

### DEAR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS,

When I took office two years ago, the tight-knit communities that call District 7 home inspired me as I navigated being the youngest woman — and the first Iranian American — elected to the City Council. I took office at a very challenging time amid the devastation of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, seeing how people in our district supported one another further solidified my belief that when we build meaningful relationships, we can work together to advance thoughtful and innovative solutions.

As a City Councilwoman and now Vice Mayor, I have been so proud to build a coalition of people doing just that – moving progressive, people-first policy forward. So much has happened, from establishing the country's first publicly funded Office of Heat Response & Mitigation to the unanimously passed Transportation Electrification Action Plan. Our **Emergency Rental Assistance program received** millions of COVID-19 relief dollars to support 18,556 households, and over \$120 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars to build affordable housing and advance homelessness solutions. The construction of the South Central Light Rail Extension project passed its halfway mark, and local businesses impacted by its construction continue to receive financial support to serve the community long after the Downtown and South Phoenix cores are connected.

None of this would have been possible without the advocacy and support of residents, city staff, and the District 7 team. We have worked together closely, bringing questions, resources, and solutions to the table. In Laveen, local leaders supported improvements to the Laveen Area Conveyance Channel so that everyone can enjoy the outdoors safely. School leaders in Estrella and Tolleson helped extend bus routes into their communities, connecting more residents to jobs and opportunities. Earlier this year, city council voted to ban source of



income discrimination, protecting people who use Section 8 vouchers and other government assistance for housing. This vote came after hours of brave testimony from residents who were on the brink of homelessness – and had been denied housing for using these types of governmental assistance.

For all the momentous ways we moved the city forward together, there were just as many everyday victories. We installed more High Intensity Activated CrossWalk (HAWK) beacon signals to make it easier and safer for people



to cross busy streets like 3rd Ave and Lantham. We added extra shade at temporary bus stops along construction routes, repaired damaged sidewalks, organized over a dozen community cleanups and knocked on hundreds of doors to connect more people to the resources offered by the city and our community partners.

Doing this work alongside my neighbors, friends, and family has been a privilege. This connection has been precious and personal. At the end of 2022, when Islamic Republic forces killed Mahsa Amini, I not only sought out the comfort of my community but tried to find ways to share this comfort with others and unite our voices to bring attention to the fate of my family, friends, and peers in Iran. I commissioned the *Woman, Life, Freedom* mural, the first in Arizona dedicated to this ongoing humanitarian crisis and designed entirely by Iranian women. And I hosted our second annual Nowruz, honoring

the global movement for women's rights and providing a familiar space for our Iranian, Afghan, and Central Asian communities to celebrate the turning of the seasons.

The work of District 7 cannot easily be encapsulated in a few pages, but I hope our passion for Phoenix and our neighbors who make it a community shine through.

Tough challenges remain ahead of us as the fifth largest and fastest-growing city in the United States, but those challenges present opportunities to build a more sustainable and equitable Phoenix. I can't wait to see what we can do together over the next year.

Janamin Lusani



#### **APRIL 2021**

#### Paving the way for a sustainable future

In my first month in office, I got to work immediately. I visited the largest encampment in the state, known as "the Zone," and prioritized shifting resources to respond to the homelessness crisis, Mayor Gallego selected me to chair the Electric Vehicle Ad Hoc Committee, and I began developing policies to build a sustainable future for the fifth largest, fastest-growing city.

#### **JUNE 2021**

#### Increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates

My first months in office were marked by some of the highest numbers of COVID-19. Vaccination rates in our district were particularly low, so my team and I worked to schedule regular vaccination events throughout the Summer of 2021 – going door-to-door to let residents know of the opportunity to receive the shot for free.



#### **JUNE 2022**

#### Making way for the electric future of transportation

Following the recommendations of the Electric Vehicle Ad Hoc Committee, which I had the privilege of chairing, the Council unanimously approved the Transportation Electrification Action Plan, preparing the city for a future with more electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, and e-mobility equity. This plan follows the Justice40 framework, ensuring that 40% of all investments will be focused in qualified census tract areas.

