



RESOLUTION NO. 2014-04

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TEXAS,**

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to provide quality City services and improve the standard of living quality for all residents, working environment for all business-owners, and playing environment for all visitors; and,

WHEREAS, achieving quality services and improving future environments require the City to develop visions to achieve the desired outcome; and,

WHEREAS, the citizens of South Padre Island met on December 18, 2013 to develop their visions for the community; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council supports the work completed in the visioning session,

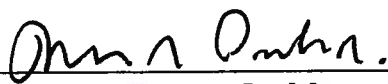
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of South Padre Island, Texas:

Section 1. The City of South Padre Visions of Tomorrow is hereby adopted as depicted in Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

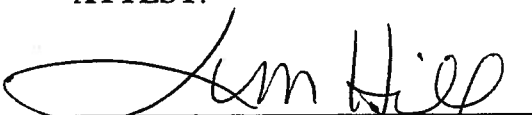
Section 2. The Visions of Tomorrow shall guide establishing goals, objectives and policies related to the City of South Padre Island Comprehensive Plan.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED on this the 5th day of March, 2014.

CITY OF SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TEXAS


Robert N. Pinkerton, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:


Susan M. Hill, City Secretary





VISIONS OF TOMORROW

MARCH 2014



CITY OF SOUTH PADRE ISLAND
4601 PADRE BOULEVARD, SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TEXAS 78597

Recognizing significant achievements since incorporation of the original Town of South Padre Island on April 10, 1973, special appreciation is given to citizens of the City of South Padre Island, who have been instrumental in City Vision's success over the years.

CITY COUNCIL OF SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

Robert Pinkerton, Jr., Mayor

Jo Ann Evans, Mayor Pro-Tem

Bharat Patel, Council Member

Alex Avalos, Council Member

Sam Listi, Council Member

Alita Bagley, Council Member

Recently, the City has initiated a number of actions to guide on-going developments and to resolve existing issues.

One of the first tasks undertaken by the City was the preparation of this Vision Plan (hereafter “the Plan”). In fact, a prosperous and sustainable future of the city depends on us looking ahead and developing visions of tomorrow. The Plan looks for a 25-year planning horizon and has been designed to assure that the Plan evolved from the community under appropriate guidance of professional in-house staff members.

The result of the visioning process will lay the groundwork for the City’s Comprehensive Plan to create vibrant, diverse, safe neighborhoods in the City of South Padre Island where all residents, workers and visitors can live, work and play.

PROCESS

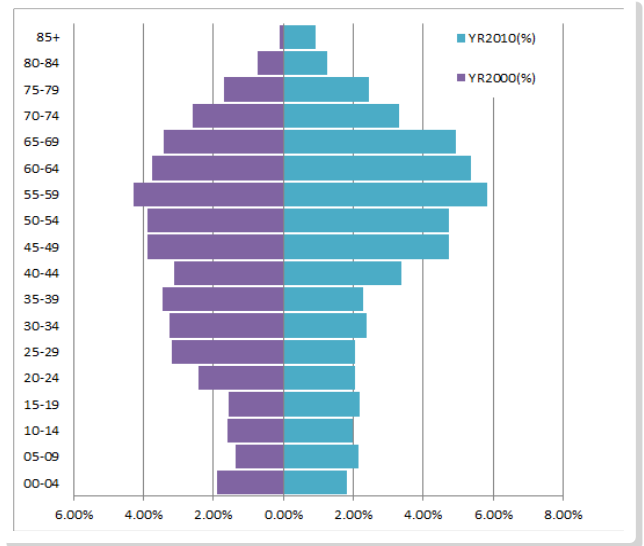
The Plan was developed over a several month period structured around a series of public workshops, each organized to gain input about issues and opportunities existing in the city.



