

IN A

# Nutshell

No. 124

Official community newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

MAY/JUNE 2006



A crowd of over 120 citizens attended the City Council's first public hearing on the draft General Plan on March 21.

## Council approves new General Plan

A new General Plan that will chart Walnut Creek's course for the next 20 years was adopted by the City Council on April 4 after nearly three years of work involving over 1,000 residents.

The unanimous approval of *General Plan 2025* completed a public process that defines a clear vision for the preservation and development of the community.

One benefit of the impressive community involvement in drafting the plan was that by the time the City Council was ready to consider its adoption, only one controversial issue remained: how to best protect the community from the negative impacts of uncontrolled residential growth.

As a result, the Council adopted a residential growth management program that includes a cap that sets a maximum number of new housing units that may be built. That cap, which is currently 1,653 units, is precisely the number of homes the

State requires Walnut Creek to accommodate.

The current cap will be reviewed when the State issues new housing numbers. Further, affordable units and density

**GENERAL PLAN**, see back page

## Council moves ahead with library project

Saying it "is the most important thing" for Walnut Creek, the City Council voted Feb. 27 to move forward without delay on building a new downtown library.

The Council voted 4-1 at a special community meeting to proceed with developing the new library, to approve a new site plan (see back page) that has been revised to reflect community sentiment, and to authorize City Manager Mike Parness to continue development of plans for the project with the architect.

The meeting, attended by more than 250 people at Las Lomas High School, concluded a two-month community outreach program to gather additional input in the wake of the November bond measure election results.

Although 61.5 percent of Walnut Creek voters supported Measure R, the City's library bond plan, it fell short of the required two-thirds majority for passage.

**LIBRARY**, see back page

## WWII merchant seaman to speak at City's Memorial Day ceremony on May 29

Rossmoor resident and former U.S. Merchant Mariner Sheldon Solloway, whose ammo ship was sunk by a German submarine in World War II, will be the keynote speaker at the City's Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 29.

The event will begin at 10 a.m. in Civic Park. Everyone is welcome.

Mayor Kathy Hicks will present a City Council commendation to U.S. Army Sgt. Ricke Branum, Jr., who served in Kosovo

in 2002 and was on duty in Bayji, Iraq in 2004-05.

The ceremony will also feature the Walnut Creek Concert Band, the Murwood Elementary 4th and 5th Grade Chorus under the direction of Frank Ryken, the U.S. Marine Corps colorguard, and the California National Guard will provide a 21-gun salute.

A wreath will be placed at the Veterans Memorial Plaza to conclude the ceremony.

## City Event Calendar

### May

**6**  
**Walk the Library Walk**  
(See *What's Happening*)

**20-21**  
**Art on the Main**  
10 a.m.-6 p.m.; free  
Main Street

**29**  
**Memorial Day Ceremony**  
10 a.m., Civic Park

### June

**22-25**  
**Civic Arts Ed sale**  
(See *What's Happening*)

## City Meeting Calendar

**City Council**   
May 2, 16; June 6, 20  
7 p.m.  
City Hall, 1666 N. Main St.

**Planning Commission**  
May 11, 25; June 15, 29  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Arts Commission**  
May 15, June 19  
4:30 p.m.  
3rd fl. conf. room, City Hall

**Transportation Commission**  
May 18, June 15  
7:30 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Design Review Commission**  
May 3, 17; June 7, 21  
7 p.m., City Council chamber

**Park, Rec & Open Space Commission**  
May 1, June 5  
7 p.m., City Council chamber

 **City Council meetings are televised live on Comcast Channels 6 and 26 (unincorporated), and on Astound Channel 29. They are repeated the following Saturday at 1 p.m. on all.**