## THE IMPACT TIMELINE & POLICY

#### **AUGUST 2022**

#### Promoting access to higher education

In partnership with Councilmember Pastor and Aliento AZ, I helped secure \$5 million in American Rescue Plan funds to create the Phoenix Promise Program, a scholarship fund for Phoenix residents pursuing two-and four-year degrees at Maricopa Community College.

#### **MARCH 2023**

#### **Banning source of income discrimination**

Councilmembers Garcia, Guardado, Pastor, DiCiccio and I led the charge to ban source of income discrimination in the city. This type of discrimination prevents people using government assistance like Section 8 housing vouchers from finding housing. City Council approved the ban in March, and with Attorney General Mayes's support, it went into effect on April 6, 2023.

#### MAY 2021

#### Prioritizing mental and behavioral health solutions

I was proud to support a \$15 million expansion of the Community Assistance Program, a civilian-only program that responds to mental health and behavioral calls. This program redirects mental and behavioral health calls away from the police and toward trained counselors and social workers.

#### **OCTOBER 2021**

#### Passing the Phoenix Climate Action Plan

I led the charge to pass Phoenix's first Climate Action Plan, which provides a long-term plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. It contains ambitious goals, like city-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 – ensuring everyone can prepare for a safe, healthy future in Phoenix.



#### MAY 2022

#### **Ensuring water access** for all residents

Entering my second heat season, with time to provide input during planning, I worked with city staff to bring ten public bathrooms, hand-washing stations, cold water spigots and two additional heat relief tents by the Zone so our unsheltered community had dignified ways to stay protected from heat and healthy.

#### OCTOBER 2022

#### Concluding a year of free transit passes

Within a year of launching free monthly transit passes for residents, all \$1 million had been spent to provide over 30 organizations with passes for the community. This program's success led my team and me to work on identifying other ways to provide residents with free public transportation.

#### **DECEMBER 2022**

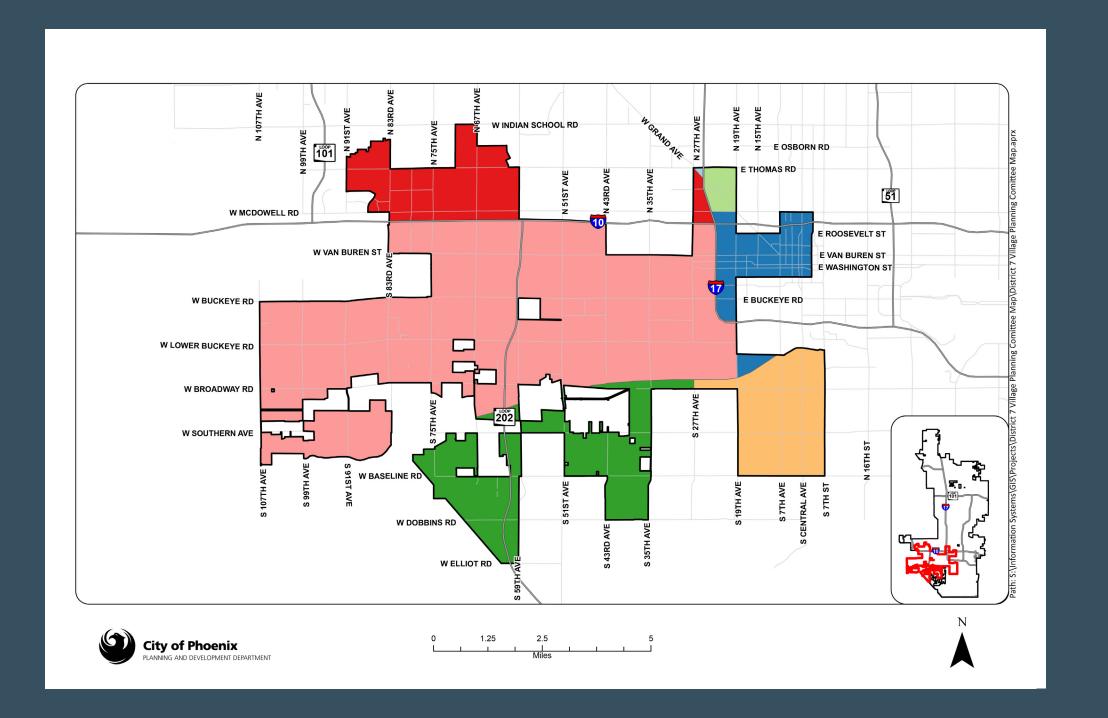
#### Expanding our city infrastructure with the 2023 GO Bond

