



LITTLE TOKYO

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A PROGRAM MANAGED BY THE LITTLE TOKYO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Artist Robert Vargas Marks First Anniversary of Ohtani Mural



As artist Robert Vargas (standing, center) joins friends, family, and fellow Dodger fans in celebrating the first anniversary of his 11-story mural, a community reflects on the behind-the-scenes drama that almost killed his dream.

In January 2024, Vargas appeared before about 25 members of the Little Tokyo Community Council to share his vision for a giant mural featuring baseball phenom Shohei Ohtani, who had just signed with the Dodgers. He proudly presented his drawing, but the reaction from the meeting attendees, about 25 or so, was disappointing. Some accused him of cultural appropriation and suggested that he replace the image of Mount Fuji with cherry blossoms. The Mayor's office jumped and tried to stop the mural two days before it was to be unveiled. Fortunately, with support from the Miyako Hotel management, former Councilmember de Leon, LTBA, and the business community, Vargas completed the mural, which he named, "LA Rising."



Join the conversation as we outline plans going forward, hear ideas, and answer any questions about the new, property-based Business Improvement District.

LITTLE TOKYO COMMUNITY MEETING*

Tuesday, May 27, from 6 p.m.

Miyako Hotel, 328 East 1st Street, Little Tokyo

*This event is open to the public free of charge.





LTBA Installs New Board of Directors

David Ikegami will be leading the Little Tokyo Business Association for his fourth consecutive term. The Board of Directors includes (left to right) Edwin Takahashi, Ernest Hida, Akira Yuhara, Janet Koyama, Rev. Ki Choi, Sheri Kanesaka, Susan Oiwake, Yuriko Shikai, David Ikegami, David Kudo, Joanne Kumamoto, Kitty Sankey, Ellen Endo, Paul Abe, Sylvia Ena, Alexander Eng, Jan Fukuhara, Glenn Osaki, Gwen Muranaka, Sebastian Lozano (field deputy for Assemblyman Mark Gonzalez), Mark Kawa, Nancy Takayama, and Nina Suh-Toma (Assemblyman Gonzalez field representative)

Bunkado Owner Reflects on Store's 75th Year



Irene Tsukada Simonian, owner of Bunkado Gifts and past president of the Little Tokyo Community Council, has been named Business Person of the Year for 2025 by the Little Tokyo Business Association. Bunkado was founded in 1946 by artist Tokio Ueyama and his wife, Suye.

In recent years, their niece Simonian has guided the store's evolution to meet the desires of its customers. Bunkado sits on the site where the first business, Kame Restaurant, was established in 1884.

Little Tokyo Selected for Smart Toilet Pilot

The lack of public restrooms along transit systems in the U.S. has long been a rider complaint, particularly on Metro's rail and busway system, which covers 100+ miles and has some lengthy bus and rail trips.

To address the challenges of both funding restrooms and keeping them clean and safe, Metro launched a partnership with Throne Labs, a company that makes self-contained, portable restrooms. The Regional Connector station was among the first to be chosen for the pilot program, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Thank you, Metro!



City of Los Angeles
Procure LA

2025

PROCURE LA SUMMIT: WORKING WITH THE BIG THREE LADWP, LAWA & POLA

CONNECT, GROW, AND TRANSFORM BUSINESSES IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2025 8 AM - 2 PM

Audrey Irmas Pavilion
(3643 Wilshire Blvd., LA, CA 90010)



CONFERENCE | EXPO | MATCHMAKING

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Engaging** in panel discussions with our Big 3 partners
- **Networking** with 30+ government agencies and prime vendors
- 300+ **suppliers** in attendance
- Intimate, targeted procurement **matchmaking** sessions
- **Training** workshops
- **On-site support** from the ProcureLA team for:
Vendor portal registration / Certification assistance /
Capability statement guidance

Register Here
tinyurl.com/mwekda4m



SCAN ME



ProcureLA, a new program launched by Mayor Bass and the City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD), provides free resources to help small businesses secure contracts and is operated by PACE (Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment).



Mayor Karen Bass



Pacific Asian
Consortium
in Employment

SMALL BUSINESS ESSENTIALS

BET TZEDEK

Legal, Tax, and IP Foundations

Join us for a four-session workshop designed to help small business owners navigate key legal considerations for their businesses.

Each session covers essential topics, from legal compliance and intellectual property to choosing the right business entity and understanding contracts.

Gain valuable insights from legal experts and learn how to protect and grow your business with confidence.

Register Here
tinyurl.com/5t554ura



SCAN ME



MEET OUR LEGAL EXPERTS

1

MARCH 18 (TUE) 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

5 Legal Tips every Small Business Owner should Know

2

APRIL 22 (TUE) 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Intellectual Property Issues for Small Business Owners

3

MAY 20 (TUE) 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Small Business Entity Choice Basics

4

JUNE 17 (TUE) 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Contracts for Small Businesses



visit our website:
www.pacelabdc.org



for more info, please email:
VBryden@pacela.org

Brought to you in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) and BusinessSource Center in Pico-Union Westlake Region (operated by PACE Business Development Center).



Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment



City Of Los Angeles
BusinessSource
Pico-Union Westlake Region

*Auxiliary Aids and Services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

STASH IT / DON'T FLASH IT

Protect Your Belongings

If you must leave valuables in your vehicle, put them in the trunk **BEFORE** you arrive at your destination. This will avoid the possibility of someone seeing you and your valuables and breaking into your car.

File a Police Report

website: www.visitlittletokyo.org

(213) 880-6875

Email: board@visitlittletokyo.org

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