

Wilmington, Delaware  
~~November 7, 2019~~  
December 12, 2019

#4735

Sponsor:

Council  
President  
Shabazz

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 5-600(a) of the Wilmington City Charter, City Council may adopt, after a duly advertised public hearing, the comprehensive development plan of the City of Wilmington that is prepared by the Department of Planning and Development with the advice of the City Planning Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, “A City-Wide Plan of Land Use: A Component of the Comprehensive Development Plan for Wilmington, Delaware” was adopted by City Council on July 10, 2003, last amended by City Council on August 27, 2009, and last certified by the State of Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (the “OSPC”) on October 21, 2010 (the “Existing Comprehensive Plan”); and

**WHEREAS**, 22 Del. C. § 702(e) requires municipalities to revise, update, amend as necessary, and readopt their comprehensive plans at least every ten (10) years; and

**WHEREAS**, 22 Del. C. § 702(f) requires municipalities to submit their comprehensive plans, and amendments and revisions to such plans, for review and approval by the OSPC and for final certification by the Governor or his designee; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wilmington submitted its updated comprehensive plan, entitled “Wilmington 2028: A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities” (the “New Comprehensive Plan”), a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A, to the OSPC on May 22, 2019 for review and approval; and

**WHEREAS**, the OSPC issued a letter dated July 26, 2019 stating that the New Comprehensive Plan could be accepted for certification following adoption of the plan by the Wilmington City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 17, 2019, after holding a duly advertised public meeting, the City Planning Commission, by its Resolution 12-19, recommended that: (i) the New Comprehensive Plan be amended to update the future land use map to change the land use designation in the area bounded by Maryland Avenue, Anchorage Street, Oak Street, and Beech Street from “Infrastructure” to “Neighborhood Mixed Use” and (ii) City Council adopt the New Comprehensive Plan, as amended by the City Planning Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with City Charter Section 5-600(a), a duly advertised public hearing on the New Comprehensive Plan was held on November 7, 2019.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON** that the Council hereby adopts the New Comprehensive Plan entitled “Wilmington 2028: A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities”, as amended by the City Planning Commission in its Resolution 12-19 (a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A), thereby replacing all components of the Existing Comprehensive Plan.

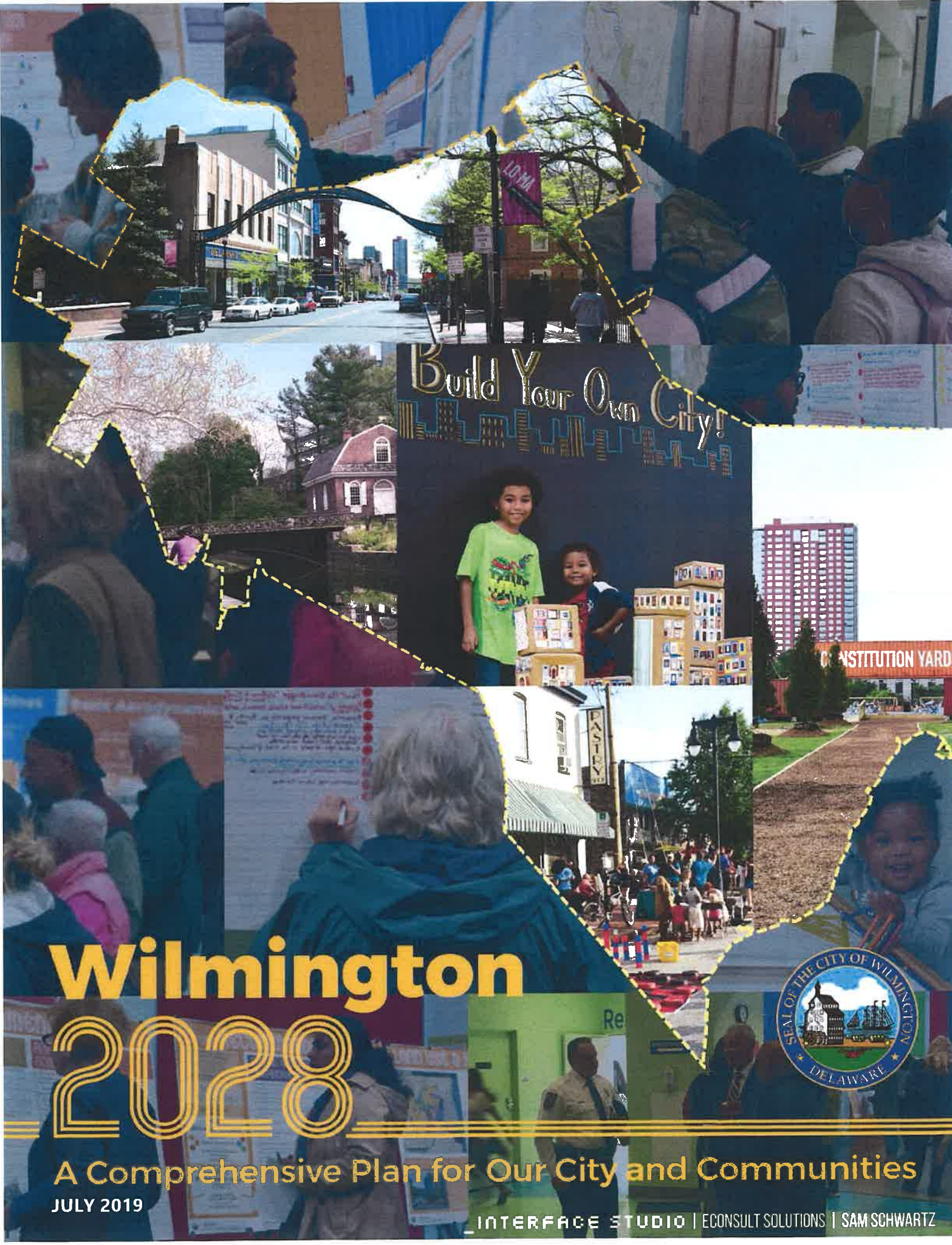
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Council recommends that the New Comprehensive Plan be forwarded to the Governor for certification.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

**SYNOPSIS:** This Resolution adopts the comprehensive plan entitled “Wilmington 2028: A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities”, as amended by the City Planning Commission in its Resolution 12-19, thereby replacing all components of the existing Citywide comprehensive development plan.

## **EXHIBIT A**



# Wilmington 2028

A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities

JULY 2019





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Build Your Own City!



Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum, October  
Source: Interface Studio, LLC

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

**“Who would invest in a corporation if it didn’t have a business plan? ...The same is true for a community if it doesn’t have a plan. Every successful institution, whether a corporation or a community, needs a plan.”**

- Ed McMahon, Charles E. Fraser Chair on Sustainable Development at the Urban Land Institute

## Project Background

In the last 20 years, Wilmington’s downtown and riverfront have been dramatically transformed but revitalization is uneven in the neighborhoods and the city as a whole. New mixed-use development and renovated historic buildings, park improvements, and pedestrian infrastructure have been credited with the in-migration of new residents and an increasingly vibrant street life, showing that Wilmington is capitalizing on the nationwide trend of young workers and businesses relocating to cities. However, many neighborhoods in the city suffer from high levels of vacancy, poverty, and crime, impacting resident opportunity, quality of life and the city’s economic vitality.

Since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2009, the city has experienced continued growth downtown and on the riverfront, and similar activity is starting to expand into other areas of the city as well. These include new amenities like the recently opened Jack Markell pedestrian and bike trail that links the Wilmington Riverfront to New Castle, the development of the Philadelphia 76ers farm team (the Wilmington Blue Coats) facility in South Wilmington, the planned Riverside Purpose Built Community, and the recent renovation to the Harper-Thiel building on Miller Road in the Northwest area of the city, which has already attracted a new brewery and restaurant.

The renaissance of Wilmington’s downtown, riverfront, and neighborhoods is critical to its regional competitiveness. Continuing this trajectory will mean cultivating the housing, transportation, and urban environment that can attract residents, workers, and the businesses that seek the advantages of a city, and connecting to neighborhoods across the city to make Wilmington a great place to live and work.



## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

In Delaware, a Comprehensive Plan is a State-mandated document that describes policies and actions related to a municipality's land use, neighborhoods, transportation, infrastructure, the economy, the environment, and quality of life. The Delaware State Code also stipulates that a comprehensive plan functions as a legal document with which all land use actions must be consistent. To continue the momentum of growth and revitalization, the City of Wilmington must think proactively and prepare for tomorrow, today. As the introduction quote from Ed McMahon notes we need to plan for the future to create the conditions for success. This is where a Comprehensive Plan comes in.

Updating the Comprehensive Plan now provides the opportunity to build on the positive initiatives already in full swing while proactively tackling existing and new challenges to keep the city's infrastructure and neighborhoods in good shape and build their resilience to climate change. The Comprehensive Plan process involved extensive community outreach to shape a vision for the city's future and a framework for the development of programmatic goals and budgetary planning from the appropriate City departments. As a community-driven document, the Comprehensive Plan helps each community achieve their goals while balancing competing interests. The Plan establishes priorities, helps guide decision making, determines how best to spend limited resources, and helps raise money for improvements citywide.



Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018. Source: Interface Studio

# CITY OF WILMINGTON



Figure 1 City of Wilmington map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- Municipal boundary
- Open space
- Cemetery
- Water body



## Previous Plans and Accomplishments

The new Comprehensive Plan has provided us with an opportunity to build upon work that is already being done and/or is ongoing to improve the quality of life of Wilmington and its diverse neighborhoods at both the City level and the grassroots neighborhood level. Planning is essential to make the most of limited resources to accomplish great things for our city. Results can take many years to bear fruit, but there are also incremental steps that lead to these larger accomplishments. Looking to past planning efforts demonstrates how important it has been for the city's revitalization over the years.

The following are a selection of these plans and their accomplishments:

### City Prepared Plans:

- **A Pilot Plan for Wilmington's In-Town Riverfront:** This 1979 plan is an excellent example of a planning effort that has had a great impact on the city. It also demonstrates the importance of the plan for guidance and the how the plan plants a seed that flourishes over time. This plan sets forth the vision of the citizens of Wilmington to reclaim the riverfront area for all to use. Prior to this initiative, these areas were reserved primarily for light and heavy industrial uses, including junk yards. Today, in 2019, the west bank of the Christina River has been totally repurposed as a mixed use residential and retail area. Other plans for this area that have contributed to what we now see today, include:
  - **Christina Gateway Development Strategy & Action Plan (1992)**
  - **A Vision for the Rivers (1994)**
- **Downtown Development Strategy:** Among the many recommendations to come from this 1992 Department of Planning study was the recommendation to create a Historic District for Lower Market Street which did occur in 1998. This district has helped preserve the character of this area which has contributed to its revitalization, including a distinct strategy using the LOMA (Lower Market Street) designation to market the area.
- **Downtown Development District Plan:** On January 11, 2015, Governor Markell announced Wilmington's designation as one of three

Downtown Development Districts (DDD). The Downtown Development District Program seeks to revitalize the downtown / Central Business District through the use of economic and other incentives in order to:

- Spur capital investments,
- Stimulate job growth and improve commercial vitality,
- Improve housing opportunities, and
- Strengthen neighborhoods adjacent to downtown areas.

Property owners in the designated Downtown Development District are eligible for a variety of incentives from the State and the City of Wilmington. This has resulted in a large number of properties in this area being renovated along with a large infusion of public funds that has leveraged a greater amount of private funds; in the period through 2018, \$18,600,668 in rebates leveraged \$374,147,634 in private investments.

- **EPA Area-Wide Planning Grant for Northeast Wilmington Grant:** This planning grant from December 2017 covers the area bounded by Vandever Avenue, Northeast Boulevard, Brandywine Creek, and Market Street. Consultants are assisting the City and the surrounding community in developing an implementation strategy for specific brownfield sites. They will also identify additional grant funding that the City can pursue, both local and Federal which can help to move the sites back to productive use.

### Select Neighborhood and Other Prepared Plans:

- **Creative District Vision Plan:** The 2014 Creative District plan was developed under the guidance of the Wilmington Renaissance Corporation and a diverse steering committee comprised of institutional partners, artists, Downtown stakeholders and City representatives. The mission of the Wilmington Creative District is to implement creative placemaking strategies to:
  - Revitalize the area of Wilmington's downtown between Shipley Street, Washington Street, Fourth Street, and Ninth Street,
  - Extend the experience and investment along Market Street further west to adjacent communities and areas beyond Downtown, and
  - Establish Wilmington as a destination for producers and consumers of art, history, culture, and creativity.
- **Westside Grows Together – Neighborhood Revitalization Plan:** This 2012 plan focused on improving the quality of life for the Westside community (an area bounded by Jackson Street / I-95, Lancaster Avenue, the rail line west of Bancroft Parkway, and Pennsylvania Avenue) and maintaining the community character of the area. Some of their accomplishments include:
  - Leveraging \$1.4 million to renovate three neighborhood parks, and completing construction of two of the three parks.
  - Designating Lincoln & Union Streets as a Main Street Affiliate through the State of Delaware. The business community leveraged \$4 million in streetscape and transportation enhancements.
- Planting approximately 300 trees with partners such as the Delaware Center for Horticulture and the City of Wilmington.
- **Blueprint Communities Plans:** A Community Revitalization Initiative of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh in partnership with the University of Delaware Center for Community Research and Service. Blueprint Communities provides training, technical assistance, coaching, and financial support to groups from selected communities in Delaware who seek to develop and implement plans that revitalize their communities. Two of the more prominent plans that have been developed under this program are:
  - **The Northeast Wilmington Blueprint Community** serves the Northeast community. The Northeast Blueprint Revitalization Initiative is an effort to mobilize the community around a comprehensive look at revitalizing Northeast Wilmington by utilizing a proven approach supported by the resources of the University of Delaware and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh's Blueprint Communities® Delaware and the City of Wilmington.
  - **The Washington Heights Blueprint Community** serves the Triangle, Washington Heights, and Brandywine Village associations in the City of Wilmington, Delaware. This is an effort to bring our community assets together to effectively address issues and concerns. The goal of this plan is to develop a vision to strengthen the capacity of existing organizations to enhance the economic, social, cultural and physical conditions within the community's boundaries.

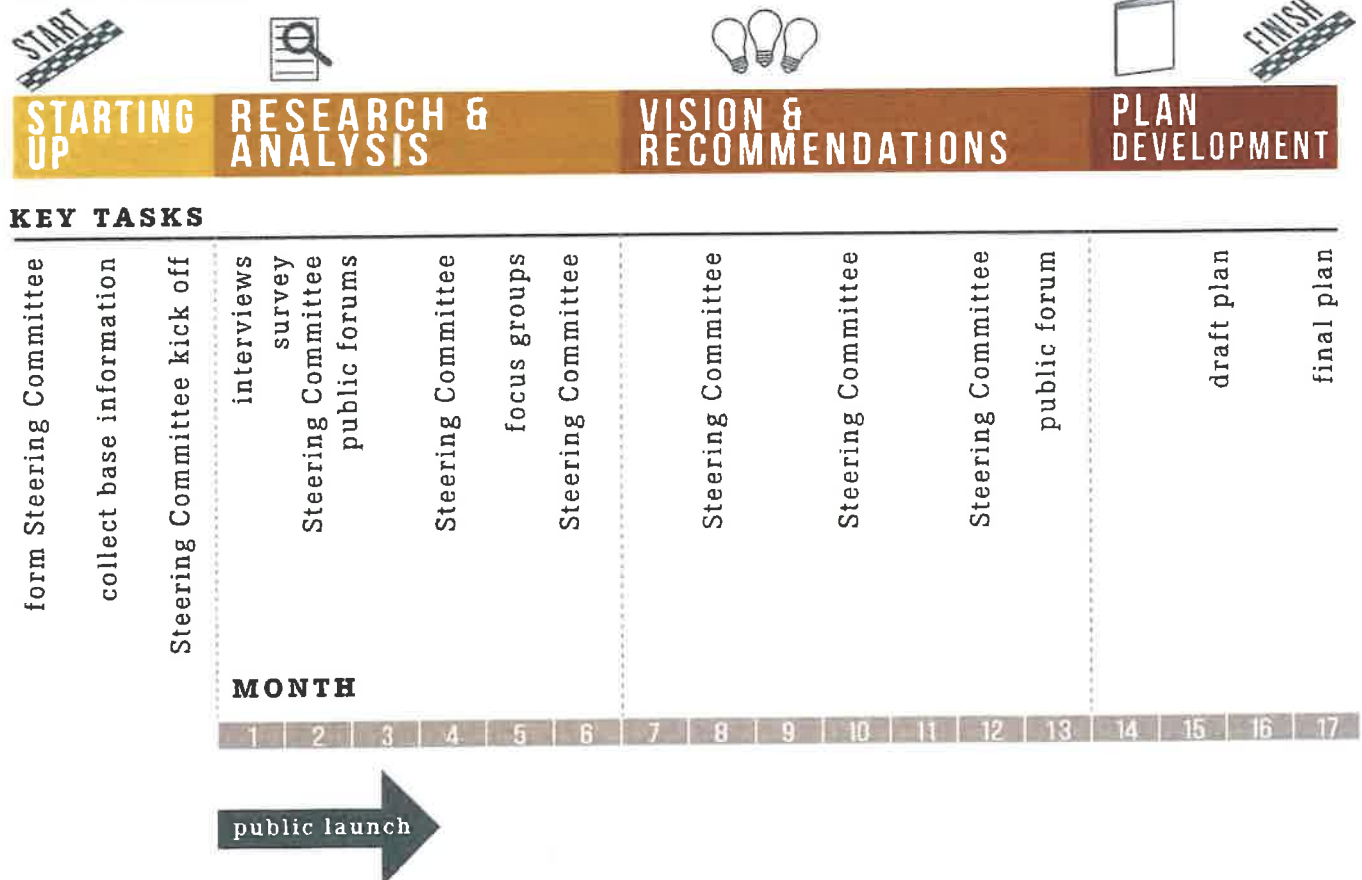
# PLANNING PROCESS

## Planning Phases

Wilmington 2028 is the culmination of a year and a half-long planning process that sought to involve everyone with a stake in the City of Wilmington. The Wilmington 2028 planning process began in the summer of 2017 and had four main phases:

1. **START UP** - during which a steering committee was formed of residents and stakeholders from the public and private sectors to guide the planning process and development of the plan.
2. **RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS** - which combined data collection and analysis with input from the public through a range of community engagement activities, including interviews, focus groups, public forums, and surveys.
3. **VISION AND RECOMMENDATIONS** - which were formed from the research findings and public input, and reviewed and shaped by the steering committee.
4. **PLAN DEVELOPMENT** - during which the vision and recommendations were further refined and prioritized through community input and steering committee guidance, and all elements of the process packaged into a plan document.

## PLAN PHASES





Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018. Source: Interface Studio

## Community Engagement

The planning process included input from a wide variety of people including residents, workers, businesses, and visitors through numerous activities and venues. Community engagement included the following:

**STEERING COMMITTEE** - The steering committee was composed of local residents, community leaders, public officials, and institutional and business representatives, and was appointed by the Mayor's Office to guide the process. The steering committee convened at key points in the process as follows:

- September 14, 2017 kick off meeting;
- November 9, 2017 review existing conditions analysis and preliminary findings from survey and interviews;
- January 11, 2018 review public input summary;
- March 8, 2018 review draft vision and goals;
- May 10, 2018 work session to refine draft vision and goals;
- July 12, 2018 review preliminary recommendations;
- September 13, 2018 work session to refine and prioritize recommendations.

**SURVEY** - More than 2,300 residents, workers and visitors participated in a survey about their perceptions of the city and their neighborhood. The survey was available both online and on paper.

**INTERVIEWS** - 37 confidential interviews were conducted with stakeholders that included residents, community leaders, business owners, service providers, and public officials.

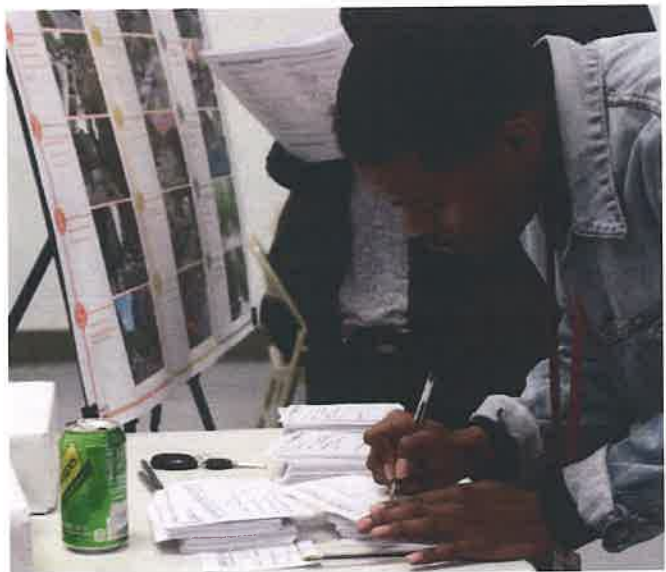
**FOCUS GROUPS** - 10 focus groups were gathered to delve deeper in specific topic areas: Economic Development, Creative Sector, Community Development, Connectivity, Environment, Parks and Recreation, Service Providers, Youth Services, Youth, and Spanish-speaking.





**PUBLIC FORUMS** – several public forums provided residents with opportunities to learn about the plan and provide input. More than 400 people attended five neighborhood forums and a final public rollout of the plan at the Delaware Children’s Museum. Additionally, forum activities were made available online for those who were unable to attend in person, and the Planning Department has given presentations at 22 community meetings and events around the city.

- November 8, 2017 forum at P.S. DuPont Middle School
- November 13, 2017 forum at Kingswood Community Center
- November 14, 2017 forum at Woodlawn Library
- November 21, 2017 forum at Southbridge Neighborhood House
- November 30, 2017 forum at Mt. Carmel United Church
- October 17, 2018 forum at Delaware Children’s Museum



Round 1 Public Forums - November 2017  
Source: Interface Studio





Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2016  
Source: Interface Studio

## PLAN COMPONENTS

Wilmington 2028 is not just an update to the City's 2009 Citywide Comprehensive Plan, it is a complete transformation of the plan format. The current plan is comprised of 13 separate documents: A Citywide Plan along with 12 separate neighborhood plans. Keeping these documents current and reflective of stakeholder needs and concerns can be a cumbersome process since any modifications require separate administrative and legal actions.

Wilmington 2028 combines both aspects of these documents into one plan that presents an overarching Vision, set of Goals, and Policies and Strategies that are reflective of the needs of stakeholders citywide and at the neighborhood level. The VISION is an aspirational statement that synthesizes the community's hopes and describes a desired future outcome. The GOALS are statements designed to help achieve the vision and provide a framework for organizing the policies and strategies. The POLICIES provide guidance and direction to decision-makers and community leaders. The STRATEGIES are specific actions that must be taken to fulfill the goals and vision.



Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018  
Source: Interface Studio





# 2

# OVERVIEW

## HISTORY

Natural features have affected the city's residential development pattern. Wilmington lies at the fall line that separates the flat coastal plain from the hilly areas to the west. East of Market Street, and along both sides of the Christina River, the land is flat, low-lying, and marshy in places. The west side of Market Street is hilly and rises to a point that marks the watershed between the Brandywine and the Christina Rivers. This watershed line runs along Delaware Avenue westward from 10th and Market Streets. The hilly and therefore healthier west side, was more attractive for the original residential areas such as Quaker Hill, developed beginning in the mid-18th century.

The City of Wilmington traces its origins to the 17th century. After periods of Swedish (1638), Dutch (1655), and British (1664) colonization, the area stabilized under British rule (with Quaker influence) and was granted a borough charter in 1739 by the King of England. At that time the name changed from Willington (after Thomas Willing, the first "developer" of the land who organized the area in a grid pattern like Philadelphia) to Wilmington, presumably after Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington, a favorite of the King. From the granting of the charter until the Revolution, the town developed steadily into a prosperous business and residential community. During the Revolution, its milling industries, geographic location, key leaders, and resources made Wilmington particularly strategic.

The borough of Wilmington officially became a city in 1832, when a charter was granted by the State legislature. In 1837 the completion of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad made the city accessible by water, road, and rail on the main north-south transportation route and the area's economy flourished.

The Civil War had a profound effect on the city's economy. Delaware, though officially a Union State, was divided in its support of both the Confederate and the Union soldiers. Wilmington was the center of the northern partisans in Delaware. The outbreak of the Civil War found Wilmington with a strong industrial base which responded to meet the great demands of war. Older establishments expanded and many new industries were attracted to the city. Wilmington products included ships, railroad cars, gunpowder, shoes, tents, uniforms, blankets, and other war-related goods, and the city emerged from the war with a greatly diversified economy.

By 1868, Wilmington was producing more iron ships than the rest of the country combined and rated first in the production of gunpowder and second in carriages and leather. The post-war prosperity allowed the construction of many elaborate new homes and businesses, which induced residential development to the west of the existing city.

In 1864, the first horsecar line was initiated, assisting development of residential areas outside the city boundaries. The first “suburban” area to be developed was centered around today’s Delaware Avenue. Wealthy industrialists and businessmen built ornate mansions on this street making it the city’s most fashionable address.

The late nineteenth century saw the development of a comprehensive park system under William Bancroft, a successful Wilmington businessman with a concern for the preservation of open parkland in Wilmington, who was influenced by the work of Frederick Law Olmsted. Rockford Park and Brandywine Park owe their creation to his generous donation of land and efforts.

The period between the Civil War and World War I, brought new industries and the greatest population growth. In 1860 there were 21,250 people living in the city. By 1920 that number had risen to 110,168.

Both World Wars stimulated the city’s industries. Industries vital to the war effort - shipyards, steel foundries, machinery, and chemical producers - operated on a 24-hour basis. Other industries produced such goods as automobiles, leather products, and clothing. Delaware’s liberal tax structure attracted corporations to locate in or near Wilmington, firmly establishing the city as a “Corporate Capital” even after the decline of large-scale manufacturing in Wilmington. The burgeoning number of automobiles and roadways in the 1950s made living in the suburbs and commuting into the city to work possible and contributed to significant population losses in Wilmington.

In the 1960s and 70s, urban renewal projects cleared many blocks of housing and the construction of I-95 cut a swath through several of Wilmington’s most stable neighborhoods. This period has had the greatest impact on the city’s urban form. The West Side, West Center City, and the East Side were cut off from downtown and from each other.

Numerous banks and financial institutions relocated to the area after the Financial Center Development Act of 1981 substantially liberalized the laws governing banks operating within the state. In 1986, the state adopted legislation targeted at attracting international finance and insurance companies.

More recently, Wilmington’s downtown and riverfront areas, much like other downtowns across the county, have seen a resurgence fueled by new residents interested in downtown living. These new residents are changing the demographic makeup of these neighborhoods, adding residents that are more likely to be single, younger, and with higher levels of education and incomes than the population of the city as a whole.



## KEY DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS — GROWTH AND POPULATION

### Population change

Wilmington's population has stabilized since the low point in the 1980s. In 2010, the last decennial count, the population reached 70,851 and was estimated at 71,263 according to the 2014 American Community Survey. The census tracts for downtown and riverfront have seen the most dramatic growth, and these figures do not reflect the enormous amount of residential built in those areas since the last census (approximately 1,800 housing units have been built since the 2010 decennial count). Given this, the actual growth numbers are likely higher.

The Delaware Population Consortium projects that the population will grow by approximately 2,800 people by 2030 for a total population of 75,579. By 2040, the population is projected to grow to over 76,000, an 8% increase from 2010 decennial count. These figures are still far below the city's mid-century population high point of 112,504.

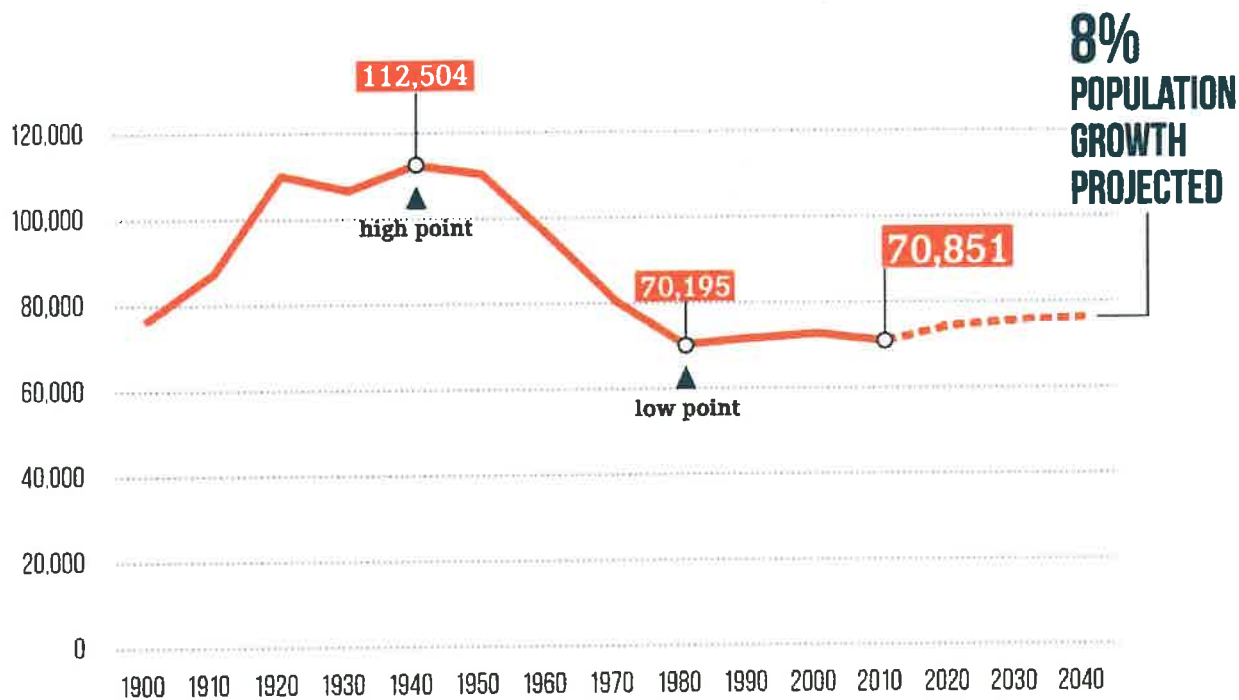
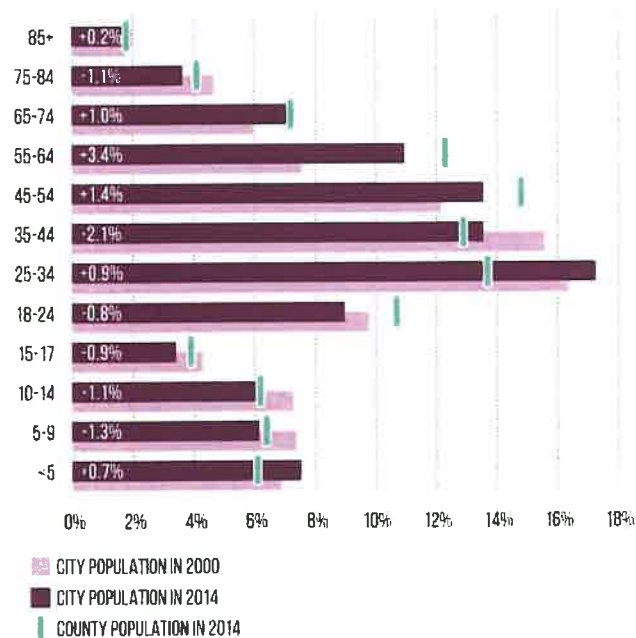


Figure 2 **Population trend and projection from 1900 to 2040**  
Source: US Census, Delaware Population Consortium



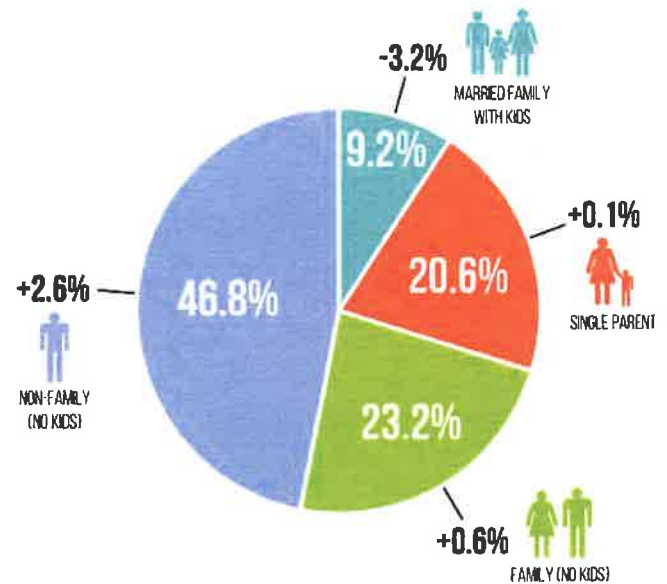
## Age distribution and household type

Between 2000 and 2015, Wilmington gained population among 25-34 year olds, outpacing the county. Residents 55 years and older have also increased since 2000. However, the share of children under 18 and adults 35-44 declined.



**Figure 4 Age distribution of City and County 2000-2015**  
Source: US Census, 2000. American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates

Over the same period, the share of married families with children declined in the city by 3.2%, while non-family households grew 2.6%. Non-family households with no children made up 46.8% of the households, family households with no children made up 23.2%, single parent households made up 20.6%, and married family households with children made up 9.2%.



**Figure 5 Household types with percent change 2000-2015**  
Source: US Census, 2000. American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates



**Figure 3 Projected change in population and diversity, 1990-2040**

Source: US Census (1990, 2000, 2010), Delaware Population Consortium

"Other" includes American Indian and Alaska Native Alone, Asian Alone, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone, Some Other Race Alone, and Two or More Races

## Race and ethnicity

Wilmington has become a more diverse city in the past 25 years with a growing Hispanic and Latinx population. According to 2014 American Community Survey estimates, the population was 28.9% white (not Hispanic or Latinx), 54.6% black (not Hispanic or Latinx), 1.1% Asian, and 1.8% other (which includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and two or more races). Additionally, 13.6% of the population identified as Hispanic or Latinx of any race. The foreign-born population has grown and was estimated to be 7% of the population in 2014, and almost 15% of Wilmington residents speak a language other than English at home.

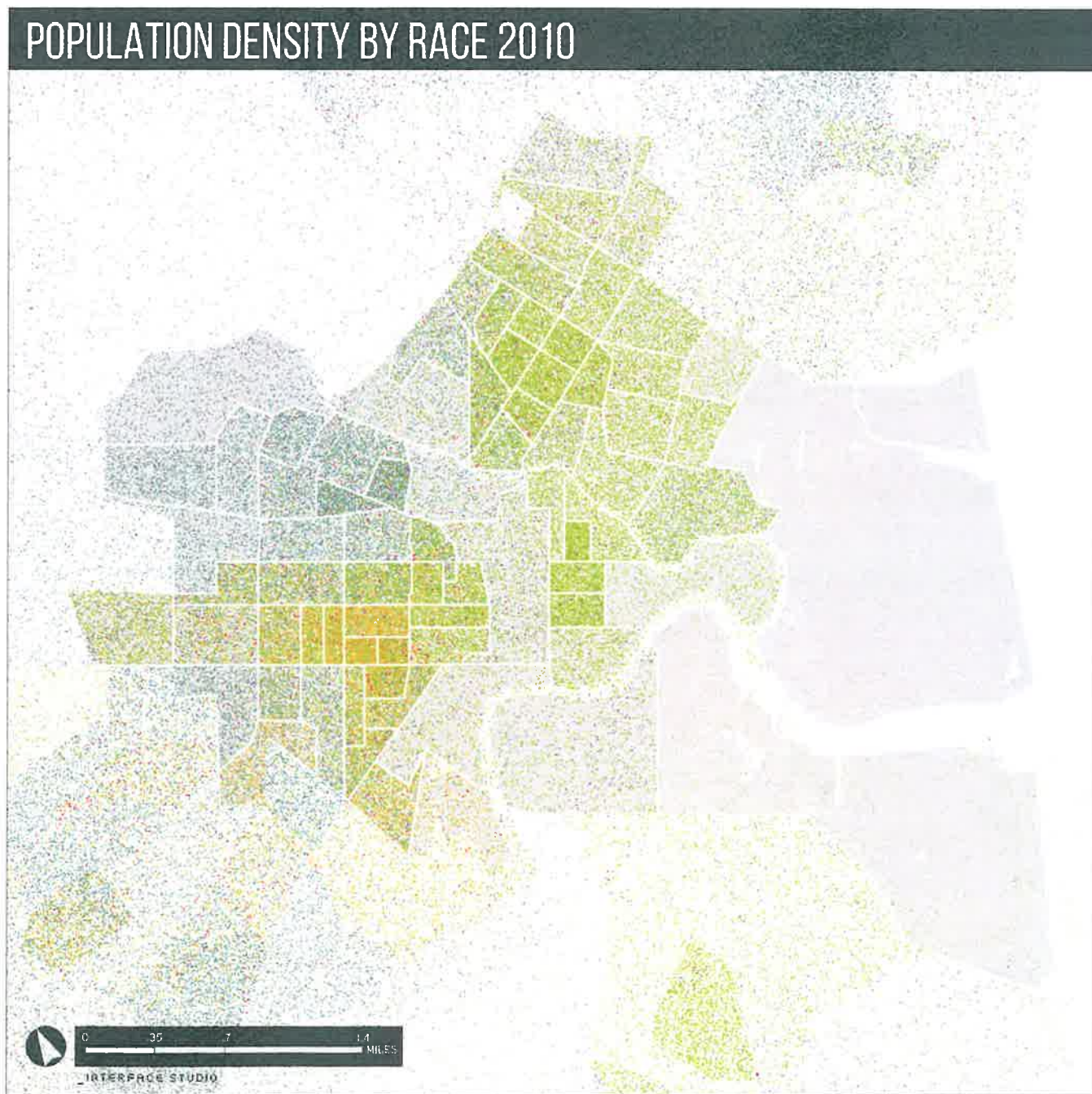


Figure 6 **Map of population density by race, 2010**  
Source: US Census 2010

1 Dot = 1 Person

White Black Hispanic Other

## Income and Poverty

According to 2014 American Community Survey estimates, the median household income in **Wilmington** was \$38,979, 35% lower than the state median income of \$60,231 and 40% lower than the county median income of \$64,857.

The poverty rate in the city was 22.6%, more than 2.5 times the statewide poverty rate, and has been rising each year since 2009. Poverty disproportionately impacts children in Wilmington. Nearly 40% of children in Wilmington live in poverty, which is more than double the rate for children in the region.

In some census tracts within Wilmington, the poverty rate ranges from 40 to 69%. These high poverty neighborhoods overwhelmingly impact the city's largest minority populations. In Wilmington's census tracts where more than 1 in 5 residents live in poverty, 75% or more of residents are African-American or Hispanic.

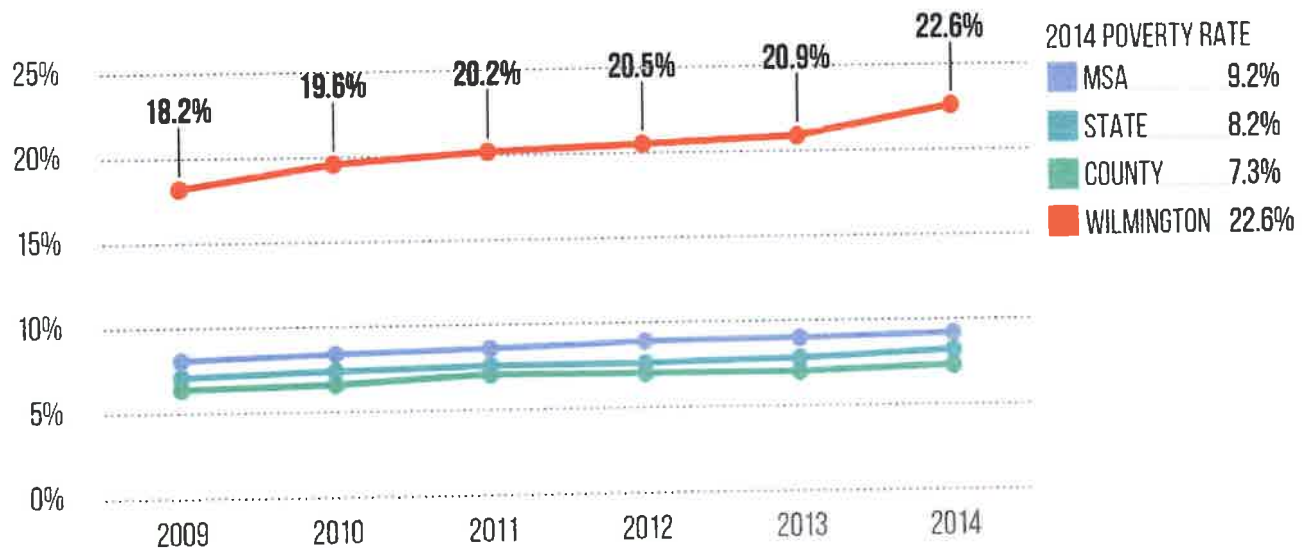


Figure 7 **Poverty rate, 2009-2014**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 5-yr estimates (2005-2009 through 2010-2014)



## PERCENT LIVING IN POVERTY 2014

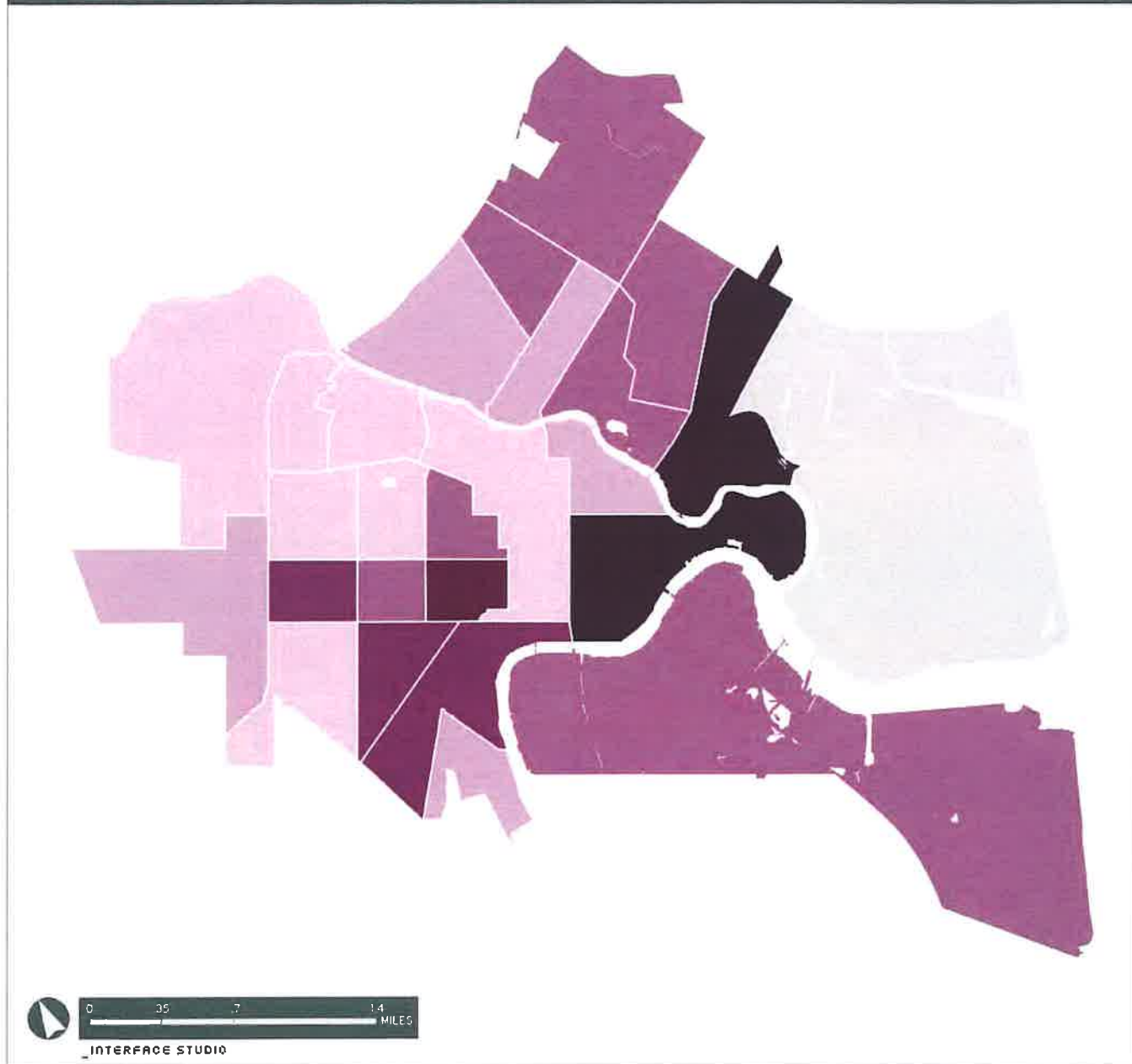


Figure 8 **Map of percent living in poverty**  
Source: US Census, ACS 2010-2014 (5-Year Estimates)

50%+	30 - 40%	10 - 20%	No Residents
40 - 50%	20 - 30%	0 - 10%	



The best little city in America!

A great city to live. It is just the right size to enjoy the conveniences of urban cities in a small tight-knit community.

A place where inner city kids will get a great education and feel proud to call Wilmington their home.

A unique and affordable small city

Residents feel comfortable walking the streets, sitting on porches, and just loving and looking out for each other.

Mixed-income housing would be more effective and just.

In the 21st century...the success of cities will be [determined by] the competition for talent, and those cities that have been successful at attracting and retaining talent are those that nurture the creative environment.

more amenities close by and more community gatherings

Wilmington needs to be an attractive place for people to live to meet our greenhouse gas goals.

A safe and clean city with excellent schools and thriving businesses.

This is a small city with the potential to be a great small city...a 24 hour city and not just an employment center.

Become a city of cultural diversity. Be a destination for music, art, and dining. Embrace the creative economy!

A healthy, safe and vibrant city with parks, bike and pedestrian priorities, jobs and affordable housing for low-income residents.

We need to talk about the strengths of the different neighborhoods.

The value of the corridors need to be redefined and become more meaningful to the people who live around them.

Wilmington is a beautiful, wonderful city. The architecture is amazing and the art scene is incredible for a city of its size...

Create an environment where young people will be happy to participate.

better walkable spaces connecting to other areas

Your Vision for 2028: quotes from public forums, interviews, focus groups, and survey

Wilmington

2028

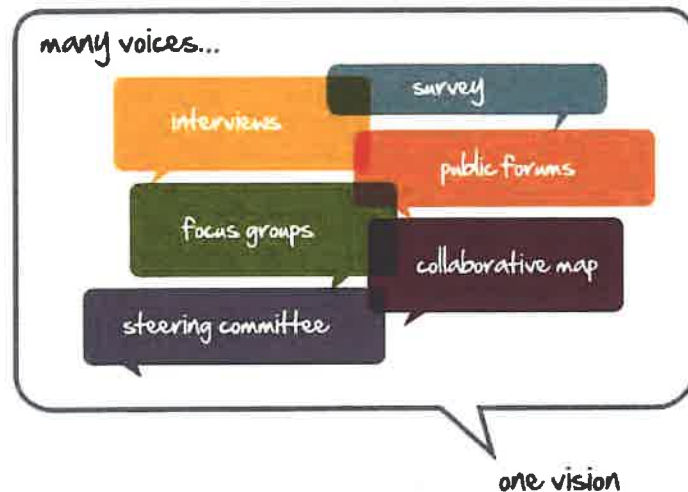
A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities

# 3

## VISION AND GOALS

“Setting ambitious goals that will inspire us...and imagining the city as we want it to be and not as it is”

- Mayor Michael Purzycki, Inaugural address



### Vision

Wilmington is a **great small city** that offers a high quality of life. It combines the attractions of cosmopolitan city life with a tight-knit and welcoming community. It is a **city of opportunity** for everyone. It has a robust economy, plenty to do with a vibrant cultural community and abundant recreational options, and support for homegrown creativity and innovation that create local jobs and enrich lives. It is a **diverse and family-friendly city** where people look out for one another, and are proud to live and work in the community. It is a **safe, healthy and attractive city** of beautiful parks and historic neighborhoods that are walkable and bikeable, where residents have easy access to community amenities. It is a **resilient and sustainable city** that embraces green design to protect the well-being of its people and businesses. And most of all, it is a **city of connected neighborhoods and communities** where people, organizations, the City and the State are working together toward a shared future.

### Guiding Principles

These guiding principles animate the plan across all the goal areas and elements:

- **Equity:** opportunity for everyone and all neighborhoods
- **Health:** people and neighborhoods have what they need to be healthy
- **Sustainability:** economic and environmental systems that are mutually supportive
- **Resilience:** ability to bounce back from economic and environmental changes
- **Safety:** a safe environment for everyone in all neighborhoods





Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018.  
Source: Interface Studio

## Five Goal Areas

### 1. Strong and safe neighborhoods:

This section of the plan is about the city's physical environment including housing, community character, historic and cultural resources, and open space and recreation, and is organized through the following goals:

- Goal 1.1: Promote walkable neighborhoods with access to jobs, services and amenities
- Goal 1.2: Ensure all residents have access to quality housing that is affordable, resilient and offers choice
- Goal 1.3: Reduce neighborhood blight and crime
- Goal 1.4: Ensure neighborhoods have access to high quality, welcoming public spaces and recreation
- Goal 1.5: Support neighborhood character, cohesion and pride

### 2. Healthy and thriving communities:

This section of the plan focuses on the city's people, developing human capital and community capacity through community building, health, and services, and is organized through the following goals:

- Goal 2.1: Ensure all youth have opportunities to shape their future in and out of school
- Goal 2.2: Encourage a coordinated and holistic approach to service provision and access
- Goal 2.3: Make healthy living the default choice
- Goal 2.4: Build community capacity and civic engagement



### **3. Robust local economy:**

This section of the plan is about building a resilient and diverse economy, and is organized through the following goals:

- Goal 3.1: Encourage a diverse and inclusive local economy in all neighborhoods
- Goal 3.2: Invest in training to access the jobs and opportunities of today and tomorrow
- Goal 3.3: Ensure that Wilmington is a city where inclusive businesses can thrive
- Goal 3.4: Promote city assets to attract and retain residents, employers and investment

### **4. Connected city and region:**

This section of the plan is about transportation and mobility for all that is balanced, and is organized through the following goals:

- Goal 4.1: Connect across Wilmington and throughout the region via a multimodal network that gives residents affordable, high-quality transportation choices
- Goal 4.2: Use streets to enhance the city's economic vitality, safety, health, and environment
- Goal 4.3: Optimize parking to provide the right amount of parking, in the right locations, at the right price
- Goal 4.4: Evaluate the potential of new technologies and transportation ideas through pilot testing

### **5. Sustainable and resilient city:**

This section of the plan is about city infrastructure and services, resource conservation, and climate readiness, and is organized through the following goals:

- Goal 5.1: Provide high quality city services, facilities and infrastructure for existing and future residents and businesses
- Goal 5.2: Conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to protect air and water quality and mitigate city's contribution to climate change
- Goal 5.3: Promote resilience to climate change and flooding in all long-range planning, critical public facilities and infrastructure
- Goal 5.4: Promote community greening and sustainable practices for aesthetic and environmental benefit

# 4

# RECOMMENDATIONS





# 1. STRONG AND SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

## OVERVIEW

Residents' well-being depends in large part on the qualities of their neighborhoods and communities. Wilmington retains a compact urban form with distinctive neighborhoods, parks, and a variety of desirable housing stock that is predominantly composed of row houses but also includes detached single family homes and apartment buildings. While these qualities give all neighborhoods the foundation to be healthy and walkable, neighborhoods vary significantly and persistent poverty compounds indicators of neighborhood health such as rising vacancy, housing cost burden, and crime. This section of the plan addresses the components of strong and safe neighborhoods to promote social, economic, and physical health for all residents.



Figure 9 **Wilmington neighborhoods map**  
Source: City of Wilmington



## Housing

### HOUSING INVENTORY

In 2014, the city's total number of housing units were estimated to be 34,635 of which 16% were vacant. Most of the housing, 64%, consisted of single family units (53% in attached units and 11% in detached units) and 35% were multifamily units. Of occupied units, almost three quarters are 50 years old or older and the greatest proportion of housing, 42.5%, were built in 1939 or earlier.

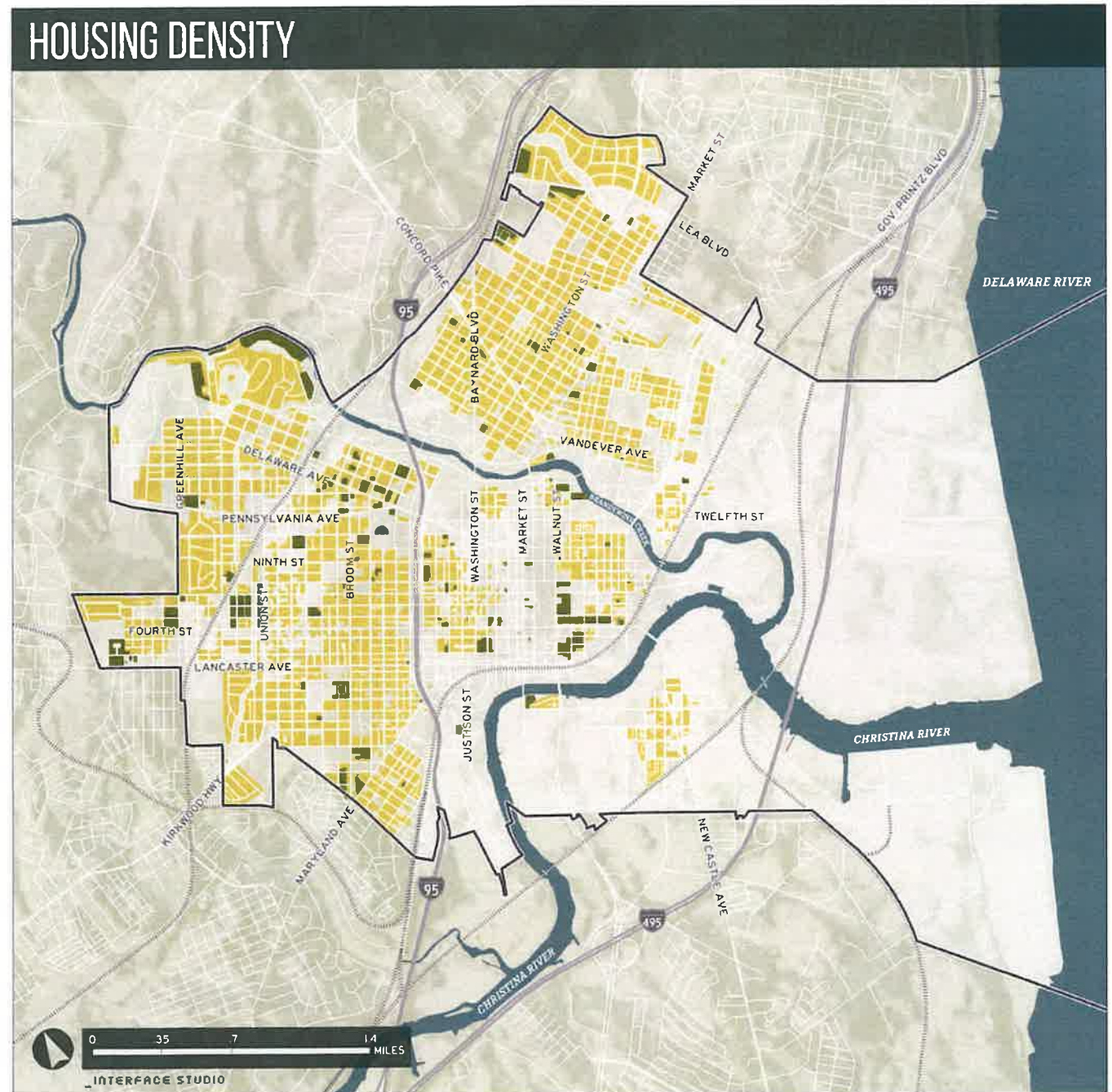


Figure 10 Housing density map  
Source: City of Wilmington

According to data from the 2014-2015 Delaware Affordable Housing Services Directory, 17% of all housing units are affordable rental units. Of these, 60% are family units, 35% are elderly, 1% are for the disabled, and 4% are single room occupancy.

This housing inventory uses American Community Survey 5-year estimates and is not a count of housing, which is done every 10 years with the next decennial census occurring in 2020. It is important to note that a number of new residential projects may not be reflected in these estimates: for example, approximately 1,800 housing units have been built, mainly downtown and on the riverfront, since the 2010 decennial count, of which over 700 units were completed in 2014 or after.

Approximately 1,000 new housing units are under construction or planned in Wilmington, including in the Downtown District, along Pennsylvania Avenue near Union Street and on both the Christina and Brandywine rivers.

## AFFORDABILITY

Between 2000 and 2014, there were significant gains in median home values across the city, with the highest home values concentrated downtown and in the northwestern areas. However, housing costs are burdensome for 37% of Wilmington households: more than half of renter households (51%) and about a third of homeowner households (31%) pay more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs. Homeownership rates declined to 46% in 2014 from 50% in 2000.

The median home value in 2014 was \$171,400 and the median gross rent was \$910. A household income of \$49,000 is needed to afford a house with the median home price, which is over \$10,000 more than the median household income of \$38,979. Similarly, renter median household incomes fall \$10,000 short of the annual income needed to afford the median gross rent.

According to New Castle County Sheriff data, there were 908 foreclosure filings in Wilmington from 2013-2014, a rate of 3.3 foreclosure filings for every 100 residential parcels, which was three times the national rate. The rate of foreclosure filings varied across the city, with elevated rates found in the 11th Street Bridge, Upper East Side, Southbridge, Browntown and Hilltop neighborhoods.

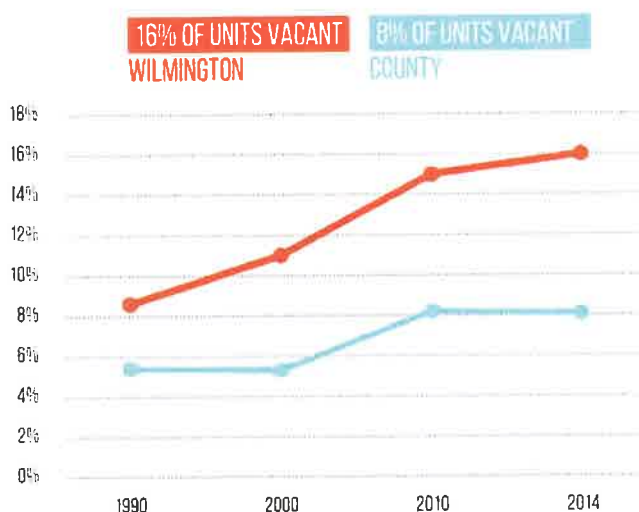


Figure 11 **Percent of housing units that are vacant**  
Source: U.S. Census (1990, 2000, 2010), ACS 5-Year Estimates (2010-2014)



Figure 12 **Homeownership rates, 2000-2014**  
Source: US Census (2000, 2010), ACS 5-Year Estimates (2010-2014)

## OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS AS A % OF ALL OCCUPIED UNITS 2010

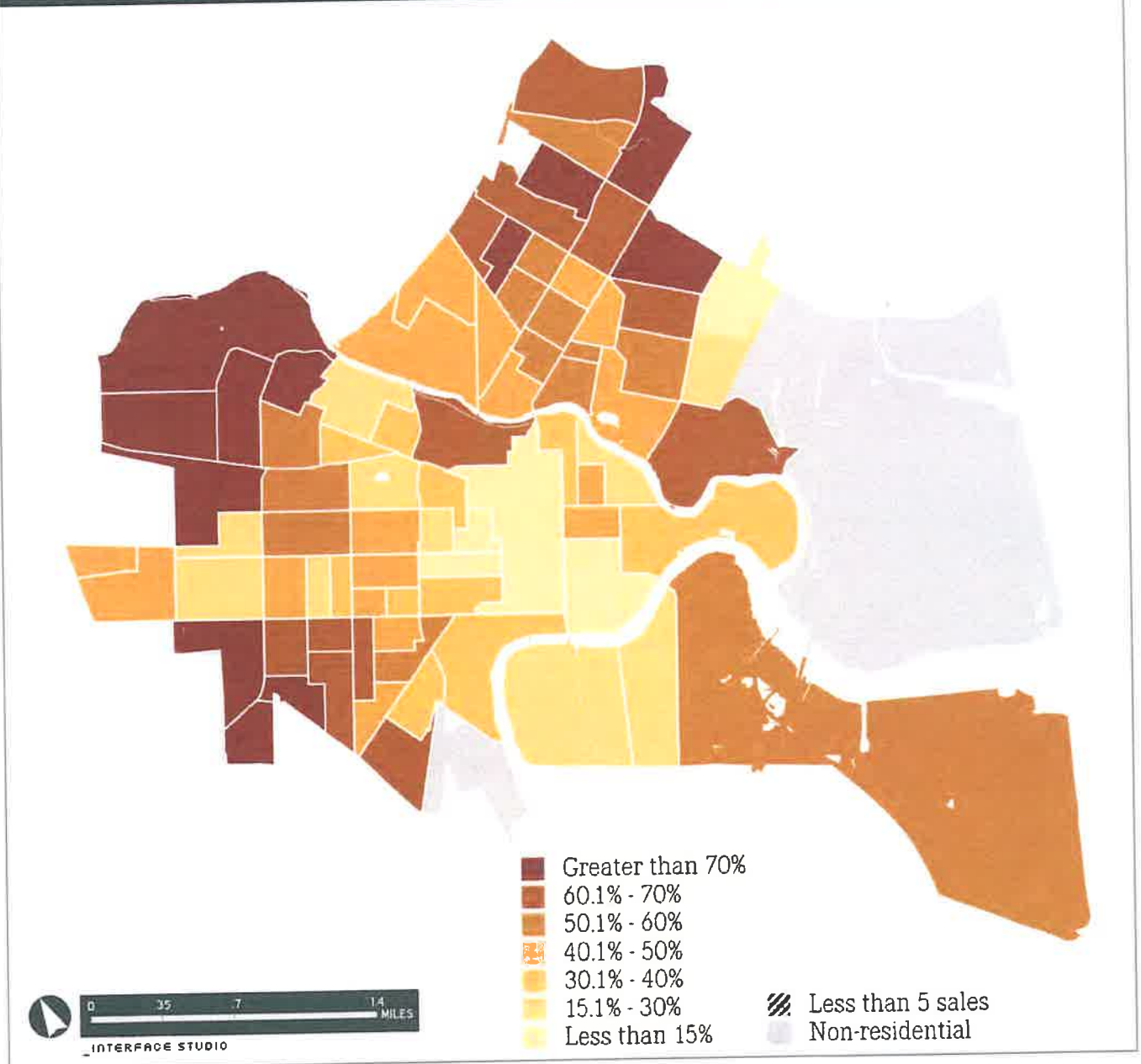


Figure 13 **Map of percent owner occupied housing, 2010**  
Source: The Reinvestment Fund (TRF)



## HOUSING NEED

In its Five-Year Consolidated Plan for FY 2016-2020, the City identified low-to-moderate income (LMI) households with incomes less than 50% of the area median income (AMI), particularly those with extremely low-incomes of less than 30% of AMI, as priorities, along with special needs populations such as the homeless, persons at risk of homelessness, the elderly and persons with disabilities. According to 2008-2012 CHAS data from the Consolidated Plan, 11,635 households have incomes less than 50% of the HUD Adjusted Median Family Income (HAMFI) and 6,775 households have incomes less than 30% of HAMFI.

The Consolidated Plan identified housing cost burden as the most common problem, as well as quality affordable housing and homeownership, especially in the older central neighborhoods where housing stock is old and expensive to modernize. Populations most affected by housing problems are extremely low-income households, small households, elderly households and renter households.

Homelessness and risk for homeless are also concerns for these populations. The Consolidated Plan does not provide estimates of those at risk of becoming homeless but describes extremely low-income households with severe housing cost burden as at risk of homelessness. According to HUD this includes 1,570 non-elderly family renter households, 540 elderly renter households and 1,860 other (mostly single-person) households.

The Delaware Population Consortium projects a population of 75,579 by 2030 which translates to approximately 31,491 households assuming an average household size of 2.4. The city's total 34,635 housing units from 2014 American Community Survey estimate, plus the additional 1,700 built or in the pipeline since 2014, are more than sufficient to meet the city's projected housing needs.<sup>1</sup> According to the Consolidated Plan, approximately 75% of units (19,875 rental units and 6,325 owner units) are affordable to households earning 80% of HAMFI and 27% of units (7,695 rental units and 1,785 owner units) are affordable to households earning 50% of HAMFI.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES

The City stimulates and supports neighborhood revitalization efforts and new development projects that promote homeownership and quality affordable rental housing. The City works with community housing development organizations, the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank and developers to find sites for infill development of affordable housing, and prepares sites through its acquisition, demolition, and clearance programs. The City also administers a housing rehabilitation program to assist in urgent maintenance and repairs for low-income households, and disseminates information about projects and financial resources to homeowners for maintaining and improving their properties.

The City's priorities for the 5-year period of 2016-2020 as stated in the Consolidated Plan are aligned with this comprehensive plan:

- Increase the supply of quality affordable housing
- Improve the quality of the existing housing stock
- Reduce the impact of neglected and vacant properties
- Engage in targeted comprehensive neighborhood revitalization
- Reduce the number of vacant properties
- Provide housing opportunities and supportive services for the homeless
- Help all City residents meet basic social and economic needs.

