

# HISTORIC CONTEXT SURVEY

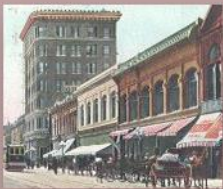
Greater Gardner Neighborhoods  
San José, Santa Clara County, California



Prepared for:

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*May 23, 2011; updated October 2, 2017*



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## PUBLICATION CREDITS

### Preservation Planning Guidelines and Publications

This report was prepared using the following guidelines and publications:

*Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation, Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning* (National Register of Historic Places Bulletin #24)

*Greater Gardner Neighborhood Improvement Plan, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, 2002*, City of San José

*Greater Gardner Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, 2007*, City of San José

*Historical Overview and Context Statement for the City of San José*, prepared by Archives & Architecture, 1992. Department of Planning, City of San José

### Historic Context Survey Report Preparation

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Van Grundy family photo album, courtesy of Dan Erceg.

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## INTRODUCTION

Historic resource surveys and historic context statements are technical documents developed by communities throughout the United States. These documents provide a comprehensive planning tool for the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties. By developing and maintaining historic resource surveys and historic context studies, local governments are able to implement planning practices addressing historical and cultural resources, practices that have century-old roots in the United States.

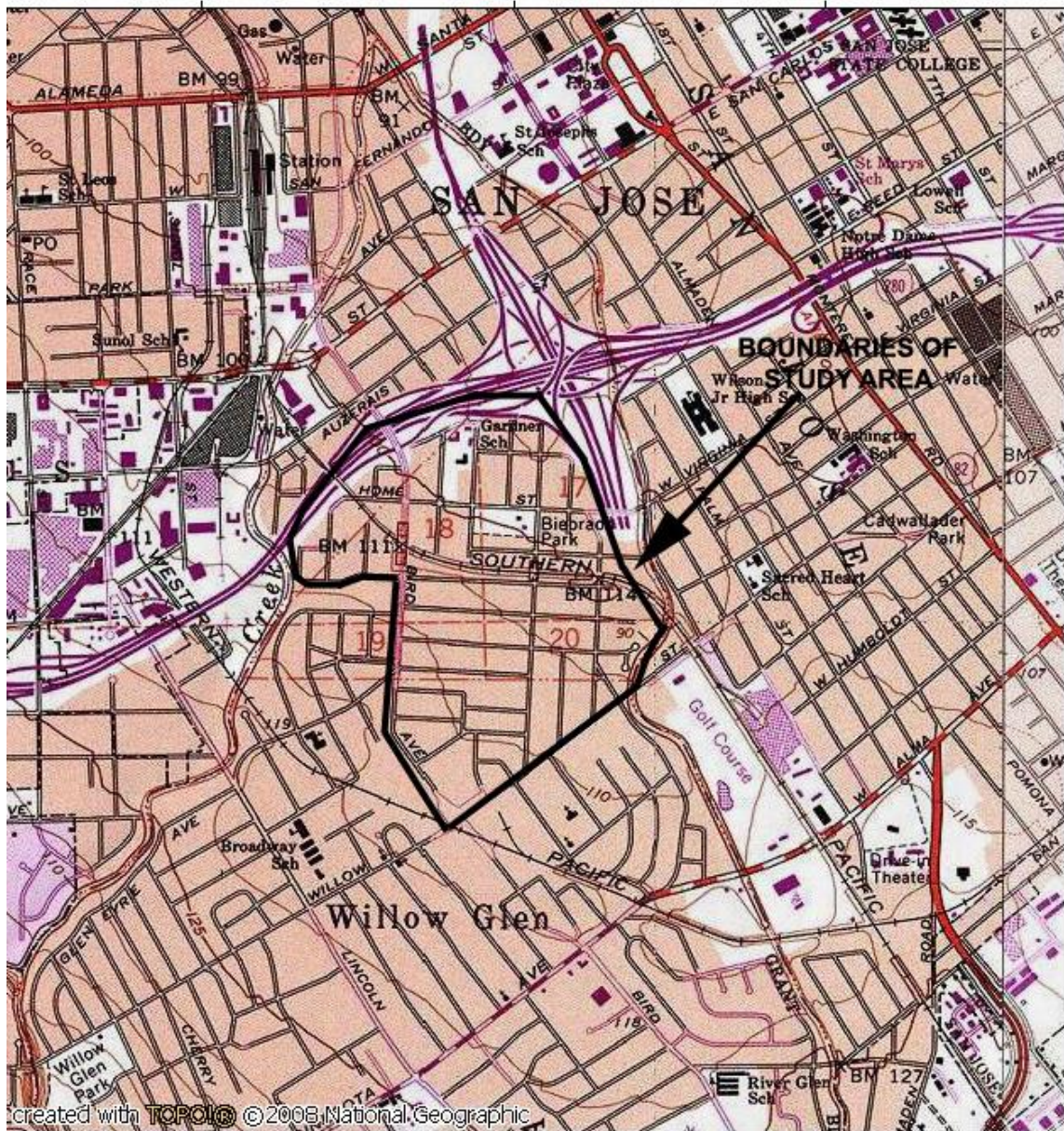
San José - California's first civil settlement following the 1769 introduction of European culture to the region - is one of the earliest non-indigenous communities established in historical times on the West Coast. It played a brief but important role during the late expansion period of European Colonialism in the Western Hemisphere that concluded with the signing of territorial treaties at Madrid in the 1790s. The town was founded as a pueblo on November 29, 1777 under Spain. As one of two significant settlements at the edge of the frontier under both Spain and Mexico during the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century (the other being the pueblo of Los Angeles), San José was an agricultural center for the central coast area. During the last century and a half, San José evolved as a unique American city built upon its historic roots.

The development of San José during the first century of the American Period following the concession of Alta California in 1848 by Mexico in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildago is discussed in many local history books. There is less information available about San Jose's development at the neighborhood level however. This report is an attempt to place the development of one of San Jose's older neighborhoods, the residential area southwest of San Jose's downtown known as Greater Gardner, within the larger framework of San Jose's history. By investigating the significant aspects and broad patterns of historical development at the neighborhood level, it is then possible to identify the types of historic properties that represent important historic trends. With a better understanding of the roots of neighborhood development, planning for future change can occur that will facilitate the long-term vitality and sustainability.

It is the intention that this neighborhood context survey be used by community organizations of the Greater Gardner neighborhoods, and the City of San José, as a planning document when considering the establishment of a conservation area, as well as for recognizing historic properties in the area for listing on the *City's Historic Resources Inventory* and designation as City Landmarks.



## Area Map



USGS San José West and East composite, 1980 photo revised

## Boundaries of the Survey Area

The study area consists of the physical land within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of San José, Santa Clara County, California, located to the southwest of the downtown commercial core, and outside what local planners call the urban frame (San José's Original City boundaries established by 1850). More specifically, it can generally be described as bounded by Interstate 280 on the north, Guadalupe Expressway/SR 87 on the east, Willow Street on the south and Bird Avenue on the west, included a triangular shaped neighborhood called Gregory Plaza that is located west of Bird Avenue below Interstate 280 and north of the Palm Haven neighborhood at Bird and Coe Avenues.



*Boundaries of the Greater Gardner survey area*



## PLANNING BACKGROUND

Preservation of the nation's heritage has long been part of the national purpose. Since 1966, when Congress called upon the Secretary of the Interior to give maximum encouragement to state governments to the development of statewide historic preservation, the National Park Service has developed methodologies for survey planning and preservation programs that are outlined in a number of published guidelines, primarily within the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*. Cities such as San José rely on these federal standards for planning long term preservation of the community's historic and cultural resources.

Surveys, and their resulting historic resource inventories, provide a basis for sensitive and effective planning decisions. San José's surveys and inventories provide documentation that allows informed assessments of its built environment within the development review processes. With the information provided in these documents, San José planners and policy makers can understand the history of the city in a variety of ways, and San José's citizens can preserve and celebrate significant buildings and neighborhoods that convey a sense of the past. The current San José Historic Resources Inventory and Citywide Historic Context Statement compile a variety of types of research, including historical patterns of development, identification of diverse community values associated with the built environment, and comprehensive evaluations of individual properties and their resources.

### Methodologies for Surveys and the Development of Context Statements

The methods for conducting surveys are specified in National Register Bulletin 24, *Guidelines for Local Surveys: a Basis for Preservation Planning*. The Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, has developed the National Register program and prepared a number of associated bulletins that address the study and registration of the full range of cultural resources that community planners may encounter.

Surveys are prepared to be consistent with the *Secretary of Interiors Standards for Identification*. The standards provide a procedural baseline as follows:

- Standard I. Identification of historic properties is undertaken to the degree required to make decisions.
- Standard II. Results of identification activities are integrated into the preservation planning process.
- Standard III. Identification activities include explicit procedures for record-keeping and information distribution.

The recommended research methodology for historic surveys undertaken in the City of San José is outlined in the *Survey Handbook*, dated March 1992. This handbook was prepared by the firm of Archives & Architecture as a part of San José's 1991/1992 Update to the Historic Resources Inventory.

Historic resource surveys link resources to their associated historic contexts. To evaluate buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts for historic significance, a statement of context must first be defined. An historic context statement establishes the background chronology and themes of a specified area. In doing so, it describes the significant characteristics and patterns of that area's history and cultural development.

*National Register Bulletin Number 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* defines historic contexts as "historical patterns that can be identified through consideration of the history of the property and the history of the surrounding area."

*National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* is more specific, defining a historic context as: "Information about historic trends and properties grouped by an important theme in the prehistory or history of a local community, state, or nation during a particular period of time. Because historic contexts are organized by *theme, place and time*, they link historic properties to important historic trends."

To place a resource within its historic context, the resource's period of significance must be identified as well as the historic theme it represents. The *period of significance* is the span of time in which a property attained the significance for which it meets the relevant local, California Register or National Register criteria for historical significance. A historic theme is a means of organizing properties into coherent patterns based on elements such as environment, social/ethnic groups, transportation networks, technology, or political developments that have influenced the development of an area during one or more periods of prehistory or history. By focusing on place, time and theme, historic context statements explain how, when, where and why the built environment developed in a particular manner. They describe an area's significant land use patterns and development, group the patterns into historic themes, identify the types of historic properties that illustrate those themes, and establish eligibility criteria and integrity thresholds for registering historic properties on national, state or local historic registers.

The historic period of this context statement about Greater Gardner begins in 1769, when Euro-Americans first entered the region with the intent of establishing permanent settlement. Occupation of Northern California by indigenous peoples began over 10,000 years previously. This historic survey and context statement however does not contain an overview of the prehistoric past. Development planning that involves archaeological resources must conform to a separate set of methodologies for investigation, identification, recordation and treatment.

The methodology for creating a historic context statement consists of five steps:

1. Identify the concept, relevant time period and geographical limits of the study area
2. Review existing contemporary information such as past surveys, recorded information about the study area on file at the local, state and national level
3. Perform original research using available primary and secondary sources of information
4. Synthesize the historical information gathered into a written narrative
5. Define existing property types within the study area and group them based on shared physical and/or associative characteristics. These property types should be understood by character-defining features associated with extant resources, patterns of development, and a statement of current conditions and the levels of integrity necessary for a resource to be a contributor to a significant historic pattern of development.

Historic context surveys are not intended to result in static planning documents, but should evolve as additional information is acquired by public agencies that might affect future development planning within the study area. The development of a historic context statement must therefore include a description of adopted community preservation goals and strategies, as well as defining what individual property research might be necessary in the future to better evaluate specific projects within the study area. The historic context statement is the foundation for decision-making regarding the planning, identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties. The criteria for historical significance are the criteria of the *National Register of Historic Places*, the *California Register of Historical Resources*, and the City of San José criteria for Historic Landmark designation and listing on the *San José Historic Resources Inventory*.

The California State Historical Resources Commission has identified nine general themes covering the entire range of California's diverse cultural heritage. These themes are: Aboriginal, Architecture, Arts/Leisure, Economic/Industrial, Exploration/Settlement, Government, Military, Religion, and Social/Education.

Over the years, the California Office of Historic Preservation has prepared several versions of its *Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan* for adoption by the Historical Resources Commission that describes the vision for California for historic preservation. Since 1973, the *Plan* has been reviewed and updated every five years, and identifies new preservation partners, has continued to broaden our understanding of all cultural resources, and provides goals and objectives for future preservation planning. In recent revisions to this *Plan*, goals were adopted to understand better the historic and cultural property types that had been little recognized in the past. These included post-World War II architecture and suburban development, Cold War era structures, cultural

landscapes and traditional cultural properties, and the inclusion of cultural properties associated with the diverse communities that are found throughout the state.

As of 2017 the Office of Historic Preservation is currently gathering public input for the next Statewide Historic Preservation Plan (2018-2022) to replace the current plan at the end of 2017.

The City of San José has adopted a *Citywide Historic Context Statement*, including “periods of significance,” and “interpretive themes.” Nine distinct themes are identified, although not all of the themes have been developed within the context statement. These themes are discussed in subsequent sections, but for the purposes of this study, the focus has been on “Architecture and Shelter,” which is the predominate theme within the Greater Gardner survey area.

## Project Objectives

The objectives of this Greater Gardner Historic Context Survey study are to:

- Establish patterns of development and any significant events in the Greater Gardner study area up to about 1960.
- Organize the Greater Gardner’s developmental patterns and events into a group of themes that represent the built environment as developed up to about 1960.
- Provide examples of associated property types focusing on properties with extant historic buildings and structures.
- Provide eligibility and integrity thresholds for purposes of listing and/or nominating historic properties to national, state and local registers of historic resources.

The anticipated results of this study include preparation of individual property documentation for those eligible for listing on the San José *Historic Resources Inventory*, and preparation of individual property documentation and a district record for any areas within Greater Gardner that are eligible for designation as a conservation area and/or historic district for use by the community or City in initiating proceedings for designation by the San José City Council.

## The Greater Gardner Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) Planning Area

The neighborhoods of Greater Gardner are located southwest of the downtown core. There are three residential areas with active neighborhood associations, *Gardner* (Gardner Community Advisory Council), *North Willow Glen* (North Willow Glen Neighborhood Association), and *Gregory Plaza* (Gregory Plaza Neighborhood Association). These three neighborhoods are included within the Greater Gardner Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Area. The *Greater Gardner SNI Neighborhood*

*Advisory Committee* (NAC) comprises a coalition of community interests, and was a participant in the larger SNI program.

This report (context statement) is a result from the Greater Gardner Neighborhood field survey conducted by Archives & Architecture, LLC, which was undertaken as a part of the study, and summarizes the history of the area within specific historic periods, and themes that are relevant to understanding the geographical area. A preliminary mapping of the area based on recorded and unrecorded surveys, tracts, and subdivisions was done to better understand the larger patterns of development.

The Vision and Goals adopted in 2002 by the Greater Gardner SNI NAC, as updated in 2007, are as follows:

*The Greater Gardner Neighborhood Improvement Plan*, accepted by the City Council on January 2, 2002, identified a shared vision for the Greater Gardner Neighborhood: “The Greater Gardner Neighborhood has a strong, positive identity of which residents are proud of”. The 2002 vision further promotes an image of a vital urban neighborhood with a mix of residential areas, a thriving community center, public pool, local parks and commercial businesses interspersed throughout the neighborhood, especially along Bird and Delmas Avenues, and West Virginia and Willow Streets. The Neighborhood Improvement Plan aims at creating a vibrant district in which residents take full advantage of the proximity to transit hubs, regional open spaces, and the walkability to both Downtown San José and Willow Glen facilities and amenities. Neighborhood leaders also plan to continue partnering with the surrounding communities to share insights and concerns. The 2002 vision identified a desire for residential areas that are attractive, clean and safe. The neighborhood identified and prioritized specific projects during the initial planning process that addressed pedestrian corridors with well-maintained streets, sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, trees, parks and open space, business improvements and other neighborhood amenities.

In 2006, the area just north of the Greater Gardner Neighborhood was added to the area designated by the City as its Downtown Core. By this extension, the densification of this area will present challenges to the neighborhood as its community amenities will provide some of the basic services for the Downtown Core extension. As the gateway from Downtown to Historic Willow Glen, the Greater Gardner Neighborhoods have an opportunity with their unique historic charm and character to soften the impact of the potential development north of Interstate 280.

Updated neighborhood improvements aim to create a historic, safe and vibrant community in which residents can take full advantage of the neighborhood amenities and the walkable downtown San José and Willow Glen areas. With staff and Council support, the Greater Gardner Neighborhood Action Coalition will continue to work with developers to improve the conditions of the neighborhood.

Greater Gardner neighbors know that good development will only enhance and improve the area and bring new life and vitality to the City streets.

With the original and updated goals and vision, there are four main categories of improvements that the Greater Gardner Neighborhood will continue to focus on:

\_Neighborhood Streets, Traffic Circulation and Parking

\_Neighborhood Organization and Services

\_Neighborhood Condition and Maintenance, and

\_Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization

## Performance of the Survey

A *historic context survey* identifies resource types to be investigated further in *reconnaissance* and *intensive* surveys. A *reconnaissance* survey identifies resources that may have significance for their historic architecture, and will generally include the preparation of a data file, or in some cases DPR523a Primary Record survey forms. If a potential district or districts are identified during this process, DPR523d District Record forms are also prepared that summarizes the historic context and articulate contributing properties to that context.

*Intensive* level surveys record information about properties that includes information about historic context, personages, and events in addition to architectural information, and includes technical evaluations for historical significance according to national, state, and local criteria. This form of recordation includes both DPR523a forms, and the more detailed DPR523b forms, and in San José also includes preparation of numerical Evaluation Rating Sheets.

DPR523 series forms are a state-developed format for recording historic information. These forms comprise a single system for documenting the full range of values present in a given location. The kinds of resources that merit recordation and the different levels of information that may be appropriate to gather about them are established within a set of guidelines that have been prepared by the State of California and are available from the Office of Historic Preservation, called *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources*.

Identifying dates of construction for historic resources within the study area as a part of *reconnaissance* and *intensive level* studies are problematic, as building permits are available for only some time periods, and the related indexes and primary records are dispersed in a number of local archives. Early maps and aerials, as well as historic city address directories are used to place building construction dates within narrow frames of time that can then be confirmed by on-site evaluations.

Research on applicable residential subdivisions for this study was undertaken at the County of Santa Clara Records and Surveyors Offices. Additional resources were utilized at the California Room of the Martin Luther King Jr. Library in Downtown San

José and the San José Archives at History Park on Senter Road. The California Room maintains original sets and microfilm copies of some versions of the Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Maps, which are the most useful tool in conducting primary building research. Additionally, city directories are available for most of the years from 1870-1979, and block books and school district maps help identify early property owners.

## Past Survey Efforts

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, local public media began to write about the public's concerns about destruction of the area's physical resources, then driven by community redevelopment advocates and the new San José Redevelopment Agency. In September 1973, the City of San José, with the urging of its Landmarks Commission, began its first "windshield" survey of historic resources within the City limits. The resulting inventory, completed in April 1974, was entitled, *San José Visual Inventory of Historic and Archeological Sites*. Coordinated by Thomas M. King under contract to the City of San José Parks and Recreation Department, the effort was assisted by the help of approximately 71 volunteers including a large number of college students. It is often referred to as "the King Survey."

This survey utilized earlier research that had been compiled by the Junior League of San José. The Junior League had been responsible throughout the Bay Area in initiating architectural resource surveys, and had helped publish a number of books during this period enlightening the region about the architectural heritage of the Bay Area. In the early 1970s, League volunteers had surveyed some 1,500 buildings in the County, and had prepared written listings of 350, which were published in Phyllis Butler's 1975 book *The Valley of Santa Clara, Historic Buildings, 1792-1920*.

Over 1,030 sites were recorded and photographed in San Jose's "King Survey." This survey was done by planning area, with approximately 23 percent of the sites recorded in the thirteen planning areas located outside of the downtown frame. The Central Planning Area included approximately 77 percent of the sites recorded. The survey resulted in publication of *San José, an Inventory of its Historical and Architectural Heritage by the San José Historic Landmarks Commission* in 1975, and an adoption of San José's first Historic Preservation Ordinance that same year. While the publication displayed only a sampling of the historical structures from the survey, it did list designated city landmarks, heritage trees, local registered California Historical Landmarks and a list of sites to be researched in the future.

This first San José Survey was followed by a second survey in 1977, but that survey only included properties within the Central Planning Area. Coinciding with publication of *A Handbook for the Preservation of Landmarks in San José* by the City of San José Department of Parks and Recreation, this survey was partially funded under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 through the California State Office of Historic Preservation. Within sixteen neighborhoods and the central business district, 1,800 structures and

community design features were identified, 300 California DPR forms were completed, and 20 National Register Applications were completed. The recorded sites were subsequently adopted in 1978 by the San José City Council as the “official survey of historic places” to be added to the existing list of City Landmarks.

This survey was amended by a second phase, which began in October 1979, also co-sponsored by the State Office of Historic Preservation. The firm of Urban/Rural Conservation prepared the supplemental study, which reviewed and re-classified the 1,800 sites according to their level of significance. The report, entitled *Historic Preservation Plan, City of San José*, also provided recommendations for the creation of an on-going program for historic preservation within the City. This supplementary study was largely in response to the emerging requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In 1981, the San José Historic Landmarks Commission supplemented the work by including within the Inventory citywide resources identified in other surveys, such as the Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory.

In 1986, the San José City Council adopted Resolution 58957 approving the use of the *Historic Resources Inventory* as a reference guide for land use and development planning and authorized the Historic Landmarks Commission to maintain the Inventory. This catalogue of over 2,000 historic structures was published in January 1987, and included the establishment of three conservation areas in the city.

In 1989, *the Plan for the Past*, developed by the City Council-appointed Committee for the Past, refocused community attention on historic preservation. Adopted by the San José City Council on October 17, 1989, the Plan called for, among other initiatives:

*Whereas the existing Inventory presents an excellent foundation, The Plan For The Past encourages completion of additional historical and architectural data in order to derive a complete survey of historic structures. This survey should initially identify areas of significant historic resources within the Downtown Core and Frame areas of the City and ultimately provide a complete citywide survey.*

In 1989, the San José Historic Landmarks Commission also developed a formal numerical evaluation rating system. This system was developed using the model designed by Harold Kalman of Canada and published in his booklet *The Evaluation of Historic Resources* (Kalman 1980). The Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement amended the rating system in late-1998, and again in 2010.

