



EMMA COMMUNITY PLAN 2023

COMMUNITY
OWNERSHIP
PODER

EMMA

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are so grateful to the hundreds of Emma community members that shared their time, stories and perspectives over the past two years; as well as Buncombe County Schools and Children First who participated as key stakeholders in this process.

We honor the time dedicated by our neighborhood research team for the countless hours spent on front porches, living rooms and phone calls, collecting this vital community input and data. Thank you to Rocio Alviter, Ana Mayra Hernandez, Jonathan Palma and Ingrid Johnson, and to the Popular Education Consultants (PECI), Isabel Vinent Gramany and Reza Fernandez, for the Participatory Action Research Training that was so critical to our team's success.

We deeply appreciate the Legacy Neighborhoods Coalition that has shared their expertise in Neighborhood Planning and have provided such valuable mentorship to our community. The Legacy Neighborhoods Coalition is comprised of neighborhoods (including the Burton Street Neighborhood Association, East End/Valley Street Neighborhood Association, the Shiloh Community Neighborhood Association, the Emma Neighborhood Council, and with support of the Asheville Buncombe Community Land Trust) that have vibrant histories of community organizing. These neighborhoods have also historically faced racially discriminatory practices, including urban renewal and redlining and/or currently face displacement due to nationally ranked levels of gentrification. Our community has been forever changed thanks to these relationships and the ability to work together to ensure community-led development, prevent harmful development, and find solutions that

support legacy residents to remain in our neighborhoods.

Our Neighborhood could not have done this work without the endless hours of guidance, wisdom and encouragement of Chloe Stuber and Chris Joyell, our planning consultants.

We also want to thank our technical support team who worked alongside our neighborhood with such dedication and care! Justin Edge (formerly of Pisgah Legal Services), Aashka Patel of FernLeaf, Ginger Kowal of UNCA's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center, and Ian Shannon of MountainTrue. It is so critical for communities to have values-aligned high quality technical assistance, to turn our vision into reality.

We also want to recognize the work of Cenzontle Language Justice Cooperative for all of the interpretation and translation work to make this plan available in English and Spanish.

We are tremendously grateful for the generosity of time and talent of Reggie Tidwell for the beautiful work of graphic design and layout, and Andrea Golden and Ami Worthen for co-authoring the content of this Neighborhood Plan.

Finally, thank you to Buncombe County for the funding that made this process possible, and for the generosity of expertise, support and accompaniment that Buncombe County Planning and Development Staff and the City of Asheville Planning and Design Staff provided to our community.

PODER Emma Community Ownership was founded in 2017 after a decade of grassroots organizing in the community. Previous efforts focused on immigrant rights and cultural organizing, however as Asheville's development patterns began to put intense pressure on our neighborhood, we realized that we needed to invest in community driven strategies to prevent displacement and gentrification and to protect the mobile home parks in our community which provide critical affordable housing.

In early 2018, PODER Emma Community Ownership undertook a community-led research project to better understand Emma community members' experiences around gentrification and displacement. This effort resulted in Emma's first community plan and the formation of a Neighborhood Council. Building on this successful experience, in 2020 we embarked on a similar process of which this new plan is a result.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, we engaged with nearly 200 Emma residents via door to door interviews, digital surveys, and virtual engagement spaces. 80% of community members surveyed live in mobile homes, with only 10% living in apartments, 8% living in houses, and 2% housing unstable or homeless.

Based on the aggregated community data from our focus sessions and surveys, the planning team created a vision for our neighborhood. The vision shows what is possible once gentrification is no longer a threat and housing and the permanence of legacy residents has been stabilized.

Emma's residents, children and grandchildren will remain in our community for generations to come, and we will continue to be a racially and linguistically diverse community. We will live free from free of displacement whether due to redevelopment, eviction, deportation or racial discrimination. Our community will have affordable, dignified, and quality housing. We will gather safely with our neighbors and families in neighborhood spaces, get around the community safely, be able to access affordable health services, and benefit from community focused educational programs for all ages that reflect our diversity of languages and cultures. We will care for our natural surroundings and continue to engage in gardening, agriculture, and stewardship of the natural world.

Our focus on mobile home residents and communities was deliberate. Homeowners who own the mobile home that they live in, but not the land on which their mobile home sits, are at particular risk for displacement if the landowner decides to sell. Additionally, mobile homes are often mistakenly perceived as temporary, disposable, undignified housing; this myth increases the threat of displacement. This plan illustrates both the threats and opportunities that the Emma Community will tackle over the next ten years. The plan provides overviews of Emma's history, our community input process, and housing, demographic and institutional data. The vision shows what is possible once gentrification is no longer a threat and housing and the permanence of legacy residents has been stabilized. Through the planning process we worked to create three frameworks:

- **Anti-Displacement Planning Framework:** A community-led process to guide and participate in investment in our communities, leading toward equitable growth.

- **Stages of Gentrification Framework:** To help determine the most appropriate anti-displacement interventions based on the specific stage of change a community is experiencing.
- **Neighborhood Stability Framework:** to measure our community's resilience and ability to withstand change without seeing displacement of legacy residents. We used this framework to develop a Neighborhood Stability Index to assess if our strategies and solutions are preventing the neighborhood from moving to an advanced stage of gentrification.

Using these frameworks to better understand the input and data we collected, we worked to create the following recommendations to achieve neighborhood stability and prevent reaching the advanced phase of gentrification:

- Pro-Manufactured Housing Zoning Reform
- Prioritize and Protect NOAH Inventory
- Community Benefits Tables and Agreements
- Anti-Displacement Property Tax Funds
- Short-Term Rental Restrictions
- Anti-Displacement Resolution
- Opportunity To Purchase Policies
- Just Housing Easements
- Land Use Incentive Grants
- Neighborhood Median Income

The Emma neighborhood is unique as it has a foot in both Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. To achieve the vision laid out in this plan, the Emma community will require the partnership of both governing bodies, and that support must be coordinated between the two.

The sequencing of the above policies is as important as the recommendations themselves. Above all, housing stability must be achieved and existing naturally occurring affordable housing must be permanently protected before the community can welcome new development and improvements, including new construction, infrastructure updates and the creation of greenways and amenities.

In addition, we identified Community-Based Strategies

- Conduct Physical Asset Mapping
- Host Community Forums
- Foster Community Relationship and Trust Building
- Form an Emma Neighborhood Council
- Create more recreational spaces in Emma

INTRO TO PODER EMMA COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

PODER Emma Community Ownership was founded in 2017 after a decade of grassroots organizing in the community. PODER Emma is a member of a collaborative of community organizations called Colaborativa La Milpa, other members include CIMA, Raices, Emma - Erwin, El Telar and Ma Hnakihi. Collectively, the collaborative focuses on neighborhood-led initiatives, economic organizing, immigrant rights, cultural resilience, and language

revitalization.

PODER Emma's two focus areas are Cooperative Development and Community-Led Development.

COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cooperatives allow people with a common interest to collectively problem solve and overcome barriers. We support the development through the provision of technical assistance and lending to worker-owned businesses, housing and real estate cooperatives.

COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

Our approach to community-led development includes the creation of community-based initiatives, policy, and investment strategies to meet the community's needs. We do this through neighborhood-based organizing, Participatory Action Research and the convening of the Emma Neighborhood Council.

PODER Emma centers community-led development and design; nothing about us without us. Neighborhoods like ours already have the resourcefulness and lived experience to assess our most pressing needs, which informs solutions that will maintain our way of life and improve our quality of life. Communities are best positioned to make decisions that will impact their future generations.

While property developers and investors are working to re-brand and re-define our neighborhood and many neighborhoods around Buncombe County and across our country, it becomes increasingly important to recognize that our neighborhoods already have names, characteristics, and residents that do not need to be replaced, redeveloped, or improved for the benefit of others.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EMMA COMMUNITY

It is important to us to document the history and present realities of our community, as well as our vision for the future.

The Emma community's early history is tied to the coming of the railroad, which was what brought boom times to the Asheville area in 1890. Indeed, the Emma community is named after Emma Station, a small train station, which was named after a woman named Emma Clayton. It was the railway that initially brought growth to our community and to Buncombe County as a whole.

The Western North Carolina railway was largely built with the unpaid labor of enslaved people, then, after the Civil War, with the unpaid labor of African American prisoners, many of whom were unjustly imprisoned. Further, some of the prominent white families associated with the Emma community's early history owned enslaved people and were involved in the Confederate Army's attempts to maintain the enslavement of Black people in the South. It is important for us to acknowledge that racial violence, oppression, injustices, and inequities are at the roots of our community's history. Wealth accumulation for some has been done for centuries at the expense of others, and community economic development work must be done in the light of that context.

