



CREATE WILMINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Growth Factors Report

Executive Summary

Growth Strategies Maps

Policies

Foundations Report

Growth Factors Report

DRAFT
1/30/15

Welcome to the future of Wilmington.



How to Use the Comprehensive Plan

Five Components of the Box Set

1

Growth Factors Report

Maps, graphs, and charts that support the policies and growth strategies. Provided are maps of existing conditions and various factors related to Wilmington's growth.

Electronic readers click here to view or download this document.

2

Foundations Report

A summary of public input collected throughout the process and results from each tool, including the Neighborhood Planning Areas, Connect Wilmington, and Alternative Future Visions.

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3

Development Policies

Comprehensive policies address the themes/issues; policies are based on public input, best practices, the growth factors report, interlocal agency coordination and scenario planning results.

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4

Growth Strategies Maps

These maps illustrate desired areas for future growth, infill, and redevelopment based on public input and planning analysis. They are designed to work in conjunction with the development policies.

Electronic readers click here to view or download this document.

5

Executive Summary

An "at a glance" reference for the entire box set.

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Find Your Way Around



Box Set Cross-Reference:
Name of Reference Provided

This symbol is used to point you to a different box set component.



Document Cross-Reference:
Name of Reference Provided

This symbol is used to point you to a different part of the document you are currently reading.



External Resource:
Name of Resource Provided

This symbol is used to point you to an external resource, such as a plan, report, or study not contained in the box set.

The color of the symbol indicates the type of reference. This is the location within the document



Cross-Reference Type
Name of Reference

The type of reference and its name is provided here.

Wilmington Comprehensive Plan Themes

The *Create Wilmington Comprehensive Plan* is developed around seven key themes for shaping Wilmington’s future:



Creating a Place for Everyone

Wilmingtonians want a diverse and inclusive community, full of family-friendly, vibrant, and creative environments. Citizens want a welcoming community that includes arts and culture, activities for youth, families, and seniors, and high-quality housing that is available to everyone.

Topics Covered:

- Affordable housing
- Arts & cultural resources
- Youth activities
- Seniors
- Family amenities
- Accessibility
- Parks and recreation
- Crime and safety
- Cultural diversity
- Job creation
- Education



Getting Around

Diverse modes of transportation are needed for an inclusive, connected community. Regional partnerships can link greenways and other amenities. Options for pedestrian and bicycle amenities, along with other modes of transportation, should be explored as valid alternatives to automobile transit, as well as other options for local and regional mass-transit.

Topics Covered:

- Interconnectivity
- Sidewalks
- Greenways
- Alternative transportation modes
- Mass-transit
- Traffic
- Regional cooperation
- Driver behavior
- Connecting land use and transportation



Regional Collaboration

Wilmington does not and cannot exist in a bubble. Collaboration with other local governments, including New Hanover and surrounding towns and counties, is critical to Wilmington’s and the region’s success. Cooperative relationships with UNCW and CFCC, as well as the public school system, state ports, and our utility providers will help us all flourish.

Topics Covered:

- Leadership/excellence in government
- Town and gown relationships
- Balancing needs and resources
- Common goals and collaborative policies



Changing Places, Revitalized Spaces

Development of vast open land is no longer an option in Wilmington; our future will include a significant level of infill and redevelopment. Envisioning suitable infill and redevelopment and optimizing existing development will be critical to our community’s well-being, not only downtown, but within neighborhoods across the city. Balancing the need for open space and a well-designed built environment will be a key to future development.

Topics Covered:

- Infill
- Redevelopment
- Densification
- Neighborhoods
- Historic Preservation
- Sustainability
- Placemaking



Unique Places, Captivating Spaces

The “built environment” encompasses places and spaces created or modified by people including buildings, parks, land use patterns, and transportation systems. Since the built environment has profound consequences for individual and community well-being, all elements of our built environment should enhance the character of our community, being not only functional, but aesthetically appropriate, enriching the lives of visitors and residents alike.

Topics Covered:

- Aesthetics
- Site design
- Architecture and building design
- Code and tech standards
- Greenspace
- Infill
- Redevelopment
- Connecting land use and transportation
- Placemaking



Nurturing our Community

Environmental sustainability is at the core of where we want to go in the future. Our natural resources are a major factor in attracting residents and visitors to the area; balancing retention of their accessibility and protection of these resources will be a challenge. How we manage our interaction with the natural habitat, from parks, water, and open spaces, to locally-grown agriculture, to protecting water quality to solid waste disposal will be critical to our future success.

Topics Covered:

- Natural resources
- Tourism
- Balancing built and natural environments
- Greenspace/open space
- Parks and recreation
- Access to local food
- Water quality
- Climate change



Opportunity and Prosperity

Fostering opportunities for economic growth and development that enhance the concepts of each of the other themes is critical to our future prosperity. Creating jobs, building a strong workforce, facilitating commerce, and promoting business vitality are necessary to the success of a healthy, well-balanced community.

Topics Covered:

- Economic development
- Jobs
- Technology
- Health care
- Placemaking
- Code and technical standards
- Leadership and excellence in government
- Regional cooperation
- Common goals
- Leveraging resources
- Public-private collaboration

CREATE WILMINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Growth Factors Report

The Growth Factors Report is a snapshot of what Wilmington looks like today and tells the story of how the city has become what it is. The report provides an assessment of current demographics and social and economic conditions and also provides a review of physical conditions, including natural and constructed systems and the patterns found in the built environment. The purpose of this report is to provide a factual understanding of current conditions and how Wilmington has changed over time. This report provides the context, or ‘starting point,’ from which the community moves forward to create a shared vision for the future.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

The steering committee was supported by staff from the City of Wilmington Planning, Development, and Transportation department, with assistance from every department within the city.

The Wilmington City Council appointed a 15-member citizen steering committee to assist in the public input process, provide guidance and leadership, and to represent the voice of the citizens in the overall process.

The members of the steering committee are:

- Robert Rosenberg,
Chair
- Elizabeth Hines
- Randy Reeves
- Howard Capps,
Vice-chair
- J. Clark Hipp
- Jennifer Rigby
- Carlos Braxton
- Paul Lawler
- Frank Smith
- Kemp Burdette
- Bonnie Nelson
- Kevin Smith
- Deb Hays
- Linda Pearce
- Tom Pollard

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Land Use, Zoning, & Development Potential

Land Use & Zoning

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- 4.2 Current Zoning
- 4.3 Rezoning History & Trends