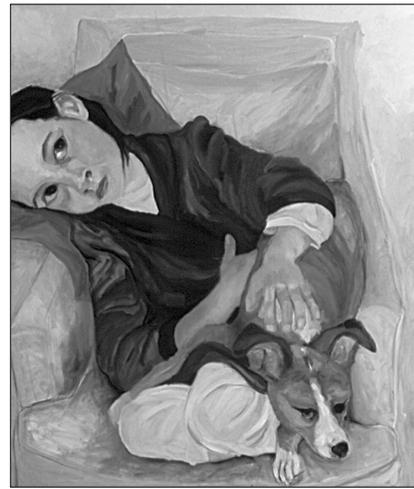
 **Walnut Creek Currents, a City-produced 10-minute video digest on City activities and services: Comcast Channels 6 and 26 — Daily at 6 a.m., 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m., and Wed. at 7:30 p.m. Astound Ch. 29 — Daily at noon and 7 p.m.**

## 'See Jane Run' exhibition on childhood art coming to City's Bedford Gallery

**S**ee *Jane Run*, a group show of 27 artists that explores ideas about childhood, will be on exhibition April 30 to June 25 at the Bedford Gallery in the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr.

The exhibition includes painting, sculpture, photography, video, and mixed media. It is sponsored by the Fleischhacker Foundation and the Diablo Regional Arts Association.

For details, go to [www.bedfordgallery.org](http://www.bedfordgallery.org)



**"Green Chair"**  
Artist: Marie Van Elder  
Oil on canvas,  
2004

## What's Happening

### Civic Arts Ed sale event June 22-25

Civic Arts Education will sponsor an art sale June 22-25 at Shadelands Art Center, 111 Wiget Lane, and at Civic Park. Sale items will include paintings, jewelry, furniture, and a large selection of hand-crafted ceramics. The sale will be Thursday, June 22, 5-9 p.m. (opening receptions); Friday, June 23, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Saturday, June 24, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, June 25, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For details, call 925-943-5846.

### Arts, Adventures & Academics for kids

Arts, Adventures & Academics is a unique summer school provided by the Walnut Creek School District and Civic Arts Education, a program of the City of Walnut Creek. Classes for boys and girls entering grades 1-8 will be held June 26-July 28, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Walnut Creek Intermediate School, 2425 Walnut Blvd. Child supervision option available before and after school. For more information or to register, call 925-943-5846 or go online at [www.arts-ed.org](http://www.arts-ed.org).

### Miniature horse show June 17-18

The Equestrian Center of Walnut Creek will present its annual Janet Read Memorial Miniature Horse Show at the north end of Heather Farm Park on June 17-18. Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free; food is available. The popular competition will have adults and children showing miniature horses, which are generally 34 inches tall. For more information, call 925-686-3284.

### Shadelands Antiques Show set June 11

Over 100 dealers will be selling their antiques and collectibles at the popular Shadelands Antiques Show on Sunday, June 11, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum, 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road. The event benefits the Walnut Creek Historical Society. Admission is free. Call 925-935-7871 for details.

### Walk the Library benefit May 6

The 4th annual Walk the Library Walk to raise funds for children's summer reading programs will be Saturday, May 6, 9 a.m. to noon beginning at the Ygnacio Valley branch, 2661 Oak Grove Rd. and ending at the old downtown library, 1644 No. Broadway. Registration fee: \$25/person or \$30/family. Co-sponsored by the Walnut Creek Library Foundation, both Friends of the Library groups, and the Diablo Valley Lions Club of Walnut Creek. For details go to [wclibrary.org](http://wclibrary.org)

### Aquanuts' 'Night of Champions' May 7

The Walnut Creek Aquanuts, one of the top synchronized swimming teams in the United States, is hosting its 19th annual "Night of Champions" fundraiser on May 7, 2 p.m. at the Clarke Memorial Swim Center in Heather Farm Park. The Aquanuts will present a gala affair that includes fine food, wine, silent and live auctions and exhibition swimming. Gates open at 1:30 p.m. General admission, \$25; reserved poolside seating, \$50; and a reserved table for 8, \$400. Tickets will be available at the gate. Advance ticket purchase is recommended. Go online to [www.aquanuts.org](http://www.aquanuts.org).

