

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development of Penn Square Properties  
Reading, PA



City of Reading  
Vaughn D. Spencer, Mayor  
February 24, 2014

Deadline for Proposal Submission: Thursday, April 10, 2014, 3:00 P.M.  
Proposals received after the above date and time will not be considered.

Request for Proposals

Development of Penn Square Properties  
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## Request for Proposals

### Development of Penn Square Properties Reading, PA

#### 1. Summary

The City of Reading (“City”) is soliciting proposals from developers interested in developing, marketing, and leasing a group of adjacent City-owned properties located at the northwest corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Penn Streets in a portion of Reading’s central business district known as Penn Square.

The properties include:

- The Callowhill Building at 10 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, a nine-story office building of brick construction, built in 1902, containing an estimated 68,527 rentable square feet of office space.
- The Farmers National Bank building at 445 Penn Street, a two-story historic bank building of concrete construction, built in 1927, containing an estimated 24,185 rentable square feet.
- Three three-story buildings immediately west of 445 Penn Street: 431, 433, and 441 Penn Street. 433 and 441 have severe structural damage and are not safe to enter.

The City is seeking to establish a working relationship with a qualified developer to undertake a combination of demolition, rehabilitation, and new construction activities in order to support subsequent marketing of these properties for a use or uses that will contribute to the revitalization of Penn Street, the city’s Main Street corridor.

Proposals received in response to this RFP will be reviewed by a proposal review committee that will include city agency representatives and other individuals with knowledge and expertise relevant to these properties or to similar development projects. Results of the review will be referred to a bid selection committee, consistent with City procurement requirements. Following bid selection committee action and other required approvals, the developer will enter into an agreement with the City that will include project documentation, including a budget and implementation schedule.

## 2. About this Request for Proposals

In issuing this Request for Proposals, the City is not expecting to receive fully documented proposals for the development and reuse of the Penn Square properties. Instead, the City's initial goal is to identify capable developers that are interested in one or more of these properties. Following review of proposals that are received in response to this RFP, the City would like to be able to invite one or more respondents to submit comprehensive proposal documentation as part of a formal developer selection process.

Developers are asked to take the following considerations into account.

The City is seeking proposals for development that will be consistent with 1) the mission and goals of Reading's Main Street program and 2) smart growth principles, including the promotion of high-density development in the central business district that will generate pedestrian activity on downtown streets. Excerpts from the City's application for Main Street program designation are provided in Exhibit D.

Given the time constraints associated with the RFP schedule, the City is not requiring evidence of firm financing commitments. However, a proposal submitted in response to this RFP should reflect an understanding of the order-of-magnitude development costs associated with proposed development plans and should include a realistic strategy for financing these costs in order to ensure timely implementation consistent with the developer's proposed schedule and with developer experience, if any, in financing projects with similar characteristics.

Proposals that include the privately-owned CNA building (401 Penn Street) as part of an overall development plan will be considered. However, 1) the City has not made a commitment to purchase and/or finance the development of the CNA building and 2) the City has not received, reviewed, or approved any applications for zoning, permitting, or other government agency approvals that may be required in connection with proposed reuses of the CNA building, cannot anticipate the manner in which the City would respond to any such applications, and cannot guarantee approval of any such applications in advance.

Developers may propose to develop one building, a group of buildings, or all of the buildings identified in this RFP.

Developers are invited to specify the manner in which they propose to interact with the City with respect to acquiring, financing, developing, and maintaining the building or buildings planned for development. The City will consider proposals that involve a transfer of ownership from the City, as well as proposals that involve continued City ownership on an interim or long-term basis and/or an ownership structure involving a public/private partnership.

In the event that more than one proposal submitted in response to this RFP addresses the RFP requirements satisfactorily, the City may invite a “short list” of respondents to submit more detailed proposals and may offer these respondents small matching grants to support some of the expenses associated with proposal preparation. Among other requirements, developers on the “short list” will be required to submit evidence of current tax account balances, as well as insurance documentation and conflict of interest disclosure documentation.

The properties are located within the Callowhill Historic District. City agency representatives participating in the briefing sessions described in the following section will provide information on associated historic preservation standards, as well as information on current zoning.

3. Proposal Instructions

- a. Mandatory Briefing Session and Site Visit. Prospective developers must attend one of two briefing sessions and site visits being scheduled in connection with this RFP. Individuals who wish to participate must register in advance, as indicated below. The two events are identical; attendance at only one of them is required.

Prospective developers must be represented at one of the two following Briefings/Site Visits:

Briefing/Site Visit I  
Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
1:00 PM  
City Council Chambers  
City Hall  
815 Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Reading, PA

*Register in advance by email message to [tammi.reinhart@readingpa.org](mailto:tammi.reinhart@readingpa.org).*

or

Briefing/Site Visit II  
Wednesday, March 26, 2014  
1:00 PM  
City Council Chambers  
City Hall  
815 Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Reading, PA

*Register in advance by email message to [tammi.reinhart@readingpa.org](mailto:tammi.reinhart@readingpa.org).*

b. Due Date and Time: An original, unbound proposal plus six (6) copies (no more than 12 pages, excluding exhibits) and an electronic copy must be received by the City by Thursday, April 10, 2014 at 3:00 P.M. Late proposals will not be accepted. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed, without exception. Proposals are to be hand delivered or sent via registered mail to:

Tammi Reinhart, Purchasing Coordinator  
City of Reading  
Room 2-45, City Hall  
Reading, PA 19601

c. Presentations/Interviews: At the discretion of the proposal review committee, respondents may be asked to participate in presentations or interviews with the proposal review committee. If presentations or interviews are scheduled, only those proposals determined by the review committee to be competitive will be considered for presentations or interviews.

d. Questions/Inquiries: All questions are to be directed in writing to Tammi Reinhart, Purchasing Coordinator, Room 2-45, City Hall, Reading, PA 19601 or by email at [Tammi.Reinhart@readingpa.org](mailto:Tammi.Reinhart@readingpa.org). No phone inquiries will be accepted. Responses to questions will be circulated to all developers that register for the RFP briefing sessions.

Questions and responses will be circulated to all individuals who participated in one of the two briefing sessions.

e. RFP Timetable:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP published	February 24, 2014
Mandatory Briefing Session/Site Visit I	Wednesday, March 12, 2014
Mandatory Briefing Session/Site Visit II	Wednesday, March 26, 2014
Proposals Due	Thursday, April 10, 2014
Notification of Developers on "Short List"	Thursday, May 1, 2014
Proposals Due from Developers on "Short List"	Thursday, May 29, 2014

The City reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to alter this schedule as it deems necessary or appropriate.

The May 1 notification of developers on the "short list" will include a proposed timetable for formal developer selection and proposal approval by city procurement staff, the city administration, and City Council. The City will work closely with developers to support the completion of the municipal

review and approval process in a timely manner and to expedite this process wherever possible.

#### 4. Evaluation Criteria

Based on the results of the proposal review process associated with this RFP, the City intends to enter into further communication with a developer or developers with sufficient experience, skill, and competence needed to organize and implement a development project that will be completed in an efficient, cost effective, and professional manner and that will produce significant benefit to Reading's downtown and the city as a whole.

The proposal review committee will evaluate proposals received based on the following criteria.

a. Experience: Demonstrated ability to implement projects similar in scale and scope. Evidence of successful track record in completing, leasing, and managing comparable projects for office, retail, residential, institutional, and/or service tenants similar to those proposed by the developer. Evidence that completed projects are successful and viable. Experience in working with municipal government standards and requirements.

b. Capacity: Demonstrated ability to complete, lease, and manage projects on time and within budget. Exemplary technical qualifications. Ability to resolve problems and adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

c. Project Approach and Timeline: Clear presentation of overall project goals, development team roles and responsibilities, proposed design, financial feasibility, and economic outcomes. Demonstrated competence in managing construction schedule on time.

d. Preservation and Sustainability: Significant and successful experience in addressing historic preservation standards and in the application of energy efficient design standards and sustainable green building practices.

e. Consistency with Main Street program mission and goals, and consistency with smart growth principles identified in the preceding section. Developers are encouraged to consider the following policies included in the "Main Street Initiatives" on the fourth page of the excerpt from the City's Main Street application (Exhibit D).

3.6 Promote first floor activities that are interactive with pedestrians in commercial areas of downtown; and

3.7 Encourage residential reuse of upper floors of buildings in the downtown.

f. Competitive pricing: Development budget and price proposals that reflect competitive fees for fixed services and reasonable construction costs.

g. Financial Feasibility: Market research or other documentation supporting the proposed development project, space allocation plan, and proposed occupancy.

h. Sources of Financing: Evidence of availability of proposed private debt and equity financing. Documentation of the availability of any government subsidy financing that may be required.

## 5. Project Description

Site and property information is provided in the proposal exhibits. The project area consists of five buildings.

During the fall of 2013, the City completed interim improvements at 10 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, including the installation of a fire alarm and security system, the installation of a new modular boiler system, and elevator repairs.

The buildings at 433 and 441 Penn Street are in hazardous condition. Respondents to this RFP shall address the question of whether the facades of these structures can be retained, preserved, and incorporated into the overall development plan as a way of reinforcing the historic character of Penn Square. Particular consideration will be given to proposals that call for the retention of the facades of 433 and 441 Penn Street.

## 6. Goals, Roles and Responsibilities

Respondents to this RFP are referred to as “the developer” below.

a. The City’s goals for this project are:

- To support high-quality development, consistent with City standards;
- To achieve full occupancy of the completed project;
- To attract jobs and generate tax ratables;
- To support the implementation of Reading’s Main Street program; and
- To enable the City to achieve a reasonable return on its previous investment in the acquisition and improvement of these properties.

The City has not established more specific goals with respect to the development of the properties for particular office, retail, residential, institutional, and/or service uses. Through this RFP, the City is inviting

developers to propose one or more uses expected to have the best prospects for success.

b. The City will consider proposals that call for the City to retain ownership of the properties during the development period and to establish a working relationship with a qualified developer during this period. The City, individually or through a City-affiliated entity, is prepared to consider taking on the role of general partner, limited partner, and/or co-developer during the development period.

c. Project Manager: The City shall designate a Project Manager who shall be the City's contact person and coordinator for this project. The Project Manager shall be the primary channel of communication with respect to the City's interests in the project and shall act as the City's liaison with the developer. Following developer selection, all communications to the City shall be directed to the Project Manager. The Project Manager shall attend all job meetings and any other meetings deemed necessary through the course of the development period.

d. Document Review: The City shall review and approve all project documents. No construction shall proceed without written City approval of construction documents, as evidenced by a Notice to Proceed. The developer is solely responsible for the content, accuracy, and timely submission of all documents. The Project Manager shall provide ongoing assistance to the development team in order to ensure that City document review and approval processes are completed in a timely and efficient manner. Additional zoning, building, and fire code reviews are required as part of a separate city agency review process following developer selection.

## 7. Proposal Submission

The following elements of the proposal must be submitted in the order indicated below, with all tabs labeled as shown below. If the developer is a joint venture, the information requested, where applicable, should be provided for all parties in the joint venture.

