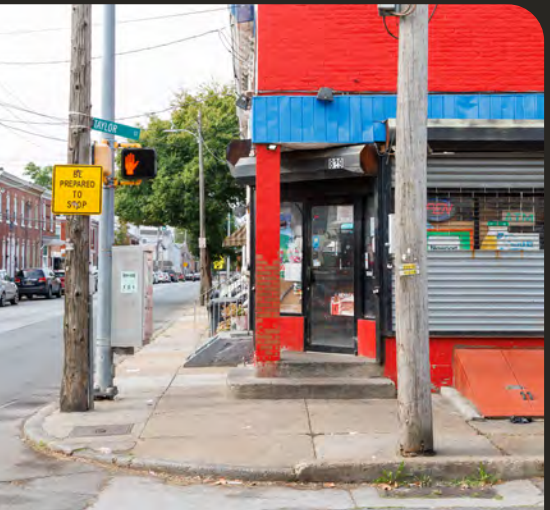





EASTSIDE THRIVE

Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Wilmington, Delaware




Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County

The Central Baptist COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Healthy Communities Delaware alignment. investment. impact.

mend collaborative

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Eastside Thrive represents the vision and efforts of hundreds of passionate residents, stakeholders, and leaders. In conversation with all of these groups, you see love for the Eastside and a desire to see the Eastside Thrive! The Mend Collaborative Team learned much from the dedicated community and want to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to everyone who contributed to this plan and contributes to the Eastside Community.



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii	Recommendations.....	75
Executive Summary.....	vi	Case Study.....	83
Introduction	1	Meaningful Work and Wealth.....	87
What is Eastside Thrive?	2	Meaningful Work and Wealth	88
Public Engagement.....	4	What We Heard.....	89
7 Vital Conditions for Health and Well Being	7	Existing Conditions	90
Vision Statement	9	Recommendations.....	91
Belonging and Civic Muscle	11	Case Study.....	95
Belonging and Civic Muscle	12	Lifelong Learning.....	101
What We Heard.....	13	Lifelong Learning	102
Existing Conditions	15	What We Heard.....	103
Recommendations.....	17	Existing Conditions	104
Case Study.....	31	Recommendations.....	105
Basic Needs for Health and Safety.....	37	Case Study.....	113
Basic Needs for Health and Safety	38	Reliable Transportation.....	115
What We Heard.....	39	Reliable Transportation	116
Existing Conditions	40	What We Heard.....	117
Recommendations.....	41	Existing Conditions	118
Case Study.....	51	Recommendations.....	119
Humane Housing.....	53	Case Study.....	123
Humane Housing	54	Zones	127
What We Heard.....	55	Community Zones	128
Existing Conditions	56	Howard Community Zone.....	130
Recommendations.....	57	Maurice Pritchett Community	132
Case Study.....	62	RiverFront mix-use zone.....	134
Thriving Natural World.....	71	Riverwalk extension zone	136
Thriving Natural World	72	Implementation.....	137
What We Heard.....	73	Implementation Strategy	138
Existing Conditions	74	Case Study.....	141

Executive Summary

Eastside Thrive is a plan to make Wilmington's Eastside better over the next 10 years. The Eastside neighborhood lays between the Christina River and the Brandywine Creek adjacent to Downtown Wilmington. The boundary on the west mostly follows Walnut Street but also includes a few blocks west of Walnut on the north side of the area.

Created with input from local residents and community supporters, this plan outlines the steps needed to bring the community's vision to life and achieve its goals, while building on the foundation laid by the 2008 Eastside Blueprint Community Strategic Plan.

The plan focuses on the **7 vital conditions for health and well-being**, important things that help everyone stay healthy and happy. These are things everyone needs in their community to live good, healthy, and safe lives. These include:



**Belonging and
Civic Muscle**



**Basic Needs for
Health and Safety**



**Humane
Housing**



**Thriving Natural
World**



**Meaningful Work and
Wealth**



**Lifelong
Learning**



**Reliable
Transportation**

The Plan

The Eastside Thrive plan is organized into recommendations for the 7 vital conditions, a total of **35 recommendations**. The Eastside Community Zones section highlight key areas with unique features and resources, based on community input and research, to create thriving neighborhoods with recommendations for improvement. Finally, the Implementation section includes details on what recommendations and initiatives to prioritize and potential funding sources to meet the community's goals.

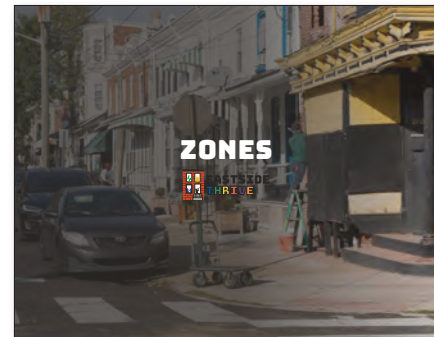
Project Introduction [p. I]



Recommendations [p. II]



Zones [p. 126]



Implementation [p. 136]



Project Schedule

The Eastside Thrive process took place over nine months in 2024, but was a product of much pre-planning work by local organizations and individuals starting in 2023.

Public Engagement

Public engagement has been a big part of creating the Eastside Thrive plan. By listening to the ideas and concerns of the people who live in the Eastside, the plan better reflects what the community values, needs and wants. By sharing their thoughts, neighbors have helped shape solutions that will make the area stronger, safer, and more welcoming for everyone. The Eastside Thrive process was designed to ensure the community's voice was prioritized.

Outreach Results

1,816 people engaged throughout the process

More than **30%** of the total population of the neighborhood participated.

The project phases included:

Understand
April - June 2024



Envision
July - Sept 2024



Act
Oct - Dec 2024



The Vision

To create a vision statement, the steering committee looked at ideas and feedback from the community during the Understand phase. Together, they decided on a statement about the future that the community wants to see. This statement helps guide the plan. For each recommendation, we ask: If we do this, will it help us reach the future we all imagine?

Our Vision

My Eastside is a **vibrant neighborhood** where **everyone feels welcome** and our **needs are fulfilled** at every stage of our lives. Our neighborhood is **safe, with well-maintained homes, comfortable streets and green parks** that reflect the pride of its inhabitants. **Artists and musicians give life to our rich history** and there are places that support **continual learning**. **Different ways to get around** help us reach jobs, important services, and locally-owned small businesses. From community programs, block parties and local gatherings, **Eastside has many ways for residents to stay active and connected.**



Belonging and Civic Muscle

Vital Condition Details:

74 Community Votes (5th/7)

7 Recommendations Proposed

Belonging and Civic Muscle means having support from friends, family, and community to handle challenges and feel fulfilled. When people trust and help each other, they build stronger connections and work together to create a better future.

BC 1.

Establish a “roundtable” for collaboration between community based organizations and clarify the role of a “backbone” organization to coordinate implementation of the plan

A roundtable of community organizations will be created to select a backbone group to lead Eastside Thrive, managing projects, funding, advocacy, and communication to achieve its goals.

BC 2.

Develop a capital campaign to establish dedicated funding for the plan’s goals

The Eastside community can launch a capital campaign to unite donors and secure funding to improve health, create jobs, and enhance quality of life.

BC 3.

Enhance Communication and Information Sharing through "Eastside Thrive"

The Eastside can strengthen communication with an "Eastside Thrive" newsletter and tools to share local news, events, and resources through social media, mailings, and bulletin boards.

BC 4.

Collaborate with partners to support existing and new community events

The Eastside should partner to revive community events like the August Quarterly festival and host year-round activities that celebrate local culture and history for all ages.

BC 5.

Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood

The Eastside can celebrate its history and culture with public art, including an Underground Railroad memorial, murals, and sculptures honoring its people and heritage.

BC 6.

Work with the National Park Service to expand the visibility of the “Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park” at Howard High School and to preserve and expand Howard’s historic collection

The Eastside can partner with the National Park Service to showcase Howard High School’s role in equal education through preservation, displays, and storytelling.

BC 7.

Utilize historic organizations and designation to increase funding in the Eastside

The Eastside can grow by preserving its African American history through national partnerships, grants, and historic designations that attract funding and recognition.



Basic Needs for Health and Safety

Vital Condition Details:

167 Community Votes (1th/7)

6 Recommendations Proposed

Basic Needs for Health and Safety include clean air and water, healthy food, a safe home, and strong relationships. It also means living free from violence and stress, with access to regular doctor visits and care to stay healthy.

BN 1.

Collaborate with partners to develop and offer more health programs

Partnering with others to expand local clinics, share care information, and explore mobile services like clinics or shuttles will help provide accessible wellness programs for all ages, promoting lifelong health in the Eastside community.

BN 2.

Work with partners to create accessible rehabilitation facilities that allow individuals to seek support with minimal barriers

Partnering with others to bring rehabilitation services closer—through satellite centers, transportation, or mobile clinics—can help Eastside residents recover, improve health, and lead more stable lives.

BN 3.

Develop comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood

A community support center offering shelter, food, medical care, and job training in one place can help people experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives, whether through temporary pop-ups or a permanent hub.

BN 4.

Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement

Form a street team to collaborate with local police, build community relationships, provide support, and work with partners to improve safety and reduce crime.

BN 5.

Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions

Create community teams with police and specialists to identify unsafe areas, address issues like trash and drug activity, and work with partners to improve lighting, pathways, and cleanliness.

BN 6.

Advocate for healthy food options in the neighborhood

Partner with local groups and city leaders to bring a grocery store with healthy food to the Eastside by gathering support through meetings and petitions.



Humane Housing

Vital Condition Details:

153 Community Votes (2nd/7)

5 Recommendations Proposed

Humane Housing means having stable, safe homes in welcoming communities where people feel secure. Good neighborhoods provide food, resources, and support to help everyone live healthy lives.

HH 1.

Expand program to fund deferred maintenance from homeowners for rental properties

Establish a program to help small landlords in the Eastside make affordable repairs to rental properties while ensuring homes stay safe, high-quality, and reasonably priced.

HH 2.

Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs

Collaborate with local partners to develop the Eastside waterfront with affordable housing, spaces for Black-owned businesses, green parks, and cultural sites that honor its heritage and provide recreation for all.

HH 3.

Reinvest in or redevelop Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improve housing conditions and expand housing opportunities

Reinvest in Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improve living conditions, increase energy efficiency, and create more affordable, high-quality housing for the Eastside community.

HH 4.

Expand homeownership programs

Expand homeownership programs to help Eastside residents buy homes, access loans, and improve properties, while offering workshops, counseling, and a "Homecoming" initiative to strengthen neighborhood ties and stability.

HH 5.

Create a program for reduced utilities for new homeowners

Help new homeowners save on utilities by promoting existing programs, creating discounts with local providers, and offering energy-efficient home upgrades.



Thriving Natural World

Vital Condition Details:

60 Community Votes (6th/7)

6 Recommendations Proposed

A Thriving Natural World means clean air, water, and land, and keeping nature healthy. It's about having an environment that can adapt to changes, stay safe from dangers, and allow us to enjoy and connect with nature.

TN 1.

Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine River

Form a team of Eastside community members to collaborate with local groups on completing the RiverWalk Greenway, ensuring it reflects the community's character, includes art and history, supports local businesses, and is well-maintained.

TN 2.

Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks

Partner with the Department of Parks and Recreation to improve Eastside parks by forming community teams to inspect playgrounds, cleanliness, and safety, and working together on improvements while involving the community at every step.

TN 3.

Advocate for improvements to Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy open spaces to create a central park zone (Maurice Pritchett Community Zone)

Create a central community zone by connecting Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool, and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy, conducting a safety walk with the community to improve sidewalks, crossings, and signs, and working with the city to plan these changes, especially for kids' safety.

TN 4.

Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy

Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy on the Eastside to improve the environment, reduce temperatures, support health, and create green spaces by organizing local planning events, forming a tree maintenance team, and working with city experts for long-term support.

TN 5.

Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building

Create a beautification program for the Eastside with a dedicated team to keep streets clean, maintain trees, and address bigger issues, starting with a pilot program that hires local residents and tracks its success for future expansion.

TN 6.

Partner with and expand community garden programs in the neighborhood

Expand community garden programs in the Eastside to provide spaces for planting food, youth programs on healthy eating, and activities that build connections, while working with local groups to grow the gardens and offer more community events.



Meaningful Work and Wealth

Vital Condition Details:

108 Community Votes (3rd/7)

3 Recommendations Proposed

Meaningful Work and Wealth means having good jobs that pay well and feeling financially secure. Personal, family, and community wealth helps people live healthy, safe, and rewarding lives now and in the future.

MW 1. Reestablish the Eastside as a Black Business District

Support Black entrepreneurs by creating a business center with mentorship, affordable workspaces, funding, grants, loans, and partnerships with schools to teach skills, while promoting the district as a vibrant hub for Black-owned businesses through events and marketing.

MW 2. Expand career development opportunities for women

Create career opportunities for women by offering training, childcare, mentorship, career fairs, and skills workshops.

MW 3. Collaborate with partners to expand childcare, support and job training programs for single parents

Work with local childcare centers and businesses to make childcare affordable for single parents, offer support services, and create a group for parents to share resources and advice.





Lifelong Learning

Vital Condition Details:

82 Community Votes (4th/7)

4 Recommendations Proposed

Lifelong Learning means providing everyone with a strong education to help them succeed. Everyone should have opportunities to start great careers and continue learning and growing at any age.

LL 1.

Collaborate with partners to expand youth after-school educational and job placement programs

Form a team with local groups to expand after-school programs for Eastside youth, offering education, job placement, mentorship, and career training opportunities.

LL 3.

Strengthen partnerships among area schools to expand adult education and job placement programs

Partner with local schools and organizations to expand adult education and job programs, helping Eastside residents gain skills for better-paying jobs and strengthen the community.

LL 2.

Develop internal summer internship for high school students and/or create a youth council as part of the organization

Form a team to create a summer internship program or youth council that provides high school students with career experience and a voice in the community.

LL 4.

Collaborate with partners to provide free early morning and after-school programming for youth

Partner with local organizations to offer free early morning and after-school programs for Eastside youth, providing a safe space for learning and supporting working parents.



Reliable Transportation

Vital Condition Details:

48 Community Votes (7th/7)

4 Recommendations Proposed

Reliable Transportation means being able to easily get to work, school, stores, and other places. Good transportation options, like walking, biking, and public transit, help people stay active and improve their jobs, health, and opportunities.

RT 1.

Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind

Redesign Eastside streets to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers by slowing traffic and adding features like one-way streets, starting with Spruce and Church Streets and expanding the 4th Street project.

RT 2.

Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program

Apply for a Safe Routes to School grant to improve Eastside intersections with better crosswalks, lights, signs, trees, and streetlights, making walking and biking to school safer for kids.

RT 3.

Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood

Create a greenway through the Eastside connecting the neighborhood to the Christina River and Brandywine Creek trails, improving access, supporting local shops and historic sites, and enhancing street redesigns along Church or Spruce Street.

RT 4.

Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors

Make the Eastside more accessible for people with disabilities and seniors by improving sidewalks, adding ramps, creating safer crosswalks, conducting a "walk audit," and partnering with local services for better transportation options.



Implementation

The implementation of **Eastside Thrive** will rely on collaboration among community organizations, residents, and the City of Wilmington. Key steps include establishing a "roundtable" to coordinate efforts and launching a capital campaign to secure resources. The plan emphasizes leveraging the strengths of existing organizations while addressing resource gaps in funding and staffing to ensure they can meet the plan's goals.

Recommendations are organized into three types: **projects**, which involve physical improvements like housing and parks; **programs**, such as job training and health services; and **policies**, like preserving affordable housing and supporting local businesses. Implementation will require tailored approaches, with the City often leading infrastructure projects, community organizations managing programs, and collaborative efforts driving policy changes.

Funding will come from a mix of sources, including government grants, private foundations, tax incentives, and community-based methods like crowdfunding. Early steps include prioritizing recommendations, setting timelines, and aligning efforts with organizational missions. Monitoring and reporting will ensure transparency, track progress, and maintain accountability to funders and the community. By fostering cooperation and building capacity, the plan aims to achieve meaningful and sustainable change.

INTRODUCTION



EASTSIDE
THRIVE



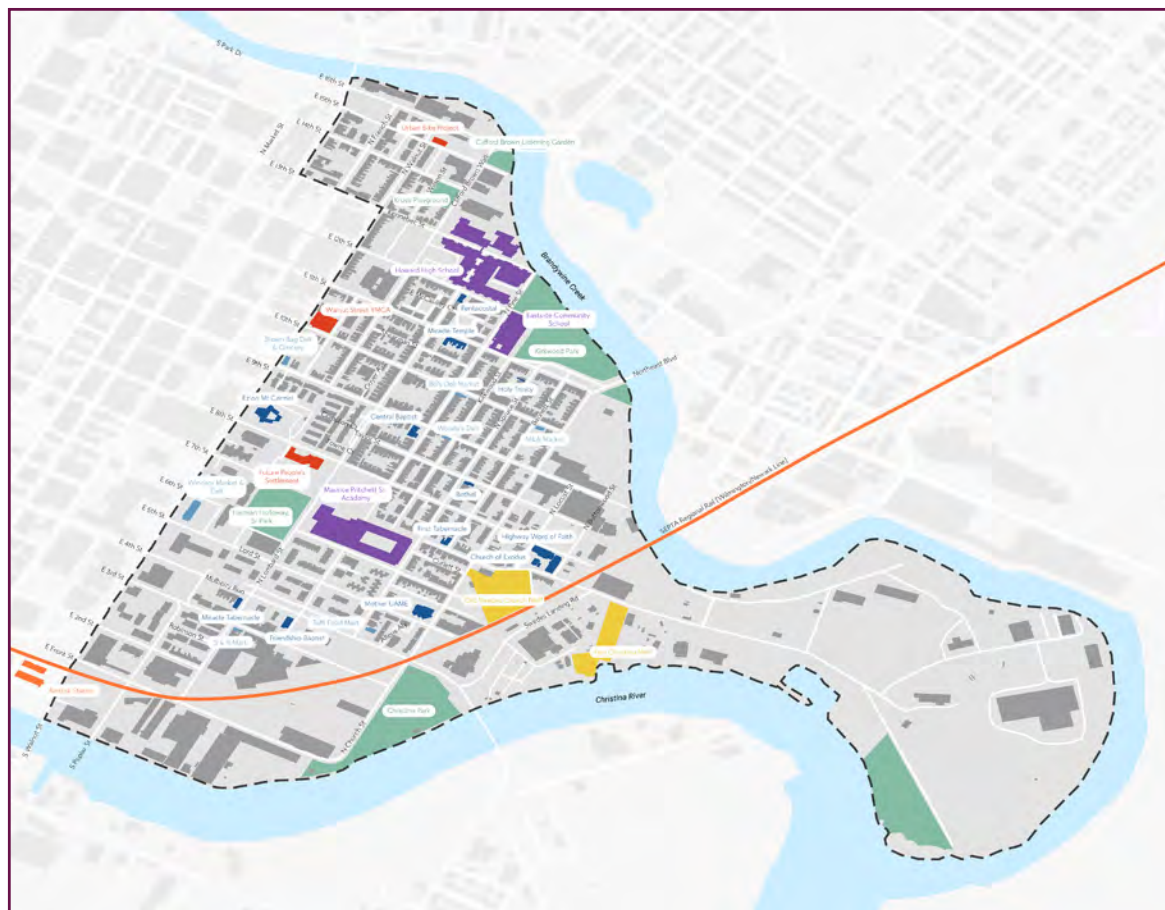
What is Eastside Thrive?

Eastside Thrive is a plan to make Wilmington's Eastside better over the next 10 years. This plan has been built from ideas from people who live on the Eastside and others who care about our community. It lays out what needs to happen for the community to reach its goals and make the community's vision for the future a reality. It also builds on the Eastside Blueprint Community Strategic Plan from 2008.

The plan focuses on the **7 vital conditions for health and well-being**, important things that help everyone stay healthy and happy. These are things everyone needs in their community to live good, healthy, and safe lives.

Location of the Eastside

Eastside Thrive focuses on the neighborhood that lays between the Christina River and the Brandywine Creek adjacent to Downtown Wilmington. The boundary on the west mostly follows Walnut Street but also includes a few blocks west of Walnut on the north side of the area. Historically, the Eastside stretched to the west of Walnut, including a Black business district on French Street which was forcibly removed during the Urban Renewal period in the 60s and 70s. The boundaries used were selected to correspond to current US Census tracts.



Project Schedule

The Eastside Thrive process took place over nine months in 2024, but was a product of much work by local organizations and individuals starting in 2023.

Pre-Planning



January - May 2024
Goal: Work with the Eastside community to develop a process for the plan and hire a planning consultant. HFH, CBCDC, community engagement specialists, and residents who served on the earlier iteration of the steering committee were involved in this process.

Understand



April - June 2024
Goal: Understand the key issues, challenges, and previous plans affecting the study area through analysis and engagement.

Envision



July - Sept 2024
Goal: Provide vetted strategies and approaches to achieving project goals and reaching engaged and supportive stakeholders.

Act



Oct - Dec 2024
Goal: Document a clear path to implementation, including range of costs and funding, timeline, and responsibility.



Public Engagement

Public engagement has been a big part of creating the Eastside Thrive plan. By listening to the ideas and concerns of the people who live in the Eastside, the plan better reflects what the community values, needs and wants. By sharing their thoughts, neighbors have helped shape solutions that will make the area stronger, safer, and more welcoming for everyone. The Eastside Thrive process was designed to ensure the community's voice was prioritized.

5,939 people live in the Eastside.

More than **80% are Black or African-American.**

The neighborhood has high percentages of people **under 20 and over 60 years** old.

More than a quarter of people on the Eastside report **living with a disability.**

Compared to Wilmington as a whole, the Eastside has a higher percentage of woman-led households and single parent families.

Working with the Eastside Thrive Steering Committee, a goal was set of engaging **at least 10% of the Eastside's population.**

Additional goals were set for engaging **elders, youth, residents with disabilities, and single parent households.**

Outreach Results

Pre-Planning Engagement:

More than **100** participants

Understand Phase Events:

535 people engaged

Envision Phase Events:

1,023 people engaged

Online Participants:

158 people engaged

Total:

At least **1,816** people engaged

More than 30% of the total population of the neighborhood participated.

Who helped get the word out and connect with the community?

Partner Organizations

The organizations who lead this project, including Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County and the Central Baptist Community Development Corporation led much of the outreach for Eastside Thrive. Many other local organizations volunteered their time, space, or other resources to assist in outreach and to ensuring the voices of those they serve were heard in the process.

Community Engagement Specialists

Richard and AliShah Watson served as engagement specialists in the early phases of preparing for the Eastside Thrive process.

Steering Committee

Fifteen residents and stakeholders served on a project steering committee. These residents attended five meetings through the course of the process and were compensated for their time and expertise.

Ambassadors

Seven Eastside residents were engaged as project Ambassadors and paid for their time. They were instrumental in door-to-door outreach and bringing outreach materials to groups and organizations throughout the neighborhood.

