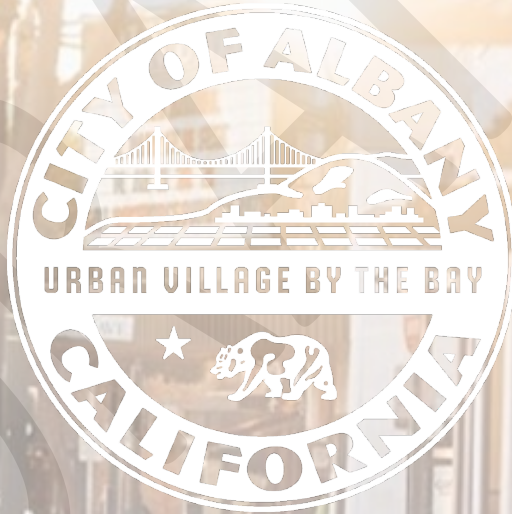


DESTINATION: ALBANY

Placeholder Image



Your guide to starting a business
in the urban village by the bay.

Why Albany?

Albany is as unique as it is beautiful. Combining a small-town atmosphere with close proximity to urban centers, Albany prides itself on its safe, strong, diverse community. From home ventures, to brick-and-mortar stores, there's a place for your business in the Albany community. The possibilities for you and your business are boundless.

Location

Due East of the Golden Gate Bridge, Albany stretches from the waters of the San Francisco Bay up towards the Berkeley Hills of the East Bay. Bordered by the communities of Berkeley, El Cerrito, Kensington, and Richmond, and intersected by large thoroughfares such as I-80, I-580, and San Pablo Avenue (SR 123), Albany is ideally situated close to larger cities like Oakland and San Francisco.



- 3 miles to UC Berkeley
- 6 miles to the Port of Oakland
- 10 miles to Downtown San Francisco
- 13 miles to Walnut Creek
- 13 Miles to San Rafael
- 40 miles to the Silicon Valley
- 65 miles to Sacramento

Transportation

The City's motto, "Urban Village by the Bay," illustrates its dense urban environment and small town ambiance. Albany is the 6th most densely populated city in the Bay Area, with 10,905 residents per square mile. With its traditional urban street grid and mixed use neighborhoods, Albany is also the 6th most walkable city in California, with a Walk Score of 82. The City maintains an excellent network of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and encourages residents to use active and clean modes of transportation.

Albany is well served by excellent road infrastructure (I-80 and I-580, San Pablo Avenue, and connection to the regional street grid), public transportation (BART and AC Transit), regional train service (Amtrak), and international airports.



Community Profile

Albany is a mature, built-out city, with much of its development completed before the 1950s. Much of its character comes from the estimated 1,500 modest single-family bungalows from the '20s and '30s, known colloquially as “MacGregors” for their creator, each one unique. Much of the housing built after 1950 has been multi-family housing, including University Village, a large UC Berkeley student family housing development comprising 15% of the city’s total housing stock, as well as several large condominium complexes located by the I-80 freeway that comprise an additional 11%. A little over half of Albany residents are renters.



Albany is diverse in age, with a median age of 37. Albany is becoming more racially diverse, and in 2010 was 55% White, 31% Asian, 4% African American, 7% multi-racial, 10% Hispanic (of any race), and 3% other. Residents are well-educated (71.5% of residents over 25 are college graduates), and the median income is \$72,479.



Albany is known for its excellent school district, which has a graduation rate exceeding 90 percent. In addition to the School District and City facilities, Albany has several large governmental facilities including the USDA Western Research Center, a State-operated Orientation Center for the Blind, and a large tract of land owned by UC Berkeley which includes student housing, a new senior housing and retail development, and 104 acres of farmland for research.

Despite its density, Albany is home to a thriving natural environment, which includes 5,000 publicly owned trees, 5 creeks, a sandy beach and wetlands, as well as 112 acres of open space. The future of Albany looks bright. By 2035, Albany is projecting a 10% increase in the number of households and a 17% increase in the number of jobs.

