



Built For Zero.
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS
A MOVEMENT TO END HOMELESSNESS

Narrative Change in Action

Built for Zero Learning Session 2025

**Built
For
Zero.**
COMMUNITY
SOLUTIONS

PRESENTERS



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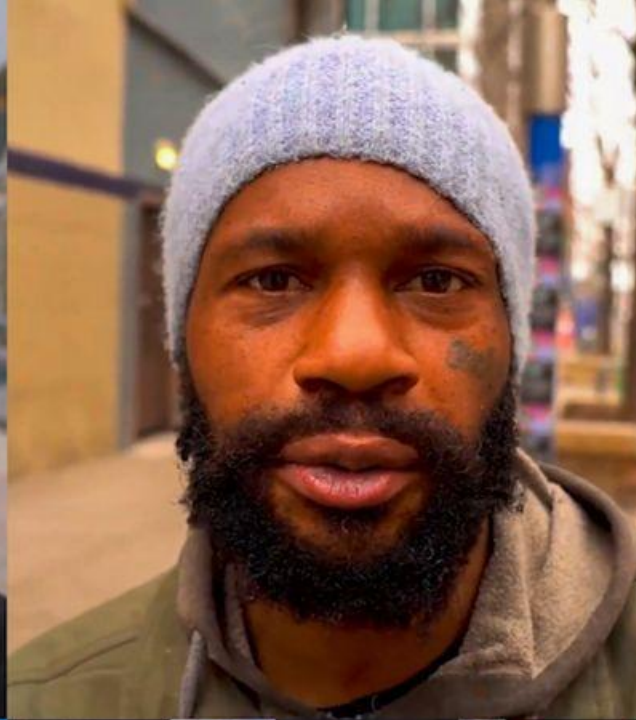
AGENDA