<sup>1</sup> This assumes a one-to-one correlation without consideration of rental vs homeownership needs and that probably at least 10% of the housing stock fails to meet Housing Quality Standards. Thus, a further, in-depth study would be needed to determine housing availability versus housing demand with an emphasis on rental demand/availability and homeownership demand/availability. In addition, one needs to also take into consideration the affordability factor.

## Community Conditions

### VACANCY AND BLIGHT

Wilmington's housing vacancy rate of 16% in 2014 has risen steadily since 1990 and was double the New Castle County rate of 8%. Neighborhoods such as the East Side, West Center City, the 9th Ward area, Price's Run and Hilltop are hardest hit by vacancy which also correlates with other factors such as persistent poverty, crime and limited access to open space.

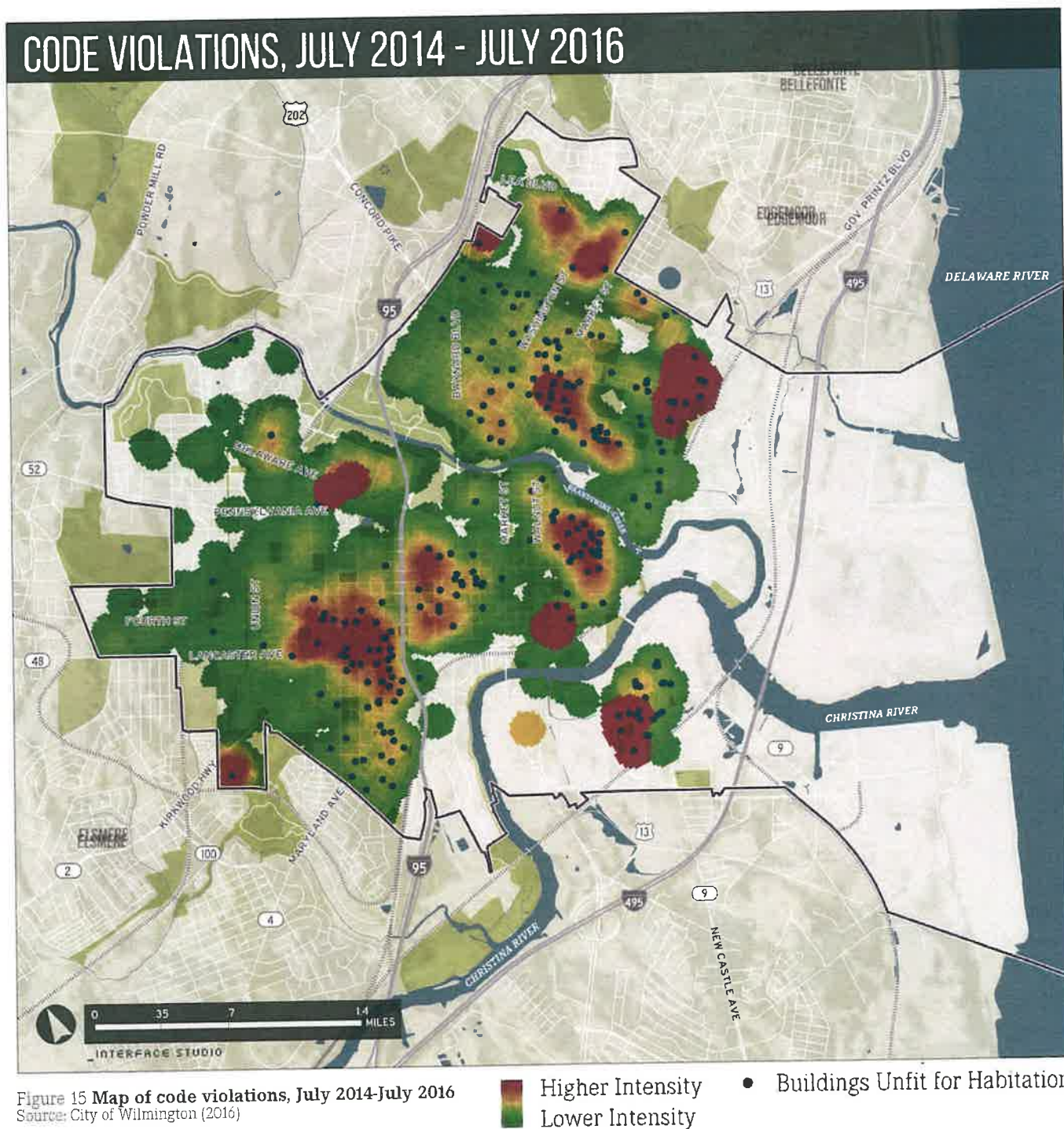


Figure 14 Map of vacancy, 2018  
Source: City of Wilmington (2018)

■ Vacant parcels ■ Vacant parcels with buildings



Code violations for the period 2014-2016 were also concentrated in some of these neighborhoods - Price's Run, the East Side, West Center City, and Hilltop - as well as parts of Southbridge, Riverside, Harlan, Delaware Avenue, Canby Park, and between Concord Avenue and Baynard Boulevard.





## CRIME

Crime is a serious concern but there have been positive trends in 2018. Property crime has declined from high levels in the 1990s with a rate of 1000/10,000 residents to a rate of 525/10,000 residents in 2014. While violent crime remains high for a city of Wilmington's size - Wilmington's violent crime rate of 164 incidents per 10,000 residents places it lower than Camden's rate of 203 but higher than Philadelphia's 102 - overall crime across all categories have shown a 14% drop in 2018 over 2017, according to Wilmington Police Department CompStat figures.<sup>2</sup> Gun violence is a particular threat to the city's youth, where roughly 3 out of every 1,000 teens are injured or killed by gun violence each year.<sup>3</sup> However, 2018 CompStat figures show a 56% drop in all shooting incidents over 2017, including a 56% drop in juvenile shooting incidents.

Violent crime is highest in neighborhoods where poverty and blight are also concerns, such as the East Side, West Center City, the 9th Ward area, Price's Run and Hilltop. There are many factors that contribute to crime and a multipronged strategy is needed that addresses vacancy and blight, opportunity, and family stability. This goal area addresses the physical environment but other sections of this plan that focus on people and the economy are also critical components of a comprehensive approach to crime reduction.

<sup>2</sup> Wilmington Police Department. (2018) CompStat Crime Complaints, Volume 2, Number 52. Retrieved from <https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=6820>  
<sup>3</sup> Horn, Reyes, Parra, Jedra, & Fenn. (2017, September 9). Wilmington: most dangerous place in America for youth. Retrieved from <https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/crime/2017/09/08/our-babies-killing-each-other/100135370/>

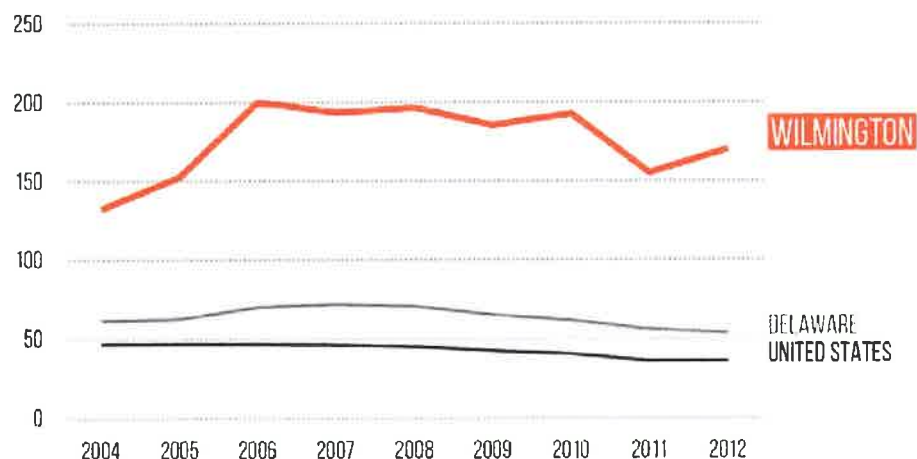


Figure 16 **Violent crimes per 10,000 residents, 2004-2012**  
 Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports as prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data

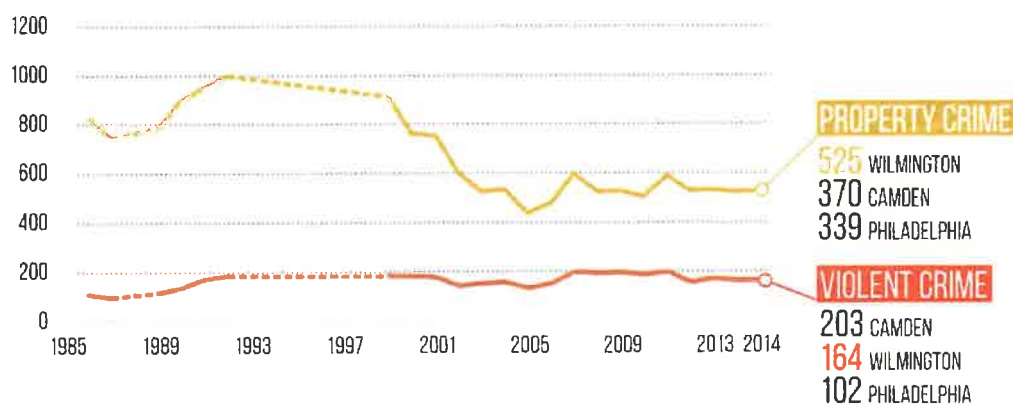


Figure 17 **Violent and property crime rate per 10,000 residents, 1984-2014**  
 Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports as prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data  
 Dotted lines indicate years for which data is not available.

# VIOLENT CRIME HOTSPOTS 2012-2017

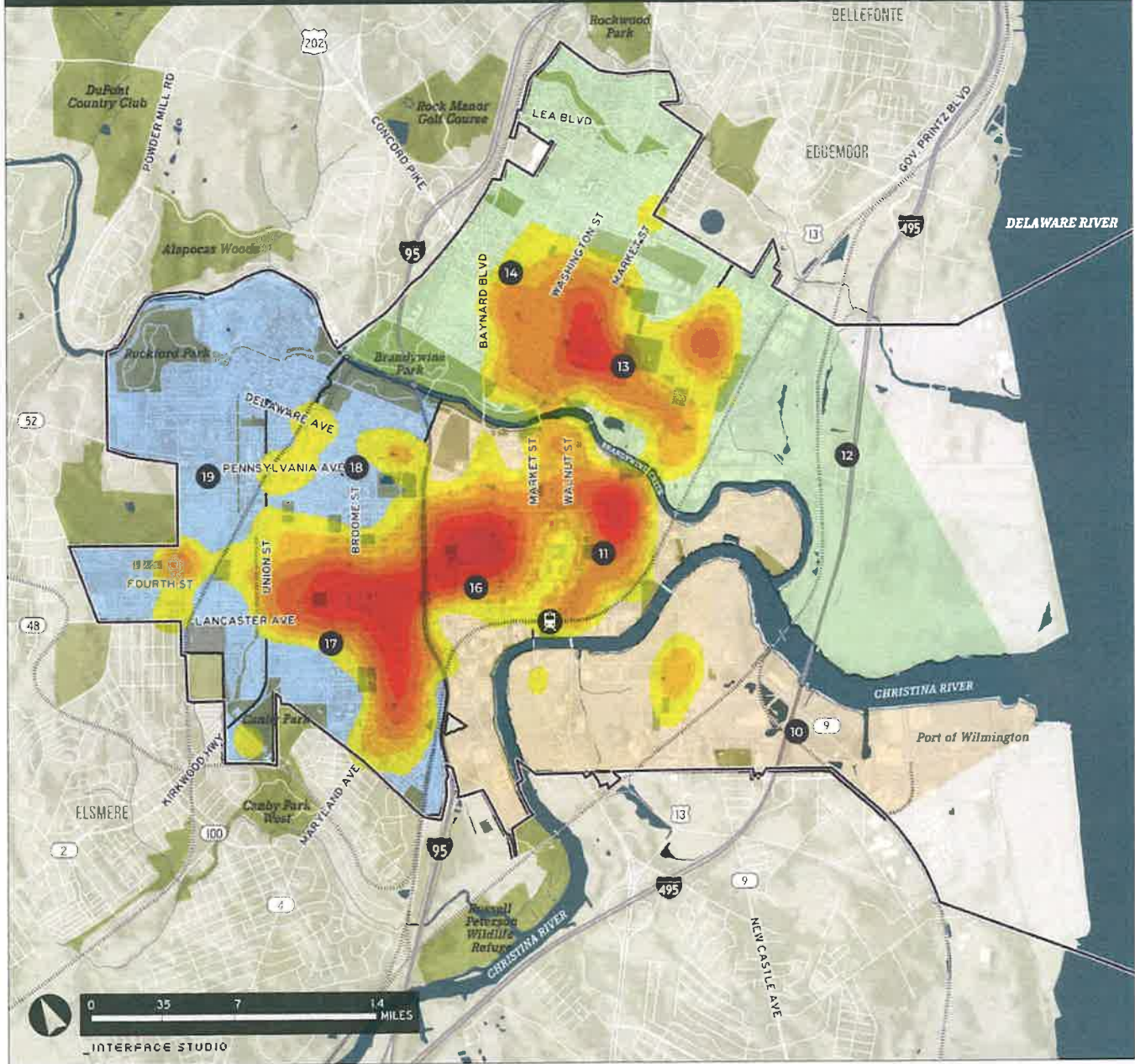


Figure 18 Map of violent crime hotspots, 2012-2017  
Source: Wilmington Police Department (2017)

## Violent Crimes

2,716 - 3,551	823 - 1,184
2,090 - 2,715	544 - 822
1,616 - 2,089	306 - 543
1,185 - 1,615	

## # Police District

- Sector 1
- Sector 2
- Sector 3



# PARKS BY OWNERSHIP

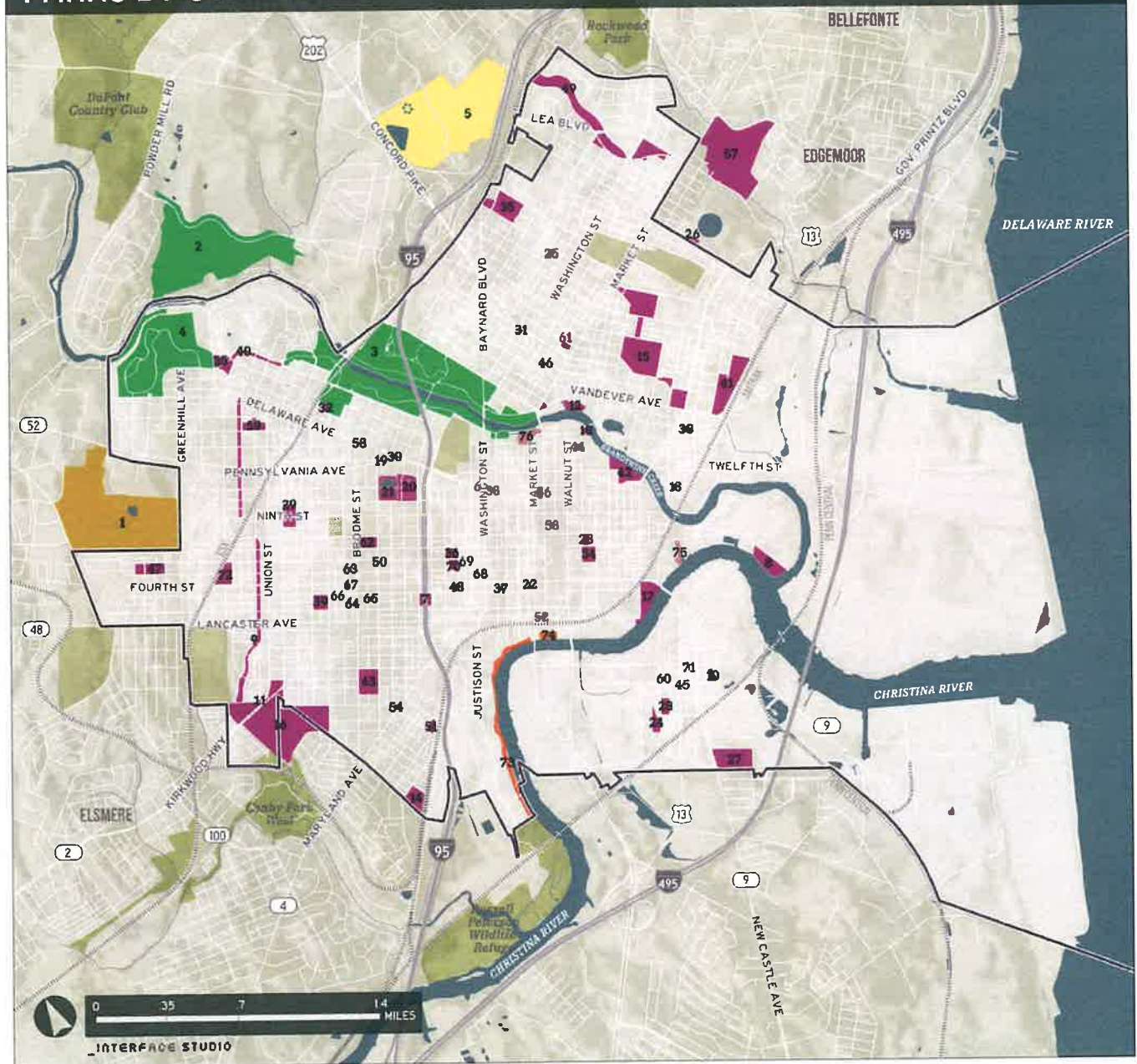


Figure 19 Parks and recreational facilities map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## City-owned parkland leased to county

- 1 Ed "Porky" Oliver Golf Club

## City-owned parkland managed by state

- 2 Ajapocas Woods
- 3 Brandywine Park
- 4 Rockford Park

## City-owned parkland privately operated

- 5 Rock Manor Golf Course

## Park & recreation facility

- 6 11th & Washington Sts. Triangle
- 7 Adams St. Courts
- 8 Babiarz Park

- 9 Bancroft Pkwy
- 10 Barbara Hicks Playground
- 11 Barry & Union Sts. Triangle
- 12 Brandywine Mills Park
- 13 Brandywine Playground
- 14 Brown Park/Eddie Cihocki Field
- 15 Brown/Burton/Winchester Park
- 16 Canby Park
- 17 Christina Park
- 18 Clifford Brown Plaza
- 19 Columbus Triangle
- 20 Cool Spring Park



- 21 Cool Spring Reservoir Plaza
- 22 Del. Tech & Comm. College Plaza
- 23 Dr. Foster M. Brown Community Pool
- 24 Dugan Field
- 25 Eastlake Playground
- 26 Eastlawn Playground
- 27 Eden Park
- 28 Elbert Playground
- 29 Father Tucker Park
- 30 Fountain Plaza
- 31 Garfield Triangle
- 32 Gilpin Playground
- 33 H.B. DuPont Plaza
- 34 H.M. Holloway Sr. Park
- 35 Haynes Park
- 36 Helen Chambers Playground
- 37 Jennie Weaver Playground
- 38 Johnston Playground
- 39 Judy Johnson Park
- 40 Kentmere Parkway
- 41 Kingswood Complex
- 42 Kirkwood Park
- 43 Kosciuszko Park
- 44 Kruse Playground
- 45 Lot: B & Heald Sts.
- 46 Louis L. Redding Park
- 47 Mack Park
- 48 Madison St. Playground
- 49 Matson Run Pkwy
- 50 McCoy Park
- 51 Michaels' Playground
- 52 MLK Blvd & King St. Median
- 53 Peter Spencer Plaza
- 54 Pulaski Triangle
- 55 Rockford Grove
- 56 Rodney Square
- 57 Sellers Park
- 58 Soldiers and Sailors' Monument Park
- 59 Stapler Park
- 60 Stoney Davis Park
- 61 Tatnall Playground
- 62 Tilton Park
- 63 Tot Lot: 1405 W. 5th St.
- 64 Tot Lot: 217 N. Fulton St.
- 65 Tot Lot: 222 N. Connell St.
- 66 Tot Lot: 237 N. Rodney St.
- 67 Tot Lot: 314 N. Rodney St.
- 68 Tot Lot: Freedom, 5th; & Jefferson Sts.
- 69 Tot Lot: Madison St.
- 70 William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center
- 71 Winston A. Truitt Triangle
- 72 Woodlawn Park
- Owned and maintained by RDC**
- 73 River Walk
- 74 Tubman-Garrett Riverfront Park
- State Park**
- 75 Fort Christina Park
- 76 H. Fletcher Brown Park

## Open Space

With a rich public space system of riverfronts, neighborhood parks, active recreation centers, tot lots and plazas throughout the neighborhoods, Wilmington has the potential to grow a vibrant and equitable public space system that reaches every corner of the city. Wilmington has 68 city parks and recreational facilities, two state parks, four City-owned/State-maintained parks, and two City-owned golf courses. This amounts to 7.6 acres of public parkland per 1,000 residents in Wilmington compared with a median of 9.7 acres in other medium-high density US cities.<sup>4</sup> Overall, Wilmington has excellent access to parks with 98% of Wilmington residents living within a 10-minute walk to a park compared with a national average of 54%.<sup>5</sup> However, the quality, size and safety of the parks vary greatly with some densely populated neighborhoods having insufficient parkland for the number of residents who live nearby or parks that have maintenance or safety issues that impact their use. Although almost all residents fall within a quarter-mile walk of a park larger than a half-acre, affluent neighborhoods have access to 3.6 times as much park space as high poverty neighborhoods. For example, in census tracts where the poverty rate exceeds 30%, there are only 3.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents whereas census tracts where poverty rates are less than 10% have an average of 13.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

<sup>4</sup> Trust for Public Land. (2015).

<sup>5</sup> Trust for Public Land. (n.d.). ParkServe. Retrieved from <https://parkservetpl.org/city/id/1077580/>

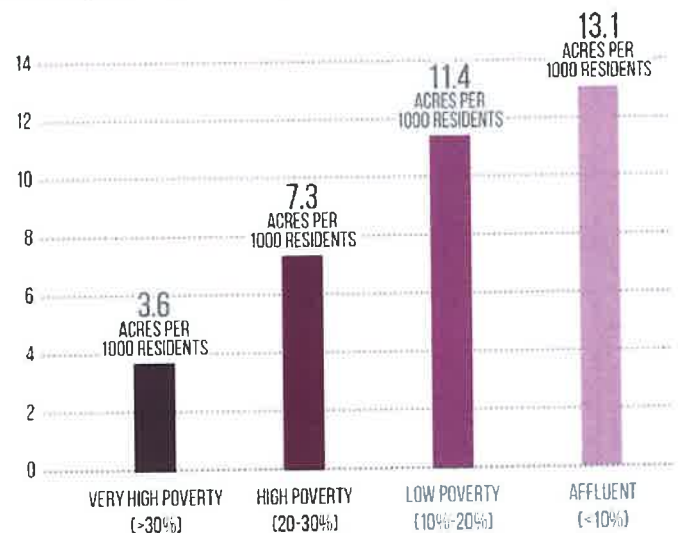


Figure 20 Average park acres per 1000 residents\* by census tract poverty rating

\*Based on population within a quarter mile of each park; see Figure 21 map

## LOCAL PARK SUPPLY



Figure 21 Map of park acres per 1,000 residents

Based on population within a quarter mile of each park. Empty areas contain no residential parcels.

Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

- No park acres within 1/4 mile
- 0.1 - 0.9 acres
- 1 - 4.9 acres
- 5 - 9.9 acres
- 10 - 24.9 acres
- Over 25 acres
- Park within city limits

Empty areas contain no residential parcels



## Community Character and Historic/Cultural Resources

Wilmington's neighborhoods are diverse and distinctive. Most neighborhoods are primarily residential and composed of medium density row houses with neighborhood-serving businesses and institutions. Downtown and the riverfront are more mixed in their uses and building types and have seen the bulk of higher density new construction. Commercial activity and cultural institutions are concentrated in these areas. Other neighborhood commercial areas in the city include Trolley Square, Little Italy and Union Street, and North Market Street.

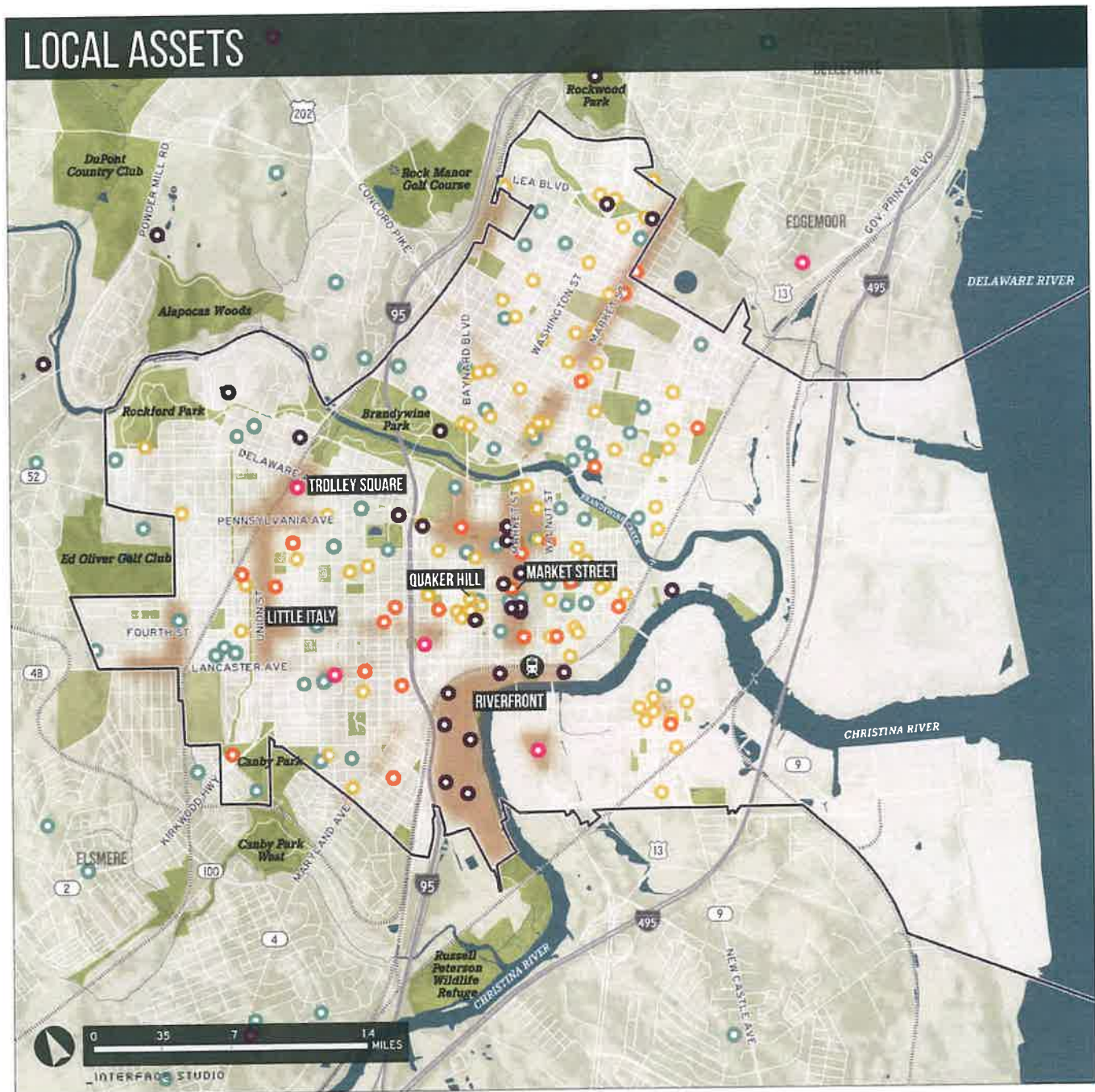
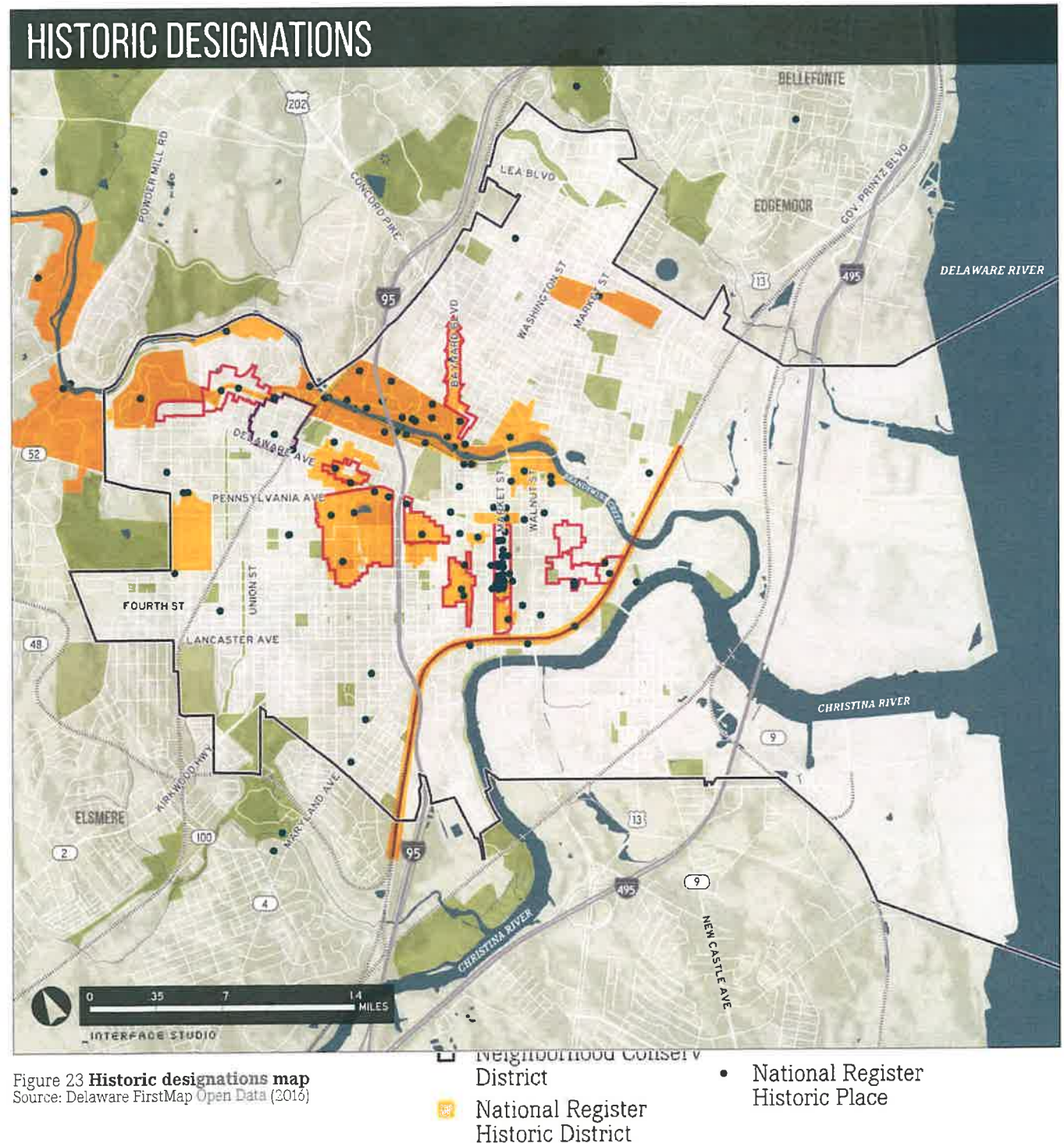


Figure 22 Local assets map  
Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

- Art/Culture/Entertainment
- Education
- Religion
- Community
- Supermarket/Commercial Area



Wilmington has a rich history with buildings dating to the 1700s, displaying popular styles from the Revolution through late 20th century. These include Federal, Queen Anne, and American Four Square, which are found in quantity, and examples of Second Empire, Richardson Romanesque, Italian Villa, Greek Revival, Georgian, Art Deco and International Style. The city has 17 historic districts and 48 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, three districts and one individual place have a “determined eligible” designation. The City uses overlay zoning for City Historic Districts and a Neighborhood Conservation District to regulate and protect its architectural heritage.



## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Residents rated parks and recreational opportunities (#2), local history and architecture (#4), and affordability (#6) among the best things about Wilmington.

Residents want to see more mixed use development and downtown revitalization, but also balance investments across the city. Residents ranked “downtown revitalization” among the top three improvements that would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington and when asked what they would focus on if they were Mayor of the city, the second highest number of resident-generated ideas fell within the theme of “revitalizing neighborhoods.” At the second public forum, of the more than 50 key recommendations, “encourage mixed use development, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas” and “balance investments between neighborhoods, downtown and the riverfront” were among the top voted recommendations, ranking sixth and seventh.

Affordability ranked among residents as one of the top five most important qualities of a neighborhood and “new and renovated housing” was among the top improvements that would make the greatest impact on quality of life. In the second public forum, “improve existing housing stock,” “develop new housing products and affordable housing,” and “promote pathways to homeownership” were among the top voted recommendations, ranking number eight, ten and eleven, respectively.

Safety was overwhelming chosen as both the most important quality residents looked for in a neighborhood and something that Wilmington needed to work on; 77% of residents said safety was the most important quality in a neighborhood, 65% gave the city a poor rating for safety, 47% gave the city a poor rating for “safe, attractive neighborhoods,” and 64% ranked “improved public safety” the number one thing that would have the biggest impact on quality of life in Wilmington. When asked what they would focus on if they were Mayor of the city, the fourth highest number of resident-generated ideas fell within the theme of “improving crime and safety.”

At the 2nd public forum, three recommendations related to public safety were among the top voted recommendations. “Expand the Neighborhood Stabilization Program in critical areas” received the most votes and more than three times as much funding in the forum’s participatory budgeting exercise compared to other recommendations. “Support Community Advisory Committee to reduce violence” came in third, and “support community engagement through community-based public safety” was ninth.

Although parks were ranked as the second best thing in Wilmington and are considered among the most important qualities of a neighborhood by residents, individual neighborhood parks received mixed ratings for quality. Brandywine Park and Rockford Park were most visited and earned high marks for park quality, while some neighborhood parks were highlighted as in need of improvement, such as Burton Brown Winchester, Eden Park, Hicks Park, Compton Park, Father Tucker Park, Canby Park, and Woodlawn Park. When asked what would make their neighborhood park better, maintenance and basic amenities (like lighting, seating, shade, bathrooms) were the top choices.

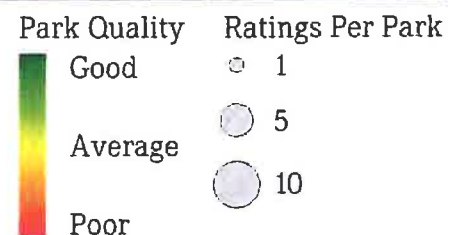
A sense of community was ranked the second most important quality of a neighborhood by residents and many residents expressed a desire for better community ties and sense of pride.

Of the five goal areas, the Strong and Safe Neighborhoods goals received the highest number of votes, with “Goal 1.3 Reduce neighborhood blight and crime” and “Goal 1.2 Ensure all residents have quality housing” selected as the highest priorities.





Figure 24 Map of public input on parks  
Source: Interface Studio, Public Forums 2017





# GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## GOAL 1.1: PROMOTE WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS WITH ACCESS TO JOBS, SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Mixed use, walkable development supports round-the-clock city life by attracting people and economic growth, and improves quality of life by bringing people closer to hubs of activity and opportunity.

**“I would like to see a vibrant thriving city, a lot more people living and working here...not just in the office towers.”**


**“My vision for 2028 is for every neighborhood to be a true mixed use neighborhood.”**

- **Encourage mixed use development in neighborhood commercial corridors and in the central business district.** Wilmington's downtown and Christina riverfront are attracting more residents, which brings more activity outside of the 9 to 5 workday. Other riverfront areas such as the east bank of the Christina around South Market Street and the EPA brownfield site and Northeast gateway on the north bank of the Brandywine Creek are infill and redevelopment opportunities where a greater mix of uses and activity can be created along with waterfront access and amenities. Mixed use should also be encouraged to create walkable neighborhood hubs of activity on North Market Street, Union Street, 4th Street, and Maryland Avenue, and the Creative District.
- **Catalyze infill and redevelopment opportunities.** Four areas in the city have been identified as redevelopment areas where major land use changes are anticipated due to concentrations of underutilized land. They include the Riverside Purpose-Built Community, the EPA brownfield site/Northeast gateway, the surface parking lots in Creative District, and the vacant and former industrial land in the South Market Waterfront. Unlocking the potential of these areas with mixed use development provides the best opportunity to transform the city with more residents and activity. These redevelopment areas fall within the boundaries of incentive programs such as the [Downtown Development District](http://destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_ddd.php) ([http://destatehousing.com/Developers/dv\\_ddd.php](http://destatehousing.com/Developers/dv_ddd.php)) and [Opportunity Zones](https://news.delaware.gov/2018/04/19/opportunity-zones/) (<https://news.delaware.gov/2018/04/19/opportunity-zones/>) that are designed to spur private investment and economic growth. These incentives include federal tax incentives, state investment rebates, local tax abatements, affordable bridge loans, and other state and local incentives. Additionally, the City can work with property owners to use the [Delaware Brownfields Marketplace](http://apps.dnrec.state.de.us/BFExt/BFExtMain.aspx) (<http://apps.dnrec.state.de.us/BFExt/BFExtMain.aspx>), an interactive database that contains a list of potential brownfield sites throughout Delaware.
- **Evaluate former public buildings, such as school buildings, for redevelopment.** Several school buildings are vacant or will be vacant in the near future, including Ebert-Palmer, Moyer, Pulaski, and Thomas Edison. The City and its partners should plan with the communities where these buildings are located to determine how best to reuse them.
- **Allow more intensive uses to provide jobs in proximity to where people live.** Special areas such as the Creative District and Employment Centers are prime opportunities to locate a broader range of jobs in the city, from tech innovation to manufacturing and assembly. Locating jobs for residents closer to where they live shortens commute times and reduces traffic and congestion, greatly improving quality of life. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.1 in Robust Local Economy]

# REDEVELOPMENT AREAS



Figure 25 Redevelopment areas map  
Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

-  Major areas of change
- ① Riverside Purpose-Built Area
  - ② EPA site/NE gateway
  - ③ Creative District/West Center City
  - ④ South Market Waterfront



# DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

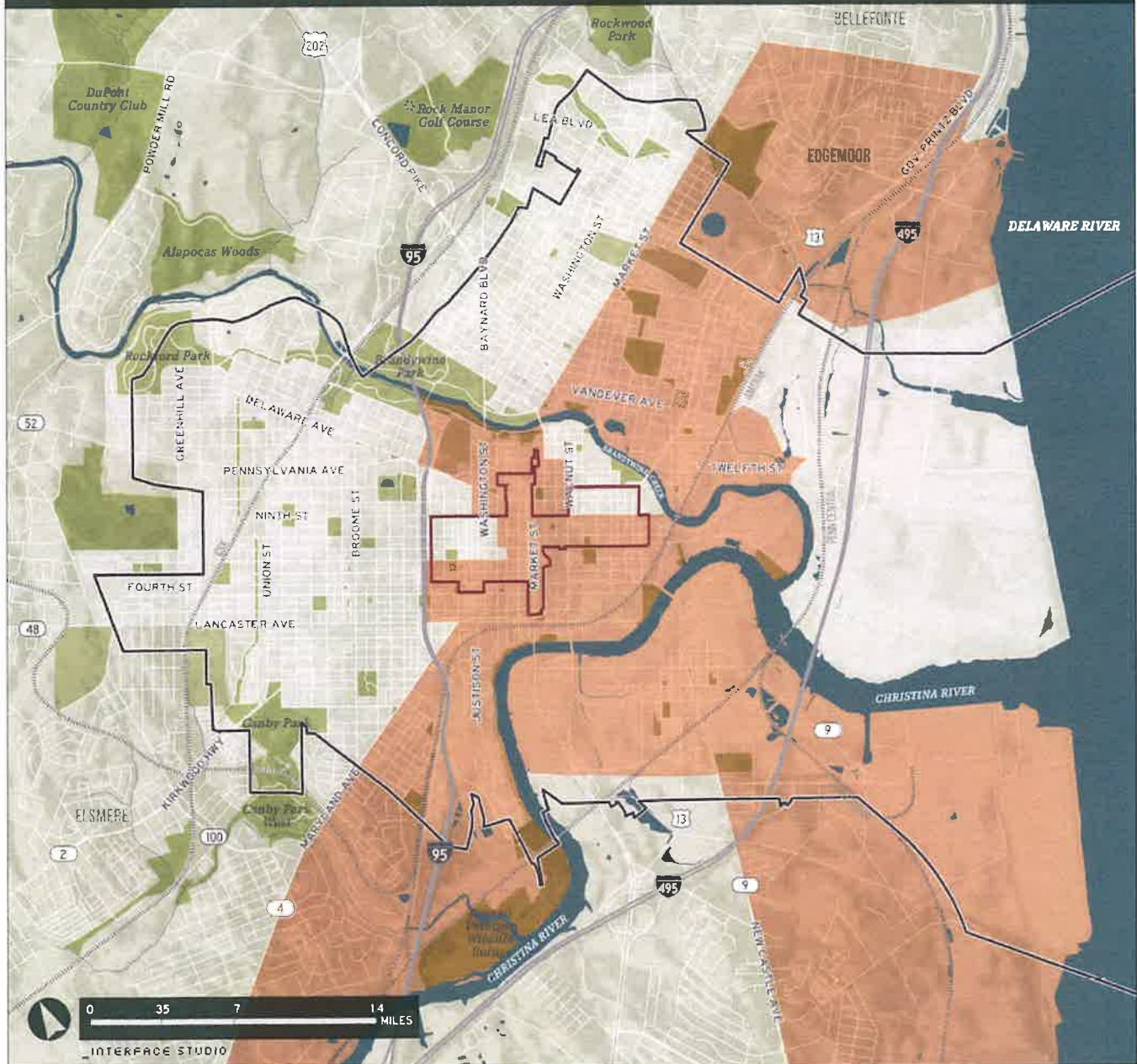


Figure 26 Development incentives map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- Opportunity Zones
- Downtown Development District



## GOAL 1.2: ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE AND OFFERS CHOICE

A range of housing choices is needed to retain and attract diverse residents, but housing insecurity is a concern for many of the city's lower income residents, destabilizing both households and neighborhoods. Helping residents maintain housing stability will strengthen neighborhoods and help residents benefit from neighborhood improvements.

**“Mixed-income housing would be more effective and just.”**

### Help residents achieve and maintain housing stability

- **Help existing residents maintain, improve and stay in their homes.** Housing insecurity is a major concern for low- and moderate-income households who live paycheck to paycheck with no savings to cover emergency events. Seniors and low- and moderate-income residents may struggle to maintain and repair housing or pay bills, leading to conditions where code violations, utility shut offs, evictions or foreclosures force them from their homes. The City of Wilmington can work with partners that provide assistance to help residents improve the condition of their homes and stay in their homes through:
  - Financial and technical assistance for basic repairs, weatherization and age-in-place retrofits;
  - Tax abatements for low-income households and seniors;
  - Utilities assistance to prevent shut offs;
  - Assistance to renters facing displacement due to landlord code violations, such as stabilization grants, low-cost loans for security deposits, moving costs, and legal assistance.
- **Promote pathways to homeownership for existing and new residents.** The City and its partners promote homeownership to existing residents to stabilize neighborhoods and ensure residents benefit from revitalization. This should include financial and technical assistance for low-, moderate- and middle-income renters who are looking to become first-time homebuyers. Plans include increasing access to low-interest lending, expanding lease-to-purchase and Live Where You Work programs, and re-establishing the city's urban homesteading program.

## Provide a range of housing choices to retain and attract diverse residents

- **Develop new affordable housing.** The City's Consolidated Plan outlines the mechanisms for affordable housing through programs such as CDBG, NSP, HOME and City Strategic Funds. The Housing Opportunity Fund is also used to promote housing projects but will need to be replenished. There are also other innovative strategies to consider such as:
  - Leveraging large-scale projects for social impact, including affordable housing and inclusive economic opportunity for local vendors [see also recommendations under Goal 3.1 in Robust Local Economy];
  - Using incentives such as density bonuses, expedited permitting and review, tax incentives, fee waivers, and reduced parking requirements in areas such as the Downtown Development District and Opportunity Zones

> **EXAMPLE:** parking requirements have already been eliminated in the C-3 and C-4 zoning areas of Wilmington's Zoning Code.

- Using the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank to target renovations and new construction for affordable housing;
- Exploring hospital-housing partnerships for affordable housing and community development.

> **EXAMPLE:** [Boston Medical Center](#) investment in community partnerships to support affordable housing initiatives to improve community and patient health, and reduce medical costs by addressing homelessness and housing insecurity. Delaware, like Massachusetts, is one of 34 states with certificate of need (CON) programs designed to control health care costs by facilitating coordinated planning that includes upstream contributors such as inadequate housing.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT: <https://www.bmc.org/news/press-releases/2017/12/07/boston-medical-center-invest-65-million-affordable-housing-improve>



- **Develop new housing products that suit the needs of a changing population.** Millennials, immigrants and retirees are leading population growth in urban centers. However, homeownership rates for millennials are much lower than for previous generations, as many of them graduated into a recession with student debt and stagnant wages. Innovative housing products, such as micro residential units and tiny houses - typically less than 350 square feet, provide high-quality design at affordable prices. These types of spaces are also attractive for retirees looking to downsize. At the other end of the spectrum, multigenerational housing and accessory dwelling units reflect another trend of grandparents moving in to help take care of young grandkids, or homeowners being able to use rental income to help afford a mortgage. Zoning codes should be reviewed to determine where and how they can be updated to allow for these housing products.
- **Promote incentives and programs for the purchase and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.** Wilmington's existing rowhouses and twins are very attractive first homes for young professionals and young families as they offer character and value, especially for those looking for fixer uppers. The revitalization of Philadelphia's rowhouse neighborhoods are an example of the attractiveness of this type of housing stock for a new generation of homeowners. However, the age and condition of many of these homes are challenging for first-time buyers to take the plunge. The City and its partners should promote these homeownership opportunities and any available incentives for rehabilitation to potential homebuyers. Wilmington's own Urban Homestead Program contributed greatly to the evolution of the Trinity Vicinity neighborhood in the 1970s. Under that program, eligible buyers could purchase abandoned homes for \$1 with a commitment to rehabilitate, maintain and occupy the property. Live Where You Work homebuyer programs are another incentive that offer low-interest mortgage loans, downpayment assistance, and/or closing costs assistance to promote homeownership for area employees.

> **EXAMPLE:** The [Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank Homesteading Program](https://www.wilmingtonlandbank.org/) (<https://www.wilmingtonlandbank.org/>) offers properties for sale for buyers who will live in the homes as owner occupants. The [Vacants to Value](http://www.vacantstoavalue.org/Incentives.aspx) (<http://www.vacantstoavalue.org/Incentives.aspx>) program in Baltimore offers incentives for homebuyers and developers to invest in city-owned properties. Also in Baltimore, the [Live Near Your Work Benefit](https://livebaltimore.com/live-near-your-work/) (<https://livebaltimore.com/live-near-your-work/>) counts over 100 employers participating and offers prospective homebuyers incentives, funded partially by employers and partially by the City of Baltimore, to be used for downpayment or closing costs. The [University of Pennsylvania Home Ownership Services](http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/homeownership/) (<http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/homeownership/>) offers eligible employees of the university and health system forgivable loans for home purchase and home improvements, as well as closing cost assistance within the program boundaries.



Examples of small housing units

## GOAL 1.3: REDUCE NEIGHBORHOOD BLIGHT AND CRIME

Reducing vacancy, blight and crime is a priority to improve resident quality of life, stabilize neighborhoods and encourage local economic growth.

### “A safe and clean city.”

#### Target and prioritize neighborhood stabilization efforts

- **Continue Neighborhood Stabilization Program in critical areas of transition.** The program, piloted in West Center City, targets crime and blight reduction by focusing the City’s resources to preserve and stabilize neighborhoods at risk of deterioration and rehabilitate areas with high levels of vacancy and crime. The program coordinates across City departments and partners with communities to increase public safety, code enforcement, infrastructure and services, and improve vacant properties for community use. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.3 in Robust Local Economy]
- **Identify and prioritize areas.** Use departmental data, GIS and on-the-ground observation techniques to define areas.
- **Secure and stabilize vacant properties (Citywide initiative).** Vacancy and blight are a drain on the perception of public safety, attractiveness, and quality of life in Wilmington. Addressing these issues requires an aggressive and interdepartmental and inter-organizational response. The City should continue to work with the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank (WNCLB), community development corporations (CDCs), the Delaware Department of Justice, and the funding community to aggressively secure and stabilize vacant properties. These properties can then be rehabilitated and repurposed for community needs such as affordable housing, local business and open space. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.2 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods, Goal 2.3 in Healthy and Thriving Communities, and Goal 3.3 in Robust Local Economy]
- **Target and prevent nuisance properties by enforcing existing regulations (Citywide initiative).** The City has prioritized blight elimination both through preventive and corrective measures and has allocated resources such as additional housing code inspectors to improve enforcement of existing regulations. Measures to prevent properties from becoming nuisance properties include helping cooperative property owners in maintaining and improving their properties to avoid or address code violations, rental registration, pre-rental inspections and increased code enforcement. Additionally, an inventory of rental properties, identification of unlicensed landlords and stepped up communication with absentee landlords can increase residential rental license registration and inspection. While prevention is key, properties that have become a nuisance can be addressed through the landlord training program, nuisance property program, vacant property registration, and if problems are not addressed, targeted for stabilization by the City and its partners. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.2 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]



# HOUSING / NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION

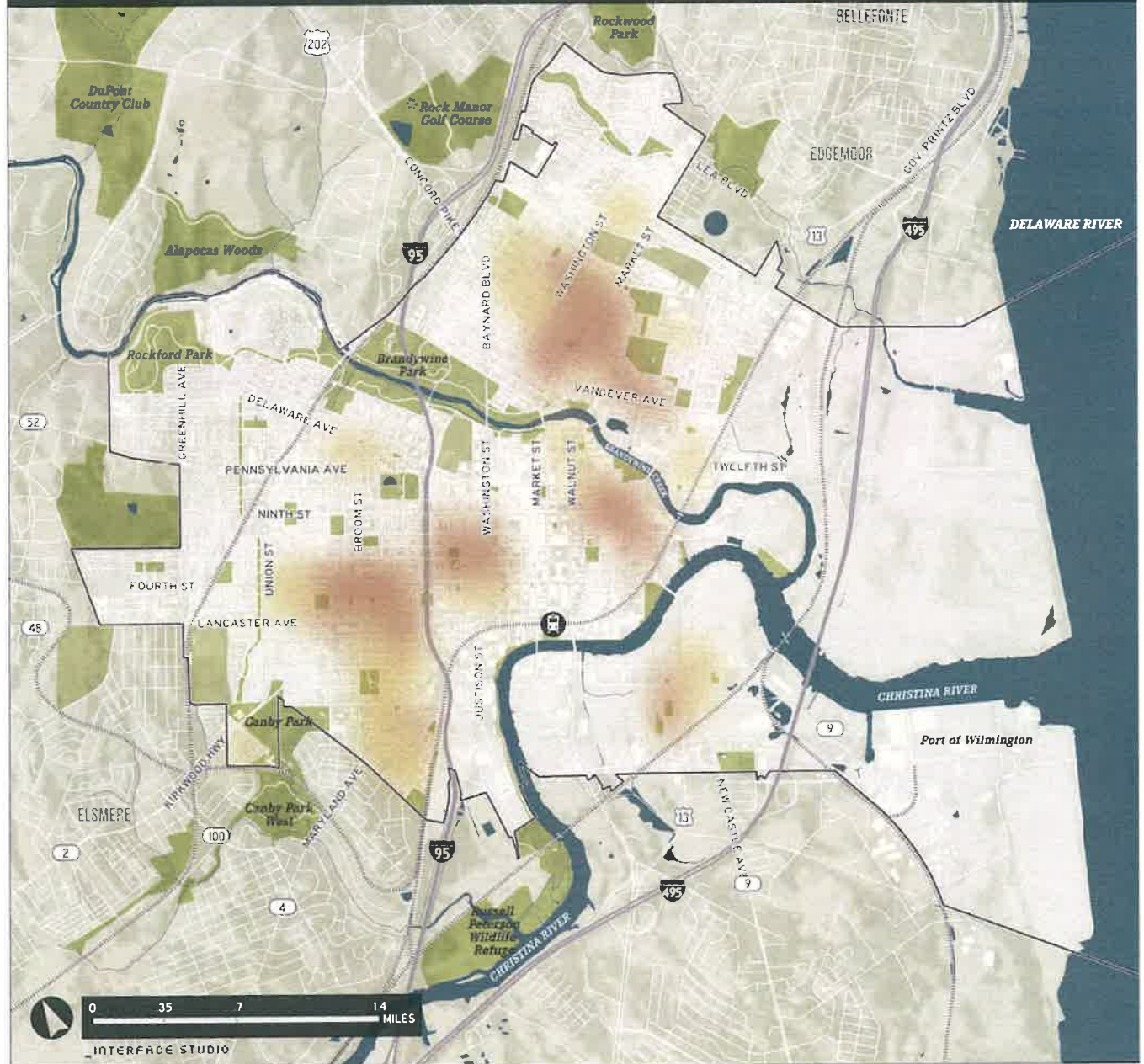


Figure 27 Neighborhood stabilization map  
Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate



- **Focus anti-blight and beautification efforts on key corridors and gateways.** Corridors such as Lancaster Avenue, Maryland Avenue, Walnut Street, North Market Street, South Market Street, Concord Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Northeast Boulevard are gateway corridors that carry high volumes of people in and out of the city. Additionally, corridors such as 4th Street and Washington Street are important neighborhood Main Streets and gateways to downtown Wilmington. Scenic byways, such as the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway and Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, connect Wilmington to the wider region and natural and cultural assets. These key corridors represent the public face of the city and should serve as gathering places rather than barriers for the neighborhoods around them, therefore, it is important that these corridors present the city at its best. The City and its partners should focus measures such as property maintenance, building repair/renovation, anti-littering and clean up, vacant lot management, tree planting and greening, and public art on these corridors. [see also recommendations under Goals 3.3 and 3.4 in Robust Local Economy, and Goal 4.2 in Connected City and Region]
- **Promote and strengthen organizations and tools that enable citizens to report issues.** Neighborhood residents are the eyes on the ground to help the City stay on top of issues as they arise. Community leaders, such as civic associations, can take the lead on organizing around issues such as vacant and nuisance properties, trash, and other quality of life issues. Individual residents can also report issues using new tools to simplify the process. Encourage residents to use the Public Works “Resolve It” app from their smart phones to report issues. Citizens can also use the Delmarva [interactive street light outage reporting site](https://delmarva.streetlightoutages.com/map/default.html). (<https://delmarva.streetlightoutages.com/map/default.html>) and a 311 Call Center was approved in the City’s FY 2019 budget. The call center will provide a platform for residents to register questions or complaints, and track City response through the City website.

### **Build community resilience to crime**

- **Support the Wilmington Community Advisory Committee to reduce violence.** The reduction in gun violence between 2017 and 2018 is a result of the hard work of many partners focused on public safety, public health and community services, but more work needs to be done. In 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) produced recommendations for a public health response to preventing gun violence. This effort was initiated by the Wilmington City Council, Mayor’s Office and Delaware Division of Public Health. The Wilmington Community Advisory Committee came out of the work of the CDC and promotes community-based social service programs for youth to provide positive influences that build their future. Their efforts should be coordinated with other recommendations in this plan that support positive youth development, including jobs, training and mentorship programs, educational programs, and healthcare as described in the Healthy and Thriving Communities goal area.
- **Support community engagement through community-based responses to public safety.** The Wilmington Police Department is focused on community engagement and building trust. Avenues for building the relationship between police and the communities they police include community policing training and efforts in every sector, and a focus on cultivating strong neighborhoods with community partnerships to identify and solve community problems. Additionally, police forge community bonds through participation in community events and youth programs such as the Police Athletic League and the [Youth Police Academy](https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/wpd-youth-academy) (<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/wpd-youth-academy>) which educates teens about police work, instills civic responsibility, and builds positive relationships.

An important aspect of Wilmington's approach to public safety includes building and maintaining strong neighborhoods where residents are engaged in creating safe environments. Some examples of community-based efforts include neighborhood watch programs and volunteer groups like the Wilmington Peacekeepers, building on events such as National Night Out, and organizing community approaches to safe ride/walking escorts, such as the [Safety Escort Service](http://downtownwilmingtonde.com/initiatives-blog/2015/8/31/safety-escort-service) (<http://downtownwilmingtonde.com/initiatives-blog/2015/8/31/safety-escort-service>) provided by Downtown Visions. Providing safe passage enhances residents' mobility and access around their neighborhoods and makes commercial corridors and districts livelier. Business improvement districts, merchant associations and institutions in neighborhoods around the city are candidates for spreading such a service beyond the downtown district. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.3 in Robust Local Economy]

- **Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) tactics to ensure public spaces are cared for and monitored.** CPTED is an approach to crime prevention that focuses on creating a built environment that influences decision-making before a crime occurs. Design interventions can help signal that spaces are maintained, used and monitored. For example, designing buildings so that windows and doors rather than blank walls face the street creates a sense of eyes on the street. Good visibility and clear sightlines are important. Make sure there is adequate lighting in neighborhoods, particularly pedestrian-level street lighting in areas that are underlit, and encourage residents to report street light outages and repair needs. Other ways to improve lighting include porch light programs that encourage residents and businesses to leave external lights on at night. Trim trees that may be blocking light fixtures and maintain landscaping to provide clear sightlines, especially around entrances.
- **Help businesses and institutions install security cameras and connect with the Public Safety Camera System.** Another aspect of CPTED is surveillance. The City's Public Safety Camera System will allow the Police Department's Real Time Crime Center to access neighborhood and business video cameras for the purposes of preventing and responding to crime. The [Wilmington Video Safety Partnership](http://downtownwilmingtonde.com/initiatives-blog/2015/8/4/video-safety-partnership) (<http://downtownwilmingtonde.com/initiatives-blog/2015/8/4/video-safety-partnership>) is an example of collaboration between Downtown Visions, the City's public safety departments, and the corporations, non-profits, and foundations downtown. Other neighborhoods and business districts can implement similar programs through partnerships between local businesses, non-profits and institutions in a business improvement district, merchants association, or other organizing entity.

#### > Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles:

- 1) Access Control** — Using the layout of your environmental design to physically limit the access and egress points. This practice can also guide users, both positive and negative, to a specific direction within the park. Controlling access makes negative users feel uncomfortable and less apt to commit a crime.
- 2) Surveillance** — Involves the elimination of physical barriers that inhibit the casual observer from scrutinizing behaviors inside a space. Surveillance is enhanced by lighting, proper placement of shrubbery, well-placed windows, elimination of physical barriers, and architecture and social commitment.
- 3) Territorial Reinforcement** — This concept involves facilitating the process of turning an area over to legitimate users who will take ownership of the space and care for it. This helps eliminate or reduce nuisance behaviors because bad actors using the space receive increased monitoring.
- 4) Maintenance and Management** — Keeping areas "clean and green" is the minimum standard for scheduled maintenance. Have a plan and take the extra steps to create a clean, well-kept area for your patrons. Do not let things like graffiti, garbage and/or damaged property be seen by your positive users. Have staff locate, clean and fix issues before your park is open or highly populated.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT: Using Design to Reduce Crime: <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2016/march/using-design-to-reduce-crime/>



## GOAL 1.4: ENSURE NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY, WELCOMING PUBLIC SPACES AND RECREATION

Wilmington has an extensive public space system with the potential to reach every corner of the city. Yet to leverage this unique asset, Wilmington must invest in its existing public spaces and look to new, innovative solutions so that the city's public spaces meet the needs and preferences of twenty-first century users.

**Maintain high quality facilities in all neighborhoods by investing in existing assets**

**“Keep parks clean and utilize them for healthy programs for families.”**

**“We have to put events and activities in the park so it's not turned over to the street, for example basketball tournaments, jazz.”**

- **Implement an equitable investment strategy to bring physical and programmatic improvements to civic spaces.** While Wilmington has park facilities in nearly every neighborhood, affluent neighborhoods were found to have access to more than three times as much parkland as very high poverty neighborhoods. Parks and recreation facilities were often cited as pressing needs during the public outreach process not just for their recreational and social benefits, but as a strategy for improving public safety by providing safe and enjoyable places for residents of all ages to go and participate in activities with friends, families, and neighbors. Wilmington should develop a capital investment strategy to target improvements in parks, libraries and recreation centers that serve communities with the highest needs, with a goal to use these public space investments to improve social, economic, and quality of life outcomes for neighborhood residents.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT NYC'S COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE VISIT: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/framework-for-an-equitable-future/community-parks-initiative>  
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PHILADELPHIA'S REBUILD INITIATIVE VISIT: <https://rebuild.phila.gov/>

- **Design for safety and comfort.** Residents reported feeling unsafe in some parks that have a reputation for crime. To counter this, the City should use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies when making improvements to city parks. CPTED strategies could include defining or limited access points, ensuring clear visibility into the site, better lighting, improved maintenance and management, and filling the park with visitors and positive activity to make criminal elements feel unwelcome. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods] To complement CPTED investments, design improvements to city parks should also strive to increase attendance and use of these parks by the residents and visitors that the parks are meant to serve. This means that parks should be designed with the elements that help encourage and facilitate use, including defined paths, furniture, wayfinding signage, bike parking, bathrooms, and other such amenities that make parks easy to visit. Additionally, park maintenance plans should be designed to ensure that signs of deterioration are minimized, which signals to users that a park is well cared for.

> **EXAMPLE:** The Center for Active Design's [Civic Design Guidelines](https://centerforactivedesign.org/assembly) (<https://centerforactivedesign.org/assembly>) provide evidence-based design and maintenance strategies for creating better public spaces, increasing trust in neighbors and institutions, and promoting local stewardship.

- **Intensify public space programming.** Park systems around the country are increasingly bringing programming into their spaces to engage communities with fun, positive activities, be they centered around the arts, athletics, food, or other interests. In Wilmington, ramping up positive activity in neighborhood parks will help to overcome concerns over safety. Programming often involves working with partner providers - for example, the City's Summer in the Parks arts program is a partnership with the Grand to bring free, interactive and fun entertainment and performances into the city's park spaces. The City should support similar efforts to ensure all residents have access to high-quality programming in their neighborhood parks throughout the year, and work to engage a diverse array of local organizations to provide programming.



Wilmington's Summer in the City arts program brings free, interactive, and fun entertainment and performances into the city's park spaces.



- **Reinvest in Wilmington’s public pool infrastructure.** Wilmington’s public pool system consists of three outdoor pools (Eden Park Pool, Foster Brown Pool, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Aquatic Center), two indoor pools (William “Hicks” Anderson Community Center Pool, P.S DuPont Middle School), in addition to five public spray parks. Public pools have many benefits - they provide activities for communities in the summer, an escape from the heat, a place to exercise and participate in team sports, and a getaway for those who can’t afford a beach vacation. With a network of public pools located within neighborhoods of need, the city should support an initiative to improve these facilities along the lines of the [Swim Philly](https://www.phila.gov/programs/swim-philly/) (<https://www.phila.gov/programs/swim-philly/>) initiative in Philadelphia or the [Cool Pools](https://www.nycgovparks.org/highlights/cool-pools) (<https://www.nycgovparks.org/highlights/cool-pools>) initiative in NYC, which use low-cost interventions to add amenities, beautification elements, and free community programs. These initiatives have been successful in increasing user attendance and satisfaction, resulting in a decrease in behavioral incidents and an increase in adult and family users, and have often increased community stewardship around pool sites.



Example of a low-cost intervention to improve the visitor experience at public pool in the Francisville neighborhood of Philadelphia.

- **Invest in a resilient and accessible waterfront that is a recreational amenity for all residents.** Throughout the country, cities have leveraged their once-industrial waterfronts to create thriving parks, trails, and public spaces that spur further economic development. Active waterfronts not only help attract and retain the talent that today's companies increasingly need to grow, but they also serve as gathering places for residents of diverse backgrounds. Wilmington should build on the success of existing and planned segments of its riverfront to create a world-class, connected riverfront on the Christina River and Brandywine Creek with programming and design elements that are welcoming for all residents and visitors. [see also recommendation under Goal 5.3 in Sustainable and Resilient City]



SCOTTSDALE, AZ



PHILADELPHIA, PA



Public art examples that activate riverfronts in Philadelphia, PA and Scottsdale, AZ.



- **Promote resiliency and sustainable practices as components of new and existing open space design and management.** Parks and recreation centers offer opportunities to mitigate the impacts of flooding on surrounding communities by incorporating stormwater infrastructure, flood mitigation efforts, and resource conservation into the park renovations and management. The new South Wilmington wetland park is an example. The feasibility and benefits of incorporating new stormwater infrastructure into park improvements should be examined when park facilities are renovated or constructed. Additionally, the City should examine water and energy usage at their park and recreation facilities with an eye towards reducing waste. [see also recommendation under Goal 5.3 in Sustainable and Resilient City]
- **Partner with the school district to create a structured community service program with the parks.** In order to graduate, every student of a Wilmington public school is required to perform community service. The City's Parks and Recreation Department should partner with the School District to create a structured, mutually beneficial community service internships to serve the needs of the parks, and especially to meet the needs of seasonal help in the summertime.

