



MURCHISON CHOICE
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
— FAYETTEVILLE, NC —

FINAL PLAN

PEOPLE ELEMENT

THEMES

PLANNING THEME



PEOPLE ELEMENT



THE PEOPLE ELEMENT OF OUR PLAN IS CENTERED AROUND ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO THOSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH FMHA AND MURCHISON COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.

The People Plan includes a range of strategies intended to improve the quality-of-life for Target Housing residents, as well as Murchison community neighbors, including residents of the Elliott Properties site. Strategies are organized into categories relating to Education (including both Early Learning and School-Aged Education), Health and Safety, and Income and Employment. Each People category includes a series of impact statements, baseline metrics, and expected outcomes in order to track success. Strategies include potential lead and supporting partners, as well as potential resources that could be utilized for implementation.

The Education Plan focuses on activities that will be undertaken to ensure all children living in the Target Housing site will enter kindergarten ready to learn. These services will help to enroll, track and support the attendance of children from birth to kindergarten in high-quality, evidence based early education programs. These programs will utilize statewide program standards that demonstrate high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards and are linked to the State’s licensing system. Programs outlined in the Plan are intended to actively engage parents as partners in early learning. The Education Plan is also intended to ensure all school-aged children living in the Target Housing site are proficient in core academic subjects, attending school consistently, and are graduating from high school college- and career-ready.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

- Local children enter kindergarten ready to learn. Children attend high-quality early childhood programs, and parents and caregivers have the tools to foster positive experiences optimize early childhood development.
- Local children are proficient in core academic subjects, and graduate high school college- or career- ready, and scholarship opportunities and paid internships are available for local students.

BASELINE METRICS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
60% of households have kids under 18	N/A
38% of head of households have a high school diploma	50% in five years
38% of school aged children participate in youth programs	65% in five years
17% of FMHA families take advantage of Headstart Program	50% in five years
Sports is the #1 desired youth program. Arts/Music is the #2 desired youth program	Ensure children have adequate access to sports, arts and music programs
Ferguson-Easley Elementary 23% proficient or advanced in Reading	45% in five years
Ferguson-Easley Elementary 35% proficient or advanced in Math	45% in five years
Ferguson-Easley Elementary 34% proficient or advanced in Science	55% in five years



**"RESIDENTS HAVE
TO BE AT THE
FOREFRONT OF
THIS CHANGE AND
INVESTMENT."**

SHAKEYLA INGRAM
CITY COUNCILWOMAN

PRIORITY PROJECTS



1. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION EXPANSION PROJECT

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start • FMHA • Cumberland County Schools
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • FSU • FTCC • FCC Ministerial Council • United Way of Cumberland County • Communities in Schools North Carolina • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Greater Life of Fayetteville • Partnership for Children of Cumberland County

Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • ARPA funding through the Child Care for Working Families Act • United Way - Youth Growth Stock Trust • Dolly Parton Imagination Library • CFF Community Grants • Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant State-wide Birth to 3 Program Feasibility and Cost Study • Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) NC Pre-K Program Outcomes-Driven Pilot Project
---------------------	--

Making sure that children enter kindergarten ready to learn presents a host of challenges in low-income neighborhoods like the Murchison community. A lack of adequate early childhood education programs and limited capacity diminishes opportunities for early interventions. Achieving the desired school readiness outcomes is expensive and available facilities cannot begin to meet the current need. The current Head Start center at Murchison Townhouses is inadequate to meet the needs of the community. The facility is extremely small and holds only 16-18 children. Currently, a fairly low percentage (17%) of FMHA families with children take advantage of the Headstart Program.

There are only a few neighborhood-based early learning centers in the neighborhood, so families must look for resources far from their homes. Desired staff-to-child ratios increase the costs of providing early childhood education but also help ensure future academic success. Licensing, regulations and insurance requirements have also impacted the ability of potential service providers to expand capacity and early childhood opportunities. The cost of early childhood education is beyond the financial means of most low- and even middle-income Murchison families. The result is oftentimes children who are not academically ready being raised by parents who may not know the best way to prepare their children for future academic success or have access to the resources to prepare them for that success.

The Early Childhood Education Expansion Project is designed to expand the number and capacity of quality early childhood learning centers that can provide early childhood education and developmental childcare, allowing Murchison parents to work and/or go to school. Early childhood education facilities could be housed at neighborhood locations that may have appropriate, available space such as local elementary schools or may be incorporated into the design of new developments at the Murchison Townhouses or Elliott Properties sites.

This project will build upon local school readiness action plans and consider elements of other best practices and evidence-based early learning models. The intent is to offer center-based care, as well as parent education and other early childhood services. The Project would also provide a training and certification program for early childhood providers and centers to improve their quality and increase their ratings under the STARS system. This could also include new incentives (salary increases, professional development, scholarships, loans, work-study, housing down-payment assistance) to attract and retain quality early childhood staff.

