



IN A Nutshell



No. 201

Newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

SPRING 2023



Walnut Creek City Council adopts new Housing Element

In January, the Walnut Creek City Council adopted the 2023-2031 Housing Element, which identifies potential sites for new housing development, as well as programs and actions for the City to take to foster more affordable housing and decrease homelessness. It is required by State law, and has been submitted to the State for review and certification.

As Walnut Creek has evolved from a small farming town to a post-WWII suburb and, more recently to a modern urbanizing community, the City has consistently focused on offering a multitude of housing choices to meet the needs of families of diverse income levels and sizes. Unlike most communities of our size, Walnut Creek's housing stock is primarily multifamily. Traditional single-family detached homes comprise only slightly more than a third of the housing stock, while more than 60 percent encompasses large apartment/condominium developments, duplexes, townhomes, and garden apartments that offer a wide range of affordability.

Over the last decade, the City has rezoned land primarily in the downtown area to increase housing affordability and housing mobility, decrease the need for a vehicle, and increase access to jobs, good schools, and a plethora of amenities. Coupled with the City's inclusionary housing ordinance and commercial linkage fees, the goal is to rebalance the costs of constructing housing to increase the number of affordable units available in the community. The city is also finalizing plans for permit-ready accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to reduce both barriers and costs related to building those units. Find out more at walnut-creek.org/HEU.

2023 BEGINS WITH HUGE WINTER STORMS



New Year's Eve brought torrential rain to Walnut Creek and throughout northern California, resulting in 20 inches of rainfall over a period of several weeks. City Public Works crews spent much of December preparing for winter storms, cleaning out more than 6,000 inlets, trash capture devices and racks, and clearing gutters, and adding additional street sweeping. That prep work paid off when the heavy rains hit, as damage was mostly limited to downed trees, localized flooding, slides in Open Space and on trails, and several road failures. City facilities and properties incurred more than \$1 million in damages; the City recognizes many homeowners also sustained property damage. For those whose homeowner's insurance does not cover flood damage, find out more about potential assistance on page 4.



Police Department adds a 4-legged team member

Timber is Walnut Creek's newest four-legged officer. Timber is a four-year-old Belgian Malinois from Holland. Before coming to the U.S., Timber placed 11th at the 2022 KNPV Nationals, a skills competition for service dogs. WCPD uses highly trained and skilled dogs to help de-escalate situations, locate missing people, find evidence of crimes and support the Central County SWAT team. Over the next few months, Timber and K9 Officer Douglass will attend several weeks of trainings to prepare for patrol work.



HIGHLIGHTS

Check cable listings or walnutcreektv.org for the full schedule of shows.

For original programming, community events and more, visit the City's YouTube channel at YouTube.com/CityofWalnutCreek.

State of the City 2023

Mayor Cindy Silva updated business leaders and community members at the annual "State of the City" event at Boundary Oak on February 22, followed by a question and answer session facilitated by Audrey Gee from the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce.

Live! from the Library

Catch the presentation of "One Singular Sensation: The Power and Passions of American Musical Theatre," hosted by Beth Wynstra, in the January edition of Live! from the Library. Wynstra highlighted the evolving nature of musical theatre, storytelling through song, and the staying power of this celebrated genre.

Messages from the Mayor

Mayor Cindy Silva provides a video community update each month. Find out the latest news and information for Walnut Creek residents by checking out the Mayor's Report.

Walnut Creek Concert Band

Enjoy the classics in the Walnut Creek Concert Band's spring presentation with a performance of band classics, from Schuman to Sousa.

High School Sports and Upcoming Graduations

Check out Northgate vs. Las Lomas in men's basketball, or Northgate vs. Las Lomas in women's soccer. WCTV brings the best of high school sports. Later this spring, WCTV will have video coverage of graduation ceremonies for Las Lomas, Northgate, and Carondelet high schools.

Public Meetings

Catch recent City Council meetings, as well as those of our many commissions. Our public meetings are also broadcast live on YouTube, Walnut Creek TV, the City's website, and Zoom.



Here's what's happening

Save the Dates for Fiesta Cultural!