### Tab 1: Letter of Authorization

A letter identifying the developer's primary contact person and authorizing this person to bind and represent the developer. The letter shall include developer contact information including name, mailing address, phone, fax, email, and web site addresses. The letter must also identify one additional individual to act on behalf of the developer in the event that the primary contact person is unavailable.

### Tab 2: Developer Key Personnel and Organization Chart

A list of the names and position titles of key project team personnel, to include, for each staff person, the number of years in his/her current position, as well as the percentage of time that he/she is to devote to the project.

A project organization chart providing a graphic representation of the listed project team members and their responsibilities.

Resumes for all individuals listed, to include education, work history, length of tenure, and relevant experience with similar projects.

### Tab 3: Development Proposal

The developer shall provide a narrative and graphic presentation of a development proposal for the properties, to include the following elements.

- a) A description of site preparation and demolition activities and subsequent rehabilitation and new construction activities to be completed. Space allocation plan for rehabilitated or newly constructed properties following construction completion. Response to the question of whether the facades of the hazardous structures at 433 and 441 Penn Street are to be retained, preserved, and incorporated into the overall development plan as a way of reinforcing the historic character of Penn Square or, alternatively, whether full demolition should be pursued. If full demolition of these properties is proposed, description of how new construction will be designed to complement other existing Penn Street frontage in the vicinity of this block.
- b) An explanation of the basis for determining that the proposed construction activities and space allocation plan will produce a new asset that is marketable to prospective tenants, based on the developer's past experience with similar projects. If available, include letters documenting expressions of interest from prospective tenants.
- c) A proposed structure for a City/developer working relationship during the development period and a proposed long-term ownership structure for the completed project, with an explanation of how the proposed structures will provide greatest mutual benefit to both parties.
- d) A description of the composition of the team that is to manage the development project, including a description of how the team is to be led, how a general contractor, subcontractors, and development

professionals are to be selected, and how team members will work together to ensure timely and cost effective completion of the project.

e) Identification of decision-making authority associated with development team activities, and an explanation of how disagreements between any members of the team are to be resolved.

#### Tab 4: Relevant Experience and References

A brief narrative description of the developer's history and capabilities. Include a list of similar projects, to include project name, project type, size, cost, start and completion dates, and experience in leasing and managing completed projects.

A list of names of persons with ownership interest in the developer, along with their titles.

Contact information for three professional references (bank, government, client, funder, etc.) with which the developer has been associated in the past 24 months. Include name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. With this submission, the developer grants the City permission to contact the references and perform background checks as deemed appropriate.

A list of green and sustainable building certifications that the developer holds.

Documentation of the developer's experience in marketing, leasing, and managing space in properties similar to the Penn Square properties.

Information on any project-specific or unique qualifications of the developer.

#### Tab 5: Proposed Schedule

A description of the developer's approach to scheduling, quality control, and problem resolution.

A construction schedule, including a timeline of key phases in project completion.

#### Tab 6: Development Budget and Pro Forma

An itemized development budget identifying sources and uses of funds, and a ten-year income and expense pro forma.

#### Tab 7: Financial Statements

One copy only of the developer's two most recent financial statements (audited, if available), to be provided with the original proposal, in unbound form. At a minimum, the financial statements shall include balance sheet, statement of income and expenses, with footnotes if applicable. The financial statements will be reviewed by City agency staff and will not be circulated to review committee members.

#### Tab 8: Tax Status

Evidence that the developer is current with respect to all municipal taxes, including business taxes, real estate, school, water, and sewer charges, with no indebtedness to the City of Reading and County of Berks.

#### Tab 9: Architectural Plans

Site plan and floor plans illustrating the development project.

### 8. Reservation of Rights and Additional Terms

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the developer affirmatively acknowledges a) acceptance of the terms and conditions of the RFP, b) agreement that the City may exercise, in its sole discretion, the following rights, and c) agreement that the City may exercise these rights without providing notice to any developer.

These rights include the right to:

- a. Reject any and all proposals;
- b. Supplement, amend, substitute, modify, and/or re-issue the RFP with terms and conditions materially different from those set forth here;
- c. Cancel this RFP with or without issuing another RFP;
- d. Extend the time period for responding to this RFP;
- e. Solicit new proposals;
- f. Conduct personal interviews with any developer;
- g. Request additional material, clarification, confirmation, or modification of any information in any or all proposals;
- h. Negotiate any aspect of a proposal;
- i. Terminate negotiations regarding any and all proposals at any time;
- j. Expressly waive any defect or technicality in any proposals;
- k. Rescind a selection prior to execution of agreements if the City determines that the proposal does not conform to the terms of this RFP; and
- l. Rescind a selection prior to execution of agreements or contracts if the City determines that the specifications contained in this RFP are

not in conformity with law or that the process in selection of a proposal was not in conformity with law or with the legal obligations of the City.

In the event that an agreement or contract is awarded, the developer shall:

- a. Procure and maintain during the life of the project, all insurance associated with developer activities, in amounts to be determined prior to the execution of any agreement or contract;
- b. Agree that activities performed by the developer are performed as an independent entity and not as an employee or agent of the City;
- c. Agree that no portion of the performance of the contract shall be subcontracted without the prior written approval of the City; and
- d. Agree to indemnify, protect, and hold harmless the City from any and all losses, injuries, expenses, demands, and claims against the City sustained or alleged to have been sustained in connection with or resulting from 1) the submission of the developer's proposals, 2) the delivery by the developer to the City of any other documents or information, and 3) any other conduct undertaken by the developer in furtherance of or in relation to the developer's proposal. The developer agrees that its duty to indemnify and hold harmless shall not be limited to the terms of any liability insurance, if any, required under this RFP or a subsequent agreement or contract.

## Exhibits

- A. Introduction to the Properties
- B. Plot Plan, Site Plan, and Preliminary Area Calculations
- C. Existing Floor Plans for 10 North 5<sup>TH</sup> Street and 445 Penn Street
- D. Excerpts from City of Reading Application for Main Street Program Designation

Exhibit A  
Introduction to the Properties

## PENN SQUARE PROPERTIES READING, PA

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Aerial view of the properties included in the Request for Proposals. This section of the downtown Reading business district is known as Penn Square.

## PENN SQUARE PROPERTIES READING, PA

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The two corner buildings, an older high-rise office building at 10 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street and a bank building at 445 Penn Street, offer excellent prospects for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

## PENN SQUARE PROPERTIES READING, PA

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10 N. 5th Street, known as the Callowhill Building, is a nine-story office tower of brick construction. Completed in 1902, the building is one of the country's first skyscrapers and was equipped with one of the first electric elevators.

445 Penn Street, built in 1927, is a historic bank building of concrete construction. Original oil paintings from its origin as a farmers bank adorn the vast atrium. The building stands at the site of a tavern that accommodated George Washington in 1794 en route to combat the Whiskey Rebellion.

The two buildings benefited from nearly \$10m of improvements and renovations in the 1980s, with major systems upgrades completed in 2013.

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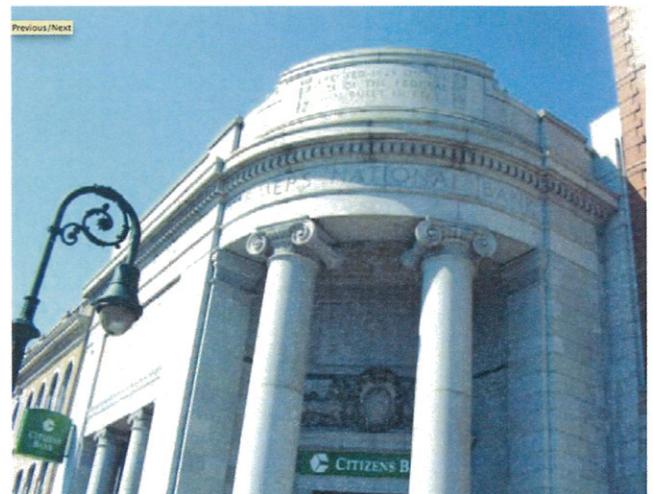
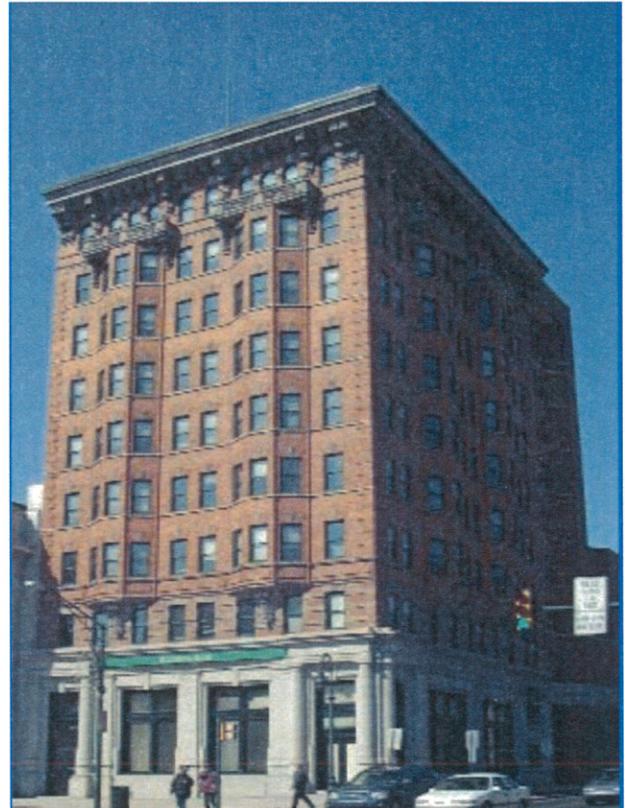
### **STRATEGIC LOCATION**

Located in the heart of Reading's Downtown Improvement District, the Penn Square properties are well positioned to serve as anchors for downtown revitalization in Reading.

This location provides ready access to the regional highway system, to nearby retail shopping districts, and to appealing residential neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing choices.

