City of

BERKELEY

2025 Economic Dashboard

Office of Economic Development

Table of Contents
Citywide Economic Dashboard

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE • People and Economy • Housing and Education	**3-4**
EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITY • Job Growth, Unemployment, Top 25 Employers	**5-6**
SECTOR SNAPSHOTS • Hospitality • Innovation and Startups	**8-10**
COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY • Trends and Transactions – Office, Commercial Inventory • Commercial Districts – Vacancy Rates, Occupancy by Business Type • Future Development • Sales Tax Revenues	**11-16**
HOUSING • Development Pipeline and Construction • Rental Costs and Sale Prices	**17-18**
OED EFFORTS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY • Financing Small Businesses • Marketing Businesses - #DiscoveredinBerkeley • Enabling Business Networks • Greening Business Practices • Developing and Equitable Economy and Future Talent Pipeline • Strengthening Connections with UC BERKELEY • Funding Arts and Culture • 2025 Highlights	**19-27**

Demographic Profile – People & Economy

City of Berkeley | 2025

121,749
Population

33.4
Median age

47,862
Total households

$103,727
Median household income

54%
Employment rate

4.7%
Unemployment rate

13,400
Businesses

$4.5B
Spending power

Data sources: ACS 2024; City of Berkeley; estimated proprietary Claritas/Esri consumer spending data (2025)

Demographic Profile – Housing & Education

City of Berkeley | 2025

54,202
Housing units

45.9%
Homeownership rate

$1,227,500
Median home sale price

60%
Renter-occupied households

75.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher (age 25+)

42.6%
Graduate or professional degree

45,882
UC Berkeley student enrollment

Data sources: ACS 2024; City of Berkeley; UC Berkeley

Employment Activity

East Bay job growth by sector & unemployment trends

Year-over-Year Change in East Bay Employment by Sector (Nov. 2024 – Nov. 2025)

Sector (in the East Bay)	% Change Year over Year	% of Total East Bay Jobs
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	**9.2%**	**1.7%**
Educational & Health Services	**4.9%**	**20.8%**
Government	**2.0%**	**1.6%**
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1.6%	14.5%
Retail Trade	-0.3%	8.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	-0.4%	3.9%
Architectural, Engineering & Related Services	-0.6%	1.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	-2.3%	9.0%
Construction	-2.6%	6.1%
Administrative & Support Services	-4.0%	4.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	**-4.6%**	**7.3%**
Manufacturing	**-5.4%**	**8.0%**
Computer Systems Design & Related Services	**-6.1%**	**1.4%**

Job Growth

Between November 2024 and November 2025, **the number of jobs located in the East Bay declined by 6,700 jobs, a decrease of 0.6%.** Job losses were concentrated in *professional services* and *manufacturing*, while job growth was narrowly driven by *health care and social assistance*.

Despite overall declines, *private education and health services* added **11,600 jobs**, accounting for roughly **90 percent** of the region's net year-over-year growth.

Unemployment Rates show slight increase year-over-year:

	2024	2025
California	5.4%	5.4%
Alameda County	4.7%	4.7%
Berkeley	4.4%	4.7%

Source: Labor Market Information (LMI-EDD) for East Bay (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), December 2025.

Employment Activity

Largest employers

Top 25 Berkeley Employers (# of employees)

