



PRESS RELEASE

CITY OF GRANTS PASS ~ 101 NW A STREET • GRANTS PASS, OR 97526

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Media Contact: Mike Zacchino, Information Coordinator
541-450-6011 ~ mzacchino@grantspassoregon.gov

Temporary resting site at 755 SE J street is now closed

GRANTS PASS – Everyone who was camping inside the temporary camping site at 755 J Street has left the fenced area, and Grants Pass Police and cleanup crews are inside preparing to clear the site.

Police Chief Warren Hensman said Community Service Officers (CSOs) had searched the camp for people and valuables. They will search again before heavy equipment clears the camp.

Chief Hensman said there is hazardous waste, needles, trash, and soiled items, and it's unsafe for people to remove such by hand.

The camp at J Street has never been considered a permanent site for unhoused people. The location was designated as a temporary resting site by City Council in 2024 and is the site for the Replacement Water Treatment Plant. Groundbreaking for the replacement plant is scheduled for May.

U-Turn for Christ, and ADAPT were at the camp early to assist those leaving the camp, as was the case on Tuesday this week when the temporary camping site on 7th Street began operating from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m.

The Grants Pass Police Department has been working with its community partners to ensure the transition was fairly implemented and that those impacted had access to available resources. These efforts included working behind the scenes with stakeholders such as MINT, PATH, U-Turn for Christ, HWAM, Mid-Rogue Foundation, UCAN, ADAPT, Options of Southern Oregon, Grants Pass Sobering Center, Maslow Project, WCST, Gospel Rescue Mission, Dove Ministries, On-Track, and Veterans Affairs.

For the past few weeks, Grants Pass police officers communicated with those utilizing the resting sites to notify them of the closing of the J Street location, and the changes in hours at 7th Street so members of the unhoused community could prepare in advance. Grants Pass police will continue to work with the unhoused population to link them to resources as they have always done.

Several years ago, the Grants Pass Police Department created a community resource team (CRT) that routinely interacts with at-risk people. The CRT's goal is to find solutions and resources for individuals in need while holding people accountable to state law and local ordinances. Since its inception, the CRT has helped at-risk community members get identification, housing, treatment, and more immediate needs like clothing and meals. CRT officers build relationships with individuals over time and leverage these relationships to encourage acceptance of resources and help.



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We have continued a strong partnership with Options of Southern Oregon, which houses a full-time case manager/advocate in our department with a second advocate planned for spring of 2025. The case managers meet with at-risk persons to find resources, encourage, and provide a separate path of communication outside of police officers. The advocates are in the field meeting persons where they need the help.

Grants Pass Police were strong supporters of Deflection both at the statewide and local levels. Deflection allows persons with substance abuse needs to avoid criminal charges if they are willing to enter a structured program run by the Sobering Center of Grants Pass. People meet with a deflection manager and choose to accept ongoing, managed services from either Choices, On-Track, or ADAPT. Deflection began in December of 2024 and has already had three successful completions. This demonstrates that the police department is committed to helping people be successful.

For over a year, Grants Pass Police have shared a program with ADAPT to help link persons suffering from overdoses or other immediate drug-related needs with the service provider. When police officers respond to the scene of an overdose, we contact ADAPT to have a case worker respond to the scene or hospital to immediately connect with them. The purpose of this partnership is to find treatment resources when the acceptance may be the greatest.

The Grants Pass Police Department is a best-practice organization and is committed to helping all community members.