Traffic congestion in Walnut Creek has been a major concern since the end of World War II.

The City has worked to address traffic concerns since the 1950s through new roadways and major road improvements and, in subsequent years, through growth management measures and a transportation demand management (TDM) program. Despite these efforts, traffic congestion continues to be a major concern, particularly downtown and along Ygnacio Valley Road. Downtown attracts people from across the region for business, shopping, dining, and the arts—and most come by car. Ygnacio Valley Road carries Walnut Creek traffic as well as regional traffic to and from Concord, Clayton, and East Contra Costa.

Through the 1980s, the City’s transportation efforts were focused on building new and improving existing roadways. With the adoption of the 1989 General Plan, the City shifted its focus from roadway improvements to better use of the existing transportation infrastructure and programs that would decrease dependency on single-occupant vehicles. Operational improvements were made to the transportation infrastructure, TDM programs were implemented, and transit use was promoted.

Regional planning efforts, such as Shaping Our Future in 2002, have stressed managing the transportation system as essential to improving quality of life. General Plan 2025 promotes the coordination of transportation and land use and the consideration of all travel modes -- transit, bicycling, and walking -- in future planning efforts.

This chapter has five sections: Regional Networks, Local Networks, Transit, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Downtown Mobility.

REGIONAL NETWORKS

The regional transportation networks comprise both a system of highways and major roadways (routes of regional significance) and a system of regional trails.

Walnut Creek is located near the center of Contra Costa County at the interchange of State Route 24 and Interstate 680. I-680 links central Contra Costa County from north to south and beyond; SR 24 links central county and Walnut Creek with the Lamorinda communities, Oakland, and San Francisco to the west.

In addition to the freeways, Ygnacio Valley Road, Treat Boulevard, Geary Road, North Main Street (from I-680 to the north city limits), and Pleasant Hill Road are identified as
Routes of Regional Significance in the Central Contra Costa County Action Plan, adopted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority as part of the countywide Measure C program. The City maintains all of these routes within the city limits.

In 1988, Contra Costa County voters passed Measure C, which raised the sales tax countywide by one-half cent to fund regional transportation improvements. Measure C also established a cooperative, multi-jurisdictional planning process that requires the County and its cities and towns to work together to manage growth in the county in return for their respective shares of the revenues from the sales tax increase. In 2004, county voters passed Measure J, which extended the policies and funding of Measure C for another 25 years (from 2009 to 2034).

Contra Costa cities and towns coordinate their transportation projects through their respective regional transportation planning committees (RTPC). As a member of the central county RTPC (TRANSPAC), Walnut Creek works with other jurisdictions to develop action plans for central county routes of regional significance.

To decrease delay and improve traffic flow along the Kirker Pass/Ygnacio Valley Road corridor, Walnut Creek, Concord, Clayton, and Pittsburg have, since 2001, cooperated in developing and operating a regional traffic signal system. In this effort, Walnut Creek meters morning peak-period westbound traffic entering the city at Oak Grove Road.

---

**GOAL 1**

Minimize future increases in congestion on regional transportation facilities.

**Policy 1.1.** In cooperation with State and regional agencies and other jurisdictions, develop and implement regional solutions to local traffic problems created by growth outside the city.

**Action 1.1.1.** Promote the Shaping Our Future Vision, encouraging development near transit nodes and along transit corridors.

**Action 1.1.2.** Participate in TRANSPAC and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

**Action 1.1.3.** Work with TRANSPAC in implementing the Action Plan for Routes of Regional Significance.

**Action 1.1.4.** Work with neighboring jurisdictions in creating and operating regional traffic signal controls along the Kirker Pass/Ygnacio Valley Road and Treat Boulevard corridors.

**Action 1.1.5.** Implement TRANSPAC’s Regional Transportation Mitigation Program with respect to new regional development and its impacts on Walnut Creek roadways.
Action 1.1.6. As regional development and redevelopment occur, require street right-of-way dedications and improvements to routes of regional significance. (See Action 3.1.4 related improvements to local routes.)

Action 1.1.7. Consider implementing an incident-management system on major arterials.

Policy 1.2. Support efforts to obtain funding for improvements to Highway 4 and other roads that provide a bypass for traffic passing through Walnut Creek.

Policy 1.3. Promote off-peak start times for special events that generate traffic passing through Walnut Creek.

REGIONAL TRAILS

Trails are another important piece of the regional transportation network. The 2003 Countywide Bicycle Plan focuses on existing and proposed regional trail facilities in the county. Figure 4 shows the bicycle trail network through Walnut Creek.

