

# No One Outside

Ms. Richards' 2nd Hour  
Estrella Middle School  
2025-2026 Project Citizen Submission

# Introduction to the Problem

Homelessness is a big problem in Phoenix. Many people can't afford rent, and even those with jobs sometimes end up living on the streets or in their cars.

The hot weather makes it even more dangerous. In the summer, temperatures can go over 110°F, which can cause serious health problems for people without shelter. Shelters and organizations try to help, but there aren't always enough beds or resources.

Some people who are homeless also deal with mental health issues or substance problems, which makes finding a home even harder. "Peralta said she's also found dead animals dumped in the area by homeless people who hang around the fenced-off area of a piece of the 10-acre property that's behind her home. People who experience homelessness lack resources for basic hygiene and physical and mental health care." As a result, homelessness causes public health problems within the community.

The city and local groups are working on programs to give people housing and support, but homelessness is still a serious issue in Phoenix. Our class decided to do this because we wanted to see if we can help in an other way we can for our community and homeless people.

# Introduction to the Problem - Causes

Abusive people can contribute to homelessness by creating unsafe living environments that force others to leave in order to protect themselves. Emotional, physical, or financial abuse can break down a person's sense of safety and stability, making it impossible to stay in a shared home. In some cases, abusers control money, destroy credit, or isolate their victims from friends and family, leaving them without resources or support when they leave. Survivors—especially teens, young adults, and caregivers—may have to choose between staying in danger or facing housing insecurity, and without access to shelters, legal help, or affordable housing, that choice can quickly lead to homelessness. This tells me that abusive people not just cause physical abuse they also cause mental abuse and that is what causes homelessness, Because it destroys them. And making it impossible to stay in their homes.

# Facts about homelessness



- For the 2024 PIT Count, 63% of the population experiencing homelessness identified as male, 36% identified as female, and 1% identified as transgender, non-binary, questioning, culturally specific identity, different identity, or more than one gender.

# Facts about homelessness



The largest age group from the PIT Count is adults 35-44 which accounted for 21% of the 2024 PIT population, followed by adults 25-34 accounting for 20% . Children (age 0-17) make up 14% of the population, while youth (age 18-24) make up 7% and older adults (age 65+) make up 6% of the count. 79% of the PIT Count are adults age 25+, a higher percentage than the ACS estimate for Maricopa County, 68%

# Facts about homelessness



“Rental assistance is a proven lifeline for households at risk of homelessness. Unfortunately, these programs are chronically underfunded, despite their potential for keeping people housed, reducing inflow into homelessness. “

<https://endhomelessness.org/a-shortage-of-affordable-housing/>

“People Priced Out by High Rent and Limited Housing”

<https://endhomelessness.org/overview/>

# Facts about homelessness



... homelessness is a regional issue,” says Keys to Change CEO Amy Schwabenlender. “Because it’s a mobile pop-up event, the Project Connect model allows us to respond quickly and effectively to regional shifts, to engage new people with services to end their homelessness or prevent it entirely. [Maricopa County Point-In-Time](#)

For families and individuals looking to escape extreme weather or just wanting a safe, quiet place to spend the night, emergency shelters provide a nutritious meal, a warm bed and a clean shower to those in need. [Salvation Army Phoenix Maryvale](#)

# Community Disagreement about the Impact of Homelessness

Our neighborhoods are negatively affected by those who are homeless. We experience things like:

- **Public health concerns:** Human waste and lack of sanitation can spread germs and create unpleasant smells.
- **Increased trash and litter:** Homeless encampments can lead to more garbage, needles, and debris in public spaces, making neighborhoods look unclean.
- **Safety concerns:** Some residents feel less safe due to unfamiliar people staying in parks, sidewalks, or abandoned areas.
- **Lower property values:** Homes near large encampments may decrease in value because the area is seen as less desirable.
- **Impact on local businesses:** Businesses may lose customers if people avoid areas with visible homelessness.
- **Strain on public services:** Police, fire departments, and cleanup crews must spend more time and money responding to homelessness-related issues.
- **Use of public spaces:** Parks and sidewalks may be harder for families and kids to use if encampments are present.
- **Community tension:** Frustration and disagreements can grow between residents, city officials, and people experiencing homelessness.

