

# Plan GO SHAMOKIN

## SHAMOKIN AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN A PLAN FOR ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

October 2020



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## SHAMOKIN AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### *Prepared For: SEDA-COG on Behalf of the City of Shamokin*

A project of this scope could not be realized without the support and commitment of many individuals. It is important to acknowledge the vision and leadership of those who assisted in the preparation of this plan and in all of the supporting technical work. All of the participants who played a role in the project, including business, community, institutional, and government leaders, are too numerous to list.

The input of the community was integral to the formation of the plan's recommendations, especially through the overwhelming participation of residents and business owners in partnership with government, non-profit, and religious leaders, agency representatives and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that lead the Shamokin Community Rebuilding Workshop.

### PROJECT CONSULTANT TEAM

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**URBAN PARTNERS**

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# SHAMOKIN AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## A PLAN FOR ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

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## What is this plan?

This plan responds to a special Shamokin community driven desire to proactively reinvent itself. The fact is, this is an easy statement to say, and a very hard one to achieve. The only way such reinvention can occur is step-by-step, one success at a time. This plan determines where there are opportunities and what may be the best next steps to take.

Shamokin is a post-industrial city located in Northumberland County. In the late nineteenth century the City boomed but has struggled to maintain economic vitality since the decline of the mining and textile industries; a common condition in towns throughout the Coal Region and much of Pennsylvania. The community of Shamokin craves to revitalize itself with fresh initiatives that enable community members to restore the lively nature by harnessing new opportunities, not just harkening to those of the past. Shamokin has recently seen an influx in tourism through the introduction of the Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area Authority (AOAA) which leased approximately 7,500 acres of former coal lands in the Shamokin area for the purposes of actively managing a family-friendly motorized and non-motorized recreation facility. Additionally, the nearby Knoebels Grove Amusement Park, the PSSA Valley Gun & Country Club, and the abundant Weiser State Forest lands, all within 15 minutes of the heart of Shamokin, establishes the City as a legitimate and unique destination for regional recreation that attracts well over 1.3 million visitors per year to the combined destinations. Shamokin has the geographic opportunity to capture travelers from the Philadelphia metro market that is 100 miles/two hours travel distance as well as the NY/NJ metro market that is 150 miles/3 hours travel distance. Utilizing the renewed resources provides an advantageous opportunity for Shamokin as it embarks on economic and community revitalization efforts.

Economic development strategies and thoughtful design initiatives are necessary steps to accomplish meaningful transformation. After conducting

extensive community research, the core of downtown, the blocks of Independence Street between Market and Shamokin Streets, have been identified as the place to focus, although some recommendations consider a larger context. Shamokin is an inherently pedestrian friendly environment, and recommendations build upon the idea of getting people out of cars and walking around to patronize businesses, public spaces, and socialize with others. The plan focuses on a combination of public/civic realm investments in infrastructure and public spaces combined with programs and resources that can be tapped to partner with the private sector to stimulate building rehabilitation and business expansion. This layered approach to economic development emphasizing “placemaking” fosters the greatest potential for creating jobs, reducing crime, enhancing community pride, and elevating the overall quality-of-life for all of Shamokin’s residents. The creation of successful places is a function of a thoughtfully considered mix of uses, location, design and supporting infrastructure systems; working together to form economically vibrant and sustainable building blocks of an overall town, in many respects it is tapping into the original processes that founded the town, just harnessing the best available aspects of the past and the present for a better future.





## What are the Key Recommendations?

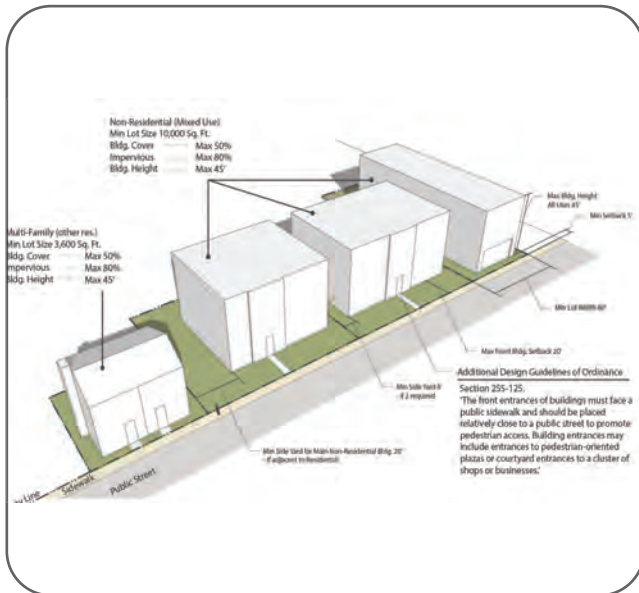
Due to the complex nature of all of the inter-related factors and considerations needed to develop an economically viable and physically constructable list of initiatives and recommendations, an extensive analysis of varied topics was required. The outcome of this analysis led to a specific list of high priority actions that creates a roadmap of what to do and how.



### 1. Foster Public Private Partnerships to Make Bricks and Mortar Redevelopment and Business Expansion Happen

- **Help Move Pending Development Projects Over the Finish Line** - Support developers in completing several pending projects, especially focused on introducing hotels to the downtown which will significantly broaden the City's tourism potential.
- **Partner with Existing Property Owners to Explore Redevelopment Potential** - Facilitate outreach with owners of buildings downtown to perform feasibility studies, undertake pre-funding activities, and partner on project financing and marketing to create new mixed-use and market-rate housing projects.
- **Promote the development of second home residential product for the recreational tourism market, including the "Lock it and Leave it" market segment.**
- **Support Existing Businesses and Strategically Recruit New Complimentary Businesses** - Work with existing business owners to expand and reach-out to potential business operators and start-ups based on the findings of the market analysis performed as a part of this planning effort, to link businesses with occupiable spaces and funding resources.
- **Package Funding Resources and Provide Technical Support to Navigate Securing Financial Resources** - Organize and promote local, regional, state, and federal programs and provide required technical support to shepherd businesses, developments, and improvements to fruition. Many programs exist and it is important that Shamokin utilize its fair share but this requires a dedicated and knowledgeable team.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## 2. Make the City “Development Ready” through Sound Policies and Promotion

- **Modernized Development Regulations** – Update Zoning and Land Development Ordinances to meet modern requirements and to reinforce the notion of placemaking and pedestrian-oriented activities as a way to create a vibrant community.
- **Promote the Positives** – Develop and deploy a branding and public promotions campaign focused on linking new improvements and a fresh image. It is as important to get the word out about what is happening as it is making physical improvements; it is all about positive change.
- **Establish a Formal Advocacy Group** – A well-informed project advocacy group is needed to focus on implementing this plan’s funding and financing strategy, meeting with key agency and elected officials to inform and advocate for projects, and to prepare funding applications.
- **Advance Crime Prevention Measures** – Implement crime prevention programs and projects starting with camera systems, speedy response to vandalism, and proactive education efforts.



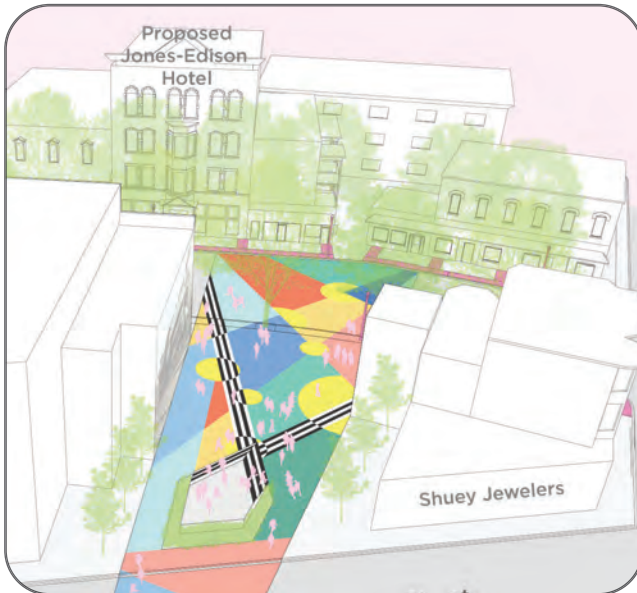
## 3. Perform a Makeover of Independence Street Focused on Complete Street Improvements that Greatly Enhance the Pedestrian-Oriented and Aesthetic Appeal of the City’s “Main Street.”

- **Pursue Funding and Prepare a Complete Streetscape Plan** – Relatively simple upgrades to Independence Street with a focus on ADA/safety and aesthetic improvements such as architectural lighting, planters, banners, etc. can have a major impact. Funding sources should focus first on the development of uniform standards and plans and then implementation.
- **Program Improvements** – Implement in phases, based on resources starting in 100 E. Independence Street block and work out from there. Ideally projects include all improvements by block or specific elements, such as lighting, along the entire corridor in phases.



#### 4. Explore Interim and Pop-Up Solutions to Address Blight and Vacancy Downtown

- **Activate Vacant Spaces** – In addition to the City policy to address property maintenance issues, activating the ground floor storefronts of buildings with installations that ideally vary regularly to foster visual interest, will mitigate some of the impact of vacant storefronts and could be tied to branding and promotion activities. Spaces could promote local and regional businesses, non-profits, and events, by highlighting them and/or products, in vacant storefronts.
- **Explore Temporary Uses** – Pop-up retail during events or seasonally could create additional activity, get people into buildings or on vacant lots, and test the marketplace for new uses and businesses without a need for major capital.



#### 5. Create Multi-purpose Public Spaces Downtown as Civic Amenities and Economic Development Venues

- **Create an Iconic Public Space Downtown** – The downtown needs a central public space that functions both as a day-to-day green space for residents as well as venue for programming for events that increase foot traffic. Building simple but effective green spaces such as this plan's proposed pocket park in the E. 100 block of Independence Street could create this type of space and also address empty voids created by the removal of blighted buildings along the City's main commercial street. Many of the plan's recommendations focus on this area as the center of the downtown, as an area most in need of improvement and with a lot of current interest in investment.
- **Create Flexible Spaces for Events of All Sizes** – The plan proposes ways to redesign streets and parking lots to make them function for their primary utilitarian purpose as well as serve as venues for festivals and events with an emphasis on the 300 E. Independence Street block and the large off-street parking lot in the same block.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## 6. Advance Critical Infrastructure Improvements

- **Engage PennDOT in Economic Development Initiatives** – Work with PennDOT and partnering agencies to study key intersection and Sunbury Street/Route 61 corridor improvements to improve traffic flow and also make the City more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. It is important for the agency to understand economic development plans and priorities to help ensure that improvements support the complete multi-modal vision.
- **Advance the Regional Trail Initiative** – Support Northumberland County’s effort to develop a regional multi-use trail that would establish Shamokin as a major trail town hub on a rails-to-trail from Mount Carmel to Sunbury. The City’s acquisition of a large portion of the former PRR railroad right-of-way along Commerce Street created the basis for a major linear trail route through the core of downtown.
- **Reduce the Flooding Potential and Related Impacts** – Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into projects, especially a greenway (including the aforementioned trail) via Commerce Street while also undertaking an H&H study to hopefully reduce the regulated FEMA designated flood zones in the downtown.

## What to do next?

This plan is also a strategy for how to obtain resources to advance its recommendations.

**Organize the City’s “People” Resources:** The City and its citizenry have made great strides to organize formal and informal boards and groups to problem solve and undertake initiatives. This plan provides guidance for how to work within these established frameworks and tap them as resources to pursue funding and undertake projects.

**Identify the Right Funding Opportunities:** The plan provides a list of potential resources that represent the best options for funding its community revitalization and economic development initiatives. The cost of projects, the costs of its components, and the cost of the next immediate phases will drive the City’s consideration of which sources of funding will be most important to pursue at any particular point.

**Organize Stakeholder Support:** Having community, business, non-profit, political, regional, and citizen support for your key projects will not only provide momentum on those projects and make them stronger, this stakeholder support is critical to winning federal and state resources.

**Coordinate with State and Federal Agency Officials:** For the City’s highest priority projects, it is very important for the City of Shamokin to continue to cultivate and expand its relationships with federal and state agencies, at both the management and program levels and in Washington, DC and in regional offices. Federal funding is routed through federal agencies (although congressional influence on those agencies is still critical) so coordinating with them early provides the best opportunity to build support for the City’s projects and in most cases this funding can serve as a match resource for state and local dollars.

**Shamokin Revitalization Roundtable:** One effective approach to build support and partnerships is to organize a forum in the community that will bring top federal and state leaders, congressional officials and the community together to boost coordination on your projects and resources for their implementation. A “Revitalization Roundtable” can involve community presentations, site tours, discussion sessions with funders about the best approaches, and coordination on next steps for action on the City’s projects. This effort would build upon the momentum of this and other efforts underway or recently completed, including the U.S. EPA led Community Rebuilding Action Plan.

**Pursue Grant Funding Following the Prepared Strategy:** When the time to draft and submit a grant funding application arrives, Shamokin will be ready and competitive by following the steps outlined above.

**Seek Non-Funding Agency Support Too:** Non-funding support from state and federal officials, which could include requests for consideration on regulatory issues, legislative issues, program funding levels, technical assistance, grant implementation challenges, coordination with key partners, and other strategic implementation issues is also important and can help to queue up larger funding resources.

**Celebrate Success!** It has been said that “nothing succeeds like success,” and that is certainly true when it comes to obtaining funding and economic development initiatives. The community should always be looking for opportunities to celebrate success, thank your agency and political supporters, hold groundbreaking and ribbon cuttings, cultivate media coverage, send newsletters, and spread the word in other ways.









# 01

## Project Introduction & Background

- Introduction and Historical Context
- Summary of Key Market Findings
- Physical Planning Considerations

## Community Engagement & Planning Framework

## Planning & Frameworks

## Implementation Action Plan

# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

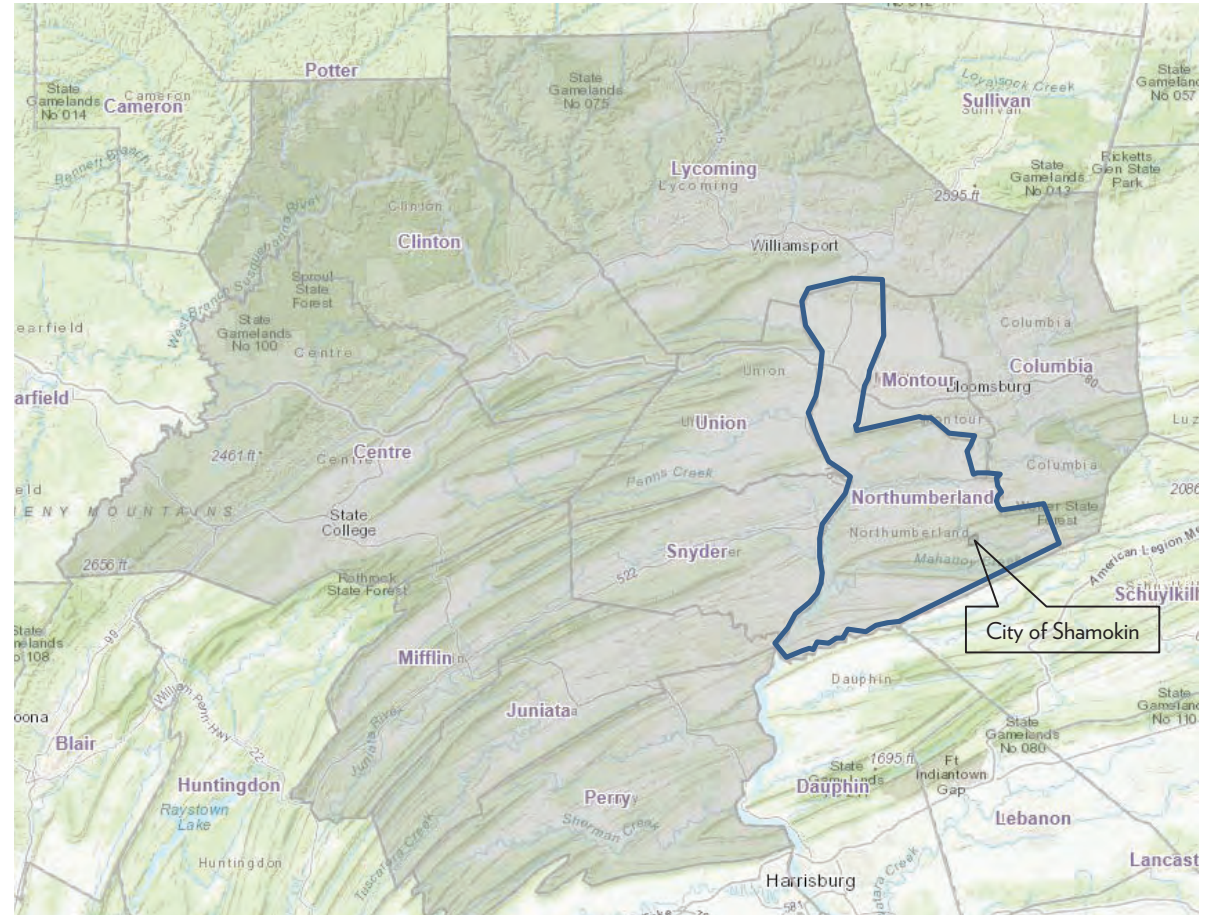
## Introduction and Historical Context

### Background

The following is an overview of strategic contextual physical planning topics, issues, and conditions that directly relate to the intent of the planning effort. The emphasis of the analysis is not to be exhaustive but to identify key factors which directly influence the development of targeted recommendations. Although certain topic areas, such as the market analysis, require more extensive contextual evaluation and are provided as a separate appendix to this plan, the emphasis is placed on performing the strategic analysis that may aid in determining various infrastructure and inter-related physical factors that support specific economic development recommendations.

