

Safe City Initiative and Services

The City of Tucson launched the Safe City Initiative in response to rising community concerns related to the increase in unsheltered residents, the impact of substance use disorders and mental health challenges, the shortage of housing options, the sense of diminished public safety and the visible blight affecting our neighborhoods. The initiative focuses on improving public safety, health, and the overall quality of life for Tucsonans. The City has stepped in to address issues that extend beyond its formal responsibilities under the City Charter because significant gaps in regional systems remain unresolved. This document provides an overview of the actions the City has implemented and expanded over the past several years. These efforts do not solve every challenge, yet they reflect meaningful and measurable progress that is starting to build momentum. The City of Tucson remains committed to advancing this work, strengthening partnerships, and pursuing additional solutions for as long as it takes to deliver safer and healthier outcomes for the entire community.

Connections from Homelessness to Housing

Housing First Program

The City of Tucson Housing First Program provides a comprehensive array of engagement, shelter, and housing services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Tucson area. Specific services include homeless protocol, street outreach, mobile shower, emergency shelter, housing navigation, and permanent supportive housing programs.

- **Street Outreach Services**

Street outreach services are conducted by professional and volunteer outreach workers who work in teams to visit homeless encampments and other places frequented by unsheltered individuals and families. Street outreach workers provide basic needs assistance including, but not limited to; first aid supplies, clothing, food, warm and cold weather supplies, and other items with the aim of building rapport and trust with unsheltered persons. Street outreach workers use evidence-based strategies to engage persons experiencing homelessness and to connect them to emergency shelter, housing navigation, and other services to address their individual needs.

- **Mobile Shower Services**

Mobile shower services are provided 4 days/week in the Tucson area. The City's mobile shower program offers showers for unsheltered persons at a variety of

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community locations including meal sites, drop-in centers, and other places frequented by individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Like street outreach services, the mobile shower program is designed to address a basic human need while building trusting relationships that support individuals and families to escape homelessness through direct placement in local shelter and service programs.

- **Housing Navigation Services**

Housing navigation services are provided by a team of human services professionals with expertise in the local housing market and available housing assistance programs. Housing Navigators assist individuals and families to develop long-term housing sustainability plans and to access available housing subsidies including supportive housing programs, Housing Choice Vouchers, Public Housing, and other assistance. Housing Navigators provide the hand-over-hand assistance and individual advocacy that is often needed to ensure smooth transitions from homelessness to long-term housing.

- **Emergency Shelter Services**

Emergency shelter services are provided at four City-owned emergency shelter locations including former hotels and congregate shelter facilities. Shelter services are provided for individual adults, couples, and families with children. City-owned shelters house approximately 200 individuals nightly and provide short-term housing assistance while shelter residents work with a housing navigator to identify and obtain longer-term housing assistance.

- **Wildcat Inn** is owned by the City and operated by Housing First staff. This hotel has 50 rooms – 47 are used for families. Currently serving 47 adults and 43 children.
 - **Amphi Housing Resource Center** (Casa del Pueblo), owned by City and operated by Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) has 50 beds for men and women. This site is the former fire station 8 and was turned into a low-barrier shelter.
 - **Desert Cove**, Operated by Community Bridges, provides shelter for men and women and has 24 beds. It is a low-barrier shelter.
 - **Breads and Roses**, owned by City and operated by OPCS, program provides transitional housing for youth 18-24 who identify as LGBTQ, with 9 beds.
- **The Craycroft**, operated by Pima County, is a shelter and a component of the Emergency Eviction Legal Services program. This shelter serves 53 adults and 73 children. In the month of October 156 people were served and 30 graduated from the program.



Star Village, a new pilot that provides a safe outdoor sleeping space for up to 25 women and non-binary. This pilot is a City of Tucson project and is operated by Primavera Foundation. All participants receive robust supportive services by OPCS and connections to employment, behavioral health and substance use services, shelter and other housing options.

- **Youth Transitional Housing in the City’s El Portal Program**

The Housing First program is currently supporting 22 youth through scattered-site housing across the community, providing not only stable housing but also the tools and resources needed for long-term independence and success. Participants receive individualized support in developing essential life skills, preparing for employment, and engaging in their communities. Services include peer mentoring, job readiness training, budgeting assistance, and financial literacy education. Through these efforts, Housing First aims to empower young people to build stability, confidence, and a strong foundation for their future.