1 | Introductions & Presentations

2 | Facilitated Panel

3 | Audience Discussion

Built for Zero Learning Session 2025

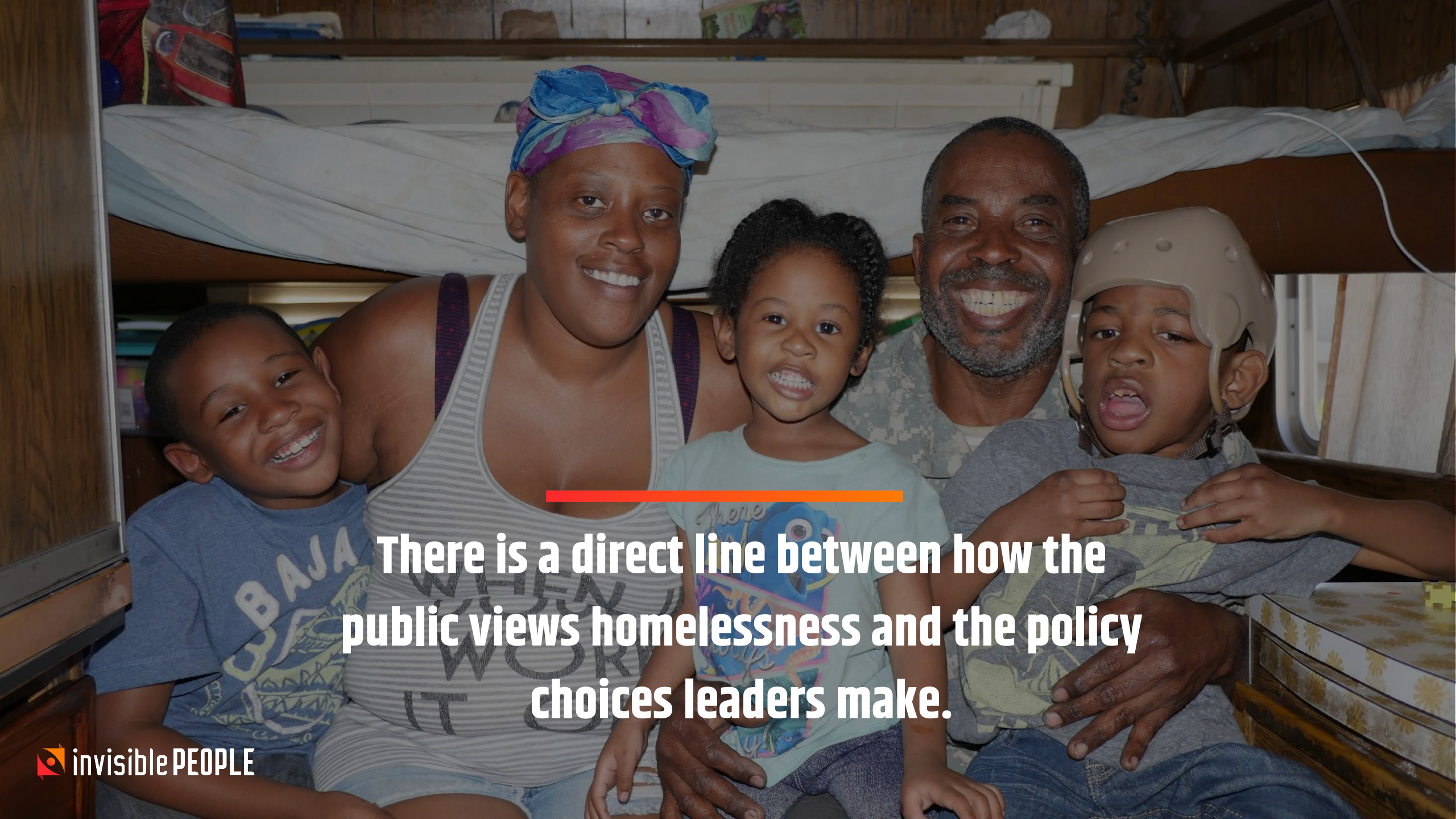




“ The stereotypes of poor people in the United States are among the most negative prejudices that we have. **People basically view particularly homeless people as having no redeeming qualities** — there’s not the competence for anything, not having good intentions and not being trustworthy.”

SUSAN FISKE

Professor of Psychology,
Princeton University

A photograph of a family of four in a crowded shelter. A woman with a colorful headwrap and a striped tank top sits in the center, smiling. To her left is a young boy in a blue t-shirt with 'BAJA' on it, also smiling. To her right is a young girl in a light blue t-shirt with a colorful graphic, smiling. On the far right, a young boy in a grey t-shirt and a white protective helmet looks towards the camera with his mouth open. The family is sitting on a bed with white sheets. In the background, there are wooden shelves and a red toy car. The overall atmosphere is one of resilience and hope despite their circumstances.

There is a direct line between how the public views homelessness and the policy choices leaders make.









**WHAT WE WANT TO TALK
ABOUT**



WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE



Jessica Wilzig Gottlieb

People work hard for their homes and resent the idea of someone getting one for free.

This is mostly because people are assholes and can't understand mental illness, cycles of poverty, being a veteran or just bad luck.

So stop talking to folks about the housing. Talk to them about how you'll make their lives better by getting the homeless away from them since that's what they really care about.







invisiblepeople.tv/toolkit

invisiblepeople.tv/2024impact

invisiblepeople.tv/podcast



By the Numbers

**MOST RECENT
ANNUAL DATA (2024)**

Over **150 million annual impressions**, **13 million engagements**, and **2.5 million followers** across platforms. Reaching both the **general public** and the **nonprofit leaders shaping change**.

Total Reach

148,950,435 total impressions
13,134,649 total engagements

Instagram

27,192,641 impressions
1,729,608 engagements

YouTube

10,105,556 views in 2024
312,657,026 lifetime views
2× STREAMY AWARD WINNER
— Creator for Social Good

TikTok

6,315,368 video views
228,920 engagements

Facebook

97,960,327 impressions
7,517,130 engagements

Podcast (as of Oct 1, 2025)

53 EPISODES (updated weekly)
321,530 podcast streams (YouTube + audio)
74% listener retention rate
+31% month-over-month subscriber growth

**Podcast sponsorship lasts forever — your
brand message stays in every episode
permanently, building lasting visibility and trust.**

Our weekly social video news reels on Instagram, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok reach 2,000–4,000 viewers daily and up to 12,000 weekly, with steady audience growth month over month.



