

Community Information

Rancho Santa Margarita





RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

Where schools, shopping centers and residential neighborhoods now stand, Native Americans once lived. On July 23, 1769, they were visited by a Spanish expedition under Captain Gaspar de Portola, who camped near the site of Tijeras Creek Golf Course in Rancho Santa Margarita.

On July 24, the expedition headed inland to avoid the many streams and swamps in the area. They found a large plateau area and camped that night on its western edge by a canyon, which the Franciscans named San Francisco Solano. This was on the eastern side of Trabuco Creek about three miles downstream from the present site of Trabuco Oaks.

While camped here on July 24-25, one of the soldiers lost his trabuco, or musket, a most valuable possession to any soldier. To mark this loss, the stream was named Trabuco. The name has been associated with the mesa, the canyon, and the entire area ever since. The Spaniards founded Mission San Juan Capistrano in 1776, and ruled the region until 1821, when California became part of Mexico.

The Mexican governors carved the area around the mission into three large ranchos: Rancho Trabuco, Rancho Mission Viejo, and Rancho Santa Margarita. James L. Flood and his partner Jerome O'Neill purchased the combined ranchos in 1882. The huge estate was run as a working ranch into the 1920s. In 1940, the ranch was divided, with the Flood family taking the lower portion, in today's San Diego County, with the upper portion retained by the O'Neill family. In 1942, the Navy annexed the Flood family's portion of the ranch for use as Camp Joseph H. Pendleton.

In 1948, the O'Neill family donated 278 acres of canyon bottom land to the County of Orange for park purposes. The O'Neill family donated an additional 120 acres of parkland in 1963, the same year they founded the Mission Viejo Company and drew up plans for a master-planned community of the same name.

By the 1960s, a rural cluster of homes had been present in Trabuco Canyon for decades. The area's first tract developed homes didn't arrive until late in the decade in what would become Coto de Caza, which started out as a hunting and fishing resort. The area remained fairly remote until 1986, when the first homes in the new master planned community of Rancho Santa Margarita were sold. The economic boom of the 1980s also fueled home construction in nearby Dove Canyon, Robinson Ranch, Wagon Wheel and a handful of smaller developments. The area became better linked to the rest of the county in 1992, when extensions of Oso, Antonio and Alicia Parkways were completed.

In 1989, the people of the community of Rancho Santa Margarita established a Community Civic Association (CCA) for the purpose of providing a political voice for the community. The CCA, later known as the Rancho Margarita Civic Association (and still later as the Civic Council), briefly explored self-governance, but it was in 1995 that the RSM Cityhood Committee, a separate community organization, began the official drive for cityhood. Rancho Santa Margarita was planned to be an "Urban Village", offering the best of two worlds: all of the elements and advantages of a small city plus the quality of life of a small village.





In November 1999, area voters opted to incorporate the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community and the neighboring Robinson Ranch, Dove Canyon, Rancho Cielo, Trabuco Highlands and Walden Communities. The newly formed City of Rancho Santa Margarita incorporated on January 1, 2000, and became the 33rd city in the County of Orange.

The City is a general law city and operates under the council-manager form of government. Rancho Santa Margarita is a contract city. Police services are provided through contract with the Orange County Sheriff. Fire Protection services are provided through the Orange County Fire Authority.

Quality of Life

Rancho Santa Margarita is a small city with the soul of a village. The City is instilled with traditions that honor the heritage of our land. A mix of land uses and a balance of jobs and housing provide a planned community oasis in which people live, work, shop, and play. Community events and public gathering places promote a family-oriented community and encourage community spirit and participation. The City maintains a safe environment through a variety of community programs, law enforcement, and fire protection services. Quality educational programs and facilities are promoted through cooperation between the City and the school districts.



As the community looks toward the future, Rancho Santa Margarita will strive to ensure its small town village character is protected and enhanced by well-designed and well-maintained neighborhoods that complement the natural environment. The quality of environmental, open space, scenic resources and our watershed shall be preserved to enhance the community's distinct setting and natural beauty. Other amenities such as Lake Santa Margarita, parks, pools, community centers, and pedestrian/bicycle trails will also be protected and well-maintained to meet the needs of the community.

As the community matures, residential, commercial, and industrial areas will be revitalized to enhance quality of life and encourage economic development. Because most facilities in Rancho Santa Margarita are owned and maintained by private organizations, the City will collaborate with public and private organizations, such as public service agencies, Homeowner Associations, and community foundations, to improve and maintain public services and facilities. The City will also maintain the transportation system to ensure safe and convenient access is provided to serve local and inter-community needs. These factors will continue to attract businesses that are beneficial to and thrive in the community.



