

About the Department of Housing Stability

Like other growing cities in America, Denver's housing challenges have mounted in recent years. Denver has experienced rapid population and economic growth. Housing costs have increased, while incomes have failed to keep pace. This reality has placed too many Denver residents at risk of involuntary displacement and homelessness and without the foundation created by an affordable, stable home. To strengthen the City's response to these challenges, in October 2019, the city created the Department of Housing Stability (HOST). The new department brings together existing investments and policies around housing and homelessness programs, development, and services.

Need for the supports that HOST funds is significant. More than one-third of Denver households pay more than the recommended 30% of their incomes on housing, and only 7% of Denver's housing stock is income restricted to ensure affordability. Additionally, access to homeownership is not equitable: while more than half (54%) of white non-Hispanic/non-Latinx householders are homeowners, only 40% of Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) are homeowners. In 2020, 4,171 people experienced homelessness on a single night in January. The COVID-19 pandemic's economic impacts have exacerbated these challenges. As a result, requests for financial assistance to keep people in their homes increased by 270%, and the number of beds available in Denver's existing shelters were reduced by more than 50%.

HOST aims to create a Denver where:

- Residents have the choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods;
- Residents experience homelessness rarely, and, if they do, it is brief and one time;
- Residents have equitable access to housing options that meet their needs with easy access to community resources.

Denver League of Women Voters is working on setting up a January briefing on HOST's Action Plan for 2021, including the Homelessness Resolution Fund (Measure 2B approved by voters in November 2020). We hope to have the details on that briefing soon.

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