### Art & Wine Festival at Heather Farm Park

The 25th annual Walnut Creek Art & Wine Festival returns to Heather Farm Park on June 3-4. Hours are Saturday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. A petting zoo, miniature train rides, music. Free parking and shuttle service from Shadelands; on-site paid parking available. Call the Chamber of Commerce, 925-934-2007.

### Free composting workshops offered

Free home composting workshops will be held May 9, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., and June 17, 1-2:30 p.m. at Lindsay Wildlife Museum, 1931 First Ave. Reservations are required; call 925-906-1806.

# Buying in WC is a good investment in community

It's no secret that Walnut Creek is one of the most economically potent cities in the Bay Area. With its impressive mix of retail stores, restaurants, theaters, and automobile dealerships, Walnut Creek is the shopping hub of the region.

Which is all the more reason why Walnut Creek residents should spend their dollars in their own town, according to City Manager Mike Parness.

"It's a good investment," said Parness. "That's because sales tax revenue accounts for the largest single source of income for the City. When residents buy their goods and services in Walnut Creek, part of that sales tax remains in their community to pay for a wide range of

programs, services, and amenities, from police officers to arts programs."

In fact, sales tax revenue accounts for 36 percent of the City's overall income, or more than \$20 million a year. Of that amount, 39 percent is generated by general retail sales (stores) and 25 percent comes from auto sales.

Although Walnut Creek has 36 new and used auto dealerships, recent industry statistics show that only 50 percent of Walnut Creek residents who purchased a vehicle actually bought it in Walnut Creek. And that hurts.

Because automobiles, trucks and SUVs are the most expensive items people buy on a regular basis, the loss of sales tax

revenues to other cities takes a big bite out of how much Walnut Creek can spend on local services and programs.

For instance, it is estimated that if the other 50 percent of residents bought their vehicles in Walnut Creek, it would generate over \$600,000 annually in sales tax, which is the equivalent of the cost of about five police officers.

Walnut Creek has a long tradition of providing the highest quality of life for its residents, and sales tax revenue is the fuel that makes that tradition go. City leaders hope residents consider that the next time they need to buy a vehicle, because the dollars they spend here can and does make a big difference to their way of life.

## Spanish village of Olvera sought as Walnut Creek's next 'sister city'

Walnut Creek's sister city group is hoping to adopt a small hillside village in the south of Spain as Walnut Creek's third sister city.

Olvera, a town of 9,000 inhabitants located about 65 miles inland from the Mediterranean coast and just southeast of Seville, has been invited to enter into a sister city relationship with Walnut Creek, according to Karen Cassano, president of Walnut Creek Sister Cities International.

"I'm really excited about this," said Cassano, who has sent a signed cooperative agreement in English and Spanish to Olvera's Mayor Francisco Parraga Rodriguez. "We've been wanting to have

a Spanish city."

Walnut Creek's sister city program was launched in 1986 when the City adopted Noceto, Italy to forge a cultural exchange between residents of the two communities. In 1991, the resort community of Siófok, Hungary became the second sister city.

Mayor Rodriguez visited Walnut Creek in 2005 and said he would be interested in exploring a cultural exchange with our community, said Cassano.

Walnut Creek Sister Cities International, formed in 1986 and numbering 60 active members, is planning a trip to Olvera in May 2007 to meet with Mayor



The hillside village of Olvera (pop. 9,000) is located southeast of Seville in the southern portion of Spain.

Rodriguez and activate the relationship.

Anyone interested in joining Walnut Creek Sister Cities International or in the Spain trip may contact Cassano at [kbcassa@astound.net](mailto:kbcassa@astound.net).

