1. February 2019 HHC Agenda
   Documents:
   FEBRUARY 2019 HHC AGENDA.PDF

2. February 2019 HHC Agenda Packet
   Documents:
   FEBRUARY 2019 HHC AGENDA PACKET.PDF
Historic Heritage Committee Meeting Agenda
February 26, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
7351 Rosanna Street, Gilroy CA 95020

HISTORIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Chair:  Steve Seebart
Council Member Peter Leroe-Muñoz
Planning Commission Representative: Tom Fischer

Comments by the public will be taken on any agenda item before action is taken by the Historic Heritage Committee. Persons speaking on any matter are asked to state their name for the record. Public testimony is subject to reasonable regulations, including but not limited to time restrictions on particular issues and for each individual speaker. Please limit your comments to no more than 3-minutes.

Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Historic Heritage Committee after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection with the agenda packet in the lobby of Administration at City Hall, 7351 Rosanna Street during normal business hours. These materials are also available with the agenda packet on the City website at www.cityofgilroy.org.

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), the City will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Clerk 72 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 846-0491. A sound enhancement system is available in the City Council Chambers.

I. OPEN MEETING

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REPORT ON POSTING THE AGENDA AND ROLL CALL

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 17, 2018

V. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: (Three-minute time limit).
This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Historic Heritage Committee on matters not on the agenda. The law does not permit Historic Heritage Committee action or extended discussion of any item not on the agenda except under special circumstances. If Historic Heritage Committee action is requested, the Historic Heritage Committee may place the matter on a future agenda. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff for reply in writing.

VI. OLD BUSINESS: None
VII. NEW BUSINESS:
A. Selection of Chair / Vice Chair / HSR citizen Representative
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Motion to elect Historic Heritage Committee Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and HSR citizen representative

B. Introduce and Receive 2019 Annual Budget Request
   1. Presentation: Bryce Atkins
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Approve / Deny annual budget request

C. Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) Survey Update
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu & Dudek
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive status update

D. Draft Historic Context Statement
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu & Dudek
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive presentation

E. Downtown Façade Program Discussion
   1. Presentation: Chair Seebart
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: None

F. Historic Resources and CEQA Review Presentation
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive presentation

G. Mills Act inspection project progress update
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action:

VIII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

IX. ORAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF THE HISTORIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE:
    Miscellaneous information and updates (no action)

X. PLANNING DIVISION MANAGER REPORT:
    Miscellaneous information and updates (no action)
    Reminders: Attendance policy, Annual $1000 expenditure

ADJOURNMENT to the Next Regular Meeting of March 20, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Know your rights under the Gilroy Open Government Ordinance
Government’s duty is to serve the public reaching its decisions in full view of the public. Commissions, task forces, councils and other agencies of the City exist to conduct the people’s business. This ordinance assures that deliberations are conducted before the people and that the City operations or deliberations are conducted before the people and that the City operations are open to the people’s review. For information on your rights under the open Government Ordinance, to receive a free copy of the ordinance, or to report a violation of the Ordinance, contact the open Government Commission staff at (408) 846-0204 or e-mail Shawna.freels@cityofgilroy.org
Historic Heritage Committee Meeting Agenda
February 26, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
7351 Rosanna Street, Gilroy CA 95020

HISTORIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Steve Seebart
Council Member Peter Leroe-Muñoz
Planning Commission Representative: Tom Fischer

Comments by the public will be taken on any agenda item before action is taken by the Historic Heritage Committee. Persons speaking on any matter are asked to state their name for the record. Public testimony is subject to reasonable regulations, including but not limited to time restrictions on particular issues and for each individual speaker. Please limit your comments to no more than 3-minutes.

Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Historic Heritage Committee after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection with the agenda packet in the lobby of Administration at City Hall, 7351 Rosanna Street during normal business hours. These materials are also available with the agenda packet on the City website at www.cityofgilroy.org.

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), the City will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Clerk 72 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 846-0491. A sound enhancement system is available in the City Council Chambers.

I. OPEN MEETING

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REPORT ON POSTING THE AGENDA AND ROLL CALL

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 17, 2018

V. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: (Three-minute time limit).
This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Historic Heritage Committee on matters not on the agenda. The law does not permit Historic Heritage Committee action or extended discussion of any item not on the agenda except under special circumstances. If Historic Heritage Committee action is requested, the Historic Heritage Committee may place the matter on a future agenda. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff for reply in writing.

VI. OLD BUSINESS: None
VII. NEW BUSINESS:
A. Selection of Chair / Vice Chair / HSR citizen Representative
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Motion to elect Historic Heritage Committee Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and HSR citizen representative

B. Introduce and Receive 2019 Annual Budget Request
   1. Presentation: Bryce Atkins
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Approve / Deny annual budget request

C. Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) Survey Update
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu & Dudek
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive status update

D. Draft Historic Context Statement (report attached)
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu & Dudek
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive presentation

E. Downtown Façade Program Discussion
   1. Presentation: Chair Seebart
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: None

F. Historic Resources and CEQA Review Presentation
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action: Receive presentation

G. Mills Act inspection project progress update
   1. Presentation: Pamela Wu
   2. Public Comment:
   3. Possible Action:

VIII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

IX. ORAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF THE HISTORIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE:
   Miscellaneous information and updates (no action)

X. PLANNING DIVISION MANAGER REPORT:
   Miscellaneous information and updates (no action)
   Reminders: Attendance policy, Annual $1000 expenditure

ADJOURNMENT to the Next Regular Meeting of March 20, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Know your rights under the Gilroy Open Government Ordinance
Government’s duty is to serve the public reaching its decisions in full view of the public. Commissions, task forces, councils and other agencies of the City exist to conduct the people’s business. This ordinance assures that deliberations are conducted before the people and that the City operations or deliberations are conducted before the people and that the City operations are open to the people’s review. For information on your rights under the open Government Ordinance, to receive a free copy of the ordinance, or to report a violation of the Ordinance, contact the open Government Commission staff at (408) 846-0204 or e-mail Shawna.freels@cityofgilroy.org
Historic Heritage Committee Meeting
October 17, 2018 at 6:00 P.M.

I. OPEN MEETING

Chair Seebart called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REPORT ON POSTING THE AGENDA AND ROLL CALL

Office Assistant Zinnia Navarro reported the agenda for the Regular Historic Heritage Committee meeting of October 17, 2018 was posted on Friday, October 12, 2018 at 12:07 p.m.

Roll Call:
Present: Chair Seebart, Vice Chair Perez, Committee Member Ashford, and Committee Member Morales Medina.

Absent: Mayor Velasco

III. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES August 15, 2018

Motion on Item III

Motion to approve the minutes of August 15, 2018 as written

Moved by Committee Member Ashford, seconded by Vice Chair Perez

Vote: Motion carried 4-1-0-0

Yes: Chair Seebart, Vice Chair Perez, Committee Member Ashford, and Committee Member Morales Medina.

Absent: Mayor Velasco

No: None

Abstain: None

IV. PRESENTATION BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

None.

V. OLD BUSINESS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Policy Governing Board, Commission, and Committee Attendance.
Senior Planner Pamela Wu provided a presentation. The Policy went into effect on September 19, 2018.

B. Approval of the 2019 Schedule of Historic Heritage Committee Meetings

Pamela Wu provided a presentation on the 2019 scheduled Historic Heritage Committee Meetings.

Motion to approve the 2019 Schedule of Historic Heritage Committee Meetings as written.

Moved by Chair Seebart; seconded by Committee member Ashford

Vote: Motion carried 4-1-0-0

Yes: Chair Seebart, Committee Member Ashford, Committee Member Morales Medina, and Vice Chair Perez.

Absent: Mayor Velasco

No: None

Abstain: None

C. Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) survey update

Pamela Wu provided an update. The Dudek team has surveyed and completed 2300 properties over 45 years of age.

Public Members Connie Rogers and Carol DeSantis spoke.

D. Annual Presentation Discussion:

Chair Seebart provided a preview of the Historic Heritage Annual Presentation to City Council.

VII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

None.

VIII. ORAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF THE HISTORIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE

None.

IX. PLANNING DIVISION MANAGER REPORT

ADJOURNMENT at 6:59 p.m. to the Next Regular Meeting of November 21, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
January 7, 2019

Historic Heritage Committee & HRI Steering Committee

SUBJECT: Draft Historic Context Statement for City of Gilroy

Dear Committee Members,

As part of the effort in updating the city-wide Historic Resource Inventory (HRI), the consultant, has prepared the draft Historic Context Statement as it is essential to understand how development shaped communities and how significant events and people contributed to the City’s rich history. Enclosed please find the administrative draft of the historic context statement for your review and a link to the draft can also be found on the City's YourVoice page, https://yourvoice.cityofgilroy.org/2094/documents/3918

Please note that this is a preliminary draft and should not be widely distributed. This first draft contains the actual context and history of Gilroy while other relevant analysis and data are still being processed. Below is a list of items that will be made available at the next review and eventually be incorporated as part of the final document:

- Discussion of property types.
- Map and figures.
- HRI update.
- Complete NWIC records search results.
- Evaluation guidelines.
- Survey findings and recommendations.
- Appendices.

Please review and provide feedback to Pamela Wu by February 15, 2019. The draft and comments will be discussed at the February 20, 2019 HHC meeting.

Should you have any question, I can be reached at 408-846-0253.

Sincerely,
Pamela T. Wu,

Senior Planner

Encl: Draft historic context statement
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> INTRODUCTION</td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Project Description</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Study Area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Survey and Research Methods</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 How to Use this Document</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> PREVIOUS SURVEYS AND STUDIES</td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Previously Completed Local Inventories</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Other Previous Studies</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION</td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> HISTORIC CONTEXT</td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Prehistory of Santa Clara County</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Spanish, Mexican, and Pioneer Period (1777-1868)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Initial Development (1868-1904)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Early and Mid-Twentieth Century Development (1904-1941)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 World War II and Post-War Development (1941-1975)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Modern Gilroy (1975-Present)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> SURVEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td><strong>94</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td><strong>95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES

In progress

FIGURES

Figure 1. Rancho Las Animas (left) and the three partitions of Rancho San Ysidro (right), circa 1859. .......23
Divisions between the two Ranchos was Llagas Creek. John Gilroy’s portion of San Ysidro is the middle
portion of three (yellow border). Quintin Ortega’s portion is the bottom (south)-most of the three
(light blue border. (Land Case Map F-316, Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley).....23
Figure 2. Inset from map south of Santa Clara County area, depicting “Gilroy” (left center) and “old Gilroy”
(center) locations, by Thompson & West, 1876 (David Rumsey Map Collection)..........................28
Figure 3. David Holloway’s Hotel, circa 1855 (Clyde Arbuckle Photograph Collection, San José Public
Library, California Room).................................................................................................................30
Figure 4. El Camino Real route created by Mabel Emerton Prentiss, 1903 (UCLA Library Special
Collections) ..........................................................................................................................................32
Figure 5. City of Gilroy town map, by Thompson & West, 1876 (David Rumsey Map Collection)........35
Figure 6. Gilroy’s Chinatown, 1896 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)....................37
Figure 7. Looking west on 5th Street, Music Hall on left, early 1900s (Photograph Collection, Gilroy
Historical Museum)..........................................................................................................................38
Figure 8. Birds eye view of Gilroy by F.W. Blake. 1885 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley)40
Figure 9. 1886 (left) and 1892 (right) Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of residential neighborhood just west of
Monterey Road. (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley)........................................42
Figure 10. Stationer’s storefront on Monterey Road, 1880 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical
Museum).............................................................................................................................................44
Figure 11. Looking north on Monterey Road, with utility poles, 1895 (Shortridge 1895).........................47
Figure 12. Gilroy Public School, 1893 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)................48
Figure 13. Gilroy churches, 1895 (Shortridge 1895).........................................................................49
Figure 14. First I.O.O.F. Hall, no date (Gilroy Historical Museum)....................................................50
Figure 15. Southern Pacific Depot building, circa 1900 (California History Section Picture Catalog,
California State Library)....................................................................................................................51
Figure 16. Dairying scene at George Rea’s farm, 1895 (Shortridge 1895)...........................................53
Figure 17. Prune drying at B.F. Thomas farm. Circa 1900 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical
Museum)............................................................................................................................................54
Figure 18. Gilroy Chinatown, looking south on Monterey Road towards 9th Street (Bancroft Library,
University of California Berkeley).....................................................................................................56
Figure 19. Postcard showing Residential Development along Eigleberry Street, c.1910s (California Historical
Society)..............................................................................................................................................58
Figure 20. Hotel Milias in 1922, (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)..........................60
Figure 21. The Strand Theatre as it appeared in 1931. The Masonic Temple designed by W.H.Weeks
pictured at the left. (Gilroy Historical Museum)................................................................................61
Figure 22. The Newly Completed City Hall Building in 1907 Prior to the Installation of the Clock Faces in the Tower (California Room, San José Public Library) ................................................................. 64
Figure 23. The Gilroy Free Library, c.1920s. (Pomona Public Library Online Archives) ........................................... 66
Figure 24. Postcard depicting Gilroy High School. Date Unknown. (California Room, San José Public Library) .......................................................................................................................... 66
Figure 25. Wyckoff & White’s 1927 rendering of the 7th and 8th Grade Elementary School. (History San José) 67
Figure 26. Wheeler Hospital Detail as it appeared in 2011, (NoeHill) ................................................................. 70
Figure 27. Excitement at the Gymkhana. Unknown Date. (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) .......................................................................................................................... 71
Figure 28. Photo Looking Down Monterey Road in 1911 Before it was paved. (California State Library) ....... 72
Figure 29. Photo Looking Down Monterey Road c.1920s after Paving. (California State Library) ................. 73
Figure 30. The New SPRR Gilroy Station, circa 1920. (Gilroy Historical Museum) ........................................ 74
Figure 31. Bettancourts Market, c.1940s-1950s. (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) ...... 78
Figure 32. New IOOF Building in 1954. (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) .................. 79
Figure 33. Kiyoshi Hirisaki and his family outside their family home in Gilroy in 1945. .............................. 81
The Hirisaki’s were the first family from Gilroy to be sent to an Internment Camp during WWII, and also the first to return to the area after the war ended. The Japanese-style building was originally part of an exhibition at the 1939 World’s Fair in San Francisco and was bought and relocated to Gilroy by Kiyoshi. (War Relocation Authority Photograph Collection, University of California Berkeley) ....... 81
Figure 34. The Gentry Plant in 1962. (Gilroy Dispatch) ................................................................. 85
Figure 35. Men Shaping Sheet Metal, BeGe Manufacturing, c.1940s, (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) ........................................................................................................ 86
Figure 36. BeGe Manufacturing, c.1940s, (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) ............... 87
Figure 37. Recently completed outlet mall, 1990 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) .... 91
Figure 38. Employees process garlic for Christopher Ranch Farms, c. 1980 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum) ........................................................................................................ 93

TABLES

Table 1. California Central Coast Prehistoric Chronology ........................................................................... 14
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Description

The City of Gilroy Historic Context Statement and Historic Resources Inventory update project was undertaken by the City of Gilroy Community Development Department to enhance and streamline the City’s historic preservation program by bringing consistency to preservation planning efforts. Historic Context Statements provide the foundation for identifying and evaluating historical resources and establish a framework for grouping information about resources that share common themes and patterns of historical development. This document presents the history of the City of Gilroy’s built environment from pre-history to present, identifies important themes, events, patterns of development, and describes the different property types associated with these important periods and themes. This document also develops registration requirements specific to the City of Gilroy, in consideration of both historical significance and integrity requirements.

Project Team

The Dudek project team responsible for this project include Principal Architectural Historian and Project Manager Samantha Murray, MA; Senior Architectural Historian Sarah Corder, MFA; Architectural Historians Kate Kaiser, MSHP, Fallin Steffen MPS, and Nicole Frank, MSHP; and Senior Historic Preservation Specialist Kara Dotter, MSHP. The Historic Context Statement and all associated archival research efforts was co-authored/completed by Ms. Kaiser and Ms. Steffen; and the citywide reconnaissance-level survey effort was organized and led by Ms. Corder with assistance from Ms. Steffen. The entire Dudek team meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards in Architectural History, History, and/or Historic Preservation. Additional support for the pedestrian survey was provided by Dudek cultural resources technicians Ibeth Adame, B.A. and Jennifer De Alba, B.A; and Dudek Archaeologist Sarah Brewer, B.A. contributed to the prehistory and ethnographic sections of the Historic Context Statement.

All project work was coordinated with City of Gilroy Senior Planner, Pamela Wu, AICP of the Community Development Department. Dudek also worked closely with Connie Rogers, President of the Gilroy Historical Society, and Tom Howard of the Gilroy Historical Museum. The Historic Context Statement was also reviewed by the City’s Historic Heritage Committee.

1.2 Study Area

The study area for the Gilroy Historic Context Statement and Historic Resources Inventory update project includes the entire City of Gilroy (Figure X). The City of Gilroy is located in Santa Clara County, approximately 16 miles south of San Jose and north of San Benito County. The eastern half of the City contains the vast majority of all historic built environment resources over 45 years old, with the western half...
of the City comprising mostly post-1960s and more recent residential and commercial developments. All properties over 45 years of age (built in 1974 or earlier) within city limits were surveyed as part of the project.

1.3 Survey and Research Methods

Survey

Dudek collected publically available parcel data from the Santa Clara County Assessor, which served as a baseline for identifying properties over 45 years old within city limits. This data was used to create an ArcGIS web map viewer with color-coded parcels based on built date. Surveyors then used this viewer to identify properties over 45 years old in the field, and to understand areas within the city where historic age buildings are clustered. Because Assessor data is never entirely accurate, some properties were verified on historic aerial photographs to ascertain a date range and/or checked in the field.

The field survey was led by Senior Architectural Historian Sarah Corder, MFA and included 4-6 individuals working in teams of two throughout the City over a period of approximately five weeks. All pedestrian survey was conducted from the public right-of-way. Properties were recorded using iPad field forms designed to replicate the information required on State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Series 523A (Primary Record), 523J (Location Map), and 523B (Building, Structure, and Object Record) forms. The iPad field forms capture all required locational and descriptive information about each property, utilizing drop down menus, check boxes, as well as custom text fields for inputting additional details. The iPad forms also captured photographs of each property from multiple angles.

Historic Context Statement

The Gilroy Historic Context Statement is arranged by chronological sections that relate to the major development periods of Gilroy’s history from pre-history to the present. The organization of the document is based on the preferred format laid out by the National Park Service (NPS) guidelines of National Register Bulletin No. 15 How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation; National Register Bulletin No. 16A How to Complete the National Register Registration Form; National Register Bulletin No. 16B How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form; and National Register Bulletin No. 24 Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning. Additional California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) resources and guidelines were also consulted, including the OHP Preferred Format for Historic Context Statements, Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, and Writing Historic Contexts.

