



County-Wide Manufactured Homes Action Plan

Orange County, North Carolina

Jointly Developed by the Manufactured Home Staff Working Group of the Towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Hillsborough and Orange County

Introduction

The Manufactured Homes Strategy Action Plan is designed to provide a plan to address the redevelopment threats facing manufactured home communities in Orange County. The Plan is a collaborative effort between the Towns of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, and Orange County that outlines specific objectives, strategies, action steps, partners and resource needs to address the redevelopment threat facing manufactured home communities. Successful implementation of the action plan will:

1. Preserve manufactured home communities.
2. Minimize resident displacement due to redevelopment.
3. Create a Relocation Assistance Package to provide meaningful relocation assistance options for residents facing displacement.

Housing and Community staff from the local governments will be playing a leading role in implementing the strategies and action steps listed in the plan, while also collaborating with many Town and County departments and community partners.

This plan recognizes manufactured housing is an important source of naturally occurring affordable housing serving diverse populations, including vulnerable community members. It uses resident engagement as the foundation for the strategies proposed.

Guiding Principles

1. Use engagement findings as the foundation for strategy selection and implementation.
2. Include a variety of strategies to fully address the different issues. There is no silver bullet.
3. Manufactured housing is an important source of naturally occurring affordable housing serving diverse populations, including vulnerable community members.
4. The Plan is a living document and open to input and change.

The Challenge

Several manufactured home communities in the county are under threat of redevelopment and resident displacement. Many homes are also in need of repair and rehab assistance. There are unique challenges faced by manufactured home residents, most of whom own the homes they live in but not the land it sits on. This plan provides a framework and strategies to address these challenges while considering the limited authority and resources of local governments and community partners.

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Background

For many years, there has been interest in addressing the vulnerability of residents living in manufactured home communities in Orange County. In 2016-2017, the County, Towns, and local housing partners formed a manufactured homes work group to begin to discuss and evaluate opportunities and obstacles to addressing the needs of manufactured home community residents. This work group created an inventory of MHCs and a survey to inform any strategies developed. You can find a copy of the inventory and survey results as attachments to this action plan.

Resident engagement has been the foundation for strategies that have been developed by partners to address the needs of the MHCs and continues to be with this Action Plan. Resident engagement has included in person meetings, focus groups, and surveys to understand the housing needs and preferences of manufactured home residents in the county.

There are many things we have learned from resident engagement and the inventory of MHCs. There are 100 manufactured home communities in Orange County housing over 2,000 households. According to the 2017 Orange County Mobile Home Park Survey, there is a 10% vacancy rate in the parks, with many parks having no vacancy at all.

Many of the homes need repairs or renovations. About half of manufactured homes need minor repairs and about 28% need major repairs, with only a small percentage, 3.2%, economically infeasible to repair. Most residents are of low-income, making it difficult to fund needed repairs.

We also know many of the MHCs are under threat to be redeveloped, in particular the MHCs closer to town centers where market demand is high. The research and engagement show there are many challenges for manufactured home residents finding new housing if displacement were to occur. Few vacancies exist in MHCs in Orange County, most households own their homes, are low income, and do not have many options for finding affordable housing that meets the needs of their family. The human and financial costs to implement a relocation package are significant and will vary depending on the MHC and severity of displacement.

Key Terms

- **Strategic Objective:** The longer-term, wider change needed.
- **Strategy:** The planned actions that will help achieve the strategic objective.
- **Action Step:** The benefit expected to occur.
- **Partners:** Town departments, community organizations, and institutions that will assist with strategy implementation.
- **Resources:** The goods and/or services needed. The figures provided in this document are preliminary estimates and subject to change as we implement the Action Plan.

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- **Manufactured Home:** Factory-built housing, constructed on or after June 15, 1976 and subject to construction standards established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- **Mobile Home:** Built prior to June 15, 1976, most, but not all, adhere to American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards.
- **Manufactured Home Community (MHC):** Though laws often refer to “mobile home parks”, the term “manufactured home community” is a common industry term. We use it in this Plan to reduce stigma and set aside the idea that mobility is a key feature of the housing, recognize that houses are homes to the individuals who live in them, and these purpose-built places are communities of people.

To find a list of partner agencies, see page 10

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Strategic Objective 1: Preserve manufactured home communities.

	Strategy	Action Steps	Lead Entity and Potential Partners	Resources
1a ★	Support efforts to create resident-owned communities (ROCs)	- Assist ROC USA and CCE in exploring opportunities to form ROCs - Provide funding assistance for acquisition - Support resident engagement efforts	Lead: County and Towns - ROC USA - Carolina Common Enterprise - MHC Owners - MHC Residents - Nonprofit Providers	\$\$\$\$ 
1b ★	Pursue acquisition opportunities of manufactured home communities	- Explore opportunities to preserve MHPs through acquisition - Use available funding sources for acquisition	Lead: County and Towns - MHC Owners - Nonprofit Providers	\$\$\$\$ 
1c ★	Explore land use policies that support manufactured home communities	- Conduct study of effective land use policies to support preservation - Consult with policy experts to determine policy recommendations	Lead: Towns - Consultants - UNC School of Government - Planning Departments	\$ 
1d	Work with manufactured homeowners to improve park quality	- Engage MHP owners in need of infrastructure improvements - Provide infrastructure improvement loans to improve quality of MHPs - Implement the County's land banking program	Lead: County - MHC Owners - MHC Residents	\$\$ 
1e	Rehab and repair homes in MHPs	- Coordinate with the OC Preservation Coalition to facilitate the completion of home repairs - Explore aligning rehab programs and policies between jurisdictions to increase homes repaired	Lead: Partners - OC Home Preservation Coalition - MHC Residents	\$\$ 
1f	Create an early warning system to identify MHPs at highest risk of redevelopment	Identify key indicators to include in early warning system	Lead: Towns - GIS and Planning Departments - MHC Owners	\$ 

\$\$\$ * indicates \$1 million or more

★ = policy or funding decision required by elected body

\$ = level of financial resources needed collectively

 = level of staff resources needed collectively

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Strategic Objective 2: Minimize resident displacement due to redevelopment.

	Strategy	Action Steps	Partners	Resources
2a ★	Pursue on-site and off-site home construction as part of redevelopment	Work with developer applicants to explore relocation options within or outside of a proposed redevelopment	Lead: County and Towns Developers	\$ - \$\$\$\$ 2 people
2b ★	Explore land use and regulatory policies that can be applied to redevelopment of MHPs	- Conduct study of effective land use policies to minimize displacement - Consult with policy experts to determine policy recommendations	Lead: County and Towns - Consultants - UNC School of Government - Planning Departments	\$ 2 people
2c ★	Implement master planning processes to proactively create development plans that minimize displacement	- Explore sites that would be good candidates for master planning - Engage stakeholders to gauge master planning interest	Lead: County and Towns - MHC Owners - Planning Departments - Consultants	\$ 3 people

★ = policy or funding decision required by elected body

\$ = level of financial resources needed collectively

2 people = level of staff resources needed collectively

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Strategic Objective 3: Create a Relocation Assistance Package* to provide meaningful relocation assistance options for residents facing displacement.

	Strategy	Action Steps	Partners	Resources
3a	Proactive engagement to connect MH residents with resources	- Establish partnership with nonprofit providers to structure program - Provide funding to create a sustainable program	Lead: County and Towns Nonprofit providers	\$ 
3b ★	Use publicly owned land to create relocation opportunities	- Explore the use of publicly owned land to develop affordable housing as an indirect site for relocation - Explore publicly owned land for creation of new MHCs	Lead: County and Towns - Engineering and design consultants - Affordable housing developers - MHC owners and experts	\$\$\$ 
3c	Provide housing search assistance	Provide one-on-one housing location assistance	Lead: Partners - Nonprofit providers - OCPEH	\$\$ 
3d	Identify manufactured home communities with open lots	- Engage MHP owners to determine sites with vacancies - Create MHP vacancy database	Lead: County and Towns - MHC owners - OC Housing Helpline - Nonprofit providers	\$ 
3e ★	Provide financial assistance to relocate homes	Determine funding needed to relocate homes	Lead: Partners - Developers - MHC owners and experts - Nonprofit providers	\$\$ 
3f ★	Provide financial assistance for residents to secure new housing	- Determine type of assistance needed - EHA - Rental Assistance (security/utility deposits, rent) - Down payment assistance	Lead: Partners - Developers - MHC owners and experts - Nonprofit providers	\$\$ 

*A Relocation Assistance Package would include some combination of the strategies included above.

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Dedicated Resources:

Affordable Housing Land Banking (Orange County Capital Investment Plan)

The land banking fund was established during the FY2015-16 budget process to enable acquisition of manufactured home parks and other property for future affordable housing development. The fund has approximately \$1 million currently available.

Displacement Mitigation Assistance Program (Orange County)

The Displacement Mitigation Assistance Program (D-MAP) provides direct assistance to low- and- moderate-income manufactured housing residents facing displacement caused by manufactured home park closure, redevelopment or natural disaster. EmPOWERment, Inc. works with Orange County to coordinate relocation services for D-MAP. Currently, the D-MAP-budget has approximately \$53,000 available.

Potential Resources:

Carrboro

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

The goal of the Affordable Housing Special Revenue Fund is to advance the Town's goal of increasing and improving the stock of affordable housing within Carrboro and its planning jurisdiction. Special Revenue Funds may be used for land banking, construction, acquisition, pre-development costs, repair, rehabilitation, and other home preservation activities. The Town Council has approved a penny and a half property tax allocation, approximately \$337,500, which is a dedicated annual revenue source for affordable housing. For more information on the Affordable Housing Special Revenue Fund, visit the [Town's website](#).

Chapel Hill

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND (AHF)

In 2002, the Town Council established the AHF to preserve owner-occupied housing in Chapel Hill for affordable housing purposes.

Eligible Uses: The AHF has a variety of eligible uses, including:

1. Preservation of owner-occupied housing

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2. Land acquisition
3. Renovation
4. Affordable housing construction
5. Rental and utility assistance

For more information on the Affordable Housing Fund, visit the [Town's website](#).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT RESERVE (AHDR)

In fiscal year 2014-15, the Town Council allocated over \$688,000 for affordable housing and approved an allocation strategy for this funding, establishing an Affordable Housing Development Reserve (AHDR).

Eligible Uses: The AHDR is dedicated exclusively to the development and preservation of affordable housing. Priority project areas are:

1. Land bank and land acquisition
2. Rental subsidy and development
3. Homeownership development and assistance
4. Future development planning.

For more information on the Affordable Housing Development Reserve, visit the [Town's website](#).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

The CDBG Program was created by the U.S. Congress in 1974 and is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The primary objective of the program is to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income peoples.

Eligible Uses: [CDBG eligible activities](#) include, but are not limited to:

1. Acquisition of Real Property
2. Relocation and Demolition
3. Rehabilitation
4. Public Facilities and Improvements, and Public Services.

For more information about the CDBG program, visit the [Federal CDBG website](#) and the [Town website](#).

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Urgent Repair Program

Orange County administers the Urgent Repair Program (URP) to finance emergency and critical repairs and accessibility modifications for low-income homeowners. Up to 20% of the total housing units repaired or modified may be manufactured housing units that are owned and occupied by eligible homeowners on rented lots. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency awarded Orange County \$100,000 in program funds and the County committed \$40,000 in local funds for the 2021 program cycle. Funds for the 2020 cycle have all been expended.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program is the largest federal block grant program dedicated to increasing the availability of affordable housing for low-income households. HOME provides flexible financing to states and localities (called “participating jurisdictions”) to use for affordable housing activities that fall into four main categories: rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing; assistance to homebuyers; acquisition, rehabilitation or construction of rental housing; and tenant-based rental assistance. HOME funds may be used to purchase and/or rehabilitate manufactured homes, provided that the owner is low-income and owns the land beneath the manufactured home. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded Orange County about \$379,000 in HOME for 2021. In addition, the Towns and the County collectively contribute local matching funds to the program, in an amount equal to 25% of HOME funds to be used for affordable housing activities.

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Eligible Funding Sources Overview:

	Strategy	Orange County				Chapel Hill				Carrboro
		CIP	Displacement Mitigation	Urgent Repair	HOME	AHF	AHDR	CDBG	BOND	AHSRF
1a	Support efforts to create resident-owned communities (ROCs)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1b	Pursue acquisition opportunities of manufactured home communities	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1d	Work with manufactured home owners to improve park quality	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1e	Rehab and repair homes in MHPs	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2a	Pursue onsite and off-site home construction as part of redevelopment	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
3b	Use publicly owned land to create relocation opportunities	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
3e	Provide financial assistance to relocate homes	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
3f	Provide financial assistance for residents to secure new housing	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓

Partners: Community Organizations

The MHP Implementation Team will partner with these community organizations to carry out the Action Plan. We anticipate that additional partners will be identified as we implement the Action Plan.

Banks & Lending Institutions: There are several local, statewide, and national banks in Chapel Hill. Several partners include: [BB&T](#), [State Employees Credit Union](#), [Latino Credit Union](#) and more.

Carolina Common Enterprise (CCE): CCE is a nonprofit focusing on co-ops that address unemployment, poverty and other issues struggling small, rural and urban communities face across the Southeast, including manufactured homes. CCE is an affiliate of ROC USA.

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Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS): The local school system. CHCCS has several initiatives related to immigrant and refugees, including the [CHCCS Newcomer Program](#) and the [Social Justice Academy](#) at East Chapel Hill High School.

CHICLE Language Institute: CHICLE offers translation and interpreting services in many languages. They also offer language classes.

Community Home Trust: A local nonprofit organization that strengthens the Chapel Hill community with permanently affordable housing opportunities.

El Centro Hispano: A regional nonprofit organization that works to strengthen the community, build bridges and advocate for equity and inclusion for Hispanics/Latinos in the Triangle Area of North Carolina.

El Pueblo, Inc.: A local nonprofit organization that supports the Latinx community.

EmPOWERment, Inc.: A local nonprofit with work focusing on affordable living options, education, home ownership, community building, and grassroots economic development.

Faith Communities: There are several churches in the Chapel Hill community that serve immigrant and refugee residents. BIC has worked closely and will continue partnering with [St. Thomas More Catholic Church](#), which serves many Latinx residents.

Family Success Alliance (FSA): A collective impact initiative, FSA partners with low-income families to ensure families have the skills and tools needed for their children to feel successful and be successful.

Habitat for Humanity: A national and international nonprofit organization, with an affiliate in Orange County, NC, that helps families in need build and own quality affordable homes.

Legal Aid of North Carolina: A statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity.

Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition (OCAHC): A coalition of individuals and organizations working together to provide housing opportunities for all in Orange County, NC. Members include: CASA, Community Empowerment Fund, Community Home Trust, DHIC, EmPOWERment, Inc., Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service, Justice United, Marian Cheek Jackson Center for Saving and Making History, Self-Help Credit Union, UNC Partnerships in Aging Program, Weaver Community Housing Association, Family Success Alliance, Triangle J Council of Governments, Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, and representatives from the Towns of Carrboro, Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and the Orange County government.

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Orange County Home Preservation Coalition: A collaborative of organizations that provide home repairs and modifications to Orange County residents. The Preservation Coalition seeks to increase communication and collaboration among organizations to decrease burden on clients and service seekers, many of whom are older adults.

Prosperity Now: For over 15 years, Prosperity Now has been the central partner in the work to promote manufactured housing as a safe, stable, and affordable path to home ownership and wealth creation for low-and moderate-income residents

Refugee Community Partnership: (RCP): A local nonprofit, community-driven organization that aims to build unique, holistic, and comprehensive support infrastructure for relocated families.

ROC USA: ROC USA is a nonprofit social venture whose mission is to make quality resident ownership viable nationwide and to expand economic opportunities for homeowners in manufactured home communities.

tilde: A local language justice cooperative, tilde creates a sustainable livelihood for language workers, and advances language justice by providing high-quality interpreting, translation, training, and consulting in the North Carolina Triangle region and beyond.

University of North Carolina School of Government: As the largest university-based local government training, advisory, and research organization in the United States, the School of Government serves more than 12,000 public officials each year.

Partners: Local Government Departments

Many departments will be involved in the implementation of the Action Plan. The departments listed below are expected to be key partners in the Action Plan.

Housing and Community Departments: The Orange County Housing and Community Development, Town of Chapel Hill Housing and Community, Town of Carrboro Housing and Community Services departments, and the Hillsborough Planning and Economic Development division are anticipated to play a primary role in implementing the Action Plan.

Planning Departments: Planning Departments will assist with land use and zoning related matters.

Geographic and Information Systems (GIS): GIS departments will assist in data visualization and mapping.

Partners: State Organizations

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North Carolina Housing Finance Agency: NCHFA's Mission is to create affordable housing opportunities for North Carolinians whose needs are not met by the market.

North Carolina Affordable Housing Coalition: The North Carolina Affordable Housing Coalition has been leading a movement to ensure that every North Carolinian has a home in which to live with dignity and opportunity.