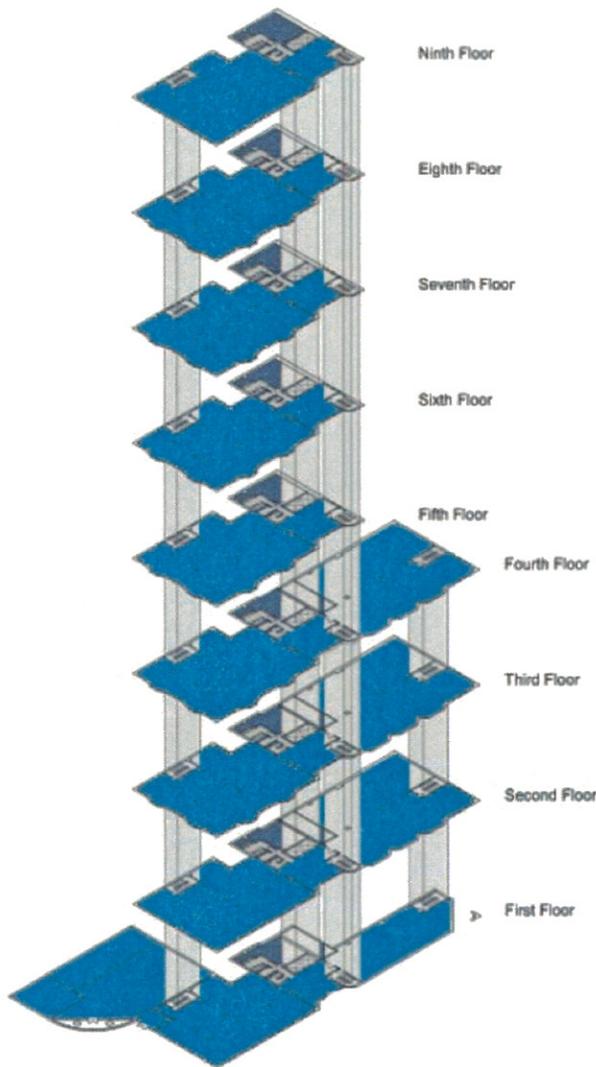
Nearby downtown points of interest include:

- The Santander Arena and Santander Performing Arts Center.
- Reading Area Community College, including the Miller Center for the Performing Arts.
- The Berks County Services Center, which houses county administrative offices and court facilities.
- The site of a DoubleTree hotel, scheduled for 2014 groundbreaking.
- The GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, an IMAX theater, and a choice of excellent restaurants.



# 10 N. 5<sup>th</sup> STREET / 445 PENN STREET READING, PA

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## **BUILDING SIZE**

10 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street: 68,527 rentable square feet office  
445 Penn Street: 24,185 rentable square feet bank branch  
Four (4) floors @ 5,926 sf per  
Three (3) floors @ 10,771 sf per

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## **CONSTRUCTION**

Concrete block with concrete and brick exterior. Roof is constructed of concrete plank, and was replaced in 2013.

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## **HVAC**

New modular boiler system installed in 2013. Roof mounted central system supplies air conditioning to the buildings.

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## **FIRE SUPPRESSION**

Newly updated fire-panel. 100% sprinklered and smoke detectors.

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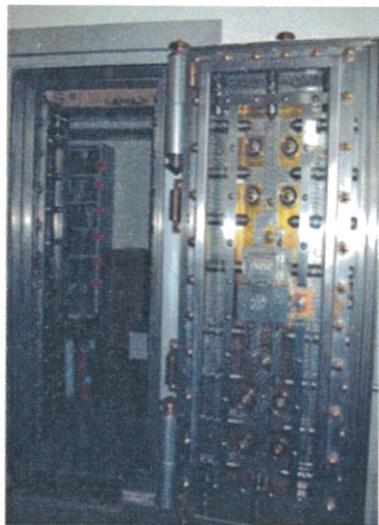
## **PARKING**

Covered and uncovered options on-site.

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After obtaining title to the Penn Street properties in August of 2013, the City's Department of Community Development, the Reading Redevelopment Authority, and the Reading Housing Authority worked together to complete a thorough inspection of the properties and identify security and critical systems upgrades. Repairs were finished in early fall, including installation of a fire alarm and security system, installation of new modular boiler system, and elevator repairs.

10 N. 5th STREET / 445 PENN STREET  
READING, PA



Ground-floor interior, 445 Penn Street.

Exhibit B  
Plot Plan, Site Plan, and Preliminary Area Calculations



## Penn Square Properties: 431, 437, 443



In the GIS parcel viewer on the Berks County Mapping Office web site, the Penn Square properties are identified as three addresses: 431, 437, and 443 Penn Street, with the following information provided.

Address	Plan	Lot	Acreage
443	0209 0031	1	.76
437	0209 0031	2	.20
431	0209 0031	3	.25

AREA (SQ.FT.)	BUILDING#1	BUILDING #2	BUILDING #3	BUILDING #4	BUILDING #5	DRIVE-THROUGH
SITE						11,552
TELLER- STATION						520
WALK-UP						288
UNEXCAVATED	762					
BASEMENT	10,717	8,841	8,417	2,973	5,875	
FIRST FLR	6,613	6,779	8,341	2,663	7,341	
SECOND FLR	11,075	2,742	8,463	2,614	2,865	
THIRD FLR	10,917	7,147	4,037		7,285	
FOURTH FLR	10,771					
FIFTH FLR	5,926					
SIXTH FLR	5,926					
SEVENTH FLR	5,926					
EIGHTH FLR	5,926					
NINTH FLR	5,926					
Gross Total of Ea. Building (SQ.FT.)	80,485	25,509	29,258	8,250	23,366	12,360

Exhibit C  
Existing Floor Plans

Note

In the drawings included in this exhibit, the Callowhill building (10 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street) and the Farmers National Bank building (445 Penn Street) are referred to as “Buildings 1 and 2.” Existing floor plans for these buildings are shown on the first three pages that follow (SK2.1 – SK2.3).

The properties at 441, 433, and 431 Penn Street are referred to as “Buildings 3, 4, and 5,” respectively. Existing floor plans for these buildings are shown on the next four pages (SK1.01 – SK1.04).

The final page of this exhibit illustrates floor plan outlines for all buildings, shown as a group.

**PRELIMINARY**  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION  
06-16-13  
10-09-13  
01.27.14

PROFESSIONAL SEAL

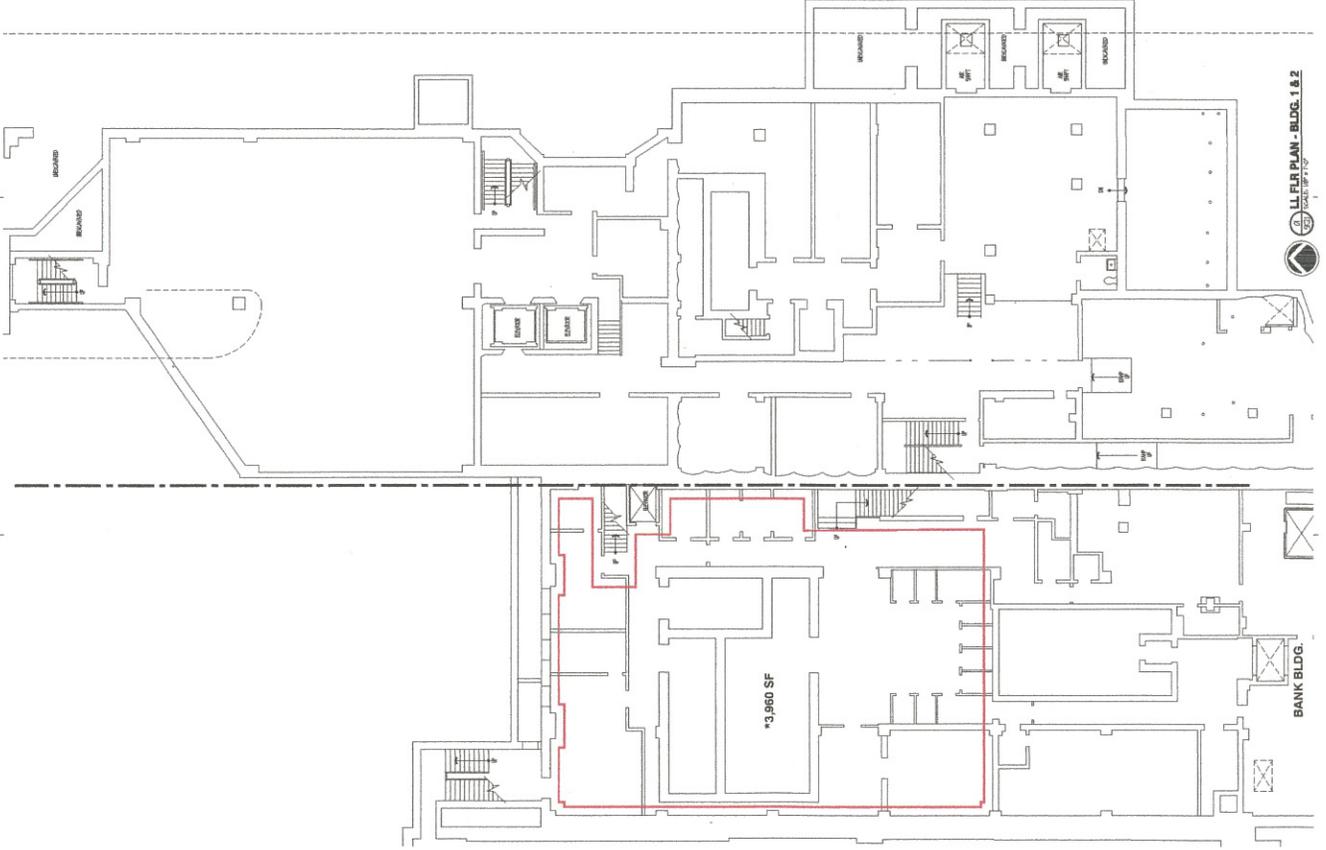
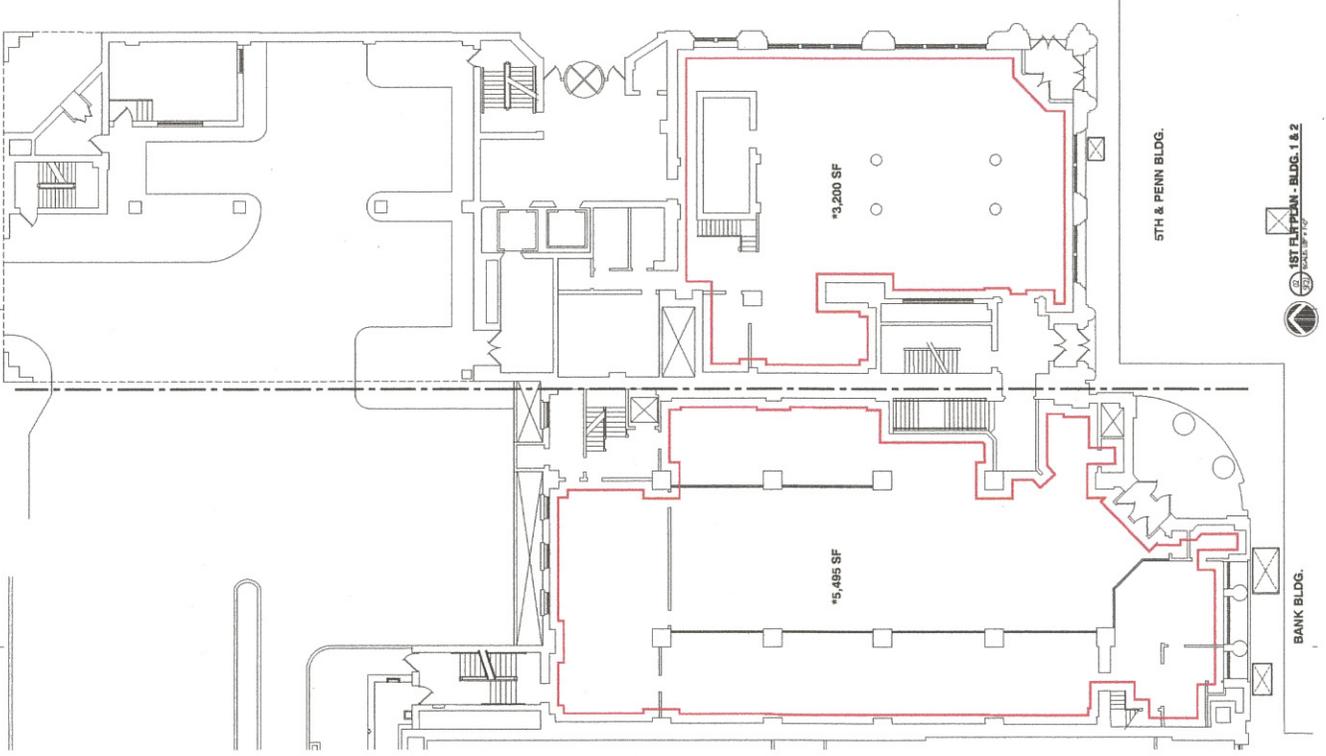
**F A S T E R  
& B E L L E Y**  
ARCHITECTS  
REGISTERED ARCHITECTS  
121 N. BARBAROUSSE  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77002

