



MURCHISON CHOICE
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
— FAYETTEVILLE, NC —

FINAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

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History, Equity and Inclusion

Wendell Anglin
 Stacye Blount
 Sheila Cuffee
 Artisha Elliott
 Jennifer Green
 Demetrius Haddock
 Tanesha Hendley Ashe
 Barbara Hill-Jones
 Michael Hines
 Melesia Lane
 Cynthia Leeks
 Raven McKoy
 Walter Melvin
 Crystal Moore Williams
 Tracey Morrison
 Wendell Phillips
 Anne Smiley
 Angelina Smith
 Adolph Thomas
 Ann Thomas

Transportation and Open Space

Maurice Elliott
 Hank Graham
 Shronda Hodges
 Harold Ignacio
 Lee Jernigan
 Felicia Jones
 Alicia Lanier
 Cynthia Leeks
 Lisa Lofthouse
 Carole Mangum
 Laura Mastin
 John McDonald
 James Powell
 David Pugh Jr
 Anthony Ramsey
 Antonio Renteria
 Candace Scott
 Liz Simpler
 Paul Taylor
 Sheila Thomas-Ambat

Housing and Commercial Development

Naviyea Adams
 Erica Baldwin
 Melissa Basnight
 Mario Benavente
 Aja Bullock
 Dennis Corbin
 Linda Darden
 Swan Davis
 Tony Fairley
 Frances Flores
 Wesley Fountain
 Gary Garner
 Douglass Garrett
 Love Gibbs
 Ltanya Haire
 Angie Hedgepeth
 Johnette Henderson
 Deno Hondras
 Suzy Hrabovsky
 Jerome Johnson
 Sherry Lahr
 Maurice Lee
 Cynthia Leeks
 Angela Malloy
 Angela Martin
 Jacqueline McDonald
 Walter Melvin
 Crystal Moore Williams
 Elaine Murry
 Christopher Narcisse
 Devon Newton
 Peter Pappas
 Sophia Pierce
 Keith Pitchford
 Brandon Price
 Jon Rose
 Karla Sessoms
 Eric Smalls
 Angelina Smith
 Gabriel Swinney
 Terri Thomas
 Tercel Walker
 Camaron Williams

Education and Job Training

DeJanetta Accoo
 Lonnie Ballard
 Tameika Baucom
 Emily Chapman Grimes
 Swan Davis
 Andre Dawkins
 Michele Dillon
 Douglass Garrett
 Shadonna Headen
 Johnette Henderson
 Jimmy Hendley
 Tanesha Hendley
 Matthew Hinson
 Cedrick Hinton
 Francis Jackson
 Fontashia Johnson
 Felicia Jones
 Shameka Joyner
 Annie Kelly
 Debra Kinney
 Cynthia Leeks
 Tiffany Lesane
 Kim Lewis
 Fredrick Lowe
 Dylan May
 Kenjuana McCray
 Ivory Narcisse
 Gerald Newton
 Georgeanna Pinckney
 Kay Pitchford
 Diana Potts
 Marvin Price Jr.
 Candace Scott
 Carla Smith
 Susanna Willock

Safety and Security

Njeri Fikes
 Johnette Henderson
 Shronda Hodges
 Francis Jackson
 Marzala Jones
 Cynthia Leeks
 Chasity Lindsey
 Patrick McArdle
 Cindy McCormic
 Sarah McDonald
 Tracy Michelle
 Amy Navejas
 Pamela Story
 Herman C Wilson Jr.
 Michael Worrell

COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS



Johnette Henderson



Shronda Hodges



Cynthia Leeks



Kim Williams



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INTRODUCTION





IN DECEMBER OF 2020, THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FAYETTEVILLE METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY (FMHA), WAS AWARDED A HUD CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING GRANT FOR THE MURCHISON NEIGHBORHOOD.

Through the Grant, the City and FMHA have worked with local residents and a variety of community stakeholders – including nonprofits, faith-based organizations, anchor institutions, supportive services agencies, businesses, and others – to create a forward-looking Choice Neighborhood Plan with a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Plan is centered on the redevelopment of FMHA’s Murchison Townhouses, which includes 60 units of low-income housing. In addition, the Plan includes a redevelopment vision for the distressed Elliott Properties site, owned and operated by the North Carolina Indian Housing Authority. The Plan is seeking to replace 100% of those housing units within the neighborhood as part of new mixed-income developments.



HOUSING

REPLACE MURCHISON TOWNHOUSES WITH A MIXED-INCOME RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT INCLUDES 1:1 REPLACEMENT OF 60 PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS, ALONG WITH REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ELLIOTT PROPERTIES SITE

PEOPLE

WORK WITH COMMUNITY RESIDENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE LIVES AND LIVING CONDITIONS FOR FMHA FAMILIES AND RESIDENTS OF THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD, WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE HIGHEST NEED FAMILIES.



NEIGHBORHOOD

BUILD ON EXISTING EFFORTS TO CELEBRATE AND MARKET MURCHISON ROAD AS A SPECIAL PLACE – WITH A RICH AND SIGNIFICANT HISTORY AND A VIBRANT, POSITIVE, AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE.