Also at the root of our community's history are examples of powerful leadership, vision, and commitment of African American leaders and families. A very important person in our community's history is James Vester Miller.

James Vester Miller's mother was enslaved in Rutherford County, where she gave birth to her son. Following Emancipation, his family moved to

Asheville and built a thriving business, Miller and Sons Construction Company. He built many of Asheville's beautiful and prominent brick buildings that are still standing today. His family home in Emma, known as Out Home, was described as the center of family life and hospitality for all.

Another thread throughout the history of Emma is entrepreneurship and community economic development. Fisher's Floor Covering opened their business in a building that was built by James Vester Miller, as reported to us by his family. Walker Tire and Moss Body Shop were some of the existing Emma businesses to open along N. Louisiana Avenue, followed by Ramsey's Mobile Home Parts Store. This began another important chapter of Emma's history; the creation of mobile home parks in the early 1980s. Today the Emma Community has a thriving small business community, many of which meet critical needs of neighborhood residents.

There is also a long history in Emma of community economics and caring for each other, including the Miller family's tradition of sharing crops and products such as jams, sauerkraut, and meat among Emma residents throughout the early 1900s. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Emma United Methodist Church Women sold crafts and baked goods at their community bazaars. Then, in the early 2000s, Children First started the Emma Bucks program, a community currency that created a modern bartering system. This work all paved the way for the current community work around cooperative development.

The research phase of this report was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Emma Community, including organizations rooted in our community like Colaborativa La Milpa, Umoja Health Wellness and



Our community-based economic work honors the history of community members like James Vester Miller, who dedicated their lives to improving the conditions of their communities.

Justice Collective, and Unete, ensured that hundreds of families had access to critical information, masks, tests, vaccines, and food. We are so proud of the community infrastructure that has been so lovingly built.

We are only beginning to relearn, share, and document our neighborhood history. We are a community that is fortunate enough to have the treasure of elders whose memories hold the history of our neighborhood. The diversity that we see in our community today is reflected in the diverse collection of stories that make up our history.

A more complete history of the Emma Community can be found in our previous Neighborhood Plan, <https://www.poderemma.org/resources>

OUR FIRST NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN: 2018

In early 2018, PODER Emma Community Ownership undertook a participatory action research project to better understand Emma community members' experiences around gentrification and displacement. We particularly focused on people living in mobile home communities, for several reasons: (1) many people in Emma own the mobile home that they live in, but not the land on which their mobile home sits – and this can result in displacement of homeowners if the landowner decides to sell; (2) mobile homes are often mistakenly perceived as temporary, disposable, undignified housing; and (3) for the reasons above, mobile home communities face the highest threat of displacement.

PODER Emma formed a research team of 12 community members who received training, support, and coaching from Popular Education Consultants (PECI). We conducted our own research study documenting our community's perspectives on gentrification and displacement. We developed a survey, then went door-to-door and had conversations with 166 people in our community. We analyzed and summarized the findings from our research, and then – since this was action-focused research – we presented our findings back to the community, inviting neighbors to develop goals and strategies related to our research findings, which were incorporated into our first neighborhood plan. A Neighborhood Council was

formed to implement this neighborhood plan and, despite the pandemic, we have been able to realize the majority of goals identified in this first planning process, which included:

1. Create a neighborhood-based loan fund to support the creation of more housing cooperatives to create more permanently affordable, community owned housing.
2. Create a network of cooperatives to ensure technical assistance and mutual aid, as well as access to capital, information and support.
3. Study the viability of creating a real estate cooperative to protect and develop commercial properties in the interest of the community.
4. Document and share the unique history of the Emma community.
5. Establish alliances, collaborations, and/or the creation of a pilot program or worker-owned cooperative to provide home repair services to mobile homes in our community to improve the quality of housing and reduce the vulnerability to breaking and entering.
6. Share the findings, goals, and strategies from this report with organizations, agencies, local government, investors, and developers to ensure that decisions made about our community include our perspective.
7. Create a Neighborhood Council to carry out this vision that was so lovingly created by our neighborhood. The Council must engage in advocacy, civic engagement, and labor needed to stop the loss of mobile home parks and create much needed neighborhood infrastructure and assets, and cultivate ever more trusting relationships amongst neighbors, small business owners, and property owners of Emma.

Building on this successful experience, in 2020 we embarked on a similar process of which this new plan is a result.



Photo: Wild and Bright Photography

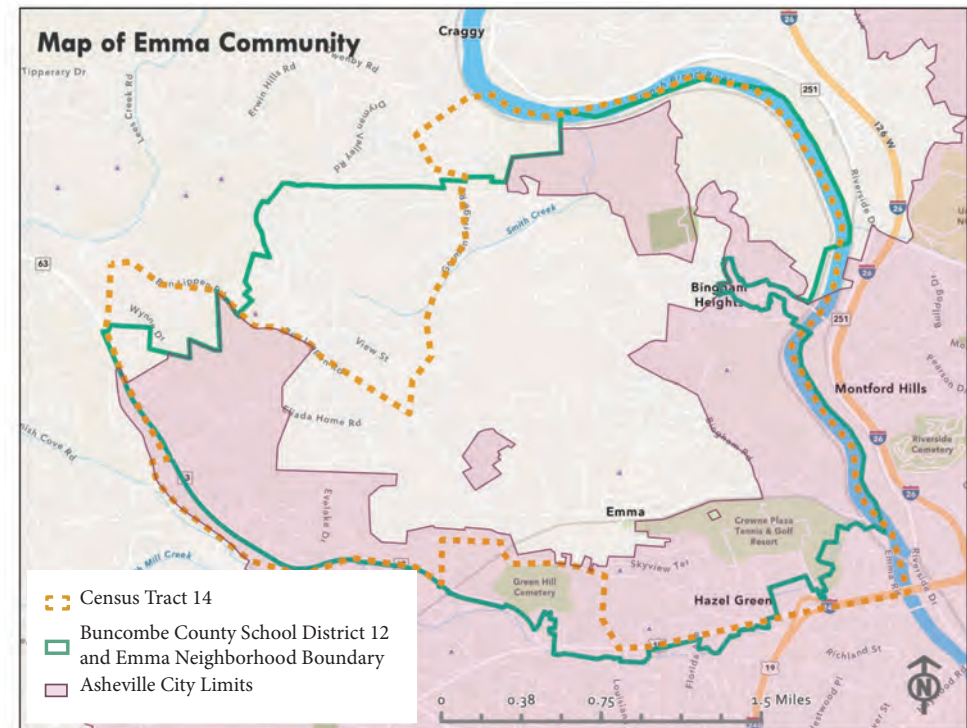
EMMA COMMUNITY PLAN 2023

In 2020, despite the global Covid-19 pandemic, we continued with our goal of updating our neighborhood plan after evaluation of the first process showed that most of the goals had been met. Throughout 2020 and 2021, using the same Participatory Action Research methods as described above, we engaged with nearly 200 Emma residents via door to door interviews, digital surveys, and virtual engagement spaces. In fall of 2021, after collecting this vital community data, the research team analyzed the data to identify patterns, trends, and priorities. To share this information back with the community we had to get creative,

due to the limitations on in person large gatherings. In 2022 we created a textile data mural to share residents' voices back to our community, reflect on patterns and trends, and engage with our neighbors to prioritize action strategies.



Another important component of this plan was to identify our neighborhood's boundaries. Community engagement revealed that the primary defining factor for Emma residents is Emma Elementary School. Families who have had children and grandchildren attend Emma Elementary identify as living within the Emma Community, and they feel a great amount of pride around their relationship to the school and community. Based on this input the decision was made to use the school map boundaries to define the geographic limits of the Emma Community. This map is very close to the Census Tract 14 limits, but does have some differences.



