



Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau FY2020 Annual Report

October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020



MISSION: The role of the Convention & Visitors Bureau is to promote and coordinate tourist related activity within the City of Pearland. To accomplish this mission, the Convention & Visitors Bureau will be responsible for the promotion of hotel rooms and visitor attendance within the City; will work with tourist related organizations within the City to coordinate marketing, advertising, promotion and programming; will work with State and regional organizations which is responsible for the promotion of the region, and finally will work to coordinate activities within City Government which directly or indirectly impact tourism.



Overview

During its seventh year under the Office of the City Manager, the City of Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau completed the most challenging year as it relates to the travel and tourism industry in recent history. Strong first and second quarters quickly led to uncertainty with the March 11 shutdown of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The ensuing events led to unprecedented challenges globally in response to the coronavirus pandemic with the hospitality sector reeling from the brunt of impact.

The pandemic coupled with an oil glut equals what Bloomberg news called a 'double black swan' event for Texas. At the local level, we navigated paths to assist hoteliers and tourism related local businesses through the lockdown and subsequent reopening phases. We are balancing the measure of the impact while preparing for the recovery with a new understanding of the travel industry's positive contributions to the local economy.

Total FY 2020 hotel occupancy tax revenue was \$965,351.

The economic impact of tourism within the City of Pearland is significant by bringing \$141 million, in 2019, in visitor spending, \$5.3 million in local tax revenues, and \$8 million in State tax revenues, a total employment of 1,130 and industry earnings of \$45 million.*

Highlights 1Q & 2Q:



- Pearland Art & Crafts on the Pavilion, hosted by the CVB, assembled 33 artists selling handcrafted pieces with 6 performers on the live music stage. The annual event attracted 2,000 visitors the weekend of October 5-6, 2019.



- Pearland welcomed the United States Fastpitch Association (USFA) 8u US Championship to the City the weekend of December 7-8, 2019 for the first event date of a 3-year commitment. A total of 33 teams comprised of 396 athletes participated in the tournament with 18 teams traveling from

outside of the Houston area. Bookings occurred across several Pearland hotels for a total of 198 room nights. Occupancy was 73.9% on Friday and 81.6% on Saturday which is a 51.9% and 59.9% increase respectively from the previous year.



- TAAF Winter Games of Texas kicked off its 3rd year of play on January 18-20, 2020 with 2,145 registered athletes competing in 9 sporting events with 186 hotel room nights booked. Occupancy for the weekend was 72.1% on Friday, January 17 and 84.6% on Saturday, January 18 representing a .2% and 1.1% increase respectively from the previous year. This was a partnership between the CVB, Pearland Parks & Recreation and the Pearland Independent School District.



Highlights 3Q & 4Q:

The April timeframe signaled the onslaught of closures and immediate effects of the Statewide Disaster Declaration for COVID-19 issued on March 13, 2020 by Governor Abbott coupled with local stay-at-home mandates. The CVB initiated measures that included:

- Cancellation and/or rescheduling of CVB sponsored events commenced;
- Pivot from travel message and a pause to ad spends;
- Deferral payment programs of hotel occupancy tax remittances similar to the State comptroller's program with slight modifications were rolled out in quarterly periods as needed by market conditions;
- A CVB Recovery Grant Program was launched August 5, 2020 utilizing a reallocation of \$500,000 from the Railroad Depot Restoration project for a one-time program. The program expires January 31, 2021.
- Re-emergence of road trip/travel message.

Staffing

A part-time sales consultant contract with the CVB expired February 2020. Vacancies for the Executive Director and Sales Manager positions carried into FY2020 with searches paused during the COVID-19 lockdown. Tracy Rohrbacher served as the interim Executive Director and was promoted to the role in a full time capacity on August 10, 2020. Teri Mazhar accepted the Sales Manager position on September 19 with a start date of October 19, 2020. The Marketing Manager position is vacant.

Marketing

Marketing efforts at the outset of the year extended the "Prepare to Love It" travel message in regional campaigns. However, ad spends were paused and messaging pivoted in response to the coronavirus situation:

Expedia Travel Ads Feb – Sept delivered 9,752 clicks, 455,126 impressions and 1,284 rooms booked during FY20.

Shop Across Texas 'shop local' campaign in April garnered 37,723 impressions, reached 29,465 people and was viewed total of 16,767 times.

A video series launched in June featuring local businesses with a tourism angle. The videos were released monthly on social media and posted on the website.

A shift toward a more focused social media presence during July through September resulted in phenomenal results -

The CVB **Facebook** page experienced a 52% increase in new likes (76); 308% increase in total page reach (200,233);

214% increase in engagements (26,638);

The CVB **Instagram** channel garnered 1,029 followers with a 637% increase in engagements (22,745);

Tour Texas landing page for Pearland delivered 15,317 page views, 45 PDF requests, 1,083 postal requests, 1,903 video views, 154 newsletter opt-ins, and 194 website click-views.

Website Activity – VisitPearland.com experienced a dramatic 49% decline in pageviews year over year which coincides with the stay-at-home orders and travel restrictions in effect 2Q. The top 5 landing pages overall for the site include: 'what to do', 'visitor savings pass', 'where to eat', 'best stores', and the rodeo line-up. 70% of traffic views the site on mobile devices, 26% of traffic views the site on desktops, 5% of traffic views the site on tablets. Sixty-three (63) original content blog posts were featured on VisitPearland.com.



Events

Events occur year round, which drive visitors to the website calendar listings, blog page and Facebook postings. This year, the CVB supported inclusion of virtual, local-centric and visitor events on our website.

Visits to Website: 97,582

Unique Users: 97,617

Pageviews: 171,972



Sales

Sales efforts consisted of handling leads and inquiries, transitioning away from a housing reservation system, offering partner programs and developing relationships.

16,123
CONSUMER INQUIRY LEADS



Year round distribution of collateral and processing inquiries total 16,123 including 12 direct inquiries for event space, visitor services, relocation and general information; 14,128 guides distributed, 1,995 consumer inquiry leads; 217 walks ins to the office; 95 newsletter sign ups

The CVB hosted a FAM Trip for an influencer as part of the Texas Travel Talk Texas Family Road Trip Planner. The visit took shape as independent travel by the influencer's in-market experience.

The campaign was timed for release (July 19-Sept 22) during the phased re-opening, the Pearland feature focused on safe travel of highlighting the nature center and foodie spots. Tx Family Road Trip Planner Blog Results = Pageviews 40K; Unique visitors 26K; Landing page 12K, Pages/session 1:34.



Thank you to the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board members:

Many Patel, Chair, Teir Allender,
Margo Green, Lonzie Helms,
Tony Caro and Keith Ordeneaux.



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