The San José Planning Department initiated a comprehensive update of the citywide *Inventory* in 1991, contracting with Archives and Architecture in this effort. In March 1992, the *Survey Handbook* was completed, providing a definitive guide to future survey work within the city as a part of the first phase of the work. A context statement for the City of San José was also prepared, along with a first phase of actual survey work, which focused on un-reinforced masonry structures (URMs), the outcome of the Loma Prieta



Earthquake. The URM study was the first systematic update of the *Historic Resources Inventory* in the downtown area since the late-1970s. Phase Two of the survey focused on two historic themes at the citywide level: Industry and Manufacturing, and Transportation and Communication. Glory Anne Laffey of Archives & Architecture prepared focused context statements for the two studied themes; the remaining themes have not yet been developed. Additional overlay themes have also been identified but not yet developed since the adoption of the original context statement in 1992.

Subsequent to the 1991-1992 efforts, the City of San José has contracted with professional historical consulting firms to conduct surveys of the downtown commercial core, the San José State University east downtown frame, and neighborhood surveys in Market-Almaden as well as SNI-funded neighborhood surveys in Spartan-Keys, Delmas Park, and Washington (Guadalupe-Washington and Cottage Grove). The surveys have resulted in the establishment of three new conservation areas and two additional landmark districts that have been formally adopted by the San José City Council.

Additionally, in 2009, a historic context survey of mid-century modern buildings was completed in partnership with the Preservation Action Council of San José, and in 2010 context statements for Urban Village planning areas were prepared by Basin Research Associates, Inc. and their subconsultants for the West San Carlos Street, North First Street, and The Alameda corridors.

These surveys, and other large surveys conducted by other public agencies such as the Bay Area Rapid Transit District, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and the California High Speed Rail Authority as well as other quasi-public agencies, constitute a diverse range of identified historic resources within the city's jurisdiction. These identified resources are yet to be compiled into a single, easily accessed datafile. At present, the San José *Historic Resources Inventory* remains the most comprehensive listing of San José's historical assets.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

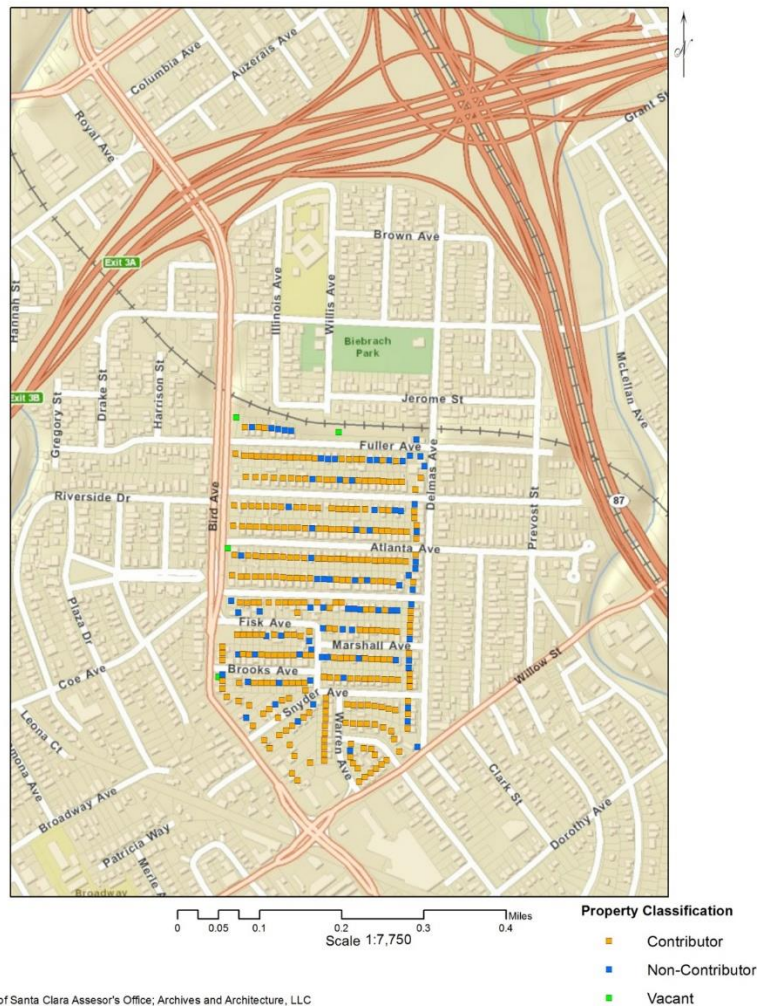
The neighborhoods within Greater Gardner contain a total of about 965 properties, of which most are developed with single family homes over 50 years in age. Little identification of historic resources through survey efforts has occurred prior to the current study, and consequently the quantity and significance of historic properties in this large inner-city neighborhood has remained unknown. Portions of Greater Gardner remain today as an intact representation of San José's historic growth for almost a century beginning with San José's period of *Horticultural Expansion* in the 1880s, and continuing to the first decade following the end of World War II. Greater Gardner embodies, within the boundaries of the neighborhood study area, architectural styles and vernacular building types that represent the breadth of design of the period, and that reflect the residential architecture found throughout California. This large, mostly single-family residential area that contains some pockets of commercial use and some multi-family residential development that occurred at its edges during the 1950s and later, is diverse in both visual and demographic aspects.

The fabric of the residential buildings in Greater Gardner is undergoing modification in the present, primarily due to envelope replacement projects (ERPs). In some areas of Greater Gardner, particularly the area north of the railroad right-of-way that bisects the neighborhood, these often-irreversible changes have cumulatively affected the historic character of the setting. Utilization of planning tools, such as designation of conservation areas, can positively assist in helping direct the revitalization of some of the neighborhood areas in the future in a way that respects the values inherent in the historic resource that they constitute. Additionally, adding eligible properties to the City's *Historic Resource Inventory* can help to preserve some of the more significant buildings and structures in the greater neighborhoods outside of potential conservation area boundaries for those buildings that have maintained integrity to their historic character over time.

Within a sub-area of Greater Gardner, south of the Joint-Powers Board railroad right-of-way, and between Bird Avenue, Willow Street, and Delmas Avenue, is a neighborhood area that has maintained a high level of integrity to its historical development. While most of this neighborhood is vernacular in character, it has a distinct sense of place. This area, and the adjacent area to the east, has been identified as North Willow Glen by local residents. The sub-area within the boundaries noted above consists of about ten residential subdivisions. Close to 80% of the residential properties in this sub-area contribute to the sense of historic place. The houses in this area have maintained adequate levels of physical integrity to their original building form and materials. This area of about 380 properties appears to qualify for designation as a conservation area under City of San José criteria for such designation (see next page).

The subdivisions to the immediate east of this potential conservation area also contains many historic properties. Much of this development occurred during later periods, and it lacks the unified historic character of the area west of Delmas Avenue. Only around 33% of the properties were found to be contributors to the larger historic context of the Greater Gardner area.

Potential Conservation Area in Greater Gardner



Source: County of Santa Clara Assessor's Office; Archives and Architecture, LLC

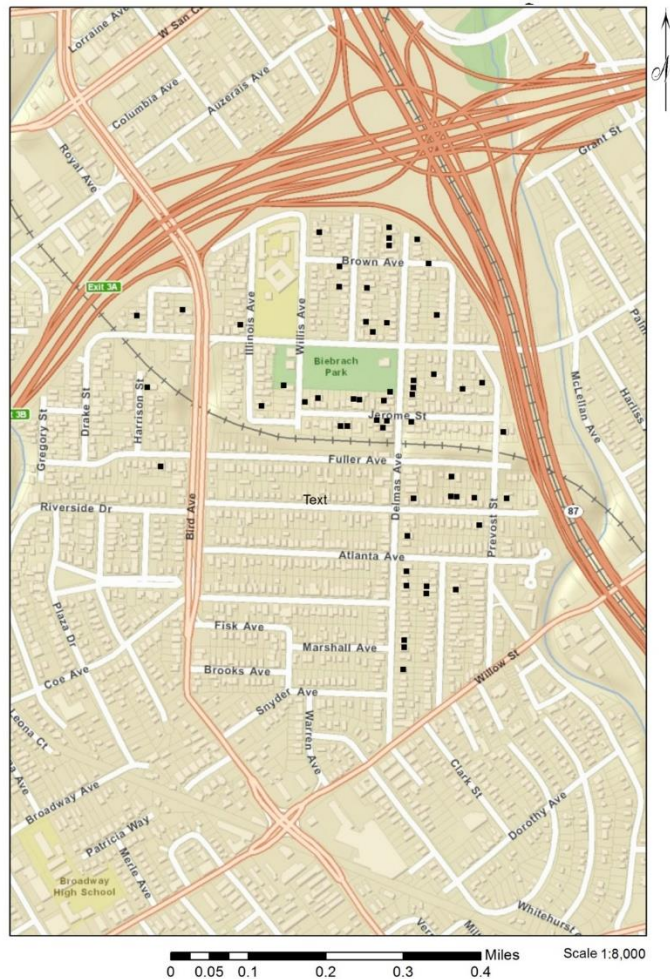
*Potential Conservation Area in Greater Gardner*

The other two neighborhood areas within Greater Gardner, Gregory Plaza and Gardner, also contain a large number of historic properties. Gregory Plaza and its environs has a small concentration of vernacular houses from the Interwar Period along Fuller Avenue, but also has large areas of more recent development mixed in with the old. This mixture of building types has resulted in a loss of a sense of historic place that may have characterized the neighborhood during its early period. Most of the older houses that

remain in this neighborhood have been subject to envelope replacement projects that cover or replace existing siding and modify window and door openings. Only around 25% of the properties contribute to the historic character of the Greater Gardner area.

The areas north of the railroad right-of-way, especially that around Biebrach Park, Gardner Community Center, and Gardner School, contain many early houses, and about 10% of the properties appear to qualify for San Jose’s *Historic Resources Inventory*. This area, however, has been severely impacted by remodeling and infill projects and does not meet the criteria for conservation area designation, as only around 40% of the properties maintain integrity to their original form and materials and contribute to the historic character of the Greater Gardner area. Future planning should focus of preservation of individual historic resources within community revitalization efforts where feasible.

Eligible Properties for HRI Outside Potential Conservation Area



Source: County of Santa Clara Assessor's Office, Archives and Architecture

*Eligible Properties for HRI Outside Potential Conservation Area*

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### Spanish Period (1777–1821)

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI divided between Spain and Portugal the right to explore and colonize the world: to Portugal he gave the east, to Spain the west. Beginning in the Caribbean, where Columbus had recently discovered a new realm, Spain gradually spread its influence over much of the Americas. Alta (or Upper) California, the far northwestern territorial edge of New Spain, was one of the last regions colonized. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and his crew explored the coast of Alta California in 1542 followed in 1602 by Sebastian Vizcaino, but neither expedition left any settlers. The Spanish chose instead to concentrate their settlements in the southwestern territory of Baja (or Lower) California, until they became aware of English and Russian voyagers exploring the neglected territory of Alta California. Spanish rulers resolved to extend the Jesuit mission system of Baja California northward. When King Charles III systematically expelled the Jesuits from Spain and all of its territories, the Franciscans took their place, arriving in Baja California in 1767. Spanish soldiers and Franciscan missionaries set out northward in 1769 to establish two new outposts of the Spanish empire: one in San Diego and the other in Monterey Bay.

The Spanish established three types of institutions when they colonized new territories: *presidios*, *pueblos*, and missions. The *presidio* was a military fort used to control native populations and defend the colony from invasion. The *pueblo* was a town settlement, establishing Spanish commerce and settling farmers in a territory. The Roman Catholic Church founded missions to convert native populations and civilize them to European standards. Each mission's sphere of influence radiated from its center, with buildings for worship, housing, and industries, outwards to surrounding grain fields and livestock grazing lands.

The Spanish presence in the San Francisco Bay region began with the founding of Mission San Francisco de Asis (Mission Dolores) on June 29, 1776. The Presidio of San Francisco, established on December 16, 1776, protected both the San Francisco mission and a second mission, Santa Clara de Asis, founded on January 12, 1777.

San José was the first pueblo to be established in Spanish California, settled on November 29, 1777, on the eastern bank of the Guadalupe River. This area, about two miles north of the Greater Gardner neighborhoods, was the town center until sometime in the 1790s, when, due to flooding problems, the pueblo was moved southward to an area centered at what is now Market and Santa Clara Streets. Within the pueblo, the settlers (*pobladores*) were granted house lots (*solares*) and cultivation plots (*suertes*). The undeveloped lands east of the pueblo were suburbs or common lands (*ejidos*), used for the grazing of livestock and retained for future residential growth of the pueblo.

The Guadalupe River generally marked the western boundary of the pueblo. Lands on its eastern bank were mainly associated with Mission Santa Clara, although during the early American period, the northeast portion of the Greater Gardner study area would be deemed pueblo lands. In the 1790s, a road was built, called now as then The Alameda, to link the pueblo and the mission.

Following the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821), most of the Greater Gardner study area remained associated with the mission, but were swampy and largely uninhabitable lands that collected rainwater from Los Gatos Creek. This creek originated above Los Gatos Canyon, and meandered through the valley through what is now Dry Creek Road, dropping to the lowlands in what is now a swale from Dry Creek Road to the current channel between Glen Eyrie Avenue and Twin Brook Drive east of Meridian Avenue. The channel then terminated and washed out into a large grove of sycamores that started at about the southern end of what is now Gregory Street. The area between this grove of sycamores and the Guadalupe River was a large swamp of willow trees that extended from about Willow Street on the south to where Interstate 280 frames the neighborhood today. The south and west boundary of the swamp was a ridge that follows the Western Pacific right-of-way from Los Gatos Creek to Willow Street, and then Willow Street to a spot north of the Willow Street bridge.

At the southeastern corner of Greater Gardner, the Guadalupe River had once jogged westward at about Willow Street, meandering southwesterly to where it fanned out at about where Bird Avenue meets Byerley Street today, draining another large swampy area populated by willows. Much of what is now the upper reaches of the Guadalupe River did not connect to the current downstream river one hundred and fifty years ago. It drained into a large sink of sycamores between Monterey Road and the current channel along Almaden Road. In the early 1860s, the Lewis Canal was constructed that connected the upper reaches of the Guadalupe River at Willow Street to the mouth of the Arroyo Seco de los Capitancillos near Curtner Avenue, allowing for the draining and development of the Willow Glen area during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Until the canal was constructed, most of Willow Glen remained uninhabitable at the northern reaches of the San Juan Bautista rancho.

During the first period of Euro-American influence in Alta California, the swampy area was likely important to the pueblo residents as well as the Native American community for game hunting and other uses associated with this type of natural setting. The earliest inhabitants of this area had been the members of the Ohlone or Costanoan Native American language group. The Santa Clara Valley along the banks of the Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek was occupied by the Tamyen or Tamien sub-group of the Ohlones, four or more triblets with their own territories within the valley. The natives congregated in rancherias or concentrations of small villages that were related to each other by kinship ties. The Ohlones established their settlements near a dependable water source and other easily available subsistence needs.

A large Tamien village existed adjacent the Willows to its east, and during the Spanish and Mexican periods, Native Americans continued to live south of the pueblo.

## Mexican Period (1821 – 1846)

The transfer of governmental control from Spain to Mexico in 1821 brought the secularization of the missions and changing land utilization and ownership patterns. In 1824, Mexico passed a law for the settlement of vacant lands in an effort to stimulate further colonization. Any citizen, whether foreign or native, could select a tract of unoccupied land so long as it was a specific distance away from the lands held by missions, pueblos, and Indians. The grantee petitioned the governor for a specific tract, which after investigation and if there were no objections, was granted.

Mexican governors made 38 land grants between 1833 and 1845 in the Santa Clara Valley. A citizen-granted rancho land was required to be occupied and a dwelling built within a certain period. Many of the ranchos granted in the Santa Clara Valley had received provisional grants from the *alcalde* several years before the official petition to the governor. Each rancho hacienda was in many cases a self-supporting village, composed of the main residence, laborers' housing, corrals, grist mill, tannery, etc., surrounded by vineyards and cultivated fields.

The former mission lands of the present Greater Gardner area became part of two land grants. On March 12, 1844, Mexican Governor Micheltoreana emancipated the American Indian Roberto Balermينو and granted him the 2219.34-acre *Rancho de los Cochés*. That same year, the governor granted the 8879.54-acre *Rancho San Juan Bautista* to José Agustín Nárvaez. The Plat of San Juan Bautista rancho, dated November 7, 1860, shows the northern boundary of the rancho abutting the southeastern boundary of *Rancho de los Cochés* ("ranch of the pigs") and the southwestern boundary of pueblo lands. Using contemporary landmarks, the line originated from where Willow Street meets the eastern bank of the Guadalupe River and ran due west to the Los Gatos Creek. The segment of Coe Avenue between Bird and Delmas Avenues is the only extent street alignment that marks a portion of the historic rancho boundary. These original rancho owners represent two classes of Mexican-era inhabitants of the Santa Clara Valley: Roberto, a Christianized Mission Indian, and Narvaez, a *pobladore* settler of San José from Mexico.

In 1840, the *mayordomo* of the Santa Clara mission, Ignacio Alviso, clearly stated in granting Roberto use of the land, "in spite of the name the *Rancho* was not a farm for hogs, but a sheep pasture used from the first of June to the end of October for grazing." This coincides with the valley's dry season, when the area was likely not as swampy and would be appropriate for pasturage. Alviso did not state the area's use during the rainy season, but testimony before the land commission in 1854 suggested that the rancho's name was apt, and wild hogs did roam there. James A. Forbes testified that "Indians had hogs in a corral where Roberto's house later stood, but as the Indians scattered, the hogs

became wild and were killed off.” Others testified that wild hogs lived in this “impenetrable swamp” and that hogs were kept at no other place on the mission lands. Because hogs could easily destroy crops, William Cronon wrote in his book *Changes in the Land* that farmers in colonial New England allowed hogs to range freely on coastal peninsulas or offshore islands, where watery boundaries offered a cheaper alternative to building and maintaining fences. This swampy area between the Los Gatos and Guadalupe Rivers would have provided a similarly natural corral for Native Americans’ hogs.

Roberto was born on the land he claimed. His father had been a *capitan* of Mission Santa Clara, supervising other Mission Indians tending to herds of cattle and flocks of sheep on mission lands. Roberto formally petitioned Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado for a land grant, which he provisionally granted in October 1840. Governor Micheltoarena made the official grant four years later.

Witnesses remember Antonio Suñol living on the rancho at least as early as 1844. He was an educated and resourceful man who could assist Roberto and other *rancheros* with accounts and operations. Antonio Suñol was a native of Spain who first saw the San Francisco Bay as a seaman on a French ship, and he is credited as the Santa Clara Valley’s first “foreign” settler. Suñol opened the first mercantile store and saloon in the pueblo in 1820. Suñol’s store, having the only strong box in town, also became the first bank. As the only educated citizen in the pueblo, he became a leading businessman and city official. He became the pueblo’s first postmaster in 1826, and in the 1830s he became the attorney (*sindico*) and registrar for the pueblo. Throughout the early 1840s he served as sub-prefect of the district and in 1841 as the *alcalde*.

Today, The Roberto Adobe & Suñol House on Lincoln Avenue to the west of the study area are among the oldest and most historically significant homes in Santa Clara County. The adobe was built by Roberto *ca.* 1836. In 1847, Antonio Suñol built the brick Suñol House adjoining the adobe. The non-profit California Pioneers of Santa Clara County acquired the property to create a free museum for the benefit of the public. The adobe is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

José Agustín Narvaez was born about 1778 in Aguascalientes, New Spain (Mexico).<sup>1</sup> At the age of 19 he came to California via San Blas in the schooner *Concepcion*, part of the settlement party that founded Villa de Branciforte (now Santa Cruz) near Mission Santa Cruz in 1797 and 1798. The *Concepcion* passengers were likely a group of convicts who had been given the choice of jail or a new life as *pobladores* in this frontier town. The

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<sup>1</sup> Genealogist Doris Castro identifies Jose Agustín Narvaez as originating from “City of Aguas Calientes, Durango from a Santa Clara baptism of 1/1/1820. A place called Agua Caliente exists about 120 miles north of Durango,” but most likely he was from the city of Aguascalientes in Guadalajara. Most Californiano genealogists identify his origin as Agua Calientes, Guadalajara.



Mexican government promised them free transportation, houses, tools, and cash as an inducement to come to California.

Agustin was married briefly to Maria Antonia Rosales in Branciforte, who died in late 1799; he remarried shortly afterward to Maria Josefa Higuera at Mission Santa Clara. Maria Josefa was born in Monterey in 1786, the daughter of Salvador Higuera and Ursula Lugo. Agustin and Maria Josefa had thirteen children. He enlisted in the San Francisco Company in 1806, and by 1811 the couple was living in San Francisco. They returned to the Santa Clara Valley in the late 1810s, where their children grew to adulthood. Agustin was *alcalde* (mayor) of the San José pueblo in 1821 and *regidor* (councilmember) in 1827, and was still living in the pueblo at the time of the 1841 *padron* (census). When the Mexican government granted Agustin Narvaez *Rancho San Juan Bautista* in 1844, it was during the last phase of land distribution before the beginning of the war with the United States. Narvaez was 66 years old when he received his land grant in 1844, and he likely lived briefly on the rancho.



Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-501 <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu>

<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tb34897/nt7brand=calispe>

*Northern portion of Rancho San Juan Bautista, from U.S. Surveyor General plat, 1860.*

## Early American Period (1846-1869)

Antonio Suñol purchased Roberto's rancho on January 1, 1847, relieving Roberto of a \$500 debt. Roberto, his wife, and his daughter, died later that year or next, likely from a cholera epidemic dating to those years. On February 8, 1851, another deed, between Suñol and Roberto's son Juan Balermino, confirmed and cleared the title. Suñol began construction of a three-room brick residence in 1847 that exists today adjacent the adobe.