Public Safety

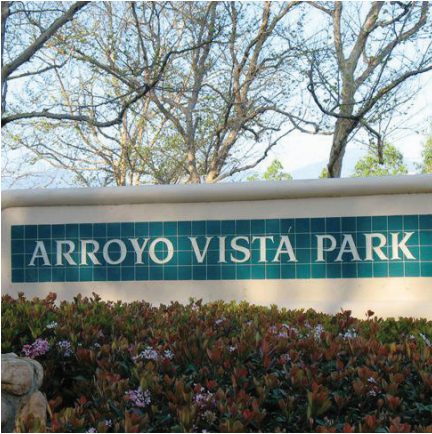
The City of Rancho Santa Margarita contracts with the Orange County Sheriff's Department for all of its law enforcement needs. The Sheriff's Department is responsible for providing for the protection of citizens, the enforcement of laws and crime prevention. Law enforcement services include patrol, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, traffic accident analysis and investigation, along with parking enforcement.



Rancho Santa Margarita is recognized as the safest city in California (of cities with populations between 20,000 to 100,000). The City is dedicated in its crime fighting strategy, as well as maintaining an atmosphere of community. There are a variety of community policing programs available to residents and businesses in the City. Police Services encourages you to participate in these programs and aid in our endeavor to preserve the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita.

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita contracts with the Orange County Fire Authority for all of its fire safety needs. The Fire Authority is responsible for providing for the protection of citizens, the enforcement of fire safety laws and fire prevention and suppression. The Battalion Chief is the Department Head for Fire Services and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of fire services in the City.

The City is dedicated in its fire safety strategy, as well as maintaining an atmosphere of community. There are a variety of community fire safety programs available to residents and businesses in the City including business inspection and plan check, the Water Watcher Program, community CPR and the Junior Firefighter Program. Fire Services encourages you to participate in our resources and aid in our endeavor to preserve the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita. Together we can continue to make this City a place where people want to live, work and play.



Utilities

Cable & Internet: Cox Cable 949.240.1212 / www.cox.com

Phone: AT&T 800.310.2355 / www.att.com

Water: Santa Margarita Water District 949.459.6400 / www.smwd.com
Trabuco Canyon Water District 949.858.0277 / www.tcwd.ca.gov

Electricity: Southern California Edison 800.655.4555 / www.sce.com

Gas: Southern California Gas Company 800.427.2200 / www.socalgas.com

Trash: CR&R Waste Services 714.826.9049 / www.crrwasteservices.com

Recreation

Parks, community centers and recreational opportunities are essential public services that help maintain a high quality of life in the community. Rancho Santa Margarita was developed as a group of planned communities emphasizing the central role of these facilities in civic life.

The Rancho Santa Margarita park and recreation system consists of neighborhood parks, community parks, O'Neill Regional Park, joint use parks, community services and facilities, an extensive open space system, and a Community Center. All parks in the City (with the exception of O'Neill Regional Park and County Trails) are privately owned, operated, and maintained by HOA's, although public access to most parks is available. Rancho Santa Margarita is also located immediately adjacent to the Cleveland National Forest.





Parks and recreation services in Rancho Santa Margarita can be characterized as primarily neighborhood-serving with facilities well distributed throughout the City. Most of the neighborhoods in the City are within walking distance from an existing park. Rancho Santa Margarita currently has 22 private developed parks which range in size from 0.5 acre Dove Canyon Trail Rest Area to the 21.4 acre Central Park in the Trabuco Highlands Planned Community. Several of the smaller parks function only as passive parks. Active recreational parkland is provided in the City at 17 of the 22 parks. Of the nearly 152 acres of parkland located in the City, approximately 85 acres (56 percent) are devoted to active recreational use. Approximately 68 acres (44 percent) are devoted to passive uses.



O'Neill Regional Park (approximately 3,358 acres) serves both as an overnight camping facility and offers day/picnic use. The picnic area provides for single and group uses and contains picnic tables, barbecues, a large turf area, horseshoe pits and playground equipment. About 3.5 acres are available for RV camping. The park facilities offer recreational opportunities including an equestrian campground, an arena, and 18 miles of riding trails.

