

# **THE INCORPORATION OF UNION CITY**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to acknowledge *The Hayward Daily Review*, and its successors, from whose archive of articles I drew most extensively in the authoring of this work. Many of these articles were used word for word to maintain their prose and impact. Articles so used are clearly defined as to the origin of the authoring. I have also used *Daily Review* prose in various parts of this document. I also drew from *The Oakland Tribune* archive of articles, but to a much lesser extent than *The Review*.

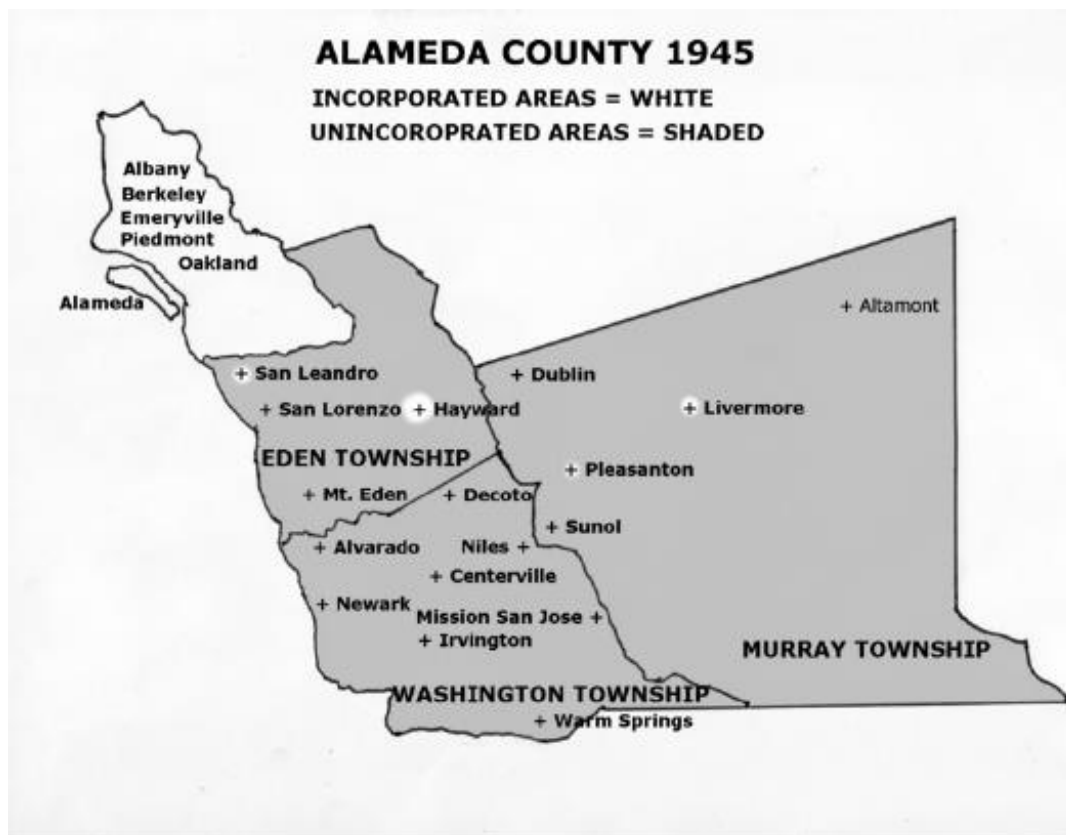
Many thanks must be given to the City of Hayward, which cooperated fully in the authoring of this work by lending me the annexation files of the City of Hayward from post-World War II to 1959. Without these documents my work would not have had the continuity, been as accurate, or been as complete.

I am basically a researcher that has compiled enough information to make an informative narrative about the incorporation of Union City. The facts, as stated, are as they were written, and I have tried not to distort them based on any prejudices I may have on the subject. The only exception to this is my paragraph of the old west end of "V" Street area bounded by Veasystreet and the old Benson Road. (Paragraph 5 on page 67) This is the area known as "Old Union City" and was the site of John Horner's founding of Union City in 1850.

# INTRODUCTION

The end of WWII would see one of the most progressive shifts of population on the American continent. Four years of global conflict were over for the U.S. The deprivation endured by the American public through rationing to support the war effort was slowly lifted as the nation turned from producing war material to consumer goods.

American fighting men poured back into the United States eager to restart their lives in civilian life. Gradually these men eased back into the civilian mode, married, and began to raise families leading to the famous "baby boom" generation. These men needed homes, and the U.S. government came to their aid. The G.I. Bill, signed by President Roosevelt in June 1944, offered the returning veterans low-down payments, and low interest loans. From its inception in 1944 to 1952, the VA backed nearly 2.4 million home loans for veterans of WWII.



A map of Alameda County just after WWII. White indicates incorporated cities, and gray indicates unincorporated towns. Washington Township is the only township in Alameda County that did not have an incorporated city. The city of Hayward only a small presence in their township, Eden Township. At the end of 1945, Hayward had a footprint of 3.5 square miles.

At the beginning of WWII, the City of Hayward had a population of 6,736 persons. This population swelled to 14,272 persons by 1950. Although I was unable to locate an exact population figure for Hayward in 1945, I doubt that it was much more than 8,000 persons, and I am guessing that most of the growth occurred after the end of WWII. Hayward at this time was almost all a residential area, having very little in the way of an industrial base.

The Hayward city limit at this time reached Jackson Street in the south, near today's Huntwood Avenue on the west. In the east, the city limit was "B" Street near Kelly. South of Jackson Street was all unincorporated land to the Washington Township boundary.

The incorporation of Union City involved two different townships, Eden and Washington. Eden Township had two incorporated cities, Hayward and San Leandro. Hayward had amongst its satellite unincorporated areas: Ashland, Cherryland, Fairview, Mt. Eden, San Lorenzo, and Baumberg.

Washington Township was all unincorporated land and consisted of eight little towns: Alvarado, Centerville, Decoto, Irvington, Mission San Jose, Newark, Niles, and Warm Springs. Also located in Washington Township was the Alviso District, located between Centerville and Alvarado.

In the 1950's I can remember riding from Mt. Eden to San Jose along the old State Highway 17 (Hesperian Blvd to the old San Jose Highway through Milpitas), and encountering my first stop sign at Decoto Road and Alvarado-Centerville Road, the second stop was a traffic light at Thornton Avenue in downtown Centerville, the third stop was at the monument in Irvington before heading towards Warm Springs. There was also a stop at the confluence of the roads from Mission San Jose, Irvington, and the road to Warm Springs.

This distance, nearly 14.5 miles of roads from Jackson Street at Hesperian, all the way through Warren Avenue near Warm Springs had only four stops. Such was the density of southern Eden Township & Washington Townships at this time.

After WWII, the eight towns in Washington Township were dominated by small farms and the merchants who served them. The only large industrial firms in Washington Township were the Holly Sugar Refinery in Alvarado, and the Pacific States Steel plant in Decoto. The marshes at this time were dominated by the Leslie Salt Company from Mt. Eden to Newark.

Also, there were several tile manufacturing plants between Decoto and Niles, and several canneries most notably in Decoto and Centerville.

Washington Township was an oasis of farms caught between two expanding cities, San Jose to the south (although Milpitas served as a buffer), and Hayward to the north. After WWII Hayward began to recognize the southern end of Eden Township and the northern end of Washington Township as an answer to their lack of industry.

Washington Township lacked the infrastructure necessary to incorporate, most notably a modern sanitary system, which at this time, was just beginning to expand their services in the Township. A comprehensive water plan was also needed. But the largest single problem was flood control. As long as the almost annual flooding of Alvarado and Newark occurred, then incorporation and attracting industry to help pay for city services was out of reach.

In 1947-48 Hayward was to receive a gift from the War Assets Administration. A then unused airport east of Hayward near the Bay, which included related buildings and equipment, was given to the City of Hayward. The airport was built in 1942, and was called Hayward Army Airfield by the U.S. Army Fourth Air Force.

The Army Air Force housed P-38 Lightning's here as part of the Bay defense force. In February 1948, Hayward would annex the airport and name it Hayward Municipal Airport (HWD). This was Hayward's first large annex. Involved were over 667 acres west of the city limits on unincorporated land. Prior to the airport annex Hayward had annexed four times after WWII, a 20 acre plot of

land, a portion of the Hayward Highlands, a small annex off "B" Street on Kelly, and a small annex on Castro (Mission Blvd.) and Rose Streets.

The airport was located about 1¾ miles west of the Hayward City limits on "A" Street and Hesperian Boulevard. Hayward began a path of annexations to fill in the route from west of the city limits at Huntwood to the Airport along "A" street. They also annexed around the airport, Hesperian Boulevard near the airport, and east from the airport along "A" Street to the city limits. Hayward also expanded west along Jackson Street towards Mt. Eden and East along "B" Street and Kelly.

Hayward's City infrastructure received its water through the Hetch-Hetchy system and its sanitary service through the Oro Loma Sanitary district. Because of this, Hayward was able to easily and quickly supply new annexes with city services.

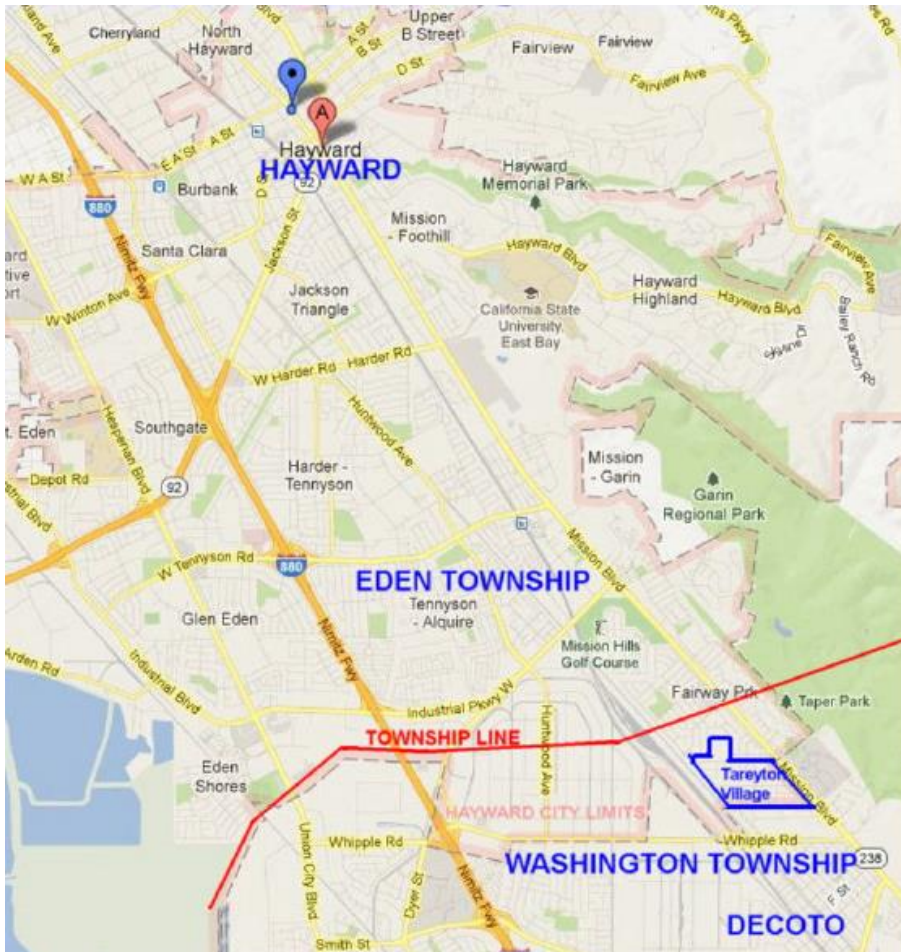
After the airport annex in 1948, the Hayward city council passed a resolution that the City of Hayward would no longer supply water to areas outside of its city limits. The only exception to this was Russell City, and this was exception was made only for the health reasons of the inhabitants.

But the area with the most room to grow was to the south. From 1948 to 1955 the City of Hayward would make no less than 88 annexes. The annexes were not contiguous, and some were as small as several city lots. This gave the City of Hayward a checkerboard look, with the incorporated area surrounded by islands of unincorporated land.

Hayward's die was cast when the Hayward Chamber of Commerce announced, on June 13, 1950, that they had passed a resolution that the City of Hayward should increase the size of the city from 3.5 square miles to 35 square miles. The main focus of this annexation was an area described as "from the Hayward City limits south to the town limits of Alvarado and Decoto, from the ridgeline of the foothills in the east then west to San Francisco Bay."

At the time this resolution was issued, the southern boundary of Hayward was within three miles of a new subdivision being built Washington Township.

# TAREYTON VILLAGE/HILLVIEW CREST



This is a map of southern Eden Township and northern Washington Township. In 1945 Hayward's southern boundary was Jackson Street near Huntwood Avenue on the west, and "A" & "B" Streets on the east. This map shows today's Hayward City limits (rose colored outline), and the location of Tareyton Village at Mission Boulevard just north of Whipple Road. Although situated in Washington Township, Tareyton Village (today's Hillview Crest) is now part of the City of Hayward. Hayward's annexation slowly moved south from Jackson Street, since 1948, to a position where Hayward annexed Washington Township territory in 1954 (the Washington Annex, aka Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde) and again in 1955 (Hillview Crest, formerly known as "Tareyton Village"). Finally, in the late 50's Hayward annexed Treeview, which is all the land to the west of Tareyton Village between (roughly) Industrial Parkway and the present southern Hayward City limits. The Washington Township boundary cuts right through the Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde tracts, leaving part in Eden Township and part in Washington Township. Tareyton Village (Hillview Crest) lies entirely within Washington Township. This led to years of controversy and infighting between the La Vista School District (Hayward) and the Decoto School District, each of which district ended at the township boundary. Hence although El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park were in the City of Hayward, roughly half of the homes were in the Decoto School District and not in the La Vista School District. (Map from Google)

The story of the incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto starts in a new housing tract called Tareyton Village. Built by Middlefield Homes of Oakland by owner T.R. Bechtel, Tareyton Village was a 113 acre site several hundred yards north of Whipple Road, in Decoto, on the west side of Highway 9 (Mission Blvd). The northern edge of the tract was one-half mile south of the Eden Township boundary with Washington Township. These homes were made for sale to vets for \$50 down, and for the least expensive home, payments of \$52 a month. Each home would feature a built-in Westinghouse television with the new large 12-inch black screen, which was later dropped.

The tract opened on June 25, 1950, with four model homes. Nearly 8,000 people toured the homes on opening day, buying 127 homes. Within eight days the sale of homes totaled 253. In September 1950, the City of Hayward announced plans to annex near Sorenson Street on the west side of Castro Street, just across from the Holy Sepulcher Cemetery. This would bring the Hayward City limits to less than three miles from Tareyton Village.

Within a week of Hayward's announcement to annex near Sorenson, Tareyton Village ran into problems with the Board of Supervisors over sanitation, drainage, and easements on the subdivision. The Middlefield builders claimed that a privately built sewage plant could be built on the site for \$75,000.

The Alameda County Planning Commission was not convinced by Middlefield's plan to build a site sewage system, and put the development on hold until the problems could be worked out. By October Middlefield begged for more time from the Board of Supervisors, as they conferred with the City of Hayward on the subject of sanitary service and drainage.

At the end of November it was announced that Middlefield and the City of Hayward were nearing an agreement on sewage service. Although no contract had yet been signed with the City of Hayward, Middlefield had signified its willingness to make the initial expenditure for construction of a sewage plant, with the City of Hayward to assume responsibility for administration and maintenance.

In December 1950, the City of Hayward changed its standing policy of not supplying water to locations outside its city limit. The City of Hayward agreed to supply water to the Tareyton Village (Middlefield Homes) tract, as well as the new U.S. Pipe & Foundry plant to be located on Whipple Road, Decoto. Both were totally located in Washington Township. At the same time Hayward prepared contracts to provide both Tareyton Village and U.S. Pipe & Foundry with sewage service if they would agree to take their water from Hayward. Hayward was eager to tie up Tareyton Village because of an impending rumor of a possible sale of Tareyton Village to a Los Angeles home builder.

Also at this time, Hayward began searching for a suitable spot to place a sewer treatment plant within their city. The best possible site appeared to be south of the Hayward Municipal Airport. The thought was to replace Hayward's contract with the Oro Loma Sanitary District with their own treatment plant.

On January 5, 1951, newspapers announced the sale of Tareyton Village to Biltmore Homes, an affiliate of the Treeview Co. in Los Angeles. The purchase price of the Tareyton Village tract on January 8, 1951, was quoted as "in excess of \$250,000."

The new owners promised the immediate erection of 609 homes. The Biltmore spokesman said the \$6,000,000 Tareyton development "is just the beginning" for the Los Angeles developers in the Decoto area. He said Biltmore had options on an additional acreage in that vicinity for another 1,000 home subdivision (eventually to be called El Rancho Verde).

During the seven months of Tareyton Village's problems with the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, not a single new home had been built. February 1951 saw the Treeview Company try to wiggle out of the original contracts with the veterans. Over the next four months a battle would ensue between Tareyton Village (Treeview), and the veterans who had bought homes with a \$50 down payment. Treeview mailed a \$50 refund check to each veteran holding a contract as a refund of their deposit. The accompanying letter also informed them of the cancellation of their contract to buy a home and that they could reapply for a home at an increased price.

In March the veterans formed a homeowners association to fight Treeview's effort to cancel their contracts. The company and the homeowner's association would battle for another two months before Treeview countered with their final offer, an 11 percent increase in the price of a home, and down payments ranging from \$200 to \$300.

The veterans sued not only to request that the firm be restrained from selling the lots, for which they had contracted, but also that the contractors be forced to build houses in conformance with original plans, that the contracting price remain the same, and that additional down payments not be extracted.

Also at this time, the City of Hayward was beefing up their ability to service annexed areas by announcing their intention to build a \$1,200,000 sewage treatment plant in the area south of the airport and north of the Washington Township line. The exact location was not announced. But this plant would give the city the flexibility to deal with new annexations, large or small.

Then on June 5, 1951, *The Daily Review* announced that Miss Mary Janeiro, Decoto Postmistress, "was making a survey of the Hillview Crest area, (formerly Tareyton Village), the 600-house subdivision now under construction north of Decoto. The survey would determine whether or not mail could be delivered house to house." This was the only official announcement I could find of the name change from "Tareyton Village" to "Hillview Crest."

Tareyton Village would soon be forgotten, and Hillview Crest would move forward as a tight knit community of service veterans bent on improving their little slice of the American dream. Within a few years T.R. Bechtel, original builder of Tareyton Village, would file for bankruptcy.

[On July 6th the Daily Review ran this article:](#)

"Hillview Crest, a complete new community, which will have 603 homes, and an estimated population in excess of 2,000 by late fall, will open this weekend, according to an announcement by S.M. Taper, President of Biltmore Homes. The new community, located on the Hayward-Niles Highway, will feature its own shopping center by early 1952. It was estimated the home and improvements will represent a total value in excess of \$6,000,000. All 603 homes are under construction at the present, time with approximately one third nearing final completion. Buyers would have their choice of four basic plans and a dozen exteriors. Homes are priced from \$8,750 to \$10,300, and are to be sold on straight GI 4% 25 year loans. Hillview Crest is just a forerunner of a gigantic homebuilding development planned for the Southern Alameda County area by Biltmore, according to Taper. He declined to disclose further details on this future plan pending new government home loan policies."

Treeview had turned things around in Hillview Crest. They had apparently mended fences with the previous veteran buyers and commenced to building homes in the tract. By the end of July 1951, sales in excess of \$4,500,000 had been reported by Treeview Home officials in their Decoto tract. This sales figure was achieved in just 3½ weeks. Hillview Crest had grown so rapidly that ten acres of land next to the tract was approved by State officials for the site of a new school dedicated to the children of Hillview Crest.

This would be Decoto's third school, the other two being Decoto Elementary and the Barnard School. The building, which would be built at a cost of about \$230,000, would be completed in 1953. The Tareyton Village Veterans Association continued as an organization to look out for the welfare of the Hillview Crest home tract. The primary purpose of the organization was to reduce costs of insulation, fencing, and such items through group purchases.

By December 1951 the homeowners association considered filing letters of incorporation with the California Secretary of State under the name Hillview Crest Homeowners Association. Association



backers pointed out that although the community had water and sewer service supplied by the City of Hayward, other vital needs were lacking or were furnished only in part by the county. Home development in the area had grown beyond the stage where a countywide service can answer the specialized needs of the area.

Shown on the page below is the ad for new homes in Hillview Crest as run in the *Daily Review*. The ad reflects the new pricing of the homes.

 <p><b>6 ROOMS - \$10,300</b></p> <p>115 square feet of finished patio • covered breezeway • formal compact entry hall • 3 full bedrooms (or 2 big bedrooms and den) • double door guest closets 18' x 18' living room • smart corner fireplace • double wardrobe closets • tiled bath • large linen closets • built-in bookcases • 9' x 12' dining area • picture windows • pullman kitchens • custom-built kitchen cabinets • tiled snack bar, tiled sink and splash boards</p>	<p><b>6 ROOMS - \$10,250</b></p> <p>roofed expandable breezeway • sun catching picture windows • flush finish fireplaces • seasoned oak hardwood floors 8-foot tiled sink drainboard • covered linoleum in kitchen • custom-built kitchen cabinets • breakfast nook space • kitchen entry to breezeway and backyard • 15' x 15' living room • 8' x 9' dining area • tiled bath • 3 full bedrooms • double wardrobe closets • 2 linen closets • attached garage</p> 	 <p><b>What "Builtmore-Built" Means To You and Your Family</b></p> <p>Biltmore Homes, Inc., builders of Hillview Crest, are probably today's largest homebuilding company. As a matter of fact Hillview Crest, when completed, will mark construction of their 15,000th home since the war. Trained craftsmen, supervisors, engineers and planners working as a team for 8 years put all their experience behind the Biltmore reputation—behind your Hillview Crest Home! Mass buying power, made possible by Biltmore's great volume assures you of best materials, without delay for your Hillview Crest Home. When you buy a Biltmore Home you buy quality and a reputation for the best!</p> <p>★</p> <p><b>DRIVE OUT TODAY—All properties are open 10:00 a. m. 'til 8:30 p. m. 'til sold.</b></p>
 <p><b>6 ROOMS - \$9850</b></p> <p>combination rustic and stucco exteriors attached garages • covered porch and walkways • 15' x 15' living room • thermostatically controlled heat • 3 full sized bedrooms • double wardrobe closets • tiled bath • 2 big linen closets • 9' x 9' dining area • tiled kitchen • picture windows custom-built kitchen cabinets</p>	<p><b>5 ROOMS - \$8750</b></p> <p>2 large bedrooms • tiled kitchen and bath thermostatically controlled heat • large linen closets • covered linoleum • rustic and stucco exteriors • picture windows custom-built kitchen cabinets • oak hardwood floors • attached garage</p> 	

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VETERANS—Bring Your Original Discharge Papers



By the middle of January 1952, the Hillview Homeowners Association began investigating several options open to the tract:

- 1) Incorporate as a separate community, or with the town of Decoto.
- 2) Annexing to Hayward.
- 3) Proceeding with the incorporation of a homeowner's association.
- 4) Holding all plans in abeyance for the time being.

In June 1953, the Western Pacific Railroad began calling for industrial zoning in Southern Alameda County. F.B. Stratton, director of industrial development for the Western Pacific said, regulations for setting aside land for industrial use are "imperative in the very near future if a balance between industrial and residential assessment values is to be obtained in Southern Alameda County."

"Suitable acreage for large industrial development exists between Hayward and Decoto along the railroad," he asserted, "but unless protective zoning is created, it is very likely this land will be developed with homes before industry has a chance to locate on it. At least 1,500 acres, and preferably more, which may be served jointly by the two railroads (SP & WP), should be zoned exclusively for industry."

In the middle of August 1953, a poll was taken at Hillview Crest to determine whether to annex to Hayward, Decoto, to incorporate separately; or to preserve the status quo. If such an annexation should occur, Hayward councilmen declared, an awkward situation would result as Hillview Crest and Hayward are in two different Supervisorial Districts.

Hillview Crest had a straw vote among 400 (out of 608) homeowners in the Hillview Crest subdivision. 281 votes went for annexation to Hayward; 16-favored formation of an incorporated homeowners association, and 20 favored incorporating with Decoto.

But when the results were announced at a Decoto mass meeting, many voiced heated opposition to the proposed Hayward annexation. But a petition asking an annexation election was going to be circulated.

On August 20, 1953, a mass meeting held in the Decoto School to protest a proposed county township boundary change, as suggested in a Hillview Crest petition asking annexation to Hayward.

[On August 21st, The Daily Review ran the following article:](#)

"Wanting to do right by Our Little Nell, but not quite sure what kind of trouble Nell is in, the Decoto Chamber of Commerce called a mass meeting last night. Nell is otherwise known as Hillview Crest. Purpose of the meeting, according to Manuel Hidalgo, president, was to discuss a proposal to change the boundaries of Supervisor George Jansen's Second District, which was made by the Hayward City Council. The extension would run south to Dry Creek, between Hillview Crest and Decoto, which would put both Hillview and Hayward in the same (Supervisorial) district.

This fact, coupled with a development last week in which Hillview Crest residents indicated that they would like to annex to Hayward, prompted Hidalgo to call the special session. The chamber president stated that an extension of Zone 2, would encompass valuable industrial land, which could eventually become part of Hayward, thus taking tax monies out of Decoto's pocket.

A few present were inclined to picture Hayward as a moustache twirling villain, playing it "cagey" in his overtures to Nell. Ken Garcia (of Decoto), on the other hand, said he didn't think Hayward even wanted Hillview Crest. Keith Whipple, Decoto fire commissioner,

pointed out the new firehouse was planned with an eye on the fact that Hillview Crest was in the district, and that the proposed annexation with Hayward would remove Hillview from the fire district. At this point a spectator accused the press of not presenting a whole picture of redistricting and annexation. "All I know is what I read in the paper," he said, and concluded with, "give the paper two words and they'll make a story out of it."

Whereupon Stuart Nixon, Niles publisher of the weekly "Township Register," rose to defend the press. He pointed out that newspapers are allowed only to report what actually happens at official meetings, that reporters may know what is going on backstage, but cannot put it in print. "The purpose of the redistricting proposal now being discussed by supervisors," said Nixon "is an attempt to juggle votes. He said that each supervisor wishes to dispose of those areas within his present district, which didn't show votes for him."

Agitation for redistricting, however, didn't come from the Supervisors, but from various improvement clubs. The supervisors had full power to redistrict without consulting the voters, but have failed to do so, though the proposition has been discussed at various times for the past several years.

It was finally decided, at the suggestion of Whipple, to turn the whole matter over to the Township Chamber of Commerce. The Township Chamber would be asked to study all aspects of redistricting, and annexation in terms of what it means to Decoto and Washington Township in general."

Fear that the proposed boundary changes in Alameda County Supervisorial districts would hurt Decoto and Washington Township were expressed by several speakers at a Chamber of Commerce sponsored mass meeting held in Decoto on August 20, 1953.

[The Daily Review report August 20, 1953 meeting:](#)

"The meeting was called a week ago after nearby Hillview Crest, a 608-home subdivision, announced its intention to petition for annexation to Hayward. The unincorporated community is part of the Decoto Fire District. In addition, Supervisor Harry Bartell has proposed a redistricting of Supervisorial districts, which would split suburban and rural Washington Township, setting up "island" stakeouts in the sparsely populated territory.

After considerable debate, last night's turnout of about 35 persons voted to petition the Washington Township Chamber to organize the fight against territorial encroachment, and specified that the larger Chamber unit secure necessary legal advice for the move.

Suspensions were voiced by Chamber President Manuel Hidalgo, and others in attendance that the City of Hayward does not plan to limit annexation to Hillview Crest, but it intends to take in "sizable industrial areas of high assessed valuation." Part of the alleged grab, residents said, was to be the U.S. Pipe Company near Decoto.

Three chamber members said that a petition to annex hill land east of the Hayward-San Jose Road (Mission Blvd) was now being circulated."

[From The Daily Review of August 24, 1953:](#)

"The Washington Township Chamber of Commerce last night went on record as opposing, at the present time, any change in the boundaries of Supervisorial District No. 1. The action was aimed at protesting Supervisor Harry Bartell's proposed redistricting, which would split the sparsely populated township into "island" stakeouts. It could also stymie the proposed annexation of Hillview Crest to Hayward since officials of the latter city asked the redistricting so the municipality would not cross Supervisorial lines.

The motion to oppose any boundary changes came from Leroy Broun, Centerville attorney, who said: "Hillview Crest is being used as a stalking horse for gerrymandering and fast shenanigans by politically inclined persons who are trying to change districts for their own political interests." Broun said the move is planned as "the only way to prevent Assemblyman Francis Dunn from becoming a supervisor, by moving part of the Second District out from under him, so he no longer will live in that district."

The Centerville representative to the township group noted additional views on the Bartell proposal: "To do that they need to move some southern territory into Supervisor George Janssen's district as an excuse for cutting off part of the northern portion since Janssen's district has the largest population.

Various supervisors were resisting the adding of territory where more Democratic votes will be thrown against them," said Broun, and alternate Republican State Committeeman, "Bartell, in his recently publicized proposal, appears to be seeking an island of Republican votes."

Manuel Hidalgo, Decoto chamber president, again voiced fears that Hayward would like to annex industrial zoned land to the south if it is to take in Hillview Crest, the 608-home subdivision several miles down the San Jose Road."

By May 1954, Decoto was in fear of Hayward's intentions in Washington Township, so they detailed three men, Manuel Hidalgo, Jack Faletti, and Dr. Harold Schoenfeld, to sit in on Hayward City Council meetings, with special instructions to listen carefully to any land grab south of Eden Township that Hayward might discuss.

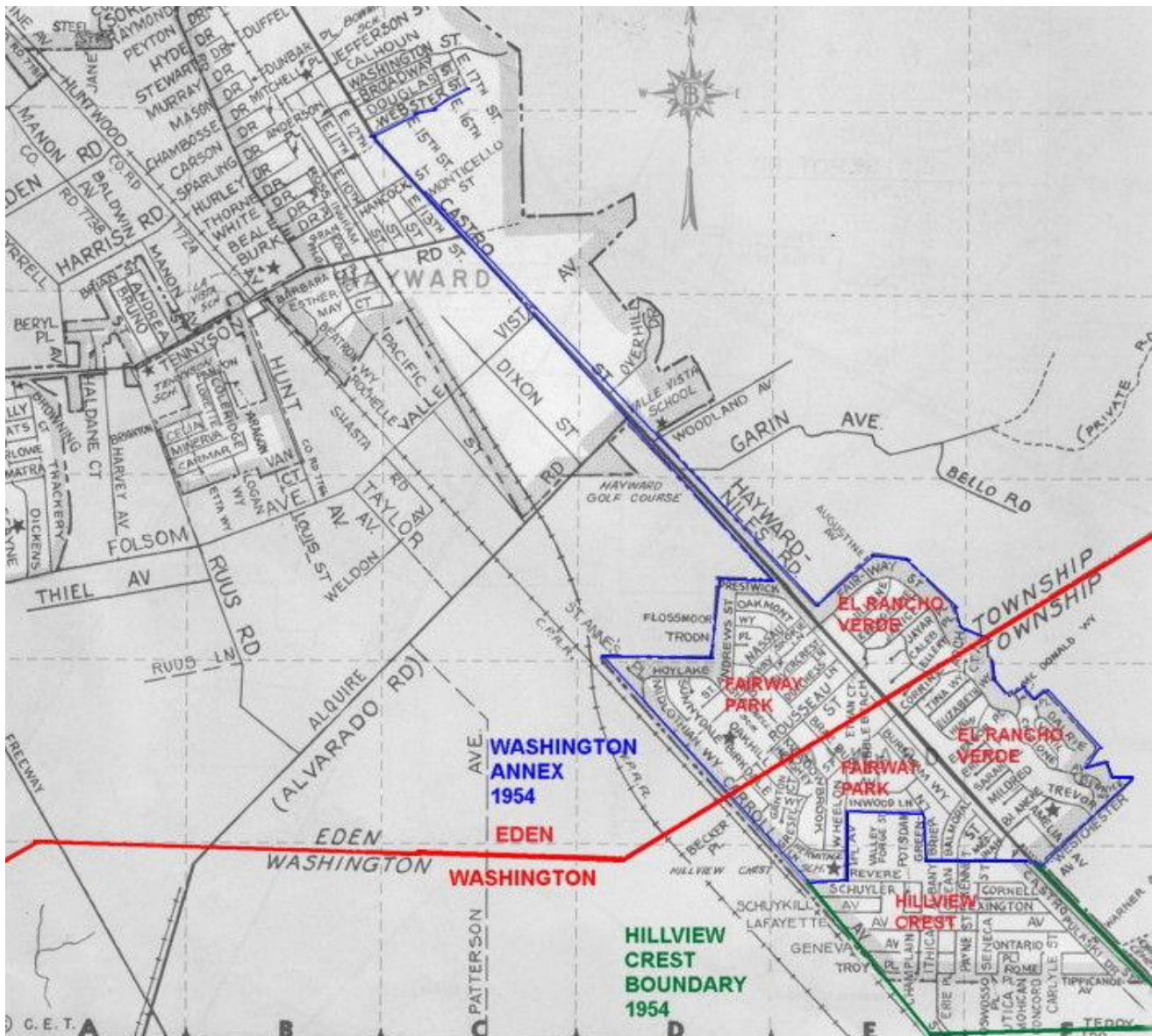
In one of those interesting stories that come about during time of conflict and stress, is the story of the road sign indicating Decoto's population and elevation mysteriously moving a half-mile north towards the Eden Township boundary. A Hillview Crest resident wanted to know whom had it moved and why. The sign now makes it appear as though at least one-third of Hillview Crest is now in the town of Decoto. The resident found out it was moved by a request from the Decoto Chamber of Commerce. Move it back, came the stern request of the Hillview Crest resident. And so it was by the County Maintenance Yard.

