

San Jose, California

by
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San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego get all the glory, but take a look at San Jose. It's the third-largest city by population in California, the tenth-largest by population in the United States, and the county seat of Santa Clara County. San Jose is the largest city within the Bay Area and the largest city in Northern California.

San Jose was founded on November 29, 1777, as San José de Guadalupe, the first civilian town in the Spanish colony of Alta California. The city served as a farming community to support Spanish military installations at San Francisco and Monterey. When California gained statehood in 1850, San Jose became the capital.

After more than 150 years as a small farming community, the San Jose area in the mid-20th century contained some of the last undeveloped land near San Francisco Bay. It then began to experience rapid population growth, much of it coming from veterans returning from World War II. San Jose then continued its aggressive expansion during the 1950s and 1960s by annexing more land area. The rapid growth of the high-technology and electronics industries further accelerated the transition from an agricultural center to an urbanized metropolitan area.

By the 1990s, San Jose's location within the booming local high tech industry earned the city the nickname "Capital of Silicon Valley". San Jose is now considered to be a global city, and notable for its affluence and high cost of living. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the population of the city to be 1.9 million as of 2017.

On March 27, 1850, San Jose became the second incorporated city in the state (after Sacramento). San Jose was California's first state capital, and hosted the first and second sessions (1850–1851) of the California Legislature. Today, the Circle of Palms Plaza in downtown is the historical marker for the first state capital. The city was a station on the Butterfield Overland



Mail route.

In the period 1900 through 1910, San Jose served as a center for pioneering invention, innovation, and impact in both lighter-than-air and heavier-than-air flight. These activities were led principally by John Montgomery and his peers. During this period, San Jose also became a center of innovation for the mechanization/industrialization of agricultural and food processing equipment.

Though not affected as severely as San Francisco, San Jose also suffered significant damage from the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Over 100 people died at the Agnews Asylum after its walls and roof collapsed, and the San Jose High School's three-story stone-and-brick building was also destroyed. The period during World War II was a tumultuous time. Japanese Americans primarily from Japantown were sent to internment camps, including the future mayor, Norman Mineta. Following the Los Angeles zoot suit riots, anti-Mexican violence took place during the summer of 1943. In 1940, the Census Bureau reported San Jose's population as 98% white.

As World War II started, the city's economy shifted from agriculture to industrial manufacturing with the contracting of the Food Machinery Corporation by the War Department to build 1000 Landing Vehicle Tracked. After World War II, FMC continued as a defense contractor, with the San Jose facilities designing and manufacturing military platforms such as the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier, the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, and various subsystems of the M1 Abrams battle tank.

IBM established its West Coast headquarters in San Jose in 1943 and opened a downtown research and development facility in 1952. Both would prove to be harbingers for the economy of San Jose, as Reynold Johnson and his team would later invent RAMAC, as well as the hard disk drive, and the technological side of San Jose's economy grew. The Ford Motor Company relocated its factory in Richmond to a new location in the suburb of Milpitas, called the San Jose Assembly Plant which was one of the primary locations for manufacturing the Ford Mustang.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the city annexed adjacent areas, providing large areas for suburbs. An anti-growth reaction emerged in the 1970s, but development was not slowed, but rather directed into already incorporated areas.

San Jose's position in Silicon Valley triggered further economic and population growth. Results from the 1990 U.S. Census indicated that San Jose surpassed San Francisco as the most populous city in the Bay Area for the first time. This growth led to the highest housing costs increase in the nation. Sixty percent of the housing built in San Jose since 1980 and over three-quarters of the housing built since 2000 have been multifamily structures, reflecting a political propensity toward Smart Growth planning principles.

San Jose has the most expensive housing in the country and the fifth most expensive in the world according to a 2017 demographics survey. *[Wikipedia]*

