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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Denver Expands Strategies to Provide Housing, Emergency Shelter for Individuals Facing Homelessness

*Series of 11 new contracts to expand day shelter services and connect more people in need to bridge housing*

**DENVER – Wednesday, December 4, 2019** – Mayor Michael B. Hancock today announced the first in a series of upcoming public and private contracts to further assist individuals facing homelessness to get indoors and to connect to permanent housing solutions.

A total of 11 new contracts with homelessness service providers will deliver approximately \$6.89 million in city funding toward bridge housing vouchers, expanded day shelter access, critical shelter improvements, and enhanced onsite programs and services to better connect residents with permanent housing.

“Housing is foundational, and it matters – that’s why people who are stably housed are healthier, they are better able to stay employed, and children are better able to grow up happy and healthy,” Mayor Hancock said. “These partnerships and expanded services are critical. Our approach of housing first – focusing on getting people indoors and housed, providing support for them and connecting them to resources and programs – has demonstrated positive results, and makes real impacts for real people and families who desperately need housing stability.”

Shelter investments include an additional 40,000 hours of operation and support services combined. Through this additional staffing, the city estimates that an additional 1,300+ households will engage with case management across Denver’s network for emergency shelters. In addition, the contracts include funding to launch Denver’s first 24/7 shelter, providing overnight and daytime shelter with 25 new beds for older and veteran women.

Bridge housing investments are projected to assist more than 600 households through next year with accessing temporary housing to help bridge their transition to permanent housing within 30-90 days.

The shelter services investments are designed to help break down some of the barriers individuals and families may encounter when experiencing a period of homelessness.

These may include lack of storage for personal belongings, limited shelter hours that don't align with an individual's work schedule, safety, and accessibility issues. Service providers selected through a Request for Proposal process have shown how they can address these barriers to get more individuals, couples and families into shelter and connected to needed services.

The contracts represent the first step of a 3-year, \$15.7 million homelessness services initiative announced earlier this year and supported by the city and Denver's business and philanthropic communities. The city has committed \$11.2 million and private funders have come forward to provide \$3.5 million.

"Partnerships and a community response are paramount to improving conditions for our most vulnerable residents," said Britta Fisher, executive director of Denver's Department of Housing Stability. "We all know we have a shared responsibility to ensure that those experiencing homelessness are treated with dignity and compassion. Today's announcement represents our first effort that blends and braids taxpayer-supported effort, government, philanthropy and business support."

Five of the proposed contracts exceed \$500,000, and thus require approval by Denver City Council prior to being finalized. These contracts are scheduled for review by the City Council's Safety, Housing, Education & Homelessness Committee on December 11.

Below is a list of the pending contracts, contract amounts, and samples of many of the funded improvements and services:

### **Colorado Coalition for the Homeless**

- Bridge Housing - \$1,985,000
  - To serve an estimated total of 600 households, including individuals, couples and families in need

### **Family Promise of Greater Denver**

- Bridge Housing - \$160,866
  - To serve 20 families with dependent children

### **Denver Rescue Mission**

- Capital Improvements - \$1,574,135
  - Improvements to the Lawrence Street Shelter to meet ADA requirements and to enable improved sheltering of clients with mobility impairments
  - 600 new storage units at two locations
- Essential Supportive Services - \$733,596
  - Expand services, including outreach to an additional 30+ individuals per day in the Ballpark area
  - Expansion of behavioral health services

### **Salvation Army**

- Essential Supportive Services - \$333,334
  - Crossroads Shelter expanded to include daytime services
  - Provide additional assistance to support rapid housing into permanent solutions including rent support and transportation

## **St. Francis Center**

- Capital Improvements - \$174,295
  - Improved ADA access; renovated bathroom and shower areas; security cameras
- Essential Supportive Services - \$322,111
  - Expand staff and day shelter operations
  - Increase mental health and other services through a case manager, to serve an additional 70-90 individuals

## **Urban Peak**

- Capital Improvements - \$138,328
  - Improvements at overnight shelter and drop-in center to include security cameras, outdoor lighting, new patio
- Essential Supportive Services - \$840,682
  - Increased daytime services at drop-in center; additional services at shelter location, including easier access to basic needs
  - Provide case management to an additional 500 youth age 15 to 24

## **Volunteers of America**

- Capital Improvements - \$100,000
- Essential Supportive Services - \$528,405
  - To support new VOA Senior Women's Shelter, providing 24-hour sheltering and supportive services for up to 25 individuals age 55 and over, as well as unaccompanied veteran women; meals, behavioral health treatment, physical care and substance abuse treatment services to be provided

Joining the city in this effort are the Anschutz Family Foundation, the Colorado Health Foundation, the Associated General Contractors of Colorado, the Downtown Denver Partnership, and VISIT Denver. Mile High United Way is serving an important role by acting as the custodian to accept funds from private entities.

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*The Department of Housing Stability is committed to ensuring all of those who call Denver home have a roof over their heads. The department invests resources, creates policy and partners to provide housing stability, resolve episodes of homelessness, and create housing opportunities.*