Albany Demographics

Total Population	18,539
% Female	51.5%
Median Age	37
% 18 years or younger	25%
% 65 years and over	10%
% White	54.6%
% Asian/Pacific Islander	31.4%
% Hispanic	10.2%
% African American	3.5%
% Native American	0.5%
% Other or two or more races	10%
Median Income	\$72,479
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1%
Rental Vacancy Rate	6.2%
% College Graduates for residents over 25	71.5%

Customer Profiles

City Lights: Younger savers living in ethnically and racially diverse neighborhoods, who believe in equality and social justice. “They are price savvy but will pay for quality brands they trust.” This group is interested in natural products and health-conscious foods. They tend to shop at Target, Costco, and Walmart. 52% Albany residents, 17% 3 mile radius.

Urban Chic: Middle-aged, well-educated, white-collar professionals who are environmentally savvy and heavy technology users. They are more likely than the average American to be married, have investment income, and commute by bike. They tend to shop at Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, and Costco, and they love coffee. There are more than 13,000 Urban Chic households within three miles of Albany. 30% Albany residents, 20% 3 mile radius.

Metro Renters: More likely to be single, use public transportation, and socialize frequently. They are in college or working long hours. They tend to shop at Trader Joe’s and Whole Foods. 14% Albany residents, 3% 3 mile radius.

Top Tier: A wealthy, middle-aged group, making more than three times the national average. They tend to travel frequently, cook organic meals at home, and support NPR and PBS. They contract out for household services. They tend to shop at Nordstrom, Amazon, Macy’s, Target, and Kohl’s. There are 1,667 Top Tier households in this trade area. 4% Albany residents, 3% 3 mile radius.

Trendsetters: Single people who are young adults, well-educated, employed, travel and dine out frequently and socialize heavily. “They are willing to pay more for products that support their causes.” Many don’t have a car. They tend to shop at Trader Joe’s and Whole Foods. 21% 3 mile radius.



Which commercial district is right for your business?

Albany has three commercial districts, offering a variety of restaurants, retail stores, professional services, auto-oriented businesses, and light industry. Albany's major commodity retailers are dispersed throughout the City. There are many retail uses not found in Albany – your business could be the first!

Solano Avenue: The charming pedestrian-oriented Solano Avenue shopping district is Albany's "main street" and boasts great restaurants, boutique retail establishments, as well as financial, legal, dental, and medical services. Solano Avenue has been Albany and North Berkeley's primary commercial street for nearly a century. It also hosts an annual street festival that attracts approximately 250,000 visitors over the course of the day. Solano Avenue has no automotive businesses, and a higher concentration (per city block) of professional offices and specialty businesses. Traffic on the two-lane avenue travels slowly because of traffic calming measures, making it a comfortable pedestrian environment which in turn translates into a better specialty retail environment. The street offers free 90-minute angled parking, two bus lines, and plenty of bicycle parking.



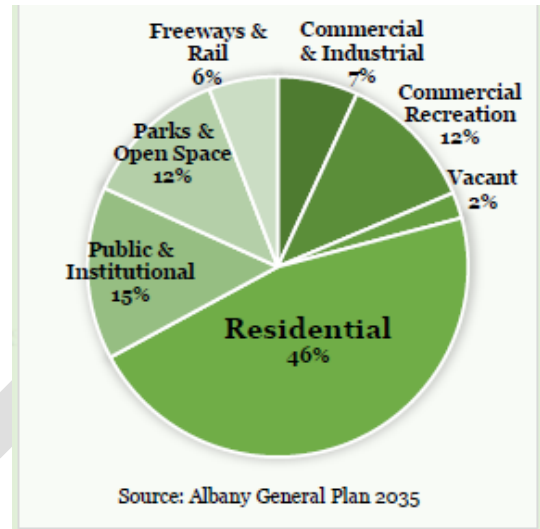
San Pablo Avenue: San Pablo Avenue (SR 123) is more auto-oriented, but still offers high-quality eateries, retail, and services, along with car dealerships and automotive services. Seven AC Transit bus lines traverse San Pablo Avenue, and the street hosts an average daily traffic volume of 20,900 cars.