## Center REP's 40th season one to celebrate

The City's own Center REPeritory Company celebrates its milestone 40th season in 2006-07 with bold new works and comfortable old favorites on the Leshar Stage at the Dean Leshar Regional Center for the Arts.

Center REP, the City of Walnut Creek's in-house professional theater company, will present six productions:

- *The Marriage of Figaro*. Sept. 7 - Oct. 7, 2006. Beaumarchais' 18th century comic masterpiece that inspired Mozart.

- *The Retreat from Moscow* by William Nicholson. Oct. 19 - Nov. 18, 2006. This will be the West Coast premiere of this Tony award-nominated drama.

- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles

Dickens. Directed by Scott Denison. Dec. 7 - 17, 2005. Only 16 performances of this perennial Center REP favorite.

- The Reduced Shakespeare Company presents two comic plays: *All the Great Books* and *The Complete History of America*. Feb. 1 - Mar. 3, 2007.

- *Bingo!* West Coast premiere of a new musical. March 22 - April 21, 2007. Fresh off its sold-out run Off Broadway, this tale of three girlfriends on a big night out is whimsical and fast-paced.

- *How the Other Half Loves* by Alan Ayckbourn. May 17 - June 16, 2007. An English farce filled with laughter.

For tickets and season subscriptions, call 943-SHOW or go to [www.dlrca.org](http://www.dlrca.org).

## Volunteers needed for Creek Clean Up

For the 17th time, volunteers can help remove a year's worth of debris from Walnut Creek's three downtown creeks on Creek Clean Up Day scheduled Saturday, May 13.

Volunteers should sign up by 9:30 a.m. at Civic Park, where they can also pick up plastic trash bags. A free barbecue lunch for all participants will follow the activity.

This event is co-sponsored by the City and Friends of the Creek. For further information, contact Lesley Hunt at 925-937-6791.

## 30 years ago in Walnut Creek

# Pres. Ford rings bell with crowd

When President Gerald R. Ford dropped in at Broadway Plaza to dedicate a replica of the Liberty Bell, real history was being made.

For the only time in Walnut Creek's history, a sitting U.S. president visited the city on May 25, 1976 in a pre-Memorial Day ceremony attended by thousands.

President Ford greeted the large crowd in shirt sleeves and proceeded to ring the small bell, only to have the clapper break off in his hand after two rings. The crowd loved it, though, and everyone — including the befuddled Chief Executive — roared with delight.

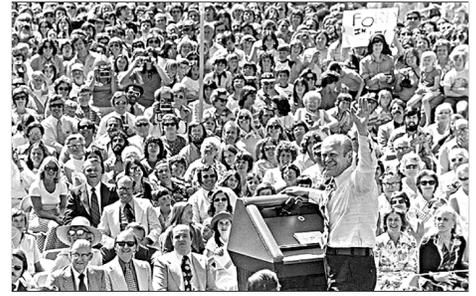
The Liberty Bell replica had been donated to the City by Soroptimist

International Walnut Creek in an American Independence Bicentennial salute to all those men and women who gave their lives for their country.

The Liberty Bell is on display at Liberty Bell Plaza, located at the corner of Broadway and Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Other presidents who have visited Walnut Creek either before or after their terms of office were Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and Herbert Hoover.

**A shirt-sleeved President Gerald R. Ford (top right) waves to a crowd of thousands in Broadway Shopping Center on May 25, 1976 during a ceremony to dedicate Walnut Creek's Liberty Bell (bottom right).**



## Celebrate WC's open space at Heritage Day June 10

Join the City in celebrating its frontier days at the annual Heritage Day event on Saturday, June 10 at Borges Ranch in the Shell Ridge Open Space.

The event will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; admission is \$5 per family. Parking will only be available at nearby Northgate High School, 425 Castle Rock Rd., where a shuttle will run to and from Borges Ranch throughout the day.

