



# Brookhill Community

## Asset & Needs Assessment

December 2021



## Prepared for City of Charlotte

The City of Charlotte provides services to more than 870,000 residents. The city's priorities are workforce and business development; transportation, planning and the environment; safe communities; and great neighborhoods.

## United Way of Central Carolinas



The United Way of Central Carolinas is a non-profit organization with over 85 years of history and experience in the Charlotte region. With a focus on the education, health and financial stability of every person in the Charlotte community, the United Way is a strategic community leader, convener and advocate with in-depth knowledge of the communities it serves, the challenges that affect them and the organizations having the most impact.

## Prepared by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute



The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute is a nonpartisan, applied research and community outreach center at UNC Charlotte. Founded in 1969, it provides services including technical assistance and training in operations and data management; public opinion surveys; and research and analysis around economic, environmental, and social issues affecting the Charlotte region.

# Acknowledgements

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## **Special Thanks**

Brookhill residents that participated in the study

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# Context





# Context

The Brookhill community is located in Charlotte's South End, on the edges of a rapidly changing and gentrifying area seeing explosive growth of new luxury apartments, breweries and restaurants. C.D. Spangler built the community of single-story, attached rental housing in 1951 to house

African-American residents<sup>1</sup> at a time when racial segregation was the law of the land.

Brookhill came into being in the decade after World War II, when the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) enacted Section 608 regulations, to incentivize developers to build low-income multifamily

2ND. SECTION

LOCAL NEWS, MARKETS, CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING AND FEATURES

FOUNDED 1869

Envy Thou Not The Oppressor.

# The Charlotte Observer

LEADS ALL NORTH CAROLINA AND SOUTH CAROLINA NEWSPAPERS IN NEWS AND FEATURES

CHARLOTTE, N. C. SATURDAY MORNING, AUGUST 5, 1950

PRICE: 5c DAILY—15c SUNDAY

## SEPTEMBER WORK DATE SET FOR 418-UNIT NEGRO HOUSING

### Local Cut Of Hidden Tax Fund \$302,685

#### \$2,325,432 JOB TO BE FINISHED BY NEXT SPRING

Spangler is informed That FHA Commitment Of \$1,866,000 Issued—Project To Be Known As Brookhill Village.

BY HAZEL M. TROTTER  
Observer Staff Writer  
Grading will begin next week and construction will start the first of September on the 418-unit Negro housing project to be built on South Tryon street by C. D. Spangler, at a cost of \$2,325,432, it was learned yesterday from Mr. Spangler.

Plans for long-neglected work were announced by Mr. Spangler after he had been informed that the Federal Housing Administration in Greenville had issued a commitment of \$1,866,000 on the project. The commitment was issued yesterday, according to James P. McRae, state director. The loan will be handled by the Mechanics Bank and Trust company of Charlotte.

The development, to be known as Brookhill Village, will be built on 40-acre tract on South Tryon street between Shuman avenue and Duane street. Mr. Spangler hopes to have all the units completed in the early spring.

Designed by William G. Lytle, Bursar, Carleton and Wolf, architectural firm with offices in Columbia, S. C., and Charlotte, the development will be of one-story frame construction and will consist of 418 three-bedroom units to rent for \$50 a week, 44 three-bedroom units to rent for \$55 a week, and 42 five-room three-bedroom units to rent for \$65 a week. They will be arranged in a garden-type development and will be a complete parking space on the project, off the street, for the tenants. A modern shopping center, including a filling station, a super market, a combined barber shop and beauty shop, a hardware store, and a variety store will be a part of the project.

The kitchen in each unit Mr. Spangler said, will be equipped with electric stoves and refrigerators. Full size bathtubs will be

### Unbottling Plan Is Forthcoming

Charlotte's long fight to ease the railroad bottleneck in the downtown sector may be approaching the happy ending. Plans at City Hall, where negotiations thus far have been pretty well wrapped in the hubbub that officials consider necessary, the topic still hasn't reached the stage of public announcement.

But City Manager Henry A. Vanecko, who has teamed with Engineer Frank T. Miller as the negotiator, has a half-committed answer to pointed questions. "We should know something definite," the manager reports, "by September or October."

He grins, then, in the way of city managers with a secret that seems to be too much to contemplate. The problem of unbottling the rail crossings is the same as it always has been, of course—a small matter of financing.

Mr. Miller, who has completed his survey of the downtown rail pattern, estimates that the unbottling could be accomplished for a shade less than \$5 million. Actual working blueprints for an underpass in open Stonewall street are being drawn. The citizens recently authorized the issuance of municipal bonds up to \$1,500,000 for underpass construction.

That leaves about \$3 million or better in the question-mark stage. Federal aid will be sought, officials have said that-and-railroad company assistance will be expected.

That's the point of the recent negotiations.

General agreement on how much, from what source, and when is the current task in the well-covered basket.

But full agreement and with it, maybe, a revelation. "Things," the manager says, "could be worse."

### WRECK INJURIES FATAL

This photograph, showing Alex Dawson Hemby jumping his horse at the horse show last June, is one of the most recent pictures of the 17-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Torrence E. Hemby of this city, who was injured fatally in an automobile accident near Newton Thursday night. Funeral services will be held at 12:30 o'clock this afternoon at the home at 915 Providence road.



### ANNEXATION BID DUE FOR ACTION

Alex Hemby's Rites Will Be Held Today

Funeral services will be held at the residence at 915 Providence road at 12:30 o'clock this afternoon for Alex Dawson Hemby, 17-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Torrence E. Hemby, who was killed in an automobile accident near Newton Thursday night.

### 50 To Receive Examinations In City Monday

Fifty draft-eligible men will undergo Army mental and physical examinations Monday when the induction center at Charlotte's Quartermaster depot is opened.

Capt. Paul Johnson, officer in charge, said that he has been advised to expect this number, but that he still has not been informed which the first county will send the I-A Selective Service registrants.

The center has been set up to examine prospective draftees from all central and western North Carolina counties, one less than the number included in the territory of the local Army Recruiting station.

A "trial run" was held at the center yesterday with noncommissioned officers stationed at the recruiting unit posing as registrants to be tested.

### ZONING ISSUE ON SLATE AGAIN

50 To Receive Examinations In City Monday

The Tuckasee road zoning issue, twice postponed, is back again for a hearing next Wednesday at City Hall.

The proposal involves the rezoning of a block of property bounded by Tuckasee road, Gibson, McKay, and Bluffton streets.

Officials of the Dixie Home Stores have asked that the sector be designated a Bauxite I district to permit the development of a super-market on the site.

Neighborhood opposition is reported. So, with the change requested by the board of adjustment, city

### TRAVISTIES +

By Gus Travis

Ever since I had ten notes at the bank, both due in three months, I've agreed with the chap who said that things always happen in twos and threes.

Now I have another example.

After my column came out yesterday telling about how I moved up Mr. Henry, owner of the Minute Grill, by using his unrefined speaker while he was letting me use his air-conditioned office in which to write my column, I was immediately heart with the necessity of writing another column for today. This is the only thing that keeps me from writing a work, if I don't eat. And then, in my second condition, I would be dead in two or three days.

Well, I went up to the Jones and Marks Realty company in the Independence building hoping Frank Jones would have gotten into another cockeyed loan of some kind and I was extremely disappointed to find nobody in the office. Maybe he'd gotten in a jam of some kind and didn't show up for work. The rest of the staff was probably not showing either home.

