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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**MEALS ON WHEELS SAN FRANCISCO BREAKS GROUND ON \$41.5 MILLION
KITCHEN AND FOOD PRODUCTION FACILITY TO FEED HOMEBOUND SENIORS**

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY JULY 25 MARKS NEW CHAPTER IN 49-YEAR HISTORY

San Francisco, July 18, 2019 – Meals on Wheels San Francisco (MOWSF) plans on making sure no homebound senior in the City goes hungry. The nonprofit has begun construction on a \$41.5 million state-of-the-art industrial kitchen and food production facility in Bayview to replace its current kitchen which produces approximately 8,000 meals daily. The new kitchen will have the ability to produce up to 20,000 meals per day to meet the needs of the growing population of food insecure older adults 60 and older in San Francisco. That population, according to the Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), will have grown by 27 percent within the next 11 years.

The new kitchen at 2230 Jerrold Avenue will house food production and meals distribution while MOWSF's 30-year-old headquarters a few blocks away at 1375 Fairfax, will remain home to administrative functions, supportive services, and the Home Delivered Groceries program. Construction of the kitchen is expected to be completed by summer 2020 and in operation shortly thereafter.

"The new kitchen is important to our community; without it, in just 2-3 years, we would cease being able to serve the most vulnerable seniors, many living on less than \$900 a month," explained Meals on Wheels San Francisco CEO and Executive Director, Ashley McCumber. "We're seeing approximately 1,200 new older adult clients each year who are depending on us to help them age with dignity and independence in their homes. Our new kitchen and production facility will allow us to be there for thousands of seniors today, tomorrow, and for many decades to come."

Approximately 80 percent of the funds for the new kitchen have been secured through private donations and government support made during the 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign. In order to meet the project construction timeline, MOWSF secured New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) financing which will deliver \$8.1 million to the project. The San Francisco Community Investment Fund and Community Impact Partners, Community Vision CA, and Chase Bank, are supporting the build via NMTC. The San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development is also supporting the expansion with a \$1 million grant. The remaining \$8 million of the \$41.5 million project still needs to be raised through the ongoing capital campaign.

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“We’re proud to partner with Meals on Wheels to assure this kitchen is built and no senior who is financially struggling in San Francisco goes without a healthy meal or feels isolated and alone,” said San Francisco Mayor, London Breed. “We need to take care of the people who took care of us and that includes making sure seniors have a place to live, are receiving the health and social services they need to thrive, and are food secure.”

San Francisco, like many U.S. communities, has a growing number of seniors aging at home with limited financial resources, limited family support, and limited access to nutritious food. According to DAAS, nearly 61 percent of the estimated 136,000 people aged 65 and older living in San Francisco do not have enough money to meet their basic needs to include purchasing food.

MOWSF has a long history in San Francisco (50 years in 2020) of providing meals, wellness checks, and social work services that help thousands of seniors live independently and maintain their general health daily. Within the past decade, the meals delivery program has grown from 527,000 meals delivered annually to 2.1 million meals delivered in 2018. In addition, in partnership with the City and County of San Francisco, MOWSF delivers more than 200,000 meals to Navigation Centers throughout the City assuring formerly homeless adults do not go hungry.

The new kitchen may grow to have other roles in serving the community. For instance, it may offer food production services for other nonprofits that struggle to keep up with demand. Additionally, in the event of a city-wide emergency, the new MOWSF kitchen could produce up to 35,000 meals – enough to handle both current senior recipients and other citizens in need of emergency meals.

Features of the MOWSF New Kitchen and Food Production Facility:

- The 35,794 square feet, two-story facility, includes a state-of-the-art cook-chill area, high bay freezers, assembly production areas, and receiving docks
- The kitchen is designed to double the efficiency and output of meals from 8,000 meals daily to 20,000 in a single 8-hour period
- The production facility is the only one of its kind in San Francisco that will use cook-chill equipment to produce bulk food to be used in meals
- The kitchen is located near the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market in Bayview allowing for food recapture opportunities
- The facility will house a test kitchen for the creation of new, nutritious, medically tailored recipes based on availability of seasonal foods
- Photovoltaic cells will offset electricity needs providing an estimate annual savings to MOWSF of \$50,000

A private, invite-only, kitchen groundbreaking ceremony to officially mark the beginning of construction, will take place at 11:00 am on July 25, at 2230 Jerrold Avenue and will include special guest, San Francisco Mayor London Breed. MOWSF thanks the project team including JL Architects, Plant Construction, Skyline Partners, and Kitchen Professionals.

About Meals on Wheels San Francisco:

Since 1970, Meals on Wheels San Francisco (MOWSF) has provided seniors residing in the City with what they need to live independent and dignified lives – nutritious meals, professional social work services including daily wellness checks, and a friendly visitor. MOWSF can deliver two meals daily to homebound senior clients, something no other program does in San Francisco. In 2018, staff and volunteers delivered 2.1 million meals to 4,700 seniors and adults with disabilities. Learn how you can get involved at MOWSF.org.

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