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Photo: Beth Nakamura The Oregonian

GLITTER Program Evaluation

BRIDGING ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL EQUITY, AND
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN
PORTLAND, OREGON

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IMPACT REDUCTION PROGRAM | Portland Solutions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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GLITTER, “Ground Score Leading Inclusively Together Through Environmental Recovery” is a community initiative developed in Portland, Oregon in 2021.

The program was created through a partnership between Ground Score Association and the City of Portland to address waste accumulation in unsanctioned encampments across the city. GLITTER is funded by the City of Portland’s Impact Reduction Program and now includes funding from the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

GLITTER is rooted in the belief that basic sanitation, including waste collection, is an essential service and a human right. The purpose of the program is two-fold; it is to provide sanitation to the homeless community and to promote environmental recovery in Portland.

The program operates through a community-focused approach: GLITTER workers, most with firsthand experience with homelessness, engage directly with homeless individuals to help them clean up their encampments. There is an emphasis on relationship-building with the homeless community that allows workers to collect waste in areas that can be challenging for other waste management program crews to access. GLITTER has litter collection teams that pick-up garbage in urban areas with larger concentrations of people living on the street, like Old Town.



Photo: Violet Kalpakis

Key Findings

There are 63 current payroll employees (including employees at the new laundry facility) plus day laborers. 95% were currently or formerly homeless at the start of their payroll employment.

67% of workers report that they have a disabling condition. 81% surveyed noted an improvement in their overall physical health since working for GLITTER.

Since the program launched in 2021 until EOY 2024, GLITTER has removed 2,590,417 pounds of trash from unsanctioned encampments in Portland.

Over 177,521 sharps have been safely removed, significantly reducing biohazard risks in public spaces .

In 2024 alone, GLITTER collected 691,706 pounds of trash from the city's streets and diverted nearly 85,000 pounds of trash from landfills.

167,300 cigarette butts (equal to 110.65 pounds) were collected on the streets of Portland in 2024.

100% of workers that lived in tents during their first pick-up shifts are now in temporary or permanent housing.

83% of workers that lived in tents during their first pick-up shifts are now in permanent housing .



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Definitions

The following definitions are used in this program evaluation:

Homelessness: A person who lacks a fixed and adequate nighttime residence

Low barrier employment: A place of work that makes it easily accessible to its employees i.e. simple application process, less-rigid qualifications and flexible schedules.

Supportive employment: An organization that provides ongoing support and assistance to its employees so that they can achieve long-term employment

Unsanctioned campsites: Unauthorized places where homeless people live in structures or tents .

Pick-up shifts: An easy entry point into GLITTER where anyone can show up at Ground Score Association headquarters on a specific day and work a 4-hour shift and get paid cash at the end of their shift

Landfill diversion rates: The percentage of waste that is kept out of landfills and instead is composted, reused or recycled.

Fringe benefits: Additional compensation that an organization provides such as health insurance, 401k, paid time off, sick time, and employee assistance programs.

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Introduction

Many homeless individuals learn about the program through interactions with GLITTER crews at their camps and start working with them through pick-up shifts. They can show up at pre-established meeting spots throughout the city on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and get paid \$20/hour for a four-hour trash collection shift.

When someone decides to move to payroll, they can take on four to five shifts a week. Workers qualify for all the fringe benefits of a supportive employment organization: paid time off, 401k, vacation time, sick time, bereavement, and an employee assistance program.

Over the last five years, GLITTER has expanded its scope in the following areas:

1. **Geographic Expansion:** GLITTER initially operated in targeted blocks in downtown Portland and the Lloyd District due to the large number of unsanctioned campsites there. With positive results in those two areas, GLITTER expanded its services. It currently provides litter and tent-side waste collection in 24 tent-side routes in Old Town, SW downtown, the Central Eastside, North Portland, and East Multnomah County. Impact Reduction Program data is used to determine the areas of town for GLITTER routes. Exact routes vary day to day based on where camps have been established and are determined by GLITTER teams in the field.
2. **Workforce Development:** The program began with a small team of 4 homeless and/or insecurely housed individuals. It has steadily increased its capacity to employ more people from this vulnerable population. GLITTER has fostered workforce development skills in its employees through consistent pay, leadership opportunities and a unique work environment that is supportive and trauma-informed in its approach. Team members have benefited from a sense of community and pride that comes from making an active and positive contribution to the city that they are part of.
3. **Community Integration:** Beyond litter removal, GLITTER has become a model for relational and inclusive community-building. Collaborations with local organizations, agencies, businesses and unhoused individuals have strengthened its impact and facilitated a more cohesive approach to environmental resilience and social equity.
4. **Impact Metrics:** The program's ability to track and report tangible outcomes, such as the volume of trash removed and the number of workers supported, has grown and will be discussed in the outcome section of this evaluation. These metrics underscore GLITTER's effectiveness in waste management and have bolstered support from stakeholders like Metro and the City of Portland.