Sources: Buncombe County School District (12-Emma Elementary); US Census Bureau; City of Asheville

THE EMMA COMMUNITY: OUR REALITIES AND HOW THEY ARE CHANGING

COMMUNITY DATA: VOICES HEARD + HOW WE SELECTED SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Our community research team surveyed 192 community members, with a focus on residents of mobile home parks. We selected this focus for our research in both 2018 and 2020 for several reasons. Homeowners who own the mobile home that they live in, but not the land on which their mobile home sits, are at particular risk for displacement if the landowner decides to sell. Additionally, mobile homes are often mistakenly perceived as temporary, disposable, undignified housing; this myth increases the

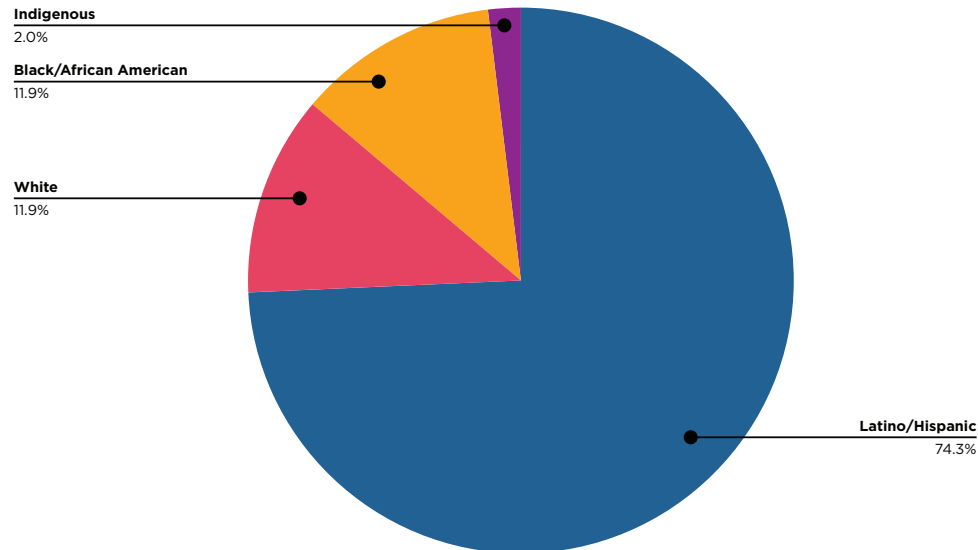
threat of displacement. As part of our community-led development values and framework, we center the voices of those most directly impacted.

We were also intentional to ensure representation of Latino and Black community members in our survey responses. The race and ethnicity of survey respondents resembles student enrollment more so than overall neighborhood demographics. Though white households make up a majority of Emma, student enrollment in Emma Elementary is predominantly composed of students of color, with roughly half of all enrolled students being Hispanic.¹

This community data therefore provides important insight into the lives of the families raising their children in the local public school district, of which nearly 100% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and one in three are eligible by “direct certification”², which means that the student belongs to a household that participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPPIR), or (in some states) Medicaid—as well as children who are migrant, homeless, in foster care, or enrolled in Head Start.

¹ Buncombe County School District Student Enrollment by Race (2019). See appendix for enrollment statistics.
² Buncombe County School District (2019)

Race and Racial Identity of Survey Respondents



Source: Emma Community Survey (2020-2021)

“EMMA IS A TREASURE.”

In many cases, residents surveyed were driven from their previous homes and came to Emma in search of a better life for them and their families, charting a new future of their own.

They came to Emma to be close to family and for the sense of community.

They also chose Emma for many of the same reasons anyone chooses a place to live: close to work, good schools, and a safer environment.

Residents surveyed expressed their love for Emma because of the strong sense of community, trust, and unity among neighbors; because the community comes together to make its voice heard; because they nurture and celebrate their rich cultures and traditions; and for the beauty and peace of the natural environment.

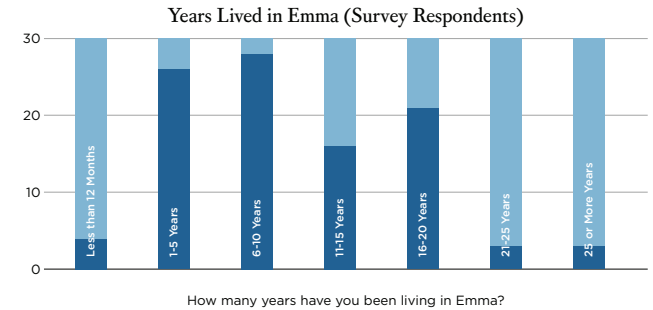
Other things that help the community thrive are the schools, local businesses, central location, and affordability. “I love the spirit of community” was echoed in countless interviews and surveys.

Forty percent of residents surveyed have lived in Emma for more than 10 years. And the majority have lived in Emma for six or more years.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

The majority of families surveyed are making their living from lower-wage jobs such as hospitality, domestic service, and public service.

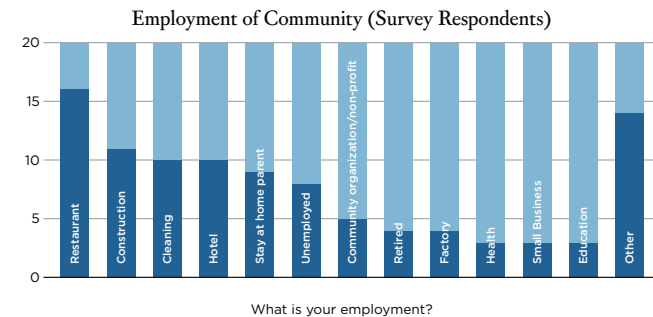
Residents cited a number of economic challenges, including cost of housing and maintenance, making basic ends meet, and access to affordable healthcare.



Source: Emma Community Survey (2020-2021)



Photo: Wild and Bright Photography



Source: Emma Community Survey (2020-2021)

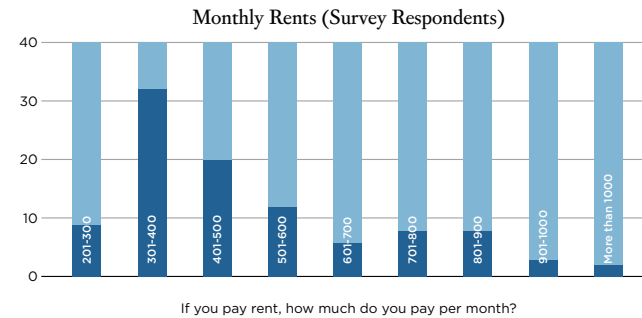
HOUSING

80% of community members surveyed live in mobile homes, with only 10% living in apartments, 8% living in houses, and 2% housing unstable or homeless.

Emma's more affordable housing make it possible for our community's most essential workers - domestic service workers, hospitality workers, construction workers, healthcare workers, and public servants – to live and raise their families in Emma.

The low rental cost for many is related to owning the mobile home and renting the lot where it is located. 64% responded that their rent, including lot rents, had increased in the last 5 years.

Of those who responded, 71% reported that their housing was in good condition, with 36% reporting need of some repair and 5% reporting serious health and safety concerns regarding the condition of their housing.



Source: Emma Community Survey (2020-2021)

COMMUNITY FOCUS SESSION

Our planning process included a focus session with Emma residents that are concerned with the rising cost of housing.

Of the 24 participants, roughly half live in 2 bedroom homes, with the other half living in 3 bedroom homes. The monthly rents reported ranged from \$320 to \$1,300 per month, with the average monthly rent of \$510 per month. Many participants reported low rents due to paying lot rents in mobile home parks where they own their own unit. Even though this model of home ownership and rental of land is a factor in vulnerability to displacement, it allows for affordable housing, which is critical in a low income community.

The focus group studied the Area Median Income (AMI) for Asheville and Buncombe County as compared to the Emma neighborhood, and reflected on the differences in "affordability" based on the comparison.

Population	30% AMI	50% AMI	80% AMI
Buncombe County	\$19,360	\$32,266	\$51,626
Black and Latino households in Buncombe County	\$10,543	\$17,572	\$28,116
Emma (census tract data)	\$10,761	\$17,936	\$28,697

*data from American Community Survey

Affordable housing often focuses on 80% AMI, which if the definition of affordable is calculated at no more than a third of income, would be approximately \$1,290 per month. This is nearly 40% more than what the focus group participants reported paying as average rent.

Based on a calculation of Emma Neighborhood AMI, which is comparable to the AMI for Black and Latino households in Buncombe County, affordability would be considered to be \$720 per month. PODER Emma has adopted this definition as affordable for our work in the the financing and development of permanently affordable housing cooperatives.

The result of this focus session was a realization that AMI is not a helpful tool when measuring affordability in low-income neighborhoods and communities whose AMI is drastically different from the surrounding area. "[To pay rents that high for families like ours would mean]... living paycheck to paycheck with only being able to pay rent and bills, not being able to provide more to our kids... We need affordable housing to be able to provide a little more to our kids than just working all the time." "We need access to housing that is related to our income. I don't understand who sees themselves as included in the 80% AMI calculations, that is not me and my family."

VALUE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORKS

84% of community members expressed that they have more than one neighbor who they trust. The networks and bonds among neighbors act as support systems. They keep each other safe, cultivate respect and trust, and break down isolation – keeping people informed despite language barriers. They also nurture culture and traditions.

"We are always here to help each other."

