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# Homewood Suites will be only extended-stay hotel in downtown Providence — for now



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HIDE CAPTION

Jeff Karam, vice president of First Bristol Corporation, provides a tour of one of the larger suites at the Homewood Suites, which will open in mid-January in downtown. [The Providence Journal / Steve Szydlowski]



By Paul Edward Parker  
Journal Staff Writer

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Posted Dec 22, 2018 at 9:06 PM  
Updated Dec 22, 2018 at 9:06 PM



PROVIDENCE — The Homewood Suites by Hilton hotel, expected to open in mid-January between Burnside Park and the Woonasquatucket River, will, at least for a while, be unique in two aspects.

First, being built on a small, triangular site, one of the last of the Capital Center parcels, its has a shape that could best be described as a skewed, elongated U-shape.

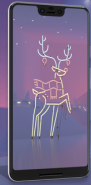
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be described as a skewed trapezoidal O-shape.

Second, and more significantly, it will be the only extended-stay hotel in downtown Providence. That distinction, though, will be short-lived, as a Residence Inn by Marriott is under construction a few blocks away, with an expected opening late next year.

Providence is seen as a hot hotel market, Jan Freitag, senior vice president of STR, a hotel data and analytics company based in Hendersonville, Tennessee, told The Providence Journal in the spring. Its 74-percent average occupancy rate in 2017 was well above the national average of 66 percent. And, “extended-stay is the darling of the development community,” Freitag said.

That’s because an extended-stay hotel, with small suites that combine a bedroom area, a sitting area and a full kitchen, serve three markets that find Providence attractive: tech workers in the gig economy, who may be in town for a job that lasts a couple of months to a couple of years; families who need room to spread out, such as those attending youth sports events at the Rhode Island Convention Center; and people displaced from their homes, sometimes for months at a time, as they move to a new home or have repairs done to an existing home.

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The Homewood Suites, wedged between Exchange Terrace, Exchange Street and Memorial Boulevard, will feature an entrance hall and 50 parking spaces inside the building, where lifts will allow valet attendants to park two cars in each spot, one above the other. The entry hall will lead upstairs to the main lobby and other amenities, including a breakfast room, which will also host evening social hours Mondays through Thursdays, according to Alyssa A. Karam, asset manager for First Bristol Corporation, the Fall River company developing the \$30-million project in conjunction with Providence’s Paolino Properties.

Because of the odd shape of the hotel, few of the rooms will be traditional rectangles, and they will offer a wide variety of views, from Burnside Park and City Hall to Waterplace and Providence Place mall to the State House and the East Side. And about half will look out on the river, offering prime views of WaterFire.

The eight-story hotel will have 120 rooms, running about \$150 to \$250 a night, on six guest floors. It is expected to employ 50 part- and full-time workers.

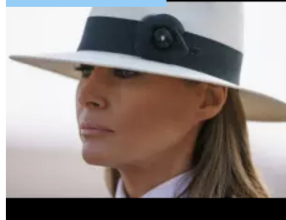
Jeffrey T. Karam, Alyssa’s brother and First Bristol’s vice president, predicted that about half of the hotel’s guests will be new to the market while the other half will be people who would have booked in other Providence hotels. “There’ll be a little shift in business,” Karam said.



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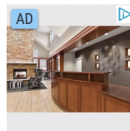
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