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By Sharon Waters

\$98M high school for New Brunswick gets boost from state

New Brunswick: The city's new public high school will be designed and built, at an expected cost of \$98 million, as one of six demonstration projects in the state.

The new program, unveiled yesterday by the governor and other state officials, aims to leverage funding from the New Jersey Schools Construction Corp. to secure private investment and maximize city redevelopment efforts

In New Brunswick, the new high school planned for Route 27 behind the Aldi supermarket will also serve as an anchor for proposed housing and commercial redevelopment, state officials said.

New Brunswick's project will be managed by the New Brunswick Housing & Redevelopment Authority, with the New Brunswick Development Corp. serving as the redeveloper.

Devco President Christopher J. Paladino said his nonprofit company was honored to be chosen for one of the six New Jersey projects.

"We really hope by facilitating the construction of this important project we'll open the door for the demonstration project to become a more aggressive tool for the construction of Abbott schools statewide," said Paladino.

New Brunswick is one of the state's 30 Abbott, or specialneeds, districts. The other cities chosen for demonstration projects are also Abbott districts: Union City, East Orange, Trenton, Camden and Vineland.

The six projects will incorporate community design features, such as a gym, playground or library accessible to students and residents. Facilities available to the community at the New Brunswick high school will include indoor and outdoor athletic facilities, meeting space and a labor training program.

New Brunswick's new high school will accommodate approximately 1,750 students in a two- and three-story building with two wings separated by a central core structure housing a gym, auditorium and other common spaces.

The new school will be 380,000 square feet, more than twice the size of the 166,000-square-foot facility on Livingston Avenue.

About half of the proposed 32-acre site on Route 27 is owned by the Jersey Precast Corp. concrete plant. The other half is vacant land owned by First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens CDC.

The state estimated \$10.4 million will be needed for land acquisition, site remediation, relocation and demolition. The project cost is estimated at \$97.9 million, according to officials at the state departments of labor and education.