#### **Provide new recreational programs and facilities that respond to current preferences and needs**

- **Adapt recreation offerings to be flexible and accommodating to changing preferences.** While Wilmington has a wealth of recreational facilities, most were built more than half a century ago and their single purpose design makes it difficult to adapt to the changing interests of new generations and meet their recreational needs. Additionally, many recreational facilities lack amenities that can be used by people of all ages and abilities. As Wilmington adds new or upgrades existing recreational facilities, the City should ensure that an adequate share of facilities meet the needs and interests of all ages and abilities, and are flexible enough to respond to changing tastes and preferences in recreation. The City should invest in athletic fields and recreational facilities that can be used for a wide range of athletic and programmatic uses to ensure that every Wilmingtonian, now and in the future, can find an athletic program that interests them. Upgrades to fields should also take into account supplemental investments to make fields more usable for athletic events and programs, including the provision of bathrooms, equipment storage facilities, and other such features.

**> EXAMPLE:** The Wilmington Skate Project (WSP) is a group of diverse volunteers seeking to provide free quality skateboarding facilities throughout the city. The group helped establish the 7th Street DIY skate park, and is exploring options for bringing additional skateboarding facilities to other parts of the city. Long-time volunteers with WSP have noted that skateboarding has increasingly gained popularity among African American and Latinx youth, a group underserved by quality recreation space in the city.

- **Use rapid prototyping, cross-programming and partnerships to test new ideas.** The City should work with partners to develop and test innovative programs to try different means for bringing parks and recreation to Wilmingtonians. Increasingly, by leveraging the talent and skillset of locally based partners and support from foundations, cities are experimenting with different tactics to engage residents - scaling up what works, and adapting and learning from what doesn't.



The Wilmington Renaissance Corporation through its Creative District Project are utilizing vacant lots as neighborhood parks in the "Vacant to Vibrant" program as seen in their Rock Lot at 305 West 8th Street.



Connect the Lots is a community-driven initiative to activate vacant and underutilized lots in Camden, NJ through artistic, cultural, and recreational programs, events, and projects.

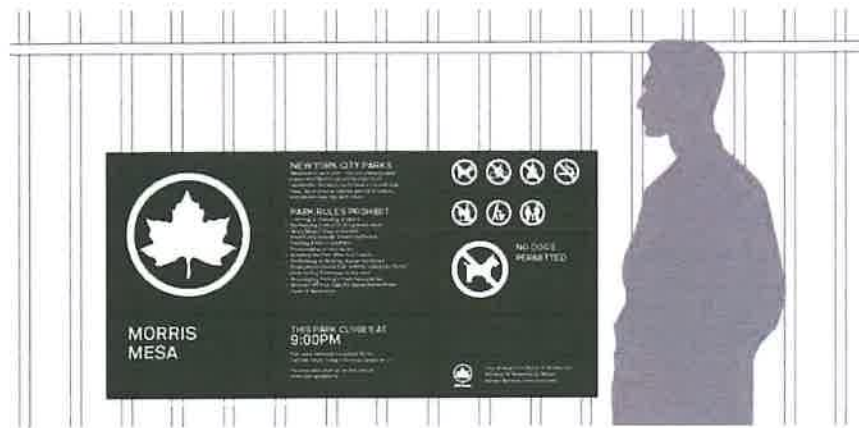
- **Expand year-round, indoor recreation opportunities.** Throughout the planning process, we heard the need for more year-round opportunities such as gyms, YMCA's, Boys & Girls Clubs, PAL's, and community centers. The benefits of such facilities, as identified by community members, include a much broader range of positive outcomes than just physical activity. The benefits can also include reductions in crime and violence by giving communities places to go and things to do in a structured, safe environment. The City should explore opportunities to expand the amount of flexible indoor recreational spaces in the community through partnerships, new construction, or other means, with a priority focus on high-poverty, high-crime neighborhoods. The City is looking forward to such opportunities that will be created with the completion of the 76ers new facility/fieldhouse being built in South Wilmington. [See also recommendation under Goals 1.1 and 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]



- **Modernize the brand and social media communication channels of Wilmington's parks system.**

Wilmington has the foundations of a great park system - a diversity of passive and active recreation park sites that host a multitude of programs within relatively short walking distances of neighborhood residents. Yet improvements to park systems can't just be measured in dollars invested, but in the number of users who frequent these assets, and their satisfaction and engagement with their park system. Modernizing communication channels to Wilmington residents would help increase engagement between residents and the park system, making parks the option of choice when residents decide how to use their leisure time. The City should support the park system through efforts to:

- Improve the Parks and Recreation Department website
- Develop a robust social media strategy
- Modernize permitting processes
- Create a "brand" for the park system that can be used with digital platforms, print materials, and wayfinding signage
- Explore ways to further engage park users through technology.



New York City's Department of Parks and Recreation worked with the design firm Pentagram to develop a flexible graphic identity for its park system. TO LEARN MORE VISIT: <https://www.pentagram.com/work/nyc-parks/story>



A more whimsical example is a custom graphic identity developed by the design firm Byggstudio for Folkets Park in Malmö Sweden. The park's entrance sign, pictured above, is designed to be both playful and functional, incorporating a large message board to inform the public about programs and events. TO LEARN MORE VISIT: <https://popupcity.net/how-to-brand-a-city-park/>

## GOAL 1.5: SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER, COHESION AND PRIDE

Wilmington's neighborhoods have distinctive character but more can be done to protect it and forge a cohesive sense of community among neighbors.

**“Wilmington is a beautiful, wonderful city. The architecture is amazing and the art scene is incredible for a city of its size...”**

### Strengthen neighborhood character

- **Encourage infill development and new construction that fit in with the basic patterns of neighborhood character.** Infill and new construction should contribute to neighborhood character, with urban design that promotes walkability, social interaction, safety, and sustainable land use. The design of structures and materials used should be sensitive to existing neighborhood character while also ensuring durability and safety. The City needs to develop citywide design standards in building and zoning codes to achieve these goals while maintaining a streamlined set of codes. [see also recommendation under Goal 5.1 in Sustainable and Resilient City]

Citywide design standards for rehabilitation, infill and new, multi-lot construction would consider:

- Character and scale: for example setbacks and building heights that complement the streetscape and are comparable to the majority of the properties on the block;
  - Frontage and landscaping that supports urban pedestrian environment: for example corner properties that address two streets in their design with a minimum area of doors and windows as opposed to blank walls and minimizing curb cuts for off-street parking;
  - High quality, long-lasting materials: for example durable materials consistent with building style and sensitive to site context.
- **Protect the historic character of the city.** Wilmington has a wide collection of historic structures and neighborhoods that distinguish the city and help define neighborhood character. Wilmington has many structures and districts on the National Register of Historic Places, which lists historic places worthy of preservation and helps properties receive preservation benefits and incentives. Properties within City Historic Districts require design review for all exterior changes and property owners may be eligible for a City tax abatement, Federal and State tax credits, and other limited funding programs for pre-approved work. The City will continue to keep residents and businesses informed about these districts as it has recently sent out over 5,000 brochures to residents and real estate professionals. Beyond properties that are regulated within historic districts, Wilmington's predominant rowhouse typology is a part of the city's historic fabric and should be promoted for rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and infill development. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.2 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]



## Develop and strengthen neighborhood cohesion and pride

**“We need to talk about the strengths of the different neighborhoods.”**

**“Residents feel comfortable walking the streets, sitting on porches, and just loving and looking out for each other.”**

- **Define and market neighborhoods.** The community assets, institutions and events that bring residents together are the glue that holds a neighborhood together and make it a unique place. Neighborhood organizations should work to define the assets and characteristics of their neighborhoods and share it widely with real estate agents and potential new residents. A neighborhood marketing campaign could incorporate various strategies including promoting neighborhood events, inviting realtors to tour neighborhood assets, and reaching out to local employees and encouraging them to spend more time to get to know the neighborhood.
- **Shine a spotlight on historic and cultural assets.** Wilmington has a wealth of historic and cultural assets both big and small, and can use them to tell a positive story of the city and its neighborhoods. The methods are many and depend on the feature being highlighted, but some examples include site-specific art whether temporary or permanent, signage, cultural trails, special events and tours, and local crowdsourced storytelling. Many events are already happening in the city but more can be done to market them and unearth smaller, local neighborhood gems. [see also recommendations under Goal 3.4 in Robust Local Economy]
- **Cultivate shared experiences and communal investment.** Social connections are important for the health of neighborhoods and for individuals as well. Strong social connections correlate with longer and healthier lives, while social isolation has been found to be a health risk comparable to smoking, alcoholism, and obesity.<sup>6</sup> Neighborhood hubs of activity are the community assets and institutions where people gather and neighborhood cohesion is forged. The more points of contact neighbors have, the stronger their bond, whether it's at the corner store, playground, community garden, religious service, local bar, community clean up or block party, to name just a few. These neighborhood hubs and activities should be supported and expanded upon by finding opportunities to deepen existing experiences and create new opportunities to meet your neighbors. [see also recommendations under Goal 2.3 in Healthy and Thriving Communities]

<sup>6</sup> American Psychological Association. (2017, August 5). Social isolation, loneliness could be greater threat to public health than obesity. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/08/170805165319.htm>





## 2. HEALTHY AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

### OVERVIEW

Growing research at the intersection of public health and urban planning show that where a person lives has an outsize impact on their health outcomes<sup>1</sup> as 60% of health determinants are related to our physical, social and economic environments.<sup>2</sup> Where we live determines our access to opportunity, assets and our social support network, as well as our exposure to stressors. This includes housing, vacancy, crime, open space, and social cohesion. This section of the plan addresses the social supports needed to promote health and opportunity for all residents, in conjunction with and complementary to the physical recommendations of the Strong and Safe Neighborhoods section.

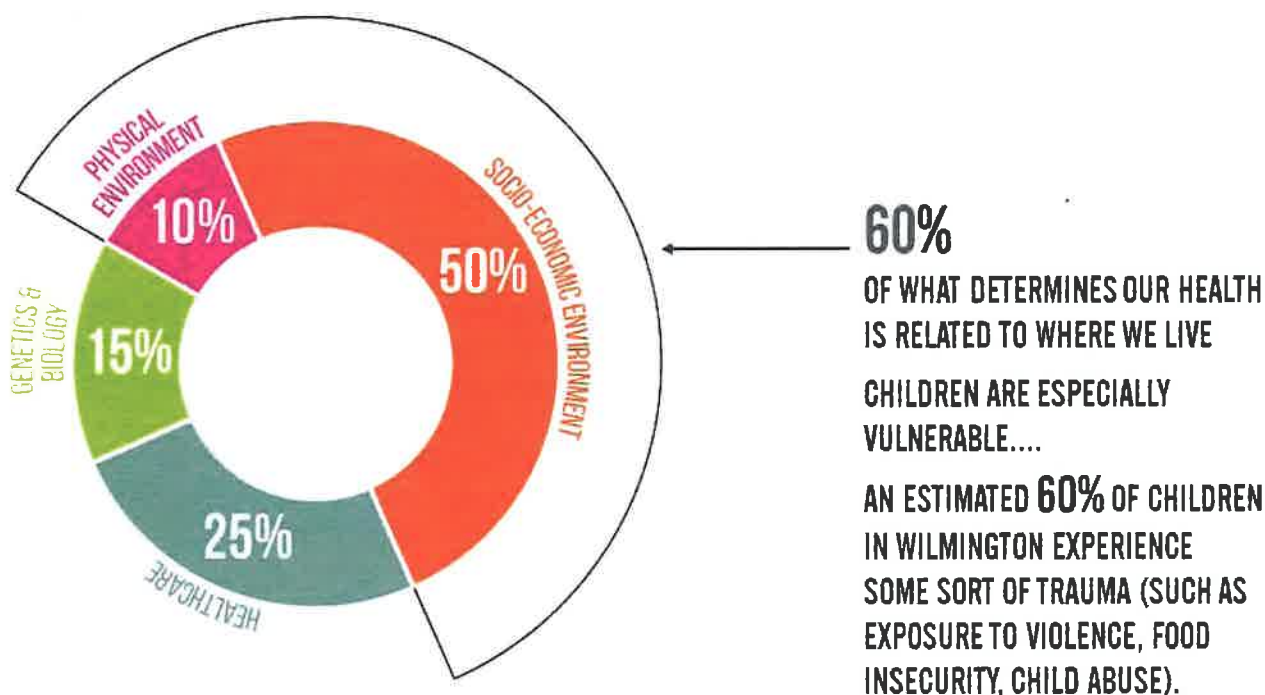


Figure 28 **Social determinants of health**

Sources:

Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Health Canada, Population and Public Health Branch AB/NWT 2002.

National Survey for Children's Health, cited in CDC Community Advisory Council. (2017). Accelerating Youth Violence Prevention and Positive Development.

<sup>1</sup> Roeder, A. (2014, August 4). Zip code better predictor of health than genetic code. Retrieved from <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/zip-code-better-predictor-of-health-than-genetic-code/>

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Health Canada, Population and Public Health Branch AB/NWT. (2002).

## PERSISTENT HIGH POVERTY

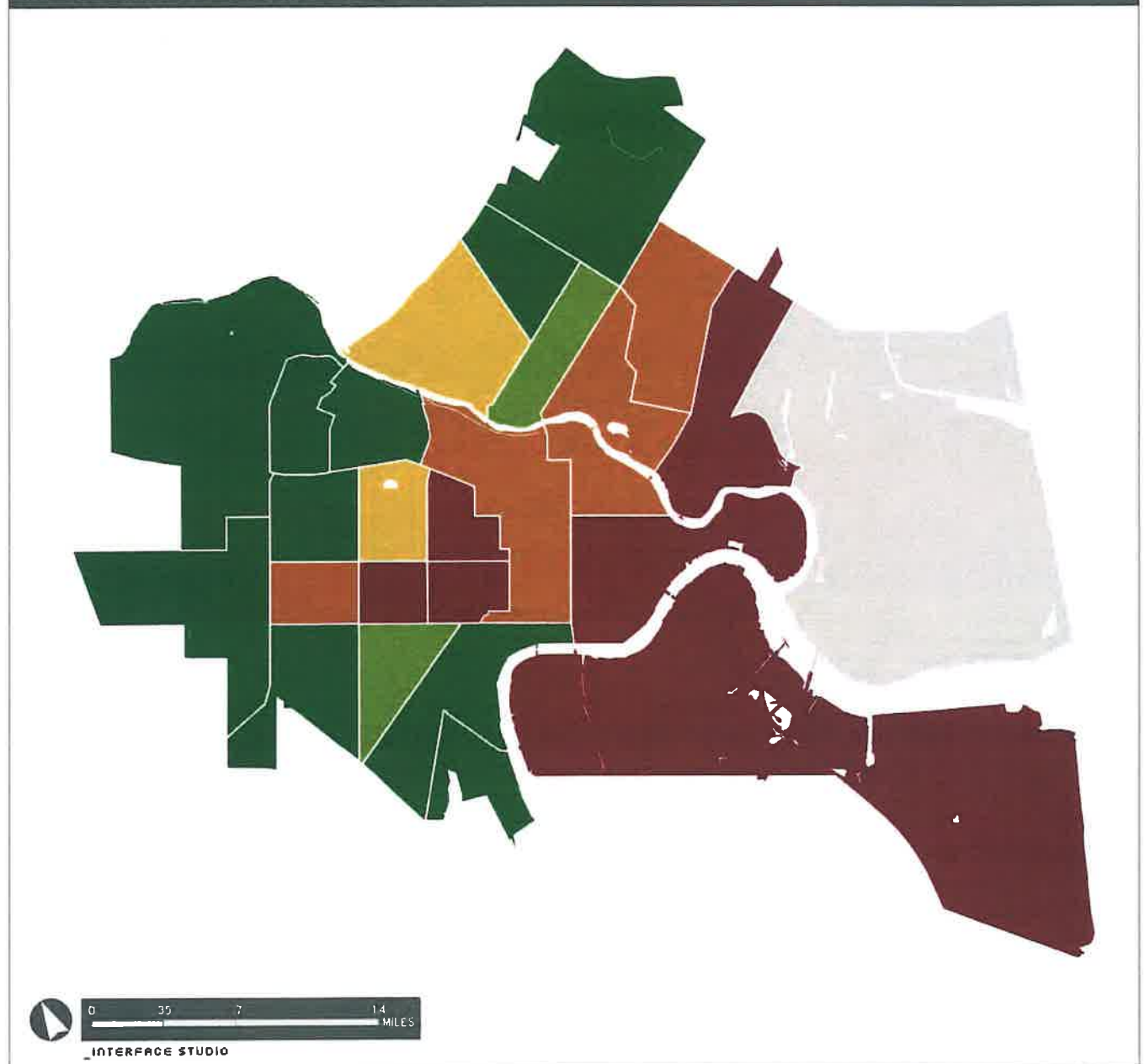


Figure 29 **Map of poverty over time by census tract, 1970-2014**  
 Source: ACS 5-yr estimates (2008-2012, 2010-2014), US Census 1970-2000,  
 accessed with Social Explorer

- Persistent High Poverty**  
*5+ decades, at least 20% of population in poverty*
- Frequent High Poverty**  
*3-4 decades, at least 20% of population living in poverty*
- Intermittent High Poverty**  
*2 decades, at least 20% of population living in poverty*
- Infrequent High Poverty**  
*1 decade, at least 20% of population living in poverty*
- No High Poverty\***

\*Map is generalized; some Census Tract shapes may obscure significant areas of persistent high poverty



## Socioeconomic conditions

Concentrated and persistent poverty is associated with a range of negative quality of life indicators that pose significant health and safety risks to residents. Chronic stress from poverty and an inability to meet basic needs, neighborhood blight and crime contributes to poor health outcomes. This is particularly serious for children whose brains are still developing and shaped by chronic stress and trauma. Poverty in Wilmington disproportionately impacts children. According to 2014 American Community Survey estimates, nearly 40% of children in Wilmington are living in poverty, more than double the rate for children in the region, and 73% of children in Wilmington are raised in single parent households, 48% of whom are living below the poverty line.

## Trauma

Over 60% of children in Wilmington have experienced some sort of trauma and 27.5% have experienced two or more traumatic events, according to the National Survey for Children's Health.<sup>3</sup> Studies increasingly show that children who are exposed to traumatic events are at a greater risk of having lasting negative impacts on health and well-being later in life, and that children who are exposed to multiple traumatic events, rather than a single incident, are those most at risk. These traumatic events can lead to what researchers refer to as toxic levels of stress, exposure to which has a negative impact on a child's development.<sup>4</sup>

One such type of trauma, being the victim of or witnessing violence in one's neighborhood,<sup>5</sup> is especially prevalent in Wilmington, most notably in neighborhoods exhibiting indicators of distress and disinvestment. In 2013, Wilmington experienced 162 violent crimes per resident, a rate that's nearly three times the number of violent crimes experienced statewide.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> CDC Community Advisory Council. (2017). Accelerating Youth Violence Prevention and Positive Development.

<sup>4</sup> Sacks, V., & Murphy, D. (2018, February 20). The prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, nationally, by state, and by race or ethnicity. Retrieved from <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/prevalence-adverse-childhood-experiences-nationally-state-race-ethnicity>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> FBI, Uniform Crime Reporting Program. (2013).

## Food Access

Studies have shown that accessing healthy food is a challenge for many Americans, but is most pronounced in low-income communities of color. Nationally, nearly 30 million Americans live in low-income areas with limited access to supermarkets.<sup>7</sup> With only four supermarkets in the city and given that 24% of Wilmington households do not own a car,<sup>8</sup> many residents rely on corner stores and smaller markets that may not stock healthy or fresh food.

<sup>7</sup> Bell, J., Mora, G., Hagan, E., Rubin, V., Karpyn, A. (2013). Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters: A Review of the Research. Retrieved from [http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media\\_items/access-to-healthy-food.original.pdf](http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/access-to-healthy-food.original.pdf)  
<sup>8</sup> ACS 2010-2014 5-yr. estimates.



Figure 30 Food assets map  
 Source: City of Wilmington

● Large grocery store    ● Small grocery store / corner store



## Education and opportunity

“For all children, life outside of school affects what happens in school. When you’re hungry, you can’t learn. When you’re homeless, you can’t do homework. When you’re worried, or sad, or angry - when mom is sick, or dad imprisoned - you can’t concentrate. Out of school challenges diminish a child’s ability to learn and thrive, especially in high-poverty urban school districts.”<sup>9</sup>

Education extends far beyond the school system, and improving outcomes for students require a holistic approach. Wilmington high school graduation rates have improved in recent years, rising from a rate of 76.1% in 2012 to 81.5% by 2014, though gains have not occurred evenly among all demographic groups; the graduation rates for Hispanic or Latino students dropped from 73.8% to 72.3% during this same period.<sup>10</sup> The high school dropout rate has also improved, having fallen from a rate of 19.6% in 2000 to 9.1% by 2014, but still remains twice as high in comparison to the statewide average dropout rate of 4.8%.<sup>11</sup>

Critics of education policy in the state and the current school district model maintain that the system reinforces disparity and disperses students far from their communities, missing an opportunity to build stronger neighborhoods centered around neighborhood schools. While the School Districts are beyond the jurisdiction of the City’s comprehensive plan, there are complementary actions the plan can take to support neighborhood students. A growing body of research suggests that when disadvantaged students have access to the services they and their families need, opportunities for support, advancement, and pursuing interests, supportive mentors and relationships, and basic necessities such as healthy food, shelter, they can perform better in the classroom.

9 Boston College, City Connects. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/lsoe/sites/cityconnects.html/>  
10 Delaware Department of Education. (2012-2014).  
11 ACS 2010-2014 5-yr. estimates.

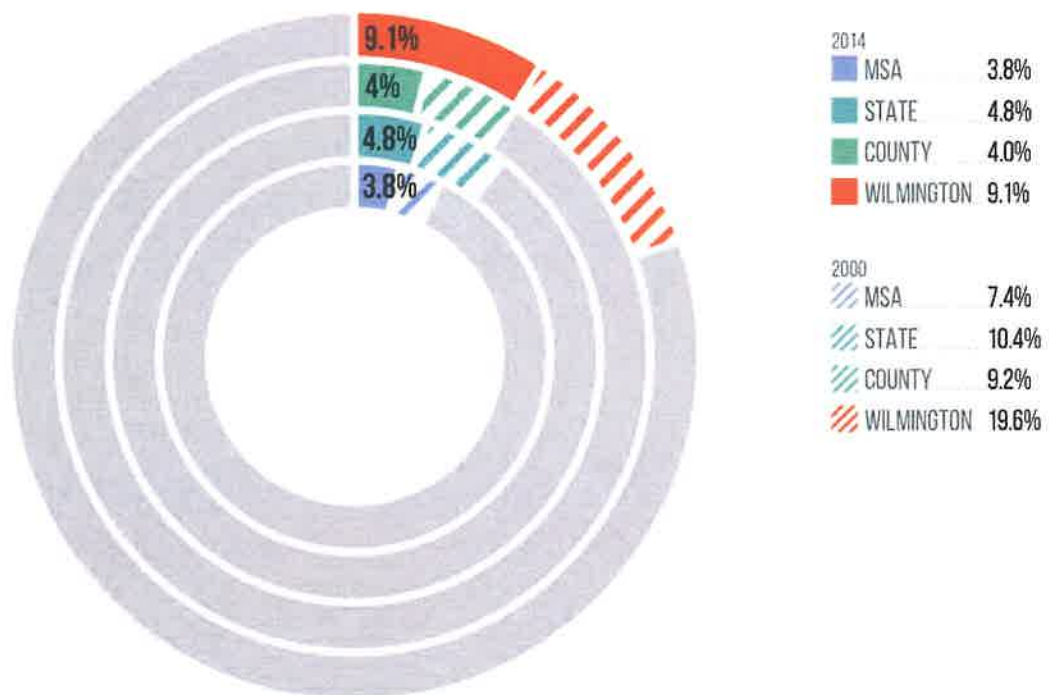


Figure 31 **High school dropout rate, 2000-2014**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 3-yr estimates (2010-2014)

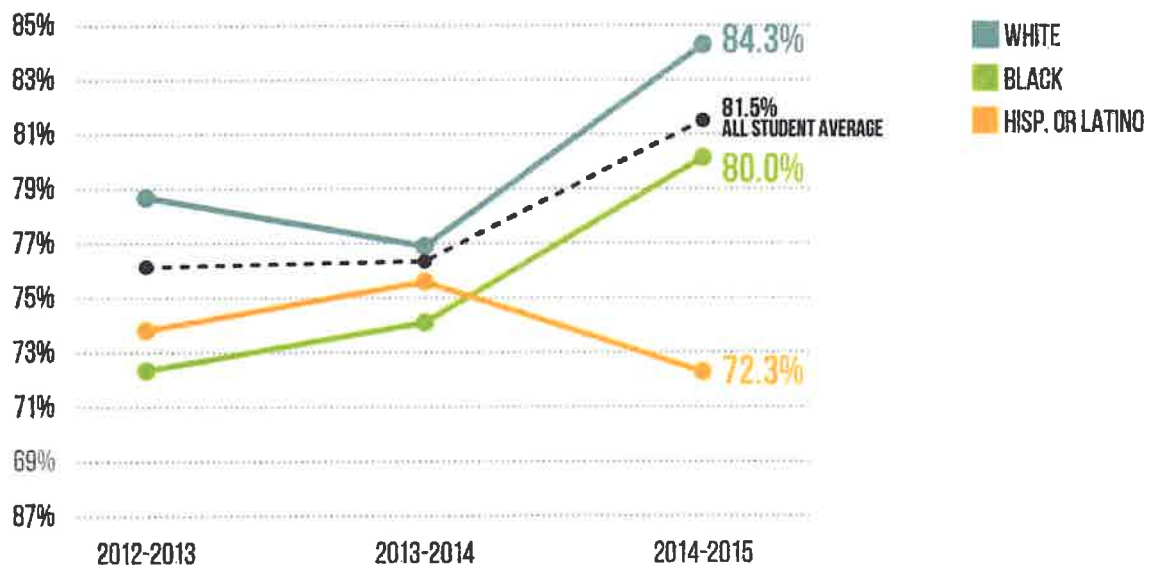


Figure 32 **Graduation rates at Wilmington public high schools by race, 2012-2014**  
Source: Delaware Department of Education  
Data includes public high schools with geographic catchments that include both the city and surrounding municipalities



## SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

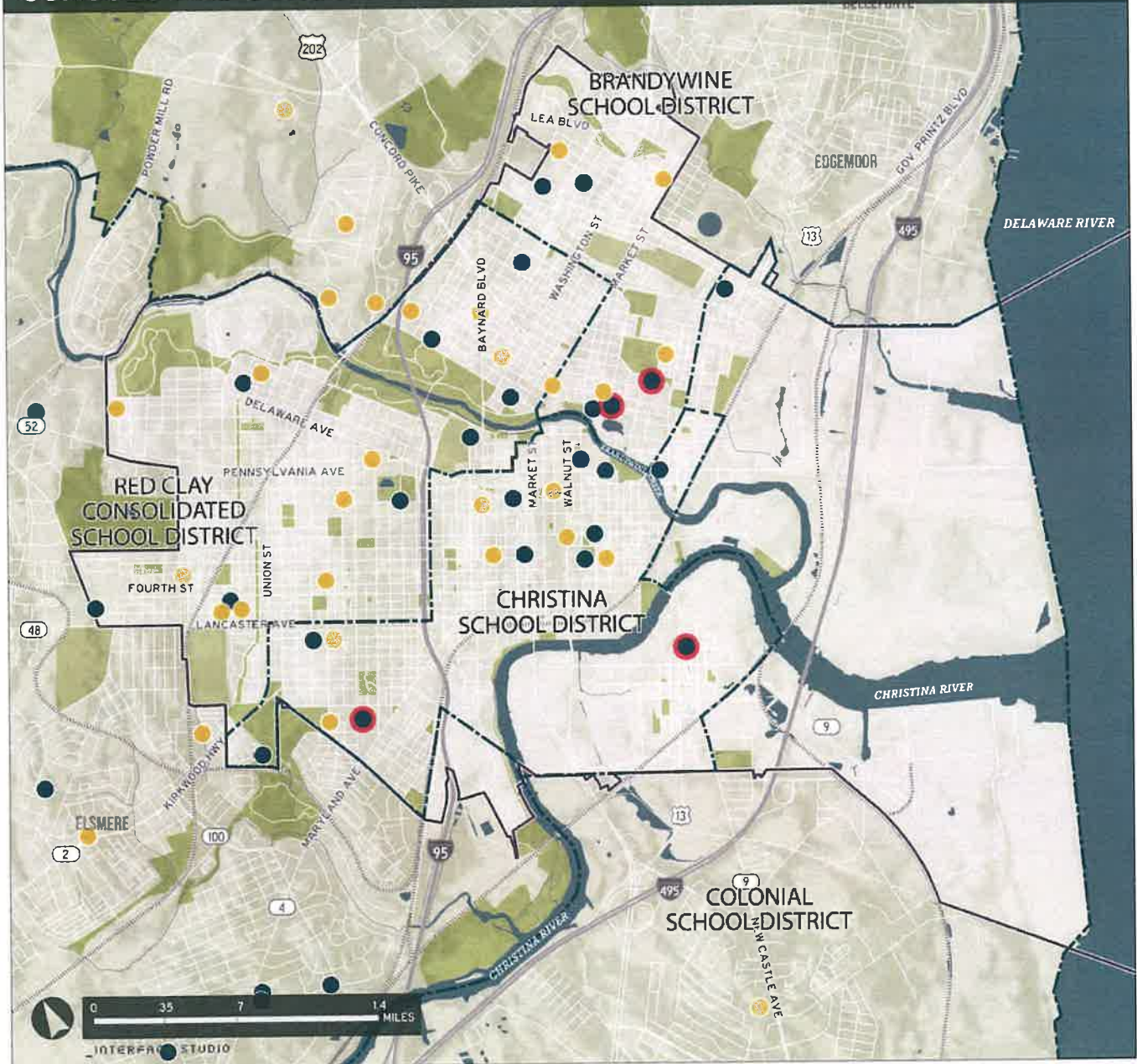


Figure 33 Schools and school districts map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- School District
- Public School
- Private School
- School is closing

## Physical Health

Poverty, housing insecurity and poor housing quality, food insecurity, vacancy and crime contribute to worse health outcomes in lower-income communities. Wilmington residents suffer from higher rates of chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and asthma compared to State and national averages.<sup>12</sup> And while these chronic conditions are higher in Wilmington, these conditions are not distributed evenly across the city. An analysis of census tracts show that rates of asthma, obesity, and diabetes are higher in Wilmington's high poverty census tracts. For example, Wilmington's obesity rate of 37% is higher than the State and national rates of 31% and 28%,<sup>13</sup> respectively, and in high poverty neighborhoods, can be as high as 40%.<sup>14</sup> Environmental factors that contribute to poor air quality, such as living within proximity of a major highway or in substandard housing, may also contribute to higher levels of asthma.

<sup>12</sup> Delaware Health Statistics Center. (2013).  
<sup>13</sup> Delaware Health Statistics Center. (2013).  
<sup>14</sup> CDC BRFSS via PolicyMap. (2013).

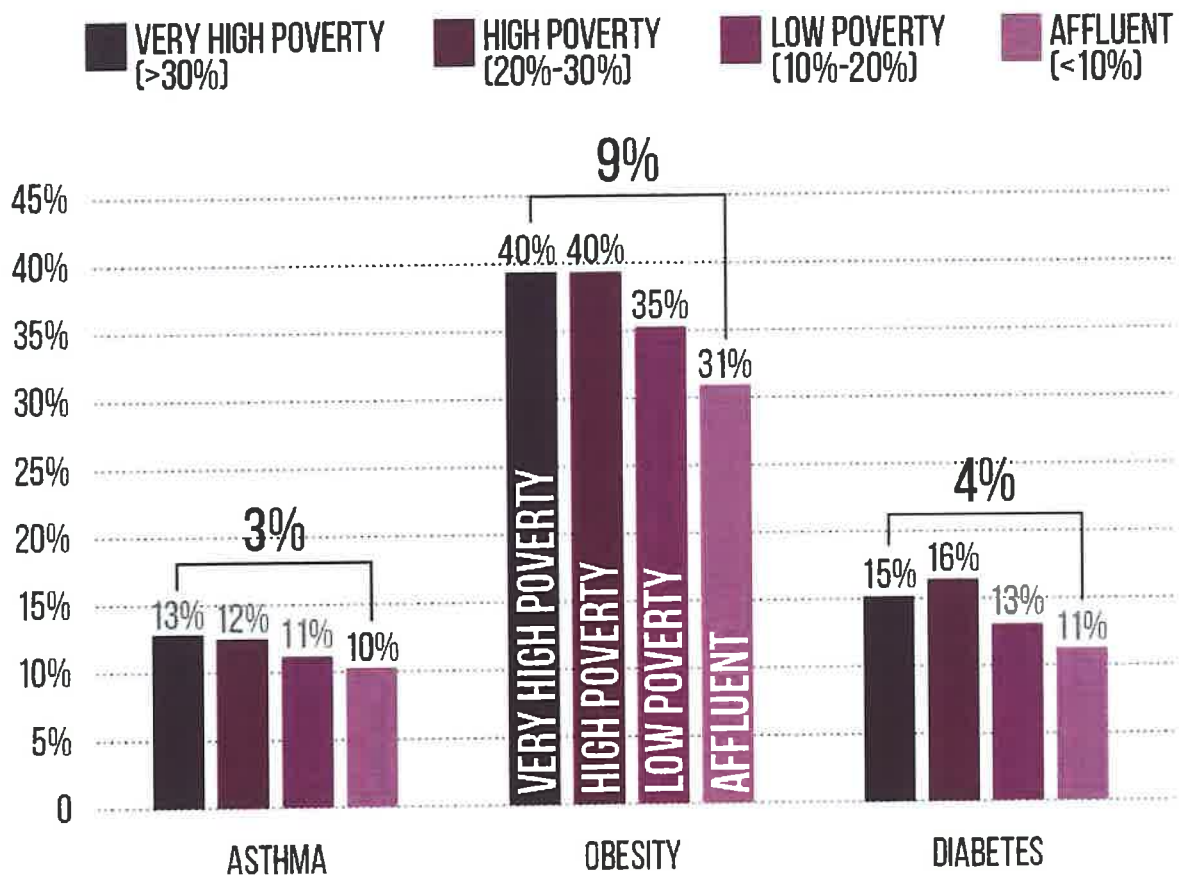


Figure 34 **Prevalence of select chronic health conditions among adults by census tract poverty rating**  
 Source: CDC BRFSS via PolicyMap; U.S. Census 2010

## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC INPUT

When asked “What does your neighborhood need help with to be healthy?” participants in the first community forum highlighted crime and violence as the top “ailments” impacting their neighborhoods’ health, as well as blight and lack of fresh food.

Residents focused on the importance of ensuring that the city is a safe and healthy place for youth, and found some areas wanting: 37% of residents said the city was not a good place to raise a family. Safety, schools, and youth activities were cited as concerns. Among residents with children, 42% ranked schools as the most important quality in a neighborhood, but 36% of residents rated the quality of schools as poor. “New and expanded youth programs” was ranked fourth among the most important improvements that would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington. At the second public forum, “expand youth programming with partners in and out of school” was ranked fourth out of more than 50 key recommendations.

Improved job opportunities was ranked by residents as the second most important improvement that would have the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington. In the second public forum, “encourage opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment” was among the top voted recommendations, ranking fifth out of more than 50.

Across all five goal areas, “Goal 2.1 Ensure all youth have opportunities to shape their future in and out of school” was selected as a high priority.



## GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### GOAL 2.1: ENSURE ALL YOUTH HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO SHAPE THEIR FUTURE IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

The City needs to focus on retaining the next generation of Wilmington residents. In order to ensure that the city works for all residents, Wilmington should invest in homegrown opportunities, which start with youth.

#### Enrich and broaden educational opportunities

**“A place where inner city kids will get a great education and feel proud to call Wilmington their home.”**

**“Most of our community are able to take their children to museums, amusement parks but there are some in our community who don’t have access. So the idea is to bring what some cannot experience into our community.”**

- **Expand youth programming with partners in and out of school.** Research has shown that young people who have sustained involvement in extracurricular activities are much more likely to go on to college than kids with sparse or no involvement.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, research has shown that children who grow up in disadvantaged neighborhoods benefit immensely from involvement in “identity projects” such as clubs, organizations, groups, or other activities that inspire and engage youth around something they are passionate about and that help young people shape their identity and socialize with others.<sup>16</sup> Wilmington’s diverse cultural institutions and community organizations offer an opportunity to expand high-quality youth programs catering to a diverse array of interests young people may have.

> **EXAMPLE:** The [Warner-Shortlidge Arts Alliance](https://www.redclayschools.com/site/Default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&PageID=1&ViewID=6446ee88-d30c-497e-9316-3f8874b3e108&FlexDataID=830) (<https://www.redclayschools.com/site/Default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&PageID=1&ViewID=6446ee88-d30c-497e-9316-3f8874b3e108&FlexDataID=830>), which brings professional teaching artists into classrooms, includes partnerships with organizations such as OperaDelaware, Delaware Symphony Orchestra, Light Up the Queen Foundation, the Delaware Institute for the Arts in Education, and the Grand Opera House.



Source: Grand Opera House, Jon Ripsom Photography

<sup>15</sup> Delaware Health Statistics Center. (2013).

<sup>16</sup> Delaware Health Statistics Center. (2013).

- **Connect schools to city assets and services.** Education is more than just the time in the classroom, it includes tapping into libraries, cultural institutions, museums, and other places that encourage students to learn and explore (and make it fun to do so). The City should work with local schools, cultural institutions and the funding community to create more opportunities for all students, especially from low-income families, to access these resources. A culture directory could compile information on available resources and free/discount days, and be distributed to families to help them take advantage of all Wilmington has to offer. In addition, a “Culture Pass” providing free or reduced admission to arts, cultural and entertainment assets in the city could be developed to unlock a wider range of opportunities.

> **EXAMPLE:** In New York City, the [Cool Culture Pass](https://www.coolculture.org/cc/index.html) (<https://www.coolculture.org/cc/index.html>) provides free access to museums, historical societies, botanical gardens and zoos for families whose children are enrolled in schools where 60% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

### Develop on-ramps to jobs through skills training

**“Make the young part of the manufacturing and digital service industries that will rise as the city grows.”**

- **Expand City summer jobs program.** Wilmington’s annual summer youth employment program, an initiative of the Parks and Recreation Department, employs over 400 young Wilmingtonians, aged 14 to 20 in competitive internships and entry-level positions throughout the city. Recently rebranded as the “Youth Career Development” program to emphasize the hope that the program could provide a pathway to a career, the initiative not only provides a six- to eight-week job placement but also matches participants with a career mentor for the summer. The City should continue to support and grow the number of slots available for interested students, the diversity of positions available, and the quality of the employment and mentoring experience. To encourage a diverse cohort, targeted outreach should be conducted in low-income, high need neighborhoods and among Spanish-speaking students.
- **Develop apprenticeship/mentorship program in partnership with local businesses and educational institutions.** One of Wilmington’s unique assets is the strong concentration of local businesses coupled with a number of high-quality educational institutions. The City should encourage local partners such as businesses and educational institutions to create a young entrepreneur mentorship program that pairs a select cohort of students with small business owners to give motivated young Wilmingtonians valuable work experience and mentorship.

> **EXAMPLE:** Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership’s [Young Entrepreneur Mentorship Program](http://myrtleavenue.org/business-services/young-entrepreneur-mentorship-program/) (<http://myrtleavenue.org/business-services/young-entrepreneur-mentorship-program/>) is a 6-week program that pairs teens with Myrtle Avenue business owners and Pratt Institute’s STEAM program. Since the program’s inception in 2016, the program has selected a class of 15-20 students each summer and has partnered with 70 small businesses on the corridor.

## GOAL 2.2: ENCOURAGE A COORDINATED AND HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SERVICE PROVISION AND ACCESS

The City should encourage collaboration and information sharing between service providers in order to help residents navigate the full menu of services available to them and provide comprehensive and coordinated care between providers.

**“We’re all coming up with the same initiatives and we’re all stating the same problems...But we’re not working together like we should.”**

- **Partner with service providers to transform civic spaces into community hubs.** Cities across the country are introducing the concept of community hubs to schools, libraries and community centers to bring a variety of services that families might need - health care, social services, skills training, etc. - under one roof that is convenient for kids and parents. These efforts have been proven in several examples to improve outcomes.

> **EXAMPLE:** The [Oyler School](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/oyler-school) (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/oyler-school>) in Cincinnati, has endeavored to close the achievement gap between poor children and more advantaged students by providing their basic health, social, and nutritional needs at school. Inspired by this model, Mayor Jim Kenney of Philadelphia introduced the [Community Schools Initiative](https://beta.phila.gov/departments/mayors-office-of-education/community-schools/) (<https://beta.phila.gov/departments/mayors-office-of-education/community-schools/>) as one of the premier initiatives of his administration, which seeks to make community schools neighborhood centers by improving access to programs and services for students, their families, and others in the neighborhood. And here in Delaware, the [Eisenberg Elementary School's Wellness Center](https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/education/2018/04/19/nemours-life-health-center-partner-colonial-open-elementary-school-wellness-center/527818002/) (<https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/education/2018/04/19/nemours-life-health-center-partner-colonial-open-elementary-school-wellness-center/527818002/>) is seeking to solve the lack of access to health care in the community by bringing healthcare to the school itself, with services provided by the Life Health Center in partnership with Nemours/A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children.

- **Encourage collaboration among service providers with complementary services.** Wilmington has a host of strong health care institutions and social service providers, but the challenges of care coordination and lack of information can be a challenge for residents and for providers. Connecting the dots between health care services, access, and care coordination could improve health outcomes for Wilmington residents, especially the city's most vulnerable populations. To improve health outcomes for residents, the City should support and encourage increased collaboration and care coordination among health care and social service providers in the following areas:
  - **Funding.** Often, service providers in the same geography will compete with each other to fund programs or services that may be redundant when looked at through the lens of the city's wider health care network. Collaboration between different service providers when pursuing funding and developing programs would help reduce redundancy and lead to stronger grant applications.
  - **Access.** A community health care worker model can help bridge the gaps by serving as a trusted local liaison between communities and health and social service providers, helping to educate, identify issues and problem solve.



- **Holistic Care.** Increasingly, primary care doctors are taking into account lifestyle habits in addition to acute systems when evaluating a patient's health - leading to 'prescriptions' to exercise more and eat fruits and vegetables.
- **Data Sharing.** The Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers (CCHP) works to improve health outcomes in Camden, New Jersey by combining real-time data from the city's three health systems to "hotspot" areas of the city with pronounced health care issues and "super-utilizers" who account for an outsized majority of emergency room visits and healthcare spending.<sup>17</sup> By establishing trusted relationships with health care providers, and demonstrating the value-added to providers by sharing this data, CCHP has been able to improve outcomes for the city's neediest patients while streamlining patient care.
- **Help homeless and prison re-entry population re-acclimate to community life.** While service provisions such as food and shelter are incredibly important for homeless and prison re-entry populations, they often don't adequately address the issue of how to reintegrate these populations into community life. The City should engage a range of partner agencies to not only help house and feed these populations, but to help train and place them in work programs, create avenues to participate in the civic and social life of the city, and provide support necessary to help these populations get back on their feet. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.2 in Robust Local Economy]
- **Support youth dealing with the impacts of trauma.** Youth growing up in neighborhoods that suffer from high levels of crime and poverty are often afflicted by trauma from exposure to violence, grief, dysfunctional family life, and other factors that impact their mental and physical health and ability to function and learn. The City should work with the School Districts, the Parks and Recreation Department, youth service providers, and experts in children's mental health to support and grow a comprehensive, holistic approach to helping children succeed who may be struggling with the impacts of trauma, both short-term and long-term. An example of an acute trauma program is the [Youth Response Unit](https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/child-development-community-policing) (<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/child-development-community-policing>), a collaboration of the City of Wilmington Police Department, the Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, and A Seed of Hope Counseling to provide free trauma assessment and short-term counseling for children and the families after a traumatic event.
- **Develop stronger State and local communication and coordination on service provision.** A number of social service programs are concentrated in West Center City and downtown, some of which are under the jurisdiction of the State of Delaware. Community members, City officials, non-profit and business leaders have been engaged in ongoing conversations regarding the impact of these services, which address social, economic, and health-related issues. The City should facilitate stronger communication and coordination with the State and non-profit providers to improve perception, collaboratively address issues, and increase awareness of the positive impacts of these entities.

<sup>17</sup> Truchil, A. (2014). Hotspotting: The Driver Behind the Camden Coalition's Innovations. Retrieved from <https://www.chcs.org/hotspotting-driver-behind-camden-coalitions-innovations/>

## GOAL 2.3: MAKE HEALTHY LIVING THE DEFAULT CHOICE

Healthy choices can help prevent and improve chronic conditions such as obesity and diabetes. Making it easier to choose the healthy option with regard to habits, food and nutrition, and mobility will have a positive impact on public health.

- **Improve access to healthy, fresh food.** With only four supermarkets in the city, many residents rely on corner stores and smaller markets that do not often stock fresh food. Introducing healthier fresh food options into these stores can help transform residents' shopping habits. Additionally, community gardens, commercial urban agriculture and farm stands can provide an important source of locally grown food. Support for communities to transform vacant lots or fallow land into community gardens can improve health outcomes and develop a sense of community around new, productive public spaces, while exploring indoor agriculture in warehouse spaces is an opportunity to bring larger properties into new productive use. The City should support and partner with organizations and community groups to bring healthy, affordable foods and productive landscapes to every neighborhood in the city. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]

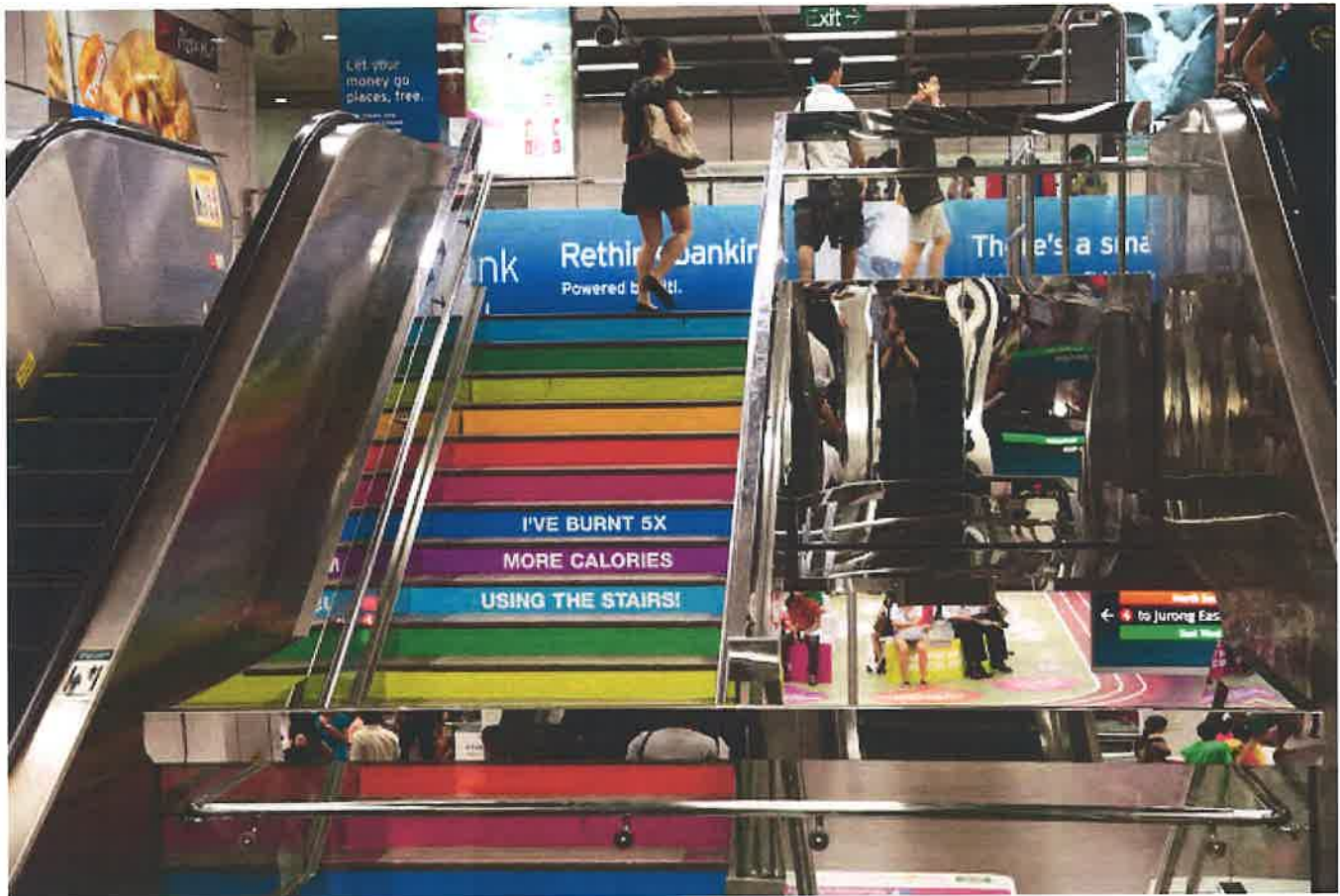
> **EXAMPLE:** The Food Trust's [Healthy Corner Stores Network](http://thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/administrative/healthy-corner-stores-network) (<http://thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/administrative/healthy-corner-stores-network>) supports increasing healthy, affordable foods in small-scale stores, and has already partnered with a number of corner stores in the city.

- **Encourage active design.** The City should encourage measures that support walkability, bikeability, and active design by ensuring that buildings, streets, and public spaces make walking or biking a safe, enjoyable, and natural choice residents of all ages. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity-or an equivalent combination each week<sup>18</sup>. The CDC notes that walking can be an excellent and no-cost method for anyone to reach these health goals, and offers a number of resources to help individuals and communities build walking into their daily lives.

> **EXAMPLE:** The [Complete Communities Toolbox](http://www.ipa.udel.edu/healthyDEtoolkit) (<http://www.ipa.udel.edu/healthyDEtoolkit>) by the University of Delaware offers a number of Delaware-specific resources to help communities encourage active design, and the Center for [Active Design's Active Design Guidelines](https://centerforactivedesign.org/guidelines/) (<https://centerforactivedesign.org/guidelines/>) provides additional strategies for incentivizing healthier living through the design of buildings and the public realm. The [Step It Up! Initiative](https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/infographic.pdf) (<https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/infographic.pdf>) by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a comprehensive list of ways to build healthy living into one's daily routine]

<sup>18</sup> walking/ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, February 13) Why Walk, Why Not! Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/>





Design strategies for buildings and public spaces that encourage day-to-day activity.



- **Create healthy community spaces at public and institutional facilities.** Public spaces are valuable places to recreate and recharge in dense urban environments, and can have an impact on physical and mental health. While the majority of Wilmingtonians are within walking distance of a park, residents in low-income neighborhoods have less access to quality parks and higher rates of chronic disease such as obesity and diabetes that could be managed with improved lifestyle habits. At a minimum, we should ensure that parks are easily and safely connected to communities. Also, the City should look for opportunities at public sites, and partner with other public and institutional facilities, to adapt underused portions of their sites for community use such as gardens, outdoor fitness centers, or other recreational opportunities to improve access to spaces that foster health and community cohesion. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.5 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]

> **EXAMPLE:** Wilmington's first urban farm, the [E.D. Robinson Urban Farm](https://www.thedch.org/what-we-do/community-gardens/urban-farming) at 12th and Brandywine (https://www.thedch.org/what-we-do/community-gardens/urban-farming), consists of both a community garden and commercial growing space. At the [Ingersoll Houses Community Garden](https://myrtleavenue.org/our-community/healthy-communities/community-gardens/) (https://myrtleavenue.org/our-community/healthy-communities/community-gardens/) on New York City Housing Authority property, over 60 residents of all ages grow their own food and flowers. The Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center in San Francisco installed "[Happy Lane](https://kaboom.org/playability/play_everywhere/gallery/happy_lane)" (https://kaboom.org/playability/play\_everywhere/gallery/happy\_lane) a playable sidewalk to encourage active play and healthy habits.



Ingersoll Houses Community Garden.  
Source: Myrtle Avenue BID



E.D. Robinson Urban Farm in Wilmington.  
Source: Delaware Center for Horticulture



Happy Lane is a sidewalk in San Francisco designed to encourage active play.



Outdoor fitness equipment can be incorporated into park renovations to encourage activity and exercise.

- **Pilot healthy living and wellness programs/campaigns in City government and public facilities.**

Healthy living, wellness programs, fitness groups, challenges, and campaigns can be effective methods for improving health outcomes. The City should support and partner with organizations that can provide fun and impactful programs that increase residents' access to opportunities to get healthy. For example, programs related to healthier eating could include Community-Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and nutrition/cooking classes. Programs related to exercise could include walking, biking, and fitness clubs or challenges/initiatives. Campaigns for healthier living could include smoking cessation initiatives and promoting community health screenings. While the cost of private gyms or group exercise classes may be prohibitive for many residents, cities across the country are showing how creative use of public recreation and park facilities, coupled with programs run by partners, can bring free and fun exercise programs to everyone, regardless of income or ability. At the Statewide level, the Delaware Division of Public Health's Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Program could be a valuable partner in implementation.

> **EXAMPLE:** Wilmington's [Play Streets](https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2945/225) (<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2945/225>) program, a partnership between the Mayor's Office, Parks and Recreation, Christina Care Health system, and Wilmington Police Department. [Philly Powered](http://phillypowered.org/) (<http://phillypowered.org/>), a program under Philadelphia's Department of Public Health Division of Chronic Disease Prevention partners with a wide array of providers to bring fun and free active recreation opportunities to all Philadelphians.



## GOAL 2.4: BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The City should help build up Wilmington's "civic infrastructure" by supporting the development and capacity of civic groups and engagements. This would help create greater productive partnerships between the City and the neighborhoods.

**"On every generational level, people just want to be heard."**

**"You do anything in this town and you get like 30 volunteers. ... Everyone is so willing."**

- **Strengthen existing civic associations and help start new ones.** Civic associations provide a way for neighbors to stay informed about what's happening in the city and the community, and for citizens to communicate with the City government. Civic associations may additionally focus their attention on specific areas of concern in the community, including crime and safety, cleaning and greening, volunteerism, and zoning. The City should support the development of civic associations by supporting initiatives and training programs that build leadership capacity, educate members on city services and processes, and ensure that every neighborhood in the city is represented by high-quality civic leadership. The City should also facilitate information sharing among groups so that strong existing groups can share their knowledge and ideas with start-up groups, for example through development of a playbook of tips and best practices. A comprehensive list of Wilmington's active civic associations can be found at: <https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/city-offices/constituent-services/civic-and-neighborhood-organizations>. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.5 in Robust Local Economy]
- **Explore development of a citizens' academy.** The City could support training and education programs that teach citizens about participation in local government and help shape their capacity to be civic leaders. Such a program helps build capacity for residents in existing civic associations as well as residents interested in starting new civic associations.

> **EXAMPLE:** Philadelphia's [Citizens Planning Institute](https://citizensplanninginstitute.org/) (CPI) (<https://citizensplanninginstitute.org/>) is the education and outreach arm of the City Planning Commission. CPI's main program is a seven-week course that empowers citizens to be more effective community leaders and changemakers.

- **Support youth engagement and leadership development.** The youth focus group that was engaged during the planning process identified a lack of optimism about the city's future, and a wish that people cared more about the city. The City should support the formation of a youth council to give young people a voice in the city and provide the city with an avenue for better understanding the issues and challenges faced by youth in the community.

> **EXAMPLE:** [Youth United for Change](https://www.youthunitedforchange.org/) (<https://www.youthunitedforchange.org/>) is a youth-led advocacy organization consisting primarily of working-class students of color who work to reform policies to improve the Philadelphia school system.



- **Support Park Friends groups.** Park Friends are volunteer-led groups with a common interest in the stewardship of a local park. Like civic associations, these groups provide a way for citizens to have a voice in the management, programming, and improvements of park spaces, and can play an important role in volunteer engagement and fundraising. The City should continue to support and grow active park friends groups throughout the city, and strengthen an umbrella organization to connect friends groups to one another, provide training and capacity building, and assist with fundraising and the formation of partnerships that benefit Wilmington's parks. This could involve providing support to existing groups like the Friends of Wilmington Parks and [Wilmington Parks Network](http://wilmingtonparksnet.wixsite.com/wilmparksnetwork/about_us) ([http://wilmingtonparksnet.wixsite.com/wilmparksnetwork/about\\_us](http://wilmingtonparksnet.wixsite.com/wilmparksnetwork/about_us)) or forming a new non-profit entity such as a conservancy to support parks and their associated friends groups.

> **EXAMPLE:** [Fairmount Park Conservancy](https://myphillypark.org/) (<https://myphillypark.org/>) is a non-profit partner in the betterment of Philadelphia's parks, leading capital projects, attracting and leveraging investments, fostering neighborhood park stewardship, and developing innovative programs through Philadelphia 10,000+ acre park system.

- **Support civic events and coordinate with City services.** Wilmington can further engage citizens and local businesses by holding citywide civic events that provide opportunities for volunteers to lend their time to improve the city and coordinating City services to support them.

> **EXAMPLE:** Philadelphia's biannual [Love Your Park](https://loveyourpark.org/about/) (<https://loveyourpark.org/about/>) week engages thousands of volunteers across the city to clean, green, and beautify the city's parks.



## 3. ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMY

### OVERVIEW

For over 20 years Delaware has been recognized as a center for the banking, financial services and insurance industry, with Wilmington and New Castle County as the nexus. This concentration of banking and financial employment is driven by a cluster of major corporate employers in downtown Wilmington. Additionally, the top three industry sectors in the city - finance/insurance, health care/social assistance, and professional, scientific, and technical services - make up 67% of the city's jobs. While Wilmington enjoys comparative workforce and cluster advantages over the region in these industry sectors, the city's economy needs a more diverse set of opportunities. This section of the plan addresses the need to build a modern, diverse economy that reinforces Wilmington's economic strengths while building it as a center for small businesses, the arts, and innovative research which already have a small but growing presence in the city.

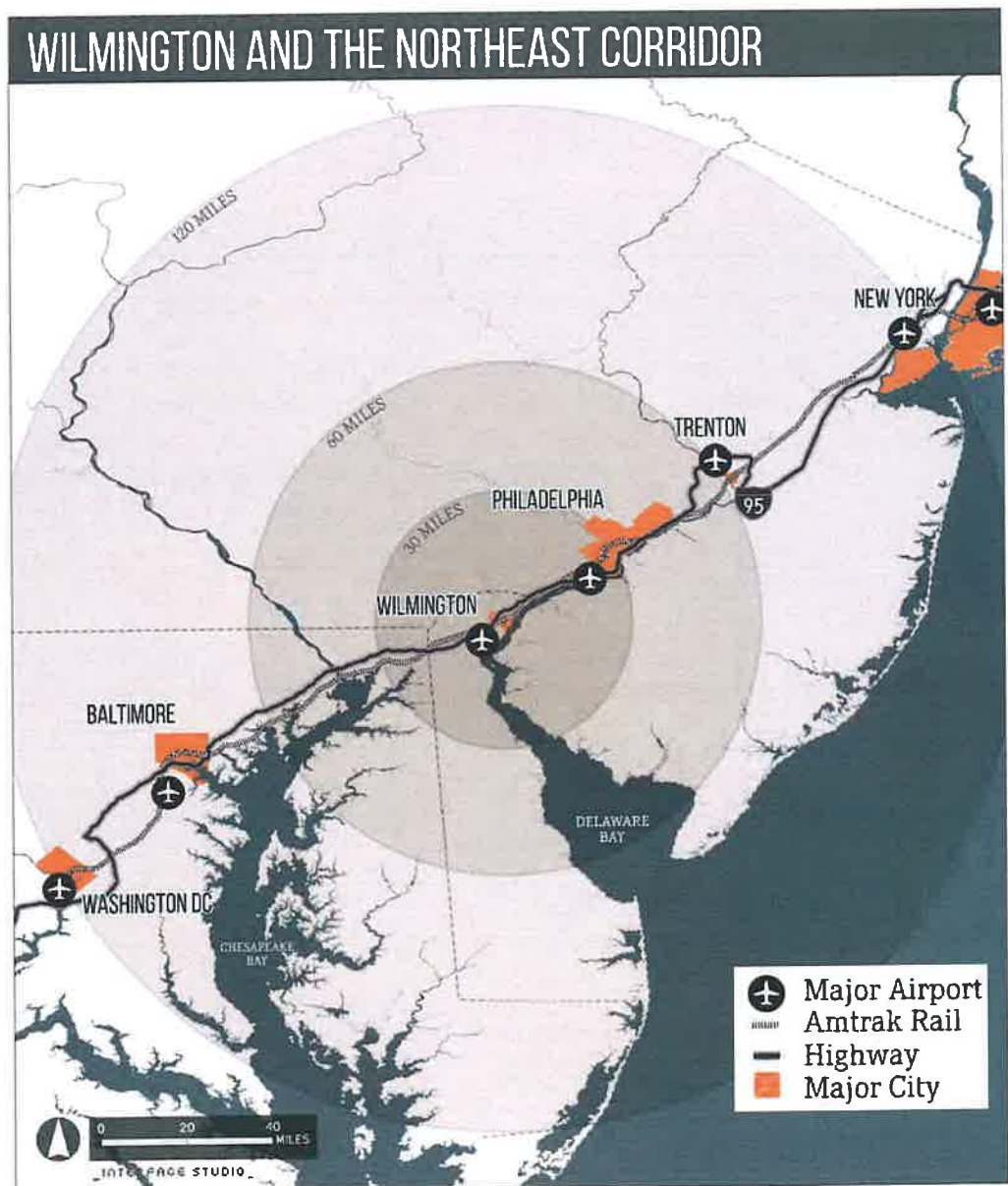


Figure 35 Regional transportation map



# REGIONAL DESTINATIONS

A map titled "REGIONAL DESTINATIONS" showing the Greenville area and surrounding regions. The map includes major highways (I-95, I-495, I-295) and the Savannah River. Labeled destinations include West Chester, Concorville, Chester, Swedesboro, Kenett Square, Woodstown, Greenville, Edgemore, Elsmere, Newport, North Star, Pike Creek, Newark, Brookside, Bear, Glasgow, Wilmington Manor, New Castle, and Salem. A scale bar indicates distances up to 5 miles, and a compass rose is present in the bottom left corner.

Figure 36 **Regional destinations map**  
Source: City of Wilmington, State of Delaware, Interface Studio

- Wilmington**  
**2028** A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities

## Economic Conditions

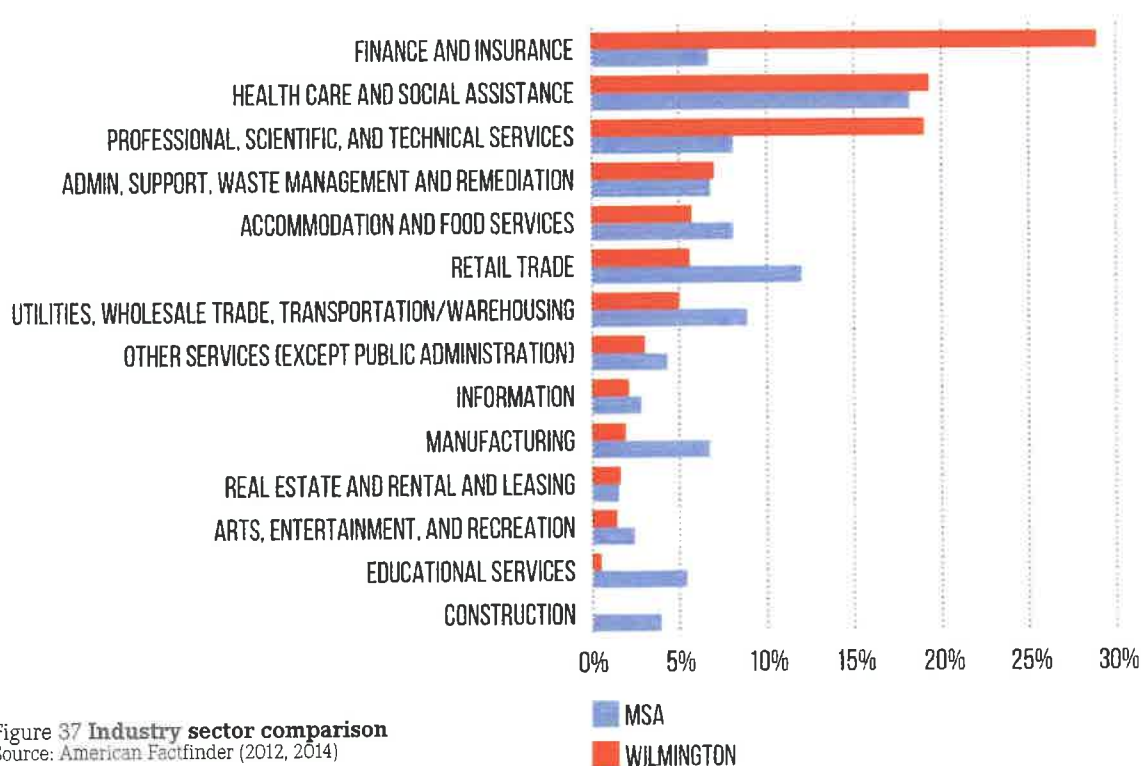
Wilmington has strong economic assets. It is centrally located on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor with excellent regional transportation and within a commutable distance from major cities. Wilmington is a regional destination for arts, culture and natural attractions, with over 160 arts and entertainment venues in the greater Wilmington area and over 5 million annual visitors.