Current audience as of October 1, 2025

1,168,955

YOUTUBE SUBSCRIBERS

943,629

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

452,453

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

110,451

TIKTOK FOLLOWERS





Internment Camps for Homeless People — Disguised as 'Help'



Invisible People ✓
1.17M subscribers

Subscribe

👍 5.1K



➦ Share

🔖 Save



72K views 9 days ago Homeless Unfiltered by Invisible People

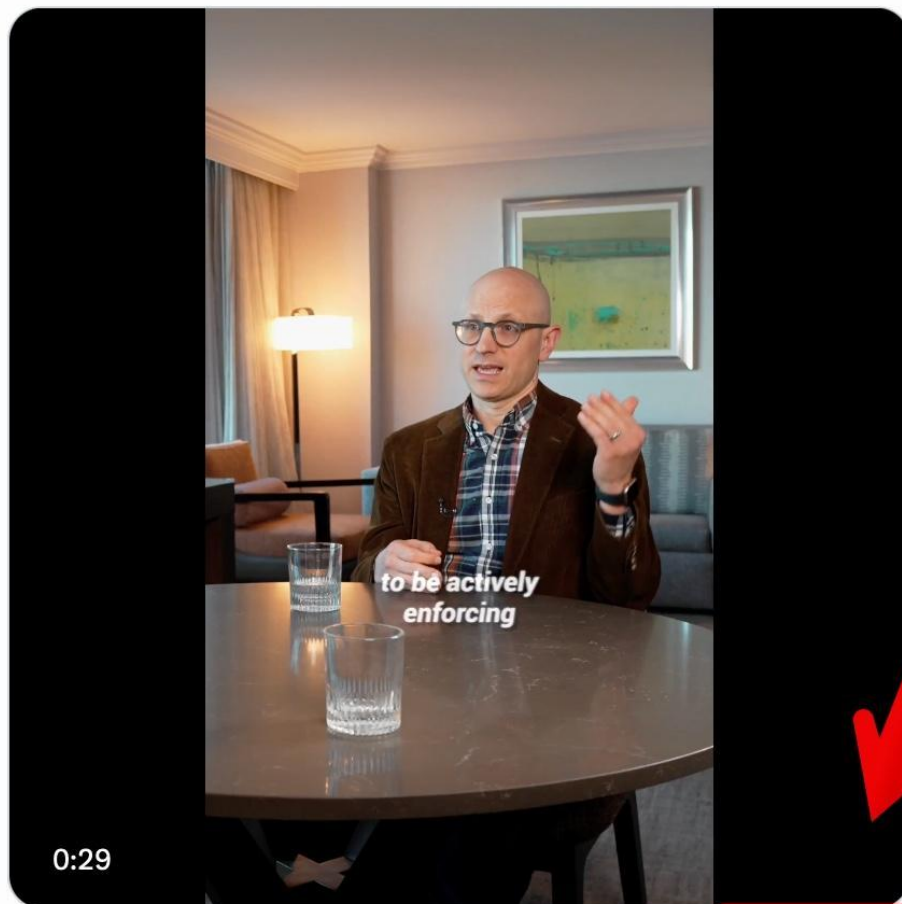


Invisible People ▶ **Imagine Everyone W...** @invisible... · Oct 26

Utah just approved a 1,300-person “mega camp” for homeless people — seven miles from town, no transportation, locked units, and even forced labor. They call it “work-conditioned housing.” We call it what it is: modern-day internment.