Phoenix D7 residents want access to active, safe parks, transportation, libraries, and other city services. In December 2022, the City Council approved a historic \$500 million General Obligation (GO) Bond program. If voters approve the GO Bond in November of 2023, the city will begin building improvements such as safer streets, regional pools, splash pads, and senior and cultural centers in District 7. Of the \$500 million available, my team organized residents to secure over \$113M for D7-specific projects.



## CITY OF PHOENIX DISTRICT 7 MAP

- Council District 7
- Alhambra
- Central City
  - Encanto
- Estrella
- Laveen
- Maryvale
- South Mountain



## IN THE DISTRICT

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

#### DOWNTOWN



#### The city's first-ever two-way protected bike lane

Opening in June 2021, this two-way protected bike lane guides bikers along 3rd Avenue from Roosevelt Street to McDowell Road.

#### **Groundbreaking of Central Station**



A one-million-square-foot mixed-use development that will include residential and student housing, retail, and will be the new hub for downtown light rail and bus connections.

#### **ESTRELLA**



#### New home to JA Solar

JA Solar will bring 600 high-wage jobs to our Estrella neighborhood and will be the largest solar manufacturing plant in Arizona.

#### **Phoenix GO Bond and Estrella** Civic Space Park

I was proud organize community support and secure funding to include the Estrella Civic Space Park and Branch Library in the Phoenix GO Bond, which, if approved in November 2023 by voters, will move into the first development phase - fulfilling a 20-year neglected promise to the Estrella community.

#### **MARYVALE**



#### **Arrival of Bristol Myers-Squibb**

This biomedical manufacturer chose Maryvale after a rigorous selection process. The Bristol Myers-Squibb campus will create 150 highquality jobs dedicated to manufacturing treatments for cancer patients.



#### **Grand opening of the Neighborhood Vista Park**

This beautiful pocket park featuring unique art installations came together after the City of Phoenix's Water and Arts & Culture divisions collaborated to refresh this old well site.

#### **SOUTH PHOENIX**





#### **South Central Light Rail & first-ever Small Business Financial Assistance program**

The first light rail extension to include assistance for small businesses has offered over 100 loans to small businesses impacted by the development. Once completed, riders will be able to travel all the way to Baseline and Central from Downtown Phoenix by light rail.



#### **South Central Transit Oriented Development** (TOD) Community Plan and the upcoming **Pedestrian Bridge**

Developed with community partners and stakeholders, the South Central TOD Plan will bring good jobs, affordable housing, and walkable communities to South Phoenix. Thanks to the guiding principles of this plan, Phoenix was awarded \$25 million from the federal government for the construction of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge connecting South and Downtown Phoenix.

#### LAVEEN



#### **Coming Soon: The Laveen Towne Center**

Incorporating the historic Hudson Farmhouse, the Laveen Towne Center, a 400,000-squarefoot retail, dining, entertainment and community-supported project, is part of our efforts to bring more retail and sit-down dining to the growing Laveen community.





#### **Grand Opening of the Cesar Chavez Community Center**

This long-awaited 34,000-square-foot community center offers activities for people of all ages and includes the city's first sensory room. We don't plan to stop there - my office helped obtain funding for two new parks: Farmland Park and Laveen Heritage Park. Additionally, the proposed 2023 GO Bond Program includes funding for an on-site Senior Center, roadway safety, and pavement maintenance projects. More information on the proposed 2023 GO Bond Program can be found on our website.

## **ENSURING A HOME**

## FOR EVERYONE

In Phoenix, achieving one's full potential starts at home. During my first term in office, I've worked to bring diverse housing stock to every corner of District 7. My first groundbreaking as a Councilwoman was a \$21 million, 90-unit affordable housing project, Sunland Flats, in South Phoenix.

Since then, I've worked to grow our skyline, fight for safe and affordable housing, and fast-track new approaches for addressing homelessness. It's no secret that the largest encampment in our city, "The Zone," resides in District 7 – and I take my duty to improve conditions for all involved extremely seriously. In year one, I delivered on

long-neglected basics: increased public water and bathroom access, improved safe storage systems and demanded **mobile cooling buses be deployed** during the summer.

I saw a huge disconnect among our heat relief efforts and asked city management to bring



back a plan focused on our unsheltered community and older adults for 2022. Every heat-related death is preventable in our city. I secured \$600,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding for additional outreach and cooling supplies that have become a heat relief standard – bringing the total ARPA funding for heat response and shelter to \$16,000,000.

Amidst controversial lawsuits and multiple social crises, we readministered block-by-block and private property cleanups and created 592 new emergency shelter beds in 2022. We now have 800 in the pipeline for 2023-24, with 280 of those beds expected to open this summer.

We looked inward as well and added 9 positions to support the newly created **Office of Homeless Solutions**, which directly reports to the City Manager. Addressing our housing shortage and putting forth homelessness response has become the most pressing issue for our entire city.

As we welcome 150 new residents daily, we've worked to protect vulnerable residents by adding an additional \$2.5 million in funding for displaced mobile home park residents and prohibiting landlords from discriminating against residents using governmental housing assistance like Section 8 vouchers.

We can do more to put housing first. I have urged the City of Phoenix to accelerate zoning solutions that allow us to add accessory dwelling units, remove parking minimums and build more housing options like duplexes and fourplexes to lower rents and mortgages.

It will take all of us to continue to deliver the Phoenix promise that so many move here to find.

# COMMUNITY DRIVEN ACTION: LIZA KURTZ AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

In early summer of 2022, a constituent of mine, Liza, reached out after receiving a code enforcement complaint against her residence from the Neighborhood Services Department (NSD). She was housing two unsheltered individuals – Jose and Irma – on her porch and providing shade for them with tarps she hung up to make make-shift walls. They were a couple actively looking for work and were worried about getting separated if they went to a shelter.

Luckily, my office was able to work with the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) and found Jose and Irma temporary housing in a hotel. Less than a year later, Jose and Irma now have their own apartment and are both employed!

Not only that, but we worked with NSD to update their code enforcement policy to ensure that caseworkers always lead with services and work with OHS in any code enforcement case involving unsheltered individuals.

## ADVANCING PHOENIX

## GLIMATE AGTION

Phoenix stands on the front lines of extreme urban heat, drought, poor air quality, and other critical climate and environmental dangers. Since being elected, I have leveraged my climate policy background to bring a climate lens to everything the City of Phoenix does – from advancing transportation electrification and expanding our tree canopy to building sustainably and reevaluating city contracts.





280,000 ELECTRIC VEHICLES ON PHOENIX ROADS







#### PASSED THE 2021 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

In October 2021, the city council unanimously passed Phoenix's first Climate Action Plan, which includes goals and benchmarks to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. I worked closely with city departments to make our goals stronger and more achievable. For example, the original draft of the plan only included 30 miles of cool shade corridors by 2050 — but we successfully increased that goal to 200 miles.