GOAL 2

Expand and improve regional trail facilities.

Policy 2.1. In cooperation with surrounding jurisdictions and regional agencies, implement the Countywide Bicycle Plan.

Action 2.1.1. Refer proposals to expand or improve bikeways within Walnut Creek to surrounding jurisdictions, interested regional agencies, and bicycle advocacy groups.

Policy 2.2. Cooperate with East Bay Regional Parks and other jurisdictions to improve connections to regional trails.

Action 2.2.1. Improve signage and displays along regional trails to provide better way finding and to direct users to convenient rest areas and other facilities.

Policy 2.3. Promote the safety of bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians.

Action 2.3.1. Investigate the feasibility of constructing a bridge over Ygnacio Valley Road for the Mt. Diablo-Briones regional trail near John Muir Medical Center.

Action 2.3.2. To improve pedestrian safety, work with BART to investigate the feasibility of constructing separated pedestrian crossing of arterials around the Walnut Creek BART station.
LOCAL NETWORKS

The local road system is a hierarchy of streets comprising routes of regional significance, arterials, collectors, and local roads. Except for a third phase improvement of Geary Road between Buena Vista Avenue and Pleasant Hill Road, the local road system in Walnut Creek is complete. Figure 3 on page 5-8 shows the major streets in Walnut Creek by classification.

**Routes of Regional Significance** are the major roadway and freeway corridors that serve regional traffic, as identified in Action Plans adopted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority as part of the countywide Measure C program. Facilities within Walnut Creek designated as Routes of Regional Significance are Ygnacio Valley Road, Treat Boulevard, Geary Road, North Main Street (from I-680 to the north city limits) and Pleasant Hill Road.

**Arterials** provide intra-city travel and access to the regional roadway network. Arterials in Walnut Creek include California Boulevard, Broadway, Tice Valley Boulevard, Olympic Boulevard, Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Bancroft Road, and Oak Grove Road, which provide connections between Walnut Creek and the surrounding communities of Concord, Pleasant Hill, Lafayette, and Alamo.

**Collectors** provide access within and between neighborhoods, and carry trips from Local Streets to Arterials. Collectors in the city include Boulevard Way, La Casa Via, San Luis Road, Buena Vista Avenue, Walnut Boulevard, and San Carlos Drive.

**Local Streets** are roadways not otherwise classified. They provide direct access to fronting properties. Travel speeds and traffic volumes are generally low on these streets.
### Figure 1
Level of Service Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Free Flow or Insignificant Delays: Operations with very low delay. Most vehicles do not stop at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Stable Operation or Minimal Delays: An occasional approach phase is fully utilized. Some drivers feel restricted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Stable Operation or Acceptable Delays: Drivers begin having to wait through more than one red signal. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Approaching Unstable or Tolerable Delays: Drivers may have to wait through more than one red signal. Queues may develop, but dissipate rapidly, without excessive delays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Unstable Operation or Significant Delays: Vehicles may wait through several signal cycles. Long queues form upstream from intersection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Forced Flow or Excessive Delays: Represents jammed conditions. Many cycle failures. Queues may block upstream intersections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Figure 2
Walnut Creek Roadway Level of Service Standards
(See Transportation Policy 3.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roadway Classification</th>
<th>Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Local. Streets and Intersections</td>
<td>LOS B ($v/c^* = 0.60$ to $0.69$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectors. Streets and Intersections</td>
<td>LOS low D ($v/c = 0.80$ to $0.84$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arterials. Streets and Intersections</td>
<td>LOS high D ($v/c = 0.85$ to $0.89$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Corridors. Streets and Intersections on Ygnacio Valley Road, Treat Boulevard, Geary Road, Pleasant Hill Road, and North Main Street</td>
<td>Delay Index = 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Area Roadways and Intersections (bounded by I-680, Iron Horse Trail and Walden Road)</td>
<td>LOS low E ($v/c = 0.90$ to $0.94$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $v/c$ Volume to capacity ratio

LEVEL OF SERVICE

The capacity of a roadway or intersection—the maximum number of vehicles that can be handled in a given time period—is affected by a number of factors: number of lanes, lane width, grade, and operating conditions (e.g., the number of trucks, buses, and pedestrians). Level of service (LOS) measures the theoretical capacity of a roadway or intersection and the traffic flow during a one-hour period. LOS ranges from a rank of LOS A, or free-flow conditions, to LOS F, or jammed conditions. The table in Figure 1 summarizes the LOS definitions. The table in Figure 2 lists the LOS standards for each roadway classification.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

The Measure C growth management program sets specific service standards for regional and non-regional routes in Contra Costa County.

For routes of regional significance, TRANSPAC established traffic service objectives (TSOs) with quantifiable measures of effectiveness. For Ygnacio Valley Road, Treat Boulevard, Geary Road, and North Main Street (between I-680 and Geary Road), the established TSO is a maximum delay index of 2.0. (The delay index is the ratio of congested peak-hour travel time to un-congested off-peak travel time.)

For non-regional routes, Measure C established LOS standards. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority developed methods and procedures to assure countywide consistency in analyzing traffic impacts. Walnut Creek adopted LOS standards for its signalized intersections, consistent with the Measure C standards.

Based on daily volumes and roadway capacities, the most congested roadways in Walnut Creek are the Routes of Regional Significance.

Although the delay index for each of these routes falls below the 2.0 maximum established by TRANSPAC, at several locations on these routes, the existing traffic demand exceeds available roadway capacity during portions of the peak commute periods in the morning and afternoon. As a result, traffic delays are significant and extend beyond the normal peak hours of 7:30 to 8:30 AM and 4:30 to 5:30 PM.

In 2004, the City evaluated a number of intersections along these routes and identified eight that operate at LOS E or worse during peak hours, meaning that vehicles may wait through several signal cycles and long queues may form upstream from the intersection.

- Bancroft Road at Treat Boulevard
- Civic Drive at Ygnacio Valley Road
- North Main Street at Geary Road
- North Main Street at Sunnyvale Avenue/I-680 ramp
- Oak Grove Road at Ygnacio Valley Road
- Oakland Boulevard at Ygnacio Valley Road
- Olympic Boulevard at northbound I-680 on/off-ramps
- Walnut Boulevard at Ygnacio Valley Road

Goal 1 in the previous section and other goals throughout this chapter are intended to guide the City’s plans to minimize future increases in congestion and to manage the level of service on regional roadways and intersections.
G O A L  3

Maintain a transportation network that provides mobility for all ages and abilities and for all areas of the community.

Policy 3.1. Maintain the level of service standards for roadways shown in Figure 2 for the City’s transportation network. (See Chapter 4, Action 11.2.2.)

Action 3.1.1. Except as modified by Chapter 4 Policy 9.2, require that new development meet intersection LOS standards.

Action 3.1.2. Implement traffic management techniques that will maintain the level of service standards.

Action 3.1.3. Require that roadway and transportation improvements needed to implement the general plan be considered when a new Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is prepared.
Figure 4. Bicycle Facilities (Existing and Proposed)
Chapter 5, Transportation

Action 3.1.4. As development and redevelopment occur, require street right-of-way dedications and improvements to the local road network consistent with adopted street standards. (See Action 1.1.6 related to improvements to Routes of Regional Significance.)

Action 3.1.5. Pursue funding grants for transportation projects.

Action 3.1.6. Evaluate whether one-way streets could alleviate downtown traffic congestion.


Action 3.2.1. Manage and coordinate construction projects to minimize traffic delays.

Action 3.2.2. Keep bicycle facilities free of debris.

Policy 3.3. Promote maximum operational capacity and efficiency on arterials and collectors.

Action 3.3.1. Operate the traffic signal system to its maximum efficiency.

Action 3.3.2. Investigate new technologies to improve traffic flow and to provide real-time highway and transit information.

Action 3.3.3. Formalize City policy that precludes non-emergency lane closures between Thanksgiving and New Years.

**NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

When major corridors become congested, motorists seek alternatives to arterials, using neighborhood streets to avoid traffic congestion. To offset this impact on neighborhood streets, Walnut Creek and the County have implemented a number of traffic calming measures, including the following:

- Peak-period turn restrictions at two intersections along Ygnacio Valley Road -- Walnut Boulevard and Homestead Avenue
- Street narrowing on Peachwillow Lane
- Turn prohibitions on Newell Avenue at Olympic Boulevard (County)
- Turn prohibitions on Treat Boulevard at Jones Road (County)
- Roundabout on Oak Grove Road at Walnut Avenue
- Street narrowing on Castle Rock Road
- Stop signs and turn restrictions in the Carriage Square neighborhood

A number of neighborhoods cross the city limits into the unincorporated county, making it critical for the City and County to work together on neighborhood traffic-calming measures.

**Northgate roundabout**

In addition to through-traffic and speeding, residential neighborhoods can be adversely impacted by nonresidents parking for extended periods on these streets. This has been a particular problem in the downtown...
neighborhoods, near BART, in neighborhoods near upper North Main Street, and near the local high schools.