Consultants

Mend Collaborative provided strategy for public engagement, hosted and facilitated steering committees and open houses, created materials for outreach, and designed a project website.

Events and Activities

A Variety of events and activities were utilized as outreach to reach many different community members.

Understand Phase Events:

- ◆ 2 Steering Committee Meetings
- ◆ Community Workshop in July
- ◆ Pop-Ups at 14 events including:
 - ◆ Pritchett School Opening - Students & Parents
 - ◆ Eastside Residents Meeting - Residents
 - ◆ Compton Apartment Pop-up - Seniors
 - ◆ Stop the Violence Block Party - Families & Community
 - ◆ Door-to-Door - Residents

Envision Phase Events:

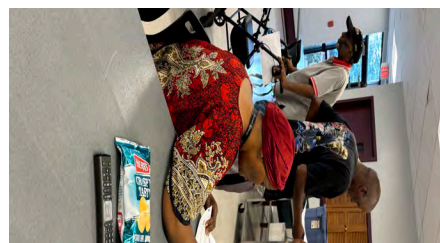
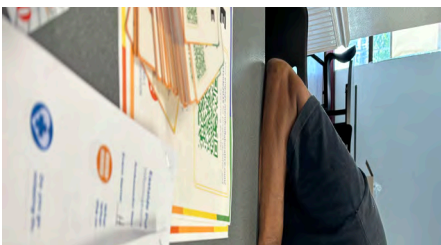
- ◆ 2 Steering Committee Meetings
- ◆ Community Workshop & Rock-the-Block in September
- ◆ Pop-Ups at 6 events including:
 - ◆ YMCA Teen Panel - Students
 - ◆ Eastside Residents Meeting - Residents
 - ◆ Eastside Housing Meeting - Homeowners
 - ◆ Kalmar Nykel Event - Families
 - ◆ Door-to-Door - Residents

Act Phase Events:

- ◆ 1 Steering Committee Meeting
- ◆ 2 Organizational Stakeholder Meetings
- ◆ Press Conference and Community Celebration

Throughout the Process:

- ◆ Project Website and Online Surveys



7 Vital Conditions for Health and Well Being

The **7 vital conditions for health and well-being** are the basic things everyone needs to live a healthy and happy life. These include things like safe places to live, good schools, clean air, and access to doctors. When these needs are met, people can thrive and take care of themselves and their families. By making sure the Eastside has these conditions, we can help everyone live better and healthier lives. The Eastside Thrive Plan is organized based on these seven elements.



Belonging and Civic Muscle

What would Belonging and Civic Muscle look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has strong social supports and networks
- ◆ The Eastside has vibrant arts and culture
- ◆ The Eastside has a strong connection to its history



Basic Needs for Health and Safety

What would Basic Needs for Health and Safety look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has low prevalence of physical and mental health issues
- ◆ The Eastside has access to healthcare facilities
- ◆ The Eastside has access to an affordable grocery store



Humane Housing

What would Humane Housing look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has access to affordable and high-quality housing
- ◆ The Eastside has paths to homeownership
- ◆ The Eastside has enough space per person in the household



Thriving Natural World

What would Thriving Natural World look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside cool and shady
- ◆ The Eastside has minimal levels of air pollution
- ◆ The Eastside has access to nearby parks and open space



Meaningful Work and Wealth

What would Meaningful Work and Wealth look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has family and community wealth
- ◆ The Eastside has many entrepreneurs
- ◆ The Eastside has community job training opportunities



Lifelong Learning

What would Lifelong Learning look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has quality elementary and high school facilities
- ◆ The Eastside has access to higher education
- ◆ The Eastside has job and skills training that provides access to great jobs



Reliable Transportation

What would Reliable Transportation look like in the Eastside?:

- ◆ The Eastside has plenty of safe transit and mobility options
- ◆ The Eastside has no pedestrian and biker accidents
- ◆ The Eastside has transit that gets residents to important community resources

Vision Statement

To create a vision statement, the steering committee looked at ideas and feedback from the community during the Understand phase. Together, they decided on a statement about the future that the community wants to see. This statement helps guide the plan. For each recommendation, we ask: If we do this, will it help us reach the future we all imagine?

My Eastside is a **vibrant neighborhood** where **everyone feels welcome** and our **needs are fulfilled** at every stage of our lives. Our neighborhood is **safe, with well-maintained homes, comfortable streets and green parks** that reflect the pride of its inhabitants. **Artists and musicians give life to our rich history** and there are places that support **continual learning**. **Different ways to get around** help us reach jobs, important services, and locally-owned small businesses. From community programs, block parties and local gatherings, **Eastside has many ways for residents to stay active and connected.**

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BELONGING AND CIVIC MUSCLE



**EASTSIDE
THRIVE**



Belonging and Civic Muscle

Belonging and Civic Muscle means having good friends and family to help us feel happy and fulfilled. When we have other people to support us, it helps us feel good and handle life's challenges. It's also about being part of a community and making it a better place. When people in a community trust and help each other, they work better together. This teamwork builds a strong foundation for everyone to create a better future together, building "civil muscle".

What would Belonging and Civic Muscle look like in the Eastside?:



Source: Eastside Ambassadors



The Eastside has strong social supports and networks

Eastside residents would feel that they belong to a thriving and connected community, where people help each other out, share resources, and know what's going on. Community support reduces stress and loneliness, leading to a happier and healthier community.



Source: Mend Collaborative



The Eastside has vibrant arts and culture

Public spaces in the Eastside would showcase the diverse talents of local artists. Cultural programs and events would keep traditions alive, building community pride.



August Quarterly. Source: Delaware Historical Society



The Eastside has a strong connection to its history

The Eastside would honor people, places, and movements that contributed to the growth of the community. People would understand where they came from to better know where they're going in the future.

What We Heard

45+ mentions of more community events in Eastside for all ages

"make it **easier** for residents to be heard."

"bring Eastside **together.**"

"we can increase **belonging** by bring[ing] the community organization[s] together."

"[we need] consistent **information** about what is happening in community."

"[we need] text or mailing blast with community info."





"I enjoy learning about the history of the Eastside. The black history makes me feel **welcome**."

"[we need] **everyone** getting together as one to talk as a community."

"bring more events that help the kids **grow**."

"[we need] **more events** in local places."



Existing Conditions

History of Eastside

pre - 1800



Lenape Tribal seal. The Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware made a Tribal Government in March 2010, and they are still active today. Source: Delaware Tribe of Indians

First Inhabitants: The Wilmington area is first home to the Lenape people, who were led by Chief Mattahorn in the early 1600s. In 1638, the Swedes built Fort Christina in the Eastside, the first Swedish settlement in North America. Later Dutch and English colonists settled the area.

1800 - 1900



Early settlement of Eastside (1874). Source: Wikimedia

The Eastside Community Grows: By the 1800s, Eastside was settled by Black families, and played a vital role in the Underground Railroad and establishing historic institutions like the Union African Methodist Episcopal Church and Howard High School.



Four barbers pose by chairs at Burton's Tonsorial Parlor at 801 Walnut St (1938). Source: Delaware Historical Society

1900 - 1960

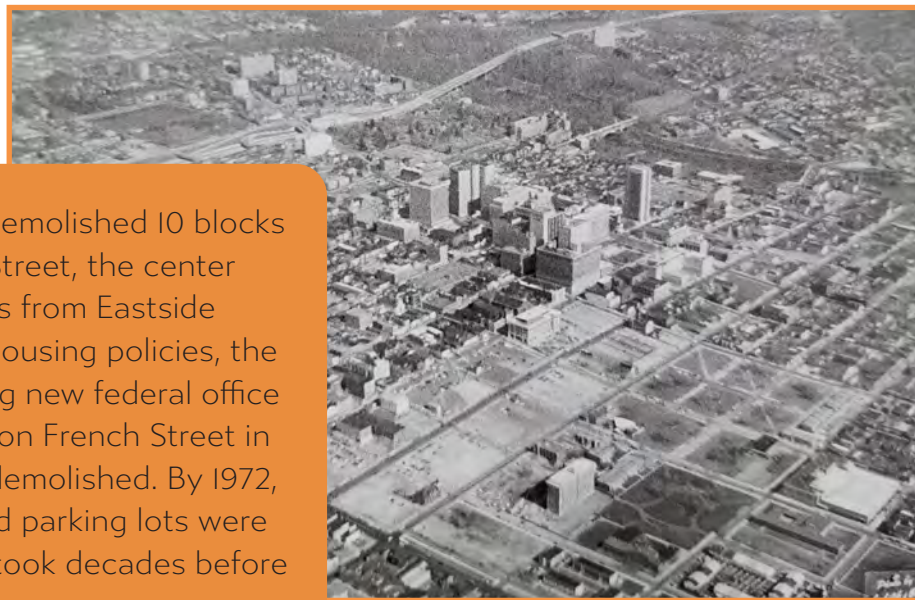
A Cultural, Economic, And Political Center Of Black Wilmington: The Eastside neighborhood becomes a cultural hub with thriving schools, churches, and Black owned businesses, like restaurants, barbershops, pharmacies, jazz clubs, and theaters. Many Black doctors, teachers, business owners, and lawyers were elected to the Wilmington City Council. They helped make decisions for the well-being of Black people in Wilmington.



Eastside musicians and residents enjoying the August Quarterly Festival (1939). Source: Delaware Historical Society

"Big" August Quarterly Festival: The Quarterly festival, held on French Street, celebrated religious freedom and black life, and drew thousands to the Eastside. Mother African Church hosted the event which took place annually in August from 1814-1969, a total of 156 years!

1960-2000



Aerial view showing the impact of urban renewal, designated as slum clearance, on the Eastside, looking south from the city center toward Interstate 95. Source: Delaware Historical Society

“Urban Renewal”: In 1967, the city of Wilmington demolished 10 blocks of mostly well-maintained buildings along French Street, the center of Black-owned businesses, despite strong protests from Eastside residents. With funding and support from federal housing policies, the city promised to redevelop the area by constructing new federal office buildings. The final Big Quarterly festival was held on French Street in 1969. A year later the Mother African Church was demolished. By 1972, parts of the Eastside lay in ruins, and above-ground parking lots were built over the demolished areas of the Eastside. It took decades before the city’s plans for the area actually came to fruition.



Eastside residents. Source: Mend Collaborative

2000 - Today

2024: The Eastside community has a rich history and cultural legacy. Despite challenges, the Eastside remains a strong, predominantly Black neighborhood with deep cultural roots, ongoing local businesses, and a legacy of resilience. Today, approximately 5,900 residents live in the area, continuing to shape its future while honoring its past.

“East Side will always have a story to tell shaped by a long history of racism in policies, practices, and laws. And still, they rise!”

- Hara Wright-Smith

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support Belonging and Civic Muscle, the Eastside should...

BC 1.

Establish a “roundtable” for collaboration between community based organizations and clarify the role of a “backbone” organization to coordinate implementation of the plan

To make sure the Eastside Thrive’s goals are met, a “roundtable” group should be formed. This group will be made up of community organizations working in the area. They will identify a “backbone” organization that will lead the implementation of the Eastside Thrive. With clear roles, a strong leadership structure, and measurable objectives, the backbone organization will manage projects, find funding, advocate for the neighborhood, and serve as a main center for communication and support.

BC 2.

Develop a capital campaign to establish dedicated funding for the plan’s goals.

To reach the goals of the plan, the Eastside community can start a capital campaign to raise money. This campaign will bring groups together to find funding from big donors and other sources. By working as a team, the community can get the money needed to improve health, create jobs, and make life better for everyone in the Eastside.

BC 3.

Enhance Communication and Information Sharing through “Eastside Thrive”

The Eastside can improve communication by using the “Eastside Thrive” brand to create a newsletter and other tools for sharing information. This will help residents be informed about local events, resources, and services, by using social media, mailings and bulletin boards. By making it easy for everyone to stay connected, the Eastside will build a stronger, more informed community.

BC 4.

Collaborate with partners to support existing and new community events

The Eastside neighborhood should work with local partners to bring back and support community events, like expanding the August Quarterly festival. This festival, which has a long history, can be updated with new activities that celebrate the Eastside’s culture and bring people together. Additionally, the neighborhood can plan year-round events for all ages, including seniors and youth, to strengthen the sense of community and highlight local history.

BC 5. Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood

The Eastside can celebrate its rich history and culture by adding public art and historical displays throughout the neighborhood. Key projects could include creating an interactive Underground Railroad memorial along the waterfront, and installing interactive art, murals and sculptures that honor important people, places, and events in the community. This will celebrate Eastside's unique stories, helping everyone learn about the neighborhood's heritage

BC 6. Work with the National Park Service to expand the visibility of the "Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park" at Howard High School and to preserve and expand Howard's historic collection.

Howard High School played an important role in the fight for equal education. By working with the National Park Service, the Eastside can help more people learn about Howard as part of the "Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park." The Eastside can protect Howard's historic items, create a place to display them, and share its story with students and visitors.

BC 7. Utilize historic organizations and designation to increase funding in the Eastside.

The Eastside's rich history in African American culture and civil rights can help the neighborhood grow and improve. By joining groups like the African American Civil Rights Network and the Association of African American Museums, the community can get grants, resources, and national recognition to protect its heritage. Marking important buildings as historic, and creating partnerships with preservation groups will bring funding and attention to the Eastside, helping restore its unique history and share it with others.

BC 1.

Establish a “roundtable” for collaboration between community based organizations and clarify the role of a “backbone” organization to coordinate implementation of the plan

To make sure the community’s goals which are laid out in the plan are met, a "roundtable" group can be created where all of the community organizations that work in the Eastside can come together to work together. This roundtable will help everyone share ideas and make decisions as a team. Along with the roundtable, there needs to be a central "backbone" organization to keep everything on track. This backbone organization will be in charge of helping carry out the plan and making sure all the projects happen smoothly.

The backbone organization will also act as a central hub for community information, helping to spread neighborhood news to everyone. It will be able to receive public and private funding, which will help pay for important programs like health and safety, beautification, and events. The organization could also own and develop property, making it easier to improve the neighborhood. It will be able to work with the city government and speak up for the community’s needs.



Source: Eastside Ambassadors

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Define Clear Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Roundtable Group: Establish the purpose, scope, and specific responsibilities of the roundtable group. Define how members will contribute, communicate, and collaborate. This could include setting up regular meetings, designating representatives from each organization, and developing protocols for decision-making. ♦ Backbone Organization: Develop a charter or mission statement that outlines its roles as a coordinator, fund manager, and advocate for the community. This charter should also clarify how it will support the roundtable group and community partners. What the organization is currently working on along the waterways? 	<p>Two organizational meetings have been held as a part of the plan development. Each meeting invited a number of community organizations to discuss next steps. Central Baptist CDC, Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County and Healthy Communities Delaware will continue this coalition organizing following the plan's completion, collaborating with as many organizations as possible.</p>
<p>Create a Governance Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Form a governing board or advisory committee for the backbone organization, including representatives from community organizations, residents, and local businesses. This ensures a balanced approach to decision-making and keeps the organization accountable to the community's goals. ♦ Set up Action Teams for each of the plans topics within the roundtable group to tackle specific focus areas, such as health and safety, beautification, and economic development. This structure allows targeted actions while still aligning with the broader mission. ♦ Coordinate with city officials and other stakeholders to advocate for policies that align with the Eastside's revitalization goals. The backbone organization can serve as the community's unified voice. 	<p>Action teams should be developed based on topic. Some topics, such as Meaningful Work and Wealth and Lifelong Learning may be consolidated, as many organizations work in both of those categories.</p>

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a Data-Driven Monitoring and Evaluation System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Establish measurable objectives for each community goal and regularly collect data to track progress. These objectives might include metrics like property improvements, crime reduction, health outcomes, or engagement levels. ◆ Implement quarterly reviews with the roundtable group to assess progress, troubleshoot obstacles, and recalibrate strategies as needed. ◆ Develop yearly reports that share progress, data, and lessons learned in an accessible and transparent manner. Use storytelling to engage stakeholders and funders. 	<p>Explore potential partnership with the Center for Neighborhood Revitalization and Research at Delaware State University</p>

BC 2.

Develop a capital campaign to establish dedicated funding for the plan’s goals.

To make sure the goals of the plan are achieved, the Eastside community can start a capital campaign to raise money for the work. This campaign will bring together local organizations and help them find funding opportunities. By working together, the community can get more support from both public and private sources. The money raised will help put the plan into action and reach important goals, like improving health, jobs, and opportunities for everyone. This effort will make local organizations stronger and ensure that all the ideas in the plan come to life, creating a better future for the Eastside.

A capital campaign involves several key steps to raise money for a specific project. First, it’s important to plan the campaign, set clear goals, and assess the community’s support through a feasibility study. Next, a strong leadership team is formed, and materials are created to communicate the campaign’s purpose. The campaign is then launched, starting with major donors and followed by a broader fundraising effort. Throughout the campaign, ongoing communication and appreciation for donors are essential. After reaching the fundraising goal, the project is implemented, and the community celebrates. Finally, continued follow-up ensures transparency and keeps donors engaged for future efforts.



Source: Unsplash

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Conduct a feasibility study and set clear goals based on its findings. This study will help assess the level of community interest and potential support, ensuring the campaign has a solid foundation. Utilize the results of the plan to define funding targets. Setting realistic goals will increase the likelihood of success and create a strong case for support.</p>	<p>These actions should be undertaken by the Roundtable described in Recommendation BCI.</p>

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Form a campaign leadership team through the proposed roundtable and develop a unified message, hiring a consultant if necessary. Assemble a committee of respected community leaders and appoint a chairperson to lead the charge. This team will play a critical role in outreach and provide the campaign with credibility. Develop a clear, consistent message that conveys the campaign’s vision and highlights the benefits for the entire community. This structure allows targeted actions while still aligning with the broader mission.</p>	
<p>Engaging major donors and formally launching the campaign. Begin by identifying and reaching out to major donor prospects, aiming to secure initial commitments to build momentum. Follow this with a public campaign kickoff event to generate excitement and encourage broader community involvement. A strong launch with visible support will boost credibility and demonstrate community-wide commitment.</p>	
<p>Expand community outreach efforts and implement a recognition program for donors. Use social media, community events, and grassroots appeals to reach a wider audience, keeping the campaign message front and center. Create recognition tiers to celebrate donors at various levels, which can help build loyalty and foster a culture of giving. This will also help maintain momentum and encourage sustained support throughout the campaign.</p>	
<p>Provide ongoing updates, implement funded projects, and celebrate the campaign’s success. Regularly share updates on fundraising progress and project impacts, ensuring transparency and keeping donors engaged. Once campaign goals are met, promptly implement funded projects to make visible improvements that show supporters their contributions are making a difference. To cap off the campaign, host a celebration event to recognize achievements, honor donors, and reinforce a sense of community accomplishment.</p>	

BC 3.

Enhance Communication and Information Sharing through "Eastside Thrive"

The Eastside neighborhood can improve communication by creating a newsletter and other content channels using the "Eastside Thrive" brand. This newsletter will help share important information with residents about resources, events, and services in the community. It can be sent out regularly so that everyone stays informed.

To reach even more people, the community can use other ways to spread the word. This could include social media pages like Facebook or Instagram, where residents can get updates and interact with each other. Marquee boards in busy areas and community bulletin boards will also help share information where everyone can see it. Regular mailings will ensure that no one misses out, even if they don't use social media. All these tools will help keep Eastside residents connected and up-to-date on what's happening in the neighborhood.



Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Create a recognizable logo and style for "Eastside Thrive" that can be used across all channels. Develop a communication plan outlining goals, target audiences, and key content themes (e.g., resources, events, and services). This brand consistency will help residents quickly identify "Eastside Thrive" materials as reliable sources of community information.</p>	<p>These actions should be coordinated by the Roundtable described in Recommendation BCI.</p>
<p>Design a digital and physical newsletter format that will be distributed monthly or quarterly, depending on community needs. Include sections on local events, resources, health and safety updates, and community success stories. Identify a team or individuals responsible for gathering content, designing, and distributing the newsletter to ensure consistency.</p>	<p>The community newsletter already undertaken by Central Baptist CDC should be the basis for this action.</p>

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Set up “Eastside Thrive” pages on popular social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, and assign a community manager to handle updates and engagement. Regularly post content on upcoming events, important neighborhood alerts, and resident highlights. Encourage community members to follow and interact with these pages to foster an engaged online community.</p>	
<p>Place bulletin boards or marquees in high-traffic locations such as community centers, local businesses, or near public transit stops. Update these boards regularly with current information about upcoming events, local services, and announcements. A designated volunteer or staff member could oversee updates to keep information accurate and relevant.</p>	
<p>Distribute physical mailings to households to reach residents who may not have access to digital platforms. These mailings can contain highlights from the “Eastside Thrive” newsletter and details on upcoming events. Include a call to action encouraging residents to subscribe to the digital version or follow social media channels for ongoing updates, making sure that no one is left out.</p>	

BC 4.

Collaborate with partners to support existing and new community events

The Eastside neighborhood should work with local partners to bring back and support fun events for everyone in the community. One idea is to expand the August Quarterly festival in the neighborhood, which is a celebration with deep roots in history. August Quarterly began more than 200 years ago as a way for Black churches to come together, celebrate their faith, and support each other and was often compared to Mardi Gras prior to urban renewal. The Quarterly has continued as a smaller festival in recent years, however, expanding it with new programs and activities could help everyone learn about the Eastside’s history and celebrate its culture.

In addition to the August Quarterly, the neighborhood could have more events that highlight the unique stories of the Eastside. Fun family nights and activities for all ages would bring people together and create a strong sense of community. There could also be events just for seniors, giving them a chance to gather and enjoy time with friends. These events would make the Eastside a lively place to live, where people of all ages can connect and celebrate together.



Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Work with local churches, historical societies, and cultural organizations to expand the August Quarterly festival. Form an organizing committee with these partners to plan additional activities, such as historical storytelling, musical performances, food vendors, and traditional crafts that celebrate the neighborhood’s heritage. Seek sponsorships from local businesses and grants to support the expanded programming and make the festival more vibrant.</p>	<p>Numerous existing organizations are active in these areas. The Roundtable should seek to coordinate activities and resources between these organizations and work to promote events in coordination with recommendation BC 3.</p>

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Plan a year-round calendar that includes events for different groups and interests, creating opportunities for family nights, outdoor movie screenings, and music in the park. Include historical tours or walking events that explore significant Eastside landmarks, helping residents and visitors appreciate the neighborhood’s history. By establishing a mix of seasonal and themed events, the Eastside can offer year-round engagement for residents.</p>	
<p>Create a series of monthly events specifically for seniors, such as game nights, hobby workshops, or tea gatherings. Collaborate with local senior centers and organizations to develop programs that foster social connections and provide easy access to activities tailored to their interests. By including senior-focused events, the neighborhood can ensure that all age groups feel involved in the community.</p>	
<p>Involve local youth groups and schools in planning and volunteering for events. Consider creating a youth ambassador program to encourage young people to participate actively, gain event-planning experience, and take pride in their neighborhood. Youth-led activities, like talent shows or sports tournaments, can be featured to appeal to younger audiences.</p>	
<p>Use the “Eastside Thrive” brand to promote all events through social media, newsletters, local bulletins, and marquee boards. Set up a dedicated website or event calendar page for the Eastside where people can check for upcoming activities. Distribute event flyers to local businesses, schools, and community centers to make sure everyone in the community knows about these opportunities to connect and celebrate.</p>	

BC 5.

Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood

To bring history and art into the Eastside, the community could add public art and historic displays throughout the neighborhood. A key idea, which is also mentioned in Recommendation HH2, is to create an Underground Railroad memorial along the waterfront, which would honor the area's role in helping people escape to freedom. Community members shared several ideas for how they'd like to see this history represented. Most people said they'd like interactive art installations that invite people to participate and feel connected to the stories. Others suggested sculptures, with one person requesting a statue of Maurice Pritchett, an beloved figure in the community. Some people also liked the idea of murals showing landmarks like the Bancroft School and the train station.

There are many important people and places that community members want to remember. Pastoe Richardson, LaDaye "Cooley" Johnson, Jackie Smith, Blanche Williams Stubbs, and Clifford Brown are just a few of the people mentioned. The community would also like to honor local places like Kirkwood Park, Bells Funeral Home, Jimmy's Barbershop, and events like the Women's Suffrage and African Parades. This art and history project could help make the Eastside a place where people learn about and celebrate the neighborhood's unique and powerful history.



Eastside sign for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.
Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Form a committee of community members, local artists, historians, and representatives from local organizations to guide the development of public art and historical displays. This group can lead decision-making, prioritize projects, and ensure that artwork and interpretations reflect community stories and values. The committee can also connect with potential partners, including schools, nonprofits, and cultural institutions, to help bring ideas to life.</p>	<p>Numerous community organizations are active in this space. The African American Heritage Institute and Howard High School Alumni Association will be especially important to the implementation of these actions.</p> <p>Explore partnering with Delaware Art Museum.</p>
<p>Collaborate with local artists and historians to design an interactive memorial along the waterfront that honors the Eastside’s role in the Underground Railroad. This could include sculpture, interpretive plaques, and interactive features that allow visitors to learn about this powerful history. Seek funding from local foundations and historical grants to support this cornerstone project, and consider adding QR codes or digital components that link to in-depth stories and resources.</p>	
<p>Commission local artists to create sculptures, murals, and installations that reflect significant figures and places in Eastside’s history. Examples could include a statue of Maurice Pritchett or murals depicting landmarks like Bancroft School and the train station. Host design workshops or community feedback sessions to involve residents in the creative process, ensuring that each piece resonates with community members and tells their stories authentically.</p>	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Create a series of murals or plaques around the neighborhood to honor important individuals and landmarks, such as Clifford Brown, Jackie Smith, Kirkwood Park, and Jimmy’s Barbershop. Partner with local high schools or youth organizations to involve young artists in painting murals, giving them a chance to learn about these historical figures and contribute to neighborhood beautification.</p>	
<p>Develop an Eastside Art and History Walking Tour that includes each new installation and historical display. Create a map or app with descriptions, photos, and audio narrations that allow visitors and residents to explore Eastside’s stories. This tour could be promoted through the “Eastside Thrive” brand and serve as an educational resource for local schools, attracting visitors while building pride among residents.</p>	

Case Study

CASE STUDY: PAPER MONUMENTS IN NEW ORLEANS

The "Paper Monuments" project in New Orleans was a community-driven public art initiative designed to honor untold stories of the city's people, places, and history. Launched in 2017, the project invited local residents to contribute ideas for new monuments that reflect New Orleans' diverse heritage, especially the stories often left out of traditional monuments. Through temporary posters and artworks placed around the city, Paper Monuments highlighted the contributions of Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities. This project aimed to spark conversations about public memory and to envision a more inclusive landscape of monuments and stories in New Orleans.



Paper Monuments display in New Orleans. Source: Paper Monuments

BC 6.

Work with the National Park Service to expand the visibility of the “Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park” at Howard High School and to preserve and expand Howard’s historic collection.

Howard High School has an important place in history, especially in the fight for equal education. To help share this story, we can work with the National Park Service to bring more attention to Howard High as part of the “Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park.” The Howard High School Alumni Association and the African American Heritage Institute have worked hard to protect items and documents from the school’s history, and more resources could help them continue this work and share it with more people.

Since Howard High is still a school, it’s hard for visitors to see the historic collection in person. A space nearby could be created to keep and display these items so that more people can learn about Howard’s role in history. The National Park Service could help by providing displays, helping with documentation, and sharing ways to tell the story of Howard. This would help protect the history and make it easier for the community to connect with Howard High School’s legacy and role in national school desegregation history.



Howard High School, 1940. Source: Delaware Historical Society

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Arrange regular meetings with representatives from the National Park Service (NPS), Howard High School Alumni Association, and the African American Heritage Institute to expand their partnership. Outline shared goals for enhancing Howard High School’s visibility, preserving its historical collection, and creating accessible educational resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The African American Heritage Institute and Howard High School Alumni Association will be especially important to the implementation of these actions. ◆ Explore opportunities to engage current or former residents to support this effort.

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Identify nearby spaces, such as a community center or local museum, that could house a dedicated exhibit area for Howard’s historical collection. Collaborate with NPS to design the space, incorporating both physical and digital displays that allow visitors to explore Howard High’s legacy. Secure funding to cover space rental, exhibit design, and ongoing maintenance.</p>	
<p>Work with NPS to inventory, preserve, and digitize Howard High’s historical items, including photographs, documents, and memorabilia. Creating a digital collection can increase accessibility for virtual visitors and protect the originals. Seek grants and donations to support these preservation efforts, and explore partnerships with local archives or libraries for long-term storage and access.</p>	
<p>Collaborate with NPS to design and install interpretive displays and wayfinding signs around the Howard High School site to educate the public about the school’s historical significance. These displays could include timelines, personal stories, and artifacts, creating a self-guided experience for visitors interested in learning about the Brown vs. Board of Education legacy in Wilmington.</p>	
<p>Create school and community programs that highlight Howard High School’s role in the desegregation movement. Work with NPS to develop guided tours, lecture series, and interactive workshops for students, teachers, and community groups. Promote these programs through local schools, libraries, and “Eastside Thrive” channels, encouraging broader engagement with Howard’s story.</p>	

BC 7.

Utilize historic organizations and designation to increase funding in the Eastside.

The Eastside has a rich history, especially in African American culture and civil rights. By joining historic organizations, the community can get extra support and funding to protect and celebrate this history. For example, joining the African American Civil Rights Network through the National Park Service would connect the Eastside with other important sites in Black history across the country. This can also open up new funding sources to help with preservation and storytelling.

Another way to bring more funding to the Eastside is by joining the Association of African American Museums. This group offers grants and resources to help communities like the Eastside protect and share their history. With these grants, the Eastside could create programs, fix up buildings, or even host events that teach others about its past. Being part of this group would also allow the Eastside to connect with experts and other resources to help with these projects.

For specific buildings that have historic significance, the community could look into special historic designations. By marking these buildings as important, the Eastside may be able to receive tax credits and funding that can help restore them. Instead of making it hard for homeowners to keep up with historic rules, this approach would focus on the buildings that truly matter, making it easier to get funding and preserve the Eastside's unique history.



Burton's Tonsorial Parlor, 1938. Source: Delaware Historical Society

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Begin the application process with the National Park Service (NPS) to join the African American Civil Rights Network, highlighting the Eastside’s significant role in Black history and civil rights. This connection to a national network will enhance visibility and funding opportunities for preservation projects. The community can then collaborate with NPS to promote Eastside as a notable destination within this network</p>	<p>The African American Heritage Institute and Howard High School Alumni Association will be especially important to the implementation of these actions.</p>
<p>Apply for membership in the Association of African American Museums to access grants and resources that support historical preservation, storytelling, and education. Leverage available funding to launch programs, restore culturally important sites, and host educational events focused on Eastside’s heritage. Establish relationships with other members to gain insights into best practices for community-based history projects.</p>	
<p>Identify key buildings in the Eastside with historical or architectural significance that are eligible for local, state, or national historic designation. Work with local historic preservation experts to help with the application process and ensure proper documentation of each site’s cultural importance. Designating these buildings can open access to funding, tax credits, and preservation grants specifically for historically significant sites.</p>	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a local preservation fund dedicated to the Eastside that can be bolstered through donations, grants, and membership contributions. Promote this fund to attract investment from residents, local businesses, and foundations interested in preserving the neighborhood’s history. Use this fund to provide matching grants for small restoration projects or to support community-driven preservation initiatives.</p>	
<p>Partner with historic organizations to host events and tours that raise awareness and funds for preservation efforts. These could include history-themed walking tours, lecture series, or cultural festivals celebrating Eastside’s role in Black history and civil rights. Use these events to attract local supporters, secure donations, and build relationships with larger preservation networks.</p>	



BASIC NEEDS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY



EASTSIDE
THRIVE



Basic Needs for Health and Safety

Basic Needs for Health and Safety means having clean air and water, good food, and a safe home. People also need good relationships and should feel free to be themselves living a life free from violence, injury, and stress. Regular doctor visits and getting care when needed help keep us and our families well, too.

What would Basic Needs for Health and Safety look like on the Eastside?



Source: Unsplash



The Eastside has low prevalence of physical and mental health issues

The Eastside offers easy access to fitness and wellness facilities, along with safe outdoor areas for exercise and recreation. People in the community feel connected and supported, with mental health resources and education readily available. With fewer health issues, the Eastside can enjoy a higher quality of life.



Source: iStock



The Eastside has access to healthcare facilities

The Eastside has health care facilities within walking distance that help get residents immediate medical services.



Source: iStock



The Eastside has access to an affordable grocery store

Eastside residents are able to easily access inexpensive fresh food for themselves and family at a centrally located grocery store.

What We Heard

80+ mentions of safety concerns in the Eastside



"more health programs for families and kids."

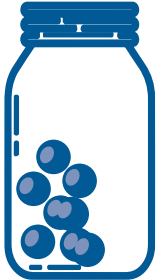
"make a safe haven for the homeless."

"[we need] safety officers getting to know the community, patrolling the areas frequently."

"more local clinics and social services."

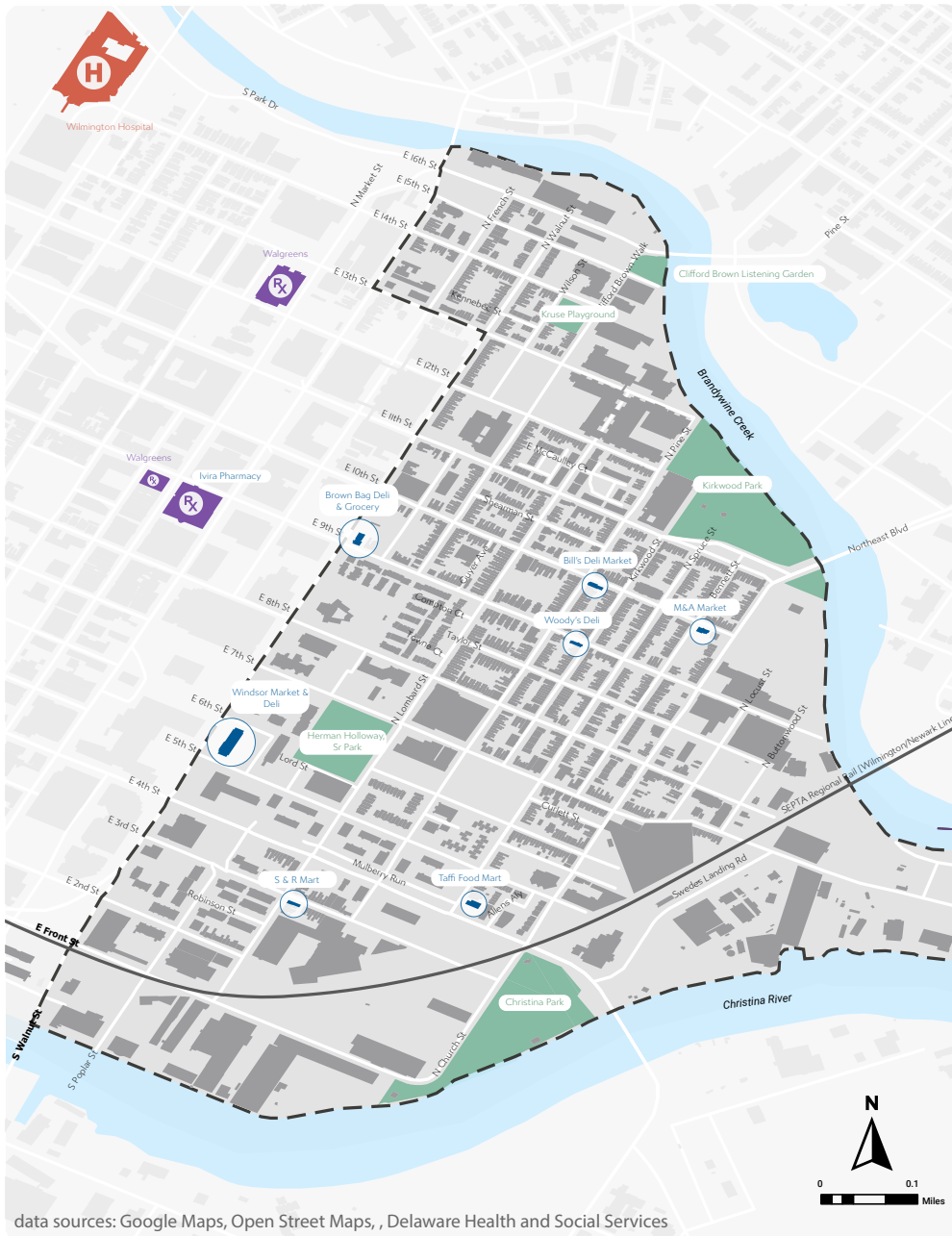


Basic Needs for Health and Safety received the highest priority for the Eastside Thrive plan, with **167** votes.



Existing Conditions

Basic Needs for Health and Safety Resources



Health facilities in the Eastside are mainly located on the west edge of the neighborhood. There is a lack of walkable and centrally located health facilities and local facilities that can treat drug dependence.

Food options are also mostly on the edges. Organizations like Sunday Breakfast Mission and other local churches along with community gardens such as Urban Acres and Duffy's Hope help provide food for the community. Eastside residents have access to several small markets and delis, including S&R Market, Taffi Food Mart, and Windsor Market, which provide grocery and convenience items. There are opportunities to increase health programming and access to food services.

Basic Needs for Health and Safety

- Hospital
- Pharmacy
- Food/Retail
- Park
- Eastside Boundary

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support Basic Needs for Health and Safety, the Eastside should...

BN 1.

Collaborate with partners to develop and offer more health programs

Work with partners to bring more programs and services to the neighborhood. This includes expanding local clinics, sharing information about existing care, and exploring ideas like mobile clinics or shuttles to make access easier. By providing services for all ages, such as Medicare assistance for seniors and preventive care for families, the Eastside can promote lifelong wellness and create a healthier community.

BN 2.

Work with partners to create accessible rehabilitation facilities that allow individuals to seek support with minimal barriers

The Eastside can team up with partners to make it easier for people to get the rehabilitation services they need. Ideas include developing a neighborhood satellite center, offering transportation to existing facilities, or bringing mobile clinics to the area. By making rehabilitation easier to access, the community can help individuals recover, improve their health, and build stronger, more stable lives.

BN 3.

Develop comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood

Create a support center to help people experiencing homelessness by providing shelter, food, medical care, job training, and other services in one place. This kind of center makes it easier for people to get the help they need to rebuild their lives and find stability. By working with local partners, the community can try different ideas, like temporary pop-ups or a permanent center, to offer these services effectively.

BN 4.

Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement

To increase safety and reduce crime in the neighborhood, create a special street team that works with local police. This team would get to know people in the community, help those who need support, and figure out other ways of reducing crime. The team could regularly meet with the Wilmington Street Team, Wilmington Police Department, and other community partners to see what is working and make changes if needed.

BN 5.

Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions

Form community teams with local police and specialists to find areas on the Eastside that feel unsafe or have problems like trash dumping or drug activity. Look at things like lighting, pathways, and cleanliness to check for unsafe conditions. Share the findings with the Wilmington Street Team and Police Department and work together on improvements, involving the community at each step.

BN 6.

Advocate for healthy food options in the neighborhood

Work with partners to bring a grocery store that sells healthy food to the Eastside. By collecting signatures, holding meetings, and teaming up with local groups, residents can show how important this is. They can also talk to city leaders to help make it easier for a store with healthy food options to open in the area.

BN 1.

Collaborate with partners to develop and offer more health programs

Having health programs for all stages of life right in your neighborhood is essential for creating a healthy, resilient community. Local access to health services means people can quickly reach the care they need, from check-ups and dental services to mental health support. These programs provide a foundation for lifelong health, helping children develop good habits, supporting adults in managing stress and well-being, and ensuring seniors stay active and engaged. With everything nearby, residents can easily take advantage of preventive care and routine services, promoting overall wellness and reducing long-term health issues.



Source: ChristianaCare

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders in improving health care access for Eastside residents. There are a few clinics in the neighborhood that may need support to expand and amplify their service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mental Health Association of Delaware (MHA) ◆ National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) ◆ Delaware Healthcare Clinics ◆ The Life Health Center ◆ ChristianaCare Health Services ◆ ChristianaCare ◆ Veterans Affairs ◆ Delaware Hope ◆ Impact Life ◆ YMCA

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a few feasible scenarios for making health care more accessible such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Expanding health care offered currently in the neighborhood ♦ Getting the word out about what is offered, when and where ♦ Getting mobile clinics to come to the area or providing a shuttle to care providers 	
<p>Work with partners to pilot a few different scenarios to improve access and to get more people the care they need. Check in quarterly or at a consistent interval to check-in on progress.</p>	
<p>For senior community members, host the Delaware Medicare Assistance Bureau (DMAB) at a central location to help people enroll into Medicare or Medicaid. If DMAB can not be in person, set up areas where people can call them and provide an aid to help with the process.</p>	<p>These clinics can be hosted a few times a year and advertised to get the word out.</p>

BN 2.

Work with partners to create accessible rehabilitation facilities that allow individuals to seek support with minimal barriers

Accessible rehabilitation facilities are important because they allow individuals to seek the support they need without facing unnecessary obstacles. When rehabilitation services are easy to reach and free of complicated requirements, people are more likely to pursue help promptly, improving their chances for recovery. Accessible facilities provide a safe, supportive environment for individuals to address substance abuse, mental health challenges, or physical rehabilitation needs. By reducing barriers, these facilities ensure that everyone, regardless of background or resources, can find a pathway to better health, stability, and a renewed sense of purpose.



Source: Pxfuel

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders regarding rehabilitation in the Eastside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ ChristianaCare Rehabilitation Services
<p>Develop a few feasible scenarios for making rehabilitation more accessible such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Developing a satellite rehabilitation center in the neighborhood ◆ Exploring ways to get people to the ChristianaCare rehabilitation center ◆ Getting mobile rehabilitation clinics to come to the area 	
<p>Work with partners to pilot a few different scenarios to improve access and to get more people the care they need. Check in quarterly or at a consistent interval to check-in on progress.</p>	

*Consider aligning this effort with BN 3. for opportunities to explore a program that overlaps multiple partners.

BN 3. Develop comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood

Creating a comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness is important because it provides essential resources and a stable environment for individuals to rebuild their lives. Such facilities can offer shelter, washrooms, food services, medical care, mental health services, job training, and social services all in one place, addressing the complex and interconnected needs of this vulnerable population. By combining services under one roof, comprehensive facilities reduce the barriers people face in accessing help, fostering a path to stability and independence.



Source: iStock

Near Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders to discuss homelessness services in the Eastside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sunday Breakfast Mission ◆ Catholic Charities ◆ Delaware Health and Social Services ◆ New Castle County - Hope Center ◆ Ministry of Caring ◆ Friendship House ◆ The Salvation Army Delaware
<p>Develop a few feasible scenarios for providing accessible homelessness services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Expanding current services offered in the neighborhood ◆ Developing pop-up pilot facilities ◆ Creating a permanent facility 	
<p>Work with partners to pilot a few different scenarios to improve access and to get more people the care they need. Check in quarterly or at a consistent interval to check-in on progress.</p>	

*Consider aligning this effort with BN 3. for opportunities to explore a program that overlaps multiple partners.

BN 4.

Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement

A dedicated street team providing safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement is crucial in areas with higher crime because it builds trust, enhances community presence, and helps prevent incidents before they escalate. These teams can focus on building relationships with residents, identifying at-risk individuals, and offering direct resources or referrals to support services.

The Wilmington Street Team (WST) is an anti-violence program launched in June 2023 under the City’s Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI), which started in 2022. WST focuses on reducing violence through direct community engagement, offering support and resources to high-risk individuals, and building trust within neighborhoods. By working closely with local residents and organizations, the Street Team aims to create safer streets and foster a stronger, more resilient community.



Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
Convene a meeting with the Wilmington Street Team and the Wilmington Police Department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Coalition for a Safer Delaware
Discuss scenarios for reducing crime in the neighborhood such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Providing a dedicated street team for the Eastside ◆ Training a dedicated street team about services on the Eastside ◆ Limiting parking and certain street access to deal with drug hotspots 	Explore opportunities for including community wellness ambassadors in partnership with the Wilmington Street Team
Work with partners to pilot a few different scenarios and check in quarterly or at a consistent interval to check-in on progress.	

*Consider aligning this effort with BN 5. for opportunities to explore a program that overlaps multiple partners.

BN 5. Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions

Conducting a nighttime safety audit in your community is essential for identifying areas that may feel unsafe or be vulnerable to crime after dark. This process involves evaluating lighting, visibility, and pathways with the goal of ensuring everyone feels secure moving around at night. A nighttime audit helps pinpoint places where additional lighting, clear signage, or security measures could enhance safety, which is particularly important for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.



Source: Wikimedia

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
Undergo a nighttime safety audit of the Eastside. Pay close attention to areas that may experience illegal dumping and drug dealing.	A nighttime safety audit is an assessment of public spaces after dark to identify areas needing improved lighting, visibility, and security to enhance community safety
Develop a community audit and observation team to perform the evaluation. During an audit, observe and record details about the nighttime conditions. Each team should have a dedicated law enforcement personnel to accompany them as they undergo the audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wilmington Street Team ◆ Wilmington Police Department
Once the audit is complete, develop a short report and/or presentation of the results of the audit.	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Coordinate a follow-up meeting with Wilmington Street Team and the Wilmington Police Department to go over the results and come up with plans for the next steps. This may include working with a lighting or security specialist.</p>	<p>Street lighting at night isn't just about making spaces bright—it's about placing low, focused light where it's needed most. Well-designed lighting highlights pathways, crosswalks, and public spaces, increasing safety without over-lighting or creating glare.</p>
<p>Check in with the Wilmington Street Team and the Wilmington Police Department quarterly to coordinate efforts and support the work that has been progressed on the Eastside.</p>	<p>If possible, find ways to support efforts with fundraising and/or assistance with grant opportunities.</p>

*Consider aligning this effort with BN 4. for opportunities to explore a program that overlaps multiple partners.

BN 6.

Advocate for healthy food options in the neighborhood

Having healthy food options within your neighborhood, like in local corner stores and grocery stores, is essential for supporting overall community health. When fresh fruits, vegetables, and nutritious foods are readily available, residents are more likely to make healthier choices, leading to reduced rates of diet-related issues like diabetes and heart disease. Accessible healthy food also means families can save time and money by shopping nearby, reinforcing local businesses and fostering a sense of community. Making healthy options convenient ensures that everyone, regardless of income or transportation access, has the opportunity to live a healthier life.



Source: Unsplash

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a meeting with partners interested in healthy food options in the Eastside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Council on Farm and Food Policy
<p>Organize local residents to show that a grocery store is a shared priority. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Collecting signatures on a petition ◆ Hosting neighborhood meetings ◆ Forming a coalition with local organizations, such as health clinics, schools, or community centers, who can provide added voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consider partnering with Network Delaware on this effort

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Show how a grocery store would benefit the community by gathering data on current travel distances to existing grocery stores, food accessibility challenges, and the potential health benefits of local, healthy food options. You can partner with local health or food access organizations to strengthen this data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consider working with WILMAPCO to provide this data or to help with the analysis
<p>Approach city council members or neighborhood representatives to discuss the need for a grocery store. Request zoning changes or incentives to make your neighborhood attractive to grocery retailers.</p>	<p>If possible, find ways to support efforts with fundraising and/or assistance with grant opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Grocery Initiative

Case Study

BALTIMORE'S HEALTHY CORNER STORE INITIATIVE

Baltimore's Healthy Corner Store Initiative helps bring fresh and healthy foods to neighborhoods that need them. Many people in the city don't have easy access to grocery stores, so this program works with corner stores to stock fruits, vegetables, and other healthy items. The goal is to make it easier for families to buy nutritious food close to home. The program also teaches store owners and customers about the benefits of healthy eating. By improving access to better food options, the initiative helps people live healthier lives and feel better every day.



Baltimore corner store. Source: John Hopkins

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HUMANE HOUSING



EASTSIDE
THRIVE


Humane Housing

Humane Housing means having stable and safe places to live in diverse, welcoming communities. People do well when they have consistent, secure homes and neighborhoods safe from dangers. Good neighborhoods have food, basic needs, and resources that help everyone live healthy lives.

What would Humane Housing look like in the Eastside?:



Source: Habitat for Humanity

 **The Eastside has access to affordable and high-quality housing**

People who live in the Eastside would live in homes that are safe, clean, and comfortable. Rents and mortgage costs would be low which would help Eastside residents to have more affordable lives.



Source: Eastside Ambassadors

 **The Eastside has paths to homeownership**

There would be many programs that make buying homes easier. Eastside families would all have the opportunity to invest long term into the neighborhood and community through homeownership.



Source: iStock

 **The Eastside has enough space per person in the household**

Houses in the Eastside would fit the size and needs of the family. Family members would not feel uncomfortable by their living conditions.

What We Heard

10+ mentions of improving and repairing housing



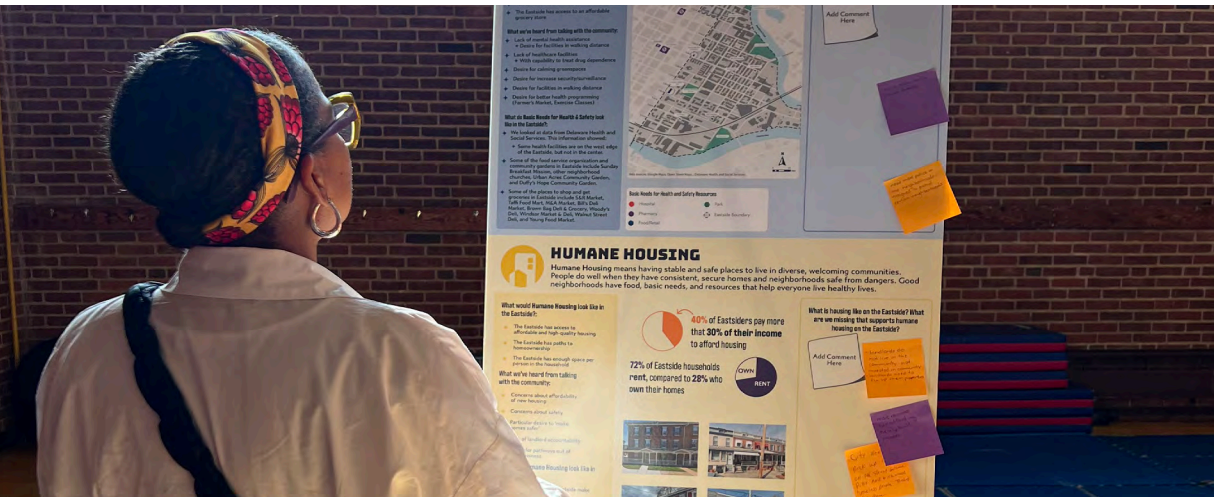
"we need more **affordable** rentals that are decent."

"need more **affordable** houses."

"more building and **restoring** house instead of tearing them down and leaving the lots vacant."

"[we need] housing programs that helps you reach **homeownership**."

"hold landlords responsible for upkeep of rentals."



Existing Conditions

Humane Housing



40% of Eastsiders pay more than **30% of their income** to afford housing

72% of Eastside households **rent**, compared to **28%** who **own** their homes



Eastside Housing. Source: Mend Collaborative

Most families on the Eastside earn about \$47k per year, with 28% owning their homes and 72% renting. Around 40% of families struggle to pay their rent or mortgage, spending over 30% of their income on housing. Key concerns in the community include the affordability of new housing, safety issues, a need for safer homes, lack of landlord accountability, and creating pathways out of homelessness.

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support Lifelong Learning, the Eastside should...

HH 1.

Expand program to fund deferred maintenance from homeowners for rental properties

Create a new funding program to help small landlords in the Eastside make repairs to their rental properties, so the homes are safer and better quality. The program will make sure rents stay affordable and prevent landlords from selling the homes after repairs. Landlords can receive support to apply for the program and make the needed repairs, keeping homes safe and affordable for tenants.

HH 2.

Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs

Work with local partners to focus development of waterfront properties in the Eastside on creating affordable housing, and providing spaces and resources for Black-owned businesses. There should also be green spaces, parks, and historical sites along the waterfront to provide recreational opportunities, celebrate Eastside's cultural heritage, and make the waterfront a place for everyone to enjoy.

HH 3.

Reinvest in or redevelop Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improve housing conditions and expand housing opportunities

Reinvesting in Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA) properties is important to improve living conditions and make homes safer and more comfortable. Repairs and updates, like fixing heating and plumbing, can lower costs and make the buildings more energy-efficient. Redeveloping these properties can also create more housing, providing more people in the Eastside with affordable, quality homes.

HH 4.

Expand homeownership programs

Help more Eastside residents buy homes and build long-term stability by expanding homeownership programs. This includes increasing funding for programs like First Start Homebuyer, offering workshops and counseling, and creating a special "Homecoming" program to encourage families with ties to the neighborhood to return. Working with banks and local groups will make loans easier to get, teach families about money, and help current and new homeowners fix up their houses, keeping the neighborhood safe and stable.

HH 5.

Create a program for reduced utilities for new homeowners

Make homeownership more affordable and sustainable by helping new homeowners save on utility costs. This can be done by promoting existing utility-saving programs, working with local utility providers to create a new program for homeowners that provides discounts on electricity, water, and gas bills, and offering energy-efficient upgrades for homes.

HH 1.

Expand program to fund deferred maintenance from homeowners for rental properties

Many Eastside homeowners have had the opportunity to use programs that fund home repairs, weatherization, and other deferred maintenance. These programs are especially important in the Eastside because homes are a major source of Black wealth, yet many African Americans have been systematically deprived of generational wealth. Expanding these programs to cover small rental properties will increase access to high-quality housing. Although most Eastside residents rent, rental homes currently aren't eligible for assistance programs for repairs, even though many of them need it. The expanded program should be available only to small landlords—many of whom also have roots or connections to the neighborhood—and should not include large rental companies, to ensure the help goes to those who truly need it. Landlords who join the program should keep rent prices affordable and agree not to sell the property just because of the improvements. These rules could be part of rental agreements or secured with a lien on the property. This way, the program can improve rental homes while keeping them affordable for the people who live in them.



Source: Ambassadors

Short Term Actions

Develop a new funding program specifically targeting small landlords who own rental properties in the Eastside. Ensure that eligibility is restricted to landlords with fewer than a set number of units (e.g., five or ten properties) to avoid large corporate landlords from accessing the funds. The program should offer financial assistance for repairs, weatherization, and general maintenance, similar to existing homeowner repair programs.

Partnerships // Additional Notes

Program goals should be coordinated with the City of Wilmington through Council Member Harlee's office by the Humane Housing Action team of the Roundtable.

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Set clear guidelines for participating landlords to ensure that the improvements made through the program lead to affordable housing. Landlords who receive funding should agree to keep rent prices at or below a specified threshold for a set period. Include a clause in the rental agreements or secure a lien on the property to prevent landlords from selling the property or dramatically raising rents after receiving the funding.</p>	
<p>Launch a community outreach campaign to inform small landlords in the Eastside about the program and its benefits. This could involve hosting informational meetings, distributing flyers, and working with local housing advocacy groups to reach eligible property owners. Highlight the long-term value of maintaining rental properties and how the program can help sustain affordable housing.</p>	
<p>Offer technical assistance to landlords on how to apply for funding, identify needed repairs, and manage the renovation process. This can include providing a list of qualified contractors, offering low-cost inspections, or guiding landlords through the paperwork required to access funding. Make sure this assistance is accessible to landlords who may not have experience with such programs.</p>	
<p>Implement a system to track and monitor the effectiveness of the expanded program, ensuring that the funds are being used as intended to improve rental properties without increasing rents or displacing tenants. This could involve periodic checks or audits of properties that received funding, collecting feedback from tenants, and adjusting the program as needed based on outcomes.</p>	

HH 2.

Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs

As Wilmington's riverfront has been redeveloped, it's brought a lot of success to the city, but some nearby neighborhoods feel left out. On the Eastside, we can redevelop the riverfront to meet the needs of local people. This could include building affordable housing so more people from the community can live there. We could also create spaces for Black-owned businesses and new businesses to grow, which would bring jobs and opportunities to the area. Adding parks and open spaces would give everyone places to relax and enjoy the river. We can even remember the history of the waterfront, like its role in the Underground Railroad, to honor the past. This way, the riverfront can be a place where the whole community feels welcome.



Eastside riverfront properties. Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Partner with developers, local government, and housing authorities to create affordable housing on the waterfront. Ensure the design and pricing of the housing meet the needs of Eastside residents. Consider mixed-income housing models that include both affordable and market-rate units, with a focus on long-term affordability. Use incentives such as tax credits, zoning adjustments, and public-private partnerships to make affordable housing a priority in the development plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Humane Housing Action Team ◆ Riverfront Development Corporation of Delaware
<p>Dedicate a portion of the waterfront for Black-owned businesses and local entrepreneurs to set up shops, restaurants, or cultural venues. Develop a business incubator or cooperative space that provides affordable rents, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Work with community organizations to ensure access to resources such as funding, training, and technical assistance to help local businesses thrive on the waterfront.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Meaningful Work and Wealth Action Team

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Incorporate green spaces, parks, and recreational areas along the riverfront to provide opportunities for leisure, fitness, and community gatherings. These spaces should be accessible and inclusive, with features like walking trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, and spaces for cultural events. Ensure that these parks reflect the cultural heritage of the Eastside by including elements that honor the neighborhood’s history.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ Riverfront Development Corporation of Delaware
<p>Designate areas along the waterfront for historical interpretation, honoring the region’s role in the Underground Railroad and its broader significance to African American history. This could include historical markers, murals, and interactive exhibits. Work with local historians, artists, and community members to tell these stories in meaningful and engaging ways, incorporating elements that celebrate both the past and the future of the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ Riverfront Development Corporation of Delaware ◆ Belonging and Civic Muscle Action Team
<p>Collaborate with local government officials, urban planners, developers, and advocacy groups to ensure that the waterfront redevelopment plan reflects the community’s vision. Advocate for policies that prioritize community-driven development, such as affordable housing mandates and local hiring initiatives. Ensure that the planning process includes a broad representation of Eastside residents and that their voices are heard in decisions regarding the future of the waterfront.</p>	

Case Study

THE ANACOSTIA WATERFRONT INITIATIVE

The Anacostia Waterfront Initiative in Washington, D.C., is a waterfront redevelopment project transforming the area along the Anacostia River. A key part of the project is the new 11th Street Bridge Park, which will turn an old bridge into a vibrant community space with gardens, play areas, and spots for events. The initiative also includes cleaning the river, adding parks and trails, and celebrating the history of nearby African American communities with art and cultural spaces. Affordable housing and support for local businesses are helping to ensure the redevelopment benefits everyone. This project is creating a lively and welcoming waterfront for all to enjoy



Anacostia Riverwalk. Source: Tim Evanson

HH 3.

Reinvest in or redevelop Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improve housing conditions and expand housing opportunities

The Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA) properties provide important housing for people in the community, but many of the buildings need repairs and updates to make them safer and more comfortable. Reinvesting in WHA properties means putting money into fixing these buildings and improving living conditions for families. For example, there are federal programs that help update heating, plumbing, and make buildings more energy efficient, which can lower costs and make homes better to live in. Redeveloping WHA properties could also create more housing, which would give more people the chance to have a good place to live. By making these improvements, WHA properties can be safe, comfortable, and affordable homes for even more people in Wilmington.



Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Perform a detailed evaluation of all Wilmington Housing Authority properties to identify urgent maintenance needs, safety concerns, and areas for modernization, such as energy efficiency upgrades and accessibility improvements.</p>	<p>Wilmington Housing Authority</p>
<p>Apply for federal grants, such as HUD’s Capital Fund Program or Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, to fund necessary repairs and updates, including heating systems, plumbing, and energy-efficient upgrades.</p>	
<p>Identify underutilized WHA properties or vacant lots for redevelopment into mixed-income housing, creating more affordable housing options while attracting diverse residents to the area. Collaborate with developers to incorporate retail or community spaces into housing redevelopment projects, providing amenities like grocery stores, childcare, or community centers alongside updated housing.</p>	

HH 4.

Expand homeownership programs

Many organizations and the City of Wilmington have been successfully working to expand homeownership on the Eastside for many years. Building on these programs will continue to increase wealth in the community. The City of Wilmington's First Start Homebuyer program helps people buy their first home by providing funding and support. Expanding and promoting this program would enhance the great work already done by community organizations to support affordable housing and homeownership. To further help the Eastside, the program could offer additional funding to people with family roots in the area, creating a "homecoming" program that encourages families to return to the neighborhood. Supporting Black homeownership is important because it helps build generational wealth, allowing families to pass down their homes and create lasting stability. Other programs, like Delaware's Homeownership Assistance Program and support from local banks, also help people buy homes and invest in their community. Together, these efforts can make homeownership a reality for more families and help keep the Eastside neighborhood strong for years to come.



New construction in the Eastside. Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Work with the City of Wilmington and local nonprofits to increase funding and awareness of the First Start Homebuyer program. Ensure that the program is accessible to more Eastside residents by offering workshops, one-on-one counseling, and application assistance. Promote the program widely through community meetings, local media, and outreach events to ensure prospective homeowners know how to apply and benefit from available support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Humane Housing Coalition Team ◆ City of Wilmington

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a targeted "Homecoming" program aimed at encouraging families with historical ties to the Eastside to return and invest in homeownership. This program could offer additional financial incentives, such as down payment assistance or reduced interest rates, for families with roots in the neighborhood. Create marketing materials and community events to spread the word and highlight the program's benefits, helping to rebuild a sense of community and connection to the area.</p>	
<p>Partner with local banks, credit unions, and mortgage lenders to provide favorable lending options to Eastside residents. This can include offering lower interest rates, down payment assistance, or more flexible lending criteria for first-time homebuyers. Host joint informational sessions with these financial institutions to educate residents about home buying processes, mortgage options, and financial literacy.</p>	
<p>Offer robust financial education programs and one-on-one counseling services that help potential homeowners improve their credit, save for down payments, and navigate the home-buying process. Partner with local organizations that specialize in financial literacy to create accessible resources and workshops. These programs can be tailored to the unique challenges faced by Eastside residents, especially those seeking homeownership for the first time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Community Reinvestment Action Council ◆ Stepping Stones Federal Credit Union

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>In addition to helping new homeowners, expand support for current homeowners who need assistance with home repairs and maintenance. This can include offering grants or low-interest loans for necessary upgrades, weatherization, and repairs that ensure homes remain in good condition. A home repair program specifically for long-term Eastside residents can help preserve existing homeownership and increase the overall value of properties in the neighborhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Habitat for Humanity home repair programs
<p>Foster stronger collaborations between the City of Wilmington, local housing organizations, and community groups to ensure a comprehensive approach to expanding homeownership. These partnerships can help align resources, streamline access to funding, and provide a network of support for individuals navigating the home-buying process. Joint efforts will ensure the community's needs are met and that all eligible residents have the opportunity to become homeowners.</p>	

HH 5.

Create a program for reduced utilities for new homeowners

Expanding on and advertising programs to help Eastside residents save on utility bills and keep homes comfortable will assist new homeowners. Wilmington already has helpful programs like the Delaware Weatherization Assistance Program, run by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC). This program is free for people who qualify and provides upgrades like adding insulation and sealing windows to keep homes warmer in winter and cooler in summer. These improvements can cut energy bills by 30–50%, which helps families save money.

Another program, Energize Delaware, offers rebates and incentives for adding energy-efficient equipment to homes. These upgrades help make homes more comfortable and affordable. Adding a new program that offers utility discounts, like lower bills for electricity, water, and gas, would be especially helpful for new homeowners. With weatherization and energy efficiency improvements, these programs would support families as they settle in and manage costs, helping everyone enjoy safe, affordable, and comfortable homes.



Source: iStock

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Promote existing utility-saving programs such as the Delaware Weatherization Assistance Program and Energize Delaware to ensure new homeowners are aware of these resources. Organize community workshops, informational flyers, and outreach events to explain how residents can access these programs. Work with local community centers, real estate agents, and homebuyer programs to include information about utility savings in their services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Energize Delaware ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ DNREC ◆ Utility Providers

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Work with local utility providers to create a new program specifically for new homeowners on the Eastside that offers discounts on electricity, water, and gas bills. This could be structured as a sliding scale or fixed-rate discount for qualifying residents. Collaborate with providers to ensure that the process for applying is simple and accessible for first-time homeowners, especially those with limited experience managing utility costs.</p>	
<p>Partner with local energy efficiency organizations and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to offer free home energy audits for new homeowners. These audits can assess where energy is being lost and provide personalized recommendations for improvements. Homeowners who participate in the audit could receive assistance in implementing recommended upgrades, such as insulation, air sealing, and energy-efficient appliances, which would lower utility costs in the long run.</p>	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Establish a program that offers incentives for new homeowners to make energy-efficient upgrades to their homes, such as installing energy-efficient appliances, upgrading HVAC systems, or adding solar panels. Partner with local businesses and contractors to provide discounted rates or rebates for these improvements. Make sure the program is easy to access and well-promoted, especially to new homeowners who may not be aware of these incentives.</p>	
<p>Include information about utility savings programs in homebuyer education workshops and materials. This could involve showing how energy efficiency improvements can lead to long-term savings and providing step-by-step instructions for enrolling in programs like Delaware’s Weatherization Assistance and Energize Delaware. Offer financial literacy sessions that cover how to budget for utilities and maximize energy savings, ensuring new homeowners are equipped to manage these costs from the outset.</p>	

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THRIVING NATURAL WORLD



EASTSIDE
THRIVE

Thriving Natural World

A Thriving Natural World means having clean air, clean and abundant water, and clean land. It's about keeping nature healthy and working well. A good environment is safe from dangers, can handle future changes in development or climate, and lets us enjoy and connect with nature.

What would a Thriving Natural World look like on the Eastside?



Trees along Pine Street. Source: Mend Collaborative

The Eastside is cool and shady

In hot, sunny summers on the Eastside, trees would help cool things down and create shady places to rest and play in the shade. There wouldn't be large areas without shade, and trees would be planted carefully so they don't damage sidewalks.



Blue skies on the Eastside. Source: Mend Collaborative

The Eastside has minimal levels of air pollution

Air on the Eastside would be clean and safe to breathe. This helps people stay healthier, with fewer problems like asthma or lung issues. It is easier to exercise outside and enjoy the outdoors without worrying about getting sick.



Herman Holloway Park. Source: Mend Collaborative

The Eastside has access to nearby parks and open space

Those who live and work on the Eastside would be a short walk from a clean and safe park with opportunities for activities, space for festivals, or a break from the day to simply take in nature.

What We Heard

5+ mentions about improving lighting in parks



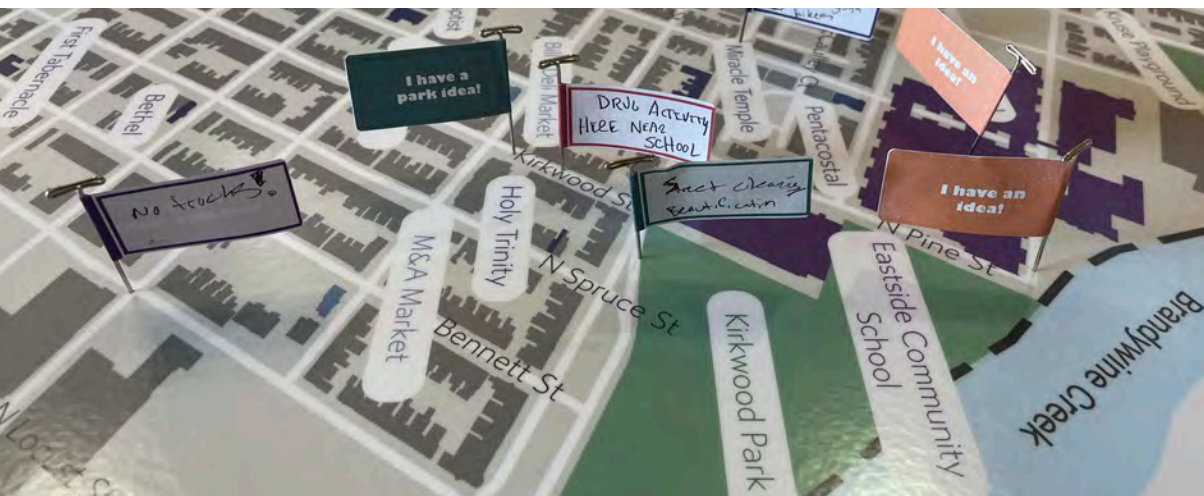
"[for] parks, more accessibility for children with special needs."