# Current Policy on Homelessness

In Phoenix, the city's plan to deal with homelessness is run by the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS), which was created in 2022. Their goal is to add more shelter beds also changed some rules, like not throwing away personal property and giving more respect during interactions. The city can give trespass notices in parks and may require people to attend treatment or education programs. Phoenix also works with Maricopa County and local nonprofits to help people find housing and support



# Disagreements about current policies

Like many other states, Arizona is struggling with rising homelessness. People are dealing with increasing housing costs, evictions, mental health challenges, and addiction – all of which contribute to more people who are homeless. Proposition 312 doesn't do anything to tackle these problems. Instead, it only offers property owners a way to get reimbursed for cleanup costs after the fact, while the underlying causal issues persist.

For example, Phoenix has seen homelessness nearly double since 2017, and the number of drug overdoses has significantly increased. Proposition 312 won't help reduce these numbers. Without addressing why homelessness and addiction are rising, these problems will keep getting worse, leading to more expenses for everyone.

[https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA (November 6, 2024)** – The Arizona Housing Coalition is deeply concerned about the potential impact of Proposition 312 on our state's ability to address the growing homelessness crisis. While we sympathize with frustrated property owners, we stand with cities and providers working every day to address homelessness for vulnerable

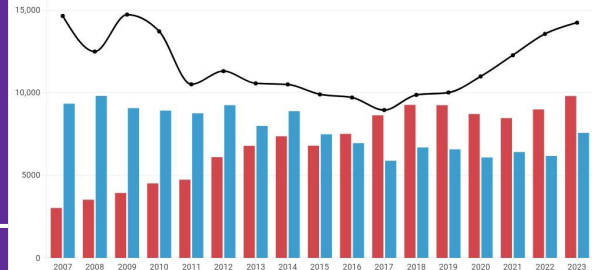
Arizonans. [https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



**Arizona Housing Inventory and Point-In-Time Counts**

The state has rapidly increased its PSH population, even as shelter capacity has fallen. The state's literally homeless population continues to rise.

■ Arizona PIT Count ■ Permanent Supportive Housing ■ Shelter Beds



Source: HUD

# Why should government be involved in solving homelessness.

The government should be involved in solving homelessness because it has the money and power to create affordable housing, provide healthcare, and support job programs. Homelessness affects public health and safety, so it is a shared responsibility. When the government works with nonprofits and community groups, people can get both housing and personal support. This teamwork helps more people get back on their feet and stay housed.



# Links & Sources

- <https://azmag.gov/Portals/0/Homelessness/PIT-Count/2024/2024-PIT-Count-Report.pdf?ver=djMIOCF-KPo72ljiQxWHeg%3D%3D>
- <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/hundreds-homeless-die-extreme-heat-rcna34409>
- <https://blocked.goguardian.com/?ctx=YWZpPTE1OTU0MTMmYXBpPTYwNDQ2Jm9pPTI0NjEzNTYyMjc5Jm91PWh0dHBzJTNBjTjGjTjGymFycmlvem9uYS5jb20lMkZob21lbGVzc25lc3MtaW4tcGhvZW5peC1hcml6b25hLXN0cmF0ZWdpYy1wbGFuLTlwMjYIMkYmcnM9QURNSU5fU0lURV9DQVRFR09SWV9GSUxURVlmc2NpPTQyJnN0PXNoaWVsZCZ2PTE%3D&sum=a0391c39>
- [https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
- [Arizonans.https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://azhousingcoalition.org/proposition-312/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
- <https://unityparenting.org/>
- <https://www.azfamily.com/2025/03/06/filled-with-rodents-trash-feces-city-council-forces-sale-west-phoenix-patch-land-neglected-decades/>
- <https://azmag.gov/Portals/0/Homelessness/PIT-Count/2024/2024-PIT-Count-Report.pdf?ver=djMIOCF-KPo72ljiQxWHeg%3D%3D>
- <https://www.goldwaterinstitute.org/>
- [.Keys to Change](#)
- [Salvation Army Phoenix Maryvale](#)
- [Project Connect](#)
- [Maricopa County Point-In-Time](#)

# Alternative Policies Introduction

We considered policies to address this problem.

- Increase Shelters
- Mobile Homeless Service Units

# Alternative one



One good way to increase housing for homeless people is by building more affordable apartments that they can actually pay for. The government and cities could also turn empty buildings into places where homeless people can live safely. This would help get people off the streets and give them a fresh start. Another idea is to have programs that help them get jobs, so they can afford housing on their own later. If people have a safe place to live, they have a better chance to improve their life and feel more hopeful about their future.



Homelessness is a big problem in our country, and everyone deserves a safe place to live. Groups like Habitat for Humanity and the National Alliance to End Homelessness work hard to help families find homes, but they can't do it alone. We can help by donating money, volunteering, or speaking up about the need for more affordable housing. Having a home gives people safety and hope, and it helps them focus on school, work, and taking care of their families. If we all work together, we can make a difference and help more people have a place to call home.

# Alternative one



## Pros

- Shelters provide a safe place for people to stay, which can reduce the number of individuals living on streets, in parks, or in unsafe conditions around neighborhoods.
- When people have access to stable shelter, they are less likely to face desperate situations that can lead to crime or unsafe environments. Shelters also connect individuals with support services.

## Cons

- Building and operating shelters requires substantial funding for staff, security, food, maintenance, and support services. These ongoing expenses can strain city budgets, especially in high-cost areas.
- Shelters provide short-term relief but do not address root causes like lack of affordable housing, mental health issues, or unemployment. Critics argue that focusing too much on shelters may delay more permanent housing solutions.



# Alternative Two

## Mobile units- cloud covered services

Cloud Covered Streets is a nonprofit organization that operates mobile hygiene trailers in Arizona and Texas to support people experiencing homelessness. Founded by Robert Thornton, the organization was created with the mission of restoring dignity and hope through compassion and service. The mobile units travel to different areas and provide free, essential resources such as private hot showers, laundry services, and professional haircuts. In addition, they distribute clean clothing, fresh socks and underwear, and hygiene kits with items like soap, shampoo, and toothbrushes. Each outreach trip typically serves about 40 to 45 people, helping them feel clean, confident, and cared for. Volunteers and donors play an important role in keeping the program running, showing how the community can come together to make a difference. By meeting basic hygiene needs, Cloud Covered Streets not only improves physical health but also helps individuals regain a sense of self-worth and encouragement as they work toward stable housing and a better future.

# Alternative 2



## **Safety and Flexibility**

Moving around can sometimes help people avoid dangerous situations, unsafe areas, or conflicts. It also gives them more control over where they stay, depending on weather, safety, or personal needs.

## **Access to More Resources**

Being mobile can help someone reach places with better shelters, food programs, jobs, or support services. If one area doesn't have much help, moving gives them a chance to find better opportunities.



## **Lack of Stability**

Constantly moving makes it hard to keep a job, attend school, or get regular healthcare. Without a stable place to stay, planning for the future becomes very difficult.

## **Physical and Mental Strain**

Traveling often while worrying about food, shelter, and safety can be exhausting and stressful. Over time, this can harm a person's physical health and mental well-being.

# Which government level is responsible for solving homelessness in phoenix.

In Phoenix, the city government is mainly responsible for solving homelessness because it is closest to the community and understands local needs. The City of Phoenix runs programs through its Office of Homeless Solutions to provide shelters, outreach teams, and heat relief. However, the state of Arizona and the federal government also help by giving money and setting housing policies. Overall, the city government takes the lead because homelessness directly affects Phoenix neighborhoods and residents.



# Analysis

One reason we did not choose to increase shelters is because, although shelters have important benefits, they also have significant drawbacks. Shelters do provide a safe place for people to stay, which can reduce the number of individuals living on streets, in parks, or in unsafe conditions around neighborhoods. When people have access to stable shelter, they are less likely to face desperate situations that can lead to crime or unsafe environments, and shelters can also connect individuals with helpful support services. However, building and operating shelters requires substantial funding for staff, security, food, maintenance, and other services, which can put a strain on city budgets, especially in high-cost areas like Phoenix. In addition, shelters mainly provide short-term relief and do not fully address root causes such as lack of affordable housing, mental health challenges, or unemployment. Because of these concerns, we decided it may be more effective to focus on long-term solutions rather than simply increasing the number of shelters.



# Analysis

We also decided not to choose mobile homeless service units because, although mobility can offer short-term safety and flexibility, the long-term disadvantages outweigh these benefits. While moving around may help individuals avoid unsafe areas and access more resources in different locations, constant mobility often leads to a lack of stability. Without a consistent place to stay, it becomes difficult for individuals to maintain employment, attend school regularly, or receive ongoing healthcare. Additionally, the physical and mental strain of frequently relocating—while already facing challenges related to food, shelter, and safety—can negatively impact overall well-being. For these reasons, we determined that focusing on more stable, consistent support systems would better promote long-term security and recovery.