Cleveland Avenue & Eastshore Highway: Cleveland Avenue and Eastshore Highway, both situated along the I-80 corridor, have a mix of light industrial businesses and larger retail establishments.

Business Profile

Land Use

Albany has a total land area of 1.7 square miles and 3.7 square miles of water. Commercial recreation includes two of the largest employers and tax generators in Albany: Golden Gate Fields racetrack and Albany Bowl, both of which are a regional draw. Albany's land use is diverse, given its size and urban setting. Albany's 12% public open space offers economic benefits to a community through increased property values and sales tax revenue. Opportunities for recreation, storm water treatment, traffic calming, air quality improvements, and wildlife habitat reduce necessary infrastructure and health expenditures by governmental agencies. Albany is built-out, with only 2% vacant land, so must look to infill development opportunities for residential and commercial growth. The City has identified a handful of priority sites for redevelopment to support the estimated 10% increase in households by 2035. Additionally, there are redevelopment opportunities along Cleveland Avenue along I-80 for "green" innovation, "maker" spaces, artists' studios, technology incubators, and other types of light industry.

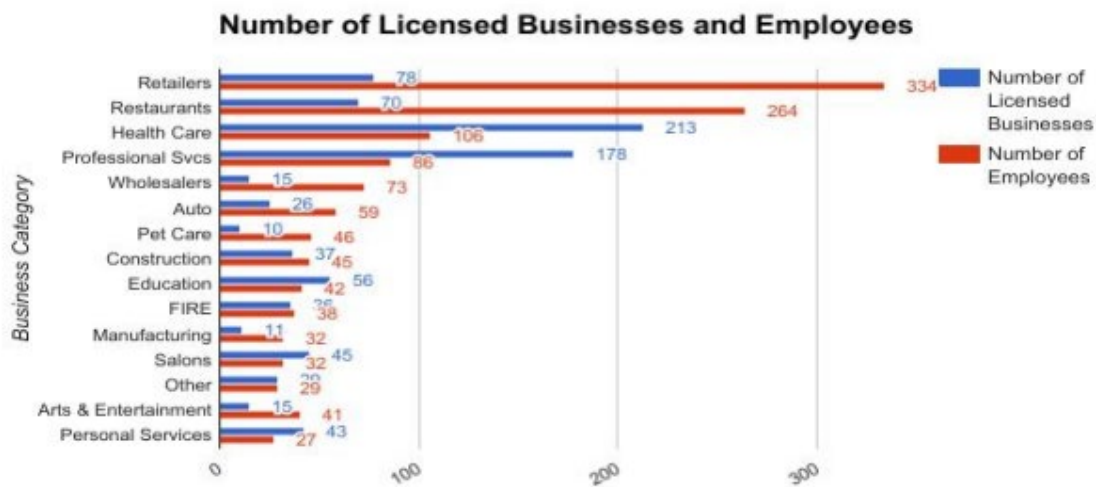
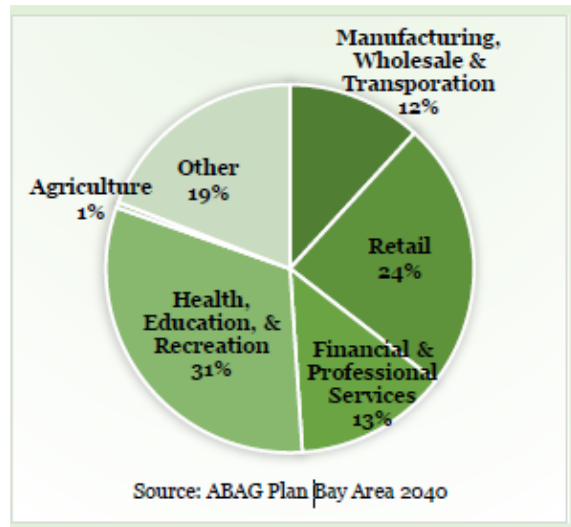


