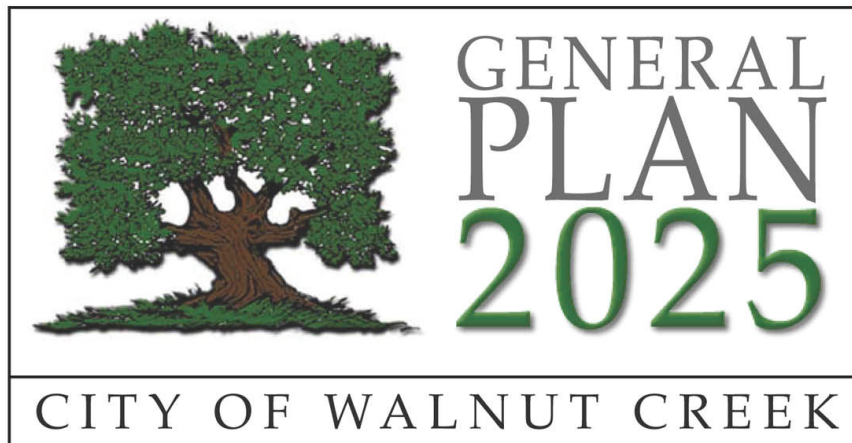


WALNUT CREEK  
GENERAL PLAN 2025

FINAL EIR

DECEMBER 9, 2005



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*Appendix: Mitigation Monitoring Program*



## CHAPTER 2

# Report Summary

This is a summary of the findings of the Draft and Final EIR. It has been reprinted from the Draft EIR with any changes made in response to comments. New text is ~~heavy-dash-underlined~~; deleted text is ~~struck-out~~.

This summary presents an overview of the analysis contained in Chapter 4: Environmental Evaluation. CEQA requires that this chapter summarize the following: 1) areas of controversy; 2) significant impacts; 3) unavoidable significant impacts; and 4) implementation of mitigation measures. Alternatives to the project are analyzed in Chapter 5.

## PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides an assessment of the potential environmental consequences of adoption of the Walnut Creek General Plan 2025. The General Plan is intended to serve as the principal policy document for guiding future conservation and development in Walnut Creek. The General Plan includes newly proposed goals, policies and actions which have been designed to implement the community's vision for the city. The policies and actions would be used by the City to guide day-to-day decision-making so there is continuing progress toward the attainment of goals of the Plan. Additionally, the General Plan includes a series of proposed land use designation changes which have been proposed to implement the overall goals and vision of the General Plan. The General Plan is further detailed in Chapter 3 of this EIR.

## AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

There has been controversy related to several items with regard to the preparation of the General Plan. These issues have included:

- Traffic congestion.
- Preservation of smaller buildings in the traditional downtown area.
- Retention of small businesses.

All of these issues were addressed in the General Plan process. To the extent that these issues have environmental impacts, they are also addressed in this EIR.

## SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Under CEQA, a significant impact on the environment is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance.

Implementation of General Plan 2025 has the potential to generate environmental impacts in a number of areas. However, the Plan has been developed to be largely self-mitigating. As shown in Table 1, all but one of the significant impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level if the mitigation measures recommended in this report are implemented. These impacts are discussed below in Section E: Unavoidable Significant Impacts.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

This EIR suggests mitigation measures that would reduce most impacts to less-than-significant levels. These mitigation measures are summarized Table 1 at the end of this chapter. They will form the basis of a Mitigation Monitoring Program which will be published in the Final EIR and implemented in accordance with State law.

## UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Implementation of General Plan 2025 would result in one significant and unavoidable air quality impact and several significant and unavoidable traffic impacts:

- **Air Quality:** The project is not consistent with the BAAQMD Thresholds of Significance that population not exceed ABAG projections and VMT may increase faster than population due to traffic movements through Walnut Creek.
- **Traffic:** The project would have significant and unavoidable freeway operations, roadway level of service, delay index, and intersection level of service impacts. These impacts are listed in Table 1.

## ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT

This Draft EIR analyzes three alternatives to the proposed General Plan, as follows:

- No Project Alternative (1989 General Plan)
- Growth Management I Alternative

- Growth Management II Alternative

Based on the comparative alternatives analysis contained in this EIR, the Growth Management I Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. Details of this analysis are included in Chapter 5.

## SUMMARY TABLE

Table 1 presents a summary of impacts and mitigation measures identified in this report. It is organized to correspond with environmental issues discussed in Chapter 4.