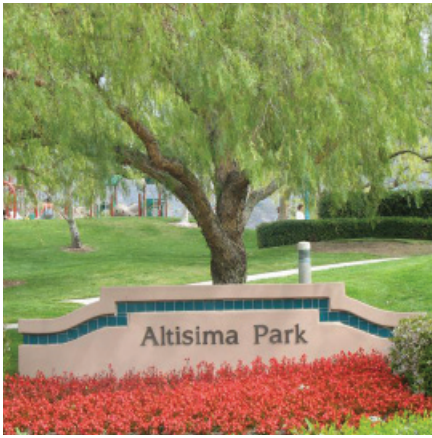
The Lago Santa Margarita Beach Club is owned and operated by the Rancho Santa Margarita Landscape and Recreation Corporation (SAMLARC). It consists of a 12.6 acre man-made lake surrounded by 16.8 acres of parks, trails, and a lakeside beach. A grill and picnic area, boating, swim lagoon, two volleyball courts, and Fiesta Room are provided at the facility for local SAMLARC residents.

The Rancho Santa Margarita Community Center is the social, cultural, civic, and wellness center of the southeast regional community. The facility is located in the heart of the town center, near Central Park and City Hall. It provides cultural and recreational programming for all age groups and all interest groups in order to meet the needs of the entire community.

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita Dog Park and Skate Park is located at Canada Vista Park at 24328 Antonio Parkway. It is located approximately one mile from Oso Parkway and is open to the public free of charge seven days a week from dawn to dusk. The park is unsupervised and there is no age limit.



Lago Santa Margarita is located a long stone's throw west of the intersection of Santa Margarita and Antonio Parkways, in the shadow of Mount Modjeska and Mount Santiago, Saddleback's twin peaks. This lake covers 11.5 surface acres and holds 31 million gallons of water. It is only one foot deep at the edge so that anyone who accidentally falls in will be able to stand up and wade out easily. Throughout the year, Lago Santa Margarita is the site of special events, including a Star-Spangled Spectacular in celebration of the Fourth of July and a Fishing Derby held regularly the third Saturday morning in May. In addition, the lake is ideal for a variety of year-round recreational activities. The walk around Lago Santa Margarita, a distance of 1.1 miles, is a favorite with local residents. Although California law prohibits swimming in man-made recreational lakes where the water is not recirculated, Lago Santa Margarita welcomes boaters and anglers. Each spring, the lake is stocked with bass, bluegill, and catfish, to the delight of anglers, and with mosquito fish, to the dismay of mosquitoes. These small North American cousins of the tropical guppy satisfy their voracious appetites by dining on mosquito larvae, which keeps the mosquito population at bay.



Annual Events

New Year's Eve Celebrating Family & Friends

The mission of the Annual New Year's Eve "Celebrating Family & Friends" event is to produce a safe and fun event that brings the community together in an alcohol-free setting. The event is intended to build community spirit and inspire hope for the future through the broadening and deepening public appreciation of the arts from our community. This event celebrates the arts in this community by providing space and opportunity to showcase local talents through music, dance and fine arts.

This celebration – which commemorates Rancho Santa Margarita's anniversary of an incorporated City – features fun, varieties of food, a diverse array of live musical entertainment, performers from local performing arts organizations, strolling magicians, balloonists, fire eaters, and jugglers, inflatable rides, interactive crafts and games, and the popular Children's Art Contest in which all local schools are able to participate and showcase their fine artists.

Summer Concerts

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita provides a variety of excellent musical performances with the sunset as your backdrop. These concerts offer an opportunity for residents to benefit from the Rancho lifestyle in a safe and positive environment. Join your friends and neighbors to celebrate fantastic live music and dancing while enjoying the great outdoors. Please visit some of RSM's local restaurants before the concerts and bring a picnic dinner with you! For more information, please contact Erin Mudry at 949.216.9700 x 250 or at emudry@cityofrsm.org



Bell Tower Regional Community Center

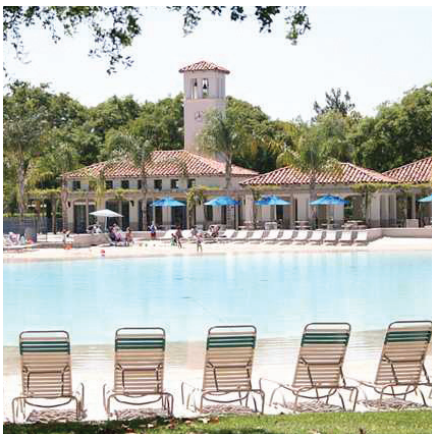
The Community Center was opened in 2004 as a central meeting place for Rancho Santa Margarita residents. The building holds beautiful charm indoors and mountain views outdoors. The 5,000 square ft ballroom is a perfect setting for a wedding, bar mitzvah, or other celebration. The Quiet Lounge is home to a cozy fireplace and couches for residents to chat with friends, read a book, or play a game of chess. Toddlers and seniors alike can enjoy the multitude of community events and recreation programs offered in the Community Center.

