

# *History and Culture of Los Gatos*

## **Location**

The Town of Los Gatos, California, is nestled at the base of the Sierra Azules, approximately 50 miles south of San Francisco, in the southwestern portion of Santa Clara County where the Santa Clara Valley meets the lower slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Los Gatos is bounded by the City of San Jose to the north and east, the City of Campbell to the north, the Cities of Monte Sereno and Saratoga to the west, and the unincorporated County of Santa Clara and the County of Santa Cruz to the south.

Los Gatos encompasses a wide variety of terrain, ranging from flat topography at the edge of the valley floor to densely wooded hillsides. Both the valley and hillsides are interspersed with creeks, streams, and riparian habitat. The sharp contrast between the valley floor and the hillsides provides the Town's picturesque background.



## **History**

The name Los Gatos comes from "El Rancho de Los Gatos," a ranch established in 1839 by a Mexican land grant and so named because of the large number of mountain lions in the area. In 1854, James Alexander Forbes purchased some of this land and built a flour mill. In 1860, the first hotel was opened to provide a stage stop on the toll road which had been built between San Jose and Santa Cruz.

Wheat production gave way to orchards, and rapid growth ensued when the railroad reached Los Gatos in 1878. The residential subdivisions of Broadway, Bayview, Fairview, and Almond Grove were built in the 1880's. By 1887, the population had grown to 1,500 and the Los Gatos community voted to incorporate.



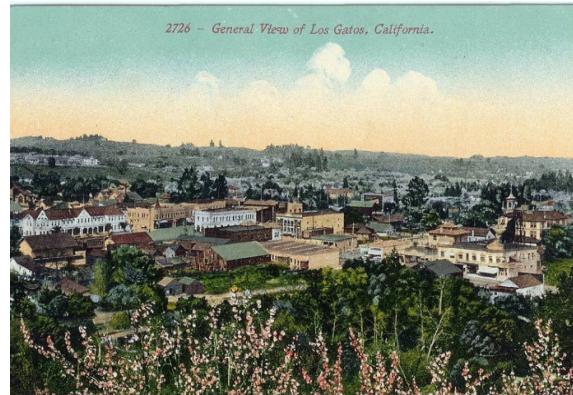
Fruit industries faded slowly during the Depression and World War II, but the postwar period brought an influx of people, producing residential and commercial development. Highway 17 was constructed through the center of town, opening in 1940. Growth levelled off in the early 1970's, leaving Los Gatos with its small-town atmosphere and pedestrian-oriented downtown.

Because of its distance from other centers of population, Los Gatos developed as a complete community including residential, business, and industrial elements. Preserving Los Gatos as a complete and well-balanced community has been and remains a prominent goal of residents. From the first 100-acre town site in 1890 with a population of 1,652, Los Gatos grew

slowly so that by 1963 the area was 6.3 square miles, with a population of 11,750. Today Los Gatos covers nearly 15 square miles and has a population of about 30,000. This relatively slow growth over the first 80 years resulted in a human scale community with narrow streets and small buildings.

As it exists now, Los Gatos' boundaries encompass a wide variety of terrain, ranging from level land to steep and densely wooded hillsides. The sharp visual contrasts among these features and charming architecture create the picturesque setting of the Town. In the midst of an increasingly urbanizing Silicon Valley, Los Gatos has attracted people with a preference for the Town's distinctive, high quality natural and downtown environment.

Los Gatos has a heritage of older, established residential areas and a downtown with many buildings representing the various eras in the Town's history.



Both the Town's management and the Town's residents take great care and pride in the preservation of its historic business district and residential architecture, and, as a result, Los Gatos is one of the most beautiful, well-maintained, and desirable communities in the Bay Area.

### **Community**

Situated within the largest metropolitan area of northern California, Los Gatos is closely tied to Silicon Valley and its fast-paced economy. Located at the southern edge of Silicon Valley, Los Gatos harbors more than 3,000 businesses with a full range of services for its residents, and serves as a destination point for visitors who are attracted to its restaurants and the variety of high-end specialty shops within the pedestrian-oriented downtown setting. Downtown Los Gatos is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the model of what communities strive to achieve in a downtown.



Los Gatos has many parks and greenbelt areas, providing many recreational activities for its residents. It



is also near the major cultural and professional athletic events in San Francisco and San Jose, tourist attractions in Santa Cruz, and ocean activities in the Monterey Bay. This picturesque and charming Town is full of enterprising citizens, proud of who they are and protective of where they live. There is a high level of community pride as demonstrated by many community-based organizations which work to retain Los Gatos' exceptional living environment. Unlike many of the suburban communities in the Bay Area, Los Gatos has its own identity. Los Gatos prides itself on being a "self-contained community" even though it borders a major metropolitan area. It is a close-knit and friendly community where people take time to get to know each other.