Research for the Gilroy Historic Context Statement was gathered from both primary and secondary sources held at a variety of local, regional, state, national and online repositories. Archival materials were predominately assembled from the Gilroy Historical Society and Museum collections, the San Jose Public
Library (California Room), the California Historical Society, and the Bancroft Library (University of California, Berkeley).

Primary sources consulted for the purposes of this project included historical maps, historic aerial photographs, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, measured architectural drawings, historical traveler’s guides, census data, contemporary historical accounts, and historical photographs. Secondary sources include books, newspapers articles, the 1986 Historic Resource Inventory forms, historical reports, surrounding area historic contexts, and online repositories. Historical accounts, information, and photographs provided by the public on the City of Gilroy’s Your Voice portal and during the course of Public Meetings were also incorporated into the Context Statement.

During the course of research, the context development team chose to divide the history of Gilroy into six chronological periods. Each of these epochs were then addressed and further divided into sections relating to the five thematic development areas identified during the course of research for this project.

The Historic Context Statement includes many historical images of and pertaining to the history of Gilroy that were gathered from both primary and secondary sources during the course of research. The source of these images is cited in the caption located below each image. The use of these images within this Historic Context Statement is intended to be consistent with the U.S. Copyright Office Fair Use Policy which permits the use of copyrighted materials in the case of “criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research.”\(^1\) (Copyright Law of The United States (Title 17) / Chapter 1, 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair Use).

**Historic Resources Inventory Update**

*Section in progress.*

### 1.4 How to Use this Document

The Historic Context Statement divides the prehistory and history of the City of Gilroy into chronologically ordered periods of development, which are further divided into overarching themes. The City of Gilroy Historic Context Statement is divided into six (6) chronological periods:

- Prehistoric Period (prehistoric-1777)
- Spanish, Mexican & Pioneer Period (1777-1868)
- Initial Development Period (1868-1904)
- Early Twentieth Century Period (1904-1941)
- World War II and Post-War Development Period (1941-1975)

---

\(^1\) United States Copyright Office. 2018. Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17) / Chapter 1, 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair Use.
Modern Development Period (1975-2018)

The discussion of each of these periods consists of a historical overview followed by a summary of the relevant themes, which influenced the development of the City. National Register Bulletin 15 defines a theme as a “means of organizing properties into coherent patterns based on elements such as environment, social/ethnic groups, transportation networks, technology, or political developments of an area during one or more periods of prehistory or history. A theme is considered to be significant if it can be demonstrated through scholarly research, to be important to American history.” Important themes have been distilled to residential development, commercial development, civic and institutional development, transportation, and agriculture industry and manufacturing.

Each chronology section begins with a general historical overview of Gilroy for a given time period. The overview will generally summarize events, persons, and overarching developments for each chronological period for the City of Gilroy. The overview is followed by an in-depth analysis of themes related to the chronological period.

Residential Development Theme

This section will discuss the important persons or architects in a given period’s residential development. It will include settlement patterns, population growth, additions to the City of Gilroy, architectural styles, and property types associated with or originating from a given period.

Commercial Development Theme

This section will discuss major businesses and important business owners in the City of Gilroy for a given chronological period. It will also briefly discuss outside influences that brought new commercial ventures to Gilroy or drove other commercial ventures to fail. This section will also discuss the architecture and development of the commercial core on Monterey Road.

Civic and Institutional Development Theme

This section will discuss the growth of Gilroy’s city government as well as influential people and town institutions such as schools, churches, clubs, and benevolent organizations. This section will categorize the establishment of such institutions and discuss their associated property types for a given period.

Transportation Infrastructure Theme

This section discusses major transportation themes for a given period. This includes the coming of the railroad and its influence on Gilroy, major transportation routes, toll roads, and highways that connect Gilroy to the greater Santa Clara County area, major cities, and the rest of the country.

Agriculture, Manufacturing and Industry Theme

This section discusses Gilroy’s industries, from its beginnings in dairy and livestock, to its agricultural prowess, to the establishment of major manufacturing businesses. This section also discusses local and immigrant workforces, agricultural and labor associations, and their influence on industries in Gilroy.
2 PREVIOUS SURVEYS AND STUDIES

2.1 Previously Completed Local Inventories

Bamburg, B. 1986. Historic Resource Inventory

The City of Gilroy commissioned a Historic Resource Inventory in 1986 from the Firm of Bonnie Bamburg in San Jose. The inventory intended to capture city, county and NRHP-designated resources located within the City’s 1945 boundaries with a survey and a State of California DPR forms for surveyed properties.

The survey documented approximately 400 residential and commercial buildings and then rated buildings from 1 to 5, with 1 being least significant and 5 being most significant, before making determinations based on National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria. Buildings with a 3, 4, or 5 rating were considered historically significant and prior to a major exterior change would be subject to recommendation and approval by the Gilroy Historic heritage Committee and the Planning Commission. Properties previously designated by the City Council in 1983 or those already listed in the NRHP are also noted by the inventory.

The inventory does not have an accompanying report document and consists of a spreadsheet of properties and their ratings, historic names, and property types as determined by the 1986 surveyors. Each property has a DPR Historic Resource Inventory form that documents location, physical appearance, construction date, architect/builder, and a short significance paragraph.

Dill Design Group. 2003. Santa Clara County Heritage Inventory Update: South County

Following the establishment of the Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission in 1972, Santa Clara County published an official inventory in 1975 called the Heritage Resource Inventory and updated this document in 1979. Prior to the 2003 update, the most recent Heritage Resource Inventory was published in 1999 and limited listing to properties located within unincorporated areas of the county.

The 2003 South County survey update consists of the re-survey of 57 properties listed in the Santa Clara County Heritage Resources Inventory, and intended to update and re-evaluate properties in the unincorporated areas of the county that were previously identified and listed in the Inventory, but that lacked technical supporting documentation. While the historic context statement associated within this report discusses Gilroy, no resources were identified within the city.


This 2004 (rev. 2012) historic context statement for Santa Clara County served as accompaniment to previous surveys as a means by which to evaluate buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts in unincorporated county lands or county-owned parks for significance within their historic context. The
context statement does provide critical information for regions of the City of Gilroy that were historically unincorporated Santa Clara County, but later annexed or incorporated into the City of Gilroy.

2.2 Other Previous Studies

Some Resources in City of Gilroy were individually documented through Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), National Register nominations, cultural resource investigations, technical studies, and individually prepared DPR forms. Such documents were created by different consultants and were conducted within the City of Gilroy between 1973 and 2018. These documents can be found at the City of Gilroy website, the Library of Congress, or at the State of California Office of Historic Preservation's Northwest Information Center (NWIC).
3 GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

Section in progress
4 HISTORIC CONTEXT

4.1 Prehistory of Santa Clara County

The prehistory of indigenous groups living within Santa Clara County follows general patterns identified within the archaeological record of the greater Central Coast area of California. These patterns represent adaptive shifts in settlement, subsistence strategies and technological innovation demonstrated by prehistoric people throughout the Holocene period and earlier. The California Central Coast Chronology presents an overview of prehistoric life ranging upwards of 10,000 years. Six temporal periods describe changes in prehistoric settlement patterns, subsistence practices, and technological advances. (Table 1).

Table 1. California Central Coast Prehistoric Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Period</th>
<th>Date (BC-AD)</th>
<th>Date (BP)</th>
<th>Artifact Assemblage</th>
<th>Example Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paleolithic (highly mobile)</td>
<td>pre-8000 BC</td>
<td>10,000 BP</td>
<td>Isolated fluted points, sparse lithic scatters</td>
<td>Possibly SCL-178 and SCR-177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millingstone/ Early Archaic (highly mobile)</td>
<td>8000 - 3500 BC</td>
<td>5,500 – 10,000 BP</td>
<td>Millingstones, handstones, core-cobble tools, lanceolate or large side-notched projectile points, eccentric crescents, Oliveella beads: thick rectangular (L-series)</td>
<td>SCL-65, SCL-178, SCL-237, SCR-7, SCR-60/130, SMA-134, MNT-229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early (sites in more varied contexts)</td>
<td>3500 - 600 BC</td>
<td>2,600 – 5500 BP</td>
<td>Mortar and pestle introduced, formalized flaked stone tools (Rossi Square-stemmed and Ano Nuevo long-stem points), Oliveella beads: Spire-lopped (A), End-ground (B2b and B2c), Cap (B4), and Rectangular (L-series)</td>
<td>SCL-33, SCL-178, SCL-163, SCR-7, SCR-38/123, MNT-108, MNT-238, MNT-391, MNT-1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle (more long-term residences)</td>
<td>600 BC to AD 1000</td>
<td>950 – 2,600 BP</td>
<td>Mortars and pestles (but still some millingstone/handstones), contracting-stemmed projectile points, greater variety of Oliveella shell beads, Haliotis ornaments, circular shell fishhooks, bone tools, grooved stone net sinkers</td>
<td>SCL-178, SCL-163, SCL-613, SCR-9, SMA-77, SMA-218, MNT-101, MNT-229, MNT-234, MNT-282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Late Transition (social reorganization due to Medieval Climatic Anomaly)</td>
<td>AD 1000-1250</td>
<td>700 – 950 BP</td>
<td>Mortars and pestles (but still some millingstone/handstones), bow/arrow technology introduced, Oliveella shell bead types: B2, B3, G1, G2, G6, and K1, notched net sinkers, hopper mortars, and circular shell fishhooks</td>
<td>SCL-690, MNT-1233, MNT-281, MNT-1754, MNT-745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. California Central Coast Prehistoric Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Period</th>
<th>Date (BC-AD)</th>
<th>Date (BP)</th>
<th>Artifact Assemblage</th>
<th>Example Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late (more permanent residential sites with additional seasonal sites)</td>
<td>AD to 1250-1769</td>
<td>181 – 700 BP</td>
<td>Mortars and pestles (but still some millingstone/handstones), Cottonwood (or Canaliño) and Desert Side-notched arrow points, flaked stone drills, steatite and clamshell disc beads. <em>Haliotis</em> disc beads, <em>Olivella</em> bead types: E1, E2, B2, B3, G1, G6, K1 types</td>
<td>SCL-119/SBN-24/H, SCL-272, SCL-828, SCL-341, SCR-177, MNT-879, MNT-1765, MNT-1485/H MNT-1486/H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jones et al. 2007.

Paleo-Indian (10,000 BP or older)

The Paleo-Indian era represents people’s initial occupation of the region. These were highly mobile hunters who focused subsistence efforts on large mammals. Multiple migrations into the region may have occurred both terrestrially and by sea.\(^4\) Although no coastal Paleo-Indian sites in the Central California Coast region have been discovered, they may have been inundated as a result of rising ocean levels throughout the Holocene.\(^5\)

Evidence of this era was generally found through isolated artifacts or sparse lithic scatters.\(^6\) In the San Luis Obispo area, fluted points characterizing this era were documented near the town of Nipomo\(^7\) and Santa Margarita,\(^8\) but so far, no fluted points have been found in the Central Coast north of the Santa Barbara area. Possible evidence for Paleo-Indian occupation was reported in buried contexts in CA-SCL-178 in the Santa Clara Valley and at CA-SCR-177 in Scotts Valley\(^9\). The early radiocarbon dates from charcoal, however, pose questions of validity.\(^10\)

---


\(^6\) E. Bertrando. “Evidence and Models for Late Pleistocene Chronology and Settlement Along California’s Central Coast.” In *Emerging from the Ice Age: Early Holocene Occupations on the California Central Coast*, edited by Ethan Bertrando and V.A. Levulett, (San Luis Obispo County Archaeological Society Occasional Papers no. 17, 2004): 93-105


\(^10\) Jones et al. 2007.
Millingstone (5,500 – 10,000 BP)

Settlement in the Central Coast appears with more frequency in the Millingstone Period. Sites of this era have been discovered in Big Sur, Moss Landing, Watsonville and in the Coyote Creek area of Santa Clara. Similar to the Paleo-Indian era, people living during the Millingstone era were likely highly mobile. Assemblages are characterized by abundant millingstones and handstones, cores and core-cobble tools, thick rectangular (L-series) Olivella beads, and a low incidence of projectile points, which are generally lanceolate or large side-notched varieties. Eccentric crescents were also found in Millingstone components. Sites are often associated with shellfish remains and small mammal bone, which suggest a collecting-focused economy. Stable isotope studies on human bone, from a coastal Millingstone component at CA-SCR-60/130, indicate a diet composed of 70%–84% marine resources. Contrary to these findings, deer remains are abundant at other Millingstone sites, which suggests a flexible subsistence focus.

Early (2,600 – 5,500 BP)

The Early Period corresponds with the earliest era the “Hunting Culture” which continues through the Middle-Late Transition. The Early Period is marked by a greater emphasis on formalized flaked stone tools, such as projectile points and bifaces, and the initial use of mortar and pestle technology. Early Period sites are located in more varied environmental contexts than millingstone sites, suggesting more intensive use of the landscape than practiced previously.

Early Period artifact assemblages are characterized by Large Side-notched points, Rossi Square-stemmed points, Spire-topped (A), End-ground (B2b and B2c), Cap (B4), and Rectangular (L-series) Olivella beads.

14 W. Hildebrandt and P. Mikkelsen Archaeological Test Excavations at Fourteen Sites along Highways 101 and 152, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, California. (Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc. Davis, California 1993)
15 Jones et al. 2007.
16 D.B. Rogers. Prehistoric Man of the Santa Barbara Coast. (Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, 1929).
18 D.B. Rogers. Prehistoric Man of the Santa Barbara Coast. (Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, 1929).
Other artifacts include less temporally diagnostic Contracting-stemmed and Año Nuevo long-stemmed points, and bone gorges. Ground stone artifacts are less common relative to flaked stone tools when compared with Millingstone-era sites.

Early Period sites are common and often found in estuary settings along the coast or along river terraces inland. Coastal sites dating to this period include CA-MNT-108,20 CA-SCR-7,21 and CA-SCR-38/123.22 Inland sites include CA-SCL-33, CA-SCL-178 and CA-SCL-163.23

Archaeologists have long debated whether the shift in site locations and artifact assemblages during this time represent either population intrusion as a result of mid-Holocene warming trends, or an in-situ adaptive shift.24 The initial use of mortars and pestles during this time appears to reflect a more labor-intensive economy associated with the adoption of acorn processing.25

**Middle (950 – 2,600 BP)**

The trend toward greater labor investment is apparent in the Middle Period. During this time, there is increased use of plant resources, more long-term occupation at habitation sites, and a greater variety of smaller “use-specific” localities. Artifacts common to this era include contracting-stemmed projectile points, a greater variety of Olivella shell beads and Haliotis ornaments that include discs and rings.26 Bone tools and ornaments are also common, especially in the richer coastal contexts,27 and circular shell fishhooks are present for the first time. Grooved stone net sinkers are also found in coastal sites. Mortars and pestles become more common than millingstones and handstones at some sites.28 Important Middle Period sites

---

21 D. Jones and W.R. Hildebrandt. *Archaeological Investigation at Sand Hill Bluff: Portions of Prehistoric Site CA-SCR-7, Santa Cruz County, California.* (Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., Davis, 1990)
22 S. Brync. *Archaeological Monitoring of the Wilder Ranch Bike Path Construction and Mitigation Related to Archaeological Site CA-SCR-38/123.* (Garcia and Associates, San Anselmo, 2002); D. Jones and W.R. Hildebrandt. *Archaeological Investigations at Sites CA-SCR-10, CA-SCR-17, CA-SCR-304, and CA-SCR-38/123 for the North Coast Treated Water Main Project, Santa Cruz County, California.* (Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., 1994)
23 Hildebrandt and Mikkelsen 1993
26 Jones 2003.
28 Jones et al. 2007.
include CA-MNT-282 at Willow Creek, CA-SCR-9 in the Santa Cruz Mountains, CA-SMA 218 at Año Nuevo, CA-SCL-613 at San Francisquito Creek, and a continued presence at SCL-178, SCL-163.

The Middle Period is a continuation of the “Hunting Culture” because of the greater emphasis on labor-intensive technologies that include projectile and plant processing. Additionally, faunal evidence highlights a shift toward prey species that are more labor intensive to capture, either by search and processing time or technological needs. These labor-intensive species include small schooling fishes, sea otters, rabbits, and plants such as acorn. Early and Middle Period sites are difficult to distinguish without shell beads due to the similarity of artifact assemblages.

Middle-Late Transition (700 – 950 BP)

The Middle-Late Transition corresponds with the end of the “Hunting Culture”. It also corresponds with social reorganization across the region due to a period of rapid climatic change known as the Medieval Climatic Anomaly. The Medieval Climatic Anomaly is characterized by drastic fluctuations between cool-wet and warm-dry climatic conditions. Archaeological sites are rarer during this period, which may reflect a decline in regional population. Artifacts associated with the Middle-Late Transition include contracting-stemmed, double side-notched, and small leaf-shaped projectile points. The latter are thought to represent the introduction of bow and arrow technology to the region. A variety of Olivella shell bead types are found in these deposits and include B2, B3, G1, G2, G6, and K1 varieties, notched line sinkers, hopper mortars, and circular shell fishhooks. Sites that correspond with this time are CA-MNT-1233 and CA-MNT-281 at Willow Creek, CA-MNT-1754, and CA-MNT-745 in Priest Valley (Hildebrandt 2006) and CA-SCL-690 in San José.

29 Jones 2003; Z.S. Pohorecky. Archaeology of the South Coast Ranges of California. University of Archaeological Research Facility 34, (Berkeley 1976)
30 M.G. Hylkema. Prehistoric Native American Adaptations along the Central California Coast of San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties. Master's thesis, Department of Anthropology, San Jose State University. (University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, 1991).
31 Ibid.
33 Jones et al. 2007; Rogers 1929
35 Rogers 1929.
40 Pohorecky 1976
Late (181 – 700 BP)

Late Period sites are found in a variety of environmental conditions and include newly occupied task sites and encampments, as well as previously occupied localities. Artifacts associated with this era include Cottonwood (or Canaliño) and Desert Side-notched arrow points, flaked stone drills, steatite and clamshell disc beads, *Haliotis* disc beads, *Olivella* bead types E1 and E2, and earlier used B2, B3, G1, G6, and K1 types. Millingstones, handstones, mortars, pestles, and circular shell fishhooks also continue to be used. Sites dating to this era are found in coastal and interior contexts. Coastal sites dating to the Late Period tend to be resource acquisition or processing sites, while evidence for residential occupation is more common inland.

Late Period sites include CA-MNT-143 at Asilomar State Beach, CA-MNT-1765 at Moro Cojo Slough, CA-MNT-1485/H and 1486/H at Rancho San Carlos, and CA-SCR-177 at Davenport Landing. Late sites in Santa Clara County include CA-SCL-119/SBN-24/H, CA-SCL-272, CA-SCL-341 and CA-SCL-828.