The following analysis is organized around a big-picture as well as a ground-up approach. It looks first at broadest factors such as geographic context and hydrology and then considers elements formed by the existing built environment, including transportation, public space, and utility infrastructure.

This information will also be used to inform how to make recommendations viable and sustainable. In this case sustainable not only means that they have environmental impact but that they also have economic longevity. In essence, each recommendation, informed by the analysis, should solve both site specific issues and serve as model for how new development and investment can serve a larger role in improving the quality-of-life for all residents of a neighborhood and ultimately the City as a whole.



*The City of Shamokin and Northumberland County within the SEDCOG Region. Source: U.S. Census Bureau*



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Introduction and Historical Context

### Study Area

The primary focus of the project is the downtown and the area bounded by Sunbury Street/Route 61 to the north, Shamokin Creek to the south, Shamokin Street to the east, and 4th Street to the west. Independence Street is the City's primary "main street" in terms of functioning as the primary commercial street, with the most of the City's largest buildings located along the blocks from Market to Shamokin Streets. Consideration was given to a larger area in some instances since some aspects, such as transportation, utilities, and gateways are not solely influenced by the limits of downtown or even the city boundary.

The heart of Shamokin is formed by its valley location at the south edge of Big Mountain and is bisected by Carbon Run, which flows into the more prominent Shamokin Creek at approximately 4th and Water Streets. Shamokin Creek roughly parallels Independence Street through the center of the City. The City is surrounded by huge culm banks dating back to the early 1900s that form large mountains ringing the town. The Cameron/Glen Burn Colliery Culm Bank is purported to be the world's largest man-made mountain.

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- In order to maximize positive community economic impact, the emphasis of this plan is on the heart of downtown. Specifically, the core blocks of Independence Street between Market and Shamokin Streets receive the primary emphasis.
- Areas near and further afield are considered for networks and contextual aspects that have a direct relationship to downtown, such as the key circulation routes including Sunbury Street/Route 61 which is critical to connecting the City and the downtown to the region and beyond.



Focus Area



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Introduction and Historical Context

### Historic Context

The City of Shamokin is located in Northumberland County in a region known for its once abundant and prosperous anthracite coal fields. The City is named for an important Native American town of the same name which stood west of the current city, near where Sunbury now exists. In the 1830's, as a result of the increase in the growing potential of coal as an energy resource, the town was laid out as a speculative venture to support the demand created by the growing mining industry. With the arrival of the railroads, the City experienced significant growth from the 1870s to 1900. Other industries followed the growth and in the early 20th century silk and knitting mills became important economic drivers as well. The Shamokin/Eagle Silk Mill was at one point the largest textile manufacturing building under a single roof in the United States. The town was incorporated as a City in 1949. Much of the City's current form in terms of a gridded street pattern and its location and concentration of it downtown are a function of the location of Big Mountain and Shamokin Creek, combined with the historic placement of the Philadelphia & Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad rail lines through town. In fact, the current configuration of Independence Street in the block between Rock and Washington Streets exists as an exceptionally wide street due to the fact that the former Reading Railroad passenger station was located on the area that is now part of the street. Commerce Street was the location of a former Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) branch line and the former PRR passenger and freight stations still exist at Commerce and Liberty Street as a part of Bader's Furniture. Over time, several commercial nodes/corridors evolved to capture the demand created by the growth of surrounding residential neighborhoods, hence the additional commercial clusters along Market, Sunbury, and Shamokin (possibly the earliest) Streets, as well as what became the primary downtown shopping district along Independence Street.



*Independence Street was once the beating heart of the City of Shamokin. Although some building have been lost, many of the key structures remain providing the basis for a vibrant, walk-able downtown mixed-use district that continues to provide important commercial/retail services to the population.*



*The Philadelphia & Reading Railroad's architecturally eclectic passenger station once stood in the East 300 block of Independence Street and was the main hub of travel between the Cities of Shamokin, Reading, and Philadelphia. The building was razed and today the site is a wide paved area of the street and a parking lot.*

The population of Shamokin peaked in 1920 at 21,204 and has experienced a drop in population ever since. By 2010 the population dropped to 7,374 and the latest data estimates (as of 2017) projected the population at 7,165. With so much of the historical peak population hinged on a few industries, anthracite coal mining and textiles, as these industries declined so has the population. A more detailed discussion of the population and household characteristics are presented in the Appendix A – Market Assessment Technical Memorandum prepared by Urban Partners.

More recently the economy of Shamokin has evolved to respond to different but equally abundant natural resources, specifically the abundance of surrounding open land for recreational purposes. The Anthracite Outdoor

Adventure Area Authority (AOAA) leased approximately 7,500 acres of former coal lands in the Shamokin Area for the purposes of actively managing a family-friendly motorized and non-motorized recreation facility, it along with the nearby Knoebels Grove Amusement Park, the PSSA Valley Gun & Country Club and the abundant Weiser State Forest lands, all within 15 minutes of the heart of Shamokin, establishes the City as a legitimate hub of a unique regional recreational destination that attracts well over 1.3 million visitors per year to the combined destinations.

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Shamokin’s physical form as a gridded city dates back to the 1830s with the original plat of the town focused on the areas between Pearl and Orange Streets, making the portions of Independence Street east of Orange Street the area that has functioned as a part of its traditional core downtown for the longest period of time. Projects that reinstate this traditional function, such as the construction of the pending medical center in this block, are important to improving the overall functionality and vibrancy of the traditional downtown core.
- The City has several commercial nodes/corridors which formed in response to growth that occurred in the first half of the 20th century. Today, there are more properties originally constructed for commercial purposes, than are required to support current

and likely demand. Although viable commercial activities can certainly continue in these areas, the emphasis should be on one primary, compact and vibrant downtown district in order to achieve the greatest economic vitality and impact. Economic development recommendations should reinforce this idea of concentration for maximum viability and impact.

- With the growing potential of outside visitors traveling to Shamokin for their recreational interests, the City and its businesses need to consider how it presents itself as a visitor ready destination, including ease of navigation, how inviting the public realm feels, how inviting are local businesses for new and unfamiliar customers, and what overall image does a visitor take away with them after visiting?



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Summary of Key Market Findings

### Market Analysis Introduction

A key part of developing viable revitalization recommendations is having a fundamental understanding of current and projected market dynamics. As a part of this planning effort, Urban Partners conducted a real estate market assessment evaluating retail, residential, and commercial opportunities for Shamokin. This analysis identified a range of feasible uses that could potentially support a more active mixed-use environment in the downtown area while strengthening the City's overall economy.

Data for this market assessment was acquired and analyzed immediately prior to the economic shutdown in mid-March 2020 resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. The near- and long-term impacts of the pandemic on the real estate market are not yet fully known, particularly on a micro-level. It should be noted, however, that not all impacts will be equally far-reaching or permanent, and some real estate sectors will recover more quickly than others. Given the changing nature of this situation, as the stabilization of new Covid-19 cases is achieved and communities begin to implement reopening plans, the effects of this crisis on the local real estate market will continue to evolve as well. Community leaders should monitor these influences as Shamokin continues its revitalization efforts while adjusting to new economic norms. A more extensive analysis of the Market Assessment is provided in Appendix A of this report.



*Independence Street Retail*



*Former Rennas Hotel Building*



### Market-Rate Rental Housing Market

The rental housing market research performed as a part of this effort revealed that available apartments in Shamokin are limited. Most common are apartments in older twins or small buildings, mostly located outside of the downtown in adjacent neighborhoods. Larger buildings appear to have no vacancy. Furthermore, there are no comparable properties in Shamokin to any prospective new or rehabbed downtown rental housing product.

At the same time, the health care industry has grown in the City in terms of numbers of jobs. These numbers will increase when Geisinger Health System completes its new medical facility in downtown Shamokin. It is likely that a segment of those employees would desire housing close to work that is also close to downtown entertainment and recreational amenities. In addition, almost 20% of the City's population is over 65 years old. There is potential for a segment of that older population to be seeking smaller, maintenance-free housing in a walkable area. Because

of the current lack of new or rehabbed downtown rental housing in Shamokin—that would likely appeal to young professionals and empty-nesters—it would therefore be reasonable to conclude that some of this potential demand could be accommodated by newer rental housing in the downtown commercial area. Local developers agree that the rental residential market in downtown Shamokin could be ripe for introducing a new or renovated rental housing product that appeals to these demographics. One such developer just completed a higher-end renovation of a four-bedroom unit in a downtown mixed-use building, which rented quickly.

#### KEY FINDINGS / CONSIDERATIONS

- As a result of these market conditions, it appears that new rental housing is potentially a viable development opportunity for an evolving downtown Shamokin. New units could potentially exist in vacant or underutilized space above ground-floor retail on various downtown blocks in one or more of the key vacant downtown buildings, particularly along Independence Street. To test the market for this product, an initial residential project should be modest in scale, perhaps involving 8 to 10 units in a single building.

- Assuming a 25% premium for new construction over rents for existing, modest rental units in Shamokin, new rehabbed apartments of this type in downtown Shamokin could likely command the following rents:
  - \$600 to \$750 per month for 800 SF to 1,000 SF one-bedroom, one bath units
  - \$850 to \$1,000 per month for 1,000 SF to 1,200 SF two-bedroom, two bath units

# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Summary of Key Market Findings

### Affordable Rental Housing Market

According to HUD, there are just 366 affordable rental units in Shamokin. Despite this low supply, the cost burden analysis above indicates that 44.9% of renter households are paying more than 30% of their incomes on housing.

#### KEY FINDINGS / CONSIDERATIONS

- There appears to be a significant opportunity for additional affordable rental units in Shamokin. Some of this need could be accommodated through various lower-priced market-rate units that exist in the City. However, demand exists for additional low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) housing with income restrictions or housing with a mixed-income element.

### Sales Housing Market

Research performed to evaluate current sales housing trends in Shamokin has revealed a relatively weak market. The total number of homes sold in the City has decreased since 2017 to just 32. While median sales prices have increased year-over-year since 2016, the median sales price during the yearlong period of early 2019 to 2020 was only \$54,500. New housing in this market would therefore require significant subsidies to offset the cost of construction. Furthermore, downtown for-sale condominiums—either new or part of a rehabbed conversion—currently do not exist and are therefore an untested housing market in Shamokin.

#### KEY FINDINGS / CONSIDERATIONS

- It appears that new sales housing is not a viable opportunity for downtown Shamokin.
- This data suggest that any near-term new or rehabbed housing occur in the form of rental housing at a modest scale.

### Retail Market

A comparison of retail supply and demand for the trade areas reveals the retail surplus or gap/potential for additional retail stores in each category. The demand of retailing in Shamokin (included in the 3-Mile Trade Area) exceeds supply by more than \$26 million, indicating that the supply is limited for the area's population, and the customer base must go beyond this three-mile ring for many retail goods and services. However, the supply of supermarkets and

pharmacies are drawing customers into the trade area from outside. Having a downtown supermarket is often one of the missing and most desired retail categories for communities that are focusing on downtown revitalization. The fact that Shamokin has a successful full-service grocery store at the western end of its downtown core should be promoted as an important validation of the market potential, as well as a convenience amenity when attracting new residential development.

The 6-Mile Radius Trade Area contains several other modest population and commercial centers, including most of Coal Township. Six miles is approximately halfway to the larger population centers of Sunbury, Danville, and Bloomsburg. Residents of those communities are not likely to travel to Shamokin for most of their retail needs since they can likely find them within their respective trade areas. However, within this 6-mile radius, total demand still exceeds supply—by a \$106 million gap. Several retail categories experience a significant opportunity gap also not being filled at the 9-Mile Radius.

In general, these would be smaller store types that could be tenants in downtown commercial buildings along Independence Street. In the case of the eating and drinking establishments focus should be placed on diversifying options in order to complement existing establishments. Also, concentrating food establishments within close proximity to each other support the concept of creating a food and dining district which tends to leverage the economic impact and viability of each establishment. Currently there are several vacant commercial spaces along the Independence Street corridor especially, that could house a portion of these retail opportunities and reinforce the concept of a vibrant and walkable retail/dining district.

### KEY FINDINGS / CONSIDERATIONS

- Several retail categories experience a significant opportunity gap also not being filled at the 9-Mile Radius. While it would be logical to assume that Specialty Sporting Goods, which include hunting, fishing, and bicycling gear, would have significant demand among Shamokin residents and visitors, the retail opportunity data indicates that this is one of the few over-supplied retail categories, even at the 9-Mile Radius. This would suggest a lack of additional demand. However, for those categories with a gap at the 6-Mile Radius that continues at the 9-Mile Radius, **there appears to be sufficient demand for many other new store opportunities appropriate for downtown Shamokin:**
    - **Art Dealers/Galleries.** The data indicates that \$530,000 in expenditures on art are leaving the 6-Mile Trade Area annually. This leakage can support 2,400 SF of gallery space. Art dealers could appeal to visitors as well as area residents.
    - **Home furnishing stores.** Within the 6-Mile Trade Area, a significant opportunity exists for home furnishing stores. The \$3.4 million gap translates to approximately 14,000 SF in store space
    - **Health and personal care store.** An opportunity exists in the 6-Mile Trade Area for a health and personal care store, such as a medical supply store. The \$888,000 in leakage would support a store of approximately 2,000 SF.
    - Family clothing stores. Significant opportunities exist in the clothing category, particularly family clothing. The retail data suggests a gap of \$7.8 million within the 6-Mile Trade Area, which could support about 28,000 SF of store space. These stores could outfit the family with clothing geared toward the outdoors and recreation.
    - **Women’s clothing stores.** Opportunities exist for women’s clothing stores as well. The gap of \$2.6 million within the 6-Mile Trade Area could support more than 9,000 SF of store space. These stores could be specialty boutique stores that would appeal to visitors.
    - **Shoe stores.** A \$1.8 million gap in retail supply exists for shoe stores in the 6-Mile Trade Area. This leakage can support a store of approximately 6,000 SF. Shoe stores could include footwear more geared toward athletics, such as running and hiking, which would lend itself well to the recreational nature of the region.
    - **Gift store.** The retail data suggests that \$899,000 in gift, novelty, and souvenir stores expenditures are leaking from the 6-Mile Trade Area annually.
  - **Auto parts stores.** A \$1.3 million gap in retail supply exists for automotive parts and accessories stores in the 6-Mile Trade Area. This leakage can support store space of approximately 5,000 SF. A portion of this opportunity could be attributed to recreational vehicle parts and accessories as well, serving residents and visitors who frequent the Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area.
  - **Pet Store.** A \$1.2 million gap in retail supply exists for pet stores in the 6-Mile Trade Area. This leakage can support approximately 4,000 SF of store space.
  - **Full-Service Restaurants.** Significant opportunity exists for full-service restaurants. Up to 29,000 SF of such space could be supported by the \$7.9 million gap in the 6-Mile Trade Area.
  - **Limited-Service Restaurants.** There is a similar opportunity for limited-service restaurants. A surplus of \$10.3 million could support 30,000 SF of restaurant space in the 6-Mile Trade Area.
  - **Coffee Shops.** There are also opportunities for coffee shops. A gap of \$1.1 million in the 6-Mile Trade Area could support a 3,000 SF coffee shop.
- Together, these retail opportunities within the 6-Mile Trade Area would total approximately 145,000 SF in store space—a significant amount of retailing. **Therefore it appears that there is demand for 40,000 to 50,000 SF** that is compatible with the physical characteristics and scale of downtown Shamokinas as well as the region’s evolving recreational character, to test the market. These opportunities, which could serve both residents and visitors, include:
    - 4 to 5 eating and drinking establishments (16,000 SF) including full- and limited-service restaurants and coffee shops that will help diversify but not cannibalize the existing restaurant supply and serve both residents and visitors;
    - 4 to 5 family & women’s apparel and shoe stores (6,000 SF) with a recreational emphasis or appeal to visitors;
    - 1 or 2 vehicle parts and accessories stores that could also supply ATVs (5,000 SF);
    - 2 to 3 home furnishing stores (12,000 SF); and
    - 3 to 4 miscellaneous stores such as an art dealer, gift shop, medical equipment, and pet stores (8,000 SF), which could also appeal to visitors and residents.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

The following is an overview of several key planning topics that include physical elements as well as policies, such as zoning, that regulates and shapes the physical realm. The approach to presenting the information is focused on highlighting key findings and considerations that may influence ideas and decision-making.