In this clip, Eric Tars from the National

[Show more](#)



136

1.8K

4K

1M



[HOME](#) > [NEWS](#) > [HOMELESSNESS](#)

A conceptual rendering of Utah's planned homeless services campus north of Salt Lake City, published on September 3, 2025. (Image from the Utah Office of Homeless Services)

Advocates Warn of 'Forced Labor' Camp for Homeless People in Utah Designed to Enforce Trump Order

An advocate for the National Homelessness Law Center warned that the 1,300-bed facility could be a "pilot" to put homeless people into similar conditions to Florida's "Alligator Alcatraz."

As far back as 2023, Trump has proposed using “large parcels of inexpensive land” to set up “tent cities” or camps for homeless people, coupled with a pledge to use “every tool, lever, and authority” to clear encampments from city streets. On the podcast *Invisible People*, which focuses on homelessness in America, Eric Tars of the National Homelessness Law Center said Utah’s new facility could be a “pilot program” for that effort around the country.

“Their end goal is not just jail,” Tars said. “They want to put up more of these Alligator Alcatraz sprung structure type facilities,” referring to the ramshackle immigration detention facility constructed in a remote part of Florida’s Everglades earlier this year, where detainees have been cut off from access to their lawyers and are widely reported to suffer from inhumane treatment.

He noted that, under a proposal drafted by the chair of Utah’s Homeless Services Board, Randy Shumway, more than 300 of the beds in the facility are slated for involuntary commitment. Other homeless people will be sent there for substance abuse treatment “as an alternative to jail” and will “receive care in a supervised environment where entry and exit are not voluntary.” Shumway referred to the facility as an “accountability center.”

“An individual would be sanctioned to go there. It would not be voluntary, Shumway said during a presentation, according to the *Standard-Examiner*. ”They would be there for a period of probably 90

Welcome, Podcasters! White House Wants New Media at the Press Briefing.

President Trump's press secretary invited social media influencers and content creators to sit with the traditional press corps.

▶ Listen to this article · 3:31 min [Learn more](#)

📺 Share full article



Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, spoke to reporters on Tuesday. Doug Mills/The New York Times



YouTube is now way more popular than Netflix and Disney Plus on smart TVs – here's how they compare

News

By Carrie Marshall published August 21, 2024

Streaming breaks new TV records – and YouTube leads the field



When you purchase through links on our site, we may earn an affiliate commission. [Here's how it works.](#)



create videos people actually
want to watch

don't hire filmmakers
hire creators

invisiblepeople.tv/docs





LAST DAY HOMELESS



[illegible]



Mark Horvath
@HardlyNormal
@InvisiblePeople  
InvisiblePeople.tv

CRAFTING POWERFUL PRO-HOUSING MESSAGES



welcoming
neighbors network



Sightline
INSTITUTE

February 2025

To build support across race, income, party, and ideology, **we need to connect rising housing costs to local people's stories** and day-to-day experiences of housing shortages. We must then present specific, concrete housing choices and the community benefits they will produce.

Across the country, the high cost of housing hurts Americans from all walks of life, in big cities and small towns. Yet in most places, **a failed status quo restricts affordable choices**, resulting in a shortage of homes, cutthroat competition, and the displacement of local workers and families.

Americans are ready for change. **A broad majority sees housing as a major issue — but a solvable one.** While many voters do not naturally connect high costs to short supply, **most recognize negative consequences of shortages in everyday life and support policies to allow more housing in their communities**, from backyard cottages to small apartments; and majorities favor solutions to foster affordable, connected, convenient city neighborhoods.

Welcoming Neighbors Network and Sightline Institute partnered with FM3 Research, Global Strategy Group, and Grow Progress to develop a tested messaging framework ready to deploy on the front lines of the fight for more abundant and affordable housing nationwide.



2.

THE PRO-HOUSING FRAMEWORK

The Pro-Housing Framework

Through extensive testing, including qualboards, research journaling, and two national surveys of American voters and political influentials, followed by randomized controlled trials, we have developed a five-step framework for policymakers and advocates to advance housing policy. **The messaging framework connects tactical policy changes to the real experiences and aspirations of real people and communities.**

Meet people
where they are:
**costs are too
high**

1

Point to
competition as
how **shortages**
increase **costs**.

