Silicon Valley, a region of California known for the Semiconductor Industry started in the Santa Clara Valley, with clusters in San Jose, Santa Clara, Cupertino, Sunnyvale, Mountain View and Palo Alto. This largely rural and suburban region has stable foundations required for vibration-sensitive wafer lithography and wafer test equipment, best found on the first floor of low-rise buildings. Densly populated urban areas like San Francisco were not suitable for silicon development, and so San Francisco was not considered part of Silicon Valley in the early days.

What changed was the booming software industry, without the same physical constraints as semiconductor. Tremendous growth in software happened in places unsuitable for silicon manufacturing, such as downtown San Francisco and lower Manhattan in New York City.

These days people consider the Silicon Valley to include San Francisco, despite the objections of silicon-purists like me.

I enjoyed using map\_libre again for a Figure Friday project. My code includes a function to wrap hover text across multiple lines, very useful for long descriptive strings.

Here is a map\_libre view of the Bay Area, showing where most of the companies are located. The marker sizes and colors are tied to Market Cap.

A screenshot of a computer screen

Description automatically generated

Here is a view of software companies clustered in downtown San Francisco.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated