



MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

December 16, 2025

Subject: Update on Strategic Initiatives Related to Unsheltered Homelessness (City Wide)

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Issue – Time has been set aside at the request of Mayor Romero to provide an update on the efforts to support unsheltered persons and how the City is addressing the concerns expressed by residents and business owners in Tucson.

City Manager's Office Recommendation – Recommend that the Mayor and Council designate one of their members to serve as the City of Tucson's elected representative on the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) General Council.

Background – The ongoing needs and challenges of addressing the unsheltered, and impacts of various encampments, have been a priority for Mayor and Council. On December 6, 2022, Mayor and Council requested updates every 30 days on these efforts.

Present Consideration(s) This update will provide information on the following items:

1. 100-Acre Woods Update

Tucson Parks & Recreation Department (TPRD) is moving forward with plans to build a new mountain bike park at 100-Acre Woods. Over the past several months, TPRD has worked closely with the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD), Multi-Agency Resource Coordinator Justin Hamilton, and local homeless service providers to engage with individuals living onsite prior to construction.

On November 18, the City completed the final phase of a large-scale, coordinated encampment removal at the future bike park site. This effort began in January 2023, when the area had become one of Tucson's largest encampment locations, with more than 170 individuals and significant safety, fire, environmental, and community-use concerns. The project was carried out in three phases: the first cleared space for required soil testing by Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, and the second and third phases prepared the site for the planned bike park. Throughout the operation, the City followed its Homeless Protocol framework, prioritizing outreach, service connections, and constitutional compliance while restoring the area for safe public use.

This November, a total of 94 personnel from service providers, City departments, and Pima County partners supported the operation as part of our ongoing Safe City Initiative.

Service Outcomes

- 30 individuals engaged onsite
- 17 individuals accepted services (57% acceptance rate)
- 6 individuals transported directly to permanent housing
- 4 individuals connected to Gospel Rescue Mission Day respite

SS/DEC16-25-245

- 2 individuals transported to the Amphi Shelter
- 4 CMS substance use intakes
- 1 individual transported to STAR Village

Of note, due to extensive pre-operation coordination with TPC and housing partners, more than half of the known individuals associated with this site were already housed before the operation began, which was approximately 35 individuals.

Debris Removal & Environmental Restoration

- 17-hour operation over two days
- Environmental Services: 25 truckloads (250 tons)
- DTM Hauling: 46 tons
- Total debris removed: 296 tons
- Shopping carts retrieved: 230
- Animals safely transported to PAAC: 1 turtle, 8 puppies, 1 adult dog, 12 kittens

Public Safety Findings

2 firearms were recovered from the encampment area, underscoring the importance of coordinated enforcement with outreach.

Conclusion

The 100 Acres operation highlights what is possible when the City's multidisciplinary teams work together under the Homeless Protocol. Through coordinated outreach, enforcement, environmental restoration, and justice-system support:

- Individuals were safely connected to services, shelter, housing, and treatment
- The area was restored for public and recreational use
- Public safety risks were significantly reduced

The City has implemented a structured safety and monitoring plan to prevent repopulation and ensure long-term stability at the park. City Encampment Assessors will conduct twice-daily visits, and the Parks Department will service the area in accordance with its established operations protocol. TPD will provide nightly patrols under the direction of Operations Division Midtown (ODM), ensuring a consistent law enforcement presence during overnight hours. The Operation at 100-Acre Wood reemphasize the importance to connecting people to their property. The City is moving forward with the pilot program, with the goal of returning property to individuals who are contacted on short notice.

2. Safe City Operation Clear Path

Safe City Operation Clear Path is a coordinated, multi-agency initiative designed to improve public safety, restore community spaces, and connect individuals experiencing homelessness with the services they need to achieve stability. The mission is to pair compassionate outreach and treatment

access with accountability and public-space management, ensuring that every person encountered has a clear path to shelter, behavioral-health support, substance-use treatment, and long-term housing resources.

By uniting City departments, Pima County, and nonprofit service providers, Safe City's Operation Clear Path maximizes resources, streamlines communication, and balances outreach with enforcement. This approach strengthens compliance with City ordinances, reduces liability risks, and builds public confidence through visible, measurable results.

Safe City Operation Clear Path will take place on the last Wednesday of every month and will include field contacts, service connections, shelter placements, detox referrals, and enforcement actions as appropriate. Priority sites are selected using multiple data sources including: hotspot analysis from the Homeless Protocol dashboard, health-risk indicators such as overdose trends and behavioral health data from Pima County Health Department, community reports and feedback from neighborhoods and constituents, and on-site environmental assessments to determine any necessary remediation or cleanup.

