



For Immediate Release
Advisory for event TONIGHT (Mon. 9/17/18) at 6:30 p.m.

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Aurora Community Members, Legislators, and Advocates Urge City Council to Approve Affordable Housing Development; Hearing TONIGHT on Project Designed to Help People Exit Homelessness

Hundreds of Aurora citizens have signed petitions in support of the Providence at The Heights development project; poll shows 77% of Aurora voters are in favor and just 20% are opposed

AURORA, Colo. — Aurora community members, legislators, and advocates are urging the City Council to greenlight an affordable housing development project aimed at alleviating homelessness. A hearing on the Second Chance Center's Providence at The Heights (PATH) project is scheduled to take place during tonight's council meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m.

Representatives from the Second Chance Center, Elevation Christian Church, Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative, Interfaith Alliance, and Enterprise Community Partners plan to testify in support of the project, and they will be available for media interviews on the steps outside the building beginning at 6:30 p.m.

On July 25, the Aurora Planning and Zoning Commission denied the site plan for PATH, which would combine housing and services to help individuals and families exit homelessness. Officials cited the development's parking plan as the reason for denial, but advocates worry it could be an effort to obstruct the project. The Second Chance Center is now seeking a waiver from Aurora City Council. If it approves the parking waiver, as it has done for other housing developments under similar circumstances, construction can begin this fall.

Over four hundred community members have signed online and in-person petitions in support of the PATH project, a majority of whom lives in Ward III, where the housing development will be located. [A survey conducted last month by Public Policy Polling](#) found three out of four Aurora voters (77%) support the PATH development, and fewer than 20% of voters are opposed. It also found:

- Four out of five Aurora voters (80%) think homelessness is a serious problem, and more than 40% think it is a very serious problem.
- About three out of four Aurora voters (74%) think a lack of affordable housing is a serious problem, and nearly half think it is a very serious problem.
- More than half of Aurora voters (53%) think the mayor and city council are doing too little when it comes to taking action to address homelessness and affordable housing matters, and more than half (55%) also said they would be more likely to vote for a mayoral or council candidate who made it a priority to push for more affordable housing. The survey of 401 Aurora voters was conducted from August 24-26 and has a margin of

error of plus or minus 4.9 percentage points.

Yesterday, eight members of Aurora's legislative delegation [sent a letter to the mayor and city council](#), urging support of PATH.

"The Colorado General Assembly works each year to address issues of housing and homelessness, especially for individuals with disabilities or who experience homelessness chronically," wrote Sens. Daniel Kagan, Nancy Todd, and Rhonda Fields, along with Reps. Dafna Michaelson Jenet, Mike Weissman, Janet Buckner, Jovan Melton, and Dominique Jackson. "We believe that PATH can help meet these needs in Aurora head-on. PATH also aligns perfectly with several of the Transforming Safety crime prevention priorities, particularly of reducing victimization among people experiencing homelessness."

The PATH development project is a three-story, 50-unit apartment building located at 15602 E. Alameda Parkway, where land has been provided by the Elevation Christian Church. To be eligible, residents must earn at or below 30% of the area's median household income, be homeless or at risk of being homeless, and/or have a disability. The Colorado Division of Housing has approved housing vouchers so that the monthly rent will not be more than 30% of household income, and there is no time limit on how long people can stay in the apartments. The Second Chance Center and Aurora Mental Health Center will provide on-site support services, the building will be staffed around the clock, and referrals for medical and behavioral health treatment will be made to off-site providers.

Statement from Scott Bloyer, lead pastor of Elevation Christian Church:

"Elevation Christian Church has always been a community of faith that has made the needs of the city of Aurora a priority. Whether it is providing school supplies for students in the Aurora Public school system through Save Our Youth. Or by providing food for 100-150 families a month who are in need through the Free Market at Elevation. By opening our building to other nonprofit organizations to meet in because they also want to care for the city. After meeting with Mayor Hogan over a year ago, we knew that helping those without a place to live was needed in this city and he confirmed it. We are always going to try our best to engage people so they can experience life change in Jesus through what we do as a community of faith."

Statement from Hassan A. Latif, executive director of the Second Chance Center:

"Providence at the Heights is supported by LIHTCs, private investors, the Department of Local Affairs and Division of Housing, public officials, and countless taxpaying voters. Yet there are some who still want to ignore the homeless like it's someone else's problem. It is our problem, and we're committed to addressing it."

WHAT: Council appeals hearing on the Second Chance Center's site plan for Providence at The Heights, a development project that would combine housing and services to help individuals and families exit homelessness

WHEN: TODAY, Monday, September 17, during the council's regular meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m.; supporters will be available for media interviews at 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: Aurora Municipal Center, 15151 E Alameda Parkway; hearing in council chambers, pre-hearing media availability on the steps outside

WHO: Supporters who plan to testify at the hearing include:

Scott Bloyer, Lead Pastor, Elevation Christian Church

Ian Fletcher, Manager of System Performance, Metro Denver Homeless Initiative

Nathan Hunt, Program Director of Economic Justice, Interfaith Alliance

Hassan Latif, Executive Director, Second Chance Center

Tiana Patterson, Policy Program Officer, Enterprise CommunityPartners

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The Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition is a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating the overuse of the criminal justice system and advancing community health and safety. For more information, visit <https://www.ccjrc.org>.