### **Climate**

Los Gatos enjoys a mild Mediterranean climate, making it ideal for business, residential, and recreational opportunities. Summers are dry and warm in the 80 degrees to 100 degrees range. Winters are temperate

and semi-moist in the 40 degrees to 60 degrees range. Los Gatos receives most of its precipitation from December through March. It is rare to see raindrops in the summer months.

### ***Transportation***

Los Gatos is part of a comprehensive transportation network that links the town to Silicon Valley cities, the Mineta International Airport in San Jose, and mass transportation rail-line facilities. The Valley Transportation Authority also has a couple of bus lines servicing the Los Gatos community. Bus routes connect to the light rail system in various locations throughout the Silicon Valley, and the airport and train station in San Jose. The Town is also accessible via Highway 17 and Highway 85.



San Francisco and Oakland are 53 and 50 miles north of Los Gatos respectively. The coastal city of Santa Cruz is 21 miles south over the Santa Cruz Mountains, and the busy tourist towns of Monterey and Carmel are approximately 60 and 65 miles south of Los Gatos.

### ***Economy***

Historically innovation-based economies like Silicon Valley have benefited from the constant change of technological advances and globalization. Silicon Valley's unique mix of talent, technology, and capital have often translated into a genuine comparative advantage nationally. These factors propelled the region out of previous recessions with patterns of growth typically outperforming the nation. However, the unprecedented challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have forced communities across the nation to address public health driven economic impacts never witnessed in our lifetimes.



Los Gatos has a diverse economic base of office, high tech, light industry, retail, and restaurants. As online demand for retail and services has increased, the Town continues to offer commercial office space, high quality dining, experiential retail, and service-based businesses. The Town's historic downtown is a draw for residents and visitors alike.

Unlike other economic barometers, Silicon Valley home sales and valuations remained strong during the pandemic, trending well above the national average. Los Gatos property values reflected that strength and are among some of the highest in the State, confirming that the Town continues to be a highly desired location.

The FY 2022/23 Budget currently anticipates no significant new programming and does maintain existing service with modest staffing additions. This Budget also provides for limited, continued strategic investments toward important wildfire vegetation management as Federal grant funding allows and other necessary infrastructure improvements, as the pandemic is not the only threat to our community's health and safety.

Vacancy rates for commercial properties in Los Gatos are low, as current and prospective retail businesses seek to enhance business models with innovative products and services to compete in a dynamic brick and mortar environment. Additionally, much like the greater Silicon Valley, office and R&D vacancies remain low as new businesses continue to find opportunity in the area in the way of startups and expansions.

## ***Town of Los Gatos Vision***



The Town of Los Gatos is a welcoming, family-oriented, and safe community nestled in the beautiful foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Town is a sustainable community that takes pride in its small-town character and provides a range of housing opportunities, historic neighborhoods, local culture and arts, excellent schools, and a lively and accessible downtown. Los Gatos offers a choice of mobility options, superior public facilities and services, and an open and responsive local government that is fiscally sound. Los Gatos has a dynamic and thriving economy that includes a mix of businesses throughout Town that serves all residents, workers and visitors.

### ***What makes Los Gatos Special?***

The desire to protect the Town's high quality of life is demonstrated by extensive citizen participation in many service groups and community issues. While residents may disagree over specific issues, they share a common appreciation for Los Gatos. The overall community consensus is that Los Gatos:

- Be a full-service community that is also environmentally sensitive.
- Maintain a balanced, well-designed mix of residential, commercial, service, and open space uses, fostering a pedestrian-oriented and bicycle friendly community with a small town, village-like character.
- Support an active business community that provides a wide variety of goods and services and a broad range of employment opportunities, minimizing the need to travel to other communities.
- Provide a well-run, efficient municipal government that is fiscally healthy, with high levels of public safety, recreational, and arts and cultural amenities, and that is committed to high quality education.



