

UPTOWN &

News on Oakland's Expanding Uptown and Downtown Districts

DOWNTOWN

A close-up photograph of a metal surface, likely a manhole cover, featuring a grid of circular holes. The word "OAKLAND" is embossed in a curved path at the bottom, and "CALIF" is embossed vertically on the right side. A small star is also visible near the bottom right.

THE JOURNEY IS THE REWARD

Changing Oakland's
Dynamic Districts

FALL/WINTER 2010



THE JOURNEY IS THE REWARD

Marco Li Mandri, Executive Director

From the outset, we have believed without question that our CBD's could and would help "turn the supertanker" known as the City of Oakland. We have all made great strides in the journey to set our city on a new course.

In the summer of 2007, property owners came to realize it was time to act in Uptown and Downtown Oakland. By July 2008 we had formed two "Community Benefit Districts", or CBDs, to fund special services that were much needed throughout both Districts.

Next, two separate non-profit public benefit corporations were set in place to provide a "governance model" for delivering services. Service providers were engaged to cover administration, security, and cleaning when full services began in February of 2009.

The third phase was establishing the machinery -- productive and functioning Boards of Directors and committee structures. They debated the merits of, and vetted, the various benefits the districts wanted. Many cities have lost this art of governing. Our CBD Boards are vital to creating "results oriented" projects.

A great example: when the recent Mehserle verdict wreaked havoc on Downtown and Lake Merritt/Uptown, within 24 hours our Ambassadors had removed all of the graffiti on walls and swept up all of the broken glass. Normalcy was re-established by the following morning. This would have been highly unlikely in the pre-CBD environment.

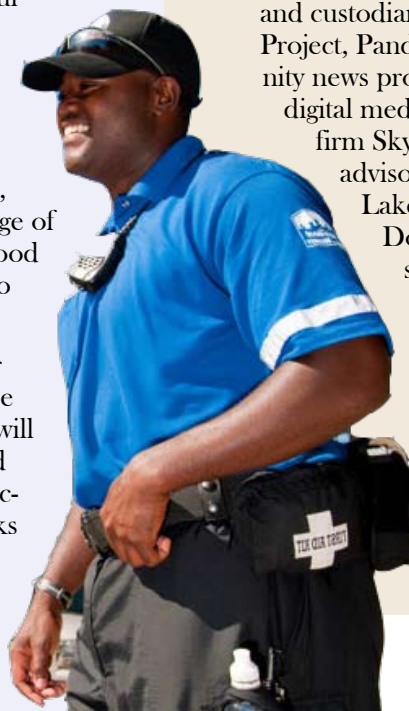
We continue to stabilize our areas, halt petty crime, sweep and clean the sidewalks and create a safer community within the public rights of way on a daily basis. For the most part we have succeeded, although we still

have 'hot spots'. But, overall, even the intersections and corners that traditionally create the most problems have, in the past 18 months, become safer places.

Just about all of our efforts thus far have been defensive but we are moving to offense in 2011.

You'll see new initiatives for business attraction and a concerted effort to fill vacant buildings. Beautification efforts will include the landscaping of street medians and installation of hanging plants. New public spaces will be designed and created along 13th Street, Latham Square, the 17th Street BART station entrance, and Franklin Square. We'll fix timeless assets such as the historic clock at 17th and Broadway and refurbish the Latham Square fountain. We'll add pedestrian signage and make our websites more dynamic and user friendly. We also have plans for a retail/restaurant program to bring new attention to the vast number of new businesses opening in the Districts. We'll be wooing more of the new generation high tech incubating businesses that are redefining the character of our Districts and, most importantly, we'll continue re-building the image of Downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt/Uptown as good places in which to own property and a better place to live, work and play.

Good offense and good defense are critical to our success. Our tasks are clear and time is short. By the time we enter 2012, we expect that the economy in will show even stronger signs, along with new growth and vitality. In the meantime, join us in a sense of real accomplishment as we now walk the beautiful sidewalks of Uptown and Downtown Oakland.



Bank of America \$20,000 Grant Expands Oakland Ambassador Program

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation recently donated \$20,000 to help expand Oakland's ambassador program. The donation was matched by the Downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt Districts to help fund a hospitality internship program projected to employ at least nine employees in two ten week programs for a total of 2,000 hours.

The new hospitality intern ambassadors will help greet visitors and pass out bus maps for the new free Broadway shuttle that operates free to the public on weekdays now.

The new internship program is an extension of the ambassador program that was launched in March 2009 by the Oakland and Lake Merritt Community Benefit Districts that initially employed 20 maintenance and safety ambassadors. The program has grown to 25 full time positions and continues to be an integral part in improving Downtown and Uptown Oakland.

did you know

Ambassador Assistance by the Numbers (2009 & 2010)

Downtown Oakland

Trash bag count - 2,848 lbs.
Pounds of Litter - 56,960 lbs
Graffiti Abatement - 1,211 instances
Power Washing - 63,000 Gals.

Lake Merritt Uptown Oakland

Trash bag count - 5,096 lbs.
Pounds of Litter - 87,876 lbs.
Graffiti Abatement - 605 instances
Power Washing - 54,000 Gals.



happening

TECH FIRMS? IN OAKLAND? You'd be surprised.

