



# LITTLE TOKYO

## BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

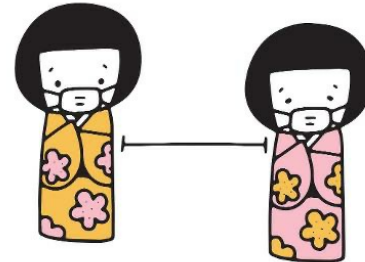
A Program of the Little Tokyo Business Association

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## Masks, Social Distance Still Here

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health is in the Orange Tier, which applies to certain businesses as follows:

**RESTAURANTS** - Restaurants and food serve facilities may provide food and beverage service via indoor and outdoor dining (with capacity limitations) as well as delivery, drive thru and carry out service. Indoor dining may be open at 50% occupancy or 200 people, whichever is less. Fully vaccinated employees may elect not to wear face shields but must show proof of vaccinations to employer. Masks and distancing requirements remain in effect. [Learn more here.](#)



**WINERIES, BREWERIES, & DISTILLERIES** that serve bonafide meals with any alcohol purchase may open for indoor and outdoor dining in addition to delivery, drive thru, and carry out service.

**RETAIL BUSINESSES** must limit indoor occupancy to 75% of their maximum occupancy. Masks are to be worn by employees at all times during the workday when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Be prepared to queue customers outside while still maintaining physical distance, including through the use of visual cues.

**WORKPLACE** - To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are prohibited from eating or drinking except during their breaks when they are able to safely remove their masks and physically distance from others. Employees are instructed to wash or replace their face masks daily. All workstations should be separated by at least six feet. Employees are allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands. [More information here.](#)

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## California Small Business Grant Applications Open

Applications are currently being accepted now through May 4 for Round 6 of the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program. Eligible applicants: current wait-listed small businesses and/or nonprofits not selected in Rounds 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 and new applicants that meet eligibility criteria. Grant awards will range from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

Details: Applicants not selected to receive a grant in Rounds 1, 2, 3 & 5 do not need to re-apply and will be automatically moved into Round 6. New applicants should [apply here](#). Japanese, Korean, and Spanish translations are available on the website.

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## Vandalism Blamed on One Man's Rampage

Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple was vandalized Feb. 25 by an unknown person who toppled a stone lantern, broke a plate glass window, and set lantern stands on fire.



The incident has been investigated by both the Los Angeles Police Department and the Fire Department. Investigators have concluded that the rampage was likely the work of a someone with mental health issues and not necessarily racially motivated.

Despite the determination by law enforcement, the incident raised concerns about recent physical assaults, property damage and other crimes being committed in Asian neighborhoods across the country.

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## LTBA: A Plea for Understanding

The Little Tokyo Business Association (LTBA) board of directors condemns the vandalism that defiled Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple on Feb. 25. We are deeply saddened by what happened to one of our most revered and enduring institutions.

As one of Little Tokyo's oldest organizations and managers of the Little Tokyo Business Improvement District, we join with other community groups in collectively standing against hate crimes in all its forms and pledge to continually work to build greater understanding among all people.

Little Tokyo is the home of eight beloved churches and temples, all of which must be protected from senseless acts of intolerance. Let us take this moment to remember the greatness within our community and rededicate ourselves to ensuring that Higashi Honganji and all of our institutions continue to stand tall for this and future generations.



Artist's rendering shows the proposed 228-unit affordable housing complex and education center planned by Go For Broke and LTSC.

## De Leon Wins Support for Affordable Housing Plan

Los Angeles City Councilman Kevin de Leon introduced a plan recently to create 25,000 new homeless housing units by 2025. His plan, titled "A Way Home," calls for revamping city policies and changing regulations that hold-up housing unit construction.

Consistent with his stated objective, De Leon has also championed the push to expand the boundaries of the Go For Broke National Education Center ground lease, clearing the way 200-plus units of affordable housing to be built in Little Tokyo.

"Councilmember de Leon is putting that talk into action," said Mitch Maki, president and CEO of GFBNEC. "Our organization, Little Tokyo Service Center, and the surrounding Little Tokyo community will be the beneficiaries of this project."

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Mitchell Matsumura leads a procession in memory of the 118 seniors who died of COVID at Kei Ai Healthcare Centers.

