



IN A Nutshell



No. 204

Newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

WINTER 2023

State Approves City's Housing Element Update

The California Department of Housing and Community Development has certified the Housing Element of Walnut Creek's General Plan. This updated version will cover the time period from now through the year 2031. The Housing Element provides a framework of goals, polices and programs to support the creation of more than 5,800 new units of housing in Walnut Creek during that timeframe, including more than 3,500 affordable homes. "I want to thank the City's Community Development and legal staff for dedicated hard work to see this through to the finish line," Mayor Cindy Silva said. "There is considerable effort that goes into meeting the complex requirements set by the State, but the certification of our Housing Element Update shows the commitment of Walnut Creek to providing for a range of housing needs."

More information about the Update can be found on the City's website at walnut-creek.org/HEU.



It's time to skate at "Walnut Creek on Ice"

– Season 18 for the popular ice rink, find out details inside.



YOUR MEASURE O DOLLARS AT WORK

THANKS TO VOTERS WHO APPROVED MEASURE O, the temporary ½ sales tax increase, efforts are underway on a variety of fronts to spend the funds on projects, programs and services important to Walnut Creek residents. Five new police officer positions dedicated to the downtown area are now in place, which will be especially helpful during the holiday season. New sports field lighting is coming to Tice Valley Park, and it should be operational by next fall. The design phase starts soon for new all-weather fields at Heather Farm Park. Public engagement for the conversion of Fields 1 and 2 will begin early in 2024.

One of the most visible projects is the upcoming replacement of the aging aquatics center and community center at Heather Farm Park.

Both were built more than 50 years ago, and need more than just a renovation. Public outreach during the fall was helpful for providing guidance and input in the overall design of the project. As a result of that first round of public engagement, architects will be preparing conceptual designs which will be presented to various city commissions and the City Council in the spring of 2024. The goal is to begin construction in the summer of 2025; construction is expected to take two years. To find out the latest about this project, visit the Heather Farm Park webpage at walnut-creek.org/heatherfarm. The City is pleased to be able to provide the new facility and pools for the entire community.

Measure O Citizens' Oversight Committee Selected

Five residents of Walnut Creek have been selected to serve on the committee that will oversee spending of the voter-approved ½ cent sales tax increase. The City Council selected them from a pool of applicants in September, and they took their oath of office in November. The members are: Jonathan Bartlett, Molly P. Clopp, Susan Hildreth, Brian Mulligan, and Jesse Smyers. Hildreth and Smyers will serve for four years; Bartlett, Clopp and Mulligan will each serve for two years. Twenty two Walnut Creek residents applied to be part of the Citizens' Oversight Committee. The Committee meetings will be open to the public, and a date for the first meeting will be set soon. The Committee will report annually on the use of Measure O funds to ensure they are being spent correctly.



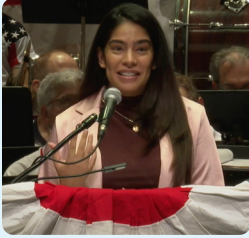
HIGHLIGHTS

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.

Veterans Day Ceremony

Walnut Creek honored its veterans for their service in the traditional Veterans Day commemoration at the Leshar Center for the Arts. See keynote speaker Elena Kim's thought-provoking remarks about the role of women in service, and hear the patriotic sounds of the Walnut Creek Concert Band.



Homeless Task Forum

Breaking down the myths about affordable housing was the topic of an interesting and important forum in November. Find out if what you think you know about affordable housing matches the real issues many residents face.

Walnut Creek Concert Band

The Band performed its annual holiday concert in November, held at the Leshar Center for the Arts. Gather your family to watch as the Band offered a wide variety of musical selections, including Christmas and Hanukkah classics.

Contra Costa Ballet

With holiday season here, the Contra Costa Ballet brings the most family-friendly production of "The Nutcracker," with an array of young, talented dancers. The one hour performance is a great introduction to the holiday classic.

Messages from the Mayor

Each month, the City's Mayor provides a video community update, sharing the latest news and information. Find out what's happening in Walnut Creek by checking out the Mayor's Report.

Public Meetings

Catch recent City Council meetings, as well as those of our many commissions, including the Planning, Design Review, Arts, Transportation, and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commissions. Our public meetings are also broadcast live on YouTube, Walnut Creek TV, and on the City's website.

