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Shawmut Design and Construction and Hobbs Brook Real Estate celebrate topping off of FM's R&D center

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Shawmut project team

Norwood, MA Shawmut Design and Construction, Hobbs Brook Real Estate, and Payette celebrated the topping off of commercial property insurer FM's new office project, which will offer a combination of world-class research, science, and technology facilities for a leader in loss prevention and business continuity.

The design-build team of project manager Hobbs Brook Real Estate, construction management firm

Shawmut Design and Construction, and architecture firm Payette has completed the structure of the flagship building. The project is transforming FM's Norwood campus by replacing a 1950s-era building with a four-story, 320,000 s/f complex that will house research, FM Approvals, and multiple operational functions and offices. The main structure is built from 3,500 tons of steel, comprising 4,585 pieces and set atop 521 drilled micro piles. When operational in 2026 the building will feature advanced research laboratories and corporate offices, along with a new 930-space parking garage and outdoor spaces to further enhance the Norwood campus.

"Shawmut's experience managing large-scale, technically complex projects has been key in bringing FM's vision for this R&D facility to life," said Kevin Sullivan, executive vice president of Shawmut Design and Construction's New England Region. "Through our collaborative, design-build approach, we've optimized project delivery, integrated advanced prefabrication, and met the project's tight timeline, all while upholding exceptional standards of technical excellence. This milestone underscores our team's commitment to innovation, and we're excited to continue working alongside Hobbs Brook Real Estate, Payette, and our trade partners."

"We're thrilled to celebrate the topping off of this state-of-the-art facility, a pivotal milestone that brings us one step closer to the delivery of this transformative project," said Peter Gottlieb, president & CEO of Hobbs Brook Real Estate. "We look forward to continuing our collaboration with all of our project partners and stakeholders as we work together to bring to life one of the region's most prominent research, science, and technology facilities."

(L to R) Peter Gottlieb, Hobbs Brook Real Estate; Andy Bryson, FM; Greg Lorusso, Hobbs Brook Real Estate;
Kevin Sullivan, Shawmut; Sanjay Chawla, FM; Jay Morris, FM

This project establishes new standards for resilience, sustainability, and technical excellence, incorporating extensive prefabrication to reduce construction time, minimize waste, and enhance project speed. The building will feature a high-performance façade to reduce energy loss, resilient mechanical systems designed to mitigate service interruptions, native species landscape designed to manage stormwater events, and laboratories of the highest engineering standards.

With a commitment to holistic and resilient construction practices, the project adheres to rigorous engineering, safety, and environmental standards. The building will be 100% electric-powered and include 221 geothermal wells, each reaching 605 feet deep, to reduce HVAC energy consumption and environmental impact. The project is expected to achieve U.S. Green Building Council LEED Gold and WELL Bronze at minimum.

"We are excited to reach this milestone in the development of FM's Norwood campus. Our new state-of-the-art facility will provide an unmatched experience for FM's clients, partners and

colleagues, as well as serve as a center for FM's leading research and learning activities. We can't wait to open its doors in 2026," said Malcolm Roberts, chairman and CEO of FM.

The facility will enable colleagues, clients, partners, students, and visiting academic researchers to collaborate through immersive lab and visitor experiences. Located at 1165 Providence Highway in Norwood, its proximity to Boston provides convenient access for international visitors and some of the world's leading academic institutions.

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