

Media Contact:
Sarah Oslund, Communications & Engagement Coordinator
Cell: 507.421.9864 | Email: soslund@rochestermn.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local organizations unite to address community food distribution

March 17, 2020 - Rochester, Minnesota – In the wake of Governor Tim Walz’s decision to close schools from March 18-27 to help slow the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, the [City of Rochester](#) and local organizations have announced a collaboration to ensure food and other necessities are available to those in need.

Representatives from more than a dozen partner organizations met March 16, 2020 to discuss how to best coordinate efforts to ensure residents of all ages in all Rochester neighborhoods have access to food and other necessities during COVID-19-related closures. The consortium will announce a community-wide plan yet this week. [Cradle2Career](#) will serve as the project manager, and Channel One Regional Food Bank will manage receipt and distribution of goods.

City of Rochester Mayor Kim Norton expresses her gratitude for the public outpouring of assistance being offered. “We know people are looking for ways to help,” she says, but Norton says the best way for community members to help right now is to [make a financial contribution to Channel One](#). “Our partner agencies are positioned to help us maximize our collective efforts during this time.”

For every dollar Channel One receives, they can provide four meals, stretching resources much further than a donation of a \$1 food item.

Channel One Executive Director Virginia Merritt says she is grateful for the support of the community, the City of Rochester, and fellow non-profit organizations during this unprecedented and challenging time. “We need the community to donate funds and to volunteer to pack emergency boxes – I know that together, we will make sure that everyone has access to food today and in the coming months,” Merritt says.

For individuals wanting to pitch in and volunteer their time and talent, they are encouraged to contact [United Way](#), to be connected with local opportunities to help but still ensure their health and safety.

The mayor also encourages Rochester residents to check in on their friends and neighbors. “If you must go to the grocery store, check with an elderly neighbor or a friend who is at higher risk for COVID-19 and see if you can pick something up for them.” Get connected with neighborhood networks such as [Facebook](#) groups, email lists, and the [Nextdoor app and website](#). These are excellent places to engage with others and share community resources.

###