

# **Change in Greenville County Neighborhoods: Challenges and Opportunities**

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## Introduction

In Spring 2017, an interdisciplinary team of researchers at Furman University, in cooperation with the United Way of Greenville County (UWGC), completed a needs and assets assessment of ten neighborhoods in Greenville. In November 2017, staff at United Way expressed an interest in further collaborating with Furman students and faculty to better understand how low-income individuals and families are being affected by the rapid changes happening in the County. A new team of researchers and students formed to execute this “Phase II” project in the spring and summer of 2018. The project set out to address the following questions:

### *Research Questions*

- How are short-term and long-term residents perceiving and adapting to neighborhood change in neighborhoods at various stages of gentrification/displacement? What are their perceptions of in- and out-movement?
- What employment and private sector investment opportunities are presently available in targeted communities?
- How might UWGC and other organizations increase the effectiveness of the private sector to better meet community needs?
- How might UWGC support the development and implementation of policies (transportation, housing, workforce development, etc.) to better meet community needs?

## Methods

The study team conducted 18 focus groups in ten Greenville County census tracts at various stages of gentrification. Eight tracts were selected in a stratified random sample. The four strata in the sample corresponded with the first four categories of the gentrification typology (Not Losing Low Income Households [low income], At Risk of Gentrification [low income], Displacement/Ongoing Gentrification [low income], and Advanced Gentrification [moderate to high income]). Two tracts (40450008 and 450450007) were purposively selected. The study tracts are hereafter referred to by names that correspond to the neighborhoods in which they are located, as follows (Table 1):

**Table 1. Study Tracts, by Gentrification Category and Neighborhood Name**

Tract Number	Category	Neighborhood Name
450450037.07	Not Losing Low-Income Households (Low-Income)	Berea
450450013.02		“Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown” (AFN)
450450030.05	At Risk of Gentrification (Low-Income)	Simpsonville
450450044.00		Arcadia Hills

450450007.00		West Greenville
450450008.00		
450450010.00	Displacement of Low-Income Households/Ongoing Gentrification (Low-Income)	Viola
450450021.04		Brandon
450450004.00	Advanced Gentrification (Moderate to High Income)	Haynie-Sirrine
450450039.04		Travelers Rest

All focus groups took place in Summer 2018. A total of 72 people participated in focus groups. Residents were recruited via e-mails disseminated through community organizations, via messages disseminated through social media (such as posts in neighborhood-specific Facebook groups), and through flyers distributed in businesses and door-to-door in each census tract under study. In order to participate, residents had to be at least 18 years old, live within the census tract or a ¼ mile perimeter of the tract, and have lived in their neighborhood for at least three years. The researchers also conducted 10 community leader interviews, utilizing a purposive sample for recruitment. In total, this study included 82 participants.

The original focus group design screened out participants whose household incomes fell above 208% of the federal poverty line; however, the study team had difficulty recruiting a sufficient number of participants who fell below this threshold. We redesigned the study to recruit participants at all income levels, and asked participants to voluntarily report their income category on a demographic form at the end of the focus group. A total of 31 focus group participants (43%) reported household incomes below 208% of the federal poverty line. An additional 39 participants (54%) reported household incomes above 208% of the poverty line. Data were not available for 2 participants (3%).

Table 2, below, displays focus group and community interview participant information.

**Table 2. Focus Groups by Neighborhood, Date, and Number of Participants**

Focus Group #	Neighborhood	Date	# of Participants
1	West Greenville	7/10/18	4
2	West Greenville	7/11/18	4
3	Berea	7/12/18	4
4	Berea	7/12/18	6
5	Viola	7/16/18	4
6	Viola	7/16/18	4

7	Brandon	7/17/18	8
8	Brandon	7/19/18	4
9	Haynie-Sirrine	7/23/18	2
10	Haynie-Sirrine	7/23/18	4
11	Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown	7/24/18	2
12	Traveler's Rest	7/25/18	5
13	Traveler's Rest	7/25/18	4
14	Arcadia Hills	7/30/18	5
15	Arcadia Hills	7/30/18	3
16	Simpsonville	7/31/18	4
17	Simpsonville	7/31/18	3
18	Berea	8/6/18	2
Community Leader Interviews	Various Communities	Various Dates	10
			<b>Total Participants: 82</b>

This report consists of:

**PART 1:** Summary of central concerns and recommendations in each category

**PART 2:** Detailed theme reports

**PART 3:** Summary of central concerns that emerged in interviews with community leaders

**PART 1:**  
Summary of Central Concerns  
and Recommendations in  
Each Category



## **Not Losing Low Income Households (Low-Income): Berea, Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown**

The study team conducted four focus groups for this category, one across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown (census tract 13.02) and three in Berea (census tract 37.07). Participants in this category are bracing themselves for an uncertain future. They appreciate some of the changes they have noticed in their neighborhoods, such as perceived lower crime rates and decreased blight. They worry, however, about the long-term affordability of their neighborhoods and how changing ethnic demographics will shape their communities. The perceptions and fears related to a growing Hispanic population were particularly salient to participants in this category compared to the other three categories.

### *Affordability*

A major change and concern among these participants is housing affordability. Participants in all groups reported that new development, renovations, and house “flipping” are on the rise, and that they expect much more in the near future. As new houses are built and new people move in, the long-term residents of these neighborhoods fear that they will not be able to afford the costs of living. A Berea resident observed, “[The area is] becoming out of reach for a lot more people than it did before. Berea used to be affordable” (B2). Homeowners in these groups have mixed feelings about their property values increasing; some are excited, but others are nervous about how it will affect property taxes. As one participant put it, “I’m just bracing” for higher taxes (AFN). Others are apprehensive about the increase in property values because they fear people of higher socioeconomic status will come in and take over properties. As a consequence of rising housing costs, some participants said they have had to make changes to their lifestyles, such as cutting out entertainment and working more. Others say they have noticed multiple families living together to “pool their resources.”

Participants believe that renters are disproportionately nonwhite and currently bearing the brunt of neighborhood change. The majority of participants attested to rising neighborhood rents, or certainty that rents will rise in the future. Several shared anecdotes of renters who have been displaced by rent increases. A general consensus among participants is that renters are experiencing more rapid increases in housing costs and, consequently, higher stress than homeowners. In one Berea focus group, participants claimed landlords are part of the problem due to their lack of accountability. Participants perceived that landlords’ poor treatment of renters and lack of care for properties increases stress and contributes to neighborhood blight.

### *Changing Demographics*

Participants perceive more people moving into than out of their neighborhoods. Many observe an increase in young people, especially young families. In Berea, participants discussed the impacts of changing ethnic demographics, particularly an influx of Hispanics. Participants feel the area has been stigmatized by nicknames like “Little Mexico” and “Berea-ito.” Some participants associated Hispanic newcomers with undesirable neighborhood changes, such as more cars in driveways and people not “tak[ing] care” of their properties – though other respondents were quick to identify Hispanic families who are “wonderful neighbors.”



Some participants fear that changing demographics will affect social cohesion in their neighborhoods. These participants trust the neighbors they know, but not those they don't – especially when the neighbor is “a different nationality.” As one participant said, “I have that neighborhood feeling. And if we keep growing, I'm not going to have that safety anymore. I'm not going to have that neighborly feeling” (B2).

#### *Additional Concerns*

In Berea, participants described the negative impact that the loss of the old Berea School has had on their community. They also described the need for more schools in the area and how the negative stigma surrounding Berea schools has led many residents to move their children to different schools.

While participants perceive their neighborhoods to have a multitude of job opportunities in banks, retail and service industries, they believe one has to go outside the neighborhood to find higher-paying jobs.

#### *Recommendations by Focus Group Participants*

Both study areas:

- More speed bumps
- More parks
- More green space

Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown:

- Pedestrian bridge across Pleasantburg Dr. near Publix
- More sidewalks
- Residents want to know what will happen to the old Belk behind McAlister Square

Berea:

- More accountability for landlords
- Greater police presence
- Establishment of Greenville Health System facility in Berea
- Establishment of civic center
- Traffic lights near the current Berea High School
- Formation of a Berea community group to have their voice heard
- More affordable housing
- More support for small business owners and/or more incentives for owners to come into area to create more revenue

#### *Recommendations by Study Team*

- As racial and ethnic demographics change in these neighborhoods, community organizations should help long-term and new residents build relationships and establish trust.
- Develop strategies for holding landlords accountable.
- Introduce interventions like rent control, property tax caps, or rental assistance to dispel some of the financial shock and uncertainty associated with rising housing costs.

## **At Risk of Gentrification (Low-Income):** **Simpsonville, Arcadia Hills, West Greenville**

The study team conducted six focus groups (two in each area) in West Greenville (census tracts 7 and 8), Arcadia Hills (census tract 44), and Simpsonville (census tract 30.05). Community participants in this category testify to already experiencing aspects of gentrification and displacement, and they fear that this is just the beginning. Overall, homeowners seem pleased with their property values rising, but they are worried about their renting neighbors. In addition, participants in this category expressed fear of increases in taxes, decreases in neighborhood trust and a diminished sense of community. A number of participants know of people who have been physically displaced or described an increasing sense of exclusivity in their neighborhood, symbolized by more expensive homes and new cultural amenities. People fear that if nothing is done, their neighborhoods will systematically exclude and push out either themselves or their neighbors.

### *Affordability*

Participants expressed the notion that affordability is relative; the cost of living in these neighborhoods is simultaneously what pushes people out and draws people in. Other places in Greenville might be more expensive, so people moving into the area are moving to these neighborhoods. These people are perceived to be white, middle to upper-class individuals from other parts of Greenville or out-of-state. Participants perceive that investors recognize that Greenville's population is growing quickly, so they are buying up people's homes, renovating them, and selling them for more. There is a perception that values are rising in these neighborhoods, and participants expressed overall satisfaction with these increases. However, they were skeptical of potential increases in taxes. With property values perceived as skyrocketing, participants state that rents are increasing as well. People shared anecdotes of neighbors having to move or adapt to the new costs of living. Those affected are perceived to be majority African American, lower to middle-income individuals. Participants stated that they either have to cut back on spending, get roommates, or move somewhere else, often with other family members.

### *Development*

Participants perceive that newcomers have altered the culture and infrastructure of these neighborhoods, and participants believe that this is just the beginning. The perception is that developers are buying up homes and monopolizing the land; building more homes on smaller lots; driving property values up and the square footage of homes down. Participants have noticed more homes for rent, and that these renters do not stay for long. The perceived influx of people and frequent movement of neighbors has altered the sense of community and neighborhood trust. Participants generally trusted the neighbors that they knew, but they were cautious about new neighbors. Some even mentioned that they do not go out of their way anymore to get to know their neighbors because people move too often. New development has also decreased participants' trust in local government; people expressed the notion that the city of county governments have not looked out for the best interests of these communities' original respondents. Some participants stated that governments have made decisions that benefited

more wealthy people. Different from other categories, these neighborhoods specifically spoke about school zoning as a way they institutions disadvantage people in these neighborhoods by sending these children to schools farther away that do not have as much funding. Residents also spoke about new development of businesses, mostly larger chains, that run local, long-standing mom and pop shops out of business. These larger service industry corporations are the most prevalent employers in these neighborhoods; most people work outside of these neighborhoods, and they commute by car. Participants expressed the desire for more efficient public transportation and access to it.

#### *Recommendations by Focus Group Participants*

All study areas:

- More affordable housing
- Better public transportation
- Direct access to the Swamp Rabbit Trail and camera surveillance on trail
- More public parks, greenspace, and areas for kids
- Better upkeep of the roads, sidewalks, streetlights, and other infrastructures
- Development of better infrastructure to keep up with the levels of development

West Greenville:

- Put polling stations along bus lines
- Easier access to education (both for younger students and college students)
- Change school zoning

Arcadia Hills

- Community swimming pool
- More speed bumps

Simpsonville

- Add stop lights on South Street
- Need a laundromat for lower-income people
- Add shelters at bus stops so people don't have to wait in the sun
- More healthy restaurants
- More sources of entertainment
- Add sidewalks outside of subdivisions

#### *Recommendations by Study Team*

- Advocate for rent control and provide housing subsidies to prevent displacement from continuing in the wake of gentrification
- Provide funding for more community spaces, especially parks for children, to foster community among all neighbors, new and old
- Advocate for development of infrastructure to match that of housing

## **Ongoing Gentrification / Displacement of Low-Income Households** **(Low Income): Viola St., Brandon**

The study team conducted two focus groups in the Viola area (census tract 10) and two in Brandon (census tract 21.04). Participants in these focus groups reported many of the same changes and concerns as those in the two previous categories, but in this category the changes have been more drastic. According to participants, property values and rents have risen remarkably - in some cases doubling - and homeowners are beginning to see higher property taxes. Participants expressed concern about increased traffic and changes to city services, such as trash pickup, which they perceive to be the result of their neighborhoods becoming more populated.

### *Affordability*

In recent years, participants noted that housing has become less affordable for many residents in these study areas. New developments have been seen as increasing housing costs, with some participants reporting that both property values and rent have nearly doubled. Many homeowners have experienced increased property taxes, while others anticipate that they will increase more in the future. The participants concluded that renters are generally more negatively affected by neighborhood change than homeowners.

Participants perceive that developers and residents alike are buying homes at low costs, “flipping” them, and then selling them for a higher price to make a profit. Many residents also described renovating their own homes and have neighbors who have done the same. Based on the participants’ responses, it appears that most people who are moving into these homes are either students, young professionals, young families, or people from out of the state—particularly from the north. Participants believe people are drawn to these areas because of urbanization, Greenville’s image as one of the best places to live, a cheaper cost of living compared to other urban areas, and proximity to downtown. Participants also described some of the reasons why some residents have moved out of the areas in recent years (i.e. job changes, the need for a different-sized home, to make a profit off the high property values).

### *Gentrification and Displacement*

When asked about gentrification, some participants defined it as a decrease in affordability that often displaces those of lower socioeconomic status. Residents have witnessed changes related to gentrification in these areas and expressed mixed feelings about those changes. Some feel pleased by the growth and the perceptions of decreasing crime, while others don’t feel represented by the changes and fear further displacement of residents.

### *Additional Concerns*

Most participants reported feeling a strong sense of trust in their community, although some expressed frustration toward political entities about issues like zoning and lack of code enforcement. Both areas are perceived as silent and peaceful, with traffic being the main source of stress. Participants stated that most people in the area use cars to travel, with few using public transportation because they feel it is not widely accessible. Participants expressed

infrastructure concerns regarding the need for road repairs, road widening, improved water lines, and changes in trash pick-up. Brandon participants in particular described finding it difficult to exercise outside due to a lack of sidewalks and trails. These participants also expressed frustration at the undesirable aspects of their neighborhood such as empty lots, foreclosed homes, and abandoned buildings.

#### *Recommendations by Focus Group Participants*

Viola:

- Better public transportation
- Road repair
- Self-service laundry
- More doctor's offices
- Decrease/halt construction of apartment complexes and condominiums
- Higher police presence

Brandon:

- Create plan for subsidized housing and middle-income housing
- More green space
- More sidewalks and pedestrian/bicycle paths
- Increase transportation options
- Easier access to healthy food options
- More street lights
- Put something in place of the vacant strip mall on Pendleton St.
- More speed bumps
- Build a public library with computer desks
- Fill vacant lots

#### *Recommendations by Study Team*

- Create more affordable housing options to offset the overall increase in rent and property values
- Focus on making opportunities for exercise more widespread in Brandon (i.e. more green space, sidewalks, and bike paths)
- Improve roads (i.e. repairs, widening, speed bumps, more street lights)
- Explore options for infill development in these areas

## **Advanced Gentrification (Moderate to High Income):** **Haynie-Sirrine, Travelers Rest**

The study team conducted four focus groups (two in each area) in Haynie-Sirrine (census tract 4) and Travelers Rest (census tract 39.04). Many participants, particularly in Travelers Rest, spoke favorably of the changes that have come to their communities, though they expressed concern about the changes effects on low-income and minority residents. Though participants reported many changes that correspond with gentrification, and knew of people impacted by rising housing costs. No one in this category described being *personally*, negatively impacted by rising housing costs. The study team believes there could be two reasons for this. First, the census tract covering Travelers Rest comprises a wide geographic area, a substantial portion of which may not be experiencing gentrification and its associated higher costs. Second, only one participant in Haynie-Sirrine reported a household income below 208% of the poverty line (compared to five reporting household incomes above 208% of the poverty line). We believe there may be few low-income residents in Haynie Sirrine precisely *because* the neighborhood is in an advanced state of gentrification. Further research would need to be conducted to elicit a robust picture of the low-income residents who remain in Haynie-Sirrine.

### *Affordability*

Participants in this category reported increased property values and the high cost of new developments. The increasing prices were viewed as particularly detrimental for current renters in the area who may not be able to afford to the stay in the area. Participants reported that renters seem concentrated in single-family housing in Haynie-Sirrine compared to apartments in Travelers Rest. Participants commented on displacement of lower income individuals and African Americans. Haynie-Sirrine participants pointed out the forced evictions of Scott Towers. Some participants knew of residents who moved because of job changes, while others moved because they wanted different housing. Most homeowners talked about their property taxes increasing.

