



March 10, 2021

Dear Mayor Hancock and Denver City Council Members:

cc: Laura Aldrete, Executive Director Community Planning & Development

**We appreciate the City's various ongoing efforts, specifically the Mayor's Office, District 10 Councilman Hinds (whose district is home to the first two Safe Outdoor Space sites), and the residents who have supported the work to provide both temporary and permanent shelter to those who are unhoused.** With over 1,000 people sleeping outside each night in Denver in the depths of winter, addressing homelessness is a matter of life or death. We understand there is no "silver bullet" to solving the homelessness crisis, but we have been heartened by the positive and immediate impacts that the *Temporary Safe Outdoor Space* (TSOS) sites have had in the last few months by providing safer shelter and navigation services for approximately 70 people. (See Addendum A).

*Therefore, we ask for immediate action and a shared commitment by the Mayor's Office, Community Planning & Development, and all City Council members to:*

- **ADD 10 SOS SITES:** Identify an SOS site -- or similar option -- that can also be set up as quickly as possible in every City Council District to provide safer shelter to an additional 350 people.
- **REMOVE LINK TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC:** "Decoupling" the Temporary Unlisted Use (T.U.U.) permit from the ongoing public health crises because homelessness in Denver will outlast the pandemic crisis.
- **INCORPORATE TSOS INTO THE WIDER CONTEXT:** Demonstrate how short-term practical measures, such as SOS sites, fit within the City's long term goal of ending homelessness.
- **PROVIDE ONE POINT OF CONTACT:** Identify a single point of contact that elected officials and neighborhood leaders can communicate with regarding the establishment and assessment of temporary shelter programs, like the SOS.

The group of neighborhood organizations and Business Improvement Districts supporting this effort (see Addendum B) continues to grow in number. Together, we have forged a path for how to build community support for and overcome barriers to opening temporary SOS sites within residential communities that are already home to many social services. We are committed to leading this effort by helping other communities with best practices.

This is a time for immediate and urgent action to save the lives of those in great peril. More than 200 unhoused Denverites died in 2020; and, some of us personally know people who froze to death living on Denver's streets this year. **We implore you to act quickly, decisively, and courageously.**





Please respond by Wednesday March 31, 2021 to our bulleted requests above.


We ask each City Council member to locate one SOS site in each of your districts and to collaboratively work with the Mayor's Office to sufficiently resource each site. Additionally, City Council should work with the Community Planning & Development Department to "de-link" the T.U.U. permit from the pandemic and introduce a resolution to do so before the end of April 2021. While setting up a space in each district will not provide housing to every person now living on the streets, it will make a meaningful difference to hundreds of vulnerable people now and demonstrate how the entire city is working for a solution.

*In cooperation,*

Signed by the following on behalf of their organizations:

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Judy Trompeter  
 President  
**UPTOWN ON THE HILL**



  
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 Jo Untiedt  
 President  
**CITY PARK WEST**



  
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 Sydney Ilg Malone  
 Board Representative  
**GOLDEN TRIANGLE CREATIVE DISTRICT**



  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ryan Cox  
 President  
**CURTIS PARK NEIGHBORS**



  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Travis Leiker  
 President & Executive Director  
**CAPITOL HILL UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.**



  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Frank Locantore  
 Executive Director  
**COLFAX AVE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**



  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 John Deffenbaugh  
 Projects Director  
**RINO ART DISTRICT, BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**



  
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 Zach Kotel  
 Board Member & Representative  
**OLD SAN RAFAEL NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION**





## **Addendum A**

### Snapshot: Successes of the Safe Outdoor Space Sites

*(Provided by Colorado Village Collaborative during the February 11th monthly Good Neighbor meeting)*

- 5 residents have moved into tiny homes at Beloved Community Village,
- 2 residents connected to housing vouchers and will be moving into their own apartment in a month,
- 5 residents are connected with Colorado Coalition for the Homelessness housing case management outreach team,
- 5 resident have completed the OneHome coordinated entry system,
- 3 residents working with St Francis Center to acquire proper identification,
- 14 residents got their teeth cleaned,
- 4 veterans made contact with the Veterans Administration,
- 2 residents are continuing their journey of sobriety,
- 7 resident connected with mental health services, and
- 1 resident started working in the field they had been working in previously and has plans to save for an apartment.

## **Addendum B**

### Geography of the Organizational Signatories to This Letter:

