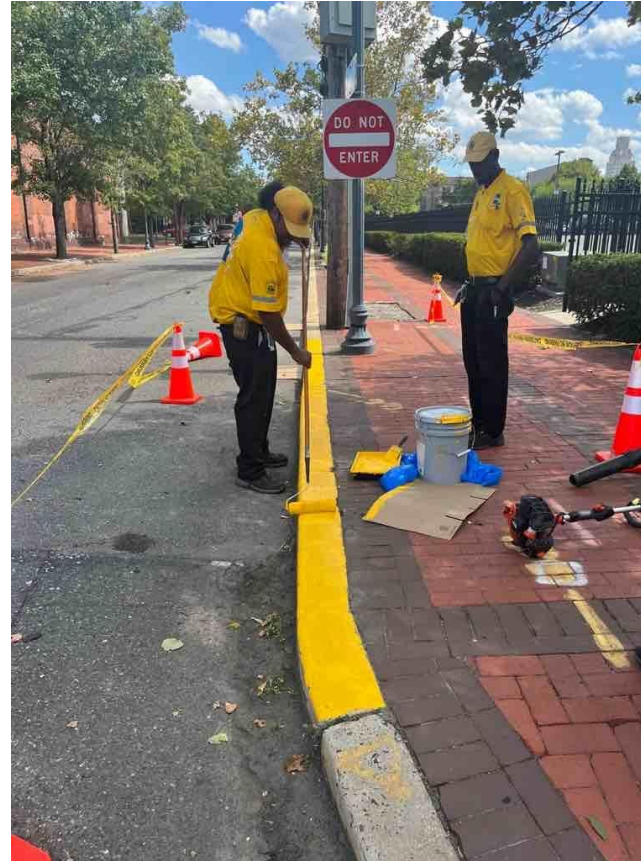
We invest in initiatives that support the health and safety on Kensington Avenue for business and residents.



Strengthen CSSD's Organizational Capacity to Expand Funding, Programming, and Partnerships

9 Strengthen CSSD's Organizational Capacity to Expand Funding, Programming, and Partnerships

1. Cleaning & Greening (current)
2. Small Business Support & Attraction (current + new)
3. Specialized Events & Programming (new)
4. Policy & Advocacy (new)
5. Coordination Across Camden Nonprofits and CDCs (new)



CSSD Yellow Jacket Ambassadors

9 Strengthen CSSD's Organizational Capacity to Expand Funding, Programming, and Partnerships

9.1 Create a strategic plan to achieve future goals

9.2 Establish a CSSD fund dedicated to accomplishing strategic plans and goals

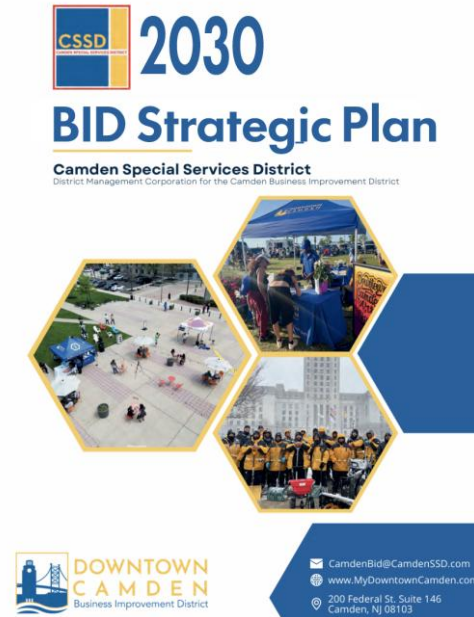
9.3 Increase organizational capacity through strategic hiring and new programming

9.4 Leverage early wins to attract new investment and organizational buy-in



Strategic Plan

Vision + Goals
Accountability
3-5 Year Road Map



CSSD 2030 Strategic Plan render

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Strategic Plan

Vision + Goals
Accountability
3-5 Year Road Map

CSSD Dedicated Fund + Funding Sources Identified

Diversified Funding Sources
Reduced Dependence on BID Funding

Community Development Financial Institutions
Philanthropic Foundations & Donations
Federal & State Government Grants
Anchor Institutions