The City established the preferential residential permit parking programs to limit on-street parking in specific neighborhoods to vehicles with authorized City permits during designated times. The program has been in place since 1989 and continues to expand.

**GOAL 4**

Protect residential neighborhoods from through-traffic, speeding, and nonresidential parking.

**Policy 4.1.** Manage arterial and collector traffic to minimize adverse affects on neighborhoods.

**Policy 4.2.** Discourage through-traffic on local streets and collectors.

**Action 4.2.1.** Selectively use alternative street designs to discourage through-traffic.

**Policy 4.3.** Prevent encroachment of nonresidential parking in existing neighborhoods.

**Action 4.3.1.** Implement the preferential residential parking-permit program.

**Action 4.3.2.** Work with schools, particularly the high schools, to develop and implement traffic-calming and shared-parking solutions.

---

**BICYCLING**

Bicycling is an important travel mode for social, recreational, and commuter purposes. With its mild climate, relatively level terrain, and proximity of residential, commercial, and business areas, Walnut Creek is particularly suited for bicycling and has an extensive bikeways network. Figure 4 on page 5-9 shows the 2005 and proposed bicycle facilities in Walnut Creek and their connections to other bicycle facilities in the surrounding area.

- **Class 1 bikeways** (Bike Path or Bike Trail): Rights-of-way separated from roadways with minimal automobile cross-flow and a minimum paved width of 8 feet for a two-way path. Class 1 bikeways in Walnut Creek include the Contra Costa Canal, Iron Horse, and Ygnacio Canal trails.

- **Class 2 bikeways** (Bike Lane): Restricted rights-of-way for exclusive use of bicycles, normally striped within the paved areas of roadways and providing a minimum width of 5 feet for one direction. Class 2 bikeways in Walnut Creek include Bancroft Road, Walnut Avenue, and Oak Grove Road.

- **Class 3 bikeways** (Bike Routes): On-street routes designated by signs or other markings. Bikes and cars share the road. Existing Class 3 bikeways include major arterials such as Ygnacio Valley Road from Oakland Boulevard to Walnut Avenue and residential streets like Wiget Lane, Cedro Lane, and Naranja Drive.
Chapter 5, Transportation

**Goal 5**

Provide a safe and attractive environment for bicycle travel throughout the community.

**Policy 5.1.** Promote bicycle use as an alternative way to get to work, school, shopping, recreational facilities, and transit stops.

- **Action 5.1.1.** Develop a bicycle master plan with measurable objectives and incorporate this plan into a new trails master plan. (See Natural Environment Goal 4.)

- **Action 5.1.2.** Where feasible, integrate new bikeways and walkways when designing new or modifying existing roadways.

- **Action 5.1.3.** When preparing the CIP, include bicycle and bicycle-related projects according to the priorities proposed in the bicycle master plan.

- **Action 5.1.4.** Periodically update and distribute a map identifying bikeways in the city and environs.

- **Action 5.1.5.** Pursue grants for constructing and developing new and improved bicycle facilities.

- **Action 5.1.6.** As part of the annual report to the City Council on implementation of the general plan, list additions and improvements made to the City’s bicycle facilities.

**Policy 5.2.** Provide facilities that encourage and support bicycle travel.

- **Action 5.2.1.** Require appropriate bicycle-related improvements as a condition of site development, design review, subdivision, or building permit approval and for all City street-widening projects.

- **Action 5.2.2.** Consider sidewalk widths greater than 10 feet whenever bicyclists are allowed or encouraged to use sidewalks.

- **Action 5.2.3.** Improve signalized intersections for bicyclist use along highly traveled bicycle corridors.

- **Action 5.2.4.** Provide bicycle racks and other bike storage facilities at key high-use public locations.

- **Action 5.2.5.** Working with local school districts, plan safe, pleasant, and attractive bicycle routes to school and organize programs that promote bicycling.
Chapter 5, Transportation

Action 5.2.6. Work with other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that safe bicycle facilities are available at the edge of the city limits.

Action 5.2.7. Revise design guidelines to require, where appropriate, new projects to provide weather-protected, safe bike parking and/or storage facilities and other bicycle-friendly amenities.

Action 5.2.8. Revise design guidelines to encourage the installation of shower facilities in large, new office developments.

Policy 5.3. Oppose the use of motorized transportation (trains, buses, autos, motorcycles) on the Iron Horse Corridor between the Pleasant Hill BART Station and Newell Avenue.

