



City of
OAKLAND
California

Media Contact:

Harry Hamilton
City Administrator's Office
(510) 238-2107
hhamilton@oaklandnet.com

News from: City of Oakland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2017

Free Walking Tours Offer Glimpse of Downtown Oakland's History, Current Renaissance

Oakland, CA – Downtown Oakland's ongoing renaissance has captured national media attention, with the Uptown District emerging as a premier arts and entertainment destination. In fact, Expedia Viewfinder recently ranked Oakland among the super cool U.S. cities to visit. Local residents and visitors can glimpse both today's happening scene and landmarks from Oakland's past during the 2017 Oakland Tours season.

Free 90-minute walking tours of downtown Oakland will be offered every Wednesday and Saturday through October. The twice weekly guided tours showcase the city's changing skyline, landmarks, churches and high-rises.

The six-month long tour season ensures ample opportunity to take in each of the eight different tour itineraries. Each tour, led by a volunteer guide, begins at 10 a.m. from various starting locations depending on the itinerary. Reservations are recommended by leaving a message on the Tours' 24-hour hotline at (510) 238-3234 or via email to aallen@oaklandnet.com. The tour brochure, itinerary descriptions, dates and starting locations are available at oaklandnet.com/walkingtours.

Tour 1 – Old Oakland: This tour explores the 1870s business district where carefully restored brick commercial buildings now house offices, galleries, boutiques and eateries. The historic district is a visible reminder of Oakland's designation in 1869 as the Western Terminus of the Transcontinental Railroad. The tour starts in front of Ratto's Market & Deli, 821 Washington Street. Tour 1 will be offered on **May 6, May 31, June 24, July 22, August 2, September 27 and October 28.**

Tour 2 – City Center: Explore the upbeat style of modern City Center, alongside restored historic landmarks like the Tribune Tower, the Rotunda Building and City Hall. The tour starts in Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, in front of City Hall. Tour 2 will be offered on **May 17, June 14, July 8, August 9, September 9, September 30 and October 11.**

Tour 3 – Uptown to the Lake: Standing out among the many new restaurants and clubs, Oakland's vibrant Art Deco-era landmarks – including the Fox Oakland Theater, the Paramount Theatre and the jazzy blue-and-silver Floral Depot Building – are the focus of this tour. The tour also features the Kaiser Center's "secret" rooftop garden overlooking Lake Merritt. The tour starts in front of the Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway. Tour 3 will be offered on **May 27, June 10, July 19, August 23, September 13 and October 7.**

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Tour 4 – Preservation Park: On this tour, view fine details of the Victorian-style architecture of several 19th century houses, relocated and restored in a tranquil setting just west of downtown. Today they serve as offices for nonprofits, conference meeting spaces and special event venues. The tour starts at the entrance to Preservation Park, 13th Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Tour 4 will be offered on **May 10, June 3, July 12, August 12, September 6 and October 14.**

Tour 5 – Oakland Chinatown: Explore this multi-ethnic downtown district packed with shops, restaurants and cultural institutions, and learn about the contributions made by Chinese and other Asian immigrants to California's history. The tour starts at the center courtyard fountain in the Pacific Renaissance Plaza at 388 Ninth Street. Tour 5 will be offered on **May 20, June 28, July 5, August 5, August 30, September 23 and October 25.**

Tour 6 – Jack London Waterfront: Follow the footsteps of Oakland's famous literary son Jack London and see some of his favorite haunts. Visit a wholesale produce market in operation since the early 1900s, located alongside newly built residential loft developments. The tour starts by the Jack London Square entry arch at the foot of Broadway. Tour 6 will be offered on **May 13, June 7, July 1, July 29, August 19, September 2 and October 4.**

Tour 7 – Churches and Temples: Visit historic houses of worship and learn about their influence on the history of Oakland. Featured buildings include the First Presbyterian Church, Temple Sinai and the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Christ the Light. The tour starts in front of the First Presbyterian Church, 2619 Broadway. Tour 7 will be offered on **May 24, June 17, July 26, August 26, September 20 and October 21.**

Tour 8 – New Era/New Politics: This tour highlights African-American leaders who have made their mark on Oakland. Learn how former mayor Lionel Wilson, journalist Delilah Beasley, Oakland Tribune publisher Robert Maynard, state legislator Byron Rumford and others changed the city and the Bay Area. The tour starts at the African American Museum and Library, 659 14th Street. Tour 8 will be offered on **May 3, June 21, July 15, August 16, September 16 and October 18.**

The annual free Oakland Tours Program is sponsored by the City of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division in the Economic & Workforce Development Department. During the 2016 season, nearly 1,800 residents, visitors and school children toured downtown Oakland on these guided walks.

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