A CELEBRATION OF LATIN AMERICAN ARTS AND CULTURE, Fiesta Cultural is a week of vibrant events and performances at the Leshner Center for the Arts. Activities will include four world-class Headliners performances, a Newsmakers Leshner Speaker Series program, Center Repertory Company's production of *In the Heights*, Bedford Gallery's exhibition, *About Face*, and a free weekend street fair with music and dance from the diverse cultures of Latin America.

NEWSMAKERS LESHNER SPEAKER SERIES

Ana Navarro
Tuesday, June 20



HEADLINERS

**Comedian
Gina Brillon**
Thursday, June 22



Arturo Sandoval
Friday, June 23



Las Cafeteras
Saturday, June 24

Mariachi Herencia de Mexico
Sunday, June 25

CENTER REP

Lin-Manuel Miranda's In the Heights May 27-June 24



Free outdoor public performances from a community organization and complementary engagement programming from Las Cafeteras and Mariachi Herencia de Mexico will provide additional opportunities to engage youth and families on Saturday and Sunday.

Fiesta Cultural is sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, Leshner Foundation, and NBC Bay Area and Telemundo 48.

Visit LeshnerArtsCenter.org to learn more and purchase tickets today!

LESHNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Dance Theatre of Harlem

Brought to you by Diablo Regional Arts Association



CENTER REP PRESENTS

Visit CenterREP.org for show details and tickets

SWEAT

March 25 - April 16, 2023

A Pulitzer Prize-winning collision of race, class, and friendship. By Lynn Nottage, Directed by Elizabeth Carter. For the Deaf community, we are providing an ASL-interpreted performance of this event on April 16, 2023, at 2:30 PM.



Young REP summer program

Young REP Theatre Training Program (ages 12+) June 12 - July 27, 2023

The Young Repertory Theatre Training Program celebrates its 50th year in 2023 and continues to train and develop students interested in the theatre arts as a vocation or serious avocation.

This year's program runs June 12 - July 27, 2023 and includes Acting Program: Mon-Fri 9:30 am-12:00 pm; Musical Theatre Performance Workshop: Mon Wed Fri 1:00 pm-4:00 pm; and Actor's Performance Workshop: Tues Thurs 1:00 pm-4:00 pm.

Directors Jeffrey Draper, Kerri Shawn, Michael Patrick Wiles, and Jennifer Perry will hold interviews/auditions for placement in Young REP 2023 from March-May at the Leshner Center. For more information, visit YoungREP.org.

VISIT BEDFORD GALLERY

Last Chance to Experience Erin Fong | The Sensation of Color

On view through April 2, 2023

Through dedicated research and experimentation, Bay Area artist and letterpress printer Erin Fong has transformed Bedford Gallery into a vibrant lab full of prints, paintings, and installations that explore how color affects emotional responses and informs our daily lives in subtle, often unconscious ways. The exhibition invites you to tap into your individual and collective experience as you are immersed in hues across the spectrum.



Erin Fong, The Friendship Project. Photo courtesy of Shaun Roberts.

About Face Opens Soon at Bedford Gallery!

April 15 - June 25, 2023

About Face, a juried and invitational exhibition, explores the fascinating tradition of portraiture, using a contemporary lens to speculate how future generations might



Joel Daniel Phillips, The Girl Speaks: With Candace G. Wiley

perceive the way we value beauty, power, and ultimately what we hold culturally significant.

Exhibition Tours at Bedford Gallery

Did you know Bedford Gallery offers exhibition tours for youth (K-12) and adult groups? These age-appropriate, educational tours are led by trained docents and include a hands-on art project (optional for adults)! Tours are FREE for Contra Costa County schools and \$85 for all other youth groups. Adult pricing varies by group size. Please visit www.bedfordgallery.org/programs/gallery-tours to book your experience.

Upcoming Headliners at the Leshner Center

Featuring world-renowned artists, the Leshner Center Presents Headliners series is brought to you by the Leshner Center and Diablo Regional Arts Association. Call the Ticket Office at (925) 943-7469 or visit LeshnerArtsCenter.org for more information.

