

## **CENTRE AVENUE YMCA RENOVATION: PROJECT NARRATIVE**

The proposed project significantly improves an existing cultural/historic asset in the Hill District community: the Centre Avenue YMCA. No change is anticipated to the current use of the building or the site. The project will also help support continued development in the walkable core of the Hill District's central corridor and provide a permanent affordable housing option to vulnerable residents.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project will renovate 73 SRO units on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors of the historic Centre Avenue YMCA (referred to as CAY). Air conditioning and new energy efficient HVAC systems will be installed. Shared bathrooms with "gang style" showers (no privacy) will be replaced with 10 individual bathrooms, of which 5 will be ADA accessible. Additional work will include installation of an elevator, a renovated kitchen, common space and programming space on the 1st floor. Room and corridor renovations will include flooring, painting and ceilings. Work will also include replacement of the roof, the mechanical system, the plumbing system, the electrical system and the installation of an NFPA 13 sprinkler system. The renovation will use high-quality, environmentally friendly materials. The SRO units will be well-designed with thoughtful floor plans and natural light.

### **ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF IMPACTED RESIDENTS**

The CAY's 77 Single Resident Occupancy units (SROs) are occupied by low-income, partially employed men. 100% of the residents are at 50% or less of the median family income. Many of the residents have family ties to the Hill District community. The residents of the CAY, and residents from the Hill District community have been engaged in discussions on the project over the last two years.

The remainder of this narrative will speak to the Development Principles and Non-Displacement Strategies as outlined in Appendices A and B respectively in the Greater Hill District Master Plan.

### **DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

**Address/Right Historical Wrongs** – This project is located in the Middle Hill.

#### **Promoting Economic Justice**

- Minimizing Displacement of Residents: Residents may be required to relocate to a different room within the building during construction, however, no resident will be displaced from the CAY during the project.
- First Source Hiring Provisions: We are not familiar with these provisions.
- WBE and MBE: We are committed to reaching the URA's goals of 25% MWBE participation (18% MBE and 7% WBE) in this project. We will make a good faith effort to exceed these goals and have done so in the past.
- Co-Ownership Opportunities: The CAY is owned by the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh and overseen by an advisory board made up of members drawn from stakeholders and the larger community. Following the project, the CAY will be transferred into a newly created 501 C 3. The new board will have representation from ACTION Housing, the YMCA, the CAY board, the URA, DHS, the Hill District community, foundation stakeholders and a CAY resident.

#### **Reflecting Neighborhood Driven Civic Design**

- Ground level retail and street activating uses: The project enhances current street activating uses by renovating new program space on the first floor of the building which will be available for use by the community. We will also enhance to supportive services in the building, some of which will be available to neighborhood residents.
- Traffic and Parking Plans: No change anticipated. Current site has no available space for parking.
- Residential Neighborhood: The renovation will enhance the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- Benefitting Existing and Future Residents: The project is undertaken solely for the benefit of current and future residents of CAY and the Hill District. It will enable existing residents to stay in the neighborhood for the long-term and provide an affordable option for residents in danger of displacement in the future.

### **Promoting a Green and Healthy Environment**

- Green Space: We will preserve the existing outside space in the basketball court and adjacent courtyard. Using the courtyard, we also plan to add geothermal heating and cooling to the building which will provide a sustainable long-term energy source.
- Preserving Views: No change to current views.

### **Utilizing Neighborhood Strengths and Assets**

- Honoring the Historical and Cultural Legacy: A wall display celebrating the historic and cultural contributions of the CAY and its leadership, is planned for the lobby/1st floor of the newly renovated building.
- Priority to Acquire Vacant Land and Buildings: Not applicable. The building is currently occupied.
- Incorporating Existing Community Plans: The project honors the existing community plan. No changes to the current footprint will be made.

### **NON-DISPLACEMENT STRATEGIES**

#### **Economic Opportunities**

- Hill District Based Employment: Martini Construction has been selected as general contractor because of their commitment to hire locally. Project manager George Germany will lead this effort.
- MBE and WBE: We are committed to reaching the URA's goals of 25% MWBE participation (17% MBE and 8% WBE) in this project. We will make a good faith effort to exceed these goals and have done so in the past.

**Homeownership Support** – Not Applicable to this Project

#### **Renter Support**

- Minimizing Displacement of Residents: Residents may be required to relocate to a different room within the building during construction, however, no resident will be displaced from the CAY during the project.
- Plan to Support Transition to New, Mixed-Income Housing: Supportive services will be available to provide assistance.

#### **Preserving Affordability**

- Affordability of at Least 30% of Units: 100% of the units will be below 50% AMI; many residents will be below this income level.
- Preserving Existing Project-Based Rental Subsidy: The CAY currently receives Bridge Housing support and it is our hope that the program will continue post renovation.

#### **Community Ownership/Equity**

- Priority to Community Groups for Vacant Property: Not applicable – property is not vacant.
- Co-Ownership Opportunities for Properties Receiving Subsidies: The CAY is owned by the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh and overseen by an advisory board made up of members drawn from the community. Following the project, the CAY will be transferred into a newly created 501 C 3. The new board will have representation from ACTION Housing, the YMCA, the CAY board, the URA, DHS, the Hill District community, foundation stakeholders and a CAY resident.