

Addressing Homelessness for Community Health and Safety

March 5, 2026

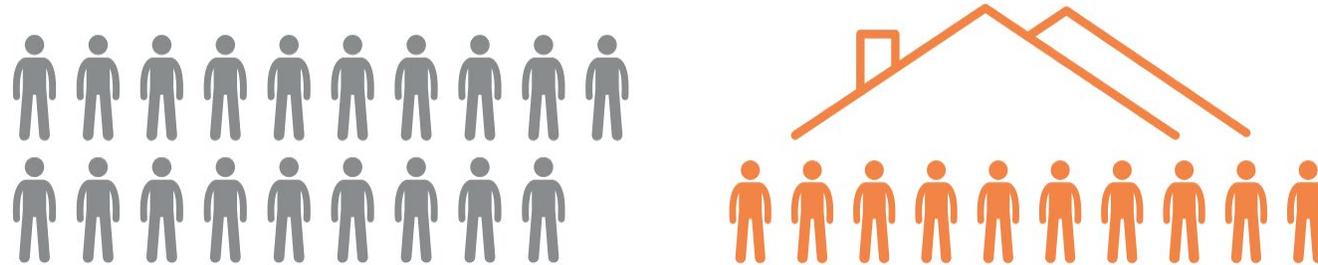
Candace Cannistraro, Deputy City Manager

Dominique Sterlin, Assistant Police Chief

Lindsey Balinkie, Deputy Director Community Services

Jussane Goodman, Human Services Administrator

There are more people entering homelessness than leaving homelessness. From January 2024 – December 2024, there were 19 new people experiencing homelessness for every 10 people finding housing.



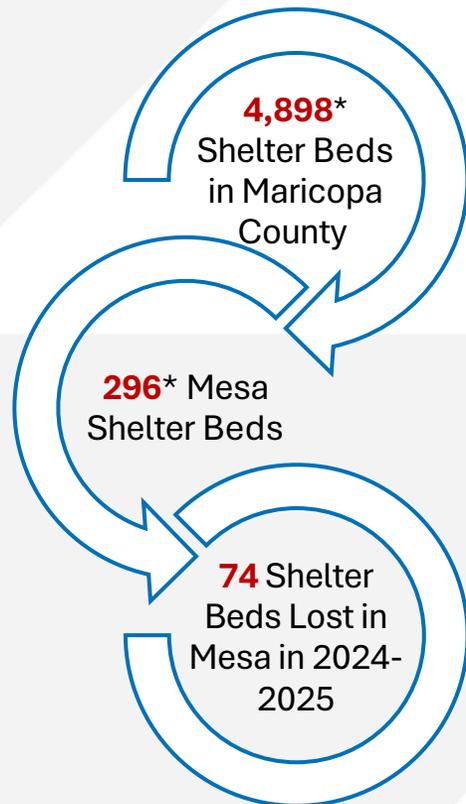
There is a significant number of new people entering homelessness each month. In 2024, an average of **962 new households per month** experienced homelessness for the first time. In 2025, shelters and bridge housing programs continue to have long waitlists and cannot meet the demand.

Breakdown of people experiencing homelessness in Maricopa County in December 2024.



