



# PORTARTHUR

Population 57,755

## PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)

*Apply by Monday, 20 June 2016*

### Background

The City of Port Arthur unites land and sea in Southeast Texas, and with its diverse history and rich culture, Port Arthur is a place that a person can set down their roots. Most of the City's 58,000 residents live and work within Jefferson County and within the Beaumont-Port Arthur Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The City's rich history spans pre-American history, European colonization, the **Kansas City Southern Railroad** expansion, and the discovery growth of the oil industry. Today, Port Arthur is at the center of one of the biggest oil refining hubs in the United States and among the world's prosperous oil refining centers.

In addition to economic growth and prosperity, Port Arthur has been home to musical great **Janis Joplin**, legendary football coach **Jimmy Johnson**, world-renowned actress **Evelyn Keyes** (*Gone with the Wind*), and football great **Joe Washington Jr.** All these and more are honored in the **Museum of the Gulf Coast**.

Port Arthur of both the past and present embodies the City's motto:

*"Let the Good Times Roll"*

### About the Position

The **Public Information Officer** is vitally-important for communicating the new vision of the City of Port Arthur. Effective communication with the public and among City departments will ensure residents are well-informed and department efforts and successes are better understood.

The PIO will be a highly-valued member of the City Manager's senior management team .

The City of Port Arthur is looking for an energetic, highly skilled, and tech-savvy professional with excellent interpersonal skills who will complement the City's need for effective, efficient and sustainable public and mass communication efforts.

## History

The shores of Sabine Lake have been occupied for more than 1,500 years. American Indians were the earliest known settlers of the area, and the late 1700s marked the first visits from Europeans.

The town was established by railroad pioneer Arthur E. Stilwell who began settling the city in 1895. With financial backing from Dutch investors, Stilwell founded what is now Kansas City Southern Railroad and he envisioned Port Arthur as the southern terminus for his new railway. Pioneers arrived by the hundreds and began building homes and opening businesses.



The eruption of the **Lucas Gusher** at **Spindletop** in 1901, changed the fate of Port Arthur. The port quickly began to serve the needs of the new petrochemical industry. As the port moved into this role companies such as **Gulf Oil Corporation** in 1901 and **Texaco** in 1902 set up refining facilities in the city. By 1957, Port Arthur was the center of the world's most prosperous refining facilities.

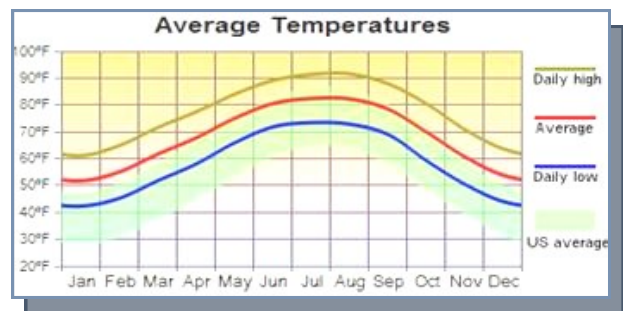


Today, Port Arthur encompasses a number of smaller communities including the former communities of **Griffing Park**, **Pear Ridge**, and **Lakeview**. Sabine Pass and Port Acres are still often regarded as self-contained communities, and **Sabine Pass** in fact still has its own school district, water district, port authority, and zip code.



## Climate

Port Arthur is tied with Lake Charles, LA as the most humid city in the 40 contiguous United States. The average *relative humidity* is 90% in the morning, and 72% in the afternoon. The average *temperature* in Port Arthur is 10 degrees above the US average throughout the year, with highs that approach 20 degrees above average. The Port Arthur area does experience tropical hurricanes.



## Geography

The Gulf Coast's many lakes, rivers and bayous between Houston (90 miles) and New Orleans (265 miles) make Port Arthur a premier destination for any one looking to enjoy some time in the sun.

For the outdoor enthusiast, Port Arthur is home to expansive nature preserves and parks including the 18-mile long Pleasure Island which provides ample opportunities for golf, hiking / biking, sailing, swimming, bird watching, disc golf, camping or a leisurely stroll through nature.

Major cities are within short driving time :

*Galveston (60 min) Houston (90 min) Austin (4 hours)  
San Antonio (4 hours) Dallas (4 hours)  
Shreveport, LA (4 hours) New Orleans, LA (4 hours)*

**Jack Brooks Regional Airport** provides daily flights to cities throughout Texas, and *two* international airports in Houston provide convenient family & business travel access to anywhere in the world.



**Demographics**

Between 1900 and 2015, the City grew from 900 to 55,000 residents. Once a small company town, Port Arthur is now the 63rd largest of 3200 cities and towns in Texas. Since 2015, the population has grown 1.4% after 30 years of steady population decline. The incorporated area of the City has a total area of **143.8 sq/mi** (*Land: 82.9 sq/mi & Water: 60.8 sq/mi*).