Wilmington is an employment hub and a net importer of workers, with 77 jobs per 100 residents compared with 42 jobs per 100 residents in the larger Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington region. The bulk of the city's jobs are located downtown, where the population more than triples during the day.

But with a large proportion of the workforce coming from outside the city and the state (25% of Wilmington workers resided out of state in 2014), Wilmington employers must compete regionally to attract and retain workers. The concentration of assets and jobs in a few major employers, and the misalignment between employment opportunities and the labor market of local residents contributes to the city's low median income and high poverty rate.

## Economic Base / Major Employers

The top three industry sectors in the city - finance/insurance, health care/social assistance, and professional, scientific and technical services - make up 67% of the city's jobs. Anchor institutions in these sectors - including DuPont, Capital One, Chemours, Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and AstraZeneca - have seen a series of layoffs over the past three years. The concentration of jobs in these sectors leaves Wilmington vulnerable to further layoffs. Wilmington's reliance on large banks and corporations needs to be balanced with a diversity of opportunities and industries so that the local economy can flourish and all Wilmington residents can participate in it. Innovation requires an inclusive and interdisciplinary approach, and cities are increasingly focusing on how to grow and support local businesses of all sizes rather than focusing primarily on attracting or retaining one to two anchor employers.



SECTOR	JOBS
Finance and insurance	11,557
Professional and technical services	6,683
Health care and social assistance	5,792
State Government	4,939
Local Government	3,193
Management of companies and enterprises	2,836
Accommodation and food services	2,084
Retail trade	1,883
Administrative and waste services	1,769
Other services, except public administration	1,191

Figure 38 **Employment by Sector\*, 2018**  
Source: Delaware Department of Labor (2019)  
\*2-digit NAICS code

SUB-SECTOR	JOBS
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	7,044
Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments & Related Activities	3,542
Social Assistance	2,064
Food Services and Drinking Places	1,871
Administrative and Support Services	1,675
Ambulatory Health Care Services	1,416
Specialty Trade Contractors	712
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	613
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	522
Support Activities for Transportation	516

Figure 39 **Employment in Wilmington by Sub-Sector\*, 2018**  
Source: Delaware Department of Labor (2019)  
\*3-digit NAICS code



## Labor Market

Less than 30% of Wilmington residents 25 years and older have an Associate's degree or higher. More than 15% of residents do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. The distribution of educational attainment in Wilmington demonstrates the need for diverse employment opportunities, including blue collar jobs, as well as a push to increase educational opportunity and training, and the need to attract and retain a more diverse resident population with higher educational attainment. Only 11% of the jobs in Wilmington that pay more than \$40,000 per year are held by city residents. Unemployment rates in Wilmington are higher than the county, state and MSA; however, they have begun to track closer to the region following a dramatic spike at the start of the recession in 2008.

The concentration of high-skilled, highly-educated jobs in Wilmington and employment centers for lower-skilled workers outside the city drives high inflow/outflow; 85% of Wilmington's workforce commutes into the city from elsewhere and 73% of employed residents commute out of the city. This reflects residential income segregation in the county; more spending power outside city limits supports more service industry businesses outside city limits. Compounding the imbalance of jobs held by residents versus commuters is the income distribution between these two groups.

An examination of imbalances of earning power by race and geography also reveals an a disparity along racial lines, felt most accutely by city residents. While median household income decreased between 2000-2014 across all demographic groups, segmenting this data by race shows that African-American and Hispanic or Latinx groups suffered a greater decrease in earnings than their white counterpoints, and that the decrease in African-American earnings was nearly three times as high in the city than in the county.

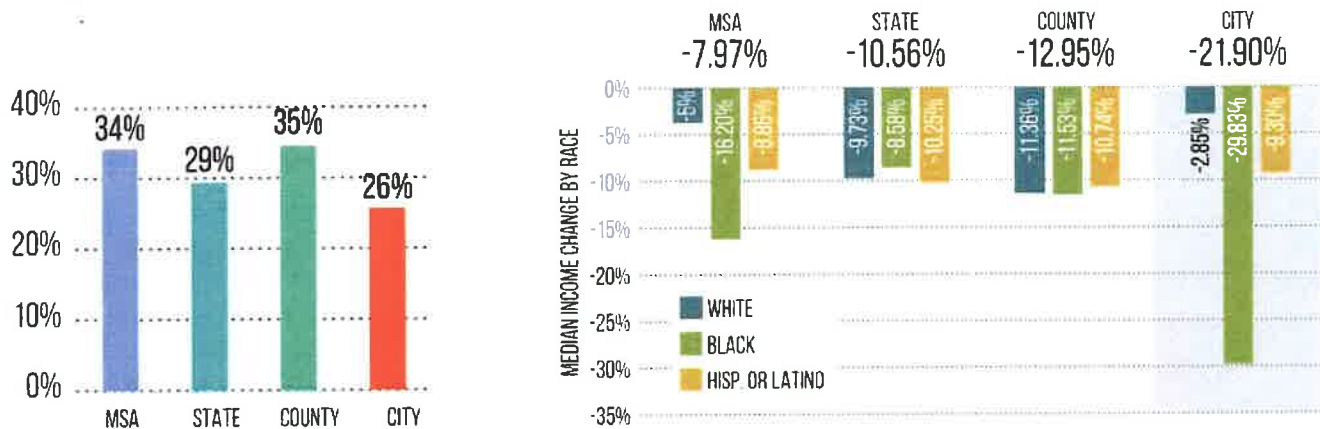


Figure 40 **Percent of population with BA or higher**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 5-yr estimates (2010-2014)

Figure 42 **Median percent change in household income by Race**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 5-yr estimates (2010-2014)

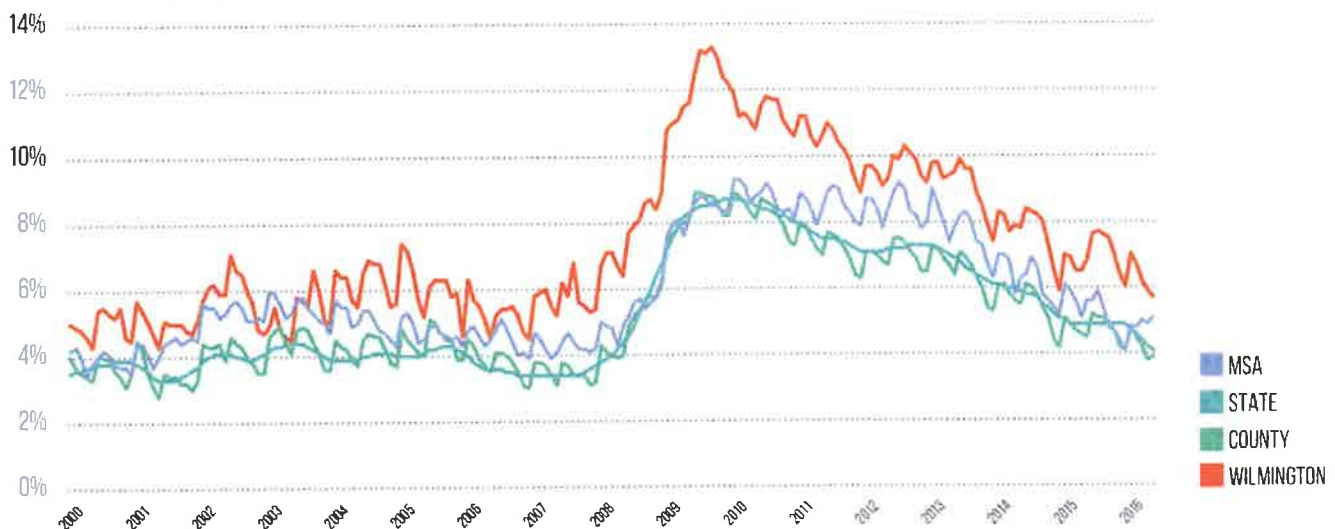


Figure 41 **Unemployment rate, 2000-2016**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 5-yr estimates (2010-2014); Bureau of Labor Statistics

# WHERE WILMINGTON WORKERS LIVE 2014

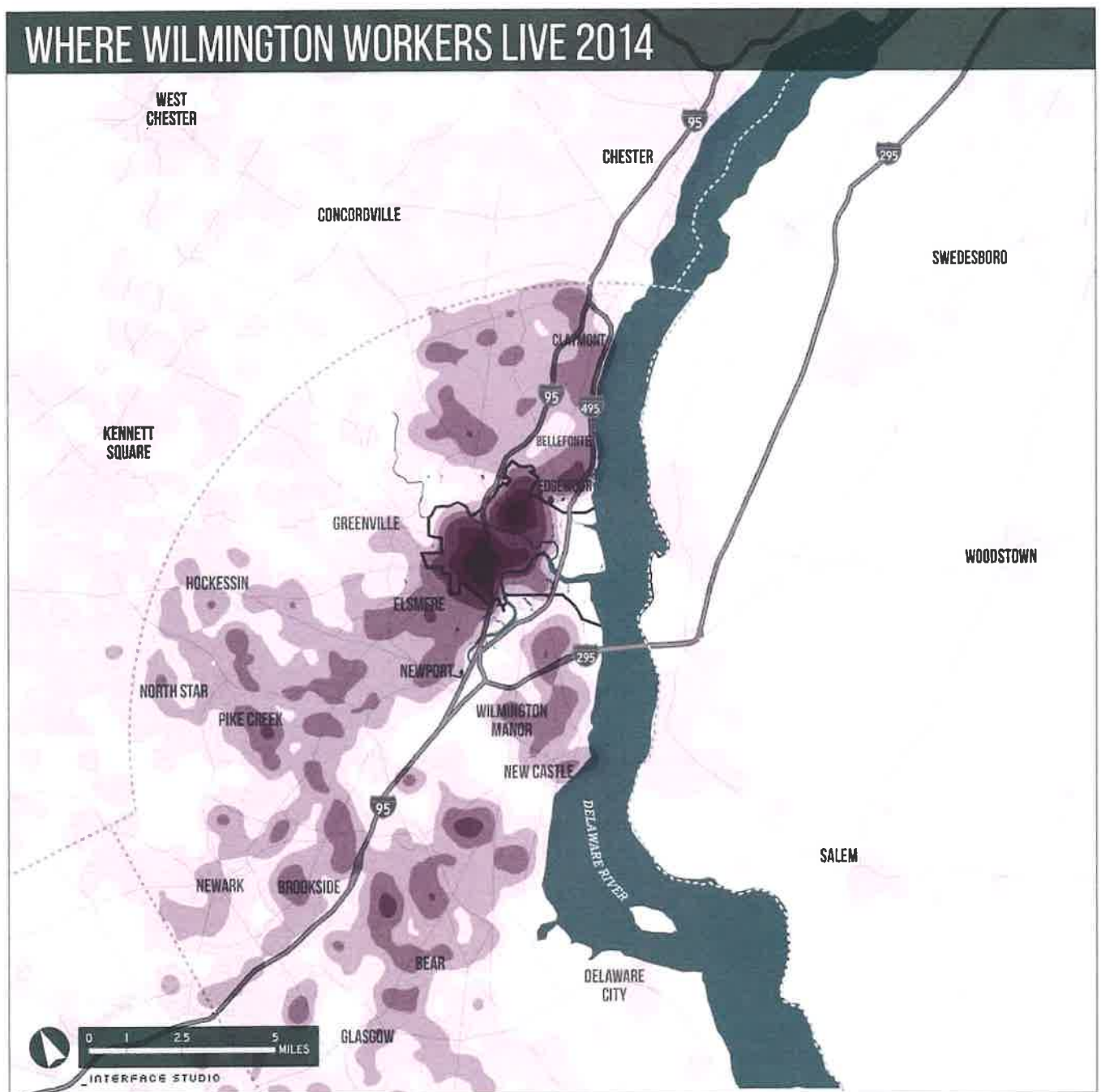
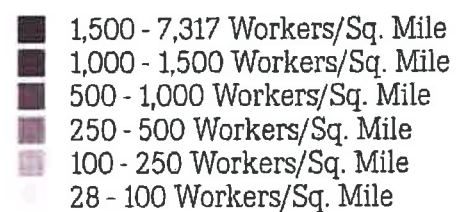


Figure 43 **Inflow map: where Wilmington workers live, 2014**

Source: US Census, OnTheMap, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)



# WHERE WILMINGTON RESIDENTS WORK 2014

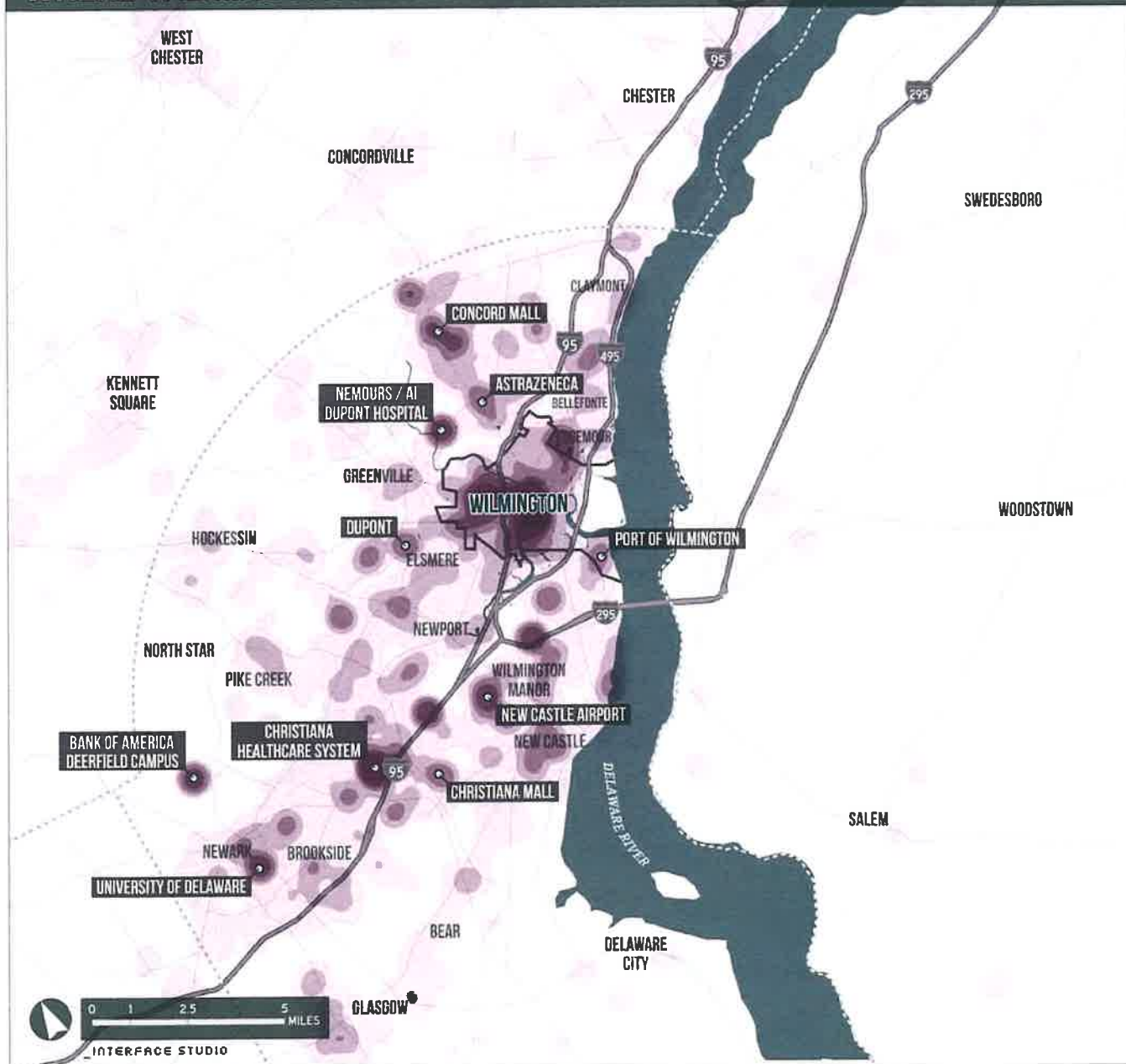
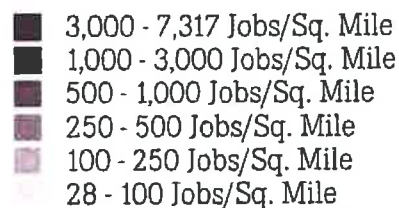


Figure 44 **Outflow map: where Wilmington residents work, 2014**  
 Source: US Census, OnTheMap, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)





One way to counter this imbalance is to encourage neighborhood-based employment hubs to help city residents find family-sustaining employment opportunities in Wilmington, reducing commute times and creating accessible employment opportunities for residents without access to a vehicle (24% of households in Wilmington do not own a car, nearly three times the national average).

The inflow/outflow pattern also indicates an opportunity to attract more residents to the city. Living closer to where they work will reduce commuting distance and make the city a more vibrant, mixed use place.

## Employment Projection

Jobs have remained relatively steady since 2010, after a period of decline from the peak of 65,729 jobs in 2003. The Delaware Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) projects that the number of jobs in Wilmington will remain steady with an estimated 52,500 jobs in 2050.<sup>1</sup>

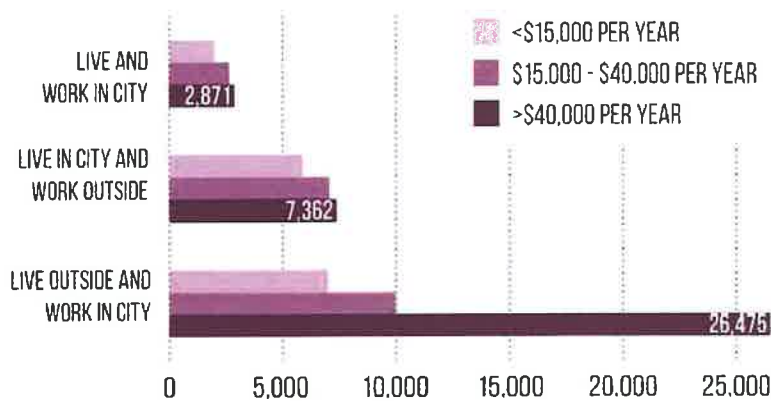


Figure 46 **Inflow/outflow job and income distribution**  
Source: US Census (2000), ACS 5-yr estimates (2010-2014)

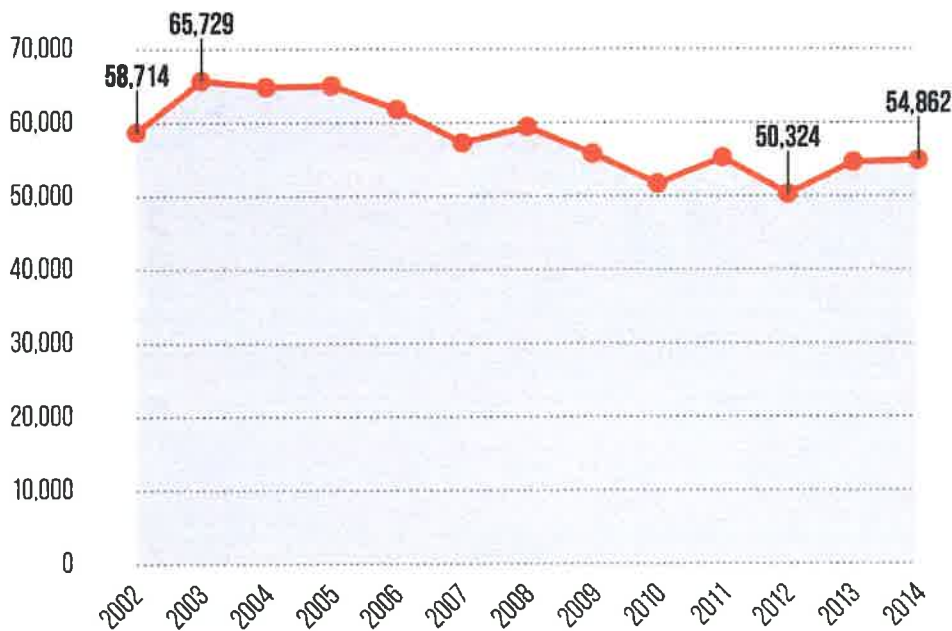


Figure 45 **Employment trends, 2002-2014**  
Source: US Census (2016)

<sup>1</sup> Employment counts and projections can vary by source depending on how a job is defined. Variations in definition include seasonality and primary vs. all jobs.

## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Residents rated convenient location the number one best thing about Wilmington, with restaurants/bars and arts/entertainment coming in third and fifth.

“Improved job opportunities” was ranked by residents as the second most important improvement that would have the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington. In the second public forum, “encourage opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment” was among the top voted recommendations, ranking fifth out of more than 50. Throughout the public outreach process, providing jobs and opportunity for Wilmington residents has consistently been cited as an important component of a multifaceted strategy to improve public safety which in turn impacts the city’s economic development and competitiveness.

Residents ranked “downtown revitalization” as the third most important improvement that would have the greatest impact on quality of life in the city, but also expressed the need to foster vibrant neighborhood Main Streets. In the second public forum, “balance investments between neighborhoods, downtown and the riverfront” and “make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive” were among the top voted recommendations, ranking seventh and twelfth out of more than 50.

## GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### GOAL 3.1: ENCOURAGE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LOCAL ECONOMY IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS

To ensure that the Wilmington economy works for all, the City should promote an inclusive economy across all neighborhoods and job types. An inclusive economy is defined as one that benefits all residents. The development of a robust, inclusive local economy will benefit current residents through improved employment opportunities and support in starting and growing small businesses, and will make the city a more attractive option for individuals and businesses in the region.

**“[We need] programs for community-level revitalization.”**

- **Continue to invest in neighborhood and downtown development.** Wilmington has a relatively strong downtown business district and programs to support investment that have been piloted and proven successful in the Downtown. These programs should be replicated and scaled for the neighborhood context. This includes investments in mixed-use commercial corridors to encourage small business development and creating opportunities for light manufacturing employment hubs throughout the city. Significant economic activity takes place in Wilmington neighborhoods and along neighborhood commercial corridors, including the South Wilmington Wetlands Park project, the Teen Warehouse, Inc. by REACH Riverside, as well as a number of projects approved for 2019 by the Department of Real Estate and Housing with federal funding from HUD.
- **Preserve and promote employment hubs and business parks for blue-collar jobs.** A critical part of building a diverse local economy is ensuring that there are accessible jobs at multiple levels of skill and education throughout the city. Promoting employment hubs in the city for business parks, warehousing, and light manufacturing would create employment opportunities for residents closer to where they live, reducing the need to commute outside the city. In order support the development of these sites, we recommend that the City undertake an industrial land use study to inventory industrial land and businesses, analyze industrial supply and demand, develop a land and market strategy, and model various development scenarios. Along with an industrial land use study, the City should explore ways to position Wilmington to compete with other business parks in the State. Strategies include the single-owner model used by Dover and New Castle County to gain site control, get parcels shovel-ready, and actively market and recruit site opportunities. Through this work, Wilmington can better support the development of smaller, modern, light manufacturing sites in the city. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.1 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]
- **Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.** Wilmington has numerous hubs of activity, but it is not perceived as a place where someone can easily and safely navigate between these hubs, particularly without a car. This makes it difficult for Wilmington to capitalize on its urban advantage at a time when urbanness is a key driver in how people choose where to live. Many neighborhood commercial corridors, such as 4th Street and N. Market Street, are seen as barriers between neighborhoods. To build a connected city and region, safe and healthy circulation between neighborhoods via commercial corridors is needed. This includes clean and safe measures, streetscaping, improving green spaces and landscaping, and providing funding for commercial facade improvement. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods and Goal 4.2 in Connected City and Region]



# ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



Figure 47 Economic opportunities map

- Neighborhood Economic Development**
- A** Todds Lane Industrial Park
  - B** Former Del Tech site
  - C** Warehouse District
  - D** 7th Street Peninsula
  - E** South Waterfront
  - F** Garasches Lane

- **Encourage the formation of merchants associations and business improvement districts to support neighborhood commercial areas.** Commercial areas are strengthened by organized businesses whether through merchant associations, Main Street programs or business improvement districts. Existing business improvement districts (BIDs) downtown and on the riverfront handle maintenance, security and marketing services in those districts and are funded by an assessment on property owners in the district. In order to strengthen other neighborhood commercial areas, the City should develop programs and policies to help businesses and community groups to organize. These efforts can include the development of a step-by-step resource guide for starting a BID and facilitating meetings between small business owners.

> **EXAMPLE:** Cities like [New York](http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid_guide_complete.pdf) ([http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid\\_guide\\_complete.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid_guide_complete.pdf)) and [Philadelphia](https://business.phila.gov/media/Starting-A-BID-in-Philadelphia-FINAL.pdf) (<https://business.phila.gov/media/Starting-A-BID-in-Philadelphia-FINAL.pdf>) have developed guides on how to start a BID.

## GOAL 3.2: INVEST IN TRAINING TO ACCESS THE JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

Wilmington is faced with a disconnect between employment opportunities and the skills of its residents. The City and its partners should develop and invest in programs and infrastructure that help residents overcome this skills gap and access jobs with long-term career opportunities.

- **Link workforce training and retraining to jobs.** Wilmington should focus its workforce training programs on skills related to current and projected employment opportunities. In particular, the City should focus on opportunities to partner with employers for direct job links in training programs and encourage on-the-job-training. Additionally, the City should work in partnership with non-profit programs, the State of Delaware (DOL, DOE), and the private sector to improve the coordination and alignment of workforce development initiatives in a data-driven manner.
- **Create employment opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment.** In order to build an economy that works for all residents, Wilmington should encourage and support private sector job creators to hire city residents trained from qualified workforce development agencies who work with populations with barriers to employment. This includes the city's re-entry population, people with disabilities, and youth. In order to ensure that Wilmington works for all people, the City should focus on creating opportunities to reducing barriers to employment opportunities among key populations.

> **EXAMPLE:** The [Achievement Center](https://wilmhope.org/the-achievement-center/) (<https://wilmhope.org/the-achievement-center/>) serves as a multi-disciplinary hub for prison reentry services.

### GOAL 3.3: ENSURE THAT WILMINGTON IS A CITY WHERE INCLUSIVE BUSINESSES CAN THRIVE

In order to develop, support, and attract local talent, the City should focus on ensuring that inclusive businesses can thrive. An inclusive business is one that seeks to expand opportunities for low-income, minority, and marginalized groups. Making Wilmington a center for small businesses, start-ups, the arts, and innovative research will help make Wilmington a city that works for all. Encouraging businesses to purchase from local businesses during the procurement process can also help support a more diverse economy.

- **Strengthen policies and programs for diversity and inclusion.** In order to create a more inclusive economy, the City can implement policies and programs that support diversity and inclusion. This can involve setting firm goals for prioritizing minority-owned businesses in filling government contracts, providing free marketing and technical assistance to small businesses, and committing to hire locally, particularly from low-income areas. These programs will create greater opportunities for locally grown small businesses to thrive.
- **Provide support for small businesses as they grow.** During the initial phases of growth, small businesses will need marketing and technical assistance, help connecting with investors, and programs to overcome growing pains. By providing support to these homegrown businesses, Wilmington can ensure that they are in the best position to succeed and increase the robustness of the city's economy.
- **Invest in entrepreneurial training and opportunities.** In order to encourage locally-grown businesses, Wilmington should provide support for entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business in the city. That is, programs that help many small efforts flourish. This includes investments in co-working spaces and/or offering subsidized space for startups and innovative research, providing technical assistance for local entrepreneurs, facilitating connections between entrepreneurs and investors, developing local success through mentoring programs, and promoting arts and events in the creative sector.

> **EXAMPLE:** [The Mill](https://themillspace.com/) (<https://themillspace.com/>) is a local community and coworking space that supports entrepreneurs, start-ups and established businesses.

- **Encourage a variety of types of spaces for start-ups and small businesses to grow in the city.** In addition to supporting individuals who want to launch start-ups and start small businesses, Wilmington needs to encourage the types of spaces where those new businesses can grow. Places like kitchen incubators, co-working spaces, live-work spaces, and light manufacturing spaces give businesses in the new economy the space they need to start up and scale up their operations, creating new employment opportunities for Wilmington residents.
- **Continue to ensure that State and local tax incentive tools are marketed and utilized.** Wilmington does not lack for incentive opportunities, but they may not be well known or coordinated. The available State and local tax incentive tools should be more aggressively marketed and utilized, particularly towards private investment in gateway and corridor locations throughout the city. Marketing should focus particularly on potential tax incentive recipients, including non-profit and private sector businesses currently investing in the city. The marketing efforts should also occur in conjunction with other investments by the public, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors, building on collaborative efforts to further investments in "tipping point" neighborhoods. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]



### GOAL 3.4: PROMOTE CITY ASSETS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN RESIDENTS, EMPLOYERS AND INVESTMENT

Wilmington does not lack for assets, but many of these assets are not well known by residents or those throughout the region. The City should better market Wilmington's assets in arts and culture, recreation and green space, events, jobs, small businesses, history, affordability, livability.

**“Wilmington has a perception problem. Some of it is based in reality, but a lot of it is just bad press. When you look at places that have turned around, a lot of that is arts driven.”**

**“In the 21st century, the main competition that determines the success of cities will be the competition for talent, and those cities that have been successful at attracting and retaining talent are those that nurture the creative environment.”**

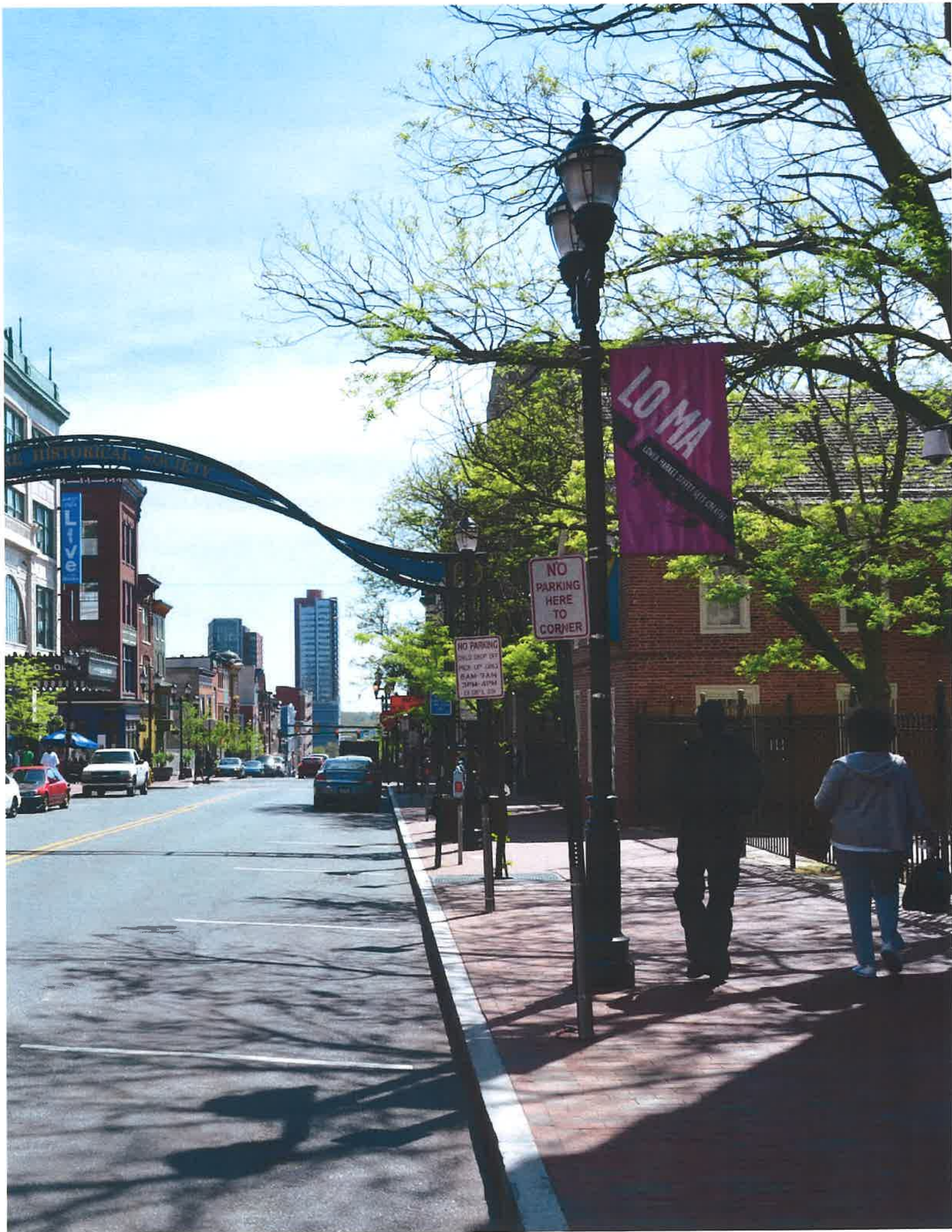
- **Nurture a creative environment to attract talent.** In addition to the physical spaces for homegrown entrepreneurial opportunities, opportunities to network and form connections among creative innovators is a vital part of supporting local businesses and the talent they seek. By offering mentorship programs, idea sharing events, forums and conferences, and networking events like breakfasts and happy hours, the City can help build the community aspect of the entrepreneurial sector.
- **Enhance attractiveness of city gateways.** Wilmington's main entryways are the first and sometimes only views visitors have of the city. Making a positive impression along city gateways and commercial corridors will serve to attract and retain residents, employers, and investments, improve quality of life in the neighborhoods around them, and enable residents to access employment opportunities more safely. Wilmington's [Beautiful City Initiative](https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/residents/keeping-wilmington-clean) (<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/residents/keeping-wilmington-clean>) focuses on keeping gateways clean and maintained. Streetscape, landscape, and facade improvements are key elements of this initiative, but investments in public art and pocket parks will also make these important connectors stand out and support the city's creative sector. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods, and Goal 4.2 in Connected City and Region]
- **Expand the reach of arts and cultural institutions and make the arts visible throughout the city.** Feedback from the public outreach process revealed pride in the strong arts and cultural presence in the city; however, some also felt that more could be done to “...make arts a larger part of the city than it is today.” Local arts organizations and artists can be tapped to engage with various aspects of community revitalization and economic development, from bringing the arts into civic spaces like parks and schools, to transforming vacant lots, to improving the appearance of gateways and public spaces and thus change perceptions of the city. Such endeavors not only highlight Wilmington's rich arts and cultural identity, but also build neighborhood identity and pride. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.4 and 1.5 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods, and Goal 2.1 in Healthy and Thriving Communities]

- **Develop wayfinding signage around key assets.** Wayfinding signage around key assets makes the city easier to navigate, which is a boon to residents and visitors alike, and encourages different modes of travel. Additionally, wayfinding signage highlights Wilmington's key assets, including parks, recreation centers, cultural institutions, and historical sites, and is often an effective marketing tool.
- **Advance communications and branding campaign.** The City and its partners are launching efforts to better advertise its existing assets to individuals and businesses in the region. By supporting efforts to encourage diverse growth in the city, Wilmington can better attract new residents to grow the economy alongside homegrown talent. This includes the internal focus on building community pride and an external focus on changing regional and national perceptions about the city. The campaign includes websites <https://wilmington.love/> and [www.WilmToday.com](http://www.WilmToday.com); YouTube channels "Wilmington Love" and "The Wilmington Show," and social media platforms Facebook/Twitter/Instagram @ItsTimeWilmDE.



> **EXAMPLE:** Wilmington's Creative District has several placemaking projects centered around the arts, including the [7th Street Arts Bridge](https://www.creativedistrictwilm.com/7th-street-arts-bridge) (<https://www.creativedistrictwilm.com/7th-street-arts-bridge>) and [The Public Art Prep Program \(PAPP\)](https://www.creativedistrictwilm.com/7th-street-arts-bridge) (<https://www.creativedistrictwilm.com/7th-street-arts-bridge>), a collaboration of Creative District Wilmington and Connections Community Support Programs.







### OVERVIEW

If all of Wilmington's residents are to share in the city's growth and emerging opportunities, people living in every neighborhood must have access to safe, affordable, and high-quality transportation options. Fortunately, Wilmington already has many of the necessary ingredients to become a connected city where it is easy to get around by any mode of transportation. Wilmington has a traditional street grid made up of pedestrian-scale blocks and the city's compact footprint means that walking and biking are convenient options for many trips. Wilmington's location at the nexus of the Northeast Corridor also gives its residents access to opportunities throughout the wider region.

But while Wilmington has many of the ingredients of a connected city, the existing transportation network is largely geared towards getting cars into and out of the city as quickly as possible. In speaking with community members and business owners throughout the city, the need to provide residents with safe, affordable, and high-quality transportation choices is clear. This section of the plan addresses the elements of a complete transportation system Wilmington must focus on to become a connected city where everyone can share and participate in the city's growth.

## Walking

Wilmington is a compact city— it's less than three miles from Rockford Park on the western border to the 7th Street Peninsula. Wilmington's compact nature, along with its traditional street grid made up of pedestrian scale blocks, mean that many trips within the city are relatively short and easily walkable. Downtown, where the majority of jobs, amenities and services are concentrated, is only a 15-minute walk from central neighborhoods such as the East Side, West Center City, Quaker Hill, and Midtown Brandywine, and a 20-30 minute walk from Trolley Square, Little Italy, Southbridge, the 9th Ward, and the Riverfront. According to 2014 American Community Survey estimates, 6.5% of Wilmington residents walk to work, a higher proportion compared to the average 4.7% of residents in similar-sized Northeast cities.

Walking in Wilmington can be dangerous; people walking account for a large share of those injured or killed in traffic crashes in the city. In response to the clear need to quickly improve conditions for people walking, Wilmington has planned a number of projects that will emphasize pedestrian safety, including Water Street, Walnut Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and several intersections around the city.

# WALKING TIME TO DOWNTOWN WILMINGTON UP TO 30 MINUTES

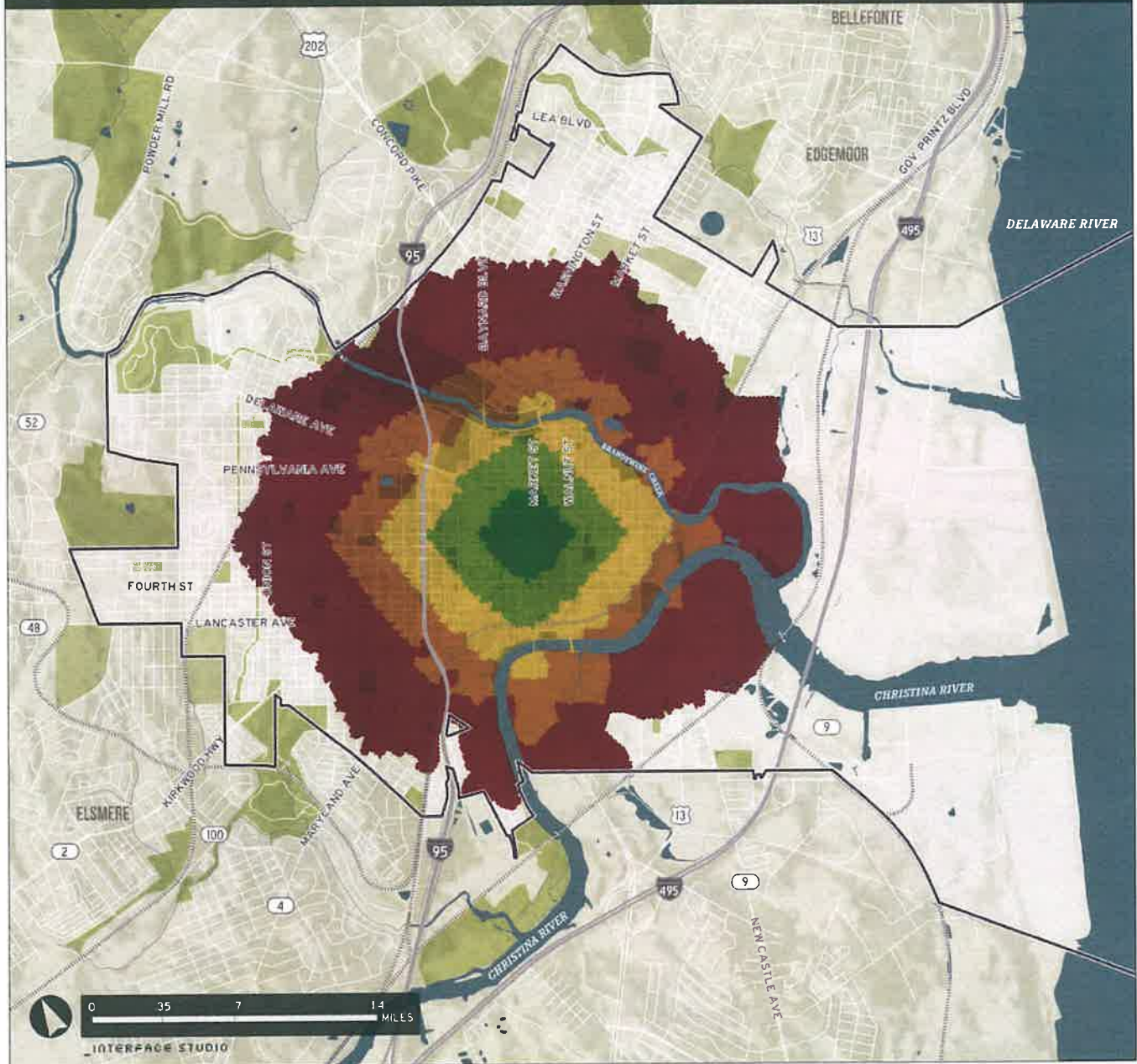


Figure 48 Walkshed map  
Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

Travel Time in Minutes  
to 8th and Market Streets

- Up to 30
- Up to 20
- Up to 15
- Up to 10
- Up to 5



## Bicycling

Just as Wilmington's compact layout and street grid should make walking a convenient choice for many trips, biking too should be an attractive transportation option in Wilmington. Every residential neighborhood in the city is within a 30-minute bike ride to downtown Wilmington and its many jobs, services, and amenities. Wilmington also connects to a number of existing and planned local and regional trails, such as the East Coast Greenway. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, only 0.6% of trips to work are by bike, but this number has increased slightly over time. This falls below the national average for major cities, which is closer to 1%, and Philadelphia's bike modes share of 2.2%. It is worth noting that 73% of Wilmington residents commute out of the city for work, and shifting that percentage so that more residents work in the city closer to where they live can make biking more feasible.

The City of Wilmington Bicycle Plan, to be published mid-2019, outlines the City's vision for growing its network of bicycle facilities and making bicycling a popular and practical mode of transportation. Wilmington's first significant on-street bike facility was completed in 2017 on Union St. Wilmington Initiatives' list of priority transportation projects also includes adding bike facilities on Walnut Street (including the Leo J. Dugan/Walnut Street Bridge), Harrison Street, and construction of the Brandywine to Christina Bike Trail. Bicycle facilities have also been proposed on Washington and West Streets, and the City is examining the possibility of bringing a bike share program to Wilmington. Adding more on-street bicycle facilities will make bicycling a more attractive transportation option and can help to increase residents' mobility, improve public health, foster economic development, and reduce vehicle emissions.

## BIKING TIME TO DOWNTOWN WILMINGTON

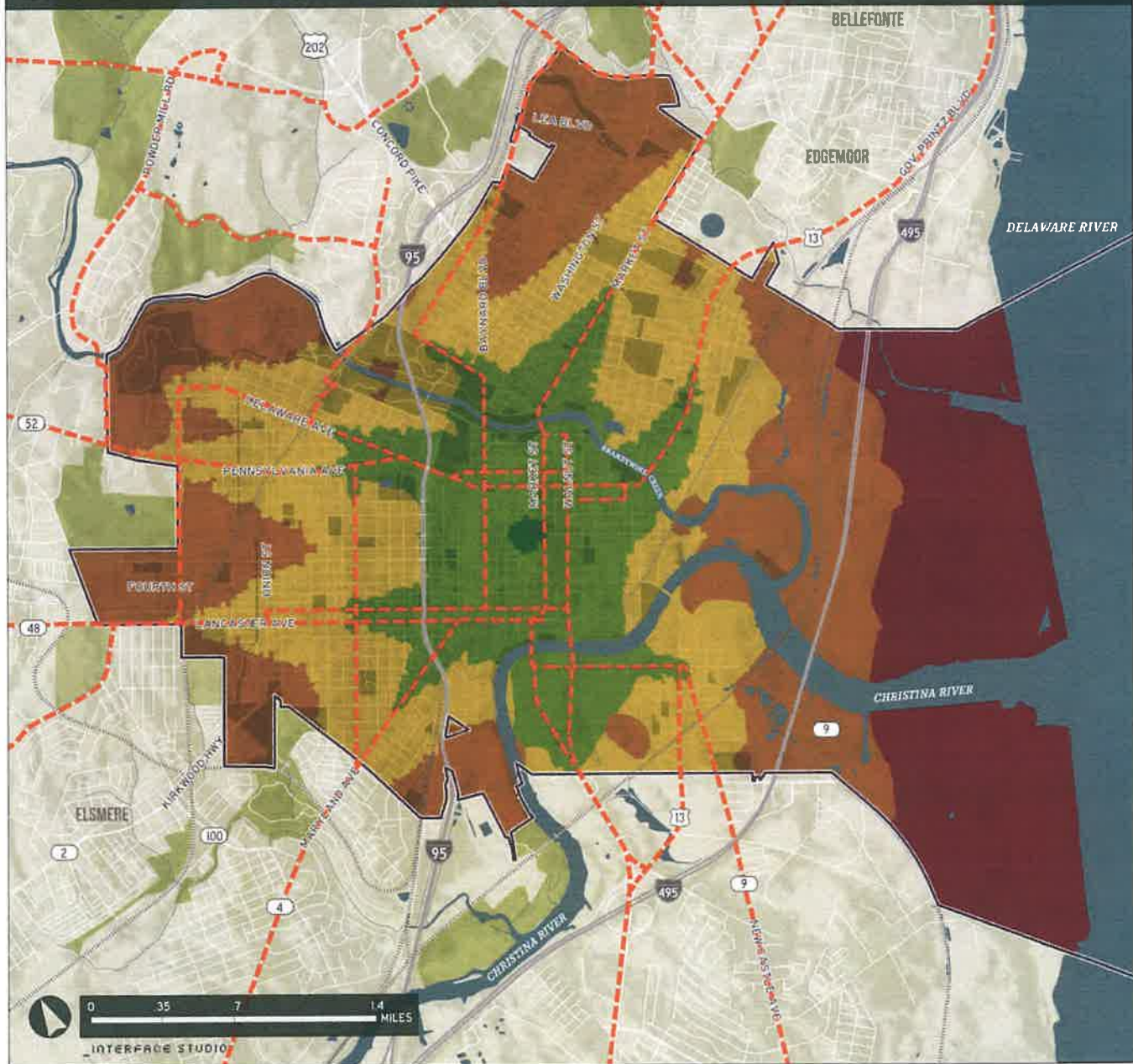


Figure 49 **Bikeshed map**  
Source: City of Wilmington, Interface Studio

Travel Time in Minutes  
to 8th and Market Streets  
with Preference Given to  
Bicycle Routes

- Greater than 30
- Up to 30
- Up to 15
- Up to 10
- Up to 1 Minute
- Bicycle Route

## Transit

Delaware Transit Corporation operates the DART First State (DART) bus system in Wilmington and the State of Delaware. DART has 31 routes that serve Wilmington and provides millions of bus and paratransit passenger trips each year. The DART has begun to shift its system that was heavily oriented toward downtown Wilmington by combining routes that provide better suburban-to-suburban connection while still traversing through Wilmington. These changes have reduced the hub-and-spoke nature of the DART system and are making it easier for residents to reach the growing number of jobs and other important destinations located outside of downtown via bus.

According to the 2014 American Community Survey, Wilmington residents are more reliant on public transportation than their counterparts in the region, and 24% of Wilmington households do not own a car. In Wilmington, 11.7% of residents commute to work by public transit, an increase of 2% since 1990. The gap between relatively good access to transit and low usage is likely a result of the disconnect between DART's downtown focus and the destinations people need to reach, the relatively low frequency of service, and the lack of late-night and weekend service. The planned construction of a new transit center downtown near the rail station will offer Wilmington an outstanding opportunity to continue its transformation of the transit system to better align with residents' needs. Plans are being finalized to upgrade transit amenities on several key bus corridors, such as King and Orange Streets.

DART contracts with SEPTA to provide commuter rail service from four Delaware stations, including Wilmington, to southeast Pennsylvania and downtown Philadelphia. The service provides a critical regional link to jobs, education, hospitals and entertainment. Serving SEPTA and Amtrak, the Biden Train Station in Wilmington is the 11th busiest train station in the country and has seen an increase in SEPTA customers coming through the station to work in Wilmington and the surrounding areas. The service includes 41 weekday trains, 14 Saturday trains, and 12 Sunday trains.



# TRANSIT RIDERSHIP AND RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT 2016

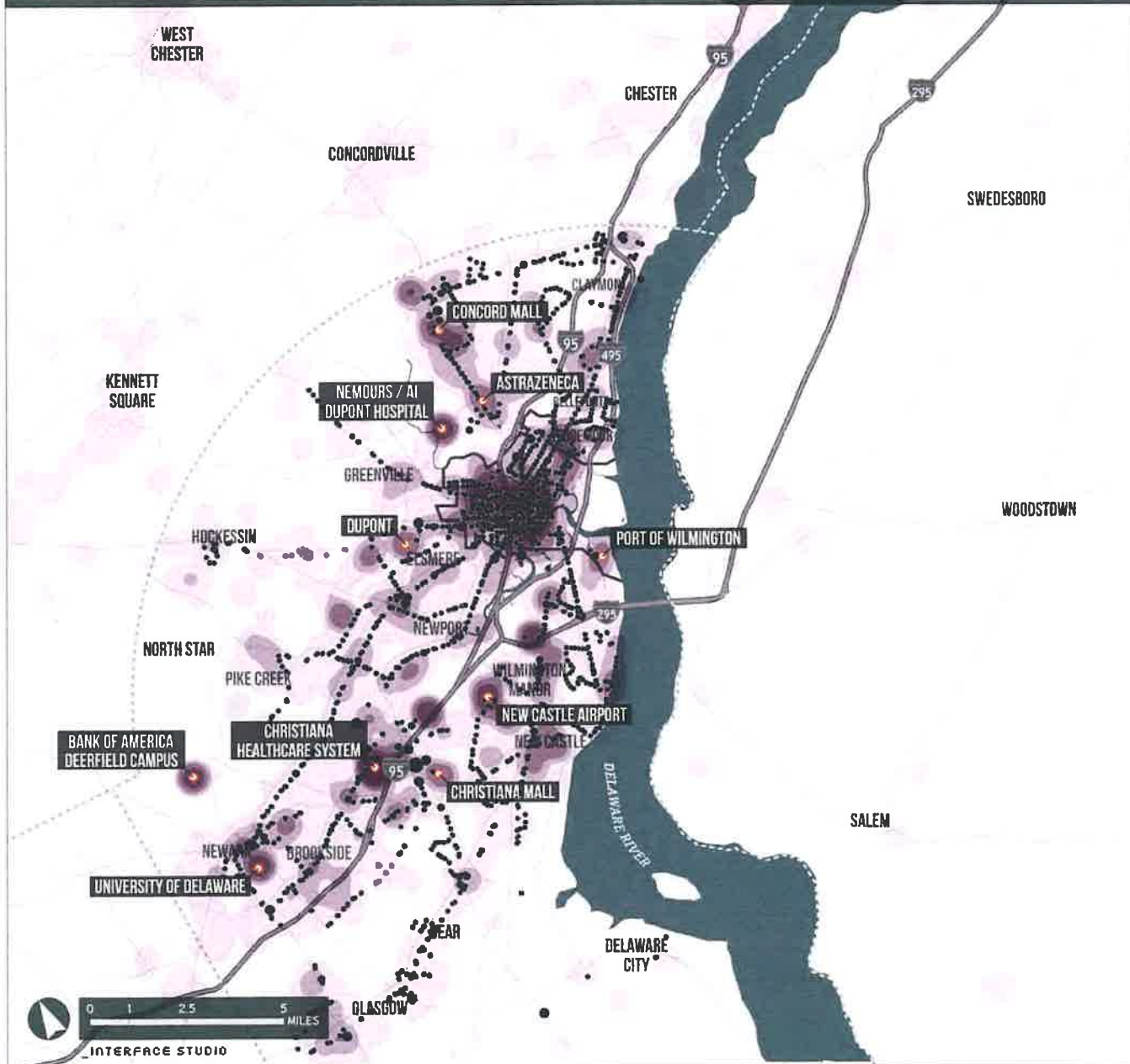


Figure 50 **Map of transit ridership and resident employment, 2016**  
 Source: WILMAPCO (2016); US Census, OnTheMap, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)

## Average ridership - weekday

- 0 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 500
- 501 - 1000
- 1001 - 2347

## Where Wilmington Residents Work

- 3,000 - 7,317 Jobs/Sq. Mile
- 1,000 - 3,000 Jobs/Sq. Mile
- 500 - 1,000 Jobs/Sq. Mile
- 250 - 500 Jobs/Sq. Mile
- 100 - 250 Jobs/Sq. Mile
- 28 - 100 Jobs/Sq. Mile

## Driving

The construction of Interstates 95 and 495 in the mid-20th century re-oriented Wilmington's transportation network towards cars and had a major impact on urban form and connectivity across the city. The prevalence of one-way streets, megablocks, and on/off ramps to Interstate 95 downtown disrupt the street grid and make navigating Wilmington's streets a challenge for all users. A traditional street grid maximizes choice and disperses traffic, but changes to Wilmington's street grid have concentrated traffic on a few main corridors. Today, portions of Walnut Street, Lancaster Avenue, Lincoln Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue carry more than 20,000 vehicles per day. These streets act as barriers for people walking and biking due to their width, the volume of traffic, and the speed of those cars. Rather than connecting Wilmington residents to important destinations across the city, the existing road network is primarily geared towards bringing people into and out of downtown Wilmington with minimal delay. This is evidenced by the fact that 92% of workers who commute into Wilmington from outside the City drive alone (according to a survey of regional residents).

Between 2012 and 2016, there were an average of 179 crashes each year that resulted in an injury or fatality. These crashes were largely concentrated in several key hotspots, including: west of I-95 between Lancaster Avenue and 4th Street, along 4th Street near Monroe Street and Market Street, and the six-way intersection where Delaware Avenue meets 11th Street. Wilmington is already acting to address these hotspots, working with WILMAPCO to examine Maryland and Monroe Streets, and the upcoming renovation of Interstate 95 will include the removal of ramps at Lancaster and Jackson Streets.

## Parking

When Wilmington shifted its transportation network to focus on getting cars into and out of the city, large quantities of parking were built throughout downtown and the riverfront. There are over 47 acres of parking in downtown Wilmington alone, which is more than 10% of downtown's total area. Today, all this parking acts as a barrier that walls off the city's fastest growing areas from the rest of Wilmington's neighborhoods - separating residents from opportunities, amenities, and services. Parking also dampens the growing vitality downtown and on the riverfront, creating long stretches, and even entire blocks, with no street-level activity.

While the current supply of off-street parking outweighs demand, national and local changes in urban transportation, such as the growth of ridesharing and the advent of driverless cars, seem likely to further decrease demand for parking. These changes may lead to large quantities of underutilized parking in certain areas, but this can also represent an opportunity for redevelopment or transitioning space devoted to parking to other productive uses like green infrastructure, bicycle parking, or electric vehicle charging. Wilmington is proactively addressing parking issues; the city has eliminated parking requirements in the downtown area, which will hopefully better align parking supply and demand and reduce the cost of housing downtown.



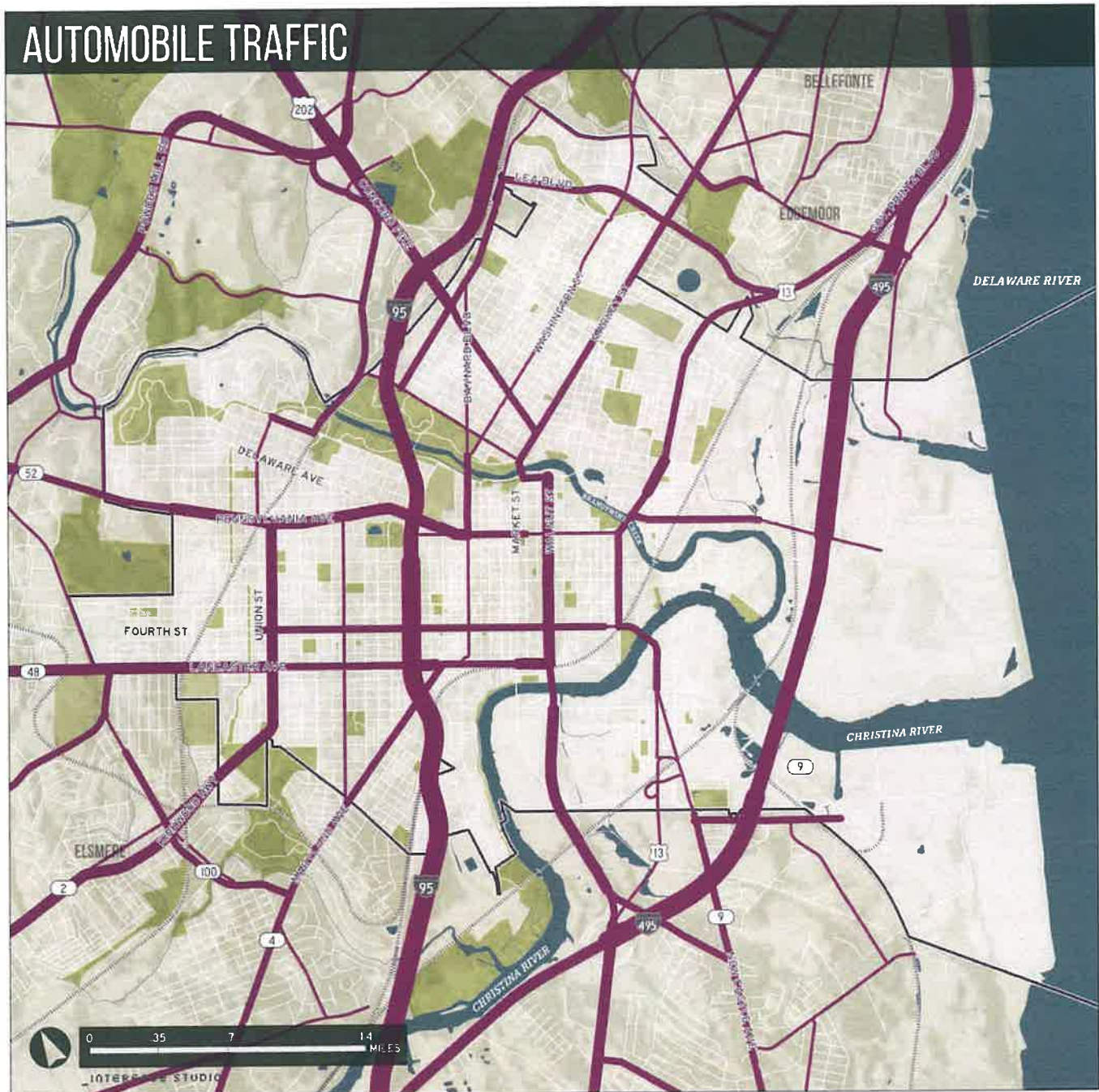
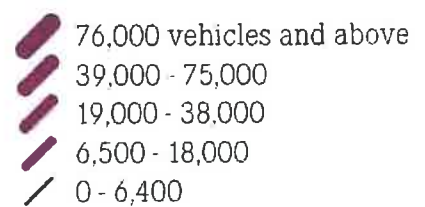


Figure 51 Map of average annual daily traffic, 2013  
Source: State of Delaware

## DAILY TRAFFIC





## CRASH HOTSPOTS 2012-2016

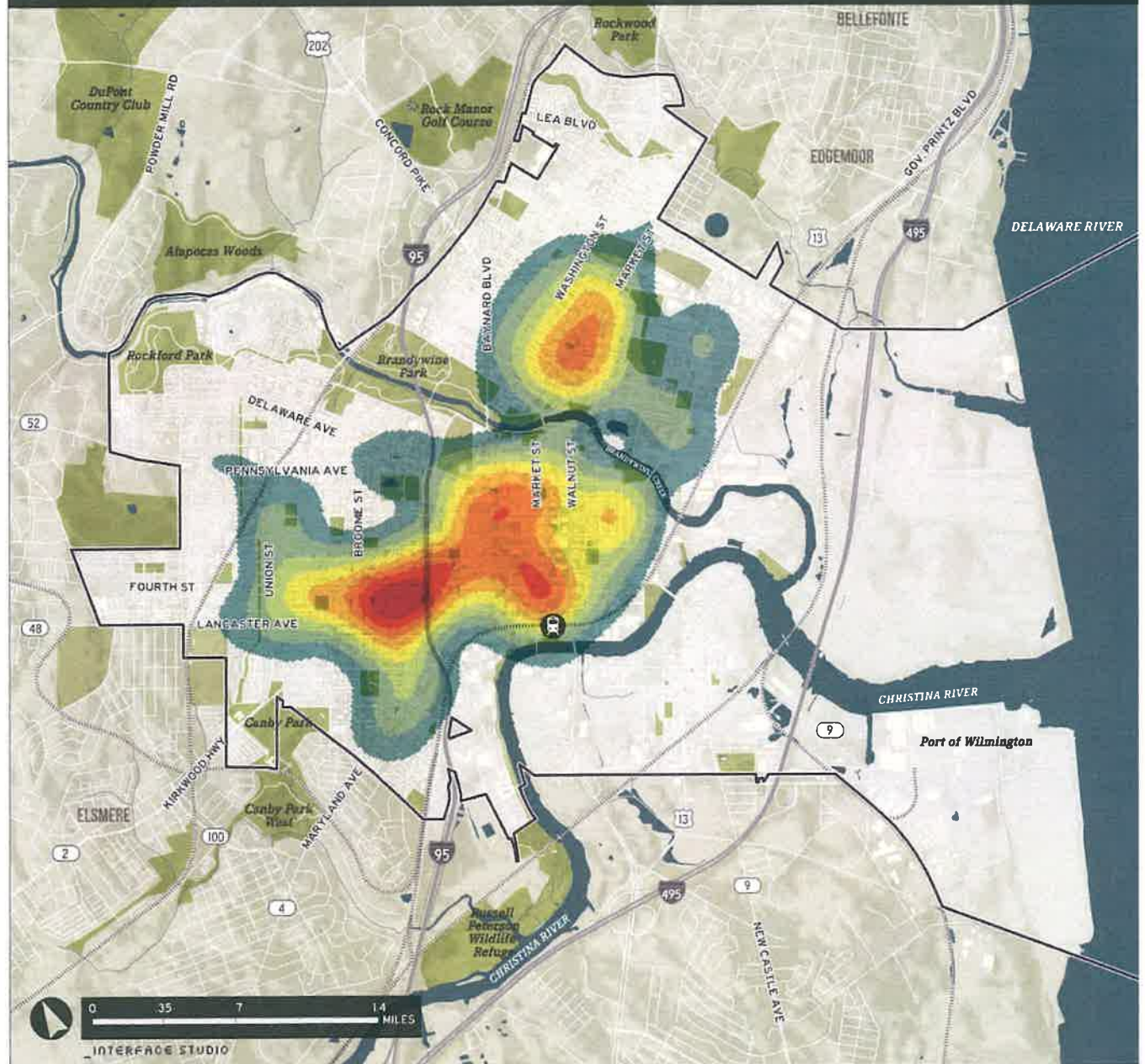


Figure 52 Map of crash hotspots, 2012-2016  
Source: DelDOT

Clusters of severe crashes  
(injuries and fatalities)





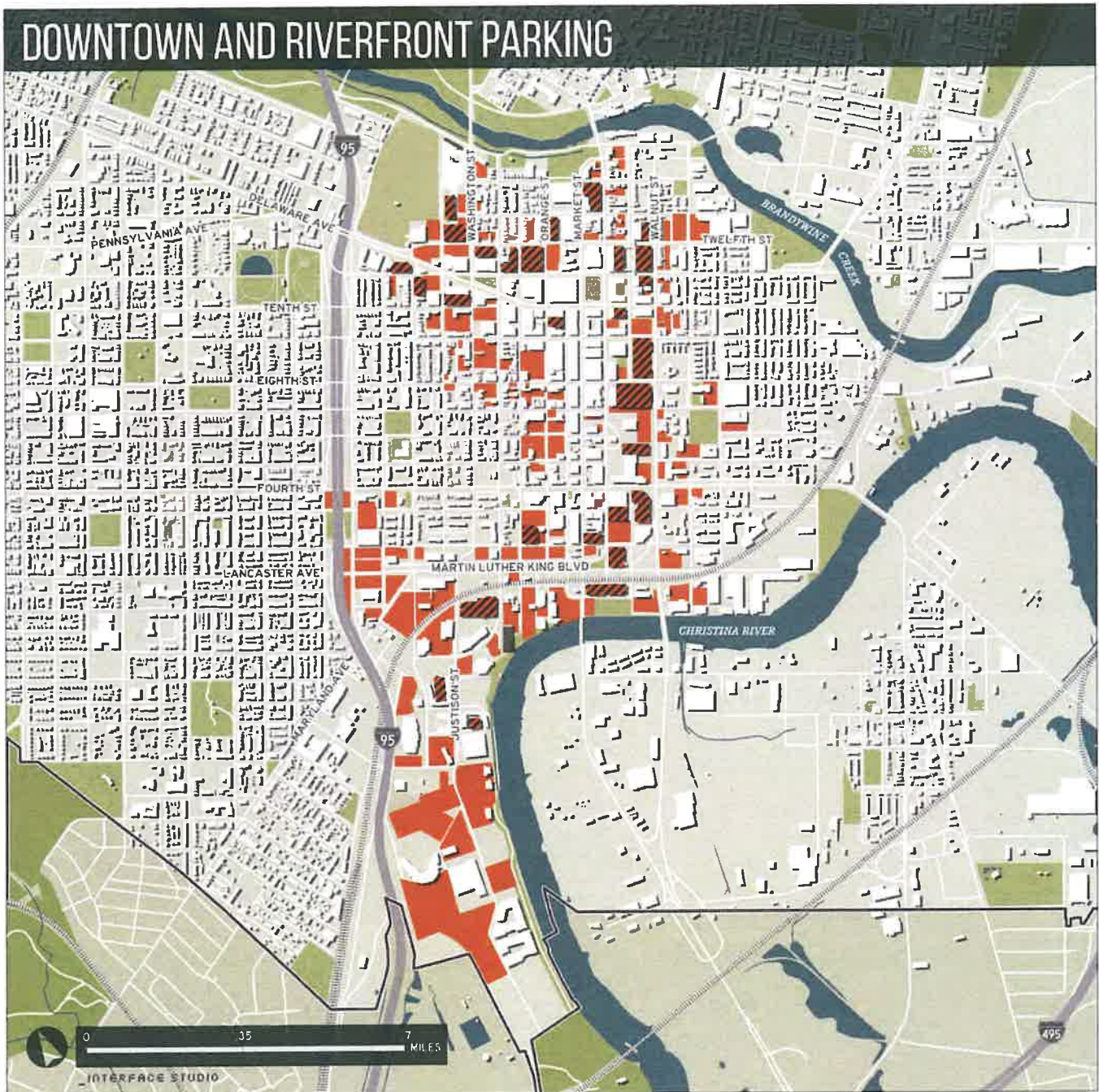


Figure 53 Downtown and riverfront parking map  
Source: Interface Studio

## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Residents rated the city's convenient location the number one best thing about Wilmington, but at the same time expressed the need to make the city better connected. When residents were asked what they would focus on if they were Mayor of Wilmington, ideas for better connectivity were the most cited and “better sidewalks and safer streets” were among the top rated improvements that would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington.