PRIORITY PROJECTS



2. YOUTH AND TEEN ENRICHMENT CENTER

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$1m - \$5m
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • Cumberland County Schools • FSU
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMHA • FTCC • FCC Ministerial Council • United Way of Cumberland County • Communities in Schools North Carolina • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Greater Life of Fayetteville • Partnership for Children of Cumberland County • Fayetteville Arts Council • Cooperative Extension
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • The Woman's Giving Circle of Cumberland County • Specialized Family Child Care Technical Assistance Program • Ribbon of Hope Grants

This strategy is designed to help reduce achievement gaps that often widen between low-income and higher income children, especially during the summer and other out of school time. Students at Ferguson-Easley Elementary, where the majority of FMHA children attend, score far below the state average on Reading, Math and Science achievement tests. The establishment of a youth and teen center would include a focus on these core subjects, along with programming that will attract and appeal to younger community residents. This project would utilize FSU and E.E. Smith High School resources to create year-round tutoring programs for local youths. Enrichment programs could also focus on different topics including career exploration, arts, civic engagement and volunteering, STEM, health and fitness, life skills and financial literacy, science and environmentalism. All programs would focus on positive behaviors, retention of skills, maintaining personal integrity and striving for academic excellence. Local teachers could potentially be incentivized to help lead enrichment efforts. Through the incorporation of a community cafe space the Center could provide food-based classes.

Before and after school programs could be offered utilizing a curriculum-based model to

assist with traditional education. An immediate transition to college is not always the best fit for all youth so it is important that young people also have employment options to break the cycle of poverty. The Center could incorporate the existing High School Connections (HSC) program, which is a partnership with Cumberland County Schools and Fayetteville Tech Community College. HSC is part of a larger statewide effort called Career and College Promise. Service providers would be incorporated to help provide fast-track career pathway training and preparation. A model could be adapted to focus on technical, trade and career/ certificate training for professional careers, rather than college, and would support retention in these technical training programs through certification.

The Center should be sited in an accessible location with good access to public transportation. Existing youth programming through Parks and Recreation, the Arts Council, and the Cooperative Extension could also be incorporated.



3. ENHANCE THE E.E. SMITH HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY OF MATH AND SCIENCE PROGRAM

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$1m - \$5m
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumberland County Schools • FTCC • Fort Bragg
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • FSU • FMHA • FCC Ministerial Council • United Way of Cumberland County • Communities in Schools North Carolina • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Greater Life of Fayetteville • Partnership for Children of Cumberland County • Fayetteville Arts Council • Cooperative Extension
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Competitive Grant Process for Non-Profit Grant Funding for State-Wide Health & Human Services Initiatives • Ribbon of Hope Grants

E.E. Smith High School offers an innovative Math and Science Program that includes a rigorous course of study in science, mathematics, and technology. The Program provides access to unique experiences with virtual and augmented reality systems, drone technology, and cybersecurity to not only visualize ideas, but to create them.

It offers a variety of areas of study to include engineering, computer sciences, mathematics, life sciences and a variety of other STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) pathways with an emphasis on completion of five courses in mathematics relevant to the chosen area of focus, to include at least college or AP level courses, and completion of at least four courses in science within a chosen area of study, to include college or AP level courses.

The Math and Science Program engages students in field experiences including tours of STEAM programs at universities and guest speakers promoting STEAM careers while utilizing rigorous lab experiences that are thoughtful and reflective and place an emphasis on inquiry. In addition, the Program requires 40 hours of community service and/or STEAM enrichment each year.

Through the Math and Science Academy, E.E. Smith offers courses both within the school and with the CCS Career Pathways partnership with Fayetteville Technical Community College.

Through collaboration with the Math and Science Academy, Fire Science Academy, Career and Technical Education Department, and the Junior Air Force ROTC Program, students will have hands-on learning experiences through cross-curricular instruction in the follow areas:

- Integration of Augmented and Virtual Realities
- Drone Technology
- Aviation Science
- Computational Thinking

The 3-Year Strategic Plan for this program is outlined below:

1. Several Math, Science, and select CTE Teachers as well as Administration are nationally STEM Certified
2. E.E. Smith High School will be nationally STEM certified by May 2023
3. Beginning Fall 2023, ALL Students will have a CTE Concentration Area
4. Continued Implementation of Blended Learning, Computational Thinking, Augmented Reality, and Virtual Reality in ALL Curriculum Areas
5. Continue to foster partnerships with local universities, colleges and businesses to give ALL students opportunities for enrichment, internships and job-shadowing

The CN Plan proposes to increase funding for this program in order to widen the overall reach to serve more students in the area, while providing additional technological resources for student use.