Development & Redevelopment Factors

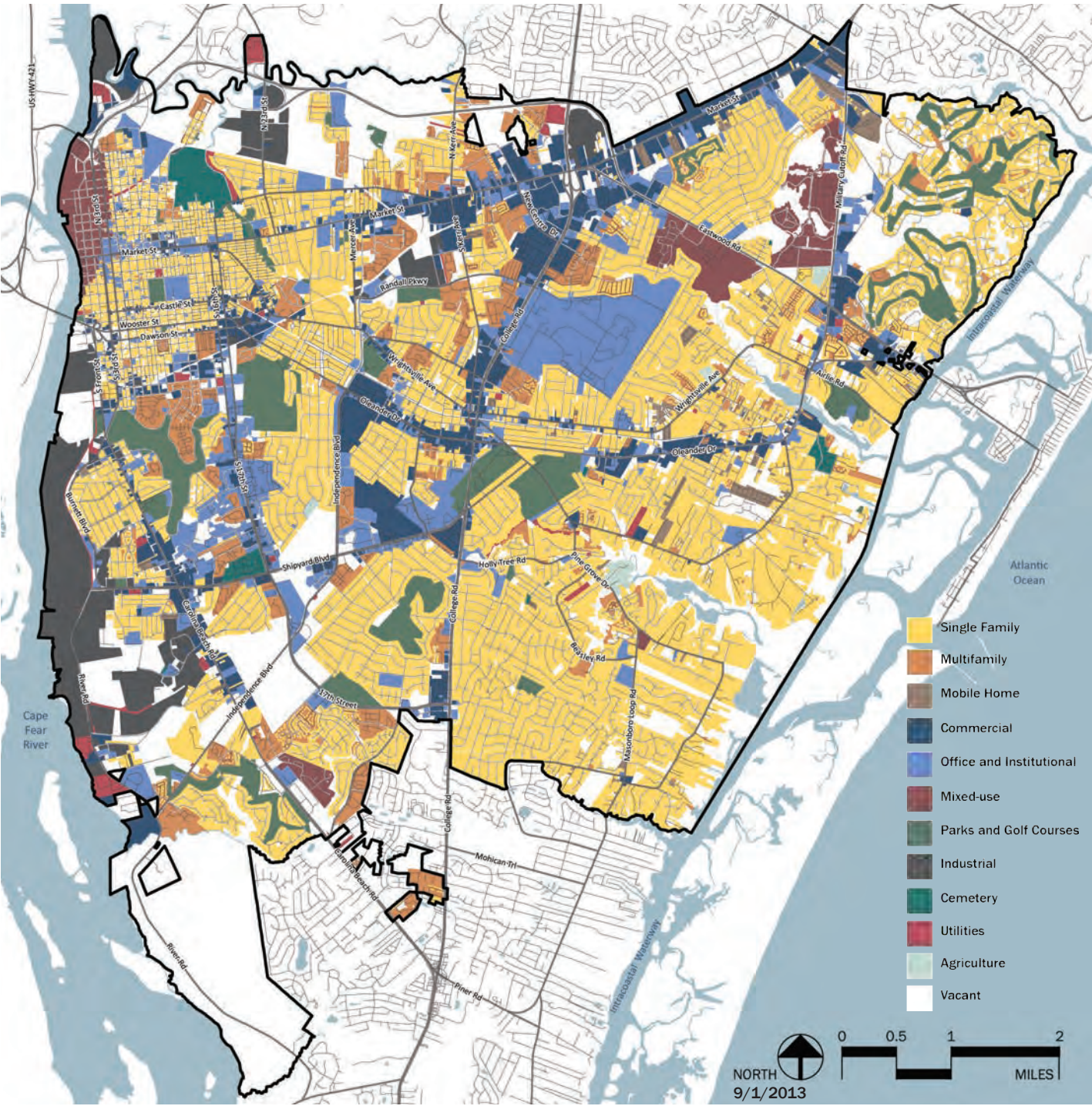
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“Cities have the capability of
providing something for everybody,
only because, and only when, they
are created by everybody.”

— Jane Jacobs



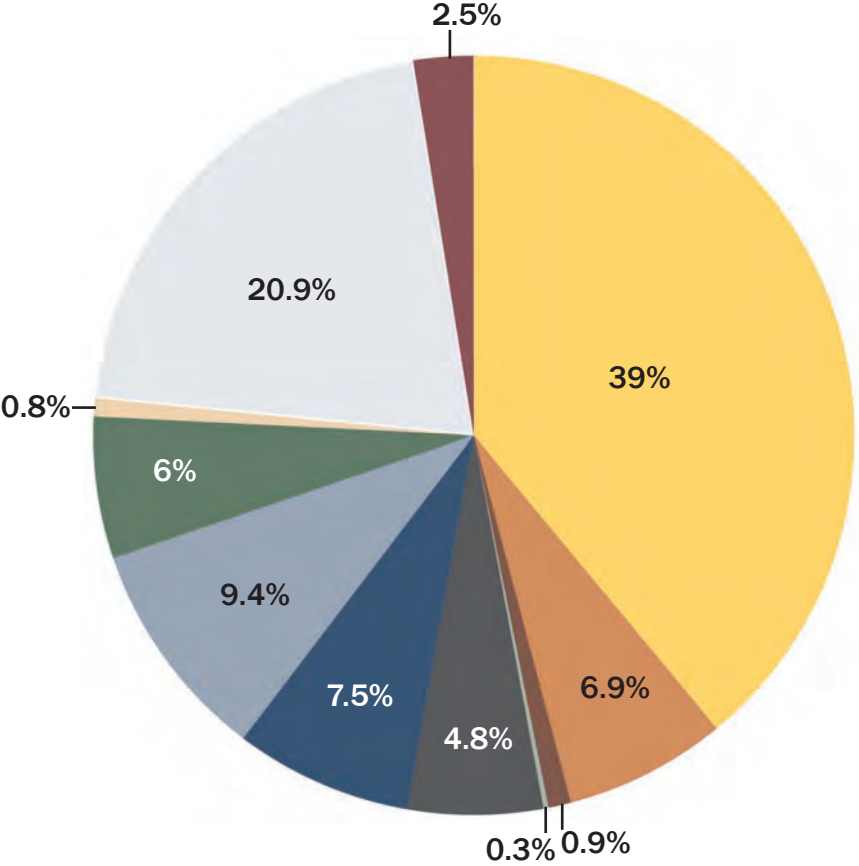
Land Use & Zoning



4.1 Current Land Use

This map depicts the existing land uses across the city. Land use is different than zoning as it indicates the actual use of the property, while zoning defines the type of development allowed. Single-family dwellings make up the largest single land use in the city. Commercial and office uses are largely confined to

major road corridors, while industrial uses are generally located along the river and associated with the state port.



Current Land Use

	Land Use	Acres	Parcels	% of Total Acreage*
	Single-family	10,978	31,399	39%
	Vacant**	6,754	3,519	20.9%
	Office & Institutional	2,722	1,452	9.4%
	Commercial	2,122	1,733	7.5%
	Multi-family	1,998	865	6.9%
	Parks & Recreation	1,705	81	6%
	Industrial	1,388	144	4.8%
	Mixed-use	726	1,066	2.5%
	Mobile Home	253	220	0.9%
	Utilities	266	117	0.9%
	Cemetery	228	21	0.8%
	Agriculture	70	5	0.3%

* Excluding public rights-of-way and water
** Includes potential wetlands and floodplain



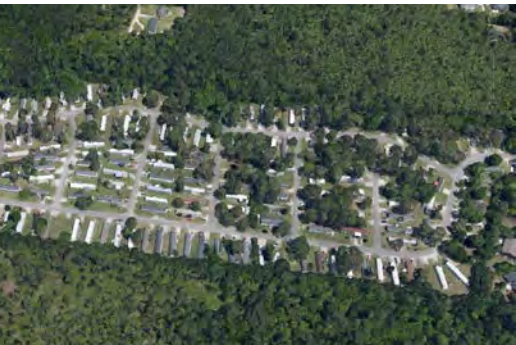
Single-family neighborhood off of Kelly Road.



Shopping center on South College Road.