Anyway, I was just about to leave when the telephone rang. Frowny though Mr. Jones has said some bad things about me, I hated to see him lose a real estate sale so I answered the phone. It turned out to be a fellow who was calling to leave their number.

When I picked up the receiver, feminine voice, strongly familiar, said, "I'm just calling for a bit of advice. This is Mrs. John Newman speaking."

Now the possession of this voice, Kitty Newman, is a good friend of mine. She comes over to my house frequently and I've always felt that she thought highly of me. Maybe it's the way I fix Tom Collins.

I know a little about real estate and, thinking I might give her the advice she wanted, I diagnosed my voice as nicely as possible in full

<sup>1</sup> Tom Hanchett. (Updated 2021). A History of Affordable Housing: What one city's story can tell us about America's persistent problem. Subsidizing the "free market" - FHA 608 (working title). From a book-length study by Tom Hanchett, currently in-progress.



Photo: Lisa Howell

housing to counteract a nationwide housing shortage. The Brookhill community included 418 apartments, with two new schools (York Road High School and Marie G. Davis Elementary School), a handful of shops and a small supermarket in the vicinity. Charlotte's 608 developments "aimed to help those on the next rungs of the economic ladder," people who could not afford to pay for even the most affordable housing units in the private market.<sup>2</sup>

Policies such as the federal government's New Deal programs, redlining, urban renewal, and new highways that divided and

demolished neighborhoods of color, explicitly and implicitly barred Black people from building wealth through homeownership, solidifying the racial and economic divide in Charlotte for generations.<sup>3</sup>

The Spangler Company has long since sold its FHA 608 developments in Charlotte, all of which have been demolished except for Brookhill Village.<sup>4</sup> Today — despite the community's physical deterioration due to lack of upkeep by property owners — about

<sup>2</sup> Tom Hanchett, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Leading on Opportunity. (2017). Leading on Opportunity Task Force Report. Retrieved from <https://www.leadingonopportunity.org/report/chapter-2>; UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. (2019). The Racial Wealth Gap Charlotte-Mecklenburg <https://ui.charlotte.edu/sites/ui.charlotte.edu/files/media/articles/RWTry2.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Tom Hanchett, 2021



120 apartments are still occupied and its residents remain affordably housed.

“

PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THIS LAND. MANY PEOPLE WOULD NOT HAVE HAD ANY QUALITY OF LIFE WITHOUT BROOKHILL.

Brookhill residents describe the community as affordable, culturally vibrant, family-oriented and centrally located near transit, family, friends, and employment, which has meant greater social and economic well-being for these Charlotte residents.

Economic stability is predicated on being stably housed,<sup>5</sup> and housing needs to remain at the center of Charlotte's conversations around economic mobility

Given Brookhill's current condition, age, and significant land value it is likely that redevelopment of the Brookhill community will occur. Thousands of apartments have been built nearby in recent years, along with high-priced townhouses and attractive amenities such as a rock-climbing gym. A recent redevelopment proposal, which has not moved forward, would include 324 housing units, half of them reserved for low-income renters.



5 Desmond, M., & Gershenson, C. (2016). Housing and employment insecurity among the working poor. *Social Problems*, 63(1), 46–67. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44014894>



While any redevelopment will likely include some affordable units, there are no guarantees that it will be redeveloped with enough affordable housing units for all current residents, and it's highly probable that the rents for newly developed affordable units will be higher than the current rents.

The City of Charlotte contracted United Way to conduct an asset and needs assessment for the Brookhill community. The United Way partnered with UNC Charlotte Urban Institute (Institute), the Brookhill Community Resource Center, the Brookhill Neighborhood Association and the South Tryon Community Development Corporation to conduct this assessment. This asset and needs assessment examines the Brookhill community and what residents need to move into new affordable housing – in Brookhill or elsewhere – in the event Brookhill is redeveloped.



# The Assessment







Photo: Lisa Howell

# The Assessment

In order to better understand the community and the resources needed in the event that Brookhill is redeveloped, a community asset and needs assessment was conducted from June 2021 to September 2021. The assessment included the following components:

## Community survey

To better understand Brookhill residents and their housing needs, the research team developed a survey that asked residents to respond to a range of questions about their

household, barriers to housing, and the resources needed in the event that they would have to relocate.

The team used a community-based, participatory framework to assess the community's needs. A group of residents was engaged throughout the assessment process. These residents assisted with the development of the survey tool and provided input during the planning, launch, and reporting phases of the survey. The survey also included a multigenerational approach to assessing need. Although the



Photo: Lisa Howell

survey was administered to the head of the household, the assessment was structured to understand the needs of all household members. One hundred Brookhill heads of household completed the survey, a little over an 80% participation rate.

The survey was administered in-person or by phone by peer assessors and the assessment team. Surveys were also self-administered. Residents had the opportunity to complete surveys during community events, support groups, at the community center or at their residence.

## Peer assessors

A group of community residents were

recruited, engaged and trained to conduct the community asset and needs assessment survey. A licensed clinical mental health counselor and a Master of Social Work who grew up in Brookhill, facilitated a peer-to-peer training on how to use empathy, emotional intelligence, and active listening while collecting surveys. A researcher from the Institute also instructed resident assessors on how to conduct the survey. Peer assessors were given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the tool prior to administering the survey to other residents. The Institute was also available to assessors throughout survey administration.



## Support groups

Given the disruption and trauma that follows displacement, seven support groups were offered during July, August and September. The support groups provided education (focused on coping with future transitions) to any Brookhill resident that chose to participate. Participants expressed their grievances and identified what they needed in order to make the best transition.

## Community feedback sessions

The Institute worked collaboratively with residents to analyze the assessment data. Two community sessions were held in November 2021. Fourteen residents attended these sessions. The Institute presented the assessment findings and obtained feedback from residents to further contextualize the survey data.





# Residents





# Residents

To learn more about Brookhill residents and their households, respondents answered basic demographic questions.

Of the heads of household who responded to the survey, nearly all identified as Black or African American (97%), with none identifying as Hispanic or Latinx.

Respondents are also predominantly female (64%), with ages ranging from 24 to 87 years old. The average age of respondents is 54 years old.