PRIORITY PROJECTS



4. PROMOTE NC PROMISE AND MILITARY TUITION PROGRAMS TO LOCAL STUDENTS

Timeline	Short (1-2 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$250k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSU
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • Fort Bragg • FMHA • FTCC • Cumberland County Schools • FCC Ministerial Council • Pathways for Prosperity • United Way of Cumberland County • New Genesis Tutorial Services • Communities in Schools North Carolina • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Greater Life of Fayetteville • Partnership for Children of Cumberland County
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • NC Promise Scholarships • Military Tuition Programs • CCF Scholarships

Through our engagement, we discovered that many FMHA families do not believe that there is a pathway forward to higher education based upon their current incomes.

The State of North Carolina established the NC Promise Tuition Plan to increase access to a quality university education by reducing student costs. Universities selected as NC Promise schools are able to offer reduced tuition rates to make earning a college degree more attainable. NC Promise puts earning a bachelor's degree in reach for more students. Fayetteville State University (FSU) has recently been designated as the state's newest NC Promise school. FSU will continue to offer the same high-quality degree programs and the same expansive course catalog. The funding for NC Promise has been awarded to FSU by the State of North Carolina. Starting fall 2022, undergraduate tuition at FSU will be \$500/semester for in-state students and \$2,500/semester for out-of-state students. There are no eligibility requirements to take advantage of NC Promise. All undergraduate students, including full and part-time new freshmen, returning students, transfer students, and students in online programs, receive the NC Promise tuition rate. Costs for part-time

students are pro-rated based on the number of credit hours taken.

The recent added state support through NC Promise made it feasible for FSU to boost its financial aid for the military community. Starting in 2022, Fayetteville State began covering full tuition for ROTC cadets, veterans, active-duty soldiers, and the spouses and children of service members. Currently, nearly 30 percent of FSU's more than 6,700 students are connected to the military. Because of Fayetteville State's sizable military community, the university has a veterans center where students can meet with advisers, as well as a learning center at Fort Bragg. The university is also expanding its online and hybrid courses to give military students more flexibility.

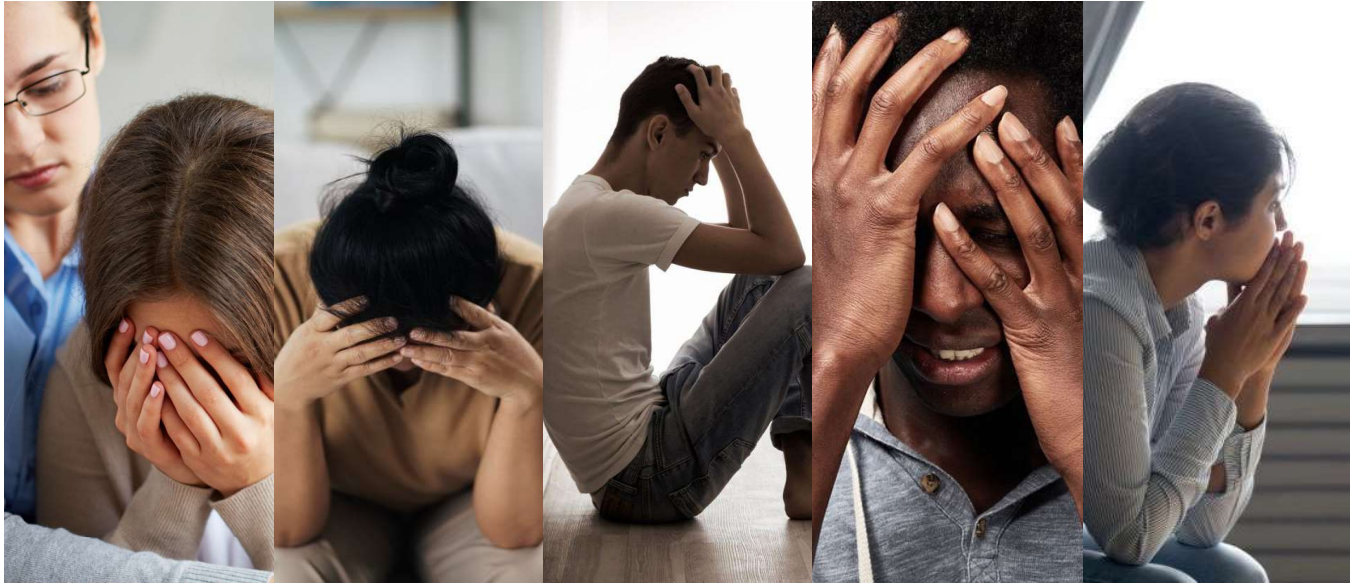
This project would promote these programs to families at EE Smith High School, Ferguson-Easley Elementary, and Westarea Elementary to encourage students to consider enrolling at FSU upon graduation.