- **Permanent Supportive Housing Programs (PSH)**

Permanent supportive housing programs administered by the Housing First team provide long-term housing for individuals with disabilities who have experienced significant lengths of homelessness during their lifetime. This non-time-limited housing allows individuals at the greatest risk of returning to homelessness with long-term housing, intensive case management, and comprehensive wrap-around services to support their permanent housing stability.

- **Amazon Motel**

City purchased property operated as a low-barrier shelter until renovated using state funding and turned into permanent supportive housing for persons coming out of homelessness. Many of these units are provided to persons coming out of the large encampment at 100 Acre Woods through several months of engagement work. This site provides 27 units for this new program operated by OPCS.

- **Housing Emergency Action Response Team (HEART)**

Provides intensive, individualized support to people experiencing homelessness who have or are experiencing trauma, chronic health issues, and other barriers to stability. The team helps clients secure permanent housing while offering wraparound services such as case management, mental and physical health referrals, food access, life skills training, and landlord mediation. The team emphasizes trust, compassion, and client-centered care, ensuring that housing is not just temporary but sustainable. HEART serves diverse populations, including



veterans, survivors of violence, and those with mental or physical disabilities, transforming lives by restoring safety, dignity, and hope in the community.

- **Multidisciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT)**

The Multidisciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT) is a collaborative outreach initiative launched in 2023 under the City’s Housing First program. Its purpose is to bring together skilled street outreach workers, behavioral health and physical health professionals to engage individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness, particularly those living in encampments, offering basic needs (food, hygiene, clothing, first-aid), medical and behavioral health support, and connection to emergency shelter and longer-term housing solutions. MDOT is a partnership among the City of Tucson, Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) and El Rio Health Centers.

Housing Programs

Tucson’s housing programs are designed to support residents across a wide range of needs, from emergency assistance to long-term affordability. These programs help stabilize families, prevent homelessness, expand access to opportunity, and strengthen neighborhoods. Together, they form a coordinated system that provides rental assistance, public housing, homebuyer support, and community revitalization. These programs have significantly prioritized persons experiencing homelessness in the past six years.

- **The Housing Choice Voucher Program** helps low-income households rent safe and stable homes in the private market. Families pay a portion of rent based on their income, and the City pays the rest directly to the landlord. This approach expands housing options across Tucson and helps participants access neighborhoods with better schools, transportation, and services. There are 22.3% of people currently in the program that were formerly homeless or referred from a homeless provider.
- **Public Housing** provides affordable, income-based, rental homes that are owned and managed by the City. These units serve families, seniors, and people with disabilities who need reliable long-term housing. Residents benefit from on-site maintenance, support services, and stable rent that adjusts with income. Many of the people currently in the program were formerly homeless or referred from a homeless provider.
- **The El Pueblo Housing Development** is a City-supported affordable community designed to serve residents who need deeply affordable housing. It includes family and senior units, shared amenities, and access to supportive services that help



residents remain stable and connected to their community. A recent project, Milagro on Oracle has 30 out of 63 units for persons formerly homeless.

- **The El Portal Program** is City owned units ranging from apartments to single family homes for low-income residents. This non-federal program has approximately 400 units in the portfolio. Many units have been rented to persons coming out of homelessness.
- **The City's Thrive Zones** are a neighborhood revitalization effort that improves housing, safety, and community services in targeted areas. It supports new affordable housing development, invests in community amenities, and provides education, employment, and health needs resources. The program links housing improvements with broader community outcomes. As part of the Thrive Zone effort, the City has opened four shelters for unhoused persons (Wildcat, EconoLodge, Amphi Housing Resource Center, and The Craycroft) as well as the Amazon and Milagro on Oracle apartment communities which provides 30 units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and 63 units of affordable housing. The City has an additional 625 units of affordable housing including redevelopment and new construction in the development pipeline within Thrive Zone communities.

