Dear Downtown Community and Visitors:

My first year in office has seen some challenging times. Across the country we have seen a rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness, a rise in gun related violence and homicides, and Pittsburgh has not been immune to these national trends.

When I stood up last April and set a goal of zero gun homicides in our city, I did so because I wanted everyone in Pittsburgh to know that public safety was going to be one of our major priorities as an administration. I knew that if we were going to meet this goal it would require long term systemic changes – the kind of changes that take serious investment and time to yield results.

We have been moving diligently to put our plan into action. Part of this meant doing an assessment on all available resources to better understand what investments we need to make in order to have a Downtown where everyone feels safe and welcome and where the heart and soul of our great city can continue to thrive.

A thriving downtown is critical for the success of our entire region – below are some updates on our plans that we have been putting into action:

Public Safety:

- Launching a Downtown Public Safety Initiative, to **triple the number of officers downtown** during peak hours of activity, led by a dedicated lieutenant and two sergeants. Officers will be carefully selected for their ability to build relationships with business owners and residents and for their ability to collaborate closely with the Office of Community Health and Safety and the ROOTS programs;

- Budgeting for and **running two police classes**, these will be the first new classes in at least two years;

- Establishing a collaboration between all downtown law enforcement and security forces;

- **Deploying 18 Public Safety Ambassadors**, modeled on best practices in other cities, to assist the police with non-criminal nuisances and connecting
people to mental health services;

- **Doubling city funding and staffing of Community Violence Intervention** staff and extending the program into Downtown;

- Launching **violence reduction and job training initiatives in our schools**, to connect with new youth-led cultural programming downtown;

- Offering **police-led safety trainings** for downtown employees and residents;

**Cleanliness and the Built Environment:**

- Adding **40 new staff to Department of Public Works (DPW) crews to allow for more frequent trash pickup**;

- Consolidating code enforcement and cleanup within DPW, to allow for efficient inspection, citation and remediation;

- DPW staff will be trained this spring to be ready for an **intensive spring cleaning**;

- Overcoming obstacles to safe, **clean and attended public restrooms downtown**.

**Residential Conversion and Economic Development:**

- **Supporting residential conversion** by launching our own pilot, aggressively pursuing funding for further conversions, and supporting independent initiatives by eliminating obstacles to conversion;

- Working with partners to make parks, green spaces and our waterfronts easy to navigate and inviting.

**Cultural Events:**

- Partnered with the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership to **launch PGH Opens events to celebrate the food, art, music, and culture of Downtown**
Pittsburgh;

- Every major event – from Juneteenth, to Pride, to the Three Rivers Arts Festival, and Fourth of July – brought in hundreds of thousands of visitors the golden triangle all without any major public safety incidents;

- Light Up Night – over 90,000 people came out to celebrate in Downtown Pittsburgh capping off a year filled with cultural activities downtown.

We have learned a lot from our first year together. My team has been and will continue to meet with you on a regular basis in order to build on the partnership that was started last year. The items listed above were all things we heard from you that we have made progress on – from more officers patrolling downtown, to addressing the need for public bathrooms, to creating new fun events to help bring people back into our central business district.

We will continue to work diligently to meet the challenges Downtown is facing. While we are beginning to see some early results, we know that change will not happen overnight. Our success can only happen if we work together, and we look forward to discussing more with you soon.

Ed Gainey
Mayor
City of Pittsburgh