The Health and Safety Plan includes a set of activities that will result in improved physical and mental health and safety outcomes and regular health care access for individuals and families living in the Target Housing sites. Health strategies consider individual family needs and goals, as well as structural barriers that impede routine healthcare use. Services will seek to support and connect uninsured adults and children to health insurance and ensure adults and children have a place of healthcare where they regularly go, other than an emergency room, when they are sick or need advice about their health. Strategies will also be designed to ensure that adults and children receive ongoing care and appropriate treatment for chronic conditions as well as preventative healthcare and connect children and adults to trauma informed care and mental health services.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

- Residents have health insurance coverage and access to high-quality preventative and primary medical care, including Support groups for people who are taking care of others.
- Residents experience a strong sense of well-being and have the resources needed to support their health Improved mental health for residents, including services and activities for the autistic and mentally challenged.
- Residents have access to affordable and healthful food options along with improved nutritional education.
- The neighborhood’s physical environment is attractive, safe and promotes active living. People feel safe in interacting with police and reporting crime with a less tactical police presence, especially in dealing with youth.

BASELINE METRICS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Depression and Anxiety are the most reported health conditions followed by cardiovascular and weight problems	The establishment of free or low cost mental health services along with programs to address cardiovascular health and fitness
Fitness is a top 3 reported household need	Increased access to fitness programs for all ages
38% of residents have a physical or mental disability	N/A
Cape Fear Valley Medical Center is the clinic of choice for 75% of residents	N/A
33% of residents are in fair or poor health	20% in five years
72% of residents have health insurance	90% in five years
2 in 5 residents work out 3 to 5 days per week	4 in 5 residents in five years
54% of residents work out less than 2 days/week	30% in five years
Approximately 50% of residents eat fresh fruits or vegetables 2+ times/day	75% in five years
52% feel somewhat safe during the daytime	75% in five years
56% feel somewhat unsafe during the nighttime	20% in five years
65% view the police as someone they can call when they need assistance	75% in five years



5. EXPAND FREE OR LOW-COST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carolina Collaborative Community Care • Cape Fear Health System • Stedman Wade Health Center
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • FMHA • FSU • United Way of Cumberland County • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Continuum of Care on Homeless • Cumberland HealthNET • Alliance Health • Endeavors • Cumberland County Schools
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • CFF Community Grants • Ribbon of Hope Grants

and access to mental health services, which could result in healthier residents, reduction in crime, and the ability to connect to educational and employment opportunities. As residents that lack health insurance typically can't pay out of pocket for mental health care, low fee or free community mental health clinics can provide the care they need. This clinic would be staffed by professional psychotherapists and psychologists, and could include student psychologists, student mental health counselors, and student social workers who are supervised by licensed, experienced professionals. Services are often provided at no cost or at a remarkably reduced rate. At the clinic, mental health professionals would offer a variety of services, including individual and family counseling, medication management, and substance use disorder counseling. They're also trained to treat a wide range of psychological conditions, like depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. The establish of these mental health services is vital in helping to connect with the community and building trust to foster a healthier, more supportive environment. A focus of these services should be on both substance abuse and trauma care, while potentially helping to address the local homeless population.

Through our engagement process, we heard numerous times regarding the lack of available mental health services within the Murchison community, especially for FMHA residents. This project would seek to improve the availability

PRIORITY PROJECTS



6. MURCHISON HEALTHY FOOD INITIATIVE

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumberland County Food Policy Council • Carolina Collaborative Community Care • YMUS Community Garden • Carolina Collaborative Community Care
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • FMHA • FSU • United Way of Cumberland County • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Continuum of Care on Homelessness • Cumberland HealthNET • Alliance Health • Endeavors • Cumberland County Schools

Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Emergency Food and Shelter Program Grant • CFF Community Grants • USDA Regional Food Business Centers • Food and Agriculture Service Learning Program • Farm to School Grant • Competitive Grant Process for Non-Profit Grant Funding for State-Wide Health and Human Services Initiatives • Food Lion Feeds
---------------------	---

Businesses along Murchison Road have suffered in recent decades as the neighborhood has undergone negative changes. This has only been exacerbated by COVID-19. The area is currently a food desert, with no local grocery stores within easy reach of current residents. Because of the lack of transportation options, many residents of the area have difficulty accessing resources including fresh food. One of the three community-defined Plan themes is called “Growing Green.” The Growing Green theme is focused on developing a sustainable system of food growing, production and

resources, building local wealth, and improving parks and vacant open spaces throughout the neighborhood. Implementation of the Murchison Healthy Food Initiative will ensure that we are transforming planning into action, while improving the quality of life for residents and helping to set the stage for future neighborhood reinvestment.

