



City of
OAKLAND
California

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**City of Oakland hosts more than 75 workshops,
events during Small Business Week**

Oakland, CA – To nurture small businesses while celebrating the vital role they play in our local economy, Oakland entrepreneurs and business owners are invited to attend **more than 75 free workshops, seminars and events** during Oakland Small Business Week, April 29 to May 5. The full roster is posted at oaklandnet.com/sbw.

The City of Oakland, with support from presenting partner Main Street Launch, designed Small Business Week activities to help Oakland's diverse business community thrive. Participants may choose from sessions **at Oakland City Hall or join neighborhood workshops** in Chinatown, Dimond, Downtown, Elmhurst, Fruitvale, Havenscourt, Rockridge and West Oakland. Topics range from tools for startups and digital marketing to how to access capital to contracting and procurement opportunities.

“Keeping our long-rooted businesses thriving in the changing economy is vital to maintaining the character of Oakland,” said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “I’m pleased to be part of Sunday’s reception when we honor seven family-owned businesses that have prospered for over 25 years and helped make Oakland a special place to live, to do business and to recreate.”

While some small businesses are startups or young companies, others are long-established firms. Across all industry sectors, small businesses are the helping to fuel Oakland’s economic growth.

“Small businesses are essential to our local economy,” said Mark Sawicki, the City’s Director of Economic & Workforce Development. “Given that 92 percent of Oakland businesses employ 20 or fewer people, we are investing in small business retention and expansion to grow job opportunities for all Oaklanders and expand our local economy in an equitable manner.”

Throughout Small Business Week, participants are encouraged to **stop by the Business Assistance Center** – next to City Hall at 270 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza – for refreshments, resources and networking or to speak to a small business advisor. The center will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Neighborhood Workshops

In addition to the scores of workshops at City Hall, the number of neighborhood workshops has increased this year to seven.

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In **Elmhurst**, **Changing Demographics** and **Access to Capital** workshops, presented in English with simultaneous interpretation in Spanish, will be held at the Radisson Oakland Airport starting at 2:30 p.m. on **Tuesday**, May 1. Recognizing the changes in demographics, the first interactive panel will offer insight into adapting to appeal to our expanding customer base. Then a panel of Oakland business owners, with representatives from Acumen Building Enterprises, Lena's Soul Food Café and Artesanias Y Botanica Del Sol, will offer insight as they share their loan process experiences.

On **Wednesday**, May 2, the **Dimond** Branch Library will be the site of two Small Business Week workshops beginning at 2:15 p.m. The **Access to Capital** workshop is for small business owners who have been in business for about a year, and are ready to grow and create jobs. Then a **Sales Strategy** workshop provides tips on cold calling and ideas for closing more sales with less effort. Both workshops will be presented in English with simultaneous interpretation in Spanish.

Also on **Wednesday** afternoon, several workshops will be offered at the **Fruitvale**-San Antonio Senior Center in Spanish, Vietnamese and English starting at 4 p.m. Participants will learn how to **develop a business plan**, the **four pillars of success for restaurants**, how to attract more customers and increase sales with **visual merchandising**, guidance on **asset protection** for immigrant business owners and **boosting sales** through social media and online visibility. This series of workshops was organized by LISC and the Anew America BRT Business Sustainability Program.

Access to Capital and Social Media Made Easy Workshops will be held at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center in **Chinatown** on **Thursday**, May 3, from 9 a.m. to noon. Presented in English and Cantonese, the access to capital workshop introduces entrepreneurs to where and how to obtain small business financing. After a short break, there's a session, in both languages, on establishing an online presence and using social media to grow your businesses. Julie Clowes, Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration's San Francisco District Office, and a representative from the Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce will also make presentations.

Starting at 3 p.m. on **Thursday** afternoon, Mills College will be the site for workshops in the **Havenscourt** neighborhood. Presented in English with simultaneous Spanish translation, the first workshop provides an overview on the components of a **successful business plan** and **access to financing**. Then, a panel of service providers reviews financing tools and resources available for businesses at different stages of growth, with a special focus on what's available for businesses located in East Oakland. The panel will include representatives from Kiva Oakland, SparkPoint Center, OCCUR - Heartlands Merchants Association, Start Small Think Big, Mason Tillman Associates' BRT Business Sustainability Program and the Healthy Havenscourt Initiative.

Neighborhood sessions continue **Saturday** morning at the **Rockridge** Branch Library with a 10 a.m. workshop on how to use **social media**, **blogging** and **DIY Media** to tell your business story. The workshop presenter is Oakland's Local Food Adventures.