Family activities will include games and crafts for children, demonstrations by

4-H, the Diablo Cloggers, music by the Jug Band, and exhibits by the Lindsay Wildlife Museum, Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation, Diablo Bees, Save Mount Diablo, and the East Bay Regional Park District.

The Essanay Silent Film Museum will show Charlie Chaplin and Billy Bronco movies filmed in nearby Niles Canyon.

Food will also be available for purchase.

For more details, call (925) 942-0225.



Sheep-shearing will be demonstrated at Heritage Day on June 10 at Borges Ranch.

## Break out the blankets and popcorn — 'Movies Under the Stars' returns May 6

The wildly popular and award-winning "Movies Under the Stars" series returns in May for a fourth year of free outdoor cinema for the entire family at Heather Farm Park with two animated features.

Wallace & Gromit in "The Curse of the Were-Rabbit" will be shown on Saturday, May 6 and "Madagascar" will play on Saturday, May 20. Admission is always free.

Both films will begin at dusk in Ballfield #1 at Heather Farm Park, located at the corner of Ygnacio Valley Road and No. San Carlos Drive.

Parking is available at various locations in the park. Arrival one to two hours before dusk is advisable for best seating.

Lawn chairs are allowed in designated



areas. Please, no pets. Popcorn and soft drinks will be available for purchase.

"Movies Under the Stars" is presented by the City's Recreation Division. For more information, call 925-943-5858.

## Recycling bins to appear in parks

Park users will be able to recycle their cans and bottles at new "recycling only" containers being installed at two Walnut Creek parks.

The City is working with the East Bay Conservation Corps to install 15 containers at Larkey Park and 16 containers at Civic Park.

# CHOO- CHOO!

## WC Model Railroad enthusiasts continue tradition in Larkey Park

**S**outhern Pacific train service to Walnut Creek may have ended decades ago, but there is still more than 65 “miles” of railroad track in town that still reverberates with the sounds of locomotives.

Those tracks belong to the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, a band of 60 hobbyists who have built their own “HO Heaven” in a 5,000-square-foot building next to Larkey Park.

It houses the “Diablo Valley Lines” — one of the largest and most delicately crafted model railroads in the U.S., which has brought the club worldwide notoriety.

The City has leased the property to the Society since 1972 so it could rebuild a permanent home for an 1,800-square-foot layout that has more than 4,300 feet of laid track on over 175,000 individual ties and more than 340 turnouts.

The Diablo Valley Lines is modeled after typical sections of the Sierra Nevada

railroads and composite towns and countryside in the western states.

The club, formed in 1946, had its layout in a building adjacent to the Walnut Creek train depot, built by Southern Pacific in 1891. The building was moved in 1972 and converted into a restaurant (today’s Vic Stewart Steakhouse), so the club moved its operations into the City’s building.

“When we searched for a new location, the City generously offered us a corner of Larkey Park to rebuild,” said longtime club member Gordon Laughland.

The club opened the new Diablo Valley Lines in 1974 and it has since become an international stop for model train buffs.

The trains, which belong to individual club members, include nostalgic steam locomotives, and modern diesels.



Ted Moreland inspecting trains against a mountain side backdrop



TC Thompson (back to camera) explained the operations to a rapt group from the Citizens Institute on March 11.



Club member Ed Chambers puts a train back on the tracks.

The public is invited to view the trains in action the last Friday evening of each month from 8 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$2, adults; \$1, seniors and children ages 6-12; free, children under 6.

Special train shows are scheduled on Saturday, May 20 and Sunday, May 21, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The popular Holiday Shows will be held Nov. 17-19 and Nov. 24-26.

### Diablo Valley Lines at a glance

**Address:** 2751 Buena Vista Avenue  
(next to Larkey Park)

**Hours:** Last Friday of the month  
8 to 10 p.m.

Annual Fall Show held two  
consecutive weekends in  
late November

**Admission:** Adults, \$2; seniors, \$1;  
children ages 6-12, \$1; un-  
der age 6, free

**Information:** 925-937-1888  
[www.wcmrs.org/](http://www.wcmrs.org/)

## City Council Update

### Outgoing commissioners honored

In a special reception on March 7, the City Council honored 10 outgoing City commissioners who had provided a cumulative 66 years of valued service to Walnut Creek.