Ethnohistoric

The City of Gilroy lies within the territory occupied by people called “Costanoan” by the Europeans at the time of contact. Many modern descendants prefer to be called “Ohlone,” and are referred to as such hereafter. The Ohlone spoke eight separate Penutian dialects and lived between the vicinities of what is now Richmond in the north to Big Sur in the south. They were organized under approximately fifty autonomous polities or tribelets. At the time of European contact, two separate Ohlone dialects were reportedly spoken within Santa Clara County. Speakers of the Tamyen Ohlone dialect lived in the northern portion of the county in the vicinity of modern-day San José. People who spoke the Mutsun Ohlone dialect lived in the Pajaro Valley watershed, which included the vicinity of Gilroy and San Juan Bautista inland and the Watsonville and Moss Landing areas closer to the coast. Roughly 1,200 Tamyen speakers and 2,700 Mutsun speakers were documented at the advent of the Mission system in 1770. Ethnographic accounts of Ohlone
at the time of contact described them as living in permanent villages, but also spending time in smaller camps to collect or process seasonal resources such as acorn or shellfish.\textsuperscript{52}
4.2 Spanish, Mexican, and Pioneer Period (1777-1868)

**Spanish Period (1777-1822)**

The European presence in the Santa Clara County region began with the English explorer and privateer Sir Francis Drake, who landed on July 17, 1579, in the San Francisco Bay Area and claimed the region for England. After Drake's departure, it took nearly two centuries before any European power settled the region. Spanish explorers operating out of Spanish-controlled Mexico first arrived in the Santa Clara County area in the 1770s. In an effort to prevent the establishment of English and Russian colonies in northern Alta California, Don Gaspar de Portolá, the Governor of Baja, sought to establish military and religious control over the area in 1769, leading to the establishment of Presidio of San Diego. Padre-Presidente Franciscan Fr. Junípero Serra founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first of the 21 missions that established in Alta California. From San Diego, Portola and Serra embarked on an overland exploratory mission that led to the establishment of three missions at the northern extent of Spanish-held Alta California: San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo Mission (1770), and San Francisco de Asis, Mission Dolores (1776), and Santa Clara de Asís Mission (1777).

Spanish Governor Don Felipe de Neve encouraged the establishment of San José de Guadalupe, two and a half miles from the Santa Clara Mission, to increase the Spanish presence in the region. In 1782, Lieutenant Moraga was directed to partition mission lands to nine Spanish settlers, close to San José. While settlement around San José grew to the north, the mission at Monterey was also parceling out lands to settlers, mostly to former soldiers of various Presidios, Missions, or Pueblos in lieu of pay. In 1803, Viceroy Félix Berenguer de Marquina of Spain awarded the 26,520-acre Rancho Las Ánimas to José Mariano Castro, a former soldier stationed at the Monterey garrison. A few short years later in 1809, the former mayordomo at Mission San Gabriel and another ex-soldier, Ygnacio Ortega was awarded the 13,066-acre Rancho San


54 Sawyer 1922: 35-36
Ysidro by Governor José Joaquín de Arrillaga (Figure 1). Both men primarily raised cattle on their lands. Non-Spanish settlers in the region were rare. Often credited with being the first white settler in the region, in 1814, John Cameron emigrated from Scotland to Monterey, before being baptized Juan Bautista Gilroy at the Carmelo Mission. Gilroy moved northeast and married Maria Clara Ortega, daughter of Ygnacio Ortega in 1822. Another was Philip Doak, who disembarked at Monterey in 1822, and lived on the Rancho Las Animas lands of José Mariano Castro as a block-and-tackle maker, and Matthew Fellom, who traveled from Russian territory in the north to Santa Clara Valley in 1823.\(^{55}\)

\(^{55}\) Sawyer 1922: 42, 292; J.P. Munro-Fraser. History of Santa Clara County, California. (San Francisco CA: Alley, Bowen & Co, 1881), 78.
Figure 1. Rancho Las Animas (left) and the three partitions of Rancho San Ysidro (right), circa 1859. Divisions between the two Ranchos was Llagas Creek. John Gilroy’s portion of San Ysidro is the middle portion of three (yellow border). Quintin Ortega’s portion is the bottom (south)-most of the three (light blue border). (Land Case Map F-316, Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley)
Mexican Period (1822–1848)

After more than a decade of intermittent rebellion and warfare, New Spain (Mexico and the California territory) won independence from Spain in 1821. The new Mexican government began the process of secularizing the area’s mission and within a few years, all the Alta California missions and towns recognized Mexican rule. In 1822, the Mexican legislative body in California ended isolationist policies designed to protect the Spanish monopoly on trade, and decreed California ports open to foreign merchants, which increased foreign settlers in California. Both Castro and Ortega successfully applied to the Mexican government to reconfirm their grants, enabling them to keep their lands, and pass it to their heirs.\(^{56}\)

Castro died in 1828, and his widow Josefa Romero de Castro received half of Rancho Las Animas lands, and his eight children received an equal portion of the remaining lands (1/16th of total lands). Though Castro passed in 1828, it took until 1835 for the Mexican Governor José Figueroa to confirm the grant to his heirs. In 1847, three of Castro’s children heirs sold their lands to José María Sanchez, followed by their mother, Josefa Romera De Castro who sold her half interest, and one other child, who sold their 1/16th interest in the rancho to José María Sanchez as well. Sanchez was also the owner of Rancho Llano de Tesquisquita and Rancho Lomerias Muertas, south of present-day Gilroy. The remaining four heir’s shares, which amounted to one quarter of the original rancho, sold their shares in the remaining years. In 1850, Vicente Castro sold his 1/16th to Alexander Godey, who sold it later the same year to Thomas Rea. In 1858, Josefa Castro sold her 1/16th to Martin Murphy, and it passed to his daughter Johanna Murphy Fitzgerald in 1860. In 1863, Encarnacion and Maria Lugarda Castro sold their combined 1/8th interest in the rancho to Henry Miller. Eventually, José María Sanchez’s wife and heirs would also sell their portions of Rancho Las Animas to Henry Miller as well.\(^{57}\)

Ortega died in 1833, the same year that John (Juan Battista) Gilroy, his son-in-law became a naturalized Mexican citizen. Ortega’s Rancho San Ysidro was divided between Ortega’s adult children and their spouses. His daughter Isabel Ortega and husband Julian Cantua received the northern-most 4,167 acres and renamed Rancho La Polka. Maria Clara Ortega and husband John Gilroy received the middle 4,167 acres. Quintin Ortega received the largest and southern-most section, 4,439 acres. All three sections were confirmed by survey and received US land patents in 1860. The line dividing Gilroy’s section from Quintin Ortega’s section was the old road from Gilroy to Pacheco Pass, according to the survey, though their houses were reportedly close to one another, just across the road. John Gilroy eventually began his soap making and millinery business out of his portion of the rancho, and his brother-in-law Quintin maintained livestock on the lands.\(^{58}\)

Julius Martin also arrived in the 1840s, prior to the Gold Rush and the Mexican-American War. Martin, his wife and three daughters emigrated to Gilroy from Missouri. In 1844, Martin constructed a small horse-
powered flourmill in San Ysidro (Old Gilroy), at the intersection of the Pacheco Pass Road and El Camino Real. Another settler was Thomas O. Larkin, who established a soap factory with partner José María Sanchez at the eastern boundary of Rancho Las Animas, three miles from Martin’s mill and San Ysidro. Larkin marketed his soap in Monterey, but the trade was short-lived as Larkin and Sanchez’s partnership, and the soap business, ceased in 1848.  

Immediately prior to the gold discoveries at Sutter’s Mill and California statehood, few other European or American settlers moved to the region. Beginning in the 1840s, American settlers began to move west to Oregon via the Oregon Trail. While most took the Salt Lake City-Humboldt River route, some took the Santa Fe passage via Los Angeles, before turning north to Oregon Country. This is how Martin Murphy, eventual purchaser of Josefa Castro’s share of Rancho Las Animas, came to reside in Santa Clara County. Settlement of non-Mexican nationals in California was also aided by the disarray of the Mexican government beginning as early as 1836. In 1842, California Governor Alvarado and General Vallejo, who managed Alta California, declared California independent and waged war with Mexico and General Micheltrona, who finally retreated in 1845. The victory was short-lived. In 1845, Captain John C. Frémont led the survey of Oregon and California, on orders from the United States. Accused initially of stealing horses, Frémont’s expedition eventually retaliated and wrested control of the California away from the newly formed Republic. In spring 1846, instigated by Frémont, American settlers in California revolted and formed the Bear Flag Republic, which sparked the Mexican-American War. Though several battles in this war were fought in Santa Clara County, there was little direct relationship with the City of Gilroy. The Mexican-American War concluded in 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, just days before the announcement of the gold discovery at Sutter’s Mill.

Pioneer Period (1848-1868)

The Pioneer Period saw an influx of Americans after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo turned over the State of California to United States control. Many American settlers came for the promise of gold, while others came to profit from the Gold Rush itself, selling goods and service. San Ysidro became increasingly known as “Gilroy,” after John Gilroy, the proprietor of this portion of Rancho San Ysidro. When Gilroy was officially chartered in 1868, San Ysidro became known as “Old Gilroy.” Sometime prior to 1850, after increased flooding from Llagas Creek, El Camino Real was realigned from running through San Ysidro (Old Gilroy) to its present position along Monterey Road in present day Gilroy (New Gilroy).

Many of the well-known Gilroy pioneers and the first Anglo-Americans settlers in the region arrived in the 1850s. One of the first Anglo-American settlers was James Houck, who is credited with building the first house at Gilroy in 1850, as well as a small roadside inn and stable intended to service travelers moving between Monterey and San José on El Camino Real. Houck was followed by Lucien Everett, and the two

---

59 Munro-Fraser 1881: 276, 616-617; Sawyer 1922: 346.
60 Munro-Fraser 1881: 105-126, 274-275; Sawyer, 1922: 46-61.
61 Munro-Fraser 1881: 274
formed a partnership running the inn. Houck, otherwise illiterate, was also credited as the first postmaster, for collecting mail dropped along El Camino Real for early residents. The Post Office was established in 1851 for a town of “Gilroy,” and consisted of a box on the side of Houck’s house where mail could be picked up by the mail stage.  

After the inn was established, more Anglo-American settlers moved to the area. Julius Martin, after attaining his fortune in the 1848 Gold Rush, purchased 1,220 acres from John Gilroy in 1850, paying cash and settling just a half mile from Old Gilroy. Lawrence O’Toole, James and John Fitzgerald, and M.T. Holsclaw also moved to San Ysidro, opening various shops including Holsclaw’s blacksmith shop. Horace Wilson, a bricklayer, moved to San Ysidro in 1853 and is credited with some of the early brick construction in San Ysidro.  

West of Llagas Creek, a different settlement called “New Gilroy” started on Rancho Las Animas lands. After José Maria Sanchez’s death in 1852 and the distribution of his shares of Rancho Las Animas to his heirs, more American settlers arrived and purchased lands from Sanchez’s wife and children. John Eigleberry was the next major settler, building a house in New Gilroy in 1852 at the present location of 4th Street and Eigleberry Street. The same year, Lucian Everett expanded his holdings and established a store at the present corner of Lewis Street and Monterey Road to support road traffic and travelers’ needs. Within the next couple of years, David Holloway opened the first hotel in the winter of 1853-1854.

A number of settlers arrived over the course of the next decade, including prominent families for whom streets in Gilroy are named: Reither, Bell, Rea, Holloway, Wood, Zuek, Chappell, Patton, Anson, Thomas, Reynolds, Wentz, Watson, Wilson, Doan, Dunn, and Hanna, to name only a fraction of the new settlers. Construction efforts continued with a blacksmith shop (1853), and saddlery (1853), and a Methodist Church (1854). In addition to construction, cross-streets were established along El Camino Real (now Monterey Road), and houses of more settlers were built along them.

In 1852, Thomas Rea emigrated from Wisconsin via to San Francisco. Rea worked first in the California mines, then married and returned to California with his bride in 1853. In 1857, Rea and his wife moved to Gilroy and bought a portion of Rancho Las Animas just outside of the town to establish a dairy business. Rea built a house in the town of Gilroy and remained a present and active business owner and politician in the town. Thomas Rea’s brother, Samuel Rea, soon joined him in 1859 and they co-operated the dairy.

---

63 Munro-Fraser 1881: 277-278; Sawyer, 1922: 292.
64 Sawyer, 1922: 292.
65 Ibid.
Another known settler, whose lands would eventually be absorbed into present day Gilroy was “Cattle King” Henry Miller. In 1859, Henry Miller (Heinrich Alfred Kreiser) purchased 1,800 acres of Rancho Las Animas from the Sanchez heirs. The year before Miller had officially partnered with Charles Lux, and the partners began to purchase huge swaths of land in California from former Mexican landholders. At his Rancho Las Animas lands, Miller started Bloomfield Ranch, which was to be a feeder station for cattle herds on their way to San Francisco market.\(^{67}\)

In the 1860s, promoters did their best to present Gilroy as a town destined for importance, and local residents began trying to attract the railroad to come through the town. Freeman Rogers, a dentist, James C. Zuck, a lawyer, and W.L. Hoover another local speculator, partnered in 1867 to form Zuck, Rogers & Hoover to purchase and develop real estate. The firm purchased 30 acres from Lafayette F. Bell on the east side of Monterrey Street, which would later facilitate the Southern Pacific Railroad Line through the town. The firm also bought other small tracts and subdivided them into residential lots, shaping the early streets along Monterey. The firm’s efforts attracted the attention of the state, who sent Dr. Huber to officially survey the town site in 1868. Huber ultimately confirmed street locations and otherwise laid out the city.\(^ {68}\)

**Residential Development**

Settlement in the area of Gilroy began with two separate communities that grew out of Rancho San Ysidro and Rancho las Animas, respectively (Figure 2). They are described in brief, below.

---


\(^{68}\) Munro-Fraser, 1881: 281.
San Ysidro (Old Gilroy)

Old Gilroy was the settlement that grew out of the Rancho San Ysidro settlement of John Gilroy and his brother-in-law Quintin Ortega. Old Gilroy was located east of Llagas Creek, two miles southeast of the future location of City of Gilroy. The town was first known as San Ysidro after the original rancho name, but this shifted to “Gilroy” and then “Old Gilroy” as American settlers moved into the area.\(^{69}\) The first, permanent, American settler here was Julius Martin, who arrived in 1843 with his wife and children.\(^{70}\) More settlers did not arrive until after the gold rush had begun, which brought more travelers through on the main road, El Camino Real. Martin also won some success at the mines and in 1850, purchased 120 acres from John Gilroy on Rancho San Ysidro, just west of Llagas Creek. New waves of American settlers came to San Ysidro, but renamed it Gilroy after John Gilroy. Small residential homes were built along the main road, including some later residencies of brick, constructed by bricklayer Horace Wilson. Between 1854 and 1859. San Ysidro was renamed Gilroy and then “Old Gilroy” when New Gilroy was incorporated as a town in 1868. It remained a separate, unincorporated town throughout this period.\(^{71}\)

---

\(^{69}\) Munro-Fraser, 1881: 278-279.
\(^{70}\) Munro-Fraser, 1881: 276
New Gilroy

Settlement in New Gilroy began with the construction of Julius Martin’s wood frame home just west of Llagas Creek in 1850. Early settlers were mostly American and built homes in support of the inn and hotel businesses that served the travelers on El Camino Real. Homes were typically wood frame structures, and were established along El Camino Real (later Monterey Road) and just off the main road. Though side streets were established in this period, they were not formalized until Gilroy was incorporated as a town in 1868.72

Commercial Development

Prior to the formal founding of the town of Gilroy in 1868, there were few commercial businesses in New Gilroy and San Ysidro (Old Gilroy). As mentioned before, James Houck’s house and inn were the first business in the area, and were set up to serve the travelers along El Camino Real, established in 1850. Just two years later, other businesses that might be categorized as roadside services were established: Lucian Everett’s store (1852), David Holloway’s blacksmith shop (1853), and Eli Reynold’s saddlery (1853). In the winter of 1853-1854, Holloway also established a formal, 2-story hotel, with a saloon and eatery (Figure 3). As more settlers were attracted to the area, businesses shifted from mostly traveler-oriented services, to services to benefit the settlers at New Gilroy. As Gilroy grew, businesses along Monterey Road/El Camino Real began to include offices, saloons, groceries, furniture stores, and general merchandise stores.73

72 Munro-Fraser 1881: 279-281.
73 Munro-Fraser 1881: 280; Sawyer 1922: 292.
Civic and Institutional Development

According to most sources, the first Post Office in Gilroy (New Gilroy) was established in 1851, by the hanging of a mailbox at James Houck’s residence. Prior to the order by Congress in 1857, mail services were privately contracted and not guaranteed by law. The U.S. Postal Service began to guarantee mail service in California in 1858, contracting with John Butterfield of the Butterfield Overland Mail Company that operated from 1858-1961. Gilroy was along the Southern Route, also called the Butterfield Line, which advertised delivery from St. Louis to San Francisco in fifteen days. The Overland Mail Company’s contract was guaranteed by an authorization by Congress in 1857, specifically for this route, to better connect the disparate coasts of the country. In Gilroy, one of the mail stations was managed by David Holloway from his home, on the east side of Monterey Road between Lewis Street and Martin’s Lane. The other nearest mail stations along the route were at Pacheco Pass and north in San José. Gilroy was also the home station and junction point for other mail routes for the state including the Inland Route and the Coast Route.  