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Small Business Week wraps up **Saturday** afternoon with a pair of panel discussions at the **West Oakland Senior Center** on trends in the **craft food and beverage industry**. Presented in English with simultaneous Spanish interpretation, the first panel will be on craft beverages (i.e., wine, beer, spirits, coffee, tea, etc.), while the second focuses on cottage food and catering industries. Panel participants include Denis Ring, OCHO Candy founder; Ikeena Hardman from Keena's Kitchen; Industry Coffee's Erin La Ninfa; Tara Christina from Tara's Teas and Mandela MarketPlace's Mariela Cedeño.

This push to add more neighborhood sessions was spurred in part by the [Economic Development Strategy](#) (2018-2020) adopted by Oakland City Council in November 2017. The Strategy sets immediate priorities and prioritizes long-term planning and investment to make Oakland an easy, efficient, prosperous and resilient place to do business, and to reduce racial disparities and help all Oaklanders achieve economic security so that everyone has an opportunity to thrive.

Small Business Celebrations

While the main focus of Small Business Week remains educational, there are four public events celebrating small businesses.

On **Sunday**, April 29, the City of Oakland will celebrate family-owned legacy businesses at a reception in City Hall at 4 p.m. followed by an awards ceremony at 5 p.m. in Council Chamber. At the **Oakland Family Legacy Business Awards**, seven family-owned business that have operated in Oakland for over 25 years will receive a plaque from Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. Combined, these companies have more than 300 years of business experience. They have persevered while being leaders in their industries and contributing positively to the community. The honorees are:

- The Allen Group (29 years)
- The Fortune Cookie Factory (61 years)
- GM Associates, Inc. (44 years)
- Guadalajara Restaurant Group (30 years)
- Montclair Sports (41 years)
- Quality Tech Automotive Group (42 years)
- Reed Brothers Security (62 years)

At the awards ceremony, Julie Clowes, Director of the San Francisco District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration, will make remarks on the importance of small business and Barbara Leslie, President & CEO of the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, will serve as emcee.

A Resolution before the Oakland City Council on **Tuesday**, May 1, will recognize April 29 to May 5, 2018, as Oakland Small Business Week. In the **Resolution, each Councilmember and Mayor Libby Schaaf honors an Oakland small business**. The honorees are:

- Piedmont Grocery - Councilmember Dan Kalb (District 1)
- George V. Arth & Son - President Pro Tempore Abel Guillén (District 2)
- Hodo Soy - Councilmember Lynette Gibson McElhaney (District 3)
- Laurel Ace Hardware - Vice Mayor Annie Campbell Washington (District 4)

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- La Loma Linda Medical Group Inc. - Councilmember Noel Gallo (District 5)
- Kay Chesterfield - Councilmember Desley Brooks (District 6)
- Aqua Fresh Seafood - Council President Larry Reid (District 7)
- Craft & Spoon - Councilmember At-Large Rebecca Kaplan
- The Lei Company Cooperative - Mayor Libby Schaaf

The ceremonial portion of the City Council agenda begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza. No advance registration is needed to attend the City Council meeting.

On **Wednesday**, May 2, Oakland's five chambers of commerce are hosting the **Oakland Multi-Cultural Chambers' Members of the Year Awards Reception** from 6 to 8 p.m. at Peony Restaurant, 388 9th Street, Suite 288. Honorees and their nominating chambers are:

- Geoffrey's Inner Circle - Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce
- Gateway Bank - Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce
- El Huarache Azteca Restaurant - Oakland Latino Chamber of Commerce
- FASTSIGNS - Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- Saigon Printing Inc. - Oakland Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce

Attendees will enjoy refreshments, network with others and enter a drawing for two pairs of roundtrip tickets on Southwest Airlines during this reception celebrating the vibrant diversity of Oakland's small business community.

Small Business Week joins with **Oakland First Fridays** – a free, five-block outdoor street festival in KONO with food, music and arts & craft vendors. At **Kiva Kurb**, revelers may browse the unique items offered by recipients of Kiva Oakland microloans and learn how they can help support Oakland's small businesses – and our local economy – by becoming a lender. Oakland First Fridays runs from 5 to 9 p.m. on Telegraph Avenue between Grand Avenue and 27th Street.

In addition to presenting partner Main Street Launch, Oakland Small Business Week activities are made possible with support from the Oakland A's, Pacific Gas and Electric, TMS Financing, Lane Partners, Matson Logistics, Mechanics Bank, Oakland Startup Network powered by the Kapor Center for Social Impact, Community Bank of the Bay, Fremont Bank, Wells Fargo, Western Regional Minority Supplier Development Council, 360 Total Concept, Cardenas Market, Clearinghouse CDFI, Jain Williams-State Farm Insurance, Lowney Architecture, Portfolio Development Properties and Riaz Capital.

Business owners interested in accessing the City's business support services year-round should contact the **Oakland Business Assistance Center** at (510) 238-7952 or visit OaklandBusinessCenter.com.

Entrepreneurs or business owners researching business locations can find out about business permit requirements and how much they will cost 24/7 using two recently launched online City apps at www.bit.ly/OAKBizPermit.

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