



Wilmington

2028 SUMMARY

A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities

DECEMBER 2019



Build Your Own City!



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Project Background

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. Despite these laudable accomplishments 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. To continue the momentum of growth and revitalization, and ensure that the benefits of revitalization are felt across every neighborhood, the City of Wilmington must think proactively and prepare for tomorrow, today. This is where a Comprehensive Plan comes in.

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.

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.

There's a lot of existing work and momentum in the city. A plan can help us coordinate these efforts, develop a collection vision, help us take stock of our assets and our challenges, and see our city in a new light.

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.

CITY OF WILMINGTON



City of Wilmington map

- Municipal boundary
- Open space
- Cemetery
- Water body

PLANNING PROCESS

Our process involved both analyzing data and learning from community stakeholders

What did we learn? Wilmington is well-positioned for success but there is much work to be done to harness the momentum and positive energy.

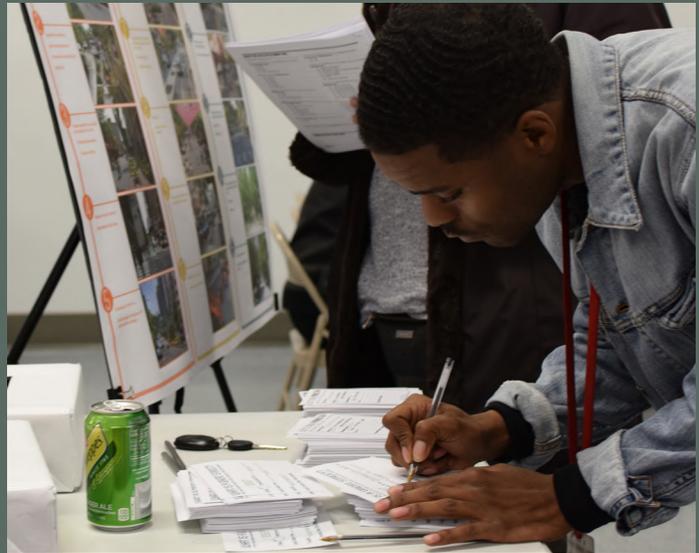
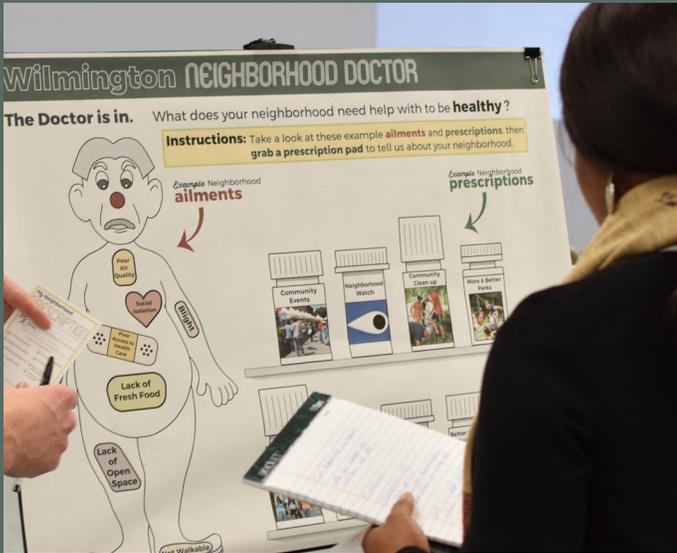
The planning process sought input from a broad cross-section of people through numerous activities and venues. Our community engagement included a **STEERING COMMITTEE** composed of local residents, community leaders, public officials, and institutional and business representatives, to guide the planning process; a **SURVEY** of more than 2,300 residents, workers and visitors about their perceptions of the city and their neighborhood; confidential **INTERVIEWS** with 37 stakeholders that included residents, community leaders, business owners, service providers, and public officials; **FOCUS GROUPS** to delve deeper into 10 topic areas; **PUBLIC FORUMS** in five neighborhood locations 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.

10 THEMES emerged that this plan should address:

1. We need **more residents** to support more businesses and make the city more **vibrant**.
2. This will also support **more amenities, activities**, and the **mix of uses** that make city life distinct.
3. We need to invest in **neighborhoods** and their **residents**.
4. We need to build **healthy communities** and help **kids** succeed.
5. We need to focus on **crime** and build **community resilience**.
6. We need to secure our **environmental health** and prepare for **climate change**.
7. We need a more **inclusive, diverse** and **resilient economy**.
8. We need more **ways to get around** and streets that don’t just funnel traffic in and out.
9. We need to put our **best foot forward** and **market** the good things happening the city.
10. We need to support **community efforts** and better **coordinate** between them.



Round 1 Public Forums - November 2017



Round 1 Public Forums - November 2017



Round 2 Public Forum at Delaware Children's Museum - October 2018

“
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.

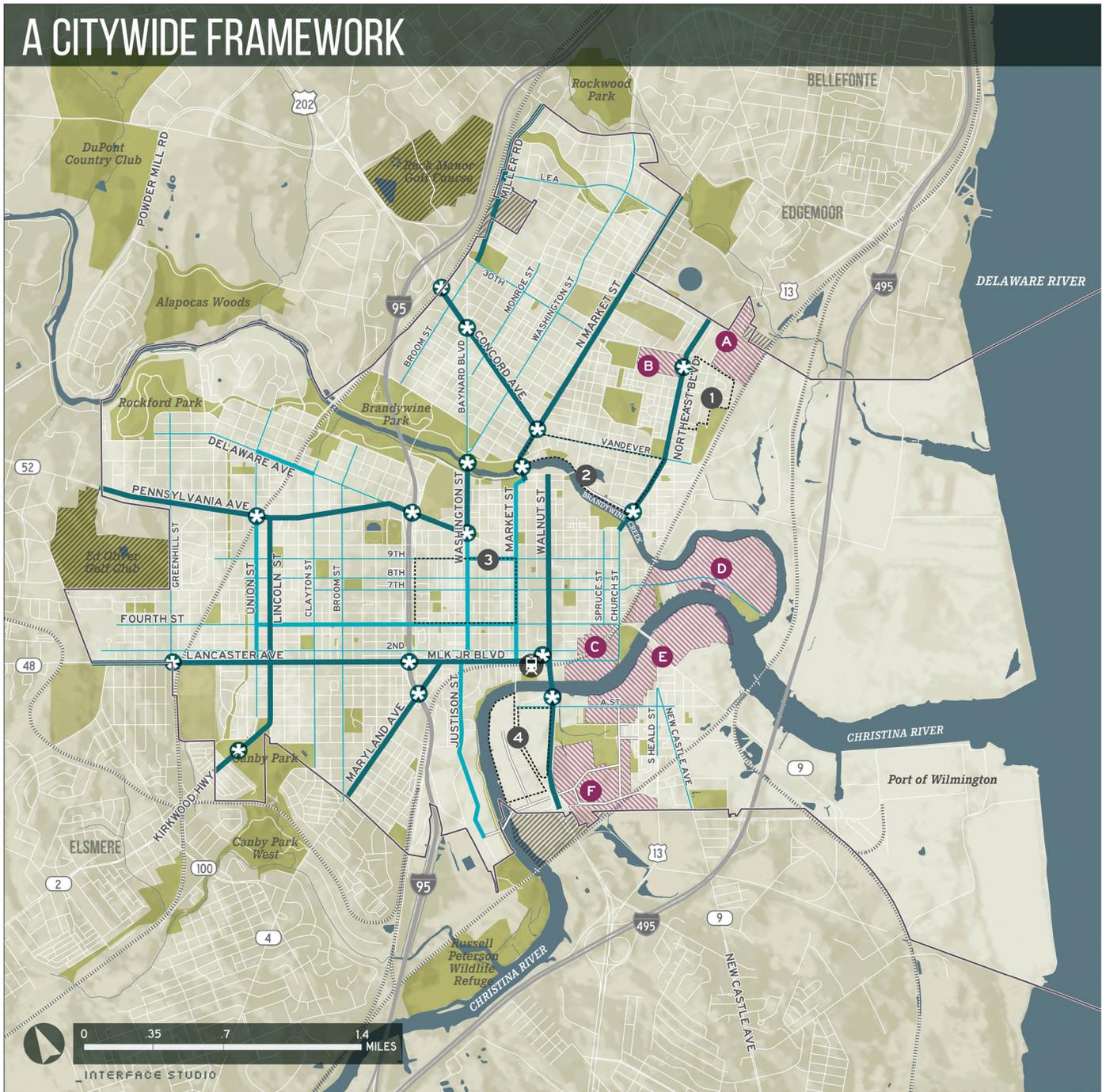
And most of all, it is a **city of connected neighborhoods and communities** where people, organizations, the City and the State are working together toward a shared future.

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

A CITYWIDE FRAMEWORK



Citywide framework map

Areas

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

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

Connections

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

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. But neighborhoods vary significantly and persistent poverty compounds indicators of neighborhood health such as vacancy, housing cost burden, and crime. 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. It addresses the components of strong and safe neighborhoods to promote social, economic, and physical health for all residents.

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.

- Encourage mixed use development in neighborhood commercial corridors and in the central business district.
- Catalyze infill and redevelopment opportunities.
- Evaluate former public buildings, such as school buildings, for redevelopment.
- Allow more intensive uses to provide jobs in proximity to where people live.

“
I would like to see a vibrant thriving city, a lot more people living and working here...
”

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.

Help residents achieve and maintain housing stability

- Help existing residents maintain, improve and stay in their homes.
- Promote pathways to homeownership for existing and new residents.

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

- Develop new affordable housing.
- Develop new housing products that suit the needs of a changing population.
- Promote incentives and programs for the purchase and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

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.