Transportation Infrastructure

El Camino Real (“the Royal Highway”), now Monterey Road, was a major transportation route, which linked Spanish Missions, presidio outposts, and pueblos in the eighteenth century (Figure 4). El Camino Real facilitated all travel between Spanish California capital Monterey to the south and the northern Spanish and later Mexican and American establishments: San José, Sonoma, the northern Missions, and Sutter’s

---

Fort. In 1822, the previously closed California was opened to trade by Mexico, and Monterey became a major port and banking center for the region. As a result, the Camino Real brought regular foot and horse traffic through San Ysidro in the Spanish period and was frequented by traders, travelers, and settlers after 1822. San Ysidro’s role in this capacity was one of the stops that were no more than a day’s ride apart between Monterey and San José. In the Pioneer Period, the Camino Real road became a stage road and stops along it were often noted by mile marker (e.g. the Morgan Hill stop was the “21-Mile House”). In the Mexican period San Ysidro, the Ortega rancho and John Gilroy’s home was a stop. In the early Pioneer Period, James Houck’s redwood house and inn was one of these stops. The business from El Camino Real arguably brought the first businesses to San Ysidro/Old Gilroy: blacksmiths, stables, hotels, stand stores. Consistent flooding a Llagas Creek, however, eventually prompted the realignment of El Camino Real further west to pass through New Gilroy.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Munro-Fraser 1881: 280, 272
Figure 4. El Camino Real route created by Mabel Emerton Prentiss, 1903 (UCLA Library Special Collections)
Pacheco Pass Road intersected El Camino Real and facilitated traffic traveling east from Santa Clara Valley to San Joaquin Valley, today called the Central Valley. It was originally surveyed by Lieutenant Gabriel Moraga in 1805. The road became a toll road in 1854, after Andrew W. Firebaugh built a toll road through the pass over the next four years. Firebaugh’s Pacheco Pass Turnpike Company organized in 1858, about the same time Butterfield overland mail routes were being confirmed. The intersection of Pacheco Pass Road and El Camino Real at Gilroy is often credited as the reason why Gilroy’s location was so successful.\textsuperscript{76}

\textbf{Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing}

In the Spanish and Mexican periods, agricultural practice in the Gilroy region was dominated by cattle and horse raising by the Spanish, and later Mexican. Local Native Americans were effectively labor for Missions, raising all of the livestock and plants needed to operate the Missions and any associated presidios on Mission lands. After Mexico gained California in 1822, the Mexican government began to secularize the Mission lands, dividing each mission’s agricultural lands among political favorites and military personnel as Ranchos. Ranchos operated independently with the ruling family controlling money and hiring a few skilled \textit{vaqueros} to manage the day-to-day management of cattle, however other than raising feed and subsistence farming. Cattle and stock raising would remain a major economic driver in the region until a drought in 1864.\textsuperscript{77}

As more Anglo-American settlers arrived in the areas in the late 1840s and 1850s, wheat, dairy, dried fruits, wine, brandy, and tobacco grew as popular agricultural products of the Gilroy area. Prominent dairymen include the Rea family, the Reeve Brothers, Sargent and Butterfield, Donnelly & Laughlin, Bryant, Ellis, Watson, Rowland Zuck, Dexter, Doan, Eschenburg, Maze A. Wilson, Davis & Cole, E.A. Davidson and Henry Miller’s Bloomfield Ranch. Early grain mills such as Julius Marti’s small grain mill at San Ysidro and J.M. Browne’s mill in Gilroy provided the first processing centers for grain in 1844 and 1852 respectively. In 1859, J.D. Culp moved to Gilroy and by 1862 erected a tobacco factory just two miles outside of Gilroy, when this factory burnt down, Culp built another in 1869 located in the City of Gilroy, at Fourth Street between Church and Rosanna Streets.\textsuperscript{78}


\textsuperscript{77} Munro-Fraser, 1881: 272.

4.3 Initial Development (1868-1904)

The town was officially surveyed by Dr. David Huber, at the request of real estate firm Zuck, Rogers & Hoover in 1868, and on February 18th, the Town of Gilroy was officially incorporated under California’s Act for the Incorporation of Towns (1856) law (Figure 5). Approximately one month later, the first officials of the town were elected: trustees, a treasurer, assessor, marshal and town clerk. The city limits after incorporation were recorded as:

```
Beginning at a point situated south twenty degrees east forty-six chains from the center of Monterey Street[sic] where the South side of Bodfish Street intersects the same, said point of beginning being in the center of Monterey Street[sic]; thence running westerly and at right angles to Monterey Street[sic] forty chains; thence northerly, and parallel to said Monterey Street, and in a straight line, one hundred and ten chains; thence easterly and at right angles to the last-mentioned line, eighty chains; thence southerly, and at right angles to the last-mentioned line, one hundred and ten chains; and westerly at right angles, to the place of beginning.
```

This also involved the re-designation of earlier street names from older names to numbered streets (e.g., renamed Sargent Street to 1st Street). A number of new streets were also opened, including sections of Eigleberry Street and Farman (6th) Street. Because of the new layout, a business district was focused along Monterey Road to take advantage of proximity to the railroad and stage traffic along the established road to Monterey and San José. Residential development took place west of downtown initially, along Eigleberry, Church, Rosanna, and Hanna Streets. The new town charter called for wide roads, tree plantings and wide sidewalks, shaded along Monterey Road.

---

80 In this initial document, and some historical documents the road is referred to as “Monterey Street.” In some other documents, the road is also referred to as Monterey Road and Monterey Avenue. For consistency, the author has chosen to call this road “Monterey Road” to avoid any confusion, and for consistency with the modern designation.
81 One chain is equal to 66 feet; 80 chains is equal to one mile; therefore Gilroy’s 1868 boundaries, as established, were one mile wide from west to east, and 1.375 miles long from north to south, bisected from north to south down its center by Monterey Street.
83 Munro-Fraser 1881: 283.
84 Ibid.
Figure 5. City of Gilroy town map, by Thompson & West, 1876 (David Rumsey Map Collection)

After the town’s official designation and delineation, the Santa Clara & Pajaro Railroad (SC&PRR) was extended from San José to Gilroy. The entire town and a brass band turned out for the arrival of the first passenger train to Gilroy, marking the beginning of sustained growth in Gilroy, and the ability to ship goods to and from San José and beyond. An official depot was opened in Gilroy as well, on land acquired by Zuck, Rogers & Hoover. In early 1870, the Southern Pacific Railroad Company (SPRR) purchased the SC&PRR.  

Nearby farmers either made their own landings along the new rail line, such as Henry Miller’s cattle loading stop three miles south of town, or brought their crops to Gilroy for loading and shipping.\textsuperscript{86}

With town lots for sale and the railroad coming through town, Gilroy’s downtown core was ready for growth. In 1868, Adam Riehl and Jacob Reither established the Gilroy Brewery.\textsuperscript{87} The brewery would change owners, but remain in operation until 1919, incidentally when Prohibition took hold.\textsuperscript{88} With the railroad and a depot came travelers, and as a result several hotels were established along Monterey Road between 1869 and 1872. These were located across from the railroad depot, and north along Monterey Road. Some of these hotels and boarding houses did not come with food, so eateries were also opened along Monterey Road.\textsuperscript{89} Church congregations that had previously met in houses or smaller buildings took the opportunity to build larger, official buildings, or relocate to more prominent lots in town.\textsuperscript{90} Like churches, both public and private schools emerged from people’s homes, and one-room school houses into more formal settings in the first years of the town.\textsuperscript{91}

Other notable beginnings were the establishment of the Gilroy Advocate newspaper in 1869, by G.M. Hanson and C.F. Macy. Another was the establishment of a cemetery north of town on 25 acres land donated by Henry Miller; 20 acres for a plotted cemetery and 5 acres for a potter’s field. Still another was the William Hanna planing mill on Church Street (1869) and the Gilroy Wagon and blacksmith shop (1869) opened on Monterey Road.\textsuperscript{92}

Between 6\textsuperscript{th} and 9\textsuperscript{th} Streets Chinese immigrants were concentrated in an informal Chinatown. Prior to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act stifling immigration, many Chinese immigrants in Gilroy were employed as seasonal agricultural workers, and others in year-round professions often associated with Chinese immigrants: gardeners, cooks, and launderers (Figure 6).\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{87} Both men would go on to serve as mayor of Gilroy. Adam Riehl in 1878-1880, and Jacob Reither for two terms from 1882-1886
\textsuperscript{88} Richard Barretta. N.D. fifty Years of Beer, the Gilroy Brewery. (Gilroy, CA: Gilroy Historical Society)
\textsuperscript{90} Elizabeth Barratt. “Religion Plays Prominent Role in Early Gilroy.” (Gilroy, CA: The Gilroy Evening Dispatch, 1969b), January 10, 1969, pg. 11A
\textsuperscript{92} Sawyer 1922: 117; Munro-Fraser 1881: 285, 302
In March 1870, a second act was passed by the state legislature incorporating Gilroy as “City of Gilroy”, endowing it with a mayor, tax collector, marshal, and city council. This was quickly followed by the incorporation of utilities such as the Pacific Pneumatic Gas Company’s subsidiary, the Gilroy Gas Company (1870), Gilroy Water Company (1871), the Fire Department (1872), and a new jail (1872). Despite the positive growth, the official recognition prompted Henry Miller, owner of the Bloomfield Ranch and prominent California cattle man and developer, to dispute land rights in Gilroy. The dispute over land rights was a hindrance to City growth. Individual partitions and boundaries within rancho Las Animas had not been officially filed with the state, making the boundaries set in land titles within the city difficult to enforce. In 1871, Henry Miller filed a complaint against the 1,032 claimants to the Las Animas Rancho, including the entire town of Gilroy (Henry Miller et. al. versus Massey Thomas et. al.). As a result of the complaint, County Surveyor Herrmann surveyed and “set off” each owner’s interest in the land tract, and new construction during this period was minimal until the issue of ownership was resolved.

While the survey carried on, Santa Clara County suffered a damaging flood in 1872, and the effects of the nationwide Depression were felt in 1874. The town of Gilroy suffered three fires in one season in 1874, despite the urging for new fire equipment by the city Fire Chief. As a result, the mid-1870s saw sporadic development along Monterey Road. The Gilroy Music Hall (later called the Opera House and the Armory)

---

95 Sawyer 1922: 292; Munro-Fraser 1881: 285-290.
opened in 1873 (Figure 7). In 1878, the Gilroy Brewery built a brick building, despite a saloon license tax meant to discourage drinking passed the previous year. By 1880, the population of Gilroy reached 1,621. In 1883, the City bought the previously privately-owned Gilroy Water Works and began distributing their own water. In 1886, a new utility, telegraph was introduced to Gilroy when Western Union received a permit to erect poles and lines around Gilroy. The same year, Miller’s land dispute was settled and the town began to build new buildings.

![Figure 7. Looking west on 5th Street, Music Hall on left, early 1900s (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)](image)

In the late 1880s, the downtown core was centered along Monterey Road between 4th Street and 7th Street, with residential buildings on large lots on the surrounding streets (Figure 8). Up until this decade, Gilroy and the entire South Santa Clara County area were dominated by agricultural industry. While cattle and dairying were the primary agricultural industries, J.D. Culp’s tobacco farm and processing plant was also a significant agricultural enterprise. However, in the 1870s an agricultural expansion began with the introduction of fruit orchards, and by the 1880s fruit processing plants were established in Gilroy. Two of these plants were the Gilroy Fruit Packing Company (1888) and the South Santa Clara Fruit Drying and Packing Company (circa 1890). The companies shipped stable fruits, but also began drying soft and stone fruits such as raisins, prunes, and apricots for sale to the eastern states.

Despite the expansion of the agriculturally based economic system in the 1880s, population growth still showed a marginal increase from 1,621 in 1880 to 1,694 in 1890. Another utility was added in 1890: the Gilroy Telephone Company, which erected poles and lines throughout the city. In the 1890s, the city turned

---

97 Munro-Fraser 1881: 290, 301; Foote, 1888: 203; San Jose Mercury Herald. “Ancient Gilroy Armory, Music Hall Goes Into Limbo After 70 Years of Service.” (San Jose, CA: The San Jose Mercury-Herald, 1940): November 17, 1940, pg. 16.
99 Foote 1888: 340
towards its younger citizens and the Daughters of Rebekah, a branch of the local Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) organization, opened a children’s home in 1897. The next year the City of Gilroy opened bidding for a public high school in a separate building.

After these initial growing pains, and settling of utilities, schools, businesses and industries, Gilroy was ready to begin a period of civic and economic expansion. The population reached 1820 in 1900 and the city began again to experience sustained growth. City Council adopted a resolution to fund a new City Hall building that included a jail and courtroom. Around the city, local farmers and fruit growers joined the California Cured Fruit Association. In 1902 another fruit packing plant was opened in Gilroy, on land leased from Henry Miller along the SPRR line.
Figure 8. Birds eye view of Gilroy by F.W. Blake. 1885 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley)
Residential Development

Residential growth in this time period was minimal. The overall population grew from 1,625 in 1870 to 1,820 in 1900.\(^{103}\) Minor additions were made to the city in the first decade after incorporation. These mostly comprised of large residential lots donated by landowners that preceded the founding of the town such as Lewis Addition and Zuck & Rogers Additions made on the east side of east side of the SPRR tracks, while the Eigleberry Addition and Zuck, Rogers & Hoover Additions were responsible for expanding the residential streets west of Monterey Road. Additions by Henry Miller (XXXX), Thomas P. Thomas (XXXX), and J.P. Sargent (XXXX) in the 1870s and 1880s also free up residential, as well as industrial, development allowing more room for the small town to grow.\(^{104}\)

According to the earliest Sanborn maps from 1886 and 1892, in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904), residential development in this period typically consisted of a wood-frame 1 and 2-story dwellings and associated outbuildings (outhouse, shed, stables) (Figure 9). In 1886, the western extent of town was at Hanna Street, the southern extent was 7\(^{th}\) Street, the northern extent was roughly 3\(^{rd}\) Street, but some sparse residences were located as far north as 1\(^{st}\) Street and the eastern boundary of settlement is Railroad Street.\(^{105}\) By the 1892 map, residential settlement had expanded north to Broadway Street, South to 9\(^{th}\) Street, and east to Chestnut Street.\(^{106}\)

---

\(^{103}\) Bay Area Census. “City of Gilroy, Santa Clara County.” Accessed December 6, 2018. [http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/cities/Gilroy50.htm#1940](http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/cities/Gilroy50.htm#1940);
Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission. “Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory.” (San Jose, CA: SCC Historical Heritage Commission, 1979), pg. 63-66


Figure 9. 1886 (left) and 1892 (right) Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of residential neighborhood just west of Monterey Road.
(Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley)
Commercial Development

Just before and after the official incorporation of Gilroy, the downtown core established along Monterey Road, concentrated between 5th and 7th Streets, with some businesses, hotels, churches, fraternal organization clubhouses, and municipal buildings off of the main road on the side streets.\textsuperscript{107} In the earliest Sanborn, six distinctive hotels,\textsuperscript{108} several saloons, the brewery, the Smith Bros. Flour Mill, and restaurants crowd Monterey Road between 6th and 7th Streets.\textsuperscript{109} Between 5th and 6th Street, businesses along Monterey Road consisted of banks, general merchandise, groceries, cobblers, clothiers (tailors, seamstresses, and millenaries), doctor’s offices, barbers, livery and feed stores, and at least five saloons (Figure 10). Between 4th and 5th Streets, the buildings transition from continuous blocks to individual buildings, but still contained groceries, saloons, a hotel, as well as some intermixed dwellings, the Masonic Hall, some wagon shops, paint and tin shops, and hardware stores. These buildings seemed to be mostly of wood frame construction, with occasional brick buildings according to the 1886 Sanborn.\textsuperscript{110} By the 1892 Sanborn map, Monterey Road gained a few more brick buildings, but was still dominated by wood frame buildings.\textsuperscript{111}

Off Monterey Road, a few large-scale businesses dominated the side streets. Between Church and Rosanna Streets at 6th Street was the Gilroy Lumber and Planing Mill, originally started by William Hanna in 1869, but subsequently owned by Whitehurst & Hodges in the 1880s. Along 6th Street, between Monterey and Church Streets, there were a few mills, a wheelwright, a blacksmith shop, and several carpenters, all occupying stone buildings.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{107} “Commercial Building Survey.” Held by the Gilroy Historical Museum, 1985.
\textsuperscript{108} According to the 1886 Sanborn map these include the Gilroy Hotel, Swiss Hotel, Southern Pacific Hotel, and Union Hotel, the William Tell Hotel and the Helvetia Hotel
\textsuperscript{110} Sanborn 1886.
\textsuperscript{111} Sanborn 1892
\textsuperscript{112} Sanborn 1886; Patricia Loomis. “Hanna’s a Name Always Important in Gilroy,” (San Jose, CA: The San Jose Mercury, 1977), December 7, 1977, pg. 30.
Hotels were of particular importance and abundance in Gilroy’s early years, and influenced where the city’s downtown commercial core would be located. With the arrival of the railroad in 1869, several hotels opened in between 1869 and 1870. The arrival of the SPRR line and depot brought recreational traffic through Gilroy beginning in 1869. The Williams Hotel and Exchange Stage Hotel were the first to be established in 1869, opening on Monterey Road in close proximity to the SPRR depot. The next to open was the Gilroy Hotel at a new location at 6th Street and Monterey Road (1870). The Idaho Hotel opened in late 1870 opposite the SPRR Depot, with a saloon and serving male travelers only. In 1871, the Railroad House opened on the neighboring lot. Two hotels stood out as the fine establishments of Gilroy: the Williams Hotel (1869) and the Hanna House (1870), later the American Hotel and eventually replaced by the Southern Pacific Hotel) which were both several stories, 40+ rooms apiece, and billed as particularly fine accommodations. Hotels typically did not offer meal services, except at the more upscale establishments,

---

and saloons and restaurants such as the Eagle Chop House (1869) and T.N. Killey’s Restaurant (1869) on Monterey Road opened as a result. Hotels also offered stage services to nearby towns and to the Gilroy Sulphur Hot Springs and Hotel (1864), a local resort nearly 15 miles from town limits.115

Other notable businesses established in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904) are the Gilroy newspapers. The *Gilroy Advocate*, a weekly newspaper, was founded in 1867, operating from the second story offices above Hall’s Clothing Store at 6th Street and Monterey Road as of 1868. Opening just a few years after the Civil War’s Conclusion, the newspaper openly declared themselves a Union Republican Party-affiliated paper. *Gilroy Advocate* was followed by the *California Weekly Leader* (1869) and the *Enterprise* (1871), a semi-weekly paper, in 1869. A short-lived paper, the *Gilroy Union* operated from 1869-1872. The *Enterprise* became the *Gilroy Telegram* in 1870, and then promptly closed after the 1872 political campaign, leaving only the conservative *Gilroy Advocate* paper. As Gilroy grew more liberal, *The Valley Record*, another weekly paper opened in 1881, but changed its name in 1885 after a sale to the *Gilroy Gazette*. The *Gilroy Advocate* remained the principal conservative paper in town, but the *Gilroy Gazette* became a more liberal-leaning paper as the nineteenth century drew to a close.116

**Civic and Institutional Development**

Gilroy established its government in 1868 after the official town incorporation. This afforded for a board of trustees, a treasurer, assessor, marshal and town clerk.117 The first “mayor” of Gilroy was William Gill Mills, who had been serving as president of the trustees prior to 1870.118 Elections were originally held annually, but after 1872, The City of Gilroy transitioned to biennial elections.119 Many important business owners and influential landowners would hold the role of mayor in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904). In the 1870 election, Mills turned over mayoral duties to J.M. Browne, who was succeeded by Volney Howard.120 William Furlong, a dairyman and landowner, succeeded Howard in 1874, then by William Hanna, owner of the lumber mill on Church Street, in 1876. In 1878 Adam Riehl, the owner of the Gilroy Brewery, was elected mayor, then John G. Otto in 1880, and J. Reither, another owner of the Gilroy Brewery in 1882.121 Reither served two terms, and was succeeded by Thomas Rea, a dairyman, in 1886. Rea was followed by Louis Loupe in 1888 who also served two terms. In 1892, L.A. Whitehurst, owner of the Whitehurst and Hodge Lumber Mill was elected mayor, followed by M. Casey in 1894. Neverland Rogers Chesbro, a prominent doctor, was elected Mayor in 1898, served three terms, and was succeeded by George Dunlap in 1904.122

---

115 Barratt 2003: 3; Coffin 1873: 30-31.
117 Sawyer 1922: 291
119 Harrison, 1888: 7
120 Arbuckle, 1970: 4; Cox, N.D.: 4.
122 Arbuckle, 1970: 4; Cox, N.D.: 10-11.
Other than the establishment of the Gilroy town government, established in 1868, and altered when incorporated as a city in 1870, Gilroy quickly established three utilities to serve residents: a Fire Department, a Water Company, and a Gas Company. These services began as private entities with some city council oversight, and in the initial period of development operated independently. The Gilroy Water Company (also known as Gilroy Water Works) was given the City’s contract of supplying water in August 1870. The company built a dam on Uvas Creek and transported water via flume to the city, then stored it in tanks, until it was supplied to customers via pipes. The Gilroy Gas Company was a branch established in 1871 by the Pacific Pneumatic Gas Company of San Francisco. Gas was stored at a warehouse on Railroad Street, and piped to customers. The Gilroy fire services ran on a volunteer basis for the first two years, 1869 to 1871. The first organized fire company in Gilroy was the Eureka Hook & Ladder Company, organized in 1871. It merged with the Neptune Hose Company in 1879 and operated from a building on Monterey and 5th street. The City of Gilroy eventually attempted to purchase its other privately owned utilities. In 1882, the City tried to buy the Gilroy Water Company after a too-high water bill. Voters approved the purchase in 1883. After the purchase, Gilroy was the second city in the state to own its own water utility. The City of Gilroy voters approved bonds in 1889 to improve the purchased water system and build cisterns within town limits.

