



### Project Highlights:

- Identification of University Research Partners necessary to document the evolution of Reading to a sustainable and a regenerative future
- Provided parameter recommendations for downtown area targeted for community revitalization
- Facilitated cross sector dialogue around aggregating financing for long term, local wealth creation and reinvestment

# Reading, PA



## CityCraft Services: Initial Analysis, City Orientation

August 2013 - Initial assessment and analysis for City of Reading to identify network of cross sector organizations and individuals necessary to implement long term city revitalization strategy. Provided preliminary road map and recommendations for planning and implementation needs.

CityCraft conducted sessions with representatives from developers, development agencies, community leaders, labor leaders, religious leaders, local foundations, non-profits, city leadership and others.

For many years, Reading had been a shadow of its former, industrious self, but its economic and social systems deteriorated rapidly. In 2012, the New York Times called Reading “the nation’s poorest city”. The struggling city earned the unwelcome distinction by having the largest share of its residents living in poverty for U.S. cities with populations over 65,000. Recent attempts at revitalization proved unsuccessful

as 1,000,000 sf of downtown office space remained vacant and tens of millions of dollars in public subsidies were expended with very little overall impact for the city.

Challenges included addressing needs of education, jobs, and attracting investment to the area. The Mayor’s leadership inspired a vision for “shared prosperity among all who live, work, learn, and visit here through a thriving local economy, broad cultural diversity, and a healthy natural environment.” The Mayor’s Five Goals for the City included:

- Safer and Cleaner Neighborhoods
- Economic Development and Job Creation
- Sound Fiscal Management
- Open and Transparent Government
- High Quality of Life