The City of Tucson serves as the lead agency for the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness which administers more than \$14M in homeless assistance funds annually. Within this role, the City and Pima County co-administer Coordinated Entry, the community's local effort to coordinate and streamline access to housing assistance for individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

City of Tucson's Housing and Community Development operates additional housing initiatives that fill key gaps in the housing system. These include 270 units of permanent supportive housing as well as housing rehabilitation and lead abatement programs for low-income homeowners, homelessness prevention programs, and grantmaking to non-profit organizations which provide shelter, housing and supportive services for unhoused Tucsonans.

Community Safety, Health & Wellness Program (CSHW)

The Community Safety, Health & Wellness Program (CSHW) centers on meeting the needs of Tucsonans, placing the right work in the right hands. With awareness that our community is safest when there are the resources and services to reduce and prevent crises, the City strives to identify the appropriate response or referral to prevent crises related to substance use, mental illness, and extreme poverty. The program functions as an umbrella for



coordination with special problem-solving teams across multiple city departments. These teams specialize in meeting the needs of those experiencing behavioral health crises and homelessness.

- **Care Coordinators**

Care Coordinators within the Community Safety, Health & Wellness Program take social work off the shoulders of 911, TPD and other City Departments. Care Coordinators support individuals and families across Tucson to prevent and recover from crisis, most often related to housing, behavioral health, and care for elders. Using goal-oriented and trauma-informed approaches proven to be successful. Care Coordinators advocate on behalf of Tucsonans and leverage our extensive expertise accessing community-based resources, connecting Tucsonans with longer-term support that improve their quality of life. In 2025 alone, Care Coordinators offered services to 858 Tucsonans and provided more intensive advocacy and support to 254 individuals and families. Since 2022, Care Coordinators directly prevented eviction for over 170 households and secured housing for over 200 households, thanks to generous support from Ward offices, City and State grants, and partner social service organizations.

Care Coordinators also support the City’s 311 system by guiding over 2500 callers annually on how to access the housing and other community resources they need.

- **Multiagency Resource Coordinator (MARC)**

The Multiagency Resource Coordinator serves as a central liaison and system coordinator among City of Tucson departments, Pima County agencies, nonprofits and outreach teams in addressing unsheltered homelessness and encampments. They facilitate cross-agency collaboration on outreach strategies, ensure alignment of resources and policy between entities, manage joint field operations and track performance metrics (e.g., outreach contacts, housing placements, service referrals). The MARC helps streamline the pathway from unsheltered status to housing stability by breaking down silos, supporting trauma-informed responses, coordinating data --sharing (such as by-name lists), and overseeing deployment of encampment assessments and outreach workers.

- **Homeless Protocol and Encampment Assessors**

The Homeless Protocol is the City’s compassionate response to encampments of unsheltered persons on public property (parks, etc.). Through the protocol process, community members can report local encampments to the program. Encampment Assessors conduct on-site evaluations using the city’s standardized encampment protocol. They determine whether a camp is inactive, stable, or presenting health and safety risks, then assign a tier that guides the city’s next steps. Their work includes



engaging with people living in camps, offering services, coordinating with outreach partners, and elevating high-risk sites for enforcement or cleanup when needed.

The assessors help the city respond quickly, prioritize safety, and make sure outreach and resources are offered before any closure occurs.

Tucson Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction

TFD's CRR program engages with the community to prevent and address risk in the community, relying on public education, intervention and prevention activities. Last year, this team engaged with over 25,000 community members.

- **Fire and Life Safety Educators**

Designed to meet the needs of underserved community members, TFD's CRR team provides outreach and presents on fire safety, fall prevention and opioid hotspots, working with local schools, care facilities and underserved populations. Efforts include the installation of smoke detectors, fall reduction education and partnership with the Pima County Health Department to lead quarterly Narcan distribution events in high drug use corridors of the City.

- **Tucson Collaborative Community Care (TC-3)**

The Tucson Fire Department's TC-3 program has completed intake on 321 referrals year to date, identifying frequent users of the 911 emergency system. Staffed in partnership with Tucson Medical Center, TC-3 recognizes that early awareness of a need for help often originates through the 911 system. TC-3 clients are connected to housing, food stability, and long-term care for behavioral health, substance abuse and complex medical issues. Relying on a well-established cadre of over 100 local non-profits and community-based organizations, TC-3 navigators assess the individual's social determinants of health and fast-track individuals to resources best suited to support their unique needs. Navigators remain engaged, short and long-term, to monitor on-going adherence to care plans and well-being.

