



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**DOWNTOWN BERKELEY BART ENTRANCE & PLAZA OPENS OCT 18  
With 4pm opening celebration for \$13M renovation project**

(Berkeley, CA) — The new Downtown BART Plaza will be unveiled Thursday, October 18 and will feature a stunning new glass entrance, a state-of-the-art sound and light system for live performances and artist soundscapes, and a dramatic large piece of public art.

See [BART Plaza Activation Plan](#) for detailed description of Plaza features and amenities.

The Berkeley community will kick-off a four day Opening Celebration for the new \$13 million plaza starting at 4pm on Thursday. The celebration will commence with a ribbon cutting and speeches at the main entrance led by Mayor Jesse Arreguin and BART Board Director Rebecca Saltzman, followed by the Berkeley Symphony emerging from the BART station below. The Symphony will then perform Joan Tower's "*Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*" during the unveiling of the Michael Christian's 14-foot "*Home*" globe sculpture in the Plaza. Next will be

the introduction of Chris Brown's "*Flow in Place*" sound art installation, the first of ten commissioned by the City of Berkeley Civic Arts Commission.

Thursday's program continues until 8pm with live music on the new Berkeley LIVE! stage, and food provided by Plaza merchants. The opening will be followed by three more days of family fun and cultural activities in the Plaza and the Berkeley LIVE! stage. See attached [BART Plaza Opening Weekend Celebration Schedule](#) for details.

The Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) has also launched the [Berkeley LIVE! On the Plaza](#) website, to provide a central hub of information about the new plaza, including calendar of events, performer submission form, and sponsor information. In addition, the DBA has commissioned a [commemorative poster](#), celebrating the opening of the plaza by artist Chris Huth, that will be available to all attendees on October 18.

"We are delighted to finally have this beautiful new transit portal and town square open in the heart of our great City," said Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin. "This project has been an amazing collaboration between the City, BART, and the Downtown community in developing a vibrant welcoming space and for visitors, commuters and residents alike. And we are particularly pleased by the investment of our Civic Arts Commission in a state-of-the-art light and sound system by Berkeley's own Meyers Sound that will activate the plaza for years to come. I also want to thank the City and BART staff, and former Mayor Tom Bates, and ACTC whose vision and tenacity made this amazing project possible."

"The new main BART entrance is not only visually striking, it's a major upgrade in terms of functionality," said BART Director Rebecca Saltzman. "The staircase improves pedestrian circulation and the new bus shelters and bus-only lane enhance BART and bus connections. The plaza exemplifies our efforts to ensure BART stations serve as integral parts of the communities we serve."

A major goal was to create a public space where commuters and residents want to linger, whether to grab a coffee and pastry, beer or slice of pizza, listen to music on the Berkeley LIVE! stage or one-of-a-kind soundscapes, or engage with an Ambassador at the new Welcome Kiosk.

"We have worked hard with the City, BART, merchants, and property owners to create an activation plan that makes the plaza a vibrant and welcoming destination and transit gateway--

mornings, daytime, and evenings,” said John Caner the CEO of the Downtown Berkeley Association, who was closely involved in the design of the new plaza.

Caner adds, “The opening of the Downtown BART Plaza is timed with the opening of our new 720 space Center Street Garage, that together will transform the arrival and departure experience for all visitors to downtown Berkeley, inviting them to come explore and enjoy this amazing City.”

### **About the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)**

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) connects the San Francisco Peninsula with Berkeley, Oakland, Fremont, Walnut Creek, Dublin/Pleasanton and other cities in the East Bay. For more than 45 years BART has provided fast, reliable transportation to downtown offices, shopping centers, tourist attractions, entertainment venues, universities and other destinations for Bay Area residents and visitors alike.

### **About the Downtown Berkeley Association**

The Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) is an independent 501(c)(6) nonprofit membership organization, funded by Downtown property owners, and focused on creating a welcoming, vibrant and prosperous City Center. The DBA is the manager of the Downtown Berkeley Property-based Business Improvement District (PBID) encompassing approximately a thousand business, nonprofits and property owners, bounded by Oxford/Fulton to the east, Grant Street to the west, Delaware to the north, and Carleton to the south. For more information please visit [www.downtownberkeley.com](http://www.downtownberkeley.com)

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