These support networks are vital for residents confronting numerous challenges including: racism and discrimination, legal status and access to drivers licenses, language barriers, lack of political power, and fear of deportation or eviction. These challenges negatively impact health and well-being and cause higher cases of stress, anxiety and depression.

This is why community support networks, community assets and trusting community relationships are so key to stability and wellbeing in communities like the Emma community, who face so many structural barriers and community based solutions are so vital. These community-based solutions are destroyed when displacement occurs and community systems and relationships are uprooted, which is why displacement and gentrification are so devastating. This conclusion became extremely clear throughout the Emma Neighborhood Planning process, and we worked to create a framework to understand gentrification, its stages, and the tools and strategies that can be effective to address the impacts.

“SOMETIMES PEOPLE DON’T UNDERSTAND OUR WAY OF LIFE, AND WE EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM.” “[WE ARE AFRAID] THAT WE WILL BE REMOVED FROM OUR COMMUNITY, EITHER THROUGH DEPORTATION OR EVICTION.”

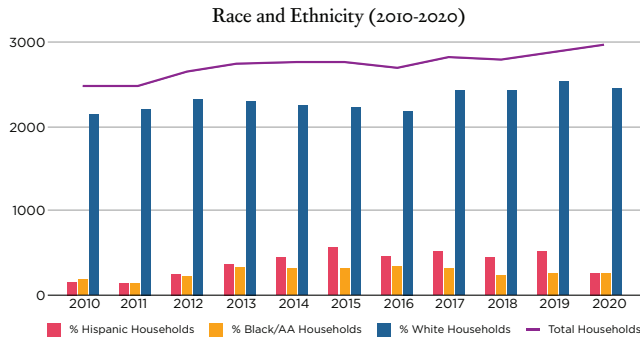
Our planning process included a focus session with Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County and Buncombe County Schools, due to the importance of the school as a community asset and institution, and to their work with our target survey population. A theme that emerged was the impact of housing instability, displacement and homelessness on students' academic success, families, and the work of educators. "I see the impacts on attendance and academics and success...So common as an Emma teacher for kids to come in distracted, stressed, or miss days, often due to housing situations or other trauma and stress. They are aware of the burden their families face." "We don't want to see more students transient and without housing stability."

Another theme that emerged from the focus session with Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County, and Buncombe County Schools was the tremendous community assets that exist in Emma. Educators and administrators noted that "the community is faced with many challenges, but people rally around one another and are there for each other. This is a tremendous asset... This is a community that cares about its place and is working to secure its future."

Educators also spoke to the benefit of the school system working in a community that values it as a vital community resource, as our survey responses showed. "We [as a school system] are recognized in the neighborhood... There is a real connection between the kids, families and the school. The school is a valuable and central community resource." To maintain this connection between children, families and schools, it is mutually important to the schools and families to prevent displacement.

INSTITUTIONAL DATA

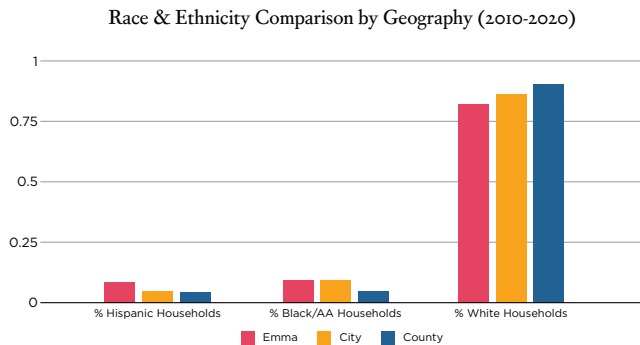
We also compiled a great deal of data that had been collected about our community by outside sources, such as the census, which we consider institutional data. It is important for our community to have access to the information that is compiled about our neighborhood as a factor in our creation of strategies and solutions. Please note that the term Hispanic is used by the Census, and appears as such in the institutional data in this plan, and is not reflective of a language choice of PODER Emma or our community.



Source: US Census American Community Survey

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Emma neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse. Race and ethnicity of Emma households is comparable to race and ethnicity of households throughout the City and County - except for Hispanic Households, which make up a much greater percentage of Emma households (approx. 18% versus 5% and 4% respectively).

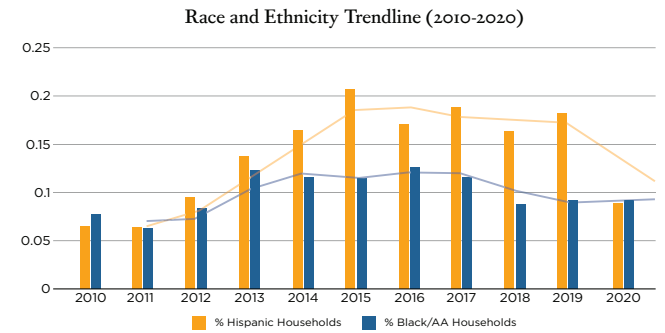


Source: US Census American Community Survey



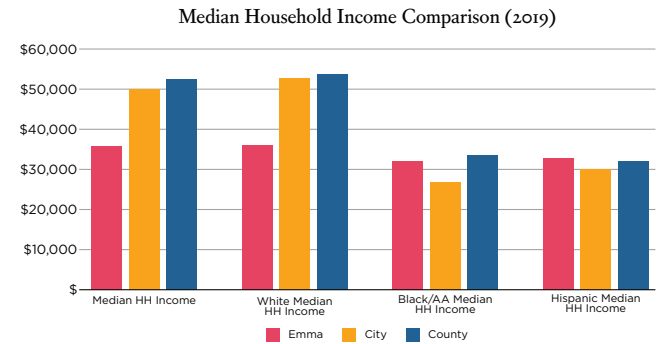
Photo: Wild and Bright Photography

Emma has experienced steady growth in the last 10 years across all racial and ethnic categories. Recent years indicate that the percentage of growth from Black and Hispanic households may be declining.



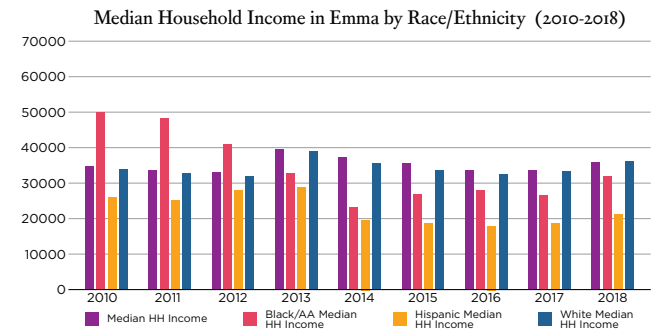
Source: US Census American Community Survey

The overall median household income in Emma is lower than the City and County median income. When broken down by race and ethnicity, the median income for Black and Hispanic households is comparable to the City and County; whereas the median income for White households is roughly \$15k lower than median income for White households in the City and County.



Source: US Census American Community Survey

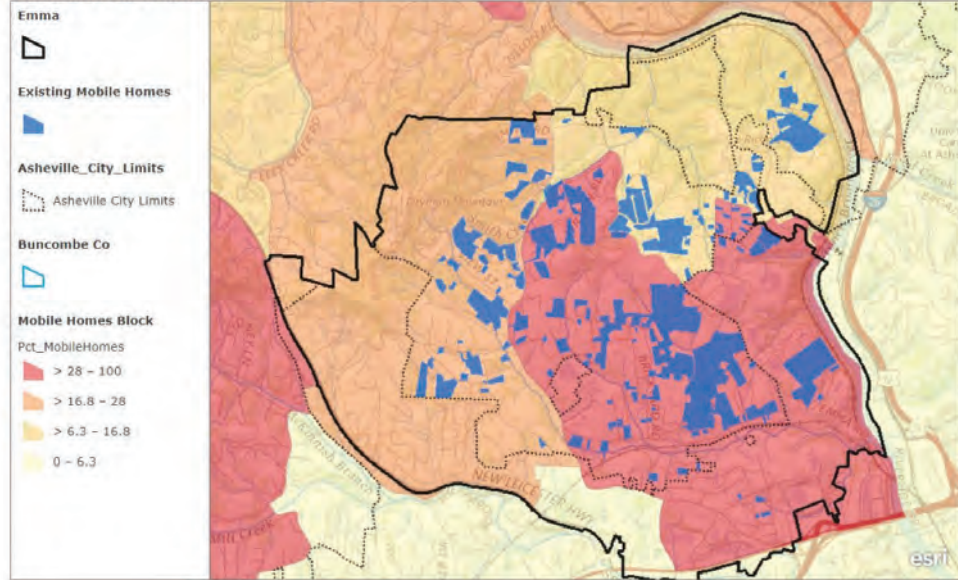
There has been negligible change in household income in Emma since 2013. The distribution of incomes across race and ethnicity has remained steady. Hispanic households report the lowest household incomes.



