



**MURCHISON CHOICE**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**  
— FAYETTEVILLE, NC —

FINAL PLAN

EARLY ACTION

# EARLY ACTION





OUR EARLY ACTION PROJECTS WERE DESIGNED TO HELP IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD CONFIDENCE, SUSTAIN THE COMMUNITY'S ENERGY, ATTRACT FURTHER ENGAGEMENT, AND HELP CONVINCE SKEPTICAL STAKEHOLDERS THAT POSITIVE CHANGE IS POSSIBLE.

Neighborhood planning is an important first step in rebuilding community confidence and establishing a shared vision for the future. The Murchison Neighborhood, which has seen plans come and go in the past, has been anxious to see planning turn into results. For this reason, even modest physical improvements and investment actions can help to build momentum for change.

Early Action Projects are physical neighborhood improvements, or unique tools, that enhance and accelerate the CN Plan. The Early Action Projects outlined in this section have supported the planning process through engaging the community, building capacity, and fostering social cohesion. Our Early Action Projects are responsive to the neighborhoods' needs and include innovative solutions that help to address neighborhood challenges.



Our Choice Neighborhood Planning team has collaborated with Southern CC Inc, a 501 (c)(3) to assist in the completion of the You, Me and Us Holistic (YMUS) Community Garden.

The Early Action Project is designed to help tackle the community’s food desert designation. The Project was selected based on local input, including Community Meeting surveys and prioritization activities. Community members identified the lack of access to healthy foods in the area as a major physical challenge, due to the fact that there are currently no grocery stores within walking distance or close proximity. Along with the identification of poor transit services, community members have difficulty obtaining the items they need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. In 2019, it was recorded that Cumberland County had a 16.0% food insecurity rate, with a total of approximately 53,180 people that qualify as food insecure. The project is critical as it will bring access to fresh fruits and vegetables to the citizens of the Murchison community.

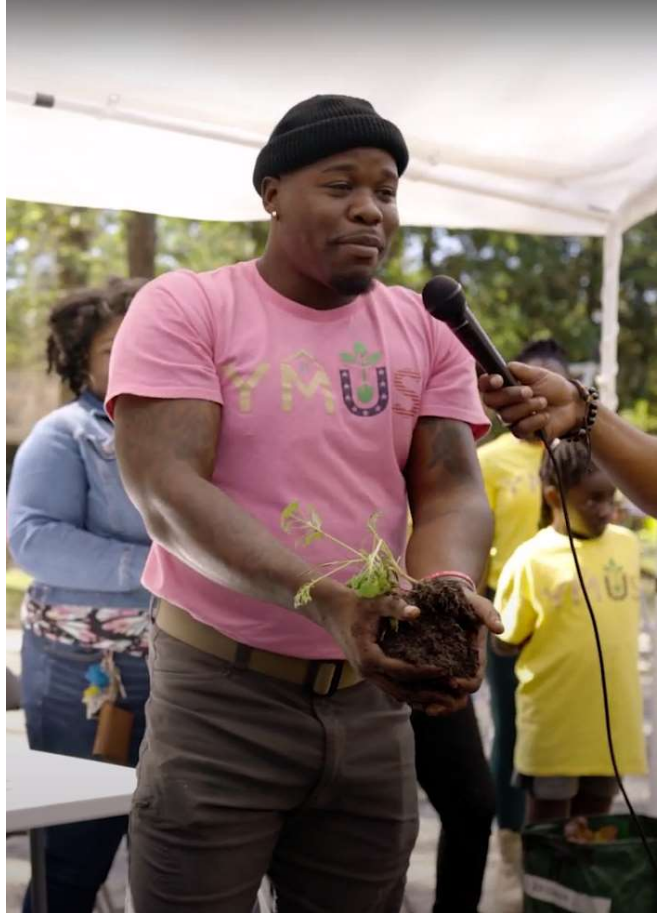
The primary garden has been created on Springfield Road, a centralized location less than a mile from both the FMHA’s Murchison Townhouses site and the Elliott Properties site, YMUS will directly serve the Murchison Choice Neighborhood residents. The garden will not only bring local quality food to local residents, but also provide an opportunity for social gathering and skills development in food growing and production.