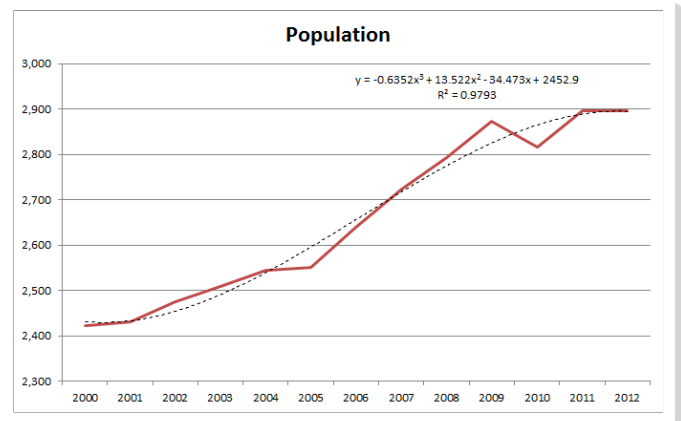
- Status Report & Visioning Session: 12/18/2013
- Review at Citizen Committees:
 - Board of Adjustments & Appeal: 01/07/2014
 - Planning & Zoning Commission: 01/16/2014
 - Development Standards Review Task Force: 01/21/2014
 - Planning & Zoning Commission’s Final Review: 02/20/2014
- The Council’s Review and Adoption: 03/05/2014

STATUS REPORT

Younger generations have been out-migrated, whereas older populations have been in-migrated to the city, showing a reversed population pyramid with an indication of potential population decrease in the future.



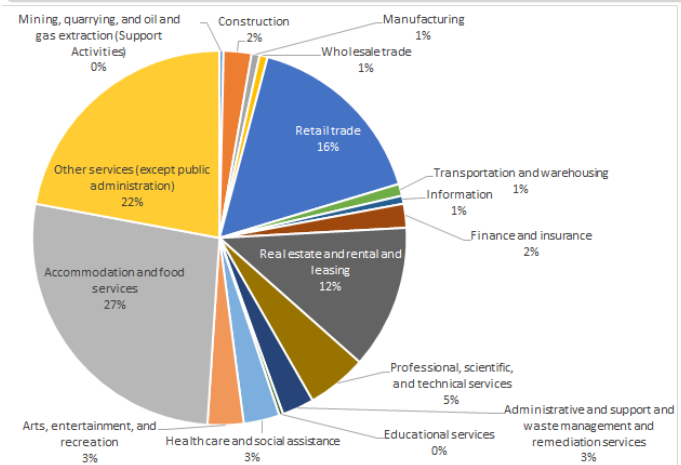
The growth in population of permanent residents has slowed down and shows no increasing trends.



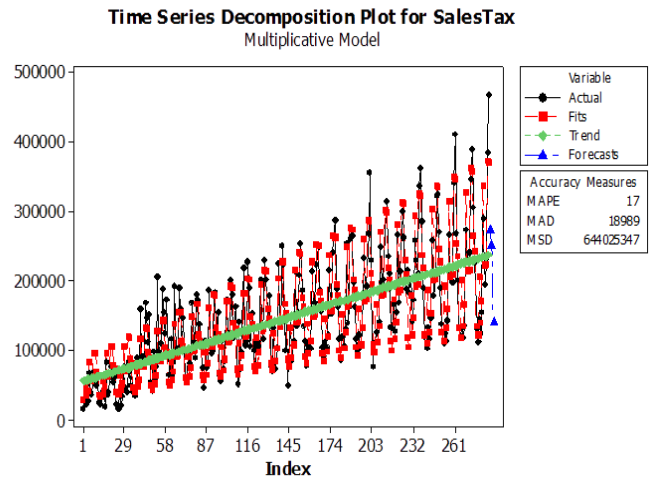
Seasonality has been growing strongly in the city, indicating almost doubled occupancy rates in seasonal, recreational or occupational housing.

Housing Occupancy	YR 2000	YR 2010
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	2,068	4,096
Year-Round Vacant	1,406	1,268
Owner-occupied housing units	769	862
Renter-occupied housing units	442	492
Total	4,685	6,718

Accommodation, food services and other related services occupy approximately 49% of the entire city business. Real estate, rental and lease services add 12%, and retail adds 16%, leaving only 23% other business occupation on the island.