College Notes A Cappella

Friday, March 10 & Saturday, March 11

The perfect harmony of bright minds and collegiate voices! Presented by Kaiser Permanente

Dance Theatre of Harlem

Thursday, March 16, 2023 & Friday, March 17

An unparalleled dance institution of global acclaim.

Paul Taylor Dance Company

Friday, April 7

The premiere institution for American modern dance.



Delfeayo Marsalis and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra

Friday, June 2

A joyful big band ensemble that maintains important jazz traditions.

Dianne Reeves

Friday, July 28

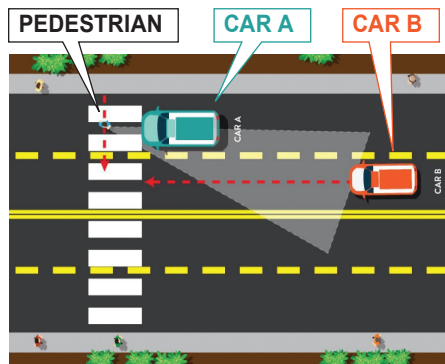
Five-time Grammy Award jazz vocalist.

BUSY STREETS IN DOWNTOWN WALNUT CREEK

Walnut Creek's downtown is host to amazing experiences, shopping, dining and more. With all the attractions comes plenty of people walking and driving.

Some streets within the downtown are larger and provide two lanes in each direction for vehicles: think California, Civic, Broadway and Mt. Diablo. These streets allow more vehicle traffic to flow through, but there are plenty of pedestrians, too—people who walk from their homes, between different destinations, or even from their parked cars. With wider streets, some drivers feel more comfortable driving at a faster speed. This is where it is critically important for you, as a driver, to watch your speed, watch for pedestrians crossing the street and watch for other vehicles stopped at a crosswalk.

The “multiple-threat pedestrian crash” occurs when a motorist in one lane stops for a pedestrian while motorists in the other lanes may or may not. As illustrated, if Car A stops for a pedestrian, Car A obscures both the pedestrian's view of approaching Car B, and Car B's view of the pedestrian. Remember, once you're out of your car, you're a pedestrian too.



Please be courteous and cautious when approaching a crosswalk, yield to pedestrians and watch your speed. As always, remember to “Go with the Slow.”

For more information about the City's Local Roadway Safety Plan and traffic safety, please check out www.walnut-creek.org/TrafficSafety.

Meanwhile, construction work is underway along Locust Street that will result in traffic control and some delays during part of a major water pipeline project underway by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD.) Work hours are Monday through Friday, 7am – 4pm, and will impact businesses and customers on Locust Street between Civic Drive and Mt. Diablo Blvd. Parts of Bonanza Street will also be included in the project. For questions, call EBMUD at 510-287-2053, or email at Construction-east@EBMUD.com.

Flood updates for residents

Residents of Walnut Creek and throughout the County are now able to seek assistance directly from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) if their property or business sustained damage during the winter storm surge. People with insurance should first file a claim with their insurance company, but additional resources may be available from FEMA. Apply online at DisasterAssistance.gov, or call 1-800-621-3362. Applying doesn't guarantee aid, but does connect residents to resources and information on available programs.

Do you know your property's status in terms of flood risk? It's easy to see if your property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area designated on FEMA's flood insurance rate map. You can find out your risk, information on flood insurance, special rules for building in a flood plan, how to properly protect your property and more at walnut-creek.org/floodprep, or email the City at dutyengineer@walnut-creek.org.



STORM DAMAGE AND CLEANUP



Summer in Walnut Creek

SUMMER
REGISTRATION
IS OPEN

SUMMER Camp



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ARTS CAMP

Year-round creative camps explore performing arts, painting, digital media and more for ages 5-18. Students receive individualized instruction, feedback, and critique as students learn new techniques and expand their artistic repertoire.



CLASSIC DAY CAMPS

Classic Day Camps are all about fun, friends, and plenty of time for play. We offer half-day and full-day summer camps for kids ages 3-12, and Junior Recreation Leader opportunities for kids age 12-14. Local teachers lead these camps packed with crafts, swim days, excursions and more.