Target and prioritize neighborhood stabilization efforts

- Continue Neighborhood Stabilization Program in critical areas of transition, secure/stabilize vacant properties and enforce existing regulations citywide.
- Focus anti-blight and beautification efforts on key corridors and gateways.
- Promote and strengthen organizations and tools that enable citizens to report issues.

Build community resilience to crime

- Support the Wilmington Community Advisory Committee to reduce violence.
- Support community engagement through community-based responses to public safety.
- Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) tactics to ensure public spaces are cared for and monitored.
- Help businesses and institutions install security cameras and connect with the Public Safety Camera System.

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

- Implement an equitable investment strategy to bring physical and programmatic improvements to civic spaces.
- Design for safety and comfort.
- Intensify public space programming.
- Reinvest in Wilmington's public pool infrastructure.
- Invest in a resilient and accessible waterfront that is a recreational amenity for all residents.
- Promote resiliency and sustainable practices as components of new and existing open space design and management.
- Partner with the school district to create a structured community service program with the parks.



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



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

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

- Adapt recreation offerings to be flexible and accommodating to changing preferences.
- Use rapid prototyping, cross-programming and partnerships to test new ideas.
- Expand year-round, indoor recreation opportunities.
- Modernize the brand and social media communication channels of Wilmington's parks system.

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.

Strengthen neighborhood character

- Encourage infill development and new construction that fit in with the basic patterns of neighborhood character.
- Protect the historic character of the city.

“

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

”

Develop and strengthen neighborhood cohesion and pride

- Define and market neighborhoods.
- Shine a spotlight on historic and cultural assets.
- Cultivate shared experiences and communal investment.

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 outside impact on their health outcomes. Where we live determines our access to opportunity, assets and our social support network, as well as our exposure to stressors. This section of the plan focuses on the city's people, developing human capital and community capacity through community building, health and services. It 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.

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

- Expand youth programming with partners in and out of school.
- Connect schools to city assets and services.

Develop on-ramps to jobs through skills training

- Expand City summer jobs program.
- Develop apprenticeship/mentorship program in partnership with local businesses and educational institutions.



Warner-Shortlidge Arts Alliance, Source: Grand Opera House, Jon Ripsom Photography

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.

- Partner with service providers to transform civic spaces into community hubs.
- Encourage collaboration among service providers with complementary services.
- Help homeless and prison re-entry population re-acclimate to community life.
- Support youth dealing with the impacts of trauma.
- Develop stronger State and local communication and coordination on service provision.



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

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.
- Encourage active design.
- Create healthy community spaces at public and institutional facilities.
- Pilot healthy living and wellness programs/campaigns in City government and public facilities.

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.

- Strengthen existing civic associations and help start new ones.
- Explore development of a citizens’ academy.
- Support youth engagement and leadership development.
- Support Park Friends groups.
- Support civic events and coordinate with City services.

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

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. 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.

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 through improved employment opportunities and small business.

- Continue to invest in neighborhood and downtown development.
- Preserve and promote employment hubs and business parks for blue-collar jobs.
- Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- Encourage the formation of merchants associations and business improvement districts to support neighborhood commercial areas.

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.
- Create employment opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment.

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

Making Wilmington a center for small businesses, start-ups, the arts, and innovative research will help cultivate local talent and make Wilmington a city that works for all.

- Strengthen policies and programs for diversity and inclusion.
- Provide support for small businesses as they grow.

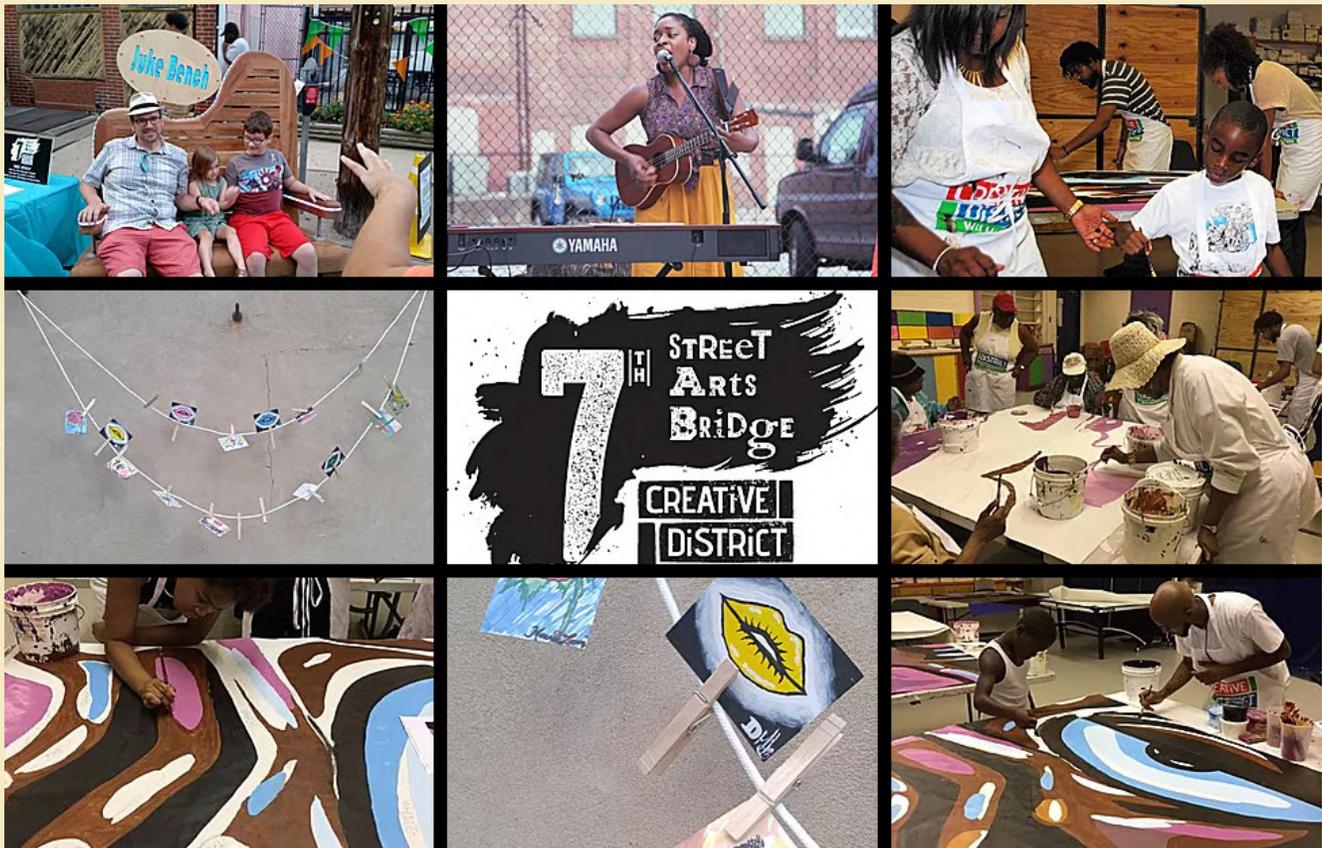
- Invest in entrepreneurial training and opportunities.
- Encourage a variety of types of spaces for start-ups and small businesses to grow in the city.
- Continue to ensure that State and local tax incentive tools are marketed and utilized.

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.

- Nurture a creative environment to attract talent.
- Enhance attractiveness of city gateways.
- Expand the reach of arts and cultural institutions and make the arts visible throughout the city.
- Develop wayfinding signage around key assets.
- Advance communications and branding campaign.

“
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.
 ”



> **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) and [The Public Art Prep Program \(PAPP\)](https://www.creativedistrictwilm.com/7th-street-arts-bridge), a collaboration of Creative District Wilmington and Connections Community Support Programs.

4. CONNECTED CITY AND REGION

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; 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 Wilmington’s existing transportation network is largely geared towards getting cars into and out of the city as quickly as possible. 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.

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

Designing streets for all users will improve connectivity and quality of life.

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

- Adopt a Complete Streets policy.
- Improve safety, connectivity, and the environment for people walking and biking throughout the city.
- Consider establishing a Vision Zero policy.
- Provide improved connections for people walking and biking across major barriers like the interstates and railroads.
- Expand Wilmington’s network of low-stress bicycle facilities.

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

- Reconnect the street grid.
- Remove “sweeps” and consolidate interstate on/off ramps.

Improve the transit experience to support riders and increase ridership.

- Continue cooperation and coordination with DART transit service to meet Wilmington’s needs.
- Use technology and amenities to improve the experience for people riding DART.
- Prioritize buses on key routes.
- Coordinate with SEPTA and DART to expand regional rail service between Wilmington and Philadelphia.

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.

- Identify key corridors throughout Wilmington and the tools the City needs to turn them into great streets.
- Protect affordable housing when improving transportation.
- Limit the amount of truck traffic traveling through Wilmington's neighborhoods.
- Create a neighborhood street program.

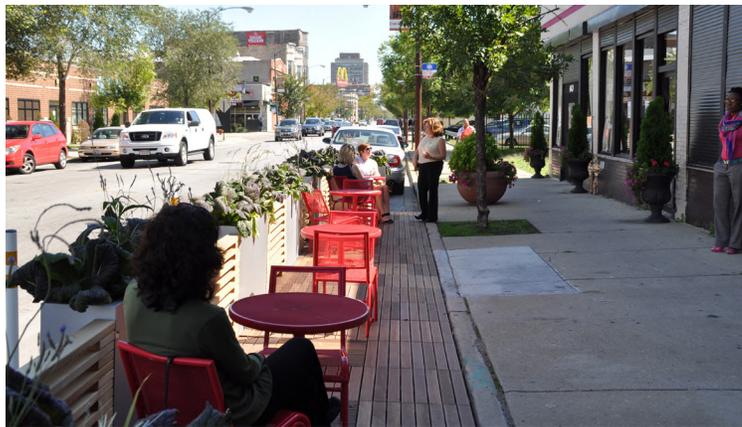
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The value of the corridors need to be redefined and become more meaningful to the people who live around them.

