UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS

ASU

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On behalf of the ASU Wrigley Institute and the School of Sustainability, we extend a heartfelt thank you to the City of Apache Junction for enthusiastically engaging with students and faculty to confront difficult problems facing the community. Your real-world projects provide students with hands-on opportunities to apply knowledge that can create positive changes to Apache Junction's future livelihood and community wellbeing.

City of Apache Junction

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February 20, 2018

Dear Apache Junction residents and community members,

On behalf of the City Council and the City of Apache Junction we wanted to let you know about our experience as the inaugural partner city for ASU's Project Cities program. We were extremely grateful for the opportunity to work on four projects with over one hundred-forty students, and eight university professors, in six courses. Each of the projects provided Apache Junction citizens with opportunities for involvement in community improvements.

As a smaller community, Apache Junction doesn't always have the resources to undertake every project that needs to be done. With a small investment in a Project Cities program, we can now work toward completing a few backlogged projects that have been identified in our city work programs and plans. The four projects that were undertaken in the Fall semester of 2017 (Positively AJ, Off-leash Dog Park, Sustainability and Solid Waste, and Understanding Homelessness), have been identified over a number of years as important issues in the Apache Junction community. By engaging with ASU on the four projects, the city has been able to advance each project more quickly than we otherwise would have been able to do with city employees alone.

The research and recommendations for each project gave the city objective insights into some of our ongoing challenges as a city and how we can better serve residents and visitors. The city is already using the report's findings and recommendations to take the next logical steps in moving the projects forward. We look forward to working with ASU and the Project Cities program on future projectsl

With gratitude,

Jeff Serdy, Mayor

Bryant Powell, City Manager

ABOUT PROJECT CITIES

Arizona State University's (ASU) Project Cities program is a university-community partnership. For an entire academic year, faculty and students work with a single city to co-create strategies for better environmental, economic, and social balance in the places we live. Students from multiple disciplines research difficult problems chosen by the city, and propose innovative sustainability solutions that will help it achieve a better future. Project Cities is a member of the Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities Network (EPIC-N), a growing network of more than 30 educational institutions partnering with cities throughout the United States and world.

ABOUT SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Project Cities is a program of ASU's Sustainable Cities Network. This network was founded in 2008 to support communities in sharing knowledge and coordinating efforts to understand and solve sustainability problems. It is designed to foster partnerships, identify best practices, provide training and information, and connect ASU's research to the front-line challenges facing local communities. Network members come from Arizona cities, towns, counties, and Native American communities, and cover a broad range of professional disciplines. Together, these members work to create a more sustainable region and state. In 2012, the network was awarded the Pacific Southwest Region's 2012 Green Government Award by the U.S. EPA for its efforts. For more information, visit *sustainablecities.asu.edu.*

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Project Cities

Sustainability Through Local Action
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ABOUT APACHE JUNCTION

The City of Apache Junction is well situated on the eastern edge of Greater Phoenix, the twelfth largest metropolis in the United States, yet it has a small-town, Western feel. This is both intentional, and influenced by geography. Apache Junction sits at the base of the Superstition Mountains and Goldfield Mountains, and is near attractions such as the Lost Dutchman State Park, Goldfield Ghost Town, Superstition Mountain Museum, Canyon Lake, Tortilla Flat, and the historic Apache Trail. Home to 39,000 residents, the city has a population that nearly doubles in the winter, when seasonal residents arrive to enjoy its pleasant weather and unique setting.

It was named Apache Junction because it is located at the intersection of US Route 60 and the historic Apache Trail, which was used by Native Americans and later stagecoaches to traverse the Superstition Mountains, and for the construction of water-reclamation dams along the Salt River. The city also straddles Maricopa County and Pinal County. Incorporated in 1978, Apache Junction has arrived at another crossroads as it matures. While the city wants to retain its small-town character, it must prepare for an increasing population, and has set out to develop greater economic opportunities. In the spring of 2005, Apache Junction debuted the first LEED-certified city hall in Arizona. It is Apache Junction's aspirations and potential for sustainability, and the unique challenges it is facing, that form the basis of its partnership with Arizona State University's Project Cities.

Apache Junction Team

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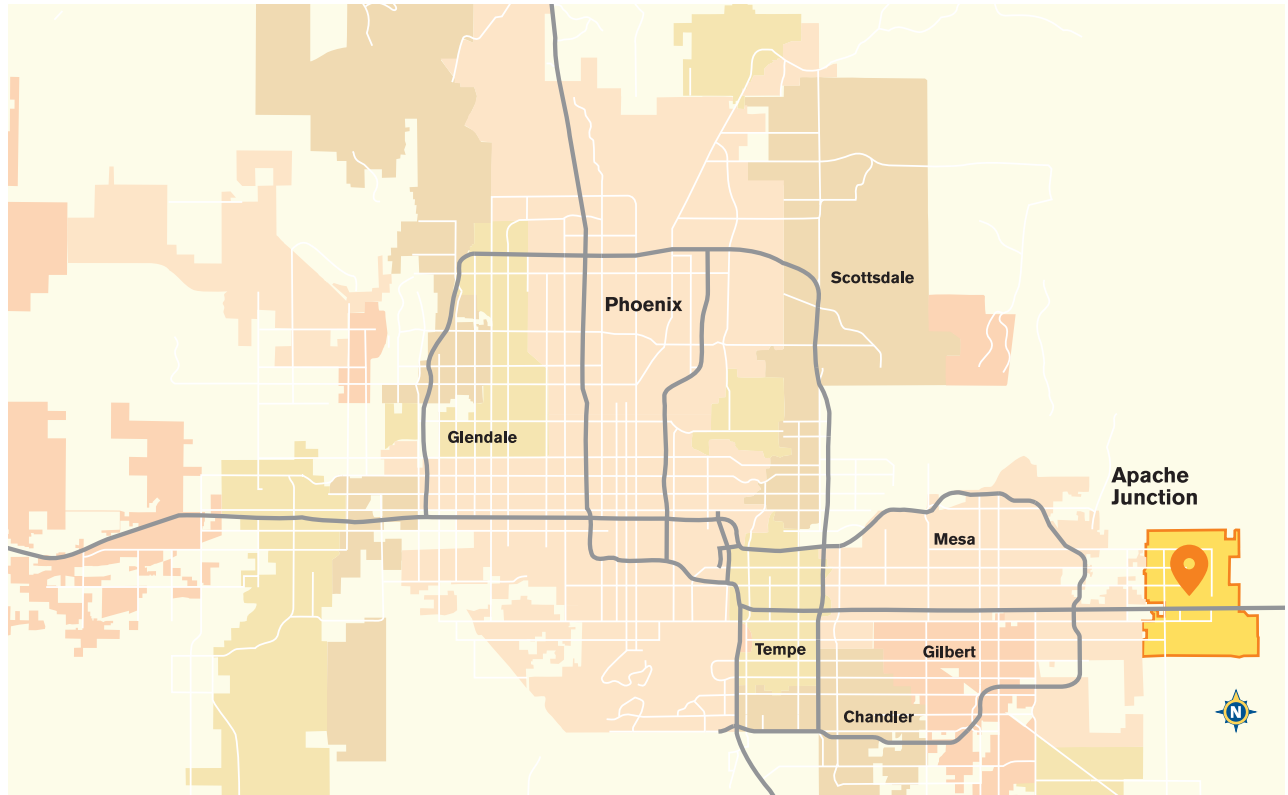Heather Patel, Grants Administrator

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Map of the City of Apache Junction and Greater Phoenix, Arizona

Phoenix

Scottsdale

Glendale

Apache
Junction

Mesa

Tempe

Gilbert

Chandler

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary and the following goals and recommendations pages provide an overview of the Understanding Homelessness report. For specific details, including methods and findings, see the following individual course sections. For select student reports and presentations in their original forms, see the appendix.

In recent years, there has been a perceived increase of homelessness in Apache Junction. The 2017 Point in Time (PIT) count tallied 43 sheltered or unsheltered homeless individuals in the city on a single night in January. Apache Junction's services for such individuals are limited and divided by county lines that bisect the city. Further, when the Genesis Project—a nonprofit that provides free food—moved to the Apache Junction's downtown, some nearby businesses were worried the presence of homeless people would deter customers.

The Apache Junction Empowerment Group was formed in 2015 and the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee in 2016 to work toward addressing and preventing homelessness in Apache Junction. Despite the contributions of these two groups, the city is still grasping to understand how the public perceives homelessness and what services are needed by its homeless population and those at risk of homelessness. In fall 2017, PUP 571 Socioeconomic Planning and PAF 509 Public Affairs Capstone enlisted in Arizona State University's Project Cities program to help Apache Junction comprehend these issues and make decisions about what to do next. The students in PUP 571 looked outward for insight, researching peer communities around the United States with similarities to Apache Junction and interviewing their leadership about successful strategies for addressing homelessness. (See Table 1 and Table 2 for their resulting recommendations.) PAF 509 students focused on Apache Junction, interviewing residents and analyzing data related to their specific topics, then presenting recommendations specific to the city's context (See Table 3 and Table 4).

PUP 571: Students in this course looked to peer communities around the country for best practices for addressing homelessness. To choose the communities, they searched for those with characteristics like climate, population, and unemployment rate that were similar to those of Apache Junction, as well as communities making promising strides, which they

then vetted with Apache Junction staff to determine which seemed most promising. From interviews with leadership in the selected peer communities, their findings indicated that successful strategies make use of federal programs and funding, encourage collaboration and data sharing, involve the community, locate services prudently, and educate law enforcement.

PAF 509: Individual students in this course each produced a capstone report for their master's degrees focused on specific aspects of homelessness in Apache Junction and related topics, such as funding opportunities or health concerns. Each chose customized investigative approaches including surveying residents and analyzing data. Based on their research methods, the students generated their own findings and recommendations. Themes that emerged for recommendations included: 1) providing shelter; 2) prioritizing transportation; 3) encouraging collaboration between service providers, the city, and neighboring municipalities; and 4) increasing public awareness.

The ideas and recommendations presented by these students are starting points for Apache Junction. They are meant to support the city in making improvements through plans informed by research, demographics, and opportunities. The work is not comprehensive or totally cohesive, and any pursuit of the recommendations requires professional review and consideration. That being said, the course reports are meant to stimulate deeper conversations among managers and policy makers as well as staff, residents, and community groups.

Following this executive summary, and the goals and recommendations of each report, are introductory summaries of the final reports generated by each course. These cover the problem targeted, research methods used, findings, resulting recommendations, and areas for further exploration. Each summary is followed by select student deliverables in their entireties, which can be consulted for greater depth and more clarity on how the recommendations were reached.

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS: THE BEST PRACTICES OF SEVEN PEER COMMUNITIES GOAL & RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal

The goal of this course was to support Apache Junction in collecting promising strategies for helping its homeless and mitigating negative impacts on its larger community. Student work was framed to help the city generate implementation strategies and ways to maximize services by researching and presenting successful practices of comparable communities around the United States.

Apache Junction has established a committee and working group to determine services for the city's homeless population, which residents and business owners perceive to be growing. Despite these efforts, the city is still struggling to identify what strategies will reduce homelessness and counter negative impacts, real or perceived, on the community.

HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS IN APACHE JUNCTION

Photos of homeless encampments in Apache Junction taken by city staff in 2016.

Recommendations for Employing a People-Centered Approach & Data

Use a People-Centered and Community-Based Approach	Collect and Employ Data
Tailor services and allocate resources based on the unique, case-by-case needs of homeless individuals and families. There are rarely one-size-fits-all approaches to homelessness.	Share data and information between service providers. Coordinated data entry and sharing are most effective in meeting the needs of homeless individuals and families, as their specific circumstances and histories are used to determine urgency and type of services provided.
To support customized approaches, create and sustain a strong network of volunteer organizations that share data and collaborate.	Use data to dispel many of the myths surrounding homelessness. Concrete evidence demonstrating where the homeless population is from, how much money they make on the streets, and how they became homeless may help alleviate stigma.
Develop a community involvement strategy that best fits the needs of the Apache Junction's homeless population and capitalizes on services already being provided. For example, consider involving citizens in selecting locations of high-volume services if it seems like this would be mutually beneficial and increase community buy-in.	Share data and information between service providers. Coordinated data entry and sharing are most effective in meeting the needs of homeless individuals and families, as their specific circumstances and histories are used to determine the urgency and type of services provided from a broad pool of options.

Table 1. Student recommendations regarding using a people-centered and community-based approach and collecting and employing data to do so.

Recommendations for Making Use of Existing Resources

Take Advantage of Existing Resources	Train Law Enforcement
Make use of available sources of funding and programming. These include various county, state, and federal programs such as Continuum of Care (CoC), the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and Housing First.	Engage police officers in connecting individuals who are at risk of homelessness, and those who already are homeless, with expedited essential support services that best fit their needs.
Reach out to organizations such as the United Way, the Salvation Army, and Goodwill for help providing services and knowledge about how to address homelessness.	Train police officers how to interact with homeless people who have mental illnesses.
Ask the Maricopa Association of Governments to put together a fair of homeless services provided in the surrounding area to facilitate conversation and discuss best practices within the region for combating homelessness.	
Help those in need get access to other federal services such as Nutrition Assistance, Medicaid, Disability Compensation for veterans, or Supplemental Security Income for those with disabilities.	
Work with local agencies, places of worship, and volunteer organizations to coordinate services and establish a shared network of volunteers.	

Table 2. Student recommendations regarding taking advantage of resources already available to Apache Junction, including law enforcement.

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POLICY PRIORITIES FOR ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS IN APACHE JUNCTION GOAL & RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal

The goal of this course was to help Apache Junction understand how its citizens perceive homelessness and what homeless services make sense in Apache Junction. The city wanted to see elements of a cohesive approach to homelessness in the city, including legal and policy remedies.

Apache Junction is not equipped to deal with homelessness. It has no housing options or shelters. Further, some service organizations do not cross the county lines that divide the city. Most of the related services Apache Junction lists on its website are hotlines or county and state services, which means they are not within reach of homeless individuals. While the Genesis Project, a nonprofit that provides free food, has relocated downtown, it is unclear if this move exacerbated the problem or is part of a solution. In response to the array of concerns, the Empowerment Group and the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee were formed to explore services and strategies. However, to move forward, the city needs a better grasp on the problem context and scope, as well as the most applicable strategies for addressing homelessness.

Recommendations for Policy Priorities to Address Homelessness Related to Resources & Policy Creation

Provide Shelter	Prioritize Transportation	Be Strategic About Policy
Create transitional housing options. Consider recruiting nonprofits like United Methodist Outreach Ministries (UMOM) or the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to assist with this endeavor.	Host bicycle donation or repair drives to help provide access to transportation. These drives could be hosted by community members, a local business like Junction Bicycles, or through a mechanics trade school.	Account for the seasonality of visible homelessness in Apache Junction when developing policy.
Encourage landlords to participate in the housing choice voucher program.	The city or the Genesis Project could reach out to private organizations and ask for donations to purchase bikes. Companies like the Target Corporation offer gift card donations to 501(c)3 organizations. Bikes could be loaned to individuals until they reach self-sufficiency.	Recognize that while drug addiction is not the cause of all homelessness, it is an issue that should be taken into consideration when designing policy regarding homelessness.
Provide incentives for seasonal residents to rent out their units to provide temporary affordable housing while they are away.	Work with the Valley Metro bus system to coordinate reduced fare options for homeless individuals.*	
Offer homeless individuals transportation to the nearest shelters in other cities if Apache Junction is unable to offer shelter. (However this may be poorly perceived if this service is coordinated without the permission of the cities.)		
Ensure that new low-income housing developments are either within walking distance of employment opportunities and support services or close to transportation to them.		

Table 3. Student recommendations related to providing shelter, prioritizing transportation, and being strategic about policy.

*While one student recommended this, city staff see it as less feasible since the closest bus stop is 8 miles away and extending a route to the city is not planned in the near future.

Recommendations for Policy Priorities to Address Homelessness Related to Collaboration & Community

Collaborate	Build Public Awareness
Fund a team of social workers or nonprofit counselors who follow through with homeless individuals to ensure they are receiving services and help them progress toward stability.	Use the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee to educate the downtown business community about services currently available for the homeless as well as any policy implementations.
Coordinate efforts at an intermediary level with funders to identify different collaborations in which to participate. Such coordination by local governments can help prepare them to make the case to the community for increasing resources for the homeless.	Appoint a residents' subcommittee on homelessness to the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee to advise about community attitudes regarding the homeless population, as citizen buy-in is important to justifying additional budgetary emphasis on homelessness services.*
Work with administrators of homelessness service providers to establish formal coordination behaviors.	Create a marketing internship position for educating the public about the facts of homelessness in their city.
Allot funding to ensure that city personnel are connecting with the community, attending trainings, and participating in regional meetings.	With any public awareness campaign about homelessness in Apache Junction, aim to humanize homeless or at-risk individuals.
Prioritize employment programs and case management services.	Invite city officials and business owners to participate in the Homeless Challenge, for which the would spend 48 hours on the streets to better understand of what homeless people experience.
Do not criminalize the homeless for things like sleeping in parks. Rather offer opportunities to receive services or see program counselors.	Invite students at local schools to submit videos that portray relatable characteristics about homeless people in Apache Junction.
Reach out to neighboring cities like Mesa to request police assistance in high-crime areas within a certain mileage of their city limits.	Challenge students to come up with other public awareness tactics. This would get them thinking critically about homelessness, learning about resources, and possibly identifying new solutions.
	Recruit nonprofits to the city that are geared toward assisting the homeless. This would to visibly demonstrate that the city is striving for solutions, and provide volunteer opportunities for citizens to get involved and be educated.

Table 4. Student recommendations regarding collaboration and building public awareness.

*While this was the recommendation of one student, in review, city staff thinks a better approach to receive community imput might be developing better opportunities for citizen engagement and feedback with the existing Chronic Homelessness sub committee such as a public town hall.

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FACULTY DEIRDRE PFEIFFER
URBAN & ENVIRONMENTAL
PLANNING

Addressing Homelessness: The Best Practices of Seven Peer Communities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is not an issue that is unique to Apache Junction. Indeed, cities around the United States are looking for ways to address this problem that leaves people without basic necessities and frustrates communities. In the last several years, Apache Junction has created a working group and committee to look for ways to address and prevent homelessness in the city. To support Apache Junction in collecting promising strategies, students in the fall 2017 course PUP 571 Socio-Economic Planning at ASU researched successful practices of seven comparable communities around the United States. This report describes their methods and findings.

First, students researched municipalities with similar qualities to Apache Junction that were making strong efforts to reduce homelessness and worked with Apache Junction officials to select from them the most relevant peer communities. Next, with the guidance of professor Deirdre Pfeiffer, pairs of students interviewed leadership from seven selected peer communities to get insight into contexts and successful strategies.

Findings from this research included that successful peer cities made use of federal grants and coordinated efforts between all organizations involved, government and non-government. The students in PUP 571 then came together to create a comprehensive report for Apache Junction highlighting the most promising practices of the seven peer communities. Recommendations included tailoring services to the needs of each homeless individual or family, collecting data to dispel myths about homelessness, coordinating support services for the homeless, and training law enforcement on how to interact with and assist homeless individuals.

Through their research, students identified common characteristics of measures that help the homeless and mitigate negative impacts of homelessness on the community. The remainder of this Socio-Economic Planning section explains the comprehensive methods students employed to identify peer communities and their successes. It then details the findings and related recommendations. This "Addressing Homelessness: The Best Practices of Seven Peer Communities" section concludes with areas for further exploration and a concise conclusion, followed by the students' synthesis report in its entirety.

PROBLEM

Apache Junction has established a committee and working group to provide services for the city's homeless population, which residents and business owners perceive to be growing. Despite these efforts, the city is still struggling to identify what strategies will reduce homelessness while also countering negative impacts and perceptions on the community.

METHODS

Students enrolled in PUP 571 used two research methods to identify best practices for consideration by Apache Junction. First, they analyzed data and reports to pinpoint Apache Junction's peer communities. Next they interviewed a small number of stakeholders in each peer community to gather more detailed information about successful strategies. The following paragraphs explain the methods employed and how they were used to generate insightful results.

Content analysis: For this method, researchers gathered documents with a certain focus and analyzed the data they found to draw helpful conclusions. In this case, data analysis was performed by collecting city data from the U.S. Census database and climate-related data sources and then normalizing, ranking, and indexing the results to find communities with comparable demographics, socioeconomic traits, and geography to Apache Junction. Characteristics considered included population, seasonal vacant housing units, car dependency, climate, unemployment rate, median income, and recent activity related to homelessness. Next, the students analyzed recent homeless advocacy reports and media related to homelessness to find peer communities that were making innovative and promising efforts to address homelessness, which meant they had potential to reveal best practices that would work in Apache Junction. For example, the success of Housing First in Nevada is well known. The resulting list of cities was presented to Apache Junction officials to select the most relevant peer communities. (See Table 1 for final peer communities and some selection characteristics.) It was important that the communities be similar to Apache Junction because if they weren't, for instance if they were too urban or wealthy, their demographics and resources might be very different and therefore even their most successful efforts might fail in Apache Junction.

It was important that peer communities be similar to Apache Junction because if they weren't, even their most successful efforts might fail in Apache Junction.

	Population	Unemployment Rate	Median Household Income	Climate	Percent of Workers Who Commuted Alone	Total Housing Units	Percent of housing that is mobile homes	Total Vacant Units	% Vacant Units for Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use
Harlingen, TX	65,801	0.08	34,466	Humid mild temperate	89%	25,585	11%	3,692	31%
Kenosha, WI	99,218	0.11	49,160	Humid cold with hot summer	84%	40,660	1%	3,553	11%
Sunrise Manor, NV	191,464	0.09	39,586	Cold desert	75%	70,465	14%	10,099	9%
El Centro, CA	43,570	0.16	33,161	Hot desert	80%	14,255	7%	1,814	18%
Marana, AZ	38,280	0.07	74,438	Hot semi-arid	83%	14,750	3%	929	39%
Rome, GA	44,548	0.12	34,874	Humid mild temperate	82%	16,160	2%	2,372	1%
West Valley, UT	133,660	0.08	52,534	Humid mild temperate	75%	38,147	7%	1,934	21%
Apache Junction	36,586	0.15	35,671	Hot desert	82%	21,766	50%	5,833	68%

Table 1. The final peer communities selected by students and Apache Junction staff and some characteristics used to determine them. (See student report page 1-4 for entire table of characteristics.) Sources included the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau, which was held in 2010.

Interview: Interviewing is a human-centered research method that is used to collect mostly qualitative data. In this case, students developed 14 interview questions with several follow-up prompts to ask the key stakeholders from the peer communities, including government officials, service providers, nonprofit leadership, law enforcement, and Veteran Affairs staff (See Figure 1 for examples). The questions, which were organized into four parts—Characteristics of the Homeless, Helping the Homeless, Community Impacts, and Wrap Up—were designed to extract information about the homeless population in each peer community and strategies being used to reduce homelessness. Before interviewing stakeholders, students tested the questions by interviewing each other to ensure questions were clear, neutral, and would generate the most useful information. Interviews with stakeholders were conducted over the phone or via email.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH PEER COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- How would you describe the characteristics of homeless people in your community?
  > Prompt: Do you have any insights into how people become homeless in your community?
- Are there places where homeless people congregate in your community? If so, can you tell me about these places?
- What kind of help is available to homeless people in your community?
- Does your community team up with other jurisdictions to help the homeless? If so, how does this work?
- Do you have any advice for the City of Apache Junction about developing strategies to help the homeless?
- What would you say are the main effects of homelessness on your community?
- Are there any efforts that help deal with the negative effects of homelessness on your community? If so, can you tell me about them?
- Do you have any advice for the City of Apache Junction about developing strategies to deal with the community effects of homelessness?

Figure 1. A selection of the 14 questions of the four-part (Characteristics of the Homeless, Helping the Homeless, Community Impacts, Wrap Up) interview tool developed by students that they asked leadership of peer communities. (See page 1-14 for entire tool.)

FINDINGS

Through their key stakeholder interviews, students learned about strategies used to help homeless populations and mitigate negative effects in the selected peer communities. These communities include: El Centro, California; Sunrise Manor, Nevada; Marana, Arizona; West Valley, Utah; Harlingen, Texas; Kenosha, Wisconsin; and Rome, Georgia. **Successful strategies in those communities included making use of federal programs and funding, collaborating and sharing data, involving the community, prudently locating services, and educating law enforcement.** (See Table 2.)

Federal Programs and Funding

Students found that **six of the seven communities have used federal funds and programming to provide housing or coordinate services.** For instance, West **Valley, Utah's homeless population has decreased from 2,000 to less than 200 since it launched Housing First in 2007.** Designed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Housing First prioritizes moving homeless people into housing and then providing additional supports and services, rather than the other way around. The overarching idea is that individuals have better access to what they need to become stable if they are in housing. Clients are merely required to pay between 30% of their income or up to $50 a month for housing, whichever amount is greater.

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY PEER COMMUNITIES

Helping the Homeless	Reducing Community Impacts
Making use of federal funding and programming	Being strategic when selecting locations of services, and include citizens in the decision
Enabling data sharing and collaboration between involved organizations	Gathering data on the homeless population that can help dispel myths and negative perceptions
Encouraging community involvement	Educating the community
	Involving law enforcement in providing homeless individuals and families with support services

Table 2. Strategies highlighted by the students that peer communities used to help the homeless and reduce community impacts. (See student report page 1-4 for how they presented these.)

According to the students, Harlingen, Texas's use of the Rapid Rehousing project of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) program is another successful example. The program was created to provide housing relocation and stabilization services for homeless families or individuals. **Since launching Rapid Rehousing in 2013, Harlingen has had a 60% decline in its homeless population.** CoC provides funding to nonprofits, states, and local governments for such services, contingent on data being gathered on clients and services through HUD's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS can also be used for data sharing across organizations.

By collaborating and sharing data, service providers are able to use an integrated network to understand the history of clients, align services, and get greater outcomes.

Collaboration and Data Sharing

Students found that **data sharing and collaboration are important strategies used by peer communities.** Many cities have food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, Veteran Affairs clinics and other critical organizations that support the day-to-day needs of the homeless population and their transition to long-term independence. (In Apache Junction, this includes the Genesis Project, The Apache Junction Veterans Center, United Way of Pinal County, and the city's Community Resource Center.) However, such organizations rarely coordinate their efforts and few have the capacity to share client data that might help customize services for individuals. HMIS's Coordinated Entry System is one way to address this. When someone is referred to this system, through a contact or physical location, they can be matched with agencies or programs in the city that best meet their needs. Such **collaboration and data sharing shifts homeless services from less-efficient program-centered models to client-centered models.** Together, service providers are able to use an integrated network to understand the history of clients, work together to align services, and get greater outcomes.

Community Involvement and Education

In the peer community of Rome, Georgia, the community came together to provide a sympathetic and supportive environment for the homeless population. Local businesses offered access to bathrooms and meals, technical colleges provided a job training program, and citizens fully funded a homeless shelter and a college scholarship for a homeless

high school valedictorian. In the peer community of Kenosha, Wisconsin, the nonprofit Kenosha Human and Development Services recruits new landlords through its programs, landlord forums, and apartment searches for clients to collaborate with Housing First programs. This nonprofit also brought together 28 community organizations through its Homeless Awareness Prevention Partnership.

These efforts highlight how important community involvement is to providing coordinated services. But they also reflect how community involvement can help dispel myths about or negative feelings toward the homeless population. Students found that **six of the seven peer communities used public participation, engagement, and education to mitigate community impacts** (see page 1-4 of the Socio-Economic Planning report for details). A similar approach is to give community members opportunities to speak about their concerns at forums and public meetings, allowing them to take ownership of problems and potential solutions. This is helpful because **public engagement allows citizens to learn about what is being done from homeless service professionals and government officials doing the work in the community.** Further, peer communities use educational opportunities to reduce negative perceptions and impacts. One example is the Kenosha nonprofit Walkin' in My Shoes, which educates the public about homelessness while providing meals to the homeless.

Data gathering bolsters community involvement and education. According to the students, collecting data requires the efforts of volunteers and community organizations and gives citizens insight into the realities of the homeless population, which can change perceptions and strengthen services. For example, the annual Point-in-Time count survey required of any community receiving federal HUD grants relies on volunteer data gathering. Questions can be added to this survey to paint a picture of who the homeless population really is and what it needs. The Human and Development Services department of Kenosha, Washington also used this count to hand out care packages.

Location of Services

Students found that collaborative decision-making can be helpful when locating highly frequented homeless services. For instance, the peer community of West Valley, Utah invited its citizens to help determine the location of a new shelter. This is because such services can generate

concerns and complaints from residents and may discourage customers from visiting nearby businesses. In contrast, **collaborating with community members to locate high-frequency services can reduce perceived negative impacts and increase citizen buy-in while ensuring important services are available to those in need.** According to several interviewed stakeholders and public opinion data, if possible, **highly frequented locations should be placed away from downtowns, but should be easily accessible by public transit, foot, and bike.** However, communication with community members and business owners may allow for mutually beneficial compromises.