This plan will be revised every two years, and I look forward to making our climate benchmarks even more ambitious as technology improves and federal funds are leveraged.



Yassamin Ansari
 Phoenix City Councilwoman and Vice Mayor



## CHAIRED THE MAYOR'S ELECTRIC VEHICLE AD HOC COMMITTEE

During my first month in office, Mayor Kate Gallego announced that I would chair a new ad hoc committee on electric vehicles. I made sure to bring diverse voices to the table and appointed a committee that included climate experts and advocates, auto manufacturers, utilities, community members, and home builders.

The final product was the unanimously passed 2022
Transportation Electrification Action Plan, which includes goals around electrifying city fleets, building homes and businesses to be EV-ready, and providing public charging stations. The Transportation Electrification Action Plan also features Justice40 guidelines so that Phoenix will focus 40% of all investments in areas suffering from the highest temperatures and worst air quality.



### ESTABLISHED THE WORLD'S FIRST PUBLICLY FUNDED OFFICE OF HEAT RESPONSE AND MITIGATION

Phoenix is one of the hottest cities on the planet, and temperatures are rising. Yet, this issue does not impact every community equally — low-income and Black, Latino, and Indigenous neighborhoods are seeing higher temperatures than affluent white neighborhoods. There are hundreds of heat-related deaths every year, especially within our unsheltered community.

Phoenix City Council established the world's first publicly funded Office of Heat Response and Mitigation to address this public health emergency. This office leads outreach efforts to help Phoenicians cope with the summer heat through cooling shelters and supplies while also implementing long-term urban heat reduction programs, including our Tree and Shade Master Plan.



#### RETHINKING CITY CONTRACTS

In November 2021, our Public Transit Department proposed a 5-year, \$145 million contract for compressed natural gas (CNG) buses without even considering available zero- and low-emission models. I was able to delay this vote while working directly with our public transit director to add language requiring annual reapproval of this contract, in addition to expanding our \$25 million Green Transit Pilot program to \$150 million.

A year later, I helped lead efforts to pass a plan that transitions our entire city bus fleet to 100% zero-emission by 2040 – one of the most ambitious transition plans in the country. We also entered a cooperative contract with the State of Washington to expedite clean bus orders and approved our own \$230 million contract for low- and zero-emission buses.



### COMMUNITY DRIVEN ACTION:

### SI SE PUEDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

In my first months as a city councilwoman, our office was approached by the incredibly passionate and organized Si Se Puede
Neighborhood Association – a group of almost entirely Spanish-preferred moms and seniors in an area just south of Maryvale. Many residents in this neighborhood are lower-income and get around by walking, using Dial-a-Ride, or riding the MARY Circulator.

The nearest bus stop from their neighborhood was over a mile away – an extremely long walk in our hot summer months. Si Se Puede organized and attended every budget hearing in 2021, advocating for an extended bus route to better serve everyone, particularly the older adults at Casa Pedro Ruiz.

Their advocacy was successful, and another bus stop was added for their community. My office also awarded them \$8,400 to install speed humps by Sunridge Park to reduce speeding and improve pedestrian safety.

Working with the Si Se Puede Neighborhood Association underscored the need for more sustainable forms of transportation that help people of all ages move safely around the city. It's why I am proud to support efforts like the proposed Bus Rapid Transit Program, which would add the city's first-ever Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor down 35th Avenue to Van Buren Street.

## **PUTTING COMMUNITY**

## SAFETY FIRST

Community safety starts with access to reliable services and resources. As our city recovered from COVID-19, it was clear that our staffing shortages were impacting the delivery of those valuable services. I met with labor leaders across the Valley to identify how we can strengthen our recruitment and retention efforts – and it boiled down to better pay and benefits.

I was proud to lead efforts to raise wages for bus drivers, sanitation workers, and more. As of 2023, we officially eliminated outstanding vacancies among bus drivers. We are not stopping there, though – this year's budget will feature substantial increases to city staff wages to ensure that our services continue without interruption.