Here's what's happening

PUBLIC ART

New library mural sparks children's imaginations in Storybook Room

Artist, children's book author, and Walnut Creek resident Netsanet Tesfay works on her bright and bold mural, Tortoise and Hare, in the Storybook Room (children's area) of Walnut Creek's Downtown Library. The mural, Tesfay's first, is inspired by Aesop's fable, The Tortoise and the Hare. This beautiful, whimsical mural was completed in October. Stop by to view the completed art!



See a video of the making of the mural at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9OUVix_kIA

UPCOMING HEADLINERS AT THE LESHER CENTER

Bundle and save up to 25% - visit LesharArtsCenter.org for the complete season.

The Doo Wop Project

January 12
DooWopified versions of classic hits and modern favorites.



Tonya Boyd-Cannon

January 19
From heart-wrenching ballads, to jazz, funk, rock, and gospel.

Colin Hay, Ramblin' Jack Elliott and more, with Host Kathy Mattea

February 1
A beloved and enduring program of public radio history.

Mads Tolling & the Mads Men

February 9
Celebrating the 1960s with their own distinctive style and innovative flair.

Sarah McKenzie

February 15
Australian jazz singer, pianist, composer, and arranger returns to the Leshar Center!

BEDFORD GALLERY

Bits + Pieces:

Contemporary Art on a Small Scale

Closing December 17

There's still time to explore the cultural phenomenon of miniature things at Bedford Gallery's current exhibition, Bits + Pieces: Contemporary Art on a Small Scale.

Featuring micro and small-scale artwork, Bits + Pieces focuses on minute, precise details.

California Clay

January 13 – March 31, 2024



BOYSEN GALLERY PAINT BY RENIEL DEL ROSARIO

Dedicated to all things “fired,” Bedford Gallery’s winter exhibition presents a survey of California artists working in clay. In response to the recent ceramics renaissance in the contemporary art world, California Clay features an intriguing mix of functional and aesthetic works that highlight the versatility of the medium, and celebrates ceramics as both functional and decorative art, showcasing the artistry and creativity of contemporary ceramicists.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ARTS

Handcrafted Holiday Sale

December 9 & 10 at Shadelands Art Center

Join Center for Community Arts for their annual Handcrafted Holiday Sale! Enjoy a weekend of holiday shopping with handcrafted items from Community Arts teaching artists and students in ceramics, glass, photography, painting, printmaking, jewelry, fiber arts and more. Proceeds from this sale benefit Center for Community Arts, the Clay Arts Guild, and the Community Arts Foundation. Visit communityarts.org/handcrafted or call 925-295-1490 for details.

LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Visit to the North Pole

December 9 – 21

Join Santa and Mrs. Claus at the North Pole during this immersive, live theatre experience. In this exclusive visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus in their kitchen and workshop, your group of up to 6 members will enjoy a private meeting and photo opportunity. Schedule a time slot and learn more at LesherArtsCenter.org.



CENTER REPERTORY COMPANY

A Christmas Carol

December 7 – 21 at the Lesher Center for the Arts

It wouldn't be winter at the REP without the Bay Area's most beloved version of the holiday classic. Thousands of residents and visitors make seeing the Center REP's performance of A Christmas Carol part of their holiday tradition. Visit the Lesher Center website for tickets and details.



Access the Arts: For the Deaf community, Center REP will include American Sign Language interpretation at the 2:00 PM performance on December 17.

“Pay What You Can” preview performances December 7 – 8

Any audience member can join these preview performances, the first ones of each production. Tickets are available for reservation/purchase online at any time – no discount needed.

Every Brilliant Thing

January 6 – 28 at the Lesher Center for the Arts



With poignant humor and joy, Every Brilliant Thing takes you on a journey through grief, healing, falling in love, and (re)discovering all that life has to give. You'll be part of the story, with opportunities for warm, fun audience participation. ASL-interpreted performance on January 13, and “Pay What You Can” performances January 6 – 14.



Adult Drop-In Pickleball Returns to Tice Valley Gym



Pickleball has caught on fast in Walnut Creek; the City's adult drop-in pickleball program is back at Tice Valley Gym. Courts are available Mondays through Thursdays, 10am-3pm, from November through May for drop-in play. Fees are \$7 per session or \$60 for a 10-visit sports pass. Please bring your own balls, paddles, and non-marking court shoes.