In 1886, the Western Union Telegraph Company was granted permission to erect poles and string wires, connecting Gilroy to San José. Poles were initially limited to Monterey Road when first constructed, but eventually branched onto some side streets near the downtown core (Figure 11). In 1890, Western Union was followed by the Gilroy Telephone Company, which received permission to erect separate poles and were contracted as a franchise for 25 years. In 1891, F.W. Swanton of Santa Cruz had an electric light franchise approved by the Council, and received a 50-year franchise. Another utility, the Gilroy Gas Light Company also applied for a franchise with the city council in 1899. The Gilroy Gas Light Company was eventually purchased by the city in 1902, buying out the franchise, and again owning its utilities.
The earliest account of a school was an unchartered schoolhouse, east of town, opened in 1853. The location supposedly moved to Monterey Road, however, early Gilroy school records prior to 1867 were destroyed in a fire so this could not be confirmed. In 1868, the building that was being used for a school was determined to be too small, and an official, chartered public school was to be opened by the Gilroy Trustees (later the City Council). A new building was funded and opened in 1869, and enlarged in 1873. Both the grammar school and high school occupied this building until 1898 (Figure 12). In 1898, Gilroy’s first separate public high school building was built on Church Street between 3rd and 4th Streets. By 1875, the school began accepting non-local students for a tuition fee, and was again determined to be too small. The City Council and voters agreed to levy a tax to fund necessary additions to the school.128

128 Gilroy Dispatch, 1970; Eugene F. Rogers. Gilroy School History: A Short Sketch of the Past and Present of the Gilroy Schools 1853-1888. Publisher unknown, pamphlet held by California Historical Society; Sawyer 1922: 1138.
Gilroy also had several private schools in its earliest years. In 1867, Sarah Severance opened a girl’s seminary and boarding school, which operated until 1885. The Convent of the Immaculate Heart Catholic School located one mile north of the center of town, on New Avenue and Monterey Road, Convent school opened 1870. The Catholic School took local girls and boys as well as boarders, and taught gender-separated classes. A private high school was opened in 1872, and operated at the Methodist Episcopal Church—South until 1876 when it became a public school. By 1873, the town boasted four private schools, and primary schools were turning away students. In 1877, a new grammar school was organized and high school started, both housed in the Gilroy Public School building built in 1875.

**Churches**

Though several churches had already established congregations in the Gilroy area at the beginning of the Initial Development Period (1868-1904), the official establishment of the town of Gilroy marks a move to more permanent buildings for the various religious denominations in Gilroy (Figure 13). For example the first Protestant church met in W.R. Bane’s home, beginning in 1852. The Methodist Episcopal Church – South was organized in 1853, and met for its first years in people’s homes. Its first building, built in 1855, was eventually razed and its permanent church building was built in 1872. The Methodist Episcopal Church – North was organized 1857, and moved from meeting in private homes to its first official church building

---

129 Gilroy Dispatch, 1970.
130 Rogers 1888: 9.
131 Gilroy Dispatch, 1970.
in 1872. The Christian (Campbellite) Church of Gilroy was organized 1855, and met in a one-room church on 3rd Street built in 1857. The Christian Church moved into its present at 5th Street location in 1887. The Presbyterian Church was organized 1860, and its first building built 1869. The Catholic congregation first met at St. Martin's Church, erected in 1855, located in what is now the town of San Martin. However, the Catholic congregation living in Gilroy soon established its own church on Martin Murphy’s ranch lands, building St. Mary’s in 1865 and adding a convent and school in 1870.132

![Figure 13. Gilroy churches, 1895 (Shortridge 1895)](image)

**Fraternal and Benevolent Organizations**

Though Churches did provide portion of the social lives of Gilroy’s citizens, fraternal organizations, benevolent societies, and clubs provided opportunities for citizens of Gilroy to meet and engage in social activity as well as socially beneficial programs for the poor or disadvantaged, integration of immigrant groups, and strengthening social and political bonds. Fraternal lodges and social group clubhouses were also venues for entertainment, political groups, and speakers. Three fraternal organizations founded their Gilroy chapters in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904). The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), Gilroy Lodge 154, was founded in 1869. The first I.O.O.F. hall was established on Martin Street in 1869 (Figure 14). The women’s branch of I.O.O.F., called the Rebekahs, also played a prominent in

---

Gilroy’s history. In 1897, the Rebekahs successfully lobbied to have the Children’s Home of Northern California established at Gilroy. The orphanage opened with five children receiving services. The Free and Accepted Masons (Freemasons), chartered the Keith Lodge No. 187 in 1868. The Masonic Lodge was built in 1869 and another built at Monterey and Lewis Streets in 1902. The Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.) was chartered in 1878, and met at the Freemason Lodge. Finally, the Gilroy’s Ladies Benevolent Society (G.L.B.S.) was founded in 1867, and met at the Temperance Hall on Martin Street (1868).

![Figure 14. First I.O.O.F. Hall, no date (Gilroy Historical Museum)](image)

**Transportation Infrastructure**

Probably the most important change in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904) was the coming of the Santa Clara & Pajaro Railroad (SC&PVRR) completed to Gilroy in 1869. Prominent Gilroy developers Zuck, Rogers & Hoover had been campaigning for four years to convince the railroad to come through Gilroy.

---

133 Cox N.D. 10.
134 Munro-Fraser 1881: 300
Gilroy, all but assuring the city’s growth as a result. The first freight train arrived in March 1869, and the first passenger train followed a month later. The train would become the primary means for travelers to visit Gilroy, and for Gilroy-area farmers to ship their goods to San José and Monterey. In 1870, the Southern Pacific Railroad Company (SPRR) purchased the line, and built a one-story, wood-frame depot at their Gilroy station (Figure 15). They also extended the line south of Gilroy, intending to link Gilroy, San José and San Francisco on its California Southern line to Fort Mojave. In 1882, a turntable, water tower, and three-stall engine house were added to the Gilroy stop.

Figure 15. Southern Pacific Depot building, circa 1900 (California History Section Picture Catalog, California State Library)

Roads in and around Gilroy also generally improved. The former El Camino Real Road, now simply the San José-Monterey Road, enjoyed a short life as a toll road before being declared a free highway in 1874. The roads in the city itself were set to determined widths, set forth in the 1868 charter, which determined the official width of Monterey Road (86 feet wide), side streets (75 feet wide), crossroads (66 feet wide), and their sidewalks (14 feet on Monterey and 10 feet on remaining streets). The 1868 charter also opened the existing roads beyond their 1868 distances: e.g., Egleberry Street was extended from Farman to Martha Street. Ordinance No. 7 of the charter also renamed streets in Gilroy, “Ordinance No. 7, likewise passed on this date [March 7, 1868], made the following changes in the names of streets: Sargent, to be First street;


139 Foot 1888: 119-120.
Martha to be Second street; Looser, to be Third street; Bodfish to be Fourth street; Levy, to be Fifth street; Farman to be Sixth Street; and Furlong to be Seventh street.”

**Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing**

Transitioning from rural village to established town in the late nineteenth century, more agricultural practices were relegated to the areas outside of Gilroy. However, Gilroy’s new SPRR depot became the shipping center for the region's agricultural products. In the late nineteenth century, cattle raising had lessened in importance as Gilroy’s cheese industry took off (Figure 16). Dairies with 25-200 cows established in the Gilroy area included those of James C. Zuck; A. W. Furlong, A. Fornii, George Rea, Samuel Rea, J. P. Sargent, A. Watson, James H. Ellis, M T. Holsclaw, Dexter Bros., Rodney Eschurburg, E. A. Maze, A. Wilson, and J. Murdock.\(^{141}\) By 1879, The Gilroy dairies had produced 700,000 pounds of cheese and 78,000 pounds of butter, gaining importance in California and across the country as the state’s leading cheese producer by volume.\(^{142}\) In the 1880s, dozens of dairies were in operation in Gilroy and production surpassed 1,000,000 pounds of cheese.\(^{143}\) By 1892, Gilroy’s cheese production was up to 1,800,000 pounds, one-fifth of the of the entire cheese product for California.\(^{144}\)

\(^{140}\) Munro-Fraser 1881: 283.


\(^{144}\) Pacific Rural Press 1892: 516.
Tobacco farming, which was particularly concentrated around Gilroy due to the tobacco farm of J.D. Culp, gained maturity in the Initial Development Period (1868-1904). J.D. Culp established his a tobacco factory at 4th Street and Rosanna Street in 1869, but sold this location in 1871. Culp went on to patent a method for curing tobacco leaf in 1872, and a fabric bag for packing and holding tobacco leaves in 1876. Culp relocated to San Felipe, but retained his Gilroy land holdings, employing many locals. As Culp’s business and agricultural land holdings increased he eventually organized the Pacific Tobacco Manufacturing Company and the San Felipe Havana Tobacco Company to manufacture product.

In addition to already established industries of dairying and tobacco farming, fruit orchards and dried fruit production rose to prominence in the 1870s. French prunes were introduced to Santa Clara County in 1856, but the first orchards took investment and lands to purchase and grow the trees as well as a few years to mature and produce a sellable crop. In 1873, the Gilroy area was still described mostly as dairying land with grain fields, relegating orchards to small plantings near homes. After the success of prunes in the 1870s, other stone fruits slowly appeared until they were proven to be suitable to the regional soil and climate conditions of Gilroy (Figure 17). In the 1880s, prunes and other stone fruit orchards would eventually become the dominant agricultural product of South Santa Clara County, overtaking tobacco. Grapes were also enjoying a local resurgence in South Santa Clara County, as early as 1880 when Henry Miller dedicated a portion of his grazing lands near Gilroy to raising grapes. After multiple vineyard diseases in the 1870s, grape crops recovered in the late 1880s, and by 1904, the California Wine Association established a winery in Gilroy.

147 A small plum, originaly imported by the Pellier Brothers into San Jose in the 1850s. (DeSantis 2016)
149 Munro Fraser 1881: 272.
150 CIRCA 2006: 50.
151 Carol A. DeSantis “Miller Red Barn.” National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Gilroy, CA: Miller Red Barn Committee, draft, April 5, 2016): 9-12
Food processing and agribusiness began to take place in Gilroy in the 1880s. Agribusiness emerged in Gilroy in the form of support services for the agricultural products being grown in Gilroy, versus the previous tradition of shipping agricultural goods to San José for processing. Such businesses included flourmills, lumber mills, and fruit drying and packing plants were established in Gilroy in this period. The Santa Clara Valley Flour Mill was established by Alex Hay in 1873. Another flour mill, the Gilroy Flour Mill, organized by the Smith Brothers was established in 1886, and had a plant on Monterey Road between 6th Street and Old Gilroy Road. In the late 1880s, after dried prunes and apricots were gaining momentum, the Gilroy Fruit Packing Company, located at Monterey and Leavesley Streets was organized by O.M. Welburn in 1888. Another packing company, the South Santa Clara Fruit Drying and Packing Company, was organized around 1900 by soon-to-be-mayor George Dunlap. Gilroy’s farmers turned outward in the 1900s, when the Gilroy Fruit Growers opted to join the California Cured Fruit Association, one of the many fruit growers’ co-operatives in California at the turn of the twentieth century.

---

153 Coffin 1873: 21
154 Sanborn 1886, 1892.
155 Foote 1888: 340
157 San Francisco Call. “Join the Fruit Association.” (San Francisco, CA: The San Francisco Call), March 14, 1900, pg. 9.
**Immigrant Labor and Farming**

Immigrants from China in the nineteenth century, and later Japan and Italy in the twentieth century comprised a large portion of the laborers involved in agricultural and industrial jobs in Santa Clara County, and around Gilroy. Given the Gilroy area’s growing importance in the tobacco, fruit orchards, vineyard, and seed production agribusinesses, low-cost foreign laborers were favored. Chinese immigration to California had peaked in the 1850s and 1860s. Many Chinese emigrated to North America to work on railroad infrastructure and mines. After the initial railroad work lapsed, displaced Chinese workers sought work in agricultural communities as seasonal crop pickers and farming tenants. Such a large influx of Chinese immigrants undercutting local, American work forces brought a political change in 1879 when the working classes began unionizing and forcing the terms of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Not all landowners abided by laws forbidding Chinese labor however. For example, J.D. Culp employed at least 100 Chinese laborers at his tobacco farms outside Gilroy and later at San Felipe. Nearly 65 Chinese worked for C.C. Morse of the Ferry-Morse Seed Company, near Hollister and Gilroy. At the time, these labor practices were perceived as a favorable, since Chinese migrants were forced to accept lower pay, longer hours, and harder work conditions as a result of the ban. Chinese migrants were also willing to pay high rents for land to raise crops. Samuel Rea, a dairy owner, found it more profitable to lease portions of his land to Chinese sharecroppers who would raise berries, onions, potatoes, corn and vegetables on rented land, pick the crops, then allow the proprietor to market the crops. In return, the Chinese sharecroppers would earn a small portion of the net profits. By the close of the nineteenth century, nearly 1000 Chinese were reported to be living in the greater Gilroy area. Those that lived in town lived below 7th street in the informal Chinatown, mostly in wood frame tenements (Figure 18). There were several shops run by Chinese in this section of town including laundries, dry goods, and restaurants. As anti-Chinese sentiment increased in the 1880s, culminating in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, living conditions were generally poor in this portion of town, and the area was prone to anti-Chinese violent crime.

---

159 Sawyer 1922: 144.
162 Shorridge 1895: 106; Sawyer 1922: 112
163 Salewske 2003
164 Munro-Fraser 1881: 237, 482
Just after the turn of the century, Japanese immigrants began to settle in California. The first wave of Japanese immigration had arrived in the 1880s after the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, and the second in 1898 when Japanese migrated from Hawa‘i after the territory was annexed. In 1902, Gilroy’s first Japanese immigrant, Tamiro Nakashiki settled near present-day site of Soares and Nunes Dairy on Old Bolsa Road. In 1904 Nakashiki was followed by Shigeru Yamane and Kiyoshi (Jimmy) Hirasaki, then the Sakai family. Hirasaki would go on to become the first major producer of garlic in the region.\(^{165}\)

At the turn of the twentieth century, Italian immigration to the Santa Clara Valley and the Gilroy region increased. The Sturla family had settled near San Ysidro (Old Gilroy) as early as the 1860s, eventually bringing their extended relations to the region as well. In Gilroy, they engaged in vineyards, olives, fruit, and vegetable farming, but as landowners instead of migrant labor. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Sturla family group had expanded to many interrelated Italian immigrant families, including the Conrotto, Bertero, Princeville, Filice, and Perrelli families, settling around Gilroy, Coyote, and Madrone and would eventually found the Bisceglia Cannery in 1907.\(^{166}\)


\(^{166}\) Dill et al. 2003:19; Arbuckle 1970: 20-21
4.4 Early and Mid-Twentieth Century Development (1904-1941)

The dawn of the Twentieth Century in Gilroy carried with it a strong desire to develop, improve, and evolve beyond a small town. By 1900, a substantial percentage of California’s population resided in large urban centers, such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, because the municipal infrastructure advancements of larger cities offered a higher quality of life than was available in smaller, rural towns in the State. With a population under 2,000, Gilroy was one such rural agricultural community located in the Santa Clara Valley, and was predominately populated by farmers and ranchers. Aided by the arrival of the Santa Clara & Pajaro Railroad to the area in the 1869 and its subsequent purchase by SPRR in 1870, the farmers and ranchers were able to haul their goods in greater quantities to the inhabitants of larger, surrounding cities like San José and San Francisco. However, exposure to the public services available in such municipalities sparked the desire for civic and economic advancement at home in Gilroy. Gilroy residents were inspired by The City Beautiful Movement, a city planning and beautification philosophy that was gaining immense popularity throughout the United States at the time. With the leadership of progressive politicians like George Dunlap and James Princevalle, the steady push of civic-minded organizations, and the generous donations of wealthy benefactors, Gilroy was on a steady course towards modernization during this period.

Residential Development

Residential development during the first two decades of the twentieth century was characterized by expansion into the previously undeveloped sections of the initial Gilroy city grid. Many private residences were erected during this period, aided by the prospect of piped utilities like natural gas, water and electricity (Figure 19). The population expanded by three percent in the first decade of the twentieth century from 1,820 in 1900 to 2,437 in 1910. By 1916, as the population continued to rise, the Advocate noted that, “The building boom which has struck Gilroy, continues with prospects of many more stores and residences than have been erected in years gone by.”

---

However, the forward residential progress would be momentarily halted by the entrance of the United States into World War I. The war effort placed a large strain on resources throughout the country, and in an effort to conserve building materials, the City Council of Gilroy banned the distribution of all building permits between 1917 and 1918 unless a license for the work was issued directly from the Federal War Industries Board. This effectively halted progress on private building projects during this period, including residential development.  

