



Downtown Berkeley Positive Change

February 6, 2023

14 New Trees in University Avenue Median



After years of encouragement from the Downtown Berkeley Association and Councilmember Kate Harrison, the City of Berkeley has planted 14 new trees in the University Avenue median from Bonita to Shattuck Ave, complementing the University Ave trees planted several years ago between Shattuck and Oxford. The trees are deciduous Chisos Red Oak, that soon well be sprouting new growth and will have nice color in the fall as well. The ceramic bowls with succulents the DBA placed on median roughly eight years ago, and act as nice greenery and punctuation between the tree wells. A big shout out to the Department of Public Works for digging the new tree wells; and the Urban Forestry Unit of the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department for sourcing and planting the new trees. It will take a few years, but University Ave will soon have a green canopy of trees greeting visitors and residents to the Downtown.

Bioneers Conference Coming to Downtown Berkeley



Now in its 34th year, the [Bioneers Conference](https://conference.bioneers.org), viewed by many as the leading independent environmental and social-justice themed annual gathering in the U.S., is coming to Downtown Berkeley, Thursday April 6 thru Saturday April 8, bringing thousands of engaged and civically active visitors to our Downtown. Ground central is the David Brower Center on Allston Way, including the closure of Allston between Shattuck & Oxford for exhibits, art, and entertainment. And the new [Residence Inn Berkeley](https://www.residenceinn.com/berkeley) is the official hotel, with the Hotel Shattuck Plaza being another option for overnight guests. Plenary sessions will be held at Zellerbach Hall on campus, with follow-on sessions scattered at various venues throughout the Downtown. We are working with Bioneers and Visit Berkeley to promote our Downtown restaurants and arts and entertainment venues. For more information and to register for the conference please visit conference.bioneers.org.

Shattuck Ave Library Mini-Plaza



On November 22, the DBA hosted a Coffee Celebration with Public Library staff, Public Works Department, Urban Forestry Unit, Kate Harrison’s office, and Downtown Ambassadors for the completion of the Library Mini-Plaza project on Shattuck at Kittredge. This project not only beautified the plaza with new benches, planters and trees, but also changed the dynamic thus discouraging encampments. A big thank you to our partners on this joint project co-funded by: the Library (50%); DBA (25%) (including planter installation); and City (25%) (including demolition of old benches and installation of new benches). The new planters were entirely funded by the Library. Please enjoy!

MIXT is Coming to BART Plaza



[MIXT](#) will be opening in late April in the Skydeck Building on BART Plaza (in the space previously occupied by Paris Baguette). San Francisco born MIXT is a certified B Corp supporting clean living and environmental sustainability. Berkeley will be their 18th store in Bay Area, California and beyond, featuring “delicious food that makes you feel good”, including combination of design-your-own salads, grain bowls and sandwiches. MIXT is also improving the space with new interior design, entrance facing BART Plaza, and sidewalk seating along their store frontage. The DBA will also be adding new bistro tables and chairs and shade elements in the Plaza to accommodate customers from MIXT, Coffee Hut, Almare Gelato, Ike’s, and Sliver—as well as the general public—to enjoy the heart of our Downtown!

Planters, Planters, Planters!



With the support of property owners, merchants and the City, the DBA has been deploying “self-watering” [Earthplanter Metropolitan Planters](#) throughout the Downtown, on upper Center Street, along Shattuck between Center and University, on Shattuck at the Library (see above story), and now on Shattuck at Blake and Dwight at the south end of the district. These textured planters are not only handsome and durable, but have 30-gallon water reservoir that efficiently wicks water to the plants over days and weeks, and saves hundreds of gallons of water over a season, and many watering trips. They are planted with drought tolerant plants that do not require much water also. Please reach out to us if you would like to explore these planters in front of or near your building!