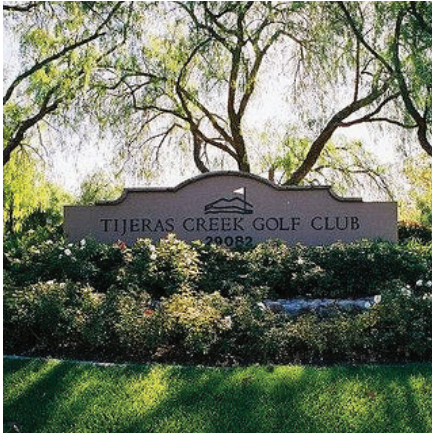
Community Center Hours: Mon–Thur 8am–9pm / Fri 8am–6pm

Saturday and Sunday: Special Events Only

22232 El Paseo / Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 / 949.216.9700

The Bell Tower Regional Community Center is home to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita Community Services Department as well as the YMCA Youth Lounge, Santiago Seniors Club, Age Well Senior Services, and The Bell Tower Foundation offices. These organizations offer services to the community within the Community Center. Together we encourage public participation in quality and diverse creative activities for all ages in an interactive environment; enhance community identity and build community awareness of the value and function of leisure activities.





County Wilderness Parks

Starr Ranch Sanctuary: Audubon's Starr Ranch Sanctuary is a 4,000-acre nature preserve adjacent to Dove Canyon and Coto de Caza. Though closed to drop-in visitation, the Ranch offers a growing number of educational programs for all ages. Staff members are biologists who offer groups of all ages an opportunity to experience nature hands-on as wildlife biologists. Minimum group size is six, and programs can be tailored to suit each group. Mon-Sun: Year Round (By Reservation Only) 7am to overnight. Adjacent to Dove Canyon and Coto de Caza. 949.858.0309 / www.starr-ranch.org

O'Neill Regional Park: This park offers a true wilderness experience among its 3,100 acres of scrub-covered hills, oak and sycamore trees and grassy meadows. The office off Live Oak Canyon Road has information about guided nature walks and special presentations given by Park Rangers. Other facilities include a picnic area, grassy fields, tot lot, interpretive center, hiking trails and butterfly garden. Wildlife includes mountain lions, rattlesnakes and poison oak, so caution is advised. Camping is also available on a first-come, first served basis. Mon-Sun: Year Round 7am to sunset. 30892 Trabuco Canyon Road, Trabuco Canyon. 949.923.2260 / www.ocparks.com



Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park: This 523-acre wilderness park has miles of trails offering outdoor enjoyment for hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers, including two seasonally flowing creeks plus groves of sycamores and oaks. The ranger station houses a visitor center, a hands-on classroom, and volunteer-operated gift shop. Surrounding the station is a one-acre native-plant butterfly garden and a large deck for picnicking or just enjoying the views. Ranger-led programs as well as self-guided hikes provide opportunities for the visitor to learn about the richness of this sanctuary. Mon-Sun: Year Round 7am to sunset. 30952 Oso Parkway, Coto de Caza. 949.923.2265 / www.ocparks.com

Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park: Dramatic 100-foot sandstone cliffs and coiled red-rock formations distinguish this 1,800-acre park. Tree creek beds wind along a canyon floor densely forested with sycamore and oak trees inhabited by diverse wildlife. Hikers enjoy 20 miles of trails and ranger-led nature walks for groups are available by reservation. In addition to mountain lions, there are rattlesnakes and poison oak in the park, so caution is advised. Mountain lion attacks have occurred at Whiting Ranch in the recent past, so extreme caution is advised. (Check the website for tips on preventing mountain-lion attacks.) Dogs are not allowed. Mon-Sun: Year Round 7am to sunset. Off Portola Parkway on Glen Ranch Road in Lake Forest. 949.923.2245 / www.ocparks.com





