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City of Pittsburgh

Onorato, Ravenstahl Announce Pittsburgh G-20 Partnership of Public & Private Organizations

PITTSBURGH (June 30, 2009) – Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato and Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl today announced the formation of the Pittsburgh G-20 Partnership, a public-private partnership of organizations that are providing time, talent and resources to serve as local hosts for the G-20 summit meeting on September 24 & 25 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

Earlier this month, the City and County announced a series of public brainstorming sessions designed to elicit ideas on the best way for Pittsburgh to welcome the meeting of the heads of state of the 19 countries and European Union who together represent 90 percent of the global gross national product, 80 percent of world trade, and two-thirds of the world's population.

Onorato and Ravenstahl said the brainstorming process yielded more than 400 distinctive ideas and more than 1,000 volunteers.

“The community sessions demonstrated the great enthusiasm Pittsburghers have for the summit and their overriding interest in ensuring that it's a clean, green and welcoming event for world leaders, journalists and visitors,” said Onorato. “We want to thank Point Park University, Robert Morris University and the University of Pittsburgh for hosting the sessions, as well as the hundreds of citizens who turned out to offer their best ideas.”

Among the ideas that are already underway are:

- Creating an enhanced welcome center at Pittsburgh International Airport;
- Distributing of an “Ask Me. I'm a Pittsburgher!” pin to community ambassadors;
- Developing an online media center and downtown media center to help tell the story of Pittsburgh's ongoing transformation; and
- Using the Partnership's website as a portal and resource for information related to street closures and other summit-related changes.

“The time for brainstorming is over, and now it is time to get down to work,” said Ravenstahl. “We are pleased to announce today the Pittsburgh G-20 Partnership, a public-private partnership – in the best Pittsburgh tradition – that will support our efforts over the next three months.”

In addition to the County and City, the Partnership has two private non-profit founding partners, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, the region's premier civic leadership organization, and VisitPittsburgh, the official tourism marketing and promotion agency for Allegheny County.

"VisitPittsburgh is hard at work facilitating lodging arrangements and working closely with the Convention Center, the White House and our fellow members of the Partnership to ensure this event is a success," said Joe McGrath, president and CEO of VisitPittsburgh.

Dennis Yablonsky, chief executive officer of the Allegheny Conference, announced that the Partnership has secured an initial funding commitment of \$500,000 from its own "Group of 20" global corporations, organizations and foundations based in Pittsburgh and that it already has more than 30 additional partners making in-kind contributions.

"I had the pleasure of facilitating two of the brainstorming sessions recently where I saw firsthand the excitement everyone is feeling around this unprecedented opportunity in the global spotlight," said Doris Carson Williams, chair of VisitPittsburgh. "We received hundreds of good ideas about the best way to extend Pittsburgh's well-known hospitality to our guests. Some of the planning for those ideas will have to wait until we know more about the White House's and State Department's plans. But one thing we can all do today is prepare ourselves to be hosts for our guests and ambassadors for Pittsburgh.

The fiscal agent for the Partnership is Event Committee Pittsburgh Inc., an existing 501(c)(3) supporting organization of the Allegheny Conference. Day to day management of the partnership is being provided by senior staff from the City, County, Allegheny Conference and VisitPittsburgh.

The Partnership website, www.pittsburghg20.org, is the information and engagement portal for the Pittsburgh region. It includes sections on being an ambassador, as well as sign-ups for an e-mail newsletter and volunteers.

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