



NEWS RELEASE

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195 District Celebrates Ribbon Cutting at Park Pavilion, Expanding Community Space in Providence's Innovation District

The 195 District today celebrated the official ribbon cutting of the new 195 District Park pavilion, marking an exciting addition to one of Rhode Island's most vibrant public spaces and further enhancing the 195 District's role as a hub for community, culture, and economic activity.

Located at the heart of 195 District Park, the new pavilion creates a welcoming, year-round gathering space for residents, visitors, and workers in the growing innovation district. The pavilion will soon be home to two beloved Rhode Island brands—The Guild and Seven Stars Bakery—bringing locally crafted food and beverage offerings to the park and further activating the space.

Mayor Brett Smiley, Governor Dan McKee, and Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi, and Chairman Louis P. DiPalma joined Commission leadership and community partners to mark the occasion, highlighting the importance of continued investment in public spaces that strengthen neighborhoods and support economic growth.

"The greenspace at the 195 District Park has become a central hub in the heart of Providence for community gatherings and I'm thrilled to be cutting the ribbon on the next evolution of this space," said **Mayor Brett P. Smiley**. "Inspired by exciting and successful projects in cities across the nation, this summer the pavilion will serve as an economic engine for Providence and a year-round gathering space for neighbors and visitors alike."

"Today's ribbon cutting of the new 195 District Park pavilion reflects our commitment to creating spaces where communities across Rhode Island can come together," said **Governor Dan McKee**. "Opening just in time for the summer, the new pavilion will serve a source of pride for Providence where small businesses can grow and thrive."

"The 195 District's transformation is drawing more people and businesses to Providence, and the new pavilion will provide a central space to connect, host events, and enjoy our beautiful capital city," said **Speaker Joe Shekarchi** (D-Dist. 23, Warwick). "I'm proud that the General Assembly supported this project through a Green Bond investment, helping create an accessible, welcoming public space to showcase some of the local businesses that make the Ocean State's hospitality industry so exceptional."

"Thriving public spaces are incredibly important for our communities," said **Senator Louis P. DiPalma** (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton), **Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance**. "195 District Park has been an outstanding addition to the City of Providence and a valued amenity for all Rhode Islanders. The arrival of the pavilion will enhance this beautiful steppingstone to the Capital City even further. I want to thank and recognize the many leaders and stakeholders who have been part of this project."

The pavilion builds on the success of 195 District Park, which has become a destination for events, performances, and community programming, including the Providence Flea and a wide range of seasonal activities. The addition of permanent food and beverage options will enhance the park experience and support increased foot traffic throughout the year.

"195 District Park has become one of Providence's great public spaces, and this pavilion is a natural next step in its evolution," said **Marc Crisafulli**, **Chair of the I-195 Redevelopment District Commission**. "By adding year-round

amenities and supporting local businesses, we are continuing to create a place where people want to gather, connect, and spend time—right in the center of our innovation district.”

Since its creation, the 195 District has transformed former highway land into a thriving mixed-use neighborhood that has attracted more than \$800 million in private investment and is delivering new housing, commercial space, and public amenities. The District Park and pavilion are key components of that vision—ensuring that as the area grows, it remains accessible, engaging, and community-focused.

“The 195 District has emerged as a hub of commerce and culture in the heart of our Capital City,” said **Secretary of Commerce Stefan Pryor**. “This pavilion contributes to the attractiveness of the area, offering amenities that make the District an even more welcoming place to work, live, and visit.”

Designed by New York City-based Architecture Research Office (ARO), the resilient pavilion is designed for all vantage points around the park, with six sides that frame waterfront views and a canopy that provides shaded seating areas in all directions. The new pavilion’s cedar shiplap rainscreen references the coastal Rhode Island vernacular and visually connects to the wood of the adjacent pedestrian bridge. Operable storefront doors in the pavilion’s main dining area provide panoramic views of the Providence River and can open for indoor-outdoor dining service as weather allows.

“As a new public amenity in the heart of Providence, the pavilion is a year-round destination for nourishment and activation, where visitors can gather and make new memories along the River, said **Kim Yao, ARO Principal**.

“We are proud to deliver the 195 District Park pavilion with our project partners and the skilled trade professionals who helped bring it to life,” said **Chris Maury, Head of Rhode Island Operations and Head of Preconstruction, New England Region at Shawmut Design and Construction**. “As a firm with deep roots in the state, projects like this reflect what we care about most: building places that matter to the communities we’re part of. This pavilion is the latest in a series of projects we’ve delivered in the I-195 Redevelopment District, including Point 225, Aloft Providence Downtown, and Emblem 125, which reflect the forward-looking projects taking shape in this part of the city.”

“As a member of the 195 District Park community for over four years with our seasonal beer garden, we are excited to extend our relationship to this year-round pavilion. We look forward to welcoming the community soon, said **Jeremy Duffy, Guild Co-founder and Partner**.

The pavilion will be open to the public in the coming weeks.

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