

## **Executive Summary**

Envision a community that is safe, clean and attractive, offers quality housing, ample recreational opportunities and convenient access to shopping, services and jobs. These desirable qualities are the vision of the NorthSide community. The NorthSide community is the northern gateway to Wilmington's historic downtown neighborhoods and central business district. The continued vitality of this community is important to the neighborhood residents, as well as to the overall city. This awareness inspired interested citizens, with the support of the City of Wilmington, to create the NorthSide Community Plan—a neighborhood revitalization strategy that envisions the successful future of this community.

The Plan identifies the current conditions and issues that residents and property owners wish to improve upon. It also addresses opportunities created by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway connection into this area by the year 2005. Developed by a diverse group of citizens including community residents, business people, church leaders and other interested parties, the NorthSide Community Plan focuses on specific goals and the necessary steps to achieve them. The Plan includes short-term goals that can be more immediately achieved, as well as long-term goals that can be accomplished over time.

The NorthSide Community Plan process was guided by a citizen steering committee. The development of the Plan included identification of common concerns and the creation of goals, objectives, and action steps needed to make the community's vision a reality. Community meetings were held as a forum to allow the stakeholders to come to an agreement on how to make their neighborhoods better. Based on the community's input, the following common themes provide the foundation of the Plan:

- Crime Prevention
- Economic Development
- Attractive Community
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Programs
- Transportation

In addition to the community-wide meetings, numerous smaller citizen group meetings were held to form the goals, objectives and action steps for each theme in the Plan. Each action step identifies a specific task and the means to accomplish it. Citizens expressed their desire for a local grocery store and a community resource facility that supports recreation, education, vocation, and rehabilitation activities and provides community meeting space. Public/private partnerships will be a strong component in the realization of these projects, as well as many others in the Plan.

The NorthSide Neighborhood Association, which was created as a result of this planning process, is the key player in the success of the Plan. A major role of the Association will be to facilitate continued communication and cooperation among stakeholders and to help form the necessary partnerships. This community-based planning process has been an opportunity for residents and property owners in the NorthSide to come together to share their ideas and vision of what they want to see in their community in the future. The NorthSide Community Plan reflects their desire to create a "better tomorrow" for their community.

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