

HOMELESSNESS IN TULSA

A GROWING SOCIAL & FISCAL CHALLENGE

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Over the past decade, homelessness has emerged as one of Tulsa's most pressing social, economic, and public-safety challenges. Despite significant public and private investment, the unsheltered population continues to grow.

\$81M+

Total Annual Homelessness Spending

2,936+

Estimated Homeless Population (2024)

\$28,600

Avg. Annual Spend Per Person

24

Nonprofit Service Providers

Homelessness is Worsening

↑ 17%

Tulsa makes up 17% of population, but 25%+ of statewide homelessness

↑ 20%

per 10,000 residents are experiencing homelessness

↑ 80%

increase in unsheltered population since 2019

Spending is Increasing

↑ 3X

Federal spending has tripled since 2014

↑ 250%

permanent housing is up, but shelter capacity is lagging PIT counts

Economic Impact

Reduced foot traffic and business closures affecting downtown corridors could result in:

↓ 1,800

jobs lost in Tulsa county

↓ \$176.6 M

in potential GDP loss for the region

↓ \$113.8 M

decline in personal income

Key Drivers of Homelessness

↑ 35%

Drug overdose deaths up statewide

↑ high

Prevalence of addiction & mental illness

↓ low

Funding directed toward substance-use treatment

The Bottom Line:

Homelessness in Tulsa continues to grow despite increased spending, expanded housing programs, and a large network of providers. The data suggests current resources may not be aligned with the primary drivers of homelessness, particularly substance use and mental health challenges. Improving outcomes may require a more balanced approach that includes not only housing, but also greater transparency, accountability, and investment in treatment and supportive services.