Sales tax will increase until 2030 and get steady, showing no further increase if no change is made to the current economic structure on the island.

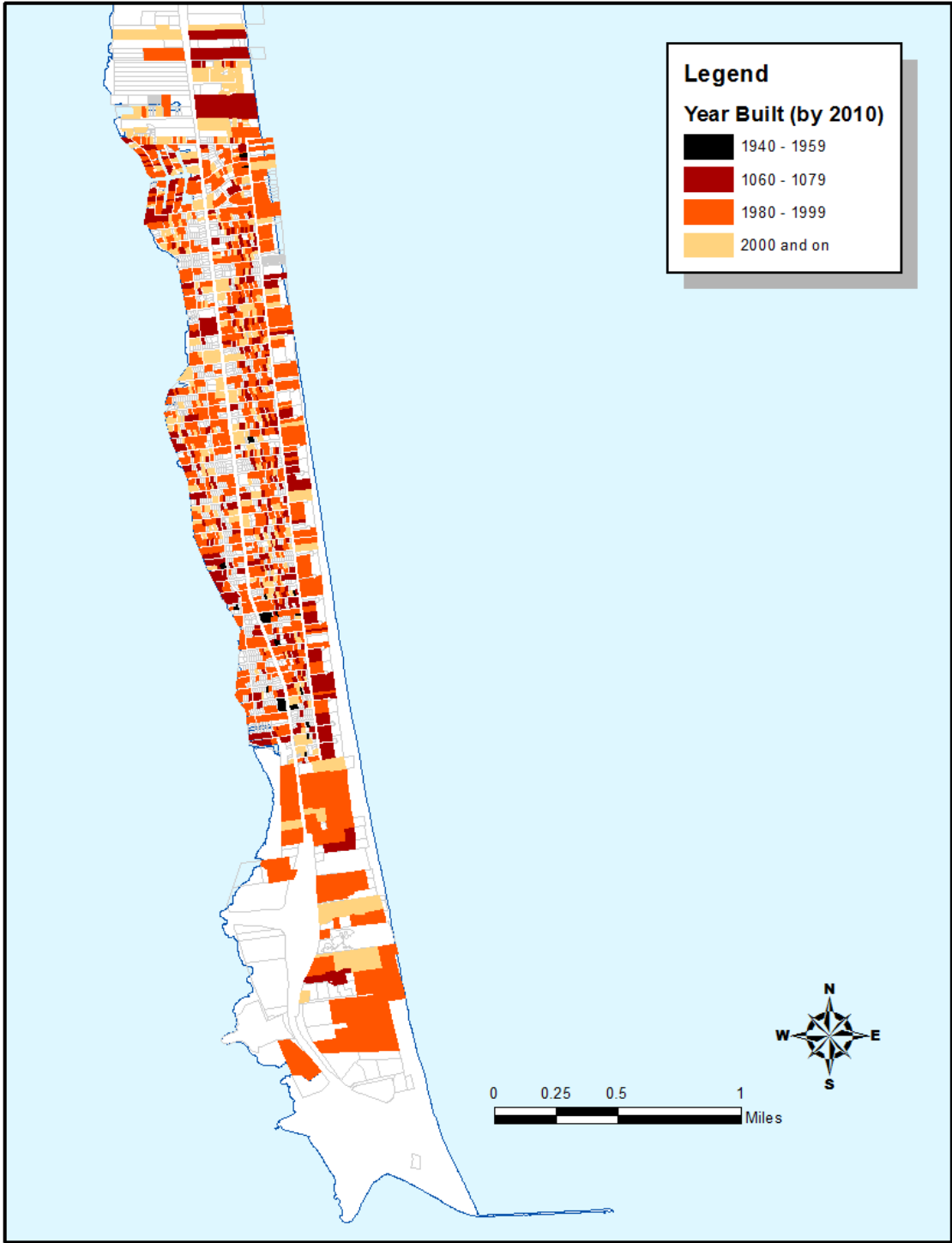


DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Urban models; including the Bid-Rent Theory (von Thünen, 1826), Concentric Zone Model (Burgess, 1923), Sector Model (Hoyt, 1939) and Multiple Nuclei Model (Harris & Ullman, 1945); do not provide basic justification for the City of South Padre Island Zoning map.