2

Emphasize the
people
affected in our
communities
now

3

Be **specific** and
concrete when
presenting
changes

4

Highlight how
**more home
choices**
benefit people
and their
communities

5

1.

Meet people where they are: **COSTS ARE TOO HIGH**

Top-Testing Example:

Across policymakers, thought leaders, and the general population of American voters, **high costs are the key entry point to the housing issue.**

Leading with costs establishes common ground with people across identities and ideologies.

“Housing is too unaffordable today because there are not enough homes to rent or buy that meet people’s needs and budgets.”

2.

Point to **COMPETITION** as how **SHORTAGES** increase **COSTS**

While people do not easily grasp the economics of housing markets or the cost impacts of regulations and zoning, they can see ways that shortages increase housing costs. Point to familiar ways **shortages drive competition**—from wait lists for rentals to bidding wars for homebuyers—to **connect the shortages to cost**.

Top-Testing Example:

“Not having enough homes to rent or buy creates cutthroat competition and drives up prices.”

3.

Emphasize the **PEOPLE AFFECTED** IN OUR COMMUNITIES NOW

Focus on **sympathetic community members** who are hurt by the shortage—families trying to stay where they grew up, workers that communities rely on who can't afford to live where they work—to **forge an emotional connection** to policies that will help unlock more home choices people can afford. **Shift the focus** from housing structures **to the benefits for people.**

Top-Testing Example:

“Right now, people our communities rely on—like teachers, childcare workers, and service and retail workers—can't find homes they can afford in the places they serve.”

4.

Be **SPECIFIC AND CONCRETE** when presenting changes

Jargon, abstractions, and the implication of drastic change can cause fear of policy changes. But voters and decision-makers respond favorably to **specific, familiar home types and discrete, focused regulatory fixes.**

Top-Testing Example:

“We can allow smaller homes to be built on small lots to create affordable starter homes, and we can make it legal to convert a basement or garage into an apartment for a family member or caregiver to live in or to rent out.”