## ***STATISTICS SECTION***

## Town of Los Gatos Statistics

### TOWN DEMOGRAPHICS:

Current Town Area	15 Square Miles
Incorporated	August 10, 1887
Elevation	428 ft.
Miles of Streets	112
Number of Traffic Signals	31
Number of Registered Voters	22,051
Form of Government	Council Manager
Town Employee/Resident Ratio	1:196

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 12 Neighborhood Parks
- Los Gatos Creek Trail
- 161 Acres of Designated Open Space
- Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation District
  - Adult Recreation Center
  - Youth Recreation Center
- Los Gatos Library
- New Museum Los Gatos

### HOSPITALS

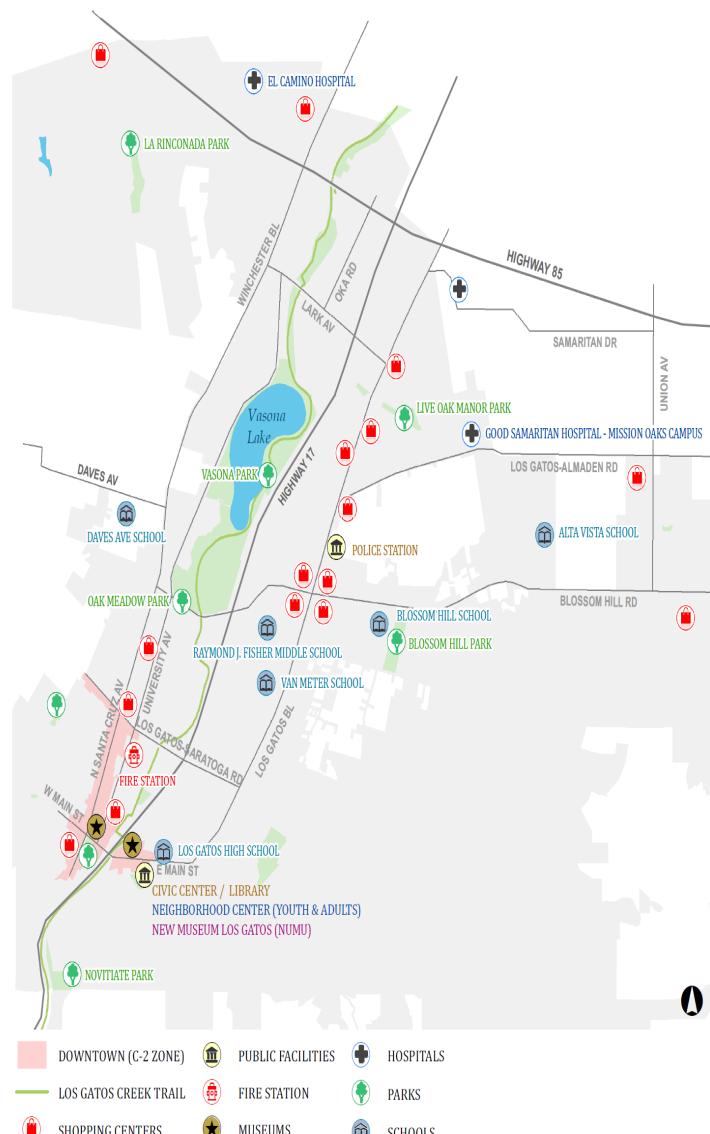
- Good Samaritan Hospital - Mission Oaks Campus
- El Camino Hospital

### PUBLIC EDUCATION

- 4 Elementary Schools
- 1 Middle School
- 1 High School
- 1 Continuation Program
- 1 Independent Study

### POLICE SERVICES

- 1 Police Station
- 1 Police Services Building
- 39 Police Officers
- 21 Support Personnel