Also during the month of May 1954, the City of Hayward announced that it would furnish water and sewer service to a 586-home subdivision to be built on the east side of the Hayward-Niles Road opposite Hillview Crest. The subdivision was called tract 1046, but it would later be called El Rancho Verde.

Hayward was already furnishing water and sewer for Hillview Crest. Extension of the facilities to tract 1046 would bring approximately 1,200 the number of homes in the Decoto area depending on Hayward for their source of service.

In August 1954, the Hayward City Council proposed an ambitious annexation known as the Washington Annex. The annex would begin at the SE Corner of Webster Street, and move down the east and west sides of Mission Blvd. 1.5 miles to the beginning of the two housing tracts to be known as El Rancho Verde on the east, and Fairway Park on the west. The annexation would continue another .9 mile to the south, and end at the cemetery on the east side, and the Hillview Crest subdivision on the west side.

In October 1954, the Washington Annex was completed and the City of Hayward was now located in both Eden and Washington Townships.



This map of the proposed Washington annex is outlined in blue in the map above. This annex would move Hayward's City limit south to Webster Street. The red line is the boundary that separates Eden Township from Washington Township, and also separates the La Vista School District from the Decoto School District. Hillview Crest is shown on this map outlined with a dark green line, but it was not part of the Washington annex. Castro Street (Mission Blvd) was annexed approximately 1.5 miles from the north end of Prestwick (the very top street in Fair Park) to Webster Street. East and west of the annexed Castro Street (1.5 miles) between these two streets was still largely unincorporated land. Although usually referred to as the Treeview homes, and associated with the Treeview annex, only Hillview Crest and El Rancho Verde were built by Treeview Homes, Inc. Fairway Park was built by Oliver Rousseau. (*The Thomas Bros. Maps, 1957*)

This raised an interesting problem for both El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park, for each had a foot in both Eden and Washington Townships. This would create a problem with the school district as north of the Eden Township boundary line was the La Vista School District, and south of the Eden Township, were the Washington Township and the Decoto School Districts. This line would cause conflict and hard feelings between the school districts for years to come.

Just before the Washington Annex was completed, it was announced that Oliver Rousseau's Fairway Park subdivision, just north of Hillview Crest, would also be serviced for water and sewer by the City of Hayward.

But even before the Washington Annex was complete, the La Vista and Decoto School Districts began posturing themselves on how to deal with two subdivisions being located in two different townships.

The school districts were worried about children having to cross Mission Boulevard to go to school. It was suggested that Decoto relinquish its property in the Treeview Tract (El Rancho Verde), directly across from Hillview Crest, in exchange for an equal slice of property in the Rousseau tract (Fairway Park), which was just in the planning stages.

Meetings were held throughout the area, some for prospective owners in the El Rancho Verde tract, as to what being in two different townships would mean for school children. It was pointed out that the township line was an artificial boundary, which cuts across lots in the tract, leaving a front portion of a lot in one township and the rear of the lot in another township. However, at this time, the school you attended was based on the residence of your township, not the residence of your city. This was predicated on the fact that at this time, taxes for school districts were based on your township and not your city or town.

[The Daily Review reports on a Decoto meeting held in September 1954:](#)

"The citizens of Decoto also held meetings; "Watch your industries," Fire Chief Roland Bendel warned members of the Decoto Community Coordinating Council meeting. Bendel asserted, "Hayward is not interested in us. What they want is our industries. Little by little they will up and get those industries, and then their taxes will go down and ours will go up."

One speaker, William Jordan, who represented Oliver Rousseau, the builders who would construct the 1,200 home subdivision known as Fairway Park on land adjacent to Hillview Crest, advised residents there to seize the present moment of annexation. The residents agreed that since the Rousseau tract, and the Treeview tract (El Rancho Verde) across Highway 9 from Hillview Crest, already have annexation proceedings in progress, there is little to be done to halt the move. Jordan added the "package deal" in sewer and water facilities offered by Hayward could not be overlooked by his firm. He also added that annexation was the only solution, since Hayward refuses such services unless the area to be served is annexed.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Harold Strauel, Council president, suggested that the Hillview Crest Improvement Club appoint a committee to study costs of sewer and water facilities, as offered by the Union Sanitary District, and the Alameda County Water District, and make a comparative analysis with the costs of these services from Hayward. Roland Bendel, Decoto Fire Chief, defining the position of the Decoto Fire District, said the department would not answer calls from outside the district if annexation to Hayward were effected.

The most commonly expressed fear, in the discussion of annexation, was that Decoto residents are taxing themselves for facilities in the school and fire districts, which may revert to Hayward should the annexation be pushed."

On October 25, 1954, the City of Hayward filed their annexation of the Washington Annex. El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park were now part of the City of Hayward. Hillview Crest, for the moment, was still unincorporated land in Washington Township.

Dr. Harold Schoenfeld, superintendent of the Decoto School system, spoke to allay fears of the incorporation when a Decoto Chamber of Commerce meeting was called about the construction of a

new school in the El Rancho Verde tract. The new school, to cost \$133,000, was to be built at the southern end of El Rancho Verde near the cemetery. Schoenfeld explained that the annexation of this area to the City of Hayward would not affect the school district. The boundaries of the City of Hayward and the boundaries of the Hayward School District are not identical.

In answer to questions, the superintendent said there was no present plan to change the Decoto District's school boundaries, although a change might be effected by petitioning the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, or by an agreement between trustees of the districts involved, should a change be desired.

It also seemed that the problems with Washington Township's infrastructure problems were now coming home to roost. With flood control progressing in southern Eden Township and Washington Township, much interest was now focused on the location of industry in Washington Township.

The township had three rail lines traversing her lands; this made the property very attractive especially when you consider the proposed Eastshore Freeway (I-880) was to cut through the township to link Oakland with San Jose in 1959.

But the township was not without its problems. Schoenfeld explained that the new Ford Motor assembly plant, which had just located in Milpitas because of the lack of an ample water supply, and sewer facilities available in Washington Township. Other industries were also inspecting our area, but they too are finding the same problem. Decoto solved their sanitation problem by joining with the Union Sanitary District, but Alvarado's sanitation system was woefully short of handling any industry, as we would find out later on.

In December Decoto began considering zoning changes in their area with the thought of possibly incorporating. They laid out plans for zoning around the town of Decoto, and also industrial zoning from the Western Pacific tracks westward to Alvarado.

## 1955

Just after the beginning of 1955, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors authorized the District Attorney to prepare an amended county ordinance, which would permit adjustment of the boundaries of the Hayward-San Leandro, and the Niles-Centerville judicial district. Existing law prohibits a city from extending its boundaries beyond a judicial district. The recent annexation of Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde, near Decoto, had pushed Hayward into the Niles-Centerville judicial district. The latter district's boundaries had to be adjusted to exclude the new Hayward annexations.

Washington Township was on continued high alert at the possibility of Hayward taking valuable Washington Township property. So on January 22, 1955, the Washington Township Incorporation study committee met in the Decoto School to discuss Hayward's continuing thrust south.

On February 2, 1955, the Decoto Chamber of Commerce met to attempt to slow the rush to incorporation of individual towns in Washington Township. The meeting resolved to oppose all incorporation efforts in Washington Township until a self-government study was completed. The time frame for this study would be about twelve months. It was further resolved to name a committee that would appear at all incorporation hearings scheduled by the county supervisors.

On February 3, the town of Newark announced that they would reveal the results of an incorporation study sometime in early March. On February 10, 1955, the Hayward City Council finally met to consider the question of the annexation of Hillview Crest.

### [The Daily Review reported the following sentiments from persons in the area:](#)

"Opponents to a movement to annex Hillview Crest to Hayward will be out in force at tonight's special meeting of the Hayward City Council, they promised today. The meeting was called to consider a Hillview Crest petition for annexation, which will be held at 7 p.m. at Hayward City Hall.

Some known proponents of the plan could not be reached for comment. Donald Patterson, 1448 York Drive, a leader in the movement was out of town. King F. Cole, 1284 Champlain Street, could not be reached by telephone. A.J. DeMamiel, 1121 Potsdam Street, said brochures explaining the movement for annexation would be distributed in Hillview Crest today.

Opposition to the movement had not yet crystallized into an organized group. Luke Campbell, 1434 Geneva Avenue, and Harold Strauel, 1396 Pulaski Drive, said they had been asked to serve on a committee opposed to annexation, but that the committee had not yet organized formally.

Several Hillview residents questioned expressed astonishment at the rapidity with which tonight's meeting was arranged. All expected the question to be considered, but most expressed surprise at what they called "lack of publicity."

Paul Shields, 1255 Pulaski Drive, who is vice-president of the Hillview Crest Improvement Club was outspoken in his criticism. "The whole deal is a raw one," he asserted. "The people who are backing this annexation are trying to get their fingers in a pudding that doesn't exist. Anything that is as secret as this has been, and will have many people feeling it's a "foul ball" deal." Shields promised he would be present at tonight's hearing with a contingent of protesters.



Strauel said he was uncertain what steps should be taken to oppose the action, since he had no real knowledge of the strength of the proponents of the plan. He said he had seen no copies of a petition for annexation, nor had he been able to talk with any tract resident that had seen such a petition.

Two officers of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce, Frank Borghi Jr., president, and Kenneth Garcia, vice president, would make no official comment.

Garcia said the chamber had been unaware the issue would arise so soon, and so had discussed no stand. He said his personal opinion was that the chamber would take no stand on the matter."

"If they (Hillview Crest) want to go to Hayward, let 'em go," Garcia said. "All they want is to see what they can get for nothing anyway." Borghi said he had "no comment" as president of the Decoto Chamber, but he concurred in Garcia's opinion that the organization probably will take no stand on the matter.

"Hillview Crest is actually a liability to us, if we should incorporate the township," Borghi pointed out. He said the tract contributes only \$1,800 a year, or half of one paid fireman's annual salary to the Decoto Fire Department.

Borghi forecasted that the chamber would take definite steps to guard Decoto's industrial sites against any possible Hayward "encroachment" in the future. "If the township should incorporate, our industrial land will be needed here," he asserted. "And I know the Decoto Chamber of Commerce will do everything it can to save that industrial land for the township. Hillview Crest is one thing, but our industrial land is something else."

Manuel Hidalgo, president of the Decoto Merchant's Association and of the Washington Township Chamber of Commerce said, "It is none of my business if the people who live in Hillview Crest want to annex, it is up to them." He said he did not believe in "interfering" in the affairs of people in other communities.

On February 11, 1955, came the bombshell that the City of Hayward planned to not only annex Hillview Crest, but over 2,200 acres of largely uninhabited land from the area west of Hillview Crest to an area near Baumberg. A legal notification was filed on that same date.

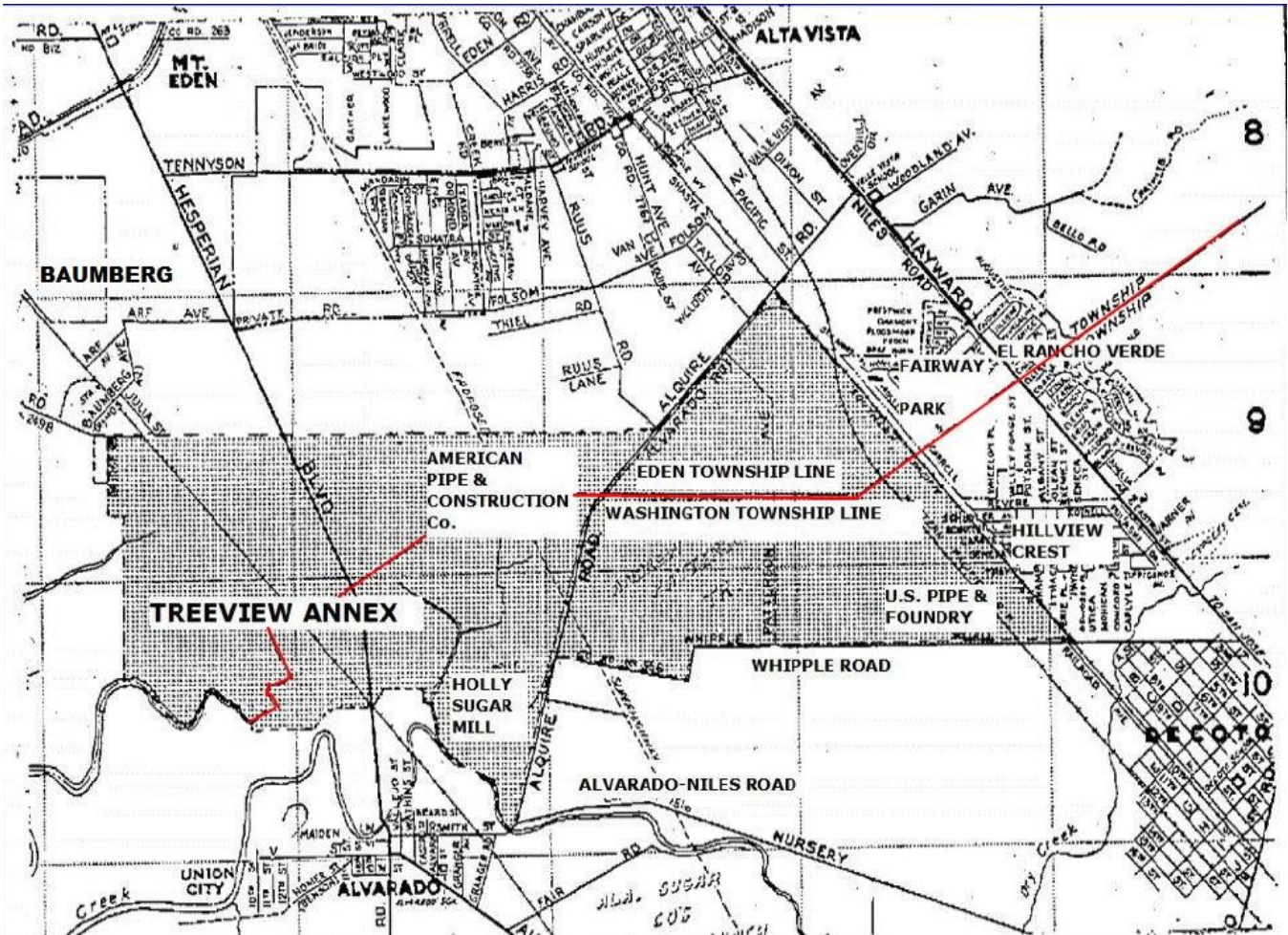
Known as the Treeview Annex, part of the territory was in Washington Township. It would take away from Washington Township the U.S. Pipe and Foundry Co. on Whipple Road, the Holly Sugar Mill in Alvarado, and the American Pipe and Construction Company also in Alvarado.

Proponents expected to gain the necessary signatures rapidly. Annexation had been discussed in the Hillview Crest tract for the last year and a half. A straw ballot taken in 1953 indicated that then, about 280 out of approximately 400 voters favored annexation to Hayward.

The citizens of Alvarado and Decoto were stunned by the size of the annexation, the loss of their valuable industrial property, and the attachment of Hillview Crest to so much largely uninhabited land.

The citizens of Alvarado were also stunned that they stood a chance to lose their beloved sugar mill, an Alvarado icon that had stood since 1869. The sugar mill offered employment to hundreds of locals, and the taxes paid by the company supported much of the infrastructure of the south Alameda County area.

# TREEVIEW ANNEX



This is the Treeview Annex Map as printed by *The Daily Review* on April 6, 1957. Some of the name changes made to highways and roads are: The Niles Road from Hayward to San Jose is today's Mission Blvd; Nursery Road out of Alvarado is today's Alvarado-Niles Road; Alquire Road in front of the Holly Sugar Mill is today's Dyer Street; Alquire Road at the bend to Mission Blvd. is today's Industrial Blvd; and Fair Road is the old Fair Ranch Road that ran from the Alvarado-Centerville Road east to the levee of Alameda Creek. Today the original Fair Ranch Road only exists from Alvarado Blvd east to the SP tracks. East of the tracks the old Fair Ranch Road is now Santa Susanna Way and San Rafael Way. The Treeview annex included all the area that is shaded plus Hillview Crest.

It took one day for the backers of the Treeview Annex to map plans for obtaining signatures on petitions. They started circulating the petitions on March 4, 1955, which date was 21 days from the publication of legal notices on February 11th. The backers required only 25% of the registered voters to bring the issue to vote. A simple majority was all that was needed to pass it.

The residents of Washington Township were stunned when they learned of the extent of Hayward's Treeview Annex. It was several days of constant meetings throughout the township by all the Chambers of Commerce before a suitable plan of defense was drawn up.

The proposed annexation of four square miles of land between the Southern Pacific tracks in Decoto to within shouting distance of Baumberg, and from Alquire Road to Whipple Road, with a dip into Alvarado to take the Holly Sugar Mill, left the citizenry dumbfounded as they tried to put the pieces of the quiet township back together. After news of the annex hit there was an intense

flurry of activity as Washington Township tried to regain its composure and come to grips with this issue.

To accurately show you the posturing taking place during this period I have taken, in articles, exactly as they were written in the *Daily Review* and the *Oakland Tribune* for the period of February 14 to March 4, 1955:

[The Daily Review and the Oakland Tribune gathered the following responses from local citizens and organizations:](#)  
[February 14th:](#)

"The Centerville Chamber of Commerce voted unanimously to oppose the annexation and to assist her sister cities, while protecting the interest of the proposed incorporation of Washington Township. Dr. Eugene Manning, president of the Centerville Chamber stated, "The full extent of the legal larceny being perpetrated," by the City of Hayward has not been stated.

Manning added, "We, as well as the rest of Washington Township, stand to lose also. I am told there is a definite move to include the Zwissig property, (opposite the Masonic Home on Mission Blvd.), which would bring Hayward adjacent to the Pacific States Steel Company, and the valuable portions of Niles. We all know Hayward is not interested in tracts. It is interested in the potential industrial property, which it needs so badly, but which we need just as badly in Washington Township."

**Note:** Hayward's taking of the Zwissig property came true to a very small extent. In 1956, Hayward moved to annex the corner of land at Mission Boulevard and Decoto Road (the SW quadrant) and placed there its fluoridation plant, which is still located there today. At the time the City of Hayward owned this small portion of land.

Manning asked the Decoto representatives to keep Centerville informed as to how it might help "in some concrete way."

Frank Borghi Jr., president of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce, announced that one phase of Decoto's fight against what he called the "big grab" will be to file boundaries for proposed incorporation of Decoto."

[February 16th:](#)

"The Washington Township communities decided to put up a united front against Hayward's proposed annexation plan at a meeting. Chamber delegations from Centerville, Irvington, Niles, Decoto, and Alvarado met at the Alvarado School auditorium and announced passing a resolution of opposing Hayward's move. Centerville had passed such a resolution earlier. Stuart Nixon of Irvington commented, "Hayward presumably offered Hillview Crest people a package deal by agreeing to take in the 600-home tract provided they brought in several major industries and potential industrial locations with them. It's a serious matter. We should stick together."

[February 18th:](#)

"Finally a plan was beginning to come together. The Alvarado Chamber of Commerce was informed by legal advisors that a petition of incorporation, if filed before the City of Hayward's annexation petition, could stop the "land grab."

Such a petition would require a name for the proposed city to be formed of the area with the Decoto and Alvarado School Districts. The unanimous choice was "Union City." The town

of Union City first appeared in 1850, as the name John M. Horner gave to his new wharf and warehouses on the Alameda Creek (at a place called the "Devil's Elbow), and the land that stretched west of today's Union City Boulevard along Horner Street to the banks of the Alameda Creek. The new Union City would be Washington Township's answer to Hayward's proposed Treeview Annex.

The boundaries of the proposed city would be filed February 18, or on Monday, the 21, 1955. The boundaries would include most of the agricultural land Hayward was seeking to annex. However, Hillview Crest would not be included because of the possibility of its 2,500 residents defeating the incorporation measure. The population of Alvarado was, at this time, about 2,000 residents and Decoto about 3,500.

At this time a steering committee was formed of Alvarado and Decoto civic leaders to combat the annexation. The committee is composed of:

Frank Borghi Jr.	President, Decoto Chamber of Commerce	
Henry Leidsen	President, Alvarado Chamber of Commerce	
J.A. Ratekin	Clifford Tinsley	Mrs. Margot Harvey
Herbert Harrold	Keith Whipple	Manuel Hidalgo
Warren Silva	Harold Faria	George Hocking

Meanwhile, the Hillview Crest residents held a mass meeting themselves, not totally sure if annexation with Hayward was a good thing or something to be avoided. C.E. Cook of Warren Avenue, Hillview Crest, said he had attended the mass meeting at Alvarado. Warren's opinion was that Hillview Crest need not choose between Hayward or Washington Township allegiance at an election, but could reject any proposal to change and keep the status quo. Cook concluded, "I am not in favor of Hayward, and I am not certainly in favor of being the back door of Decoto and Alvarado. I like it here, and I would like to keep it the way it is. Then a member of the audience asked whether, "(Is) this a Hillview Crest fight or an industrial fight under discussion?"

#### February 19th:

"Attorney Leroy Brown and Gerald Cochran were retained by the Union City Steering Committee last night to speed filing of the proposed city boundaries. Broun, a Centerville lawyer, volunteered his legal services. "As long as we have a problem in the township, we ought to try and solve it so that we may go forward as a township," Broun said.

Cochran, leader of the Bay Area incorporation movement in the Ashland area, was retained at a \$400 fixed fee, and would conduct the proposed incorporation drive through the filing of petitions with the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

Harley Bradley and Nestor Barrett, representatives of the Leslie Salt Company, requested an exclusion of an estimated 3,000 acres of salt flats from the proposed Union City. "It doesn't seem to us to be proper incorporation materials," they said. Assessed valuation of the land was estimated at \$300,000.

Broun recommended that the request be refused because Union City corporate limits were defined on a map filed with Alameda County Boundaries Commission yesterday. He pointed out that a withdrawal might delay Union City plans as much as two days, which might defeat the entire timetable. The objective of the committee is to file petitions for incorporation of Union City before Hillview Crest petitions for annexation to Hayward. Frank Borghi said he wasn't sure all the land ought to be excluded, for a portion of it would make a desirable recreation area for Union City once a drainage canal is constructed."

#### February 21st:

"The Alameda County Boundaries Commission was expected to act today on the boundaries of the proposed Union City in Washington Township. As outlined by Union City proponents, boundaries of the new city would encompass the Alvarado and Decoto Elementary School Districts with the exception of the Hillview Crest, El Rancho Verde, and Fairway Park subdivisions. Union City boundaries were filed on February 18, 1955."

#### February 24th:

"The Washington Township Incorporation Study came up with a new plan to incorporate all of Washington Township into one big city. The names they have come with for the super-city is: Fremont City, Union City, Alvarado, Peralta, Washington City, Dumbarton, and Mission City. This is separate from the movement afoot to name Alvarado and Decoto as the new city of Union City.

#### February 25<sup>th</sup>:

"A violation of morals and ethical principles in the proposed Treeview annexation to Hayward was charged at last night's mass meeting at Hillview Crest School. Annexation proponents replied that morality and ethics didn't enter into the question, but legality and sound financial thinking did. The point was raised because the proposed Treeview annexation of 2,400 acres will take some of Washington Township's choicest industrial area. Members of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce feel the move is unfair. Pro annexationists say it's legal, and it's a protection for the tax rate of Hillview Crest.

Hayward City Councilman Robert O. Wright, stressed that annexation will give residents a voice in their government. Wright was interrupted in an attempted discussion of an industrial area of annexation and was ruled out of order. Kenneth Garcia, Vice President of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce, asked Wright if the Hillview Crest tract would have been annexed had the industrial area been omitted. Wright replied, "We know it would be a liability to annex Hillview Crest alone, but remember, we also knew it would be a liability to annex Valle Vista and Alta Vista, but we are doing it. We are going to do it because the people need the services and we have a moral obligation to serve those people. Therefore I sincerely believe we would have taken in Hillview Crest alone."

Dr. Schoenfeld, of the Decoto School District, quoted figures to prove that Hayward is a poor financial risk for annexationists, with street repairs and drainage projects postponed for lack of funds.

Wright described the city as a "young man's town. It has a wealth that has nothing to do with assessed valuation in these young people, and that it is the thing that will make Hayward come into its own in a very short time," Wright said.

Questioned as to whether Hayward would accept new petitions for annexation, excluding the industrial area, Wright answered yes, but said he was speaking for himself and not for the entire council."

#### February 27th:

"The Alameda County Boundary Commission approved the limits of the proposed Union City, which would be formed by merging Decoto and Alvarado. Petitions could be circulated by Friday, after which the supervisors will be asked to set an election date to determine if the residents of Alvarado and Decoto want to become Union City."

#### February 28th:

"Proponents of incorporation of a new 15,000-acre Union City in Southern Alameda County took a major step toward their goal. At 8:55 p.m. they filed petitions with county clerk Jack Blue asking the County Board of Supervisors to get the machinery of incorporation rolling. The petitions asked the board for the incorporation of Union City as a city of the sixth class, where all city officials, with the exception of five councilmen, would be appointed. The Councilmen would elected by districts, with district reapportionment required each four years, according to the petitions."

#### March 2nd:

"Opposition to Hillview Crest's proposed annexation to Hayward was expressed within the ranks of tract homeowners yesterday, with the distribution of a four-page brochure to Hillview Crest homes. Published by a group designated as the Hillview Crest Committee of Opposition, leadership was attributed to four executive board members of the Hillview Crest Improvement Club.

Board members were listed as:

Paul J. Shield                  Clair E. Cook                  Roger W. Cowan                  Edith Harkleroad

Clair Cook explained that the purpose of the brochure was to make tract residents seek their own answers to questions concerning lower utility rates, better police and fire protection, free library service, and improved streets and lighting. "We want residents to think for themselves," he asserted. "We want them to go to the source and the get the answers to these questions for themselves. They have been confused by too many facts and figures, too many of which are wrong. We want them to seek their own answers on the meaning of annexation to them."

#### March 2nd; from the pages of *The Daily Review*:

"Hayward's City Council appears to today, to have wrested jurisdiction over the Treeview area from the County Board of Supervisors. According to Assistant District Attorney Douglas Dunning, by the simple act of adopting a resolution last night, Hayward has effectively blocked Union City's organization.

The council's resolution acknowledged receipt of the notice from Treeview annex proponents of their intent to circulate annexation petitions, and approved the circulation. Dunning said he would advise the county board tomorrow that it no longer has jurisdiction.

The Hayward City Council resolution satisfied provisions of the government code, which Dunning interprets to preclude any portion of the area described in the annexation notice from filing for annexation or incorporation within 50 days. Hayward's apparent advantage today could be short-lived if incorporation proponents decide to make it a legal fight. Dunning and his aides have admitted the annexation hassle is a snarl of unsolved legal questions. And Union City backers have promised to go to court if necessary.

The big question is: When does jurisdiction attach? Did Hayward actually have it when the council consented to circulation of petitions February 7th? When it passed the acknowledgement last night? Or will jurisdiction be fixed only when the city receives annexation petitions, as it would be at the earliest next Monday?

When could the County Board of Supervisors get jurisdiction over the Union City incorporation? When it accepted petitions yesterday, when it fixes and accepts the filing fee, or when it sets the date for the protest hearing? In a three-hour harangue before the County Board of Supervisors yesterday, Hayward appeared to have gained a time

advantage, which could be a decisive factor in the tug-of-war for hundreds of acres of valuable industrial property along the Washington Eden Township line.

In a split 3-2 vote, the board authorized County Clerk Jack Blue to check Union City's incorporation petitions to determine whether they bear the required number of signatures, and whether the proposed city's boundaries are accurately described. Blue is to report to the board tomorrow. Had the Hayward council action last night precluded such action, (or would) the board then have fixed the amount of many incorporation proponents would be expected to pay for legal publications and an incorporation election would then accept payment. The next step would have been to set a date for a public protest hearing, two weeks in the future.

Meanwhile, Treeview annex proponents can begin circulation of annexation petitions Saturday and are expected to have them read for presentation to the Hayward Council on Monday."

March 3rd; from the pages of *The Daily Review*:

"Union City is not dead. Its life was spared, at least temporarily, by a technicality that stalled action by the County Board of Supervisors that would have authorized Hayward to proceed with annexation in the territory sought by both.

Leroy Broun, Centerville attorney and counsel for the Union City Incorporation Committee, told the board there was an error in the boundary description published in Hayward's notice of intention to annex. This was admitted by Hayward City Attorney John W. Scanlon, but he argued that it didn't matter.

The supervisors referred Hayward's published notice to the district attorney and county surveyor to determine whether they were valid. They were to report to the board later today.

Ass't D.A. Dunning told *The Tribune* that it is the view of the district attorney's office that the Board of Supervisors would not get jurisdiction over the incorporation (of Union City) matter until the board had fixed the amount of the fee for legal publication, and had directed the clerk to file the petition upon receipt of the payment. "It is our view that the petition is not filed with the board until that is accomplished," he said.

Dunning said the board cannot act on the petition because the Government Code prohibits two different actions on the same area at the same time, and Hayward qualified its program first. It was reported that petitions for exclusion would be circulated in Decoto and Alvarado if the incorporation fight is lost.

San Leandro City Attorney Arthur Carden, an authority on annexation matters, said the exclusion move, if any, would come to a head at the protest hearing Hayward is required to call as part of the annexation machinery. He said if 51 percent or more of the landowners ask exclusion at that meeting and protest the annexation, the annexation is killed.

Each parcel of land, regardless of size, can be represented by only one owner. If protests are less than 51 percent, the city can overrule protests and pleas for exclusions, for the convenience of property owners are up to the city."

March 4th, from the *Oakland Tribune*:

"Alvarado and Decoto residents decided on a new strategy today to salvage their plan for incorporation of the area into Union City. The Decision came after the Board of Supervisors handed them a setback late yesterday by tabling a petition for an incorporation election,

giving Hayward a clear field in the race to annex much of the same territory." However, the steering body of the Union City incorporation committee decided last night to:

1. Contact residents to determine how many will ask for exclusion from Hayward's annexation when a protest meeting is set.
2. Postpone until Monday a decision on whether to attack the Board of Supervisors decision on Hayward's annexation in the courts.
3. Form a 10-man finance committee to raise funds for continuing the fight."

Such was the flurry of activity following the first few weeks of the announcement of the Treeview annex. The township put up a brave face, with the six other towns vowing solidarity with Alvarado and Decoto. But this proved to be lip service.

For as early as January 1955 three of the six towns (Centerville, Newark, and Irvington) were actively discussing their own incorporations. Before the end of January, 1955, Newark had already drawn up an incorporation map for the planning commission. Irvington had been discussing incorporation since early in January and by the beginning of February, Centerville began feeling the incorporation pressure.