To remain current and robust, Tucson Fire hosts quarterly meetings to engage with stakeholders across the community to identify and recommend services, develop contacts and assess remaining gaps. Downstream, TC-3 reduces system load, making the emergency response system more reliable and available for emergency response

- **Tucson Fire Department's Cadet Program**

TFD hosts an annual summer camp program, providing youth a four-week view of the fire service and teaching skills critical to attaining and maintaining meaningful



employment. Cadets learn the value of hard work, team effort and improved communication skills.

- **Community Wildfire Protection Plan**

Tucson Fire takes part in a regional planning effort surrounding the wildland urban interface, areas where unhoused individuals often choose to reside. This county-wide effort focus on fire management as overgrown natural areas intersect with urban development.

Community Outreach, Resource, and Education (CORE) Unit

The Tucson Police Department's (TPD) CORE Unit focuses on quality-of-life issues and outreach in areas where unsheltered homelessness, substance use, and chronic calls for service overlap. Officers work closely with social service partners to provide resource navigation, build trust with individuals living outside, and reduce the strain on patrol by resolving problems through engagement rather than enforcement when possible. The unit's goal is practical: connect people to help, improve conditions in public spaces, and support safer, healthier neighborhoods.

- **Safe and Just Tucson & Deflection**

TPD's CORE Unit advances Safe and Just Tucson by prioritizing equitable public safety, collaboration, and diversion from the justice system. In partnership with CODAC and CSHW Care Coordinators, officers redirect people with substance use or behavioral health needs to free treatment and recovery services instead of arrest, addressing underlying issues and reducing recidivism.

- **Co-Responder Model**

TPD's co-responder model pairs CORE officers with two CODAC Peer Support Responders and CSHW Care Coordinators to engage people with substance use disorders in the field, offering referrals, interventions, and placement into treatment including medication-assisted care. The team follows up on nonfatal overdoses, works proactively in high-risk areas, distributes Naloxone kits, provides community outreach, builds trust, and increases treatment acceptance by combining law enforcement and peer expertise.

Homeless Work Program

In partnership with the City of Tucson's Housing & Community Development Department and Environmental Services Department, Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) operates its Homeless Work Program to provide day labor employment opportunities for people experiencing homelessness while simultaneously addressing municipal cleanup and beautification needs.



Cooling Centers and Heat Response

Network of cooling centers across City recreation centers, libraries, and nonprofits. Over 2,300 visits reported at Ward 5 Cooling Center in September 2025.

Safety, Enforcement and Justice Services

Safe City Loop Deployments

City department-led collaborative loop deployments bring together multiple city and community stakeholders in an effort to address homeless and open-air drug use issues in reoccurring problem locations along the Chuck Huckelberry Loop.

Tucson City Court - Specialty Courts

The Court operates multiple specialized dockets designed to address particular types of cases through a problem-solving lens. These courts reflect the city's effort to move beyond a purely punitive justice model toward one that integrates treatment, social services and accountability, aiming to improve outcomes for individuals, reduce recidivism and enhance community safety. The persons served in these courts are often identified as experiencing homelessness.

These include:

- **Mental Health Court:** This court is focused on defendants with mental illnesses, working to ensure both public safety and appropriate treatment rather than simply traditional criminal adjudication.
- **Veterans Court:** Designed for veteran defendants, this court provides access to behavioral health, substance use treatment, and peer support services as part of supervision and rehabilitation.
- **Domestic Violence Court:** Handles intimate partner violence cases with a dedicated calendar, specialized staff (prosecutors, defense, victim advocates) and a focus on speeding up resolution, ensuring victim safety, and holding offenders accountable.
- **Community Court:** A voluntary program for certain low level offenses in select zip codes that emphasizes behavioral health interventions, services linkage, and partnership between social service providers and justice system to improve quality of life and reduce reoffending.
- **Fine Resolution Court:** Assists individuals whose legal matters (e.g., unpaid fines) may hamper employment, housing or driving privileges, helping resolve those issues and thereby removing barriers to stability.



