City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 20, 2026

Contact:
Ryan J. Railsback
Acting Public Information Officer
RRailsback@RiversideCA.gov
(951) 231-5820

Riverside Celebrates Small Businesses as Drivers of Local Economic Growth

Citywide recognition, shop local rewards, and a Holiday Makers Market encourage support for Riverside businesses.

Riverside, CA – The City of Riverside is celebrating Small Business Saturday on November 28 with business recognition, shopping rewards and opportunities to discover local entrepreneurs throughout the holiday season. Residents and Festival of Lights visitors are invited to shop, dine and explore the businesses that create jobs and help make Riverside a vibrant place to live and visit.

Small businesses strengthen Riverside's economy by providing jobs, serving neighborhoods and bringing activity to commercial districts. Choosing local helps these businesses grow and reinvest in the community.

"Our small businesses help make Riverside a place people are proud to call home," stated Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson. "Behind every storefront is someone investing in our community, creating opportunities, and serving our neighborhoods. This holiday season, I encourage residents and visitors to shop small and celebrate the businesses that make our city special."

"When you shop small, you support the entrepreneurs who create jobs, invest in their neighborhoods, and keep our local economy growing. Small Business Saturday is an invitation to discover Riverside's businesses and make supporting them a year-round habit." said Paul Nolta, Director of the IE Small Business Development Center.

The celebration began November 19, when the Economic Development Committee honored seven small businesses, one from each of Riverside's seven wards, representing a range of industries:

- Ward 1: Phenix Technology, Inc.
- Ward 2: Benedetto Gelato
- Ward 3: Ballet Folklorico de Riverside
- Ward 4: Gless Ranch
- Ward 5: Enzo's Pizza

- Ward 6: Taqueria Dos Portrillos
- Ward 7: Jaffa Precision Engineering, Inc.

Beginning Saturday November 21, Community & Economic Development will feature small businesses on social media each day for seven consecutive days, highlighting a different ward each day. The campaign will introduce residents to businesses throughout Riverside and explore local establishments beyond their usual destinations.

“Supporting small businesses is an investment in Riverside’s economic future,” said Miranda Evans, Director of the City’s Community and Economic Development Department. “These businesses create jobs, bring activity to our commercial corridors, and strengthen our community. Our goal is to turn the excitement of the holiday season into lasting customer relationships that help businesses succeed year-round. They truly are the heartbeat of our local economy.”

During the week of Small Business Saturday, shoppers can also earn 50% rewards through Riverside Rewards at all participating businesses listed in the Open Rewards app. The promotion is designed to encourage local spending during the holiday shopping season and connect businesses with new and returning customers.

The celebration will conclude with a Holiday Makers Market in partnership with the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center (OCIE SBDC) on Saturday, December 5, on Main St., providing another opportunity for small businesses to reach customers and for residents to shop locally for holiday gifts.

Rachael Dzikonski, CEO of the Riverside Arts Council, said, “Our local artists and makers are such an important part of what makes Riverside special. With the designation of our Arts & Culture District, we have even more reason to celebrate the creativity and talent that make our community unique. When we shop locally, we're doing more than purchasing a gift. We're supporting the people who contribute to our city's culture, character, and economy while investing back into our creative community.”

The City encourages residents and visitors to make supporting Riverside businesses a year-round commitment. Every decision to shop, dine, or purchase services locally is an opportunity to support the entrepreneurs and workers who help Riverside’s economy thrive.

###