Antonio Suñol entertained the foreign visitors that passed through San José, encouraging many to settle in the valley and enter into trade. Of the approximately 700 people who lived in the pueblo in 1835, forty were foreigners, mostly Americans and Englishmen. The first overland migration arrived in California in 1841, and by 1845 new American settlers had increased the pueblo population to 900.

This generation of settlers brought a new attitude toward land ownership and land use. Aboriginal population pressure on the land had not been great in the period before European settlement in 1777. The small Spanish and Mexican populations that joined and often displaced them supported themselves with limited farming, leaving most of the land free for cattle to graze. The products of this pastoral economy, hides and tallow, allowed trade with passing ships for import goods. Americans believed that their wealth was in the land, and the more they made the land pay, the wealthier they would become. One method for making a fortune in land was to buy large tracts early when the price was low and subdivide the land as population increased and property values rose.

These American and English settlers whom Suñol befriended rapidly stepped in to purchase Narvaez's rancho after California achieved statehood. On August 22, 1850, Agustin granted a portion of the rancho to his son José, and both father and son began to sell off the rancho piecemeal. The grantees purchased land throughout the 1850s in fairly large parcels of 100 or 200 acres; most were associated with the San Jose Land Company, a group of pioneer American settlers of the Santa Clara Valley who accumulated as much pueblo and rancho land as possible for speculation.

The 1860 census enumerated on July 9th the residents of what is now the Greater Gardner area. The two largest landowners were Coe and Bird, the namesakes of the roads that intersect the neighborhood. Henry W. Coe, age 40, claimed \$15,000 in real property, \$10,000 in personal property, and supported five workers on his farm along with his wife and infant son. Isaac Bird, age 42, claimed \$10,000 in real property, \$5,000 in personal property, and supported an equal number of farm laborers along with his wife and five children. Bird occupied the former *Rancho de los Coches* land; Coe occupied the northernmost parts of *Rancho San Juan Bautista*. Two farmers with more modest acreages, Pleasant C. Easley and James M. Patterson, were Coe's neighbors. Coe likely purchased his acreage from these two men, as the names of Easley and Patterson appeared on the Plat of Rancho San Juan Bautista, which was dated November 7, 1860,

but likely surveyed around 1856 or 1857. William J. Lewis surveyed Los Coches in January 1857.

Bird and Coe arrived singly in California during the height of the Gold Rush: Bird overland from Texas in 1849, Coe overland to Oregon in 1846, arriving in Santa Clara County in 1848. Bird mined only briefly and returned to Alabama to bring his wife and children to the Santa Clara Valley in 1851 via the isthmus of Panama. Coe was more fortunate in discovering gold. He claimed the Phoenix mine in Amador County and used what wealth and experience he gained to mine the miners through much of the 1850s. He settled in San Francisco and dealt in mining machinery imported from England. In 1858, he returned to New York to marry and brought his bride, the former Hannah Huntington, back to California. Historian Eugene Sawyer reported in 1922 that both Coe and his wife possessed a “handsome fortune” and settled in The Willows.

Isaac Bird was born in Brampton, England, and immigrated to the United States at age 23. He was naturalized in San José on April 6, 1857. On March 20, 1861, Isaac Bird declared and recorded his homestead as 150 acres bounded “on the east by the River Guadalupe, on the south by the lands of James M. Patterson and H. W. Coe, on the west by the Los Gatos, and on the north by the lands claimed and owned by Antonio Sunol and L. Prevost.”

On February 5, 1856, the Federal Board of Land Commissions confirmed to the City of San José four square leagues of land. The Guadalupe River was designated the western boundary, but to make the city limits square, the boundary cut a north-south line through Bird’s ranch between the Guadalupe River and a line approximately two city blocks away from the western bank. Some acreage was within the jurisdiction of the City of San José, but most was in unincorporated Santa Clara County.



*1869 Bird's Eye View by Geo H. Hare, Library of Congress collections (south from Auzeais in foreground)*

On April 23, 1861, Patterson recorded a homestead declaration of about 20 acres bounded “on the east by the Guadalupe River, on the north by the land of Isaac Bird, on the west by the land of H Coe, and on the south by the land of Pleasant C Easley.” Henry W. Coe did not record his homestead, but real estate transactions in 1863 suggest he was clarifying title for himself and his neighbors. To James M. Patterson, on March 17, 1863, he granted 11.2 acres. The Easleys granted 61.71 acres to Hannah H. Coe the following day. The Coe residence is shown on the 1876 Thompson and West map outside the study area, on the west side of Bird Avenue south of Coe. The Patterson residence stood on the south side of Willow Street, also beyond the project area boundaries.

Only 10.75 acres of the Bird ranch stood on the former Los Coches rancho. Bird purchased that tract from Suñol in February 1863. The remainder of Bird’s holdings were pueblo lands, tied up for years in court battles between the federal government, the City of San José, and the San Jose Land Company. On January 19, 1867, the City of San José granted Isaac Bird the easternmost part of his holdings, 200.62 acres. The San Jose Land Company claimed Bird’s western 120 acres during the land disputes, but cleared his title on September 25, 1868.

Bird and Coe set to work making these soggy bottomlands suitable for more intensive agriculture. Allowing cattle to graze on natural grassland is the least labor-intensive agricultural land use. During the 1850s and 1860s, while land titles were in flux, labor still in short supply, and markets outside California limited, the staple agricultural product was wheat. The easy cultivation and high fertility of the soil of the Santa Clara Valley facilitated wheat production with little capital investment and minimal labor inputs. By 1854, Santa Clara County produced 30 percent of California’s total wheat crop. In 1868, one observer noted, in summer the Valley was an almost unbroken wheat field. Other grain crops, primarily barley and oats, followed wheat in productivity.

While grain crops predominated in the Santa Clara Valley and throughout California during the 1860s, agriculturists began to experiment and diversify. Given the area’s mild climate, farmers imagined that many crops never before grown in California would flourish here, providing an alternative to imported agricultural products, and expanding California’s role in the export market. While the sea remained the primary route for export, Californians recognized the need for a railroad network to link the state not only to seaports but also to markets in the American interior. The Santa Clara Valley anticipated the coming of the railroad in the early 1850s; however, not until 1864 did a railroad line link San Francisco and San José, and not until 1869 did San José connect with the transcontinental railroad.

The California legislature subsidized agriculture and industry during the 1860s by offering cash premiums from the state treasury to farmers or manufacturers who could deliver proof of their success in growing desired new crops or producing needed manufactured goods. A 1922 biographical sketch of Henry Willard Coe credited him

with planting the first hops in the Santa Clara Valley, the first tobacco in California, and the first silk grown and manufactured in Willow Glen. The historical record supports none of these firsts, giving the honors instead to Coe's neighbors who predeceased him.<sup>2</sup>

Isaac Bird won a prize for his ten-acre crop of tobacco at the 1863 state agricultural fair. Farmers were optimistic that tobacco would make poor, thin soils pay, but leaf quality was not high in early crops, and farmers struggled with curing tobacco in a dry climate so different from America's tobacco belt. With the end of the Civil War, the pressure to grow tobacco outside the South lessened, and by 1870, farmers in Santa Clara County grew only a tenth of the tobacco they had harvested just a few years earlier.<sup>3</sup>

The silk pioneer in San José was not Coe, but his neighbor Louis Prevost. Prevost learned the silk business in his native France, introduced the white mulberry tree into California in 1854, and began his search for a fertile supply of silkworm eggs. Disease had ravaged French silkworm coconeries in the 1850s, and Prevost hoped that healthy eggs would thrive in California. The 1860 batch from France hatched successfully. Prevost's nursery of mulberry trees was just northeast of the study area. His silk factory was on Delmas Avenue and San Salvador Street, and he raised cocoons on the roof of his home nearby. Prevost manufactured little silk, so great was the worldwide export demand for silkworm eggs. The legislature offered extravagant bounties for mulberry tree plantations and the production of silk cocoons between 1862 and 1869, which triggered an unhealthy speculative boom statewide.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph Newman of San José attempted to cash in on the silk craze. He purchased land along the Los Gatos Creek from Henry W. Coe and erected the Pioneer Silk Factory in February 1867. He failed in two attempts to capitalize the company, but not for want of publicity stunts. Emperor Norton, the San Francisco eccentric, visited San José in July 1868 to command that the *San Jose Mercury* publish a proclamation exhorting the San José public to furnish sufficient capital to start the work of the silk factory. The following year Newman solicited more conventional authority, soliciting California Governor Haight to support the manufacture of two immense flags of California silk, one for California and one for the United States. After exhibits in Vienna in 1873 and Philadelphia in 1876, Newman presented one of the flags to the Smithsonian Institute in

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<sup>2</sup> "An Act for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Manufactures in California [Approved April 25, 1863.]" in *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society During the Year 1863* (Sacramento: O. M. Clayes, 1864), 52-55; Eugene Sawyer, *History of Santa Clara County*, (Historic Record Company: Los Angeles, 1922), 395.

<sup>3</sup> "List of Entries at the Fair of 1863: Farm Products Entry," in *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society During the Year 1863*, 79, 83, 132; "Table of Statistics for 1870-1871," in *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society During the Years 1870 and 1871* (Sacramento: A. Springer, 1872), 389.

<sup>4</sup> Nelson Klose, "Louis Prevost and the Silk Industry at San Jose," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 43 (December 1964): 309-317.

1888. Given Coe's background as a cotton manufacturer, he may have advised Newman on equipping the silk factory that bordered his ranch, but Coe appears otherwise uninvolved in the local silk industry.<sup>5</sup>

Farmers in the Sacramento Valley, immigrants from New York State's hop-growing region, won the first premiums for hops in 1864, but by 1867, Isaac Bird and Henry Willard Coe had 81 acres in the Santa Clara Valley planted to hops. Both used the labor of Chinese sharecroppers. Coe had come to California from Cooperstown, New York, the hub of that state's hop-growing region, so he might have preceded Bird in making the decision to plant to hops. Hops grew well in marshy bottomlands, and the tall poles on which to train the vines could be easily made from the willow trees that thrived in such areas. It took some years to plant out entire ranches to hops, and Bird and Coe both leased land to the Chinese to plant the rest of their acreage in strawberries and blackberries.<sup>6</sup>

### **Horticultural Expansion (1870-1918)**

The census taken on August 2, 1870, found the Bird and Coe households surrounded by large encampments of Chinese laborers cultivating hops and strawberries. Later in the decade, Bird and Coe had fully planted out their ranches in hops. As the 1870s progressed, Chinese farmers concentrated their strawberry farm leases in the Alviso area, where artesian wells provided better irrigation for thirsty strawberry plants and where anti-Chinese sentiment was not as strong as in the Willows. By 1877, Chinese were no longer welcome in the local hop fields. The *San Francisco Bulletin* reported that year that the Bird hop ranch, which previously used "Chinese labor costing \$10,000 or \$12,000," would that season harvest with labor from "white girls and boys and families."

Both Bird and Coe faced crises of labor and capital that would doom their hop ranches over the course of the 1870s. In 1871, both Bird and Coe mortgaged their land to the Odd Fellows Savings Bank, a San Francisco firm incorporated in 1866 for the benefit of members of that fraternal order. Each added a second mortgage by the spring of 1873. The Panic of 1873 came that fall and brought with it a depression felt worldwide that lasted through the 1870s. The Odd Fellows Savings Bank foreclosed on Coe's mortgages

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<sup>5</sup> SCC Deeds Book X, Pages 135, 182 (January 23, 1867); "When San Jose Was Young," *San Jose Mercury* (columns dated February 1, 1937; June 28, 1937; March 21, 1938; April 18, 1938; August 1, 1938); Klose, 315.

<sup>6</sup> James J. Parsons, "Hops in Early California Agriculture," *Agricultural History* 14 (July 1940): 110-116; Michael A. Tomlan, *Tinged with Gold: Hop Culture in the United States* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 19, 26, 51; "Table of Statistics for 1870-1871," in *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society During the Years 1868 and 1869* (Sacramento: D. W. Gelwicks, 1870); Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 124-126.

in 1874, and on March 30, 1875, Coe's hop ranch of 70.58 acres became the property of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank. A correspondent in the February 1880 issue of *The Californian* reported on the 1878 harvest at the Odd Fellows Savings Bank hop ranch. Although the ranch manager claimed "it would have been far more profitable to the company to hire Chinamen," the bank was experimenting with "hoodlums," idle men and boys from San Francisco boarding at the ranch for the duration of the harvest. "Any offenders against decency and good order would be promptly discharged and delivered over to the stern hand of the law," said the ranch manager.<sup>7</sup>



Excerpt from Thompson & West Atlas, 1876

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin C. Wright, *Banking in California, 1849-1910* (San Francisco: H. S. Crocker, 1910), 32; SCC Mortgages Book W, Page 538 (May 18, 1871); Book 1, Page 231 (February 19, 1873), Page 616 (April 15, 1873); SCC Deeds Book 7, Page 405 (March 30, 1875); Robert Duncan Milne, "Hoodlums on a Hop-Ranch," *The Californian* 1 (February 1880), 171-176.

## Bird Tract

Samuel Bishop began running his First Street Railway Company in 1872, a horse-drawn streetcar line. As Bishop had hoped, property values increased wherever horse cars were located. Calvert T. Bird, Isaac Bird's eldest son, built his legal career on his knowledge of the law of rails and roads, and the foundation of his expertise began in his effort to save the Bird hop ranch from foreclosure through a similar horse-car and land-sale venture. The Bird Tract map laid out Home (now West Virginia) Street, which intersected Lincoln (now Bird) Avenue and ran between the Los Gatos Creek and the Guadalupe River. The Birds also mapped out a proposed streetcar line that originated at Market and Santa Clara streets, entered the Bird hop ranch on a short extension of Delmas Avenue, turned west on what would become William Street until it intersected with an extension of Josefa Street. The southwestern route through the hop ranch corresponded to the alignment of present-day Willis Street. The road made a sharp turn northwest on what would become Coe Avenue east of Bird. The road continued along Lincoln (now Coe) Avenue to The Willows. In February 1876, the Market Street and Willow Glen Railroad incorporated, with Calvert T. Bird as its president, and the County Board of Supervisors granted the company a franchise to build the line. On January 13, 1877, the Market Street and Willow Glen Railroad began regular service.<sup>8</sup>

The Birds sold off some of their holdings west of Lincoln Avenue, likely implying to the buyers that the new horse-car line would raise the value of their lands. To Mary A. Smith, they sold 6.23 acres in what is now the Hulet Tract. To Sylvester Newhall they sold two parcels bordering his nursery on the north: eight acres near the silk factory, which is now the west half of El Nido Park and the Campo del Sol subdivisions; and 5.31 acres along Lincoln Avenue, which is now part of Newhall's subdivision and Griffith Court. To William Gardner, the Birds sold 5.108 acres, which is the block of the El Nido Park subdivision presently bounded by West Virginia Street, Harrison Street, Griffith Court, and Bird Avenue.<sup>9</sup>

The land sales and fledgling streetcar line were insufficient to prevent the Birds from defaulting on their mortgages with the Odd Fellows Savings Bank. In the spring of 1880, Calvert Bird stepped down as the streetcar's company president. Merchant Felix

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<sup>8</sup> Charles S. McCaleb, *Tracks, Tires & Wires: Public Transportation in California's Santa Clara Valley* (Glendale, CA: Interurban Press, 1981), 6; San José Historical Museum Association, *Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers: Santa Clara County, California* (San José: History Museum of San José, 1986. Originally published as *Santa Clara County and Its Resources: A Souvenir of the San Jose Mercury*, 1896), 280; The unrecorded Bird Tract map has not been found, but it is presumed to be represented on the City of San Jose Fourth Ward map in Thompson & West, *Historical Atlas of Santa Clara County* (San Francisco: Thompson and West, 1876), 42.

<sup>9</sup> SCC Deeds Book 39, Page 27 (November 11, 1875); SCC Deeds Book 39, Page 277 (January 27, 1876); SCC Deeds Book 42, Page 350 (June 1, 1877); SCC Deeds Book 42, Page 11 (August 11, 1876).



Gambert took his place at the helm. Low ridership put a financial drain on the railroad stockholders, and the line went bankrupt. On March 10, 1881, the railroad was sold at public auction to Gambert for \$6500.<sup>10</sup>

In the 1880 census, the Bird and Gardner families were living on neighboring farms, a Mr. Higginbotham ran the silk factory, and only a few Chinese labored and lived nearby. After the Odd Fellows Savings Bank foreclosed on the Bird hop ranch in 1881, the Bird family moved into town, settling at 376 Orchard for several years while Isaac Bird worked as a traveling salesman for a Sacramento nursery. The original Bird ranch house appears to have survived at 817 Willis Ave. until its demolition in 1963. When Isaac Bird retired in 1893, he and his wife moved to Watsonville.<sup>11</sup>

Felix Gambert tried to keep the railroad running, but, as historian Charles S. McCaleb wrote, “the little cars, traversing fields of mustard so high they were sometimes hidden from view, often made the run nearly empty.” Gambert sold the railroad to Jacob Rich, who already purchased Samuel Bishop’s First Street Railway Company. In June 1882, Rich asked permission from the county supervisors to build a branch on Willow Street westward from First Street. He abandoned the unprofitable run through the Bird hop ranch, providing service on Auzerais Avenue only to Delmas Avenue. On March 7, 1883, workmen began removing the hop ranch tracks. The Willow Street branch was opened to Lincoln Avenue April 14, and cars of the First Street Railroad first ran up Willow to Lincoln the following day.<sup>12</sup>

Land selling in The Willows for \$10 an acre in 1854-55 was worth as much as \$300 an acre in 1880, but the streetcar line alone could not account for all the increase in the land’s value. The large ranches of wheat, barley, and hops could be subdivided for profit if a new crop of immigrant farmers could make their smaller ranches pay with a more intensive crop. Berries had been area farmers’ first foray into intensified agriculture, but it was in dried orchard fruits that Willow Glen ranchers found the crop that would make a five- or ten-acre ranch pay. California orchardists had been experimenting with dried fruit to bring more of their crops to distant markets, but little was known about the methods European horticulturists used to dry the fruit that was California’s competition in the domestic marketplace. An early method was forced-air heat using an Alden

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10 Pendens, SCC Deeds Book 1, Page 417 (November 6, 1877); McCaleb, *Tracks, Tires & Wires*, 10.

11 SCC Deeds Book 60, Page 232 (July 2, 1881); 1915 Sanborn map, City of San José building permit to Bennie Romero, March 4, 1963; San José City Directories, 1881-1893; “Isaac Bird,” Santa Clara County Early Settlers File, on file at the Santa Clara City Library

12 McCaleb, 10, 12.

evaporator, patented for commercial use in 1869 by Charles Alden, of Newburgh, New York.<sup>13</sup>

On July 3, 1874, the Alden Fruit and Vegetable Preserving Company of San José incorporated with \$14,000 in capital stock sold to purchase the evaporator. Four of the company's five directors were long-time farmers in the Willows: Miles Hills (settled in 1855), C. T. Settle (1857), Royal Cottle (1857), and M. R. Brown (ca. 1860). The fifth director was a recent arrival to the Valley: W. H. Leeman, who with his son Frank C. Leeman had recently run what historian H. S. Foote described in *Pen Pictures* as "a large wholesale and retail general grocery and supply business" in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Leemans appear to have been the ones who sold the other investors on the Alden evaporator. Charles Alden's name would have been known to the first generation of California pioneers: he was the inventor of condensed milk, which, shipped around the Horn, brought a canned taste of the dairy to Gold Rush miners.<sup>14</sup>

The company erected its Alden evaporator at the corner of San Salvador and Josefa Street, just north of the Greater Gardner area. Other Willow Glen orchardists invested, including Sylvester Newhall, W. W. Cozzens, and T. B. Keesling, who would each later invest in land in Greater Gardner. Foote wrote in 1888 about the Alden evaporator:

*The machine was of no great capacity and did not work satisfactorily, but it turned out some good fruit, and in 1876 the company made a shipment of about fifteen tons of dried apricots. The returns from this shipment were so large that it satisfied the people that there was a great future for fruit-growing in this county. They knew that methods could and would be devised for putting their product into an imperishable shape for transportation, and they started in with vigor to plan their orchards.*<sup>15</sup>

George A. Fleming recalled in 1909 that, in the late 1870s, a Willow Glen orchardist took a load of prunes to a neighbor's evaporator but arrived too late. Fearing the prunes would not last until the next day, he dumped them by the bank of a creek. Several days later, he happened by and found that many of the prunes had dried well in the warm air and sunlight. Drying cut fruit on trays in the open air became the standard method in the Santa Clara Valley, one that the George A. Fleming Company practiced in a large way at the southern end of the Greater Gardner area.<sup>16</sup>

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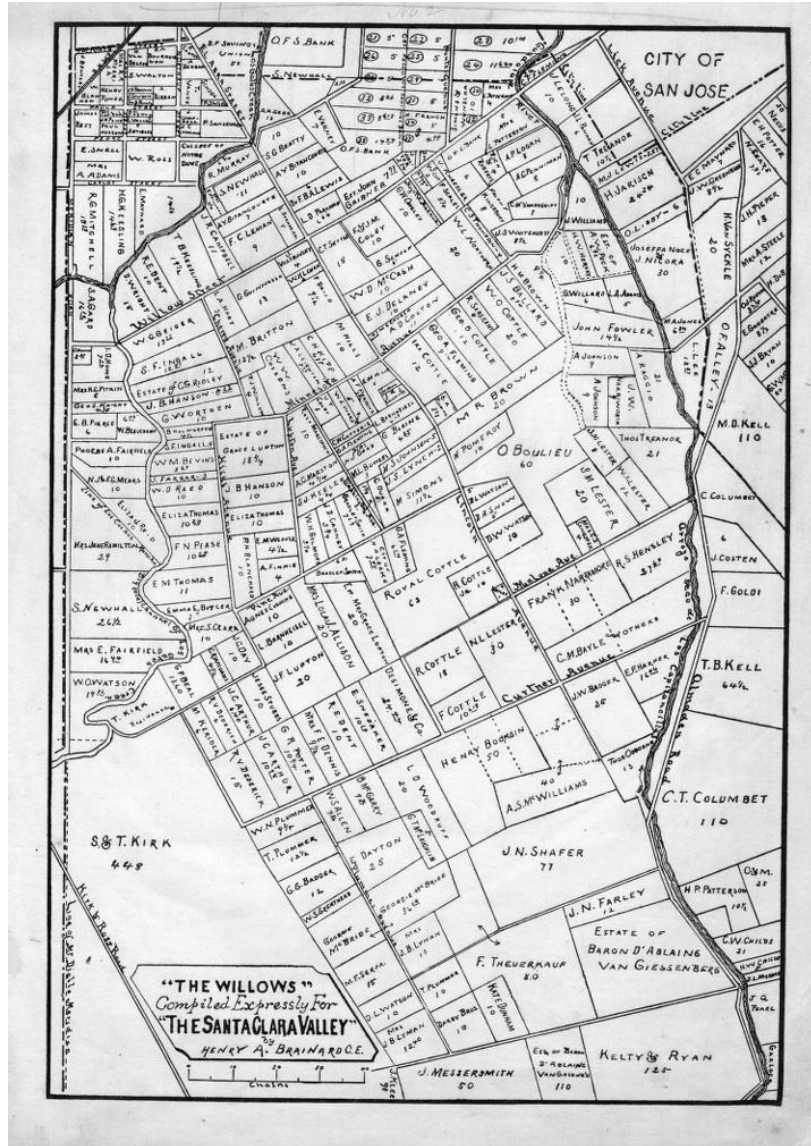
<sup>13</sup> McCaleb, 9; "The Alden Processes," in *The Great Industries of the United States* (Hartford, CT: J. B. Burr & Hyde, 1872), 664-674.

