



Release

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Statement on W. 83rd St. Safe Haven

The building at 106-108 West 83rd Street has been a Department of Homeless Services facility for decades. Most recently it was the 130-bed Skyway Men’s Shelter operated by Acacia Network Housing from 2012 to 2021. DHS contracted Breaking Ground to open a safe haven to replace the Acacia shelter when the building was renovated in 2022. This came when Mayor Adams announced he would increase funds for low-barrier shelters by more than \$170 million in 2023—the largest ever investment in safe havens by any administration.

New York City needs to create more beds for the homeless. Breaking Ground operates successful safe havens in the East Village, Union Square, Boerum Hill, and Williamsburg. They house a relatively small number of people who receive individual attention. I am concerned about the number of beds in each room at this new safe haven. I urge Breaking Ground to limit it to one or two beds per room instead of four. The goal is to get people off the street, not to maximize the number of people in the building.

Safe havens are pipelines to permanent housing. I have visited many and supported their construction. The safe haven will only be successful if there is an active Community Advisory Board, which Breaking Ground has agreed to do. Breaking Ground could have done more to involve the community and officials earlier in the process. I didn’t hear about it until just before the community board meeting.

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