Role of Law Enforcement

According to the students' research, **police officers are critical to ensuring individuals and families receive services and support.** They often respond first to situations that lead to, or are a part of, homelessness, including domestic abuse and drug use. Police officers regularly interact with homeless populations, and are often the most accessible sources for finding services ranging from health clinics to Alcoholics Anonymous. Accordingly, they need to be educated about where to direct individuals for services, and how to determine what resources they need. The students found several examples of peer communities working with law enforcement to improve access to homeless services. For example, in the peer community of West Valley, Utah, the Lethality Assessment Program helps first responders and victim advocates expedite essential services for those in need. And in Cameron County, Texas, a bike patrol police unit connects homeless individuals with mental health issues to local service programs that meet their needs. Police officers also need to know how to avoid escalating situations when interacting with homeless members of society. **In Rome, Georgia police officers are trained by the National Alliance on Mental Illness how to interact with homeless individuals with mental illnesses and open lines of communication.**

Police officers regularly interact with homeless populations, and are often the most accessible sources for finding services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on their findings, the students compiled recommendations for Apache Junction. They separated these into four categories, including using a people-centered approach, taking advantage of existing resources, collecting data, and training police officers about how to interact with and help homeless individuals with mental issues.

Use a People-Centered and Community-Based Approach

1. Tailor services and allocate resources based on the unique, case-by-case needs of homeless individuals and families. There are rarely one-size-fits-all approaches to homelessness.
2. To support customized approaches, create and sustain a strong network of volunteer organizations that share data and collaborate.
3. Develop a community involvement strategy that best fits the needs of the Apache Junction's homeless population and capitalizes on services already being provided. For example, consider involving citizens in selecting locations of high-volume services if it seems like this would be mutually beneficial and increase community buy-in.

Take Advantage of Existing Resources

1. Make use of available sources of funding and programming. These include various county, state, and federal programs such as Continuum of Care (CoC), the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and Housing First.
2. Reach out to organizations such as the United Way, the Salvation Army, and Goodwill for help providing services and knowledge about how to address homelessness.
3. Ask the Maricopa Association of Governments to put together a fair of homeless services provided in the surrounding area to facilitate conversation and discuss best practices within the region for combating homelessness.
4. Help those in need get access to other federal services such as Nutrition Assistance, Medicaid, Disability Compensation for veterans, or Supplemental Security Income for those with disabilities.
5. Work with local agencies, places of worship, and volunteer organizations to coordinate services and establish a shared network of volunteers.

Collect and Employ Data

1. Add questions to the Point-in-Time count that service providers and the community want answered. Use data collection to get to the heart of the problem.
2. Use data to dispel many of the myths surrounding homelessness. Concrete evidence demonstrating where the homeless population is from, how much money they make on the streets, and how they became homeless may help to alleviate stigma.
3. Share data and information between service providers. Coordinated data entry and sharing are most effective in meeting the needs of homeless individuals and families, as their specific circumstances and histories are used to determine the urgency and type of services provided from a broad pool of options. This recommendation is directly related to pursuing a people-centered approach to addressing homelessness.

Train Law Enforcement

1. Engage police officers in connecting individuals who are at risk of homelessness and those who already are homeless with expedited essential support services that best fit their needs. Police officers are often present in pivotal moments that lead to or are part of homelessness, including domestic abuse and drug use.
2. Train police officers how to interact with homeless people who have mental illnesses.

AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

It is important to involve the community, but Apache Junction needs to first determine what role, if any, local residents, business owners, and community leaders could and should play in addressing homelessness. Just like there is not a one-size-fits-all solution to homelessness, there is not a single best practice for community involvement.

CONCLUSION

With this report, Apache Junction wanted best practices to consider for reducing homelessness that also take community concerns into consideration. To help the city in that endeavor, the students of the fall 2017 PUP 571 course with Professor Pfeiffer researched the best practices of seven peer communities. Based on their findings, they identified the importance of providing customized support for individuals through collaboration and data sharing, making use of resources like federal programs, and training law enforcement. The students also recommended Apache Junction address community concerns by emphasizing data collection to dispel negative perceptions, encouraging educational opportunities, and inviting citizens to get involved. The recommendations lend themselves to strategies the city can develop to better help their homeless population while minimizing effects on the community. As Apache Junction decides what solutions to pursue, it can look to these best practices of seven peer communities for guidance.

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Policy Priorities for Addressing Homelessness in Apache Junction

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a multifaceted problem, and there are no one-dimensional responses. This is very clear to Apache Junction officials, who are trying to understand the many facets of its homeless population and citizen perceptions of the issue in the city. The students of fall 2017 course PAF 509: Public Affairs Capstone at ASU set out to support Apache Junction by gathering concrete information about homelessness in Arizona, the needs of homeless and at-risk individuals, the perceptions of homelessness in the city, and funding options available for future steps the city may take.

Eight students in the course worked independently, determining their approaches to the topic for their master's degree capstone projects in which they presented their findings and recommendations. All students began their research by reviewing literature to gather data on Apache Junction, homelessness, and efforts to reduce homelessness across the United States. Then the students selected methods of research to gain further insight, including analyzing data and surveying and interviewing Apache Junction stakeholders. Using such methods, students identified the most important homelessness issues and developed solutions for the city to consider including what services and funding options work best, and how to manage public perceptions.

Through this project, Apache Junction wanted to better understand how its citizens perceived homelessness, what homeless services are required in Apache Junction, and how to align support services. Accordingly, each student generated recommendations relating to their findings, including: 1) prioritizing access to housing 2) collaborating with organizations, residents, and other cities, and 3) generating public awareness. Importantly, it is up to Apache Junction to identify which recommendations align best with its priorities, and how to integrate these into a cohesive strategy.

The remainder of this "Policy Priorities for Addressing Homelessness in Apache Junction" section explains the methods used by the students, as well as their findings. It then delves into the most enlightening recommendations. The report wraps up with areas for further exploration and a concise conclusion, followed by select student reports in their entireties.

PROBLEM

Apache Junction is not equipped to deal with homelessness. It has no housing options or shelters. Further, some service organizations do not cross the county lines that divide the city, and most of the related services it lists on its website are only available outside city limits. While the Genesis Project, a nonprofit that provides free food, has relocated downtown, it is unclear to the city or businesses if the move exacerbated the problem or is part of a solution. The city's lack of clarity on public perceptions of homelessness has resulted in a lack of action, positive or negative. In response to the array of concerns, the Empowerment Group and the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee were formed to explore services and strategies. However, to move forward, the city needs a better grasp on the problem context and scope, as well as the best strategies to cope with it.

METHODS

The students used literature review as their initial research method to better understand what causes homelessness and how it has been met by other cities. Under the guidance of Professor Goggin, some students then proceeded to gather more information from stakeholders, while others analyzed data to determine patterns and new insights. The methods they employed were stakeholder interviews, stakeholder surveys, and content analysis. The methods are explained in the following paragraphs.

Literature review: This method requires compiling and reviewing information and data on, or related to, a specific subject. In this case, literature does not mean novels or plays, but rather the broad scope of written work on a specific topic. For this report, the students reviewed academic papers; class lectures; online posts; case studies; and materials produced by city, county, state, and federal governments. Literature review can be a general or structured research method. Some students used a structured analytical method to extract information for their findings and recommendations. This is detailed below.

Content analysis: Researchers use this method to analyze data for patterns, themes, or fresh information. One student applied this method to data on nearby cities including the size of their homeless populations and their related programs. Another employed content analysis to create

a comprehensive set of available financial resources for homelessness and housing services in Arizona, focusing on the lower two tiers of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Need, rest and shelter (Serviss report, page 5-7). (Therefore resources like help with education and employment were not included.) Then she further analyzed the content to determine which of these resources apply to Apache Junction. Sources of these funds included but were not limited to the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services, Arizona Department of Housing's National Housing Trust Fund, and the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program. (See Figure 1 for all the sources the student analyzed.)

FUNDING SOURCES
ANALYZED BY ONE STUDENT

- Arizona Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services
- Arizona Department of Economic Security's Domestic Violence Prevention Program
- Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants
- Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Projects
- Arizona Department of Health Services' Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless
- Individuals
- Arizona Department of Health Services' Projects for Assistance in Transition from
- Homelessness
- Arizona Department of Housing's HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Arizona Department of Housing's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS
- Arizona Department of Housing's National Housing Trust Fund
- City of Apache Junction's Allocation of Non-Entitlement Funds
- HUD's Continuum of Care Program

Figure 1. Sources of funding one student looked at to create a unique data set for Apache Junction (Serviss, 5-13).

Interviews and Surveys: These research methods involve speaking with or sending surveys to participants to explore perspectives on a particular topic. (The difference between the two is that interviews are conducted by the researcher with the participant, while surveys require participants to fill out surveys.) For this report, two students interviewed or surveyed stakeholders in Apache Junction, primarily downtown business owners. They provided open-ended questions rather than multiple choice options, as they were gathering qualitative information such as opinions, rather than data. One student did semi-structured interviews over the phone and via the online tool SurveyMonkey (Evans report, page 3-9). (See Figure 2 for her survey questions). She received less than 10 responses. The other student identified his pool of businesses from the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce's listings and then randomly selected sixteen to contact. Four responded. His interviews were semi-formal, which means he asked specific questions about their businesses, such as size and number of years open, as well as open-ended questions about topics including perceptions of homelessness in the city and any impacts of homelessness on their businesses. One of the four interview participants responded that they were unaware of homelessness in the city, and so was not asked follow-up questions. Afterward, this student examined interview transcripts for common themes and key points (Andrews report, page 6-9).

FINDINGS

Using literature reviews, students were better able to understand the statistics and underlying causes of homelessness in Arizona. According to Arizona's annual point-in-time street and shelter count, there were 9,682 men, women, and children who were experiencing homelessness in 2016. In Apache Junction, the homeless count for 2017 was 43. This number does not reflect those who are in and out of housing or living in temporary situations. An ASU Morrison Institute of Public Policy survey done in 2013 determined that **nearly half of the homeless population in Arizona were women, children, or families and 23% are military veterans.** This report lists **the most reoccurring issues that cause homelessness in the state are: job loss, family violence or conflict, divorce, medical (non-mental) issues, mental health, disability, and substance abuse.**

Survey Title: Public Views on Apache Junction Homelessness

Survey Type: Semi-structured phone interviews

Participants: Stakeholders of Apache Junction area (i.e. business owners close to the soup kitchen and citizens of Apache Junction etc.)

Survey questions:

- Would you be willing to answer some questions, so that I may better understand the public's view on homelessness in Apache Junction? The questions will take you about five minutes to complete. Your answers will be combined with other peoples' responses and I will not share your individual information.
- What do you know about the homeless population in Apache Junction?
- How would you describe homelessness in Apache Junction?
- What do you think are the primary reasons that some people are homelessness in Apache Junction?
  + Economic factors, health related factors, family related factors, substance abuse, inadequate public transportation, housing availability, inadequate support service or other? If other, please explain.
- Have you, someone you know, or your workplace been impacted by homelessness in Apache Junction?

Figure 2. Interview questions asked by one student of Apache Junction stakeholders about homelessness (Evans, 3-23).

Of this population, **91% are interested in finding housing**, but nearly 20% are on a waiting list or unable to qualify. (See Table 1 for more information.) Of all services available to homeless individuals in Arizona, those they use most are shelter, food assistance, health care services, and case management. (See Table 2 for more information.)

PERCENT OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS IN ARIZONA INTERESTED IN HOUSING PLUS THEIR INCOME SOURCES

Interest & Individual Revenue Sources	Percentage
Interested in finding Housing	91%
On housing waiting list	19%
Working	14%
Has income	11%
Pension	1%
Worker Compensation	1%
Veteran Disability	1%
Unemployment	2%
Veteran Pension	1%
Private Disability	0%
Retirement	1%
Food stamps	1%
Other sources of income	22%

Table 1. The percentage of homeless individuals in Arizona who want housing along with basic personal income situations (Mettler report, page 4-15).

PERCENTAGE OF ARIZONA HOMELESS POPULATION THAT MADE USE OF SPECIFIC SERVICES

Social Services	Percent of Homeless That Uses Service
Emergency Food Assistance	59%
Shower Program	35%
Water or Respite Station	28%
Shelter	62%
Employment Program	27%
Soup Kitchen or Dining Hall	51%
Health Care Services	38%
Community Voicemail	11%
Case Management	38%
Rent Assistance	6%
Utility Assistance	5%

Table 2. The percentage of Arizona's homeless population that made use of each type of social service (Mettler, 4-15).

When it comes to resources for people experiencing homelessness in Apache Junction, the city does have a few related programs and organizations, but the students noted that **most of the programs and services listed on the city's website are hotlines or county or statewide services. This means most services are not within reach of homeless individuals in the city.** Further, there are no housing options or shelters for the homeless in Apache Junction.

According to one student, **the city would benefit from employment programs and case management services. However, there can be resistance to providing such services if homelessness is perceived as a result of personal choices rather than of social issues that require community responses.** This can lead to homeless people being marginalized as helpless or criminal, and as subordinate to citizens with homes. Such mentalities about "what to do with the homeless," rather than "what to do about homelessness," can be problematic (Andrews, 6-3). The first framework is reflected in policies such as anti-vagrancy laws (which have been historically ruled unconstitutional) and laws prohibiting sitting or congregating in certain areas. One-dimensional **policies targeted at keeping certain individuals out of areas like downtowns are not viable long-term solutions.** While "quality of life" ordinances are justified as ways of forcing homeless people to seek services, they also cause homeless individuals to distance themselves from repeated police contact and harassment. Further, **criminalizing homelessness can worsen the problems of homeless individuals by giving them petty criminal records that impede them from getting jobs, housing, or certain services.** On the government side, increased policing to enforce such ordinances can cause financial strains on city resources. **One alternative posed by the city of Washington D.C. in response to complaints from its business district was to open a drop-in center where homeless people could go when emergency shelters were closed. This helped prevent loitering.** To help fund the center, district businesses paid a tax based on property size. By providing a service that had been previously unavailable the community was able to engage with homeless people in a positive way.

One-dimensional policies targeted at keeping certain individuals out of areas like downtowns are not viable long-term solutions.

However, such responses are limited in scope when it comes to meeting all the needs of homeless people. In contrast, affordable housing options can prevent homelessness, while transitional housing, at-risk youth housing, single-person housing, family housing, and senior housing can provide paths to stability for homeless individuals. According to the U.S. Department of Economic Security, **"housing is the foundational intervention that moves an individual or family from homelessness to self-sufficiency."** Providing the chronically homeless with a safe and sustainable place to live provides easier access to resources for solving other root issues. No form of shelter or housing dedicated to the homeless is available in Apache Junction. The city is not alone in its resource limitations. Queen Creek, Marana, and Oro Valley are all in similar straits. Mesa, Tempe, and Phoenix, the three larger nearby cities one student compared to Apache Junction, are pursuing more traditional housing, rent assistance, and short-term shelters (Mettler, 4-16). Though most major cities in the United States have transitional housing, 74.3% of this housing has minimum wait times of four months. Along with transitional housing, **low-income and affordable housing also help reduce homelessness.** However, according to the 2008 Pinal County Housing Needs Assessment, the housing mix available in Apache Junction results in an affordable housing shortage. Further, 60% of the city's housing units are vacant seasonally.

That being said, housing is not a standalone solution to homelessness. This problem requires meeting a number of social needs. Solutions should include overcoming further barriers to independence, such as the inability to travel to basic services or work. According to a report one student cited, **lack of reliable transportation hampers the ability of homeless individuals to gain stability.** In its response, Apache Junction should consider ways to provide access to public transportation.

According to one student, **in the 2016 fiscal year, Arizona had more than $136 million to dedicate to homelessness and housing support services. Of this, Apache Junction is utilizing only 0.9 percent** (Serviss, 5-15). Today, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers nearly $2 billion in federal funds across the United States through regional and geographic Continuums of Care (CoC). There are three CoC in Arizona: the Maricopa CoC, which covers Maricopa County; the Tucson-Pima Collaboration to

> *Affordable housing options can prevent homelessness.*

End Homelessness CoC, which covers Pima County; and the Balance of State CoC, which covers the thirteen remaining counties in the state. Pinal County and Apache Junction are in the Balance of State CoC jurisdiction. **The most promising funding opportunity from HUD (see Table 3) is its emergency solutions grants, which are disbursed to local governments with the requirement that they collaborate with their CoC to distribute funds to service providers.** The grants can be used for homeless outreach, shelter operations, rapid rehousing, and homelessness prevention. On the state level, **the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services funding is distributed to homeless service providers and is fairly flexible** (Serviss, 5-15). One thing the student stressed is that **all these funding sources require public comment, either through solicitation over a period of time or public hearings.** By seeking public input, clearly communicating with citizens, and educating them, Apache Junction could find traction for solutions that address the complex social issue.

The interviews that students conducted with a limited number of Apache Junction citizens, primarily downtown business owners, revealed some citizen support for the city making efforts to help its homeless population. According to a student survey of four downtown business owners, respondents did report seeing more begging or panhandling near their businesses. However, **the respondents did not think that the new location of the Genesis Project, a nonprofit that provides free food, was the cause of increased visibility of homelessness downtown or in the city.** One respondent pointed out that the Genesis Project supports other residents in addition to the homeless (Andrews, 6-11). (Of the 100 to 120 meals it serves a day, on average about 70 to 90 of them go to people on fixed incomes or facing other temporary hardships). **Only one respondent knew of resources available to homeless people in Apache Junction other than the Genesis Project.** Further, one respondent spoke of the lack of long-term or short-term shelter for the homeless in the city, and said Apache Junction was hesitant to provide shelter services for fear of attracting more homeless individuals. The respondent also pointed out that even if they are homeless, these individuals see the city as home, and might benefit from services close to where they live.

THE MOST PROMISING FUNDING SOURCES FOR APACHE JUNCTION

U.S. Housing and Urban Development	Arizona	Other
Emergency Solutions Grants: can be used for homeless outreach, shelter operations, rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention.	Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services: program funding is mix of state taxes, federal funds, fines and fees. Distributed to homeless service providers.	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH): only available to nonprofit service providers who work with to people experiencing homelessness together with substance abuse and/or mental illness.
National Housing Trust Fund: can be used for new construction or rehabilitation of rental units to create housing for extremely low-income households.		
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), CBDG State Special Projects, HOME Investment Partnerships Program: focused on creating and preserving affordable housing.		
Housing Opportunities for People with Aids: focus on housing assistance for individuals with HIV/AIDS.		

Table 3. The most promising funding sources for Apache Junction to address homelessness. (See full table of potential funding in the Serviss report, page 5-14.)

None of student's four respondents noted an increase of crime in the city resulting from homelessness. There was, however, a recurring opinion that drug addiction causes criminal behavior and that there is a relationship between addiction and homelessness. The student did find business owners perceived an uptick of homelessness in the city in the winter season. For the other survey conducted by a student, which received less than ten responses, **all respondents believed there was a large homeless population in the city, and that summer heat and public stigma makes life difficult for them.** However, those respondents only identified three causes for homelessness: economic factors, substance abuse, and family related factors. The surveying student pointed out that **if Apache Junction citizens are unaware of the root issues of homelessness in the city, or are resistant to relevant solutions that they think might negatively affect them, it will be hard for solutions to gain traction.** Public service announcements are one way to change attitudes, which may benefit the homeless. These announcements can be persuasive or informative, such as the "Street Sheet," a 2017 flyer that the United Way of Pinal County distributed in Apache Junction with information about resources for those in need in the city. They can also communicate the reality of homeless people in Apache Junction, thus energizing community support, and help at-risk residents connect with support services to avoid becoming homeless.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After examining their research findings, each student generated his or her own recommendations for Apache Junction. The main areas of interest included what needs are most urgent, how businesses perceive homelessness in Apache Junction, and how the city can work collaboratively to find solutions. Since each student approached the topic from a different angle and with different methods, their recommendations overlap but vary. For example, the student who set out to examine solutions to homelessness prioritized collaboration in her recommendations as a way to implement services with less investment and demonstrate to the public that efforts are underway (Mettler, 4-19). Another student who analyzed funding resources stressed community input in her recommendations. This is because community participation

is essential to seeking funding and can provide traction for new initiatives (Serviss, 5-16). A third student, who focused on underlying causes of homelessness and related public perceptions in Apache Junction, stressed housing, transportation availability, and public awareness campaigns (Evans, 3-13).

Accordingly, student recommendations are useful to the city but will require discernment by city leaders to determine which recommendations are most applicable and beneficial. Each recommendation could use more input from residents, and a deeper dive into its details, costs, and benefits. Following are paths for solutions for the city to consider, but it is up to Apache Junction to further define which options conform best to city priorities, constituencies, and resources.

Provide Shelter

1. Create transitional housing options. Consider recruiting small or large nonprofits like United Methodist Outreach Ministries (UMOM) or the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to assist with this endeavor.
2. Ensure that any new low-income housing developments are either within walking distance of employment opportunities and support services or close to transportation to related parts of town.
3. Encourage landlords to participate in the housing choice voucher program.
4. Provide incentives for seasonal residents to rent out their units to provide temporary affordable housing while they are away.
5. Offer homeless individuals transportation to the nearest shelters in other cities if Apache Junction does not have such services. (However this may be poorly perceived in the destination cities if such a service is not coordinated with their permission.)

Prioritize Transportation

1. Host bicycle donation or repair drives to help provide access to transportation. These drives could be hosted by community members, a local business like Junction Bicycles, or through a mechanics trade school or other such organization.
2. The city or the Genesis Project could also reach out to private organizations and ask for donations to purchase bikes. Companies

like the Target Corporation can offer gift card donations to 501(c)3 organizations if they submit a donation request form. Bikes could be loaned to individuals until they reach self-sufficiency. Bike serial numbers could be logged to track loaned bikes.

3. Work with the Valley Metro bus system to coordinate reduced fare options for homeless individuals. Currently this program requires documentation from individuals to prove qualification, which the homeless may not have. For example, the City of Phoenix's Homeless Service Provider Program allows qualified organizations to purchase half-price fares for their clients. Another idea is to have a homeless service organization work with Valley Metro on an alternative verification process.

Collaborate

1. Fund a team of social workers or nonprofit counselors who follow through with homeless individuals to ensure they are receiving services and help them progress toward stability.
2. Coordinate efforts at an intermediary level with funders to identify different collaborations in which to participate. Such coordination by local governments can help prepare them to make the case to the community for increasing resources for the homeless.
3. Work with administrators of homelessness service providers to establish formal coordination behaviors as well.
4. Allot funding to ensuring that city personnel are connecting with the community, attending trainings, and participating in regional meetings. This way Apache Junction can be sure to get all resources available to help its homeless population.
5. Prioritize employment programs and case management services.
6. Do not criminalize the homeless for doing things like sleeping on private property or in parks, as this only exacerbates their situation. Rather offer opportunities to receive services or see program counselors.
7. Reach out to neighboring cities like Mesa to request police assistance in high-crime areas within a certain mileage of their city limits. This could create or help solidify reciprocal relationships between the cities. This would also limit demands placed on the Apache Junction police department and increase its law enforcement capacity.

Build Public Awareness

1. Use the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee to educate the downtown business community about services currently available for the homeless as well as any policy implementations designed to alleviate the problem, given that interviews indicate business owners are unaware of available resources for the homeless.

2. Appoint a residents' subcommittee on homelessness to the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee to advise about community attitudes regarding the homeless population, as citizen buy-in is important to justifying additional budgetary emphasis on homelessness services (Serviss, 5-18).

3. Create a marketing internship position for educating the public about the facts of homelessness in their city.

4. With any public awareness campaign about homelessness in Apache Junction, aim to humanize homeless or at-risk individuals.

5. Invite city officials, and even disgruntled business owners, to participate in the Homeless Challenge, which challenges individuals to spend forty-eight hours on the streets to understand of the daily experiences of homeless people.

6. Offer an incentive to students at local schools to submit videos that portray relatable characteristics about homeless people in Apache Junction.

7. Challenge the students to come up with other public awareness tactics. In this way, students are influenced to think critically about homelessness, learn about the resources that are available, or even provide fresh, unbiased solutions.

8. Recruit nonprofits to the city that are geared toward assisting the homeless to make a visible demonstration that the city is striving for solutions, and provide volunteer opportunities for citizens to get involved and be educated.

Be Strategic About Policy

1. Account for the seasonality of visible homelessness in Apache Junction when developing policy.

2. Recognize that while drug addiction is not the cause of all homelessness, it is an issue that should be taken into consideration when designing policy regarding homelessness (Andrews, 6-14).

AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Apache Junction or future ASU students helping Apache Junction may want to consider using focus groups to gather additional community perception information, and sufficiently engage participants.

Regarding transportation options, a bikeshare program like Phoenix's new Gridbikes might be beneficial for those in Apache Junction who don't have transportation otherwise. However, such a program might have negative impacts on local bike shops, which is something Apache Junction should take into consideration.

CONCLUSION

According to the PIT count in 2017, there were 43 homeless people in Apache Junction. It is likely that there were other residents who were living in temporary situations or at risk of becoming homeless. Apache Junction is looking to address homelessness in the city. For their final projects in PAF 509: Public Affairs Capstone, eight graduate students conducted independent research and, based on his or her findings, generated recommendations. These included prioritizing access to housing; collaborating with organizations, residents, and other cities; and generating public awareness. While these studies were limited by time and resource constraints, they resulted in insightful pathways for Apache Junction to pursue as the city determines what solutions align best with its goals and opportunities. As it does so, Apache Junction will be improving living conditions for those most in need, as well as its broader community.

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Analysis of Best Practices for Helping the Homeless and Mitigating Community Impacts

Prepared for: City of Apache Junction, Arizona

Prepared by: Graduate Students in PUP 571 - Socio-Economic Planning

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Arizona State University, Fall 2017

Introduction

Seven cities across the United States were identified as peer communities for Apache Junction (AJ), Arizona based on an analysis of demographic, geographic, and economic factors. The cities selected include; El Centro, California; Sunrise Manor, Nevada; Marana, Arizona; West Valley, Utah; Harlingen, Texas; Kenosha, Wisconsin; and Rome, Georgia. Data on each community was gathered through a content analysis of documents and reports and a series of key informant interviews. Through our research we've created a compendium of best practices for helping the homeless and mitigating the community impacts of homelessness.

Methods

Peer communities for Apache Junction were identified in two ways. First, data was collected from the U.S. and other existing sources on communities that have similar demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic qualities to Apache Junction. With this data, an index was created to identify communities that best fit Apache Junction across these qualities (see attachment). Second, existing reports were reviewed to identify communities similar to Apache Junction who were already engaging in potentially innovative practices in addressing homelessness. The full compiled list of communities was shared with Apache Junction's Grants Administrator and city contact for the Homelessness Best Practices contact, Heather Patel. Through her guidance, Patel helped eliminated peer communities that were not in urban regions or were not felt to be truly comparable to Apache Junction. This process resulted in a complete list of seven confirmed peer communities and seven "back-up" communities.

From this list, groups of two students chose a peer community and a "backup" peer community to review. Students would first focus on researching their peer community. If, for some reason, the chosen peer community did not yield adequate or useful insights on issues or approaches to homelessness, students could shift their focus to the chosen "back-up" community.

In order to glean insight on issues and approaches to homelessness within peer communities, students developed a list of 14 interview questions covering characteristics of the homeless population, approaches to helping the homeless population and community impacts of homelessness with which to approach peer community members. Interview questions were workshopped with peers to ensure that the final interview tool was clear, neutral and would elicit information most useful to the project (see attachment). With the interview tool, students then

approached members of the peer communities who could best provide information about their homeless population and approaches to homelessness. Examples of peer community members contacted include city and government officials, service providers, non-profits, law enforcement, the Veterans Affairs and more. Students conducted interviews with peer community members via phone and email and used the results of those interviews to draft individual reports covering best practices to helping the homeless and mitigating community impact for each of their peer communities. The individual reports have been synthesized into the following report outlining best practices for all peer communities to be of best service to Apache Junction and its efforts to understand and respond to homelessness in its community.

Table 1: Peer Communities

Community Name	Population	Unemployment (%)	Median Household Income ($)	Strategies Used to Help the Homeless	Strategies Used to Mitigate Community Impacts
Apache Junction, AZ	36,586	15	35,671	N/A	N/A
El Centro, CA	43,570	16	33,161	· Federal Programs and Funding · Collaboration and Data Sharing	· Public Participation, Engagement and Education
Sunrise Manor, NV	191,464	9	39,586	· Federal Programs and Funding · Community Involvement	· Public Participation, Engagement and Education
Marana, AZ	38,280	7	74,438	· Federal Programs and Funding · Community Involvement	· Location of Services
West Valley, UT	133,660	8	52,534	· Federal Programs and Funding · Collaboration and Data Sharing	· Location of Services · Public Participation, Engagement and Education
Harlingen, TX	65,801	8	34,466	· Federal Programs and Funding · Collaboration and Data Sharing	· Public Participation, Engagement and Education
Kenosha, WI	99,218	11	49,160	· Federal Programs and Funding · Collaboration and Data Sharing · Community Involvement	· Location of Services · Public Participation, Engagement and Education
Rome, GA	44,548	12	34,874	· Community Involvement	· Public Participation, Engagement and Education · Role of the Police

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Strategies for Helping the Homeless

Federal Programs and Funding

A variety of federal, state, and county initiatives are in place across the United States to provide rehabilitative services that meet the needs of the homeless population. The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program created by HUD provides funding to nonprofits, states, and local governments to rehouse the homeless and promote self-sufficiency after rehousing. Funding is

contingent upon use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which allows for data collection on the clients and the provision of housing and services to the homeless population. The Housing First approach, designed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, rapidly rehouses the homeless in permanent housing with minimal required preconditions or barriers. The approach is based on the idea that housing stability promotes stability overall.