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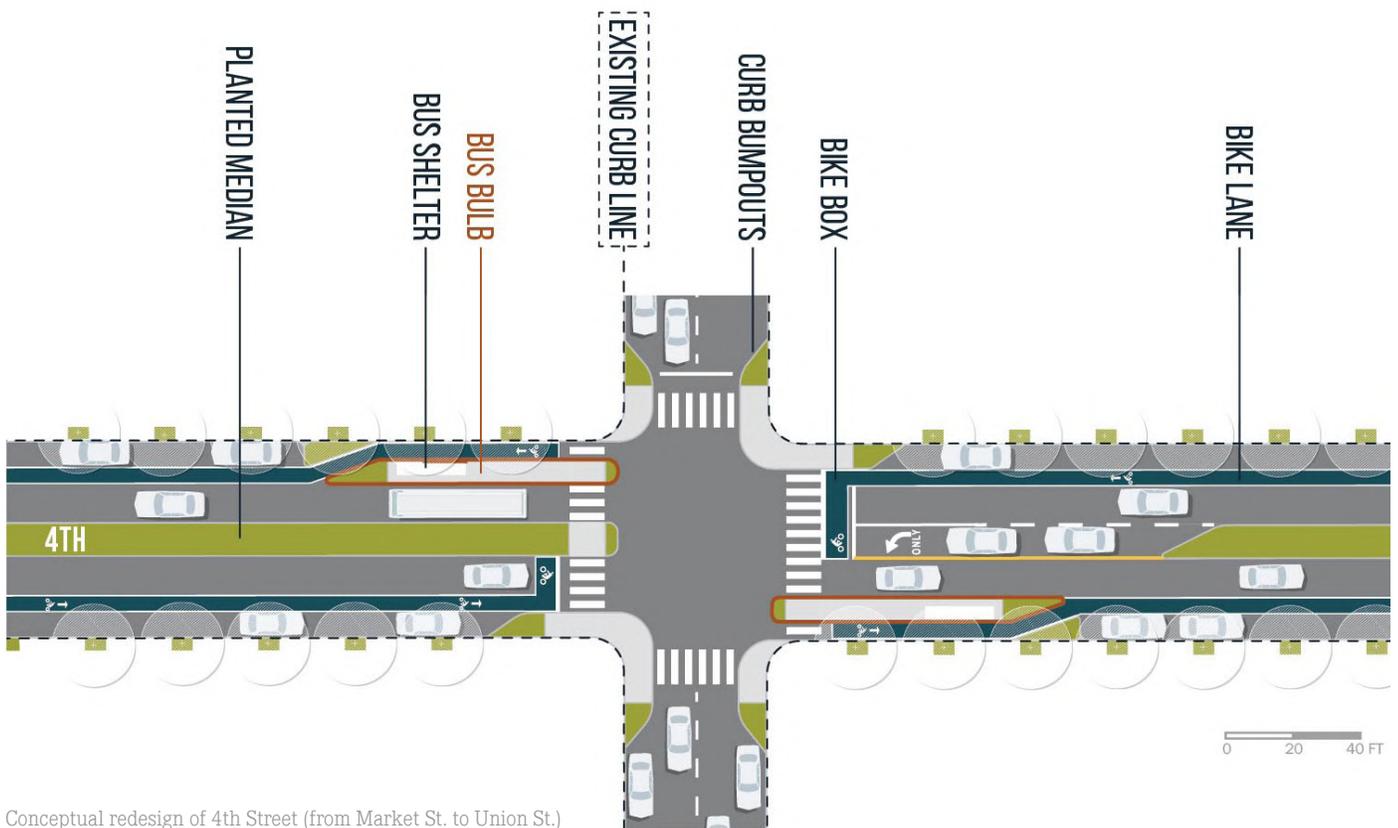
Gateway corridors connect the wider region to the city's major destinations and employment centers. It is important that that convey the image of an active city and that they are safe and comfortable for everyone, whether they are driving, walking, biking, or taking the bus, to use.



Main Street corridors are where Wilmington residents shop, dine, and work. Wilmington's main streets balance their role of moving cars with their function as places for neighbors to recreate, socialize, and play.



Neighborhood Connectors connect residents across the City to commercial and employment centers, and should be viewed as shared community spaces.



Conceptual redesign of 4th Street (from Market St. to Union St.)

4th Street could be transformed to emphasize its role as a Gateway Corridor into the city and a neighborhood Main Street by focusing on blight reduction and redevelopment, beautification, traffic calming, and better walking and biking amenities.



Rendering of conceptual 4th Street redesign

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.
- Strive to balance parking supply and demand.
- Continue providing clear information to the public on parking availability in commercial districts.
- Encourage shared parking arrangements amongst neighboring offices, businesses, and residences.
- Create a simple process for converting under-utilized parking spaces to other uses.
- Encourage commuters to use alternative forms of transportation to get to work.

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.
- Pilot test new transportation services and technologies in Wilmington.
- Recognize street and curb space as valuable public assets and price them accordingly.

5. SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CITY

OVERVIEW

A sustainable and resilient city 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. 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, resource conservation, and climate readiness to ensure Wilmington can meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses, and continue to grow in a sustainable manner.

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.
- Coordinate repairs, maintenance, and improvements to public assets to save money, time, and materials.
- Update building codes.
- Update zoning code.

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. Continuing to coordinate public and private efforts will help 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.
- Cultivate a culture of sustainability.
- Coordinate with private organizations seeking to implement sustainable practices.

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

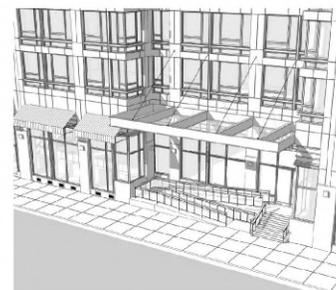
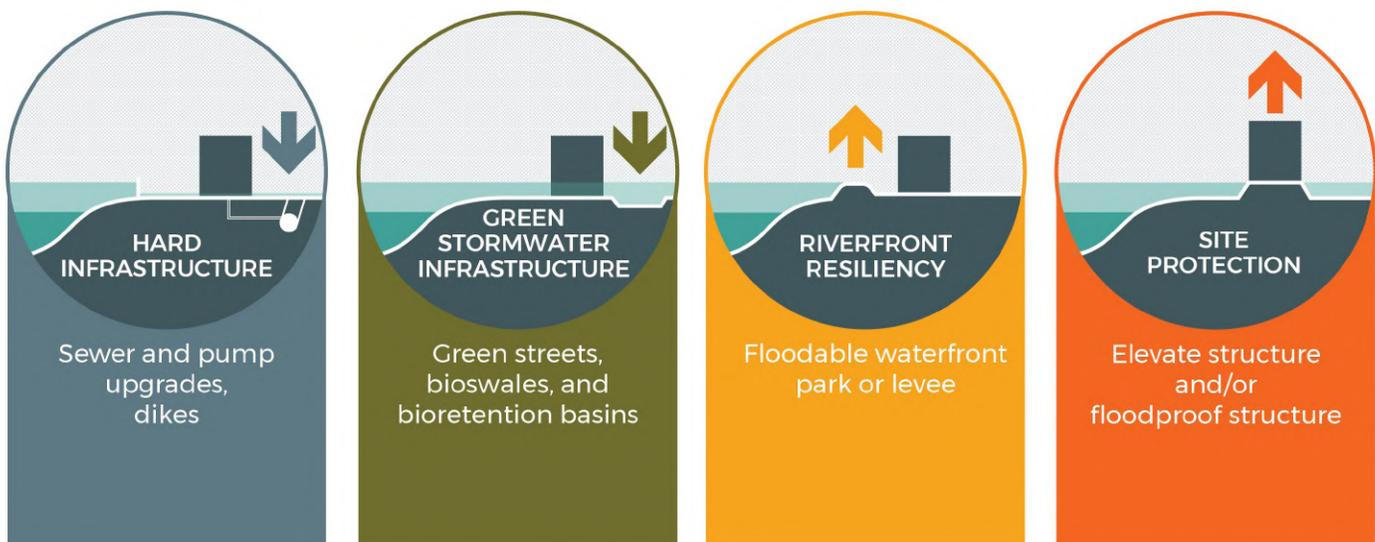
- Conduct energy audits of public buildings and use technology to track usage.
- Upgrade buildings to conserve energy and water.
- Help residents and businesses incorporate solar energy production into their properties.
- Implement water-efficient irrigation for municipal properties.
- Transition City fleet to electric vehicles and expand the availability of charging stations.
- Reduce waste through recycling, composting and source reduction.

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 riverfront flood management options.
- Provide information and assistance for property owners who are susceptible to flooding.



Flood and sea level rise resilience measures

Manage stormwater through grey and green infrastructure

- Continue Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) mitigation.
- Integrate green stormwater infrastructure and greening into the way Wilmington designs its streets.
- Encourage property owners to manage stormwater on-site through low impact development.

Reduce heat impact on vulnerable communities

- Locate and promote the use of cooling centers in vulnerable neighborhoods.
- Provide weatherization assistance to low-income residents.
- Reduce urban heat island effect.

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.
- Increase green space in the city through vacant lots and yards.
- Strengthen regulations regarding the replacement of trees removed during development.