Newark would continue their incorporation plans, and in September, 1955, they voted to become the City of Newark. Centerville began their lobbying to become a city by convincing Niles, Mission San Jose, Warm Springs, Irvington to join them in incorporating, and this was accomplished in January, 1956. Alvarado and Decoto stood alone against Hayward.

Alvarado and Decoto proved to be feisty little fighters, and would continue their battle for nearly another four years to reach their goal. The tale picks up again in March 1955.

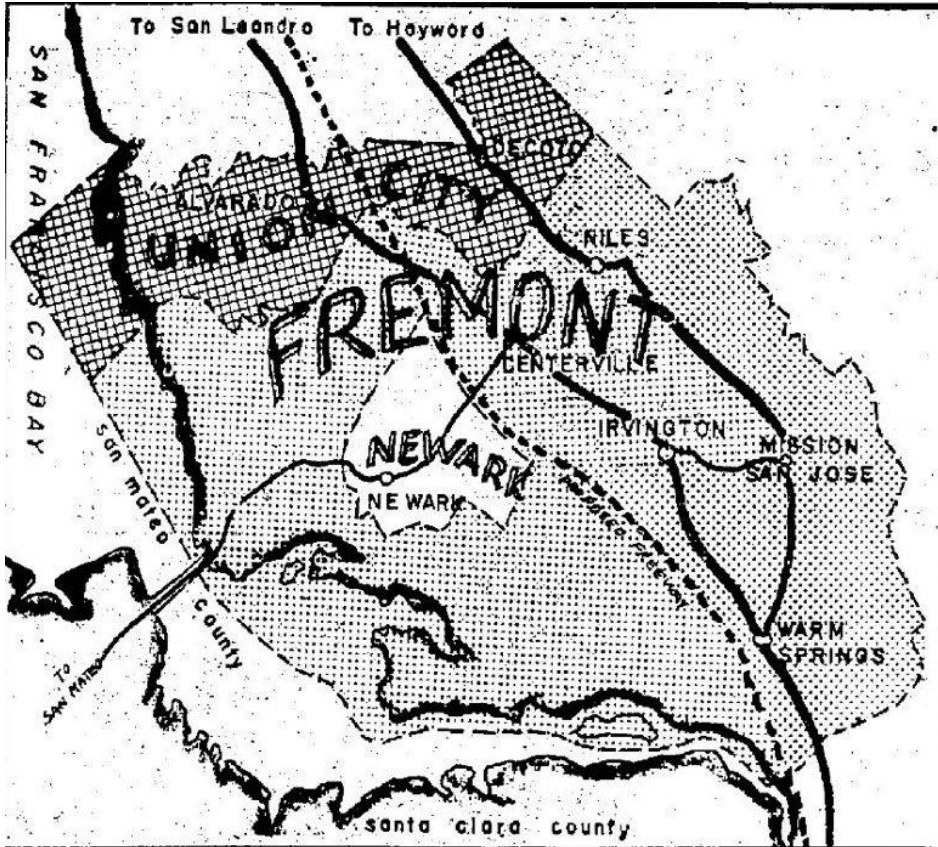
In order to rally the citizens of Alvarado to the unification cause, meetings were held to disseminate information on the Hayward annexation, its motives and effect on the people of Alvarado was to keep them informed. On March 9, 1955, a meeting for such a purpose was held in the Alvarado Elementary School with speakers George Hocking, Graydon Spurlock, and Elvin Rose.

On March 10, it was announced that the proponents of the incorporation of Union City would make two legal moves to thwart the Treeview annexation. The first would be a writ of mandamus, which would force the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to act on the Union City incorporation petitions. The supervisors filed the Union City incorporation petition without action after the D.A.'s office ruled the board did not have jurisdiction. The second action made by the committee would be to seek an injunction from the Superior Court to halt the annexation proceeding. The annexation election is set for May 10, 1955. Decoto and Alvarado residents started the Union City incorporation move in an effort to block the Treeview annex, which was initiated by the residents of Hillview Crest.

"The fight has just begun," Attorney Leroy Broun bellowed as he outlined contemplated legal steps. This was followed up by Keith Whipple who said that "people here do not know what is going on; they don't know that Union City has a chance to succeed."

Petitioners Frank Borghi Jr., Keith Whipple, and Attorney Leroy Broun, served a writ of alternate mandate upon the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on March 22. They signed as an executive sub-committee of the Union City Steering Committee. The petition asked that the Supervisors be ordered by the court to proceed on the petition for the incorporation of Union City, or to show why they have not done so. Douglas Dunning, district attorney, explained that the county may at once file Points & Authorities to show cause, or may wait until the court issues the writ before proceeding.





This is the Washington Township map after the incorporation of the City of Newark in September 1955. The area marked Fremont would incorporate in January 1956. The area marked Union City is what would be left of the unincorporated area of Washington Township after January 1956. From *The Daily Review* of October 8, 1955

Reasons set forth by Broun in requesting the writ were listed as follows:

1. There is no authoritative decision in California to answer the question of when a board of supervisors has jurisdiction in incorporation proceedings. The petition stated that the "present rapid growth of California, and its attendant annexation and incorporation disputes, make it vital a final and fast answer be supplied by the highest court in the State."
2. The time element is most important in this dispute. The request asserts that other legal questions in the Union City dispute could result in litigation, which may drag on for years, but public interest demands an immediate and final decision so that the voters may have an opportunity to express their opinion.
3. Initiation in a lower court would lead to an eventual appeal to the State Supreme Court, where the matter must be finally determined.
4. There would be inevitable delay in the appeal process. "A final decision must be available before May 10, 1955, (date of an election to determine outcome of the proposed Treeview annexation to Hayward), for a final decision is of no use after that date."

There were still several avenues left open for Union City if the State Supreme Court refuses to hear Union City's case versus the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The best alternative may well be the question of "a fraud upon the people, in a situation where property owners of approximately 100 acres of land can force 2,300 acres into a union with a neighboring city without their approval." Broun said he would battle this point in the courts, if a writ of mandate were refused.

At the conclusion of Broun's explanation, Kenneth Garcia appointed Joseph Seane as chairman of a fund soliciting committee, which will conduct a house-to-house drive for money. It was reported that costs have already exceeded \$1,000. "And we're going to need a lot more money," Garcia asserted.

Alvarado was reported to have subscribed more than \$700 as its financial share. A collection at last night's meeting netted \$231 more for the Decoto war chest. By the end of March 1955, the incorporation of Union City was held up in the courts, and the fledgling incorporation moves by Newark and the five towns of the now proposed City of Fremont were locked in a battle over disputed territory on their borders that each laid claim to. The land in question was between Blacow Road and the new freeway.

Union City won the first court battle when on March 19, 1955, the District Court of Appeals ordered the Alameda County Board of supervisors to show, by April 25th, why the Union City election should not be held.

On this same date the Western Pacific Railroad, and the American Pipe and Construction Company, sided with Hillview Crest citizens in the Treeview Annex to the City of Hayward, said Arthur DeMamiel, chairman of the Hillview Crest Committee for Annexation.

In the middle of April. the beginning of a school district struggle began to show between Washington and Eden Townships. La Vista School District took no action on the Decoto School's proposed swap of territory in Fairway Park to Decoto, for a swap of territory in the El Rancho Verde tract in the La Vista School District.

One week later the La Vista School Trustees decided against a proposed "swap" of school sites with the Decoto School District. The La Vista trustees said they were not in favor of changing school boundaries at the present because rapid population changes in the area may quickly alter school needs.

[The Daily Review ran this Editorial on May 12, 1955:](#)

"The Treeview election has moved that area into the final stages of annexation to Hayward. It focuses new attention on the court where the battle between annexation proponents and opponents will be decided.

Hayward, as required by law, in the next few weeks will complete annexation proceedings, making Treeview part of the city. The addition is of vital importance to Hayward's future because it will provide the land needed for industrial development. Inclusion of industry as an integral part of the city is necessary to a healthy, balanced, and maturing of Hayward.

Hayward, already assured of sustained residential development to fill out the city, is well on the way to realization of an integrated retail area whose facilities will offer the full scale of regional needs. But in industry Hayward is lacking. Shotgun residential development, plus the lack of substantial city council policy protecting areas for industry has allowed subdivisions to erode areas suitable to plant development.

Treeview offers area in which industry might settle without fear of residential encroachment. Major industries already in Treeview set a precedent the city council has promised to protect. One of these industries is Western Pacific, which plans industrial development in the area, has spoken out in favor of annexation for this very reason: They want protection by an established city government from the sea of homes engulfing Southern Alameda County.

Without industrial development Hayward faces the serious problem of a lightweight tax base taking on heavyweight problems of paying for expanded city services. What happens in such situations is painfully clear in the tax rates of Peninsula communities with no industry.

The homeowner and businessman must bear the load alone, and it's an increasingly heavy burden. Aid for rapidly rising tax rates will not be limited to Hayward alone when Treeview is industrially developed. Although the city will meet the costs of development, promotion, extension of services, streets, and zoning, profits will accrue to Washington Township.

Indirectly, more plants in Treeview will mean more payrolls and more residents. This will augment the present phenomenal growth; which will mean more business for retailers in the township.

Directly, industrial development of Treeview will contribute substantially to the high school, two elementary schools, and hospital districts. This is important now because higher taxation and costs always run ahead of actual increases in the tax base. In the case of Decoto and Alvarado, this would augment taxes needed to pay for schools that must be increased several hundred percent in the next five years.

For the high school district the same story. Preliminary plans have been ordered on a second high school in that district. But that's just the beginning, as Hayward High School District development has shown. Early industrialization of Treeview will help bear the burden of taxes this expansion will unload on the taxpayer.

Treeview will continue to be a point of contention between Hayward and its southern neighbors, no matter what the courts rule. This area is vital to Hayward. It is vital to the entire region. Development as part of Hayward will insure quicker realization of Treeview potential with benefits to Hayward and to Washington Township."

On June 9, 1955, it was reported that the City of Hayward was victorious in one court case on the four-square mile Treeview annex case. The court ruled that Hayward had beaten Union City in papers filed for incorporation. At this same time the farmers and industrialists that own land in the 2,300 acres adjoining Hillview Crest had filed a challenge against the merger in the courtroom of Alameda County Supreme Court Judge Ms. Cecil Mosbacher.

One week later the City of Hayward served notice by resolution to the Decoto fire commissioner that it was taking over a portion of Decoto's fire district. Fire Chief Roland Bendel announced to the (fire) commissioners that the matter was referred to the district attorney. A portion of the district became a part of the City of Hayward along with the long disputed Treeview annexation. The council resolution was a formal notification.

On July 7, 1955, the City of Hayward assumed jurisdiction of the four square mile Hillview Crest/Treeview annex. The district, which was annexed to the city in special election May 10, today becomes part of the city despite pending action in a suit filed in the Alameda County Superior Court by industries and individuals protesting inclusion in the annexed area.

In taking over the new territory, the City of Hayward is providing police and fire protection. Residents of the area are being informed that water rates will be reduced by approximately 40 percent, while sewer rates will be reduced from \$25 to \$12 per year.

The Decoto Fire Department, which had previously served the area, will no longer operate in the district, and city officials will take immediate steps to have the district withdrawn from the fire district.

The annexed area included the 609-home Hillview Crest subdivision just north of Decoto, and largely uninhabited agricultural land north of Decoto and east of Alvarado. The area has been described as the best potential industrial land remaining in Alameda County.

The following day brought a chilly response from Roland Bendel, Decoto fire chief, who said Decoto will continue to respond to fire calls in the Hillview Crest area. Hayward fire chief, Matt Jimenez, asked Bendel to quit the district. Bendel refused saying his department would continue to respond to the needs of Hillview Crest residents.

Hayward Fire chief Jimenez offered to notify the Decoto department when alarms were received at Hayward, and to let the Decoto firemen help quell the blaze. He asked the same courtesy from Bendel, Jimenez said. But the Decoto chief said his department would continue to serve the area until lawsuits challenging Hayward's annexation have been settled. He added that if the Decoto department gets any calls they will not pass them onto Hayward.

Meanwhile Capt. R.E. Condon, of the sheriff's Washington Township substation, said his patrol cars would continue to cruise the area along with Hayward's, until he is notified by letter that Hayward is assuming responsibility.

After a weeklong jurisdictional dispute with the Decoto Fire District, the Hayward Fire Department finally took over undisputed responsibility for the Treeview annex area, including Hillview Crest. The agreement was reached July 14, 1955, when Decoto Fire Chief Roland Bendel said that the Decoto Fire Commissioners had received formal notification from Hayward that the city had taken over the responsibility of fire protection in the area.

Near the end of July 1955, came this interesting note:

Among those still breathing hard after the dust had settled and Treeview (and Hillview Crest) had been annexed to Hayward over Decoto's objections was Don Patterson. Patterson, a Hillview Crest resident, who had energetically participated in pro-annexation efforts. A few days ago he received his first official communique from Hayward City Hall. He noted with some pleasure the envelope was addressed to him at 1448 York Place, Hayward.

Upon opening it, however, he found the letter was encased in a second envelope. Cancellation stamps indicated it had been returned to city hall by the post office. It was addressed to 1148 York Place, Decoto. Postal officials, up on the latest changes even if Hayward city fathers are not, had stamped it with the stern reminder: "Please refer correspondence to correct address." The letter was from Hayward Mayor Bill Wilson appointing Patterson to the library board.

On August 2, 1955, the Holly Sugar Company threw their weight behind the Union City incorporation. Mark Brady, who was speaking for Delmar Jacobs, attorney for the Holly Sugar Corporation presented a review of court challenges. The Holly Sugar Corporation is one of several industries and landowners challenging the Hayward annexation in Superior Court. In the meantime, the annexation was "presumed legal" by the district attorney's office and Hayward had assumed jurisdiction of the area.

Brady said both sides presented briefs. Holly Sugar will present a final brief before August 9th. A decision was expected with 60 days after that, although it might take longer, he said. Chief contention of Holly Sugar is that Hayward acted illegally. He said that Hayward should have proceeded under the Uninhabited Area annexation Act of 1939, rather than the Inhabited Area Annexation act of 1913.

Brady explained that under the act of 1913, if any part of the area is uninhabited, and distinguishable, the whole action would be invalid. Emphasizing these points, Brady said his group

is trying to prove Hayward tried to annex two distinctly different areas, one inhabited, and the other rural. If only a small portion of the annexation fits these four descriptions, then the whole is incorrect.

Holly Sugar further contended that Hayward should have proceeded under the act of 1939, which permits the registered voters of such an area to voice a decision by ballot. Brady pointed out, however, that there is a difference between being actually and legally rural. That point must be decided by the courts. Brady said Jacobs contends that no city proposed or otherwise, had jurisdiction over all of the contested area. He emphasized that this meant Fremont, Union City, and specifically Hayward.

The following day members of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce quickly approved two communications to local governing boards and adjourned in one of the fastest meetings in Decoto records. Members unanimously agreed to draft a petitioning letter to the Union Sanitary District, asking that all of the land in the Decoto area, lying south of Hayward's city limits be added to the Union district.

The second letter was to remind the Alameda County Planning Commissioners of a promise of several years' duration. Planners agreed, at the time of Decoto's zoning, to notify the chamber prior to consideration of any change in that zoning, according to members. "All we know about any changes is what we read in the newspaper after changes are made," protested Manuel Seoane.

One week later on August 8, 1955, Engineer Harry Goodridge was directed by board members of the Union Sanitary District to prepare exterior boundaries for the North Decoto annex to the district. To be known as Annex 11, the area included the entire Decoto area northwest of present district boundaries, and reached almost to the Hayward city limits. It would make possible the development of several new subdivisions in the Decoto area.

[From the pages of \*The Oakland Tribune\*, August 19, 1955, \*Treeview Annex is Ruled Illegal\*:](#)

"Hayward's annexation of uninhabited territory stretching south nearly to Decoto has been ruled illegal. Superior Court Judge Cecil Mosbacher today issued a judgment granting a preemptory writ to industrial and private landowners who started fighting the annexation before it was accomplished.

The ruling nullifies that portion of the annexation between Southern Pacific and Western Pacific tracks, but leaves undisturbed the Hillview Crest tract and connecting corridor annexed by the city in a May 9<sup>th</sup> election.

The suit was against both the City of Hayward and the City Council. The suit has been in court since April 26, 1955, when the United States Pipe & Foundry Co., and a number of private owners, challenged the right of the city to annex the territory. They called the land 'uninhabited in nature and prime industrial land.'

The suit was directed at the portion of the territory, which is open fields, not at the home tract. Plaintiffs pressed the point that 1,987 acres outside the Hillview Crest territory, representing five-sixths of the annexed land, contains only nine "inhabitants" as they are defined by interpretation of the 1913 California Inhabited Territory Annexation Act. Hayward had contended there were 12 such inhabitants. The court found that two of the claimed inhabitants were registered to vote to in Alameda, and that a third man lives on the unannexed portion of his farm, which was bisected by the territory's boundary line.

The court calling the annexation improper followed consideration of two legal theories:

- 1) Whether the territory annexed was one piece including heavily populated Hillview Crest, and the wide-open spaces west of the rail lines immediately north of Decoto.
- 2) Whether the open spaces were inhabited territory under earlier interpretations of the 1913 law.

The high court found "substantial separable and distinguishable uninhabited areas" included in the territory proposed for annexation, thus finding such areas not "inhabited" in the legal sense. The act says 12 or more residents qualify an area to be annexed as "inhabited" for purposes of the law."

[The Daily Review printed the following comments about of Judge Mosbacher's ruling:](#)

["Frank Borghi, Jr.:](#)

As chairman of the Union City Incorporation Steering Committee Borghi said: "We definitely are going ahead." Borghi said he would call a meeting of his group as soon as possible to plan a renewed drive for incorporation of Union City. It's just like Happy New Year's around here," Borghi said of the court ruling, which came as a major victory for Union City. Earlier, in other court actions designed to block the Treeview annexation, Union City had been unsuccessful.

[Holly Sugar Company:](#)

While not formally involved in the suit of Holly Sugar, Union City leaders have worked closely with the corporation officials and desired the same blocking of the Hayward annexation.

[Leroy Broun:](#)

Geoffrey Steel, Centerville attorney associated with LeRoy Broun, counsel for the Union City group, said incorporation might be able to proceed as soon as the final findings of fact are handed down on Sept. 6, 1955. A Union City petition for incorporation was presented to the Board of Supervisors months ago. Supervisors then, on the advice of the district attorney, accepted the petitions, but did not order them filed formally.

[Hillview Crest Residents:](#)

Hillview Crest residents, who initiated the annexation movement, will also meet soon. Donald M. Patterson, one of the original signers of the annexation petition and a leader of the annexation movement, said he expected a Hillview Crest meeting within a few days to discuss the ruling. The court order, if upheld, will remove from Hayward City limits Hillview Crest residents who voted nearly 3 - 1 in favor of annexation to Hayward. The legal fate of Treeview has been in question since the court action was filed April 28, 1955; two weeks before Treeview residents voted 453 to 145 to become a part of annexing to Hayward.

[Hayward City Officials:](#)

Hayward city official refused to acknowledge any cloud on their jurisdiction in the area and extended city services to Treeview in July. Hayward police and fire departments, which have been providing protection to Hillview Crest since the annexation procedure was completed, will continue to do so until their orders are changed. Officials of both departments said today they had not received orders changing those in early July to cover the area.

The court action was initiated by the two industries, Alden E. and Adolph A. Oliver, Millicent O. Schafer, Christina M. Anderson, Maurice Y. Nicole, Daniel Riley, and Marian C. and Jeryl R. Fry. They argued that the city was legally wrong in proceeding to annex 2,400 acres south of the city, where voter control was vested in the 609-home Hillview Crest subdivision. They maintained that 1,990 of the 2,400 acres cut off from the rest by the Western Pacific railroad tracks parallel to the Niles Road, was not ripe for urbanization, but

rich farm and industrial land. They contended that there were only nine registered voters in the area west of the railroad, and to annex under the "inhabited" territory act of 1913 required twelve."

Meanwhile *The Oakland Tribune* was making light of Hayward's rebuff on Treeview in the courts by writing, "the court has slapped Hayward's pinkies for reaching deep into the Decoto pocket to annex a big hunk of land suitable for farming, industrializing, or subdividing. Now that Hayward's move is judicially rebuffed, here stands promoters of Union City, who got in late with a plan to incorporate the same ground, asking "Now?" of the county supervisors."

On August 27, 1955, 20 residents of Hillview Crest sent to the County Boundary Commission a revised map for the annexation of Hillview Crest's 126.34 acres into the City of Hayward. Headed by Clarence Ramos of York Place, the condensed map shows only the Hillview Crest boundaries and not the entire Treeview Annex.

Newark became the 11th incorporated city in Alameda County when the citizens there voted 1,261 to 94 to become an incorporated city on September 13, 1955.

The consolidation of homeowners of the Hillview Crest, Fairway Park, and El Rancho Verde tracts into a unified improvement club was considered at a board of directors' meeting of the Hillview Crest Improvement Club on September 20, 1955. Residents of the two adjoining tracts are to be invited to the Hillview Crest October meeting, when the question is to be considered.

#### [The Oakland Tribune reports on October 4, 1955:](#)

"Hayward's annexation of four square miles in Washington Township was nullified in an order signed today by Alameda County Superior Court Judge Cecil Mosbacher. The court issued a writ calling upon Hayward to "discontinue and terminate" all proceedings in the so-called Treeview Annex. City Atty. John M. Scanlon said he will carry the case to the District Court of Appeal.

The findings represent a victory for the U.S. Pipe & Foundry Co., the Holly Sugar Corp., and 10 individual landowners who sued the city on the grounds that the annexation last May of property west of the Hillview Crest subdivision near Decoto as inhabited territory was illegal. It was brought out during trial on June 7, 1955, that there are only 9 registered voters in the area outside the subdivision, while a minimum of 12 is required to qualify a section as inhabited."

#### [From The Daily Review, October 8th, 1955:](#)

"The initial step toward renewed efforts for incorporation of Union City was taken in Oakland yesterday, when intent to circulate petitions was filed with County Clerk Jack Blue. The intent notice was signed by Frank Borghi, as chairman, and Leslie Maffey as secretary of the Union City Incorporation Committee.

Union City's earlier move to incorporate the area, comprising the Decoto and Alvarado Elementary School Districts, less the subdivisions of Hillview Crest, Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde, was stopped by the 2,400-acre Treeview annex to Hayward. Boundaries of Treeview and Union City overlapped and the Alameda County Board of Supervisors ruled that the (Hayward) annexation held jurisdiction.

Treeview, in turn, was stopped when industries and ranchers in the annexed area won a judgment from in the court of Superior Court Judge Mosbacher. That judgment was signed October 3, 1955. The City of Hayward has 60 days from that date to file an appeal.

Meanwhile, the 600-home subdivision of Hillview Crest has filed for annexation to Hayward boundaries, covering 126-acres, has been approved by the Alameda County Boundaries Commission. Frank Borghi, of the Union City Steering Committee, last night confirmed that Union City stands ready to begin anew the legal steps leading to incorporation."

On October 20, 1955, Union City's notice to begin circulating petitions for incorporation was ruled as being too early by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Ass't D.A. Douglas Dunn said that the City of Hayward has 60 days to appeal Judge Mosbacher's ruling, and that Union City is barred from filing for incorporation during this period. Supervisors instructed their clerk to note the date the Union City notice was received and took no further action.

On the same day, a meeting held by the Hillview Crest Improvement Club to dissolve, and rename the improvement club, "The Treeview Improvement Club." Members were now comprised of residents of Hillview Crest, Fairway Park, and El Rancho Verde. In the business portion of the meeting, members discussed a tentative cafeteria policy presented by the Decoto School. It was criticized as not being definitive. It was decided a club delegation would appear at the coming Decoto trustee's meeting to ask that "loopholes" in the policy be eliminated. "We want a policy that is not subject to interpretation," president Lawrence Kelly said.

On October 21st, the Treeview area fire department service was turned back over to the Decoto Fire Department. The Hayward Fire Department halted service to that area on October 20, 1955. Decoto Fire Chief Roland Bendel said that the Hayward Fire Department had been serving the area "for about three months," but that he was informed yesterday by Hayward Fire Chief Matt Jimenez that the Hayward service was ending.

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, October 21, 1955:](#)

"Union City's incorporation must be pushed, members of the Alvarado Chamber of Commerce declared on October 20, 1955. The movement, born as a stopgap measure to halt the planned Treeview annexation by the City of Hayward, must now become a reality. Asked to express an opinion on a possible consolidation with Fremont, members voiced solid opposition to union with that proposed city. President Harry Leidsen then asked, "Am I right, then, in saying to Union City's Steering Committee that we are unanimously in favor of the incorporation of Union City?"

"Not unanimously," demurred one member, "I'm not for Union City, either. I'm for Alvarado." Fremont's encirclement of Newark was likened to the attempted Hayward annexation of Treeview, which extended into the Decoto and Alvarado areas. We said we didn't like Hayward's annexation move," a member of the group said, "well, Fremont's encirclement of Newark is the same thing and I think we ought to dislike that too. I don't know if Fremont or Hayward is worse, but I think I prefer Hayward."

Members cited fear of inadequate services for Alvarado as major reason for frowning on an alliance with Fremont. Warren Silva pointed out that Alvarado has the best potential development of any community in Washington Township. He said that potential should make Union City incorporation financially feasible. Members called for more public meetings of Union City proponents, so interest will be kept alive and supporters of the movement informed."

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, November 2, 1955:](#)

"The Decoto Chamber of Commerce, in a move to offset proposed tax increases for unincorporated areas last night, unanimously resolved to ask the Board of Supervisors to force subdividers to provide school-site land and adequate lighting in all future tract developments. The resolution capped an evening of panel discussions on the proposed



Union City incorporation of which, the chamber reiterated its stand of full endorsement.

Dr. Harold Schoenfeld, Decoto school Superintendent:

An ardent Union City advocate, urged a four point study that included:

- 1) The cost of Union City (Decoto & Alvarado) as an independent venture.
- 2) The price of Union City joining the proposed City of Fremont to the south.
- 3) What the area would face if it remained unincorporated.
- 4) The benefits of annexing to Hayward.

Schoenfeld emphasized he was not in favor of annexing to Hayward, but added that the people of the area must know all the facts before any proposition is put before them. A panel of members moderated by S. Robert Infelise brought these comments:

[Manuel Hidalgo, Decoto merchant:](#)

"I don't think Hayward will object to the result of the court ruling on the disputed Treeview annex. The land is rightfully ours."

[William Davis, Decoto School Trustee:](#)

"Although I opposed incorporation at first, I'm in favor now. We ought to go ahead with it now, or forget it completely."

[Kenneth Garcia, school district employee:](#)

"I hear talk that the Alvarado Chamber members may be seeking to go it alone (incorporation)."

[Mel Boliba, Decoto merchant:](#)

"We're giving the county a lot of money but not getting anything for it."

Infelise closed the discussion by declaring it "is unanimous that we incorporate."

The Hillview Crest Improvement Club was now known as the Treeview Improvement Club, and announced they will sponsor a second attempt to annex Hillview Crest to the City of Hayward. "There is nothing worse than the state of confusion which exists in the minds of people "who are moving into these tracts, many do not know who is responsible for street lights, sewers, and other services," DeMamiel said.

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, November 18, 1955:](#)

"The planning commission's zoning proposal for Northern Washington Township, in the hopper since last May, ran into a heavy barrage of protest when they reached the Board of Supervisors yesterday. The board retreated after a four-hour battle, set to reconnoiter next Tuesday afternoon (Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>), with the planning staff, and bring the matter to a decision at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday.

Robert Nahas, Chairman of the Alameda County Land Development Committee, fired the first blast, and then wheeled up the heavy artillery of South County industrialists, ranchers, and the Chamber of Commerce. They directed their fire at 2,300 acres bounded on the southwest by the Alvarado Niles Road, on the southeast by Dry Creek, on the east by the Southern Pacific railway, on the west by the new Eastshore Freeway, and on the north by the common boundary Washington Township and Eden Townships.

The Planning Commission said this area should be zoned for agriculture, as a "holding" action, until the commission is able to determine from a comprehensive viewpoint on what

is the best ultimate use for this acreage. The commission recommended extension of industrial zoning in proximity to U.S. Pipe & Foundry, American Pipe & Construction Co., and Holly Sugar Mill to approximately 400 acres. The Land Development Committee and its cohorts maintained it should be earmarked immediately for industry. They argued:

- 1) The county must prepare in advance for industry in order to have a balanced economy.
- 2) Alameda County is competing with every other county in the U.S. for an industrial tax base.
- 3) Industry needs high land, well drained, close to highways, freeways, and rail transportation.
- 4) Industry demands the reassurance of industrial zoning before it will commit itself to acquire sites.
- 5) This area is ideally suited to industrial development.
- 6) It would provide the industrial payroll required by the county, and reward efforts of chamber of commerce committees whose primary expenditure of time and money is devoted to bringing new industry to Alameda County.

Those who took this tack in the argument were:

Robert Nahas, C.W. Mangum; general agents for the WPRR.

R.D. Rodenberger; representing the Southern Pacific Railroad

Ralph E. Merritt; President of Cast Mfg. and Supply Co., and chairman of the Alameda County New Industries Committee.

Guilford Koch; manager of the Alameda County New Industries.

Committee of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce.

Ken Moeller; Oakland Chamber of Commerce.

C.W. Kraft; representing Washington Township Industries

E.E. Hayden; spokesman for Alameda County Industries, Inc.

Earl E. Jackson; Vice President and Division Mgr. for the American Pipe & Construction Co.

D.R. Jacobs; attorney for industrialists, ranchers, and homeowners in the controversial Treeview annex area.

Harking back to planning recommendation presented county officials by the Land Development Committee 14 months ago, Nahas prophesied an ultimate Alameda County need for 10 to 20 thousand industrial acres, said it must be protected from encroachment by subdividers. Mangum, averring industry will "not even look at land zoned for agriculture." He added that Western Pacific is protecting itself by buying land in other areas: 1,800 acres in San Jose, Stockton, Sacramento, Turlock, Modesto, and Oroville, all reserved by planners for industry.

Jacobs, who represented ranchers and industrialists who shattered Hayward's dream of annexing 2,400 acres of potentially rich industrial land, said his clients want their lands earmarked for industry. "Put industry where it can live with industry. Do it now, while there are no subdivisions, no one to object," he pleaded.

Those with different viewpoints were:

[Tom Kitayama:](#)

Alvarado commercial flower grower, who agreed with the planning commission's recommendation for agricultural zoning.

[Mildred Meyers, Decoto, and her sister, Dr. Edith Meyers:](#)

Owners of 1,500 acres in the area, who recognize the need for industry, but prefer an "orderly" development to pre-planning of masses of industrial area.

Don Guloff, Planning Director, the City of Hayward:

He agreed with the County Planning Commission that agricultural zoning can represent a better protection for industry than strict industrial zoning, under mechanics of the county zoning ordinance.

Boyd Morningstar: Ass't Supt., Decoto School District:

Boyd asked heavy industrial zoning north of Whipple Road and west of Western Pacific and the Southern Pacific railroads to the school district's boundary. He asked a buffer of light industrial zoning between heavy industries and the Hillview Crest homes.

Manuel Hidalgo:

Manuel also recommended homes on the south side of Whipple Road and industry on the north.

Uncontested were the planning commission's recommendations for leaving existing residential and commercial areas of Alvarado "as is," Leslie Salt Company holdings in a "U" zone, recognizing the residential character of Decoto, and designating the remainder of the 31-square mile area for agriculture."

