

The Help and Hope Center

The Help and Hope Center, formerly the Douglas Elbert Task Force, was founded in 1981 and has grown to be the main source of assistance to those living on the edge of insecurity in Douglas County. Currently serving between 15,000 and 20,000 clients yearly on a \$2m budget, H&HC provides food, clothing, financial support, and limited shelter on a daily basis with the intent to keep people out of homelessness. Our current facility is in an aging, retrofitted building located at 1638 Park Street. All through this pandemic, H&HC served as a front-line source for food, financial, and clothing assisting directly targeted toward survival of the COVID 19 virus. The pandemic clearly exposed our current facilities inability to adequately support the expanded need. Our current facility options are 1.) to remodel an aging facility at a cost of around \$5.5m (only to face future size and space limitations), or 2.) to build a new facility more suitable to our operation and the growing demand we expect as the consumer Government stimulus support recedes.

The project brought before you today is for the construction of a new Help and Hope Center to be located on a retail pad site in Castle Rock with plans to use the added funding this new facility will generate to look toward expanding our care network in Douglas County. Current data indicates that Highlands Ranch is the most underserved zip code in Douglas County...essentially this means that there is a significant percentage of families in need of our services without easy access (residents in Castle Rock and Parker have multiple options for our services). We are in early planning stages to create a funding model that will enable a second location in Highlands Ranch by 2026. Currently our retail store, which generates approximately ½ of our budget, is not in a retail area. A recent study completed by the DU Daniels College of Business indicated that we would increase our sales volume by locating the Treasures thrift store in a retail area. Administratively our main site of operations needs to be in one building so what that means is we need to move all functions to the new building.

The proposed new facility depicted by the attached rendering and accompanied by a statement of probable cost delineates the plans for a new \$10.5m operations center here in Castle Rock that would house, the Thrift Store, the Food Bank, Receiving, Pricing, Client Services and Administration as well as a planned space for a future jobs training program (the 5 year plan mentioned above also includes a training path to expand our client services to offer more than just emergency relief, but to enable on-going advisor support in helping the families we serve to achieve true self-sufficiency).

The specific request H&HC is making to the BOCC is for funding of \$8.5m for this project. As the stimulus checks and extended unemployment benefits lapse, coupled with the future inflation that will inherently follow, H&HC must position ourselves to provide services for the food, housing, and clothing insecurities that are on the horizon. Full or partial funding of this request will enable H&HC to meet the needs and keep thousands from your safety nets.