### Cultural/Historic Resources

The determination of a nationally eligible Shamokin Historic District was originally determined in 1987. It included a large portion of the eastern half of downtown and neighborhoods of the original City plat, located to the north. As a result of a significant loss of contributing structures in the following decade, the City requested that the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PASHPO - PHMC) review the district designation and boundaries in 1999. As a result of the review, it was recommended that the eligible district boundary be revised to a slightly smaller boundary. In preparation of a HUD funded demolition project for two building within the eligible historic district in 2017, further review was performed by PASHPO – PHMC, which determined that although there was an additional loss of several contributing resources, it was overall intact and maintain significant resources to continue to be National Register eligible, with a reduction of the boundary along Sunbury Street. The recommendation was made in 2017 to also rename the district the, “Shamokin Commercial Historic District.”

In addition, a determination of a nationally eligible historic district was determined for the Shamokin WPA Waterway Control System, which incorporates engineered structures and systems used for flood control and constructed by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1933 and 1941. It follows portions of Shamokin Creek, Coal and Carbon Runs through the downtown.



*Historic view of F&S brewery building*



*2020 view of F&S Brewery building*

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- The Shamokin Historic District was determined to be a nationally eligible historic district by the PASHPO as far back as 1987. The district has not been formally nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The determination of eligibility (versus a true listing on the National Register) provides some level of protection for contributing properties to the district but those are limited primarily to review of impacts if federal or state funding is used for activities within the defined eligible historic district. The current status, however, does not offer up the potential for property owners to participate in the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit program which could provide a 20% federal tax credit for eligible projects or the Pennsylvania Preservation Incentive Tax Credit Program which can provide up to an additional 25% of the qualified expenditures as determined by the application in connection with the completed project. Tax credit awards can potentially be increased to 30% of the qualified expenditures in connection with a workforce housing completed project. These tax credit programs have helped many private property owners and developers foster economic revitalization in their downtowns across Pennsylvania.
- There are several structures identified by the PASHPO as potentially being individually eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. If property owners are willing to undertake or

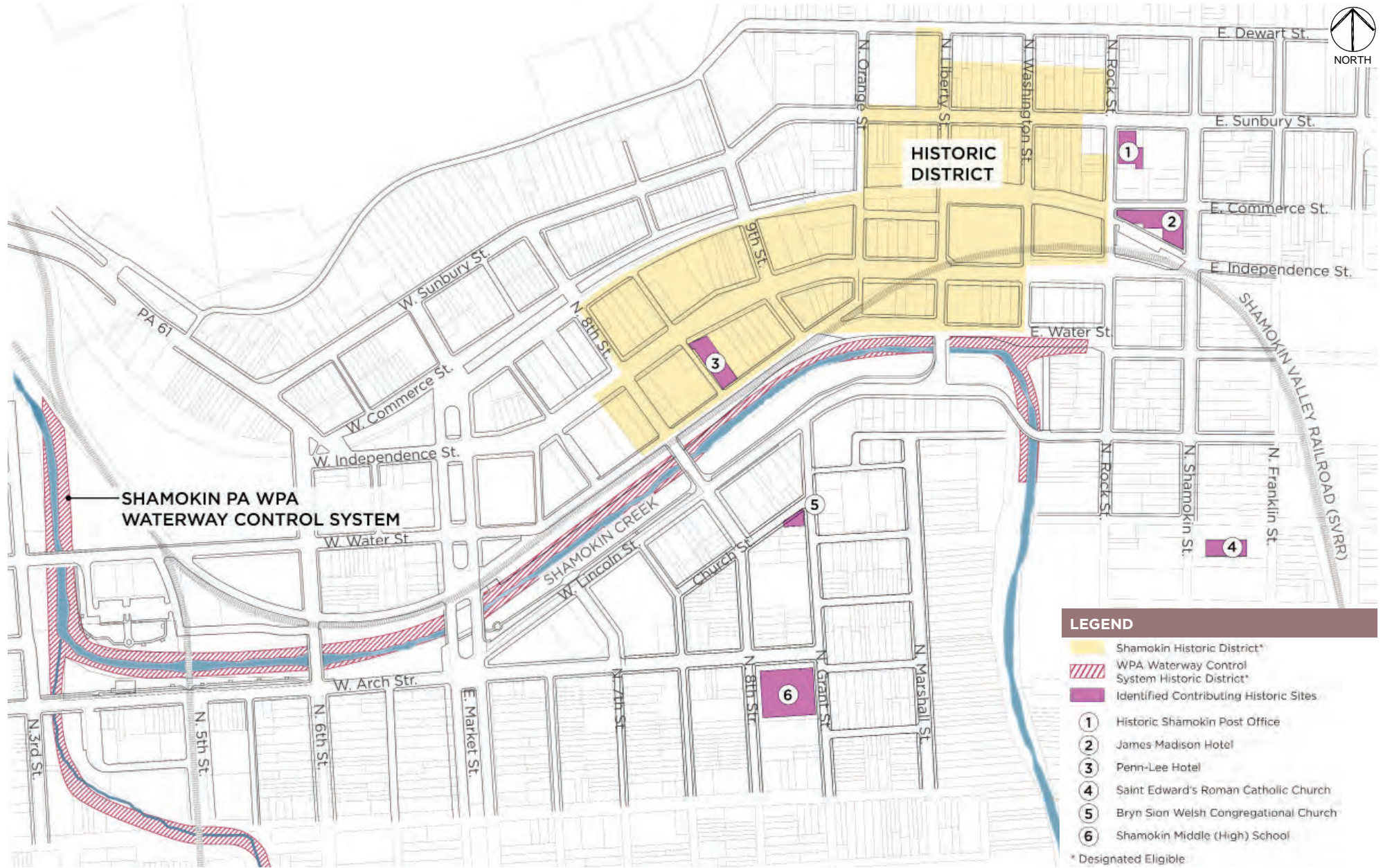
partner on individual nominations, this would also open them up to tax credit funds to support comprehensive rehabilitation. In addition to considering the formal nomination of the district, the City should work with property owners to individually nominate eligible structures and to undertake projects with utilize the federal and state tax credits.

- The City played an important role in the history of the societal utilization of electricity. The connection to Thomas Edison and the Edison Illuminating Company in the downtown could be the basis of historic interpretation and branding.
- Cultural and historical tourism is a growing niche aspect of the overall tourism industry, especially in terms of day or weekend-tripping that is easily accessible by car. There are other thematically related destinations within the region, such as the Mining Museum at Knoebel's Amusement Park (which has excellent public reviews posted on tourism websites) that could be packaged together to be a viable weekend experience, especially if tied to other multi-generational destinations like the AOAA and Knoebel's.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Existing Cultural Resources/Historic Districts Map





### Potential Brownfields/Key Vacant Properties

The City of Shamokin received direct technical support from the PADEP through a local assistance grant provided by the U.S. EPA. The objectives of the technical assistance included preparing an inventory of potential brownfields sites in the City. The inventory was completed in June 2020 and identified 39 potential brownfields sites (for more information reference the June 26, 2020 Shamokin Brownfields Inventory Grant Final End-of-Project Report prepared by AECOM). Several potential brownfield sites located within the targeted study area of this planning effort were identified, including, 301-303 Commerce Street (former F&S Bottling House), 115 E. Independence Street (former Jones Hardware) two sites specifically targeted for reinvestment and adaptive reuse.

#### **KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS**

- In addition to the potential brownfield sites identified, there are likely others not yet known, that could surface as economic development activities advance, illustrating the need for the City to pursue potential grant resources from the U.S. EPA and the State to assist the City, partnering agencies, and potentially private property owners in assessing the status of their properties and preparing remediation (i.e. clean-up) strategies. The presence of asbestos and lead containing building material constitutes potential brownfields funding eligibility for commercial properties, which based on the age of much of the downtown building stock, has broad applicability.

- The PADEP led brownfields inventory effort recommended pursuing U.S. EPA brownfields assessment grant funding as a key next step. In addition to using these funds, if secured, for environmental assessment and remediation plans, it can also be used to support site-specific reuse planning which could advance recommendations from this planning effort and other concurrent efforts.

# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

### Public Parks & Open Spaces

In the context of the downtown core, the presence of the public spaces along Shamokin Creek, most notably Claude Kehler Community Park, create an attractive greenway, a block or two from Independence Street. The downtown, however, does not have a signature public space that can be used for programming and events, i.e. a literal and physical central town square.

#### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Public spaces for special events, fairs, and pop-up uses such as food truck corrals and festivals, can serve as major drivers for economic development. Many communities are using these types of events to test and establish market viability for various types of economic activities. They can also be used to support bricks and mortar retail establishments by generating greater foot traffic and expanding the draw of their facilities.
- Quality public spaces are important to attracting dwellers to new multi-family housing units in downtowns and should include multi-generational appeal. Public spaces should be designed to be safe and flexible for day-to-day utilization as well as for special events, with an emphasis on being family-friendly.
- Demolition of blighted properties are creating “gaps” in the street walls in downtown commercial/retail blocks. If new buildings cannot be constructed to infill these void spaces (preferred) these vacant lots should be considered for new public spaces that are programmed to link to commercial/retail activities within the specific block and/or the overall opportunities in the downtown. Former blank party walls between structures should be evaluated to open up views into the public spaces and/or be treated with murals and other visually interesting treatments.



*Shamokin Creek adjacent to downtown building*

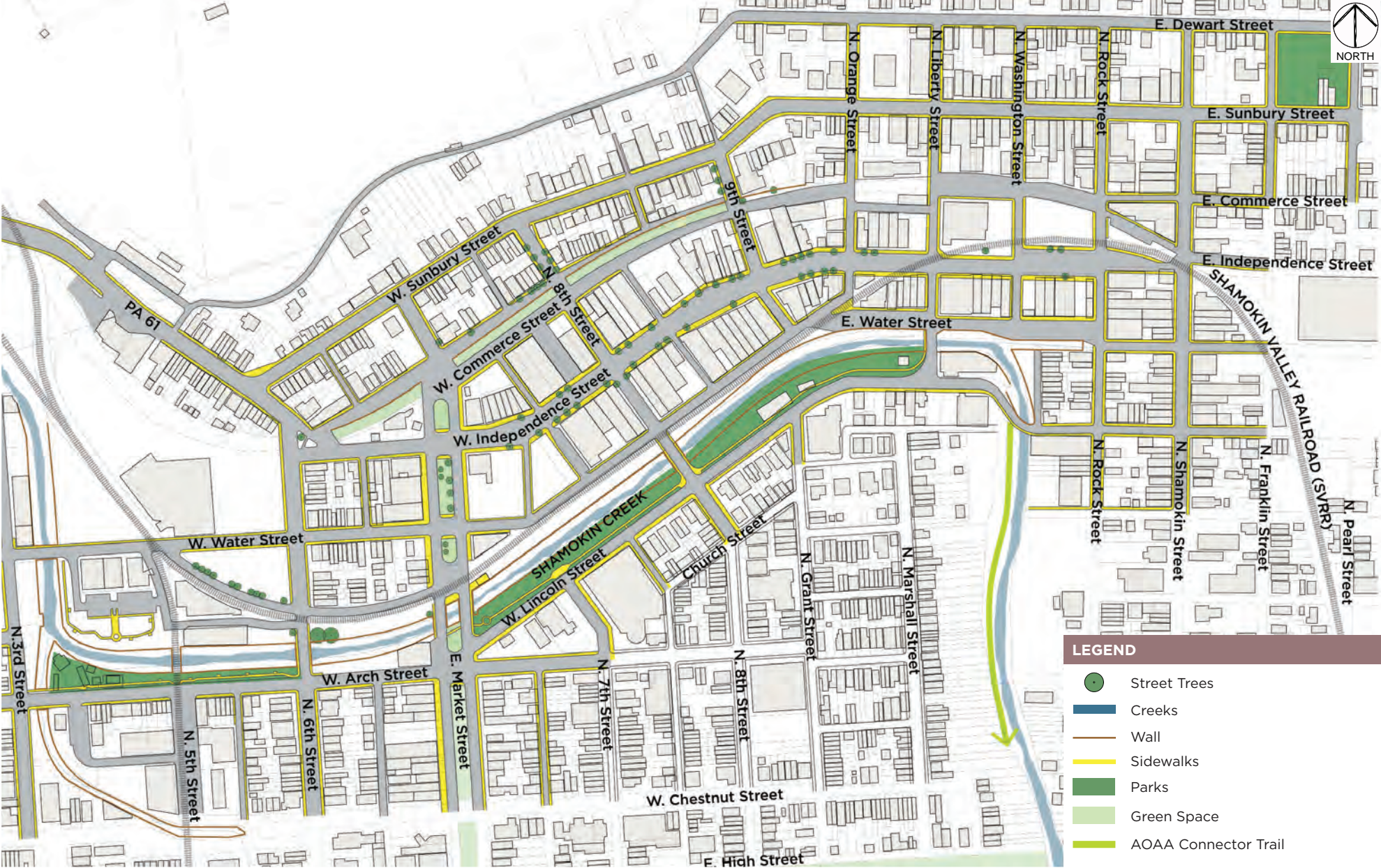


*Bandshell at Claude Kehler Community Park*



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Existing Parks & Pedestrian/Bicycle Circulation



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

### Bicycle/Pedestrian Circulation

Downtown Shamokin's street grid generally creates a pedestrian-friendly environment. Nearly all of the streets include sidewalks. The City has been upgrading intersections with ADA compliant facilities, but many of the intersections along Independence Street do not meet current ADA standards for accessibility. Fortunately, Independence Street is not a through-put oriented arterial roadway like Sunbury Street, making it much more pedestrian-friendly than many "main streets" in towns of similar size in Pennsylvania.

The creation of the connector trail to the AOAA that follows the Terrace Avenue right-of-way along the west side of Shamokin Creek, terminates

at N. Washington/Spurzheim Streets at the edge of downtown. There are no clearly designated bicycle-friendly routes to connect bicyclists to the core of downtown and also to "trailblaze" along Shamokin Creek.

In 2011, Northumberland County Planning Department undertook the preparation of the Northumberland County Greenways and Open Space Plan which serves as a guide for the preservation of key lands and to begin to develop a system of linear pathways to connect key sites and communities. A major recommendation of the plan is the creation of a recreation trail which utilized portions of the abandoned PRR railroad right-of-way from Sunbury, through Shamokin to Mount Carmel.

#### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Streetscape improvements that include ensuring that sidewalk facilities and intersection crossings are ADA compliant are important and should serve as a part of the justification for funding applications for downtown streetscape improvements.
- The biggest barrier to pedestrian mobility in the downtown are intersection crossings. The City has been upgrading intersection with new ADA compliant ramps and installing bar-type pedestrian crosswalks, such as at Independence and Market Streets. For major intersections the City might want to upgrade to PennDOT Continental style "piano key" crosswalks at heavily trafficked intersections to provide an increased level of pedestrian safety and to convey a stronger message that the City is focused on pedestrian activity as a part of its economic development strategy.
- The City has recently acquired a significant portion of the former PRR railroad right-of-way along Commerce Street, through

downtown. This could serve as the basis of a multi-use path/bicycle route through downtown and could be part of a larger regional trail system.

- Northumberland County obtained PADCNR funding to undertake a trail feasibility study for a multi-use recreational trail from Sunbury through Shamokin to Mount Carmel. The potential for a major regional recreational trail that could traverse downtown, could be significant, especially when tied to the growing recreational visitation created by the other major tourism destinations in the area. The routing of this trail through downtown, ideally as linear park with a trail, could form a signature civic and economic development amenity. Also, this trail should connect to the AOAA link trail to establish Shamokin as a trail town hub and destination.
- Consider adding painted street markings on key bicycle routes as "sharrows" to denote that the streets are intended for both bicyclist and motorists.



### Vehicular Circulation & Transit Services

The major routing of vehicular traffic to and from Shamokin occurs via Sunbury Street/Route 61 which connects U.S. 11 at Shamokin Dam/Sunbury to the northwest and to Frackville/I-81 to the southeast. Route 61 traverses the City via Sunbury Street, which forms the northern edge of the downtown core. For many visitors, they do not realize that Sunbury Street is not the City's "main street" through its downtown and therefore believe they have seen the center of the town. Connecting vehicular traffic between Sunbury Street and Independence Street is important.

Independence Street is the town's main commercial corridor. It is located two blocks south of Sunbury Street/Route 61. Although there are many intersecting streets that connect the two corridors, the primary intersecting streets are Sixth, Market, Liberty, and Shamokin Streets. The challenge is that these streets do not provide optimal turning movements onto Independence Street. For example, left turns are prohibited from southbound Market Street onto Independence Street. The intersection of Shamokin Street is at an at-grade railroad crossing and includes an unusual southbound "free right" onto Independence Street and a no left turn for northbound traffic. Local residents have learned how to navigate these quirky conditions, but for a first-time visitor they are especially challenging and disorienting.

