

Measuring the Movement to Thrive Together: National Dashboard for Thriving and Vital Conditions Data

Indicator Selection Memo

The [Rippel Foundation](#) (“Rippel”) has partnered with the [Institute for People, Place, and Possibility](#) (“IP3”) to select indicators for and develop the National Dashboard for the Measuring the Movement to Thrive Together online hub. This document summarizes the selected indicators, following a structured selection process and using criteria described below.

The [National Dashboard](#) (“Dashboard”) is an interactive, publicly accessible resource featuring data from 25 key indicators that reflect the seven vital conditions and long, thriving lives. Available at the national, state, and county levels (for most indicators), the Dashboard is designed to help stewards and changemakers understand the movement’s progress, identify trends, and consider new possibilities for action.

While not an exhaustive list, these 25 indicators paint a broad picture of the movement to thrive together over time. We hope the dashboard inspires you to expand your vision of what’s possible when equitable, place-based system change is the goal, and imagine what greater collaboration and commitment could lead to.

Criteria for Selecting Indicators

Our overall goal was to collate a small set of indicators, across all seven Vital Conditions¹, that would paint a picture of progress over time. We established the following general criteria to ground our indicator selection efforts. These criteria were applied in selecting the proposed measures.

1. **Strength of measure:** Measures should be methodologically strong and aligned with key frameworks or measurement approaches used in the field.
2. **Valuable member of a whole:** Besides having value on their own, measures must also contribute meaningfully as part of a small group of measures that together summarize a Vital Condition.
3. **Geographic compatibility:** Measures must be available at, or aggregated to, the county or census tract-level to be compatible with the IP3 ASSESS dashboard leveraged for this project
4. **Geographic coverage:** Measures generally should be available nationwide.²
5. **Relevance across settings:** Measures should be relevant to both rural and urban contexts.³

¹ Note that an additional category of indicators—Long, Thriving Lives—was added in order to share important measures that are not readily organized into the Vital Conditions, including Cantril’s well-being measures.

² Note that in some instances we selected indicators without nationwide coverage as they were well-aligned with a particular Vital Condition and illustrate what could be possible to measure with increased national investment.

³ Recognizing that our small set of indicators could not wholly apply to both rural and urban settings, we discussed trade-offs as part of the indicator selection process.

6. **Demographic stratification:** Measures should be stratified by race, ethnicity, and other significant demographic groups whenever possible, except where doing so may be harmful to people and communities.
7. **Trackable over time:** Measures should include multiple years of data in order to construct a time series wherever possible.
8. **Readily available:** Measures must be readily available, meaning previously sourced for IP3's existing library of 500+ community indicators or otherwise readily available for public access.
9. **Demonstrates investment potential:** Measures should demonstrate the flexibility and potential features of the platform we seek to build with co-investors.

Indicator Selection Process

The Rippel team selected recommended indicators in consultation with the IP3 team, who facilitated the process outlined below and aligned with the criteria summarized above.

1. **Audit of IP3 Indicators Library and frameworks:** Following an initial conversation about data of interest for the Dashboard, IP3 compiled a list of around 200 indicators for consideration. The list included:
 - a. Indicators appearing in the Vital Conditions Framework on [IP3 ASSESS](#);
 - b. Indicators used in Rippel's Well Being Dynamics Model and
 - c. Indicators appearing in other relevant frameworks (e.g., County Health Rankings)Indicators were organized by vital condition where possible, and information, such as years and demographic breakouts available, was provided in support of the selection effort.
2. **Multiple rounds of review:** The Rippel team reviewed candidate indicators based on the below general criteria and advanced a subset of indicators for consideration. Rippel and IP3 teams met to discuss and iterate on the proposed indicators via three rounds of structured review, and included feedback from a broad range of staff from Rippel. The final set of agreed-upon indicators to be used in the beta version of the National Dashboard are listed below.

Summary of Selected Indicators

The 25 selected indicators are summarized below, organized by each vital condition, and a top-level section of indicators for Long, Thriving Lives. You can jump to each set by clicking below.

[Indicators](#)

[Long, Thriving Lives](#)

[Basic Needs for Health and Safety](#)

[Lifelong Learning](#)

[Meaningful Work and Wealth](#)

[Humane Housing](#)

[Reliable Transportation](#)


[Thriving Natural World](#)


[Belonging and Civic Muscle](#)


Data Notes and Table Key

We have described each indicator using asset-based framing, a narrative model that seeks to lift up the assets and aspirations of people and communities, before noting their challenges or deficits.⁴ This helps users engage with resources using a broader set of associations and information rooted in worth and hope (rather than fear or cynicism) as a motivator for action.

Where applicable, pertinent information about an indicator's underlying data ("Data Notes") accompanies the rationale for selection. Below is a key for the data note flags we use.

 **Demographic breakouts available** - Denotes an indicator for which demographic breakouts, such as race, ethnicity and gender breakouts, are available.

 **Multiple years of data available** - Denotes an indicator for which multiple years of data are available to create a time series.






 **Data availability warning** - Flags an indicator with a data availability warning, for example, when data are limited to a subset of states or counties. Note that the indicator selection team decided to include several indicators with data availability warnings because of the strength of the measure and data advocacy purpose.



⁴ Watch Trabian Shorters define asset-framing in this [brief video](#).

Indicators

Long, Thriving Lives




During our indicator selection process, the utility of including a top-level section to lift up indicators for long, thriving lives—an outcome of communities in which the vital conditions for health and well-being are ensured—became apparent. The domain for long, thriving lives focuses on five key measures that collectively reflect the quest for a long and thriving life. These include life expectancy and self-reported measures of well-being, such as self-rated health and mental and physical healthy days within a month. These indicators anchor the broader story of whether people's aspirations for a healthy and thriving life are being fulfilled.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Thriving Percentage of people who are "thriving" on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Scale	BMJ Open	<i>Thriving</i> is a leading, validated measure of well-being, the key outcome around which the Movement is situated. Thriving data from BMJ Open are the best publicly available at a usable geography.	 Multiple years of data available  Data unavailable for certain counties
Life Expectancy at Birth Estimated life expectancy at birth	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation	<i>Life Expectancy at Birth</i> is an indicator of longevity. These data from IHME provide the best coverage and longest time series of data with demographic breakouts.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available
Good, Very Good or Excellent Health Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who report having "excellent", "good" or "very good" or "fair" health	PLACES	<i>Good, Very Good or Excellent Health</i> (usually presented as <i>Fair or Poor Health</i>) is an often-used indicator of general health status. PLACES provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available

Poor Physical Health Days Age-adjusted average number of reported physically unhealthy days per month	County Health Rankings	<i>Poor Physical Health Days</i> is an often-used indicator of physical health status. CHR provides up-to-date county-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
Poor Mental Health Days Age-adjusted average number of reported mentally unhealthy days per month	County Health Rankings	<i>Poor Mental Health Days</i> is an often-used indicator of mental health status. CHR provides up-to-date county-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available





Basic Needs for Health and Safety


The selected measures highlight foundational needs like healthy eating, active living, and access to preventive care. Measures include food security, exercise opportunities, and freedom from addiction (e.g., binge drinking and smoking rates). The inclusion of routine primary care visits underscores the importance of accessible and consistently utilized healthcare as a vital condition rather than an urgent service.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Food Security Percentage of population who are food secure	Map the Meal Gap	<i>Food Security</i> (sometimes presented as <i>Food Insecurity</i>) is an often-used indicator germane to the state of our food system. Map the Meal Gap provides up-to-date county-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available
Recent Primary Care Visit Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who report having been to a doctor for a routine checkup in the past year	PLACES	<i>Recent Primary Care Visit</i> is an often-used indicator germane to the state of our preventive systems of care. PLACES provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
Does Not Currently Smoke Cigarettes Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who report having never smoked	PLACES	<i>Does Not Currently Smoke Cigarettes</i> (usually presented as <i>Currently Smokes Cigarettes</i>) is an often-used indicator for this important health behavior, which, in this domain, tells a story about improving health through policy and systems transformation. PLACES provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available

Lifelong Learning







This domain emphasizes educational equity and opportunity across all stages of life. Selected measures include preschool enrollment, high school diploma attainment, and equity-focused metrics like school funding and segregation. Together, these indicators reflect the availability and experience of educational opportunities and the aspiration for universal access to quality education.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Preschool Enrollment Percentage of the population aged 3-4 years who are enrolled in school	American Community Survey	<i>Preschool Enrollment</i> is an often-used indicator germane to the state of early childhood education. In this domain, <i>Preschool Enrollment</i> provides Dashboard users with a measure representing the lower bound of Lifelong Learning. ACS provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
Adults with a High School Diploma Percentage of the population aged 25 years and older who are high school graduates or higher	American Community Survey	<i>Adults with a High School Diploma</i> is an often-used indicator germane to the state of basic secondary education. In this framework, <i>Adults with a High School Diploma</i> provides Dashboard users with a measure representing the upper bound of Lifelong Learning. ACS provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available
Equity in School Funding Estimated dollars in spending required per pupil to achieve U.S. average test scores	County Health Rankings	<i>Equity in School Funding</i> is a relatively new indicator developed by CHR, examines per pupil spending—an often-used indicator germane to education system investments—using an equity lens. In this framework, <i>Equity in School Funding</i> tells a story about our investments in education and what is needed for equitable outcomes.	 Multiple years of data available

School Segregation Index measuring the extent to which students from different race and ethnicity groups are unevenly distributed across schools, where 0 represents minimum segregation and 1 represents maximum segregation	County Health Rankings	<i>School Segregation</i> was included in the Lifelong Learning domain to add a dimension of fairness in system design to the framework. County Health Rankings provides up-to-date data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
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Meaningful Work and Wealth





The selected measures in this domain include children not living in poverty, racial equity in economic opportunity, and the Gini coefficient measuring income distribution. These measures paint a picture of economic vitality and equity, focusing on the inclusion of vulnerable populations in wealth creation and the fair distribution of resources across the population.


Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Children Not Living in Poverty Percentage of the population under 18 years of age for whom poverty is determined who are not below poverty level	American Community Survey	<i>Children Not Living in Poverty</i> (usually presented as <i>Children Living in Poverty</i>) is an often-used indicator germane to the state of our economy and well-being. ACS provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available
Racial Equity Index, Economic Vitality Component Racial Equity Index Prosperity score for Economic Vitality Indicators where 1 represents minimum prosperity and 100 represents maximum prosperity	National Equity Atlas	<i>The Economic Vitality Component of the Racial Equity Index</i> is a novel indicator from the <i>National Equity Atlas</i> that examines multiple economic measures with a racial equity lens. ⁵	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available  Data unavailable for certain counties
Gini Coefficient of Income Inequality Gini Index of income inequality, a measure of statistical dispersion representing income distribution	American Community Survey	<i>Income Inequality</i> was included in the Meaningful Work and Wealth domain to add a dimension of fairness in system design to the framework. Within the domain, Income Inequality tells a story about how legacies of oppression impact economic well-being. CHR provides up-to-date data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available

⁵ Racial Equity Index, Economic Vitality Component measures the economic well-being and opportunity of different racial and ethnic groups in a particular area. It comprises several measures, including median household income, unemployment rates, and poverty rates, which are disaggregated by race and ethnicity. The index also incorporates disparities in access to good-paying jobs and business ownership.

Humane Housing


The selected measures for humane housing focus on affordability, overcrowding, and neighborhood diversity. These metrics collectively reflect the goal of ensuring that housing is livable and inclusive, free from systemic segregation across racial lines, and supportive of diverse and thriving communities.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Affordable Housing Costs Percentage of occupied housing units for which housing costs amount to less than 30% or more of household income	CHAS Consolidated Planning	<i>Affordable Housing Costs</i> (usually presented as <i>High Housing Costs</i>) is an often-used indicator germane to the design of our housing system. Essential to this domain, <i>Affordable Housing Costs</i> tells Dashboard users about housing cost and affordability. CHAS—a data product created by the Census Bureau for HUD—provides disaggregated tract-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available
Not Overcrowded Households Percentage of occupied housing units with no more than one occupant per room	American Community Survey	<i>Not Overcrowded Households</i> (usually presented as <i>Overcrowded Households</i>) is an indicator used in assessing housing conditions and crowding. Here, <i>Not Overcrowded Households</i> tells Dashboard users about quality and adequacy of housing. ACS provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available

Residential Segregation⁶ Index of dissimilarity measuring residential segregation between black and white county residents, where 0 represents complete integration and 100 represents complete segregation	County Health Rankings	<i>Residential Segregation</i> was included in the Humane Housing domain to add a dimension of fairness in system design to the framework. Within the domain, <i>Residential Segregation</i> tells a story about housing policy and race. CHR provides up-to-date data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
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Reliable Transportation




A single measure represents this domain—whether individuals have access to reliable transportation for daily needs such as work, medical appointments, and errands. Reliable transportation is critical for supporting independence and connecting people to essential resources and opportunities. The survey question is “*During the past 12 months, has a lack of reliable transportation kept you from medical appointments, meetings, work, or from getting things needed for daily living?*”

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Reliable Transportation Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who do not report that a lack of reliable transportation kept them from medical appointments, meetings, work, or getting things needed for daily living in the past 12 months	PLACES	<i>Reliable Transportation</i> is a newly available indicator from PLACES that measures self-reported access to reliable transportation. The team that selected the candidate indicators felt that <i>Reliable Transportation</i> , by itself was comprehensive of the domain.	 Data unavailable for certain states

⁶ This indicator is listed in both Humane Housing and Belonging and Civic Muscle.

Thriving Natural World


The selected measures include proximity to parks as a proxy for contact with nature and air quality measured through fine particulate matter, which impacts cardiovascular health, lung health, neurological disorders, immunity, among other adverse health effects. Together, these indicators capture the aspiration for an environment free from hazards and toxins while ensuring access to natural spaces that support health and well-being.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Parks Percentage of the population living within .5 miles of a park	National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network	<i>Parks</i> is an often-used indicator to assess access to nature and green infrastructure. In this domain, <i>Parks</i> does that and tells a story about nature in people's daily lives. NEPHTN provides disaggregated tract-level data for this indicator.	 Demographic breakouts available  Multiple years of data available
Particulate Matter 2.5 Above Regulatory Standard Percentage of days per year for which PM 2.5 levels were above the regulatory standard	National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network	Indicators relating to PM 2.5 levels are often used to assess air quality. We opted to use <i>PM 2.5 Above Regulatory Standard</i> because it is grounded by the NAAQS standards, clearly defining what safe and unsafe air quality levels are. In this domain, <i>PM 2.5 Above Regulatory Standard</i> tells a story about environmental quality and how we might improve it through policy and systems transformation.	 Multiple years of data available

Belonging and Civic Muscle

The selected indicators include access to social and emotional support, connectivity via broadband and computers, and youth engagement at work or school. These indicators reflect whether people feel connected to their communities and institutions. Connected Youth is a key opportunity: Ensuring that all young people have meaningful opportunities to connect through school, work, or other supportive environments is essential for building strong civic muscle and fostering a thriving community.

Indicator	Source	Rationale for selection	Data notes
Social and Emotional Support Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who report sometimes, often or always getting the social and emotional support they need	PLACES	<i>Social and Emotional Support</i> (sometimes presented as <i>Lacking Social and Emotional Support</i>) is a newly available indicator from PLACES that measures self-reported adequacy of social and emotional support. <i>Social and Emotional Support</i> is a strong measure that cuts to the heart of this domain.	⚠ Data unavailable for certain states
Computer and Internet Access Percentage of the population in households with a computer and a broadband internet subscription	American Community Survey	<i>Computer and Internet Access</i> is an indicator used to assess access to civic infrastructure and the so-called digital divide. While similar indicators are available from other sources, we selected <i>Computer and Internet Access</i> from ACS because the data are more credible and reliable than the alternatives, and the indicator is more comprehensive of people's needs due to its inclusion of computer access.	📈 Multiple years of data available
Connected Youth, In School or Working Percentage of the population aged 16-19 years who are enrolled in school or working	American Community Survey	<i>Youth In School or Working</i> (usually presented as <i>Youth Not In School, Not Working or Disconnected Youth</i>) is an often-used indicator germane to the state of our economy, belonging and well-being. ACS provides up-to-date tract-level data for this indicator.	📈 Multiple years of data available

Residential Segregation⁷ Index of dissimilarity measuring residential segregation between black and white county residents, where 0 represents complete integration and 100 represents complete segregation	County Health Rankings	<i>Residential Segregation</i> was included in the Belonging and Civic Muscle domain to add a dimension of fairness in system design to the framework. Within the domain, <i>Residential Segregation</i> tells a story about the legacies of racial oppression and discrimination that have shaped our communities. CHR provides up-to-date data for this indicator.	 Multiple years of data available
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⁷ This indicator is listed in both Humane Housing and Belonging and Civic Muscle.