Walking

Pedestrian walkways range from downtown sidewalks to unpaved shoulders along residential streets to paved trails separated from the roadway. Walkways are particularly important downtown, in commercial areas, and around schools, transit stops, and transit stations.

The City generally requires that sidewalks be installed at the time of development. However, the burden to install as well as maintain sidewalks in most cases rests with the property owner.

Walnut Creek has three types of pedestrian-ways.

- **Sidewalks** in urban and suburban areas
- **Walkways** in rural and semi-rural areas
- **Hiking and walking paths**, such as the Contra Costa Canal, Ygnacio Canal, and Iron Horse trails

Creek walk sign at Broadway

The difference between walkways and sidewalks is primarily in their physical design. To preserve the rural character of specified neighborhoods, the City developed the “walkway” concept: walking areas are separated from vehicular lanes by an asphalt berm or a roadside swale rather than the standard curb and gutter that separates paved streets from concrete sidewalks.

As the City improves the walking environment, it is committed to improving mobility services for the elderly and those with disabilities (e.g., lengthening crossing signal times on crosswalks located near senior housing facilities).

To improve safety, the City built a pedestrian bridge where the Iron Horse Trail crosses Ygnacio Valley Road, vertically separating pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicles. As of 2005, the County was designing a bridge to take the same trail over Treat Boulevard near the Pleasant Hill BART station.
In 2002, the City received a safe routes to school grant for a pedestrian walkway on Walnut Boulevard between Ygnacio Valley Road and Sierra Lane, and a pedestrian safety program grant for improvements on Buena Vista Avenue between Parkside Drive and San Luis Road.

**G O A L 6**

Provide a safe and attractive walking environment accessible to all.

**Policy 6.1.** Provide safe and attractive pedestrian routes along arterials and collectors leading to schools, along arterials or collectors that carry high traffic volumes, on all downtown streets, along major streets leading to the downtown, and on all streets leading to transit facilities.

Action 6.1.1. Review policies for installing sidewalks and walkways, including in areas designated as rural in character.¹

Action 6.1.2. Working with local school districts, plan safe and attractive pedestrian routes to schools, and organize programs that promote walking.

Action 6.1.3. When updating the CIP, consider including pedestrian improvements in existing built-out areas based on priorities.

Action 6.1.4. Eliminate “gaps” in sidewalks/walkways and support the additional connections to regional trails and trailheads.

Action 6.1.5. Provide improved pedestrian facilities via grants and assistance to residents in forming assessment districts.

Action 6.1.6. Develop sidewalk standards for minimum clear-walkway width.

**Policy 6.2.** Require full-frontage curb and sidewalk improvements in all commercial areas.

Action 6.2.1. Require minimum 10-foot wide sidewalks in all commercial, mixed-use, and multifamily residential developments in the Core Area.

Action 6.2.2. Require, through the City’s review processes, sidewalks wider than 10 feet in areas expected to have high levels of pedestrian traffic or strong pedestrian appeal.

Action 6.2.3. Review and as needed, update the street standards.

Action 6.2.4. Require appropriate pedestrian improvements as a condition of site development, design review, subdivision, or building permit approval and for all City street-widening projects.

**Policy 6.3.** When utility rights-of-way, drainage, or other corridors are established, obtain dedications of land or easements, where appropriate, for paths that would enhance the pedestrian system.

¹ See City of Walnut Creek Street Standards, adopted by the City Council February 4, 1992.
Policy 6.4. Facilitate use of public sidewalks and walkways throughout the city. (See Chapter 2, Policy 8.1.)

Action 6.4.1. Review all projects, programs, and services for accessibility by pedestrians of all abilities.

Action 6.4.2. Ensure that new parking lots in commercial and multifamily housing developments provide safe and direct paths to building entrances from sidewalks and on-site parking areas.

Action 6.4.3. Confirm that developments are providing access in accordance with Title 24, California Administrative Code.

Action 6.4.4. Update the City’s ADA Transition Plan, in accordance with the latest requirements of Title 24, California Administrative Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

TRANSIT

Transit services in Walnut Creek include Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) trains and County Connection buses, including a downtown shuttle bus system and paratransit services for the elderly and those with disabilities. Figure 5 shows the BART and County Connection facilities as of 2005.

BART provides train service to the central San Francisco Bay Area (and direct service to San Francisco) from the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill BART stations. Located at California Boulevard and Ygnacio Valley Road, the Walnut Creek BART station is closest to downtown. As of 2005, the station had 5,646 daily entries and the second highest morning entries within the BART system. The majority of riders are from Alamo, Danville, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek.