Outdoor options include eight courts at Rudgegar Park available for play on Monday-Wednesday from 8am-1pm, Friday from 8am to sunset, and Saturday and Sunday from 10am to sunset (closed on Thursdays.) At Heather Farm Tennis Center, there are currently two outdoor courts with three additional ones being converted this winter.

Summer Camp registration opens January 18 at Noon



It's not too soon to be thinking about Summer Camps for the young people in your life. Take advantage of the best early bird rates on summer day camps by registering before February 1, 2023. Learn more at WalnutCreekArtsRec.org

"The hours are great for working parents. My child really enjoys the environment and the staff. The field trips are so fun as well!" – testimonial from a parent of a Walnut Creek Day Camper.

SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY – YOUR INPUT REQUESTED

The City of Walnut Creek adopted a new Sustainability Action Plan in July, setting the stage for how the City and residents can collectively lower our climate change-causing emissions and improve our sustainability and resilience. Over the last few months, the City has begun implementing actions outlined in the Plan, including conducting community outreach. To further our understanding of how we can work together to achieve our goals, we would like residents to take



a few minutes to fill out an online survey. It will help the City understand which sustainability topics are of interest to you, and how you would like to learn more. The City will use survey results to inform our outreach efforts

going forward. You can find out more about our sustainability plan and a link to the survey at walnut-creek.org/eco. You can also take the survey directly through the QR code on this page. The survey will be open through mid-January.

Walnut Creek on Ice Returns

It's time to lace up the skates and enjoy one of the special holiday activities in Walnut Creek as "Walnut Creek on Ice" returns for another season of outdoor ice skating. Located in Civic Park, it is the largest outdoor ice skating rink in the Bay Area. It opens December 15 and runs through January 15, and welcomes skaters of all ages and abilities to enjoy a winter wonderland under the partially-covered rink. The family-focused rink also offers gliders for kids and adults alike, helpful for those a bit wobbly on skates, and events geared towards a festive family night out. Special events throughout the season, including DJ nights, little kids-only skate on Dec. 18, 20, Jan. 3, 8, and 10, and a "Let it Glow," neon family, skate from 5-9 p.m. Dec. 19. The rink can be reserved for



birthdays, holiday and company celebrations, and personal heated cabanas can be booked as well. Visit WalnutCreekOnIce.com for tickets and more details.

Shop, dine, and entertain in Walnut Creek this holiday season

The official holiday shopping season is underway, and the City encourages residents to support local Walnut Creek businesses for your shopping, dining, and entertainment needs. The City offers a wide variety of shopping, casual and fine-dining choices, and activities and entertainment for all ages, including exclusive live performances, art exhibits, ice skating at the park, and plenty of other outdoor amenities. You can mix and match your own daily adventure.

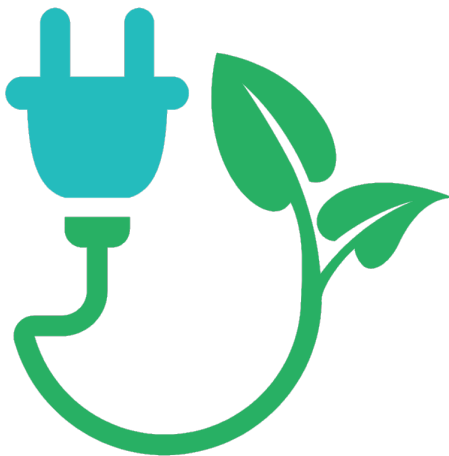
Walnut Creek is proud of its thriving business community. Businesses, especially small businesses, help shape our community character, strengthen economic vitality, as

well as develop strong partnerships among neighbors, local business owners and employees, and community leaders. Local businesses are an essential part of our community fabric working hard to serve the needs of patrons.

The City also wants residents to feel safe during the busy holiday season. If you're downtown, you'll likely notice the extra Police Department patrols deployed in the downtown corridor throughout the holidays. For Broadway Plaza shoppers, the street that runs through the middle of the Plaza will be closed to make it easier to move between stores and restaurants.



