



Sycamore & Oak

1110 Oak Drive SE

Washington, DC 20032

Office: (301) 452-0410

Website: <https://www.sycamoreandoak.com/>

Member since 2023

Winner of the 2023 District Sustainability Award

Reported Environmental Activities

✓ Environmental Policy/Sustainability Mission Statement

At Sycamore & Oak, we proudly declare our steadfast commitment to sustainability as one of three pillars of our community ethos. Those pillars are: individual economic opportunity; community uplift and celebration; and planetary regeneration.

This statement reflects our impact, current sustainability policies, and initiatives for ongoing improvement, all tailored to benefit our community. Through the seamless integration of renewable energy, carbon-negative construction, and energy-efficient design, we are contributing to building a neighborhood where sustainability is an integral part of our shared identity. As part of this work, we commit to foster transparency, awareness, and a legacy of responsible operations that enriches our collective well-being.

To bring our sustainability commitment to life, Sycamore & Oak is guided by three mission-driven initiatives:

1. Holistic Sustainability by Design:

Mission: Envision and implement a design philosophy that seamlessly integrates eco-conscious elements into every facet of Sycamore & Oak. From modular construction to renewable energy, our commitment to sustainability is not just a design choice but a way of cultivating an environmentally conscious community, as embodied in our mission statement.

2. Inclusive Sustainability Empowerment:

Mission: Foster an inclusive economic ecosystem that uplifts local entrepreneurs through sustainable practices. Beyond providing physical spaces, Sycamore & Oak is dedicated to nurturing an environment where businesses, especially those from marginalized communities, can flourish sustainably. Our mission is to empower, support, and promote sustainability within the economic fabric of our community.

3. Leadership in Sustainable Innovation:

Mission: Lead the way in sustainable innovation within the community and beyond. Sycamore & Oak strives to be a pioneering force, setting new standards in sustainable living and construction practices. Through continuous innovation, we aim to inspire and influence other developments to embrace eco-friendly solutions, aligning with our mission statement to build a lasting legacy of responsible living.

✓ **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing**

The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak has been meticulously designed and constructed with a focus on sustainability and reducing environmental impacts. Here are the key attributes in design and composition that contribute to these efforts:

1. **Renewable Energy:** The Retail Village will soon harness solar power through photovoltaic panels incorporated into the roof canopy. This renewable energy source will help power the facility, aligning with sustainable energy practices and reducing reliance on traditional power sources.
2. **Carbon-Negative Materials:** The primary construction material used in the Retail Village includes sustainably grown and harvested mass timber, contributing to carbon negativity.
3. **Advanced Heating and Cooling Systems:** The Retail Village employs advanced heating and cooling strategies, particularly high-efficiency heat pumps.
4. **Water Conservation:** The building incorporates stormwater retention and reuse systems, leading to reduced water usage. This sustainable water management approach aligns with environmental conservation efforts and minimizes the impact on local water resources.
5. **Energy Conservation:** High-efficiency glass, lighting, and thermal management systems are integrated into the design to conserve energy. These elements contribute to overall energy efficiency and help reduce the environmental footprint of the Retail Village.
6. **Hyper-Local Sourcing and Urban Farming:** The use of hyper-locally sourced and recycled building materials showcase a commitment to sustainability and supporting local ecosystems. A bee apiary on site; plans for urban farming plots; and pollinator friendly plantings contribute to a reduced carbon footprint associated with transportation and supply chains.
7. **Modular and Reclaimable Construction:** The Retail Village is constructed using a modular system with reclaimable joints, allowing for easy assembly, disassembly, and potential reassembly elsewhere. This approach promotes sustainability by minimizing waste and facilitating future repurposing of the building.
8. **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** The entire development process of the Retail Village involved extensive collaboration with the Congress Heights community. The structure is designed to serve as a 'community within the community,' supporting local entrepreneurs and artists. This community-led approach not only fosters social sustainability but also ensures that the facility aligns with the needs and values of its users.

✓ **Equity Considerations in all Activities**

The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion by actively engaging in initiatives that hire, retain, and promote people of color from marginalized communities. Here are specific actions and programs that contribute to this commitment:

1. “Incubate the Eight” Program: This program is specifically designed to develop emerging Black entrepreneurs by providing them with the necessary business and marketing skills. By focusing on individuals from marginalized communities in Wards 7 and 8, where there has been a history of disinvestment and high unemployment rates, the Retail Village aims to empower these entrepreneurs with the resources and support needed to thrive.