Other Impacts & Trends in Mesa

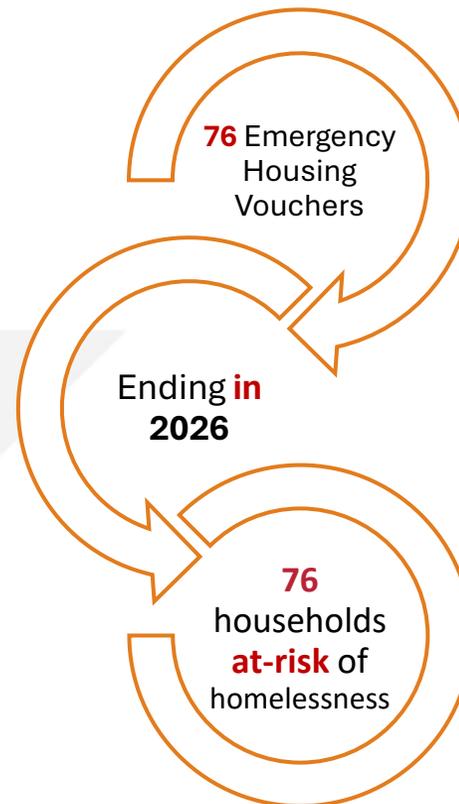
Homeless Shelter Beds



*Single adult & family beds

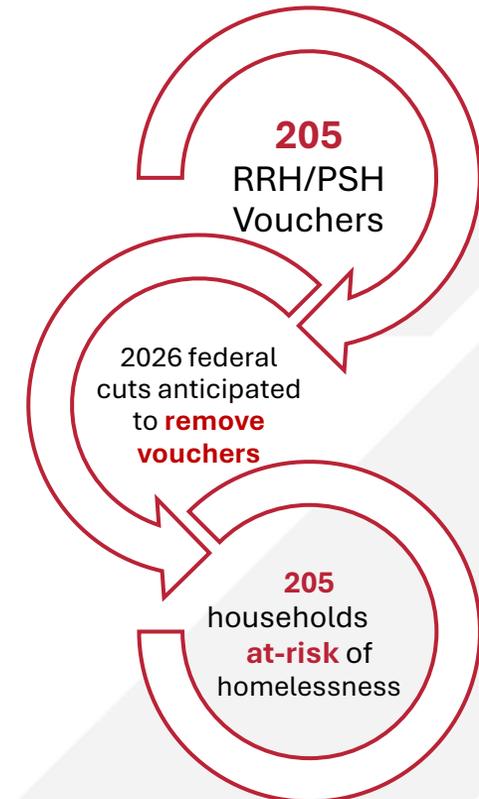
County Shelter Beds Source: COC HIC

Emergency Housing Voucher Cuts



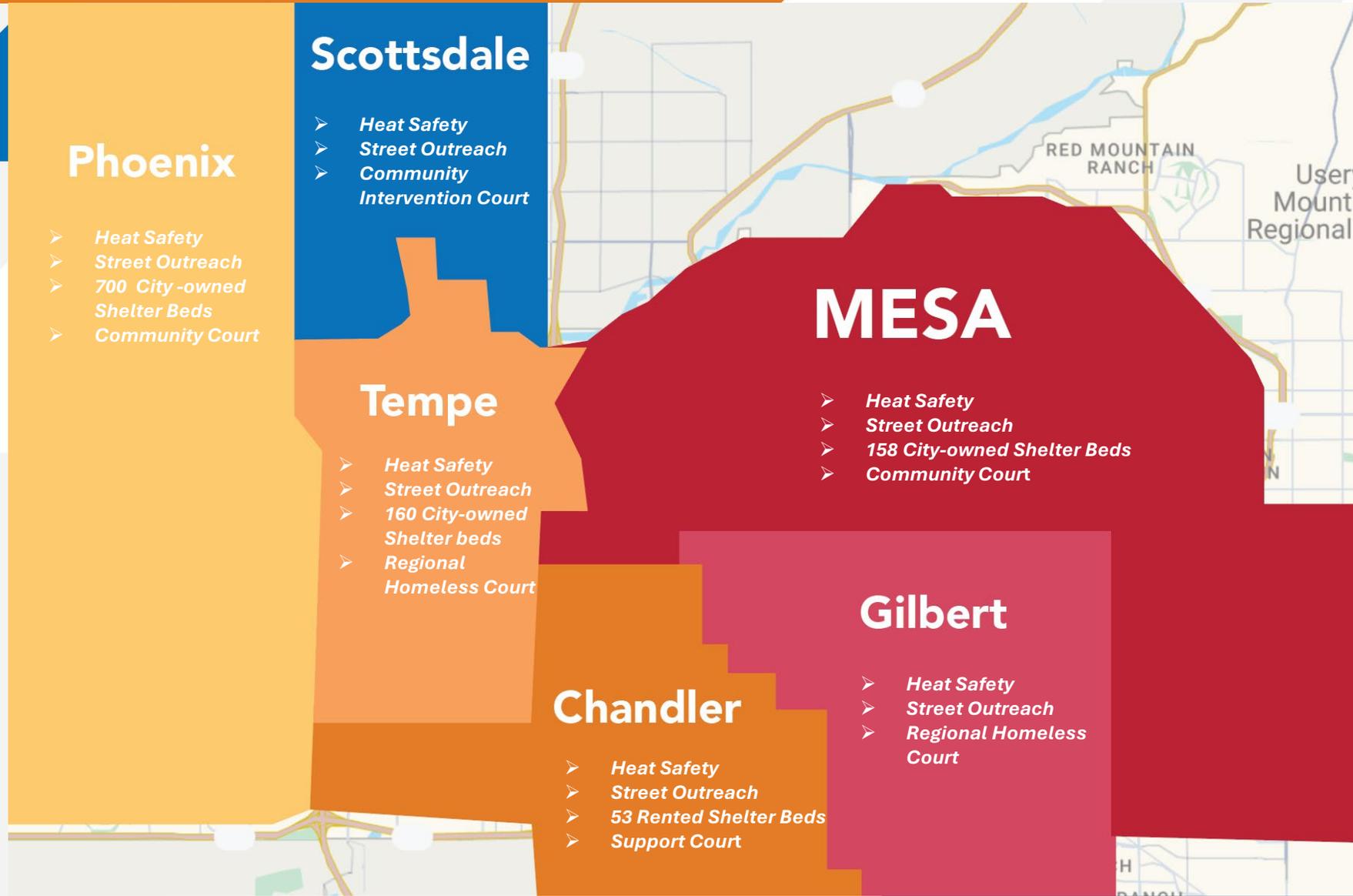
Mesa Housing Authority

Other Anticipated Housing Voucher Loss



Reductions to COC HUD Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing

Regional Government Efforts





Police



Fire & Medical



Emergency Shelter



Mental/Behavioral Health

Office of Homeless Solutions Objective:

Create robust partnerships and comprehensive services in addressing homelessness to support a healthy and safe community for all in Mesa.

Core components

- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelter
- Heat Safety
- Collaboration
- Support to first responders, neighborhoods and businesses



City Involvement: Lessons Learned



Mesa pays for homelessness with or without providing services.



City-led coordination is essential in meeting public safety needs of entire community.



First Responder support is required.

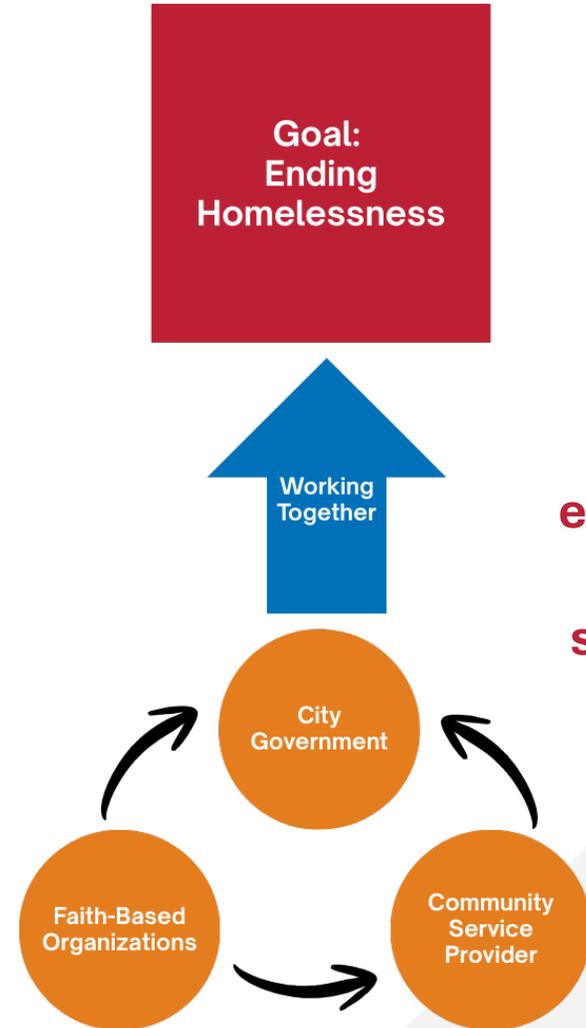


Collaboration increases capacity to serve needs better together.