<sup>14</sup> H. S. Foote, *Pen Pictures from the Garden of the World* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1888), 176, 476; "The Alden Processes," 666.

<sup>15</sup> Foote, 176.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Couchman, *The Sunsweet Story* (San José: Sunsweet Growers Inc., 1967), 14.

The Market Street and Willow Glen Railroad passed near the Alden evaporator on Josefa Street. Both enterprises took advantage of the Southern Pacific Coast narrow gauge line that ran from Alameda County through San José and on to Santa Cruz. The narrow-gauge depot, also called the Westside Depot, opened in 1877 in the Crandallville district at West San Fernando and South Montgomery Streets.<sup>17</sup>



Brainard map of the Willows, circa 1885

<sup>17</sup> Diridon Station Area Plan: Briefing Book for the TOD Technical Assistance Panel ULI San Francisco (July 2009), 12.

## Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract

The mid-1880s Brainard map of Willow Glen showed a patchwork of five- and ten-acre orchard homesteads, a process Isaac Bird had initiated in the 1870s by selling off lots of five, six, and eight acres in the 1870s to Smith, Newhall, and Gardner. The Odd Fellows Savings Bank would accelerate this trend when it subdivided the Bird and Coe hop ranches.

With the demise of the streetcar line through the Bird hop ranch, the Odd Fellows Savings Bank was left with a large tract of land that had access to streetcars only at the extreme north (Delmas Avenue) and south (Willow Street). Lincoln Avenue, the only road that passed through the tract, did not intersect with either line. The Odd Fellows Savings Bank corrected that deficiency by surveying two new thoroughfares: Hunter Avenue, which connected Delmas Avenue and Willow Street north to south; and Home Street, which connected Lincoln and Delmas avenues east to west.

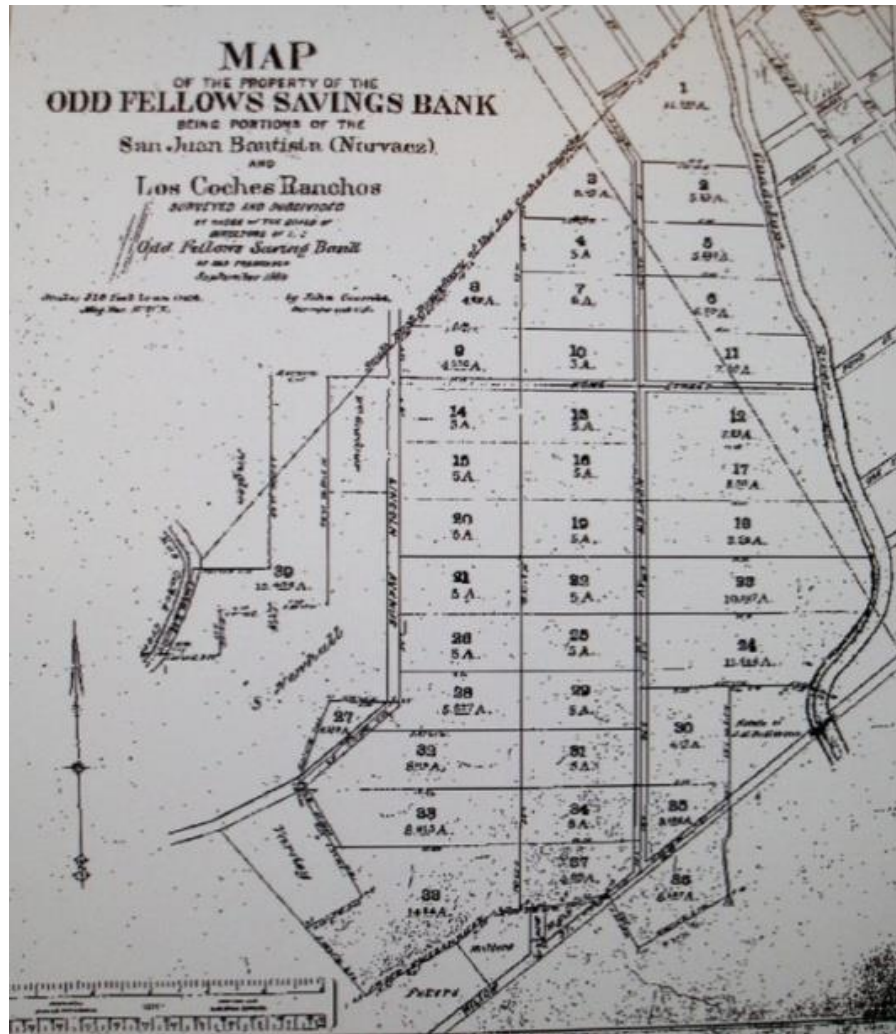
After Coe and Bird defaulted on their mortgages, the Odd Fellows Savings Bank itself fell on hard times. A run on the bank in the fall of 1878 led to its liquidation on February 5, 1879, at which time the bank owed over two million dollars to its depositors. Selling off foreclosed property was one means for the bank to satisfy its debts. In the fall of 1884, the bank's board of directors authorized the surveying and recording of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract. William Gardner's land was marked off on the west side of Lincoln (now Bird) Avenue), as was Sylvester Newhall's land. Lots 27 and 39 were all that remained of the Bird's former holdings on the west side of Lincoln Avenue. Home Street (now West Virginia Street), which was surveyed on the unrecorded Bird Tract, is joined by Hunter Avenue, connecting the terminus of Delmas Avenue (near present-day William Street) with Willow Street. David Hunter, then the president of the bank, was the likely source of the Hunter Avenue name. This new thoroughfare allowed each lot a frontage on Lincoln, Hunter (now Delmas), or Willow. The typical lot in the tract measured five acres, most in a rectangular shape that corresponded to the shape of a city block.<sup>18</sup>

The first buyers in the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract set out their land in orchards and built homes: Henry French settled along Willow Street on Lots 34 and 37; settling along Hunter (now Delmas) Avenue were George F. Freyschlag on Lot 29, John Shepard on Lot 31, Franklin B. Fuller on Lot 19, and Henry True Besse on Lot 22. Fred L. Tileston and Taylor Archibald divided between them Lot 39, an irregularly shaped lot that bordered Henry M. Naglee's land on the west and northwest, the Los Gatos Creek on

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<sup>18</sup> Wright, 109; "Map of the Property of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank," SCC Recorded Maps Book B, Page 14, October 1884.

the west, Sylvester Newhall's land on the south and southeast, and William Gardner's land on the east.<sup>19</sup>



Portion of the recorded Odd Fellows Savings Bank map, 1884

The lots north of Home Street straddled the western city limits and were most likely to be the first to be developed as residential tracts. One factor impeding such development was the continued presence of non-whites on the land, so on June 3, 1885, the Chinese were burned out of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract. For the previous two years,

<sup>19</sup> French, SCC Deeds Book 77, Page 416 (January 22, 1885); Freyschlag, SCC Deeds Book 81, Page 260 (November 3, 1885); Shepard, SCC Deeds Book 81, Page 275 (November 6, 1885); Fuller, SCC Deeds Book 82, Page 144 (November 28, 1885); Besse, SCC Deeds Book 81, Page 500 (December 29, 1885); Tileston and Archibald, SCC Deeds Book 77, Page 378.

Qung Tu Sing & Company leased what the San José *Evening News* called an “old landmark and well-known building formerly used as a hop dryer” on the Bird ranch. The newspaper account reported that fire completely destroyed the brick building. The Odd Fellows Savings Bank Lots 1 through 6, all north of Home Street, sold in the first half of 1886 to C. E. Driscoll, Benjamin H. Mace, and William Gardner. Real estate sales accelerated in the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract at the end of 1886. Between October 1886 and March 1887, buyers purchased all of the remaining lots.<sup>20</sup>

In February 1887, the Hermann Brothers surveyed the most southerly portion of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract, Lots 28, 32, 33, and 38, for another set of brothers, George A. and Charles F. Fleming. The Flemings recorded their purchase of the lots on March 10, 1887, and recorded the Fleming’s Subdivision the next day. The subdivision broke the four lots into more manageable parcels of one to three acres and gave each lot a frontage on what was mapped as Willow Glen Avenue, which made the missing connection between Lincoln Avenue and Willow Street. It appears that George Flemings built his residence that exists today in modified form at 1070 Bird Ave., and Charles Fleming built his house at 1023 Bird Ave., which exists today as San José City Landmark HL06-157.<sup>21</sup>

On April 11, 1887, C. E. Driscoll subdivided Odd Fellows Savings Bank Lots 1 and 2 into house lots and recorded the tract as Driscoll’s Addition No. 2. These most northerly lots of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract were the only ones completely within the boundaries of the City of San José. The lots fronted extensions of existing city streets: Delmas, Marliere, and Prevost on the west side of the Guadalupe River, and Colfax and Grant on the river’s eastern edge.<sup>22</sup>

While the *San Jose Evening News* trumpeted the city’s real estate boom in August, no further subdivision of Odd Fellow Savings Bank lots would occur for another year. Developers of new tracts may have been waiting for the city’s first sewer system to be built out to the western city limits. In 1888, sewer construction terminated at Park and Delmas, still some distance from the Odd Fellows Savings Bank lots. On September 6, 1888, C. E. Driscoll subdivided Lots 5, 6, and 11 and recorded the new house lots as Bender’s subdivision. The city limits bisected three of these new residential blocks diagonally, but the other four blocks were completely within the City of San José. The

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<sup>20</sup> “Last Night’s Fire: Destruction of the Hop Dryer on the Bird Ranch,” San Jose Evening News (June 3, 1885), 3; Gardner, SCC Deeds Book 86, Page 626 (January 1, 1886); Driscoll, SCC Deeds Book 83, Page 71 (January 22, 1886) and Book 85, Page 358 (June 13, 1886). Mace is presumed to have purchased Lot 3 in same time period, but grant deed not yet located; see SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 91.

<sup>21</sup> SCC Deeds Book 88, Page 417 (March 10, 1887); SCC Recorded Maps Book B, Page 51 (March 11, 1887).

<sup>22</sup> SCC Recorded Maps Book B, Page 59 (April 11, 1887).

blocks continued the extension of Delmas, Marliere, and Prevost to the south and placed house lots on the south side of Grant Street. The subdivision's southern boundary was Home Street, which was outside the city limits, as was the newly surveyed Brown Avenue, which paralleled Home Street.<sup>23</sup>

In April 1889, five of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank lots north of Home Street and east of Bird Avenue were subdivided into residential blocks, laying out these new thoroughfares: the avenues Minor, Willis and Brown, and the streets Home, William, and Gardner. In August 1890, B. H. Mace, and likely also C. E. Driscoll, William Gardner, and Jerome Vostrovsky, property owners who recorded these subdivisions, petitioned the county Board of Supervisors to accept these streets as public rights-of-way.<sup>24</sup>

The name "Bird Avenue," referring to the segment of Lincoln Avenue between San Carlos Street and Willow Street, appears in print later in 1889 on the maps of two other new subdivisions: the Hulet Tract, west of Bird Avenue, and the Edenvale tract, east of Bird.<sup>25</sup>

During the 1890s, William Gardner led in the improvement of this new suburban area west of San José. One of the area's most pressing needs was an old problem: managing excess ground water. In March 1891, he and his neighbors successfully petitioned the San José Common Council to construct a storm drain from the end of the present city limits along the west side of Delmas Avenue.<sup>26</sup>

In July, Gardner appeared again before the city council, speaking in favor of granting Jacob Rich a franchise to build a streetcar along Delmas Avenue:

Wm. H. Gardner, a resident on the Bird tract, stated that some twenty residences along Delmas avenue seemed strongly in favor of it and he hoped that the Council would grant the franchise, as it would put that part of the city in closer communication with the city proper. He believed that Mr. Rich was in earnest and was quite able to do as he

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<sup>23</sup> "The Boom Rolls Along and Gathers Strength," San Jose Evening News (August 18, 1887); Foote, 161; SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 11 (September 6, 1888)

<sup>24</sup> Leach & McIlvain, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 85 (April 13, 1889); Boynton's, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 87 (April 15, 1889); Mace No. 3, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 91 (April 17, 1889); Gardner, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 93 (April 19, 1889); "County Affairs, The Board of Supervisors Consider Matters of Import," San Jose Evening News (August 5, 1890).

<sup>25</sup> Hulet, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 99 (May 7, 1889); Edenvale, SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 135 (July 30, 1889).

<sup>26</sup> "The Common Council," San Jose Evening News (March 24, 1891);

agreed. Some time ago the people in the southwestern part of the city had contributed toward a road that up to date was unconstructed.<sup>27</sup>

The city council granted Jacob Rich his franchise to electrify his existing San Fernando-Delmas line in September 1891 and extend the line along Delmas Avenue to meet the line he ran on Willow Street.<sup>28</sup>

The Delmas Avenue streetcar line opened for service in 1892, and from that time Delmas Avenue ran straight through to Willow Street. Coe Avenue also came into existence that year. The 1892 city directory was the first to identify residents as living on Coe Avenue, which had been the southwestern section of Lincoln Avenue from Bird Avenue to the Los Gatos Creek. On June 5, 1893, Bernhard T. Campen recorded Lot 29 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract as the Campen Subdivision and named the street that bisected the 32 house lots Coe Avenue.<sup>29</sup>

The area still called in the early 1890s the Bird tract or the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract was not within the San José city limits and not part of the Willow Glen school district. Neighborhood children attended the Hester county school, and residents were sometimes listed in city directories as living in Hester. In April 1893, the County Board of Supervisors approved a petition of local residents to establish a new school district carved out of a portion of Hester. Its boundaries were the western city limits of San José, Home Street (now West Virginia Street), the Los Gatos Creek, and Park Avenue. These were the original boundaries of the Gardner school district. Over the course of a decade, as the area became more thickly settled, the southern boundary of Gardner School District shifted, first to Jerome Street and later to Willow Street.<sup>30</sup>

The Gardner school and neighborhood were named for William H. Gardner. Born in New Hampshire in 1829, he crossed the isthmus of Panama in 1852 to join the Gold Rush, but returned within a year. In 1872 or 1873, he brought his wife and family to San José. When Isaac and Calvert Bird began selling off their hop ranch in 1876, Gardner purchased five acres on the west side of what is now Bird Avenue. In the 1880 census the Gardner family lived on this ranch, but later in the 1880s the family moved downtown to a house at First and San Carlos Streets, near Gardner's grocery store at 77 S. First St. William Gardner bought Lot 4 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract on January 1, 1886. H. S. Foote reported in 1888 that Gardner lived on Delmas Avenue, which was on the

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<sup>27</sup> "City Affairs. Proceedings at the Special Meeting of the Common Council," San Jose Evening News (July 31, 1891).

<sup>28</sup> McCaleb, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Campen, SCC Recorded Maps Book G, Page 83 (June 5, 1893). Not until the 1907 survey and recording of the Highland subdivision would the two sections of Coe Avenue be connected.

<sup>30</sup> "The Board of Supervisors," San Jose Evening News (April 6, 1893); "Gardner District School House," San Jose Evening News (May 16, 1893).



eastern boundary of Lot 4. The house, 659 Delmas Ave., stood until 1970, when it was demolished to make way for Interstate 280. In April 1889, Gardner had the five acres of Lot 4 surveyed into 32 house lots fronting Willis, Minor, and Delmas Avenues.<sup>31</sup>

William Gardner's daughter, Mary E. Field, a widow with two small children, co-owned the subdivision. Mary's father gave her the house at First and San Carlos and paid to have it moved to the Gardner subdivision. Alyce Walker, granddaughter of Mary E. Field recalled her mother, Ida M. Bishop, "telling her how they continued to live in the house as it rolled towards its new location and how she looked for its whereabouts each day, for three days, on the way home from Lincoln School." The house still stands at 689 Delmas Ave. In 1929, Mrs. Ralph Richards, Gardner's granddaughter, reported that her mother and two widowed sisters still lived in that block of Delmas Avenue: Ida Lowden, the youngest, lived at 659 Delmas; Mary E. Field Rhodes, the middle sister, lived next door at 661 Delmas in a house also demolished for the interstate; and Eliza Arthur, the eldest sister, lived in the still-extant 675 Delmas. The 1930 census enumerated a renter occupying Mary E. Field's house at 689 Delmas.<sup>32</sup>

Gardner District boosters had cause to believe in 1893 that the neighborhood would grow steadily through the rest of the decade. Not only had they lobbied successfully for roads, streetcars, drainage, and a school, but the San Jose Packing Company was also their new neighbor, moving from Fifth and Julian Streets to a newly constructed cannery complex on Auzerais Avenue near the Los Gatos Creek. Public opposition in 1890 to expanding the railroad connections from the cannery to the Fourth Street line likely put the company owners in mind to relocate out of the downtown to the area near the Westside Depot. (Public clamor to remove the Fourth Street line entirely would bring the Southern Pacific Railroad line straight through the Gardner District in the 1930s.)<sup>33</sup>

The Panic of 1893 dashed the rosy prospects Gardner boosters foresaw for the district. Much like the Panic of 1873, the events of 1893 brought economic depression and slowed development throughout the nation. The effects on the Gardner District were several. In May 1893, local voters approved a \$7000 bond issue to build the Gardner schoolhouse, intended to serve 152 children, but almost a year passed before the county supervisors approved a bid for Gardner's bonds and construction could begin. The crash brought

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<sup>31</sup> J. M. Guinn, *History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the Coast Counties, California*. (Chicago: The Chapman Publishing Company, 1904), 1249; *Trailblazer* 25 (February, 1984), 3–5; SCC Deeds Book 42, Page 11 (August 11, 1876); SCC Deeds Book 86, Page 286 (January 1, 1886); Foote, 432; SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 93 (April 19, 1889).

<sup>32</sup> "William Gardner. Founder of the Gardner School and Community Organizer," typescript in the San Jose Public Library's California Room, San Jose clippings file under "Schools: Gardner", 3.

<sup>33</sup> San Jose Historical Association, 196; "Want a Track. Opposition to the Application of the San Jose Packing Company," *San Jose Evening News* (March 14, 1890).

Jacob Rich to insolvency in 1897, after having reincorporated his streetcar lines in 1894 as the San Jose Railroad Company. Finally, subdivision of Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract lots ceased entirely after 1894 and did not resume until 1904.<sup>34</sup>

Another housing boom would arrive in the first years of the twentieth century, but during that lull at the end of the 1890s, residents of the Gardner school district created a center of community life the Gardner schoolhouse. Neighborhood groups and political parties met there regularly in the evenings. On October 5, 1894, the County Board of Supervisors created a new election precinct with the same boundaries as the Gardner school district. Voters went to the polls at the schoolhouse. Additional residential development necessitated changing the boundary between the Willow Glen and Gardner school districts “so as to include the Vostrovsky tract.” In 1896, Gardner district residents entered a float in the city’s Carnival of Roses and won second prize. At least 250 pupils of Gardner school district were expected to march, an increase of 100 pupils in the three years since the school district was created. This period of neighborhood history ended with the death of William H. Gardner, on August 28, 1896.<sup>35</sup>

In 1902, the subdivision of Henry Morris Naglee’s residential estate east of the downtown opened a new phase of building and expansion in San Jose. An officer in Stevenson’s Regiment, part of the U.S. Army campaign to take California from Mexico in the 1840s, Naglee’s early presence in the new state allowed him to purchase large tracts of land throughout Northern California. Besides his mansion, distillery, and gardens along the Coyote Creek just east of the San Jose Normal School, Naglee owned much of Rancho de los Coches. The Ford Garden Lots subdivision, bounded on the east by Drake (formerly Naglee) Street, marks Naglee’s holdings in the Greater Gardner area.

Residential development in Gardner restarted in 1904 in anticipation of the San Jose-Los Gatos Interurban Railway laying tracks along Bird Avenue for its cut-off to Campbell. Construction began along Bird Avenue in September and the streetcar opened for service on November 26, 1904.<sup>36</sup>

Seven subdivisions were recorded between 1904 and 1907 in the Greater Gardner area: Gunckel, Thomas Subdivisions No. 1 and No. 2, Lynnhurst, Barrett and Mack, Highland, and Marshall.