Education

Saddleback Valley Unified School District

25631 Peter Hartman Way / Mission Viejo, CA 92691
949-586-1234 / www.svusd.k12.ca.us

Elementary Schools

Cielo Vista

21811 Avenue de las Fundadores, RSM, 92688 / 949-589-7456

Melinda Heights

21001 Rancho Trabuco, RSM, 92688 / 949-888-7311

Trabuco Mesa

21301 Avenida de las Flores, RSM, 92688 / 949-858-3339

Middle Schools

Rancho Santa Margarita

21931 Alma Aldea, RSM, 92679 / 949-459-8253

High Schools

Trabuco Hills

27501 Mustang Run, Mission Viejo, 92691 / 949-768-1934



Capistrano Unified School District

33122 Valle Road / San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

(949) 234-9200 / Fax (949) 493-8729 / capousd.ca.schoolloop.com

Elementary Schools

Arroyo Vista School

23371 Arroyo Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

949-234-5951 Phone | 949-589-6924 Fax

Las Flores Elementary

25862 Antonio Parkway, Rancho Santa Margarita, California 92688

(949) 589-6935 Phone | (949) 589-9286 Fax

Tijeras Creek Elementary

23072 Avenida Empresa, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

(949) 234-5300 Phone | (949) 858-3862 Fax

High Schools

Tesoro High School

1 Tesoro Creek Road, Las Flores, CA 92688

(949) 234-5310 Phone | (949) 766-3370 Fax





RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

22112 EL PASEO
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
CA 92688

INCORPORATED: 2000
AREA: 12.9 square miles
TELEPHONE: (949) 635-1800
WEBSITE: www.cityofrsm.org

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor	Carol A. Gamble
Mayor Pro Tem	Michael Vaughn
Council Members	L. Anthony Beall
	Jerry Holloway
	Bradley J. McGirr

DEPARTMENTS

City Manager	(949) 635-1800 ext. 6301
Community Development	ext. 6702
City Council	ext. 6301
Parks & Recreation	216-9700
Fire Authority	(714) 573-6000
Sheriff Services	(949) 770-6011

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION		2010 POPULATION BY AGE (1)			2010 RACIAL & ETHNIC POPULATION (1)		
1960	*		Total	%		Number	%
1970	*	0-4	3,026	6.3	Non-Hispanic White	32,054	67.0
1980	*	5-9	3,702	7.7	Hispanic of any race	8,902	18.6
1990	*	10-14	4,356	9.1	Non-Hispanic Asian	4,268	8.9
2000	47,214 (1)	15-19	4,130	8.6	Non-Hispanic Black	788	1.6
2010	47,853 (1)	20-24	2,458	5.1	All Other NH Races	1,841	3.8
		25-34	5,624	11.7			
2005	47,822 (2)	35-44	8,082	13.7	Total:	47,853	100%
2006	47,536 (2)	45-54	9,318	19.5			
2007	47,728 (2)	55-59	2,721	5.7			
2008	47,764 (2)	60-64	1,725	3.6			
2009	47,723 (2)	65-74	1,520	3.1			
2010	47,853 (2)	75-84	796	1.6			
2011	47,997 (3)	85+	395	0.8			
2012	48,237 (3)	Total:	47,853	100%			
2013	48,375 (3)	Median Age:	36.0				
2014	48,464 (3)	% of County:		1.6			
2015	48,575 (3)						
2016	48,636 (3)						
2017	48,602 (3)						

CURRENT PROJECTIONS SERIES POPULATION: OCP-2014 MODIFIED (4)

2015	48,815
2020	48,659
2025	48,659
2030	48,751
2035	48,727
2040	48,678

VOTER REGISTRATION, 2017 (6)

