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Fountain Valley is a city in Orange County, California. The population was 58,741 according to the 2010 estimate by the California Department of Finance. A classic bedroom community, Fountain Valley is a middle-class residential area.

The area encompassing Fountain Valley was originally inhabited by the Tongva people. European settlement of the area began when Manuel Nieto was granted the land for Rancho Los Nietos, which encompassed over 300,000 acres (1,200 km²), including present-day Fountain Valley. Control of the land was subsequently transferred to Mexico upon independence from Spain, and then to the United States as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

The city was incorporated in 1957, before which it was known as Talbert (also as Gospel Swamps by residents). The name of Fountain Valley refers to the very high water table in the area at the time the name was chosen, and the many corresponding artesian wells in the area. Early settlers constructed drainage canals to make the land usable for agriculture, which remained the dominant use of land until the 1960s, when construction of large housing tracts accelerated.

Geography

Fountain Valley is located at (33.708618, -117.956295). The elevation of the city is approximately twenty feet above sea level, slightly lower than surrounding areas. This is especially noticeable in the southwest area of the city, where several streets have a steep grade as they cross into Huntington Beach.

- The Tongva, also referred to as the San Gabriel Band, are a Native American people who inhabited the area in Los Angeles County, California, before the arrival of Europeans. *Tongva* means "people of the earth" in the Tongva language, an Uto-Aztec language. The Tongva are also sometimes referred to as the Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe and the Fernandino-Tongva Tribe. Following the Spanish custom of naming local Mission Indian tribes after nearby missions, they were called the *Gabrieleño* in reference to Mission San Gabriel Arcángel. Likewise, those in the San Fernando Valley and the nearby Tataviam people were known as *Fernandeño* after Mission San Fernando Rey de España.
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- Along with the Chumash, their neighbors to the north and west, the Tongva are among the few New World peoples who regularly navigated the ocean. They built seaworthy canoes, called *ti'at*, using planks that were sewn together, edge to edge, and then caulked and coated with either pine pitch, or, more commonly, the tar that was available either from the La Brea Tar Pits, or as asphaltum that had washed up on shore from offshore oil seeps. These *titi'at* could hold as many as 12 people, their gear and the trade goods they were carrying to trade with other people along the coast or on the Channel Islands. The Tongva canoed out to greet Portuguese explorer Juan Cabrillo when he arrived off the shores of San Pedro Bay, near present day San Pedro in 1542