Despite the hardships and brief building freeze caused by World War I, the population of Gilroy continued expanding gradually. The 1920 United States census recorded the population at 2,862 persons. James Princevalle was elected Mayor during the same year and contemporary sources suggest that Gilroy underwent a renewed period of residential development during his time in office between 1920 and 1932. The increased development activity during the 1920s period was keeping pace with a third consecutive decade of sizeable growth in the City. By the start of the 1930s, the population of Gilroy measured 3,502 persons.

---

170 White, N. D.
172 Sawyer, Eugene. 1912. “James Princevalle” in History of Santa Clara County, California. Historic Record Co.: Los Angeles, California.
The difficulties wrought by the Great Depression were widespread in Gilroy during the 1930s, and as a result, the accelerated growth of the City seen in previous decades stagnated, and the population increased only by a nominal 113 people between 1930 and 1940.\footnote{174}

As the 1940s got underway and the United States entered into World War II in 1941, it became clear that the deceleration of the population in Gilroy was only a short-lived phenomenon. In 1941, the San José Mercury-News reported on the increasing value of the property in the area despite the apparent stagnation in population growth and the number of water meters added during the most economically trying years of the Depression.

Steady growth of Gilroy is reflected noticeably in two comparisons, those of assessed property valuation and home building. City property valuation in 1940 was $3,151,236, as compared to $2,867,408 in 1933. Home building, based on number of water service meters installed by the city, shows steady increase. In 1940, there were 1125 meters in service, while in 1933 there were 900.\footnote{175}

**Commercial Development**

Commercial development during the first two decades of the twentieth century was characterized by rapid expansion and growth of commercial businesses related to the everyday needs of Gilroy’s citizens. A large number of storefronts were erected during this period, aided by the advent of city sidewalks, paved streets and new municipal buildings drawing increased pedestrian traffic to the commercial areas of the city.

However, similar to the residential areas of Gilroy, the entrance of the United States into World War I resulted in the stagnation of private commercial development between 1917 and 1918. The banning of all building permits by the City Council of Gilroy during this period effectively halted progress on private building projects throughout the city until the beginning of the 1920s.

By the start of the 1920s however, the commercial sector mirrored the same patterns of growth seen elsewhere in the city. Popular restaurants like the Lily Café and Floro’s Place Café served economical dishes to Gilroy’s hungry citizens.\footnote{176}

The Louis Hotel and Café opened in 1921, and in addition to offering visitors and guests a pleasant, eclectic place to stay during their travels, the hotel also featured a large hall utilized by social and civic clubs for their meetings, fundraisers and banquets.\footnote{177} The Hotel Milias, Restaurant, and Steak House (Figure 20) opened on

\footnote{174}“Population of the City of Gilroy, 1870-1997,” Gilroy Historical Museum.

\footnote{175}San Jose Mercury-News. 1941. “Gilroy’s Fame Comes from Ranches.” June 20, 1941. San Jose Public Library.


\footnote{177}Salewske. 2003.
the corner of Monterey and Sixth Streets, cattycorner from the City Hall in 1922. The restaurant and hotel served local elites of Gilroy as well as several Hollywood celebrities.\textsuperscript{178}

![Figure 20. Hotel Milias in 1922, (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)](image)

The Strand Theatre was completed on Monterey Road beside the Masonic Temple in 1921 (Figure 21). The program from the formal opening of the Theatre on December 3, 1921 states that the Neo-classical-style building was completed by local contractor William Radtke and furnished at a cost of $175,000.\textsuperscript{179} The theater was a venue for musical performances plays, motion picture films accompanied by live music from the theatre’s $15,000 pipe organ, and benefit events for Gilroy’s community organizations like the Elks'.\textsuperscript{180}

In response to the increased traffic brought to town by the completion of State Route 101 through Gilroy, and the relatively inexpensive cost of mass produced automobiles like Ford’s Model T, Lilly's Auto Camp was established by Allen and Alice Lilly on the Monterey Road north of Leavesley Road in 1927. Auto camps emerged in California in the mid-1920s along the newly completed State Highways, and they are thought to be the precedent to the modern drive-up Motel. Lilly’s Auto Camp featured fifteen California bungalow-style cabins furnished austerely with a gas stove, bed, table, chairs and a toilet. Showers were housed in a small detached building while the main building fronting Monterey Road served as an office, restaurant, grocery, and service station.\textsuperscript{181}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{178} Sprain, Rick. 2018. \textit{Postcard History Series: Santa Clara County}. Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, South Carolina.
\item \textsuperscript{179} Strand Theatre Program. 1921. Vol. 1, No. 1, December 3, 1921. As featured in Salewske. 2003. \\
\item \textsuperscript{180} Salewske. 2003.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Civic and Institutional Development

The economization of the automobile offered other commercial opportunities to people living in Gilroy. By the beginning of the 1940s there were a sizeable number of businesses associated with the automobile clustered along Monterey Road. These establishments included service stations, repair garages, auto-dealers, and several Auto Courts (motels).\textsuperscript{182}

In response to civic advancements in communities such as Hollister and Los Gatos, the \textit{Gilroy Advocate} appealed to the citizens of Gilroy in February of 1904 claiming that:

\begin{quote}
    Towns of fewer natural advantages are steadily forging ahead of Gilroy. Some of our valley settlements bid fair in a few years to outdo us in population and enterprise. To make progress, we must get out of our dormant condition and show more public spirit…\textsuperscript{183}
\end{quote}

As evidenced by this newspaper article, the citizens of Gilroy were primed for change, and a chance to keep up with surrounding districts. The Gilroy Board of Trade, concerned with the commerce and industry of the town, rebranded itself the Promotion Society in (later it would become the Chamber of Commerce) in order to update its role in the advancement of Gilroy’s economic ventures. The rhetoric of hopeful politicians reflected the citizen’s refrain of improvement and change was embraced enthusiastically by entrepreneurs such as George T. Dunlap, who ran for the Mayoral office in 1904. He ran alongside what the \textit{Gilroy

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Sanborn Map Company. 1943. “Gilroy, California.”
\item \textit{Gilroy Advocate}. February 27, 1904. As quoted in Woollacott et al. 1991. p3
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Advocate dubbed a “Ticket of Progressive Business Men.” Dunlap was an accomplished capitalist who headed the Dunlap Realty and Produce Company, owned the Coyote Cattle Company and was the president of the South Santa Clara Fruit Drying and Packing Company. Dunlap’s progressive stance won him the office of Mayor in 1904, alongside three reformist candidates elected to the City Council. Armed with a new, progressive government, Gilroy was set to push forward into a new era.

A New City Hall

Although Gilroy had an existing City Hall building located on Fifth Street, the City had adopted a resolution for the creation of a fund to construct a New City Hall building as early as 1900. However, the project stagnated and never came to fruition. In his inaugural speech, Mayor Dunlap highlighted his hopes to see the project through, claiming that:

nothing is a better index of the enterprise and stability of a community than the general appearance and character of its public buildings... We shall be sadly delinquent as a city if we do not give early and earnest thought to the subject of erecting a new city hall...

The new City Council took Dunlap’s social and architectural commentary seriously, and committed to the construction of a New City Hall during the City Council meeting on August 1, 1904. The northeastern corner lot at the intersection of Monterey and Sixth Streets was purchased from the Hotaling family for the prestigious project. The purchase of this lot would place the New City Hall at the strategic intersection of Gilroy’s main commercial corridor, Monterey Road, and 6th Street, the only street that crossed completely over Monterey Road between Old and New Gilroy at this time.

Owing to their reputation for working well within a wide range of styles, prominent San José Architects Frank D. Wolfe and Charles McKenzie were selected to create the design for the new building. Frank D. Wolfe had established a contracting firm in San José following a move from Newton, Kansas in 1888. He quickly gained notoriety in San José and Santa Clara County- and subsequently transitioned his firm to architecture in 1895. Charles McKenzie joined the firm as a partner in 1899. The pair designed a large number of prominent homes and buildings in San José during their 11-year partnership between 1899 and 1910. The New City Hall Building designed by Wolfe and McKenzie was an eclectic mix of Richardsonian Romanesque, Northern Renaissance Revival, and Mediterranean Revival styles to be built using local stone offered by Henry Miller from his quarry on Glen Ranch. The layout included meeting space for the City Council, a police courtroom, office space for the city superintendents in charge of gas and water, and a basement level for use by the fire crew. Additionally, as the Santa Clara county seat was located over thirty

---

184 Gilroy Advocate. April 9, 1904. As quoted in Woollacott et al. 1991: p3
185 Gilroy Advocate. June 11, 1904. As quoted in Woollacott et al. 1991: P4
188 Various Newspapers. “Highlights from Gilroy Newspapers by Year.” November 11, 1904. Gilroy Historical Museum.
miles away in San José, for convenience it was decided that this building would include a jail. The County subsequently offered $5,000 towards the project in lieu of having to build a branch jail in the area.189

During 1905, while the stonework for the New City Hall was underway by the Granite Construction Company of Watsonville, the progressive City Council under Mayor Dunlap continued the modernization of the city by initiating the process to introduce further infrastructure improvements to Gilroy. As part of this process, A.E. Holloway was appointed to create a cost estimates for a city-wide sewer system, an electric light grid system, and improvements to the municipal water works which totaled $51,000.190 The Independent Producers Union also received a 50-year contract from the City for the construction and operation of a pipeline to provide Gilroy with oil, natural gas, and petroleum during this year.191

The structural competency of the new monumental City Hall was tested heavily during the earthquake centered in San Francisco on April 18, 1906. The New City Hall Building was nearly completed by the start of April 1906 at a cost of $19,890, under the efficient management of local contractor, George Seay.192 The earthquake was the result of the northernmost 296-miles stretch of the San Andres fault rupturing between Cape Mendocino to the northwest of San Juan Bautista, a mere 13 miles from Gilroy.193 While the Richter magnitude scale would not be developed for another several decades following the 1906 earthquake, the shaking lasted approximately 45-60 seconds and was felt as far away as southern Oregon, Nevada, and Los Angeles.194 Newspapers reported approximately $50,000 in damages to Gilroy buildings, but no injuries or deaths.195 The New City Hall had experienced some cosmetic damage, but many other buildings in Gilroy were not as fortunate.

In the days following the quake, a special meeting of the City Council was called to assess the action needed to repair damage throughout the area. In response to the widespread destruction of property in Gilroy, a special police force was convened, and Wolfe was retained by the city to inspect City Hall as part of a wider effort to inspect and evaluate buildings for safety and structural integrity throughout Gilroy.196 Repairs commenced on City Hall the following month, and by summer of 1906, the building was repaired to the state it was at prior to the earthquake. As final finishes were being applied to the spaces inside and out, it became clear that the extra costs of the repairs had considerably depleted the resources available for furnishing the lavish interior rooms and offices. Despite this fact, the City Council opted to move into the unfurnished space and held the first meeting in the New City Hall on October 1, 1906, in the Marshal’s room, instead of the Assembly Hall.197 As it took an additional year from the point of this first meeting to...

189 Various Newspapers. “Highlights from Gilroy Newspapers by Year.” August 6, 1904. Gilroy Historical Museum.
190 Cox, Phil. N.D. Notes “Compiled from Gilroy City Council Minutes. Gilroy, CA: City of Gilroy City Clerk’s Office.
191 Cox, N.D.
194 USGS. 2018.
196 Woollacott et al. 1991: 17
when the remainder of City Hall was actually furnished for use, the bold 1905 date emblazoned on the edifice of City Hall remains more representative of the planning stages of the building than the actual completion and use timeline (Figure 22). On October 7, 1907, the first meeting of the City Council was held in the furnished main Assembly Hall.

![Figure 22. The Newly Completed City Hall Building in 1907 Prior to the Installation of the Clock Faces in the Tower (California Room, San José Public Library)](image)

The funds for the four-dialed Seth Thomas Tower Clock were donated to the City in 1913 by a wealthy benefactor who requested to remain anonymous. However, by the time H.J. Musgrave of San Francisco was finished with the installation, it was common knowledge that Mrs. Caroline Hoxett was the generous donor. Caroline Hoxett, the wealthy widow of Thomas Hoxett, was very involved in her community and donated large sums towards civic-minded projects during her lifetime. The formal presentation of the new clock tower by Mrs. Hoxett took place on March 2nd, 1914.198

**The Gilroy Free Library**

Following the declined request by a committee of women associated with the Promotion Society to use the Old City Hall site on Fifth Street as a site for a new public library, nearly one quarter of the eligible voters in Gilroy signed a petition in favor of a committee who could oversee the establishment of a public library in Gilroy.199 The Library Board was established by public ordinance in January 1906 and they immediately set about trying to secure a Carnegie Library Grant to erect a library building. Andrew Carnegie, an American-Scottish entrepreneur and philanthropist, offered the City of Gilroy a $10,000 grant in March of 1906 for

---


the construction of a public library, if the City would agree to provide a site for the building and set aside $1000 per year for its continued operation. Additionally, the conditions of the grant stated that a temporary library space be established until the new building could be completed, so a library room was opened in the New City Hall for use as the interim public library in December of 1907.

The Doolittle property on the corner of Fifth Street and Church was purchased by Caroline Hoxett and donated to the Library Board as the site for the future Gilroy Free Library in June of 1909 (Figure 23). William Henry Weeks, the prominent Canadian-born architect responsible for designing a large number of schools, libraries, post offices and private residences throughout the Bay Area, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Salinas was chosen to design the building. Weeks designed eight buildings in Gilroy between 1894 and 1909, including both private residences for prominent community members such as George Dunlap (1900), as well as institutional buildings such as Rucker School (1894) and the Masonic Temple on Monterey Road (1902). Weeks designed the Gilroy Free Library in the Neoclassical Style and it featuring a traditional, full-height pediment entry porch atop grouped, Tuscan columns. Plans for the new library were approved by the Carnegie Foundation in October and the project was completed in July of 1910.

Overall, the New City Hall and the Carnegie Library development projects triggered an escalation in the number of construction projects throughout Gilroy, both in the public and the private sectors. This sudden increase reflects the concern for forward progress, and that the call for forwards progress extended to all sectors of the city.

201 Various Newspapers. “Highlights from Gilroy Newspapers by Year.” December 14, 1907. Gilroy Historical Museum.
204 Various Newspapers. “Highlights from Gilroy Newspapers by Year.” October 2, 1909. Gilroy Historical Museum.
Schools

As the population of Gilroy grew, so too did the number of school-aged children who required an education. Although several schools had already been established within the City, the need for a separate facility to house secondary education was answered during the 1910s. Funding for Gilroy High School was secured through bonds, and the simplified Beaux Arts-style facility was subsequently designed by W. H. Weeks and constructed on I.O.O.F. Avenue in 1913 (Figure 24).

Two additional schools were established during the 1920s to account for a sharp rise in population between 1920 and 1930. A new elementary School, named Jordan School after the President of Stanford University, David Starr Jordan, was built in 1923 on a site located at Third Street between Hanna and Carmel Streets. Eliot Elementary School, named after the Harvard University President, Charles Eliot, was designed by prominent San José architects, Ralph Wyckoff and Hugh White as a school for 7th and 8th graders, and was completed in 1927 on Old Gilroy Street (Figure 25).

---

207 Gilroy Dispatch. 2006.
Firemen

In 1915 and 1916, the City invested heavily to support and unify the two brigades of volunteer firemen, the Eureka Hook and Ladder Co. and the Vigilant Engine Co., protect the City from the devastating effects of fires. Following the installation of a new fire alarm system at a cost of $1,940 in 1915\textsuperscript{208}, the City purchased the first motor-driven vehicle for use by the city fire department in March 1916. The American La France was described by the *Gilroy Advocate* as a “Chemical Auto Engine”\textsuperscript{209} and the person who earned the honor of being the engineer and first paid member of either fire crew was a young man named Shirley Johnson.\textsuperscript{210}

In June of 1916, the *Advocate* featured a small article about the new fire house planned for the Old City Hall site on Fifth Street. The two-story brick building was designed by San José Architect William Binder and William Radtkie served as the contractor in charge of erecting the building which would contain space for the new engine, the new alarm system, a meeting room, and bedrooms.\textsuperscript{211} The completion of the building in September of 1916 meant that the two crews, who had maintained a competitive relationship since their inception, were finally united under one roof.

*Gilroy Women’s Civic Club*

While it was formed in 1912, by 1914 the Gilroy Women’s Civic Club had made considerable headway in the Gilroy enhancement effort. Working as the female auxiliary organization of the Chamber of Commerce,
the GWCC was a social society comprised of the elite wives and daughters of Gilroy’s founding families and well-off entrepreneurs. During their first few years the GWCC:

…accomplished great things especially in beautifying the town. This club has urged the removal of fences, the parking of sidewalks, the removal of [wooden] awnings on Monterey Street, the appointment of a board of forestry for the preservation and planting of shade trees, the passage of an ordinance compelling owners of dogs to keep them off the public street, and has established a cozy rest room for shoppers and visitors to the town on Martin Street.212

Utilities and Other Civic Improvements

Despite a declaration of financial hardships by Mayor Dunlap following the earthquake, installation of new civic infrastructure projects continued uninterrupted as citizens of Gilroy pressed their public representatives towards forward progress in other areas of the City during 1906. A capable man named C.M. Barker from San José was employed to begin work constructing a city sewer system,213 after the completion of the electric plant the first electric street lights along Monterey Road were lit on St. Patrick’s Day, 1906, and the Promotion Society advocated for a publicity space within the newly completed City Hall to display agricultural goods produced in Gilroy and the surrounding Santa Clara Valley, in order to “…attract the eyes of visitors.”214

Continued infrastructure projects planned under the Mayor A.A. Martin after 1910 reflected an expansion of the community and anticipation of sustained future growth. As part of this growth initiative, engineer A.B. Ward was awarded a contract to erect a pumping plant to supply to City with municipal water in 1910.215 In 1911, concrete sidewalks were installed on major streets throughout Gilroy. Considerable advancements in 1912 and 1913 included the installation of electric transmission lines by Sierra & S.F. Power Co., a levee constructed near Dowdy Street to control an area subject to seasonal flooding from the Uvas River. In 1913, $25,000 in bonds was secured to pave the interior of the city reservoir. The work on the reservoir was managed by prominent local contractor, William Radtke, whose work ostensibly saved the City 8.5-million gallons of water monthly.216

The citizens of Gilroy elected James Princevalle as the new mayor in 1920. After serving five City Council terms, the Gilroy native and the esteemed owner of both an ice cream manufacturing plant in town and a prominent grocery store on the corner of Monterey and Fourth streets, hoped to continue on the foundation of forward progress laid out by Mayor Dunlap in 1904. Mayor Princevalle orchestrated and oversaw a number of critical infrastructure improvements during his six consecutive terms in office between 1920 and 1932.

