CITY PROFILE

DEMOGRAPHICS, STATISTICS, AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION

More than 150,000 people a year attend the Santa Barbara County Fair held in Santa Maria every July. The popular Strawberry Festival also is hosted at the Santa Maria Valley Fairpark.

Downtown Fridays draw more than a thousand people each week for entertainment and food. The event is a partnership among the City and local organizers, to stimulate the community's downtown core.

The Santa Maria Valley is rich in agriculture and home to some of the ripest, juiciest, largest strawberries in the country. Farmers grow 10 varieties and harvest more than 8,000 acres annually.

Tens of thousands of travelers per day along Highway 101 are welcomed into town by this sign. Santa Maria has long been a regional shopping center, and continues to attract more companies due to its business-friendly approach.

Home buyers appreciate Santa Maria's affordability on California's Central Coast. More than 1,500 housing units are either under construction or in plan review as of mid-2018.

Before Sunset Magazine named our valley's classic feast the "best barbecue in the world", the California Visitor's Guide dubbed our famous Santa Maria Style Barbecue "the number one food not to miss while visiting California."

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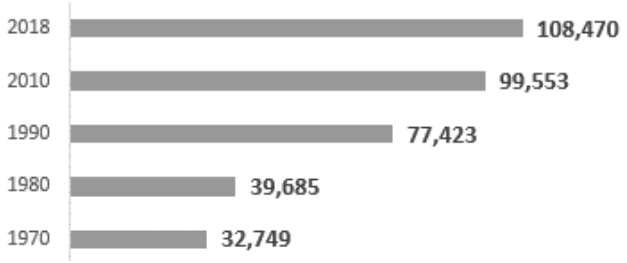
The City of Santa Maria is located in Santa Barbara County on the west coast of California in what is known as the Central Coast. Santa Maria is the largest City by population and geographic area in the County (23.2 square miles).

City Population:
The City's population reached 108,470 as of January 1, 2018, according to the State Department of Finance (DOF), making it the 64th largest city by population of 482 municipalities in California.

The City population grew 40 percent from 2000 to 2018, compared to 17.5 percent for all of California. During that span, the number of City residents identifying as Hispanic increased from 51.3 percent to 73.7 percent.

City population growth by decade, according to the Census and State:



Estimated ethnicity as of 2018:

Composition of Population:

Age Analysis:	City:	State:
Male	50.4%	49.7%
Female	49.6%	50.3%
Median Age	29.4	36.9
Avg. Household Size	3.74	2.90
Owner-occupied	51.3%	55.8%
Renter occupied	48.7%	44.2%

Economics:

Top employers*	Type of Business	Employees
Santa Maria-Bonita School Dist.	Education	2,100
Marian Regional Medical Center	Hospital	1,920
Allan Hancock College	Education	1,480
Zodiac Aerospace	Aircraft	915
S.M. Joint Union High School Dist.	Education	805
Windset Farms	Agriculture	750
City of Santa Maria	Municipality	586
Wal-Mart (3 locations)	General Retailer	440
Agro-Jal Farms	Agriculture	420
Vocational Training Center	Rehabilitation	310

*Although located outside the City limits, Vandenberg Air Force Base (6,700 employees and contractors) and the Diablo Canyon Power Plant (1,430 employees and about 640 contractors) are near the City and are a major source of local employment and local purchasing of goods and services.

Another significant employer is Santa Barbara County government with 4,365 full-time equivalent positions. No subset is available for County employees assigned to County offices in the Santa Maria area.

An estimated 29 percent of employment in Santa Maria is in agriculture, according to the UCSB Economic Forecast Project.

Comparisons to Other Communities/State:

2018 Estimated Median Household Income

Santa Maria	$56,500
Santa Barbara	$75,640
Lompoc	$50,207
California	$70,636

The City is investing in new technologies for the benefit of its departments, and eventually for businesses, schools, and residents. The City and its partner company, Wave Broadband, are building a core fiber network to lay the foundation for the City's high-capacity Wi-Fi wireless network to attract new tech companies and employees, and to retain existing businesses.

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Housing: Santa Maria has approximately 29,718 housing units, of which 67 percent (19,885) are single-unit structures, 28 percent (8,284) are multi-unit structures, and five percent (1,549) are mobile homes.