SPECIALTY CAMPS

Year-round Specialty camps give kids ages 4-14 a fun space to focus on a single experience like sports, STEM, cooking or more.

ADAPTIVE + INCLUSIVE CAMPS

Fun day camps designed for children, teens and young adults who have special needs.

**WALNUT CREEK ARTS + REC LEADS ENGAGING CAMPS FOR CHILDREN, TEENAGERS & YOUNG ADULTS.
IT'S THE PLACE TO EXPLORE FUN ACTIVITIES & MAKE NEW FRIENDS!**



Camps | City of Walnut Creek
(walnut-creek.org)



Register here: Arts + Rec
Registration Start Page



Scholarships | City of Walnut Creek
(walnut-creek.org)

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE We offer financial aid for low and moderate income Contra Costa County residents. Awards cover 30% to 90% of the program fee and take time to process so apply early.
Questions & Customer Support **925-295-1490** artsrec@walnut-creek.org

WE ARE

Hiring



Part-time position, flexible schedule including nights, weekends & seasonal shifts.

Summer Camp Counselors, Building Attendants, Coaches for After School Sports, Gym Attendants, Professional Teaching Artists, Lifeguards, Swim Instructors, Preschool Co-Teachers, Ticket Agents, House Managers. Contact jobs@walnut-creek.org

Programs

AQUATICS



POOLSIDE & PICNIC RENTALS

Make a splash this year for your child's birthday, family reunion, or recent accomplishments! Spaces available at Clarke Swim Center & Larkey. For specific dates and pricing www.walnutcreekrec.org/aquatics

AQUATICS PROGRAMS

Dive into swim lessons every spring, summer and fall for ages 6 month to adult. Teens ages 11-14 can explore the Jr. Lifeguard Experience which covers water safety, basic rescue skills, teamwork, leadership skills, personal responsibility, and an introduction to First Aid and CPR.



FOOD DONATION FIGHTS HUNGER AND COMBATS CLIMATE CHANGE



NEARLY 1 OUT OF EVERY 6 CONTRA COSTA residents is food insecure, meaning individuals or families struggle to find their next meal. Local food recovery organizations and community members have dedicated time and resources to changing this, and California has made food donation a requirement. The State passed Senate Bill 1383 with a goal of drastically reducing methane emissions from organics discarded in landfills. Residents now must separate organics from landfill waste, including food scraps, food soiled paper, and yard trimmings. Those should be composted in your green Recycle Smart bin.

Also important is the requirement that some businesses donate excess edible food to help feed community members in need. Mandated food donors have been placed in two tiers to ease-in the regulation.

The City of Walnut Creek already has resources in place to meet the new state mandates, and provide assistance for convenient and safe food donation. Recycle Smart, which manages the City's trash, recycling and organics services, partnered with White Pony Express, a local food recovery organization, to obtain a grant to increase food donation in Contra Costa County. White Pony Express offers free, as-needed food rescue services, and can pick up and distribute fresh and prepared foods within 24 hours. This helps our highest-need neighbors: isolated seniors, students and their families, veterans, and the unhoused. Walnut Creek residents can even volunteer with White Pony Express as a "food runner" to help get food to those in need.

Visit RecycleSmart.org for all the details.

Tier 1

January 1, 2022

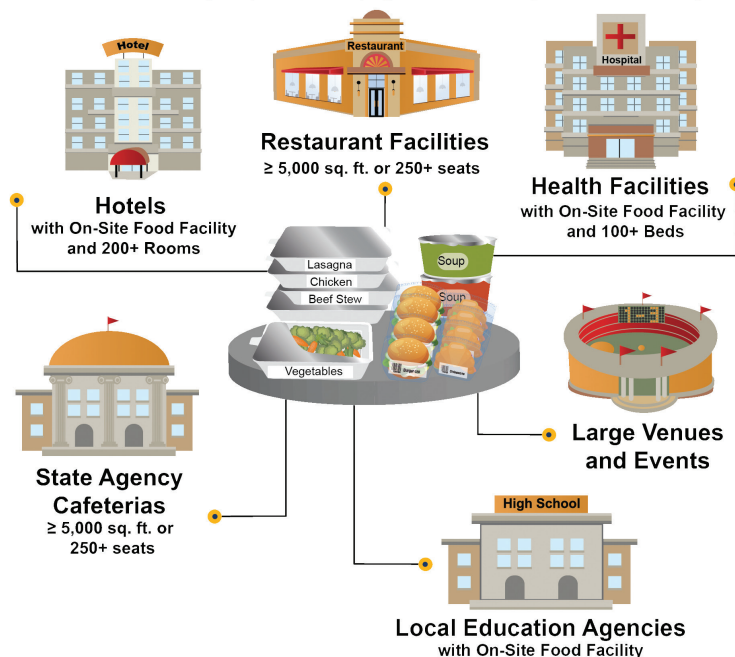
Tier one businesses typically have more produce, fresh grocery, and shelf-stable foods to donate.



