



# Pearland

Convention & Visitors Bureau

## ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016



# MISSION

The Convention & Visitors Bureau in Pearland is a division within the City Of Pearland, City Manager's Office. 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 convention 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.



# A GLIMPSE

The third year of the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau has brought a continued increase in partnerships, media coverage, sales, distribution and events.

Pearland's hotel occupancy tax revenue in FY2016 brought in \$1,408,936 Million compared to FY2015 1,492,168 Million and FY2014 \$1,403,723\*. State and local tax revenue increased 4.4% in 2015, however visitor spending decreased by 2.2% from 2014 to \$129 Million in 2015. Employment increased by 4.2%.

Envisioned by the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau, **Pear-Scape** brought 20 fiberglass pears, 83 artist drawings, 20 donors, \$46,000 funds raised and many partnerships together to develop a public art sculpture trail. This project fits with the overall mission in promoting cultural tourism.

A Houston First **Marketing Matching Grant**, \$15,000, was secured for a summer weekend promotion entitled Shake, Rattle & Roll into Pearland during Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend with a two-day event scheduled June 11-12, 2016. Partnerships with Pearland hotels, attractions and restaurants offered visitors weekend packages. Marketing efforts on Expedia.com indicated a 21% increase year over year for hotel bookings and 19% increase in room nights.

This year, the **Travel Rally Picnic** welcomed celebrity guests Sean Townsend, Olympic gymnast, Vernon Turner, retired

NFL player and Ricky Davis, NBA player to assist in distributing 8 hospitality and tourism awards. This event culminated a weeklong salute to National Travel & Tourism Week held to celebrate, educate and recognize the hospitality/tourism industry for its economic impact and value.

In its 3rd year, the **Pearland Art & Crafts on the Pavilion** generated increased attendance and incorporated new elements including a Pop-Up Paint Studio, Wine Bistro, and Sidewalk Chalk Art Paint supported by local art teachers and their students. The Art Show generates revenue to offset event expenses and has gained a following not only attendees but also with 19 artists returning for a third year.

Pearland was awarded a bid from the **Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF)** for the 2018/2019 TAAF Winter Games of Texas. The Winter Games of Texas will bring athletes and competitors from around the state into Pearland for amateur competition in a variety of sports during Martin Luther King weekend. Estimated economic impact of this event will be \$1.4M.

A partnership with the Pearland Police Department to restructure the taxi fees and policy resulted in increased **taxi permits** (1681) and increased taxi service within Pearland.

\*(A new hotel rebate program instituted in FY2016 resulted in a .5% (\$7690) hotel occupancy tax revenue loss.)

# TRAVEL INDUSTRY FACTS & FIGURES

The economic impact of tourism within the City of Pearland is significant by bringing \$129 million, in 2015, in visitor spending, \$4.6 million in local tax revenues and total employment of 1,200. Pearland has experienced a steady growth in industry earnings, state and local tax revenues and total employment during the past ten years.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Direct Spending*</b>	\$123M	\$132M	\$129M	N/A
<b>Industry Earnings*</b>	\$35M	\$39M	\$42M	N/A
<b>State Tax Revenue*</b>	\$6.5M	\$7.1M	\$7.3M	N/A
<b>Local Tax Revenue*</b>	\$3.9M	\$4.3M	\$4.6M	N/A
<b>Total Hotel Occupancy Tax Rev   FY</b>	\$1,158M	\$1,404M	\$1,492M	\$1,408M
<b>Total Employment</b>	1070	1150	1200	N/A
<b>Total Budget for CVB   FY</b>	\$508,356	\$571,112	\$594,936	\$628,433
<b>Number of Hotel Rooms</b>	860	860	860	860

\*Data research conducted by Dean Runyan Associates and prepared for the Texas Tourism, Office of the Governor, Texas Economic Development and Tourism. (FY indicates fiscal year; City of Pearland operates Oct through Sept)

**Total Tax Relief per Household - \$320.98**

**Total Local and State Tax revenues divided by the # of households (37,073 as of 2015)**

**A big thank you to the Pearland Convention & Visitors Advisory Board Members for their time, support and commitment. The members include:**

- Gary Shepherd - Chair
- Manny Patel - Vice-Chair
- Steve Saboe - Secretary
- Teir Allender
- Arlene Ford
- Lonzie Helms
- Keith Ordeneaux- non-voting
- Tomika Gamble – non-voting

# MARKETING

The Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau continues to promote Pearland as a destination on the Gulf Coast using "A Perfect Pick" as the hook to position the City as a hub and spoke destination while referencing the 'pear' legacy.