Phoenix City Council withdraws agenda item discussing 5-year contract with auction



The city council was supposed to discuss the five-year contract to resell guns to "Sierra Tactical Auctions" on Wednesday, but the item was withdrawn.

#### REDUCING PROLIFERATION OF FIREARMS

While Arizona has a deep-rooted and respected firearm culture, more guns in our communities make crimes more violent. As David Hemenway, a Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health professor, noted, "what guns do is make hostile interactions – robberies, assaults, - much more deadly."

This is why I strongly advocated for the City of Phoenix to reexamine our contract with Sierra Tactical Auctions to resell the weapons that the City has confiscated or forfeited by residents to the police. While state law requires the City to sell a portion of these weapons, I urged the City of Phoenix to reduce the scope of firearms sold – ensuring that we followed state law and reduced the number of guns sold back into our communities. I will continue to push state leaders to remove the preemption on our ability to dispose of firearms.



## EXPANDING THE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Within my first month in office, I had the opportunity to expand our Community Assistance Program (CAP), which redirects mental and behavioral health calls away from police and toward trained mental health professionals like social workers and counselors. Housed within the Fire Department, this \$15 million expansion allowed CAP to add ten crisis units and nine additional behavioral health units.

This expansion has allowed us to help connect more people to services – ensuring that they get the help and resources they need. In high-traffic areas like 51st Ave and Baseline, over 30% of people that the teams have contacted accepted services.



## CLEANUPS WITH NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

One of my favorite things about District 7 is our commitment to the community. That commitment shines through in our residents' pride in their neighborhoods. After Laveen residents noticed that areas around 51st Avenue and Baseline needed extra care, they contacted our office.

I connected them with the City of Phoenix's
Neighborhood Services Department and the nonprofit
Redeem Neighborhoods. Together, they have launched
several cleanups focused on this high-use area – and
Redeem Neighborhoods organizes biweekly cleanups.
My office has been grateful to partake in several of these
cleanups as we join them in caring for our community!

## VISION ZERO: MAKING OUR ROADS SAFER

Our roads have been hazardous to pedestrians, bikers, and drivers for far too long. Phoenix suffers from some of the highest rates of traffic fatalities in the country – and it has, overall, given us a bad reputation as a car-centric city. In 2022, I helped change that narrative by strongly advocating for and later passing the Vision Zero Road Safety Action Plan.

Unanimously approved by Phoenix City
Council, this multi-pronged plan puts us on an
ambitious path to meet our goal: eliminating
all fatalities and severe injuries on Phoenix
roadways by 2050. By engaging community
input through surveys and our Vision Zero
Community Advisory Committee, this plan
commits to implementing the Five Es of traffic
safety: Evaluation, Engineering, Enforcement,
Education, and Equity.

Vision Zero has already improved our infrastructure and general road safety awareness. From the recently completed two-way protected bike lane on 3rd Avenue to the implementation of the 75th HAWK signal in 2022, Phoenix is moving forward with ensuring those traveling by foot or by bike can do so just as safely as those traveling by vehicle.



## **BUILDING BACK BETTER**

## AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT AT WORK

It's no secret that COVID-19 hit Arizona hard. Beyond the toll it took on our local economy, Arizona experienced the highest adjusted death rate during the COVID-19 pandemic at 581 deaths per 100,000 people. For context, it was about the same as the world's hardest-hit countries – Russia, Bulgaria and Peru.

For this reason alone, the funding we received from the federal government, specifically with the American Rescue Plan Act, has been invaluable to our recovery. The City of Phoenix received \$396 million in ARPA funding. While much of the funding has been budgeted or spent, the City of Phoenix uses real-time data to evaluate our investments and make adjustments where needed. To date, we've spent \$142 million – all of which can be viewed on the City's ARPA tracking portal.