Alvarado and Decoto submitted the names of their nominees to the 12 member Union City Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

From Alvarado:

Fred Brown	Frank George	Wilbert Hendricks	Joe Lewis
William Machado	John Ratekin	Mrs. Mabel Rogers	Mrs. May Santos
Mike Salido			

From Decoto:

Frank Borghi Jr.	Oscar Dowe	Kenny Garcia	Mrs. Florence Spencer
Clifford Tinsley	Bernie Joseph	Manuel Seoane	

The Treeview Improvement Club met on December 8, 1955, to listen to and question various speakers and officials from Southern Alameda County. More than 200 people gathered from Hillview Crest, El Rancho Verde, and Fairway Park to get acquainted. The leader of the meeting was King Cole. Speakers at the meeting included:

Matt Jimenez, Hayward City Fire Chief  
George Forth, Hayward City Police Chief  
J. Vernon Goold, Supt. of Washington Union High School  
William J. Howe, La Vista School District  
Neal Beardon, Finance Officer for the City of Hayward  
William Webster, Librarian, City of Hayward  
Clair Cook, Washington Township Sheriff Substation  
Arthur DeMamiel, Meeting Chair

In mid-December the City of Fremont set aside \$750 for a survey of effects on the possible annexation of the Union City area. Funds were voted over the protests of Councilman Winifred Bendel (whose husband is Roland Bendel, Decoto Fire Chief), who called the move "an insult to Union City."

The action followed the December 5, 1955, meeting of the Union City Steering Committee, which challenged Hayward's claims of goodwill with a request that the northern city withdraw its

annexation appeal. This appeal has stopped attempts by Alvarado and Decoto citizens to incorporate the two towns as Union City.

Meanwhile the Alvarado Chamber of Commerce went on record in favor of a joint installation of new officers with the Decoto Chamber of Commerce "sometime in January." "The Alameda County Board of Supervisors will be invited," President Harry Leidsen told chamber members at the firehouse. He said the invitation would be extended to the supervisors "to show them the two Chambers are working together toward the realization of Union City."

The joint installation was recommended by Union City's Steering Committee as a step toward merging the two chambers into a single body to be known as the Union City Chamber of Commerce. Leidsen said the two chambers would remain separate for the time being, but would meet together "every two or three months."

The Alvarado Chamber's board of directors and officers, with one exception, will remain the same for another year. The only change on the slate will be the replacement of William Gianella. New directors were:

Joseph Lewis	Harry Leidsen	Mabel Rogers	John Ratekin	Susie Lemos
Manuel Borges	Warren Silva	Damaso Diaz	Leslie Maffey	

Fremont continued to explore the possibility of annexing Alvarado and Decoto into the soon to be new City of Fremont. Dale Isenberg, Centerville Chamber Manager, asked for the study when the Union City Steering Committee, headed by Frank Borghi Jr., asked that the study be made. Chamber participation in the financing of the study is not tantamount to approval, but merely a "neighborly gesture" of "friendly public relations." Isenberg said the Chamber neither espouses nor divorces itself from the proposal. Borghi asked for Fremont to study annexation after he had attended a meeting and listened to Hayward City Manager S.D. Smith explain possible effects of annexation to Hayward.

This drew 1955 to a close. But there were still several factors of importance that were not mentioned in the write-up above. One was flood control. Washington Township was an oasis free from large industrial parks and sprawling subdivisions mostly because of the frequent flooding.

It was the regular visitations of the flooding of the land that made Washington Township a great farm area. Devastating floods visited in regular cycles (mostly Alvarado, Newark, southern Centerville and sometimes Niles in modern times). During the 50's, the floods visited in 1950, 1952, 1955, and the final one in 1958.

Farmers and residents had called for flood control for decades but were always defeated by the same problem; lack of funds to create and pay for flood control districts, the channeling of water, and drainage of low areas. In the early days the only way to lessen the effects of the floods was to clean Alameda Creek of brush and snags so that there was an even flow of water to the Bay.

It must be remembered that the Alameda Creek watershed was in excess of 630 square miles, and that water was collected from the southern slopes of Mt. Diablo on the north, the ridgeline of the Altamont Pass on the east, and the runoff of Mt. Hamilton on the north; all of which flowed through Alameda Creek and its tributaries through Niles Canyon, and eventually out beyond Alvarado into the Bay. Hence, we are not talking about little flows of water. At many times Alameda Creek had been referred to as the Alameda River due to the power of its flow during heavy rains.

During July 1955, there was a swirl of activity over Flood Control in the Decoto district. Again, taxation and paying for the flood control program was at the forefront of discussions. Southern Eden Township, Washington Township, and parts of Murray Township were broken up into Flood

Control Zones. Each zone covered a specific area that was designed to fix the flood specific to that zone.

Reactions in Decoto to the flood control bonds were mixed. Irving Williams and Henry Rivera spoke against the proposed bond issue saying Decoto did not need flood control. Williams said, "We will be paying the bill to drain somebody else's property so that they can make money subdividing." Added Rivera, "We are in no position financially to help anyone else."

Kenneth Garcia, speaking for Zone Five (Decoto) declared, "We are going to get flood control whether we like it or not. If we don't pass the bond issue, the supervisors will tax us an equal amount and do the work anyway."

Manuel Seoane said, "In the long run we will benefit. We will not get government aid to control Alameda Creek unless we vote yes." He added that, "factories would not locate in parts of Washington Township unless there was flood control."

The voters in Flood Control District Zone 5 went to the polls on July 19, 1955. Voters in the communities of Decoto, Newark, Centerville, Niles, and the Alviso District of Washington Township (Flood Control Zone 5) voted in the \$3,989,000 bond issue by a count of 1,048 for the measure and 393 against it.

Just before Christmas 1955, the weather showed us why we need Flood Control in Alvarado and Decoto. The Alvarado-Niles Road was closed between Decoto and Alquire Road (today's Dyer Street). Whipple Road was closed at Alquire. Decoto Road was closed from Alvarado-Niles Road to Highway 17, and Decoto streets were muddy and covered with debris from Dry Creek.

Another problem in the Alvarado-Decoto area was zoning. There was a definite need for industrial zoning (especially the Treeview area). Historically, this was agricultural land, and most was zoned agricultural. This area was known to have lost the Ford Motor Assembly Plant to Milpitas (today's Great Mall) because of the lack of industrial zoning.

As early as 1953 the Western Pacific Railroad had stated that there needed to be industrial zoned areas near Decoto and especially around the areas of the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific Railroads. In mid-November there was a tumultuous meeting held by the Board of Supervisors over zoning in Washington Township. Not only citizens and merchants attended and voiced their opinions, but so did the two railroads in town, and there was a contingent of interested outside commercial developers who eagerly lined up and voiced their opinions about how this valuable land should be zoned.

Sanitation was another problem that plagued Washington Township. Although the town of Decoto had joined the Union Sanitary District of Fremont, Alvarado's sanitary system was a primitive one that proved to be a real problem for the struggling proposed Union City. As we will see in the coming three years Alvarado's sanitary system would plague the new city.

Hayward and their Treeview annexation plan had been rebuffed by the courts and Hayward was still deciding whether to appeal the verdict. But Hayward was busy on other fronts, during the year 1955, the City of Hayward completed 33 annexations totaling 1,582.36 acres. 12 of those annexations were less than one acre.

## 1956

The City of Fremont was incorporated on January 23, 1956, as the 12<sup>th</sup> city in Alameda County. This incorporated the towns of Niles, Centerville, Irvington, Mission San Jose, and Warm Springs, and it also included the Alviso District. Alvarado and Decoto remained as unincorporated towns.

Fremont became the third largest city (in area) in California. Although already large, the City of Fremont was looking to grow even larger with her eyes set solidly on the two northern towns of Alvarado and Decoto, the only two unincorporated areas remaining in Washington Township. But the City of Fremont would have to wait while Hayward's boundary dispute with Alvarado and Decoto wound its way through the court of appeals.

The day after Fremont's incorporation, Union City Attorney Leroy Broun quickly dispelled Fremont's thoughts of annexation, when he said that the goal of Alvarado and Decoto was still to incorporate as Union City. Broun said Union City had no choice, at present, but to continue its action for incorporation. "We are still awaiting the outcome of the appeal filed by the City of Hayward on the Treeview annexation. We have no other course of action until that appeal is settled."

### From the Editorial pages of *The Daily Review*, January 24, 1956:

"Establishment of California's third largest city (Fremont) in this end of Alameda County brought newsmen running to the south county to report on this municipal phenomenon. Unfortunately this brief glimpse of Washington Township seems to have lured one San Francisco newspaper out on the thin ice of scanty knowledge.

At this point the expected happened: *The San Francisco Journal* fell in, up to its editorial neck in icy cold error. The subject was Union City, the name proposed for a city to include Alvarado and Decoto. "Union City is a wooden and unimaginative kind of name if we ever heard one, and entirely without euphony or California flavor," according to the metropolitan daily.

Union City had already established itself as a flourishing farming and business center in 1851 (actually 1850), 14 years before the San Francisco Journal itself went to press. Indeed its existence was of considerable import to the Bay's queen city, because it furnished fresh fruits and vegetables for San Francisco.

Union City, according to south county historians, was established on Alameda Creek when that considerable stream ran to the Bay. Sailing vessels and steamers carried cargoes to and from warehouses located on the creek bank. A busy community built up around the commercial district, and furnished many stalwart pioneers citizens of Alameda County.

To our compatriot's statement "Union City means nothing," we must point out that in the 1850's it was the Union or nothing. The fervor of pro-Union men in California left the name throughout the state, particularly in the Mother-Lode country. Union City historically has earned itself a niche among California place names. If Alvarado and Decoto citizens should create Union City, then they can do so knowing its name is linked strongly with California's early days."

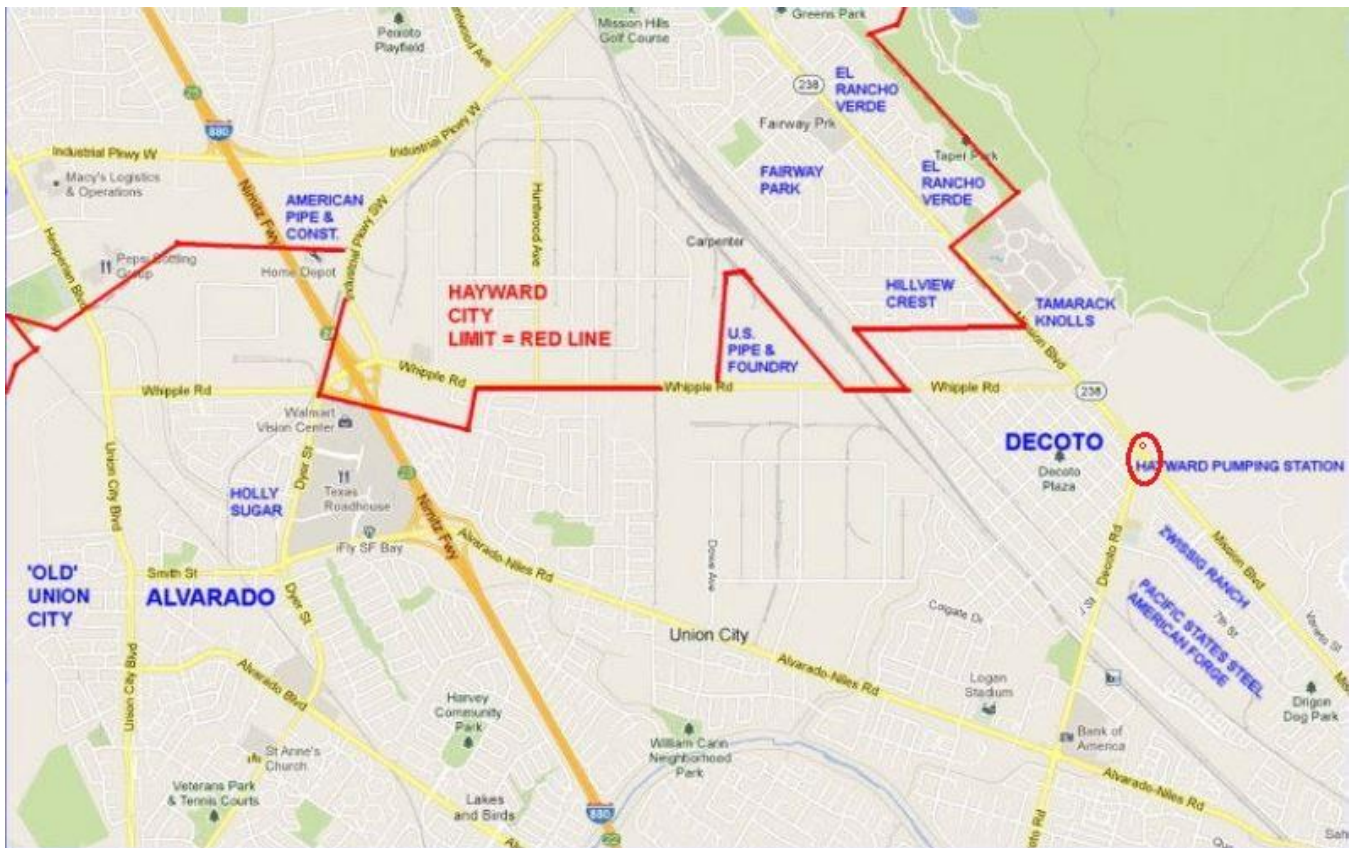
On the incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto into Union City, there was little progress made in early 1956, for the Treeview Annex was still in limbo awaiting Hayward's decision whether to file an appeal of Judge Mosbacher's ruling. There was posturing on both sides of the issue, however, ready to make a mad dash for incorporation when the courts made their decision. Throughout the year

the Union City Steering Committee, headed by Frank Borghi Jr. and Leslie Maffey, filed new petitions to incorporate every 50 days so as to keep Union City's right to incorporate without any intervening lapses.

By the end of 1956, the Union City Steering Committee had filed petitions seven times. Hillview Crest also was active in 1956. In late February a petition proposing annexation of the tract to Hayward was approved by the Hayward City Council. The election date was not set as City Attorney John Scanlon was caught off-guard by the fact that there were no protests at the meeting, and Scanlon did not have a resolution ready to present to the council.

The date eventually set for the election of the Hillview Crest Annex was May 1, 1956. On that date the residents of Hillview Crest went to the polls and selected to be annexed to Hayward by a vote of 421 to 89. The City of Hayward assumed responsibility for police and fire protection around the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.

In April 1956, the City of Hayward announced plans to annex one-half acre of land at the south-west corner of Decoto Road and Mission Boulevard. The land was owned by the City of Hayward and they planned to build a water fluoridation and booster pump station here. The land is part of the former Zwissig Ranch across from the Masonic Home. The site location is shown by the red oval in the lower right corner of the map.



The map above shows the Hayward Pumping Station to the right of "DECOTO." Below that is the Zwissig Ranch and Pacific States Steel. This map also puts into perspective the future Hayward City line (in dark red) and the important areas of northern Washington Township. This map shows the Hayward city limits of today, not of 1956. (Google map)

The Alameda County Planning Commission voted 6 to 1 against Hayward's plan to locate the pump station outside Hayward City limits (the site is about six-tenths of a mile south of Teddy Drive in

Hillview Crest, the southern terminus of the Hayward city limits). But this vote was non-binding, and amounted to nothing more than a recommendation.

The townspeople of Decoto became immediately suspicious and troubled over Hayward's leap-frogging to a piece of property in Decoto. Manuel Hidalgo pointed out that Hayward had gone far outside its own boundaries to establish this pump station in the corner of some 230 acres of land that was designed for industrial development. The land in question (the Zwissig Ranch) sits west of Mission Boulevard and south of Decoto Road and stretches west towards the Pacific States Steel Company. Frank Borghi indicated resentment that the City of Hayward had invaded Union City territory without the formality of consulting with the incorporation committee and the citizens of the area.

Ed Phillips, director of Public Works for the City of Hayward, said that the location chosen was the most effective from an engineering standpoint (as a tie-in to the City of Hayward Hetch-Hetchy water line, which ran along the eastern edge of Mission Blvd to the City of Hayward), and that Hayward had started annexation procedures. Ken Garcia noted that "the plant goes up whether we like it or not. The one thing we can do is stop annexation to Hayward. With new boundaries for Union City, we would have to start the incorporation movement all over again."

The move was vigorously opposed by the Decoto Merchants Association, the Decoto Chamber of Commerce, the Decoto Homeowners Association, and the Union City Steering Committee because annexation would alter the boundaries of the proposed Union City.

[Daily Review Editorial of June 13, 1956:  
Hayward Plays Nice With Union City:](#)

"PROOF that Hayward's wish to improve its public relations is a matter of policy rather than a promise, was gratifyingly displayed last night by the (Hayward) city council. It voluntarily abandoned any attempt to annex the property (one half-acre) on which its fluoridation plant will be located south of Decoto.

The proposed annexation was an issue of emotional importance rather than financial importance. If it were carried to completion, the city would have to pay taxes on the property. By remaining politically outside the city, the property will be subject to taxes payable to the county if the area remains unincorporated or to "Union City" if that municipality is formed.

The tax will amount to about \$18 a year in either case. However, the annexation had taken on significance beyond its tax worth. It had become a matter of pride, or jurisdiction, of that nebulous but powerful emotion traditionally summed up by "it's the principle of the thing."

Residents of Alvarado and Decoto foresaw that annexation of the fluoridation site would mean an island of Hayward would be within Union City boundaries if an incorporation there was successful. That would be an affront to municipal authority.

The City of Hayward, on the other hand, found justification in a recent state law that specifically permitted the island annexation of property it already owned. It was prepared to be affronted if its legal rights were challenged. Situations like that becloud the lens through which good neighbors can be viewed.

That is why Hayward City Council's voluntary capitulation deserves praise even though the practical issues involved were small. Indeed, it is the constant settlement of small differences that form the bond between neighbors. As in a successful marriage, occasional



avowals of love do not influence good public relations unless they are based on the constant and amicable adjustments necessary to achieve a happy companionship.

It is to be hoped that the Hayward council will continue the course it has set for itself, not always with capitulation, but with respect for the city's neighbors and consideration for their feelings."

On June 19, 1956, *The Daily Review* reported that the City of Hayward had filed a brief in the appeal of the Treeview Annex. It was the first action in the case since the annexation was overruled by the Superior Court last year. The filing ended speculation that Hayward might not act on the appeal. It also dimmed hopes of Union City backers for an early incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto. No action can be taken until the Treeview case is resolved, since the annex and Union City boundaries conflict.

But Hayward did not rest on their laurels, besides the Hillview Crest annexation and the Decoto fluoridation plant, Hayward had the following irons in the fire during 1956:

[Reported by \*The Daily Review\* of December 5, 1956:](#)

"Hayward will increase in area by nearly 50 per cent if annexations now underway go through. In various stages of negotiation or administrative procedure are six important annexations, which would add approximately 3,000 acres to the city's present area of 6,413 acres. They would also bring in 1,700 more residents and an industrial plant with its payroll of some 300 workers. Hayward population, including those residents, is estimated at 50,000.

The annexations were:

[Woodland Estates Annex:](#)

378 acres of a Rousseau residential development at Hayward Boulevard and Fairview Avenue in the Hayward Highlands.

[Soda Annex:](#)

Approximately 1,500 acres generally south of the Woodlands Estates annex, planned for residential development by the Haymont Corporation.

[Bohannon Annex:](#)

90 acres at the southwest end of the Hayward Airport planned for industrial development by the David D. Bohannon organization along with 47 adjacent acres already in the city.

[Hesse Annex:](#)

300 acres stretching in erratic shape from Alquire Road almost to Hesperian Boulevard, south of Folsom Avenue, planned for industrial development by Clarence Hesse.

[Harder-Tennyson Annex:](#)

695 acres with 1,700 residents, bounded roughly by Harder Road, Tennyson Road, Western Road, and Schafer Park.

[Herrick Annex:](#)

33 acres on Clawiter Road about 2,000 feet north of the San Mateo Bridge Road, site of a projected new plant for Herrick Iron Works, under negotiation.

Not counted are the small annexations, individual pieces of property of an acre or two, continually joining the city, and swelling its size. This not include the Treeview annex, with its close 2,400 acres.

Zoning was an issue that also plagued Alvarado and Decoto, and was now beginning to attract a lot of attention. The vast open space between Eden Township and the Santa Clara County line was now drawing attention to the area. There still remained the problems of the rural infrastructure yet to be fixed, but pressure from commercial real estate developers, and the city of Hayward annexation was pushing Alvarado and Decoto into a progressive mode.

If these two small towns were to keep their identity they would have to be thorough in their bringing themselves into alignment with the more progressive towns (cities) in the township.

In April 1956, the Alameda County Planning Commission carved out a 1,560-acre parcel of industrial land between Decoto and Alvarado for heavy industrial use in an effort to attract and retain industry for the county.

The planners had seen the county lose the Ford Assembly Plant to Santa Clara County (Milpitas) because there was no land zoned heavy industrial in the Washington Township area. The new zoning area was located between the Western Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads, and was the area roughly bordered by State Highway 9 (Mission Blvd), Alquire Road (today's Industrial Blvd.), Whipple Road, and the Niles-Hayward Road.

This area was ideal for industry because of its proximity to rail and highway facilities, utilities, the existing labor market, and that it was high and well drained.

The following month the Decoto Chamber of Commerce agreed fully with Southern Pacific's request to have the 223-acre Zwissig property zoned heavy industrial. The Zwissig property is located at Mission Boulevard and Decoto Road across the highway from the Masonic Home.

In August 1956, *The Daily Review* reported that the Alameda County Board of Supervisors rezoned 3,000 acres on Highway 9 in Decoto. Changed from various uses to heavy industrial zoning, was a 260-acres parcel of the Southern Pacific Company on the south side of Decoto Road west of Highway 9. Most of this land was the old Zwissig Ranch, which had been bought up recently by SP.

Zoned agricultural, as a "holding-action," were 2,200 acres in the hills east of Decoto and Hayward, and 500 acres at the Alvarado-Niles Road adjacent to the SP property. The land had been in unclassified or residential zones. The Supervisor's explained the "holding" action by saying much of the land was potentially good for industry, but at the present time is still subject to flooding.

The fate of Union City (Alvarado and Decoto) was now in the hands of the various committees that were guiding its fate. Chief among these committees was the Alvarado and Decoto Chambers of Commerce, and the Union City Steering Committee. In their main meeting of the year, the Union City Steering Committee met on January 24, 1956, to try to decide which path to take. Open to committee members were:

- 1) Incorporate the communities of Decoto and Alvarado into Union City.
- 2) Joining Fremont
- 3) Keep the status quo.
- 4) Annex to Hayward.

Although the status quo and annex to Hayward measures seem remote, Frank Borghi, committee chairman, declared all aspects will be "carefully considered." Holding up any Union City action was

the court action concerning the controversial Treeview election, which was designed to add that territory to Hayward.

Members of the Union City Steering Committee, besides Frank Borghi Jr. were:

Alvarado:

Leslie H. Maffey          Henry Leidsen          John A. Ratekin          George Hocking  
Mrs. Margot Harvey

Decoto:

Manuel Hidalgo          Harold Faria          Keith Whipple          Herbert Harrold  
C.R. Tinsley

In January 1956, the joint chambers named their new officers.

From Alvarado were:

President: Henry Leidsen  
Vice President: Joseph Lewis  
Sec-Treasurer: Leslie Maffey

From Decoto were:

President: Frank Borghi Jr.  
1st Vice President: Kenneth Garcia  
2nd Vice President: Jesse Perry  
Secretary: S. Robert Infelise  
Financial Secretary: Bernie Joseph  
Treasurer: Jack Faletti  
Parliamentarian: Dr. Harold Schoenfeld

In May 1956, Frank Borghi Jr. resigned from the Decoto Chamber citing his many other duties, including having just been made a trustee of the Washington Union High School. Ken Garcia, Vice President assumed the leadership of the Decoto portion of the Chamber.

To show their solidarity in the creation of Union City, the Alvarado and Decoto Chambers of Commerce began talks of a merger of the two chambers. On August 1, 1956, the boards of the two chambers agreed to present the unification of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce and the Alvarado Chamber of Commerce to their respective bodies for a vote.

On August 7, 1956, the Decoto Chamber of Commerce voted unanimously to merge with the Alvarado Chamber of Commerce. The Alvarado Chamber voted for the merger on August 16th. September 6, 1956 was set as the meeting date at the old firehouse in Decoto to appoint temporary officers and a bylaws committee of the Union City Chamber of Commerce. The combined membership of 165 would work toward incorporation of the two areas into Union City, a movement stalled pending a court decision.

At the September 6, 1956 meeting of the newly formed Union City Chamber of Commerce, the following persons were named to spearhead the merger:

Chairman, By Laws Comm: Oscar Dowe  
Other Committee Members: Manuel Seoane          John A. Ratekin          Joseph Lewis

On December 6, 1956 the nominating committee presented the following names for directors of the Union City Chamber of Commerce:

Nominees from Alvarado were:

Fred Brown	Frank George	Wilbert Hendricks	Joe Lewis
William Machado	John Ratekin	Mabel Rogers	May Santos
Mike Salido			

Nominees from Decoto are:

Frank Borghi Jr.	Oscar Dowe	Kenny Garcia	Bernie Joseph
Manuel Seoane	Clifford Tinsley	Mrs. Florence Spencer	

The Union City Steering Committee then chose the Board of Directors for the combined Alvarado-Decoto Chamber of Commerce.

Representing Alvarado were:

Frank George	Joe Lewis	John Ratekin	Wilbert Hendricks
Mrs. May Santos	Mike Salido	Mrs. Mabel Rogers.	

Representing Decoto are:

Bernie Joseph	Frank Borghi Jr.	Kenny Garcia	Oscar Dowe
Manuel Seoane.			

On a different front, the Alvarado Sanitary District, long an inexpensive and low level sanitary system, was suddenly jarred into having to update its antiquated system. The system was put in place in the early 40's as a solution to keep overflowing cesspools and raw sewage from causing serious diseases. It consisted of sewer lines leading to collection tanks on the west side of the town (in "Old Union City" at Veasy Street & Benson Road) where treatment consisted of allowing overflowing liquids to be dumped into the Alameda Creek, and then be flushed out into the Bay. Solids were collected and were disposed.

This sanitary system accomplished what it was designed to do. It prevented serious diseases at a minimum of cost. But Alvarado would soon not be the sleepy little town that it had been for one hundred years. Times were changing quickly and Alvarado had to adapt to survive.

Recognizing this, civic leaders in Alvarado called upon the Alvarado Sanitary District to modernize their plant. This was next to impossible as the Alvarado Sanitary District had a small footprint, and the tax base contributed very little to upkeep.

The *History of Washington Township*, by the Washington Township Country Club, states that "the Alvarado Sanitary district was established in 1941. Its commissioners, Elvin Rose, Fred Joyce, Manuel Pinto, and William Machado, being low on funds would 'tend' to the pump. The installation was two immense wooden tanks, draining into Alameda Creek and the Bay."

The Alvarado Chamber of Commerce, on April 20, 1956, wrote to the commissioners of the Alvarado Sanitary District, urging them to merge with the Union Sanitary District (herein after referred to as USD) of Fremont. The following month the Alvarado Sanitary District wrote a letter to the Union Sanitary District asking to open talks exploratory to the two districts merging. The Union Sanitary District replied that there were problems to be overcome before such a merger could even start. The Union and Alvarado Sanitary Districts were not contiguous and the land that lies between had to be annexed before merger talks could begin.

The Fremont City Council took up expansion of the USD in June 1956. Mayor Jack Stevenson wanted a survey made to expand USD Newark, Alvarado, and Decoto. Councilman Bruce Michael seconded the motion, who had called for the survey two months ago. Since that time the USD has

been called a "millstone around Fremont's neck," and the district replied that 95% of the accusations are false.

On July 10, 1956, the USD directors authorized an independent survey of present and recommended future sewer facilities. The survey was scheduled to get under way immediately. One of the points of the survey was to assess the feasibility of consolidating the Alvarado Sanitary District, but did not include a study of the Alvarado sewer facilities.

The September 1956, election of two director's seats in the Alvarado Sanitary District was cancelled by the Board of Supervisors. No one had any interest in Alvarado to serve on the board. The Board of Supervisors had to appoint two persons on the Alvarado board on a temporary basis. This was a severe black-eye for the town of Alvarado and their progressive-thinking civic leaders. The County Supervisors, on December 5, 1956, agreed to advise the Alvarado and Union Sanitary Districts that California now had \$2,053,000 in federal funds available to supplement construction or remodeling of sewage treatment plants. The board was informed the funds were available in a letter from the Regional Water Pollution Control Board. The money, part of an annual \$50,000,000 made available from the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, was offered on a matching dollar-for-dollar basis to cities or intercity agencies.

So this is how 1956 ended. The Treeview Annex was still held up in the courts, the Union City incorporation was at a stand-still because they claimed part of the Treeview Annex in their incorporation bid.

Alvarado was awakening to the fact that they now needed sewage treatment, as well as just sewage collection. The Alvarado Sanitary District was just able to handle its own sewage problems (the system served only the people in the town of Alvarado and not any outlying farms).

## 1957

1957 opened in a deadlock, Hayward had their Treeview Annex on appeal in the courts, and the Union City proponents had filed for incorporation with overlapping claims on Hayward's Treeview Annex. Neither could move forward until the battle in the courts could be resolved.

But there were several other fronts of activity in 1957 that began to heat up. One was the confrontation between the La Vista School District (Hayward), and the Decoto School District. Brought on by Hayward's annexation of El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park, both of these tracts straddled the Eden-Washington Township line, which meant that children living in these tracts went to different schools depending on where they fell on the dividing line. The students residing in Washington Township went to Decoto Schools, and the students in Eden Township went to the La Vista School District.

Another area that heated up in 1957 was the wooing of Alvarado and Decoto by both Hayward and Fremont, and even for a short time by the City of Newark. This scenario played throughout 1957.

The controversy between the La Vista and Decoto School Districts began amicably at the beginning of the year. The superintendents of the two school districts agreed to study possible boundary changes in their districts. The residents of El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park (who were in the City of Hayward) had been dissatisfied that two thirds of their residents had been attending Decoto schools.

The need for a common boundary which would keep neighbors in the same housing tract, and in the same school district, rather than having them in different districts, was underlined in terms of new subdivisions. The petitioners claim that the present boundaries, established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were set up in an arbitrary fashion by the county assessor. The arbitrary line referred to here, was the Eden-Washington Township line, which finds both El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park tracts in two different townships.

On March 1, 1957, a meeting on the possible merger of Alvarado, Decoto and La Vista school districts was held. The hearing was prompted by a petition asking for a study of school district boundaries in the South Hayward-North Washington Township area. Superintendents from the three districts reported on schools, enrollment, and finances, leading to a suggestion of a merger study. Consolidation of the three districts would pool their tax wealth to offer better educational opportunities to area children. The committee took the reports under consideration and agreed to meet in the near future with trustees from Alvarado, Decoto, and La Vista Elementary Schools. Also included in the discussions were the Hayward Union High and Washington Union High School districts to discuss consolidation implications. There was a growing feeling of discontent in the Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde tracts. Children from these tracts were split between La Vista schools and Decoto schools.

During the spring and summer talks continued on school unification in southern Hayward and northern Washington Township. Although several different plans were considered, none came to fruition.

Then in mid-August 1957, came an announcement that La Vista's School District's El Rancho Verde subdivision would be able to attend school in the Decoto School District with special permission in the fall. Decoto School Superintendent, Dr. Harold Schoenfeld, said Decoto and La Vista Trustees had worked out an agreement to allow children of the approximately 240 families to attend nearby

El Rancho Verde School instead of traveling by bus to La Vista School. Approximately 200 residents of the subdivision had petitioned for inclusion into the Decoto School District.

Not so fast, said La Vista School District Superintendent Clarence Hardie, the La Vista School District had made no such deal with the Decoto School District to allow El Rancho Verde school children in Eden Township to attend grade school at the new El Rancho Verde School in Washington Township.

Homeowners were pleased with the original announcement that children in Eden Township could attend the El Rancho Verde School, which was within walking distance, rather than being bused across the highway to the Bidwell School in Fairway Park. The only way a child can go out of district, said Hardie, is to have permission of La Vista officials. That applies to all neighboring districts, not just Decoto; and permission is given only in emergency cases, he said. So far, he said, no parents in the 240 families who live in the El Rancho Verde portion of La Vista District had applied to send their children to the Decoto School.

[The Daily Review of August 24, 1957 reported:](#)

"As the September 3, opening day of school edged closer, the tension between La Vista and Decoto School Districts over the school of El Rancho Verde children in South Hayward becomes livelier. A parent group has obtained 200 names on a petition to move the section from La Vista to Decoto School District.

Many of the parents are urging La Vista to let their children go to Decoto schools while the petition is being considered by county school authorities. La Vista is running a holding action to prevent the children from migrating south.