"parks need to be cleaned up."

"better tree[s] in the communities that [are] up kept by someone, garden pots that is up kept by some[one] throughout the year."

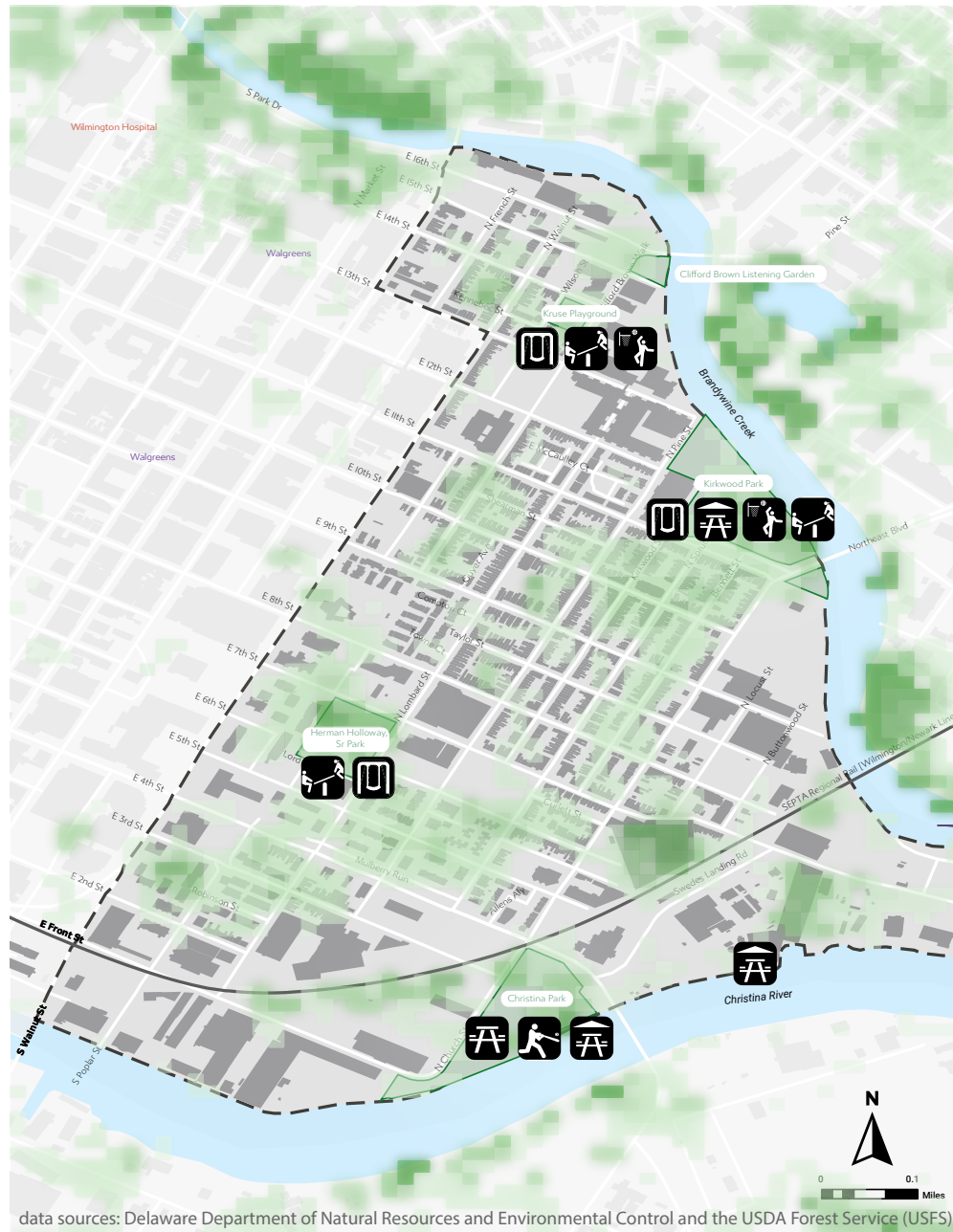
"outdated playgrounds in the park/metal slides, unsafe swings, no picnic area."

"beautify the neighborhood with more greenery."



Existing Conditions

Park Facilities and Tree Cover









data sources: Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and the USDA Forest Service (USFS)

The Eastside is home to six main City parks—Clifford Brown Garden, Kruse Playground, Kirkwood Park, Herman Holloway Sr. Park, Christina Park, and Babiarcz Park—creating a network of green spaces for the community. These parks offer places to exercise, relax, play, and connect with nature. There are opportunities to improve some of these public spaces to better support the community.

Framing the Eastside, the Brandywine and Christina Rivers provide vital open spaces and habitats for local wildlife, enriching the area’s natural beauty and creating opportunities for outdoor exploration. However, access to the river is a challenge due to the location of private property, steep slopes, and unsafe conditions.

◀ Park Facilities

-  Playground
-  Basketball Court
-  Swings
-  Picnic Pavilion
-  Picnic Area
-  Baseball Field

Tree Cover



Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support a thriving natural world, the Eastside should...

TN 1.

Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine River

Create a team of Eastside community members to work with local groups on finishing the RiverWalk Greenway, connecting the Christina and Brandywine Rivers. This team will make sure the project reflects the community's character, include art and history, support local businesses, and has plans to keep the greenway well-maintained after it opens.

TN 2.

Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks

Work with the Department of Parks and Recreation to make improvements to parks in the Eastside area, so they are safe, fun, and easy to enjoy. Form community teams to inspect each park, looking at things like playground equipment, cleanliness, and safety. Share these ideas with Parks and Recreation and work together on improvements, involving the community at each step. Work together on improvements, involving the community at each step.

TN 3.

Advocate for improvements to Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy open spaces to create a central park zone (Maurice Pritchett Community Zone)

Work to connect Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool, and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy into a central community zone. Conduct a safety walk with the community to find ways to make the area safer, with better sidewalks, crossings, and signs. Then, work with the city to plan these changes, especially to help kids get around safely.

TN 4.

Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy

Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy to improve the Eastside's environment, lower temperatures, and support community health. Trees provide shade, clean the air, reduce energy costs, and create welcoming green spaces for relaxation and outdoor activity. Start by gathering local stakeholders to plan tree planting and care events, create a tree maintenance team, and work with city experts to establish long-term support for the tree canopy.

TN 5.

Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building

Create a beautification program for the Eastside with a dedicated team to keep streets clean and well-maintained. This team would handle tasks like picking up trash, minor tree care, and reporting bigger issues, helping make the area more welcoming and attractive. Start with a pilot program, hire local residents and track how well it works to see if it should grow in the future.

TN 6.

Partner with and expand community garden programs in the neighborhood

Expand community garden programs in the Eastside where people can plant food, enjoy nature, and build stronger connections with their neighbors. These gardens can offer youth programs that teach healthy eating, teamwork, and environmental care, providing safe, engaging activities. Work with local groups to make these gardens bigger and offer more activities for the community.

TN 1.

Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine River

The Brandywine and Christina Rivers form the north, south, and east boundaries of the Eastside. These rivers are important because they provide open space, and homes for wildlife. The Riverfront Development Corporation of Delaware (RDC) has completed work on the Christina River west of Walnut Street, and the trails along the Brandywine River stopping at N. King Street.

There is also an opportunity to create a greenway along the waterways that connects the two rivers and extends into the Eastside neighborhood. A greenway is a long, open space, like a park or path, that people can walk or bike through.



Riverwalk along Christina River. Source: Riverfront Wilmington

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Form an Eastside working group that meets on a regular basis to advocate for completing the RiverWalk Greenway. Ensure the group is a diverse representation of the Eastside including residents of varying ages, community leaders from different microcommunities, and representatives from local organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Urban Bikes Project ◆ Kalmar Nyckel Foundation ◆ Howard High School ◆ Community Leaders ◆ YMCA Teen Leaders ◆ Teen Warehouse Leaders
<p>Start coordination efforts between the working group and local organizations and partners doing work on the RiverFront. Focus early efforts on finding out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What the organization is currently working on along the waterways? ◆ What future projects are in the Eastside? ◆ What kind of public outreach has the organization done on the Eastside? ◆ How can the working group and organization work together to move efforts forward? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Riverfront Development Corporation of Delaware (RDC) ◆ Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation ◆ Bike Wilmington ◆ Delaware Greenways ◆ Delaware Nature Society ◆ Partnership for Delaware Estuary

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a list of Eastside community requirements for any greenway development projects, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All projects must undergo robust community engagement during the design phases of the project ◆ Projects must consider community character and history, including interpretation and art where applicable ◆ There must be plans for ongoing operations and maintenance along the greenway well after the opening ◆ Where possible local businesses should be considered in all aspects of the project development 	<p>Robust community engagement includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Setting an outreach goal based on community demographics and making efforts to engage with people usually left out of the process ◆ Aiming for diverse representation, including a wide range of community members, of different ages, races, income levels, and backgrounds ◆ Reaching out using varied marketing methods including social media, fliers, emails, posters, coasters, and yard signs ◆ Connecting using varied engagement methods including surveys, workshops, focus groups, pop-up events and on-line platforms
<p>Develop an ideal set of scenarios for connecting the greenway to or through the Eastside and advocate for those ideas and routes.</p>	
<p>Advocate for transparent processes and coordinated efforts during planning and implementation of the greenway.</p>	

TN 2.

Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks

There are six main City parks in the Eastside area, including the Clifford Brown Garden, Kruse Playground, Kirkwood Park, Herman Holloway Sr. Park, Christina Park, and Babiarz Park. These public spaces create a network of green areas for the community to exercise, rest, play, and explore.

The Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation makes updates and provides the main level of care for the parks. The Department undergoes planning efforts and annual budgeting for park amenity improvements. There are opportunities to collaborate with Parks and Recreation to advocate for park improvements in the Eastside.



Herman Holloway, Sr. Park. Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Undergo a community audit of the Eastside park spaces paying attention to existing assets and improvements that could make the space better. This process helps city planners and park managers make informed decisions about maintenance, upgrades, and future park planning to ensure spaces are welcoming, safe, and useful for everyone.</p>	<p>A park space audit is an assessment of a park’s features, condition, and accessibility to understand how well it meets community needs and standards.</p>
<p>Develop a community audit and observation team to perform the evaluation of the park spaces. During an audit, observe and record details like the state of equipment, cleanliness, safety, access, and available amenities like seating, shade, or trails.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Friends of Wilmington Parks ◆ Urban Bikes Project ◆ Kalmar Nyckel Foundation ◆ Howard High School ◆ Community Leaders ◆ YMCA Teen Leaders ◆ Teen Warehouse Leaders

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Each community audit team should take detailed notes and take photographs of the space.</p>	<p>For example, at Herman Holloway Park there is some older metal play equipment that is outdated. Consider suggesting to update that play area based on what is missing at the park and what the community would like to have there.</p>
<p>Once the audit is complete, develop a short report and/or presentation of the results of the audit.</p>	
<p>Coordinate a meeting with Parks and Recreation staff to go over the results and come up with plans for the next steps. This may include a full plan update to a park that can be undertaken in phases over the following years.</p>	
<p>Check in with the Parks and Recreation Department quarterly to coordinate efforts and support the work that has been progressed on the Eastside.</p>	<p>If possible, find ways to support efforts with fundraising and/or assistance with grant opportunities.</p>

*Consider conducting the street lighting audit and TN. 3 in coordination with this effort.

TN 3.

Advocate for improvements to Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy open spaces to create a central park zone (Maurice Pritchett Community Zone)

A hub for education, parks, and recreation in the Eastside is located near Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy (previously Bancroft School). It includes Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool, and the planned park space associated with the school. These spaces are highly utilized not only by the community living in the area, but the students at the newly built school.

These important areas, although near to one another, are often not connected. The public realm could be better designed to facilitate safer crossings especially for youth, more clear wayfinding, and shaded sidewalks and trails to connect all these facilities almost like a central park campus.



Foster Brown Pool. Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
Undergo a community safety audit walking the area between the parks, pool, and school spaces.	A park space audit is an assessment of a park’s features, condition, and accessibility to understand how well it meets community needs and standards.
Develop a community audit and observation team to perform the evaluation of the area. During an audit, observe and record details like the quality of the sidewalks, safety, access, and available amenities like seating, shade, or wayfinding signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Friends of Wilmington Parks ◆ Community Leaders ◆ Wilmington Street Team (WST) ◆ Safe ◆ Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy ◆ Students
Once the audit is complete, develop a short report and/or presentation of the results of the audit.	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Coordinate a meeting with the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff to go over the results and come up with plans for the next steps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wilmington Department of Public Works ◆ Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
<p>Develop a list of steps for making the area more cohesive and work with the City and even State departments to make the area easier and safer to navigate, especially for youth. Consider applying for the Safe Routes to School Program for some of the improvements (if applicable).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), Safe Routes to School Program ◆ (if applicable)

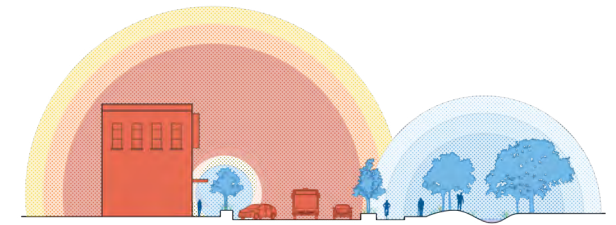
*Consider conducting the street lighting audit and TN. 3 in coordination with this effort.

TN 4.

Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy

Urban tree canopy is essential for environmental comfort and human health. Trees provide shade, reducing temperatures in cities, which helps lower energy costs and decrease the risk of heat-related illnesses. They also improve air quality by filtering pollutants and releasing oxygen, creating a healthier atmosphere. Additionally, green spaces with trees reduce stress, encourage outdoor activity, and enhance mental well-being.

Even with all the stacked benefits of trees in our cities, they can be challenging to establish and to maintain. Some cities have found ways to mobilize groups of stewards to take care of trees on public lands.



Urban Heat Island Effect
 Urban areas can be 10 to 20 degrees hotter than surrounding rural and natural areas. Tree canopy, building heights, and other shade can make a meaningful difference.

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
Convene a group of interested stakeholders in pursuing tree planting and stewardship in the Eastside. Determine if trees on public lands have been tagged and tracked.	
Meet with the City Forester to see if there are opportunities to support the tree canopy on the Eastside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wilmington Urban Forestry Program ◆ Tree for Every Delawarean ◆ Community Leaders
Develop a few feasible event or program options to support urban tree canopy of the Eastside. Some of these options could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Working with partners to plant more trees on public park land and around schools ◆ Develop a street tree care team that can take care of minor maintenance and report major maintenance needs, aligned with recommendation TN5. ◆ Develop a tree planting event with the goal to connect the community with tree related resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wilmington Urban Forestry Program ◆ Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation ◆ Tree for Every Delawarean ◆ Community Leaders

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Supporting and stewarding trees is a long term investment into the future of the neighborhood. Consider developing a long term program, or partnership to support the urban tree canopy.</p> <p>Consider working with experts to develop guidelines for planting and maintaining trees in the Eastside.</p>	

Case Study

CASE STUDY: URBAN TREE PROGRAM

TreeBaltimore works with city agencies, private groups, and individuals to plant and protect more trees in Baltimore. Their goal is to grow the number of trees in the city by planting new ones, taking care of them, and making sure they stay healthy. TreeBaltimore is a program from the Mayor, led by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, along with groups like Blue Water Baltimore, Baltimore Tree Trust, and others who care about trees.

Baltimore TreeKeepers is a program for people who care about trees in the city. The unique part of this program is that it teaches people how to take care of trees and keep them healthy. After the training, people can become tree helpers and work to plant and care for trees in their neighborhood and around the city.



TreeBaltimore tree planting event. Source: Blue Water Baltimore

TN 5.

Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/maintenance/capacity building

City beautification programs are valuable for communities by enhancing public spaces, boosting pride, and improving quality of life. Clean streets, green spaces, and vibrant public art make neighborhoods feel welcoming and safe, encouraging more people to spend time outdoors and connect with one another. These programs can also attract people and new businesses, supporting the local economy.

Currently Eastside beautification projects are undergone as events lead by local community organizations. For example, Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County organizes and leads multiple “Rock-the-Block” events in the Eastside focused on cleaning streets, trimming grass, pruning trees, minor house repairs, and in some instances focused on public space improvements in the neighborhood. These projects are impactful, but there are opportunities to have a more permanent street beautification program.



Community planting day at Stubbs Early Education Center. Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders in pursuing a more permanent street team dedicated to neighborhood beautification in the Eastside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County ◆ Central Baptist Community Development Corporation ◆ Wilmington Police Department ◆ Wilmington Department of Public Works ◆ Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation ◆ Community Leaders

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Develop a pilot program (street ambassador team) to support beautification of the Eastside. The program should consider:</p> <p>Working with partners to plant more trees on public park land and around schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Boundary of work extent ◆ Number of full-time or part-time employees needed annually ◆ Opportunities for employing and training Eastside residents ◆ Job description and tasks ◆ Hours a week of work ◆ Safety protocol ◆ Annual budget ◆ Funding or leadership partners 	<p>Potential duties and task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pick up trash in public spaces ◆ Pick up pet waste in public spaces ◆ Empty trash receptacles ◆ Minor pruning of trees ◆ Track and report major repair needs to associated departments ◆ Follow-up on repairs ◆ Connect community members to care resources as needed
<p>Launch the pilot program taking care to track the success to determine if expansion is a possibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <u>If successful</u>, work with partners to find funders or program leadership. ◆ <u>If not successful</u>, consider modifying the program and launching it again with modified programs and outcome goals 	

TN 6.

Partner with and expand community garden programs in the neighborhood

Community garden programs are vital in cities because they create green spaces where residents can grow fresh food, connect with nature, and strengthen neighborhood bonds. There are two community gardens currently in the Eastside including Urban Acres Community Garden and Duffy’s Hope Community Garden. These gardens have also hosted youth and community programming and events, such as after-school programs. Gardens with after-school programs provide kids with hands-on learning about healthy eating, environmental care, and teamwork. These programs not only beautify urban areas but also offer safe, productive activities for youth, fostering a sense of responsibility and pride in their community.



Duffy's Hope Community Garden. Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders regarding urban agriculture and community gardens in the Eastside. Explore ways to increase program reach and serve more of the Eastside community, such as providing after school programming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Central Baptist Community Development Corporation ◆ Urban Acres Community Garden ◆ Delaware Urban Farm and Food Coalition ◆ Duffy’s Hope Community Garden ◆ Community Leaders
<p>Check in with the urban agriculture and community garden group quarterly to coordinate efforts and support the work that has been progressed on the Eastside.</p>	



MEANINGFUL WORK AND WEALTH



**EASTSIDE
THRIVE**



Meaningful Work and Wealth

Meaningful Work and Wealth means having good jobs that pay well and feeling financially secure throughout life. Personal, family, and community wealth helps people live healthy, safe, and rewarding lives. Having enough money affects how well families and communities live now and in the future.

What would Meaningful Work and Wealth look like in the Eastside?:



Source: iStock



The Eastside has family and community wealth

Eastside families would have the financial resources they need to live quality lives. They will be able to handle emergencies and plan for the future, and invest in their neighborhoods.



Source: iStock



The Eastside has many entrepreneurs

People on the Eastside would be easily able to create and run their own businesses. They would have the support and resources to make sure their businesses thrive.



Source: iStock



The Eastside has community job training opportunities

Eastside residents would have access to programs that build job skills. This will help people learn new skills to find better jobs.

What We Heard

80+ mentions of needing more jobs in the Eastside community



"[we need] small business development with grant to help create small business."

"having a good job so I can pay my bills and having good health."

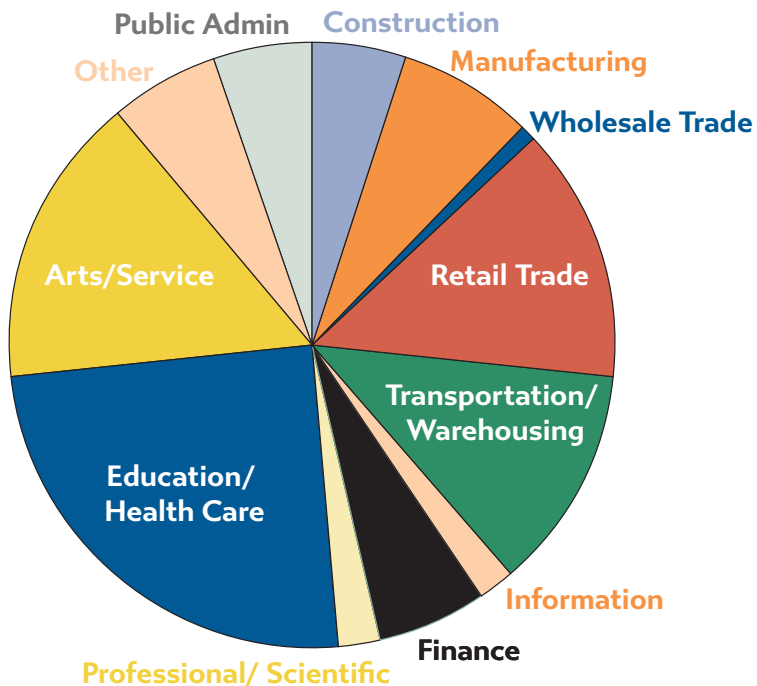
"more job training for single mothers."

"we need ongoing career development training."

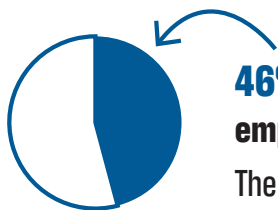


Existing Conditions

Where does the Eastside work?



2020 American Community Survey



46% of Eastside Residents are employed or looking for work. The other **54%** are not in the labor force.*

5.30% of all Eastsiders are in the workforce but **unemployed**, which is **11.4%** of the total labor force



Nearly half of Eastside residents are employed, with education, healthcare, arts, service, and retail being the main work sectors. 5-10% are unemployed, and about 40-45% are not in the labor force. There is a strong desire for more local jobs and job placement support, as well as a grocery store that could serve as both a community resource and an employer. Residents also want more community-accessible credit unions to improve financial access and stability, such as Stepping Stones Community Federal Credit Union.

*People who do not work and are not looking for work are considered 'not in the labor force.' This group includes full time students, retired folks, children, and disabled folks, among many others.

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support Meaningful Work and Wealth, the Eastside should...