Among residents surveyed, 10.6% walked to work, while more than 20% of those who lived downtown, in Midtown Brandywine/Central and West City Center, walk to work. In contrast, 92% of the people who work in Wilmington but live outside the city commute to their jobs via car. While living in the city, particularly downtown, makes it easier to walk, only 37.1% of Wilmington residents feel that the environment for people walking is good or very good (and 26.5% feel it is poor or very poor). The perception that Wilmington is not very walkable is likely a result of critical safety issues, along with a handful of major barriers (e.g., interstates, railroads, superblocs, and parking garages) that impede connectivity for people walking.

In the first public forum, residents were asked “What is a great street?” Residents’ most desired characteristics centered on inviting and attractive people-oriented streets that were pedestrian-and bike-friendly.



Residents participate in the “What is a Great Street?” activity at the first public forum



In the first public forum, residents were asked “What is a great street?” Residents’ most desired characteristics centered on inviting and attractive people-oriented streets that were pedestrian-and bike-friendly.

Out of more than 50 strategies for improving the city, “adopt Complete Streets policy, improve pedestrian safety, and expand bike network,” received the second highest number of votes and amount of funding in a participatory budgeting exercise. When asked what would encourage them to walk, bike, or take transit more, 21.6% of Wilmington residents responded with “more bike lanes and bike parking.”

The majority of Wilmington residents (57.3%) rate their access to public transit as good or very good, but only 5% of those surveyed commute via transit. In the second public forum, “restructure DART transit service to meet needs and prioritize buses on key routes” was among the top voted key citywide recommendations.

Of the five goal areas, the Connected City and Region goals received the second highest number of votes, with “Goal 4.1 Connect across Wilmington and throughout the region via a multimodal network” selected as a high priority.

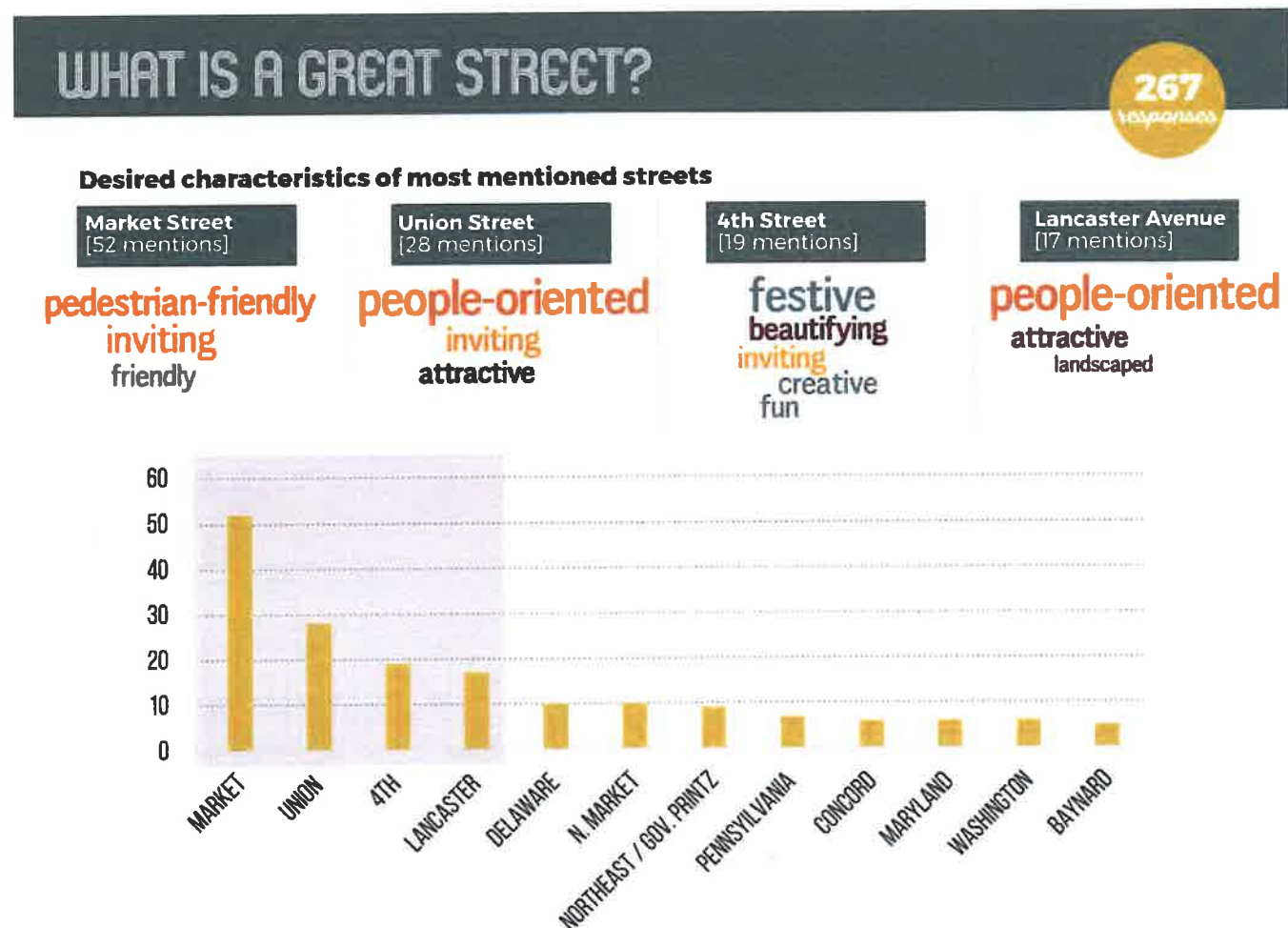


Figure 54 Results of “What is a Great Street” activity  
Source: Interface Studio

## GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### GOAL 4.1: CONNECT ACROSS WILMINGTON AND THROUGHOUT THE REGION VIA A MULTIMODAL NETWORK THAT GIVES RESIDENTS AFFORDABLE, HIGH-QUALITY TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

Wilmington already has many of the necessary ingredients to become a connected city, but the existing transportation network is largely geared towards getting cars into and out of the city as quickly as possible. Designing streets for all users will improve connectivity and quality of life.

**“How can we keep people from jumping into their car?”**

**“Better walkable spaces connecting to other areas.”**

**Design streets that are safe and accessible for everyone, no matter their age or mode of transportation.**

- **Adopt a Complete Streets policy.** Complete streets enable people of all ages and abilities to safely travel along and across streets, regardless of which mode of transportation they use. More than 1,400 cities, states, and towns around the U.S. have adopted a complete streets policy to ensure that transportation projects account for everyone’s needs. Similarly-sized cities like Camden, NJ; Rockville, MD; and Reading, PA have adopted policies.



#### **What are complete streets?**

For decades, the United States’ roadway system has been designed with one primary goal in mind: moving cars through space as quickly as possible. Over the course of the 20th century, transportation planners and traffic engineers lost sight of the multifaceted role that streets play in people’s lives and, instead, focused on designing roads for cars rather than people. The complete streets movement aims to make streets work for people once again by ensuring that everyone, whether travelling by bike, car, public transit, walking, or wheeling, can safely use our streets regardless of age or ability.

- **Improve safety, connectivity, and the environment for people walking and biking throughout the city.** Wilmington must maintain its existing sidewalk network, fill key gaps in the network, and continue investing in upgrades to make sidewalks ADA-compliant. The City should also focus on making it safer and easier for pedestrians to cross the street by building curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands, ensuring crosswalks are marked and well-lit, installing signals with leading pedestrian intervals at intersections with significant pedestrian activity, and restricting right turns on red, especially downtown. Lowering traffic speeds and reducing speeding by installing traffic calming projects, using digital speed feedback signs, and increasing enforcement can improve safety for people walking and make walking more comfortable for everyone. The City should also expand and invest in the Safe Routes to Schools program, so that walking and biking to school is a viable option for more kids across Wilmington. [see Appendix for Streets Toolbox]



Examples of pedestrian safety improvements.



- **Consider establishing a Vision Zero policy.** No one should die or be seriously injured in a traffic crash. This is the core tenet of the Vision Zero movement. Cities around the U.S. and the world are realizing that most traffic crashes are preventable and by instituting a proactive, preventative approach that prioritizes safety cities can increase safe, healthy, equitable mobility for everyone. City staff should engage with communities, advocacy organizations, schools, key departments, and other stakeholders to assess the desire and capacity to commit to and follow through on a Vision Zero policy and align it with DelDOT's *Delaware Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Toward Zero Deaths*.
- **Provide improved connections for people walking and biking across major barriers like the interstates and railroads.** Wilmington should partner with local artists and use lighting to create more welcoming spaces along highway overpasses and underpasses, and underneath rail viaducts. The proposed improvements to the Amtrak rail viaducts at French, Market, and Orange Streets can be used as a showcase to demonstrate the transformative power of these strategies. The City should also work with the Delaware Department of Transportation to incorporate similar improvements to highway underpasses and bridges into the upcoming reconstruction of Interstate 95. [see also recommendation under Goal 3.4 in Robust Local Economy and Appendix for case studies]
- **Expand Wilmington's network of low-stress bicycle facilities.** The City should prioritize building the highest priority projects listed in the new City of Wilmington Bicycle Plan and install bike parking at public facilities, destinations, and major transit stops. Examples of potential bike facilities are explored in corridor redesign scenarios under Goal 4.2. [see Appendix for Streets Toolbox]

#### Create a logical, easy-to-navigate street network.

- **Reconnect the street grid.** While most of the city has a compact street grid, urban renewal has created large blocks downtown and on the East Side that interrupt the grid. A large number of one-way streets, some of which are not paired or change direction, also make it confusing and difficult to navigate the network. Wilmington should actively pursue opportunities to provide direct pedestrian access where the street grid has been broken up by megablocks and to convert one-way streets to two-way operations.
- **Remove "sweeps" and consolidate interstate on/off ramps.** Wilmington is already planning to remove the Front Street sweep that funnels cars from I-95 into downtown. The City should also evaluate the removal of the sweep at King Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Removing these sweeps would improve safety for all users and create two square blocks that could be developed as a transit-oriented development. Wilmington should also begin studying the feasibility of consolidating the ten on/off ramps to I-95 within the downtown. The upcoming reconstruction of Interstate 95 includes removal of the S. Jackson Street on ramp.

#### Improve the transit experience to support riders and increase ridership.

- **Continue cooperation and coordination with DART transit service to meet Wilmington's needs.** Increasing the frequency of transit service and ensuring routes connect Wilmington residents to the places they need to go will make DART a more competitive and convenient transportation choice. Service in downtown should be maintained, but the City and DART should continue restructuring regional routes to better connect Wilmington to suburban job and commercial centers.

> **EXAMPLE:** Amid a national decline in bus ridership, Seattle, Phoenix, and Houston have all seen bus ridership increase after adding and/or restructuring service.



Figure 55 **Street direction map**  
Source: Interface Studio



- **Use technology and amenities to improve the experience for people riding DART.** Enhancements to the overall experience for people using transit, like mobile access to real-time arrival information, bus shelters with transit screens, and improvements for people connecting to DART by bicycling or walking, will also increase the attractiveness of transit service. The City should partner with businesses along major bus routes to help fund amenities like upgraded transit shelters. Key information should also be provided in languages other than English given Wilmington's growing immigrant population.
- **Prioritize buses on key routes.** On routes with the highest ridership, Wilmington should look to decrease travel times for buses by implementing transit priority lanes, queue jumps, and signal priority for buses.
- **Coordinate with SEPTA and DART to expand regional rail service between Wilmington and Philadelphia.** Wilmington should coordinate with both SEPTA and DART to increase late-night and weekend regional rail service between Wilmington Station and Philadelphia to make transit a more convenient option, regardless of the time of day or day of the week.

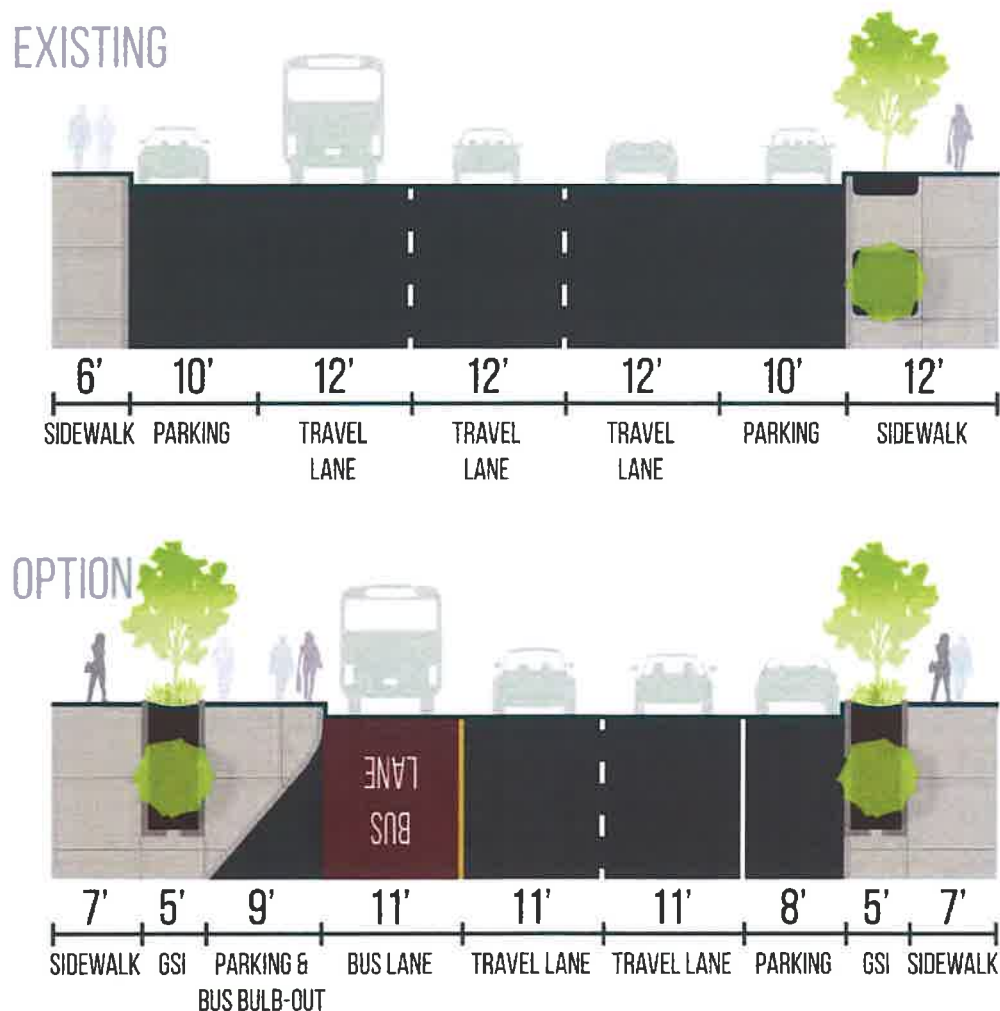


Figure 56 Conceptual cross section of King Street at 8th Street  
Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio



## GOAL 4.2: USE STREETS TO ENHANCE THE CITY'S ECONOMIC VITALITY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENT

A people-first approach to street design, management, and policy will ensure that people can get around safely and easily, making the city healthier, sustainable, and more attractive.

**“The value of the corridors need to be redefined and become more meaningful to the people who live around them.”**

- **Identify key corridors throughout Wilmington and the tools the City needs to turn them into great streets.** These corridors have been categorized as Gateway Corridors, Main Street Corridors, and Neighborhood Corridors. Illustrative examples of these types of corridors are provided in the following pages. See Streets Toolbox in the Appendix for full set of tools and their application.

**Gateway corridor**



**Main Street corridor**







**Neighborhood corridor**



## KEY CORRIDORS



Figure 57 **Key corridors map**  
Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio

-  Gateway
-  Gateway corridors
-  Main Street corridors
-  Neighborhood corridor



- **Gateway corridors:** Gateways connect residents from around Wilmington and the wider region to the city's major destinations and employment centers. They carry large numbers of people (10,000-30,000 vehicles per day) longer distances. Because everyone uses Wilmington's Gateways to access the city's key destinations, it is important that they convey the image of an active city and that they are safe and comfortable for everyone, whether they are driving, walking, biking, or taking the bus, to use.

Criteria: Higher traffic volumes (>10,000 AADT and most > 20,000), Connect into downtown, Wider right-of-way (multiple travel lanes in both directions)

Streets:

- Concord Ave.
- Gov. Printz Blvd.
- Lancaster Ave.
- Lincoln St.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Maryland Ave.
- N. Market St.
- Pennsylvania Ave.
- Walnut St.
- Washington St.(from Delaware Ave. to Brandywine Creek)

► **EXAMPLE:** Wilmington's Beautiful City Initiative funds projects aimed at creating a cleaner, more attractive City. Special attention is being given to City gateways and neighborhoods by the Public Works Department.

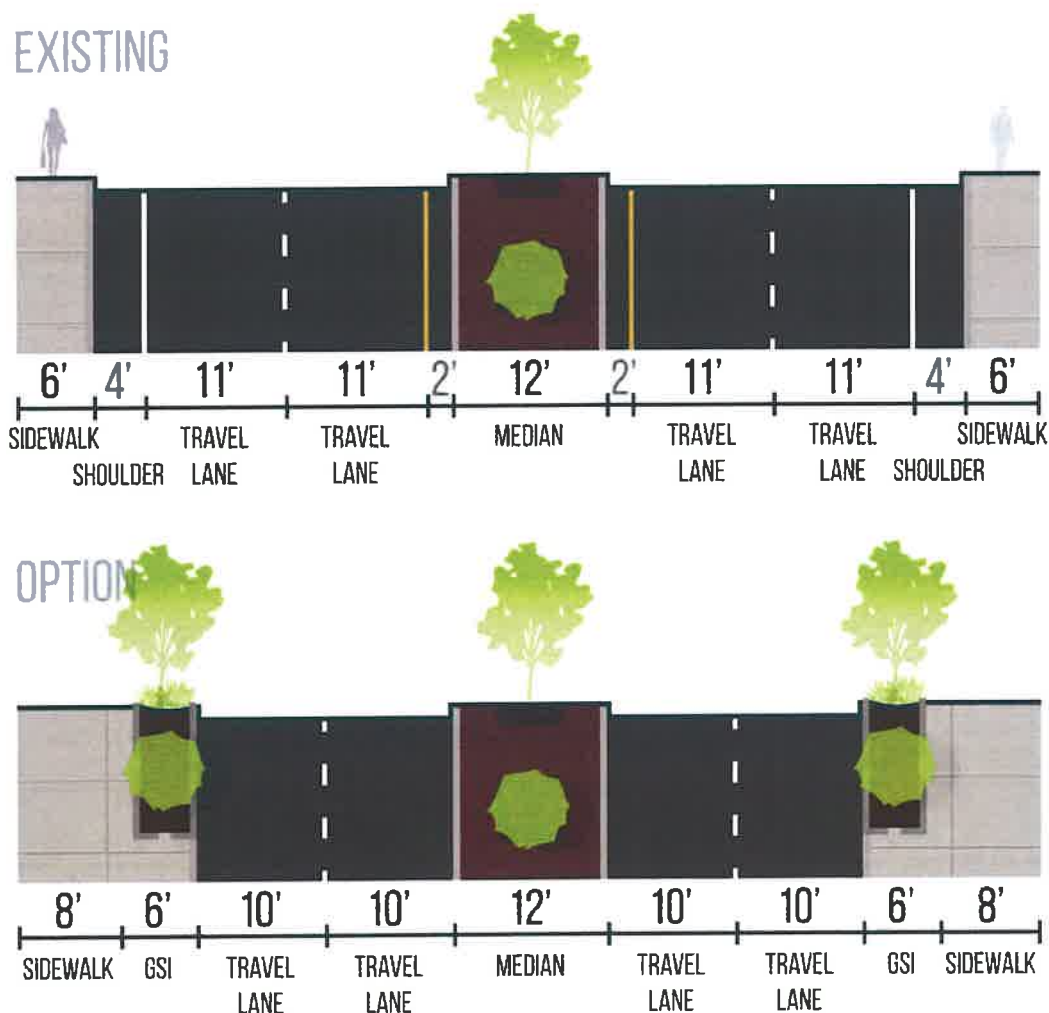
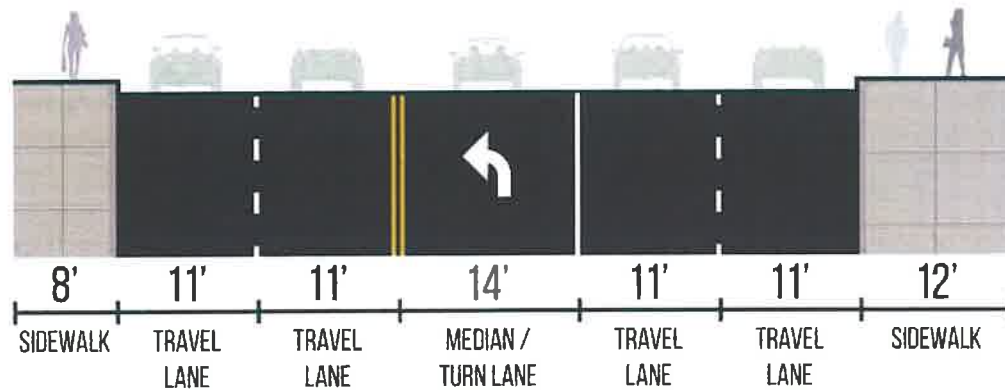


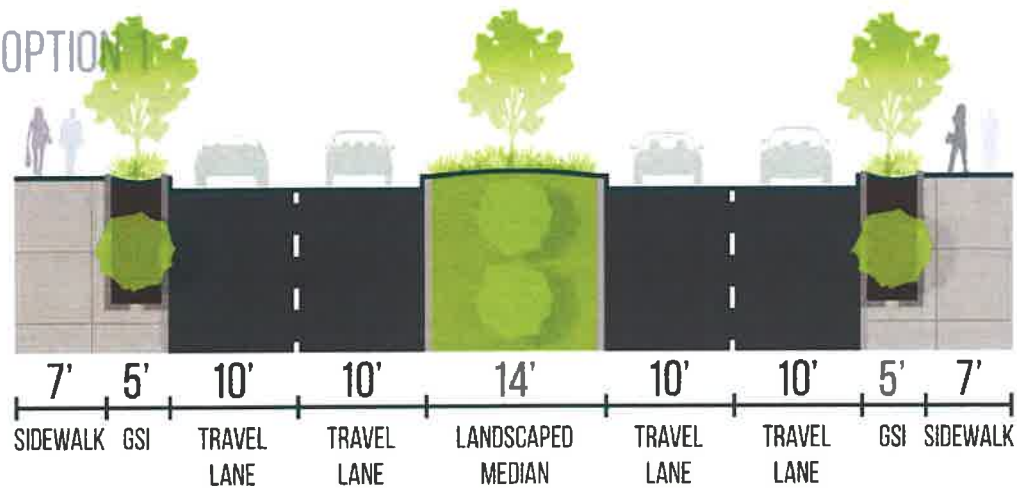
Figure 58 Conceptual cross section for Governor Printz Boulevard at 22nd Street  
Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio



## EXISTING



## OPTION 1



## OPTION 2

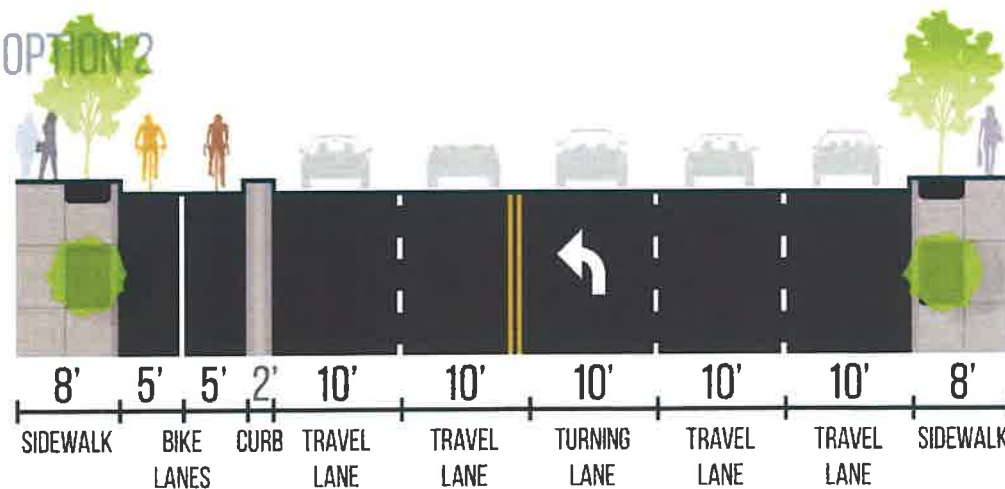


Figure 59 Conceptual cross section options for Pennsylvania Avenue at Union Street  
Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio



Figure 60 **Conceptual cross section for Walnut Street at 10th Street**  
 Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio

- **Main Street corridors:** Main Street corridors are where Wilmington residents shop, dine, and work. These streets are core to the City's economic well-being and local business community. Wilmington's main streets balance their role of moving cars with their function as places for neighbors to recreate, socialize, and play. In addition to people driving, main streets must be welcoming for people walking and biking and need to ensure access for buses and delivery vehicles.

Criteria: Moderate traffic volumes (<10,000 AADT), Commercial node

Streets:

- 4th St (from Market St. to Union St.)
- Delaware Ave. (@Trolley Square)
- Justison St.
- Market and N. Market St.
- Union St.
- Washington St. (from MLK Jr. Blvd. to Delaware Ave.)

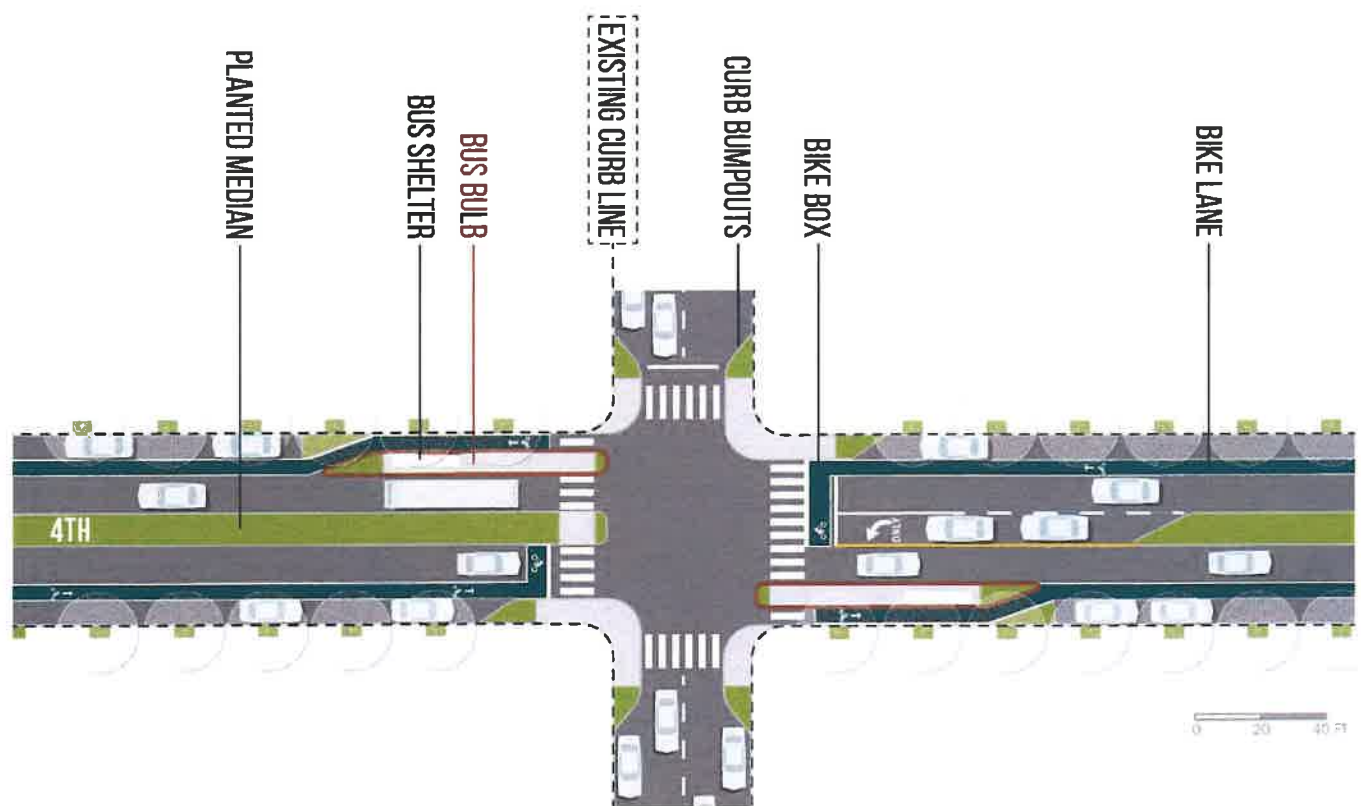


Figure 61 **Conceptual redesign of 4th Street (from Market St. to Union St.)**  
Source: Interface Studio





Figure 62 **Rendering of conceptual 4th Street redesign**  
Source: Interface Studio



**> EXAMPLE:** Vanderbilt Avenue in Brooklyn, NY was redesigned as a multimodal commercial corridor and has slightly higher traffic volumes than 4th Street.

**AFTER**



Figure 63 **Rendering of conceptual redesign of Washington St.**  
Source: Interface Studio

**BEFORE**



**> EXAMPLE:** Spruce Street in Philadelphia was redesigned to accommodate a buffered bike lane and has slightly higher traffic volumes than Washington Street.



- **Neighborhood Connectors:** Neighborhood connectors are important links in Wilmington's street network for people using all modes of travel. These streets connect residents across the City to commercial and employment centers. Neighborhood connectors are primarily fronted by a variety of housing types, from single family homes, to townhomes, to apartments, along with community facilities and some stores and businesses. They carry low to moderate amounts of traffic and should be viewed as shared community spaces.

Criteria: Low to moderate traffic volumes (most <10,000 AADT- Church and New Castle are exceptions), Primarily residential land use, Connect multiple neighborhoods/parts of the City

Streets:

- 2nd St.
  - 4th St. (west of Union St.)
  - 7th St.
  - 8th St.
  - 9th St.
  - 30th St.
  - A St.
  - Baynard Blvd.
  - Broom St.
  - Clayton St.
  - Church St.
  - Delaware Ave. (west of Union St. and from Clayton St. to Van Buren St.)
  - Greenhill St.
  - Monroe St.
  - New Castle Ave.
  - S. Heald St.
  - Spruce St.
  - Union St. (north of Delaware Ave.)
  - Vandever Ave.
  - Washington St. (north of Brandywine Creek)
- **Emphasize maintenance of existing transportation assets.** Wilmington must maintain existing sidewalks, transit facilities, and road surfaces to create a clean, comfortable public realm. Maintaining the City's infrastructure will require adequate funding, but prioritizing routine maintenance can save Wilmington money over the long-term by avoiding more costly repairs or complete reconstruction downline.



- **Prioritize safety improvements in locations where serious crashes are concentrated and at complex intersections across the City.** Wilmington should conduct an in-depth, city-wide crash analysis to better understand the causes of crashes and where they are clustering.

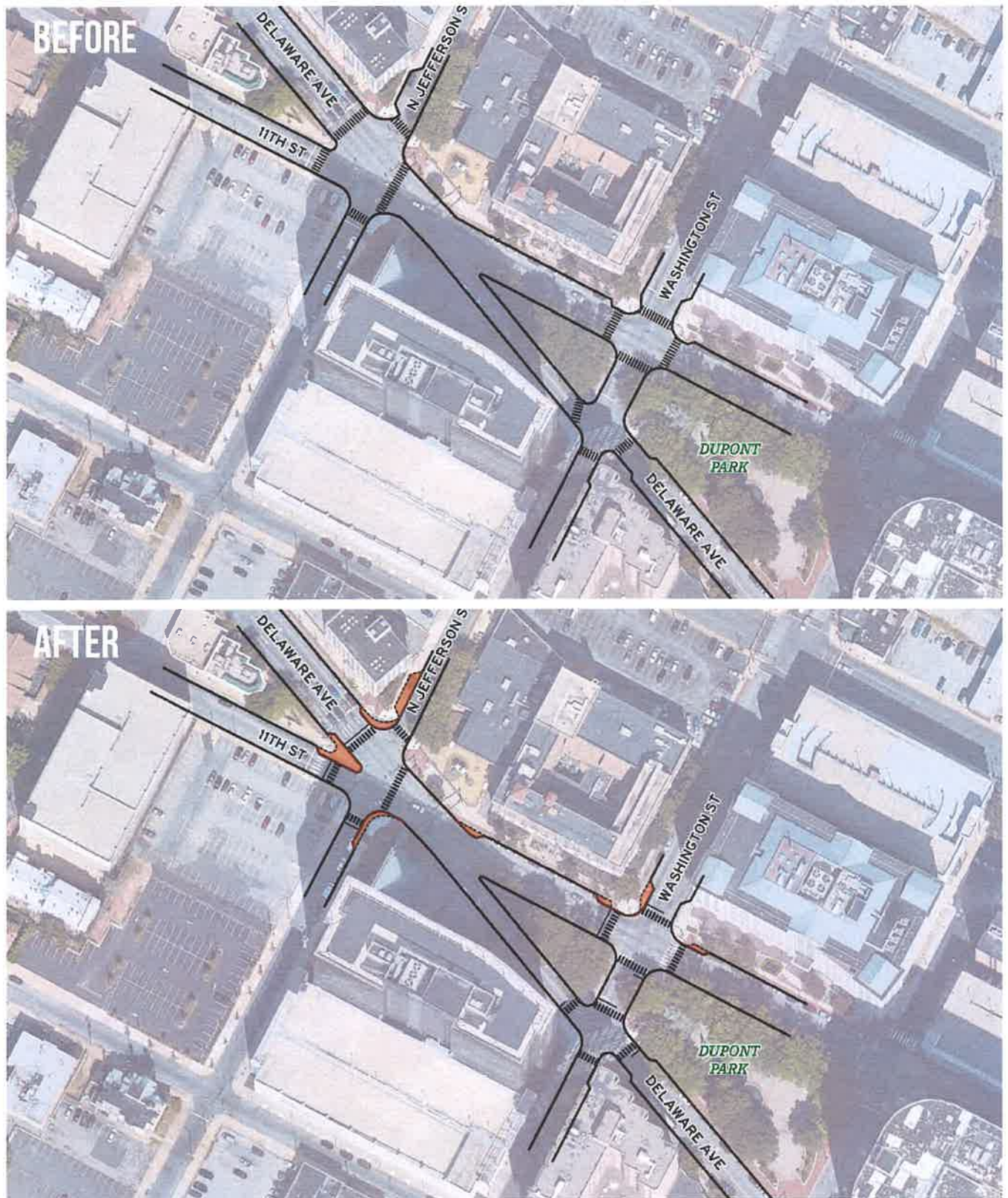


Figure 64 **Potential redesign of Delaware/11th and N. Market/Concord**  
Source: Sam Schwartz / Interface Studio

- **Protect affordable housing when improving transportation.** Transportation improvements can have a dramatic effect on the value of surrounding land and catalyze development. Wilmington should work towards including protections for existing residents and affordable housing in transportation projects with the potential to alter the economics and land use mix of an area.
- **Limit the amount of truck traffic traveling through Wilmington's neighborhoods.** Limiting truck traffic in neighborhoods will reduce wear and tear on roads and decrease air and noise pollution. Wilmington should better enforce truck restricted streets, as well as truck signage, with a special emphasis in South Wilmington and the Eastside, and make necessary changes to ensure trucks are clearly directed towards the appropriate routes.

> **EXAMPLE:** WILMAPCO Route 9 Corridor Master Plan offers recommendations to route truck traffic away from city neighborhoods.

- **Create a neighborhood street program.** Wilmington has focused considerable resources to improving neighborhood streets and the public realm: Wilmington completed 10 neighborhood streetscape projects in both FY 17 and 18 (with a budget of \$150,000 for each year) and organized 12 neighborhood cleanup projects each year from FY 16-18. To further strengthen this effort, the City should create a neighborhood street program through which residents can request traffic calming, green infrastructure, street rehab, or other street improvements on their street. The City should establish a dedicated funding source for the program and detail a clear process for residents to make requests.

### GOAL 4.3: OPTIMIZE PARKING TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF PARKING, IN THE RIGHT LOCATIONS, AT THE RIGHT PRICE

Parking consumes 10% of the land area downtown, dampening the city's street-level activity. With off-street supply currently outweighing demand, and national trends in urban transportation likely to further decrease demand for parking, there is an opportunity to park smarter and free up valuable space for better uses.

- **Conduct a comprehensive, citywide parking assessment.** In order to make informed decisions and craft effective parking policies, Wilmington needs a comprehensive parking database with information on pricing and occupancy rates. The City should conduct a parking study to collect this data and provide recommendations on new policies.
- **Strive to balance parking supply and demand.** Wilmington should follow a market-based approach to parking management, eliminating parking minimums and pricing parking based on demand and occupancy. Following completion of the citywide parking assessment, the City should evaluate raising rates at high-occupancy locations, reexamine time limits, and look for opportunities to implement adaptive pricing.

> **EXAMPLE:** Wilmington has already eliminated parking minimums for C-3 and C-4 zoning districts. Both Buffalo, NY and Hartford, CT eliminated all parking minimums in 2017.

- **Continue providing clear information to the public on parking availability in commercial districts.** Driving around looking for parking results in congestion, emissions and wasted time. Minimizing the search for parking improves the experience of being in the city, making for happier drivers and businesses. This can be done by providing clear wayfinding and real-time information on available parking in commercial districts and by expanding the Parkmobile app to cover commercial districts throughout Wilmington and expanding its capabilities to provide information on parking availability.
- **Encourage shared parking arrangements amongst neighboring offices, businesses, and residences.** Not all parking lots are at capacity at all times of the day. Wilmington can park smarter and more efficiently by allowing complementary uses to share parking. For example offices and businesses may need daytime parking, while residences need nighttime parking. The City should update the zoning code to allow for shared parking to be counted towards parking requirements (note: there are no parking



requirements in C-3 and C-4 zoning districts) to maximize the efficient use of parking garages and lots.

- **Create a simple process for converting under-utilized parking spaces to other uses.**

Wilmington should create a simple process for property owners adjacent to on-street parking spaces to be able to convert parking spaces into other uses, such as:

- Parklets
- Bicycle corrals
- Ride share pick up/dropoff spaces
- Spaces for short-term deliveries
- EV charging

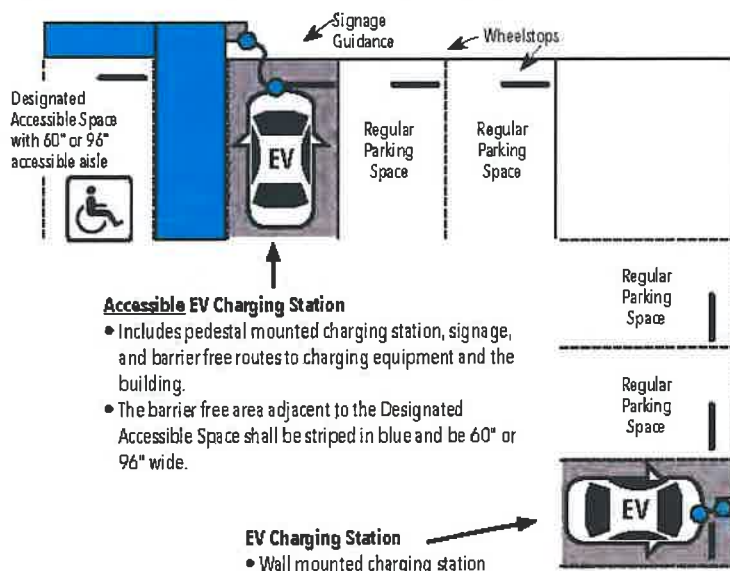
- **Encourage commuters to use alternative forms of transportation to get to work.**

Wilmington should support its large employers and other potential partners, like DART and the Downtown Wilmington Business Improvement District, in creating a transportation management association to develop overlapping programs and incentives for employees to use alternative forms of transportation.



> **EXAMPLE:** The [Philadelphia parklet program](https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/images/uploads/resource_library/City-of-Philadelphia-Parklet-Application.pdf) ([https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/images/uploads/resource\\_library/City-of-Philadelphia-Parklet-Application.pdf](https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/images/uploads/resource_library/City-of-Philadelphia-Parklet-Application.pdf)) allows local businesses and community groups to apply to develop parklets.

### Typical ADA-Compliant PEV Charging Parking Space



Example of parking lots with electric vehicle charging stations from the Delaware Workplace Charging Program



## GOAL 4.4: EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND TRANSPORTATION IDEAS THROUGH PILOT TESTING

From Uber and Lyft to dockless bikes and scooters, the pace of change in the transportation sector is rapid, accelerating, and filled with opportunity. All of these new services and technologies bring benefits and challenges and Wilmington must identify which services can benefit its residents and proactively work to mitigate the subsequent challenges.

- **Examine the potential to integrate emerging technologies into the existing transportation system.** While it is challenging to keep up with the onslaught of new mobility options, Wilmington should evaluate the potential of new transportation technologies and services (e.g., dockless bikes, microtransit, and autonomous vehicles) to increase mobility and choice for Wilmington residents and complement existing transportation options.
- **Pilot test new transportation services and technologies in Wilmington.** Pilot testing emerging transportation technologies will allow the City to gather more data and better assess the positives and negatives of new technologies. Wilmington should develop stringent permitting requirements and performance measures for all pilot tests.

### Scorecard for emerging technology pilots

- > Does the service/ technology reduce serious injuries and fatal crashes?
- > Does the service/ technology increase mobility for people without access to cars, low-income households, and minorities?
- > Is the service/technology accessible for everyone?
- > Does the service/ technology expand access to public transit?
- > Does the service/ technology reduce congestion, air pollution, and GHG emissions?
- > Does the service/ technology contribute to sustainable urban density and land use?
- > Is the company providing the service/technology willing to contribute to the maintenance of the City's infrastructure?
- > Is the company providing the service/technology willing to share its data with the City?

- **Recognize street and curb space as valuable public assets and price them accordingly.** Wilmington should develop a fee system for new transportation technologies and services that utilize public street and/or curb space. The fees can be used to maintain these assets and ensure equitable access to new mobility options for all residents. In addition, the city should update the code as needed to account for emerging technologies and services.



## 5. SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CITY

### OVERVIEW

A sustainable and resilient city is one which ensures its resources and services will adequately serve its residents today and tomorrow; is prepared for social, economic and environmental changes on the horizon; and is ready to bounce back from unexpected challenges stronger than before. Accomplishing these goals require an account of the city's services and resources, and the sorts of stressors that may present themselves moving forward. Wilmington services and facilities are well positioned to meet current needs, but there is more work to do to ensure that all residents will prosper and thrive in the coming years. The main long-term environmental stressor will be climate change, which will impact day to day life across the city. While the most acute impacts of climate change will extend beyond the 10-year timeframe of this Comprehensive Plan, this plan can lay the foundation to prepare and take early steps needed to mitigate future impacts. This section of the plan addresses the city's infrastructure and services to ensure Wilmington can meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses, and continue to grow in a sustainable manner.

### Community Infrastructure: Services and Public Facilities

#### PUBLIC SAFETY: POLICE

The Police Department deploys up to 320 officers with a mission to prevent and reduce crime through community engagement. Community policing, CompStat reports, and an online service to inform residents about recent crime, CRIMEMAPPING.com, are among the initiatives and tools used by the department to foster partnerships and build community trust. Additionally, the police department has been an integral part of the West Center City initiative to reduce crime and blight, focusing on community policing and collaboration with local and federal agencies. Crime statistics have seen a steady decline over the last year between 2017 and 2018, especially with regard to shootings and homicides.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY: FIRE

Currently, the number and location of fire stations is adequate for the current and future anticipated population. Three fire stations (2, 4, and 6) will need to be renovated over the next decade. Equipment, such as trucks, breathing apparatus, hose, and gas meters, will need to continue to be monitored for their condition and replaced according to staggered replacement cycles.

Current staff level is good and maintaining that level will be important. Given the estimated population increase over the next 10 years, staffing should be sufficient, however actual changes in population and the built environment will need to be monitored to ensure response times are sufficient.

Currently, the majority of new development in the city is apartment buildings that require sprinklers with good fire prevention, however, other new non-apartment residential construction do not require sprinklers. The building code should be evaluated and re-written to address the sprinklering of all new residential construction.



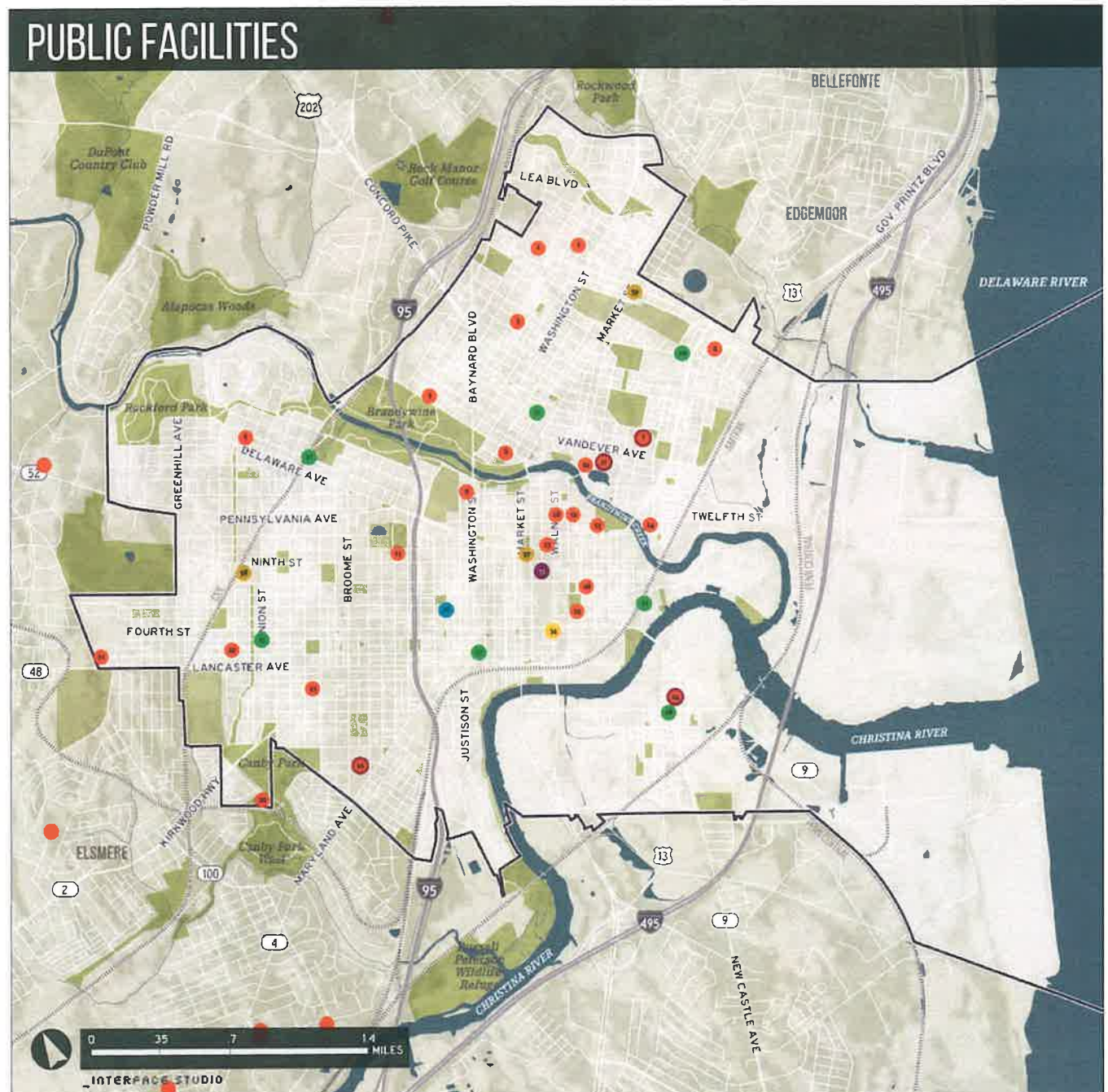


Figure 65 Public facilities map  
Source: City of Wilmington


## PUBLIC FACILITIES

Public facilities include three libraries, two community centers, seven fire stations and one police station.

#### Public and Charter Schools

-  School is closing or closed
-  duPont (Pierre S.) Middle School
-  Harlan (David W.) Elementary School
-  Delaware College Preparatory Academy
-  East Side Charter School
-  Red Clay Alternative Ed and Warner Elementary School
-  Shortlidge (Evan G.) Academy
-  Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School
-  Highlands Elementary School
-  First State School
-  Delaware Adolescent Program Inc. (DAPI)
-  Moyer (Maurice J.) Academy
-  Howard High School of Technology
-  Stubbs (Frederick Douglass) Elementary School
-  Prestige Academy
-  Lewis (William C.) Dual Language Elementary School
-  Great Oaks School and Kuumba Academy
-  First State Montessori Academy
-  Montessori Academy Wilmington and Bancroft Elementary School
-  Pyle (Sarah) Academy
-  Joseph H. Douglass School
-  Calloway (Cab) School of the Arts and Charter School of Wilmington
-  Odyssey Charter School
-  Bayard Middle School
-  Elbert-Palmer Elementary School
-  Pulaski (Casimir) Elementary School
-  Douglass School

#### Fire Department

-  Fire Station 1
-  Fire Station 2
-  Fire Station 3
-  Fire Station 4
-  Fire Station 5 (new)
-  Fire Station 6
-  Fire Boat House Station 7

#### Police Department

-  Public Safety Building




#### Municipal Government

-  City/County Building

#### Park Department

-  William Hicks Anderson Community Center

#### Libraries

-  Wilmington Library
-  Woodlawn Branch Library
-  North Wilmington Library

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

Community services, such as trash pick-up, leaf collection and snow removal, are adequate for the current and anticipated future population. Street cleaning of targeted areas has begun and looks to be increased to additional areas. The City currently provides residential weekly pickup of municipal solid waste and single stream recycling. Wilmington's recycling rate is about 20%, compared to Delaware's rate of 45%.<sup>1</sup> The Public Works Department is looking to roll out a Citywide Municipal Solid Waste Container Program to limit the volume of trash and increase recycling diversion. Looking forward, mandatory recycling and the trash hauling contracting by condo and other non-residential buildings will be critical to the expansion of waste diversion and service to serve future growth areas.

## SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

The City completed a Source Water Protection Plan in November of 2010. This study can be found on the Department of Public Works website at: <https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/city-departments/departments-of-public-works/source-water-protection-plan>.

The City's Source water protection ordinance can be found in City Code: Secs. 48-431–48-436. As noted in this section of the code, the City, with the assistance of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) delineated a Source Water Protection Area (SWPA) within the city limits for the Brandywine Creek, the city's source of drinking water, and created a SWPA Map. Parcels within the SWPA shall be subject to this division which is designed to protect the SWPA, a critical area, from activities and substances that may harm water quality and subtract from overall water quantity. The SWPA includes two sub-categories with more stringent water quality and quantity protection requirements: (1) SWPA Subcategory A - Erosion Prone Slopes; and, (2) SWPA Subcategory B - 200 Foot Creek Buffer from the bank of the Brandywine Creek.

<sup>1</sup> Delaware Business Now. (2017, November 15). State's Recycling Rate Inches toward 45 Percent. Retrieved from <https://delawarebusinessnow.com/2017/11/states-recycling-rate-inches-toward-45-percent/>



# WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

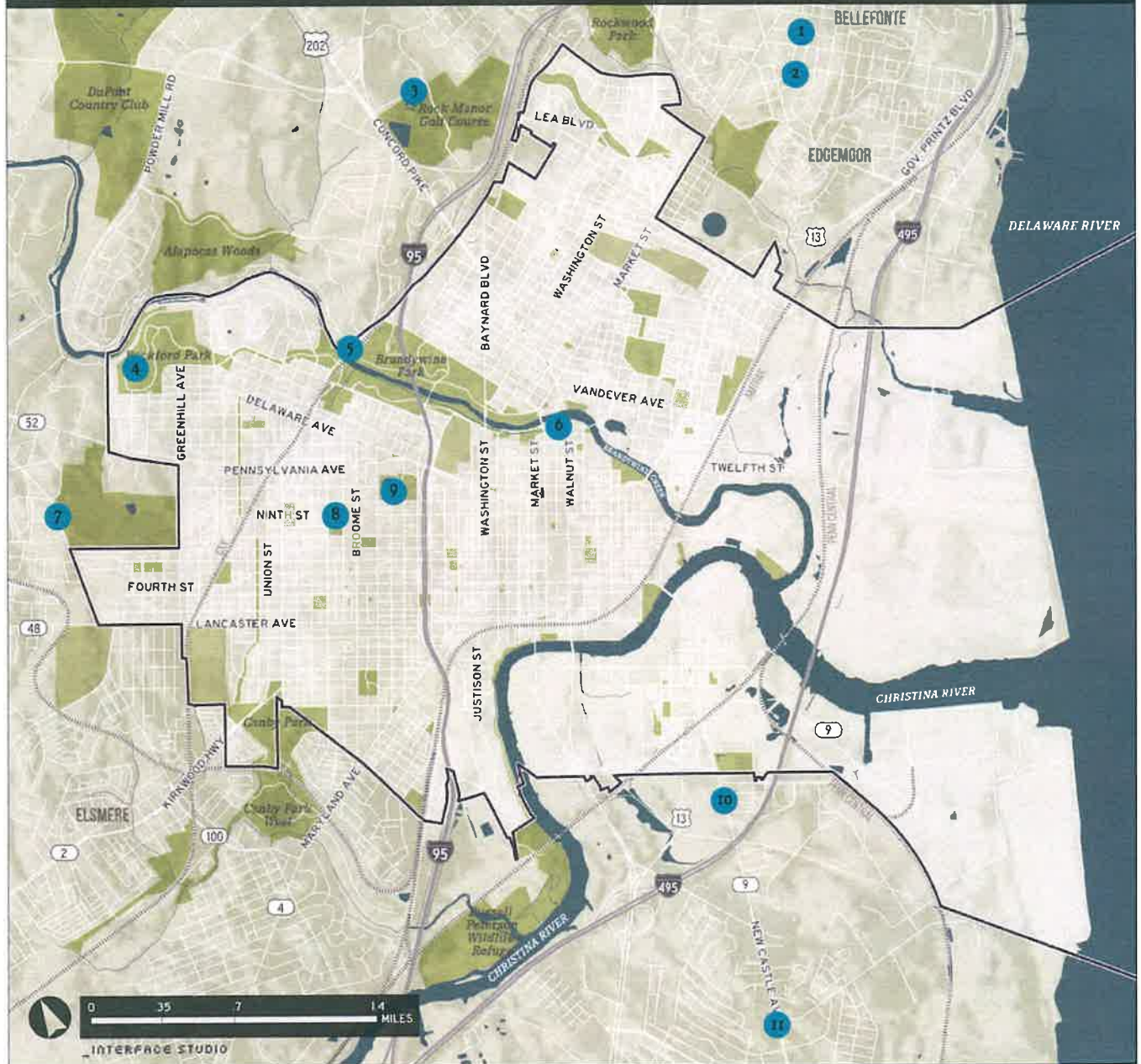


Figure 66 Water and wastewater systems map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Hillcrest Elevated Tank   | 7 Greenhill Elevated Tank   |
| 2 Hillcrest Pumping Station   | 8 Rodney Sreet Reservoir & Gatehouse, Communication Tower & EDP       |
| 3 Porter Gate House/Valves<br>Alapocas Pumping Station<br>Porter Filter Plant Complex             | 9 Cool Spring Gate House and Reservoir<br>Cool Spring Pumping Station |
| 4 Rockford Tower  | 10 New Castle Ave Pumping Station                                     |
| 5 Wills Pumping Station   | 11 New Castle Ave Elevated Tank (Rose Hill)                           |
| 6 Brandywine Membrane Plant<br>Brandywine Pumping Station<br>Water Works Center/Water Quality Lab |   |



## WATER AND WASTEWATER

The water system consists of two water filtration plants treating surface water. The main source is the Brandywine Creek with reserves at Hoopes Reservoir. There are nine elevated water tanks, five finished water pump stations, three raw water pump stations, two raw water reservoirs, a finished water reservoir, and 420 miles of water main servicing approximately 40,000 accounts. Treatment is by rapid sand filter at Porter Filter Plant and by Micro Filtration Membrane at Brandywine Filter Plant. Together both plants are capable of producing approximately 35 MGD. Average daily production is 16 MGD.

The sewer collection system is 90% combined sanitary/stormwater consisting of approximately 300 miles of sewer main. The system has three sewage pumping stations and a regional WWTP providing primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment to approximately 500,000 customers, 22,000 within the City of Wilmington and the remainder in New Castle County under a wholesale sewage treatment agreement. Average daily flow is 105 MGD with peak wet weather flows of 340 MGD.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The City has been active for many years in implementing green infrastructure; in 2006 a Stormwater Utility was implemented and the City has an active Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). Projects identified in the LTCP are underway to reduce CSOs such as sewer separations projects and the construction of a South Wilmington Wetland Park to minimize local flooding. The Public Works Department promotes the use of green infrastructure to address the management of stormwater at its source and as a way of minimizing CSOs.

## Climate Change

Over the coming years, life in Wilmington may change drastically due to the effects of climate change. Rising seas, hotter temperatures, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events will touch residents in every corner of the city.

The Delaware Coastal Program reports that up to 11% of the state of Delaware will be inundated with water in 2100,<sup>2</sup> and properties at risk in New Castle County are valued at about \$582 million, according to a study from the University of Delaware.<sup>3</sup> Significant portions of Wilmington are already susceptible to flooding; along the Christina River, approximately a thousand structures lie within the floodplain,<sup>4</sup> and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimates that such floodplains will grow an average of 45% by 2100 due to climate change.<sup>5</sup> In Wilmington, a meter of sea level rise may inundate significant portions of neighborhoods at least three-quarters of a mile inland, according to NOAA's Sea Level Rise Viewer.<sup>6</sup> And as waters rise and flooding becomes more common, so will extreme temperatures: the number of days in which temperatures reach above 95 degrees Fahrenheit may increase to around 22-48 in 2100 from 5-6 in 2017.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Delaware Coastal Program, Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control. (2012). *Preparing for Tomorrow's High Tide: Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for the State of Delaware*. Retrieved from <http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/coastal/documents/sealevelrise/assessmentforweb.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Kauffman, G. & Homsey, A. (2011). *The Delaware Floodplain*. Retrieved from <http://www.wra.udel.edu/wp-content/publications/DelawareFloodplain.pdf>. Quoted in Furlong, E. (2018). *Climate Justice: For a Prosperous & Sustainable Wilmington*.

<sup>5</sup> Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2013). *The Impact of Climate & Population Growth on the National Flood Insurance Program Through 2100: ES-3*, 7. Retrieved from [http://www.aecom.com/content/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Climate\\_Change\\_Report\\_AECOM\\_2013-06-11.pdf](http://www.aecom.com/content/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Climate_Change_Report_AECOM_2013-06-11.pdf). Quoted in Furlong, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> <https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/slr.html>

<sup>7</sup> Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware Climate Projections Portal

# FEMA FLOOD HAZARD AREAS



Figure 67 **FEMA flood hazard areas map**  
Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (2016)

## FEMA Flood Hazard Areas

- FEMA Moderate Flood Hazard Area  
0.2% annual chance flood (500-year flood)
- FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas  
Zone A/AO/AE  
1% annual chance flood (100-year flood)
- Zone VE  
1% annual chance flood (100-year flood) with velocity hazard (wave action)
- Regulatory Floodway



# SEA LEVEL RISE INUNDATION SCENARIOS

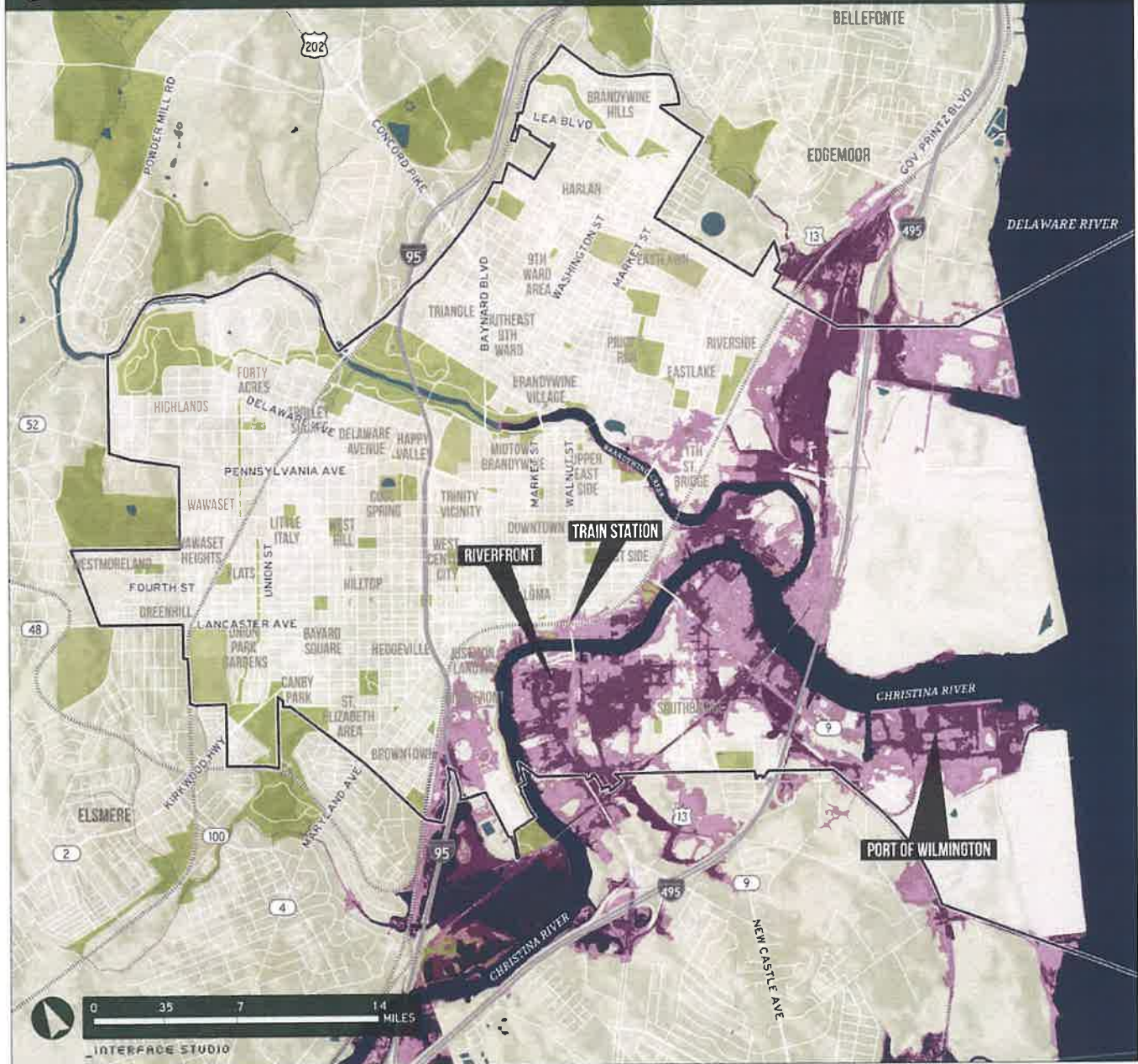


Figure 68 Sea level rise inundation scenarios map  
Source: State of Delaware, Delaware Coastal Programs (2016)

## Sea Level Rise Scenarios

- Mean Higher High Water
- 0.5 Meter Inundation
- 1 Meter Inundation
- 1.5 Meter Inundation

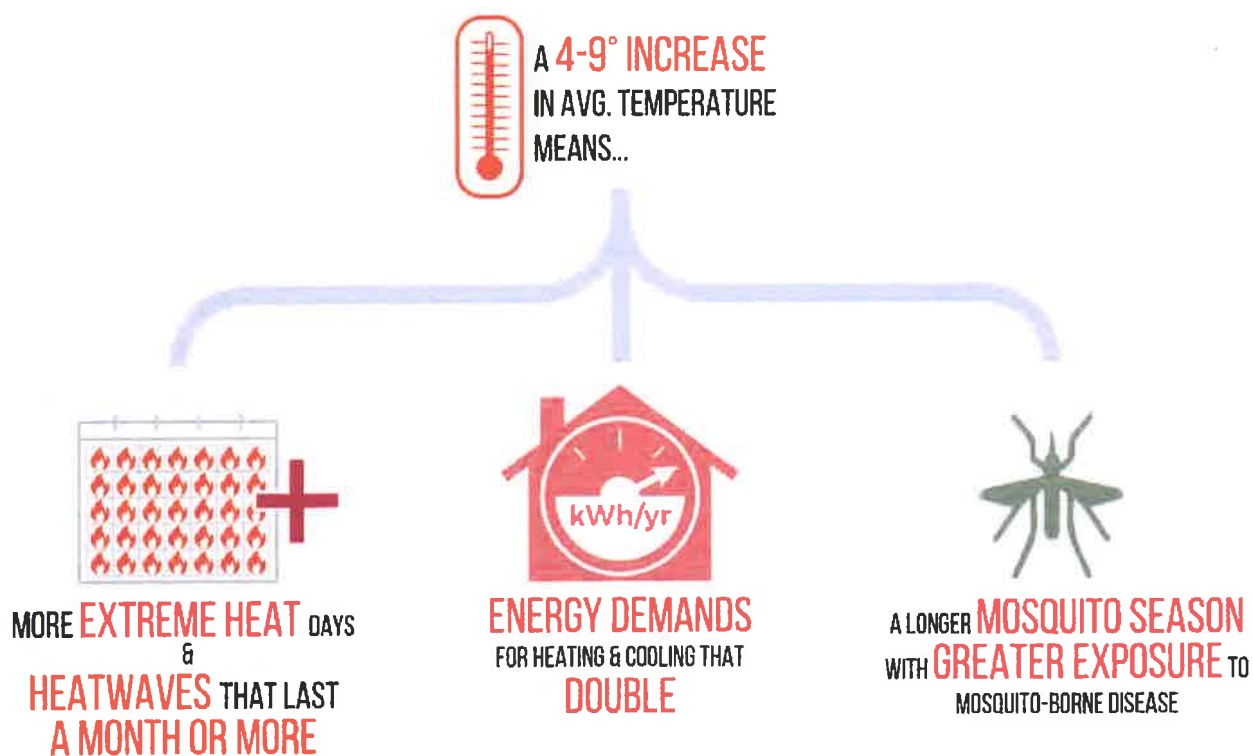


The effects of climate change in Wilmington will have the greatest effect on the city's most vulnerable populations. Rising seas will impact minority and low-income neighborhoods most of all. Additionally, hotter days and poor air quality can seriously impact residents' health, especially among seniors and youth. Changing conditions can mean new and unexpected stresses on utility systems and emergency services, making it more important than ever that we ensure our essential infrastructure has the capacity to handle the days ahead.