July 16th saw the birth of Innovate Oakland, a.k.a. INOAK. INOAK was created to strengthen and expand the city's burgeoning new media and technology sector.



Founding members include automated music recommendation service and custodian of the Music Genome Project, Pandora; web-based community news provider Oakland Local, digital media performance software firm Skytide and venture/brand advisory firm North. Both the Lake Merritt-Uptown and Downtown Oakland Associations are supporting INOAK and we hope you will too.

The group's first networking event took place at Levende East restaurant on Washington Street on July

16th and the second event took place at the Den at the Fox Theatre on August 19th. Both events had a very good crowd and we hope to see even more people at the next event, to be held October 7th on the Rooftop Garden of the Kaiser Center. Come along, meet fellow businesspeople and entrepreneurs working in Oakland, network, share best practices and support innovation in Oakland.

More information: www.inoak.org or www.facebook.com/innovateoak

IT'S A BIRD...IT'S A PLANE...NO, IT'S A PROJECT BANDALOOP!

If you noticed people hanging off of Oakland's "Great Wall" last month, then you're not alone.

In August the world-renowned aerial dance group Project Bandaloop began open rehearsals on the "Great Wall" of 2201 Broadway to begin preparation for the group's upcoming performances in Orange County and Dallas.

Inspired by the possibilities of climbing and rappelling, Project Bandaloop's choreography draws on aerial, vertical and horizontal movement to craft dances that have now been seen by close to half a million people since the group's inception in 1991.

Find out more about Project Bandaloop at www.projectbandaloop.org

FREE BROADWAY SHUTTLE LAUNCHES IN DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

The new Broadway Shuttle officially launched the beginning of August and now operates FREE to the public weekdays from 7am to 7pm.

Nicknamed the "B," the shuttle runs along Broadway between Jack London Square and Grand Avenue and uses three 30-foot buses to provide a convenient opportunity for workers, residents, and visitors to explore Oakland's thriving commercial neighborhoods.

Capital Opportunities

Yes, times are tough, but the City of Oakland still offers grants and funding for a variety of local businesses, including owners of commercial property. Here are some you might be able to use:

BUILDING OWNERS

Facade Improvement: Does the exterior of your building need some TLC? The Downtown Façade Improvement Program offers up to \$20,000 in matching grants to property and business owners needing to remodel and improve the exterior of their properties.

Tenant Improvement Program: Buildings in the Downtown Redevelopment Project area with space that has lain vacant for more than six months but has interest from a tenant can qualify for matching grants for interior improvements.

Contact: Brian Kendall 510.238.7403

ENTREPRENEURS

Business Loans: The Oakland Business Development Corporation handles business loans up to \$249,500 and may be able to help entrepreneurs who don't qualify for traditional bank financing.

Tax Credits: If you locate your business in the Oakland Enterprise Zone, which includes most of Downtown and Uptown, you may qualify for dollar-for-dollar tax credits to offset California state income taxes. The largest single credit is the Enterprise Zone Hiring Credit, which totals up to \$37,440 per qualified employee over a five-year period.

More information:

www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/CEDA/Index.html



BUILDING OWNERS: HELP US TO HELP YOU.

Several owners of smaller commercial buildings in both the Lake Merritt-Uptown and Downtown districts have told us recently about space available in their buildings. We're looking into several resources that might be useful to them in marketing that space. Meanwhile, we'd like to profile buildings in the districts on the website. If you'd like to have your building included please contact:

Nancy Amaral of Gallen.Neilly at Nancy@gallen.com.

NEW BUSINESSES

Cyark: Archeologist, inventor, and digital preservationist Ben Kacyra and his company move to 2201 Broadway

Ben Kacyra is responsible for developing a revolutionary laser-mapping device that scans three-dimensional objects into digital blueprints within a few millimeters. What does this mean? It means that Cyark can digitally preserve cultural heritage sites like Peru's Machu Picchu or Israel's Dome of the Rock because unlike cultural artifacts safely housed in museums, cultural heritage sites are constantly at risk due to erosion, natural disasters, and human aggression. Once blueprints for these ancient wonders have been calculated they are stored in a digital file making it possible to re-create these edifices to scale for future generations. Cyark was previously located in Orinda.

www.cyark.org

Cubic Transportation Systems moves to 1000 Broadway

Based in San Diego, Cubic designs installs and operates revenue management systems for mass transit agencies around the world and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) is one of the company's major U.S. customers. Cubic chose Oakland for its second NorCal location because of the city's central location within the BART system. Cubic operates and maintains BART's ticket systems, gates and smart card readers as well as providing processing and revenue reporting systems. cts.cubic.com

UPTOWN & DOWNTOWN

Fall 2010

Downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt-Uptown District Association
388 19th St. Oakland, CA 94612

Marco Li Mandri, Executive Director

Steve Snider, District Manager

Masumi Matsumoto,
Designer | m-matsumoto.com

Gallen.Neilly & Associates,
Media Consultant | www.gallen.com

Photocredits

Cover: Chad Ziemendorf

Inside: Chad Ziemendorf

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www.downtownoakland.org

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