Those recognized were:

- Park, Recreation & Open Space Commission: **Neil Gerstner** (2000-06) and **Barry Slavin** (2000-06)
- Arts Commission: **Sheila Wilkins** (2003-06) and **Patricia Pava** (2000-06)
- Planning Commission: **Allan Moore** (1997-2005), **Jerry Kaplan** (1997-2005), and **Rich Larsen** (2002-06)
- Design Review Commission: **Robert Becker** (2001-06)
- Park, Recreation & Open Space Commission: **June Kirske** (2000-06), **Neil Gerstner** (2001-06), and **Barry Slavin** (2001-06)
- Transportation Commission: **Ben Bryce** (2002-06)

Following the reception at the City Council meeting, City Clerk Patrice Olds administered the oath of office to the following new commissioners: **Fritz Brunner** and **Michael Fotheringham**, Arts; **Darcy Kremin**, Design Review; **Matt Francois**, Transportation; and **Sandra Jacobsen**, **Robert O'Brien**, and **Dave Osorio**, Park, Recreation & Open Space.

### Mayor recognizes Bedford staff

Mayor Kathy Hicks on March 7 publicly acknowledged the efforts of the Bedford Gallery staff as part of the Mayor's Recognition program.

Staff members who were recognized for their outstanding contributions at the Gallery were Curator **Carrie Lederer**, **Erik Mortensen**, **Alesha Colberg**, **Melanie Chang**, and **Ann Trinca**.

## City's emergency training sign-ups open

Neighborhood teams of eight people or more are invited to register for the free Community Emergency Response Team training program.

CERT classes meet weekly for six weeks, 6-9:30 p.m. at the Contra Costa Fire District Training Center in Concord. Space is available in the sessions beginning Tuesday, July 25 - Aug. 29, and



### Walnut Creek 101

City Manager Mike Parness (above) welcomed the 30 enrollees in the City's 10th Citizen's Institute on March 11. The kick-off session included an educational bus tour of Walnut Creek, highlighted by a stop at the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society's Diablo Valley Lines in Larkey Park (right), where Las Lomas High sophomore Heather Love gazed at the miniature scale locomotives.



## Historic preservation rules group formed

The City Council on March 21 appointed seven individuals to serve on the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance Drafting Committee.

The committee comprises Roger Miller and Paul Cianfichi of the Walnut Creek Historical Society; Brian Hirahara and Mike Reed of the Walnut Creek Downtown Business Association; and at-large members Marc Herbert, Sally Ingraham, and Craig Lazzareschi.

The committee met for the first time on March 29 and is expected to complete a draft ordinance by July for review by the Design Review and Planning commissions and the City Council.

The group's task is to work with City staff to develop guidelines and draft a new ordinance that will govern how various historic buildings and sites within Walnut

Creek are to be preserved. The General Plan currently lists 37 potential historic resources in Walnut Creek.

## City Attorney Haas to retire after 18 years

Tom Haas has announced his plan to retire after 18 years as Walnut Creek's city attorney. His last day will be July 23.

Haas informed City Council members on March 22 of his plans. No decision has been made on how and when his successor will be chosen.

Haas, 62, began his tenure on May 2, 1988, succeeding David Benjamin in the post. He had previously served as Fairfield's city attorney for 12 years, and before that was deputy city attorney for the City of Sacramento for six years.

In 1989, Haas served as president of the City Attorneys Division of the League of California Cities, and served on the League's Board of Directors in 2001.



