

# WILTON STATION EXPECTED TO REVIVE FIVE POINTS AREA

A Fort Lauderdale-based developer has announced plans to build Wilton Station, a mixed-use project that will bring 272 condominiums and 18,000 square feet of retail space to downtown Wilton Manors.

The project, to be built on 9.44 acres of land at Northeast 14th Avenue and Northeast 26th Street — just east of the city's Five Points downtown area — will take the place of a 70,000-square-foot beer distributorship that comprises of office and warehouse space. It is expected to help revitalize the downtown area.

"I think it's a great project for our community," said Jim Storke, the mayor of Wilton Manors. "One of the main reasons is that the developer spent a tremendous amount of time talking to neighbors, civic associations and our downtown redevelopment people and got their feedback."

The project — expected to break ground in April — will take about 16 months to build, said Jim Ellis, chairman of **Wilton Station LLC**, the developer. It will feature condominium units ranging in size from 1,000 to 2,400 square feet. The unit types will include townhouses, lofts and apartment-style condominiums. Prices will range from the mid-\$200,000s to the mid-\$400,000s. Ellis said he is projecting sales in excess of \$105 million.

The amenities at Wilton Station will include a 300-foot waterfront boardwalk, two fenced pet recreation areas, private garages and poolside cabanas. There will be a 90,000-gallon pool with a shallow beach area and lap pool, as well as two spas, a rock waterfall and a covered tiki hut. There will also be an 8,000-square-foot clubhouse with fitness center, a private theater and a reception area for parties.

The retail space will be leased to businesses that will provide services to the residents of Wilton Station, Ellis said, such as a dry cleaner, cof-



**MIXED USE:** Wilton Station will bring 272 condos and 18,000 square feet of retail space to Wilton Manors. *Company illustration*



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fee shop and restaurant.

Ellis plans to open sales for the project once the sales office is officially open, which is scheduled for mid-March. He said that the project's Web site has attracted a lot of viewers who have registered to receive more information when it becomes available. "If a tenth of the people who registered on the Web site are seriously interested, we'll be very, very happy," he said.

The developer is targeting the project to all ages and demographic groups. Ellis said that he has advertised in traditional publications as well as gay publications and expects the buyer mix to be quite diverse.

There are several new projects planned for Wilton Manors in the next few years, but Storke said that the city is trying to balance development with quality of life for its residents. The current population of the city is 12,600; he expects it to swell to about 14,000.

Those other projects will compete with Wilton Station. One of them, Belle Isle, under development by Delray Beach-based **New Urban Communities Corp.**, will consist of 60 units ranging in price from the mid-\$300,000s to the high \$500,000s. The developer started selling in July and has already sold 32 units.

"We like Wilton Manors for a lot of reasons," said Tim Hernandez of New Urban Communities. "It's close to the employment, cultural and entertainment options of downtown Fort Lauderdale, but has a small-town feel. We viewed it as being on the upswing two or three years ago."

Others are bullish on the area as well. "There will certainly be sufficient demand for the 272 units at Wilton Station," said Rusty Bradshaw, a real estate agent with **Realty Executives** in Sunrise. "It represents an affordable, trendy and viable option to the resale market, which consists of mainly mid-century homes."

The general contractor for Wilton Station will be Fort Lauderdale-based **Stiles Corp.** The architect is **Pierce Architectural Group PA**, also based in Fort Lauderdale.

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