- **Video Alternative to Jail:** Allows individuals cited for certain low-level offenses to appear remotely via video rather than being physically booked into jail. This reduces the burden on the jail system, limits in-person contact, and allows participants to resolve their legal matters more quickly while maintaining compliance with court requirements. It is part of the City of Tucson’s efforts to provide alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenses.

Defense-Care Coordinator Services

Most who are involved with the legal process are experiencing substance abuse and mental health issues along with homelessness and food instability. To address these concerns embedded within the City Public Defender’s Office there are care coordinators. These coordinators work directly with clients, clients’ families, and members of the public to help coordinate treatment services, housing planning services, and other holistic approaches to help our community.

- **Wrap around service plans:** Engage with clients both in and out of custody, client’s families, and the public to provide wraparound services to remove and resolve barriers. Working closely within the court system, including specialty courts. Additionally, Care Coordinators provide services throughout the courthouse to de-escalate situations and help.
- **Jail Discharge Plans:** Help coordinate treatment as an alternative to jail. Work with both jail medical staff at Naphcare, behavioral health agencies, and the Pima County Transition Center to plan and coordinate release to treatment, AHCCCS applications, and transportation.

Transit Safety and Security

On October 8, 2025, Mayor and Council approved a motion directing the City Manager to prepare a Transit System Safety Action Plan addressing those areas that reflect the City’s commitment to a safe, accessible, and equitable transit system. Staff will return in December 2025 with a comprehensive Transit System Safety Action Plan to enhance safety and security across the City’s public transit network.

Opioid Public Health Crisis, Substance and Mental Health Services

Community Safety Health and Wellness (CSHW) Opioid Response – SOR IV Grant

In 2024, CSHW was awarded the State Opioid Response (SOR IV) grant for \$110,992 annually, funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) by way of AZ Department of Health Services, AHCCCS. The SOR



IV grant funds a full and a part-time Care Coordinator who provide peer support and connection to detox, rehab, shelter, and long-term housing to at least 100 individuals in 2025-2026, and educate 2000 individuals per year about prevention and recovery from opioid misuse, with a focus on fentanyl. This team works closely with TPD CORE, the shelters, the Health Department and behavioral health agencies, and in the VIVA sites to support residents struggling with addiction.

Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

The MHST is TPD’s dedicated behavioral health unit that focuses on reducing arrests, repeat crises, and unsafe encounters involving people experiencing mental illness or substance use issues. The team uses a co-responder model that pairs trained officers with licensed clinicians, which allows them to provide immediate crisis support, on-scene assessments, and safe transport to treatment when needed. MHST also handles follow-up and case management so people stay connected to services instead of cycling through emergency calls or jail.

- **CARES Co-Responder**

Embedded co-responder models have become a nationwide law enforcement mental health collaboration best practice, and nearly every major city police department operates them. MHST first obtained a federal grant that started the CORE unit, and then a second grant later to start the CARES program. The CORE unit has peer co-responders, and the CARES team provides the MHST unit with clinical support.

The CARES co-responders are force multipliers for MHST, allowing team detectives to work hundreds of additional cases per year. The clinical co-responders can quickly triage cases referred from patrol divisions, determine enrollment and diagnosis information, and inform investigative decisions. Additionally, CARES co-responders attend follow-up meetings with treatment providers seeking long term solutions for high utilizers of patrol division resources. These activities enable MHST detectives to move on to priority cases which often involve a danger to the community. The MHST CARES co-responders have worked over 150 patrol division referrals to date in 2025.

Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP)

The Tucson Police Department receives federal support through the Department of Justice’s Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP). This grant helps TPD expand its response to the growing impact of opioid and stimulant use in the community. Funding supports overdose prevention, timely data sharing, and stronger coordination between first responders, behavioral health providers, and harm-reduction partners. The grant also helps TPD connect individuals with treatment and recovery services instead of cycling through repeated emergency and criminal-justice encounters. Through



COSSUP, Tucson is able to scale evidence-based approaches that save lives, support recovery, and reduce the strain on emergency and public safety systems.