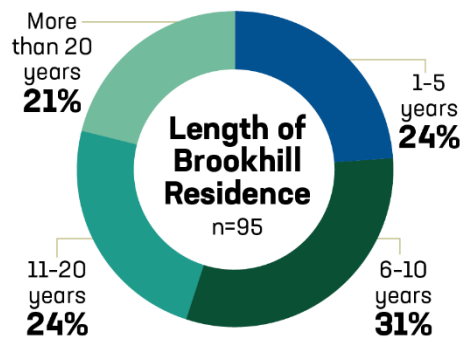
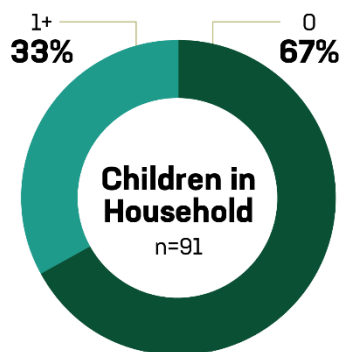
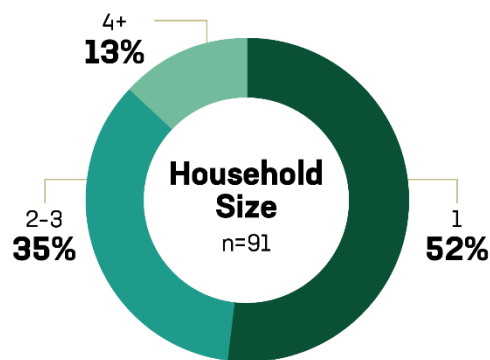
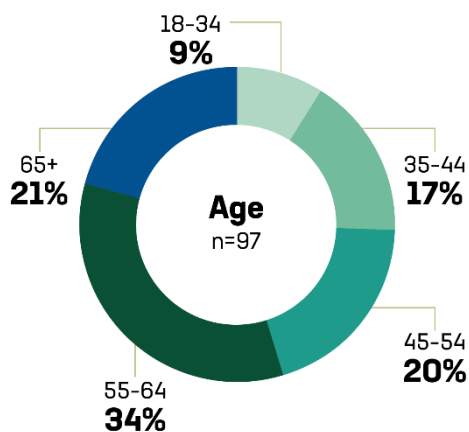
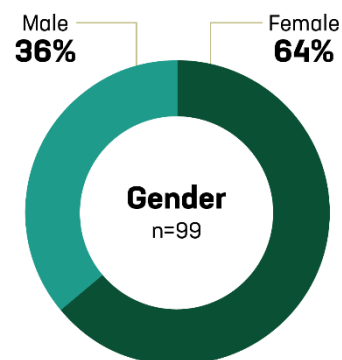
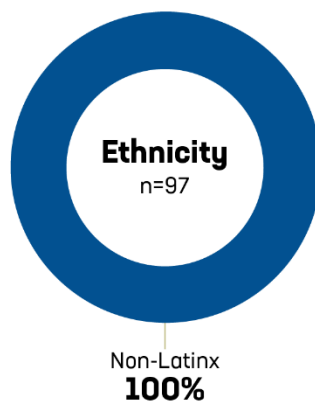
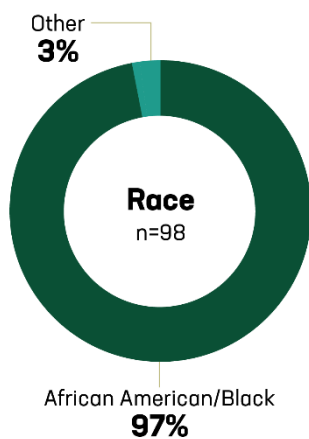
The average household size is 2 individuals

“ALSO, WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GO IF WE HAVE TO MOVE OUT? BROOKHILL IS MY HOME.”

and one-third (33%) of these households have children.

The length of residence in the Brookhill community was dispersed, with 24% of survey respondents residing in Brookhill for 1 to 5 years; 31% for 6 to 10 years; 24% for 11 to 20 years and 21% for more than 20 years.







The research team also wanted to learn more about the education, training and work opportunities residents were involved in. Seventy-four percent of survey respondents held at least a high school degree and 28% had some college or higher. Residents are also enrolled in classes and training opportunities: 13% of respondents indicated they were enrolled in classes for their high school diploma or GED/high school equivalency and 6% of respondents stated they were enrolled in a workforce/career development program.

For employment status, 34% work full-time and 12% of respondents work part-time. Thirty-eight percent of respondents are retired (14%) or have a disabling condition

(24%). Sixteen percent are unemployed and another 4% are not seeking work or are in school.<sup>6</sup>

Residents are employed in pivotal industries in the city, contributing to Charlotte's economic vitality. These industries include health care, transport & logistics, food & beverage, education, child care, cleaning, hospitality, retail, technology services, and maintenance industries.

The demographics of the Brookhill residents mirror the demographics of cost burdened households nationwide, which are majority Black or Latinx, more likely to be seniors, people with disabilities, or working families.<sup>7</sup>

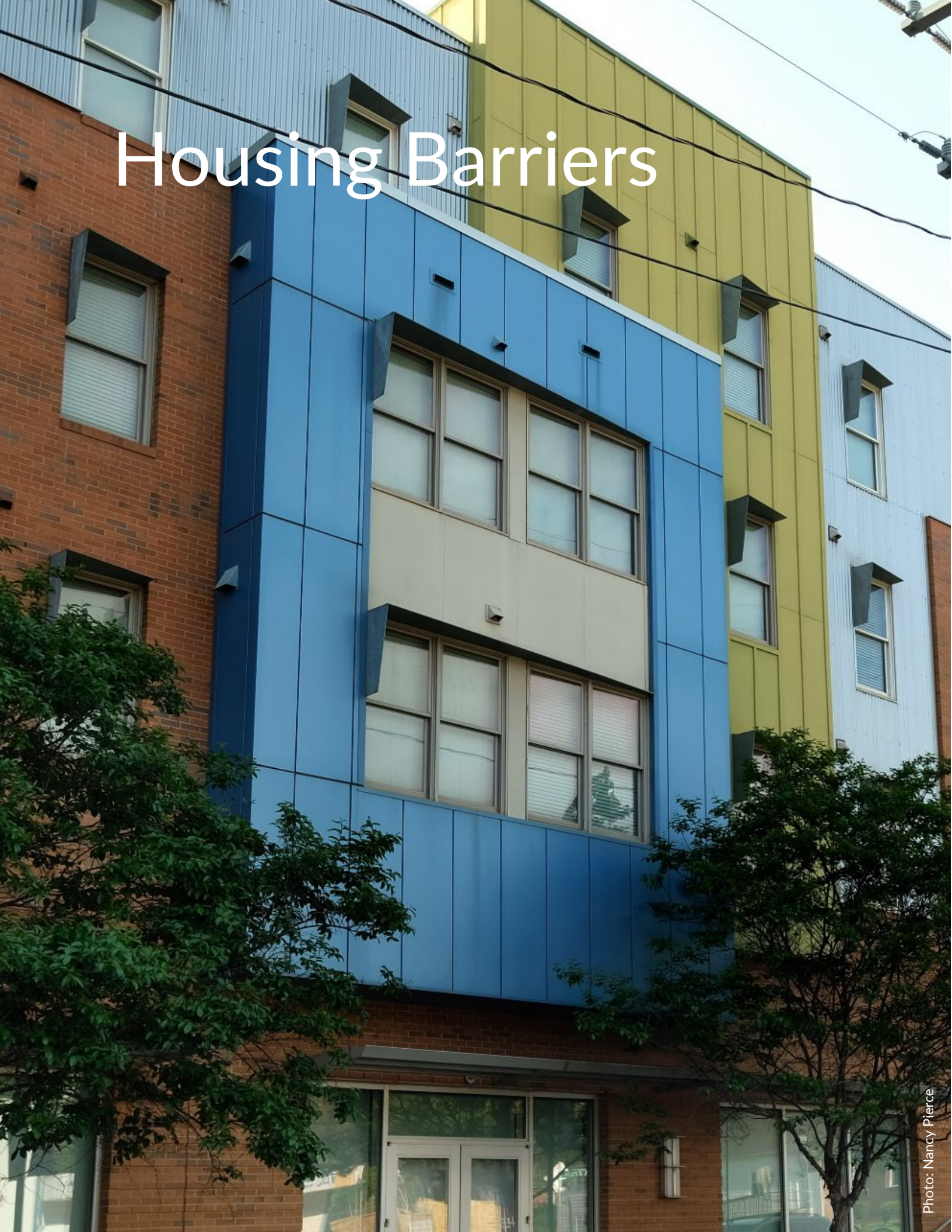
#### Brookhill Residents are Represented in Various Industries



<sup>6</sup> Respondents were asked to check all that apply so total may not equal 100%

<sup>7</sup> Aurand, A., Emmanuel, D., Rafi, I., Threet D., & Yentel, D. (2021) Out of reach: The high cost of housing. National Low Income Housing Coalition. [https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach\\_2021.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach_2021.pdf).