CALLOWAY PROJECT, 445 PENN AVENUE  
DATE: 10/20/13  
REVISION: 10/20/13  
SCALE: AS NOTED

EXISTING CONDITIONS:  
FLOOR PLANS OF BLDG. 1 & 2

PROJ. NO. 025  
DATE: 10/20/13  
SCALE: AS NOTED

**SK2.1**



**PRELIMINARY**  
 NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

06-16-19  
 10-03-19  
 01.27.14

PROFESSIONAL SEAL

**KANTLER  
 & KELLEY  
 ARCHITECTS**  
 1000 MARKET STREET  
 PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106  
 TEL: 215-562-8800  
 FAX: 215-562-8801

CALDWELL PROJECT  
 5TH & PENN AVENUE  
 REGIONAL GOV'T AUTHORITY  
 PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106

EXISTING CONDITIONS:  
 FLOOR PLANS OF BLDG. 1 & 2

PROJ. NO. 1522

DATE: 09/20/18

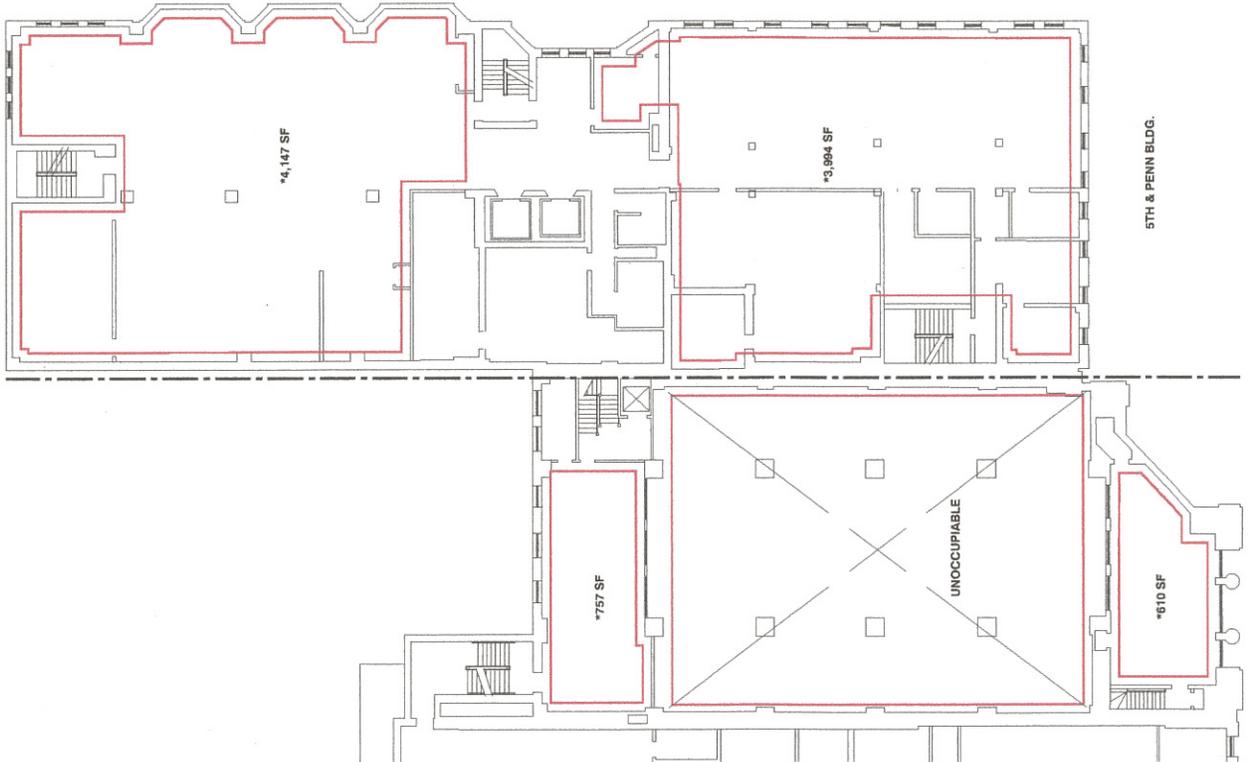
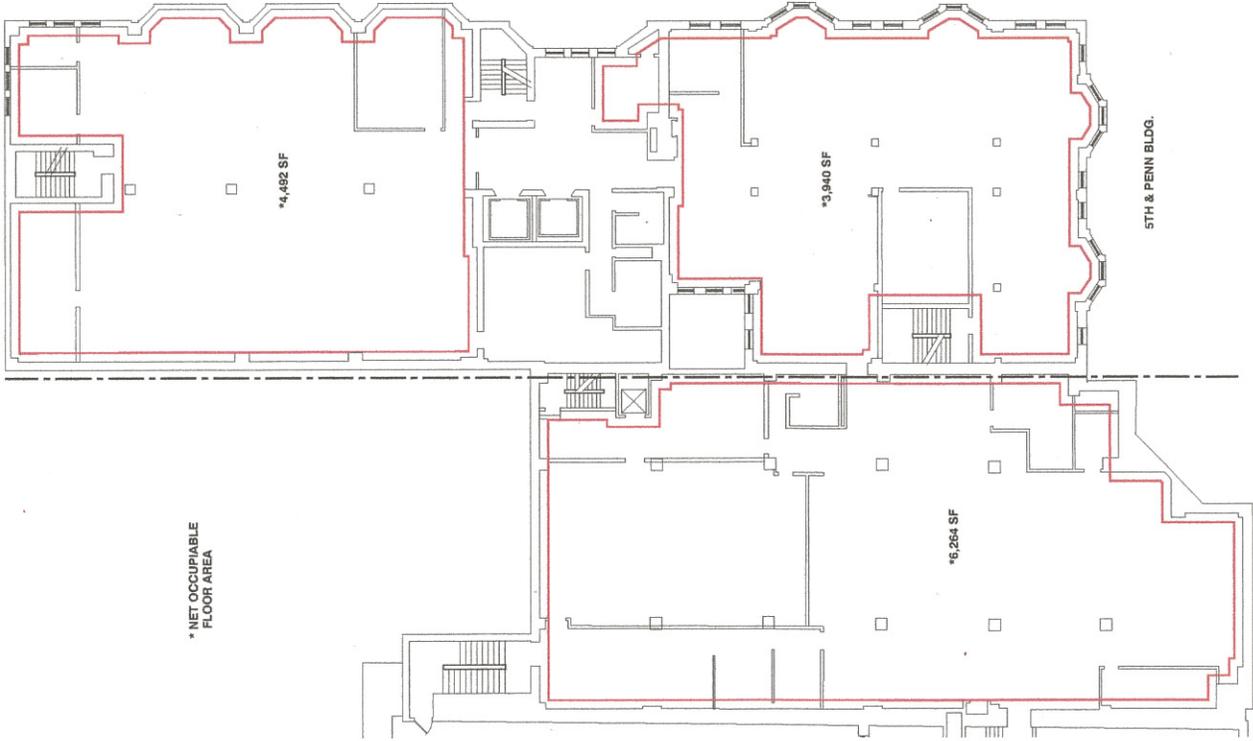
SCALE: AS NOTED



BANK BLDG.



BANK BLDG.



BANK BLDG.

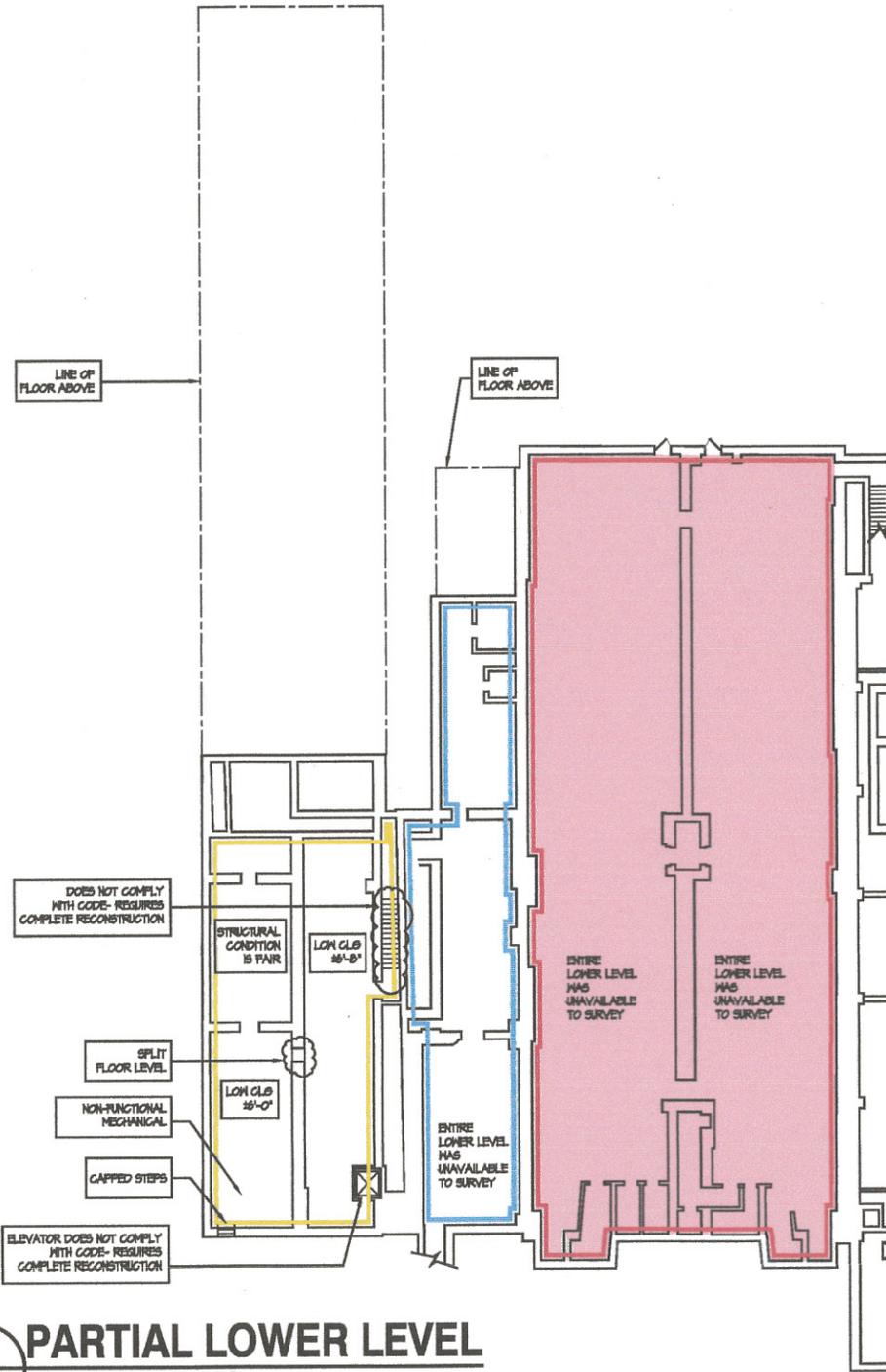


BANK BLDG.