Public Safety Communications Department Crisis Partnership

Crisis call-takers were introduced to PSCD Communications in 2018. The partnership with Solari and their certified behavioral health professionals intends to present the call to the correct resource for support and response and permit PSCD resources to handle incoming emergency calls. When a caller describes a situation indicating a non-emergent behavioral health component, the call is transferred to our in-house crisis call-takers, who are trained and better equipped to give the patient the help they need. In the past, an EMS or Law Enforcement response would have resulted from such a call to 911. Now, the person in need can access mental health services and even a mobile crisis team response if necessary. The call-takers are embedded in our center amid PSCD emergency call-takers and process over 1,200 calls a month for Tucson and surrounding agencies.

Violence Prevention and Intervention

Office of Violence Prevention and Intervention (OVPI)

The recent creation of the City's Office of Violence Prevention and Intervention will enhance the ongoing coordination and evaluation of prevention work, convene multi-disciplinary partners, manage violence prevention grants, and publish results on shooting reductions. OVPI will align with TPD's Violence Intervention efforts on outreach, case management, data sharing, and rapid responses at priority locations.

- **Violence Intervention and Vitalization Action (VIVA) Program.**

Evidence-based effort to address violent gun crime at specific locations in the city. Coordinated effort across all city department plus community organizations, landlords, and other stakeholders. Demonstrated to be effective at the three initial sites, initial stages underway at a fourth location.

- **Community Enrichment Coordinators**

Community Enrichment Coordinators are frontline staff who work directly with residents and local community networks in neighborhoods impacted by historic disinvestment, persistent violence, or under-investment. Their work focuses on strengthening peer-to-peer connections, building resident leadership, coordinating outreach events, and linking community-identified goals with city resources and partner agencies. They engage with multi-departmental teams, support strategic



planning sessions with neighborhood leaders, and help ensure that community-driven solutions (such as mediation, safe-space activation, and local cultural celebrations) are part of broader efforts to promote long-term safety, wellness and equity.

TPD Violence Prevention Neighborhood Listening Sessions

The Village Program at Goodwill of Southern Arizona, along other community partners including Tu Nidito and Boys to Men, holds regular community conversations about gun violence in the city's most impacted neighborhoods, and held an additional 8 school-based listening sessions since January 2024 as part of the development of Tucson's first Community-based Violence Intervention (CVI) Program with TPD. The sessions gathered input and experience from approximately 340 community members and 130 students. Future community conversations about gun violence are planned around the City and in schools.

Tucson Violence Intervention and Prevention Planning Council

TPD and Goodwill established a Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Advisory Board in December 2023 as part of TPD's Bureau of Justice Assistance Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Grant. Over time, the board transitioned into the Tucson Violence Intervention and Prevention Planning Council. The Council, composed of system stakeholders and individuals impacted by violence, advises on current and future violence intervention and prevention strategies, especially those that focus on preventing interpersonal and gun violence through community-based, public health-informed approaches.

Violence Intervention through Goodwill's The Village Program and TPD

In 2024, funded through a TPD DOJ grant, The Village Program at Goodwill began relentless outreach, engagement, and intervention with young people ages 12-24 who have a high likelihood of being involved, exposed to, and victimized by violence. Since May 2024, The Village has received close to 600 referrals from TPD and other community partners. The Village Program and the Level 1 Trauma Center at Banner-University Medical Center established Arizona's first Hospital-linked Violence Intervention Program, with Village staff responding bedside to gunshot- and stab-wound victims to provide support, working to prevent retaliation and reinjury.

Tucson Youth Music Partnership (TYMP)



Now in its second year, the Tucson Youth Music Partnership is a Department of Justice and TPD violence reduction program with Sunnyside School District and Ward 5 that provides free, immersive music education to under-resourced youth to reduce violence, keep young people out of the justice system, and strengthen relationships with police. The program is part of VIVA in Operations Division South and currently serves 45 students.

Arizona Department of Education School Safety Officer (AZDOE/SSO)

The AZDOE/SSO program embeds specially trained off-duty officers in schools to boost safety, enabling rapid response, early intervention, and trust-building, resulting in strengthened student and police relationships and reduced bullying, fights, and serious violence. There are currently 32 trained SSO personnel.

Innovation and Accountability in Policing

Problem-Oriented Precision Policing (POPP)

POPP is TPD’s problem-oriented deployment model for micro places, with emphasis on violent places, business corridors experiencing disorder, and park safety. Police and CSOs perform scheduled deployments at locations emphasizing community problem solving. In 2025, there have been over 19,000 deployments in violent micro places, over 17,000 park safety deployments, and 2,200 deployments along business corridors. POPP’s impact on deployment sites include an 8% reduction in calls for service and an 18% reduction in weekly Part 1 violent crimes.

Community Service Officers (CSO)

The CSO is a professional staff, nonsworn position that supports law enforcement functions by responding to nonemergency calls and providing support in specialized units. Duties include, but not limited to, investigating traffic accidents, issuing civil citations, collecting evidence, traffic control, conducting interviews, testifying in court, and providing frontline customer service. Their work frees sworn officers to focus on higher threat calls by handling lower risk, routine public safety tasks with an emphasis on service, problem solving, and community engagement.

De-Escalation Training

TPD’s CORE and Mental Health Support Team (MHST) Units train City departments and local businesses in situational awareness and de-escalation, giving non-sworn staff practical skills to spot risks, manage disruptive behavior, and engage people in crisis. The program



strengthens public-private partnerships, reduces workplace risk and calls for service, and improves coordination with emergency services and community resources.

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)

In partnership with Pima County Justice Services, TPD's MHST Unit coordinates regional crisis intervention training based on CIT principles, combining de-escalation, behavioral health awareness, legal guidance, and scenario practice so officers better assess risk, connect people to services, and avoid unnecessary force or arrest. By training agencies across Southern Arizona with providers, peer specialists, and family advocates involved, and by issuing regional CIT certifications, MHST builds common protocols, improves multi-agency coordination, reduces repeat crisis calls, and strengthens community trust.

Governance Committees for Technology Oversight and Appropriate Use

TPD, Public Safety Communications, Tucson Fire and the IT Department collaborate to examine public-safety technology through the City IT-led Idea-to-Completion process to ensure solutions meet City and industry standards. Public safety leadership also participate in Advance Technology Council reviews and serve on the Data Governance Committee to oversee data ownership, protection, and the ethical use of technology, ensuring tools meet operational needs while maintaining public trust, accountability, and transparency. Once deployed, technologies are governed through defined access controls, role-based permissions, and auditing protocols that regulate data use, track system activity, and ensure ongoing compliance with City policy, state law, and national best practices.

The Community Safety, Awareness, and Response Center (CSARC)

CSARC is the City's real-time public safety center (TPD, Public Safety Communications, Tucson Fire, and IT) that supports day-to-day calls, events, and major emergencies with live video, Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR), mapping, and responder data; since October 2024 it has supported 3,019 events in 2025, and integrated 500+ City cameras. CSARC follows strict privacy and retention rules and does not share live camera feeds or ALPR data with federal agencies.

Crime Reduction Meetings (CRM) for Accountability

TPD holds a monthly Crime Reduction Meeting (CRM) to conduct a comprehensive review of public safety performance, including trends in shootings, robberies, aggravated assaults, calls for service, response times, and hot spot activity. The meeting also examines officer productivity measures such as community engagement, field interviews, arrests, reports,



and problem-oriented policing efforts to ensure that enforcement and prevention strategies remain balanced and effective. Participants identify emerging crime patterns, problem locations, repeat offenders or groups, and high-risk victims, then establish 30-day priorities with assigned owners, timelines, and measurable outcomes. Each cycle concludes with a brief recap summarizing progress, resource adjustments, and engagement impacts to inform command decisions and future deployments.

Community Collaborations

Tucson Team Up to Clean Up

Team Up to Clean Up initiative is a city-wide volunteer cleanup effort led by the City's Environmental & General Services Department. It invites individuals, families, neighborhood groups, businesses, and City employees to work together to litter-pick, remove debris, and beautify public spaces. The initiative is to improve neighborhood appearance, reduce blight and litter, and build civic pride through community-driven clean-up actions.

