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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 11, 2016

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DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION DOUBLING CITY-FUNDED DROP-IN CENTERS TO BRING STREET HOMELESS OFF NYC STREETS

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio announced today that the City will double the number of City-funded Drop-In Centers designed to help bring homeless people off the streets and provide them with services that can help keep them off the streets permanently.

Drop-In Centers are an essential part of a continuum of care for street homelessness that starts with HOME-STAT outreach workers identifying them and gaining their trust; bringing them to a Drop-In Center for food, showers, case management services and medical care; taking them to a Safe Haven to spend the night; and moving them into supportive housing where they can receive help to rebuild their lives.

“Every street homeless person is an individual tragedy, a life gone off course. But sadly they often reject traditional shelters. We are now assembling all the specialized services needed to find each of these people and offer them the assistance that will work for each of them. Drop-In Centers are an essential part of the path off the streets, where homeless people can rest, eat, see a case manager, receive medical care and be offered placement into housing,” said **Mayor de Blasio**.

Mayor de Blasio has now substantially strengthened every step needed to move homeless people off the street, including creating HOME-STAT, the nation's most comprehensive street homelessness outreach effort, committing to add 500 new Safe Haven beds, and committing to finance 15,000 new supportive housing units.

Today's announcement is another in a series of reforms resulting from the 90-day review of City homeless services ordered by Mayor de Blasio on December 15, including:

- Launching the Shelter Repair Squad 2.0, substantially increasing the City's ability to monitor and correct unacceptable shelter conditions.
- Ending the use of cluster apartments for shelter over the next three years.
- Reiterating the existing requirement to keep shelters open for residents during the day.
- Adding 300 beds for homeless youth.

Drop-In Centers provide an alternative to traditional shelter for street homeless individuals. They offer temporary respite where individuals can shower, eat a meal, see a doctor and rest. Case management and housing placement services are also available for clients who wish to receive them. The Centers also offer a limited number of off-site overnight respite beds, but ultimately seek to place people in permanent housing.

The City is announcing a new \$8.5 million annual commitment to double the number of Drop-In Centers it currently operates. The City will open three new Drop-In Centers and take over funding of the current HUD-

funded Drop-In Center in the Bronx run by BronxWorks, as HUD looks to reinvest those dollars in permanent housing.

These four locations will be added to the four existing City-funded Drop-Ins: two in Manhattan, one in Staten Island and one in Brooklyn. In the past two fiscal years (FY14 and FY15), these Drop-In Centers served an average of 454 clients during the day, saw a daily average of 128 clients overnight and made 1,238 housing placements.

The City previously had nine City-funded Drop-In Centers, but five were closed between 2008 and 2010.

“To ensure maximum coordination and to make it as easy as possible for homeless New Yorkers to go to the Drop-In Centers, the City’s existing Outreach Team providers will run these Centers,” said **Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks**.

New Centers will open in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. These Drop-In Centers will be expected to each serve approximately 75 clients at any given time.

Drop-In Centers will continue to focus on working collaboratively with the City’s outreach teams on the placement of chronically street homeless individuals into housing, and provide housing placement services to the non-chronically street homeless individuals. This includes working with clients to obtain identification, entitlements and housing. Drop-In Centers will also set up the front door of their programs to rapidly connect individuals to more appropriate systems of care, such as the emergency shelter system, residential drug treatment programs, family re-unification, travel assistance and other resources.

In addition, the City has updated its policies to allow for individuals who have recently stayed in the City shelters to use the Drop-In Center services, reversing a policy that had been in place since 2012.

"I look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio to site a new Drop-In Center in Brooklyn for street homeless individuals that need a safe and supportive place to access critical services," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**. "This is one of many resources needed to combat the homelessness crisis facing our city, and we must continue to invest in these resources in order to help our neighbors in need reach more hopeful futures."