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<sup>34</sup> “Gardner District School House,” *San Jose Evening News* (May 16, 1893); “County Affairs,” *San Jose Evening News* (April 3, 1894); McCaleb, *Tracks*, 25.

<sup>35</sup> “Election Precincts,” *San Jose Evening News* (October 5, 1894); “The Saratoga Road,” *San Jose Evening News* (February 18, 1895); “Gardner Is Enthused,” *San Jose Evening News* (March 27, 1896); “Carnival Queen,” *San Jose Evening News* (March 31, 1896); “Gardner Bryanites,” *San Jose Evening News* (August 28, 1896); “His Trouble Ended,” *San Jose Evening News* (August 29, 1896).

<sup>36</sup> “First Rails Laid on the Campbell Cut-Off,” *San Jose Mercury* (September 11, 1904); McCaleb, 35.

Each had been Odd Fellows Savings Bank lots set out in orchards between 1885 and 1887. The economic viability of the fruit trees common in the Gardner District (primarily prune, apricot, cherry) is no more than twenty years. The orchardists themselves were growing older. William F. Gunckel died in 1894, and Joseph W. Hildreth died in 1898. Samuel N. Shaver and Franklin B. Fuller were entering their seventies in 1905. These orchards would become residential subdivisions to fund their retirement or divide amongst their heirs.

By the time of the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, most of the Odd Fellows lots had been subdivided, but development was slow due to a lack of infrastructure to facilitate the expansion of San Jose's urban areas into what was called "San Jose's Garden Spot." The Gardner Improvement Club was formed in early April 1906 just weeks before the earthquake, and when club members met again a month later in May, they returned to their work with renewed vigor with many new members contributing to the effort. The major goal of the club was to form a sanitary district within the County of Santa Clara and secure sewers for the neighborhood. With an affirmative vote for the district later that year, the new sanitary board went to work planning for improvements, but soon found that the water table was too high in the Gardner district for a functioning septic tank system such as had been installed for College Park's sanitary district near The Alameda. Over the next five years, district leaders lobbied the City of San Jose to allow them to hook into the city sewer system, but their efforts failed. With their sights set on development, Gardner district boosters planned special events in the neighborhood to bring potential new residents into the area, and saw population growth as a means of catalyzing the extension into the district of services like gas and electricity, sewers, organized garbage collection, and construction of sidewalks and paved streets.

In early 1908, the Gardner Fire Hose Company was formed for fire protection, and fire insurance was purchased. By late 1909 the Gardner Hose Company joined forces with the West End Hose Company to improve the capability to respond to fires in the large growing area west of downtown San Jose, as the San Jose Water Company enlarged its mains and installed five new fire hydrants, and a lease was secured for construction of a firehouse with volunteer labor at the corner of William and Martin Streets. The Gardner Club endorsed the new County library system and hoped to include a branch library in the new firehouse. The improvement club, functioning as a quasi-office government body, hired a night watchman (a Mr. Crandall) to maintain security in the neighborhood beginning on December 1, 1909.

By 1909, regular weekly meetings at the Gardner schoolhouse saw increased efforts to resolve the sewer problem which was the primary roadblock to development. A steady gain in population was evident in the addition of two new classrooms to the school in the assembly room. In late 1909, the District Attorney advised the County Board of Supervisors that the City of San Jose had no power under a recent act of the Legislature to allow the Gardner Sanitary District to connect their proposed sewer system with the


City of San Jose. With efforts to build the sewer system now thwarted, the Gardner Improvement Club held a meeting in late March 1910 to discuss annexation to the City

of San Jose, with Byron Purinton chosen as Chairman. With much media attention and polemics by local civic leaders and boosters, on February 28, 1911, the residents of the Gardner District and nearby Crandallville voted affirmatively to annex to the City of San Jose, the first annexation to San Jose since the year California achieved statehood in 1850. The annexation was opposed by both the San Jose Chamber of Commerce, who believed that the County of Santa Clara needed to construct improvements in the area prior to annexation to relieve San Jose's capital obligation, and a local group of saloon keepers, who fought to keep authority over their businesses from the City of San Jose. An application to San Jose's Police and Fire Commission for licenses in the city after annexation was denied, and subsequent suits, filed by A. Liebenthal and C.B.L. Marcotte against the Mayor and Common Council of the City of San Jose were ultimately denied in court. On November 25, 1911, Superior Court Judge J. R. Welch ruled in favor of the City of San Jose in a courtroom packed with members of the San Jose Woman's Christian Temperance Union who had marched on the courthouse earlier that day. With the annexation complete, San Jose expanded its population to 35,000 residents.

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The Gardner Improvement Club was quick to respond to its success, and a week after the election had proposed that the new annexed district become San Jose's Fifth Ward. A Fifth Ward Improvement Club was soon formed, and over the next year both clubs lobbied for improvements and stature as the area's primary neighborhood advocacy group. By late 1912, sewers were being

installed by the City of San José in the new annexed territory, and control of the Gardner School was transferred to the San José school district. In April 1912, the two clubs came together and formed the Fifth Ward Gardner Improvement Club, electing new officers and a new president, L. D. Bohnett. Bohnett, an attorney who had been elected to the State Assembly in 1909 representing the 44<sup>th</sup> District, would become a seasoned and effective leader for the Gardner district in the next few decades. As Assembly Floor Leader for Governor Hiram Johnson, he brought forth many progressive reforms in Sacramento. He is now recognized as a leader in the development of railroad regulation, and his work in State legislation ran parallel with his local involvement in the controversy's involving the Southern Pacific Railroad and San José's Willow Glen neighborhoods.

Between 1907 and 1913, the Southern Pacific had been buying up many house lots in the Greater Gardner district to reroute the Fourth Street line through west San Jose. It would take two decades before the move would finally take place, with railroads being the catalyst for community organizing and advocacy. Bohnett's efforts to regulate the Southern Pacific Railroad's development through Willow Glen remain in existence today, as the primary legislative pieces of railroad regulation in California, despite the fact that they are now around 100 years old.



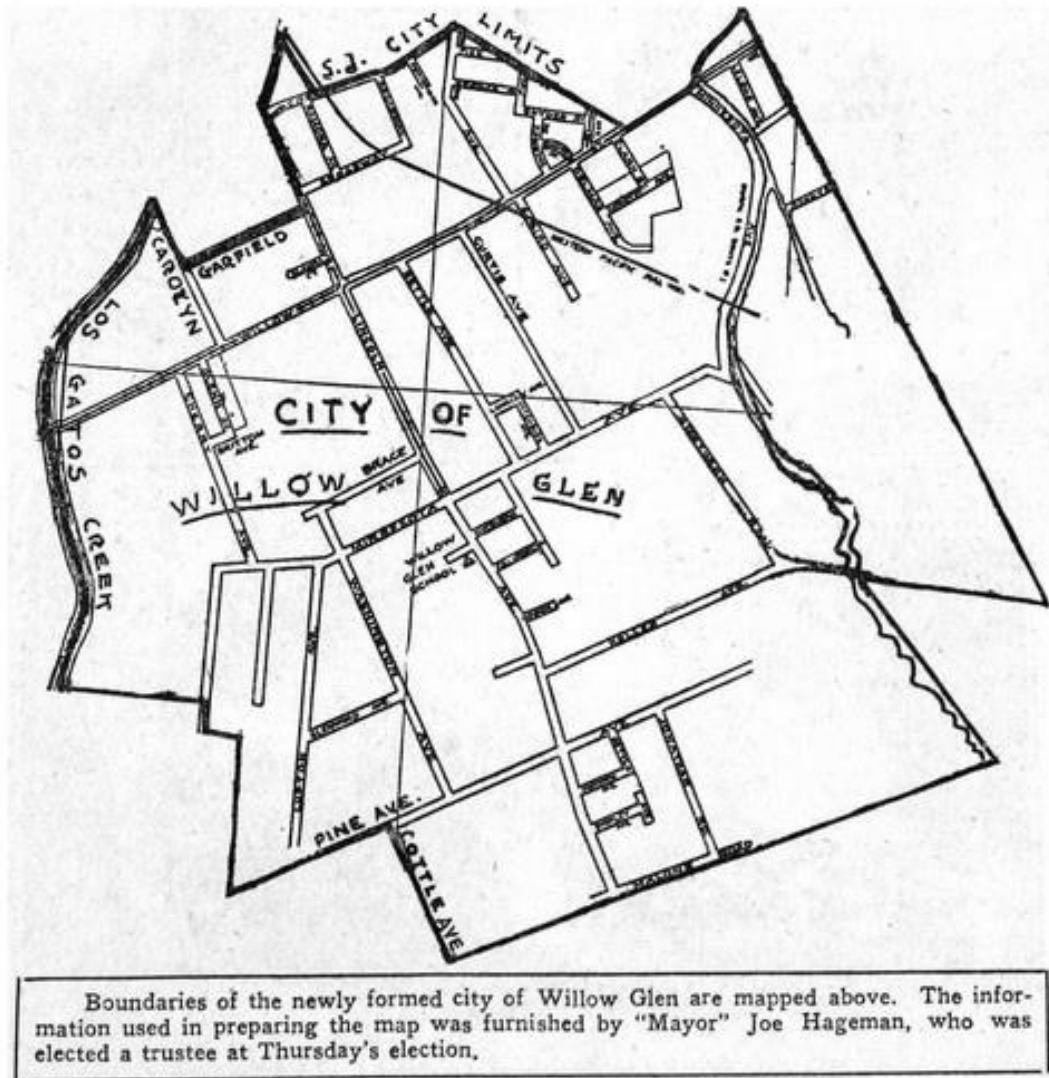
*L.D. Bohnett – Mercury Herald*

### **Interwar Period (1918-1945)**

After World War I, San José entered a period of great prosperity, with exponential population growth continuing through the twenties as the city expanded outward. Three large subdivisions developed between 1920 and 1926: Cole Realty Company Subdivision, Roosevelt Park Subdivision, and French Residence Park. The City of Willow Glen was incorporated as a result of election on September 8, 1927. At that time, the San José city limits as established in the 1911 annexation cut a diagonal line through Greater Gardner area. Almost everything south of Fisk Avenue was part of the newly formed City of Willow Glen.

Incorporation was accomplished in an attempt to deny a franchise to Southern Pacific as they planned to reroute the Fourth Street rail line. Ultimately, the railroad right-of-way varied little from the path the Southern Pacific planned in 1907 through Greater Gardner, which almost exclusively ran through land within the San José city limits. The final adjustment of the right-of-way resulted in houses north of Fuller Avenue being moved out of the path of the railroad line in 1935, and tracks were laid down the following year in 1936, the year that the City of Willow Glen was annexed into the City of San Jose.

**SAN JOSE MERCURY HERALD: SATURDAY MORNING**  
**BOUNDARIES OF CITY OF WILLOW GLEN ARE MAPPED**



Much of Greater Gardner built-out during the 1920s, although a number of large blocks remained undeveloped. Residential housing construction was greatly stalled in San José during the Great Depression of the 1930s. However, in the Greater Gardner area, residential infill occurred at a greater than average rate after 1936 and the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad line. By this time, expansion of residential subdivisions into Willow Glen had extended far beyond the early annexation, and the area became more integrated into the growing metropolis of San Jose, losing its identity as an outlying suburb.

By the 1920s and 1930s, the neighborhoods of Greater Gardner had also begun to diversify. The large ethnic Italian neighborhood known as Goosetown, located to the east across the Guadalupe River had expanded into parts of the Gardner and Willow Glen areas, anchored by neighborhood Italian grocery stores like Della Maggiore's on Delmas Avenue and Pasquini's on Willow Street.



*Greater Gardner in 1931 - USGS aerials via Fairchild Maps at the California Room, SJPL*

## Industrialization and Suburbanization (1945- )

Comparatively little post-World War II construction occurred in the Greater Gardner area compared to the Santa Clara Valley as a whole. Some infill development has occurred, but most of the subdivisions created in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries had already been built-out.

Radical changes that occurred in the Greater Gardner area during the post-World War II period have to do with the planning and construction of Interstate 280 at the north end of the study area. Almost all of the housing stock between Auzerais Avenue and William Street was demolished in 1970 for freeway construction. Additional housing stock was lost east of Prevost Street later during clearance work for State Route 87 later in the twentieth century. The combined intrusions of these two freeways into the neighborhoods created a distinct boundary between downtown San Jose and Greater Gardner and Willow Glen. Additional housing was lost when Bird Avenue was widened in 1972 to accommodate increased traffic flow to Interstate 280. The widened thoroughfare extends from the I-280 on/off ramps to Coe Avenue.

The planned expansion of San Jose during the post-war period was founded on the work of the Citizen's Planning Council of Greater San Jose, which gained a majority on the San Jose City Council during the mid-1940s. These council members intended to shift San Jose away from its horticultural economy by promoting and enabling industrial development and related urban expansion necessary to house new workers who came to San Jose for its job opportunities. San Jose grew exponentially for two decades under the guidance of City Manager Dutch Hamann, who was hired in 1950.

By the late-1960s, a coalition of neighborhood activists had succeeded in getting candidates elected to the San Jose City Council, and following the election of Norman Mineta as mayor in 1971, San Jose subsequently prepared its first land-use plan in 1974. This new General Plan, adopted in March 1976 as The San Jose General Plan 1975-1995, revisited many policies regarding inner-city redevelopment. The land use diagram identified the Greater Gardner neighborhoods for long-term single-family residential densities. The plan to widen Bird Avenue south of Coe Avenue was dropped, although West Virginia Street remained as an identified Major Collector in the Transportation Diagram.

Contemporary times have seen the establishment of new neighborhood community organizations in the Greater Gardner area, the reconstruction of Biebrach Park, the building of the Gardner Community Center, and the rebuilding of Gardner School of the latter part of the 1990s and the 2000s. Efforts at regeneration and reconstructed began with San Jose's Model Cities programs, and continued until recently with the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI). Today, Greater Gardner is a distinct neighborhood, bounded by two large freeways to the north and the east, the Palm Haven neighborhood to the west, and the larger Willow Glen area to the south and southwest.



## HISTORICAL THEMES

The *City of San José Historic Context Statement* includes interpretive themes that have been defined to help understand the historic development of the city. Subsets of these themes that are associated with the Greater Gardner neighborhoods are provided below:

- Manufacturing and Industry
- Communication and Transportation
- Religion and Education
- Social, Arts, and Recreation
- Population and Cultural Groups
- Architecture and Shelter

The neighborhoods have a rich and diverse history as a residential area with related commercial and institutional uses that have served both the local community and the city as a whole. Property types beyond residential use exist throughout the neighborhoods, that are directly associated with the evolution of the communities within the subject area.

The subject area was home for a number of important personages that lend significance to individual properties. Early local residents such as William Gardner, Byron Purinton, L. D. Bohnett, Frank Delos Wolfe, Fiore Cribari, and many others provide insight to the evolution of a community and its accomplishments.

The following sections address some of this thematic context, followed by a more detailed overview of the theme of *Architecture and Shelter*. These sections establish a framework for individual property evaluations and historic district considerations.

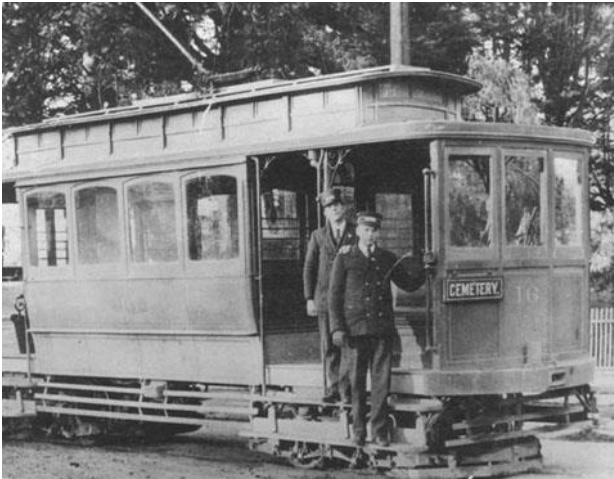
### Manufacturing and Industry

Industrial and manufacturing facilities clustered around the South Pacific Coast Railway and the Westside Depot north of the study area. San Jose Packing Company (later called Del Monte Plant No. 3) and Santa Clara Valley Mill and Lumber Company were the two major employers of residents of the Greater Gardner area. Neither of these plants remains operational today, and their sites are physically isolated from the study area by Interstate 280.

The earlier industrial (agricultural) uses of the land associated with both the hops and silk industries had buildings and structures associated with those industrials and their workers, but no evidence remains within the neighborhoods of these early uses. Locations of early structures could not be determined as a part of this study.

## Communication and Transportation

In the forty years before the Gardner District voted favorably in 1911 for annexation to the City of San José, streetcar lines ran along its major thoroughfares and stimulated agricultural and residential development. The streetcar lines define parts of Greater



*Photo of a San Jose streetcar, ca. 1900. City of San José Archives – courtesy of History San José.*

Gardner as a “streetcar suburb,” a form of leapfrog development that allowed for urban expansion before the advent of the automobile.

In the one hundred years since annexation, the transportation needs of a rapidly growing population in Santa Clara County have eaten into the housing stock of the Greater Gardner area and isolated some of it from the rest of the City of San José. Rerouting of the Southern Pacific railroad away from downtown’s Fourth Street cut the neighborhood in two in 1936. The opening of Interstate 280 in 1972 decimated several northern neighborhood

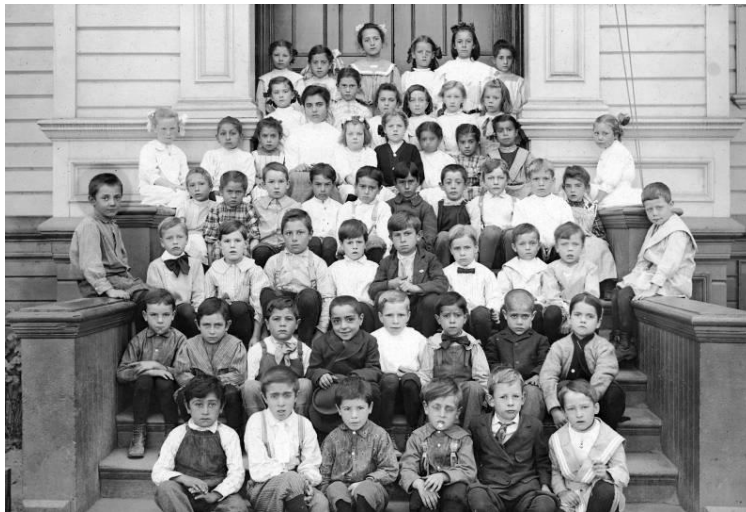
blocks and sacrificed other homes along a widened Bird Avenue. The expansion of the Guadalupe Expressway (State Route 87) also removed some residential properties, but has also separated the Greater Gardner area from its Washington/Almaden neighbors to the east of which it has an affinity.

## Religion and Education

The Word of Faith Christian Center at 873 Delmas Ave. is the only church within the boundaries of the Greater Gardner area that exists today. The North Willow Glen Neighborhood Association uses the church building as a meeting place.

The Catholic Diocese of San Francisco established a mission in the area in 1900, following the movement of (Catholic) Italian residents into the Gardner and Washington neighborhoods. The Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Church was constructed in 1920 at Willow and Palm Streets. Sacred Heart School was constructed in the 1930s at the corner of Locust and Edwards Streets, and replaced an earlier St. Francis Xavier School that had been located at West Virginia and Palm Streets. It is currently called Sacred Heart Nativity School and provides boys within the Washington/Gardner neighborhood with middle school education opportunities.

In May 1893, local voters approved a \$7,000 bond issue to build the Gardner schoolhouse, intended to serve 152 children, but almost a year passed before the County supervisors approved a bid for Gardner's bonds and construction could begin. The school was named after local booster William H. Gardner. It was formed out of a portion of Hester School District. During the 1890s, residents of the Gardner school district created a center of community life at the Gardner schoolhouse. Neighborhood groups and political parties met there regularly in the evenings. On October 5, 1894, the County Board of Supervisors created a new election precinct with the same boundaries as the Gardner school district. Voters went to the polls at the schoolhouse. Additional residential development necessitated changing the boundary between the Willow Glen and Gardner school districts to include the Vostrovsky tract. In 1896, Gardner district residents entered a float in the city's Carnival of Roses and won second prize. At least 250 pupils of Gardner school district were expected to march, an increase of 100 pupils in the three years since the school district was created.



*Circa 1900 photo of students at Gardner School, California History Center collection.*

In 1913, the San Jose Public Library opened a branch library in the Gardner School, with K. M. Bartle as Custodian as a part of San Jose's first expansion of the branch library system.

In 1917, eight additional lots were acquired by San Jose's Board of Education along Martin Avenue and Willis Street and a boy's playground with baseball field as well as a girl's playground and basketball court, and a new entrance was added from Brown Avenue. As a part of the planned acquisition, the school district sold off the existing houses at auction to clear the site for the playgrounds.

The reconstituted Gardner Academy burned in 2003, and reopened in 2005.

## Social, Arts, and Recreation

Only one lot of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract was never subdivided into house lots, and it is on Lot 13 where Biebrach Park now stands. Orchardist Michel Kerloch purchased this five-acre parcel on November 20, 1886 (SCC Deeds 86:592). Two years later, H. S. Foote profiled Kerloch in his *Pen Pictures*. A French sailor who abandoned ship in San Francisco in 1873 at the age of 20, Kerloch settled in the Willows as an orchardist. Foote reported that Kerloch lived on a six-acre fruit ranch of mostly bearing cherry trees at the corner of Booksin and Hicks avenues. Kerloch's additional "five acres of fine fruit land...on Delmas Avenue and Home Street" was "as yet undeveloped" in 1888 according to Foote. The 1915 Sanborn Company map labeled this block as "Orchard." Kerloch never married, and he had no next of kin in the United States when he died in 1919. The only property in his estate at the time of his death was the five acres in the Gardner district. Kerloch willed each of his six siblings in France a one-sixth interest in the Gardner orchard. It seems that none of his brothers or sisters wished to immigrate to San José, because the 1924 Thomas Block Book shows that the San José school district had purchased the land sometime in the five intervening years. At some future time, the city school district transferred ownership to the City of San José, but aerial maps in the 1930s and 1940s show that the block remained undeveloped during that period.

