



**Walnut
Creek 2050**
Rooted. Evolving. Thriving.



Land Use and Community Design

Existing Conditions Report

SEPTEMBER 2026

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Introduction

This Existing Conditions Report (ECR) provides an overview of existing land use and community character in Walnut Creek. It includes current land uses, General Plan land use designations and Zoning districts, and key characteristics of the built environment. It also summarizes key plans and policies and development projects. This report provides a snapshot of current conditions, key issues and trends, and additional considerations for the Walnut Creek General Plan Update (GPU).

Summary of Key Findings

The following are key findings from the Land Use and Community Design ECR that will be further analyzed and explored in later phases of the GPU.

- **Infill Development.** The City's 2006 General Plan and zoning regulations emphasize infill development and provide guidance for housing and employment growth, particularly in areas surrounding the BART stations and in the Downtown Core. Infill development will continue to play a major role in Walnut Creek due to constraints on outward expansion, including the City's planning area boundaries, surrounding watersheds, and protected open space areas.
- **Vacant and Underutilized Sites.** A limited number of vacant and underutilized sites remain within the city limits. Many of these properties are either planned for future development or have been identified as rezoning sites through the Sixth Cycle Housing Element to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

WHAT IS LAND USE?

Land use describes how a property is used and managed. Cities spatially organize and plan for various resident and business needs by categorizing land for residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial, public and/or institutional purposes.

The General Plan maps the distribution of land uses to each parcel and provides a description of allowed use, density, and intensity for each parcel. General Plan Land Use signals to the community and decision makers the vision for how an area will evolve over time and is a key tool for housing and economic development.

- **Measure A, the “Building Heights Freeze Initiative.”** The 1985 voter-approved measure limits the maximum allowable building heights in the city and has played a role in shaping Walnut Creek's urban form, redevelopment potential, and approach to accommodating growth over time. Housing projects often use incentive programs like the State Density Bonus to exceed Measure A heights, whereas non-residential projects like offices must adhere to the height limitations.
- **State Laws.** Recent state legislation has significantly influenced local land use planning and housing production by streamlining housing approvals, requiring fair access to parks and open space, and expanding opportunities for jurisdictions to accommodate new development and housing growth. Many of these regulations permit housing in areas where it has not traditionally been allowed, such as single-family neighborhoods (Senate Bill 9), on faith-based and institutional lands (SB 4), and on parcels where office, retail, or parking are principally permitted uses (SB 6 and AB 2011).
- **Tools for New Development.** Specific plans have served as important tools for encouraging and supporting infill and development to address housing needs. The City continues to utilize these tools in West / North Downtown, Shadelands, and elsewhere to focus and encourage new public and private investment.
- **Unincorporated Areas.** Walnut Creek's city limits create several unincorporated county areas that are fully or partially surrounded by the city. These "county islands" and edge areas present specific planning, service delivery, and governance considerations.

Planning Context

The following section outlines the regional characteristics and planning context.

Regional Context

The City of Walnut Creek is located in central Contra Costa County, within the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area, nestled between the San Ramon and Ygnacio Valleys at the base of the western slopes of Mount Diablo. Residents and visitors have access to and views of the valley's green space from Briones and Mount Diablo. Walnut Creek shares its boundaries with Clayton, Lafayette, Alamo, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and Unincorporated County land as shown in **Figure 1**.

Walnut Creek serves as a key connector for residents and visitors between the Central Valley and the Bay Area, providing convenient access to major employment and activity centers in cities such as Stockton (57 miles east), Oakland (16 miles west), San Francisco (25 miles west), and San Jose (50 miles south). Regional connectivity is supported by major transportation corridors such as Ygnacio Valley Road, Mount Diablo Boulevard, Interstate 680 (I-680), and State Route 24 (SR 24), as well as two Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations as shown in **Figure 2**.

City Limits

Walnut Creek's city limits are shaped by the ridges and hills surrounding the city, and pockets of unincorporated County areas. This total area is 19.7 square miles. See the **Existing Land Use section** for more information on the existing land uses and internal makeup of the incorporated areas.

To the north, Walnut Creek's borders are suburban Pleasant Hill and Concord, and an urban unincorporated area, known as Contra Costa Centre. To the east is a large open space and rural area, including Mount Diablo State Park and the Diablo Foothills. Alamo and Las Trampas Regional Park, also a mix of rural residential and open space, border Walnut Creek to the south. To the west is the rural edge of the City of Lafayette boundary and Briones Regional Park.

Sphere of Influence

As of 1963, every county in California has a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) overseeing most forms of local government boundary change, including incorporation, annexations, and special district formations. A Sphere of Influence (SOI)

is a LAFCO-approved planning area outside city limits intended to support efficient service delivery, limit urban sprawl, protect agricultural and open space lands, avoid overlapping jurisdictions and duplicated services, and guide potential annexation. To update a SOI, which occurs as needed or every five years, LAFCO is required to complete a Municipal Service Review (MSR) to evaluate how services are provided, recommend actions to improve the provision of services, highlight best practices, and identify risks and challenges facing local agencies.

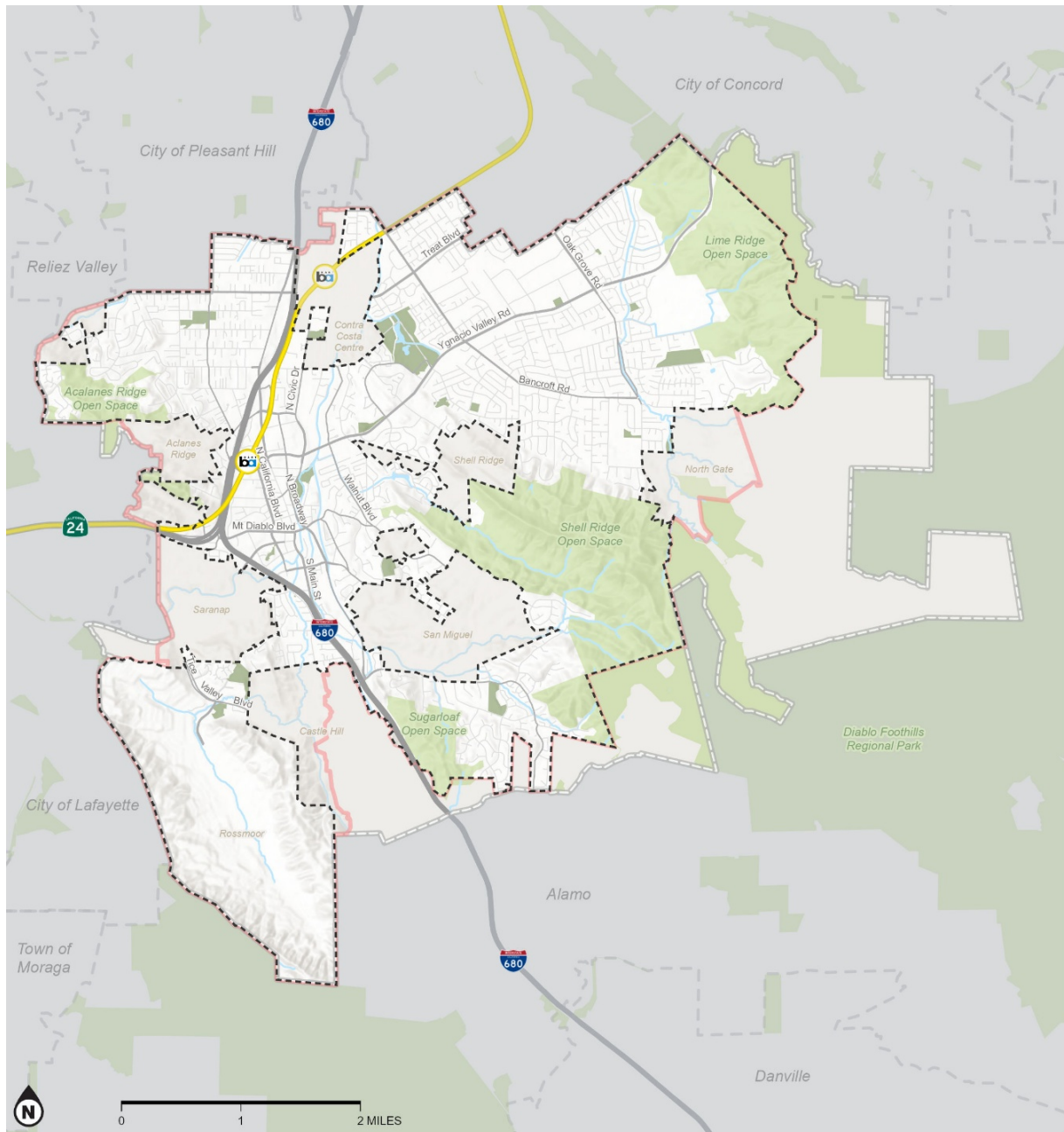
There are approximately 4.8 square miles remaining unincorporated within Walnut Creek's SOI. These areas include both peripheral lands adjacent to the city's boundaries and county islands that are fully or partially surrounded by city limits. The unincorporated areas within the SOI are primarily characterized by low-density single-family residential development with some open space uses. The SOI generally follows the city's boundaries but extends into adjacent unincorporated areas in several locations to accommodate future potential planning and service considerations.

Plan Area

The Plan Area includes the city limits, the SOI, and adjacent areas that are important for understanding future growth and development patterns beyond the SOI. While the City may establish land use designations for properties within the Plan Area, these designations do not confer regulatory authority outside the City's jurisdiction. Rather, they reflect Walnut Creek's long-term vision for future land use and development patterns.

The Plan Area covers approximately 31.4 square miles, including 6.7 square miles located outside the city limits and SOI. Much of this area consists of open space and low-density residential uses. The Plan Area boundaries generally align with the city limits and SOI where Walnut Creek borders other incorporated jurisdictions and extends into adjacent open space areas that are closely linked with the City's environmental, visual, and community character.

Figure 2. Plan Area, Sphere of Influence, and Walnut Creek City Limit



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/24/2026.

PLANNING AREA

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

County Land

Unincorporated land is governed by Contra Costa County (CCC). In the context of the Walnut Creek GPU, several unincorporated areas are located within the Plan Area and SOI, with some partially or entirely surrounded by city limits. These unincorporated areas vary in size and configuration, reflecting historical jurisdictional boundaries, natural terrain features, and property ownership patterns that have resulted in irregular boundary shapes. Many of these areas rely on the City of Walnut Creek's transportation infrastructure, utilities, and services to sustain and travel around the area and into unincorporated areas. The City has not actively pursued annexation of these areas. Contra Costa County Housing Element Sites have been identified within the unincorporated areas in the Plan Area. See **Figure 3** and **Table 1**.

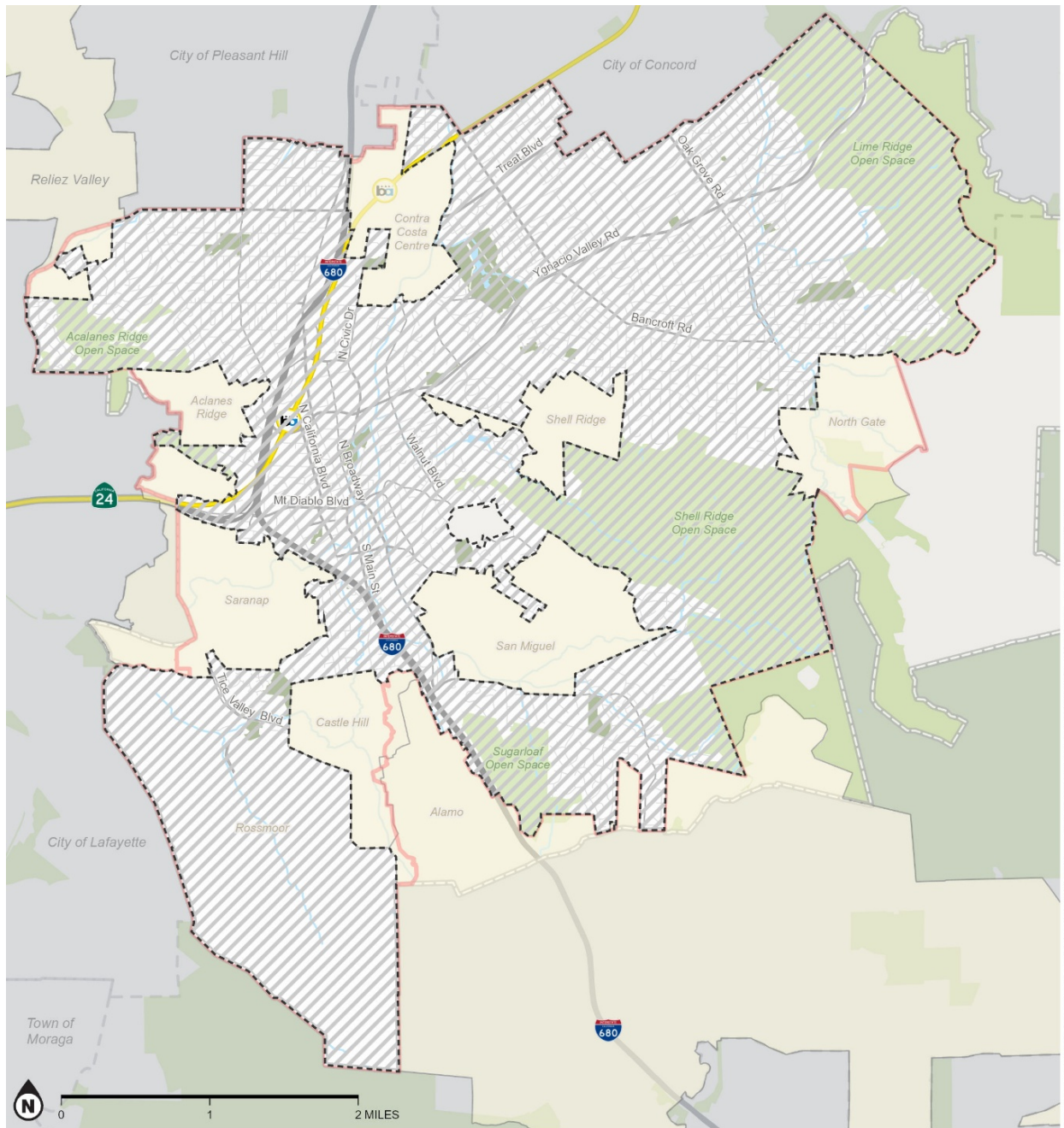
Table 1. Unincorporated Community Descriptions in the Plan Area

Unincorporated Areas	Location / Boundaries	Existing Land Use	Plan Area (Acres)	% Acre of the Plan Area
Acalanes Ridge	East of Lafayette City Limits, West of I-680	Single-family attached and detached, open space.	92,180	1%
By Lar Rieu Park	Island directly east of the Broadway Plaza area by Lar Rieu Park	Single-family detached and religious and service	5,715	0%
Castle Hill	South of the Walnut Creek city limits, West of I-680	Single-family detached and open space	627,774	10%
Contra Costa Centre	North end between Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill	Apartments, single-family homes detached, common area parcels in PUDs, CCC housing element site identified	2,258,271	35%

Unincorporated Areas	Location / Boundaries	Existing Land Use	Plan Area (Acres)	% Acre of the Plan Area
Diablo Foothill Area	Southeast Edge of the City limit	Single-family attached and detached, open space	232,064	4%
Livorna Estate	Southern Edge of the City limit	Single-family attached	3,555	0%
North Gate Area	Eastern City limit as the base of Mount Diablo	Single-family attached and detached, open space, common area parcels in PUDs	420,743	6%
Reliez Valley	East of Walnut Creek boundary and next to Mount Diablo	Single-family detached, open space, CCC housing element site identified	5,156	0%
San Miguel Island	Southern Island next to the I-680	Single-family attached and detached, open space	922,207	14%
Saranap	Island in the southern portion of Walnut Creek	Single-family attached and detached, open space, commercial space, CCC housing element site identified	1,793,604	28%
Shell Ridge	East of Lafayette City Limits, South of SR-24, West of I-680	Single-family attached and detached, open space	127,872	2%
Grand Total			6,489,140	100%

Source: Contra Costa County LAFCO. Retrieved from:
https://www.contracostalafco.org/documents/unincorporated_islands/Maps.pdf

Figure 3. Unincorporated Communities in the Plan Area



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/24/2026.

UNINCORPORATED AREAS

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



Unincorporated Areas

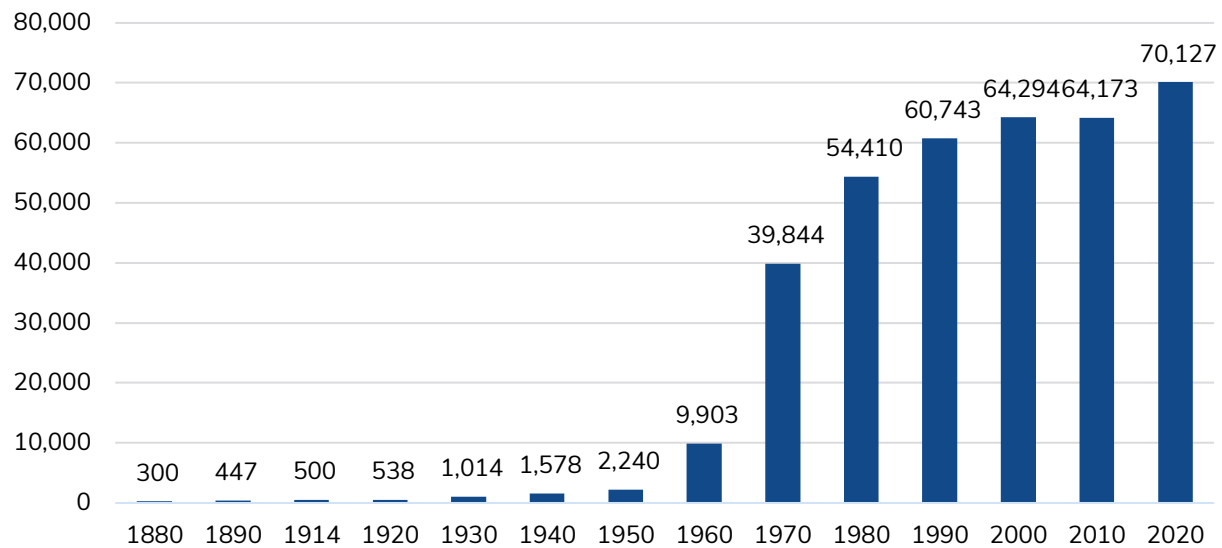
FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

History of Development

Walnut Creek has had many phases of growth that have shaped it into what it is now. **Figure 4** shows the population growth over time, and **Figure 5** shows aerial images of historic development. The following includes a timeline of development patterns and notes past general plans with a star sticker.

Figure 4. Population Growth¹



Source: Tunnell, J. (2021, December). Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Retrieved from: https://files.mtc.ca.gov/library/pub/48117_Place_WalnutCreekCity.pdf.

Walnut Creek Historical Society. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <https://wchistory.org/history/timeline/>

Origins and Early Settlement

- 1800's:** First home to the Bay Miwok tribes and later part of the Mexican land grant Rancho Arroyo de Las Nueces y Bolbones, the area was eventually settled by Americans in the Gold Rush era. It became known as “The Corners” because early settlement developed around a key crossroads that shaped the community’s growth and continues to serve as an important center of activity and connectivity today at the intersection of Mount Diablo Boulevard and Main Street.²

¹ Historical Timeline. Walnut Creek Historical Society. (2021, April 22). <https://wchistory.org/history/timeline/>

² <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/community-development-department/general-plan-and-specific-plans/general-plan-history>

- **1862:** The area became officially known as Walnut Creek, named after the local creek, when community growth led to a new Post Office for the area and extended communication and connections beyond the immediate area.
- **1891:** Southern Pacific Railroad services were established in the area, stimulating growth and business for the region.
- **1903:** Construction of a tunnel between East Bay and inland Contra Costa County was completed. The opening of the “Inter-County Tunnel” improved access between the Bay Area counties, bringing more people, businesses, and investment to the area. The connection was expanded due to increased use in 1937 with the addition of a second tunnel, “Caldecott Tunnel.”³
- **1914:** Walnut Creek officially became an incorporated city.

Post World Wars and Suburbanization

- **1950's:** Steady population growth in Walnut Creek necessitated the development of additional housing, goods, services, and infrastructure to welcome the city's expanding population.
- **1951:** The Broadway Shopping Center was constructed and opened with 38 stores and 1,500 parking spaces, establishing Walnut Creek as a regional shopping destination. The new large-scale commercial center expanded access to goods and services while creating local jobs to support regional community growth.



Broadway Shopping Center – 1951.

Source: Walnut Creek Historical Society. Retrieved from:
<https://wchistory.org/history/then-now/>



- **1954:** Walnut Creek's long-range plan, the “Little Master Plan,” was developed to address the needs of the city's growing commercial businesses and traffic in the city core.

