



# The Tiny House Movement: A Solution to Homelessness in Jackson, MS





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## What is homelessness?

- The US Department of Health and Human Services defines homelessness as individuals who lack housing and/or whose primary residence is a supervised public or private facility such as a shelter that provides temporary living accommodations.
- Viewed as a temporary condition that people fall into when they cannot afford to pay for a place to live or when their current home is unsafe or unstable.



## Homelessness in Jackson, MS

- Currently Jackson, MS has a "Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness"
- The plan works with strategies to identify homelessness and come up with solutions.
- The city of Jackson states that its first priority is to provide permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals.



# Current Problems with Current Solutions to End Homelessness in Jackson, MS

## Tiny House Movement

- Growing popularity across the US as a solution to end chronic homelessness.
- The Tiny House Movement advocates for living simply in smaller homes.
- Gained success in various metropolitan cities and can serve as a viable solution to end homelessness in Jackson MS.



- Lack of affordable housing
- Safety issues/concerns in public housing
- Leaky roofs, cracked floors, shifting foundations, chronic sewage and septic problems, mold and mildew, illegal/electrical wiring
- Lack of shelters in Jackson, MS to house the homeless in Jackson MS



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# Current Tiny House Movements

Madison, Wisconsin- Occupy Madison  
Olympia, Washington- Quixote Village  
Austin, Texas- Community First! Village



# Methodology

- Conducted Ethnographic research to develop an in depth analytical description of the current system in place to address homelessness in Jackson, MS.
- Collected extensive narrative data from 10 homeless individuals at Smith Park, various city officials, various homeless shelter directors, directors of Tiny House Movements in different states.





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# Results

- Homeless Individuals
  - Felt that there were not enough options for them in the Capitol city to sustain and keep employment
  - The veterans felt that there was a lack of respect for what they had done for their country.
  - The women felt unsafe in shelters, even in the ones designed specifically for women
- Directors and Employees of Jackson Shelters
  - Expressed that people are homeless due to drug and substance issues or crime
  - Felt that there are not enough resources available for homeless individuals in the city of Jackson
  - No long term shelters for the chronic homeless in Jackson, MS



# Results

- Conducting email interviews with Tiny House Village Directors it was found that a collaborative community effort was conducted to make these shelters a reality.
- Each Tiny Village was started by local 501 (c) 3 non-profits
- Crime, substance abuse/use, and lack of affordable housing in their areas were also found to be reasons for continued homeless populations.
- Each village although comprehensively the same, took on unique approaches to address their specific community needs.





# Solutions for Jackson

What can Jackson, MS do to  
Implement this movement?





# Solutions

Jackson, MS has the capacity to develop the Tiny House Movement for the city.

For this movement to be a success, the capitol city must explore:

- Current Housing supply
- Space standards
- Neighborhood conditions
- Affordability
- Housing quality
- Opinions of formerly and potentially homeless people on housing and shelters provided or arranged through current services or strategies



# ...But Can it Work???

- The Tiny House Movement can sustain itself through the work and efforts of the residents who live there and the grassroots efforts from surrounding communities.
- Residents accepted in The Tiny House Movement must acquire a job or skill to live on the village grounds.
  - developing/sustaining community garden, waste/garbage collection, recycling
- Collaborate with local municipalities and resources to provide residents with rehabilitation services, job/skills training, treatment, or other support services.

# Suggestions for Success

- I suggest that Jackson collaborate to create a citizen-driven initiative to create positive changes in attitudes, policies, and practices that would benefit homeless individuals.
- Dedicating to this initiative can provide facilities at low-cost, low impact development, while improving the overall appearance of the city.
- By facilitating support by increasing education to stakeholders, community leaders, and members through providing evidence-based practices and data support, the Tiny House Movement can gain traction as a solution to end homelessness in the Capitol city and serve as a model for surrounding communities within the state of Mississippi.







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