MW 1. Reestablish the Eastside as a Black Business District

Support Black entrepreneurs and small businesses by starting a business center with resources like mentorship, affordable workspaces, and funding support. Offer grants, low-interest loans, updated retail spaces, and tax breaks to support Black-owned businesses. Work with schools and training programs to teach job and business skills and grow local talent. Use marketing and community events to showcase the district as a thriving hub for Black-owned businesses and help business owners connect and work together.

MW 2. Expand career development opportunities for women

Create more career opportunities for women by offering training programs in fields like healthcare and legal jobs. Provide childcare during training so moms can join without worry. Start a mentorship program where women can learn from experienced workers and host women-focused career fairs in the Eastside. Offer workshops to teach important skills like leadership, communication, and negotiation, to help women do well in their jobs.

MW 3. Collaborate with partners to expand childcare, support and job training programs for single parents

Work with local childcare centers to make childcare more affordable and available for single parents, especially when they are working or in training programs. Offer support like counseling and family help to support parents dealing with stress and balancing work and home life. Create a group for single parents to share advice and resources. Partner with local businesses to offer jobs that are family-friendly.

MW 1.

Reestablish the Eastside as a Black Business District

The Eastside has a strong history as a center for Black-owned businesses. In the past, many shops and services were owned by people in the community, and this helped create jobs, wealth, and pride. But during urban renewal, many of these businesses were lost, and with them, a lot of community wealth disappeared. Reestablishing the Black Business District in the Eastside as which will be a place where Black-owned stores and services can thrive once again will help make the Eastside stronger and more self-sustained.

To make the long term goal of a thriving business district a success, several steps need to be taken. First, the community will work to support small businesses and community members with business ideas. A business incubator could be created to give new business owners a chance to test their ideas with low costs. This incubator will offer resources like business coaching, mentorship, and affordable rent to help new businesses grow. Second, buying real estate to build or update stores and shops in the area will be necessary. Coordinating this recommendation with the Humane Housing recommendations could create opportunities for retail spaces to be included in new housing construction. Creating a pathway for business owners who have participated in the incubator to move to a brick-and-mortar space can be achieved by making sure there are grants and other support systems for Black entrepreneurs. This way, new stores and services can open without too much financial stress.

The community has shared ideas for the types of businesses they would like to see. These include grocery



Eastside's historic Spot Cafe, 1940. Source: Delaware Historical Society

stores, restaurants, and convenience stores to provide fresh food nearby, so people don't have to go far for healthy meals. Health and wellness services, like medical centers and urgent care, are also very important for the neighborhood. People want places for families, like children's centers and spaces for seniors to spend time and meet others. Other ideas include hair shops, barber shops, nail salons, and laundromats, which are helpful for daily needs and are also a source of jobs.

Small businesses in this district can do a lot for the Eastside. They will create jobs for local people, making it easier for community members to find work. These businesses will also help build stronger community connections, with familiar faces and safer spaces where people can gather and shop. And because the businesses will be close by, it will be more convenient for everyone who lives in the area. Finally, the project can connect with students from Howard High School, offering job training and business ideas that will keep the Eastside's future bright.

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Establish a community-driven business incubator that provides resources like business coaching, mentorship, affordable office spaces, and access to capital for aspiring entrepreneurs. Partner with local organizations, universities, and business development agencies to offer workshops, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. This will allow local entrepreneurs to test their ideas with minimal risk and gain the skills they need to succeed.</p>	<p>Numerous existing community organizations are working in this area. A Meaningful Work and Wealth Action team should work to coordination actions and identify gaps, as well as seeking greater resources for this work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Launch Delaware
<p>Create a fund or partner with financial institutions to provide grants, low-interest loans, and microloans to Black entrepreneurs. These financial resources can help businesses secure startup capital or expand into brick-and-mortar spaces after they have proven their concept in the incubator. Include funding options specifically for Black-owned businesses that align with the needs and goals of the Eastside community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Steppingstone Federal Credit Union
<p>Purchase or lease properties to develop or renovate retail spaces for small businesses. This could involve repurposing vacant lots or underutilized buildings in the Eastside for business use. By incorporating retail spaces into new housing developments (as part of the Humane Housing initiative), the community can create a mixed-use area that fosters both residential and commercial growth, making the district more walkable and integrated.</p>	
<p>Provide tax incentives, grants, and reduced rent for Black-owned businesses that establish themselves in the district. These incentives can help offset the high costs of starting or running a business and make the Eastside more attractive to entrepreneurs. Additionally, offer incentives for businesses that align with the community’s needs, such as grocery stores, restaurants, health clinics, and service-oriented businesses that create jobs.</p>	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Facilitate the establishment of businesses that the community has expressed interest in, such as grocery stores, health services, child care centers, and beauty-related businesses like barbershops and nail salons. Work closely with community members to identify priorities and offer support to businesses that can provide essential goods and services. Create a clear pathway for these businesses to start and thrive, from financing options to legal and regulatory guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Familiarize business owners with community members and strengthen relationships between businesses and residents ◆ Incentivize hiring within the community ◆ Encourage community service opportunities for those fulfilling service requirements
<p>Partner with Howard High School and local vocational training centers to develop job training programs and business education curricula that prepare students for careers in entrepreneurship and business management. Create internship and apprenticeship opportunities within the Eastside Black Business District to give students hands-on experience and increase their exposure to the benefits of owning a business.</p>	
<p>Develop a strong marketing strategy that promotes the Eastside Black Business District as a vibrant, self-sustaining hub for Black-owned businesses. Use social media, local press, and community events to showcase new and existing businesses. Organize regular events such as pop-up shops, markets, and festivals that highlight the district’s offerings, drawing in customers from within and outside the community.</p>	
<p>Create opportunities for business owners to connect, share resources, and collaborate. Organize regular business networking events, workshops, and forums where business owners can meet with potential partners, investors, and customers. Encouraging collaboration between businesses in the district will help strengthen the community, build partnerships, and increase business visibility.</p>	

Case Study

CASE STUDY: SHERMAN PHOENIX

Sherman Phoenix is an incubator for small businesses of color located in a renovated strip mall in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It offers spaces to gather, eat, shop, and attend events, while supporting economic growth in the community. Since opening, it has hosted nearly 50 businesses, with 96% owned by people of color and 63% led by women, and currently houses over 25 businesses and employs more than 75 residents. The monthly pop-up marketplace supports over 50 local entrepreneurs, showcasing diverse talents and products. Beyond Milwaukee, the Sherman Phoenix serves as an inspiring model for cities and neighborhoods working to create fair and equal economic opportunities for everyone.

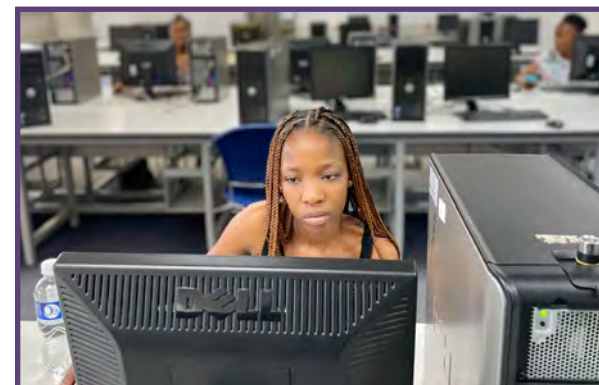


Sherman Phoenix businesses. Source: Simone Cazares

MW 2.

Expand career development opportunities for women

The Eastside neighborhood has a higher number of women-led households than other parts of Wilmington, and expanding career development for women is essential for strengthening these families. While there are already job training programs in the area, many focus on fields like construction and industrial jobs, which are often male-dominated. It’s important to keep offering those opportunities to women, but there’s also a need to expand training in fields more aligned with nearby Downtown employers, especially in healthcare and legal services. These fields provide stable, well-paying jobs that many women in the community could excel in. To make these programs even more accessible, childcare should be available alongside job training, allowing women with children to participate fully in building their careers.



Source: Wikimedia

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Partner with local employers and institutions to develop training programs focused on healthcare and legal services. These programs should provide certifications, internships, and job placement assistance for women looking to enter these well-paying fields.</p>	<p>Numerous existing community organizations are working in this area. A Meaningful Work and Wealth Action team should work to coordination actions and identify gaps, as well as seeking greater resources for this work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Central Baptist Career Development Center
<p>Offer childcare services during career training sessions to ensure women with children can fully participate. Partner with local childcare providers to make these services affordable or free for participants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Steppingstone Federal Credit Union ◆ Lazarus Business Educational Services

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Establish a mentorship program connecting women with experienced professionals in their desired industries. Offer career counseling to help women set goals, navigate career challenges, and access professional networks.</p>	
<p>Host career fairs and networking events specifically for women in the Eastside. These events should connect women with potential employers in high-demand fields like healthcare, law, and business, and provide workshops on job search strategies and career advancement.</p>	
<p>Provide workshops that focus on developing essential soft skills like leadership, communication, and negotiation. Include job readiness training, such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and networking. Offer financial literacy workshops to help women manage their finances and build wealth. Additionally, provide entrepreneurship training for women interested in starting their own businesses, focusing on business planning, marketing, and financial management.</p>	

MW 3.

Collaborate with partners to expand childcare, support and job training programs for single parents

In addition to providing career development opportunities for women, a focus on supporting single parents through expanded childcare and job training programs is essential. Partnering with local organizations can help create a network of resources tailored specifically for single parents, who often face unique challenges balancing work, training, and family responsibilities. By expanding childcare options alongside training, single parents will have more flexibility to attend programs and pursue new career paths. Additional support services, such as financial counseling or mental health resources, could also be integrated to provide a holistic approach. These efforts will empower single parents to gain skills and find steady employment while meeting their family's needs, ultimately strengthening the Eastside community as a whole.



Source: Unsplash

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Collaborate with local childcare centers to increase the availability and affordability of childcare for single parents, especially during training programs or work hours. Offer subsidized childcare options for low-income families.</p>	<p>Numerous existing community organizations are working in this area. A Meaningful Work and Wealth Action team should work to coordination actions and identify gaps, as well as seeking greater resources for this work.</p>
<p>Integrate mental health services, counseling, and family support programs into job training initiatives to help single parents manage stress, work-life balance, and emotional well-being.</p>	

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Establish a peer support network for single parents, providing a platform for sharing resources, advice, and experiences. This could include mentorship opportunities, networking events, and workshops focused on career advancement, parenting, and work-life balance.</p>	
<p>Partner with local employers to create family-friendly job opportunities, such as positions with flexible hours, remote work options, or on-site childcare, ensuring single parents can find steady employment that fits their family responsibilities.</p>	

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LIFELONG LEARNING



**EASTSIDE
THRIVE**

YMCA


Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning means giving everyone a good education so they can be successful. No matter their age, background, or ability, everyone should have the chance to reach their full potential. It's about helping people start great careers and always have chances to keep learning and growing throughout life.

What would a Lifelong Learning look like on the Eastside?



Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy. Source: Habitat for Humanity

 **The Eastside has quality elementary and high school facilities**

Eastside schools would provide safe and well-maintained school facilities. This would help students feel motivated and have a sense of pride in their education. Every child would have the opportunity to succeed academically.



Delaware Technical Community College Source: DTCC

 **The Eastside has access to higher education**

Higher education can help Eastside residents gain skills and knowledge that lead to better job opportunities and higher wages.



Future Eastside Career Development Center (Central Baptist Church). Source: Habitat for Humanity

 **The Eastside has job and skills training that provides access to great jobs**

Local jobs and skills training opportunities would be available to those who live on the Eastside. This means that people would gain qualifications for stable and well-paying jobs, and that less people would be unemployed in the community.

What We Heard

45+ mentions of more job training programs in the eastside



"get more kids into evening and early child education that is free."

"more afterschool programs."

"more life skill training and computer training for older people."

"more job corps or vocational trade centers for the youth."

"training that can help better your current skills."



Existing Conditions

Institutions for Higher Learning and Workforce Development



There are several institutions for higher learning and workforce development in and around the Eastside. Howard High School of Technology has adult education courses offered throughout the semester. Delaware Technical Community College provides a range of options for young adults and beyond, including both associates degrees, certificate programs, and workforce training programs.

Other higher learning institutions, such as Strayer University and University of Delaware-Wilmington (a 30 minute bus ride), provide higher education. Delaware Works and the Wilmington Job Center focus on job training and workforce development and do not offer degree programs.

There are community groups on the Eastside that offer job training programs. The Central Baptist Community Development Corporation has a Career Development Center that helps learners overcome challenges they might face. Their program provides strong job training to help people build better lives. ECDC is dedicated to teaching, supporting, and empowering learners for success.

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support Lifelong Learning, the Eastside should...

LL 1.

Collaborate with partners to expand youth after-school educational and job placement programs

Gather a team to work with local groups to expand after-school educational and job placement programs for Eastside youth, helping them build skills, explore careers, and gain work experience. These programs give students a safe place to learn, meet friends, and get advice from mentors to help them succeed. Start by meeting with community groups to find ways to reach more students in the neighborhood, and plan new programs, like green industry training.

LL 2.

Develop internal summer internship for high school students and/or create a youth council as part of the organization

Form a team to create, support and plan for a summer internship program or youth council to give high school students hands-on career experience and a voice in the organization. These programs can build youth confidence, strengthen community ties, and show support for the next generation.

LL 3.

Strengthen partnerships among area schools to expand adult education and job placement programs

Work with local schools to grow adult education and job programs, helping people in the Eastside get new skills for stable, higher-paying jobs. These programs prepare adults for new careers and connect them with jobs in the area, helping make the community stronger. Team up with local groups to spread the word so more people can find and join these helpful programs.

LL 4.

Collaborate with partners to provide free early morning and after-school programming for youth

Work with partners to offer free early morning and after-school programs for Eastside youth, giving kids a safe place to learn and connect while supporting working parents. Collaborate with community groups to expand these programs and reach more families in the area.

LL1.

Collaborate with partners to expand youth after-school educational and job placement programs

Expanding youth after-school educational and job placement programs is essential for preparing young people for future success. These programs provide a safe and structured environment after school, where students can build critical skills, explore career interests, build confidence, make friends, and receive guidance from mentors. Job placement opportunities allow youth to gain valuable work experience, develop responsibility, and start building their professional networks early on.

In and around the Eastside there are programs that students can attend after school including programs at the Walnut Street YMCA, Howard High School, and the Warehouse for Teen in the Riverside Neighborhood. At the YMCA Teen Panel event, we heard how important this programming is and the interest in seeing more opportunities in the community.



YMCA Teen Panel. Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders regarding youth after-school educational and job placement programs. Explore ways to increase program reach and serve more of the Eastside community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Urban Bike Project ◆ Howard High School ◆ YMCA Teen Leaders ◆ The Warehouse for Teens ◆ Kingswood Academy ◆ Community Leaders

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>During the meetings explore other programs that could work in the Eastside, such as urban agriculture, green industry and environmental career programs. In addition, explore opportunities for dual school entrepreneurship training for young adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ DuPont Environmental Education Center ◆ Partnership for the Delaware Estuary ◆ Urban Acres Community Garden ◆ Duffy's Hope Community Garden
<p>Develop plan and next steps for supporting interested partners with expanding and creating new programs. Spread awareness about these opportunities within the community and support recruitment.</p>	

*Consider aligning this effort with TN6. for opportunities to explore a program that overlaps multiple partners. .

LL 2.

Develop internal summer internship for high school students and/or create a youth council

Summer internships offer students hands-on experience, allowing them to develop new skills and gain insights into potential career paths. The early exposure to a professional environment also builds confidence and fosters future leaders in the Eastside.

Additionally, a youth council can provide the organization with fresh perspectives, helping it stay relevant and responsive to younger generations' needs and ideas. Together, these initiatives can create a pipeline of young talent, enhance community engagement, and demonstrate the organization's commitment to supporting the next generation.



Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene an internal team to discuss developing an intern program and a youth council as part of the Eastside Thrive organization or other local group.</p>	<p>Make sure that the right people from your internal team are at the meeting including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Organization HR Team ◆ Organization Leadership Team ◆ Board Leadership (if applicable) ◆ Intern Liaison - Person assigned to running the summer intern program ◆ Youth Council Liaison - Person assigned to leading and organizing the youth council

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Assign a liaison for summer intern(s) and for the youth council to provide consistent and dedicated support to the program.</p>	<p>Some of the responsibilities of the liaison may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Onboarding the interns and new youth council members ◆ Checking in with the interns and youth council members ◆ Being the main point of contact ◆ Setting agendas ◆ Setting weekly tasks ◆ Developing presentations ◆ Providing mentorship
<p>Determine the details of the intern program including how students will be referred to or apply to the program.</p>	<p>The intern program should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Program funding ◆ Number of full-time or part-time interns ◆ Job description and tasks ◆ Hours a week of work ◆ Desk area needs ◆ Technology needs ◆ Intern marketing partners ◆ Application requirements (if applicable)
<p>Determine the details of the youth council program including how students will be referred to or apply to the group.</p>	<p>The intern program should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Size of the group ◆ Mission and purpose of the group ◆ Meeting time ◆ Meeting organizing structure, will there be a chair? ◆ Food provided ◆ Youth partners ◆ Application requirements (if applicable)

LL 3.

Strengthen partnerships among area schools to expand adult education and job placement programs

Adult learning opportunities are essential because they provide individuals with the skills and resources needed to succeed in today's job market. These programs help adults gain new knowledge, adapt to changing industries, and increase their earning potential, fostering economic stability. The Eastside has a few adult education options in the neighborhood that could be expanded upon and bolstered.

Job placement support connects learners directly to career paths, boosting confidence and empowering individuals to contribute more effectively to their communities. Together, these opportunities create a stronger, more resilient workforce and drive positive community growth, especially when connected to the market opportunities found in and near the Eastside.



Source: iStock

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders regarding adult education and job placement programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Howard High School ◆ Strayer University ◆ Delaware Technical Community College ◆ Wilmington Job Corps Center ◆ The Challenge Program ◆ Eastside Career Development Center ◆ University of Delaware ◆ Delaware State University ◆ The Bridge Program ◆ Central Baptist Communication Development Center ◆ Delaware Skills Center ◆ Other Job Training programs, Elwyn Building

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>During the meeting, explore ways to increase program reach and serve more of the Eastside community including getting the word out about the programs and providing assistance for applying to programs.</p>	
<p>Develop plan and next steps for supporting interested partners with increasing the adult education and job placement in the Eastside. Support efforts to reach out about these opportunities within the community and support recruitment.</p>	

*Consider aligning this effort with Meaningful Work & Wealth

LL 4.

Collaborate with partners to provide free early morning and after-school programming for youth

Free early morning and after-school programs are essential for supporting working parents, allowing them to complete their workday while ensuring their children are in a safe, structured environment. These programs provide youth with valuable learning experiences, social interaction, and support outside of regular school hours.

Early and after-school options reduce stress for parents and ensure that kids have access to enriching activities, promoting a balanced, supportive environment for families to thrive. Free or reduced-cost after-school programs allow families a way to stay financially secure.



Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Convene a group of interested stakeholders regarding free early morning and afterschool programming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Stubbs Early Education Center ◆ Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy ◆ Walnut Street YMCA ◆ Private schools & nursery
<p>During the meeting, explore ways to increase program reach and serve more of the Eastside community including getting the word out about the programming.</p>	
<p>Develop plan and next steps for supporting interested partners with increasing the early morning and after-school programming for youth in the Eastside.</p>	

Case Study

CASE STUDY: YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS & CAREER DISCOVERY

"My favorite place in the Wilmington area would have to be the Brandywine River. Being there is a very calming environment."

- YMCA Teen Panel

"My favorite place in Wilmington would have to be Brandywine Park. My first time going there was in 2022. Ever since I have been going there just to clear my mind. I go with friends too to enjoy the walk, the nature, and the trees. I really enjoy it."

- YMCA Teen Panel

At the YMCA Teen Panel two participants mentioned their appreciation of the environment and the waterway bounding the neighborhood to the north, the Brandywine River . There are opportunities to increase the environmental afterschool programming in the community similar to what the Austin Youth River Watch does in Austin Texas.

Austin Youth River Watch (AYRW), a non-profit in Austin, Texas, provides multi-year after-school and summer programs for high school students in over 20 schools, blending peer mentoring with hands-on environmental education. River Watchers collect and report water quality data from local streams and rivers, working with community partners on restoration projects and exploring potential environmental careers. Through outdoor adventures like



Austin Youth River Watch students connecting with the outdoors.
Source: Austin Youth River Watch

camping and paddling, many for the first time, AYRW helps students build a strong connection to nature, fostering a new generation of environmental stewards.

The non-profit utilizes a combination of public funding and grants to administer the program and offers wrap-around services for students including: transportation to and from school, snacks and meals, and a stipend for their services. The program has served over 200 students and the high school graduation rate for River Watch Seniors since 1992, has been nearly 100%.

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RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION



**EASTSIDE
THRIVE**

Reliable Transportation

Reliable Transportation means being able to get from home to work, school, stores, and other places every day. How we get around affects our jobs, health, and ability to move up in life. Walking, biking, and using buses or trains help us stay active. Building communities where everything is close by and having good transportation choices allows everyone to get where they need to go, no matter how they travel or what they can afford.

What would a Reliable Transportation look like on the Eastside?



Source: Mend Collaborative



The Eastside has plenty of safe transit and mobility options

The Eastside community, along with seniors and people with disabilities will be able to safely get to where they need to go.



Source: iStock



The Eastside has no pedestrian and biker accidents

Eastside residents would feel safe at crosswalks. The streets would have lights and signs to make it easier for cars to see pedestrians and bicycle riders. This will prevent accidents.



Source: Wikimedia



The Eastside has transit that gets residents to important community resources

There will be accessible bus routes in the Eastside that make it easy to get to jobs, businesses, and services in the neighborhood and between the Eastside and other neighborhoods.

What We Heard

10+ mentions on the need to repair and improve sidewalks in the Eastside



"traffic needs to **slow down** on Church and Spruce St."

"**fix sidewalks** for my scooter."

"better **safer sidewalks** and streets, speed bumps or other ways to slow traffic down in the community."