The table is arranged in four columns: 1) environmental impacts; 2) significance prior to mitigation; 3) mitigation measures taken from relevant General Plan policies; and 4) significance after mitigation. A series of mitigation measures is noted where more than one mitigation may be required to achieve a less-than-significant impact. For a complete description of potential impacts and suggested mitigation measures, please refer to the specific discussions in Chapter 4.

This summary does not detail the timing of mitigation measures. Timing will be further detailed in the Mitigation Monitoring Program, which will be published with the Final EIR.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
<b>Impact TRAF-1:</b> The land use development proposed in the General Plan 2025 Buildout Alternative would contribute to freeway speeds of less than 30 miles per hour during the peak hour along I 680 through Walnut Creek.	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure TRAF-1:</u> Regional coordination would be required to address the congestion along the freeway. The General Plan 2025 includes policies that support the goal of reducing the increase in congestion of regional facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5, Policy 1.1. Working with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Caltrans, and other jurisdictions, develop and implement regional solutions to local traffic problems created by growth outside of the city.</li> <li>• Chapter 5, Policy 1.2. Support efforts to obtain funding for improvements to Highway 4 and other existing roads that provide a bypass for traffic passing through Walnut Creek.</li> </ul>	SU
<p><b>Impact TRAF-2:</b> The land use development proposed in the General Plan 2025 Buildout Alternative would contribute to the degradation of the level of service at the following arterial segments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mt. Diablo Boulevard between Bonanza Street and California Boulevard</li> <li>• Bancroft Road south of Treat Boulevard</li> <li>• California Boulevard between Trinity Avenue/Civic</li> </ul>	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure TRAF-2:</u> Roadway widening to provide additional capacity would improve the level of service; however, the downtown Core Area is primarily built out with little opportunity to widen the roadways. Rather any improvements would consider operations and management for improve efficiency of the existing roadway system as well as opportunities to improve the pedestrian-oriented nature of the Core Area. The General Plan 2025 includes policies that support and/or enhance carpooling, transit, bicycling, and walk-</p>	SU

LTS = Less Than Significant S = Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

**Table 1 (continued)**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<p>Drive and Bonanza Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic Drive between Ygnacio Valley Road and Broadway</li> <li>• South Broadway north of Newell Avenue</li> <li>• South Broadway north of Rudgear Road</li> </ul>		<p>ing that would provide an alternative to reduce some of these auto trips.</p>	
<p><b>Impact TRAF-3:</b> The land use development proposed in the General Plan 2025 Buildout Alternative would contribute to delay indices greater than 2.0 along these Routes of Regional Significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ygnacio Valley Road Westbound</li> <li>• Treat Boulevard Eastbound and Westbound</li> </ul>	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure TRAF-3:</u> Ygnacio Valley Road and Treat Boulevard are regional transportation facilities. The City of Walnut Creek will continue working with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Caltrans, and other jurisdictions to develop and implement regional solutions to local traffic problems created by growth outside the city (Chapter 5, Policy 1.1).</p> <p>The City has been responsible for the metering of the morning peak period westbound traffic entering the city at Oak Grove Road as part of the regional traffic signal system along Kirker Pass/Ygnacio Valley Road. Similar treatments should be considered for Treat Boulevard.</p>	SU

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Table 1 (continued)

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<p><b>Impact TRAF-4:</b> The land use development proposed in General Plan 2025 would contribute to the degradation of the LOS at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadway and Civic Dr (PM)</li> <li>• Broadway and Mt Diablo Blvd (PM)</li> <li>• California and Mt Diablo Blvds (PM)</li> <li>• Main St and Mt Diablo Blvd (PM)</li> <li>• California Blvd and Civic Drive (PM)</li> <li>• Oak Grove Road and Mitchell Drive/Peachwillow Lane (PM)</li> <li>• Olympic Boulevard and NB I-680 On/Off ramps (AM and PM)</li> </ul>	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measures TRAF-4:</u> The opportunities to improve these intersections are limited due primarily to right-of-way constraints as well as the desire to maintain the pedestrian-oriented nature of the Core Area. The policies of the General Plan 2025 support alternative modes to the automobile that may reduce the traffic congestion. However, this would be considered a significant and unavoidable impact.</p> <p><u>An eastbound left-turn lane was constructed and completed in 2005 at Oak Grove Rd and Mitchell Drive/Peachwillow Ln, which will improve the LOS to E (0.93 0.96), which would be below the LOS standard and considered a significant impact.</u></p> <p>At Olympic Blvd and NB I-680 On/Off ramps, the heavy northbound traffic from the off-ramp is a critical movement with significant volumes coming off the ramp then continuing through the intersection to get back onto I-680. The west-bound right-turn movement to access the on-ramp is also a critical movement. <u>The City could prohibit NB off-ramp through drivers destined for the opposite NB on-ramp (during peak period only or all times) to make that through movement. The City shall also investigate modification of the NB on-ramp and WB/NB right-turn to allow continuous right-turns to improve operations of the intersection, but this would require an operations analysis and need to account for the bike lane along Olympic and possible right-of-way con-</u></p>	SU