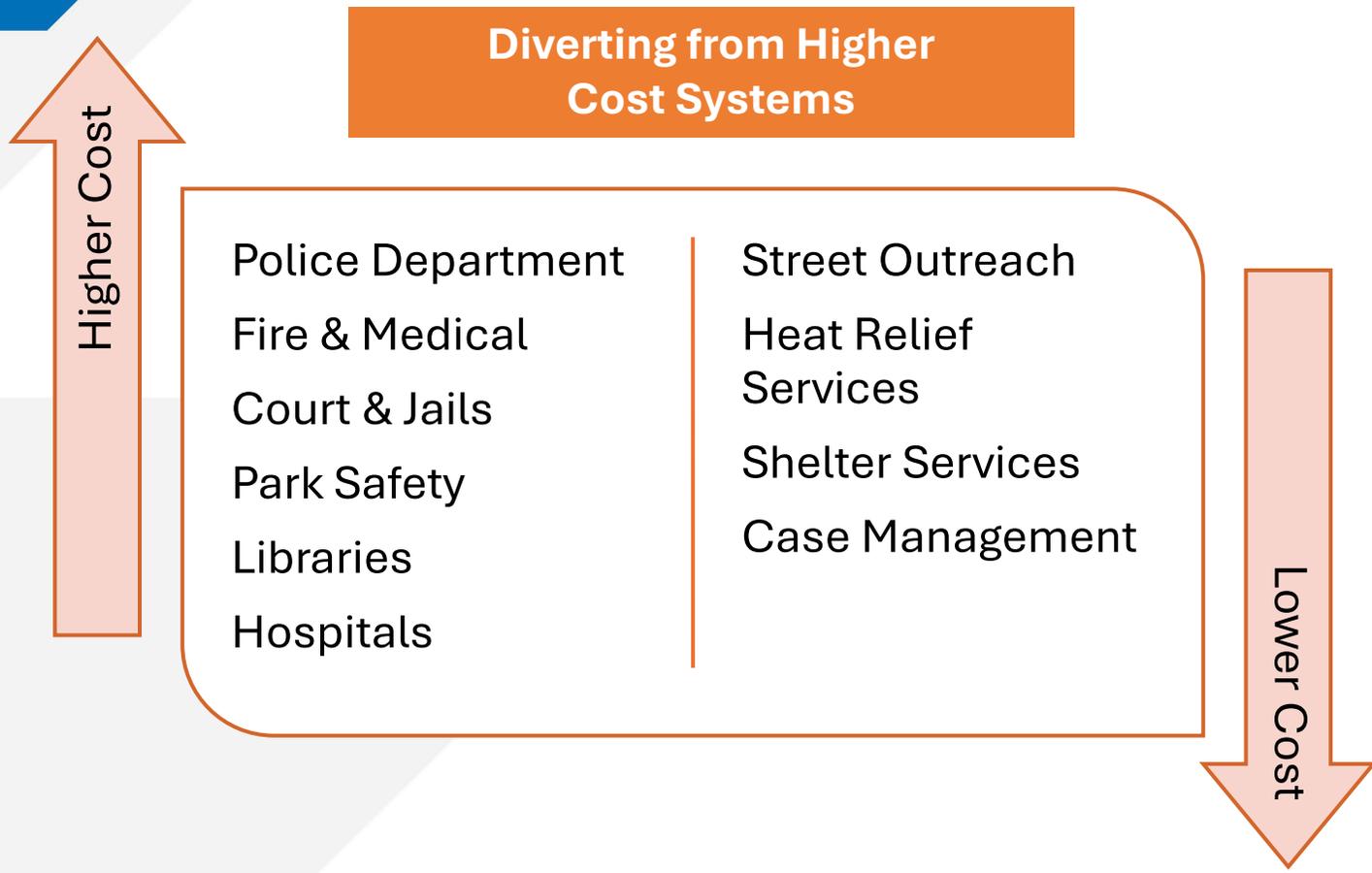


City investment in services strengthens accountability and aligns services with priorities

Importance of Mesa's Involvement



City of Mesa is the entity best positioned to coordinate a systematic response



Homelessness touches nearly every public system:

- police
- fire/medical
- behavioral health
- Courts
- Libraries
- code enforcement
- housing services neighborhoods