\$120,734,460 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Including rental assistance and more.

AND HOMELESSNESS



\$57,700,000

NEIGHBORHOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Including family assistance, home weatherization, and more.



Including food bank support, and more.

#### QUICK GLANCE AT ARPA FUNDING



Including closing the digital divide, the Phoenix Promise Program and more.



\$51,700,000

WORKFORCE

Including workforce training, small businesses grants, and more.



Including capital needs, revenue replacement, and more.

## ADDRESSING THE HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

COVID-19 had a devastating impact on our economy – but what has been more insidious has been the effect of long covid on our community members. Some studies cite that up to 30% of people infected with COVID-19 suffer from long-term effects. People who once used to hold down steady employment physically cannot work a 40-hour week, those who have been out of the economy for a while now cannot find a foothold back into the workforce, and all have struggled with the rising cost of living.

Ensuring residents have financial support and resources to navigate these challenges is the core of reducing homelessness. The City of Phoenix allocated most of its ARPA funding to this issue – and I'm committed to seeing every dollar spent wisely and efficiently to keep more people in their homes and help move residents off the streets.

Rent and utility assistance is a key part of our ARPA funding, with \$14,000,000 allocated and over half of that already spent to keep residents in their homes with life-saving utilities like water and A/C kept on. In February of this year, a mom caring for her 16- and 10-year-old children reached out requesting support as she had been locked out of her rental property for missing the last month's rent due to medical issues. Our Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) team provided over \$20,000 to help her pay her pastdue rent, utilities, and the remainder of her lease. This assistance was not just critical to keeping this family in their home – it also prevented her from having an eviction on her rental history when seeking future housing.

Success stories like this underscore the importance of providing our neighbors a safety

net – without this rental assistance, three more people would have joined our unhoused population. In sharing her gratitude with the ERA team, she said,

#### YOU DID SOMETHING LIFE-CHANGING IN MY LIFE, AND YOU MAY NOT REALIZE IT, BUT I AM TELLING YOU NOW THAT YOU HAVE, AND FOR THAT I THANK YOU SO MUCH.

- Anonymous

Phoenix Recipient of Emergency Rental Assistance

Additionally, APRA funding has been used to provide temporary and long-term shelter to those experiencing homelessness. Before the pandemic, our homeless population exceeded the available shelter beds. Using this funding to build more emergency shelter beds quickly is critical to our efforts to reduce the number of people living on the streets, particularly in the area known as the Zone.

This area is in my district – and I lobbied hard to have ARPA funding directed toward building more shelters across our city. Projects like the XWing Non-Congregate Shelter Project, which received \$5,500,000 in ARPA funding, will provide private sleeping areas for up to 60 people on a city-owned site at 3000 S 22nd Ave.

I was thrilled to see the city respond to community needs by allocating most of our ARPA funding to housing and homelessness – we must use all available resources to keep and build homes for every resident.

## STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES

The pandemic also debilitatingly affected our communities' overall health and wellness. People of all ages reported more mental health concerns like increased depression and anxiety, with at least four-in-ten U.S. adults experiencing high levels of psychological distress at least once since March 2020.

I strongly urged the City of Phoenix to invest our ARPA funds into community health initiatives, like our \$9 million partnership with MercyCare to provide residents with outreach, behavioral health, substance abuse, physical health, and transportation services. We took this partnership further by including screening for Medicaid (AHCCCS) eligibility and application assistance.

Our financial situation significantly impacts our mental health, and the pandemic negatively impacted many families and local small businesses. I was proud to push for ARPA funding to support micro and small businesses. We allocated and spent \$8 million to provide small businesses around the city with up to \$15,000 to keep their operations running.

I also wanted ARPA funding to go directly to families to alleviate financial stress. The City of Phoenix directed \$12 million to 1,000 families, providing them with a \$1,000 monthly financial assistance grant for 12 months.