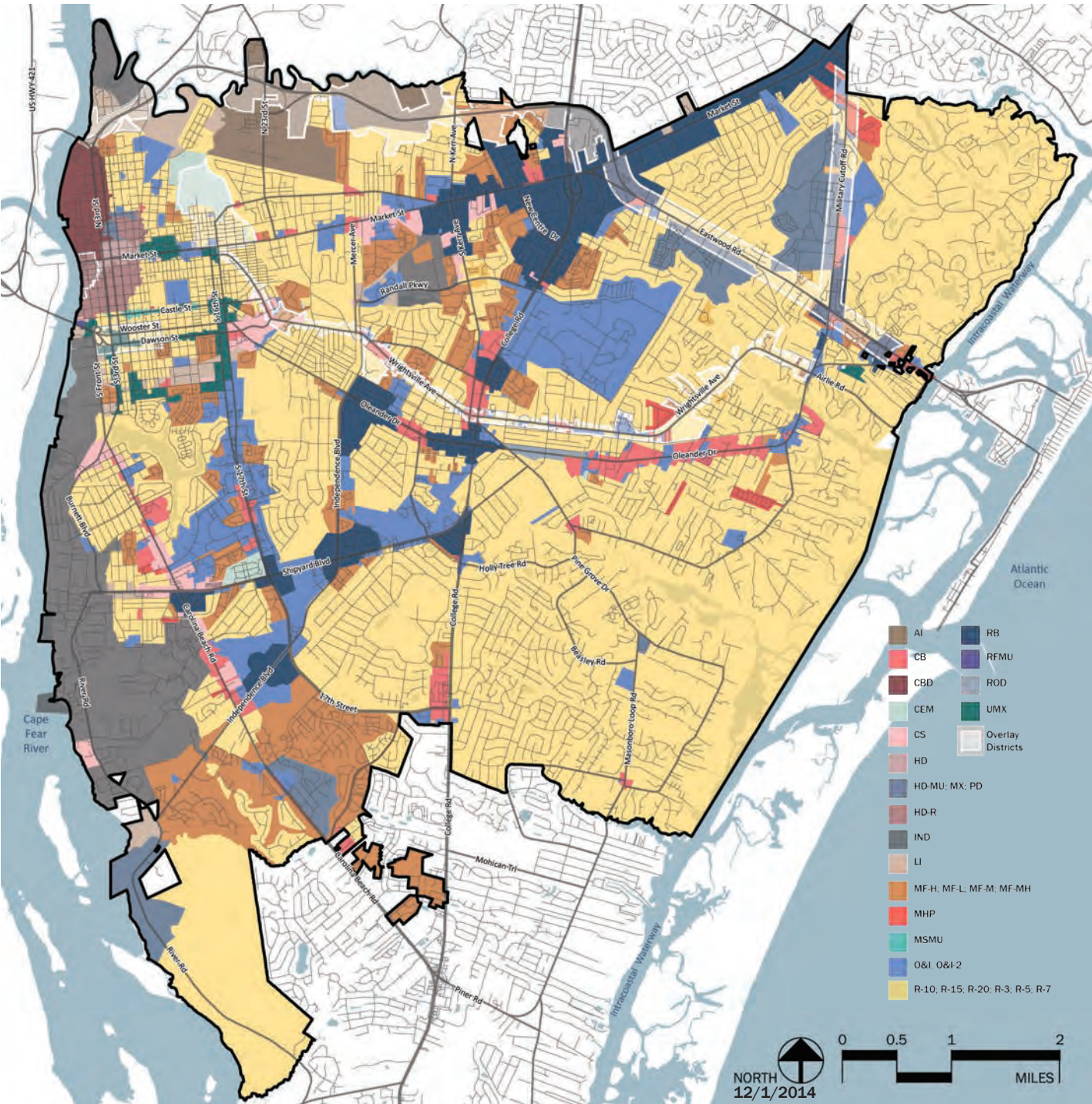
Office park on Sir Tyler Drive.



Manufactured housing off of Greenville Loop Road.

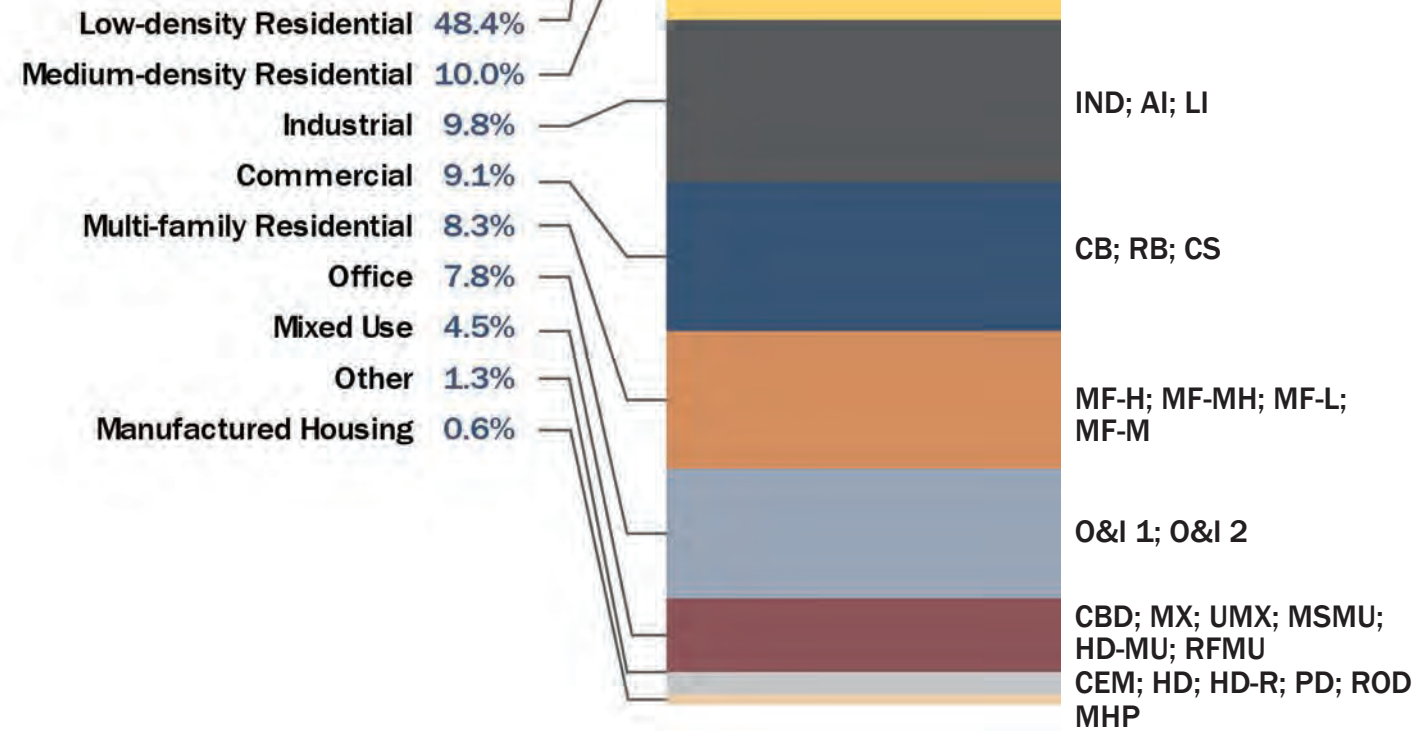
Land Use Patterns
These images reflect some of the different land uses located in Wilmington.

