



Office of the Mayor

Contact: Cisco DeVries
510-981-7103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Organization on Disability to Name Berkeley Most Accessible City in U.S. at Ceremony on March 27th

Ceremony will celebrate past and current accessibility achievements and anticipate the next breakthrough on disability access: The Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART station.

Berkeley, CA – Berkeley will receive the Most Accessible City in the U.S. award and a check for \$25,000 from the National Organization on Disability (NOD) and UPS at a public reception on Tuesday, March 27th from 5 to 7 p.m. at the North Berkeley Senior Center.

Berkeley is receiving the award in recognition of its focus on disability issues and successful design of programs, services and facilities that are accessible for citizens and visitors with disabilities. NOD praised Berkeley's creation of the nation's first universally-designed affordable housing development, free and reduced price accessible taxi services, and emergency attendant care and transportation services that are funded by a self-imposed tax, among other programs.

The award ceremony will feature Berkeley's next major disability initiative – the Ed Roberts Campus. The Ed Roberts Campus is a universally-designed, transit-oriented campus that will be built at the Ashby BART Station in South Berkeley. The ERC will house the offices of seven disability service and advocacy organizations as well as fully accessible meeting rooms, a computer/media resource center, a fitness center, a cafe, and a childcare center. Fundraising for the project is now 80-percent complete and a groundbreaking is expected by the end of 2007. More information is available at www.edrobertscampus.org.

"As the birthplace of the disability civil rights movement, we in Berkeley could not be more honored to win the 2006 Accessible America contest," said Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates. "The award is truly a reflection of the great people in our community and on our City staff who continue to find new and innovative ways to enable everyone in our community to fully participate in civic and cultural life. We will use this award as an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to disability rights and access."

- Who:** Mayor Tom Bates; Dmitri Belser, Chair of the Disability Commission and President of the Ed Roberts Campus; and Susan O'Hara of the Bancroft Library; representatives from the National Organization on Disability and UPS; community and disability leaders; over 100 well-wishers.
- What:** Celebration of Berkeley's Award as the Most Accessible City in the U.S.
- When:** Tuesday, March 27th
5 – 7 p.m.
- Where:** North Berkeley Senior Center
1901 Hearst Street (at Martin Luther King Jr. Way)
Berkeley, CA

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