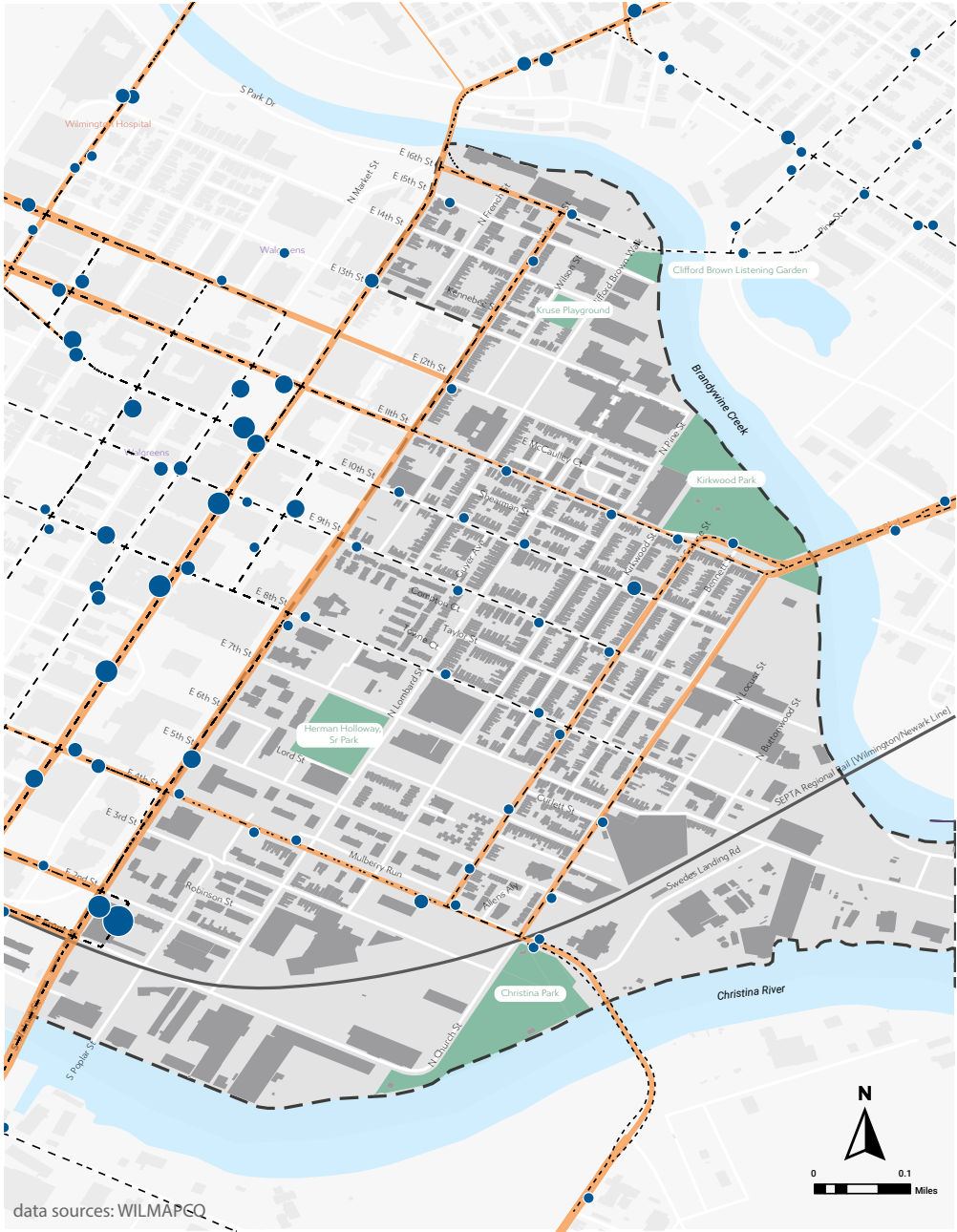
"**more space** for walkers or canes, handicap curbs or rail space."

"seniors need **access to rides** closer to home."



Existing Conditions

Reliable Transportation



The Eastside has access to three bus lines (4, 8, 15, and 51) that connect residents to downtown and other parts of Wilmington, as well as an Amtrak line running south to Newark. Residents have expressed a need for free transit to essential services like grocery stores and healthcare, along with better transportation options for the elderly. Additionally, there is a strong desire for improved safety measures, such as more traffic lights, stop signs, and road repairs.

Reliable Transportation

- Bus Routes
- Park
- Eastside Boundary

Bus Stops

- less busy
- more busy

Major Roads

-
-

Recommendations

What actions can we take?

To create and support a Reliable Transportation, the Eastside should...

RT 1.

Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind

Redesign streets in the Eastside to make them safer and easier for people to walk, bike, and drive. Some streets are too fast for the neighborhood, so changing them to one-way or adding features to slow down traffic will help people feel safer. Work with the community and city to plan these changes, starting with quick fixes on Spruce and Church Streets and expanding the 4th Street project.

RT 2.

Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program

Apply for a Safe Routes to School Program grant to make walking and biking to school safer for kids on the Eastside. Improve busy intersections with features like better crosswalks, lights, and signs to help drivers see children and keep them safe. Adding trees and streetlights will also make walking paths more comfortable and secure for everyone.

RT 3.

Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood

Create a greenway through the Eastside to connect the neighborhood with the Christina River and Brandywine Creek trails. This new trail would make it easier for people to walk or bike to the river, while also helping local shops and historic sites attract more visitors. As part of street redesigns, add the greenway along Church or Spruce Street to improve access and support the community.

RT 4.

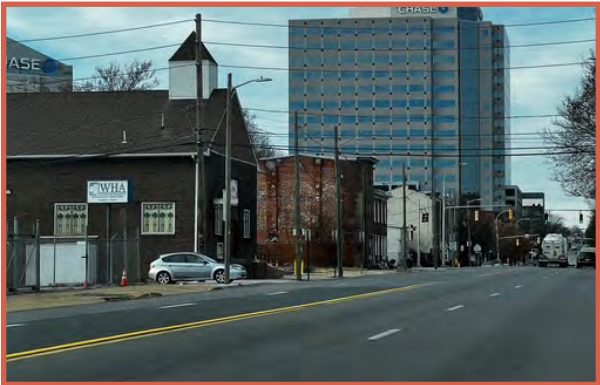
Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors

Make the Eastside fully accessible for people with disabilities and seniors by fixing sidewalks, adding ramps, and constructing safer crosswalks. Conduct a "walk audit" to identify and fix problem areas like narrow or damaged sidewalks to meet ADA standards. Partner with local services to provide better transportation options for seniors, such as shuttle services and accessible bus stops.

RT 1.

Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind

Designing streets with the neighborhood in mind means creating streets that match what local people need and care about. Streets should be safe and easy for everyone to use, whether they're walking, biking, or driving. Right now, some of the main streets in the Eastside are built more for people passing through than for the people who live there. One-way streets like Spruce Street, Church Street, and 10th and 11th Streets make it easy for cars to move quickly but make sidewalks, trees, and intersections less safe. Fourth Street, with its four lanes, is especially dangerous for a neighborhood. These streets should be redesigned to support the neighborhood's goals of having safer streets and helping small businesses thrive.



View of 4th street. Source: Habitat for Humanity

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Work with the Delaware Department of Transportation and the City of Wilmington to either redesign Spruce, Church, 10th, and 11th Streets as two-way streets or add features that slow down traffic. This should make it easier and safer for people to walk, increase tree cover, and improve crosswalks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ Urban Bike Project ◆ Delaware Living Labs ◆ WILMAPCO
<p>Extend the 4th Street traffic calming project, which is now being planned west of Walnut Street, all the way to the 4th Street Bridge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO
<p>Before a full redesign, work with community members to create temporary ways to slow down traffic and make quick improvements on Spruce and Church Streets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO

*Consider conducting the nighttime safety audit, BN 5. in coordination with this effort.

RT 2.

Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program

The Safe Routes to School program is a national program that funds improvements make it safer for kids to walk or bike to school. It focuses on improving sidewalks, crosswalks, and streets so students can travel safely. On the Eastside, this is especially important because many children live south of 10th and 11th Streets, while their schools are north of these busy streets. By making improvements like better crosswalks, signs, and visible intersections, we can help drivers see kids crossing the road. Adding trees and street lights also makes walking paths safer and more comfortable. These changes ensure that Eastside families can walk or bike to school, making the trip safer and healthier for everyone.



Source: Safe Routes Partnership

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Apply for a Safe Routes to School Grant to make intersections safer at 10th and 11th Streets, at Spruce, Pine, Lombard, and Clifford Brown Walk. Improvements could include adding speed tables or raised crosswalks, better lighting, curb extensions, pedestrian-activated beacons, and clearer signs. These changes will help make crossing the street safer and easier for kids walking to school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ Urban Bike Project ◆ Delaware Living Labs ◆ WILMAPCO

RT 3.

Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood

There are plans to finish the Christina River and Brandywine Creek greenway, creating special trails for people to walk and bike along. These trails will meet at the far eastern edge of the Eastside, but that area is far from the center of the neighborhood and goes through a lot of industrial land. Building a greenway through the center of the neighborhood, on Church or Spruce Street, would help connect the Eastside to these trails. This would make it easier for people to reach the river trails and could also bring more visitors to local shops and historic sites like the Old Swede’s Church, bringing more customers to Black-Owned businesses in the community.



Old Swede's Church. Source: Old Swede's

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>As part of recommendation RT1, add a neighborhood greenway in the redesign of Church or Spruce Street.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO ◆ Urban Bike Project ◆ Delaware Greenways ◆ Delaware Nature Society ◆ Partnership for Delaware Estuary

Case Study

CASE STUDY: INDIANAPOLIS CULTURAL TRAIL AND THE JOE LEWIS TRAIL IN DETROIT

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail and the Joe Louis Greenway in Detroit are two trails that have helped their cities grow and bring people together. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an 8-mile path that goes through neighborhoods, parks, and cultural areas. It's made for walking and biking, with nice landscaping, art, and places to stop along the way. This trail has brought more people to the area, helping local businesses like restaurants and shops. Since it opened, new businesses and jobs have been created, and the trail has become a popular spot for visitors.

The Joe Louis Greenway in Detroit is a similar project. It's a trail that will eventually go all around the city, connecting neighborhoods and parks. Like the Indianapolis trail, it's designed to help people walk and bike safely. This greenway is expected to help Detroit grow by making it easier for people to reach different parts of the city and encouraging new businesses to open up along the path. Both trails are



Joe Louis Greenway. Source: Joe Guillen

great examples of how walking and biking paths can help a city develop and make neighborhoods more fun and connected.

RT 4.

Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors

People with disabilities and seniors make up a greater share of people living on the Eastside than in most Wilmington neighborhoods. The Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, is a law that helps make sure people with disabilities have equal access to public places, like sidewalks and streets. Because of the ADA, sidewalks are supposed to have features that make it easier for people in wheelchairs or with other mobility needs to get around. For example, sidewalks now often have ramps at corners, smooth surfaces, and special bumps called “tactile paving” to help people who are visually impaired know where they are. Today on the Eastside, however, many sidewalks are too narrow, blocked by trashcans or torn up due to tree roots. Streets and sidewalks should be designed so that anyone who uses a wheelchair, walker, or cane can get around safely and easily. Adding ramps at curbs, fixing bumpy sidewalks, and making crosswalks clear and easy to use are all important steps. It’s also helpful to provide more transportation options for seniors, like shuttle services or safe bus stops close to where they live. These improvements make it easier for everyone to travel and stay connected with their community.



Source: Mend Collaborative

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Do a “walk audit” of all Eastside streets and make a plan to fix sidewalks that need improvements, so all sidewalks meet ADA standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO

Short Term Actions	Partnerships // Additional Notes
<p>Work with recommendation TN4 to choose and plant trees that won't damage sidewalks with their roots.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO ◆ Wilmington Urban Forestry Program ◆ Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation ◆ Tree for Every Delawarean ◆ Community Leaders
<p>Work with DART to make sure seniors have the transportation they need and that bus stops are safe and meet ADA standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delaware Department of Transportation ◆ City of Wilmington ◆ WILMAPCO ◆ DART

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ZONES

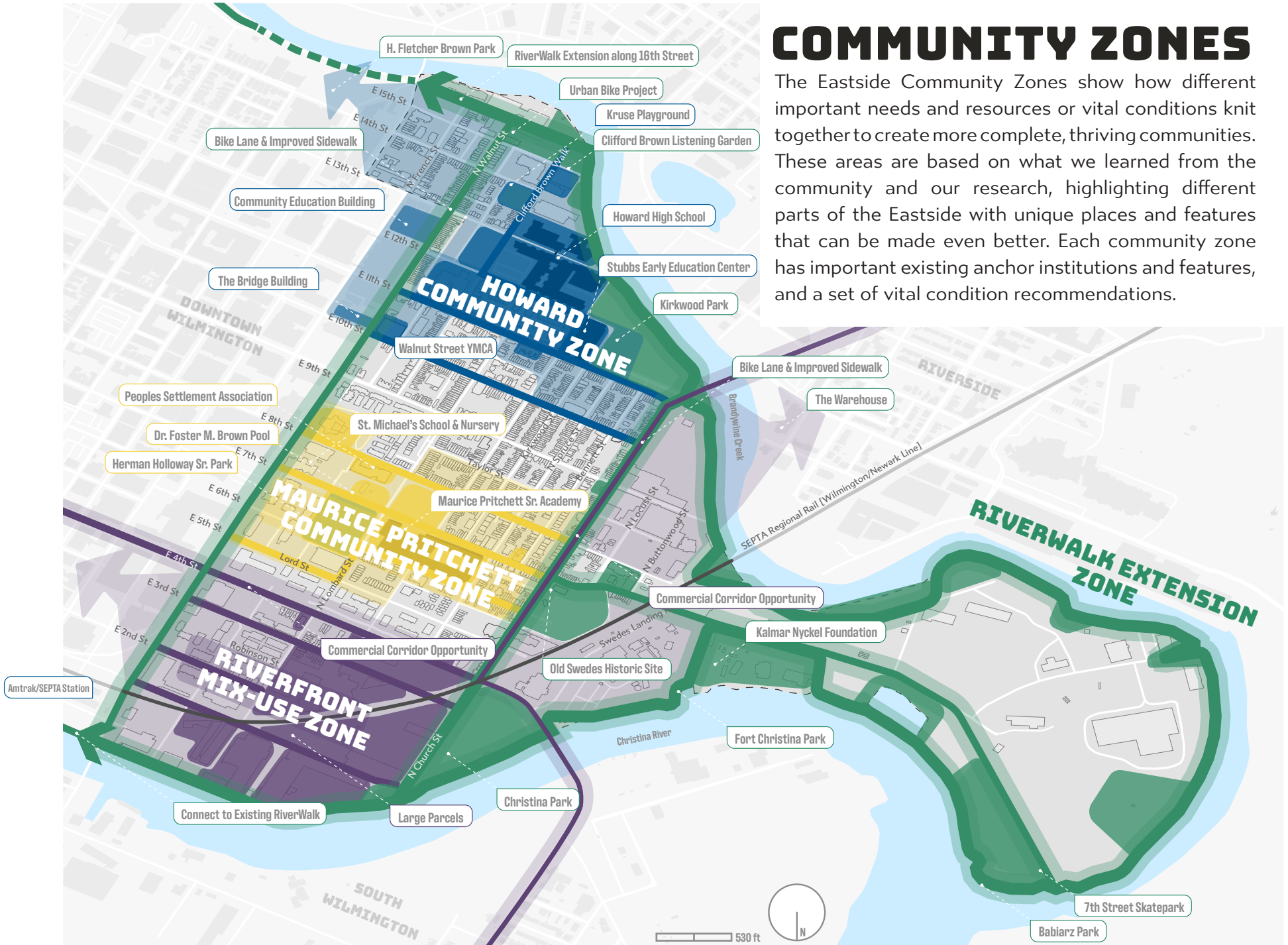


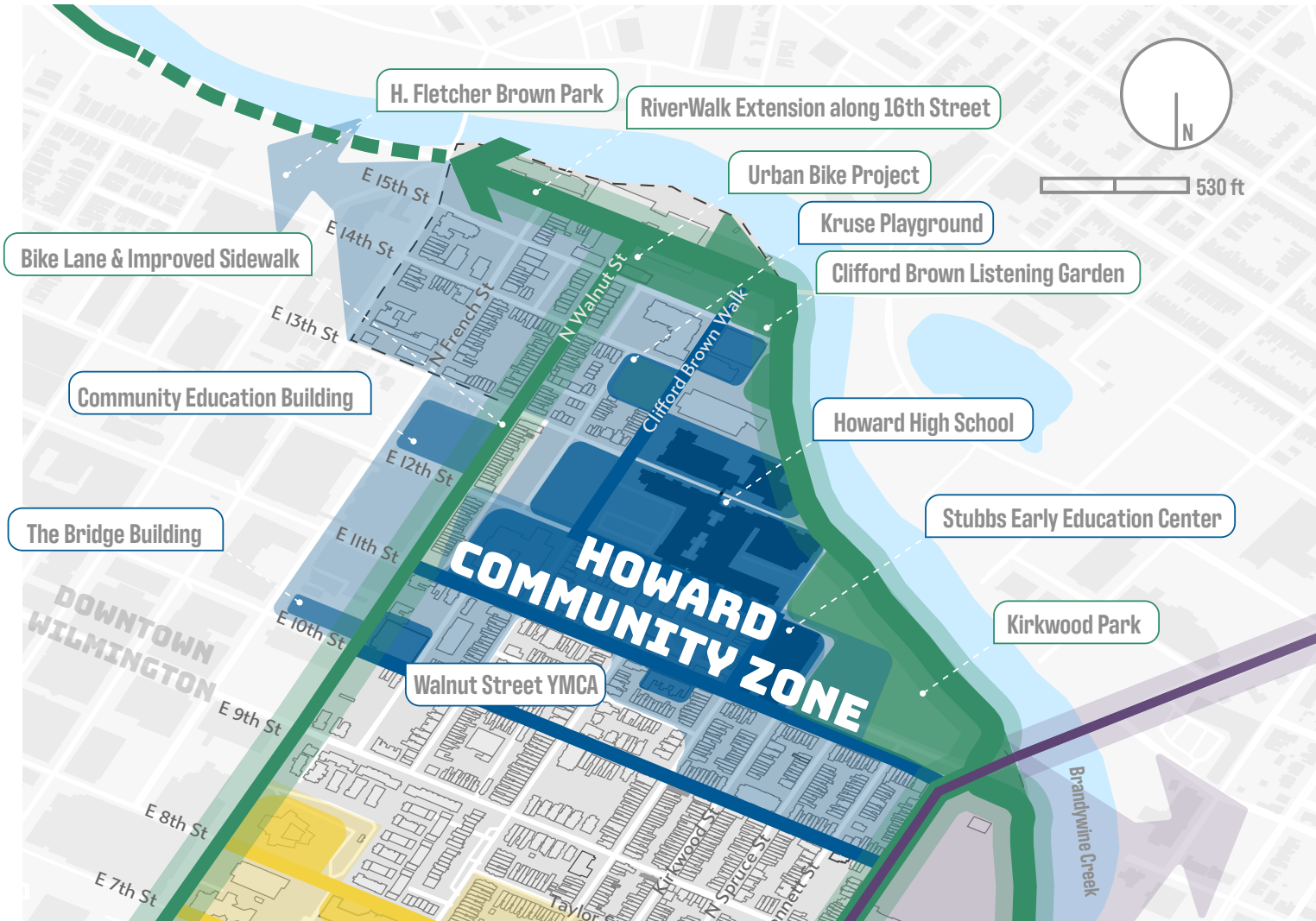
EASTSIDE
THRIVE



COMMUNITY ZONES

The Eastside Community Zones show how different important needs and resources or vital conditions knit together to create more complete, thriving communities. These areas are based on what we learned from the community and our research, highlighting different parts of the Eastside with unique places and features that can be made even better. Each community zone has important existing anchor institutions and features, and a set of vital condition recommendations.





What are the main existing elements?:

- ◆ Howard High School | Stubb’s Early Education Center
- ◆ Kruse Playground | H. Fletcher Brown Park
- ◆ Walnut Street YMCA
- ◆ Urban Bike Project
- ◆ Elwyn Building [proposed plans]
- ◆ Community Education Building

HOWARD COMMUNITY ZONE

What is it?:

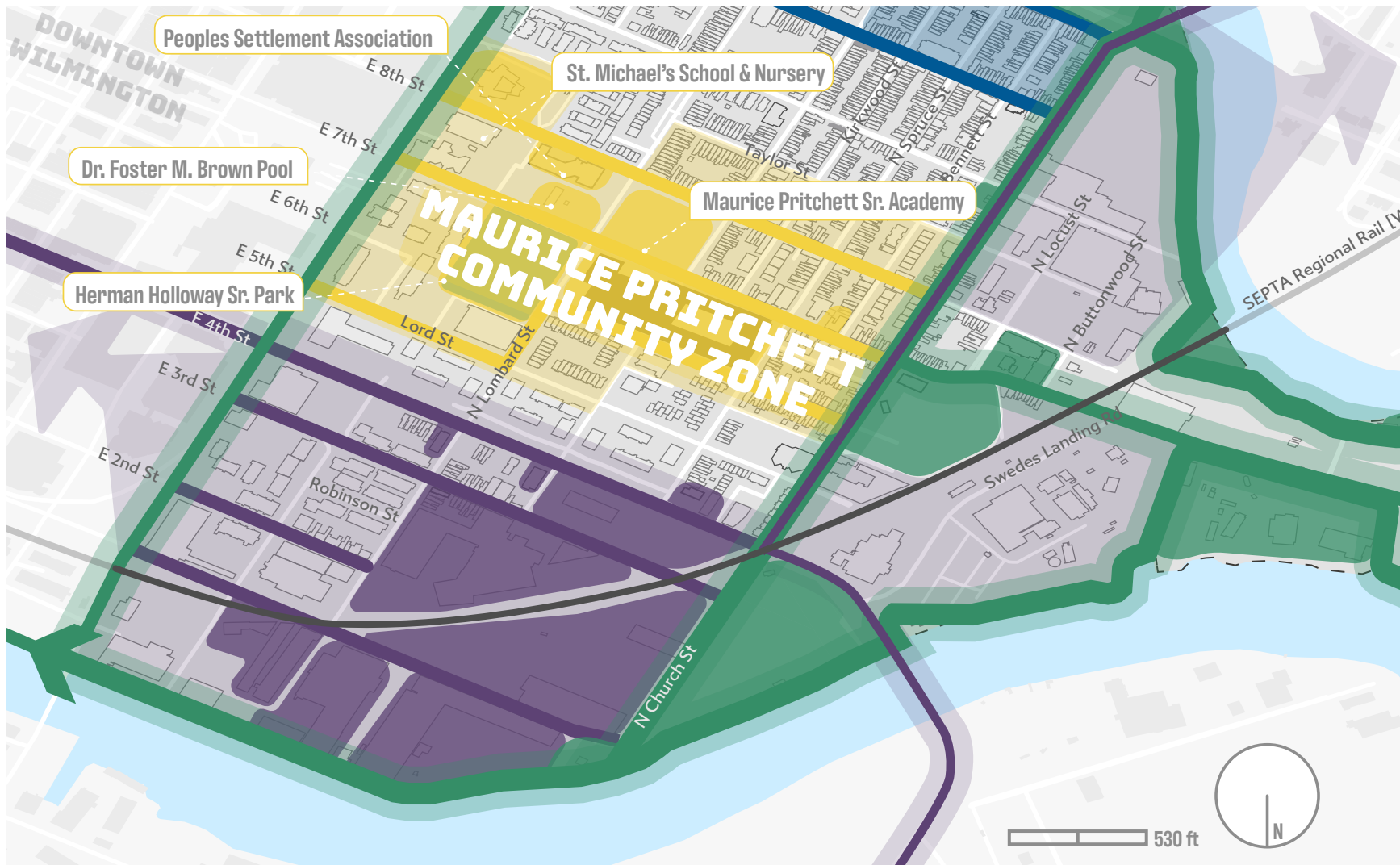
The Howard Community Zone is an area in the Eastside that has great existing community elements or anchors. Our ideas are to support the good things already there, improve how people get to these places, and create stronger programming that helps everyone in the community.