The YMUS Holistic Community Gardens will allow community members to discover the benefits of planting, nurturing and picking their produce. Interactions among gardeners, plants, animals, and the environment will produce

results greater than the sum of individual parts. YMUS is engaging veterans through dedication of garden beds to fallen heroes as a place of honor to their loved ones. Partnerships with the Autism Society of America will allow individuals on the autism spectrum and their families to have a safe place to interact with live animals.

The partnership established with Southern CC Inc, is yielding to a greater outreach to residents in the area through social media, word of mouth and through community events. Throughout the project timeline, YMUS will survey the community to receive feedback on the service being provided. Through investing in the YMUS program, the Murchison Choice Neighborhood will become cleaner, safer and healthier furthering the goal of creating a community of choice.





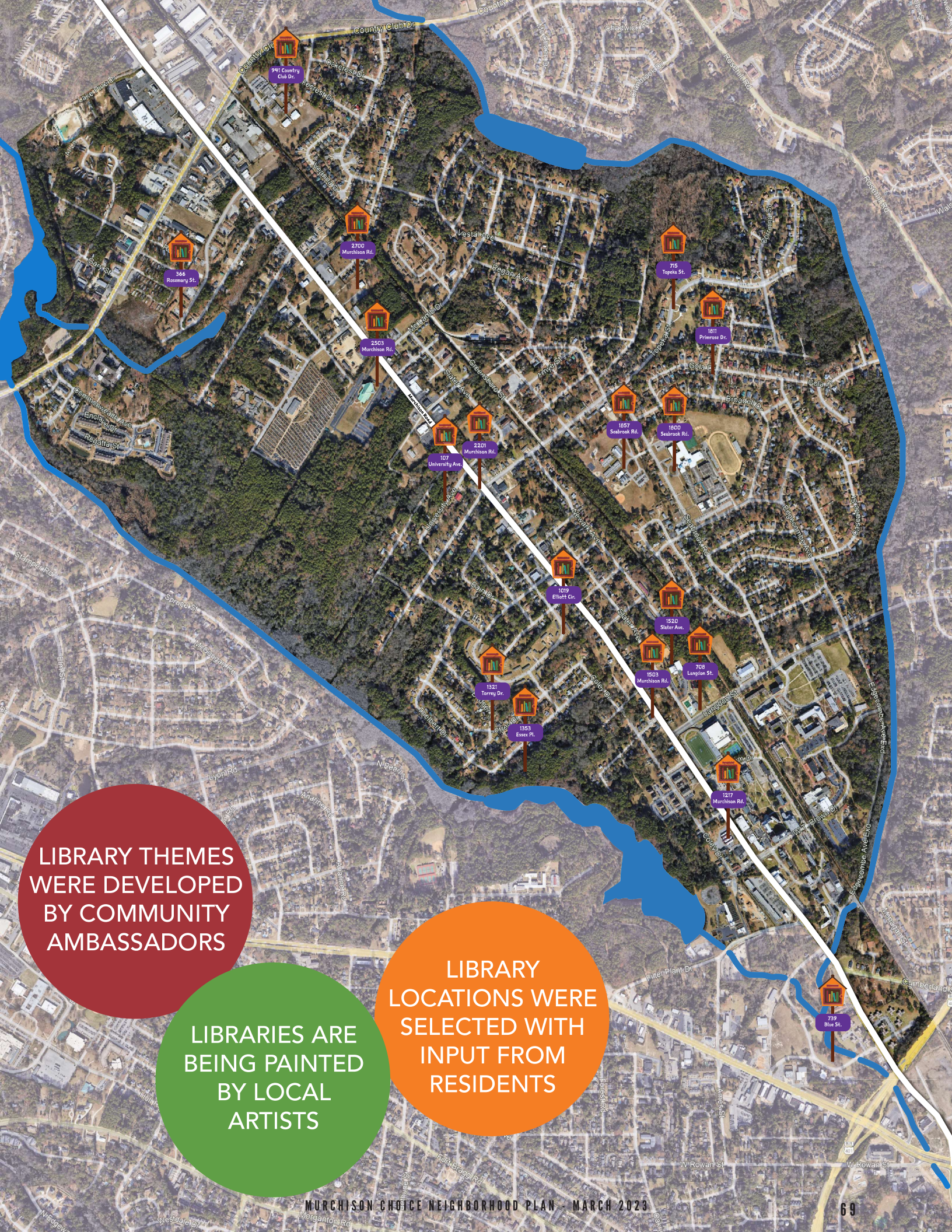
Based on local input, the Planning Team has chosen to tackle the lack of equitable access to books through the implementation of the Little Free Libraries ([www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org)) Project which will work in tandem with the Digital Equity Initiative Early Action Project to help improve literacy in the neighborhood.