Harlingen, Texas has been using the CoC program and the HMIS system to use the Rapid Rehousing program and provide education for both the homeless population and other local residents since 2013. Since then there has been a 60% decline in homelessness in their area.

In West Valley, Utah a service called Housing First that subsidized housing costs was offered to those in need. This approach requires clients to pay either 30% of their income or up to $50 a month, whichever is greater. This service focuses on the chronically homeless. This approach has led to a steep decrease in homelessness in West Valley, from 2,000 in 2007 to less than 200 in 2017.

Collaboration and Data Sharing

Communities typically have a variety of nonprofit and governmental service organizations supporting their homeless population, including Veterans Affairs, women's shelters, food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters. The services provided by each organization are critical in supporting the homeless population and promoting long-term independence; however, organizations often lack data sharing capabilities, as well as history and background on individuals. The Coordinated Entry System established through HUD's HMIS collects standardized data on all individuals entering homeless services to streamline the entry process and determine the needs of individuals based on what services they have received in the past and what services are available to them at present. This system promotes movement from a "program-centered model" to a "client-centered model" in which the myriad service providers in a community create cohesive strategies within an integrated network of service providers to achieve a collective impact.

In Sunrise Manor, Nevada, the *Project Homeless Connects* brings together resources from 150 providers. Since its inception in 1992, *Project Homeless Connects* has assisted over 15,000 homeless individuals through the help of over 600 volunteers and funding through donations and business sponsorships.

Community Involvement

Each of the selected peer communities approached community involvement differently, largely depending on the types of services offered to the homeless population. Regardless of service type, the daily and large-scale operations of services are dependent on a strong volunteer base. Shelters, soup kitchens, and other support services draw on public support, be that monetary or physical time, to remain open. The annual Point-in-Time count survey requires volunteers in order to swiftly and accurately gather data on the homeless population each year. Developing a strong relationship with prominent organizations in the community, such as churches or businesses, to establish a network of volunteers and support is critical to the success of services. Volunteering creates a comfortable space for interactions and conversations, which contribute to the community's understanding of the nature of homelessness.

In Rome, Georgia the community has banded together to provide a sympathetic environment for homeless. The local businesses provide food and bathroom access for the homeless, and the local community and technical colleges have a program to provide job training for those in need. There is also *The Shelter*, which runs solely on community donations. In addition, for a homeless high school valedictorian, the community created a scholarship to allow this student to go to college.

Strategies for Mitigating Community Impacts

Location of Services

Warnings issued by several interviewees coupled with public opinion data emphasized the importance of placing homeless services, particularly those frequented regularly like soup kitchens and shelters, away from downtowns. Congregations of homeless people tend to result in increased safety concerns and increased refuse complaints. Both can also deter customers from frequenting businesses nearby. When deciding on locations for shelters and services, accessibility by public transit, foot, and bike must be considered. Collaboration and communication with community members and business owners may allow for a compromise to be reached in regard to service locations.

The community of West Valley, Utah involved its citizens in the process of determining where a new homeless shelter would be located to ensure that those in need were adequately served while reducing perceived community impact.

Community Collaboration, Public Participation, Engagement, and Education

Deeply rooted stereotypes and the stigma surrounding homelessness both act as barriers between the homeless population and the rest of the community. These barriers can be broken down by education. Data, if collected properly, can be used to paint a picture of who the homeless population really is and to dispel myths about homelessness. The perceived impacts on the community are likely to change as citizens' awareness is broadened. Giving the community a voice through forums for decision making and public meetings allows the community to begin to take ownership of the problem and potential solutions. Engagement with homeless service professionals through open CoC meetings, or other similar gatherings, offer an opportunity to demonstrate what is already being done to mitigate the community impacts of homelessness.

Offering school programs is also a way to help the homeless youth population. In Pima County there are after school programs such as Arizona Youth Partnership that offers Family Friendly and Community Education Support along with snacks and field trips.

In Kenosha, WI the Kenosha Human and Development Services performed the Point in Time count and also hands out care packages. This department also recruit new landlords to help the community and has developed the Homeless Awareness Prevention Partnership, which brings together 28 organizations. In addition a nonprofit, Walkin' in My Shoes, educates the public about homelessness and provides meals to the homeless.

Role of the Police

The police play a critical role in ensuring homeless individuals receive the services and support they need. Police are often among the few who regularly interact with the homeless population, whether that is in response to community complaints, breaking up encampments, or ensuring the safety of those who are intoxicated and/or mentally ill. In Cameron County, Texas, a Bike Patrol police unit services homeless individuals with mental health issues by connecting them to local programs providing services specific to the needs of the mentally ill. In Rome, Georgia the local police receive training from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on how to interact with the homeless, who are often afflicted by mental illness. This approach can open up a line of communication between police and the homeless population to ensure those most vulnerable receive the help they need. Beyond just assisting those with mental illness, the police, through regular interactions with the homeless community, are often the most

accessible source of information on where to find support services, from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) to health clinics.

The police are often involved in situations that lead to or are a part of homelessness. This includes domestic violence, drugs and abuse. In West Valley, Utah they have a program called the Lethality Assessment Program, which helps first responders and victim advocates to expedite essential services to those in need. This is done through education of the first responders to enable them to direct the population to services that suit specific needs.

Recommendations for Apache Junction, Arizona

The following are suggested strategies that Apache Junction, Arizona could use to better help their homeless population and deal with the community effects of homelessness.

Use a People Centered and Community Approach

- Focus on creating a people centered approach to resource allocation. There is likely no one size fits all solution for your homeless population, so it is recommended that a case by case approach is used so services can be tailored to the unique needs of individuals and families. Creating and sustaining a positive network of support is an important step to helping those affected by homelessness.

- Develop a community involvement strategy that best fits the needs of the AJ homeless population and capitalizes on the current services provided. Determine what role, if any, local residents, business owners, and community leaders could and should play in combating homelessness.

Take Advantage of Existing Resources

- Use available resources. There are various federal, state, and county programs that provide funding and resources to communities affected by homelessness. These resources include the Continuum of Care (CoC) program, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and Housing First. Helping those in need use other federal services, such as food stamps, Medicaid and Disability, would also be useful in fulfilling the needs of the homeless.

- Reach out to organizations such as the United Way, the Salvation Army, and Goodwill, as they provide services for the homeless and have a wealth of knowledge about how to

address homelessness. Work with local agencies and places of worship to coordinate the services that are provided for the homeless.

Collect Data

- Collect as much data as possible. Use the Point-in-Time count to your advantage by adding questions that service providers and the community want answered. Data is an excellent tool for dispelling many of the myths surrounding homelessness. Concrete evidence demonstrating where the homeless population is from, how much money they make on the streets, and how they became homeless may help to alleviate stigma. Use this as an opportunity to get to the heart of the problem.

- Share data and information between service providers in your community. Coordinated entry and data sharing are thought to be the most effective means of meeting the needs of the homeless population and determining what services will meet those needs. The specific circumstances and history of each individual entering the system should guide recommendations for that individual moving forward.

- Ask the Maricopa Association of Governments to put together a fair of homeless services provided in the surrounding area to facilitate conversation and discuss best practices within the region for combating homelessness.

Train the Police

- Engage the police in ensuring homeless individuals receive the services and support they need, particularly access to mental health services.

- Consider giving special training to police officers on how to interact with homeless people who are afflicted with mental illness.

Conclusion

We investigated how seven cities across the United States approach homelessness. We discovered that addressing homelessness is a complex task. Communities must first address the immediate needs of the homeless, including housing, shelter and food. Only after these needs are met can communities invest time and energy into retraining, providing affordable housing and employment. It is necessary to work as a community to be effective and to benefit from all of the federal, state, county and nonprofit services that exist. It is also important for communities to

quantify the needs of the homeless through Point in Time and other studies to regularly assess their issues to budget resources most effectively.

Understanding Homelessness Best Practices Research Project

Participant Recruitment Script

Subject line for emails: seeking information about homelessness in your community

Hi! I am a graduate student at Arizona State University. I am currently working on a project for one of my classes to understand how to best help the homeless and deal with the effects of homelessness. Our client for this project is the City of Apache Junction, a community near Phoenix, Arizona that has lots of similarities with your community.

I am looking to speak with individuals who have knowledge about how your community approaches homelessness. I would like to include your perspective in this research, given your [DESCRIBE ROLE OR EXPERTISE]. The interview can be conducted over the phone or by email and should take about 30 minutes to complete.

Your perspective is invaluable in helping our client, the City of Apache Junction, figure out how to approach homelessness in their community. Please let me know if you are interested in participating in the interview. Also, please let me know if you know of others who may be interested in participating in this research.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this opportunity. I look forward to hearing from you.

Understanding Homelessness Best Practices Research Project

Participant Consent Script

Thank you for taking time to speak with me. Before we begin the interview, I would like to go over the purpose of the research, what we're going to be talking about, and how the information will be used.

I am a graduate student at Arizona State University. I am currently working on a project for one of my classes to help a client, the City of Apache Junction, Arizona, develop strategies to help the homeless and deal with the effects of homelessness. We want to learn how your community approaches homelessness, because it shares similar characteristics with Apache Junction. Learning from your community will help the City of Apache Junction understand how to best approach homelessness in their community.

The interview should last about 30 minutes. The questions that I will ask you address how your community approaches homelessness. If you feel that you don't know an answer to a question or would prefer not to answer it, feel free to ask me to skip the question. Everything that we discuss today will be confidential. I will not use your name in any way. We will be compiling information from these interviews into a report for the City of Apache Junction.

IF DIGITIAL RECORDING: [I would like to record the interview. If you would like for me to turn off the recorder, please let me know. The audio recording will be deleted at the conclusion of this research.]

Do you have any questions about who I am, what the research is about, or the interview? Are you ready to begin the interview?

[Extra information about the project if requested: Project Cities is a university-community partnership where ASU students in designated courses work directly within a local city on sustainability-related projects. Apache Junction is the inaugural city partner of Project Cities, teaming up with the students during the 2017-18 school year. The research challenge that was chosen for the students in our class was to conduct research and make assessments for an effort to understand homelessness in Apache Junction. We will then propose solutions that enable the city to achieve better economic, environmental and social balance. The reports, proposals and presentations we as students produce will enable the city to make more informed decisions in the future.]

Understanding Homelessness Best Practices Research Project

Interview Instrument

Part 1: Characteristics of the Homeless

First, I'd like to learn more about homelessness in your community.

1. How many people would you estimate are experiencing homelessness in your community?
2. How would you describe the characteristics of homeless people in your community? PROBE: Do you have any insights into how people become homeless in your community?
3. Are there places where homeless people congregate in your community? If so, can you tell me about these places?

Part 2: Helping the Homeless

Now, I'd like to learn about activities aimed at helping the homeless in your community.

4. What kind of help is available to homeless people in your community? PROBE about programs, services, and resources, including homelessness shelters, soup kitchens, and activities related to finding employment and permanent housing; organizations/actors providing help; funding sources.
5. Does your community team up with other jurisdictions to help the homeless? If so, how does this work?
6. What would you say are the impacts of these activities? PROBE about the successes and ongoing challenges of specific programs, services, resources, and partnerships mentioned; whether there are success stories of people breaking out of homelessness and what happened.
7. Do you have any advice for the City of Apache Junction about developing strategies to help the homeless?

Part 3: Community Impacts

Let's transition and talk about how homelessness affects your community.

8. What would you say are the main effects of homelessness on your community? PROBE about impacts on crime and businesses and in the places where the homeless congregate; the public perception of homelessness.

9. Are there any efforts that help deal with the negative effects of homelessness on your community? If so, can you tell me about them?
10. What would you say are the impacts of these activities? PROBE about the successes and ongoing challenges of specific programs, services, and resources mentioned; whether there are success stories of the community coming together to deal with the effects of homelessness.
11. Do you have any advice for the City of Apache Junction about developing strategies to deal with the community effects of homelessness?

Part 4: Wrap Up

We're just about done with the interview. I have a few more questions before we finish.

12. Is there anything that we haven't talked about related to homelessness in your community that would be important for me to know?
13. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview with me if I have additional questions later on?
14. Is there anyone else that you feel I should talk to that may have knowledge on homelessness in your community? If so, can you provide me their contact information?

Thanks so much for your time. The insight that you provided today will be invaluable in helping our client devise strategies related to homelessness.

View the whole presentation at https://vimeo.com/247880248

Fall 2017 Partnership with Apache Junction

ASU Project Cities

Approaches to Helping the Homeless and Mitigating Community Impact

Best Practices – PUP 571: SocioEconomic Planning
Students of Deirdre Pfeiffer, PhD

Presenters:

Maggie Dellow & Catyana Falsetti

PUP 571 Classmates:

Heidi Hanlon, Kelly Hyde, Caleb Carpenter, Beth Dukes, Anissa Keane, John Field, Wenqi Ding, Brittany Kimura, Monika Mlynarska, Brian Rojas, Kellie Rorex, Elizabeth Van Horn

Presentation Outline

- Project Overview
- Goals/Objectives
- Findings
- Conclusions & Recommendations

Project Overview: Best practices for approaching homeless among Apache Junction peer communities

Source: Leroy Skalstad

- **7 U.S. cities chosen for peer community review**
- **Data gathered through content analysis and key informant interviews**
- **Compendium of best practices**

Selection:
- **Data collected on communities with similar demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic qualities**
- **Existing reports reviewed to identify similar communities who were already addressing homelessness**
- **Final selection facilitated by Apache Junction**

Selection:

- **7 U.S. cities identified as likely peer communities to Apache Junction**
  - El Centro, California/Sunrise Manor, Nevada (adjacent)
  - Marana, Arizona
  - West Valley, Utah
  - Harlingen, Texas
  - Kenosha, Wisconsin
  - Rome, Georgia
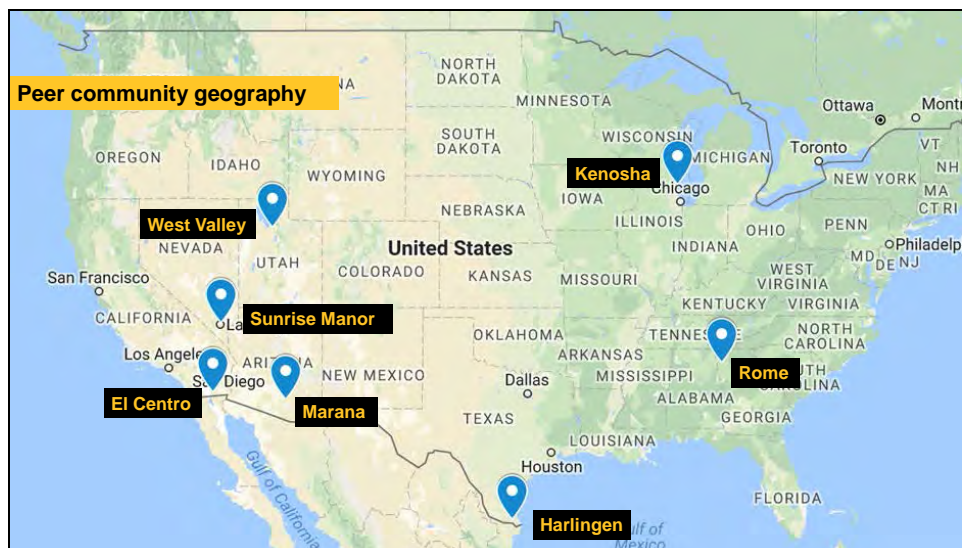
Research Overview:

- **Students created a list of 14 interview questions**
- **Approached peer community members perceived as having insight on issues of homelessness within their community**
  - city and government officials
  - service providers
  - non-profits
  - law enforcement

Research Overview:

- **Interviews conducted with peer community members via email and phone**
- **Results of research used to draft individual best practices reports for each community**
- **All reports used to compile peer community best practices report for Apache Junction**

Goals/Objectives:
To understand how to best respond to issues of homelessness through best practices of peer communities

Source: Leroy Skalstad

Findings:
- **Approaches to helping the homeless**
- **Strategies used to mitigate community impact**

Source: William S. Davies Shelter

Federal Funding and Programs:

- **Continuum of Care (CoC) developed by HUD – funding to nonprofits for rehousing**
  - o **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**
- **Housing First model developed by United State Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)**

Federal Funding and Programs is a best practice of Harlingen, Texas

Outcomes: 60% decrease in homelessness since 2013

Collaboration and Data Sharing:

- **Coordinated Entry uses HMIS data to keep records of services provided to individuals**
  - o **Shared among all service providers / homeless organizations in a region**
  - o **Streamlines the entry process and determines the needs of individuals**
  - o **Client-centered**

Outcomes: Since 1992, *Project Homeless Connects* has assisted over 15,000 homeless individuals using the help of over 600 volunteers.

Collaboration and Data Sharing is a best practice of adjacent cities Sunrise Manor, NV and El Centro, CA

Source: Stan Shebs and Aaroads.com

Community Involvement:
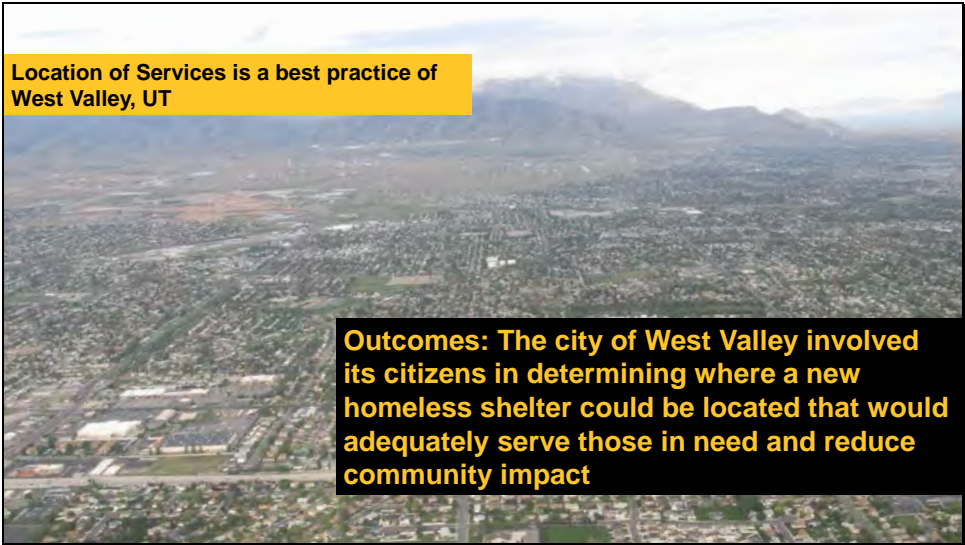
- **Public meetings**
- **Promote Volunteering**
- **Creating a space for conversation and understanding**

Outcomes: Concerted effort to rally around those in need; provision of shelter, food and scholarship

Community Involvement is a best practice of Rome, GA
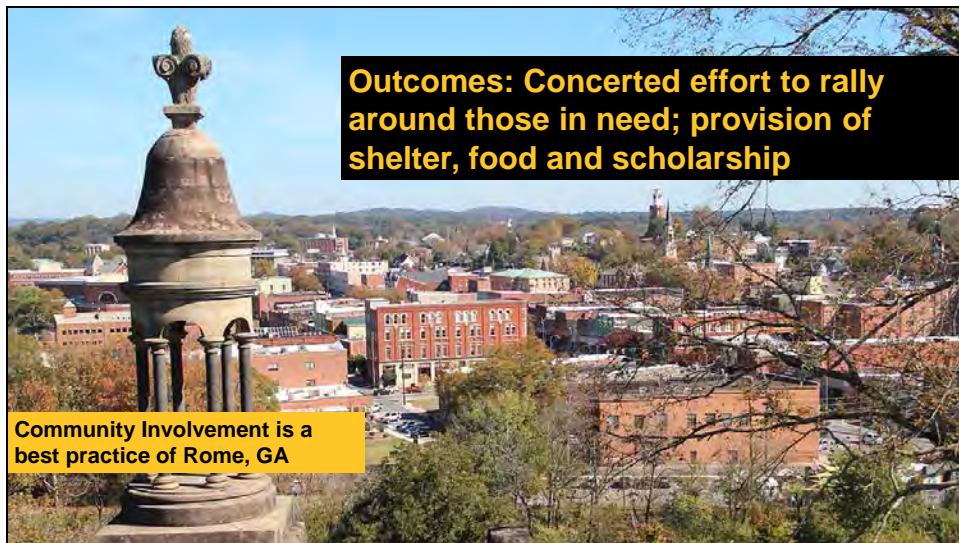
Service Locations:

- **Striking a balance between accessible services and services that do not disrupt the everyday lives of local residents**
  - o **Local resident concerns: safety, refuse accessibility to businesses**
  - o **Homeless concerns: proximity to public transit, foot, and bike**

Location of Services is a best practice of West Valley, UT

Outcomes: The city of West Valley involved its citizens in determining where a new homeless shelter could be located that would adequately serve those in need and reduce community impact

Public Engagement and Education:

- **Eradicate stereotypes and dispel myths through education**
- **Encourage opportunities to engage with the homeless community and aid organizations**

Public Engagement and Education is a best practice of Kenosha, WI

Outcomes: Human and Development Services performs the Point in Time count, hands out care packages, recruits new landlords and brought together 28 organizations to partner in helping spread awareness about homelessness

Source: Marinas.com
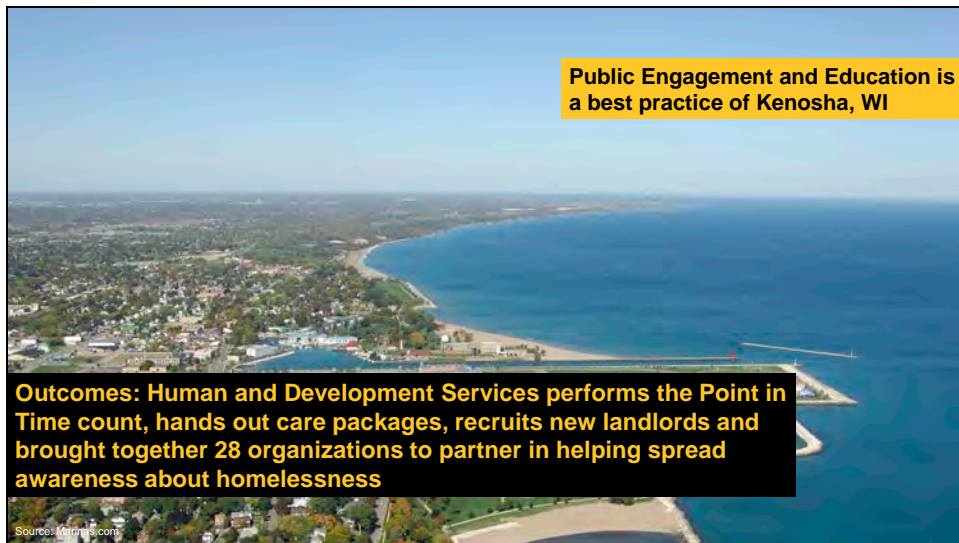
Mitigating community impacts

Source: C. Falsetti

Role of Law Enforcement:

- **Build trust**
- **Offer help and support**
- **Relevant trainings**

Outcomes: police receive training from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on how to interact with the homeless, who are often afflicted by mental illness; police become a source of help

Role of Law Enforcement is a best practice of Rome, GA

Source: C. Culber
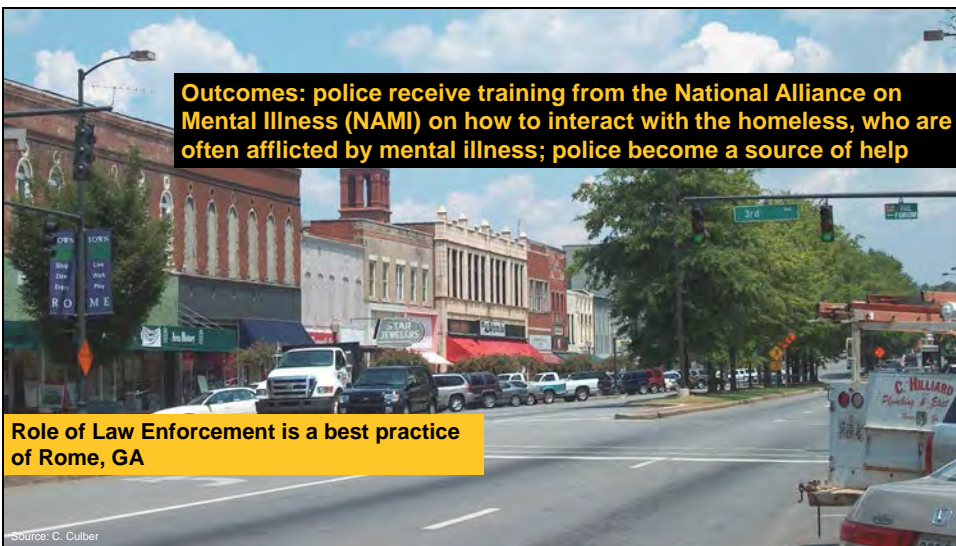
Role of Law Enforcement is a best practice of Harlingen, TX (Cameron County)

Outcomes: a Bike Patrol police unit services homeless individuals with mental health issues by connecting them to local programs providing services specific to the needs of the mentally ill

Source: XishayanPorMexico, Youtube.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- **People-centered and community approach**
- **Collect all the data you can**
- **Share data among services in your community and region**
- **Use resources already available**
- **Involve the community in the process**

Source: Leroy Skalstad

Thank you!

Deirdre Pfeiffer PhD – Deirdre.Pfeiffer@asu.edu

Understanding Homelessness in Apache Junction

Justine Evans

PAF509: Public Affairs Capstone

Dr. Malcolm Goggin

November 22nd, 2017

Abstract

This paper explores homelessness, and the public's perception of the homelessness issue, in Apache Junction, Arizona by focusing on the following three facets: public transportation availability, housing mix and public service marketing techniques. This paper reviewed the current literature available on homelessness in Arizona and Pinal County and includes the results of a mixed method study. The study examined public feedback regarding homelessness in the city and analyzed case studies that focus on solutions that other towns have implemented to reduce homelessness. In turn, the research reveals that transportation availability must be improved in Apache Junction through cost effective methods that do not impact local business owners. Furthermore, the results of the study highlight that the housing mix in Apache Junction could be improved by ensuring seasonal occupancy is utilized, that rental property mix increases, and that housing developments ensure tenants have transportation options or walkability to jobs and resources. Lastly, city officials can utilize unpaid internship positions and provide incentives to locals for idea creation related to public service marketing techniques that educate the public about the facts of homelessness, align citizens' perceptions on the issue and recognize the city's efforts to address it.

Understanding Homelessness in Apache Junction

Introduction

It is a widely accepted notion that in the United States, the percentage of the population that is homeless is higher than in many other countries. Public officials may argue that the issue is inevitable, and that homelessness is going to exist regardless of the policies and programs they implement. In Arizona, some are passive about their stance on homelessness; "they regret the suffering but ultimately view it as an inevitable consequence of the free market at work" (Hart and Hedberg, 2012, p. 3). The goal of any public administrator is to ensure that people have an equal chance to live a safe and healthy life with the opportunity to achieve one's full potential. Thus, any level of homelessness is a sign of a government's failure to reach all people with their policies and programs. Homelessness cannot be considered acceptable if a government aims to care for all its citizens equally.

Many officials in Apache Junction, Arizona, recognize the importance of addressing the homelessness issue. In *The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context*, Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett (2008) advocate that "leaders from Arizona met in Phoenix to discuss moving away from a system of managing homelessness to one that focuses on permanent solutions" (p. 3). Although Arizona officials recognize the importance of minimizing homelessness, there is still more to learn about how to eradicate the issue. This paper analyzes empirical research to offer more clarity regarding public perceptions on homelessness in Apache Junction. Included in this document are recommendations for an affordable and widely accessible education based marketing tactic that can help align perspectives about homelessness held by different stakeholders in Apache Junction. Furthermore, this paper presents recommendations for increasing the affordable transportation options and improving low income housing availability in the city. These recommendations are based on empirical data collected from people in Apache Junction and from an array of case studies. These results may help provide the resources necessary for influencing government officials to work towards implementing modern tactics for minimizing the homeless population. A cohesive strategy for addressing homelessness starts with a unified understanding of the problem.

Literature Review

Research Method

The research in this review includes peer-reviewed academic journals found in Arizona State University's online library database. The search results in the database were refined by using the following restrictions: journal articles were the only allowed content type and the articles must have been published within the last ten years. This review also references public documents, found on government websites, and news articles, found through basic internet searches, related to homelessness in Arizona and specifically in Pinal County.

Homelessness in Arizona

In 2013, Hedberg and Hart released a report called the Survey of Arizona's Homeless Population. The report was organized by the Arizona Commission on Homelessness and Housing. It contains surveys that were completed by homeless people throughout the state of Arizona and provides empirical data about the characteristics and needs of these homeless people. Figure 1 provides clarification for understanding the different states of homelessness as described by Hart and Hedberg (2013). Someone can be at-risk of being homeless, legally homeless or literally homeless. The authors go on to share that the average homeless person in Arizona matches the following characteristics:

On average, Arizonan experiencing homelessness are single, childless white males in mid-40s, he has been homeless for several months and has experienced two bouts of homelessness in the past three years. He probably spent last night in an emergency shelter; he most likely became homeless after losing a job or following a conflict or violence in the family. These findings match findings from DES's annual homelessness report. (Hart and Hedberg, 2013, p. 2).