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Table 1 (continued)

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<p><b>Impact TRAF-5:</b> The land use development proposed in General Plan 2025 would contribute to the degradation of the LOS at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadway and Civic Dr (PM)</li> <li>• Broadway and Mt Diablo Blvd (PM)</li> <li>• California and Mt Diablo Blvds (PM)</li> <li>• Main St and Mt Diablo Blvd (PM)</li> <li>• California and Civic Dr (PM)</li> </ul>	S	<p><del>straints at the corner. These mitigations would result in LOS E (v/c: 0.93) during the AM peak hour, but would still be at LOS F during the PM peak hour for the General Plan 2025 Buildout condition. Because the mitigation would not reduce the LOS to an acceptable level, this is considered a significant and unavoidable impact.</del></p> <p><del>Mitigation Measure TRAF-5: The City may consider changing the peak-hour intersection LOS standard for the Core Area to allow for congested traffic conditions that may encourage the use of alternative modes and support improvements to the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and services. If the LOS standard for the Core Area is modified to "LOS high E (v/c: 0.90 to 1.00)" then the impacts at the intersections of Mt Diablo Blvd with California, Broadway and Main St would be considered less than significant.</del></p> <p><del>At California and Civic, the critical movements are the southbound right turn and through movements. By optimizing the signal, which currently provides split phasing of the Civic and Trinity, the critical V/C ratio may be reduced to less than 1.00, which would result in LOS high E. A separate southbound right turn lane would further reduce the critical V/C ratio to 0.92, which would meet the current LOS standard for the Core Area. With these improvements, the impacts would be reduced to less than significant.</del></p>	LTS SU

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**Table 1 (continued)**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<u>None available.</u>			
<b>AIR QUALITY</b>			
<b>Impact AIR-1:</b> The project is not consistent with the BAAQMD Thresholds of Significance that population not exceed ABAG projections and VMT may increase faster than population due to traffic movements through Walnut Creek.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure AIR-1:</u> None available.	SU
<b>Impact AIR-2:</b> Land use maps associated with General Plan 2025 do not propose new sources of odors or toxic air contaminants and would not locate sensitive land uses near sources of odors. However, the plan shows new residential uses within 500 feet of Interstate 680, a source of air toxic contaminants.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure AIR-2:</u> The City should add the following wording to Chapter 4 Built Environment Action 30.3.4: “Interstate 680 and Highway 24 are sources of air toxic contaminants. Projects that locate new sensitive receptors (facilities or land uses such as hospitals, day care centers, schools and residences that are occupied for substantial amounts of time by members of the population particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly and people with illnesses) proposed within 500 feet from the edge of the closest traffic lane of Interstate 680 or Highway 24 should include an analysis of mobile source toxic air contaminant health risks, based on appropriate air dispersion modeling. Project review should include an evaluation of the adequacy of the setback from the highway and, if necessary, identify design mitigation measures to reduce health risks to acceptable levels.”	LTS

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Table 1 (continued)

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<p><b>Impact AIR-3:</b> Construction associated with development allowed under General Plan 2025 would result in emissions of dust and equipment exhaust, including diesel particulate matter.</p>	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure AIR-3:</u> The City should amend Chapter 4 Built Environment Action 30.3.1 to read as follows: “require construction emissions control measures recommended by the BAAQMD.”</p> <p>A list of feasible control measures that the BAAQMD currently recommends for construction projects is provided below. Appropriate measures should be implemented at all construction projects in Walnut Creek. Implementation of these measures would reduce air pollutant emissions associated with construction activities to a less-than-significant level.</p> <p>For all construction projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sprinkle water on all active construction areas at least twice daily and more often when conditions warrant.</li> <li>• Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard.</li> <li>• Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.</li> <li>• Sweep daily all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites.</li> <li>• Sweep streets daily if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.</li> </ul>	LTS