# Links & Sources

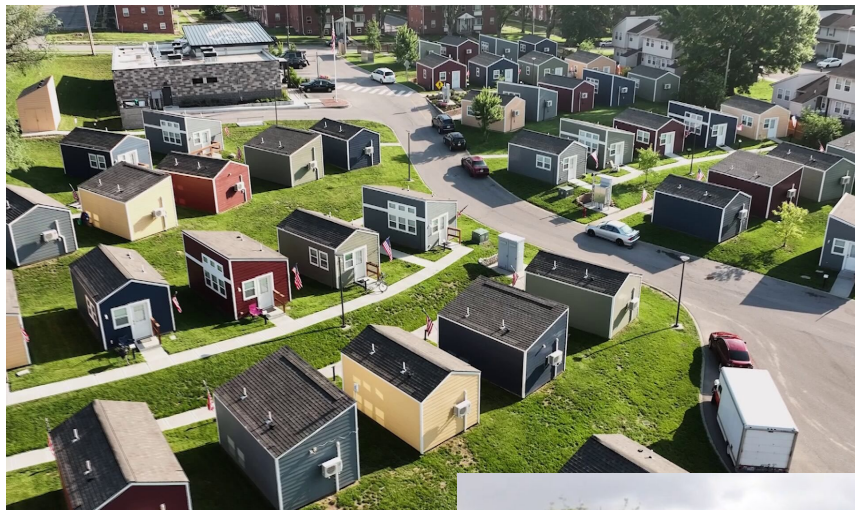
- [power-individuals-facing-homelessness-through-higher-education/](#)
- [Nonprofit drug treatment center for low-income Texas teens shuts amid opioid crisis](#)
- <https://keystochangeaz.org/category/press-release/>
- [https://phoenixmaryvale.salvationarmy.org/phoenix\\_maryvale\\_corps/provide-shelter/](https://phoenixmaryvale.salvationarmy.org/phoenix_maryvale_corps/provide-shelter/)
- <https://keystochangeaz.org/media-alert/2025-maryvale-project-connect/>
- <https://azmag.gov/Portals/0/Documents/MagContent/2025-PIT-Count-Report-Final.pdf>

# Our Class Policy KK

**A strong plan to develop a permanent small-footprint housing with supportive services and community integration, tailored to local needs and regulations. The project would start by identifying a parcel of land in or near Maryvale that can be zoned or rezoned for a mixed-use tiny home community under Phoenix's housing and planning guidelines; the city is actively working to expand housing options and update zoning to allow diverse housing types, which could support innovative solutions like tiny home villages if aligned with policy goals. Next, the community would be designed as a cluster of individual tiny homes — each on a permanent foundation with essential utilities — grouped around shared spaces like community gardens, a central service hub, and gathering areas to foster stability and belonging. Drawing on successful models such as the plan would also incorporate on-site case management, mental health services, workforce support, and connections to long-term housing pathways. Funding can be pursued through a mix of city and state housing grants, philanthropic contributions, and partnerships with nonprofits and local service agencies. By integrating housing with wrap-around services and community engagement, this approach aims not just to provide shelter but to help residents transition into stable, sustainable lives.**

**Improving lighting and public spaces can make a big difference in the Maryvale community in Phoenix. When streets, parks, and parking lots are well-lit, it becomes harder for crime to happen because people can clearly see their surroundings. Better lighting helps residents feel safer walking at night and allows neighbors to look out for one another more easily. Cleaning up graffiti, fixing broken sidewalks, and removing trash or abandoned property also sends a message that the community is cared for and monitored. Safe, clean parks give families and children a positive place to gather, exercise, and spend time together. Overall, improving lighting and maintaining public spaces can reduce crime, increase community pride, and help Maryvale become a safer and more welcoming place for everyone.**

# Examples of tiny home communities for homeless



# Benefits of Tiny Home Communities

- 1. Tiny homes provide a secure place to live, protecting people from harsh weather, unsafe streets, and health risks. Having stable housing also helps people focus on improving their lives.**
- 2. Living in a private, safe space reduces stress and improves well-being compared to living on the streets or in overcrowded shelters.**
- 3. Many tiny home communities connect residents with job training, counseling, healthcare, and social services that help them become independent.**
- 4. Tiny home communities can help reduce pressure on emergency rooms, shelters, and law enforcement by providing stable housing for people experiencing homelessness. When individuals have a safe place to live, communities — including cities like Phoenix — often see fewer emergency calls and lower public service costs**
- 5. Living in a private, safe space reduces stress and improves well-being compared to living on the streets or in overcrowded shelters..**