Wilmington has already made great progress: Well ahead of its 2020 deadline, the City reached its goal to reduce harmful emissions 20% below 2008 levels.<sup>8</sup> The City is continually working to find opportunities to reduce emissions and prepare for climate impacts. Currently the City is working with Delmarva to replace all city street lights with energy efficient LED lights to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. In South Wilmington, a new wetland park stands to absorb stormwater and combined sewer overflows will be eliminated, helping Southbridge to become more resilient to flooding and sea level rise, and the city has recently implemented an impervious surface fee to help fund the city's response to flooding and stormwater.<sup>9</sup>

The Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to coordinate existing efforts and complement the Resilient Wilmington initiative to become a more sustainable and resilient city.

## IMPACTS OF RISING TEMPERATURES ON DAILY LIFE



<sup>8</sup> Furlong, 64.  
<sup>9</sup> Furlong, 63.

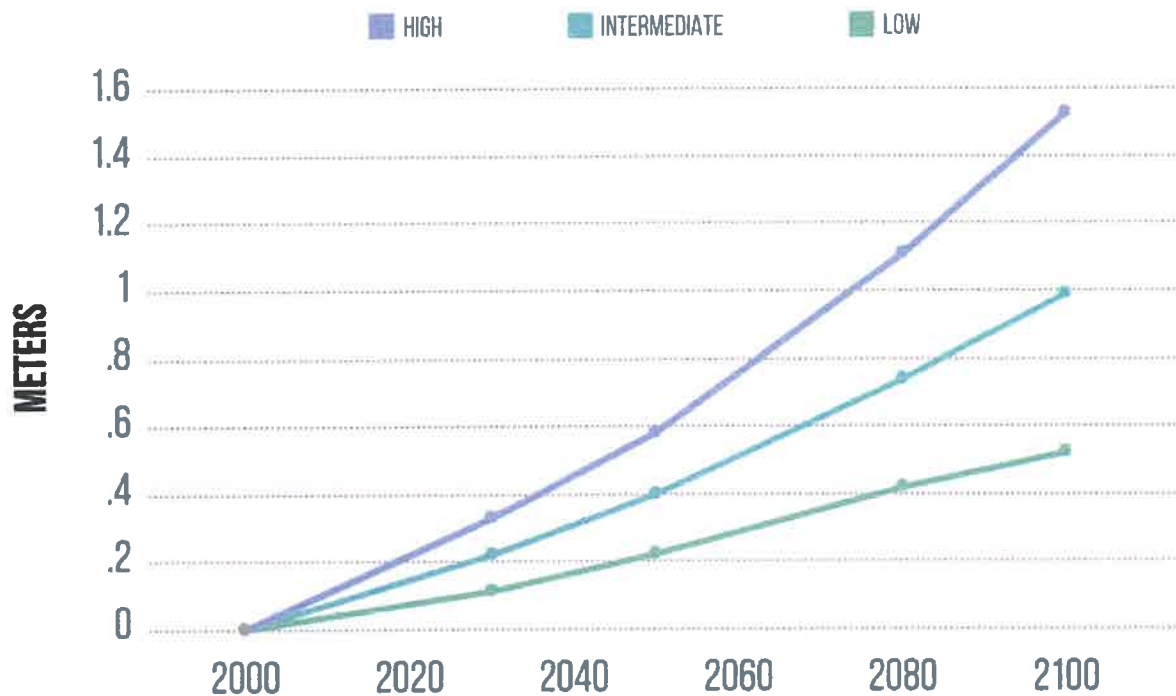


Figure 69 Delaware Relative Sea Level Rise by 2100  
Source: Delaware Geographical Survey, <https://www.dgs.udel.edu/projects/determination-future-sea-level-rise-planning-scenarios-delaware>

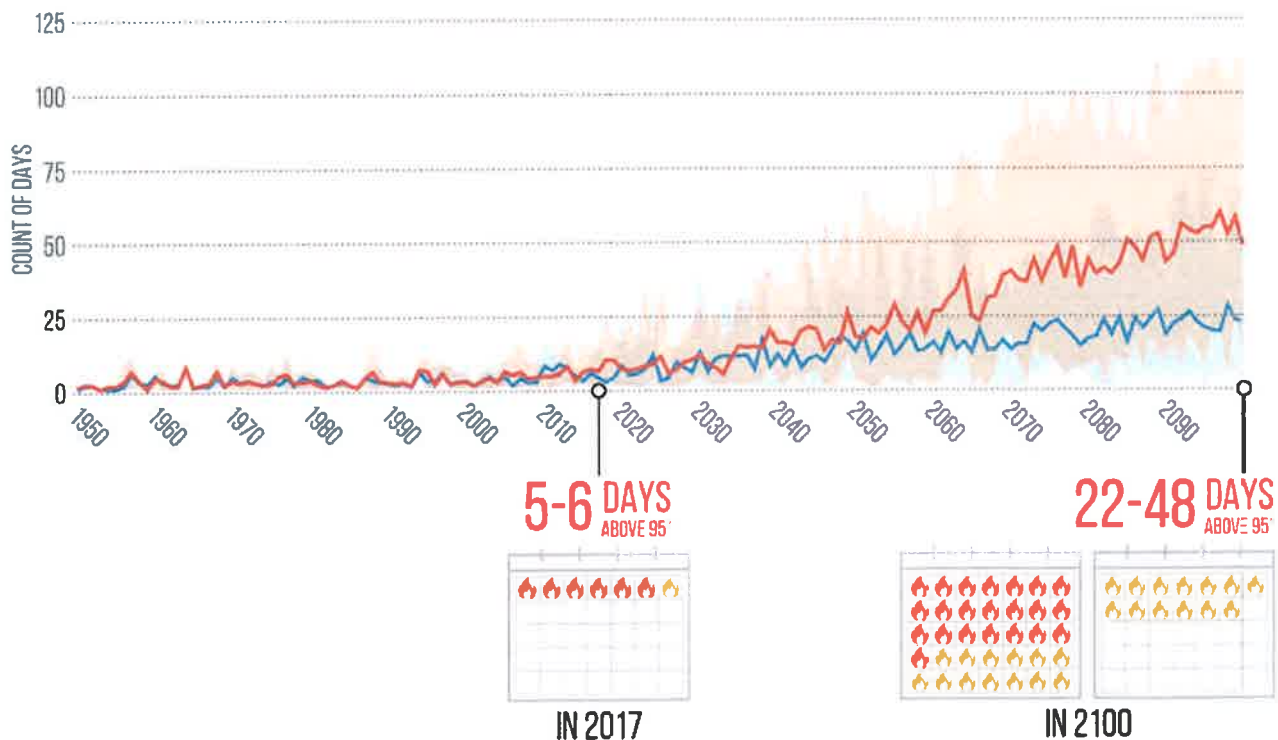


Figure 70 Days with Max Temperatures Over 95 Degrees Fahrenheit  
Source: Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware Climate Projections Portal

## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Residents rated parks, recreational opportunities and open space the second best quality of the city. Continuing to increase various types of open space was seen as important to address not just recreational needs but also environmental and public safety ones. In the second public forum, “increase green space through vacant lots and yards” and “increase tree canopy and develop tree coverage goal” were among the top 20 key citywide recommendations, ranking 14th and 17th respectively. For residents who live in areas impacted by flood, “proactive flood management” was an important improvement that would have the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington and strategic use of open space, such as the wetland park in South Wilmington, is an example of how the City can use landscape to achieve multiple goals.

## GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### GOAL 5.1: PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

Wilmington currently provides adequate services to support the needs of residents and businesses. As the city grows, departments will monitor capacity and systems, upgrades in technology, and continue to improve services, facilities and infrastructure as needed to maintain quality and performance.

- **Continue to monitor the capacity of infrastructure and emergency services to handle population growth and environmental changes.** The City’s public safety, water, wastewater, waste management, and energy systems currently maintain enough capacity to handle Wilmington’s present population and projected growth. As the city continues to grow and new issues arise, City departments should monitor their capacity and plan accordingly.
- **Coordinate repairs, maintenance, and improvements to public assets to save money, time, and materials.** Major infrastructure and facilities projects provide an opportunity for City and State departments to support each other’s objectives, to reduce overall resource expenditures and advance common goals, such as preparing for a changing climate. Departments should systematically inform each other about internal planning processes early on, so they can brainstorm potential collaborations before projects become solidified.
- **Update building codes.** The building code can help achieve many of the goals in this plan with regard to health and public safety, urban design and long-term resilience. As the codes are reviewed, considerations should be made with regard to fire safety standards, citywide design standards, energy and water efficiency, clean energy and resilience to climate change and flood.
- **Update zoning code.** The City is mandated to update the zoning code within 18 months of adopting the Comprehensive Plan to align the future land uses with the zoning. In some cases this will require a zoning change. In others, the code itself can be updated and re-written to reflect modern needs and circumstances. Among the issues to address are creating a more flexible code with regard to parking requirements (as was recently done to eliminate parking requirements downtown), better encouraging mixed uses in order to attain the goals of this plan for a more vibrant and walkable city, and adding provisions to protect the city from the impacts of climate change and flooding, which should be addressed in the City’s Waterfront zoning districts.

> **EXAMPLE:** Norfolk, VA’s zoning for sea level rise includes required elements such as ground floor elevation and permeable parking surfaces, as well as [Resilience-Quotient Zoning](https://www.planning.org/planning/2018/aug/silverlining/) (<https://www.planning.org/planning/2018/aug/silverlining/>), a points-based system that allows developers to choose from a range of resilient features to reach project approval.



## GOAL 5.2: CONSERVE RESOURCES AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TO PROTECT AIR AND WATER QUALITY AND MITIGATE CITY'S CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Wilmington is making great progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions, coming in well ahead of its 2020 deadline to reduce harmful emissions 20% below 2008 levels. The City continually seeks to incorporate sustainability in its decision-making and coordinate public and private efforts to improve quality of life in the city and prepare for climate change.

**“Wilmington needs to be an attractive place to live to meet our greenhouse goals.”**

### Coordinate efforts in order to make the city a model of sustainability

- **Develop a sustainability plan to coordinate efforts.** The plan should establish a baseline for sustainability indicators, set new reduction targets for greenhouse gasses and specifically address how City departments and the private sector can meet those targets. The Resilient Wilmington initiative led by the Department of Public Works is an important component. When complete, the Resilient Wilmington Plan will be available at the Department of Public Works.

> **EXAMPLE:** [Greenworks](https://www.phila.gov/departments/office-of-sustainability/greenworks/) (<https://www.phila.gov/departments/office-of-sustainability/greenworks/>) is Philadelphia's sustainability plan, which is managed by the Office of Sustainability.

- **Cultivate a culture of sustainability.** Making Wilmington a model of sustainability involves starting with City government and getting buy-in from City staff. Help City staff understand their carbon footprint and offer strategies to reduce it at work by implementing campaigns to reduce waste, energy and water use. Expand these efforts to the public through education and a coordinated narrative promoting conservation and sustainability efforts throughout the city to increase their visibility. [see also recommendation under Goal 2.3 in Healthy and Thriving Communities]

> **EXAMPLE:** Woodlawn Library rain garden

- **Coordinate with private organizations seeking to implement sustainable practices.** More and more businesses are finding that sustainability is a core value that customers appreciate. Companies should be encouraged to develop their own sustainability goals and action plans that build off and amplify City efforts to create cost savings and economic growth.

> **EXAMPLE:** [The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia](https://www.sbnphiladelphia.org/) (<https://www.sbnphiladelphia.org/>) aims to empower local businesses in promoting a triple bottom line economy (people, planet, profit) by building a base of local businesses and educating policymakers and the public.

## Reduce energy, water and waste and transition to clean energy

- **Conduct energy audits of public buildings and use technology to track usage.** Buildings consume 48% of all energy produced in the United States and are responsible for 45% of CO2 emissions, which is more than transportation and industry.<sup>10</sup> To better inform efforts to reduce energy usage, the City should assess the efficiency of its buildings and track when and why facilities use the most energy. This information can be shared internally or publicly to reinforce efforts to cultivate a culture of sustainability.
- **Upgrade buildings to conserve energy and water.** More efficient building systems not only reduce contributions to climate change and pollution, but can also reduce water and energy costs. For example, passive design strategies, weatherization, more efficient HVAC systems, and smart energy management systems can reduce heating and cooling costs, and recycling stormwater or greywater (water from sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines) can lower water consumption. The City should look to promote clean and efficient energy and water use in both the public and private sectors:
  - For municipal buildings, the City should look to upgrade public buildings through retrofits, explore installing renewable energy systems and purchasing agreements with regional renewable energy generators for building upgrades and new construction.
  - For private sector buildings, the City can encourage property owners to make upgrades through coordinated communications and marketing, updating building codes with energy efficiency standards, and connecting property owners with incentives. For example, commercial and industrial businesses can apply to the Energy Efficiency Investment Fund (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/energy-climate/efficiency/energy-efficiency-investment-fund/>) to help replace aging, inefficient equipment with energy efficient alternatives. Specific funding support for residential/mixed use building energy audits and pursuit of LEED certification is available through the Downtown Development District program and can be found on the DDD website:<http://www.stateplanning.delaware.gov/ddd/incentives/index.shtml>.

> **EXAMPLE:** [The Atlanta Better Building Challenge](https://atlantabbc.com/) (<https://atlantabbc.com/>) aims to support the Department of Energy's goal of helping businesses reduce energy costs, enabling them to grow, invest in new technology, and create jobs.

- **Help residents and businesses incorporate solar energy production into their properties.** According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, Delaware is rapidly increasing its solar capacity with substantial increases in residential installed capacity over the last 3 years. As the solar industry matures and prices become more competitive, the City can help property owners benefit from installing solar panels by connecting them with incentives such as the Green Energy Program (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/energy-climate/renewable/assistance/>), which provides funds and incentives for renewable energy systems.

<sup>10</sup> 2012 US Energy Information Administration data from Architecture 2030. Why the Building Sector? Retrieved from [http://architecture2030.org/buildings\\_problem\\_why/](http://architecture2030.org/buildings_problem_why/)

- **Implement water-efficient irrigation for municipal properties.** Improving water efficiency in the irrigation of public landscapes will help to reduce water use, labor and costs, as well as ensure landscapes are well maintained. The City can also explore the use of recycled water for irrigation. Recycled stormwater or greywater can be used instead of the municipal drinking water supply to irrigate municipal properties such as median landscaping, parks and golf courses. This has the double benefit of reducing water use and improving water quality by reducing runoff. Such practices are becoming more common on golf courses, which are well suited to act as natural filtration systems that result in cleaner water.
- **Transition City fleet to electric vehicles and expand the availability of charging stations.** Wilmington has room to grow in the area of clean transportation. The City should utilize and promote the State of Delaware's Clean Transportation Incentive Program (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/energy-climate/clean-transportation/>), which provides rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles (EV) and charging stations. The City should engage in a coordinated effort across departments to transition the City fleet to electric vehicles and install EV charging stations at City parking facilities, and integrate them into utility poles and street lights. To encourage the private sector, the City could consider allowing a reduction in the overall parking requirement for developments that include charging stations and allow residents and businesses to install EV charging stations on public property.
 

**> EXAMPLE:** More than 400 cities in the U.S. have joined the Climate Mayors Electric Vehicle Purchasing Collaborative, which uses the participating cities' collective buying power to reduce costs for electric vehicles and charging stations. By lowering procurement costs, the Collaborative hopes to accelerate the transition of municipal fleets to electric vehicles.
- **Reduce waste through recycling, composting and source reduction.** As part of cultivating a culture of sustainability and to boost recycling rates above 30%, the City should expand recycling and composting at public facilities and events, and boost residential recycling through education of homeowners, landlords and tenants, and the piloting of municipal solid waste containers to limit the volume of trash. The City should also encourage source reduction, or pre-cycling, practices in operations that include reducing printing unless necessary, purchasing in bulk to avoid packaging, reducing plastics and styrofoam in cafeterias, and encouraging use of reusable containers such as water bottles and shopping totes. These efforts can be coordinated through the development of a Zero Waste (<https://www.epa.gov/transforming-waste-tool/how-communities-have-defined-zero-waste>) component of a sustainability plan.



## GOAL 5.3: PROMOTE RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING IN ALL LONG-RANGE PLANNING, CRITICAL PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Flooding and rising seas, hotter temperatures and prolonged heat waves, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events will have an impact in the city in coming years. The City can plan now to address these challenges and protect residents and businesses.

### Protect against flooding and sea level rise

- **Harden infrastructure vulnerable to sea level rise and extreme weather events.** Evaluate the vulnerability of critical infrastructure, including water treatment facilities and pump stations, emergency services, and transportation infrastructure – including the Wilmington Train Station and evacuation routes. Develop plans to protect infrastructure from rising waters, potentially including:
  - Increasing the absorptive capacity of land surrounding key transportation infrastructure with landscaping and bioretention facilities;
  - Developing redundancy for vulnerable infrastructure systems and evacuation routes;
  - Elevating crucial transportation routes that have no viable alternative;
  - Limiting new transportation infrastructure within the floodplain;
  - Building critical infrastructure above base flood elevation (BFE); and
  - Utilizing greening strategies to protect investments.



Figure 71 Flood and sea level rise resilience measures

- **Evaluate riverfront flood management options.** The Brandywine and Christina riverfronts are important opportunity areas in the city for future development, however, they are also vulnerable to the impacts of flood and sea level rise. Future development should include setbacks and site design elements to achieve the key goals of flood management and public waterfront access, and be included in changes to the City's Waterfront Zoning Code. Depending on the site conditions, future infrastructure and flood management systems could include future expansion of dikes or levees, green infrastructure, wetlands, parks and trails. [see also recommendation under Goal 1.4 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]
- **Provide information and assistance for property owners who are susceptible to flooding.** The City and its regional partners should work to inform property owners of their exposure to flood and sea level rise and their options to mitigate the impacts of severe weather and flooding. Financial incentives and assistance should be investigated to help property owners implement flood-proofing and flood resilience measures.

### Manage stormwater through grey and green infrastructure

- **Continue Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) mitigation.** Combined sewer overflow separation projects are identified in the City's CSO Long Term Control Plan and are an important part of flood mitigation and water quality improvement. The City's FY 2019 budget supports the acceleration of this effort to upgrade its sewer infrastructure.
- **Integrate green stormwater infrastructure and greening into the way Wilmington designs its streets.** Integrating green infrastructure and greening strategies into Wilmington's streets can help manage stormwater closer to where it falls and redirect it towards groundwater recharge. All street reconstruction projects should evaluate the need and feasibility of incorporating green infrastructure.

> **EXAMPLE:** Philadelphia's Green Streets Design Manual provides guidance on the technical design of green infrastructure tools, like permeable pavement and stormwater bump-outs, as well as information on which tools are best suited to different types of street and where they should be located within the street.

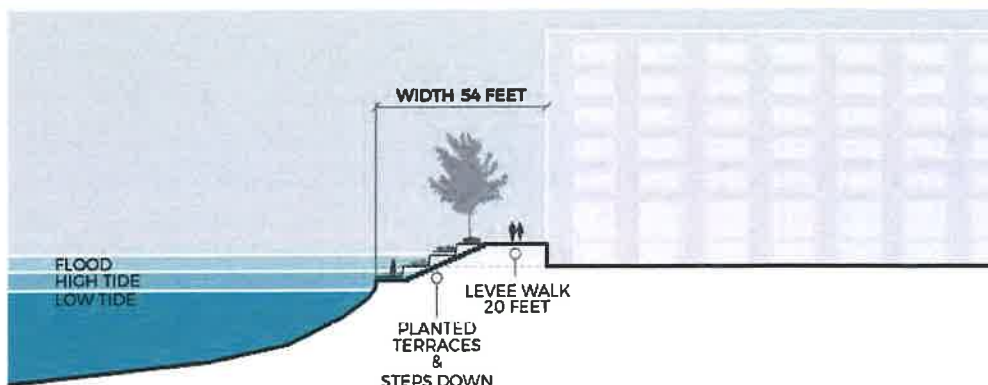


Figure 72 Illustration of riverwalk as riverfront flood management option

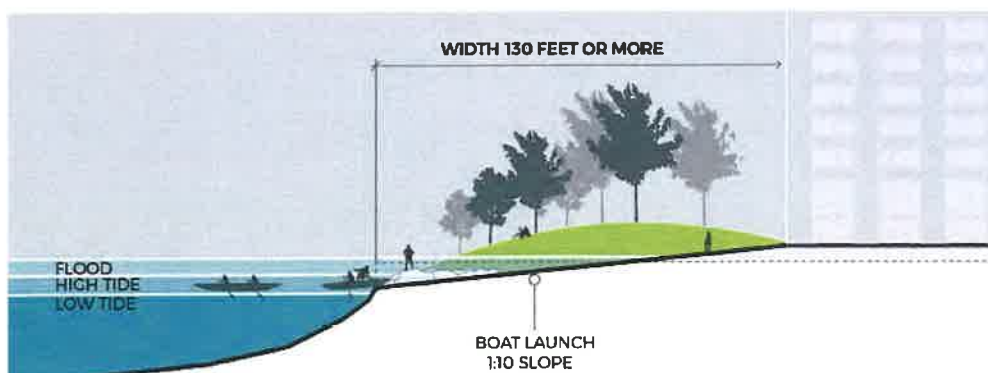


Figure 73 Illustration of waterfront park as riverfront flood management option

- **Encourage property owners to manage stormwater on-site through low impact development.** The City and its partners should promote the use of various stormwater management techniques to reduce runoff and divert stormwater from the sewer system and waterways. This includes providing information and technical assistance on installing stormwater management systems such as rain barrels, downspout planters, rain gardens, bioretention facilities, vegetative rooftops, and permeable pavements.

> **EXAMPLE:** The Philadelphia Water Department's [Rain Check Program](https://www.pwdraincheck.org/en/) (<https://www.pwdraincheck.org/en/>) offers residents stormwater tools and installation, including free rain barrels.



Example of a stormwater bumpout, one of the green infrastructure tools recommended in Philadelphia's Green Streets Design Manual

## Reduce heat impact on vulnerable communities

- **Locate and promote the use of cooling centers in vulnerable neighborhoods.** Ensure that emergency "cooling centers" are located in lower-income areas, especially those without access to indoor air-conditioned community spaces or public pools. Promote these and all community centers, libraries and open places where anyone can come spend time and cool off during the summer. Evaluate whether information about cooling centers is reaching the populations who need them most and work with community partners to strengthen local social networks to reach vulnerable residents.
- **Provide weatherization assistance to low-income residents.** Information and resources for weatherization of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied structures will assist residents in keeping their dwellings cool without wasting energy. The Weatherization Assistance Program (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/energy-climate/sustainable-communities/weatherization/>) is designed to reduce energy costs for low-income homeowners and renters by weatherproofing and improving energy efficiency. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.2 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods]
- **Reduce urban heat island effect.** Developments with ample green space, reflective white roofs or absorbent green roofs, and minimal hardscaping can help ensure that a community stays cooler when the temperature goes up. A 2014 Georgia Tech study estimates that two urban heat mitigation strategies, green space and reflective building materials like white roofs, could potentially offset most projected heat-related deaths due to climate change in the Philadelphia metro region by 2050.<sup>11</sup> The City should promote the implementation of these urban heat mitigation strategies and specifically consider during the development review process whether new developments incorporate strategies to reduce overheating at the street level.



Example of rain barrels, similar to those offered for free by the Philadelphia Water Department's Rain Check Program

> **EXAMPLE:** [NYC CoolRoofs Initiative](https://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-coolroofs) (<https://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-coolroofs>) is a City initiative that offers free or low cost energy-saving reflective rooftop installation with priority to non-profits and affordable housing buildings. The program also provides local job seekers with training and work experience.

<sup>11</sup> Stone, E. Jr, Vargo, J., Liu, P., Habeeb, D., DeLucia, A., Trail, M., et al. (2014). Avoided Heat-Related Mortality through Climate Adaptation Strategies in Three US Cities. *PLoS ONE* 9(6): e100852. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0100852>



## GOAL 5.4: PROMOTE COMMUNITY GREENING FOR AESTHETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT

Community greening has wide-ranging benefits that include beautification, community stabilization, traffic calming, lowering temperatures and energy costs, soaking up stormwater, and providing wildlife habitat.

- **Develop a tree coverage goal and increase the tree canopy in communities that lack it.** In 2009, the Delaware Center for Horticulture estimated Wilmington's urban tree canopy to be at 16% coverage, well below the national average of 23%.<sup>12</sup> In 2010, the Wilmington Tree Commission announced a goal to plant 20,000 trees in the city by 2020.<sup>13</sup> Though progress has been made, inadequate tree cover may be contributing to the impact of heat on the city. Trees reflect heat and absorb water, reducing the effect of extreme heat and weather upon residents, and reducing residents' energy costs. The city should increase its efforts to add trees to the neighborhoods that need them most, focusing on key corridors and parks, and also encouraging private property owners to plant trees.
- **Increase green space in the city through vacant lots and yards.** Beyond the city's parks, there is ample opportunity to increase green space through greening vacant lots and maximizing yards, making neighborhoods safer, more attractive, and cooler in the face of global warming. Vacant land is often perceived as a blight upon neighborhoods, but can become a community benefit if put to work through active management and greening. In addition to looking cared for and thus deterring nuisance activity, greened vacant lots can add much-needed usable open space to underserved communities. Yards are another opportunity to create beautiful and healthy ecological habitats. The City's efforts to increase the urban tree canopy should extend beyond streets and parks and into residents' yards, where a significant portion of open land sits. Encouraging and assisting residents to plant trees and native species in their yards can offer multiple benefits including providing habitats that support local fauna. [see also recommendations under Goal 1.3 in Strong and Safe Neighborhoods and Goal 2.3 in Healthy and Thriving Communities]

> **EXAMPLE:** The Delaware Nature Society's [Backyard Habitat](https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/what-we-do/protecting-habitats-wildlife/garden-for-wildlife/) (<https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/what-we-do/protecting-habitats-wildlife/garden-for-wildlife/>) programs encourage citizens to garden for wildlife and water conservation

- **Strengthen regulations regarding the replacement of trees removed during development.** The current regulation requires private developers to replace each tree that they remove from the public right of way with one new 2.5" caliper tree or larger, and city departments must replace each tree they remove from the public right of way or from public property with two 2.5" caliper trees or larger. This regulation allows the replacement of large, older trees with small, young trees, which do not have the same environmental, social, or economic impact. To encourage preservation of older trees and maintain the urban tree canopy, consider amending this regulation to require tree replacement on the basis of the total diameter or basal area of trees removed. A revised regulation might require developers and the city to replace each tree removed with one or more trees whose total sum diameter or basal area is equal to that of the removed trees. In cases where there would be no room on the property to replace the removed trees, developers would pay a fee in lieu into a fund used to plant trees on other parcels.

> **EXAMPLE:** The State of Maryland's forest conservation law and the City of Rehoboth, DE, both require tree replacement based on inches of tree caliper.

<sup>12</sup> Delaware Center for Horticulture. (2009). Our Urban Forest.  
<sup>13</sup> Furlong, 62.





The vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan are embodied in the future land use for the city and implemented through the zoning code.

## FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

**Parks/open space:** Parks, playgrounds, trails, park-like boulevard medians (such as Bancroft and Kentmere)

**Institutions:** Schools, libraries, hospitals, government buildings, cemeteries, community centers, major religious meeting spaces

**Manufacturing:** Ports; general industrial activities, warehouses and storage; heavy and chemical industrial processes, auto repair

**Mixed commercial/light manufacturing:** Light manufacturing, wholesale, warehouses, assembly, tech services, “business parks,” artisanal production, all uses shall be appropriate for location adjacent to residential neighborhoods, outdoor storage and automobile-related uses are generally prohibited. Examples: Garasches Lane, Downing Drive

**Regional commercial:** Auto-oriented commercial (strip malls, shopping centers, self-storage facilities, office buildings outside of downtown), warehouses, wholesale, gas stations, auto repair, artisanal production. Examples: N. Market Street north of 34th, Lancaster Ave west of Woodlawn

**Downtown mixed use:** Office buildings, street-facing commercial retail/services, civic centers and hotels, restaurants, nightlife and performance venues; medium- to high-density residential uses (which are encouraged to have ground floor commercial). Example: Downtown

**Waterfront mixed use:** Medium density residential buildings (multi-family buildings encouraged to have ground floor retail), office buildings, civic centers and hotels, restaurants, commercial retail/services, nightlife and performance venues, and recreation. Examples: Christina Riverfront, Brandywine Mills

**Waterfront mixed commercial/light manufacturing:** Similar to employment centers, but with the addition of special setback and design requirements to ensure room for the development of flood control measures and public access to the waterfront. Examples: A Street between Humane Association and Heald Street, area south of Front Street and east of Poplar Street

**Neighborhood mixed use:** Street-facing commercial retail/services, small-scale nightlife and performance venues, artisanal production (breweries, artist studios, maker spaces), residential uses (permits mixed-use buildings with commercial on the ground floor and residential units on upper floors). Examples: Union Street, N. Market Street

**High-density residential:** Multi-family residential buildings taller than 5 stories

**Medium-density residential:** Semi-detached houses and rowhouses up to 3 stories in height, and apartment buildings up to 5 stories in height

**Low-density residential:** Detached single-family houses

**Infrastructure:** Water treatment plant, recycling centers and landfills, high-voltage powerlines, substations, transit centers, public (DART, Public Works) vehicle and equipment storage, reservoirs, underpasses and bridge piers, non-publicly accessible green infrastructure



# CURRENT LAND USE

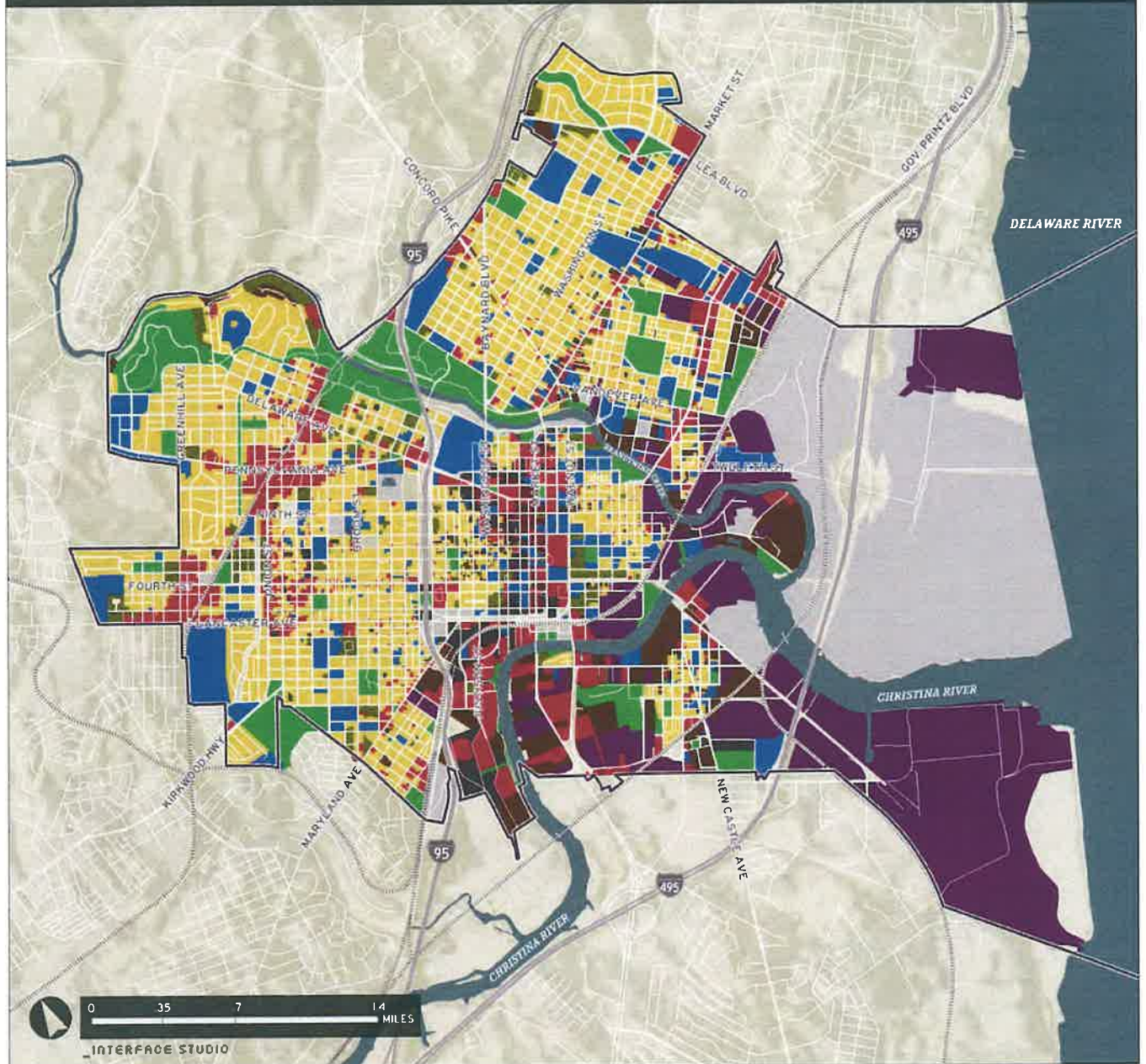


Figure 74 Current land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- Parks & Open Space
- Institutions
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Medium-High Density Residential
- Low-Medium Density Residential
- Infrastructure
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- City border



# FUTURE LAND USE

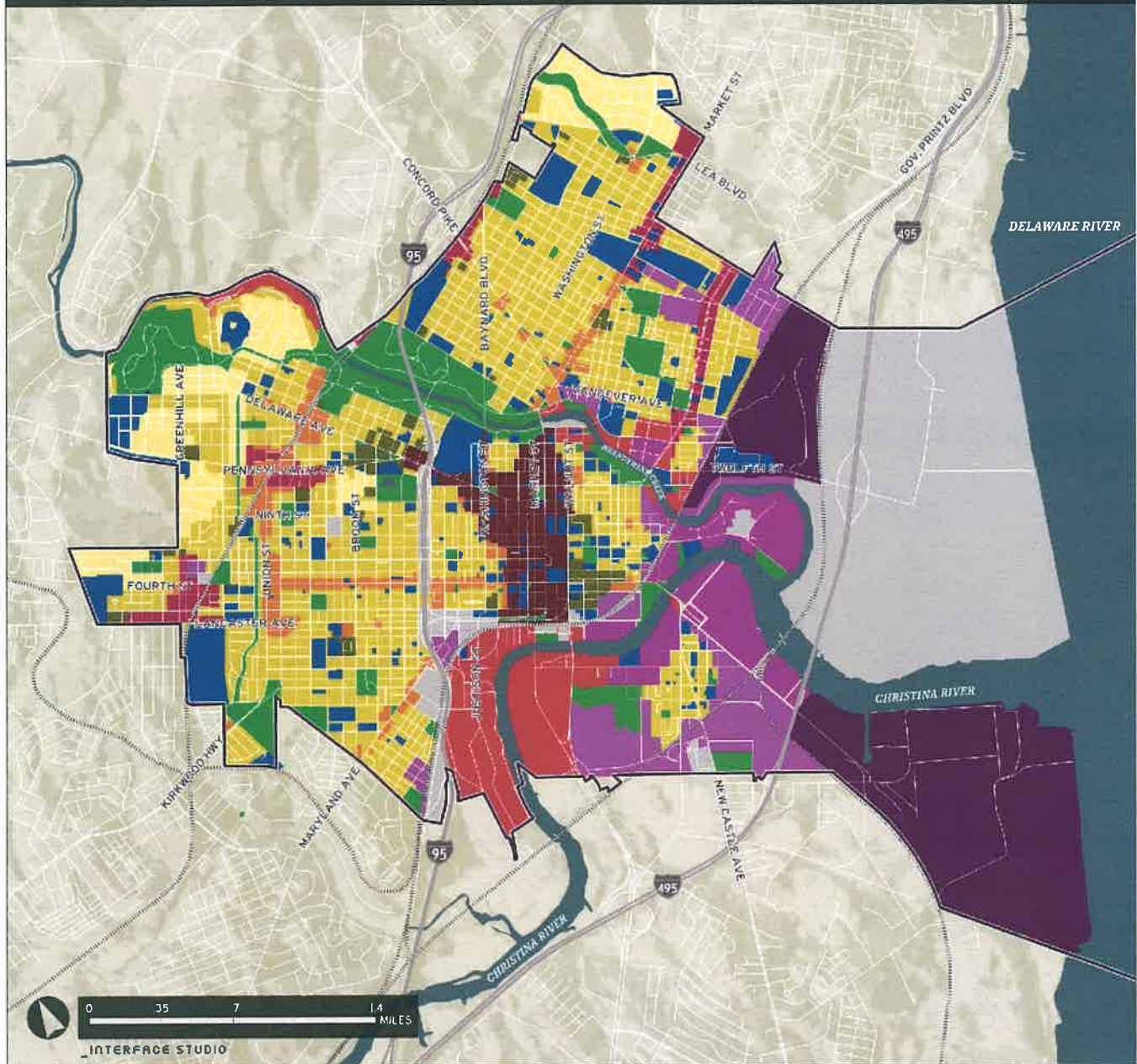


Figure 75 Future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                          | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing                      |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                                 | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use   |
| <span style="color: darkpurple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> High Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: lightpurple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential   |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                           | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential   |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                          | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure   |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                          | <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> City border |



# ZONING

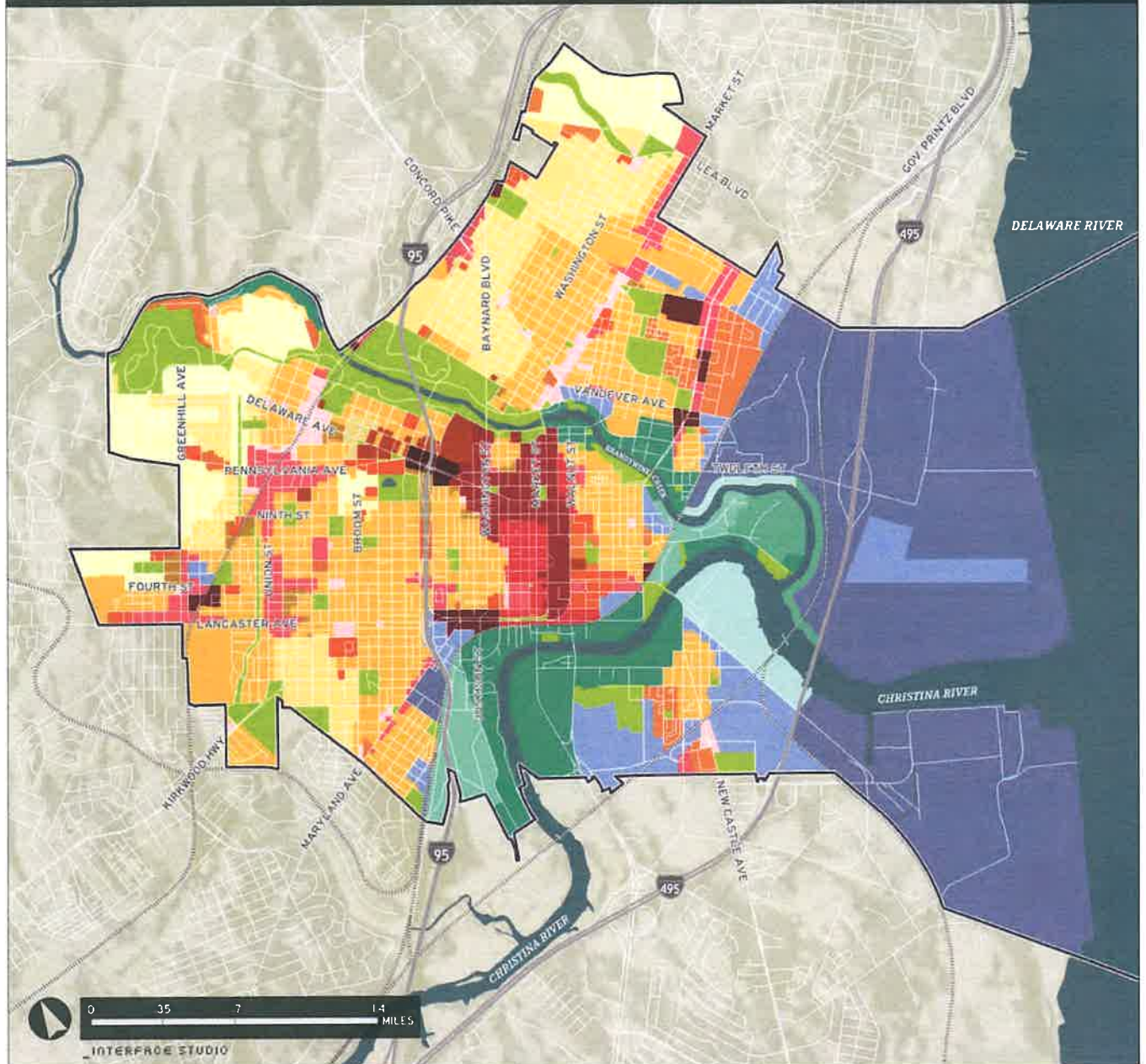


Figure 76 **Current zoning map**  
Source: City of Wilmington

Commercial	Residential	Industrial
C-1	R-1	M-1
C-1A	R-2	M-2
C-2	R-2A	<b>Waterfront Zones</b>
C-2A	R-3	W-1
C-3	R-4	W-2
C-4	R-5A	W-3
C-5	R-5A-1	W-4
C-6	R-5B	Open Space
	R-5C	



# ZONING CATEGORIES

## Residential Districts

### **R-1: One-family detached dwellings.**

Sec. 48-131.

*Purpose.* The R-1 district, one-family detached dwellings, is designed to protect and maintain those residential areas now developed primarily with one-family detached dwellings on relatively large lots and adjoining vacant areas likely to be developed for such purposes. It will enable the city to continue to provide a restricted type of environment which would otherwise be found only in suburban areas.

### **R-2: One-family detached dwellings and one-family semi-detached dwellings.**

Sec. 48-132.

*Purpose.* The R-2 district, one-family detached dwellings and one-family semidetached dwellings, is designed to include those sections of the city where there are substantial numbers of one-family semidetached dwellings, twin houses, in most cases intermingled with one-family detached dwellings on somewhat smaller lots than are found in R-1 districts. Some public and institutional uses and home occupations are permitted.

### **R-2A: One-family detached and semi-detached dwellings with conversions.**

Sec. 48-133.

*Purpose.* The R-2A district, one-family detached and semidetached dwellings with conversions, is designed to preserve certain areas which were originally developed with one-family detached dwellings and one-family semidetached dwellings, in which some such buildings have been converted for the use of two or more families, and which areas constitute an irreplaceable part of the city's limited supply of fine residential housing. It would retain the general one-family detached and semidetached character of these areas, permitting conversions for an additional family or families with zoning board of adjustment approval. New apartment houses with not more than two families on each story are also permitted.

### **R-3: One-family row houses.**

Sec. 48-134.

*Purpose.* The R-3 district, one-family row houses, is designed to conserve for one-family use those areas developed with one-family row houses which have not been converted to use by two or more families. Permitted nonresidential uses are similar to those in R-2 districts.

### **R-4: Row houses with conversions.**

Sec. 48-135.

*Purpose.* The R-4 district, row houses with conversions, is designed to include those areas which were originally developed with one-family row houses but where many such buildings have been converted for the use of two or more families. It would retain the general row house character of these areas, permitting conversions for an additional family or families only if approved by the zoning board of adjustment. To encourage assembly and rebuilding, new apartment houses with not more than two families on each story are permitted. Some institutions excluded from the one-family districts are permitted.

### **R-5: Apartment houses, subdivided into:**

#### **R-5A: Low density.**

Sec. 48-136.

*Purpose.* The R-5A district, low density apartment houses, is designed to permit low-density garden apartment developments contiguous to one-family districts. The density of such developments is controlled by a floor area ratio and height of buildings is limited to three stories. This district includes the public housing projects of the Wilmington Housing Authority, which are typical of this kind of development.

**R-5A-1: Low-medium density apartment houses.**

Sec. 48-137.

*Purpose.* The R-5A-1 district, low-medium density apartment houses, is designed primarily to permit low to medium density apartment developments contiguous to one-family districts and to include other residential and residentially compatible, institutional uses. Any R-5A-1 district would serve to buffer one-family neighborhoods from more intensive residential and certain commercial uses. The density of uses in the district is controlled by the floor area ratio (FAR) and height of buildings is limited to five (5) stories as a matter of right.

**R-5B: Medium density.**

Sec. 48-138.

*Purpose.* The R-5-B district, medium-density apartment houses, is designed to accommodate medium-density elevator apartment houses with ample light and air at medium or high rentals. Density and yard controls would assure that they could adjoin one-family neighborhoods without impairing the value of homes therein. In some cases they would serve as buffers between one-family residence districts and commercial districts.

**R-5C: High density.**

Sec. 48-139.

*Purpose.* The R-5C district, high-density apartment houses, is designed to encourage large high-rise apartment houses in those locations where relatively high land values and convenience to downtown areas would make such buildings the best economic use of the land. They would, in general, be located on the edges of the C-4 district and where they would not immediately adjoin one-family residence districts.

**Commercial Districts****C-1: Neighborhood shopping.**

Sec. 48-191.

*Purpose.* The C-1 district, neighborhood shopping, is designed to provide sites for convenient retail and personal service establishments for a small tributary area, with a minimum impact upon adjoining or surrounding residential development. Preferably, each portion of the district should be small and compact in area, but where extensive strip development has occurred as a result of earlier zoning the district has been expanded to include such development.

**C-1A: Neighborhood commercial.**

Sec. 48-192.

*Purpose.* The C-1A district, neighborhood commercial, is designed to provide sites for convenient retail and personal service establishments for a small tributary area, with a minimum impact upon adjoining residential development. Preferably, each portion of the district should be small and compact in area, but where extensive strip development has occurred as a result of earlier zoning, the district can include such development.

**C-2: Secondary business commercial centers.**

Sec. 48-193.

*Purpose.* The C-2 district, secondary business commercial centers, is designed to provide both shopping and business needs for large segments of the city outside of the central business area. It is, in general, located on main highways and includes secondary employment centers. Where feasible, it is laid out in sufficient depth to permit and encourage designed shopping centers.

**C-2A: Secondary office and business centers.**

Sec. 48-194.

*Purpose.* The C-2A district, secondary office and business centers, is designed to provide areas for low intensity and low density office and business uses that will function as self-contained employment and service centers. It is, in general, located in areas of the city that adjoin residential areas and/or sites which act as buffers between residential areas and incompatible adjoining uses, such as heavy manufacturing or general commercial districts, or major transportation corridors. The district is also appropriate for former manufacturing or institutional sites located within residential areas that are not suited to residential redevelopment or conversion. The permitted uses are defined narrowly so as not to permit uses which generate excessive delivery, customer vehicle, or pedestrian traffic, or have hours of operation which conflict with adjoining residential uses.

**C-3: Central retail.**

Sec. 48-195.

*Purpose.* The C-3 district, central retail, is designed for that portion of the central business area which contains the main retail district, providing a wide variety of retail and display services and serving the whole city metropolitan area. While most of it is within a single compact area, it also includes some separate areas on the edges of the C-4 district.

**C-4: Central office.**

Sec. 48-196.

*Purpose.* The C-4 district, central office, is designed to accommodate the downtown office district containing the civic center, large hotels, and the principal office buildings. It permits buildings of any height and the greatest density of building of any zoning district so as to make possible the concentrations necessary for the efficient handling of both public and private business.

**C-5: Heavy commercial.**

Sec. 48-197.

*Purpose.* The C-5 district, heavy commercial, is designed to provide sites for large wholesale and storage establishments involving both storage in buildings and storage yards. It includes areas which draw heavy trucking traffic and is therefore located within easy access reach of main highways and with controls to minimize the effect on nearby residence districts.

**C-6: Special commercial.**

Sec. 48-198.

*Purpose.* The C-6 district, special commercial, is designed to encourage intense and high quality commercial uses along boulevards and major arterial streets leading to and from Wilmington's downtown area. Special controls on height and bulk as provided in division 3 of this article are designed to provide a proper setting for the development of these commercial uses. Review and approval of all new buildings and uses by a design review and preservation commission is required.

**Manufacturing and Industrial Districts****M-1: Light manufacturing.**

Sec. 48-246.

*Purpose.* The M-1 district, light manufacturing, is designed to provide areas where scientific research, light manufacturing or fabrication, and wholesale storage or warehousing activities, and providing open space around buildings and surroundings attractive to employees therein would be encouraged. They would be restricted to low-density developments on large sites with suitable landscaping, which can be operated in a clean, quiet manner. In addition, public facilities and private utilities which are needed to serve the uses within the district and adjoining residential areas may be located therein. No new residential development is permitted.



### **M-2: General industrial.**

Sec. 48-247.

*Purpose.* The M-2 district, general industrial, is designed to provide areas where large-scale industries can find suitable sites served by rail, water and highway transportation. Only a few specified heavy industries which might create objectionable conditions in the residential and commercial areas of the city are excluded. No new residential development is permitted.

## **Waterfront Districts**

### **W-1: Waterfront manufacturing.**

Sec. 48-336.

*Purpose.* The W-1 waterfront manufacturing district provides areas where manufacturing and heavy industrial uses are well established and where there are suitable sites for such uses served by rail, water and highway networks.

### **W-2: Waterfront manufacturing/commercial.**

Sec. 48-337.

*Purpose.* The W-2 waterfront manufacturing/commercial district provides for areas where manufacturing uses are well established and where commercial development is suitable because of locations near arterial highways.

### **W-3: Waterfront low intensity manufacturing/commercial recreation.**

Sec. 48-338.

*Purpose.* The W-3 low intensity waterfront manufacturing/commercial recreation district provides areas for low intensity development that are appropriate to existing land conditions and the level of public utility and transportation services available, and includes areas with significant recreational and scenic resources.

### **W-4: Waterfront residential/commercial.**

Sec. 48-339.

*Purpose.* The W-4 waterfront residential commercial district is designed to provide areas adjacent to the central business district and residential neighborhoods where medium to high density residential, retail and office development can take place.

## **Special Purpose Districts**

### **Special Purpose District O: Open space.**

Sec. 48-286.

*Purpose.* The O district, open space, is designed to include lands dedicated as permanent open space, to be enjoyed by the public for rest and recreation or to provide permanent light and air to surrounding developments.

## **Supplementary Districts**

### **Supplementary District: Historic Areas, Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks**

Article IX.

This article provides for the designation of historic areas within which specialized review procedures are necessary to preserve and enhance the educational and aesthetic values represented by areas and structures of historic and cultural significance. [see Historic Designations map on page 38 for City Historic Districts]

## **Floodplains and Floodprone Areas**

### **Requirements in All Special Flood Hazard Areas Other Than Coastal High Hazard Areas**

Article XII.

All development and new construction in special flood hazard areas as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency must be compliant with the City's floodplain management regulations to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. Special flood hazard areas include Zones A, AE, and AO. [see FEMA Flood Hazard Areas map on page 134]

## NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS

The neighborhood areas section of the plan translates the citywide goals and recommendations into neighborhood examples. This section is organized into the 11 neighborhood analysis areas in alphabetical order and includes a brief overview of demographic and physical conditions. For a full demographic report by neighborhood analysis area, consult the City of Wilmington Demographic Profiles which are updated after each decennial census (<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/about-us/about-the-city-of-wilmington/population-demographics>). The next census is scheduled for 2020.



Figure 77 **Neighborhood analysis areas map**  
Source: City of Wilmington

# BANCROFT PARKWAY/DELAWARE AVENUE

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population in the Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue area declined at a similar rate to the city as a whole, decreasing by 2% from 2000 to 2010. Children under 18 made up only 11% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 accounted for 23% of the population. Citywide, children under 18 made up 24% of the population and adults over 65 accounted for 12% of the population in 2010.

This area has a very low poverty and unemployment rate. The percent of people living in poverty in the Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue area increased slightly from 6% to 8% between 2000 to 2010. The percent of residents in the workforce who were unemployed remained steady at about 3% from 2010 to 2014, while the citywide unemployment rate decreased from 11% to 8% during that period.

Education attainment rates are significantly higher in this area than compared to the city as a whole. Approximately 60% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 6% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 8% of all housing units in 2010, about half the citywide rate of 16%. Renter occupied housing made up 44% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made 56% in 2010. Approximately 27% of homeowners and 34% of renters were cost-burdened in 2010. Citywide, 32% of homeowners and 54% of renters were cost-burdened during the same period.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue has varied housing stock that includes single family homes, rowhomes and apartment buildings. The area includes commercial centers at Trolley Square and along Pennsylvania Avenue, several high-quality parks, and historic landmarks.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as Brandywine Park, Bancroft Parkway, Gilpin Playground, Rockford Park, and Stapler Park.
- Significant commercial areas and gateways such as Pennsylvania Avenue, Union Street, and Trolley Square.
- Delaware Art Museum
- Highlands Elementary School

Challenges: Multi-modal conditions and connections between destinations.

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue residents:

- Safety in the community (76%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (56%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (46%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue :

- 49% of respondents ranked “safety in the community” good, 30% rated it average, and 21% rated it poor.
- 71% of respondents ranked “local shopping, restaurants, and entertainment” good, 22% rated it average, and 7% rated it poor.
- 74% of respondents ranked “my neighbors or sense of community” good, 20% rated it average, and 5% rated it poor.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (71%)
- Downtown revitalization (40%)
- Improved job opportunities (37%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (28%)
- New and expanded youth programs (18%)



# BANCROFT PARKWAY/DELAWARE AVENUE

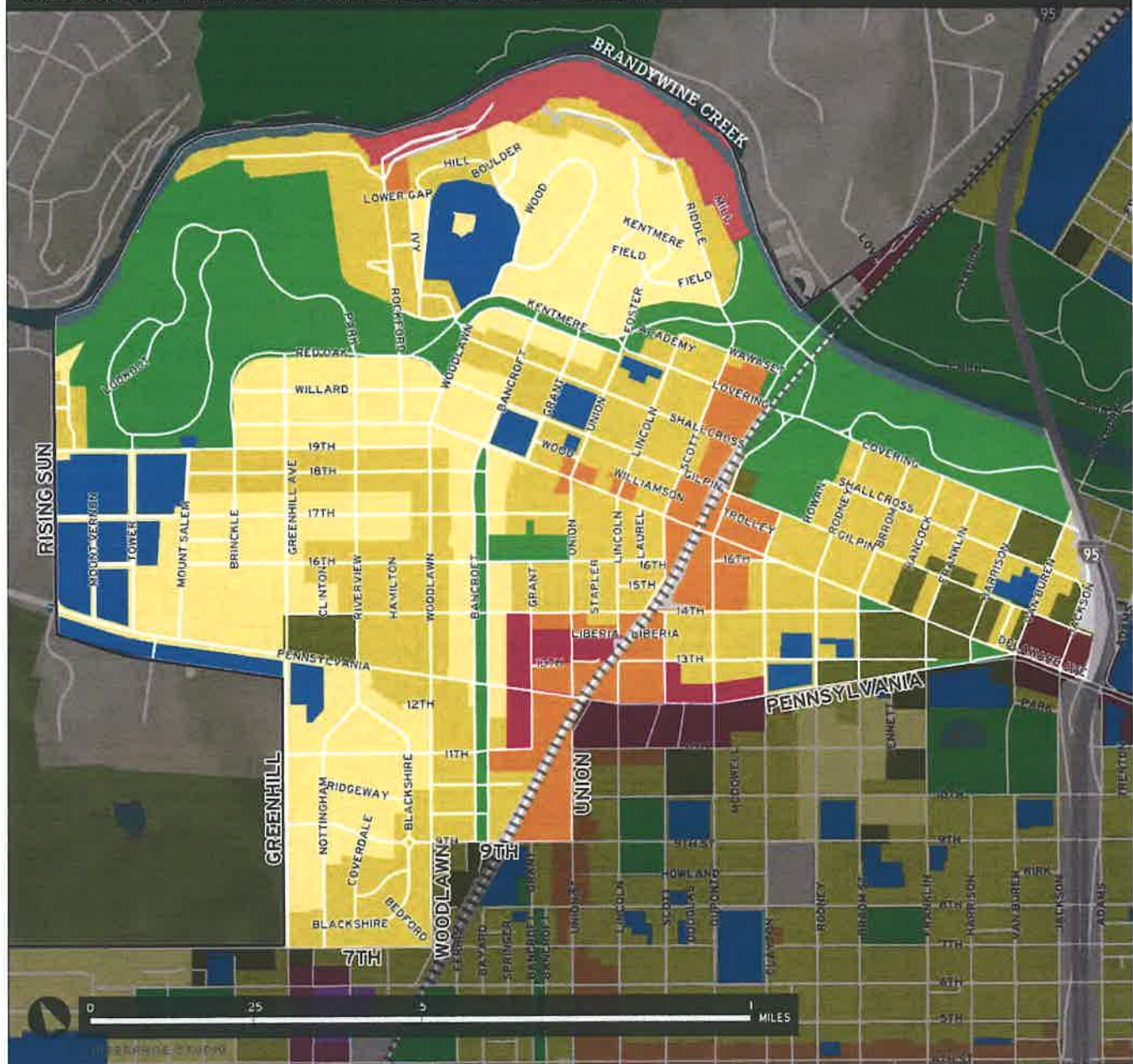


Figure 78 Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                      | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                             | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                          |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: brown;">■</span> High Density Residential                         |
| <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                      |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                       | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                    |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                    | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure                                    |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                      | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                           |



# BANCROFT PARKWAY/DELAWARE AVENUE



Figure 79 Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

- ◆ Gateway corridor
- ◆ Main Street corridor
- ◆ Neighborhood connector
- ◆ Off-street trail

## Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate

### **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Strengthen neighborhood character by ensuring infill and new construction fit in with basic neighborhood patterns.

### **Robust Local Economy**

- ② Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ③ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

### **Connected City and Region**

- ④ Transform Pennsylvania Avenue as a gateway corridor that is safe and comfortable for all users.
- ⑤ Improve intersection at Pennsylvania Avenue and Union Street.
- ⑥ Enhance Bancroft Parkway as potential off-street connection to parks and other assets with pedestrian and bicycle paths.

### **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑦ Encourage expanding tree canopy and native habitat in yards.



# BAYNARD BOULEVARD

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population in the Baynard Boulevard area declined at a slightly higher rate than the city as a whole, decreasing by 3% from 2000 to 2010 (citywide, the population declined by 2% during the same period). Children under 18 made up 25% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 accounted for 12% of the population.

The percent of people living in poverty in the Baynard Boulevard area increased from 16% to 19% between 2000 to 2010.

The percent of residents in the workforce who were unemployed has increased slightly. From 2010 to 2014, the unemployment rate increased from 13% to 14%, while the citywide unemployment rate decreased from 11% to 8% during that period.

Approximately 26% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 15% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 11% of all housing units in 2010, lower the citywide rate of 16%. Renter occupied housing made up 48% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made 52% in 2010. Approximately 31% of homeowners and 47% of renters were cost-burdened in 2010. Citywide, 32% of homeowners and 54% of renters were cost-burdened during the same period.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

Baynard Boulevard is a residential neighborhood just north of the Brandywine Creek and Park with commercial activity along N. Market Street.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as Brandywine Park and Zoo, and a network of small pocket parks.
- Significant commercial corridors and gateways such as N. Market Street, Baynard Boulevard, and Concord Avenue.

- Institutional assets such as Shortlidge Academy and Warner Elementary School.

Challenges: Crime, vacancy and housing conditions, multimodal conditions.