# Housing Barriers





# Housing Barriers

In the event that Brookhill is redeveloped, the research team wanted to better understand what barriers residents might face finding a new place to live. Survey respondents described a range of challenges.

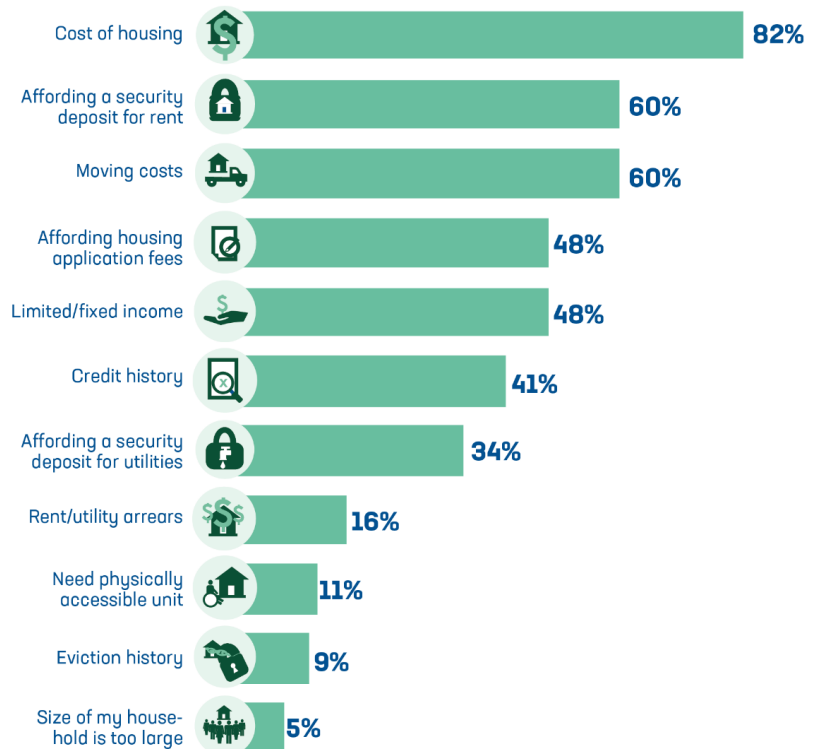
## Housing affordability

The majority of respondents (82%) identified the cost of housing as a current barrier to obtaining housing. On the survey, respondents shared what they currently pay for rent per month, which equaled an average of \$463. Respondents also spend an average of \$192 on utilities a month. During community feedback sessions, residents shared if they had to look elsewhere in the city, even housing deemed affordable at today's market rate would still be unaffordable and out of reach for them. Residents called for low-income housing versus affordable housing since affordability is subjective.

Residents that reported less household monthly income were more likely to identify cost of housing as a barrier.

According to the 2021 State of Housing and Homelessness Instability Report, the fair

Current Housing Barriers n=98



market rent (FMR) of a one- bedroom apartment in Charlotte is \$1,010. FMR, established by HUD, includes cost of utilities (except telephone) and is the amount required to obtain privately owned rental housing in a given area.<sup>8</sup>

Further complicating residents' ability to afford housing in the area is the dwindling stock of low-cost housing in Charlotte. The availability of low-cost housing in Mecklenburg County (defined as less than \$800 per month in 2019) decreased from

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, B. (2021). 2021 Charlotte-Mecklenburg state of housing instability & homelessness. UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. <https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.172.157/275.2a4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-Charlotte-Mecklenburg-State-of-Housing-Instability-Homelessness-Report.pdf>

“

I JUST WANT A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND A PLACE THAT I CAN AFFORD... I'M HOPING WE GET A NEW BROOKHILL.

approximately 45% of all rentals in 2011 to 22% of rentals in 2019.<sup>9</sup>

Although the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program allows for more affordable housing options in Charlotte by subsidizing rents for low-income households renting in the private market, it has significant barriers to its use. Source of Income Discrimination (SOID) and an average of an 11-year wait to receive a voucher prevents Brookhill residents from benefiting from this program now.<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, almost half of respondents (48%) identified limited or fixed income as a current barrier to finding housing. The average net monthly household income for respondents is \$1,368, with a little more than one-third of households (37%) earning less than \$1,000, 30% earning between \$1000 to \$1499, 11% earning \$1500 to \$1999 and 22% earning \$2000 or more monthly. The median household monthly income for respondents is \$1200.

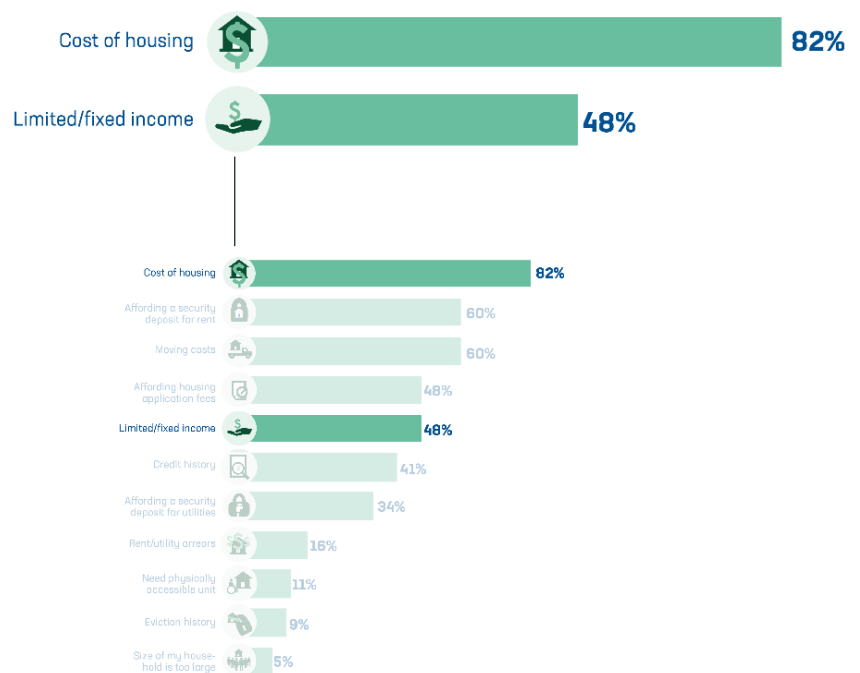
Thirty-nine percent of survey respondents indicated they were currently receiving Supplemental

Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance, Social Security retirement benefits or pension benefits, fixed income benefits.

Older residents were more likely to identify limited or fixed income as a barrier.

