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Avenue and Legacy Community Health Partner to Bring First Clinic to Near Northside

Federally Qualified Health Center Opening in Avenue’s New Community Resource Hub in 2020

HOUSTON – (August 12, 2019) – Avenue, a local nonprofit dedicated to developing affordable homes and strengthening communities, announced today that it is collaborating with Legacy Community Health to bring a much-needed community health clinic to Near Northside. The 6,200-square foot facility, which will serve families in this traditionally low-income neighborhood, will open next year in Avenue Center, a new mixed-use community resource center being developed by Avenue across from Moody Park.

“We are excited to collaborate with Legacy Community Health to improve healthcare access for working families in Near Northside. Like Avenue, Legacy is committed to improving the quality of life for all, including low-income households that are cost-burdened and struggling to accommodate healthcare costs,” said Mary Lawler, executive director at Avenue. “Creating healthier communities starts with healthier families and that is not possible without adequate access to quality affordable healthcare. The Legacy Community Health Clinic at Avenue Center will provide Near Northside residents with improved access to healthcare providers and a state-of-the-art healthcare facility, both of which are critical to building healthier and happier communities. We look forward to offering this key resource to the community in the coming year.”

Legacy Community Health is a not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that provides comprehensive care to over 150,000 patients at more than 30 clinics in Southeast Texas, regardless of their ability to pay. The agency, a United Way of Greater Houston agency, will provide primary care and behavioral health services at the Near Northside clinic.

“We are proud to have the opportunity to address the need for quality health care in the Near Northside community,” says Legacy Community Health CEO Katy Caldwell. “We look forward to our collaboration with Avenue in the new Avenue Center and hope that it will inspire further investment in healthcare services for underserved communities across Houston and the state.”

Situated in Houston’s urban core, the Near Northside is home to approximately 25,000 people, more than one-third of whom live below the poverty line, compared to Houston’s overall poverty rate of 23 percent. Health disparities are a key concern in the community, where nearly 40
percent of residents lack health insurance and approximately 11 percent of residents have previously reported serious psychological distress. Childhood obesity is also a prominent issue in Near Northside, with more than 50 percent of children reported to be an unhealthy weight.

Located at 3517 Irvington Blvd., Avenue Center will feature approximately 30,500 square feet of community programming space. In addition to the new Legacy Community Health clinic, Avenue Center will offer area residents access to a wide variety of programs and services including homebuyer education and counseling, financial education, space for meetings and trainings, and an early childhood education center, which will help address the shortage of early childhood education capacity in the community.

Lawler noted that the goal of Avenue Center is to conveniently co-locate a variety of vital resources for residents, especially low-income families, to improve access to essential support services that will improve the quality of life for individuals and the community as a whole.

Avenue is currently in the midst of a capital campaign which has raised nearly $10 million for Avenue Center (toward a $12 million goal) from organizations that include the City of Houston, Complete Communities Improvement Fund, BBVA, Houston Endowment, The Fondren Foundation, Midway Foundation, J.E. & L.E. Mabee Foundation, Green Mountain Energy Sun Club, The Brown Foundation, The Hearst Foundation, Camden, Trammell Crow Company, Cullen Foundation and Wells Fargo.

Avenue tapped architecture and engineering firm Page for the design for Avenue Center, which is inspired by the vibrant cultural fabric of the Near Northside community as well as Avenue’s existing development portfolio. Over the past 27 years, Avenue has helped revitalize Houston neighborhoods by leveraging more than $117 million in investments for developments including 200 single-family homes, 756 rental units and 140,000 square feet of commercial space. Last year, Avenue was recognized nationally with the prestigious Jack Kemp Excellence in Affordable and Workforce Housing Award from Urban Land Institute.

For more information about Avenue’s community development and revitalization efforts visit, http://avenuecdc.org/.

In 2017, Near Northside was designated as one of five pilot neighborhoods for Mayor Sylvester Turner’s Complete Communities initiative, which focuses on ensuring Houston communities have the quality of life elements needed for residents to live and prosper in their own neighborhoods. These elements include adequate access to healthcare, educational resources, healthy groceries, parks and green space, quality public transit and economic opportunities. The initiative seeks to address these elements in Houston communities where they are lacking and includes provisions for sufficient quality, affordable housing, which has become a growing concern across the Houston area, including in the Near Northside community.

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**About Avenue**

Avenue’s mission is to build affordable homes and strengthen communities. The organization enhances the quality of life of working families and works to promote healthy, vibrant and economically diverse neighborhoods that are essential to Houston’s future as a world-class city. Avenue develops homes for purchase and rent as well as provides homebuyer education and counseling to help working families buy and maintain their own homes. We promote economic development and offer supportive services such as computer labs, after-school programs, and nutrition, fitness, and financial literacy classes that enrich the lives of the individuals and families.
we serve. Avenue is a member of the nationwide NeighborWorks® Network of more than 245 community development organizations working in nearly 4,358 urban, suburban and rural communities across America. Connect with Avenue on Facebook: http://bit.ly/FBAvenueCDC and Twitter: https://twitter.com/AvenueCDC.