



July 21, 2016

To: Mr. Steve Timms
Planning Manager
City of Commerce City Community Development Department
7887 E. 60th Ave.
Commerce City, CO, 80022

From: Angela Bornemann
Executive Director
ACCESS Housing, Inc.

Re: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Dear Mr. Timms,

We understand that Commerce City has qualified to receive federal funding for community development projects from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Access Housing (AH) would like to express our excitement to the city on earning this qualification. CDBG helps develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities – principally to low or moderate-income residents which directly relates to the mission of ACCESS Housing. These funds will be instrumental in meeting Commerce City's community needs.

Located in Commerce City, ACCESS Housing (AH) was established by a group of Adams County residents in 1983 as a response to the increase in homelessness in the Denver metro area that occurred with the bust in the oil industry. Beginning with emergency shelter and supportive services, the organization evolved over time to build a continuum of services that included transitional, homeless prevention and low income permanent housing options. Funding for these services has waned over time as has organizational stability but thirty-three years later, ACCESS Housing continues to serve the community and those most in need to the best of our ability. We maintain our core emergency shelter and supportive services and some low income rental units and look to increase our opportunity to assist the families that we serve.

In the current economic conditions, the Denver metropolitan area continues to face additional challenges due to the housing market. Rent rates within Adams County are increasing faster than wages,

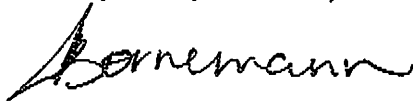
affordable units are scarce. With skyrocketing local rents and wages remaining the same, we have seen an increase in emergency and long term housing assistance especially for families.

According to the last McKinney Vento count, Adams County had the highest number of homeless children in the state, with 4,285 children during the 2014-2015 school year, surpassing the next highest ranking county, Denver, by more than 25% (2014-15 USDE Data Submission for McKinney-Vento Education of Children and Youth Program). *Per* the HUD definition of homelessness - which does not count the many vulnerable families doubled up in crowded housing unsuitable for multiple families - on an average night in Adams County, 524 people are homeless, with 357 of those individuals being family members (Denver Metro Homeless Initiative, Point in Time Study, 2015). However, there are only 60 shelter beds available for those families on any given night for the whole county; 24 of those are operated by ACCESS Housing in Commerce City. The shelter facility and our low income units are operational yet in need of many facility improvements.

ACCESS Housing provides a valuable service in Commerce City. From January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, the organization provided shelter, homeless prevention, transitional housing and other family support services to 731 families comprised of 2,047 adults and children. Yet, we continue to more with less as funding for these serves has decreased over time.

The city's first Five-Year Consolidated Plan provides a framework, program goals and general strategies for the city's CDBG-funded projects into 2021. We support the plan and look forward to partnering with Commerce City in the future and to collaborating on the five year plan in any way that we can to reach overall goals related to shelter, services and affordable housing for the city's low to moderate income residents.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bornemann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Angela Bornemann