

City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Dear Gresham Voters,
As a lifelong advocate for our community, I am committed to enhancing the safety and security of our city. My husband is a retired firefighter, and my son currently serves as a firefighter, which deepens my resolve to support the proposed five-year operating levy for fire and police services (measure 26-247).

Gresham's growth has outpaced our public safety resources, leading to increased emergency response times and a spike in crime rates. In fact, our population has grown 19% over the past twenty years, while daily minimum firefighter staffing only increased by 9%. **And Gresham has one less sworn police officer than twenty years ago.** But as you know, calls for fire service have increased 69%, and shootings in Gresham have spiked 400% in recent years. The rising need for public safety and inadequate staffing mean slower emergency response times and fewer patrol officers to prevent crimes.

I am only supporting this levy because it is critical for our safety, especially that of our seniors and children. Let's show our firefighters and police officers that they have our support.

The proposed levy aims to address these challenges at \$1.35 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. With an average monthly cost of less than \$30 for homeowners, the levy is a prudent investment in our collective safety and security. The levy's strict accountability measures, including oversight by an independent committee of residents and annual audits, guarantee that funds are used effectively for public safety enhancements. I am personally committed to holding the city accountable to these safeguards. I urge you to support this levy to fortify our city's resilience against emergencies and crime. It's a commitment to our community's safety, honoring the dedication of all first responders.

Vote for a safer Gresham. Your support is crucial.

Warm regards,
Cathy Keathley

(This information furnished by Cathy Keathley)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

GRESHAM FIREFIGHTERS URGE A YES VOTE ON MEASURE 26-247

Dear Gresham Residents:
We are proud to serve as Gresham firefighters. We take our responsibility to protect you very seriously. In an emergency or crisis, like a house fire, a medical emergency, or devastating storms... **we don't wait... we respond.**

Fires double in size every minute. And we only have 6-8 minutes to save the life of a heart attack victim.

For too many years, Gresham has failed to invest in more

firefighters and better equipment to serve our city. While the city population has grown, the daily minimum fire staffing has not kept pace. That means slower response times and crews stretched thin.

Measure 26-247 will begin to fix this problem. A dedicated levy will allow us to retain existing personnel and, critically, hire 13 new firefighters to serve the community. The levy will provide an additional rescue truck at our busiest fire station and would add one new Fire Marshall to ramp up school inspections and support arson investigations.

IN AN EMERGENCY OR CRISIS, EVERY SECOND COUNTS.

AS GRESHAM FIREFIGHTERS, WE DON'T WAIT - WE RESPOND.

"As Gresham Fire Chief, I respectfully urge a yes vote on this public safety levy. It will give us the dedicated, stable funding to hire more firefighters and an additional rescue truck for our busiest station. A yes vote will allow us to better serve and protect you."

- Chief Scott Lewis

"As President of the Gresham firefighter's union, I urge you to vote yes. Our men and women love their work and care about this community. Calls for service are increasing, but our staffing hasn't kept pace with demand and need. Help us help you when you need it most."

Kevin Larson, President IAFF Local 1062

VOTE YES ON MEASURE 26-247 FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Neighborhood Leaders Support the Gresham Fire and Police Levy

Neighborhood leaders in the Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations regularly review city issues and advocate for improvements and good government.

We understand the need for more firefighters and police officers for a safer Gresham.

Any of us can need our first responders at any time, such as:

Medical Emergencies Traffic Accidents House Fires

Random Violence Missing Persons

Extreme Weather Events Burglaries & Theft

In these changing times, calls for emergency services have significantly increased.

- We need more firefighters and police officers to improve life-saving response times.

City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

- We need more officers to restore our specialty police units that focus on crime prevention and traffic enforcement, and to support investigations of drug, property and violent crimes.

- We need funding for an additional rescue truck to improve response times, for another Fire Marshall to support arson investigations, and to add fire inspections to keep our schools, businesses and community spaces safe.

The Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations endorses Measure 26-247.

We need this funding to retain positions plus add more in our Fire and Police Departments.

Please join us – Vote YES for A Safer Gresham Vote

Yes for the Gresham Fire and Police Levy!