Source: US Census American Community Survey

HOUSING

MountainTrue-Emma

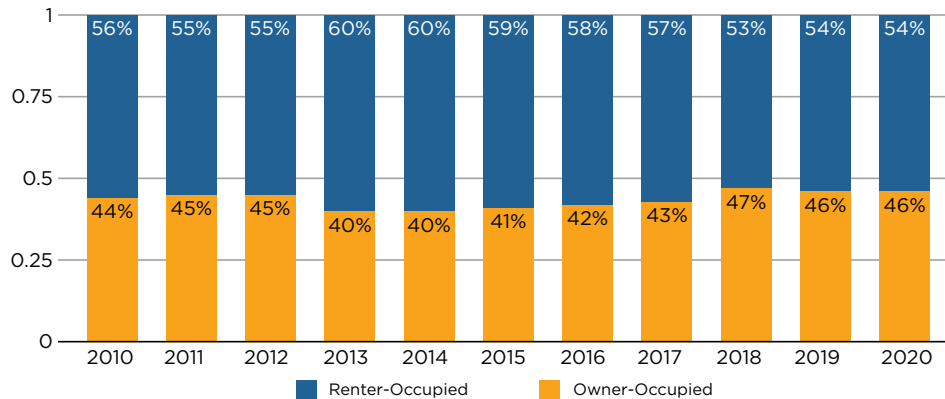


Sources: MountainTrue Environmental Justice Mapping Tool, Buncombe County, City of Asheville

About half of Emma households are occupied by renters and one-third of Emma households are mobile homes.

The high percent of mobile homes is what creates such a significant inventory of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing in Emma. Although, as the ownership of mobile home parks has significantly transitioned from locally and family owned to ownership by national investment companies, the affordability of mobile home parks is at great risk.

Homeowner/Renter (Tenure) of Emma Residents (2010-2020)



Source: US Census American Community Survey

Since 2010, median rents in Emma have increased by 15% and home values by 57%. The median income of homeowners has increased along with home values, but the median income of tenants has remained stagnant against increasing rents. As a result, 73% of tenants are housing cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their household income on rent alone.¹

The rise in rents and number of cost-burdened households disproportionately impacts Hispanic households, who are more likely to rent versus own.

The vast majority of white households are owner-occupied, a trend that remains stable.

Recent trends show that the amount of Black households, renter-occupied and owner-occupied, could be on the decline.

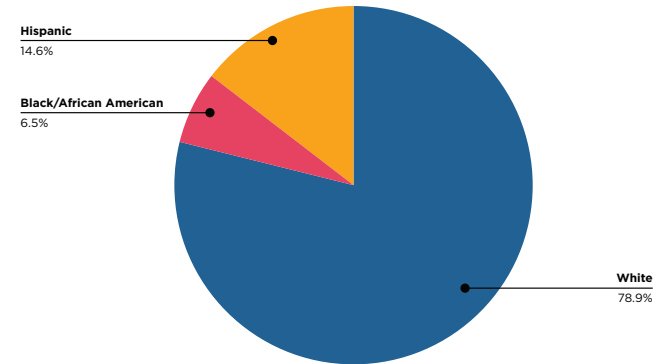
Since 2005, increases in property values have led to a significant decline in homes affordable to low-to-moderate income families.

The average value of mobile home communities has increased at a far greater rate than that of other kinds of residential parcels. The average total value of parcels classified as mobile home communities with more than 3 units has increased over 7-fold since 2005.²

This significant spike in property values of mobile home communities poses a direct threat to the truly affordable communities that many of Emma residents call home.

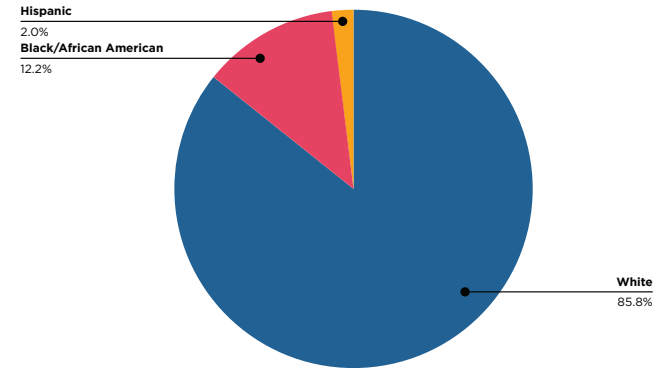
¹ Citation: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, Census Tract 14, 2010-2020. See appendix for related data tables.
² Citation: Buncombe County, Real Estate Tax Appraisal History years 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017. See appendix for full Emma Property Value Analysis.

Race and Ethnicity of Renter-Occupied (2020)



Source: US Census American Community Survey

Race and Ethnicity of Owner-Occupied (2020)



Source: US Census American Community Survey

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORKS

Through the planning process we worked to create three frameworks:

- ▶ **COMMUNITY LED ANTI-DISPLACEMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORK** (pg. 17)
- ▶ **STAGES OF GENTRIFICATION FRAMEWORK** (pg. 18)
- ▶ **NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY FRAMEWORK** (pg. 20)

We created these frameworks for several reasons.

- **COMPLEXITY OF ISSUES.** We set out to find solutions to problems that communities are struggling with nationwide. It is overwhelming to try to find solutions amidst such complexity, and frameworks are a tool to boil down to basic concepts and ideas.
- **POWERFUL PERSPECTIVE.** Our approach to development challenges many myths, stereotypes, and dominant narratives. We have heard numerous times that there is “nothing that can be done about gentrification,” or that “it’s just impossible to get community engagement.” We were determined to find structured ways to break down those narratives and find a powerful way to reapproach the conversation.
- **SHARING OUR LEARNINGS.** We believe that clear frameworks and processes provide powerful tools for sharing learning with other communities that are trying to resolve similarly challenging issues.

COMMUNITY LED ANTI- DISPLACEMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

CORE BELIEFS:

The existing residents of communities most vulnerable to displacement are the best equipped to guide – and participate in – investment in their communities toward equitable growth.

Community groups can be valuable resources to local government agencies and organizations in the development of innovative policy and funding solutions to address a community’s greatest challenges; especially when they have full access to “insider” knowledge of the local political, legal, and economic context.

Easier is not always better. The most challenging pathways may be the most worthwhile. The decision for which paths to pursue should rest with the community, made with a thorough understanding of the obstacles associated with each.

A successful policy agenda must be rooted not only in the community’s stated priorities, but also developed in awareness of and in response to the realities of the local context in which the policies would need to be adopted and implemented.

PLANNING TEAM MEMBERS

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES: Leaders appointed and trusted by their community that provide direction based on results of community dialogue and shared decision-making processes.

POLICY ADVISOR: Professional in planning or related field that provides insights into the practical implications of different policy tools and solutions (administration and implementation).

LEGAL ADVISOR: Practicing attorney in the respective state and related policy field to provide information regarding existing legal landscape and legal feasibility.

PROCESS

CREATE A COMMUNITY DEFINITION OF A SUCCESSFUL ANTI-DISPLACEMENT AND EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY AGENDA. What are the primary objectives of the community? What would be the outcome of an effective anti-displacement and equitable development policy agenda? Example: Mobile home parks would have the necessary protections to be able to remain mobile home parks.

COMPILE A POLICY TOOLKIT. Research what other cities and communities have done or have proposed. Assemble an inventory of existing policy tools and best practices with relevant resources and case studies.

ALIGN AND PRIORITIZE. Identify which community objectives each tool addresses and how. If there are objectives that are not addressed by any existing tools, add placeholders for new solutions. Set aside tools that do not directly address community objectives or mark them as non-priority.

CHART PATHWAYS. Beginning with priority policy tools, articulate the key steps to achieve success, noting all known obstacles (legal, political, financial, etc.) and possible alternatives (e.g. incentivize versus require). Make sure to specify the policy realm (i.e. city, county, state, national, etc.) and other relevant legislation (e.g. state legislation prohibiting local rent control). Generate ideas for new policy solutions where there are placeholders.

DEVELOP POLICY AGENDA. Share the completed toolkit (including pathways) with community members and guide a community decision-making process to develop a policy agenda with policies grouped by potential collaborating entities. Flag policies that will require lobbying efforts on the state or national level and identify potential coalition partners. Policy change does not happen overnight. Instead, it begins here with community members identifying issues, offering solutions, and advocating for changes that will improve their quality of life

GENTRIFICATION FRAMEWORK

Gentrification occurs when a neighborhood that has been historically denied investment turns into an attractive area for new investment and development. This can change the culture of the community, as new residents with a higher income move into the area, and businesses start catering to the new residents. As a neighborhood's popularity grows, so too does outside investment. This investment leads to increases in property values in the neighborhood, and results in the neighborhood becoming less and less affordable for residents and business owners that have been there for generations. Without necessary protections and supports in place, these residents and businesses are eventually pushed out. This displacement disrupts the lives and livelihoods of longtime residents, fractures community support systems, and destroys the social and cultural fabric of the place left behind.

