



May 28, 2021

Honorable Commissioner George P. Bush
Texas General Land Office
1700 N. Congress Avenue
Room 330
Austin, Texas 78701

Please Return to Park Board for Upload

RE: Park Board Cycle 12 Support Letter- For 3 CEPR Coastal Resource Funding Applications

Dear Commissioner Bush,

The Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce is submitting this letter of support for three (3) Galveston Park Board grant applications. These applications will help to enhance the long-term viability of Galveston's greatest asset- our beaches. We have been advocating for businesses and community development to improve life on Galveston Island since 1845. We are the oldest Chamber of Commerce in the State of Texas.

With this history in mind, we are keenly aware of the importance of our beaches and the need to repair any damages or sediment loss as quickly as possible, while at the same time, also taking the necessary steps to implement future restoration projects. It is common knowledge beachfront areas beyond the west end of the seawall took an extremely hard hit during the 2020 hurricane season. We are happy to support the applications developed by the Park Board because they address these impacted areas.

Our understanding of the projects is they are intended to address three distinct issues by 1.) Restore Hurricane Harvey Damages to the Babe's Beach area by Implementing a FEMA repair project; 2.) Extending from 8-Mile Road to 13-Mile Road, the soon to be implemented Engineering and Design project for a future beach nourishment project in this highly eroding area; and 3.) amending both Park Board's U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permits that would extend their lifespan an additional 5 years to December 31, 2029. Without these two permits in place beyond their current expiration at the end of 2024, Galveston Island will continue to erode without the ability to implement any projects to repair or slow that erosion.

Each of these applications is seeking to partner with the General Land Office, and in the case of the Hurricane Harvey repair at Babe's Beach, FEMA will be the primary funding source for the repairs. This project sets a precedent for FEMA assistance at Babe's Beach to repair storm damage and helps to protect the local community investment that led to the creation of Babe's Beach in 2015.

Again, I would like to express our support for these three (3) important projects. Each is intended to benefit Galveston Island, its residents, and visitors. We believe all three project applications are essential, and worthy of Cycle 12 funding.

Should you have any questions or need additional information please do not hesitate to let me know.

Thank you for allowing us to voice our support of these three applications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina Spagnola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Gina Spagnola, President & CEO
Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce