

GREATER READING

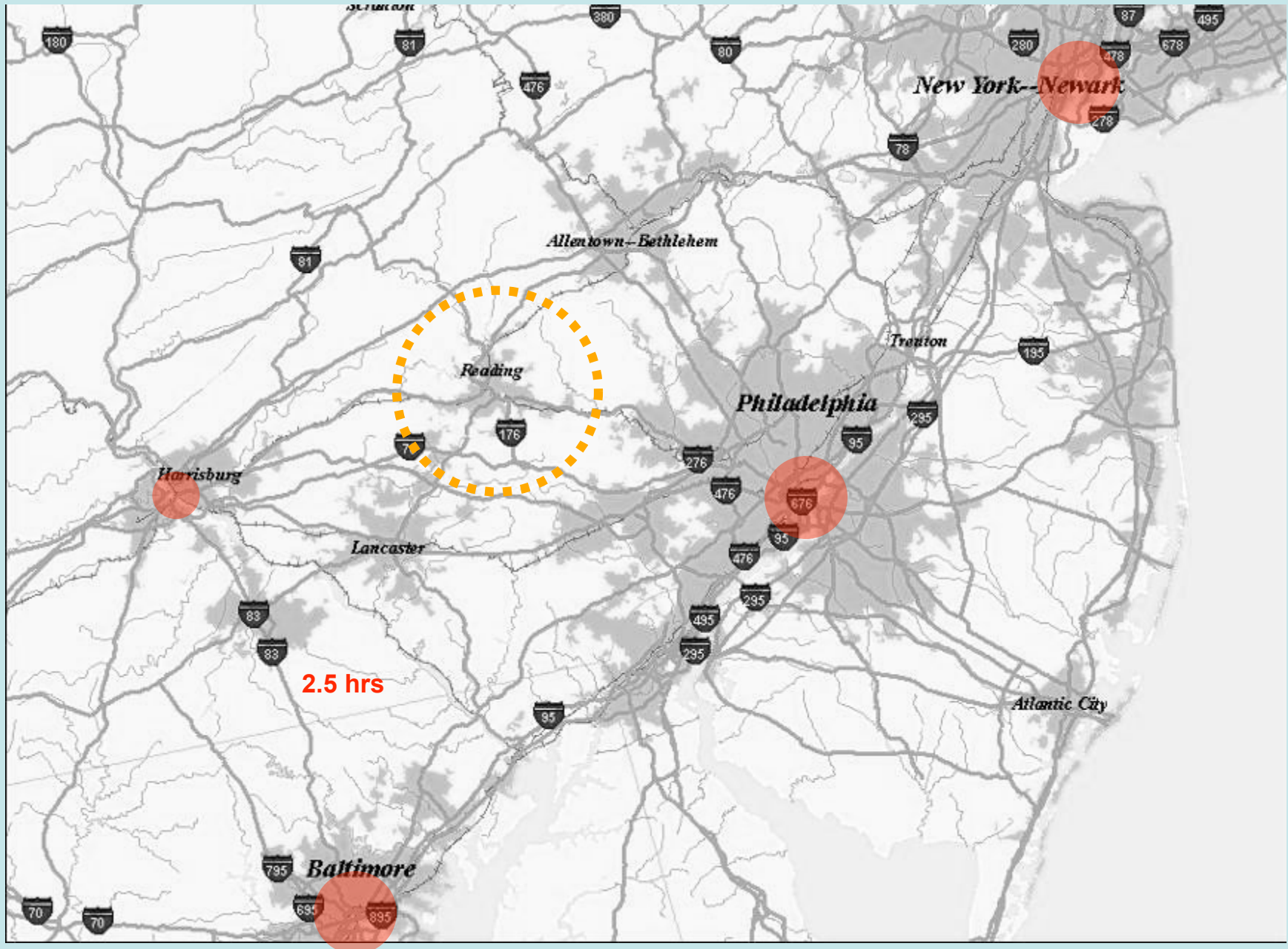
More than Just a Railroad

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Berks Economic Partnership

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READING IN THE REGION



Strengths of the Region

- **Proximity to markets**
- **Quality of Life**
- **Cost of Living**
- **Diversity**
- **Workforce**
- **Technology Infrastructure**