PennDOT has listed improvements to Sunbury Street/Route 61 on the Long-Range Transportation Plan (TIP) for the region, but the project is currently not funded for design.

The City is served with limited transit service by the Lower Anthracite Transit System (LATS) as a loop system. The route travels down Independence Street and connects the City to Coal Township, the Geisenger Complex, and the big box shopping centers.

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Independence Street benefits from not being a heavily trafficked through-put arterial roadway, making it more pedestrian-oriented and suitable for main street-type development. Traffic circulation improvements that enhance the direct connection of traffic desiring to go downtown from Sunbury Street/Route 61) would improve the economic development potential of the downtown.
- The City and the economic development leadership of the City should advocate for the funding for the Sunbury Street/Route 61 corridor and participate in the planning and design process to ensure that multi-modal and streetscape enhancements are integrated into any traffic design improvements. The calming of traffic should also be a consideration, understanding that the accommodation of volume capacity should be balanced with not promoting speeding traffic through the downtown.
- There is a desire to create a more substantial transit system but due to the distances between destinations, this has proven to be a challenge. The current routing of the transit system has its main downtown stop at Independence and 9th Streets. With the pending construction of the new health center in the 300 East block of Independence Street, it might be advantageous to create a more substantial transit stop with shelter facilities at the intersection of Independence and Washington Streets, especially if enhanced transit service is provided.

# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

### Flooding & Stormwater Management

A vast majority of the upper reaches of Shamokin Creek are or were lined with commercial and industrial uses. All of Shamokin Creek is designated as impaired as a result of impacts from Acid Mine Drainage into the creek. This condition creates very high levels of metals which also dramatically lowers the pH of the water creating highly acidic conditions in which few living organisms can survive. There is an ongoing effort between the Northumberland County Conservation District and the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance to improve the environmental quality of the watershed through passive treatment and restorative approaches. Projects have been funded by the U.S. EPA and the PADEP to advance these efforts.

In addition, the watershed is impaired by high volumes of sewage that flows into the creek during storm events. Much of the existing urban sewer systems in the watershed, including in Shamokin, are combined systems which means that raw sewage and stormwater flow into a single piped system. When there are large storm events, the sewage treatment plant cannot handle the immense volume and therefore the system bypasses the plant and flows directly into waterways. This condition is referred to as Combined System Overflows (CSOs). These problems are not new. In 1917, a Water Resources Inventory Report referred to Shamokin Creek as the most impaired stream in the Coal Region and coal deposits were so highly concentrated it was actually commercially viable to recover coal from the streambed. There are conditions within the overall combined sewer system referred to as “wildcats” (completely disconnected and untreated sewer lines). A small portion of the overall sewer system was separated in Springfield and Bunker Hill neighborhoods at a cost of approximately \$26M. In the downtown, the separated systems recombine in the area of Commerce Street.

Based on discussions with representatives of the Joint Sewer Authority (JSA) for Shamokin/Coal Township, the JSA was previously under consent order from the U.S. EPA due to CSO issues, but based on the town’s distressed

condition an estimated cost of \$200M to separate the sanitary and stormwater sewer systems, the consent order was lifted in 2016.

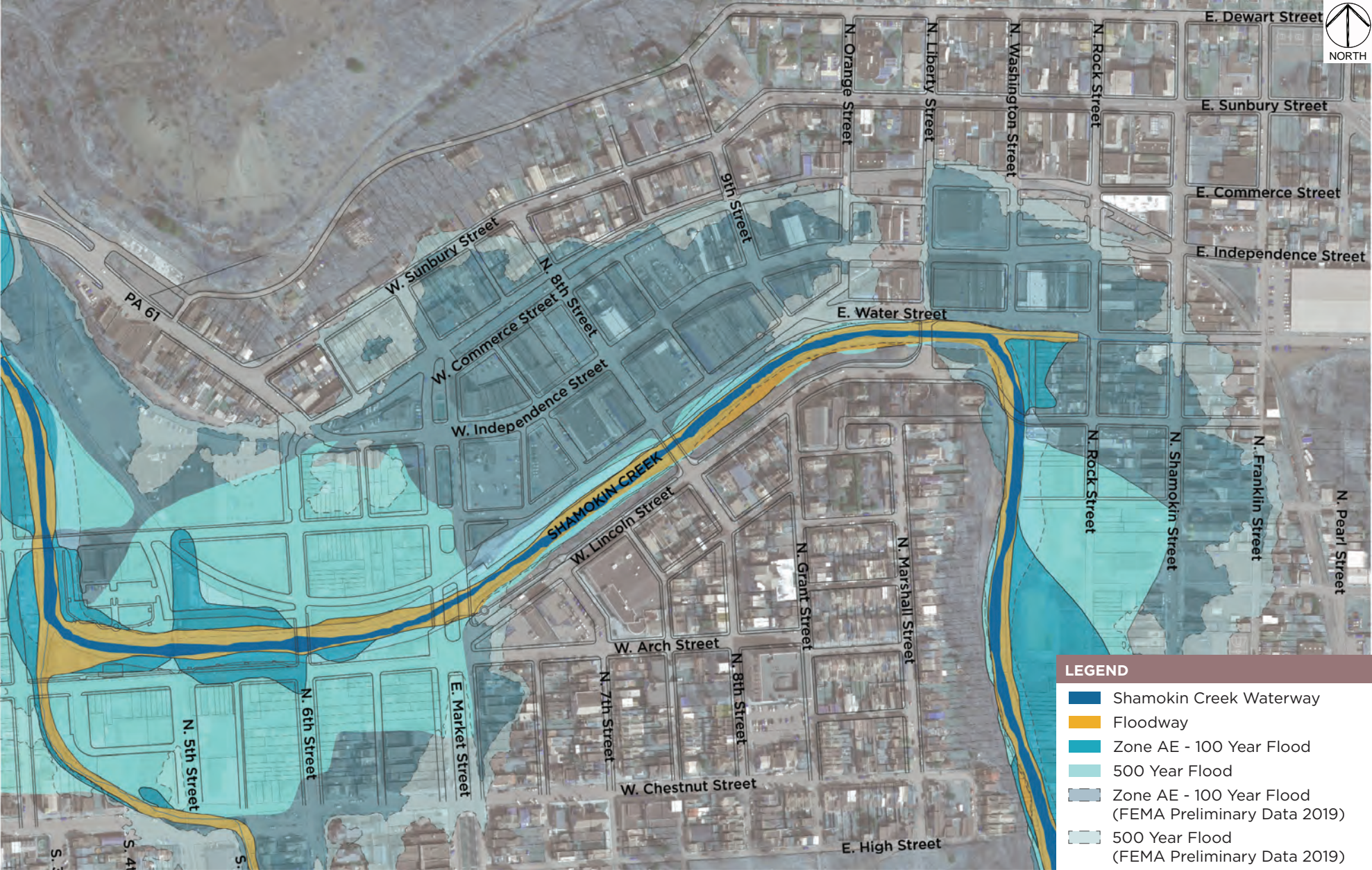
With the prominent location at the confluence of three waterways, especially the routing of Shamokin Creek through the downtown core, flooding and stormwater management have been a concern and influencer on the development of the City since its beginning. Initially, the proximity of the waterways was a benefit as a water source, but over time the need to address and control its boundaries became necessary in order to allow for expansion of denser downtown development. As early as 1872, portions of the waterway were channelized with a low stone wall. Over time, additional stone walls were constructed to allow for growth and a major flood control project was undertaken in the 1930s through the Works Progress Administration which resulted in most of the stone wall structures visible today. The physical structures have been designated as contributing structures of an eligible national historic district. This determination was made as part of a structural repair and improvement project undertaken starting in 2013.

Although flood events have raised the water level beyond its banks, flooding has not historically been a major problem in the core of downtown, with a few exceptions in the western end near the confluence of Coal Run. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) periodically updates its flood mapping, producing what is referred to as a FIRM Map, for communities across the United States. In 2019, FEMA produced an updated FIRM map for Shamokin which significantly increased the area in the downtown that is located in what is known as the AE Zone (formerly referred to as the 100-year floodplain). This designation is slated to go into official regulatory effect in 2021 and will impact a significant number of properties in the downtown, especially east of Market Street up gradient, to at least Commerce Street.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Flood Zones - Existing and Pending



Source: FEMA GIS Data

# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Although flooding in the downtown has not been nearly as significant as other communities in the Coal Region, the pending remapping of the 2021 FEMA FIRM mapping will impact redevelopment efforts of the City and property owners in the downtown. Since the deadline to request a more detailed evaluation by FEMA has passed, the only way to modify the pending increase in the designated flood zones in Shamokin is to undertake a formal Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) Study. H&H studies evaluate the potential volume and flow rate dynamics within a watershed that influence the determination of flood risks and boundaries, considering not only local factors, but conditions below and upstream. Shamokin should pursue undertaking a H&H Study and coordinate with FEMA if the study determines that reducing designated flood zones is justifiable.
- The JSA is currently working on a long-term control plan to reduce their CSO conditions and undertaking an engineering study to develop a plan. Exact mapping of sewer lines, as well

as other underground utilities, is very limited due to many incremental projects and repairs over decades and limited accurate documentation. Efforts to determine the exact existing conditions of underground utilities is important to ensure that as new development occurs there is adequate and reliable service to meet increased demand.

- Green infrastructure projects should be pursued and promoted within both public and private developments, to retain stormwater runoff to reduce CSO impacts, reduce the potential for flooding, and to improve the quality of runoff that enters the Shamokin Creek watershed. Although these projects have costs, they are dramatically less expensive than undertaking separated sewer/stormwater conveyance systems. They can also be integrated into public space, streetscape, and parking lot improvement projects to create visual amenities and potentially increasing grant funding opportunities to undertake civic improvement projects.



### Utility Infrastructure

Public water is provided in the City by AquaPA, a private company. The company is incrementally upgrading water lines based on their own determination of needs. Similarly, natural gas is provided by UGI, also a private company and they have been upgrading the most aged lines following the company's determination of need and capital investment plans.

PPL Electric Utilities provides electrical service to the City of Shamokin. The downtown is fortunate in that Independence Street does not have overhead electric and telecommunication lines. The buildings fronting on Independence Street are served from their rears, either from Water or Commerce Streets.

Internet service is provided by Service Electric. There is an effort by the City to deploy free wireless internet in the downtown.

### Zoning & Ordinances

The City has its own adopted zoning ordinance that dates to 1964. The downtown area targeted by this planning effort includes two zoning districts. The majority of the area is governed by the Commercial District – Central Commercial zoning district. Most of the surrounding areas, including the blocks north of Commerce Street, are zoned as the Residential – Multi-Family Town zoning district. A cursory review of the zoning ordinance was performed, and the following is a list of the key findings and considerations. The review was not comprehensive but instead focused on how requirements may support or hinder the desire to foster greater economic development activity and an overall improved quality-of-life for the City's residents.

#### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Coordination on private utility upgrades is important, especially as any new development projects are proposed to determine the status of capacity as well as condition, to ensure sufficient supply and reliability.
- All private utility work should be mapped by a central clearing house, either by the City or County to assist in capital programming for public utility upgrades. Also, private investments could serve as local funding matches for public grant applications, so knowing well in advance where and when upgrades are occurring is critically important.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

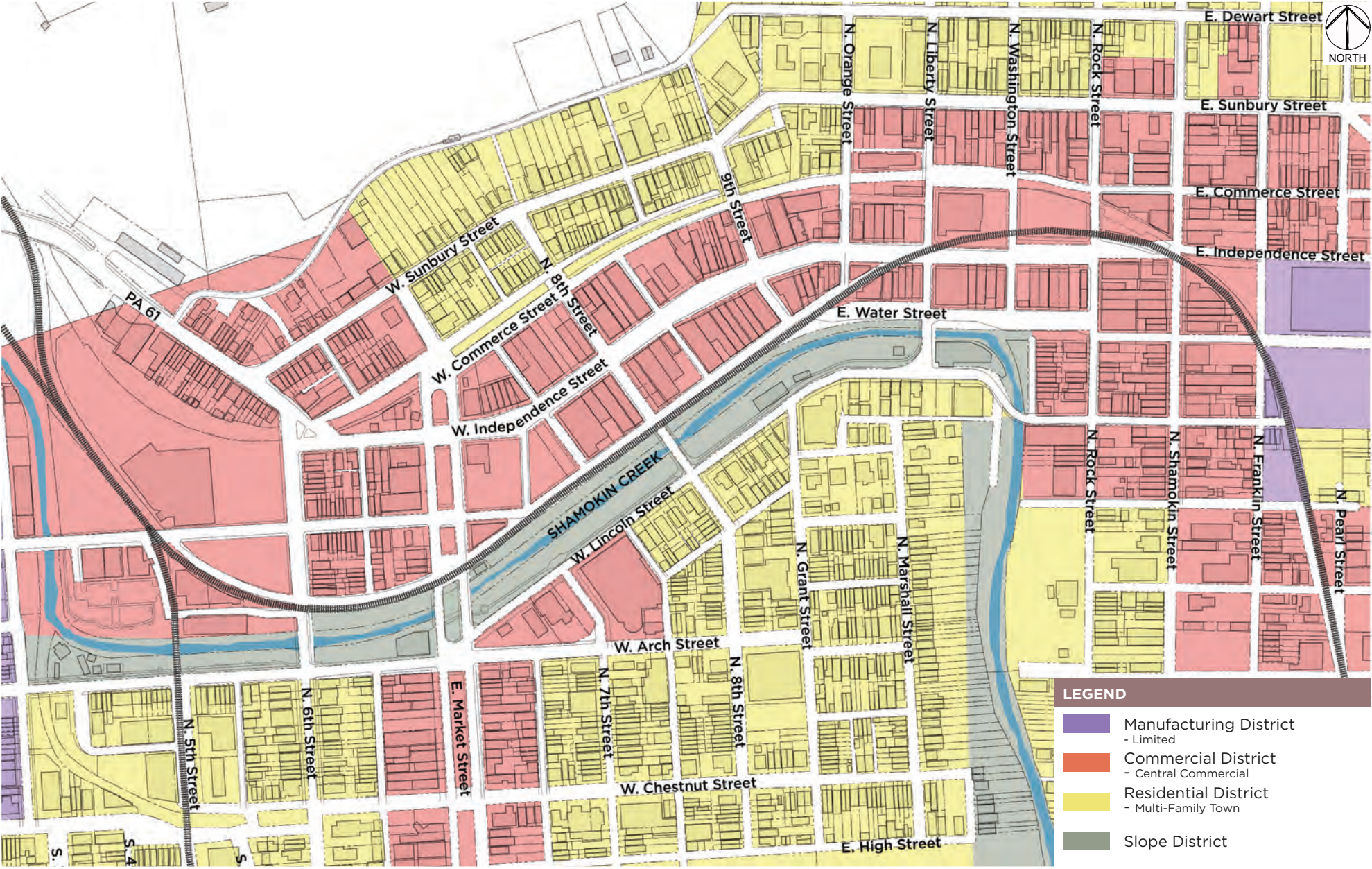
### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Although it appears that there have been periodic updates to the ordinance, its fundamental approach to guiding land use and shaping development character is very outdated. Reviewing the basic approach to retail/commercial uses, it represents a 1960's mindset that the method to foster downtown activity is to create suburban style development. This is not an uncommon finding in older urban areas that were beginning to face dramatic land use changes in the 1960s and 1970s with the introduction of strip shopping centers and an overall car-centric mindset. In fact, the current zoning hinders the ability to redevelop existing buildings or infill with new development in a fashion that is consistent with the downtown's historical development pattern.
  - In general, the entire ordinance should be audited for conformance and consistency with the requirements of the current version of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and this and other current community and economic development planning studies.
  - The types of uses described does not appear to comprehensively reflect current/modern use types and does not respond to the implications of formats such as drive-up windows, which should be treated as conditional uses, in order to mitigate their potential impacts on the pedestrian-oriented downtown.
  - Setback and bulk requirements should be updated based on a form-based approach that focuses on creating new developments that are pedestrian-oriented and focused on creating vibrant streetscapes. For example, in the Commercial District the ordinance should require a maximum setback versus a minimum setback and eliminate the ability to place parking in front yards.
- Parking requirements are outdated and should be revised. For example, the current off-street parking requirement for a new development retail store is 10 spaces per 1,000 sf of floor area. This requirement is extremely excessive and is actually consuming development area for parking and creating excessive impervious surface adding to potential CSO and flooding issues. On-street parking fronting on the property should be considered as counting towards the parking requirement of the development to reduce the amount of off-street parking lots. A shared parking component should be considered to support greater multi-family and service versus entertainment uses downtown. The size of parking spaces should be reduced to 9 feet wide and 18 feet long.
  - As mixed-use development occurs in the downtown, a comprehensive parking strategy will be needed to support this investment. This may include creating a downtown resident parking permit program.
  - The City should consider discouraging the dividing-up of single-family homes into numerous apartments. Promoting greater single-family homeownership may increase neighborhood stability and reduce block-by-block densities in historically single-family home neighborhoods and reduce the removal of yards for the creation of parking lots. This action may be linked to programs that encourage new property owners that intend to live in their homes, to convert multi-family homes back to single family dwellings.
  - Integrate physical design parameters into the zoning ordinance that reinforce the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles advocated by the National Crime Prevention Council and supported by the U.S. Department of Justice. See the Public Safety section for more detail on this topic.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Existing Zoning





# PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Physical Planning Considerations

### Public Safety

Another aspect of attracting investors, residents, and visitors is ensuring that the downtown is both safe and perceived as being safe. This is a function of actually deterring crime as well as creating a place that appears to be active, vital, and cared for, i.e. a place people want to be. There are endless examples of downtowns of all types and contexts that have struggled with the issues of real and perceived crime. In most cases, the primary actions that have improved conditions is a combination of public and private investment into a place that ultimately leads to more positive 24-hour activity, providing more eyes and ears on the street, and feeling that downtown is place where crime is not welcome.