2. “Chefs-In-Residence” Program: The Retail Village's "Chefs-In-Residence" program is an initiative that provides food and drink vendors with mentorship and operational guidance from the Jose Andres Group. This mentoring program not only supports the growth of local businesses but also contributes to the professional development of individuals within the food and beverage industry, particularly those from marginalized communities.

3. Collaboration with Congress Heights Community Development & Training Corporation: By partnering with local organizations like the Congress Heights Community Development & Training Corporation, the Retail Village actively engages in the identification and support of emerging local entrepreneurs. This collaborative effort ensures that individuals with ideas but limited resources receive the training and resources necessary to open their own shops.

4. Workforce Programming and Job Creation: The Retail Village contributes to job creation by actively participating in workforce programming offered through the Department of Employment Service. Of the roughly 100 jobs created at Sycamore & Oak over its operations in 2023, 60 were performed by residents who participated in these workforce programs. This direct link between the Retail Village and workforce development enhances employment opportunities for people of color in the local community.

5. Rec for ALL Community Grant: The support from the Department of Parks and Recreation through the Rec for ALL Community Grant further exemplifies the commitment to creating opportunities for all community members, including those from marginalized communities. This grant supports bringing recreation to nontraditional spaces, contributing to a holistic approach that extends beyond job opportunities to include community well-being.

6. Minority Contracting: the construction of the retail village was led by a District-based, Black-owned general contractor. The various trades and subs were almost uniformly DBE firms. Sycamore & Oak has won an award from DOEE for its inclusionary contracting practices.

✓ **Water Conservation**

Rainwater Collection System:

- The building is equipped with a rainwater collection system integrated into the feature timber canopy. This system is strategically designed to capture rainwater and channel it for various purposes within the facility.
- The collected rainwater serves a dual purpose – not only as a sustainable water source for non-potable uses within the Retail Village but also as a means of minimizing runoff and promoting on-site water management.
- The feature timber canopy not only provides shade and protection from the elements but also serves as a tool for rainwater collection.
- Low flow water systems are installed throughout the project. High-pressure, low volume toilets reduce water used in flushing.

Sustainable Design Principles:

- The Retail Village has been designed with a commitment to sustainability, including the use of carefully selected sustainable materials. This approach extends to water conservation efforts, with an emphasis on reducing the environmental impact associated with water use.

✓ **Renewable Energy/Solar Panels**

The Retail Village at Sycamore & Oak has strategically implemented several measures to enhance energy efficiency, showcasing our commitment to sustainability in both design and construction. Notably, we are in the final stages of negotiations with Greenbank to assist with funding installation of photovoltaic panels on the canopy, marking a pivotal step towards harnessing solar power and utilizing renewable energy sources.

Our architectural design places a strong emphasis on energy conservation, incorporating high-efficiency glass, lighting, and thermal management systems. The wide-scale use of mass-timber construction underscores our dedication to environmentally conscious building practices.

Given the recent opening in 2023, and the unprecedented nature of the structure, specific results on energy efficiency are not yet available.

✓ **Awards/Certificates**

1. Forest Stewardship Council Leadership Award

FSC recognizes uncommon excellence that advances responsible forest management and forest conservation, contributing to the movement toward responsible sourcing and forest management.

2. District Sustainability Award

The District Sustainability Awards highlight businesses, individuals, and organizations that are working towards a more sustainable DC. Awardees' projects and programs support the Mayor's Sustainable DC Plan, which aims to make the District the nation's greenest, healthiest, most sustainable city; it encompasses equity, governance, education, built environment, climate, economy, energy, food, nature, transportation, waste, and water.

3. Washington Building Congress Craftsmanship Award

The 2024 Washington Building Congress Craftsmanship Awards are presented to projects and craftspeople for exemplary work in one or several of the key construction trades. Awards are made after a judging panel comprised of skilled tradespeople tour the site and review the work. These awards are the highest local honor in recognition of the highest standards of craftsmanship. Awards only given if merited. Some categories receive no award in a given year.