³ BOGGS, W. B. (1937, October). *California highways and Public Works : California. dept. of Public Works Internet archive*. California Highways and Public Works.
<https://archive.org/details/californiahighwa193436calirich/page/n163/mode/2up?q=Tunnel>

- **1955:** Developer Joe Eichler created several subdivisions of mid-century modern homes in Walnut Creek, located in Northgate, Rancho San Miguel, and Diablo Shadows.⁴
- **1960:** Expansion of the Caldecott Tunnel and the construction of highways I-680 and SR 24 enhanced Walnut Creek's connectivity to Alameda County, the South Bay Area, and the North San Joaquin Valley. Improved transportation access connected residents to more jobs and services, supported economic growth, and strengthened Walnut Creek's role as a regional center.



A Walnut Creek Eichler home.

Source: Walnut Creek Eichler Home. Retrieved from:

<https://www.walnutcreekeichlerhomes.com/neighborhoods/walnut-creek-eichlers>

- ★ **1961:** Walnut Creek adopted its first comprehensive General Plan, providing a framework to accommodate rapid population growth (about 9,903 people) and enhanced its status as a subregional retail and employment center, representative of post-war suburban growth.
- **1964:** Rossmoor Senior Community opened with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-approved co-op housing, expanding access to affordable housing while providing seniors with supportive services, social connections, and opportunities to age in place.⁵

Expansion and Reinvestment

- ★ **1971:** The General Plan was updated to establish a framework to accommodate anticipated growth and to ensure adequate infrastructure and services.
- **1972:** Heather Farm Park opened as a key community hub on former undeveloped rancho lands expanding access to a variety of events, recreation, programs, and public open space for residents of all ages for years to come.

⁴ The Eichler's of Rancho San Miguel - Walnut Creek. Eichler Network. (n.d.).

<https://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/eichlers-rancho-san-miguel-walnut-creek>

⁵ Our story: The history of Rossmoor Walnut Creek. Rossmoor Walnut Creek. (2026, May 6).

<https://rossmoor.com/about/rossmoor-history/>



Heather Farm before the Park in the 1960s and Heather Farm Park in 2026.

Source: Walnut Creek Historical Society. Retrieved from: <https://wchistory.org/history/then-now/> and Google Earth 202



1975: Four new elements were added to the General Plan (open space, safety/seismic safety, scenic highways, and noise), which promoted a more balanced approach to growth by prioritizing open space conservation, environmental quality, and public safety in a rapidly developing city.

- **1973:** BART Yellow Line expanded to Walnut Creek and Contra Costa Centre, adding more public transit access to the area for people commuting around the region for work, home, services, and entertainment.
- **1974:** Voters approved a \$6.7 million bond measure that allowed Walnut Creek to purchase 1,800 acres of undeveloped land, leading to the creation of Shell Ridge, Lime Ridge, Sugarloaf, and Acalanes Ridge Open Spaces.
- **1975:** Shadelands business park became Walnut Creek's first business park. It was originally designed to accommodate traditional offices and research centers, creating more opportunities for local employers.⁶
- **1980:** Development of several high-rise office buildings near the Walnut Creek BART station marked the beginning of a transit-oriented infill pattern that expanded employment opportunities in the Golden Triangle and reinforced Downtown Core investment.
- **1985:** Walnut Creek residents voted to limit building height with Measure A, capping vertical growth and protecting scenic views.
- **1985:** Macerich Company acquired the Broadway Shopping Center, renamed Broadway Plaza, and gave it a multimillion-dollar makeover, reinvesting in physical and economic development.

⁶ Visit Shadelands, Walnut Creek. Shadelands. (n.d.). <https://www.visitshadelands.com/about>



Leshner Center Source: City of Walnut Creek



1989: The General Plan was comprehensively updated to strengthen the downtown core and guide coordinated development in priority districts, including Northgate and North Main Street.

- **1990 to 2014:** Many of the City's current landmark facilities were built throughout the city, including municipal and private development which created venues for recreation, civic activity, employment, services, and residence. Buildings and facilities included a renovated City Hall, the Leshner Center for the Arts, the Shadelands Arts Center, Veterans Memorial Plaza, an all-abilities playground in Heather Farm Park, and Walnut Creek Library in Civic Park. The expansion also included private development such as the John Muir Medical Center and the Walnut Creek Transit Village development.

2005: The City of Walnut Creek hosted a 50th-anniversary Eichler House walk to celebrate the architectural legacy, with over 75% of the homes having retained their original Eichler exteriors.



2006: The General Plan was updated to accommodate infill and redevelopment areas, helping protect open space, enhance mobility, and maintain the community's quality of life.

- **2014:** Shadelands Property and Business Improvement District (PBID) was established to support local businesses by advocating for investment, promoting economic growth and job creation, and enhancing parks and public spaces.
- **2014:** The community celebrated Walnut Creek's centennial year with more than 150 community-sponsored events and activities.

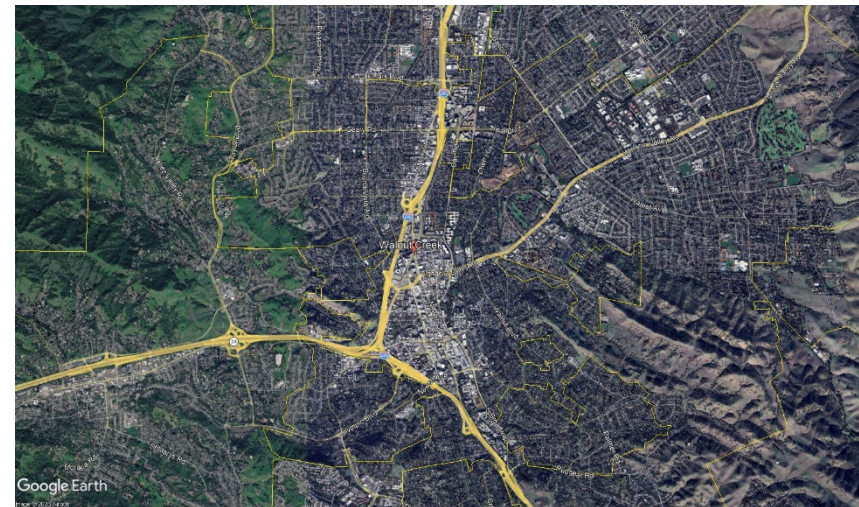
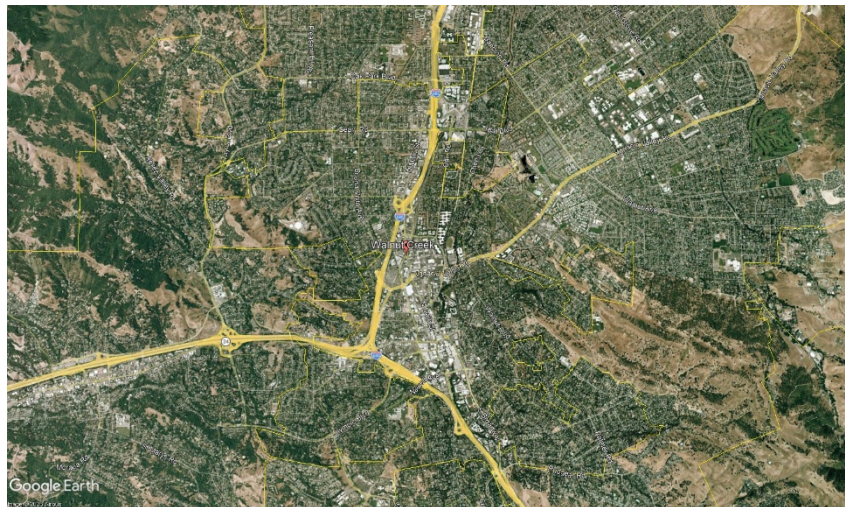
Today

- **2021:** Following the pandemic, Walnut Creek invested in the Downtown Core recovery by making streetscape enhancements, welcoming new businesses, and implementing a parklet program to support outdoor activity and economic vitality.
- **2022 to Present:** Mixed-use and multifamily housing developments in the Downtown Core and transit-served areas promoted infill growth by expanding housing opportunities, improving transportation connectivity, and creating new public spaces and pocket parks.
- **2022:** Voters approved Measure O to fund recreation and community infrastructure improvements, enabling development of the Aquatic and Community Center at Heather Farm Park in 2025 and investment in citywide parks, transportation, drainage, libraries, and public safety.
- ★ **2023:** The Housing Element was updated, certified by the State, and adopted to expand housing opportunities by identifying development capacity and promoting housing production
- ★ **2026:** The Safety Element was updated and adopted to integrate hazard mitigation into planning and development decisions, reducing risks to public safety, property, and the environment from hazards.



Heather Farm Groundbreaking in 2026. Source: City of Walnut Creek

Figure 5: Historical Aerials (1938, 1988, 2006, and 2026)



Source: Google Earth

Land Use

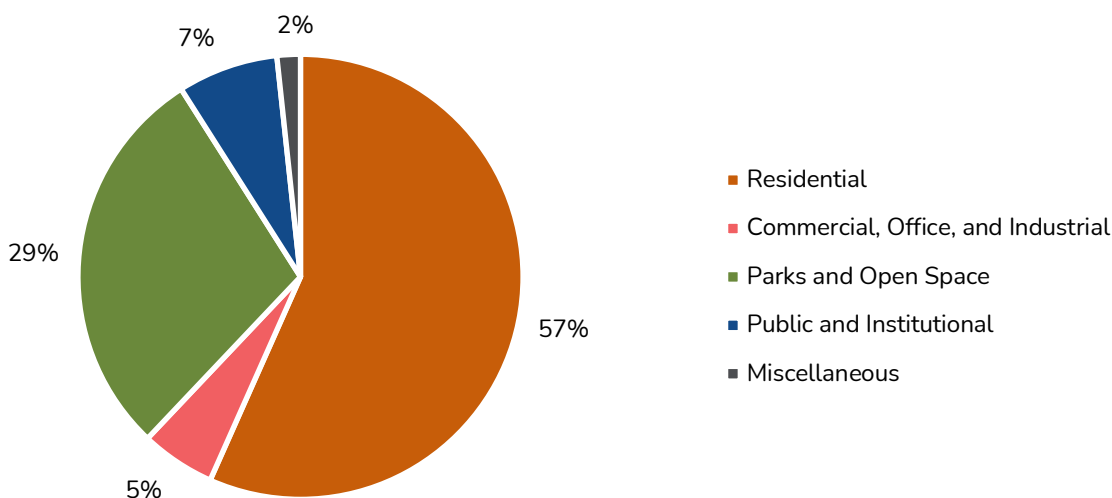
The following section outlines the characteristics and distribution of existing land uses, existing General Plan Land Use designations, Zoning Districts, and specific plans within Walnut Creek’s city limits. This section also outlines other key state, regional, and local policies and guidance that regulate land use and development in the city.

Existing Land Use

Walnut Creek is a largely built-out city centered around a traditional Downtown Core, with established commercial and office nodes along major corridors where development intensity and density standards accommodate more concentrated activity. Historically, lower-density single-family and single-family attached neighborhoods were developed around these employment and commercial centers to provide larger living spaces, while maintaining access to jobs, services, and recreation. Infill development and higher-density multifamily housing were introduced within and around commercial hubs, major corridors, the Downtown Core, and BART to accommodate more homes near activity centers.

The following section details existing land use categories within city limits. Existing land uses are sorted broadly into the following broad categories: residential; commercial, office, and industrial; parks and open space; public and institutional; and miscellaneous uses. The existing land use is shown in **Figures 6 and 7** and **Table 2**.

Figure 6. Area of Existing Land Uses



Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026

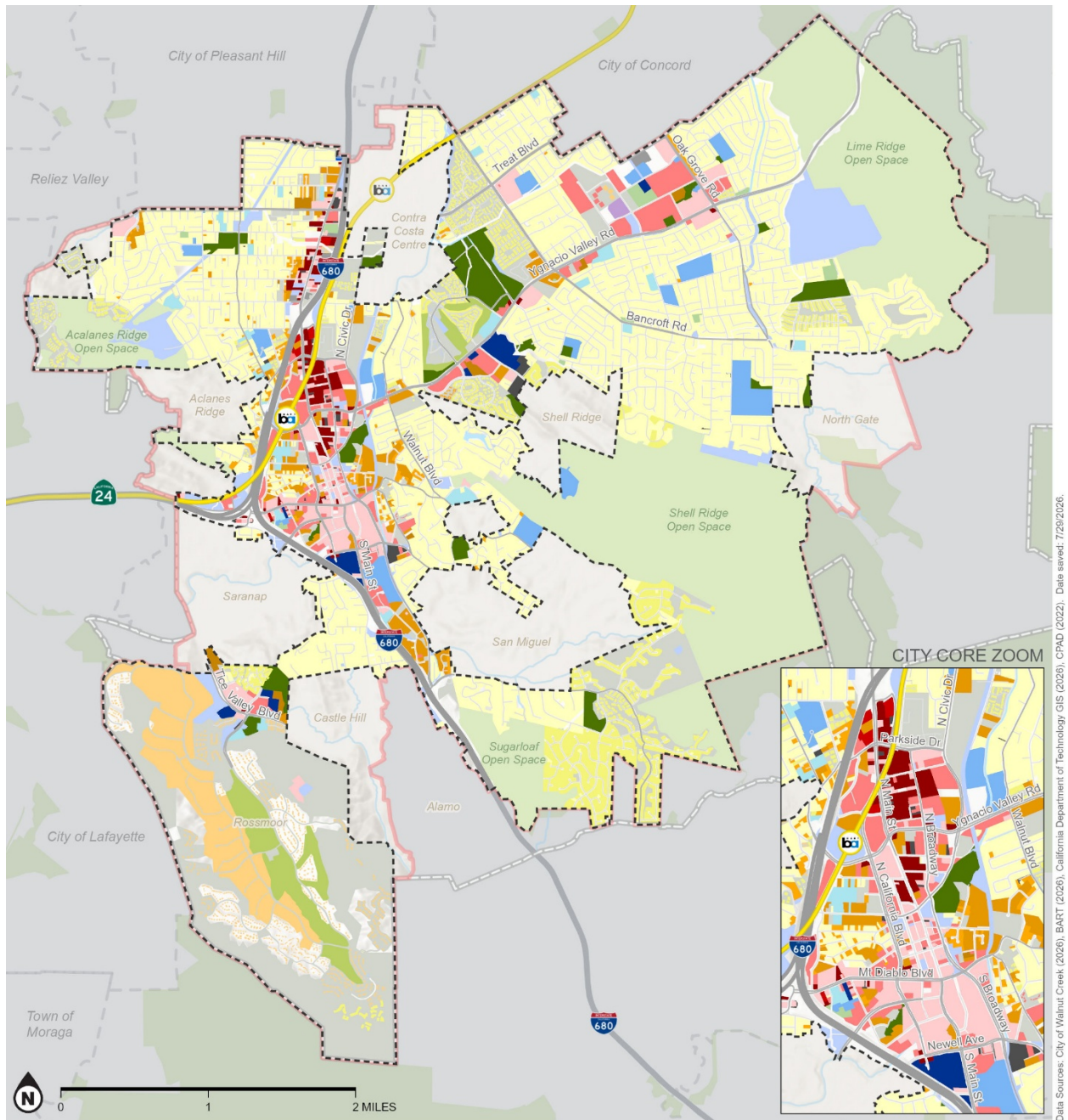
Table 2. Existing Land Use

Land Uses	Count of Existing Parcel	Total Area in City Limits (acres)	% of Total Area in City Limits
Residential	19,481	6,242	57%
Single-Family Attached/Detached w/ Com. Area	4,741	545	5%
Single-Family Detached	10,710	3,164	29%
Condos and Co-Ops	2,950	451	4%
Multiplex Housing (Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex)	367	68	< 1%
Apartments	185	174	2%
Retirement housing	11	29	< 1%
Common Area Parcels in PUDs	517	1,811	16%
Commercial, Office, and Industrial	679	612	6%
Commercial, Grocery, and Restaurant	310	246	2%
Financial, Medical and Dental, and Office	241	268	2%
Lodging	6	9	< 1%
Auto Uses	115	69	< 1%
Light Industrial	6	12	< 1%
Research and Development	1	8	< 1%
Parks and Open Space	148	3,196	29%
Open Space	70	2,712	25%
Parks and Playgrounds	54	238	2%
Golf Courses	11	216	2 %
Recreation and Fitness	13	30	< 1%
Public and Institutional	394	805	7%
Government Owned Lands	311	447	4%
Religious and Service	43	98	< 1%
Schools and Colleges	27	204	2%
Cemeteries and Mortuaries	2	1	< 1%
Hospitals	11	55	< 1%
Miscellaneous	170	155	1%
Vacant	170	155	1%
Grand Total	20,872	11,010	100%

Note: Table does not include roads and rights-of-way.

Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026

Figure 7. Existing Land Use



EXISTING LAND USES

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



Single Family Residential	Financial/Medical & Dental/Office	Institutional
Detached	Lodging & Mobile Homes	Government Owned Lands
Attached/Detached w/ Com. Area	Auto Uses	Religious & Service
Multifamily Residential	Industrial	Schools & Colleges
Condos & Co-ops	Light Industrial	Cemeteries & Mortuaries
Duplex, Triplex, Quadplex	R&D	Hospitals
Apartments	Land	Miscellaneous
Retirement housing	Recreation and Fitness	Roads & Parking
Commercial	Parks & Playgrounds	Common area parcels in PUDs
Commercial/Grocery/Restaurant	Golf Courses	
	Open Space	

Residential

Residential uses, such as single-family, single-family attached, co-op, and multifamily housing types, cover about 57% of the total area in the city. Single-family homes (attached and detached) cover about 3,709 acres (34%) of the city and accommodate 12,780 homes. Single-family homes are spread throughout Walnut Creek, surrounding the Downtown Core and various commercial centers, West Downtown, and bordering the city boundaries that are adjacent to other municipalities.

While multifamily homes account for 12,823 units, or about half of the city's housing stock, these dwellings are generally clustered at higher concentrations within a smaller land area.⁷ These include condos and co-ops, such as those located in Rossmoor and north of the Downtown Core, and multiplex housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, apartments, and retirement housing. These units are spread across the Plan Area along major roadways including Ygnacio Valley Road, Main Street, California Boulevard, Mount Diablo Boulevard, and North Broadway.

The city continues to add housing opportunities for a broad range of ages, income levels, and housing needs. Recent multifamily infill development expanded housing capacity in targeted locations, providing residents with greater access to commercial, social, and recreational amenities. This also reflects the increasing importance of multifamily development in meeting housing need/demand within a constrained urban environment, both locally in Walnut Creek and across the Bay Area.

The **Demographic, Economic, and Real Estate Market Existing Conditions Report** provides more detailed information about housing and housing trends in the city.

Commercial, Office, and Industrial

Commercial, office, and industrial uses enable Walnut Creek to maintain a balanced, economically resilient, and fiscally healthy city. Approximately 6% of the total area in Walnut Creek, these land uses include 246 acres of retail, grocery, and restaurant establishments; 268 acres of financial, medical, dental, and professional office uses; and 69 acres of automotive-related businesses. Lodging, light industrial, and research and development uses make up less than 30 acres of the city. While limited in amount, industrial uses range from relatively low-intensity, enclosed-building activities to more

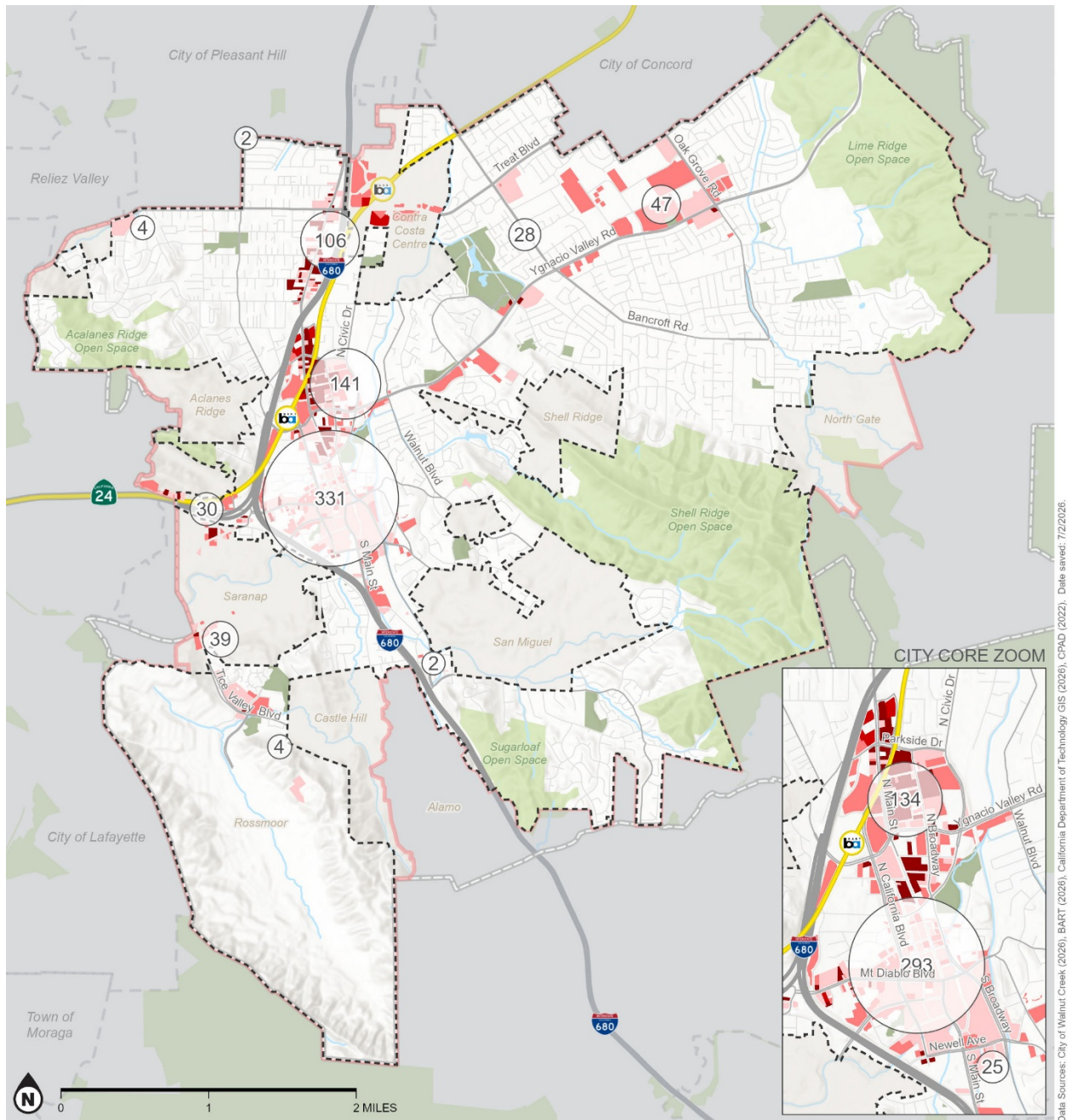
⁷ Note: E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2026. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2026 | California Department of Finance. (n.d.-a). <https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2026/>

intensive manufacturing and processing uses involving truck or rail traffic, outdoor storage, or bulk materials. **Figure 8** shows the distribution and the concentration of only commercial businesses across Walnut Creek.