Tier 2

January 1, 2024

Tier two businesses typically have more prepared foods to donate, which often require more careful handling to meet food safety requirements (e.g. time and temperature controls).



Walnut Creek welcomes new Human Resources Director

Trish Raver has joined the City of Walnut Creek team as the new Human Resources Director. The City's Human Resources Department manages recruitment, hiring, employee onboarding and many aspects of workforce training. Raver comes to Walnut Creek from the City of Emeryville, where she held the Human Resources Director position for three years. She previously served in HR leadership roles with the cities of Livermore and Orinda.



The City of Walnut Creek currently has a wide range of job opportunities available, from seasonal and hourly workers, to police officers and dispatchers. Find out more by visiting the website at walnut-creek.org or by calling (925) 943-5815.



Want your copy of "In a Nutshell" sooner than it arrives by mail?

The City of Walnut Creek publishes "In a Nutshell" four times per year, and it is mailed to all residences in Walnut Creek via bulk mail. An electronic version of the newsletter is available much sooner, which is helpful for those who use the Nutshell to help plan attendance at seasonal events.

If you would like to receive an email notification when the electronic version of the Nutshell is posted on the City's website, you can register online from the City's homepage at walnut-creek.org. In the upper right hand corner of the homepage, you'll see a tab for "eNotifications." Select that link and you'll be able to subscribe to a variety of electronic newsletters issued by the City of Walnut Creek, from information on emergency preparedness to news from Arts and Recreation.

Walnut Creek Concert Band performs March 21 Final performance for Music Director and Conductor Harvey Benstein



The Walnut Creek Concert Band kicks off its 2023 performances with an evening of classics at the Leshar Center for the Arts on Tuesday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m. Join the Band members as they perform music by composers who have led the way in the musical growth of the Concert Band in a showcase titled "Band Classics."

The concert will also mark a milestone as longtime Music Director and Conductor Harvey Benstein passes the baton to Associate Conductor Matthew Sadowski after serving for 25 years in that role.

Find out more and purchase tickets at LesharCenterArts.org, or call the Ticket Office at (925) 943-7469.



"Painted Pianos" to return as an Earth Day Beautification Project

Saturday, April 22, 2023 – 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Walnut Creek Downtown is proud to announce the return of the beloved Painted Pianos musical art project. Join WCD for a day of downtown beautification and connect with the community as you paint this year's pianos in Walnut Creek. Each piano will be assigned a group of volunteers who will stencil and paint.

All levels of artistic expertise are welcome. The Painted Pianos project brings community members together to create beautiful art and musical memories in downtown Walnut Creek. For more information on how to participate, or how to sponsor a piano, email services@walnutcreekdowntown.com.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAUNCHES KEY MARKET STUDIES



“Office Forum” panelists: left to right, Bob Linscheid, Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce; Phil Tagami, California Capital & Investment Group; Breck Lutz, Newmark; Jason Chadorch, Align Real Estate

With the fluidity of industry conditions and changes brought about by COVID, the City’s Economic Development Division commissioned regional expert consultants to conduct analyses of three key market segments in Walnut Creek: downtown retail space, citywide office space, and medical office demand. The latter was prompted by the opening of two new cancer centers in Walnut Creek.

All three market studies and the executive summary are now available and posted on the City’s Economic Development website at walnutcreekconnected.com.