Area median income (AMI) is the median or middle value of an area's income distribution, half of the households in an area will earn less than the median and half of the households will earn more. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the FY21 AMI for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metropolitan area is \$84,200 for a 4-person family.<sup>11</sup>

AMI is broken down into income limits and adjusted to family size. These income limits are used by HUD to determine the income eligibility requirements of federal housing



<sup>9</sup> Anderson, B., 2021

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, B. (2020). 2020 Charlotte-Mecklenburg state of housing instability & homelessness. UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. [https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.172.157/275.2a4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-SoHHI-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.172.157/275.2a4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-SoHHI-Report_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, B., 2021



programs. There are three main income limits: Extremely-Low Income (at or below 30% of AMI); Very-Low Income (at or below 50% of AMI); and Low Income (at or below 80% of AMI).

Based on the FY21 income limits set by HUD<sup>12</sup>, 75% of households that responded to the survey are considered extremely-low income, 21% are very-low income and 4% are low income households.

Since 2009 minimum wage has remained at \$7.25, while Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (income support for people with disabling conditions, and/or who are age 65 and older with limited income and resources) has gradually increased. While rent has continued to increase, neither low-income source has kept up with inflation.<sup>13</sup>

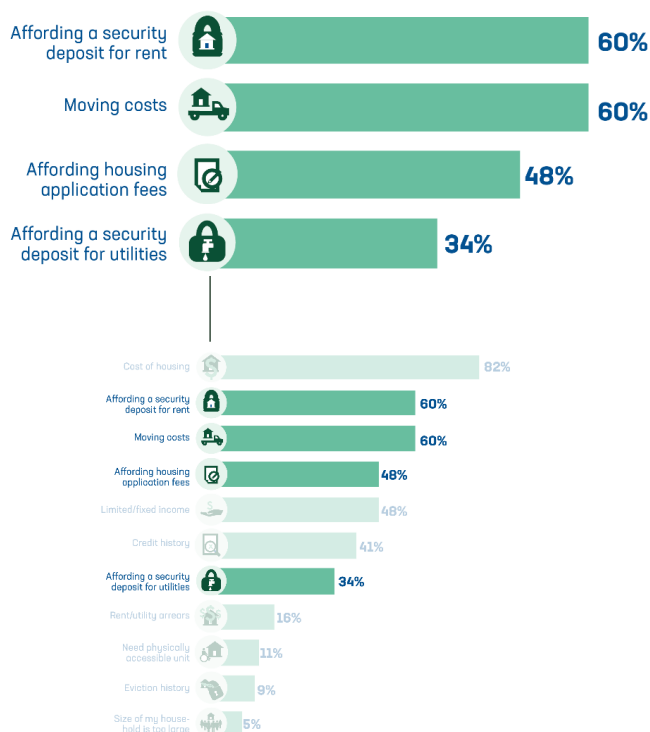
Even at the current rent, the majority of households that responded to the survey are cost-burdened according to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development's (HUD) definition.<sup>14</sup>

“MOVING TAKES MONEY - LAST TIME I MOVED WHICH WAS 14 YEARS AGO, IT TOOK ME 5 MONTHS JUST TO SAVE FOR DEPOSITS, ASKING PEOPLE TO HELP YOU MOVE. IT'S STRESSFUL.”

## Costs Associated with Moving

More than one-third of respondents identified the costs associated with moving as a current barrier to housing. Sixty percent of respondents reported affording a security deposit for a new rental as a barrier to housing. Sixty percent also reported moving costs such as movers, a truck rental, moving supplies, etc., as a barrier to housing. More than one-third of respondents also identified housing application fees (48%) and security deposits for utilities (34%), as current barriers to housing.

Residents that reported less household monthly income were more likely to



<sup>12</sup> Anderson, B., 2021

<sup>13</sup> Anderson, B., 2020

<sup>14</sup> HUD defines cost-burdened families as those “who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing” and “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.” Severe rent burden is defined as paying more than 50 percent of one’s income on rent.

“

FINDING A HOUSE THAT HAS A 3 BEDROOM AND 1.5 TO 2 BATHROOMS THAT IS AFFORDABLE FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. I WORK A FULL TIME JOB BUT DON'T MAKE 3 TIMES THE RENT ON MY OWN AND MY FIANCÉ WORKS FOR TIPS WHICH NO-ONE IS ACCEPTING FOR ME TO MOVE.

identify moving costs (movers, truck rental, moving supplies, etc.), affording application fees, affording a security deposit for rent and utilities as barriers to obtaining new housing.

Older residents as well as residents with disabling conditions, likely on a fixed income, were also more likely to identify moving costs as a housing barrier.

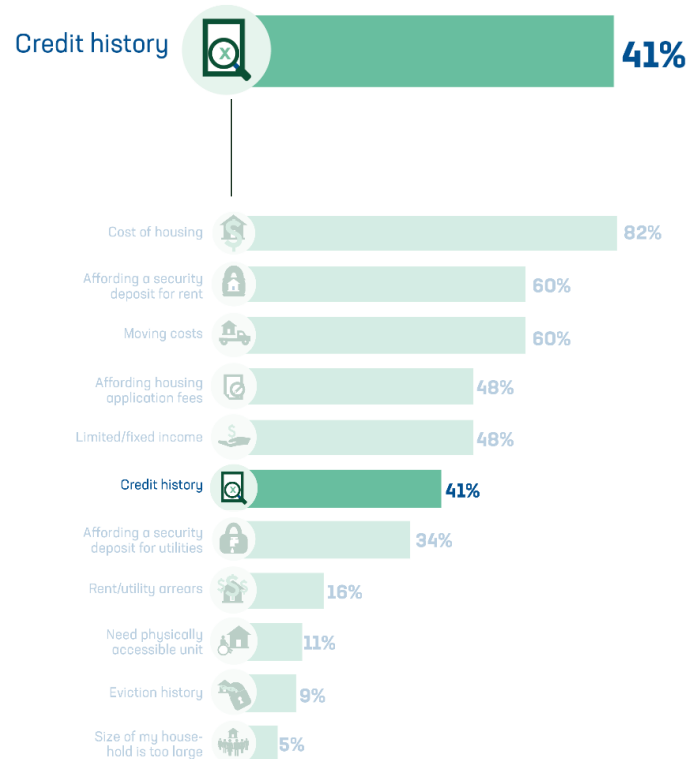
The security deposit alone is often an insurmountable hurdle to low-income renters. The thousands of dollars set aside for moving costs prevent people from paying for other necessities, food, medicine, childcare, transportation, etc.<sup>15</sup>

Households that are cost burdened have no financial buffer, in the form of savings, to weather the financial shock associated with an involuntary move. Not only are involuntary moves costly for the individual, but they are also costly to society as a

whole. Housing instability, is associated with poor mental and physical health outcomes, decreased earnings, homelessness, and poor development and academic outcomes in children.<sup>16</sup>

## Housing requirements

More than one third (41%) of survey respondents cited credit history as a current barrier to housing. Residents shared during the community feedback sessions that credit history and income requirements were restrictive and thwarted access to housing. Requirements such as having a monthly income 3 times the rent makes it difficult to afford a place to live, according to residents.



