

After eight years away, Old Navy will return



Rendering provided

Old Navy is returning to DeKalb and will occupy the former Barnes & Noble site at 2439 Sycamore Road in the Oakland Place shopping center

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DeKALB – After eight years away, Old Navy is returning to DeKalb, and will make its home at the former Barnes & Noble site at 2439 Sycamore Road in the Oakland Place shopping center.

“We are certainly very excited about this,” said Paul Shand, director of retail properties with Mid-America Management Corporation based in Cleveland, Ohio. “We have been working on that lease for about a year now. I think Old Navy knew it was a good market for them, they performed well when they were here. It made sense for them to add a store in a market they’d already known and was proven it was the best shopping center in the market.”

Shand said the lease will begin in the summer, and Old Navy plans to open its doors about back-to-school season.

“Certainly before the holiday season, but their target is to be around [for] back to school,” Shand said.

Old Navy’s former location was

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Steps to Improve and Maintain Your Heart Health

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Changes in diet, exercise, and lifestyle habits can be challenging. But often, once you start, those changes become healthy habits which turn into daily routine. Heart disease is the number one cause of death in men and women in the United States, but many of these diseases and their unfortunate effects can be prevented by taking certain precautions. Undergoing large-scale changes may not be feasible right away, so instead, smaller adjustments can serve as a great starting point to build off of.

Here are several steps to begin improving your heart – and overall – health immediately.

1. **Enjoy a short walk.** If you exercise regularly, great! For those who don't, going on a 10 to 15-minute walk every day is a good way to start building your cardiovascular strength.
2. **Eat one more fruit or vegetable daily.** No matter the time of day, fruits or vegetables make for a healthy snack, stave off bad cravings, and are overall very good for you. Adding just one more daily serving can greatly improve your diet.

3. **Deep breathing or meditation.** Take a few minutes out of your day to breathe slowly and deeply, or practice meditation. This can help you relax, and studies have shown it to help with blood pressure.

4. **Cut the sugar.** Carrying a few extra pounds increases your risk of heart disease. Eliminating just one soda or sugar-filled snack per day can cut hundreds of calories from your daily diet. Over time, this helps significantly with weight loss.

5. **Get proper rest.** Research has shown that not getting enough sleep can increase your blood pressure and slow down your metabolism. These can become contributing factors to heart-related, and other diseases.

These are just a few simple steps that you can begin doing today to help start a healthy daily process that will improve your heart's health. Putting little things like this into practice can serve as a foundation to build from, so that any future, or larger changes to your diet or lifestyle won't be as difficult. For more information and to learn how an assisted living community can help with specific diet and exercise programs to promote heart-healthy living, visit our website or call 815-787-6500.

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between Michael's and T.J. Maxx. The store left in February 2012, after 10 years at that location inside the Oakland Place shopping center. The former Old Navy site has been divided into two spaces and now houses Five Below and DSW.

Dan Olson, principal planner for the city of DeKalb, said Old Navy will not have to go through the city's Planning and Zoning Commission since the space already is zoned for commercial use.

He said they've applied for a building permit that has not yet been approved.

Shand said the former Barnes & Noble, which closed in 2014 and has since been temporary Halloween stores, will be divided into two separate spaces to lease, Old Navy will use 12,500 square feet of it for its store, and then Mid-America will look to lease the remaining 7,000 square feet to another retailer.

Old Navy's former space in

DeKalb was almost twice that size at 20,000 square feet, Shand said.

"Old Navy will have a new storefront, so it won't look like Barnes & Noble anymore," he said.

The Oakland Place Shopping Center is losing Pier 1 Imports and Hallmark at the end of the month, but Shand said he's hopeful for the future of the strip mall, which Mid-America has owned since October 2004.

The shopping and eatery options along both side of Sycamore Road have changed over the years, as big box stores struggle under the weight and popularity of online shopping giants such as Amazon. In July, international grocer ALDI moved across the street to a new location at 2540 Sycamore Road in Northland Plaza (it owns its now vacant former space next to Target). Baton Rouge-based Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers will build its own space on the land once used by Applebee's, 2411

Sycamore Road.

Shand said contrary to popular belief, statistics from the U.S Census Bureau and the International Council of Shopping Centers show people still are going out to shop more than they're shopping online.

From 2014 to 2019, e-commerce shopping grew from \$210 billion to \$369 billion, but online shopping still only equates to 10% of total retail dollars spent in the country, he said.

"Our goal for this strip mall is to be the best in class shopping center in this shopping corridor," Shand said. "We are seeing that with the

tenant mix we're focused on here. From DSW to Five Below to T.J. Maxx and adding more soft goods retail. It's certainly a different environment than when we acquired it, definitely has its challenges, but those best-in-class retailers are what really keeps this relevant and keeps the center full."

Shand said Pier 1 and Hallmark will be placed back on the leasing market as soon as they're emptied. Mid-America does not own the Target property or the former ALDI grocer in the strip, but owns from Target to the Certified Phone Repair, 2331 Sycamore Road.



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