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for Northwest residents:

- Safety in the community (75%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (66%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (31%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Northwest:

- Only 26% of respondents ranked “safety in the community” as good, while 37% ranked it poor.
- 68% of respondents ranked “my neighbors or sense of community” as good, and only 13% ranked it poor.
- 39% of respondents ranked “local shopping, restaurants and entertainment” average, 23% ranked it good, and 23% ranked it poor.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (58%)
- Downtown revitalization (36%)
- Improved job opportunities (33%)
- New and expanded youth programs (33%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (28%)

# BAYNARD BOULEVARD

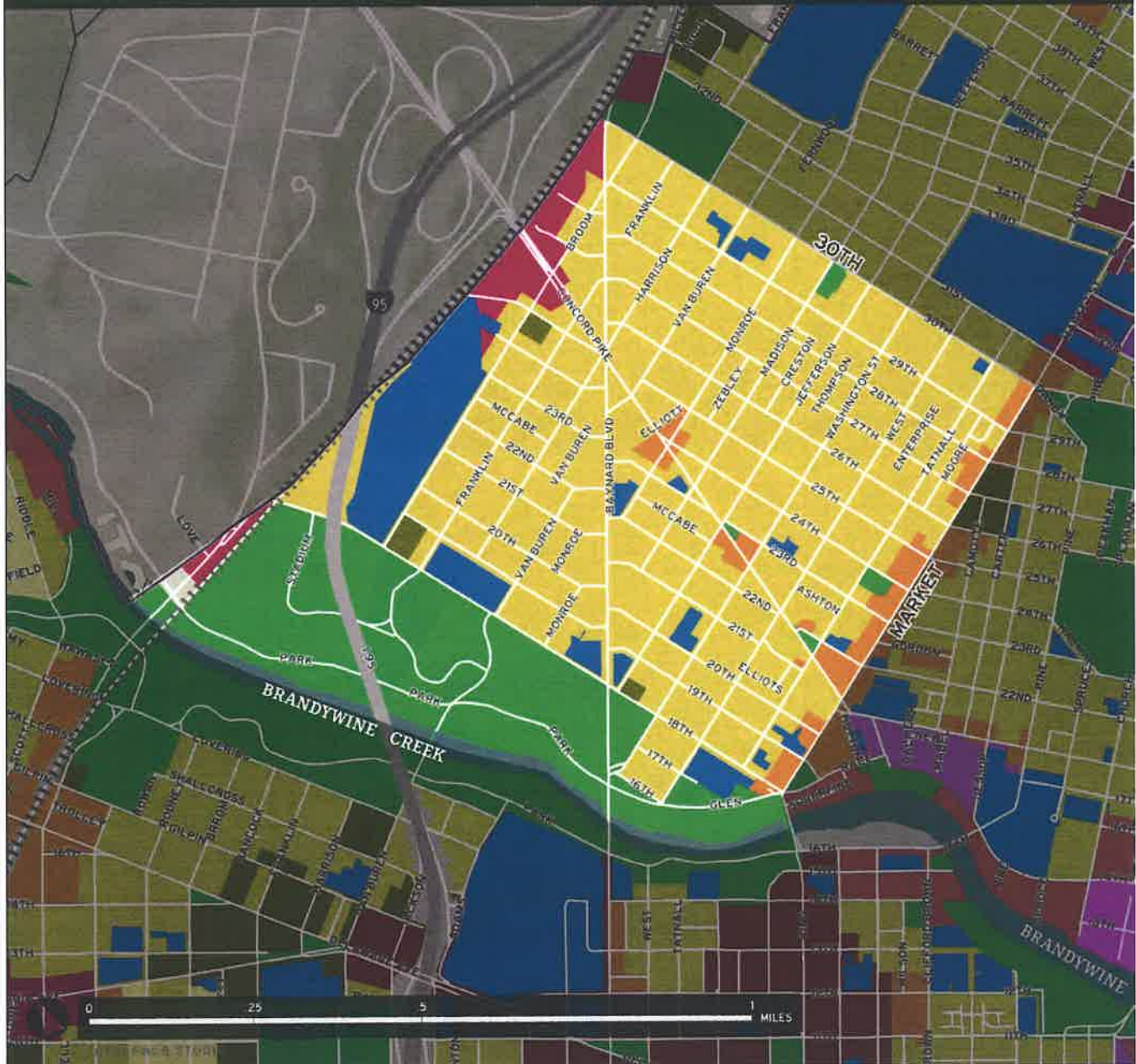


Figure 80 Baynard Boulevard future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                      | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing                         |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                             | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use  |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> High Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                       | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                      | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure  |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                      | <span style="border: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> City border |



# BAYNARD BOULEVARD

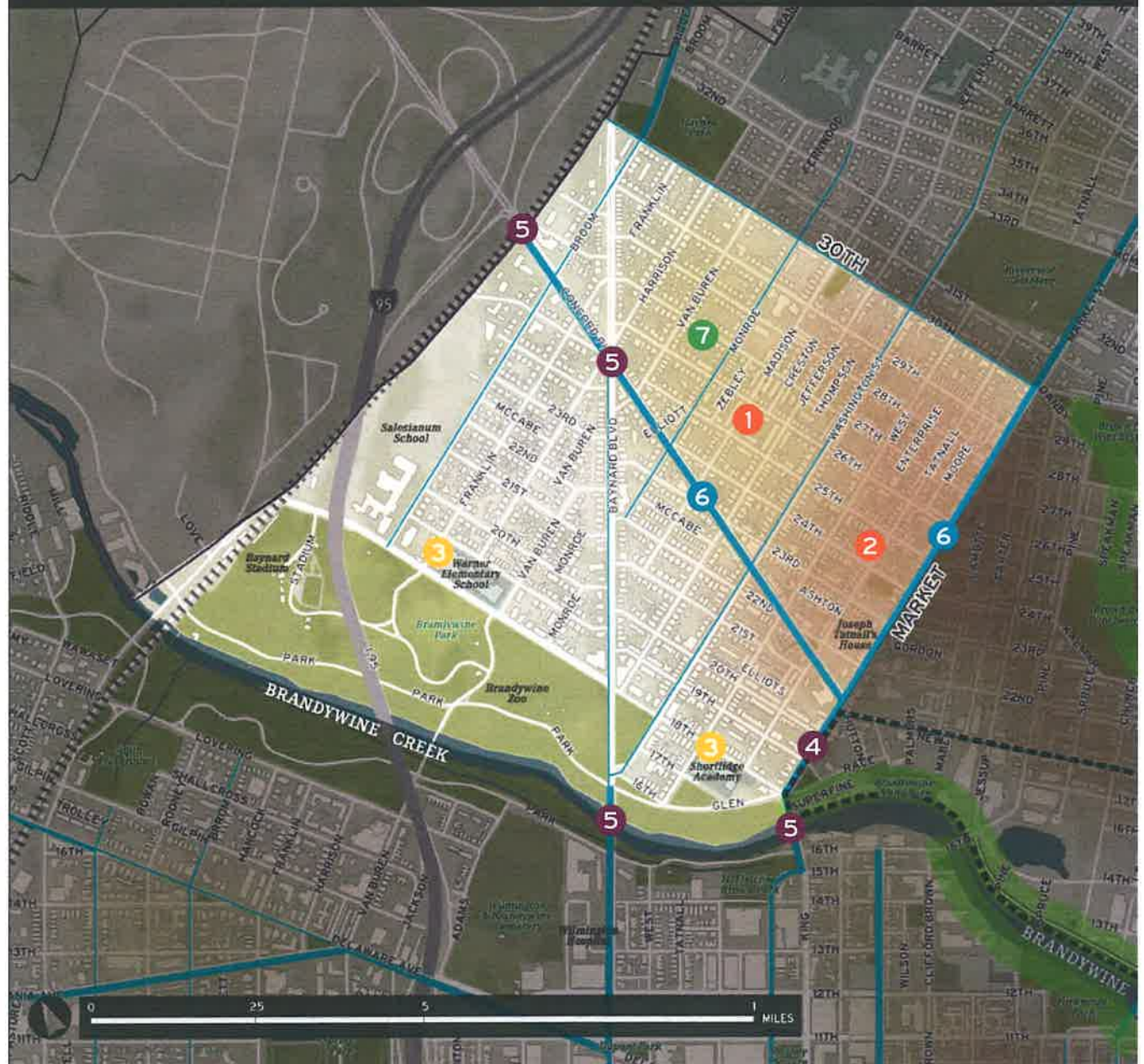


Figure 81 Baynard Boulevard strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

- Gateway corridor
- Main Street corridor
- Neighborhood connector
- Off-street trail

## Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate



### **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties .
- ② Support community engagement through community-based public safety.

### **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ③ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

### **Robust Local Economy**

- ④ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑤ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

### **Connected City and Region**

- ⑥ Enhance Concord Avenue and North Market Street as attractive gateway corridors.

### **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑦ Increase green space through yards and vacant lot improvement.

# BROWNTOWN-HEDGEVILLE

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The area is growing more than the city as a whole. The population of Browntown-Hedgeville grew by 4.7% between 2000 and 2010 (from 8,664 to 9,069), far greater than the citywide rate of less than 1%.

There are a significant number of children living in this area. Nearly a third (28.6%) of all Browntown-Hedgeville residents were under 18 in 2010, just over the citywide rate of 24%. About 8% were over 65, below the citywide rate of about 12%.

The percent of people living in poverty in Browntown-Hedgeville went up from 2000 to 2010, from 14% to 18%. Around 10% of residents who were in the workforce in 2014 were unemployed, greater than the citywide rate of about 8%.

The percent of residents with a college degree (25%) or with less than a high school diploma (18%) was similar to the city as a whole in 2014.

Fifty-nine percent of residents were homeowners in 2010, and 41 percent were renters. More than half (55%) of all renters were housing cost-burdened in 2010, as were about a third (34%) of all homeowners. Eleven percent of all housing units were vacant.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area includes a dense, older residential neighborhood as well as newer waterfront development, separated from each other by the I-95 highway and a rail line.

Assets in the area include:

- Cultural institutions such as the Delaware Children's Museum and Delaware Contemporary (art museum)
- Parks and recreational resources such as Canby Park and Kosciuszko Park
- Wilmington Amtrak Station
- Christina Riverfront
- Frawley Stadium

Challenges: Property and violent crime west of I-95, vacancy and blight, insufficient parkland and community space, western areas separated from waterfront by rail and highway

Recent and proposed projects: Christina riverfront parklands

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for East Side residents:

- Safety in the community (82%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (47%)
- Local shopping, restaurants, and entertainment (36%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Browntown-Hedgeville:

- 59% of respondents ranked "safety in the community" poor.
- 27% of respondents ranked "my neighbors or sense of community" average, with about half of the remaining respondents rating it good or poor.
- 28% of respondents ranked "local shopping, restaurants, and entertainment" average, with about half of the remaining respondents rating it good or poor.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (73%)
- Improved job opportunities (31%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (31%)
- New and renovated housing (28%)
- Downtown revitalization (23%)

# BROWNTOWN-HEDGEVILLE

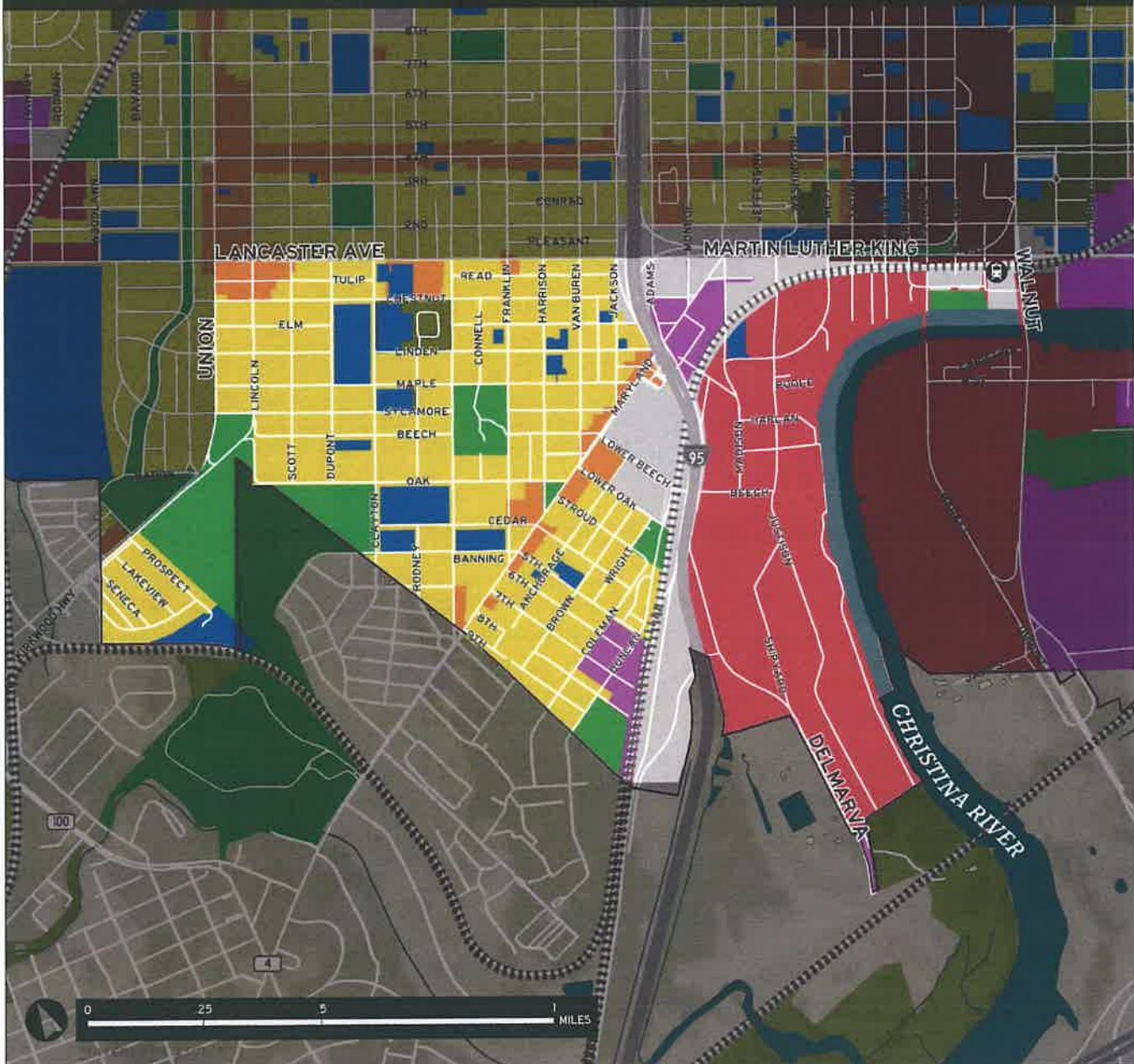


Figure 82 Browntown-Hedgeville future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                     | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                            | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                            |
| <span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> Manufacturing                       | <span style="color: olive;">■</span> High Density Residential                           |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                        |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                      | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                      |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                   | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure                                      |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                     | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                             |



# BROWNTOWN-HEDGEVILLE

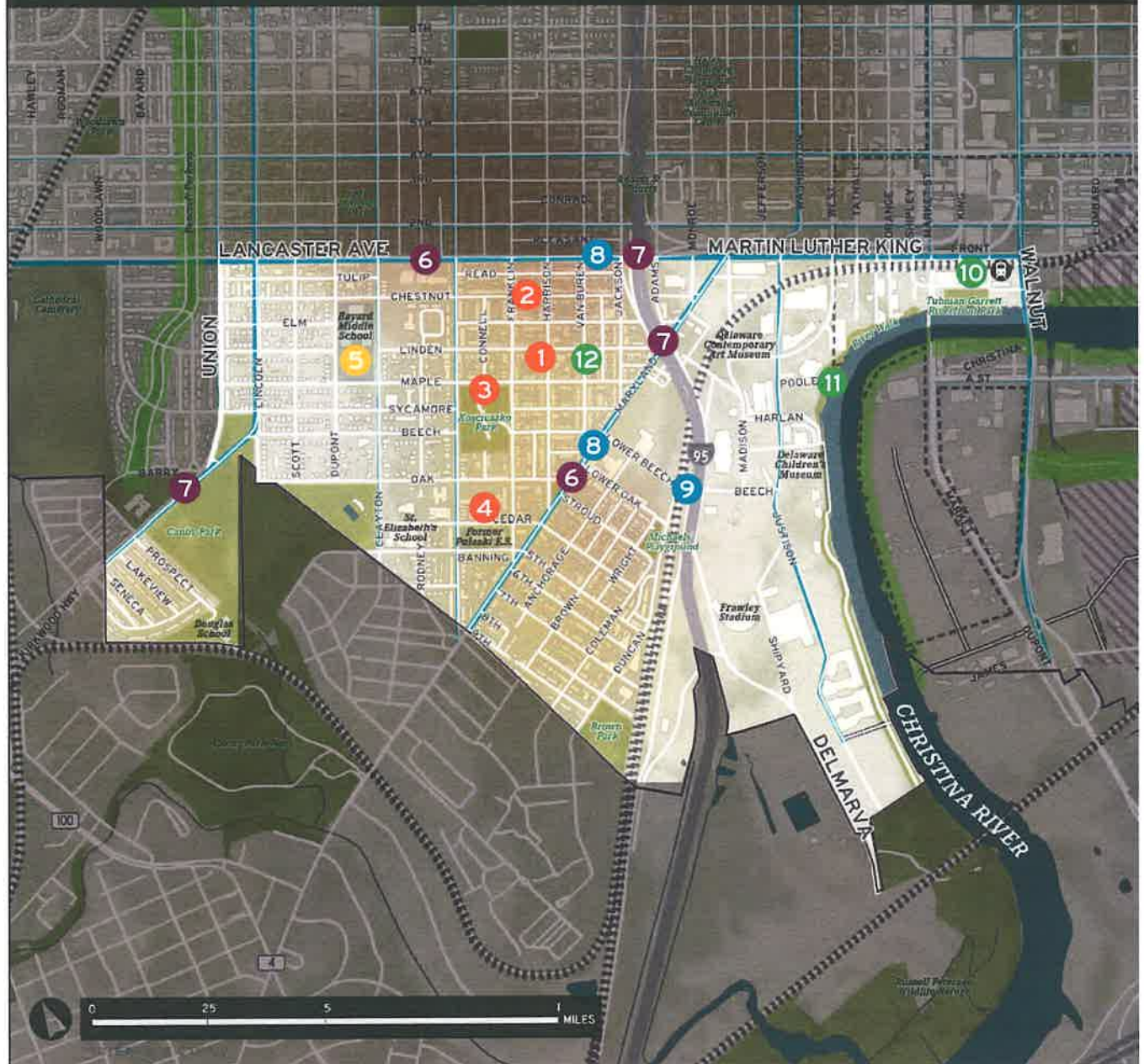







Figure 83 Browntown-Hedgeville strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington



## Connections

-  Gateway corridor
-  Main Street corridor
-  Neighborhood connector
-  Off-street trail

## Areas

-  Major areas of change
-  Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

-  Preserve/strengthen
-  Stabilize/rehabilitate

### **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties.
- ② Support community engagement through community-based public safety
- ③ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers
- ④ Evaluate former schools buildings for redevelopment.

### **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ⑤ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

### **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑥ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑦ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

### **Connected City and Region**

- ⑧ Transform Maryland Ave and Lancaster Ave into gateway corridors that are safe and comfortable for all users
- ⑨ Improve connection to the waterfront and downtown from Browntown-Hedgeville under the rail viaduct along Linden and Beech Streets.

### **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑩ Harden infrastructure vulnerable to sea level rise and extreme weather events
- ⑪ Evaluate riverfront flood management options.
- ⑫ Increase green space through yards and vacant lot improvement

# EAST SIDE

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population declined 14% between 2000-2010, from 6,721 to 5,793.

Children under 18 made up 21% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 made up 9%, comparable to citywide rates.

The area has higher poverty and unemployment rates than the city as a whole. The percent of the population living below the poverty level increased from 35% in 2000 to 40% in 2010. Unemployment has also increased: 20% of those in the labor force were unemployed in 2010, climbing to 30% in 2014, far exceeding citywide rates of 11% and 8% respectively.

Only 5.8% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 13.2% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 16% of all housing units in 2010, similar to the citywide rate. Renter occupied housing made up 76% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made 24% in 2010. Cost burden is a concern for 54% of renters and 23% of owners.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area is mainly residential with a mix of medium and high density housing in close proximity to downtown and with riverfronts on both the Christina River and the Brandywine Creek.

Assets in the area include:

- Wilmington Amtrak Station
- Park and recreational resources such as Babiaryz Park, Christina Park, Compton Park, Fort Christina Park, Foster Brown Pool, Kirkwood Park.
- Schools such as Howard High School of Technology, Stubbs Elementary School, Bancroft Elementary School, Sarah Pyle Academy.

- Historic resources such as Church street Historic District, Kalmar Nickel, Old Swedes Church

Challenges: crime, poverty, vacancy, barriers to downtown including Walnut Street and megablocks from urban renewal

## Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for East Side residents:

- Safety in the neighborhood (72%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (49%)
- Affordability (37%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for the East Side:

- 54% of respondents ranked “safety in the community” as poor and 37% ranked it average
- 37% of respondents ranked “my neighbors or sense of community” as poor, 33% ranked it as good, and 25% ranked it average
- 39% of respondents ranked “affordability” as average and 32% ranked it as good

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (56%)
- Improved job opportunities (40%)
- New and expanded youth programs (39%)
- New and renovated housing (26%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (21%)



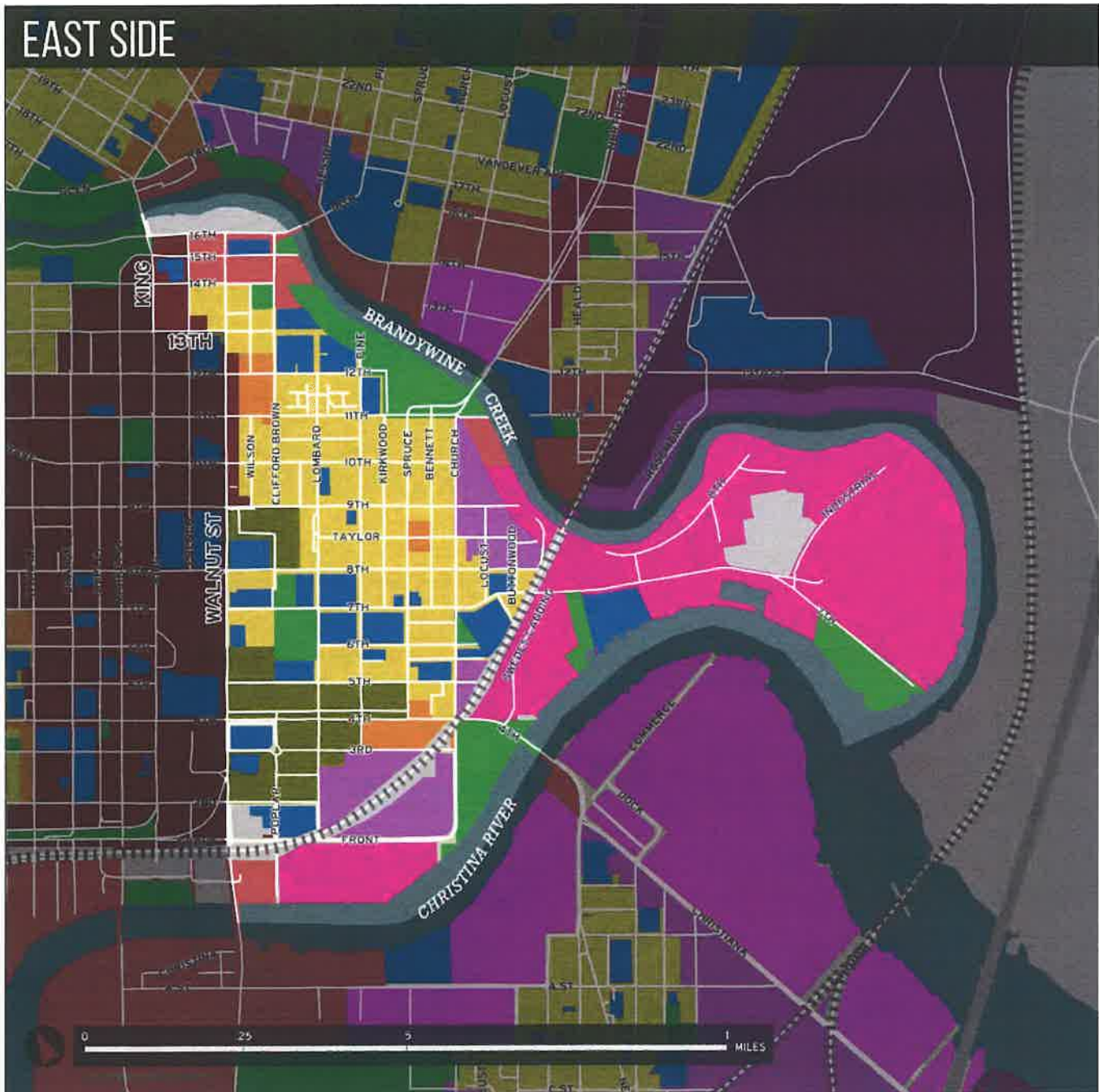


Figure 84 East Side future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                      | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                             | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                             |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Manufacturing                         | <span style="color: olivegreen;">■</span> High Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellowgreen;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                    |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                       | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                            |
| <span style="color: darkbrown;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                  | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure                                       |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                      | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                              |

# EAST SIDE

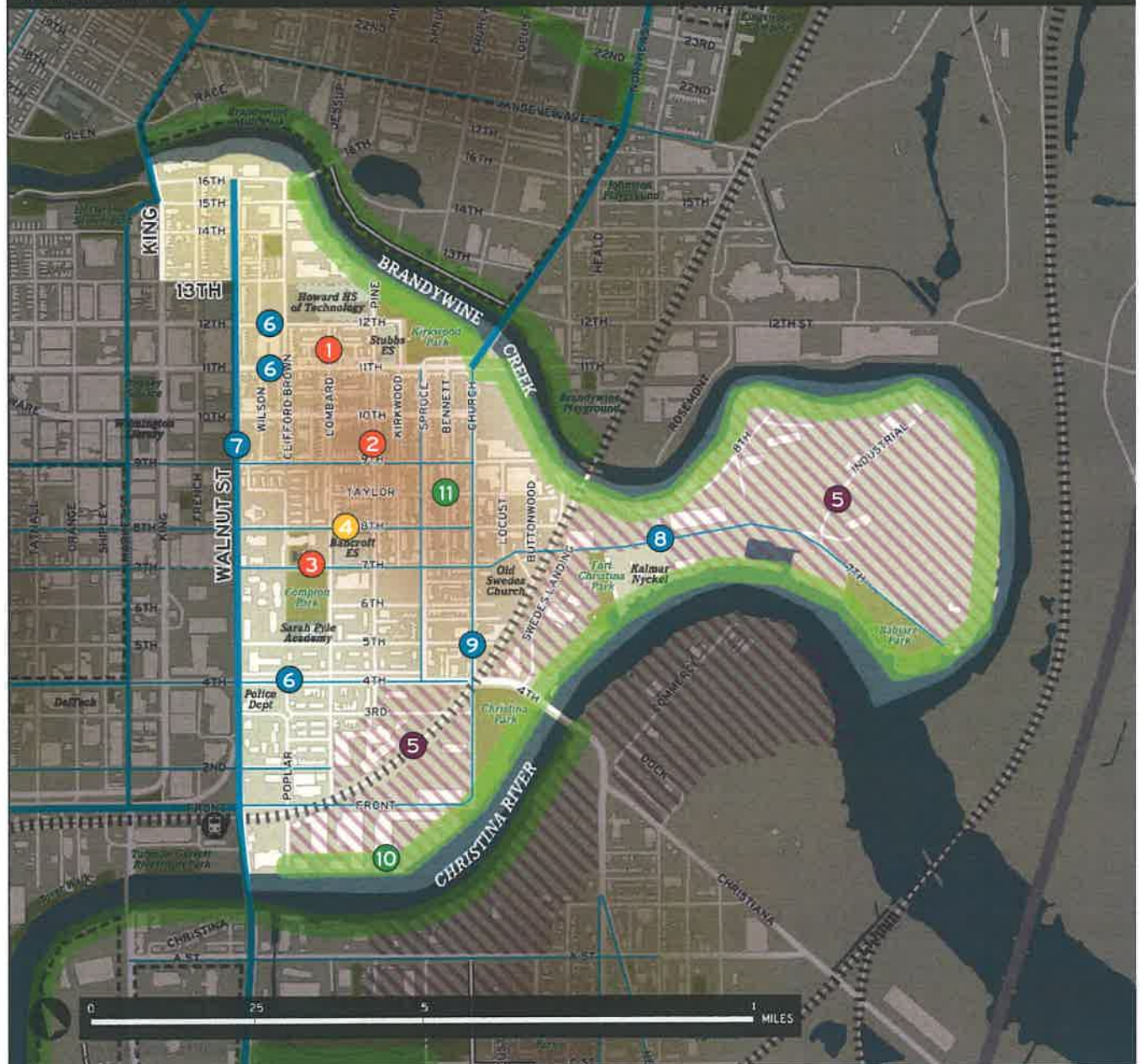


Figure 85 East Side strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

- Gateway corridor
- Main Street corridor
- Neighborhood connector
- Off-street trail

## Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate



### **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties.
- ② Support community engagement through community-based public safety.
- ③ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.

### **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ④ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

### **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑤ Position and promote Front Street Warehouse District and 7th Street Peninsula for neighborhood economic development.

### **Connected City and Region**

- ⑥ Create better multimodal connections on 4th, 11th, 12th, and Walnut Streets.
- ⑦ Redesign Walnut Street to serve as a bridge between East Side and downtown.
- ⑧ Invest in 7th Street as an important east-west connector in the city that links assets from the 7th Street Peninsula to Bancroft Parkway.
- ⑨ Limit truck traffic in neighborhoods.

### **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑩ Extend the off-street trail along the rivers to connect and provide flood mitigation to neighborhoods north and south of the rivers.
- ⑪ Increase green space through yards and vacant lot improvement.



# MIDTOWN BRANDYWINE/CENTRAL

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population increased 34% between 2000-2010, from 1,431 to 1,917, and housing units almost doubled over the same period, from 602 to 1,101. Even more downtown housing has been built since the 2010 census so it is expected there will be even bigger gains seen after the 2020 census.

The area has about half the percentage of children under 18 and adults over 65 than the city as a whole: children made up 13% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 made up 6%, compared with the citywide rates of 24% and 12% respectively.

The area has higher educational attainment than the city as a whole: 48% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, compared to 26% citywide. But poverty rates have increased from 13% in 2000 to 22% in 2010. Unemployment was 7% in both 2010 and 2014, slightly below the city as a whole.

Vacant units made up 21% of all housing units in 2010. More residents rent in this area than in the city as a whole. Renter occupied housing made up 76% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made up 24% in 2010. Cost burden is a concern in for 37% of renters and 23% of owners, below citywide rates of 57% and 43% respectively.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area includes Wilmington's downtown core as well as the residential neighborhood of Midtown Brandywine. Most of the city's new residential and mixed development has occurred here and on the riverfront.

Assets in the area include:

- Major employment hub for both private and public sector jobs
- Concentration of cultural institutions
- Wilmington Amtrak Station
- Park and recreational resources such as Rodney Square and H. Fletcher Brown Park.
- Educational institutions such as Delaware

Technical Community College and Delaware College of Art and Design.

- Historic resources such as Market Street Historic District and numerous sites listed as National Register Historic Places

Challenges: barriers to downtown neighborhoods to the east and west by Walnut Street and surface parking lots

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for Midtown Brandywine/Central residents:

- Safety in the neighborhood (69%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (55%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (44%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Midtown Brandywine/Central:

- 37% of respondents ranked "safety in the community" as good and 31% ranked it average
- 42% of respondents ranked "local shopping, restaurants and entertainment" as good and 37% ranked it average
- 54% of respondents ranked "my neighbors or sense of community" as good and 31% ranked it average

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (54%)
- Downtown revitalization (49%)
- Improved job opportunities (31%)
- New and expanded youth programs (28%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (21%)

## MIDTOWN BRANDYWINE/CENTRAL

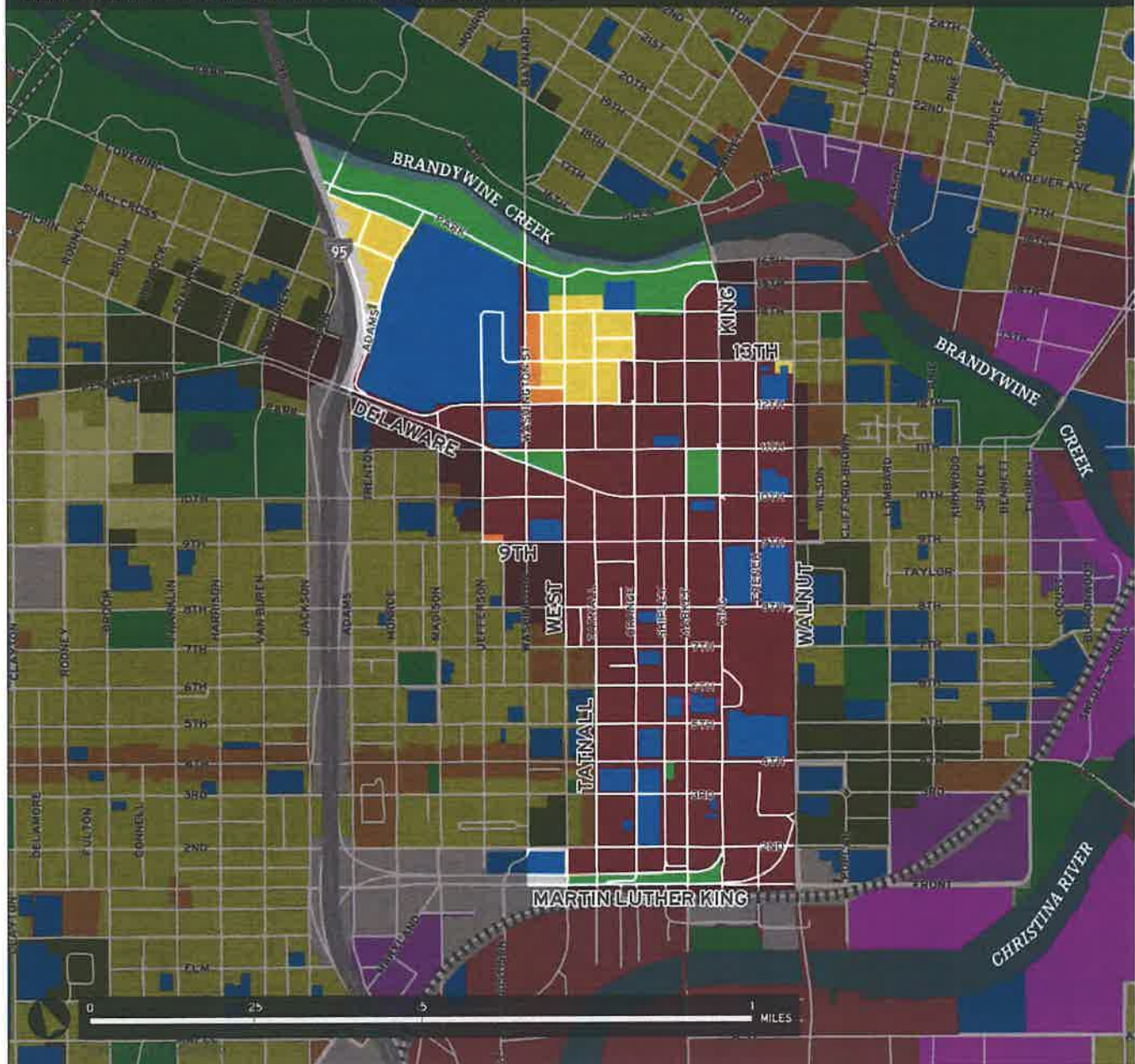


Figure 86 Midtown Brandywine/Central future land use map

Source: City of Wilmington

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                           | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                                  | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                             |
| <span style="color: darkpurple;">■</span> Manufacturing                           | <span style="color: olivegreen;">■</span> High Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: lightpurple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                            | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                         | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure                                       |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                          | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                              |



# MIDTOWN BRANDYWINE/CENTRAL

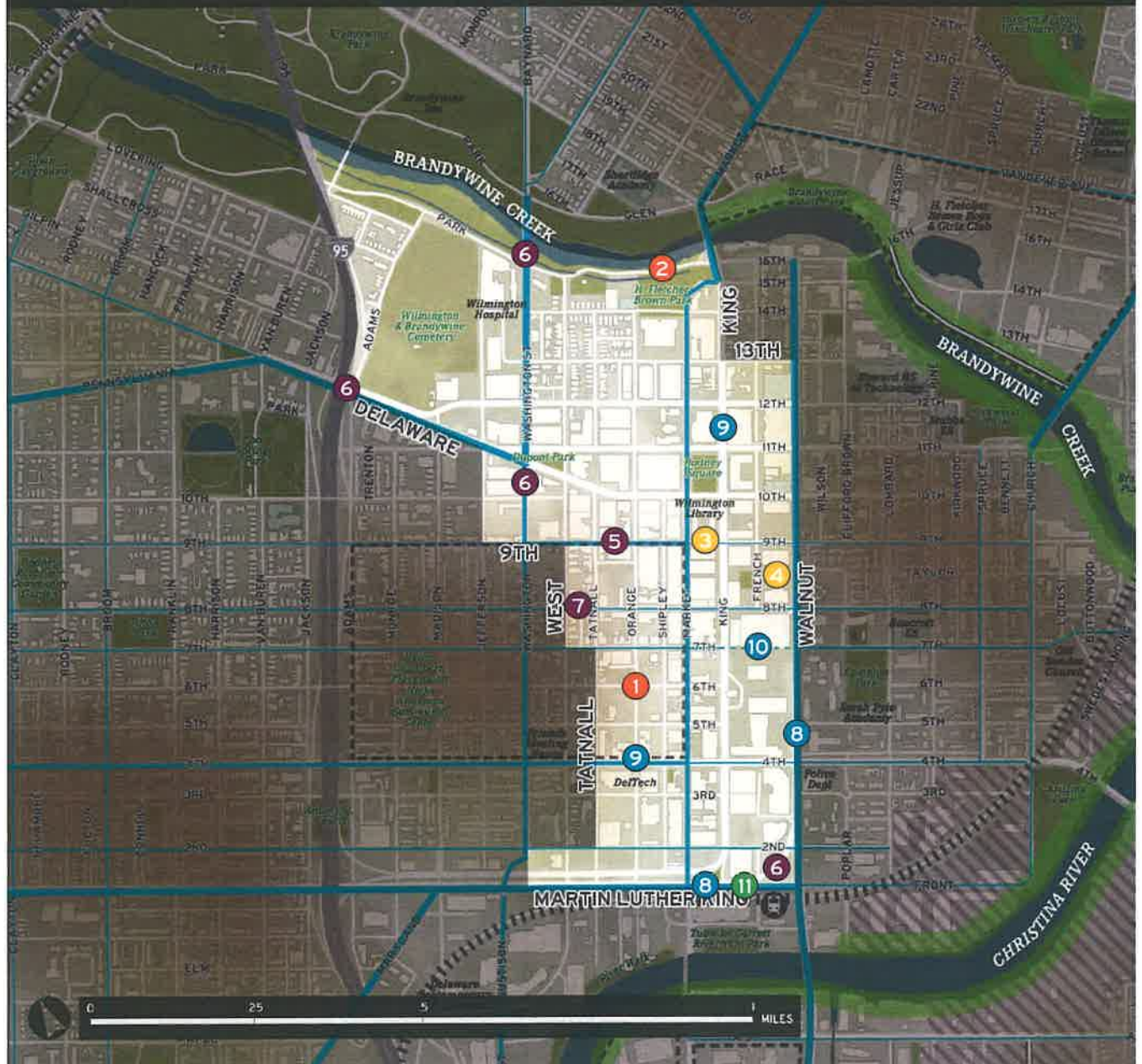


Figure 87 Midtown Brandywine/Central strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

- Gateway corridor
- Main Street corridor
- Neighborhood connector
- Off-street trail

## Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate



## **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas such as surface parking lots and the Creative District.
- ② Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.

## **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ③ Create healthy spaces at public and institutional facilities.
- ④ Pilot healthy living and wellness programs in government and public facilities.

## **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑤ Nurture a creative environment to attract talent.
- ⑥ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.
- ⑦ Make the arts visible.

## **Connected City and Region**

- ⑧ Improve Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and Walnut Street as gateway corridors that connect neighborhoods.
- ⑨ Create better multimodal connections on 4th, 11th, 12th, Market, King and Walnut Streets.
- ⑩ Reconnect 7th Street between Walnut and King with enhanced pedestrian access to connect East Side assets with downtown.

## **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑪ Evaluate flood management options.

# NORTHWEST

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population in the Northwest area declined at about the same rate as the city as a whole, decreasing by 2% from 2000 to 2010. Children under 18 made up 24% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 accounted for 12% of the population.

The percent of people living in poverty in the Northwest area remained steady at a rate of 11% between 2000 to 2010.

The percent of residents in the workforce who were unemployed has doubled. From 2010 to 2014, the unemployment rate increased from 6% to 12%, while the citywide unemployment rate decreased from 11% to 8% during that period.

Approximately 20% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 17% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up just 7% of all housing units in 2010, significantly lower the citywide rate of 16%. Renter occupied housing made up 32% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made 68% in 2010. Approximately 45% of homeowners and 62% of renters were cost-burdened in 2010. Citywide, 32% of homeowners and 54% of renters were cost-burdened during the same period.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The Northwest is a residential neighborhood along the boundary with New Castle County. The neighborhood includes several significant parks and natural features as well as commercial corridors and redevelopment areas.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as Matson Run and Haynes Park.
- Significant redevelopment sites include the new brewery at the Harper Thiel site and Riverside Hospital Site.

- Educational assets such as Harlan Elementary School and PS DuPont Middle School.
- Significant commercial corridors and gateways such as Miller Road and N. Market Street.

Challenges: Some vacancy, housing conditions, multimodal conditions

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for Northwest residents:

- Safety in the community (81%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (48%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (32%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Northwest:

- 39% of respondents ranked “safety in the community” good, 32% rated it average, and 27% rated it poor.
- 55% of respondents ranked “my neighbors or sense of community” good, 26% rated it average, and 19% rated it poor.
- 35% of respondents ranked “local shopping, restaurants and entertainment” good, 29% rated it average, and 35% rated it poor.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (68%)
- Improved job opportunities (39%)
- Downtown revitalization (34%)
- New and expanded youth programs (21%)
- New and renovated housing, and Better sidewalks and safer streets (19% each)

# NORTHWEST

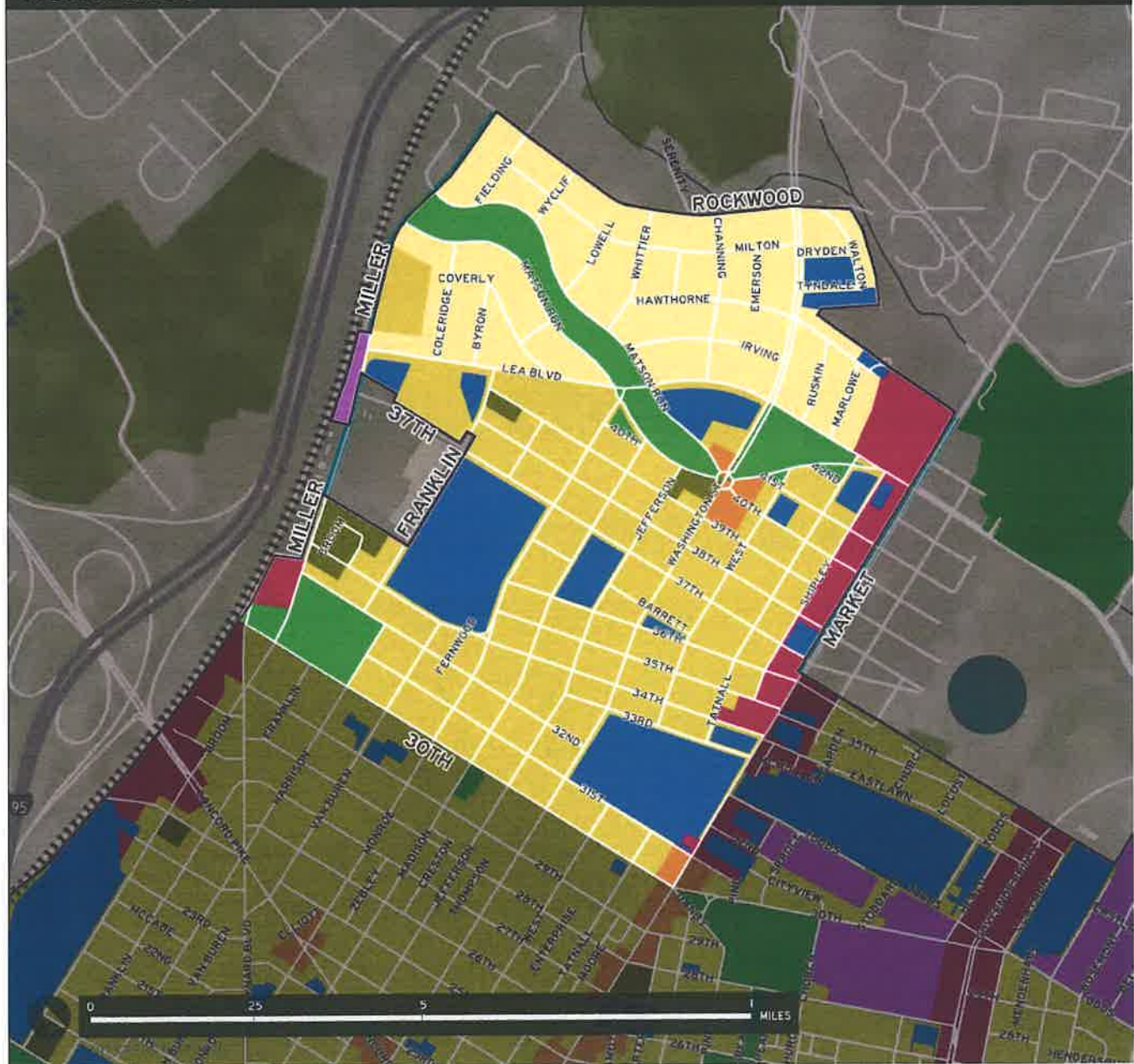


Figure 88 Northwest future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                      | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                             | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                             |
| <span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> Manufacturing                        | <span style="color: brown;">■</span> High Density Residential                            |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                       | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                    | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure                                       |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                      | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                              |



# NORTHWEST



Figure 89 Northwest strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

- Gateway corridor
- Main Street corridor
- Neighborhood connector
- Off-street trail

## Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate

## **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- ② Strengthen neighborhood character by ensuring infill and new construction fit in with basic neighborhood patterns.
- ③ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.

## **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ④ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

## **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑤ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.

## **Connected City and Region**

- ⑥ Work with the County to improve Miller Road as a gateway corridor that better aligns with planned developments along the corridor.
- ⑦ Enhance N. Market Street as gateway corridor.
- ⑧ Enhance Matson Run Park as potential off-street connection with pedestrian and bicycle paths.

# PRICE'S RUN/RIVERSIDE/11TH STREET

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population in the Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street area declined more rapidly than the city as a whole, decreasing by 11% from 2000 to 2010. Children under 18 made up 25% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 accounted for 8% of the population.

The percent of people living in poverty in the Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street area increased between 2000 to 2010 from 28% to 31%.

The percent of residents in the workforce who were unemployed has dropped slightly in recent years. From 2010 to 2014, the unemployment rate decreased from 19% to 18%, though this is far above the citywide unemployment rate of 8% in 2014.

Only 9% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 30% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 17% of all housing units in 2010, slightly higher than the citywide rate of 16%. Renter occupied housing made up 48% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made 52% in 2010. Approximately 32% of homeowners and 66% of renters were cost-burdened in 2010. Citywide, 32% of homeowners and 54% of renters were cost-burdened during the same period.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area includes a series of unique neighborhoods, commercial corridors and gateways located just north of Wilmington's downtown core and the Brandywine Creek and just west of the Amtrak Northeast Corridor.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as Brown-Burton Winchester Park and Kingswood Community Center.
- Family and youth services such as Northeast Service Center, Reeds Refuge, and Boys and Girls Club.

- Commercial and gateway corridors such as North Market Street and Governor Printz Boulevard.
- Significant planned redevelopment projects such as the Riverside Purpose Built community, the Teen Warehouse, and the EPA brownfield area.
- Natural resources such as the Brandywine Creek.

Challenges: Crime, vacancy, flooding in low-lying areas

## Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street residents:

- Safety in the community (68%)
- Local parks and recreational opportunities (30%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (30%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street:

- Only 11% of respondents ranked "safety in the community" good, while 49% ranked it poor.
- 46% of respondents ranked "local parks and recreational opportunities" good, 30% ranked these as average, and 16% ranked these as poor.
- 41% of respondents ranked "my neighbors or sense of community" average, 30% ranked it poor, and 27% ranked it good.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (47%)
- Improved job opportunities (39%)
- New and expanded youth programs (37%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (21%)
- Targeted code enforcement (21%)



## PRICE'S RUN/RIVERSIDE/11TH ST BRIDGE

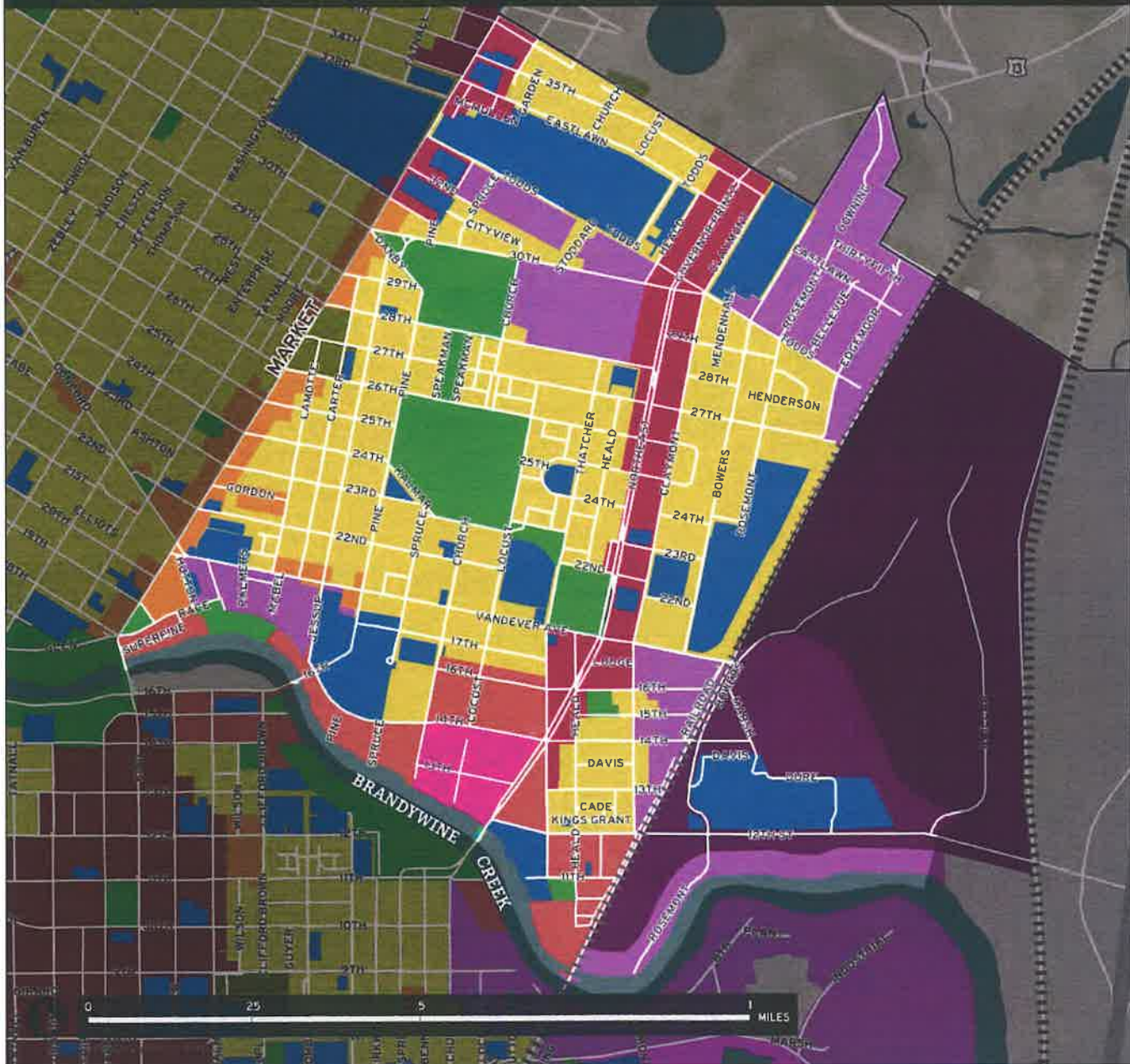


Figure 90 Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                     | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing                         |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                            | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use  |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Manufacturing                         | <span style="color: olivegreen;">■</span> High Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                      | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                     | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure  |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                    | <span style="border: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> City border |



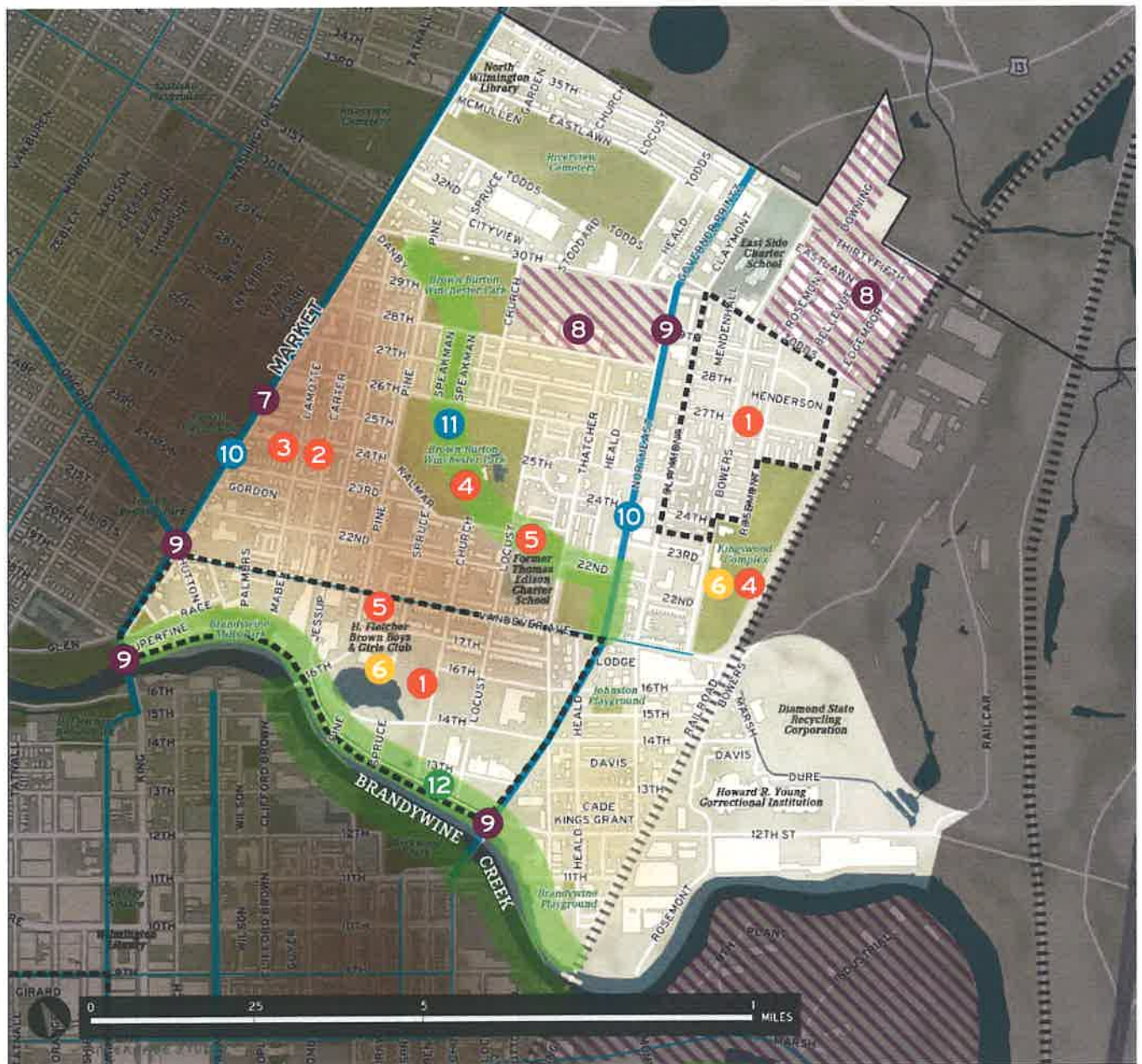


Figure 91 Price's Run/Riverside/11th Street strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

### Connections

- ◆ Gateway corridor
- ◆ Main Street corridor
- ◆ Neighborhood connector
- ◆ Off-street trail

### Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

### Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate

## Strong Safe Neighborhoods

- ① Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- ② Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties.
- ③ Support community engagement through community-based public safety.
- ④ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.
- ⑤ Evaluate former schools buildings for redevelopment.

## Healthy Thriving Communities

- ⑥ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

## Robust Local Economy

- ⑦ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑧ Position and promote former Del Tech Site and Todds Lane Industrial Park as economic opportunities with blue collar jobs.
- ⑨ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

## Connected City and Region

- ⑩ Improve North Market Street and Northeast Boulevard as gateway corridors.
- ⑪ Explore potential off-street trail connection through Brown-Burton Winchester Park to civic assets.

## Sustainable and Resilient City

- ⑫ Evaluate riverfront flood management options that include public waterfront access.



# SOUTHWEST

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population trend in the Southwest area is similar to the city as a whole: it experienced about 2% growth from 2000 to 2010, about 22% of its residents were under 18 in 2010, and about 13% were over 65.

The percent of people living in poverty in Southwest went up between 2000 to 2010 from 13% to 16%.

The rate of residents in the workforce who were unemployed has also gone up. From 2010 to 2014, the unemployment rate went from 6% to 12% - far above the citywide rate of 8% in 2014.

About 44% of area residents ages 25 and over had a college degree or higher in 2014 (significantly higher than the citywide rate of 26%), while 13% had less than a high school degree.

The neighborhood was almost evenly split between homeowners (47%) and renters (53%) in 2010, similar to the citywide rates. About 8% of units were vacant, half the citywide rate. Overall, half of renters were housing-cost burdened in 2010, as were almost a third (28%) of homeowners.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

Southwest is a far west neighborhood bisected by a rail line; it is home to low density and medium residential, as well as commercial areas focused around Lancaster and Greenhill Avenues.

Assets in the area include:

- Woodlawn Library
- Parks and recreational resources such as Bancroft Parkway, Mack Park and Woodlawn Park
- Commercial and gateway corridor along Lancaster Avenue and Union Street

Challenges: Park conditions, commercial corridor scale and multi-modal conditions

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for East Side residents:

- Safety in the community (83%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (53%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (41%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for the East Side:

- 36% of respondents ranked "safety in the community" poor, and 36% rated it average.
- 72% of respondents ranked "my neighbors or sense of community" good.
- 48% of respondents ranked "local shopping, restaurants, and entertainment" good; 21% rated it poor.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (75%)
- Improved job opportunities (35%)
- Downtown revitalization (32%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (28%)
- New and renovated housing (18%)

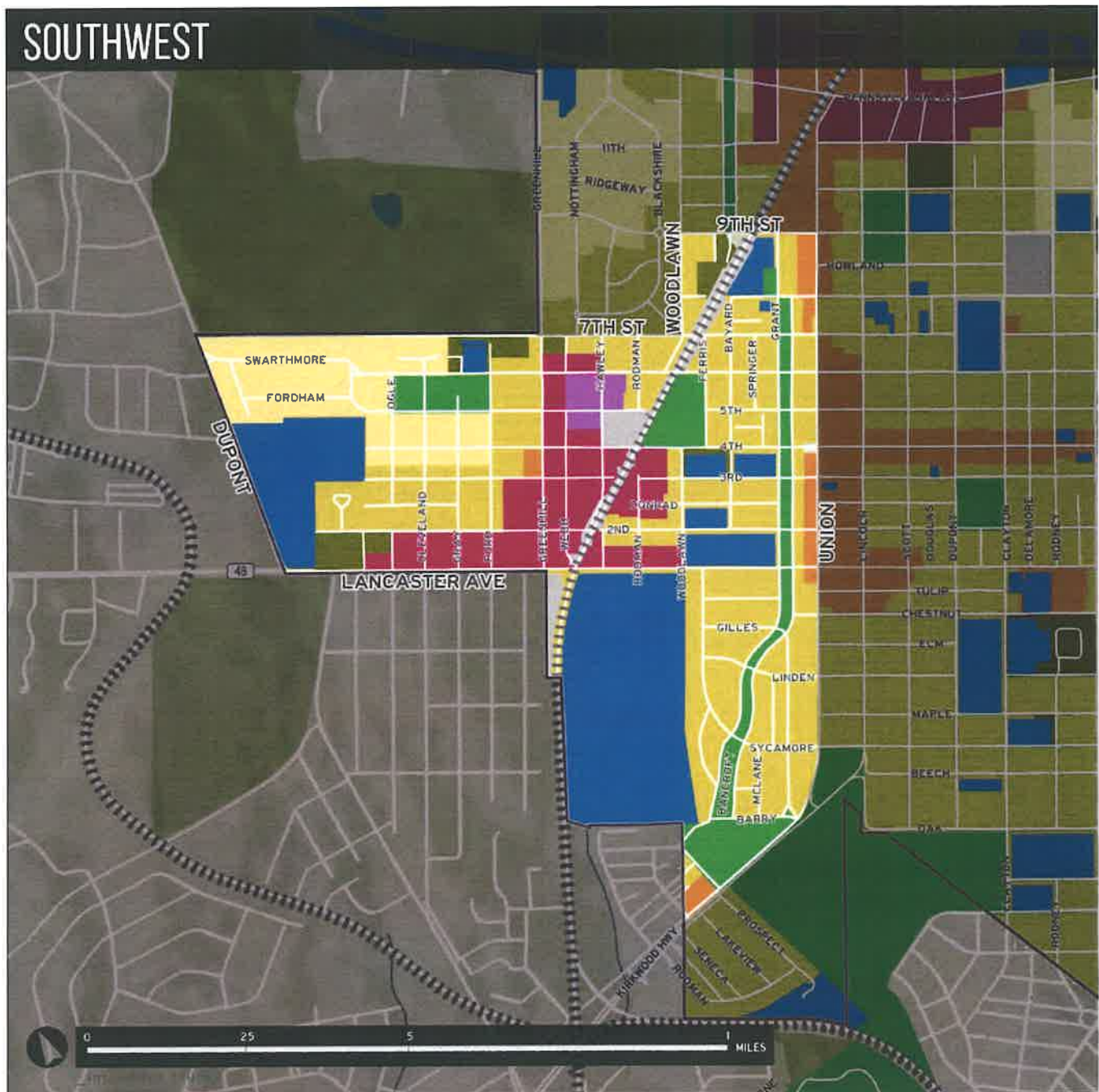


Figure 92 Southwest future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                    | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                           | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                             |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Manufacturing                        | <span style="color: olive;">■</span> High Density Residential                            |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                     | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                    | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure                                       |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                              |

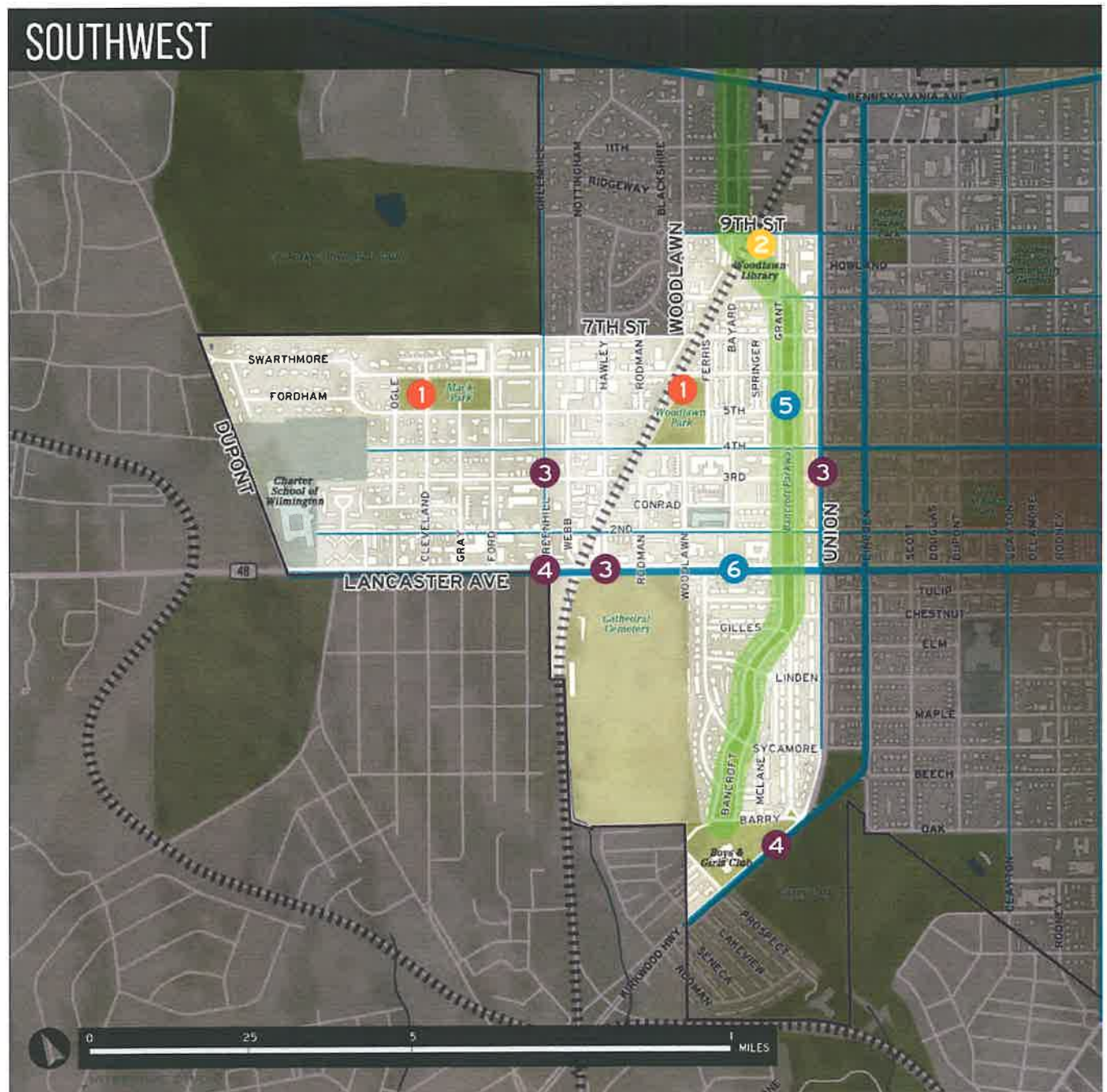


Figure 93 Southwest strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington



## **Strong and Safe Neighborhoods**

- 1 Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.

## **Healthy and Thriving Communities**

- 2 Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

## **Robust Local Economy**

- 3 Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- 4 Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

## **Connected City and Region**

- 5 Enhance Bancroft Parkway as potential off-street connection to parks and other assets with pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- 6 Transform Lancaster Ave as a gateway corridor that is safe and comfortable for all users.

