

# Memorandum

## Human Services



Date: September 29, 2016  
To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
From: Kim Van Nimwegen, Homeless Coordinator  
Through: Paul Bentley, Deputy Human Services Director  
Cc: Steven Methvin Deputy City Manager; Naomi Farrell, Human Services Director  
Subject: Tempe's Work to End Homelessness

### Summary:

Tempe has a long history of working to end homelessness. Recently the increased visibility of on-street homelessness has exacerbated concern through our community. This memo seeks to provide reassurance of Tempe's commitment to ending homelessness, information about the current state of homelessness in Tempe, knowledge on Tempe's collaborations and strategies for ending homelessness.

### Current State of Homelessness in Tempe

Homelessness in Tempe affects all of us. The issues surrounding homelessness encompass many of society's most pervasive social concerns like hunger, displaced families, substance abuse, serious mental illness, post-traumatic stress disorder, and chronic health problems. The reasons for why people fall into homelessness are as varied and unique as the people themselves stemming from any number of factors like lack of education, limited job skills, no personal support systems, deep poverty, job loss and lack of affordable housing. As a result, a comprehensive strategy is required to resolve homelessness.

In Tempe all categories of person's experiencing homelessness are represented including: children and youth, families, individual adults, veterans, domestic violence survivors and aging adults. Therefore, a comprehensive mix of solutions are required to resolve homelessness in our community. Due to high visibility, one category typically dominates the discussion of homelessness, the chronically homeless<sup>1</sup> street population. They are frequently found sleeping in public places, exhibit mental health illness, are repeatedly arrested for misdemeanor crimes, create unhealthy encampments in parks. Chronically homeless individuals often represent those people with the most complex needs and are at the greatest vulnerability for dying on the streets. Unfortunately, they are often the most difficult to engage in services to end their homelessness. Without connections to comprehensive care to end their homelessness they consume a disproportionate amount of resources, cycling in and out of hospital emergency departments, hospital inpatient beds, detox programs, jails, prisons, and psychiatric

---

<sup>1</sup> The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines chronically homeless people as individuals or families (head of household) who have a disability and who have been homeless for a duration of at least one year, or those who have experienced four episodes of homelessness in the last three years.

institutions, all at high public expense. Some studies have found that leaving a person to remain chronically homeless costs taxpayers as much as \$30,000 to \$50,000 per year according to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH<sup>2</sup>) The chronically homeless population typically represents 10% of the total homeless population in a community.

### **Collaborations to End Homelessness**

Numerous areas of the city including the City Attorney's Office, Tempe Fire Medical Rescue (TMFR), Human Services, Municipal Court, Tempe Police Department (TPD), and Public Works all directly allocate resources to matters of homelessness. Attachment A provides an overview of the resources, costs and initiatives each of these departments expends on issues related homelessness.

Plans to address homelessness should include specific interventions to address the particular needs of the chronically homeless. Interventions like Housing First models for Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing are best practice models for chronic homelessness, which have been successful around the country, including Tempe. Yet, the chronic population should not be the only focus of efforts and resources. To end homelessness our focus must include: system development, enhancement and regional collaborations. Continued focus and effort to expand these areas will create real and lasting change for the homeless, while improving the health and well-being of the community at large.

### **Strategies for Ending Homelessness**

We are embarking on a strategy to prioritize the chronic homeless population, thereby addressing our immediate problem in our parks. This includes strengthening Tempe's homeless response system and connecting it to the larger community of ending homelessness. Tempe will continue work on the Tempe Homeless Coalition strategic plan and address identified gaps in services. Our continued work on building agency capacity and increasing both coordination and collaboration across services will result in better housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. Some interventions will be straight forward like providing a centralized depository for community wide homeless data collection. Others are more complex and will take longer like creating low barrier<sup>3</sup> temporary shelter access which enables service providers to efficiently work with clients in a safe, stable and secure place to stay. For a more detailed list of future actions see Attachment B.

Connection to county, state and federal resources will be expanded and new partnerships will be developed to take advantage of resources that are there for our city. Maricopa County provides a wealth of resources to assist Tempe in ending homelessness. For example, countywide Rapid Rehousing dollars have recently become available to Tempe homeless residents, through the Maricopa Regional Coordinated Entry System. Beyond county resources

---

<sup>2</sup> USICH is an independent agency within the federal executive branch and is composed of 19 Cabinet secretaries and agency heads.

<sup>3</sup> Low-barrier housing can be understood as any range of options for providing housing to people experiencing homelessness with minimal stipulations for eligibility, for example not requiring sobriety to qualify. The intent is to reduce barriers and allow more people access to services.

there are state resources that are available through the Arizona Housing Trust Fund, the state Department of Housing and the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness. These opportunities could provide increased affordable housing. The federal government through agencies like Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are both mandating and providing resources for innovative collaborations. Finally, a resource yet to be fully explored is the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) provides leadership, direction and consulting to communities to help them end homelessness with great success (see Attachment C).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this memo provides reassurance of Tempe's commitment to ending homelessness, greater clarity of current collaborative efforts, and the strategy moving forward. In brief, this memo addressed the following:

- Coordinated efforts within the city, like the multi-prong approach in public spaces, have shown success
- Strengthening regional collaborations will bring additional revenue and help influence regional policy
  - Determining the size, scope and scale of homelessness requires collaborative data collection and evaluation to determine the appropriate interventions needed
- There is City Manager Working Group currently researching housing options including: single site vs scattered sites, permanent supportive housing, and rapid rehousing using a housing first philosophy, which will inform Tempe's next steps
- Council input will help to further refine the city's approach to ending homelessness

## **Attachment A**

This attachment provides an overview of department resources dedicated towards ending homelessness. This list is not intended as an exhaustive accounting of costs, as many of these departments do not specifically track costs associated to a person's housing status. However, it is illustrative of the level of resources and engagement across the city.

### **City Attorney Office**

The prosecutors and support staff in the City Attorney's Office estimate an average of 2 hours per-case for each case heard in Veteran's Court, Mental Health Court or Homeless Court. In addition to this direct support, the office indirectly supports our homeless population by providing legal advice, drafting and negotiating agreements, and providing other representation, to City Departments and Divisions such as PD, Courts, Human Services, TFMR and Public Works.

### **Fire Medical Rescue**

Tempe Fire Medical Rescue (TFMR) does not track costs specifically associated with homelessness, but began tracking calls related to homelessness in November 2015. Since tracking began TFMR has responded to 1,424 calls for homeless patients. TFMR begins the process of connecting homeless patients to the proper resources, such as CARE 7. Additionally, TFMR is working with the Veterans Association and the Phoenix Indian Hospital to provide medical connectivity, including homeless individuals.

### **Human Services**

- **CARE 7** – CARE 7 spends approximately \$130,000 in general funds related to homelessness via case management and responding to calls. CARE 7 frequently responds to calls for service from Police and Fire regarding individuals experiencing homelessness. In August alone, the mobile crisis unit responded to 47 calls for service involving homelessness, and another 31 calls for alcohol and drug issues where homelessness was also present. In addition, CARE 7 will spend \$750 in grant money during an average month on things like emergency food, clothing, gift cards, bus passes, hotel stays and other financial resources.
- **HOPE** – This program cost approximately \$209,000 annually. The HOPE team consists of two homeless outreach staff (32 hours/week) overseen by a fulltime Homeless Coordinator. The program is dedicated to ending homelessness in Tempe. The team provides intensive support including survival aid, crisis management, access to emergency shelter, housing, and document services. Resources are expanded through collaboration with other service providers.
- **Housing section** – Tempe's Housing section provides \$8.5M in federal rental assistance to low income households, in the form of Section 8 vouchers, to prevent homelessness. Additionally, housing administers the first-time homebuyer program offering up to \$35K per household in down-payment assistance and the emergency repairs program providing up to \$10K in assistance to homeowners.
- **Tempe Community Council** – TCC distributed approximately \$329,000 in homeless related funding during FY2016 as shown in the chart below. The precise FY2017

distributions can be provided in a future update, but in general funding levels are increasing. For example, the TCC Board approved an additional \$106,297 (from the TCC homeless reserves) for agencies serving homeless in Tempe. Additionally, Tempe City Council approved \$48,000 in rental assistance for Tempe Community Action Agency.

	Agency	Program	Funding
Agency Review Funded Housing	A New Leaf	La Mesita Homeless Shelter	\$ 45,600
	Catholic Charities	Pathways Transitional Housing	\$ 3,250
	Catholic Charities	My Sister's Place	\$ 4,550
	Child Crisis Center	Arizona Adoption and Foster Care	\$ 2,000
	Child Crisis Center	Emergency Shelter Program - Tempe	\$ 3,500
	Chrysalis Shelter	Shelter Services	\$ 4,000
	Homeward Bound	Family Services - Scattered Sites	\$ 2,378
	Newtown CDC	Community land Trust Operating Support	\$ 16,000
	Sojourner Center	Domestic Violence Shelter	\$ 17,500
	Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development	Emergency Housing Program for Homeless Young Adults	\$ 22,500
	UMOM New Day Centers	Transitional Housing - Tempe	\$ 5,740
	UMOM New Day Centers	Emergency Shelter for Families	\$ 13,280
	Agency Review Funded Services	A New Leaf	East Valley Men's Center
Area Agency on Aging		In Home Services	\$ 10,296
Arizona Bridge to Independent Living		Tempe Home Accessibility Program	\$ 14,000
Community Bridges		Substance Use Disorder Treatment	\$ 26,880
Save the Family Foundation of Arizona		Case Management	\$ 14,700
Save the Family Foundation of Arizona		Families Adult & Children Empowerment Services	\$ 13,300
Tempe Community Action Agency		IHELP	\$ 6,120
Tempe Community Council		Tempe Financial Stability Initiative	\$ 26,000
The Centers for Habilitation		Job Training	\$ 4,650
Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development		Tempe Youth Resource Center	\$ 45,000
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 329,244</b>

### Municipal Court

The Tempe Municipal Court does not have a specific line item in the general operating budget for serving individuals who are homeless. Tempe Municipal Court provides judges and personnel to assist homeless people through the judicial system in the homeless court, mental health court and veteran's court.

- Homeless Court - The Tempe Municipal Court participates in the Maricopa County Regional Homeless Court (MCRHC). In 2006, Tempe was one of three municipal courts that began a cooperative effort to resolve misdemeanor warrants where the defendant's homelessness was a contributing factor. The effort expanded in 2012 when the RHC was established to hear victimless, misdemeanor offenses from any Municipal or Justice of the Peace Court in Maricopa County. MCRHC works with 37 different approved service providers comprised of more than 60 programs for homeless participants. Cases are most often resolved by homeless offenders completing a program which involves community service and job and/or housing counseling, and is supervised by a program case worker. Completing the MCRHC program allows defendants to have their driving privileges reinstated or their warrants quashed without having to serve additional jail time.

- The Tempe Municipal Court works with Tempe Human Services to address homelessness on an as-needed basis through the Mental Health Court and Regional Veterans' Court programs.
  - Mental Health Court (MHC) – In 2003, the Tempe Municipal Court established a Mental Health Court program to assist individuals with mental illnesses in resolving their misdemeanor cases by addressing their unique needs. Offenders diagnosed as Seriously Mentally Ill or with Developmental Disabilities may choose to participate in MHC where they will receive individualized treatment and services, which if completed as directed may result in their charges being dismissed or reduced. Tempe Human Services and/or case managers assigned to defendants through the Regional Behavioral Health Authority provide assistance with various levels of housing needs, including referrals for immediate placement, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing programs.
  - East Valley Regional Veterans' Court (RVC) – A \$100,000 grant was received from the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services, Veteran Donation Fund, to establish a Regional Veterans' Court Coordinator position and fund the first-year operating costs. In 2014, the Tempe Municipal Court established a Veterans' Court program to assist veterans in resolving their pending misdemeanor charges by addressing factors specific to their military experience that may have contributed to their legal cases. The program connects defendants with appropriate Veterans Administration services or other treatment needs which, if completed as directed, may result in their charges being dismissed or reduced. In 2016, the Tempe Regional Veterans' Court has expanded to become part of the East Valley RVC and includes other municipalities in the East Valley of Maricopa County. Tempe Human Services, the Veterans Administration, and related agencies provide assistance with various levels of housing needs, including referrals for immediate placement, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing programs.

### **Police Department**

Tempe Police Department (TPD) has many partnerships with stakeholders related to homelessness. This includes: numerous city departments, Tempe Homeless Coalition, neighborhood groups, the faith community, and local businesses. TPD also established a partnership with Circle the City, specifically their Mobile Medical Clinic, to address homeless medical issues and assist individuals getting off the street.

In March 2016 TPD redeployed an existing position from within the Patrol Division to staff a Park Officer Position specifically assisting with issues in city parks. The average cost for an Officer is \$114,494.00. Additionally, the Central City Bike Squad, Mounted Officers and the Parks Officer patrol the downtown area. This downtown area includes LoPiano Bosque, Town Lake and Beach Park, Moeur Park, Tempe Women's Club Park, Indian Bend Wash, Evelyn

Hallman/Canal Park, Tempe Butte/A Mountain, Sixth Street Park, and Papago Park. Additionally, Patrol Officers patrol parks citywide.

