



Memorandum

Date: 10/21/2025

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

File No. CM 25-556

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Planning and Community Development	Carol Helland	425-556-2107
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DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Planning and Community Development	Seraphie Allen	Deputy Director
Planning and Community Development	Brooke Buckingham	Human Services Manager

TITLE:

Approval of Office of Public Defense (OPD) Public Defense Improvement Funds

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

Staff is requesting Council approval to accept a grant award for Office of Public Defense (OPD) Improvement Funds. Grant funds would be used to contract with an expert consultant to evaluate attorney performance, case outcomes, and oversight and compliance with standards.

☐ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☐ **Receive Information**

☒ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**

N/A

- **Required:**

Council approval is required for grant acceptance. Upon receipt of the contract, it will undergo internal and legal review of the terms. The Mayor will sign as the authorized representative of the City following review through the contracting process consistent with the Delegated Contracting Authority.

- **Council Request:**

N/A

- **Other Key Facts:**

Washington State offers grants to help cities and counties improve public defense services. Eligible uses for these funds are outlined in RCW 10.101.060.

OUTCOMES:

This grant would support an evaluation of Redmond's contracted public defense attorneys to ensure high-quality, equitable legal representation for indigent clients. The City would solicit services from a public defense expert to conduct this evaluation and develop recommendations for improvements.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
N/A
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
N/A
- **Feedback Summary:**
N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:
\$20,930

Approved in current biennial budget: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

Budget Offer Number:
0000276 - Criminal Justice

Budget Priority:
Safe and Resilient

Other budget impacts or additional costs: ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If yes, explain:

The City may need to provide additional funds to attract qualified consultants, because approximately half of the requested grant funds were awarded to the City. The budget for public defense was increased in the 2025-26 biennial budget in anticipation of proposed changes to the public defender case load standards. As a result, the current budget will be sufficient to cover any additional funding necessary to hire a qualified consultant for the proposed work.

Funding source(s):
Grant

Budget/Funding Constraints:

The grant period is for 18 months with two disbursements, one in 2026 and one in 2027. The OPD will conduct occasional site visits to learn more about the City's public defense practices, provide technical assistance, and ensure that funds are being spent on approved uses.

☐ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
	Item has not been presented to Council	N/A

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
11/3/2025	Business Meeting	Approve

Time Constraints:

The contract must be signed by December 29, 2025. Funds must be expended by June 2027.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

Loss of grant funding.

ATTACHMENTS: n/a