**THIS EARLY ACTION  
PROJECT INCLUDES  
THE PLACEMENT  
OF 19 LITTLE  
FREE LIBRARIES  
WITHIN THE  
MURCHISON CHOICE  
NEIGHBORHOOD.**

The installation of 19 Little Free Libraries has doubled the amount currently located within the City of Fayetteville, improved access to resources, and included public art to help beautify the community. The Libraries have been individually designed and painted by local artists, utilizing themes brainstormed by our Community Ambassadors. Locations of the libraries are strategic, and were selected by area residents at Community Meeting 1 to ensure convenience and access throughout the neighborhood. The Libraries are also serving as “engagement stations” for the Plan, including FAQs, flyers, and other Plan materials.

Various partners and local residents have been identified to act as stewards for the libraries, ensuring that they are well-maintained and well-stocked into the future.





LIBRARY THEMES  
WERE DEVELOPED  
BY COMMUNITY  
AMBASSADORS

LIBRARIES ARE  
BEING PAINTED  
BY LOCAL  
ARTISTS

LIBRARY  
LOCATIONS WERE  
SELECTED WITH  
INPUT FROM  
RESIDENTS

Our Needs Assessment survey has indicated that 45% of FMHA households mostly access the internet by smartphone. Households have also reported that the greatest barrier to internet access is cost.

The Digital Equity Initiative aims to address these challenges through two unique Early Action Projects.

Through a partnership with the Kramden Institute, 19 Murchison Townhouse families received free desktop computers for their homes. This project was targeted to families with school age children.

In order to ensure connectivity and internet access, the City of Fayetteville, in collaboration with FMHA, has installed free wi-fi services that are accessible to all families in the Murchison Townhouses community. This service ensures that residents have the ability to get online to access needed services. When the Murchison Townhouses property is ultimately redeveloped, the wifi equipment will be able to be temporarily relocated and reinstalled to provide an amenity to both existing and future families.







This coloring book, created as part of the Plan, is intended to honor just a few of the “everyday heroes” of the Murchison community, while also highlighting some of the important places within the neighborhood. The coloring book encourages young people to find out more about the people and places that make this community special.

Many of the people and places in the book were identified for inclusion by the Umoja Group, Inc. and are represented on their artistic mural: the “Wall of Honor” located on Langdon Street. We are incredibly thankful for their partnership and support in this project.

