

Fastest-growing city in the U.S.? San Marcos, Texas

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A Texas flag flies from atop a tower crane in March at the forthcoming 200,000-square-foot Vistas at San Marcos mid-rise student housing development near Texas State University and downtown San Marcos. Eight of the 15 fastest-growing U.S. cities are in Texas, according to official 2012 population estimates released on Thursday by the U.S. Census Bureau. SAN MARCOS MERCURY PHOTO by JAMIE MALDONADO

STAFF REPORT

San Marcos is the fastest-growing large city in the United States, according to updated population estimates [announced today by the U.S. Census Bureau](#).

The city added 2,339 new residents — an increase of 4.91 percent — between July 2011 and July 2012, the bureau said, pushing its official population above 50,000 for the first time. South Jordan, Utah was the second fastest-growing with a 4.87 percent increase to 55,934.

San Marcos Mayor Daniel Guerrero said news that San Marcos' population is well beyond booming does not come as a total surprise based on "the growth trends that we've seen over the last 10-15 years."

“We knew San Marcos is a growing city. The population of Central Texas as a whole is booming and San Marcos happens to be in the center of all that action. So we ended up with the largest gains,” Guerrero said. “When you have that kind of proximity to Austin and San Antonio — and you’re three hours away from every major city in Texas — those are certainly big facets” in attracting new residents.

Texas State University is a leading factor in the city’s growth, the mayor said, as is the city’s and county’s aggressive drive over the last decade to update and expand roads and other infrastructure. In addition, he said, “San Marcos’ overall natural beauty is something that brings people in.”

Elsewhere in the Interstate 35 corridor, Austin moved from the 13th most populous city in the nation to the 11th with a population of 842,592, according to the new estimates. San Antonio grew to 1,382,951 residents and kept its spot as the seventh-largest city in the U.S.

Two other corridor cities, Cedar Park and Georgetown, joined San Marcos on the list of the top 10 fastest-growing large cities, defined as cities with a population of 50,000 or more. At No. 4 on the list, Cedar Park’s population grew 4.67 percent to 57,957 residents and, at No. 7, Georgetown’s population grew 4.21 percent to 52,303 residents.

Of the 15 fastest-growing large cities in the country, eight are in Texas, the bureau said:

Fastest-growing large cities in the U.S. (by percentage)

Rank	City	Percentage increase	2012 population
No. 1	San Marcos, Texas	4.91 percent	50,001
No. 2	South Jordan, Utah	4.87 percent	55,934
No. 3	Midland, Texas	4.87 percent	119,385
No. 4	Cedar Park, Texas	4.67 percent	57,957
No. 5	Clarksville, Tenn.	4.43 percent	142,519
No. 6	Alpharetta, Ga.	4.37 percent	61,981
No. 7	Georgetown, Texas	4.21 percent	52,303
No. 8	Irvine, Calif.	4.21 percent	229,985
No. 9	Buckeye, Ariz.	4.14 percent	54,542
No. 10	Conroe, Texas	4.01 percent	61,533
No. 11	McKinney, Texas	3.95 percent	143,223
No. 12	Frisco, Texas	3.92 percent	128,176
No. 13	Odessa, Texas	3.83 percent	106,102
No. 14	Auburn, Ala.	3.71 percent	56,908
No. 15	Manhattan, Kan	3.71 percent	56,069

* Between July 2011 and July 2012, based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates as of 05/23/13

Hover over the circles on the map to see the percentage increase in population according to the census bureau’s latest estimates released on May 23.

The San Marcos City Council declared in July 2007 that the city’s population had reached 50,000 based on city planners’ estimates rooted in the number of residential utility connections and other indicators. The Census Bureau itself estimated the city’s population to be 53,205 at one point. But the actual 2010

census count came in at 44,894 — 20.8 percent fewer than the Texas State Data Center estimated at the time and 15.6 fewer than the census bureau’s own 2009 estimate.

The central I-35 corridor anchors of Austin and San Antonio were among the U.S. cities that grew the fastest based on number of new residents.

Fastest-growing large cities in the U.S. (by people)

Rank	City	Numeric increase	2012 total population
No. 1	New York	67,058	8,336,697
No. 2	Houston	34,625	2,160,821
No. 3	Los Angeles	34,483	3,857,799
No. 4	San Antonio	25,400	1,382,951
No. 5	Austin	25,395	842,592
No. 6	Phoenix, Ariz.	24,536	1,488,750
No. 7	Dallas	23,341	1,241,162
No. 8	Charlotte, N.C.	18,989	775,202
No. 9	San Diego	18,074	1,338,348
No. 10	Fort Worth	16,328	777,992
No. 11	Denver	14,980	634,265
No. 12	Washington	13,303	632,323
No. 13	San Jose, Calif.	12,751	982,765
No. 14	Seattle	12,638	634,535
No. 15	Nashville-Davidson	12,323	624,496

* Between July 2011 and July 2012, based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates as of 05/23/13

Hover over the circles on the map to see the number of new residents in the 15 fastest-growing large cities as determined by the raw population increase, not as a percentage increase.

Most Populous U.S. Cities

Hover over the circles on the map to see the 15 most populous U.S. cities, four of which are in Texas. Austin moved up to 11th and San Antonio remained the seventh most populous U.S. city.