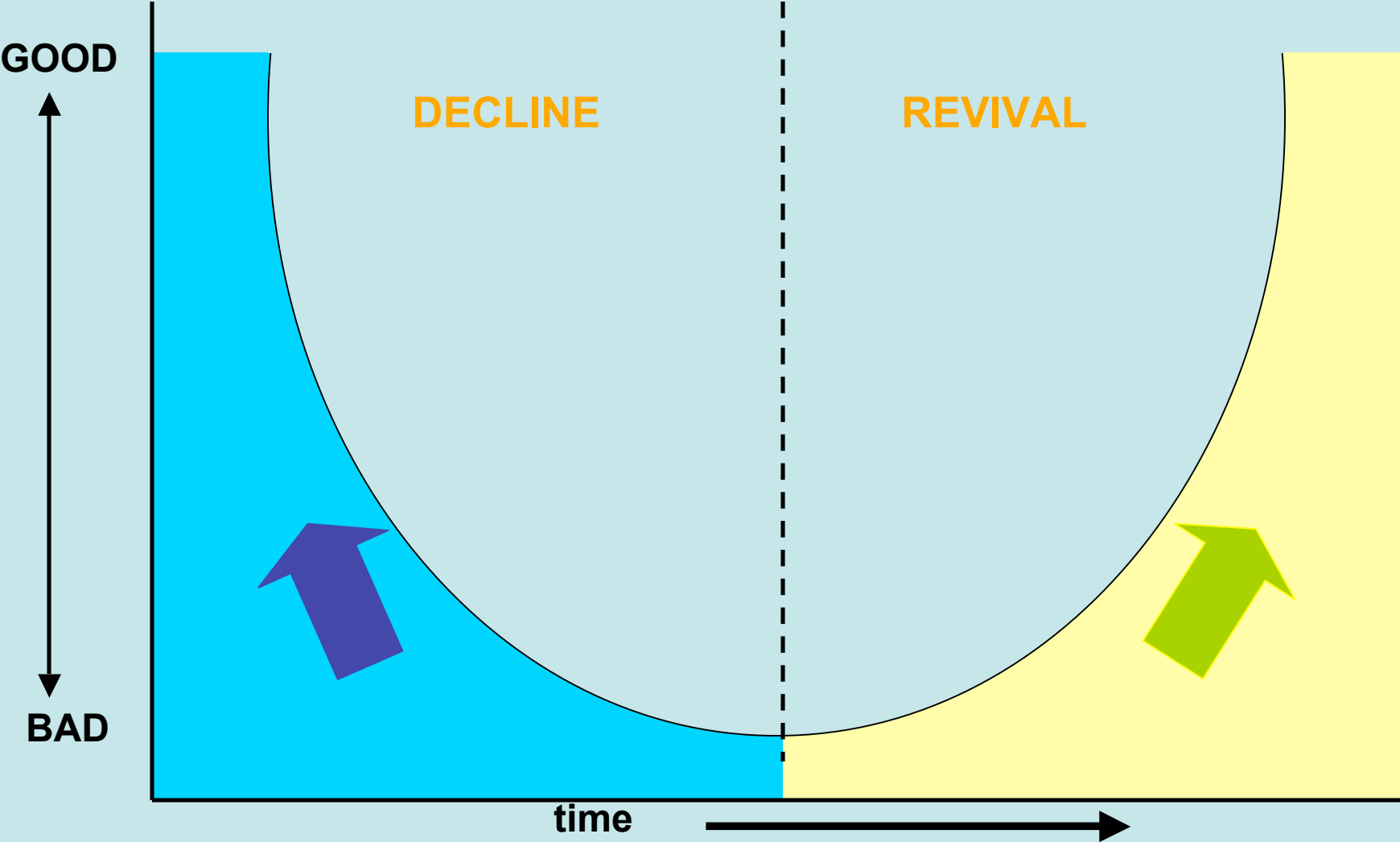
There's always a "but"...

- 1. Berks County = 400,000 people**
- 2. Berks County = 556,000 acres**
- 3. Berks County is still 100 miles from NYC**
- 4. Berks County contains 72 municipalities**
 - 72 zoning maps
 - 72 waste disposal plans
 - 72 public safety schemes
 - etc.
- 5. 24% of Berks County residents have a college degree**
- 6. Berks County is the 4th oldest county in the 2nd oldest state**

Local Mind Set

- Reading doesn't matter
- The only good jobs are manufacturing jobs
- Things were better when...
- You take care of yours and I'll take care of mine
- Taxes are too high

Do things really work this way?



The Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading

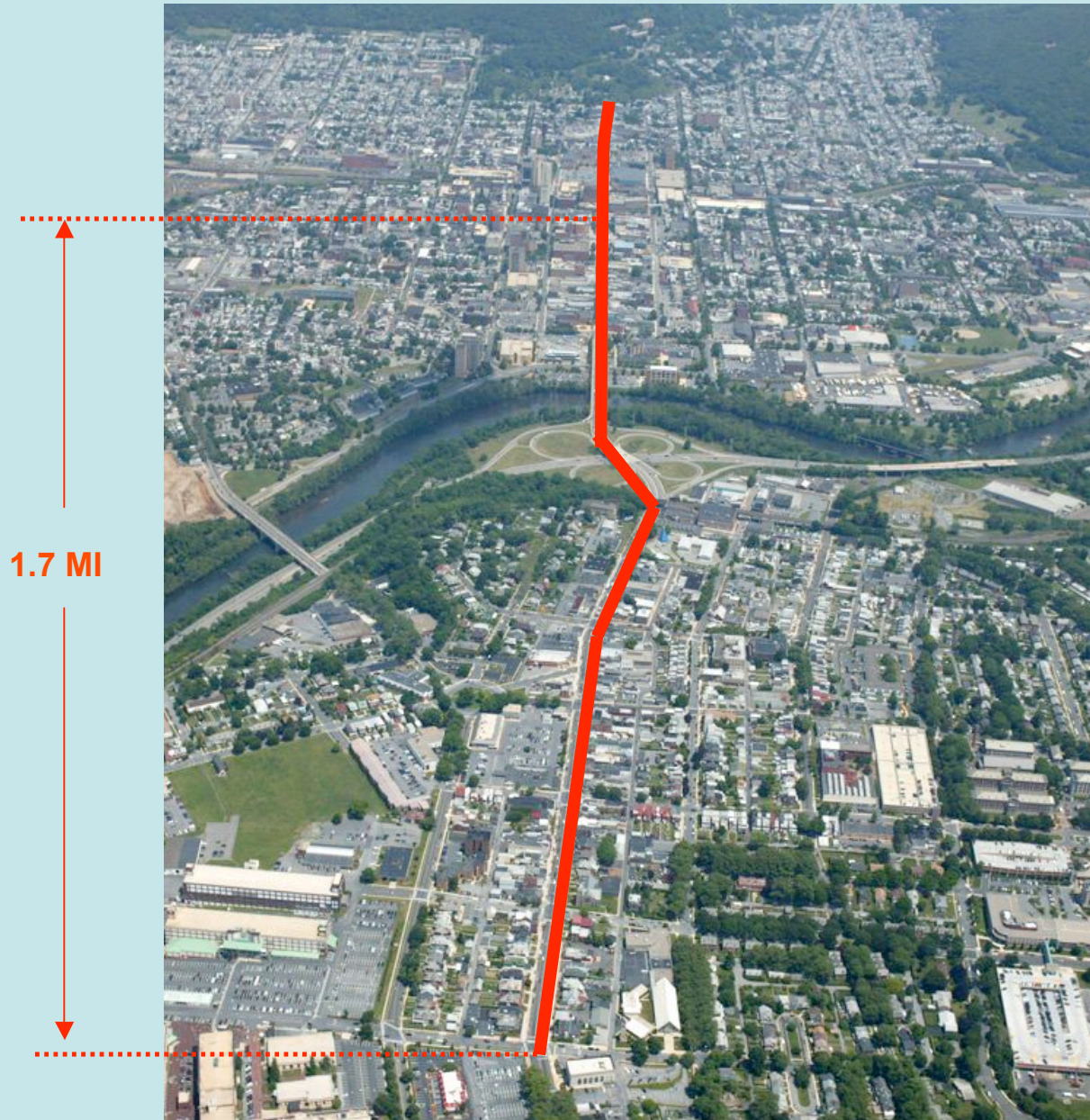
OPPORTUNITIES

- *Making the Corridor an attraction*
- *Marketing the region's tourism attractions*
- *Leadership in Professional and Shared Services*
- *Competitiveness in Food Processing*

CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

- *Leverage the inner city as an asset*
- *Increase competitiveness of manufacturing*
- *Communicate the new image of the Greater Reading region*
- *Foster collaboration in economic development*

THE CORRIDOR



READING

WEST
READING

WYOMISSING

Corridor Vision Statement

The corridor will be Berks County's hub for arts, culture, dining and entertainment. It will reconnect Berks County residents with their urban core.

ICGR Plan Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive plan for a pedestrian friendly environment.
- Introduce thematic public art.
- Establish financial incentives.
- Develop a Dedicated Corridor Transit Route
- Create a management structure.

CHALLENGE OF SCALE

SASAKI

5 Minute Walk Circles



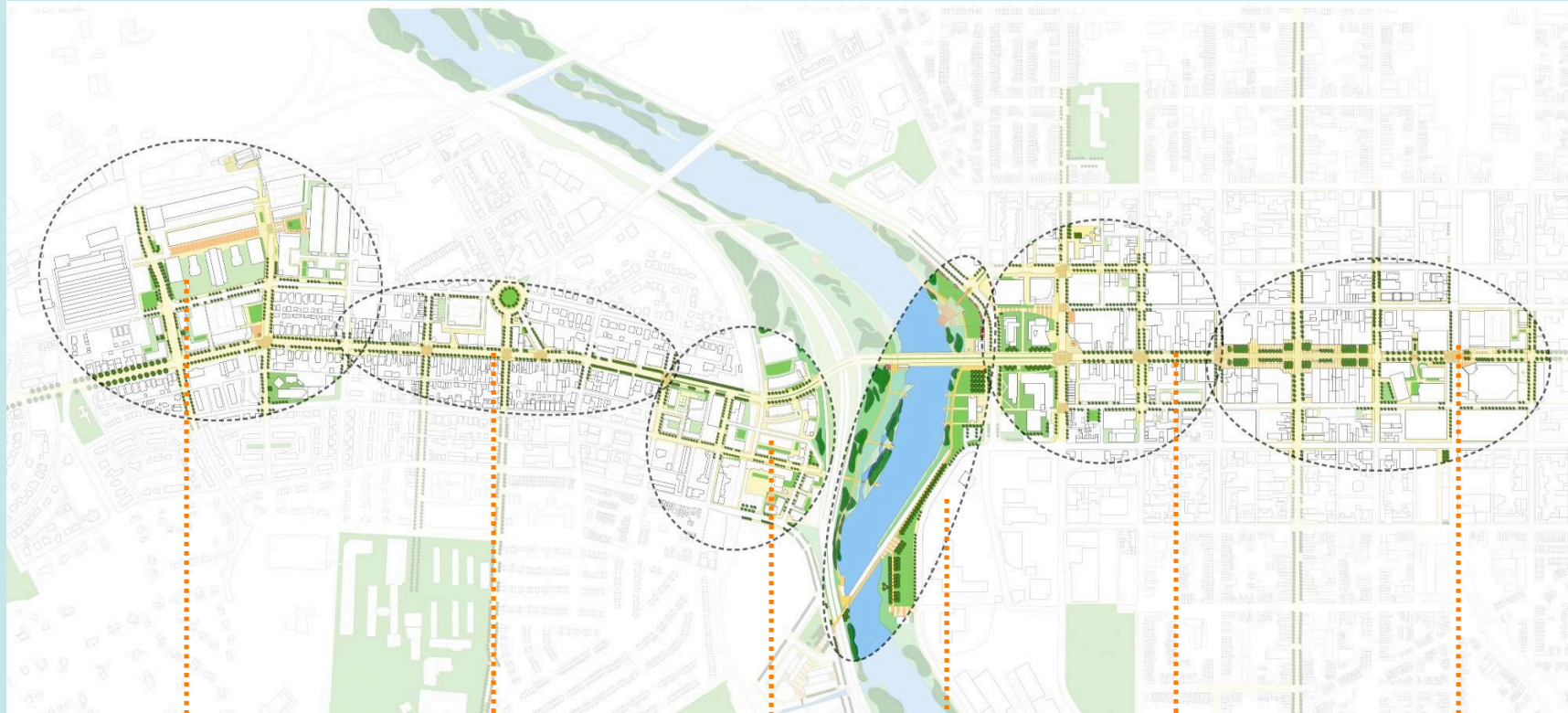
Park St

1.7 mi

7th St

A CHAIN OF SPECIALTY DISTRICTS

SASAKI



WYOMISSING
SQUARE

"THE AVENUE"

CHOCOLATE
FACTORY DISTRICT

THE BANKS OF THE
SCHUYLKILL

ARTS AND
ENTERTAINMENT
DISTRICT

PENN SQUARE
DISTRICT

Penn Corridor Strategy

- Create the Penn Corridor Joint Municipal Authority
- Non-profit organization to keep politics out of the day-to-day business
- *Achieve economies of scale in all three downtowns not affordable to any town*
- Controlled by board of directors

The Brookings Institution

To do what?

- ***Venue Management***
- ***Operating Expertise***
- ***Operations Consulting***
- ***Area Services***
- ***Marketing, Advertising and Sponsorship Sales***
- ***Event Booking***
- ***Event / Concert Promotions***
- ***Event Management***
- ***Risk Management and Security***

because...

- *it's all about scale & density; and*
- *it's all about competent management*

Existing Assets on the Corridor

- Civic Center
- Performing Arts Center
- Ocean Blue
- Jimmie's Peanut Bar
- Bistro 614
- West Reading Tavern
- Hard Bean Café
- Viva
- The Works
- Etc.

Major Projects Underway on the Corridor

- Goggle Works
- Hotel Development at 7th and Penn St
- Wyomissing Square Development
- Penn Ave. Redevelopment District
- The Miller Theater
- RiverPlace Master Plan\
- Sovereign Bank Building
- Redevelopment of 422 Penn St.
- Schuylkill Valley Metro

Why place management above development?

- 1. Existing assets are underutilized**
- 2. The Corridor physically looks pretty good**
- 3. 3 municipalities are involved**
 - Reading**
 - West Reading**
 - Wyomissing**
- 4. *And there's that scale thing...***

All I know about project management...

Beginning

Middle

End



tells me
we're about
here

But what I think I do know...

- Activity trumps brick and mortar
- Traffic jams can be a good thing
- Big crowds attract bigger crowds
- Traditional municipal structures don't work anymore

because

They were designed and built to regulate activity of people who had no choice about living and working downtown.



GREATER READING



Take a Ride