Impact of homelessness on first responders

Importance of collaboration with homeless services system

Benefits of Street Outreach, Shelter and Heat Relief

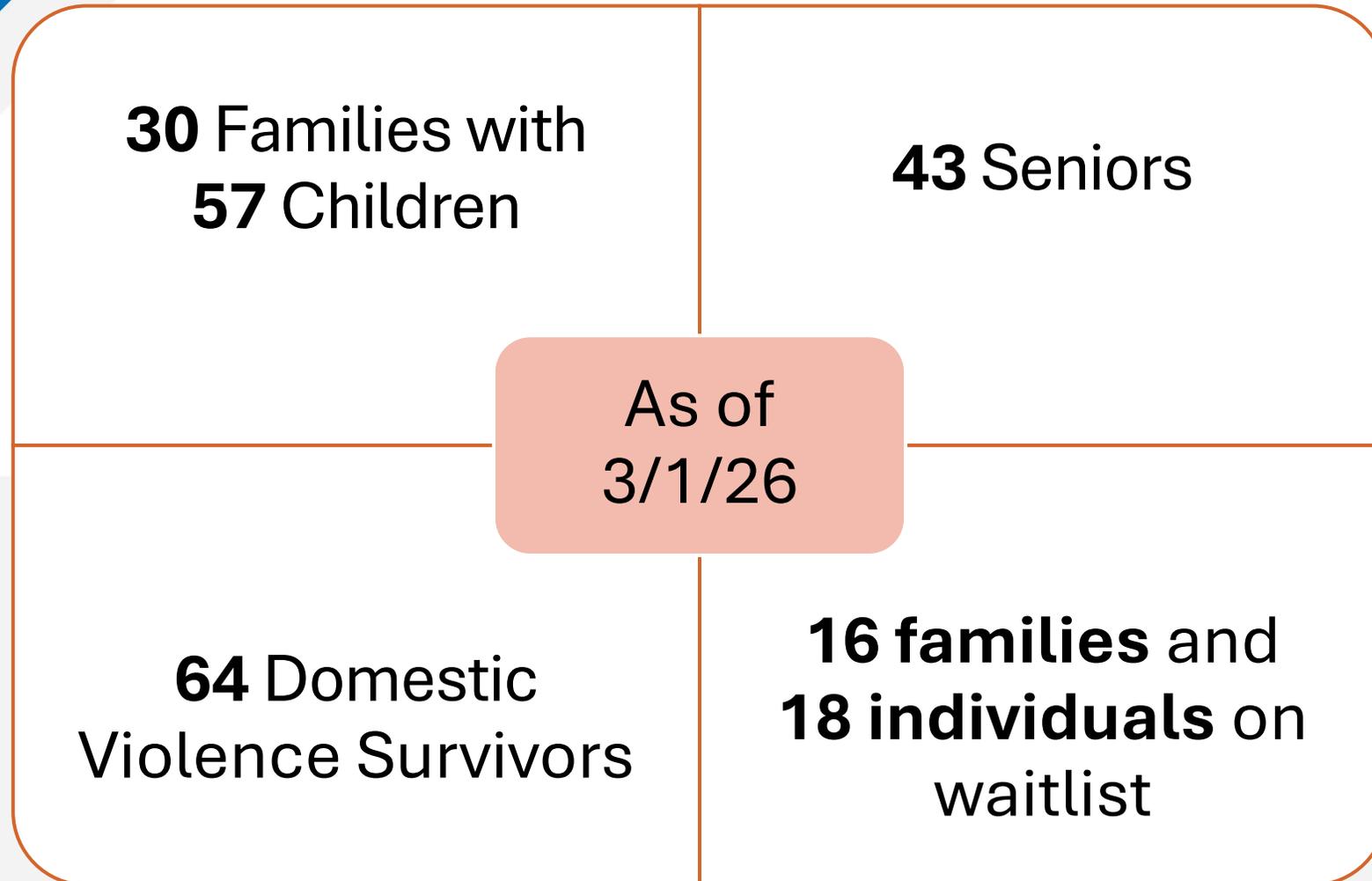
Diverting from higher cost systems

- 5+ years emergency homeless shelter services
- Focused on Mesa-based residents
- Began with *Martin v Boise*, Covid funding and rise in homelessness
- Currently renting 85 rooms at Windemere Hotel
- Supports Public Safety/Community Court
- Good Neighbor Policy
- Only Mesa shelter for families/women/seniors

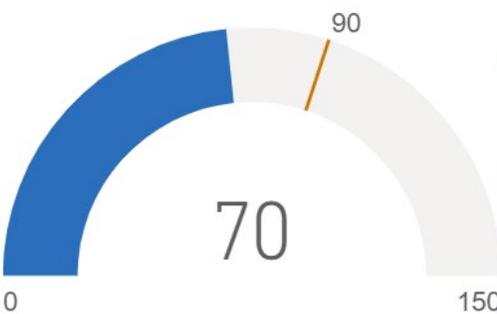
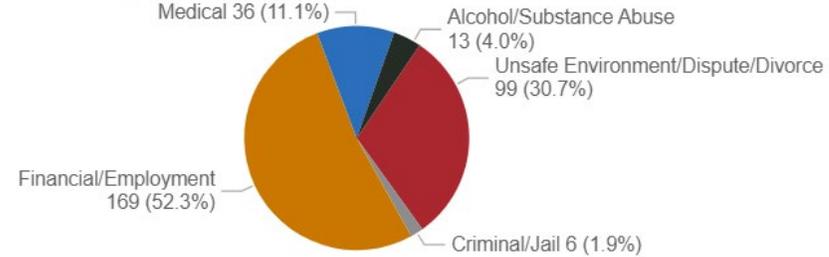


- Up to a 90 day stay
 - Case Management services
 - Positive progress in the program required
- Zero-tolerance drug policy
- Regular room checks
- Closed campus, no walk-up referrals
- 10:00 PM curfew
- Connection to housing/employment services, medical care (substance/mental health treatment, etc.)
- Connection to elementary schools





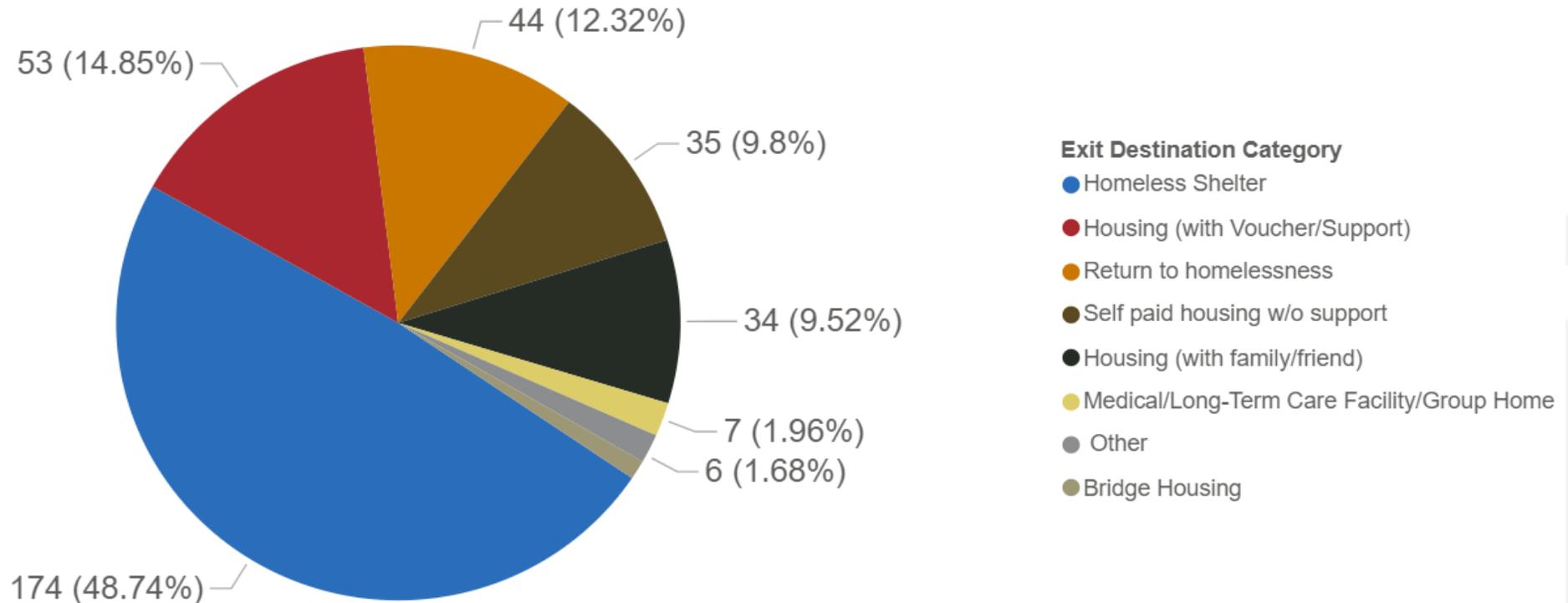
Source: Homeless Management Information System