Ad placements reinforce the Convention & Visitors Bureau goal to increase leisure travel and attract business travel to Pearland. Consumer and Business to Business audiences are reached with a targeted approach and niche market segments are tapped at the regional, state and national levels.

Consumer advertising is comprised of a combination of digital, display ad campaigns for branding with a variety of components including display ads, sponsored content and storytelling products and print ads in a variety of publications

A new, story-telling content piece generated **3,611 page views** on the CVB website and reinforced Pearland's culinary side paired with Summer package offers. Likewise, a print campaign running in conjunction with "See Texas First" positioned Pearland as weekend getaway in neighboring states and generated **65% increase in leads**.

Business to business advertising consisted of placement in specialty digital and print publications geared to group tour, meetings, reunion, and religious based travel at the state and national level. Featured publications included:

- ABA Insider News
- NASC News Brief
- SCMA Newsletter

## SEASONAL CAMPAIGN

As the only Convention & Visitors Bureau awarded a Marketing Matching Grant by Houston First, the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau created a marketing campaign to promote weekend hotel packages between Memorial Day and Labor Day. In addition to promoting hotel package rate offers, the promotion also touted a brand new 2-day event entitled – Shake, Rattle, & Roll. The goal was to maximize audience coverage and expand our reach.

The grant consisted of a \$15,000 award with a matching requirement resulting in a \$30,000 campaign to increase awareness, book Pearland hotel nights and drive attendance at the weekend event.

- Print and digital ads were placed in publications and websites geared to Texas travelers for summer package promotions;
- A digital campaign was deployed on Expedia.com resulting in a **21% increase in hotel stays** year over year;
- All marketing messages were centered around Shake, Rattle & Roll vintage feel which was reiterated in the programming for the 2-day event set in early June;
- An additional ad buy was layered in to promote attendance and increase awareness of the 2-day event geared to a Houston area audience to entice day-trippers. Digital ads included audience segmentation with behavioral characteristics skewed to live music, foodies, and classic cars.

The Shake, Rattle and Roll promotion earned a **Finalist** position in the Hospitality category of the American Marketing Association Houston Chapter's prestigious Marketer of the Year Awards 2016.



## WEBSITE ACTIVITY

VisitPearland.com continues to resonant with audiences interested in cuisine, Pearland events and things to do in the city as well as unique offerings. The 'what to do in Pearland/ events page', which also includes the calendar, remains as one of the most popular entry points to the website.

Added website enhancements during FY 2016 and improvements incorporated to the website include:

- Reworked Dine page to include cuisine categories, restaurant slider images, Google map direction ability for each restaurant location and recent stories related to cuisine;
- Addition of calendar and free map guide positioned on home page to generate more interest;
- Creation and implementation of an online cultural arts grant application;
- Development of dedicated Pear-Scape page to support and drive interest in the program.

The website maintains 79% new visitors with an average of 53% organic traffic. The highest (24,219) page views historically for the site occurred June 2016 coinciding with the Shake, Rattle, & Roll promotion.

Website Page Views – 174,971 with an average of 6,805 visitors per month indicating a 23% of increase in traffic from 2015 to 2016

Organic Search ranks as the top channel for traffic to visitpearland.com with Direct, Social and Referral coming in second, third and fourth respectively.

Facebook likes – 3,755

Shake, Rattle & Roll posts promoting weekend packages and the event reached 18,557 people with 102 shares and 19 comments



## MEDIA COVERAGE

News release stories written and distributed included coverage of community events, news-related items, and promotions with YTD coverage. Seven news releases distributed between October 2015 and Sept 2016 resulted in coverage of 20 stories via an online platform; 11 stories/mentions in print format.

- Pear-Scape Call for Artists & Sponsors;
- Pearland Sportsplex Openings;
- Shake, Rattle, & Roll Weekend Packages/2-day Event;
- Springhill Suites Renovation;
- Pear-Scape Sponsorship Opportunities Remaining;
- Pear-Scape Mold Arrivals;
- Pearland Art & Crafts on the Pavilion;

In addition to formal news releases, web posts are created on a continual basis with a few generating media interest during FY2016 resulting in Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau coverage with on-air segments at Fox 26, Great Day Houston, KPRC Click 2 Houston, KACC radio, Houston Public Media and Travel Planners Radio Show.



The CVB also developed a consumer e-newsletter sent to more than 5,000 recipients providing details of upcoming, relevant events and activities in the area.

