



City of  
**OAKLAND**  
California

**Media Contact:**

Harry Hamilton  
Marketing Coordinator  
[hjhamilton@oaklandca.gov](mailto:hjhamilton@oaklandca.gov)  
510-238-6766

Facebook: Oakland  
Twitter: @Oakland

News from: **Economic & Workforce  
Development Department**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 19, 2019

**Free Walking Tours Offer Glimpse of Downtown  
Oakland's History and Ongoing Renaissance**

*Oakland, CA* – Downtown Oakland's continuing renaissance has captured national media attention, with Uptown emerging as a premier arts and entertainment destination. Local residents and visitors can glimpse both today's happening scene and landmarks from Oakland's past during the 2019 Oakland Tours season.

Free 90-minute walking tours of downtown Oakland will be offered every Wednesday and Saturday from May to 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@oaklandca.gov](mailto:aallen@oaklandca.gov). The tour brochure, itinerary descriptions, dates and starting locations are available at [oaklandca.gov/walkingtours](http://oaklandca.gov/walkingtours).

**Tour 1 – Old Oakland**

This tour explores the 1870s business district where carefully restored brick commercial buildings now house offices, galleries 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 May 1, May 25, June 22, July 20, August 28 and October 26.

**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 May 15, June 12, July 6, August 7, August 31, September 14 and October 9.

**Tour 3 – Uptown to the Lake**

Nestled 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 at 2025 Broadway. Tour 3 will be offered on May 11, June 8, July 17, August 21, September 4, September 18, October 5 and October 30.

(more)

#### **Tour 4 – Preservation Park**

On this tour, view fine details of the Victorian architecture of several 19<sup>th</sup> century houses that have been relocated and restored as a nonprofit office and meeting complex in a tranquil setting. The tour starts at the entrance to Preservation Park at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Tour 4 will be offered on May 4, June 1, July 27, August 10, September 11 and October 12.

#### **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 courtyard fountain in the Pacific Renaissance Plaza at 388 Ninth Street. Tour 5 will be offered on May 29, June 26, July 3, August 3, September 28 and October 23.

#### **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 that has been in operation since the early 1900s, alongside newly built residential developments. The tour starts by the Jack London Square entry arch at the foot of Broadway. Tour 6 will be offered on May 8, June 5, July 10, August 17, September 7 and October 2.

#### **Tour 7 – Churches and Temples**

Visit historic places of worship and learn about their influence on the history of Oakland. Featured buildings include the First Presbyterian Church, First Congregational Church and Temple Sinai. The tour starts in front of the First Presbyterian Church at 2619 Broadway. Tour 7 will be offered on May 18, June 15, July 24, August 24, September 25 and October 19.

#### **Tour 8 – New Era/New Politics**

This tour highlights African-American leaders who have made their mark on Oakland. Learn how Lionel Wilson, Delilah Beasley, Robert Maynard and Byron Rumford changed the city and the Bay Area. The tour starts at the African American Museum and Library at 659 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Tour 8 will be offered on May 22, June 19, July 13, July 31 August 14, September 21 and October 16.

The free walking tours are a program of the Economic & Workforce Development Department's Cultural Affairs Division. During the 2018 season, nearly 1,800 residents, visitors and school children toured downtown Oakland on these guided walks.

# # #

#### **About the Cultural Affairs Division**

The Cultural Affairs Division is housed in the City's Economic & Workforce Development Department. The division includes the City's cultural funding program, which provides approximately \$1 million in grants to support the arts in Oakland; the public art program, which has more than \$1 million in funds currently dedicated for public art installations across Oakland and staff working on special events, film production permitting and a walking tours program.