

# The Initiatives of the Mayor

(As dictated from his 2018 Leadership Gathering speech.)

## 1. Assist the Homeless – through volunteering & giving financial support to strategic nonprofits:

**“...So my request to you, is to keep up the volunteer hours and think about how you can play continuing roles in these efforts to assist the homeless.** And the financial contributions that allow us to do some things like, one of the things I’m very much **looking forward to is the Rescue Mission getting a large enough kitchen to have a chronically homeless lunch service every day.** And move that out of the Marian House out of the central part of downtown. Catholic Charities will serve meals to families down there, and the working poor. I think that will assist the whole situation in the downtown area, that take financial assistance and we’re working hard to get there.

But just as I tell our citizens not to give handouts on street corners that are counter productive, but rather give to our service providers who can provide productive outreach, I’d ask you and your churches to direct your efforts to organization that take a scaled approach to the problem and please don’t direct your own services that might be duplicative of others. We really need to take advantage of the existing nonprofits that are really well suited in these areas and know how to go about it. Help the Rescue Mission, help Salvation Army, help Catholic Charities, Urban Peak and many of these other many services that are available.

## 2. Support of Youth - through education in regards to resources available to those struggling with substance abuse:

Other areas where I ask for your assistance, as you know I’ve expressed this to you a couple times, **I remain very concerned about the substance abuse environment in Colorado. I think we’re making some very serious mistakes. You know on one hand we’re promoting through our policy young people and marijuana use and then we’re shocked that we have a bunch of 19-20 year olds who are overdosing on opioids and killing themselves.** Folks there’s a correlation there, we’ve got to be very consistent in our message to our 12,13,14 year old. That’s the age that these kids are gaining access to drugs and we need for your to provide direction for those in your community in need of help to deal with the scourge. **I’d ask you to make sure you know what resources are available, and communicate to your church members and those that are dealing with these problems that number one, there is help and their is hope, but you’ve got to get these kids to health as soon as possible.**

### 2b. Support of Youth – through mentoring:

**And finally, as I have said when I've met with you in the past, our churches can be one of the greatest sources for the mentors** that so many of our youth desperately need. There's no question about it a lot of our kids were poorly parented. They have come into a circumstance far beyond their control where they are just not getting the parental support that they need. They may have a parent or grandparent that's trying as hard as they can, **but they need additional support in the form of mentoring.** I can't tell you, and I think you've probably experienced this too, I always ask people who have clearly overcome challenging circumstances, I'm always looking for those resilience factors. Why do some kids overcome difficult circumstances while some kids don't. And you'll notice the consistent threads is mentors. How you grow up to be a productive citizen. And that's the role of mentors, and you know, I don't care whether it's Big Brothers/Big Sisters, coaches of youth sports...coaches can make an incredible impact on young people, Boys & Girl Scouts, and many more organization that could we could use to help our youths that don't get enough attention, that don't get enough direction, that don't get enough mentorship.

### **3. Church & School Partnership – through cleaning up school grounds & acquisitioning supplies:**

**I also encourage all our churches to look for church neighborhood and church to school partnerships.**

It's really incredible. **So, I would encourage these sorts of adopt a school, cleanup grounds at the school, help them with acquisition of supplies and equipment.** Don't be deterred, as long as we're not doing any proselytizing there's no Church to State issues here. **These are volunteers helping our schools and our neighborhoods to accomplish things. And I think that, your churches and COSILoveYou could be a strong force in those efforts.**

### **4. Strategic Southeast Partnership – through neighborhood partnership**

**Particularly in the socially and economically less affluent sectors of our town, including the Southeast quadrant. We have a lot of attention about what needs to happen in the Southeast quadrant.** I can tell you the types of partnerships that I'm talking about are one of the things that needs to happen. We need for people to adopt, churches to adopt schools, churches to adopt neighborhoods.

Let me just give you some examples. I've been involved in helping CONO, our Council of Neighborhoods and Organizations, **to clean up neighborhoods in the Southeast quadrant.** It's amazing how many resources they bring and they will go out and get literally fences donated, paint donated, sod donated and

volunteer groups descend on the neighborhood. You know they talk to people in a very non-threatening way. They say “We noticed that your fence was in disrepair, could you use some help on that?” And most people say “Yes, I really could use some help.” It makes a dramatic difference, when a group of hard working people descend on a house and get it painted in five hours.

## **Gratitude & Conclusion:**

So, these are just a few ways that you can help, there are many more. COSILoveYou has been and will continue to be an incredibly positive force for good in our community. And I think back, to a little over two years ago, when we met at Phantom Canyon. How many of you were there? Okay, maybe a third, something like that. I was overwhelmed by the number of pastors that showed up. I thought I was just meeting with a handful of people and I got over there and there was quite a few and we had a great discussion along the lines of how churches could get involved. Next thing I know, there’s 1,000 volunteers getting together and going out on a Saturday and doing things. Next thing I know, \$50,000 get raised on a Easter Sunday. And folks, that’s, I was just overwhelmed that we had a group of people that were able to mobilize their people in a fashion that could make that type of impact. I’m asking you to continue to try and do this.

Now, Yemi, he stole my line that I always end virtually every speech I say anymore, I say it all the time. We do live in one of the most beautiful places in America, our job and our obligation to future generation of Colorado Springs residents, as people who want to be good ancestors; our job is to build a city, a society, that matches our scenery. Thanks for all you’re doing and I’m positive will continue to do to help that effort. Thanks so much.”

## **4 Initiatives from the Mayor:**

### **1. Assist the Homeless through:**

- a) Continuing to volunteer
- b) Financial giving to strategic nonprofits

### **2. Support of Youth through:**

- a) Education in regards to resources available to those struggling with substance abuse
- b) Mentoring

### **3. Church & School Partnership through:**

- a) Cleaning up school grounds
- b) Acquisitioning supplies

### **4. Strategic Southeast Partnership through:**

- a) Neighborhood Partnership