Commercial, office, and industrial development is concentrated primarily within the Downtown Core and along the North Main Street and Ygnacio Valley Road corridors. Additional commercial centers are found at key intersections near outer neighborhoods, like Ygnacio Valley Road near Oak Grove Road, and Tice Valley Boulevard and Rossmoor Parkway. The Shadelands Business Park anchors commercial activity in west Walnut Creek, with 113 acres of research and development/offices/medical uses, in addition to the John Muir Hospital located on La Casa Via, which is further surrounded by additional medical and office uses. The proximity of these commercial hubs to major transportation corridors including I-680, SR-24, Mount Diablo Boulevard, Main Street, and South Broadway provides convenient access to adjacent services, employment centers, and regional transportation networks, and reinforces Walnut Creek's role as a regional crossroads and commercial destination.

Figure 8 shows an approximation of six main commercial activity centers (or clusters) in the city. The map clusters areas containing 25 or more parcels with existing commercial uses. These clusters are near major intersections, including Boulevard Way and Saranap Avenue, Olympic Boulevard and Tice Valley Blvd, Treat Boulevard and Bancroft Road, Oak Grove Road and Ygnacio Valley Road, San Carlos Drive and Ygnacio Valley Road, and all along the eastern side of I-680, spanning from Geary Road to Newell Avenue. The Downtown Core has the highest share of existing commercial parcels as shown in **Figure 8**. These uses are located mainly along major corridors and transit centers and have been identified as potential places for infill and growth in previous plans and policies.

Figure 8. Commercial Activity Centers



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022), Date saved: 7/2/2026.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



EXISTING LAND USE

- Commercial Parcels
- Vacant Commercial
- Commercial/Grocery/Restaurant
- Financial/Medical & Dental/Office
- Lodging & Mobile Homes
- Auto Uses

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Parks and Open Space

Walnut Creek's extensive parks and open space system are one of the city's defining assets. Parks and open space occupy a significant portion of the city limits (29%). The City owns and operates 19 parks with a variety of amenities and uses. There are also four special-use areas, including Howe Homestead Park, Liberty Bell Plaza, Shadelands Ranch, Boundary Oak Golf Course, and Liberty Bell plaza. The parks and special use areas total 412 acres.

Additionally, Walnut Creek has 2,726 acres of open space, including Acalanes Ridge, Lime Ridge, Shell Ridge, and Sugarloaf open spaces. Open spaces and recreational lands add to community livability by providing broad access to outdoor space, recreational programming, ecology, and scenic resources.

The **Open Space and Conservation Existing Conditions Report** provides more information about the existing conditions of the parks and open space in the city.

Public and Institutional

Public and institutional uses are foundational infrastructure that help Walnut Creek meet residents' educational, health, civic, cultural, and spiritual needs while supporting long-term community well-being. Government land and facilities, religious buildings, schools, and hospitals occupy about 7% of the city.

Walnut Creek also serves as a regional healthcare hub, with John Muir Health, Kaiser Permanente, UCSF, and BASS Medical Group anchored by major hospitals, specialty medical facilities, cancer centers, and over one million square feet of medical office space. The healthcare sector accounts for nearly one-quarter of local employment, provides critical regional services, supports high-quality jobs, and contributes significantly to the city's economic vitality and daytime population. These uses occupy over 50 acres of land in the city. The **Demographic, Economic, and Real Estate Market Existing Conditions Report** provides more detailed information about these uses.

Five public school districts and several private and post-secondary schools provide high-quality education to Walnut Creek residents of all ages and occupy over 200 acres. At the same time, employers choose to operate in Walnut Creek to access the highly educated workforce. Schools are evolving into vital neighborhood centers, providing space for meetings, workshops, and extracurricular activities for all ages.

There are 34 religious institution sites across 98 acres throughout the city, as shown in **Figure 7**. These spaces foster community connections, charitable services, and serve as

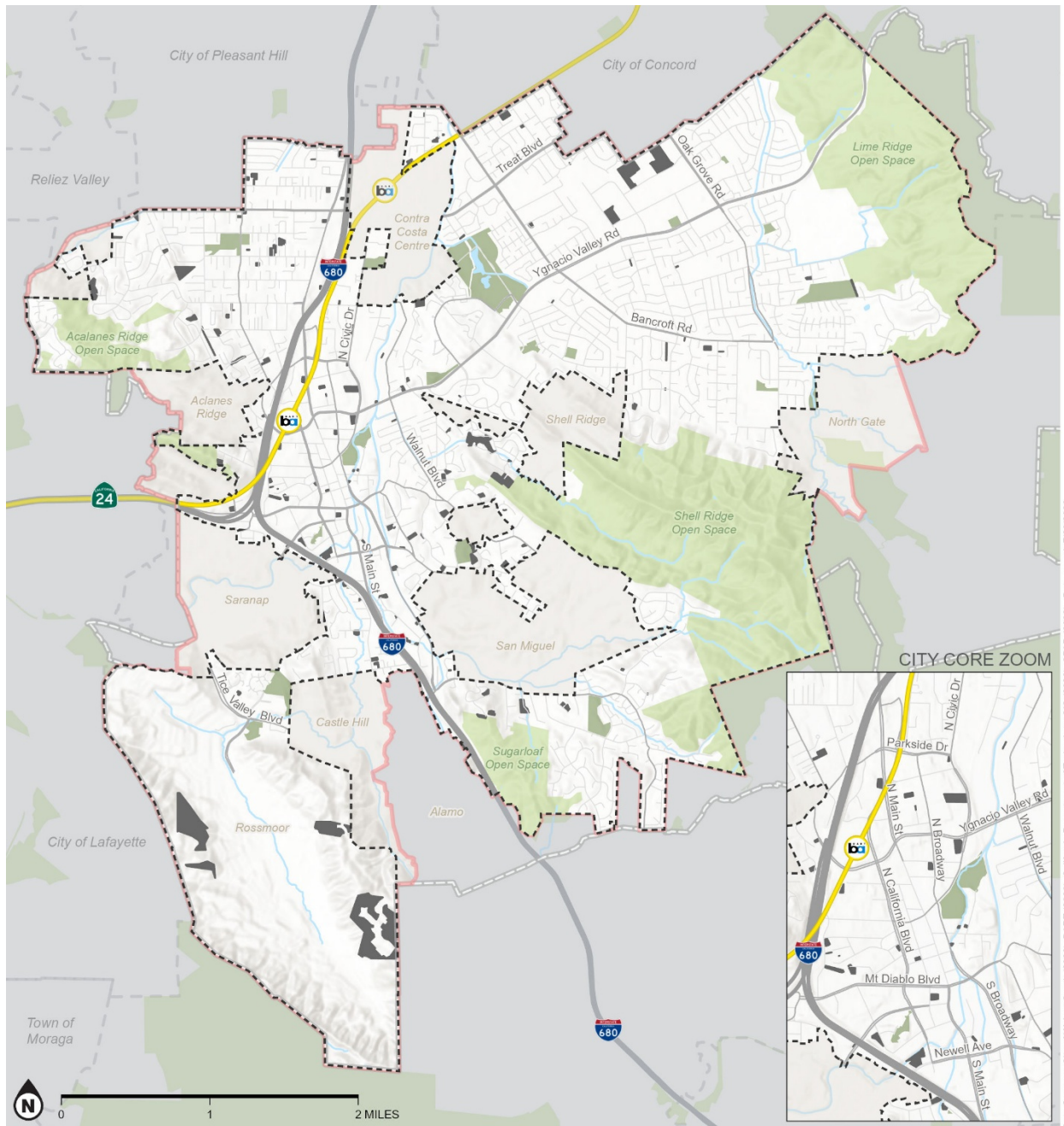
gathering places during emergencies and community events. See the **Faith-Based Housing Opportunities section** to read about how State law allows housing on these sites.

Public services and community institutions are spread across Walnut Creek, with some clusters in the southern portion of the Downtown Core and along Ygnacio Valley Road. The distribution of schools, religious institutions, and other community serving facilities is an important consideration for future land use planning, as these sites have increasingly been identified as potential locations for affordable and workforce housing development while maintaining community-serving functions.

Vacant

Walnut Creek is more than 99% built out, meaning the vast majority of parcels have active existing uses, such as residential, commercial, parks and open space, and public uses. Vacant land is shown in **Figure 9**. There are 155 acres of vacant land in the city.

Figure 9. Existing Vacant Parcels



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 7/29/2026.

VACANT PARCELS

■ Vacant

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

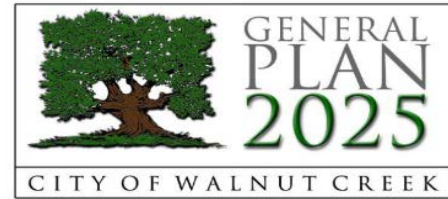


FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Existing 2025 General Plan

A General Plan is a long-term guide for how a city evolves and changes over time. California law requires every city to maintain and periodically update a General Plan to help plan for the future. The Plan covers topics like where housing and jobs are located, how people get around, how parks and open space are protected, and how the city plans for things like noise and natural resources. Walnut Creek's General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 2006. Since the last update, the General Plan has undergone a series of amendments in response to evolving State laws, which often supersede local regulations, and to address new priorities established by the City. The **Other Key State and Regional Policy Affecting Land Use** section provides more information on those policies that impact land use.



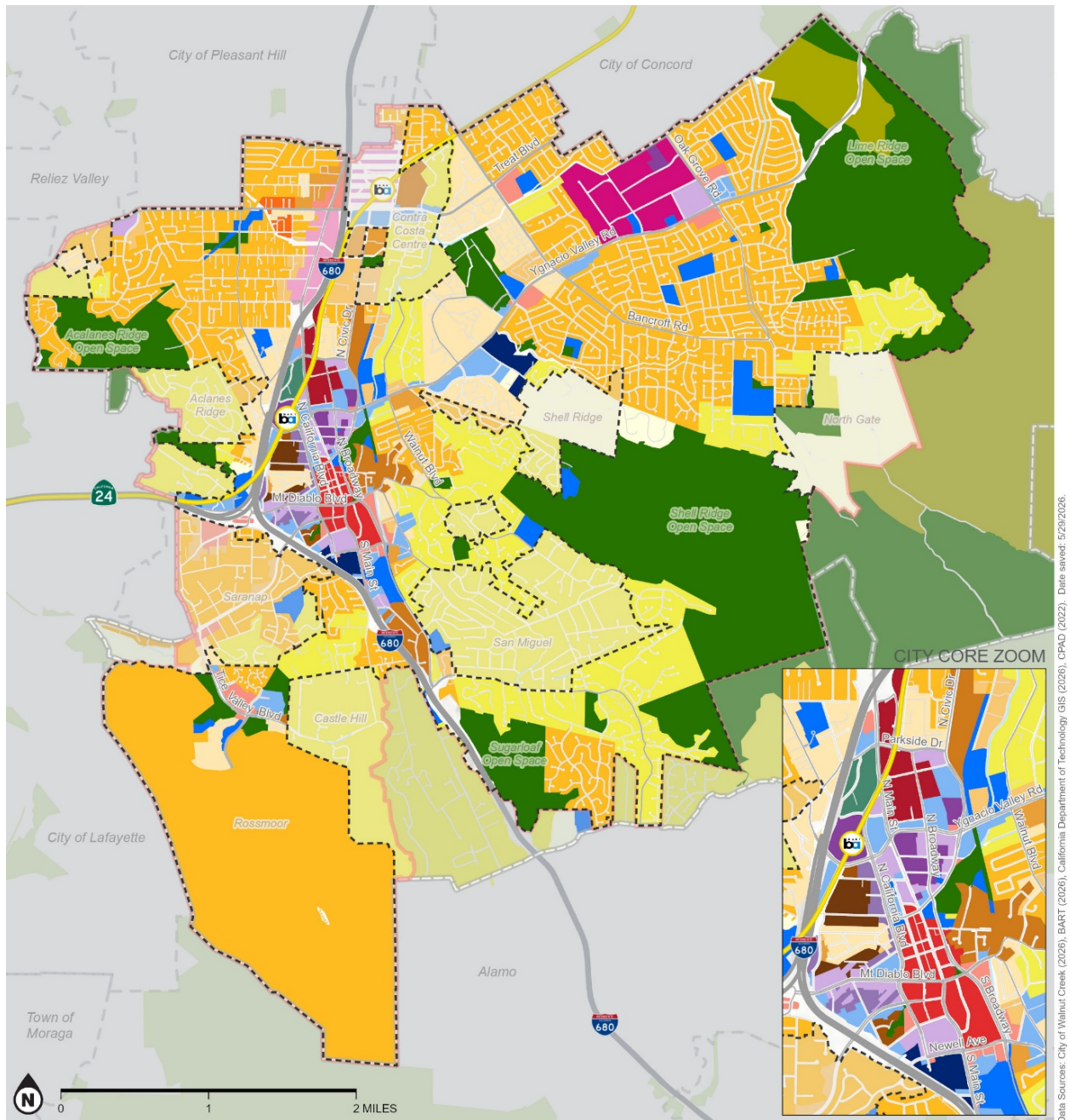
Adopted April 4, 2006
(including all amendments as of May 5, 2026)

Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA, 2006 General Plan Cover

At the core of a General Plan is the Land Use Element, which defines a long-term vision for land use. The General Plan maps the distribution of land uses to each parcel and provides a description of allowed use, density, and intensity for each parcel. Density and intensity are defined below. General Plan Land Use signals to the community and decision makers the vision for how an area will evolve and is a key tool for housing and economic development. The General Plan Land Use Designation may differ from how the land is being used today. Most parcels have a single designation, but there are some parcels that have multiple General Plan Land Use designations. The land use designation map is shown in **Figure 10**, with descriptions provided in **Table 3**.

Figure 11 illustrates the distribution of the General Plan Land Uses by type. Residential designations make up 61% of the total area within the city, with single-family designations overlaying 6,732 acres (52%) and multifamily (9%) within city limits. Public, parks, and open space cover 32% of the city.

Figure 10. General Plan Land Use Designations



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 5/29/2026.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN LAND USE

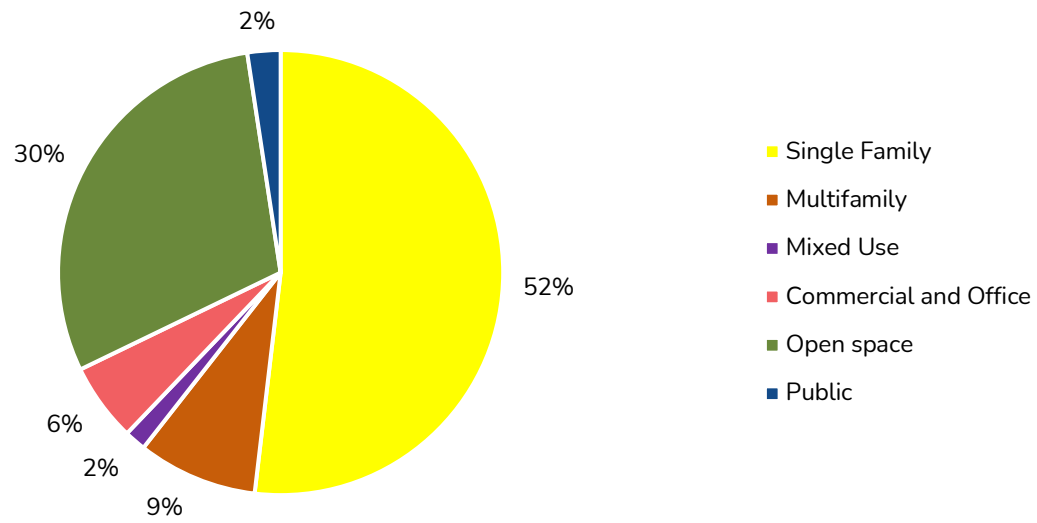
CITY OF WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



GENERAL PLAN LAND USE

Single Family	Very High	MUC/MUD	Office
Very Low	Special High	OF/MFVH	Hospital
Low	Downtown	Pleasant Hill SP	Other
Medium	Mixed Use	Commercial	Recreation
High	Residential	Auto & Manufacturing	Agriculture
Multi-family	Commercial	General Retail	Public/Semi-Public
Low	Downtown	Pedestrian Retail	
Medium	Golden Triangle	Service Commercial	
Medium High	MUC/MFD	Business Park	

Figure 11. General Plan Designation within City Limits



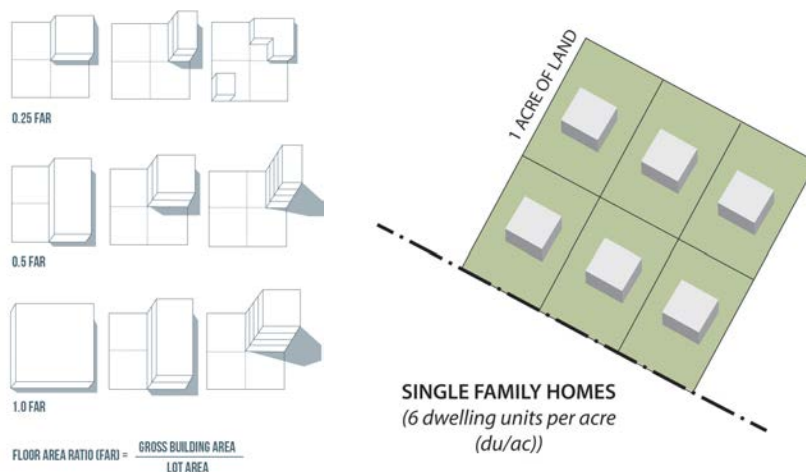
Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026.

What are Density and Intensity?

Density is the amount of residential development that is allowed within a given area. Standards of building density for residential uses are stated as the allowable range (i.e., minimum and maximum) of dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

Standards of building intensity for mixed use and non-residential uses, such as office, commercial, industrial, and institutional development, are stated as a maximum floor area ratio (FAR). FAR is a measure of the total amount of building space (or “floor area”) compared to the area of the parcel.

Figure 12. Intensity and Density Diagrams



Single-Family and Multifamily Residential

Residential land use designations include single-family and multifamily with multiple subcategories defined by various building densities as shown in **Table 3**. Residential General Plan designations are distributed throughout Walnut Creek at various densities. The area is predominantly designated as single-family homes but also supports the City's housing needs and long-term planning objectives with higher-density housing in strategic locations. Recent State interacts with, and often supersedes, local General Plan Land Use designations and is described in the **Other Key State and Regional Policy Affecting Land Use** section.

Single-family residential land use designations make up roughly 52% of the area within city limits, spanning over 6,700 acres. The single-family density spans from 0.1 du/ac in single-family very low (SFL) to 9.0 du/ac in single-family high (SFH). Single-family medium (SFM) represents the largest share in the single-family subcategory, including parcels with clusters of detached single-family homes, attached and detached townhomes, and condos. SFM has an allowable density of 3.1 to 6.0 du/ac. This subcategory is represented in most of the neighborhoods around Walnut Creek, occupying over 4,900 acres within city limits.

