

*Michael B. Hancock*  
Mayor



*City and County of Denver*

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December 31, 2020

Dear Members of City Council:

I am attaching a copy of the application Denver will submit to the State of Colorado later today for participation in the Governor's Five Star Program. As you know or may be aware, this program was announced by the Governor two weeks ago and is designed to create a certification process for businesses to implement safety measures beyond what is already required by public health orders, so they can potentially accelerate their reopening and still slow the spread of COVID-19. The goal of this program is to provide assurance to employees and customers that businesses are adhering to enhanced safety guidance and protocols.

Managed properly, certification under the State program will give Denver an additional tool to help us re-open our local economy. As framed by the Governor, participation in this program is also intended as a tool to inhibit, and not add to, the spread of COVID-19 in our community. We are committed to implementing the Five Star program with significant public health rigor even as Denver and other Level Red counties on the State's COVID-19 dial prepare to move back to Orange on Monday.

A number of communities have already filed Five Star applications and been approved by the State for participation in the program. These include Arapahoe, Douglas, Larimer, Mesa, Jefferson, Broomfield and Summit, as well as other counties that are in process of submitting applications.

I have charged Denver's Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) – a multi-agency and city partner organization tasked with COVID-19 recovery planning and strategy – to explore whether it would be appropriate for the State's largest city, with the largest number of businesses at risk, to participate in this program. A sub-group of this committee, including City Council President Stacie Gilmore, City Attorney's Office staff, Bob McDonald (Denver Department of Public Health and Environment), Eric Hiraga (Denver Economic Development and Opportunity), Ashley Kilroy (Excise and Licenses) and select members of my staff, have worked over the holiday break to craft an application that will establish Denver's approach to this program. This working group of the LTRC also included outreach to members of the business community who've been volunteering their services as part of the city's Economic Relief and Recovery Committee.

As you can see, we have an application that includes key stakeholders in overseeing certifications, a process that is careful and will not commit us to do anything that risks reversing our current trajectory of fewer COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations. This application also carefully avoids committing city funds or resources we cannot afford and avoids placing additional burden on our public health staff while maintaining strong oversight by DDPHE.

This is an important and necessary first step we need to take to participate in the program and secure State feedback and approval for next steps. I feel strongly that to support our local economic recovery, Denver should file an application and participate in this program at this time. We have too many

unemployed residents, too many small businesses at risk of shutting their doors permanently and too many livelihoods at stake to reject this opportunity. We also have an obligation to keep COVID-19 from spiking disastrously and taking lives. This application will not jeopardize that overriding priority.

Finally, with Council President Gilmore's assistance, we will work to keep you informed, briefed and responsive to your questions. This application to the State is the City's first step to qualify for the program. We anticipate additional outreach to various stakeholders, close coordination with other members of the LTRC (including Denver Public Schools), unions, non-profits, minority- and women-owned business applicants, and others to ensure that any program we oversee will be safe, equitable and add value to the mission of protecting our residents and restoring our economy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hancock", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael B. Hancock  
Mayor