

Bedford Dwellings Phase I- Reed Roberts Project Summary

Allies and Ross Management and Development Corporation (“ARMDC”) (“Development Team”), the development instrumentality of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (“HACP”) has selected Trek Development Group, Inc. (“Trek”) as its Co-Developer and Property Manager for the first phase of the redevelopment of Bedford Dwellings (“Reed Roberts”). Reed Roberts will be the first development ahead of an application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development Choice Implementation Grant and will be the catalyst for further neighborhood developments. In the first phase, residents of the lower portion of Bedford Dwellings along Somers Drive will be relocating as part of the new development.

Situated at the apex of Reed Street, the site is a well-known site in the Hill District. Formerly home to Reed Roberts Manor, located at the intersection of Reed St. and Roberts St, this project will transform vacant land on a key intersection in the neighborhood, allow residents to relocate from a distressed public housing project, and create an opportunity for residents to live closer to the growing option of amenities available on Centre Avenue.

The site design strives to address the topographic challenges as it slopes more than 80’ feet of elevation from the Reed and Roberts intersection down towards the Dinwiddie and Colwell intersection. The team of WRT, Gateway Engineers, and LaQuantra Bonci Landscape Architecture found a way to mitigate this issue by using the design of the buildings as well as the configuration of the types of buildings while fulfilling the development scope. The design also strives to be sensitive to the existing neighborhood fabric by mirroring the height and density of the community and infilling the existing street grid in order to energizing the streets, improving the pedestrian experience, while maximizing the usable green space in the neighborhood. We anticipate the exterior finish materials of the buildings to be a mixture of Brick, Fibercement siding and a “wood look” composite siding panel that includes a high level of recycled materials. The mixture and ratio’s of these materials on the elevations have not been finalized yet but we are working under the knowledge that the brick will be used along the ground and entrances of the buildings as it is a durable material, the fibercement will be used on the upper parts of the building and the “wood look” composite siding material will be used as accents and at entries to provide a warmer tone material to make the building more welcoming and give them a more natural feel.

The Reed Roberts development plan includes approximately 120 one-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom units in elevator served apartment and townhome buildings. Of the 120 residential units, approximately 25% will be unrestricted market rate units and 75% will be affordable, tax credit/project-based voucher replacement housing units affordable to residents at 30%-60% area median income. All the affordable units will be a one for one replacement of the existing Somers Drive units and will be subsidized and affordable into perpetuity, ensuring the non-displacement of the existing Hill District Residents. The site plan includes two (2) apartment buildings, the first, a senior building, consisting of one- and two-bedroom units with an entrance via Reed Street. The second apartment building along Colwell Street, will be a mix of one-, and two- bedroom units and will be targeted to families. Three- and four-bedroom townhomes along Reed Street and Miller Street will be targeted to larger families. Community and resident engagements have begun, with plans being socialized with focus groups of residents from the Bedford Dwelling and Dinwiddie neighborhoods. In addition, on September 29, 2021, the team held an all-day design charrette allowing residents of Bedford Dwellings to inform all aspects of the design. Key take aways from the charette include larger units, private outdoor space, community fitness and rec space, open and green space, and confirmation of the need for a senior building.

The plan includes a large common greenspace behind the apartment building and townhomes on Roberts Street extension into the site that would give community members a great view of the city and the Monongahela River.

The large park-like greenspace will include pedestrian pathways, tot lots, creative play areas, community gardens, tenant grilling stations, and outdoor seating and gathering spaces. These green spaces will be well-lit with an emphasis on safe pathways and inviting landscapes. A community center will sit next to the greenspace to connect the outdoor community space inside. This community space could include amenities of a fitness center, computer lab, and community gathering spaces for homework and senior activities. We are envisioning the community space functioning as a resident lead co-working space for intergenerational learning and a center for Bedford Connect to continue their community work. The center would be dedicated to the empowerment of African American residents by decreasing community barriers to empowerment through education and kinship. Art installations would recognize the rich history of the Hill District by honoring residents' stories and celebrating black Pittsburgh, while looking ahead to the future. The roof of this community room would also act as a private outdoor roof deck for the residents of the senior building.

The development will include modern amenities not available at Bedford Dwellings. The individual units will be much larger than the current Bedford units, allowing for additional storage and living space for each resident. The units will be air conditioned with all energy star certified appliances, including washer, dryers, and dishwashers in each unit. This development will be sustainable and will meet the Energy Star Green Communities program and the US Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Home Program. The team is exploring the possibility of Passive House; however, this will take further studies. To further mitigate the environmental challenge of stormwater runoff, our Civil Engineering team has begun to examine strategies to ensure the development will not cause any additional disturbance. Based on our initial knowledge of the rock outcropping on the site, infiltration will not be suggested. Stormwater measures are expected to consist of underground detention tanks, conveyance piping, and green roofs to meet or exceed the City's Stormwater management code.

The site will have off-street parking options for tenants, with most of the parking integrated into the buildings, limited large open parking areas. The location is also close to public transportation routes. From the top of the site, the senior building close to the bus connection on Centre Avenue via Heldman, while the family building at the bottom of the site will be accessible to the new Bus Rapid Transit stop on 5th Street. We continue to explore further ways to support further mobility and connect the upper site with the lower site, either through a built improvement or a partnership. We have met with both the City's Planning Department and Port Authority to explore additional public transportation connections for residents. The site location features an abundance of retail and social services, religious institutions, educational facilities, amenities, and public transportation options available within short walking distance of the site. This act as an additional amenity for the residents, while adding additional shoppers to the neighborhood for the retail on Centre Avenue.

This development will utilize a twinning strategy, using both 9% and 4% LIHTCs from PHFA. In addition to the LIHTC funding, funding will come through HACP and potentially other sources. These combined funding sources require that the construction of the development integrates Davis Bacon Wage rates as well as MBE/WBE requirements and Section 3 requirements. The development is committed to the goal of 30% MBE and 15% WBE participation for all professional and development contracts. Currently, our MWBE team members include Cosmos (Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering), Geo-Mechanics (Geotech and Inspections), Sheffler & Company (Survey & Landscape), and Santangelo & Lindsey (Site Lighting). The construction contracts and subcontracts will be subject to the HACP's Section 3 Participation requirements, to promote first source hiring.

In addition to the Hill Districts Design Review Panel, the site will be requesting City approval from the Planning Commission and could require approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