The Gardner Community Center, located to the west of Biebrach Park, was envisioned in 2000 when City of San José voters passed Bond Measure "P" that allocated funds for City capital projects, including a Gardner Satellite Community Center. A master plan was approved by the San José City Council in 2002, and the Steinberg Group was selected to design the center known today as the Gardner Community Center.

## Population and Cultural Groups<sup>37</sup>

In the early years of the twentieth century, housing development increased in the Greater Gardner area with an influx of Italian immigrants moving next to the already settled majority northern European- Americans (English, Irish, Scottish, French, and Swedish), the original *Californio* population, alongside the few German and Russian residents that all worked in the booming horticultural industries. Greater Gardner residents found employment in canneries just north of the neighborhood, which included the recent Del Monte Plant #3, once the largest cannery in the Santa Clara Valley. Fruit orchards were located to the south of the Greater Gardner area in the orchard district of the Willows.

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<sup>37</sup> Demographic information derived from analysis of United States Census information and City Directories.

During the Interwar Years (1920-1940), San José entered a period of great prosperity, with ever-increasing population growth. By 1920, 79% of the women employed in the canneries were first- or second-generation Italian and Portuguese immigrants. By 1930, the Santa Clara Valley supported 38 canneries. Permanent communities of cannery workers developed in such areas as Greater Gardner area because of the availability of nearby steady work. Cannery management segregated both jobs and wages by gender and race, with Europeans and whites at the higher end of the scale. The Greater Gardner area reflected these cannery demographics. Italians, primarily employed in cannery labor, settled into the neighborhood from 1900 to 1941. By World War II the percentage of Italian-American residents grew to approximately 40%, while the number of northern European surnamed residents was around 56%. The number of Hispanic residents had declined to 4% just prior to the World War II.

Reflecting the demographic changes in San José at large, the Greater Gardner area transformed after World War II. Hispanic refugees from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) slowly migrated north from the southwest and Los Angeles to the San José area in search of agricultural work. San José saw a marked increase in this population during and after World War II. Recently immigrated Mexican women dominated cannery work, a position they retained until the industry declined in the region in the 1970s. The European immigrant populations of the earlier periods leveraged out of lower paid agricultural jobs to more lucrative industrial work in other areas of the city. Just after the end of World War II the Hispanic population of the Greater Gardner area jumped to 21%, while the Italian-American presence declined to 28%, with populations of other ethnicities declining to 47%. At the end of the 1950s the presence of Italian-Americans dropped to 22%, while the Hispanic population swelled to 32%.

By 1970, with freeways bisecting the area and decimating the housing stock, the local population as a whole decreased by nearly 40% due to a loss of housing stock. Percentages changes followed the prior decades with Hispanics accounted for 61% of the population.

## **Architecture and Shelter**

Most of the properties in Greater Gardner developed with single-family homes during the twentieth century. The houses are diverse in age, style and massing. Although the neighborhood is predominately pre-World War II in character, replacement housing and infill continues to the present. The neighborhood has not been subject to extensive demolition and replacement projects in the recent past, but the pace of remodeling of older houses has picked up in the recent years due to housing demand in the region.

In addition to single-family houses, there are also duplexes and apartment buildings located in the outer areas of the neighborhood; a majority of these were constructed beginning in the late 1940s. By the 1960s, some parts of the study area had begun to lose their single-family character due to replacement and infill projects. This new housing is

less representative of specific historic styles; the designs were primarily vernacular examples of what is now referred to as the “stucco box”, characteristic of common building materials and methods of the period.

The early street grid and the small lot sizes established by the early subdivisions limit the size and massing of buildings in the neighborhood; further later subdivisions only tightened the lot sizes. Traditional single-family residences of a variety of styles and ages form the main character of much of this area of the city. Both one and two-story houses are found, as are both vernacular and stylistically elaborate designs.

Although there was a transition from single-family residences to multi-family housing in the area during the second half of the twentieth century, most apartment buildings and duplexes in the study area are similar in massing and scale with the surrounding houses.

Because of their age of construction, as well as the constraints of the parcels, most of the houses in the area have detached garages, some of which were modified from earlier outbuildings, although accessory buildings built originally as carriage houses are rare. The scale of the parcels prohibits large outbuildings, so most of these garages and sheds are modest in size and form and set well to the rear of the properties.

Many parcels continue to include other outbuildings such as storage sheds. Original agricultural structures related to pre-subdivision settlement have not been identified in the area; however, some residential-scale agricultural structures, such as chicken houses, may still remain.

Within the building types noted in the following pages, are representative examples of many major residential architectural styles popular between the 1880s and the present day in Greater Gardner. The styles are typical of San Jose’s downtown frame, although few examples of styles from the Early American Period exist due to subdivision development that occurred mostly in the twentieth century, half a century after the establishment of San Jose’s Original City.

The residences in the area include styles as diverse as early-American farmhouses (some possibly relocated into the area), Victorian-era single-family residences, later Neoclassical and Craftsman bungalows and cottages, Eclectic Revivals from the twenties and thirties, Ranch-style and related Minimal Traditional houses, as well as stripped-down-Modern “stucco-box” apartments and duplexes. Within the mix are some newer replacement houses that are Neo-Eclectic in style.

Regardless of style, almost all the residential buildings within the neighborhood are of conventional wood-frame construction; however, there are also a few board-wall houses. The dates that are included in the following analysis are not firm; the popularity of specific styles tends to cross timelines.

## Pre-American-era Structures

### *Prior to 1850*

There are no known extant resources associated with the Spanish and Mexican Periods (1769-1846) in the study area. The area lies within two ranchos, but the haciendas for those ranchos lie outside of the study area.

### National Style and other early pre-railroad vernacular forms

#### *1850s to early 1870s*

Of the earliest American-era buildings in the study area, only a few may still be extant and are of the vernacular National style. Most of these may have been relocated into the study area during the twentieth century. These buildings are modest in size and plain in appearance, so are not always recognized as potentially significant. Some of these mid-nineteenth-century vernacular houses are of board-wall construction. They have simple, steeply gabled roofs and rectangular footprints, and their board-and-batten siding is integral with their structure although they may have been clad with lapboard or channel rustic siding.

The houses are referred to as National style, representing the simplicity and universality of their forms. National style houses can have added detailing that shows some stylistic influences, such as turned porch posts, Tudor headers, or Gothic Revival eave trim, but most in San José, and the few that have been found in Greater Gardner, are very plain.



*National-style house at 690 Minor Ave.*

Early vernacular wood-frame residences—usually balloon frame—also most often took a National-style form; these simple houses also had moderately to steeply pitched, gabled roofs covering simple rectangular floor plans or “L”-shaped plans; however, changes in construction techniques and the availability of locally milled materials allowed somewhat larger footprints and provided a more polished exterior siding material.

In addition to a widespread use of channel-rustic siding, the houses had boxed eaves, simple projecting porches, and plain, flat-board trim characteristic of this era. Windows, if they haven’t been replaced, are usually two-over-two or six-over-six double hung wood sashes.

Many have been re-clad with stucco, asbestos shingles, aluminum, or plywood envelopes. The re-clad houses are generally reversible to their earlier character, although recent remodeling trends that include new window inserts reduce the integrity of these rare houses to where they no long can convey their historic character.

### Italianate

#### *Late-1860s and 1880s*

As American influence in the area increased after California statehood, construction of wood-frame houses increased throughout the area. By the time that railroads first appeared in the South Bay area in the mid-to-late 1860s, housing construction began to take on more stylistic characteristics compared to the vernacular National style houses of the pre-railroad era.

Materials and some detailing were similar to those of the earlier houses; however, fashionable buildings became Italianate in style, and vernacular buildings started to incorporate Italianate elements. The construction methods were sturdier, utilizing redwood lumber for balloon framing.

Larger houses in the area that were built during this early era, such as the house of William H. Gardner (shown on this page), have a distinctive Italianate form: two stories on a raised pony wall, with tall windows and attached porches. Few of the early Italianates exist in the study area however, and the Gardner house has been modified and appears to have lost its features that would clearly identify it with the Italianate style.



*Gardner House at 689 Delmas Ave.*



## Victorian-era Designs: Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Shingle-style houses and cottages

*1880s to early 1900s*

Victorian architecture refers to designs roughly associated with the period of the reign of Queen Victoria of Great Britain—approximately the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Within this catchphrase are a number of specific styles that have some commonality and some differences. The common traits include a sense of verticality expressed in the proportions of the massing, trim, windows and doors. Asymmetry is also an attribute of Victorian architecture; , most houses from this era have asymmetrical towers, bay windows, gables, porches, cantilevers and other projecting objects that interrupt the basic, underlying house form. Much of this era of design focuses on elaborate decorative elements such as brackets, spindlework, Eastlake carved trim, and complex shingled window surrounds. The various styles are built of frame construction, often platform-framed for differentiation between the first and second floor plans. This lightweight or “western” construction method slowly replaced the earlier “balloon framed” houses of the National and Italianate styles.



*Jeremiah Wolfe House, 1060 Bird Ave.*

Queen Anne houses and cottages are present in both stylistically clear and vernacular forms in the Greater Gardner neighborhoods. Queen Anne houses typically feature asymmetrical façades with a combination of hipped roofs and decorative gables, as well as angled bay windows and turrets. The style is well known for ornate trim, including scroll-cut brackets and decorative window surrounds. Porches on Queen Anne cottages usually project from the building mass and feature turned columns and additional ornate trim, although houses late in the period began to have a more integral sense of volume as residential architecture took on more classical forms. Queen Anne cottages have traditional hipped main blocks with a single, projecting gable, often featuring angled bay windows; they have less ornate trimwork, but still include some porch brackets and other delicate features.

Shingle-style houses are recognized by their broad, gabled forms—often multiple stories or half-stories are protected by the same gabled roof. Shingle-style walls have cantilevers, bays, and eyebrow forms that are frequently shingled to cover these complex articulations. Shingle-style houses often include Neoclassical-style porch columns, window casings with pilaster trim, and heavy brackets and dentils.

Victorian Farmhouses are the later versions of National-style forms with vernacular “Victorian” elements utilized within the porches and eaves. The roof pitches, siding type, window proportions and sash types are subtly different from the earlier National-style buildings, although most of these utilize balloon framing like their predecessors.

### Twentieth Century: Prairie-style and Foursquare houses

#### *Late 1890s to mid-1920s*

Traditional Prairie-style proportions include blocky massing with a horizontal emphasis, and the buildings are strongly grounded. The strength and solidity of these houses is most often expressed with a tall first floor—often created by a trim band or change of materials at the apron level of the second-floor windows; not only does this create a substantial base, it also accentuates the horizontality of the upper portion of the elevations. Additional strength is conveyed by wide doorways and heavy posts. Additional horizontality is conveyed by deeply cantilevered, boxed eaves and ribbons of windows. Smaller details that express the Prairie style include geometric art-glass windows, windows with Prairie-style lite patterns (compositions of rectangles and squares), and stripes of trim (See Frank & Nellie Wolfe House next page).

Foursquare houses are a practical, vernacular expression of this transitional time between Victorian-era verticality and Craftsman horizontality. Their exteriors are relatively unornamented, and their name refers to their room configuration. Some foursquares have recessed porches, but usually they have applied front stoops with simple porch roofs.



*595 Brooks Ave. at Bird Avenue, San Jose's first Prairie-style house built by and for Frank & Nellie Wolfe.*

## Neoclassical and Craftsman Bungalows and Cottages

*1900 to 1925*

Greater Gardner has areas with collections of buildings that exhibit simple Craftsman-style residential design. Earlier versions of these houses had Neoclassical characteristics. Most of the houses from this era are vernacular, but, nevertheless, embody the design aesthetics presented in such magazines as *Craftsman*.

Craftsman bungalows built during the early twentieth century have a horizontal orientation that is often highlighted by long porch beams, broad eaves, and ribbons of windows. Most Craftsman houses in Greater Gardner are one story or one-and-a-half stories in height.

As the early Neoclassical cottage design esthetic evolved into the Craftsman-style house designs during the second decade of the twentieth century, a variety of features that set them off from early buildings: knee braces at their gable ends, outlookers, massive porch posts and/or truncated posts that rest on solid, sided porch railings, exposed rafter tails and other expressions of joinery, and wide front doors, as well as double-hung and casement windows with horizontal or square, rather than vertical, proportions.



*564 Brooks Ave. - Craftsman Bungalow*

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The earlier Neoclassical cottages have similar horizontal or cubical proportions as Craftsman houses, and use similar materials; however, their distinctive features include the small hipped or gabled dormers at their usually hipped roofs that also sometimes have forward-facing gabled pediments, a feature deriving from the nineteenth century Victorian cottage. These houses have modest turned columns and solid porch railing, and a great many have recessed porches and shallow angled bay windows tucked under boxed eaves. Greater Gardner also have a few shingled Craftsman-era houses with hipped roofs and recessed porches, but the common siding choices from this timeframe include tri-bevel siding, simple lap siding, and stucco.



*431 Marshall Ave. – Neoclassical Bungalow*

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## Eclectic Revival Styles: Spanish Eclectic, Normandy Cottage, and Tudor Revival Colonial Revival

### *1920s and 1930s*

Over time, Craftsman-style houses began to take on new exterior detailing reminiscent of historic and international examples, such as half-timbered gable ends, and after the First World War the Eclectic Revival or Period Revival styles grew in prominence to become characteristic of both residential and non-residential construction. Such styles as Spanish Eclectic, Mission Revival, Mediterranean, French Eclectic, and English derived designs became popular. Even very modest residences included Eclectic Revival detailing, such as Spanish tile roofs, raised and inset plaster ornament, arched porches and arched picture windows, shaped buttresses, and the occasional ornamental column.

Growing out of a similar desire for traditional and historical forms of Europe, some houses from this era were Colonial Revival. Looking to colonial New England and the Middle-Atlantic states for design features, designers included gambrel roofs, cantilevered upper stories, blocky proportions, shuttered windows, and classical pediments over symmetrical front entries.

One of the new building types that emerged in this period is the automobile garage. Although early garages were sometimes based on carriage-house prototypes, and so were detached, had board walls and board-and-batten doors, garages soon were being built along with the primary residences, and so matched the materials and forms of the house.



*570 Coe Avenue*

## Minimal Traditional

*Late 1930s through 1950s*

Some vernacular houses, particularly in the 1930s and early 1940s, were built very simply in what is referred to as “Minimal Traditional style.” In the study area, the style is most often displayed with one-story, unadorned, stucco houses with gabled roofs, shallow eaves and simplified porch designs. Within the Minimal Traditional style evolved a distinctive, 1940s, residence that features simplified roofs, often hipped, and horizontal window lites, often steel casements but also sometimes double-hung wood sash. Detailing in these later buildings is somewhat less traditional and more typically geometric, particularly accentuating horizontal lines, such as a pattern of horizontal rails between the porch posts. Interesting versions of houses from this era have corner windows with thin corner posts. Minimal Traditional buildings are a transition between the revival styles into post-war Ranch-style houses.



515 Hull Ave.

## Art Deco, Art Moderne, and Early Modern

### Mid-1930s to early 1950s

While Modern architecture began to appear in Santa Clara Valley in the mid-1930s, there are few examples of buildings with these stylistic characteristics in the study area.



83 Delmas Ave.

## Ranch Style

### Late 1940s and 1950s

The thirties and early forties were a lean time for construction; the financial atmosphere and the need to use materials for the war effort diminished the ability of people to erect new buildings, but after World War II, the boom years began. Although a large proportion of Ranch-style houses in California are traditionally found in groupings of similar houses within large subdivisions, vernacular and custom Ranch-style residences can be found in the study area. The Ranch style, championed by *Sunset Magazine* in the late 1940s, included mostly single-story construction under hipped roofs, rooms that opened into the landscape, and attached carports or garages. Typical features of Ranch-style houses include simple posts at the recessed porches, horizontal ribbons of window

sash, often steel casements, and geometric fascia gutters. A decorative feature that often was used to create a more horizontal line was brick wainscoting.



577 Hull Ave.

## Modernism: Stucco Duplexes and Modern “Shoebox” Apartments

*Late 1940s to the about 1980*

Mid-century Modernism began to reach widespread popularity, as its simplicity was both practical and aesthetically pleasing for commercial and industrial construction in the post-World War II economy. The character of this style comes from wide wall planes under flat roofs with little or no trim around large windows and simple doors. Ribbon windows and some angular trim or elements often accentuated the horizontality, but the primary focus was the overall rectilinear massing.

Bay Regional style is a regional variation of Modernism, focused on the use of local materials for the exterior finishes; specifically, the forms of such buildings are geometric and Modernist, but the siding and trim might be wood, such as v-groove siding. Single-family residences in the study area seldom utilized this style; however, the multi-family residences were most often Modernist in style. Of particular note in San José, and in the study area specifically, are “shoebox” apartment buildings. Rectangular in plan and elevation, with flat roofs and little trim, the massing of these two-story, two-unit-wide



buildings resemble their namesake. These apartments sometimes respect the front and side yard setbacks of the earlier parcels, and so have a front façade similar in size to surrounding houses; however, some apartments included parking at the front façade. Some duplexes and apartment buildings represent a subset of Modernism that is



referred to as “Stucco Boxes.” These vernacular buildings, unlike the architect-designed examples of Modern residential architecture, are virtually devoid of all ornament or attention to design details.

*408-410 Fuller Ave.*

## Envelope Replacement Projects

*1950s to present*

Since the mid-twentieth century, many residential structures in the study area have been the subject of envelope replacement projects. Remodeling the exterior of buildings is not a new phenomenon although historically most renovation work has tended to focus primarily on re-roofing or replacement of deteriorated window sash. Older buildings that were relocated during the twentieth century often had their porches replaced, new foundations built, and additions added to expand the useable floor area. Starting about the mid-1930s, house renovators began to cover wood siding with asbestos shingles. Stucco re-cladding became more popular after World War II. Later, aluminum siding was promoted by large retailers, such as Sears to cover wood siding, and sometimes aluminum windows, particularly aluminum sliders, replaced original wood windows. Vinyl siding was also used after the late-1950s. In recent times, envelope replacement projects continue in Greater Gardner. The most common cladding types used today for

envelope replacement projects are sprayed stucco and textured plywood. While simple over-cladding with a modern material is often reversible, many remodeled structures lose their historic character permanently when new siding is combined with either window frame replacements or the removal of trim features from the house or porch. The changes in vinyl window technology in the last 10 years, along with intensive marketing to the general public, has resulted in the recent transformation of much of the historic building fabric of Greater Gardner.



498 Jerome St.

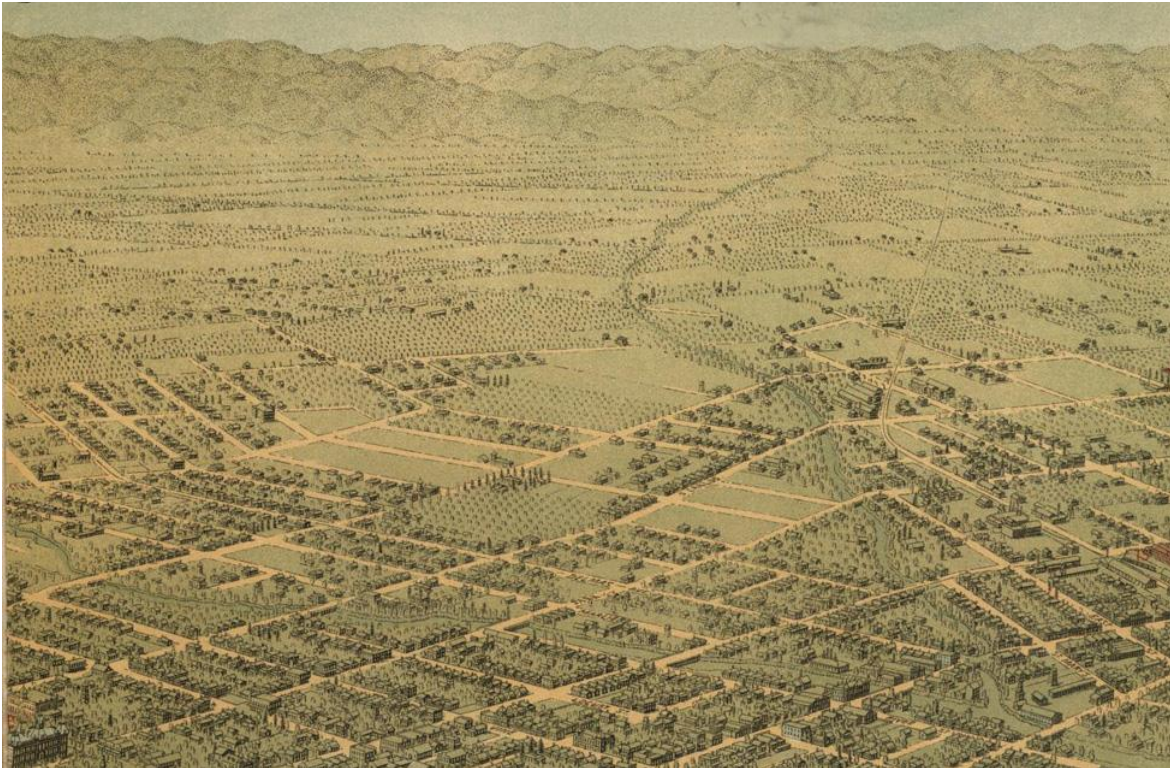


378 Brown St.

## DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The earliest American surveys of San José platted the city from the old pueblo east to the Coyote Creek, and is known as the Original City. Within a few decades, new tracts within the Original City had defined the urban frame. This frame was divided into four political districts divided into quadrants by First and Santa Clara Streets.

In 1911, Greater Gardner became the first expansion to the Original City when the city limits were expanded to the southwest. This new expansion area was identified briefly as the Fifth Ward, but changes in the City Charter eliminated the Ward system of political representation. The Greater Gardner and other nearby neighborhoods continued to be identified as the Fifth Ward until World War II.



