

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

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May 3, 2024

Dan Buckshi, City Manager
City of Walnut Creek
1666 N. Main Street
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Dear Dan:

RE: Prohousing Designation – City of Walnut Creek

Please Note: The Prohousing Designation award is under a media and public announcement embargo until released by the Office of the Governor or otherwise notified by HCD staff. HCD will provide updates on the timing of the award announcement and provide a social media toolkit and a quote from the HCD Director for use in local media releases. Please reply to this email and provide the name, email, and phone number of your Public Information Officer. Should you want to host an in-person event, please complete HCD's online speaker request form [calhcd.service-now.com] to ensure the event is routed to our executive office.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (Department) is pleased to announce that the City of Walnut Creek has been designated a Prohousing Jurisdiction under the Prohousing Designation Program. The Department has determined that the application meets Prohousing statutory requirements.

The Prohousing Designation Program was established in the 2019-20 Budget Act to acknowledge the policies of local governments that promote housing development. The purpose of the program is to encourage jurisdictions to pass and implement policies that accelerate housing production, promote favorable zoning and land use, reduce construction and development costs, and provide financial subsidies. Through a Prohousing Designation, the City of Walnut Creek has shown commitment and diligence and demonstrated itself as a partner to the state in combatting the housing crisis.

The City of Walnut Creek's Prohousing Designation application demonstrates a commitment to accelerating affordable housing development. The city adopted the Community Benefits program, which provides opportunities to developers to receive additional height limits, greater floor area ratio, and density bonuses for a project in exchange for providing amenities desired by the city and greater development intensity. Additionally, Walnut Creek is undertaking efforts to streamline housing development at the project level. In the past five years, the city has approved many residential projects that utilized statutory and categorical exemptions as authorized by applicable law, which

has allowed for greater unit outcomes. Finally, the city utilizes local funding sources sufficient to facilitate and support the development of housing for lower-income households. For example, the city has adopted ordinances on commercial linkage and housing in-lieu fees that are allocated for affordable housing development.

As a reminder, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) is state law (Chapter 958, Statutes of 2018) and a threshold requirement for receiving and maintaining your Prohousing Designation. The treatment of unhoused individuals has inherent intersections with public agencies' duties to AFFH. People with disabilities, and particularly people of color with disabilities, continue to be disproportionately impacted by California's housing crisis. People with disabilities are the most likely population to experience homelessness, be rent burdened or unable to afford housing, and face the highest rates of housing discrimination.^{1 2} This is an evolving area of law. Thus, the Department strongly recommends you monitor your policies, procedures, and ordinances for compliance with AFFH; examine possible disparate impacts on persons with protected characteristics; follow best practices regarding encampments published by the US Interagency Council on Homelessness ([USICH](#)) at [Principles for Addressing Encampments](#); and follow the principles laid out in the [Martin v. Boise](#) decision. The Department may reach out if concerns with your implementation of AFFH arise.

Congratulations on your successful application. For further information, please contact Paul McDougall at Paul.McDougall@hcd.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Megan Kirkeby, Deputy Director
Housing Policy Development

¹ National Disability Institute, Financial Inequality: Disability, Race and Poverty in America <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/disability-race-poverty-in-america.pdf>.

² HCD's Final 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/plans-reports/docs/final2020ai.pdf>