# Drawbacks of Tiny Home Communities

Tiny home communities for people experiencing homelessness have several drawbacks. The homes are very small, which can feel cramped and offer limited privacy, especially when bathrooms or facilities are shared. Many of these communities are temporary or transitional, meaning residents must eventually move out, which can create stress and uncertainty about future housing. They often have strict rules such as curfews, guest limits, or sobriety requirements that may feel restrictive or exclude some individuals. In addition, not all tiny home villages provide strong on-site services like mental health care, job support, or addiction treatment, making long-term stability harder to achieve. Finally, residents may experience social isolation or stigma from being labeled as part of a designated homeless community, which can affect their confidence and sense of belonging.

# Constitutionality

Our proposed policy does not break any constitutional rights:

These are just some of the Bill of Rights supporting our case. We are not the only ones using these though, people in court cases agree with our case and can use these Amendments themselves.

Providing tiny homes for homeless individuals **does not violate the Bill of Rights by itself**. Problems would only arise if:

- The government violated due process,
- Discriminated unlawfully,
- Took private property improperly,
- Or forced religious participation

# Constitutionality

## Our proposed policy does not break any constitutional rights- here are cases that support this assertion

### **Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.**

This case established that local governments have the right to use zoning laws to regulate land use for the health, safety, and welfare of the community. This supports policies like tiny home communities because cities can legally decide where and how housing is developed.

### **Berman v. Parker**

The Court ruled that the government can take actions to improve public welfare, including addressing housing issues. This supports the idea that creating housing solutions for homeless individuals is a valid government purpose.

### **Goldberg v. Kelly**

This case emphasized that individuals have rights when receiving government assistance, but it also supports the idea that providing aid (like housing) is a legitimate government function.

### **Lindsey v. Normet**

The Court ruled that there is no fundamental constitutional right to housing. This is important because it means your policy is not violating a guaranteed right—it is *providing* support beyond what the Constitution requires.

# Other cases supporting this include:

Chico, California

Klostermann v. Cuomo

Tiny House Hand Up v. Calhoun, Georgia

Martin v. Boise

# Links & Sources

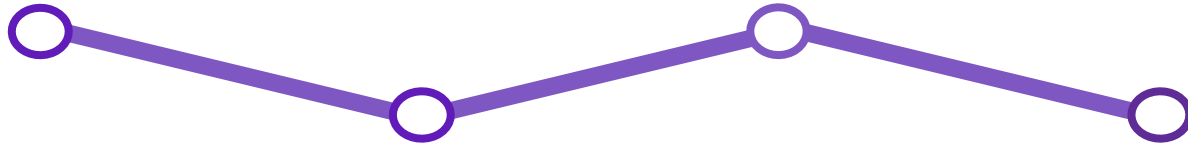
## Key Case Source

- [https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/272/365/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/272/365/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Village\\_of\\_Euclid\\_v.\\_Ambler\\_Realty\\_Co.?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Village_of_Euclid_v._Ambler_Realty_Co.?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
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- <https://krcrtv.com/news/local/judge-rules-against-city-of-chicos-motion-to-exit-warren-homelessness-settlement>
- <https://www.casemine.com/judgement/us/5914c34fadd7b049347c5558>
- <https://www.georgiapolicy.org/news/calhoun-tiny-house-advocates-score-legal-win/>
- <https://harvardlawreview.org/print/vol-133/martin-v-city-of-boise/>

# Action Plan Introduction: Timeline of events

Conduct research

Create a solution and find  
available funding sources



Survey the Community

Propose our solution to the  
City Council

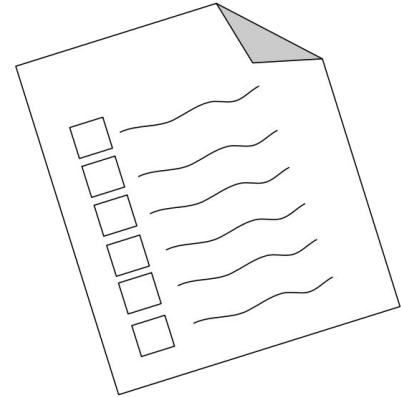
# Step 1- Conduct Research to Identify the Problem

Our first step was to research the problems caused by homelessness in our neighborhood. We used Google to find news articles that explained what is happening with homelessness in Phoenix. We also researched what our government is currently doing to solve the problem of homelessness . This helped us see how big of a problem homelessness is in our community and that we need to do more to help solve this problem.