## ***Town of Los Gatos Statistics***

### **WEATHER:**

#### Average Temperatures (degrees Fahrenheit)

Winter	40/59
Spring	45/70
Summer	54/83
Fall	48/73

Average Sunny Days 330 per year

Average precipitation 23.08 inches

Annual snowfall 0.00 inches

### **POPULATION:**

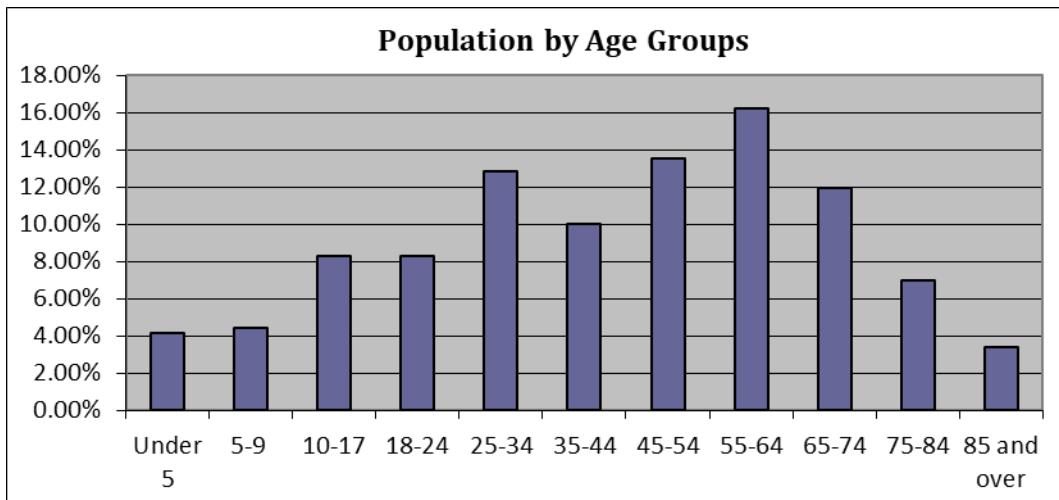
1990 Census 28,013

2000 Census 28,523

2010 Census 29,413

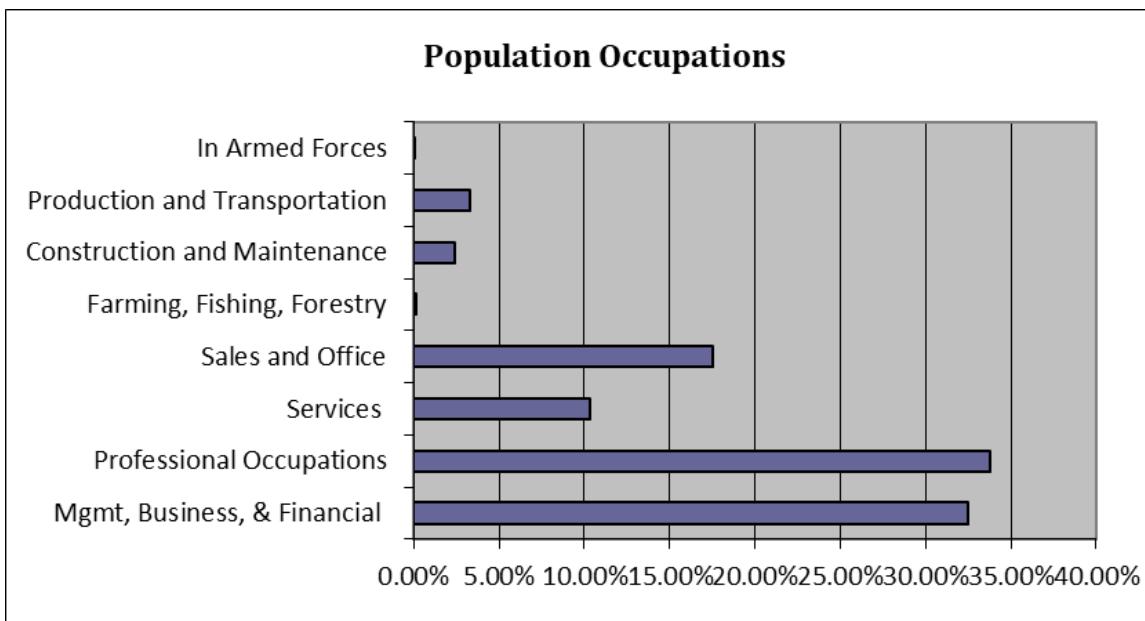
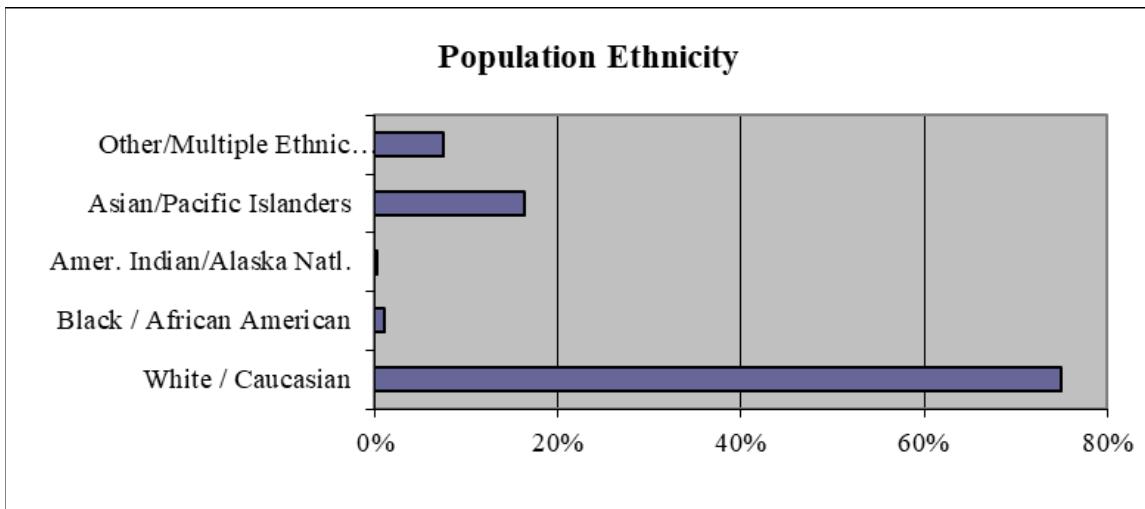
2022 Estimates 30,062

