Measuring Revitalization: A Step-by-Step Guide for Evaluating Neighborhood Conditions and Grove Park Foundation's Community Impact

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Executive Summary

Grove Park is a large, historic Atlanta neighborhood situated to the southwest of Westside Reservoir Park along Proctor Creek. Over the past decade, city investments in parks and recreation infrastructure surrounding the neighborhood have led to increased potential and actual capital investment, adding new challenges to existing symptoms of systemic underinvestment in Grove Park and other formerly redlined Westside neighborhoods. The confluence of these factors motivated the city's place-based revitalization effort targeting 7 Atlanta neighborhoods for investments in housing, health, education, economic development, and public infrastructure. Collaborating with the Department of City Planning and the Grove Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA), the Grove Park Foundation (GPF) is leading the neighborhood's revitalization effort with a focus on five core pillars: housing, real estate, economic mobility, health, and education. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework following this memo is tailored to the five pillars and includes metrics that will assist GPF in measuring the impact of their revitalization efforts. The KPIs were chosen for their alignment with GPF's objectives to promote economic revitalization in Grove Park while preserving the neighborhood's character and amplifying the needs of existing residents. Using existing GPF and Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) publications, as well as literature from community development nonprofits engaged in similar work, the Step-by-Step Guide was developed to provide a replicable, scalable framework for evaluating GPF's progress toward inclusive and sustainable neighborhood revitalization.

KPI Methodology

KPIs were selected based on their relevance to GPF's key pillars, alignment with specific program objectives, and ability to meaningfully convey information in an easily understandable yet meaningful way. We provided two to three comprehensive KPI's per pillar with the required inputs for calculations. Our project scope was limited due to timing and resourcing constraints, so data has not been input to calculate each KPI. Our deliverable operates as a framework, and in cooperation with the ARC as mentioned in our recommendations below, it can transition into a strategic data-driven approach to communicate neighborhood revitalization achievements by GPF.

Each pillar is designed to demonstrate community purpose, inform storytelling, and highlight changes in resource allocation. While each KPI captures different aspects of community wellbeing, together they collectively reflect the lived experiences and challenges faced by residents - such as displacement rate, housing mix changes, and chronic disease prevalence. Metrics like rent relief access, public infrastructure investment, and revitalization fund reflect how resources and funding have been prioritized, ensuring that the foundation can address urgent community needs. These measures allow the foundation to make informed

decisions about where resources should be focused to create a sustainable and equitable impact. Further, as the foundation aims to serve community needs, and the changes within them, we incorporate values such as free breakfast access, clinic availability, and needs coverage to reflect community equity and the foundation's ability to address tangible service needs.

The components informing each KPI intentionally excluded multiple potential inputs in an effort to provide a concise framework and ensure the deliverables' sustainability. Information was excluded if existing KPI's captured an identical or adjacent metric (i.e., transportation reliability rate for both health and housing KPI's). This exclusion allowed us to reduce redundancy throughout KPIs and across pillars. We further disregarded information that may be difficult to measure accurately and consistently, such as informal employment opportunities. Each metric was intentionally selected to Grove Park's neighborhood profile and the foundation's objectives, so information not central to capturing tangible and meaningful changes was not incorporated.

Our framework aims to influence program strategy by capturing dynamic challenges, targeted interventions, and long-term solutions. By identifying where disparities are currently concentrated, metrics can influence targeted interventions that address pressing challenges, such as banking access and food desert presence, ensuring programs are not only reactive but also proactive. Our focus on short-term metrics - rent relief access, average daily school attendance, and clinic availability- emphasizes acute community needs that directly affect individuals' wellbeing and equitable access to resources. We address long-term community needs through the incorporation of intergenerational title transfer rates, tax revenue rates, and average lifespan of businesses and individuals in comparison to adjacent counties. These metrics address infrastructure and health challenges that can only be addressed with longstanding and systematic changes within the community.

Recommendations

Due to timing and resourcing constraints, our team was not able to fully implement data collection and analysis for the selected KPIs. To ensure that this framework remains actionable and sustainable, we have developed a step-by-step guide for GPF to continue the community needs assessment beyond the scope of our work.

The first step is to define and standardize Grove Park's geographic boundaries. We observed discrepancies between how the neighborhood is outlined in official city datasets and how it is defined by residents and the Foundation. These inconsistencies are common in neighborhood-level analysis and can lead to inaccurate or incomplete data interpretation. GPF should review available GIS shapefiles from the City of Atlanta and ARC to determine an appropriate boundary, reconcile any gaps between community and administrative definitions, and adopt one consistent version for internal use. Documenting this choice will support transparency and continuity in future data collection efforts.

The second step is to reaffirm the values used to select and prioritize KPIs. These values ensure that each indicator serves a distinct purpose: capturing the lived experience of residents,

helping the Foundation tell the story of change, and showing where resources are flowing. KPIs aligned with community purpose reflect issues residents care about most. Storytelling-oriented indicators support communication of impact. Resource-focused KPIs reveal where funding or services are being distributed and where gaps remain. These guiding principles can be used to refine the current list of KPIs and guide future adaptations as needs evolve.

The third step is to gather and organize the relevant data. GPF can begin by drawing from existing sources, including the ARC Open Data Hub, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, City of Atlanta Open Data Portal, Fulton County health and housing reports, and Atlanta Public Schools. If data gaps remain, qualitative methods such as community surveys, interviews, and focus groups can provide additional insight. This mixed-methods approach ensures that the KPIs reflect both statistical trends and resident perspectives.

The fourth step is to build a simple and consistent system for storing and tracking data. A spreadsheet or cloud-based tool such as Google Sheets or Airtable can be used to begin this process. Over time, GPF may consider transitioning to visualization platforms like Tableau or Power BI to support real-time tracking and reporting. Establishing standard procedures for entering, updating, and reviewing data will strengthen accuracy and reduce duplication.

The final step is to create an internal review process for evaluating and refining KPIs over time. We recommend an annual check-in to assess whether each KPI still aligns with GPF's goals, reflects current community conditions, and supports decision-making. Feedback from residents, community partners, and Foundation staff should inform any changes. This ensures that the framework remains flexible, relevant, and community driven. While our team was not able to complete implementation, we believe this structure offers a practical and mission-aligned pathway for GPF to advance its work. This step-by-step approach enables long-term tracking of neighborhood revitalization while centering equity, local voice, and measurable impact.

Conclusion

Recent investment in Grove Park and in public infrastructure surrounding the neighborhood creates new opportunities but also unforeseen challenges which need continuous monitoring and evaluation. GPF must be able to quantitatively measure the impact of its interventions and track its progress toward the goals within the organization's 5 pillars. Data collection and real-time tracking tools like the ones suggested in our recommendations will help GPF address urgent needs and can inform the organization's long-term programmatic planning.

However, data collection for community-run organizations like GPF can be challenging and must be wary of the ethical dilemmas and social limitations involved in surveying at the household-level. It is for this reason we designed our KPIs to measure place-based metrics that indicate broader trends in the neighborhood and can largely use inputs from existing city-level and census data hubs, given consistent boundaries across these organizations are identified. We hope the KPI framework provided here as well as our data collection, maintenance, and program-review recommendations serve as a foundation for a sustainable and effective monitoring system quantitatively tracking neighborhood conditions, resident needs, and the impact of GPF's work.

KPI FRAMEWORK

Pillar 1: Economic Mobility

KPI: Business & Community Development		
Definition:	Indicators and factors influencing business growth	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Property/Lease values + Change	Average yearly price of a lease for an open business space	Total Price of all Leases/ Number of Businesses
Percentage of businesses involved in revitalization efforts	Percent of businesses with at least one employee or representative involved in Grove Park revitalization efforts	Business Count /Total Number of businesses
Growth in retail rates	Sales for all businesses located in Grove Park	(Current Period Sales - Prior Period Sales) / Prior Period
New businesses added	Count of new businesses located within the boundaries by 2024	Count of qualifying Businesses
High-Investment business added	Number of new employers with high-paying jobs (Jobs paying above the median income in the city of Atlanta)	Count of qualifying Businesses
Revitalization Fund Usage	Percent of revenue from Grove Park community events (Park) that is utilized for community revitalization	Community revitalization costs/Community event Revenue

KPI: Business Sustainability		
Definition:	Indicators and factors influencing business turnover	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Business turnover per year	An average of the total amount of money a business receives from the sale of goods or services over a year	Sum of all businesses' revenue/ Number of Businesses
Closure Rate	Percent of businesses that closed in 2024 relative to the total number of operating businesses	$(Close_{2024} - Close_{2023})/ Close_{2024}$
Average lifespan of small businesses	Average length of time small businesses (i.e., excluding chains or major corporations) have stayed in business	Total number of Days in Business/ Number of small Businesses
Private to public business ratio	Proportion of businesses that are public services to businesses that are privately owned & operated	Number of private businesses: Number of public businesses
Needs coverage	An indicator of whether there is at least one bank, medical clinic, dentist, school (all levels), grocery store, and day care center within the boundaries	(0,1) for each; Average

KPI: Employment Opportunities		
Definition:	Indicators and factors influencing local employment rates	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Change in Unemployment Rate	Unemployment rate for residents over 18	Total of unemployed individuals/ total number of people in the labor force
Net new jobs	Total sum of jobs from any employer or industry added in 2024	Number of jobs created - Number of jobs eliminated
Median Household Income Growth Rate	Percent increase or decrease in median household income from 2023 to 2024	$(MHI_{2024} - MHI_{2023})/ MHI_{2024}$
Change in Poverty Rate	Percent of individuals living at or below the national poverty rate	$(Poverty_{2024} - Poverty_{2023})/ Poverty_{2024}$
Average Length of Job Held	Estimate of the average time individuals have been in the current or previous job	Average of the total length of time in days at employment
Average Starting Salary	Average starting salary for employment opportunities in Grove Park	Starting salary for current job
Credit/Banking Access	Percentage of households with a bank account, including the number of banks in the neighborhood, (change in banking access)	Number with bank account access/ total number of families

Pillar 2: Education

KPI: Education Participation & Engagement		
Definition:	Indicators and factors influencing education participation/access and engagement in school activities	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Average Daily Attendance Rate	Average attendance rate as a measure of educational participation of students in schools serving Grove Park	Avg. number of present days/total school days in year
Pre-K Enrollment & Change in Pre-K enrollment (KIPP expansion effect)	Proportion of population aged 3 years and younger in an Early Head Start Program, percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in a Georgia state-funded Pre-K program, and population 3-5 years of age (excluding kindergarteners) enrolled in a Head Start program as a measure of resident participation in early childhood education and effect of KIPP school	(# >3 y/o, # 4 y/o, & # 3-5 y/o) / (total age group population) for each program
Free/Reduced Pre-K Access	Number of free/reduced Pre-K programs (Early Head Start, Head Start, Georgia Pre-K program) serving Grove Park neighborhood as a measure of resident access to early childhood education	Raw number of free or reduced Pre-K programs in 5-mile radius
Extracurricular Program Participation	Proportion of students enrolled in schools serving Grove Park registered for a school-sponsored extracurricular program as a measure of extracurricular access and participation	Number of extracurricular-registered students/total students

KPI: School Health & Stability		
Definition:	Indicators of the health and stability of the school environment and level of school resource-access	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
High School Graduation Rate	Proportion of on-time graduates in high schools serving Grove Park to assess high-school completion rate	(Number of graduates) / (number of first-time entering ninth graders 4 years prior) *excluding transfers
Annual Teacher Turnover Rate	Proportion of teachers retained each year in schools serving Grove Park as a measure of teacher-transiency/turnover	(Number of teachers at end of school year) / (number of teachers at beginning of school year) *excluding retirees, mid-year replacements, and end of year new hires
Average Teacher-to-Student Ratio	Average teacher-to-student ratio in elementary, middle, and high schools serving Grove Park (compare to city, state, and national average)	Avg. number of students per class

KPI: School & Student Resources		
Definition:	In-school and student resources/resource-accessibility	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
In-school Counselor Access	Whether schools serving Grove Park have an on-site, full-time school counselor	Dichotomous (yes/no) variable measuring number of schools with/without an in-school counselor
Free Breakfast Access	Number of schools serving Grove Park that offer daily free breakfast	Dichotomous (yes/no) variable measuring number of schools with/without free breakfast
Advanced Placement (AP) Curriculum Access	Proportion of national AP curricula offered at high schools serving Grove Park	(Number of AP courses offered) / (number of courses in national AP curricula portfolio)
Extended Day Access	Number of elementary and middle schools serving Grove Park that offer extended day after-school programming	Dichotomous (yes/no) variable measuring number of schools with/without extended day
Reliable Transportation	Proportion of students with reliable access to transportation to and from school by bus, public transportation, car, or another means of transportation	(Number of students with reliable transportation) / (total students)

Pillar 3: Health

KPI: Community Health Access		
Definition	Measures the ability of Grove Park residents to obtain needed health services, including primary, mental, and emergency care	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Clinic Availability	Number of clinics or health centers within Grove Park, Percentage of residents with access to reliable transport or within 30 minutes of care	Number of Grove Park residents with access to a clinic within 30 minutes (by public or private transport) / Total number of Grove Park residents
Health Insurance Coverage	Percentage of residents with active health insurance	Number of Grove Park residents with current health insurance (public or private) / Total number of Grove Park residents
Primary Care Access	Percentage of residents within 15-minute travel distance to a provider; Signaling access to routine care	Number of Grove Park residents with access to a primary care provider within 15 minutes of travel time / Total number of Grove Park residents
Mental Health Service Access	Ratio of mental health providers to population	Number of mental health providers serving the Grove Park area / Total population of Grove Park
Utilization of Appropriate Care	Percentage of residents using the ER for non-emergency or routine care.	Number of Grove Park residents who visited the ER for non-emergency or routine issues within the past year / Total number of Grove Park residents who accessed any form of health care within the past year

KPI: Chronic Disease Prevention		
Definition:	Tracks prevalence and management of chronic diseases that affect quality of life and long-term health outcomes in Grove Park	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Difference in Average life span	Average lifespan of Grove Park Residents relative to the city of Atlanta	Sum of age at death for all Grove Park residents (over a defined period) / Total number of deaths among Grove Park residents Compare to city of Atlanta
Vaccination Rates	Percentage of population up to date on recommended vaccines (e.g., childhood immunizations, flu, COVID-19, shingles)	Number of Grove Park residents who are up to date on all age-appropriate recommended vaccines (e.g., childhood immunizations, flu, COVID-19, shingles) / Total number of Grove Park residents in the eligible population for each vaccine
Chronic Disease Prevalence	Obesity (Percentage of adults with BMI ≥ 30), Diabetes (Percentage of adults diagnosed with diabetes), AIDS/HIV (Percentage of adults diagnosed with AIDS/HIV)	Number of adult Grove Park residents with BMI ≥ 30 / Total number of adult Grove Park residents Number of adults diagnosed with diabetes/ Total number of adult Grove Park residents Number of adults diagnosed with AIDS or HIV/ Total number of adult Grove Park residents
Cancer screening rates	Percentage of eligible population receiving screenings (e.g., mammograms, colonoscopies)	Number of eligible Grove Park residents who received specific screenings (e.g., mammogram, colonoscopy) within the recommended time interval / Total number of Grove Park residents eligible for each screening based on age and risk guidelines
Smoking/tobacco use	Percentage of adult smokers	Number of adult Grove Park residents who report current smoking or tobacco use/ Total number of adult Grove Park residents

KPI: Food and Nutrition Security		
Definition:	Measures the ability of residents to access and afford healthy food, and the presence of nutrition education and support systems	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Access to Fresh Foods	Number of grocery stores/farmers markets within 1 mile	Number of full-service grocery stores and USDA-recognized farmers markets located within a one-mile radius of the Grove Park neighborhood
Participation in Food Assistance	Percentage of eligible residents enrolled in SNAP, WIC, etc.	Number of Grove Park residents currently enrolled in SNAP, WIC, or other nutrition assistance programs / Total number of Grove Park residents eligible for those programs (based on income thresholds and family size guidelines)
Presence of Food Deserts	Percentage of census tracts in Grove Park classified as food deserts by USDA	Number of census tracts in Grove Park classified as food deserts by the USDA (based on low income and low access to food retail) / Total number of census tracts that fall within the Grove Park neighborhood boundaries
Food Pantry Usage	Percentage of residents or households receiving groceries from local food banks/pantries monthly	Number of residents or households in Grove Park who receive groceries from local food banks or pantries on a monthly basis / Total number of residents or households in Grove Park

Pillar 4: Housing

KPI: Housing Valuation and Conditions		
Definition:	Factors influencing the economic quality and living conditions of housing units	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Code Violation Rate	Percentage of properties receiving state or local code violations in 2024	Total code violations/ Number of homes
Repeat Code Violation Rate	Percentage of properties receiving more than one code violation in 2024	Number of homes with 2+ violations/ Total number of homes
Percentage of homes with viable walkways	Percentage of residential properties with maintained and accessible sidewalks	Homes with accessible walkways/ Total number of homes
Housing Rehabilitation Rate	Percentage of renter or owner-occupied properties that have chosen to do renovations or repairs in 2024	Homes with completed or ongoing renovation/ Total Homes

KPI: Housing Stability		
Definition:	Measures the affordability, quality, and security of housing for residents in Grove Park, focusing on reducing displacement and promoting long-term residency	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Rent/Mortgage Cost Burden	Percentage of households spending more than 30% of income on rent and/or mortgage	Households spending >30% of income on housing / Total households in Grove Park
Eviction Rate	Number of eviction filings per 1,000 renter households annually	Eviction filings among Grove Park renters (annually) / Total renter households in Grove Park
Rent vs. Income Growth	Annual percent change in average rent compared to percent change in median household income	Annual % change in average rent / Annual % change in median household income
Resident Tenure	Average number of years residents stay in the same housing unit	Total years current residents have lived in their homes / Number of residents surveyed
Homeownership rates	Percentage of households that own rather than rent their homes	Number of owner-occupied households / Total occupied households
Displacement Rate	Percent of long-term residents migrating from homes or rental properties	Number of long-term residents who moved involuntarily / Total number of long-term residents
Intergenerational title transfer Rate	Percent of homes with inter-family title transfers	Number of homes passed between generations within families / Total number of home sales or title transfers

Pillar 5: Real Estate

KPI: Real Estate Development and Preservation		
Definition:	Tracks the scale, type, and impact of real estate development activity in Grove Park, including both new construction and preservation of historic or community assets	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Historical Properties Preserved	Number of historic or architecturally significant properties restored or protected	Number of historic properties restored or protected
Vacant Property Activation	Percent of formerly vacant lots or buildings brought back into productive use	Number of formerly vacant lots or buildings reactivated / Total number of vacant lots or buildings
Real estate investment volume	Dollar value of public/private investment in real estate development annually	Total dollars invested in Grove Park real estate (public + private)
Community ownership initiatives	Number of units or parcels under community land trusts or nonprofit ownership	Number of units or parcels under nonprofit or community ownership

KPI: Housing Mix		
Definition:	Tracking the distribution of different housing types in Grove Park to ensure inclusive housing stock that supports affordability, economic diversity, and anti-displacement goals	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Percentage of Housing Units by Type	Percent breakdown by housing type (single-family home, townhome, multifamily apartment, affordable housing units, senior living communities)	Units of given housing type/ Total number of housing Units
Changes in housing mix over time	Rate of change in percent breakdown of homes from 2023 to 2024	(Housing Percent$_{2024}$ -Housing Percent$_{2023}$)/ Housing Percent$_{2024}$
New Builds by Housing Type	Number of new builds annually by housing type (single-family home, townhome, multifamily apartment, affordable housing units, senior living communities)	Total Count by Type
Vacancy Rate by Housing Type	Average vacancy rate by housing type	Vacant Housing Rates$_{Type}$ / Total Units $_{type}$
Mixed Use/Commercial Space Added	Square footage of new retail, office, or community-use space built	Sum of square footage of all new commercial spaces

KPI: Investment Opportunity & Resiliency		
Definition:	Indicators of investment appeal and opportunity	
Component	Definition/Purpose	Input
Property Value Growth	Year-to-year percentage change in property values	(Avg. property value current year – avg. property value previous year) / (avg. property value current year) * 100
Housing Absorption Rate	The rate at which available housing units are sold or leased on an annual basis	(Number of units sold or leased) / (total units available)
Commercial Absorption Rate	The rate at which available commercial units are sold or leased on an annual basis	(Number of units sold or leased) / (total units available)
Land-Use/Zoning Volatility	The number of zoning changes or land-use amendments that have been approved over a certain period (i.e., over the past decade or the past 5 years)	Raw number of code amendments over a given time period
Public Infrastructure Investment Growth	Year-to-year percentage change in public infrastructure investment (roads, public transit, parks, etc.)	($ amount spent on infrastructure current year – $ amount spent on infrastructure previous year) / ($ amount spent on infrastructure current year) * 100
Tax Revenue Growth	Year-to-year percentage change in tax revenue from property, sales, or other local taxes collected	($ amount local tax revenue current year – $ amount local tax revenue previous year) / ($ amount local tax revenue current year) * 100