Electrify Your Home to Fight Climate Change, Improve Health, and Save Money



Switching your home's systems to electric is one of the best ways to fight climate change. Making the switch to electric also directly benefits your household: you'll lower your risk of developing chronic health conditions from exposure to gas appliances like stoves and furnaces. You can also save money on your utility bill, since electric appliances use less energy than gas appliances. Everything from your air conditioner and heating system to your clothes dryer and kitchen appliances can save energy using electricity. And more than \$28,000 in discounts and tax credits are available to make the switch. Visit walnut-creek.org/eco and check the "Top Actions You Can Take" section for details.

WALNUT CREEK POLICE DEPARTMENT BECOMES EARLY ADOPTER OF "ABLE"

The Walnut Creek Police Department is proud to share its participation in the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) project. ABLE was developed by Georgetown University Law Center after years of academic research and is designed to strengthen a culture that supports intervention. The Police Department mandates that officers intercede in excessive force situations and provides continual training throughout the year on use of force policies. The ABLE program brings the missing element of peer intervention skill building, and support for building this in our culture.



ABLE training provides practical active

bystandership strategies and tactics to prevent misconduct, reduce police mistakes, and promote health and wellness. ABLE gives employees the tools they need to overcome the powerful inhibitors to intervene in one another's actions. In addition to giving employees the tools to successfully intervene, ABLE also trains employees to recognize and be receptive to intervention. Creating a culture of being open to peer intervention is a key component of ABLE's success.

WCPD is the first adopter of the program within Contra Costa County and joins a list of 22 other California law enforcement agencies who have become early adopters of ABLE.

WCPD introduces new Captain

In October, Chief Jamie Knox announced the appointment of Lieutenant Ryan Hibbs as the next Police Captain at the Walnut Creek Police Department. Captain Hibbs joined the Walnut Creek Police Department in 2009 and has held numerous assignments throughout the organization, including Patrol Officer, Defensive Tactics Instructor and Field Training Officer. He was assigned to the Community and Downtown Policing Team and has been a member of the Crime Scene Investigations Team, and the Rossmoor Policing Enhancement Committee. Captain Hibbs most recently served as a Lieutenant Watch Commander in the Patrol Bureau and as manager of the Field Training Officer Program.



Chief Knox stated, "Ryan brings a breadth of increasingly responsible police experience with him to this position, and he will be a welcome addition to my executive team."

A 21-year veteran in law enforcement, Captain Hibbs holds an Associate's Degree

in Administration of Justice and a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Negotiations, Conflict Resolution, and Peace Building.



Give Your Time and Expertise to the Community Arts Foundation

The Community Arts Foundation in Walnut Creek (<https://commartsfoundation.org/>) is actively seeking new board members. The Foundation works to raise funds for a countywide scholarship program, which serves students of all ages who want to pursue their passion in the arts at Walnut Creek's Center for Community Arts. Board members advocate for and work to provide access to arts education for all, regardless of the ability to pay. For more information, contact Development Director Cole Portocarrero at colep.caf@gmail.com. The Arts Foundation website is at commartsfoundation.org.



Thanks to Clean-Up Crew

The City of Walnut Creek has a big thank you to those who volunteer with the Community Clean-Up Crew for clearing out trash in Walnut Creek every other weekend. The Crew has been making Walnut Creek safer and more beautiful since 2020. To volunteer or find out more, visit thecleanupcrew.org.

Don't be a statistic: know the dangers of driving while impaired

No matter how advanced your driving skills are, driving while impaired is not only illegal, it's dangerous.

Alcohol and other regulated substances reduce your ability to steer safely around other vehicles, avoid collisions, and handle unexpected situations.



One in five severe crashes on Walnut Creek streets are DUI related. Walnut Creek recently adopted its Local Roadway Safety Plan: A Path to Vision Zero. The City is committed to prioritizing safety and eliminating severe traffic collisions on City streets. As we enter the holiday season, please be responsible at parties and other festivities where there will be alcohol. Plan in advance to have a designated driver, take transit or a rideshare to ensure a safe ride home. If you see an impaired driver, call 911.



