

# Welcome to the City of Walnut Creek Open Space

In 1974, a \$6.75 million bond was approved by the citizens of this community to purchase and preserve the undeveloped ridgelines that surround the city and contribute so much to its quality and character. With over 2,700 acres of oak woodlands, grassland savannah and chaparral, this is one of the largest city-owned open spaces in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Serving as a greenbelt between Walnut Creek and Lafayette, **Acalanes Ridge Open Space** is a relatively small natural area providing sweeping vistas of Mount Diablo, particularly Castle Rocks and Rock City. From the ridgeline you can see Mount Diablo as well as the Carquinez Strait and the delta to the north. Spring wildflowers can be spectacular.

**Lime Ridge Open Space** encompasses the dominant ridge leading to Mt. Diablo and forms an important visual backdrop to the urbanized portions of Ygnacio Valley. It is a natural greenbelt connector between Walnut Creek and the Concord and Clayton areas to the east. The preserve contains some of the last remaining chaparral vegetation in the Walnut Creek Open Space. Due to the rich diversity of plant and animals, the preserve is protected more than other areas. For example, the Lime Ridge Wildlife Preserve (center section, south of Ygnacio) is off-limits to dogs.

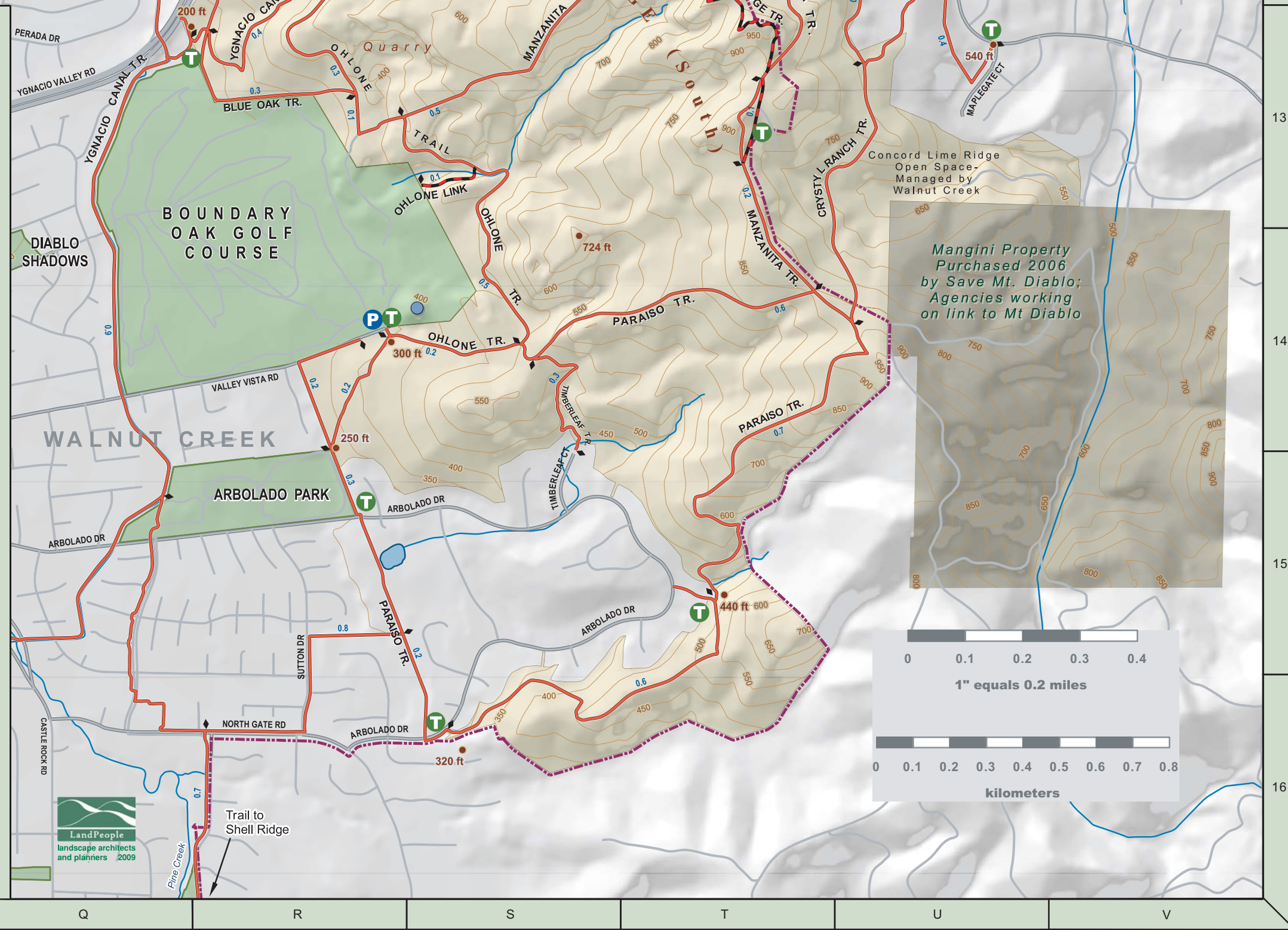
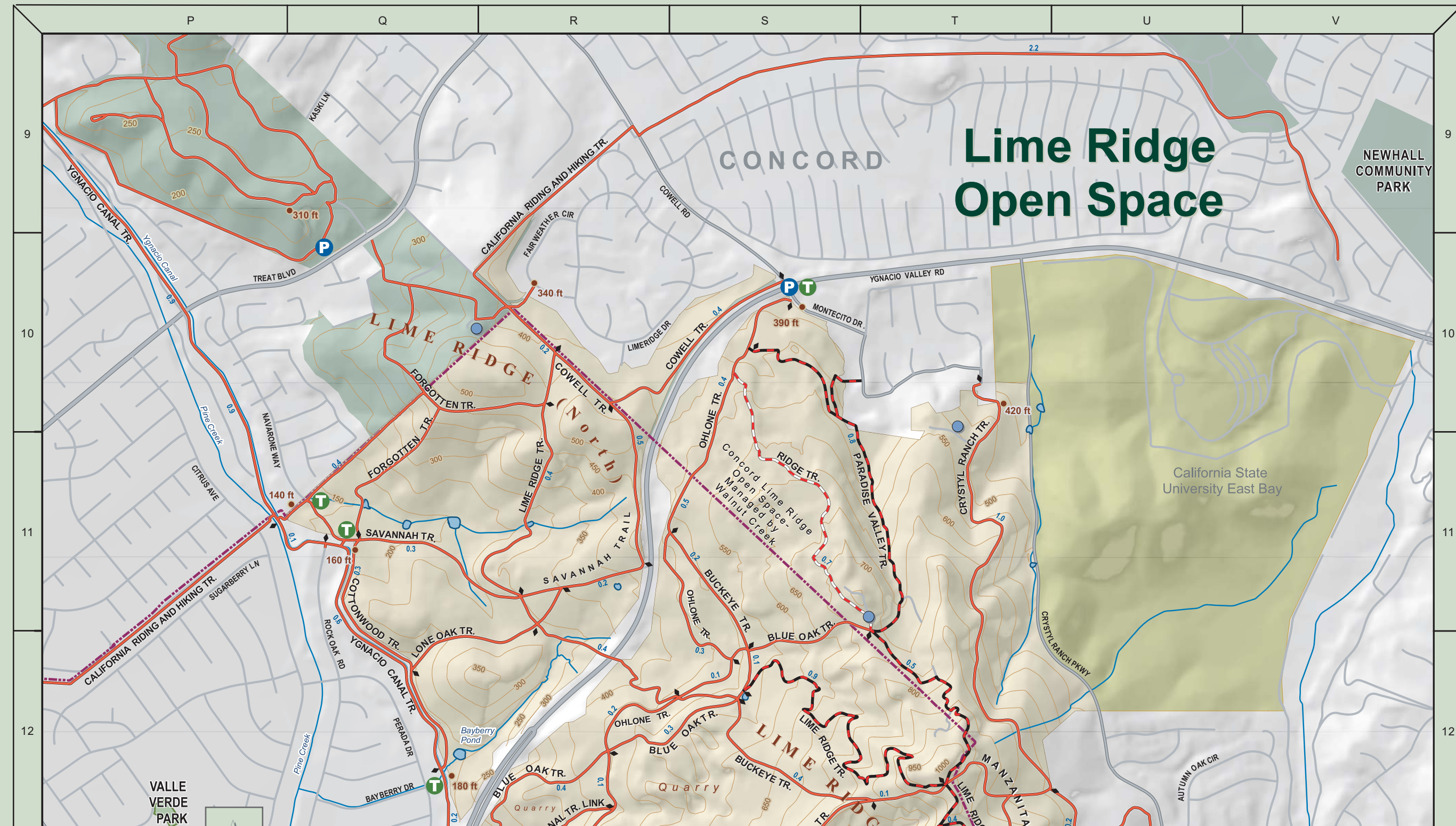
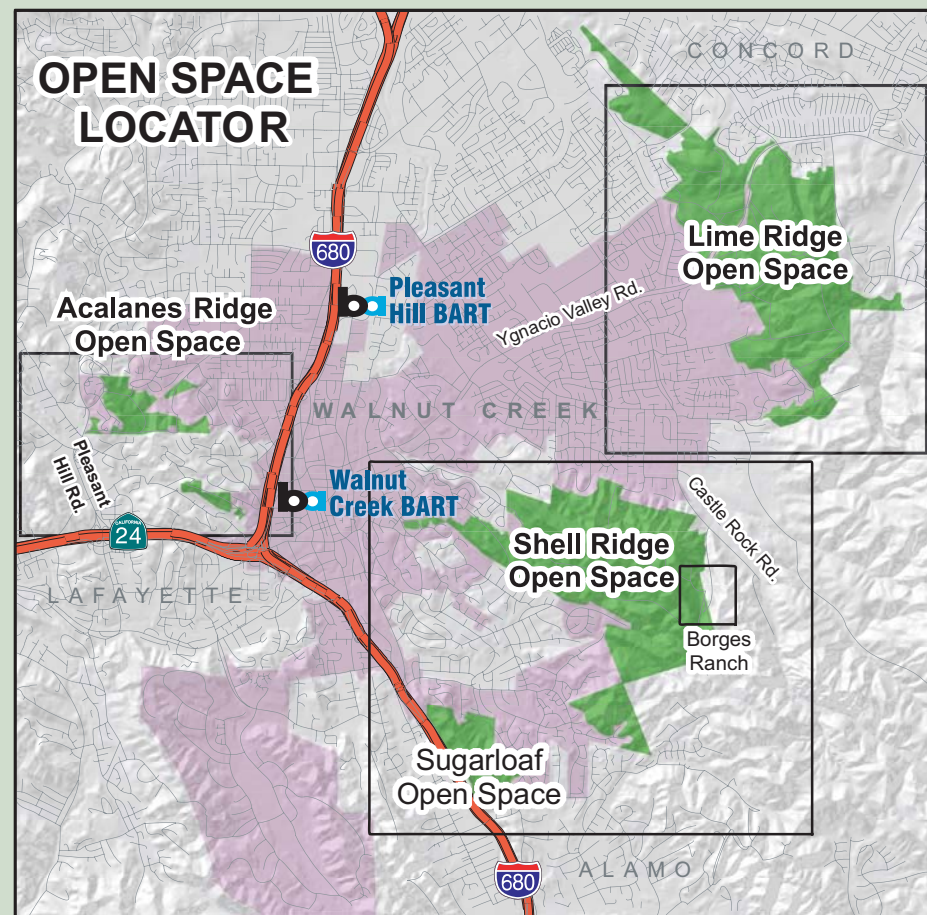
**Shell Ridge** comprises a series of parallel ridges, which cut diagonally into the heart of Walnut Creek, forming a wedge of open space running all the way to Mt. Diablo. As the City of Walnut Creek's largest open space unit, it has trails for biking, hiking and horseback riding through oak woodlands and grassland savannah. A major feature of Shell Ridge is the historic **Borges Ranch**, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. Established in 1899, this cattle ranch complex features weathered barns and ranch buildings, corrals and the restored Borges family home.

**Howe Homestead**, adjacent to Shell Ridge Open Space, is the former home of James Howe, a foreign correspondent for the Associated Press. This park recreates the historic urban farm with a collection of fruit and nut trees, beehives, and outbuildings. The homestead is the location for the Community Gardens, an area of 48 garden plots rented by residents for the growing of vegetables and ornamental plants.

**Sugarloaf Open Space Area** has a system of hiking and equestrian trails, with a trail connection to Rudgear Park and Shell Ridge Open Space. The area also provides picnic and camping opportunities. Along the upper ridgeline, there are views of Mt. Diablo, Shell Ridge, Las Trampas Ridge and the Briones Hills. A 15 acre black walnut orchard is located on the preserve. This orchard, one of the last in the City, also provides a shaded wildlife habitat area.

Cattle graze throughout most of the open space areas, not only to preserve the area's cultural history but to reduce invasive weeds. They are generally very docile, and although curious, will normally move away from people.

Hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking are all available in our open spaces. Please check the entry points and trail markers for regulations applying to specific areas or activities. Please remember, the efforts of yesterday created the opportunities of today. Do your part to preserve them for tomorrow.



Mangini Property Purchased 2006 by Save Mt. Diablo; Agencies working on link to Mt Diablo