**LEGEND**

- STRUCTURALLY UNSOUND CONDITIONS
- 2,500 SF
- 1,450 SF
- 8,150 SF



**01 PARTIAL LOWER LEVEL**  
SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"

READING HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BUILDINGS 3, 4, & 5  
5TH STREET, READING, PA 19610

EXISTING CONDITIONS

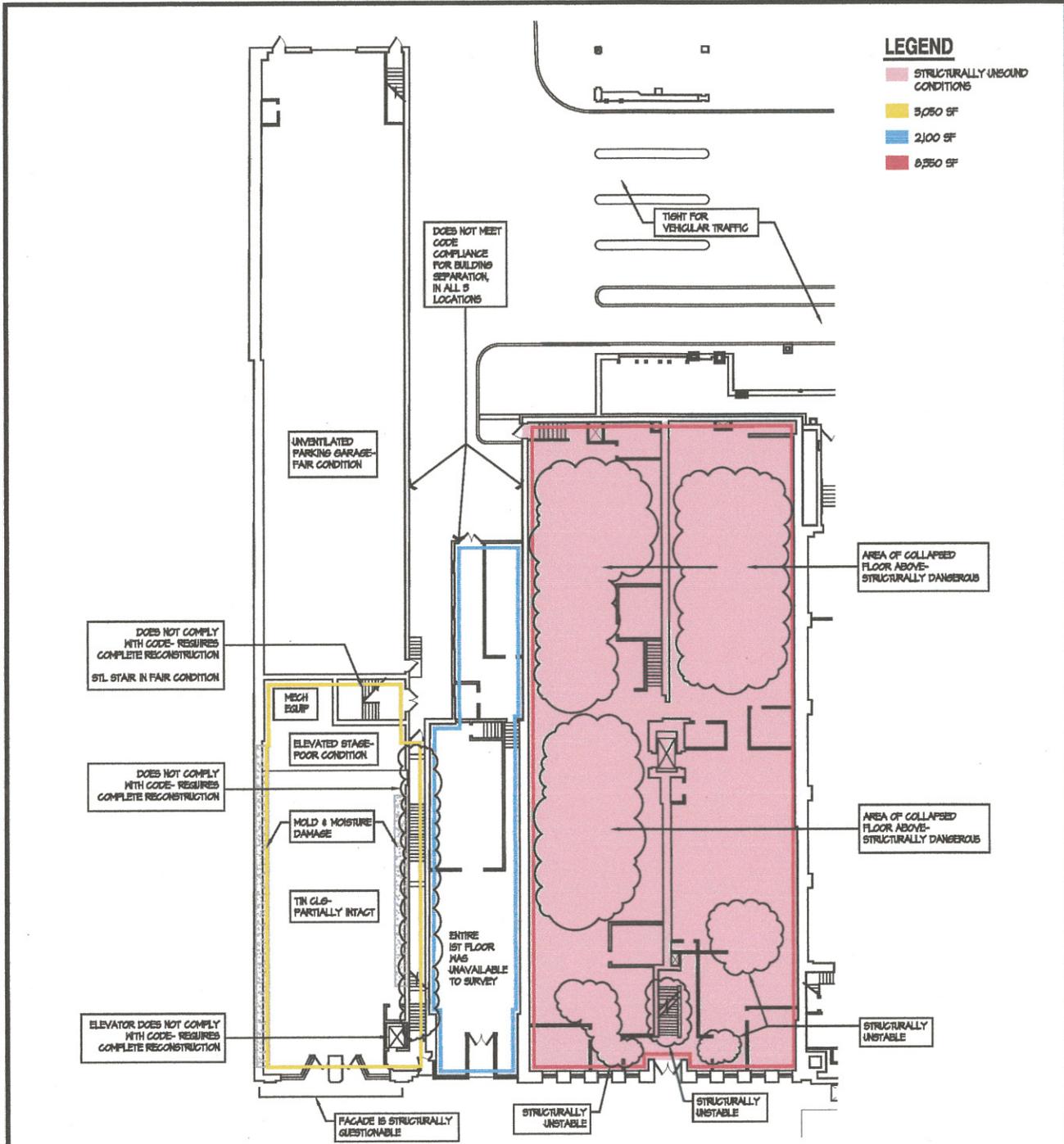
**KAUTTER & KELLEY ARCHITECTS**  
5 Belmont Avenue  
Wyomissing, PA 19810  
Tel 610.372.9980  
www.kautterkelley.com

PROJ. NO.: 1322

DATE: 10.04.13

SCALE: AS NOTED

**SK1.01**



- LEGEND**
- STRUCTURALLY UNSOUND CONDITIONS
  - 5,050 SF
  - 2,100 SF
  - 8,250 SF

**02 PARTIAL FIRST FLOOR**  
 SK1.02 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"

READING HOUSING AUTHORITY  
 BUILDINGS 3, 4, & 5  
 5TH STREET, READING, PA 19610

EXISTING CONDITIONS

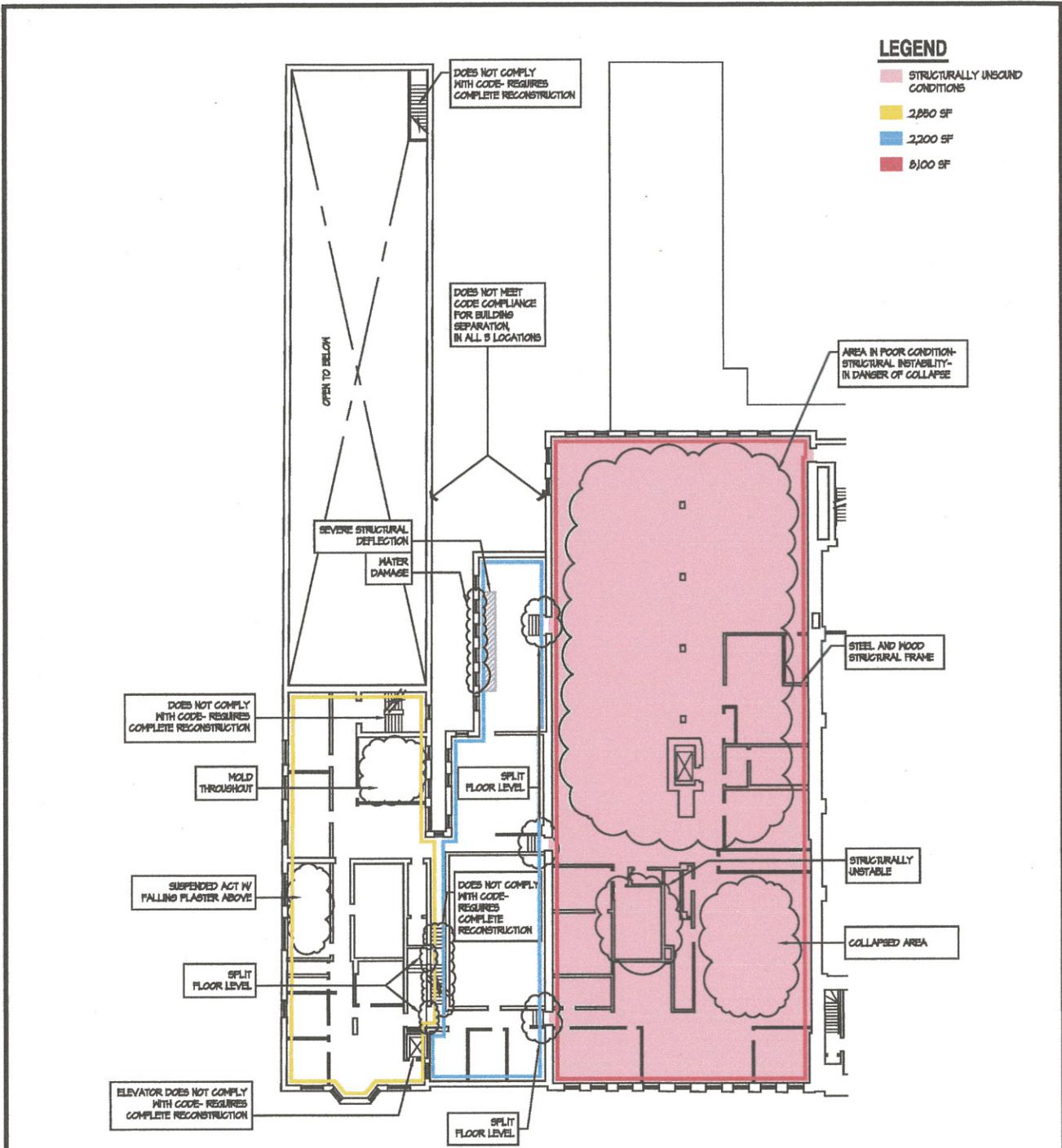
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 Tel 610.872.9880  
 www.kautterkelley.com