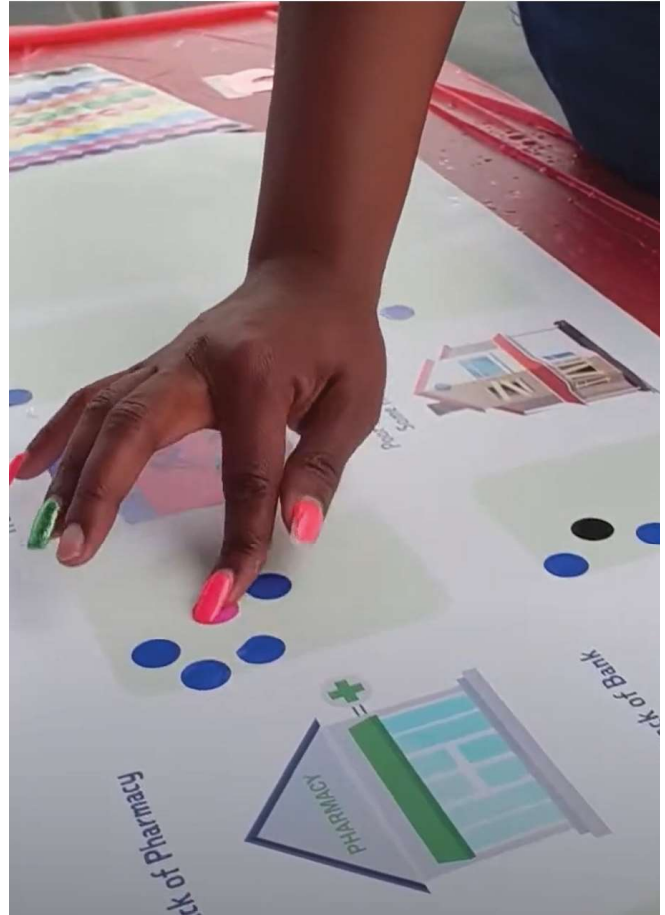
The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CN) is a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program that employs a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. The program helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing distressed public and/or assisted housing, and catalyzing critical improvements in the neighborhood such as: vacant property, housing, business development, social services, education, transportation, and improved access to jobs. The CN ensures that current residents will be able to benefit from this transformation by preserving affordable housing or providing residents with the choice to move to affordable and accessible housing in another existing neighborhood of opportunity.

**THE CHOICE
NEIGHBORHOODS
INITIATIVE IS
FOCUSED ON THREE
CORE GOALS:
HOUSING, PEOPLE,
AND NEIGHBORHOOD.**

To achieve these core goals, communities such as Fayetteville are required to develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or Transformation Plan. This Plan will become the guiding document for the revitalization of the public housing units, while simultaneously directing the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood into positive outcomes for families.



CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS





The Murchison CN Plan has been developed using a community-based, bottom-up strategic planning approach that engages and empowers local stakeholders and the anchor Institutions such as Fayetteville State University. The Plan builds on successful programs and investments already in place, and organizes implementation actions around the capacity of partners, stakeholders, businesses, and residents.

The City and FMHA have built on their established relationships with target housing and neighborhood residents, project partners, and a variety of community stakeholders to establish a robust planning process. Planning Coordinator COLLABO has provided technical assistance throughout the process.

We are sensitive to the cultural and historical elements of this effort and have worked to foster a seamless and inclusive collaboration with local leaders and those currently working in the neighborhood to develop strategies and solutions that are driven through community ownership.

THE PLANNING PROCESS, WHICH INCLUDED SIX PHASES, BEGAN IN DECEMBER OF 2020 AND CONCLUDED IN MARCH OF 2023.

The City and FMHA maintain a strong commitment to diversity and have actively sought out partnerships with individuals and groups representing underserved populations. To further this goal, we have selected and trained local Community Ambassadors to help lead various elements of the project.





**"THE SPIRIT OF
THE COMMUNITY
IS ITS GREATEST
ASSET"**

MAYOR MITCH COLVIN

THE MURCHISON NEIGHBORHOOD

The Murchison Neighborhood was selected for its tremendous assets and strategic position less than a mile from downtown Fayetteville, on the direct route to Fort Bragg. The neighborhood is the historic center of African-American culture in the city and is anchored by Fayetteville State University, an HBCU that offers over 60 programs of study.

The community, 3.1 square miles in size, is defined by natural creeks and lakes on the east and west, and major arterials on the north and south. It has been identified as a primary focus area for reinvestment through its designation as an Opportunity Zone as well as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area.

In 1908 the school that would become Fayetteville State University started building a campus on Murchison Road. The road developed into the mid-1900s — first with the college, then with houses for teachers, and eventually into the thriving center of Fayetteville’s black community.

Segregation from the 1950s into the 1970s forced blacks to live in the black Murchison Road community, so businesses sprung up to cater to them. There were grocery stores, nightclubs, motels, beauty stores and other black-owned, mom-and-pop businesses. Discrimination prevented blacks from finding housing outside of the corridor. That led to subdivisions built for black homeowners and renters. Quite a few communities were built to provide homes for black military families.

Integration meant people could live in other parts of the city and patronize businesses elsewhere. Over time, the black-owned businesses disappeared. In the 1970s, drugs became a major problem, with a stigma that persists today. This Plan represents an opportunity to address these challenges by building upon local assets in order to create a community of Choice.







The 60-unit Murchison Townhouses development was constructed in 1970. Though FMHA does its best in maintaining the property, the buildings are generally in poor to fair physical condition and require significant rehabilitation and retrofit to render the structures viable as safe and sanitary housing.

While the area is generally quiet, with little drive-through traffic, the site is generally disconnected from the surrounding neighborhood, which contributes to a sense of isolation for FMHA residents. Murchison Townhouses does not currently have any frontage on Murchison Road, making it difficult to locate for visitors.

The existing on-site Head Start Center provides a resource for early learning for both FMHA and neighborhood residents. Beyond this facility, the property includes a significant lack of amenities and park space, with no playgrounds or ballfields for local children to utilize.