---

213 Cox. N.D.
214 Gilroy Gazette. February 2, 1907. As quoted in Woollacott et al. 1991. Pg. 20
215 Cox. N.D.
216 Cox. N.D.
In 1923, a bond measure secured the $87,000 necessary to order and install water meters throughout the town to monitor and charge for water usage. In 1926, the City Council passed a resolution to obtain $110,000 for major improvements to the municipal sewer system, including the purchase of 187-acres of land for use as a sewer farm.\footnote{White, N.D.}

**Wheeler Family Contributions to Gilroy**

There was, however, a limit to the amount of money that Gilroy could allocate for projects within the City. Wealthy benefactors had historically been responsible for donating their own money when it came to medical facilities in Gilroy. Following a move from the initial location at the corner of Fifth Street and Monterey Road in 1920, the Gilroy Private Hospital, founded by Dr. Jonas Clark in 1895, was experiencing substantial financial difficulties. Dr. John Clark, the son of Dr. Jonas Clark, attempted to continue the hospital operations from his residence on Railroad Street, but citing the need for expanded capital to cover the cost of equipment and general operations, the hospital closed its doors in 1924.\footnote{Gwinn, Vernon C. 1982. “History of Hospitals in Gilroy.” Gilroy historical Museum.} Apart from several physicians also practicing from their homes, Gilroy was without a hospital facility between 1924 and 1929.\footnote{Gwinn. 1982.}

When his wife became gravely ill between 1926 and 1927, Lin Wheeler, owner of the successful Pieters-Wheeler Seed Company, felt the substantial strain of trips as far as San José and San Francisco to receive medical care. With the aid of a steering committee, Wheeler sought to determine the feasibility of establishing a community hospital. Finding the need for such a facility absolutely necessary, Wheeler offered to allocate $25,000 of the substantial profit he had earned through the operation of the seed production company he had purchased in 1910 towards the construction of a 29-bed non-profit public hospital.\footnote{Pacific Coast Architecture Database. 2018. “Wheeler Hospital, Gilroy CA.” http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/7911/. Accessed December 5, 2018.} When subscriptions for the remaining necessary funds did not materialize, Wheeler offered to match an additional $15,000, and the total needed for the project was raised shortly thereafter. Plans for the new hospital were drawn up by W. H. Weeks in 1928, and the construction overseen by William Radtke. The two-story, Spanish Colonial Revival Wheeler Hospital was completed in July of 1929 (Figure 26).\footnote{Gwinn. 1982.}
Despite the economic downturn effecting the U.S. during the Great Depression, city-backed development projects persisted throughout the remainder of the 1930s with financial assistance from prominent Gilroy families like the Wheelers. The Gilroy Gymkhana Roundup (Figure 27), a recreational equestrian event started in 1929, had secured regional notoriety by the late 1930s, so Linwood Wheeler donated the grounds he owned to the City in 1938 where the annual event had taken place across the road from the Pieter-Wheeler plant since it began.  

The Wheeler family also donated a majority of the funds to construct a Civic Auditorium for use by Gilroy, which was completed on the corner of Church and Sixth Streets in 1940. The Art Deco-style building was designed by San José Architects William Binder and Ernest N. Curtis and built by George Renz at cost of $51,000.  

---

222 Cox. N.D.  
Parks

The Ousley family donated 60-acres of their estate adjoining the reservoir to the City in 1938 for use as a large municipal park.224

Transportation Infrastructure

Highway 101

Growth and development in the transportation sector also impacted the development pattern of Gilroy in the early twentieth century. One such transportation project was the state highway system. Statewide California elections in 1910 approved the 1909 State Highways Act, allocating $18 million dollars towards the acquisition and construction of a state highway system.225 This project prompted Gilroy to evaluate its own transportation infrastructure, and when the first state highway construction began in 1912 on the Highway 1, Pacific Coast route, rumors circulated that the subsequent highway projects would skirt the edge of the Santa Clara Valley instead of passing through it.226 Prideful citizens and the City Council elected to pave their main thoroughfare, Monterey Road, so that it might be “…equal in every way to the roadway to be constructed by the State Highway Commission.”227 (Figure 28)

224 Cox, N.D.
Despite the estimate of paving Monterey Road within city limits costing approximately $12,000 more than the yearly budget cost to run the entire town (roughly $24,000 annually)\textsuperscript{228}, the City Council concurred with the public, the Chamber of Commerce (formerly the Promotion Society), and the newly formed Gilroy Women’s Civic Club that the returns from having the road pass through Gilroy far outweighed the burden of initial cost for the work.\textsuperscript{229} With the invention of the affordable Model T automobile by the Ford Motor Company in 1908, motor tourists were at the forefront of an emerging tourism industry that allowed previously rural and isolated regions of the state to become accessible.\textsuperscript{230} Gilroy wanted to be at the forefront of this movement, so following a bond election in May of 1913, the compulsory funds were secured and a 24-foot wide swatch of paving down Monterey Road was completed the following year (Figure 29).\textsuperscript{231} Upon the completion of the project, the Highways system was indeed routed through the center of Gilroy and the \textit{Gilroy Advocate} reported that “our citizens are rejoicing over the completion of the Monterey Road pavement […] It is one of the finest streets in the state, and being on the State Highway, thousands will pass through our city.”\textsuperscript{232} Picking up from the initial paving of Monterey Road in 1914, Old Gilroy and First Streets were paved within city limits in 1922.\textsuperscript{233}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure28.png}
\caption{Photo Looking Down Monterey Road in 1911 Before it was paved. (California State Library)}
\end{figure}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{228} Woollacott et al. 1991.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Woollacott et al. 1991.
\item \textsuperscript{231} Woollacott et al. 1991.
\item \textsuperscript{232} \textit{Gilroy Advocate}. May 16, 1914. As quoted in Woollacott. 1991. Pg. 31.
\item \textsuperscript{233} Cox, N.D.
\end{itemize}
A New Passenger Depot

In 1917, Gilroy City officials convinced the Southern Pacific Railroad Company to replace the original depot station with a new facility. The two-story, redwood framed “Mission Style” depot was designed by SPRR architects, constructed by SPRR contractors, and completed in April of 1918 at a cost of around $13,000 [Figure 12]. It featured a red tile roof, a cement plaster (stucco) exterior, and “…an electric sign with the letters “Gilroy” The interior spaces included fine oak woodwork, separate men’s and women’s rest rooms finished in marble, a baggage room, and a ticket office. In December 1918, the Gilroy Advocate remarked that the original depot station was currently under demolition, following the completion of the new passenger station. “The S.P. Co. is removing the old passenger depot just north of the present handsome depot. This depot is an old landmark, having been used for half a century.”

236 Gilroy Advocate 1918
Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing

Immigrant Farmers

Italian immigrants were among some the earliest settlers to the Gilroy area, including the Princevalle, Arena, Porcella, Bisceglia, Filice, and Perrelli families. They established successful vineyards and orchards on many properties surrounding Gilroy, producing wine, raisins, apricots, cherries, prunes and walnuts. Italians are credited with introducing the propagation of tomatoes, onions and garlic to the area and they were among the first prominent grocers and canners in the community.\(^{238}\)

First-generation Japanese (Issei) families begun settling in the area as early as 1902.\(^{239}\) Along with their American-born children (Nisei), the Nakashiri, Yamane, and Hirasaki families were among the leading growers of seed varieties for prominent seed companies in the area, such as the Pieter-Wheeler Seed Co. Common varieties of seeds were onion, lettuce and mustard.\(^{240}\) The Japanese also found considerable success in growing row crops like strawberries and garlic. In 1919, Kiyoshi Hirasake leased 130 acres that would later become the Hirasaki Farms. Initially growing plants for a seed business, Hirasaki switched to other crops, including garlic. Hirasake, an Issei, had to purchase all land in his Nisei children’s names, as they were American citizens by birth and eligible to own property where he was not.\(^{241}\) By 1941, Kiyoshi

\(^{238}\) “Italian Influence Brings a Change to Agriculture.” No Date. Newspaper Article. Gilroy Historical Museum.


Hirasaki was one of California’s largest garlic producers, with 1,500-acres of Garlic in cultivation on his Gilroy ranch, named Soap Lake.  

**Live Oak Creamery**

Gilroy was at the heart of Santa Clara Valley’s prosperous dairy industry during the beginning of the Twentieth Century. When it was constructed in 1908 on Martin Street, the Live Oak Creamery was the first creamery in Gilroy producing high-quality cheese and butter. The simple, one-story masonry building in the center of the City featured an innovative insulated area for the storage of dairy products.

**Pieters-Wheeler Seed Company**

Linwood Wheeler purchased the A.J. Pieters Seed Company in 1910, rebranded the company the Pieters-Wheeler Seed Company, and relocated the company to Gilroy the same year. The company produced a wide range of domestic vegetable seeds using both fields owned by the company as well as contracting out production to area farmers, especially Japanese Farmers. The Pieters-Wheeler Seed Company was extremely successful and gained the family a great deal of wealth and notoriety within the Gilroy community. The Wheeler family donated generously to civic projects in Gilroy including the Wheeler Hospital, the Gymkhanna Grounds, and the Wheeler Civic Auditorium.

**Felice & Perrelli Cannery**

The Bisceglia Cannery when Joseph, Bruno and Alfonso Bisceglia opened a facility on Lewis Street in 1907. Following a fire that destroyed the plant, two young employees, Gennaro Felice and John Perrelli, raised and borrowed the funds needed to buy the defunct plant and reopened it in 1914 under the name Felice & Perrelli. In 1929, the company expanded and opened an F & P Brand plant in Richmond, and when the 1914 plant burned again in 1931, many employees transferred to Richmond to maintain employment and train new employees while the Gilroy facility was rebuilt. The New Gilroy Cannery opened in April of 1933 and continued to employ a work force through the worst years of the Depression between 1937 and 1938.

**C. B. Gentry Chili Powder Company**

Although there was little demand yet for dehydrated garlic and onion products, the C. B. Gentry Chili Powder Company found Gilroy as a suitable location to diversify their product line in the late 1930s. Founded in Los Angeles in 1918 by Charles Gentry and his wife, Lydia Clausen, Gentry specialized in processing peppers into ground chili and paprika seasonings for sale to food manufactures throughout the

---

United States. After several failed attempts to establish plants in other areas of California, Gentry erected a small dehydration plant in Gilroy in the late 1930s on the Pacheco Pass Highway. Capitalizing on the success of early row crops farmers producing garlic in the area, such as Japanese immigrant James Hirasaki, Gentry became the preeminent producer of dehydrated garlic products during this period.\textsuperscript{246}

**BeGe Manufacturing & Welding Co.**

A small company called BeGe Manufacturing & Welding Co. was formed in 1932 when farmer Albert Gurries solicited blacksmith James Bussert to create a prototype of a land-leveling scraper and power control unit that could be affixed to the front of a tractor. By 1936, the product was a hit, and Gurries and Bussert expanded their operation to a larger building on Monterey Road and hired a small team of employees. Despite the economic hardships experienced by people throughout California during the 1930s, farmers continued to invest in the BeGe Manufacturing product, allowing the company to maintain a workforce throughout the Depression period and into the 1940s.\textsuperscript{247}


4.5 World War II and Post-War Development (1941-1975)

Like so many other cities in California, Gilroy was unable to evade the lasting effects brought by World War II (WWII). The entrance of the United States into the war effort following the Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, laid the foundation for permanent shifts in Gilroy’s history: population growth, expansion of City territory, and enlarged manufacturing, food production and processing capabilities.

Residential Development

The population of Gilroy grew substantially between 1940 and 1946 from 3,615 persons to 4,388.248 This growth was spurred by a combination of service members returning from the war to establish families and people who were attracted to the area in search of job opportunities created by the war effort in Gilroy at companies like C.B. Gentry and BeGe Manufacturing. The rapid population growth placed strain on the community burdened with the responsibility to provide housing during a period when construction materials were being allocated towards the war.249

When no plans were underway for new residential development, the owner of BeGe Manufacturing, Albert Gurries, took the matter of housing his employees into his own hands. Designating a portion of the land he owned north of First Street between Hanna and Church Streets, Gurries resolved to build his own employee housing in April 1945, beginning with three, four-unit apartment buildings.250 Following the end of WW II, Gurries announced in January 1946 that 50 additional houses would be developed on his land as housing for employees and returning soldiers.251 Presently, many of these modest, Minimal Traditional-style Gurries Tract houses still stand on Gurries Drive.

Residential development in Gilroy during the post-war period continued in the pattern established by early sub developers like Albert Gurries: sub-develop a property just outside the city-limits and have the property annexed to become part of the City. Like many other cities in California, Gilroy’s population continued to grow in the decade following the close of WWII, and the need for residential development required more space than the remaining undeveloped areas within the City limits could allow. In order to house Gilroy’s many incoming residents, annexation of new territory by the mid-1950s was essential to keep pace with the steadily rising demand for housing. Reports like this from the San José Mercury-News in 1954 were common during this period: “Workmon Homes will commence building 20 more units in September, making a total of 77 new homes in the northwest sector of town.”252 The area of the City of Gilroy grew gradually in this way for the next several decades.

248 Cox, Phil. N.D. Notes “Compiled from Gilroy City Council Minutes. Gilroy, CA: City of Gilroy City Clerk’s Office.
250 Hollister Free Lance. 2006.
251 Hollister Free Lance. 2006.
252 San Jose Mercury-News. 1954.
By 1960, the population of Gilroy had soared to 7,348 persons, growing from 4,951 persons recorded in 1950. The influx of people to the City required even more newly annexed areas devoted to residential developments as well as supporting infrastructure like schools, parks, churches and commercial centers. During 1965, the City annexed 750-acres of land, effectively increasing the area of the City by 50 percent during that year alone. Many of these annexed regions were sub-developed into modern residential neighborhoods, like Sherwood Park, Eschenberg Park, and Castlewood Park. By 1970, when the population of Gilroy had nearly doubled within the decade to 12,665 persons, there were approximately 3,000 residences housing the people of Gilroy.

**Commercial Development**

Commercial development continued at a moderate rate in Gilroy during the course of WWII. There were several standard business that changed hands but maintained the same basic function, such as the Gilroy Hardware Company (1928-1939) at 7428 Monterey Road becoming the Chappell Hardware Company in 1940 and Espindola’s Grocery (1926-1940) at 7533 Monterey Road becoming Bettencourt’s Market in 1941 (Figure 31). Little new construction was completed for the purposes of commercial development during this period, as most business that began during the war years were established in existing commercial buildings. There were at least a few entrepreneurs willing to take the chance. Perhaps recognizing the imminent growth of the City, A.W. Brown with the expertise of contractor William Radtke, erected a new Streamline Moderne-Style Real Estate office at 7495 Monterey Road.

![Figure 35. Bettancourts Market, c.1940s-1950s. (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum).](image)

---

In 1949, following the recommendation by the Planning Commission, the City Council passed an ordinance allowing restricted businesses to operate for the first time on a section of Eigleberry Street between First and Seventh Streets.\textsuperscript{256} One of the first commercial developments in this new commercial sector was the International Order of Odd Fellows Lodge. In 1953, the original I.O.O.F. building constructed in 1869 on Martin Street was demolished to make way for the construction of a new American Trust Co. bank. A replacement I.O.O.F lodge was designed by structural engineer O.B. Christiansen from Santa Clara and built by contractor William Radtke & Son on its present site at Eigleberry Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets for $112,000 in 1954. The two-story, Mid-Century-Modern building was designed with four commercial spaces on the ground level below the lodge hall (Figure 32).\textsuperscript{257}

![New IOOF Building in 1954. (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)](image)

Additional commercial development in 1954 included the completion of the American Trust Co. bank on Monterey at Martin Street, and the new modern Arizona Flagstone Post Office building on Third Street.

Commercial Development in the 1960s and 1970s was largely confined to the newly developed areas of the City. These areas required the installation of new facilities like shopping centers to service the outlying residential developments. Commercial development along Monterey Road in the downtown corridor did


not see sizeable new projects during this period. Comparative to the WWII period, new commercial ventures were initiated in the storefronts of pre-existing buildings. (Need More Here)

**Civic and Institutional Development**

**Alien Registration During the War Years**

Prior to the formal declaration of war by the United States on Japan and Germany, the Alien Registration Act, popularized as the Smith Act, was signed into law in June of 1940. The final provision of the act required all resident, non-citizen adults living in the United States to register with the federal government. Registration began in cities throughout the country and by January 1941, nearly 4.7-million resident aliens had been registered. Following United States involvement in WW II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Presidential Proclamations 2525, 2526, and 2527, which stated that

> all natives, citizens, denizens, or subjects of the hostile nation[s] being of the age of fourteen years and upward, who shall be within the United States and not actually naturalized, shall be liable to be apprehended, restrained, secured, and removed as alien enemies.

Gilroy began their registration program shortly after the war began, operating out of different locations in town including the Post Office and City Hall. The residents being registered were identified, fingerprinted, asked for information pertaining to their birthplace, their family’s ethnic heritage and then they would receive a passport-like booklet bearing all the information in addition to a physical description. By this time, Gilroy was home to a wide array of first and second-generation immigrants from Europe and Asia, many of whom were both well-established members of the community and prominent producers of agricultural products.

Many Japanese families living in Gilroy destroyed evidence connecting their families to Japan in an effort to disassociate themselves with the fear following the attack on Pearl Harbor. The ensuing registration process had an especially profound effect on these families, as prominent members of the community who had been in Gilroy for decades were among the first arrested by the FBI and those relocated to internment camps (Figure 33). There were also a number of Nisei from Gilroy who were drafted and served throughout the war, and others who volunteered to serve with the all-Japanese 442nd Regiment during their time in one of the many internment camps throughout the country.

---

261 Woollacott et al. 1991, 49.
262 Woollacott et al. 1991, 49
Figure 33. Kiyoshi Hirisaki and his family outside their family home in Gilroy in 1945. The Hirisaki’s were the first family from Gilroy to be sent to an Internment Camp during WWII, and also the first to return to the area after the war ended. The Japanese-style building was originally part of an exhibition at the 1939 World’s Fair in San Francisco and was bought and relocated to Gilroy by Kiyoshi. (War Relocation Authority Photograph Collection, University of California Berkeley)

Civilian Defense Organization

City Hall also became the headquarters of the civilian defense organization in Gilroy during WWII, and was the site of at least one event on November 19, 1942 inspiring support for the war. The rally was organized as part of a tour of a captured Japanese Submarine called the ‘Tojo Cigar,’ which was displayed at sites along a nationwide tour intended to promote the war effort and encourage Americans to purchase war bonds.264

Standard Building, Electrical and Plumbing Codes

Although the City established a Planning Commission by ordinance in 1936, several more years passed before a Uniform Building Code and Standard Electrical and Plumbing codes were adopted in 1941.265 Noticing a distinguished rise in the number of building permits issued between 1940 ($136,639) and 1952 ($1,452,952), the City took steps to control and curb unbridled development through the adoption of additional ordinances, such as the 1945 ordinance forbidding shacks and unsightly structures.266 These types

265 Cox. N.D.
of ordinances were implemented in an effort to standardize the quality and safety of buildings in Gilroy. Additionally, zoning ordinances were passed to help maintain the character of certain neighborhoods and protect the residential areas from becoming dotted with commercial use.

