



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Catholic Charities Opens Higher Ground Saint Paul**

*First phase of the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center  
marks historic public-private partnership to prevent and end homelessness*

**Contact:** Therese Gales, Media Relations Manager  
[therese.gales@cctwincities.org](mailto:therese.gales@cctwincities.org); 612-221-5161

**Onsite contact:** Sara Thatcher  
[sara@goffpublic.com](mailto:sara@goffpublic.com); 952-221-5368

**Online Press Kit** with additional information as well as downloadable images / renderings of Higher Ground Saint Paul and the Dorothy Day Center: <https://dorothydaycampaign.org/press-kit/>

**Saint Paul, Minn. (January 12, 2017)**—Today, Catholic Charities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis marked the opening of Higher Ground Saint Paul, the first phase of the Dorothy Day Place project which includes a larger, more dignified emergency shelter and permanent housing units. The two-phase transformational project to prevent and end homelessness-- the largest public-private partnership in state history in housing and social services--secured broad support and funding from both public and private sources.

“For 36 years, the Dorothy Day Center has been a place of hope and refuge for those in need, but today as we open Higher Ground Saint Paul, we are marking a historic turning point,” said Tim Marx, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. “We are transforming how we work with people experiencing homelessness. We are grateful to our public and private sector leaders, and our many donors and partners for their support of our vision to provide our most vulnerable neighbors with pathways out of poverty.”

This comprehensive approach to end homelessness replaces the Dorothy Day Center, which opened in 1981 as a temporary fix for what was thought to be a temporary problem. Thirty-six years later, the number of people needing shelter and services in Saint Paul continues to climb – and the Dorothy Day Center is unable to serve people with the dignity they deserve.

Higher Ground Saint Paul offers 473 people experiencing homelessness a dignified place to sleep each night and a pathway out of poverty. Located across the street from the current Dorothy Day Center, the five-story building includes emergency shelter for 280 women and men and a range of permanent housing options for 193 people—including many long-term homeless individuals and veterans. The building will also offer medical respite beds for men and women who are experiencing homelessness and are recovering from hospitalization; specialized housing and assistance for women suffering from late-stage alcoholism; and Pay-for-Stay beds that have a minimal fee, which is held in savings for clients and can be used for a first month’s rent or down payment for permanent housing.

Catholic Charities is leveraging significant public-private investments and partnerships in order to fully realize the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center. The Center is a statewide asset, having provided services to



residents from 56 of Minnesota's 87 counties last year—and the new vision has received support from a bipartisan group of legislators from every corner of the state of Minnesota.

To date, the State of Minnesota, Ramsey County, and other public sources have committed more than \$25 million. This legislative session, Governor Mark Dayton has recommended a \$12 million state investment in General Obligation Bonds for the Opportunity Center as well as investments in Housing Infrastructure Bonds, both of which are critical funding sources to complete the project.

Additionally, Catholic Charities is in the midst of a \$40 million private Capital Campaign to fully fund Dorothy Day Place. In December, Catholic Charities announced that they had raised more than \$35 million towards this goal. Fifteen prominent regional and statewide business leaders are spearheading the private fundraising campaign, including campaign co-Chairs Doug Baker, Jr., Chairman and CEO of Ecolab; Mary Brainerd, Chief Executive Officer and President of HealthPartners; and Andy Cecere, President and COO of U.S. Bank.

Nearly 400 generous individuals, corporations and foundations throughout the community have donated to the Capital Campaign. The campaign launched with a \$5 million lead grant by The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation—the most significant private investment to support Catholic Charities in recent history. Other contributions of \$1 million or more were received from Target; Hardenbergh Foundation; Premier Banks; 3M; Julie and Doug Baker, Jr. Foundation; Ecolab Foundation; Frey Foundation; Carl and Eloise Pohlada Family Foundation; and U.S. Bank Foundation.

“Today we are moving forward with a bold and ambitious vision,” added Marx. “The historic public-private partnership that has come together to transform the Dorothy Day Center—advancing permanent solutions to prevent and end homelessness—is a powerful example of what can be accomplished when all sectors of our community focus on a common goal.”

### **Phase II: Saint Paul Opportunity Center**

Higher Ground Saint Paul is the first phase of a \$100-million vision for the Dorothy Day Center. Called Dorothy Day Place, the new vision is based on an innovative and proven model in Minneapolis, which is also run by Catholic Charities.

The second phase consists of a six-floor, 50,000-square-foot building to be built on the site of the current Dorothy Day Center. The building will include the Saint Paul Opportunity Center, an integrated, one-stop location connecting people to critical services to improve their health, income, housing stability, and well-being. Services will be provided by a variety of community partner organizations, including Catholic Charities, Ramsey County, the Veterans Administration, and health care providers. The building will also include the Dorothy Day Residence, 171 permanent housing units above the Opportunity Center. Catholic Charities hopes to complete Phase II construction by 2018.

### **History and Project Timeline:**

The Dorothy Day Center opened in 1981 as a drop-in center for meals. Over time, due to increasing homelessness, the center transitioned into an overnight shelter – something it was never designed or intended to do. Today, more than 6,000 people rely on the Dorothy Day Center each year, including hundreds of people who sleep on thin mats on the floor every night.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
*of St. Paul and Minneapolis*

In 2011, for the first time in its history, Catholic Charities was forced to turn people away from the Dorothy Day Center, leading people to camp in the surrounding area—it was a breaking point that launched a community response. In 2012, Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman convened a diverse task force of community leaders to assess the urgent situation of overcrowding at the Dorothy Day Center, and in 2013 the Task Force issued its recommendation for an innovative new vision to prevent and end homelessness.

For more information, including how to get involved, visit [www.dorothydaycampaign.org](http://www.dorothydaycampaign.org).

###

**About Catholic Charities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis:** *Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis serves those most in need. We are a leader at solving poverty, creating opportunity, and advocating for justice in the community. Our programs for children, families and adults annually help nearly 30,000 people, regardless of faith, background or circumstance. Through our advocacy efforts, Catholic Charities serves as a tireless voice for those who often go unheard. Our work would not be possible without our dedicated volunteers and donors.*