# SALES & ACTIVITIES

Sales activity has consisted of handling leads and inquiries, developing promotional seasonal rates, providing visitor services, and attending tradeshows. Overall, interest in Pearland business and leisure travelers remains steady due to extensive advertising, networking, public relations and sales outreach. Promotional efforts generated a total of 32,761 requests for information.

The following chart details the number of lead requests fulfilled which includes monthly mailings, e-newsletter sign-ups, Shake Rattle & Roll summer promotion campaign, bulk distribution requests, and general information inquiries.

INQUIRIES/LEADS	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	TOTAL
General Info & Visitor Packets	1,333	5,765	5,854	13,194	26,146
Group Business	150	5,144	2,083	1,524	8,901
Bulk Distribution	N/A	13,756	20,779	18,043	52,578
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>24,665</b>	<b>28,716</b>	<b>32,761</b>	<b>87,625</b>

This year promotional seasonal rates (i.e., Summer Promotion) were conducted to encourage weekend travel and combine offerings with multiple events throughout the promotional date range, excluding major sporting events.

A total of 13 group business leads were processed within the market segments of sporting tournaments, corporate, association, government, local events and SMERF (weddings, education, religious groups, and reunions). Through combined efforts of lead distribution, visitor servicing, and hotel call arounds, these markets brought a total of 5,787\* room nights to Pearland indicating an approximate economic impact of \$30 Million. A detailed breakdown of each market segment is below:

- SMERF: 433 room nights
- Sports: 1,952 room nights
- Corporate: 131 room nights
- Government: 204 room nights
- Medical: 22 room nights
- Events: 3,045 room nights



Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, NCAA Final Four Basketball Tournament, Offshore Technology Conference, AAU Junior Olympics, Shake Rattle & Roll Summer Promotion, Skeeet Tournaments and various other special events

The lead referral program continues to offer value to groups, resulting in a total of 124 inquiries fulfilled. Approximately 29 of those inquiries were for visitor services, providing welcome information for events that require hotel room nights. The visitor servicing program, in addition to providing special event and promotion assistance, distributes welcome bags, which include Visitor Maps, Pearland Town Center Visitor Savings Passes, Antiques & Boutiques Shopping Guides, and small logo promo items.

A Destination Training Program was debuted on February 16, 2016 with a total of 12 local hospitality partners in participation. Travel Writers were hosted June 9-11, 2016 for our inaugural Shake, Rattle & Roll event.

## TRADE SHOWS

A pro-active and aggressive sales effort has been conducted by attending 15 trade shows. Shows market segments included consumer, sports, SMERF, group bus and international and media totaling 1524 leads. Additional co-operative efforts with Team Texas and Houston & Beyond included consumer and international group markets.



\*The PCVB is aware that more business is being booked through the hotels directly, and that these numbers may not include all of the local hotel rooms utilized for any given event in Pearland that comes through our office. Local events are defined as both events that occur here in Pearland and Houston area events in which Pearland hotels are utilized.

# VISITATION

A snapshot of attendance at special events, sporting tournaments and major attractions throughout the year.



YEAR ROUND	EVENT	ATTENDANCE
FALL	SKEET TOUR	300
	IFEST	10,000
	FUSION OF THE ARTS	500
	KING'S OKTOBERFEST	8,000
	ART & CRAFTS ON THE PAVILION	3,200
	DIVE MEET	150
	KID FISH FEST	1100
	SOCCER TOURNAMENT	200
	SWIM MEET	150
	SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT	400
CHEER COMPETITION	200	
WINTER	HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS	13,000
	WINTERFEST	12,000
	FIRE LAW COURSE	100
	YAC SUMMIT	325
	ELVIS EVENT AT BILLY'S HALL	250
SPRING	PAWS IN THE PARK	500
	EARTH DAY	250
	TX CLASSIC BASKETBALL	1,000
	DANCE COMPETITION	400
	WATER POLO	300
	PEAR RUN	1,100
	SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT	3,400
SWIM MEET	250	
SUMMER	KING'S BIERFEST	5,000
	SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	1,300
	GREAT AMERICAN SHOOTOUT	850
	BMX TOURNAMENT	100
	SHADOW CREEK TRI	1,000
	WATER POLO	250
	SWIMMING TOURNAMENTS	2,700
WINE FESTIVAL - AUGUST	975	
ADIDAS VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT	1,750	
YEAR ROUND	KIDS BACKPORCH PRODUCTIONS	1,436
	PEARL THEATRE PERFORMANCES	2,439
	KING'S BIERGARTEN & RESTAURANT	180,000

# A Perfect Pick



[VisitPearland.com](http://VisitPearland.com)