

## **Rose Street Townhouse Development Narrative**

The Rose Street Townhouse Development Project consists of the reuse of 5 adjacent, vacant parcels, located in one of Pittsburgh's great neighborhoods and a nationally-renowned African American economic and cultural center, the Hill District. For well over two decades, the 10,710 square feet of parcels have been vacant, and were purchased by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) in 2004.

Due to the area's decline, through practices such as mortgage redlining, maintenance and infrastructure improvements caused many homes to become distressed or abandoned in place. Since the URA's purchase of these parcels, there has been minimal investment to help stabilize the surrounding neighborhoods. This redevelopment opportunity can help provide slight economic catalyst to help create the vibrant urban streetscapes that historical supported the Hill District's culture and uniqueness as a neighborhood, while connecting the dots to all other development activity currently and what's anticipated.

The Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) and Rose Street Ventures, LP (RSV) teams propose to develop and construct new infill mixed-income homes that would garner the least risk and greatest response from the market. The completed development nearby the Hill District's designated *Center of Opportunity*, will help connect the dots to the major overhaul happening in the Lower Hill, while also providing access to centrally located transit opportunities. The affordable housing component is vital due to the large influx of proposed commercial investment, highlighted in the Greater Hill District Master Plan.

This redevelopment project consists of the reuse of existing vacant parcels to provide mixed-income new construction single family homes. Two [2] of the six [6] homes in the development will be sold to home buyers who qualify for 80% AMI. This new development will include code compliant fire sprinkler systems across the six [6] units and will designed to maximize indoor / outdoor living, with huge decks off of the kitchen area. All six units will have 3 bedrooms / 3 baths, front porches and updated finishes that you would find common in high-end townhome projects.

There are two main components to this project:

- 1) Acquiring five [5] vacant parcels from the Urban Redevelopment Authority, through their disposition process. After the acquisition, the one [1] parcel will be sub-divided to accommodate a sixth home.
- 2) Develop, construct and sell the six [6] homes; two [2] of which will be to affordable home buyers from the local Pittsburgh market.

Other efforts include infrastructure updates such as a new sidewalk installed on Rose Street, modification to the current electrical line configuration to accommodate below ground access, but more importantly engaging the local community in this residential project helps underscore the distinct persona that is based on this community's historical experience, architecture and identity.

## **Proposed Impact:**

The redevelopment of many blighted or distressed opportunities is a priority for the City of Pittsburgh and the Hill District. The community recognizes that there are significant efforts needed help reconnect the Hill District to downtown Pittsburgh. Addressing vacant or underutilized land, such as the parcels outlined for this project, are one of the many ways to help revitalize the community at its core. Given its adjacency to both the Central Business District (Downtown Pittsburgh) and Oakland (Univ. of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University), puts this project site in a unique position to attract strong residential and commercial tenants and other businesses to the area.

As highlighted in the Greater Hill District Master Plan, growth in the economy in communities surrounding the Hill District is at an all time high. This is due in part to investment in business and development. There has been a lack of [specific] reinvestment in the Hill District, despite the cost of living and doing business being more favorable. The Rose Street Townhouse Development project represents a turning point for the community. It starts the conversation about reuse and redevelopment opportunities in a historically African-American cultural node. Suburban options are attractive to some homeowners, but distances them from the fabric of African-American heritage and legacy that the Hill District provides. We feel this development will offer current Hill District residents an opportunity to upgrade their housing options while remaining in their neighborhood of choice. This development aims to retain current residents while potentially attracting new residents by offering urban oriented amenities and largely owner-occupied mixed income housing.

Expected outcomes are as follows:

1. **REVITALIZATION:** Revitalization and reuse of assets that already belong to the community.
2. **HOUSING:** New construction housing units within the urban core.
3. **MIX OF HOUSING OPTIONS:** Mixed income housing options. Housing located near the downtown core tends to vary due to market conditions. This project will include two [2] new affordable housing units that will be preserved as affordable for a minimum of 30 years. Providing a mix of housing options leads to a greater diversity of tenants and thus a brighter future for the Hill District.
4. **PARKING:** This project will offer six [6] off-street parking pads to ensure home owner convenience and helps keep additional cars off of Rose Street.
5. **FEET ON THE STREET:** 24 hour activation of surrounding streets [Centre Avenue] resulting in increased foot traffic for local commercial entities.
6. **JOBS:** A project of this magnitude in this neighborhood will have a significant effect on jobs for the local economy. One effect will be the creation of new construction trade opportunities associated with the construction of the six [6] homes. Our target requirements will be to source 30% MBE opportunities, 15% WBE and first source hiring of local Hill District residents. Opportunities such as residential electrical, plumbing, carpentry, even site excavation will be bid out to qualifying firms.

A sound housing stock dominated by units that are attractive, in good repair, and with strong “curb” appeal is key to creating a strong housing market, developing a healthy community, retaining existing residents and attracting new ones.