**Schools**

The original Gilroy High School building was condemned and demolished in 1956 after the construction of new high school buildings to the east on the same property.

*(NEED MORE INFO)*

Owing to the extensive expansion of the city limits in the 1960s, by 1972, the Community Economic Profile released by the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce boasted six elementary schools, one junior high, one high school and one junior college serving the Gilroy community.267

**A New City Charter**

The gradual expansion of the City’s territory through annexation during the 1950s shed light on some aspects of Gilroy’s government structure, which had not been updated since the original city charter was adopted in 1870. In 1949, the *San José Mercury-News* reported that Gilroy’s City Charter was “…believed to be the only early-day charter still in effect in California.”268 A new City Charter was adopted in 1960, which included key updates such as lengthening the two-year term for the office of Mayor to four years and the elected position of City Marshal would be replaced by an appointed Chief of Police.269

**New Civic Center**

In 1963, all City offices except the Police Department were relocated from City Hall to a wing in the Wheeler Auditorium. A new Justice Court building was also completed during 1963 on Rosanna Street near to the Wheeler Auditorium, creating the foundation of the Gilroy Civic Center complex presently. In 1965, following the completion of a new police administration building on the corner of Hanna and Seventh Streets on the edge of the Civic Center, the Gilroy Police Department vacated their office in the Old City Hall. Newly vacant, the fate of Old City Hall was unknown until the Gilroy Historical Society formed in 1965 and worked to nominate the Old City Hall Building for placement on the National Register of Historic Places by 1975.270

In 1975, the City Public Library was moved from the Carnegie Library building into a new facility on the corner of Sixth and Rosanna streets beside the Civic Center Complex. The following year, the Carnegie

---


270 “Through the Decades: 1960s.”
Library Building was dedicated as the Gilroy Historical Museum to house the ever-growing collection of Gilroy-related historical materials initially compiled by City Historian, Armand White.\textsuperscript{271}

**New Gilroy-Morgan Hill Sewer Line and Future Treatment Plant**

In 1965, anticipating the eventual need to expand sewer and water treatment infrastructure to keep pace with population growth, Gilroy agreed to a $370,000 deal that would connect Morgan Hill’s sewer line to their own. The sewer line was completed in 1969 with future plans to build a joint treatment plant south of Gilroy. \textsuperscript{272} Planning on the new sewage treatment plant was underway by 1971.\textsuperscript{273}

**Street Improvements and Numbering System**

Municipal infrastructure improvements during 1955 included the installation of a center divider and new street lamps to replace the 1906 cast iron lamps on Monterey Road.

In 1964, a joint effort between Gilroy and Morgan Hill resulted in the adoption of a system standardizing house and street numbering in the south of the county, starting from the Santa Clara-San Benito county line and moving north. This effectively replaced the previous numbering system which was based on labeling streets north of Sixth Street ‘North’ and those south of Sixth Street ‘South’ in the downtown area. The new numbering system simplified this by eliminating the north south labels in favor of a sequential numbering system.\textsuperscript{274}

**New Hospital**

In 1962, a new hospital facility was completed for the people of Gilroy in 1962. The new facility was constructed behind the original Wheeler hospital on Sixth Street, and was capable of accommodating 50 patients - 21 more patients than the original 29-bed Wheeler hospital facility could serve.\textsuperscript{275}

**Gavilan College**

The Gavilan College District was approved for the eventual move of the community college from the City of Hollister to a new site southwest of Gilroy in 1963. The new, 2,700 square mile Community College district placed the college astride both Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, offering students from both counties an opportunity to attend. A local bond in 1966 appropriated the fund necessary to build the new campus and the new campus opened in 1968.\textsuperscript{276}

\textsuperscript{271} White, Armand. No Date. "Timeline". Gilroy Historical Museum.
\textsuperscript{272} San Jose Mercury-News. 1966.
\textsuperscript{274} San Jose Mercury-News. 1966.
\textsuperscript{275} “Through the Decades: 1960s.” Gilroy Historical Museum.
Christmas Hill Park

Improvements to the 28-acre Christmas Hill Park also in the southwest of Gilroy started in 1965, and the park opened during the summer of 1966.\textsuperscript{277} The unusual name for the park stems from the Toyon Trees, or California Holly, that once grew on the slope above the park. These trees bear bright red berries in the late fall and early winter that Gilroyans harvested for use as festive Christmas décor. Eventually the Toyon trees were gone, but the namesake of the place remained.\textsuperscript{278}

Chesbro and Uvas Dams

While not located within city limits, the Chesbro Dam and the Uvas Dam located northwest of Gilroy, were completed respectively in 1956 and 1957.\textsuperscript{279}

Transportation Infrastructure

The increased number of people living and working in Gilroy resulted in increased traffic through town. As early as 1965, Gilroy, in conjunction with Morgan Hill, appealed to the State Highway Commission to route Highway 101 around the City instead of along Monterey Road in order to alleviate traffic congestion. By the time the Highway 101 bypass was complete in 1973, the population of Gilroy was recorded at over 12,600 persons.\textsuperscript{280}

Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing

The War Effort

The notion that “Where Our Men are Fighting, Our Food is Fighting” was at the heart of several important food production and manufacturing expansions during the World War II period.\textsuperscript{281} American Troops abroad required huge and regular quantities of food, and so a primary mission in the war effort therefore focused on the production, processing and home front rationing of food on a national scale. The U.S. Department of Agriculture promoted the cultivation of private gardens, called Victory Gardens, to help bolster family supplies during heightened periods of rationing. Gilroy’s prominent agricultural history helped to support the war effort in a few unique ways.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[279] Cox n.d.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
C.B. Gentry Company

Having established a small plant to dehydrate onion and garlic in Gilroy during the 1930s, the C. B. Gentry Company was conscripted to begin providing dehydrated food products for the armed forces during WWII (Figure 34). The initial limited facility was not sufficient for the scale of production required, so a new facility was constructed on the present site of Gilroy Foods, using funds provided by the federal government. Hundreds of people from the Gilroy community labored at the new facility, which functioned 24-hours a day producing dehydrated varieties of locally grown food for the troops, eventually earning the Company an Army Navy Production Award for their assistance in the war effort.

BeGe Manufacturing

The BeGe Manufacturing Company was founded in the early-1930s to produce agricultural machinery products, but when the U.S. involvement in WWII began, their product line expanded to include the production of steel-plate ship sections, armored amphibious tank sections, and the 76 MM Tank gun (Figures 35, 36). The Gilroy Dispatch noted, “additional precision machinery makes BeGe one of the finest

---

283 Clausen Jr. 2007.
machine shops in state.”

The considerable enlargement of the company necessitated a substantial workforce, and during peak war-time production the plant supported a workforce of 175 men and women. In 1944, BeGe announced further plans to expand the facility and workforce, just as soon as housing became available to accommodate them.

Figure 35. Men Shaping Sheet Metal, BeGe Manufacturing, c.1940s, (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)


287 Hollister Free Lance. 2006.
Christopher Ranch

Following in the footsteps of their Danish immigrant Father, Ole Christopher, who was a famous producer of prunes in the Santa Clara Valley region, Don and Art Christopher set out in 1956 to create a ranch of their own. They purchased some acreage in Gilroy and decided to cultivate a crop that was gaining popularity in the area: garlic. They initially planted French and Italian varieties, and eventually settled on a variety from the Piedmont area in northwest Italy, which would become their signature garlic crop, Monviso.288

Gilroy Invites New Industry

By 1954, the farmland surrounding Gilroy was cultivating a wide variety of agricultural products, including prunes, apricots, pears, strawberries, walnuts, lima beans, garlic, sugar beets, tomatoes and cucumbers.289 Yet, despite the success of these goods, the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce sought to attract new industries which might move the community away from the seasonal nature of agricultural based industry, noting that currently “…industrial employment [in Gilroy] now draws 4,000 workers for a three months’ period, requiring only about 200 the rest of the year.”290 Realizing the geographical advantages of their location, the City identified 250-acres of available land to the southeast of town near to the rail line and the highway

289 San Jose Mercury-News. 1954.
290 San Jose Mercury-News. 1954.
available for industrial development because “Gilroyans owe their daily bread largely to farm operations, but industry accounts for an enormous share of the local pay roll.”

In 1961, a Standard Industrial Survey Summary of Gilroy found that Gilroy’s six largest manufacturing plants included BeGe Manufacturing Co. (300 employees), Gentry (60 to 400 seasonal employees), Felice & Perrelli Canning Co. (80 to 800 seasonal employees), National Fiberglass Corporation (25 employees), Air-O-Fan Corporation (12 employees), and Sandoe Hanna Welding Co. (10 employees).

By 1972, Gilroy boasted 37 manufacturing plants in the area. Food processing still accounted for the largest employer in the area with California Canners & Growers, Gentry’s Inc., and Gilroy Foods employing around 1,850 people. The production of modular buildings by Dukor Industries employed 175 people, while paper products produced at companies like Crown Zellerbach Co. and Pacific Central Co. employed another 130.

291 San Jose Mercury-News. 1954.
4.6 Modern Gilroy (1975-Present)

The continued development of Gilroy during the modern period can be largely defined by the City’s close proximity to the rapid expansion of Silicon Valley’s tech industry, efforts by engaged community members to safeguard the agricultural and architectural heritage of the community in the face of becoming a bedroom district to the tech industry in San José, and the rebranding of the City as the Garlic Capital of the World.

Residential Development

Residential development continued through the close of the 1970s, as the overwhelming expansion of San José drifted into the Southern area of the county. The population of Gilroy had grown from 12,684 in 1970 to 21,550 in 1980.²⁹³ In the early 1980s, the South Santa Clara Valley was named “…one of the five new San Josés in the Bay Area.”²⁹⁴ Realizing that their proximity to the booming tech industry meant unavoidable future growth, the relatively small communities in the Valley like Gilroy and nearby Morgan Hill quickly felt the pressure to plan for future expansion of their infrastructure. The development potential of Gilroy was at its core, predicated on the capacity of its sewer system. A new joint sewer treatment plant servicing Gilroy and Morgan Hill was planned for a site off Luchessa Lane, two miles south of Gilroy, as early as 1971.²⁹⁵

The new plant cost approximately $4 million dollars to complete and replaced the older treatment plant, which had been functioning since 1927. The new plant began operation in 1981 and was capable of processing 6.1 million gallons of wastewater per day. However, problems with operation began after completion. Perhaps in an effort to cover up the miscalculations in the actual treatment capacity of the new plant, rather than encouraging residential development now that an expanded sewer system was in place, Gilroy’s City Council passed a measure limiting residential development to 375 units per year.²⁹⁶

Ultimately, Gilroy officials had selected an inexpensive design that State engineers warned might fail, and, the site selected was subject to frequent flooding, making the isolation of the various percolation treatment ponds very difficult.²⁹⁷ Two years into its operation, the plant was showing signs of overuse and was at almost constant risk of flooding. In a desperate attempt to avoid total shut down, the City Administrator at the time ordered the secret dumping of sewage into Llagas Creek by the cover of night. Workers tasked with this regrettable duty later claimed that they illegally dumped anywhere between six and ten million gallons of sewage into the creek several nights per week over the course of two years.²⁹⁸

Needless to say, the Gilroy community and City officials were outraged when the scandal came to light in early 1984, and several City officials resigned while others lost their reelection bids as a result. The most

²⁹⁸ San Jose Mercury-News. 1984a.
profound outcome and perhaps the most enduring for the community was the state-imposed sewer hookup moratorium for the City of Gilroy, which effectively halted the pace of growth in the city to a crawl during a period of rapid expansion in other parts of the County. A city council member at the time the sewer hook-up ban was introduced commented about the effect that the scandal would have on the continued growth of the community claiming that, “The pressures for development were so great that the people involved in the process felt, ‘Oh my God, we can’t let this get out.’ When you’ve worked so hard to bring development, it’s hard to face realities.”

Despite the difficulties wrought by the sewer treatment plant and the resulting sewer hook-up ban, the population of Gilroy continued to gradually expand throughout the 1980s. While there was a marked deceleration in the rate of growth when compared previous decades, the City was still attracting new residents to the residential sub developments that crepted towards the hills west and south of the City. In 1986, the area constituting of Gilroy encompassed 6,270-acres, and by 1997 when the sewer moratorium had been lifted for several years, the city limits held 9,366-acres of land and a population of 35,267 people who called Gilroy home.

As the tech industries in San José continued to grow through the present, the reputation of Gilroy as a bedroom community grew alongside it. As of 2010, the population of Gilroy reached 48,821 persons, a massive increase from the nominal 3,000-person count recorded in 1870 at the time Gilroy became a City.

Commercial Development

**Gilroy Premium Outlets**

As the City of Gilroy grew, so too did the commercial needs of the City. The largest contribution to commercial change for the city came in 1990 with the construction of the sixty store Pacific West Outlet Center on Levesley Road (Figure 37). The shopping complex would continue to expand, eventually reaching its current size of 575,000 square feet of built area containing over 145 outlet stores. Today the complex is simply called the Gilroy Premium Outlets.

---

300 “Area of the City of Gilroy.” No Date. Gilroy Historical Museum.
301 “Population of the City of Gilroy 1870-1997.”
Gilroy Gardens

In 2001, another important commercial venture in Gilroy opened to the public following over two decades of planning and development. Gilroy Gardens is a horticultural theme park, which aims to educate children and their families about the importance of horticulture in a fun and memorable environment.303

Civic and Institutional Development

Gilroy Garlic Festival

In the summer of 1978, three local Gilroyans hosted a modest luncheon event that featured garlic as the star attraction. The luncheon was a raving success and so the idea conceived by Dr. Rudy Melone, Val Felice and Don Christopher of Christopher Ranch, expanded with the support of City officials to become the first official Gilroy Garlic Festival. The event was held at the Bloomfield Ranch on August 4-5, 1979, and all proceeds would be returned to the Gilroy Community. Over 15,000 people attended in the first year alone and the festival raised over $19,000 dollars through the sale of tickets, garlic themed dishes, and beer. The following year, the festival moved to its permanent home at Christmas Hill Park.304

The Gilroy Garlic Festival celebrated its 40th year in 2018 and raised more than $11 million dollars for use by Gilroy schools and local non-profit organizations to date. The Garlic Festival continues to be a huge success and draws garlic-loving crowds from all over the world.\textsuperscript{305}

**Transportation Infrastructure**

**Caltrain Service**

In 1992, Caltrain extended a twice daily commuter train service line from Dridon Station in San José to Gilroy. The frequency of Caltrain service has expanded and thinned at various points during the years, but currently offers three AM and three PM trains a day Monday through Friday with special weekend services offered during the Gilroy Garlic Festival.\textsuperscript{306}

**California High-Speed Rail**

After California voters passed Proposition 1A in 2008, California began preparation on a Statewide-High-Speed Rail system that would eventually create a route between San Francisco and Los Angeles. As the approved route for the project will pass through Gilroy, Gilroy entered into an agreement with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) in 2015 to create a Station Area Plan (Plan) within the downtown community area of Gilroy utilizing grant monies received from High-Speed Rail (HSR). While the Station Area Plan focused on the development of a downtown station, the Plan was intended to serve as a guide for future community development in the private and public sectors for the next 25 years. Following the study of various land use and circulation plans for City concerning the implementation of such a large project, four viable routes were identified for the path of the project into Gilroy: Viaduct to Downtown, Embankment to Downtown, East Gilroy, and Highway 101 Alignment. Following the negative concurrent findings between City officials and CHSRA concerning the Highway 101 option in 2017, the City of Gilroy moved to place the Station Area Plan on hold and wait to choose the final alignment path from the three remaining choices until the completion of CHSRA Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the San José to Merced segment of the HSR project.\textsuperscript{307}

**Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing**

In many ways, the present of Gilroy’s agricultural, manufacturing and general industry reflects patterns which were established early in the City’s development. Agriculture and agricultural product processing continues to maintain a huge share of the employment market in Gilroy, followed closely by manufacturing and industrial ventures (Figure 38). However, as the City becomes more desirable as a commuter suburb to...
Silicon Valley, the balance within the community is becoming offset as former agricultural lands are converted into land for housing.

Figure 38. Employees process garlic for Christopher Ranch Farms, c. 1980 (Photograph Collection, Gilroy Historical Museum)
5 SURVEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Section in progress.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


“Area of the City of Gilroy.” No Date. Gilroy Historical Museum.


Cox, Phil. N.D. Notes “Compiled from Gilroy City Council Minutes. Gilroy, CA: City of Gilroy City Clerk’s Office.


Gilroy Advocate. 1916.


Gilroy Advocate. 1918


Gilroy Dispatch. 1944. December 5, 1944. As quoted in Barratt. No Date. Gilroy Historical Museum.

Gilroy Dispatch. 1969.


Gilroy Historical Museum Subject Files. N.D. “Tobacco Culture in Gilroy and the Consolidated Tobacco Company.” From the Tobacco Subject File at the Gilroy Historical Museum

Gilroy Historical Museum Subject Files. 1985. “Commercial Building Survey.” From the Commercial Subject File at the Gilroy Historical Museum.


Harrison, E.S. 1888. Gilroy: The Most Favored Section of Santa Clara Valley. Gilroy, CA: Gilroy Board of Trade.


“Italian Influence Brings a Change to Agriculture.” No Date. Newspaper Article. Gilroy Historical Museum.


Jones, D., and W.R. Hildebrandt. 1994. *Archaeological Investigations at Sites CA-SCR-10, CA-SCR-17, CA-SCR-304, and CA-SCR-38/123 for the North Coast Treated Water Main Project, Santa Cruz County, California.* Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc. Copies available from Northwest Information Center, Department of Anthropology, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park.


Pacific Coast Architecture Database. 2018. “Wheeler Hospital, Gilroy CA.”

May 6, 1882, pg. 346.

June 27, 1885, pgs. 594-595.

September 24, 1892, pg. 252

December 17, 1892, pg. 516.


San José Mercury-News. 1941. “Gilroy’s Fame Comes from Ranches.” June 20, 1941. San José Public Library.


San José Mercury-News. No Date. “New Plant Never Really Did its Job.” San José Public Library.


Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission. 1979. “Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory.” San José, CA: SCC Historical Heritage Commission


Various Newspapers. “Highlights from Gilroy Newspapers by Year.” November 11, 1904. Gilroy Historical Museum.


APPENDIX A

In progress