*This 1901 Bird's Eye View of the area southwest of downtown San José shows the future Greater Gardner neighborhoods in their early stages of development (Britton & Rey – Library of Congress collections)*

The following overview of subdivision development in Greater Gardner addresses patterns of growth that occurred in the area beginning with the Original Survey of San José in 1847, with reference to ranchos that had existed in the study area during the Mexican Period that were patented during the first two decades of the Early American Period. Most development in Greater Gardner ended during the first decade following World War II, although some recent infill develop has occurred near Willow Street. Infill development continues today at the perimeter of the study area, as well as residential

replacement projects throughout the neighborhoods. The subdivision list compiles all known tracts or early surveys that were recorded.

Understanding when and where particular subdivisions of property occurred provides factual information for determining the age of buildings and when neighborhood development occurred. Where tract developments overlay earlier lot patterns, extant buildings can often be found that were once associated with the earlier, larger lots. When buildings clearly appear older than the associated date of its parcel subdivision, there is the possibility that the building was relocated.

## Gardner Neighborhood

The City of San José has designated the Gardner neighborhood as the area bounded by Bird Avenue, Interstate 280, the Guadalupe Expressway, and Willow Street. Houses stand on twenty-four residential subdivisions, each originally a lot in the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract. Biebrach Park was the only Odd Fellows lot in the neighborhood that did not undergo residential subdivision. The first Gardner schoolhouse, built at the southeast corner of William and Illinois Streets in 1894, for many years shared the block with residential neighbors. The San José school district has slowly acquired the block since the 1911 annexation into the City of San José. All the houses that once stood in this block have been demolished or relocated.

### Gardner Subdivision

William Gardner bought Lot 4 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract on January 1, 1886. H. S. Foote reported in 1888 that Gardner lived on Delmas Avenue, which was on the eastern boundary of Lot 4. The house, 659 Delmas Ave., stood until 1970, when it was demolished to make way for Interstate 280. In April 1889, Gardner had the five acres of Lot 4 surveyed into 32 house lots fronting Willis, Minor, and Delmas Avenues. William Gardner's daughter, Mary E. Field, a widow with two small children, co-owned the subdivision. Mary's father gave her the house at First and San Carlos and paid to have it moved to the Gardner subdivision. The house still stands at 689 Delmas Ave. The Gardner Subdivision is



the northernmost Odd Fellows Savings Bank lot still extant after the construction of the Interstate 180-Highway 87 interchange. Of its original 32 lots, nine to the north were lost to the construction of the interstate. It is bounded by Delmas Avenue on the east, the Leach and McIlvain Subdivision on the south, and the Edenvale Tract on the west (SCC Recorded Maps Book d, Page 93).

### Bender's Subdivision

C. E. Driscoll purchased Lots 5 and 6 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on June 13, 1886. He added Lot 11, adjacent to the southern boundary of Lot 6, to his holdings on February 8, 1887. Driscoll surveyed and recorded these three lots as Bender's Subdivision on September 6, 1888 (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 11). Its 128 lots in the northeastern portion of Greater Gardner were bounded by Grant Street on the north, the Guadalupe River on the east, West Virginia Street on the south, and Delmas Avenue on the south. The subdivision was split north to south by Spencer Ave, which was previously known as Marliere Street.



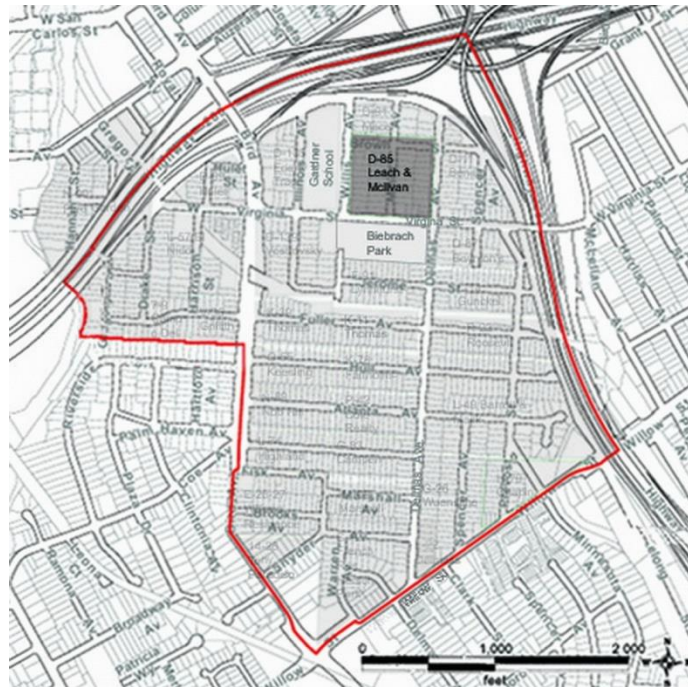
The original city limits bisected Bender's Subdivision from its northwest corner at Delmas Avenue and Grant Street to the intersection of Spencer Street and West Virginia Street. State Route 87 eventually cut off the northern and eastern section of the subdivision, leaving around 40 lots of the southern portion of the subdivision within the boundaries of the survey area.

### Leach and McIlvain Subdivision (map next page)

Willow Glen orchardist W. W. Cozzens purchased Lots 7 and 10 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on February 21, 1887. Cozzens leased the Bird Ranch hop dryer from the bank as late as June 1885, when fire completely destroyed the old brick landmark. Perhaps the hop dryer stood on these lots, and these were the ones Cozzens chose to purchase. Cozzens subdivided Lots 7 and 10 into 48 lots, recording the tract on April 13, 1889 (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 85). He put realtors S. H. Leach and A. J. McIlvain in charge of selling the lots and carrying the mortgages.

Forty-four of the lots are bounded on the north by Brown Street, on the east by Delmas Avenue, on the south by West Virginia Street, and on the west by Willis Avenue. Minor Avenue bisects the subdivision east and west.

The remaining four lots are on corners fronting the north side of Brown Street where it intersects Willis Avenue, Minor Avenue, and Delmas Avenue. The northern boundary of these four lots borders lots of the Gardner Subdivision.



### Edenvale Tract

The Edenvale Tract is a subdivision of 68 lots bounded by William Street to the north, Willis Avenue to the east, West Virginia Street to the south, and Bird Avenue to the west. This subdivision, originally Lot 8 and Lot 9 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract, was purchased by J. C. Jackson on March 9, 1887. It was subdivided in 1889 by E. P. Reed and three other investors: his son Edward C. Reed, former San José mayor Charles J. Martin, and John Freeman .

At the time of subdivision, West Virginia Street was known as Home Street. Martin Avenue, presumably named after the mayor, bisected the tract (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 135). The name was changed to Illinois Avenue around 1930, to correspond to the name of the street that bisected the Purinton Tract immediately north of the Edenvale Tract.



### Boynton's Subdivision

J. Vostrovsky purchased Lot 12 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on February 3, 1887. Subsequent owners J. E. Boynton and G. W. Worthen subdivided it in 1889 (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 87). The subdivision consisted of 38 lots and was bounded by West Virginia Street on the north, the Guadalupe River on the east, the region north of Jerome Street on the south, and Delmas Avenue on the south. It was split north to south by Spencer Avenue, Prevost Street, and Sycamore Street. State Route 87 eventually cut off Sycamore Street and the eastern portion of the subdivision, leaving around 30 lots within the boundaries of the survey. At the time of subdivision, West Virginia Street was known as Home Street, and Spencer Avenue was known as Marliere Street.



### Vostrovsky Subdivision

Born in Prague, Jerome Vostrovsky immigrated to the United States in 1864. After a career in the mercantile business in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest, he settled in 1883 in San José. The following year Vostrovsky purchased four acres at the southwest corner of what is now Bird Avenue and Willow Street, where he planted an orchard of prunes and cherries and built a family home (Foote, Pen Pictures, 391). Vostrovsky increased his holdings to almost twenty-two acres when he purchased Lot 12, Lot 14, and Lot 15 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on February 3, 1887 (SCC Deeds Book



87, Page 470). He sold off Lot 12 by 1889, and others would subdivide it as Boynton's Subdivision (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 87).

On August 15, 1889, Vostrosky recorded the subdivision that bears his name (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 139). The tract originally contained 44 lots and was bounded by Home (now West Virginia) Street on the north, Willis Avenue on the east, and Bird Avenue on the west. Lots 11, 12, 33, and 34 were at the subdivision's southern boundary, separated from the rest of the lots by Jerome Street, likely named for Mr. Vostrovsky or his namesake son. These four lots became part of the Southern Pacific Railroad's right-of-way in the 1930s. Martin (now Illinois) Avenue split the tract east and west, an extension of the Martin Avenue recorded the previous month as part of the adjacent Edenvale tract.

Lots 1 through 10 fronted Bird Avenue. By 1970, most of the lots had residential improvements. The City of San José purchased these lots and cleared them for the widening of Bird Avenue in 1972. Lots 40 through 44 fronted the west side of Willis Avenue and were likewise improved for residential purposes. On the 1915 Sanborn map, Lot 41 (817 Willis Ave.) showed a one-and-a-half story residence with a tank house to the rear. This was likely the Isaac Bird family residence, as it matches the location shown on the 1876 Thompson & West map. On March 4, 1963, the City of San José granted owner Bennie Romero a permit to demolish the house and replace it with a duplex. By 1969, the City of San José had purchased Lots 41 to 44, and on this land constructed the Gardner Community Center.

### Lynnhurst Tract

R. R. Hall purchased Lot 16 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on October 23, 1886. Louise C. Jeannery, an unmarried woman living in Alameda County, had Lot 16 subdivided into 30 house lots and recorded the Lynnhurst Tract on May 16, 1905 (Maps Book K, Page 79 – also Book F page 91). The tract was the final subdivision north of Home (now West Virginia) Street. It is bounded by Lot 13 (Bierbach Park) on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, Thomas Subdivision No. 1 on the south, and Willis Avenue on the west. Jerome Street split the subdivision west to east. Lots 16 to 30 have abutted the Southern Pacific right-of-way since 1936.





### Gunckel Subdivision

Samuel N. Shaver purchased the 8.5-acre Lot 17 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on November 20, 1886. Shaver planted an orchard and lived on Delmas Avenue, where he was enumerated in the 1900 census. In September 1905, Shaver sold his ranch to Emma J. Gunckel, widow of dentist William F. Gunckel. Dr. Gunckel invested in ranch land and experimented in horticulture. Before his death, he owned Lot 31 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract. Mrs. Gunckel had Lot 17 surveyed and recorded on December 18, 1905 (SCC

Recorded Maps Book L, Page 14). The subdivision consisted of 55 lots, split west to east by Jerome Street. Lots 1 to 30 are bounded on the east by Prevost Street and on the west by Delmas Avenue. Lot 31 is the right-of-way of Prevost Street. Lots 32 to 55 were in a block stretching from Prevost Street on the west to the Guadalupe River on the east. Construction of State Route 87 necessitated the demolition of that entire block except for the westernmost Lots 32, 33, and 34.



### Herschbach's Subdivision of Roosevelt Park

Henry Messing, owner of a San Jose harness and saddlery business on South First Street in downtown San Jose, owned Lot 18 of Odd Fellows Savings Bank before it was sold to C. E. Driscoll in September 1887. The property remained undeveloped until acquired by builder Thomas H. Herschbach and recorded as Herschbach's Subdivision of Roosevelt Park on December 12, 1922 (SCC Recorded Maps Book R, Page 22). The subdivision was bounded by the Gunckel Subdivision on the north, the Guadalupe River on the east, the Barrett and Mack Subdivision on the south, and Delmas Avenue on the west. It was split north to south by Prevost Street and west to east by Fuller Ave. The subdivision was originally divided into 4 blocks. Block 1 (northwest quadrant) consisted



of 15 lots, block 2 (northeast quadrant) consisted of 14 lots, block 3 (southeast quadrant) consisted of 15 lots, and block 4 (southwest quadrant) consisted of 15 lots, for a total of 59 lots. The northerly half of the subdivision became part of the Southern Pacific Railroad's right-of-way in the 1930s, and a row of houses on the north side of Fuller Avenue between Delmas Avenue and Prevost Street was demolished or relocated. State Route 87 eventually cut off the eastern portion of the subdivision.

### Thomas Subdivision No. 1

Franklin B. Fuller purchased Lot 19 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on November 28, 1885. A subsequent owner, Arthur C. Thomas, had Lot 19 subdivided and recorded as the Thomas Subdivision No. 1, on November 9, 1904 (SCC Recorded Maps Book K, Page 11). The tract was re-recorded in 1905 when Berta A. Thomas was added as one of the owners. Its 26 lots are in the central portion of Greater Gardner, bounded by the Lynnhurst Tract on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, the Fairholme Subdivision on the south, and the Thomas



Subdivision No. 2 on the west. Fuller Avenue splits the tract west to east. The portion of the tract on the north side of Fuller Avenue developed first, but became part of the Southern Pacific Railroad's right-of-way in the 1930s. About eight were demolished or relocated at that time. Most of the south half of the tract was still vacant by the beginning of the 1930s, and developed in the 1930s and later with new or relocated buildings.

### Thomas Subdivision No. 2

Joseph W. Hilderth purchased Lot 20 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on February 26, 1887. Arthur C. Thomas purchased the lot from Hilderth's heirs and recorded Thomas Subdivision No. 2 on January 30, 1905 and few months after recording the adjacent tract to the east (SCC Recorded Maps Book K, Page 39). The tract was re-recorded in May 1905 when Berta A. Thomas was added as one of the owners. Its 32 lots are in the central portion of Greater Gardner, bounded by the Vostrovsky Subdivision on the north; Willis Avenue, the Lynnhurst Tract, and Thomas Subdivision No. 1 on the east; Keesling Cherry Court on the south; and Bird Avenue on the west. Fuller Avenue

splits the tract west to east. About 50% of the tract had developed on both the north and south sides of Fuller Avenue by the beginning of the 1930s. The portion north of Fuller Avenue became part of the Southern Pacific Railroad's right-of-way in the 1930s, and six houses were demolished or relocated at that time. Much of the south half of the tract was developed by the beginning of the 1930s.



### Keesling Cherry Court

Thomas B. Keesling, a pioneer orchardist with a home place on Willow Street at Cherry Avenue, purchased Lot 21 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on February 8, 1887. He granted his son George L. this five-acre lot in 1891, around the time of George's marriage to Lila M. Hodges. George planted an orchard on Lot 21 and worked it until 1914, when he had it subdivided into 23 lots. On July 2, 1914, Keesling Cherry Court subdivision was recorded at the request of San Jose House Builders (SCC Recorded Maps Book O, Page 55). This contracting firm advertised the tract for sale in the *San Jose Mercury* on September 27, 1914, promising "full-bearing cherry trees" on each 60-foot-wide lot. Keesling did not sell any lots until the late 1920s, when he began to hire contractors to build houses on speculation. He commissioned at least ten such houses in the subdivision



between 1927 and 1941. Other buyers built on the remaining lots during this interwar period, leaving only a handful of empty lots that underwent infill soon after World War II. The subdivision is in the central portion of Greater Gardner, bounded by Thomas Subdivision No. 2 on the north, the Fairholme Subdivision on the east, the Nob Hill Subdivision on the south, and Bird Avenue on the west. Hull Avenue splits the tract west to east.

### Fairholme Subdivision

Henry True Beese retired to the Santa Clara Valley in the summer of 1885 after thirty years in the ministry. He purchased Lot 22 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on December 29, 1885 (SCC Recorded Maps Book K, Page 78). Three years later, Foote described Besse's fine residence on Delmas Avenue and the five acres "he improved from a stubble-field." (Foote, Pen Pictures, 459-460). Besse sold the lot on April 19, 1892, to Jefferson Hull, a fruit grower who continued to tend the orchard Besse had planted. On May 16, 1905, Hull subdivided and



recorded the tract as the Fairholme Subdivision. Hull Avenue splits the tract west to east. Its 32 lots are bounded by Thomas Subdivision No. 1 on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, the Cole Realty Subdivision on the south, and Keesling Cherry Court on the west. The Southern Pacific Railroad Company purchased Lots 1 through 8 in 1907 through San Francisco attorney Franklin T. Poore. In 1913, Poore and other agents of the Southern Pacific transferred their holdings to the Southern Pacific, alerting the people of San José of the route the railroad intended to build when their franchise on Fourth Street expired in 1923. This news slowed development of the subdivision; on the 1915 Sanborn, only 12 of the 32 lots had been improved. In 1935, the Southern Pacific moved several houses in the path of the right-of-way on the north side of Fuller Avenue to vacant lots on the north side of Hull Avenue. In 1936, the Southern Pacific sold off its holdings to individual householders. Infill of the remaining vacant lots occurred in the late 1930s through the 1950s.

### Barrett and Mack Subdivision

The Barrett and Mack subdivision was originally Lots 23 and 24 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract. George A. Fleming purchased Lot 23 on January 8, 1887, and John R. Burr purchased Lot 24 on December 1, 1886. Twenty years later, Alva C. Keesling owned Lot 23 and A. B. Hedderly owned Lot 24. Late in 1906, Keesling and Hedderly sold their lots to Morgan Hill real-estate agents C. H. Barrett and William Mack who recorded the subdivision (SCC Recorded Maps Book L, Page 49). The San Jose realtor T. S. Montgomery became the subdivision's sole agent,



advertising the tract heavily along with the Naglee Park and Hanchett Residence tracts. Montgomery reported that “highly improved streets” and “cement sidewalks” were under construction in October 1906, and that the Gardner Sanitary District was pursuing the installation of sewers. “Sufficient building restrictions to warrant the desirable class only to locate,” promised Montgomery. The subdivision consisted of 128 lots in 8 blocks. Blocks 1 and 2 bordered the south side of Hull Avenue, beginning at Delmas Avenue on the west, intersected by Prevost Street, and ending at the Guadalupe River on the east. Lots 3 and 4 were bounded by Hull Avenue on the south, Delmas Avenue on the west, Atlanta Avenue on the north, and the Guadalupe River on the east. Lots 5, 6, and 7 were small blocks of 10 blocks each on the north side of Atlanta Avenue. Lot 8 was a single block adjacent to the Guadalupe River. The subdivision was largely unsuccessful, with only portions south of Atlanta Avenue and northeast of the intersection of Atlanta and Delmas Avenues developing by 1930. State Route 87 eventually cut off the eastern portion of the subdivision past Prevost Street, leaving around 90 lots within the survey boundary.

### Cole Realty Company Subdivision

George F. Wakefield purchased the five-acre Lot 25 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on December 1, 1886. Contractor Luther C. Rossi acquired the still-undeveloped Lot 25 in 1919 and parceled it into 34 house lots as the Cole Realty Company Subdivision (SCC Recorded Maps Book P, Pages 42 and 43). The subdivision straddles both sides of the 400 block of Atlanta Avenue as well as three lots on the northwest corner of Delmas



restricted class of people agreeing to erect a house worth at least \$2500 (Real estate ad, March 17, 1912).

The lots remained unsold until after Keesling deeded the remaining acre to Nelson on November 9, 1912 (SCC Deeds 392:357). On December 2, 1912, Nelson sold Lot 4 to auto trimmer Fred Rumpf and Lot 15 to Peter Newgren and Albert McCord. Rumpf's deed had no restrictive covenants, and he immediately filed a permit to build. The Rumpf house (extant at 569 Atlanta Avenue, formerly 57 Nelson Way)

was the only house built in the subdivision until after World War I. The Newgren and McCord deed included the advertised restrictive covenants, which made the deed null and void if the grantees sold or conveyed the property "to any Italian, Slovenian, Negro or Japanese."

### Highland Subdivision

The Highland Subdivision was originally Lot 28 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract, purchased by George A. and Charles F. Fleming on March 10, 1887. The Flemings divided the 5.5-acre lot into Lots 1 and 2 of the Flemings' subdivision.

In the 1900 census, orchardist John G. Haas was growing fruit on Coe Avenue. In April 1907, Haas sold Lots 1 and 2 to Paul Furst, a well-known local businessman and cashier of the First National Bank. Furst had the two-acre lots subdivided into 27 house lots and recorded the tract on April 15, 1907 (SCC Recorded



Maps Book L, Page 74). Frank Wolfe designed the first house in the subdivision on Lot 1 at 599 Coe Avenue and lived there between 1907 and 1911. The house was demolished as a part of the widening of Bird Avenue in the 1970s. The subdivision is bounded by the Nob Hill Subdivision on the north, the Campen Subdivision on the east, Willows Residence Tract on the south, and Bird Avenue on the west. It is split west to east by Coe Avenue.

### Campen Subdivision

The Campen Subdivision was originally Lot 29 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract, purchased by George F. Freyschlag on November 3, 1885. Bernhard T. Campen had Lot 29 subdivided into 32 house lots and recorded the tract on June 5, 1893 (SCC Recorded Maps Book G, Page 83). It is bounded by Cole Realty Subdivision on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, the Marshall Subdivision on the south, and the Highland Subdivision on the west. It is split west to east by Coe Avenue.



### Wuensche Tract

Anna Wuensche purchased Lots 30 and 35 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract at an unknown date, but likely between 1885 and 1887, when the rest of the lots initially sold. Mrs. Wuensche subdivided and recorded a tract of 48 lots on November 30, 1892 (SCC Recorded Maps Book G, Page 26). It is bound by the Barrett and Mack Subdivision on the north, the Chapin Subdivision on the east, Willow Street on the south, and Delmas Avenue on the west. It is split north to south by Spencer Avenue (originally Marliere Street). Many of the properties along Delmas Avenue developed with houses early, but Spencer Avenue remained mostly undeveloped until mid-twentieth century.





### Marshall Subdivision

John Shepard purchased Lot 31 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on November 6, 1885. Local dentist William F. Gunckel purchased the lot before his death in 1894 and kept the land in fruit trees. In April 1905, his widow, Emma J. Gunckel, sold the lot to realtor Marshall B. Atkinson, who in turn subdivided the five acres into 32 house lots on May 3, 1905 (SCC Recorded Maps Book K, Page 101). It is bounded on the north by the Campen Subdivision, Delmas Avenue on the east, Snyder Avenue on the west, and the French Residence Park on the south. It is split west to east by Marshall Avenue.