PROJ. NO.: 1322

DATE: 10.04.13

SCALE: AS NOTED

**SK1.02**



**03 PARTIAL SECOND FLOOR**  
 SK1.03 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"

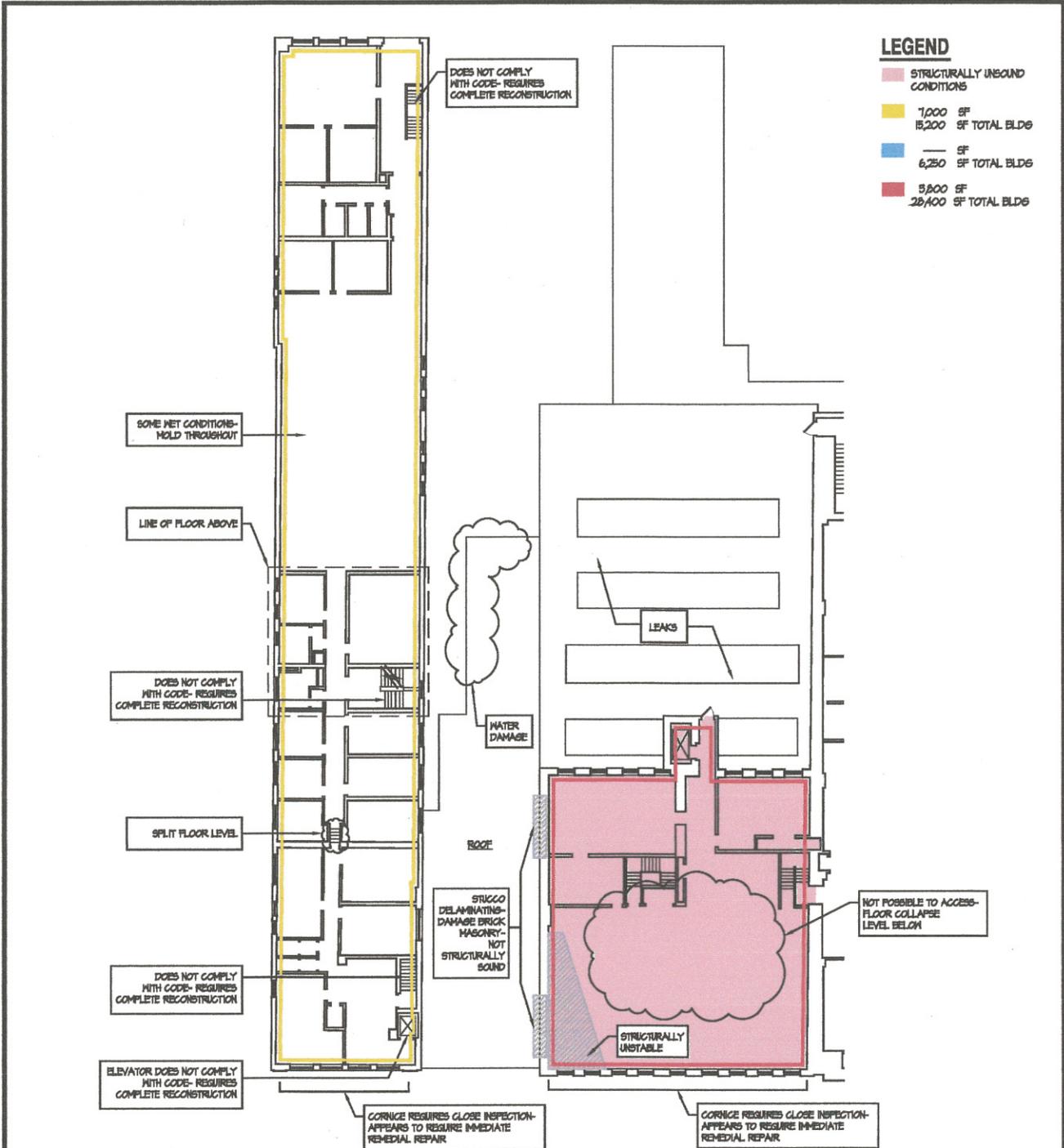
READING HOUSING AUTHORITY  
 BUILDINGS 3, 4, & 5  
 5TH STREET, READING, PA 19610

EXISTING CONDITIONS

**KAUTTER & KELLEY ARCHITECTS**  
 5 Belmont Avenue  
 Wyomissing, PA 19810  
 Tel 610.372.9880  
 WWW.KAUTTERKELLEY.COM

PROJ. NO.: 1322  
 DATE: 10.04.13  
 SCALE: AS NOTED

**SK1.03**



**LEGEND**

- STRUCTURALLY UNSOUND CONDITIONS
- 1,000 SF  
5,200 SF TOTAL BLDG
- 6,250 SF  
6,250 SF TOTAL BLDG
- 3,800 SF  
20,400 SF TOTAL BLDG

**04 PARTIAL THIRD FLOOR**  
 SK1.04 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"

READING HOUSING AUTHORITY  
 BUILDINGS 3, 4, & 5  
 5TH STREET, READING, PA 19610

EXISTING CONDITIONS

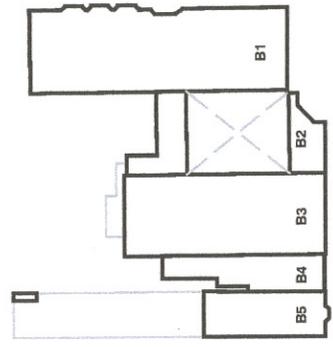
**KAUTTER & KELLEY ARCHITECTS**  
 5 Belmont Avenue  
 Wyomissing, PA 19610  
 Tel 610.372.9980  
 www.kautterkelley.com

PROJ. NO.: 1322

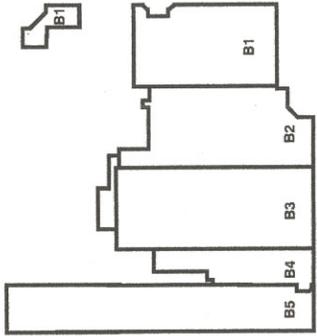
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SCALE: AS NOTED

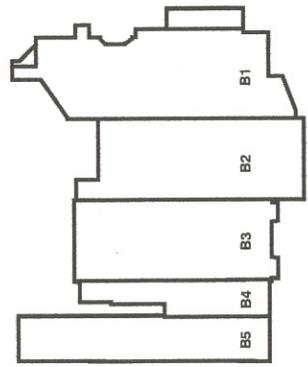
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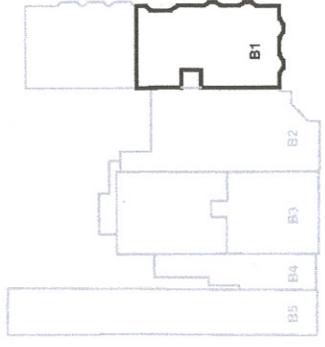
SECOND FLOOR



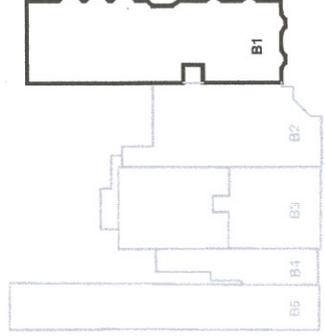
FIRST FLOOR



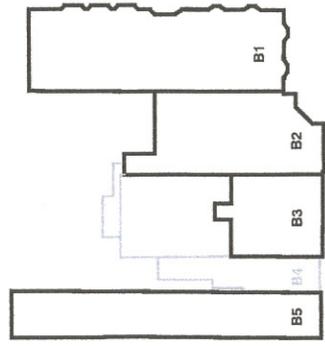
BASEMENT FLOOR



FIFTH THRU NINTH FLOORS



FOURTH FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

08.27.13  
**K A U T T E R  
 & K E L L E Y  
 A R C H I T E C T S**  
 6 Belmont Avenue  
 Wyomissing, PA 19810  
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 www.keutterkelley.com

Exhibit D  
Excerpts from City of Reading Application for Main Street Program Designation

## Reading, PA Main Street Program

### Mission

Ensure vibrancy and economic vitality in Downtown Reading through design, promotion and revitalization to attract and retain businesses, residents and visitors to the City of Reading.

### Preamble

The City of Reading, located in southeastern Pennsylvania, has a population of 88,082 and is the principal municipality of the Greater Reading Area and the seat of Berks County. With access to major highways, downtown Reading is Greater Reading's hub for arts, dining, and entertainment with an international flair. Connect with your urban core and discover downtown Reading, a dynamic and attractive community that is the most desired location in the region for starting or relocating a business, staging and attending events, shopping, eating, strolling, and meeting.

### Tagline

Reading All Aboard!

### Vision

**All Aboard... for Charm and Beauty:** Downtown Reading's intact collection of attractive and historically significant buildings paired with its array of businesses reflects the city's current cultural diversity, creating a distinct neighborhood identity. With attention to design and historic preservation, downtown Reading is known for its charming architecture, decorative signs and banners, picturesque landscaping, and seasonal décor. This is achieved through design guidelines that encourage a uniform aesthetic of the downtown streetscape and recognize the history of downtown Reading while celebrating the diversity of current residents and businesses. Attention to design also promotes the development and use of green spaces, increases the reality and perception of safety, and encourages pedestrian activity.

**All Aboard... for Excitement:** Downtown Reading is Greater Reading's hub for social gatherings, entertainment, shopping, and dining. Residents and visitors are attracted to downtown because of the energy exuding from venues that offer a variety of music, theater, dance, and other arts and cultural experiences. Visitors come early and stay late to dine on authentic multi-national cuisine ranging from mouth-watering Latin and Indian dishes to delectable regional favorites. Whether you're looking for a chance to attend the performance of a legendary jazz artist, take in the thrill of a hockey game, experience classical music through one of the nation's longest-performing symphony orchestras, attend an art gallery exhibit, shop for vintage items, or take the kids to a movie, downtown has something exciting to offer everyone! In addition to activities at major venues, recurring outdoor events such as street fairs and markets ensure that coming to downtown Reading is always an enlivening experience.

**All Aboard... for Opportunity:** Doing business downtown means success! With a central location and easy access from major highways and thoroughfares, downtown Reading is the ideal business location. Revitalization of the city's commercial core has created an environment that encourages economic development and a variety of attractive incentives make it easy for businesses to start and grow or relocate to downtown Reading. Business owners can also count on one another for cross-promotion between restaurants, entertainment venues and other establishments. As a result, downtown Reading is a center of economic activity for Greater Reading, all of the storefronts and commercial/office spaces are filled, and businesses thrive with the support of residents, visitors, workers, and students.

### Organization

This vision will be achieved through the cooperative efforts of City government, non-profit organizations, businesses, private developers, and volunteers to implement design; promotion; economic restructuring; and safe, clean & green initiatives. These efforts will be led by the Main Street program as administered by the Reading Downtown Improvement District (DID).