4.2 Current Zoning

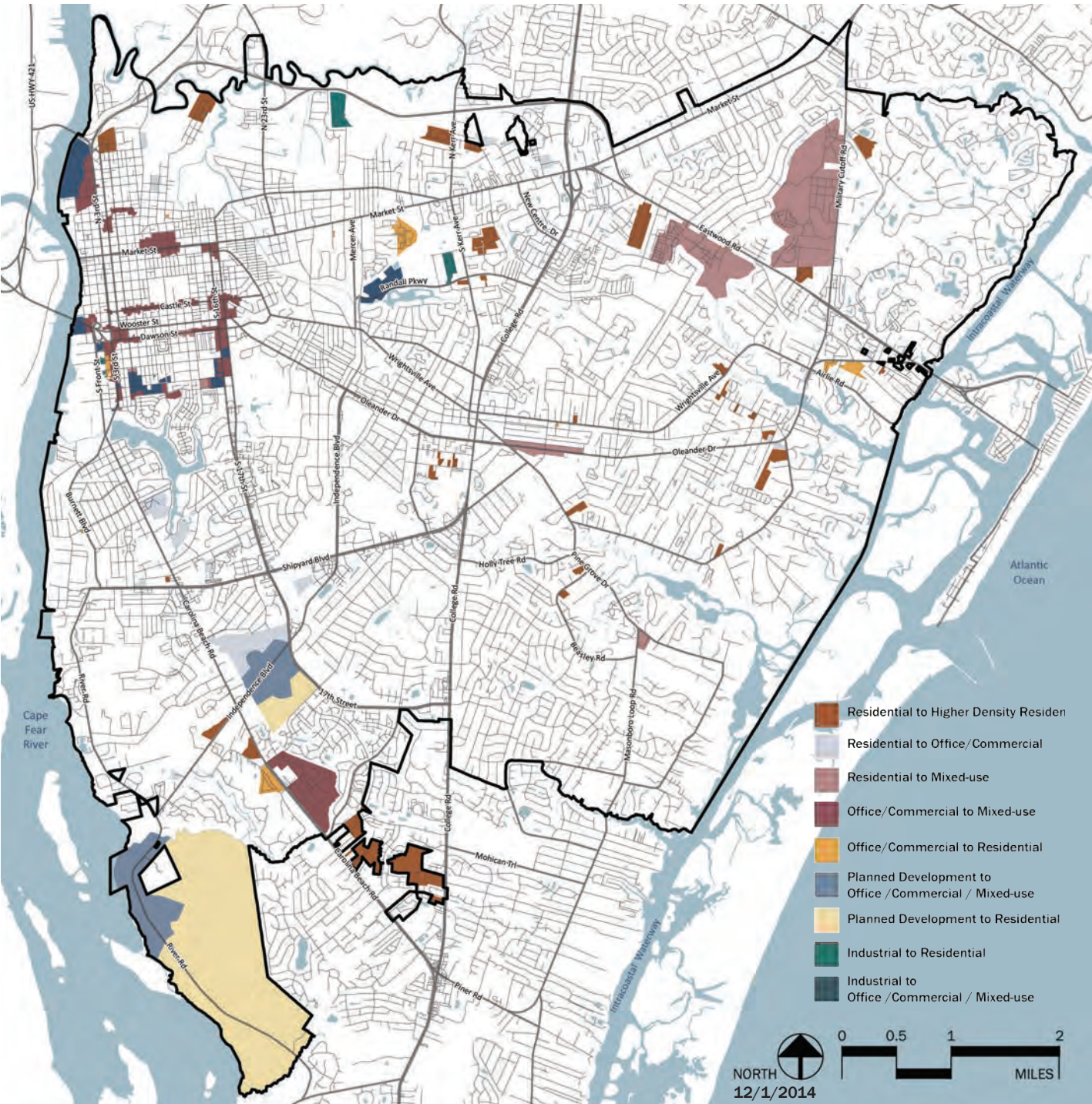


The City of Wilmington has a total of 29 zoning classifications. The majority of the city’s land area falls within one of the single-family zoning classifications. Commercial zoning and office zoning are located primarily along major roads and around major intersections. The city’s industrially-zoned land is largely found along the river and near the airport.

Current City Zoning Allocation
Nearly half of the current zoning in Wilmington is for low-density, single family development. While some zoning districts allow for mixed-use development, many do not accommodate it or it is prohibited.



4.3 Rezoning History & Trends



Since 2000, approximately 3,578 acres have been rezoned within the current city limits, including all annexed properties, some of which fall outside of the extent of this map. There were five major trends within this time period. Over 1,200 acres were rezoned from planned development (PD) to residential. Approximately 656 acres were rezoned from residential (single- or multi-family) to a mixed-use zoning classification (e.g. Autumn Hall), 412 acres were

rezoned from residential to a higher density residential zoning classification (e.g. Lake Avenue), 388 acres were rezoned from a commercial or office classification to a mixed-use classification (e.g. Fairfield Park), and 233 acres were rezoned from residential (single- or multi-family) to a commercial or office classification (e.g. Barclay West).

Major Rezoning for Mixed-use Development

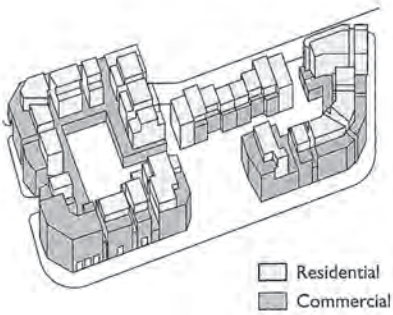
Project	Year	Acres
Mayfaire	2000	395
Autumn Hall	2005	176
Urban Mixed-use (UMX)	2013	371
Barclay West	2013	290
Northern Riverfront	2005	61
Fairfield Park	2001	132
Galleria Shopping Center	2014	13



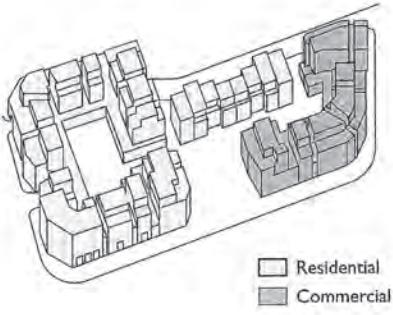
Autumn Hall Master Plan.

Mixed-use Development Types

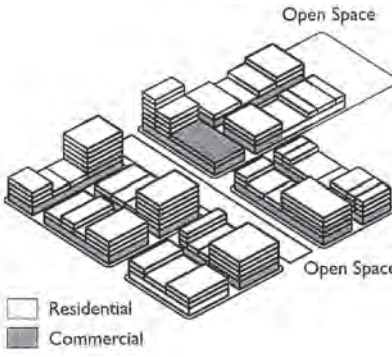
Not all mixed-use development and districts are the same. Some types have a rich integration of uses, which promotes activity and vitality.



Vertical Mixed-use
Uses are mixed within the same building, thus being well-integrated. Residential over office or retail is the most common.



Horizontal Mixed-use
Uses are not mixed within the same building, but are placed next to one another on the same site (or as part of a multi-use area).



Multi-use Area
Uses are mostly separated, but a variety of uses can be found within a relatively small, walkable area. These may contain vertical mixed-use building types.



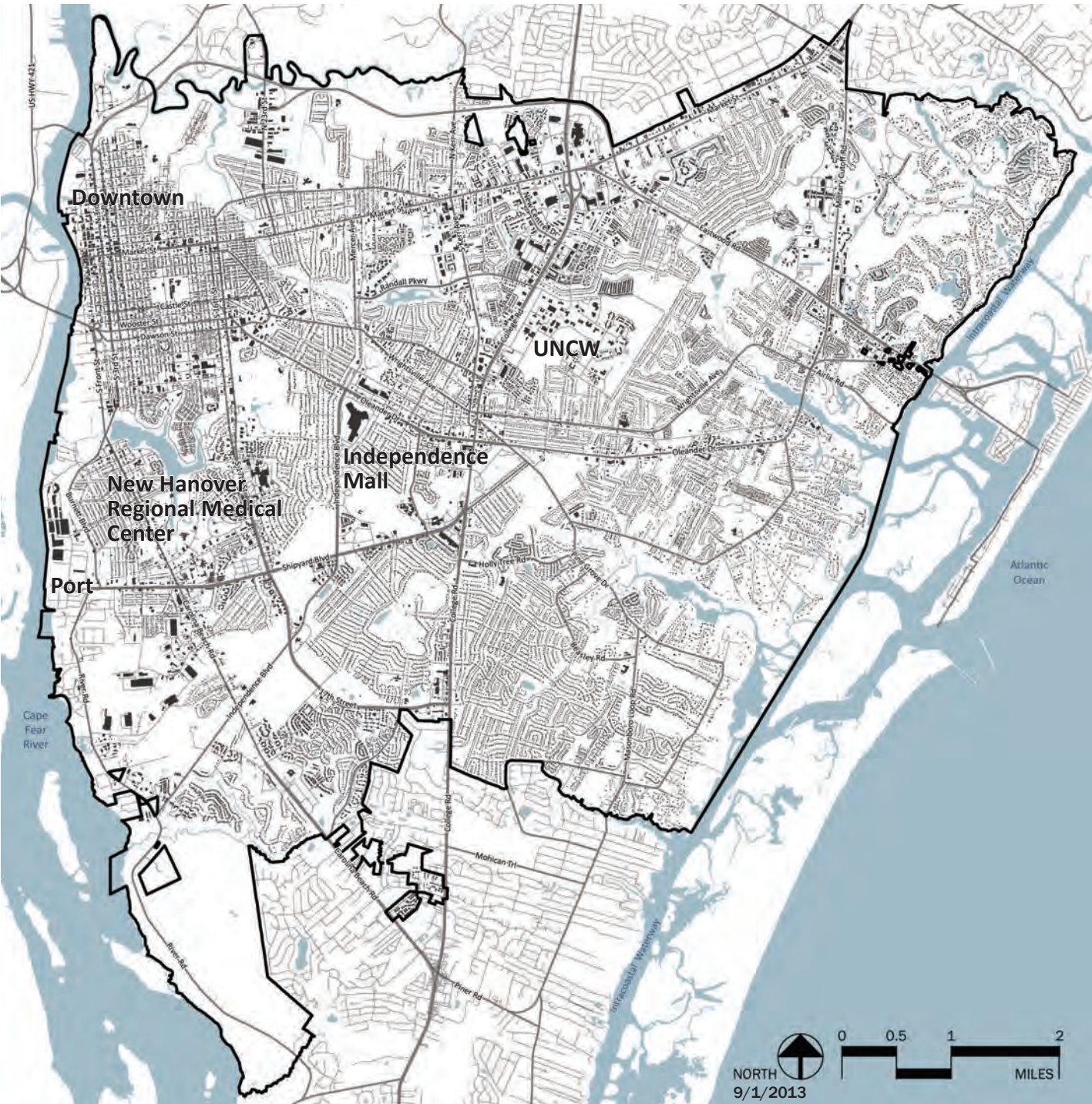
Example
Buildings along Front Street have residential and office uses above retail.



