Houston nonprofit breaks ground on 30,500 SF community center with UAE, BBVA, city funding

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Avenue CDC, a nonprofit focused on affordable housing, celebrated the groundbreaking of its new mixed-use community center just north of downtown on April 15.

Tax Day was chosen as the groundbreaking date in an effort to highlight the tax benefits of homeownership, according to a media alert.

Avenue Center will be at 3527 Irvington Blvd., across from Moody Park in the Near Northside neighborhood. The three-story, 30,500-square-foot facility will contain community programming space — including Avenue’s headquarters, realty office and Homeownership Center — plus a health clinic and an early childhood education center.

The project is expected to cost $11.3 million, a spokesperson told the Houston Business Journal in January. It will be funded in part by $2.6 million from the United Arab Emirates’ donation for Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts. As of January, Avenue’s ongoing capital campaign had raised more than $2.1 million for the project through both public and private funding.

In February, the city of Houston approved $3.4 million in project funding, according to Avenue’s press release at the time. More recently, a $1 million gift from the BBVA Compass Foundation kickstarted construction on the project, per the media release. Avenue Center will house the future BBVA Compass Center for Financial Education in recognition of the gift.

Avenue Center is expected to open in early 2020. Page, a Washington, D.C.-based architecture and engineering firm that has a Houston office, is designing the building. Dallas-based Trammell Crow Co. is the development manager, and Houston-based Arch-Con Corp. is the general contractor, the spokesperson said in January.

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