In 2010, there were an estimated 21,839 households & 14,675 families living in Port Arthur. The population density is 695.5 people per sq/mi. The racial makeup of Port Arthur is 40% African American, 36% White,

29% Hispanic or Latino, 6% Asian, .45% Native American, .02% Pacific Islander, 14% of other races, and 2% of two+ races.

50% of the population falls under 35 years of age. The highest percentage of residents are under 20 years old, with 30% of the population over 55 years. The median age is 34.6 years.

Age Group	Percent
1-9	15%
10-19	16%
20-24	6.5%
25-34	12%
35-44	14%
45-54	12%
55-64	8%
65-74	13.5%
75+	8%

*Source: U.S. Census*

**Commerce**

Port Arthur has a diverse workforce as demonstrated by the numerous active businesses in the area. While the petroleum and related service industries are dominant clusters, Port Arthur also has a strong representation in manufacturing, health care, rail transportation and offshore services.

The top 10 employers in Port Arthur include:

Company	FT Employees
Motiva Enterprises, LLC	1300
Huntsman Corp.	1250
CHRISTUS St. Mary Hospital	900
Valero	825
Walmart Supercenter 2 locations	650
The Medical Center of Southeast Texas	562
TOTAL Port Arthur Refinery	500
Echo Maintenance, LLC	500
Horizon Offshore Contractors, Inc.	400



During the past 20 years, the Port Arthur economy has weathered a period of stagnation and neglect directly tied to fluctuations in the oil industry and catastrophic weather events. Port Arthur is currently enjoying renewed investment in several key petrochemical installations. Several large projects that involve energy infrastructure are currently underway or being proposed:

- ◆ **Golden Pass and Sabine Pass LNG** terminals have gathered investments that total more than \$2 Billion, and will provide 1000s of jobs in the months ahead;
- ◆ **Motiva Enterprises** has begun a \$10 Billion expansion (largest US oil refinery expansion in 30 years) to its western Port Arthur refinery, expanding capacity to 600,000 barrels per day;
- ◆ **Valero Refining** has finished its \$775 million expansion of its petrochemical plant; and
- ◆ **BASF/Fina** recently commenced operations of a new \$1.75 billion gasification and cogeneration unit.

These expansions and additional investments will provide for job growth and rejuvenation of abandoned buildings and the creation of greater employment opportunities.

The city has been hit by three major tropical storms in the past 10 years: **Hurricanes Rita, Ike, and Tropical Storm Gabrielle**. For these and many reasons, the local economy needs to be re-engineered and diversified through comprehensive economic development and new investment to become a more solid and diverse 21st Century city.

Port Arthur's **Economic Development Corporation** is working to promote Port Arthur's many advantages to new business and residents, and a RFQ to rebuild Port Arthur's Downtown is pending. The **Public Information Officer** will play a BIG role in promoting these efforts.





## **Form of Government**

Port Arthur was incorporated in 1898 and has become a full-service city with over 700 full-time employees. A FY 2015-2016 annual budget of \$134 million, and an ad valorem tax rate of \$0.792 per \$100 valuation.

Port Arthur is a **Council-Manager government**, with a Mayor and 8-member City Council. All councilmembers and mayor are elected to 3-year terms. 4 Council members are elected from defined districts and 2 are elected at-large. Mayor Deloris “Bobbie” Prince, has been in office since 2006

City Council appoints the City Manager, Municipal Court Judge, City Attorney, City Secretary, and members of City boards and commissions. The City Manager manages 700 full-time staff more than 15 departments including:

*Development Services, Fire, Health, Housing, Finance, and Neighborhood Services, Human Resources, Library, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Transit, Water and Wastewater Utilities.*

## **Work Environment**

The City Manager is creating a collaborative and professional organization where employees are exposed to challenging work assignments giving employees the opportunity to contribute, diversify skills, and improve the city’s efficiency & effectiveness. The organizational culture is professional and diverse. Employees of all ethnicities enjoy **collaboration and a supportive environment** where unique challenges, innovative solutions and fulfilling accomplishments are part of every-day work!

The City has an excellent relationship with the media. The new **Public Information Officer** will be a critical member of Senior City Management team in creating a more effective public information strategy and modes of communication with news media and the public.

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

The City of Port Arthur is undergoing important changes, guaranteed to be exciting and challenging for the new **Public Information Officer (PIO)**.

### ***Communications Opportunities***

The City of Port Arthur could significantly benefit from:

1. A Mass Communication Strategy.
2. A standard approach to proactively educate the public on events, local government policy and preparedness.
3. A centralized approach among various departments in providing information to the public.
4. Effective use of electronic and social media.
5. The production and distribution of newsletters.
6. Effective communication with the public when difficult and challenging issues face the City or items of general public interest (health & safety) and basic municipal operations.
7. Upgrading of the City’s website and Cable TV channel
8. Efficient use of *Synergy*—an app allowing residents to report a problem to City officials.