Building Activity: Residential and commercial development activity is brisk. Development activity jumped from $37 million in valuation in 2009 to $230 million in valuation in 2017. As of May 2018, more than 575 residential units are under construction. This does not include the 318 apartments proposed at the new Enos Ranch development.

As of May 2018 the median homes sales price was $389,000 according to CoreLogic, and $372,000 January through May according to the Santa Maria Association of Realtors. Asking prices for some homes in neighborhoods is around $500,000. The average gross rent for a two-bedroom apartment was about $1,900 according to Realtors and Zillow.

Public Schools:

Institution	Enrollment
Santa Maria-Bonita School District (K-8)	17,100
Allan Hancock College (avg. per semester)	11,500
Santa Maria Jt. Union High School District	7,950

The Santa Maria-Bonita School District has experienced 18 straight years of enrollment growth (presently about 150 additional students per year). Hancock College has completed most of its $180 million in voter-approved improvements (See Page xiii).

Museums:
Santa Maria Museum of Flight
Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum
Santa Maria Valley Historical Society Museum
Santa Maria Valley Natural History Museum
Santa Maria Valley Railroad Museum

Parks: Santa Maria has 27 City parks including more than 234 acres of turf, trees, and play fields, two public swimming pools, gazebos for summer concerts, plenty of places to barbecue, and an 11-acre lake park where visitors may fish. The City also owns and operates a 1,774-acre regional open space called Los Flores Ranch Park, located about eight miles south of Santa Maria.

City Parks:
Adam Park[+]
Alice Tefts Park
Armstrong Park
Atkinson Park
Buena Vista Park
Fletcher Park
Grogan Park
Hagerman Sports Complex
Jim May Park
Joe White Park
Maramonte Park
Minami Park[+]
North Preisker Ranch Park
Perlman Park
Pioneer Park
Preisker Park
Oakley Park
Rice Park
Rodenberger Park
Rotary Centennial Park
Russell Park
Sierra Vista Park
Simas Park
Stanley Park
Tunnell Park
Veterans Memorial Park
Bob Orach Park

[+]*Parks are adjacent to each other*

Outside in Nature Day at Los Flores Ranch Park.

Local Hospital: Marian Regional Medical Center

Transportation: The City operates Santa Maria Area Transit (local bus service), the Breeze (intra-City service), and ADA Paratransit. The Transit Center is at 400 Boone Street. Greyhound serves the area. The Santa Maria Public Airport, with two runways, provides commercial flights and is home to over 210 general aviation aircraft. Amtrak provides local bus service to its rail service.

Highways serving the area: U.S. Highway 101
State Route 135
State Route 166

Legislative Districts:
State Senate District 19
State Assembly District 35
Congressional District 24
Santa Barbara County Supervisorial Districts 4 and 5

Zip codes: 93454-93458

Area codes: 805 and 820

Weather: 14" of annual rainfall. Average high is 68.6 degrees; record low 20 degrees in 1978; record high 110 degrees in 2008.

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City Government

The City of Santa Maria was incorporated on September 12, 1905. The City became a Charter City in December 2000, after the voters of Santa Maria approved a ballot measure in November 2000 to change from a General Law City to a Charter City. A Charter City can adopt laws, different than the general State laws, to meet the specific needs of the city. The operation of a city under a charter is often referred to as "home rule."

The City operates under the council-manager form of government. Starting in November 2018, Councilmembers are elected by-district for four-year, overlapping terms of office. The Mayor is separately elected at-large by a popular vote, for a four-year term.

