



Walnut Creek, CA



Walnut Creek, California, was first known as “The Corners” because of two roads that converged in this area. A nearby creek was then known as Nuts Creek, and in 1855, a hotel called the Walnut Creek House was constructed. With the arrival of a post office in 1862, the residents chose Walnut Creek as its name.

Several museums are located in Walnut Creek. The Lindsay Wildlife Museum is a natural history and environmental education center that exhibits more than 50 species of live, nonreleasable, native California animals and operates a wildlife hospital and rehabilitation center. Located in a 1903 redwood-framed house, Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum showcases numerous historical artifacts and houses an archive of Contra Costa County and Walnut Creek history. The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society operates the Diablo Valley Lines, a permanent, 1,800-square-foot model train layout with more than 4,300 feet of laid track. Bedford Gallery exhibits the work of historic, modern, and contemporary artists and is housed in the Leshner Center for the Arts.

Three theaters and the Center REPeratory Company, which is a resident professional theatre company that offers a variety of musicals, dramas, and comedies, are located in the Leshner Center for the Arts. The Leshner Center is also home to the California Symphony, Contra Costa Musical Theatre, Diablo Theater Company, Chamber Music SF, Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble, and Smuin Ballet.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The traditional downtown area of Walnut Creek is not currently residential; however, several developments have been proposed. The surrounding core area has many residential areas. Houses in the Almond-Shuey neighborhood, one of the oldest areas in the city, were built between the 1920s and 1940s. Housing options include large and small houses, apartments, duplexes, and townhomes on tree-lined streets. Some new apartments and houses are under construction. The Lakewood Area consists of more than five hundred homes and an entrance to Shell Ridge Open Space. Alma Avenue features condominiums and apartments.

The Parkmead neighborhood consists of approximately 620 homes; about one third of this neighborhood is located within the city boundary near Kaiser Permanente Medical Center. Most of the homes are single-story ranch houses that were built in the 1950s. Apartments are also available in this neighborhood.

Further from the downtown, the Rancho San Miguel subdivision was built between 1955 and 1958 and consists of 375 mid-century modern homes in the Eichler style and 160 standard ranch style homes. This neighborhood is located close to the John Muir Medical Center. Single-family homes dominate the Livorna Estates neighborhood, which is located near the Sugarloaf Open Space; most of the homes were built between 1960 and 1980. The nearby Rudgear Estates consists of 429 single-family homes built in 1973, many of which back up to open space hills. Other single-family home developments include the Woodlands, which was built during the 1960s, and the Northgate area, where construction began in the 1970s.

Approximately 6,700 residential units are available at Rossmoor, a development for residents aged 55 years or older. Housing styles include 14 condominium and 3 cooperative developments situated in garden-style duplexes, four-plexes, and mid- to high-rises and a single-family home development.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Walnut Creek has 22 parks and open spaces and facilities that include the Boundary Oak Golf Course, swimming pools, tennis courts, sports fields, an equestrian center, a skate park, and playgrounds. Amenities at Heather Farm Park, one of the largest parks in the city, include the Clarke Swim Center, tennis, community center, Walnut Creek Equestrian

Center, Walnut Creek Skate Park, an off-leash dog park, bike paths, tot lots, sand volleyball court, fishing pond, nature pond, six athletic fields, restrooms, and connection to the Iron Horse Trail. The adjoining Gardens at Heather Farm educates the community about gardening and practices that preserve and protect the environment.

Other parks include the Civic Park, which features the Butterfly Habitat Gardens, and also has tennis courts, children’s play area, a community center with seniors’ programs, gazebo, and connection to the Iron Horse Trail. Arbolado Park amenities include a playground area, basketball and tennis courts, a soccer field, an orchard, and connection to walking trails. Larkey Park is home to the Lindsay Wildlife Museum and the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society and also has tennis and sand volleyball courts, a swimming pool, and connection to walking trails. Castle Rock Youth Sports Park has two soccer fields, two baseball/softball diamonds, and a central concrete plaza area. The Ruth Bancroft Garden features a collection of succulents, cacti, and other drought-tolerant plants as well as California-native plants and hosts the summertime Sculpture in the Garden program in which artists display their work.

Shell Ridge is the city’s largest open space area, with trails for biking, hiking, and riding through oak woodlands and grassland savannah on the lower flanks of Mount Diablo. Located within Shell Ridge, the Borges Ranch, which was the former home of Walnut Creek pioneer Frank Borges, is a working cattle ranch complete with farm animals and a blacksmith shop that provides a glimpse at life a century ago.

EDUCATION

The Walnut Creek School District educates 3,500 students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade in five elementary schools and one middle school. Students in grades 9 through 12 attend one of the Acalanes Union High School District high schools located in Walnut Creek. Some residents of Walnut Creek are served by schools from the Mount Diablo Unified School District (K-12), the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (K-12), or the Lafayette School District (K-8).

Brandman University’s Walnut Creek campus offers a blend of face to face and online instruction to accommodate working adults and offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and several other subjects.

HEALTH CARE

Walnut Creek is served by two acute care hospitals with more than 800 licensed beds. The city also has a long-term acute care hospital.

CITY STATS

2011

City Population	65,211
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	4,391,037
Per Capita Personal Income, San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, MSA	\$61,395