This project builds off of existing programs such as the YMUS Community Garden Early Action Project to help neighborhood residents access healthy, affordable food, improve nutrition, and ensure food security by creating a holistic food system. This system would be designed to offer healthier, affordable food through collective buying power while supporting the community through education, entrepreneurship and access. The project will be accomplished by drawing on local expertise and examining multiple healthy food hub models that have proven successful in the other cities. The goal would be to buy food in wholesale volumes, so that the consumers with a lower/budget price range could purchase whole & natural foods at an affordable price. Relationships would be established with farmers and distributors to learn about food, negotiate price and ensure food security. Additional goals would be to bring food to local residents in a place where they feel comfortable and safe, have foods that are familiar to the various cultures in the area, provide food education, cooking classes and tastings, and have a component that focuses on economic development and employment.

This program would also support the creation of additional community gardens and urban farms that are accessible to FMHA and community residents in order to increase employment opportunities and increase access to locally grown produce. By utilizing the YMUS Community Garden as a catalyst site, interested residents and community members should be encouraged to participate/volunteer and receive seasonal produce for their participation.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

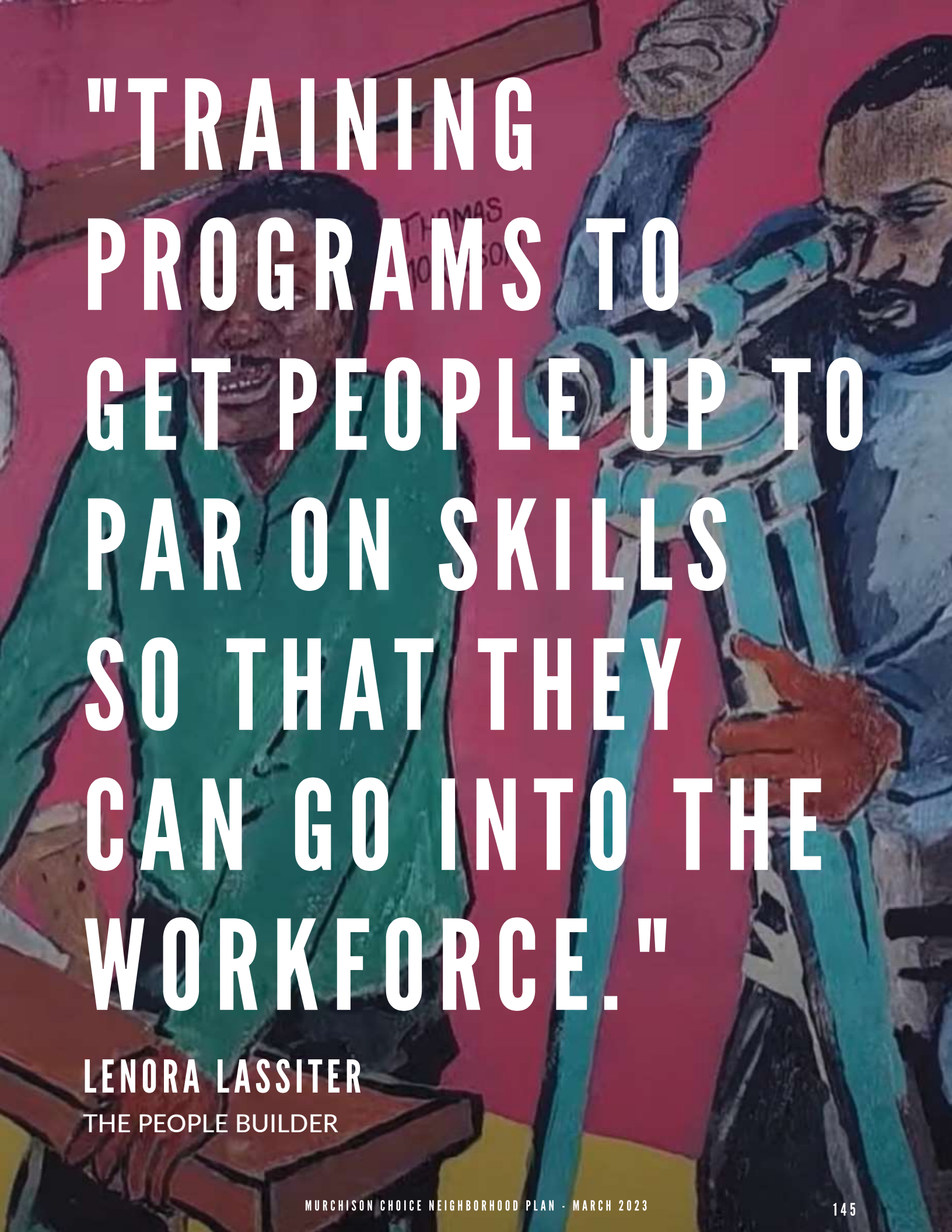


7. IMPROVE PARTICIPATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY POLICING PROGRAM

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Residents • City of Fayetteville Police Department • Cumberland County Sheriff's Office
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCC Ministerial Council • Fayetteville Fire Department • Existing Community Watch Groups • FSU Community Advocacy and Criminal Justice Department • National Crime Prevention Council • Community Neighborhood Watch • Realtors Associations
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Community Safety Micro-Grant

