Wilmington's Housing Market Is Surprisingly Stable

A key indicator shows a surprising trend in regional migration.

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THE DATA

3.2%

Year-over-Year Population Growth

Among coastal North Carolina communities, Wilmington's growth rate is below the state average.

Wilmington’s population growth of 3.2% year-over-year is modest compared to other coastal cities in North Carolina. This suggests that while the market remains active, it is not experiencing a wave of new residents from elsewhere — a critical insight for understanding demand drivers. The stability may reflect an economy more focused on retaining existing residents and leveraging local workforce assets.



01

Local Workforce Is Driving Demand

The stability in population growth indicates that demand is not driven by large-scale migration. Instead, it’s rooted in local labor market dynamics. UNCW's Cameron School of Business has been a key contributor to the regional economy, attracting and retaining talent. This suggests that housing affordability is being sustained by internal economic forces rather than external inflows.



02

Implication for Market Strategy

If demand is primarily from within the region, then strategies should focus on enhancing local workforce retention and expanding professional services. This is a more sustainable path than relying on transient population inflows. The market's stability also means that housing prices are less likely to experience rapid appreciation unless local labor markets grow significantly.

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