FUTURE LAND USE

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

FUTURE LAND USE

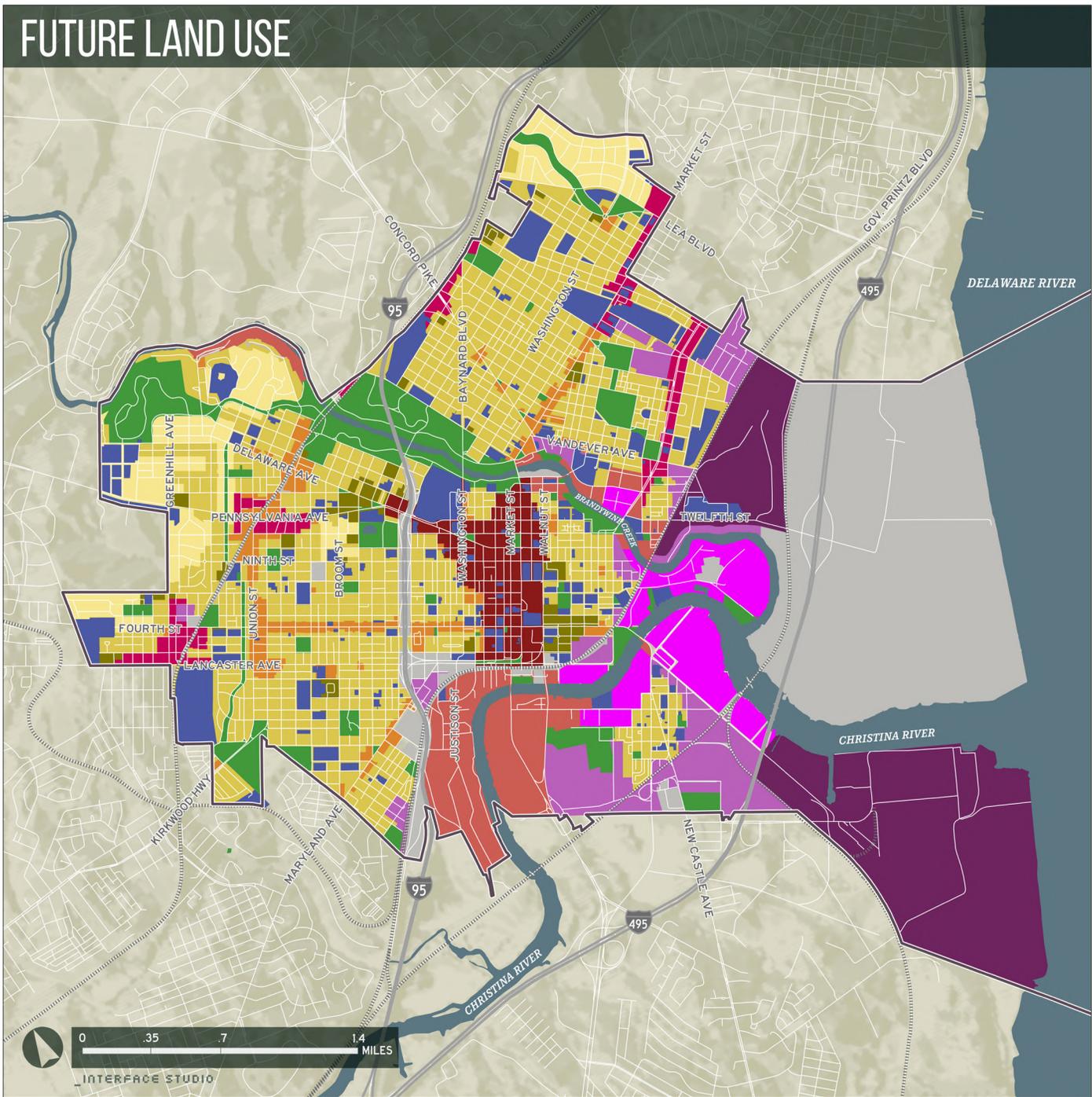


Figure 75 Future land use map
Source: City of Wilmington

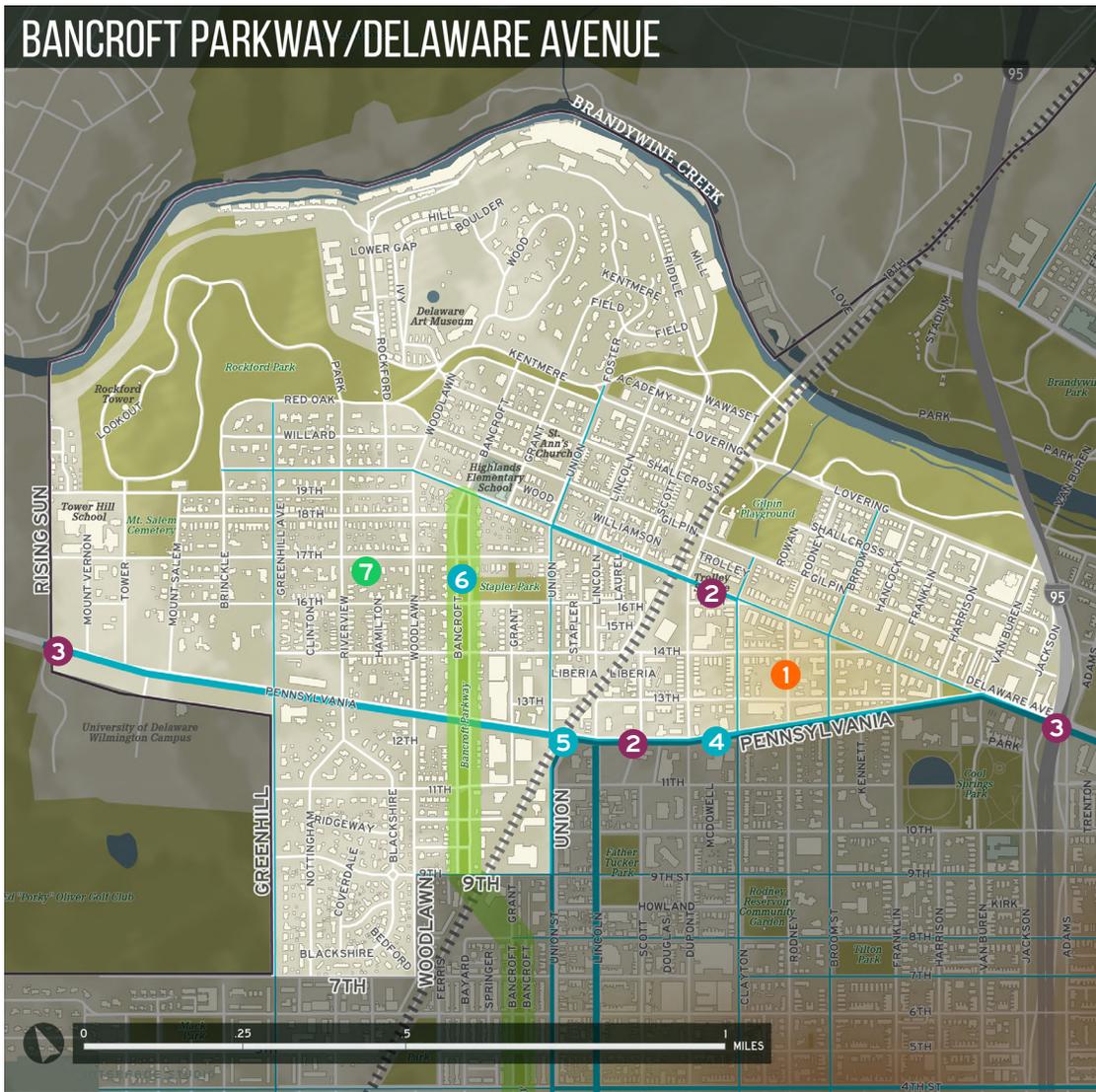
- Parks & Open Space
- Institutions
- Manufacturing
- Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown Mixed Use
- Waterfront Mixed Use
- Waterfront Mixed Commercial / Light Manufacturing
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Infrastructure
- City border

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS AREAS



Neighborhood analysis areas map

The neighborhood areas section of the plan translates the citywide goals and recommendations into neighborhood examples.



Bancroft Parkway/Delaware Avenue strategies map

Strong Safe Neighborhoods

- 1 Strengthen neighborhood character by encouraging infill and new construction that 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.

