

## Tom Luehrs announces retirement from St. Francis Center after 31 years of leadership...

...a true catalyst for community response and service to Denver's unhoused.



# SAINT FRANCIS CENTER

**Denver, Colorado Dec 5, 2022 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com))** - Tom Luehrs, having been St. Francis Center's Executive Director for over three decades and leading the organization to unprecedented growth in response to community needs, today announced his planned retirement.

Tom is recognized as a visionary and outspoken advocate for needed community response in support of Denver's neighbors experiencing homelessness. "It has been my joy to work with great and compassionate people during my 31 years of service at SFC. The changes we have brought to the Denver community with and for our unhoused neighbors have resulted in thousands of housing units created and even more, lives changed," said Luehrs.

"The collaboration that has taken place over the years, with unhoused people, providers, government partners, funders, and faith communities, has reflected the care our community has for those who are the most vulnerable people in our midst. Together we have developed the tools and knowledge to create a more equitable, just, and inclusive community in Denver and throughout Colorado."

Under Tom's oversight, St. Francis Center has grown from a ministry meeting the basic needs of a few hundred people daily to a multi-service organization offering housing, employment services, street outreach, safe outdoor space, and a dynamic day center serving 10,000 individuals annually.

Tom's leadership style has always incorporated the vision to bring concerned stakeholders together, creating synergy and lasting solutions to Denver's complex challenges around homelessness. A multitude of new programs at St. Francis Center has been instituted in response to Tom's vision.

"From his first day as Executive Director providing day center services in a converted store front, Tom has been dedicated to the mission of The St. Francis Center to provide a sanctuary of peace and

transformative services for our guests who seek a return to housing,” added Board of Directors Chair Rusty Pickard. “For some 30 years, he has worked steadfastly with community partners to increase the quality, scope and depth of the Center’s services and housing opportunities with humility, creativity, and care. Tom is a role model to all of us who work to help our neighbors in need.”

St. Francis Center has advanced profoundly during Tom’s tenure and stands ready to continue answering the community’s call to serve our unhoused neighbors. During Tom’s leadership the staff has increased from 15 people to over 80 positions at the organization. Program and service expansion also included:

- Establishing a street outreach program (9,500 people assisted by street outreach in 2021)
- Expanding employment services (1,174 people seen and 579 placed in full time jobs in 2021)
- Delivering various on-site wellness services for our guests
- Development of four supportive housing complexes:
  - Cornerstone Residences at St. Francis Center (50 units)
  - Saint Francis Apartments at Cathedral Square (50 units)
  - Warren Residences (50 units)
  - Saint Francis West Apartments (Opening Sep 2024) (62 units)
- Championing/Implementing the Safe Outdoor Space Program

Tom has been encouraged by the growing capacity of St. Francis Center’s leadership team and feels confident that the Board of Directors is well positioned to identify the Center’s next dynamic leader through a purposeful search process. Tom will remain in his role until a successor is announced and public recognition of his years of service will be held in 2023 as part of St. Francis Center’s 40th anniversary celebrations.



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