Multifamily land use designations cover 1,130 acres or approximately 9% of the total parcel acreage within the city limits. Multifamily spans from 6.1 du/ac in multifamily low (MFL) to 100 du/ac in multifamily special high (MFSH). Density and infill development goals from the last General Plan and subsequent specific plans enabled Walnut Creek to grow the housing stock and encourage production. MFL is the largest share of the multifamily designation, encompassing more than 700 acres within the city limits. MFL designation includes portions of Rossmoor, several condominium developments across the city, and the townhome communities surrounding Heather Farm Park.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-use designations cover approximately 203 acres, or about 2% of total area within city limits. Mixed-use subcategories include residential emphasis, commercial emphasis, Downtown, and Golden Triangle. These designations are primarily in the Downtown Core and a few commercial centers. Mixed-use development integrates previous goals to blend residential, commercial, office, and other land uses (either horizontally or vertically), creating denser activity centers and increasing access to employment, services, and amenities. Building density within these designations is regulated through FAR, allowing different building heights and intensities ranging from 1.0 to 4.5.

The General Plan incorporates the Pleasant Hill BART Area Specific Plan area, located in the Contra Costa Centre in the unincorporated part of the Plan Area and regulated by the County.

Commercial and Office

Commercial and office designations cover approximately 740 acres, or 6% of the total area within city limits. Commercial land use categories include pedestrian retail, general retail, service commercial, and automobile sales or service, and custom manufacturing. The City does not currently have any industrial-specific designations. General retail is the largest share, 111 acres, and is intended to serve retail businesses that rely on automobile access. The FAR ranges from 0.1 to 2.8, allowing opportunities for infill development.

Office use categories include business park, office, and hospital. Business Park is the largest share with 214 acres and a 0.1 to 2.8 FAR to accommodate various office types, primarily in the Shadelands area. The locations for other commercial and office general plan designations are spread around the Downtown Core, Broadway Plaza, the Orchards, the Rossmoor Shopping Center, and Ygnacio Plaza, among others. The allowable commercial FAR may vary by location, especially the Downtown Core and Specific Plan areas, enabling development to concentrate activity in key centers while ensuring it reflects the vision of each area.

Public and Open Space

Public and Open Space categories include Public/Semi-Public, Open Space/Agriculture, and Open Space/Recreation designations. These designations cover approximately 4,180 acres, or 32% of the total area within the city limits. In the Plan Area, about 5,010 acres of land are designated as recreational open space and span incorporated and unincorporated land. Recreational open space includes golf courses, parks, and open space like Briones Regional Park, Lime Ridge Open Space, Shell Ridge Open Space, Sugarloaf Open Space, Acalanes Ridge Open Space, Las Trampas Wilderness Regional Preserve, and Mount Diablo State Park North Gate Area. The recreational open space designation allows limited development to support public access, with a maximum density of 0.1 dwelling units per acre or an FAR of 0.1, subject to case-by-case review.

The **Open Space and Conservation Existing Conditions Report** provides more information about the existing conditions of the parks and open space.

Table 3. General Plan Land Use Designations

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowab le Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowab le Densitie s (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
Single-Family					6,732	52%	2,952	42%	9,684	48%
SFVL	Single-Family Very Low	Low-density single-family residential	-	0.1-1.0	157	1%	484	7%	641	3%
SFL	Single-Family Low	Transition between suburban single-family neighborhoods and outlying rural residential areas, with some agricultural use.	-	1.1-3.0	1,595	12%	2,115	30%	3,710	18%
SFM	Single-Family Medium	Suburban single-family neighborhood in Walnut Creek.	-	3.1-6.0	4,961	38%	353	5%	5,314	26%
SFH	Single-Family High	Only under a Planned Development Zoning District.	-	6.1-9.0	18	<1%	-	-	18	<1%
Multifamily					1,130	9%	110	2%	1,240	6%
MFL	Multifamily Low	Transition between single- family neighborhoods and commercial or higher- density residential areas.	-	6.1-14.0	711	5%	7	<1%	718	4%

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowable Densities (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
MFM	Multifamily Medium	Intended for developments of condominiums and/or low-rise apartments with substantial amounts of on-site recreational facilities.	-	14.1-22.0	145	1%	55	1%	200	1%
MFMH	Multifamily Medium High	Two-story (or higher) apartments or condominiums.	-	22.1-30.0	80	1%	17	<1%	97	<1%
MFVH	Multifamily Very High	City's conventional apartment complexes (two stories and include on-site amenities).	-	30.1-50.0	11	<1%	-	-	11	<1%
MFSH	Multifamily Special High	This district occurs only in the Core Area around Alma Avenue, where the Alma Avenue Specific Plan governs development. Its primary intent is to expand the potential for downtown living.	-	50.1-100.0	153	1%	31	<1%	184	1%
MFD	Multifamily Downtown	Highest-density residential neighborhoods generally in proximity to the core exceed	-	40.0-90.0	30	<1%	-	-	30	<1%

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowable Densities (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
		three stories and include on-site amenities.								
Mixed Use					205	2%	78	1%	283	1%
MU-R	Mixed Use–Residential Emphasis	Combination of ground floor retail with office and/or residential uses above the ground floor.	1.0 to 2.8	-	49	<1%	-	-	49	<1%
MU-C	Mixed Use–Commercial Emphasis	Intended to encourage a combination of commercial and residential uses. Commercial (office or retail) must be the primary use.	1.0 to 4.5	-	95	1%	-	-	95	<1%
MU-D	Mixed Use–Downtown	Combination of high-density commercial and residential uses, with only retail/restaurant /service uses on the ground floor along the Core Area.	1.0 to 3.0	-	28	<1%	-	-	28	<1%
MU-GT	Mixed Use – Golden Triangle	Combination of ground floor retail, high-intensity/density office/residential development near the Walnut Creek BART station.	1.5 to 4.5	-	18	<1%	-	-	18	<1%

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowable Densities (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
MU-C/ MU-D, MU-C/MF D, MFV H/OF	Multiple Designations for Multifamily and Mixed Use	These designations are intended to support a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses, with ground-floor commercial activity in core areas and a range of multifamily housing types typically accompanied by on-site amenities.	-8	-	13	<1%	-	-	13	<1%
PH	Pleasant Hill BART Area Specific Plan	Specific Area Plan in unincorporated Contra Costa County in Walnut Creek's Sphere of Influence.	-	-	2	<1%	78	1%	80	<1%
Commercial And Office					738	6%	51	1%	789	4%
PR	Pedestrian Retail	Intended to provide for a range of retail and personal service uses that are accessed by pedestrians.	0.75 to 2.8	-	66	1%	-	-	66	<1%
GR	General Retail	Intended for one-stop-shop businesses that rely on	0.3 to 2.8	-	111	1%	24	<1%	136	1%

⁸ Parts of the parcels fall in two designations; the intensity will depend on which part of the parcel is being reviewed.

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowable Densities (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
		customers arriving by auto and provide on-site parking.								
SC	Service Commercial	Businesses that rely on customers who arrive by auto do not require a central location. Office use is permitted on the second floor and above, but not on the ground floor.	0.1 to 0.3	-	65	1%	-	-	65	<1%
AS-CM	Automobile Sales/ Service and Custom Manufacturing	Primarily intended for auto-related and auto-oriented retail sales and uses within the North Downtown Specific Plan Area.	-	-9	44	<1%	-	-	44	<1%
BP	Business Park	Only applicable to the Shadelands Business Park.	0.3 to 0.5	-	214	2%	-	-	214	1%
HO	Hospital	Medical facilities and services.	Core: 0.6 to 1.05 Outside the	-	53	<1%	-	-	53	<1%

⁹ The North Downtown Plan area specifies locations for with building intensities and heights by parcel and not by use.
WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN 2050

Abb.	Designation	Description	Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Allowable Densities (du/ac)	Incorporated Plan Area		Unincorporated Plan Area		Total	
					Area (acres)	% of City Limit	Area (acres)	% of Uninc. Area	Area (acres)	% of Plan Area
			Core: 0.85							
OF	Office	Administrative, professional, and general business offices.	0.5 to 4.5	-	184	1%	26	<1%	210	1%
Public And Open Space					4,175	32%	3,906	55%	8,080	40%
PU	Public/ Semi Public	Facilities serving the public and the larger community good.	0.1 to 2.8, on a case-by-case basis	-	312	2%	-	-	312	2%
OS/A	Open Space/ Agriculture	Open space/agricultural character	-	0.1	624	5%	2,135	30%	2,758	14%
OS/R	Open Space/ Recreation	Existing publicly owned open space, parks, and golf course.	0.1	0.110	3,239	25%	1,771	25%	5,010	25%
Grand Total					12,980	100%	7,096	100%	20,076	100%

Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA, 2006 General Plan Chapter 4.

¹⁰ Development density case by case.
WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN 2050

Zoning Ordinance

The City's Zoning Ordinance helps implement the General Plan land use vision. It defines specific regulations related to a parcel's allowed uses, site and building development standards, and development process. General Plans and Zoning Codes are required to be consistent under State law. Walnut Creek's Zoning Ordinance includes 35 main zoning districts, listed in **Table 4** and illustrated in **Figure 13**. Zoning districts outside of city limits are listed in **Table 5**.

Residential

There are fifteen residential use zoning districts in Walnut Creek, grouped into three categories: single-family, duplex, and multifamily. Residential zoning districts account for approximately one-third of Walnut Creek's total area inside city limits. Single-family residential districts comprise the largest share at 24%, followed by multifamily at 4%, and less than 1% for duplexes. The single-family residential district 10,000 (R-10) is the most prevalent residential district, encompassing approximately 1,315 acres and more than 4,500 parcels. The amount of single-family zoned land is significantly less than the area covered by General Plan single-family land use designations. This difference is partly attributable to Planned Development areas, which cover approximately 1/3 of the city, as described below.

Residential zoning districts are differentiated primarily by minimum parcel size, which influences the applicable development standards and density. For example, single-family residential district 10,000 has a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet with a maximum lot coverage of 35% and threshold FAR of 0.42. The density depends on the stricter of the applicable General Plan Land Use designation; the maximum lot coverage; or the maximum density permitted under Hillside Performance Standards.

Planned Development

Approximately 34% of the total parcel acreage within Walnut Creek is zoned as Planned Development. The purpose of the Planned Development district is to provide flexibility for development projects. Planned Development has been used for single-family homes and some higher-density residential uses, to accommodate commercial uses and to preserve open space for recreation. Project developers may apply for a planned development district on parcels of any size, so long as the proposed development complies with the regulations and provisions of the General Plan designations and any applicable Specific Plan.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use zoning districts blend commercial, residential, and other uses together. These districts cover 1% of the area within city limits, approximately 120 acres. Most of the mixed-use districts are in the Downtown Core areas and along major corridors. Development standards for the mixed-use districts vary by location. Most mixed-use districts are located in specific plan areas, which establish development standards for concentrated centers and reflect planning objectives for each area.

Commercial and Business

There are eight commercial and business zoning districts in Walnut Creek: auto sales and custom manufacturing, community commercial, central retail district, pedestrian retail, service commercial, office commercial district, and two business park zones. The commercial zones apply to about 2% of the total area within the city limits and are located throughout the Downtown Core areas and along major corridors. The business park zones apply to about 1% of the total parcel acreage within the city limits and are located in the Shadelands Area. Development standards are calibrated to the location of the district in the city. The City does not currently have any industrial-specific zones but does allow industrial uses. Refer to the zoning code for permitted uses.

Public

Public zoning districts include community facilities, recreational open space, and utility throughout the city. Together, these districts account for approximately 22% of the city's total area, with recreational open space comprising approximately 2,700 acres. The development standards for recreational open space are a building density of 0.1 du/ ac and a FAR of 0.1.

Overlay Districts

There are 27 Overlay Zoning Districts throughout the city to provide supplemental, site-specific regulations. They allow greater development flexibility, protect unique site features, and preserve the character of surrounding areas.

Table 4. Zoning Districts and Standards within the City Limits

Incorporated Zoning Districts		Max Height (ft)	Density (du/ac)	FAR	Lot Cover .	Area (Acres)	% of City Limit
Single-Family						3,089	26%
R-40	Single-Family Residential District 40,000	25	-	-	NA	110	1%
R-20	Single-Family Residential District 20,000	25	-	N/A	25%	355	3%
R-15	Single-Family Residential District 15,000	25	-	N/A	25%	331	2%
R-12	Single-Family Residential District 12,000	25	-	N/A	30%	410	3%
R-10	Single-Family Residential District 10,000	25	-	0.42	35%	1,229	9%
R-8.5	Single-Family Residential District 8,500	25	-	0.42	40%	224	2%
R-8	Single-Family Residential District 8,000	25	-	0.42	40%	430	3%
Duplex		-	-	-		57	<1%
D-3	Duplex Residential 3,000	25	-	-	50%	57	<1%
Multiple Family						612	4%
M-2.5	1 DU/2,500 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/2,500 sq. ft.	-	50%	54	<1%

Incorporated Zoning Districts		Max Height (ft)	Density (du/ac)	FAR	Lot Cover	Area (Acres)	% of City Limit
M-2	1 DU/2,000 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/2,000 sq. ft.	-	60%	68	<1%
M-1.5	1 DU/1,500 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/1,500 sq. ft.	-	70%	78	1%
M-1	1 DU/1,000 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/1,000 sq. ft.	-	70%	116	1%
M-1 / M-0.75	1 DU/1,000 sq. ft. net lot area / 1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/1,000 sq. ft. – 750 sq. ft.	-	70%	1	<1%
M-0.75	1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	30	1 du/750 sq. ft.	-	70%	285	2%
M-H-D	High Density Residential	-	-	0.75	NA	9	<1%
Mixed Use		-	-	-		119	1%
MU-C	Mixed Use - Commercial	-	-	1.5	NA	23	<1%
MU-C / M-0.75	Mixed Use - Commercial / 1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	-	1 du/750 sq. ft.	1.5	NA	57	<1%
MU-C / MU-D	Mixed Use - Commercial / Mixed Use - Downtown	-	-	1.0	NA	1	<1%

Incorporated Zoning Districts		Max Height (ft)	Density (du/ac)	FAR	Lot Cover	Area (Acres)	% of City Limit
MU-R	Mixed Use - Residential	-	1 du/425 sq. ft	1.0	NA	3	<1%
MU-D	Mixed Use - Downtown	-	-	1.0	NA	17	<1%
M-U	Mixed use - Planned Development	-	-	-	NA	18	<1%
Commercial		-	-	-		348	2%
AS-CM	Auto Sales & Custom Manufacturing	-	-	-	NA	42	<1%
C-C	Community Commercial	20 ft	-	0.3	NA	54	<1%
C-R	Central Retail District	-	-	-	NA	22	<1%
P-R	Pedestrian Retail	-	-	-	NA	37	<1%
S-C	Service Commercial	30 ft	-	0.3	-	65	<1%
O-C	Office Commercial District	25 ft	-	Outside Core: 0.5	NA	128	1%
Business Park						175	1%
BP-100	Business Park 100,000	40 ft	-	0.5	50%	109	1%
BP-200	Business Park 200,000	40 ft	-	0.3	30%	66	0%
Planned Development						4,693	34%
P-D	Planned Development District	-	-	-	-	4,259	31%
SFH - PD1	Single-Family High Residential - Planned Development	25 ft	6 - 9 du/net acre	0.55	50%	16	<1%

Incorporated Zoning Districts		Max Height (ft)	Density (du/ac)	FAR	Lot Cover .	Area (Acres)	% of City Limit
H-P-D	Hillside Planned Development	25 ft	1 du/10 acres	-	-	418	3%
Public						3,000	22%
C-F	Community Facility District	-	-	-	-	229	2%
O-S-R	Open Space/Recreation	25 ft	0.1 du/ac	0.1	-	2,648	19%
UTIL	Utility District	NA	NA	NA	NA	123	1%
Grand Total						12,093	100 %

Note: Zoning code development standards are nuanced according to location; the Planning Commission and City Council have final say, as they can authorize a zoning change. Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS and Municipal Code. Title 10 Planning and Zoning. (n.d.). <https://ecode360.com/48750816#48750816>

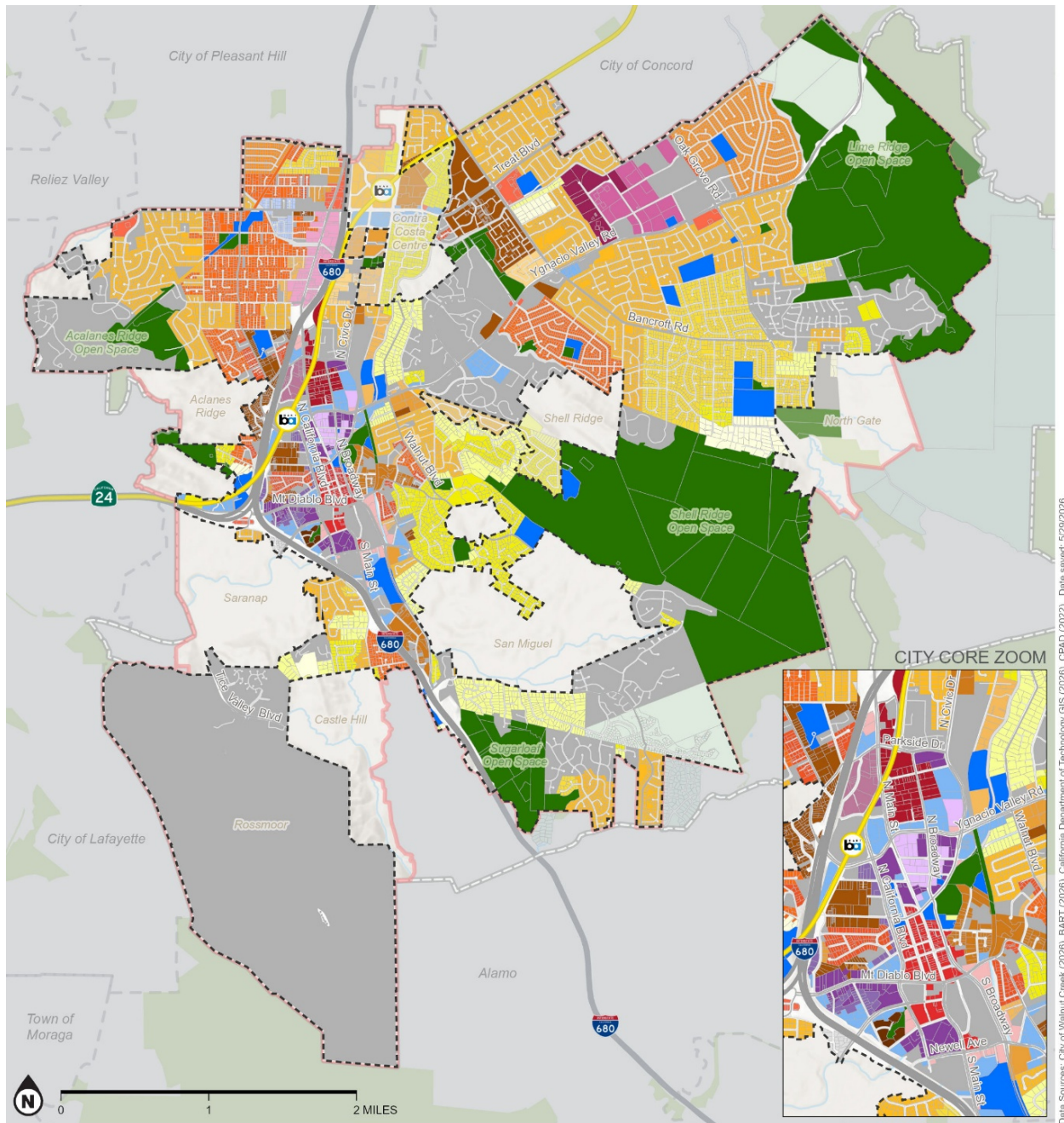
Table 5. Zoning Districts Outside City Limits (Unincorporated)

Zoning Districts	Area (acres)	% of Unincorporated Area
Single-Family	270	2%
Single-Family Residential District 40,000	5	<1%
Single-Family Residential District 20,000	15	<1%
Single-Family Residential District 15,000	164	1%
Single-Family Residential District 10,000	86	1%
Commercial	28	<1%
Community Commercial	1	<1%
Office Commercial District	27	<1%
Planned Development	1,487	11%

Zoning Districts	Area (acres)	% of Unincorporated Area
Planned Development District	43	<1%
Hillside Planned Development	1,444	10%
Public	60	<1%
Open Space/Recreation	48	<1%
Utility District	12	<1%
Grand Total	1,845	13%

Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS and Municipal Code. Title 10 Planning and Zoning. (n.d.).
<https://ecode360.com/48750816#48750816>

Figure 13. Zoning Districts



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 5/29/2026.

