

McKee Administration Announces New Placemaking Grant Awards to Support Summer Events

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Today, Governor Dan McKee and Secretary of Commerce Liz Tanner announced the recipients of new mini grant awards under the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation’s Placemaking Initiative.

The RI Rebounds Placemaking Initiative is a statewide effort to support businesses in the tourism and hospitality industries. The mini grants, approved by the RI Commerce Corporation’s Board of Directors on June 10, will fund activities, events, and programs, aimed at attracting visitors and are held outdoors, or in public spaces, during the summer months.

“We are proud to announce these awards for events which celebrate Rhode Island’s rich history, arts, and culture.” said **Governor Dan McKee**. “We know that when we bring people together in communities across the state, we showcase all that makes the Ocean State so great and empower our cities and towns to succeed.”

Established in 2022 with federal funding from the American Rescue Plan, the Placemaking Initiative has awarded \$2.9 million to date for projects that have helped to grow Rhode Island’s tourism and hospitality industries.

“These grants are an investment in keeping our communities vibrant, providing Rhode Islanders and visitors opportunities to come together and experience the best our state has to offer,” said **Secretary of Commerce Liz Tanner**.

The announcement includes three awards that directly support events and programming in the City of East Providence.

“We are excited to be a recipient of these Placemaking Initiative grant awards,” **Mayor Bob DaSilva** said. “Thank you to our Governor Dan McKee and Secretary of Commerce Liz Tanner for their continued support. Since day one of the Washington Bridge closure, we have fought to support our city by any means necessary and that includes both our businesses and the people who call East Providence home. The funding from these grants continues to enrich our community’s heritage, history and culture.”

PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE SUMMER 2024 MINI GRANT RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council (\$25,000)

To support the creation of a “Pirates Lair” at Central Falls Landing for family fun and educational purposes on Saturday afternoons for fourteen (14) weeks from July – October 2024. Participants can board the riverboat Explorer for demonstrative pirate tours.

City of Central Falls (\$30,000)

To support various summer events including Youth Kayaking, Salsa Nights, Fourth of July Celebration, Car Show, and Food Truck Fest in the City of Central Falls.

City of East Providence 1 (\$16,666)

To support the July 14th intertribal pow wow in the City of East Providence.

City of East Providence 2 (\$25,000)

To support eight cultural feasts within the City of East Providence during the summer months. The events will occur between May – October 2024.

City of Pawtucket (\$25,000)

To support the Cape Verdean Festival as part of the Pawtucket Arts Festival.

Cranston Cares (\$20,000)

To support the creation of the “Night Market” series which will serve as a venue for local arts, crafts, and foods during the summer months.

Downtown Providence Park Network (\$20,000)

To support “Meet Me Downtown: A Music Series in Burnside Park ” which includes a concert series, beer gardens, wine tastings, family-friendly activities, crafts, storytelling, and STEM activities for children.

Federal Hill Commerce Association (\$25,000)

To support two overlapping events: (1) A 7-week Al Fresco on Federal Hill featuring outdoor dining, shopping, and music festival; and (2) Summer Festival for dining, shopping, and music.

Festival Ballet Providence (\$20,000)

To support free or donation-based performances featuring live music with Aurea Ensemble at the Temple to Music in Roger Williams Park and the creation of a temporary outdoor performing arts venue.

FirstWorks (\$20,000)

To support the expansion of the FirstWorks Summer Beats concert series in South Providence and Roger Williams Park. Includes concerts, street performers, food trucks, and activation of nearby attractions, libraries, and museums.

Newport Contemporary Ballet (\$20,000)

To support the five-day Newport Dance Festival that is marketed as genre-defying contemporary dance. Food trucks will be available on the premises.

Roger Williams Park Conservancy (\$30,000)

To support the Kick-off to Fall Weekend in Roger Williams Park which includes a signature live-music evening concert, an interactive art installation, and extends food truck offerings through the weekend. The anticipated weekend for this event is the last weekend of September.

The Crescent Park Carousel Preservation Association (\$18,225)

To support five events: (1) Summerfest; (2) The Great Townie Pumpkin Festival; (3) Trunk or Treat; (4) Movies in the Park; and (5) an additional event to be announced at a later date.

The Empowerment Factory (\$20,000)

To support the 8th Annual Healthy Living Community Event (HLCE), an extension of the Pawtucket Arts Festival on Saturday, September 7, 2024. The HLCE includes a Baldwin Loop Walking Path Scavenger Hunt, vendors, installations, yoga and fitness coaches, family activities, petting zoo, and ice cream.

Town of Warren (\$20,000)

To support the Town of Warren's annual summer events at Burr's Hill Park which includes: (1) Summer Outdoor Concert Series; (2) Summer Outdoor Movie Series; and (3) Community Take it Outside Night.

WaterFire Providence (\$30,000)

To support the annual WaterFire Clear Currents Community Paddling Night on August 3, 2024. Event to celebrate the return of aquatic life to the rivers of Providence.