Background

According to the 2023 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homelessness Assessment, Oregon has the 2nd highest rate of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness in the United States. Multnomah County has the highest total number of people experiencing homelessness in Oregon. From the period of 2015–2023, homelessness increased 65% in Portland, from 1,887 to 6,297 individuals according to the 2023 Point In Time count.

A Portland State University 2022–2023 study through the Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative (HRAC) found that homelessness has increased in Oregon despite attempts to add more temporary shelter options (Green, 2023). The report found that people of color, LGBTQ+ people and those with disabilities are more likely to end up homeless. While there are many reasons that people end up homeless, affordable housing options remain a huge issue in addition to mental health and addiction issues.

Despite significant local government investments in interventions, high numbers of unsanctioned campsites scatter the city. The lack of waste management services in these camps can have many public health, environmental and equity implications: infectious disease outbreaks can result from the lack of sanitation and Portland's water quality is affected by excess trash, human feces and drug paraphernalia that enter the sewage system.

An inequitable solid waste management system has a great impact on homeless individuals. In a six-month evaluation conducted for Portland Street Response in 2021, more than 300 unsheltered homeless people were surveyed. As one person stated in the survey, "If someone would come out and collect the trash, we would happily work with them. We just need the basics. The basic things that housed people take for granted are so hard for us (Townley, 2021)." Often, unhoused individuals are forced to dispose of their waste by dumping, burning, abandoning or utilizing public waste bins because there aren't adequate waste disposal options available.

Ground Score Association is an association of informal recyclers, canners, dumpster divers, and other waste pickers who create and fill low-barrier waste materials management jobs in Portland, Oregon. It is a collectively organized and radically inclusive organization that prioritizes work opportunities for those facing work and housing insecurity.

GLITTER was developed during the pandemic as a program through Ground Score Association to address the needs of the homeless community. The program also aligns to support the City of Portland's waste management goals: by 2030 the City of Portland aims to: reduce total solid waste generated by 25%, to recover 90% of all waste generated, and to reduce the greenhouse gas impacts from the waste collection system by 40%.

In its first three weeks, GLITTER hired 13 workers and successfully removed over 8,000 pounds of micro-trash, debris and litter as well as 383 sharps from encampments in downtown Portland and the Lloyd District.



Photo: Beth Nakamura | The Oregonian

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Outcomes - Waste Collection

Since the program launched in 2021 until EOY 2024, GLITTER has removed 2,590,417 pounds of trash from unsanctioned encampments in Portland.

Diversion Rates: GLITTER has successfully diverted 87,539 lbs from landfills. In 2024 they achieved a 12% diversion rate. This aligns with Portland’s goal of recovering 90% of waste by 2030.

Sharps Collection: Over 177,521 sharps have been safely removed, significantly reducing biohazard risks in public spaces

Burning and Dumping Mitigation: GLITTER reduces the reliance on harmful practices such as burning and dumping waste. In the broader context, Portland homeless communities burn approximately 552 lbs of waste weekly, and programs like GLITTER help minimize such practices.

Collaboration with Other Programs: As part of the Ground Score Association, GLITTER works alongside organizations like Clean Start and Rapid Response Bio-Clean, further enhancing Portland’s equitable waste management system.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Waste Removed	311,099 lbs	739, 574 lbs	848, 038 lbs	691,706 lbs
Total Landfill Diversion	NA*	NA*	2, 705 lbs	84,834 lbs
Number of Sharps Collected	41,738	66,040	51,626	18,117
Contact with Community Members	NA*	5, 490	9,462	10,189
Cigarette Butts Collected	NA*	NA*	NA*	167,300 (110.65 lbs)

*Data not yet tracked

Outcomes – Supportive Employment

Between January and May 2024 alone, 116 individuals participated in their first pick-up shifts

City of Portland's contract with GLITTER only provides wages for waste removal. At the time of this report, the contract does not include any funding towards the services, training and wraparound care that make GLITTER a supportive employment program.

Despite this, GLITTER has demonstrated its effectiveness at supporting individuals transitioning from homelessness to stability by providing accessible and flexible job opportunities. It has removed traditional obstacles to employment, such as extensive application processes, rigid schedules, and strict qualifications, allowing individuals to earn income while addressing other challenges, such as housing instability or behavioral health concerns.

76.66% of workers that were surveyed started through pick-up shifts. Pick-up shifts offer an easy entry point into the workforce so that people get to try out the demands of the job, schedule and routine before they decide to become employees. The program fosters long-term employment success, with 52% of workers moving from pick-up shifts to payroll within six months and 70% within one year. This model demonstrates that low-barrier employment can serve as a bridge to stability and long-term employment for those that face significant barriers in traditional job markets.

By employing 63 individuals, including 11 new hires in the last quarter, the program showcases its capacity for growth and its commitment to expanding access. Additionally, the average employment duration of 698 days reflects strong retention and highlights the program's ability to provide sustained pathways to long-term stability for the homeless community.

Access to Employment: The program employs 63 workers, with 11 new workers added in the last quarter alone (July–September 2024).

Low barrier employment: 52% of GLITTER workers moved from pick up shifts to payroll within 6 months and 70% of GLITTER workers moved from pick up shifts to payroll within 1 year

Easy entry point for work: 76.66% of workers starting through pick-up shifts.

Retention: The average employment duration for GLITTER workers is approximately 698 days (1 year and 11 months)

Outcomes - Housing Transitions

By addressing one of the root causes of housing instability—unemployment—the program creates a pathway for individuals to transition from homelessness to sustainable living arrangements.

The program's success is particularly evident in its ability to assist individuals transitioning from extreme forms of homelessness, living in tents. All workers who lived in tents at the start of their employment have now moved to temporary or permanent housing, with 83% of those surveyed indicating that they have secured permanent housing.



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Homeless to housed: At the time of their first pick-up shift, 58% of workers reported that they lived in temporary housing or were homeless. Currently, 71% of workers report that they are in permanent supportive housing. This is a 50% reduction in temporary housing for those employed by GLITTER.

Positive Housing Changes: 55% of workers said that their employment at GLITTER was the primary factor that impacted their ability to access housing

From tents to shelter: 100% of workers that lived in tents during their first pick-up shifts are now in temporary or permanent housing.

From tents to permanent housing: 83% of workers that lived in tents during their first pick-up shifts are now in permanent housing

Outcomes – Improved physical and mental health and reduced substance use

Survey data showed a tangible impact on workers' physical and mental health. Besides income, the program also provides stability and resources that contribute to improved health outcomes.

Among GLITTER workers, 81% reported improvements in their overall physical health; workers attribute these changes to better nutrition (65%), reduced skin conditions (23%), and enhanced access to primary and medical care (42%). The program's structure allows workers to prioritize self-care and address long-standing physical health challenges which help workers achieve greater physical stability. Being employed by GLITTER improves employees' quality of life.

The impact on mental health is equally significant: 52% of workers surveyed reported improved mental health since they joined the program. Employment at GLITTER fosters a sense of purpose, social connection and autonomy, all of which are protective factors for mental health.

Furthermore, GLITTER offers consistent and predictable work shifts and this reduces worker stress and anxiety, particularly for those that are homeless or recovering from addiction. Four-hour work shifts ensure that workers don't overextend themselves physically and mentally.

The GLITTER community encourages progress and accountability from each other. Workers check-in with each other and look out for one another. It provides a critical alternative to the isolation and despair that can perpetuate mental health challenges.

Physical and Mental Health Improvements

- Improvements in physical health: 81% surveyed noted an improvement in their overall physical health
- Improvements in mental health: 52% surveyed said their mental health has improved since working for GLITTER
- Improved Nutrition, reduced skin conditions and better access to primary and medical care: 65% of workers said they have improved nutrition, 23% have reported reduced skin conditions and 42% reported better access to primary/medical care

Reduction in Substance Use:

- Reduction in Active Substance Abuse: At the time of their first pick up shift, 48% of workers reported that they were active in a substance abuse addiction.
- Only 12% of GLITTER employees still struggle with substance abuse issues. This 73.33% reduction highlights GLITTER's positive impact on recovery efforts.
- Currently, 88% of GLITTER employees do not currently struggle with a substance abuse issue

Outcomes - Community Impact

This information was collected from a community impact survey.

A critical component of any program evaluation is the inclusion of community feedback. This ensures that a diversity of perspectives is represented, strengthening the relevance of the evaluation findings. For programs operating in public-facing spaces—especially those addressing complex social issues like homelessness and sanitation—community input is essential not only for identifying areas of improvement but also to inform policies and program recommendations.

GLITTER actively engages with the unhoused community and various business and neighborhood stakeholders across Portland. GLITTER workers are distinguishable by their blue vests marked “Ground Score Association”—these blue vests set them apart from other litter cleanup crews in Portland. Understanding how communities perceive GLITTER, and whether they recognize their presence, differentiate them from other teams, and view their work positively, is essential in this program evaluation.



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A six-question survey was developed to assess GLITTER’s impact with community stakeholders. Over 130 physical surveys were handed out to businesses, community members and posted in visible locations along GLITTER routes in North, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest and Northwest Portland. Surveys were also posted to community boards in local libraries, grocery stores, non-profits and shared electronically with community organizations.

Six survey questions:

1. What cleanup programs, projects, or efforts do you regularly see in your neighborhood?
2. Are there any cleanup programs that you would like to see in your neighborhood (that you are aware of)?
3. Are you familiar with the Ground Score Association (GSA) or the GLITTER program?
4. Have your interactions with GSA or GLITTER been generally positive?
5. Since the introduction of GLITTER crews in your area, have you noticed any changes in the impact of nearby encampments or the presence of the unhoused population?
6. Is there anything you would like to share about Ground Score Association or the GLITTER program to help them improve their program and increase community support?

Key findings from the survey showed:

20% of people surveyed cited GLITTER as the cleanup program they regularly see in their neighborhood.

46% surveyed said they were familiar with GLITTER

46.43% of people that participated in the survey stated that their area has improved since GLITTER started cleaning in their area

46.43% of people that participated in the survey said that their area has stayed the same since GLITTER started cleaning

Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendation 1: Lead Collaboration Towards A Multi-Sector Approach for a Sustainable and Equitable Waste Management System

A focus on multi-sectoral partnerships and inter-agency planning would help to create a more cohesive, equitable, and sustainable waste management system at the municipal and regional levels. A strategic approach would prioritize collaboration between public agencies, private sector partners, and community organizations to address waste-related challenges while ensuring environmental justice and sustainability. By leveraging partnerships and aligning local efforts with broader regional policies, Portland can take a leadership role in advancing waste management solutions that are both effective and equitable.

Oregon's waste management system is shaped by state-level regulations, county-specific policies, and municipal contracts, leading to inconsistencies in service delivery. Statewide regulations, such as the Oregon DEQ's Materials Management Program and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws, set broad waste management goals, but their implementation varies across counties and municipalities. For example, in the Portland metro area, waste management is overseen by Metro, while rural areas rely on county-run programs. Additionally, local municipalities establish their own waste service contracts, resulting in disparities in service standards, pricing structures, and recycling programs. These fragmented approaches create inefficiencies and make developing a cohesive, statewide waste management strategy difficult.

The lack of integration in waste management leads to several key challenges. Disjointed policies across counties create inefficiencies, which makes streamlining waste reduction and recycling efforts difficult. Service gaps disproportionately impact rural and low-income communities, where residents may have limited access to recycling, organics recovery, or hazardous waste disposal. Furthermore, limited cross-jurisdictional collaboration means that cities and counties often contract independently for waste services, leading to duplication of efforts and a lack of resources for vulnerable populations. Without a more coordinated approach, these challenges will continue to hinder Oregon's ability to implement sustainable and equitable waste management solutions.

Oregon should adopt a more integrated waste management system that aligns policies, resources, and infrastructure across jurisdictions to improve efficiency and equity. A key strategy for achieving this is regional standardization, where statewide contracting guidelines ensure consistent service expectations while allowing local flexibility. Shared infrastructure and data systems would facilitate collaboration between counties, allowing for better waste processing tracking and coordination. Equitable cost structures, such as progressive rate systems, can help ensure low-income communities access affordable waste services. Additionally, the creation of a multi-jurisdictional task force would provide a platform for cities and counties to coordinate waste policies and share best practices.

Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendation 2: Integrate Equitable Waste Management Practices into Broader Urban Planning Efforts

Coordinating waste collection, transportation infrastructure, and storm water management can enhance public space cleanliness, reduce pollution, and improve environmental health outcomes.

By ensuring that waste management is incorporated into transportation and storm water strategies, Portland can mitigate harmful practices such as illegal dumping and waste burning, practices that contribute to environmental degradation and public health risks. Strengthening collaboration between City bureaus, such as the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), can further support these efforts by promoting shared responsibility and resource allocation.

Integrating waste equity considerations into transportation and infrastructure planning is critical to this approach. PBOT oversees the city's street network, sidewalks, and bike lanes, making it essential to ensure that waste collection services and facilities are accessible to all residents, including those experiencing homelessness. BES, which is responsible for storm water management, can collaborate with IRP to prevent waste from entering drainage systems by implementing targeted waste diversion strategies near flood-prone areas and waterways. By embedding waste management into transportation and environmental planning, PBOT and BES can address service gaps while improving public space cleanliness and safety.

Policy Recommendation 3: Develop Inter-Agency Information-Sharing Agreements

Despite its pilot as a waste management program, GLITTER has clear positive public health outcomes in substance use, behavioral health, nutrition, and supporting housing transitions. Earlier coordination may have allowed local governments to support these efforts better, focusing key resources.

Formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between city bureaus and external partners should outline protocols for sharing outcome data and operational insights. These agreements should define data-sharing frequencies, reporting structures, and confidentiality protocols to ensure compliance with privacy regulations while fostering transparency. A structured approach to interagency coordination would allow for early identification of problem areas and facilitate joint action on critical urban challenges.

Policy Recommendations

A structured system for continuous policy refinement should be built into the data-sharing process, ensuring that city agencies adapt their strategies based on emerging trends and outcome evaluations. Monthly interagency meetings should be held to review shared data and identify necessary adjustments to stormwater planning, homeless services, transportation infrastructure, and public space maintenance. This iterative approach would enable more responsive governance and allow Portland to address urban equity challenges proactively.

By implementing these structured information-sharing pathways, Portland can enhance interagency coordination, improve service delivery, and ensure that critical urban challenges are addressed in a data-driven, transparent, and community-informed manner.



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Policy Recommendation 4: Capitalize on Existing Investments to Maximize Outcomes

The GLITTER program presents a unique opportunity for coordination and connection across multiple city agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders due to its community-driven approach and high level of organization. Unlike traditional waste management or homeless response efforts, GLITTER operates at the intersection of environmental sustainability, public health, workforce development, public safety, and social services, making it an ideal platform for collaborative partnerships that enhance service delivery and maximize impact. Additionally, the program's operational insights and measurable outcomes can serve as a valuable feedback system to inform future policy investments and improve citywide resource allocation.

One key area for coordination is between waste management, public health, and public safety agencies. Given that GLITTER's work directly reduces environmental hazards associated with unsanctioned encampments, the City of Portland can better align the program with existing sanitation, harm reduction, and public safety initiatives. Expanding partnerships with organizations such as Multnomah County Public Health, the Bureau of Environmental Services, and local public safety programs could enhance GLITTER's ability to integrate waste collection with mobile hygiene stations, sharps disposal, and street-based healthcare services. This approach would create a multi-layered intervention model, addressing both waste accumulation and public health risks while improving safety conditions in public spaces.

Policy Recommendations

These partnerships would also provide critical data on environmental and public safety conditions, helping city officials assess the effectiveness of various waste management and public health strategies.

Another opportunity for connection exists within workforce development, housing stabilization, and public safety efforts. GLITTER has demonstrated that low-barrier employment can serve as a bridge to economic stability and permanent housing. By collaborating with organizations focused on job training, transitional housing, and behavioral health support, the program can expand its role beyond waste management to a structured pathway for long-term employment and self-sufficiency. This approach also supports public safety by providing stability for individuals who might otherwise be involved in cycles of homelessness and criminalization. The City of Portland can formalize partnerships between GLITTER, workforce development programs, and affordable housing providers to create an integrated system where employment directly supports housing transitions while reducing interactions with law enforcement and emergency services. Regular tracking of employment and housing transitions within GLITTER can also serve as a key performance metric for evaluating workforce and housing policies in Portland.

Additionally, the community-driven nature of GLITTER makes it an ideal partner for place-based urban planning and public safety strategies. The program operates in public spaces with high visibility and engagement, providing real-time insights into waste patterns, public space accessibility, and the needs of unhoused individuals. Coordination with the Portland Bureau of Transportation, Metro, and local urban planning and public safety initiatives could leverage GLITTER's work to inform infrastructure decisions, such as the placement of public waste receptacles, pedestrian improvements, lighting enhancements, and stormwater mitigation strategies. These operational insights could feed directly into Portland's urban planning and public infrastructure investments, ensuring that future projects are responsive to real-time community needs.

By fostering stronger connections across agencies, GLITTER's highly organized model can serve as a central hub for coordinated service delivery, ensuring that waste management, public health, workforce development, infrastructure planning, and public safety are addressed holistically. Furthermore, establishing formalized feedback loops based on program data and community engagement findings can help inform policy adjustments, optimize budget allocations, and enhance the overall efficiency of city services. A structured approach to cross-sector collaboration would not only enhance program efficiency but also contribute to broader equity, sustainability, public safety, and evidence-based policymaking goals for the City of Portland.

Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendation 5: Expand Low-Barrier Employment and Housing Pathways Outside of Short-Term Shelter Investments

GLITTER has demonstrated substantial positive housing outcomes for its workers. The City of Portland should consider expanding investments in similar programs that offer low-barrier employment opportunities and direct pathways to housing stability. Traditional short-term shelter investments often fail to address the root causes of homelessness, leaving individuals without long-term solutions for stability. By integrating supportive services with employment opportunities, programs like GLITTER offer a more sustainable and dignified alternative that helps individuals transition from homelessness to permanent housing while fostering economic independence.

Expanding low-barrier employment programs should focus on scaling up existing models that have proven effective in providing immediate income and workforce development. Portland can build on GLITTER's success by replicating this approach in other sectors, such as urban environmental maintenance, community beautification projects, and stormwater infrastructure management. Partnering with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and workforce development agencies can help increase the number of accessible, trauma-informed employment pathways for individuals who face barriers to traditional jobs, including those experiencing homelessness, behavioral health challenges, or past incarceration.

The expansion of these programs should also include wraparound services to support long-term housing transitions. Employment alone is not always enough to stabilize individuals facing chronic homelessness, so integrating case management, mental health and addiction services, financial literacy training, and peer support networks into low-barrier employment initiatives can improve retention and long-term success. These services should be incorporated in a way that ensures flexibility and accessibility, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by unhoused individuals re-entering the workforce.

Additionally, dedicating municipal funding and exploring public-private partnerships can ensure the sustainability of expanded low-barrier employment initiatives. While short-term shelter funding is often prioritized in homeless response budgets, investing in employment-based solutions offers a long-term return by reducing reliance on emergency services, improving public space maintenance, and facilitating housing transitions. The City of Portland should explore federal and state workforce development grants, as well as partnerships with private employers and philanthropic organizations, to expand and sustain employment-driven housing solutions.

Program Recommendations

Program recommendations 1: Expand GLITTER's Geographic Reach and Service Capacity

The GLITTER program has demonstrated success in targeted areas of Portland, but expanding its services to additional high-need locations would magnify its impact. The program should collaborate with Metro, county governments, and private stakeholders to expand its efforts beyond the current routes. This expansion might encompass additional tent-side waste collection routes in areas with significant unsanctioned encampments and waste accumulation, particularly in East Portland and suburban areas where services are scarce. A feasibility study ought to be performed to identify optimal expansion locations based on data from the Impact Reduction Program and Environmental Health Assessments.

Program Recommendation 2: Strengthen Wraparound Support for Participants

GLITTER offers essential employment opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness, but additional wraparound services would boost its effectiveness as a pathway to stability. Enhancing access to mental health services, substance use treatment, financial literacy training, and peer mentorship programs would facilitate long-term employment success and housing transitions. Since GLITTER's current contract with the City of Portland only covers wages for waste removal, it's crucial to seek additional funding to incorporate these services through philanthropic partnerships, local business sponsorships, and state workforce development grants.

Program Recommendation 3: Improve Data Collection and Program Evaluation

GLITTER has effectively tracked waste removal metrics and employment outcomes, but improved data collection and evaluation would bolster its capacity to advocate for sustained funding and policy integration. The program should introduce longitudinal tracking of participant outcomes, including employment retention, housing stability, and health improvements over time.

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