



SYCAMORE & OAK

THE RETAIL VILLAGE AT SYCAMORE & OAK, A COMMUNITY-LED PROJECT OPENS TODAY IN CONGRESS HEIGHTS DC

The fully sustainable shopping destination and wellness and cultural hub incubates local, small and minority-owned businesses, providing an economic infusion to the community

Washington, D.C. June 14, 2023 - [The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak](#), a transformative new community-led development, opens today in Congress Heights Washington, D.C. The 23,000 square-foot retail village offers wellness and entrepreneurial support services, food vendors, convening and event space, and provides a year-round community resource, shopping and cultural destination. It is expected to initially provide more than 100 jobs to local residents in the fields of security, retail, facilities management and green construction.

The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak features thirteen local businesses representing a variety of specialties including streetwear brands, beauty and skincare shops, art boutiques, a fitness operator, food vendors, and a fresh food market. It will also include a playground and a courtyard for eating, entertainment and learning. The businesses opening at The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak include Black Bella Spa & Wellness Center, Soufside Creative, Chris Pyrate & Friends, LoveMore Brand, Paradyce Clothing Company, Inc., Vaya Beauty, The Museum DC, WeFitDC, Dionne's Good Food, Glizzy's DC, Triecy's DC, Buna Talk Café, and The Fresh Food Factory Market. Business biographies are available upon request.

"Today, we celebrate 13 businesses that are all owned by residents of Wards 7 and 8. We celebrate keeping a promise to bring jobs, opportunity, and amenities to Ward 8 – right here on the St. Elizabeths East campus," said Mayor Muriel Bowser. "Now, when people come to the ESA to watch the Mystics, or for boxing, or high school graduations, or any of the fantastic events we have going on, you can also eat, shop, and support local businesses while you're here."

The Retail Village incubates food and retail concepts that all originated in Wards 7 and 8 and offers an "Incubate the Eight" program for emerging Black entrepreneurs and local business owners. Through the program, local entrepreneurs receive technical and marketing support along with training to help scale and sustain their businesses. The Retail Village also offers a "Chefs-In-Residence" program, where the food and beverage operators will receive operational support and mentoring from the Jose Andres Group.

“The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak is a one-of-a-kind development that positions community members in leadership positions and prioritizes our expertise and input, and I’m excited to see the transformative effect it will have on Congress Heights,” said Monica Ray, manager of The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak and executive director of the Congress Heights Development and Training Center. “Congress Heights is a unique and historic corner of Southeast D.C. that has been overlooked for far too long. This project will provide the diverse services and opportunities desired in the neighborhood and will highlight the remarkable talent found among its residents.”

“The entrepreneurial and artistic talent present in Congress Heights is palpable and is ready to take D.C. and beyond by storm,” said Le’Greg Harrison, founder of The Museum DC and experience manager at The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak. “The Incubate the Eight Program will transform Congress Heights into a thriving location for local entrepreneurs to launch their business and elevates the incredible talent of Congress Heights within the D.C. community and beyond.”

Built using FSC-certified, sustainably harvested mass timber, the Retail Village demonstrates the versatility, beauty and sustainability of carbon-sequestering. It is the largest free-standing structure of its sort in the District and demonstrates the flexibility, economy, and sustainability of this ancient building material in its new, high-tech form. An all-electric building, it will demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of solar energy, battery storage, heat pumps and induction cooking.

“Congress Heights has always been a vital part of Washington D.C.’s vibrant cultural and entrepreneurial spirit, and the Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak is a celebration of the neighborhood’s dynamism and diversity,” said Dan Tangherlini, Managing Director at Emerson Collective, one of the lead investors and community liaisons for the project. “We were honored to play a role in helping this unique development come to life, and hope that it will set a high standard of community collaboration, sustainability, and equity that Congress Heights residents deserve and expect.”

“Redbrick LMD was thrilled to collaborate with Emerson Collective, the District and Congress Heights to deliver this exciting development at the St. Elizabeths East Campus,” said William Passmore, Managing Partner at Redbrick LMD, the lead developer. “Since 2019, Redbrick has played an active role in transforming St. Elizabeths East, creating needed housing and medical office space. The addition of the Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak will bring retail, dining options and more, contributing to the richness of the Congress Heights neighborhood.”

The 23,000 square foot Retail Village is the first installment of the larger proposed Sycamore & Oak project—a first-of-its-kind mixed-use real estate development slated to serve the Congress Heights neighborhood. Proposed plans for the larger, 650,000 square feet, longer-

term development include a hotel, affordable housing units, retail, restaurants, and convening spaces.

About The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak

The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak is a year-round destination and community resource for shopping, arts, culture, and wellness. Located on the historic former St. Elizabeths campus in the Congress Heights neighborhood of Washington, D.C., the 23,000 square foot Retail Village incubates retail and food concepts that originated in the community, including thirteen local businesses representing a variety of specialties including three streetwear brands, two beauty and skincare shops, two art boutiques, a fitness operator, four food vendors, and a fresh food market. To learn more, please visit sycamoreandoak.com.