Over the past several months, the City of Tucson and its partners have carried out four operations, The Pantano Wash and Gateway Park/Santa Cruz River Corridor, Grant and I-10, Ajo and Park/Benson Hwy Corridor, Participants are as follows:

- **City of Tucson**

- Tucson Police Department (TPD)
- TPD Community Outreach Resource Engagement (C.O.R.E) Unit
- City Manager Office's Multiagency Resource Coordinator
- Community Safety, Health & Wellness Care Coordinators
- Housing and Community Development Outreach Team
- Parks & Recreation
- Tucson Fire Department & Tucson Collaborative Community Care (TC3)
- Environmental Services

- **Pima County**

- Pima County Sheriff / Prosecutor & Courts support
- Pima County Health Department
- Pima County Transition Center
- Pima County Health Department
- Pima County Flood Control
- Pima County Parks

- **Nonprofit and Service Providers**

- Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS)
- CODAC Health, Recovery & Wellness
- Community Bridges Inc. (CBI)
- Primavera Foundation
- Community Medical Services (CMS)
- Gospel Rescue Mission (Shelter)
- Salvation Army (Shelter)

- **Other Partners**

- Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
- DPS (Arizona Dept. of Public Safety)
- Private contractors (SGS Shopping Carts)

Across four coordinated operations, our multidisciplinary teams had the following outcomes.

- Engaged 139 individuals
- Placed 13 into shelter
- Connected 12 to treatment and detox
- Removed more than 80 tons of debris while resolving 35 encampments.

These results demonstrate what is possible when outreach, behavioral health, law enforcement, public health, and environmental services operate as one unified team. The multiagency partnership resulted in aligned efforts, shared mission focus, and responded collaboratively to the needs of our community.

3. Safe City Enforcement Deployments

In month of October, the Tucson Police Department set out to conduct two enforcement-focused deployments per week along the Chuck Huckleberry Loop and associated adjoining washes to address violent crime and other criminal activity. The deployment evolved as lessons were learned from each operation. Due to heavy rain in the beginning of the month, two of the scheduled deployments were postponed. Additional Safe City Deployments will continue to be conducted at a reduced frequency through the end of the year, as determined by Division Commanders who are monitoring the area.

A variety of resources and stakeholders were mobilized to accomplish the goal of addressing criminal behavior. Individuals were connected to services through the Transition Center or transported to resources by on-scene partners. Operational stakeholders included:

- Tucson Police Department
- Tucson Fire Department
- City of Tucson Multi-Agency Resource Coordinator Justin Hamilton
- Pima County Sheriff's Department (10/7 deployment only)
- City of Tucson Environmental and General Services Department
- Pima Animal Care Center
- Pima County Transition Center
- Pima County representatives with Facility Safety and Security Manager, Office of Housing Opportunities and Homeless Solutions, and Parks and Recreation
- Pima County Pre-Trial Services
- City of Tucson Housing and Community Development
- Pima County Flood and Transportation (trash remediation)
- Pima County Health Department
- Tucson Fire Department/Tucson Medical Center TC3
- Gospel Rescue Mission

Safe City Deployment #1 – Enforcement
October 7, Full custodial bookings
Rillito River, Oracle to Campell

Total # of Arrests	52
New Misdemeanor Charges	64
New Felony Charges	13
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	72
Felony Warrants Served	13

Safe City Deployment #2 – Enforcement
October 17, Full custodial bookings
Santa Cruz River, Grant to Cushing

Total # of Arrests	49
New Misdemeanor Charges	63
New Felony Charges	6
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	95
Felony Warrants Served	3

Safe City Deployment #3 – Enforcement
October 20, Full custodial bookings
Rillito River, Oracle to Hacienda del Sol

Total # of Arrests	37
New Misdemeanor Charges	31
New Felony Charges	13
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	65
Felony Warrants Served	2

Safe City Deployment #4 – Enforcement
October 24, Full custodial bookings
Rillito River, Swan to 1st Avenue

Total # of Arrests	28
New Misdemeanor Charges	24
New Felony Charges	4
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	30
Felony Warrants Served	4

Safe City Deployment #5 – Enforcement
November 21, Full custodial bookings
Rillito River, Stone to 1st Avenue

Total # of Arrests	3
New Misdemeanor Charges	2
New Felony Charges	1
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	2
Felony Warrants Served	0

Safe City Deployment #6 – Enforcement
December 1, Full custodial bookings
Santa Cruz River, Grant to 22nd Street

Total # of Arrests	18
New Misdemeanor Charges	30
New Felony Charges	0
Misdemeanor Warrants Served	19
Felony Warrants Served	1

These deployments enhance safety along the river path and reinforce Safe City deployment objectives in addressing community concerns related to crime, public safety, and environmental degradation along Tucson’s riverbeds and washes.

Due to the unique terrain challenges and the anticipated number of people encountered, the following police department equipment have been utilized: Drones, ATVs, Can-Ams, 4x4 vehicles, Motors, Bikes, and Prisoner Transport Units.