Hart and Hedberg's (2013) report helps to explain the many different root causes of homelessness in Apache Junction. The authors illuminate the unfortunate truth that Apache Junction officials have also recognized in their town: many people are uncomfortable around the homeless and often make judgments about those individuals that may or may not be true. Hart and Hedbert (2013) insist that "most Arizonans glimpse [homeless] in ones or twos. Many who notice them react with fear, or shame or even disgust" (p. 3). There are plenty more homeless people that are not in the public view. When they are seen by the public, they are often misjudged. Conducting a survey in Apache Junction to understand the real, not perceived, impact

of homelessness in the city will be important for helping to illuminate the public misconceptions that might exist. Citizens that are unwelcoming and unempathetic are not helping homeless individuals overcome their challenges. These stigmas may prove to be a reason some homeless people do not have the confidence to pursue a job search or the reason some employers may not feel comfortable offering employment opportunities to homeless people. In *The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context*, Artibise, Hart, Welch, Whitsett (2008) share that "aside from the material aspects of survival…lack of motivation, often because of a loss of hope and trust in community and government institutions and other people, further complicate their situations." (p. 10). It is not enough to merely understand the perceptions held by citizens of Apache Junction. The next step will be establishing creative outlets for rebranding the public's view on the homeless people in their town.

The public's discomfort around homeless people is a social implication of the homelessness issue but there are also financial implications to this problem. Artibise, Hart, Welch, Whitsett (2008) detailed the average cost of basic services typically provided to a homeless person in Arizona. Figure 2 lists the breakdown of this calculation. On average, each person accrues 10,340 dollars' worth of basic services. These costs include case management, food assistance and medical expenses. Many organizations and agencies have been established to minimize these costs on the city and to attempt to lift people out of homelessness. Figure 3 shows a few examples of the public services available for homeless or at-risk individuals.

Artibise, Hart, Welch, Whitsett (2008) outlined a pathway to services available in Maricopa County that may help individuals overcome homelessness. Figure 4 contains a graphic that visually displays this pathway. The first step is to have knowledge about the resources available. Homeless people need food and nutrition to survive. The information obtained in the first step would hopefully lead someone to retrieving food assistance. Next, homeless individuals need shelter. After they have food and shelter they must consider their overall welfare. They may need medical services for their physical or mental health. Ideally, these individuals would find support for these services. However, often homeless individuals must continue to endure these physical or medical states. Either way, their next step would be reducing barriers to becoming self-sufficient. These barriers may include obtaining public identification and finding a method of transportation. Next, the individual needs to get motivated, find employment and maintain their income. Finally, the individual would attempt to find affordable housing. Each of these

steps can be overseen by a case manager. Often, homeless individuals lack the support or resources to begin moving through this pathway.

Transportation Options for Homeless

The Department of Economic Security releases an annual report of homelessness in Arizona. In 2015, their report advocated that the largest group of the homeless population includes people that have an inability to overcome barriers to becoming independent (Department of Economic Security, p. 3). A major facet of independence includes the ability to travel from one place to another. These commutes an include traveling to obtain basic services or to work. Without transportation, homeless individuals face even greater challenges in obtaining support and maintain employment. Artibise, Hart, Welch, Whitsett (2008) advocate that "lack of reliable transportation hampers [homeless peoples'] efforts to get back on track" (p. 10). Apache Junction does not have public transportation options. This project aims to identify alternative transportation options that Apache Junction can deploy throughout the city.

In *Bicycles=Freedom*, Alex Pickett (2008) describes that the Homeless Emergency Project's Freewheel program began to repair and distribute bikes to homeless adults and children in Clearwater, Florida. The program serves only clients in need and provides them with a free bike, safety equipment and a bike lock. Pickett (2008) boasts that when homeless individuals receive these bikes they are empowered, discover independence and feel a sense of liberation. In *Students Restore Bikes for Homeless*, Becky McClatchy (2007) shares that students at Cheyenne's Central High began a club that restored bicycles and donated them to the Wyoming Coalition for the Homeless. According to McClatchy (2007), "the students were able to fill the center's rooms with hundreds of donated bicycles" (p. 1). The project benefited students, reduced metal waste and helped the students learn new skills. These articles show that it is possible to implement an effective solution to transportation assistance that is cost effective and benefits the community.

Housing Options for Homeless

To support the homeless population, it would be important to offer individuals aid. In contrast, to reduce chronic homelessness, it is important to teach people how to be self-supporting. Transportation and housing are both crucial for maintaining independence. The Department of Economic Security advocates that 'housing is the foundational intervention that moves an individual or family from homelessness to self-sufficiency" (Department of Economic

Security, 2015, p. 4). Research suggests that limited housing options is a root cause of chronic homelessness. Hart and Hedberg (2012) indicate that most homeless people would choose sustainable housing if they had the option:

> There is a striking contrast between respondents who say they want to find housing and those on waiting lists and this contrast is likely a reflection of Arizona's relative lack of affordable housing, which not only limits shelter for the homeless but also keeps many other individuals and families teetering on the brink of homelessness. (Hart and Hedberg, 2012, p. 6).

Considering that many states have adopted a housing first strategy against homelessness, and recognizing that most people in need want to move into stable housing, it is concerning that cities are struggling to provide alternative housing options. The Department of Economic Security (2015) suggests "eliminating barriers to shelters and housing programs such as income requirements, sobriety restrictions, and crime free designations… denying housing to individuals and families who are transitioning from incarceration are counterproductive." (Department of Economic Security, p. 19).

In considering alternative housing options, Habitat for Humanity readily comes to mind. The organization offers low-income housing opportunities. However, Habitat for Humanity is more equipped to support people on the brink of homelessness rather than people without any housing. A person who builds their home with Habitat for Humanity pays an average of five hundred dollars a month. According to Hart and Hedberg (2012), the homeless people surveyed in Arizona make a mean monthly income of $218.20 (p. 6). It is highly unlikely that homeless individuals in Apache Junction will have enough stable income to build a home with Habitat for Humanity. The research within this section indicates that affordable housing solutions are necessary for addressing the homelessness issue but are not prevalent throughout Arizona. Each city much work independently to implement modern solutions to issues facing their city. Homelessness is another public dilemma that can be addressed with an array of creative solutions. However, these applicable ideas will not surface if the public is not aware of the facts regarding homelessness in their city. Again, a collective solution begins with a unified understanding of the problem.

Public Service Announcements

In *Educating Homeless Children and youth: A sample of programs, policies and procedures*, Kathleen McCall (1990) indicates that governments need to help the public understand what they have in common with homeless families, identify the facts about the homelessness issue and clarify the myths about homeless individuals. Public service announcements that are delivered through creative advertisements are a cost-effective way to spread messages to many people. These advertisement strategies are a means for providing information in a short, attention-grabbing, way that also elicits viewers to change their behaviors or thoughts in some way.

Some effective forms of public advertisements are informative rather than persuasive. In September of 2017, The United Way of Pinal County created and distributed an Apache Junction Street Sheet. The street sheet is a flyer that contains a vast amount of resources available to people in need or at-risk in Apache Junction. These flyers can be given to people across the city at a relatively cheap price. Paper copies of the sheet can be hand-delivered to individuals in the community or the flyer can be spread online. According to Hart and Hedberg (2012), "many people are only one serious medical mishap or one layoff away from the street" (p. 4). Most individuals do not plan to become homeless. In turn, many are ill prepared for dealing with the situation and overcoming obstacles when it happens. The street sheet may prove to be an effective way to help at-risk individuals find public resources available to them so that they avoid becoming homeless. All in all, public service announcements are an affordable tool that can be used to provide preventative services to the public or it may be a way to rebrand public perceptions of homeless people. Apache Junction has already begun utilizing this tool to inform the public. However, they may benefit from using public media distribution as a persuasive tactic in the future.

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Methodology

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This research project is a mixed methods study focused on analyzing information about homelessness in Apache Junction. The empirical data is compiled into a comparative analysis and was used to build recommendations that city officials may implement in attempt to reduce the homeless population. This study's research design is primarily composed of qualitative research. Data will be collected through obtaining personal narratives from Apache Junction citizens and conducting case studies about programs and strategies that have been implemented

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in other cities. More specifically, this research will employ explanatory and descriptive case studies. The research will have a multiple case design because homelessness exists almost everywhere. An array of existing solutions to the issue of affordable transportation and housing will be explored because idea sharing is the cornerstone to efficiently implementing innovative solutions nationwide. These findings will be compiled into a comparative analysis so that Apache Junction officials can continue to understand modern solutions to the homelessness issue. A logic model may be used in the final deliverable to visually represent the impact of a program or solution.

This project will also include the results of carefully constructed field surveys which can be found in Figure 5. Interviews were conducted with business owners and members of the community to further understand their perceptions of homelessness in Apache Junction. These interviews were semi-structured and conducted by phone or email. Respondents also had the option of responding to the interview questions using the data collection website called SurveyMonkey. The surveys consisted of hybrid questions. While it is important that the survey collects consistent data, these hybrid questions also allow respondents the option of providing an answer that may not be provided in the question. These surveys are structured but avoid potential biases created by limiting the response options. A weakness of this approach was that less than 20 people were willing to respond to the survey. If the project were reinitiated, it likely would be more effective to structure the survey to have more multiple-choice answers. Based on the low response rate, and the average response length, the structure of the interview impacted the quality of the data collected. Furthermore, the mixed-study methodology is a broader approach rather than targeted approach for understanding an issue.

Results

The results of this study reveal that transportation availability in the city is limited and some other small towns have had success implementing innovative bike share program, ride share initiatives or increased bus transit routes. However, these innovative solutions may impact local businesses so launching these solutions require effective public communication announcements. Furthermore, the transportation issue is less impactful when affordable housing options are within walking distance to jobs and resources. The city is very involved in establishing public housing options using federal and state grants. The city could continue to improve these efforts by becoming increasingly competitive in obtaining grant funding.

Furthermore, seasonal occupancy is important to consider for finding more affordable rental property options. Lastly, the public believes the homeless issue is prevalent. While Apache Junction has taken steps to inform the public by condensing information into a fact sheet. They would benefit from employing tactics that help teach or explain that information in public settings through a tailored and attention-grabbing approach.

Transportation

According to Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett's (2008) pathway out of homelessness, the first step homeless individuals should take is to get connected to resources or support services. It may be difficult for people to consistently connect with those services without transportation. Figure 6 presents a summary of transportation options that are available to homeless or at-risk individuals in Apache Junction. There are very limited public transportation options that service primarily Apache Junction. Some of the shuttle services, which were not listed in Figure 6, provide these services solely for people going to or leaving from the airports.

On November 16th, the owner of Junction Bicycle, Nathan Hyer, answered semi-structured questions in a phone interview about his business and its impact on transportation in Apache Junction. These interview questions can be found in Figure 5. When asked what he knew about the homeless population in Apache Junction, he noted that "he sees a lot of them and that it is a prevalent issue in the city". Next, we discussed how his shop impacts the Apache Junction community. The owner shares that he believes his local business donates a lot to local organizations in support of the homeless population. He goes on to state that while he does not have any programs in place or discounts for homeless individuals. He states that he often donates bicycles or tire tubes to the genesis project. We discussed whether he would be willing to host a bicycle donation or repair drive in conjunction with the community. He said that he would be willing to be part of such an event. Lastly, we talked about the recent news regarding the bike share program in Phoenix. He was aware of the new bike program called Gridbikes. He was asked whether he would want that type of program in Apache Junction. He shared that "it wouldn't be a bad program, but it could hurt in other ways". He was hesitant and unenthusiastic about the program.

The interview with Nathan Hyer revealed a few important perspectives. First, local government officials have stated that they believe their community finds the homelessness issue to be a prevalent problem. Mr. Hyer's perception of the homelessness problem aligns with the

stigma held by other members of the community. As a business owner, Mr. Hyer finds it necessary to be involved in social responsibility efforts that benefit his community and would likely be open to be a partner in other transportation initiatives. Lastly, My. Hyer highlights an important consideration that government officials should recognize: innovative transportation solutions that benefit some members of the community may negatively impact small businesses. Any bike share programs, or other solutions that improve public transportation, should consider how it will affect other facets of the town. Furthermore, if new programs are put in place then the city will have to consider how it will market these launches to the public so that it will not disengage small business owners.

Housing

Research shows that a typical household spends "nineteen percent of its income on transportation, households living in auto-dependent neighborhoods spend 25 percent and households living in neighborhoods where they can easily walk, bicycle or take transit to access jobs and other daily needs spend just nine percent" (U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development, 2014, p. 5). Providing affordable transportation options is important but are most impactful if those people live close to those resources. Figure 8 provides a few examples of affordable housing programs available in, or near, Apache Junction. There is a lot of undeveloped land in Apache Junction and many organizations helping homeless people transition into sustainable living conditions. Despite these city attributes, research shows that affordable housing is still a problem in Apache Junction. There are several barriers to providing affordable housing in Apache Junction. Figure 10 provides information about the fair market rents in Apache Junction for 2017. Even a studio home could cost someone $624 a month. The Pinal County Housing Needs Assessment (2008) advocates that the housing mix available in Apache Junction is a root issue causing a shortage of affordable housing. In the article, *Transportation Transformation*, Thompson (2014) discusses how low-income housing mix was a problem in Denver, Colorado and in response, the city implemented an ordinance requiring that a percentage of new development be affordable (p. 27). This public ordinance has proven to be successful for Denver. A recent article reports that since 2013, the city has developed "two thousand and eight hundred housing units, not including the 867 units under construction, on their goal of creating five thousand new housing units" (Real Estate Monitor Worldwide, 2017, p. 1).

Public Service Marketing

Through semi-structured phone interviews, and using the online survey tool SurveyMonkey, perspectives on the homeless population were collected from business owners and citizens of Apache Junction. In Figure 5, the second set of survey questions were used to collect information about citizens' views on local homelessness. Each respondent emphasized that they believe there is a large homeless population that exists in the city. The second question focused on how they would describe homeless individuals in Apache Junction. Most of the responses were empathetic to the fact that the heat, and negative public stigma, make it difficult for these individuals to overcome homelessness. When asked what factors they believe caused individuals to become homeless in the city, the only three causes that respondents selected were economic factors, substance abuse and family related factors. None of the respondents selected housing availability, transportation options, inadequate support services or health related issues as reasons for homelessness. Also, none of the respondents have been personally impacted by homelessness. Although less than ten people completed the survey, the responses offer a glimpse into the perspectives of Apache Junction individuals. People who have not been impacted by homelessness will not have a full understanding of living life without shelter. Educating people about modern homelessness, and showing how relatable at-risk people are to people that have never experience being homeless, is important for breaking stigmas that exist about the homeless population. Public service announcements or marketing tactics can be used to educate the public.

In *Where is the evidence Supporting Public Service Announcements to Eliminate Mental Illness Stigma*, Patrick Corrigan studies the effectiveness of public service announcements. He concludes that modern public service announcements must be evaluated for penetration and potential for tangible positive impact, be projected through tailored and relevant communication channels and be targeted or localized (Corrigan, 2012, p. 81). There are several examples of successful marketing tactics for encouraging more positive attitudes surround homeless people. In the country, many people have participated in the homelessness challenge project. In the project, people spend forty-eight hours on the streets to learn more about the life homeless people live. Another example includes public service announcement videos that portray relatable characteristics about homeless people.

Recommendations

Transportation

Homeless individuals need transportation options to travel to different resources that may help them overcome barriers to self-sustainability. Owning an automobile or using public transportation is costly for homeless or low-income individuals. As previously discussed, bicycles are a great resource for people to begin their independence. An affordable transportation solution that the city could implement includes hosting bicycle donation, or repair, drives. These drives could be hosted by community members, by a local business, like Junction Bicycles, or through a mechanics trait school classroom or organization. The city, or the genesis project, could also reach out to private organizations and ask for donations to purchase bikes. Companies like the Target Corporation can offer gift card donations to 501(c) 3 organizations if they submit a donation request form. Many other organizations participate in these types of donation programs as well. These bikes could then be loaned to individuals for periods of time until they reach self-sustainability. The serial numbers on the bikes could be logged when loaning out the bikes. If the bike is not returned, then the bike's serial number can be reported to police as stolen.

Phoenix recently announced the launch of their new bike share program called Gridbikes. While the program may provide another transportation alternative to citizens, the success of the program would need to be evaluated before determining whether it would be a viable program to expand to Apache Junction. Furthermore, from the interview with the Junction Bicycles owner, it would be important to consider the impact that the program might have on local businesses. Local bicycle shop owners would likely be more supportive of the program if they had a partnership with Gridbikes. More specifically, when Gridbikes gets a call about a broken or malfunctioning bicycle. Perhaps they could ensure that the repairs are made through the local bicycle shops. In this way, people may not buy bikes as often from the local bicycle shops, but the shops can still make money through the repair partnership with Gridbikes.

The Valley Metro Bus system offers reduced fare programs for people in certain age groups or with disabilities. This program requires documentation that eligible homeless individuals may not be able to provide. Although there are resources available to help homeless individuals obtain new copies of government identification forms, these eligibility verification restrictions may be negatively impacting some homeless individuals' ability to use that method of transportation. Perhaps an Apache Junction representative, can partner with Valley Metro to

determine if there is a way to bypass this eligibility requirement while still ensuring that people without these eligible characteristics do not abuse the reduced fare program. Furthermore, if Valley Metro included all homeless individuals as a part of their reduced fare program, instead of only people in certain age groups or with disabilities, then homeless people would have another affordable transportation option available to them. A limitation of this suggestion is that it would be difficult for Valley Metro to verify if a person is homeless and eligible for reduced fare. To eradicate this issue, perhaps an Apache Junction organization that consistently works with homeless individuals could establish a partnership with Valley Metro. In this partnership, the Apache Junction organization could provide their homeless clients with a verification card that Valley Metro recognizes and approves in their eligibility verification process.

Lastly, the Salinas Valley case study revealed that small towns can benefit from workplace carpool programs or vanpooling services. Perhaps Apache Junction can recognize or offer to promote businesses that participate in establishing this sort of program for low income, at-risk or homeless individuals. All in all, public transportation options in Apache Junction are minimal. A bike share program or increased bus transit routes may be the most practical solution that the city can implement.

Housing

According to the Pinal County Housing Needs Assessment, sixty percent of units are vacant seasonally (Pinal County, 2008, p. 90). More renters could be encouraged to participate in the housing choice voucher program (Section 8). Or other incentives can be put in place to encourage tenants to rent out these seasonal places for a lower than average rental price when they are not using the unit. Low income individuals would have a wider variety of affordable housing options. During the time that they rent these affordable units they could save up money for the months that they must live in a more expense rental property. Perhaps some sort of property manager position could be created that oversees these rental agreements specifically so that tenants feel confident renting to low income individuals. According to the Apache Junction Housing Assessment and Strategic Plan, in 2010 there was only a seventeen percent rental population available in the city and a large portion of those available rentals were unaffordable (Apache Junction, 2010, p. 11). All in all, the fair market rents rates are much higher than the estimated monthly income of at risk or homeless people, a portion of the population will likely never be able to afford homeownership and there are not enough affordable rental options

available. A weakness of this recommendations includes that seasonal rentals are not a permanent enough solution for some individuals prone to chronic homelessness. These individuals may need more stability. However, if more affordable permanent housing options cannot be constructed than another alternative must be implemented. Otherwise, people will continue to struggle finding shelter until construction agreements can be made that offer affordable housing to people or until the length of waiting lists for public housing are reduced.

Furthermore, any future new low-income housing developments should either be within walking distance to jobs and support services or should be a connected area that offers some form of direct transportation to these key parts of town. Typically, land that is closer to a city center is more expensive which would cause the housing rent to be higher. However, the savings in avoiding transportation costs is important to consider. If the cost of rent would be drastically cheaper further from the city center than the city must ensure there are plans in place to provide public transportation routes.

Public Service Marketing

The city of Apache Junction could create a public marketing internship position that would entail educating the public about the facts of homelessness in their city. The position would be unpaid so that it does not incur financial burden on tax payers. The city of Apache Junction could partner with Arizona State University to ensure that the student could receive course credits for completing the internship. The intern would obtain real public service experience and practice using key marketing skills. In exchange, Apache Junction could influence the community to having a common understanding of homelessness in the city. A solidified perception of the problem may help the city obtain more relevant ideas and solutions. Furthermore, public officials may observe less social disengagement from business owners about homelessness in the city. All in all, the city has a lot of support services and programs in place to help low income, or homeless, individuals. However, the public still perceives that the homelessness issue is prevalent. Apache Junction took a great step in educating the public about the resources they provide by creating the homelessness resource fact sheet. The next step is to ensure that the information is attention grabbing and taught to others in the public. The intern could speak at schools or educate local business employees. Furthermore, the marketing strategy should aim to humanize these homeless or at-risk individuals and make them relatable to members of the community. These two tactics may help to ensure that Apache Junction cities

understand the facts about their local homelessness issue and reduce the number of biased stigmas that exist about the homeless and how the city is supporting them.

City officials could also participate in the homelessness challenge project and encourage some of the disgruntled business owners to participating as well. If individuals spend forty-eight hours on the streets than maybe they would have a broader perspective on the issue. Another option that city officials could implement would be to offer an incentive to students at local schools for submitting videos that portray relatable characteristics about homeless people in Apache Junction. Or perhaps the students could be challenged to come up with other marketing tactics. In this way, students are positively influenced to think critically about homelessness at a young age. In turn, later in life they may recognize the amount of resources that are available and avoid homelessness. Or they might be able to provide fresh, unbiased, ideas about solutions to the issue.

Conclusion

Public research that examines the root causes of local homelessness has expanded over the years. Despite this vast knowledge, most cities have not implemented the correct combination of solutions to eradicate their local homelessness. Many cities and organizations still spend a lot of money to help homeless people survive. Apache Junction's focus must shift towards helping these individuals with their specific barriers to overcoming homelessness. The Department of Economic Security summarized what the future strategy for reducing homelessness should look like in the following statement:

> "Theories about solutions, stereotypes of causes, and programs to fix the homeless problem abound, but the problem remains. Duplicating existing programs and repeating the same strategies are not enough, and it is time to consider the actual needs of the individuals experiencing homelessness today, while preparing for the unique challenges coming in the near future" (Department of Economic Security, 2015, p. 9).

City officials must have a proactive and tailored approach to addressing homelessness in their town.

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Figure 1: Defining Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines people in the following situations as officially "homeless":

- **Literally Homeless:** "An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." This generally means people spending their nights in "a public or private place not meant for human habitation," such as outside, in a car, or in shelters.
- **At imminent risk of homelessness:** "An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence," usually within two weeks, and can't afford other permanent housing.
- **Homeless under other federal laws:** This includes "unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age" and families that haven't had stable housing for at least 60 days and have few prospects of getting it.
- **Domestic violence victims:** "Any individual or family who is fleeing, or attempting to flee domestic violence, and is incapable of securing other permanent housing."

Figure 1. Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett. (2008). Richard's Reality: The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context. Morrison Institute for Public Policy. AZ.

Figure 2: Average costs for basic services for homeless people

Basic Services Include Food, Shelter, and Help Back to the Mainstream, Composite annualized costs for basic services	
Service	$ Per Person Per Year*
Shelter ($17 x 365)	6,200
Case management	1,350
Meals (14 per week)	1,275
Dental	550
"Hub" for services, education, mail, & enrichment	450
Day Refuge	250
Employment assistance	200
Identification and family reunification	65
Total	$10,340

*These figures account for food, shelter, and basic re-entry support services. Costs have been annualized based on the reported direct costs. Figures have been rounded for readability. Most services are not used for a year's time, but the annual figure is used for easy comparability. Dental costs are based on 2,000 patients per year. At this time, per person data are unavailable for outreach and detox services often associated with involving residents in shelter programs. Other health and substance abuse costs may be found later in this report.
Sources: Lodestar Day Resource Center, Central Arizona Shelter Services, St. Joseph the Worker, Community Information and Referral, Ecumenical Chaplaincy for the Homeless, and St. Vincent de Paul. Shelter, case management, and dental were calculated at $30 X 365. Meals were figured at $1.75 per meal.
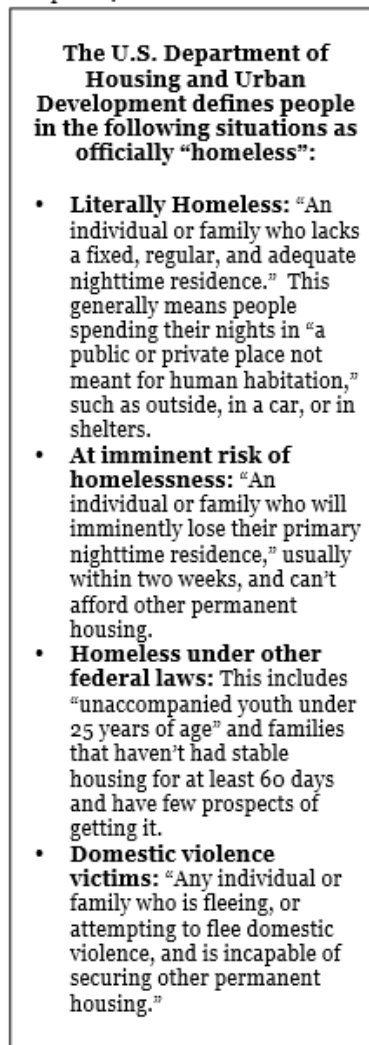
Figure 2. Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett. (2008). Richard's Reality: The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context. Morrison Institute for Public Policy. AZ.

Figure 3: Examples of public services available to the homeless

Services for Homeless Individuals Come from Many Public Systems, Examples of sources		
System	Public Providers, Funders, Administrators, or Regulators	Major Services for Chronically Homeless Individuals
Social Services	• Arizona Department of Economic Security • U.S. Social Security Administration	SSI, Food Stamps, General Assistance, shelter, clothing, transportation, and job referral
Health	• Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System • Arizona Department of Health Services • Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health • Maricopa County Public Health Department • Maricopa Integrated Health System • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Community clinics (mental, physical, and dental health assistance), community hospitals and emergency departments, in-and out patient care, and medications
Criminal Justice	• Maricopa County • City of Phoenix	Municipal court, county jail, and probation
Veterans	• U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	Healthcare, income supports, outreach, shelter, case management, rehabilitation; employment assistance, permanent supportive housing
Employment and Asset Building	• Arizona Department of Economic Security • Arizona Department of Commerce • Arizona Department of Education	Adult education, job training, life skills, and career development
Shelter and Housing	• U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development • Arizona Department of Economic Security • Arizona Department of Housing	Emergency shelter, transitional, and permanent supportive housing. Public housing and housing subsidies. Prevention and housing support
Public Safety	• Local police and fire departments	Paramedic assistance, referral to services, voluntary and involuntary delivery to health or substance abuse services

Source: Compiled by Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 2008.

Figure 3. Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett. (2008). Richard's Reality: The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context. Morrison Institute for Public Policy. AZ.
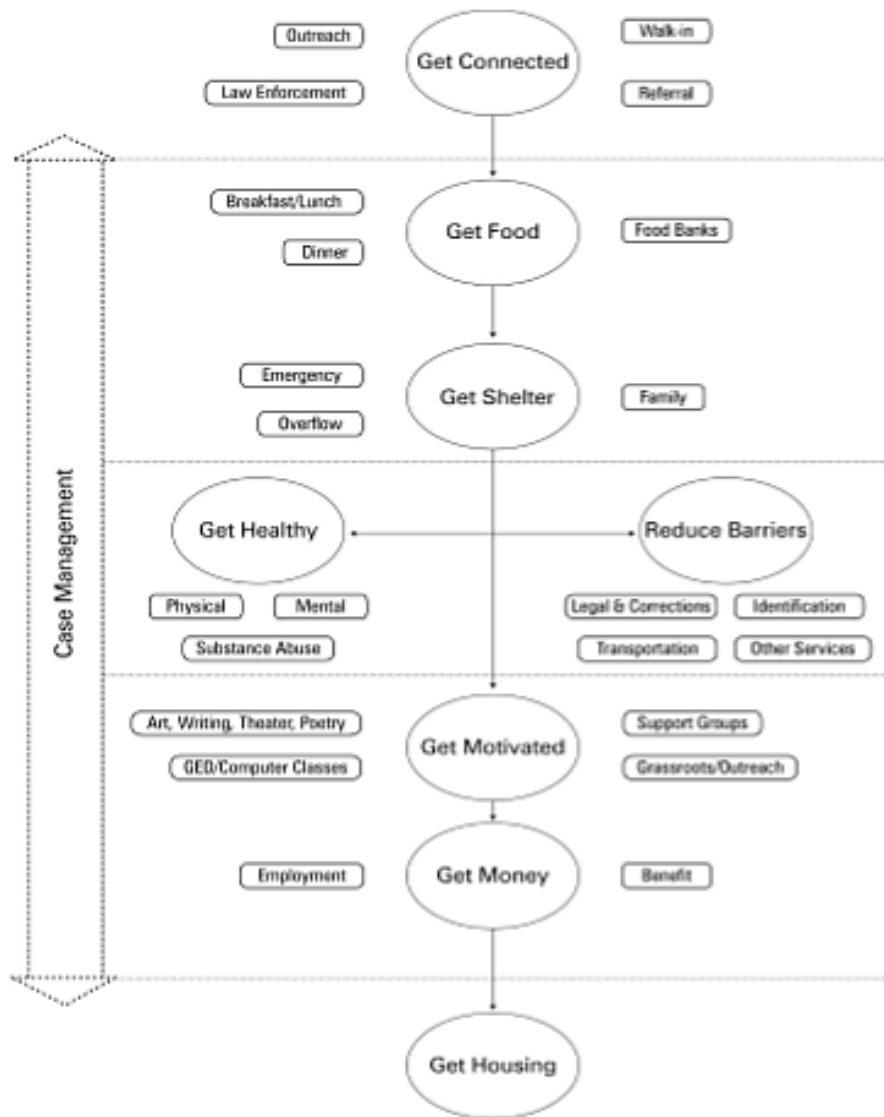
Figure 4: Pathway to overcoming homelessness

Figure 4. Artibise, Hart, Welch and Whitsett. (2008). Richard's Reality: The Costs of Chronic Homelessness in Context. Morrison Institute for Public Policy. AZ.

