



MEDIA RELEASE

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CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, HOMEWARD BOUND AND UNITED WAY COLLABORATE TO ESTABLISH NEW UNHOUSED RESOURCE CENTER

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. Nov. 8, 2023 – The City of Grand Junction is collaborating with Homeward Bound of Grand Valley and United Way of Mesa County to create a Resource Center that is planned to open in December of 2023.

“The city has been actively pursuing practical and compassionate solutions as we address the complex issues related to unhoused community members. We are very proud of convening these organizations and collaborating to develop the Resource Center concept and hope it can serve as a model for other cities,” stated Grand Junction Mayor Anna Stout. “Our plan is that this new Resource Center not only provides individuals and families with a safe place where they are treated with dignity and can feel a sense of belonging, but that this collaboration with experienced service providers will help create a path out of houselessness.”

Resource Center services will be provided in a hard-sided pavilion that can be cooled and/or heated depending on the weather and will include portable restrooms, showers, and an opportunity for meals to be provided in one location along with a centralized space for service providers to offer resource navigation for unhoused community members. When constructed, the Resource Center will operate with low barriers to entry. The center is planned to be staffed and operated by Homeward Bound, with other providers delivering services and meeting basic needs. Homeward Bound will provide professional staff at the site during hours of operation and will work with a collective of other service providers that will meet regularly to help inform and steer the overall direction of the Resource Center to ensure it is meeting the community’s needs. Homeward Bound has indicated that there will be office space available for service providers in the facility that will provide mental health counseling, medical and other services.

“United Way of Mesa County is proud to be a part of the Resource Center project,” stated Zebulon Miracle, executive director of Mesa County United Way. “There is great work being done by local nonprofit organizations and the faith-based community, and we believe this project will help coordinate and focus these efforts to improve lives. This project provides a secure, dignified, and safe place to gather and also directs people to the services and resources available to make

substantial change,” continued Miracle. “Our community is strongest when we leverage collaboration and partnerships and this project has been designed with that in mind.”

At Homeward Bound, our unrelenting focus is to meet the people we serve at their immediate point of need,” stated Bill Wade chair emeritus of HomewardBound. “The resource center is exciting because of the partnerships it creates and the community commitment to working towards a long-term solution. Everyone deserves dignity and support as they move through life, and this project is a great way to help people change their lives and circumstances.”

Grand Junction City Council voted unanimously last Wednesday to approve a resolution authorizing the city to use \$912,400 in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to purchase the pavilion and a restroom and shower trailer to be placed on the site, and for related start-up costs as well as initial operational costs. The pavilion structure and the mobile shower and bathroom trailer are movable and are intended to be located on the site for up to two years. A supplementary budget appropriation for the funds was also approved on first reading Wednesday, with a public hearing to finalize the ordinance scheduled for Wed., Nov. 15, 2023. Additional funding for the center operations will be designated in the adopted 2024 city budget.

Homeward Bound and United Way, with input from the city, have identified the city owned property at 225 S. 2nd Street for the Resource Center and the equipment ordering is being expedited so the facility can be open in December of 2023.

The Center is currently intended to be temporary, and the longer-term future of the center may be dependent upon the evolving community needs as strategies are further developed from the Unhoused Needs Assessment.

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