Boulder’s First Permanently Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Opens

Boulder, CO--Boulder Housing Partners will celebrate the grand opening of 1175 Lee Hill, Boulder’s first apartment community for chronically homeless individuals, on November 3.

The 31-unit apartment community will provide permanent homes and supportive services for homeless individuals to help them achieve long-term stability and self-reliance. Residents will begin moving in on November 4.

“Providing permanent, supportive housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness is both a compassionate response and a cost-effective approach to assisting this vulnerable population,” said Angela McCormick, Chair, BHP Board of Commissioners. “Housing creates stability in people’s lives.”

The new building will be open to the public from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on November 3, and the grand opening program will begin at 5 p.m. The new facility is located on Lee Hill Drive and Broadway in North Boulder). The community is invited to attend.

“This project catalyzed and inspired change in the North Boulder neighborhood, and will catalyze and inspire change in the 31 people who move in on November 4,” said Betsey Martens, Executive Director of BHP. “We’re grateful to our neighbors for their vital participation in making a great place that will serve an essential social goal but will also be a beautiful gateway to our neighborhood.”

Other speakers will include the Honorable KC Becker, Colorado House District 13; Andrew Shoemaker, Boulder City Council; and partners and investors in the project.

The two-story, multifamily apartment building has 31 one-bedroom, fully-furnished units. Residents will also have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor community spaces, laundry facilities and a community room for classes and social events. Each resident will be assigned a case manager whose role is to assist them in obtaining community services such as federal income benefits, medical care, counseling, and job training. BHP is contracting with the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless to provide the on-site case management.

A recent campaign raised $34,000 to help furnish resident apartments, as most residents move in with virtually no possessions. Art@1175, a committee of local volunteers working to create community connections through public art, is responsible for obtaining grant funding for a 32-foot-high mural designed by a North Boulder artist and mounted on the building’s exterior. Sally Eckert’s “A Higher Perspective” will be unveiled at the grand opening.

The 1175 Lee Hill development, which follows the national Housing First model, will increase the number of permanent housing units available to Boulder residents who have suffered from chronic homelessness, a critical component of Boulder’s ten year plan to end homelessness. The chronically
homeless, which comprise approximately 15-20 percent of the homeless population, are its most vulnerable group. They tend to have high recurring incidences of mental illness, addictions and physical disabilities and are often in need of emergency services. The economic burden on community hospitals, mental health organizations, jails and courts can be reduced significantly, as shown in studies around the country, by providing this group with permanent supportive housing

“The Shelter is very excited to continue its long-term partnership with BHP in bringing this project to fruition,” said Greg Harms, executive director of the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless. “Over the next month, 31 people who have led very unlucky lives will finally have a roof over their heads. This won’t end homelessness in our community but it is a great start.”

BHP is a national leader in sustainable affordable housing development. Accordingly, 1175 Lee Hill is designed to be 30 percent more energy efficient than city code. A 56 kW solar array will be installed on the roof, offsetting 100 percent of the common area electricity demand.

The $7.6 million development was designed by Humphries Poli Architects; the general contractor is Boulder-based Deneuve Construction. Funding was provided by the City of Boulder, Boulder County, the Colorado Division of Housing, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, National Equity Fund and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

About Boulder Housing Partners:

Boulder Housing Partners is the housing authority serving the City of Boulder since 1966. BHP builds, owns, and manages quality affordable housing for low and moderate-income Boulder residents, and helps those residents pursue successful, productive, and dignified lives. BHP is one of only 35 public housing authorities in the United States participating in the prestigious Moving to Work program, which encourages innovation by providing flexibility in the use of federal funds. Its Red Oak Park community recently won national and international awards for sustainability and affordable housing development.

About Boulder Shelter for the Homeless:

The Boulder Shelter for the Homeless has been serving the homeless adults in Boulder County since 1982. Its mission is to provide safe shelter, food, support services and an avenue to self-sufficiency for homeless adults in our community. The Shelter is a private, 501c3 corporation that runs multiple programs, including the 160-bed shelter facility in North Boulder.

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