FMHA residents at Murchison Townhouses do not currently participate in a Resident Board or other community organization. This leads to many feeling unsafe in the community, not knowing their neighbors, and not having an outlet to discuss local safety issues. This project

encourages greater participation and growth in neighborhood watch programs, helping to bring local FMHA residents, together with their neighbors to promote a safer environment. Community policing promotes strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. This project supports the idea that local changes need to be led by the people. Improving education regarding crime (who do we talk to, how and when?) will help the community to act while facilitating greater engagement with police and crime prevention efforts. Redefining and expanding the role of the neighborhood watch groups could also help to connect with community beautification and environmental interventions. A citizens training course would ensure that law enforcement and the community are working together to address these issues. Specific focus should be on helping people feel safe in establishing a new business in the community. Enhancing community connections among residents and breaking the negative connotations associated with the police can help to reach more people while potentially encouraging local residents to join the police force.



**"TRAINING
PROGRAMS TO
GET PEOPLE UP TO
PAR ON SKILLS
SO THAT THEY
CAN GO INTO THE
WORKFORCE."**

LENORA LASSITER
THE PEOPLE BUILDER

The Income and Employment Plan seeks to result in increased income and employment for Target Housing residents, especially employment in living wage jobs. The Plan seeks to help strengthen the career pathway pipeline available to work-able adults (including those who are unemployed, underemployed, or fully employed but seeking career advancement) that is tailored to resident needs and goals.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

- Ensure internet access and digital literacy.
- Access to reentry programs for formerly incarcerated residents.
- Break down traditional silos.
- Strong supportive services to ensure that people find training programs successful.

BASELINE METRICS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Small Business Training is a top 3 reported household need	Connect residents to training programs based on their skillsets.
Top job skills of residents are customer service and retail/sales	Strengthen connections to customer service and retail/sales positions for residents
52% of residents are unemployed or underemployed	25% in five years
22% say that child care is the biggest barrier to employment	10% in five years
91% do not use the Family Self Sufficiency Program and would like more information about it	40% in five years
20% of residents do not use any banking service	10% in five years
30% of residents are interested in receiving assistance with money management	Enroll additional residents in FSS Program
Financial Management and Credit Repair is a top 3 reported household need	Enroll additional residents in FSS Program

PRIORITY PROJECTS



8. EXPAND JOB SKILLS TRAINING AND PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PILOT PROGRAM

Timeline	Short (1-2 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMHA • FTCC • Mid- Carolina Workforce Development
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fayetteville • Apprenticeship NC
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Job Development Investment Grant • Golden LEAF Open Grants • Workforce Assistance – Golden LEAF • Workforce Investment Board • Community Development Block Grant • American Rescue Plan Funds

FMHA, in partnership with Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC), Mid-Carolina Workforce Development, the City of Fayetteville, and Apprenticeship NC, as a registered Apprenticeship Program, launched its first Job Skills Training/Pre-Apprenticeship Pilot Program in October 2021. FMHA public

housing residents were given an opportunity to complete an application to enroll in the Job Skills Training/Pre-Apprenticeship Pilot Program. Residents were interviewed and ten (10) were selected to begin the eleven-and-a-half-week course entitled “Construction Skills” that began on February 7, 2022. The Construction Skills course consisted of nine (9) modules that focused on the following skills: OSHA 10 for Construction (16 hours), Appliance Repair (16 hours), Basic Electrical (50 hours), HVAC (20 hours), Plumbing (50 hours), Carpentry (52 hours), Painting (24 hours), Computer Applications (8 hours), and Employability Skills (16 hours).

Upon successful completion of the class, a graduation ceremony was held on the campus of Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) on April 27, 2022, and all ten (10) residents received a certificate in “Construction Skills” for completing 252 contact hours and 25.20 continuing education units from FTCC. Each participant was required to complete five (5) volunteer hours in the community to receive a hand drill and a tool bag filled with tools funded by the City of Fayetteville’s Economic and Community Development Department.

On May 16, 2022, the participants began the pre-apprenticeship with the FMHA Empowerment Institute, LLC. During this pre-apprenticeship, apprentices completed 160 hours of Work-Based Learning through FTCC, and 240 hours of paid Work Experience through Mid-Carolina Workforce Development's Work Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program. They are earning \$13 per hour during year one and \$16 per hour in year two. The apprentices work part-time, an average of 20 hours per week. Most of our residents are single females with children, these work hours allow parents to be available to see their children off to school before reporting to work and return home before their children return from school. Monthly meetings are held with the apprentices to give them an opportunity to express their thoughts about their experiences in the program.