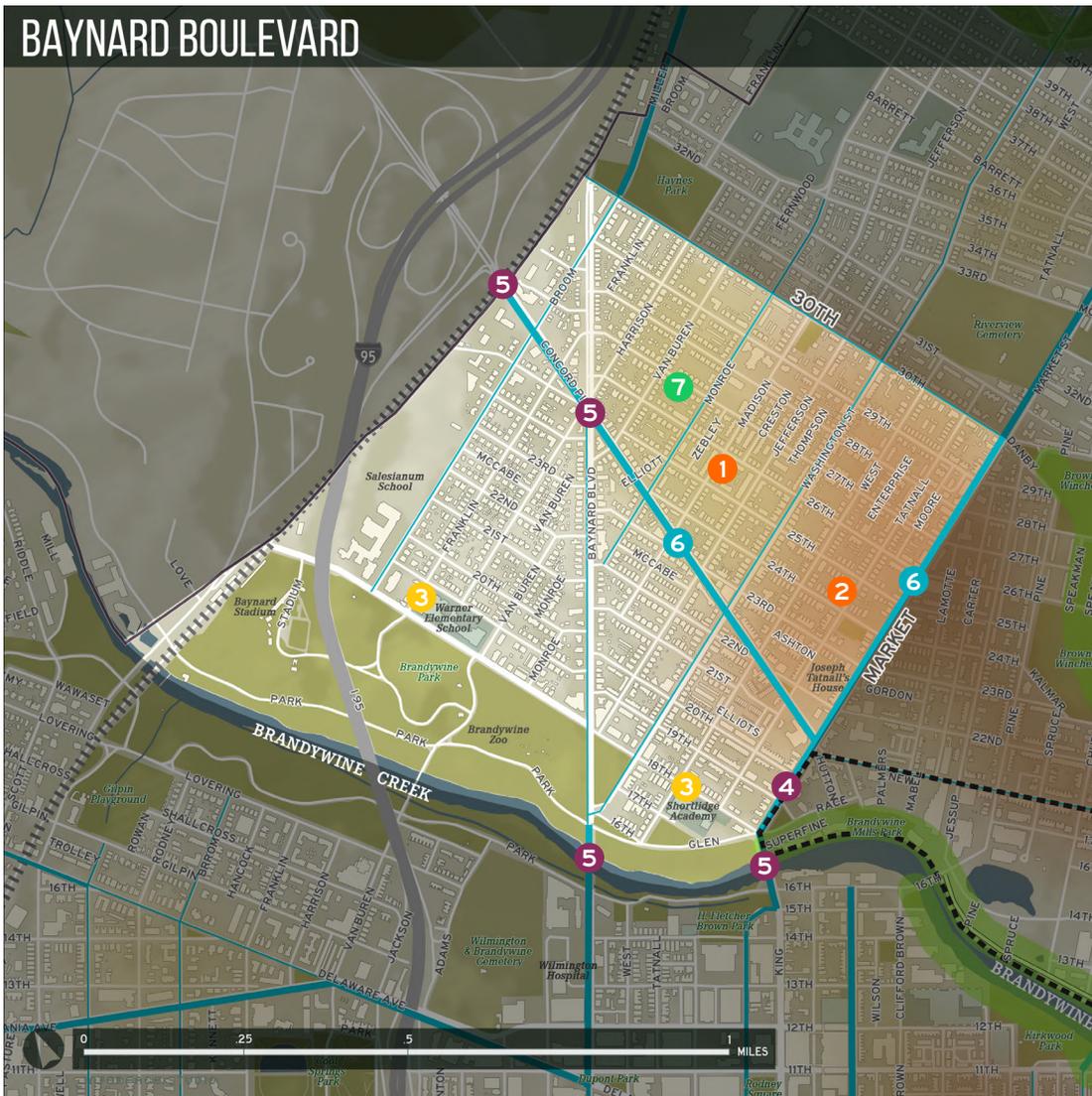
Connected City and Region

- 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



Connections

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

Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate

Baynard Boulevard strategies map

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

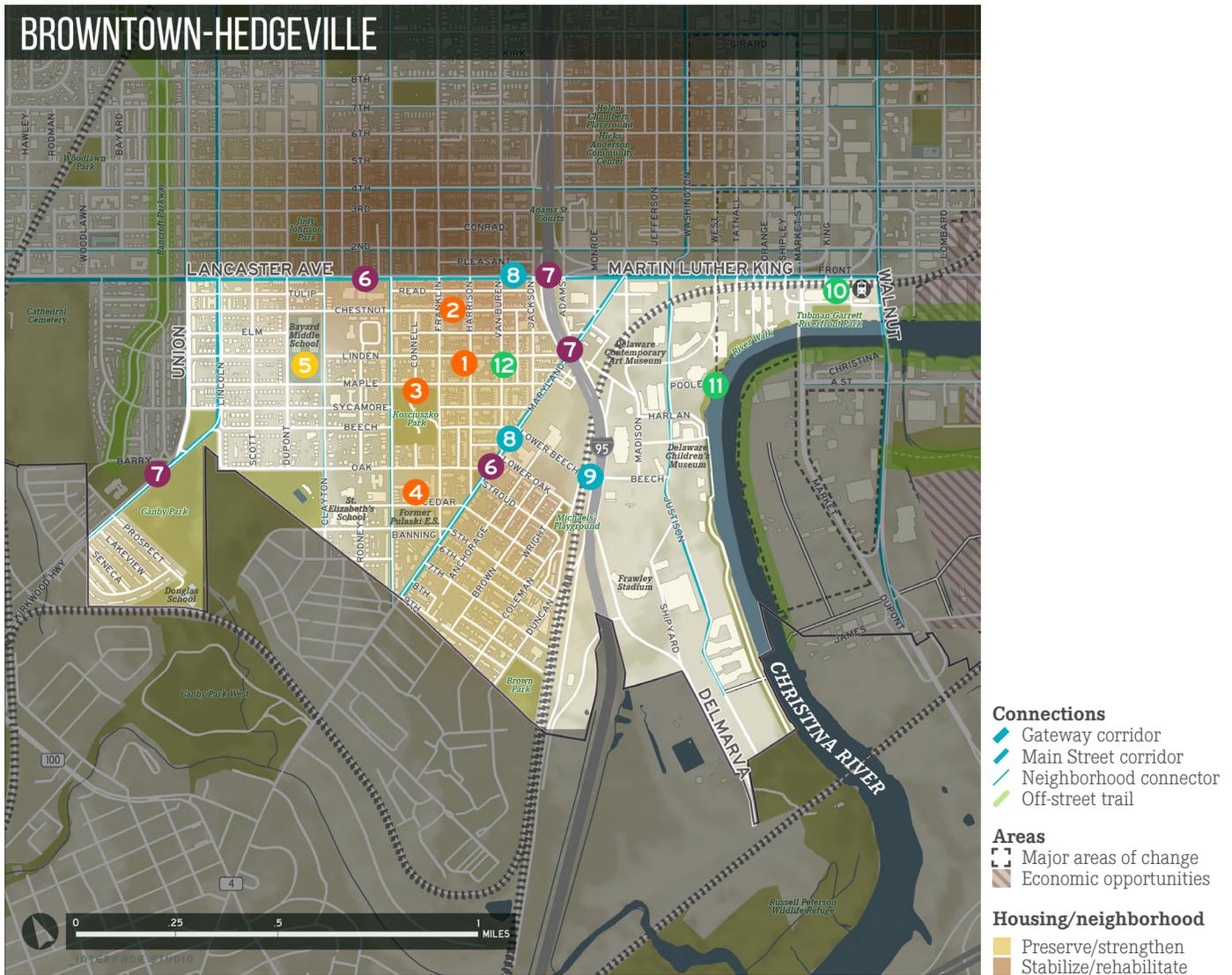
- 4 Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- 5 Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

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 strategies map

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

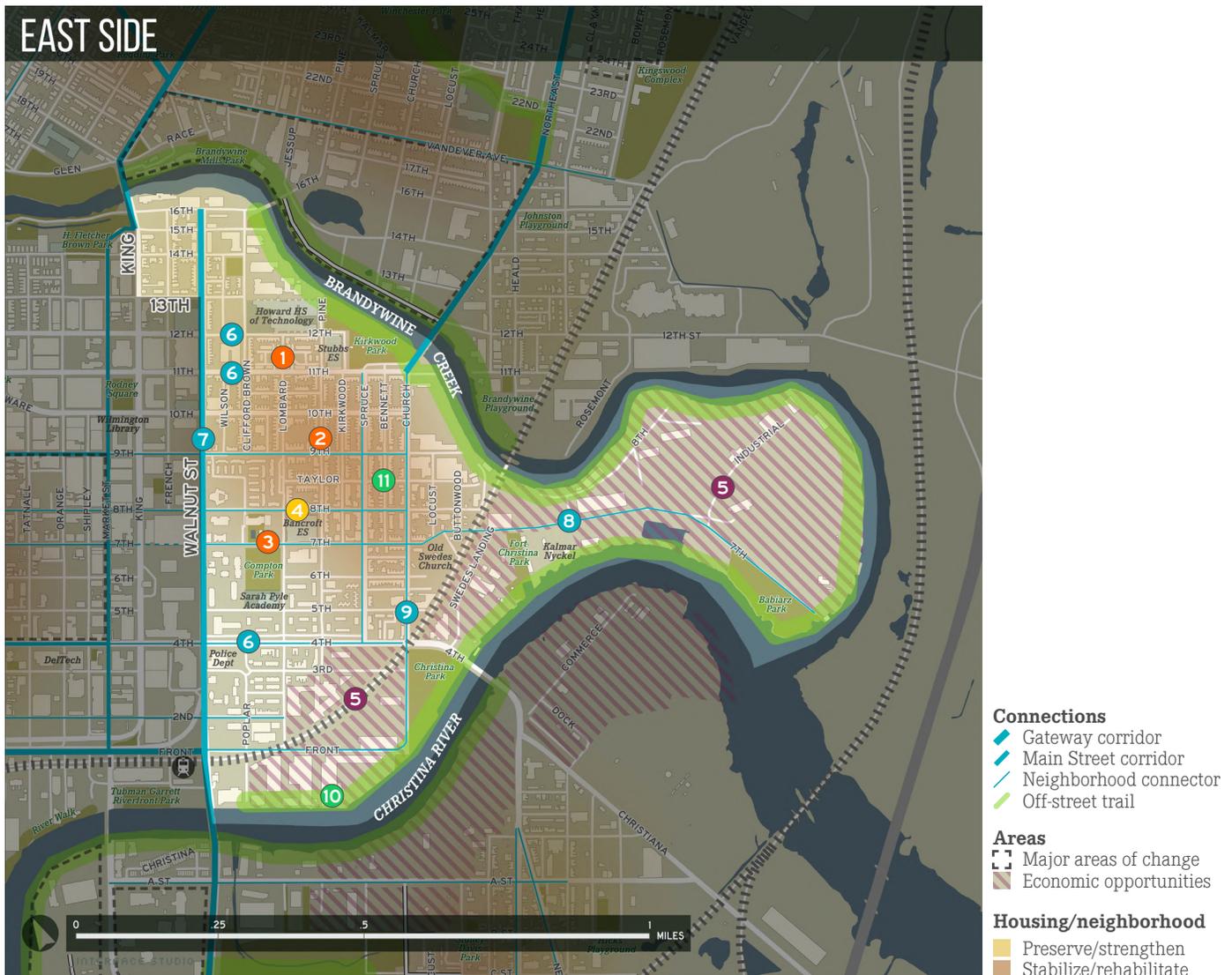
- 6 Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- 7 Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

