



GROVE PARK – SUNSET MOUNTAIN NEIGHBORHOOD

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
'NEIGHBORS WORKING TOGETHER'
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∞ Plan on a Page ∞

<u>Table of contents of our neighborhood's:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
Description	2
History	3
Vision	4
Strengths	5
Challenges	6
Responsibility	7
Alignment with City Council Goals	7
Alignment with City of Asheville Development Plan 2025 Goals	8

1. Neighborhood Description:

Grove Park/Sunset Mountain Neighborhood [GPSMN] is one of the oldest established neighborhoods in Asheville and is defined as the section shown on the accompanying map: <http://gp-smna.org/neighborhood-map/>. There are two main parts of the neighborhood:

1. The Grove Park area is known for being an established traditional neighborhood of tree-lined streets surrounding the Grove Park Inn. This area is generally known as the various streets off of the northern end of Charlotte Street, Macon, Edwin, and connecting along Kimberly Avenue.
2. The Sunset Mountain area is generally less dense due to the steeper elevation and slope restrictions - creating a more wooded forest feel. Connecting from the top end of the Rose Garden all along to the upper section of Cherokee Rd running north including Old Toll Rd and Sunset Drive as well as several connecting streets between Charlotte St and Town Mountain Rd.

Combined, it is an active community with many of the residents often being seen on a walk, jog, or taking in the magnificent views of the surrounding mountains and the Grove Park Inn. The neighborhood is comprised of a significant and diverse number of working professionals and business owners. Many residents and non-residents alike frequent the parks, walkable areas, and enjoyable bicycling in the neighborhood roads - all within a couple of miles of downtown Asheville. All these factors contribute to being a vibrant and engaged neighborhood.

Commercial areas, except for the Grove Park Inn, are focused along Charlotte Street running north up to Lennox St and not past Edwin Pl.

GPSMN has a special relationship with the Grove Park Inn - the notable and large commercial establishment surrounded by a residential neighborhood.

Residential areas include mostly owner occupied single-family homes with a mix of visually conforming apartment buildings. These residential rentals focus on long-term tenants.

Construction styles are mixed, mostly traditional with all providing an engaged street level (where land gradient allows). This engaged street level (habitable space) promotes an engaged community.

2. Neighborhood History:

The Grove Park neighborhood was designed and developed by St. Louis entrepreneur Edwin Wiley Grove with the help of Chauncey Beadle, landscape designer and later superintendent of Biltmore Estate and is a superb example of early twentieth century planned residential development. Grove wanted his development, like every other real estate venture he engaged in, to be exciting and innovative. Some of his ventures, such as the Grove Arcade and the Battery Park Hotel, were on the cutting edge of design and planning and his Grove Park Inn stands today as a monument to Grove's vision and genius.

The early phases of Grove Park were laid out by Chauncey Beadle and have curvilinear streets, large tree canopies, stone retaining walls and a grand entry park. There are many architectural styles represented and these include Shingle, Neo-Classical, American Foursquare, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Georgian Revival, Bungalow, Italian Renaissance, Queen Anne and Chateausque.

Edwin Wiley Grove began developing GPSMN in 1907 when he purchased the land which today encompasses the three of the neighborhood's areas:

1. Grove Park
2. Proximity Park
3. Sunset Terrace

All are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Many nationally known and historically important architects worked within the Grove Park neighborhood. These included Richard Sharp Smith, Ronald Greene, Henry I. Gaines and James Gamble Rogers. Local Asheville developers E.A. Jackson and W.H. Westall also contributed to Grove Park's growth, buying and developing many lots in the 1920s.

Especially notable in this lovely neighborhood are the large number of deciduous and evergreen trees. Stonework in retaining walls and stairs are found throughout and many of the houses are on terraced grounds.

A more extensive history may be viewed via: <http://gp-smna.org/detailed-history/>

3. Neighborhood Vision - Grove Park/Sunset Mountain Neighborhood Initiatives and general community desires:

- Preserve the residential flavor and historic nature of GPSMN.
- Maintain an active relationship with the Asheville community including joint neighborhood activities, resident engagement, and neighborhood association in providing a pathway to collectively engage with city officials regarding concerns and goals.
- Promote safer pedestrian and bicycle use across the GPSMN. This includes encouraging and advocating for multimodal improvements and pedestrian safety measures along Charlotte St in particular - as well as all streets throughout the neighborhood corridor.
This should include the city developing a multimodal plan for the Sunset Mountain area of the neighborhood - particularly along Sunset Drive - to be reviewed with Sunset Mountain residents and implemented.
- Partnering with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to restore and enhance the neighborhoods three historic parks and improved neighboring playgrounds for neighboring community members.

The three historic parks that are an integral part of its neighborhood:

1. E. W. Grove Park
2. Sunset Parkway
3. Griffing Blvd. Rose Gardens

This desire includes continued effort to turn the Sunset Parkway ravine into an urban wilderness park.

- Envisioning the new projects for the neighborhood that continue to create a sense of community.

This includes maintaining neighborhoods' community strength by encouraging continued development that creates street-level active space, respects the terrain and steep slopes of Sunset Mountain, augmenting architectural designs, and restricted elements of concern such as commercialization into our established residential neighborhoods (including AirBNB type vacation rental proliferation).

- Maintaining the extensive landscaping in the neighborhood's 22 traffic calming islands through an annual neighborhood fundraising effort.
- Continuation of the beneficial annual neighborhood Tour of Homes and Gardens that promotes its diverse and historic homes and gardens. More info about this great event may be viewed via: www.gp-smna.org/tour-of-homes/

4. Neighborhood Strengths:

The rich history of the neighborhood coupled with its well-designed layout continue to provide strength. This includes proximity to downtown, an active park system, and encouraged engagement.

The neighborhood also benefits by a successful neighborhood association. You can learn more about the Grove Park Sunset Mountain Neighborhood Association [GPSMNA] by visiting this website: <http://gp-smna.org>.

Forming in 1973, and subsequently earning its 501(c)3 status - this well-organized association benefits from good standing built by previous engagement of the neighborhood and city officials.

The community's varied architectural styles create a sense of place far different from current residential developments. These styles are broad, but give a nod to the general historic feel of the neighborhood.

The varied geo-terrain and location also contributes to the attractiveness of our neighborhood. Whether walking, jogging, or (sometimes challenging) biking - within minutes, families can be: along flat residential neighborhoods; at downtown; or enjoying forested mountainous roads providing impressive mountain views. These recreation activities are enjoyed broadly by residents and non-residents alike along with the historic parks and neighboring playgrounds of W.T. Weaver Park and Jones Park.

With its established and stable housing stock, the neighborhood has maintained property values. That stability has also enhanced the desirability of living in the neighborhood.

The current annual GPSMNA home tour has provided a great mechanism for both neighborhood engagement, community enrichment, as well as providing funding for association programs.

Please visit: <http://gp-smna.org/tour-of-homes/> for additional information about the upcoming GPSMNA Tour of Homes!

5. Neighborhood Challenges:

- GPSMN is a high risk area for pedestrians and bicyclists. The popularity of the area by residents and non-residents is not matched by the needed multimodal improvements sought throughout our streets.
 - Multimodal implementation, especially along Charlotte St (very hazardous street as a pedestrian, bicyclist, or driver at present), remains a challenge due to lack of design improvements and infrastructure investment. These multimodal challenges exist throughout the neighborhood corridor, including the Sunset Mountain section.
 - Unenforced speed limits, intersections lacking appropriate safety measures, and safer pedestrian corridors connecting to highly dangerous areas (such as the sidewalks along Charlotte Street) provide harrowing challenges for an active community.
 - Traffic calming continues to be a community desire. Programs like the PACE Car, traffic islands, increased enforcement, and speed reduction programs will need to be maintained - especially along Charlotte St., Edwin Pl., Kimberly Ave., and Macon Ave corridors.
- Continuing to promote park restoration efforts in bringing all neighbors together.
- Beyond the highly dangerous aspects of Charlotte Street, efforts to beautify this tourist and resident gateway should be implemented. Such ideas include consistent sidewalk design with landscape elements and the burial of the mass of overhead utility lines that currently run along this corridor (a notable eyesore to residents and visitors alike).
- Underfunded City owned area playgrounds for the use of GPSMN as well as multiple nearby neighborhoods. These well used facilities, particularly W.T. Weaver Park, tend to be lacking in maintenance that keeps up to the level of use, as well as struggling to provide engaging playground structures in keeping with other cities and more appealing playgrounds.
- The neighborhood's relationship with Grove Park Inn means both group's interests should be maintained - as each creates impact on the other. Maintaining positive impact on each is central and only is maintained through engagement and mutual respect. Challenges of traffic, events, and development risk are ongoing.
- City proposals, such as Form Based Coding, promotion of short-term rentals (such as AirBNB) - could adversely allow commercialization into established residential neighborhood areas.
- Development among the Sunset Mountain area poses challenges due to the steep slope. Impacts of significant development challenges the landslide risk and continued water runoff issues this section faces. Steep slope ordinances must be respected with infill impacting as few trees as possible in an attempt to maintain existing ground stability and erosion control.
- Existing development within Sunset Mountain faces challenges due to the landslide risk and continued water runoff issues. Efforts to stabilize the land, maintain old growth trees and ecosystems, and ongoing maintenance and improvement of City storm water drains and collection systems is needed and encouraged.
- Promotion of well-integrated development along Charlotte Street - the gateway into GPSMN.
 - Encourage derelict properties to be restored into industrious properties with engagement along the street level.
 - Promote development that embraces the community and promotes multimodal accessibility across this corridor as well as the streets across this broad neighborhood.

6. Neighborhood Responsibility:

- Remain an active member of CAN, NAC, and continually engage with both residents as well as community partners such as the Grove Park Inn, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville, St Mary's Episcopal Church, and the business along Charlotte Street.
- Promote neighborhood engagement and advocate when issues are raised.
- Promote the neighborhood parks and accessibility.
- Residents are encouraged to utilize the "Asheville App". The Asheville App sends service requests (potholes, damaged sidewalks, brush collection, hazardous waste, noise, short-term rental violations, streetlights needing repair, etc.) and produces trackable results for residents including the ability to send pictures and location guidance.

Neighbors are encouraged to download this to their smartphone and use this great service.

- Residents should be encouraged to be members of the Grove Park - Sunset Mountain Neighborhood Association and can do so via: <http://gp-smna.com/join-the-association/>

This promotion of engagement allows the neighborhood to help spread awareness and provide uniform perspective on community issues and potential concerns.

7. Alignment with the City Council Goals/Describe how the issues facing the neighborhood align with the goals identified in the City Council's Strategic operating Plan:

www.ashevilenc.gov/Departments/CommunityRelations/StrategicOperatingPlan.aspx

Focus Area 3: High Quality of Life

Goal 1: Make Asheville one of the safest cities in America based on approved metrics for similarly sized cities

- Remain in active partnership with the city.
- Address traffic and pedestrian safety throughout Asheville in partnership with Asheville and the NC DOT. Particular focus to be given to Charlotte St., Macon Ave., Edwin Pl., Kimberly Ave., and Gracelyn Rd.
- Promote ever increasing walkability and multimodal use of the neighborhood by continuing to advocate for infrastructure investments across the neighborhood corridor and enhance the Pace Car program launched in the GPSM neighborhood. This program is based on peer pressure to get speeders to slow down. The neighborhood needs more signs available to residents to voluntarily place outside their homes and the Asheville Police Department along with the City's Transportation Department needs to report back to the neighborhood on results of the program.

Goal 4: Continue to develop City Council communications and bring partnership with citizens, community leaders, the media and elected officials.

- Action Item: Maintain the Memorandum of Understanding with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to restore and maintain its three historic parks:
 - E. W. Grove Park
 - Sunset Parkway
 - Griffing Blvd. Rose Garden

8. Alignment with City of Asheville Development Plan 2025 Goals (Describing how our neighborhood plan corresponds with some of the major themes of the Asheville City Development Plan 2025-Implementation Matrix #1): www.ashevillenc.gov/Departments/PlanningUrbanDesign/AshevilleCityDevelopmentPlan.aspx

Historic Preservation:

Goal 1: Continue efforts involving the preservation, enhancement and management of change within local historic districts and properties and the continuing education towards the preservation of historic resources in the City of Asheville.

- Encourage the continued preservation of historic neighborhood properties and parks.



Thank you for reviewing the Grove Park – Sunset Mountain Neighborhood’s Plan on a Page.

This document is the culmination of many months of neighborhood discussion and dialogue. In particular, a committee comprised of both GP-SMNA Board members and neighborhood residents worked compiling neighborhood feedback in answering the referenced questions. An initial draft went through several iterations. Meetings with residents, owners of neighborhood businesses, and several requests for neighborhood input successfully provided the bulk of this material.

The current version has incorporated these months of neighborhood dialogue and review and was prepared and presented to the GP-SMNA Board at its June 2016 meeting.

Thank you to everyone who provided comments and suggestions - we could not have accomplished this without you – and hope to be a stronger community do to this great effort.

Naturally, this is an ongoing discussion. If you have neat ideas, suggestions, or comments... we welcome you to engage with our Grove Park – Sunset Mountain Neighborhood Association’s Board.

Please contact us via: <http://gp-smna.org/contact-us/>



☞ Respectfully submitted to the City of Asheville - July 2016 ☜