Tom Haas



By Officer Chris Norlund

## Red light running is costly

**Y**ou're in your car running late. You come up to an intersection as the light turns yellow. You think "I can make it" so you speed up. You get through the intersection, but look into the mirror and see the red and blue lights of a police vehicle. The officer steps up and tells you that the reason you were stopped is because you ran a red light.



Wait a minute, you say, the light was yellow.

The officer takes your license and registration and comes back with a citation.

California Vehicle Code section 21453(a) states: A driver facing a red light shall stop at the limit line.

Officers enforce this section in a number of ways. One is to park just off the intersection in a place where they can see the limit line, and the signal. The officer watches the light turn red, then looks at the limit line and any cars approaching it. Any vehicle that crosses the line after the light turned red is in violation.

The officer's perspective in this instance is from standing still. The driver's perspective is from a moving vehicle. Usually the last light the driver saw was yellow. Then they look to where they are driving, not realizing where their vehicle was in relation to the limit line as the light turned red.

The length of a yellow light is usually between 3 and 4 seconds. If you are traveling anywhere close to the speed limit, that is more than enough time to stop for a changing light.

Now the bad news. The minimum fine for a red light violation is \$351. Add to that the possible premium increases in insurance, money lost for court appearance times, traffic school, and a brief period of impatience can really add up in costs.

And hopefully you didn't cause a traffic collision.

## Planning a vacation? Be sure to secure your home before heading out the door

**T**he summer months are approaching and you're beginning to scope out your long-awaited vacation. Don't let it be ruined by crime. Be sure to include home security in your vacation planning.

The Walnut Creek Police Department reports that 50 residential burglaries were reported between June and August of 2005.



You can prevent becoming a victim when you're on vacation by taking some basic precautions. Common sense dictates most actions people should take before they leave their home for an extended period. The box at right includes tips on what you can do to make your home more secure and to increase your peace of mind when you're away.

But once you are away, don't forget to think about how to keep safe. Remember: Planning reduces your chances of becoming a victim of a crime. When sight-seeing, ask for directions at a hotel/motel on how to get to those attractions you want to see. Only carry the cash you will need, and only in small denominations.

Looking lost (that is, stopping and looking at addresses or staring at street signs) may make you an easy target for crime. If you do get lost, find an open business and ask for directions.

### Vacation security tips for home, road

**Before leaving:**

- Install good locks on all doors and windows and use them.
- Engrave your valuables with your driver's license number (preceded by "CA") and post Operation I.D. stickers in entry doors, windows.
- Never leave your house key hidden outside under a doormat, in a flower pot, or on a door ledge.
- Make your house appear "lived in." Use timers for lights and radios. Have a neighbor or friend pick up mail, newspapers, packages and keep your lawn mowed.
- Leave your trip plans and an emergency phone number with trusted neighbors or friends.

**On vacation:**

- Never carry large amounts of cash; use traveler's checks or an ATM card.
- Keep a copy of your credit card numbers in a safe place. Have the telephone numbers to call in case your checks or credit cards are lost or stolen.

For more information on crime prevention and Neighborhood Watch programs, call 925-943-5885.

## Commute to work by bike on May 18

**B**icycling is a great way to get fit, help reduce traffic, and increase air quality.

The month of May is National Bike Month. And on Thursday, May 18, some 50,000 to 100,000 Bay Area participants are expected to use their pedal power in support of Bike to Work Day (BTWD).

Be sure to stop by one of the dozens of Energizer Stations located along local bike commute routes for free refreshments and giveaways to bicyclists.

Check the 511.org website for more

information about Energizer Station locations, BTWD activities, and the

"Team Bike Challenge," a competition where team members earn points for riding their bike during the month of May.

Teams will be given their own webpage

where they can update information, post photos, and send challenges to other teams.

All BTWD participants, whether on a team or not, should register today for a chance to win some cool prizes!



## Library

### From front page

Proposition 81, the state bond measure on the June 6 ballot, would raise \$600 million for library construction. The City of Walnut Creek's application for an \$18.2 million grant received an "outstanding" rating from the state, meaning it could receive the funds if Prop. 81 passes. Prop. 81 requires a simple majority for passage.

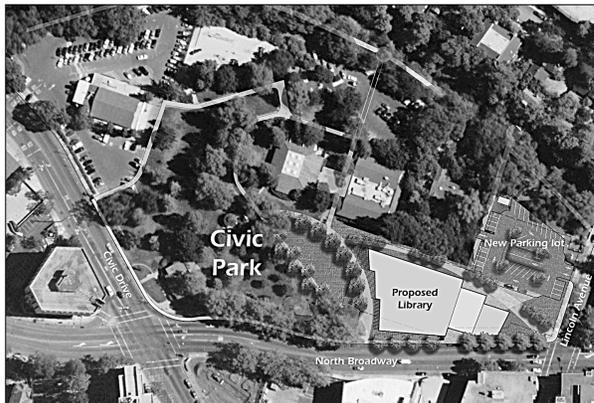
The majority of the Council agreed that a 42,000-square-foot library is needed to meet the community's long-term needs.

However, the Council agreed to move the new library slightly south and further from Civic Park, thus providing more green space, and eliminated a proposed 300-space parking structure in favor of a surface lot and underground parking with a total of 170 spaces for library patrons.

With the revisions, the project cost was pared from \$51 million to \$43.5 million.

There was near unanimous agreement among the various individuals and groups that met with City staff in January and February that the project must keep moving forward without delay.

"We need to make this investment,"



The new downtown library will be built on the site of the existing library.

said Art Rangel, a 16-year resident. "We have a shameful library and we need to change that. I hope the library is done soon — the urgency is there."

Longtime resident Phyllis Ceaser said, "I want to see this thing really happen during my lifetime. Please don't delay."

Residents who had opposed the original plan embraced the new ideas.

"Today we're highly supportive of the City's compromises," said Adriel Hampton of Save Civic Park.

Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning, Inc., the project architect, is preparing the first design drawings of the building for the City to consider.

The City hopes to break ground in 2008, and complete the library in 2010.

## General Plan

### From front page

bonus units are exempt from the cap.

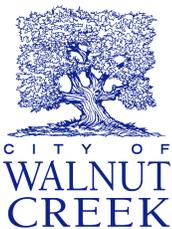
Community members influenced the General Plan process in other ways by requesting that it include goals such as:

- Stronger policies for the continued protection of neighborhoods from traffic intrusion
- Better public access to creeks
- Special trail needs for equestrians
- More support for open space and park preservation and expansion
- Buffering the historic Almond-Shuey neighborhood from commercial areas
- Incorporating a long-term arts vision
- Preserving the character of the traditional downtown

The General Plan continues the City's commercial growth management program that meters new growth at 75,000-square-feet a year. (The Shadelands Business Park is exempted from metering as a way to develop more quality jobs in the city.)

Another major theme is to bring new housing into the core area, where there is ready access to the freeways, BART, and community services.

The plan also recognizes that the City will need to step up its efforts to improve transportation alternatives and walkability to deal with worsening traffic congestion.



### CITY COUNCIL

Kathy Hicks, Mayor\*  
Sue Rainey, Mayor pro tem  
Gwen Regalia  
Charlie Abrams  
Gary Skrel

\* For appointment: Call 256-3504.

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

CITY MANAGER  
Michael Parness  
CITY ATTORNEY  
Thomas Haas  
CITY CLERK  
Patrice Olds  
CITY TREASURER  
Ronald Cassano

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
Valerie Barone, Director  
ARTS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES  
Gary Pokorny, Director  
POLICE  
Tom Soberanes, Chief of Police  
PUBLIC SERVICES  
Dan Richardson, Director

## IN A Nutshell

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Brad Rovanpera

We welcome your comments and questions.  
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