

Peoplestown

**Discovery, Strategic Investment
Options and Policy Recommendations**

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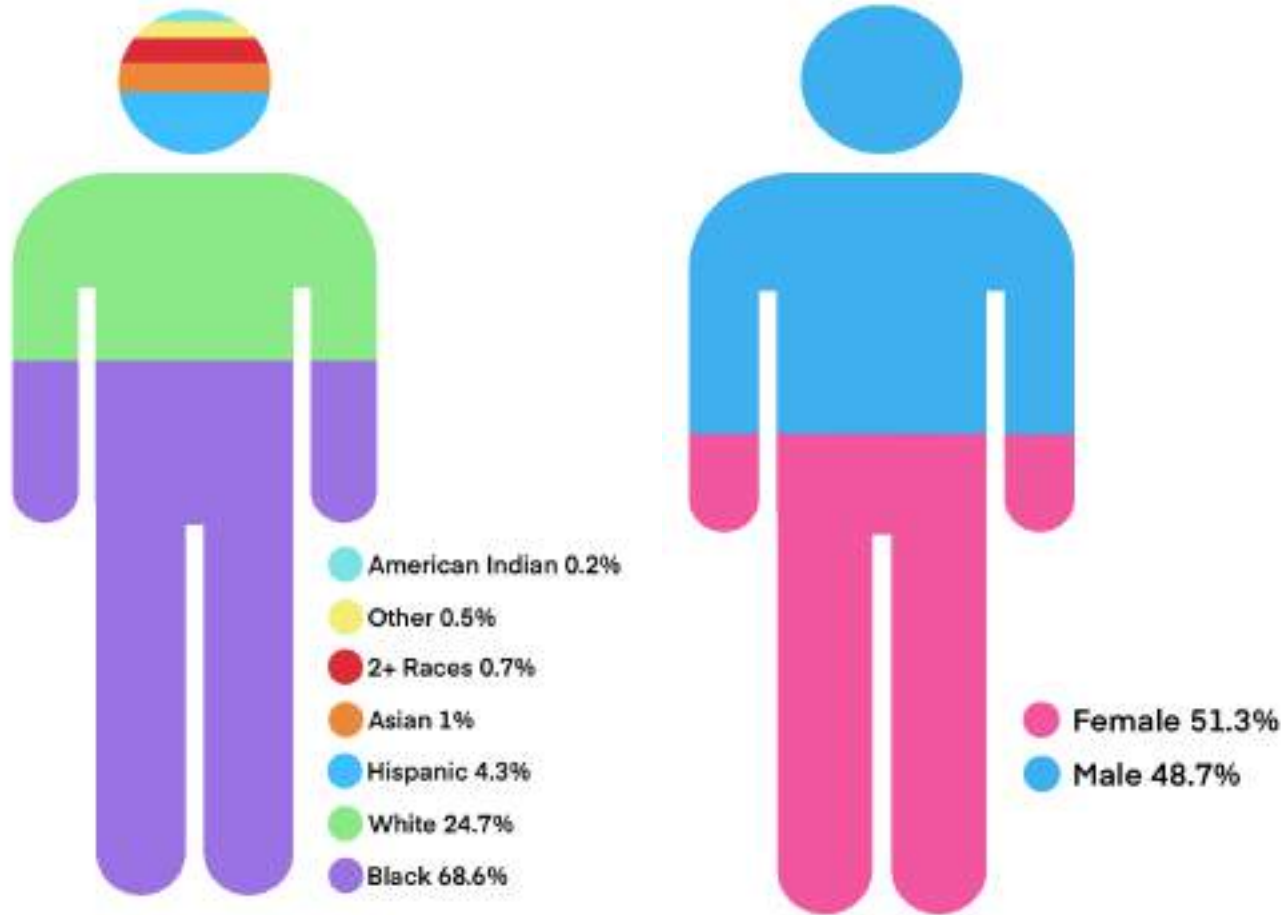


Google Maps

Phase 1 – Discovery

Demographics

Peoplestown Population: Race, Gender, and Age Breakdown



- Population: 2,757
 - Increased by 5.5% since 2010
- Predominately Black with growing diversity in recent years
- Median age:
 - Women: 34.3
 - Men: 28.6

Peoplestown housing reflects both high property values and economic challenges

- Median Household Income: \$36,436 (Nat. \$75,149)
- Median Home Value: \$435,109 (Nat. \$281,900)
- Median Rent: \$957 (Nat. \$1,268)
 - 69% Renters
- Families with Children: 27%
- Housing Units: 13,151
- Vacancy Rate: 13%



Home on the market for \$550,000



Home off the market across the street

Peoplestown faces educational challenges

- Education attainment:
 - 15% Master's+, 25% Bachelor's, 33% HS Diploma
- Barack and Michelle Obama Academy
 - 97% Black Enrollment
 - Math & Reading Proficiency: 10-14%
 - Bottom 50% in GA
- Middle and high schools are in nearby neighborhoods
- Improving education:
 - Freedom School
 - Sheltering Arms Early Education Center
 - Youth on the Move

Barack and Michelle Obama Academy



Cooper Carry

Crime in Peoplestown is slightly elevated in comparison to the City of Atlanta

- Higher rate of crime against people and property in relation to population size
- Not concentrated in any one area
- Higher per capita crime
- Crimes within the neighborhood in 2024:
 - against people: 81 | against property: 150 | against society: 56
- Contextual comparison within Atlanta:
 - against people: 6.9k | against property: 25.2k | against society: 4.2k



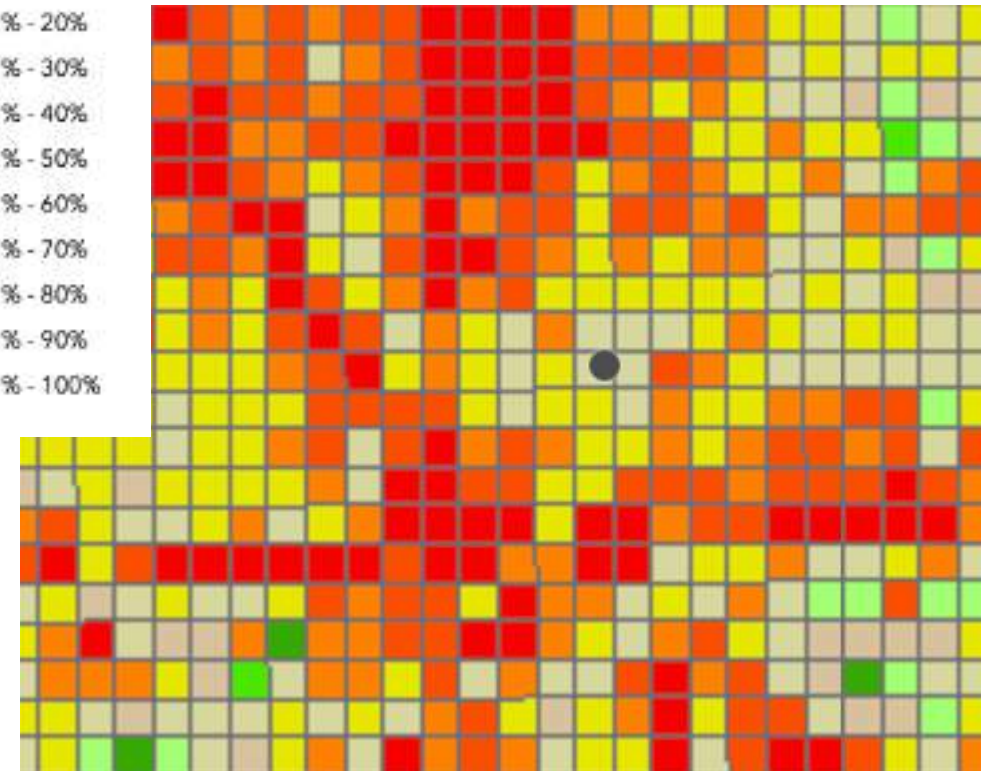
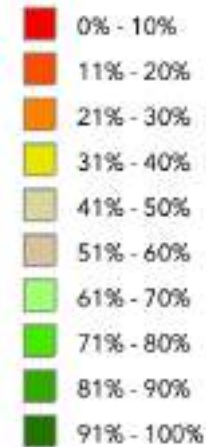
Crime Map in Peoplestown (2024 as of Nov 22)

Peoplestown faces environmental challenges

- Current tree canopy: 40%
- Slightly below Atlanta's 48% tree canopy
- Air Quality Index: Moderate levels; impacted by the proximity to major highways
- High flood risk due to low-laying areas and aging stormwater systems

UTC Grid 2018

Grid2018



Tree cover in Peoplestown

History

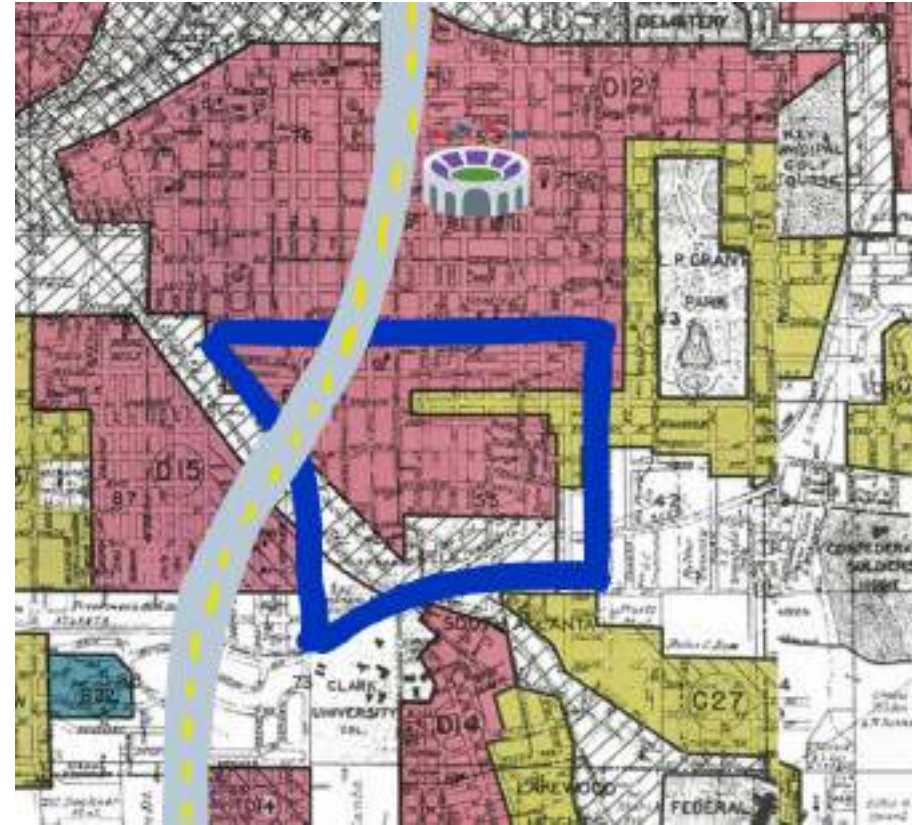
Peoplestown's story started out racialized

- Peoplestown was built in 1885 along electric rail
- Designed as an intentionally segregated neighborhood
- Automobiles in the 1920s and 30s allowed white people to move out and drive in to the downtown resources
- Over the next three decades, Peoplestown became a stable middle and lower-class black neighborhood



Highway construction signaled the apex of devitalization

- Construction of the downtown connector tore down 110 homes
- The highway separated Peoplestown from surrounding resources
- The Washington-Rawson Urban Renewal project soon followed, tearing down 34 more homes in Peoplestown, and hundreds nearby
- These projects displaced large portions of the community, and disadvantaged those remaining



1930's HOLC map with Peoplestown boundary, and highway and stadium location overlay

The Beltline proposal kickstarted revitalization

- Along with Mechanicsville, the announcement of the Beltline project inspired investment
- DH Stanton park was remodeled
- New housing developments
- Influx of revitalization organizations working in the area
- Renewed push for neighborhood identity



Stanton Park^



Columbia Peoplestown Apartments

Despite improvement efforts, the turmoil continues

- Flooding in 2012 sowed distrust in city government– not resolved until 2022
- Discontent over gentrification, especially with Terminal South Development
- Despite gentrification, statistics continue to show Peoplestown is a distressed neighborhood



Courtesy of Peoplestown Parks Org ^



Terminal South new development ^

Assets and Deficits

The accessibility to necessities within the Peoplestown neighborhood addresses inequities seen in other parts of Atlanta

- The Southside Medical Center provides multiple services to serve Peoplestown and the Southern region of the City of Atlanta
- Peoplestown has Family Food Mart, and Stadium Grocery, and a close proximity to Publix



Source: Commonwealth Radiology

Peoplestown's culture and location allows the residents to be more interconnected to each other and the City

- Rick McDevitt Youth Center provides a safe haven for the neighborhood's youth
- Stanton Park and Four Corners Park are easily accessible to residents in the neighborhood
- The Beacon provides a multiuse space of restaurants, art studios, and markets for service employment opportunities and money circulation
- Close proximity to the Southside Beltline Trail



Pictured: Rick McDevitt Youth Center

Pictured: The Beacon

Despite a strong neighborhood culture, challenges persist

- The built infrastructure is unsafe for residents to walk through the neighborhood
- With development projects, housing becomes more expensive, making gentrification a growing concern
- Homicide rates are four times the national average
- Lack of higher paying jobs within the neighborhood



Crew Street (West of Hank Aaron Dr.)



Dunning Street (East of Hank Aaron Dr.)

Phase 2 – Strategic Investment Options

The Vision

Coordination is necessary for Peoplestown's success

- Envision an official neighborhood plan
- Clear goals and routes for communication with the city
- Clear neighborhood culture with history preservation
- One central coordinating board
 - There are currently many individual actors at play, in contrast to Purpose Built or FCS

marta



**HOUSING
JUSTICE
LEAGUE**



**THE
PEOPLESTOWN
PROJECT**

Some of the organizations involved ^

Key infrastructure gaps need to be filled

- Literal infrastructure like sidewalks and drainage
- Relational Infrastructure: Connections to city policymakers and law enforcement
- Economic Infrastructure: Availability of higher paying jobs and any necessary training
- Educational Infrastructure: School improvement plan



Some literal infrastructure gaps



Peoplestown needs closer relationships with the city

- Relationships with policy makers to have a say in plans affecting the neighborhood
- Relationships with law enforcement for neighborhood health
- Relationships with partners of the city for access to opportunities



Peoplestown residents protest city decisions they felt ignored by

The utilization of the commercial spaces for more sustained economic development is imperative

The Beacon & Terminal South

- Designate a percentage of the nine vacant spaces in The Beacon for small businesses
- Ensuring the rental spaces in Terminal South are affordable to small business owners

Small Business Support/Creation

- Educating potential small business owners about the resources from Invest Atlanta



Pictured: Terminal South

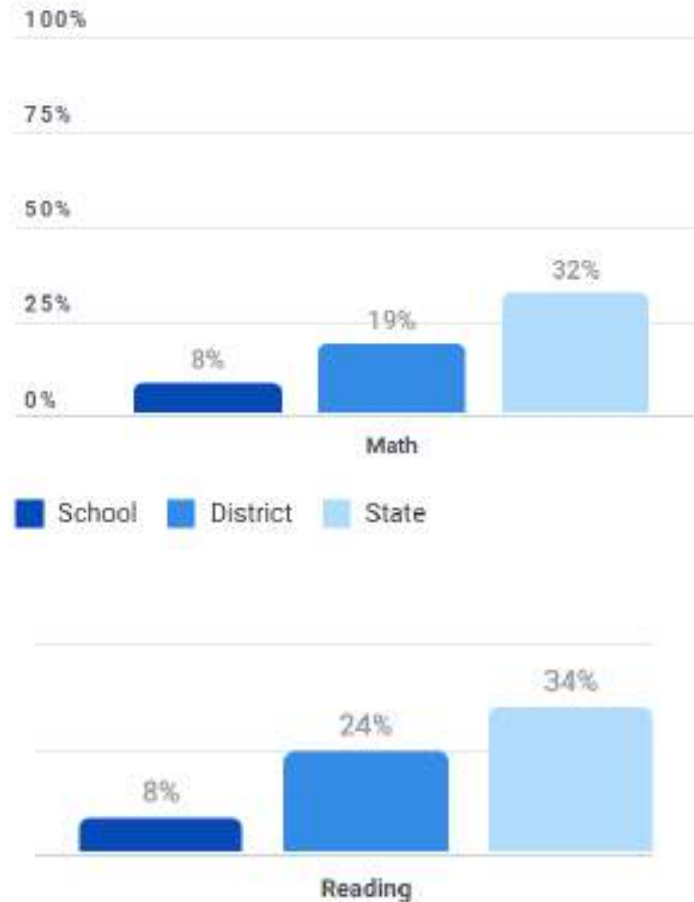
While there is limited vacant space within Peoplestown, its location is optimal to address gaps

- Proximity to the Rick McDevitt Youth Center provides an opportunity to address educational gaps
- Proposal: Building a new Atlanta Technical College Early Education Center
 - Age of attendance is from six weeks old to five years old
 - Has partnerships around Atlanta and Georgia, so funding is already secured



Pictured: Current ATL Tech. College

Community engagement in local school will build a strong foundation



Subject proficiency for Barack and Michelle Obama Academy, the Atlanta Public school district, and the state of Georgia

- Engage local businesses to sponsor school programs, events, and facility upgrades to enhance the learning environment
- Increase student enrollment and community involvement in Freedom Schools to further boost literacy
- Targeted tutoring and mentorship programs
- Encourage community volunteers to help with classroom activities and student support

Prioritizing accessibility will be the difference between revitalization and gentrification

- Long time community members are involved in governing neighborhood board and have a say in neighborhood vision
- Local small business owners are supported and prioritized for new economic development
- New housing developments are designed to be accessible
- High paying jobs are brought in intentionally for members of the community to be trained for



Community artwork in Peoplestown



Neighborhood branding should reflect improvements as well as culture

- Hosting and marketing neighborhood and city events
- Marketing local businesses
- Marketing neighborhood improvement programs to continue support and funding
- Historical narratives preservation projects
- Investing in and sharing community artwork

Sprit, Family and Community sculpture by local artist >



< Atlanta Streets Alive, city-wide event boosting local businesses and showcasing neighborhoods

Peoplestown is evolving; policy can help it grow sustainably and equitably

- Establish neighborhood leadership organization – pulling from individuals already involved
- Fill literal, relational, economic, and educational infrastructure gaps – taking advantage of what is already here
- Push involved actors to make new economic and housing opportunities accessible to the community
- Market neighborhood strengths in a way that honors culture and history