## Reading, PA Main Street Program Five-Year Strategy

Lead Committee		Goals for 2013
Year 1	■ <b>Organization Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secure \$2M in funding through applying for grants and soliciting aid from four local foundations. By June 1 develop a quarterly plan for continued fundraising.</li> <li>2. Prioritize projects, activities, and tasks by April 30 to develop measurable committee work plans.</li> <li>3. Develop and launch a Main Street membership incentive program with the goal of obtaining 200 new memberships by December 31.</li> </ol>
	◆ <b>Economic Restructuring Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Develop a framework to empower 325 existing businesses in target area.</li> <li>5. Take inventory of 250 buildings in the Main Street target area and develop a business database.</li> </ol>
	◆ <b>Design Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Purchase and place public furniture (30 benches) and fixtures (including, but not limited to, 25 new trash cans) for Main Street area by June 1.</li> <li>7. Install way-finding (pedestrian) and directional (vehicular) signs between Penn and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets and Penn and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets by June 1.</li> </ol>
	▲ <b>Promotion Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Gather information by April 1, 2013 on all current downtown events and activities planned for 2013.</li> <li>9. Develop online and hard copy materials by May 1 to aid in cross-promotion of businesses and encourage event attendees to stay downtown beyond their planned event.</li> <li>10. Coordinate a June street fair in the Main Street target area to celebrate placement of the new directional signs, public furniture, and fixtures.</li> </ol>
	● <b>SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Conduct tree trimming and tree replacement assessment in May and October.</li> <li>12. Promote availability of DID Ambassadors to the public. Ambassadors will commit to visit each downtown business with a flyer outlining their services by June 1. Additionally, a DID representative will schedule a press release by March 31 with a renewed commitment statement to the public.</li> <li>13. Provide uniform trash receptacles (with Design Committee help) by June 1.</li> </ol>

Lead Committee		Goals for 2014
Year 2	■ <b>Organization Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secure an additional \$500K in funding, partnerships, and volunteers for second year priority projects – Specifically, apply for Public Improvement Grant and Anchor Building Grants to assist owners in achieving required design standards and façade improvements.</li> <li>2. Cultivate partnerships with 40 new businesses and recruit 50 committed volunteers through outreach and education in local schools and businesses.</li> </ol>
	◆ <b>Economic Restructuring Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Design two new programs aimed at strengthening the local economic base and retaining existing businesses (through 2015). Work with the Berks Chamber of Commerce and Community First to advertise and implement programs.</li> </ol>
	◆ <b>Design Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Draft Downtown Design Handbook that will publicize design standards for the Main Street area. Publish and release to public through DID by April 1.</li> </ol>
	▲ <b>Promotion Committee</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Schedule quarterly opportunities for community groups and local business and property owners to host activities that attract people to downtown or to participate in activities already happening in downtown businesses and venues.</li> <li>6. Update existing online and hard-copy materials to aid in cross-promotion of businesses, distribute new materials with maps and calendar of events by March 31.</li> </ol>

	7. Hold annual historic downtown walking tour in May.
●SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN	8. Continue coordination of planning on light poles. Identify which lights are operating with LED bulbs. Present budget to steering committee for cost of making all lights LED. Make all lights energy efficient by September 30. 9. Conduct assessment of street lighting in target area by July 31 and make recommendation to DID of necessary additions and or repairs. 10. Complete bench restoration project by June 1.

Lead Committee		Goals for 2015
Year 3	■Organization Committee	11. Secure \$500K in funding, partnerships, and volunteers for third year priority projects.
	◆Economic Restructuring Committee	12. Design programs for business recruitment and actively recruit at least 10 new businesses for downtown, preferably with the option to use the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> floors for residential rentals (through 2015).
	●Design Committee	13. Take inventory and evaluate all public spaces (court yards and historic landmarks) by mobilizing a volunteer committee. Purchase and install markers for historic landmarks by September 30.
	▲Promotion Committee	14. Continue to establish and promote ongoing events. 15. Review existing parking patterns and availability. Meet with Reading Parking Authority by April 30 to resolve any parking issues that result from the assessment. 16. Hold annual historic walking tour in May.
	●SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN	17. Beautify entrance to the City from Penn Street Bridge (with Design Committee help). Decided on project scope and cost by March 1 and implement by June 1. 18. Centralize placement of handbills and 12 advertising kiosks by April 30.

Lead Committee		Goals for 2016
Year 4	■Organization Committee	1. Secure \$200K in funding, partnerships, and volunteers for fourth year priority projects.
	◆Economic Restructuring Committee	2. Increase technical assistance for new business owners about local funding and provide appropriate financing education. Hold at least two workshops, one in March and one in September aimed at business recruitment.
	●Design Committee	3. Establish a (design) vision for Penn Square (400 & 500 blocks of Penn St) using the prior studies completed of this area. 4. Begin implementing façade improvements.
	▲Promotion Committee	5. Develop a coupon program for all downtown businesses, with the goal of obtaining membership from 50 businesses. 6. Hold annual historic walking tour in May. 7. Continue to establish and promote ongoing events.
	●SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN	8. Work with BARTA to have bus stops renovated. 9. Work with the Reading Parking Authority to upgrade the appearance of City garages.

Lead Committee		Goals for 2017
Year 5	■ Organization Committee	10. Secure \$200K in funding, partnerships, and volunteers for fourth year priority projects. 11. Create Main Street Sustainability Plan for years 6-10.
	◆ Economic Restructuring	12. Create a strategy to effectively monitor the economic performance of the 50 most prominent businesses in the Commercial Core district.
	◆ Design Committee	13. Review traffic patterns by assessing 12 volunteers to document traffic flow and count over three days during rush hour times as well as mid-afternoon and early evening times. Present recommendations to Planning Commission by September 1.
	▲ Promotion Committee	14. Hold annual historic walking tour in May. 15. Continue to establish and promote ongoing events.
	● SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN	16. Continue street lighting improvements throughout Main Street area including a focus on sign lighting for a minimum of thirty Main St. businesses.

### Main Street Initiatives in Relation to City of Reading and County of Berks Comprehensive Plans

In 1998 the City of Reading held a public outreach phase that consisted of 29 neighborhood meetings and various public questionnaires. This resulted in developing the current **City of Reading Comprehensive Plan**, which, through the following policies, addresses solutions for the issues surrounding commercial uses of Main Street:

**ISSUE:** Downtown Reading remains an activity center in the City, but has lost much of its former vibrancy and no longer functions as the center of the region.

#### POLICIES:

- 3.1 Develop concepts and strategies for the downtown based on recent development and previously endorsed plans,
- 3.2 Evaluate the influence of the Sovereign Center to guide potential strategies for nearby underutilized or vacant properties.
- 3.3 Create innovative programs for attracting new commercial and residential uses that are appropriate to the character of individual activity areas.
- 3.4 Assist business and property owners in the co-ordination of special events, business hours, property lighting, signage and reinvestment.
- 3.5 Develop a unified strategy for marketing the downtown.
- 3.6 Promote first floor activities that are interactive with pedestrians in commercial areas of downtown.
- 3.7 Encourage residential re-use of upper floors of buildings in the downtown

to increase vitality of City and to augment property values<sup>1</sup>

**ISSUE:** To enhance the general welfare and safety of pedestrians through physical improvements and new programs that preserve the character of neighborhoods.

**POLICIES:**

2.1 Assess pedestrian street lighting needs citywide that would improve the sense of security.

2.2 Evaluate circulation patterns in areas of heavy pedestrian traffic to improve safety and convenience throughout the day.

2.3 Explore options for improving pedestrian safety at the Lancaster Avenue/Morgantown Road/West Shore Bypass intersection.<sup>2</sup>

**ISSUE:** To improve traffic flow and safety through infrastructure enhancements that reduce congestion, improve air quality and will increase the City's appeal as a place to live, work and visit.

**POLICIES:**

3.1 Standardize street, directional and attraction signage with assistance from Berks County and the State.

3.2 Synchronize signals to improve traffic flow downtown and on major arterial streets.<sup>3</sup>

**The Main Street 5-year plan submitted in our application presents measured goals and outputs for 80% of these policy points. Therefore, we hold that it successfully aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan.**

The **Berks County Comprehensive Plan** does not address many issues pertinent to the Main Street focus area, and therefore is largely irrelevant for the purpose of our goals in this application. However, it does suggest plans for the following, which can be incorporated into the larger goals of Main Street:

- US 422 / Penn Street Interchange – reconstruction of substandard interchange to eliminate congestion and provide safe, efficient access to the heart of the Reading urban area.<sup>4</sup>
- Ongoing use of Geographic Implementation Systems (GIS) to provide data layers for transportation and land use as well as tax parcel ID numbers<sup>5</sup>

The County also offers all municipalities the opportunity to apply for the Existing Developed Areas Program (EDAP). Funding under this program is used for Long Term Financial Analysis and Forecasts and Site Specific Redevelopment Concept Plans.

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<sup>1</sup> 2000 City of Reading Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 1: Land Use Issues and Policies, pg. 28

<sup>2</sup> 2000 City of Reading Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3: Transportation, pg. 39

<sup>3</sup> 2000 City of Reading Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3: Transportation, pg. 40

<sup>4</sup> County of Berks Comprehensive Plan, Section 3, Highways, III-15

<sup>5</sup> County of Berks Comprehensive Plan, Section 3, Programs, Future, III-25

Wherein the Berks County Comprehensive Plan addresses problems relating to Main Street, City of Reading (as listed above), we find that the 5-year plan is adequate to address them and therefore aligns with the greater goals of Berks County.

## **Revitalization Strategies/Plans**

### *Act 47 Financial Recovery Plan*

Despite the tremendous amount of capital investment in the downtown over the last decade, the City of Reading is in a severe financial crisis. A few years ago the Mayor of Reading asked the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development to designate the City as financially distressed under Act 47. In November 2009 the Secretary approved the distress determination, saying the City's "pattern of operating deficits is unsustainable and if left unabated will force the city to significantly reduce or eliminate fundamental services that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, and quality of life of the citizens."

As a result, in December 2009 the Secretary appointed a coordinator led by Public Financial Management, Inc. to develop a financial Recovery Plan to bring the City back to fiscal health. Filed in the spring of 2011, the Act 47 Financial Recovery Plan outlines several changes that are needed to foster economic development and growth in the City. These include recommendations to bring short- and long-term revenues into balance, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its public services, and establish sustainable operating budgets.

Among these, and relevant to this Master Plan, is the recommendation that the City develop a local economic development partnership and comprehensive strategy that will coordinate future development activities (as many of the recent development projects listed above were not directed or coordinated by the City but rather by outside groups such as Our City Reading [OCR]). It is intended that this Master Plan will serve as a blueprint for this group as it looks to identify and prioritize specific projects that will increase the City's tax base by attracting and retaining residents and businesses within the City limits

### *Penn Corridor*

The Penn Corridor is Greater Reading's hub for arts, culture, dining and entertainment. It will reconnect residents with their urban core. The over two-mile long Penn Corridor includes Penn Street from City Park in Reading through the downtown area and across the Penn Street Bridge to Penn Avenue, extending through West Reading and Wyomissing. Just off Penn Corridor are several parks, a world-class museum and art exhibits, something for everyone.

The Penn Corridor Development Plan was commissioned by the Berks County Economic Partnership in 2005. This plan, conducted by Sasaki Architects and the Brookings Institution, developed urban design/development recommendations and marketing strategies to position the Penn Street Corridor as the main street of downtown Greater Reading (to include Reading, West Reading, and Wyomissing). It stemmed from the 2004 Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading (ICGR), which recommended that the Penn Corridor be branded as a hospitality, entertainment, and tourism corridor.

The area of Reading proposed for Main Street Designation overlaps with Penn Corridor boundaries.

#### *Schuylkill River National Heritage Area*

Considered a National Heritage Area, the Schuylkill River and its banks, trails, and watersheds are within close walking distance of the proposed Main Street area. A National Heritage Area is a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape. The Schuylkill River received this designation from Congress in 2000. The Schuylkill River watershed was also designated a Pennsylvania Heritage Area by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in 1995.

