

## **Events DC Unveils First Round of Renderings for New Entertainment and Sports Arena in Congress Heights Neighborhood of Washington, DC**

(Washington, DC) – September 23, 2016 – Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia, revealed on Thursday evening, the first round of renderings for the new Entertainment and Sports Arena in the Congress Heights neighborhood of Washington, DC. The initial design renderings for the Arena project were led by joint venture of architectural firms, Washington, DC-based Marshall Moya Design and international sports design firm, ROSSETTI. Acting as an economic catalyst to help transform an under-recognized area of DC, the new Arena will serve to integrate the community and professional sports to create a new sports and entertainment district within the city.

“When we first set forth on the Entertainment and Sports Arena project with our partners, Events DC committed to Washington, DC that we wouldn’t just build a new arena, but a world-class sporting and entertainment venue that was built for and alongside the local DC community. Today is another step forward in that effort and we appreciate the feedback from our local DC residents,” said Max Brown, chairman of the Board of Directors for Events DC. “We also continue to be steadfast on delivering jobs to the local community and meeting a 50-percent minority business goal, the most ever on a DC public project and I, personally remain unwavering and accountable to exceeding these targets. Our city deserves an arena that is iconic and this project will fulfill that vision. The Entertainment and Sports Arena is designed to celebrate and strengthen the historic Congress Heights neighborhood as well as provide an unmatched attendee experience.”

Operated by Events DC, the 4,200-seat arena will act as more than a professional basketball arena and training facility, but as a multi-functional, flexible space that combines sports, entertainment and community programming with neighborhood-serving resources. The Arena design will be built to incorporate community-centric elements from the ground up that include innovative space planning and programming elements.

“As the official convention and sports authority for the District, Events DC is thrilled to reveal the initial design renderings for the new Entertainment and Sports Arena, a project that will transform the Congress Heights neighborhood and greater Washington, DC region,” said Gregory A. O’Dell, president and chief executive officer of Events DC. “We applaud our partners, joint venture of architectural firms, Washington, DC-based Marshall Moya Design and ROSSETTI for developing a design that achieves so many goals: re-imagining an underserved area of the city and creating an iconic civic space that will celebrate the best of this community’s great past and even brighter future. This initial design demonstrates that this Arena will not only create an amazing experience for everyone who steps foot in and around the facility but will stage first-class amenities to support and celebrate our local athletes. We will continue our efforts with the team to progress the designs and get critical input from the community.”

The public-private partnership with a professional sports franchise, Monumental Sports & Entertainment increased the need for a design to be highly functional for a variety of activities. Innovative programming ideas were used to achieve this balance through a split-bowl design that enables a very intimate viewing experience for non-basketball programming such as

entertainment and concerts with seats that are closer in proximity to the stage. In addition to basketball, the Arena can also be used for boxing, e-sports and concerts.

The design solution is based on the creation of two distinct buildings that feature basketball training activities and an entertainment arena at the core of the building. The concourse and lobby areas, located along the perimeter of the building, will be used for special events and community programming, such as art, local food production and gallery space. Additional elements include exterior facing retail tenant bays that will deliver community-serving resources and create the ability for tenants to remain open when the Arena is not operational.

“The most exciting aspects of this project are also the most challenging for the design team,” said Tony Reiner, Design Lead at ROSSETTI. “We had to be very strategic in order to design welcoming spaces for the community while integrating the private spaces that professional basketball players require. We were also careful to reflect the context of the building’s environment and imagine how the building will evolve under Events DC’s operation for future uses.”

The building program is unified under an undulating roof articulation that also functions to break down the volume of the building into a more human scale. The design also relates to the adjacent Gateway DC pavilion with its impactful roof. The materiality of the historic buildings will be used for the building’s common spaces to create a united thread to its environment on the greater St. Elizabeths Campus. The sloping topography of the site allowed the bowl to sink into the earth and rest on grade, reducing costs and the scale of the building within its environment.

The overall design aesthetic aligns with the classic built environment of Washington DC. The design team deconstructed the elements of ‘classic’ to their most impactful form to create the volume for community activation with welcoming space that opens to the outside.

“As a native Washingtonian, I am personally excited that the Congress Heights neighborhood and the adjacent parts of our city east of the Anacostia will finally receive a catalytic project that will enhance the economic development of their community. We look forward to our partnership with the Congress Heights neighborhood,” said Michael Marshall, Design Director and Principal, Marshall Moya Design.

Located on the St. Elizabeths East Campus, the Arena will serve as the first WNBA-dedicated facility in the league. This further showcases Washington, DC’s commitment to its professional sports teams and provides a great example and avenue for enhancing women’s opportunities with a state-of-the-art venue and training facility. The Washington Wizards training facility will be situated in a distinct space within the greater arena and designed as a best-in-class facility that offers amenities inclusive of sports training to meet NBA standards and drive future recruitment opportunities. Basketball programming will include two practice courts, a kitchen, hydrotherapy and domesticated environments such as lounges to encourage pre- and post-training camaraderie, respite and recovery.

The joint venture, announced in the fall of 2015 is expected to attract more than hundreds of thousands of new residents and visitors per year to Congress Heights and generate hundreds of

construction and permanent jobs for both the arena and Phase I infrastructure of the St. Elizabeths East Campus redevelopment. This project will be a catalyst for new opportunities in Ward 8 and citywide to create a new destination within the District for residents and visitors to enjoy. Upon completion, Events DC will be responsible for the operation of the arena. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2017 with completion in the fall of 2018.

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#### ABOUT EVENTS DC

Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia, deliver premier event services and flexible venues across the nation's capital. Leveraging the power of a world-class destination and creating amazing attendee experiences, Events DC generates economic and community benefits through the attraction and promotion of business, athletic, entertainment and cultural activities. Events DC oversees the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, an anc