Supt. Clarence Hardie said yesterday he has received "several applications" from parents for permission to send their children to Decoto District's nearby El Rancho Verde School. But he said that he has told most of them that he will recommend against allowing the change when the La Vista Board considers the requests at the next meeting. Hardie said most of the parents want to send their children to the other school to avoid La Vista's double sessions.

While La Vista's schools will be overcrowded this year, Supt. Hardie said that a new school due for completion during the term will alleviate that situation. But the Decoto School will have empty classrooms, and it is within easy walking distance of at least 65 La Vista children.

All sides agree that even if the boundary is approved, it will not become effective until at least next summer. La Vista's parent's demand an immediate solution to the knotty problem. They assert they are not eager to send their children out on a busy highway day after day. They seem to discount that seventh and eighth graders might have to cross the same highway to attend Decoto's Barnard School.

Decoto Supt. Harold Schoenfeld says his district is willing to accept any of the children who wish to attend, but pointed out that permission of La Vista School District is required by law. Schoenfeld said that 17 students have been registered to date, but their names have been placed on a waiting list pending favorable action by the La Vista Board on their applications.

"We can't help it if Decoto has overbuilt its schools," Hardie said, referring to the comparison between La Vista's double sessions and Decoto's empty classrooms. He added that teachers have already been hired by La Vista and arrangements made for buses to take care of the El Rancho students. Even if there is only one child still attending his school the

buses must pick him up according to a recent board ruling which forbids letting children walk along or across the highway he said."

County supervisors set 10 a.m., November 21, 1957, for a public hearing on the La Vista - Decoto School boundary dispute. The center of the dispute is the Caleb Court area, which is in the Valle Vista School (La Vista School District) attendance area. Last year half of the residents signed petitions indicating they would prefer sending their children to the Decoto School District. But that sentiment has changed now that it has been announced the La Vista School District would build the Garin School.

The La Vista and Decoto School boundary dispute in the El Rancho Verde tract of South Hayward would be settled in a special election of January 7, 1958. That was decided yesterday by county supervisors after a hearing on the matter. The issue involves about 283 families and 121 children in the La Vista portion of the homes tract. Voting will be limited to residents of that area. Mrs. Joan Hineman, 7868 Janice Avenue, spoke for petitioners who want their children to go to Decoto Schools. Mrs. J.R. George, 7853 Janice Avenue, spoke for parents opposing the petition.

During this time, the Treeview Improvement Club also had several issues of importance to them. Chief among them was the new telephone service from Pacific Telephone and Telegraph. In mid-February, the Treeview Improvement Club retained an attorney to direct its fight against PT&T's decision to include the south Hayward area telephones in the Decoto exchange. Roger Pillsbury, president, said hiring of legal counsel had been approved overwhelmingly by the general membership, which wishes to be listed in the Hayward area telephone book instead of the Dumbarton Exchange of Alvarado and Decoto.

The Treeview Improvement Club, would also invite Assemblyman Carlos Bee to hear resident's protests, Pillsbury added. S.D. Smith, Hayward city manager will address the meeting. Officers elected at this week's Treeview Improvement Club meeting were:

President	Art DeMamiel, Hillview Crest
1 <sup>st</sup> VP:	Dee James, Fairway Park
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP:	Victor Fabian, El Rancho Verde
Secretary:	Gladys Strain, El Rancho Verde
Treasurer:	John Hineman, El Rancho Verde

At a meeting with PT&T officials the Treeview Improvement Club members were told that their efforts to become part of the Hayward Exchange and Hayward Telephone book were hopeless.

Another topic dear to the hearts of the Treeview Improvement Club was traffic lights. The improvement club voted unanimously on March 15, 1957, to draw up a resolution seeking Hayward City Council action on the widening of Niles Highway, and installation of signal lights at the entrance to Fairway Park. The vote came after Floyd L. Spark, publisher of *The Daily Review* outlined courses of action which could be taken on the matter.

It did not take long for the Treeview Improvement Club to receive a reply on their lobbying effort to have Mission Boulevard widened and a traffic light installed at the entrance to Fairway Park. Hayward City Manager S.D. Smith said the State Highway Dept. will install a traffic signal at Tennyson Road & Mission Boulevard. The state turned thumbs down for a traffic signal at the Fairway-El Rancho Verde area despite heavy pressure from the City of Hayward and the Treeview Improvement Club. What irked the Treeview people and City of Hayward officials the most, was the installation of traffic lights at Decoto Road and Mission Boulevard, which is far less heavily used than either Tennyson or Fairway.



The year 1957 saw Alvarado and Decoto actively courted by Fremont with growing interest in the area by the City of Hayward. At the beginning of 1957, Fremont was eager to impress upon Decoto and Alvarado the benefits of annexing to their city. Frank Borghi, of the Union City Steering Committee, wanted to set up a meeting with Fremont officials for mid-January, but Fremont City Manager Robert Coop wanted to hold the meeting after receiving a survey report from Public Affairs Research, Inc. (PAR) of Oakland California. The survey was a report on the advantages and disadvantages of an independent Union City.

At this same time the City of Hayward had also cast an eye toward the Alvarado-Decoto area, entertaining hopes that if they merge, they will do so by annexing to the northernmost city, Hayward.

Meanwhile the Union City Chamber of Commerce, vowing to become a force in the incorporation fight, elected new directors at the end of January, 1957. They were:

From Decoto:

Frank Borghi Jr.	Mrs. Charles Spencer	Bernie Joseph	Oscar Dowe
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From Alvarado:

Frank George	Wilbert Hendricks	J.A. Ratekin	Fred Brown
William Machado	Mike Salido		

On February 16, 1957, The Daily Review ran an article on the City of Fremont:

"Fremont City Councilmen pulled all the stops yesterday in a drive to woo the Decoto-Alvarado area into sprawling Fremont. Councilmen endorsed a sales campaign advanced by Councilman Michael Overacker that Fremont would try to:

- (1) Increase the city council from 5 to 7 representatives to accommodate each of the sought communities.
- (2) Change council member selection from at large, to district, so each of the new communities and the five towns that already make up Fremont would be equally represented in the Fremont City Council.

Both of these moves, however, would be contingent on how Fremont's desire to annex the proposed Union City area is received by residents of Alvarado and Decoto. Those sales points, and the promise of lower taxes, will be advanced by Fremont City Mgr. Robert Coop before proponents of Union City, Monday at 8 p.m., in Decoto's Barnard School.

The area of 24 square miles between Fremont and Hayward had 1,830 registered voters at last September's count. It has an estimated \$12 million property valuation and about 6,750 people.

The area faces four alternatives; annexing to Fremont, annexing to Hayward, forming Union City on its own, or staying the way it is.

If Fremont gets the area, that would make Fremont 123 square miles with an estimated 40,000 people, and an assessed valuation of \$65 million. Coop will present the Fremont case Monday by outlining aspects of a \$990 Public Affairs Research, Inc. report on an annexation move that would benefit both Union City and Fremont.

Coop says figures show Union City residents would have only a 76¢ property tax rate under Fremont, but would have to pay an 87¢ tax rate if Union City incorporated. This 87¢ figure

has grown from the 78¢ tax found necessary to support an incorporated Union City in PAR's earlier survey for the Union City Steering Committee.

Costs of governmental administration, policing, and fire services have caused the estimated incorporated tax rate to rise almost 10¢ since that earlier report, Coop pointed out. This would hint that it could go as high as 90¢ or \$1 within the next six months, he warned."

[The Daily Review February 19, 1957:](#)

"Fremont last night offered Alvarado and Decoto residents a rosy future, and little else, if the area would annex to Fremont. The rosy future was the main theme of City Manager F. Robert Coop's annexation presentation before the Union City Steering Committee and other interested observers.

About 50 persons gathered at Barnard School and heard Coop extend the Fremont City Council's "warm invitation" to residents of the Decoto-Alvarado 24-square mile, 7,000-population area to annex to Fremont's 99-square miles. He based his views on what the Fremont city of the future would be able to offer Decoto-Alvarado area and the findings of an annexation survey prepared by Public Affairs Research, Inc. Differing cost and revenue figures in that report and one prepared by PAR on a proposal to form a Union City of this area drew questions from the audience.

Coop expressed confidence in the report but asserted "the figures are not ours. I won't say I stand back of it, but I think it is comparatively good." His closing comment was a proposal that the Union City Steering Committee name a study group to find its own facts concerning annexation to Fremont.

Steering Committee Chairman Frank Borghi said his group would consider the study group proposal at the next meeting. Borghi named a five-man committee to study the three alternatives facing the area, annex to Fremont, annex to Hayward, or incorporate as Union City.

Named to the committee were:

Oscar Dowe:	V.P. of Pacific States Steel Corp.
Edward Dana:	Holly Sugar Corp. executive of San Mateo
George Hocking:	Alvarado hardware store owner
Keith Whipple:	Decoto rancher
Dr. Harold Schoenfeld:	Supt. of the Decoto School District.

Notably absent from committee membership was representation from the Decoto Home Owners Association, members of which attended the meeting. Borghi said the Steering Committee likely would reach decisions on the questions in meetings closed to outsiders and the press. Members would discuss things more freely he said...

Coop's presentation follows a talk before the group by S.D. Smith, Hayward city manager telling what Hayward has to offer the area. Coop conceded that Hayward has more services now to offer Decoto-Alvarado, but he said that would change in the future."

Suddenly Alvarado and Decoto had a choice other than incorporation or annexation to the City of Fremont. The City of Hayward had taken a liking to their two southern neighbor towns. The Hayward City Council worked up a three-page "love Letter" proposing to the Alvarado-Decoto people.

But Alvarado was playing hard to get. She was making eyes over the fence at little Newark, a city completely surrounded by Fremont, why Newark can't even get close enough to touch boundaries with Alvarado-Decoto.

Newark Mayor George Silliman, as well as Councilman Leonard Lucio and Louis Milani, reported they've been contacted by leaders of the unincorporated territory who want to make sweet talk. "Gee, we're rather popular," said the mayor, and appointed City Attorney Charlie Snow to look up the law of annexation of lands that don't touch.

The big City of Fremont, which surrounds the small City of Newark, had hopes of annexing the Alvarado-Decoto area, which was still unincorporated, didn't know whether to take Newark's competitive maneuvers seriously or not. Newark, you know, told its City Attorney Charles Snow to look into the possibility of beating Fremont's time with Alvarado-Decoto, even though Newark isn't close enough to touch.

So Attorney Snow, tongue in cheek, reported the other day that Newark could do it by acquiring a mile-long corridor through Fremont linking Newark with the open land beyond, and annex the new territory. Fremont did not know what to make of the Newark offer. Especially after Mayor George Silliman told the council he didn't want the matter dropped, and made it a "standing project" for Attorney Snow.

On March 27, 1957, the Union City Steering Committee ousted two of its members for initiating a new petition to incorporate Alvarado and Decoto (but not the Treeview annex) into the city of New Haven. Wilbert Hendricks and Kenneth Garcia signed their names as chairman and secretary, respectively, of the New Haven Steering Committee on a petition filed yesterday with the Alameda County Supervisors.

When told he and Hendricks had been ousted by chairman Frank Borghi Jr., Chairman of the Union City Steering Committee, Garcia retorted, "He can't kick us out, we quit! The reason we filed the petition was because the Union City group wasn't doing anything and we thought we would expedite matters." Garcia said he and Hendricks are "not interested in the Treeview annex. We just want to preserve what we have," Garcia said.

The New Haven boundaries include all of the area in the proposed Union City incorporation movement except the 2,400 acre Treeview annex set for a court hearing April 14, 1957, in San Francisco.

Borghi said his organization would not give up the Treeview annexation now or in the future. He said the territory is part of the proposed Union City area politically and otherwise. Borghi said he has ordered attorney Leroy Broun to draw up a protest to the New Haven Movement for presentation to the board of supervisors when the New Haven petition comes up.

[On April 6, 1957, The Daily Review reported:](#)

"On April 5, 1957, the Fremont City Councilmen decided to stop "knocking at the door" of Decoto-Alvarado residents and ask them to decide now whether they are interested in annexing to Fremont. Asserting they should "rise above all this petty bickering," councilmen agreed to send a letter to the Union City Steering Committee asking for a decision.

Fremont Council's letter will renew their warm invitation for the combined Alvarado-Decoto area to join the city. At the same time, it will say the city wants to proceed with its own growth and development plans. If Union City is considering becoming part of this program, the councilmen want to include it now, if it is not they will drop the entire idea. "We are not

in competition with Hayward or any other special interests that want to cut up the pie," City Manager Robert Coop said.

Mrs. Winifred Bendel, Fremont city council member, said the committee probably could not reach a decision until the Treeview annexation suit is settled. The suit involves some 2,400-acres Hayward is attempting to annex and is on the State Appellate Court Docket next Tuesday in San Francisco.

Leroy Broun, attorney for Union City, said it will take at least six to eight months to straighten out the litigation. He added the recent application to incorporate a "New Haven" city in the Decoto-Alvarado area was filed only to test the Union City petition's legality and will further delay a decision. "It would be a tragic mistake for Union City to incorporate on its own," according to Fremont City Councilman Bruce Michael. He said the council's letter may provoke comment from some of the many people not represented on the Union City Steering Committee. Added Michael, "We may find some interested in joining Fremont and others favoring Hayward." Michael said there may be a "logical plan and boundary," which could take the two areas in both directions."

Meanwhile the New Haven Steering Committee made up of Kenneth Garcia and Wilbert Hendricks forged ahead with their incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto. When offered help by the City of Fremont, Kenneth Garcia said "We're not interested. We are very well satisfied with the way we have planned our city. We don't need or want any outside help."

[The Daily Review reported in its April 23rd issue:](#)

City of Hayward move on April 23, 1957 takes all by surprise!

"Hayward moved back into the disputed Treeview area today as it acted to annex 1,132 acres south of the city.

Hayward yesterday posted with the County Boundary Commission a map showing the proposed annex bounded by Southern Pacific tracks on the east, Whipple Road, the Eastshore Freeway and Alquire Road. The area, described as prime industrial land by city Manager S.D. Smith, and called the "South Hayward Industrial Annex," was assessed at \$487,910. Smith said the action was taken after several landowners asked to have their land annexed.

Although Smith refused to name them, the landowners included Western Pacific railroad, which has bought land along its tracks that cut through the area. Another landowner and the only industry in this proposed annex is American Pipe and Construction Company, whose manager, Earl Jackson, heads the Hayward Chamber of Commerce Industrial Committee.

Left out of the proposed annex are U.S. Pipe & Foundry Co. plant on Whipple Road and the Holly Sugar Co. at Alvarado. Both were included in the original Treeview annex and were opposed to joining Hayward. The 2,400-acre Treeview annex was started in 1955, was invalidated by the Superior Court and is now on appeal by Hayward in the appellate court."

The first few days brought a flurry of activity to Hayward's new move into Treeview. (Although officially called the "South Hayward Industrial Annex," it was still referred to as the "Treeview Annex" by the newspapers.) On May 1, 1957, the New Haven Steering Committee announced a mass meeting to get reactions of residents to the New Haven incorporation movement.

The Union City Steering Committee held a closed meeting to consider Hayward's most recent move in to Treeview. The committee had no other comment at that time. On May 2, 1957, the State

District Court of Appeals held that Judge Mosbacher's original ruling on the 2,400 acre Treeview Annex nullification was valid because under the Act of 1913, there may be no annexation of uninhabited areas within the whole of an annexation. Hayward was expected to quit the original Treeview Annex and to pursue the new 1,132-acre Treeview Annex announced on April 23rd.

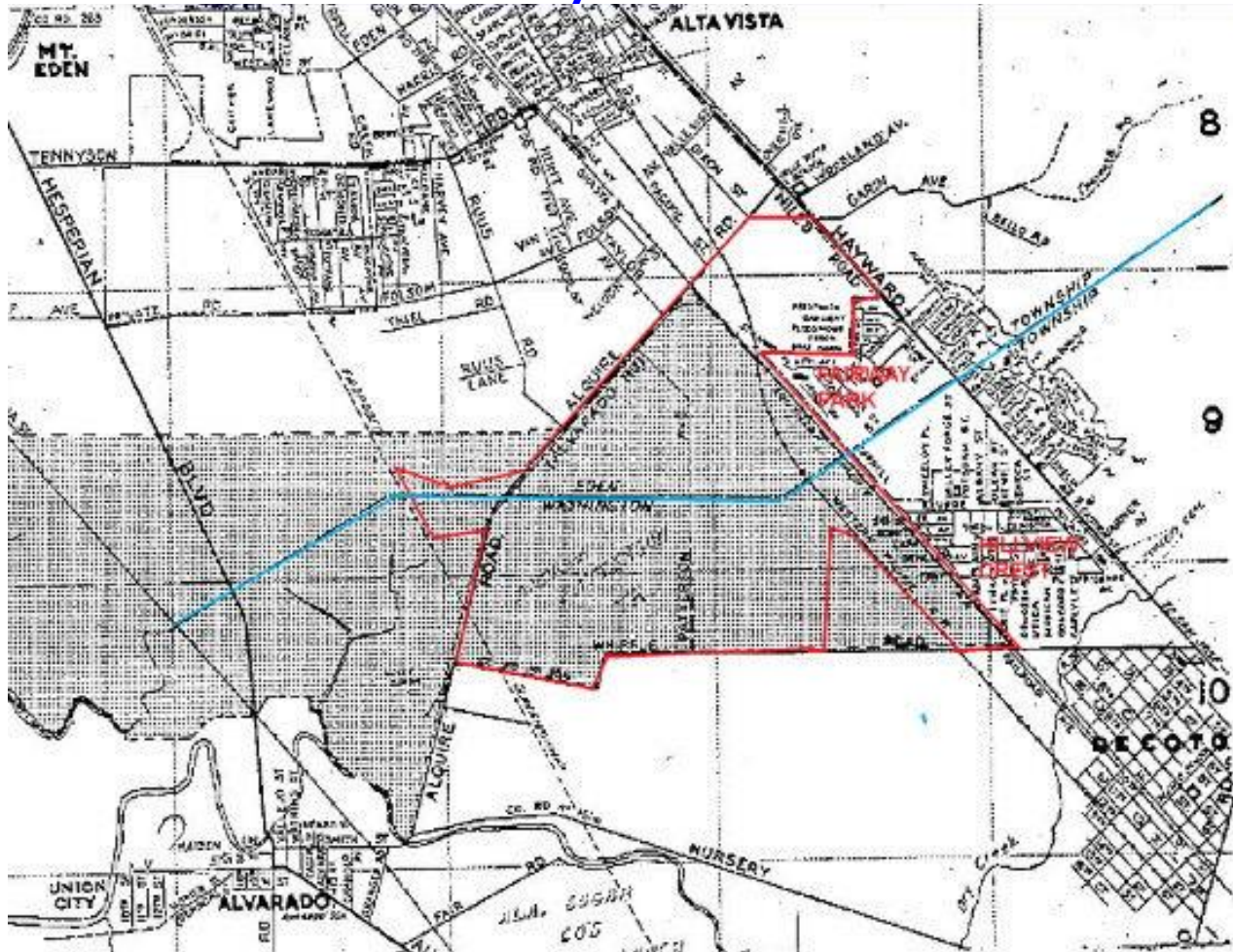
On May 4, 1957, the New Haven Steering Committee elected new officers. Unlike the Union City Steering Committee, which is seeking to incorporate land also claimed by annexation by the City of Hayward in the Treeview Annex, the New Haven Incorporation seeks only the towns of Alvarado & Decoto.

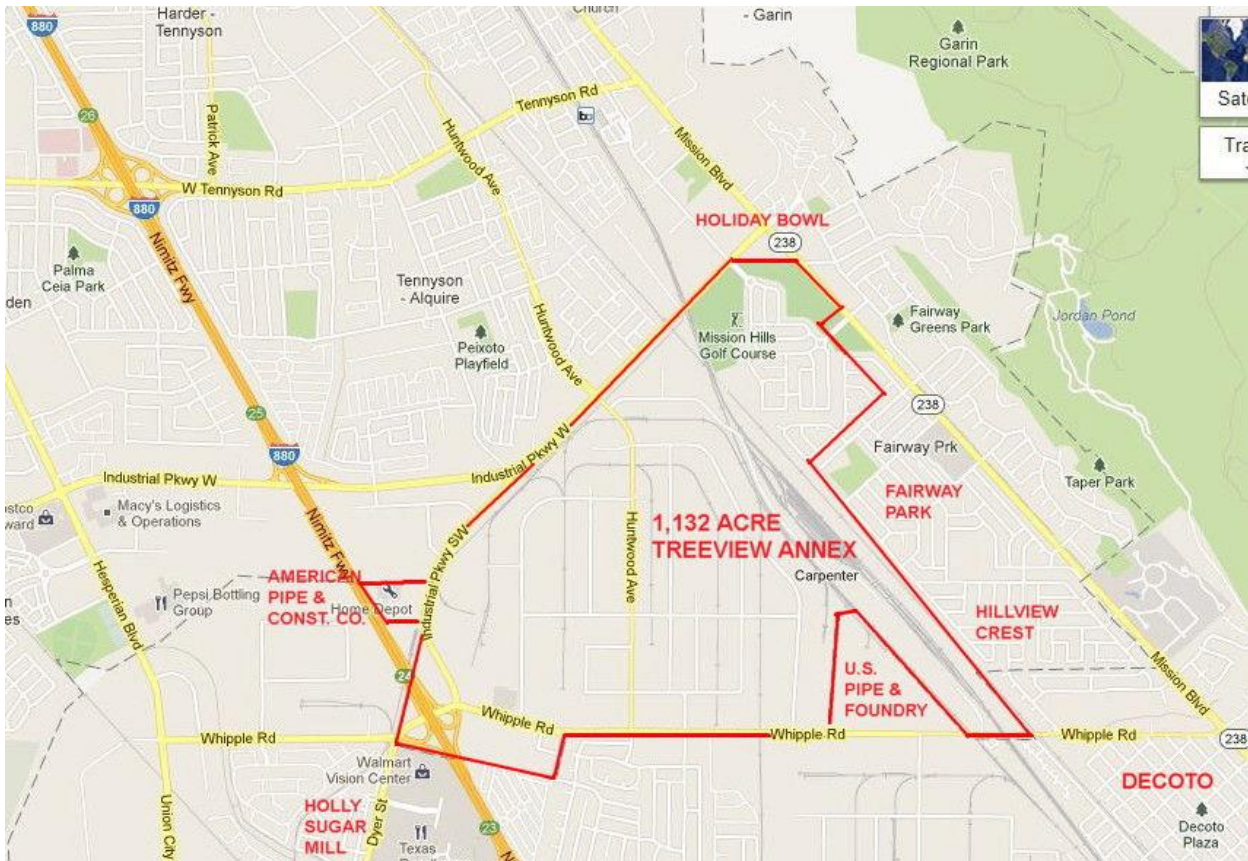
Officers chosen for the New Haven Steering Committee were:

- President: Wilbert Hendricks
- Secretary: Kenneth Garcia
- Treasurer: Oscar Dowe
- Members: George Hocking            Mike Rodriguez            Herbert Harrold
- Segundo Diaz            Joe Seoane                Ray Orozco
- George Vargas            Bill Machado            Dr. John Bettencourt.

Dowe, Hocking, Harrold and Rodriguez are also members of the Union City Steering Committee.

### The South Hayward Industrial Annex





In the first map above (black & white, from *The Daily Review*) the shaded area represents the original 2,300 Treeview Annex as envisioned by the City of Hayward in February 1955. The red outline over the shading represents the 1,132 acre South Hayward Industrial Annex as just proposed. The blue line through the center represents the Eden-Washington Township boundary line. The second map (in color, from *Google*), shows the enlarged area with street names. Note the notch on Whipple Road that cuts out the U.S. Pipe & Foundry Company, and also note that the annex does not dive down toward Alvarado to annex the Holly Sugar Mill. Note also that there is a finger that juts out from Industrial Boulevard to take in the American Pipe & Construction Company. Holly Sugar and U.S. Pipe were very vocal critics of the City of Hayward's first annexation attempt. So, on the second attempt the City of Hayward just side-stepped or bypassed them.

[Reports \*The Daily Review\* from a May 9, 1957 meeting:](#)

"Two "disinterested" spokesmen last night used what sounded like scare tactics in urging Alvarado-Decoto residents to incorporate into what would amount to a city of smokestacks. The men asserted high property taxes would result if the area does not "take care of industry."

Some of the figures quoted brought gasps from some 50 persons at a meeting called by the backers of the proposed city of New Haven. One of the men, Maurice Cox, said he thought a well-planned community of 80% industry and 20% residential would be a good thing. Cox, an Oakland investment banker, claimed he qualified as a disinterested outsider and had appeared before the group because "I am civic minded" and looking out for the good of the whole county. He added, however, that a group of us have considerable land in the area, which could be sold to industry or gotten rid of in an "unplanned, hodgepodge community."

Both Cox and Abe Doty, an Oakland industrial realtor who lives in Orinda, said large residential developments are a drain on the community. Cox said that each family that moves in is a "liability," and causes increased taxes with its demand for schools and city

services. Both men lashed out at Hayward as a community with too many homes and not enough industry.

Sheldon Glatt, of the Western Pacific Railroad, told the group his firm owns property in the area and has been looking toward Hayward. He said Hayward city officials have promised to service the land with water and utilities. Glatt added, however, that if Western Pacific could get a commitment from New Haven on water and sewage, the company might reconsider and go along with the proposed city.

Steering committee Secretary Kenneth Garcia promptly informed Glatt he would try to arrange a meeting with Union Sanitary District directors to see what could be done. Elvin Rose, Alvarado Sanitary District director, told the audience his district was preparing to launch an engineering survey of the industrially zoned area to determine what it would cost to service it. He said the survey would also determine the assessed valuation of the area and give the district a basis for future planning.

Oscar Dowe, committee member, told the gathering the city could operate on a tax rate as low as 30¢. The budget he suggested, would call for expenditures of \$323,000 with \$17,000 set aside for reserve. This \$340,000 budget would call for a \$1 tax rate. If however, the city starts its own police force like Newark, instead of contracting with the Sheriff's Dept., \$67,000 would be trimmed off the budget and make the 30-cent figure possible. The tax rate is based on an assessed valuation of "less than \$10 million," Dowe stated.

At the close of this meeting Dowe called for a show of hands from the crowd on whether to annex to Hayward, annex to Fremont, or incorporation. The New Haven Steering Committee has scheduled another mass meeting for 7:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Decoto Elementary School."

The New Haven Steering Committee began circulating petitions on May 13, 1957, for incorporation of the Alvarado-Decoto area. Committee secretary Kenneth Garcia said 30 to 40 petitions will be circulated in an effort to sign up 51 percent of the property owners favoring the incorporation movement. Garcia also said the committee will ask the board of supervisors this week for an extension of time to complete circulation of the petitions. The incorporation petition, filed March 27, 1957, with the supervisors will become void if not renewed this week according to Garcia.

The beginning of June started off with the City of Hayward deciding to abandon the court battle to overturn a ruling invalidating the 1,955 annexation of the Treeview Area near Decoto. The City Council voted to instruct the city attorney not to ask for a hearing to appeal a State Appellate Court ruling that the annexation is invalid. The city had until Tuesday to appeal, but councilman Frank Biggs moved for the abandonment of the legal move. Biggs, and Mayor John Purchio, a lawyer, said that they felt after a study of the court interpretation that the high court was correct and that the city should not combat the decision further.

The New Haven Steering Committee indicated it will make no difference to them as the City of New Haven had no aspirations to annex any part of Hayward's claim. This leaves the City of New Haven free to pursue their incorporation plan. New Haven Steering Committee Chairman Ken Garcia said "Hayward has annexation designs upon large sections" of this so-called Union City territory. He noted that Hayward's declaration leaves the Holly Sugar Corp. and U.S. Pipe & Foundry free to join New Haven's incorporation movement "if they wish."

These two industries were in the Treeview Annex and joined in the court fight against Hayward.

Union City backers, on the other hand, planned to go after the recent 1,132 acre Treeview Annex plan of Hayward. Frank Borghi cited that Union City backers have been refiling incorporation petitions for the last two years and they feel that their claim will precede that of Hayward's.

From *The Daily Review* of July 9, 1957:

The Union City Steering Committee members agreed last night that they are at a temporary impasse in their incorporation efforts. A suggestion to hold another mass meeting right away was turned down because there "is nothing new we can tell Alvarado-Decoto residents."

Chairman Frank Borghi asserted the future of the area depends on an engineering survey being made for developing sanitary facilities. If sewerage the area is unfeasible from economic standpoint, industry will not be attracted. And it is necessary to have the industry to support the proposed 23-square mile city, Borghi said.

Other committee members took the attitude of "let's wait and see what happens before we throw up our hands." The engineering survey, being financed by the Alvarado Sanitary Dist. is expected to be completed by August 1, 1957. Meanwhile a six-member committee was appointed to find a way of financing incorporation activities. Kenneth Garcia, Wilbert Hendricks, Oscar Dowe, John Ratekin, Johnny Sanchez, and George Hocking were the appointees.

If the court battle with Hayward over the 1,132-acre Industrial Annex goes to the California Supreme Court, the cost of the fight will be about \$3,000. John Ratekin, of the Holly Sugar Corp. pointed out this amount doesn't include the \$6,000 to \$8,000 needed for actual incorporation.

In other action, the committee approved \$100 for payment of a \$5,000 bond the court required the area to put up pending the outcome of the suit against Hayward.

Flood Control was again an issue in 1957, with the October sale of \$600,000 in bonds for Zone 5 (Newark, Centerville, Niles and Decoto) to restore much of the Alameda Creek channel, installation of a line between Cherry Road and Mayhews Landing Road, and improvement of Patterson Creek. The present bond sale would provide funds for installation of a number of storm drains, improvement of Dry Creek, and acquisition of rights of way for additional portions of the comprehensive project.

Alvarado's antiquated sanitary system was receiving more attention in 1957, as their system was expected to carry its own weight in the incorporation fight. Elvin Rose, sanitary board member, told *The Daily Review* that the Alvarado Sanitary District is considering an expansion program to include all of the Alvarado-Decoto area not within the Union Sanitary District. The board has no plans for annexing to or merging with the Union Sanitary District, Rose stated. These possibilities faded when Union Sanitary District failed to include any projects for Alvarado-Decoto area in its \$8 million expansion program, he said.

The Union Sanitary District was also criticized by the Union City Steering committee for failure to propose any projects for the industrially zoned Whipple Road area near Decoto."

On May 14, 1957, the Union Sanitary District directors cleared away an obstacle to Hayward's proposed annexation of 1,132-acres south of that city. Despite opposition from Union City and New Haven forces, the directors of Union Sanitary District said that they cannot sewer a key 150-acre segment of Hayward's proposed annex owned by the Western Pacific Railroad.



Frank Borghi Jr. and Kenneth Garcia, Union City and New Haven representatives, said the action, if repeated, would allow a "vulture-like" Hayward to grab industrial land near Decoto and Alvarado. The 150-acre piece lies north of Whipple Road between Alvarado and Decoto. Borghi and Garcia asked the district to annex the land to keep it from Hayward, but directors said servicing the area would be too costly.

From the pages of *The Daily Review*, July 22, 1957:

"Washington Township officials will get together Monday, July 29th, to go over the proposed \$6 million Union Sanitary District bond issue. Indications are that more than one session will be needed before the communities involved see eye to eye and agree to endorse the bond issue. District Engineer Raymond A. Boege, and sanitary board members will be on hand to answer questions.

Members of the Union City Steering Committee are opposed to any bond issue. They appealed to the board at a recent meeting for a line to serve potential industrial development in the Whipple Road and Alquire Road areas near Decoto (Alquire Road was that portion of today's Dyer Street that ran from Smith Street on the south; north and then east to Mission Blvd on what is today's Industrial Blvd). They still have a bitter taste in their mouths after a flat turndown by the board, according to some steering committee members.

Newark has questioned an industrial pipeline that would run through the area Fremont has zoned for industry. The line would cut through the unincorporated "island" between Newark and Fremont and run southward to the Irvington treatment plant near Warm Springs.

Newark officials have objected to running the line through that area because it is not a part of the sanitary district. And they've exhibited further unhappiness because the sanitary board has failed to make it clear how the line is financed. A Newark delegation showed up at one sanitary board meeting and made it clear the line should not be financed by a general obligation bond. They felt instead it should be financed by those hooking onto it and who would directly benefit from it.