<sup>15</sup> Denary, W., Fenelon, A., Schlesinger, P., Purtle, J., Blankenship, K. M., & Keene, D. E. (2021). Does rental assistance improve mental health? Insights from a longitudinal cohort study. *Social Science & Medicine*, 282. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114100>; Desmond, M. (2018). HEAVY IS THE HOUSE: Rent burden among the American urban poor. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 42, 160-170. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12529>

<sup>16</sup> Ellen, I. G., Ganz, A., & O'Regan, K. (2020). A renter safety Net: A call for federal emergency rental assistance. The Aspen Institute. <https://live-aspen-economic-strategy-group.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Emergency-Rental-Assistance-1.pdf>; Desmond, M., & Gershenson, C. (2016). Housing and employment insecurity among the working poor. *Social Problems*, 63(1), 46-67. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spv025>



# Needed Resources

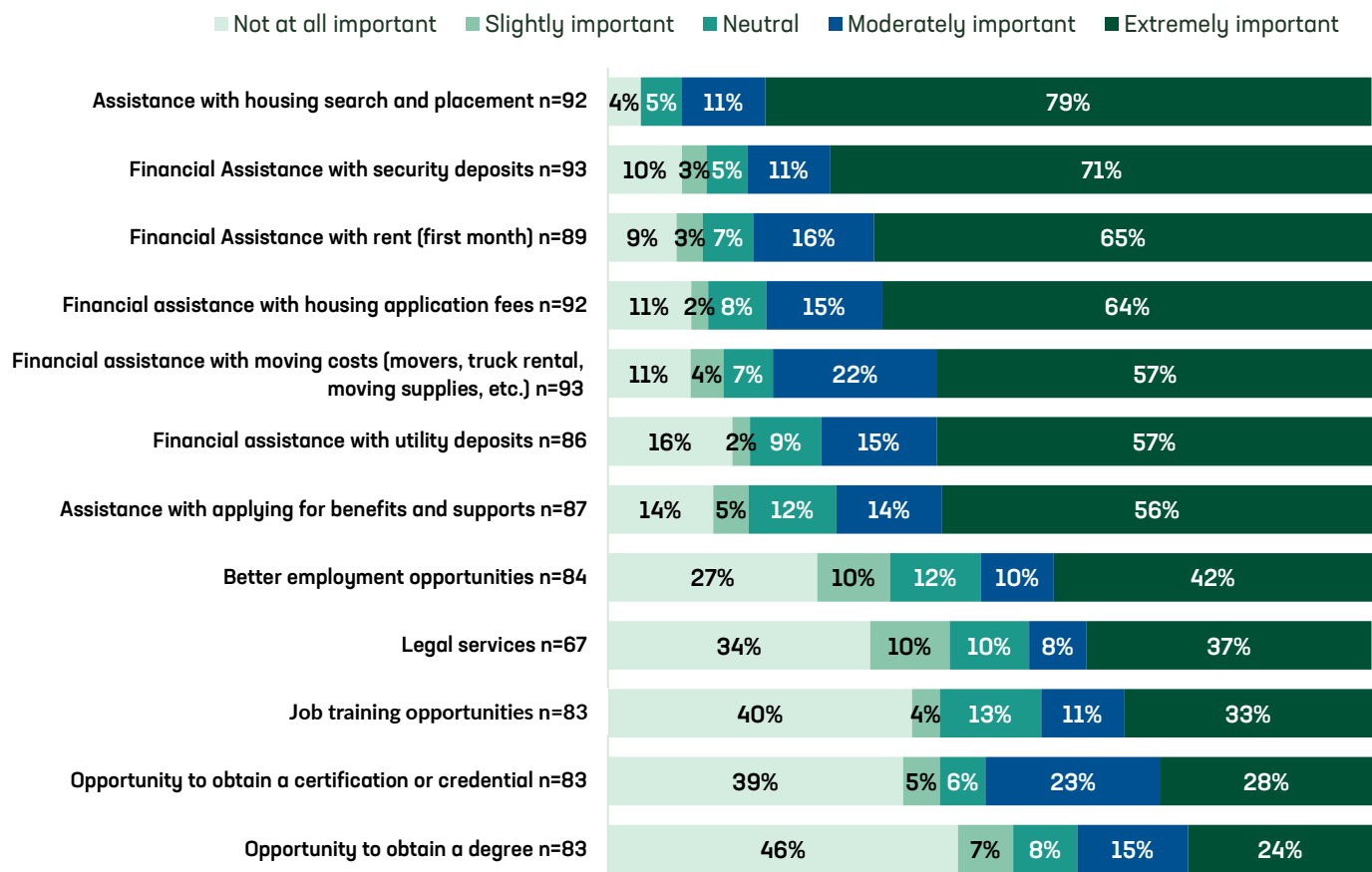


# Needed Resources

The research team also wanted to understand what resources Brookhill residents think will help them afford new housing in the event Brookhill is redeveloped.

“ I WOULD LIKE TO BE QUALIFIED FOR A NEW UNIT OR HELP TO FIND HOUSING. ALL OTHER AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLACES ARE FULL OR HAVE A 5-YEAR WAITLIST.

## Resources Important to Affording New Housing





## Assistance with housing search and placement

The vast majority of respondents (79%) stated that assistance with their housing search and placement is extremely important to afford new housing. They also described that this resource is important to them locating housing that is close to public transportation and other important neighborhood amenities.

## Affordability

### Affordability is key to Brookhill residents.

Given the lack of affordable housing in the Charlotte community, Brookhill residents were asked if they think they could afford to pay any more in rent if they had to relocate. Forty-three percent of respondents indicated that they could afford to pay

more. Respondents that stated they could afford to pay more and indicated how much more could pay on average an additional \$238. That's a total rent of \$701, still far below the average market rent in Charlotte.

Also, Brookhill residents expressed that a lack of affordable housing coupled with limited or no information about what affordable units currently exist makes the housing search difficult. Residents suggested individualized housing search services as a resource to assist them in finding affordable units in Charlotte.

Residents with significant income barriers such as those that are unemployed, those with disabling conditions and those that are retired, were more likely to identify assistance with the housing search and placement as extremely important to their household.