### ***Other Opportunities***

The City of Port Arthur could significantly benefit from:

- ◆ **Decreasing the City’s annual expense of tax liens, levies and maintenance of abandoned properties (exceeds \$1 million);**
- ◆ **Ongoing forensic audit (investigations) into acts of potential waste or fraud and ongoing litigation .**
- ◆ **Communicating the purpose and progress of Implementing of the City’s **Redevelopment Strategy (underway)** and **Downtown Revitalization Plan (pending approval)**;**
- ◆ **Development a Public Communications Strategy with effective use of electronic media;**
- ◆ **Communicate Public-Private Partnership opportunities to companies looking for tax incentives throughout established redevelopment areas;**



## **Public Information Officer - Key Responsibilities**

- ◆ Serve as primary Information Officer for the City;
- ◆ Create and implement a **Mass Communication Strategy and Policies** which includes (a) an internal, integrated system of communicating and information gathering between and among departments and (b) effectively communicating to the public;
- ◆ Develop, implement and maintain a **Social Media Strategy** and presence which also accounts for Port Arthur's demographics;
- ◆ **Collaborate internally with City departments and externally with partner agencies** to gather and provide facts to media on certain administrative or policy issues and events involving Port Arthur;
- ◆ Serve as a **liaison between the City Manager and department heads** to assure a common voice when communicating on behalf of the City of Port Arthur;
- ◆ Serve as a **liaison between the City and citizens**, private industry and other government entities to discuss and resolve complex issues;
- ◆ Establish and maintain a highly effective and functioning **relationship with mass media outlets**;
- ◆ Effectively and tactfully respond and/or coordinate responses to **difficult and sensitive complaints**;

## **The Ideal Candidate**

The ideal candidate will possess the following attributes, skills, education and experience are desired:

### ***Attributes & Skills***

- √ ***Politically-savvy, Proactive Communicator***  
Port Arthur is known as a politically-active community which often includes issues which need to be communicated clearly, effectively and proactively to assure a well-informed the community of the media, business owners, corporations, developers, citizens and elected officials.
- √ ***Multi-lingual***  
Must speak and write in English effectively, with a 2nd or 3rd language. Vietnamese or Spanish *is a plus*.
- √ ***Excellent Analytic and Problem-solving skills***  
Must be capable of analyzing and understanding complex administrative and policy issues and

communicating information in the best interest of the City and its residents. Must have a track record of reporting difficult issues in a positive light

- √ ***Technically Skilled & Experienced***  
A seasoned professional experienced in interpersonal communication, mass communication & conflict resolution. The ability to listen to and understand opposing viewpoints. The ability to clearly articulate City policy and vision (verbal, written) in difficult environments is important. Must have a firm grasp on and experience with a variety of **new technologies** to increase the effectiveness of communication among all departments and divisions. Private-sector media experience a plus.
- √ ***Team Builder***  
An assertive individual with a positive and *infectious* attitude who is willing to inspire those around them through passion and experience. Strong collaboration with and among department & division managers is essential to positive communication & avoiding conflict.
- √ ***Excellent Project Management***  
A disciplined, organized individual who can work both independently and collaboratively will be successful in managing the challenges of this position.
- √ ***Commitment to Port Arthur***  
Preference given to candidates willing to commit efforts for 3 or more years.

### ***Education & Experience***

- √ **Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations, Marketing, Journalism, Mass Communications, or related field from an accredited college or university.**
- √ **Minimum of five (5) years experience in Public Relations, Mass Communications or combination w/ **minimum of three (3) years experience in a senior management / project role in public or private agency.****
- √ **Technically savvy and a proven track record of success in challenging work environments.**

### ***Certifications & Licenses***

- √ **Valid Texas Driving License w/in 90 days (required);**
- √ **Member of the Public Relations Society of America (preferred);**
- √ **Willingness to join the Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers (TAMIO).**



## Amenities

The Gulf Coast’s many lakes, rivers and bayous between New Orleans (265 miles) and Houston (90 miles) make Port Arthur a destination for any one looking to enjoy some time in the sun.

On average, there are 211 sunny days per year and no snow-fall! Enjoy a day outside and an evening exploring fine-dining or the wide array of incredible events in the area. Port Arthur’s tropical climate permits residents to enjoy the outdoors year-round and provides easy access to many world-class recreational and cultural activities including **theatres, museums, professional sporting events, beautiful beaches & outdoor festivals.**

For the outdoor enthusiast, Port Arthur is home to expansive nature preserves and parks including the 18-mile long Pleasure Island which provides ample opportunities for **golf, sailing, bird watching, swimming, hiking / biking, disc golf, camping** or a leisurely stroll through nature. Port Arthur’s wetlands and beaches offer **world-class salt and fresh water fishing** in a comfortable year round climate that is perfect to enjoy.



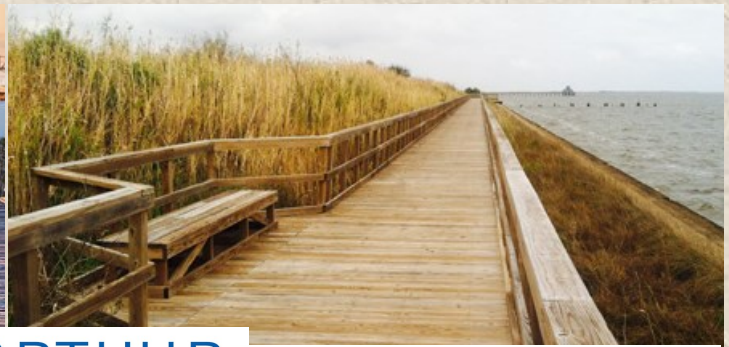
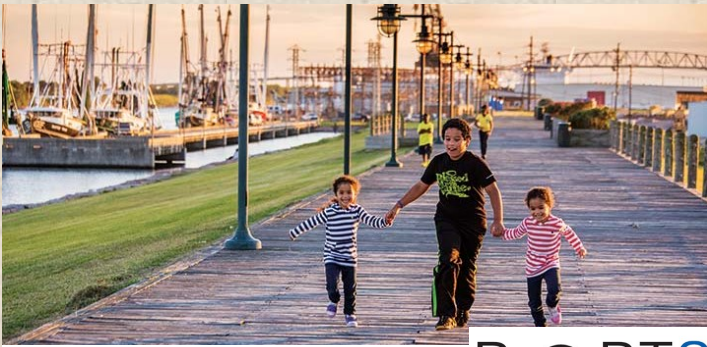
**Mardi Gras** is also just a catch away. Residents and visitors can lose themselves in Port Arthur culture and history tasting the Cajun, classic Mexican/Tex-Mex, Italian, Asian, to the good ol’ home-style food. Catch the excitement at the Mardi Gras of Southeast Texas, **Zachary Breaux Jazz Festival** and **Buu Mon Lotus Festival** and **Bamboo Festival**. The **Jurassic to Joplin Museum** experience includes tributes to the ‘**Big Bopper**’, **Jimmy Johnson & Robert Rauschenburg**. You can also:

- Cast a line in Sabine Lake from Pleasure Island
- Visit Sea Rim State Park (birding, beachcombing & kayaking)
- Explore the Faith Trail
- Visit an exciting night club like Capri or Crazy 8’s
- Monthly fishing tournaments, heritage festivals & art displays
- Shopping expedition at the Port Arthur Central Mall
- Visit the Museum of the Gulf Coast and Janis Joplin’s (replica) psychedelic Porsche
- Take in a professional football or baseball game with the NFL Houston Texans or Major League Baseball Houston Astros

### Some additional useful websites:

- ◆ [City of Port Arthur](#)
- ◆ [Jefferson County Government](#)
- ◆ [Port Arthur Independent School District](#)
- ◆ [Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce](#)
- ◆ [Port Arthur Economic Development Corp](#)





# PORTARTHUR

*“Let the Good Times Roll”*

## APPLY TODAY

### Compensation

The City offers a competitive annual salary of at least **\$65,000 to \$85,000** (*Depending on Qualifications*). Relocation expenses, association dues and an attractive cafeteria-style benefits program. Click on the link for information on the City’s [benefits program offerings](#).

### Equal Opportunity

All genders and ethnicities are encouraged to apply. The City of Port Arthur is a Drug-free workplace and Equal Opportunity Employer. The City values public service, equal opportunity and diversity in the workplace. It is a community committed to workforce building and serving its residents and businesses with commitment to the following values:

***Responsibility, Respect, Honesty Teamwork,  
Diversity and Inclusiveness.***

### Confidentiality

The City realizes that some candidates are not comfortable having their names disclosed to the public. As a result, all candidate application materials, including the applicant’s name, will remain confidential until Finalist are selected for interviews.

### Residency

Residency within the city limits is not required, however living within a 30-minutes commute is.

### Process

Email your resume and Letter of Interest to:

***David Evertsen, Principal***

[PortArthurPIO@municipalsolutions.org](mailto:PortArthurPIO@municipalsolutions.org)

before

**5:00 PM Central Time, Monday, June 20th to:**

Faxed & mailed resumes will not be considered.

Candidates will be screened May through mid-June.

Semi-Finalists’ Background checks conducted in early July.

Finalist interviews will be held near July 18th with selection soon thereafter.

Direct questions to the email address above or by calling 801 678-2001 or 623 207-1309.

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