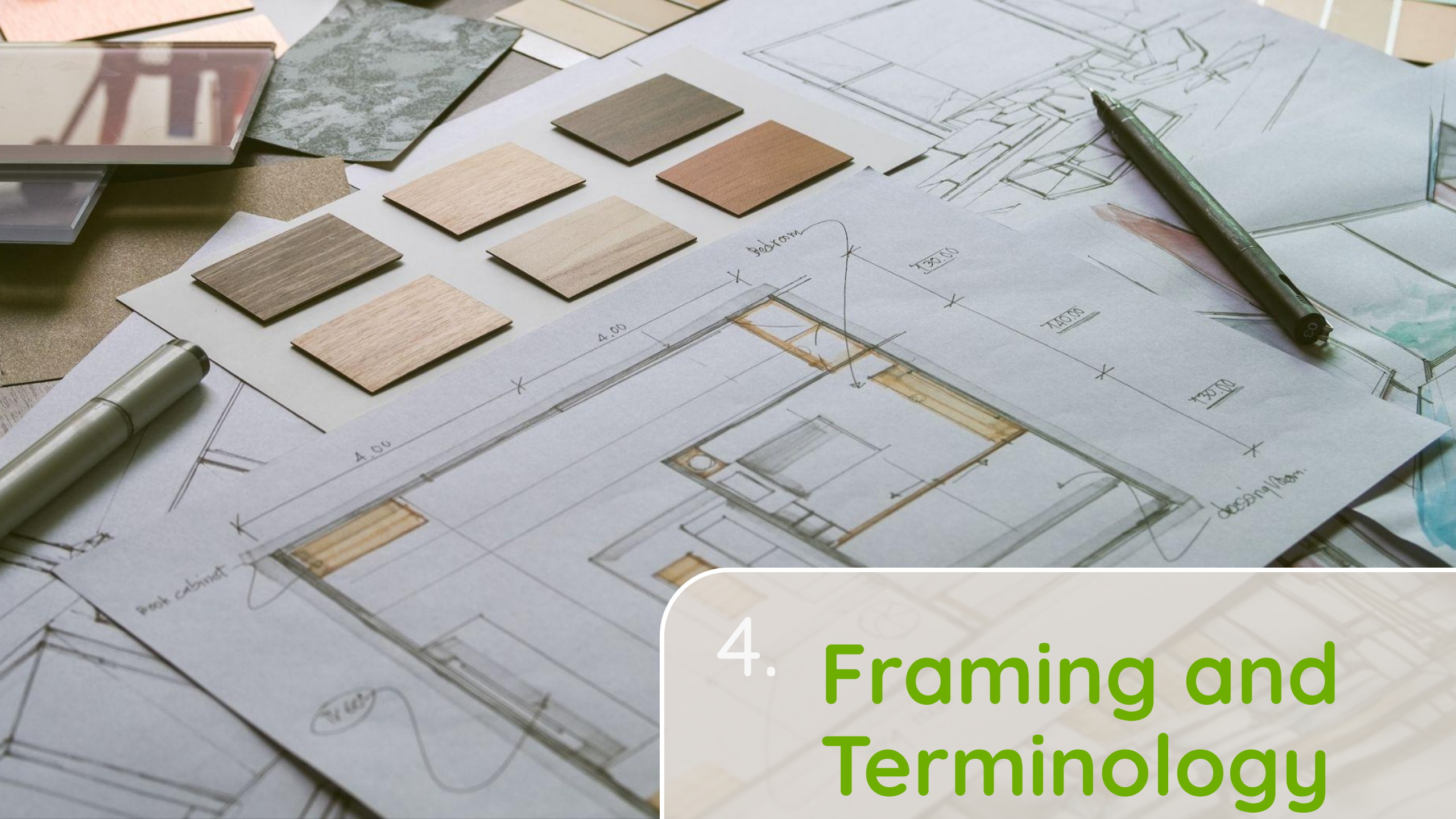
5. Highlight how more home choices **BENEFIT PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES**

Paint a compelling picture of positive community outcomes and the ways people stand to benefit.

Create a powerful emotional response by **illustrating how the lives of sympathetic community members will be better** through policy changes that allow more home choices.

Top-Testing Example:

“A mix of homes, of all sizes and prices, will give more people a chance to own their home, build wealth, and provide solid foundations of economic stability and opportunity for themselves and the next generation.”



4. Framing and Terminology

DOs and DON'Ts: FRAMING

Housing <i>shortage</i>	Housing <i>crisis</i>
More choices and availability	Building and construction
Allow homes of all shapes and sizes; lift local restrictions preventing affordable home choices	End single-family zoning; rezone; upzone
More affordable home choices for people with jobs here; workers the community relies on	Growth projections; population boom
More available homes give renters and home buyers more leverage and power	Allow supply to meet demand
Allow smaller starter homes on smaller lots	Reduce minimum lot sizes
Bans on affordable housing choices like [housing type]	Single-family zoning
McMansions and luxury remodels	Single-family homes

Adopt everyday wording, familiar examples, and friendly visual language

Avoid repeating anti-housing frames, scare tactics, exaggerations, and jargon that alienates people.

