

## Keys to Change Community Outreach Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2025

Human Services Campus, Inc. dba Keys to Change hosted a Quarterly Community Outreach Meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 6:00 pm via ZOOM. This report is submitted per Ordinance G-6799.

Invitations were emailed to 506 people, and hard copy, postcard mailed to 460 people. Approximately 17 individuals participated.

The following is a report of the meeting:

### CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

### KEYS TO CHANGE UPDATE

Amy Schwabenlender provided updates from Key Campus

- **Construction & Campus Improvements:**
  - Renovations funded by Maricopa County Industrial Development Authority.
  - 1218 Madison Building (formerly men's overflow shelter) is now teal; will house administrative offices.
  - Plaza Area Transformation: Former "campus lawn" is being converted into a more structured plaza with walkways and color-coded navigation.
  - Lighting & Wayfinding Enhancements: Future installations will help clients locate services using colors and signage.
  - Cooling Tower Project: Funded by the City of Phoenix, designed to improve airflow, decreasing temperatures, and reduce heat stress during summer months.
  - Brian Garcia Welcome Center Expansion: A second story addition will occur, plans are pending City of Phoenix approval.
  - The center is now open 24/7 as of January 1, 2025, thanks to an expanded HUD contract.
- **Reduction in Overflow Shelter Capacity:**
  - Temporary overflow shelter funding is phasing out.
  - 280 mats will be eliminated by June 1st, after funding from the City of Phoenix expires.
  - Concerns raised about the impact on the unhoused population once beds are removed.

Nicole Peña provided updates from CASS

- **Current Capacity & Expansion:**
  - 130 additional shelter beds remain fully occupied every night.
  - Total downtown campus capacity: 600 beds per night.
- **New Senior Emergency Shelter – The Haven:**
  - Location: I-17 & Northern Avenue.
  - Opened December 2024, accepting seniors aged 55+ from CASS.
  - Capacity: 170 beds, and ramping up floor-by-floor to meet staffing ratios (1 case manager per 15 residents).

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- Current occupancy: 25 seniors (as of February 2025).
- Long-term impact: As the Haven reaches full capacity, it will free up space at the downtown single adult shelter.
- **Funding & Future Plans:**
  - Additional Maricopa County funds secured to maintain shelter expansion.
  - Ongoing efforts to improve service delivery and streamline senior shelter placements.

### **PHOENIX CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS 7 & 8 UPDATE**

- **District 7 Representative (Leila Gamiz):**
  - Councilman Carlos Galindo-Elvira will be leaving office in April.
  - Office remains supportive of solutions for the unhoused community.
  - Expressed optimism about summer response plans.
- **District 8 Representative (Kalia Moore):**
  - Councilwoman is committed to supporting services for the unhoused.
  - District 8 staff available for constituent concerns and community feedback.
- **Acknowledgments:**
  - Both Councilmembers toured the campus and engaged with the community upon taking office.
  - Encouragement for residents to reach out for assistance and stay involved in discussions.

### **CITY OF PHOENIX UPDATE**

- **Office of Homeless Solutions (Margaret Adams & Team):**
  - Shelter Capacity Growth: Since 2021, 1,400 new beds have been added, despite the loss of 400 temporary beds.
  - Safe Outdoor Space Initiative:
    - Opened in 2024 as part of encampment decommissioning efforts.
    - 1,300+ individuals served in its first year.
    - 31% of participants transitioned to housing, detox, or shelter.
    - New workforce programs introduced, with 104 participants referred so far.
  - Encampment & Street Management:
    - Active engagement in key areas surrounding the Key Campus.
    - Outreach teams and police coordination to balance services and enforcement.
    - Street cleanups occurring three times per week.
  - Upcoming City Initiatives:
    - Railroad Track Cleanup: Coordinated effort between the city and BNSF Railway to address encampments near tracks.
    - Camping Ordinance Enforcement: Officers receiving new mandatory training to ensure proper implementation.

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- **Police Department Update (Commander David Seitter):**
  - Increased officer presence in affected areas.
  - New citywide training program for officers regarding camping ordinances and outreach coordination.
  - Expect more consistent enforcement in coming weeks.

### **MADISON PIONEERS COALITION UPDATE**

Bill Morlan gave an update on behalf of the Madison Pioneers Coalition

- Acknowledgment of improvements in the area surrounding the Key Campus.
- Concerns about overflow shelter closures leading to increased street homelessness.
- Call for additional shelter capacity and more evenly distributed services across the city.
- Recognition of Phoenix PD's increased presence but concerns that cleanup efforts are temporary fixes.

### **COMMUNITY QUESTIONS AND RECAP**

**Dean Scheinert (Justa Center):**

- Advocated for a senior-specific overnight shelter to replace the overflow beds.
- Highlighted challenges in finding an appropriate site despite funding availability.
- Requested a forum to discuss solutions with city officials.

**City's Response:**

- Acknowledged the need for senior shelter solutions.
- No immediate location available, but discussions are ongoing.
- Haven Shelter may help, but currently only expanding slowly.

**Community Member Concerns (Pam Fitzgerald & Others):**

- Frustration with slow progress and increased homelessness in other parts of Phoenix.
- Concerns about businesses leaving due to crime and encampments.
- Criticism of tax increases funding programs with unclear results.
- Desire for stronger enforcement measures rather than service-first approaches.

**Next Steps & Closing Remarks**

- Next Meeting Scheduled for August 5, 2025.
- Continued monitoring of:
  - Impact of overflow shelter closures.
  - Enforcement of camping ordinances.
  - Expansion of shelter and service capacity.
- City and nonprofit partners committed to finding long-term solutions.
- Encouragement for continued community engagement and advocacy.