



**Media Contact:**  
Erin Kilmer-Neel  
(510) 967-3126  
Hello@OaklandGrown.org  
www.OaklandGrown.org

Oakland Grown is a nonprofit program of the Sustainable Business Alliance.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Love Oakland? Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is.**

*New Oakland Gift Card Supports the Local Economy and Eases Holiday Gift Giving*

*Oakland, CA* — Just in time for the 2011 Holiday Season, the **Oakland Grown Gift Card** pilot project has been introduced. The gift card, available in amounts between \$20 and \$200, is accepted by multiple Oakland businesses and artists. It is fun, flexible, good for the local economy and an easy way for those who **Love Oakland** to put their money where their heart is.

Launched by Oakland Grown, with support from the City of Oakland, Sustainable Business Alliance, *East Bay Express*, and One PacificCoast Bank, the Oakland Grown Gift Card is part of the **Love Oakland campaign** which encourages holiday shoppers to take the economy into their own hands and recognize the power they have to rebuild our communities just by shifting where they shop. Communities find power in the fact that shopping with independent businesses keeps more money in the local community, leading to more local jobs. This isn't just theory; studies on the impact of shopping local and independent from Maine to San Francisco, Chicago to Texas, have found impressive numbers. A Civic Economics Study reports that 58% more of your dollar stays in the local community when spent with a local independent versus an out-of-town owned chain store.

“The new gift card and accompanying gift guide make it easy for everyone to shop Oakland this holiday season,” said Mayor Jean Quan. “Our 40 neighborhood shopping districts are both great places to find gifts and enjoy holiday dining, events and cultural attractions with family and friends.” Mayor Quan added that local purchases generate sales tax revenue that flows back into City’s General Fund, which pays for police, fire, libraries and public works in addition to programs that support at-risk youth, the homeless and low income residents.

The gift card acts like any debit card, but is only redeemable at participating independent Oakland businesses. It is a convenient alternative to the gift cards available from national retailers that offer cookie-cutter products. Give a gift card that recipients can use to make a truly unique, one-of-a-kind purchase. Beyond holiday gift giving, the Oakland Grown Gift Card makes an excellent client thank-you gift or incentive prize for your employees and customers.

(more)

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For the pilot launch, organizers have tapped the rich pool of locally owned restaurants, shops, service providers and boutiques offering everything from fine dining and fresh roasted coffee to clothing and housewares. Oakland Grown has estimated that Oakland residents will buy up to \$26 million worth of gift cards during the holiday season that get spent outside Oakland and at non-local chains. And over \$1 billion worth of retail shopping dollars is leaked out of Oakland each year as Oaklanders shop elsewhere. Re-capturing this money means more jobs, more money for libraries, parks, police, and other services. Imagine the positive impact on the local economy if folks give the Oakland Grown Gift Card and those dollars are retained locally to keep and create local jobs.

To see the roster of participating Oakland businesses and artists as well as details on purchasing a gift card, please visit [oaklandgrown.org](http://oaklandgrown.org). Shoppers are encouraged to visit [OaklandGrown.org](http://OaklandGrown.org) to find information on upcoming holiday events, sales, contests, gift guides, links to related articles and much more.

The Oakland Love campaign coincides with the **Shift Your Shopping** holiday campaign, the largest ever Buy Local campaign in North America. Representing over 38,000 locally owned and independent businesses across the U.S. and Canada, Shift Your Shopping will encourage residents and businesses to make a “Shift” by buying local and independent for the holiday season, November 1st to December 31st. The Shift Your Shopping campaign offers an easy and powerful way to boost the real economy, and preserve and create jobs in our local communities. For more information, visit [shiftyourshopping.org](http://shiftyourshopping.org).

Oakland Grown counts more than 250 local, independent businesses who have come together to raise awareness of the plethora of holiday shopping and gift options available in Oakland’s 40 neighborhood shopping districts ranging from well known areas like Rockridge, Temescal, Grand Lake, Piedmont Avenue, Montclair, Chinatown, Uptown and Fruitvale to increasing visible areas such as Koreatown/Northgate, Dimond, Laurel, International Boulevard, Glenview, Golden Gate, Adams Point and Millsmont.

With the Oakland Gift Card, gift givers can be proud that they are supporting Oakland’s economy and assured that the recipients will have many fun purchase choices.

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