



COUNCILWOMAN KESHA HODGE WASHINGTON

District 8 Newsletter



November 2025

Dear District 8,

November has been a season of giving, gratitude, and reflection across our community. I've been inspired by the countless ways neighbors, organizations, and volunteers have shown up to support one another, whether through Thanksgiving celebrations, community health fairs, G.A.I.N. events, or youth programs that empower our next generation of leaders. These moments remind me that the strength of District 8 comes from the people who care enough to step in, lend a hand, and make a difference.

As we close out the month, I am also excited to share that our 3rd Annual Holiday celebration is right around the corner. It is one of my favorite traditions, and I look forward to welcoming families for an evening full of festive fun and community joy at the District 8 Holiday Express. You will find more information later in this newsletter on page 10, and I encourage you to [RSVP](#) so you do not miss this magical celebration.

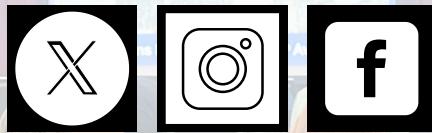
This month also offered the opportunity to focus on issues that matter deeply to our families, especially around housing and stability. I'm proud to see Phoenix's Housing Trust Fund moving forward with a focus on preserving affordability, supporting homeownership, and helping families stay rooted in our neighborhoods. As we continue to strengthen local housing investments, I remain committed to ensuring these resources are community-focused and deliver real benefits for residents.

You can read my full statement on the Housing Trust Fund here: tinyurl.com/housingtrustfundstatement

As we move through this season of thanks, I hope you are reminded of the power of community, the importance of compassion, and the difference we make when we show up for one another. Together, we celebrate progress, honor service, and continue building a District 8 where everyone can thrive.

Warmly,

Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington



If you are not already plugged in, follow us on the social media sites below to stay up to date on relevant news:

- Twitter - [@PHXdistrict8](#)
- Instagram - [@phxdistrict8](#)
- Facebook - [Phoenix City Council District 8](#)



In this newsletter you will find:

•> Around District 8 In November

•> Important Updates: News You Should Know

•> Constituent Corner

Around District 8 In November

South Phoenix Light Rail Tour Brings Community Together

It was a wonderful morning exploring the newest South Central extension of our light rail system alongside engaged residents, Valley Metro partners, and the local businesses that bring so much spirit to our community. Thank you to everyone who joined me and Councilwoman Anna Hernandez for our South Phoenix Light Rail Community Tour.

Together, we visited a few places along the way starting with coffee at Brew-jas Coffee Shop, bird watching at the Audubon Center, and a delicious lunch at El Portal. We highlighted public art, libraries, small businesses, and community resources that reflect the heart of South Phoenix.

Thank you to Valley Metro for organizing this tour and for continuing to help build a stronger, more connected South Phoenix.



The Community Cart event brought families together for the opportunity to shop for fresh groceries and essential items at no cost. It was great to see the power of community in action and to see neighbors stopping by, feeling welcomed, supported, and cared for during a time when many need it most.

My sincere appreciation goes to Pastor Dr. Robert Ty, First Institutional Baptist Church, FIBCO Family Services, Inc., St. Mary's Food Bank, The Black Philanthropy Initiative, The Leadership Consortium, Revive Community Health Services, Robert and Dr. Buffy Wooten, Richard and Marion Holmes, and Sandra Kennedy for coming together in service. Their dedication reflects what makes our community strong: compassion, collaboration, and the commitment to show up for one another.



Around District 8 In November

Mary Rose Wilcox Center for Healthcare and Innovation Groundbreaking

Grant Park was filled with a shared sense of purpose as I stood alongside community members, leaders, and residents to break ground on the new Mary Rose Wilcox Center for Healthcare and Innovation. This project represents a meaningful step toward expanding access to high-quality, affordable care for families and reflects our commitment to building healthier, stronger neighborhoods. We celebrated the legacy of Mary Rose Wilcox, whose lifelong dedication to equity and opportunity continues to shape our community. This center will honor her leadership while serving as both a place for healing and a training space for future healthcare professionals. It is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we invest in the well-being and future of our residents.