For more information go to SaferGresham.org

Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations
Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association
Jim Buck
Richard Dwyer
Mary Edmeades
Stephen Estes
Chris Fast
Greg Hartung
Ken Howard
Catherine Nicewood
David Porter
Carol Rulla
Kat Todd
Theresa Tschirky
Karin Zachow

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

THE SMART PUBLIC SAFETY INVESTMENT

VOTE YES ON MEASURE 26-247

A DEDICATED LEVY TO HIRE MORE FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS

As business people, we know that **smart investments are critical to our success. And that includes investing in the safety of our community.**

Gresham Firefighters have the same staffing level they did in 1994, yet our population has almost doubled. Our firefighters are now stretched too thin.

In 2023, the Gresham Police Department saw 3,323 more calls for service than in 2022. But Gresham has one of the smallest police-to-resident ratios among Oregon's biggest cities. We need more officers.

The current \$15 per month Police, Fire and Parks fee only funds 9% of public safety services. It is essential,

but not enough to meet the growing demand for emergency services.

Levy is A Net Gain for Gresham:

1) **22 more first responders.** A dedicated five-year levy will help retain existing fire and police personnel and fund 13 more firefighters and 9 more police officers.

2) **Faster response times.** More firefighters and police officers will help improve response times and strengthen public safety.

3) **Restore specialty police teams.** Restored specialty teams will help prevent crime and allow proactive traffic enforcement.

4) **Add fire resources.** An additional rescue truck at the busiest fire station will improve emergency response. An additional Fire Marshall will increase fire inspections in schools and support arson investigations.

5) **Ensure Financial accountability.** Levy spending will be **audited each year** and will be **overseen by an independent committee of Gresham citizens.**

As Gresham residents we are asking you to join us and Vote Yes for this Safety Levy.

Historic Downtown Gresham Business Association
Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce
East Metro Association of Realtors
Home Building Association of Greater Portland
Bob Avila
Kayla Brown
Amee Curtis
Pat DeLaquil
Uriah Edmonds
Karen & Steve Johnston
Michael & Diane McKeel
Greg Moen
Sue O'Halloran
James Parker
Jared Tjaden
Doug Walker
Hilda Williams
Bess Wills

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Dear Gresham Residents:

Gresham is not immune from the public safety challenges facing our region. Last year, the Gresham Police Department had 3,323 more calls for service than in 2022 – a 7% increase in just one year.

At the same time calls for police service are increasing; Gresham actually has about the same number of sworn police officers as we did twenty years ago.

City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

Bottom line: Gresham has too few police officers for a city our size. In fact, Gresham has one of smallest police-resident ratios among Oregon's largest cities (we are the fourth largest city in the state).

Right now there are only 7 to 9 patrol officers on duty to serve a city of over 114,000 people.

From 2002 to 2004, an average 19 officers were assigned to the Investigations Division. At the same time, the city averaged two homicides per year. Today, there are 20 officers assigned to the investigations Division. Over the past three years the city of Gresham has averaged over 10 homicides per year. The Police Department's resources no longer match the needs of the community.

We can solve this problem – with your help. **Please vote YES.**

Measure 26-247 will:

- ✓ Fund 9 new police officer positions.
- ✓ Allow Gresham PD to staff more officers on the road and investigate crime.
- ✓ Help reduce emergency response times and strengthen community safety.
- ✓ Require annual audits of public safety spending.

Vote YES to Keep Our City Safe

The Gresham Police Officer Association (GPOA)

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

WHY GRESHAM NEEDS A LEVY DEDICATED TO MORE FIRE AND POLICE:

DID YOU KNOW?

Gresham is Oregon's fourth largest city but actually has fewer police per residents (1.04 per 1000) than the smaller cities of Beaverton, Medford, Tigard, Corvallis, and Hillsboro.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gresham's population has grown 19% since 2004, but the city actually has one less sworn police officer than we did then. During the same time, calls for fire service have increased 69% but the number of firefighters has not kept pace with demand for service.

DID YOU KNOW?