State Ranking in Population 226 of 482



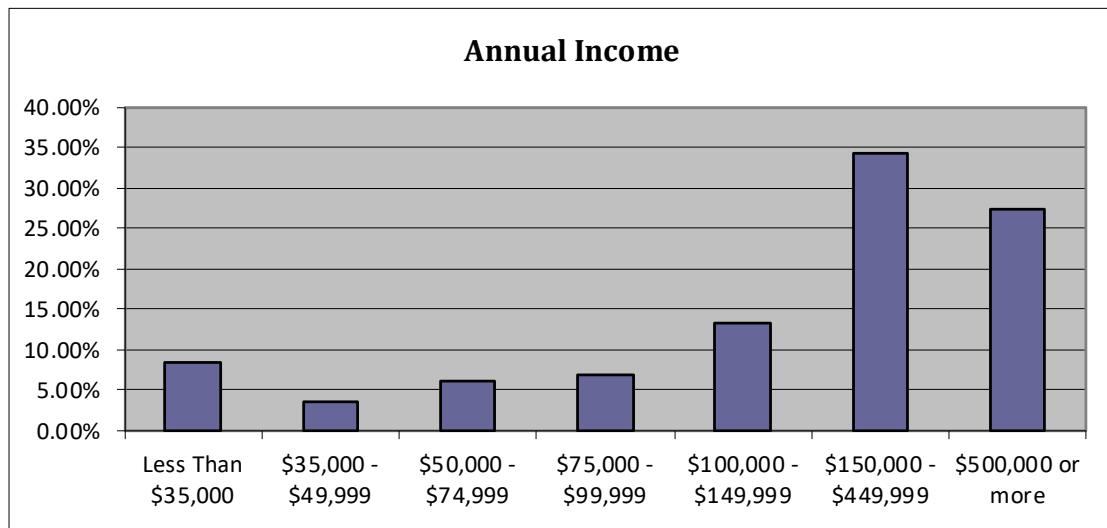
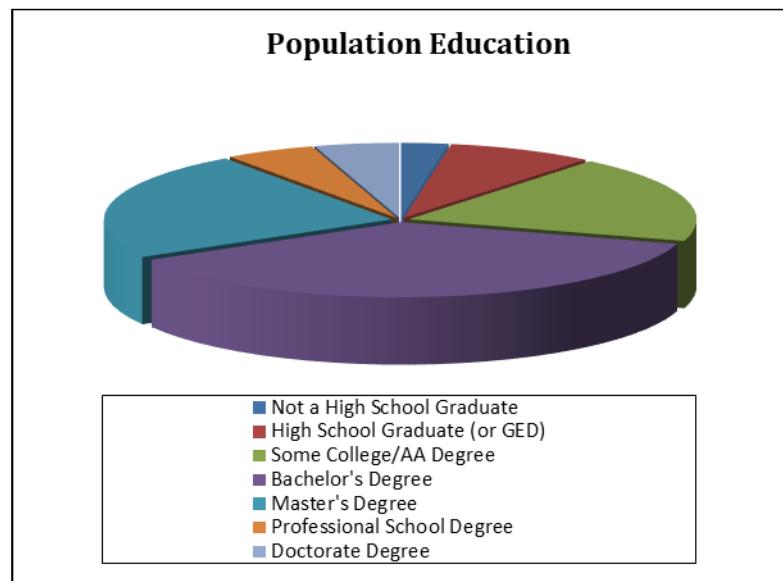
*Note: Demographic figures obtained from State of California and Claritas LLC*