Celebrating OAT Youth Pilot Program Graduation

I served as the keynote speaker at the graduation of the first-ever Reform Rising OAT Youth Pilot Program at South Mountain High School. This new effort, launched and piloted here in District 8, brought together 25 students who dedicated themselves to learning, listening, and helping shape what accountability and reform can look like in our city. Their voices, questions, and ideas strengthened this program and have already made a meaningful impact.

This milestone reflects what is possible when partnership, transparency, and youth leadership come together. I am grateful to the Office of Accountability and Transparency, Strategies for Youth, South Mountain educators, and the families who supported these students throughout the journey. The graduates of this pilot program represent the future of Phoenix, and I could not be more proud of the purpose, courage, and commitment they demonstrated. Their leadership reminds us that progress begins with rising up, speaking out, and staying engaged.



Around District 8 In November

Restoring Hope Community Breakfast

I attended the Restoring Hope Community Breakfast, where I heard powerful stories from individuals whose lives have been changed through the work of St. Vincent de Paul. Their journeys showed the impact compassion, partnership, and community support can have.

I also had the chance to connect with partners and community leaders committed to ensuring every neighbor has access to food, shelter, care, and hope. St. Vincent de Paul remains a pillar of service in Phoenix, bringing people together to build a more caring and connected community. Events like this highlight what we can accomplish when we work side by side to support those who need us most.



Ángeles de Barrio Holiday Celebration Volunteer Event



I was grateful to support this year's Ángeles de Barrio Holiday Celebration through CPLC. I stopped by to see volunteers finish preparing holiday stockings for children in our community. Seeing how each stocking came together with so much care and joy was truly heartwarming.

These moments remind me of the incredible generosity that exists in our neighborhoods. They show the difference we can make when we come together for our families. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and helped bring smiles, warmth, and holiday cheer to so many of our young residents.



Important Updates: News You Should Know

Supporting Families on the Path to Homeownership

Many families in District 8 and across Phoenix dream of owning a home but feel the goal is out of reach. With the median home price now at \$417,633, the City of Phoenix remains committed to providing access to affordable homeownership and supporting first-time buyers.

If you or someone you know is interested in purchasing a home, the City offers several Homeownership Assistance Programs to help families take that next step. Learn more at phoenix.gov/housing or by calling 602-262-6794. Let's continue working toward a future where more families can build stability and wealth in the communities they love.



Homeownership Opportunities

OWN A HOME WITH HELP FROM
THE CITY OF PHOENIX!



Looking to buy a home?

The City of Phoenix offers affordable homeownership opportunities through three unique programs:

Open Doors Program

Eligible first-time homebuyers can get up to 10% of the purchase price towards down payment and closing costs - fully forgiven after the period of affordability.

Section 32 Program

Eligible first-time homebuyers can purchase a 2-4 bedroom city-owned home with a 20% discount which is fully forgiven after 10 years of living in the home.

Section 18 Program

Purchase city-owned homes with no income limits - perfect for buyers ready to invest.

Get started
on your path to
homeownership!



Assistance Available for Home Repairs and Improvements

A graphic for the Neighborhood Services Department Housing Repairs Program. It features the NSD logo, the City of Phoenix logo, and the text "IMPROVE YOUR HOME'S HEALTH & SAFETY". It also includes a list of services offered: AC or Heating, Electrical, Plumbing, Roofing, Appliances, and Water Heaters. There are also small images of an air conditioning unit, electrical panels, a roof, and a water heater.

Keeping families safe and secure in their homes remains a priority for our city. The Neighborhood Services Department offers several Housing Repair Programs to help eligible homeowners maintain essential systems, address safety concerns, and improve energy efficiency. These services include critical repairs, exterior code assistance, weatherization upgrades, lead-hazard removal, and improvements for rental properties serving low- and moderate-income tenants.

If you or someone you know could benefit from these programs, please visit tinyurl.com/phxhousingrepairs or call 602-534-4444 (option 3) to request a home assessment. Strengthening our neighborhoods begins with ensuring every family has a safe, healthy place to call home.



Important Updates: News You Should Know

Phoenix Public Library Celebrate Black Voices Virtual Art Exhibit

I'm excited to share that Phoenix Public Library is now accepting artwork for its annual Celebrate Black Voices Virtual Art Exhibit. This wonderful program invites students in kindergarten through 12th grade to create original pieces that honor the people, stories, and moments that have shaped the African American experience in America.