City History

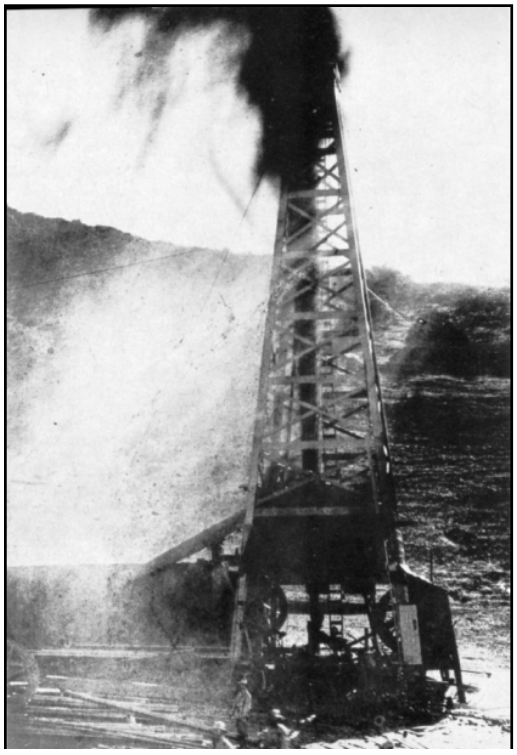
The community's roots are traced back to the days of the California missions. After Mission San Luis Obispo was established in 1772 and Mission La Purisima (in what is now Lompoc) in 1787, settlers were attracted to the Santa Maria Valley. In 1821, when Spain granted Mexico its independence, mission lands were made available for private ownership. In 1874, four of the valley's prominent settlers, Rudolph Cook, John Thornburg, Isaac Fesler, and Isaac Miller, each donated land where their properties met to form a city centered on Main Street and Broadway. The townsite map was recorded in Santa Barbara in 1875.

The community was not always known as Santa Maria. The town was originally known as Grangerville – for a Grange co-operative store started by Thornburg. Later, it took on a new name, Central City, because the town lay between Guadalupe and Sisquoc. But the name Central City, California, kept getting confused with Central City, Colorado. Mail intended for Central City, California was being sent to the Colorado community of the same name. Thornburg reportedly came up with the name Santa Maria from the name that settler Juan Pacifico Ontiveros had given to his property 25 years earlier. Ontiveros and his wife had arrived in the area in 1855 and built a palatial adobe (a home built of clay and straw bricks) at the mouth of a local canyon and called their home Santa Maria. The home was finished in 1858. Ontiveros already named the nearby waterway "Santa Maria Creek," until it rained for 30 days and 30 nights in 1861-1862, and then he referred to it as a river. This waterway is known today as the Santa Maria River.

The change of name from Central City to Santa Maria was noted in the first issue of the *Santa Maria Times* on April 22, 1882.

The Santa Maria Valley saw oil exploration begin in 1888, leading to large-scale discoveries around the turn of the century. In 1901, William Orcutt urged his company (Union Oil) to move forward by leasing more than 70,000 acres within a year. Soon, Union Oil and a number of smaller companies were pumping for oil. By the end of 1903, Union Oil, the major player in the region, had 22 wells in production. Several significant discoveries followed, including the Orcutt and Cat Canyon fields in 1904 and 1908, respectively. Union Oil's Hartnell Well No. 1 (known as Old Maude) struck a large oil-bearing reservoir in the Orcutt field in late 1904 and reportedly produced one million barrels of oil in its first 100 days of operation. Oil development intensified in 1930s, spurring the City's growth even further. By 1957, there were 1,775 oil wells in operation in the Santa Maria Valley, producing more than $64 million worth of oil.

In 1905, faced with the need to provide local governance to the rapidly growing population attracted to the valley, due to the discovery of oil, Santa Maria was incorporated as a general law city. That same year, Union Sugar built the valley's first major industrial plant in Betteravia. Acres of sugar beets were grown and sugar cane and beets were imported from inland California and other American and foreign fields. A cattle feeding yard was developed to dispose of waste from the sugar plant.



Oil production in the valley is more than a century old.

Soon after the incorporation, people began talking about the possibility of a library and in 1907 the City appointed a Board. Because the Carnegie Library Foundation was giving money for buildings in order to encourage the use of libraries, the Board applied for a grant in the amount of $10,000. The women of the Minerva Club received their wish for a new library. After consideration of various locations, Mr. Paul O. Tietzen generously donated a plot of land and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie kept his promise. A beautiful Carnegie Library opened in May 1909, initially with 600 volumes.

The Carnegie Library

In 1908, an electric streetcar provided service to the northwest part of the City. Three years later, the Santa Maria Valley Railroad was constructed by an oil syndicate. Before World War II, Santa Maria Valley Railroad and Pacific Coast Railway trains connected areas east and south of Santa Maria to the Southern Pacific line at Guadalupe. An ice plant at Miller supplied ice for the refrigerator cars, which carried vegetables and other produce. The Santa Maria Valley Railroad was incorporated in 1911 and in 1915 was sold to Captain G. Allan Hancock. Today, the railroad has 14 miles of mainline track and serves freight customers in the Santa Maria Valley, linking with the Union Pacific Railroad at Guadalupe.

Frank McCoy came to work for the new Union Sugar plant. Immediately he saw that the City, located midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, had no comfortable hotel accommodations. When he retired in 1915, he bought a lot eight blocks south of the center of the town and built the Santa Maria Inn. With its beautiful flower gardens, the Inn became a popular stopping-place for important travelers from all over the world. With the addition of the six-floor tower in 1984, it now provides 166 rooms and suites.

Paying homage to the past: A classic wooden caboose, a Sacramento Northern Railroad boxcar, and Union Sugar No. 1 steam locomotive were installed in November 2011 as an exhibit near the Transit Center.

In 1919, a two-story 13-room home built by Robert Martin on South Broadway was sold to a group of businessmen and later became the Santa Maria Club. This private men's club served as the political and social center of the valley for many years. The members built a huge barbecue pit and developed the famous "Santa Maria Style Barbecue." Later, the building became the Landmark Restaurant and Lounge and barbecue duties were assumed by the Elks Lodge.

In 1928, Hancock Field, Santa Maria's first airport, was opened on the east side of town. Captain Hancock was president of Santa Maria Airlines and founded the College of Aeronautics at that field. Later Allan Hancock College was built on the site of Hancock Field. Today, the college offers more than 1,700 courses in over 100 fields of study via 14 academic departments and is a major focal point in the community with an economic impact of over $160 million annually. A $180 million bond, Measure I, passed by voters in June 2006, enabled the College to modernize technology, upgrade infrastructure, and build new teaching and learning spaces. Through early 2015, $150 million+ has been expended, including a new Industrial Technology/Physical Education and Athletic Fields Complex, Public Safety Training Complex, Childhood Center addition, Community Education building, a Student Services building, and more. A future project is an 88,000-square-foot Fine Arts Complex.

Santa Maria City Hall was dedicated in 1934. Initially, the building also had room for the Police Department and Chamber of Commerce. The building received designation as a City landmark in 1985.

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In the mid-1970s, the Santa Maria Town Center West (the Mall) was added to the City's downtown, creating 400,000 square-feet of enclosed retail shopping. The Mall was expanded in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

On June 20, 1998, Santa Maria was selected, as one of 10 cities Nationwide, to receive the coveted All-America City designation. The program promotes the collaboration of individuals, businesses, local government, non-profit organizations and the citizenry in the identification and solutions of problems.

In 1999, the commercial area along Bradley Road expanded and the Crossroads Shopping Center opened at Betteravia Road and Highway 101. This shopping center is home to national retailers and several automotive dealerships. The City has continued to add major "destination" retail outlets to its existing retail offerings.

The Public Library is one of the jewels of downtown. Following four expansions, the new Main Public Library opened in August 2008 to rave reviews. Patrons enjoy the expanded book collections, public computers, the Children's Theater, Library Café, the Central Coast Literacy Center, study rooms and a Library Shop. Shepard Hall serves as the community meeting room, and new art exhibits from local and regional artists are put on display. Nearby is the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center.

Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center

Held annually in June, the Santa Maria Elks Rodeo celebrates Santa Maria's heritage.

Agriculture has always been significant to Santa Maria. Many modern farms have been in the same family for generations, and about one in every five local jobs is tied to agriculture. Santa Maria Valley farms and ranches made a huge contribution to Santa Barbara County's gross crop production value of over $1.42 billion in 2016. Strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce and celery are grown in the valley. The 2016 strawberry crop was valued at $414 million. In 2011, Canada-based Windset Farms opened its state-of-the-art, multimillion-dollar greenhouse and processing operation to grow tomatoes, and expanded in 2015. The campus occupies four 32-acre greenhouses, one 5-acre greenhouse, a processing plant and other facilities, and is seeking to expand.