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**Table 1 (continued)**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure AIR-3 (continued)</u></p> <p>For construction sites greater than 4 acres in size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas.</li> <li>• Enclose, cover, water twice daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil binders to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).</li> <li>• Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.</li> <li>• Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.</li> <li>• Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.</li> </ul> <p>For construction sites that are located adjacent to sensitive receptors or warrant additional controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off all trucks and equipment leaving the site.</li> <li>• Suspend grading activities when winds exceed 25 miles per hour (mph) and visible dust clouds cannot be prevented from extending beyond active construction areas.</li> <li>• Limit the area subject to excavation, grading and other construction activity at any one time.</li> </ul>	LTS

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**Table 1 (continued)**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
		<p><u>Mitigation Measure AIR-3 (continued)</u></p> <p>Exhaust emissions controls for large projects (greater than 4 acres or projects located within 100 feet of sensitive receptors):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 50 percent of the heavy-duty, off-road equipment used for construction should be CARB-certified off-road engines or equivalent, or use alternative fuels (such as biodiesel) that result in lower particulate emissions.</li> <li>• Properly maintain all construction equipment.</li> <li>• The contractor should install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently powered equipment (e.g., compressors).</li> <li>• Diesel equipment standing idle for more than two minutes should be turned off. This would include trucks waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks could keep their engines running continuously as long as they were on site.</li> <li>• Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions.</li> </ul>	LTS

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Table 1 (continued)

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<b>Impact AIR-4:</b> Wood smoke from new residential uses allowed under General Plan 2025 could emit significant amounts of PM <sub>10</sub> , which could worsen an already existing air pollution problem.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure AIR-4:</u> <del>The City should amend Chapter 4 Built Environment Action 30.3.2 to adopt a wood smoke ordinance for fireplaces or woodstoves consistent with the BAAQMD model wood smoke ordinance, or alternatively, require that all new residential development include fireplaces and wood stoves that are EPA certified wood burning appliances, pellet fueled stoves or natural gas fireplaces.</del> <u>None available.</u>	LTS <u>SU</u>
<b>NOISE</b>			
<b>Impact NOI-1:</b> Vehicular traffic in Walnut Creek will increase on two major roadways as development and population increase within the community.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure NOI-1:</u> Chapter 6 Safety and Noise Policy 9.1 and Action 9.1.1 would control the impacts of new commercial and residential noise sources on the existing environment.  Safety and Noise Policy 9.2, Action 9.2.1, and 9.2.2 would strive to reduce traffic noise levels through the installation of noise control measures such as quiet pavement surfaces.	LTS
<b>Impact NOI-2:</b> New noise sensitive development is proposed in noisy areas.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure NOI-2:</u> Chapter 6 Safety and Noise Policy 8.1 and Actions 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 would establish exterior noise level standards for new residences proposed in noisy areas. Chapter 6, Policy 8.2 addresses urban noise conflicts. Chapter 6, Actions 8.2.3 and 8.2.4 specify interior standards to control average and maximum noise levels.	LTS

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Table 1 (continued)

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
<b>Impact NOI-3:</b> New residential development proposed adjacent to BART where it is operating at-grade could expose residents to excessive vibration.	S	<u>Mitigation Measure NOI-3:</u> Vibration impacts should be mitigated through site design and buffers between BART and new residential development. Residential uses proposed as a part of Change Area 13 within 150 feet of BART should include a vibration study to show that vibration levels do not exceed the FTA criteria.	LTS
<b>Impact NOI-4:</b> Construction of new development would temporarily elevate noise levels at adjacent noise sensitive land uses.	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure NOI-4:</u> City's Municipal Code, Title 4, Article 2, addresses excessive, unreasonable, and prolonged noise; including building construction and repair. Standard measures to minimize construction noise impacts could include the following quiet construction methods:</p> <p>(a) Equip all internal combustion engine driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.</p> <p>(b) Locate stationary noise generating equipment as far as possible from sensitive receptors when sensitive receptors adjoin or are near a construction project area.</p> <p>(c) Utilize "quiet" air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.</p> <p>(d) When necessary, temporary noise control blanket barriers should shroud pile drivers or be erected in a manner to shield the adjacent land uses. Such noise control blanket barriers can be rented and quickly erected.</p>	LTS

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**Table 1 (continued)**

Significant Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance With Mitigation
	S	<p><u>Mitigation Measure NOI-4 (continued):</u></p> <p>(e) Foundation pile holes should be pre-drilled to minimize the number of impacts required to seat the pile. The pre-drilling of foundation pile holes is a standard construction noise control technique. Pre-drilling reduces the number of blows required to seat the pile.</p> <p>(f) Designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include it in the notice sent to neighbors regarding the construction schedule.</p>	LTS

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