<p>Total Unique Clients</p> <p>489</p>	<p>Percentage of Veterans</p> <p>2.5%</p>
<p>Median Number of Days in the Program</p> 	<p>Survivors of Domestic Violence</p> <p>29.9%</p>
	<p>Percentage of Families</p> <p>76.3%</p>
	<p>Percentage of Seniors</p> <p>6.7%</p>
<p>Clients by Primary Reason for Homelessness</p> 	<p>Positive Exit Rate</p> <p>86.0%</p>

Total unique clients served since May 2020: 3,289

Source: Homeless Management Information System

Clients by Exit Destination Category



Source: Homeless Management Information System

Family Promise

Bridge Housing

Up to 10 Families with Minor Children

Up-to 60 days length of stay

Funded by private donations, grants, and 12% government funding.

Eden Village

Permanent Housing

Single Adults

No cap on length of stay

Funded by private donations and grants.

The Other Side Village (Utah)

Permanent Housing

Single Adults

No cap on length of stay

Funded by client rent, social enterprise, private donations, and grants. City land contribution and funding for capital.



CONTINUES

*90-day structured program

*Program management

Property management

*No walk ups

Transportation

*Police presence

Pet friendly

NEW

Control of campus

*Serving seniors, families and domestic violence victims ONLY

Additional family friendly rooms

*Cameras

*Council Use Permit Requirement/Good Neighbor Policy

- Existing program demonstrates success and strong partnerships.
- Ownership of property allows Mesa to control quality, security, population served, citywide public safety.
 - ADA compliant/friendly
 - Pet friendly
 - Controlled access to campus/building
- Federal ARPA funding supports investment in long-term stability.
- Ongoing cost savings and cost avoidance.
- Alignment with city priorities and community needs



Hotel Purchase Community Engagement 2023

- Three large, well attended, community meetings and many additional neighborhood meetings by request.
- Three rounds of door-to-door visits and discussions with area residents.
- Meeting reminders and program updates via web, email, social media, flyers, bilingual materials, resource line.
- Connections to online resources and an extensive Q&A.

2023 Community Survey at time of Sunaire purchase

48% of residents see homelessness as an issue in Mesa

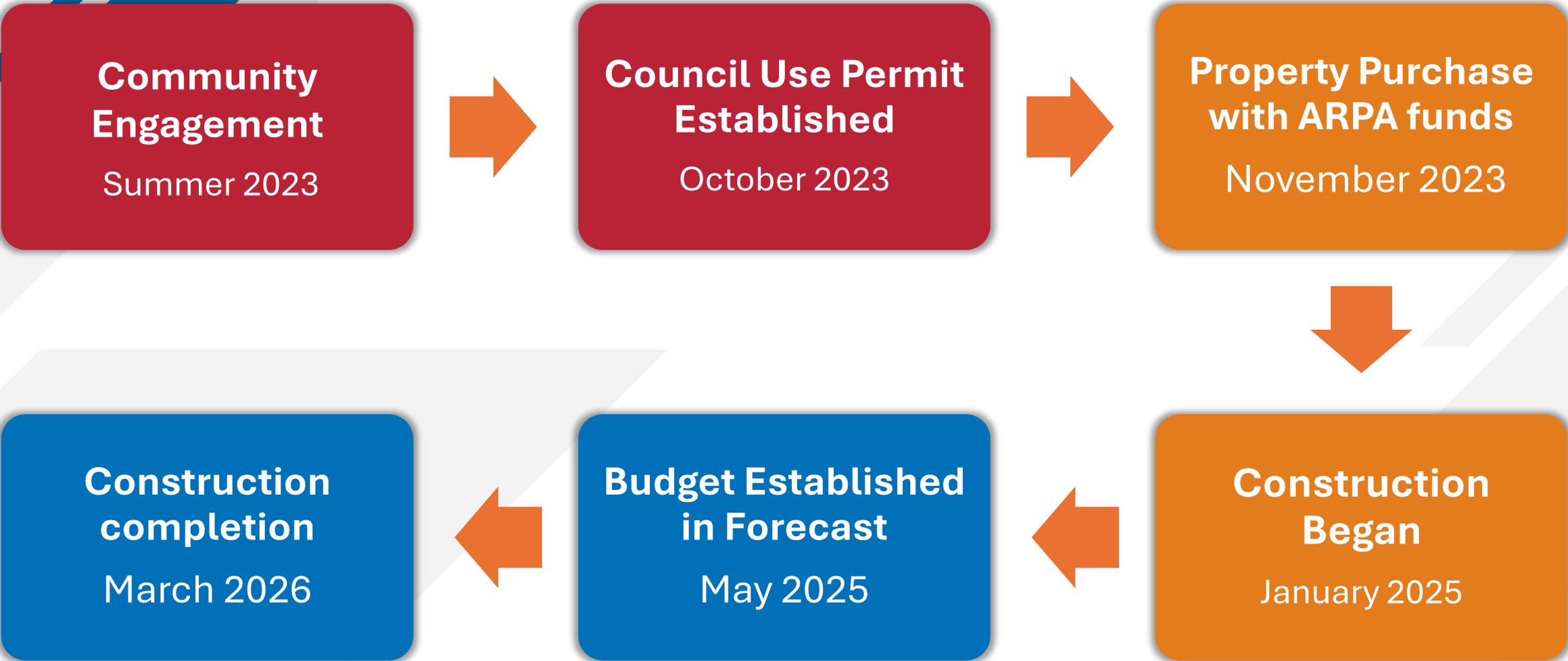
71% of residents believe the issue of homelessness is the City of Mesa's responsibility to address