Shamokin has experienced an up-tick in crimes in the last few years, with a more than 500% increase in reported crimes since 2013. From the perspective of the aspects of crime prevention within the purview of possible strategies that can be made through this planning effort, the primary aspects focus on the physical realm and how design can improve public safety. With limitations on the Police Department as a result of the City's Act 47 status, other approaches beyond purely relying on the Department become especially important.

### KEY FINDINGS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Consistent lighting on Independence Street, as well as Sunbury Street/Route 61, and the intersecting streets will support the sense of safety. Lighting levels should not be excessive but should be consistent throughout the downtown. Lighting fixtures should be viewed as an aesthetic part of a streetscape as well.
- As much as possible, graffiti and other visual forms of vandalisms should be addressed. This may require ordinances that allow the City (or partnering organizations) the ability to address visual conditions on private property in order to quickly address conditions.
- Addressing the visual character of buildings at the ground level through short and long-term techniques such as dynamic installations in vacant storefronts and promoting as much clear glass on rehabbed storefronts as possible, can have a major impact. These types of strategies can also extend to the public spaces following the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

(CPTED) principles advocated by the National Crime Prevention Council and supported by the U.S. Department of Justice. Some of these principles can be deployed through ordinances, including zoning and land development. See the Council's website for more information: [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

- The City has received funding to install a Police Department monitored security camera system in the downtown. This pilot system should be installed and if deemed successful, should be expanded as needed and determined feasible. The implementation of such systems can be in conflict with other physical improvements to streetscape in order to maintain camera views, so careful coordination should be done to ensure that both desired outcomes are achievable.
- Consider including aspects of the emphasis of community safety into branding and public promotion campaigns for the City and downtown.













# 02

## Project Introduction & Background

## Community Engagement & Planning Framework

- What We Heard - Community Rebuilding Goals
- Community Rebuilding Goals / Potential Strategies

## Planning & Frameworks

## Implementation Action Plan

# Community Engagement & Planning Framework

## What We Heard - Community Rebuilding Goals

### Establishing Community Goals

The process employed to engage the community into this planning effort was closely linked to a larger concurrent effort called the Shamokin Community Rebuilding Action Plan, directly led by staff from the U.S. EPA. A signature aspect of the community engagement process was a multi-day workshop held February 11-13, 2020. The SGA consultant team for this plan worked closely with U.S. EPA and SEDA-COG staff on the development of content for community engagement activities. Each project had its own Steering Committee due to the slightly differing natures of the planning efforts, although many members served on both committees.

SGA led a series of topic specific meetings that included an invitee list of key stakeholders from the community as well as key agency leaders, etc. in order to have detailed and informed discussions around key issues and opportunities.

The U.S. EPA led engagement effort focused on an interfaith and multi-stakeholder collaborative partnership formed to create the Faith Alliance for Revitalization (FAR). In addition to a large interactive public workshop, a field tour was undertaken, along with a youth session with students from the Shamokin Area High School. The broad community input received during the multi-day workshop, which was attended by approximately 165 people, formed the basis of a set of goals and strategies that reinforced the desire for how to achieve Shamokin's vision of substantial rebirth. They also form the framework for specific recommendations for implementation.

The following goals are defined in the U.S. EPA led Community Rebuilding Action Plan. For each of the goals, a corresponding Implementation Strategy was developed for this planning effort. These six strategies are the over-arching framework that is linked to a key recommendation in Chapter 3 of this report.





# Community Engagement & Planning Framework

## Community Rebuilding Goals / Potential Strategies



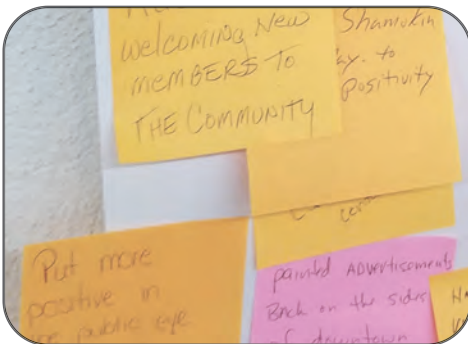
**GOAL 1** - Attract and support the development of new businesses and support job creation activities/ programs.

**STRATEGY 1** - Expand Downtown as “the Hub” - Attract additional and diversified retail, food, dining, and entertainment venues in close proximity to other activity generators to maximize vitality and create a vibe for the place as the center of the community. This aspect should focus on creating both local and destination-oriented venues that attract local patrons as well as from the region and beyond.



**GOAL 2** - Bring citizens together to work towards a common goal of increasing pride and ownership in our community.

**STRATEGY 2** - Create Resident-Oriented Places and Uses Downtown – The downtown should foster social and economic activity for local residents and be integral to their needs. This includes attracting more people living in the downtown in order to make the downtown a 24-hour place that is vibrant and vital to the residents of the City and by doing so reinforcing that feeling to visitors.



**GOAL 3** - Foster and nurture productive partnerships.

**STRATEGY 3** - Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Expand the Capacity to Make Change – This includes a wide variety of partnerships from federal, state, and regional agencies, corporations, philanthropies, non-profits and to local residents to undertake major projects and to organizing local events. Tapping into trends, especially to organize, operate, and perpetuate local events which may not be capital intensive but require a lot of community organizing can create greater activity in the downtown and they will require involvement from many partners and sponsors. Nurturing partnerships through the combined vision created by all of the current planning efforts can form the basis of engaging people for implementation and action.



# Community Engagement & Planning Framework

## Community Rebuilding Goals / Potential Strategies



**GOAL 4** - Redevelop/demolish/rehabilitate/cleanup blighted commercial and residential properties throughout the City.

**STRATEGY 4** - Focus Initiative-led Investment and Building Rehabilitation – This means working at the block-by-block level as much as possible to maximize impact versus scattering efforts which could have much less overall impact. The City should be critical in how it views itself, especially from the perspective of how places look and feel for residents and visitors. Part of this approach still includes removing the worst safety and blight conditions but at the same time trying to concentrate resources in terms of blight removal and public and private investment for the greatest leveraged effects.



**GOAL 5** - Enhance positive relationship, building inclusive communities, fostering human dignity, and respect.

**STRATEGY 5** – Continue Momentum through Project-by-Project Processes to Engage the Community – The significant public engagement that has occurred to date in the various planning processes and discussions illustrates that there is strong community interest in participating in revitalization efforts. This idea of “greenhousing” locally-driven opportunities from within will likely result in projects that are most in-tune with untapped economic potential as well as garner the most local support.



*Credit: City of Shamokin Facebook*

**GOAL 6** - Making Shamokin healthy, green, and clean now and tomorrow.

**STRATEGY 6** - Integrate Quality Design into a Variety of Civic and Public-Private Partnership Projects. There are opportunities to integrate quality design improvements that range from branding campaigns, active and passive public spaces, green infrastructure, and landscape improvements to make the City and the downtown more inviting for visitors and partnering economic investors.





LAVO...

GARRIGAN  
WALTONS

WALTONS





# 03

**Product Introduction & Background**

**Community Engagement & Planning Framework**

**Planning Frameworks**


- The Independence Street Corridor
- The 100 East Independence Block
- Focus on Fundamental Streetscape
- Make Tactical Public Space Improvements
- Address Critical Circulation Challenges
- Commerce Street Blue/Greenway
- Undertake Civic Branding Campaign
- Building Signage

**Implementation Action Plan**



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - DEFINING THE DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

## The Independence Street Corridor

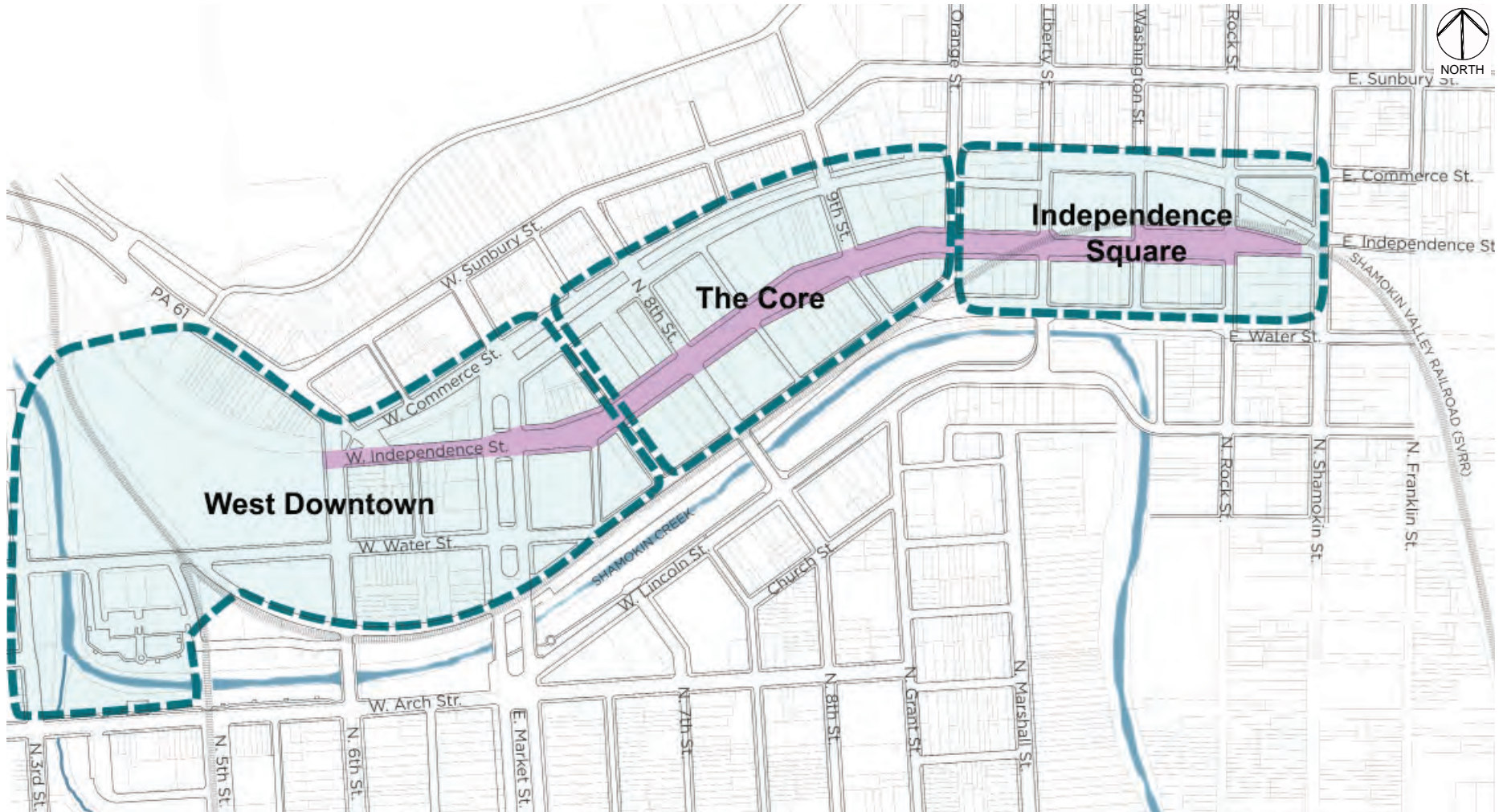


The planning frameworks focuses on the physical and capital project improvements recommended to reinforce the economic development opportunities and initiatives of the planning project. The project recommendations primarily focus on the types of activities that are typically the purview of the public sector, with an emphasis on transportation, civic realm, parks and public spaces, and supporting infrastructure including stormwater management. The recommendations presented in this section of the report are broken down into individual projects and major components in Chapter 4 – Implementation Action Plan.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - DEFINING THE DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

## The Independence Street Corridor



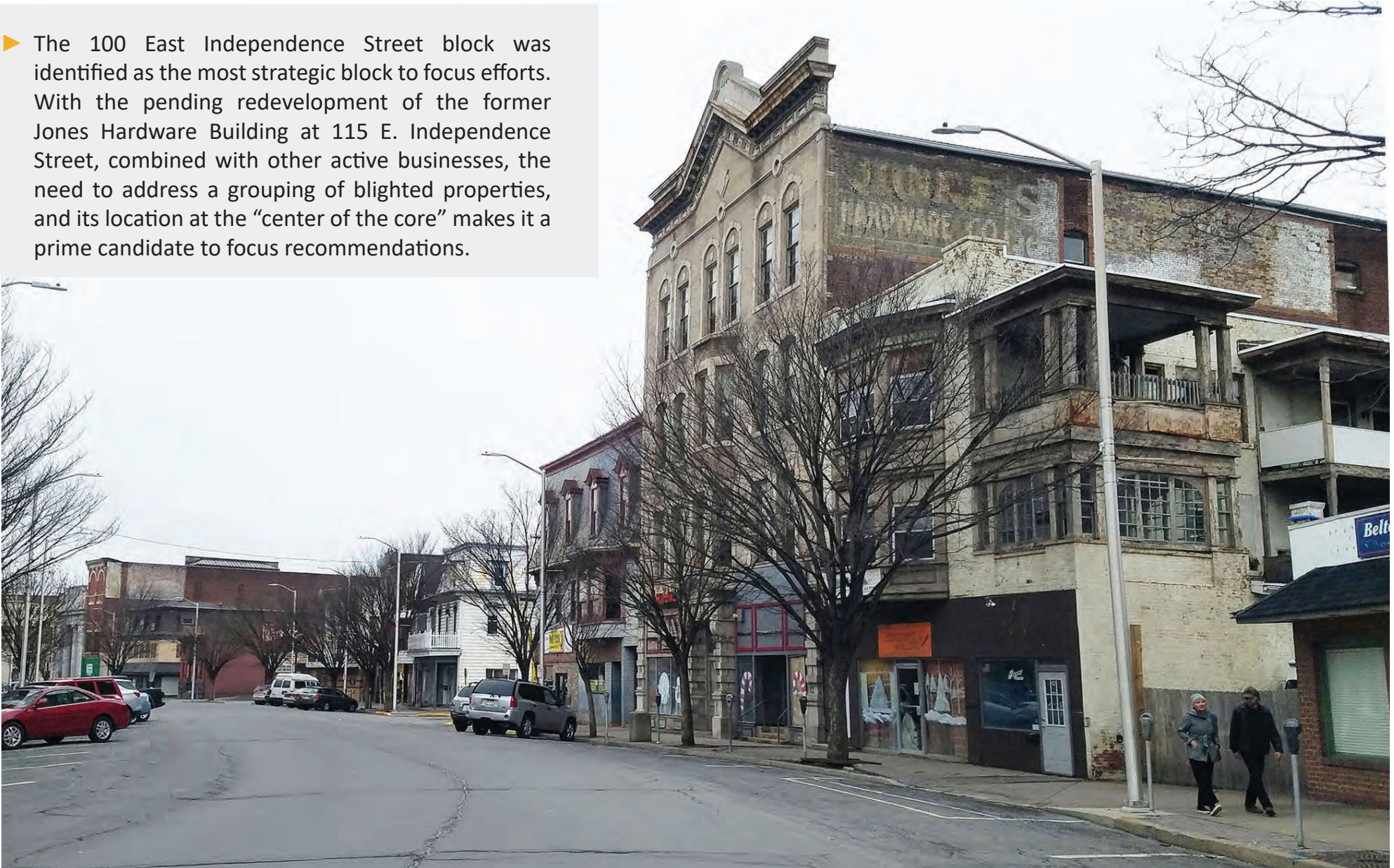
- ▶ The overall Independence Street Corridor is quite large for the size of the City but can be organized into three distinct zones. Since commercial/retail uses especially are spread across the entire length of the downtown, breaking it down into a few distinct zones will aid in how to approach the planning and design aspects as well as the prioritization of projects. This plan proposes the naming of the zones, which may or may not have application beyond purely planning, such as the creation of branding names for wayfinding and promotional purposes.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - FOCUS EFFORTS FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

## The 100 East Independence Block

- ▶ The 100 East Independence Street block was identified as the most strategic block to focus efforts. With the pending redevelopment of the former Jones Hardware Building at 115 E. Independence Street, combined with other active businesses, the need to address a grouping of blighted properties, and its location at the “center of the core” makes it a prime candidate to focus recommendations.







# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - KEY STRATEGIES

## Focus on Fundamental Streetscape Aesthetics



- ▶ Perform a makeover of Independence Street focused on complete street improvements that greatly enhance the pedestrian-oriented and aesthetic appeal of the city's "Main Street."
- ▶ Relatively simple upgrades to Independence Street with a focus on ADA/safety and aesthetic improvements such as architectural lighting, planters, banners, etc. can have a major impact. Funding sources should focus first on development uniform standards, and plans and then implementation.





- ▶ Complete Streets focus on a complete assembly of multi-modal aspects of sidewalk and street, not solely vehicular facilities. Architectural lighting and street trees make inviting pedestrian environments. Tall canopy trees that are “limbed-up” so branches do not block storefronts and create a shade canopy create the most pleasant main streets for walking and shopping.

# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - KEY STRATEGIES

## Focus on Fundamental Streetscape Aesthetics



Graphic from 'Living Melbourne, Our Metropolitan Forest' publication / image: City of Melbourne

### References:

Buckman, D. (2018, July 15). Can trees help stop crime? Retrieved June 25, 2020, from <https://www.americanforests.org/blog/urban-trees-crime-reduction/>  
Wolf, K.L. 2010. Crime and Fear - A Literature Review. In: Green Cities: Good Health (www.greenhealth.washington.edu). College of the

## The Community Benefits of Street Trees

Street trees play a major role within the U.S. Department of Justice Crime and the National Institute of Crime – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) initiative by incorporating the presence of a natural structure that acts as a crime deterrent and as a communal symbol. Incorporation of street trees deters crime by providing the community with a sense of ownership, generates visibility, and offers permeability. Trees provide opportunity for public space which then encourages folks to participate with these places. The attraction of people to these spaces increases discernability amongst individuals. Studies of crimes and their context indicates that presences of vegetation and trees in urban environments may influence public safety and activity. Studies by the University of Washington in 2010 found:

- ▶ Among minor crimes, there is less graffiti, vandalism, and littering in outdoor spaces with natural landscapes than in comparable plant-less spaces.
- ▶ Studies of residential neighborhoods found that property crimes were less frequent when there were trees in the right-of-way, and more abundant vegetation around a house.
- ▶ In a study of community policing innovations, there was a 20% overall decrease in calls to police from the parts of town that received location-specific treatments. Cleaning up vacant lots was one of the most effective treatment strategies.
- ▶ Vegetation can be managed to create a reassuring environment, reduce fear, and increase citizen surveillance and defensible space. Principles of CPTED suggest how to achieve safer places.





- ▶ The overall streetscape in downtown is in reasonably good condition, it just needs refreshing.
- ▶ Utility companies such as PPL have municipal partnering programs that include architectural lighting. The highway style cobra head lighting along Independence Street, although newer, should be fitted out with new architectural style fixtures that reinforce the character of the downtown.
- ▶ The existing accent paver areas should be replaced with new pavers and all intersections should be upgraded to meet current ADA requirements.



### Acorn



<b>LUMINAIRE:</b>	Acorn, black or green
<b>FIXTURE SIZE:</b>	2,600 lumen (36 watt) or 3,800 lumen (53 watt)
<b>FIXTURE TYPE:</b>	Light-Emitting Diode (LED)
<b>POLE:</b>	11 or 13 foot black or green fiberglass, boulevard style, mounted on concrete foundation
<b>ALTERNATE POLE:</b>	14 foot round black steel or spun aluminum
<b>ELECTRIC SUPPLY:</b>	Underground
<b>RATE:</b>	Low-mount underground, Rate Schedule SLE Light-Emitting Diode (LED)

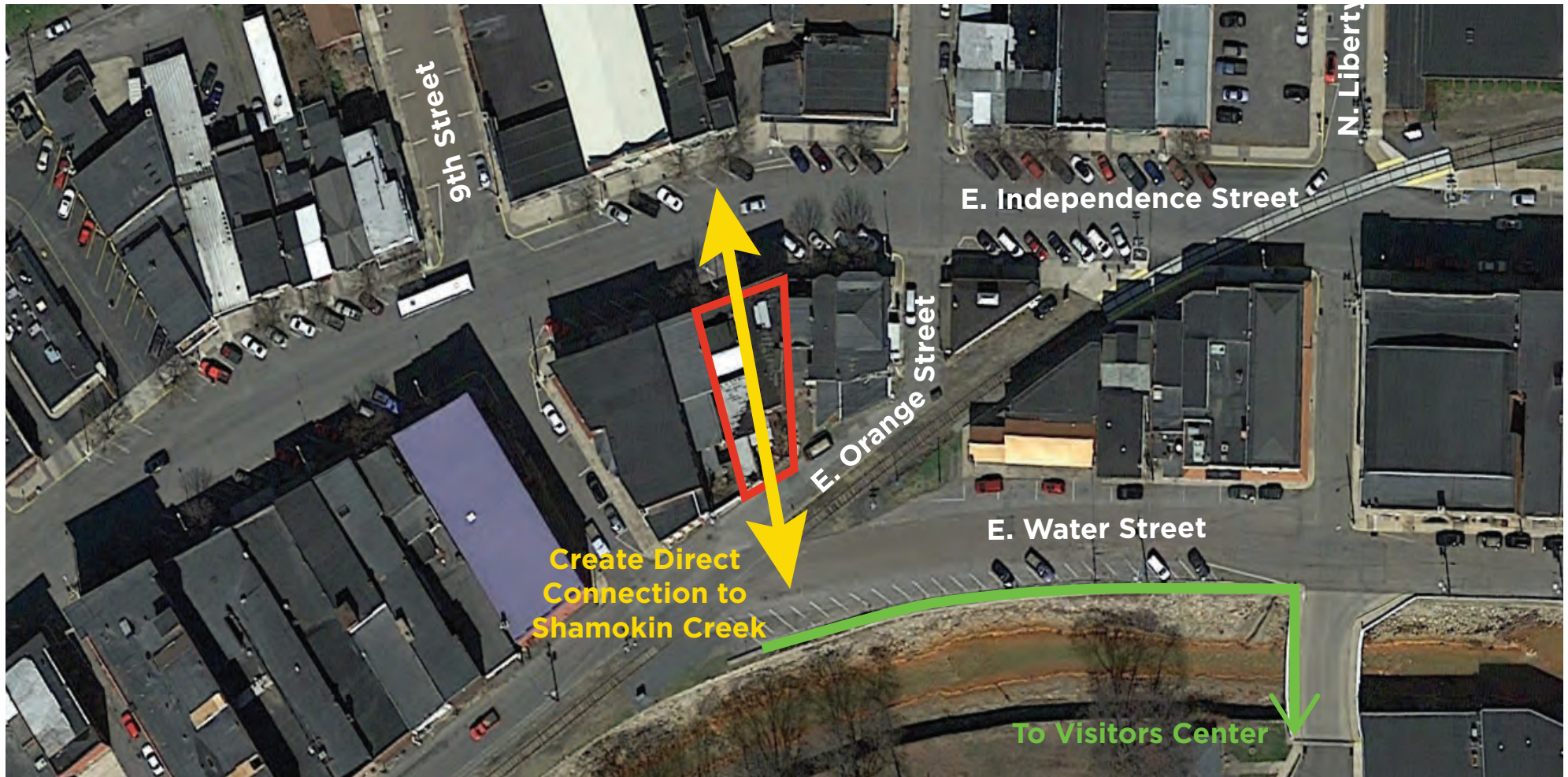
*Want to know more about the PPL Electric Utilities Outdoor Lighting Program?*

Call your PPL Electric Utilities representative or PPL Electric Utilities Customer Service Business Accounts 1-888-220-9991, option 4 on IVR during business hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Make Tactical Public Space Improvements



- ▶ Through likely blight control actions, demolition of existing buildings too deteriorated to rehabilitate may be necessary. In some cases, the void created by demolition should be evaluated for new buildings or public spaces versus parking lots.
- ▶ An opportunity to create a signature public space may arise in the E. 100 block of Independence Street.
- ▶ Connections to Shamokin Creek are very important. It is less than a block from Independence Street yet all of the buildings' backs face the creek. Every effort should be made to improve the human connection to the creek, with more generous overlooks and ways to get closer to the water.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS - KEY STRATEGIES

## Make Tactical Public Space Improvements

- ▶ Creating effective public spaces does not need to be complicated. For example, there is a foundation that funds public art installations on streets and public spaces that create dramatic and inviting public spaces that begin to redefine the use of urban spaces.
- ▶ Creative uses for parking lots, vacant lots, and other ancillary spaces as passive and small-scaled active uses such as bocce and cornhole courts, etc. can enliven activity downtown, especially when linked to adjacent restaurants and entertainment venues.





# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Make Tactical Public Space Improvements



- ▶ The opportunity existing to create an iconic public space in the downtown that could serve as a public space for new residents in mixed-use developments as well as for special events and festivals. The emphasis should be on quality design materials yet a simple and dramatic design that illustrates vibrancy and investment to visitors. This sketch shows how dramatic paving or painted surfaces could extend the park space into Independence Street like a carpet.





E. 100 Block of Independence Street  
Looking West

- ▶ Demolition of mid-block buildings will create blank walls. These wall will need to be insulated and covered with architectural materials to finish them. Opportunities to create side interaction between interior and the public spaces should be explored. The walls can also be used for murals and other branding elements. This view also shows how public space treatments can be extended into the street to create event streets.



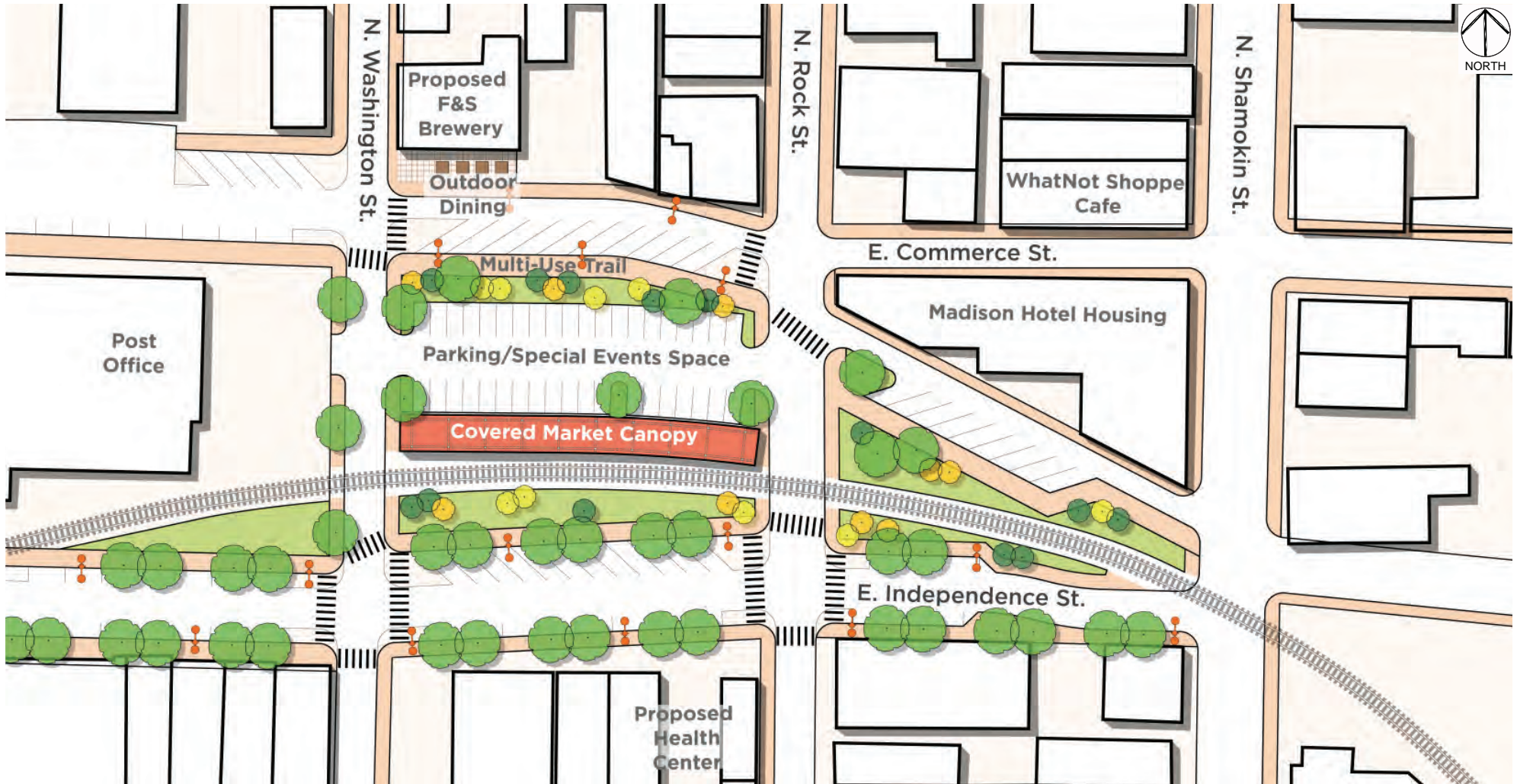
# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Make Tactical Public Space Improvements



- ▶ The E. 300 block of Independence Street, including the large parking lot up to Commerce Street represents another opportunity to inject more economic development opportunity.





- ▶ The opportunity exists to rethink large expanses of asphalt to make them more efficient for day-to-day parking and also allow them to serve as venues for special events, farmers markets, food fairs, etc. If a regional trail along Commerce Street can be created, this would also serve as a downtown trail head. The covered canopy is proposed on the parking lot side so vendor's can park in spaces by backing up to the canopy. The parking lot could be closed during special events held on weekends and used for additional tents canopies and vendors.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Make Tactical Public Space Improvements



- ▶ New covered canopies in a linear public space next to the parking lot could be designed to evoke the former Reading Railroad covered platforms. These type of amenities could support farmers markets, food festivals, and events.

- ▶ Vendors can back into the parking spaces of the covered canopy to create an attractive and convenient shopping experience.