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 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 strategies map

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

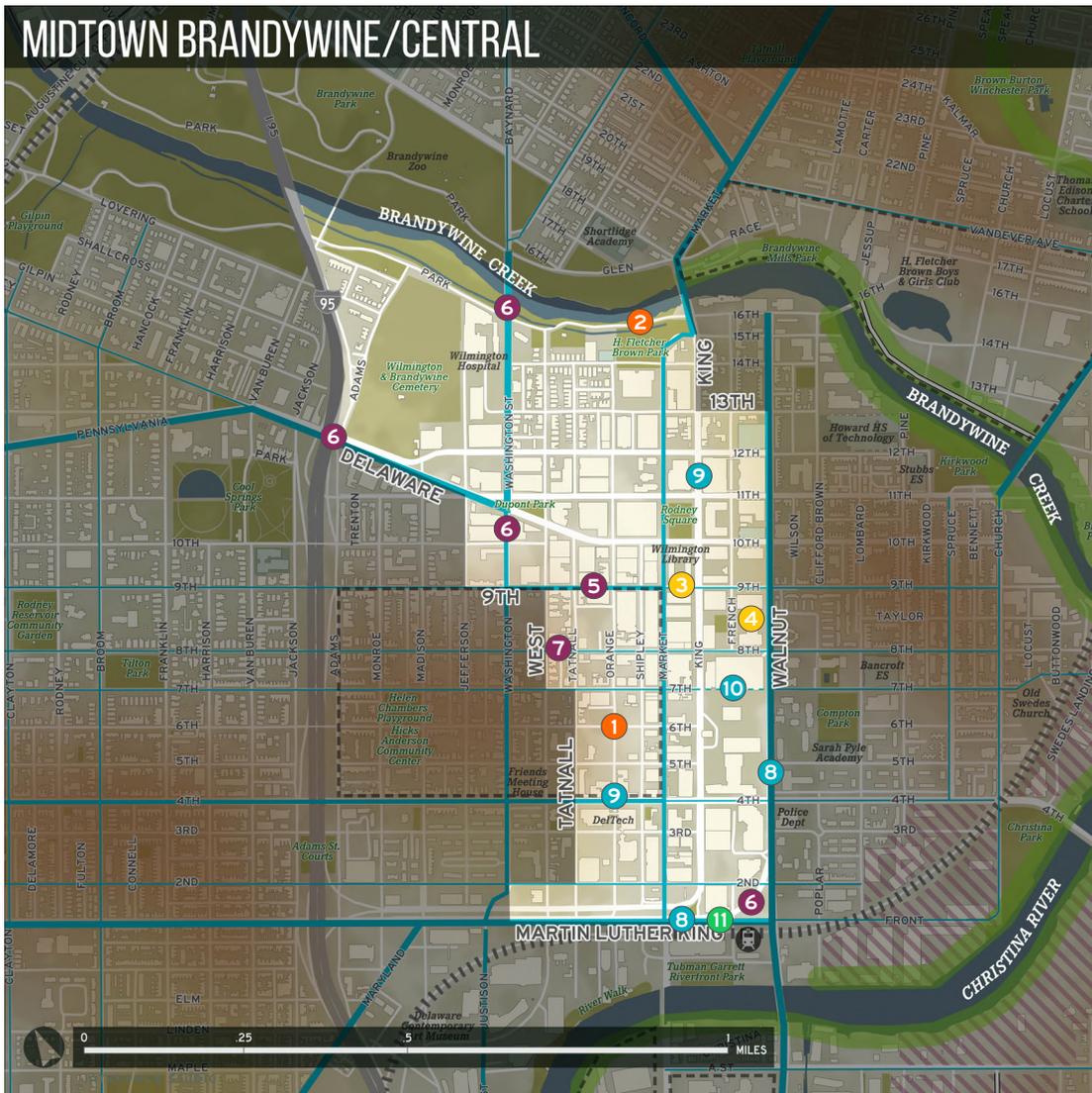
- 5 Position and promote Front Street Warehouse District and 7th Street Peninsula for neighborhood economic development.

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 strategies map

Strong Safe Neighborhoods

- 1 Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- 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.

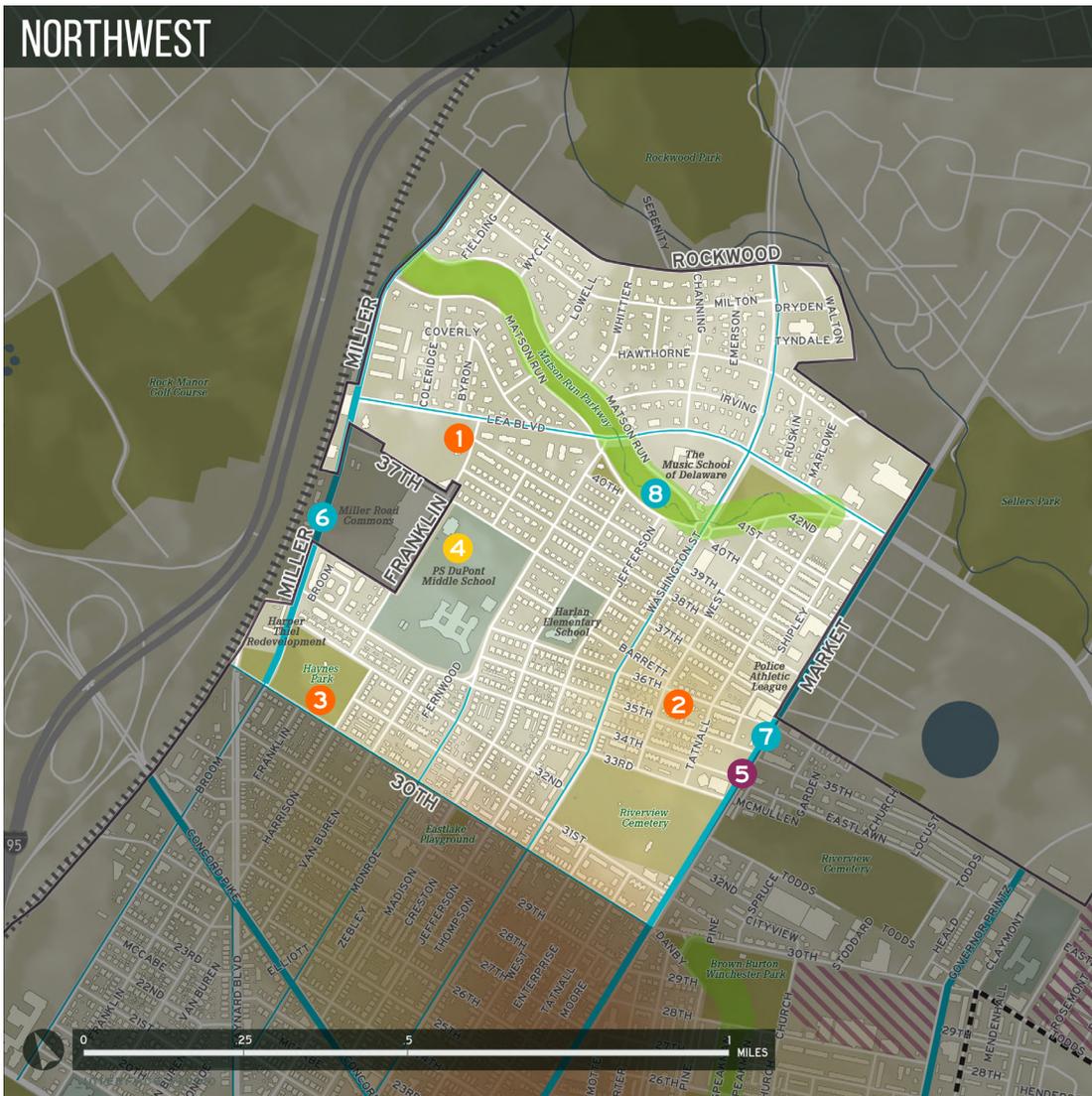
Connected City and Region

- 8 Improve Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard 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



Connections

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

Areas

- Major areas of change
- Economic opportunities

Housing/neighborhood

- Preserve/strengthen
- Stabilize/rehabilitate

Northwest strategies map

Strong Safe Neighborhoods

- 1 Encourage mixed use, infill and redevelopment in key opportunity areas.
- 2 Strengthen neighborhood character by encouraging infill and new construction that 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

