



**CITY OF SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TX**  
INVITES YOUR INTEREST IN THE POSITION OF  
**DIRECTOR OF THE CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU**



## THE COMMUNITY

South Padre Island lies on the southernmost tip of Texas and is situated on the south end of Padre Island. The longest barrier island in the world, Padre Island has the largest stretch of undeveloped ocean in North America. The island is just 30 miles north of Mexico and is linked to the mainland by a two-and-a-half mile long bridge, the Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway. The island is a half-mile wide at its widest point, and only the island's southernmost five miles are developed. Located in Cameron County, the City of South Padre Island is home to an estimated 5,000 residents. According to the Convention & Visitors Bureau, over one million people visit South Padre Island every year.

The island was originally developed when Padre Jose Nicholas Ballí brought the first permanent settlers while establishing a church and attempting to bring Christianity to the native Karankawa Indians. The island had been granted to his grandfather, Nicolás Ballí, in 1759 by King Carlos III of Spain. When Padre Ballí owned the island, it was known as the Isla de Santiago, but the people he ministered to affectionately referred to it as La Isla Del Padre. The name stuck and people have been flocking to the Padre's Island ever since. Being mainly coastline, the Island's main source of income is tourism, with tens of thousands of college students flocking to the island every Spring Break. It is also a hotspot for retirees from northern regions to stay throughout the winter months. These residents are known throughout the Rio Grande Valley as "Winter Texans." Isla Blanca Park, a preserve and recreational park, is located at the southern end of the island.

South Padre Island is a year-round vacation destination located at the same latitude as Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Island enjoys a sub-tropical environment with mild dry winters and warm breezy summers. The Island has a winter average temperature of 65 degrees, a summer average temperature of 82 degrees, and an average of 253 days of sunshine each year.

The City of South Padre Island is also known as the Sand Castle Capital of the World and the Fireworks Capital of Texas. The Lower Laguna Madre that hugs the western shore is one of six hyper-saline bodies of water on earth, creating one of the most unique and abundant fisheries anywhere. The City has hosted Texas International Fishing Tournament (TIFT), the largest salt water fishing tournament in Texas, for over 75 years, giving testament to the Island's world class on- and off-shore fishing credentials. Due to favorable winds and a shallow bay, South Padre Island is also known as the Kite Boarding and Wind Surfing Capital of Texas.

Recently, Space Exploration Technologies, SpaceX, broke ground on its future commercial launch facility located on Boca Chica Beach in nearby Brownsville. The company designs, manufactures, and launches advanced rockets and spacecraft with the ultimate goal of enabling people to live on other planets.



The facility is expected to attract visitors to the area and boost local economies. Another exciting nearby development is the opening of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine in Harlingen in 2016. The UTRGV School of Medicine will offer an exceptionally innovative learning experience designed to instill students with scientific, clinical, and research expertise of the highest professional standards.

The three airports in the Rio Grande Valley that provide air access to South Padre Island include Brownsville South Padre Island International Airport, Valley International Airport, and McAllen International Airport. All three offer a variety of ground transportation options including car rentals, taxi, and shuttles, and combined they are served by major airlines such as American Airlines, United Airlines, Delta Airlines, Southwest, Sun Country, U.S. Airways, Allegiant, Aeromar, and AeroMexico. If traveling by sea, the Intracoastal Channel waterway provides access to boats of all sizes, in addition to the Gulf of Mexico lining the Island's shores. South Padre Island's WAVE Shuttle offers free transportation to Island beaches, hotels, restaurants, and shopping. The Island offers more than 4,000 guest accommodations. Lodging options include full-service resort hotels, motels, condominiums, and houses for rent. Public and private campgrounds and RV sites are also available.

South Padre Island is the premier beach destination and resort in Texas with attractions, recreational opportunities, and events to suit all ages and lifestyles year-round. With its scenic beaches as an ideal backdrop, the Island maintains a small-town feel for its residents, yet offers world-class resort destination amenities for its visitors—a winning combination by any standard.

## THE AGENCY

The City of South Padre Island has a Council-Manager form of government. The City Council consists of the Mayor and five City Council Members who have three-year staggered terms. The Council appoints the City Manager, City Attorney, Municipal Court Judge, and various citizen boards and commissions, including the Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee consists of five Members, a Chairman, and two Ex-Officio Members. The City Council's public policy activities include: 1) financial management of the City by adopting the City's annual budget, establishing general objectives, and providing an annual independent audit of the City's financial records; 2) reviewing and adopting all ordinances and resolutions; and 3) establishing programmatic goals and strategic direction for the City.

The City Manager serves as the chief executive officer of the City. The City Manager's Office is comprised of the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, City Secretary, and Executive

Assistant, and along with the City Council, forms the City's Strategic Team. Together, they are responsible for the formulation and communication of public policy to meet community needs, assure orderly development in the City, and provide for the general administration of the City.

The Strategic Team has identified two major economic drivers for the local economy: the beach and the Convention Centre. The City's efforts to manage the beach is highlighted by the staffing of a Coastal Resource Manager who oversees the delicate balance of maintaining a pristine beach to attract tourist while implementing ecologically sound best practices regarding beach maintenance. The unique organizational structure empowers the Director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau to implement a progressive marketing plan for the community and to maintain a space to attract conventions to the Island.