## Step 2- Survey the Community

We researched how our school and community feel about the problems related to homelessness. This was done to identify the perspectives of our community on this problem. It was important to be sure that this was not just an issue that impacted us but our whole community. We did this through using news resources and research skills.



# Step 3- Funding the proposed project

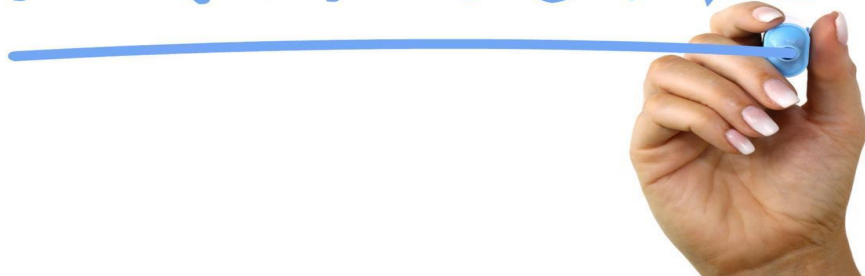
We looked for grants that could help fund this program. We did this so we can implement this project without raising taxes. People may not support this if they have to pay extra tax to make it happen. We searched for grants that would exceed the estimated cost to get our project done.



# Step 4- Propose solution to the City Council

Our last step would be to present this solution to the Phoenix City Council for their consideration. We will work to contact a City of Phoenix council member to discuss how to bring this idea up for consideration by the council at a future board meeting.

PROPOSAL



# Proposed Costs



A recent and highly relevant example is the 50-unit veteran tiny home project in Glendale led by Veterans Community Project. The development is expected to cost approximately \$14.2 million to \$15 million, covering site development, specialized housing units, and on-site support services. Based on these figures, a comparable 100-unit project would likely exceed \$30 million when accounting for expanded infrastructure, communal facilities, and comprehensive support programs.

# Proposed funding sources

When people discuss *proposed funding sources for homelessness*, the sources come from a variety of levels and mechanisms, and the research on them generally highlights a mix of federal, state, local, and private streams. Across cities and states, **federal grants** such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Continuum of Care programs are common pillars of homeless service funding, often administered through state or local governments to support shelters, rehousing, and prevention services. **State initiatives**—like California's Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program and voter-approved bonds such as Proposition 1—provide large pools of funding for housing and supportive services tailored to vulnerable populations. **Local governments** also allocate general funds, tax revenues, and reallocated budget items to fill gaps or sustain services, and some counties have even created dedicated sales tax measures for homelessness funding. Finally, **non-governmental sources** such as philanthropy, corporate contributions, and community fundraising campaigns supplement public funding, diversifying the revenue base for shelters and support programs.



# Proposed funding sources

The pros and cons of proposed funding sources. (Pros) **Provides necessary money** – Funding sources make it possible to start and maintain programs (like shelters or housing projects). **Can improve the community** – With proper funding, cities like Phoenix can invest in safety, housing, and support services. **Spreads responsibility** – Different funding sources (government, businesses, nonprofits) share the cost instead of one group paying for everything. (Cons) **High costs** – Some funding methods (like raising taxes) can be expensive for residents or businesses. **Limited or unreliable** – Grants or donations may not always be consistent, which can hurt long-term planning. **Public resistance** – People may disagree with how money is raised or spent.



# Government Officials Needing to be Influenced

We would need to influence the City Council as their vote is needed to enact this solution.

- The current Mayor of Phoenix is Kate Gallego
- Our current vice mayor is Kesha hodge washington
- Ann O'Brein (District 1)
- Jim Waring (District 2)
- Debra stark (District 3)
- Laura pastor (District 4)
- Betty Guardado (District 5)
- Kevin robinson (District 6)
- Anna hernandez (District 7)
- Kesha hodge washington (District 8)

# Supporters and opponents

## SUPPORTERS

- Community members who want to see these people get the help they need.
- People in need of help getting off of drugs.
- Businesses because they won't have as much crime or health issues they need to address in the areas surrounding their businesses.
- Church/Community groups

## OPPONENTS

- Taxpayers because they don't want to pay more money
- People that live near methadone clinics because it brings in lots of people on drugs and homeless people
- State news, Because they say the rules in the methadone clinic are jeopardizing the path of recovery
- [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration](#), they say that they have concerns of potential diversion of medication.