The intervention often offered to combat gentrification is the inclusion of new affordable housing as part of a larger development proposal for the neighborhood. This strategy, though important and necessary to ensure that newcomers to the community can find affordable housing, does not respond to the needs of existing residents and does not help to prevent displacement. We created the Gentrification and Intervention Framework Matrix to help determine the most appropriate anti-displacement interventions based on the specific stage of change a community is experiencing. PODER Emma used this framework to determine the policies and programs outlined in this neighborhood plan.

Although the stages that we mapped out (Pre, Early, Accelerated and Advanced) reflect the process that we have seen in our community, they may play out differently depending on context in different places, and the strategies may not necessarily be linear. The intervention strategies are helpful to analyze when it may be necessary to pivot in the approach to preventing, stopping, or slowing down gentrification. We do not mean that a community like ours, in the accelerated or even advanced phase, is too late to engage in asset building and preservation strategies. We believe that all of the strategies can be important tools in communities that are actively experiencing gentrification. Instead, we share this framework because in hindsight we wish we would have begun our work of community-led development earlier, when we were in pre-stage. We hope that this tool may be helpful for other communities.

Our assessment is that during the 2018 Neighborhood Planning process the Emma Community was in the early phase of gentrification. In contrast, by 2022 at time of print of this second Neighborhood Plan, the Emma Community is now in the accelerated phase, and the plan and its strategies look to keep it from moving into the advanced phase. We created a Neighborhood Stability Index and Framework to make that possible.

GENTRIFICATION INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK MATRIX

STAGE	INDICATORS	POTENTIAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES
PRE	The neighborhood is mostly low income, and often residents have been in the neighborhood for generations. Housing and commercial rents are attainable for low income families. There is not a lot of interest in outside investment, public or private.	COMMUNITY ASSET BUILDING Legacy residents are effectively able to purchase housing and commercial properties to ensure community ownership. Pilot strategies that have long lasting intergenerational impacts and prevent the neighborhood from shifting into the stages of gentrification, including community economic development, home ownership opportunities, development of housing cooperatives and community land trusts.
EARLY	The neighborhood has a diversity of incomes. Affordable residential and commercial rents and homeownership is attainable for low- and middle-income households. Land/property is viewed as "good investment."	PRESERVATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS Build upon seeded strategies, systematize learnings and successes to accelerate the community's ability to build upon success. Increased access to financial capital is key at this stage.
ACCELERATED	Land values and residential/commercial rents are rising at a rapid pace. The median income shifts upward as more affluent residents move in and lower-income residents leave.	MITIGATION Consider strategies that reduce/offset burden on legacy residents as the context around them is changing.
ADVANCED	Residential and commercial rents/sale prices are unattainable for low- and moderate-income households; and cost-prohibitive for start-ups and small businesses.	RESTITUTION AND REPAIR Implement strategies that address the harm done and the impact on legacy residents who have left the neighborhood, as well as the few that remain, and encourage people's right to return.

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY INDEX AND FRAMEWORK

The Emma Community has a deep understanding that change is part of individual, family, and community life. Our own community has gone through many changes and transformations. We are committed to actively engaging to create the positive changes that our community seeks. PODER Emma worked to create a Neighborhood Stabilization Framework to measure our community's resilience and ability to withstand change without seeing displacement of legacy residents. As our neighborhood is approached by partnering institutions, such as the NCDOT, Buncombe County, and the City of Asheville, as well as private developers and investors, with recommendations for infrastructure improvements (including sidewalks, access to city water and sewer service, greenways, new housing, and more), we have struggled to articulate at what point our community would be able to embrace these improvements without anticipating the negative impact of displacement.

PODER Emma drew inspiration from the field of climate resilience¹ to create this framework, as well as collaborated with City of Asheville Planning and Urban Design and Buncombe County Planning and Development staff, to create the index. Just as communities can become more resilient and prepared for climate crises, we propose that the same is true for neighborhoods facing gentrification pressures.

THE FRAMEWORK

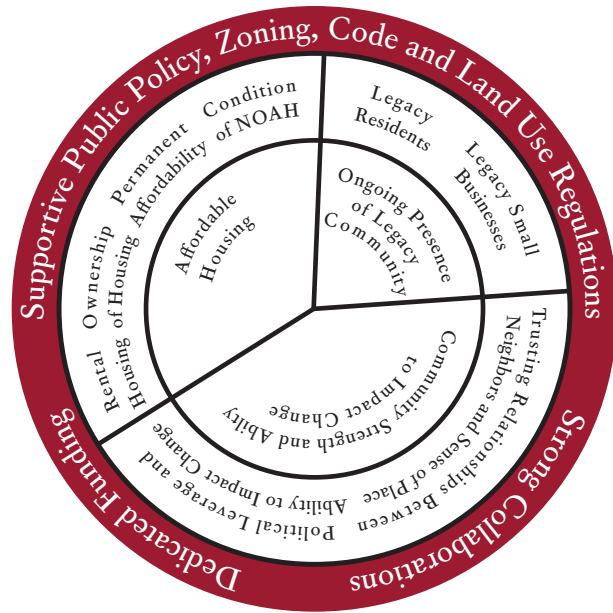
There are several key supports that are critical to stabilization, and must be present in all of the neighborhood's priorities. These include:

- Dedicated funding
- Supportive public policy, land use regulations, etc.
- Strong collaborations

In order for Emma to be able to welcome infrastructure improvements and development changes there are three areas that must be stabilized.

1. Availability and permanence of Affordable Housing. This includes specific goals around rental housing, ownership, permanent protections, and housing conditions.
2. Ongoing presence of Legacy residents and small businesses
3. Community strength and ability to impact change.

THE INDEX



KEY AREAS OF STABILIZATION	SUB-AREAS	INDICATORS
Availability and Permanence of Affordable Housing	Rental Housing Affordability and Availability	Average mobile home lot rent
		Percent of cost burdened tenants
		Total number of mobile home parks
		Total number of mobile homes
		Mobile homes as total percent of housing inventory
	Home Ownership Patterns	Percent of mobile home parks with local ownership
		Percent of housing inventory used for short term rentals
		Demographic and socioeconomic homeowners data, including home owner zipcodes
	Permanent Affordability	Number of mobile home parks and total number of units with permanent affordability protection, including deed restrictions, right of first offer protection, or via land trusts and limited equity housing cooperatives
		Total number of units of total housing inventory with affordability set to expire
Conditions of NOAH	Number of households participating in home repair programs	
	Community data on self reported housing conditions	
Permanence of Legacy Residents and Small Businesses	Presence of Legacy Residents	Demographic and socioeconomic changes in neighborhood residents
		Average length of time residents have lived in the neighborhood
	Presence of Legacy Small Businesses	Demographic and socioeconomic changes in business ownership
		Average price per square foot of rental commercial space
		Number of commercial units with permanent affordability protection via cooperatives, land trusts, nonprofit ownership, etc.
		Number of community events and participants
Community Strength and Ability to Impact Change	Trusting relationships between neighbors and sense of place	Level of trust and sense of place via community surveys / self reporting
		Participation in local government initiatives, committees, etc.
	Political leverage and ability to impact change	Changes to policy, zoning, land use regulations, codes, etc. in alignment with community plan

¹ https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/downloadable_resources/UR/City-Resilience-Framework.pdf

FUTURE VISION FOR EMMA:

COMMUNITY VOICES, VISION, PRIORITIES, AND KEY ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS

Based on the aggregated community data from our focus sessions and surveys, the planning team created a vision for our neighborhood. The vision shows what is possible once gentrification is no longer a threat and housing and the permanence of legacy residents has been stabilized.

Emma's residents, children and grandchildren will remain in our community for generations to come, and we will continue to be a racially and linguistically diverse community. We will live free from free of displacement whether due to redevelopment, eviction, deportation or racial discrimination. Our community will have affordable, dignified, and quality housing. We will gather safely with our neighbors and families in neighborhood spaces, get around the community safely, be able to access affordable health services, and benefit from community focused educational programs for all ages



Photo: Wild and Bright Photography

that reflect our diversity of languages and cultures. We will care for our natural surroundings and continue to engage in gardening, agriculture, and stewardship of the natural world.