When the term gentrification was introduced, focus group participants in Travelers Rest did not know what the term meant or had never heard of it before, and participants in Haynie-Sirrine described it as resulting in displacement due to unaffordability when more wealthy people moved into an area, changing the face of the community. Participants reported new residents were wealthier, from out-of-state, younger, and majority white. Participants from Haynie-Sirrine remarked about the rapid development in the area and a concern about the quality based on the speed of change. When discussing the lack of renovations of certain Section 8 apartments, some Haynie-Sirrine participants articulated that they believed the city thinks it is too valuable to put affordable housing there.

### *Level of Desirability*

Some participants expressed concerns about displacement, but the general consensus was that “the good outweighs the bad” (TR1). Participants stated that these areas are a desirable place to live. Participants from Haynie-Sirrine reported that the urbanization and convenience of downtown Greenville is a huge draw. The focus group participants from Travelers Rest stated

that the Swamp Rabbit Trail was the catalyst of revitalization for the area, and that people wanted to move there because it was more reasonably priced to live there compared to downtown Greenville. Generally, the participants reported a strong sense of trust in their neighborhoods, but some participants also reported not trusting new neighbors who have recently moved in until they have gotten to know them. Many participants reported feeling safe in their community. Some participants in Haynie-Sirrine described a decrease in crime in recent years, which one participant attributed to the demolition of many empty homes.

Outdoor spaces were a commodity mentioned that added to the appeal of the areas. Residents of Haynie-Sirrine expressed that the area provides opportunities for walking and biking. They note that there are also parks and gyms in close proximity. Participants in Travelers Rest described the Swamp Rabbit Trail as being beneficial for the community's health. They also mentioned the YMCA, parks, and community activities. Some participants reported difficulty accessing emergency services during races and events, when roads are blocked.

#### *Recommendations by Focus Group Participants*

Haynie-Sirrine:

- Develop on vacant properties
- More efforts for affordability housing initiatives like "Homes of Hope"
- "I'd like I guess more engagement from these people that develop properties privately, to have some responsibility to be a part of the neighborhood, and at least engage in some dialogue with us about what their plans are for our neighborhood" (HS1).
- Build more homes
- More parks/trees
- Manage overgrowth on trails/sidewalks

Travelers Rest:

- Road maintenance
- Better street lighting
- Widen some of the narrow, winding roads such as Paris View
- "Get rid of the ditches" (TR1)
- Better parking
- More transportation options (i.e. trolley)
  - Particularly for the elderly or those with disabilities

#### *Recommendations by Study Team*

- Develop strategies for increasing landlord accountability and mitigating increasing rental costs
- Encourage local government to support mixed-use and mixed-income housing
- Support expanding bus transportation
- Provide job training programs to increase access to higher paying jobs

# **PART 2:**

## Detailed Theme Reports



## **Not Losing Low-Income Households (Low-Income): Berea, Across S. Pleasantburg From Nicholtown**

### **Key (Abbreviation for each group):**

Berea (7.12.18- 3PM): **B1**

Berea (7.12.18- 6PM): **B2**

Berea (8.6.18- 6PM): **B3**

Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown (7.24.18- 6PM): **AFN**

### **Affordability**

Affordability is the term used to address neighborhood changes in the cost of living. Most people used this term when discussing a neighborhood no longer being affordable for people already living in the neighborhood, but it is also used when people cannot move into the neighborhood because of costs. People in this category discussed how they fear that their neighborhoods are becoming unaffordable. As new houses are built and new people move in, the original residents of these neighborhoods fear that they will not be able to afford the costs of living.

- **Not Affordable for Current Residents**

“Those houses are being fixed up beautifully, but they’re being priced out of where the original residents of those neighborhoods maybe can’t afford to live in their own neighborhoods anymore” (AFN).

“Poor people want to live better, but if you’re building million dollar homes, I can never afford that... Nothing is affordable anymore” (B2).

- **Exclusivity of New Housing**

“It’s becoming out of reach for a lot more people than it did before. Berea used to be affordable” (B2).

### **Increased Rent**

Increased rent pertains to when people talk about rent prices changing. This term is used when someone’s own rent changes and when people perceive the neighborhood’s overall rent changing. This term is also used when people fear that rent will rise in the near future. The majority of people attested to the neighborhood’s rent already rising or rising in the future. People in this category have noticed slight increases in rent, but they fear that rent will increase at higher rates as new developments increase property values.

- **Perception of Rent**

“It seems like rental prices are really increasing as well” (AFN).

- **Anecdotes**

“There’s seven or eight duplexes and the same guy owns all of them. They were

telling me that when they moved in five years ago it was 575, and now its 975” (B2).

## **Increased Property Value**

Increased property value means a homeowner’s property rises in value according to online property value calculators. This term is used when people both appreciate their home value rising from what it was when they bought their property, and it is used when people are cautious about the increase in value. Many people in this category were excited that their property values were increasing as long as their taxes hadn’t risen too much, but others were apprehensive about the increase in value because they fear people of higher socioeconomic status claiming ownership of the land.

- **Appreciation**

“Our house has doubled in value since we moved here six years ago” (B2).

“Our property values have gone up with the new renovations” (AFN).

- **Caution**

“They weren’t attractive for a while; people wanted the bigger houses out by the subdivisions. Then the in-town neighborhoods sort of got neglected, but now they’re valuable again” (AFN).

## **Property Tax**

Property tax is the term used to identify when and why property taxes increase. It also refers to the belief that property taxes will increase in the near future especially after property values increase. Many people attribute this to the influx of renovations and outsiders moving into neighborhoods. New people moving in are willing to pay higher property taxes, which increase due to heightened property value. People in this category understand that the value of their homes are increasing because of the desirability of their neighborhoods; some have experienced this already, but others are waiting for it to increase.

- **Actual Taxes**

“Property taxes have gone up with value” (B2).

“If people would not go in and sign the contract and build the houses for that amount, they wouldn’t... They would lower the price. The cost of material is not going up that high. It’s the profit margin.... That’s what’s driving the rates up” (B1).

- **Future Taxes**

“I’m just bracing” (AFN).

## **Perception of Renting vs. Owning**

People attribute changes to neighborhoods partly to the ratios of renters to homeowners. People had positive and negative feelings towards renters and owners. This term is used when people talk about the changing demographics of owners and renters. Many people talked about how as older generations move away, families rent out properties to new families moving in.

- **More Rentals**

“I think the neighborhood started to go away and it turned into more of a renter’s community” (B2).

“As the family dies it goes to rental” (B1).

- **Feelings About Rental vs. Ownership**

“I’m worried that the trend is happening where companies are buying up enormous amounts of property to have them as rental properties forever, to price people away from home ownership” (AFN).

## **New Development**

New development refers to buildings and homes built on land that was empty or land that had buildings torn down and rebuilt. People spoke of new development being built for new people moving in that could pay more. New development includes homes, apartment complexes, and businesses. Most people in this category were apprehensive of all the development because it decreases the affordability of the neighborhood. While some people appreciated the decrease in blight, others did not desire the new development. All the neighborhoods testified that new development was increasing, and that they expect much more in the near future.

- “We were told by the realtors that there would probably be development in the area, in the general area. And that this area would be a focus for development in the future. So, six years ago we kind of knew things were going to happen. I don’t know if we realized that they were going to put that many houses in that small period of time” (B2).

“All the apartment buildings they’re putting in” (B2).

## **Flipping Houses**

Flipping houses is when someone takes a house and renovates it just to be sold off again. This can happen when original owners flip their own houses or when new people buy a house a flip it. This often happens in up-and-coming neighborhoods when the property values are beginning to increase. This often happens when developers come in and buy homes and flip them. People in these neighborhoods attested to developers trying to buy up properties; many people had first-hand experience with solicitation. However, flipping was perceived to be a phenomenon that people expect to happen more so in the future.

- **Developers**  
“I started to notice about a year and a half ago... I was starting to get a lot of solicitation letters and postcards from companies. You know, I want to buy your house” (AFN).
- **Perception of Flipping**  
“Everyone wants to be by the worst house in the best neighborhood, and it’s close to the city” (B2).  
  
“Berea is going to be a flipper’s, if you watch HGTV, it’s going to be a flipper’s paradise” (B2).

### **Renovations/Remodeling**

Renovations and remodeling refer to when large companies update and beautify buildings, homes, or apartments. This can also refer to individuals who upgrade their own homes and remain living there. People were generally positive about the renovations; it leads to less blight, and they appreciated the updates to their neighborhoods.

- “I’m glad to notice that some of the homes are now being renovated” (AFN).

### **Landlord**

Landlord is the term used to identify the property owner. People generally spoke of their landlords in a negative light. They perceived landlords as contributing to stress and blight. Participants believed that they have no accountability. All participants that spoke about their landlords argued that they desired accountability for their landlords because they were perceived as not doing their jobs.

- “So I look at all the beautiful homes around me, and then when something falls and it takes him three months to get it off the roof of his property... but he expects me to pay rent every month” (B1).

“If there was more accountability for these rental properties to keep them up, and to keep them like they’re supposed to be” (B1).

### **Adaptation to Increased Housing Costs**

This term refers to how people have adjusted to housing costs. Many people mentioned having to cut back on certain costs to be able to afford housing. Some participants spoke about their own adaptations they have had to make, such as cutting out entertainment from their budget, while others talked about their perceptions of how others have adapted to housing costs increasing.

- “I’ve made a lot of changes because I’m on a fixed income myself” (B1).
- “You’ll get several families come together to pool their resources” (B1).

## **In-movers**

In-movers refers to anyone moving into the neighborhood. This term is used both for who is actually moving in, and for who is perceived to be moving in. Most people said that the majority of people moving in are renters. Most participants in this category spoke of the young population that is moving into their neighborhoods, mostly young families. Others argued that people are moving in from out of state or from other parts of Greenville that have become unaffordable. Still others confessed that they did not know where people were moving in from, but they were curious about the large influx of in-movers.

- **Young Adults**

“Houses are being sold to younger couples” (AFN).

- **Other Parts of Greenville**

“Travelers Rest is coming towards us... We’re caught in the middle between Travelers Rest and downtown” (B2).

“West Greenville and downtown Greenville are pushing the low-income out of there and they have nowhere else to go but Berea” (B3).

- **Out of State**

“They’re coming in from other states” (B1).

- **Uncertainty**

“I wonder where these people are coming from. I mean it’s just, it’s great, but it’s definitely encroaching toward our place” (B2).

“I think that downtown is running out of room. Some of that burden of building is spreading out toward us” (AFN).

## **Out-movers**

Out-movers refers to the people moving out of the neighborhood for any reason. This term refers to occupants that are actually moving out and the perceptions of those people moving out. Most people did not know where people were moving, and they did not think that many people were moving out. Most people moving were due to changes in jobs.

- **Rural**

“People move out to the county where it’s more affordable” (AFN).

- **Places**

- Mauldin
- Gower

## **Blight**

Blight is a term describing perceived and actual dilapidation or undesirable aspects of the neighborhood. People often described empty lots, abandoned buildings, and foreclosed houses as undesirable. People in this category described the high levels of blight in their neighborhoods, and how they desired it to change. Blight was one reason people were not proud of their community.

- “That’s one of our biggest problems is what to do with empty buildings” (B2).

“The worst thing would be for the empty buildings to just sit there; they need to tear it down and repurpose the land” (AFN).

“Berea’s got some pretty places, but they’re run down” (B2).

## **Level of Desirability**

Level of desirability is the term used to identify why people desire or do not desire to move to a neighborhood. The term also refers to aspects of the neighborhood that make it perceived as a good place to live. This level is a spectrum from desirable to undesirable. With so many people moving into these neighborhoods, participants explained that convenience and location in proximity to downtown Greenville, low taxes compared to other states, and the image of Greenville as an up-and-rising city are why more people desire to live in these neighborhoods.

- **Convenience**

“What we do is in close proximity of what we need” (B1).

“I want it because of the location” (AFN).

- **Taxes**

“They’re escaping big taxes and all that stuff” (B1).

- **Image**

“It’s also the general notoriety of Greenville. You look in magazines and you look at AARP, you look at all these magazines. Greenville one of the top ten places to retire to” (B2).

“The Swamp Rabbit Trail will go right down the middle, houses on each side. This attracts people coming from the North Country” (B2).

## **Perception of the Term “Gentrification”**

This refers to how people interpret what gentrification is and their perceptions of it. This includes if they feel positively, negatively, or torn about it. Some people did not know what the term meant or had never heard of it before. Others described it as resulting in displacement due to

unaffordability.

- **Urbanization**

“The city coming to the suburbs” (B2).

- **Leading to Displacement**

“It’s the taking over of certain areas, not like eminent domain, but the same principal. Allowing buildings to be torn down, those condos put up downtown without regard for those people who were there. Where are they going to end up?” (B2).

“They get priced out of their own neighborhood” (AFN).

- **Beautification**

“It’s reclamation of properties that were distressed for a long time, or not seen as desirable. And then, a new demographic comes in and sees something desirable in them... They save the houses” (AFN).

## **Displacement**

Displacement is when someone is pushed out of their neighborhood because they can no longer afford the cost of living or they feel like they are no longer welcome in the community. This term refers to not only the anecdotes of displacement, but also the perceptions, worries, and fears of people being displaced. People most often described displacement as a result of rents rising too high for people living in the neighborhood to afford. People did not say that many people are being displaced, although some people argued that some renters have had to move because of rent increases. However, people in this category worry that people of lower incomes will be priced out and have to move.

- **Anecdotes**

“He was a long-term renter. He was a solid, established member of the community, a good neighbor, but whoever owned his house sold it to one of the flipping companies, and he had a couple of days it seemed like” (AFN).

- **Worries**

“Unless Berea itself puts back into that area, they’re sending growth and they’re sending money, but all they’re going to do is push us out, but where are we going to go?” (B1).

“Where are the poor people going to go? Where are they going to live? You can’t just push them out and say thank goodness we got rid of those people” (B3).

- **Renters**

“If landlords keep raising rent, they can’t afford it anymore and eventually have to

move out” (B2).

“Older folks get priced out of rentals that they’ve lived in for decades. They’re going to not just have to leave their houses, they’re also going to have to leave their support structures” (AFN).

## **Feelings about Neighborhood Change**

Feelings about neighborhood change refers to participants’ perceptions and reactions—both positive and negative—to the changes occurring around their neighborhoods. Most participants experienced mixed feelings regarding neighborhood change in their areas. Many were happy to see that their property values were increasing and that the city’s national profile was rising, but they were also worried about the renters and residents who are unable to afford the increased rent and housing costs. Some participants also felt sad and bitter about the general trend in increased housing prices in the area.

- “I don’t know where these people are supposed to go” who “get priced out of the rentals they’ve lived in for 20 years” (AFN).
- “It’s going to end up happening in the next ten years. We will be like Simpsonville and that’s sad” (B2). (about housing costs going up)

## **Race/Ethnicity**

Participants were asked whether or not they have witnessed neighborhood change affecting certain races or ethnicities more than others. Some argued that it was less a matter of race and more a matter of socioeconomic status. Others recognized that most new homeowners in their neighborhood “tend to be white” (AFN). Many participants who have lived in their neighborhoods for extended periods of time realized that their blocks lack diversity and that most homeowners are white while renters tend to be minorities. Berea residents in particular mentioned an influx of Latinos which has shaped their community.

- “I will say this, there in my block, which is more homeowners, there’s not as much diversity” (AFN).
- “A couple streets over, up until recently was more of a rental street, was more minority. Just by driving through you could tell, you could see the people” (AFN).

## **Trust- Neighbors**

When asked about whether or not neighbors tend to trust one another, participants once again had differing answers. Some felt a strong sense of trust within the neighborhood, with one woman saying, “I would trust my neighbors with anything I have” (B2). Others explained that they trust the neighbors they know, but not those with whom they aren’t familiar. One participant expressed fear that if the neighborhood grows, there will be less trust amongst neighbors.



- “I have that neighborhood feeling. And if we keep growing, I’m not going to have that safety anymore. I’m not going to have that neighborly feeling.” (B2).
- “If something goes wrong, they’re going to call me, or text me... I would trust my neighbors with anything I have.” (B2).

### **Distrust- Neighbors**

Participants described experiencing a sense of distrust of their neighbors when they didn’t know them, with one stating “you don’t trust somebody you don’t know” (B1). This sense of distrust appears to be heightened when the other person is of a different nationality.

- “You don’t trust somebody you don’t know.” “especially if it’s different... they’re a different nationality or whatever” (B1).

### **Distrust- Government**

When asked about trust within the study areas, a few participants expressed frustration and a lack of trust toward the government. There were two quotes from participants in the Berea community that represent a sense of distrust in the local government. However, the majority of participants did not express any distrust toward the government.

- “They wanted to be one of the top ten cities in the United States so they want the crime to be in Berea, even if it’s in the city” (B2).
- “So Berea has gotten a bad reputation that has not only, by radio stations and everybody and word of mouth, county’s not even supporting us” (B3).

### **Stress/Peace**

Stress/peace refers to the general sense of stress, or lack thereof, experienced by members of the community as a result of the changing neighborhoods. A general consensus among participants was that renters tend to be experiencing more stress than homeowners due to changes in rental prices and poor treatment from landlords. Other factors that contribute to stress among participants were increased traffic, people speeding through streets, and long commutes to work.

- “She’s the one that’s worried about keeping a roof over her head and having her needs met” (B1). (a homeowner referring to a renter)

### **Crime/Safety**

Crime refers to examples of crime within the community, while safety describes the general sense of security among residents. Crime rates varied among the study areas, with some sections (i.e. low-income trailer parks) having higher crime rates than others. However, there has been an overall perception of decrease in crime in recent years, in part due to the establishment of neighborhood watch signs and cameras in the area. Most participants still feel

safe walking and biking in the neighborhoods and stated that neighbors tend to watch out for one another.

- “There have been a couple of incidents where people’s cars got broken into. What’s nice is that I know several of my neighbors on Facebook. They send out the alert, be careful, so there’s a good sense of people watching out” (AFN).
- “I feel very safe in my neighborhood. I think it’s got great people in it” (B2).

## **Transportation**

Transportation describes the responses of participants when asked about how residents get from one destination to the next. According to participants, most residents who live in the study areas tend to drive their own cars to work. However, the public bus is also an option for those who don’t have a car or prefer a bus. Participants noted that the bus runs every 30 minutes and has expanded its route to be more accessible to a greater number of residents. Some residents walk to their destinations, although a lack of sidewalks prohibits many from doing so.

- “There’s one of the school teachers that works at Armstrong Elementary, where my granddaughter goes, and she rides the bus because she said it’s cheaper to get on the bus and ride it than to put gas in her car” (B1).
- “Yeah, they have increased the route. And I see a lot of people using it for shopping. Like, if you notice there’s the bus stops next to Walmart on White Horse Road, they’re always full” (B1).
- “Most of the people have cars” (B3).

## **School/School Zoning**

Any mention of schools or school zoning issues within the community was included in this section. Participants in the area across South Pleasantburg from Nicholtown did not have anything to say about schools in their area. In Berea, participants described the negative impact that the loss of the old Berea School has had on their community. They also described the need for more schools in the area and how the negative stigma surrounding Berea schools has led many residents to move their children to different schools.

- “We need more schools in that area... my options for sending him to K-4 in the area, there’s not any” (B2).

## **Health- Physical Activity**

This refers to opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity such as through walking, fitness centers, or senior centers. Most participants feel that their neighborhoods are safe to walk and bicycle in and described the added benefits that come from speaking with neighbors who they pass along the way: “it keeps your mind fresh. It keeps your general health

good” (B2). Senior centers and new fitness centers such as Planet Fitness are also options for exercise. In Berea in particular, participants described the benefits of being in close proximity to Furman University’s campus and the Swamp Rabbit Trail for walking and exercise.

- “Health for me would mean that I know somebody in my community that I could walk with and exercise” (B1).

### **Health- Food**

This section describes the proximity and availability of grocery stores and restaurants in the area. There are some grocery stores in close proximity to the areas of study. The area across South Pleasantburg from Nicholtown has Publix and Fresh Market where residents can buy groceries. Participants noted that Berea does not have many grocery stores; some participants discussed how Kwik Trip is a primary source of food for many residents within the study area. They also mentioned that Aldi, Ingles, Walmart, and BI-LO are all close to the area and are where many people buy their food. Both areas studied had multiple restaurants and fast food options within the vicinity such as Wendy’s, McDonald’s, Jason’s Deli, Kitchen Sync, and Subway.

- “There’s nothing in this area, to eat-wise. This is all housing.” “It’s all residential.” “Nothing except Hardee’s or McDonald’s” (B1).

### **Health- Access to Services**

Access to services refers to the availability of healthcare and treatment within the area. The areas are in close proximity to doctor’s offices. Berea is seen as having multiple dentist offices and a children’s clinic. Senior centers also provide opportunities for older populations to receive healthcare such as through blood pressure testing.

- “I always say any time you get in the car, it’s just a matter of a few more minutes” (B1).

### **Employment in Neighborhood**

This section describes any employment opportunities discussed by participants within the study areas. Both areas have a multitude of opportunities in banks and in the retail and service industries. In the area across South Pleasantburg from Nicholtown, there are some professional jobs available in education at Greenville Technical College.

- “Every business you go to, they’ve got a Help Wanted sign” (B1).

### **Employment outside of Neighborhood**

This section describes employment opportunities outside of the area of study. Several residents work outside their neighborhood in places such as Greer and downtown Greenville. Many of these jobs are higher-paying than those available within the neighborhood.

- “If you have that kind of education and live in this area, you are not working in this area. You are driving to a place that is going to pay you a whole lot more than what you can make here” (B1).

## **Business**

Business refers to any time a participant commented on past or present businesses in the area. Many of the larger businesses in the area have left over time and have been replaced by smaller, “little quicky places” (B1). For example, BI-LO, K-Mart, Winn Dixie, and Hamrick’s have all left the areas to be replaced by thrift stores, storage units, and empty buildings.

- “When you have big, big properties like that, turning into thrift stores, that doesn’t always bode well as to what’s happening in the neighborhood. Especially since that neighborhood, that was a walkable grocery store for a lot of people that live back and behind there. And then, they lost it” (AFN). (“big properties” referring to loss of Bi-Lo)

## **Potential Improvements**

These are the suggestions for future changes provided by participants in each area.

Both study areas-

- More speed bumps
- More parks
- More green space

Across S. Pleasantburg from Nicholtown-

- Pedestrian bridge across Pleasantburg Dr. near Publix
- More sidewalks
- Residents want to know what will happen to the old Belk behind McAlister Square

Berea-

- More accountability for landlords
- Higher police presence
- Establishment of Greenville Health System facility in Berea
- Establishment of civic center
- Traffic lights near Berea High School
- Formation of a Berea community group to have their voice heard
- More affordable housing
- More support for small business owners and/or more incentives for owners to come into area to create more revenue

## **At Risk of Gentrification (Low-Income):** **Simpsonville, Arcadia Hills, West Greenville**

### **Key (Abbreviation for each group):**

West Greenville (7.10.18- 6PM): **WG1**

West Greenville (7.11.18- 6PM): **WG2**

Arcadia Hills (7.30.18- 3PM): **AH1**

Arcadia Hills (7.30.18- 6PM): **AH2**

Simpsonville (7.31.18- 3PM): **S1**

Simpsonville (7.31.18- 6PM): **S2**

### **Affordability**

Affordability is the term used to address neighborhood changes in the cost of living. Most people used this term when discussing a neighborhood no longer being affordable for people already living in the neighborhood, but it is also used when people cannot move into the neighborhood because of costs. People in this category discussed how affordability is relative. Compared to some other places in Greenville or other states, housing is perceived as affordable. However, participants said that housing is becoming unaffordable for people who have lived in Greenville for a long time. People gave stories of people they knew having to move because of housing no longer being affordable. Some participants mentioned the existence of subsidized housing that helped with affordability.

- **Not Affordable for Current Residents**

“I know that in this area it is very hard; there’s not affordable housing. All the housing developments, and all the growth has took over to where people on a fixed income, or people making minimum wage or barely above, they can’t afford a place to live” (S1).

“They done built all those apartments down there and they got all these restaurants down there, but none of those people work down there. The people who work there like in Centerville, Mauldin, Diamond, Piedmont, and most of them don’t even got a car because they don’t make enough money to buy a car... They can’t afford to live up here because they can’t afford those apartments they built up there. Not fair” (WG2).

- **Exclusivity of New Housing**

“Pretty soon it’s going to be too expensive to live in Simpsonville” (S2).

- **Affordable in Comparison**

“I think it’s better than what you can find in a lot of other places in Simpsonville, in Greenville... Less expensive, I guess I should say” (S1).

- **Subsidized Housing**

“I think it’s 40% of the neighborhood actually, so they’re subsidized rental properties for people that are working but don’t quite make enough to pay all their expenses” (AH2).

## **Increased Rent**

Increased rent pertains to when people talk about rent prices changing. This term is used when someone’s own rent changes and when people perceive the neighborhood’s overall rent changing. People attested to their rents and their neighbors’ rents rising at high rates. Some homeowners spoke about how if they were to move into a smaller house or apartment, the rent would be the same price or even higher than what they already pay.

- **Perception of Increase in Rent**

“That’s an ideal place right there, because looking at how things are going up, homes, people coming in, but man, I would have to be making, bringing in at least \$10,000 almost a month in order to accommodate the rent for the land” (S1).

“Rents have skyrocketed” (WG1).

- **More Expensive than Ownership**

“The fact that even if we move to an apartment and we tried to rent, or if we moved anywhere else, it would still cost about the same to live there” (AH1).

## **Increased Property Value**

Increased property value means a homeowner’s property rises in value according to online property value calculators. For most people, they appreciated their home value rising from what it was when they bought their home. Many people in this category were excited that their property values were increasing as long as their taxes hadn’t risen too much. Some people liked their homes rising in value, but acknowledged the harm of it to other people. Others thought their homes should have risen even more than they have.

- **Appreciation**

“Personally, I like that because it makes my property value go up and I’m going to get a better return on the investments that I’ve made here” (S1).

“I’m excited about the changes because my house is more than doubled in price” (AH1).

- **Blames Gentrification**

“When we moved in, we bought our house for \$50,000, and since that time, because of the gentrification, the value of it’s gone way up” (AH2).

- **Desiring Higher Increases**

“I think that the housing should have gone up far more than what it has” (S2).

## **Property Tax**

Property tax is the term used to identify when and why property taxes increase. It also refers to the belief that property taxes will increase in the near future especially after property values increase. Some people in this category said that they had not seen any changes in taxes. Others said that they knew people that have had to move because taxes, in addition to other costs, have increased too much.

- **Anecdotes**

“And then there are some that’s owned, that’s had to sell their place because of the property taxes and the lot space rent and the insurance and all has gone up to where they can’t pay” (S1).

- **Future Taxes**

“I hope this is not the downside, but what is that going to do for our taxes? Property taxes. That’s a bit of a concern” (AH1).

- **No Change**

“I feel like my taxes have been pretty consistent” (S1).

## **Perception of Renting vs. Owning**

People offer their opinions on the differences between renting and owning homes in their neighborhoods. This term is used when people talk about the changing demographics of owners and renters. People discussed the differences in prices between renting and owning. They also spoke about the short-term renters that move in and out because of rent increases.

- **Percentage of Renters**

“Ninety percent of the people where I live own, but they do have rentals” (S1).

“Some of them are rented, but on our street, mostly our street is homeowners, except for the townhomes on the corner” (AH2).

- **Cost Between Renting and Owning**

“Renting is way more. I mean you’ll pay thirteen hundred for something that you buy and pay seven hundred” (S2).

“People who’ve lived in that neighborhood for decades are at risk of losing their homes because they’re renting and the owner of the house can do whatever they want” (AH2).

- **Quick Turnaround**

“The other people, there’s one house it’s been rented at least five times in the three years I’ve been there. They never stay longer than four months” (S2).

## **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure refers to people’s concerns about and anecdotes of changes to structures and services. This includes changes in roads, utilities, easements, trash pick-up, and other infrastructures.

- **Roads**

“I think one of the changes that I’ve seen that I truly, truly hate is on Main Street, how they’ve blocked Main Street and a certain area there with trees, and then made it a one-lane and it really does back up traffic” (S2).

“These streets don’t have speed bumps” (AH1).

- **Sidewalks**

“The new construction here took the sidewalk that we had” (S1).

- **Easements**

“Duke Energy...they’re saying, ‘Okay, well, we can’t draw enough power on this side’... now they come in to say, ‘Well, our, original easement instead of being, I think instead of being 18 feet wide, now it’s up to 45.’ And so they come in and practically cut down half of your yard on that side, where they run this path through. And so they tell you, ‘Well, yeah, that’s your land still,’ but yet, you can’t do that you want to do on it” (S1).

- **Trash Pick-Up**

“I guess it was the city, picking up trash before. Now they’ve outsourced it to Ace, and I think it’s caused a big issue in Simpsonville” (S1).

## **New Development**

New development refers to buildings and homes built on land that was empty or land that had buildings torn down and rebuilt. People spoke of new development being built for new people moving in that could pay more. New development includes homes, apartment complexes, and businesses. Some people in Simpsonville said they saw high increases in development, while those in Arcadia Hills said that renovation was more prevalent. Those in West Greenville have found both happening.

- **Increase in Buildings and Homes**

“And all those housing developments are going up everywhere. I mean, you can go down that way on Georgia Road, anywhere you go, there’s housing developments” (S1).



“There’s so many sets of apartment buildings that done went up in this short amount of time... So who are you actually targeting to move in this area?” (WG1).

“I mean they’re really monopolizing on the land. Really small lots and if you look at the older houses, you see big yards and land around them, and you look at the new ones, they’re like this, just a little land” (S2).

- **No New Development**

“Overall, there’s not been more homes, because they’re just renovating homes... You know we don’t have big apartment buildings or new subdivisions in our area” (AH2).

## **Flipping Houses**

Flipping houses is when someone takes a house and renovates it just to be sold off again. People in this category did not talk about flipping houses. They were more aware of renovations, remodeling, and new development.

## **Renovations/Remodeling**

Renovations and remodeling refer to when large companies update and beautify buildings, homes, or apartments. This can also refer to individuals who upgrade their own homes and remain living there. People in this category spoke about receiving many letters from developers wanting to buy and renovate their homes. They also talked about many of their neighbors renovating their own homes in these neighborhoods.

- **Renovating More Houses**

“I think they’re building more houses in this area... you know tearing down old run down houses and building these big old houses that’s like two or three hundred thousand dollars” (WG1).

“There are houses that have either been torn down and built up from scratch, or people have taken them” (AH1).

“You have to, I guess, update some things and other things like that to make it so people would want to come there instead of buying a new build, you know?” (S2).

- **Corporations Buying Houses to Remodel**

“You see all these little signs, ‘I buy houses, cash’” (WG1).

“That kind of situation is that, you can have somebody come in. I have six things that I have gotten in the mail, ‘We would like to buy your house’” (AH1).

## **Landlord (ONLY IN AH2)**

Landlord is the term used to identify the property owner. People generally spoke of their landlords in a negative light. They perceived landlords as contributing to stress and blight. Participants believed that they have no accountability. People spoke about landlords raising rents.

- “Their landlord wouldn’t improve the house...but when they moved out, he fixed it up, and then raised the rent” (AH2).

## **Adaptation to Increased Housing Costs**

This term refers to how people have adjusted to housing costs. Many people mentioned having to cut back on certain costs to be able to afford housing. Some participants spoke about their own adaptations they have had to make, such as cutting out entertainment from their budget. Some people spoke about splitting prices with roommates. Others said they relied on family or churches for support.

- **Families and Churches**

“I know families right now that do not, that are having to live with parents or, and especially senior citizens” (S1).

“I have a wonderful church family that, if I would need anything... I’m really dependent on those types of things because I don’t have a family” (S1).

- **Cutting Things Out**

“I just make adjustments. I try to look at the whole picture, like is cable worth it? No. Is DirecTV worth it? You have to cut the costs regardless of even if you don’t like it, my rent is going to be what they tell me” (WG1).

“Spending time with family. I guess, like going to the park or something like that up in the mountains or something. We cut into that” (WG1).

- **Roommates**

“I think that for my mom and for my relatives, [housing costs are] conflicting at this point because we don't really know what to do... I think probably one of our best decisions would be to get roommates and to have somebody else rent some of the empty bedrooms...” (AH1).

## **In-movers**

In-movers refers to anyone moving into the neighborhood. This term is used both for occupants who are actually moving in, and for occupants who are perceived to be moving in. People said that people from the north and other parts of Greenville were moving in. They also said that retired people were coming to these neighborhoods. Still others confessed that they did not

know where people were moving in from, but they were curious about the large influx of movers. People perceived white people to be the largest racial group moving in.

- **Retired People**

“A lot of new people from all over. And I think what it is is a lot of the Baby Boomers, or people who were in the north, the cost of living is a lot lower in the south than it is in the north” (S2).

- **Other Parts of Greenville**

“There’s a lot of people moving from Greenville out this way” (S2).

“Local people just moving from another part of Greenville” (AH2).

- **Out of State**

“I’ve met people from all over the place, and I’m trying to figure out how all these people found out about Simpsonville” (S1).

“I mean people from New York are moving here because our prices are so cheap compared to New York” (WG1).

- **White People**

“I guess bringing in a lot of downtown white people, like geared towards people who have lots of money” (WG1).

“White people have moved in... a lot of young, very nice, upwardly progressive young people are moving in” (AH2).

## **Out-movers**

Out-movers refers to the people moving out of the neighborhood for any reason. This term refers to occupants who are actually moving out and the perceptions of those people moving out. Some people did not know where people were moving, but others listed some places they knew people had moved. Some people moving were due to changes in jobs, while others moved because rents were rising and housing was becoming unaffordable.

- **Perceptions of Moving**

“They’ve gone to live with family or, well, I know one got to be, was at the homeless shelter” (S1).

“I know people that, because of their job, they transferred out and moved to another state” (S2).

“Well once they move, I don’t know where they’re going” (WG2).

“African American people moved out and then white people have moved in” (AH2).

- **Places**
  - Neely Farm
  - Atlanta
  - Augusta area
  - Virginia
  - Brookwood
  - Woodside
  - Cotton Hill
  - Piedmont
  - Anderson
  - Bellemeade
  - Augusta
  - Johnson
  - Motel 6
  - The Lodge
  - White Horse Road corridor
  - Taylors
  - Fort Mill
  - Fountain Inn
  - Charlotte
  - Simpsonville
  - Columbia

## **Blight**

Blight is a term describing perceived and actual dilapidation or undesirable aspects of the neighborhood. People often described empty lots, abandoned buildings, and foreclosed houses as undesirable. Not many people described blight in their neighborhood.

- “How time has gone on, things have changed. I think all neighborhoods get a little less shiny” (AH1).

“You keep seeing the empty houses” (AH1).

## **Level of Desirability**

Level of desirability is the term used to identify why people desire or do not desire to move to a neighborhood. The term also refers to aspects of the neighborhood that make it perceived as a good place to live. This level is a spectrum from desirable to undesirable. With so many people moving into these neighborhoods, participants explained that convenience and location in proximity to downtown Greenville, low taxes compared to other states, availability of jobs, and the image of Greenville as an up-and-rising city are why more people desire to live in these

neighborhoods.

- **Convenience**

“People discovered how great it is to live close to town, not have to fight that traffic” (AH2).

- **Taxes**

“Your dollar goes further... I think that’s one of the incentives to make people come to the south” (S2).

“People from New York think it’s a bargain” (WG1).

- **Jobs**

“I think one, because I talked to a girl who moved here from New York, and this is a couple months ago, and I asked her why she moved here and she said jobs, jobs, jobs” (AH1).

- **Image**

“Well, you know, they advertise... I think the Chamber of Commerce, more or less... putting out there you know, saying that we have all of these different areas and everything that want to draw people” (S1).

“I started seeing in magazines and stuff that this is the place to be” (S2).

“All the people who are clamoring to be here because we’re getting all these superlatives on a national level” (WG1).

## **Perception of the Term “Gentrification”**

This refers to how people interpret what gentrification is and their perceptions of it. This includes if they feel positively, negatively, or torn about it. Some people did not know what the term meant or had never heard of it before. Others described it as resulting in displacement due to unaffordability. Still others thought that it was when there were increased demands in housing in an area and increases in prices in housing.

- **For Higher Statuses**

“It’s when you take an existing property and increase the value of it by renovating, by enlarging, by beautifying and thereby increasing the property and making it more expensive and drawing a higher socioeconomic population to the area” (AH2).

“Gentrification, that means that you get out and we coming in... West Greenville wasn’t place that was desirable back in the day but now they want it and they taking it, done took it... White people” (WG2).

- **Leading to Displacement**

“I guess they’re buying people out and moving into a better area, and, you know, the older generation of people that was in that area has to move out or something like that... I don’t think that’s a problem in Simpsonville” (S2).

“They come in and buy those houses, fix those houses up, and then the people that were there are unable to stay there because they can’t afford that and other people move in” (AH1).

- **Demand**

“There is a demand that increases in a certain residential neighborhood whereas before there was no demand. There was no demand or no real demand for living in... When the demand increases, the prices go up. When the prices go up, the owners of the rental homes can get more in rent, so people have to go find another place to live if they can’t pay that rent. If somebody wants to buy in this area, they’re going to have to pay a lot more that they would have six or seven months ago, in Greenville’s case because it’s going up every quarter” (WG1).

## **Displacement**

Displacement is when someone is pushed out of their neighborhood because they can no longer afford the cost of living or they feel like they are no longer welcome in the community. This term refers to not only the anecdotes of displacement, but also the perceptions, worries, and fears of people being displaced. People most often described displacement as a result of rents rising too high for people living in the neighborhood to afford. Many people spoke about people they knew that have had to move because of not being able to afford housing.

- **Anecdotes**

“They all want to stay in town and so we pushed out. All our neighbors, they doing away with them and putting up new things that we can’t afford and that’s the truth of the matter” (WG2).

“Three families have had to move out because they couldn’t, can’t afford the price in there now” (S1).

“They [the government] moved them all out of the city. They told them they would get vouchers if they qualified to come back, but the qualifications were so, they were radically different then, it actually had to do with art” (WG1).

- **Worries**

“Our neighbors who are renting who are worried about their homes being, you know the landlords deciding to you know kick them out” (AH2).

- **Renters**

“People who are renting run the risk of losing their home because they won’t be

able to afford to stay in their home if the landlord decides to renovate and increase the rent” (AH2).

“I hate seeing my neighbors, which I’ve seen, their rent go up so high they had to leave” (WG1).

## **Feelings about Neighborhood Change**

Feelings about neighborhood change refers to participants’ perceptions and reactions—both positive and negative—to the changes occurring around their neighborhoods. Overall, participants were generally pleased with the progress they have seen in their area, citing decreased crime, increased property values, and more access to parks and entertainment. The main worry expressed by participants was that people may not be able to afford their increased rent and thus will be pushed out.

- **Fear of Displacement**

“They’re good and they’re bad. I mean I love that crime has gone down. I mean that’s terrific. But I hate seeing my neighbors, which I’ve seen, their rent went up so high they had to leave” (WG1).

## **Race/Ethnicity**

Participants were asked whether or not they have witnessed neighborhood change affecting certain races or ethnicities more than others. Some believe that their neighborhoods have become more diverse in recent years, while others in Simpsonville noted a loss in black neighbors. Similar to the first group, many participants stated that gentrification affects people of different income levels more than those of different races. In West Greenville in particular, participants in the all-black focus group reported that the changes taking place in their area are not for them.

- “I don’t think so much race, but I definitely think obviously, the different income levels” (S1).

- **Black/African American Respondents in West Greenville**

“There ain’t nothing down there for us. I don’t know who it for but it ain’t for us” (WG2).

## **Trust- Neighbors**

Neighborhood trust refers to the general sense of community and trust amongst residents in the areas of study. Many participants described friendly but impersonal interactions with neighbors, stating: “I mean, I don’t invite them over for dinner. But like, I know who they are. I trust if something were wrong, they would help” (S1). Some stated that they keep their doors unlocked and garage open, while others always lock their doors because they don’t know their neighbors.

- “I know all of my neighbors. You know they're right there. My neighbor will be washing his dishes and I'll be on the porch and he'll say, 'Hi XXXX, how was your day.' And I'll say, 'It was lovely. How was yours?' You know, so you have that social bond thing” (WG1).
- “I see my neighbors, but we're not visiting neighbors, you know what I mean? So we speak and keep it moving. .... Which is good enough for me” (S1).

### **Distrust- Neighbors**

A perceived increase in crime in some areas has led to a greater sense of distrust within neighborhoods. Some participants also stated that people are simply more private now and no longer engage with their neighbors, saying: “people don't want to get involved” (AH1).

- **Response to thefts in neighborhood**  
“When I hear something like that, I want to move. I'm ready to put my house on the market. Cuz I don't like that, I don't feel comfortable with it. And I don't know if it's just par for the course or what's going on and if it's really worth the lower price” (AH2).
- “They come home, they pull into their garage, it goes down, and then you don't seem them. That connection is not there. It's just not there anymore. People are concerned about what's going on in their lives unfortunately, and that's just the way the world is” (AH1).

### **Distrust- Government**

A sense of distrust in the government refers to any time a participant expressed frustration or concerns about entities in power. This included mention of Nikki Haley, political parties, town councils, and a more ambiguous group of “people who run this” (WG2). Some participants questioned the motives of those making decisions that affect their neighborhoods. A few reported that officials are not following through with promises they have made, while others stated that the changes occurring are not taking place for their benefit.

- “They [people who work in the area] can't afford to live up here because they can't afford those apartments they built up there. Not fair. But that's it and the people who run this don't care and that's my opinion” (WG2).
- “Say for instance, it might be the Democratic party or it might be Republican, whatever the case may be. But the trust there is being damaged because those individuals are not doing what they said they was going to do, in order to get your vote. To put them in the position, to represent” (S1).
- “But as change in itself, like they say is that, changes are good for you. And that's, at times. But then again, sometimes you have to look at the change, you know, who making it? And who are going to benefit? Because all the changes



are not for the entire population and not for the people. But it's for those individuals, or that individual. And so when it comes down to that, and I think we in general as a body of people, when we see it, then when it come voting time, then you try to vote them people out of there” (S1).

### **Stress/Peace**

Stress/peace refers to the general sense of stress, or lack thereof, experienced by members of the community as a result of the changing neighborhoods. Changes in housing costs and rent have resulted in an increased sense of stress in many areas. Other sources of stress include crime, long commutes to work, and loud environments near homes (e.g., from trains). New business developments have led some to report feeling less stressed because they have easier and quicker access to resources.

- “Well, I think our neighbors who are renting who are worried about their homes being, you know the landlords deciding to you know kick them out so that they can renovate the house I think that's a big stress” (AH2).

### **Crime/Safety**

Crime refers to examples of crime within the community, while safety describes the general sense of security among residents. Most participants mentioned an increase in crime in their areas. Some still reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods despite the crime, while others lack a sense of safety.

- “You feel safe, but it's just either you see it and you kind of let it go and you continue with your life because you feel pretty safe or you try to talk about it and see what you can do” (AH1).
- “We used to have block parties you know. The kids had parties and everybody would come. It's not like that now. I guess it's because everybody's scared. You're gonna get killed, can I say” (WG2).

### **Transportation**

Transportation describes the responses of participants when asked about how residents get from one destination to the next. According to participants, cars are the most common form of transportation in the areas studied. The public bus is available, but participants expressed that the bus takes significantly longer than a car.

- “I know they have the bus, riding the bus. But if you get on the bus, where it might take you in your car 15, 20 minutes, it may take two to three hours to get there on the bus. Because the bus you get on, it goes to the bus station, then you have to get on another bus” (WG1).

### **School/School Zoning**

Any mention of schools or school zoning issues within the community was included in this section. Schools were rarely mentioned in Arcadia Hills and Simpsonville, but West Greenville residents expressed frustration regarding school zoning in their areas. Many said that students are zoned for schools in Berea despite living closer to other schools such as Greenville High.

- “I mean, Greenville High is just right down the street and they go to high school at Berea” (WG1).
- “The zone as far as schooling is awful” (WG1).

### **Health- Physical Activity**

This refers to opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity such as through walking, fitness centers, or senior centers. Access to sidewalks and being in close proximity to the Swamp Rabbit Trail and various parks allow many residents to exercise outside. Gyms are available in some areas, “if you [can] afford it” (S1).

- “It’s been good for my health because we’re so close to the park. My mom and I go to the park every day and walk from the park downtown and walk back. That’s our exercise instead of having to go to a gym or anything” (AH1).

### **Health- Food**

This section describes the proximity and availability of grocery stores and restaurants in the area. In West Greenville, many of the restaurants are perceived as unaffordable. They buy most of their groceries at Publix, Walmart, Aldi, and Tomato Vine. Residents could not think of grocery stores in the study area near Arcadia Hills but mentioned shopping at the nearby Publix and downtown Farmer’s Market. In Simpsonville, food options “are limited, but they’re growing” (S1). Many shop at Walmart, Publix, and BI-LO. Restaurants in the area include McDonald’s, Hardee’s, Subway, and O’Charley’s.

### **Health- Access to Services**

Access to services refers to the availability of healthcare and treatment within the area. West Greenville is close to hospitals such as St. Francis. Simpsonville residents stated that many medical facilities are available in the area, although one participant mentioned that it is hard to find someone who accepts Medicaid.

- “You find a doctor in Simpsonville that will take Medicaid. You go to the Yellow Pages, nope. Nope. Nope. You have to go to Greenville” (S1).

### **Health- Environmental Health**

Few residents discussed aspects of the environment which may affect their health. One West Greenville resident mentioned how the area has access to clean water. A resident of Arcadia Hills expressed frustration about the high levels of pollen in the area. A Simpsonville participant felt that air quality in the area is satisfactory.

- “Greenville does happen to be known for very high pollen sources and very high storms, so for me that does kind of suck. ... It's one of the highest pollen places in the nation, and it's also one of the worst ranked places for migraines because of the storms” (AH1).

### **Employment in Neighborhood**

This section describes any employment opportunities discussed by participants within the study areas. West Greenville mostly has service and retail jobs. Arcadia Hills has jobs at restaurants, the mall, and convenient stores. Simpsonville residents could not identify any job opportunities in their area.

- “I don't really see any businesses that would hire mass amount of people. I mean, I don't see anything” (WG2).
- “Yeah, maybe not ... yeah retail. I mean you see Krispy Kreme. TD Convention Center, you might meet there. But you're not, if you work there, I mean. For opportunities where you can make an average income or above, I don't see it on here. Am I wrong?” (AH2).

### **Employment outside of Neighborhood**

This section describes employment opportunities outside of the area of study. Several residents work outside their neighborhoods in places such as Mauldin, Simpsonville, downtown Greenville, and Haywood Road. Residents are employed at businesses such as Michelin, BMW, Greenville Technical College, Bob Jones University, banks, schools, and government agencies.

- “I don't know anybody that works in the neighborhood. Everybody is out farther” (WG1).
- “I believe most everyone would go outside of the neighborhood to work, unless they're working from home” (AH2).

### **Business**

Business refers to any time a participant commented on past or present businesses in the area. Some larger businesses such as BI-LO have closed and new restaurants have come in. In Simpsonville in particular, a variety of businesses opened and subsequently closed in recent years. Smaller, non-chain stores struggle to stay open in Simpsonville.

- ““The little shops don't stay in business very long” (S1).

### **Potential Improvements**

These are the suggestions for future changes provided by participants in each area.  
West Greenville-

- More affordable kid's area/daycare
- Put polling stations along bus lines
- Easier access to education (both for younger students and college students)
- Change school zoning
- More affordable housing
- Upkeep of current housing and neighborhoods (e.g., street lighting)

Arcadia Hills-

- More affordable housing
- More speed bumps
- Expand public transportation route
- Parks for kids
- Add cameras along Swamp Rabbit Trail to prevent crime
- Community swimming pool
- Add a link to connect to the Swamp Rabbit Trail

Simpsonville-

- Add stop lights on South Street
- Add sidewalks outside of subdivisions
- Need a laundromat for lower-income people
- Add shelters at bus stops so people don't have to wait in the sun
- Fix potholes
- Expand infrastructure for new people coming in (expand one-lane roads)
- More green space/outdoor areas/a pool
- More healthy restaurants
- Better drainage
- More streetlights
- Connection to Swamp Rabbit Trail
- More sources of entertainment

## Ongoing Gentrification / Displacement of Low-Income Households (Low-Income): Viola St., Brandon

### **Key (Abbreviation for each group):**

Viola (7.16.18- 3PM): **V1**

Viola (7.16.18- 6PM): **V2**

Brandon (7.17.18- 6PM): **B1**

Brandon (7.19.18- 6PM): **B2**

### **Affordability**

Affordability is the term used to address neighborhood changes in the cost of living. Most people used this term when discussing a neighborhood no longer being affordable for people already living in the neighborhood, but it is also used when people cannot move into the neighborhood because of costs. Many people discussed how all of the new development and remodeling going on in the neighborhood increased rent, making it unaffordable for current residents. They also mentioned that these new developments systematically excluded people of low to middle incomes because of the prices of these new homes. In addition, some people questioned where the jobs were that could support people the people that have lived in the neighborhood and need money to pay for the increases in housing.

- **Not Affordable for Current Residents**

“As far as affordable houses, there’s no such thing as affordable houses anymore” (B2).

“The houses that I looked at were more expensive than I could afford” (B1).

“They [renters] couldn’t afford the houses again” (V2).

- **Exclusivity of New Housing**

“Where are all the jobs that are supposed to support all the people who are gonna live in the studio apartments for 1900 a month? Where is that gonna come from? Where’s that money being generated?” (V2).

“And here now these investors are sneaking in and they’re buying it and all of the poor people are the people who want their identity maintained; they don’t have any place to live and they can’t afford it” (B1).

### **Increased Rent**

Increased rent pertains to when people talk about rent prices changing. This term is used when someone’s own rent changes and when people perceive the neighborhood’s overall rent changing. People explained that as housing values and prices change, rent increases. Other people gave anecdotes of how these prices have risen.

- **Perception of Increase in Rent**

“Where the prices are increased, rent will increase” (V1).

- **Anecdotes**

“Before, somebody could maybe go rent, especially a low income person, could go rent something for about maybe 300-400 dollars, but now, to rent a, to even get a house, and it might not be the nicest house, or whatever, or apartment or whatever, they go to pay anything from maybe 700-150-0 dollars on up” (B2).

## **Increased Property Value**

Increased property value means a homeowner’s property rises in value according to online property value calculators. Most people did not like the increases in property value because they thought they were unnecessarily increasing at higher rates than the natural economy, since people were buying homes at above the market value. People gave examples of their own property values rising.

- **Frustration**

“Somebody’s moving out for those people to move in and I know the property values are increasing, so I know they’re paying more” (V1).

“So she’s [new neighbor] paying above appraised value... That hurts everything because you’re buying silver at gold prices” (V2).

- **Anecdotes**

“Well there’s no doubt property values are a huge change in our neighborhood just in the 18 years I’ve been here... The value of the houses has more than doubled in that time” (V1).

“My little two-bedroom townhouse, when I moved in three years ago, it appraised at 150, and now, they guy two doors down, sold his at 190” (V2).

“The houses at the very beginning out here was something like between 70-80,000 dollars, and over the years, the last person that sold a house, I think, was something like 135,000 dollars” (B2).

## **Property Tax**

Property tax is the term used to identify when and why property taxes increase. It also refers to the belief that property taxes will increase in the near future especially after property values increase. Most people talked about the fear or expectation that taxes will increase soon, but they have not seen too many increases yet. Others said that they have experienced tax increases already.

- **Acceptance**

“They have to increase, and so you accept it, the light bill, the gas bill, the water bill, things that” (B2).

“The taxes have gone up” (V1).

- **Future Taxes**

“When they start putting up 300,000 dollar houses next to an 80,000 dollar house, the property tax is gonna go way up here” (B1).

“I’m waiting for it to bust” (V2).

- **No Change**

“I don’t know if we’ve had a tax increase in about 15 years” (V2).

## **Perception of Renting vs. Owning**

People offer their opinions on the differences between renting and owning homes in their neighborhoods. Some people talked about owners not having to move out of a neighborhood, while renters do because of rent increases. People also talked about the increased property values encouraging home owners to sell their properties instead of renting them out. In Brandon, there was a strong bias towards owners because they were perceived to be better neighbors and to be more invested in the neighborhood.

- **Renters Moving Out**

“Because they’re buying their houses they ain’t gotta to move” (V1).

- **Owners Selling**

“The value has gone up in just a short period of time, so you’ll see that there’s more people instead of continuing to rent their unites, they’re selling their units to take advantage of that increase” (V2).

- **Quick Turnaround**

“Now Brandon Mill Community has a good many renters, and we see turnover often on the same house. People coming, staying a few months and leaving for whatever reason” (B1).

“There’s rental property, so there’s always turnover” (V2).

- **Owners Are Better Neighbors**

“Everybody over here is supposed to be homeowners... That’s the stipulation we had at the very beginning, that we didn’t want no rental properties. We want everybody to be a homeowner... in Freetown, because we figured that if you’re a homeowner, you’d take more pride in your property, but if you’re say a rental property, you might be here for two months, three months, and you don’t care anything about the neighborhood” (B2).

## **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure refers to people's concerns about or anecdotes of changes to structures and services. This includes changes in roads, utilities, easements, trash pick-up, and other infrastructures. Some people also spoke about concerns about the infrastructure needing to be updated to accommodate the other changes happening in Greenville.

- **Roads**

"They [the city] could repair a few more roads, but however, they have gone to great lengths to do traffic common studies and to make things more smoothly" (V1).

"White Horse Road was widened and they did eminent domain on both sides of the highway, and they cut into people's yards by 15 feet" (B1).

"They changed the lanes. It's just one lane; it used to be two lanes, and now it's one lane, and a turn lane, and that backs traffic up... if you're going down Pendleton" (B2).

- **Water Pressure**

"We had a sewer project some in... I didn't get new pipes, and I know it's about money. That's the bottom line, but some people did and some people didn't so that might have something to do with the water pressure" (B1).

- **Trash Pick-Up**

"We have an alley behind our house and the trash people, we kept our trash cans out there, and the trash truck would go down and pick up the trash. It's very nice. Now we have to roll the bins down to the street... It's a minor annoyance, but sort of this loss of civility where you have to now take your trash can back and forth" (V1).

- **Concerns**

"What I think about Greenville is this, it's nice, the building up that we're doing, but I think we're doing it too fast, and we're not giving ourselves time to prepare" (B1).

"There's growth and that's more pressure on what resources we have, and there's no expansion being made to accommodate the resources" (B1).

"Water's been incrementally more expensive... and that is because the lines downtown like in our neighborhood are 100 years old, and they need to replace those. They should have replaced them 50 years ago" (V1).

## **New Development**



New development refers to buildings and homes built on land that was empty or land that had buildings torn down and rebuilt. People spoke of new development being built for new people moving in that could pay more. New development includes homes, apartment complexes, and businesses. Everyone said that they noticed increases in development, so much so that there was a decrease in green space. People were concerned with the sizes and scale of the buildings. They also talked about how there are more buildings, but people have less space.

- **Increase in Buildings and Homes**

“We’re getting smaller houses, smaller lots and apartments, so we’ve got more people per square inch” (V1).

“Now the Victorian homes are dwarfed by these big, ugly boxes that are condos, probably apartments, whatever, and that’s a scale issue” (V1).

“People coming into Greenville because downtown is burgeoning and they’re building all these places to fill, so I think the influx of people” (V1).

- **Deforestation**

“More houses are being built with the destruction of trees and stuff like that. Yard is being taken away, things like that” (B1).

“Once it was Green-ville, but no, it’s more of concrete-ville... You really could take the word green away” (B1).

## **Flipping Houses**

Flipping houses is when someone takes a house and renovates it just to be sold off again. People in this category talked about corporations coming in and flipping houses. They also talked about neighbors moving in just to flip houses, sell them, and move out.

- **Corporations Flipping**

“If you owed on a house, if you owned it, they [developers] would pay off your mortgage and give you fair market value for it” (V2).

“GCRA would buy the houses” (B2).

- **Outsiders Flipping**

“She [a neighbor] got her company to buy a house on my street that was an older home, needed remodeling. Bought it for 12,000 dollars. Came in, flipped it with pretty much reused stuff and is renting it for 1,000 dollars a month” (B1).

## **Renovations/Remodeling**

Renovations and remodeling refer to when large companies update and beautify buildings, homes, or apartments. This can also refer to individuals who revamp their own homes and remain living there. People in this category discussed renovating their own homes and having

neighbors who did the same thing. They also talked about downtown and the arts district being renovated.

- **Renovating More Houses**

“Now if you walk down there it’s very different, people buying up any old property they can find and rehabilitating it” (V1).

“I think the initiative that the Urban League and the United Way worked on. I know when Viola Street was being renovated, I worked some with that, and the United Way, the Urban League, and Clemson were all in it together” (V2).

“There are some homes that are being converted and enlarges, not far from where I live is the Village Lofts” (B1).

- **Renovating Downtown**

“Just the renovations of downtown, the more emphasis in getting restaurants and condominiums and apartments to the downtown business district, bringing in tourists and income” (V2).

“They’re building that art center, making it an art district down there” (B2).

## **Landlord**

Landlord is the term used to identify the property owner. No one in this category talked about landlords.

## **Adaptation to Increased Housing Costs**

This term refers to how people have adjusted to housing costs. Many people mentioned having to cut back on certain costs to be able to afford housing. Some participants spoke about their own adaptations they have had to make, such as taking in renters, working multiple jobs, or cutting unnecessary things out of the budget.

- **Multiple Jobs**

“I have to work one and a half jobs” (B1).

“Some people have two and three jobs trying to do that because they can’t afford to buy a house or anything, or the credit, or they just don’t have the money” (B2).

- **Cutting Things Out**

“I had to cut a little bit... certain things that I used to do, like eat out or you know, maybe wouldn’t get a new car or something like that. I couldn’t afford it. Our house payment and a car payment because insurance and everything else because I had to come out on disability” (B2).

- **Taking in Renters**

“He separated it [the house] and now he gets two rents” (B1).

“She’s renting it and she’s very smart because there’s three rooms and she sublets it to visiting medical students from other states when they come” (B1).

## **In-movers**

In-movers refers to anyone moving into the neighborhood. This term is used both for occupants actually moving in, and for occupants perceived to be moving in. People said there were a large number of young people moving in with and without kids. They also said young professionals and students were coming into the neighborhoods. Others said it was mainly out-of-state individuals.

- **Young Adults**

“They just moved there, I guess they’ve been there about maybe six months now. The man and his wife, they have no kids, they’re young people” (V1).

“Now you’ve got kids all over the place. You got young couples, single people” (V2).

- **Professionals and Students**

“You got more professionals. You have people without kids, which they walk dogs, they run, they walk, they do whatever. And then you’ve got Stone school, which brings in the magnet kids in and the neighborhood kids. They’re now trying to get in the neighborhood, so they don’t have to fight the magnet program to get in” (V2).

“The Clemson campus is being built now. We already have the USC campus... so in order to accommodate these students, you have to have housing” (B1).

- **Out of State**

“A lot of Yankees here. Yeah, a lot of Yankees these days” (V1).

“It’s out-of-state people” (B1).

## **Out-movers**

Out-movers refers to the people moving out of the neighborhood for any reason. This term refers to occupants who are actually moving out and the perceptions of occupants moving out. Some participants did not know where people were moving, but others listed some places where they knew people had moved. Some residents moved due to changes in jobs, while others moved because they wanted different housing. Others said people were bought out of their homes and made a profit.

- **Moving Because of Job**

They're leaving not because they want to necessarily, but I think some of them work for bigger companies, and they're getting transferred to other cities" (V2).

- **Selling Home for Profit**

"We had a few people that left, and they sold their houses for a pretty penny. They made money off it" (B2).

"A lot of the older families are moving out because they can make so much off of their house. So, they're going more into a condominium or town home of some type, and taking advantage of the extra money" (V2).

- **Places**

- Hampton Pinckney
- Pickens County
- Georgia
- Simpsonville
- Fountain Inn
- Travelers Rest
- Easley
- Powdersville

## **Blight**

Blight is a term describing perceived and actual dilapidation or undesirable aspects of the neighborhood. People often described empty lots, abandoned buildings, and foreclosed houses as undesirable. Only people in Brandon described blight in their neighborhood.

- "Here's this horrible, ugly nasty building [gambling spots] and it completely looks deserted, and there's 25 cars there at all times" (B1).

"They do have some houses that really need to be knocked down" (B2).

## **Level of Desirability**

Level of desirability is the term used to identify why people desire or do not desire to move to a neighborhood. Desirability also refers to aspects of the area that people living in the neighborhood like about it. This level is a spectrum from desirable to undesirable. With so many people moving into these neighborhoods, participants explained that the urbanization is a huge draw. People also talked about the image of Greenville and how it is presented as one of the best places to live. Others said that the prices, in comparison with other urban areas, are cheaper, which is pulling people in.

- **Convenience**

"I really think that the downtown is the draw, and I think that it's so appealing to be able to walk in your neighborhood and see the houses and feel the

neighborhood-y type stuff of that. It's just almost the dichotomy of the busy downtown and then the nice neighborhoods around" (V2).

- **Prices**

"I got a cute little mill house for forty thousand dollars [around 2005], and it blew my mind because I'm from Florida and you couldn't live in a dump for forty thousand dollars" (B1).

- **Image**

"Now it's like—seems like the place to be" (V2).

"Someone heard once that they gave a trip away, on TV, to Greenville, South Carolina. We're now a tourist trap" (V2).

"Greenville makes all these Top 10 lists, but they are only seeing one part of Greenville. They are not seeing the whole area" (B2).

- **Urban Center**

"There's a new sort of attitude throughout the whole country to move into urban areas as opposed to suburban areas, so this area becomes extremely attractive because it is essentially an urban area" (V1).

## **Perception of the Term "Gentrification"**

This refers to how people interpret what gentrification is and their perceptions of it. This includes if they feel positively, negatively, or torn about it. Some people did not know what the term meant or had never heard of it before. Others described it as resulting in displacement due to unaffordability. Still others thought that it was when there were increased demands in housing in an area and increases in prices in housing. Many also thought that it involves a loss of history.

- **For Other People**

"They're pushing up the cost of housing so only certain people can move in there, and certain races" (B2).

"What I fear is that the influx of the middle-income people into the Freetown area is going to erase the history of Freetown... How many people can actually relate to Freetown? A place where free slaves got across and congregated and built the community up" (B1).

- **Leading to Displacement**

"That means the people at the far end of Hampton Avenue are not able to afford to live there anymore because people with more money are coming in and fixing up the houses. The people who used to live there don't have anywhere to go because they can't afford to go anywhere else" (V1).

“People being asked to give up their houses and areas that have just sort of been—I’m not sure what the populations were in all the years that Greenville has been Greenville, but I believe that there have been certain populations that have been somewhat forced to move out of where they’ve lived so that middle class and such can move in” (V2).

- **Loss of History**

“You know I understand that gentrification can bring problems and yet I go back to when I usually think of the word I do think of improvement, and I think how sad it is that we lost so much of our history and so many of our neighborhoods in Greenville because we didn’t gentrify them... the right way... tearing down its history” (V1).

## **Displacement**

Displacement is when someone is pushed out of their neighborhood because they can no longer afford the cost of living or they feel like they are no longer welcome in the community. This term refers to not only the anecdotes of displacement, but also the perceptions, worries, and fears of people being displaced. Some people talked about developers pushing people out and not making the new developments affordable for the original residents. Others talked about renters having to move because of new renovations being too expensive. People spoke about the homes that had not been renovated, and the idea that the upkeep was too expensive for some people. Still others thought that even though displacement was occurring, they were not concerned because of affordable housing available to them through Habitat for Humanity, etc.

- **Anecdotes**

“A couple of people had lost their home and then somebody else got it” (V1).

“In the growth, you must also take into consideration what the people that are displaced in that... In fact, Greenville has always had a problem with that” (B1).

- **Developers**

“They’re [developers] pushing the people out of their homes and building homes that they can’t afford, and condominiums and things that people can’t afford” (B2).

“When they tear them down, or even for the seniors or anything, they’re not bringing them back, they’re bringing other people in. They’re not bringing the low income back” (B2).

- **Renters**

“I think what’s happened is as the people who rented, their owners sold the house, renovated it, they couldn’t afford to buy it, so they had to move out” (V2).

- **Not Concerned**

“You might be forcing the less employed people, less fortunate people out... but there are places for them. We have a certain number of even halfway houses around here that Habitat has rebuilt and made available to people” (V1).

- **Old Home**

“There are people who have been in a house a while I can imagine might have to leave because they’re older houses and they just can’t afford to fix them up” (V1).

## **Feelings about Neighborhood Change**

Feelings about neighborhood change refers to participants’ perceptions and reactions—both positive and negative—to the changes occurring around their neighborhoods. Many participants reported feeling pleased and even “lucky” about the changes and growth that have taken place (V2). Others complained about a perceived increase in tourists, decrease in green space, and potential displacement of residents as a result of the changes. One participant expressed that she doesn’t feel represented by the changes taking place, saying: “I still wanna be able to look and see something that reminds me of me” (B1).

- “I like it. I like the growth. I like seeing the new buildings. I like the new homes around me. I like the new downtown area. I like it, I hate to see anybody get displaced, but I like seeing the community built up. The houses around me that used to be run down, I like seeing them demolished, built back up” (B1).
- **Decreased Crime**  
“It’s a tremendous amount of improvement with kids. You don’t see as much shooting, you don’t see as much prostitution, you don’t see as much drugs. Obviously, you can’t eliminate all of them, but you do have some. But, if the people see what it was at that time because compared to what it was now, it’s like day and night ... day and night” (B2).

## **Race/Ethnicity**

Participants were asked whether or not they have witnessed neighborhood change affecting certain races or ethnicities more than others. Many participants reported living in diverse neighborhoods, with a few noting a recent influx of white residents in areas that were previously predominantly black. Some participants noted a distinction between income and race, stating that neighborhood change affects those of lower socioeconomic status more than those of different races.

- “I don’t think it’s so much the race in our neighborhood. I don’t think that’s an issue because I have white, black neighbors, Hispanic neighbors. I think what the common-bond is affordability. We’re all struggling to keep our houses, live here. ... I think it’s more of an economic diversity rather a racial issue” (B1).

## **Trust- Neighbors**

Neighborhood trust refers to the general sense of community and trust amongst residents in the areas of study. Most participants reported a sense of trust within their neighborhoods, stating that neighbors “know each other” and “look out for each other” (B2).

- “And there's a lot of trust that is still here. We have a lot of very trusting, kind people” (B1).

### **Trust- Government:**

Trust in government refers to any time a participant positively mentioned governing entities such as “the city” or the mayor. This was mainly expressed by participants from the Viola focus groups. Participants stated that decisions by the mayor and others to rehabilitate downtown have been beneficial and that those in power have “made good decisions” (V1).

- “I think the thing that would affect trust is when the city doesn't produce the services you need, and we have not had that here. They have produced ... They could repair a few more roads, but however, they have gone to great lengths to do traffic common studies and to make things move smoothly. As XXXX says, we have all the noise and that's expected downtown, but I trust them because they've produced with my tax money what I think they should” (V1).

### **Distrust- Government**

A sense of distrust in the government refers to any time a participant expressed frustration or concerns about political entities. This included mention of zoning issues, lack of code enforcement, and leadership not protecting residents of lower socioeconomic status.

- “As I said to a city council member, why do we have to come down and do your job for you? Couldn't you just tell us the kind of place that you envision and the kinds of decisions you make and we could count on you to do that? Because when you're an elected official that's your job” (V1).
- “The city ... the people that plan these things ... the city administrators and all those people down at City Hall and wherever, the governor, mayor, all that and they ... These plans are not just happening now. They've been in the works for a long time. So ... seemed like to me they could've included the other people, people with lesser income, they could have made preparations for them while they were doing all this beautification. You know, Greenville makes all these Top 10 lists, but they are only seeing one part of Greenville. They are not seeing the whole area. And Greenville, don't get me wrong, is really a nice place, but you gotta be of certain stature to be able to live in certain places and do certain thing. That's part of that gentrification too” (B2).

### **Stress/Peace**



Stress/peace refers to the general sense of stress, or lack thereof, experienced by members of the community as a result of the changing neighborhoods. Many participants described a sense of peace and quiet within their neighborhoods. The main source of stress reported by participants was due to traffic—both from cars and from strangers walking through neighborhoods.

- “It’s very quiet and peaceful and they said it was the ninth non-violent neighborhood in Greenville” (V1).
- “That’s what kills me is the traffic” (B1).

## **Crime/Safety**

Crime refers to examples of crime within the community, while safety describes the general sense of security among residents. Participants in Viola reported feeling safe in their neighborhood, describing a decrease in crime from the past. “Crimes of convenience” and “quick thefts” still occur occasionally, but they are perceived as being less severe than crimes in the past (V1). In Brandon, some participants reported decreased crime while others stated that it has increased in recent years.

- “Where it says Viola Street right there behind the QuickTrip—that used to be an area you wouldn’t drive through and now, as she says, it’s very safe” (V1).
- **Abandoned Buildings**  
“That’s one thing I don’t like is abandoned houses. I will cut their grass and pretend somebody lives there. I will even put a potted plant on their doorstep and I will cut their grass to make it look like someone lives there ‘cuz if you don’t, you will have someone sneak in that house and they’re usually druggies and you don’t want them near your babies” (B1).

## **Transportation**

Transportation describes the responses of participants when asked about how residents get from one destination to the next. Similar to other groups, cars were reported as the most frequent form of transportation. Some people are able to walk, and a few in Viola mentioned using golf carts. The public bus is not widely accessible or used, and participants reported that it often takes longer to take the bus than other forms of transportation.

- “But there is some transportation on the peripheral of this community. But there’s none that comes into the community anymore. So that is one of the really bad things for those of us who are aging. These young folks right here, they still got cars and transportation but as you get older ... My niece lives with me and she spends four hundred dollars a month getting to work, to dialysis and back home” (B1).

## **School/School Zoning**

Any mention of schools or school zoning issues within the community was included in this section. The only significant mention of schools was in Viola when a resident described that more people have moved to the area in recent decades since Stone Academy became a magnet school.

- “Well, Stone becoming a magnet school. That turned everything around. Everybody wants to go to Stone” (V2).

## **Health- Physical Activity**

This refers to opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity such as through walking or community centers. Viola residents achieve physical activity through parks, green space, access to sidewalks, and being in close proximity to the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Brandon participants stated that the community center is a place to exercise but find it harder to exercise outside due to safety issues.

- **Viola**  
“All these neighborhoods have sidewalks, so, you can walk. There's still a lot of green space, with the parks and all” (V2).
- **Brandon**  
“There's no place to exercise. If you go walk on my street, where I live on the State Road, honey you get run over in a skinny minute” (B1).

## **Health- Food**

This section describes the proximity and availability of grocery stores and restaurants in the area. Viola residents reported shopping at Walmart, Publix, and Harris Teeter. Some residents expressed a desire for more healthy restaurants in the area. In Brandon, residents reported using the same grocery stores as Viola in addition to Aldi. “There’s every restaurant known to man” in the area, but some participants also expressed a desire for more healthy options in Brandon (B1).

## **Health- Access to Services**

Access to services refers to the availability of healthcare and treatment within the area. St. Francis Downtown is in close proximity to both Brandon and Viola.

- “There is Saint Francis just down the road and Memorial just down the road, you have easy access to many, many healthcare ... Dialysis unit” (V1)

## **Health- Environmental Health**

This refers to any discussion of environmental factors in the neighborhood that can impact a resident’s health. Participants did not consider Greenville to be a polluted city, but one resident

did mention concerns about poor water quality. A participant also reported health issues related to a lack of code enforcement in the area.

- **Lack of code enforcement**

“I just ... my health is directly affected by where I live because codes are not enforced. My elderly neighbor has one hundred and fifty-four tires in his back yard and the mosquito-breeding places. So the mosquitoes, I have a half an acre and I'm married to my yard, that's all I do is garden. And so, I can't go outside without covering myself with bug spray. I mean literally, because the mosquitoes are so bad. Now nobody knows code enforcement, I mean I didn't, it's ... in Greenville County, you can have a hundred and twenty tires on your property, but they're supposed to be either enclosed in building or covered with tarps. Right? Now, this is the funny part, if code enforcement ... if you call code enforcement, if they can't see those tires from the road, they can't do one thing, not one thing” (B1).

## **Employment in Neighborhood**

This section describes any employment opportunities discussed by participants within the study areas. There were not many opportunities reported in either area of study. Most jobs were service jobs such as at gas stations, Family Dollar, restaurants, and car repair shops.

- “You know as I look at the map and there really are not a lot of places for businesses because so much of this shaded area is neighborhood” (V1).

## **Employment outside of Neighborhood**

This section describes employment opportunities outside of the area of study. Several residents work “anywhere and everywhere, but not nearby” (V1). Some areas of employment located downtown include engineering, architecture, construction, hospitals, and banks. Larger manufacturers such as BMW and Michelin are also sources of employment outside of the neighborhood.

## **Business**

Business refers to any time a participant commented on past or present businesses in the area. Despite some old businesses closing, many new and assorted businesses have opened in recent years. These include restaurants, thrift stores, clothing stores, art museums, doctor's offices, lawyer's offices, and large manufacturers.

- “The only thing I can complain about are some of the old businesses going out of business. But for every one of those that close it seems like two or three more open” (V1).

## **Potential Improvements**

These are the suggestions for future changes provided by participants in each area.

Viola-

- Better public transportation
- Road repair
- Self-service laundry
- More doctor's offices
- Decrease/halt construction of apartment complexes and condominiums
- Higher police presence

Brandon-

- Create plan for subsidized housing and middle-income housing
- More green space
- More sidewalks and pedestrian/bicycle paths
- Increase transportation options
- Easier access to healthy food options
- More street lights
- Put something where vacant strip mall on Pendleton St. is
- More speed bumps
- Build a public library with computer desks
- Fill vacant lots
- Facilitate opportunities for highlighting and communicating the historic significance of areas such as Brandon

## Advanced Gentrification (Moderate to High Income): **Haynie-Sirriner, Travelers Rest**

**Key (Abbreviation for each group):**

Haynie-Sirriner (7.23.18- 3PM): **HS1**

Haynie-Sirriner (7.23.18- 6PM): **HS2**

Travelers Rest (7.25.18- 3PM): **TR1**

Travelers Rest (7.25.18- 6PM): **TR2**

### **Affordability**

Affordability is the term used to address neighborhood changes in the cost of living. Most people used this term when discussing a neighborhood no longer being affordable for people already living in the neighborhood, but it is also used when people cannot move into the neighborhood because of costs. Many people talked about knowing people that have moved because of how expensive the new developments are, in addition to the taxes and rents rising. Participants talked about how people would need to have high paying jobs to be able to live in the area, which excludes the lower income people that usually lived there. In Haynie-Sirriner, people spoke of the integrated housing neighborhoods that Homes of Hope has created, which utilizes rent control in order to prevent displacement of lower income families.

- **Homes of Hope**

“Around 30 houses are rental, affordable housing mixed with homeowners, Homes of Hope” (HS1).

“Our neighborhood is a mixed income neighborhood, so you have homeowners that bought outright, market value, and then Homes of Hope on half or more of the houses” (HS2).

- **Not Affordable for Current Residents**

“Prices went up and they [neighbors] couldn’t afford it [living in the neighborhood]” (TR1).

“It’s just hard for somebody with a lower income to be able to stay right here in the city limits” (TR1).

“My grandmother’s houses was where your house is; it’s not there anymore. I wish I could afford to live in that neighborhood... I know it’s a house unaffordable for a lot of people” (HS1).

- **Exclusivity of New Housing**

“You have to be, to afford it, you’ve got to be making a good bit of money” (TR1).

“I would hope that somewhere in there there’s something built in there for some affordable type housing for some of the people that work in our city” (HS1).

## **Increased Rent**

Increased rent pertains to when people talk about rent prices changing. This term is used when someone’s own rent changes and when people perceive the neighborhood’s overall rent changing. People explained that as housing values and prices change, rent increases. Other people gave anecdotes of how these prices have risen. People attributed these rent increases to redevelopment and renovations that allow landlords to charge more.

- **Perception of Increase in Rent**

“Definitely rent and everything else has gotten more expensive” (HS2).

- **Due to Renovations**

“All those houses are rental properties. They’re redoing a couple of them right now, and the rents on those will go up” (HS2).

“They used to rent for really low prices, like two, three hundred dollars it was to rent there. They [the city] decided to re-do those. They’re making them nice, but nearly everybody there got evicted recently... couldn’t afford it because it went up to \$500” (TR1).

- **Anecdotes**

“My rent’s gone up a lot” (TR1).

## **Increased Property Value**

Increased property value means a homeowner’s property rises in value according to online property value calculators. People gave examples of their own property values rising, along with the houses in their neighborhoods increasing.

- **Anecdotes**

“They’re building, I think, four or five houses. Now this used to be a YWCA; they’re building four or five houses. I couldn’t believe it, \$500,000” (HS1).

“They [neighbors] bought these houses for \$2,000 or \$3,000, and now, they’re being offered \$160,000 and such for it” (HS2).

Participant 1: “In 2008, a home would go on the market in TR, it would sit empty nine months to a year before it might sell. Today, if a home goes on the market in TR, it’s sold within three days.”

Participant 2: “Double the price.”

Participant 1: “Yeah. Much higher” (TR1).

## **Property Tax**

Property tax is the term used to identify when and why property taxes increase. It also refers to the belief that property taxes will increase in the near future especially after property values increase. Most people talked about their property taxes increasing.

- **Anecdotes**

“It’s making it harder for poorer folks to live there because the property values and taxes and everything else are going up” (HS2).

## **Perception of Renting vs. Owning**

People offer their opinions on the differences between renting and owning homes in their neighborhoods. Some people talked about owners not having to move out of a neighborhood, while renters do because of rent increases. Most people addressed the fact that there are more renters in the area than perceived previously. This high percentage of renters causes people to move in and out of the neighborhood at high rates.

- **More Renters**

“A lot of those [houses] maybe were at one time family homes are now rentals” (HS1).

“I think it [the neighborhood] is back to the rental area, I think, as opposed to home ownership” (HS2).

- **Quick Turnaround**

“Our community is primarily a rental community, so there’s a good but of changeover in housing in our area” (HS2).

## **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure refers to people’s concerns about or anecdotes of changes to structures and services. People spoke about changes in roads and parking, along with people running races in these neighborhoods, which shut down roads. Some people also spoke about concerns about the infrastructure needing to be updated to accommodate the other changes happening in Greenville.

- **Roads**

“[We’ve seen] more traffic and more speed bumps” (HS2).

“When the city first told us all about that they were going to restructure Main Street and go from four lanes to two lanes, create parking, I think it was almost universal that most of us that lived here... our first reaction was, ‘Are you crazy?’... Within just a couple of years, we had to eat our words because that revitalization has been fantastic” (TR1).

"I just thought of something that's really negative. They had these runs around here, these 5K runs? I live in Hope Springs. I've been here 19 years. They shut the roads down, you cannot get to your house. I've had to wait a hour to get in my house before. They literally shut the roads down. You can't get in and out. My daughter had an asthma attack one day. I couldn't even get to the emergency room with her. I told a police officer, I said, "My daughter's having an asthma attack. I need to get to the emergency room." He said, "Well, that's ..." What did he say? He said, "That's ..." He said something smart to me. I finally out and cut through the neighborhood. They shut the roads down, you can't get in or out. Where I live, the roads are closed for, like, 45 minutes. That's bad" (TR1).

- **Parking**

"It's gonna be doing a lot away with a lot of free parking that had been in that government square area, too. That'll be paid parking, which has gotten ridiculous in Greenville now" (HS2).

- **Concerns**

"I think a lot of people are kind of wondering about the infrastructure, and with the rate of growth overall with all the condos going up and the apartments. You can really tell that it's gonna change quite a bit more quickly" (HS2).

## **New Development**

New development refers to buildings and homes built on land that was empty or land that had buildings torn down and rebuilt. People spoke of new development being built for new people moving in that could pay more. New development includes homes, apartment complexes, and businesses. Everyone said that they noticed increases in development in houses and businesses. They spoke about how there is a trend in building more homes on less land. People in Haynie-Sirrine mentioned new houses built for Homes of Hope. Others predicted that all the empty fields will be filled with new development in a few years.

- **Increase in Buildings and Homes**

"Most of the time, for every two lots, every two houses, when they raze the houses, that's three lots. So they're gaining a house every time" (HS2).

"They've built condos on the corner...I've noticed an apartment building just a quarter mile down the road off of Poinsett. I've seen a lot of building, a lot of growth" (TR2).

- **Homes of Hope**

"That was development by Homes of Hope, as part of the revitalization and the master plan for this area" (HS1).

- **Businesses**



“Well it has changed from being a predominantly residential area from University Ridge down 29 to Crestone Avenue, to a mixed use... A lot of businesses have moved in” (HS1).

“It [Little Texas Road] developed very much from not having nothing to having Goodwill” (TR2).

- **Future**

“You’ve got little pockets of houses being built, but by and large, there are tracts of land that used to have houses that are now just trees, fields, and probably within the next little while, 5-10 years, if not sooner, all that’s gonna be combination use, or full-blown businesses” (HS1).

“Around us a lot of houses have been torn down, nothing’s been rebuilt. We’re sort of a...there’s just a lot of vacant property. I mean I know it’s all accounted for, but it’s just sitting there, with the wonder of what’s gonna come next” (HS1).

## **Flipping Houses**

Flipping houses is when someone takes a house and renovates it just to be sold off again. People in this category talked about corporations coming in and flipping houses. People in Haynie-Sirrine spoke specifically of the South Ridge Apartments being flipped.

- **Corporations Flipping**

“South Ridge Apartments. These two will be an apartment complex. Everything back behind there in the next 5-10 years is gonna be all these half million, up to one million dollar houses they the time they finish” (HS2).

“You got a lot of investors that come here” (HS2).

## **Renovations/Remodeling**

Renovations and remodeling refer to when large companies update and beautify buildings, homes, or apartments. This can also refer to individuals who upgrade their own homes and remain living there. People in this category discussed the lack of renovations of certain Section 8 apartments; participants articulated that they believed the city thinks it is too valuable to put affordable housing there. They also predicted continuous renovations in the future. People from Travelers Rest talked about the renovations on Main Street in the last few years.

- **Renovating Apartments**

“They were going to renovate the Garden Apartments... the land got too valuable for them to put Section 8 apartments up, but that’s the only thing that can be put up on that property” (HS2).

- **Future**

“Over the next ten years, there’s going to be a billion dollar redevelopment that’s gonna take place” (HS2).

- **Renovating Downtown**

“The renovation on Main Street in the 14 years that I’ve been here” (TR2).

## **Landlord**

Landlord is the term used to identify the property owner. Participants from Haynie-Sirrine discussed landlords in a negative light citing their role in raising rents and displacing residents.

- “They have these houses that are for rent; they don’t do anything to them. The city comes along and gives them summons to fix something or to do something, they sit on that, they don’t do anything because they might have anywhere from three to six months to act before someone comes back around to really say something, and even then it’s just a reminded, or say it again. Then they fix whatever it is, door, window, roof, whatever, raise the rent a little bit, \$25, 50 the next year, and then do nothing again” (HS1).

## **Adaptation to Increased Housing Costs**

This term refers to how people have adjusted to housing costs. No one in this category volunteered that they had changed their lifestyle to accommodate changes in housing costs.

## **In-movers**

In-movers refers to anyone moving into the neighborhood. This term is used both for occupants who are actually moving in, and for occupants who are perceived to be moving in. People said there were lots of young people moving in, especially rich people, who are white. They also thought most people were moving in from out-of-state. People from these neighborhoods think that there are more people moving into the neighborhoods than moving out.

- **Young Adults**

“A lot of the younger generations are moving into the houses” (TR1).

- **Rich People**

“Wealth has come in” (HS1).

“You’re getting a different socioeconomic group of people who are buying and moving into that area” (HS2).

- **White People**

“The people who move into those houses usually are white people” (HS2).

- **Out of State**

“You have more people from out-of-state moving in” (TR1).

- **More In-Movers**

“People moving in cause there’s not a lot left to move out of. I mean in terms of older homes, especially on the Haynie side” (HS1).

“I think there are gonna be more people moving here instead of moving away” (TR2).

## **Out-movers**

Out-movers refers to the people moving out of the neighborhood for any reason. This term refers to occupants who are actually moving out and the perceptions of occupants moving out. Some people did not know where people were moving, but others listed some places they knew people had moved. Participants knew of some residents who moved because of job changes, while others moved because they wanted different housing. Others said people were “bought out” of their homes and made a profit.

- **Moving Because of Choice**

“A couple people that have moved out of the neighborhood have moved to get a yard” (HS2).

- **Moving Because of Job**

“It could also be job related or career related” (TR2).

“I’ve seen people relocate for jobs” (HS1).

- **Selling Home for Profit**

“He was ready to get out of the neighborhood because of all the growth. Plus his property value had gone up so much” (HS2).

“When people move out, they’re making lots of profits off of their houses” (TR1).

- **Uncertainty**

“I don’t have a clue” (TR1).

- **Places**

- Marietta
- Anderson County
- Williamson

## **Blight**

Blight is a term describing perceived and actual dilapidation or undesirable aspects of the neighborhood. No one in this category spoke about blight.

## **Level of Desirability**

Level of desirability is the term used to identify why people desire or do not desire to move to a neighborhood. Desirability also refers to aspects of the area that people living in the neighborhood like about it. This level is a spectrum from desirable to undesirable. Given the perception that more residents are moving into the area, participants explained that the urbanization is a huge draw and convenience to downtown Greenville. People thought that the Swamp Rabbit Trail was a huge draw. Others thought that Travelers Rest had better prices when compared to downtown, which is why people want to move there.

- **Convenience**  
“Proximity to Falls Park, to the main street, to the downtown area. That’s so popular right now” (HS2).
- **Prices**  
“Perhaps the property prices might have had something to do with the big rush to develop...I’m sure property in Travelers Rest is and was and probably forever more shall be cheaper than, say, downtown Greenville” (TR2).
- **Image**  
“Swamp Rabbit Trails...the biggest thing cause to grow, I think” (TR1).
- **Urban Center**  
“Greenville has been growing, and in the business social economic desire of the area, it has been...we are going to be, my words, but what’s happened, we’re going to be that city people want to come to, that businesses want to come to, that headquarters want to come to. We’re gonna be the bridge between Atlanta, Columbia, and Charlotte. We’re gonna put ourselves right in the middle of all this other growth that’s going on, and that’s what they’ve done” (HS1).

## **Perception of the Term “Gentrification”**

This refers to how people interpret what gentrification is and their perceptions of it. This includes if they feel positively, negatively, or torn about it. People in Travelers Rest did not know what the term meant or had never heard of it before. People in Haynie-Sirrine described it as resulting in displacement due to unaffordability. Others said that it was when more wealthy people moved into an area, changing the face of the community. One person said that gentrification is inevitable, but there are more humane ways of going about it.

- **Leading to Displacement**  
“The people who owned a lot of the land have been able to, because they have the wealth, they don’t have to scramble for their daily sustenance, so to speak. They’ve been able to just sit back and wait and let people move out, and let things drift apart, let community slowly drift out. Then they come in and through the phase or through gentrification and change, they can do what they want” (HS1).

- **For Higher Statuses**

“Gentrification means there’s a socioeconomic change that takes place in a community. Typically it goes from a lower socioeconomic level to a higher socioeconomic level, so that older, less expensive housing is replaced with newer or renovated and more expensive housing. And people who typically move into those neighborhoods are typically more affluent people...so they community transitions from one type of community to another” (HS2).

- **Demand**

“It’s inevitable...There’s the need or desire for development, but it almost borders on a mean spirited ignoring of realities of other human beings that are being affected by the movements. Not that it shouldn’t happen, it’s going to happen, but how to be more humane about it” (HS1).

- **Don’t Know**

“What does it mean?” (TR1).

## **Displacement**

Displacement is when someone is pushed out of their neighborhood because they can no longer afford the cost of living or they feel like they are no longer welcome in the community. This term refers to not only the anecdotes of displacement, but also the perceptions, worries, and fears of people being displaced. Some people discussed the forced evictions in Scott Towers. Others mentioned the disparities in the displacement of African Americans from these neighborhoods. Most people confirmed that the lower income people were also disproportionately displaced. A few individuals knew people who are concerned that they will be displaced by being “kicked off” their property by the city or a landlord.

- **Anecdotes**

“The majority of people who have moved have been displaced. They have not moved voluntarily” (HS1).

“I know Scott Towers was a huge amount of displacement” (HS1).

“With Scott Towers, I think pretty much all of those folks were displaced. They were sent to other places. I don’t know what those places are, but they [the city] actually moved them all out, tore the building down... and the Garden Apartments is the same situation” (HS2).

- **African Americans**

“At the end of the day, the dollar rules, and I think that you will tend to see continued displacement of poor folks, and African Americans, disproportionately” (HS2).

“Typically, African Americans are displaced more because these areas that we’re talking about on these maps here, where most of the change is taking place, are in the historic African American neighborhoods” (HS2).

- **Worries**

“She [a neighbor] is so terrified that somebody’s gonna run her off of her property or take her property from her” (HS2).

- **Poor**

“Travelers Rest has always pretty much had a lot of low income individuals, and I feel like a lot of those are being kind of run out” (TR1).

“It’s [renovations] chasing the lower income people out of their homes” (TR1).

## **Feelings about Neighborhood Change**

Feelings about neighborhood change refers to participants’ perceptions and reactions—both positive and negative—to the changes occurring around their neighborhoods. Similar to previous groups, many participants reported feeling pleased with the changes in their neighborhood. Some expressed concerns about displacement, but the general consensus was that “the good outweighs the bad” (TR1). A few participants stated that change was inevitable and reported feeling apprehensive about how future changes in their areas will affect them.

- “I think it’s kinda ... it’s pretty exciting to me, to see all the empty property and all these government buildings torn down, and the mixed-use housing that’s gonna be put up. I think it’s gonna be exciting times for this community” (HS2).
- “Within just a couple of years, we had to eat our words because that revitalization has been fantastic. Both with the new business, the cosmetic appeal of a small town, just everything that’s involved with it. We did not see the massive traffic jams or the backups at the traffic lights, because traffic does flow pretty smoothly there. In the future, as these housing developments continue to be built around, that could change drastically” (TR1).
- “As XXXXX says, inevitable so, okay, there’s the inevitability a lot of those houses are torn down, the neighborhood changes and so there’s ... like I initially said happy about where I live, and everything about that, but also now some apprehension I guess, about what’s coming next, around us as we watch things go in” (HS1).

## **Race/Ethnicity**

Participants were asked whether or not they have witnessed neighborhood change affecting certain races or ethnicities more than others. In Haynie-Sirrine, multiple participants reported that neighborhood change is primarily affecting minorities and blacks due to an influx of whites.

However, many participants in both areas noted that it is more an issue of socioeconomic status than of race, as illustrated below.

- “It has primarily been black residents in the area that have been affected because again, because the city is wanting to reclaim, not reclaim, has taken that area. And in that area, a lot of those houses, again going way back, were owned houses, and then they got bought up. ... But I will say this. It's been primarily low wealth people. So if you look at, not just this area, but all the areas in the Greenville area, cause that's how far I go back, if you look at all the areas in the Greenville area, it really, really doesn't matter if the neighborhood was predominantly white, mill village, they see the opportunity, they'll go in and those people will get pushed out as well. So any studies that you're doing here, I would say, make sure that it's based in low wealth, as opposed to race because the low wealth, or low income is really the target of gentrification. That's the real target, it is not racial. It becomes racial because of the people living there. But primarily it is about money, and it is about wanting what it is that this group of people have, 'cause it's happened in other neighborhoods and they've been predominantly white neighborhoods. I know that” (HS1).
- “Typically, African Americans are displaced more because these areas that we're talking about on these maps here, where most of the change is taking place, are in the historic African American neighborhoods. And so, almost all these houses that were torn down that are lots now were occupied by African Americans before. Most of the houses where your neighborhood is, that was historic African American community. Sullivan Street was historic African American community. So as the economic change starts to happen, and the prices rise, those African American folks who live in those neighborhoods are displaced because they can no longer afford to live there. And the housing, the people who move into those houses, usually are white people who take those ... buy those new houses and move in there. So you see racial change take place within those communities, not just socioeconomic. Although, they're hand in hand” (HS2).

### **Trust- Neighbors**

Neighborhood trust refers to the general sense of community and trust amongst residents in the areas of study. Generally, the participants reported a strong sense of trust in their neighborhoods. Many reported that they care for their neighbors' homes when they are out of town and that “everybody kind of looks out for everybody” (TR1).

- “And we do things like ... you see a package on someone's porch, you either move it out of sight. Like our neighbors across the road got married and went on a honeymoon. They started getting this pile of packages. We just went over and picked them up, brought them in our house. We got a couple of shared keys with our neighbor across the road. Literally, you could walk to any of the folks in our

immediate area and ask for help, and you'd get it. So it's very nice in that respect, I think" (HS2).

- "Our neighborhood's so tight, that the neighbors know each other's friends who come and go. They might not know them by name, but they'll know them by sight, they'll know them by car and say, "Okay, they're gone, that person's looking out for the house, coming into it, so that's okay, they can come and go." That type of thing. But if they aren't, we'll call each other in a skinny minute" (TR1).

### **Distrust- Neighbors-**

Participants reported feeling less trust toward renters compared to homeowners because "you don't really get to know your neighbors in a big community if they're only there for a year before they take off" (HS2). Participants also reported not trusting new neighbors who have recently moved in until they have gotten to know them. Discussion of crime and drug activity in the study areas also decreases the sense of trust in the community. In Haynie-Sirrine in particular, some participants expressed frustration because they felt their neighborhood is geographically divided by a large road which prohibits them from building an overall sense of community.

- **New Movers**

"You have more people from out-of-state moving in, and I think that makes the issue" (TR1).

"But when someone new moves in.... you don't. You gotta get to know the person. You don't know until you get to know" (TR2).

- **Haynie-Sirrine**

"When I moved to Haynie-Sirrine, I questioned how we were supposed to be a neighborhood with Haynie and Sirrine and this huge road running between us, I mean in terms of neighbors. And how do you come together as a neighborhood when you're separated" (HS1).

### **Distrust- Government**

A sense of distrust in the government refers to any time a participant expressed frustration or concerns about political entities. This was rarely discussed in the focus groups, although one participant in Haynie-Sirrine expressed the following:

- "My distrust I have is from, again I go back to that, for me it's a big thing, and is that the city and developers, and people who own the property want something, and it doesn't matter what the neighbors want. Because if they can take her portion of the community and people can go in and see, oh it's a way for us to make money, we're gonna do Airbnb, or we're gonna do this, or we're gonna buy it and we're gonna flip it. And it's all about making more, and more, and more, and money. That's where my distrust comes from so to a large extent, my distrust



is with the city and the people who want the city to continue to be bigger and bigger, and more affordable” (HS1).

## **Stress/Peace**

Stress/peace refers to the general sense of stress, or lack thereof, experienced by members of the community as a result of the changing neighborhoods. Participants described how increased traffic (both via cars and people walking) has added to their stress levels. It was also noted that stressors may vary depending on one’s age or socioeconomic status.

- **Traffic**  
“There's a lot of walk through traffic. So trash cups or that. We've had some theft off porches and that kinda thing” (HS2).
- **Age**  
“It depends on the age group of the individual. Like say, it's somebody that's lived here all their life, say, per se, and they're used to what they know. And so, new shops may heighten their stress of uncertainty, because they're used to going somewhere, and say if it's not there, say, like a building, like they were going to one building for a long time, like Martha's Hardware” (TR2).
- **Socioeconomic Status**  
“The people who used to be in the community, the residents, had the stress of, low income, property that they were renting that either the rent went up, or things weren't fixed. The change has been, again I can't get away from it cause it's there ... the change has been in Hanney Serene that wealth has come in. And oftentimes when wealth comes into an area, the stress factors change, and those stress factors are, I suppose ... I'm going to assume, shouldn't do that but I will, I'm going to assume are going to be stress factors that are more along the lines of, what kind of car am I'm going to buy, where am I gonna get my kids in school” (HS1).

## **Crime/Safety**

Crime refers to examples of crime within the community, while safety describes the general sense of security among residents. Many participants reported feeling safe in their community. Some participants in Haynie-Sirrine described a decrease in crime in recent years, which one participant attributed to the demolition of many empty homes.

- Participant 1: “I've been here almost four years, three and a half years. And my understanding is that the area's a lot safer than it used to be. ... Because where this building sits was high crime, and kind of drug infested. The people who worked here, who were here for a long time had described break ins, and a purse snatching right out here in the parking lot as the couple were leaving one evening. That's only been six or seven years ago.”

Participant 2: “That gets back to tearing, all those empty houses that are torn down where those empty lots are. It has a lot to do with that” (HS2).

- “Yeah, I feel real safe where I am. I walk downtown all the time to go eat, go to the brewery, something. It's not that far a walk, but I don't feel unsafe, at all” (TR1).

## **Transportation**

This section describes the responses of participants when asked how residents get from one destination to the next. Participants reported that they generally use cars as their primary form of transportation. The public bus is accessible in both areas, but it does not appear to be widely used.

- Participant: “I know a few people that take the bus.”  
Moderator: “Does it seem to be adequate for them?”  
Participant: “Yes. Because they work off of Augusta Road. So it's not a long bus ... it's not like their taking them really to an extremely different area” (HS1).

## **Health- Physical Activity**

This refers to opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity such as through walking or community centers. Residents of Haynie-Sirrine expressed that the area provides opportunities for walking and biking. There are also parks and gyms in close proximity. Participants in Travelers Rest described the Swamp Rabbit Trail as being beneficial for the community's health. They also mentioned the YMCA, parks, and community activities.

- **Haynie-Sirrine**  
“I think it's really good because we enjoy walking. There's lots of good walking area. He enjoys biking a lot. So you've got, if you want to take advantage for exercise kind of things, I think it's good in that sense” (HS2).
- **Travelers Rest**  
“With the Swamp Rabbit Trail, getting out riding the bikes or just walking, just right here in town, or whatnot, and walking to the different little shops, you're getting exercise and not really even feeling like your exercising” (TR2).

## **Health- Food**

This section describes availability of grocery stores and restaurants in the area. Haynie-Sirrine residents report buying food at Publix, the Walmart in Powdersville, and the new Harris Teeter. Participants in Travelers Rest mentioned buying food from the Travelers Rest Farmers Market in Trailblazer Park. According to one participant, some residents have gardens where they grow their own fruits and vegetables. Travelers Rest residents also mentioned eating at local restaurants such as Farmhouse Tacos and Monkey Wrench.

- “They're eating better. They're not going to the store for vegetables. They grow their own vegetables, they grow their own fruits. You have the convenience too, you have the land. You take advantage of the land. Naturally, you go as natural as possible, you'll get wellbeing or feel better” (TR2).

### **Health- Access to Services**

Access to services refers to the availability of healthcare and treatment within the area. There are hospitals in close proximity to both areas of study. One participant in Travelers Rest described a situation when he encountered challenges seeking healthcare. When his daughter was having an asthma attack and he tried to drive her to the emergency room, the roads were blocked because of a 5K race. He describes the situation in the quote below.

- “I just thought of something that's really negative. They had these runs around here, these 5K runs? I live in Hope Springs. I've been here 19 years. They shut the roads down, you cannot get to your house. I've had to wait a hour to get in my house before. They literally shut the roads down. You can't get in and out. My daughter had an asthma attack one day. I couldn't even get to the emergency room with her. I told a police officer, I said, "My daughter's having an asthma attack. I need to get to the emergency room." He said, "Well, that's ..." What did he say? He said, "That's ..." He said something smart to me. I finally out and cut through the neighborhood. They shut the roads down, you can't get in or out. Where I live, the roads are closed for, like, 45 minutes. That's bad” (TR1).

### **Health- Environmental Health**

This refers to any discussion of environmental factors in the neighborhood that can impact a resident's health. Participants mentioned high levels of pollen in Greenville being a contributing factor to incidence of respiratory disease. Good water quality was also discussed in respect to environmental health.

- **Water Quality**  
“Our water is fantastic here, because that is a modern, state-of-the-art, reverse osmosis water plant. Like, water out of our tap at home has a Ph of 6.9-7.1. I've never seen it vary. The parts per million of particulates in there, both the chemicals they put in, like fluorine, chlorine and all, the parts per million in our water run less than 20 parts per million, which is extremely clean” (TR1).

### **Employment in Neighborhood**

This section describes any employment opportunities discussed by participants within the study areas. In Haynie-Sirriner, employment opportunities include the Health Department, schools, restaurants, retail, and service jobs. Places of employment in Travelers Rest include Walmart, CVS, Walgreens, Goodwill, the Post Office, restaurants, and other service jobs.

- “What we see now is, we see low-end, low-quality, what they call "service jobs." You know, your burger flippers, retail sales clerks. People who get education and training for skilled labor and stuff like that, if they live in Travelers Rest, most of them that I see, the younger people that are doing very well, go into business for themselves. Be they electricians, plumbers, whatever. That doesn't mean they necessarily work in Travelers Rest, they could work all over the area” (TR1).

## **Employment outside of Neighborhood**

This section describes employment opportunities outside of the area of study. Many residents in both areas of study are perceived to be retired. For working residents, places of employment include the Greenville Health System, St. Francis Hospital, Michelin, BMW, and schools. Many of these are located in downtown Greenville, Marietta, Powdersville, and Simpsonville.

- “Could be anything from industrials like BMW, to services similar to, everything from restaurants to gyms, personnel in gyms. People in the medical field, our various hospitals, and all. They're just all sorts of places they could work. Not in Travelers Rest” (TR1).

## **Business**

Business refers to any time a participant commented on past or present businesses in the area. According to participants, both areas of study have experienced an influx of businesses in recent years. In Haynie-Sirrine, “it has changed from being predominantly a residential area from University Ridge down 29 to Crestone Avenue, to a mixed use” (HS1). Many new restaurants and small retail stores have developed on the outskirts of many residential areas; one participant called the development the “Sim-City Effect” (see below). Additionally, some participants mentioned an increase in Airbnb locations in Haynie-Sirrine. In Travelers Rest, participants noted that after Walmart opened, some smaller businesses went out of business. There are still many businesses in the area and the main street of Travelers Rest has developed significantly.

- **Sim-City Effect**  
“I call it the Sim-City effect. ... Sim-City is computer game where you build a city, and the city would prosper or not, depending on how you build it. ... Your decisions you make. Do you have transportation bus line? Do you have an industrial hub? Do you have a manufacturing hub? Do you have commercial and residential? All of these things would have to be placed strategically, because if you had too much business and not enough residential, people would move out, and nobody would work the businesses, so the businesses would fail. But yeah, sort of the Sim-City thing. Corner lot places, would land on the corner” (HS1).

## **Potential Improvements**

These are the suggestions for future changes provided by participants in each area.  
Haynie-Sirrine:

- Develop on vacant properties
- More efforts for affordability housing initiatives like “Homes of Hope”
- “I'd like I guess more engagement from these people that develop properties privately, to have some responsibility to be a part of the neighborhood, and at least engage in some dialogue with us about what their plans are for our neighborhood” (HS1).
- Build more homes
- More parks/trees
- A church in the area
- Manage overgrowth on trails/sidewalks

Travelers Rest:

- Road maintenance
- Better street lighting
- Widen some of the narrow, winding roads such as Paris View
- “Get rid of the ditches” (TR1)
- Better parking
- More transportation options (e.g., trolley)
  - Particularly for the elderly or those with disabilities

**PART 3:**  
Summary of Central Concerns  
that Emerged in Interviews  
with Community Leaders

## **Non-Profit Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This community leader has witnessed changes in the West Greenville area. The individual talked specifically of the gentrification taking place and that high-end apartments are replacing mill villages, which results in residents displaced. He/she mentioned that many people are moving to motels in Greenville. This leader believes that some change is beneficial for the city, but original respondents, especially African Americans, are being displaced and harmed. This individual talked about the changes in businesses; mom and pop shops are going out of business.

- “The positive has been a cosmopolitanism that did not exist 25 years ago and is palpable now and appreciated. The negative is, of course, long-time residents of areas such as right around us in West Greenville, those folks have now, we think, moved to the periphery of the city limits and probably right out into the county including places such as north of Berea as an example.”

### **Affordability**

The interviewee notes that because of gentrification, most low rent housing is gone in the neighborhood. The housing stock for original residents is diminishing as well. This leader addressed the issue of limited affordable housing; people in these neighborhoods are having to move because they cannot afford the increases in rent. He/she mentioned that Homes of Hope, along with other organizations, are trying to prevent further gentrification by providing affordable housing in these neighborhoods through their efforts. Affordability is directly related to housing, which he also related to one's health. This leader recognized that for an individual to be healthy, they need to have affordable housing.

- **Housing Stock**  
“The negative impact of gentrification on West Greenville for example to some degree on Viola Street and right now in Brandon is clear. In other words, housing stock for folks who have lived there for many years is now gone.”
- **Health**  
“Housing is good medicine. So, people who have stable housing by all measures across the country are healthier human beings.”

### **Leadership**

This leader spoke about stability in neighborhoods stemming directly from neighborhood leaders; he/she observed that these leaders are usually women. Strong women in the neighborhood act on behalf of their neighbors to create a strong sense of community.

- **Female Decider**  
“Usually it's a female person who is the decider in these neighborhoods who provides that leadership, who interfaces with the city or county officials.”

### **Potential Improvements**

Transportation is perceived as a major issue in this community, especially since people are being displaced farther out of the inner city limits. This leader desires more strategic public transportation and more funding for it. The leader also highlighted food deserts in the community; better food options would improve the health of residents. Finally, to push back on displacement, he/she thinks that preservation of the current housing stock for original residents is crucial.

## **Government Official**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This community leader spoke about differences in changes in the urban and rural parts of Travelers Rest; the urban area has had much more development in housing and businesses, whereas the rural area has had minimal development. He/she also mentions that these changes affect the health of residents because there are more medical services closer to the urban areas. More upper-middle class people have moved into the area, which has caused business to change their products, or even change the businesses all together. This leader spoke about some neighbors selling their homes and moving to the county because of increases in property values.

- **Rural v. Urban**

“I think they [people who live closer to the mountains] might have a new neighbor, singular, but I don’t think that they have had as much development on the outskirts as we have had in here.”

### **Affordability**

The participant felt that property values have increased in Travelers Rest. This leader did not mention people being displaced because of affordability, but he/she did express concern about exclusivity of the neighborhood due to prices rising. Most people moving in are upper-middle socioeconomic status individuals because others cannot afford to move in. This increase in more affluent individuals has led to businesses catering to higher income ‘hipsters’, not original residents.

- “Are we cutting people out?”

### **Leadership**

The influx of people affects the sense of community and trust in or knowledge of community leaders. This leader mentioned that not that many people knew who she was; people in the community are more prideful about being from Travelers Rest than in the past, but they are not as aware of the leadership and do not have the same sense of a tight knit community anymore.

### **Potential Improvements**



This leader thought that providing more funds for businesses would improve the community. The interviewee also mentioned the possible development of the Poinsett Corridor.

## **Community Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

Many changes have happened in Viola in the last few years. There has been more overall development and beautification of the area. This leader spoke about more homes being built behind the Salvation Army. The interviewee also talked about the businesses changing, namely, the extinction of the day labor businesses. With all of these new service industry businesses, there are more job opportunities in downtown Greenville.

### **Affordability**

Affordability in this neighborhood has changed as more high-income housing infiltrates the area. The participant mentioned that there was an increase in house flipping.

### **Leadership**

This leader mentioned a potential change in leadership in Greenville because many people are about to retire, which might change the trajectory of programs and partnerships.

- “I think Greenville might be getting ready for some changes in that a lot of its agencies may be changing leadership in the next few years. There’s just a lot of us that are approaching retirement age.”

### **Potential Improvements**

The two main improvements for this area would be better public transportation and more affordable housing. The participant also mentioned the desire for more community spaces where people of all backgrounds can interact, like a coffee shop.

## **Community Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This community leader spoke about the changing demographics of the neighborhood and mentioned that more immigrants were moving into the area. The participant also talked about more owners in the neighborhood than renters. Finally, this leader expressed frustration and disappointment in the lack of engagement and comradery in the community. The interviewee also perceived police surveillance to be increasing and overall crime decreasing.

- “Everybody just wants to stay by themselves.”

### **Affordability**

Even though the majority of the neighborhood is perceived to be owners, the few that are renters have are perceived as having been negatively affected by rising rents. During the interview, we witnessed a family moving out because of eviction. They could not afford to live in the neighborhood any longer.

- “[They] haven’t paid their rent, so they’re being moved in a negative way. I don’t know where they’ll go.”

### **Potential Improvements**

Adding a bus stop in the neighborhood would be beneficial for residents to commute to work.

## **Community Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This community leader spoke of the increasing changes in the area (specifically a neighborhood classified as at ongoing gentrification), especially in zoning and demographics. The perception is that African Americans are moving out, and more white people are moving in. Revitalization is seen as positive (and community-driven), whereas gentrification is perceived as negative (imposed from the outside). The perception is that zoning is integral to the distinction. This leader works to prevent certain commercial investors from buying up land, because he/she this outside influence can result in displacement and evictions. The interviewee also talked about the influx of investor groups vs. individual property owners.

- **Investors as Landlords**  
“It used to be investors that would be landlords like and individual landlord. Now, it’s more groups, investment groups.”
- **Zoning**  
“The rezoning of single family residents to be able to have multi family... but when we see investors and more commercial investors buying property inside of our neighborhood then we know this type of rezoning is getting ready to change the trajectory of where this community and where we would like the values of this community to stay.”

### **Affordability**

This leader talked about property values increasing, as well as rents and taxes rising. He/she talked about investors coming into the community and dehumanizing residents. This participant referred to the phenomenon as a tsunami effect because it is not a small population of people or investors participating in this development, but the entire community. According to this interviewee, investors are essentially forcing long-term homeowners out.

- **Property Values**

“And of course, houses, 10, 20 times the value of previous, just in the last five years.”

- **Tsunami Effect**

“As the tide lifts, everything is lifted. I don’t see it as a tide being lifted. I see it more of as a tsunami... I see it as a disconnect from humans to just cash cows.... I mean it’s a very disconnect from people who are rooted in the area, have been part of a certain area. Their jobs were in certain distances from that area; those people are being displaced without any structure.”

### **Potential Improvements**

This leader thinks there needs to be a better bus system to get people to where they work, and he also talks about the need for better jobs to be available to support residents.

## **Government Official**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

According to this participant, there has been an influx of businesses and residents in recent years in the Simpsonville community. Many in-movers are perceived as coming from northern states such as New Jersey and Ohio and are attracted by the lower tax rates in the area. Other than perceiving a decrease in the homeless population, this community leader does not see a large population moving out of Simpsonville. According to the interviewee, churches and schools have played a significant role in the growth in Simpsonville. Other changes in the area include the construction and expansion of restaurants and large businesses.

### **Affordability**

Property values are perceived to be rapidly increasing, and homes do not stay on the market for long. In addition to increased property values, the general affluence of the population has also increased. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are working to provide more affordable options for the community.

- **Increased Property Values and High Demand**

“Simpsonville’s a hot commodity right now when it comes to housing especially. Whenever you can put a house on the market and 48 hours later it’s gone, you’re in the right spot. As far as the price goes, we are one of the more affluent areas in Greenville County, so of course we’re going to have a larger increase when it comes to our housing prices, as opposed to say Travelers Rest or Greer.”

- **Affluence**

Simpsonville has always been affluent “but not as much to this degree. I mean whenever you can move a million-dollar home and nobody bat an eye about it, yeah. It's really coming full circle right now I think.”

- **Organizations**

Habitat for Humanity “really gives the people the opportunity to have home ownership in this area where normally you couldn't even buy a little bungalow down in the mill village. I think that's going to help as well, just with the diversity of our area and everything.”

### **Potential Improvements**

One of the biggest stressors faced by Simpsonville residents is traffic. To help alleviate this issue, this community leader suggested improving traffic flow using the results of current road studies being conducted by SCDOT. Another suggestion was to create an educational course available to residents that teaches essential life skills such as how to balance a checkbook.

- **Traffic**

“It's stressful just to go across town from here to my house, and I live less than two miles away, but I mean it's stressful to get involved in that much traffic and everything. Yeah, I mean traffic is a huge part of it.”

- **Life Skills Course**

“We have a section of our community that I feel like could benefit from just life skills... [like] how to balance a checkbook. How to pay your bills.”

## **Community Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

Recent changes in the area have been perceived as positive. This leader and his church invested money in an effort to create transitional housing in the area, which has resulted in a more diverse population. New businesses have also been established including restaurants, offices, and establishments associated with the arts district.

- **Positive Changes**

“No, not negative. Everything has been going ... It's either been leveled out or either is going to follow it. We haven't seen any digression. Everything has been moving forward.”

- **Diversity**

“We can't build a strong community with all low-income people and all. If we want a strong community, we need to mix it up. We need to have low income, middle income, upper income people. We have to have blacks, whites, Hispanics, or whatever else. In other words, racial diversity-centered. If we're going to have a strong community, a good community, we need a community that has a lot of that, and so I made ... I put forth a special effort to try to diversify our community, race wise, and social wise, etc. I think that has proven to be ... I don't think I know

it has proven to be a tremendous asset, and a tremendous, what do I want to say? A tremendous asset, but it has made the difference.”

### **Affordability**

According to this community leader, West Greenville has experienced and is still experiencing gentrification. He/she sees that there is a “need for improvement” in the community and stated that it would not be good for these areas or properties to “simply go under.” The participant then emphasized the need to find a balance between the benefits and consequences of gentrification.

### **Potential Improvements**

This leader hopes to see an elimination of the substandard housing that still remains in the area.

- “Apart from elimination of what few substandard housings or housings that's not up to par ... Apart from seeing them cleared out and all, West Greenville is doing well.”

## **Community Leader**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This area has experienced an expansion of Main Street and the construction of new infrastructure such as the Kroc Center and the Greenville Drive Stadium. In terms of businesses, many “mom and pop” shops seem to have gone out of business due to increased rent, and larger chains have moved in. Within the neighborhoods, there is a perceived influx of higher-income residents who can afford new or renovated homes, which has increased the cost of living for many. There is a sense of stress among some residents who fear having to leave their homes. There has also been a perceived decrease in neighbor interaction among new and wealthier neighbors.

- **Stress**  
“They don't feel secure at all. And I wonder what you would feel like if every day of your life you didn't know if you were gonna be where you live right now. ... imagine every day wondering whether you're gonna have to call the U-Haul truck to find another place. That's the stress they live in.”
- **Neighbor Interaction**  
“We have porches where we sit on it in the afternoon and catch up with each other. Whereas these other houses [of in-movers] have two or three car garages that are all closed in, everybody's closed up, the blinds are drawn. They're tired after work, and they stay inside with their TV or whatever it is they might do. So it's a very different economic class also very different lifestyle choice. And I don't think the value of neighbor is held by the newcomers.”

## **Affordability**

There has been a perceived increase in disparity between old homes and new homes in the area, with new homes becoming less affordable for many residents. The interviewee noted that some residents have had to move out due to lack of affordability and because of eviction due to new ownership. This leader hopes to see more efforts to create affordable and workplace housing. The church where this leader works has acquired and rehabbed 12 nearby homes and rents them on a sliding scale according to tenant salary to provide more affordable housing options for residents.

- **Housing Costs**

“So a house here that goes for 30 or 40 thousand dollars is being replaced by a house that goes for \$750,000... And this is not one house. This is many homes. And there's a new proposal on our block for nine more.”

- **Displacement**

“Within a month or two of rent, they get a letter saying, “You need to be out. If you can be out in 30 days, we’ll give you a thousand dollars. And we don’t have a place for you.”

## **Potential Improvements**

This leader provided many suggestions for future improvements.

- Disconnect median income and affordable housing  
“So we’d love to see that median income and affordable housing law separated so that median income did not affect the term-affordable house, allowing a more mixed community than what happens now.”
- Better city planning for senior housing
- Legal advocacy for the poor
- The church wants the city to agree to “sequester from the market homes for 2,500 workforce individuals or families” and elderly poor. “[W]ithout that, it’s immoral and unethical development.”
- “I think anything Furman and the United Way can do to build a coalition of protectors that replace government when government no longer provides and protects its poorest members ... I think the citizenry has to just simply rise up and do what the government won’t. If the government won’t work fast, we have to get in there and work instead of them to acquire properties and rebuild homes to have workforce housing.”
- More food options because it is a food desert

## **Non-Profit Leader (Greater Greenville)**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This area has witnessed a perceived improvement in infrastructure and a reduction in crime over the last two decades. Efforts between the city of Greenville and Homes of Hope have

resulted in the elimination of dead-end streets and the construction of new homes closer to sidewalks to encourage people to interact with their neighbors. Efforts by multiple parties originally focused on restoring blighted homes, have been positive. However, the strong housing market has meant that some parties are buying any type of housing available and more expensive housing is going in its place. Overall, this leader believes that most of the changes in the area have been positive, but there have been negative unintended consequences as well.

- “[T]he market started coming in and buying up boarded up houses or vacant property and building expensive housing in there which scared everybody. And now it's gotten to the point where they're buying up housing that's not necessarily blighted. It's just anybody's house that's willing to sell it.”
- **Negative Consequences**  
“A lot of drastic changes over the years have 75% of them been good. Maybe 80 or 90, I don't know. But the unintended consequences are pretty scary for the neighborhood now that they feel like they're losing control.”
- “I've certainly seen the businesses change in terms of the price point of restaurants in the area. They've gone up the roof. I've heard many of our neighborhood folks say those restaurants aren't for me. I can't pay.”

### **Affordability**

Due to the perception of high demand and a strong market, the price of homes has seemingly increased significantly over recent years. The participant cites that for renters and people on fixed incomes, gentrification and neighborhood change can make taxes and housing costs unaffordable. This leader knows of some renters who have been displaced because they can no longer afford their rent.

- **Strong Market**  
“The market is so strong they're buying and tearing down some of those houses, building we're talking five to eight hundred thousand-dollar houses in a neighborhood that the average house price when we started working there was fifty thousand dollars. So, it scared everybody, like, "What's happening to our neighborhood?”

### **Potential Improvements**

This leader wants to see more affordable housing that “looks like everybody else's housing,” but with “cheap money not cheap materials.” He/she hopes to see the city and county get more involved in efforts to solve the affordable housing problem. For example, he/she wants both the city and the county to issue more bonds for affordable housing developers, which he/she believes could benefit all parties involved. Additionally, because jobs are essential to help people out of poverty, he recommends establishing more workforce development programs in low-income neighborhoods.

## **Government Official (Greater Greenville)**

### **Neighborhood Changes**

This community leader has witnessed a six-fold increase in people seeking housing assistance in recent years. The organization has also been receiving more calls from employers whose employees are struggling with housing.

- “We've always, traditionally, have served the lower-tier service sector folk. But now it's people who are, they are working, but they just cannot seem to get ahead.”

### **Affordability**

Many people are seeking help because they are being priced out of the rental market because fair market rates established by the federal government aren't keep pace with the actual market.

### **Potential Improvements**

This leader suggested creating workforce housing for the “missing middle” who can afford to pay more than many others can for housing, but who still qualify for vouchers for a small portion of their rent.