COMPANY	SECTOR
BACKROADS, INC.	RECREATION
BAYER CORP	BIOTECH
BERKELEY BOWL PRODUCE, INC.	FOOD AND BEVERAGE
BERKELEY CEMENT, INC.	CONSTRUCTION
BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE	EDUCATION
BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE	ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	EDUCATION
BOICHIK BAGELS	FOOD AND BEVERAGE
CITY OF BERKELEY	GOVERNMENT
FIELDWORK BREWING CO	FOOD AND BEVERAGE
FORESIGHT MENTAL HEALTH	HEALTHCARE
FORM ENERGY, INC.	MANUFACTURING/TECHNOLOGY
INSIGHT HOUSING	SOCIAL SERVICES
KAISER PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, INC.	HEALTHCARE
LAWRENCE BERKELEY NATIONAL LAB	LABORATORY
LIFELONG MEDICAL CARE	HEALTHCARE
OC JONES & SONS	CONSTRUCTION
SUTTER HEALTH	HEALTHCARE
TARGET CORP	RETAIL
TECHNICAL SAFETY SERVICES, INC	BIOTECH/MANUFACTURING
THE WRIGHT INSTITUTE	EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	EDUCATION
UPSIDE FOODS	BIOTECH/R&D
WHOLE FOODS MARKET CALIFORNIA INC	FOOD AND BEVERAGE
YMCA OF THE CENTRAL BAY AREA	RECREATION

Berkeley's top 25 employers are reflective of the city's diverse economy. Top employers include four in the healthcare sector and four in the education sector, including UC Berkeley, one of the city's main economic engines. There are also a few large private sector corporations in Berkeley, notably Bayer, Target and Whole Foods. *New to the top 25 list in 2025: Form Energy, a manufacturing and technology company and Boichik Bagels.*

Form energy

boichik

Source: State of California Employment Development Department (EDD), Q1 2025

Sector Snapshots
Hospitality

2025 Performance Overview

In 2025, Berkeley outperformed neighboring cities, **ranking first in occupancy and second in ADR**, behind only San Francisco. It was one of just two markets to record growth in demand, occupancy, and revenue, reflecting a strong and balanced hospitality market.

Demand Drivers and Citywide Activation

- The Bioneers Conference attracted nearly **2,000 visitors** to Downtown Berkeley in March 2025 and will return March 26-28, 2026.

- The **11th annual Berkeley Restaurant Week** highlighted more than **50 local restaurants**, supporting visitation during the spring shoulder season.

BRW
MARCH MUNCH MADNESS
BERKELEY RESTAURANT WEEK
BERKELEYRESTAURANTWEEK.COM
MARCH 21-31 #BRW25

Visitor Marketing and Business Support

- **VisitBerkeley.com** pages including the Event Calendar, Food & Drinks, and Where to Stay, continue to promote leisure travel.
- The **Berkeley Bucks** e-gift card program generated **$16.5K** in redemptions in 2025, supporting local business.

Hotel Occupancy & Inventory

- Berkeley hotel occupancy remained higher than other Bay Area cities, supported by **1.6 million overnight visitors** and **$160.8 million in visitor spending**.
- **Average occupancy** increased slightly from 71.0% in 2024 to **71.5% in 2025** with weekend nights driving peak demand.
- The **average daily rate** rose to **$190,** reflecting continued pricing strength.
- **Hotel revenue reached $76 million**, representing a **3.3% increase** over 2024.
- Domestic visitors stayed an average of **3.3 nights**, with **~79.5%** of **staying overnight**. Nearly half of visitors originated from California, followed by Texas, Florida, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

Sector Snapshots

Startups & innovation businesses

Berkeley has almost 370 **innovation companies citywide**; the vast majority are startups (86%).

Pitchbook **ranked UC Berkeley #1 in venture-funded startups** founded by undergrad alumni from any university worldwide **AGAIN**.

*Companies defined as startups are for-profit businesses that sell innovative technology products or services OR substantively use innovative technologies to develop and manufacture their products or provide their services AND are developing repeatable and scalable business models that aren't yet profitable.

Sources: City of Berkeley Office of Economic Development (OED), UC Berkeley IPIRA, Pitchbook

Sector Snapshots

Startup sectors & wealth creation

Despite another tough year for fundraising,

5 Berkeley startups were acquired and

88 raised:

- **$1.54 B** in public offerings, venture and seed capital
- **$39.6 M** in government R&D grants

INNOVATION COMPANIES BY INDUSTRY

Berkeley Innovation Sector 2025 Fundraising Highlights

- rigetti: $350M in a second public offering on the Nasdaq to accelerate the commercial scale-up of its quantum computers
- KoBold Metals: $280M to continue using AI tools to search for critical metals needed for the clean energy transition (copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt).
- Terabase: $147M to accelerate construction of utility-scale solar energy plants using AI/robotics-assisted technologies
- MagneticTides: $8.5M in NIH R&D grants to use non-invasive brain stimulation to help patients with neurological and psychiatric disorders

Sector Snapshots

Local impact of UC Berkeley's entrepreneurship initiatives

180
UC Berkeley-Affiliated Startups

100
UCB Innovation & Entrepreneurship Initiatives

2.05x
Total Employment Multiplier

$216,000
Average Annual Salary

City of Berkeley

500 - 640
Jobs

$100 - $130
Million
Payroll

$200 - $250
Million
Economic Impact

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Programs equip entrepreneurs from early formation to scale

Source: UC Berkeley Institute for Business Innovation Economic Impact Report FY 2024-2025 Data

Commercial Activity

Trends & transactions - office

The number of office jobs in the East Bay has yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels, with about 30 thousand fewer office-using jobs. Office-based employment is just below early 2015 levels. Leasing activity by square footage is on track to reach its highest level since 2021. This along with a slight decrease in vacancy is a positive sign that underscores strengthening demand and growing confidence in the market. Tenant demand continues to focus primarily on spaces 10,000 square feet or less, highlighting sustained interest from small to mid-sized companies.

Source: *Newmark Cornish & Carey, 3Q25 Greater Oakland Office Market Reports*

Q3 2025 Office Market, Berkeley	Indicators
Total Inventory	2,945,215
Availability Rate	16.5%
Average Asking Rent	$3.38/ SF

Office Availability Rate, East Bay Cities
Q3 2021 – Q3 2025

Source: Newmark Cornish & Carey, 3Q25 Greater Oakland Office Market Report

Commercial Activity

Trends & transactions – commercial inventory

Together, three sectors (*Food & Beverage*, *Retail*, and *Office/Other Non-Retail*) comprised 59.4% of total 2025 ground floor commercial inventory. Pending developments recorded in the *Office/Non-Retail* category have dropped to (15.7%) since the peak of 2023 (20.8%), as some development projects were completed and opened for occupancy in the past year. In 2025, both *Retail* and *Food & Beverage* as a percentage of total square footage were mostly unchanged from the year prior (both changed by a tenth of a %), but *Retail* as a total percentage of ground floor inventory has trended downward since 2021. The *Personal Services* category at 8.7%, *Business & Professional Services* (6.5%) and *Public and Non-Profit Entities* at 7.7% were the next largest categories by square footage.

Commercial Activity

Business district vacancy rates

Citywide, the ground floor commercial vacancy rate has decreased to **6.3%***, a drop of 1.25% since Q4 2024. Almost all commercial districts saw a decrease in storefront vacancy rates with the exception of the San Pablo and Telegraph districts which saw an increase in vacancy rates.

Vacancy Rates by District, Calculated by Square Footage, 2020-2025

District	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Year Over Year Change
Downtown	15.7%	11.9%	10.8%	10.9%	9.7%	↓
Elmwood	10.9%	7.7%	6.2%	6.9%	1.4%	↓
North Shattuck	4.3%	4.3%	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%	↓
San Pablo	7.9%	10.8%	15.5%	7.1%	8.4%	↑
Solano	4.4%	3.7%	2.6%	2.1%	2.0%	↓
South Berkeley	8.8%	11.8%	19.2%	8.9%	6.8%	↓
Telegraph	12.6%	8.5%	9.3%	9.9%	10.5%	↑
University	9.1%	12.8%	17.7%	7.7%	3.3%	↓
Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)	3.2%	2.3%	2.6%	2.8%	1.6%	↓
West Berkeley	4.7%	5.2%	2.2%	6.5%	5.0%	↓
Citywide Avg.	**8.3%**	**8.4%**	**8.1%**	**7.5%**	**6.3%**	↓