Windemere Hotel 13.6 acres



Sunaire Program 1.3 acres





Timeline Based on Original Council Direction



Off the Streets @ Sunaire – Budget Overview		
Description	One-Time Cost	Funding Source
Property Purchase	\$7,475,388	City ARPA: \$3,475,388 County ARPA: \$4,000,000
Architect Design	\$386,041	ARPA
Construction	\$5,285,205	ARPA
Total One-Time Property Cost:	\$13,146,634	
Furniture Fixtures & Equipment	\$450,000 \$300,000	ARPA-Interest
Total One-Time FFE Cost:	\$750,000	

Today at Windemere

Windemere
\$98.65

Price per room/day
with case management

Windemere
\$3.1M

85 Rooms/163 Beds

- Windemere contracts are ARPA funded in 2026.
- Windemere ends as Sunaire begins.
- Figures do not reflect cost for PD presence at Windemere.

Summer 2026 Sunaire opens

Sunaire
\$85.27

Price per room/day with
case management*

**Excludes grab-n-go meals cost for equal comparison.*

Sunaire
\$2.0M+ \$0.5M
64 Rooms/158 Beds
+ Grab-n-go meals

- Sunaire funding sources: general fund, APRA interest and HOME ARP .
- Figures do not reflect cost for PD presence at Sunaire.

Explore making Sunaire facility available to an emergency shelter provider without city funding or oversight

Considerations:

- Feasibility of provider funding availability is low
- Removal of COM funding reduces alignment with council priorities
 - Community Health and Safety
- Loss of leverage to coordinate services
- Cost of police presence remains
- Saves operational costs but unknown long-term impact

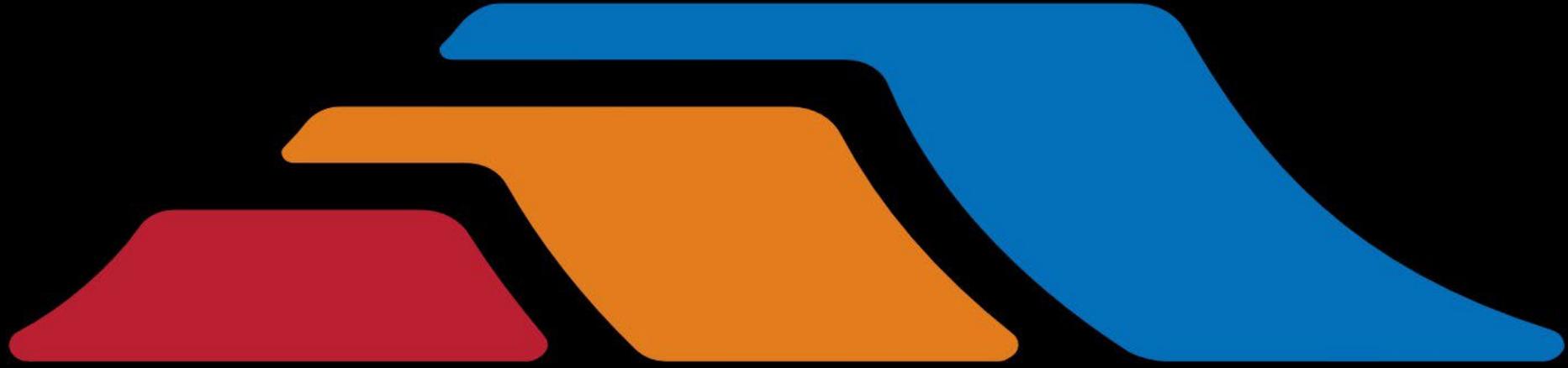
Sell Sunaire and Continue OTS at Windemere

Considerations:

- ARPA reimbursement requirements
 - \$9.15M recaptured by US Treasury
 - \$4M returned to Maricopa County per IGA
- Cost to maintain and manage property until sale
- Vacant property with risk of vandalism and damages
- Timing property sale and need for repayment may not align
- Risk of possible mixed hoteling legislation interfering with program operation



**Staff Recommendation:
Complete the Move to Sunaire - 6733 E Main Street**



mesa·az

Mesa's Housing Path



EMERGENCY

Immediate shelter.
Safety.
Housing Plan.



STABILIZATION

More rules and responsibilities.
Health and employment needs.



BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

Demonstrated success.
Bridge housing.
Continued support services.
Connected to housing vouchers.



RENTAL ASSISTANCE

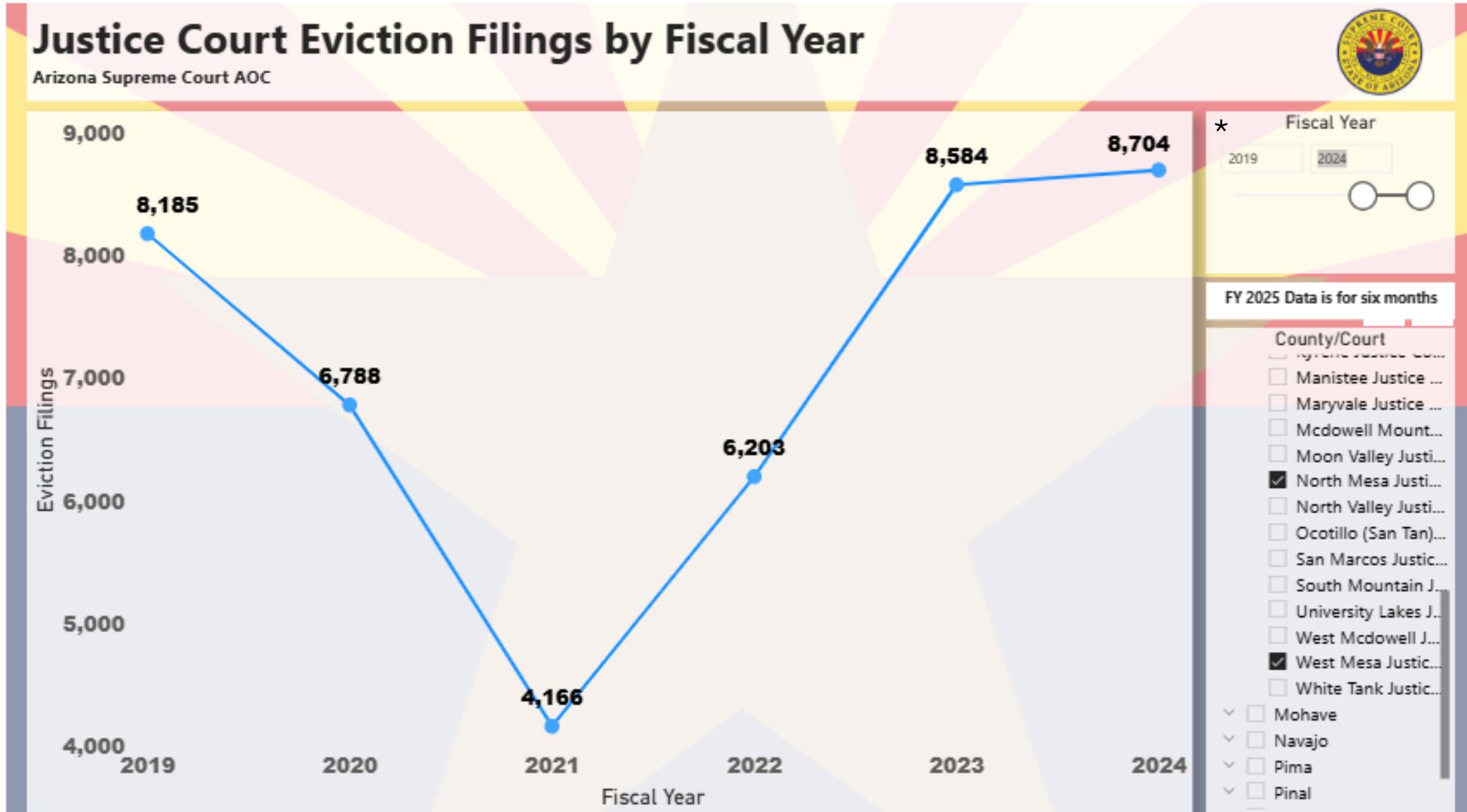
Rental assistance.
Housing vouchers.



INDEPENDENCE

Move to complete independence.
Home ownership.

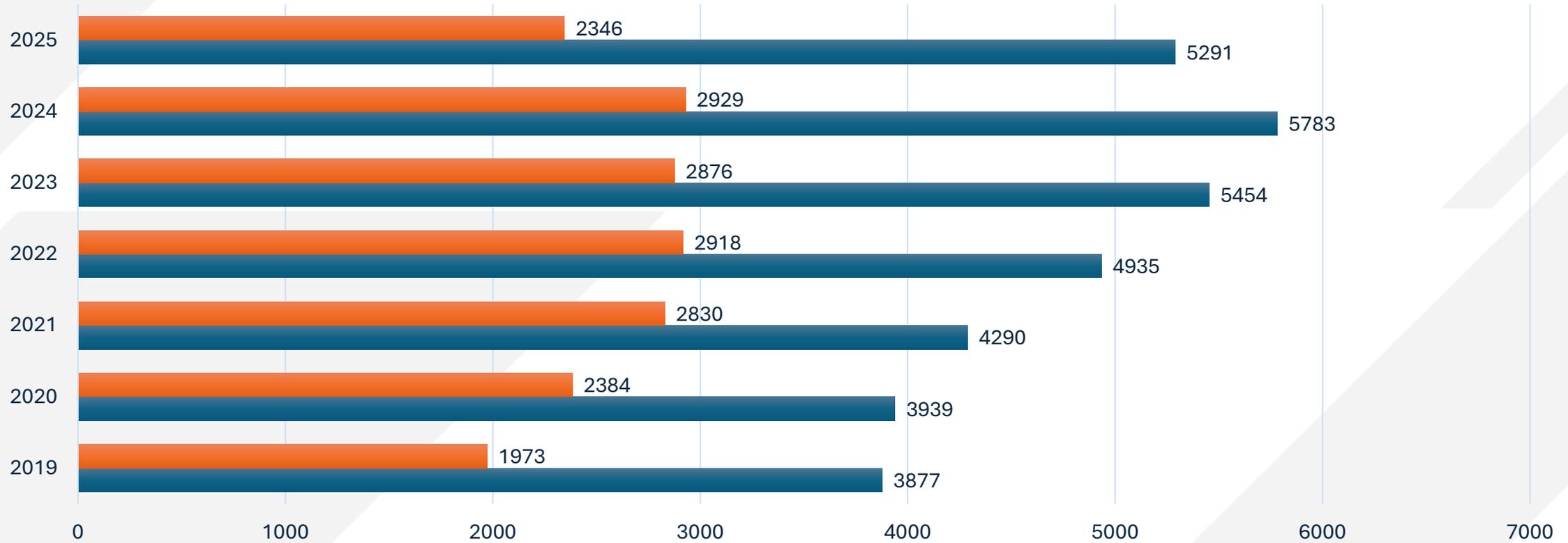
Other impacts: Mesa Evictions by Fiscal Year 2019-2024



*FY 24 data incomplete. Does not include May or June 2025 data.