Summer Intern Program

The collaboration brings together Tucson area youth workforce development efforts, Tucson Clean & Beautiful's hands-on environmental work, and the Borderlands initiative's focus on restoration and leadership to offer paid summer internships and field-based work experience, some of which are employed by the City of Tucson. Young people (often from underserved neighborhoods, ages roughly 18–26) gain real world skills in urban forestry, green infrastructure, stormwater eco-restoration, community beautification and environmental stewardship through TCB's programs. The interns are paid, receive mentorship and training, and engage in meaningful, physical fieldwork tied to climate resilience, job-skills and community improvement. This partnership creates a bridge between youth workforce development and tangible environmental projects, supporting both young people's career readiness and the city's goals for sustainability and equity.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

Pedestrians and cyclists in Tucson face safety challenges due to gaps in infrastructure, high traffic volumes, and busy streets. To address these risks, the City is investing in sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, street lighting, and traffic-safety programs, while also promoting education and planning initiatives. Together, these efforts aim to create safer, more accessible streets for everyone. There are several bond initiatives and programs to address the needs for safer streets.



- **Proposition 411, Tucson Delivers Safe Streets** - The voters of Tucson approved a 10-year, ½-cent sales tax extension in 2023 dedicated to repaving roadways and improving safety for the traveling public. The initiative will result in over \$150 million in direct, local investment in sidewalks, street lighting, enhanced crosswalks, protected and improved bike lanes, traffic signal upgrades, and other safety interventions by 2033.
- **Safe Routes to School program** - The City of Tucson partners with Living Streets Alliance to provide in-classroom education for 3rd graders across Pima County, developing safe transportation habits and encouraging walking and biking to school.
- **Prop 407, Tucson Delivers, Parks+Connections** - Proposition 407, known as the Parks + Connections Program, is a \$225 million investment in improving park amenities and walking and biking connections across Tucson. The program will invest over \$90 million in building out a network of low-stress bicycle boulevards - with improved crossing at major streets, walkability projects, and greenways/shared-use paths. When completed, Tucson will have an extensive, interconnected network of bikeways allowing residents to reach their destination with minimal exposure to busier streets.
- **Safe Streets for All (SS4A)** - The City of Tucson is engaged in a regional planning effort, in partnership with other Pima County jurisdictions, to develop a transportation safety plan. The Plan, funded through a federal competitive grant, will identify high-priority safety investments, evaluate existing programs and policies, and provide a foundation for continuing to prioritize safety in all transportation decision making.
- **High-Intensity Activated Crosswalks (HAWK) Installations** - The City of Tucson actively maintains a list of HAWK requests. Every HAWK request received is then evaluated for need and ranked against other locations based on pedestrian demand and risk factors, such as speed, history of crashes, number of travel lanes, nearby pedestrian destinations, such as transit stops, parks, schools, shops, etc., proximity to traffic signals or existing HAWKS, and other factors. We then actively pursue funding through all available sources to advance investments. In recent years, the City has been aggressive at securing federal safety funding for installation of HAWKS as well as continuing to fund new locations through our local propositions and major corridor investments. We currently have over 150 HAWKs citywide and are actively working on designing and building over 50 more in the coming years.
- **Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP)** - Tucson developed a citywide PSAP in 2020, which outlines strategies and investment recommendations for making walking safer



and more comfortable in the city. The PSAP resulted in the identification of a Pedestrian High-Injury Network (HIN), which are corridors within Tucson seeing a disproportionate number of pedestrian crashes, particularly severe-injury crashes. The HIN has subsequently been used to inform the identification of HAWK investments, prioritization of street lighting upgrades, and corridor-scale project improvements through Tucson's transportation master plan (Move Tucson) and project recommendations for RTA Next.

- **Complete Streets Policy** - In 2019, the City of Tucson adopted a Complete Streets policy, which is now guiding design decisions on all City projects. The Complete Streets approach prioritizes the most vulnerable roadway users (people walking, biking, taking transit, and those with disabilities) in the planning, design, and maintenance of the transportation system.
- **Miscellaneous Safety Improvements** - In addition to the programs highlighted above, the City continues to invest in safety in the everyday operation of the transportation system. Recent efforts include
 - A citywide push to install flashing yellow arrow operation at intersections, with the ability to provide full protected left-turns based on time of day. This strategy significantly reduces conflicts between pedestrians and left-turning vehicles.
 - Regularly and proactively evaluating speed limits to ensure they are established to prioritize safety
 - Installation of smart traffic signals on select corridors
 - Upgrading street lighting on currently unlit/underlit major roadways