Increased Organizational Capacity

Development Hire
Program Staff
Ability to Create New Missions

Small Business Incubator + Corridor Activation + Grant & Donor Outreach

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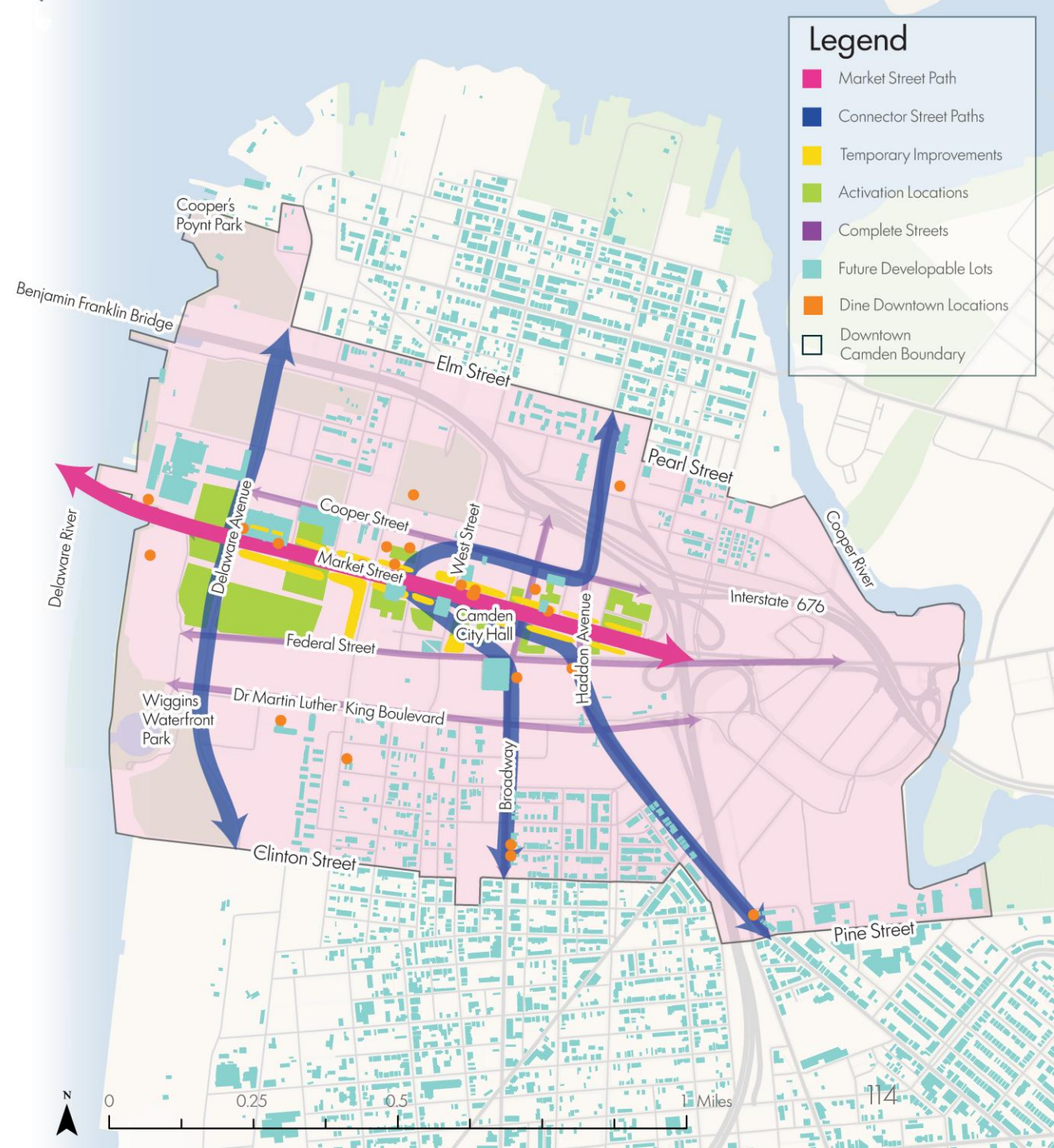
Increased Organizational Capacity
 Development Hire
 Program Staff
 Ability to Create New Missions
 Small Business Incubator + Corridor Activation + Grant & Donor Outreach

Leverage Early Wins + Sustainable Revitalization
 Proven Outcomes
 Sponsorship Menu
 Corporate Buy-In
 Scaled Impact
 New Investor Tier
 CSSD Anchor Role



Recommendations

Together, our recommendations paint a picture of an **active**, **connected**, and **equitable** downtown.



Implementation

Partners & Funding

1

Visible Interventions People Will Notice

Partners

Schools
Community Groups
Local Businesses
Camden Planning and Development
Rutgers University—Camden

Funding

William Penn Foundation
Improvement for Public Spaces Grant
AARP Community Challenge Grant
NJEDA Grants
National Trust for Historic Preservation

2

A Distinct Downtown Camden Experience

Partners

Restaurants
Rutgers University—Camden
Subaru
Campbells

Funding

NJ Tourism Grants
NJEDA National Endowment for the Arts
A.R.T. Program
NJ Historical Commission Grants

3

Policies That Lock In Long Term Change

Partners

Camden Planning and Development
Camden Public Works
Camden Redevelopment Agency
North Camden Community Development
St. Joseph's Carpenter Society

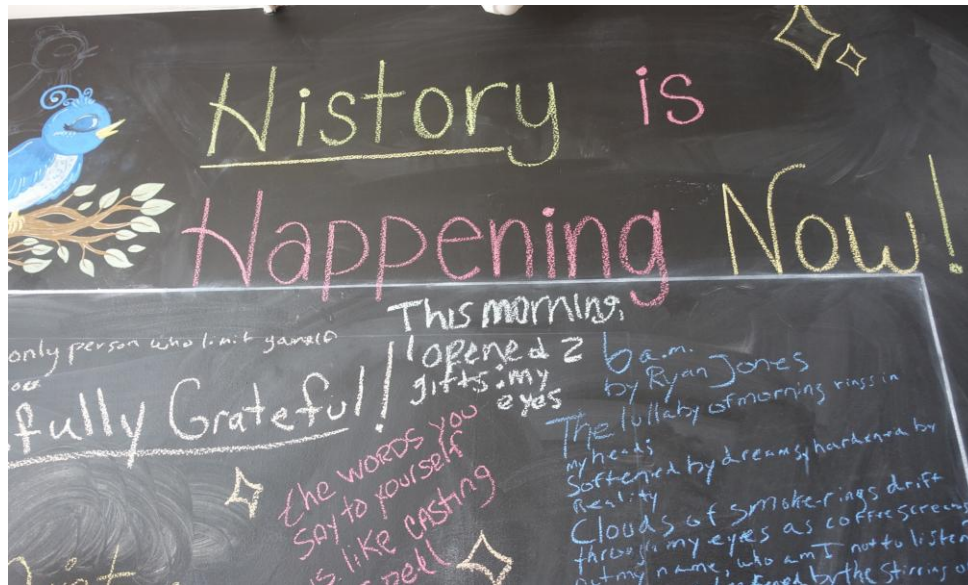
Funding

CDFI Loans
Urban Investment Fund
New Jersey & Federal HUD Grants
DVRPC Grants
NJDOT Municipal Aid Grants

Implementation

Implementation Timeline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Focus Area 1:										
1. Establish Market Street as Camden's Main Street										
1.1										
1.2										
1.3										
2. Enhance Downtown Camden's Visual Identity and Accessibility Through Wayfinding										
2.1										
2.2										
2.3										
3. Utilize low-cost and temporary initiatives to improve the physical infrastructure										
3.1										
3.2										
3.3										
Focus Area 2: A Distinct Downtown Camden Experience										
4. Encourage exploration across downtown through coordinated incentives and connections										
4.1										
4.2										
4.3										
5. Plan consistent, year-round programming to activate streets and parks										
5.1										
6. Develop a unified marketing strategy to spotlight the culture and current wins of Downtown Camden										
6.1										
6.2										
Focus Area 3: Policies That Lock in Long-Term Change										
7. Develop Groundwork to Implement Complete Streets and Safety Improvements Across Downtown										
7.1										
7.2										
7.3										
8. Remove Barriers in Creating Future Residential, Commercial, and Mixed-Use Development										
8.1										
8.2										
8.3										
9. Strengthen CSSD's Organizational Capacity to Expand Funding, Programming, and Partnerships										
9.1										
9.2										
9.3										
9.4										

Conclusion



Thank you!