**DR. EZEKIEL EZRA SMITH**

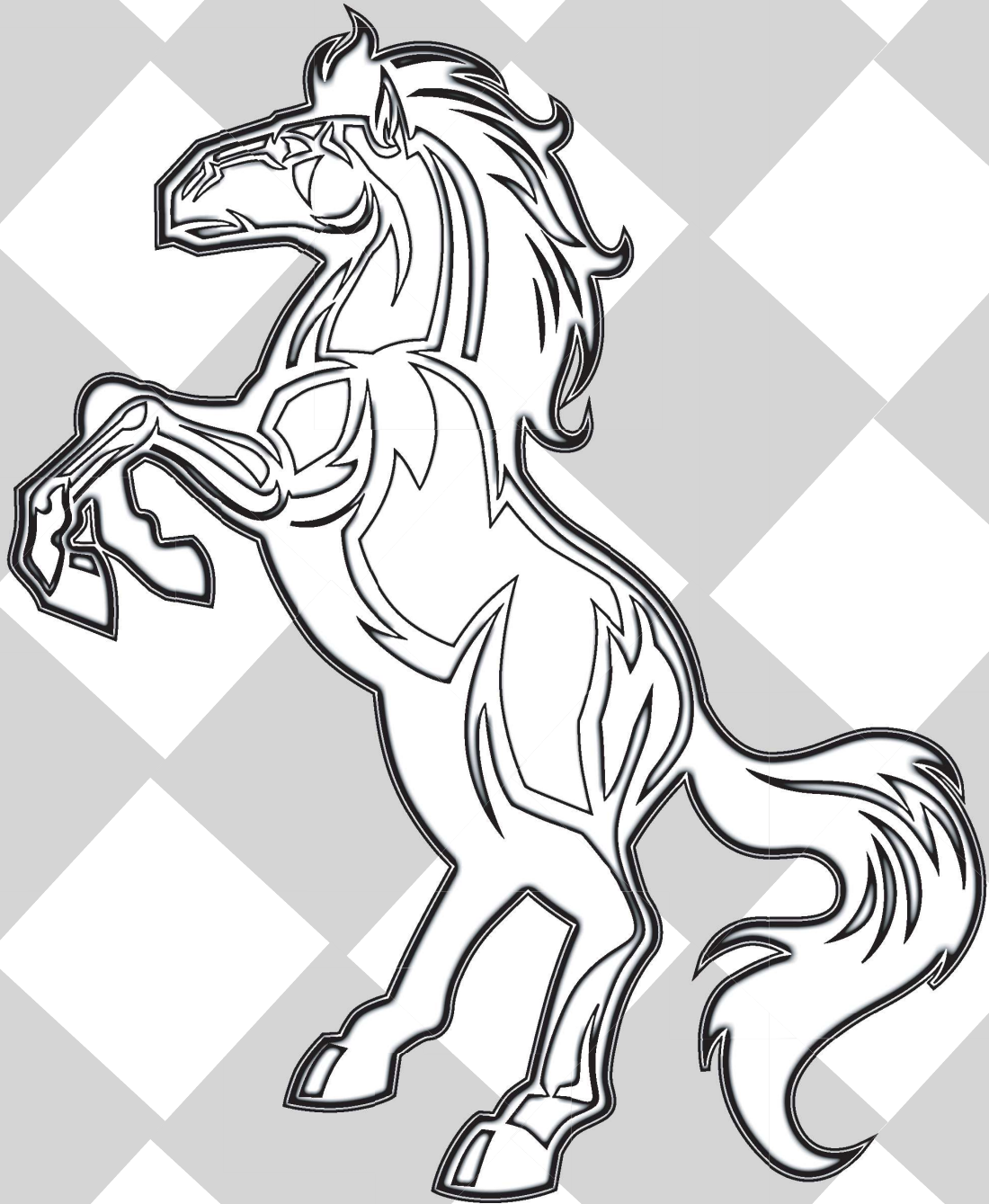
Dr. Ezekiel Ezra Smith was a distinguished educator, clergyman and U.S. Ambassador. He was selected as the Principal of the State Colored Normal School, now Fayetteville State University. E. E. Smith High School, is named in his honor.

**DOROTHY WATKINS FIELDER**

Dorothy Fielder, a retired social worker, coordinated two artistic murals: the “Wall of Honor” located on Langdon Street and “Games Around the World” located in the Smith Recreation Center. She is a founding member of the Umoja Group, Inc. and co-authored Wall of Honor: A Celebration of Fayetteville’s Everyday Heroes.

**OMAR IBN SAYYID MOSQUE**

Omar Ibn Sayyid was a West African born Muslim and a scholar learning under religious leaders in the area of Senegal. Ibn Sayyid saw the importance of co-existence between Islam and Christianity in America.



## **FSU BRONCO STATUE**

The 9 Ft. Tall bronze statue at Fayetteville State University lives up to its name: Defiance. Bold authority and strength of force describes the independent nature of the horse—wild, free, proud.

