

Build it in
San Diego

The fleet, the program offices and the engineers are in one city, and every line in this document is cheaper, bigger or closer than the Bay Area. Published figures only.

42%

less

for R&D space than Silicon Valley. \$1.75 a foot a month against \$3.01.

\$23.5M

less

a year to run a 500-person company. \$63.2M here, \$86.7M there. CBRE model, 2024 office inputs.

16–22%

less

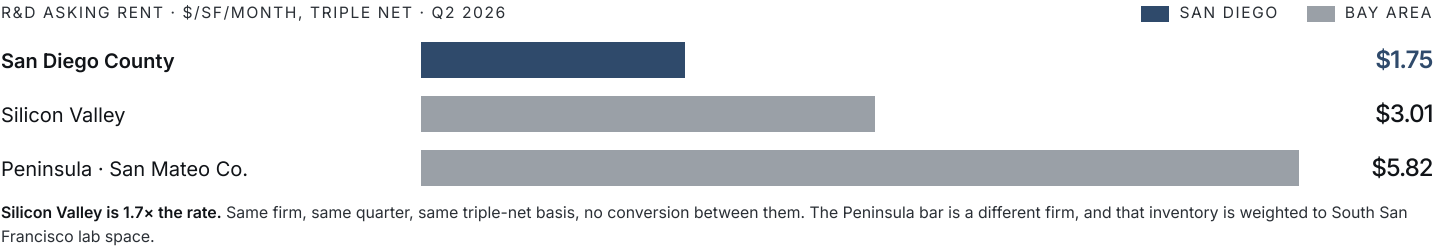
to pay engineers than San Francisco. 25–31% less than San Jose.

3.9x

more

defense contract flow than the Bay Area. \$11.67B against \$3.02B.

WHAT THE SPACE COSTS



\$625

City business tax for a hundred-person company, a year in San Diego, flat whatever the revenue. San Francisco taxes gross receipts above \$5M at 0.250–1.512% (manufacturing) or 1.000–1.680% (scientific and technical services), plus a homelessness tax above \$25M and a \$20,000 registration fee.

WHAT THE ENGINEERS COST · ANNUAL MEAN WAGE, ONE BLS RELEASE

Software developers		Electrical engineers		Mechanical engineers	
San Diego	\$163,300	San Diego	\$131,220	San Diego	\$124,420
SF–Oakland–Fremont	\$193,430	SF–Oakland–Fremont	\$162,170	SF–Oakland–Fremont	\$158,690
San Jose	\$221,710	San Jose	\$189,370	San Jose	\$165,920
16% under SF · 26% under San Jose		19% under SF · 31% under San Jose		22% under SF · 25% under San Jose	

THE CUSTOMER IS ALREADY HERE



NAVWAR buys networks, C2, cyber and information warfare from Point Loma. Third Fleet runs West Coast experimentation from the same base. Coronado holds carrier aviation, Naval Special Warfare and the San Clemente Island range. Miramar and Pendleton put 3rd MAW and I MEF an hour up the road. Saronic, Firestorm Labs and Seasats have all opened or expanded here since 2025.

WHERE THE MONEY ACTUALLY GOES

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PRIME CONTRACT OBLIGATIONS BY PLACE OF PERFORMANCE · FY2025



Four Bay Area counties combined do not reach a third of San Diego's defense contract flow. Source: federal award data, obligations by place of performance.

EVERYTHING IS TWENTY MINUTES FROM THE GATE

FREE-FLOW DRIVE TIME FROM THE TERMINAL



The airport sits three miles from downtown, so the whole defense corridor is a short drive from the terminal. Free-flow times on the open road network.

AND THE BAY IS STILL AN HOUR AND A HALF AWAY

NONSTOP DEPARTURES A WEEK



337 a week, about 48 a day. Alaska and Southwest fly all three; United and Frontier serve SFO. Investors and program offices stay a morning away.

AND THE REST OF THE CASE