We presented the aggregated data and vision back to the residents through a traveling data mural and story, and community members shared their reflections.

“I SEE MY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY REFLECTED IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN. IF WE DO NOT WORK TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY OUR CHALLENGES WILL ONLY INCREASE. BUT IF WE COME TOGETHER, WE CAN REALIZE THE FRUITS OF OUR WORK AND MAKE OUR VISION COME TRUE.”



CITY / COUNTY STRATEGIES

The Emma neighborhood is unique as it has a foot in both Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. To achieve the vision laid out in this plan, the Emma community will require the partnership of both governing bodies, and that support must be coordinated between the two.

Both County and City staff have contributed in part to this plan, and we are encouraged by their continuing involvement as we seek to implement the strategies identified by the community. The County and City can demonstrate that support through dedicated funding of neighborhood initiatives and supportive public policy.

This plan illustrates both the threats and opportunities that the Emma Community will tackle over the next ten years. This plan will only be successful with increased community civic engagement and responsiveness of local government.

While this plan lays out numerous recommendations, the sequencing of policies is as important as the recommendations themselves. Above all, housing stability must be achieved and existing naturally occurring affordable housing must be permanently protected before the community can welcome new development and improvements. In the face of such housing instability, such improvements would only accelerate displacement.

The completion of this community plan coincides with two recent comprehensive planning initiatives led by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County. Asheville completed their most recent comprehensive plan in 2018, while Buncombe County is developing their comprehensive plan at the time of this writing. Both comprehensive plans present an opportunity to align city and county goals with those of the Emma Community.



EMMA NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the application of our frameworks and with the guidance of the priorities expressed by the community through the surveys and focus sessions, we worked to create the following recommendations to achieve neighborhood stability and prevent reaching the advanced phase of gentrification.

	DESCRIPTION	GENTRIFICATION INTERVENTION			
		ASSET BUILDING	PRESERVATION	MITIGATION	RESTITUTION & REPAIR
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	Pro- Mobile Home Zoning and Code				
	Prioritize and protect Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)				
	Opportunity to Purchase				
	Community Benefits Tools				
	Short-Term Rental Restrictions				
	Anti-Displacement Resolution				
	Just Housing Easement				
	Neighborhood AMI				
COMMUNITY BASED STRATEGIES	Physical Asset Mapping and Acquisition Planning				
	Emma Neighborhood Council				
	Community Relationship and Trust Building + Access to Recreational Spaces				
	Emma Community Forum				

PRO-MOBILE HOME ZONING AND CODE

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Preservation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Mobile homes provide one of the few naturally occurring affordable housing options in today's challenging housing market. Mobile homes can offer not only affordable rentals, but also affordable homeownership opportunities.

Local zoning policy typically offers few if any protections for mobile homes, and in some cases prohibit this type of housing altogether. Supportive zoning and code can help increase opportunities for new mobile homes and mobile home parks, as well as offer protections for existing mobile home communities.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Review current zoning and code to identify opportunities to be more supportive of mobile homes and mobile home parks.
2. Recommend against zoning changes that would reduce the number of properties zoned to permit manufactured and mobile homes.
3. Allow for manufactured housing and mobile home communities by-right in more base zoning districts.
4. Create a zoning district strictly for mobile home communities that prohibits other types of residential development. Any attempts to introduce new types of residential development would require conditional zoning approval.

PRIORITIZE AND PROTECT NOAH INVENTORY

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Asset Building Preservation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) refers to residential properties that are affordable but not subsidized. Nationally, NOAH units are the most common affordable housing and are also at greatest risk of being lost. This loss is caused by market speculation and upgrades that result in lost affordability, as well as by underinvested properties failing to be adequately maintained and becoming uninhabitable. (Source: NOAH Impact Fund). In many communities, for every new affordable housing unit created, two more are lost. (Source: CMHHS.)

Protecting NOAH inventory is more cost effective than building new housing, and the creation of funding and programs to make possible the acquisition and preservation of NOAH prevents displacement by helping residents remain in their current homes.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Develop a data-driven strategy to identify NOAH units and document yearly net loss or gain of NOAH inventory
2. Create dedicated funding for critical home repair of NOAH; with particular funding streams for NOAH that is permanently protected through deed covenants, right of first refusal agreements, ownership via land trusts and housing cooperatives, or non-profits
3. Implement Land Use Incentive Grants (LUIG). LUIG is a tool that local governments can use to incentivize affordable housing. The City of Asheville's LUIG program currently provides property owners with a variety of options to meet affordability guidelines and qualify for funds. This tool could be adapted by the City and County to prioritize actions that preserve NOAH and prevent displacement including (1) Permanently affordability protection through deed covenants, (2) Avenues to cooperative ownership including opportunity to Purchase agreements, Right of First Refusal and/or Offer, (3) Rezoning to a zoning district that only allows for mobile home communities, and (4) Ownership via land trusts and housing cooperatives, or non-profit forms of permanently affordable housing.

OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Asset Building Preservation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Opportunity to Purchase policies and practices are focused on addressing the vulnerable nature of mobile home park residents, particularly residents that own their mobile homes and rent the lots where they live. These policies and practices may focus on ensuring tenants advance notice that the landlord is planning to sell their land, as well as the implementation of Right of First Offer and/or Refusal Agreements to create the opportunity for purchase of the land by a qualified nonprofit, land trust or housing cooperative in the event that the owner chooses to sell their property. (Source: [All-In Cities Policy Toolkit](#)).

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Explore local opportunities to require or incentivize a policy that requires advance notice to tenants of a property owner's intent to sell their mobile home park
2. Expand on existing incentives (such as LUIG) for property owners to sign right of first offer and/or refusal to tenants and/or nonprofit organizations, land trusts, or housing cooperatives.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS TOOLS

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Mitigation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Community Benefits tools are mechanisms by which community coalitions can negotiate directly with developers for social and economic benefits most important to local residents in exchange for community support of the project. Local government can incentivize developers to provide community benefits.

Community Benefits can address a range of community priorities including affordable housing, local and targeted hiring, living wage requirements, community use of space, and more. Community Benefits tools can provide communities with a level of certainty that traditional planning processes cannot provide. (Source: [All-In Cities Policy Toolkit](#))

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Creation of Community Benefits tools that protect affordable housing and prevent displacement
2. Create incentives for developers to establish Community Benefits with communities at high risk for gentrification and displacement
3. Establish a communications radius of 0.25 miles around legacy neighborhoods' boundaries. This would require communicating directly with neighborhood associations when private developers inquire at the City and County about properties within the neighborhood boundary and communications radius. City/County give developers a copy of the summary of the neighborhood plan and require a meeting with the neighborhood to proceed.
4. Support structures and processes that increase community capacity to assess impact, identify mitigation strategies, and increase leverage and oversight in areas at high risk for gentrification and displacement

SHORT-TERM RENTAL RESTRICTIONS

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Preservation Mitigation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Short-term rentals (STRs) generate a substantial profit for the owners. Left unchecked, proliferation of STRs in a community can erode the housing stock of residential areas, exacerbate housing shortages, and push housing prices higher. Placing restrictions on STRs can help preserve housing stock for residents and also create a new funding stream through application/renewal fees and fines.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Define Short Term Rental as a Land Use. Local zoning ordinances commonly define land uses and set restrictions on those uses. Although local governments have limited tools in regulating STRs, the local authority to consider STRs as a type of land use permissible in certain zoning districts has been affirmed. If not appropriate for all unincorporated areas, prioritize protections for communities at high risk for gentrification and displacement.
2. Dedicate funds generated through STR permitting and enforcement to NOAH preservation and property tax assistance programs.

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT RESOLUTION

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County	Preservation	Ongoing presence of Legacy Community

DESCRIPTION

A resolution is a formal expression of opinion, will, or intent voted on by local government. Though less binding than an ordinance, resolutions are often used to establish a task force or to support a policy plan or set of recommendations. Resolutions can function to establish a set of priorities and create opportunities for accountability.

An Anti-Displacement Resolution should be considered as a first step for jurisdictions to demonstrate their commitment to curbing and preventing displacement and outline an action plan for how they will fulfill their commitment.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Develop a city-county joint Anti-Displacement Resolution
2. Dedicate staffing and funding to support implementation of actions included in the resolution

JUST HOUSING EASEMENT

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County, Local/regional non-profit partners	Preservation	Affordable Housing

DESCRIPTION

Just Housing is affordable, inclusive, permanent, sustainable, and democratically controlled by the community. A Just Housing Easement is an easement that restricts a piece of property to maintain these attributes, much like how a conservation easement limits development of natural ecosystems. Once established, a land bank, nonprofit or community land trust would step in during the sale of property with a Just Housing Easement to ensure that restrictions in the easement are upheld. The concept of a “Just Housing Easement” is new, however the model is worth exploring for its permanence and potential to improve upon deed restrictions by offering income and property tax deductions. The idea for this concept was inspired by [Community Enterprise Law: Legal Structure Models for Economically Sustainable Housing](#) and the [Just Housing Index in Homes for All: Communities Over Commodities Report](#).

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Identify an organization to manage enforcement of Permanently Affordable Housing easements, develop legal agreements, provide outreach and education for property owners about Housing Easements and related benefits.
2. Create formal incentives and advocate for property owners to set aside land for Housing easements.

NEIGHBORHOOD AMI

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville Buncombe County, Local/regional non-profit partners	Mitigation	Ongoing presence of Legacy Community

DESCRIPTION

Criteria for affordable housing is usually set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is based on the Area Median Income (AMI), which can skew to higher income levels in areas with significant income inequality. For example, in 2021 the AMI for the Buncombe County was \$64,532, and for the Emma Community was only \$35,871. Furthermore, in areas experiencing significant growth primarily from wealthier new residents, fair market rents can shift higher even as the earnings of lower income households remain the same. If neighborhood-specific AMI is not factored into affordable housing strategies deployed in those neighborhoods, the result is effectively subsidized gentrification, where incentives for affordable housing attract residents of higher income brackets and do not provide the relief or access to lower income existing residents. The creation of neighborhood-based AMI would allow for more equitable solutions to affordable housing.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Calculate a Neighborhood Median Income (NMI) and generate corresponding NMI-specific tables for affordability guidelines.
2. Adapt current and future policies that incentivize affordable housing to prioritize units that meet affordability criteria based on the Neighborhood Median Income (NMI).

PHYSICAL ASSET MAPPING AND ACQUISITION PLANNING

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
Values aligned consultant	Asset Building Preservation	Community Strength & Ability to Impact Change

DESCRIPTION

A community-led process to identify and map the places, businesses, and other economic, social, and cultural assets of the Emma community that provide critical services, support community building, and are critical for the vision of the future of the community.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Design and carry out a Participatory Action Research process to identify Community Assets and accompanying strategies for permanent preservation.
2. Work with property owners of identified properties to ensure that they have access to all existing preservation programs.
3. Create acquisition, development and preservation strategies for physical assets.

EMMA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
Local Neighborhood Associations	Asset Building	Community Strength & Ability to Impact Change

DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Associations are common structures that allow residents to work together. The Emma Community currently has a Neighborhood Council that was formed as a result of the 2018 Neighborhood Plan, however this Plan proposes considerable growth and formalization of the Council to be able to effectively implement this Plan, as well as monitor and analyze the outcomes.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Seek mentorship and peer learning from established neighborhood associations in our area, particularly neighborhoods that are facing similar patterns of gentrification and displacement.
2. Establish the policies, practices and systems necessary to formalize the Emma Neighborhood Council

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP AND TRUST BUILDING + ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL SPACES

Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
Emma Residents Neighborhood Businesses Buncombe County Schools	Asset Building	Community Strength & Ability to Impact Change

DESCRIPTION

Historically the Emma neighborhood has engaged in activities for neighbors to support each other, come together as a community, and create relationships and trust. We will work to continue this tradition, while also seeking ways to create access to increased recreational and educational opportunities, as this was identified as a significant community priority.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Create an Emma Community Newsletter
2. Organize community events, including yard sales, celebrations, and other activities
3. Continue to collaborate with Buncombe County Schools to envision ways that BCS and the community can partner around academic achievement, trusting relationships, and strategies to meet the basic needs of students and families.
4. Pursue funding and opportunities to develop additional community recreational spaces and programming.
5. Work with existing property owners to advocate for “pocket” recreational spaces so that each resident has access within walking distance.

EMMA COMMUNITY FORUM

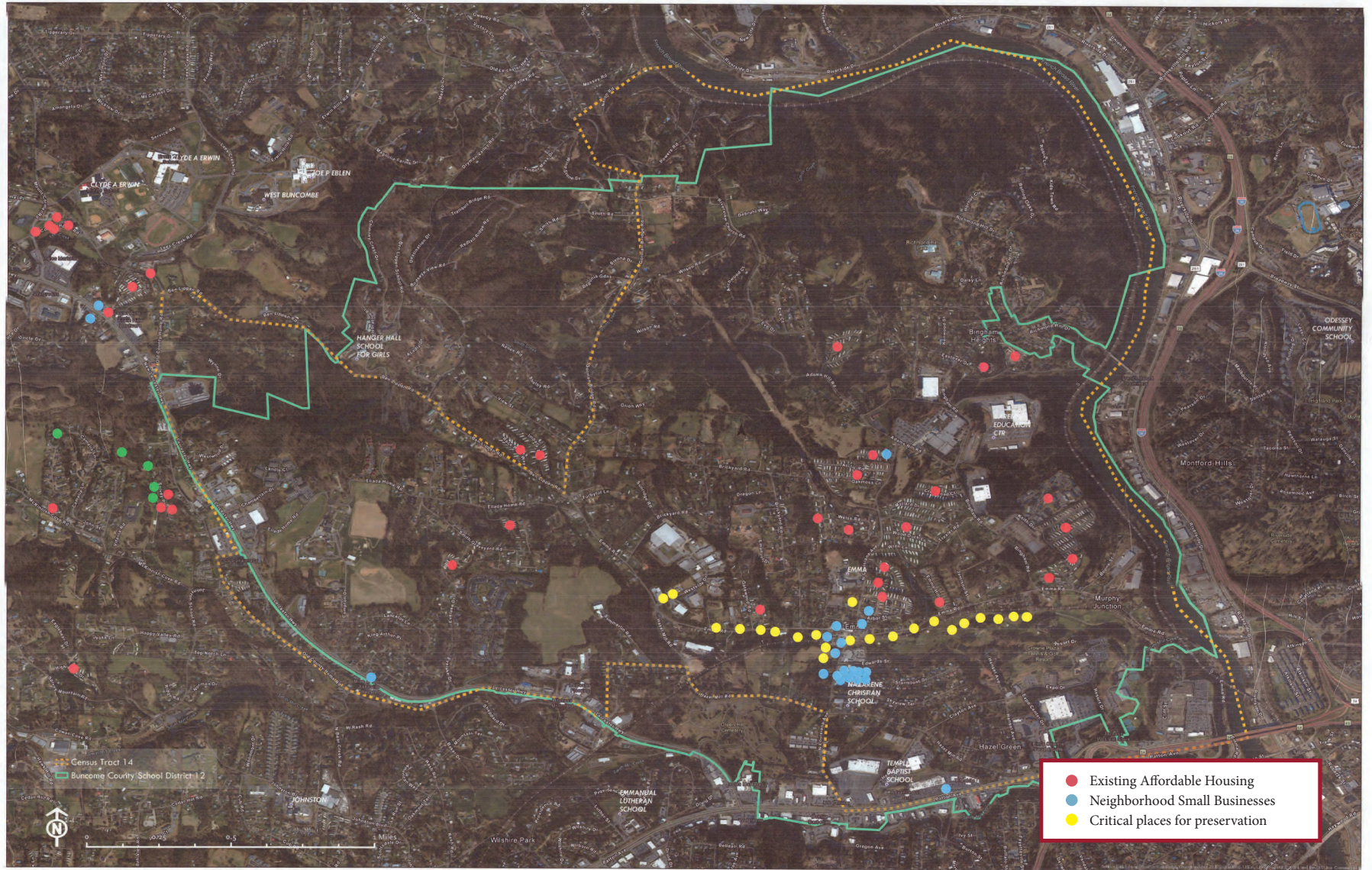
Partners	Gentrification Intervention Strategy	Neighborhood Stability Indicator
City of Asheville, staff and elected officials, Buncombe County, staff and elected officials	Preservation Mitigation Restitution & Repair	Community Strength & Ability to Impact Change

DESCRIPTION

It is important for our community to have regular dialogue with decision makers, including City and County Staff, Committee and Board members, and elected officials. PODER Emma will organize regular forums for our neighborhood to engage with decision makers to make sure that our voices and perspectives are heard and inform decisions that will impact our community for generations to come. Other constituents in our city and county do not face the same barriers that our neighborhood faces, including historical exclusion from civic processes, language barriers, and generational mistrust. Community-organized forums can work to overcome these barriers and bring our community fully into civic processes.

LOCAL ACTIONS

1. Identify partners within the City of Asheville and Buncombe County to co-create the Emma Community Forum
2. Organize the first Emma Community Forum



EMMA COMMUNITY PLAN 2023