“Drop-In Centers work – they provide a crucial gateway for the street homeless population to begin connecting with services and shelter and start on the path to shelter and eventually permanent housing,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “Dramatically reducing homelessness in New York City will require real investments of government resources, and it’s good to see our mayor making one of those investments today.”

“Moving from the street to supportive housing can be a long, difficult transition,” said **Council-Member and General Welfare Committee Chair Stephen Levin**. “It is essential that case workers be given the resources to provide relief and services to street homeless individuals where they reside. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for stepping up to fully fund our Drop-In Centers, which are an essential component of any strategy for successful outreach to the street homeless. Drop-In Centers allow New Yorkers in need to rest, clean up, speak with a caseworker or doctor, shelter from the cold, and access services and information at their own pace. This type of personal contact lays a foundation for trust and rapport that helps connect street homeless individuals with essential services and eases their transition back to the path toward stable housing and employment.”

"Thanks to Mayor de Blasio’s funding commitment, 3 new sites along with continued support for the BronxWorks Drop-In Center, will help more people leave the streets and move into permanent housing,” said **Susan Stampler, Director of United Neighborhood Houses**. “Drop-In Centers provide an essential community safety net for homeless individuals during one of their most devastating life moments. While it may be a meal or a shower, medical treatment or a bed, or just finding the right person to talk to, these Drop-In Centers make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors. ”

"Breaking Ground applauds Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to helping the most vulnerable New Yorkers," said **Brenda Rosen, President and CEO of Breaking Ground**. "Drop-In Centers are a critical step in the journey from the street to stable, safe, permanent supportive housing. Breaking Ground has been serving the homeless and many other at-risk New Yorkers for more than 25 years as the largest provider of supportive housing, running the city's largest safe haven, and homeless street outreach in three boroughs. We look forward to working with the de Blasio administration to open three new desperately-needed Drop-In Centers, and to get people into permanent housing as soon as possible."

"BronxWorks is thrilled that the Mayor has such a strong commitment to the expansion of Drop-In Centers throughout New York City," said **Eileen Torres, Executive Director of BronxWorks**. "As the long-standing operator of the Bronx Drop-In center while also overseeing the homeless outreach program, we know firsthand the integrated approach is critical to the successful reduction of the numbers of street homeless population in the borough. In addition to coming in off the streets during extreme weather conditions, a Drop-In center offers clients the opportunity to receive medical and/or psychiatric evaluations and care, meet with case managers and complete applications for supportive housing."

"The Mayor's announcement will provide us with another tool in our kit to help those living on the street make the transition from street to permanent housing," said **Stephan Russo, Executive Director of the Goddard Riverside Community Center**. "This is another welcomed sign that the City is providing the resources we need to make our outreach efforts even more effective."

"Homeless New Yorkers living on the street need permanent supportive housing, but until there are enough units available for them, Drop-In Centers can provide a safe place to come in and be protected from the elements," said **Judith Goldiner, Attorney-in-Charge of the Legal Aid Society's Civil Law Reform Unit**.

"Project Hospitality applauds Mayor de Blasio for supporting and expanding what has proven for us to be a critical piece of a continuum of compassionate engagement and services that will successfully move homeless persons from the streets to safe shelter and supportive housing," said **Reverend Terry Troia, Executive Director of Project Hospitality**.

"Drop-In Centers provide immediate assistance for clients coming off the street in need of food, shelter, a shower and social services," said **Lisa Lombardi, Deputy Executive Director of Urban Pathways**. "As soon as they enter the door they get a safe place to put their belongings, a hot meal, access to bathrooms and a hot shower as well as physical and mental health evaluation. All these services lead to permanent housing or a chance to return home to family. Drop-In Centers also remain open 24 hours which assist with getting clients off the streets at all hours."

"In operating the Main Chance Drop-In Center, our emphasis is on serving clients and working towards placing them in permanent housing," said **Brady Crain, Executive Director of the Grand Central Neighborhood Social Service Corporation**. "We work with clients to build self-esteem and reach stability."

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