



# City Council Report

**Date:** April 1, 2024  
**To:** City Council  
**Through:** Candace Cannistraro, Deputy City Manager  
Ruth Giese, Community Services Director  
**From:** Lindsey Balinkie, Deputy Director Community Services  
**Subject:** Proposed Heat Relief Services in collaboration with Maricopa County,  
Public Health  
(Citywide)

## Purpose and Recommendation

Approve Resolution \_\_\_\_ providing the City Manager authority to sign an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Mesa and Maricopa County accepting American Rescue Plan Act funds (ARPA) to implement Heat Relief Services for individuals experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable populations in Mesa from April 1, 2024, to December 31, 2026.

The amount of \$235,464 will be provided for services in calendar year 2024. Grants for calendar years 2025 and 2026 are subject to funding availability, with a term option for two additional one-year renewals in which cost will be subject to renegotiation.

## Background

Heat Relief Services for this grant will be offered in Mesa by Resurrection Street Ministries (RSM) including:

- One (1) day respite center 6 days/week with respite and wrap-around services within RSM facilities at 1135 E Main Street (including a/c, water, rest areas, access to food, navigation services, showers, laundry and more). RSM provided this service in 2023 through an RFP process. RSM has existed in this location for many years with large scale food distribution, Veteran support services and free material and clothing supply distribution for people experiencing homelessness through their thrift store/donation warehouse.

Services in the City of Mesa will be reimbursed through an IGA using ARPA funds from Maricopa County, Public Health. Services will begin in May 2024 and be available through the end of September 2024.

Additionally, other local organizations provide cooling centers and hydration stations in Mesa. A collaborative communications plan will exist to educate the community about all available heat relief services.

## **Discussion**

The number of heat-related deaths has reached record numbers every year since 2014. A total of 645 heat-associated deaths have been confirmed by Maricopa County Department of Public Health for 2023, which breaks the previous year's total by over 50%. Though all residents and visitors of Maricopa County are affected by extreme heat, some populations are impacted more, such as people over age 50, those who live in mobile home parks and people who are experiencing homelessness.

Of those deaths, 74% occurred outdoors and 45% of those were identified as experiencing homelessness, with an additional 13% having unknown housing status. The 2023 heat season was also the hottest season on record with 31 consecutive days and 54 total days over 110 °F, with several nighttime lows exceeding 90 °F.

According to the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Temperature Outlook Forecasts released January 18, 2024, the 2024 heat season is predicted to be leaning toward above normal temperatures, underscoring the need to anticipate and prepare for extreme summer temperatures to prevent heat-related illnesses and deaths. The County's goal is to increase access to heat relief in locations that are accessible to those most in need of services. The heat relief locations shall meet basic needs by ensuring air-conditioned space, hydration, and food are available to allow people to recover from heat exposure.

In addition to the day respite center, cooling centers will be provided by other agencies (The Salvation Army, Mesa CAN) in Mesa.

Community Services in collaboration with the Police Department have met with and assessed the RSM's location for the day respite center to address safety and security concerns. Last year, similar services at this location were successful and did not have significant impacts on the surrounding area therefore both departments feel comfortable with this location. Additionally, Mesa Fire and Medical and Park Rangers have provided input regarding this location and the value of having this type of service available to the community throughout the summer. Clear communication channels for nearby business and residents will be available to connect with RSM and Community Services with questions/concerns.

## **Alternatives**

Without this agreement, there would not be a day respite center in Mesa. A day respite center provides comprehensive services including a/c, water, rest areas, access to food, showers and access to medical care and navigation services intended to assist people in beginning to take steps to move out of homelessness. Cooling centers are also helpful but limited in providing an air-conditioned space and access to water with no additional services.

The day respite center provides an enhancement to heat related public safety challenges.

## **Fiscal Impact**

From experience, a day respite center must have security measures in place to ensure the facility remains a good neighbor and those receiving services feel safe and welcomed. This IGA does not include funding for security. General funds will be used to provide security and for administrative costs in the estimated amount of \$75,721 for the May–September 2024 program.

## **Coordinated With**

Mesa Homeless Strategy Team including Mesa Police Department, Park Rangers, and Mesa Fire and Medical Department.