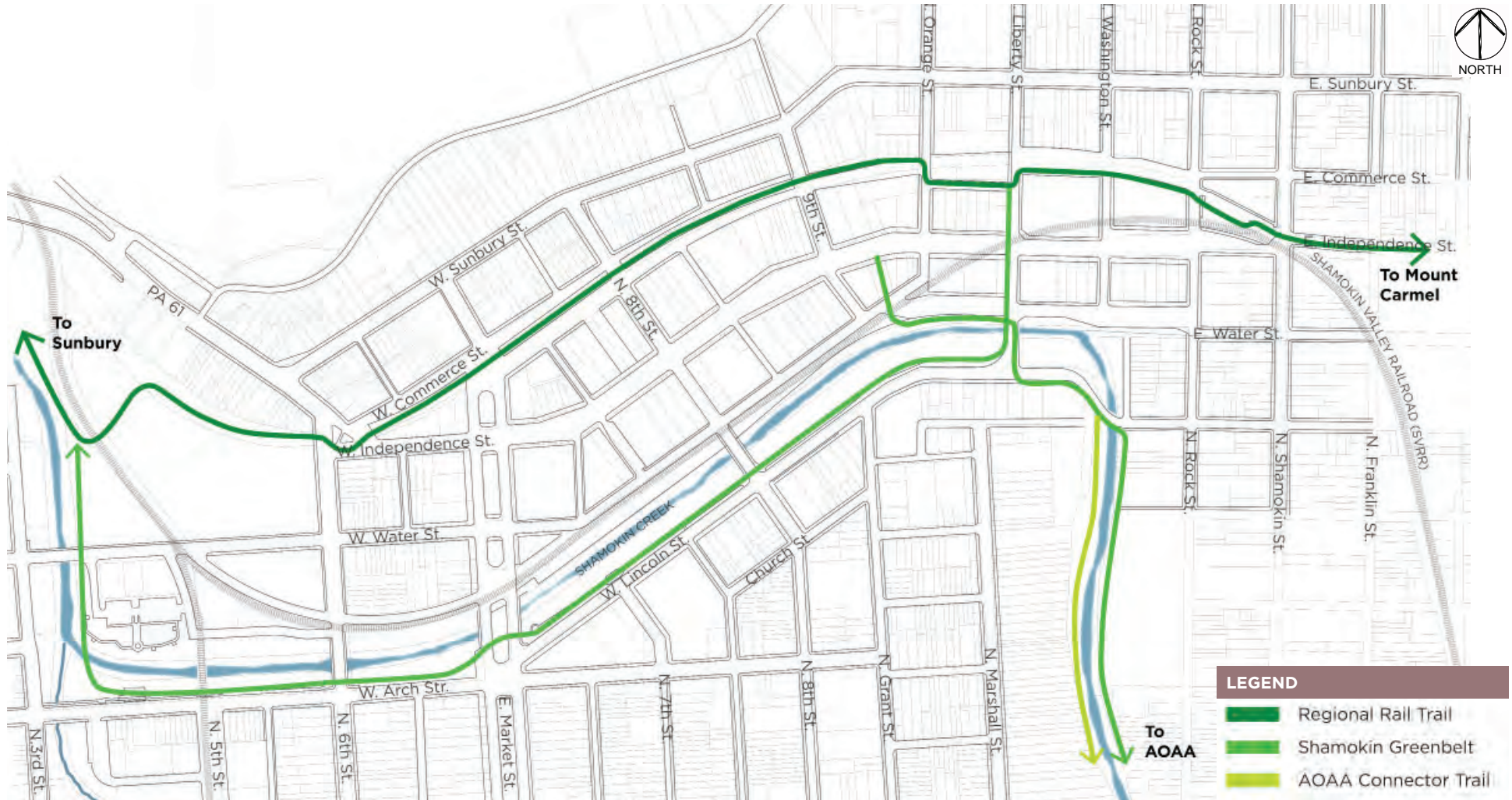




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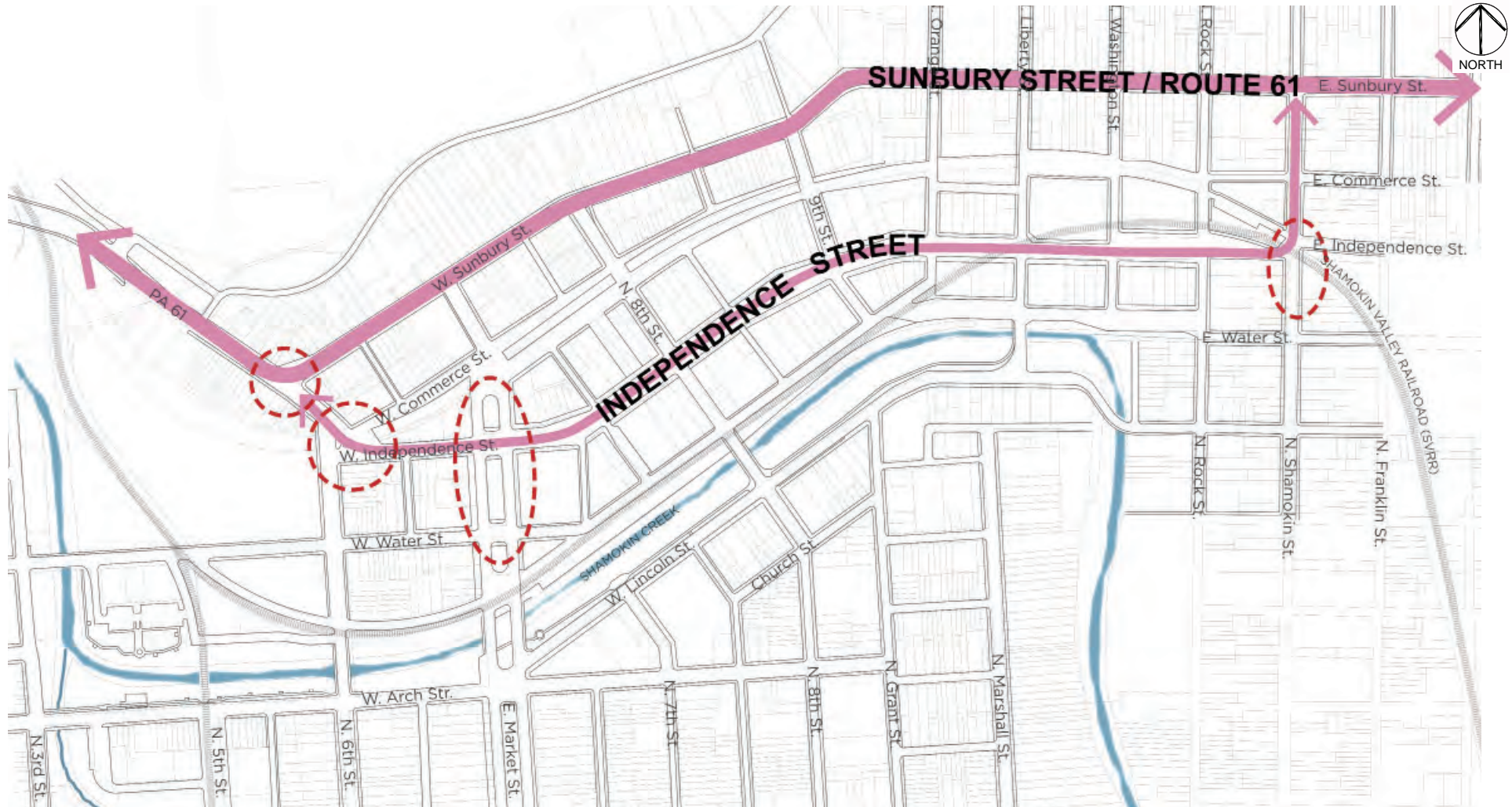
# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Create a Regional Trail Network



- ▶ Opportunities exist to connect Shamokin to the region via a rails-to-trails initiative from Mount Carmel to Sunbury. With the other connection options, including to the AOAA, this would make Shamokin a major trail town hub, especially once lodging is added to the downtown.





- ▶ The City benefits from the fact that the primary state route through town is not its traditional “main street.” However, for visitors it is not even apparent that there is a downtown two blocks away. In addition several intersections with Independence Street do not allow direct turns onto the street. The City should work with PennDOT, especially as a part of the proposed PA Route 61 upgrade study, to address intersection circulation issues, including ways to potentially direct motorists down 6th Street to Independence Street.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Address Critical Circulation Challenges



A comprehensive multi-modal traffic study should be considered which evaluates:

- ▶ Complete street improvements to Sunbury Street/Route 61 to include improved cross walks and architectural lighting.
- ▶ Improve circulation flow to Independence Street including issues at 6th Street, Market Street, and Shamokin Streets.
- ▶ How the introduction of a new regional trail along Commerce Street could be achieved along with Commerce Street with safe street crossings.





► Realigning the intersection of N. 6th Street, Independence Street, and Commerce Street could improve safety, allow for the crossing of a regional trail, and potentially create a direction connection between Route 61 and Independence Street.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Commerce Street Blue/Greenway



- ▶ The City recently acquired much of the former PRR railroad right-of-way via Commerce Street in the downtown. This corridor has the potential be an important linear greenway and regional trail route through the downtown. In addition, it is strategically located near the terminus of several separated sewer lines, allowing it to potentially serve as linear stormwater facilities to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows into Shamokin Creek.





- ▶ The opportunity exists to create a linear park that includes a multi-use bike path and landscape amenities along Commerce Street.
- ▶ The critical element is the connectivity of a well defined off-road or designated “sharrow” through downtown. Some blocks are more supportive to additional park amenities as well as underground and linear bio-retention stormwater planters.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Commerce Street Blue/Greenway



- ▶ In addition to the public space and recreational opportunities above ground rain gardens and below ground stormwater storage facilities could be build next to, and under, the trail.



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Commerce Street Blue/Greenway



- ▶ Diagonal parking along Commerce Street could be better delineated to provide convenient parking through the downtown, while also accommodating additional landscaping and stormwater management.

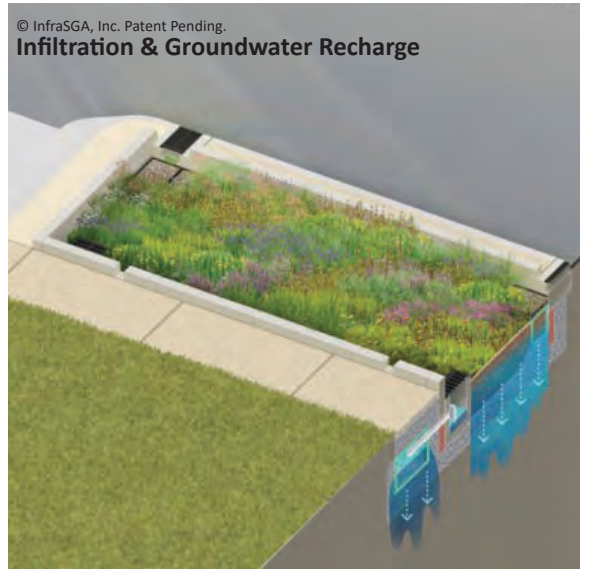
© InfraSGA, Inc. Patent Pending.

### Large Storm Event Overflow Storage



© InfraSGA, Inc. Patent Pending.

### Infiltration & Groundwater Recharge



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Undertake Civic Branding Campaign



The City should focus on a comprehensive branding campaign that including mutli-media from digital, print, and environmental installations. Branding should include:

- ▶ Catchy tag lines that change perceptions like, “The City of Energy!” as an example.
- ▶ Consistent logos, typeface, colors, etc. that are specifically designed to work in many different contexts including as gateway signs, wayfinding, district arrivals, and banners.
- ▶ Historic/Interpretive and trail signing should also be considered.





Example Gateway Branding Sign  
Credit: Merje



Example Wayfinding Sign  
Credit: Cloud Gehshan



# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

## Undertake Civic Branding Campaign



- ▶ Gateway signs should be dramatic and have impact. Projects like these may require regional participation and should be located in logical gateway points, not based on a literally jurisdictional boundary that is meaningless to out of town visitors.



Independence Street, Shamokin, Pa.



- ▶ In addition to branding signing, the City should consider an incentivized building signing program that plays off of the 1920s to the 1950s era signing.

## PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

### Building Signage

- ▶ Building signs that build upon the “heyday” of downtown retail signs, the first half of the 20th century would be very appropriate for Shamokin’s downtown and create rich visual interest as well as serve an important advertising role. In addition, temporary installations in vacant storefronts could create visual interest and market local business, events, and heritage.















# 04

**Product Introduction & Background**

**Community Engagement & Planning Framework**

**Planning Frameworks**

**Implementation Action Plan**

- Initiate Funding Strategies
- Multi-modal Transportation Projects
- Parks and Public Space Projects
- Branding Projects
- Policy and Programs Projects

### Implementation Action Plan

The following tables breakdown this plan's recommendations into four primary categories:

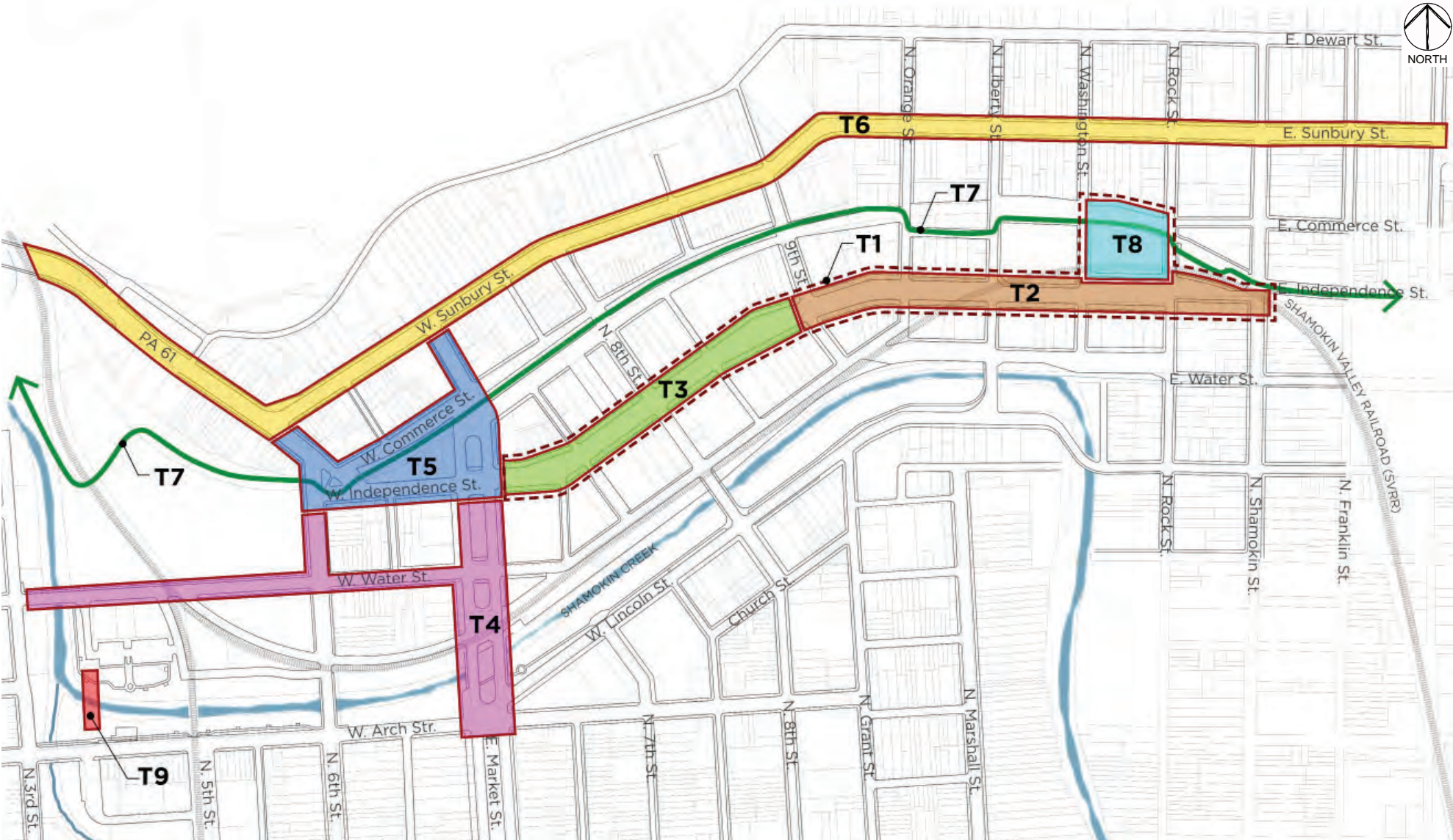
- Multi-Modal Transportation
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Branding and Signing
- Policy and Programs

For each of the categories the projects are defined in terms of next step studies or design development, and the key components of the project. Larger projects are divided into potential phases and each recommended project is ranked in terms of timeline priority. In general, near term projects can be pursued immediately, while the mid and long-term projects will require near term actions and/or the pursuit of funding and partnership, property acquisition, etc. that will require more time to execute.

Level-of-magnitude costs are provided to assist in funding pursuits, including grant applications and identifying matching sources, as required.



# Implementation Action Plan Multi-modal Transportation Projects



# Implementation Action Plan

## Multi-modal Transportation Projects

### PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS - MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Estimate of Probable Costs *	Description
<b>T1</b>	NEAR TERM	Independence Street/ Downtown Streetscape Plan and Design Standards	\$85K Schematic Design & Palette of Elements	A schematic plan for the Independence Street Corridor should be developed that includes ADA intersection improvements, needed sidewalk repairs, accent paving replacement, architectural lighting, refinements to pending camera system, street tree locations and standards, landscape planters, seating, banners, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, etc. Resulting plan should establish a block by block and E. 300 block parking lot schematic plan along with corresponding costs for construction, phasing priorities and a manual of standard elements to be adopted for the entire downtown to promote consistency.
<b>T2</b>	NEAR TERM	Independence Street Streetscape Upgrade - Phase I	\$125K Design & Permitting \$1.2M Construction (More accurate costs determine at conclusion of Project T1)	Includes realignment of edge of curb to narrow the north side of the E. 300 block of Independence Street and associated improvements described under project T1. Assumes roadway and drainage improvements are included and a PennDOT HOP is not required based on project limits. Assumes architectural lighting upgrades can be done through PPL program.
<b>T3</b>	MID TERM	Independence Street Streetscape Upgrade - Phase 2	\$75K Design & Permitting \$500K Construction (More accurate costs determine at conclusion of Project T1)	Extension of Phase I streetscape improvements including ADA intersection upgrades as needed. Limits of project end at Market Street PA Route 125 R.O.W. Assumes architectural lighting upgrades can be done through PPL program.
<b>T4</b>	MID TERM	Market & Water Streets Improvements	\$90K Design & Permitting \$900K Construction	These improvements could employ a simplified set of streetscape and intersection improvements described in projects T1-T3. With the construction of a hotel at the former Coal Hole site, a general enhancement of sidewalks, needed ADA upgrades, and strategic architectural lighting, banners, etc. will help connect the development to the core of downtown and also help distinguish a few of the more commercial blocks of the Market Street corridor that overlap with the edge of downtown. Assumes architectural lighting upgrades can be done through PPL program although additional underground utility work may be required to provide for proper pole placement. Market Street work would require a PennDOT HOP which requires additional permitting work.
<b>T5</b>	LONG TERM	6th Street - Market Street - Commerce Street - Independence Street Traffic Improvement Project	\$90K Traffic Study or Integration into PennDOT PA Route 61 Study \$TBD Construction - Dependent upon study findings	The City should work with PennDOT and/or undertake a traffic study to improve the overall multi-modal circulation and flow of traffic from Sunbury Street to Independence Street via 6th Street and Market Street. Concept plan considers the ability to realign 6th Street at a "T" intersection created by extending Independence Street into alignment with the northernmost block of 6th Street and create a direct connection to Sunbury Street/ Route 61. Conflicts with no southbound left turns from Market Street onto Independence Street should be evaluated including potential utilization of Commerce Street between Market and 6th Streets and drive-up queuing conflicts from Dunkin Donuts. Project could be an independent downtown traffic flow study or incorporated into PA Route 61 Corridor improvement study current un-funded. Project should also include the feasibility of a multi-use trail along Commerce Street.