Figure 5: Surveys

Survey Title: Transportation Options for the Homeless
Survey Type: Semi-structured phone interview
Participants: Junction Bicycle's store owner
Survey questions:
- Would you be willing to answer some questions about your business, so that I may better understand transportation options, for low income individuals, in Apache Junction?
- What role do you think your business serves in Apache Junction?
- What do you know about the homeless population, or low-income population, in Apache Junction?
- Do you have any programs in place that helps support this population of potential bike owners?
  - If not, have you ever considered starting a program that helps these individuals obtain or repair bicycles? Why or why not?
- Have you considered, or would you be willing to consider, hosting a bicycle donation or repair drive in conjunction with community members?
- Have you heard of the new bike share program in Apache Junction? If so, would you want this program in Apache Junction?

Survey Title: Public Views on Apache Junction Homelessness
Survey Type: Semi-structured phone interviews
Participants: Stakeholders of Apache Junction area (i.e. business owners close to the soup kitchen and citizens of Apache Junction etc.)
Survey questions:
- Would you be willing to answer some questions, so that I may better understand the public's view on homelessness in Apache Junction? The questions will take you about five minutes to complete. Your answers will be combined with other peoples' responses and I will not share your individual information.
- What do you know about the homeless population in Apache Junction?
- How would you describe homelessness in Apache Junction?
- What do you think are the primary reasons that some people are homelessness in Apache Junction?
  - Economic factors, health related factors, family related factors, substance abuse, inadequate public transportation, housing availability, inadequate support service or other? If other, please explain.
- Have you, someone you know, or your workplace been impacted by homelessness in Apache Junction?

Figure 6: Public Transportation Options in Apache Junction

Fare Type: Bus
Service Provided by: Valley Metro
No. of Fare Outlets: Eight
Regular Cost:
• $20 for five all day passes
• $20 for seven consecutive day passes
• $33 for fifteen consecutive day passes
• $64 for thirty-one consecutive day passes
• All fares also have $1.25 handling fee
Low income programs available:
• Reduced fare passes
  o Based on age or disabilities
  o Must show proof of eligibility
  o Cost:
    ▪ $10 for five all day passes
    ▪ $10 for seven consecutive day passes
    ▪ $16.50 for fifteen consecutive day passes
    ▪ $32 for thirty-one consecutive day passes
• Dial-a-ride
  o For people with disabilities only
  o Must show proof of eligibility
  o Cost:
    ▪ .50 cents for twenty-five tickets
• Homeless Service Provider Program
  o Qualified organizations working with homeless individuals may purchase fares at half price for those clients.
	Fare Type: Shuttle
	Service Provided by: Stagecoach Express Shuttle
	No. of Fare Outlets: One
	Regular Cost:
	• $37 for one-way fair
	• Shuttle promotes primarily service to and from airports
	Low income programs available:
	• None

Fare Type: Taxi
Service Provided by: Aba Taxi, Arrow Taxi or A Better Cab Service
No. of Fare Outlets: Unknown
Regular Cost:
• Unknown
Low income programs available:
• None
	Fare Type: Ride Share
	Service Provided by: Uber
	No. of Fare Outlets: One
	Regular Cost:
	• $6 minimum starting rate
	  o 2.25 safe ride fee
	  o 5.75 minimum fee
	  o .40 base fare
	  o .95 per mile
	  o .09 per minute
	  o Cost does not include gratuity
	Low income programs available:
	None

Figure 7: Transportation Comparative Analysis of Two Case Studies

Fare Type: Bike Share Program
Service Provided by: Gridbikes.com
No. of Fare Outlets: 50
Regular Cost:
• $7/hr for pay as you go
• $10/week for seven day plan
• $15/month for monthly plan
• $20/month for monthly plus plan
Pros:
• Monthly rate is cheaper than bus fare monthly rate.
• Up to 500 bikes available
• 50 outlets spanning across whole city
Cons:
• Not a permanent form of transportation
• Membership is purchased with a credit or debit card
• Memberships are purchased online, through a phone app or a kiosk.
• Membership requires 3 month commitment.
• Citizens must be near the grid lock stations to rent the bike
• Must be 18 to rent bike
• Maintenance costs for broken or stolen bikes may be imposed on bike renter
• Local bicycle shop owners may be negatively impacted
Can program be implemented in Apache Junction?:
• There are plans already to expand to Mesa and Tempe.
• May be too costly to implement in Apache Junction.
	Fare Type: Van Pooling Program
	Service Provided by: Calvans.org
	No. of Fare Outlets: Unknown
	Regular Cost:
	• For five people to travel 10 miles, five days a week it would cost $35/month
	• If employer subsidizes commute options than the cost could be different
	• **Pros:**
	  o The more riders the lower the cost
	  o Successful in Salinas Valley for low income agricultural workers
	  o Fare outlets are not restricted- the vans can travel throughout vast areas and pick up points
	• **Cons:**
	  o Not as cost effective as other forms of public transportation but cheaper than owning a car
	  o Best value is when many people are using the van per trip.
	    ▪ Most effective for groups to travel to the same location (i.e. multiple team members traveling to their workplace).
	    ▪ Unlikely that all team members would live in the same area and have to arrive to work at the same time.
	Can program be implemented in Apache Junction?
	• Businesses in the same complex could collaborate to establish a carpool system or work together to pay for a vanpool system for their workplaces.
	• There may not be enough willing participants to implement in Apache Junction.

Figure 8: Affordable Housing Support Options in Apache Junction

Overview of Housing in Apache Junction:	
The average monthly cost of a home in the city costs $975. The median gross monthly rent is $679. The percentage of available housing that are single family detached households is 39%. *Housing and Transportation Index, 2017, Retrieved from: https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/*	
Program title: Housing Rehabilitation Program	**Program title:** Low Income Renters Assistance by Pinal County Housing Authority
Avg. Cost: • Depends on individual application including level of service, age of home and investment amount. **Pros:** • Helps at-risk or low-income individuals ○ May help decrease the number of homeowners from becoming homeless **Cons:** • Does not benefit homeless individuals	**Avg. Cost:** • 30% of monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities. • The lesser of the payment standard minus 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income or the gross rent for the unit minus 30% of monthly adjusted income. **Pros:** • Prioritizes helping homeless or displaced individuals • Increases housing mix • Federally funded **Cons:** • Long list of people applying in need *Hud Housing, 2017, Retrieved from: https://www.hud.gov/topics/ housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8
Program title: Low Income Housing Tax Credit (w/ public housing)	**Program title:** Habitat for Humanity
Avg. Cost: Rent cannot exceed the Tax Credit maximum for the area. Housing earning less than sixty percent of the area median income qualify for units with reduced rent. **Pros:** • Rent amount is tailored to income level • Permanent housing solution **Cons:** • Waiting lists • Priority rent pricing goes to lowest income amount but may not consider other costs individuals may have despite having higher income than others (i.e. medical bills, costs of	**Avg. Cost:** $500/month **Pros:** • Helps low income people become home owners • Teaches at risk individuals how to maintain their home which in turn, may help them to avoid homelessness in the future **Cons:** • Homeless people do not benefit from this program

Figure 9: Comparative Analysis on Two Case Studies Related to Housing

Case study topic: Denver Affordable Housing Ordinance	Case study topic: The Importance of Grants
Overview: Low income housing mix was an issue in Denver, Colorado. In response, the city set an ordinance requiring that a portion of all new development be affordable. **Pros:** • Successful in Denver since 2013. • Increased housing variety. • Cost for diversified housing creation was placed on private developers and not the city. **Cons:** • Program requires that enough businesses want to establish new developments in the city. • May deter businesses from wanting to create new housing structures in the city. **Can program be implemented in Apache Junction?** • It may not be viable for Apache Junction to establish regulations that deter future businesses from developing in the city. It may be more detrimental for the city's growth to deter business development.	**Overview:** In 2011, Traverse City Michigan received a HUD Regional Planning Grant due to their impressive housing improvement vision. Also in 2011, the city of Gonzales, California improved their competitiveness for grants to fund infrastructure improvements (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 2014, p. 23). **Pros:** • Funding comes from other government entities or organizations **Cons:** • Applying for grants is time consuming • Competition for grant funding is high • Funding is typically short term **Can program be implemented in Apache Junction?** • The city could continue to increase their competitiveness in obtaining grants by creating a grant writing internship position on the Revenue Development Team or in the Resource Development Division.

Figure 10: 2017 Fair Market Rents in Apache Junction

Studio	One BR	Two BR	Three BR	Four BR
$624	$757	$944	$1,374	$1,594

Figure 10. Layfield, D. (2017). Affordable Housing in Apache Junction. ApartmentSmart.com.

Retrieved from: *https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/Arizona/Apache-Junction*

Examining Solutions for Homelessness in Apache Junction through Public Policy

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PAF509: Public Affairs Capstone

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Abstract

In this proposal the topic of trying to end homelessness in the City of Apache Junction through public policy is examined. The purpose of asking this question is to understand where we should begin in order to create a better life for the residents in the City of Apache Junction and the individuals living on the streets in poverty. By both observing the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee, a current on-going programs for the homeless, and analyzing past and present surveys, data will be collected to see if there are any positive correlations between policies and programs being made to help the homeless. Articles provided in the literature review will support the hypothesis that homeless and individuals living below the poverty line do benefit from assistance provided by both publicly funded and non-profit programs. To further this support a document and content analysis method was chosen to help find geographically comparable and demographically similar situations to the City of Apache Junction to analyze how they approached their homeless situation and figure out what worked.

Ending Homelessness in Apache Junction through Public Policy

Introduction

Located near the base of the Superstition Mountains between the historic Apache Trail and U.S. 60 is the City of Apache Junction. Officially becoming a city in November of 1978, the City of Apache Junction has just over 35,000 residents at the average age of 50 years old (City-Data, 2010). It is a predominantly white community with only 19% of its population being Hispanic, African American, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other (City-Data,2010). When they became a city in 1978, the City of Apache Junction began to form committees within their community to address local issues. One of these issues was the growing homeless population. In 2014 there was a survey done by the United Way of Pinal County (UWPC) to identify community gaps. In 2015 these results were announced and within the same year the Empowerment Group was created to start fixing these issues. By 2016 a Chronic Homeless Subcommittee (CHS) was formed to specifically tackle the issue of the homeless in the City of Apache Junction. In April of 2017 at the Mayor's Breakfast, the CHS presented their ultimate mission which was, "to reduce chronic homelessness in Apache Junction while addressing the business community and criminal activities taking place," (Project outline, 2017). The goals that were established by the committee were as follows; Conduct federally mandated annual point in time count, assist with homeless health and social service events led by UWPC, coordinate information between Apache Junction Police, HOT Team, Genesis and municipal court, CAHRA attending Genesis weekly to conduct interviews, UWPC will attend Genesis weekly to provide mentoring, and identifying recommendations for implementations of programs and services (Project Outline, 2017). More potential goals were then added to understand the homeless population by; identifying the people and how they can be helped, what to do with the impacts of homelessness and understanding the actions of the homeless and how they negatively affect the City of Apache Junction (Project Outline, 2017).

With the recent creation and implementation of the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee it's obvious there is a homeless issue in the City of Apache Junction. This population of homeless has spurred a great wave of illegal activity and public outcry for the local city government to find a solution. While there are multiple programs in place to help the homeless receive a proper education, work, and housing in Arizona the population of homeless in the City of Apache

Junction continues to grow. Ensuring that the growing homeless population is addressed has become the responsibility of the Chronic Homeless Subcommittee.

Based off an ASU Morrison Institute of Public Policy survey done in 2013, Arizona has nearly 14,000 residents that are considered homeless (Hedberg & Hart, 2013). The demographic of Arizona's homeless population can be broken down further by gender, age, and veteran status. Nearly 50% of the homeless population in Arizona are women, children, or families and 23% are veterans of the United States Military (Hedberg & Hart, 2013). In ASU's Morrison Institute 2013 report, it's stated that the most reoccurring issues that cause homelessness in Arizona are; lost job, family violence/conflict, divorce, medical (non-mental), mental health, disability, and substance abuse (Hedberg & Hart, 2013). From this population, 91% are interested in finding housing but 19% are on a waiting list or unable to qualify based off prior convictions or background information (Hedberg & Hart, 2013).

Hedberg and Hart lead readers to assume that the issue with homelessness is a lack of transitional housing or extreme regulations for housing that cannot be met by a majority of the homeless population. According to the ASU Morrison Institute of Public Policy in 2013, the best course of action is to offer transitional housing for homelessness along with specific transitional programs in order to alleviate the homeless problem. In Pinal County, which the City of Apache Junction falls under, there are currently thousands of individuals experiencing homelessness (Pinal County, United Way, 2017). According to Valley of the Sun United Way homepage, a neighboring program, there is a clear set of steps laid out that need to be accomplished to try and end homelessness. These steps are; leadership, permanent supportive housing, prevention and emergency needs, and advocacy (Valley of the Sun United Way, 2017). Pinal county has several initiatives that coincide with Maricopa's including a "Where to Turn Guide," which helps people focus on getting a job (ajcity.net Document-Center, 2014). In 2010 there was a list created to identify all housing and shelter options in Pinal County, these options include; Domestic violence shelters, elder abuse shelters, homeless shelters, runaway/youth shelters, and transitional shelters (Pinal County United Way, 2017). There are also multiple support groups, support hotlines, and emergency facilities available to the homeless in Pinal County. Unfortunately, although the Pinal County and Maricopa County United Way strategies calls for available housing, there are currently no housing options or shelters for the homeless in the City of Apache Junction. The City of Apache Junction only has a few social service agencies and

programs to assist people facing homelessness. While Apache Junction advertises services that are available on their city government website, most of those services are not within the city limits and are offered on a state or county level only. These state wide services range from transitional housing and shelters, drug rehabs, and veterans facilities to food banks and non-profit organizations that offer basic hygiene products. If individuals are unable to physically reach a location and receive help, they are able to call an assistance hotline that tries to cater to their unique needs (Valley of the Sun United Way, 2017). Listed on Apache Junctions city website are a plethora of services and non-profits where individuals can seek help along with basic steps on how to get a job, apply for housing, and locate the nearest shelter within Pinal County.

Understanding what the core issue is and how efficiently the solution can be executed is important because it could resolve the problem in the City of Apache Junction quickly while offering a template for other cities that are facing the same problem to use. The successful completion of this project would allow the city, Empowerment Group, and Chronic Homeless Subcommittee to look at an alternative solution to this problem. Alternative solutions and ideas are a curial part to developing a public policy and all completed suggestions should be analyzed. Some of the products that might come out of this proposal are other cities programs and approaches to half-way housing for the homeless and how to handle illegal activities being committed by this demographic. Because these suggested solutions have already been physically done, analyzing the data and comparing it to the City of Apache Junctions Government and community can be done. If a curfew has been installed in a neighboring town and succeeded at decreasing illegal activity, that task could be then coordinated with the City of Apache Junction's Police Department and council to install appropriate times. In the situation of a new halfway house or service facility being built the city manager, council board, and senior program coordinator can look to the provided researched cities for advice on how to handle that new infrastructure. Working with non-profit organizations to alleviate the homeless problem would also be wise and is already strongly suggested in Hedberg and Hart, 2013. Non-profits typically operate the day to day activities while the long-term items, like individual healthcare and social services, could be offered by the city (Hedberg & Hart, 2013). By incorporating non-profits and other charity leagues, the City of Apache Junction could potentially save money. These initial comparisons to nearby cities and analyzations should ultimately limit how much illegal activity

is happening while offering positive solutions to the homeless in attempt to help them get off the streets and better their lives.

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Literature Review

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Past research that discusses the possible solutions to help decrease the homeless population in a city while positively impacting the public and people facing homelessness are reviewed below. Articles that discuss what happens with a growing population of homeless and the outcome of that situation has are important to understand and read so that cities trying to make change do not make the same errors. Quantitative data is included and analyzed from these previous studies to show how well the programs or policies implemented worked.

Understanding the Homeless

Transient Criminality: A model of stress-induced crime by Boyanowsky in 1992 establishes the understanding that anyone could become homeless. In these texts Boyanowsky describes how "the stress of events combined with the absence or destruction of social bonds and supports," (Boyanowsky, 1992) creates a certain downward spiral in an individual's life that leads to homelessness. Three of these key stress-induced situations are the addiction to drugs, physical or mental abuse, and physical or mental disabilities. This article goes on to elaborate how these situations can cause stress-induced crime, which a subcategory of illegal activity that takes place when an individual is thrown out of their normal environment and panics, or seeks immediate relief from the situation (Boyanowsky, 1992). This is an important base to begin understanding the reason why people are homeless in the first place and participating in illegal activities. The City of Apache Junction is trying to solve the crime rate that is associated with the homeless population, Boyanowsky's (1992) work offers a great starting point to understanding why the crime rates has spiked.

ASU Morrison Institute of Public Policy did a broad overview of the different demographics that make up the homeless population throughout the entire state of Arizona. Data is quantified in this study and gives exact percentages regarding age, race, reason for being homeless, and disabilities.   Knowing who the demographic is across Arizona will give the City of Apache Junction officials a better grasp on the homeless demographic and if there is a correlation between certain age groups, minorities, or disabled individuals. Realizing a possible trend

growing between age and homelessness will give officials enough insight to target that group and cater to their needs.

Two reports done by the Department of Economic Security give a more in-depth understanding of the current homeless population throughout Arizona. *The Current State of Homelessness in Arizona and Efforts to Prevent and Alleviate Homelessness* was done in 2008 by three separate departments; Arizona Homeless Coordination Office, Office of Community Partnerships and Innovative Practices, and the Department of Economic Security. Tracy Wareing led the findings of this report and served as the Director at the time. This first report is 140 pages of background data and research commissioned by the State of Arizona in order to find out exact details on how many homeless there are, what they want, what we were giving them, and steps to take in the future. The ultimate goal of this report was to establish the issue and then develop a plan to tackle the problem. *The Current State of Homelessness in Arizona (*2008) focuses on who the homeless are, housing inventory facts, the benefits of continuum care efforts, and state agency efforts to end homelessness. A lot of useful information was pulled from this report while doing the findings after developing the method section. Because it provides hard quantitative data, this report will be useful when finding the entire states demographic and homeless needs.

The second report found was the *Annual Homeless Report* done in 2015. This report was done by the same departments as *The Current State of Homelessness in Arizona* (2008). The difference between this report and the one described prior is that it is more up to date and provides a specific look at Maricopa and Pima County. The City of Apache Junction does not fall within either of these counties, but has valuable information on what neighboring cities like Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa are doing to solve their homeless problems. What is useful about this report is that is allows for current data to be analyzed. The data provided in 2008 can be cross examined with the 2015 information to see if any impacts were made, if services were increased or decreased, and if there is a growing trend for one specific program that cities believe will help solve homelessness. Between these two reports and two articles, ASU Morrison Institute, 2013, and Boyanowsky, 1992, a solid base will be laid out to help the City of Apache Junction better understand who their demographic is, what brought them to this point in life, and why some of them are acting out through criminal activities.

Ending Homelessness Initiatives

Once the basics of "who" and "what" are understood, researching methods on how to handle the situation can begin with *Patterns of Homelessness* by Toro and Janisse done in 2002. Toro and Janisse, 2002, explore the various solutions that have been implemented in cities and states since the 1950s. Originally most of the homeless populations were corralled and sent to facilities that specialized in the mentally disabled (Toro & Janisse, 2002), this suggested that everyone who was homeless was unable to function in society due to an underlying mental or emotional issue. Knowing that this is clearly not the case anymore, *Patterns of Homelessness* discuss two popular tactics that cities and towns tend to choose between. The first option is to criminalize the homeless by targeting the things they like to do and make those activities illegal (Toro & Janisse, 2002). By criminalizing their behavior the homeless are exposed to a possible criminal record and chronic homelessness. The second option is to become more involved with the homeless as a community and encourage a certain level of participation in resources being provided to them (Toro & Janisse, 2002). An example of encouragement to participate in provided resources would be if a homeless individual was given the opportunity for transitional housing and by default could also receive certain benefits like products from foodbanks. *Pattern of Homelessness* stresses that criminalizing the homeless does answer short-term issue but exacerbates the problem down the line. Criminalizing the homeless makes it difficult for them to find jobs and seek permanent homes which results in them being back on the streets in a worse situation than they were in after they serve time in jail (Toro & Janisse, 2002).

According to the United States Interagency Council of Homelessness (USICoH), there are seven things that need to be offered and addressed in order to successfully dissolve any homeless population. Four of these things are steps that can be done and directly impact the homeless population. Housing, one of the four, directly impacts the homeless because it provides a foundation for people to access services and support they need to achieve stability (USICoH, 2016). Health Care is second because it allows the homeless to manage any chronic health and behavioral conditions that affects an individual's ability to stay housed and achieve goals (USICoH, 2016). Jobs and sustainable job training increases the access to employment and is third because it gives people confidence and sense of accomplishment (USICoH, 2016). Finally, education directly impacts the homeless population because it offers a safe area for children and adults to learn while also mitigating the impact of homelessness (USICoH, 2016). The last three

steps are things the local governments need to do in order to build a unified and sustainable attitude geared towards solving the homeless problem at hand. First a city needs to create a Crisis Response which involves coordinating and reorienting programs and services to a Housing First approach that allows for a rapidly moving permanent housing set up so people experience less time being homeless (USICoH, 2016). A city needs to look at Criminal Justice Reform because being caught in the revolving door between streets, shelters, and jails does not solve the problem of homelessness but instead makes it worse and should be stopped for a positive long-term effect (USICoH, 2016). Lastly, Collaborative Leadership should be had throughout the government in order to recognize that solutions to homelessness cut across federal, state, and local jurisdictions. By installing all of these methods, the City of Apache Junction should see a decrease in their homeless population and a downward trend as kids are taken off the streets and given an education, home, and job as they come of age.

Predicting the Future

The move to solving homelessness is already showing positive results in America. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness because of the rapid re-housing capacity growing dramatically between 2013 to 2015 the nation saw a decrease in overall homelessness by nearly 22% (State of Homelessness, 2016). There was also a decrease and continued descent over the past several year to 24.8 homeless less veterans per 10,000 in the general homeless population (State of Homelessness, 2016). The biggest factor in this outcome is the availability of affordable or low-income housing. It is the more expensive option in the beginning but by offering people experiencing chronic homelessness a safe and sustainable place to live it allows them to branch out and seek more resources to solve additional issues they might be facing. All of the major cities in the United States have transitional housing, but 74.3% of those facilities have waiting lists that usually have a minimum of 4 months (State of Homelessness, 2016). While it is easy to criminalize the homeless it does not solve the problem. By offering more services through non-profits the City of Apache Junction will start to see a decrease in their homeless population over the course of the next five years.

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Current Study

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The research design for this proposal is a document and content analysis method. Document coding was utilized as a base structure for this project to compare past research and

recent additions. To begin this method research had to first be done regarding similar cities facing the same issues as Apache Junction. Marana, Flagstaff, Queen Creek, and Oro Valley, Arizona are all within the same population size as the City of Apache Junction and are trying to resolve their own homelessness issues. A sampling of data such as population, income, number of services, number of housing options, and number of homeless was done on each city to establish similar demographics. All of these cities have or have plans to create and implement programs or housing to alleviate their transient population.

Document and content analysis research design was chosen because it focuses on quantitative data which will be seen in the forms of previous studies done on neighboring cities and the City of Apache Junction. Having a more emphasized focus on quantitative data rather than qualitative data for this study is important. Because this research focuses on the homeless and the progress that is being made to decrease population and crime, comparing numerical data like population size and services provided is crucial. Starting with the most recent estimated homeless population size in the City of Apache Junction, the number of programs will be tallied to see the ratio of programs to individuals correlate. Once data is collected in these areas for the City of Apache Junction, the same will be done with Flagstaff, Queen Creek, Marana, and Oro Valley. When all information is collected, a clear relationship should be revealed between more programs leading to less homeless.

Based off of the information that will be collected from the literature review and previous case studies, the current general question is; will more police presence in areas with high crime rates, programs offered to assist the homeless with securing a job, and transitional housing in the City of Apache Junction have a directly impact the number of illegal activities originating from the homeless population?

Methods

To try and answer the proposed question in a quantitative way, data will be collected from the previous Apache Junction surveys based off of population size, demographic, and number of services and housing. Data from surrounding cities with similar demographics will be researched and compared using the same information found on the City of Apache Junction. Data from the literature review if comparable will be used. Below, in Table 1, the selected cities were listed along with the latest population, income, number of social service programs, number

of transitional housing opportunities, and average population of homeless. This information is provided by the United States Census Bureau and individual city webpages.

Table 1: Similar Neighboring Cities

	Population	Average Income	# of Social Service Programs (including non-profits)	# of Housing opportunities (including non-profit)	Average # of Homeless
Apache Junction	39,954	$36,771	20	0	40-50
Marana	38,280	$74,649	22	0	55- 60
Oro Valley	41,965	$69,244	24	0	45-55
Flagstaff	71,459	$53,152	43	8	93(winter) – 388 (Summer)
Queen Creek	35,524	$86,440	19	1	35-45

Locating basic statistics such as number of housing opportunities in the named cities and actual population of homeless in designated cities was difficult. With the information that was found I can compare the demographics between cities before truly diving in to what programs, services, and types of housing are working best according to the compared cities. Being able to understand what cities are potentially facing the same crisis as Apache Junction is important because it allows for common information and problem solving to be shared. Unfortunately Apache Junction's population is fairly small and hard to match since resources are new or uncreated. Thus, the conclusion to use larger cities alongside the smaller and more statistically similar cities was decided. In Table 2 you can see an extended version of Table 1 with larger city information for comparison.

Table 2: Large and Small Cities

	Population	Average Income	# of Social Service Programs (including non-profits)	# of Housing opportunities (including non-profit)	Average # of Homeless
Apache Junction	39,954	$36,771	20	0	40-50
Marana	38,280				
Oro Valley	41,965				
Flagstaff	71,459	$53,152	43	8	93(winter) – 388 (Summer)
Queen Creek	35,524	$86,440	19	1	35-45
Tempe	182,498	$49,816	57	5	350-400
Mesa	484,597	$63,789	76	17	900 – 1,100
Phoenix	1.615 mil	$55,547	107	20 (in metro area)	1,700-1,900

The most obvious limitation of this research is the generalizability of the findings. Given that this data, this report of information should not be used to make specific and niche assumptions of homelessness but rather be utilized as a broad understanding of what does and does not work.

Based on the methodology options listed in Eller, Gerber, and Robinson (2013), a document and content analysis was selected as the most appropriate method format for this studies objective and scope. Qualitative methods were originally chosen to try and get insight back from the community, but was ultimately decided against since the population of homeless is so small comparatively and the committees given this task are very new. The scope of this study was designed to give a higher level of narrative that could be repurposed by the City of Apache Junction and implemented in a way to cater their community needs. The intent of this research was to create guidance and a proposition for the City of Apache Junction on how to handle homelessness than provide the perfect permanent solution.

This project ultimately sought to gather a guiding narrative through the compilation and comparisons of relatable neighboring communities that have already begun the process of trial and error regarding homelessness. Demographic data and city promoted approaches were gathered to give a better understanding of what other relatable communities are pursuing in this area. The cities selected for this data comparison are local neighboring cities to the City of Apache Junction that focus on both demographically similar statistics as well as population size differences to allow for more information to be shared. While there are certain limitations to this study, because of resource and time constraints, this report has been designed to be a suggestion to the City of Apache Junction in attempts to aid them as they pursue this issue.

Findings

The descriptive statistics and observations from this study are based off of the research done online and through scholarly articles. Much of the research takes place between 2010 and 2017. In Table 3 you can see data collected on what type of housing and how much housing is available state wide in Arizona. In Table 4 the average age demographic for homelessness is provided. In Table 5 the ethnicity percentages for Arizona's homeless demographic is shown.

Table 3: Program Types

Program Type *People were counted more than once if they attended more than one program type within reporting range	Count	Percentage
Coordinated Assessment	14,225	44%
Emergency Shelter	15,321	47%
Homelessness Prevention	565	2%
Permanent Housing	704	2%
Permanent Supportive Housing	4,867	15%
Rapid Re-housing	3,450	11%
Services Only	5,334	16%
Street Outreach	7,923	24%
Transitional Housing	5,644	17%

Table 4: Age

Age	Count	Percentage
Under 5	2,566	8%
5- 12	3,832	12%
13 -17	1,972	6%
18 - 24	3,199	10 %
25-34	5,238	16%
35-44	4,937	15%
45-54	5,712	18%
55 - 61	3,281	10%
62+	1,624	5%

Table 5: Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
Non-hispanic/Latino	24,137	74%
Hispanic/ Latino	8,034	25%
Client doesn't know	1	0%
Client Refused	1	0%
Other	271	1%

Going off of the basic demographics that create Arizona's homeless population, it is now possible to look and analyze what services Arizona's homeless population chooses to use the most. In Table 6, economic services are given a percentage based off how much they are used by Arizona's entire homeless population. In Table 7, it specifically addresses the percent of homeless individuals that are looking for or want housing along with basic personal income situations.

Table 6: Services

Social Services	Homeless percentage that uses service
Emergency food assistance	59%
Shower Program	35%
Water or Respite Station	28%
Shelter	62%
Employment Program	27%
Soup Kitchen or Dining Hall	51%
Health Care Services	38%
Community Voicemail	11%
Case Management	38%
Rent Assistance	6%
Utility Assistance	5%

Table 7: Housing

Interest & Individual revenue sources		Percentage
Interested in finding Housing		91%
On housing waiting list		19%
Working		14%
Has income		11%
	Pension	1%
	Worker Compensation	1%
	Veteran Disability	1%
	Unemployment	2%
	Veteran Pension	1%
	Private Disability	0%
	Retirement	1%
	Food stamps	1%
	Other sources of income	22%

As shown in the above data tables, the homeless are using the resources provided to them whether they be government funded or sponsored by non-profits. According the research done in the literature review, larger cities are beginning to incorporate the need for additional housing, safe havens, and resources facilities within their districts. According to multiple scholarly articles, when the homeless are approached as victims of the situation instead of criminals or nuisance, there will be a decrease in the homeless population. As noted in previous literature, criminalizing the homeless pushes individuals into chronic homelessness or makes their situation worse. By making laws or ordinances that prohibit them from standing, sleeping, or panhandling in certain areas because they are an eye-sore gives the individuals petty criminal records that impede them from getting jobs, housing, and government services. Toro and Janisse in 2002

made it very clear that chronic homelessness is a pattern and symptom of city and state governments criminalizing the homelessness and stress how un-effective the tactic is. If more housing was provided, the homeless all through the state have shown interest in using it or are currently pursuing it. Another key fact made by National Alliance to End Homelessness in the literature review section, is that while people might be homeless that does not mean they are not currently on a waiting list to receive housing. Waiting lists and requirements to obtain transitional housing are becoming too steep or unreachable due to high demand and lack of supply.

When it comes to the City of Apache Junction specifically compared to other demographically similar cities, it is difficult to give exact numbers. All of the small, newer cities in the state of Arizona have a lack of resources to create the needed facilities and programs that would help alleviate the homeless issue. In the Current Study section the cities of Apache Junction, Queen Creek, Marana, and Oro Valley all face similar situations but very little has actually gone in to effect or been done directly by the cities. Most of the services and shelters provided are done by non-profits. In the situation of Flagstaff, because of their drastically larger homeless population is due to nicer climate, they have distanced themselves and shown that by addressing the needs of the homeless and offering them services, they were able to maintain both the community expectations and homeless population with small decreases in homeless population size each year. The larger cities within Arizona that were compared to the City of Apache Junction might have more resources but are showing that they are actively pursuing solutions every year. The biggest goal amongst the three larger cities is to offer more transitional housing, rent assistance, or short-term shelters as shown in the Valley of the Sun United Way goals.

Recommendations

The most obvious and immediate realizations that occurred in the Findings section were the desperate need for housing and recognition that the cities facing a homeless crisis are not within reach of the programs and services being provided. Because there are only a hand full of internal programs or services being offered within the City of Apache Junction limits it becomes difficult for individuals to physically reach the help they need. If a city is facing an increase in homeless population but services, shelters, and programs are not within the city limits, then funding and organization of non-profits needs to begin. This section of the study attempts to

combine the objectives given in the project while simultaneously provide context to the research question posed in the first half of the paper. As the recommendation section continues, the format will change to specifically address pieces of the research question to ensure that it has been answered with the best ability. An implementation plan will follow.

RQ 1: Will more police presence in areas with high crime rates decrease illegal activity done by the transient population?

As discussed in *Transient Criminality: A Model of Stressed Induced Crime* by Boyanowsky in 1992, the answer is yes. More police will always lead to a decrease in illegal activity. A financial burden however then falls onto the city since they would then have to hire more staff or overwork the current employees. The best decision that the City of Apache Junction can make right now, based off of research done by scholarly articles, is to not criminalize the homeless and offer them the opportunity to see a service or program counselor. Addressed in this project's prompt was the need for chronic homelessness to end. By arresting homeless individuals a city would only exacerbate the issue. As an example, it's reasonable to not want people sleeping on private property, in parks, national forest or state land, because it's unflattering for the city but it shouldn't be illegal. When it comes to actual crime like burglary or petty theft, then the city should take action and target the areas more affected. If criminals like to target homes near the city limits and away from the main roads, then encourage more officers to sweep the area more often or make an agreement with neighboring cities to keep an eye on the troubled areas if it's happening close to their border as well.

RQ 2: If more programs and resources for the homeless were created, would there by a decrease in population size?

Programs and services such as food banks, employment programs, health care services, shower programs, case management and rent assistance will encourage people facing poverty to stay on the right track. The main idea behind offering these types of services is to show support for individuals who are trying to get their life back on track. Homeless programs and services were specifically created to help the problem and ensure that once someone did receive housing, they remained employed or off the streets. Currently, the City of Apache Junction's social services are in the double digits. The issue in this situation is that most of the programs and services that the City of Apache Junction recommends on their city website are hotlines and county or state-wide services. This means that a majority of the services giving are not physically

there or close enough that homeless individuals could talk to someone face to face. By distancing the support lines, it makes the task of helping people more difficult and less likely to succeed. The City of Apache Junction does have some non-profit agencies trying to give the homeless population what it needs to get out of poverty, but the stress for small, local non-profits is becoming too much if the homeless problem is getting worse. The best course of action here is to invite a large, well known non-profit like the YMCA or UMOM to Apache Junction and see if they could assist with the community needs. By bringing even one "big named" non-profit in to the city, the City of Apache Junction is most likely going to see a decrease in population size and decrease in illegal activity. As shown in Table 6: Social Services, people utilize a service if it is available. Apache Junction would benefit most from employment programs and case management services based off the homeless demographic they have. Funding a team of social workers or non-profit counselors that are invested in the lives of the homeless and follow through with them to try and ensure success would be a great addition.

RQ 3: Can transitional housing facility in the City of Apache Junction have a direct impact the number of illegal activities originating from the homeless population and help decrease the homeless population?

Yes. Transitional housing, low-rent housing, emergency housing, at-risk youth housing, single person housing, family housing, senior housing are all types of housing that would immediately decrease the criminal activity going on in the City of Apache Junction. Currently the City of Apache Junction has zero forms of shelter or housing for homeless. It was shown in the Findings section that the entire homeless population all across Arizona is seeking or is currently waiting for housing. It is unfair to suggest that the homeless population needs to be solved when a majority of immediate resources are not within city limits and there are no shelters, half-way housing, or any form of housing nearby. Transitional housing, as supported by multiple articles in the literature review and found data, would immediately impact the homeless population in Arizona. As suggested by Toto and Janisse (2002), The State of Homelessness Report (2016), and Solutions to Homelessness (2016), having a stable and safe home to go to takes away the stress of "surviving" that the homeless face every day. Petty theft caused by the homeless community will most likely stop since they no longer feel the need to steal in order to rent a hotel, get food, or receive any other human necessities. When an individual is placed in a home you give them structure, you give them something they're afraid to lose, you give them

something to work for (Solutions to Homelessness, 2016). The best recommendation for the City of Apache Junction if they can't create any form of housing is to offer a form of transport service to the nearest shelters in cities close by.

Implementation Plan

The best course of action that the City of Apache Junction can take is to start small and begin integrating non-profits in to their community that are geared towards assisting the homeless. Non-profits are great resource for two reasons. The biggest reason is because they do not cost the government any money. They generate their own revenue off of sponsorship or fundraising. If the City of Apache Junction is concerned about budgeting, non-profits would be able to sustain themselves and still contribute to the solution. The second reason is that non-profits can be specifically created to do one thing or many. Throughout the paper and Findings section it was concluded that the best form of action that can be taken to alleviate the homeless issue is to create more transitional housing. This is a large task for any city to take on and one that non-profits can help with. Earlier in this section it was noted that by introducing organizations like UMOM or the YMCA into their city, the City of Apache Junction could have non-profit transitional housing. But since integrating such a large organization could be difficult, creating and supporting small non-profits would be a wiser direction. The City of Apache Junction currently has non-profits in their community but could use more geared towards housing assistance, where they help individuals seek and apply for transitional housing, or employment opportunities. Depending on how quickly the City pf Apache Junction wants these types of services would create the accurate timeline for their creation. In Appendix A: Integrating Non-Profits a basic timeline flow chart of an ideal non-profit situation is given.

As noted in the research proposal of this paper, the City of Apache Junction is trying to show the public that they are implementing change and trying to solve the issue of homelessness. By incorporating more non-profits the community could not only see work being done to reach the solution, but they can also participate through volunteer work. Volunteering is an easy way for the community to get involve and educate at the same time.

When addressing the crime being created by the homeless population in Apache Junction a great tool that the city can use is sharing of resources between themselves and neighboring communities. By reaching out to neighboring cities like Mesa or San Tan Valley, the City of Apache Junction can express their needs for more police assistance in high crime areas within a

certain mileage of their city limits. Not only could this create or further solidify relationships but could also lead to the City of Apache Junction assisting with things that Mesa or San Tan Valley, as examples, could need as well. By creating this sharing of resources arrangement, the City of Apache Junction would be able to have more law enforcement without having to hire more people or cause their current employees to work longer hours. Because there would be more law enforcement the City of Apache Junction would see a decrease in crime being committed by the homeless and also make their communities feel safer. In Appendix B: Sharing Resources, a thorough flow chart timeline of an ideal resource sharing situation is given.

Conclusion

From this paper the City of Apache Junction should be able to draw a better understanding of their homeless demographic. They currently are trying to help forty five to fifty homeless individuals get off the streets that are the result of family violence, drug abuse, or poor physical or mental health. The state of Arizona has a plethora of services and programs that can be found state wide but the City of Apache Junction is struggling to find a solution for their immediate homeless crisis. In the literature review it was discussed how transitional housing can be the solution to this crisis and how the impacts of housing can alleviate the stress inflicted on both the community and individuals facing homelessness. Transitional housing offers a secure and sustainable environment for the homeless to seek employment, more assistance or attend programs geared towards education or trade building. Unfortunately transitional housing is made unavailable due to the lack of facilities and regulations put on the existing housing units in Arizona. In the Methods and Findings section of this paper we learned more about relatable communities that are similar to the City of Apache Junction and how they handle their homeless population. In the Findings we learned the largest cause of homelessness, what services were being provided state wide, and what percentage of homeless are looking for or want housing. Knowing that 91% of homeless populations want housing and that 19% are currently on a waiting list is a key indicator that there are not enough resources available to solve the issue. To handle the City of Apache Junction's homelessness issue it was recommended to start implementing or creating more non-profit groups geared towards offering emergency or transitional housing. By bringing more non-profits into the City of Apache Junction, the city supports both the homeless by giving them assistance and the community by actively showing

them they are trying to solve the issue while giving everyone the opportunity to educate themselves on the issue.

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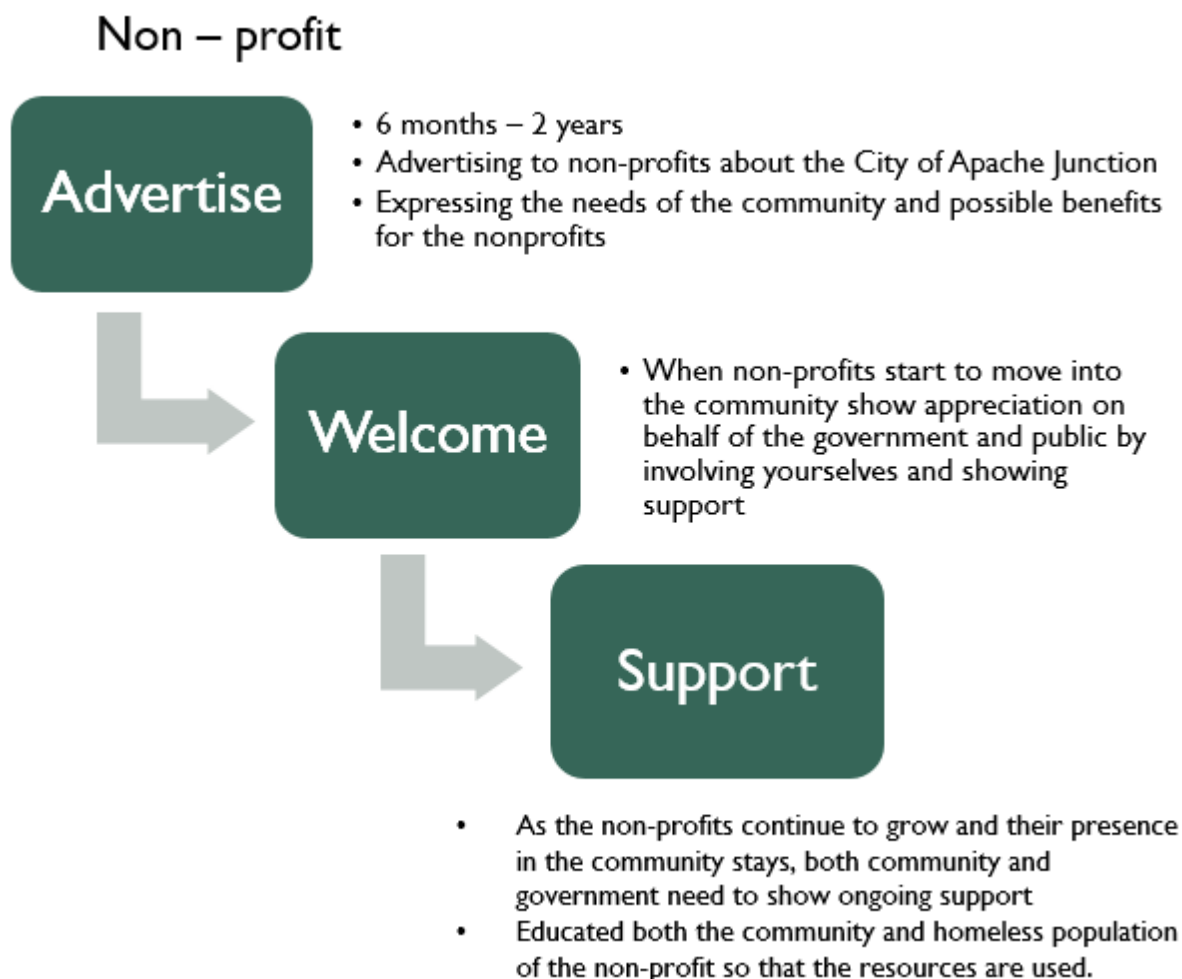
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Appendix

Appendix A: Integrating Non-Profits

Non – profit

Advertise
- 6 months – 2 years
- Advertising to non-profits about the City of Apache Junction
- Expressing the needs of the community and possible benefits for the nonprofits

Welcome
- When non-profits start to move into the community show appreciation on behalf of the government and public by involving yourselves and showing support

Support
- As the non-profits continue to grow and their presence in the community stays, both community and government need to show ongoing support
- Educated both the community and homeless population of the non-profit so that the resources are used.

This is a very basic outline of some steps that can be taken to integrate non-profits into the City of Apache Junction. Descriptions bulleted next to each of the three areas give a better understanding of what needs to be done during each step. The timeline for this to be successful could take between one and five years. Getting the non-profits into the city is the most important part and creating a market for them is necessary. By showing the non-profits there is a need and that both the community and local government supports their business then the non-profits will most likely come and stay to help alleviate the homeless population.

Appendix B: Sharing Resources

Seek Approval	
City of Apache Junction government	Public

Initiate Conversation	
Mesa	San Tan Valley

Express Needs	
Apache Junction	Chosen City

Create agreement	
Written	Verbal

Implement resource sharing	
More police	Resource chosen city wants

Maintain	
Relationships	Agreed resources
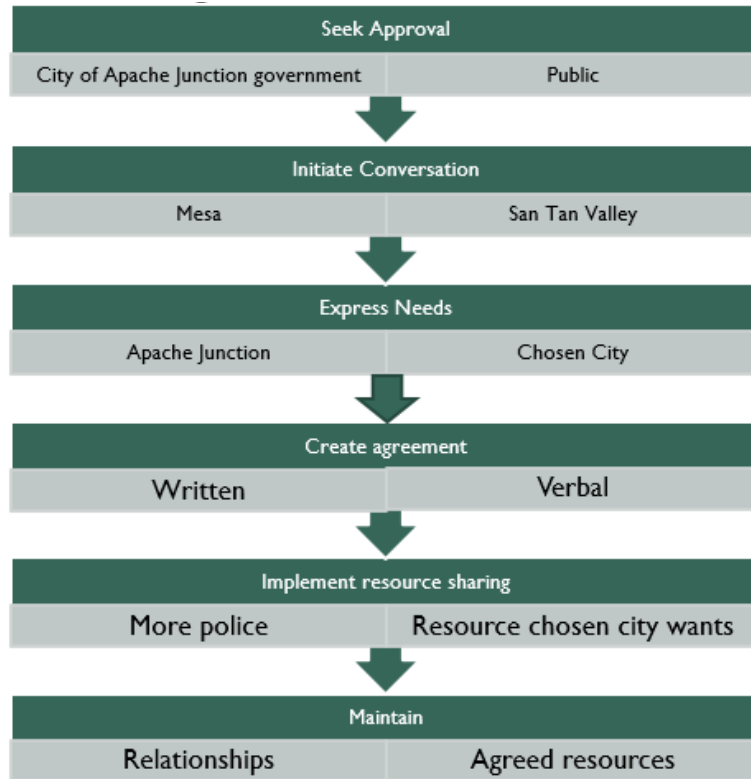
Appendix B goes into more detail than the non-profit process because it requires more communication and teamwork. Although the process is laid out, the first step is to seek approval from the City of Apache Junction and Public. This is necessary to ensure that everyone is on board and no one is left out of the conversation. The next step is to initiate conversation with the neighboring cities, Mesa and San Tan Valley are used as an example here, to express the needs and mutual benefits this type of relationship could have. Create an agreement could take any form such a written policy or signed ordinance, as long as there is a mutual understanding and clear set of expectations. Implementing resource sharing would be the act of receiving more police monitoring within the City of Apache Junction limits and providing the chosen city with whatever reasonable request they might have. Lastly, it is important to maintain this relationship in order to keep the resource sharing. This process would take longer than that of integrating non-profits since so many council meetings and hearings would have to happen on an internal city level and inclusive level.

Understanding the Federal, State and Local Resources Dedicated to Homelessness in Apache

Junction

Joan Serviss Arizona State University

Abstract

The issue of homelessness is often called a "wicked" problem. Funding allocated to the issue of homelessness in Arizona alone is a tangled web of federal funding pass-through, state funding subject to political favor, differing recipients – either nonprofits or local governments, and restrictive and narrowed eligible uses of dollars. In fiscal year 2016, Arizona had over $136 million dollars to dedicate to homelessness and housing support services. At the same time, 9,682 men, women, and children were suffering from homelessness. The purpose of this research proposal will be to evaluate the financial resources that go towards tackling homelessness in the state of Arizona, with special attention to what resources Apache Junction, a city in Arizona, has to address the issue of its citizens without homes. Based on existing literature, I will look at what impact an increase in state and local funds could have on meeting the needs of Apache Junction's homeless population. In addition, the research proposal will identify policy actions that Apache Junction officials can or can continue to embark on to increase funding for homeless support services.

The history of homelessness in the Americas predates when the first Europeans displaced indigenous people. However, not until the late 1970s when the combination of state mental hospital closures, tens of thousands of veterans returning from Vietnam scarred from battle, and federal cuts in housing slashed the stock of affordable housing, did the problem of homelessness become a visible social problem.

The purpose of this research proposal will be to evaluate the financial resources that go towards tackling homelessness in the state of Arizona, with special attention to what resources Apache Junction, a city in Arizona, has to address the issue of its citizens without homes. Based on existing literature, I will look at what impact an increase in state and local funds could have on meeting the needs of Apache Junction's homeless population. In addition, the research proposal will identify policy actions that Apache Junction officials can embark on to increase funding for homeless support services.

Background

In America, estimates are that about 550,000 people experience homelessness on any given night according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) point-it-time street and shelter count (Henry, Watt, Rosenthal, and Shiviji, p. 1). These estimates only capture the homeless on a single night in January; over 1.4 million people experienced sheltered homelessness each year (Henry, Shivji, deSousa, and Cohen, p. 8). In Arizona, according to the 2016 annual point-in-time street and shelter homeless count, 9,682 men, women, and children experienced homelessness (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AZ). Apache Junction's 2016 point-in-time estimate counted 43 individuals experiencing homelessness within the city limits. (Basta, p. 44). According to the Arizona Department of Economic Security, an estimated 40,745 people statewide received some level of support towards ending homelessness in 2016. (p. 4).

Homeless programs take the form of providing shelter to those who are unable to secure other means of housing. The most common option for a homeless family or individual is an emergency homeless shelter. Shelters offer beds but typically few supportive services. Shelters for individuals tend to place many beds in large open spaces, while family shelters provide each family with a separate room. As a result, family shelters face greater capacity constraints and most maintain waitlists. Emergency shelters serve 70 percent of those utilizing homeless programs (Popov, p. 11). Individuals and families cannot stay in emergency shelters indefinitely. Therefore, they are referred to homeless programs providing more intensive services. Traditionally, this has been in the form of transitional housing, which is housing coupled with a wide range of support services from substance abuse treatment to job search assistance. If transitional housing cannot help a household or individual attain housing independence, the next array of services is permanent supportive housing, which provides the individual or household with an apartment and access to supportive services.

Society has chosen to respond to homelessness in the form of governmental, faith-based, and philanthropic organizations providing funding to nonprofit organizations to deliver homeless support services and shelter. One of the major sources of funding for homeless services comes from the federal government. In 1987, Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the first legislation of its kinds specifically addressing homelessness, to fund the explosion of emergency shelters across the country (National Coalition for the Homeless, p. 1).

Today, nearly $2 billion dollars in federal funds are administered by HUD and distributed across the United States to regional administrative and geographic units called "Continuums of Care" (CoC) (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Aug. 2017). In Arizona, there are three Continuums of Care covering three geographic areas: the Maricopa CoC, which covers Maricopa County; the Tucson-Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness CoC, which covers Pima County; and the Balance of State CoC, which represents the thirteen remaining counties in the state of Arizona.

The state of Arizona funds a homelessness response by directing state taxes and by channeling federal funds through the state Departments of Economic Security, Housing, and Arizona's Medicaid agency, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). Finally, because homelessness is believed to be a local issue, and is ranked by local elected leaders as an issue they must address (Kellar, 2017), local governments may direct some of their federal block grant funds towards the issue. These federal funds help states and local governments meet their housing and community development needs, which can include homelessness services, and are distributed to local projects based on public feedback.

Yet even with the funding streams listed above, homelessness continues to be an issue that plagues communities across the nation. With income inequalities rising, there is a growing gap between the cost of housing and the salaries individuals have available to pay rent, creating an affordable housing crisis that distresses communities, and affects many people, regardless of race, gender, or political ideology. Couple the diminishing supply of affordable housing with the increasing strain on federal, state, and local budgetary resources available to address housing and support services, and the issue of homelessness looms ever greater over communities, including cities like Apache Junction.

As discussed, this research will evaluate the existing resources that go towards tackling homelessness in the state of Arizona, with special attention to the resources Apache Junction can dedicate to the issue. Included in the research will be an outline of policy choices that Apache Junction officials may chose to explore to increase financial resources for homeless support services.

The paper is outlined as follows: A literature review of related studies that have evaluated the impact of increased funding on homeless services. Next, I will outline in detail the funding sources to address homeless services at the federal, state, and local level in Arizona. I

will then compare the available resources to what the City of Apache Junction allocates to address homelessness. I will conclude by providing policy options for the City of Apache Junction to consider allocating additional resources to address homelessness.

Literature Review

Homelessness is a complex problem that manifests in all societies. This intractable and odious issue of homelessness has received attention from policy makers and researchers over the years. Government organizations, researchers, and policy analysts have examined how widespread homelessness is, the causes associated with homelessness, and the costs of providing services for this vulnerable population. Some, but not a wealth of information, is available on whether the number of people experiencing homelessness can be decreased through increased housing assistance funding and policy choices.

In an important study that looked at the "wickedness" of homelessness, Brown, Keast, Waterhouse and Murphy (2009), looked at innovation as a solution to the issue of homelessness. A key takeaway from their study is that for there to be progress in ending homelessness, adequate resources must be present, but also relational capital must be built between stakeholders. The authors advocate for a networked response of experts in the field dedicated to "bust silos" and coordinate to counteract fragmented responses to homelessness that too often results in competition for scarce shelter options. Instead, they advocate for a multi-layered comprehensive response that utilizes wide-ranging solutions to aligning information, resources, and expertise.

A collection of studies, including Culhane, Metraux, and Hadley (2002) and Flaming, Mantsunaga, and Burns (2009) have looked at the cost savings to federal and local governments in giving the most vulnerable chronically homeless individuals free apartments as part of the permanent supportive housing program offering. These studies bolster the popularity of the "housing first" philosophy, which advocates providing housing to chronically homeless households and individuals – typically considered harder to serve and medically vulnerable - in conjunction with intensive support services.

Lucas (2017) examines the relationship between federal homelessness funding and homeless counts in recent years. According to Lucas, an increase in federal homelessness funding creates an increase in the sheltered homeless population; that an additional $1 thousand

in funding per 10,000 individuals corresponds to a 0.309 person increase in the rate of homelessness. Lucas suggests that federal funding that funds emergency shelter will not reduce short-term homelessness because the sheltered population size is limited by shelter availability; increased funding expands shelter availability, which increases the potential size of the sheltered population. He continues by describing the homeless households living on the margins who have limited contact with formal homelessness infrastructure. Increased funding may facilitate that contact, thus raising the homeless count by expanding bed inventory. Additionally, expanded outreach and increased local coordination may enable more accurate counts of unsheltered homelessness. Lucas' results show an increasing minimum cost of reducing homelessness over time. This makes reasonable sense as the unsheltered homeless population has been decreasing over the years, thus the pool of remaining unsheltered homeless individuals may be costlier to house and serve.

Popov (2016) looked at behavioral responses to program generosity to study the tradeoffs in expanding homelessness assistance. He too found that with increased service provision, there was a reduction in unsheltered homelessness. A permanent $100,000 annual increase in homeless assistance decreased the size of the unsheltered population by 35 individuals. He also found that while increased program service through additional homelessness funding helps house otherwise unsheltered families, it also attracted homeless families in need of services from outside the prescribed area.

These findings must be taken into account by local government leaders on how to plan and spend new and existing resources that can be used to address homelessness. This also begs the question of prioritizing homelessness funding given the competing priorities local governments face. Berman and West (1997) looked at municipalities and their attitudes and preparedness in responding to homeless programs. They find that the major driving factor of preparedness and public officials' perceptions are significantly affected by the federal governments' opinions and funding prioritization.

Yet a community's response to the issue is not a federal issue, instead it is greatly affected by the views of citizens and community leaders. A significant study that looked at community response to homelessness, Dowell and Farmer (1992) suggests a city-sponsored task force be created made up of city personnel, service providers, a local university, and citizens. Once created, this task force can serve as the convening body to orchestrate needs assessments,

surveys, develop policy recommendations and weigh in on municipal government budgeting, otherwise known as participatory budgeting. Dowell and Farmer's research highlighted the friction between different levels of governments and their perceived responsibilities in addressing homelessness, further compounded by the federal government devolving responsibility to local governments and funding through block grants.

Participatory budgeting was the subject of research by Zhang and Liao (2011), which looked at the budgeting process as a two-way dialogue between governments and its citizenry. The research also surveyed municipal managers and elected officials for their attitudes and perceptions on the community's influence in the budgeting process. They found that both mayors and managers may shape the process of participatory budgeting, but with different motivations. Municipal managers may encourage participatory budgeting because they think the participation is affordable and citizens are interested – creating buy-in on the budgeting outcomes, while mayors would support participatory budgeting if they highly value public participation in general.