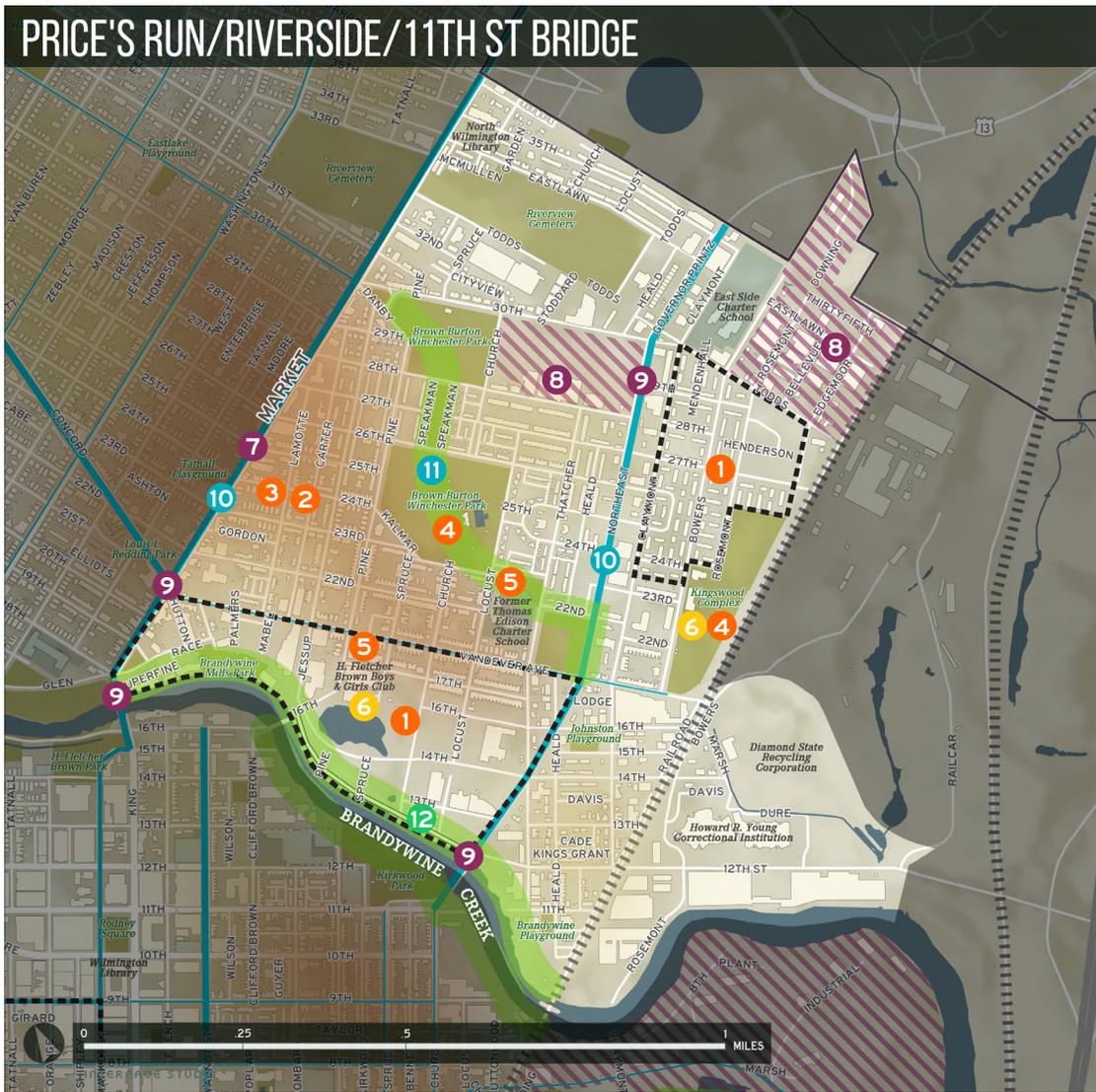
- 4 Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

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 strategies map

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

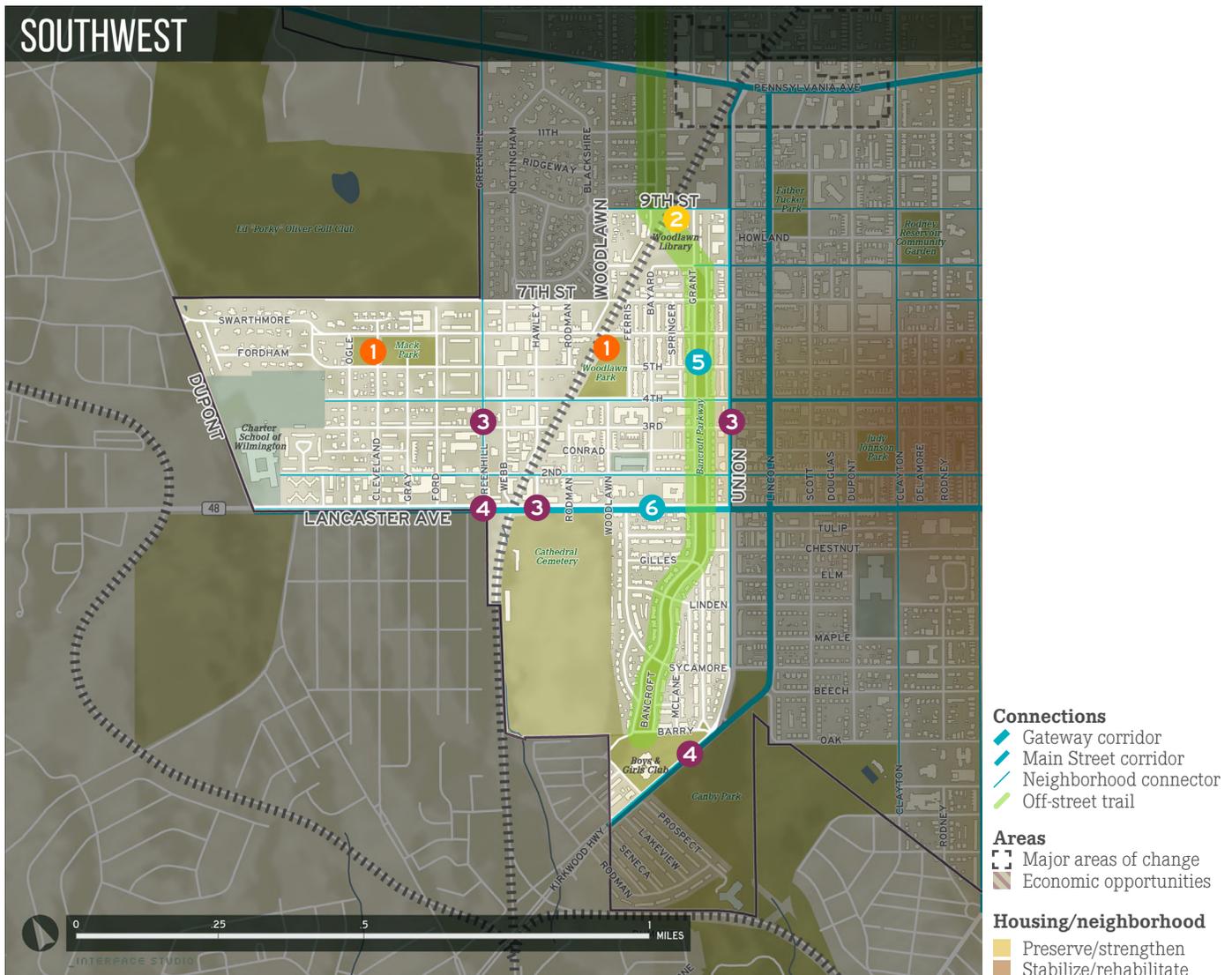
- 7 Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- 8 Position and promote former Del Tech Site and Todds Lane Industrial Park as economic opportunities with blue collar jobs.
- 9 Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

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 strategies map

Strong and Safe Neighborhoods

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

Healthy and Thriving Communities

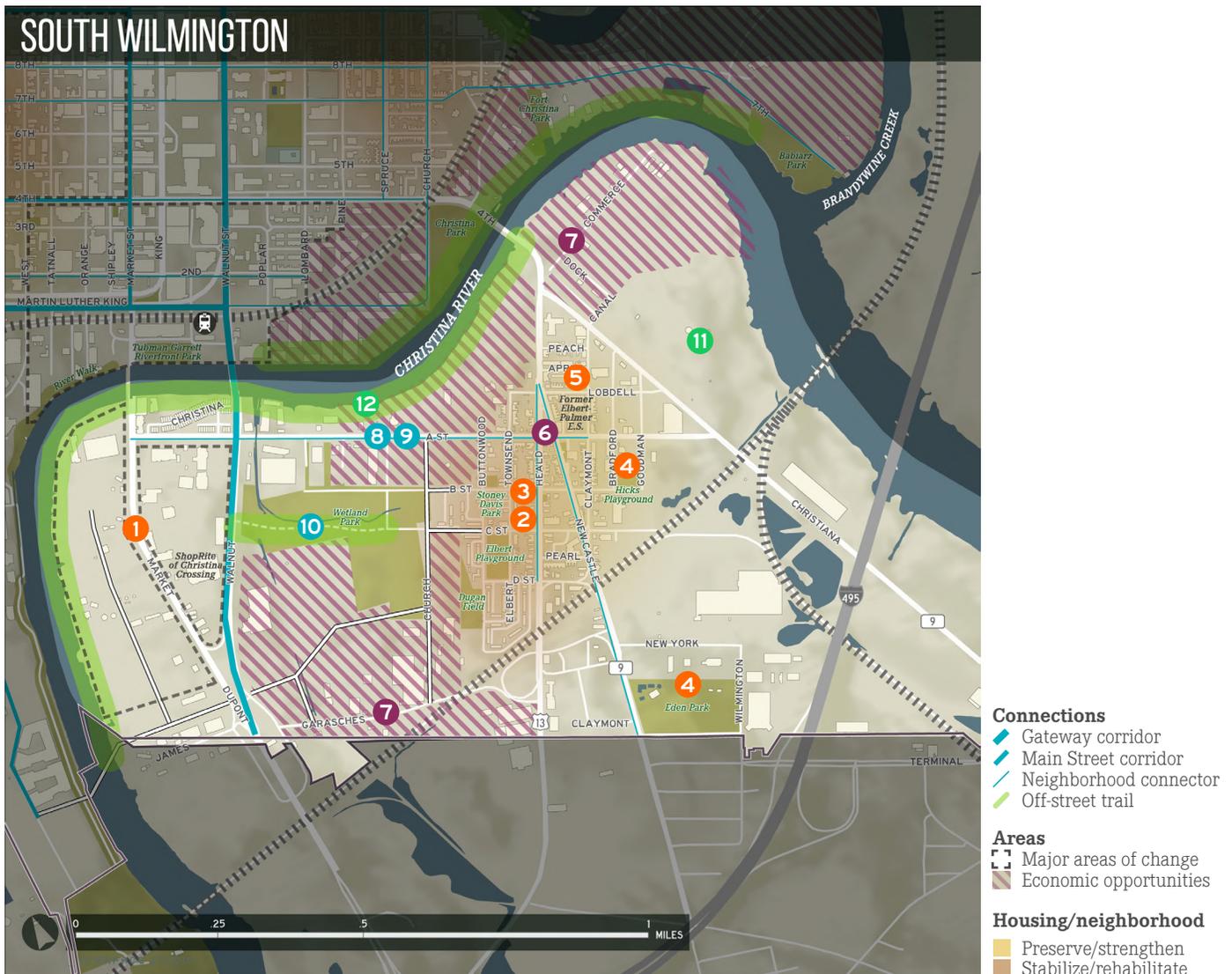
- 2 Partner with service agencies to transform civic spaces into community hubs that offer cross-programming.