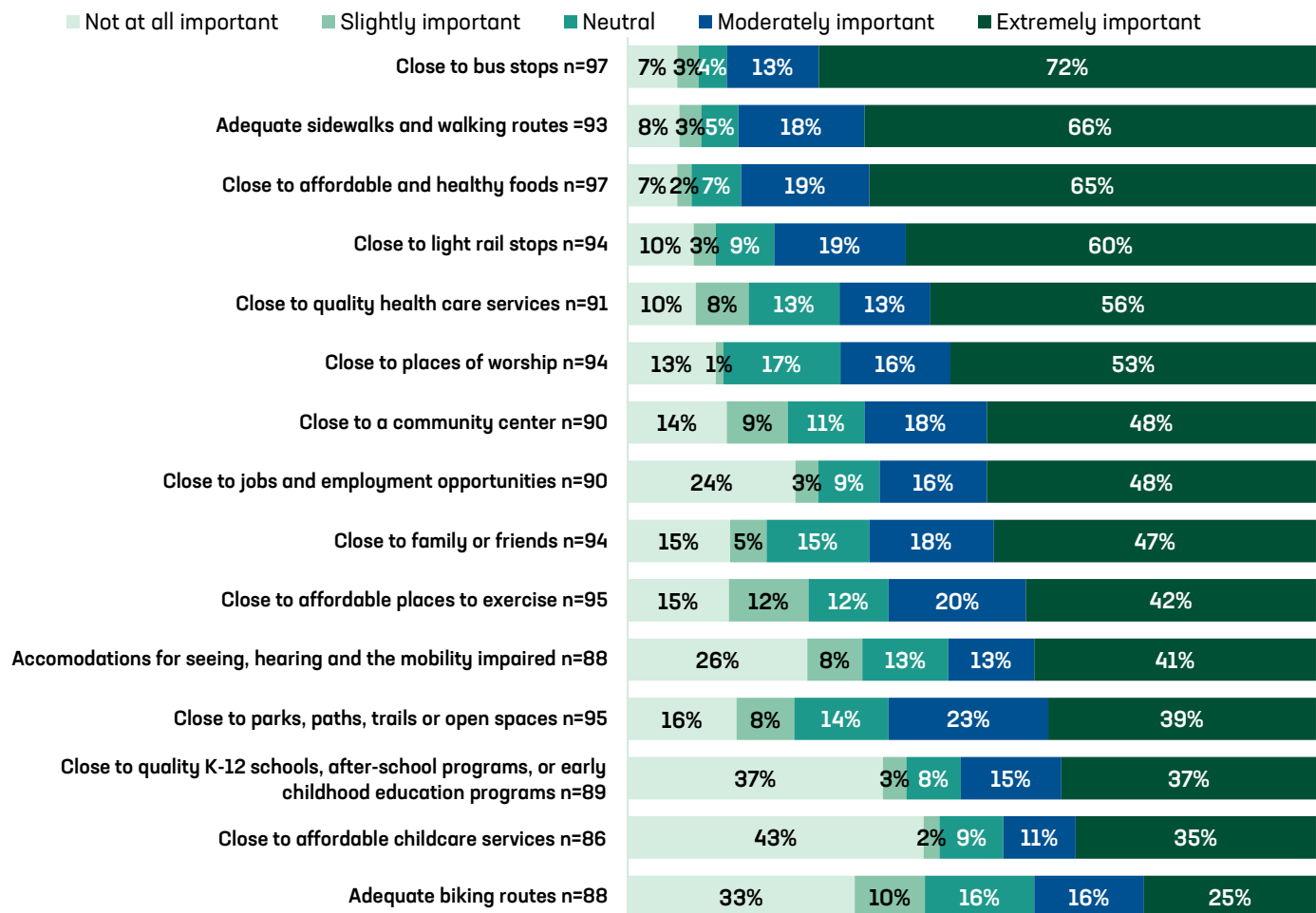
## Access

Residents' transportation, housing, and neighborhood preferences are also key to the housing search. Brookhill residents were asked to identify neighborhood characteristics that were important to them and their household.

Brookhill residents found access to be an important neighborhood feature.

Access to the physical, economic, and social infrastructure that Brookhill provides was emphasized in the survey data and in community feedback sessions.

### Neighborhood Characteristics Important to Households





“

THE COMMUNITY IS GREAT  
AND EXTREMELY CONVENIENT  
TO WORK AND SHOPS.

The majority of survey respondents indicated that being close to bus stops (72%) and light rail stops (60%) is extremely important to their household. Residents said that the public transportation options near Brookhill have allowed them to have reliable

modes of transportation when it was hard to maintain or afford a personal vehicle.

Many Brookhill residents depend on the bus system: the same percentage of respondents use the bus as those that use the car to get to work.

Modes of Transportation Residents Use for Different Activities n=94

	Car	Bus	Walk	Rideshare	Train
Work	36%	36%	12%	7%	16%
Friends	45%	31%	13%	10%	5%
Family	54%	31%	11%	11%	7%
Community group	30%	18%	17%	4%	3%
Place of Worship	40%	22%	16%	5%	2%
Health care provider	47%	42%	7%	10%	9%
Child's school (K-12), after-school program or early childhood education programs	19%	14%	1%	3%	1%
Child care	19%	9%	1%	0%	1%



Residents also want to have adequate sidewalks and walking routes, to be close to affordable and healthy foods, and near quality health care services, with more than half of respondents identifying these neighborhood characteristics as extremely important to their household. The focus on health may be reflective of residents that have prioritized their health and physical well-being.

A little more than half of respondents (53%) feel being close to places of worship is extremely important, and almost half identified being close to a community center (48%), and family and friends (47%) as extremely important. The strong social infrastructure and network that exists in Brookhill have made the community an attractive place to live, according to residents. Brookhill residents describe the strong sense of family and community and the support and networks that are present in the community.

Older residents (65 years and older) were more likely to identify being close to bus stops, light rail stops, affordable and healthy foods (e.g. grocery store, farmer's market,

community garden, etc.), quality health care services, family and friends and places of worship as extremely important to their household.

Furthermore, almost half of respondents indicated that being close to jobs and employment opportunities (48%) is extremely important. Residents shared that being centrally located, allows them easily to get to work.

Households with children were more likely to identify being close to job and employment opportunities; being close to quality K-12 schools, after-school programs or early childhood education programs; and being close to affordable childcare services as extremely important to their household.

Survey respondents also mentioned that safety, maintenance (ensuring housing is well-kept), streetscape such as adequate lighting, and recreation spaces were important neighborhood characteristics.



WE ARE A FAMILY; WE TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER AND THAT'S IRREPLACEABLE.



## Move-in assistance

Survey respondents described the costs associated with moving as a current barrier to obtaining housing. Respondents also identified move-in assistance as a resource that is very important to their household in affording new housing. More than half of respondents indicated that financial assistance with the security deposit (71%), first month's rent (65%), housing application fees (64%), utility deposits (57%) and other costs related to the move (57%) (i.e., movers,

truck rental, moving supplies, etc.) are extremely important.

Older residents (65 years and older) were more likely to identify financial assistance with moving related costs as a resource that is extremely important to their household. Retired residents and residents with disabling conditions were also more likely to identify financial assistance with moving costs as a resource.





## Assistance with applying for benefits

Brookhill residents identified assistance with applying for benefits and support as an important resource. Fifty-six percent of respondents identified this assistance as extremely important. Brookhill residents were also asked if they are aware of any support and/or benefits they are qualified for but are currently not receiving. More than one-quarter of respondents identified subsidized housing (30%) and food assistance (26%) as support that they may be qualified for but are not currently receiving. Twenty-four percent of respondents also indicated they were not