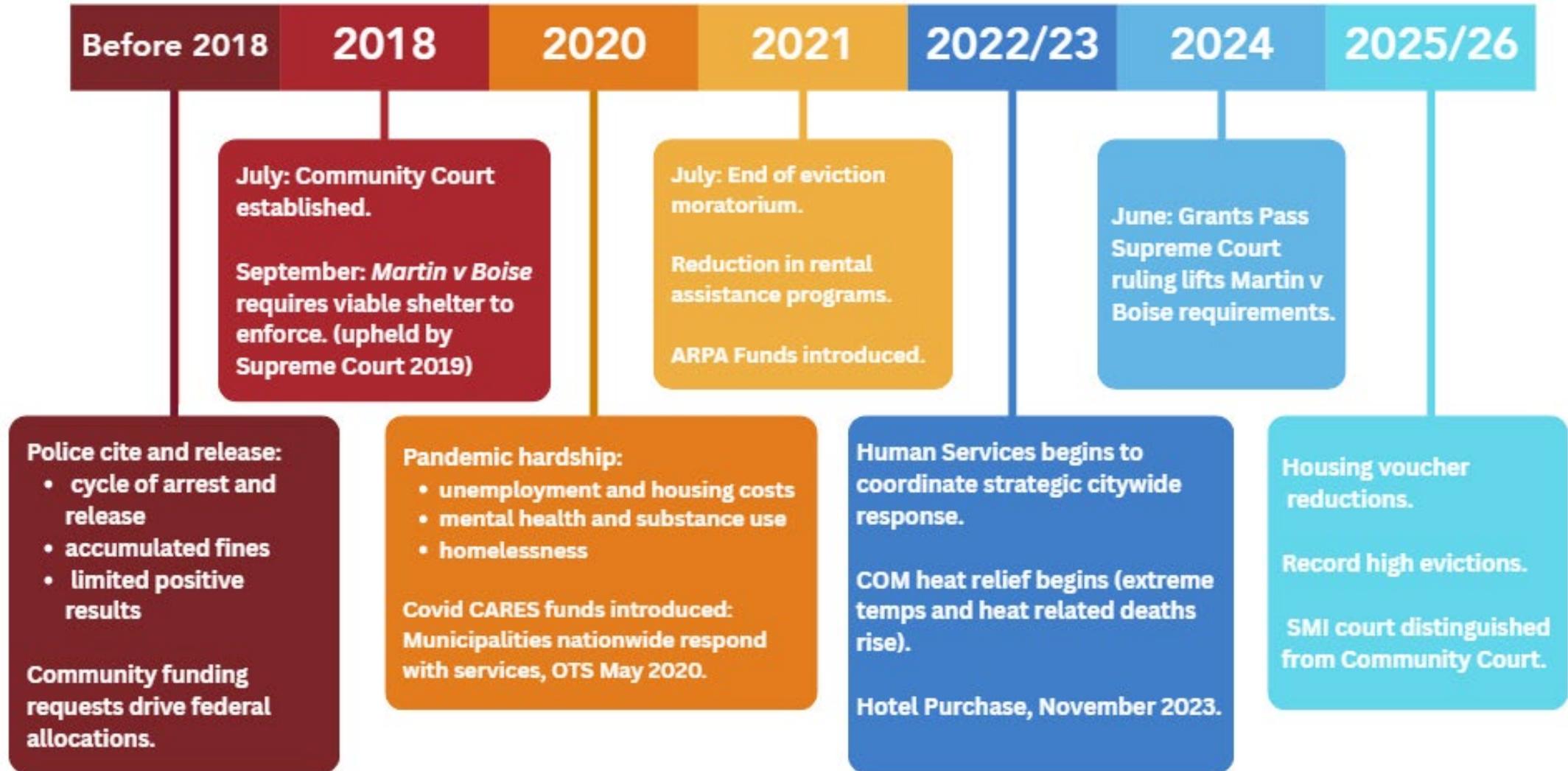
Individuals Receiving Services

■ Total Served in Mesa ■ Mesa Residents Served Countywide



Source: Homeless Management Information System

History of Mesa's Response to Homelessness



Hotel Purchase Community Engagement 2023

- Acknowledgment of citywide issue and more services are needed in Mesa.
- Desire for services in East Mesa and spreading service citywide.
- Awareness that City ownership of property and police presence will bring positive impacts to the neighborhood and the program.
- Desire to volunteer and giveback.
- Goal of helping to minimize stigma for serving families and individuals in crisis by having the right staffing, public safety and social service resources.
- Proud of city/community response to helping people and success of Off the Streets program, especially the focus on families, elderly and domestic violence victims.

Hotel Purchase Community Engagement 2023

NIMBY concerns and concerns with impact on property values.

- Response: Good Neighbor Report with commitment to uplift the area, provide communication feedback line.

Concern with current public safety in neighborhood and area – drug use, sex offenders, crime in neighborhood and at businesses.

- Response: Mesa Police Department Public Safety meetings, connection and increased focus, Good Neighbor Policy addresses dedicated police presence, strong rules and program structure.

Concern with bringing additional homelessness to the area.

- Response: proactive outreach underway to respond to existing homelessness in the area, closed-campus referral program.

Maintenance of property/area and commitment of the City overtime.

- Response: Comprehensive assessment of neighborhood to infuse resources and updates to streetlights, street surface, trees, cleanups, ongoing neighborhood engagement.

Fear of type of facility being used for alternate social services.

- Response: Limited use outlined in Good Neighbor Report, with requirement for council approval for change.



Program	Funding Source	Budget
Street Outreach/Case Management	Opioid	\$750,000
	General Fund	\$274,000
	CDBG	\$296,000
Heat Safety	County ARPA	\$235,000
	General Fund	\$165,000
Community Court Case Management	General Fund	\$432,000



Bunk Bed



Twin Bed



Queen Bed

*Adjustable for ADA needs



**Wardrobe
Shelving**



Side/Dining Table



Chairs



Nightstand



- **Case Managers**



- **Mesa Room (Intake, Meetings, Resident Gatherings)**
- **Job/Housing Search Computer Stations**