SECOND AVENUE COMMONS TO OPEN!
Unique 24/7 shelter will transform city’s resources for homelessness

Pittsburgh will soon be home to a new and innovative 95-bed shelter, daytime engagement center, and primary care clinic for adults experiencing homelessness. Set to open in a few weeks, Second Avenue Commons represents a dramatic expansion of current resources and aims to reduce the number of unsheltered individuals on city streets.

Pittsburgh Mercy and Operation Safety Net were selected by the Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services to run the shelter and engagement center, based on our 30+ years of experience as homeless service providers.

What makes it unique?
Second Avenue Commons is a first-of-its-kind facility:

- **Low barrier**, which means it will not turn away someone struggling with addiction and/or behavioral health issues; will allow individuals to keep their pets (cats or dogs); and will allow individuals to stay with a partner.

- **A ‘one-stop shop,’”** it will eliminate the need for clients to visit several different agencies. The building will have onsite intensive case management support, a medical clinic run by UPMC, a drop-in day program on weekdays, and even a professional kitchen with job training opportunities.

- **Year-round 24/7 operation** with no judgment or stigma. Emphasizing dignity, privacy and security, harm reduction, and trauma-informed care, the facility will be a welcoming and holistic sanctuary where clients can access the support they need.

“The new facility represents a giant leap forward in our ability to serve the region’s most vulnerable adults,” said Michael Turk, VP of Community & Wellness Services and the leader of Pittsburgh Mercy’s efforts. “Being open 24/7 every day of the year, it will provide an essential, often life-saving, haven at a time when homelessness is on the rise.”
An incredible public-private partnership
More than three years of research and an unprecedented partnership of local
government, business, health care, public safety, and NGO organizations made
Second Avenue Commons possible.

- The land parcel was donated by the City of Pittsburgh.
- Funding came from PNC, Highmark, the Hillman Family Foundation, Richard
  King Mellon Foundation, PNC Foundation, PNC, Buchanan Ingersoll, The
  Pittsburgh Foundation, Heinz Endowments, UPMC, and P.J. Dick.
- PNC Realty Services handled development and construction, with design by
  DLA+ Architects.
- Expertise and input came from Action Housing, Allegheny Conference,
  Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services, and Allegheny Health Network.
- 41.5% of related vendors qualify as Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged
  Business Enterprise (MWDBE), far exceeding the project’s initial goal.

“We’re thrilled to have been chosen to run the shelter and to have been part of the
enormous collaborative effort that made it possible,” said Tony Beltran, CEO of
Pittsburgh Mercy. “And we couldn’t be more excited to see the many ways this
incredible facility will benefit our city and its most at-risk population.”

A HEARTFELT GOODBYE
In March, Pittsburgh Mercy officially closed the doors of our Winter Shelter on
Smithfield Street after 20 years of operation. A much-needed haven, this
shelter provided life-saving access to warm beds, showers, and meals during
the harsh winter months. Located in the basement of Smithfield United Church
of Christ, the shelter could accommodate 155 individuals (130 men and 25
women), although COVID-19 social distancing protocols reduced the capacity
to 67 individuals per night for the past two seasons.

During its long history, the shelter served an average of 675 individuals each
year. Since many individuals served were shelter guests throughout the winter
months, a total of more than 14,000 beds were filled each season. A heartfelt
thanks to the many staff who lovingly operated the shelter for over 20 years!

COMING SOON: All Souls Mailing
You’ll soon receive Pittsburgh Mercy’s All Souls appeal
letter. All donations will support our vital work in the
community and we hope you’ll consider a generous
contribution. Give online HERE or email us at
development@pittsburghmercy.org. Thank you!