Example
The Forum on Military Cutoff includes a of mix restaurants, stores, and offices side by side.



Example
Mayfaire provides a combination of mixed-use types all within a short walk of each other.

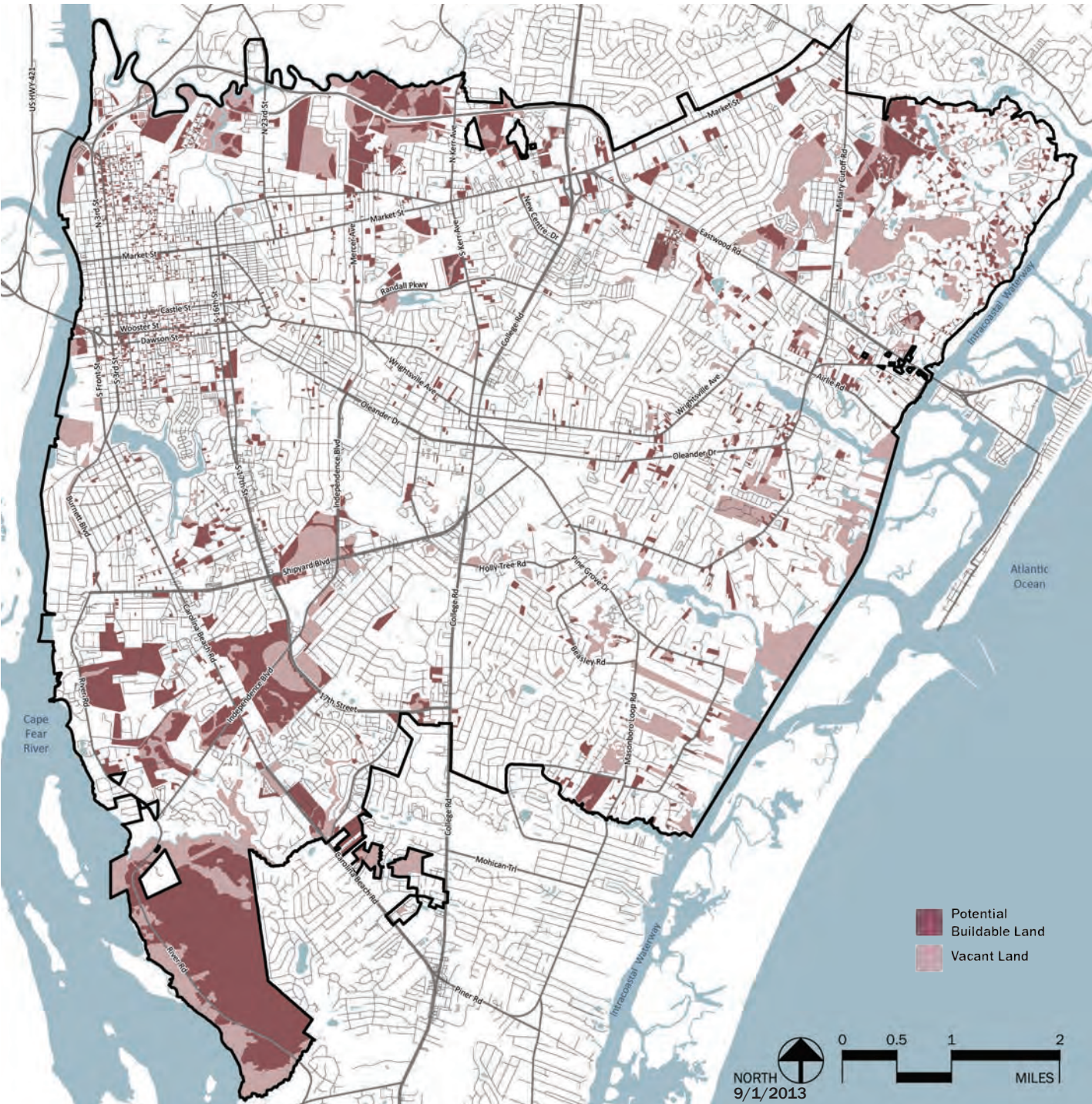


4.4 Building Footprints and Unbuilt Areas

This map shows the city’s buildings and development pattern, the space between buildings, and the locations of exceptionally large buildings. Downtown, Independence Mall, New Hanover Regional Medical Center, UNCW and the Port of Wilmington facilities are clearly visible.