**Public Works (Park Maintenance)**

Parks has spent approximately \$83,000 related to homelessness since June. The parks team has made significant progress over the past several months removing trash and litter from the Papago area. Ten large cleanups have been performed totaling 403 labor hours, resulting in the removal of approximately 31 tons of trash. Four additional cleanups are scheduled. The costs are estimated as follows:

- Labor - \$21,000 (not including contracted services or Public Works Solid Waste railroad cleanup)
- Hauling and disposal - \$12,600
- Contracted services for Green Line: \$50,000

## Attachment B

This attachment provides a list of Human Services ongoing and immediate next steps for addressing homelessness.

- Connect document readiness activities to Care 7 services, for identified clients
- Collaboration to leverage and integrate resources of mainstream systems, in the areas of housing, employment, education, health care, and benefits (link to USICH)
- Financially support homeless individuals to obtain necessary personal and legal documentation needed to obtain housing
- Compile Data elements from all ending homelessness service providers and stakeholders
- Create a dashboard for ongoing, community wide, data collection
- Partner with public works to provide a trash collection process, aimed at engaging homeless individuals to clean up after themselves in encampments
- Update HOPE fliers and literature for community distribution
- Expand personnel resources through volunteerism in support of the Point in Time Street Count
- Create a community homeless to housing continuum flowchart
- Update and expand landlords willing to rent to persons with felony records and other complicated rental histories
- Explore Phoenix based Misdemeanor Repeat Offender Program (MROP) with PD
- Explore LEAD program with PD (see <http://leadkingcounty.org/>)
- Pilot extensive assessment of people in encampments
- Create a library based Social Work intern position dedicated to serving the homeless people and those at risk of homelessness
- Create and secure funding for an AmeriCorps Public Ally position to assist with housing location for people who need rapid rehousing assistance and housing locator services
- Leverage opportunities for partnerships to increase and create, Housing First, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Rapid Rehousing
- Assure all local public benefits are accessible to homeless and newly housed individuals and families (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, and other existing federal assistance programs)
- Connect to other State resources:
  - Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness
  - The Arizona State Legislature – Use this web site as a tool to track pending legislation, plus locate and contact individual legislators, and stay up-to-date on current issues.
  - The Joint Legislative Budget Committee - The JLBC makes recommendations to the Legislature regarding all facets of the state budget, state revenues and
  - Arizona Commission on Homelessness and Housing - The purposes of the ACHH are to (1) serve as the statewide homelessness planning and policy development resource for the Governor and the State of Arizona, and (2)

oversee the implementation and progress of the *Housing Arizona: State Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*.

- Arizona Department of Economic Security, Coordinated Homeless Programs - The Homeless Coordination Office plans and coordinates activities and contracts with community-based organizations and local governments to provide services for homeless and near-homeless individuals and families throughout the state.
- Arizona Department of Housing
- Arizona Department of Education's Education of Homeless Children and Youth
- Arizona Department of Veteran Services' Homeless Veterans Services Division

## **Attachment C**

USICH is an independent agency within the federal executive branch and is composed of 19 Cabinet secretaries and agency heads. USICH partners with these 19 federal agencies, state and local governments, advocates, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness to achieve the goals outlined in the first federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, *Opening Doors*.

USICH recommends **the following ten strategies to end chronic homelessness to municipalities:**

([https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/10\\_Strategies\\_to\\_End\\_Chronic\\_Homelessness.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/10_Strategies_to_End_Chronic_Homelessness.pdf))

1. Start at the Top: Get State and Local Leaders to Publicly Commit to and Coordinate Efforts on Ending Chronic Homelessness.
2. Identify and be Accountable to All People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness, including People Cycling through Institutional Settings.
3. Ramp up Outreach, In-reach, and Engagement Efforts.
4. Implement a Housing First System Orientation and Response.
5. Set and Hold Partners Accountable to Ambitious Short-Term Housing Placement Goals.
6. Prioritize People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in Existing Supportive Housing.
7. Project the Need for Additional Supportive Housing and Reallocate Funding to Take It to the Scale Needed.
8. Engage and Support Public Housing Agencies and Multifamily Affordable Housing Operators to Increase Supportive Housing through Limited Preferences and Project Based Vouchers.
9. Leverage Medicaid and Behavioral Health Funding to Pay for Services in Supportive Housing.
10. Help People Increase Their Income through Employment Opportunities and Connections to Mainstream Benefits and Income Supports.