Photo by Mario G. Reyes

## Candlelight Tribute Honors 118 Kei-Ai Residents

There was a chill in the air as the sun set in Little Tokyo on March 23, but the resolve of those gathering for a memorial procession and candlelight ceremony was undaunted. Nearly 400 took time to remember 118 seniors, the combined number of COVID victims who has succumbed at Kei-Ai Los Angeles and Kei-Ai South Bay, healthcare facilities operated by the same company--Pacifica.

The candlelight service speakers also took note of the fact that Pacifica is moving forward with plans to convert the 90-bed Sakura Gardens Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) in Boyle Heights to multi-family apartments.

Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance) has introduced a bill that would give the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) stronger authority to prohibit unqualified and unethical owners and operators from owning and operating skilled nursing facilities in the state. However, the Assembly Health Committee chaired by Assemblymember Jim Wood (D-Santa Rosa) has declined to hear the bill, which would forbid the use of management agreements to "circumvent state licensure requirements."

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## New Website to Introduce Little Tokyo to Kids

A cash award from Aratani CARE, a program administered by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, will enable the Little Tokyo Business Association to create a new website. Among other features, will include a virtual tour of Little Tokyo and introduce young people, kindergarten through 12th grade, to our community's culture and unique character.



Artist Mike Saijo leads the creative and technical team. Project co-chairs for LTBA are immediate past president Mike Okamoto and board member Kitty Sankey.

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## New LTBA Board of Directors Installed

At its February 17 General Meeting, the Little Tokyo Business Association installed its 2021 Officers and Board of Directors. Warren Furutani, Senior Advisor to Councilmember Kevin De Leon administered the oath of office. Ellen Endo steps in as president. Mike Okamoto, who led the organization for the past three years, will remain as immediate past president.

Officers include: senior vice presidents Sylvia Ena, David Ikegami, Joanne Kumamoto, Tomoko Omura, and Haru Takehana, Yuriko Shikai was re-elected secretary, Andrew Lee returns as treasurer, and Edwin Takahashi is auditor. Vice presidents are Paul Abe and Hironori Yonezawa. Directors for 2021 are Doug Aihara, James Choi, Thornton Dickerson, Yoshitaka Ena, Jan Fukuhara, Miho Groia, Tamako Henken, Yoko Kawaguchi, Kitty Sankey, Tetsu Shiota, Nancy Takayama, Yoshiko Ueda, Mike Powers, and Akira Yuhara. Angela DeGroot, Rev. Howard Miyoshi, and Jason Toyoshima have been named advisors.

LTBA, established in 1959, manages the Little Tokyo Business Improvement District and is committed to the betterment of Little Tokyo for its merchants, residents, workers, and visitors.

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## City, County Partner to Build Housing for Homeless



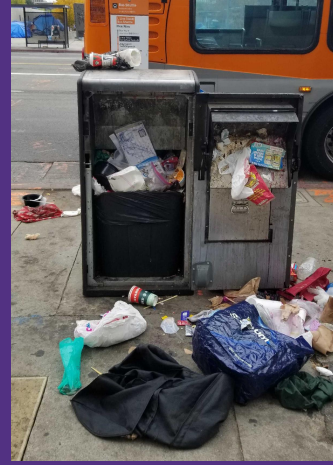
A four-acre property located between Union Station and Homegirl Cafe at 1060 N. Vignes Street will soon open for either interim or permanent supportive housing with up to 232 beds for homeless individuals. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the project unanimously on a motion by 1st District Supervisor Hilda Solis.

On Oct. 20, at his first City Council meeting after taking office, 14th District Councilmember Kevin De Leon introduced the motion that established the partnership between the City and County to build the facility. Funding for the project includes \$42 million allocated to the County under the Federal CARES Act plus \$6 million in interim housing pool funds. The City will pay operating costs for the facility through June 2025.

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Like everyone, Little Tokyo is beginning to recover from the year-long pandemic. More businesses, old and new, are opening, and Little Tokyo is teeming with life once again. Unfortunately, this has also caused a humongous trash problem.

We are working with our partners at L.A. Conservation Corps and L.A. Department of Sanitation to identify solutions, but we need everyone's help. Whenever possible, take your trash to the dumpsters assigned to your building or business. If the Big Belly containers are full (as seen in this photo), do not leave the trash next to or on top of the receptacle. For bulky item or graffiti removal, call the City of L.A. at 3-1-1.



To reach our safety patrol, call (213) 326-0636 or **contact the Little Tokyo BID at (213) 880-6875**

[www.visitlittletokyo.com](http://www.visitlittletokyo.com)