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 strategies map

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.

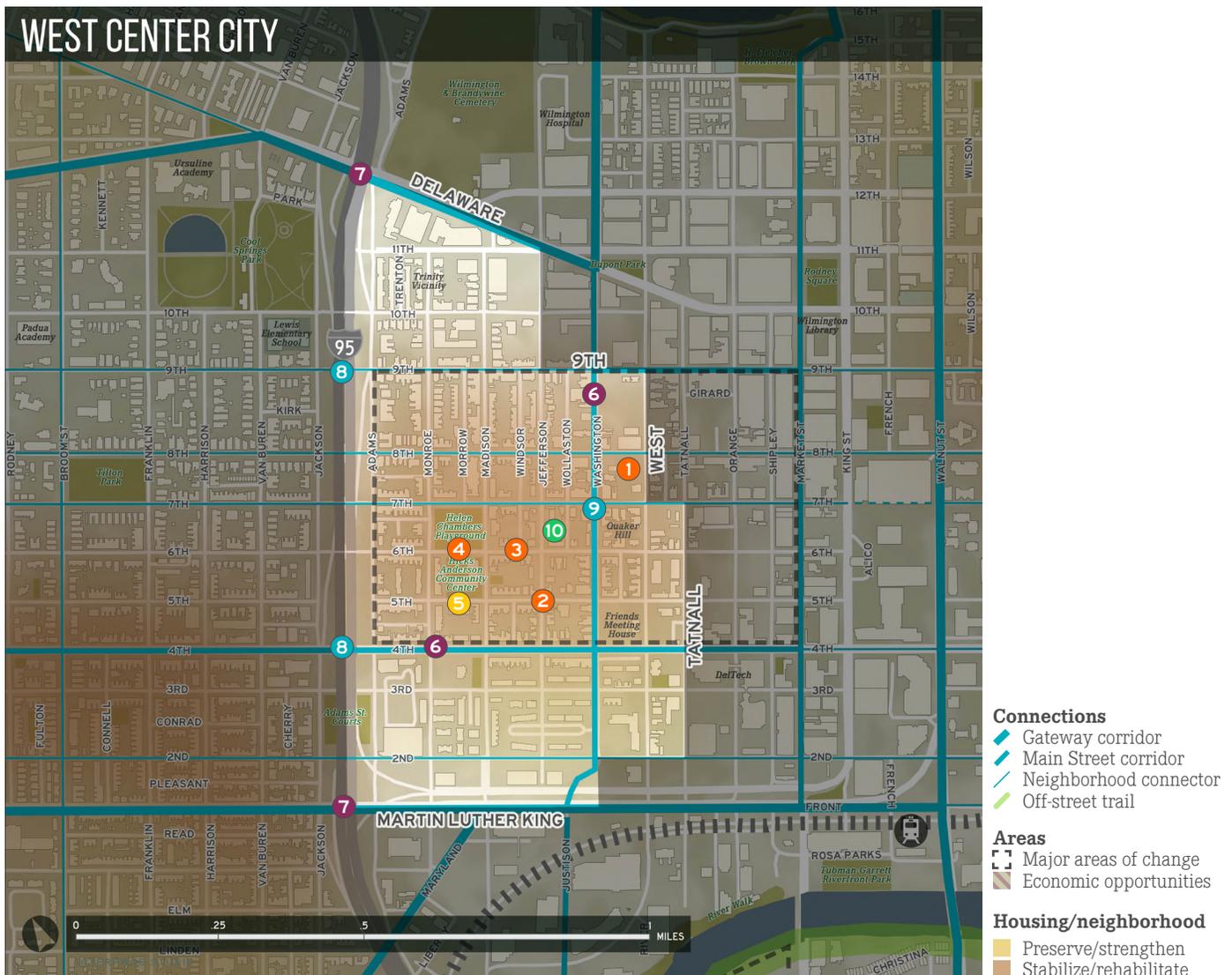
- 7 Position and promote the Commerce Street/South Waterfront and Garasches Lane as economic opportunities with blue collar jobs.

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 strategies map

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

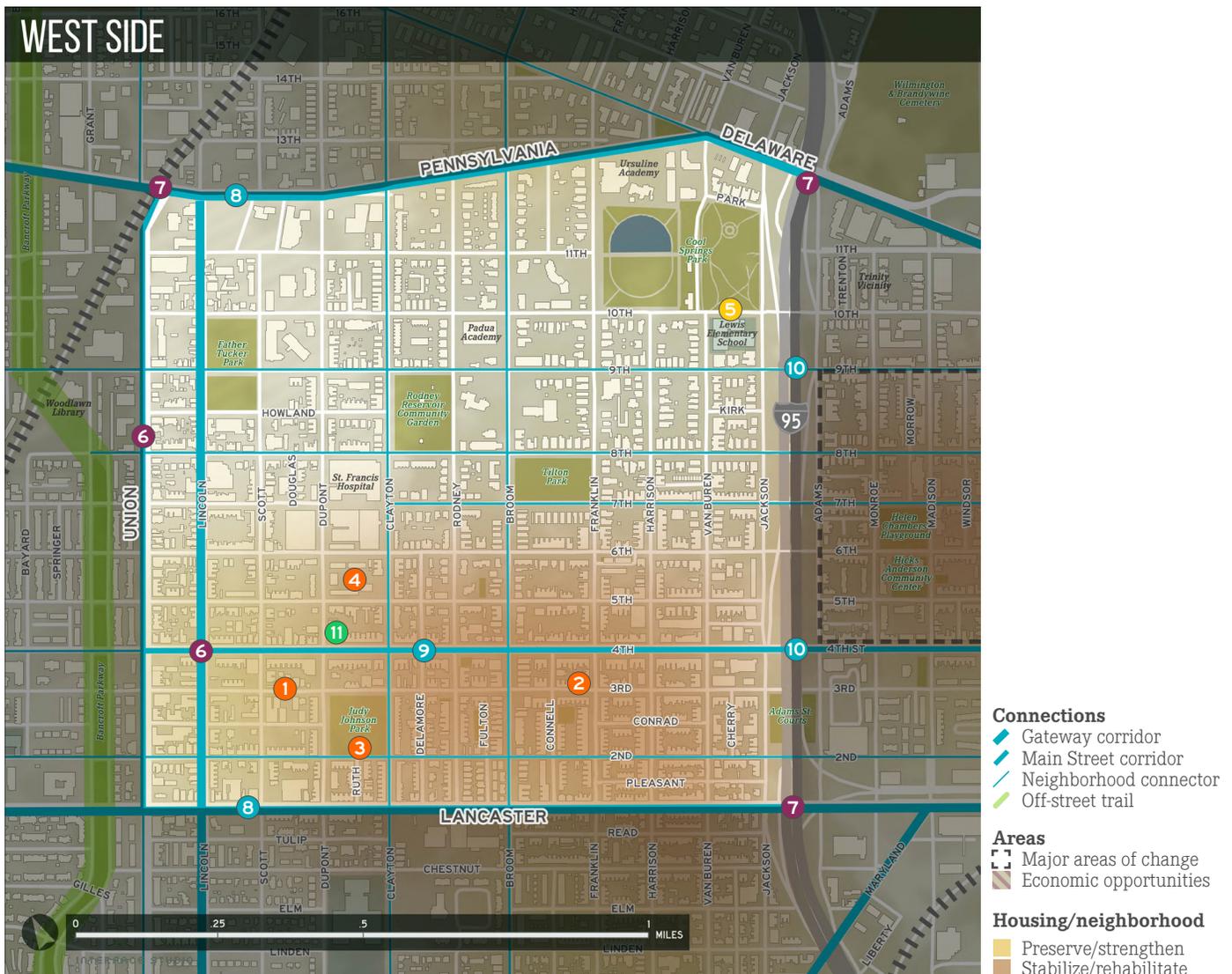
- 6 Make neighborhood commercial corridors and centers clean, safe and attractive.
- 7 Enhance the attractiveness of city gateways.

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 strategies map

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 encouraging infill and new construction that 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.

For more information please contact **Gemma Tierney, Planner II/City of Wilmington Department of Planning and Development** by email at grtierney@wilmingtonde.gov or by phone at **302-576-3117**.

The full plan document will be available on our website: www.WilmingtonDE.gov/wilmington2028 and can also be viewed at **800 N. French Street, Wilmington, DE 19801**.



Wilmington

2028

A Comprehensive Plan for Our City and Communities