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News Release

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Durham Project Homeless Connect Set for October 10

Funding, Volunteers and Donations Needed to Serve Hundreds Seeking Help

DURHAM, N.C. – This year’s Project Homeless Connect is quickly approaching and event organizers need Durham’s support again to serve hundreds of people who will be seeking help.

The Eighth Annual Durham Project Homeless Connect will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, October 10 at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park, 409 Blackwell St., Durham. The annual event is a one-day, one-stop center to provide people experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) homelessness with a broad range of services including housing, employment, health and dental care, mental health care, veterans’ and social service benefits, legal services, and more.

According to Program Manager Matthew Schnars with Durham Opening Doors Homeless Prevention & Services in the City of Durham’s Community Development Department, organizers are expecting an increase in people seeking help this year. “We’ve seen an increase in the needs in our community and we expect to see a reflection of that during this year’s event,” Schnars said. “Since 2007, we have served more than 2,000 people experiencing homelessness and we really need our community’s support again this year so we can provide critical and basic services to those in Durham who need it the most.”

According to Schnars, approximately 200 volunteers are needed for this year’s event with positions available for all schedules, abilities, and interests. Volunteers can help on the day of the event or from 1-4 p.m. the day before with event set-up. Bilingual volunteers fluent in Spanish are also needed. People interested in volunteering should register at www.durhamopeningdoors.org by 5 p.m. Friday, October 3.

Funding for food is needed as well as hygiene and clothing items, which will be distributed to participants at the conclusion of the event. Hygiene supplies such as soap, lotion, disposable razors, shaving cream, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, lip balm, tissue packets, shampoo and feminine hygiene products are needed. Clothing supplies, such as new or gently used coats and gloves as well as new undergarments and new socks are also needed.

If neighborhoods, businesses, schools or churches would like to organize a drive for these needed items, they should register at www.durhamopeningdoors.org. The requested deadline for completion of these drives is 5 p.m. Friday, October 3.

This year's event is being organized by the City's Community Development Department in partnership with over 20 organizations from all sectors of the Durham community including non-profits, faith-based organizations, universities, and local businesses.

For more information about the 2014 Project Homeless Connect, contact Schnars at (919) 560-4570, ext. 22249 or by email at Matthew.Schnars@DurhamNC.gov, or visit <http://www.DurhamTenYearPlan.com>, like on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/phcdnc>, follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/phcdnc>, or follow on Instagram at <http://instagram.com/phcdnc#>.

About the Community Development Department

The City of Durham's Community Development Department is responsible for coordinating the City's housing resources and various housing assistance programs as well as promoting affordable housing by working with investors and community housing development organizations. The department also provides assistance with the abatement of lead in older homes and administers the City's entitlement programs from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Guided by the City's Strategic Plan, the department helps to ensure that the City has thriving, livable neighborhoods by enhancing housing quality and affordability for Durham residents. To learn more, visit <http://DurhamNC.gov/ich/cb/cdd/Pages/Home.aspx>.

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