EXISTING ZONING

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



ZONING

R-40	M-2.5	MUC	CR	SFH-PD1
R-20	M-2	MUR	PR	HPD
R-15	M-1.5	MUD	SC	CF
R-12	M-1	MUPD	OC	OSR
R-10	M-0.75/M-1	MUD & MUC	BP-100	UTIL
R-8.5	M-1/M-0.75	MUC/M-0.75	BP-200	
R-8	M-0.75	AS-CM	PD	
D-3	MHD	CC		

Measure A

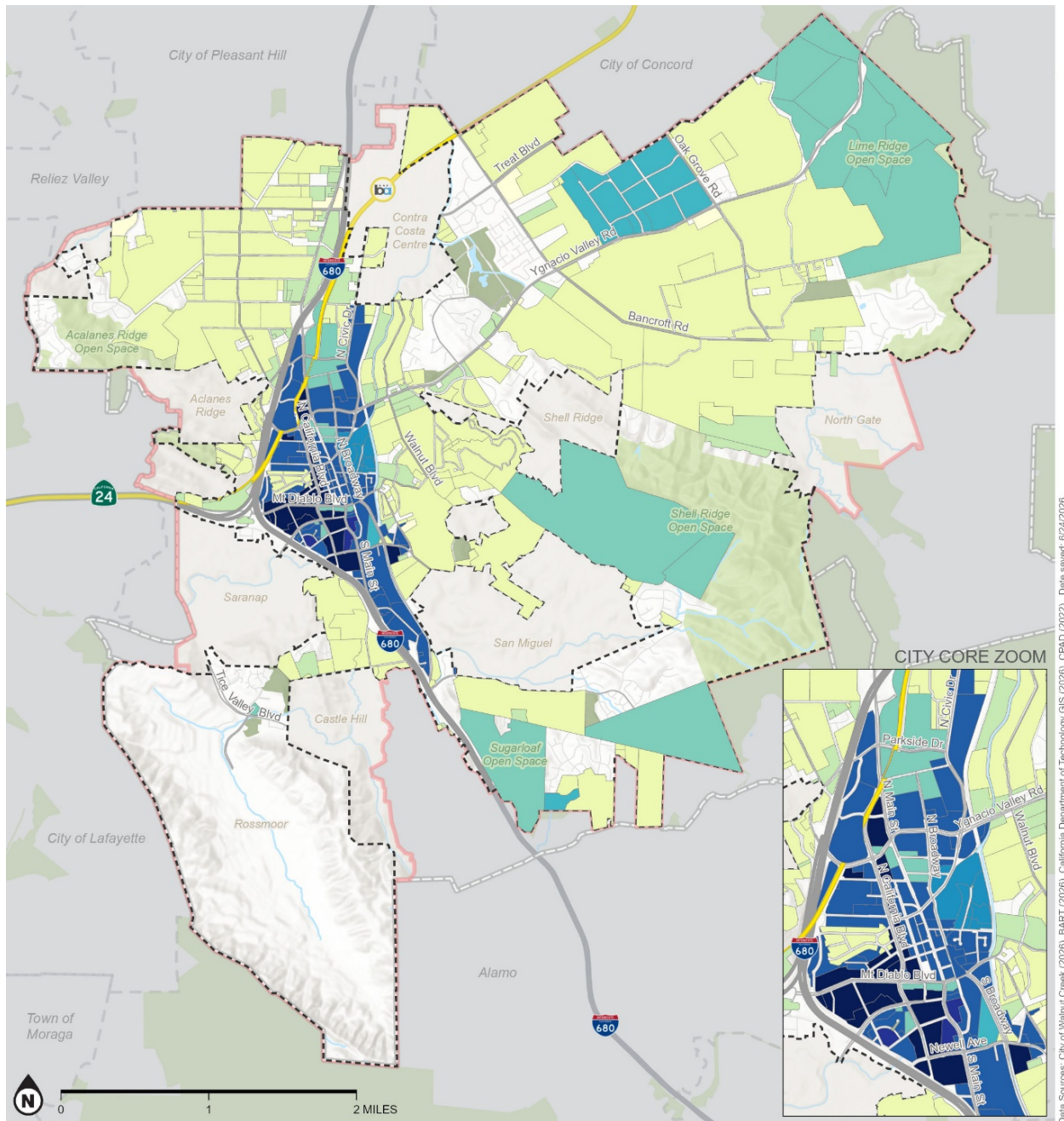
In 1985, Walnut Creek voters approved Measure A, the “Building Height Freeze Initiative,” to mitigate concerns about the traffic impacts associated with new commercial development in the Downtown Core and around BART stations. Measure A established citywide building height limits that can only be amended through voter approval. Height limits range from 25 feet (about two stories) in most single-family and duplex residential zoning districts to 89 feet (about six stories) in certain multifamily zoning districts, as shown in **Figure 14**. In some areas, the height limits established by Measure A exceed those currently permitted under the Zoning Ordinance.

While Measure A establishes voter-approved height limits, it has not been identified as a significant constraint to housing production in Walnut Creek. Housing projects have used the State Density Bonus law (Government Code Section 65915 et seq.) as a method to increase building height. The State Density Bonus is specifically used in multifamily or mixed-use projects with five or more units that provide a specified number of affordable units or units targeted at special needs populations. The current Housing Element found that limited availability of sites in single-family zone districts is a greater barrier to housing production than building height. Building heights of over 89 feet typically require more expensive construction methods, materials, and labor, so they are not built, but Measure A’s maximum height limits accommodate the range of development that is generally financially feasible. Walnut Creek has committed to its housing goals and has found that Measure A is not the greatest barrier to building housing.¹¹

Along with market conditions, rising construction costs, and limited land availability, Measure A has been identified as an obstacle for commercial and office development. Walnut Creek has been applying State policies to prioritize infill within specific plan areas to accommodate both commercial and housing, but the policies do not increase the building height for commercial, only housing development. Outside of the Downtown Core, the building’s height is limited to 50 ft (roughly three to four stories) for areas zoned and designated in the General Plan for commercial and office space. Measure A height limits challenge commercial development feasibility.

¹¹ City of Walnut Creek. Retrieved from <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/departments/housing-programs/housing-policies/housing-element/measure-a>

Figure 14. Measure A Height Limits



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/24/2026.

MEASURE A

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



HEIGHT

19 - 20	41 - 45
21 - 25	46 - 50
26 - 30	51 - 70
31 - 36	71 - 89
37 - 40	

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Specific Plans

Walnut Creek uses specific plans to establish the vision, guiding policies, and implementation activities for small areas of the city. Specific plans define allowed land uses, development standards, circulation networks and standards, infrastructure needs, and funding and financing methods. Walnut Creek has sixteen specific plans within the Plan Area, including fifteen City-led plans and one County-led plan. Most of the specific plans helped to implement residential neighborhoods, support infill in the Downtown Core, and reinvent existing commercial areas like Shadelands, as shown in **Table 6** and **Figure 15**.

Table 6. Existing Specific Plans

Name	Year	Intention	Existing Description	Partially Uninc.	Area (Acres)
SP-1 - Montego Way and La Casa Via	1973	Encourage low-density residential and conserve natural areas	Includes developed low-density residential, hospital, and office.		69
SP-2 - Shadelands Business Park	1971 Updated: 2022	Encourage admin, professional, and research offices	Offices, Parking lots, Public Uses, Commercial, Vet, and Medical Offices.		236
SP-3 - Shell Ridge	1975	Encourage low-density residential and conserve natural areas partially in the unincorporated land	Indian Valley Swim Club and open space	Yes	7
SP-4 - Walnut Blvd and Whitecliff Way	1976	Encourage low-density residential and conserve Sugarloaf Natural Area partially in the unincorporated land	Low-Density single-family homes and Open Space	Yes	58

Name	Year	Intention	Existing Description	Partially Uninc.	Area (Acres)
SP-5 - Bridle Lane	1981	Encourage low-density residential and conserve Rocksprings Natural Area	Low-Density single-family homes and Open Space		22
SP-6 - La Casa Via	1975	Encourage low-density residential and conserve natural areas partially in the unincorporated land	Hospital, Parking, Medical Facilities, Trailheads, Low-Density Single-family Homes	Yes	198
SP-7 - South Newell Ave	1978	Encourage a mix of uses (residential and commercial) and conserve natural areas around the San Ramon Creek and trees.	Parking, offices, restaurants, groceries, and creek area		10
SP-8 - Geary Rd, Hall Lane, and First Ave	1994	Encourage residential uses in the transition of the area from single-family to higher density, street improvements, and multimodal access.	Built-out high- and medium-density housing along the collector/ arterial Geary Rd- zoned as planned development		29
SP-9 - Alma Ave	1985	Encourage high-density residential neighborhood development, with some retail and office space.	Built out high-density housing along the arterials in and around Downtown. Designated as office, Multifamily High Commercial, and Recreation.		13

Name	Year	Intention	Existing Description	Partially Uninc.	Area (Acres)
SP-10 - North Gate	1991	Encourage low-density residential and conserve Mt. Diablo North Gate State Park partially in the unincorporated land	Low-Density single-family homes and Open Space	Yes	470
SP-11 - East Mt. Diablo	1996	Encourage infill in the southern part of the Downtown area core around Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Surface parking, retail, commercial, and restaurants		7
SP-13 - Locust St and Mt. Diablo Blvd	2010	Encourage infill in the southern part of the Downtown area north of Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Surface parking, Retail, commercial, restaurants, and apartments		5
SP-14 - Shadelands Gateway	2014	Gateway commercial and mixed-use area	Senior Living, Commercial center, Surface parking, green spaces, preschool, and commercial.		25
SP-15 - West Downtown	2018	Encourage infill in the Western part of the Downtown area core around 680 Olympic, California, and Ygnacio Valley Rd.	Surface parking, BART TOD, retail, commercial, and restaurants		163
SP-16 - North Downtown *Replaces SP-12 (North Main	2019	Encourage infill in the Northern part of Downtown area core - Infill and Auto and Makers Area	Surface parking, retail, auto commercials, restaurants, and multi family		177

Name	Year	Intention	Existing Description	Partially Uninc.	Area (Acres)
St and YVR)					
CCC - Pleasant Hill BART Station Area Specific Plan	1998	To develop the BART area and multifamily residential	Mostly built-out multifamily with one open lot	Yes	125

Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA. Retrieved from: <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/community-development-department/zoning/long-range-plans/specific-plans>

Figure 15. Existing Specific Plans

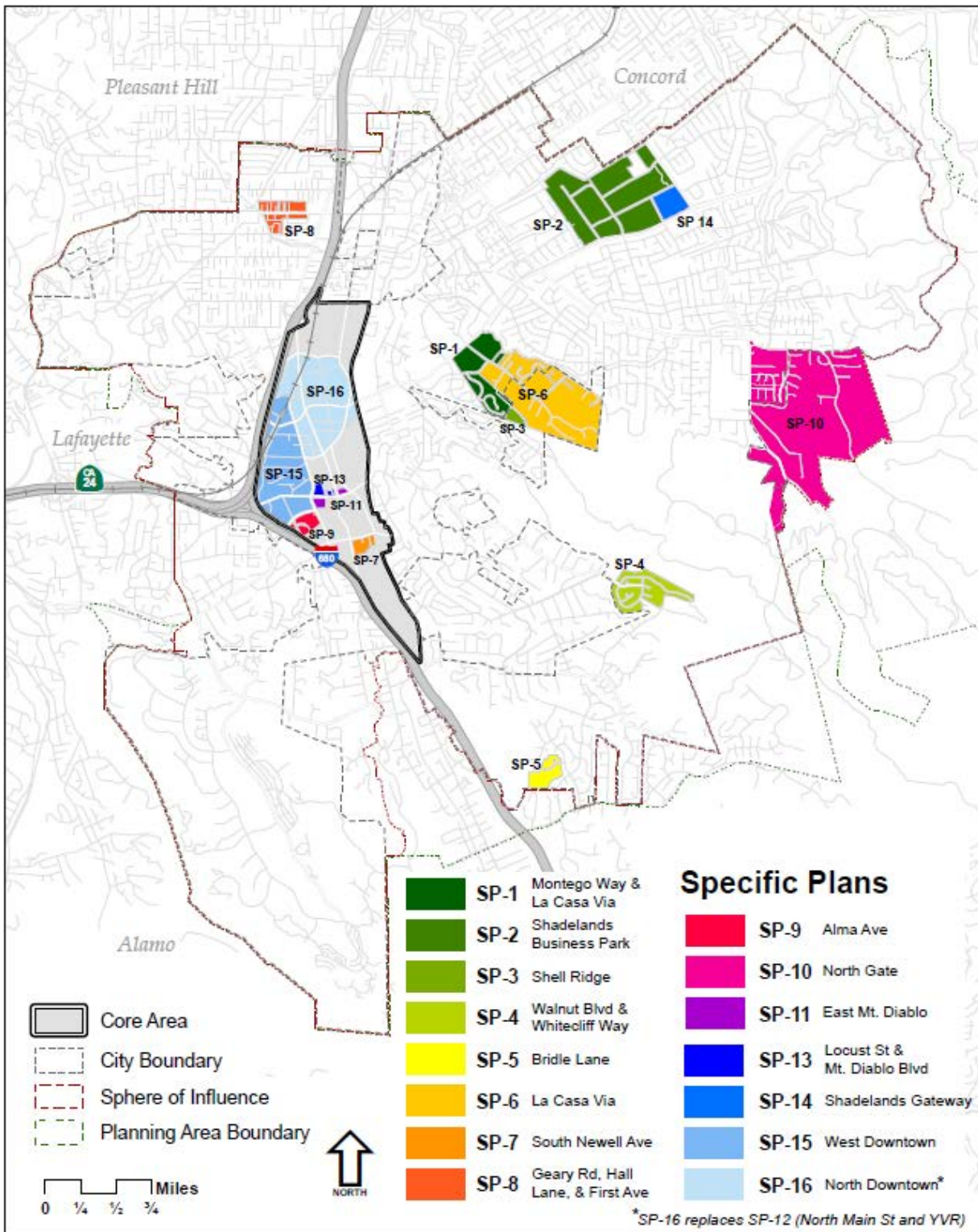


Figure 15. Specific Plan Boundaries

Revised: January 10, 2023
Base Map Data: 2020
Data Source: City of Walnut Creek

Other Key State and Regional Policy Affecting Land Use

Senate Bill 9 (California Housing Opportunity and More Efficiency (HOME) Act)

In 2021, California adopted Senate Bill (SB) 9, which requires ministerial approval of qualifying housing developments and urban lot splits on parcels located within single-family zones. SB 9 enables the creation of up to four residential units on eligible parcels through a combination of lot splitting and accessory dwelling unit development, thereby increasing opportunities for small-scale infill housing in existing neighborhoods. The intent is to promote the development of dwelling units that meet the housing needs of individuals and families (particularly low- and moderate-income households, seniors, and persons with disabilities), while ensuring that new development is compatible with and enhances the existing neighborhood character.

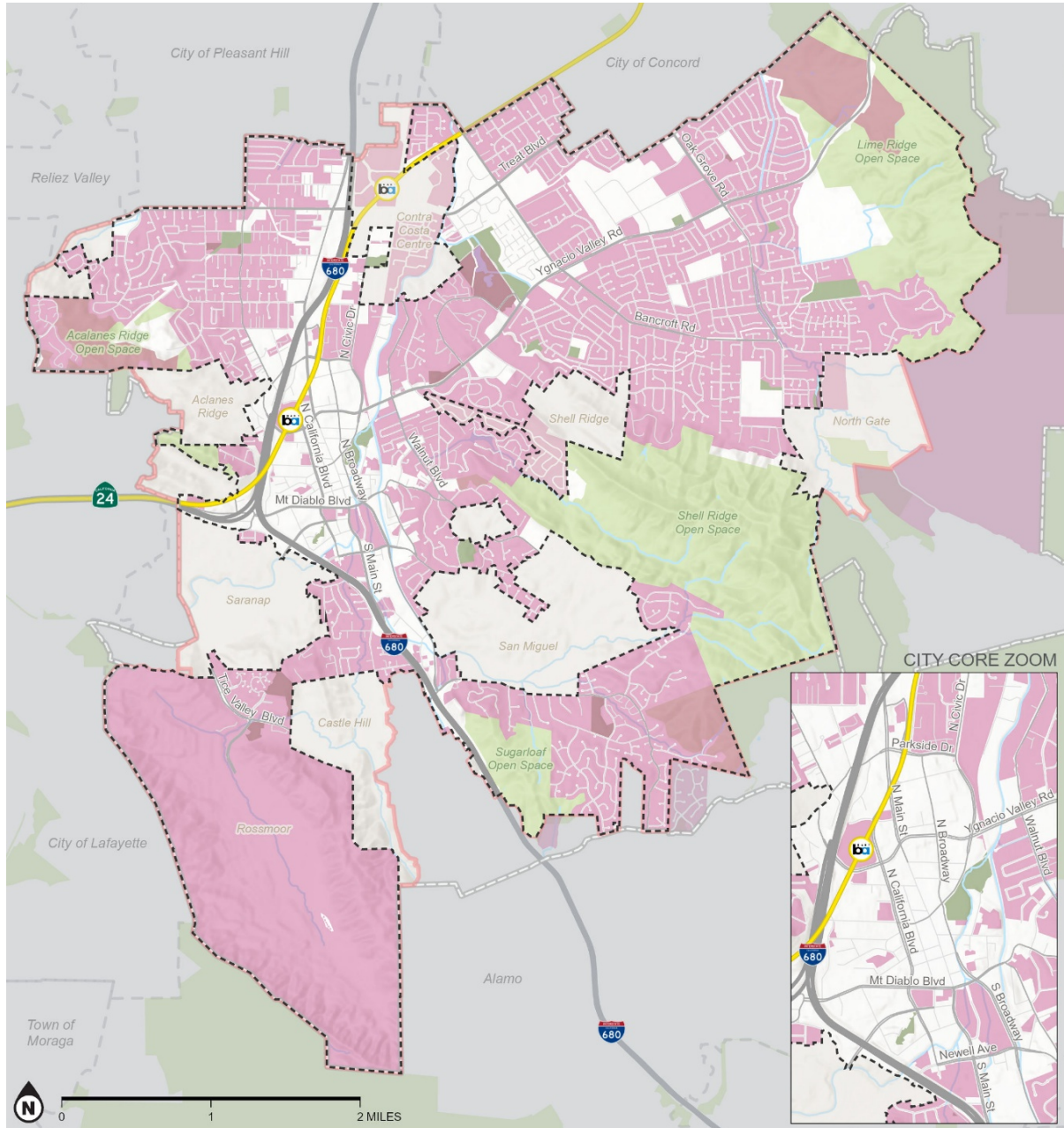
In 2023, the City of Walnut Creek adopted an ordinance to establish the implementation of SB 9.¹² The Walnut Creek ministerial process includes guidance on the development of dwelling units such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), duplexes, triplexes, and other housing types, as well as urban lot splits. The City created guidance and objective design standards to develop the parcel and support housing creation. Walnut Creek SB 9 regulations outline the possible types of development, urban lot split scenarios, and standards to provide viable SB 9 units. All new residential units in Walnut Creek, including SB 9 units, pay an impact fee (\$26.04 per square foot of living space) or provide inclusionary housing units.

SB 9 development is permitted in approximately 60% of the area within city limits, including single-family residential zoning districts, which comprise 26%, and planned development areas, which comprise 34%. While lot sizes vary among the single-family residential zoning districts and planned development zoning districts, which can vary in unit and urban lot split capacity, the SB 9 regulations provide development standards

¹² City of Walnut Creek. Senate Bill 9 Regulations: Two-Unit Development and Urban Lot Splits. Revised March 2026. <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/33318/639086507322430000>.
City of Walnut Creek. Single-Family Residential Zones: SB 9. City of Walnut Creek — Single-Family Residential Zones: SB 9.

based on net parcel area, creating opportunities to expand housing capacity across a wide range of residential properties.

Figure 16. Single-Family Residential and Planned Development Parcels Eligible for SB 9



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 5/29/2026.

AREAS ELIGIBLE FOR SB 9

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



SB9 Areas

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Senate Bill 6 (Middle Class Housing Act) and Assembly Bill 2011 (Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act)

California Senate Bill 6 (SB 6), enacted in 2022, allows qualifying multifamily residential or mixed-use projects on sites of 20 acres or less in zones where office, retail, or parking are principally permitted uses. Sites on or adjacent to properties with less than one-third industrial use, within five hundred feet of a freeway, in very high fire severity zones, or that contain tribal resources are exempt. SB 6 developments are projects with residential-only units or mixed-use projects with at least 50% residential use in square footage supporting housing production.

California Assembly Bill 2011 (AB 2011), enacted in 2022, establishes a streamlined, ministerial review process for qualifying multifamily residential projects in zones where office, retail, or parking are principally permitted uses. Sites on or adjacent to properties with more than one-third industrial use or within 500 feet of a freeway, in a very high fire severity zone, or that contain tribal resources are exempt. AB 2011 developments include 100% affordable housing projects and mixed-income housing projects on commercial corridors that contain a percentage of affordable housing units. Commercial corridors must have at least 50 feet of frontage on a public street with a 70- to 150-foot right-of-way for mixed-income housing projects and are allowed on sites of 20 acres or less.

