

**12th Street Connector Draft Purpose and Need:**

Project Purpose	Project Needs
<p>Improve access between Northeast Wilmington and the Brandywine River Waterfront and downtown Wilmington Central Business District.</p>	<p>The street system in Northeast Wilmington is incomplete and discontinuous. Important connections like the main cross street closest to the waterfront between Church Street and Pine Street, at the former Diamond State Salvage Site, is closed to traffic. Multiple other streets end within the Project Area including 13th Street, 16th Street, 17th Street, North Church Street, and North Locust Street. System improvements can provide better access locally in the community, to the Brandywine River Waterfront, and to destinations in downtown Wilmington.</p>
<p>Improve multi-modal access for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit riders.</p>	<p>Discontinuous sidewalks, missing crosswalks, and missing pedestrian ramps inhibit pedestrian safety, mobility, and access to transit service. A lack of bicycle facilities and accommodations inhibit bicycle access and safety. Transportation improvements for multi-modal users can improve mobility and safety.</p>
<p>Improve traffic operations.</p>	<p>Within the Project Area, traffic volumes are heaviest on Vandever Avenue, Northeast Boulevard, and 12th Street while traffic volumes remain low on the 16th Street Bridge and on local streets. Accidents most frequently occur on the streets with the most congestion, including Vandever Avenue, Northeast Boulevard, and 12th Street at the Northeast Boulevard Intersection. Redirecting traffic to a corridor closer to the waterfront and 16th Street Bridge can reduce congestion and improve safety.</p>
<p>Support economic development and job creation.</p>	<p>The City of Wilmington has conducted multiple planning studies that identify the Brandywine River Waterfront in Northeast Wilmington as a strategic redevelopment site for economic growth. These studies include the Brandywine River and Northeast Wilmington Redevelopment Plan (2013), the Wilmington Economic Development SWOT Analysis (2014), the City of Wilmington Economic Development Strategic Plan (2014), the Blueprint Communities Northeast Wilmington Community Revitalization Plan (ongoing), the Wilmington Comprehensive Plan for our City and our Communities (ongoing), and the Northeast Brandywine Riverfront Area Wide Plan for Brownfield Redevelopment (ongoing). Currently, access to vacant and underutilized properties and land along the Brandywine River Waterfront is limited and inhibits potential. Improving access along the waterfront will support the City's vision for redevelopment and provide new job opportunities.</p>
<p>Provide better accommodations for freight movement for local businesses while minimizing impacts to the community.</p>	<p>Local industrial businesses need freight access to operate, and freight movement passes through the community. 12th Street connects freight traffic to I-495 from areas to the northwest, northeast, and south via Northeast Boulevard. Freight also passes through residential communities along Vandever Avenue in the Project Area and along the Spruce Street/Church Street corridor in residential areas south of the Project Area. Freight access must be maintained to support local businesses as well as improved freight access to the 16th Street Bridge to reduce freight traffic through residential communities to improve neighborhood safety and quality and life.</p>