Pleasant Hill BART, located at Treat Boulevard and Oak Road, serves Walnut Creek’s northern neighborhoods and is easily reached via Geary Road and Treat Boulevard. In 2005, this station had an average 7,206 daily entries and the highest number of morning entries in the system. Riders using this station come from Benicia, Clayton, Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, and Walnut Creek.

Together, the two stations have 5,907 parking spaces. County Connection provides bus feeder services to both stations. Each station also provides lockers and storage for bicycles, wheelchairs, and mopeds.

COUNTY CONNECTION

Since 1980, the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) has operated County Connection buses serving Walnut Creek and other neighboring communities. In 2005, Walnut Creek had 15 local and express County Connection routes, as shown in Figure 5. The routes primarily cover major roads linking the residential neighborhoods of Walnut Creek and adjacent communities with downtown Walnut Creek and the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill BART stations.
DOWNTOWN FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE

The downtown free shuttle (County Connection Route 104) provides service between the Walnut Creek BART station and downtown. (See Figure 5, page 5-18.) The shuttle primarily travels north on North Main Street and south on California Boulevard and Locust Street and makes 23 stops. The City reimburses County Connection for fares and enhanced service levels. Weekday ridership averages 780 passengers. Weekend ridership averages 500 on Saturdays and 250 on Sundays.

PARATRANSIT

CCCTA operates the LINK paratransit service in Central County. Most LINK trips are medical or work related, although the service also supports school children and includes early morning, late evening, Saturday, and Sunday service, added in 2000 to comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

From 2000 to 2005, LINK ridership increased by almost 25 percent, from 112,963 trips to 135,213 per year. The largest portion of this increase was attributed to school trips.

CCCTA has concluded that the increase in urban sprawl countywide will limit the overall service ability of LINK in the future.
Chapter 5, Transportation

Action 7.3.5. Working with CCCTA, seek outside funding for improving all forms of bus service in the city.

Action 7.3.6. Work with CCCTA and the Golden Rain Foundation to provide transit services that connect Rossmoor with the rest of Walnut Creek.

Action 7.3.7. Arrange for easy availability and prominent display of Walnut Creek bus routes, schedules, and maps, particularly in downtown.

Policy 7.4. Offer support and funding for effective transit alternatives such as trolleys and improved shuttle services.

Action 7.4.1. Consider using a portion of parking revenues (beyond costs) to underwrite local transit improvements.

Action 7.4.2. Research alternative transit options for the downtown, such as smaller more flexible buses or pedicabs.

Policy 7.5. Develop a comprehensive plan with CCCTA to install public transit amenities such as benches, passenger shelters, and walkways.

Action 7.5.1. Regularly review the locations of bus stops and encourage removal of those no longer in use by CCCTA.

Action 7.5.2. Work with CCCTA to ensure that bus-stop locations meet both the convenience, comfort, and safety needs of riders and roadway and traffic-flow considerations.

Action 7.5.3. Promote transit ridership by providing funding assistance for bus turnouts, bus shelters, benches, and sidewalks.

Action 7.5.4. Require, where appropriate, that new developments provide transit amenities as a condition of project approval.

Action 7.5.5. Consider options for future transit use when designing new or modifying existing roadways.

Action 7.5.6. Working with CCCTA, use technology to improve customer service (e.g., real-time arrival signage at bus stops).

Policy 7.6. Encourage provision of a variety of transportation services for seniors and members of the public unable to use conventional transit.

Action 7.6.1. Working with CCCTA, support paratransit services such as the LINK van service.

Action 7.6.2. Support the continued use of discount transit fares for those in need.

Action 7.6.3. Continue the senior center volunteer minivan program.
Figure 5. Local Bus Service and BART
TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

The City is committed to using transportation demand management strategies and actions to decrease dependency on single-occupant automobiles and increase transit use, ridesharing, and walking.

The City adopted TDM strategies in the early 1980s to reduce vehicle trips, congestion, and emissions. TDM efforts included transit system enhancement, residential and commuter transit incentives and promotions, bicycle facility construction, use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies, expanded school ride-matching outreach, and land use policy coordination.

The City’s TDM programs also included requirements that large employers develop and implement trip-reduction programs. A 1995 change in State law prohibited cities from requiring employer-based TDM programs. Nevertheless, Walnut Creek remains committed to promoting commute options for individuals by working with major employers to facilitate TDM programs and by coordinating with other agencies at a regional level.

