

**Business Recognition Program  
Owens Corning  
July 17, 2007 City Council Meeting**

- **Tonight we have the pleasure of recognizing an outstanding Santa Clara business, Owens Corning, which opened in Santa Clara in 1949.**
  
- **On behalf of the entire City Council, I'd like to welcome Jim Gerodimos, Owens Corning Santa Clara Plant Leader, and other Owens Corning representatives, to the Council Chambers.**
  
- **Owens Corning was one of the first new industries to settle in Santa Clara Valley after World War II. The Santa Clara plant was constructed from 1948-1949 in Santa Clara's Pasetta industrial tract. The structural steel for the plant was fabricated at the Bethlehem Pacific Coast Steel Corp. in Alameda, and Bechtel Corp. served as general contractor for the new facility.**
  
- **Dramatic aerial photographs from 1948 and 49 show the plant under construction, and were donated to our City Library's historic collection from W. Marvin Draper of Pomona who worked for the company.**





- **“Old photos are too precious to throw away,” he said in his donation letter. He pointed out that it was**

**interesting to see how much undeveloped land there was in 1948. He referred to the fiberglass plant as being “out in the country,” which at the time it was, on Lafayette at Kifer Road (now on Central Expressway). Mr. Draper said that the construction contractor paid for the rental plane from the San Jose Airport that he used to take progress photos of plant construction.**

- **In his farewell speech, reported in the May 5, 1949 “Santa Clara Journal,” retiring Mayor James R. Bacigalupi (“Jimmy Batch” as he was known) pointed with pride to what the opening of the Owens Corning plant would mean to the industrial advancement of Santa Clara.**
- **This plant was Owens Corning’s first built specifically for the manufacturing of insulation (prior plants had been originally constructed as bottling plants, and were converted). The plant opened with 235 employees.**

- In the 1970s, it was reported that the Santa Clara Owens Corning plant had the two largest electric gas furnaces in the world.
- For centuries, glass has been one of civilization's most useful materials, utilized in hundreds of ways, but limited by its traditional properties as brittle material unable to withstand shock.
- The advent of the development of glass in fiber form that is pliable, lightweight, strong and soft, able to withstand shock and vibration, and become a basic engineering material, entering many marketplaces, not just the familiar pink insulation we see in construction.
- The City of Santa Clara is truly fortunate to have Owens Corning as an integral part of our community.



- Today the Owens Corning plant employs about 300 individuals.
- While the City has been recognizing the accomplishments of local businesses for many years, a

**more formal Business Recognition Program was established by**

**the City Council in late 2003, upon the recommendation of a committee of the City Council, the Mission City 21 (Economic Development) Committee. The recognition program is a joint one with the Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce and Convention-Visitors Bureau. We have with us tonight Maria Edmonds Zediker, Chair of the Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, who will also be making a presentation to Owens Corning.**

- **The formalized business recognition program recognizes the valuable contributions that all businesses make to the City of Santa Clara.**



- **Owens Corning is one of the oldest, active businesses in our community.**



- **The company and its employees are well respected for its standards of excellence, ethics and their community commitment.**

- **The City of Santa Clara would like to congratulate Plant Leader Jim Gerodimos, and all the Owens Corning employees, on nearly 60 years of outstanding service to the Santa Clara community!**

**Thank you. I would now like to introduce Maria Edmonds Zediker, Chair of the Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for her presentation.**