Artwork can be submitted between December 1, 2025, and January 9, 2026, and selected pieces will be featured in a virtual gallery from February through December 2026, with special highlights during Black History Month.

Students may submit one piece of artwork in any medium, as long as it is no larger than 11" x 17" and created on white paper. Submissions can be dropped off at any Phoenix Public Library location or emailed to socialmedialibrary@phoenix.gov.

I encourage families to participate and help uplift the creativity, talent, and voices of our young artists across Phoenix.



STUDENTS K-12 CAN SUBMIT BETWEEN DEC. 1 - JAN. 9
SUBMISSIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT ANY PHOENIX
PUBLIC LIBRARY LOCATION OR EMAILED TO
[SOCIALMEDIALIBRARY@PHOENIX.GOV](mailto:socialmedialibrary@phoenix.gov)

PHOENIXPUBLICLIBRARY.ORG / (602) 262-4636

**Click here to learn more:
Phoenixpubliclibrary.org**



Phoenix Sister Cities Ambassador Exchange Program



**Click here to learn more:
Phoenix Sister Cities**



Phoenix Sister Cities is now accepting applications for the 2026 Youth Ambassador Exchange Program. High school sophomores and juniors who live in Phoenix and are U.S. citizens can apply for this unique opportunity to represent our city abroad. Students participate in leadership workshops in the spring, spend June living with a host family in one of Phoenix's 11 sister cities, and welcome their international counterpart to Phoenix in July.

Scholarships are available to help cover program costs. Applications are due **Friday, December 12, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.** For questions, contact Grace Koube at grace.koube@phoenix.gov.

Important Updates: News You Should Know

Share Your Input in the 2025 Annual Action Plan Survey



YOUR CITY
YOUR VOICE
Improving Your Community
One Action Plan at a Time

Participate in the
**ANNUAL ACTION
PLAN SURVEY**

**Help us identify
community needs
for 2026-27 in >>>**

**Take the survey
through January 9!**

Affordable Housing and Homelessness
Infrastructure and Enhancement
Community and Economic Development
Public Services and Facilities
Housing for Persons Living with AIDS

City of Phoenix | NSD NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT Neighborhood Administrative Division

The City of Phoenix is asking residents to help shape priorities for the upcoming 2025 Annual Action Plan. This survey is an important opportunity to share your perspective on issues such as affordable housing, homelessness solutions, neighborhood infrastructure, public services, and economic development.

Your feedback will guide how federal funds are allocated for the 2026–2027 program year, ensuring that community needs and voices remain at the center of our city's work. I encourage you to take a few minutes to participate and help influence the future of Phoenix.

Take the survey by January 9
phoenix.gov/yourvoice

Aviation Land Reuse Strategy Community Update Meeting

I invite residents to join me and the City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department for an important community update on the Aviation Land Reuse Strategy. This meeting is an opportunity to learn more about the future use of select parcels surrounding the airport and to hear how this work may impact our neighborhoods. Your participation, questions, and feedback are essential as we continue shaping a plan rooted in community priorities.

- **Date:** Monday, December 1st
- **Time:** 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Herrera School, Performing Arts Center/Gym at 1350 S. 11th Street
- Spanish interpretation will be available

If you are unable to attend but would still like more information or have questions, please contact my office at council.district.8@phoenix.gov. Your voice continues to guide this process, and I look forward to engaging with you.



AVIATION LAND REUSE STRATEGY COMMUNITY MEETING

The Office of Councilwoman Hodge Washington and the City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department invite you to join us for an update on the Aviation Land Reuse Strategy.

DATE:
Monday, December 1st

TIME:

6:00pm - 7:30pm

LOCATION:

Herrera School-Performing Arts Center/Gym

1350 S. 11th Street

Phoenix, Arizona

If you have questions, please contact Tom Sawyer
By email: Thomas.Sawyer@phoenix.gov or by phone: 602-884-4877

CITY OF PHOENIX

Important Updates: News You Should Know

Join Us for the Holiday Mixer & Fundraiser

I invite the community to join me and State Representative Junelle Cavero for the Holiday Mixer & Fundraiser, hosted by the South Mountain & Laveen Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Roosevelt Education Foundation. It's a great chance to connect with neighbors, celebrate the season, and support the growth of South Phoenix.

