

BUSINESSES, RESIDENTS FLOW INTO CANAL PLACE

Ray Daudani, NBC12 News (www.nbc12.com)

Business is booming and so is development on Richmond's Canal Walk. This month a condo tower, restaurant and music venue are all opening their doors.

It's taken awhile for the Canal Walk to really take off, but now with residents moving into Vistas on the James and two new restaurants opening their doors, the action's really starting to pick up.

The glass-and-brick tower of Vistas on the James looms 18 stories over the Canal Walk and 14th Street. Starting next week, residents will begin to call this building home.

"It's been a long and tedious road, but we're getting to the point now where all the finishing touches are going in, and getting a lot of positive feedback from the community," said Anthony Miller of Vistas on the James.

Residents praise the condominium's location, sandwiched between the James River and the Canal Walk.

"Most of them are impressed by the views and the location," Miller said. "Once we get up in the units, they're kind of blown away about how great the views are in the upper units."

Across the canal, Toad's Place opened its doors Thursday night as Richmond's newest concert venue.

A short walk down the canal to 10th Street leads to Riverside on the James, where the BlackFinn restaurant opened its doors last week and served lunch for the first time this afternoon. The restaurant sits in Riverside on the James, another condo building already populated on the canal.

"We have a 100 and some condos there that they are wearing out our phones with to-go orders already," said Gregg McConnell of the BlackFinn. "I'm looking forward to the Vistas opening too. I think that'll be a great customer base for us."

All the new businesses are turning the once quiet Canal Walk into a very lively spot.

"I've been here for almost three months and the Canal Walk is just a constant flow of families and runners and all kinds of traffic," McConnell said.

The residents at Vistas on the James will start moving into the first three residential floors next week, with the other floors to follow.

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Story Created: Jun 22, 2007 at 8:16 AM EDT

Story Updated: Jun 25, 2007 at 6:13 AM EDT