



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

nerej

Construction begins on new East Providence Community Center - by Roberto DaSilva

August 08, 2025 - Rhode Island



Roberto DaSilva

After years of planning, construction has finally begun on the new East Providence Community Center at 610 Waterman Ave. in the heart of the city. This site is centrally located on the campus of the city's Robert Rock Senior Center, directly across the street from East Providence High School via a pedestrian bridge and accessible from major bus lines.

The approximately 19,446 s/f building will serve as a community learning center and be the home of the city's recreation department. The building will include a health monitoring room, individual rooms

for residents to take personal tele-health or virtual education meetings and classes, a multi-purpose gymnasium (including basketball, futsal, volleyball, and pickleball courts), multi-purpose classroom space to be used for adult education classes and workforce development programming, community meetings, and outdoor space for recreational use. The center will be a place where the city's recreation department will host and expand on its adult and youth programming.

Due to its location adjacent to the senior center and high school, it can also serve as a location for intergenerational activities. No new employees are required as the building will provide administrative space for the existing recreation department staff who are currently located in the senior center. The community center is also planned to host after-school educational programs as part of governor Dan McKee's Education 365 initiative, where state grant funding is made available to the city to fund youth educational programming. The city has hired Bentley Builders as the project's construction manager, William Starck Architects as the project's architect, and Peregrine Group as the owner's project manager. Construction will occur through the fall of 2026.

Funding for the project has been provided by the RI Pandemic Recovery Office's Community Learning Center municipal grant program funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Congressional Directed Spending funds administered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as East Providence's share of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. This project has had strong community support, as East Providence citizens approved two referendums since 2002 to construct a new community center, however, the city never issued a bond and never constructed a new facility. Today, no bonding is necessary, as the grant funding awarded to the city will cover the cost of construction.

The city currently lacks community space and this long-overdue project will be a tremendous resource where residents can easily access valuable programming and multi-faceted services. The center will meet many community needs and will be used at different times of the day by various segments of the community. The project is an example of how East Providence is enhancing the quality of life for its residents in a cost-effective manner and the city is grateful for the state and federal leaders who have made this community center possible.

Roberto DaSilva is the mayor of the city of East Providence, R.I.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540