The evening will include networking, refreshments, and a keynote from Ike Shehadeh, founder of Ike's Love & Sandwiches. The event will be held at Heritage Headquarters, 515 E Grant Street, on Wednesday, December 4, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. I hope to see you there as we celebrate community, collaboration, and the season of giving.



Holiday Fiesta on Central Avenue



I am excited to invite our community to the Holiday Fiesta on Central Avenue, a festive celebration that brings the holiday spirit to South Phoenix while highlighting the new South Central Extension. This family-friendly event will feature a holiday train experience with Santa, a local holiday market, cultural performances, children's activities, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy food, games, and entertainment together.

I hope you will join us at the Baseline Park and Ride on Friday, December 19, from 4 to 8 p.m. It will be a wonderful evening to connect with neighbors, support local vendors, and learn more about the future of light rail in our community. I look forward to seeing you there as we celebrate the season and the progress happening in South Phoenix.



Important Updates: News You Should Know

Reminder: District 8 Holiday Express

The District 8 Holiday Express is almost here, and I am excited to invite you and your family to join us for this magical community celebration. Inspired by The Polar Express, our 3rd Annual Holiday Party will bring an evening filled with festive music, sweet treats, museum fun, a whimsical train ride, and special photos with Santa and the Grinch. It is one of my favorite traditions because it brings our community together in such a joyful and meaningful way.

Here are the details to help you prepare and get involved:

- **Date & Time:** Saturday, December 20, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Children's Museum of Phoenix
- **RSVP:** tinyurl.com/d8holidayexpress
- **Volunteer Sign-Up:** tinyurl.com/d8holidayexpressvolunteer
- **Questions:** district.8.events@phoenix.gov or 602-262-7493



The image is a promotional flyer for the District 8 Holiday Express. The background features a winter scene with snowflakes and pine trees. The event is titled "ALL ABOARD!" and "Join us for an Adventure on the District 8 Holiday Express". It features a red train engine and several red passenger cars. A reindeer is shown sitting on a blue sign that includes the date and time. The Children's Museum of Phoenix address is listed, and there are gift icons at the bottom. The logo for Councilwoman KESHA Hodge Washington, District 8, is in the top right corner.

**COUNCILWOMAN
KESHA
HODGE WASHINGTON
DISTRICT 8**

ALL ABOARD!

Join us for an Adventure on the

**District 8
Holiday Express**

"Next stop...holiday joy with special treats!"

Children's Museum of Phoenix
215 N 7th St,
Phoenix, AZ 85034

SATURDAY
DECEMBER
20

5:30 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

Constituent Corner



Thanksgiving Season of Giving Recap in District 8



This Thanksgiving season, I joined partners and community leaders across District 8 to support families and celebrate the spirit of giving. I started off with 3 Women of Excellence's 11th Annual Giving Thanks by Giving Community Meal at East Lake Park, where families shared a warm holiday meal surrounded by volunteers who truly embody community.

I then joined HeroZona Foundation's 22nd Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway at American Legion Post #65, a drive-thru tradition that has helped families for more than two decades; the 32nd Annual Thanksgiving Community Celebration A Legacy of Giving, where raffles, performances, and services brought joy to hundreds; the Prensa Arizona Guajolotón Festival at Barrios Unidos Park, filled with music, food, and turkey giveaways; and the Black Girls Break Bread Health Fair, an Elevate Eight grant recipient, which provided fresh produce and wellness resources to families, caregivers, and youth.

I am grateful to every organization, partner, and volunteer who helped make this season meaningful for so many. Your commitment to compassion and community strengthens District 8 every day.



Continuing Community Connections Through G.A.I.N.

Our G.A.I.N. (Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods) celebrations continued throughout November, giving me the chance to connect with residents and support our shared commitment to safer, stronger neighborhoods. I was glad to join the South Mountain Block Watch and the 44th Community Alliance for their GAIN events.

As we wrap up this year's GAIN season, thank you to every block watch leader, volunteer, and partner who helped make these gatherings meaningful. District 8 shines because of your dedication and unity.



Stay Connected and Get Involved!

Stay Connected and Get Involved! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office at **(602) 262-7493** or email us at **council.district.8@phoenix.gov**. We're always busy working for District 8, and we'd love for you to join us as a volunteer. Your help makes a real difference—sign up today to get involved and support our community!



(602) 262-7493



council.district.8@phoenix.gov



Volunteer Registration