Data and Methodology

Data

I gather data from various sources to construct an original data set of available financial resources that can be used to address homelessness in Arizona. For the purpose of this funding evaluation, I include only funds that have a direct impact on homelessness and housing services. Using Abraham Malsow's Hierarchy of Need (Burton, 2012) as the lens to weigh various government funding sources, I concentrate on funding that addresses the lower two tiers of Maslow's Hierarchy pyramid - rest and shelter. Therefore, funding from the state's departments of Economic Security, Education, and Veterans' Services that goes towards employment, education, utilities, and childcare for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or housing instability are not included in this analysis.

Arizona Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services

The state's Department of Economic Security (DES) oversees programs and services in Arizona that strengthen individuals and families, increase self-sufficiency, and develop capacity in the community (Arizona Department of Economic Security, About Us). DES coordinates and distributes financial resources from state taxes; from an allocation of Arizona's Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant; and from a distribution of proceeds from Arizona's lottery profits. In fiscal year 2016, this allocation totaled $3,522,600 and assisted 11,517 individuals and families with shelter and homeless prevention services statewide (Joint Legislative Budget Committee, p. 129).

Arizona Department of Economic Security's Domestic Violence Prevention Program

Similar to the homeless program it administers, DES coordinates and distributes funding from state taxes; an allocation of Arizona's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant, and a portion of fines and fees collected from Arizona Superior or Justice courts for individuals found guilty of domestic or family offenses, harassment and stalking. In fiscal year 2016, this allocation totaled $13,903,700 and served 21,407 women and children with shelter, transitional housing and legal aid statewide (Joint Legislative Budget Committee, p. 129).

Arizona Department of Economic Security's Emergency Solutions Grant Program

DES works in collaboration with the state Department of Housing to administer and oversee HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program. According to HUD rules, (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, CFDA Number 14.231) the ESG funds go to engage homeless individuals and families living on the street; improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families; help operate these shelters; provide essential services to shelter residents; rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families; and prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless. In fiscal year 2016, the state departments of Economic Security and Housing received and granted $4,403,372 (U.S. Housing and Urban Development, FY16 Allocations) serving 11,517 individuals (Romero, p. Statement of Federal Funds, p. 218).

Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants

The state's Department of Housing ensures that affordable housing programs exist and funds prevention assistance to address housing needs in the state (Arizona Department of Housing, About ADOH). Federal funds from HUD in the form of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are passed from the department to entitlement and non-entitlement communities.

CDBG provides grant opportunities for community revitalization to ensure decent housing, a suitable living environment and economic opportunity for Arizonans. Each local

community that receives CDBG funds seeks feedback from its citizenry to determine what activities it will fund, as long as it meets the goal of providing: benefits to persons of low and moderate income, aid in the prevention of elimination of slums or blight, or meeting other community development needs that the local community is unable to fund on its own. Since, according to HUD (U.S.Department of Housing and Urban Development, Notice CPD-03-14) individuals experiencing homelessness would be classified as low-income populations, CDBG can be used for homelessness assistance. In fiscal year 2016, the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) received $10,578,395 ((U.S. Housing and Urban Development, FY16 Allocations) in CDBG funds to grant to assist 1,472,503 Arizona citizens living in eighteen communities (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, CDBG Accomplishment Reports).

Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Projects

In fiscal year 2016, a portion of HUD's CDBG funds were competitively available to non-entitlement communities. A total of $1,373.054 was available in Arizona for activities that mirror the CDBG national objectives (Arizona Department of Housing, CDBG Grant Program).

Arizona Department of Housing's HOME Investment Partnership Program

Also administered by the state Department of Housing, HOME Investment Partnership funds are allocated to participating jurisdictions in Arizona. They can be used to fund a wide range of housing activities, including building, buying, or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership. HOME funds may also be used for providing direct rental assistance to low- income individuals. Similar to CDBG funds, local communities can use their HOME funds to address the local challenges of homelessness (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Notice CPD 03-08). In fiscal year 2016, the Arizona Department of Housing received $4,804,047 (U.S. Housing and Urban Development, FY16 Allocations) in HOME funds to serve 138 low-income households (Arizona Department of Housing, Consolidated Plan 2015-2019).

Arizona Department of Housing's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS

ADOH receives funding from HUD to provide rental subsidies and services to household affected by HIV/AIDS, a program known as Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA). Funding is formula-based on incidence of HIV/AIDS in particular geographic areas. Funds may be used for housing and social services, primarily for low-income persons. In fiscal year 2016 the state department of Housing received $239,786 (U.S. Housing and Urban

Development, FY16 Allocations) and assisted 60 households affected by HIV/AIDS (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AZ HOPWA Performance Profile).

Arizona Department of Housing's National Housing Trust Fund

Enacted in 2008, but never fully funded until 2016 due to the housing crisis that besieged the nation and led to an economic recession, the national Housing Trust Fund is financed by a portion of new mortgage loans from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, government-sponsored enterprises that play a role in the financing of our nation's home mortgage industry (U.S. Government Publications Office, Federal Register Vol. 81, No. 87). The Housing Trust Fund is a new affordable housing program, administered at the federal level and governed by the state Department of Housing in Arizona, that serves as a funding match or complementary funding stream to bolster existing federal, state and local funds in the effort "to increase and preserve the supply of decent, safe, and sanitary affordable housing for extremely low- and very low-income households, including homeless families." (U.S. Government Publications Office, Federal Register Vol. 81, No. 87). Beginning in fiscal year 2016, Arizona received $3,000,000 from the national Housing Trust Fund. The state Department of Housing is in the process of awarding those funds through a competitive process.

Arizona Department of Housing's State Housing Trust Fund

The state Housing Trust Fund is an Arizona-specific state resource devoted to addressing Arizona's housing needs. Created in 1988, it is funded from the sale of unclaimed property, which can be assets such as stocks or savings accounts abandoned by the owners, often due to a death without a will. The state Housing Trust Fund was initially funded by 35% of unclaimed property proceeds, and then increased to 55% to better address rural housing needs. Prior to the Great Recession, the Housing Trust Fund received over $30 million and was a flexible resource, meeting both homelessness support and coupling with federal resources to increase the stock of affordable housing. However, due to state budgetary constraints, in 2010, the state Housing Trust Fund was capped at $2.5 million. The $2.5 million in funding now only serves as the state match required by HUD's federal funding (Arizona Housing Coalition, n.d.).

Arizona Department of Health Services' Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) works to promote and protect the health of Arizona's children and adults (Arizona Department of Health Services, Home Page).

Prior to 2017, ADHS was the state agency that received funds from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, for the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) grant. In fiscal year 2017, management of the PATH grant moved to the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), which is Arizona's Medicaid Agency (AHCCCS, Governor Ducey's Administrative Simplifications).

The PATH grant provides financial assistance to Arizona to support services for individuals who are suffering from serious mental illness, or serious mental illness and substance abuse, who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Programs and activities include outreach services; screening and diagnostic treatment services; habilitation and rehabilitation services; community mental health services; alcohol or drug treatment services; and case management services (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, PATH). In fiscal year 2016, ADHS received $1,173,429 and served 1,960 individuals (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, PATH Statewide Annual Report for FY 2016).

Arizona Department of Health Services' Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals

During and ending in fiscal year 2016, ADHS administered the Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI – States). Back in 2013, SAMHSA initiated a CABHI-States grant program for up to 3 years to states to enhance and develop health outcomes for individuals with substance use or co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders who experience chronic homelessness. Then in 2016, the CABHI program was expanded to include additional communities. Funding was provided to enhance or develop the infrastructure needed to provide accessible, comprehensive, evidence-based treatment services including, permanent supportive housing, peer supports, and other critical services for veterans, youth, and families experiencing homelessness or chronic homelessness and who also have serious mental illnesses or serious emotional disturbances, substance use disorders or co-occurring substance use and mental disorders. While the CABHI-States grant ended in fiscal year 2016, the CABHI-Expansion funding service to expand geographic service area statewide to include such counties as Maricopa, Pima, La Paz and Mohave. The enhanced project scope provided supportive housing and a comprehensive array of services to serve a total of 35 people in the expanded

service area while also improving statewide infrastructure and capacity through local, community-based behavioral health service providers based on the location and choice of the individual. In fiscal year 2016, ADHS received a total of $711,818 for the CABHI State-Enhancement grant, collectively serving 35 individuals experiencing homelessness and substance abuse or a behavioral health diagnosis (D. Valenzuela, personal communication, November 2, 2017).

HUD's Continuum of Care Program

As previously mentioned, HUD distributes nearly $2 billion dollars in federal funds regionally across the United States to administrative and geographic units called "Continuums of Care" (CoC). In Arizona, there are three CoCs: the Maricopa CoC, which covers Maricopa County; the Tucson-Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) CoC, which covers Pima County; and the Balance of State CoC, which represents the thirteen remaining counties. Each CoC must assign a collaborative applicant - an administrative entity that collects and submits the CoC application for funding, among other administrative and governing responsibilities (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Continuum of Care Program). Maricopa's CoC operates under the administrative guidance of the Maricopa Association of Governments, a council of government that looks at regional issues such as air quality, transportation, and human services (Maricopa Association of Governments, About MAG). In fiscal year 2016, the Maricopa CoC received $25,418,465. The Tucson-Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness CoC is staffed by Community Partners, Inc., a Tucson-area behavioral health nonprofit (Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness, About Us). The TPCH CoC received $8,414,896 in fiscal year 2016. Finally, the Balance of State Continuum of Care is overseen by the Arizona Department of Housing, and received $3,999,989 in fiscal year 2016.

Methodology

Entitlement & Non-Entitlement Communities	AZ Coordinated Homeless Program (DES)	AZ Domestic Violence Program (DES)	HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant (DES/ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants Nonentitlement & Entitlement (ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Project (ADOH)	HUD's HOME Investment Program (ADOH)	HUD's Housing Opportunities for People w/AIDS (ADOH)	HUD's National Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	AZ State Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	SAMHSA Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (ADHS/AHCCCS)	SAMHSA Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals-State&Expanded (ADHS/AHCCCS)	HUD's Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grants	TOTAL
Arizona (Statewide)	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$1,685,724	$10,578,395	$1,373,054	$4,804,047	$239,786	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818		$43,492,
Avondale				$574,039									$574,
Casa Grande				$318,914									$318,
Chandler				$1,283,590									$1,283,
Douglas				$165,853									$165,
Flagstaff				$599,050									$599,
Gilbert				$856,245									$856,
Glendale			$189,758	$2,200,786									$2,390,
Maricopa County			$239,473	$2,735,554		$3,324,501							$6,299,
Mesa			$287,998	$3,224,529		$1,002,129							$4,514,
Peoria				$773,274									$773,
Phoenix			$1,306,316	$14,517,493		$4,136,102	$1,842,885						$21,802,
Pima County			$233,372	$2,613,490									$2,846,
Prescott				$233,755									$233,
Scottsdale				$941,577									$941,
Sierra Vista				$218,415									$218,
Surprise				$585,139									$585,
Tempe				$1,374,482									$1,374,
Tucson			$460,731	$5,031,253		$2,532,186	$456,639						$8,480,
Yuma				$750,576									$750,
Maricopa CoC (covers Maricopa County)												$25,418,465	$25,418,
TPCH CoC (covers Pima County)												$8,414,896	$8,414,
Balance of State CoC (covers 13 remaining counties)												$3,999,989	$3,999,
FY 2016 Total	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$4,403,372	$49,576,409	$1,373,054	$15,798,965	$2,539,310	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818	$37,833,350	$136,336,

The data displayed is funding that is available to all communities in Arizona. Federal funding from HUD and other federal agencies are often distributed to "entitlement communities" and "non-entitlement communities". Entitlement communities are larger cities and urban counties, whereas non-entitlement communities are areas and cities with populations of less than 50,000 (U.S. Housing and Urban Development, State Community Development Block Grant). As of July 2016, the City of Apache Junction, with a population of 39,954 (U.S. Census, 2016) is considered a non-entitlement community.

Therefore, a more accurate representation of funding that may be available to Apache Junction and communities like it would be to limit the data to funding that comes to non-entitlement communities through the state, either as a federal pass-through or through an allocation of state taxes, as well as the funding that comes to the Balance of State CoC, that manages the thirteen rural counties in Arizona, including Pinal County, in which the City of Apache Junction primarily exists.

Entitlement & Non- Entitlement Communities	AZ Coordinated Homeless Program (DES)	AZ Domestic Violence Program (DES)	HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant (DES/ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants Nonentitlement & Entitlement (ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Project (ADOH)	HUD's HOME Investment Program (ADOH)	HUD's Housing Opportunities for People w/AIDS (ADOH)	HUD's National Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	AZ State Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	SAMHSA Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (ADHS/AHCCCS)	SAMHSA Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals-State&Expanded (ADHS/AHCCCS)	HUD's Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grants	TOTAL
Arizona (Statewide)	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$1,685,724	$10,578,395	$1,373,054	$4,804,047	$239,786	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818		$43,492,553
Balance of State CoC (covers 13 remaining counties)												$3,999,989	$3,999,989
FY 2016 Total	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$1,685,724	$10,578,395	$1,373,054	$4,804,047	$239,786	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818	$3,999,989	$47,492,542

City of Apache Junction's Allocation of Non-Entitlement Funds

I then reviewed Apache Junction's budgetary documents (Apache Junction Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, p. 8) and other budgetary documents included in council meeting agendas for fiscal year 2016, to compare with the available funding set, to determine the Apache Junction's allocation of HUD funds as a non-entitlement community. Apache Junction received $139,242 in non-entitlement CDBG funds and $300,000 in CDBG State Special Project funds (City of Apache Junction City Council Work Session, 2016). The total CDBG funds of $432,147 that Apache Junction receives must meet the national objectives of the CDBG grant, which can include addressing homelessness, although that is not what

Apache Junction has historically funded. Historically, the City has funded (City of Apache Junction, Community Development Block Grant Program):

- Fire protection facilities and equipment

- Library construction

- Housing Rehabilitation

- Street Improvements

- Funding to non-profits for transportation needs

- Food Bank expansion

- Senior Center kitchen improvements

- Mobile Command Unit for the Police Department

- Communication system for the Police Department

- Street lighting installation

- Downtown Redevelopment Plan

Findings

Comparing the existing funds that the state of Arizona has to respond to homelessness and housing supports with the funds that the City of Apache Junction currently directs towards the issue, one can see that Apache Junction is utilizing only 0.9 percent of Arizona's funding in response to homelessness. The pool of resources available solely to Apache Junction city officials is CDBG funds, which the City has insufficient resources to direct towards many different community objectives, one of which is homelessness. Meanwhile, the other streams of funding outlined can be utilized to address Apache Junction's homelessness issue, but may present challenges in administering or allocation by City officials.

HUD's emergency solutions grants provide the greatest flexibility in terms of a direct financial response to homelessness. As mentioned before, these funds can be used for homeless outreach, shelter operations, rapid-rehousing, and homelessness prevention. The recipients are local governments, who must work in collaboration with their local Continuum of Care to disburse the funds to homeless service providers. Arizona's coordinated homelessness and domestic violence program monies are a mixture of state taxes, federal funds, and fines and fees. This mixture of funds, overseen by the state Department of Economic Security and distributed to homeless service providers, also represents a fairly flexible source of funding for addressing

homelessness in the state, although the domestic violence funds only go to domestic violence services, even if homelessness is an outcome of the domestic violence survivor status. SAMHSA's Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) also grant funds to address homelessness, but those funds are only applicable to people who are experiencing homelessness together with a substance abuse and/or mental health disorder, and only distributed to nonprofit service providers. HUD's Community Development Block Grants, CDBG State Special Projects, and HOME Investment Partnership Program also present funding that can be used to address homelessness, but because their primary focus is on creating and preserving affordable housing, services for low-income populations, (i.e. the homeless), often take a backseat. HUD's National Housing Trust Fund is a new stream of funds that can currently only be used for new construction or rehabilitation of rental units. While its target recipient focus is to create housing for extremely low-income households, its current funding stipulations do not call for direct funding of services to individuals experiencing homelessness. Finally, HUD's Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS funding program can be used to address homelessness, but its primary funding focus is on housing assistance for individuals with HIV/AIDS.

Where there is commonality in the aforementioned funding is around citizen input. All of the funding that goes towards homelessness and housing supports in Arizona requires public comment in some fashion, either through a solicitation for written comments over a determined time period or public hearings. As Irvin and Stansbury (2004) highlight, the benefits of seeking public input is vital in properly allocating tax-payer resources and addressing large social issues:

> "At all levels of government, citizen-participation programs have been launched since the 1950s with the underlying assumption that if citizens become actively involved as participants in their democracy, the governance that emerges from this process will be more democratic and more effective. Arguments for enhanced citizen participation often rest on the merits of the process and the belief that an engaged citizenry is better than a passive citizenry. With citizen participation, formulated policies might be more realistically grounded in citizen preferences, the public might become more sympathetic evaluators of the tough decisions that government administrators have to make, and the improved support from the public might create a less divisive, combative populace to govern and regulate."

Recommendations and Conclusion

The issue of homelessness is often called a "wicked" problem. As Brown, Keast, Waterhouse, and Murphy (2009) state,

"Homelessness is a complex problem that manifests in all societies. This intractable and 'wicked' issue resists single-agency solutions and its resolution requires a large, on-going investment of financial and professional resources that few organisations can sustain."

Funding allocated to the issue of homelessness in Arizona alone is a tangled web of federal funding pass-throughs, state funding subject to political favor, differing recipients – either nonprofits or local governments, and restrictive and narrowed eligible uses of dollars. In fiscal year 2016, Arizona had over $136 million dollars to dedicate to homelessness and housing support services. At the same time, 9,682 men, women, and children were suffering from homelessness.

In reviewing the findings of the dataset, an effective standard of practice in the distribution of financial resources to address homelessness is to seek community input. All of the funding streams reviewed require that accepted practice. This practice of participatory budgeting helps identify spending priorities in the community and a "co-production" of decision making responsibility and ownership of decisions between citizens and local government officials. At the same time, competing priorities and scarce resources may negatively impact the shared decision-making process.

The other essential element in the allocation of finite resources to address the mammoth task of ending homelessness is coordination of activities. Local governments, service providers, and funders need to coordinate their efforts. One recommendation in coordinating efforts is to engage with the funding points of contact and identify different collaborations to participate in. Often times, as a precursor to the citizen participation process, elected and appointed officials, public managers, and stakeholders convene smaller group meetings to stay abreast of issues and best practices in the field. These convenings, either directed by the funder or an intermediary organization, serve as an integral avenue for making the case for increased resources for a community or jurisdiction. As Mosley (2014) writes:

"Intermediary organizations are generally not formed exclusively for the purpose

of advocacy but rather to coordinate public and private systems of care in a geographic region or field of practice and their use is growing rapidly. These collaborative organizations intentionally include participants from both the public and private sectors and serve several different functions, including helping member organizations access funding, improve services, expand the reach of their programs, and engage in policy advocacy. These groups may be important outlets for advocacy because collaboration, generally, has long been cited as an ideal way for nonprofit organizations with limited resources to become involved in policy advocacy. Research indicates 66% to 87% of nonprofits are involved in such collaborations (Salamon, Geller, & Lorentz, 2008). Nonprofits in human services fields may find themselves particularly reliant on collaboration for advocacy as they face severe time and resource constraints and must balance advocacy participation with their main activity of service provision (Salamon et al., 2008)."

Recommendations to the City of Apache Junction, through its management team, would be to recommend to the City Council that a residents subcommittee on homelessness be appointed to study and advise the "Chronic Homelessness Workgroup" staffed by City and nonprofit personnel to share with the Council community attitudes about homeless residents, with a view to supporting an additional budgetary emphasis on homelessness services.

Further, the City would be better served by gaining the assistance of the administrators of homelessness service providers to establish formal coordination behaviors. A portion of the available funding should be used for administration to assure that City personnel are connecting with community collaborations, attending trainings, and participating in regional meetings to assure that the City is getting all resources available to address its citizenry without a safe and affordable place to call home.

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Appendix A Recommendation Implementation Plan

Create a Citizen-Led Subcommittee of the Apache Junction Chronic Homelessness Workgroup. This subcommittee should consist of Apache Junction citizens and could include a representative of the business community and an individual living unstably in Apache Junction, along with a sampling of Apache Junction citizens who volunteer to serve on this subcommittee. This committee would provide recommendations to the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup on the current state of homelessness as perceived by community members, perceptions of the City's response to the issue, and would assist with advocacy on policy options and budgeting priorities that City staff must be neutral on. This subcommittee can also serve as an amplifier of the City's work on homelessness by sharing the work of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup in various community settings, up to and including sharing volunteer opportunities such as the annual point-in-time street count, and donation drives. Ideally, the initial recruitment of this subcommittee should take place during the November and December months when the issue of homelessness seems to be prevalent in the media and when folks seem to express gratitude and a commitment of giving back. Alternatively, subcommittee recruitment can coincide with the City budget hearings as a way to provide participating citizens with additional opportunities for engagement. It's recommended that this committee meet quarterly, providing direction and support without becoming administratively burdensome to members of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup and Apache Junction staff.

An additional recommendation to Apache Junction officials and staff is to assure coordination of activities. The creation of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup was a significant leap in that direction. Further ways to assure coordination of activities with neighboring cities and towns is to dedicate a staff or member of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup to participate in meetings of the local Continuum of Care. The latest news, potential funding opportunities, and best practices are shared at these meetings and serve as an opportunity for horizontal diffusion learning. A portion of the available funding that the City has to dedicate to homelessness should also cover staff time, travel, and meeting costs to assure that City personnel are connecting with community collaborations, attending trainings, and participating in coordination meetings.

Impacts of Homelessness on Business in the City of Apache Junction, Arizona

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PAF509 Applied Project

Abstract

This exploratory study uses the goals of the Chronic Homeless Committee to examine the

perceptions and impacts of homelessness on the business community within Apache Junction.

This study uses qualitative research methods to determine how businesses in Apache Junction

perceive and are affected by homelessness in the downtown area. Further, the study addresses

concerns identified by the Chronic Homeless Committee, specifically, the correlation between a

perceived increase in the homeless population and the local soup kitchen, Genesis Project,

moving from a residential area into downtown Apache Junction.

Introduction

In response to concerns from the downtown Apache Junction business community, in early 2016 the city created the Chronic Homeless Committee to address the perceived issue of increased problems related to homelessness in Apache Junction. The response from the business community correlates with the movement of Genesis Project (soup kitchen) from residential areas to the downtown area. While it is clear from the work already performed by the Chronic Homeless Committee that Apache Junction can do more to provide services for those experiencing homelessness, simply enacting laws and ordinances aimed moving homeless individuals out of the downtown area is not a viable, long term solution. The City of Apache Junction must not only work toward understanding homelessness within the city but also understand the effects the problem has on its citizens and visitors.

Review of Literature

At the heart of the issue of homelessness is the tendency to view homeless persons as something other than citizens. Middleton (2014) discusses this "non-recognition" as an underlying problem of addressing homelessness at a macro-level. Middleton (2014) argues that homelessness is viewed as a condition of personal choices rather than a social issue that deserves a community wide response. The view of homeless being in some way lacking what makes a person a citizen has led to assumptions, according to Middleton, that define what are appropriate actions in response to the problem of homelessness. Middleton posits that the marginalization of homeless as helpless and criminal is driving the political discussion both locally and at the state level. The popular response is to hold homeless people accountable for their criminal actions. Middleton cites Feldman (2004) in the discussion of homeless people as subordinate to citizens with homes. Feldman discusses in part the recurring theme in policy development that casts homeless as a separate class of person, less than a citizen. Feldman further states that compounding the problem is the historical view that idleness translates to criminality. As the post-industrial workforce depends less upon manual labor, the traditional view of what constitutes a "productive" member of society is still pervasive in the determination of who is acting in a criminal manner and who is simply trying to exist. Feldman (2004) states that because of this, the questions of what to do *about* homelessness become too easily transformed into questions about what to do *with* the homeless. Feldman suggests that government bodies

that pass laws with the intent to reduce crime and increase overall feelings of safety and wellbeing do not punish conduct alone, but punish the condition of homelessness and criminalize status.

Novak and Harter (2008) discuss the accomplishments of StreetWise, an organization in Chicago, Illinois that employs homeless men and women to sell newspapers around the city. The premise behind this business model is to enhance the feeling of community. In an effort to combat the condition of "othering" when dealing with the homelessness issue, StreetWise endeavors to create a condition wherein homeless men and women engage in actual work for pay. This approach, however, has raised the question of what constitutes "real work". According to the authors, they found that the organization has been successful in bridging those gaps as the interview subjects they reference begin using terms such as "pay", "shifts", and "breaks" when they describe their work with StreetWise. The benefit of this concept, Novak and Harter state, is the building of social connections via the vendors (as StreetWise refers to them) becoming part of the community in which they live (rather than simply existing as outcasts and becoming an element of the community that others feel they must hide or otherwise move from view). StreetWise maintains a campaign they have termed "this is my job" which helps to foster the idea of community and thereby combats that notion that the activity of the vendors is simply panhandling.

Culhane, Kane and Johnston (2013) examine the popular response of housing first models of addressing homelessness which maintain that providing homes for the homeless will inevitably reduce the prevalence of homelessness. While many communities have had success with programs that provide housing, and the need for affordable housing is indeed great, Culhane et al. (2013) caution that housing alone is not enough, and communities should not remain blind to the fact that a collection of social needs must be met to address the problem on a macro-level. Additionally, the authors discuss the problems associated with the various models of homelessness support around the country and the issue that one model does not work for everyone. Culhane et al. warn that health and social services, in conjunction with housing solutions, are necessary. Further, they state that special needs housing is important to consider as homelessness is not an encompassing descriptor. Teens, the elderly, those suffering from mental illness and other conditions need to be considered when examining housing solutions. Culhane et al. (2013) also posit that housing first solutions to homelessness do not mean housing *only*.

In 2014 the United Way of Pinal County conducted a community needs survey (the fourth such survey since 1999) examining 1,939 survey responses from residents of Pinal County. (United Way of Pinal County, 2015) The survey responses indicated that 30% of respondents earned between $5,001-$17,000 annually and 55% of those surveyed lived in homes with a total income of between $15,001 and 30,000 per year. The survey indicated that, because the estimated mean wage for a person renting is $11.16 per hour, the average worker must work 60 hours per week at the mean wage to afford a fair market rent (FMR) based on 30% of income. Further, according to the survey, the primary respondents' concerns within Pinal County are underemployment and the inability to support a family. Additionally, the survey revealed that 30% of respondents were living in a state that was defined as "chronic insufficient funds" and that the remaining 70% did not know where to turn for assistance.

Much like Feldman (2004) and Middleton (2014), Beard (2013) examines the issue of the dialogue of homelessness and the question of solutions transitioning from how can homelessness be combatted to what should be done with the homeless. The transition in questions is one that many communities are battling, and Beard offers some insight to the condition of addressing the problem to addressing the people. Beard (2013) suggests that the change in policy ideas from the New Deal era to the Reaganomics era of the 1980s spurred the change in conversation. Under the programs championed by President Franklin Roosevelt, the public welfare was a right afforded to any citizen, and that instances of someone "down on their luck" were opportunities for communities to help. During the Roosevelt administration and years after, social programs flourished but were not viewed as long term solutions; rather, they were seen as stopgap measures during a challenging time. As these programs began to fail through the 1960s and 1970s, the public view became that those in need should be grateful for what they received through social safety nets, and the focus of social responsibility shifted from the federal government to the individual. The dialogue further shifted from an attitude of providing for social welfare in a general sense, toward blaming the individual for personal choices. For example, in Philadelphia, business owners began demanding city policy solutions to what they perceived as a negative impact on business. In New York City, blame was directed toward the state for deinstitutionalizing the mentally ill. In response, the state maintained that homelessness was an individual problem of welfare and therefore not a statewide issue to be addressed by

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Albany policy-makers. Finally, federally, the Reagan administration defined homelessness as a local problem and should be addressed accordingly.

In a report by the National Coalition for the Homeless (2004), several competing factors are identified that lead to homelessness: Most notable on the list is the lack of affordable housing for many, including those with jobs. Compounded by other factors, including mental illness and domestic violence, the disparity between the federal minimum wage and the mean cost of fair market rents (FMR) has created a condition making it nearly impossible for those with steady employment to maintain adequate housing. While the report indicates rising incomes, the authors caution that the perceived increase corresponds with an increase in hours worked rather than an increase in real wages. Further, the report indicates that other work-related factors, including an increase in lower paying service industry jobs and a decline in manufacturing jobs, lead to the increase in hours worked. Finally, the report highlights that, in every state, the minimum wage is insufficient to afford a one or two-bedroom apartment at FMR.

In many cities, responding to concerns surrounding the visibility of homelessness, have turned to the police for answers. Although anti-vagrancy laws have been historically ruled unconstitutional by the U. S. Supreme Court (*Papachristou v. Jacksonville*, 405 U.S. 156 (1972)), municipal and local government policy-makers nonetheless enact ordinances prohibiting camping in public areas, sitting on sidewalks, and congregating in specific areas to move the homelessness problem from public view, if not to solve it. Liese (2006) reported on Washington D.C.'s response to complaints from the business district by instituting a "drop in center" which offered an alternative for homeless persons during the hours when emergency shelters were not open. Here, the goal was providing a place for the homeless to go during the day thereby discouraging loitering near the businesses in the downtown district. In this example, the downtown district businesses paid a tax based on property size to help fund the center, and is demonstrative of businesses working proactively to address not only their complaints but also provide a service that was lacking in the downtown area.