A third position has been taken by the City of Fremont with Mayor John L. Stevenson's flat declaration that the bond issue will not be supported in his city unless that industrial land is served. Fremont councilmen will be given an advance briefing on the sewer expansion plans at a work session scheduled for Friday.

On August 21, 1957, the directors of the Alvarado Sanitary District resolved to seek federal aid to help finance a sewer expansion program that would service potential industry. The plan, if successfully developed, would further the aims of the proposed city of New Haven, which would include Decoto and Alvarado and much of the surrounding territory.

A preliminary study of an expanded district showed the need for eleven miles of sewer mains and new treatment plant facilities at the cost of \$1,095,000, said directors. Directors would apply through the State Water Pollution Board for federal funds to help finance serving an additional six square miles, which the directors plan to annex to the present 400 acre district.

Board President Elvin Rose said last night that owners of "about 40 per cent of the property" in the area have indicated they favor annexation. Only two persons were against it and they were small land owners, according to the board president. The area would overlap the Hayward Industrial annex in the controversial Treeview area. The industrial annex has been challenged in court.

Rose said the engineers will be finished with their preliminary study within 30 days, and at that time the board will take the necessary steps to start annexation. When the annexation is complete,

the district will then hire a firm to make financial study of the district to see if it is economically feasible to undertake the project outlined by the engineer. Directors say they don't want to spend money for this study until the annex action is complete.

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, November 21, 1957:](#)

"Expansion of the Alvarado Sanitary District to more than nine times its present size has the full backing of the Union City Chamber of Commerce. Chamber members, meeting with district directors last night, endorsed the \$1,095,000 expansion program outlined last August by District Consultant Harry N. Jenks.

A spokesman for the chamber said members would circulate annexation petitions among property owners of practically all the unincorporated land between Fremont and Hayward. If successful, the annexation would add a total 3,840-acres to the 400-acre district and increase its assessed value from \$680,000 to \$3,850,000.

Union City proponents believe the expansion will clear the largest hurdle blocking their move to incorporate the Alvarado-Decoto area into a new Southern Alameda County city. Fremont's Union Sanitary District has refused to provide sewer service to the area because of engineering difficulties, and the only other alternative would be annexation to the city of Hayward.

Lack of adequate sewer facilities is currently holding up development of 6.6-square mile area, which has population potential of around 50,000, according to the Jenk's report. Union City backers also hope good sewer service will attract industries to the presently agricultural area.

At the end of November a panel of sanitary engineers concluded that the waste disposal problems in southern Alameda County are no nearer a solution today than they were a year ago. The Alvarado Sanitary District, although there are expansion plans for the future in the works, was no better at the end November than they were in January.

The *Daily Review* and *The Oakland Tribune* printed various articles and editorials throughout 1957 in an effort to educate voters in southern Alameda County on the efforts of their civic leaders in Alvarado and Decoto and their design for the new Union City. Here are these articles:

**[Annexation: Hayward Perspective:](#)**

[The Daily Review, February 8, 1957:](#)

"The proposed Union City incorporation stands at the crossroads. The small group which launched an incorporation drive is reportedly unchanged in its outlook; the tax figures contained in a study financed by that group are under question by others.

The study contains some conclusions which depend on mental agility as well as arithmetic. As an illustration, it declared that a projected city tax rate of 78¢ would not be that at all. Since the 78¢ rate includes a Decoto Fire District tax of 31¢, the net rate for that part of the new city would be only 47¢, the study asserts.

In Alvarado with a fire district of 20¢, the study says the net city rate would be only 58¢. However, residents of both communities would find themselves paying the actual rate, not the so called "net" rate. The latter is a fiction, which would dissolve with the first tax bill. Whether the 78¢ rate proves out in fact depends on the accuracy of other conclusions arrived at by the same researchers.

Meanwhile, authors of the Union City incorporation study have completed a similar study on what would happen by annexation to Fremont. It was paid for by the City & Chamber of Commerce of Fremont, and will be presented to the Union City Steering Committee next week, a stranger in presumably hostile territory. Word of a forthcoming study, reportedly dealing with annexation to Hayward, has also created a "wait & see" attitude among other incorporation proponents.

Implicit in the situation is the suggestion that incorporation is losing its first, fresh appeal to all but the original proponents; and that status quo or annexation to Fremont or Hayward may be the final outcome.

### **Hayward Chamber Plans Big Area Study:**

[The Daily Review, February 13, 1957:](#)

The Hayward Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a study of governmental consolidation in the area between San Leandro and Fremont. Chamber board members authorized the project yesterday after President George P. Oakes, recommended it as a means to end inter-community jealousies and competition, which have been hurting Southern Alameda County's development chances.

The committee will not interfere in any way with current annexation or incorporation movements, even though it will study areas where such projects are going on, Oakes said. Areas included would be Hayward, Ashland, San Lorenzo, Washington Manor, Mulford Gardens, Cherryland, Mt. Eden, Alvarado, and Decoto (of those, San Lorenzo and Alvarado-Decoto have incorporation movements, and Washington Manor, Mulford Gardens, and Ashland have San Leandro annexation plans underway). The consolidation could be one large city, a number of smaller cities or an amalgamation of service district functions in varying degrees, Oakes suggested.

### **Hayward's Open Letter to Union City:**

[The Daily Review, February 25, 1957:](#)

Hayward has opened a bid for annexation of Alvarado and Decoto with an open letter to leaders of the two communities. Emphasizing services and facilities Hayward has now, the letter has gone out to the five-member committee Union City Steering Committee studying the alternatives of annexation to Fremont or Hayward, or incorporation, the Decoto and Alvarado Chambers of Commerce and the Decoto's Homeowners Association. No specific boundaries are mentioned.

The Union City Steering Committee has been working toward incorporation of Alvarado, Decoto, and a large area of surrounding land. The surrounding land, amounting to some 1,900-acres, was included in the Treeview annexation to Hayward, which was nullified in Alameda County Superior Court, and is now tied up in appeal litigation. Decoto and Alvarado themselves were not included in the annexation.

Hayward's letter point to 280 municipal employees performing city services, fire stations, police station and other municipal plants now available and the current property tax base of \$55,400,000, due to go up \$20,000,000 in the next two years.

The present Hayward tax rate is \$1.61 per \$100, the letter points out, but sections of the two communities with their own water and sewers would have to pay only \$1.24. Fire District tax rates would be eliminated. The average Decoto resident would pay only \$23.25 per year in city taxes, the average in Alvarado resident only \$31. The newly adopted charter gives Hayward home rule, the letter says.

Looking to Hayward's future, the letter cited the master plan for a balanced community, with industrial development being encouraged, commercial development already large and residential development "phenomenal."

### **Hayward Courts Union City:**

[The Oakland Tribune, February 27, 1957:](#)

The Hayward City Council is off wooing again. Not long ago, on the morning after Hayward certified the Harder-Tennyson annexation to the city by a slim two votes, they sent a task force of officials into the new area to celebrate Annexation Day.

Now they're sending mass notes to voters in the unincorporated Alvarado-Decoto areas. People in this chunk of green land between the end of Hayward and the beginning of Fremont have been studying the merits of either joining Fremont, or forming a city of their own.

But Hayward is going to be heard. They've sent off three pages of propaganda to the Alvarado-Decoto Committee, the Decoto Homeowners Association, and the Decoto and Alvarado Chambers of Commerce advising that Hayward is planning a "Balanced Community."

"Becoming a part of the City of Hayward is highly desirable..." goes their almost-singing commercial.

### **Backroom Boys:**

[The Daily Review, April 5, 1957:](#)

Remember that New Haven petition recently presented to the board of supervisors? You know, the proposal to incorporate Alvarado and Decoto under the name New Haven, but excluding the Treeview annex?

It all started when the Union City committee found its neighbors were getting mighty interested in joining Hayward. A quick glance at the map showed Treeview and more acreage might annex north, even if Hayward lost the court case.

So the boys in the back room at the steel plant got busy and came up with a little scheme. That's how New Haven was born, to stop Decoto and Alvarado from joining Hayward. Two staunch Union City men were selected to carry the petition to Oakland, and then were "fired" from the Union City Steering Committee. It was all part of the window dressing. Having retreated to a new line of defense, Union City forces are waiting to see what Hayward will do.

### **Hayward Annex Benefit:**

[The Daily Review, April 24, 1957:](#)

Alvarado and Decoto residents could save 10 years, and millions of dollars by annexation to Hayward, according to City Manager S.D. Smith. Speaking to members of the Hayward Chamber of Commerce Planning & Development Committee yesterday, Smith said that Hayward could provide facilities for the two communities at a much lower cost than if they were to remain independent.

He cited a report prepared by the city staff at the request of the city council to prove his point. He and his staff prepared a report on Hayward expansion based on an approximate population of 150,000 at the end of ten years. Cost of providing expanded highway, sewage, water, fire, police, airport, civic, library and recreation facilities would be \$12

million. Smith said Alvarado and Decoto could be annexed without increasing the cost of facilities, because, much of the proposed expansion would take place in that general area.

**Daily Review Comment:**

[The Daily Review, May 1, 1957:](#)

Hayward water will soon be fluoridated. A final check of the equipment in the Decoto pumping station is underway, after which fluoridation will begin, probably late this month. A Decoto resident looked at the newly painted station at Decoto Road and Highway 9, and gave a snort when reminded the town had raised a furor over the \$250,000 installation some months back. "Why it's one of the best looking buildings in town," he said.

**Fast Shuffle:**

[The Daily Review, May 3, 1957:](#)

"Resistance forces" in the Decoto-Alvarado area are busily regrouping. Boys from the Union City backroom are being invited to the New Haven backroom. Watch for the same old names to suddenly pop up under New Haven banners. That's the same New Haven recently disowned by the Union City boys.

**Daily Review Insight:**

[The Daily Review, May 15, 1957](#)

Definition: No wonder Decoto and Alvarado residents are cool to the Union City-New Haven boys. Barkers for the latter Monday referred to Hayward as a "vulture" preying on Decoto and Alvarado, a not so direct way of saying those two growing communities are dead.

**Hayward is a Good Neighbor:**

[The Daily Review, June 21, 1957](#)

Hayward is practicing a good neighbor policy toward Decoto-Niles residents today. The city has allowed the Citizens Utility Company, a private organization serving that area with water to tap into the Hayward system during repairs.

In case of any emergency shortage during the repair work, Citizens Utility will be able to draw up to 200 gallons a minute from its tie-in to a Hayward hydrant on Castro Street (Mission Blvd) near Tamarack. If the neighbor utility uses any Hayward water, it will pay the regular rate. The tap-in itself has been granted as a courtesy.

**Sanitation District:**

[The Daily Review, September 10, 1957](#)

During the last two weeks, residents in Washington Township have been bothered by offensive odors from inadequate treatment of industrial sewage. The Alviso City Manager (Santa Clara County) has appealed to Governor Knight to have something done. An engineer for the Water Pollution Control Board says the south end of the bay is in "bad shape" from the sewage.

In past years, caustic winds from dump areas have changed the colors of houses in the Fremont region. These conditions dictate that steps need to be taken to correct the situation and that every care should be taken to see that it does not become worse.

Especially to be deplored then, then, is the plan of the Alvarado Sanitary District to expand its "disposal plant." The plant gives primary treatment to sewage. In layman's language, primary treatment consists of septic tanks. Solids are periodically removed from the tanks, liquids carrying a quantity of suspended solids are discharged into the bay or a channel, and odors are discharged into the atmosphere. In the case of the Alvarado Sanitary District, the liquid is discharged into Alameda Creek.

The district's plan to expand its facilities will change none of these details, except that additional raw sewage liquids will be dumped in the creek, and more gases will arise. If the Alvarado Sanitary District makes its proposed annexation, it will deliver a crippling blow to potential development of the area. It will have brought tremendous disadvantage to residents, both by property tax and air pollutants. And it will be smack against the problem of additionally heavy investment when the Water Pollution Board says it can no longer dump primary treated effluent into Alameda Creek or the Bay. The plan should be abandoned.

## **DECEMBER 1957**

The month of December 1957 changed all of the incorporation plans of New Haven and Union City. The question at the end of the month was not whether Union City or New Haven would incorporate,

but whether Decoto and Alvarado would remain unincorporated and free to choose their own direction.

[From the pages of \*The Oakland Tribune\*, December 10th:](#)

The City of Hayward won a Superior Court fight to annex 1,132-acres in the South Hayward Industrial area. Superior Court Judge Chris B. Fox sustained demurrers of the City of Hayward and the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to anti-annexation injunctions filed by the Committee for the Incorporation of Union City.

The Union City Incorporation Committee had filed suit June 16, 1957, getting a temporary injunction halting Hayward's move to annex the territory to the south. The committee also had asked the court to give exclusive jurisdiction to the Union City proceedings for incorporation, to order the board of supervisors to proceed on the Union City petition for incorporation, and to declare the South Hayward Industrial annexation invalid.

The ruling today, sustaining demurrers to these pleas, in effect eliminates them. The Union City fight was being waged by Frank Borghi Jr., chairman of the committee; Leslie Maffey, secretary; Kenneth Whipple\*<sup>\*</sup>; and Mrs. Christine M. Anderson, property owner.

\*Kenneth Whipple here would be either Kenneth Garcia or Keith Whipple.

They seek to incorporate about two-thirds of the 1,132-acres Hayward wants to annex. The area is part of a larger "Treeview Annex," which Hayward took up some months earlier, only to have it declared invalid. As proposed, Union City includes the present towns of Decoto and Alvarado, several large industries, and attractive sites for industrial expansion."

The Union City Steering Committee planned meetings to discuss the latest development from Judge Fox. Chief among the topics to be discussed is whether the committee will appeal Judge Fox's ruling.

Union City proponents voted on December 13, 1957, to appeal Judge Fox's invalidation of Union City's assertion that Hayward's 1,132-acre Treeview Annex invalid. But there was a definite note of pessimism among the members of the Union City Steering Committee. Members generally painted this picture facing the movement to make an industrial city out of Alvarado, Decoto and surrounding farmland. A lot of the residents were losing interest in incorporating the area in a separate city.

Two steering committee members, Wilbert Hendricks and Dr. John Bettencourt, advocated giving up the fight for incorporation and try to make the best possible deal to annex to Hayward. But others, led by Oscar Dowe, of Pacific States Steel, advocated an appeal, and a look a little longer attitude.

To face this new threat, the Union City Steering Committee merged with the New Haven Steering Committee for a united front. This eliminated New Haven, which tried to salvage Union City incorporation under a different name. Committee Chairman Frank Borghi appointed Oscar Dowe, George Hocking, Keith Whipple, and Elvin Rose as a subcommittee of four to supervise the court appeal and to draw up boundaries of Union City to present to the Board of Supervisors.

The new boundaries would delete about 350-acres of the 1,132-acres Hayward now has under its thumb in Washington Township, and in the proposed Union City boundaries. New boundaries, the steering committee members theorized, would tend to stop Hayward from further annexation if Hayward won the appeal.

Union City vowed to continue the fight, with the steering committee voting to take Judge Fox's decision to the District Court of Appeals. Maurice Cox, Alvarado property owner warned that Hayward could expand its annexation past Whipple Road thereby dividing Alvarado and Decoto and ending all hopes of incorporation.

On December 17, 1957, the death knell of the dying Union City incorporation movement was sounded when it was learned that a petition to annex 8.6 square miles of the Decoto area to Fremont. The parcel, bounded roughly by the Hayward City limits and Whipple Road on the north, Fremont City limits on the south, the Eastshore Freeway on the west and extended Fremont boundaries on the east, running north into Eden Township behind El Rancho Verde.

The petition to annex to Fremont was presented to the City of Fremont by a prominent member of the Union City Steering Committee, along with several other Decoto registered residents and property owners. In justifying their petition they claimed that Decoto and Fremont were tied together economically, historically, geographically, and traditionally.

Members of the Fremont City Council welcomed the Decoto petition for annexation with enthusiasm, passed it unanimously, and referred it for immediate action to the city planning commission. The Fremont City Planning Commission, in a special session, approved the proposed annexation, and instructed the director of public works Gunnison to file the boundary map with county commission as soon as possible. This was done on the morning of December 18, 1957.

Thus the Union City incorporation had received two telling blows. The first blow was the affirmation of Hayward's right in the Treeview industrial annex, and the second blow came when the Petition for Annex to the City of Fremont was delivered.

Included in the petition's 5,500-acre proposed annex (to the City of Fremont) was a population of approximately 5,000 people, and three major industries: the U.S. Pipe & Foundry Co., the PG&E Pipe Yard, and the Pacific States Steel Co.

The estimated assessed valuation of the area was put at \$8 million. The Decoto petition was filed with the Alameda County Boundaries Commission. This commission was required to make its report to the city within 20 days.

The Decoto petition plan left Alvarado out in the cold. Alvarado, with their antiquated sanitary system, was unable to offer sanitary service to their side of the Eastshore Freeway, and thus was unable to attract industry to help their incorporation efforts.

What will happen to Alvarado, which was teamed with Decoto at this point in the proposed Union City, had not been determined. The Union City Steering Committee and the Union City Chamber of Commerce went into closed sessions at the Alvarado Firehouse to discuss Alvarado's position. "It's too early to guess what will happen," said Leslie Maffey, secretary of the Union City Steering Committee and the Alvarado School Superintendent.

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, December 18, 1957:](#)

"The Union City Steering Committee fell to pieces here last night as Alvarado and Decoto residents' raked the Decoto petitioners with a hot verbal crossfire. The Decoto petitioners, who Tuesday petitioned Fremont to annex 8.6 square miles of the Decoto area, left the meeting after scorching charges were made against them. The stormy meeting finally broke up after a unanimous vote to end the committee and call a mass meeting January 8, 1958, to decide what to do next."



[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\* and \*The Oakland Tribune\*, December 27th:](#)

"Alvarado, the last outpost of the Union City incorporation movement surrendered yesterday with a petition to annex 4.4 square miles to Fremont. The proposed annex involves 1,500 to 1,800 persons in an area bounded by Fremont on the south, Hayward's new Leslie Salt Annex 3 on the west, Eastshore Freeway on the east, and Hayward on the north.

The only major industry included is the Holly Sugar Co., and plant Supt. John A. Ratekin told *The Daily Review* today, "All this is over my head. I didn't know anything about it."

Fremont City Councilman met in a special session yesterday afternoon to receive the petition and refer it to the city planning commission for report and recommendation. The council then adjourned to 9 a.m. Tuesday to then receive the planners' report, and take necessary action on the petition. It was forwarded to the county boundaries commission yesterday for review.

The councilmen also voted yesterday to take temporary jurisdiction over the proposed Decoto annex of 8.6 miles, when they received the report of the boundaries commission.

Decoto will now have to wait 21 days before circulating a petition to get the signatures of 25 per cent of the community's registered voters. When, and if, this is accomplished, and public hearings have been held, Fremont then may set the date for a special election to let voters decide on the annexation.

Then on December 23, 1958, the Union City incorporation effort was dealt another blow. The City of Hayward approved the annexation of 11 square miles, mostly made up of Leslie Salt Co. land along San Francisco Bay and extending south to Fremont.

The annex included everything along the shoreline south of the San Mateo Bridge down to the flood control channel near Lowry Road. This closed Alvarado's access to the Bay. Alvarado was now like the City of Newark, they were landlocked.

(A new petition seeking the annexation Alvarado to Fremont was presented to the Fremont City Council. The petition was signed by several residents and property owners in the town of Alvarado.)

However, incoming Union City Chamber of Commerce President Kenneth Garcia declared today that a mass meeting of Alvarado-Decoto residents scheduled for January 8, 1958 is still on. The Fremont City Council yesterday also received approval from the Boundaries Commission of a proposed 8.6-square mile Decoto annex to Fremont."

[From the Pages of \*the Daily Review\*, December 31st:](#)

"The City of Fremont councilmen moved today to erase the last trace of Union City incorporation movement by accepting a petition to annex 4.4-square miles surrounding Alvarado. Boundaries of the proposed annex will be filed today with the County Boundaries Commission. The bounds originally were filed last Thursday when Fremont first received the petition to avoid any outside encroachments on the annex.

Last night's action by the planning commission recommending annexation to the land was all that was holding the council back from formally filing with the boundary commission. This latest annex to Fremont is bounded by Hayward on the north, Fremont on the south, Eastshore Freeway on the east, and Hayward's Leslie Salt Annex No. 3 on the west.

A mass meeting is scheduled for January 8, 1958 to try to resolve the positions of the two communities. Many are hoping to clear the air and get at facts of choices open to them after three years of confusing leadership by the now disbanded Union City Steering Committee.

**End of the Union City Farce:**

[The Daily Review, December 20, 1957](#)

"The verbal free-for-all, which rang down the curtain on the Union City Steering Committee (December 17, 1957), was a perfect ending for an attempt to con the people of Alvarado and Decoto.

The show was a flop because of the deceit, which marked most of the group's activities. Organized to halt Hayward's tactless 1955 attempt to annex most of the area's industrial land, the committee spoke commendably of providing leadership in assaying the future.

Instead of that, however, it retired to secret meetings in smoke-filled backrooms, and proclaimed itself spokesman for the Alvarado-Decoto area. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Much of the committee's work was unsubtly manipulated by several big industries, which wanted only to maintain the status quo.

They displayed no interest incorporation, annexation, or the area's needs. Union City, therefore, was a fraud, a legal gimmick set up to keep any form of city-hood away from Alvarado and Decoto. The fraud became a laughing stock during the farce of creating yet another city, New Haven.

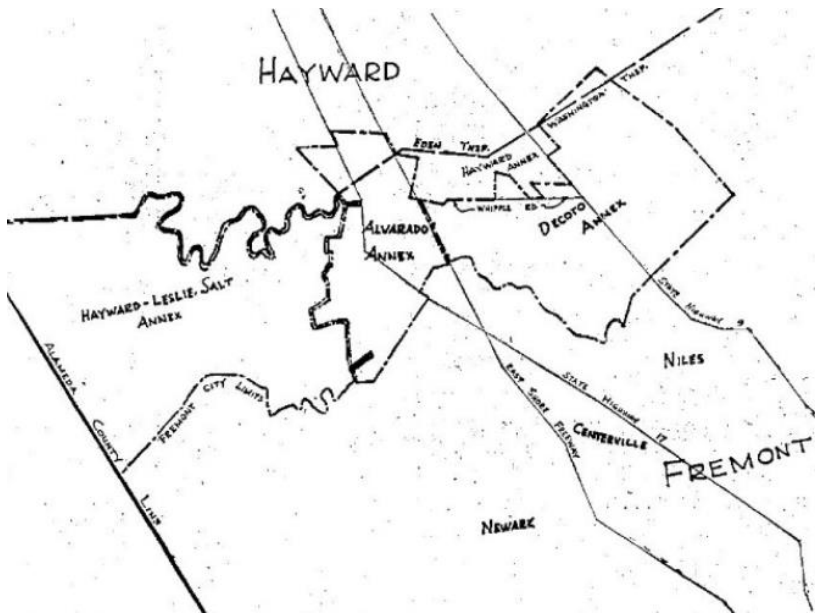
The people of Alvarado and Decoto recognized the fraud and avoided the committee's "mass meetings" like the plague. Not one of them drew a crowd to equal a PTA bazaar. Even members of the committee began to realize they were being hoodwinked.

For the first time in two years something like the voice of the people penetrated the mental smog of Union City meetings when Wilbert Hendricks suggested both towns bargain to see what they could get if annexed. Alvarado and Decoto have major maintenance and public safety problems to be met, problems, which would cost cities that might annex them more in funds expended than would be returned in taxes.

Thus while Alvarado and Decoto still have industrial land around them to help in the bargaining, they should talk annexation to Fremont and Hayward. These two towns have broken through the chains of deceit with which the Union City Steering Committee have bound them. They should demand an honest appraisal of their future, and seriously consider every opportunity for meeting it.

**Hayward Files for Largest Annex:**

[The Oakland Tribune, December 23, 1957:](#)



The Map above shows the incorporation and annex activity around Alvarado and Decoto. On the far left is the "Hayward-Leslie Salt Annex," to the right of this is the "Alvarado Annex," and on the right is the "Decoto Annex." The Hayward Industrial Annex is between the Alvarado and Decoto annexes.

Hayward initiated steps for its largest annexation in history. The city, acting on a petition by the Leslie Salt Company, and other owners, filed boundaries of Leslie Annex No. 3, consisting of 11-square miles within the Alameda County Boundaries Commission.

City Manager S. D. Smith (Hayward) said the annexation is possibly the largest ever undertaken in Alameda County. The area is bounded on the north by Leslie Annex No. 2, which recently became part of the city (Hayward), and on the west by the San Mateo County line, the southern boundary touches the City of Fremont and follows along Coyote Slough to the Leslie Salt Company line near Marsh Road, but does not include Alvarado.

Smith said that under the annexation Hayward's boundaries would touch Fremont's for the first time. He said that Hayward's area six months ago totaled 11-square miles. Additional annexations and those pending will bring the city's area to approximately 33-square miles.

### **Fremont Faces Sewer Task in Annexation:**

[The Daily Review, December 31, 1957:](#)

Fremont will be in the sewer business if Alvarado's petition to annex to Fremont goes through. Fremont City Attorney Leroy Broun this morning said the 360-acre Alvarado Sanitary District would be dissolved automatically when and if annexation of the 4.4-square mile area becomes effective. This will leave Fremont with three choices of action: continue operation of the Sanitary District as it is, merge it with the Union Sanitary District, or expand the operation.

## 1958

The year 1958 starts out with the Union City/New Haven incorporators in total disarray. The City of Fremont was elated to welcome the Decoto petition for annexation into their community.

Meanwhile, a contingent of persons in the Alvarado also petitioned for annexation into the City of Fremont. Although Fremont welcomed the Alvarado group it did present them with a problem. It would put the City of Fremont in the sanitary business as Alvarado's sanitary system was woefully inadequate for a modern city.

As we pick up 1958, the City of Fremont is enthusiastically pushing the annex of Decoto into their city. The Union City proponents are, at this moment, still in disarray and looking for the next persons to head their cause. Although there was still a groundswell of support for Union City, a catalyst would have to emerge to put the fighting spirit back into the drive to become Union City.

That person would be Oscar Dowe, Vice President of the Pacific States Steel Company. He along with John Ratekin, Ken Garcia, Wilbert Hendricks, and Joseph Lewis Sr. would push to see that the Union City cause was not abandoned.

Gone was the proposed Union City of some 24 square miles. The proposed new Union City that would emerge would be less than 10 square miles. Most of the area had been lost to the City of Hayward in the Treeview Annex, and the Leslie Salt annex of some 11 square miles. With the Leslie Salt Annex, Union City lost its outlet to the Bay, and like Newark, was land-bound by other cities.

The historic past of Old Union City, with its wharves of the 1850's, its river boat and steamboat history, which was at one time, was the commercial center of the East Bay, today is secluded from view by a circuitous detour. This area is cutoff from Alvarado by the closing off of Horner Street west of Bulmer. Today it requires a long detour around just to see it. But no one, except those with a purpose to go there, visit any longer, as it is cut off from view of the rest of Union City.

### From the pages of *The Daily Review* of January 2, 1958:

"Starting off 1958 was the ongoing battle between the La Vista and Decoto School Districts over pupils in the Fairway Park and El Rancho Verde housing tracts. A vote will be taken for 170 pre-school and grammar school children to vote on whether to remain in the La Vista School District, or become part of the Decoto School District. County Supervisors, who authorized the special election, hope the result will help end the hassle over school boundaries in the fast-growing area. The some 280 registered voters in the eight square blocks involved can vote between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. at 7861 Janice Avenue.

If the proposal is carried, the area will become part of the Decoto School District and children can attend El Rancho Verde School, which is within walking distance from most of their homes. It will also become part of the Washington Union High School District. The issue has split the neighborhood on a friendly basis. Parents debate the question on a first name relationship.

The issue at hand arose last fall when 200 residents of the area near Caleb and Fairway Streets signed a petition asking for permission to send their children to El Rancho Verde School. The petitioners asserted that although the schools are about equal distance for their children, the El Rancho Verde School is within walking distance; while the school in the Valle Vista School in the La Vista District, is across from busy Highway 9 (Mission Blvd.).

While supervisors were studying this petition, a poll reported by La Vista School officials in October 1957, showed 100 of 125 families favored remaining in the Hayward District when they learned La Vista Trustees planned to build a new school in their area. Since the poll indicated many of the original petition signers had apparently changed their minds, the supervisors call for an advisory election to resolve the issue. Since then, the neighborhood has spilt into camps, each trying to convince voters of the advantages of being part of one district or the other.

Proponents of remaining in La Vista District agree their ties are in Hayward and with its schools system, while those wishing to join Decoto say that district has good facilities immediately available. Officials of both districts say they will be satisfied with the results of Tuesday's election, whichever way it goes.

But they point out that any solution reached now can only be temporary, because eventually some re-alignment of school boundaries along city limits will be made. Supt. Harold Schoenfeld of Decoto maintains his district will have no trouble handling the additional if the parents decide to come in.

On the other hand, the only immediate effect of La Vista District will be the abandonment of plans for the new school near Fairway Street if Decoto is favored, according to Ass't Supt. Douglas Pimentel. Construction of this school has been approved by trustees subject to results of a survey made by a study team from Stanford University," Pimentel said.

A slip in yesterday's story outlining the La Vista-Decoto School District boundary problem in a portion of El Rancho Verde referred to residents joining the Decoto District last year. Actually the changed referred to was made after a group of Decoto District families petitioned to be moved into the La Vista District, where their children had been attending school under an inter-district agreement.

This boundary change was made in Fairway Park, across Highway 9 from El Rancho Verde, and has been the only actual boundary change made since the tracts were built, according to La Vista Ass't Supt. Douglas Pimentel. A number of other small adjustments in El Rancho Verde were made by inter-district agreement both last year in an attempt to solve the most pressing problems."

**Letter to the Editor of the *Daily Review*:**

January 9, 1958, Editor:

We appreciate your interest in this week's special election in the La Vista School District. However, we object to the manner in which the issue was presented in the January 2, 1958, edition of *The Daily Review*.

Your reporter states that the outcome of Tuesday's special election would provide a temporary solution to the school boundary dispute in the Hayward section of the El Rancho Verde tract. Quoting "a school official," he implied that the outcome of the election doesn't matter because school boundaries will eventually be realigned along city limits.

We cannot believe the writer and "school officials" fail to recognize the threat to such realignment plans posed by efforts to transfer our neighborhood into the Decoto School District. In view of the zealous behind-the-scenes efforts made by Decoto district officials in support of the transfer proposal, we doubt that Decoto would agree to any new boundaries set up along city limits once they have us under their control.

We caution you, as we have cautioned our neighbors, not to be lulled by the "it doesn't matter anyway approach." It does matter. We realize that El Rancho Verde is an island outpost in the Hayward city limits, but we are a Hayward oriented community. We bought our homes in Hayward for specific reasons, and we want our children to attend Hayward school for those same reasons.

Recently, we have been encouraged by the effort of the La Vista School trustees to work out some sort of a merger agreement with the Hayward Elementary School District. In view of this, we cannot see that anything would be gained by casting our lot with the Decoto-Alvarado area.

In closing, allow us to express our gratitude for previous articles, which have been written about our problem. The coverage in these earlier cases was fair, accurate and timely.

---ERIC L. NYSTROM

---MRS. JOHN GEORGE

---RICHARD A. RICCA

Voters of the Caleb Street area of El Rancho Verde voted 183 - 16 to stay in the La Vista School District. There had been a large controversy over school children in the El Rancho Verde in Eden Township being able to attend school in the Decoto School District's (Washington Township).

In May the Treeview residents again sought to realign their schools totally within the La Vista School District. Such a move would place about one half of the present Decoto School children into the La Vista District. The move was designed to take the Washington Township portions of El Rancho Verde and Fairway Park away from the Decoto School system and place them in the La Vista School District.

Hillview Crest, which is totally in Washington Township, was also a part of the City of Hayward. Mrs. Jean Wiggins, 1945 Balmoral Lane said she and others will circulate petitions requesting such an annexation. Mrs. Wiggins said the move is inevitable because "these people will not be pushed into Fremont. Socially, industrially, and commercially; our interests are in Hayward," she said.