What we heard:

The main ideas we hear from the community about the Howard Community Zone focused on making the area better for everyone. Many people want a medical center nearby to provide important healthcare services. There is also a strong interest in adding more housing options. Families would like spaces for kids to play and enjoy, and others hope to see more businesses in the area. Overall, the community wants the Howard zone to include healthcare, housing, kid-friendly spaces, and local businesses to create a thriving neighborhood.

What are recommendations for the area?

- ◆ BC 5. Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood
- ◆ BC 6. Work with the National Park Service to expand the visibility of the “Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Park” at Howard High School and to preserve and expand Howard’s historic collection
- ◆ BN 1. Collaborate with partners to develop and offer more health programs
- ◆ HHI. Expand program to fund deferred maintenance from homeowners for rental properties
- ◆ HH4. Expand homeownership programs
- ◆ HH5. Create a program for reduced utilities for new homeowners
- ◆ TN 2. Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks
- ◆ TN 4. Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy
- ◆ TN5. Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building
- ◆ LL 1. Collaborate with partners to expand youth after-school educational and job placement programs
- ◆ LL 3. Strengthen partnerships with area schools to expand adult education and job placement programs
- ◆ RT 1. Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind
- ◆ RT 2. Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program
- ◆ RT 4. Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors



What are the main existing elements?:

- ◆ Maurice Pritchett Sr. Academy
- ◆ St. Michael's School & Nursery
- ◆ Herman Holloway, Sr. Park
- ◆ Peoples Settlement Association
- ◆ Dr. Foster M. Brown Pool
- ◆ Central Baptist Church

MAURICE PRITCHETT COMMUNITY

What is it?:

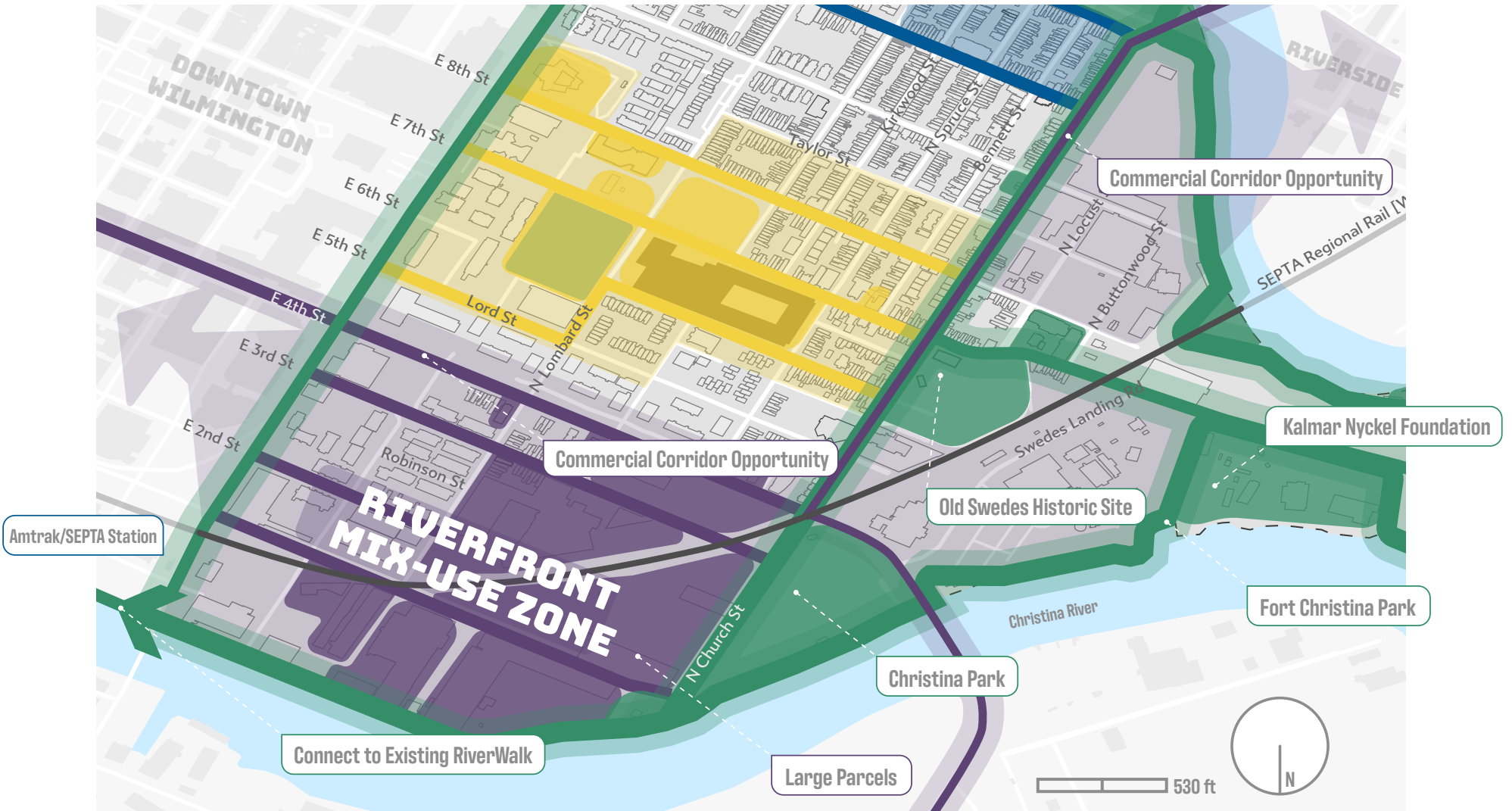
The Maurice Pritchett Community Zone is an area in the Eastside that has great existing community elements or anchors. Our ideas are to support the good things already there, improve how people get to these places, and create stronger programming that helps everyone in the community.

What we heard:

The community has shared important ideas about what the Maurice Pritchett Zone should look like. Safety is a top concern, with many asking for better community policing and safer parks. People also want clean and well-maintained parks that have activities for everyone, including spaces for children with disabilities. Adding affordable housing and keeping the area clean are also big priorities. Overall, the community wants the Maurice Pritchett Zone to be safe, welcoming, and well-kept, with great parks, housing, and activities for everyone.

What are recommendations for the area?

- ◆ BN 4. Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement
- ◆ BN 5. Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions
- ◆ HH4. Expand homeownership programs
- ◆ HH3. Reinvest in or redevelop Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improve housing conditions and expand housing opportunities
- ◆ HH5. Create a program for reduced utilities for new homeowners
- ◆ TN 2. Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks
- ◆ TN 3. Advocate for improvements to Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool and Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy open spaces to create a central park zone
- ◆ TN 4. Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy
- ◆ TN5. Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building
- ◆ TN6. Partner with and expand community garden programs in the neighborhood
- ◆ LL 4. Collaborate with partners to provide free early morning and after-school programming for youth
- ◆ RT 1. Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind
- ◆ RT 2. Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program
- ◆ RT 4. Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors



What are the main existing elements?:

- ◆ Connection to the Christina River
- ◆ Large parcels and development potential
- ◆ Amtrak/SEPTA Station
- ◆ Opera Delaware Studios
- ◆ Christina Park
- ◆ Old Swedes Historic Site

RIVERFRONT MIX-USE ZONE

What is it?:

The Riverfront Mix-Use Zone is an area in the Eastside that has opportunities for creating new businesses and development. Our ideas are to support a good quality mix of uses in the area. Mixed-use development is a type of building or area where different things happen in one place. For example, it might have homes, shops, offices, and restaurants all together. This makes it easy for people to live, work, and have fun without going far from home.

What we heard:

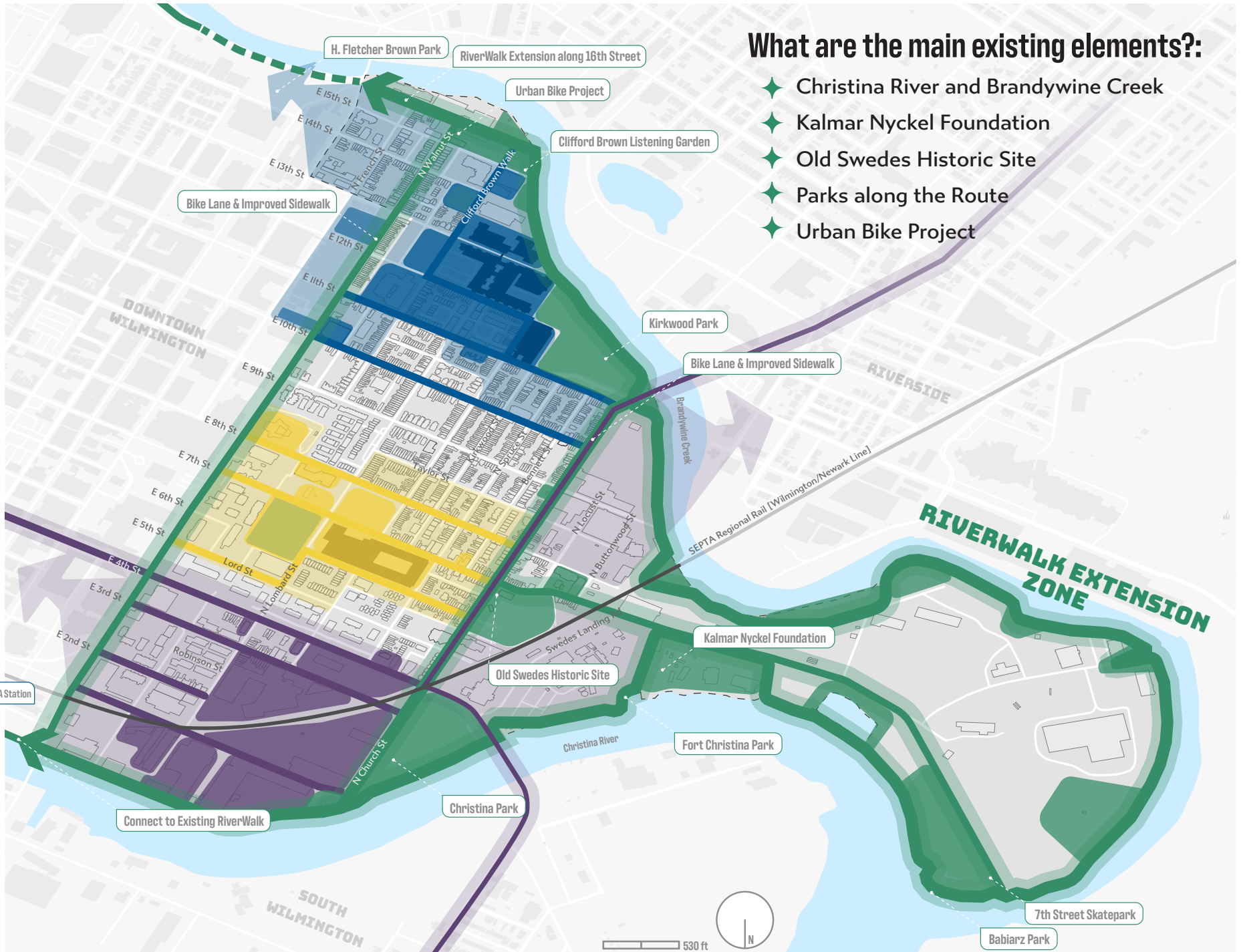
The community has shared many ideas about the types of businesses they want to see in the neighborhood. There is a big demand for grocery stores with fresh food, as well as restaurants like soul food spots and convenience stores to provide diverse food options. People also want health and wellness services, such as medical centers, urgent care, and rehab facilities, to make healthcare more accessible. Family-focused spaces, like children's centers, senior centers, and community hubs, are important, especially places that offer support for kids and the homeless. Many hope to see more Black-owned and culturally significant businesses that reflect and serve the community. Overall, the community envisions businesses that meet essential needs and celebrate local culture.

What are recommendations for the area?

- ◆ BN 2. Work with partners to create accessible rehabilitation facilities that allow individuals to seek support with minimal barriers
- ◆ BN 3. Develop comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood
- ◆ BN 4. Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement
- ◆ BN 5. Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions
- ◆ HH2. Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs
- ◆ HH4. Expand homeownership programs
- ◆ TN 1. Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine River
- ◆ TN 2. Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks
- ◆ TN 4. Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy
- ◆ TN5. Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building
- ◆ MW 1. Reestablish the Eastside as a Black Business District
- ◆ RT3. Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood

What are the main existing elements?:

- ◆ Christina River and Brandywine Creek
- ◆ Kalmar Nyckel Foundation
- ◆ Old Swedes Historic Site
- ◆ Parks along the Route
- ◆ Urban Bike Project



RIVERWALK EXTENSION ZONE

What is it?:

The RiverWalk Extension Zone includes expanding the trail along the Christina River and Brandywine Creek in the Eastside. Our ideas are to support the good things along the waterfront, improve how people engage with the waterways, and create community supported opportunities for developing the greenway. A greenway is a long, open space, like a park or path, that people can walk or bike through.

What we heard:

The community has shared exciting ideas for the Riverwalk Extension Zone. Many want the area to include shops and restaurants, making it a lively place to eat and shop. Families are asking for kid-friendly spaces, youth activities, and recreational areas like a baseball field. Safety and cleanliness are also important, with requests for better lighting and regular clean-up. People hope to see affordable housing and resources like a shelter or support hub for homeless individuals. Overall, the community envisions the Riverwalk as a vibrant, welcoming space for everyone.

What are recommendations for the area?

- ◆ BC 5. Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood
- ◆ BN 3. Develop comprehensive support facility for people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood
- ◆ BN 4. Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement
- ◆ BN 5. Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions
- ◆ BN 6. Advocate for healthy food options in the neighborhood
- ◆ HH2. Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs
- ◆ TN 1. Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine River
- ◆ TN 2. Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks
- ◆ TN 4. Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy
- ◆ TN5. Develop a beautification project program with a care plan for stewardship/ maintenance/capacity building
- ◆ TN6. Partner with and expand community garden programs in the neighborhood
- ◆ MW 1. Reestablish the Eastside as a Black Business District
- ◆ LL 1. Collaborate with partners to expand youth after-school educational and job placement programs
- ◆ RT3. Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood

IMPLEMENTATION



EASTSIDE
THRIVE

Implementation Strategy

The implementation of this plan between now and 2035 will take a lot of hard work by numerous organizations and community members in cooperation with the City of Wilmington. If you are reading this, your role will be essential in turning this plan into action. **Eastside Thrive focuses on creating a safer, healthier, and more vibrant neighborhood by improving housing, enhancing public spaces, boosting local businesses, and fostering community connections.** This work will involve collaborating with partner organizations, engaging with other residents, and ensuring that every step aligns with the vision of a thriving, inclusive Eastside. By staying focused on these goals, the plan will bring meaningful change to the community and create a lasting impact.

Implementers

Unlike many neighborhood plans created by a city, Eastside Thrive is a community-driven plan developed with the help of many organizations. Because of this, different groups will share the job of making the plan happen, so working together will be very important. The first recommendation in the plan, **BC I**, suggests creating a community "roundtable" to help coordinate everyone's efforts.

Even though the City of Wilmington didn't lead the creation of Eastside Thrive, they are still an important partner because they can provide funding for projects and set policies that support the plan.

One remarkable thing about this plan is that there are already organizations in the community that can do almost everything it suggests. The problem is that, even though these organizations have the skills and passion, they might not have enough resources to do everything they want to do. Resources could mean more funding, more staff, or both to reach their goals. A key part of making this plan work will be helping these organizations grow their capacity to carry it out.

Types of Recommendations

There are **three types of recommendations** in Eastside Thrive. Each is important to realizing the community vision for the Eastside, and different types of partners will have the resources and mission to care them out.

Projects

Projects are things we build or fix, like new homes, better parks, or safer streets, to make the neighborhood look nicer and work better. These are often the most expensive parts of the plan, and they can take a long time to finish. Some projects, like fixing streets or sidewalks, must be done by the City because they own the streets. Others, like building new homes, can be done by community organizations. Some projects, like improving parks or adding public art, might be done through a partnership between the City and other groups.

Programs

Programs are activities or services that help people, like job training, after-school programs, or health care, to make life better for everyone. Sometimes the City runs programs, but most of the time they are managed by organizations. Programs can often start quickly, but they need skilled staff and resources to keep them going.

Policies

Policies are rules or plans that guide how things work, like keeping housing affordable, supporting local businesses, or deciding how land can be used. These recommendations are very important and need support from elected officials to make them happen.

Funding

To help make a **Eastside Thrive** happen, different kinds of money can be used to support different projects. Here are the main types of funding:

Government Grants and Funding

Federal Grants: Money from the national government for things like affordable housing, community projects, and improving neighborhoods. In most cases, the City must be the applicant for this funding. **Recommendation RT 2** is an example of this type of funding.

State Grants: Money from the state government to help with projects like parks, streets, or programs to help people stay healthy.

Local Government Funds: Money from the city or county for projects in the neighborhood, like fixing up streets or building new parks.

Private and Corporate Grants

Foundation Grants: Money from nonprofit organizations that help with programs like youth activities, environmental projects, or community arts. This plan was paid for by a foundation grant. **Recommendation BC 2** also focuses on developing a capital campaign focused on establishing more philanthropic funding.

Business Donations: Companies may give money or help in

other ways for projects that help the neighborhood.

Tax Incentives and Financing

Tax Credits: Special tax breaks for projects like building affordable housing or fixing up old buildings.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): A way for cities to use money from future property taxes to pay for today's projects, like new streets or parks.

Opportunity Zones: Special areas that get tax breaks to encourage investment in neighborhoods that need help.

All three funding types in this section could be utilized to implement **Recommendations HH 2 and MW 1**.

Community-Based Funding

Crowdfunding: People can raise small amounts of money from many people online for a local project.

Community Investment Funds: Local people can put money into a fund that helps improve the neighborhood, like building affordable housing or community centers. A Community Investment Fund could also be utilized to implement **Recommendation MW 1** in a way that returns wealth to the community.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

Shared Funding: When both the government and private businesses work together to pay for big projects like housing or new public spaces.

Social Impact Bonds: Private investors put up money for projects that aim to make the community better, like reducing homelessness. If the project works, the government pays them back.

Loans and Financing Options

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs):

Special banks that give loans to people and businesses in low-income neighborhoods to help improve the area.

Economic Development Loans: Low-interest loans from local governments to help businesses or people build or fix things in the neighborhood.

By using these different kinds of funding, Eastside Thrive can be successful and help make the community a better place for everyone.

Implementation Approach

Foundational Recommendations: As mentioned earlier, most of the recommendations in this report can be achieved by community organizations working together to build resources that help make these actions happen. There are two key recommendations that create the foundation for this cooperation:

- BC 1. Establish a "roundtable" for collaboration between community based organizations and clarify the role of a "backbone" organization to coordinate implementation of the plan.
- BC 2. Develop a capital campaign to establish dedicated funding for the plan's goals.

These two recommendations should be the focus of the first steps in making the plan happen.

Recommendations that require coordination with the City of Wilmington: The plan contains a number of recommendations that will require the cooperation or leadership of the City or other public partners like the County or State.

- BN 4. Establish a dedicated street team to provide safety support in collaboration with local law enforcement.

- BC 5. Incorporate public art and historical interpretation throughout the neighborhood
- BN 5. Undergo a nighttime safety audit to find ways to improve conditions.
- HH 1. Expand program to fund deferred maintenance from homeowners to rental properties.
- HH 2. Redevelop waterfront properties in ways that meet community needs.
- HH 3. Reinvest in or redevelop Wilmington Housing Authority properties to improved housing conditions and expand housing opportunities.
- TN 1. Complete the RiverWalk Greenway connecting the Christina and Brandywine Rivers
- TN 2. Collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation to update plans for city owned parks
- TN 3. Advocate for improvements to Herman Holloway Park, Foster Brown Pool and Maurice Prichett, Sr. Academy open spaces to create a central park zone.
- TN 4. Invest in expanding the urban tree canopy.
- LL 3. Strengthen partnerships with area schools to expand adult education and job placement programs.
- RT 1. Ensure streets are designed with the neighborhood in mind.
- RT 2. Make pedestrian improvements tied to Safe Routes to School Program.
- RT 3. Connect the River Greenways with a Greenway through the Neighborhood.
- RT 4. Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the Neighborhood and support transportation options for seniors.

The remainder of recommendations can be accomplished primarily through the partnership of existing organizations.

Priorities and Timeline

Because this plan is unique, prioritizing recommendations wasn't part of the planning process. Many organizations were already working on different aspects of the improvements the community wanted, so it didn't feel right to ask them to change their focus or take on work that might not match their goals. Instead, prioritization should be one of the first tasks for the roundtable, with all organizations involved. This way, priorities and timelines can be set, taking into account each organization's resources and mission.

Case Study

CASE STUDY: HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL LIVABLE CENTERS REPORT CARD

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC Livable Centers Report Card) tracks the progress of Livable Centers projects across the Houston-Galveston region. Livable Centers is a program that funds community plans that create "vibrant, walkable communities where people can live, work, and play." The report cards highlight how well these projects are meeting goals like improving walkability, supporting public transit, increasing housing and job opportunities, and enhancing community spaces. The report card provides data on completed projects, ongoing efforts, and measurable outcomes, helping communities and stakeholders see the impact of their work and identify areas for improvement.

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting are key to making sure the plan stays on track and continues to make a difference. By regularly tracking progress and sharing updates on the channels suggested in **Recommendation BC 3**, the community can see the impact of the work being done and stay engaged in the process. Monitoring also helps identify what's working well and what needs adjustment. Reporting to funders is just as important, as it shows how their support is making a difference. Clear, regular updates help build trust and encourage funders to continue supporting the plan's goals.

FIFTH WARD/EAST END Livable Centers Study

- Year: 2015
- Partner/Sponsor: Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation
- Cost of Study: \$288K
- Projects Built/Invested: \$10M
- Projects Planned/Programmed: \$27M
- Capacity to Implement: HIGH
 - Continue to implement streetscape improvements
 - Market recent park improvements
 - Leverage future FTA and Precinct 1 improvements

53% complete

EXCEPTIONAL

“...Livable Centers study has been a guiding anchor to encourage true collaboration between 3 culturally unique communities ... to improve the quality of life for its residents and businesses. Our work is not done, and ... offer a number of opportunities to demonstrate impact throughout implementation.”

Kathy Payton
Fifth Ward CRC
President & CEO

A Report Card Example. Source: H-GAC



EASTSIDE THRIVE

Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Wilmington, Delaware



Healthy Communities Delaware
alignment. investment. impact.

mendcollaborative