



Downtown Berkeley Positive Change

May 1, 2025

New Retail Coming to Downtown Berkeley



Several new restaurants have recently signed leases to open in Downtown Berkeley, including Shake Shack, Spyglass Coffee, and Palmetto Foods on University Ave. just west of Oxford, and Mendocino Farms on Shattuck at Hearst.



Also, on the

corners of Milvia and University, Sobo Ramen, Café Torino, and another café are all slated to open soon! Other new venues include Mercatino Neighborhood Market, Baron Art Tattoo Studio, The Original Mels Express.



SOBO RAMEN



Living in Downtown Berkeley Marketing Campaign

The DBA launched the [Living in Downtown Berkeley](#) campaign in early April, designed to showcase the vibrant, diverse, and convenient lifestyle available in Downtown Berkeley. Whether you're a UC Berkeley student or a young professional, this campaign highlights the best rental properties in the heart of the city, offering everything from luxury student housing to modern apartments. With over 30 properties available, there is a perfect home for everyone.



Through engaging digital content, virtual tours, and an exciting live *Welcome Home Event* during UC Move-In week, the campaign brings together the community, local businesses, and city services to

create a dynamic, welcoming experience for new residents. From stylish studios to spacious apartments, Downtown Berkeley is the ideal place to live, work, and connect with neighbors.

BART Plaza sports New Seating, Shade Sails, Hanging Baskets



As part of our Annual Refresh after the winter rains, the DBA has deployed new colorful tables and chairs, shades sails, and hanging baskets in BART Plaza. The sturdy new seating is less likely to walk off, and brightens the plaza, while we also continue with the Plaza Patio for customers of the **Coffee Hut** and other BART Plaza venues. There is plenty of additional seating for those who bring their own food or just there to rest, read the paper, or people watch. Also, stop by **Cal Flower** kiosk and consider a bouquet or plant for home or office. And then enjoy [Jazz-ish Lunches](#) every Thursday this May at 12noon.

Civic Center Park Cleared of Encampments



As reported in [BerkeleyScanner](#) and [Berkeleyside](#), Civic Center Park was finally cleared of all encampments and fenced off on April 10. This was due to concerns from BHS parents, DBA and other nonprofits and other community members; AND the extraordinary efforts of the City Homeless Response Team, and the DBA's Homeless Outreach Specialist (who has freed seven persons from the streets in the past month). The net result is a drop to 23 homeless persons in the Downtown, down from a high of 104 in early winter last year. This is an all-time low since we started counting unhouse persons in our Downtown in January 2020. We are in discussion with the City, of how and when to reopen the Park—with a community celebration—after renovations are completed later this summer, as well as future enforcement to prevent return of the prior encampments.

Annual Meeting to feature Mayor Ishii & DBA Strategic Plan



The DBA Annual Meeting will be held Wednesday May 14, 5-7pm, at the David Brower Center. The meeting will start off with an hour of refreshments and networking with other Downtown stakeholders. Then around 6pm the meeting will feature DBA update, followed by [Mayor Adena Ishii's](#) first State of the City/Downtown address. We will then hear from [Brad Segal](#), consultant with Progressive Urban Mgmt Associates (PUMA), re downtown global trends and the DBA 2027 Strategic Plan and PBID Renewal. If you have not already done so, please RSVP to info@downtownberkeley.com if you plan to attend.