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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City and County of Denver to build a new Denver Police Crime Laboratory

Tribute to Denver's Victims and Groundbreaking Ceremony

DENVER, CO — Thursday, March 31, 2011 — Mayor Guillermo (Bill) V. Vidal, city officials, Denver Police Department representatives and community partners are pleased to announce that construction has begun on the Better Denver Bond funded Denver Police Crime Laboratory at 1371 Cherokee Street. The public commemorated the state-of-the-art facility at a groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, March 31.

The 60,000 square foot Denver Police Crime Laboratory will be significantly larger than the existing 14,000 square foot facility currently housed in the Denver Police Administration Building. The larger space will enable the Denver Crime Laboratory Bureau to offer improved forensic and evidence-handling resources to scientists and investigators. Additionally, the interior was designed using a modular approach which will allow for flexibility as the lab's needs evolve in the future.

“After so many years in a cramped facility, we are excited to begin work on the much needed, and much larger, Denver Police Crime Laboratory,” Mayor Vidal said. “So much of our vital police work is completed in the lab. We are thankful that Denver residents approved Better Denver Bond funding to help us provide better services to victims for years to come.”

City officials, representatives from the Denver Police Department and community partners praised the innovative Crime Lab Thursday by paying tribute to Denver's past, present and future victims who stand to benefit from the facility's improved forensic technologies.

Ms. Tiffany Engle, a victim of the Denver-based, 2005 Brent Brents case shared at the groundbreaking ceremony how Denver's crime lab technology was imperative to resolving her case then, and expressed how improved forensic technologies will benefit future victims in our city. In addition to Ms. Engle, Colorado based Joe and Kaye Cannata and Howard and Virginia Morton were in attendance; both couples have been politically active in our state since the tragic deaths of their children. The Cannatas established Voices for Victims, a non-profit organization providing post-sentencing advocacy and support to victims of violent crimes. The Mortons co-founded Families of Homicide Victims and Missing Persons (FOHVAMP) in 2001. FOHVAMP advocates for the families of cold case homicide victims and persons missing under suspicious circumstances in Colorado.

“This state-of-the-art crime lab will provide the necessary tools to assist officers and detectives in seeking justice for victims of crime well into the future of our city,” said Denver Police Chief Gerry Whitman.

The new facility will enable the Denver Crime Laboratory Bureau to consolidate its units under one roof and provides capacity for on-site vehicle examinations, which are currently being conducted at external district police offices. Units managed by the Bureau include:

- Crime Scene Investigation Unit
- Forensic Chemistry and Trace Evidence Unit
- Firearms and Toolmarks Unit
- Latent Prints Unit
- Forensic Imaging Unit-video and photographic analysis
- Forensic Biology and DNA Unit

- Quality Assurance Unit
- Crime Scene Volunteer Unit

Consolidation is expected to enhance communication, coordination and efficiency of the lab's work.

"The improved facility provides our public safety teams with the opportunity to reach the highest forensic and investigation standards," said Manager of Safety Charles Garcia. "We are grateful for the dedication shown by those who were instrumental in planning and implementing this vision."

The \$36 million facility will connect to the Police Administration Complex. The secure connection from the lab to the Denver Evidence Bureau will ensure maximum protection of forensic evidence. Last year, Denver's crime lab handled more than 10,000 cases.

"Denver is an internationally recognized leader in DNA and forensic science and this facility will finally give the crime scene investigators and scientists a work space that corresponds with that international reputation," District Attorney Mitch Morrissey said.

The building's architecture was designed to mimic the structure of a DNA molecule. The materials selected for the building address security and longevity, as well as complement the surrounding architecture of Denver's Civic Center.

Additionally, under the City's commitment to Greenprint Denver initiatives, the lab is being designed and constructed with the goal of achieving Certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) through sustainable construction approaches recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council. The new lab's design has addressed energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emission reduction, and improved indoor air quality.

"This important facility will benefit the city as a whole. It anchors an important corner near the Police Administration Building and the Justice Center. Its design should complement the civic buildings along 14th Avenue as well as the neighborhood," said District 10 Councilwoman Jeanne Robb.

Denver Public Works is providing project management for the facility by working closely with the Denver Police Department. Durrant Smith Group is the architectural design firm for the lab and JE DUNN is the construction firm. Completion is anticipated by mid-year 2012.

"We are committed to the efficient and timely delivery of the Denver Police Crime Laboratory," said George Delaney, Bond Implementation Manager and Manager of Public Works. "Once complete, the facility will be a first-class forensic center with the capacity to meet the needs of the crime lab staff for years to come."

For visuals and more information on the facility, visit: <http://www.denvergov.org/BetterDenver/DPDCrimeLab>

The City & County of Denver's Better Denver Bond Program works to preserve, renovate and create amenities that touch citizen's lives – including roads, libraries, parks, recreation centers, child care sites, hospitals, city buildings and cultural facilities. Approved by voters in 2007, the bond program generates millions of dollars for the economy, preserves and creates jobs and makes Denver a more attractive place to live, work, and invest in the future. For more information about the Better Denver Bond Program, visit www.denvergov.org/betterdenver.

Greenprint Denver is the City of Denver's initiative to incorporate sustainability into all city operations and programs, in order to conserve resources, protect the environment, and save money to help make Denver prosperous now and in the future. All of the City's new construction and major renovation projects must achieve LEED Silver certification, and they must achieve Energy Star status after one year of operation. The City established a Better Denver Bond Sustainability Committee to encourage innovation in building design, lead by example, share information and best practices among City agencies, and evaluate all projects' integration of sustainability and innovation.