As of the middle of October there had been no changes made to school district boundaries. No changes would be made in the boundary between Decoto and La Vista School Districts by Decoto trustees until after all current boundary studies have been completed. This stand was taken by board members October 14, 1958, after they heard a request that the boundary be moved southward as submitted by Mrs. Jean Wiggins. Trustees explained they do not feel any boundary change now would solve the problem, which has existed since the area began to build a few years ago.

Another problem, which was plaguing the Union City incorporation, was Alvarado's sanitary system. During 1958, Alvarado hurried to bring their sanitary system up to the level of cities surrounding the little town. Talks continued about consolidating the Alvarado and Union Sanitary Districts. By merging the two systems it would save the district \$120,000 over the \$7,200,000 expansion of both districts alone. Talks to consolidate the two systems continued into February 1958, where the Union Sanitary District wanted the Alvarado Sanitary District to contribute to the \$1,000 cost of an area survey. Fremont said they would absorb 25% of the cost if Alvarado annexed to Fremont. But the Alvarado District replied that it did not have the funds to contribute anything to defray the cost of the survey.

The battle over the funding of the survey by the Union Sanitary District continued with the City of Newark (part of the Union Sanitary District) objecting that the Alvarado Sanitary District board had

not yet signaled that they were interested in joining the Union Sanitary District. But the Union Sanitary District decided to go ahead and fund the survey on their own.

On March 19, 1958, Newark, Decoto, and Fremont officials demanded inclusion of the Alvarado area in the overall sewer expansion plan to be financed by the Union Sanitary District's forthcoming bond issue. The main point here was a main sewer trunk running from Niles to a new treatment plant to be located on the west end of Alvarado, near Alvarado's present sanitary facility. This would save a considerable amount of money over the one now proposed. Fremont City Manager F. Robert Coop suggested that USD take over leadership and "show these people the way" into the district.

On March 26, the Union City Chamber of Commerce endorsed the Union Sanitary District's \$6 million bond issue. June 24, 1958 was set as the date the bond issue was to go before the voters. "This bond issue is essential to development of industry in the Decoto-Alvarado area and must pass if we are to move ahead," Chamber President Kenneth Garcia stated.

With only an 18% turnout, the majority of voters in the Union Sanitary District overwhelmingly voted in the \$6,000,000 sewer bond issue on June 24<sup>th</sup>. The vote was 2,968 to 696 in favor to finance the sewer line and treatment plant facility. Plans called for main line sewers throughout the Fremont, Newark, Decoto, and eventually into the unincorporated Alvarado area. This will then bring the Alvarado sanitary system up to what is necessary to service a city, its residents, and its industry.

[From the pages of \*The Daily Review\*, September 3rd:  
Status of South-Bay Sanitary Systems:](#)

"Only five per cent of the pollution problem in the southern end of San Francisco Bay is caused by south county sewer wastes. That might not make that foul smell, which fill the air these hot summer nights any easier to take, but at least residents will be able to know where to place the blame.

About 95 per cent of the sewage, which causes the gas that creates this unpleasant odor of rotten eggs, comes from Sunnyvale and San Jose. This is pointed out in a regional water pollution control board study of pollution in the Bay south of Dumbarton Bridge just made public.

The survey revealed that Sunnyvale and San Jose are the main contributors, while the Union Sanitary District, which serves Fremont, Newark, and unincorporated parts of Washington Township, has only one problem area. That is USD's Irvington treatment plant. At present sewage being dumped into the Bay from this plant account for the other five per cent of the smell because it is hardly treated at all. But steps are already underway to solve this problem. Voters recently approved a \$6 million expansion bond issue to take care of future needs in the fast growing district.

A Palo Alto engineering firm has already started designing an \$800,000 sewage treatment facility at the Irvington plant. This will be completed sometime next spring, and will solve the district's part of the pollution problem for the several years to come. In all, \$2.7 million of the total bond issue is earmarked for sewer treatment facilities. This will spent on further improvement of the Irvington plant, added capacity in the Newark plant, and a whole new plant in Alvarado to take care of sewage from the Niles-Decoto area and eventually Alvarado.

But the main problem of pollution in the Southern Bay waters will not be affected by these improvements. They merely indicate that the Alameda County district will do its share to

insure the Bay is kept clear. Until Sunnyvale and San Jose plants are overhauled, the south Bay will remain useless for such things as fishing, recreational swimming, and boating, the pollution board reports. The familiar rotten egg smell caused by hydrogen sulfide will continue to offend the sense of southern Alameda County residents as well as their neighbors across the Bay who cause the problem."

During the past few years water service had been a concern of the Decoto residents. Decoto, along with Niles, was serviced by the Citizens Utility Company of California. Both towns had been searching for other water service providers. In mid-February talks between Decoto, Fremont, and the Alameda County Water Department (ACWD), began to see what service could be provided to Decoto and its planned industrial growth.

[The Daily Review of April 14, 1958 published the following article about water:](#)

"April 22nd's statement by Joseph Martin Jr., San Francisco Public Utilities Commissioner should be read with interest in southern Alameda County. With surprising candor, Martin lays San Francisco water problems before that city. In so doing, he clearly outlines the city's relationship to Southern Alameda County, a customer of the San Francisco Water Dept. That relationship is twofold, as a landowner and as a water distributor.

In the last half of the 19th century, the Spring Valley Water Company bought up water rights in Southern Alameda County, including what is now the Pleasanton well (water) fields and the upper reaches of Alameda Creek.

San Francisco took over those rights when it bought out the Spring Valley Water Company in 1931. Water by these Alameda County sources meets 15 per cent of San Francisco needs, according to Martin.

Then, as a distributor, the City of San Francisco sells water at \$70 an acre foot to the Hayward and Alameda County Water Dist., which serves Decoto, Fremont, and Newark. That water, from dams high in the Sierra, comes from the San Francisco aqueduct, which crosses Southern Alameda County near Mission San Jose.

Martin notes two points of irritation between the South County and the City of San Francisco. First, this area must buy water from San Francisco, which at the same time is taking water from the South County. This gibes with the appearance of the South County paying San Francisco to use South County water. In Pleasanton this actually happens. Second, Hetch Hetchy water is not cheap at \$70 an acre foot. Moreover, there has been the question of whether San Francisco could meet the near future needs of Southern Alameda County, and what sort of priority its demands would receive.

As a result South County, along with fast growing Santa Clara County has thrown strong support behind the South Bay Aqueduct. It could supply a large amount of water at an estimated price of \$22 an acre foot. These factors lead to the conclusion there is little likelihood San Francisco can find answer to these problems which would be acceptable to the South County."

Then in December, the problem of the price of water supply slammed the residents of Niles & Decoto. For the 2,210 subscribers of water from Citizens Utility Company in those towns learned that the utility company planned to ask the PUC for a rate increase almost double what they were presently paying.

The Union City Chamber of Commerce announced they would soon lodge a formal protest with California PUC over the proposed hike in water rates. Ken Garcia, Chamber president, said his



organization will have a representative appear at the January 7, 1958, meeting to lodge a formal protest. "We are very unhappy and think an increase that just about doubles our rates is too steep," Garcia asserted.

On December 29, 1958, the Alameda County Water District directors announced they would expedite water service to new industry, whether it locates in Decoto or within Hayward City boundaries. The decision was in answer to a request from the Western Pacific Railroad, which indicated a \$1 million industry, which will employ from 300 to 400 persons is interested in its land north of Whipple Road. Though part of this is in the Hayward City limits it is served entirely by the Alameda County Water District.

At the end of December the ACWD had made plans for 1959 water delivery to southern Alameda County.

[The plan was outlined in a \*Daily Review\* article dated December 31, 1958:](#)

"Despite an acute water shortage householders in the Alameda County Water District won't have to worry about their faucets drying up in 1959. Early in the New Year the district's \$130,000 percolation project in the Niles area will be completed doubling the amount of water that can be funneled from Alameda Creek into the underground basin.

ACWD General Manager Matt Whitfield said the project would utilize two more gravel pits in addition to the district's Shinn Pit, which has been in operation for several years, about 3,000 acre feet of water will feed the basin which provides water for Fremont, Newark, Decoto, and Alvarado when the project, now 80 per cent complete, is finished. This will provide enough water to serve the district's approximately 10,000 customers plus an additional 2,000 new customers expected to request water service in 1959.

The year just ended saw the district's five-man board of directors make some progress in longer range conservation projects, which will be needed within a few years in the fast growing south county area. The state issued a water permit jointly to ACWD and the Pleasanton County Water District allowing them to take some 12,000 acre feet from the Arroyo Del Valle Creek in the Livermore Hills. State officials also included the two district's Arroyo Del Valle Dam project into the proposed South Bay Aqueduct.

Service was also expanded in the Alvarado area, as new industry showed interest in the area, and just this Monday directors announced they will expand their line to the part of their district that extends through Decoto into the Hayward City limits to serve a new industry if it locates on Western Pacific land."

But the future of Union City lay in the incorporation movement and now that fight was in the hands of the Fremont annexation effort, which had to be solved before Union City could fulfill their destiny."

[Events from the first of the year 1958:](#)

On January 7, 1958, Attorney Stacy Dobrzensky filed an appeal to the recent Hayward Superior Court decision on the City of Hayward's victory in the Treeview Annex. The appeal would also affect 8.6 square mile annex to Fremont, the 11 square mile annex of Leslie Salt, the 4.4 square mile annex of Alvarado.

The money to fight Hayward's 1,132 acre industrial annex was pledged to the residents of Alvarado and Decoto by the Holly Sugar Co., and Pacific States Steel. This action also places the Fremont annex in jeopardy. The suit was being brought in the name of two residents and property owners in

the Union City area. The fight would continue with Alvarado School Supt. Leslie Maffey, and Mrs. Christina M. Anderson in the legal battle.

Maffey said he would make a decision whether to leave his name on the appeal following a mass meeting of Alvarado and Decoto residents at the Alvarado Elementary School on Smith Street. However, Mrs. Anderson said she will stay in the fight until the end because she doesn't want to become part of Hayward. She owns 8.32 acres in that city's industrial annex.

A meeting held at the Decoto Elementary School on January 8, 1958, drew an interested crowd of over 200 persons who politely listened to the alternatives available to the two towns, as presented by Fremont City Councilman Wallace Pond, and Fremont City Manager F. Robert Coop, stressing what they called the close ties of Decoto with the rest of Washington Township, and generally outlined Fremont's hopes for the future.

Fremont City Manager Robert Coop called for a meeting with Holly Sugar to "state our case" and warned the audience that court appeals involving Hayward annexations that overlap proposed Union City territory "can drag on for years."

But Coop and Stevenson couldn't sway the crowd with the description of a future with Fremont. Coop warned residents that if the appeal fails the communities would be laying themselves wide open for annexation to Hayward. If the appeal should be successful and the way to incorporation opened he cautioned: "You'll be picked apart and lose your identity in the meantime," Coop said. "Your city wouldn't be a failure. You'll get by. But you only have to look at Newark to see that small cities don't end up with 25 cent tax rates and big cities with \$1. But Newark is getting by and so could you."

Mayor John Purchio, City Manager S.D. Smith, and Chamber of Commerce President George Oakes Jr., representing Hayward, stressed that Hayward had no legal jurisdiction over the area so hadn't made a detailed study of the area in relation to Hayward.

Edwin Dana, Holly Sugar Co. executive told the crowd: "Local industries have paid 95 per cent of the cost so far of the three year legal battle, and the industries will continue to carry the load. We are not asking for donations from the townspeople, but we do want your cooperation. You can participate financially if you want."

Bud Thomas, plant manager of Pacific States Steel Corp. and American Forge Co. at Decoto declared: "I'm here to say we are 100 per cent behind Union City. If we're going to be taxed we want to be represented."

A large round of applause went up when Fred Brown of Alvarado attacked the 'Decoto faction' that brought the annexation request of Decoto to the City of Fremont. He charged that: "The Decoto faction was guilty of the greatest breach of faith anyone could be accused of. Let's get this whole matter out of smoke filled backrooms and into the open."

Wilbert Hendricks, chairman of the meeting called by the Union City Chamber of Commerce, asked for a show of hands for the choices open to residents. Annexation to Fremont and Hayward both received four votes, and the rest raised their hands and voices in favor of Union City.

Feeling rejuvenated, the City of Union City took another step on the comeback at the Meeting of January 8, 1958, with the formation of the Alvarado Area Steering Committee. Headed by Wilbert Hendricks, this group announced it would oppose the Fremont annexation of Alvarado, and the Fremont annexation of Decoto, and would strive instead for incorporation of the two communities into Union City.

Wilbert Hendricks declared of the new committee, "This committee won't be run like the Union City Steering Committee. Everything is going to be open and the public will be kept informed on what's going on through the newspapers and mass meetings."

Joe Lewis Sr., of Decoto charged that, "The 'Decoto faction' set themselves up as czars from the beginning and took the attitude of 'to hell with the people'." Lewis said he personally would circulate a petition to sign up owners of 51 per cent of the assessed valuation of the property to defeat the Decoto Annex, and that an attorney was preparing the petition now, he stated.

Holly Sugar remained resolute in their effort to create the City of Union City, urging residents to keep up the fight for incorporation despite present effort to annex both towns to the City of Fremont.

Meanwhile the City of Hayward moved forward with hearings for the proposed annexation of 11 square miles of marsh/salt ponds known as Leslie Annex #3. Coupled with this, was the proposed annexation of the 164 acre Stanley McCosker property between Hesperian Boulevard and the freeway. This plot of land sits directly north of Alvarado along the flood control channel. A small finger of this annex falls into Alvarado, just west of the freeway and south of the township line.

On the following night, January 9, 1958, the Union City incorporation sprang back to life when some 180 Alvarado and Decoto residents turned thumbs down on annexation. Fremont Mayor John L. Stevenson and City Manager F. Robert Coop were unable to soothe and woo the crowd that was definitely in the mood for a fight to incorporate.

[The Daily Review's editorial article of January 10, 1958:](#)

Wednesday's meeting in Alvarado, on the future of that town and its sister community Decoto, turned out a large crowd, which cheered for Union City. But it was a meeting run by big business, not by the people of Alvarado. When the 180 persons present voted for Union City, they voted or something most of them knew little about.

The main points in the meeting were the same old points in the Union City Steering Committee has been making in smoke-filled back rooms for three years: "Stop Hayward," and "Don't desert to Fremont."

But what about Alvarado? What about Decoto? Was the big spokesman who demanded "representation with his taxation" speaking for the citizens of the towns? Certainly not. No matter what happens to those two towns, big business will always have its representation. So big business wants to keep the status quo. Its taxes will only rise slightly if it ended up in Fremont or Hayward, but it would find itself more closely checked on water and air pollution, for one thing. That is why they are footing the legal bill for fighting Hayward in the courts.

All it asks is that the people of Alvarado and Decoto stick with it and don't ask questions about annexation. Wednesday night's meeting was fun. One of Union City's fallen heroes (the 'Decoto faction") was derided and the speakers tilted with the familiar old Fremont and Hayward boogies. But when it was all over, no questions about the future of Alvarado and Decoto had been answered. No one explained how Union City could finance sewer water line expansion necessary for the city's industrial growth. No one explained how the communities might better themselves, obtain better services. No figures were given so that listeners might compare taxes they would have to pay if they incorporated or joined a neighboring city.

Wednesday night was mainly a big business show, and big business didn't answer many questions. Its only advice seemed to be: sit tight, don't make a move, and everything will be all right. Someone should have asked for proof.

On January 11, 1965, Union City Chamber of Commerce President Kenneth Garcia said that two chamber directors will try to form a Decoto steering committee to work for the incorporation of Union City. They were Oscar Dowe and Joe Lewis. That news came out of last night's Chamber of Commerce director's meeting.

Alvarado and Decoto had suddenly become rejuvenated, and there was an enthusiastic fervor in the air. Civic leaders like Ken Garcia, Oscar Dowe, Joe Lewis, were renewing the faith of the people in Union City.

But there were still detractors of the new city and they must be won over for Union City to go forward. In the meantime, City Manager S.D. Smith of Hayward and Robert Coop of Fremont, lunched together to talk about a County Boundaries Commission proposal that the cities could reach agreement on what Alvarado-Decoto area territory each city would try to annex. Smith said no decision was reached. Coop said Fremont would not try for the McCosker property. Hayward got to the County Boundary Commission first with the McCosker property.

On January 14, 1958, the United Steelworkers of America, Local 3367, endorsed annexation to Fremont. They termed Union City a "dream that will never be realized." In looking back on the stance of the union and the executives of Pacific States Steel and American Forge, they were on opposite sides of Fremont annexation question.

By mid-January the Union City incorporation movement was gaining support, not only from the two large industries in Alvarado and Decoto, but from local associations. Manuel Hidalgo, president of the Decoto Merchants Ass'n, announced that his organization had voted in favor of supporting the incorporation movement. He said that the association had formed a committee to help circulate petitions among property owners protesting the Fremont annexation.

The move was made at the request of Oscar Dowe, co-chairman of a committee appointed last week by the Union City Chamber of Commerce to fight the annex proceeding. Dowe said two men were presently working at the Oakland Court House listing the names of property owners and the legal description of their property in the Decoto area.

If owners of property totaling 51 per cent of the assessed valuation protest the annex, the annex movement would be killed. Newark City Councilman Clark Redeker, told the association he didn't want to take sides in the issue but, did say that Newark residents are very satisfied they incorporated instead of going into Fremont.

Residents of Tamarack Knolls "don't want to stick their head into the fan" in the incorporation vs. annexation struggle in Decoto. This was the report made by Dan Tibbott following a meeting of 54 homeowners in the area.

#### [The Daily Review, January 16, 1958:](#)

Being "in the county," is no longer an actuality. A quick look at Southern Alameda County shows there is little "county" left, the county of half acre lots, a cow in the backyard and uncrowded streets.

As far south as Decoto, the "county" is now "in town." The area may be unincorporated, but it has all the marks of the city, with demands for better streets, lights, traffic control, fire protection, library facilities, and other city services.

As a result that "out in the county" feeling will change. Taxes will change it as newcomers demand more services and the county government is forced to charge city prices for those services. And despite the higher taxes, the unincorporated areas will have a progressively smaller voice in government.

Eventually it will be cheaper to be in the city than out. It is now for many people, explaining why annexation has succeeded in many areas."

The 'Decoto faction' to annex to Fremont was running into opposition in their move to sell Decoto residents on annexing to Fremont. At a meeting called on January 24, 1958, by the Decoto Improvement Association, the best the Decoto faction could muster was a vote with the majority favoring incorporation, not annexation.

Attending the meeting were representatives from the Decoto Merchants Association, Cascade Gardens, Tamarack Knolls, and land owners in the proposed 8.6 square mile Decoto annex. The 'Decoto faction' that favored annexation to Fremont told the gathering "what you have to decide is whether you want Hayward or Fremont. Union City is just a dream and you had better do something now because Hayward has the power."

Dream or no, Manuel Hidalgo, president of the Decoto Merchants Association, declared the community's businessmen favored incorporation and were firmly opposed to annexation to either city.

Oscar Dowe, leader of the anti-annexation forces charged: "The reason they (Fremont) are anxious to bring us in is to create a holding block while they develop their industry ahead of us." Dowe said the big question in his mind was what Fremont planned to do about zoning the area. He noted that landowners in Fremont aren't particularly happy about the way their city has been zoned.

Joe Andrade declared, "This town belongs to the people. The merchants and industrialists have run it long enough. It's not the organized groups that have the right to decide, it's the individual voter." He called for the annexation to Fremont to go ahead. "If the people want to incorporate they will defeat the annexation in the election," he stated.

But Dowe stuck to his guns and charged: "You aren't giving the people a second chance. You're pushing them into Fremont. There is plenty of time before the suit with Hayward is resolved to start an annexation move."

At end of January 1958, the Hayward annexations of Leslie Salt No. 3, the McCosker annexation north of Alvarado, and 75 per cent of the Treeview Annex faced double taxation because they are in the Alameda County Water District. If Hayward runs mains into these annexes the property owners will face having to pay to retire ACWD bonds and the City of Hayward water bonds for the construction of the mains. The bonds to finance the ACWD expansion were to be retired by revenue from sales of water, and not from taxes.

On February 1, 1958, the rush was on. Annexation proponents had fourteen persons circulating petitions favoring annexation to Fremont. They needed 25% of the 1,500 registered voters in Decoto before the annexation election could be held. They needed to complete their petitioning before February 14, or lose exclusive jurisdiction over the annex. After that date the area would be open for proponents of incorporation to file new boundaries or annexation thrusts from other directions.

Meanwhile, Oscar Dowe, the leader of the anti-annexation forces said that he had ten petition circulators trying to stop the Fremont annexation. He must obtain the signatures of 51% of the property owners by the assessed value of their property to put a halt to the Fremont annexation.

By the end of the first week February, Oscar Dowe was claiming he was close to successfully signing up enough property owners to defeat the Fremont annexation at the protest meeting, which must be held before the election.

The 'Decoto faction' dismissed Dowe's claims as misleading, and showed no concern over the purported gains Dowe had made. They declared that they "knew for a fact," that a lot of the major property owners have not yet committed themselves one way or the other. The number willing to sign doesn't mean a thing. What's important is the amount of land the signers own.

By the day before the deadline the 'Decoto faction' claimed to have enough valid signatures to call for an election in Decoto for annexation to Fremont. They said that they still had one third of the town to go and was confident of going over the top.

Oscar Dowe, leader of the movement to incorporate rather than annex, said he "wasn't surprised by the claim the 'Decoto faction' had collected enough signatures." Dowe said he is still confident of signing up enough property owners to defeat the annex. "But I'll know more about that tonight after I meet with my district chairmen," he added.

Even if the annexation election should come off and be successful, Fremont can't officially take over the territory until a lawsuit against Hayward is decided. Two property owners are appealing a Superior Court ruling awarding Hayward 1,132 acres in the Decoto Area.

The 'Decoto faction' made the February 14, 1958, deadline by delivering their petitions to the Fremont City Council. A protest hearing would be held in the next 30 days and at that time Dowe and his supporters can kill the annex, if they have enough property committed in opposition. Even if he can't muster the support by then, Dowe said he is sure the move will be killed at the polls by the residents in the annex.

As the signatures on the petition were being validated by the Fremont City Clerk, Oscar Dowe continued his efforts to sign up property owners to defeat the Fremont petition. But PG&E and the railroads, which control 20% of the assessed value of Decoto refused to take sides on the issue.

On February 25, 1958, Fremont City Clerk Howard Reese reported to the city council that their petitions were short 102 valid signatures. This was following a check on the 508 names on the petitions. Fremont needs 417 signatures on petitions before the protest meeting can be called. According to law there was still ten days to pick up the added signatures.

Meanwhile, Oscar Dowe, leader of the anti-annexation forces said he is still plugging away to sign up the majority of property owners to kill the election. If Dowe can come up with the signatures of owners of 51 percent of the assessed valuation of property, he can kill the annex before it ever goes to the polls.

On March 8, 1958, new petitions for annexation were delivered to the Fremont City Council. The 'Decoto faction' had added 142 more signatures to their petitions. They had missed the number needed on the first submission when over 200 signatures were ruled invalid. The election issue still appeared to be in doubt, pending a check of the validity of signatures by Fremont City Clerk Howard Reese, who said the check would be made in the next three or four days. They need 102 valid signatures to bring about the vote. Annex petition circulators slid into home base with a scant 18 signatures to spare in their move to call a vote to annex Decoto to Fremont. City Clerk Howard

Reese announced the annexation leaders had collected the signatures of 455 registered voters in the 8.6 square mile annex. They needed 25 per cent, or 437 signatures, from the 1,747.

Next step in the annexation procedure would be for the Fremont City Council to adopt a resolution at its March 25, 1958, meeting setting a date for the annex election and a date for a public protest hearing. Councilmen will also have to decide at this meeting on the date the annexation will be effective in the event the election is successful.

The Fremont City Council set the date of April 15, 1958, for a protest hearing and special election to decide the 8.6 square mile Decoto Annex. Opponents to the annex weren't expected to muster enough support to kill the annex before it went to a vote.

The 4.4-square mile Alvarado annex, started about the same time, died when its backers failed to pick-up and circulate petitions asking Fremont to call an annexation. Decoto annexation backers proclaimed confidence that the town of Decoto would approve the annexation if they were allowed to vote on it.

Joe Lewis, one of the anti-annexation leaders took a wait and see attitude. His only comment was that a protest would be definitely made at the meeting on the 15th. Just as the protest meeting was about to be held, Fremont City Attorney Leroy Broun informed the city councilmen that the notice of the protest meeting had only been published once and the legal requirement is that it should have been published twice.

The councilmen postponed the protest meeting until May 6, 1958, allowing opponents of the annexation to gather more steam in the hotly disputed area. Oscar Dowe claimed to have enough signatures and assessed value to kill the Fremont annexation of Decoto. This claim was made at the protest meeting of May 6, 1958.

[As reported from the pages of \*The Daily Review\*:](#)

"Annexation of Decoto to Fremont may have been dealt a deathblow May 6, 1958, when a very confident Oscar Dowe, leader of the forces against the 8.6-square mile annex of Decoto to Fremont, estimated he had signed up and turned in property with an assessed value of \$1.06 million. If this adds up to 51 per cent of the assessed land value in the annex, then it is dead.

City Clerk Howard Reese today refused to be pinned down as to Decoto's assessed value, but conceded to make a "very rough guess" of \$1.5 million to \$2.0 million range. Exact figures won't be known until the protests petitions have been checked and tallied, he says.

If the city clerk's "rough guess" proves to be the case, Dowe and his foot-weary petition circulators have won a victory. If we're short it can't be by a helluva lot," Dowe declared. "But there's no way to tell for sure until a final check is made." Dowe accused the Decoto annexure's of "lousing up when they tried to take Decoto, and part of Alvarado in the middle of the night, without even asking the property owners."

"There is a lot of assessed valuation in the small Alvarado corner of the annex and it made these people mad when they weren't consulted," Dowe said. Dowe said that the "door is still wide open. We're not leaning toward Hayward, Fremont, or incorporation. This thing hit us without warning when we were still fighting Hayward and we didn't approve of their tactics," he declared.

Fremont Councilman Wallace Pond said he was amazed that anyone would oppose the annexation for "sentimental or emotional reasons," since it affects the welfare of Decoto

residents the rest of their lives. "There will never be another chance for total annexation to Fremont because the area will be gobbled up piecemeal," he said.

Dowe replied that there was "no" sentiment or emotion or grievance in our action. We felt property owners should have been advised and that the move was ill-timed. The whole thing has been worked out in a poor way."

May 8, 1958, the Daily Review:

Protests against the blitzkrieg attempt to annex Decoto to Fremont give early evidence of success that the city clerk must officially confirm. That the big push in opposition to joining Fremont came from Pacific States Steel is no surprise. The company is dedicated to keeping the status quo and pushing back possible annexation from north and south. There is more to the protests than the maneuvering of the steel giant. The dark-of-the-night attempt at annexation by a defected the Union City Steering Committee member, aroused considerable suspicion in Decoto.

Fremont, trying to build California's third largest city from the village up, has its hands full. Annexing Decoto would increase the city's area by nearly 10 per cent and impose even greater problems of service and safety on the young city.

Hayward, on the other hand, in the last year has caught up with many of its growth deficits. It is in the position to extend needed services to Decoto earlier. Owners of much of Decoto's surrounding land want those services available now, so their property can be developed. As has been noted before, this could lead to uninhabited annexations of the valuable areas around Decoto, leaving the town without their bargaining power.

If the protest sidetracks the Decoto annexure's railroad, Decoto residents had best take another look at their ticket. That name Union City is just a mirage Big Business has dreamed up to the keep the area confused, a gimmick which is not calculated to benefit Decoto or Alvarado.

On May 27, 1958, Oscar Dowe's forces learned that their bid to deal a death-blow to Decoto's annexation into Fremont, annexation effort had fell short. Fremont City Clerk Edward Reese said that the anti-annexation effort had totaled \$755,400 of the area's estimated \$2.3 million assessed valuation. This meant that the Dowe forces must sign up another \$395,000 in valuation by the June 10, 1958 deadline.

Dowe and his forces went back into the street, the farms, and the local businessmen to drum up enough assessed value to defeat the Fremont annexation bid. When the deadline for the protest petitions came, Dowe turned in what he had collected to Edward Reese. All that he and his anti-annexationists could do now was to wait.

The nip and tuck battle against annexing Decoto to Fremont was going into its final stages. Oscar Dowe predicted success in his efforts to sign up owners of half of the \$2.3 million assessed land value in the 8.6 square mile annex.

On June 10, 1958, Oscar Dowe plunked down an additional \$40,000 he had signed up. Another \$79,000 had been turned in earlier to bring the total of new property to approximately \$120,000. Dowe needed some \$395,000 to make up for the petitions thrown out on a variety of reasons.

He originally submitted petitions totaling \$1,055,000, but had this amount reduced to \$755,400 by a check by the city clerk. The city clerk noted that most of those thrown out were on the question of authority of the signature or that the signature does not agree with the county tax rolls. The



clerk said that it would take several weeks to thoroughly validate the submitted signatures on his petitions.

On June 24, 1958, the Fremont City Clerk made his announcement on the annexation of Decoto to Fremont: it was a dead issue. Fremont City Clerk Howard Reese announced that Oscar Dowe had succeeded in blocking the annexation before it could come to a vote of the people. He reported Oscar Dowe, leader of the opposition, had turned in protest petitions representing \$1,330,100 valuation in the \$2.3 million annex. This amounted to \$280,000 more than was actually needed.

Success of the movement kept alive the drive for the incorporation of the Alvarado-Decoto Area. If the appeal to a court decision giving Hayward a chunk of the Union City area is successful, incorporation workers will have the green light to go ahead with their plans.

On June 26, 1958, the Union City forces filed a new incorporation petition with the County Supervisors, this time they excluded the Treeview annex, the Leslie Salt annex, and the hill area east of Mission Boulevard. The new proposed city of Union City would only be nine miles square in size, compared with to the original 23 miles square area.

The petition was signed by 41 persons and was headed by Elvin Rose. "This time we mean business. We're going ahead with incorporation, providing the people want it," J.A. Ratekin said today. Ratekin heads the Alvarado plant of Holly Sugar Co., which has backed previous Union City moves.

On July 25, 1958, petitions started circulating for the incorporation of Decoto and Alvarado into Union City. But the effort was initially troubled by disparaging rumors that were spread that Union City would help bolster their tax base through the legalizing of gambling within the new city. John Ratekin, Holly Sugar Mill Superintendent at Alvarado, branded these stories "just plain vicious and outright lies. There hasn't been, and won't be, any consideration given to allowing gambling interests in Union City. You can find gambling in a lot of neighboring cities, but there won't be any organized or open gambling here," Ratekin declared.

Oscar Dowe, Pacific States Steel Company executive offered this to squelch the rumor: "The steel company backed the county when anti-gambling laws were written, and you can be sure we're still 100 per cent against it. They (gambling interests) certainly aren't contacting the people working for incorporation and would be wasting their time," was Dowe's flat answer. Dowe said he has heard the same rumor but has no actual knowledge of gambler interest in the area.

[From the pages of the Daily Review, July 30, 1958:](#)

"Alvarado-Decoto residents can incorporate into Union City with minimum services and a minimum 48¢ tax rate. This was told to some 50 residents last night by Oscar Dowe, Pacific States Steel Executive and one of the incorporation leaders.

But a drawback to this financial picture is the fact that Alvarado and Decoto Fire Districts will continue to function as separate taxing agencies. The Alvarado Fire District has a 28¢ tax and Decoto has a 35¢ tax rate. This means a minimum total tax rate of 76¢ for Alvarado and 83¢ for Decoto.

Dowe stressed that the 48¢ would be a figure for a minimum government. If the people want more services they will have to pay a higher rate he declared. The Research Inc. report on the eight square mile area, Dowe listed these expenditures for the city's first budget that would come to \$197,000"

The main selling point Dowe used last night was that home owners would save \$14 a year on their utility bills by forming their own city. The public affairs report estimates present assessed value at \$10,186,105, and says the valuation should reach \$11 million (including \$500,000 worth of new industries) by the time of the incorporation in the 1959 - 1960 fiscal year.

J.A. Ratekin, of Holly Sugar, reported more than 50 per cent of the Alvarado residents have signed the incorporation petitions and the number of refusals have been insignificant. Petitions have not yet been circulated in Decoto. Mark Bray, Holly Sugar attorney, told listeners August 27, 1958, is the deadline for getting petitions in to Oscar Dowe.