DOs and DON'Ts: TERMINOLOGY

Homes	Units
More homes choices; more housing options	Housing <i>supply</i>
More home choices in convenient; connected communities	Density
More home choices in cities; home choices near jobs and transit; homes tucked into existing neighborhoods	Infill; urban infill
Affordable; unaffordable	Expensive; inexpensive
Small apartment buildings up to [proposed number of] stories	Multifamily housing; mid-rise apartments; 5-over-1s
Duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes	"Missing middle"; small multifamily
Displacement	Gentrification
Working family housing	Workforce housing

In our testing, four pro-housing messages persuaded people across all demographic groups, without alienating any group:

1. Homes that **local workers** who serve our communities can afford
2. Home choices **young people** can afford to keep families together
3. Affordable home choices for **local seniors** to downsize in their community
4. Starter homes build solid foundations of **economic stability** and opportunity



6. Research Methodology



General Population Research

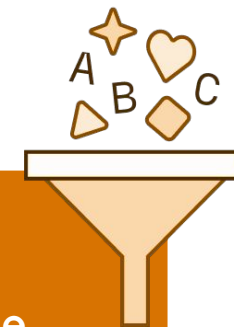
[FM3 used two different methods](#) to conduct research among a nationwide, general population audience—a national survey of 1,211 respondents and a qualboard (an online discussion forum facilitated by researchers) with 25 respondents. This phase of research allowed us to identify the perceptions of the housing space among everyday Americans.



Elites and Policymakers Research

Global Strategy Group (GSG) [conducted](#) an online journal among nationwide “policy elites” defined as people who are higher education, higher income, high news consumption, and civically engaged, meaning they are active in their own communities and likely to speak up when it counts, including on matters of local import such as zoning.

This journal contained a mix of elites across gender, age, region, partisanship, level of education, and homeowner/renter status. They also conducted a survey of 500 nationwide elites.



Randomized Message Tests

Grow Progress conducted a message tests that focused on various types of housing development, with 9 messages total. In the test, respondents were split into groups of 1,000 and exposed to either one of our messages, or to a placebo message to establish a baseline of sentiment without any message exposure. Message success is measured by the persuasive effect a message had across a set of success questions.

This research approach allowed us to identify where there is alignment between a general population audience and elites when it comes to housing policy, as well as where there are gaps in knowledge and sentiment. Randomized message tests were then used to confirm our findings and identify the exact language that is more effective for persuading audiences across demographic groups.

A New Messaging Framework: *Grounded in Public Insights*

National Learning Session - November 5, 2025

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

**Objective: Better understand
public perceptions on homelessness
to better build public support
for solutions**

Focus: Atlanta, Denver and San Diego

- **Stakeholder Interviews**
- **Focus Groups**
- **Perception Survey**

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

The need to address homelessness is a major concern in Atlanta, Denver and San Diego - ranking #2 as the biggest issue facing each city.

Public conversations about causes and solutions for homelessness are tightly interwoven with a number of issues, including;

- lack of affordable housing
- concerns about safety and overall livability
- the need for mental health and substance abuse services
- residents' sense of community

There is an economic angst in these cities, reflected in the rankings of other “biggest issues”:

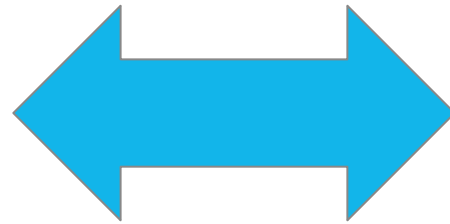
#1 - Overall cost of living #3 Housing prices #4 Jobs and the economy

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

There is a tension within the public

Empathy
Compassion

“Them”



Impatience
Frustration

“We/Me”

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

How this tension shows up:

Greatest Impact of Homelessness:

- 53% Suffering of those who are homeless
- 42% Overall cleanliness and livability of the city
- 33% Certain parts of the city are unsafe
- 18% People less willing to use public transportation

Why work to reduce homelessness in your city:

- 43% It's about our city being a better place to live for everyone
- 39% It's about helping people who've fallen on hard times
- 24% It will improve the safety of our city
- 24% It's what we do here to support those who need a hand

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

How this tension shows up:

Mental Health and Addiction Support:

95% Favor more support for treatment of those who suffer from mental illness or addiction

67% Support forcing those with mental illness or addiction to get treatment (including 62% of Democrats)

What would make voters most proud to live in your city?:

27% The city is a safe and clean place to live

21% Everyone has an opportunity to thrive

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

Nearly universal support for housing:

- 91% - making it simpler for people to get help in a housing crisis
- 88% - providing basic, simple housing to get people off the street
- 85% - combining new housing units with support programs

With a caveat....