# SOUTH WILMINGTON

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

South Wilmington saw a modest population increase (4.2%) between 2000 and 2010. In 2010 almost a third (28.9%) of residents were under 18, while about 6% were over 65.

The area saw a slight decrease in the percent of residents living below the poverty level from 2000 to 2010 (from 36% to 30%); though the poverty rate was still high. Unemployment in the area increased from 2010 to 2014, from about 7% to about 12%.

Two-thirds of residents ages 25 and over (66.6%) had a college degree or higher in 2014 - a far higher rate than the citywide rate of 26%. Ten percent of residents over 25 had less than a high school degree, lower than the 16% citywide.

The area has very high vacancy: 23% of all housing units were vacant in 2010. Of occupied units, most are home to renters (64%). Thirty-six percent of housing units are owner-occupied.

A very high rate of renters (72%) are housing cost-burdened in South Wilmington. Twenty-three percent of homeowners are cost burdened.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

South Wilmington is a residential and industrial waterfront neighborhood on the south side of the Christina River.

Assets in the area include:

- Christina Crossing Shopping Center
- 76ers Fieldhouse
- Parks and recreational resources such as Barbara Hicks Park, Bradford Street Park, Eden Park, Wetlands Park

Challenges: Flooding and sea level rise, poor tree cover, high concentration of brownfields, vacancy and blight

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for South Wilmington residents:

- Safety in the community (76%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (59%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (29%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for the South Wilmington:

- 36% of respondents ranked “safety in the community” poor, and 32% rated it average.
- 44% of respondents ranked “local shopping, restaurants, and entertainment” good, and 36% rated it average.
- 39% of respondents ranked “my neighbors or sense of community” good, and 39% ranked it average.

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (47%)
- Improved job opportunities (33%)
- Downtown revitalization (31%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (29%)
- New and expanded youth programs (23%)

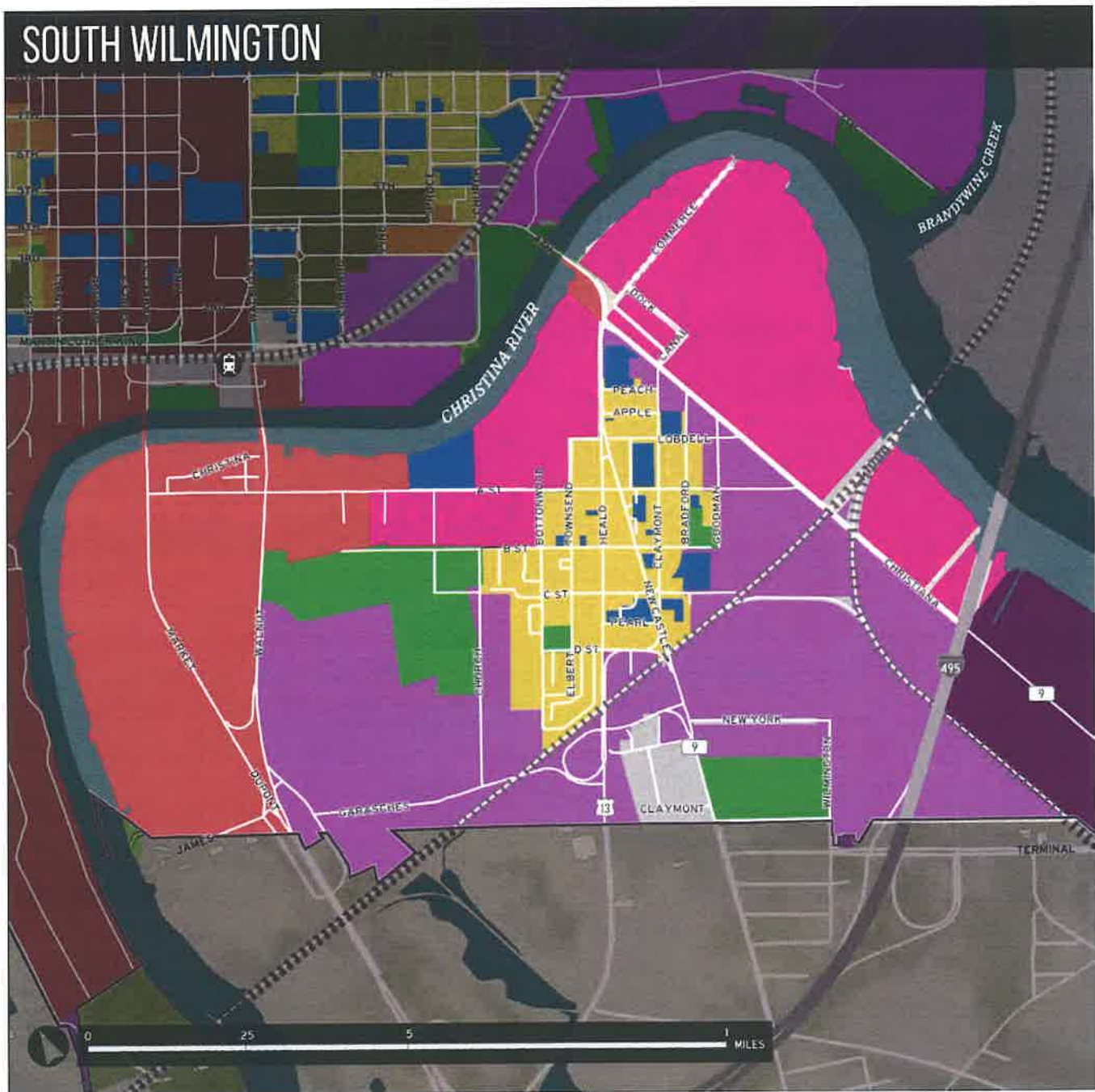


Figure 94 South Wilmington future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                          | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing                     |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                                 | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use   |
| <span style="color: darkpurple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> High Density Residential  |
| <span style="color: lightpurple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential   |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                           | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential   |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                        | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure   |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                         | <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> City border |



# SOUTH WILMINGTON

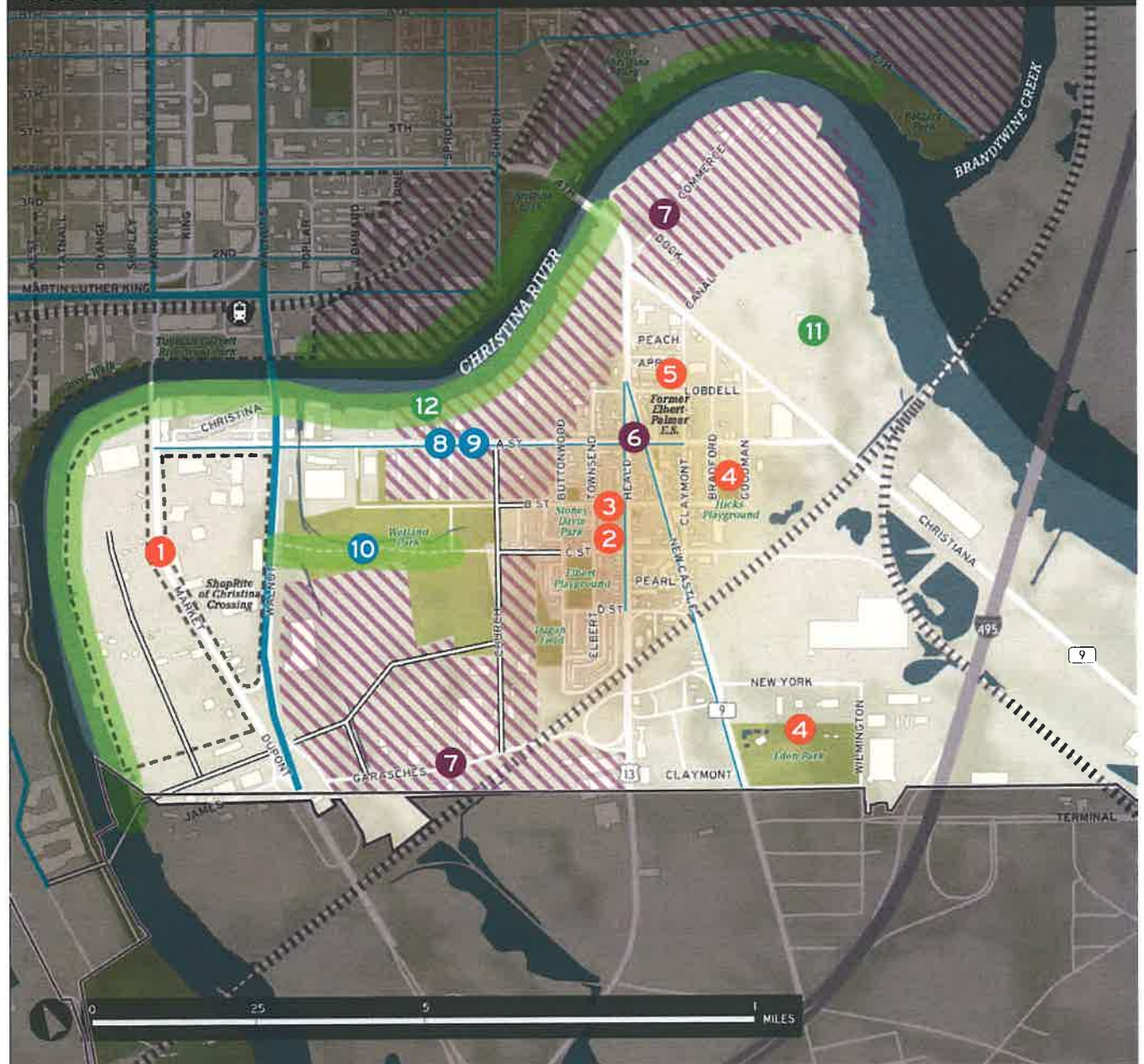




Figure 95 South Wilmington strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

## Connections

-  Gateway corridor
-  Main Street corridor
-  Neighborhood connector
-  Off-street trail

## Areas

-  Major areas of change
-  Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

-  Preserve/strengthen
-  Stabilize/rehabilitate

### **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- ② Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties.
- ③ Support community engagement through community-based public safety
- ④ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers
- ⑤ Evaluate former schools buildings for redevelopment

### **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑥ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑦ Position and promote the Commerce Street/South Waterfront and Garasches Lane as economic opportunities with blue collar jobs.

### **Connected City and Region**

- ⑧ Emphasize A Street as a neighborhood connector that supports safe and comfortable travel between local destinations.
- ⑨ Limit truck traffic in neighborhoods.
- ⑩ Emphasize wetland park trails as an alternative pedestrian and bicycle route between Southbridge and other destinations.

### **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑪ Harden infrastructure vulnerable to sea level rise and extreme weather events
- ⑫ Evaluate flood management options that include public waterfront access.

# WEST CENTER CITY

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population declined 12% between 2000-2010, from 4,824 to 4,234. Children under 18 made up 29% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 made up 10%, similar to citywide rates.

The area has higher poverty and unemployment rates than the city as a whole. The percent of the population living below the poverty level increased from 29% in 2000 to 42% in 2010. The percent of those in the labor force who were unemployed remained steady between 2010 and 2014 at 17% and 18%, compared to a decrease in the citywide rate from 11% to 8% over the same period.

Educational attainment is lower than the city as a whole: 18% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 25% had less than a high school diploma. Citywide, 26% have a college degree or higher and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 19% of all housing units in 2010. Renter occupied housing made up 73% of all occupied housing, compared to 54% citywide, while owner occupied housing made up 27% in 2010. A high percentage of renters are cost-burdened (71%), compared to the citywide rate of 54%, but the rate is lower for owners in the area (21%) than citywide (34%).

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area is mainly residential predominantly consisting of rowhouses, that is adjacent to the downtown core and includes the emerging Creative District that bridges the downtown and West Center City.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as William “Hicks” Anderson Community Center, Helen Chambers Playground, Madison Street Playground.
- Historic resources such as Trinity Vicinity and Quaker Hill Historic Districts, and Friends Meeting House.
- Adams Four Shopping Center

Challenges: crime, poverty, vacancy, barriers to adjacent neighborhoods such as surface parking lots and I-95

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for West Center City residents:

- Safety in the neighborhood (82%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (54%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (54%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for West Center City:

- 56 % of respondents ranked “Safety in the community” as poor and 21% ranked it average
- 40% of respondents ranked “Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment” as poor, 37% ranked it as good, and 21% ranked it average
- 37% of respondents ranked “My neighbors or sense of community” as average and 30% ranked it as good

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (64%)
- New and expanded youth programs (36%)
- Improved job opportunities (36%)
- Downtown revitalization (29%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (27%)



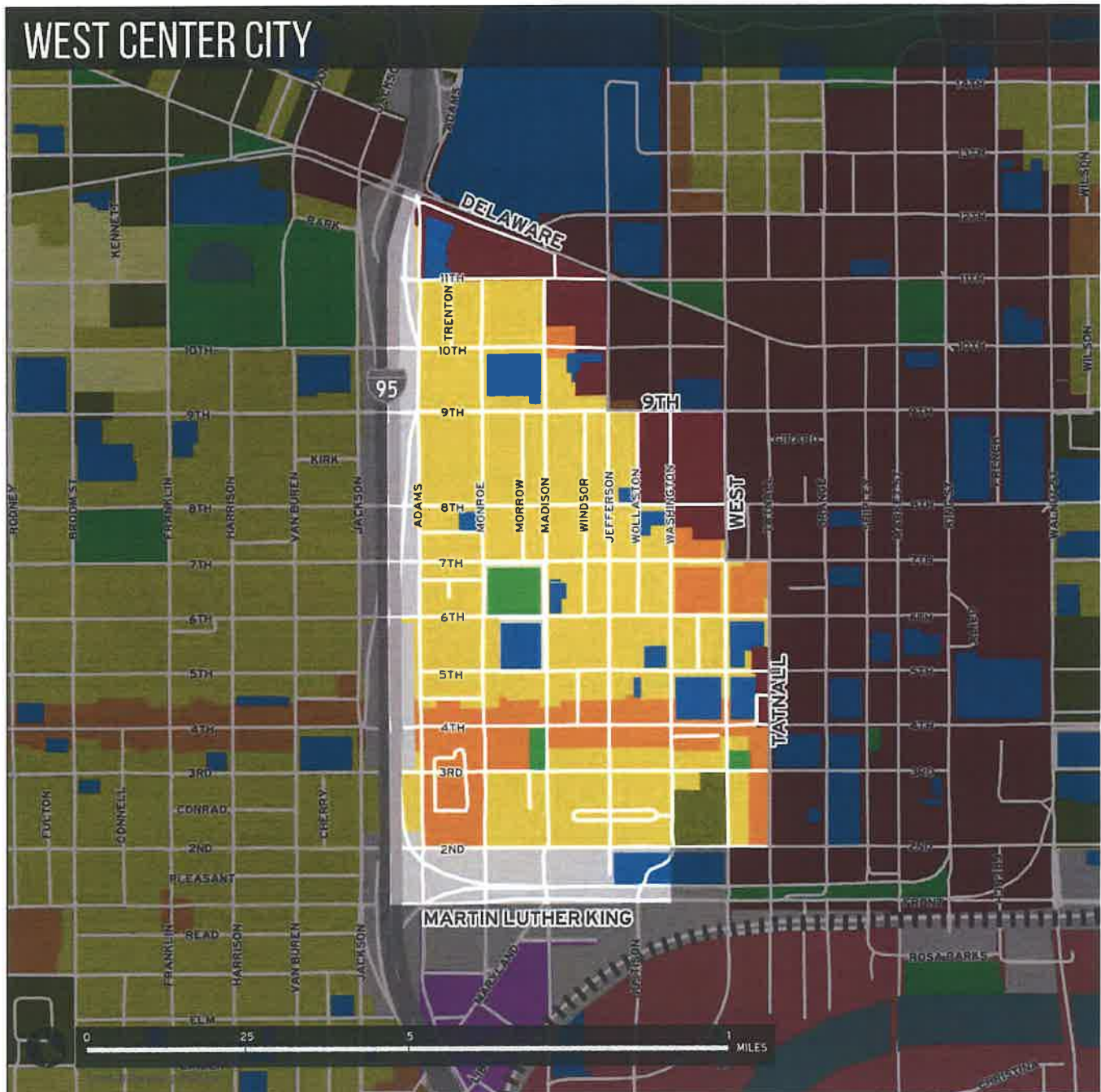


Figure 96 West Center City future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                          | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                                 | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                             |
| <span style="color: darkpurple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: olivegreen;">■</span> High Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: lightpurple;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                           | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                       |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                        | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Infrastructure                                       |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use                         | <span style="border: 1px solid white;">□</span> City border                              |

# WEST CENTER CITY

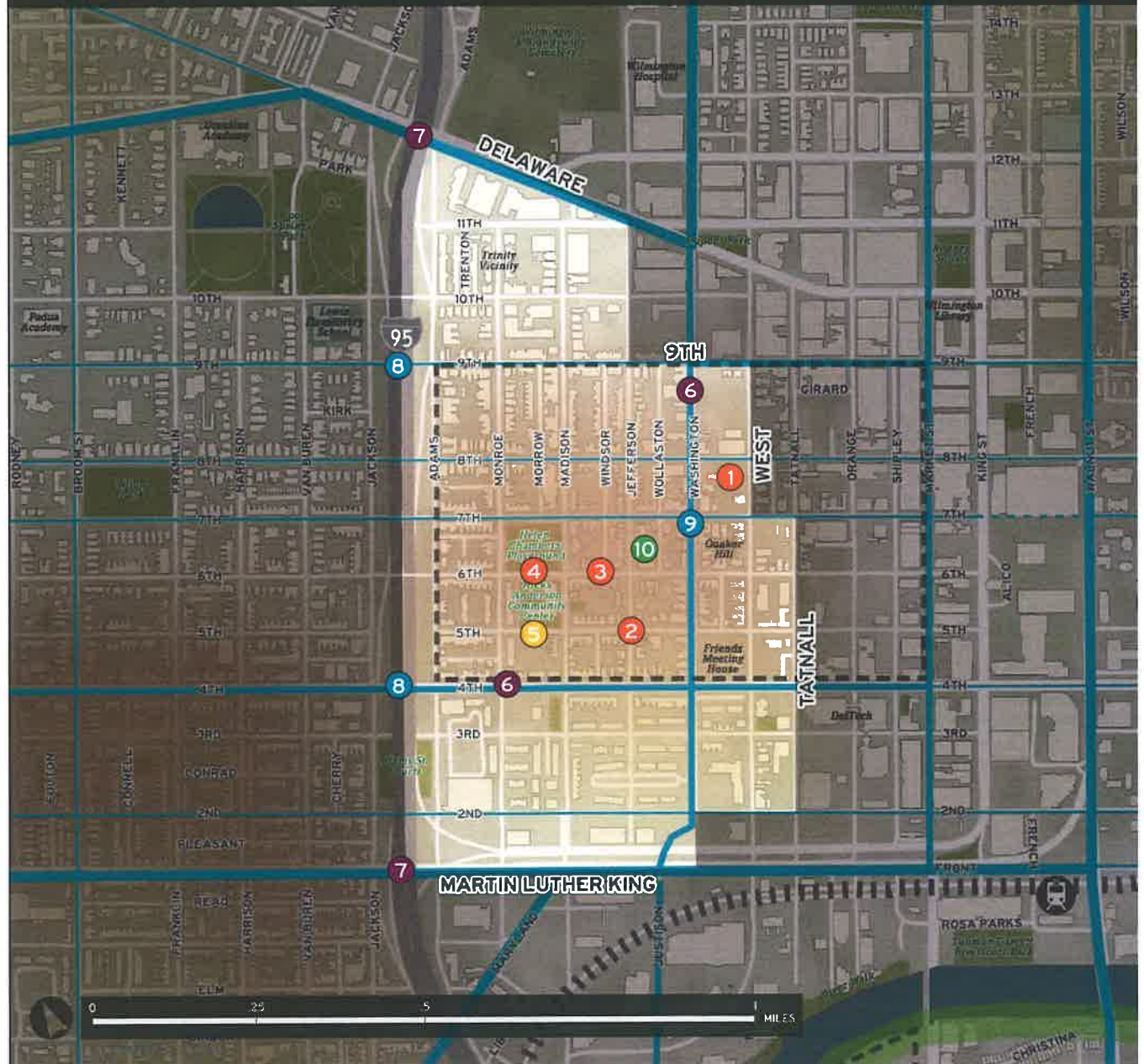




Figure 97 West Center City strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington



## Connections

-  Gateway corridor
-  Main Street corridor
-  Neighborhood connector
-  Off-street trail

## Areas

-  Major areas of change
-  Economic opportunities

## Housing/neighborhood

-  Preserve/strengthen
-  Stabilize/rehabilitate

## **Strong Safe Neighborhoods**

- ① Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- ② Continue Neighborhood Stabilization Program in critical areas of transition, prevent nuisance properties, and stabilize vacant properties.
- ③ Support community engagement through community-based public safety.
- ④ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.

## **Healthy Thriving Communities**

- ⑤ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

## **Robust Local Economy**

- ⑥ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑦ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

## **Connected City and Region**

- ⑧ Improve connections across I-95 to the West Side.
- ⑨ Highlight Washington Street as a great street and key corridor that bridges West Center City and the Creative District through private and public investment along the corridor and improved street design.

## **Sustainable and Resilient City**

- ⑩ Increase green space through yards and vacant lot improvement.



# WEST SIDE

## Overview of Key Issues

### Key demographic characteristics

The population declined 4% between 2000-2010, from 11,350 to 10,923.

Children under 18 made up 19% of the population in 2010, and adults over 65 made up 12%.

The area has a strong Hispanic/Latinx community, making up 29% of the population.

In 2010, 31% of the population lived below the poverty level (of those 37% were children under 18) and 13% of the labor force was unemployed.

Educational attainment is lower than the city as a whole: 19% of the population over 25 had a college degree or higher in 2014 estimates, while 25% had less than a high school diploma.

Vacant units made up 14% of all housing units in 2010. Renter occupied housing made up 58% of all occupied housing, while owner occupied housing made up 42% in 2010. Cost burden (paying 30% or more of household income on housing-related costs) is a concern for a high 62% of renters and 38% of owners.

### Key physical characteristics: assets and challenges

The area is mainly residential and consists mainly of rowhouses, as well as some single-family detached homes and apartment buildings.

Assets in the area include:

- Park and recreational resources such as Cool Springs Park, Father Tucker Memorial Park, William Judy Johnson Memorial Park, Rodney Reservoir and community garden, Tilton Park.
- Historic resources such as Cool Spring, Delaware Avenue and Eighth Street/Tilton Park Historic Districts.
- Little Italy and Union Street

Challenges: crime, poverty, vacancy, barriers to adjacent neighborhoods such as surface parking lots and I-95

### Summary of Key Input

Which qualities are the most important to you in a neighborhood? (participants were asked to choose three)

Top three most important qualities in a neighborhood for West Side residents:

- Safety in the neighborhood (78%)
- My neighbors or sense of community (60%)
- Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment (34%)

How survey participants ranked these qualities for the West Side:

- 46% of respondents ranked "Safety in the community" as poor and 36% ranked it average
- 57% of respondents ranked "My neighbors or sense of community" as good and 24% ranked it average
- 47% of respondents ranked "Local shopping, restaurants and entertainment" as good, 28% ranked it as average, and 25% ranked it poor

What improvements do you think would make the greatest impact on quality of life in Wilmington? (participants were asked to choose three responses)

- Improved public safety (68%)
- Improved job opportunities (35%)
- New and expanded youth programs (33%)
- Better sidewalks and safer streets (27%)
- Downtown revitalization (26%)

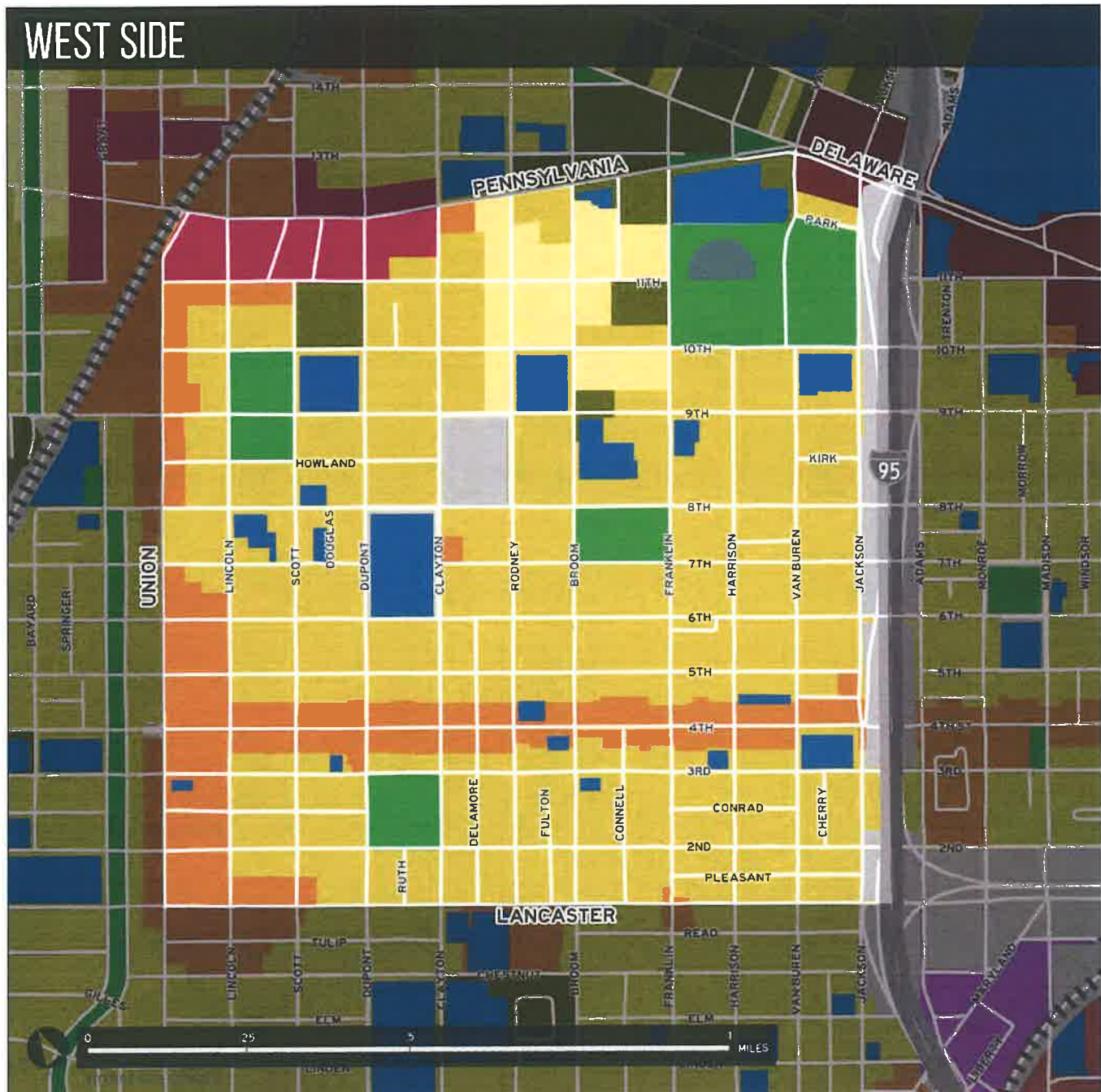


Figure 98 West Side future land use map  
Source: City of Wilmington

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks & Open Space                      | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutions                             | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Neighborhood Mixed Use                          |
| <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Manufacturing                          | <span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> High Density Residential                     |
| <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Mixed Commercial/ Light Manufacturing | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium Density Residential                      |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Regional Commercial                       | <span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential                    |
| <span style="color: darkred;">■</span> Downtown Mixed Use                    | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Infrastructure                                    |
| <span style="color: lightcoral;">■</span> Waterfront Mixed Use               | <span style="border: 1px solid black;">□</span> City border                           |



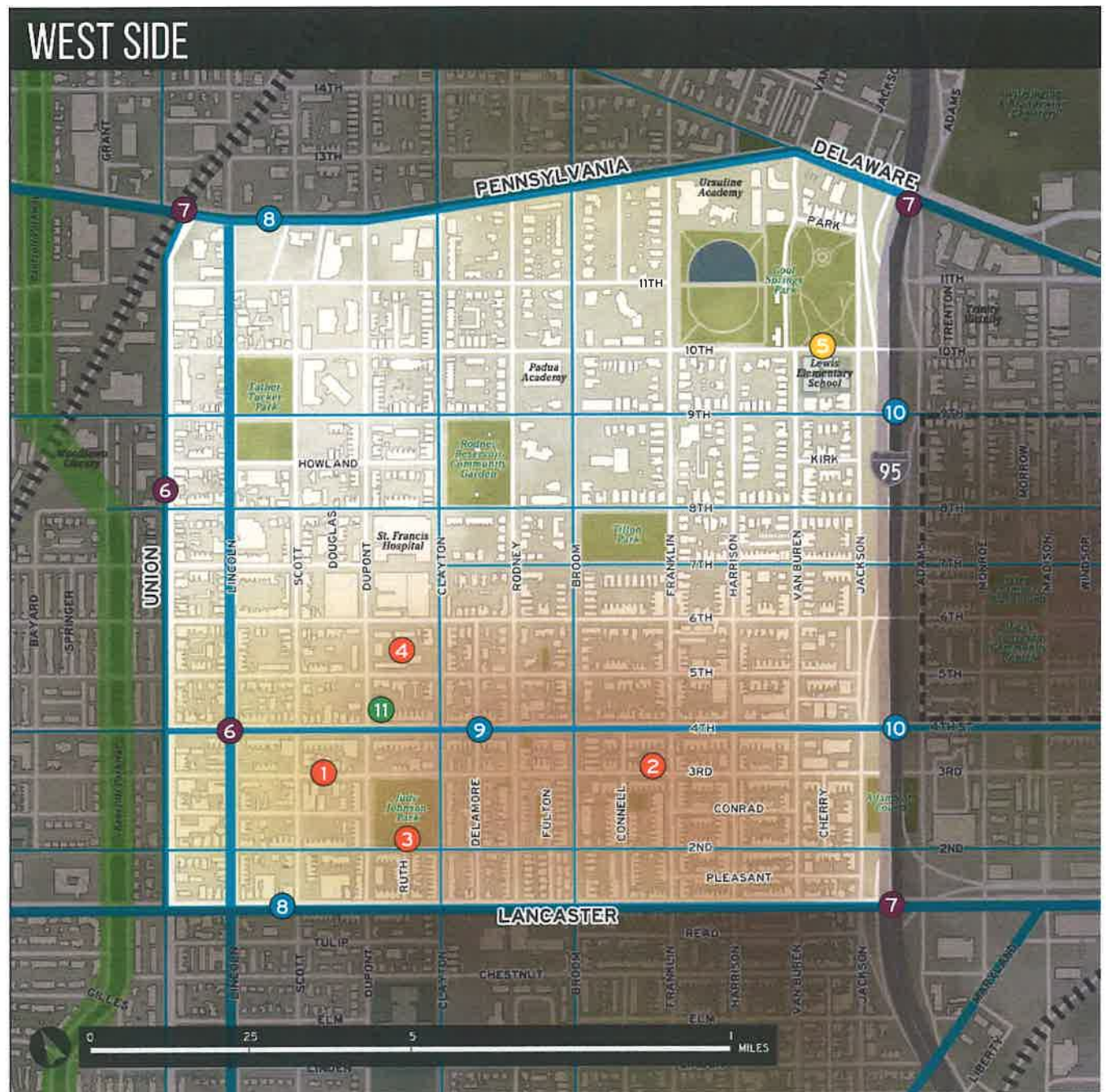


Figure 99 West Side strategies map  
Source: City of Wilmington

### Connections

- Gateway corridor
- Main Street corridor
- Neighborhood connector
- Off-street trail

### Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

### Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate



## Strong and Safe Neighborhoods

- ① Prevent nuisance properties and stabilize vacant properties.
- ② Support community engagement through community-based public safety.
- ③ Implement an equitable investment strategy for civic spaces like parks, pools, libraries and community centers.
- ④ Strengthen neighborhood character by ensuring infill and new construction fit in with basic neighborhood patterns.

## Healthy and Thriving Communities

- ⑤ Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

## Robust Local Economy

- ⑥ Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- ⑦ Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

## Connected City and Region

- ⑧ Improve Lancaster and Pennsylvania Avenues as gateway corridors.
- ⑨ Improve 4th Street as Main Street corridor that connects neighborhoods.
- ⑩ Improve connections across I-95 to West Center City and downtown.

## Sustainable and Resilient City

- ⑪ Increase green space through yards and vacant lot improvement.



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND COORDINATION

The City of Wilmington strives to maintain strong intergovernmental relationships with adjacent communities, New Castle County, and State agencies, such as the Delaware Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and the Office of State Planning Coordination. The City coordinates with these agencies with regard to adjacent areas, corridors, transportation, waterways and open space.

Representatives from the following County, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and State agencies have been an integral part of the Comprehensive Plan process:

- DART Delaware Transit Corporation
- Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
- Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)
- Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
- New Castle County Department of Land Use
- Office of State Planning Coordination
- Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

Representatives from DART, New Castle County Department of Land Use, Office of State Planning Coordination, and WILMAPCO were members of the Comprehensive Plan steering committee. DelDOT and DNREC were consulted through interviews and also participated in focus groups. DHSS participated in focus groups. In addition to serving on the steering committee, representatives from the New Castle County Department of Land Use were consulted with regard to county planning and areas adjacent to the city.



## OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### Strategies for State Policies and Spending

The Comprehensive Plan is in alignment with the **2015 Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending** which coordinates land use decision-making in the state in a manner that makes best use of natural and fiscal resources. The State has created five land use levels based on an evaluation of data concerning development and redevelopment, land preservation or agricultural development, and land considered “out of play” that cannot be developed. The five levels are:

- Levels 1 and 2: these are generally municipalities, towns or urban/urbanizing places in counties and the primary focus of State policies and investment to support growth and economic development activities that promote higher densities and mixed-use development.
- Level 3: these are areas that are in the long-term growth plans of counties or municipalities, or are adjacent to or intermingled with fast-growing areas categorized as levels 1 or 2.
- Level 4: these are areas where state policies will support agriculture, protection of natural resources, and open space activities.
- Out of play: these are publicly owned lands, private conservation lands, lands for which serious legal constraints on development are identified, and lands in some form of permanent open space protection.







Almost all of Wilmington is categorized as level 1 or 2, except for natural features which are considered “out of play.”

### Adjacent areas

An analysis of the future land uses of adjacent communities is mostly in alignment with the city’s future land use plan where those land uses are residential or commercial. A review of New Castle County future land uses, and coordination with the New Castle County Department of Land Use, resulted in highlighted areas of adjacent land uses that are of interest to the City of Wilmington along the boundary of the City in South Wilmington where future land uses will see the greatest change from general and heavy industrial uses to mixed use and light industrial/office for reasons detailed further as an area for intergovernmental coordination below.

[illegible]

Figure 100 **Delaware** strategies for state policies and spending map, 2015  
Source: Delaware FirstMap

-  Investment Level 1
-  Investment Level 2
-  Investment Level 3
-  Investment Level 4
-  Out of Play
-  City border



# FUTURE LAND USE OF ADJACENT AREAS

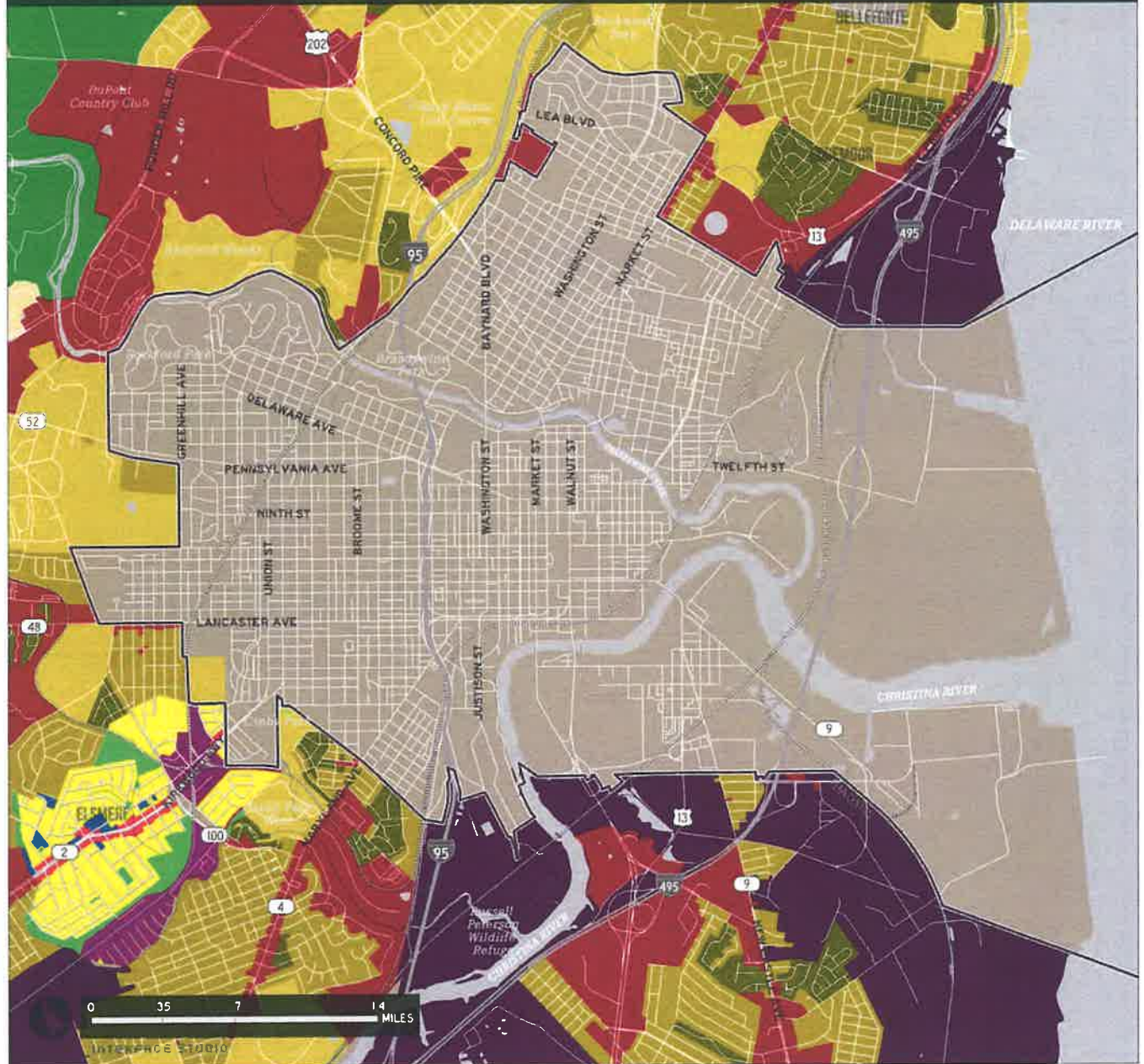


Figure 101 Future land use of adjacent areas map  
Source: (Elsmere) University of Delaware; (NCC) New Castle County

## Elsmere

- Residential
- Commercial
- General Industry
- Institutional
- Parks and Recreation

## New Castle County

- Commercial / Office / Industrial Development Area
- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Very Low Density Residential

- Resource & Rural Preservation
- Hi Zoned Land
- Municipal Land
- City border



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION STRATEGY

Strategies for intergovernmental coordination include identifying planning issues for joint planning and coordination, such as joint planning agreements, memorandums of understanding, partnerships between the City and neighboring governments.

### Annexation

Annexation is of concern for the City in that the annexation process for the City of Wilmington differs greatly from every other municipality in the State. The process for the City is quite onerous in that, not only does a property owner who elects to be within the City limits have to go through a rather rigorous City process, they must also go through a separate and, again, rigorous process, in which New Castle County government must also approve the annexation request. The County's process, generally does not start until after the City's process is complete meaning it can also take twice as long as any other municipality. It is unclear why, at this point in time, the City of Wilmington is treated differently than all other municipalities in the State. The City will endeavor to have this law changed so that the City is treated as all other municipalities are treated. With that said, until the City is permitted to follow the same annexation rules that all other municipalities follow and if annexation is deemed an appropriate course of action, the City will work closely with New Castle County as we have done in the past to make the process as smooth as possible.

The City is not currently considering any future areas for annexation. The City's policy is to consider annexation requests on a case by case basis. We note that should there be an annexation in the future the plan will be amended accordingly.

### Joint planning and coordination / Position on development of adjacent areas and expansion of boundaries

#### CORRIDORS

Route 9 plan: This corridor was the subject of the WILMAPCO Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, which made recommendations to route truck traffic away from city neighborhoods such as Southbridge. These recommendations as well as evaluating the residential zoning discrepancy south of Eden Park are issues for joint planning and coordination.

Route 202 plan: The County is initiating the Concord Pike (Route 202) Corridor Master Plan. This corridor is an important gateway into the city. Concord Avenue in the city has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a gateway corridor, and the neighborhoods along it are targeted for housing and neighborhood stabilization.

Route 48 and 52: Both of these corridors have been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as gateway corridors. These corridors are an opportunity for joint planning to look at important redevelopment opportunities, such as Barley Mills and the former Pathmark, and incentives for gateways.

7th Street Peninsula and the 12th Street area studies: Along the Brandywine Creek the City partnered with WILMAPCO recently on studies affecting the 7th Street Peninsula and the 12th Street area. These studies are intended to make recommendations to improve access between Northeast Wilmington and the 7th Street Peninsula and the Brandywine River Waterfront and downtown Wilmington Central Business District as well as promote economic development opportunities among other considerations. These studies can be found on the WILMAPCO website: <http://www.wilmapco.org/>

## **WATERWAYS**

Christina River, Brandywine Creek, Delaware River: Issues for joint planning and coordination concerning these waterways include scenic byways, stormwater runoff, water quality, flood mitigation, sea level rise and recreation.

## **AREAS**

The following areas are important areas of transition and coordination between the City and County.

Miller Road properties in the County that includes the Miller Road Shopping Center: These New Castle County properties are adjacent to new and proposed development in the City; the redeveloped Harper-Thiel site which now houses a brewery and restaurant, and the former Riverside Hospital site, which is slated for redevelopment with upscale apartments. In order to capitalize on this positive change, the Miller Road shopping center is an area where a joint effort can be applied to improve curb appeal through code enforcement and connectivity by continuing sidewalks along Miller Road.

South Wilmington waterfront and South Market Street: The east bank of the Christina River is poised to undergo great change over the next decade of this Comprehensive Plan. Like its counterpart on the west bank of the river, the South Wilmington waterfront is envisioned as a mixed-use area that takes advantage of its waterfront location while also developing in a manner that is resilient to flood and sea level rise. Other developments in this area that will undoubtedly influence future development in a direction different than the current manufacturing zoning in the City and industrial zoning in the County include the South Wilmington Wetland Park and the new 76er multi-use facility along South Market Street adjacent to the County. This area presents a tremendous opportunity for joint work between the City and County to consider modernizing the zoning and potentially developing a sub-area plan that will benefit the City and County in seeing the area developed with mixed use development projects to compliment these other new projects.

The City will also look for other opportunities to work in coordination with adjacent governmental bodies.



Figure 102 Areas of intergovernmental coordination map  
Source: City of Wilmington, New Castle County, Interface Studio

Corridors  
Areas





# 5

# IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will involve not only the various departments of the City of Wilmington, but also partners in New Castle County and State agencies, nonprofits, the private sector, and the communities.

The implementation matrices in the following pages lay out the timeframes and partners for each plan recommendation as well as priorities as determined by the City of Wilmington with input from the steering committee and public.

Along with the implementation matrices, a major aspect of plan implementation mandated in state code is a comparison of the proposed land uses in the Future Land Use Map with the current Zoning Map. If there are inconsistencies between these maps then the City will have 18 months from plan adoption, to make them consistent with one another most likely by rezoning properties and/or by updating the actual zoning code.

## TOP KEY CITYWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTICIPANTS WERE EACH ASKED TO "SPEND" A TOTAL OF \$100 ON A LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS. THEY WERE GIVEN A \$50 BILL, A \$20 BILL, TWO \$10 BILLS, AND TWO \$5 BILLS.

### TOP VOTED RECOMMENDATIONS IN ORDER OF TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT

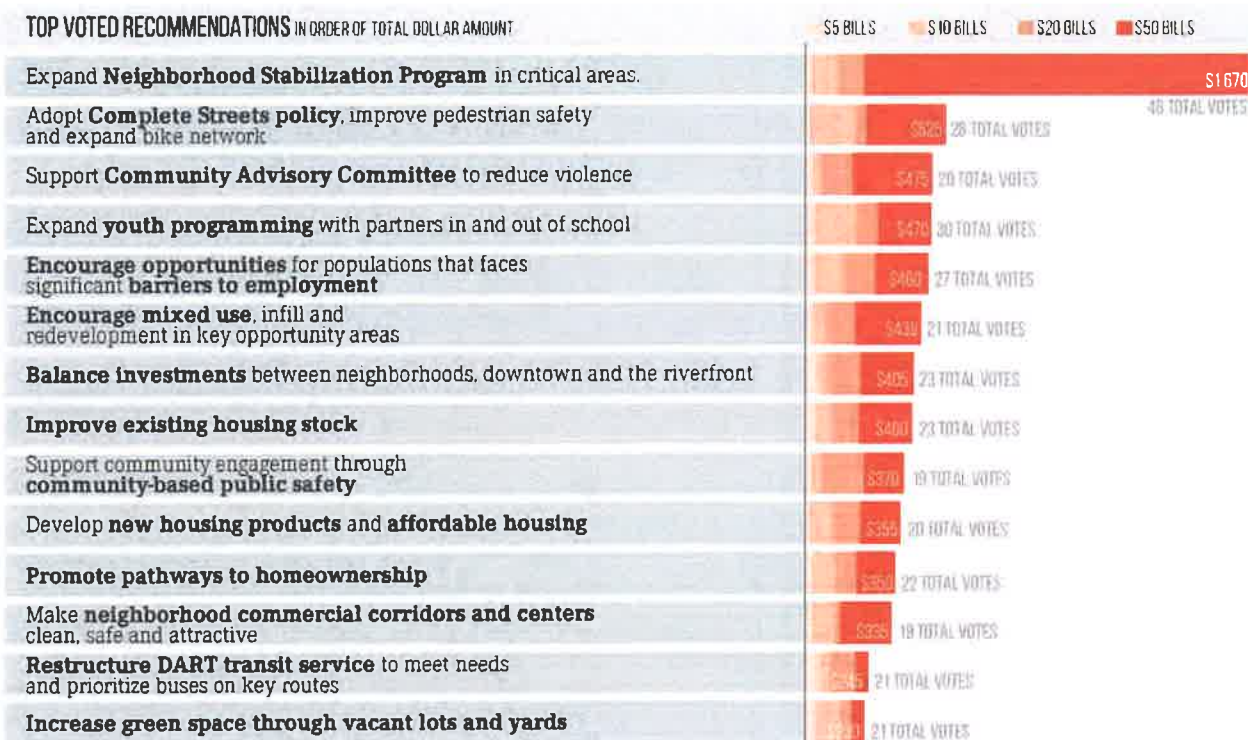


Figure 103 Public input summary: Top key citywide recommendations  
Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018. Source: Interface Studio

## POSITIONING CITY GOVERNMENT TO SERVE AND PARTNER WITH A WIDE RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS

While implementation of plan recommendations will involve a combination of public, private, non-profit, and grass-roots organizations, the following actions are important to ensure that city government is an efficient and responsive implementation partner. In all efforts, the City should support innovation to overcome silos, find and vet best practices, and develop ideas for better government and partnerships.

**“It’s great for insiders but hard for outsiders.”**

**“Ultimately, the city’s not going to grow unless you get outside investment... we need to create a system that is welcoming.”**

- **Use technology and innovation to create efficiency and transparency in government.** In order to best serve residents and businesses, and compete with other urban centers for new ones, the City should implement processes that support municipal growth. These include a centralized GIS system tied to the long-term goal of expanding the City’s mapping data and technology. By streamlining access to data, Wilmington can better support small businesses and entrepreneurs who need City data in order to make investment decisions. In addition, supporting innovation through the Best Practices/Innovation position in Mayor’s Office will help to coordinate departments and help implement best practices for better government. **[\*\*\*city priority]**
- **Continue to streamline the development review process.** The difficulty and uncertainty of municipal processes is a significant deterrent to growth. The City should continue to streamline its development review process, including continued documentation and digitization of the process such as the OnBase system being deployed in the Department of Public Works. In addition, more consistency and predictability in the review process will mitigate existing concerns among Wilmington developers about investing in the city due to the uncertainty and inconsistency of review process outcomes. The City should also identify additional venues for interdepartmental and inter-organizational collaboration. This should include a review and update to various City codes including our Zoning and Subdivision codes. **[\*\*\*city priority]**
- **Develop standard operating procedures.** Across all City departments, standard operating procedures should be in place to ensure that a broad base of knowledge and capabilities carry over between staff to overcome silos, improve the efficiency of daily operations, ensure smooth transitions in the event of personnel changes and quickly get new hires up to speed.
- **Bolster the capacity of City staff to provide excellent service to citizens.** Investing in the capacity of City staff to effectively and efficiently serve the needs of citizens efficiently would help create greater trust in local government and provide a better quality of life to Wilmingtonians. The City should encourage training, professional development and national certification to provide excellent customer-service to citizens, track the impact of improvements in customer service, and celebrate key customer service accomplishments. Additionally, improvements in the City’s digital footprint, including the information and navigation of the City’s website, are needed to streamline service provision.



- **Strengthen the Mayor's Office of Constituent Services to meet resident needs.** For many Wilmington residents, the City government is abstract and difficult to access. Often, the public doesn't understand how local government works and residents can become frustrated when trying to access the services they need. The Office of Constituent Services is a vital entry point for residents for City services. Creating greater accessibility for residents includes educating the public on how government works, better coordinating between offices so there is not an undue burden on residents when they need services that involve multiple departments, better balancing constituent services between City Council and the administration, and providing information in languages other than English given Wilmington's growing immigrant population. [see also recommendation under Goal 2.4 in Healthy and Thriving Communities]
- **Strengthen and support local capacity.** The City should serve as convener and advocate for the creative sector, small businesses and start-ups, community groups and merchant organizations. For example, the City could develop an entrepreneurial advocate position to better coordinate policy and programs in support of entrepreneurs across the tech and creative sectors. This position would act as a front door for entrepreneurs, connect them with existing programs, inform them of tax credits and other incentive tools they may be eligible for, and help them navigate the City permitting system. [**\*\*city priority**]

> **EXAMPLE:** [Seattle's start-up advocate](https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/techflash/2016/07/startup-advocate-dont-take-seattles-business.html) (https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/techflash/2016/07/startup-advocate-dont-take-seattles-business.html) builds connections between the city's startup community and the larger business community.

# 1. STRONG AND SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 1.1: PROMOTE WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS WITH ACCESS TO JOBS, SERVICES AND AMENITIES</b>			
***	Encourage mixed use development in neighborhood commercial corridors and in the central business district.	1 to 5	City
	Catalyze infill and redevelopment opportunities.	1 to 5	City
	Evaluate former public buildings, such as school buildings, for redevelopment.	1 to 5	City
	Allow more intensive uses to provide jobs in proximity to where people live.	1 to 5	City
<b>GOAL 1.2: ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE AND OFFERS CHOICE</b>			
	Help existing residents maintain, improve and stay in their homes.	Ongoing	City, State, nonprofits
	Promote pathways to homeownership for existing and new residents	Ongoing	City, DSHA, Wilmington Housing Authority, Wilmington Housing Partnership, Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank, nonprofits
	Develop new affordable housing.	Ongoing	City, DSHA, Wilmington Housing Partnership, nonprofits, developers
	Develop new housing products that suit the needs of a changing population.	1 to 5	City, DSHA, Wilmington Housing Partnership, nonprofits, developers
***	> Review zoning code to determine how new housing products can be developed		
***	Promote incentives and programs for purchase and rehabilitation of existing housing	1 to 5	Employers, business groups, institutions, City, Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank, nonprofits
<b>GOAL 1.3: REDUCE NEIGHBORHOOD BLIGHT AND CRIME</b>			
***	Continue Neighborhood Stabilization Program in critical areas of transition.	Ongoing	City, State, community groups, nonprofits
	> Identify and prioritize areas		
	> Secure and stabilize vacant properties		
	> Target and prevent nuisance properties by enforcing existing regulations		
	Focus anti-blight and beautification efforts on key corridors and gateways.	1 to 5	City, County, community groups, nonprofits, businesses
	Promote and strengthen organizations and tools that enable citizens to report issues.	1 to 5	City, community groups
	Support the Wilmington Community Advisory Committee to reduce violence.	Ongoing	City, community groups, nonprofits
	Support community engagement through community-based responses to public safety.	Ongoing	City, community groups, nonprofits, businesses, institutions

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
	Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) tactics to ensure public spaces are cared for and monitored.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits, businesses, institutions
	Help businesses and institutions install security cameras and connect with the Public Safety Camera System.	1 to 5	City, community groups, businesses, institutions
<b>GOAL 1.4: ENSURE NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY, WELCOMING PUBLIC SPACES AND RECREATION</b>			
***	Implement an equitable investment strategy to bring physical and programmatic improvements to civic spaces.	1 to 5	City, County, community groups, nonprofits
	Design for safety and comfort.	1 to 5	City, County, community groups, nonprofits
	Intensify public space programming.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits
	Reinvest in Wilmington's public pool infrastructure.	1 to 5	City
	Invest in a resilient and accessible waterfront that is a recreational amenity for all residents.	5 to 10	City
	Promote resiliency and sustainable practices as components of new and existing open space design and management.	1 to 5	City
	Partner with the school district to create a structured community service program with the parks.	1 to 5	City, School District
	Adapt recreation offerings to be flexible and accommodating to changing preferences.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits
	Use rapid prototyping, cross-programming and partnerships to test new ideas.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits
	Expand year-round, indoor recreation opportunities.	5 to 10	City, community groups, nonprofits
	Modernize the brand and social media communication channels of Wilmington's parks system.	1 to 5	City
<b>GOAL 1.5: SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER, COHESION AND PRIDE</b>			
***	Encourage infill development and new construction that fit in with the basic patterns of neighborhood character.	1 to 5	City, community groups
	> Develop citywide design standards in building and zoning code updates to address basic design considerations.		
***	Protect historic character of the city.	1 to 5	City
	Consider changes to historic districts		
	Consider including City Historic District information in zoning code update		
	Define and market neighborhoods.	1 to 5	Community groups, nonprofits
	Shine a spotlight on historic and cultural assets.	1 to 5	City, community groups
***	Cultivate shared experiences and communal investment.	1 to 5	City, community groups



## 2. HEALTHY AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 2.1: ENSURE ALL YOUTH HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO SHAPE THEIR FUTURE IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL</b>			
***	Expand youth programming with partners in and out of school.	1 to 5	School District, nonprofits, institutions, Wilmington Community Advisory Committee
	Connect schools to city assets and services.	1 to 5	City, School District, nonprofits, institutions
	Expand City summer jobs program.	1 to 5	City, School District, nonprofits, institutions
	Develop apprenticeship/mentorship program in partnership with local businesses and educational institutions.	1 to 5	Educational institutions, businesses, nonprofits
<b>GOAL 2.2: ENCOURAGE A COORDINATED AND HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SERVICE PROVISION AND ACCESS</b>			
	Partner with service providers to transform civic spaces into community hubs.	1 to 5	City, School District, service providers, health care institutions
	Encourage collaboration among service providers with complementary services.	1 to 5	Service providers, health care institutions
	Help homeless and prison re-entry population re-acclimate to community life.	1 to 5	City, service providers, health care institutions
	Support youth dealing with the impacts of trauma.	1 to 5	City, service providers, health care institutions, Wilmington Community Advisory Committee
	Develop stronger State and local communication and coordination on service provision.	1 to 5	City, State, service providers, nonprofits, community groups
<b>GOAL 2.3: MAKE HEALTHY LIVING THE DEFAULT CHOICE</b>			
	Improve access to healthy, fresh food.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits
***	Encourage active design.	1 to 5	City
***	Create healthy community spaces at public and institutional facilities.	1 to 5	City, institutions
	Pilot healthy living and wellness programs/campaigns in City government and public facilities.	1 to 5	City
<b>GOAL 2.4: BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT</b>			
***	Strengthen existing civic associations and help start new ones.	1 to 5	City, community groups
	Explore development of a citizens academy.	1 to 5	City
	Support youth engagement and leadership development.	1 to 5	City, School District, community groups, nonprofits
	Support Park Friends groups.	1 to 5	City, community groups
	Support civic events and coordinate with City services.	1 to 5	City, community groups, nonprofits

### 3. ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMY

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 3.1: ENCOURAGE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LOCAL ECONOMY IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS</b>			
***	Continue to invest in both neighborhood and downtown development.	1 to 5	City, developers
	Preserve and promote employment hubs and business parks for blue collar jobs.	1 to 5	City, County
	Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.	1 to 5	City, businesses, community groups
	Encourage the formation of merchants associations and business improvement districts to support neighborhood commercial areas.	1 to 5	City, businesses
<b>GOAL 3.2: INVEST IN TRAINING TO ACCESS THE JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TODAY AND TOMORROW</b>			
	Link workforce training and retraining to jobs.	1 to 5	Nonprofits, private sector, institutions
	Create employment opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment.	1 to 5	City, State, nonprofits
<b>GOAL 3.3: ENSURE THAT WILMINGTON IS A CITY WHERE INCLUSIVE BUSINESSES CAN THRIVE</b>			
***	Strengthen policies and programs for diversity and inclusion.	Ongoing	City
	Provide support for small businesses as they grow.	1 to 5	City, State, County Chamber of Commerce, institutions, NCC Innovates
	Invest in entrepreneurial training and opportunities.	1 to 5	City, State, nonprofits, private sector, institutions
	Encourage a variety of types of spaces for start-ups and small businesses to grow in the city	1 to 5	City
	Continue to ensure that state and local tax incentive tools are marketed and utilized.	1 to 5	City, State, private sector
<b>GOAL 3.4: PROMOTE CITY ASSETS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN RESIDENTS, EMPLOYERS AND INVESTMENT</b>			
	Nurture a creative environment to attract talent.	5 to 10	City, State, County Chamber of Commerce, institutions, NCC Innovates
	Enhance attractiveness of city gateways.	1 to 5	City, businesses, community groups
	Expand the reach of arts and cultural institutions and make the arts visible throughout the city.	1 to 5	City, nonprofits, institutions
	Develop wayfinding signage around key assets.	1 to 5	City
	Advance communications and branding campaign.	1 to 5	City

## 4. CONNECTED CITY AND REGION

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 4.1: CONNECT ACROSS WILMINGTON AND THROUGHOUT THE REGION VIA A MULTIMODAL NETWORK THAT GIVES RESIDENTS AFFORDABLE, HIGH-QUALITY TRANSPORTATION CHOICES</b>			
	Adopt a Complete Streets policy.	1 to 5	City
***	Improve safety, connectivity, and the environment for people walking and biking throughout the city.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO, Bike DE, Urban Bike Project, community groups, business groups
	> Evaluate strategies such as physical design interventions, pedestrian signals, restricting right turn on red		
	Consider establishing a Vision Zero policy.	1 to 5	City
	Provide improved connections for people walking and biking across major barriers like the interstates and railroads.	5 to 10	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO, Amtrak, CSX
	Expand Wilmington's network of low-stress bicycle facilities.	Ongoing	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO, Bike DE, Urban Bike Project, Delaware Greenways
	Reconnect the street grid.	5 to 10	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO
	Remove "sweeps" and consolidate interstate on/off ramps.	5 to 10	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO
	Continue cooperation and coordination with DART service to meet Wilmington's needs	1 to 5	DART, City, WILMAPCO
	Use technology and amenities to improve the experience for people riding DART.	1 to 5	DART, City
	Prioritize buses on key routes.	1 to 5	DART, City, WILMAPCO, DelDOT
	Coordinate with SEPTA and DART to expand regional rail service between Wilmington and Philadelphia.	5 to 10	DART, SEPTA, City, WILMAPCO
<b>GOAL 4.2: USE STREETS TO ENHANCE THE CITY'S ECONOMIC VITALITY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENT</b>			
	Identify key corridors throughout Wilmington and the tools the City needs to turn these into great streets.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO, community groups, New Castle County
	Emphasize maintenance of existing transportation assets.	Ongoing	City, DelDOT
	Prioritize safety improvements in locations where serious crashes are concentrated and at complex intersections across the City.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO
	Protect affordable housing when improving transportation.	Ongoing	City, DelDOT
	Limit the amount of truck traffic traveling through Wilmington's neighborhoods.	Ongoing	City, DelDOT, WILMAPCO, Port of Wilmington
	Create a neighborhood street program with dedicated funding for residents to request street improvements.	1 to 5	City, community groups, business groups



Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 4.3: OPTIMIZE PARKING TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF PARKING, IN THE RIGHT LOCATIONS, AT THE RIGHT PRICE</b>			
	Strive to balance parking supply and demand.	1 to 5	City, parking lot operators
	Continue providing clear information to the public on parking availability in commercial districts.	Ongoing	City, business groups, parking lot operators
	Encourage shared parking arrangements amongst neighboring offices, businesses, and residences.	1 to 5	City, parking lot operators, developers
	Create a simple process for converting under-utilized parking spaces to other uses.	1 to 5	City, parking lot operators, developers, community groups, business groups
	Conduct a comprehensive, citywide parking assessment.	1 to 5	City
***	Encourage commuters to use alternative forms of transportation to get to work.	1 to 5	Employers, business groups, DART
<b>GOAL 4.4: EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND TRANSPORTATION IDEAS THROUGH PILOT TESTING</b>			
	Examine the potential to integrate emerging technologies into the existing transportation system.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT, DART, WILMAPCO
***	Pilot test new transportation services and technologies in Wilmington.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT, DART
	Recognize street and curb space as valuable public assets and price them accordingly.	1 to 5	City, DelDOT

## 5. SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CITY

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 5.1: PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES</b>			
	Continue to monitor the capacity of infrastructure and emergency services to handle population growth and environmental changes.	Ongoing	City
	Coordinate repairs, maintenance, and improvements to public assets to save money, time, and materials.	Ongoing	City
	Update building codes.	Ongoing	City
	Update zoning code.	1 to 5	City
<b>GOAL 5.2: CONSERVE RESOURCES AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TO PROTECT AIR AND WATER QUALITY AND MITIGATE CITY'S CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE</b>			
***	Develop a sustainability plan to coordinate efforts.	1 to 5	City, State
	Cultivate a culture of sustainability.	1 to 5	City
	Coordinate with private organizations seeking to implement sustainable practices.	1 to 5	City, nonprofit, private sector
	Conduct energy audits of public buildings and use technology to track usage.	1 to 5	City
	Upgrade buildings to conserve energy and water.	5 to 10	City, DNREC, Energy Coordinating Agency, Interfaith Power & Light, Delaware Sustainable Energy Utility
	<i>Public buildings:</i>		
	> Retrofits		
	> Renewable energy systems		
	> Purchasing agreements with regional renewable energy generators		
	<i>Private sector buildings:</i>		
	> Coordinated communication and marketing of benefits and incentives		
	> Updated building codes with energy efficiency standards		
	Help residents and businesses incorporate solar energy production into their properties.	1 to 5	City, DNREC, Delaware Sustainable Energy Utility
	Implement water-efficient irrigation for municipal properties.	5 to 10	City
	Transition City fleet to electric vehicles and expand the availability of charging stations.	5 to 10	City, DNREC
	Reduce waste through recycling, composting and source reduction.	1 to 5	City

Priority	Recommendation	Timeframe (1-5, 5-10, 10+ years)	Partners
<b>GOAL 5.3: PROMOTE RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING IN ALL LONG-RANGE PLANNING, CRITICAL PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b>			
***	Harden infrastructure vulnerable to sea level rise and extreme weather events.	5 to 10	City, State, County
	> Increasing the absorptive capacity of land surrounding key transportation infrastructure		
	> Developing redundancy for vulnerable infrastructure systems and evacuation routes		
	> Elevating crucial transportation routes that have no viable alternative		
	> Limiting new transportation infrastructure within the floodplain		
	> Building critical infrastructure above base flood elevation (BFE)		
	> Utilizing greening strategies to protect investments		
***	Evaluate flood management options.	1 to 5	City
	> Update zoning code to include flood management and public waterfront access		
	Provide information and assistance for property owners who are susceptible to flooding.	1 to 5	City, State
	Continue Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) mitigation.	Ongoing	City
	Integrate green stormwater infrastructure and greening into the way Wilmington designs its streets.	1 to 5	City
	Encourage property owners to manage stormwater on-site through low impact development.	1 to 5	City
	Locate and promote the use of cooling centers in vulnerable neighborhoods.	1 to 5	City
	Provide weatherization assistance to low-income residents.	1 to 5	City, State, community organizations
	Reduce urban heat island effect.	1 to 5	City, community organizations
	Consideration of urban heat mitigation strategies in development review process		
<b>GOAL 5.4: PROMOTE COMMUNITY GREENING FOR AESTHETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT</b>			
***	Develop a tree coverage goal and increase the tree canopy in communities that lack it.	1 to 5	City, community organizations, DCH
	Strengthen regulations regarding the replacement of trees removed during development.	1 to 5	City
	Increase green space in the city through vacant lots and yards.	1 to 5	City, community organizations, DCH, DNS





# Wilmington 2028

A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities