

FY25 GBPS Community Needs Assessment

Recovery Needs Assessment for Grand Boulevard Prevention Services Introduction

Grand Boulevard Prevention Services (GBPS) is a non-profit organization serving the Grand Boulevard, Douglas, Washington Park, and Fuller Park community areas on Chicago's South Side. Since its inception in 2017, GBPS has focused on prevention services addressing underage drinking, substance abuse, and the intersection of these issues with violence. More recently, as the recipient of ROSC (Recovery Oriented Systems of Care) grant funding, GBPS expanded services to include the needs of adults in recovery, supporting programs and resources to help individuals maintain sobriety.

Community Characteristics

The service areas are predominantly African American and have long histories of economic and social challenges. They suffer from some of the worst economic, health, social, and violence disparities in the United States. Key statistics include:

- **High Poverty Rates:** Poverty rates are projected to range between 25% and 35% in 2025, significantly higher than the projected citywide average of 17.5%.
- **Low Median Household Income:** Median household income is projected to range from \$26,000 to \$36,000 in 2025, compared to Chicago's projected \$75,000.
- **High Unemployment Rates:** Unemployment rates are projected to remain higher than the city average, with some areas exceeding national averages.
- **Violent Crime:** These communities continue to experience some of the highest violent crime rates in Chicago.
- **Limited Access to Treatment:** The Chicago Department of Public Health reports continued limited access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services in these areas.
- **Homelessness:** The projected 2025 Chicago Point-in-Time Count indicates a persistent homeless population in Grand Boulevard and Douglas.
- **Gentrification:** These neighborhoods are experiencing ongoing mixed gentrification, bringing both resources and displacement.

Substance Use Challenges

These communities continue to face significant substance use challenges, with projected rates of adults with any SUD exceeding the citywide average. Limited access to treatment services further exacerbates the problem. Youth and families face many challenges including poverty and violence.

Data Sources:

- **U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2021-2025 Projections:** (For poverty, income, and demographic data)

- **Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Community Health Profiles 2024:** (For health and substance use data)
- **Chicago Police Department (CPD) Crime Statistics 2024:** (For violent crime data)
- **Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, 2025 Point-in-Time Count (Projected):** (For homelessness data)
- **Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Opioid Data Dashboard (Updated Regularly):** (For opioid-related data)
- **The Chicago Health Atlas (Continuously Updated):** (For broad health data)
- **University of Chicago Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment (2024-2025):** (For local health needs assessments)

Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

- GBPS's established community presence and trust.
- Diverse prevention programs for youth and adults.
- Active harm reduction initiatives, including Narcan and Fentanyl strip distribution.
- Recovery support services, including peer support.
- Strong community engagement efforts.
- Expertise in peer support and lived experience.
- Consistent Naloxone training.
- Trauma-informed approach.

Weaknesses:

- Shortage of staff with advanced certifications (e.g., Certified Recovery Support Specialist - CRSS) and specialized training in areas like co-occurring disorders or trauma-informed recovery. This limits the depth and breadth of services offered.
- There are difficulties in effectively reaching and engaging specific high-risk populations within the community, such as individuals experiencing homelessness, those with severe mental illness, or young adults at risk of overdose. This can lead to gaps in service delivery.
- As the organization expands, internal communication and coordination between different programs and departments may not be optimal. This can lead to inefficiencies and duplication of efforts.
- Need for additional staff training and certification for recovery professionals.

Opportunities:

- Expansion of ROSC framework and services.
- Increased targeted outreach to providers.

GBPS has the opportunity to create a structured and sustainable program for safe and sober events. This would include establishing a dedicated event planning team, securing consistent venue partnerships and developing a diverse calendar of events (e.g., recreational activities, workshops, social gatherings).

This program could significantly enhance social support, reduce isolation, and promote a healthy, sober lifestyle within the community.

GBPS can significantly improve its impact by developing and implementing targeted strategies for presenting youth substance use resources, including community treatment options, to parents and school staff. By proactively educating and equipping parents and school staff with knowledge and resources, GBPS can facilitate early intervention and improve youth access to essential support services.

- Expand the Availability and Accessibility of Trauma-Informed Care Training for Community Members. GBPS can significantly enhance community resilience by increasing the availability and accessibility of trauma-informed care training. This includes equipping community members with the knowledge and skills to respond to trauma in a supportive and informed manner, GBPS can foster a more healing and resilient community environment.
- Staffing development and training for residents in the recovery field.

Threats:

- Limited and unstable funding.
- Challenges in ensuring long-term sustainability.
- Lack of consistent provider participation.
- Persistent stigma surrounding addiction.
- Staffing shortages, particularly certified peer recovery specialists.

Recommended Actions:

- **Diversify Funding Sources:** Explore public-private partnerships, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising events.
- **Sustainability Planning:** Develop a long-term plan with strategies for securing ongoing funding.
- **Targeted Outreach:** Engage treatment providers through face-to-face meetings, webinars, and informational packets.
- **Highlight Success Stories:** Showcase ROSC benefits to encourage wider participation.
- **Community Education:** Organize workshops and events to increase public awareness.
- **Peer Advocacy:** Involve people in recovery in outreach efforts.
- **Community Partnerships:** Partner with faith-based organizations and local businesses.
- **Joint Training & Events:** Foster collaboration through joint training.

- **Diverse Stakeholder Groups:** Ensure diverse perspectives in decision-making.
- **Competitive Compensation & Benefits:** Attract and retain qualified staff.
- **Peer Support:** Develop career pathways for certified peer recovery specialists.
- **Mentorship Programs:** Support new staff and promote professional development.

GBPS initial community survey results are on the next pages. The survey results indicate that mental health services are a priority need in the community. Providing additional educational opportunities and outreach is also needed.

2. People who use drugs deserve respect.

4.45

Average Rating



3. People with a mental illness deserve respect.

4.70

Average Rating



4. Medication Assisted Recovery -MAR (which is the used of medications to treat substance use disorders e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) in my community.

3.92

Average Rating



5. It is difficult to find healthcare providers who offer Medication Assisted Recovery-MAR(which is the use of medications to treat substance use disorders, e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) in my community.

3.40

Average Rating



6. Harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs reduce the risk of drug use.

3.61

Average Rating



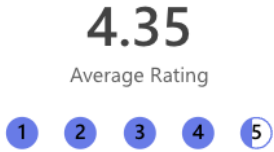
7. It is difficult to find harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs in my community



8. It is difficult to find mental health and substance use treatment services in my community.



9. We should increase government funding on treatment options for mental health and substance use disorders.



10. Everyone in my community can get help for mental health regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status.

3.06

Average Rating



11. Everyone in my community can get help for substance use regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status.

3.05

Average Rating



12. It is difficult to find resources within the community to assist individuals with getting jobs or additional education

3.47

Average Rating



13. It is difficult to find resources within the community to assist individuals with safe/sober activities

3.49

Average Rating



14. It is difficult to find resources within the community to assist individuals with connecting to recovery mentors

3.49

Average Rating



15. It is difficult to find resources within the community to assist individuals with finding safe affordable housing

3.65

Average Rating



16. It is difficult to find resources within the community to assist individuals with Legal services

3.69

Average Rating



17. How many individuals that you know have been exposed to opioids, including Fentanyl, Morphine, Herion, Oxycodone, and others?



18. What services do you feel the community is lacking?

- Latest Responses
- "Healthy foods in the area"
 - "Mental health"
 - "Homeless shelters"
 - ...

(23%) answered Mental Health for this question.

