



For Immediate Release:  
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## **Shop Local on Plaid Friday and All Season Long**

*Oakland's holiday shopping season kicks off November 23 with Plaid Friday sales and activities, continues through December with fun family events and special offers*

Oakland, CA – Nearly 200 retailers, makers, restaurants and artists from Oakland will mark **Plaid Friday, November 23**, with lively entertainment, holiday decorations, sales, artisan pop-ups and lots of local love for shoppers. Shoppers can skip the stress of standing in lines to have fun, find great gifts and keep their money in Oakland supporting local businesses and bolstering the city's economy. The one-stop portal at [OaklandGrown.org](http://OaklandGrown.org) is packed with information on holiday sales, community events, inspiration guides, the #ShopOAKProud photo contest, online directories and a helpful concierge service.

“Oakland is full of unique shops to buy one-of-a-kind gifts all year round, and our Plaid Friday tradition serves as a wonderful reminder to make sure that residents and visitors, alike, take full advantage of all that our small business community has to offer during the holiday season,” said Mayor Libby Schaaf. “Our diverse local artists and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our local economy, so again we’re encouraging all Oaklanders to put their money where their heart is and support the businesses that invest so much in us.”

Plaid Friday marks the start of a season-long campaign to promote local shopping. Shoppers are encouraged to explore Oakland's shopping districts, discover the unique gift items offered by local retailers and experience a variety of special events through New Year's Eve. With the inclusion of places to shop, eat and have fun, Oaklanders have many options on where to spend their dollars locally. Check the Oakland Grown website throughout the holiday season as information is continuously updated.

Local businesses create a shopping experience unique to Oakland and capture the spirit and reflect the diversity of our community. As part of the promotion, Oakland residents are asked to put their money where their hearts are by shopping locally. This theme aims to capture the immense pride and affinity residents have for Oakland.

The newly launched [ShopOaklandNow.org](http://ShopOaklandNow.org) online small business directory helps Oaklanders find the boutiques, shops and makers offering one-of-a-kind holiday gifts. Main Street Launch has gathered information on 3,600 merchants throughout Oakland and continues to grow that number.

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## **Shop Local on Plaid Friday and All Season Long Page Two**

The **#ShopOAKProud Photo Contest**, sponsored by the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, starts on Plaid Friday and runs through noon on Friday, December 21. Post your holiday selfie taken at a local Oakland business and use the hashtags #ShopOAKproud and #OAKPROUDplaid in your posts to be entered to win two round-trip tickets to any published Southwest Airlines destination within the U.S.A. and Puerto Rico. Be sure to tag the Oakland business, too. A merry band of judges will review entries on the creative expression of Oakland's 2018 holiday season of "Sharing, Caring, and Giving" shopping experience and select a winner. Find the complete photo contest rules at <http://www.oaklandchamber.com/resource>.

Need gift ideas that are truly unique and meaningful? Know what you want to give, but stumped where to find the gift item in Oakland? The **free [Concierge Service](#)** offered by Oakland Grown will help you find one-of-a-kind items at a local, independent business. Launched for the 2017 holiday shopping season, the Concierge Service has proven so successful that the nonprofit has continued the service year-round.

A growing number of transportation options are available to help shoppers explore Oakland's commercial districts without the hassle of looking for street parking. Thanks to BART, AC Transit, the Ford GoBike bike share system, e-scooters, and ride-hailing and taxi services, shopping local is easier than ever.

For those who rely on automobiles, the City will encourage shoppers to explore Oakland's commercial districts by offering free off-street parking on Saturdays from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day as well as Plaid Friday (November 23).

### **Free Off-Street Parking Dates & Details**

On Friday, November 23; Saturday, November 24; Saturday, December 1; Saturday, December 8; Saturday, December 15; Saturday, December 22 and Saturday, December 29, the City of Oakland is offering free parking at four City-owned garages and five City-owned parking lots for the time-period posted on the meter, kiosk, or sign (30 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 4 hours or 5 hours).

### **Participating City-Owned Garages**

The holiday parking program will also offer free parking on the designated Saturdays and Plaid Friday at the following City-owned garages:

- Franklin Plaza Garage at 19th & Franklin streets
- Montclair Garage at 6235 LaSalle Avenue
- Dalziel Garage at 16th Street between San Pablo Avenue & Clay Street
- Lakeshore Avenue Garage on Wesley Way between Trestle Glen Road and Lake Park Avenue (free year-round, time limited)

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### **Participating City-Owned Lots**

The free holiday parking applies to the following City-owned lots on designated Saturdays and Plaid Friday:

- Grand Avenue Lot in the 3200 block of Grand Avenue
- LakePark Lot under I-580 between Grand and Lakeshore avenues
- Piedmont Avenue Lot on Howe Street between 40th and 41st streets
- Parkway Lot on Wayne Avenue near Park Boulevard and E. 18th Street
- Dimond Lot on Bienati Way between Dimond Avenue and Fruitvale Avenue (free year-round, time limited)

**Motorists should note and follow the maximum time limits posted; standard parking rules and time limits will be enforced.**

### **Why Shopping Locally is Important**

By choosing to shop at local businesses, you will enjoy a more distinctive and personal experience and help support Oakland businesses.

Shopping locally also helps strengthen Oakland's economy as your purchase supports jobs for your neighbors and sales tax revenue for the City of Oakland.

### **About Plaid Friday**

Now a national movement, Plaid Friday was founded in Oakland in 2008. Plaid Friday is the more relaxing, enjoyable and inspired local shopping alternative to the big box "Black Friday" experience. Plaid Friday celebrates our neighborhoods and the independent retailers and merchants who make Oakland a great place to live and shop. It is designed to promote the many social and economic benefits of spending time and dollars with local small businesses on the busiest shopping day of the year and all-season long.

The promotion to shop local during the holidays is a partnership between the City of Oakland's Economic & Workforce Development Department, Main Street Launch, Oakland Grown, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Visit Oakland and the *East Bay Express*.

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