Additionally, I was proud to create a separate financial assistance bucket specifically for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers. With the additional \$5.3 million that my office secured, a total of \$8.3 million is going to nonprofit partners that work directly with the refugee and asylee communities. As the daughter of Iranian

immigrants, I know firsthand the challenges and mental stress of seeking refuge in a foreign country – and the pandemic exacerbated the need for immigrant and refugee-specific resources, as social services were limited in 2020.

These funding initiatives represent only a tiny portion of the projects created and funded with ARPA to strengthen our communities. They were vital to keeping families afloat during the most challenging times, and now in 2022, the funds still provide critical resources to residents in need.

## COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ACTION: PHOENIX PROMISE PROGRAM



In August 2022, the City of Phoenix unanimously approved the Phoenix Promise Program – a community-driven investment I was proud to sponsor with Councilmember Pastor and the nonprofit organization Aliento AZ. Originally estimated to support 400 students, this \$5 million investment has helped over 800 students pursue two- or four-year degrees through Maricopa Community College – and 575 of them were first-generation students.

## GETTING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY

Our office takes immense pride in being visible across District 7, hosting monthly and annual events that uplift diverse communities to meet people where they're at and create trust between residents and their elected officials.

From backpack giveaways in Maryvale to a heat safety pool party in South Phoenix and countless mobile office hours, we tailor our events to center policy responses to neighborhood issues and activate our exceptional city-owned facilities.

#### **CONSTITUENT SERVICES**

Helping our diverse constituency is a critical part of the responsibility of our office, and I take this immensely seriously. I make 15-20 calls per month, speak to residents to identify needs and trends, and advocate for them during my checkins with directors of city departments.

We've engaged over 80,000 residents. Most importantly, we've closed close to 73% of our constituent services cases, ensuring that residents have the support they need regarding our streets, parks, and other city services like trash pickup and water line maintenance.

My office also uses social media and email to communicate regularly with District 7 residents. We've added nearly 1,000 residents to our listserv since I took office – and I encourage others to stay up to date with our office by signing up for our newsletter.







#### SIGNATURE EVENTS

One of the most exciting parts of our work is hosting events that bring together neighbors and families. These events, often hosted in city-owned spaces like Civic Space Park and the Desert West Community Center, celebrate the diversity of Phoenix and connect people with resources offered by the city and our nonprofit partners.







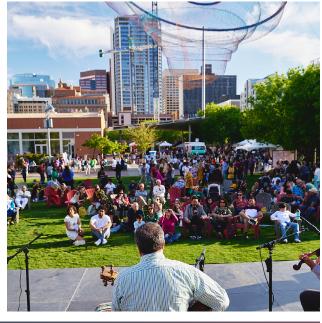
## 4

#### **Pride on the Block**

Hosted annually by my office, Pride on the Block is a family-friendly event that celebrates our LGBTQ+ community and gives back to a selected nonprofit. In total, 3,000+ people attended our event to support queer local businesses, artists and initiatives.







#### Nowruz

In 2022, I was proud to host the first-ever Nowruz celebration at Phoenix City Hall to celebrate the Persian New Year. In response to multiple refugee crises, we have grown this event to be an inclusive and resource-forward fair serving diverse immigrant and refugee communities — we've celebrated with 4,000+ people from all over the state.

Quarterly Resource Fairs

From Maryvale Unidos to the Jolly Jamboree to our pool party, I love how our resource-focused events help connect folks who are not typically engaged by the city. These fairs have connected our office with more than 3,000 residents.



JUST TO SEE THE EXCITEMENT ON THE CHILDREN'S FACES OUT WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND ENJOYING THE EVENT WAS HEARTWARMING.

Susan
 Realtor and community member



4

### **KEEP UP WITH DISTRICT 7**









@district7phx















#### CONTACT US

200 W. Washington St., 11th floor Phoenix, AZ 85003

602-262-7492

council.district.7@phoenix.gov