

THE DENVER'S ROAD HOME DONATION METER PROGRAM

A BETTER WAY TO GIVE

“The Donation Meter Program is just one more example of the Denver community coming together for an important cause. This project is an innovative, creative approach to educating the community about homelessness while also generating much-needed resources.”

– *Jamie Van Leeuwen & Christine Benero*

THE CONCEPT

Launched in 2007, the Donation Meter Program was designed to increase community awareness about *Denver's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness*. It has also acted as an effort to redirect the roughly \$4 million a year that is given to panhandlers—most of whom are not homeless—into efforts that provide meals, job training, substance abuse counseling, housing and other programs for those in need.

HOW IT WAS DONE

Denver Public Works, Denver's Road Home, Leadership Denver, the Downtown Denver Partnership, Visit Denver, Mile High United Way, rabble+rouser and OZ Architecture have come together to coordinate and execute the meter design, installation, coin collection and sponsorships.

RESULTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Donation Meters (73 downtown Denver meters plus 10 located at Denver International Airport) generate almost \$70,000 from individual and corporate sponsors. Additionally, nearly \$30,000.00 in coins is collected from the meters each year. We are proud to announce that 100% of the almost \$100,000 in funds collected go to our homeless assistance providers. The Donation Meter Program is an important part of Denver's Road Home's partnership with the greater Denver community to successfully deliver long-term solutions for the homeless. Just look at what we've accomplished:

- **Developed 1,500 new units of housing for the homeless.**
- **Prevented more than 2,200 families from becoming homeless.**
- **Provided 3,278 homeless people with employment.**

In addition to making great strides in reducing the number of chronically homeless individuals on our streets, there has also been an 83% reduction in panhandling. With such overwhelming success, the Donation Meter Program has begun serving as an inspiring model and is being duplicated by other cities around the country, such as Nashville and Chicago. In May 2008, *Reader's Digest* noted, “A growing number of American cities, including Portland, Denver, Baltimore, and Chattanooga, have come up with an enlightening way to help the homeless (and discourage panhandling).”



HOW IT WORKS

As a result of outreaching community involvement and the creative use of resources, the Meter Donation Program does not cost Denver's Road Home any additional resources to manage. Donation meters are located along established meter collection routes so as to not incur additional costs for collection. Denver Public Works continues the process of meter maintenance and coin collection and also locates or relocates meters throughout the city. What's more, all annual meter sponsorships are responsibly managed by Mile High United Way and Denver Public Works ensures the nameplates on each meter clearly educate the public to our generous sponsors.

The annual meter sponsorship fee is \$1,000 per meter and we are proud to say that our sponsors include everyone from private citizens and families to Leadership Denver Alumni classes, employee groups, small businesses and corporations. This project has significantly exceeded expectations in generating both community awareness and resources for Denver's Road Home and we hope you'll join us as we continue on this exciting journey.

JOIN THE CAUSE

It is our honor to invite you to become a Donation Meter Sponsor. Here's how to get started:

1. Review the attached PDF of Donation Meters available for sponsorship.
2. Choose the Donation Meter that you, your company or employee group would like to sponsor. If you desire a specific site where a meter is not currently installed, we would be happy to discuss possible placement. In this case, we will work closely with you and Denver Public Works to determine if the location is suitable for installation.
3. Decide the name that will appear on your meter nameplate (limited to 28 characters).
4. Choose your method of payment for the \$1000 annual sponsorship fee (check or credit cards accepted). If you are already a sponsor and are up for renewal, please let us know if you would like an invoice.
5. Alert your fellow employees, friends and family that you are now a proud sponsor of a Denver's Road Home Donation Meter. Consider spreading the word via social media outlets, such as Twitter and Facebook. Finally, encourage them to become a sponsor. After all, there is a better way to give. And this is it.

Thank you for helping us provide continued resources and assistance to those who need it most. Thanks to you, we have been able to offer thousands of homeless individuals hope and an alternative to living life on the streets. Together, we can, and will, solve homelessness as we know it.

For more information on how to sponsor a meter, or how your sponsorship and/or donations help the homeless, please contact Lisa Betchey at Mile High United Way at 303-561-2354 or lisa.betchey@unitedwaydenver.org. Or simply visit www.DenversRoadHome.org.