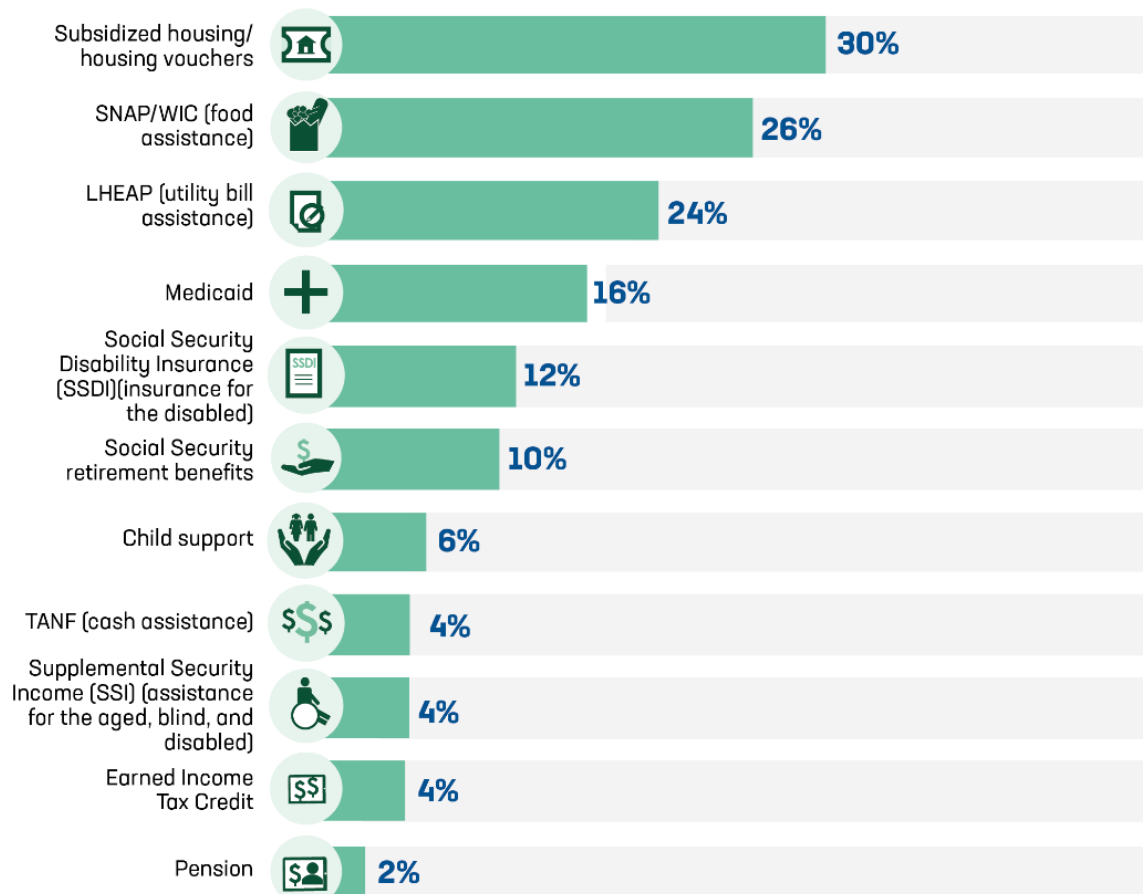
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JUST MAYBE HELP WITH SECURITY DEPOSIT ... OR IF I WOULD HAVE TO MOVE FROM THIS LOCATION PROBABLY WOULD NEED HELP FINDING HOUSING.

currently receiving utility bill assistance but may be qualified to receive this benefit.

Assistance with applying for benefits should be coupled with removing barriers to use. Waitlists and income discrimination can be significant barriers for residents.

**Percent of respondents who identified support/benefits they qualify for but are not currently receiving**  
n=50





## Employment and educational opportunities

Survey respondents also feel that better employment (42%) and job training opportunities (33%) are extremely important to obtaining new housing. Almost one-quarter of respondents also found the opportunity to obtain a certification or credential (28%) and the opportunity to obtain a degree (24%) as extremely important.

Younger residents (25 to 44 years old) identified opportunities to obtain a certification or a credential as well as opportunities to obtain a degree as resources they found extremely important to their household. Residents with less than an associate degree and residents that were unemployed also identified better

employment opportunities and job training opportunities as a resource they needed.

## Emotional support

Thirty-two percent of respondents stated they would need support for mental and emotional distress if Brookhill is redeveloped and they need to relocate. Residents that identified this support also identified the various kinds of support that might be helpful to them. Respondents were able to select all the resources they felt would be helpful. A little more than half of respondents (52%) specified that a one-on-one setting would be helpful, 30% stated speaking to a mental health care provider would also be helpful and 30% identified attending a peer support group with other residents of Brookhill as helpful.





# Discussion





# Discussion

## Community Assets

The Brookhill community has a *robust infrastructure*, one that has allowed residents to have greater social and economic stability as well as physical well-being.

The Brookhill community is *centrally located*, as residents emphasize. The community is either near residents' employment or employment is accessible by highway or public transportation, which is also close by. This infrastructure promotes greater economic well-being for residents.

The *physical infrastructure* is also important to the health of aging residents in the Brookhill community. The average age of residents that responded to the survey is 54 years old. Having access to adequate sidewalks and walking routes, affordable healthy foods, and health care services is very important to a majority of respondents.

Lastly, the *strong social network and infrastructure* is an asset in the Brookhill community. Long-time residents have built a strong social network. Almost half of respondents have lived in Brookhill for longer than 10 years, and 21% have lived there longer than 20 years. Residents described a "community of family." "Some residents have lived in Brookhill their whole lives and have grown up with one another.

Others have family members that also live in the Brookhill community. Residents look out for each other's well-being and offer support to one another when it is needed. Half of respondents also share the importance of having a community center and house of worship in their community.

## Housing Resources Needed

Interventions informed by the evidence-based Housing First model demonstrate repeatedly that when individuals are provided with needed assistance in obtaining housing (housing identification assistance, rent and move-in assistance) coupled with individualized services, like housing case management, they are able to maintain greater stability.<sup>17</sup>

Housing identification services assists households in finding and securing housing. In the event that Brookhill is redeveloped, Brookhill residents have identified these services as extremely important to obtaining new housing which is affordable and centrally located. These services may include developing relationships with landlords and other necessary housing referral agencies to try to mitigate the barriers individuals and families may encounter in trying to obtain affordable and low-cost housing. Resources such as housing locators have also been utilized to

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<sup>17</sup> McDonald, S. (2019). Why Housing First? Why Not Housing Second? Or Third? <https://endhomelessness.org/why-housing-first-why-not-housing-second-or-third/>

streamline the search process, giving individuals clear guidance and a plan to navigate the housing market.<sup>18</sup>

Assistance with moving-related costs was another important resource identified by Brookhill residents. Rent and move-in assistance covers the move-in costs, deposits, and rent and/or utilities of households served. These subsidies would help households address barriers to housing.<sup>19</sup>

Long-term rental subsidies are also needed for some (or a subset of) Brookhill residents. Residents identified their employment status on the survey. Thirty-eight percent of respondents are retired or have a disabling condition. These residents are likely to be on a fixed income and in need of longer-term rental subsidies that fill the gap between their income and the higher cost of housing.

Brookhill residents each have unique housing barriers and obstacles they are facing. The community houses working, individuals and families, retirees, residents with disabling conditions, and aging Charlotte residents. Given the uniqueness of these households, individualized housing services may be needed. Case management connects families to appropriate services and supports based on their unique needs, preferences, and resources. This ensures that Brookhill residents are connected to benefits they qualify for and community-based services that are needed.<sup>20</sup>

Connecting Brookhill residents to needed housing resources such as housing identification services, rent and move-in subsidies, and housing case management services, will provide residents the best opportunity to obtain new housing in the event Brookhill is redeveloped.

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<sup>18</sup> Bergman, P., Chetty, R., DeLuca, S., Hendren, N., Katz, L., & Palmer, C. (2019) Creating Moves to Opportunity: Experimental Evidence on Barriers to Neighborhood Choice. [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w26164/revisions/w26164.rev0.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26164/revisions/w26164.rev0.pdf); National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2014). Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing. <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/core-components-of-rrh/>

<sup>19</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2014

<sup>20</sup> Ibid