## ***Town of Los Gatos Statistics***



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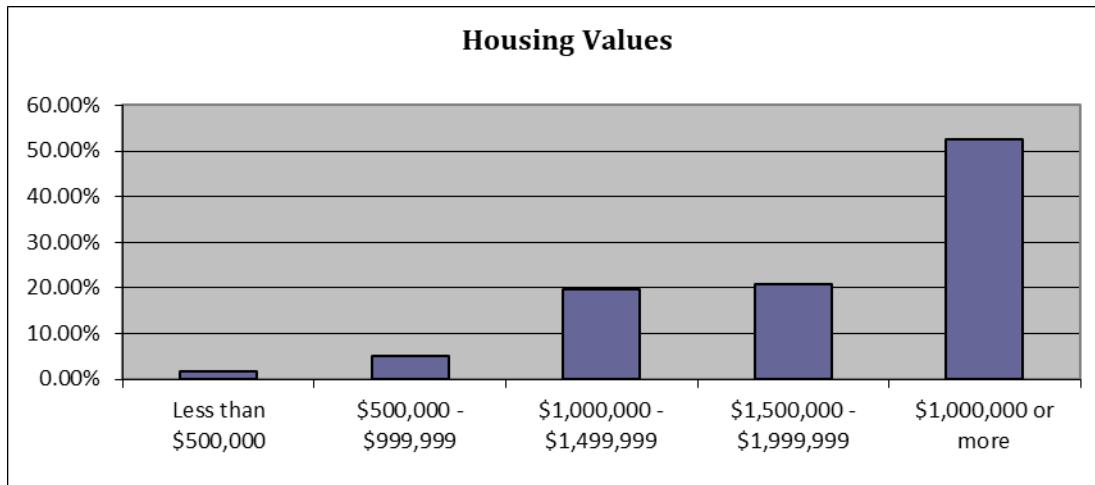
## ***Town of Los Gatos Statistics***



*Note: Demographic figures obtained from State of California and Claritas LLC*

## ***Town of Los Gatos Statistics***

<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Owner Occupied	8,393	64.0%
Renter Occupied	4,730	36.1%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>13,123</b>	<b>100%</b>



*Note: Demographic figures obtained from State of California and Claritas LLC*

## ***Economic Factors***

### **FY 2021/22 Twenty Local Secured Taxpayers**

<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Assessed Value</b>	<b>% of Total (1)</b>
Serramonte Corporate Center LLC	Business Park	\$ 211,123,540	1.38%
SI 32 LLC	Apartments	158,132,236	1.04%
Wealthcap Los Gatos 121	Business Park	119,316,793	0.78%
Preylock Los Gatos LLC	Business Park	96,873,316	0.64%
Summerhill N40 LLC	Residential Development	59,462,462	0.39%
Donahue Schriber Realty Group LP	Shopping Center	59,255,121	0.39%
Knowles Los Gatos LLC	Industrial	54,592,229	0.36%
San Jose Water Works	Water Company	53,320,614	0.35%
El Camino Hospital	Medical Buildings	50,456,560	0.33%
Sobrato Interests IV LLC	Apartments	46,155,127	0.30%
140 Toll House IV LLC	Hotel	35,499,104	0.23%
SRI Old Town LLC	Shopping Center	35,246,406	0.23%
SF Los Gatos LLC	Hotel	33,214,527	0.22%
KSL Capital Partners	Athletic Club	33,037,818	0.22%
International Hotel	Hotel	27,471,495	0.18%
Kay K. & Go Sasaki Sr., Trustee	Apartments	27,231,335	0.18%
750 University LLC	Office Building	27,064,374	0.18%
Equestrian 3 Investments LLC	Office Building	26,306,130	0.17%
Alberto Way Holdings LLC	Office Building	24,896,799	0.16%
Good Samaritan Hospital LP	Hospital	<u>24,111,608</u>	0.16%
		<u>\$ 1,202,767,594</u>	<u>7.89%</u>