The apprentices are supervised by a Crew Leader who has over 30 years of work experience in this career field and a retired former FMHA maintenance employee. The Crew Leader provides supervision and mentorship to all apprentices on the worksite as they clean, make carpentry and plumbing repairs, install floor tile and paint to recondition the vacant public housing units. The apprentices make the necessary repairs to the units so that the units are ready to be leased in a timely manner. Through this program, the apprentices assist the agency in meeting the HUD mandated turnaround time for vacancies, which allows FMHA to maintain its "High Performing" status with HUD. After completing the two (2) year apprenticeship, the apprentices will be employed through the FMHA Empowerment Institute, LLC, and will serve as a contractor to make repairs for FMHA and turnaround vacant units.

Through this project, FMHA would expand the program to help further realize its goal of establishing a workforce of skilled workers who have been trained through the FMHA Empowerment Institute, LLC, and who meet the qualifications to be hired as part-time or

full-time employees for the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority plans to maintain a pool of qualified applicants to fill future maintenance positions. This program will allow our residents to obtain full-time or part-time employment, earn a livable wage and have medical insurance and additional benefits. Aside from the great benefit to our residents, the Housing Authority will be able to fill vacant maintenance positions with qualified employees and perform some much needed repair work in our housing stock.

Through the Job Skills Training/Pre-Apprenticeship Program, Public Housing residents are learning valuable construction skills in a classroom setting in an employment field that is in high demand in today's job market. They are gaining hands-on experience in a two (2) year apprenticeship, and will secure gainful employment while earning a livable wage.

The Job Skills Training/Pre-Apprenticeship Program, in partnership with local community partners, provides "free training" to an overlooked workforce - Public Housing residents. Seven (7) of the ten (10) participants in the program are women. Among the seven (7) women participating in the program are two ladies who also serve as Ambassadors at Murchison Townhomes, the targeted Public Housing site for the Choice Neighborhood Initiative Planning Grant. This program affords them the training and opportunity to increase their income so that they are able to better provide for their families in a career field typically viewed as "a man's job."



9. CREATE A COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER AS PART OF FSU INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB

Timeline	Short (1-2 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSU • United Way of Cumberland County • FTCC
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ft. Bragg • Workforce Development Board • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Operation Inasmuch • Pathways for Prosperity • Salvation Army • Veterans Empowering Veterans • NC Works
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Program for Investors in Microentrepreneurs (PRIME)

Fayetteville State University is working to reimagine and invigorate the workforce through the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub where the university anticipates at least 30 new jobs or business will be fostered within two

years. The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub represents our commitment to be a resource to the city, county, and region. With FSU at the helm, the hub will offer open workspaces for students and community members, conference rooms, technology like laptops and 3D printers, faculty consultations, business skills workshops, entrepreneurial summits, experiential learning opportunities for students and more.

With sizeable investment from both the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County, this state-of-the-art Entrepreneurship hub is the first of its kind for the region. Situated in a 6,500 square foot building that previously housed the university’s bookstore within the Bronco Square Commercial Development, which totals 32,000 square feet, the Hub not only signifies added jobs, but FSU’s commitment to be a continued resource to the city and region.

While a number of skilled partners currently provide direct services to Murchison community and FMHA residents, the desired outcomes for this strategic initiative would be enhanced through development of a community resource center set up as a one-stop shop. The creation of the resource center

would improve the coordination of resources and provide and connect FMHA and other low-income residents with necessary and beneficial services including training opportunities related to local employment. The community resource center could potentially be incorporated as part, or in tandem with FSU's new Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub at Bronco Square. There would be an overall focus on providing great customer service in a comfortable environment, potentially including a cafe / restaurant space.

The center would provide comprehensive case management, service coordination, self-sufficiency and life skills services through FMHA's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, and additional programmatic offerings by FMHA partners. These services would be provided by property-based social workers and self-sufficiency staff and be available first to all property residents and offered to other low-income community residents, resources permitting. The model would consist of a centralized resident intake with a skilled intake specialist, who would assess the resident's needs and assign the resident to a social worker. The social worker would then assist the resident in developing an individual or family service plan, connect the household with the most salient services and provide follow-up on an ongoing basis. Partner organizations would provide various classes, seminars, workshops and services, and would operate on a set schedule, allowing residents to appropriately plan their participation. While program operations are simplified here, the pilot program would have clear criteria and expectations for local residents.