511 CONTRA COSTA

The City supports the regional TRANSPAC/TRANSPLAN TDM Program operated by 511 Contra Costa (formerly the Contra Costa Commute Alternative Network). Covering central and east Contra Costa County, 511 Contra Costa is voluntary. The program comprehensively integrates a number of projects that encourage the use of alternative commute methods, including the following:

- Transit incentive program
- Carpool incentive program
- Vanpool incentive program
- Guaranteed ride home program
- School access program
- College commute program

GOAL 8

Serve as a model for other cities by providing a comprehensive TDM program that strives to decrease the use of the automobile and reduce peak-period traffic congestion.

Policy 8.1. Provide, monitor, and continuously improve a coordinated set of convenient, efficient transportation alternatives for those who would otherwise drive alone, including employees and school children of driving age.

Action 8.1.1. Encourage TDM programs in new and existing development.

Action 8.1.2. Support the efforts of 511 Contra Costa and other similar programs that promote changes in driving patterns.

Action 8.1.3. Explore methods to improve the permanence, visibility, character, and utility of the free downtown shuttle.

Action 8.1.4. With 511 Contra Costa, work with local high schools on carpool programs.
Policy 8.2. Seek new and innovative methods and programs that address peak-period congestion.

Action 8.2.1. Promote staggered start times for jobs and schools.

Action 8.2.2. Work with schools on issues of passenger drop-off zones, school bus service, and traffic signals.

Action 8.2.3. Support casual carpools at appropriate locations.

Action 8.2.4. Work with the owners of underutilized parking lots to create park-and-ride lots.

Action 8.2.5. Review the use of park-and-ride lots toward maximizing their use, and coordinate with other communities.

Policy 8.3. Manage employee parking supply and demand in all commercial areas.

Action 8.3.1. In partnership with the business community, seek ways to manage employee parking.

Policy 8.4. Serve as a TDM role model for employers.

Action 8.4.1. Monitor Walnut Creek’s TDM Program for City employees and implement new program components as needed.

Policy 8.5. Link high-density residential developments, employment centers, and shopping areas via transit, bikeways, and walkways.

DOWNTOWN MOBILITY

Walnut Creek’s vibrant downtown attracts local and regional shoppers, diners, and patrons for the cultural activities. This concentrated mix of uses in the Pedestrian Retail District provides an environment conducive to walking and bicycling.

The City has chosen to enhance the walking quality in the Pedestrian Retail District by:

- Giving priority to pedestrians over vehicles (e.g., mid-block crossings with pedestrian-activated caution lights)
- Supporting the Paver Program, a public-private partnership to install decorative sidewalk paving blocks
- Implementing the downtown improvement program, encompassing landscaping, street trees, benches, and trash bins
- Working with the Downtown Business Association on enhancements such as ornamental tree lights, banners, and special events
- Supporting the improvement of downtown sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops to accommodate the elderly and those with disabilities

The City has used a portion of its parking revenues to fund some parking and pedestrian amenities in the downtown.

GOAL 9
Promote a pedestrian-friendly downtown.

Policy 9.1. Balance the needs of drivers with downtown’s pedestrian scale and existing and proposed transit and bicycle access.
Chapter 5, Transportation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy 9.2.</th>
<th>Favor pedestrian travel over vehicular travel in the Pedestrian Retail District.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action 9.2.1.</td>
<td>Convert selected streets to temporary pedestrian-only use on a regularly scheduled basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 9.2.2.</td>
<td>Establish a trail connection that links BART to Mt. Diablo Boulevard and the Pedestrian Retail District (similar to the one identified in the 2002 Shaping Our Future workshop).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 9.2.3.</td>
<td>As part of the annual report to the City Council on implementation of the general plan, list improvements to downtown pedestrian amenities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 9.3.</td>
<td>Promote pedestrian safety in the downtown area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 9.3.1.</td>
<td>In new development, encourage mid-block walkways from street to street. (See Chapter 4, Actions 20.1.3. and 21.1.1.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 9.3.2.</td>
<td>Periodically assess the design and monitor the function and safety of mid-block lighted crosswalks, and consider additional mid-block crosswalks downtown.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL 10</th>
<th>Promote safe bicycling to and through downtown.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy 10.1.</td>
<td>Link existing and planned bikeways in and through downtown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 10.1.1.</td>
<td>Prepare a downtown bicycle safety and amenities plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 10.1.2.</td>
<td>Identify and sign bike parking and bike routes in and through downtown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 10.1.3.</td>
<td>Encourage development of a home delivery system that will allow bicyclists to make major purchases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL 11</th>
<th>Develop a comprehensive shuttle system serving downtown residents, shoppers, day and overnight visitors, and employees.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy 11.1.</td>
<td>Study the utility of a comprehensive downtown shuttle system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 11.1.1.</td>
<td>Determine demand for a downtown shuttle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 11.1.2.</td>
<td>Determine whether the presence of a shuttle would increase interest in downtown housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 11.1.3.</td>
<td>Investigate potential funding sources for a comprehensive downtown shuttle system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