The City of South Padre Island employs 167 full-time employees within 12 departments including Administrative Services, City Manager's Office, Coastal Resources/Parks Division, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Development, Environmental Health, Finance, Fire, Information Technology, Police, Public Works, and Transit. The City's adopted FY2015 annual budget is \$29.7 million, including a general fund operating budget of \$11.5 million, and the City's capital budget for streets and sidewalks, the Convention Centre, multimodal transportation, and beach walkovers is \$8.4 million. The City maintains a AA bond rating and currently has substantial reserves.

## THE POSITION

The City of South Padre Island is seeking a Director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau to function as the chief administrative officer of the Convention & Visitors Bureau department and to be responsible for the management, organizational development, planning, and direction of the Visitors Bureau, the Convention Centre, as well as sales and marketing efforts. The CVB Director reports directly to the City Manager and oversees 22 full-time employees within the department, including nine direct reports. This position also works closely with the Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board. The Director is responsible for the CVB's budget of \$10.7 million, which includes \$4.9 million in capital projects such as building renovations, and is accountable for overseeing the Convention Centre, a 45,000 square-foot facility located on 30 scenic acres with a view of the Laguna Madre Bay. Primary facilities include 22,500 square feet of exhibit hall space, a 2,633 square-foot conference auditorium with seating for 225, and 9,000 square feet of meeting rooms available in a variety of sizes.

The Director is responsible for the daily operation of the Convention & Visitors Bureau. Duties include developing and implementing several items such as: long-range marketing and research programs; advertising and media programs and campaigns with professional agency assistance; a building maintenance plan to ensure the Convention Centre is effectively maintained to be competitive and marketable; and operating policies and procedures for employees, users of the Convention Centre, and special sponsors, as well as a user fee schedule for the facility. This position directs administrative personnel who oversee specialized operating components such as marketing, food and beverage, tourism, and building maintenance; oversees and advises on any necessary formulation or modifications to the organization and its staffing plans, including numbers and types of employees, essential functions, salaries, benefits, and additional activation plans; prepares and

manages all budgets related to the department; reviews and approves all purchasing, travel, promotional, and other expense activity consistent with approved departmental budget; works closely with staff on scheduling, negotiating, and administering event contracts; assures aggressive public media and community relations programs for the CVB; negotiates service contracts for professional services associated with the CVB; and establishes and maintains close contact with booking agents, promoters, meeting planners, and association executives to maximize interest in the City and the Convention Centre. Other key functions performed by the Director are to assure an effective reporting system is in place to keep City officials, as well as community, business, and industry representatives, informed on the operations of the Convention & Visitors Bureau; and to speak to the media and the public as the South Padre Island tourism representative.

The Director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau must be a professional, results-oriented leader who is personable, accountable, and collaborative. The City desires an approachable leader who promotes customer service, excellence, and staff development, and also understands the importance of casting vision and providing strategic direction for the future of the Convention Centre, Visitors Bureau, and tourism as a whole on the Island. The desired candidate will have the ability and experience in effectively working with people; exercising initiative, judgment, tact, and diplomacy in a wide variety of public contact situations; expressing ideas clearly and concisely; exercising effective management and leadership techniques; administering and motivating all levels of personnel; and communicating and acting under pressure.

The Director must be able to increase tourism activity on the Island through various outreach programs; aggressive sales, marketing,



and advertising campaigns; and by attracting new events, festivals, and conventions; along with developing strategic tracking systems to measure growth and provide feedback to the City Council and community leaders. The preferred candidate will have a keen understanding of the tourism trade and what stratagems, programs, and initiatives will turn South Padre Island into an international beach destination, festival location, and tourism resort, in addition to enhancing the image of the Island throughout the State of Texas, the nation, and beyond. Collaboration will be key to the success of the new Director. The selected candidate will have a knack for opening lines of communication, developing long-lasting relationships, creating a team environment, garnering support for new initiatives, and building a sense of trust with staff, City officials, and community leaders alike. The ideal candidate will possess a working knowledge of convention, meeting, trade-show, consumer shows, tourism, and entertainment industries; marketing, promotion, press, and public relations techniques; applicable liability and risk management elements of the tourism and group meeting industry; and have solid budgeting, general accounting, and financial skills. The Director will also possess excellent negotiation skills. Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Business or Public Administration, Marketing, or a closely related field is required. A Master's Degree is preferred. In addition, candidates must have a minimum of seven (7) years work experience in the convention, tourism, hospitality and/or public assembly facility industry, as well as five (5) years work experience in marketing and advertising, plus extensive knowledge of digital marketing. A candidate who is bilingual in Spanish and English is highly desirable. This position requires a varied work schedule including nights, weekends, and holidays, along with frequent travel.



## THE COMPENSATION

The salary for this position is open, dependent upon qualifications. The starting salary will be based upon the relevant experience and knowledge of the candidate selected. The City of South Padre Island offers an excellent benefits package.

## TO APPLY

If interested in this outstanding opportunity, please visit our website at **[www.srnsearch.com](http://www.srnsearch.com)** to apply online. First review of applications will take place on **May 4, 2015**; position is open until filled. Resumes will be screened according to the qualifications outlined above. Screening interviews with the most qualified applicants will be conducted by S. Renée Narloch & Associates in order to determine a select group of finalist candidates who will be asked to provide references; references will be contacted only following candidate consent. Final interviews will be with the City of South Padre Island. Questions regarding this recruitment may be directed to:

**Ms. S. Renée Narloch, President**  
**S. Renée Narloch & Associates**  
**[info@srnsearch.com](mailto:info@srnsearch.com) | 850.391.0000**

The City of South Padre Island is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Pursuant to Texas State law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act.



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