

EAST METRO OUTREACH – PREVENTION – INTERVENTION (EM OPI)

REQUEST

City of Gresham and community partners request \$2 million per biennium to invest in outreach, violence prevention and intervention services. There is consensus among local leaders, service providers, and communities of color that investments must be made to prevent increasing violence in Gresham communities, and that these services should be directly provided by culturally-responsive partners.

OUTREACH

Outreach to all youth in high-risk geographic areas. Expanding the existing street outreach program via four new full-time, culturally-responsive outreach workers who would provide intervention and prevention activities for hundreds of youth. Investment: \$500,000 annually.

PREVENTION

Social engagement for all youth in high-risk geographic areas. Expanding free, culturally-responsive recreation opportunities for youth through sports, arts and other recurring and one-time events. These events would be designed to facilitate law enforcement participation as a way to foster positive interactions between youth and officers. Investment: \$100,000 annually.

INTERVENTION

Intervention services for the highest-risk youth. Expanding the existing East County intervention services to include four new full-time, culturally-responsive case managers would serve up to 100 of the region's highest-risk youth, helping them manage school, work, mental health and more. Investment: \$400,000 annually.

THERE ARE OVER 29,000 GRESHAM RESIDENTS UNDER AGE 20.

That's as large as the total population, both adults and youth, of an entire Oregon city like Redmond or Tualatin.

PROPOSAL

Gresham is one of the youngest and diverse cities in the state of Oregon. In East Multnomah County, historic disparities have limited access to services and educational and economic opportunity. The Oregon Legislative Assembly has an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of investing in social services, youth programs, and education, as a way to improve public safety outcomes. If successful, these investments will benefit those receiving these much-needed services, improve public safety across the region, and decrease the downstream need for juvenile detention beds and related criminal justice. Investing in effective prevention and intervention services offered by culturally-specific community-based organizations will increase trust in law enforcement and provide opportunity to our residents.

The East Metro OPI Program invests in upstream community based intervention services and establishes new practices for funds formerly allocated to the East Metro Gang Enforcement Team.



A COMMUNITY IN NEED

Over the past decade, Gresham has grown to be one of the most diverse cities in the Portland metropolitan region—in fact, our Rockwood neighborhood is located within the most diverse zip code in the state of Oregon. Historically, outcomes for communities of color are the most pervasively challenged in all measures of well-being, including health and income.

GUN VIOLENCE INCREASING

In 2019, Gresham Police opened cases into 33 shootings, with nine involving injuries within city limits. That number jumped to 54 shootings in 2020, with 15 involving injuries.

Local leaders, service providers, and communities of color agree that re-investments must be made to prevent rising violence, and that services should be directly provided by culturally-responsive partners.



THE OPPORTUNITY

Gresham and community partners have found that the best way to address rising violence is via culturally-responsive partnerships that provide outreach, prevention, and early intervention services to youth who are at-risk of or experiencing housing instability.



CITY OF GRESHAM resources comprise a 30% match to the requested \$2M per biennium in state funding, including all administrative and contracting needs. These existing staff resources and strong relationships with community-based organizations will bring meaningful change to East Multnomah County.