- Programming would include intergenerational education opportunities (adult education classes concurrent with early childhood education classes and related parent/child activities), parenting education, health and wellness education and life-skills training. Other educational classes and seminars would include: job readiness, workplace competency, basic

workplace skills (office skills, customer service, clerical) job training, digital training, application, resume, interview and job search skills and vocational and/or trade training.

- Safety net services would connect residents to mainstream benefits (TANF, SNAP, SSI, healthcare), utility assistance, transportation assistance and other supportive services necessary for daily living. Safety net services would be appropriately structured to require recipients to attend specific classes, as applicable. For instance, a recipient of utility assistance would be required to attend financial literacy classes, a resident applying for SNAP with staff support would be required to attend classes on how to shop for affordable and healthy food.
- Financial literacy services would include: money management, connecting to banking services, establishing savings, credit and credit repair, debt repayment, understanding loans, transitioning to market rate rental and understanding homeownership, Free Application for Federal Student Aid and student financial aid, to name a few.
- Legal services – legal advice on topics like living wills, medical bankruptcy, immigration and other potential impediments to achieving self-sufficiency would be offered.
- A repository of information on local social/supportive service/ self-sufficiency programs would be offered and would be available for use by both staff and residents.

PRIORITY PROJECTS



10. ENHANCE CHILDCARE SUBSIDY AND TRAIN AND REGISTER NEW PROVIDERS

Timeline	Medium (2-5 years)
Estimated Cost	\$1m - \$3m
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumberland County Schools • FTCC
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way of Cumberland County • Cumberland County Department of Social Services • Head Start • Greater Life of Fayetteville • Pathways for Prosperity • Partnership for Children • Boys and Girls Clubs • Faith-based Organizations • Bel Perazim Child Care
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant • Specialized Family Child Care Technical Assistance Program • Preschool Development Grant B-5 - Renewal Grant Coaching Towards Mastery • Program for Investors in Microentrepreneurs (PRIME)

In order to open up employment opportunities for FMHA and community residents that have childcare skills, this project seeks to enhance overall childcare offerings in the community by expanding subsidies, training and registering new providers. Additional childcare options will also make it easier for parents to find and keep employment. This project would help to address the current lack of staff for daycares and Head Start Centers within the area while potentially offering scholarships to new childcare providers being established within the Choice Neighborhood. The focus within these centers would be on programs for infants and toddlers. In coordination with Cumberland County Schools, a childcare technical specialization option in high school could introduce younger people to the profession.

PRIORITY PROJECTS



11. ENABLE GREATER UTILIZATION OF FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

Timeline	Short (1-2 years)
Estimated Cost	\$100k - \$500k
Potential Lead Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTCC • FMHA • Operation Hope
Potential Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Women's Giving Circle of Cumberland County • The GOME Investment Partnership
Potential Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is a program designed to help low-income families gain education and job skills in order to improve their family's financial situation and overall quality of life. FSS is a goal focused program to assist participants to increase financial stability and move forward on an individualized path toward economic independence and well-being. Each participant comes into the program with a unique set of personal goals, some of which include reducing debt/improving credit, earning a post-secondary degree, starting a new career, starting a business, or becoming a homeowner. FSS is open to low-income families and single persons who live in public

housing and are interested in pursuing further education in the form of GED, high school diploma, training certificate or a college degree. Applicants may currently be enrolled in a school or a job-training program, be receiving welfare, be employed or unemployed. The Family Self-Sufficiency Program can provide the kind of support necessary for residents, FMHA's Murchison Townhouse residents to reach their goals and become self-sufficient. Interested participants must be motivated and willing to enroll in school, vocational training and actively seek employment.

As part of the program, an escrow account is established by FMHA for each FSS participant. By participating in the FSS program, participants become eligible for an escrow account if they begin employment or report a pay increase. Money is deposited into their escrow account monthly. Services offered by the FSS program include:

- Comprehensive Case Management
- Education Assistance
- Quarterly Food Boxes
- Transportation Assistance
- Computer Lab
- Free Tax Preparation

- Homebuyer Workshops
- Career Counseling through Division of Employment Security
- Resume writing and job search assistance
- FSS participants have access to computers to post resumes, write cover letters and search for employment at the Old Wilmington Road Neighborhood Resource Center.
- Academic advising and financial aid assistance through Fayetteville Technical Community College
- Credit Counseling through Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Fayetteville

As part of this process, FMHA residents would be invited to participate in a credit score project. This would be a local neighborhood event where people could obtain their credit scores for free, receive a brief 1:1 information and counseling session and be provided with referrals for financial literacy training, financial coaching, credit counseling, and predatory lending intervention. These events would help to educate individuals and families on how to understand credit, avoid predatory lenders and develop good financial management and credit building habits. This should focus on the utilization of appropriate banking services, developing and maintaining credit and how loans impact credit.