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Popular $400 Million Annual US Tourism Destination Economy
Making Epic Comeback from Category 4 Hurricane

The popular beach town tourism destination of Mustang Island’s Port Aransas, Texas, that took a direct hit from Hurricane Harvey on August 25, 2017, has been making significant progress in rebuilding their community in time to re-open for the 2018 spring and summer season. The category 4 hurricane with recorded winds of 160 mph devastated the coastal community of 3,700 people. Port Aransas & Mustang Island plays host to over five million visitors every year. Over 85% of the physical structures in the community including homes, businesses, schools, and churches were impacted by the storm, with 90% of the tourism businesses completely closed for several weeks and months.

The Tourism Bureau and Chamber of Commerce launched a hurricane relief and recovery foundation to raise money to assist community residents, homeowners, churches, schools, and small businesses to begin to rebuild and recover from Harvey. The Chamber Foundation and New Day Port A initiative have raised over one million dollars since the effort was launched in September. These funds have helped many residents in the community to recover and small businesses re-build and re-open in time for the March tourism season.

“We learned quickly that any community, especially Port Aransas, is closely woven together in five core areas that make us such a special place to live and visit: our residents, churches, schools, businesses, and employees,” said Jeff Hentz, President and CEO of the Port Aransas & Mustang Island Tourism Bureau/Chamber of Commerce and Chamber Foundation and New Day Port A fund. “Without those five areas healthy and functional, our destination can’t move forward. They are the primary reason we launched the Chamber Foundation and New Day Port A initiative.”

Port Aransas is known for its world class fishing, birding, nature trails, and variety of water sports including surfing, kite boarding, kayaking and boating. The vacation destination has also developed a global reputation as a foodie town, and it just recently announced the three year agreement as the Texas home for all World Food Championship qualifying events. In addition, the much anticipated fall event, BeachtoberFest, will take place over the weekends of September 22-October 28, 2018.

As part of Port Aransas’ successful and quick comeback from Harvey, several major tourism growth initiatives remain in place for Mustang Island and Port Aransas, including major vacation resort developments with Cinnamon Shore and Palmilla Resorts. In addition, the Tourism Bureau completed a market study that will be combined with special Texas legislation incentives, recently passed in summer 2017, for Port Aransas to develop a convention center and hotel project by 2020.
The marketing of Port Aransas has begun across the state of Texas and nationally, with the campaign “We’re Open for FUN”, which includes all traditional media. The destination has 3,800 lodging rooms/units that fit every lifestyle and budget, and expectations are that over 75% of all lodging sectors including hotels, vacation homes and condominiums will be open for the busy spring and summer tourism season.

Discover the original ISLAND LIFE destination – Port Aransas & Mustang Island. The Port Aransas & Mustang Island Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau is the one-stop information planning source for all travel trade and media professionals. Experience our 18 miles of wide, sandy beaches, world class watersport activities, sport fishing, kayaking, nature preserves, championship golf, and more. Port Aransas is famous for nightlife and endless varieties of food, entertainment and great shopping. Accommodations for all lifestyles and budgets include hotels, vacation homes, condominiums, cottages, and RV parks.

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PORT ARANSAS & MUSTANG ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM BUREAU
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