



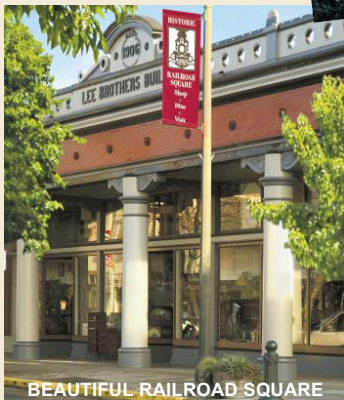
City spotlight: SANTA ROSA

HISTORY

Santa Rosa's story is a rich collection of people and traditions whose imprints are woven into the tapestry of the community. From the early native Americans who lived amongst the untouched beauty of Sonoma County to the pioneers who explored unclaimed territory to open up new areas of thought, research/development, technology and art, Santa Rosa's long-held distinction as the economic center of the North Bay continues to live on today.

Founding forefathers Hoen and Carillo saw the potential for Santa Rosa to serve as a vibrant commerce hub and in 1854 they began laying the foundation to engineer Santa Rosa as the county seat. In 1875, Santa Rosa's most famous innovator, Luther Burbank, moved to the area to begin his life pursuits and in the process started an agricultural and horticultural movement that quickly captured the world's attention. Visitors as prestigious as Thomas Edison and Henry Ford traveled great distances to meet the "Wizard of Santa Rosa" and to this day Sonoma County is synonymous with exceptional agricultural bounty.

Today Santa Rosa continues to drive the North Bay region with industry clusters that include wineries/agriculture, manufacturing, biomedical, health care, software and clean tech.



BEAUTIFUL RAILROAD SQUARE



STONY POINT LAKE WATERFALLS

What excites you the most about Santa Rosa's future? The city's continuing efforts to foster a strong and diverse business base through retention, promotion and attraction help the city adapt to the changing economic landscape. Our city is dedicated to sustainable growth, investing in alternative transportation and the continuing enhancement of our creative culture.

What will Santa Rosa's biggest challenge be over the next 10 years? Use of natural resources, water in particular, will be a challenge to business as well as residents. Santa Rosa has taken the lead in adopting innovative energy practices. Since 2007 the city has been growing algae in wastewater, helping to clean it by removing nitrates and phosphates. With the city's unique Geysers Recharge Project, 11 million gallons of recycled water are sent to the geysers' steam fields, increasing the production of geothermal energy by 85 megawatts a year, or enough to meet the energy needs of 100,000 households.

What are Santa Rosa's three strongest opportunities in the next five years? 1) The New Railroad Square project and the SMART rail line are pivotal for the City of Santa Rosa and the entire North Bay region. 2) The relative low cost of housing combined with a high quality of life continue to attract residents, visitors and businesses. 3) Santa Rosa's sustainability goals are enhanced by its efforts to create a vibrant and dense downtown core that emphasizes a live, work and play lifestyle.

What are Santa Rosa's three biggest strengths? 1) Santa Rosa is the premiere Sonoma County location for entrepreneurial businesses wanting to access strong market share, vested educational institutions and public and private partnerships to help their businesses grow. 2) Santa Rosa's physical location and its combination of family-friendly metropolitan amenities and natural beauty attract everyone from Generation Y to retirees. 3) Santa Rosa's growing bike culture and lifestyle industries have embraced Sonoma County living with new biking industry businesses sprouting up daily.

Why is Santa Rosa a great place for business? Santa Rosa serves as the primary service center for three surrounding counties, which provides additional access to post-rural markets for much of the north coast. Santa Rosa's educated workforce, diverse school offerings, affordable housing and solid business networks make it a competitive business location. Strong partnerships with education, local industries,

Chamber of Commerce and the City's Economic Development Program demonstrate the city's commitment to economic sustainability. Our Downtown provides a blend of attractions and activities sought by the creative class looking for a unique urban "city experience," with the rural friendliness found in the countryside.

What is the most important development project on the horizon? The New Railroad Square project, located just west of Depot Park, will make Santa Rosa the crown jewel of the 14 stations along the new 70 mile passenger rail route of the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) district. When completed, the New Railroad Square project will include a mix of affordable and market-rate housing, retail and office space and a 30,000 square foot food and wine center.

What is something people don't know about Santa Rosa? Santa Rosa is the only city in Sonoma County with a dedicated economic development team, consisting of five full-time staff and one part time intern. We offer business concierge service, resource referrals, a vibrant partnership with a five-star chamber of commerce and opportunities for start-up businesses to access an entrepreneurial network.

VITAL STATISTICS

Population: 154,241
Average household size: 2.49
Median age: 36.1
Total civilian labor force: 269,700
Average household income: \$71,127
Median home price: \$278,000*
No. of parks: 57
Educational attainment:
 High school graduate: 21.54%
 Some college: 24.54%
 Associate's degree: 8.85%
 Bachelor's degree: 18.57%
 Graduate degree: 10.26%

* June 2009, source: BAREIS

TO LEARN MORE

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SANTA ROSA CITY HALL