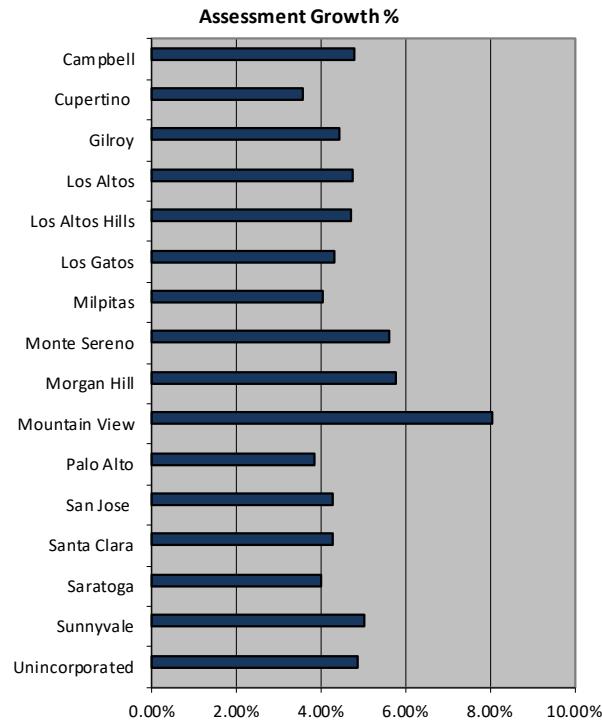
## ***Economic Factors***

<b>Santa Clara County Assessment Roll Growth by City</b>			
(Values in \$Billions*)			
Santa Clara County Cities	Total Roll 2021	Total Roll 2020	Percent Growth**
Campbell	\$ 12.37	\$ 11.81	4.78%
Cupertino	28.81	27.82	3.55%
Gilroy	10.27	9.83	4.45%
Los Altos	18.83	17.97	4.73%
Los Altos Hills	9.33	8.91	4.71%
Los Gatos	15.55	14.91	4.33%
Milpitas	22.35	21.48	4.04%
Monte Sereno	2.57	2.43	5.63%
Morgan Hill	11.48	10.85	5.75%
Mountain View	37.58	34.78	8.06%
Palo Alto	44.03	42.39	3.85%
San Jose	215.86	206.99	4.28%
Santa Clara	52.26	50.12	4.28%
Saratoga	17.54	16.87	4.00%
Sunnyvale	57.58	54.83	5.02%
Unincorporated	20.50	19.55	4.88%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 576.91</b>	<b>\$ 551.54</b>	<b>4.60%</b>

\*Net of nonreimbursable exemptions

\*\*percentage based on non-rounded values

Source: Santa Clara County's Office of the County Assessor 2021/22 Annual Report



Organization	Product/Services	Employees
Netflix	Internet Services	2278
El Camino Hospital, Los Gatos	Health Industry	517
Courtside Tennis Club*	Leisure/Recreation	542
Los Gatos -Saratoga Union High School District*	Education	320
Safeway ( 3 locations)	Food Industry	314
Los Gatos Elementary School District	Education	281
Vasona Creek Health Care Ctr*	Health Industry	250
Terraces of Los Gatos	Health Industry	200
Good Samaritan Regional Cancer Center	Health Industry	200
Whole Foods Market*	Food Industry	180
Town of Los Gatos*	Town Government	165