A Command Post is also established where the following staff and resources are staged: Evidence Technicians, Detectives, Community Service Officers, Booking Officers, CORE members, Tucson Fire Department Alpha Truck and COT Environmental Services. The Housing Outreach Team is also present to assist with gathering names for referrals after the judicial process is completed.

Deployment sizes have been adjusted based on the anticipated level of activity in each area, including expected encounters and encampment conditions. The resulting reductions in key metrics reflect the combined impact of ongoing efforts within the deployment areas and the early signs of longer-term effects.

4. TPOCH Update

The Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness is currently amidst several major projects.

- **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)-** HUD released the FY25 Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on November 13, 2025. The NOFO included substantial shifts in federal priorities and presented significant challenges for communities nationwide. Due to concerns about the legality and feasibility of several new requirements, Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes filed a lawsuit seeking to halt implementation, and the City of Tucson joined the legal action. Following this challenge, HUD rescinded the NOFO and announced that it will revise and reissue the funding opportunity. TPOCH and local partner agencies will continue preparing for the updated release once HUD provides new guidance and timelines.
- **Expanded City Representation on TPOCH Board** - Although HUD has rescinded the recent Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), it included proposed requirements for Continuums of Care to update their board composition to include at least three elected officials and two law enforcement representatives. TPOCH anticipates these requirements will remain in the revised NOFO and is proceeding with the Governing Council composition changes. The TPOCH General Council has voted to allocate one elected official seat and one law

enforcement seat specifically for the City of Tucson. Mayor and Council are respectfully requested to identify a Council Member willing to serve on the TPCCH Governing Council and help guide the Continuum of Care's direction and coordination with City efforts to address homelessness, on or before January 5, 2026.

- **2026 Point in Time Count-** The 2026 Point in Time Count (known locally as Every Counts-Pima County Street Count) will occur on January 28, 2026 in the early morning. Team Lead recruitment and registration occurred early in November, and registration for Interview Volunteers began December 3rd. Every year this community-wide event requires nearly 500 volunteers and takes months of planning. This event collects vital data that is used locally and federally to guide decision making for homeless resources and system design. To learn more about this years' event, please visit tpch.net/point-in-time-count/
- **Strategic Planning-** The public comment period for a draft of the new TPCCH strategic plan concluded on November 30. Thank you to everyone who reviewed the document and submitted comments. Between now and January, the draft will be edited based on the public comments, and prepared for adoption by the TPCCH General Council in February, 2026. There are many areas where partnership between TPCCH and the City of Tucson will be vital to achieving our goals. We look forward to working closely with you to address homelessness in our community.
- **Operation Deep Freeze-** Our annual winter weather response is underway for 2025. Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) is Tucson's winter severe weather emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. ODF is activated when weather predictions for overnight temperatures are 40°F or lower with rain, 35°F or lower without rain, or when wind chill factors indicate a health hazard from exposure. If ODF is "on" this will be reflected on the TPCCH website and social media, as well as announced via our listserv. For more information on ODF and how people can participate, please visit tpch.net/operation-deep-freeze-2/.

5. Housing First

The City of Tucson's Housing First team continues to provide vital services through strong collaboration with internal departments, city divisions, and a wide network of community partners. Together, these partnerships ensure a coordinated response to address the complex needs of Tucson's most vulnerable residents. This includes ongoing collaboration on shelter and housing initiatives citywide, such as the following:

- Wildcat Inn Shelter Program provides shelter for 42 adults and 44 children.
- Desert Cove, operated by Community Bridges Inc. (CBI), provides shelter for 23 adults.
- Craycroft shelter, operated by Pima County, serves 56 adults and 61 children.
- Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) operates Amphi Housing Resource Center congregate shelter under their program name "Casa Del Pueblo" and currently serves 48 adults both men and women.

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(City Wide)

- Bread & Roses Transitional currently serves 8 beds as well as 1 emergency bed and is operated by OPCS.
- Star Village currently serves 23 individuals and is operated by Primavera Foundation.
- Amazon Flatts, which is a permanent supportive housing program, is operated by OPCS and currently houses 27 participants.
- There are 22 young adults, ages 18-14, that are being housed in the El Portal scattered unit program and receive housing supports from Housing First staff. Services include peer mentoring, job readiness training, budgeting assistance, and financial literacy education.

Plan Tucson Consideration(s) – This item supports the following Plan Tucson policies:

H1: Evaluate the social, physical, and spatial needs related to housing program design and location, including neighborhood conditions and access to basic goods and services.

H7: Increase access to safe, healthy, and affordable housing choices, including mitigating the impacts of foreclosure.

H8: Address the housing needs of the most vulnerable populations in the community, including those at risk of homelessness.

Financial Considerations – There are multiple funding sources supporting the various programs outlined in this Memorandum, which include General Funds, State and Federal funding.

Legal Considerations – City Attorney's Office has reviewed this Memorandum.

Respectfully submitted,



Liz Morales
Assistant City Manager

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City Manager's Office