In fact, residential zones reside between commercial and tourist destinations, cut in the middle of traffic chaos. This has been caused by earlier residential development patterns that came before non-residential developments that want to be located both along Padre Boulevard, the major traffic corridor, and water-frontages.

It is expected that the existing residential developments will move out from the area to further north due to non-residential development pressure and increasing land values. Annexation of northern lands is essential to accommodate future residential development.



VISIONING SESSION

On Wednesday, December 18, 2013, at 3:00 p.m., the City of South Padre Island accommodated a public workshop for the Visioning. Approximately twenty (20) citizens participated in the session. At the session, professional staff guided each themed discussion. More specifically, the citizen participants revised the existing vision, and when questions arose, staff provided comments and/or answers to them.



THE VISION

MISSION STATEMENT (Why do we exist now?)

South Padre Island is a unique, friendly seaside resort community that values its residents and tourists, preserves and protects the natural environment, and provides for quality sustainable growth and development that is highly diverse and responsive to changing economic conditions.

VISION STATEMENT (Where should we be headed?)

1. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- South Padre Island has transformed its image as a unique seaside community and a first-class resort destination, attracting a blend of permanent and seasonal residents and visitors who come to enjoy its beaches, protected scenic natural environment, and its many recreational attractions in a family-friendly, but respecting its diversity, small-town setting.
- A distinctive “South Padre Style” reflects the relaxed seaside ambiance and the climate and international culture and encompasses well-designed buildings, lush landscaping and themed way-finding signage and lighting.
- Boulevards have been transformed as visually exciting corridors reflecting themed image-quality constituting the preferable shape, color and arrangement. New and retrofitted buildings are harmonious in design. Signage is appropriate in scale and understated in design. The visual impact of overhead utilities has been reduced by taking advantage of technological innovations and other opportunities to cost-effectively place utilities underground. Where feasible, excessive front paved areas have been removed and replaced with landscaping and generous sidewalks and bike lanes.
- The city hall, community center, birding center and other public buildings and civic enhancements have set high standards in exemplifying the “South Padre Style” and are widely emulated by new and renovated commercial and residential structures.
- The city is noted for the cleanliness of its beaches, parks, roadways and public and private properties. The declining number of vacant lots are well kept and free of litter and debris.

2. PARKS AND RESOURCES

- The city’s beaches, parks, playgrounds, beach access points, waterfront promenades, boat ramps, shaded areas, restrooms and other recreational amenities are well placed and conveniently accessible for residents and

- visitors. Recreational and sports facilities meet the needs of all age groups and are well-used by the island's growing number of families with children.
- A sustainable maintenance plan for parks and beaches has been developed and scheduled for cleanliness and adequate facility operations.
 - The island's unique natural resources—its beaches and dunes, wetlands, Laguna Madre waterfront and native flora and fauna—are valued and well protected.
 - A system of linked parks, greenways, open spaces, water-front promenades, nature trails and areas dedicated to activities such as bird watching and ecotourism are easily accessible by foot or bicycle.
 - The Birding and Nature Center has grown into one of the best in the world, providing bird watching, fishing, kiting, sand castles, beaches and windsurfing. The City also supported and acquired a world-class aquarium.
 - Continuous funding sources have been identified to provide sustainable parks and resources.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The transformation of the character and ambience of the island, the presence of permanent residents, more discerning tourists and a commitment to excellence by the City has in turn created greater employment and business opportunities year-round, and the diversified economic opportunity has become a foundation of the city's economic stability.
- Tourism has matured and diversified with a year-round orientation, longer stays and a broader array of family attractions. The island has developed a wide range of entertainment and amenities, more upscale hotels and services, shopping and a well-used convention center attracting group visitation from the region and nation-wide. South Padre's reputation and market share have grown, making it a well-known, highly competitive destination for regional, national and international visitors. Hospitality training programs have improved service quality, producing a stable, educated and better-paid workforce while supporting a shift toward a higher-end tourism market.
- There are many new attractions and amenities on the island catering to permanent residents, business owners and visitors encompassing youths, adults and senior citizens. These include community meeting facilities, a library, eco-tourism and cultural attractions, public sporting facilities, and improved public access to marinas and water sports. Travel in the region and across the border into Mexico is easily arranged with tours available to places of interest.

