



## Successful Practices & Strategies

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# Gresham Police Department

Gresham, Oregon

<https://greshamoregon.gov/Police-Department/>

Community policing element

Problem/issue

Community partnerships

Quality of life

### Problem description

Gangs have a stronghold in low-income apartment complexes. Quality of life in these complexes is diminishing because of high crime rates, gang activity, and poor management.

### Community policing strategies implemented

Two years ago, in an effort to respond to this problem, the Gresham Police Department's (GPD) Special Enforcement Team (SET) began reaching out to property owners in an effort to establish a coalition. This collaborative effort between police and owners began to pay off.

One example of this effort was the Barberry Village apartment complex. The property manager reported that UPS refused to come onto the property, and the garbage haulers came in looking over their shoulders. The complex was a hotspot for prostitution and drug deals. Homicides were committed just outside the gates. Four police cars were required to respond to even routine calls.

The members of SET contacted the property owners, who lived in another state, and opened a dialog over the issues that plagued the complex. The property owner moved from a tenant-manager style of management to working with a property management firm.

In October 2013, as an addition to the forum, the police chief invited all rental property managers and owners in the City of Gresham to a free, one-day Landlord Training seminar to learn how landlords and property managers can keep illegal activity out of their units. This program was one of many efforts to stop illegal drug, gang, and other criminal activity threatening the health, safety, and welfare of the GPD's residential neighborhoods.

SET has also been working with landlords to create a mentorship program that partners successful apartment managers with those who are struggling to clean up their complexes. The successful managers have been able to coach the less effective managers on pre-rental screening criteria and tenant interview techniques, which help prevent problems before they move in.



## Change and/or impact as a result of these community policing efforts

As a result of this partnership, problem tenants have been evicted, landscaping and lighting were installed, and families are now letting their children play outside. The complex is now fully rented for the first time. The success of the partnership between SET, the property owner, and the property management company quickly spread to other complex owners and managers. Now management companies are contacting the police when these companies take over a problem building, looking for guidance and assistance.

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