In all of Albany, there are only 250 parcels developed with commercial or industrial uses, for a total of 62 acres. Most commercial properties in Albany are zoned to allow either office or retail 31 (with some exceptions based on parking standards). Office uses are a small share of commercial leasable space, with an estimated total of about 100,000 square feet (SF). This excludes institutional office uses not available for rent, such as City

Hall, the USDA complex, and the Sutter Health-affiliated medical office and clinic. Albany's private-sector office users are predominantly locally-oriented businesses, like real estate and medical. Albany's largest office buildings are the Plaza Oak Professional Building, with 20,000 SF next to El Cerrito Plaza, and Atrium Plaza, with 16,000 SF on San Pablo Avenue. By contrast, retail uses occupy an estimated 300,000 SF, counting the new University Village commercial development (approximately 44,000 SF), and Safeway (approximately 30,000 SF), but not including Target (approximately 163,000 SF).

Employment

Albany's job market is diverse and includes manufacturing, services, retail, and government. In 2015, government agencies were one of the largest employers; 3.91% percentage of the Albany workforce was employed by the Albany Unified School District; 2.94% by the United States Department of Agriculture; and 0.9% by the City of Albany. Additionally, the Target retail store employed 2.56% and the Golden Gate Fields race track employed 1.95%. In 2015, there were 5,070 jobs within the city; 0.69 jobs per household compared to 1.3 in the region. Albany therefore acts as a housing reservoir for nearby cities like Berkeley and Emeryville, which have more jobs than households. With 9,500 employed residents in 2015, Albany had an unemployment rate of 3.1%, which is the second lowest rate in Alameda County. Albany's employment statistics have remained relatively stable over the past 20 years, and there is a 17% increase expected in the number of jobs by 2035. Ultimately, the city offers a diverse variety of jobs for different skill sets.



Source: City of Albany Economic Development Strategic Plan

Starting a Business in Albany

Making a Business Plan

Creating a business plan is the first step toward starting a prosperous and successful business. Your plan will help you evaluate the costs, strengths, weaknesses and needs of your business. [insert text here]



Developing a Legal Structure

[insert text here]

Registering a Fictitious Name

[insert text here]

Zoning & Permitting

Obtaining the correct building permits and other approvals for proposed modifications to the site, including new construction, renovation, and signage is necessary for operating legally and safely. Permits can be obtained from the Community Development and Fire Departments. In order to learn more about zoning and permitting requirements, please visit our website at www.albanyca.org/departments/planning-zoning. You can contact our Planning Department at (510) 528-5760 or com-dev@albanyca.org.

Obtaining a Business License

All businesses operating within Albany, including home and mobile businesses, must obtain a business license to operate legally. To obtain a business license, determine the appropriate fee using the Business License Fee Schedule on the City's website, <https://www.albanyca.org/departments/finance/business-licenses>, complete the Business License Application, and mail or deliver the application to:

Finance Department
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, CA 94706

Questions? Contact the City of Albany Finance Department at (510) 528-5730 or accountsreceivable@albanyca.org.

Utilities

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E): Provides natural gas and electricity services.

East Bay Community Energy (EBCE): Provides cleaner electricity at lower rates.

Waste Management: Provides solid waste, recycling, and composting services.

AT&T: Provides phone services.

East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD): Provides water and waste water services.

Useful Resources

Albany Chamber of Commerce: <https://www.everythingalbany.com/>

Solano Avenue Association: <https://www.solanoavenueassn.org/>

East Bay Economic Development Alliance: Provides financing and technical assistance for new and existing businesses. <http://www.eastbayeda.org>