Article 2. Establishment of Districts

Sec. 10-2.1.201. Designation of Land Use Districts.

A. **Land Use Zone Map.** For the purpose of orderly, planned development of the City and to implement the General Plan, the City is hereby divided into several land use districts which are designated as follows:

1. R-40, Single-Family Residential District;
2. R-20, Single-Family Residential District;
3. R-15, Single-Family Residential District;
4. R-12, Single-Family Residential District;
5. R-10, Single-Family Residential District;
6. R-8.5, Single-Family Residential District;
7. R-8, Single-Family Residential District;
8. D-3, Duplex Residential;
9. M-3, Multiple-Family Residential District;
10. M-2.5, Multiple-Family Residential District;
11. M-2, Multiple-Family Residential District;
12. M-1.5, Multiple-Family Residential District;
13. M-1, Multiple-Family Residential District;
14. M-H-D, High Density Residential Planned Development;
15. H-P-D, Hillside Planned Development;
16. P-R, Pedestrian Retail District;
17. C-R, Central Retail District;
18. O-C, Office Commercial District;
19. M-U, Mixed Use Planned Development;
20. AS-CM, Automobile Sales/Service and Custom Manufacturing District;
21. C-C, Community Commercial District;
22. S-C, Service Commercial District;
23. B-P, Business Park District;
24. O-S-R, Open Space Recreation District;
25. C-F, Community Facility District;
26. P-D-(followed by Ordinance number), Planned Development District;
27. O, Overlay District;
28. SFH-PD1, Single Family High-Planned Development District;
29. MU-C, Commercial Mixed Use District; and
30. MU-R, Residential Mixed Use District.

B. Such land use districts are delineated and set forth on the zoning map of the City, which is contained in Table 3* of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code.

*Code reviser’s note: Table 3 became inactive when the city began using its GIS system. Below are the links to the two sheets of the official zoning map:
(§4, Ord. 2161, eff. 1/19/17; §4, Ord. 2200, eff. 12/6/19)

A. Zoning Map. The boundaries of the various land use districts are shown upon a map designated as the "Zoning Map of the City of Walnut Creek," which map is made a part hereof by reference and is contained in Table 3* of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code. (§4, Ord. 2070, eff. 6/20/2008)

*Code reviser's note: Table 3 became inactive when the city began using its GIS system. Below are the links to the two sheets of the official zoning map:

B. Building Height Zones.

  1. Measure A, the Building Height Freeze Initiative was passed at a Special Election held on March 12, 1985 and became effective on March 29, 1985. The text of Measure A is adopted as part of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code as follows:

    a) "The building height limitations in the Zoning Ordinance (as of March 29, 1985) shall not be raised without the approval of the electorate.

    b) No use permits to exceed the basic building height limitations of a land use district shall be granted.

    c) No permit shall be issued to construct a building over six stories in height without the approval of the electorate.

  2. For the purpose of the orderly planned development of the city, consistency with Measure A height regulations, and the implementation of the General Plan, Building Height Zones are adopted as a part of this code and are indicated on the Zoning Map. In all areas of the city, the maximum building height is as stipulated within the Development Regulations of each zoning district, except as otherwise shown on the Zoning Map. Two special designations are included on the Zoning Map:

    a. 35/50 Feet Height Limit. This height limit establishes a normal maximum building height of thirty-five (35) feet, consistent with the existing scale and character of the area. This height limit may be extended up to fifty (50) feet by stepping back additional building floors. The precise amount of setback required from the property line along the street frontage will depend upon maintaining a compatible pedestrian scale street wall edge, the design and orientation of adjacent structures, and the individual project design. The depth of the height setback should be as follows:

        i. For buildings located within the boundaries of the Locust Street/Mt. Diablo Boulevard Specific Plan, the depth of the height setback shall be a minimum of 10 feet from the property line along the street frontage, except architectural elements that provide variation and promote visual interest (e.g., towers) may exceed the thirty-five (35) foot height limit without stepping back from the face of the building; provided, that such architectural elements do not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) or twenty-five (25) linear feet of each building frontage, whichever is less.
ii. For buildings in all other areas, the depth of the height setback should not be less than twenty (20) feet from the property line along the street frontage, except where the Design Review Commission approves a reduction. Parcels of shallow depth are unlikely to achieve a height of fifty (50) feet. (See General Plan Chapter 4, Policy 13.2 and Figure 7.)