***Typical commercial district storefront vacancy rates range from 5-15% due to natural market churn. Proposed and pending development projects throughout the city have an impact on vacancy rates.**

Photos: Top: Café Brusco; Bottom: Green Leaf Market

Source: Berkeley OED

Commercial Activity

Ground floor space occupancy by business type

- **Retail** comprises the most significant percentage (31%) of ground floor space across Berkeley commercial districts, with **Food & Beverage** also representing a large portion (13%) of occupancy, especially in the Telegraph, Elmwood, Solano, and North Shattuck districts.
- **Downtown, West Berkeley** and **San Pablo** have the dominant share of Office/Other Non-retail (18%, 20% and 20%) due to the high level of development activity ("leased or pending development" is included in this category).
- **West Berkeley** (including 4th Street) has the highest concentration of Retail (46%).
- **C-N** has the highest rate of Personal Services (21%), followed by **Elmwood** (18%) and **Solano** (17%).

Commercial Activity
Future development

Innovative Genomics Institute (IGI) – Bakar Labs

Bakar Labs for Energy & Materials

New Buildings Status

UC Berkeley is now the largest rate payer to the Downtown Berkeley BID* – with a number of planned and recently completed projects surrounding the campus are providing spaces to conduct research, learn, and live.

Flying Horse Investments purchase of the long vacant Shattuck Plaza Retail block will renovate and revitalize it with new shops.

Berkeley Commons remains unoccupied and efforts to find tenants are ongoing.

** **BID** – Business Improvement District, a fund that supplements public services within geographically defined boundaries.*

Shattuck Plaza Retail Frontage – Flying Horse Investments

Commercial Activity

Sales tax revenue trends

Total Annual Sales Tax Revenue (Q2 + previous three quarters)	July '23 to June '24	July '24 to June '25	% Change (Year over Year)
City of Berkeley	**$18,893,092**	**$18,922,439**	**.2%**
Alameda County (total including cities)	$385,954,179	$391,157,971	1.3%
State of California	$9,376,883,707	$9,373,547,594	-0.04%

Source: MuniServices, Quarter 2 (Apr-June) 2020 to 2025, Nominal Values

In Q2 2025, *Retail* remained the largest contributor to Berkeley's sales tax revenue (40 percent), followed by *Food & Beverage* (37 percent). Sales tax revenue increased 5 percent compared to Q2 2024, with growth observed across most business categories. *Personal Services* experienced the largest increase (122 percent), driven primarily by gas station sales. The only decline occurred in the *Retail* category where collections decreased by 4 percent year-over-year.

Housing

Development pipeline & construction

Berkeley's Large Residential Developments, Approved 2004 & 2025

In 2025, applicants submitted land use permit applications for **11 distinct projects representing a total of 1,687** new housing units. The plans span several neighborhoods and are typically close to transit corridors and the UC Berkeley campus, the largest is a 28-story residential tower at 1998 Shattuck (599 units) and Berkeley Way *(see image on bottom right corner).*

Legend

- **Approved Housing Units 2025**
- **Approved Housing Units 2024**

Sources: City of Berkeley Department of Planning and Development, December 2025; Map OED.

Pipeline & Construction Highlights

2425 Durant

2190 Shattuck

2200 Bancroft Way

1998 Shattuck

Source: SF YIMBY

Housing
rental costs & sale prices

Home sales soften, sale prices decrease, rental prices flatten

In 2025, Berkeley's housing market reflects stabilization rather than growth. There were 46 single family homes sold in December of 2025, up from 37 in December of 2024. Home prices for single family homes remain high but have leveled off following post-pandemic exuberance in 2022, and rental prices, particularly for 3 bedrooms, and 1-bedroom apartments are down slightly from their 2024 peak.