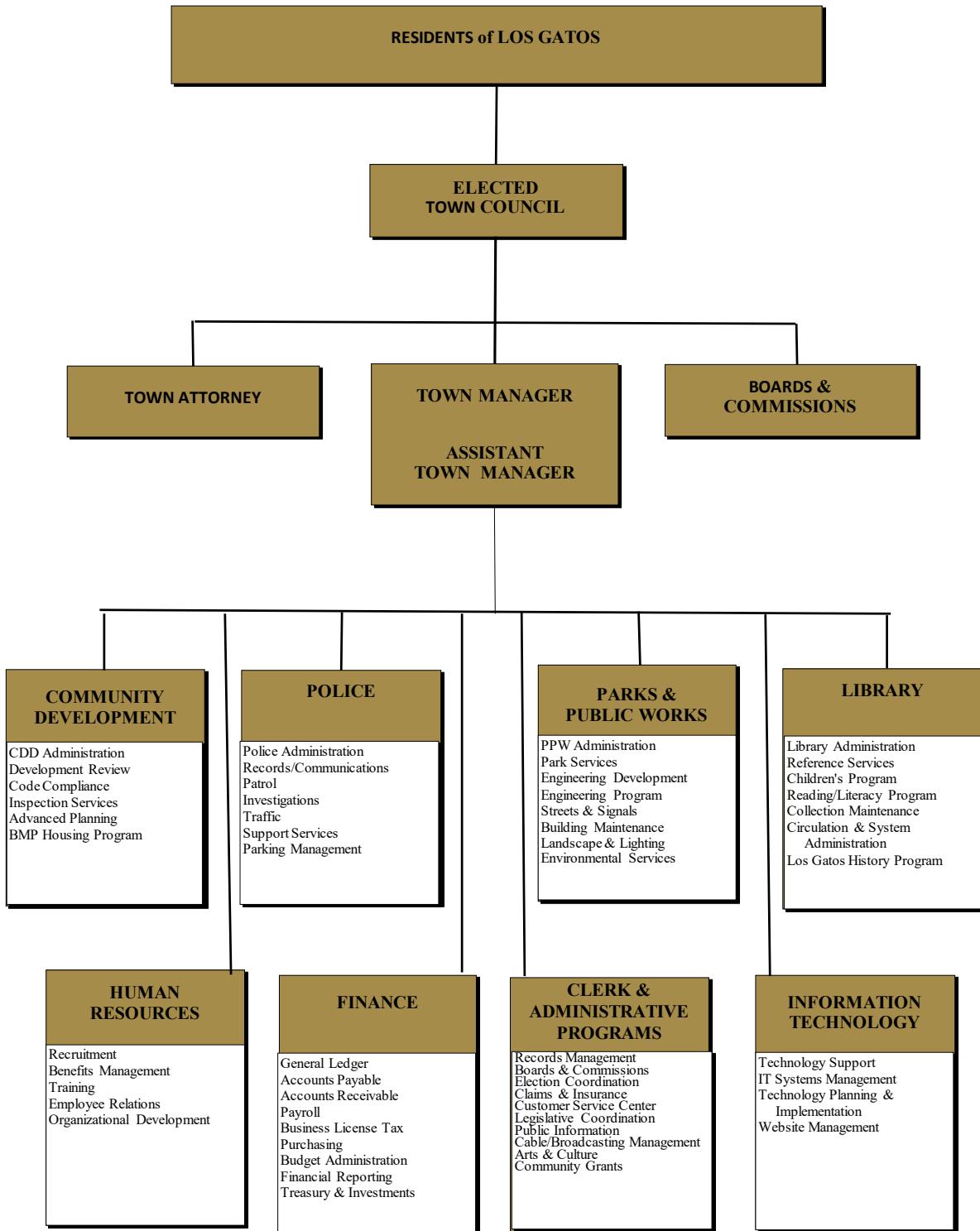
\*Includes full and part time employees

Source: MuniServices, LLC and Staff direct correspondence with Town's local businesses.  
Latest data available at the time of publication.

## ***Town Management***

Town Manager .....	Laurel Prevetti
Assistant Town Manager .....	Arn Andrews
Town Attorney .....	Gabriella Wheelan
Chief of Police .....	Jamie Field
Community Development Director .....	Joel Paulson
Interim Parks and Public Works Director .....	Timm Borden
Library Director .....	Ryan Baker
Finance Director .....	Stephen Conway
Human Resources Director .....	Salina Flores

## ***Town of Los Gatos Organizational Structure***



## ***Town of Los Gatos Commissions, Committees, and Advisory Boards***

The Town of Los Gatos has a variety of volunteer Commissions, Committees, and Boards, whose purpose is to act in an advisory capacity to the Los Gatos Town Council. Members of these Commissions, Committees, and Boards are appointed by the Town Council. The following is a list of the Town's active Commissions, Committees, and Boards:

### ***Arts and Culture Commission***

Encourages the development of art, drama, music, and other creative activities in Los Gatos.

### ***Building Board of Appeals***

Hears appeals of Building regulations.

### ***Community Health and Senior Services Commission***

Ensures the pertinent goals and objectives of the Human Services Element to the General Plan are implemented by regularly assessing the human service needs of the community.

### ***Complete Streets and Transportation Commission***

Provides input and suggestions into the development of safe and effective transportation and mobility options for all modes throughout the Town of Los Gatos.

### ***Conceptual Development Advisory Committee***

Advises prospective applicants of whether a project is consistent with Town policy prior to initiating the development review process.

### ***Finance Commission***

The Finance Commission is advisory to the Town Council on financial, budgetary, and investment matters. The Commission reviews and makes recommendations to the Town Council regarding the Town's Operating and Capital Budgets, Annual Financial Report, financial policies, use of the Town's dedicated Sales tax revenue, new revenue opportunities, cost recovery fee structure, and other topics.

### ***Council Policy Committee***

Reviews and discusses Town policy updates and makes recommendations to Town Council.

### ***General Plan Committee***

Provides assistance to the Community Development Department, Planning Commission, and Town Council on all matters relating to the General Plan or any Specific Plan.

### ***Historic Preservation Committee***

Advises the Planning Commission and Town Council concerning matters pertaining to historic preservation. Determines and issues approval for minor exterior alterations to historic structures.

### ***Library Board***

Represents the community in making recommendations regarding Library services.

***Town of Los Gatos  
Commissions, Committees, and Advisory Boards***

***Parks Commission***

Provides advisory oversight for issues related to public parks, off-street trails, open space, grounds, street trees, and town beautification.

***Personnel Board***

Hears appeals submitted by any person in the classified services, relative to any disciplinary action or alleged violation of Town ordinance, and certifies its findings and recommendations.

***Planning Commission***

Takes actions and makes recommendations to the Town Council regarding planning, zoning administration, and other land use issues.

***Senior Services Committee***

Advises the Town Council on the needs of Seniors through the preparation of a roadmap and recommendations for implementation.

***Town Pension and OPEB Trusts Oversight Committee***

Provides fiduciary oversight of the Town's Pension and Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) IRS Section 115 Trusts.

***Youth Commission***

Provides young people a voice in the Los Gatos community and functions as an advisory board to the Town Council on youth-related issues.