National and State Heritage Areas work to revitalize and restore the region through natural and cultural resource preservation, education, recreation, community revitalization, and heritage tourism. The City of Reading is included within the boundaries of both the State and the National Heritage Areas, and as such is eligible for the many state and federal grants available to communities interested in coordinating marketing, heritage tourism promotions, and historic resource protection.

#### *Riverplace Master Plan*

The Riverplace Master Plan stemmed from a 2003 initiative to champion and coordinate revitalization efforts along the Schuylkill River in Berks County. In 2004 the RiverPlace Development Corporation, a newly formed non-profit corporation, together with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (who is primarily responsible for managing the Schuylkill River State and National Heritage Area) commissioned a master plan to create a vision for riverfront redevelopment.

Conducted by Sasaki Associates in 2006 and funded in part by a grant provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the National Park Service, and the County of Berks, this plan addresses the riverfront area between the Schuylkill Avenue Bridge (on the north) and Heritage Park (on the south), extending approximately one-half mile inland on both sides of the Schuylkill River. Its recommendations include a variety of new civic

and private development initiatives within this area, including greenway trail extensions, open space and park development, and streetscape improvements.

The RiverPlace Development Corporation, whose board is comprised of local government, business and civic representatives, continues to coordinate plans for the riverfront and communicate these plans to the community at large.

The Riverplace Master Plan area also overlaps with the proposed Main Street program area.

### *Ride to Prosperity*

Ride to Prosperity is an initiative of eight leading Berks County economic development and workforce organizations who have come together to brainstorm and develop pathways to prosperity that can be put into place over the next five years. Members include: The Berks County Industrial Development Authority, the Berks County Planning Commission, the Berks County Workforce Investment Board, the Berks Economic Partnership, the City of Reading, the Greater Berks Development Fund, the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau. Initiatives are underway in the areas of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Workforce/Talent Development, Clusters, Sites & Infrastructure, and Quality of Place.

### *Reading Area Community College (RACC) Master Plan*

The Reading Area Community College completed a Master Plan for campus expansion in 2006 that is envisioned to accommodate needed changes through the year 2016. Highlights of the plan recommend several major improvements and acquisitions, including the Fleetwood property and the Competition Tire property (south of Franklin Street), which has already been done. Based upon recent discussions with RACC administrative staff, other plan recommendations of relevance include:

- Converting the Chestnut Street Extension to extend Front Street and closing off Franklin Street to thru-traffic between Front and 2nd Streets.
- Demolishing Berks Hall and replacing it with an updated academic building.
- Extending and strengthening the central pedestrian spine that runs north-south through the center of the campus and providing traffic calming along Front Street, such as a boulevard and raised pedestrian crossings.

The area being proposed for Main Street designation begins at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Penn Streets, which is a central point of RACC's sprawling campus.

### *Ricktown Arts District Master Plan*

In recent years the arts have emerged as a potential key to revitalization in cities like Reading. In a 2010 report for the National Endowment for the Art's Mayors' Institute on City Design, Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa describe the process of "Creative Placemaking." This concept is one of the driving forces behind the Ricktown Arts District initiative.

"In creative place making, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities," according to Markusen and Gadwa (2010, p. 3).

Planners focus on making an area more physically attractive by animating public and private spaces, and rejuvenating structures and streetscapes. However, the ultimate goals of any creative placemaking plan are multi-faceted and include improving local business viability and public safety, celebrating community diversity, and promoting resident pride and ownership among other things.

The Ricktown Arts District is a creative placemaking effort focused on a 10-block area of the City of Reading. The focus area is kept to a modest size intentionally. In 2010, the City was advised by the State's Department of Commerce and Economic Development, to target investment in one compact area as part of the City's Act 47 Recovery Plan. This strategy will allow the City to show success and make a significant impact with limited resources in one particular area. The City would then use that model to develop other areas rather than stretching resources with little impact across the entire City of Reading.

The Ricktown Arts District Master Plan provides recommendations and outlines specific ways to capitalize on the neighborhood's existing arts and cultural assets, create new arts and cultural features, improve public spaces, use public resources and partnerships, attract new and retain current residents and investors, and encourage resident ownership and participation in order to spur overall community improvement. If successfully implemented, the plan will drive economic development and private investment in the neighborhood, the City, and eventually throughout Greater Reading.

### *City of Reading Market Value Analysis*

The Market Value Analysis (MVA) is a tool designed to assist the private market and government officials to identify and comprehend the various elements of local real estate markets. It is based fundamentally on local administrative data sources.

By using an MVA, public sector officials and private market actors can more precisely craft intervention strategies in weak markets and support sustainable growth in stronger market segments.

The Reinvestment Fund of Philadelphia prepared the MVA for Reading by doing the following:

1. Taking all of the data layers and geocoding to Census block groups.

2. Inspecting and validating those data layers.
3. Using a statistical cluster analysis, identify areas that share a common constellation of characteristics.
4. Mapping the result.
5. Visually inspecting areas of the City for conformity with the statistical/spatial representation.
6. Re-solving and re-inspecting until they achieve an accurate representation.

Components of the MVA include:

- Median sales price 2010-2012 (February)
- Coefficient of variance for sales price
- Subsidized rental stock as a % of all rental units
- Vacant housing units as a % of all housing units
- Foreclosure filings as a % of residential parcels
- Ratio of commercial to developed area
- Owner-occupied as a % of all housing units
- New construction as a % of residential parcels

## IMAGE DEVELOPMENT REPORT SUMMARY – DOWNTOWN READING BUSINESS DISTRICT:

### Standard Community Perceptions

The community was asked to supply their opinion on a series of standard perceptual questions about the Downtown Reading Business District. The purpose of this survey tool is to get a better idea of how people feel about common attributes that contribute to a "sense of place" within a community. The questions are based upon a matrix for what constitutes a "place" that was developed by the Project for Public Spaces.

The online survey consists of participants responding by analyzing their opinions about 43 different factors in five major perceptual categories. These categories include Comfort & Appearance, Economic Uses/ Characteristics, Sociability/Community Attitude, Activities and Access/Linkages. Just as important as the individual factors is the extent to which the major categories may be determined to be either a strength or a weakness within the community. It is important to note that for the purpose of this survey, *undecided* responses are counted as negative since it is an indication of lack of familiarity with the central business district and as such, a negative result. A moderately negative perception has responses between 50% and 75% negative. Strongly negative has greater than 75%. A moderately positive perception has between 50% and 75% positive responses, while strongly positive has greater than 75%.

The online survey was promoted in December 2012-January 2013 by Reading Downtown Improvement District press releases and direct emails, through Reading Downtown Improvement District Ambassadors, City of Reading Community Development staff, in addition to postings on other organizations' websites and Face Book pages such as: BCTV, Sovereign Center, Reading Eagle, Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Greater Reading Economic Partnership, Greater Reading Young Professionals, Hispanic Center of Reading, City of Reading, Reading Symphony Orchestra, GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, Greater Reading Visitors Bureau, Reading Parking Authority, and Penn Corridor. A total of 723 individuals responded to the online survey, this high response rate is an indicator that there is great interest and momentum towards the current revitalization effort. The results from the various participants' answers to this exercise in the Reading community are detailed in the following page.

In summary, the participants gave the Downtown Reading Business District moderately negative ratings to a large extent in four out of five major categories, Comfort and Appearance, Economic Characteristics, Community Attitudes, and Activities. While the other category, Access and Linkages received a mix of answers. A number of *uncertain* ratings were found throughout all of the categories. It is important to note that for the purpose of this survey, *undecided* responses are counted as negative since it is an indication of a lack of familiarity with the central business district and as such, a negative result. Obviously, negativity points to a community that may be in transition – full of opportunity but also sharing the possibility of decline.

This is a critical time for the Downtown Reading Business District and the revitalization of the greater Reading community, and a time when great positive changes can be realized. This survey acts as a possible guide in providing direction at the current stage of the revitalization process and at crucial junctures during the process. The results found in the Downtown Reading Business District's survey are not that different than the results found for many of the downtowns throughout Pennsylvania. Ideally, the preliminary five year plan should reflect action taken towards addressing the strengths associated with the strongly positive ratings, and the issues, those that receive strongly negative ratings.

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF DOWNTOWN READING BUSINESS DISTRICT – 723 Respondents (collected during 12-2012 to 01-2013)

The Central Business District		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	? (Neutral)	Agree	Strongly Agree	Overall
Comfort and Appearance	is safe	[Bar chart showing distribution]					64%
	is clean	[Bar chart showing distribution]					63%
	is green	[Bar chart showing distribution]					68%
	is charming	[Bar chart showing distribution]					76%
	Has quality historic architecture	[Bar chart showing distribution]					77%
	has places to sit and relax	[Bar chart showing distribution]					52%
	has well maintained buildings	[Bar chart showing distribution]					60%
	has adequate lighting at night	[Bar chart showing distribution]					25%
	has an identifiable logo	[Bar chart showing distribution]					21%
	has inviting storefronts	[Bar chart showing distribution]					83%
Economic Characteristics	has the right mix of businesses	[Bar chart showing distribution]					82%
	has available goods and services	[Bar chart showing distribution]					98%
	has unique businesses	[Bar chart showing distribution]					55%
	is business friendly	[Bar chart showing distribution]					33%
	has prices I can afford	[Bar chart showing distribution]					38%
	has a low first floor vacancy rate	[Bar chart showing distribution]					49%
	has places to live	[Bar chart showing distribution]					24%
	has places where people can work	[Bar chart showing distribution]					23%
	appeals to a broad range of users	[Bar chart showing distribution]					74%
Community Attitude	is welcoming to strangers	[Bar chart showing distribution]					76%
	shows our community's pride	[Bar chart showing distribution]					79%
	a friendly place to spend time	[Bar chart showing distribution]					78%
	has stakeholders who cooperate	[Bar chart showing distribution]					52%
	is customer friendly	[Bar chart showing distribution]					28%
	has a volunteer spirit	[Bar chart showing distribution]					36%
	communicates with the community	[Bar chart showing distribution]					33%
	is progressive and future oriented	[Bar chart showing distribution]					25%
Activities	has a good array of special events	[Bar chart showing distribution]					22%
	is vibrant during the day	[Bar chart showing distribution]					19%
	is vibrant in the evening	[Bar chart showing distribution]					88%
	has activities that create foot traffic	[Bar chart showing distribution]					58%
	is well promoted and marketed	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%
	has an image I understand	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%
	convenient customer hours for me	[Bar chart showing distribution]					35%
Access and Linkages	has good directional signage	[Bar chart showing distribution]					28%
	has sufficient, easy-to-find parking	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%
	is well connected to other attractions	[Bar chart showing distribution]					23%
	can be reached by bike, car, walking	[Bar chart showing distribution]					78%
	is convenient to major highways	[Bar chart showing distribution]					69%
	has good sidewalks for pedestrians	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%
	is a safe place to cross the street	[Bar chart showing distribution]					72%
	has smooth flowing traffic	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%
	is walkable to & from other places	[Bar chart showing distribution]					20%