Median Sale Price, Single-Family Homes, Dec. 2025	
Alameda	$987,500
Albany	$1,125,000
Berkeley	**$1,265,000**
El Cerrito	$1,194,500
El Sobrante	$575,000
Emeryville	$439,000
Oakland	$700,000
Richmond	$635,000
Piedmont	$2,375,000
San Leandro	$775,000

Source: Realtor.com

Sources: Redfin, Apartment List, Zumper, MLS, Rent Cafe, and City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board

OED efforts to support local economic sustainability

Financing small businesses through the Revolving Loan Fund & Resiliency Loan Program

Revolving Loan Fund Portfolio (RLF)	Active Loans
Number of RLF Loans	7
RLF $ Deployed	$616,000

Source: Berkeley OED, Working Solutions December 2025

COVID-19 Resiliency Loan Program Portfolio (RLP)	Active Loans
Number of RLP Loans	18
RLP $ Deployed	$346,000

Source: Berkeley OED, Working Solutions, December 2025

Supporting Berkeley's existing small businesses

The **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)** program was seeded by a grant to the city in 1980 from the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). The RLF fund was defederalized in 2024, and as of 2025 is administered by Working Solutions, which provides a much more streamlined experience for Berkeley borrowers, including the ability to make online payments.

The **Resiliency Loan Program (RLP)** program, also administered by Working Solutions, a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), was established in 2020 with federal CARES Act funding to help Berkeley businesses weather the impacts of the pandemic. It is a revolving fund with 18 active loans to Berkeley borrowers.

Current Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Borrowers:

Spotlight on the newest Berkeley RLF Borrower —Kanlaya Palivan, owner of Lao Garden, opened her restaurant on San Pablo Avenue in West Berkeley in January 2025 with financing assistance from Berkeley's Revolving Loan fund.

Source: East Bay Nosh, Aug. 2025

Marketing businesses #DiscoveredinBerkeley

The #DiscoveredinBerkeley marketing campaign highlights local businesses across a range of sectors, including food and beverage, retail, arts and crafts, and health services, helping connect residents and visitors with Berkeley-based businesses.

Since 2025, the #DiscoveredinBerkeley campaign has:

- Generated approximately 4.6 million impressions and 187,000 engagements
- Driven 17,317 unique page views on Berkeleyside articles, with a 0.27 percent click-through rate, exceeding the site average
- Reached 3,000 users through in-story links to featured businesses
- Grown the @DiscoveredinBerkeley Instagram account by 377 followers (1,852 total)
- Attracted nearly 5,400 users to the #DiscoveredinBerkeley website

Watch a game, listen to live music, or dance the night away at **Cali's Sports Bar & Kitchen** in the Telegraph District.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative businesses ▸

West Berkeley's **Bangkok by the Bay** takes 'no shortcuts' when preparing authentic Thai street food, fiery traditional faves and vegan specialties.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative businesses ▸

Elmwood Village Shoes in Berkeley provides 'Euro comfort', prioritizing service, quality and experience.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative business ▸

Find giant donut cakes, donut sliders, custom donuts, and specialty flavors like red velvet and ube at **Rainbow Donuts** in Berkeley's International Marketplace.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative businesses ▸

Skilled woodworkers use proper joinery to make custom wood frames at **Holton Studio** in West Berkeley.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative businesses ▸

Berkeley startup **Magnetic Tides** is developing a new non-invasive treatment for stroke patients.

Learn more about Berkeley's innovative businesses ▸

BERKELEY HOLIDAY GIFT FAIR (12/4)

Find paper-crafting supplies and DIY classes in North Berkeley at **Smiles Handcrafted**.

Support local businesses this holiday season ▸

Enabling sustainable business networks

OED supports local business improvement districts (BIDs), Visit Berkeley, and the Berkeley Chamber through the Berkeley Business District Network (BBDN), strengthening coordination, shared learning, and long-term district sustainability across Berkeley.

Coming in 2026: OED will support 10-year strategic planning and district renewal activities for the Downtown and Telegraph BIDs.