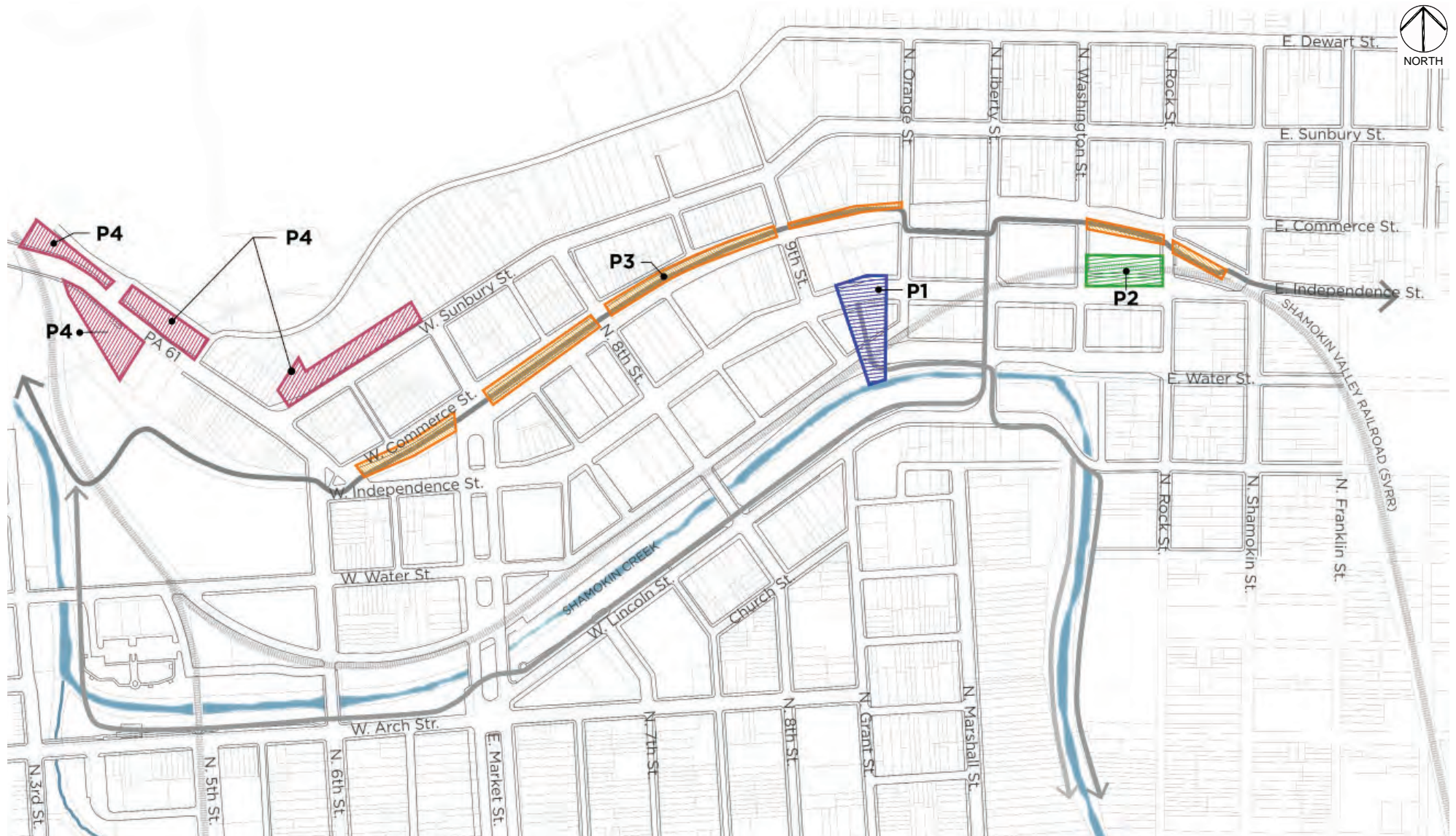
# Implementation Action Plan

## Multi-modal Transportation Projects

### PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS - MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Estimate of Probable Costs *	Description
<b>T6</b>	LONG TERM	Sunbury Street/Route 61 Corridor Improvements	PennDOT Led Project	PennDOT lists this corridor as an unfunded project on the Long Range Transportation Improvement Plan. The recommendation of this plan is to ensure that the City is actively engaged in any analysis and contemplated improvements to ensure they compliment the economic development and livability of the downtown and the corridor. It is critically important that improvements do not focus on “through-put” capacity improvements that result in speeding traffic and less safe pedestrian and bicycle conditions. Any improvement alternatives should include extensive pedestrian safety crossing enhancements and ideally architectural lighting which would improve safety for both motorists and pedestrians as well as improve the aesthetic aspects of the primary vehicular route through the City. The traffic analysis and routing concepts discussed under project T5 should be considered for incorporation with this project to create the most comprehensive of transportation solutions possible for the downtown.
<b>T7</b>	NEAR TERM	Regional Trail Feasibility Study	Feasibility Study Funded by DCNR and Led by Northumberland County Planning Dept.	The County is leading this effort as an implementation item of the Northumberland County Greenways and Open Space Plan (2011) funded by DCNR and DCED. The City should play an important role on the Steering Committee for this project to inform planning decisions and guide the selection of the preferred route through the downtown. This project should be leveraged by referencing it in other economic development and brownfields grant applications, since the for PRR Corridor would qualify as a brownfields. Project should also consider opportunities to address stormwater through the inclusion of the greenway through downtown.
<b>T8</b>	MID TERM	E. 300 Block Parking Lot and Commerce Street Improvements	\$175K Design & Permitting \$1.5M Construction (More accurate costs determine at conclusion of Project T1)	The final extent and elements of this project will be determined through Project T1. In general should include parking lot improvements including curbing, paving (possible unit/permeable), promenade with covered canopy, E 300 Block of Commerce Street diagonal parking, curb and gutter and streetscape improvements.
<b>T9</b>	LONG TERM	Shamokin Creek Greenway/Kehler Park Connector	\$90K Design & Permitting \$650K Construction	With the proposed redevelopment of the former Coal Hole site adjacent to Shamokin Creek, a connection to the south side of the creek and Kehler Park would fill in an important gap in the sidewalk and bicycle network from the south side of the creek and neighborhoods. This would eliminate the unsafe pedestrians usage of the active railroad trestle over the creek at 5th Street. This assumes a pre-engineered multi-use path bridge (10’ minimum width) would be possible in this location. Depending on funding will require historic district review by PASHPO, especially related to new abutment design and impacts to historic stone masonry. .

# Implementation Action Plan Parks and Public Space Projects





# Implementation Action Plan

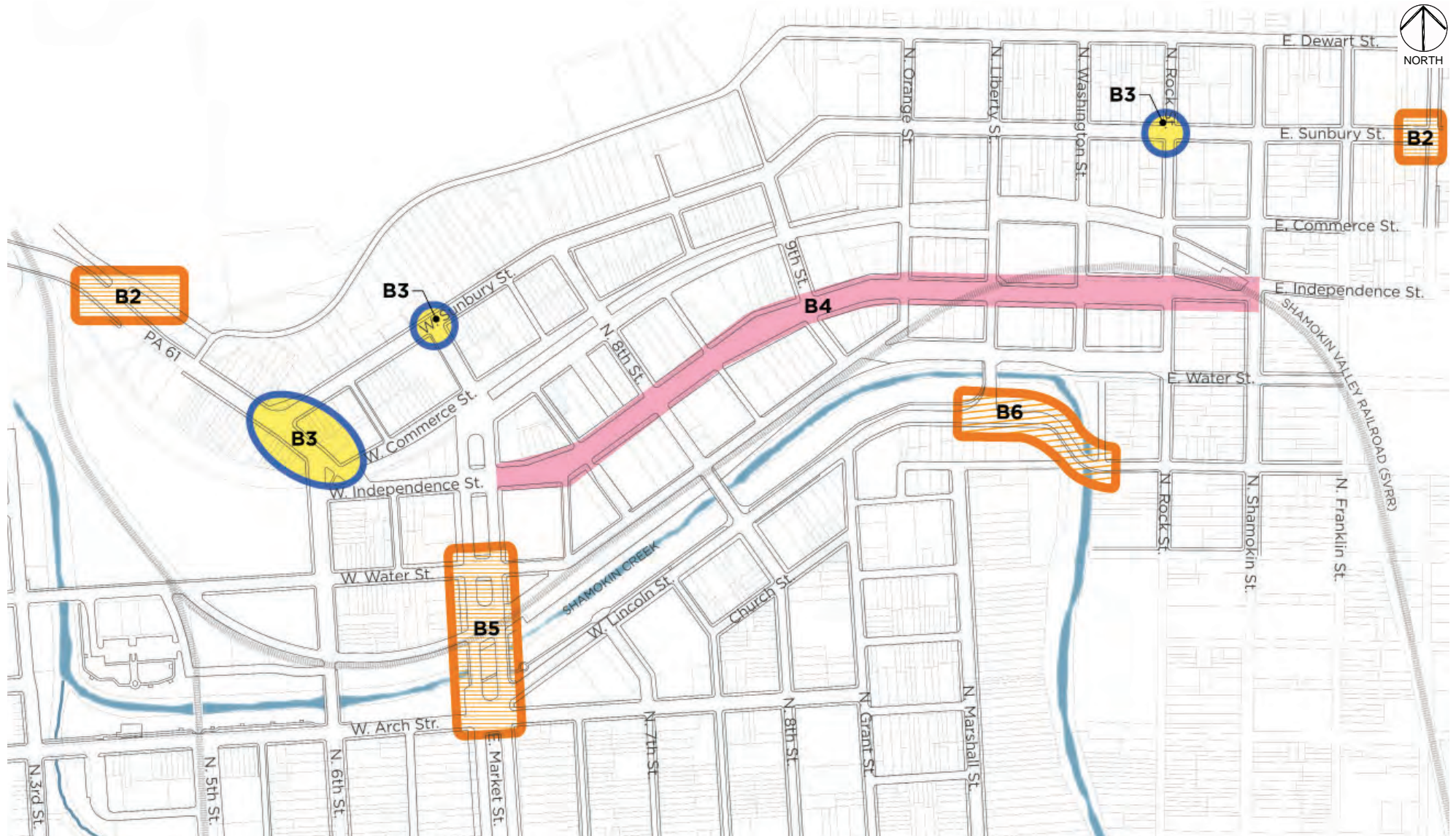
## Parks and Public Space Projects

### PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS - PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACE

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Estimate of Probable Costs *	Description
<b>P1</b>	NEAR TERM	Overall Downtown Parks Master Planning and Independence Street Pocket Park	Downtown Park Master Plan \$100K (for projects P1-3) Design & Construction for P1 Project \$750K to \$900K	Downtown Public Parks and Public Space master planning project that includes development schematic master plans (following DCNR park master planning process) for projects P1, P2, and P4 as a combined process. Independence Street Pocket Park should be a flexible public space designed to accommodate the daily needs of local residents and downtown works, while also providing flexibility for special events programming such as live performances, market/food festivals, movies in the park, etc. Design should be constructed of high quality durable materials for longevity and how should include signature design elements to have a visual impact downtown. Could be linked to Asphalt Art program to have design reach into the street for larger events.
<b>P2</b>	MID TERM	Independence Square Promenade and Market House	Master Planning part of P1 Design & Construction for P1 Project \$850K to \$950K	This project would be linked to adjacent streetscape improvements described in Transportation Project T2 and T8. Focus of the design is the creation of an events space for markets and festivals as well as creating a well designed and landscaped parking lot that can also serve as an events venue during weekends and special events. The timing of these improvements would be linked to other economic development projects including medical center completion and redevelopment of the former F&S Brewery building.
<b>P3</b>	LONG TERM	Commerce Street Blue/Greenway	TBD based on findings of Master Plan under Project P1 and County Regional Trail Feasibility Study.	The creation of a linear park along the former PRR right-of-way following Commerce Street would ideally be part of the regional trail network to be studied by Northumberland County to extend from Mount Carmel to Sunbury. In addition to the multi-use trail, additional public space amenities, including significant stormwater management facilities could be proposed. Master planning is proposed as a part of project P1. Due to number of blocks, the project could be implemented in phases, based on the findings of the County led feasibility study and the Downtown Parks and Public Space Master Plan described under P1.
<b>P4</b>	MID TERM	West Gateway Landscape and Parking Improvement	TBD based on site acquisition costs, easement agreements, and branding signing recommendations.	This plan recommends a series of gateway improvements along this stretch of Sunbury Street/Route 61 at the western gateway into the City. The project would consider the ability to acquire and demolish a series of blight residential properties along the W 200 block of Sunbury Street. Project could include pocket park amenities as well as off street parking to serve the neighborhood and adjacent commercial buildings. Significant landscape plantings should be considered as part of gateway signs to improve the overall appearance of the gateway. Project should be linked at the planning and design stages with Transportation project T6.

# Implementation Action Plan

## Branding and Signing Projects





# Implementation Action Plan

## Branding and Signing Projects

### PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS - BRANDING AND SIGNING

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Estimate of Probable Costs *	Description
<b>B1</b>	NEAR TERM	Comprehensive Branding, Promotion and Wayfinding Signing Strategy	\$50K to \$70K for including branding design and standards manual	Comprehensive Strategy including branding design and standards manual. Branding strategy should include tag lines, graphics, and wayfinding signing palette. Project would include considering all forms of promotion, including digital/social media, print, and environmental graphics (i.e. signing). Project should be comprehensive and used to establish and reinforce a brand image tied to economic development and tourism goals and marketing. Initiative should be developed in partnership with Susquehanna River Valley Visitors Bureau.
<b>B2</b>	MID TERM	Major Gateway Signing	\$35K Design & Permitting \$175K Construction (Could be incorporated into Public Space Project P4)	Western Gateway is the prominent entry point into the City. This project is linked with Public Space Project P4. Project could potentially include lighting, signing, variable messaging for event promotion, etc. Project will include the need to work with key property owners to acquire easements or properties. Improvements will be outside of PennDOT ROW but will still require coordination with PennDOT District.
<b>B3</b>	LONG TERM	Secondary Gateway/ Nodes & Overall Vehicular Wayfinding Signing	\$35K Design & Permitting \$125K Construction	Directional signing tied to branding to provide wayfinding to destination and Independence Street and could include signing and landscaping. Should include approximately 10 to 15 vehicular and trail wayfinding signs.
<b>B4</b>	NEAR TERM	Independence Street Banner Branding	\$2K Design & Permitting \$10K Construction	Specialized branding for Independence Street. Could include seasonal changes for light pole banners and other branding installations. Should be designed graphically to work with overall City brand campaign as a special district.
<b>B5</b>	MID TERM	Market Street Banner Branding	\$2K Design & Permitting \$10K Construction	Same as Project B4 with a different district brand.
<b>B6</b>	MID TERM	Visitor Center/Trail Gateway	\$2K Design & Permitting \$5K Construction	Same as Project B4 with a different district brand emphasizing AOAA trail gateway connection to downtown and Visitor Center arrival.

# Implementation Action Plan

## Policy and Programs

### PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Estimate of Probable Costs *	Description
PP1	NEAR TERM	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update	\$45K to \$50K	Comprehensive zoning re-write to update 1960's based zoning ordinance to be consistent with PA MPC, modern use standards, and current economic development vision.
PP2	MID TERM	Targeted Building Reuse and Historic Designation Feasibility Studies	\$35K to \$40K	Identify up to five potential buildings and obtain property owner support to participate. Plans would include historic research to determine historic eligibility for tax credits, adaptive reuse/rehabilitation potential, and potential financial modeling.
PP3	NEAR TERM	Façade Grant Program	\$50K	Reapply for DCED funding to expand on first round program.
PP4	NEAR TERM	Redevelopment Gap Financing Program	Based on Available Resources/ Ideally \$1M to \$5M Fund	A program/fund of non-traditional sources of funding for private development should be established especially for pioneer developments in the downtown. New market-rate/mixed-use projects will be challenged by the lack of valuation "comparables" within the marketplace needed to support traditional lending strategies. In addition, until a new market is established and market rents/values increase, there will be financing gaps between the construction costs and revenue generation, resulting in the need to fill "gaps" required to make projects economically feasible. Such a program or fund could also include special low or no interest loans that form the basis of a revolving loan fund to support future projects as the fund is paid back.



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