



**COMMUNITY SAFETY
DIVISION / COMMUNITY
INVESTMENT TEAM**

Mid-Year Report // Jul-Jan FY22





The Community Investment Team’s mission is to catalyze the power of communities to advance safety.

The Community Safety Division Community Investment Team (CSD/CIT) includes:

- The Office of Violence Prevention (OVP)
- Safe Blocks Program (SBP)
- Safer Summer PDX –Focused Investment Team (SSPDX-FI)

Overview

- On July 1, 2022, the CSD welcomed the OVP (formerly in the Mayor’s Office), the SBP (formerly in the Office of Community and Civic Life), and the Youth Against Violence and Rose City Self-Defense programs (formerly in the Police Bureau) to our team. **Collectively these programs form the new CSD/CIT, aligning services and programs that seek to catalyze the power of communities to advance safety.**
- The CIT’s first quarter involved the many intricacies of navigating staff and programs from three different bureaus and offices to a new Division, while maintaining frontline safety services for the community. **The members of this team should be commended for their flexibility, adaptability, and openness to finding the opportunity associated with change.**
- The SSPDX-FI team successfully allocated \$2.4 million to 18 new community partners working to reduce gun violence between July and October 2022. Most of these partners had never received City funding before, and five of them transitioned to the Office of Violence Prevention in November 2022. **A newly released “Final Report” on this initiative is attached to this report.**





Office of Violence Prevention

Goal: Reduce violence through communication and coordination between service providers and community members. Using a public health approach, OVP programs engage in Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary lanes of prevention strategies and services.

Strategy Development and Capacity Building:

- OVP traveled to Oakland alongside other representatives of Portland's criminal justice community to learn about Oakland's Ceasefire strategy to combat gun violence. The cohort was able to attend a shooting review, ride along on patrol, and meet with local service providers. The experience enhanced understanding and built trust across agencies; they emerged from the trip a coalition committed to implementing focused deterrence as a primary strategy of gun violence reduction in Portland.
- OVP is investing \$7.3 million this year in a city-wide strategy to prevent gun violence through increased staffing, funding community-led initiatives, and partnerships. See page 5 for OVP impacts by the numbers.

Programming Highlights:

- The Director of the OVP Program *Youth Against Violence*, Monae Elliot was recognized as a "Hometown Hero" by the Portland Timbers Association. As a result, YAV was able to take 16 families to a Portland Trail Blazers game. One parent described that experience later: "They had a blast, [their] first time to a Blazers game and they high-fived the players and one of them threw a ball to [my son] and he threw it back, it was amazing!"
- At a Portland Public HS Football game, Vigilant outreach workers noticed a known gang connected individual hanging out in the parking lot. Knowing members of a rival set were present and looking for trouble, the worker engaged the individual and advised him to leave immediately. Fortunately, no confrontation between rivals occurred. After the near confrontation, OVP's outreach team advised vigilance and a robust outreach and PPB presence at future games. The following week, the schedule included a game between two rival high schools. The fans included individuals known to be affiliated with these same gangs. Outreach teams and PPB responded to the warning with more than 12 outreach workers and 6 officers. Outreach teams reported the presence of gang members waiting outside the venue, several of whom are known to carry handguns. Fortunately, the game concluded without incident. The consensus opinion was that serious violence was avoided, in part due to the combined presence of PPB as deterrence and Outreach teams as violence interrupters.





Safe Blocks Program

Goal: Help Portlanders feel safe and connected through trainings, place-based security assessments, community building activities, engagement, and resource referrals. Rose City Self-Defense empowers girls, women, and the LGBTQ+ community.

Strengthening Existing Programs:

- SBP recently added three new coordinators, expanding the team who responded to community requests for 26 security assessments (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design assessments). These included multiple places of worship, a motel, three Habitat for Humanity developments, apartment buildings and condominiums, Laurelhurst Park Annex, a health clinic, and a business district in St. Johns working with multiple businesses.
- SBP provided 33 trainings covering topics of personal safety and public safety resources and engaged with the community through 615 consultations by phone, email, and in-person to help problem solve and provide resources and services.
- Rose City Self-Defense provided Personal Safety Workshops that resulted in 440 community members being trained. Some workshops included staff from Mt Hood CC; SEED (through SSPDX referral), M Financial, House 9 (wellness center) and Providence Medical group, Turner Construction; PSU Women's Softball Team; CPS workers; Mt Hood Community College Family Program home visitors; women realtors; and Portland Youth Builders. Additionally, 107 community members were trained in Introductory Self-Defense skills.
- SBP revived a beloved block party event. Rebranded as "Party on, Portland!" this two-week block party event in August encourages community building block party style. Multiple public safety partners with the City participated and visited parties, as well. 75 parties were registered!

Program Pilot:

- The SBP managed a micro location pilot project under the Gun Violence Emergency Declaration resulting in a decrease of calls for police service by 31% and a reduction in shooting incidents by 1. These efforts were located at NE 82 nd Avenue between Beech St and Milton St, working with multiple bureaus and stakeholders. They developed an outreach plan and put it into action; Drafting an outreach letter, meeting with community members, supporting community-led initiatives to bring positive activity into the space, engaging in community walks, and building relationships that will support long-term community building efforts. Additionally, they provided a CPTED assessment for a motel in this focus area.





Challenges:

- Working with new/small/emerging partners is rewarding and effective but presents administrative challenges.
- Internal review and analysis is necessary for effective and focused programming, but it requires time, patience, and the occasional suspension of services to clients.
- Transferring and consolidating programs and staff can be awkward and create issues that distract from the work we all came here to do.

Learnings:

- Engaging supportive partners such as "Four Forces" and "Hearts and Minds" eases the administrative burden and allows new program managers to focus on their mission.
- Good planning, flexibility, and gap funding and communication can help smooth the transition and reduce harm.
- Keeping open lines of communication, working collaboratively with colleagues, and a division-wide commitment to community safety is important to overcoming organizational challenges.