b. **Transitional Height Zones.** Transitional Height Zones are areas where a 35-foot height limit is established approximately 100 feet from the property line along the street frontage, and where a 50-foot height limit is established beyond the 35-foot height limit area. Where the boundary between the 35-foot height limit area and the 50-foot height limit area bisects a parcel, as it does on North Main Street and South Main Street, the intent is to create a lower, less massive building along the street frontage which may be stepped up to a maximum height of 50 feet in the interior of the parcel. In these Transitional Height Zones, the width of the 35-foot height limit area may be decreased to no less than 80 feet from the parcel line facing the street frontage. The precise depth of the height setback shall depend upon the site configuration, the design of adjacent structures, the typical height profile along the street and individual project design.

C. **Parking Reduction Zones.** For the purpose of the orderly planned development of the City and the implementation of the General Plan, Parking Reduction Zones are adopted as part of this code. Notwithstanding the quantity of parking required by other portions of this code for the various types of land uses, a parcel of real property which is located within the boundaries of those areas designated as Parking Reduction Zones A, B, C, D and E on the Zoning Map shall be permitted the minimum reduction in the quantity of required off-street parking spaces as specified in Sec. 10-2.3.203. (§4, Ord. 2070, eff. 6/20/08; §4, Ord. 2114, eff. 1/3/13)

**Sec. 10-2.1.203. Definitions of Boundaries.**

The following rules shall apply in determining the boundaries of any district or zone shown on the Zoning Map:

A. **Street, Alley or Lot Lines.** Where the indicated district or zone boundaries are approximately streets or alleys, the centerline of such streets or alleys shall be construed to be the boundary; otherwise such boundaries shall be determined by use of the scale appearing on the Zoning Map unless specifically indicated by dimensions.

1. **Uncertainty of Boundaries.** Where uncertainty exists, the Planning Commission shall, by written resolution, recommend the location of any district or zone boundary or setback line to the Council for its action and final decision.

2. **Vacated Streets.** Where a street, alley or right-of-way is officially vacated, the property formerly in such street, alley or right-of-way shall be included within the district or zone or adjoining property on either side thereof.

In the event such street, alley or right-of-way was a boundary between two or more different districts or zones, the new district or zone boundary shall be the property line which is created by such vacation.
Sec. 10-2.1.204. Use of Land Limited.

Except as provided in this chapter:

A. No building shall be erected and no existing building shall be moved, altered, added to, or enlarged, nor shall any land or building be used, or be designed to be used, for any purpose or in any manner, nor shall any yard or other open space surrounding any building be encroached upon or reduced, except as permitted by and in conformity to the regulations specified in this chapter for the land use district as set forth in the Zoning Map, or any amendment thereto.

B. No yard or open spaces provided about any building for the purpose of complying with the provisions of this chapter shall be considered as providing a yard or open space for any other building or any other lot.

C. It shall be unlawful to divide any parcel of land so as to create a parcel of land not meeting all of the requirements of this chapter.

D. No building or structure shall be erected nor shall any use be made of any land within any setback area as shown on the Zoning Map except agricultural uses, landscaping or vehicular or pedestrian thoroughfares, said setbacks being in addition to front or street side yards otherwise required herein.

E. No use shall be made of land in the City which use is obnoxious or detrimental to the area in which such use is made or intended to be made, or which use violates state or federal law, and no use of land other than the uses specifically authorized in any district shall be made. Specific uses of land, buildings and structures listed as not permitted in this chapter in each district are hereby declared to be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare and for this reason expressly prohibited. The enumeration of prohibited uses shall not by implication enlarge the scope of permitted uses; they are for purposes of clarity only. (by §18, Ord. 2046, eff. 12/1/2005)

Article 3. Definitions

Sec. 10-2.1.301. Purpose and Applicability.

The purpose of this article is to ensure precision in interpretation of the zoning regulations. The meaning and construction of words and phrases defined in this article shall apply throughout the zoning regulations, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning or construction. For definitions of uses, see Part I, Article 4. Use Classifications.

Sec. 10-2.1.302. Rules for Construction of Language.

In addition to the General Provisions of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code, the following rules of construction shall apply:

A. The particular shall control the general.