Another Holly attorney, Ed Dana, announced "We as a corporation, and others, have determined it would be best to form a city rather than become a part of another community. If you people are willing to get by with minimum services then we can get by with a minimum tax rate. In the long run it will be better to incorporate than to be taken over piecemeal by our neighbors," the attorney declared.

Jesse Perry, local rancher, had a different slant on things. He contended: "We worked like dogs to keep from getting annexed into Fremont and now the same people are out circulating petitions to form a Union City. Why don't they make up their minds? They tell us this is a swell (incorporation) but look out in the end,' he warned.

Nearing the end of the third week of August, the Union City incorporation proponents were feeling confident of victory on the petitioning front. The petitioners must sign up 25% of the eight plus square mile area's 5,100 person population and 25 per cent of the \$10,186,105 assessed value of the two communities.

Manuel Bolivia, Decoto chairman reports, "Things are looking pretty good. I think we've got it licked already." He said the most refusals encountered in a single block has been three and is estimating a 70 to 80 per cent signup.

Oscar Dowe, Pacific States Steel Co. executive said he is sure the major landowners will go along with the movement. The area's two major industries, the steel mill and the sugar mill already signed, according to Dowe. Next Wednesday has been set as the final day for turning in the petitions. If this deadline is met the incorporation election can be held in October or November, Dowe stated.

[On August 28, 1958, The Daily Review's editorial read:](#)

"Company Town in the Making" Here is that editorial:

"Union City has more than a 50-50 chance of incorporating, according to news reports drifting out of the area. Proponents say the new city could have minimum services with a 48¢ tax rate. The 48¢ would not include the fire district tax, water district tax or sewer tax. Addition of those items would boost the total in Alvarado to \$1.95, and in Decoto to \$1.51. The minimum services to be secured through the 48¢ tax would be for police protection and roadwork.

Since minimum services are available now under county jurisdiction, it is obvious that the incorporation movement is for some other purpose. Two questions arise: What is the purpose? And, would the average homeowner serve his own best interests by voting to help that purpose? It has long been evident that the sparkplugs of the incorporation movement are affiliated with the areas big industries. It has been hinted, also, that the area should have "protection" from Fremont and Hayward.

Union City voters have already rejected annexation to Fremont, and their civic stance has suggested a cold shoulder would be turned to Hayward should the occasion arise. So protection is not the issue; voters are amply able to protect themselves from outside encroachment.

That leaves the question of whether encroachment from inside is lurking under the camouflage of reasons that have been advanced. In short, is an effort being made to incorporate Union City as a "company town" with the idea sold to voters by reasoning that doesn't stand up?

There is nothing wrong with a company town if voters establish it with full realization. But careful avoidance of the subject in Union City and the straw man characteristics of the reasons that have been advanced suggest that the whole story hasn't been told.

On September 5, 1958, incorporation chairman Elvin Rose said petitions with signatures of 40 per cent of all property owners in the nine-square mile area were filed with the county clerk yesterday (Sept. 4th). He said at least 30 per cent of signers were "small property owners" indicating that the incorporation is a "grass roots movement" and not something being pushed exclusively by big industry.

Pacific States Steel Co. and the Holly Sugar Co. have been accused of trying to put across incorporation to create a "company town" in Alvarado and Decoto. "These charges are untrue," asserted Rose.

Union City is over its first hurdle toward becoming Alameda County's 13th city. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors yesterday were told the backers of the Alvarado-Decoto incorporation had signed up the necessary 25 per cent of the area's population and assessed valuation. The board clerk said there was no breakdown on the figures, but that the amount "is more than enough."

The supervisors then set October 7, 1958, as the deadline for Union City backers to put up the \$450 to pay for publication of the public hearing and election notices.

J.A. Ratekin, Holly Sugar executive, said the money "is not a problem," and announced the incorporation election "will be held as soon as possible." Ratekin said they hope to have the election sometime in November. The incorporation will have to be completed by February 1959, if the city expects to get on the tax rolls to collect funds for the 1959-60 fiscal year, he explained.

The Western Pacific Railroad then jumped on the Union City bandwagon by giving the proposed new city its official blessing and further stating that it would not protest the planned incorporation. Western Pacific had just received word that the Alameda County Water District would provide water service to the more than 300 acres of Western Pacific as soon as it is ready to be developed. The district has \$880,000 available to expand water service in the Decoto/Alvarado area and is only waiting for development before going ahead.

The protest hearing on the proposed incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto into Union City was held October 30, 1958, at Oakland by the County Board of Supervisors. At that meeting the Alameda County Board of Supervisors set January 13, 1959, as the date to decide whether the 8.6 square mile Union City area between Hayward and Fremont should become Alameda County's 13th city.

The board of supervisors set the boundaries of the proposed city after excluding two parcels from the area. Five other owners had asked to be left out of the incorporation but the board refused the requests. The only parcels excluded were 120 acres of the Oliver Bros. ranch in the extreme

northwest tip of the proposed city and less than an acre on the eastern tip owned by the City of Hayward, which includes a Hayward (fluoridation) pumping station.

By November 17, 1959, four men had declared for seats on the UC City Council, while three other had taken out nominating papers but had not yet returned them to the clerk's office. The deadline for filing is November 20, 1958.

Definitely in the race for council seats are:

John A. Ratekin, 57 Holly Sugar executive  
Manuel J. Hidalgo, Decoto Realtor & Merchant  
Joseph E. Lewis, 65 Laborer (retired Standard Oil Dealer)  
Leo J. Avelais, 40 Warehouseman

Those who have papers out are:

Oscar Dowe, 51 Pacific States Steel executive  
Joseph L. Seaone, Jr., 41 Mechanic and Labor Official  
Irving A. Williams, 30 Contractor

On November 19th the following persons filed their papers:

Roland B. Paul, Control wireman  
Wilbert Hendricks, Leslie Salt shipping foreman

Prospective candidates who picked up papers yesterday included:

Mike P. Rodrigues, Laborer  
George M. Sloan, Teacher  
Tom T. Kitayama, Nurseryman

Others who still have papers out are:

Henry C. Rivera, Trailer Court Operator  
George Vargas, Mechanic  
Fred E. Anderson, Accountant  
Joaquin Naharro, Production Worker  
George Hocking, Retail Lumberman

#### [The Daily Review on December 11, 1958:](#)

In one of those unusual twists that happen whenever an issue that carries such emotional weight as the incorporation of two small towns is concerned, and when a person interjects their opinion where they are not needed, a verbal flare occurs. Such is an article written about a Fremont City Councilman who vented his opinion about the incorporation of Union City:

"Fremont City Councilman Kenneth Steadman has been asked to mind his own business on the subject of incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto into Union City.

A letter from the Decoto Merchants Association stated: "This association regrets that you have interfered in matters that do not concern you, namely your remarks that the people of Union City, vote against incorporation." The letter suggested Steadman "please confine your remarks to your own city."

The blast came on the eve of candidate's night sponsored by the Union City Chamber of Commerce at the Decoto School, 6th & "H" Streets. Fifteen candidates running for five seats on the city council if Union City incorporates have been invited to give their views.

Steadman told the Daily Review today that "anything that concerns men at Pacific States Steel Co. concerns me as president of Local 3367 of the United Steelworkers of America."

The plant is in the projected Union City. Union City Chamber of Commerce President Kenneth Garcia took this as a poor excuse for interference when he declared: "The Union City Chamber of Commerce feels Alvarado-Decoto residents should decide the issue, not a councilman from an outside area. His (Steadman's) men are old enough and qualified enough to make up their own minds."

Steadman said the local had endorsed an earlier move to annex Decoto to Fremont because "incorporation would be bad for the Union City area." Steadman said the eight-square mile area proposed for Union City is too small to be economically feasible and the city will be headed for trouble if the election is successful. The union leader-councilman did not deny making the comments but said he "would appreciate knowing who had attributed the (anti-incorporation) statements to me."

He added, however, the union local has met and decided to take no stand on the incorporation election scheduled for January 13th. In a letter to the Decoto Merchants Ass'n. He says: "If your motives are justified for incorporation you have nothing to fear from Ken Steadman."

On December 11, 1958 the candidates for the five UC City Council seats met at a meeting held locally.

[The Daily Review gave this account of the meeting:](#)

"Incorporate into Union City January 13th or be swallowed up by neighboring cities. This warning was issued to some 80 Alvarado-Decoto residents last night by campaigning candidates for five Union City Council seats.

Mechanic Joseph Seoane declared: "We'll be gobbled up by the monster to the south (Fremont), and the octopus to the north Hayward if we do not incorporate."

In the same vein, nurseryman Tom Kitayama asked: "Would you like the city councils of Hayward or Fremont to tell you how to live? Let's incorporate and control our own future."

Most of the candidates went on record supporting a pay-as-you-go city government instead of bonding the proposed eight-square mile city for development. They contend a 48¢ property tax rate for the city is realistic, but readily admitted that if residents want more than minimum services they will have to pay for them with higher taxes.

Decoto businessman Henry Rivera said, "Incorporation means home rule instead of having one county supervisor handling your affairs way off in Oakland, you have the councilmen right here at home interested in and responsible to the residents."

The majority of the campaigners advocated a council administration form of government rather than a council-city manager type. Only Leo J. Avelais came out in favor of a city manager.

J.A. Ratekin, Holly Sugar Co. executive firmly announced: "I oppose the city manager form at this time. We're too small and don't need a lot of high salaried people to run our city."

Kitayama agreed and asserted the administrator form "will keep administrative costs to a minimum and help hold taxes down. When the city's population reaches 25,000 or 30,000, we can have an election then to see what the people want."

Oscar Dowe, Pacific States Steel Co. executive, declared residents and merchants have no cause to fear the area's two major industries, his firm and Holly Sugar. Said Dowe, "I can speak for the steel company, and I know Holly agrees, that we are willing to pay our fair share of the taxes. The small businessman and homeowners won't be pushed around by industry."

Other speakers at last night's meeting were George Sloane, Roland Paul, Wilbert Hendricks, Manuel Hidalgo, Joseph Lewis, Irving Williams, George Vargas, and Joaquin Naharro.

[On January 8, 1959, the candidates for the UC City Council spoke and \*The Daily Review\* gave this account of the proceedings:](#)

"Incorporate or wind up annexed to Fremont or Hayward was again the theme of Union City council candidates speaking last night to some 200 area residents.

"We've been nurtured and tortured by the north and south and the time has come we must incorporate," Oscar Dowe warned. Dowe also said Decoto residents don't have to fear double taxation because the new city will be forced to take over and run the Alvarado fire and sanitary districts.

"Fremont took over four fire districts at incorporation and a fifth was dissolved by election without any problems," according to Dowe. "If I were elected to a city council faced with running a sewer service, I would make sure that it got into the Union Sanitary District in a hurry," Dowe added.

Wilbert Hendricks said he is "interested in the working class of people" and if elected would not serve special interest or pressure groups.

Manuel Hidalgo declared, "Don't be swayed by special interest groups," (in Hayward), "(we) do not be a slum and dead-end for Hayward, which has the highest tax rate in the county. Vote to incorporate."

Tom T. Kitayama, stumping for a balanced city, said standards set forth in the Urban Land Institute study could be used as a guide for development of land. The study recommends 67 per cent of the area be set aside for residential development, 4 per cent for commerce, 7 per cent for public facilities, and 22 per cent for industry. He urged a sound zoning and planning program with the explanation that "you just don't arbitrarily set aside scattered parcels for unrelated uses."

Joe Lewis pledged to work for harmony on the City Council and to keep taxes down so farmers in the communities won't be forced out. He also promised to work with utility districts to see that the area is properly served.

Joaquin Naharro told listeners to "face the facts. If we don't incorporate we'll be annexed. As long as we're going to have to pay taxes to a city we might as well pay here and use the money ourselves. We know what we want and need better than anyone else."

J.A. Ratekin told the audience that he has "been in the middle of various incorporation actions since the (Hayward) Treeview Annexes started in 1955." Ratekin, Holly Sugar Co. executive said that "A city is run on a budget like a business. The city council will have to work on a budget and not overrun it. As for industry getting more out of incorporation than home owners, "industry has to pay the same amount per \$100 assessed value as the residents," he asserted. Ratekin served on the Tracy City Council three years and said this experience would be useful to get the city off to a sound businesslike start.

Henry Rivera said there must be something good in the area planned for incorporation because Hayward and Fremont have tried to get it. "We can always annex later and have a group of people to negotiate for us if things don't work out. At least that way we wouldn't be taken in like a bunch of sheep," he declared.

Mike P, Rodriguez accused Hayward of trying to grab off Union City because Hayward had started off with poor planning. "They used up all their land for homes and are looking for someplace to put their industry."

Joseph Seoane said that "If Hayward took over you can bet our area would be filled with industry and we wouldn't benefit. If incorporation fails Tuesday, Hayward will be down here on Wednesday morning to take over our choice lands," Seoane warned.

Irving Williams termed incorporation a "necessity, not a luxury," and added that home rule by local councilmen is far better than having things run by supervisors in Oakland."

On January 9, 1959, George I. Vargas, of Alvarado announced that he was withdrawing from the race for the UC City Council. He asked his supporters to shift their votes to the other six Alvarado candidates on the ballot. He hoped this move will give Alvarado a better chance for representation on the council if the incorporation measure passes. There were still 14 candidates in the race with eight from Decoto.

[From January 6 through January 8, 1959, \*The Daily Review\* printed a series of three editorials on the incorporation of Union City. They follow in their entirety:](#)

**[\*The Daily Review's Take on Union City - Part I:\*](#)**

Backers of the move to incorporate Alvarado and Decoto into Union City are sure that everything is tied in a neat package for voter acceptance next Tuesday. But so far residents of these communities have been treated to "don't open until incorporation" for specifics on what is in the package.

Next Tuesday come 1,521 registered voters in the eight square mile area will be eligible to go to polls. A simple majority of yes votes would cinch incorporation of Alameda County's 13th city. But what will some 5,000 to 6,000 residents get if the move to combine Alvarado and Decoto is successful?

The industries in the area, particularly Holly Sugar Co. and Pacific States Steel Corp., have been behind several successful maneuvers to keep the communities out of annexations to Hayward or Fremont. Using local leaders as "front men" they started out in 1955 to incorporate all of the 23-square mile area between Hayward and what is now Fremont.

But this fizzled with a series of successful annexations by Hayward. A last minute desperation move to halt Hayward was the filing of boundaries for the city of "New Haven" in 1957.

Late in the year, a move by some Decoto residents started their unsuccessful attempt to bring Decoto into Fremont. But this was defeated in last June by an all-out effort headed by Oscar Dowe, an executive of Pacific States Steel Corp. All of this maneuvering was, for the most part, handled in secret in back room meetings attended probably by no more than a dozen persons.

J.A. Ratekin, manager of the local Holly Sugar Plant, said at one of these meetings that his firm had spent between \$20,000 and \$30,000 in the legal battle to ward off Hayward's

advance. From 1955 to 1958 the town's people were pulled and hauled. One minute it was incorporation into Union City; then annexation, and then it was New Haven, and finally back to incorporation into Union City.

But in the meantime Hayward had trimmed the areas through annexation to the point the proposed annexation of the eight square mile city now represents only the "industrial heart" of the original annex.

Union City proponents eliminated the Masonic Home and Tamarack Knolls subdivision, when the decision was made to cut off the area east of Highway 9. Leaving out this area also eliminated the possibility of strong opposition to incorporation that might have swung the tide in the upcoming election.

Petitions for incorporation and annexation have floated around Alvarado and Decoto like a ticker tape parade the past three years. Claims and counter claims and secret maneuvering undoubtedly have confused the voter. And behind most of the juggling acts that have kept the area in the balance the past few years have been local industries.

At the protest hearing last October 30th on incorporation industries, their squad of attorneys and industrial realtors showed up in force to support incorporation before the County Board of Supervisors. A few farmers and home owners' representatives sat on the opposite side of the room but they couldn't halt the board's approval. The case seemed settled almost before the meeting convened.

There was no time for the supervisors to give adequate time to consideration of the protests. Their legal advisor told them that delay might result in failure of the new city to get on the tax rolls.

And so it went. The timing was close, but it was perfect. And now the Union City opponents have resigned themselves to the belief that Alvarado and Decoto will be joined and are running their own candidates in the hope they will have a voice in a government they didn't want.

It is clear what gains industry made in delaying incorporation and financing legal maneuvers against Hayward. Their reward came in the taxes saved and minimum restrictions. But now the handwriting is on the wall and further delay is impossible.

They have chosen incorporation over annexation. And now that they are going all out for incorporation two of the council candidates, Ratekin and Dowe, are in the race and would afford industrial representation in city government, if elected. In the long haul industry can keep the pressure on the council for low taxes, minimum government, and minimum capital improvement programs and see to it there is an all-out move to attract industry, then for them Union City will be a success.

*Daily Review, January 6, 1959:*

**Take on Union City - Part II:**

Unless there is an upset, residents of Decoto and Alvarado are going to buy Union City incorporation at the polls next Tuesday.

That's the clear indication *Daily Review* reporters get by talking to homeowners and businessmen. This spot check also revealed the basic reasons why they are willing to form a new city. Residents fear being gobbled up by Hayward or Fremont through annexation and



they want home rule. And home rule they will get if the majority checks the Yes box on the incorporation question next Tuesday.

Fifteen candidates for Union City's five council seats are beating the election and incorporation drum on the basis of a projected 48¢ property tax rate for Alameda County's 13th city. But in the off record talks many readily confide that the 48¢ figure is the barest possible minimum tax, and the odds are that the rate per \$100 assessed valuation will be higher.

Publicly they tell voters this figure is for "minimum services and government" and that anything beyond a shoestring operation will cost more money. The document often flashed by candidates to back up their low cost city pitch is a report prepared by Public Affairs Research Inc. of Oakland. This study shows an estimated budget of \$197,000 for the first year of Union City operation.

The major item is \$85,000 for police protection. But this amount would provide no change or improvement over present protection from the sheriff's office, which service Union City would buy from the county. Maintenance and improvement of roads and a city engineer's salary is the second largest item at \$57,000. This is a far cry from an earlier report by the same firm that recommended \$129,000 be budgeted for streets and listed nearly half a million dollars' worth of street deficiencies.

The other two items in the financial statement call for \$35,000 to pay city hall rent, city hall staff, legal, planning, and council costs with another \$20,000 set aside for reserves and capital improvement. The other services listed are being provided now at the \$1.98 county tax rate, which will continue even after incorporation.

Besides the 48¢ that will be heaped on the present total tax rate, the fire districts serving the two communities will continue to function as separate taxing agencies. Since fire protection is normally a city function, a realistic look at the Union City tax rate would show that Alvaradans will be paying 77¢, and Decotans 81¢.

The Public Affairs Research report concluded that incorporation will mean a \$14 a year reduction in utility bills for homeowners. It points out that this saving is more than the additional cost of city taxes. But PG&E officials say that density of population and not incorporation is the determining factor in utility rates. A survey is made annually and if increased population warrants a drop in rates it is done automatically, incorporated or not.

*The Review* poll of the two communities also revealed that home owners and businessmen are interested in specific things, better police service, better roads, parks, zoning, street cleaning, curbs, gutters and sidewalks, drainage, industry, and commerce. But what they want and what they likely will get would appear, at this time to be, two different things.

There will be no increase over present police service as noted earlier. Improvements in drainage, improving residential streets, installation of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, will have to be done by the individual property owner. The city won't pick up the bill or do the work. Better arterial roads, street cleaning and a parks program would have to be financed by the city and would probably mean a boost in the rate.

Industry and commerce are the heart's desire of all communities but none seem to get enough. Newark, similar in size, population, and assessed valuation, kicked its tax rate up to 97¢ this year and will probably pass the \$1 mark with next year's budget.

Decotans will continue in the Union Sanitary District and will continue to be supplied with water by Citizens Utility Co. regardless of incorporation. But Alvaradans will still have to pick up the tab for their own sewer service and pay off outstanding sewer bonds (This year's ASD rate is \$1.19).

Unless a solution is devised, Alvaradans will come out on the short end. This area, much poorer in assessed value as its neighboring community, will be stuck with providing sewage service for expanding industry while the entire city reaps the tax benefits of any increases in assessed valuation.

Citizens will still have to trot to the county office building to get permits to build sheds and homes, and for permits for heating, ventilating, and plumbing. Inspection of improvement also will be handled by county men out of Hayward.

As for zoning, the council candidates generally favor sitting as a planning commission rather than appointing citizens to a planning board. None have made public commitments on zoning other than to say they favor a "balanced community."

Some 150 businesses, office and professional persons will be tapped for a local business license at whatever rate set by the council. Services will continue basically unimproved and unchanged. But residents are being asked to vote for another 48¢ on their tax rate. To date backers of incorporation haven't told voters of or shown them any benefits beyond home rule and the slamming of the gate in the annexation fingers of Hayward and Fremont.

### **Take on Union City - Part III:**

Industry's all-out campaign to incorporate Decoto and Alvarado as Union City will meet its deciding test at the poll's Tuesday. Industry and industrial realtors have kept the communities in a state of political turmoil with maneuvers that have left residents on the outside looking in most of the time.

But on Tuesday voters will close the voting booth curtain and the test of years of backroom strategy will be on. Many of the self-styled leaders representing their own and vested interest that the manipulation of the communities political future the past few years has been in the best interest of residents. But most of the time only the very few "leaders" knew what was behind the maneuvering and the average homeowner was left in the dark.

The on-again, off-again incorporation and annexation movements were confusing. Equally strong cases were made for each new political cause that could not help but leave a voter in a state of confusion. And each time a new turn of events threatened industry's favorable tax position the specter of the land-grabbing Hayward boogey man was dusted off and propped up in front of residents as a rallying point for the scheme of the day.

Petition after petition were carried through the communities by first one group, and then another, but each with the same basic backing and with the purpose of stalling or delaying annexation or incorporation. Joe Perry, Decoto farmer, summed it up at one meeting when he announced that "we worked like dogs" to defeat annexation to Fremont and "now the same old bunch is pushing to incorporate."

Industry saved many thousands of dollars in taxes by keeping the "future of Alvarado and Decoto dangling in midair." These savings were above the costs of attorneys who waged one battle after another for status quo. There is still a court case pending against a Hayward annex that could throw a monkey wrench into incorporation if it is successful.

A winning appeal by certain Decoto-Alvarado landowners to Hayward's 1,132 acre annexation would reestablish different boundaries than the ones now proposed for Union City. Until it is settled or dropped a legal cloud hangs over a successful election. But regardless of the success or failure of any in a long series of complicated moves, they were not anything started at the grass-root level by residents.

When boundaries were filed in the area in 1957 to form New Haven, the proponents of this city, Kenneth Garcia and Wilbert Hendricks, were "kicked off" the Union City Steering Committee. They were publicly criticized for yanking the rug out from under the Union City backers, who clasped their hands and innocently disclaimed any advance knowledge of what Garcia and Hendricks had planned.

But subsequent developments revealed that this had been hatched out by the same crew of backroom strategists. And it developed that the New Haven "boundaries" had been carried to Oakland for filing by an industry executive.

While this tight-knit group went one, two, and three directions at the same time, residents were treated to dressed-up explanations, but weren't allowed to look behind the scenes of the show. As the battle draws to a head, these same voters, who have been non-participating witnesses to the fancy footwork, are being called on to carry the ball. They are being asked to step into a voting booth and throw their support behind the crucial issue of incorporation.

At last, industry needs the help of John Q. Public, it needs his vote. The average homeowner will pick up little if any immediate tangible benefits from a yes vote on incorporation Tuesday. The voters will have home rule, but services from the county and special districts will be basic and unchanged.

The home rule will add 48¢ per \$100 assessed valuation to a tax rate that now pays for virtually the same services. While the homeowner gets little from "minimum government and service" at a minimum tax rate, the industries, industrial realtors, and landowners stand to gain a great deal if they can continue to pull the strings after incorporation.

If a new Union City is willing to permit sale of most any parcel of land to most any kind of industry it will certainly go far toward increasing assessed valuation. But a city of smoke stacks, fumes, and strong, biting odors isn't going to prove satisfactory to the 24-hour a day residents.

Emeryville has the lowest rate of any city in Alameda County. It is an industrial paradise. But the desirability of living in the shadow of an industrial smokestack is questionable. A city mainly composed of industry has no need for parks, large shopping centers, nice roads, or restrictions that would force an industry to clean up or prohibits a brother industry from coming in regardless of its nuisance potential.

In an industrial town everything but industry, and what services is required by industry is surplus. The tax rate is the thing. Ten cents on a tax rate would finance a park without costing the average more than the price of a few packages of cigarettes.

But it would be thousands of dollar to the industries. And so far industry has paid the piper and calls the tune in the formation of Union City.

[On January 8th, the Oakland Tribune:](#)  
[\*\*The Oakland Tribune's Take on Union City:\*\*](#)

Union City has almost fought its way back onto the map of Alameda County. Some 1,500 registered voters of Alvarado and Decoto will decide in an incorporation election next Tuesday whether to establish municipal rule in the locale where the county's government was born 106 years ago.

The new Union City, named for defunct port just west of Alvarado, has dwindled to a potential 8.6 square miles from the 20 originally proposed in 1955. A substantial portion of the difference has been taken up by the City of Hayward annexation thrusts, one of which blocked off access to San Francisco Bay for proposed Union City and another, which stalled the incorporation movement during lengthy jurisdictional battles in the courts.

Alvarado and Decoto civic leaders decided they were still not to be denied their own city. They turned down offers to annex to the two towns of Hayward or Fremont, and drew up Union City boundaries again on a reduced scale, also leaving out several square miles east of Highway 9.

Union City would drive a wedge five-miles long between Hayward and Fremont, although those two cities touch on the Bay and its shared shoreline area. Unincorporated land would still lie to the east in the hills. Union City would have a population of 5,000 persons, with some 3,500 of them in Decoto, located three miles east of Alvarado. The flat farming and industrial land of the area is by the meandering Alameda Creek, which empties into the Bay past Alvarado.

A dozen industries are dominated by Pacific States Steel near Decoto, and the Holly Sugar Mill at Alvarado. Industries and civic groups are backing the incorporation campaign, which has drawn 15 City Council candidates. The Union City Chamber of Commerce reports no organized opposition to creation of a municipality. The chamber was formed from a merger of the old Decoto and Alvarado Chambers of Commerce more than two years ago in an attempt to spur the drive toward city status.

The city would be the 13th in Alameda County, which held its first governmental meeting, a Court of Sessions, on June 6, 1853, in a room above the store of A.M. Church and Co., now marked only by a monument on Alvarado's main street.

Union City came into existence before Alvarado. (Union City was founded in the fall of 1850 by John Horner, and New Haven/Alvarado was founded in January 1851 by Henry C. Smith). John M. Horner purchased an extensive tract of land located on the banks of the Alameda Creek at a point then known as the Devil's Elbow. He built the first warehouse there and named the town Union City. Horner (Horner sold town lots in December 1850), and his brother William, built a steam operated flour mill at Union City in 1853, and a sample of the product won first prize at the first Agricultural Fair in California.

Alvarado, first called New Haven, grew up one half mile east of Union City. The name honors Don Juan B. Alvarado, governor of California in 1836. Henry C. Smith, a local merchant and State legislator, is credited with having Alvarado named the county seat when Alameda County was formed from portions of Contra Costa and Santa Clara Counties. San Leandro won the county seat shortly thereafter in an election was termed a "hard-faced fraud" by an Irvington newspaperman, who charged that hundreds of men were imported from San Francisco to vote for the change.

Decoto did not develop as a town until after 1867 when Ezra Decoto and his two brothers, John and Adolphus, purchased 334 acres of land there. Union City proponents can look back a long way, but right now they're looking toward next Tuesday.

On January 13, 1959, the initial voting was reported as light this morning as Decoto and Alvarado residents went to the polls to decide the issue of whether to approve the incorporation of Alvarado and Decoto into the City of Union City, and which five councilmen to choose to lead the fledgling city. Voting picked up in the afternoon, however.

January 14, 1959 – 12:00:01:

Hello Union City!  
Goodbye to the towns of Decoto & Alvarado...  
Hello to the Decoto & Alvarado Districts of Union City

Votes in favor of Union City: 834  
Votes against Union City: 221

City Council Victors:

Tom Kitayama:	35	Alvarado	Nurseryman	701 votes.
J. A. Ratekin:	57	Alvarado	Supt. Holly Sugar Co.	654 votes
Joseph J. Seoane	41	Decoto	Chemical Worker	574 votes
Oscar Dowe	51	Decoto	Steel Plant executive	571 votes
Joe Lewis	65	Alvarado	Retired oil co. exec.	428 votes

Tiny Alvarado, fearful of not having representation on the city council because of the lack voting strength as opposed to neighboring Decoto, fretted in vain. Three of the new councilmen, Tom T. Kitayama, J.A. Ratekin, and Joseph E. Lewis were from Alvarado. Decoto winners were Joseph Seoane Jr. and Oscar C. Dowe.

#### [The Aftermath of Incorporation:](#)

*The Hayward Daily Review* had touted for several years that the Union City incorporation was backed by two large local industries, the Holly Sugar Mill in Alvarado, and the Pacific States Steel Company in Decoto; and that Union City would become a city of smokestacks

As for the smokestack city? In January 1968 the Holly Sugar Co. reported the impending closure of the Alvarado sugar mill, 99 years after its founding. By September 1968 the last remaining molasses in the giant tanks on the Alvarado property were emptied, and the sugar mill was closed forever.

The following decade, the dumping of Japanese steel on the American economy, slowly strangled the profits of the Pacific States Steel Co. and the American Forge; both located side by side in Decoto. In 1977, the steel mill was also gone. The two industrial giants of Union City were gone within two decades of incorporation.

The other struggle worthy of mention was the battle for students between the Decoto School District of Washington Township, and the La Vista School District of Eden Township. The battle between these two school districts began when the City of Hayward (an Eden Township entity), annexed property in Washington Township. When incorporation occurred in January 1959, Hayward City students living in Washington Township attended Decoto elementary schools, and Washington Union High School in Centerville (Fremont). In 1960 the high school students living in Washington Township in the Fairway Park, El Rancho Verde, and Hillview Crest subdivisions attended James Logan High.

The Washington Township residents of Fairway Park, El Rancho Verde, and Hillview Crest subdivisions, almost to a person, preferred to be in the Hayward school district. They fought with

the certainty that they could have the school district lines adjusted so that their children could attend Hayward schools. As far as I am able to determine, in the year 2020, these students are still in the Decoto School District (called the New Haven School District today), and are not in the La Vista School District of Hayward.

<b>TALLY BY PECINCTS:</b>					
	<b>Barnard Schol</b>	<b>Decoto School</b>	<b>Decoto Firehouse</b>	<b>Alvarado Firehouse</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>INCORPORATION</b>					
<b>Yes</b>	253	260	103	218	834
<b>No</b>	102	40	62	17	221
<b>CITY COUNCIL</b>					
<b>Kitayama</b>	244	215	101	141	701
<b>Ratekin</b>	173	199	99	183	654
<b>Seoane</b>	178	216	100	83	577
<b>Dowe</b>	190	192	73	116	571
<b>Lewis</b>	67	102	87	172	428
<b>Sloane</b>	147	149	62	58	416
<b>Rivera</b>	183	129	50	27	389
<b>Hidalgo</b>	152	127	33	53	365
<b>Williams</b>	82	81	51	31	245
<b>Naharro</b>	61	23	10	143	237
<b>Alvelais</b>	131	57	12	11	211
<b>Hendricks</b>	25	22	34	126	207
<b>Rodrigues</b>	85	85	22	13	205
<b>Vargas</b>	16	19	14	16	65
<b>Paul</b>	9	6	4	14	33
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>1622</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>1,187</b>	<b>5,304</b>

# **B I B L I O G R A P H Y**

## **NEWSPAPERS:**

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## **BOOKS:**

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BY: THE COUNTRY CLUB OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, ©1965

*THE HISTORY OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP*

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## **COMPUTER FILES:**

*THE CITY OF HAYWARD, HAYWARD ANNEXATION FILES, POST WWII*

## **MAPS:**

GOOGLE MAPS

THOMAS BROS. MAPS, 1957