



City Manager's Office

October 30, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager 
Subject: Berkeley Legacy Business Program

This memo provides an update on the launch of the City of Berkeley's new Legacy Business Program, an initiative developed by the Office of Economic Development (OED), in partnership with Mayor Adena Ishii's Office and the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce to recognize and celebrate businesses and organizations that have operated in Berkeley for 25 years or more.

Background

Berkeley's Legacy Business Program was developed in response to inquiries from longstanding local businesses seeking formal recognition for their contributions to the community. The program recognizes businesses and organizations that have operated in Berkeley for at least 25 years, celebrating their resilience, longevity, and role in shaping the City's distinctive commercial districts.

The program currently recognizes approximately 243 businesses and organizations across Berkeley, including 19 that have operated in the city for more than 100 years. Businesses are recognized in four categories based on their longevity: 25+, 50+, 75+, and 100+ years. A map of participating businesses can be found at the website: <https://www.discoveredinberkeley.com/legacy/>.

The program's visual identity and official recognition decal were created by Berkeley-based type designer Graham Bradley of A+ Type, reinforcing the City's commitment to engaging local creative talent.

Participating businesses receive:

- An official Legacy Business window decal identifying them as a recognized Berkeley Legacy Business;
- A certificate of recognition from the Mayor;
- Digital recognition materials for use on business websites and social media;
- Inclusion in a publicly accessible online [Legacy Business Map](#); and
- Opportunities to be featured through the City's *Discovered in Berkeley* business promotion channels.

The City celebrated the official launch of the Legacy Business Program on September 22, 2026, at the Hillside Club, itself a longstanding Berkeley institution founded in 1898. The event brought together 101 business owners, community partners, and City representatives to celebrate the generations of entrepreneurship, service, and local investment represented by Berkeley's legacy businesses. The reception also provided an opportunity to unveil the program's official visual identity and recognition materials and introduce the City's ongoing efforts to promote these businesses. Mayor Ishii formally introduced the program, recognizing the important role that longstanding businesses play in Berkeley's economy and community life and spoke about honoring their contributions to the City's economic vitality, cultural identity, and community character.

Next Steps

The Legacy Business Program is an ongoing recognition initiative jointly administered by OED and the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce. Businesses that meet the eligibility criteria may continue to apply for recognition, and staff will update the program's online directory and map as additional businesses with 25+ years of service to the Berkeley community are identified.

OED will continue working with the Berkeley Chamber, commercial district organizations, and other community partners to increase awareness of the program and encourage residents and visitors to support Berkeley's longstanding businesses. The City also intends to explore opportunities to expand the program beyond recognition to provide additional promotional resources, connections to business assistance services, and other forms of support that can help longstanding businesses remain successful in Berkeley.

The Legacy Business Program complements the City's broader economic development efforts to support local businesses, strengthen commercial districts, and preserve the distinctive character that makes Berkeley a unique place to live, work, and visit. Additional information about the program and recognized businesses are available through the City's [*Discovered in Berkeley*](#) website.

cc: Eleanor Hollander, Economic Development Manager
David White, Deputy City Manager
Jenny Wong, City Auditor
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager
Farimah Brown, City Attorney