Overall, the good news is that Walnut Creek fared well generally in those market segments. The downtown retail market is very strong, and has many opportunities ahead. Similarly, the new John Muir Health and BASS Cancer are anticipated to bring new demand for medical office buildings. In line with both national and regional trends and the increase in work-from-home arrangements, general office needs are the most challenged of the market segments. This is not unique to Walnut Creek, and the City appears to be in the middle of the trends on vacancy and lease rates.

These studies are intended to be a baseline that will spur discussion, and in the coming months the City’s Economic Development team will continue meeting with stakeholders and partners to explore ideas and options that will be used to develop an Economic Development Action Plan for the next two years. Special emphasis will be placed on ways to support office properties and attract new jobs and companies to Walnut Creek. Additionally, another study looking at the levels of viable retail options citywide will be published online this spring.

CITY HOSTS OFFICE FORUM EVENT

THE CITY OF WALNUT CREEK’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION held the City’s first “Office Forum” to introduce the recently completed office and medical office market studies. The event, held in December at the Walnut Creek Executive Park in Shadelands, drew more than 40 commercial property owners, brokers and key stakeholders. They heard insightful presentations on Walnut Creek’s current office and medical office markets, and engaged in meaningful dialogue from a range of perspectives. Special thanks to the venue host and networking reception sponsors, California Capital and Investment Group and the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce.

Outdoor dining to continue in Walnut Creek



In January, the Walnut Creek City Council adopted an updated Outdoor Dining Policy. It will allow for a comprehensive outdoor dining program, and made some elements of outdoor dining, which were previously temporary, into permanent amenities. An ordinance on design standards and operational requirements for outdoor dining spaces and a fee structure were approved at the January 17, 2023, City Council meeting.

The continuation of the outdoor dining program will result in structures that add to the attractive appeal of downtown Walnut Creek and are operated in a responsible manner.

The City will begin accepting applications in early 2023. For more information on outdoor dining, contact outdoordining@walnut-creek.org.

KNOW YOUR WALNUT CREEK PARKS:

HOWE HOMESTEAD PARK



JUST A SHORT WALK FROM downtown is Howe Homestead Park, the former home of Associated Press correspondent James Howe. Crossing over the old stone bridge from the Howe Homestead parking lot, one gets an impression of the area as it appeared in the late 1930's. Howe Homestead serves as the western access to Shell Ridge open space. Hikers can start on the Kovar Trail and walk to the crest of Mount Diablo 10 miles away.

James Howe was a noted Associated Press correspondent from the early 20th century. Howe was stationed in many of the world's Great Cities—London, Paris, Warsaw, Berlin, Brussels, Moscow, Tokyo, Peking, Shanghai, Bombay, Washington, Honolulu, and San Francisco. For three decades, Howe circled the globe covering world-sharing events such as World War I, the Russo-Polish war, the Sino-Japanese war, the Chinese Revolution. Howe interviewed influential and historic figures including

Gandhi, Lindbergh, George Bernard Shaw, King George, Lloyd George. When he retired in 1935, he chose to move to Walnut Creek. He remodeled the home at the Howe Homestead and built it into his treasured estate that is now shared with the public today.

In addition to the natural beauty that abounds, a beloved feature of the park is the Community Gardens. There are 48 gardening plots rented to residents of Walnut Creek for growing vegetables and ornamental plants. The Community Gardens are very popular with a multi-year waiting list.

We invite you to visit this local treasure, located at 2950 Walnut Blvd. Howe Homestead is open from dawn to dusk, 7 days a week. A small picnic area is available on a first come, first serve basis and a restroom is located in the central part of the park. For tours, special events, or information on the community garden, call Open Space Ranger Art Janke at (925) 943-5899 extension x3521.



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Mayor Pro Tem Loella Haskew
Cindy Darling
Matt Francois
Kevin Wilk

For an appointment, call 925-256-3504

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Ronald Cassano

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Nutshell Newsletter is published quarterly. For questions and comments, contact editor Betsy Burkhart, 925-943-5895 or burkhart@walnut-creek.org

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