Mountain Shadow Film Society Launches 11th Season

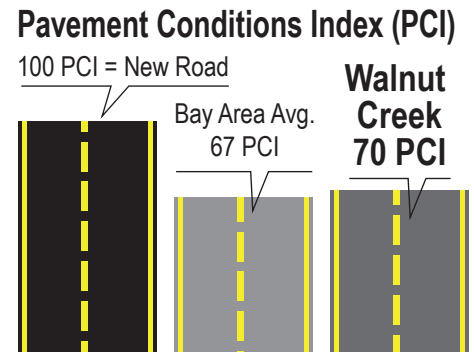
Celebrating more than a decade of bringing the best in international and independent filmmaking to Walnut Creek, Mountain Shadow Film Society has new memberships available for both matinee and evening series. Monthly shows are in the Walnut Creek Library, and include new theatrical releases otherwise unavailable in our area. Visit mountainshadow.org for details.

Walnut Creek's Pavement Management Program

With 400 miles of roadway, keeping Walnut Creek's streets in good condition takes a great deal of work. To manage how that work is accomplished, the City uses a standard measure of pavement quality called the Pavement Conditions Index (PCI) to rate our roads. On a simple 100 point scale, a new road has an PCI of 100. Walnut Creek's 70 PCI puts it in the "good" category, and ahead of the Bay Area overall which averages a 67 score.

To make the best use of the \$3.4 million average annual investment in our roads, staff analyze pavement conditions based upon several factors, including age, number of nearby streets receiving the same treatment, future construction or utility improvements, traffic loads, and available funds.

With soaring construction costs, we are working harder to stretch every pavement dollar, while giving our residents safe roadways. 2023's program included pavement maintenance on 80 streets and adding 70 ADA curb ramps. Updates with our 2024 plans will be coming soon on our City website and social media channels.



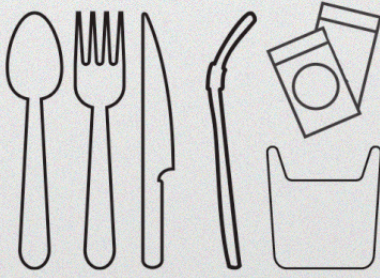
Is your home in a flood zone, and do you need flood insurance?



Floods can happen anywhere, at any time. What can be challenging is to determine if your property is in an area considered higher risk for flooding. A good way to figure that out is to use a FEMA flood map. The maps show each community's risk of flooding, including specific flood zones and their boundaries. Visit msc.fema.gov/portal to find the map, enter your address and it will pull up a record of your area. Even easier, contact the City at dutyengineer@walnut-creek.org, and we will help you check.

Depending upon which flood zone you live in, you may be required by your mortgage lender to have flood insurance. Most homeowners' insurance policies don't cover flooding. Even if you're not required to purchase insurance, it's worth considering; about 25% of flood claims come from properties that are not in high-risk zones. Find out more flood information on FEMA's website at fema.gov.

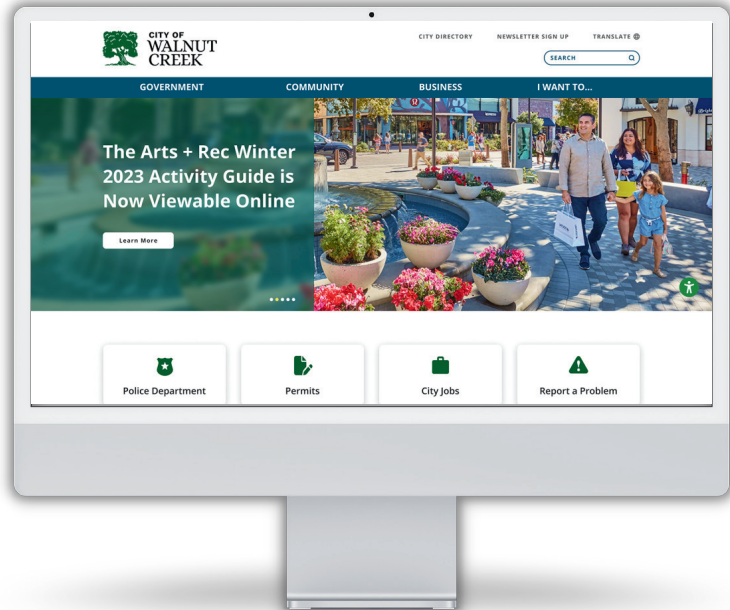
UPON REQUEST ONLY



Single-use items from restaurants: now upon request only

If you've ordered takeout online from a restaurant recently, you may have noticed a new option as you're placing your order: a box to check if you want utensils to be included with your food. This is because of a new California law requiring restaurants, coffee shops, and other stores that sell food to ask customers whether they want single-use disposable accessories, such as disposable forks and straws, before providing these items. This applies to dining in as well as takeout, and regardless of what material is used – plastic, wood, etc. Straws, stirrers and condiment packets are included as well.

To help further reduce waste, you can bring your own reusable containers for takeout food and leftovers from your favorite restaurants. For more information on how to reduce waste from single-use foodware, visit recyclesmart.org/AB1276



Redesigned City Websites Launching Soon to Enhance Civic Experience

The City of Walnut Creek is excited to announce the launch of four new websites for the City, Arts + Rec, Economic Development and the Police Department. Coming in mid-December, the revamped sites are designed to provide easy access to services, local information, and community engagement opportunities. The sites were designed with the help of our community and staff through a series of surveys, workshops, and user-testing over the past year. All four websites will



host simplified navigation, user-friendly content, expanded translation options, and new accessibility tools.

With clean and intuitive designs, the websites ensure an improved experience for visitors on both desktop and mobile devices. Navigating services, finding out about meetings and events, and learning the latest City news that could impact you will be simpler than ever, empowering visitors to stay informed with just a few clicks. Visit the new sites soon at walnutcreekca.gov.

Shadelands Ranch Holiday Faire and Traditional Tea Luncheons

The holidays are arriving at Shadelands Ranch with a series of annual events that have something for everyone. Running from November 25 – December 10, visit the Holiday Faire with 35 local crafters offering handmade, one of a kind goods perfect for gifting. The Holiday Tea reservations are now available as well, with seatings at 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM daily, including a three-course luncheon, inside the historic Shadelands Ranch house. Santa and Mrs. Claus even stopped by in late November to say hello. If you love history and would like to help



preserve and pass on the fascinating story of the Penniman family, Shadelands and Walnut Creek, become a volunteer.

Schedules are flexible; there is no minimum required number of hours. The Walnut Creek Historical Society is offering the following opportunities for 2024: Museum house docents, downtown history docents, living history docents, assisting with archives, and helping with the many community events held on the Ranch.

Volunteering with Shadelands is both fun and rewarding; training is provided. Find out more at wchistory.org, and to volunteer, contact the office at 925-935-7871.

KNOW YOUR WALNUT CREEK PARKS:

SHADELANDS HISTORIC RANCH



COMPLETED IN 1903, THE SHADELANDS RANCH MUSEUM is a time capsule of turn-of-the-20th-Century Walnut Creek. The Museum is a site on the National Register of Historic Places, and furnished with many original family furnishings and treatments.

The large redwood-framed Colonial Revival house was originally the ranch home of Hiram Penniman, an early Walnut Creek pioneer. Hiram Penniman came to Walnut Creek in 1850 and eventually owned 500 acres of fruit and nut orchards in the Ygnacio Valley. He and his wife Carrie Morris raised four children—two sons and two daughters—and built the home to provide for the future security of his daughter Mary. Sadly, Mary died of influenza in 1909, only a few years after the house was built.

Upon Mary's passing, the house and ranch property were given to Penniman's other daughter, Bessie. Bessie was married to Albert Johnson, the son of a wealthy Ohio businessman, known for building the now-National Monument "Scotty's Castle" in the Death Valley area of the Mojave Desert. Upon Bessie's death in 1943, Johnson inherited the property. Having no heirs, Johnson formed the Gospel Foundation of California to operate Shadelands and his other assets. Shadelands continued as a working fruit and nut ranch until 1948, the year of Johnson's death.

In 1970, the Gospel Foundation donated the Penniman Historic home and 2.67 acres of land to the City

of Walnut Creek for the purpose of preserving and interpreting local history. The City appointed the Walnut Creek Historical Society perform these important functions. The house and grounds were first opened to the public as the Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum in 1972 and continue to this day. The historic home is open for Museum tours Sundays and Wednesdays from 1 pm to 4 pm, as well as for a number of special events. The surrounding park grounds are open dusk to dawn, with the gazebo area that can be reserved for event rental through the Walnut Creek Historical Society.

To learn more about the Shadelands Historic Ranch or plan your visit, visit <https://wchistory.org/museum>.



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