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Virtual Public Forum on Homelessness in Walnut Creek, November 17, 2021
Speakers, panel discussion, Q&A to focus on mental health issues and resources

WALNUT CREEK, CA—October 15, 2021—The Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force, established in 2013, is hosting a free public **Community Forum on Homelessness in Walnut Creek** on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, 6–8pm, via Zoom. This is the fourth in a series of forums designed to give community members and business owners a platform to discuss homelessness in Walnut Creek and to learn about the actions being taken in the city and county to address homelessness.

The Fall forum will focus on mental health services available to homeless and at-risk individuals and will kick-off with a brief video providing background on the continuum of care available to unhoused people in Walnut Creek.

After the video and opening remarks by **Walnut Creek Mayor Kevin Wilk, Michael Myette**, Mental Health Program Supervisor with Contra Costa Public Health, will present information about behavioral health resources available for people experiencing homelessness. He will be joined by **Lisa Thomas** from CORE (Coordinated Outreach, Referral & Engagement), a program of Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless Services.

In June 2019, the Walnut Creek Police Department launched the Homeless Outreach Program (HOP), a dedicated team of two officers who address both quality of life and public safety issues surrounding homelessness in Walnut Creek, offering referrals to shelters and mental health services to those in need. The HOP team's work will be showcased at the forum.

After the presentations, a panel of experts representing a variety of resources will be on hand to share information about mental health services available to people experiencing homelessness and to answer questions. During Q&A, speakers and panelists will take questions from attendees through the forum's moderator, **Mark Newsom**.

Panelists scheduled to attend are **Jaime Jenett**, Health, Housing, and Homeless Services, Contra Costa Health Services; **Lisa Thomas**, CORE; **Mark Wardlaw**, City of Walnut Creek, Community Development; **Sgt. Gary Silva**, Walnut Creek Police Department, HOP Team; **Leslie Gleason**, Trinity Center; **Janette Kennedy**, Loaves and Fishes; **Donna Colombo**, Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force.

This is a free public event, but attendees must RSVP online at Eventbrite to receive the Zoom link. For the Eventbrite link and for more information about the forum, visit www.WCHomelessTaskForce.org.

Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force, WCHomelessTaskForce.org

Mindful of the needs of the Walnut Creek community and the City's quality of life, the Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force seeks compassionate solutions to homelessness and works collaboratively with local and regional organizations to develop safety net services and the means for affordable supportive housing.

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