Over the past 30 years, Gresham's population has grown 46% yet the daily minimum staffing for the Gresham Fire Department is the same as it was in 1994 – 30 years ago.

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2018, verified shootings in Gresham have increased more than 400%, and in 2023 alone, calls for police service increased by over 3,000 calls.

But today, due to police staffing shortages, there are only 7 to 9 patrol officers on duty at any given time.

VOTING YES ON MEASURE 26-247 = MORE FIRE AND POLICE PERSONNEL

- A dedicated five-year Fire and Police levy will help retain existing personnel and **13 more firefighters and 9 more police officers.**
- More firefighters and police officers will help **improve emergency response times** and strengthen public safety.
- Levy spending will be **audited each year** and will be **overseen by an independent committee of Gresham citizens.**

WE URGE A YES VOTE ON MEASURE 26-247

State Senator Chris Gorsek
State Representative Zach Hudson
State Representative Ricki Ruiz
Metro Council President Lynn Peterson
Metro Councilor Duncan Hwang
Metro Councilor Ashton Simpson
Multnomah County Commissioner Lori Stegmann
Gresham Mayor Travis Stovall
Gresham Council President Sue Piazza
Gresham Councilor Dina DiNucci
Gresham Councilor Janine Gladfelter
Jerry Hinton Gresham City Councilor
Gresham Councilor Vince Jones-Dixon
Gresham Councilor Eddy Morales

For more information go to SaferGresham.org

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Even Rivals Agree on the Safer Gresham Levy

Gresham United for Safety and **East County Rising** don't agree on much. **But we both are working to make Gresham to a safe and thriving city where we all can live, work, and play** – a place where our kids can safely walk to school, where our local businesses grow and thrive, and where our neighborhoods are safe for us all.

We often disagree, but not on the Safer Gresham Levy.

Here's Why Rivals Agree:

Gresham has too few firefighters and police officers to

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City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

meet the growing number of emergency calls. Our city has grown, and so has the demand for emergency services.

We have rigorously examined other options to finance the additional safety resources we need. And we have pushed the city to do the same. Cost have been and belts have been tightened, but we need more to keep up with demand.

The current \$15 per month Police, Fire and Parks fee only funds 9% of public safety services and is not enough to meet the growing demand for emergency services. **A dedicated public safety levy will enhance fire and police protection and responsiveness.**

Gresham Fire Department is 30% smaller than similar-sized cities and is understaffed at the city's busiest station. This measure will help ensure that Gresham has the firefighters and paramedics it needs so they are there when the community needs them the most.

Gresham is experiencing the impacts of dangerous street drugs, including fentanyl and new types of meth. Gresham needs additional police resources to fight this powerful threat to the community.

The levy will restore funding for Gresham's specialty police units that are focused on crime prevention and working with community members to reduce conflicts before a full police response is needed.

This levy is a responsible and reasonable investment in the future of our city and our overall safety.

Please Vote Yes on 26-247

East County Rising Gresham United for Safety

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS AGREE

As unbelievable as that might sound in today's world, it's true!

Here in Gresham there is a long tradition of putting aside partisan differences to work together on our most critical issues. And **nothing is more critical to a community than safety.**

OUR FIRST RESPONDERS NEED OUR SUPPORT

Gresham Fire Department is 30% smaller than similar-sized cities and is understaffed at the city's busiest station. This measure will help ensure that Gresham has the firefighters and paramedics it needs so they can be there when we need them.

Violent crime has been on the rise - shootings in Gresham have increased more than 400% in recent years.

We are experiencing the impacts of dangerous street drugs, including fentanyl! Gresham needs additional

police resources to fight this powerful threat to the community.

This levy will make it possible to restore funding to Gresham's specialty police units focused on crime prevention, and to investigate serious crimes.

Gresham's population has grown, but the city actually has one less sworn police officer than twenty years ago. We are the fourth largest city in Oregon but for too long we deferred hiring more police and fire personnel to keep up with population growth.

The current \$15 per month Police, Fire and Parks fee only funds 9% of public safety services and is not enough to meet the growing demand for emergency services.