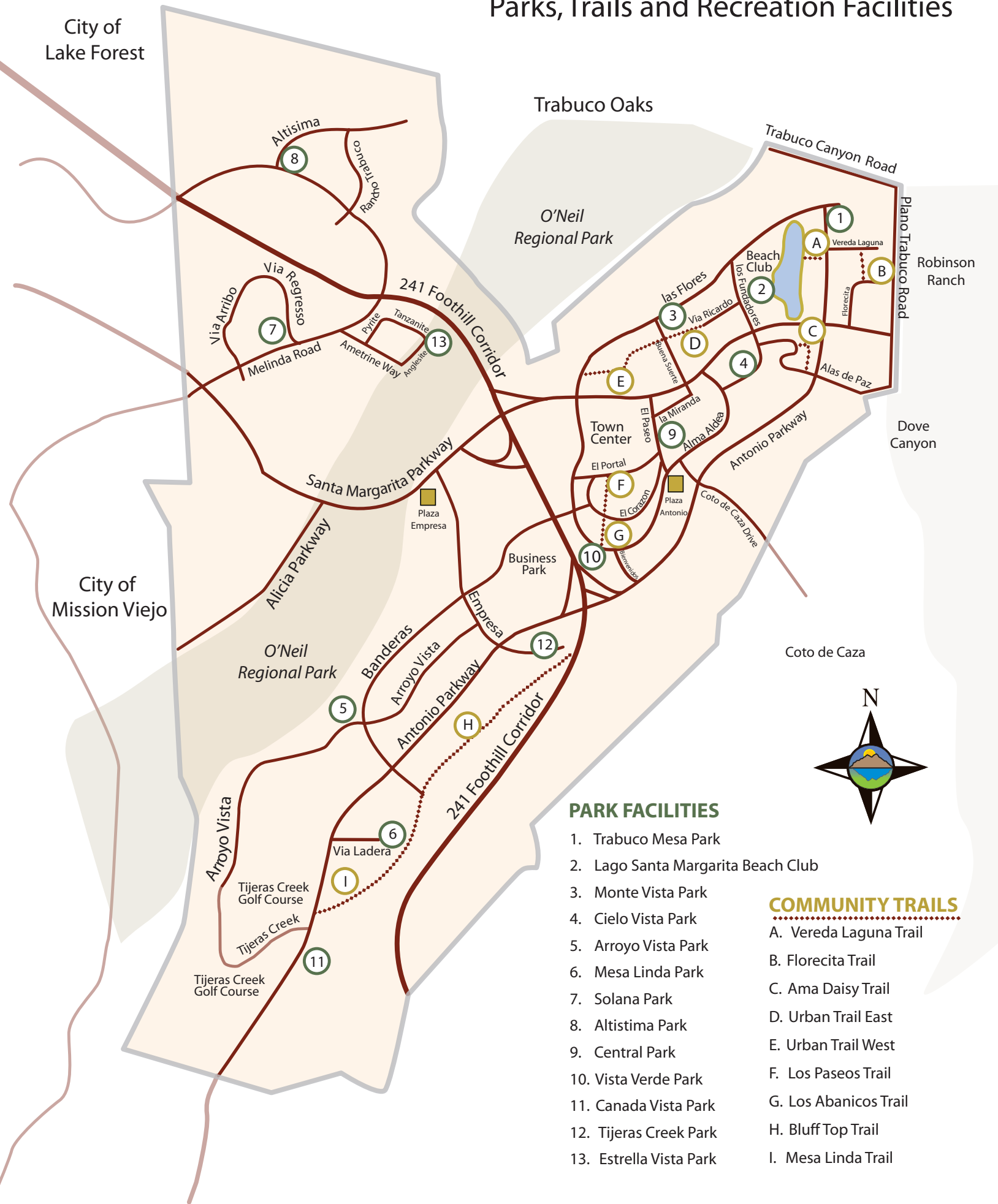
Democratic	7,286	Peace & Freedom	39
Republican	12,603	Misc.	61
Independent	812	Decline To State	6,785
Green	75		
Libertarian	234	Total:	27,895

VITAL STATISTICS (5)

	2010	2011	2012
Total Births	573	522	529
Birth Rate	12	10.8	10.9
Total Deaths	133	151	147
Death Rate	2.8	3.1	3

* City not incorporated at this date.
Sources: (1) April Decennial Census of Population, U.S. Census Bureau. (4) Center for Demographic Research, CSUF.
(2) E-8 Released November 2012, State Dept. of Finance. (5) OC Health Care Agency rates per 1,000 pop. 2012 is the latest published data by city.
(3) E-5 (Revised) Released May 2017, State Dept. of Finance. (6) OC Registrar of Voters, 2017.

Rancho Santa Margarita Landscape and Recreation Corporation Parks, Trails and Recreation Facilities



PARK FACILITIES

1. Trabuco Mesa Park
2. Lago Santa Margarita Beach Club
3. Monte Vista Park
4. Cielo Vista Park
5. Arroyo Vista Park
6. Mesa Linda Park
7. Solana Park
8. Altistima Park
9. Central Park
10. Vista Verde Park
11. Canada Vista Park
12. Tijeras Creek Park
13. Estrella Vista Park

COMMUNITY TRAILS

- A. Vereda Laguna Trail
- B. Florecita Trail
- C. Ama Daisy Trail
- D. Urban Trail East
- E. Urban Trail West
- F. Los Paseos Trail
- G. Los Abanicos Trail
- H. Bluff Top Trail
- I. Mesa Linda Trail