When asked in focus groups who should be prioritized for new housing - **“middle class families”** and **“those who are housing insecure”** largely had equal, if not greater, priority than the homeless. .

A New Messaging Framework, Grounded in Audience Insights

Messaging Framework:

- Communications guidance for the campaigns Community Solutions and their partners are launching in these cities.
- Designed to help local leaders talk about homelessness in ways that resonate with the public.
- Some of these approaches will differ from how efforts to reduce homeless have been talked about in the past.

By applying the audience insights, local leaders can create messaging that builds support for policies to actively reduce homelessness and — just as importantly — to demonstrate that those policies are working.

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE:

*Build trust
that it can be done
and leaders will get it done.*

MESSAGING PILLARS

**A better, safer and
more livable
community for all**

**Working together,
effectively and with
accountability**

**People first,
not policy**

**Tangible results,
real people**

MESSENGERS

Strategic Imperative: Build trust that it can be done and leaders will get it done.

**The challenge isn't to convince people that homelessness matters.
The challenge is to prove local leaders can deliver visible, measurable results.**

The public sees homelessness as a significant concern.
And believes it can be reduced (+84%) or even solved (+43%)

The trust gap isn't about capability but about accountability and efficiency.

The real barrier is that while the public holds local government leaders most accountable for progress (71%), only 49% believe government will use the resources responsibly.

MESSAGING PILLARS

A better, safer and more livable community for all

Working together effectively and with accountability

People first, not policy

Tangible results, real people

Pillar: A better, safer and more livable community - for all

Homelessness impacts everyone in a community, and voters see dual benefits in addressing it.

Voters support actions that:

- **directly help those experiencing homelessness**
- AND**
- **improve the overall safety, cleanliness and livability of a city**

People grasp that successful homelessness interventions create a win-win outcome — helping individuals rebuild their lives and improving community conditions for all residents.

Pillar: Working together effectively, and with accountability

Voters expect local elected leaders to lead, and will hold them accountable for tangible progress.

They also recognize the best solutions come from bringing together the nonprofit, business, philanthropic and faith communities.

Residents are split on whether to support new resources,

Approaches that most resonate will:

- **show efficient use of existing resources;**
- **break silos and look for a combination of the most effective solutions; and**
- **reflect a sense of good stewardship that focuses the right support for the biggest impact.**

There is also a strong sense that those who receive assistance should be accountable, too. The public wants to see the homeless accept responsibility in return for the support they receive (79%).

Pillar: People first, not policy

Community members aren't moved by pure policies and statistics. **People** are the center of their concern.

The public has heard countless stories about the need for “housing first,” vague references to mental health crises, and calls for more money for homelessness support services. Abstract frameworks are not resonating with them or inspiring action.

This is also apparent in the concerns about their community. Safety concerns are personal, not abstract.

This is not a problem about numbers; it's about improving the lives of people — those who are homeless and the individual residents of the city.

Describe policies and programs in terms that reflect their impact on people's lives.

Pillar: Tangible results, real people

The ultimate measure of success: “I’ll believe it when I see it.”

Roughly half of voters said when they will know homelessness reduction efforts are working when they “see fewer homeless people on the street.”

Nothing should discount the importance of that perception.

The public can also see success in the faces of those whose lives were changed. Putting a face to solutions can ignite belief that programs can work and that tax dollars are actually changing lives in visible ways.

People believe what they see. Help them envision what their community could look like when solutions work and are scaled up effectively.

Who delivers the message is as important as the message itself

1. Real people
2. Elected leaders
3. Community leaders

“If there is this whole thing set up to make it a better community, personally, I have less to worry about if something goes wrong. So it gives everybody a little bit more of that peace of mind.”

- Denver focus group participant

FACILITATED DISCUSSION

AUDIENCE Q&A

THANK YOU!