Measure 26-247 will allow the city to retain existing police and fire personnel and add 22 new first responders.

Our first responders put their lives on the line for us every day.

In May, Gresham voters can support our Fire and Police by Voting Yes on Measure 26-247.

John & Shirley Vandermosten
Michael Patrick

For more information go to SaferGresham.org

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

IF YOU CAN ONLY SAY YES TO ONE ASK THIS ELECTION SAY YES FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

For many of us, every dollar matters and can be the difference between affording our medication, our food or other necessities.

As you are considering the asks coming to you this election, **please make the Fire and Police Levy your top priority.**

- **Gresham still has one of the lowest city tax rates in the state – but the cost of that is we now have some of the lowest numbers of first responders per person in the state. And that is not good.**
- **Fewer police than even smaller cities.** Gresham has fewer police officers per one thousand residents than smaller cities in the region like Tigard, Medford, Beaverton, and Hillsboro.
- **Calls for fire and police growing.** Over the past 30 years our population has nearly doubled, and calls for fire and police service in Gresham have grown while staffing levels have not.
- **In an emergency, every second counts.** With population and calls for service increasing, fewer fire and police first responders are doing a lot more – with a lot less.

City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

MORE FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS

- 1) **22 more first responders.** This five-year levy will help retain existing fire and police personnel and fund 13 more firefighters and 9 more police officers.
- 2) **Faster response times.** In an emergency every second counts. More fire fighters and sworn officers will help improve emergency response times.
- 3) **Financial accountability.** Levy spending will be audited each year and will be **overseen by an independent committee of Gresham citizens.**

**This levy is an insurance policy
that could save the life of someone you love.**

Help Ensure a Safer Gresham - Vote Yes on 26-247

SnowCap Community Charities
Dads Helping Dads
My Father's House
Allan Richard
Former Mayor Karylinn Echols
Amanda Orozco-Beach
Andy Miller
Claire Lider
Hugh Harris
Jairo Rios-Campos
Mayra Gomez
Se-ah-dom Edmo
Shannon Chisom
Sho Dozono
Thomas Slyter

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Everyone Deserves a Safe Community

As your Gresham neighbors, we not only believe that statement, we work every day to make it a reality.

Among our ranks are volunteers, business owners, elected leaders, students, teachers, community advocates, parents, grandparents, and more.

To keep our city safe for all our families in all of our neighborhoods we need more funding for Fire and Police.

It's just that simple.

We know that means many of us will be asked to pay a little more every year, but we respectfully remind you to consider the value you place on your home, your family, or your business.

As the saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Please join us in Voting Yes on Measure 26-247 For the safety of our families and our community.

Carla "KC" Hanson
Dave Dyk
Erin Beggs
Gini Moldovanyi
Jacquenette McIntire
Jim Kirwan
Jim Rulla
Mishawn Nelson
Patton Echols

Paul Gladfelter
Preston Wills
Samuel Meza
Scott Lewis
Shirley Craddick
Sophia Ybarra
Stephanie Dwyer
Tyler Brookings
Vicki Moen
Van Austin

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Customer and employee safety is vitally important to business. Rising crime affects the livability of our community and the prosperity of businesses. Controlling and reducing vandalism, shoplifting and car theft are concerns for businesses. Gresham will not continue to be the vibrant community we value without a healthy business environment and that starts with safety measures.

When businesses invest in a community, they are all in. They purchase property, improve existing buildings, hire staff, and plan for growth. All are in jeopardy when crime rises to an unacceptable level. Businesses leave seeking safer communities for their customers and staff. The Gresham Fire and Safety levy will stabilize our public safety departments.

The Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce represents over 450 businesses in the area and over 24,000 employees. All industries in the chamber are concerned about safety. It starts at the homes of their employees and customers, traveling to work or to shop, at the office or store, and on their days off safety is a concern even in neighborhood parks. There isn't a moment of the day when safety is not of utmost importance to businesses, whether it's for their customers or staff.

If essential fire and police services are understaffed, the business climate suffers. We all suffer. The levy addresses fire and safety staffing concerns. It has a five-year duration, offering Gresham voters the chance to evaluate the city's performance when they consider a renewal.