### Willows Residence Tract

The Willows Residence Tract was originally Lot 32 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract and purchased by George A. and Charles F. Fleming on March 10, 1887. It was originally a part of Flemings Subdivision in 1887, but was re-subdivided in 1890 and owned by N. Holway (SCC Recorded Maps Book E, Page 26 and 27). It consisted of 48 lots and was located in the southern portion of Greater Gardner. It was bounded by Fisk Avenue on the north, Willis Avenue on the east, the Fleming Subdivision on the south, and Bird Avenue on the west. It was split in a west to east direction by Brooks Avenue.



### Flemings Subdivision (no map shown)

In February 1887, the Hermann Brothers surveyed the most southerly portion of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank tract, Lots 28, 32, 33, and 38, for another set of brothers, George A. and Charles F. Fleming. The Flemings recorded their purchase of the lots on March 10, 1887 (SCC Deeds Book 88, Page 417), and recorded the Fleming's Subdivision the next day (SCC Recorded Maps Book B, Page 51, March 11, 1887). The subdivision broke the four lots into thirteen lots of one to three acres. Each lot fronted on what was mapped as Willow Glen (now Bird) Avenue, which made the missing connection between Lincoln Avenue and Willow Street. Lots 3, 4, and 5 were surveyed into house lots in 1890 as the Willows Residence Tract, and Lots 1 and 2 were surveyed into house lots in 1907 as the Highland Subdivision. Lots 10, 11, 12, and 13 are on the west side of Bird Avenue and are not part of this survey. Lots 6, 7, and 8 on the east side of Bird Avenue contain some of the grandest residences in the Greater Gardner area, from the 1890 Jeremiah B. Wolfe house at 1060 Bird Ave. to the 1923 Cribari residence at 1066 Bird Ave.

### Herschbach's Subdivision of French Residence Park

Henry French purchased Lots 34 and 37 of the Odd Fellows Savings Bank Tract on January 22, 1885. His children John W. French and Cordelia French subdivided the family's orchard and homestead after their parents' deaths. The siblings recorded French Residence Park on April 21, 1924 (SCC Recorded Maps Book S, Page 12). Its four blocks total 70 lots. Block 1 (15 lots) is bounded by Marshall Subdivision on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, Snyder Avenue on the south, and Willis Avenue on the west. Block 2 (25 lots) is bounded by Snyder Avenue on the north, Delmas Avenue on the east, Shepherd Avenue on the south, and Warren Avenue on the west. Block 3 (14 lots) is bounded by Shepherd Avenue on the north and northeast, Willow Street on the southeast and southwest, and Warren Avenue on the west. Block 4 (16 blocks) is bounded on the north by the intersection of Willis and Snyder avenues, Warren Avenue on the east, Willow Street on the south, and Flemings' Subdivision on the west.



### Chapin Subdivision

Mary C. Chapin recorded a subdivision of 22 house lots bordering the north side of Willow Street on June 26, 1894 (SCC Recorded Maps H, Page 79). She had purchased the land from James Patterson, who then still owned property on the south side of Willow Street. The subdivision is bounded by the Barrett and Mack Subdivision on the north, Willow Road on the south, and Mrs. Wuensche Tract on the west. Mrs. Chapin reserved a parcel of land for her own residence on the eastern boundary of the subdivision along Willow Street. The house was still shown on the 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map, but it appears to have been demolished in 1956 when the Willow Manor apartments were built on that site. The extension of Minnesota Avenue from Willow to Prevost Streets likely also occurred in 1956. Houses stood on Lots 14 to 22 of the Chapin Subdivision on the 1950 Sanborn, but some were demolished in the construction of Minnesota Avenue. The subdivision was originally split east to west by Chapin Avenue, which was renamed Prevost Street after the surveying of the Barrett and Mack Subdivision in 1906 connected Prevost and Chapin.



### Delmas Avenue Subdivision

The Delmas Avenue Subdivision was originally Lots 14, 15, 16, and part of 17 of Mrs. Wuensche's Tract. T. H. Manning had this resubdivision into seven lots recorded on February 7, 1906 (SCC Recorded Maps Book L, Page 22).



## Gregory Plaza Neighborhoods

### Ford Garden Lots

The Ford Garden Lots are located in the western portion of Greater Gardner bounded by San Salvador Street to the north, Drake Street to the east, Riverside Drive to the south, and Los Gatos Creek to the west. Owner Hannah A. Ford had the subdivision recorded as 126 lots on March 26, 1912 (SCC Recorded Maps Book N, Page 90).

Interstate 280 cut through the subdivision in 1970, leaving only about 40 lots in the southeastern corner of the subdivision within the boundaries of the survey area.



### Hulet Tract Subdivision

The Hulet Tract was subdivided on May 7, 1889 and originally owned by H. C. Hulet (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 99). This tract is located in the northwestern portion of Greater Gardner and consists of 33 lots (SCC Recorded Maps Book D, Page 9).

The area is bounded by Bird Street to the east, West Virginia Street to the south, and Drake Street to the west. At the time of subdivision, Drake Street was known as Naglee Street and West Virginia Street was known as Home Street.





### Griffith Court

Griffith Court is a subdivision of 17 lots in the western portion of Greater Gardner. It was subdivided in 1926 and originally owned by John B. Locoste, C. M. Griffith, and Elizabeth B. Griffith (SCC Recorded Maps Book V, Page 35).

The subdivision is bounded by El Nido Park on the north, Bird Avenue on the east, the region north of Riverside Drive on the south, and Harrison Street and Tract No. 193 Campo Del Sol on the west. It is split west to east by Fuller Avenue.



## PLANNING AND REGULATORY ISSUES

### Determining Architectural Significance

Architectural significance is identified when a building distinctly represents a particular style or building type. Architecturally significant buildings may also embody excellent artistic workmanship or demonstrate unique architectural ideals. In some neighborhoods, certain building styles or types dominate the landscape, and the structures that illustrate those patterns are significant for their contributions to the overall character of their surroundings. Vernacular buildings can also be found important for their representation of commonly accepted approaches to design and shelter, even without ornate detailing. Although some vernacular buildings aspire to a specific style by including limited characteristic design elements, such as scroll-cut corbels on an otherwise stylistically simple wood porch, other vernacular buildings can be associated with specific periods solely from their materials and forms. Because many of the historic Greater Gardner neighborhoods evolved slowly, architectural styles and types are interspersed throughout the area. The architectural significance of most buildings is thus related to individual examples and overall patterns of urban design. Key architectural features that affect the overall urban design of a neighborhood include front yard setbacks, continuity of materials, and building massing, scale, and size.

Buildings in San José have characteristically been of a transitory nature due to the use of wood in construction beginning in the 1850s. Early houses, without foundations, indoor plumbing or electrical connections, were easily relocated. Many early residents of San José and its environs purchased and brought their houses to empty lots in the Downtown Frame and adjacent evolving suburban areas such as Greater Gardner. These “itinerant” buildings are sometimes difficult to spot in the field, but can be identified when houses of early styles and construction techniques are found on lots that had no commensurate recorded structures in directories, maps, or deeds from the period. The process of relocating buildings continues to the present, even with the challenges of modern construction. Many freeway and road-widening projects, as well as redevelopment efforts in San José over the last century have resulted in houses being moved to other San José neighborhoods (and in some cases, out of town). Removal of old neighborhoods under the San José Mineta International Airport development, the construction of Interstate 280 and State Route 87, the building of the Children’s Discovery Museum and San José McEnery Convention Center, and the recent site preparation for construction of San José Civic Plaza have relocated many houses to outlying neighborhoods.

In the Greater Gardner neighborhoods, buildings significant for their architectural character can be identified using the architectural styles outlined in the thematic section, *Architecture and Shelter*. Due to the diversity of architectural styles, a variety of buildings may be determined to be historic resources, and these may be broadly spaced. Very

early buildings are rare, and are usually considered to have some level of architectural significance, even if their historical integrity may be comparatively compromised. Later buildings can be significant for their rarity, utility, beauty, associations, or other ability to convey important information as historic resources.

The Greater Gardner neighborhoods have some representation of architecture from the period after World War II, but the significance of most of this late-twentieth-century building stock has yet to be established. The mid-century buildings have only recently reached fifty years old, the commonly accepted age for buildings to be evaluated for historical significance. The very nature of construction after 1945 has been fast and extensive, so much of what was built is not individually distinctive of the era. Within some areas however, houses built in the decade following World War II are the last phase of development within these subdivisions, and the buildings do not differ greatly from the vernacular buildings nearby that were constructed towards the end of the Interwar Period. Both the Ranch and Minimal Traditional styles began to evolve during the late 1930s. The post-war houses that exemplify these traditional styles contribute to the unified fabric of some neighborhoods today, and do not distract from the historic setting that may warrant preservation through Conservation Area designation.

### **Conservation Planning in the Greater Gardner SNI area**

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) was developed as a partnership of the City of San José, San José Redevelopment Agency, and the community to build clean, safe, and attractive neighborhoods with independent and capable neighborhood organizations. The City and Redevelopment Agency had committed funds to the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative effort, and this context study is an outgrowth of that commitment. The stakeholders within that planning process were the residential neighborhoods, which are represented by three neighborhood associations in the area: North Willow Glen, Gardner, and Gregory Plaza.

The *Vision* of revitalizing Greater Gardner included creating and maintaining a safe, high-quality living environment, where residents are secure from the threat of crime, streets are safe and attractive, residents have quality affordable housing, and there are safe places for the community to interact and children to play.

Within the Action Plan Summary, Item 1a states “Preserve and enhance the existing strengths of Greater Gardner area,” and was developed as an ongoing public project with all parties to the Plan taking responsibility.

Item 2a states “Conduct a study to identify historic buildings and sites for inclusion in the City’s Historic Inventory.” This is a short-term public project under the responsibility of the San José Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department.



## San José Preservation Planning Program

The City of San José General Plan (as of Spring 2011 when this study was initially completed) contains seven Major Strategies that identify objectives to provide for a broad framework for consistent interpretation and application of the Plan's individual goals and policies. Of these strategies, the Urban Conservation/ Preservation Strategy recognizes the importance of sustaining viable neighborhoods, as they are irreplaceable assets. The General Plan notes that residents have a need to belong to a neighborhood or an area with community identity that promotes civic pride. In addition to maintaining and improving services through economic stability, preservation of specific structures or special areas contribute visual evidence to a sense of community that grows out of the historical roots of San José's past. Historic and architectural structures add inestimable character and interest to the City's image.

Since the initial completion of this study in 2011, the City Council has adopted the Envision 2040 General Plan Update. In this update, historic sites and structures have been reaffirmed to provide an educational link to San José's past; they foster a sense of place and community identity for San José. The preservation of appropriate remnants provides multiple benefits important to the health and progress of the city. Under General Plan Goal LU-14, it is the intent of the City of San José to "preserve and enhance historic structures of lesser significance (i.e., Structures of Merit, Identified Structures, and particularly Historic Conservation areas) as appropriate, so that they remain as a representation of San José's past and contribute to a positive identity for the City's future. To enact that goal, eight policies have been adopted (LU-14.1-14.8), as enumerated in Chapter 6, Land Use and Transportation, pages 22 and 23.

In the year 2000, the City Council adopted an ordinance amending the Zoning Code to include discretionary review of certain single-family house permits. These permits are required for residential remodeling and new construction when maximum height or floor area ratios are exceeded, or when the property is listed on the Historic Resources Inventory.

## Discussion of Conservation Area Policy and Guidelines

San José presently contains six conservation areas that are identified in the Historic Resources Inventory. Three of these areas, Naglee Park, Hanchett and Hester Park, and Palm Haven were identified within a city cultural resources survey that took place in the late 1970s, prepared by the then Department of Parks and Recreation, and partially funded by the California State Office of Historic Preservation. Portions of the survey were later adopted as the Official Inventory of Historic Places by the City Council, and later incorporated into the Historic Resources Inventory established in the 1980s.

The Market-Almaden Conservation Area was designated by the San José City Council following adoption of a new ordinance in 2004. In 2008 the Martha Gardens

Conservation Area was established by the City Council, and in 2009 the Guadalupe-Washington Conservation Area was established.

A conservation area is defined as follows:

*The purpose of conservation areas is to provide a designation tool to recognize as well as to preserve and enhance the character of qualifying neighborhoods. Conservation Area shall mean a geographically definable area of urban or rural character with identifiable attributes embodied by architecture, urban design, development patterns, setting, geography and history.*

The criteria for designation includes meeting the intent as defined above, and must include one or both of the below:

*The neighborhood or area has a distinctive character conveying a sense of cohesiveness through its design, architecture, setting, materials, natural features and history, or*

*The neighborhood or area reflects significant geographical or developmental patterns associated with different eras of growth in the City.*

Conservation areas are used as a planning tool throughout the country to preserve and enhance neighborhood character in places that have cohesiveness or distinctive character. Use of this approach to historic district designation is often of value when the targeted area might not technically merit consideration as an historic district, or in some cases when historic district designation is not supported by area residents.

Conservation areas represent a particular period of design or architectural style. Significance is derived from a grouping of structures viewed as a whole rather than from the importance of an individual building. The historic significance of these areas reflects development patterns of growth in the city. The areas are specifically defined in terms of their physical boundaries rather than by their historical development.

## FINDINGS AND PLANNING OPTIONS

The Greater Gardner neighborhoods consist of about 965 properties. Slightly fewer than 950 of these properties have built resources on them, and the remaining are vacant lots or remnants of past road construction or widening activities along Bird Avenue and the two highways. The majority of structures (over 95%) are 50 years in age or more. Little identification activity has occurred to date to determine the quantity and significance of historic properties in this large inner-city neighborhood. Almost all of the current Inventory-listed properties exist along Bird Avenue between Willow Street and Coe Avenue. These properties were identified as Contributing Sites in the 1970s during San Jose's first survey efforts, and were added to the San Jose Historic Resources Inventory in the 1980s.

*This study presents the following general findings:*

The Greater Gardner neighborhoods, in a broad sense, represent San Jose's historic growth for about 65 years, beginning in the late 1880s, during the period of Horticultural Expansion, and continuing through the first decade following World War II. These years define the area's period of significance (1885 – 1955). Not a part of the development of San Jose's Original City, Gardner was San Jose's first annexation in 1911. It initiated for San José a limited thirty-year growth period that ended with the start of World War II.

The neighborhood character of Greater Gardner varies according to area. There has been little infill since the build-out during the first decade after World War II, although areas at the perimeter, and the northwest corner west of Bird Avenue have seen recent development. The area north of the railroad right-of-way, known as the Gardner Neighborhood, has the earliest concentration of early houses, but it has also been subject to the greatest amount of replacement projects as well as recent remodelings. These recent projects include envelope replacements that have destroyed the historic character of many of these early buildings.

The historic building fabric of the residential buildings in the Greater Gardner neighborhoods continues to be subject to modification due to envelope replacement projects. Most of the changes consist of incompatible window replacements, but there is also a growing trend to cover older wood buildings with stucco or plywood and remove original building trim. In some areas of the Greater Gardner neighborhoods, these often-irreversible changes are starting to cumulatively impact the historic character of the neighborhoods. The owners perceive the projects as modernizations that increase property values, but the diminished continuity of historic building fabric affects other values inherent in neighborhoods that have a sense of historic place.

*The following specific findings relate to future designation:*

Within the Greater Gardner neighborhoods, a portion of the North Willow Glen sub-area represents the most intact and consistent pattern of historic development. Over 95%

of the buildings in the North Willow Glen sub-area between Bird and Delmas Avenues were constructed in the period of significance and around 75% of the properties maintain historic integrity to their original form and materials. About 20% of the properties contain buildings that qualify individually for the San Jose Historic Resources Inventory on their own merits and a number of these also are potential Candidate City Landmarks.

Other neighborhoods within Greater Gardner were also considered for designation, but lack the density of historic resources to meet the City's conservation area criteria. A secondary area within the North Willow Glen neighborhood located between Delmas Avenue and Prevost Street was considered for inclusion with the above identified conservation area. This area contains about 155 properties, of which 66% are at least 50 years in age. Only half of those buildings maintain sufficient integrity to be considered as historic resources if they were to be included in a conservation area, resulting in a contributing ratio of about 33% of total properties. The area east of Prevost Street adjacent State Route 87 has even fewer contributors, with most properties containing vernacular houses constructed in the last half a century or recent multi-family developments.

The Gardner neighborhood north of the railroad right-of-way also lacks sufficient density of historic resources for consideration as a conservation area. There are about 240 residential properties in this area. The ratio of historic properties to the total is about the same as that in the area discussed in the paragraph above, but the ratio of contributors to the historic setting is only about 40%. In this area, envelope-replacement projects and replacement houses dominate the neighborhood setting, and affect its character. Within this area is a small cluster of houses constructed during the first decade of the twentieth century located to the east and south of Biebrach Park. The two subdivisions, Lynnhurst and Gunckel, were recorded in 1905, and many buildings were constructed shortly thereafter. Many of the buildings in this grouping continue to maintain integrity to their original form and materials, but the proliferation of envelope-replacement projects nearby has begun to disrupt the historic setting of these two tracts. There is no clear sense of boundary for this grouping. Many of these houses are eligible for listing on the Historic Resources Inventory as Structures of Merit.

The Gregory Plaza area west of Bird Avenue was also surveyed and considered for designation. It also lacks the density of historic resources to meet City's conservation area criteria. The sub-area contains about 150 properties. Much of this area was developed late in the period of significance, and many older houses in the neighborhood have been subject to recent envelope-replacement projects. Less than 30% of the properties contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood.

In the areas outside of the potential conservation area, consisting of about 570 properties, approximately 55 properties have been identified as individually eligible for

listing on the San Jose Historic Resources Inventory. These 55 properties have been documented as a part of the Greater Gardner Survey and are listed in the Appendix.

## Planning Options

Neither the Greater Gardner area, nor any of its sub-areas, appear to technically merit consideration as a historic landmark district; however, portions of the North Willow Glen sub-area appear to qualify as a conservation area. This area is bounded by Bird and Delmas Avenues, Willow Street, and the Joint-Powers Board railroad right-of-way.

The San José City Council and/or local neighborhood citizens can consider nomination of this portion of the Greater Gardner neighborhoods as a conservation area. A "Statement of Neighborhood Character" is being prepared as a part of this study. All properties within the boundaries of the conservation area would be subject to design review under this process following designation by the San José City Council. Should a North Willow Glen Neighborhood Conservation Area be established, all the properties within the designated area(s) would be listed on the City of San José Historic Resources Inventory. Exterior changes to any single-family structure in the conservation area, which trigger a building permit, would require a Single Family House Permit in conformance with the guidelines "Your Old House: Guide for Preserving San José Homes". Most of Single Family House Permits are administrative, reviewed by staff at a reduced fee for historic houses. Applications that exceed floor-area ratios and height limitations, or that do not conform to the guidelines would be subject to a Category 2 Single Family House Permit that includes a public hearing. Individually historic properties significant at the City Landmark or California Register level would still require evaluation and environmental clearance at the development permit stage. The conservation area designation would not, by itself, create the need for additional permits for other types of development projects, including commercial and other non-single family residential projects. However, new development projects or exterior modifications to structures within, or adjacent to, the conservation area would be reviewed by staff as part of the applicable permitting process. The properties within the potential conservation area are listed in the Appendix.

The areas outside of the potential conservation area contain about 55 properties that appear eligible for listing in the San Jose Historic Resources Inventory. The Director of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement has the authority under City Ordinance to include these properties as Structures of Merit within the Inventory. The Inventory serves to identify those historic and architectural resources that receive careful scrutiny during land use and development planning. Exterior changes to any single-family structure listed on the Inventory which trigger a building permit, would also require a Single Family House Permit as discussed above. The properties found to be individually eligible for the Inventory, are listed in the Appendix.

The study also identified nine properties that appear to qualify as City Landmark Structures. The owners of these properties can apply to the City of San Jose for nomination of their properties for City Landmark status. The San Jose City Council makes the final determination for landmark designation under the City Historic Preservation Ordinance. Properties that are formally designated are thereby eligible for Historic Property Contracts, which can provide property tax relief on a contractual basis as consideration for the long-term maintenance of these properties by current and future owners. The list of properties can also be found in the Appendix.

On the following page is an aerial diagram outlining the boundaries of the potential conservation area:



*Diagram of the potential North Willow Glen Conservation Area and related areas in Greater Gardner*

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# APPENDIX

Within Greater Gardner are 27 properties that meet the Criteria for designation by the San Jose City Council as San Jose City Landmark Structures.



820 Bird Ave.  
Benjamin Cribari House



1018 Bird Ave.  
James Ward House



1022 Bird Ave.  
Bruce House



1040 Bird Ave.



1042 Bird Ave.  
Mary Pender House



1050 Bird Ave.  
James Chilton House



1060 Bird Ave.  
Jeremiah Wolfe House



1064 Bird Ave.  
Alphonse Bisceglia House



1066 Bird Ave.  
Fiore Cribari House



564 Brooks Ave.  
Spencer House



595 Brooks Ave.  
Frank Wolfe Prairie House



570 Coe Ave.  
Morrison House

Greater Gardner Neighborhoods  
City of San José



578 Coe Ave  
F. William Bocks House



591 Coe Ave.  
Smith House



689 Delmas Ave.  
Gardner Family House



777 Delmas Ave.  
Field House



897 Delmas Ave.  
SP Railroad Agent's House



983 Delmas Ave.



1001 1003 Delmas Ave.  
Della Maggiorie Store and House



508 Fuller Ave.  
Henry Lingua House



357 Hull Ave.  
Peter and Mamie Dalis House



554 Hull Ave.  
George L. Keesling House



577 Hull Ave.  
Morter House



348 Jerome St.  
J.A. Robinson House

Greater Gardner neighborhoods  
City of San José



423 Marshall Ave.  
Petersen House



485 Marshall Ave.



614 Minor Ave.