Document Cross-Reference:
Community Pattern Areas



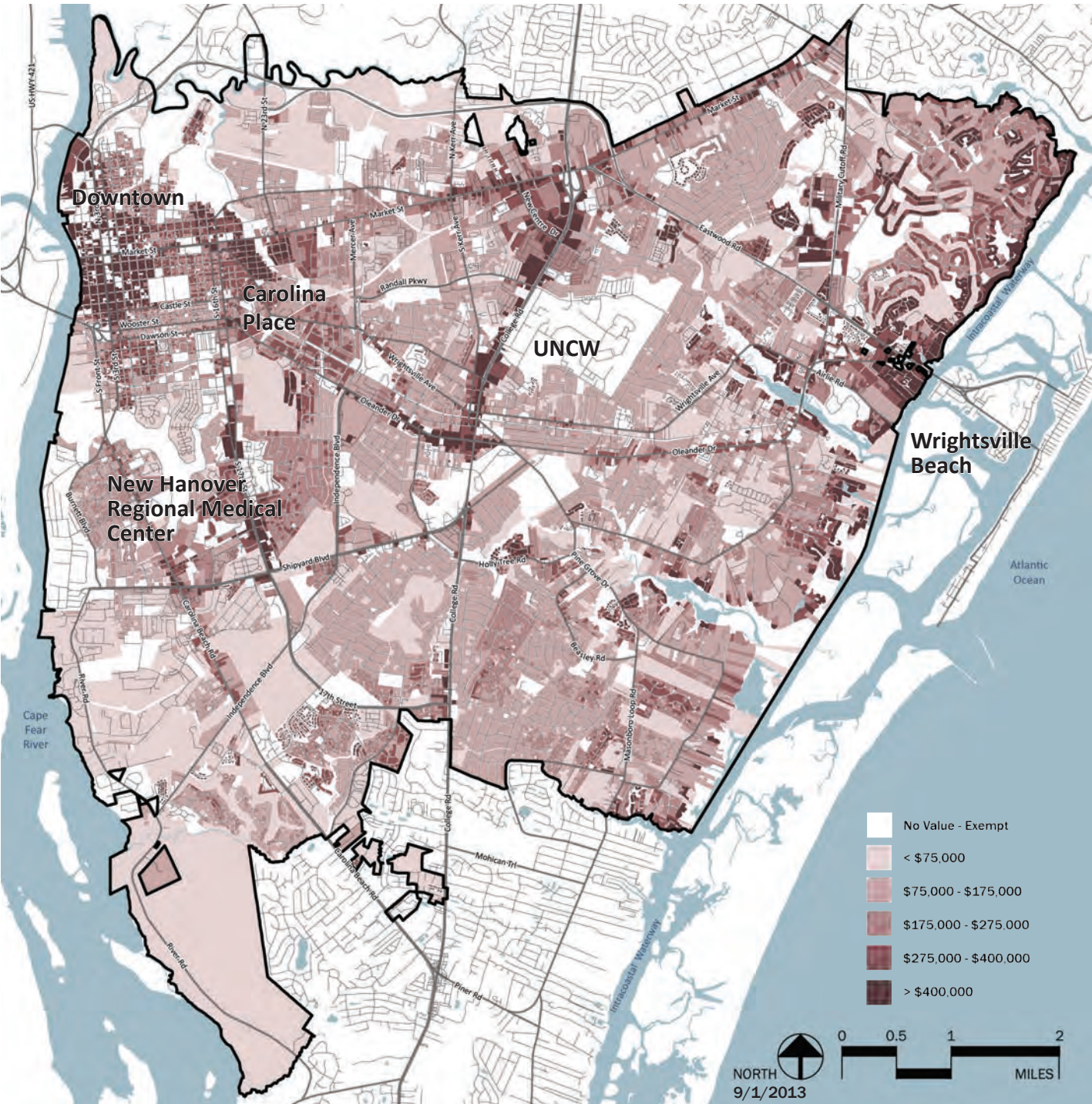
4.5 Vacant and Buildable Land

Vacant, buildable land has become a scarce resource within the city. Of the city’s 28,484 acres (39,556 parcels) of land, only 6,757 acres (3,519 parcels) are considered vacant. After removing floodplains, wetlands, federally-owned lands, and other potential barriers to development, the remaining potentially buildable land amounts to approximately 3,726 acres, or just 13% of the total land area.



Document Cross-Reference:
Environmental Assets

4.6 Land Values

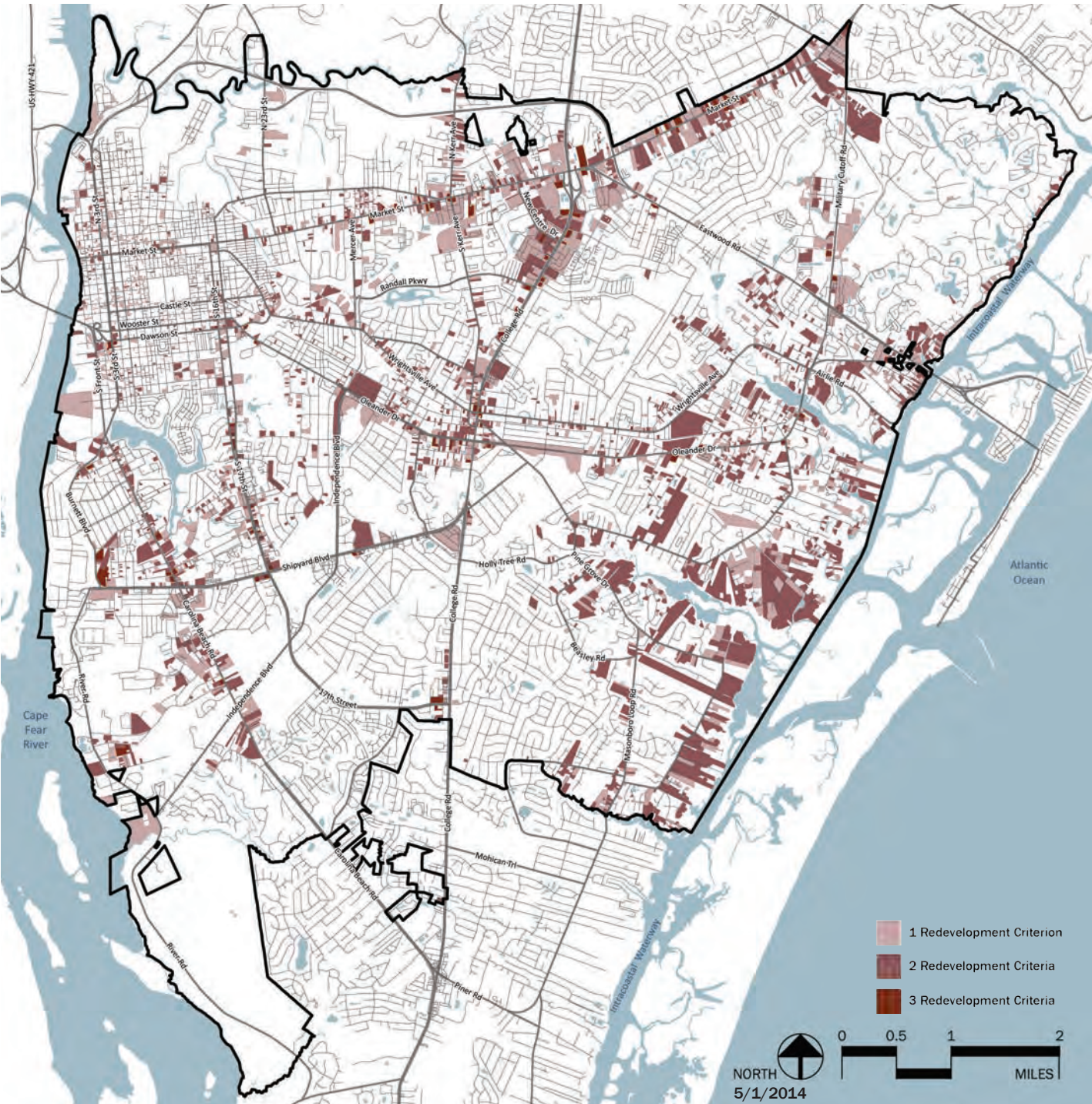


This map reveals land value in terms of dollar value per acre. Each parcel is valued and ranked on the color ramp, with no color indicating no tax value, exemptions, or no data. The value represents land value only, building values are not included. The analysis reveals a strong land value in downtown and Carolina Place, as well as along heavily-developed corridors

like Oleander Drive and College Road at UNCW, Wrightsville Avenue near Wrightsville Beach, and areas along 17th Street near New Hanover Regional Medical Center.

Source: New Hanover County Tax Department

4.7 Areas of Potential Redevelopment



This map depicts potential redevelopment sites within the city. Sites identified as potential redevelopment areas include properties where building value is less than the land value, building lot coverage is less than 10%) and/or parking lot coverage is greater than 50%. Properties are categorized as meeting 1, 2, or 3 of these criteria.

Suitability Criteria for Redevelopment Sites

- Land Value > Building Value
- Building Coverage of Parcel < 10%
- Parking Lot Coverage of Parcel > 50%

Suitability and Redevelopment Area Examples

There are approximately 5,800 acres of potentially redevelopable land and 3,600 acres of potentially buildable vacant land in the city. A large percentage of parcels that are suitable for redevelopment and infill development are less than two acres in size.