"The small tax increase on property owners whether business or home, is a price worth paying for safety and peace of mind that someone will answer the emergency call." Lynn Snodgrass, CEO Gresham Area Chamber.

The Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports a yes vote on the Gresham Fire and Police Levy.

Submitted by Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Gresham's Center For The Arts Foundation values the importance of responsive and readily available fire

City of Gresham

Measure 26-247

and police services. As presenters of Music Mondays, Wednesday Music in the Parks, and now Gresham's Arts Festival in July and Winter Holiday celebrations including the Christmas Tree lighting on December 7, safety is always a top concern.

In the recent past, the shortage in particular of police presence in our Historic Downtown area and the Arts Plaza has caused concern. Unfortunately in today's world of increasing violence, a rapid response is especially important. In bringing crowds of people together enjoying the sense of community, we are cognizant that the safety factors are greater when there is a shortage of responders available.

In recognizing the City of Gresham does not have an adequate number of police or fire personnel, we support the efforts to correct this via the proposed Safer Gresham ballot measure. Please vote Yes to ensure we can continue to gather publicly in a safe environment.

Sue O'Halloran, President

Center For The Arts Foundation

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

WHY YES VOTE ON MEASURE 26-247 MAKES SAFE SENSE FOR GRESHAM?

IN AN EMERGENCY, EVERY SECOND COUNTS...

Fire and Police services are like homeowners' insurance. You hope you will never need to use them, and you might not like paying for them, but you want them to be there in an emergency.

Fire and medical emergencies require fast response times to save lives and property.

A fire doubles in size every minute – it goes from the heat and flame of one candle to that of over 1,000 candles in just 10 minutes. That's enough to engulf a whole house.

When a heart stops, there are fewer than 10 minutes to save that life.

Gresham is Having Growing Pains:

Over the past 30 years, Gresham's population has almost doubled but daily minimum firefighter staffing is the same as it was in 1994.

Right now, **Gresham has one less sworn police officer than we did in 2004.** Last year alone, calls for police service increased by more than 3,000 calls.

Too few Gresham firefighters and police officers means longer response times...making our community less safe.

This Levy is an Investment in Our Safety:

Hire more firefighters and police officers to help improve emergency and police response times.

A new levy dedicated to public safety will retain existing fire and police personnel and fund **22 new first responders** - 13 new firefighters and 9 new police officers to enhance public safety.

Vote Yes to Hire More Firefighters and Police Officers Vote Yes to Improve Emergency Response Times

April Avery
Cassandra Meza
Donald Kozacek
Elizabeth Livingston
Jef & Jen Kaiser
Jesus Duran
Jim Kirwan
Joyce Shea
Kymberlee Lake
Larry Williams
Lloyd Anderson
Marlene Byrne
MaryAnn Armas
Michael & Kathryn
Henton Michelle Metzger
Patricia Gutierrez
Susan Foster

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Keep Gresham Safe for All Ages and All Families

Dear Neighbors,

Did you know that our city is growing older AND younger at the same time? That's exciting because it means grandparents and grandchildren in the same community.

But it also means we have two groups of more vulnerable people.

- In 2025, 20.1% of Gresham is forecast to be 60 or older.
- In 2025, 23.9% of Gresham is forecast to be under 18.
- Gresham is home to 28 senior living communities, 138 adult foster care homes, and 3 school districts serving over 30,000 children.

And speaking of growing - Gresham's population has almost doubled over the last 30 years, but our police and fire staffing has remained about the same. We need more first responders to keep us safe.

The current \$15 per month Police, Fire and Parks fee only funds 9% of public safety services and is not enough to meet the growing demand for emergency services.

A dedicated public safety levy will improve fire and police protection and responsiveness.

Our first responders are there when we need them, now they need us to step up for them.

Please join Safer Gresham in voting Yes for the Fire and Police Levy – Measure 26-247 on your May ballot.

For more information please go to SaferGresham.org

(This information furnished by John Freudenthal, Safer Gresham)

No arguments were filed in opposition to this ballot measure.