- Tough restrictions on local business expansion have been removed, and South Padre Island has become one of the most business-friendly cities in the United States by encouraging and investing local workforces.
- Knowledge-based workers who are working from home have been increased due to advanced technology with a high-speed connection.
- South Padre Island has supported tourism for the space industry, offshore oil and gas production and university-sponsored events.
- The City has adopted a correct marketing strategy and provided appropriate resources for developing tourism. Through the efforts, for example, Spring Break has become a positive experience of sporting, cultural and special events that attract both college students and families.

4. GROWTH & FUTURE LAND USE

- New regulations and development standards enacted to implement the Comprehensive Plan are clear and user-friendly and have served to streamline the permitting process while raising the bar of standards of development quality.
- Land use patterns have been consolidated to form distinct neighborhoods and activity districts through carefully guided new development, infill and redevelopment. Mixed-use has been encouraged where strong traffic issues were identified, and a city center has emerged through planning efforts.
- Northern areas of South Padre Island have been annexed into the city, and through implementation of a strong annexation plan, the growth has been controlled carefully to provide a strong basis for permanent population.
- The City has built sustainable resilience through interlocal relations that were circumvented by creative and effective collaborations while sharing mutual benefits.
- Neighborhoods are well defined by use-separation and are consistent in scale. Business, shopping and entertainment districts serving both tourists and residents are compact and well defined. Through shared parking and a well-developed pedestrian network, reliance on the automobile for local travel is greatly reduced.
- The array of housing types has diversified, with single family homes, townhouses, apartments and condominiums sited compatibly and consistently in scale. With a broad array of amenities such as parks, playgrounds, sidewalks and landscaping, neighborhoods are livable and attract growing proportions of families and permanent residents.
- Commercial uses have diversified with a wide array of quality shopping opportunities for local residents and tourists. Tourist-oriented commercial

activities such as souvenir shops have diversified and improved in image and are located in close proximity to hotels and entertainment attractions.

5. TRANSPORTATION

- Traffic congestion has been reduced during special event and peak periods by limiting access in selected areas and by strict and innovative traffic management. In addition, increased availability and convenience of public transit and a convenient network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities have minimized congestion.
- The city has supported Space X program. Ferry operations to and from Boca Chica Beach have offered greater access to the city. Alternatively, a bridge between the city and Boca Chica Beach has been constructed.
- A second causeway has been constructed providing an alternative link to the mainland and improved egress for emergency evacuation. The new causeway respects the delicate ecological balance and recreational functions of the Laguna Madre. The design of the causeway and its approach to the island provide a distinctive image as an entry feature or gateway.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

- Deficiencies have been corrected and measures instituted to ensure an adequate supply of potable water and water for irrigation supplemented by additional resources like desalinization.
- Sanitary and storm sewer systems have been designed and provided in an appropriate manner, and their negative impacts have been reduced.
- The supply of electricity is reliable and sufficient to satisfy all local needs.
- Flooding threats have been reduced in low-lying areas through drainage improvements and development standards that reduce standing water and encourage detention and rapid percolation.
- The City has the infrastructure capacity and fiscal resources to support planned incremental growth.

7. GOVERNANCE

- The City has successfully maintained a “Home Rule” type of government, which allows greater control over fiscal matters and public expenditures. This allows for a more stable environment for effective decision-making.
- The city government is well managed and has instituted measures to ensure fiscal health and remain well prepared for high performance outcomes through short- and long-range capital investments.