Areas of Potential Growth Details		
Potential Redevelopment Areas	Parcels	Acres
Parcels < 2 Acres	3,807	2,034
Parcels > 2 Acres	814	3,795
TOTAL	4,621	5,829
Potentially Buildable Vacant Land	Parcels	Acres
Parcels < 2 Acres	2,610	812
Parcels > 2 Acres	200	2,800
TOTAL	2,810	3,613



K-mart on South College Road.

Excessive Surface Parking Lots

Sites where surface parking exceeds 50% of the total lot area can be suitable for creative infill and redevelopment.



Starway flea market off Carolina Beach Road.

Low Lot Coverage / Under used Land

Underutilized sites include parcels with building footprints that are less than 10% of the total lot area.



Former Coca-Cola bottling facility on Princess Street.

Post-industrial Areas w/ “Main Street” Potential

Older commercial corridors and industrial areas have buildings that are no longer in use that can be repurposed and retrofitted to meet modern demands for commercial space.

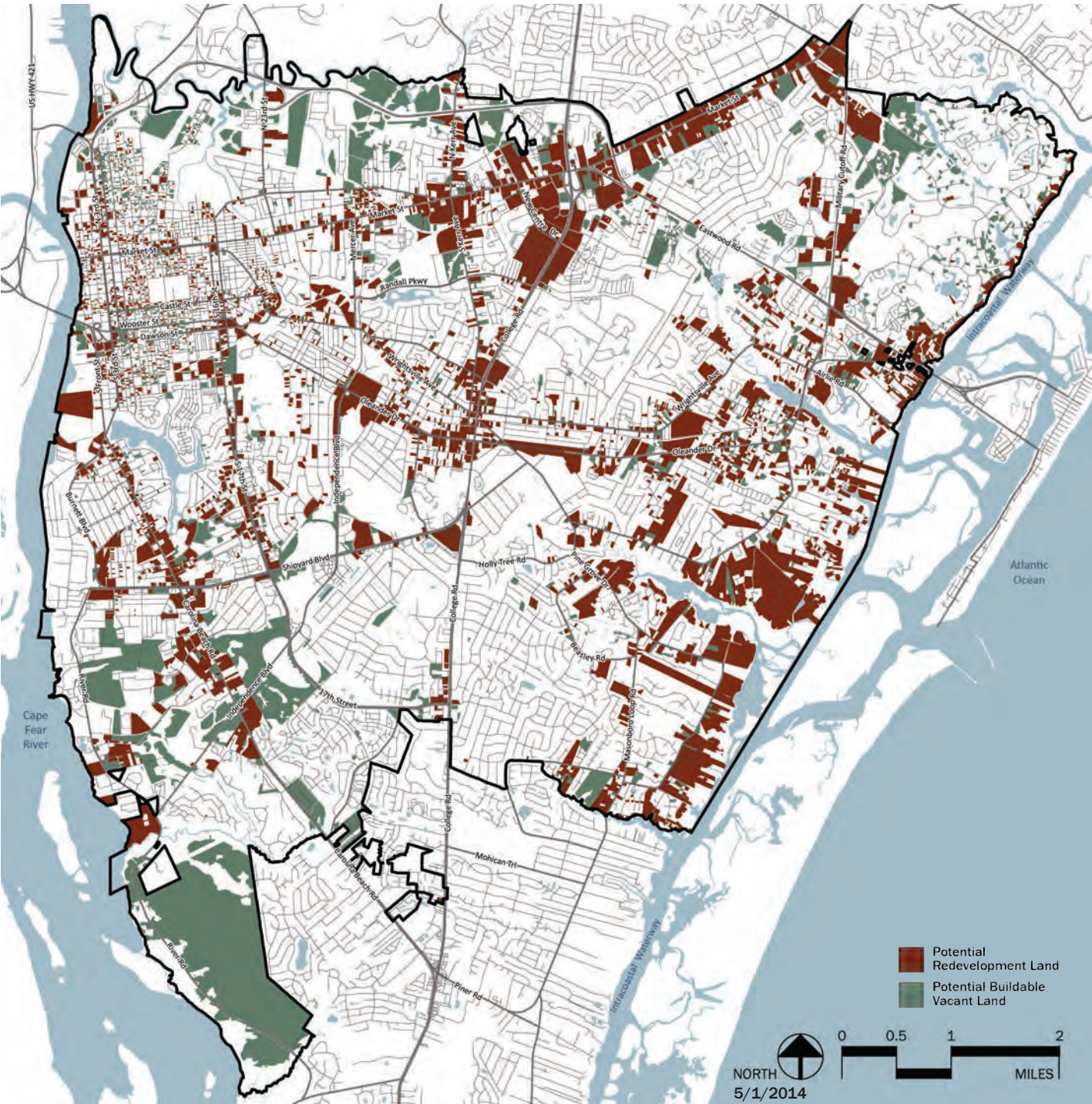


South 3rd Street at Dawson and Wooster streets.

Underinvested Gateway Areas

Gateway areas include underutilized sites with large surface parking lots and small building footprints.

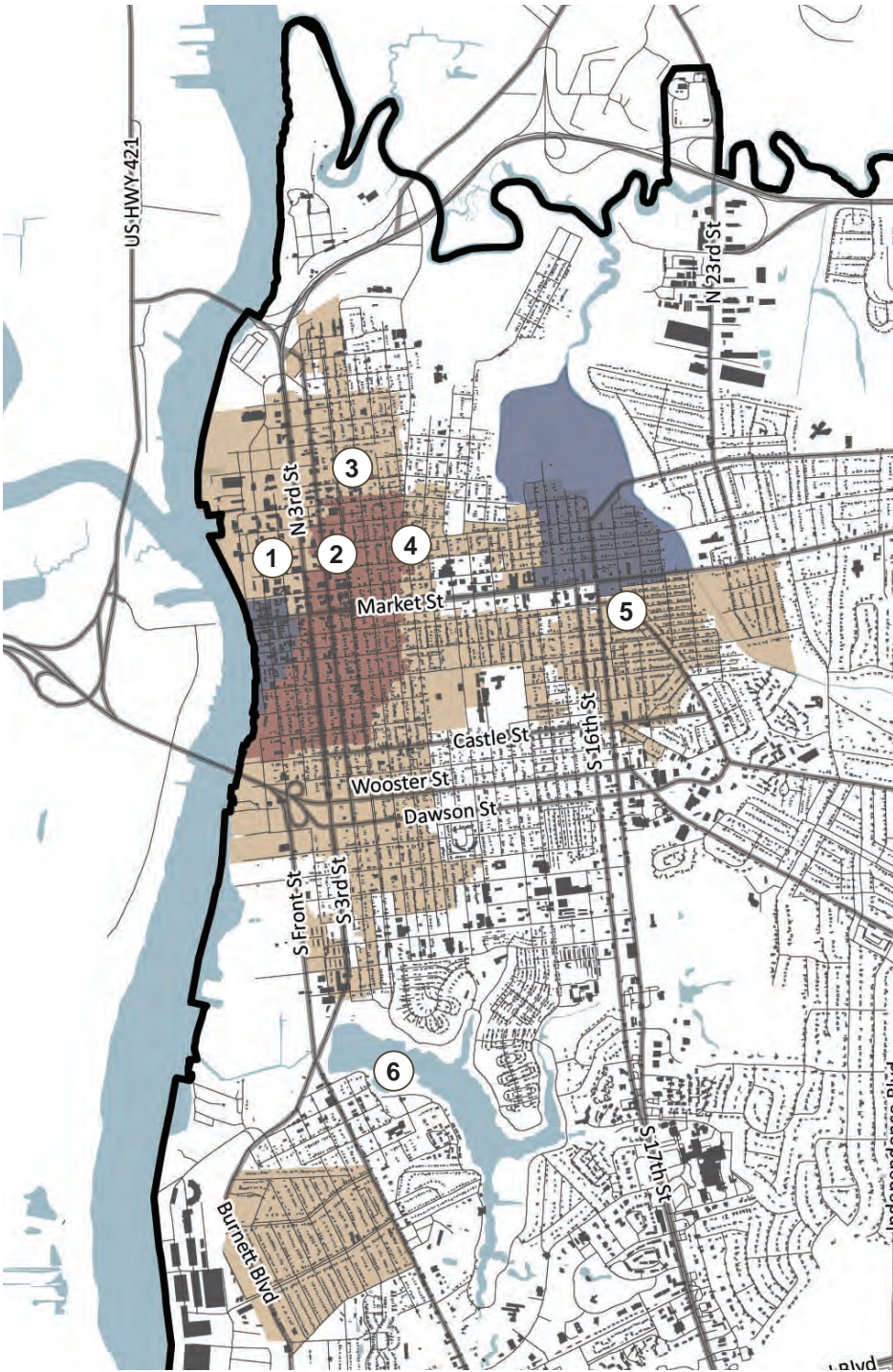
4.8 Developable Land & Redevelopment Sites Combined



This map depicts potential redevelopment sites and likely buildable vacant land within the city. The vast majority of these sites are less than two acres in size. These smaller sites are typically found within already urbanized areas.



4.9 Historic Districts & Sites



This map depicts the city’s existing locally designated historic districts, historic district overlays, designated historic landmarks, and areas that are included in the national register of historic places.

- National Register of Historic Places
- Local Historic Districts
- Historic District Overlay
- Local Historic Landmarks (see next page)

Greater Downtown & Sunset Park Historic Districts

The National Register of Historic Places identifies a large portion of the Greater Downtown as well as the Sunset Park neighborhood as historically significant.



National Register of Historic Places
The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of buildings and districts worthy of preservation due to their architectural and historic significance. Wilmington has six districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Local Historic Landmarks
Landmark designations may apply to individual buildings, structures, sites, areas, or objects that are found to have historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural value. Designation is an honor, indicating the community believes the property deserves recognition and protection.

Local Historic Districts
Districts are designated by City Council following a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Design review by the HPC is required for exterior alterations to properties located within the local historic districts.

Designated Historic Landmarks



1 Efrid’s-Einstein Department Store



2 Lazarus-Hill-Devine House



3 North 6th Street Harry Forden Bridge



4 Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church



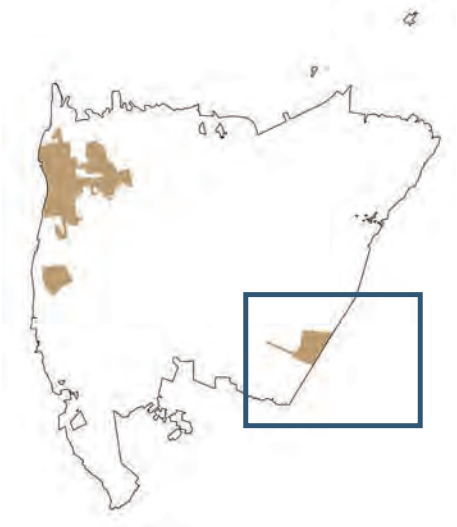
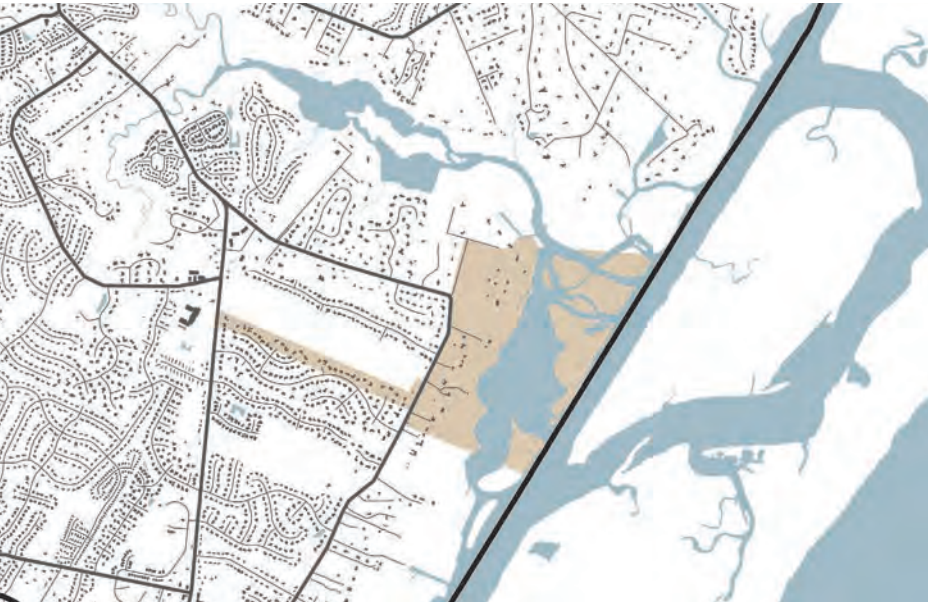
5 Fire Station No. 5



6 Greenfield Lake Park & Gardens

Masonboro Sound National Register Historic District

This map depicts the National Register Historic District that is located off of Masonboro Sound Road. This area of the city is recognized for the historical significance of the tidewater estates located along the Intracoastal Waterway.



- National Register of Historic Places
- Local Historic Districts
- Historic District Overlay
- Local Historic Landmarks (see next page)



A brownfield is a property that has been abandoned or is underused because of known or potential environmental contamination. As part of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded grant, the city has identified nearly 65 potential brownfield sites within the study area. There are approximately 130 acres identified as potential brownfields. The intent of the brownfields program is to put those properties back into productive use



9/1/2013



Brownfields Redevelopment: Northern Riverfront Area

The northern downtown riverfront was once the industrial center of the city and included lumberyards, shipping terminals, warehouses, and was the headquarters for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. When the railroad offices left in 1960, all buildings were abandoned and left to deteriorate.

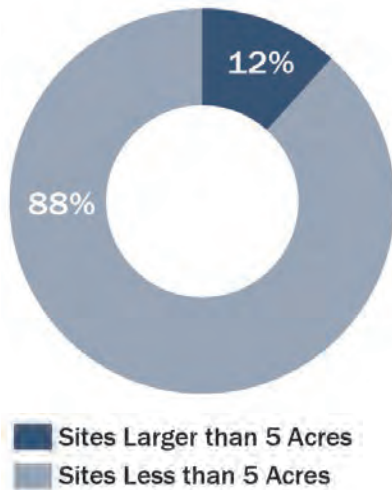
Federal and state grants were used to reduce uncertainty and liability exposure, thus facilitating the cleanup and redevelopment of vast tracts of contaminated land.



Document Cross-Reference:
Downtown Framework Analysis
Downtown Core Subdistrict Profile:
Northern Riverfront Redevelopment Area

Acreage of Brownfields Sites in the 2011 Study Area

Of the 60 inventoried sites in the 2011 brownfields study area, seven were larger than five acres (12% of the total number of sites). Sites larger than five acres are more suitable for large-scale redevelopment projects, whereas smaller sites require more strategic intervention.



Phase I & II Environmental Assessments

Environmental assessments are performed on sites that were previously used for commercial purposes to identify any environmental issues that may exist, such as hazardous waste contamination.

A Phase I Environmental Assessment is a vital part of commercial and industrial real estate transactions where potential contamination is a concern. The primary goal of a Phase I assessment is to determine the previous ownership and use of the property and uncover evidence of the environmental condition of the site. The Phase I assessment includes a records review, site reconnaissance, and interviews to uncover this evidence. Phase I assessments do not include any sampling or chemical analysis but make a recommendation as to whether a Phase II Environmental Assessment should be performed.

Phase II Environmental Assessments include site-specific sampling and chemical analysis to characterize the occurrence, distribution, nature, and extent of hazardous compounds in the soil and/or groundwater at the site. Phase II assessments generally provide the necessary information to determine if cleanup activities are warranted on the property.