Santa Marians like to play hard, too. Every June, the Santa Maria Elks Rodeo is a three- to four-day event made possible by more than 1,300 volunteers who work on numerous committees. The result is the annual parade on Broadway (State Highway 135), the rodeo, a rodeo queen contest, beard-a-reno contest, a mini rodeo, concerts, dances, barbeques, banquets, and much more.

Windset Farms employs more than 730 people in Santa Maria.

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The City's Present and Future:
Santa Maria has a diverse economy based on agriculture, commercial, and manufacturing, in addition to education, health care, tourism, oil production and government. Over the past couple years, the City has experienced positive trends in most economic segments led by consumer spending, construction spending, and increased property values. Construction activity has increased significantly. Two years ago, Rabobank relocated an operations center from the Inland Empire to Santa Maria, and with potential to grow to 250 jobs locally. Downtown Fridays, in their third year as of 2018, draws thousands of people downtown to shop and find live entertainment.

The City Council in early 2016 approved formation of a tourism business improvement district, assessing a two percent fee on each overnight stay in a Santa Maria motel or hotel room. Funding is fueling a marketing push into new markets. More guests staying overnight, eating at restaurants, visiting wineries, using gas stations, and shopping at local stores will boost sales tax revenue for the City.

Also early in 2016, the Council adopted a two-year pilot program focused on business cooperation and retention by providing eligible employers with incentives to encourage business retention, expansion, and beautification efforts. Santa Maria's incentive plan will create breaks in City fees to help businesses improve their buildings and hire more employees.

In 2017 the new Enos Ranch regional shopping center opened with a larger Costco and a 24-pump fueling station, a Lowe's Home Improvement store, and in 2018 welcomed many more retailers including Dick's Sporting Goods, HomeGoods, Ulta, Kirkland's, Old Navy, Buffalo Wild Wings, Chick-Fil-A, and many more. The 113-acre development will bring auto dealers across five lots totaling 175,000-square-feet, a new elementary school, a new City park, and a 10-building, 318-unit apartment complex.

More development is a new 182,000-square-foot FedEx warehouse near the Santa Maria Public Airport, and at the north end of town a 108-room Hampton Inn & Suites, with an additional 15,000 square feet of retail spaces.

The approved Preisker Commercial Center will include a new Hampton Inn & Suites.

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Timeline:

1856	Juan Pacifico Ontiveros and his wife, Maria Martina Osuna purchase Rancho Tepusquet. Arriving on the "Feast of Mary." They name their ranch "Santa Maria" and build an adobe.		**1959**	Santa Maria River Levee is built by Army Corps of Engineers (1959-1963) to deter continuous flooding from upstream watersheds.
1874	Rudolph Cook, John Thornburg, Isaac Fesler, and Isaac Miller donate land to form a town called Grangerville, later renamed Central City.		**1975**	Santa Maria Town Center East Mall opens with a three-level parking structure. It becomes the first major indoor shopping center on the Central Coast.
1882	Central City was later renamed Santa Maria. The Pacific Coast Railway arrives, connecting Santa Maria to Port Hartford (now Port San Luis).		**1998**	As one of only 10 cities in the nation anually, Santa Maria received the All-America City designation from the National Civic League.
1905	The City of Santa Maria is born on September 12, 1905. The vote is 202 votes for and 139 against incorporation.		**2006**	With 89,917 residents, Santa Maria becomes the most populous city in Santa Barbara County for the first time.
1911	Santa Maria Valley Railroad is incorporated, providing rail freight and commerce to the valley.		**2008**	The 60,000 square-foot new Main Library opens in August to a crowd of over 10,000 on the first day and quickly becomes the jewel of the Central Coast.
1925	Captain Allan G. Hancock establishes the Santa Maria Valley Railroad and Hancock College of Aeronautics (now Allan Hancock College). Santa Maria High School opens.		**2015**	The City opens its new Police Department on Betteravia Road. At 72,000-square-feet, it is the largest police facility in the tri-county area.
1934	Dedication of the new City Hall. In its early days, the building housed the City Judge, Department of Motor Vehicles and Chamber of Commerce.		**2018**	The Enos Ranch development opens more stores in addition to initial major tenants in 2017, becoming the newest regional shopping destination.

Buying local strawberries at the Farmer's Market.

Dia de Los Muertos is a popular November event.