Figure 17. AB 2011 and SB 6 Criteria



Source: Association of Bay Area Governments. Retrieved from: <https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-04/AB-2011-SB-6-Summary-Key-Details-4-2025.pdf?cb=141b9237>

SB 6 and AB 2011 are alternative methods to produce housing. Walnut Creek is not required to adopt implementing ordinances for SB 6 or AB 2011 and has not done so. These state laws provide additional pathways that jurisdictions may elect to use to accommodate housing development. Any ordinance adopted to implement these laws would be exempt from CEQA. SB 6 and AB 2011 apply to properties in the commercial and business park zoning districts, and approximately 500 acres within the city may be eligible.

In the commercial and business park zones, SB 6 projects must meet labor requirements, ensure there is no net loss, and comply with local zoning, parking, design, and other ordinances, such as inclusionary housing requirements. For residential density, projects must meet or exceed a density of 20 units per acre (default density for Housing Element law) or comply with the standards in the closest zone that allows for housing at that density.

AB 2011 100% affordable housing projects are also allowed on properties in the commercial and business park zones. Similar to SB 6 projects, AB 2011 100% affordable projects must meet or exceed the default density and comply with the standards in the closest zone that allows for housing at that density. AB 2011 mixed-income housing projects are allowed on properties along commercial corridors in Walnut Creek that meet the right-of-way criteria, such as Ygnacio Valley Road and South Broadway. For AB 2011 projects, the permitted height and density vary by parcel size, right-of-way width, and transit accessibility as shown in **Table 7**.

Table 7. AB 2011 Development Standards

Project Type	Max Height	Density
Less than 1 acre	Locally permitted height	20 du/ acre
1 acre with a Right of Way <100 ft	35 ft	30 du/ acre
1 acre with a Right of Way >100 ft	45 ft	50 du/ acre
Half mile of the Major Transit Stop and with a population of greater than 100,000	65 ft	70 du/ acre

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments. Retrieved from: <https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-04/AB-2011-SB-6-Summary-Key-Details-4-2025.pdf?cb=141b9237>; and https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023-07/How-to-Review-AB-2011-Development-Project-Proposals_7.29.23.pdf?cb=b60ab24a

Faith-Based Housing Opportunities

State Legislation, including Assembly Bill 2244 (AB 2244), Assembly Bill 1851 (AB 1851), and Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), has expanded opportunities for affordable housing development on land owned by faith-based institutions. These policies allow institutions to develop affordable housing on faith-based properties that may otherwise be constrained by zoning, parking, entitlement requirements, or other local government regulations. AB 1851 and AB 2244 reduce parking-related barriers by allowing qualifying religious institution-affiliated housing projects to eliminate up to 50% of religious-use parking spaces and limiting local agencies' ability to require replacement parking or deny projects based solely on those reductions. SB 4 encourages housing production by allowing qualifying affordable housing developments on land owned by religious institutions and certain higher education institutions through a streamlined, ministerial approval process.

Consistent with State policy, the Walnut Creek 2023–2031 Housing Element includes policies and programs that support housing development on faith-based lands to address affordable housing needs. Housing Element Program H-2.Q, Faith-Based Properties, calls for identifying faith-based properties that may be able to take advantage of State law for affordable housing development and connecting interested faith-based organizations with affordable housing developers.

The Housing Element sites inventory identifies at least six faith-based properties, totaling approximately 15 acres as potential housing opportunity sites, as shown in **Table 8**. In addition, the city has identified 34 religious institution sites across 54 parcels throughout the city, with a range of General Plan designations. These properties provide a potential resource for future housing production, as shown in **Figure 18**.

Housing development on faith-based properties is occurring in Walnut Creek, including the following projects:

- Hope Village Micro Homes at Grace Presbyterian Church (2102 Tice Valley Road) provides six units of very low-income housing.¹³

¹³ Homes Heal Hearts. Hope Solutions. (2026, May 27). <https://www.hopesolutions.org/hope-village-walnut-creek-a-new-model-for-senior-housing-and-community-in-contra-costa-county/>

- St. Paul's Commons / Trinity Center (1888 Trinity Avenue), a four-story development with 44 affordable housing units adjacent to St. Paul's Episcopal Church.¹⁴

These projects illustrate how faith-based properties can accommodate affordable housing while continuing to serve as locations for community-serving institutions.

Table 8. Faith-Based Properties and Affordable Housing Opportunities in Walnut Creek

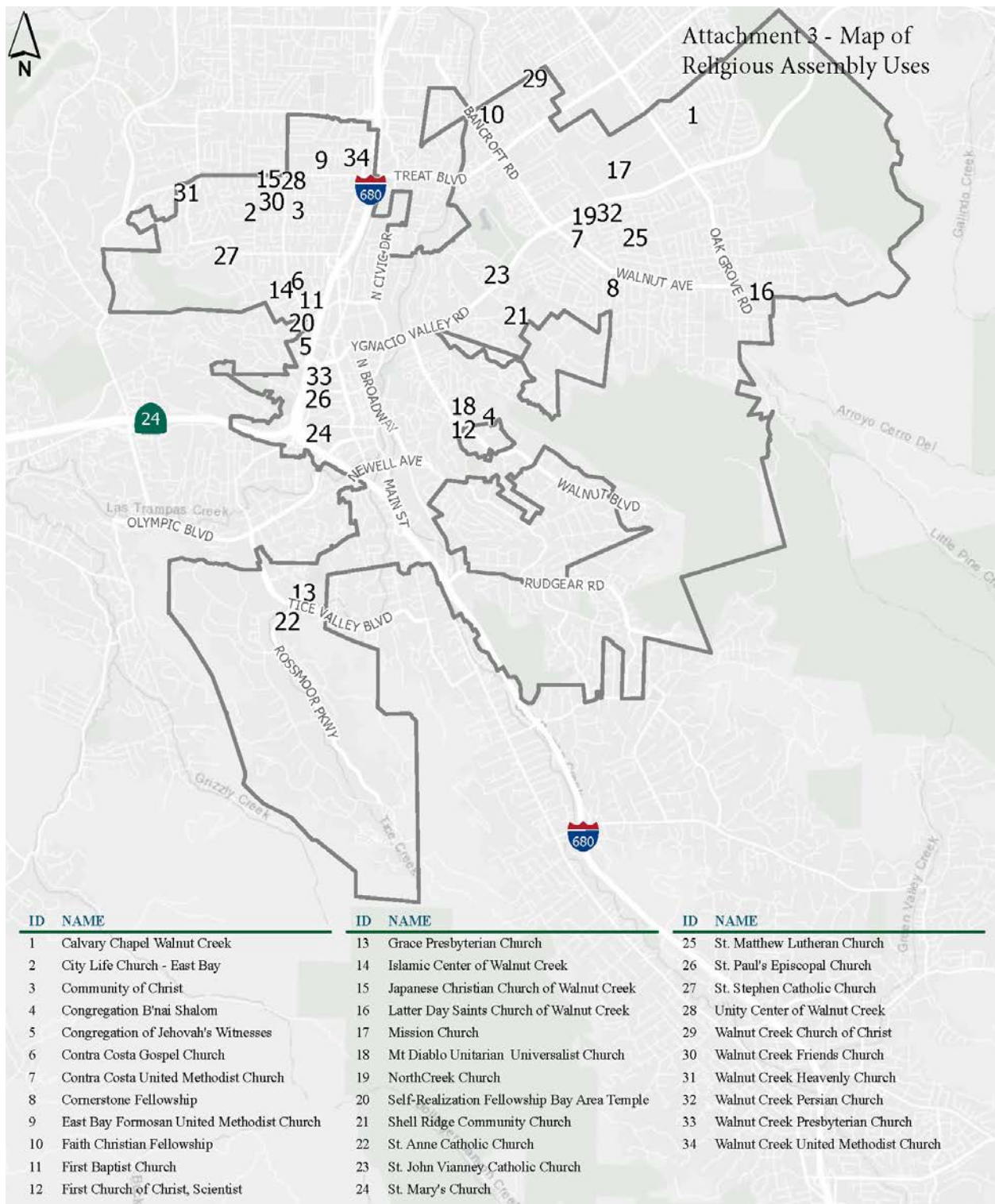
Land Use, Build Date	Site Address	General Plan	Zoning	Specific Plan	FAR Max	Measure A (Feet)	Parcel Area (SF)
Church, Built in 1979	200 La Casa Via	Single-family Very Low	Planned Development District	None	N/A	40	128,502
Church, Parking Lot	Trinity Ave	Multifamily Downtown	Multifamily, 1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	West Downtown Specific Plan	1.5; Up to 2.5 with a Community Benefits Agreement	50	46,609
Church, Parking Lot, Built in 1948	1859 Lacassie Ave	Multifamily Downtown	Multifamily 1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	West Downtown Specific Plan	1.5; Up to 2.5 with a Community Benefits Agreement	50	19,602

¹⁴ St. Paul's Commons. Resources for Community Development. (2022, February 22). <https://rcdhousing.org/st-pauls-commons/>

Land Use, Build Date	Site Address	General Plan	Zoning	Specific Plan	FAR Max	Measure A (Feet)	Parcel Area (SF)
Church, Parking Lot, Built in 1970	1801 Lacassie Ave	Multifamily Downtown	Multifamily 1 DU/750 sq. ft. net lot area	West Downtown Specific Plan	1.5; Up to 2.5 with a Community Benefits Agreement	50	226,512
Church, Parking Lot, Built in 1941	Mt Diablo Blvd	Mixed Use-Downtown	Downtown Mixed-Use District	West Downtown Specific Plan	1.5; Up to 3.0 with a Community Benefits Agreement	89	84,506
Church, Parking Lot	2100 Tice Valley Blvd	Multifamily Very High	Planned Development District	None	0.5	40	138,085
Grand Total							643,817

Source: City of Walnut Creek. Retrieved from:

https://walnutcreek.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=12&clip_id=4993&doc_id=89cba562-13af-11ef-b231-0050569183fa

Figure 18. Existing Religious Assembly Uses as of 2024

Source: City of Walnut Creek. Retrieved from:

https://walnutcreek.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=12&clip_id=4993&meta_id=312629

Assembly Bill 2923 Parcels

AB 2923 authorized BART to define baseline Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) zoning standards for BART-owned properties within a half mile of stations and streamlines local approval for qualifying residential projects that meet affordability, height, and labor requirements. TOD facilitated by AB 2923 aims for BART to collaborate with local jurisdictions to increase ridership, provide sustainable transportation choices, provide affordable housing, and raise revenue for BART maintenance and improvements.

BART owns several parcels in the half-mile radius around each of the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill BART stations. Eligible AB 2923 TOD projects must be located on BART-owned infill sites totaling more than 0.25 acres, with at least 75% of the site within a half mile of the existing BART station entrance and within an area overseen by the BART Board. Many of the parcels are built out and not part of the work plan to implement TOD infill. There are two parcels owned by BART, eligible for AB 2923, and in progress with TOD implementation, as shown in **Table 9** and **Figure 19**. The two TOD projects have gone through the developer solicitation process, including selecting teams. Completion of these projects will support achievement of TOD 2040 performance targets. Both parcels also have TOD lease-to-sale options for development.

Table 9. Summary of AB 2923 Conformance Findings by Station

Station	Parcels	Jurisdiction	Local Zoning Conforms	Local zoning does not Conform*
Pleasant Hill/ Contra Costa Centre (Block D)	48-221-043-0	Contra Costa County	Land Use, Building Height, Vehicle Parking (Shared and Unbundled)	Residential Density, FAR, Vehicle Parking (Minimum, Residential Maximum, Office Maximum)
Walnut Creek (Phase 3)	174-180-004-7	Walnut Creek	Land Use, Vehicle Parking (Shared and Unbundled)	Residential Density, FAR, Building Height, Vehicle Parking (Minimum, Residential Maximum, Office Maximum)
*AB 2923 Baseline Zoning Standards become the local zoning as of August 25, 2022, until AB 2923 sunsets January 1, 2029				

Source: BART. Retrieved from https://www.bart.gov/sites/default/files/docs/AB2923_ConformanceFindings_AdoptedAug25.pdf and https://www.bart.gov/sites/default/files/docs/BART_AB2923_FinalTechGuide_Full.pdf

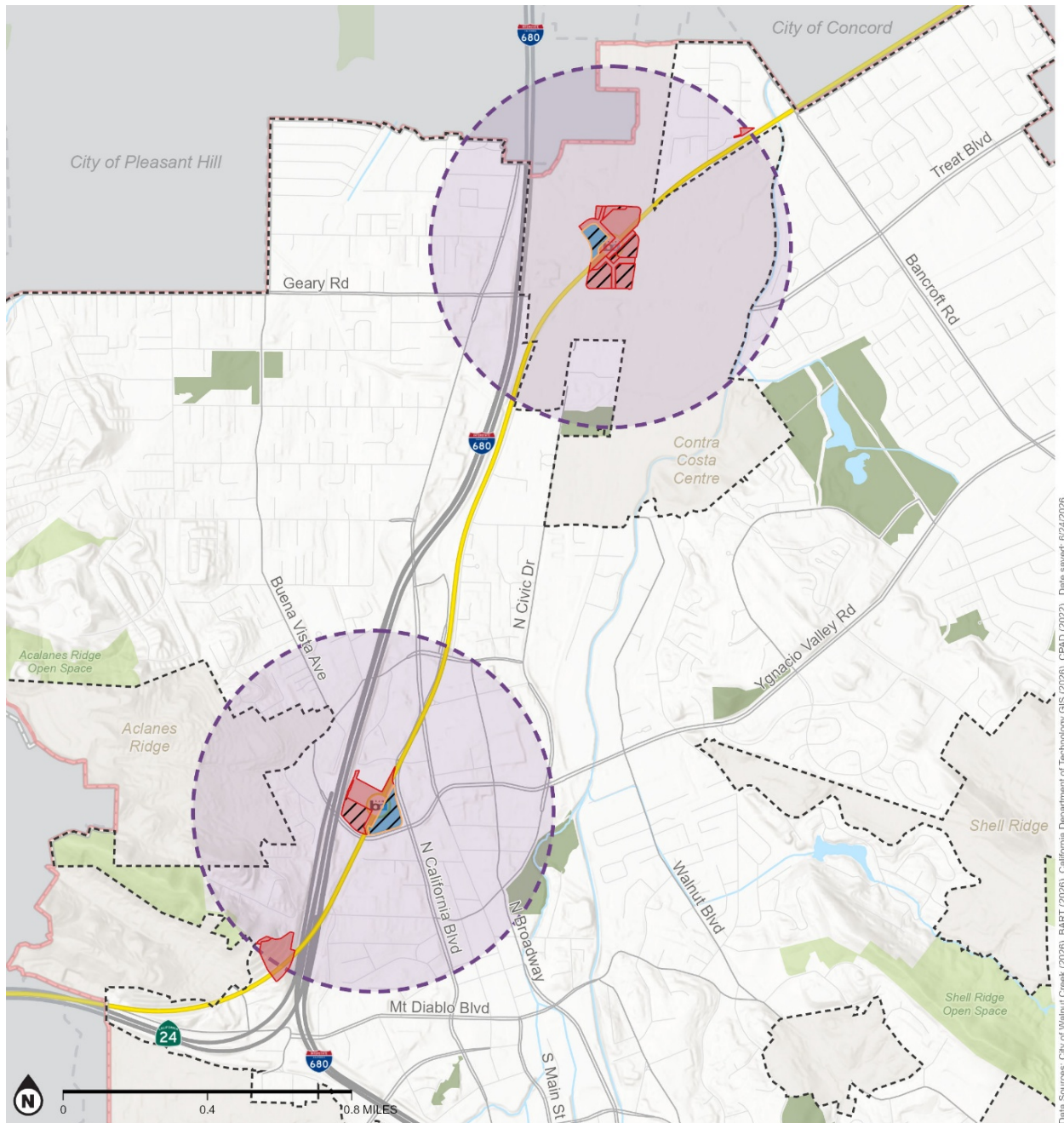
Under AB 2923, the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill BART stations are designated Neighborhood or Town Center. Both stations have had TOD on BART property with plans for future phases in the Bay Area BART Work Plan as shown in **Table 10**. The TOD guidelines require a maximum building height of five stories for transit-oriented land use, which can include a mix of residential and non-residential uses. The minimum residential density is 75 dwelling units per acre and parking ratios not exceeding one space per residential unit. The non-residential intensity is 3.0 FAR and 2.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office space. TOD allows for increased housing opportunities, supports transit ridership, and promotes sustainable growth.

Table 10. Progress of BART's TOD Program by Station

Station	Year Complete	Commercial (SF)	Rental Units	
			Total	Affordable
Completed				
Pleasant Hill-Contra Costa Centre (Blocks A-B)	2008	35,590	422	84
Pleasant Hill/ Contra Costa Centre (Block C)	2018	0	200	0
Walnut Creek (Phase 2)	2023	6,000	181	179
Pre-Development*				
Pleasant Hill/ Contra Costa Centre (Block D)	TBD	0	170	34
Walnut Creek (Phase 3)	TBD	12,000	238	0
*Commercial square feet and number of residential units are approximate and subject to change.				

Source: BART. Retrieved from https://www.bart.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/20240826%20TOD%20Work%20Plan_Final.pdf

Figure 19. AB 2923 Conformance Findings by Station



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022), Date saved: 6/24/2026.

BART DEVELOPMENT (AB 2923)

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- BART Station Half-mile Buffer
- TOD Lease Sale Option
- TOD Work Plan
- Yes
- No
- In Progress
- AB 2923 Parcel
- Yes
- No
- To Be Determined

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

MTC Transit-Oriented Communities Policy

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has adopted the Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Policy to support transit ridership and encourage communities around transit stations and along transit corridors to provide equitable access to housing, jobs, and services to all Bay Area residents. Compliance with the policy is voluntary. Adherence to the TOC Policy, however, opens opportunities and eligibility for jurisdictions to be competitive for some MTC discretionary funding, such as the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG), to invest in transportation infrastructure supporting infill development. The TOC Policy applies to the half-mile area around existing and planned transit stops and stations as shown in **Figure 20**. The half-mile measure is associated with the distance measure of a 15-minute walk. This TOC Policy aligns with Walnut Creek's approach to support infill development in specific plans, reach RHNA targets, and fulfill the goals of the last General Plan.

The TOC policy areas are categorized by tier based on the level of transit service and are subject to a specific development standard according to the tier. There are two eligible transit stations in Walnut Creek's Plan Area, and both belong in Transit Tier 3. Tier 3 areas are station areas that are served by one major transit provider, like BART.

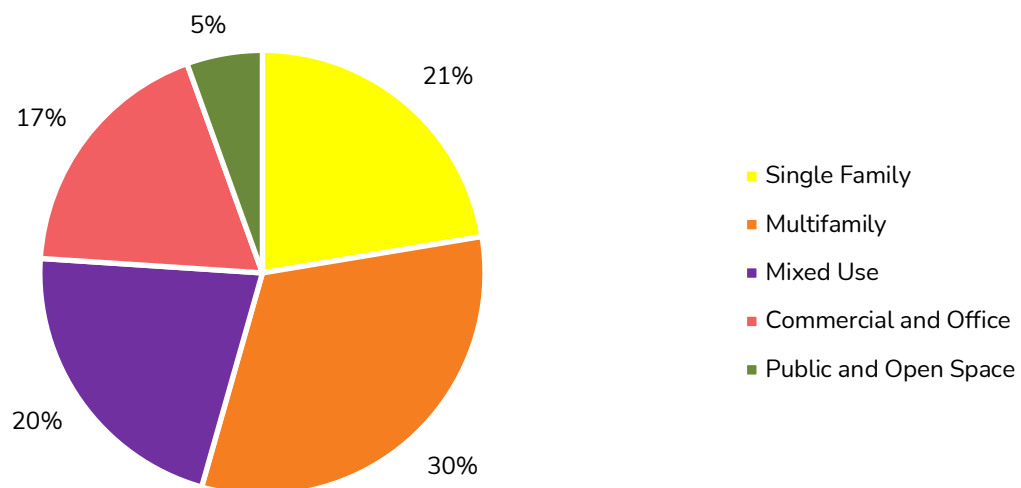
The TOC Policy focuses on the core elements of land use density, affordable housing and commercial stabilization, parking management, and complete streets/multimodal access. The land use density standards are applicable to new residential or commercial office developments on parcels that are not currently occupied by existing single- or multifamily dwelling units. Allowable minimum and maximum density standards must be met within the half-mile station area subject to the TOC Policy. Zoning within this area requires that new residential or commercial office development be built at the minimum and maximum specified densities in **Table 11**.