In an earlier authored counterpoint, Smith (1994) argues that courts striking down order maintenance laws are the reason that neighborhoods began to deteriorate. Referencing the Papachristou decision (*Papachristou v. Jacksonville*, 405 U.S. 156 (1972)), Smith argues that the court dealt a severe blow to the integrity and safety of neighborhoods where police were given the discretion to deal with those elements (loitering and vagrancy) increasing local crime. A

vocal critic of those court decisions, Smith maintains that the conduct that anti-vagrancy laws intend to curb are precursors to crime and defines order maintenance laws as important tools in combatting "anti-social behavior".   Accordingly, Smith advocates that order maintenance laws are a means of combatting the problems of crime and poverty.

In contrast, Robinson (2017) finds that the increasing prevalence of public order laws in cities facing homelessness has become the embodiment of criminalizing homelessness. Specifically, Robinson examined camping ordinances in Denver Colorado and found that they were more far-reaching than simply prohibiting setting up a temporary home at the outskirts of the city. Rather, Robinson reports that residents were ticketed by police for using any means to protect themselves from the elements including newspaper blankets and using backpacks as pillows. Additionally, Robinson states that many cities view quality of life ordinances as "tough love" for homeless individuals. The justification lies in the premise that using the law to move the homeless from the streets and sidewalks will inevitably force them to seek city and county services. One latent function of these quality of life ordinances is that instead of driving the homeless residents toward social services, it makes it more difficult for advocates to reach homeless populations to connect with them. Homeless residents attempt to shield themselves from repeated police contact and harassment. The argument is that trying to force homeless people from the streets and into social services is only a viable option when the social services exist to support them.

Within Robinson's (2017) study was the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty's 2013 study of 187 U.S. cities. The study examined municipal codes aimed at criminalizing behavior that is typically classified as life-sustaining (quality of life ordinances). The findings demonstrate that 34% of the cities surveyed have bans on sheltering in public (camping ordinance) that are not specific to particular areas of the city. Of the cities surveyed, slightly over half (53%) had provisions that prevented sleeping in vehicles within the city and nine percent prohibited sharing food with homeless. Further, the survey found a marked increase in the number of cities enacting these quality of life ordinances: Between 2011 and 2014, 34% more cities banned public sleeping and 43% banned sitting or lying down. Still 60% more banned public camping during the same timeframe. The report suggested that the criminalization of life sustaining activities did little to solve the issue of homelessness and, in fact, created barriers to employment and public benefits.

In their report on food sharing, the National Coalition for the Homeless (2014) found that an increasing number of cities are enacting restrictions limiting the times and conditions where citizens can share food with the homeless. The report finds a pervasive attitude that limiting food sharing within cities will discourage homelessness. From January 2013 to October 2014, the report cited 21 cities that had enacted legislation to restrict food sharing with homeless persons. During that same time, 12 cities passed laws that required anyone distributing food on public property obtain a permit from the city. What the coalition found was a derivative of the 'Not In My Back Yard' (NIMBY) principle. The overwhelming argument was that feeding homeless simply perpetuated the problem by enabling those who were seeking the service. By cutting off the free food supply, critics of food sharing claim that homelessness can be abated. The report also points to pressure from the businesses in the affected areas causing food sharing organizations to either re-locate or stop their operations altogether to keep homeless individuals from congregating in specific areas. The coalition report (2014) argues that criminalization of homelessness, through food sharing laws, are "misdirected, narrow in scope, and neglect to make long term policy changes…" (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2014 p. 24).

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Point in Time Survey of homelessness (2016) indicates an overall decline in homelessness nationwide between 2015 and 2016. Interestingly, the decline was limited to those experiencing homelessness that were staying in emergency shelters; people experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations increased by two per cent. During the point in time survey in January 2016, nearly 550,00 people were identified as homeless with 68 per cent of those in shelters or other temporary emergency housing situations. The survey estimated approximately 9,700 homeless persons in the State of Arizona thereby representing less than three per cent of the total state population. During the one night survey in 2016, one in five homeless individuals (nationwide) were identified as experiencing chronic patters of homelessness. Of those, 68 per cent were in unsheltered locations, living out doors in public areas or abandoned buildings. The report does not address to what degree reductions in the available emergency shelters or transitional housing affected the increase in unsheltered homeless identified. Increasing numbers of chronically homeless individuals living in unsheltered locations indicate that public order, or "no camping" ordinances, appear to be marginalizing larger populations.

The consistent response to addressing homelessness in business districts around the country has focused on law enforcement: A 2016 article in the North Bay Business Journal discusses the issues of homelessness in Santa Rosa California's busy Old Courthouse Square. (Dunn, 2016) The city's police department has responded to requests of business owners by staffing a special detachment of officers specifically to target issues related to homelessness in the area. While the businesses feel that the city is not doing enough, and many business owners reported that they would rather not have any homeless in the area, the police department appears to have responded with a more balanced approach. Sgt. Ryan Corcoran, who heads the special unit, stated in the article that although law and ordinance prohibits camping on private property, he prefers his officers take an educational approach rather than a legal one. He also mentioned that officers have worked to try to educate business owners as well, noting that everyone is welcome in Santa Rosa and the police cannot restrict movement in specific areas absent a violation of the law.

Methodology

The purpose of developing the Chronic Homeless Committee was to gain a better understanding of homelessness in Apache Junction. For this exploratory study, the goal was to gain a better understanding of how homelessness in Apache Junction affects local businesses. With the introduction of Genesis Project, a soup kitchen serving the homeless, closer to the downtown business district, one concern raised during the Chronic Homeless Committee meetings was the increased prevalence of homeless around area businesses. The primary research question for this study was "to what degree are businesses impacted by homelessness in Apache Junction".

To answer this question, a qualitative approach utilizing semi-structured interviews was used to try and elicit the most information from respondents. Business listings from the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce were used to identify a pool of 30 businesses with addresses located in what the City has identified as the downtown area.   Those businesses were assigned numbers one through 30 and, using an online random number generator tool (www.randomnumbergenrator.com), sixteen businesses were selected for telephone interviews. A response rate of 25% translated into four of the sixteen randomly selected businesses contacted agreeing to participate. Of the four, one business owner stated that they were unaware of a

homelessness issue in the city. The remaining three interview participants responded that they were aware of a homelessness issue in the city. Follow up questions included information about business characteristics (type of business, size of business, number of years in business) as well as questions regarding their perception of homelessness in the city, impacts homelessness has had on their business and overall impacts on the downtown area.

Interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. The transcripts were then examined for common themes across respondents, and trends in responses were identified for reporting. Key comments from respondents were also incorporated into the research findings. The small sample size for this research made the task of identifying common themes somewhat easier. This method of data analysis would likely be less effective for similar future research that included larger sample sizes.

There are two primary benefits for utilizing the qualitative methodology employed here: First, qualitative methods for this application employed open ended questions via interview that allowed respondents to expand on concepts in a way that would not be possible with quantitative methods. This information could prove invaluable for city policy makers attempting to address this issue, and would not have been available utilizing a quantitative methodology. Second, this methodology allows respondents to speak candidly and specifically about personal knowledge and experiences related to the research topic rather than, for example, attempting to relate their experiences to a Likert scale questionnaire. Given that respondents' expansion on responses are directly related to their experiences as business owners operating daily in the studied area, city officials would have more valuable information available to them during policy design. That said, an inherent limitation of utilizing a qualitative methodology, versus quantitative, is the limited ability to conduct correlation analysis among variables.

There were challenges presented during this research: First, the response rate of respondents limited the amount of data collected. A potential factor contributing to this limitation could be the time of year the study was conducted. According to City Manager Bryant Powell, (personal communication November 1, 2017) the number of homeless (and the corresponding number of business complaints regarding them) increase during the cooler weather months when the homeless can be outside comfortably. Consequently, homelessness may not be on downtown businesses' radar this time of year thereby reducing willingness to participate in the study. Additionally, late summer/early fall is typically a time when political

races are making campaign calls. Businesses being inundated with calls from political groups and pollsters could discourage potential participants from agreeing to be interviewed.   Another potential factor contributing to the response rate may include the size (number of employees) of businesses in the area. The businesses selected were primarily small-sized where the owner is an active participant. This resulted in many respondents simply being too busy to devote time to a telephone interview thereby lowering response rate and data collected.

Finally, conducting telephone interviews presented challenges over face to face interviews. While the businesses that agreed to participate in interviews were eager to offer information and discuss their own experiences, those that declined to participate may have had concerns surrounding the legitimacy of the research. This may also be a function of the increased number of telephone surveys that are generally conducted in the late summer/early fall leading up to election day. While none of the businesses questioned the legitimacy of the research (the interviewer provided organizational affiliation prior to beginning interviews) this method of data collection may be more effective if telephone interviewers could make calls using a phone number that is local to the sample area.

Discussion of Findings

Of the businesses that responded to requests for interviews, all were small businesses with less than twenty employees. A response shared by the respondents was the increased visibility of begging or panhandling in the downtown area near their business. Based on responses, none of the business owners felt that the increase of visible homeless in Apache Junction was a direct result of Genesis Project's move closer to downtown. One respondent noted that the presence of a soup kitchen, and resources for the homeless, did not produce an incentive for more homeless individuals to go to Apache Junction. Another respondent highlighted that Genesis Project provides help and resources for more than just homeless individuals. As revealed in one of the Chronic Homeless Committee meetings, Genesis Project serves between 100-120 meals per day; of those, only about 30 meals are served to homeless individuals. Others served by Genesis Project include Apache Junction residents who are on a fixed income and residents who experience temporary hardships (loss of a job, leaving an abusive home, etc.). As one participant stated, "Genesis Project can provide the homeless with hope."

Based on responses, the business owners interviewed were unaware of what resources the city of Apache Junction had available for homeless. When asked about county-based services for the homeless, two of the three respondents (75%) that indicated they were aware of a homelessness problem in Apache Junction did not know what resources were available. One interview participant did feel that the county governments contribute to the problem of homelessness by blocking initiatives such as a shelter and housing for veterans. While the challenge associated with the City spanning two counties (Pinal and Maricopa) was discussed in some of the Chronic Homeless Committee meetings specific to housing vouchers, the perception that the counties are actively preventing the development of homeless resources is a potential question for further research. One participant, who indicated that they had regular contact with individuals who identify as homeless, talked at length about the lack of both long term and short-term shelter for those in need. The participant stated that it appeared the city of Apache Junction was hesitant to work toward providing at least short-term shelter for fear of attracting more homeless to the city. The respondent stated that even homeless individuals in Apache Junction consider that "home" and may be better served with resources closer to the areas they live in. Compounding the problem, according to this participant, is the lack of public transportation in Apache Junction which prevents those individuals in need from accessing resources that are more prevalent in the larger population centers such as Mesa and Phoenix. This respondent recommended looking at the homelessness issue as a human need rather than a problem that needed to be solved by the city, "In the pursuit of preserving and improving the business center, the city is overlooking the human element of providing resources".

Another recurring theme among participants was the correlation of homelessness and addiction. In response to questions regarding crime in downtown Apache Junction, none of the respondents specifically noted an increase in the visibility of crime in the city. However, three of the four respondents did indicate that they felt addiction played a significant role in the activities of homeless individuals. There was also some anecdotal correlation by the three respondents of crime and substance abuse. One interview participant stated that a homeless individual once told her "if you don't have a drug problem when you first become homeless, you will eventually". The participant said that she felt that meant that many homeless may not necessarily be homeless because of an addiction problem, but turn to substance abuse as a coping mechanism when faced

with the challenges of being homeless. Among respondents, there was a recurring opinion that addiction is what fuels criminal activity, rather than homelessness itself.

An area of controversy for the city of Apache Junction has been the no camping ordinances in place. As in many cities, Apache Junction prohibits camping in "any area that the public has access to" within the city limits. This ordinance was the subject of critique by the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona (ACLU) when they sent notice to the city regarding the no camping ordinance. The notice was a request to repeal the current "Anti-camping" ordinance because it was excessively broad in scope and, as a result, criminalized the condition of homelessness. The city responded to the letter maintaining that the ordinance was not overly broad and that the intent was not to make homelessness a crime in Apache Junction.   When asked about anti-camping and vagrancy laws, responses among respondents varied: One respondent stated that similar laws are only effective if they are enforced. The participant admitted that he/she did not have any firsthand knowledge that the police in Apache Junction were or were not enforcing the law, but clarified that the laws themselves do not appear to be a deterrent to public camping and loitering by homeless. Two of the respondents (50%) were quick to dismiss anti-camping ordinances as ineffective. One participant who shared this view stated that the ordinances "only push the problem outside of the city limits, they make it difficult for people who are already having a difficult time". When questioned further on the topic, the respondent reiterated that forcing homeless individuals further away from the city center removes them from access to available resources (food banks, thrift stores, etc.). Combined with the lack of public transportation in the city, it appears the ordinances may be compounding the human needs issue raised by another respondent. Another participant's viewpoint on anti-camping ordinances suggested that they are beneficial to business owners who must contend with campers in alleyways and parking areas. This respondent felt the ordinance provide a means to discourage those that leave behind mattresses and trash, relieve themselves in public areas near businesses, or cause property damage. The counterpoint, this respondent noted, is that for those homeless who do not engage in those activities, the anti-camping ordinance forces them further away from services. Another interview participant noted that the anti-camping ordinance only serves to "shield the issue from public view", and does little (if anything) to address the problem of homelessness.

Policy Recommendations

Given these data, policy development related to homelessness should account for the seasonality of the homelessness problem wherein a marked increase in homeless is apparent during the cooler weather months. Additionally, policy designed to address the issue should consider the drug-related struggles of homeless persons. Finally, given that data indicate businesses are unaware of available resources for the homeless, city leaders could utilize the Chronic Homeless Committee to educate the downtown business community about what is currently available for the homeless as well as update them on any policy implementations designed to address the problem.

Conclusion

This exploratory study produced informative data to add to existing information utilized by the Chronic Homeless Committee related to efforts by Apache Junction to address homelessness within the community. More specifically, this exploratory study demonstrated consensus among respondents that downtown businesses believe homelessness in Apache Junction is a problem that should be addressed by city leaders. Further, this exploratory study indicates consensus among respondents that Genesis Project, and its recent relocation to the downtown area, has not contributed to an increase in the problem of homeless in the downtown area. Additional findings indicate that seasonality is a significant component of homelessness in Apache Junction, and that there is a perceived relationship between drug addiction and homelessness (though not a cause and effect). Finally, respondents' responses seem to indicate that downtown businesses are not aware of the resources currently available to the homeless in Apache Junction.

Based on the data of this exploratory study, it can be suggested that downtown businesses believe there is a problem with homelessness in downtown Apache Junction that should be addressed via policy by city leaders, and that the relocation of Genesis Project to the downtown area did not contribute to this problem.

In consideration of future research on this topic, a more 'hands-on' approach, such as focus groups, might enhance efforts to sufficiently engage the participants in an effort to uncover additional data not discovered in this study. Additionally, simple random sampling was employed as a methodology in choosing participants, a methodology that prohibits adding more

participants to garner a larger number of respondents. Future research could, given the population of businesses in the downtown area, include all businesses in an attempt to increase number of respondents.

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PRESENTATION SLIDES AND NOTES FROM FALL 2017 SHOWCASE

View the whole presentation at https://vimeo.com/247880433

Capstone Overview
Eight Student Projects

To solve homelessness requires an understanding of factors that contribute to this complex problem and trends that perpetuate the problem in our society. Poverty, domestic violence, chronic health conditions, mental health issues, and substance use are commonly attributed as driving factors in an individual or family becoming homeless. While people experiencing homelessness absolutely struggle with these and other problems, the primary reason that people become and remain homeless is their lack of safe and stable housing that they can afford and necessary supports to keep them stably housed. Affordable housing is scarce in our communities. The need far exceeds the supply, especially for those individuals and families with extremely low incomes.

The issue of homelessness is often referred to as a wicked problem which resists single-agency solutions and its resolution requires a large, on-going investment of financial and professional resources. Funding allocated to the issue of homelessness in Arizona alone is a tangled web of federal funding pass-throughs, state funding subject to political favor, differing recipients – either nonprofits or local governments, and restrictive and narrowed eligible uses of dollars. In fiscal year 2016, Arizona had over $136 million dollars to dedicate to homelessness and housing support services. At the same time, 9,682 men, women, and children were suffering from homelessness. The purpose of this research proposal will be to evaluate the financial resources that go towards tackling homelessness in the state of Arizona, with special attention to what resources Apache Junction, a city in Arizona, has to address the issue of its citizens without homes

Group Composition

- Eight capstone students
- Four are local and four live outside the metro area
- Two of the locals met with Heather and toured the city and observed locations where the homeless gathered, slept, and ate
- Two of the locals visited the soup kitchen

Sample Research Questions

- Who are the homeless people in the City of Apache Junction and how can they be helped?
- What programs are proven to be most effective?
- Will more police presence have an impact on illegal activities?
- What is the nutritional content of Genesis Project meals?

Student's Research Methods

- Data collected through obtaining personal narratives from Apache Junction citizens
- Case studies about programs and strategies that have been implemented in other cities
- Survey of city council members
- Content analysis of documents

Sample of Key Findings

- Transportation in the city of Apache Junction is limited
- Local businesses may not be as concerned about the homeless population and its perceived rapid increase
- Support services and addition are two of the homeless populations' greatest needs
- Comparable cities are beginning to incorporate the need for additional housing, safe havens, and resources facilities within their districts
- When the homeless are approached as victims of the situation instead of criminals or nuisance, there will be a decrease in the homeless population

Sample Recommendations

- Improve transportation options for the homeless population
- Make available affordable low-income housing within walking distance of jobs and support services
- Create a public marketing internship position
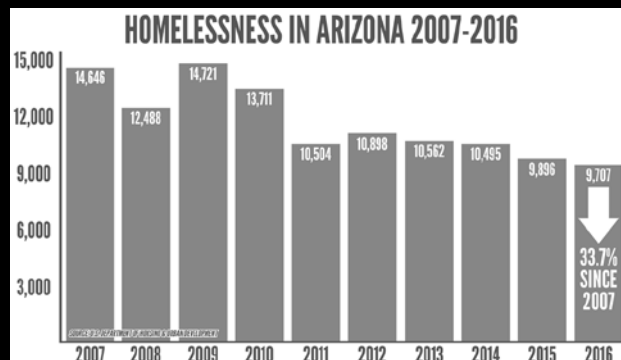- Encourage more non-profits to organize and implement programs to aid the homeless

Understanding Homelessness

Joan Serviss

Research Purpose: Understanding the Federal, State, & Local Resources Dedicated to Homelessness in Apache Junction, AZ & Recommendations
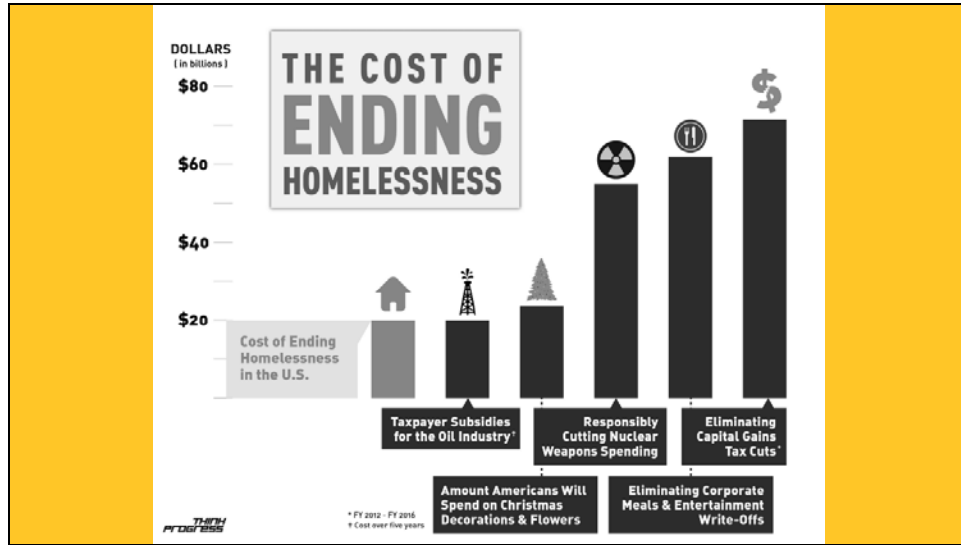
Joan Serviss, Arizona State University
PAF 509 Student – Fall 2017

Statement of the Problem

HOMELESSNESS IN ARIZONA 2007-2016

Year	Count
2007	14,646
2008	12,488
2009	14,721
2010	13,711
2011	10,504
2012	10,898
2013	10,562
2014	10,495
2015	9,896
2016	9,707

33.7% SINCE 2007

- 549,928 individuals experiencing homelessness in the U.S. on any given night
- 9,682 men, women, and children experiencing homelessness in Arizona

In America, estimates are that about 550,000 people experience homelessness on any given night according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development point-it-time street and shelter count. These estimates only capture the homeless on a single night in January; over 1.4 million people experienced sheltered homelessness each year. In Arizona, according to the 2016 annual point-in-time street and shelter homeless count, 9,682 men, women, and children experienced homelessness. Apache Junction's 2016 point-in-time estimate counted 43 individuals experiencing homelessness within the city limits. According to the Arizona Department of Economic Security, an estimated 40,745 people statewide received some level of support towards ending homelessness in 2016.

The Cost of Ending Homelessness

Society has chosen to respond to homelessness in the form of governmental, faith-based, and philanthropic organizations providing funding to nonprofit organizations to deliver homeless support services and shelter. One of the major sources of funding for homeless services comes from the federal government. In 1987, Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the first legislation of its kinds specifically addressing homelessness, to fund the explosion of emergency shelters across the country.

Major Government Funders

United States Department of Housing & Urban Development

Maricopa County Continuum of Care

Tucson/Pima County Continuum of Care

Arizona Balance of State Continuum of Care

Today, nearly $2 billion dollars in federal funds are administered by HUD and distributed across the United States to regional administrative and geographic units called "Continuums of Care". In Arizona, there are three Continuums of Care covering three geographic areas: the Maricopa CoC, which covers Maricopa County; the Tucson-Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness CoC, which covers Pima County; and the Balance of State CoC, which represents the thirteen remaining counties in the state of Arizona.

The state of Arizona funds a homelessness response by directing state taxes and by channeling federal funds through the state Departments of Economic Security, Housing, and Arizona's Medicaid agency, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). Finally, because homelessness is believed to be a local issue local governments may direct some of their federal block grant funds towards the issue. These federal funds help states and local governments meet their housing and community development needs, which can include homelessness services, and are distributed to local projects based on public feedback.

Literature Review

- Increased funding creates an increase in sheltered homelessness
  - Increased funding expands shelter availability
  - Families "couch-surfing" find "room at the inn"
  - Increased funding expands outreach

Homelessness is a complex problem that manifests in all societies. This intractable and odious issue of homelessness has received attention from policy makers and researchers over the years. One such study Lucas (2017) examines the relationship between federal homelessness funding and homeless counts in recent years. According to Lucas, an increase in federal homelessness funding creates an increase in the sheltered homeless population. Lucas suggests that federal funding that funds emergency shelter will not reduce short-term homelessness because the sheltered population size is limited by shelter availability; increased funding expands shelter availability, which increases the potential size of the sheltered population. He continues by describing the homeless households living on the margins who have limited contact with formal homelessness infrastructure. Increased funding may facilitate that contact, thus raising the homeless count by expanding bed inventory. Additionally, expanded outreach and increased local coordination may enable more accurate counts of unsheltered homelessness.

Literature Review

- Addressing homelessness thought to be a local official's issue to resolve
- Highly dependent on community's perceptions
- Community task force can lead to shared advocacy and participatory budgeting

Attitudes of local government leaders must be taken into account on how to plan and spend new and existing resources that can be used to address homelessness. This also begs the question of prioritizing homelessness funding given the competing priorities local governments face. Berman and West (1997) looked at municipalities and their attitudes and preparedness in responding to homeless programs. They find that the major driving factor of preparedness and public officials' perceptions are significantly affected by the federal governments' opinions and funding prioritization. Yet a community's response to the issue is not a federal issue, instead it is greatly affected by the views of citizens and community leaders. A significant study that looked at community response to homelessness, Dowell and Farmer (1992) suggests a city-sponsored task force be created made up of city personnel, service providers, a local university, and citizens. Once created, this task force can serve as the convening body to orchestrate needs assessments, surveys, develop policy recommendations and weigh in on municipal government budgeting, otherwise known as participatory budgeting. Dowell and Farmer's research highlighted the friction between different levels of governments and their perceived responsibilities in addressing homelessness, further compounded by the federal government devolving responsibility to local governments and funding through block grants.

Data Methodology

- Arizona Department of Economic Security's Coordinated Homeless Services
- Arizona Department of Economic Security's Domestic Violence Prevention Program
- Arizona Department of Economic Security's Emergency Solutions Grant Program
- Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants
- Arizona Department of Housing's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Projects
- Arizona Department of Housing's HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Arizona Department of Housing's HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Arizona Department of Housing's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS
- Arizona Department of Housing's National Housing Trust Fund
- Arizona Department of Housing's State Housing Trust Fund
- Arizona Department of Health Services' Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness
- Arizona Department of Health Services' Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals
- HUD's Continuum of Care Program

For the purpose of this funding evaluation, I include only funds that have a direct impact on homelessness and housing services. Using Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Need as the lens to weigh various government funding sources, I concentrate on funding that addresses the lower two tiers of Maslow's Hierarchy pyramid - rest and shelter. Therefore, funding from the state's departments of Economic Security, Education, and Veterans' Services that goes towards employment, education, utilities, and childcare for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or housing instability are not included in this analysis.

Data Findings

Entitlement & Non-Entitlement Communities	AZ Coordinated Homeless Program (DES)	AZ Domestic Violence Program (DES)	HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant (DES/ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants Non-entitlement & Entitlement (ADOH)	HUD's Community Development Block Grants-State Special Project (ADOH)	HUD's HOME Investment Program (ADOH)	HUD's Housing Opportunities for People w/AIDS (ADOH)	HUD's National Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	AZ State Housing Trust Fund (ADOH)	SAMHSA Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (ADHS/AHCCCS)	SAMHSA Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals-State& Expanded (ADHS/AHCCCS)	HUD's Continuum of Care Grants	Total
Arizona (statewide)	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$1,685,724	$10,578,395	$1,373,054	$4,804,047	$239,786	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818		$43,492,553
Balance of State (covers 13 remaining counties)												$3,999,999	$3,999,999
FY 2016 Total	$3,522,600	$13,903,700	$1,685,724	$10,578,395	$1,373,054	$4,084,047	$239,786	$3,000,000	$2,500,000	$1,173,429	$711,818	$3,999,999	$47,492,542

Apache Junction's Homelessness & Housing Support Funding Availability

0.9% available to City of Apache Junction to fund homelessness and housing supports

Image: AJCity.net

Comparing the existing funds that the state of Arizona has to respond to homelessness and housing supports with the funds that the City of Apache Junction currently directs towards the issue, one can see that Apache Junction is utilizing only 0.9 percent of Arizona's funding in response to homelessness. The pool of resources available solely to Apache Junction city officials is CDBG funds, which the City has insufficient resources to direct towards many different community objectives, one of which is homelessness. Meanwhile, the other streams of funding outlined can be utilized to address Apache Junction's homelessness issue, but may present challenges in administering or allocation by City officials.

Recommendations

- Expand Chronic Homelessness Workgroup to include citizen subcommittee
- Continue seeking public comments as part of budget
- Engage with local Continuum of Care
- Coordinate homelessness-ending activities with neighboring cities to learn best practices, new funding sources (horizontal diffusion)

Image: AJCity.net

Create a Citizen-Led Subcommittee of the Apache Junction Chronic Homelessness Workgroup. This subcommittee should consist of Apache Junction citizens and could include a representative of the business community and an individual living unstably in Apache Junction, along with a sampling of Apache Junction citizens who volunteer to serve on this subcommittee. This committee would provide recommendations to the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup on the current state of homelessness as perceived by community members, perceptions of the City's response to the issue, and would assist with advocacy on policy options and budgeting priorities that City staff must be neutral on. This subcommittee can also serve as an amplifier of the City's work on homelessness by sharing the work of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup in various community settings, up to and including sharing volunteer opportunities such as the annual point-in-time street count, and donation drives. Ideally, the initial recruitment of this subcommittee should take place during the November and December months when the issue of homelessness seems to be prevalent in the media and when folks seem to express gratitude and a commitment of giving back. Alternatively, subcommittee recruitment can coincide with the City budget hearings as a way to provide participating citizens with additional opportunities for engagement. It's recommended that this committee meet quarterly, providing direction and support without becoming administratively burdensome to members of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup and Apache Junction staff.

An additional recommendation to Apache Junction officials and staff is to assure coordination of activities. The creation of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup was a significant leap in that direction. Further ways to assure coordination of activities with neighboring cities and towns is to dedicate a staff or member of the Chronic Homelessness Workgroup to participate in meetings of the local Continuum of Care. The latest news, potential funding opportunities, and best practices are shared at these meetings and serve as an opportunity for horizontal diffusion learning. A portion of the available funding that the City has to dedicate to homelessness should also cover staff time, travel, and meeting costs to assure that City personnel are connecting with community collaborations, attending trainings, and participating in coordination meetings.

Thank you!

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