Berkeley Business District Network Partners

Map of Berkeley's Commercial Districts

Internal

Greening local business practices

Going Green Helps Companies Achieve Environmental Benefits and Cost Savings

184 Berkeley companies have registered for California Green Business Program certification. ***81 are currently green business certified.***

In 2025:

- 13 new green businesses certified
- 11 green businesses recertified
- 2,839,424 gallons of water saved
- 2,230,936 kWh of electricity conserved
- 234,713 lbs of solid waste diverted
- 1,071 gallons of fuel saved

Green Businesses in Berkeley

Recent Certifications

24 Carrot Salon

RAD POWER BIKES™

GU HYDRATION ENERGY RECOVERY

See Berkeley Green Businesses at www.greenbusinessca.org.

Deepening and diversifying Berkeley's talent pipeline

OED and the Institute for STEM Education at Cal State University arranged **200** Berkeley High School student visits to **10** STEM career exploration tours in 2025. These tours gave students hands-on exposure to how science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills are applied in the workplace, as part of the Berkeley Startup Cluster's *Berkeley Ventures, Berkeley Values* initiative.

Participating Berkeley –based Companies:

Arris Composites
Bayer
Berkeley SkyDeck
Copper
Form Energy
Magnetic Tides
Magnitude.io
Rigetti Computing
Type Five
Windscape.ai

100%

Recommend participating in company visits

**Based on post-visit student surveys*

Student Quotes:

"From every visit I've attended I learned that everyone starts from scratch and tries their best to achieve what they wanted to do in their company. Also, being a good critical thinker plays a big role as a STEM major."

"There's so many pathways within STEM that I truly believe there's a path for everyone."

"The experience made me feel calmer and less anxious about the future, realizing that there are many ways to build a career path."

Strengthening City - University Connections

SCET Campuswide Entrepreneurial Mixer

Berkeley Civic Innovation Challenge w/ Big Ideas

Berkeley Institute for Business Innovation UCB I&E Economic Impact team

Berkeley Bio Showcase at JPM Healthcare Conference

Demo Night with SkyDeck Investors

SCET Challenge Lab,: Designing Startups to Transform Society

Funding arts & culture in Berkeley

Sustaining Berkeley's Arts and Culture Sector

The City of Berkeley Civic Arts program provides nearly $660,000 in direct grants to support a vibrant arts ecosystem, strengthen diverse cultural expressions, and ensure equitable access to arts and culture throughout Berkeley.

Civic Arts Grants Awarded in 2025 include:

10

Individual Artist Grants (total $50,000)

29

Community Festivals (total $158,500)

72

Arts Organizations General Operating Support (total $449,714)

Clockwise from top Left: New Apollo Youth Symphony Orchestra, general operating support grantee. Berkeley Bird Festival, community festivals grantee. Nimisha Doongarwal, individual artist grantee. Girls Garage, general operating support grantee.

Public Art

Gallery Exhibits: The Cube Space Gallery on Allston Ave in the Downtown Arts District hosted four shows in 2025 including *Après moi, le déluge* by Mary Anne Kluth, (pictured).

New Commissions: Sorell Raino-Tsui's mosaic artwork *South Berkeley Shines 2* was selected for the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/ Young Adult Project (MLK/YAP) building in Gove Park at 1730 Oregon Street (design pictured at left).

2025 Highlights

- 500 ATTENDEES at 30 Manufacturing Week tours (Oct. 2025)
- 300+ STARTUPS engaged through Berkeley Startup Cluster programming
- 200 SMALL BUSINESSES served through the OED Small Business Forum (Sept 2025)
- 10 COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS supported through coordination and technical assistance *(representing ~3,000 brick-and-mortar businesses)*

City of

BERKELEY

Office of Economic Development (OED)

See the OED website for past Economic Dashboards and other economic reports:
https://berkeleyca.gov/doing-business/economic-development/economic-dashboards-and-reports
Contact OED for more information:
oedmailbox@berkeleyca.gov