Table 11. Land Use Density Requirements for Tier Three Stations

Minimum Density for New Residential Development	Maximum Allowable Density for New Residential Development	Minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for New Commercial Office Development	Maximum Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for New Commercial Office Development
50 units/net acre or higher	75 units/net acre or higher	2.0 or higher	4.0 or higher

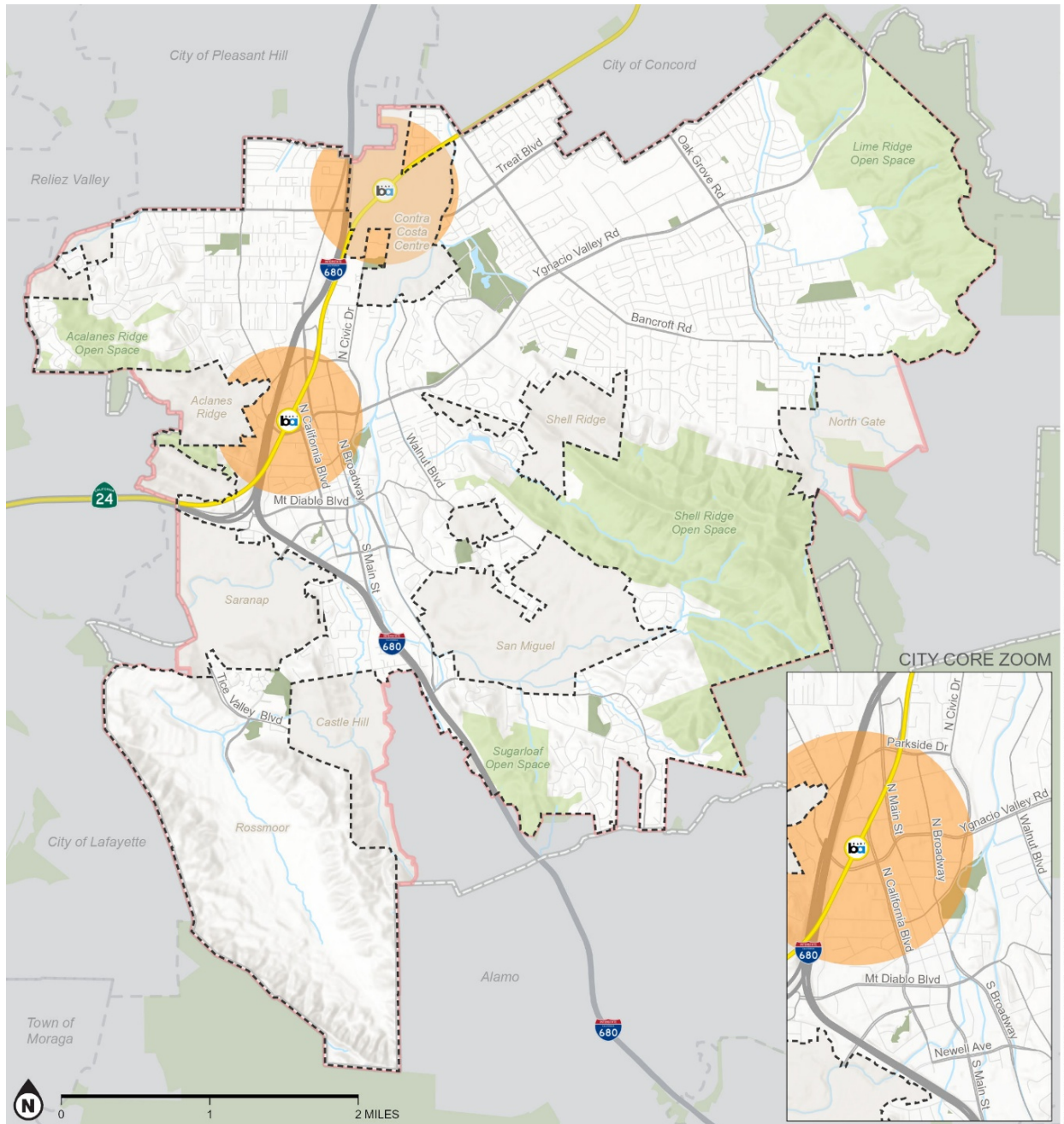
Source: Transit-oriented communities (TOC) policy. Metropolitan Transportation Commission. <https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/land-use/transit-oriented-communities-toc-policy>

Both stations have already developed the planned high-density, transit-oriented development using the West Downtown, North Downtown, and Pleasant Hill BART Station Area Specific Plans. The parcels in the half mile around the BART stations' General Plan designations are generally diverse and distributed evenly, with the largest share for multifamily (30%) followed by single-family (21%) and open space (14%), where the TOC does not apply. The variety of General Plan designations within a 15-minute walk of the stations reflects the walkability of these areas and provides access to a range of housing, employment, and community-serving uses.

Figure 20. General Plan Designation Breakdown for the Half-Mile Radius of the BART Stations

Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026.

Figure 21. TOC Stations and Buffers



TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES

CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology/GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/23/2026.

Sixth Cycle Housing Element

In 2023, City Council adopted the Sixth Cycle Housing Element. It serves as Walnut Creek's strategy for meeting existing and future housing needs for residents at all income levels. California law requires every city to update its Housing Element every eight years and have it certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Housing Element established goals, policies, and programs focused on:

- Accommodating future housing growth
- Expanding housing opportunities for households of all income levels
- Preserving and improving the existing housing stock
- Removing governmental constraints on housing development
- Affirmatively furthering fair housing and promoting equitable access to housing opportunities

The Housing Element addresses the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirement of 5,805 housing units affordable to very-low-, low-, moderate-, and above-moderate-income households as shown in **Table 22**. The Sites Inventory identified residential sites with sufficient capacity to meet the RHNA, as shown in **Figure 23**. Sites included planned and approved projects, potential housing opportunity sites on vacant and underutilized sites, and accessory dwelling unit projections. Potential sites for future housing are mainly concentrated in the Downtown Core, implementing the City's current infill policies. There will be two to three additional housing cycles by the next General Plan Update.

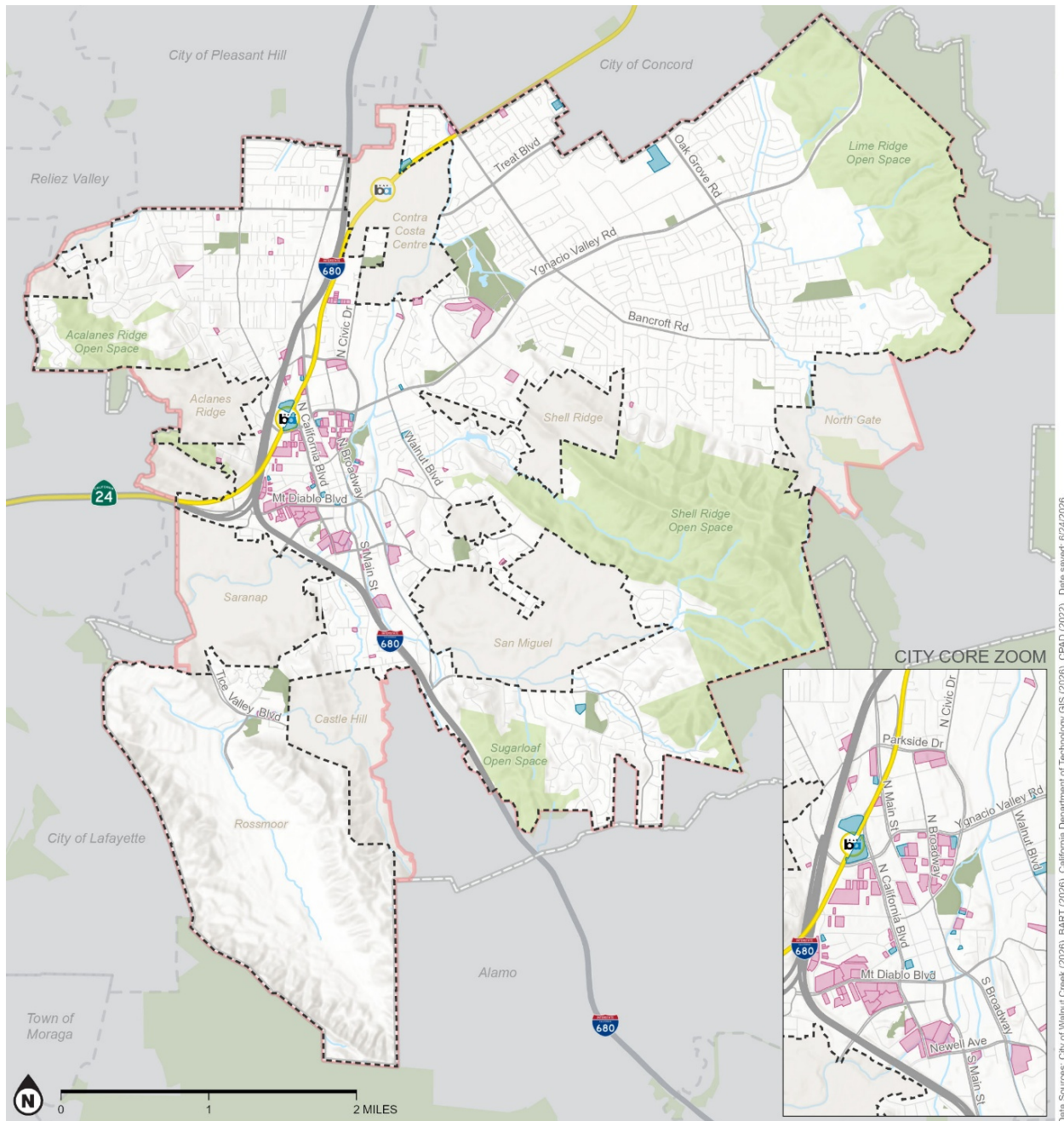
Table 22. RHNA

Income Category	Regional Housing Needs Allocation
Extremely Low/Very Low (0%–50% AMI)	1,657
Low (51%–80% AMI)	954
Moderate (81%–120% AMI)	890
Above Moderate (over 120% AMI)	2,304
Total	5,805

Note: AMI = Area Median Income. Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA. Housing Element. Retrieved from: <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/departments/housing-programs/housing-policies/housing-element>

Assembly Bill 686 (AB 686) is an additional State law that requires cities and counties to “affirmatively further fair housing” through meaningful actions. In Walnut Creek’s case, affirmatively furthering fair housing requires addressing housing affordability, maintaining housing choice, preventing and reconciling income segregation, enforcing fair housing protection, and avoiding the displacement of households.

Figure 23. Housing Element Sites Inventory Map



Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/24/2026.

HOUSING ELEMENT SITES

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GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



HOUSING ELEMENT SITES

- Pending Project
- Available

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Additional Key State, Local, and Regional Policy Affecting Land Use

- **Senate Bill 330.** SB 330 requires maintenance of the overall residential development capacity in a city and suspends the enactment of local downzoning and housing construction moratoriums. It ensures proposed zoning changes and land use policies preserve or increase residential capacity.
- **Senate Bill 35.** SB 35 requires a streamlined, ministerial approval process for qualified multifamily infill projects in jurisdictions that are not on track to meet housing production goals. Eligible projects must provide a minimum share of affordable units and must meet objective development standards. It incorporates clear, objective development standards and establishes land use policies to ensure the City continues to meet housing production goals.
- **Senate Bill 244.** SB 244 requires cities and counties to address the barriers to access community infrastructure and resources in unincorporated communities. It reviews and ensures Unincorporated Islands are planned for accordingly.
- **Contra Costa County Measure C/ L / J / Urban Limit Line.** Measure C was designed to require cooperation among the various cities and the County, imposing a sales tax for local transportation purposes on transportation and growth issues that cross city boundaries. In 2006, voters approved Measure L, which extended the County's Urban Limit Line (ULL) until December 31, 2026. Measure J extended the sales tax for the growth management requirements of Measure C through 2034. It provides strategies and an implementation framework for how the City's new General Plan will account for growth. This also requires coordination with the County and neighboring jurisdictions for coordinated growth.
- **Measure O.** This is a half-cent sales tax that provides funding for City services, replacing aging facilities, and helping maintain the community's activities; public safety, art and recreation capital projects, economic development support, library, and sustainability efforts. It provides strategies and an inventory of facilities and activities for the new General Plan elements

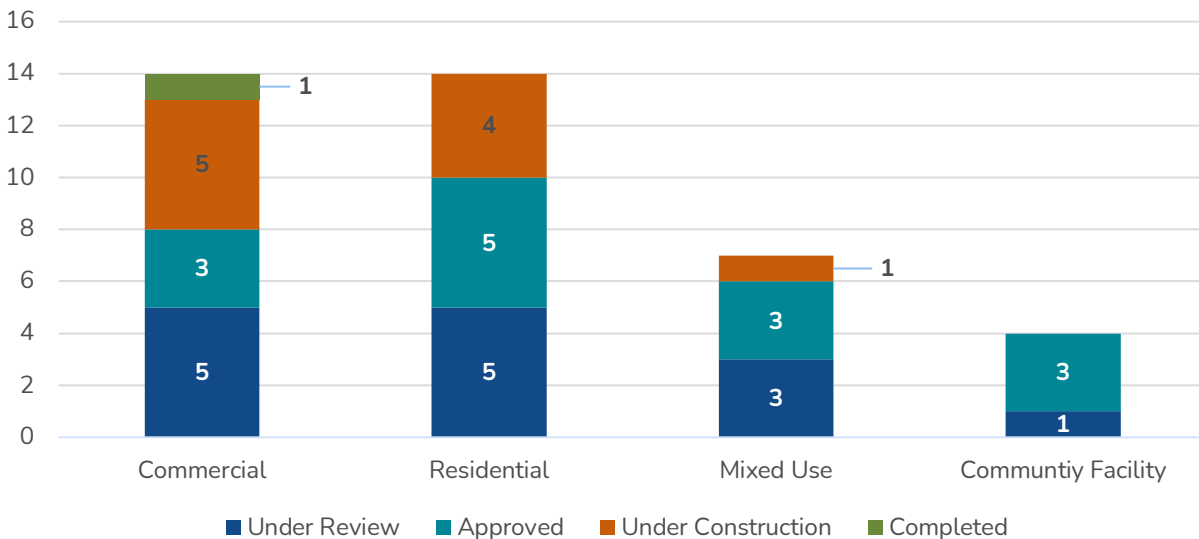
Pipeline Projects

The Development Pipeline List ("Pipeline") is a list of current development activities in Walnut Creek that is updated once per quarter (last updated May 8, 2026). This inventory includes larger-scale commercial construction, major subdivisions, and affordable housing developments. It does not include smaller projects such as single-

family residential home additions, use permits without construction, or minor commercial tenant improvements. Projects are assigned statuses for community transparency and understanding, including whether the project is under review, approved, under construction, completed, or withdrawn.

As of May 2026, there are 39 projects underway, including fourteen commercial, fourteen residential, seven mixed-use, and four community facilities. Most are under review by City staff or have been approved and received their requested planning entitlements. Though Walnut Creek is limited in undeveloped/ vacant parcels, projects continue to be pursued within the city. All of the pipeline projects have private applicants that have worked with the development standards in the General Plan, Zoning Code, and applicable specific plans to advance their projects. Development processes vary based on project characteristics such as location, budget, and applicant, as well as lead time from review periods, comment resolution, and completing approval requirements.

Figure 24. Pipeline Projects



Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA. May 2026. Development Projects. Retrieved from: <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/community-development-department/development-projects>.

Table 12. List of Major Pipeline Projects

Project Name	Project Type	Project Status	Site Size (SF)	Residential Units (Net New)
1455 Montego Senior Living	Community Facilities	Approved	52,272	39
Byron Park Expansion	Community Facilities	Approved	53,143	N/A
Chick Fil-A restaurant at Citrus Marketplace Shopping Center	Commercial	Under Construction	38,768	N/A
Fifteen24 Residential	Residential	Under Review	12,632	4
Khali SFR development – One lot subdivision	Residential	Approved	11,761	2
San Miguel Two-Lot Subdivision	Residential	Approved	44,867	1
Habitat for Humanity – Las Juntas	Residential	Under Construction	89,298	42
Cityview Mixed Use Development - 1910 North Broadway	Mixed Use	Under Review	67,954	140
Toyota Walnut Creek GPA/ Rezone	Mixed Use	Approved	265,716	N/A
W.C. BART Transit Village (Mixed Use)	Mixed Use	Under Construction	705,672	596
Mitchell Townhomes	Residential	Under Review	958,320	422
Mt. Diablo Mixed-Use Development	Mixed Use	Approved	24,394	74
2670-80 Walnut Blvd. Subdivision	Residential	Under Construction	65,776	11

Project Name	Project Type	Project Status	Site Size (SF)	Residential Units (Net New)
Original Joe's Restaurant	Commercial	Completed	16,553	0
Sierra Gardens	Residential	Approved	61,855	87 (58 net new)
1532 Mt. Diablo Mixed-Use Building	Mixed Use	Approved	33,541	42
Oakmont Senior Housing & Residential Care Facility	Residential	Approved	413,820	254
Chick-fil-A	Commercial	Under Construction	28,750	N/A
Honda GPA, SPA, and Rezone	Mixed Use	Under Review	120,661	N/A
Wolf Subdivision	Residential	Under Review	58,370	5 (4 net new)
Centre Place South	Residential	Under Review	57,499	112 net new (considering more density)
Taiwanese New Cultural Center	Community Facilities	Approved	57,064	N/A
F&M Bank	Commercial	Under Construction	24,829	N/A
Civic Crossing	Residential	Under Construction	39,640	97
Shadelands SecureSpace/ Calicraft	Commercial	Under Construction	339,768	N/A
The Residences at Abigail Place	Residential	Under Construction	88,427	15

Project Name	Project Type	Project Status	Site Size (SF)	Residential Units (Net New)
1200 Rossmoor Parkway GPA/ Rezone	Commercial	Approved	58,806	N/A
Toyota of Walnut Creek Dealership	Commercial	Approved	87,120	N/A
Haven SFR Development	Residential	Approved	45,738	6
Taco Bell Drive-Thru (Rossmoor Shopping Center)	Commercial	Approved	29,185	N/A
Rossmoor Pickleball Courts	Commercial	Under Construction	104,544	N/A
Restoration Hardware Commercial Development	Commercial	Under Review	49,223	N/A
Sunnyvale SFR Development	Residential	Under Review	43,560	8
1532 Mt. Diablo Mixed-Use Development	Mixed Use	Under Review	17,860	106
Oceania - New Seafood Restaurant	Commercial	Under Review	6,970	N/A
Lithia Diablo Subaru	Commercial	Under Review	24,829	N/A
Porsche Dealership	Commercial	Under Review	103,673	NA
Joybound New Daycare Building	Community Facilities	Under Review	67,082	NA
Skims Retail	Commercial	Under Review	6,970	N/A

Source: City of Walnut Creek, CA. May 2026. Development Projects. Retrieved from: <https://www.walnutcreekca.gov/government/community-development-department/development-projects>.

Existing Community Design

The following section examines elements of the city's form and structure, including topography and views, building age, and parcel sizes.

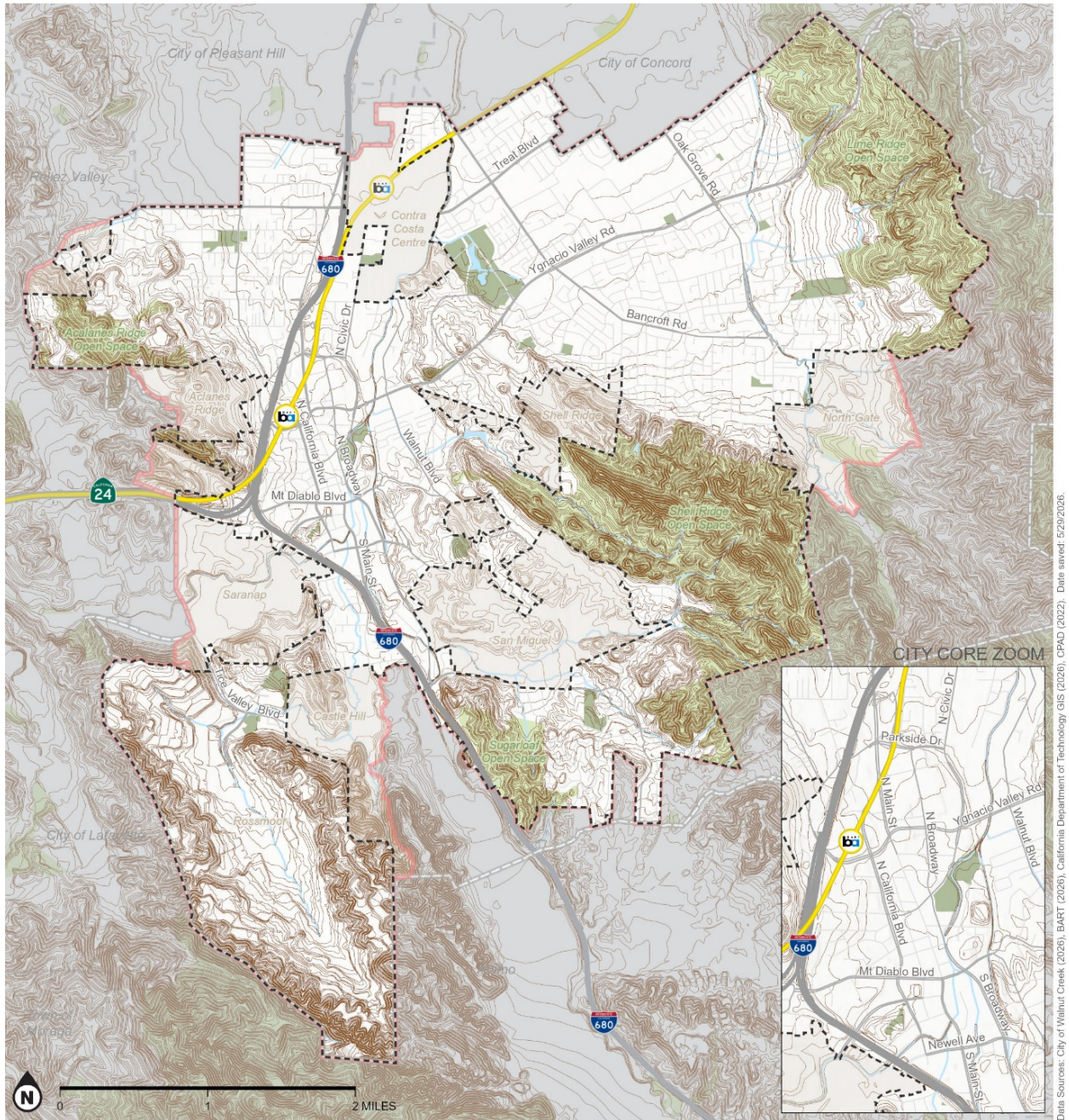
Topography

Walnut Creek is defined by the ridges and hills surrounding the city limits, creating a natural boundary making up the San Ramon Valley and the Ygnacio Valley. The Walnut Creek Downtown Core is where the San Ramon Creek and Walnut Creek meet at the base of the East Bay ridges and Mount Diablo. Mount Diablo has the highest peak in the surrounding ridges and hills at a height of 3,849 feet. The elevation throughout the Plan Area ranges from 60 feet at the northern edge of the city going towards Concord to just under 1,000 feet on the eastern edge of the city in the Mount Diablo North Gate area.