April 4, 2006  Walnut Creek General Plan 2025  5-21
DOWNTOWN PARKING

Parking is a vital component of the city’s transportation system, particularly in the Core Area. The availability of parking and loading facilities affects the circulation and the vitality of the downtown.

As of 2001, the city had more than 20,600 non-residential parking spaces in the area bounded by Walden Road on the north; Carmel Drive, Margarido Drive and San Miguel Drive on the east; and I-680 on the south and west. Of this total, 46 percent were in private and public surface parking lots; the remaining spaces were in private or public garages (45 percent) or on-street parking (9 percent).

As of 2005, the city had 8,600 non-residential parking spaces in the area defined by California Boulevard, Civic Drive, Broadway, and Newell Avenue, with 64 percent located in garages, 27 percent located in surface lots, and 9 percent located on the street. In the same area, 77 percent of all parking is provided by the private sector. The remaining 23 percent is provided by the public sector and includes both on- and off-street spaces.

Peak-period parking occupancy in the study area occurs during the noon hour on Friday (80 percent occupancy). The on-street parking occupancy rate exceeds 80 percent from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday, with an average duration of 75 minutes.

The City charges for parking in the downtown area (metered on-street and surface lot parking) and in the Locust Street parking garage adjacent to the Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, the Broadway parking garage, and the South Locust parking garage. Free public parking is provided by the owners of the Broadway Pointe garage, Olympia Place garage, Plaza Escuela garages, and Broadway Plaza garages and in many surface parking lots.

GOAL 12

Provide convenient and adequate parking.

Policy 12.1. Balance the need for convenient parking access with potential negative impacts on traffic and pedestrian flow.

Action 12.1.1. Manage the supply, location, and demand for downtown parking.

Policy 12.2. Promote a wide variety of public and private parking options.


Action 12.2.2. Allow for valet parking on the street.

Action 12.2.3. Study ways to obtain additional downtown on-street parking (e.g., convert parallel spaces to diagonal spaces).

---

2 TJKM Transportation Consultants, Downtown Walnut Creek Parking Study, May 2, 2002.
3 Walnut Creek Downtown Transportation and Parking Study, August, 2005
Action 12.2.4. Implement “park once and walk” facilities and programs from centralized public parking locations in the Pedestrian Retail District.

Action 12.2.5. Study the concept of ringing the downtown with parking structures connected by a shuttle system to downtown intersections and activity centers.

Action 12.2.6. Research ways to finance downtown parking.

Policy 12.3. Allow the payment of in-lieu parking fees in new development only if parking can be provided within easy walking distance.

Action 12.3.1. Review and update City in-lieu parking-fee policies and their effects.

Policy 12.4. Provide additional parking based on actual and projected demand and vacancy rates.

Action 12.4.1. Periodically review parking supply and demand in the city’s major activity areas, particularly the Core Area.

Policy 12.5. Make parking garages safe, friendly, and easy to use. (See Chapter 2, Policy 8.1.)

Action 12.5.1. Consider painting interiors of City parking garages white and adding improved lighting.

Action 12.5.2. Provide improved signage and visual identification in parking garages.

Action 12.5.3. Consider a system of directional signs in the downtown that display real-time parking availability.

SERVICE VEHICLE LOADING

Trucks load and deliver goods in the Core Area from both on-street and off-street loading areas.

GOAL 13

Provide convenient and adequate loading facilities in the Core Area.

Policy 13.1. Through the City’s review processes, guide new development to improve truck loading in Core Area commercial lanes and alleys. (See Chapter 4, Action 20.1.3.)

Action 13.1.1. Require that all buildings abutting Commercial Lane have primary access from Main or Locust Streets or Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Action 13.1.2. In reviewing projects, seek the improvement of existing commercial lanes and alleys for service uses and prevent them from being adversely affected.

Policy 13.2. Make efficient use of existing loading facilities.

Action 13.2.1. In reviewing projects, consider methods and programs for shared use and time management of existing loading facilities.

Policy 13.3. Provide sufficient off-street loading facilities in all new commercial construction and multifamily residential development.
This page intentionally left blank.