- The Comprehensive Plan is the key reference for all government decisions, actions concerning budgets, capital spending, regulatory measures and development review and approvals.

8. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- South Padre citizens are deeply involved in civic affairs and participate in decisions affecting their current and future lifestyles. The City provides effective communication on day-to-day affairs and the various associations on the island as well as throughout the region, representing a wide range of interest. The communication efforts are well supported by citizens of all ages.
- The City has continuously followed the Texas Open Meetings Act (Government Code Chapter 551) and has made governmental decision making easily accessible to the public.
- Government, citizens and business and civic organizations continue to collaborate effectively on initiatives to improve South Padre Island through every possible means.
- City staff and elected officials are committed to fulfill their obligations to provide high-quality services and leadership.
- The City has been providing a seed for emotional attachment to home on the island, and the notion of “home or citizen ownership” grew in the communities.

9. FIRE, POLICE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- As parts of fundamental municipal services, the City has been fully supporting fire, police and emergency management operations.
- Citizen volunteers have been fully utilized through appropriate training programs.

FIRE

- The fire department established additional fire stations on the island. As the infrastructure is extended to the north, business and residential occupancies have also moved into those areas. Additional stations reduced the response times to those areas as well as provided additional personnel and equipment to respond to the increased calls for service.
- Increased and improved distribution ensures fire hydrants have been adequately placed throughout the city.
- Communications equipment has been updated throughout the fire department. The department has shared a state-of-the-art communications system with all of the emergency services on the island. This includes radio

communications as well as a computer-aided dispatch system. This system allows all fire equipment to have real-time access to maps, fire hydrant locations, pre-fire plans, hazards and fire system information. Dispatch information and fire apparatus response have been relayed via computer, decreasing the amount of radio traffic on the emergency channels.

- The department has seen increased personnel in the fire prevention division. This division educates residents, visitors and students throughout the area on fire and home safety, safety evacuation practices and fire inspections. The division has a “Fire Safety House” trailer to actually demonstrate fire safety in the home to elementary students at schools in the area as well as at appropriate events on the island.
- The department acquired a fire command vehicle that is equipped with firefighter tracking GPS capability. This allows the incident commander (IC) to locate all firefighters inside a building during an emergency to decrease the time necessary to assist in victim rescue as well as downed firefighter rescue. The vehicle also has the capability to track the amount of air left in the firefighters’ air packs. This ability allows the IC to determine when firefighters needed to have replacement personnel ready to enter the structure to replace the firefighters fighting the fire. The vehicle also has scene lighting and audio, video and thermal imaging capability to assist with the management and safety of the emergency scene.
- Beach Patrol/Rescue increased its capability as the area requiring coverage and the number of visitors increased. The number of life guards and life guard towers have been increased to meet the maximum safety standards for beach safety. The beach patrol vehicles are staffed by paramedics with all of the necessary medical supplies and equipment. This provides immediate, onsite medical intervention when necessary to improve the outcome of medical emergency victims on the beach.
- The department has grown to provide region-wide fire response.

POLICE

- In an effort to enhance the quality of life for all stakeholders, community members have been involved positively with the police operations, and crime rates have been decreasing.
- The police service has become strengthened and successfully provided educational sessions, satellite monitoring, and prompt response to citizen complaints.
- As the general population has increased, police department personnel, equipment and facilities have been built to provide professional and effective police services, with the best effort directed toward protecting lives and safeguarding property.

- An important component of this agency's ability to achieve and maintain certification through the Texas Police Chief's Association of Recognized Cities, is an annual evaluation of police employee staffing and services offered to determine overall suitability, as it recounts our perpetually changing environment.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation have been best accomplished through continued outreach programs, planning and training.
- Emergency managers are equipped with state-of-the-art information technology and can take preventive and preparatory measures to build South Padre Island into a disaster-resistant community by anticipating future disasters.
- Emergency managers achieved the highest possible degree of united efforts among all levels of government and all elements of the community.
- Restoration and continuity of city services have been guaranteed within a reasonable time.