The surrounding ridges and rolling hills in Walnut Creek provide a unique environment and sense of place with various view corridors and vistas. The existing General Plan includes several goals, policies, and actions aimed at preserving open spaces and scenic views and preserving airspace to maintain unobstructed views. Development standards, such as building height and density, may influence previously identified view corridors within the Downtown Core and adjacent to major corridors, especially in infill opportunity areas.

The **Open Space and Conservation Existing Conditions Report's Visual Resources section** provides more information about the visual assets.

Figure 25. Topography



TOPOGRAPHY

— Ten Foot Contours

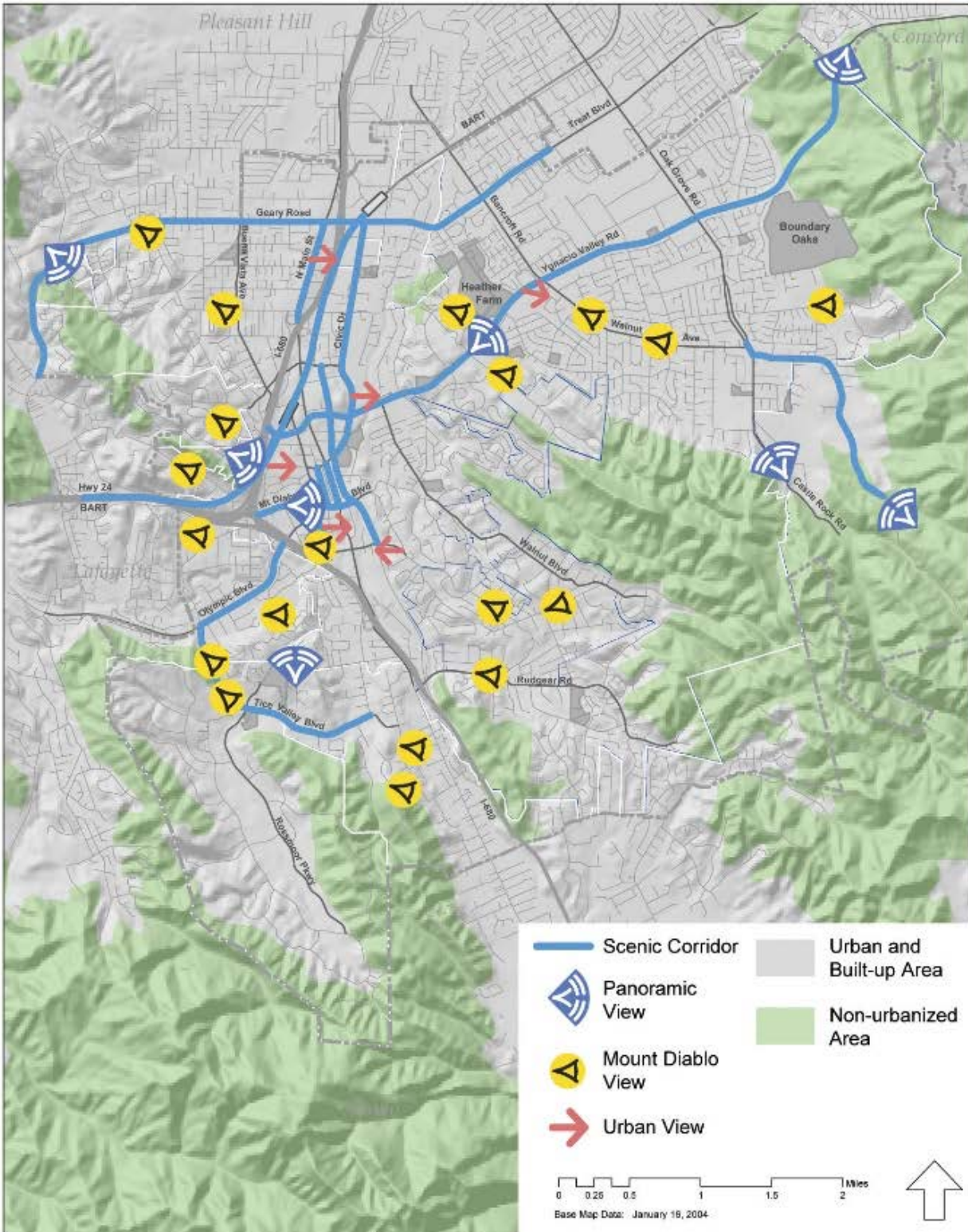
CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
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FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Parks
- Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Freeways
- BART Stations

Figure 26. Scenic and View Corridors

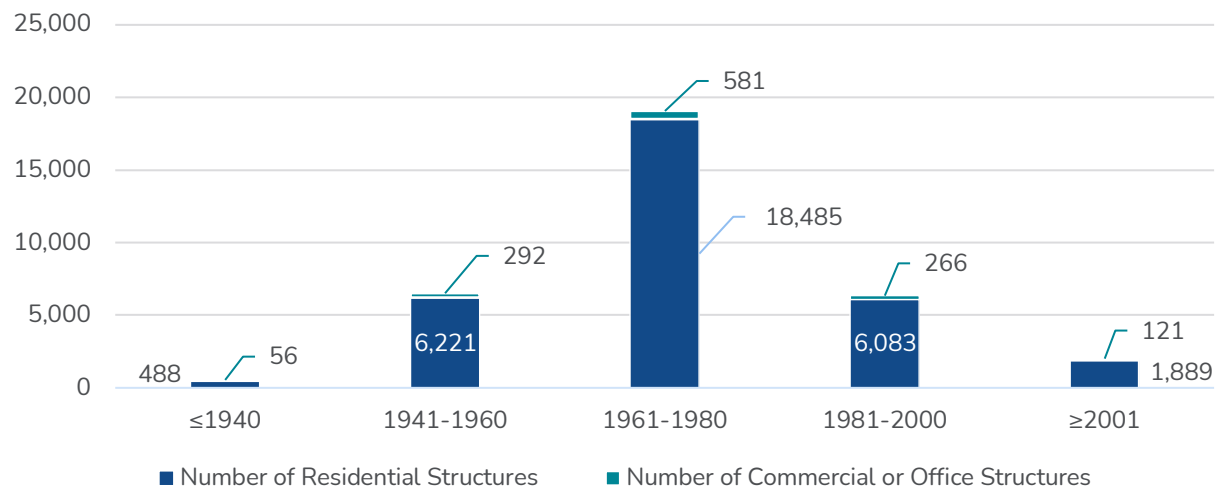


Year Built

Building age data illustrates historical development patterns and can indicate the overall condition of the building stock. Older buildings are more costly to maintain and repair and were often constructed before State laws like Title 24 (State building and energy codes) went into effect in 1978. As **Figures 27 and 28** indicate, most of the city's development occurred between 1960 and 1980, when residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors expanded throughout the city. During this period, the housing stock increased by 18,845 units and 581 commercial and office buildings were constructed, reflecting the rapid suburbanization and economic growth of the area.

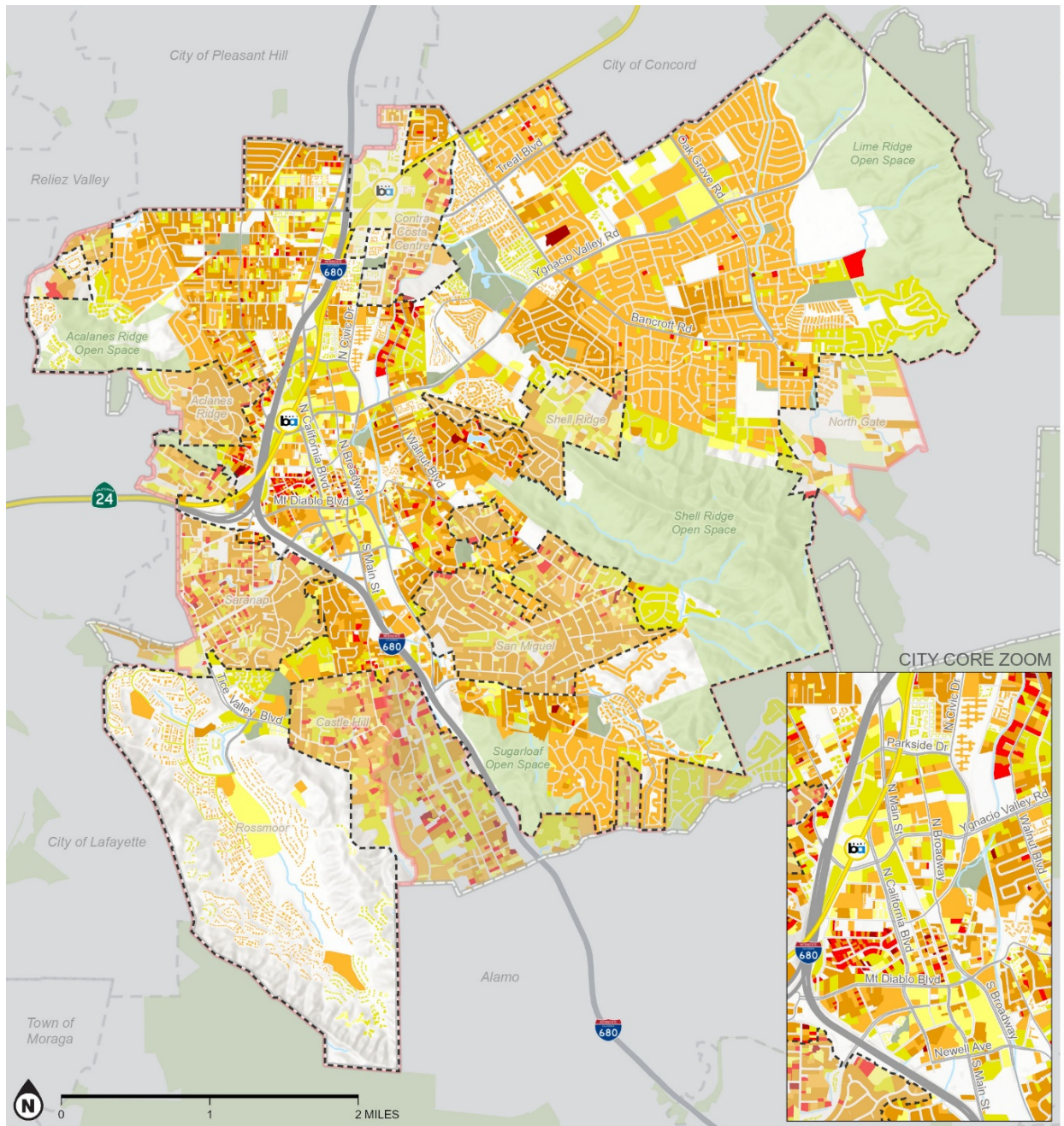
Most of the older buildings (built before 1960) are located in the Downtown Core and along the city's main roads: N. Broadway, California Blvd., Main St., Mt. Diablo Blvd., and Ygnacio Valley Road. Over the last 25 years, development has been distributed throughout Walnut Creek, reflecting the priorities and implementation from the last General Plan.

Figure 27. Building Structure Age



Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026.

Figure 28. Building Structure Age



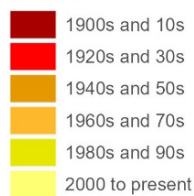
Data Sources: City of Walnut Creek (2026), BART (2026), California Department of Technology GIS (2026), CPAD (2022). Date saved: 6/23/2026.

YEAR BUILT

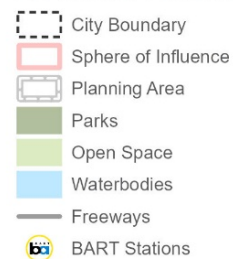
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YEAR BUILT



FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

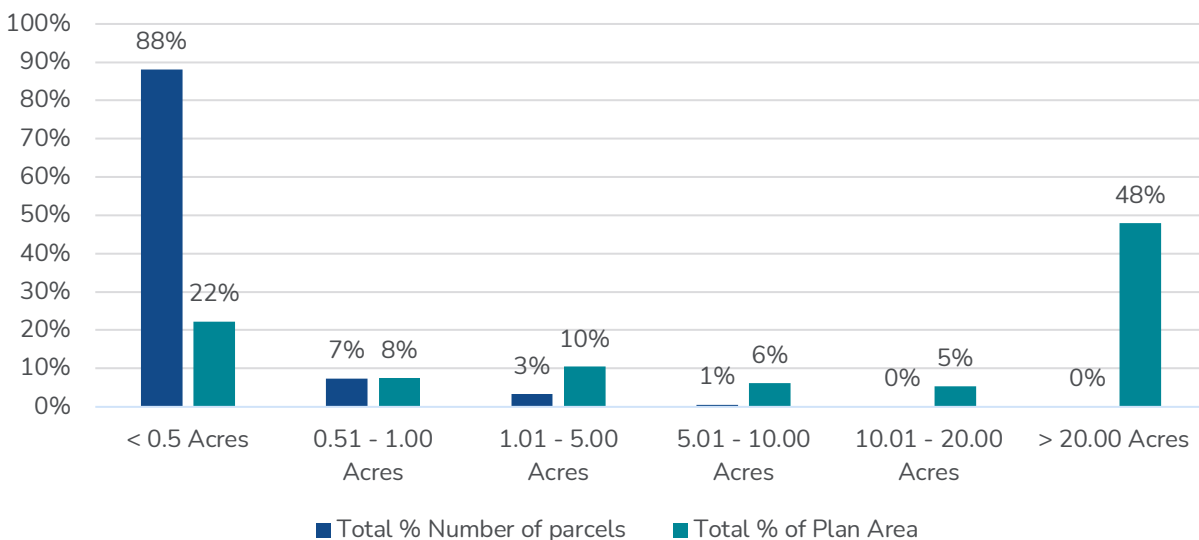


Parcel Size

Parcel size drives the scale of development and helps to define a city's scale, walkability, and character. Smaller parcel and block sizes contribute to a finer-grained building scale and often more walkable streets. New multifamily and commercial development is more frequently financially feasible and appropriate on larger parcels (greater than half an acre), or by aggregating several smaller parcels.

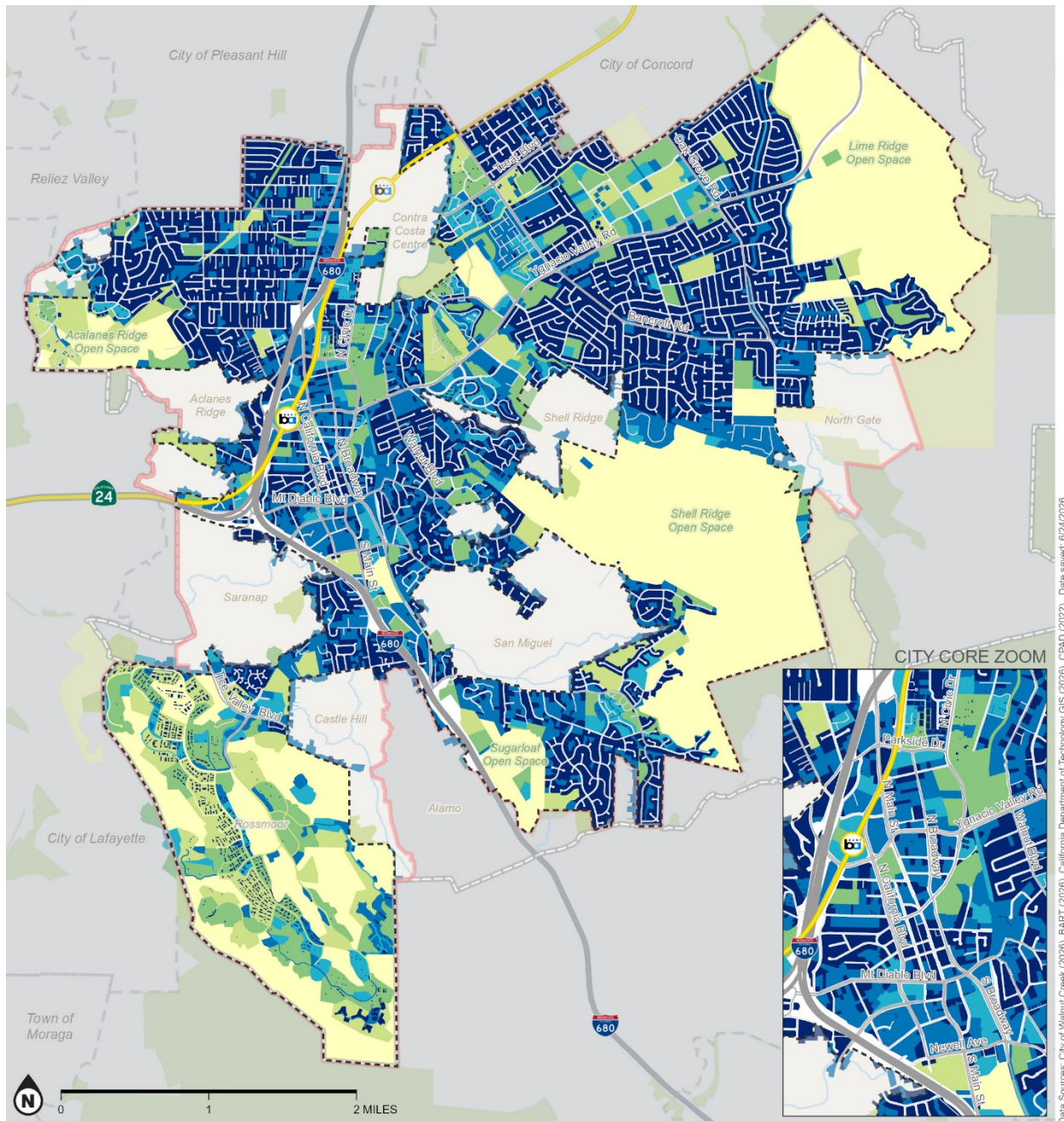
Most parcels in Walnut Creek are less than or equal to half an acre (88%) as shown in **Figure 27**. Parcels that are less than or equal to half an acre are located throughout the city. There are few parcels that are greater than or equal to 20 acres; however, those parcels make up 48% of the Plan Area. These parcels consist mostly of open space on the edges of the city limits and are reserved for recreation and conservation.

Figure 29. Parcel Size Distribution



Source: City of Walnut Creek GIS. 2026.

Figure 30. Parcel Size



PARCEL SIZE WITHIN THE CITY

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PARCEL SIZE

- 0.5 acres or less
- 0.51 - 3.00 acres
- 3.01 - 5.00 acres
- 5.01 - 10.00 acres
- 10.01 - 20.00 acres
- Greater than 20 acres

FEATURES + BOUNDARIES

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Waterbodies
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Commercial Floor Area Ratio

Commercial Floor Area Ratio refers to the specific standard of building intensity for commercial development. The permitted FAR generally changes according to where the parcel is geographically. Most of the parcels with calculable commercial FAR are within the Downtown core and Shadelands. A higher FAR measure correlates with a higher building intensity to increase the total amount of building space (or “floor area”) compared to the area of the parcel. The areas with a FAR greater than two are concentrated near the Walnut Creek BART station in the North Downtown Area, reflecting the implementation of infill priorities.

Conclusion

Walnut Creek has evolved, shaping the city’s physical character and form. The existing conditions analysis described the existing land use context and highlighted the various tools and regulations, such as infill development, specific plans, State laws, and Measure A, influencing the way Walnut Creek continues to evolve. Characteristics such as natural conditions and the presence of unincorporated county areas in the city are part of the existing physical form. The existing conditions and analysis will inform the next step in the General Plan process to create land use and circulation alternatives, as well as future policy development.