



Testify Against Approval of PUD #26P-009 (Discovery Sands) *Protect Galveston's West End Community and Coastal Ecosystems*

Background

A 351-acre real estate development, known as “**Discovery Sands**”, has been proposed next to Jamaica Beach in Galveston's West End. The project will place 733 new lots, 213 condos, and a tourist attraction immediately next to the beach in an ecologically sensitive area.

The developer is requesting approval of Planned Urban Development (PUD) #26P-009, along with **exemptions** that would allow them to **bypass standard safety and environmental rules**, including:

- Elimination of minimum lot size and setback requirements;
- Increase to allowable building heights,
- Reduction of maximum density, lighting, and parking requirements, and
- Creation of private streets

These changes would allow high-density development in an area that has received decades of public investment in marsh restoration and storm protection.

[Click here to review the developer's documents submitted to the Planning Commission.](#)

Why This Matters

- **Protect Public Investment**
Approximately 100 acres of marsh restoration efforts that happened over a 20-year time period using public funding. Approving high-density development immediately next to these restored systems raises concerns about protecting long-term public investment.
- **Storm Protection and Flood Risk**
Coastal wetlands and natural shoreline features play a documented role in reducing storm surge and buffering flood impact during hurricanes. Development adjacent to restored marsh systems warrants careful evaluation to ensure natural storm protection is not compromised.
- **Endangered Wildlife and Protected Habitat**
The project area includes wetlands and habitats associated with federally protected wetlands, including the black rail. Any approval should ensure full compliance with federal and species protections. The region is identified as an essential habitat for migratory bird, and aquatic species.

- **Infrastructure Capacity**

The proposed PUD seeks increased density and regulatory exemptions. Before approval, the Planning Commission should ensure adequate evidence demonstrates whether Galveston's water, sewage systems, drainage, transportation, and emergency services can support the full scale of development and associated tourism in this area.

- **Community Integrity**

Land use decisions in coastal areas shape long-term community identity and resilience. Approval of a high density PUD may influence future development patterns in Galveston's West Bay and beyond.

Take Action: Testify or Submit a Comment to Galveston's Planning Commission

Submit Written Comments (5-Minute Option)

Deadline: Before the March 3 Planning Commission Meeting

- Submit a comment online [here](#) (use the drop-down menu to select **PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING, AND REFERENCE CASE 26P-009**); OR
- Email your comment to planningcounter@galvestontx.gov
subject line: "**Comments to Case 26P-009.**"
Use the talking points below.

Testify In-Person at Planning Commission Meeting (3 Minutes)

Tuesday, March 3 at 3:30pm
Galveston City Hall
823 Rosenberg St, 2nd floor,
Galveston, Texas 77554

Key Talking Points

Personalized comments and testimony are most effective. Connect the information below to your own experience, and clearly state your position on PUD #26P-009.

How to Structure Your Own Testimony (3min)

- Introduce yourself and your connection to Galveston.
- Clearly state your position on PUD #26P-009.
- Share 1-2 personal concerns that matter to you.
- Close by asking the Commission to carefully reconsider approval.

Choose 1-2 Concerns That Matter to You

Public Investment

- Are you concerned about protecting the approximately 100 acres of publicly funded marsh restoration adjacent to this project?
- Do you believe public restoration efforts should be safeguarded from incompatible development?

Storm Safety and Flooding

- Have hurricanes or flooding affected you personally?
- How might adding hundreds of new homes and condos in the area affect local drainage during heavy rain?
- Could increased density impact evacuation routes during a storm?
- Do you want to ensure development next to restored marsh areas does not compromise storm resilience?

Endangered Wildlife and Protected Habitat

- Do you fish, kayak, birdwatch, or spend time outdoors in Galveston's West End?
- Do the restored marsh areas adjacent to this project contribute to why you value this community?
- Are you concerned about approving large scale development next to wetlands habitat associated with federally protected species, including the black rail?
- Are you concerned about the development next to wetlands that serve as fish nurseries and support migratory bird habitats?

Infrastructure Capacity

- Have you experienced drainage issues, sewer overflows, traffic congestion or delayed emergency response in this area?
- Do you have concerns about how current infrastructure performs during storms or peak tourism seasons?
- How might adding hundreds of new homes and condos in the area affect local drainage during heavy rain?
- Do you want to be provided clear evidence that existing systems can safely support this scale of development before approval?

Community Integrity

- Do you care about the scale and pace of development in Galveston's West end?
- Are you concerned about approving regulatory exemptions for this project?
- Do you believe development in coastal areas should prioritize long-term resilience over short- term growth?
- Do you believe that granting exceptions in this project could make it easier for future high density developments to seek similar approvals?

Example Testimony

"Good Afternoon. My name is _____, and I live in [neighborhood or area]. I have lived in Galveston for [X years] and regularly spend time in the West End.

Hurricane Harvey and other storms have affected me personally, and I've seen how quickly water can rise during heavy rain. I also know how important restored marsh areas are for

absorbing stormwater and reducing storm surge and flood risk on the Island. I am concerned that adding hundreds of new homes and condominiums next to a restored wetland could put additional pressure on our aging drainage systems, and clog evacuation routes during hurricanes and storms.

I also value the coastal wetlands near [specific landmark if applicable]. I fish and birdwatch in this area. The marshes support nurseries and migratory bird habitats, as well as our thriving fishing community. Development in this region would have a direct and negative impact on my quality of life.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to deny approval of PUD#26P-009. Thank you for your time.”

What's next?

- **Save the date**
On **March 26**, the City Council will review this development again, offering another chance to testify and share your concerns about Galveston ecosystems.
- **Share this alert**
Forward this to neighbors, community members, and local schools who care about coastal resilience, wildlife and responsible development in Galveston.
- **Contact your representatives and local planning commission**
Contact your city council members and the Planning Commission to share your opposition.
- **Support and Learn more**
Learn about existing ordinances, community groups, and policies that support and safeguard Galveston's environment and community. Advocating for these protections ensures that future developments respect your community's integrity and identity. Some helpful resources include:
 - **City of Galveston Planning Commission:** Learn about meeting schedules, agendas, and how to follow or participate in planning decisions that affect land use.
 - <https://www.galvestontx.gov/471/Planning-Commission>
 - **City of Galveston's Land Development Regulations (LDR):** Learn more about the regulations and community goals that provide guidance and standards for the orderly development and redevelopment of land and associated public infrastructure, facilities, and amenities within Galveston.
 - <https://www.galvestontx.gov/638/Land-Development-Regulations-LDRs>
 - **Coastal Zone Management Programs by Galveston Park Board:** Discover the coastal zone management programs focused on maintaining public beaches, wildlife monitoring, and environmentally responsible practices.
 - <https://www.galvestonparkboard.org/199/Coastal-Zone-Management>
 - **Join Vision Galveston's Green Galveston Action Team:** Vision Galveston is hosting Green Galveston Action team, which brings together community members who are interested in all things green and want to contribute to creating a more sustainable Galveston. As a Green Galveston Action Team member, you will be the first to know about events, projects, and volunteer opportunities with Vision Galveston and our partner organizations.

- <https://www.visiongalveston.com/initiatives/green-galveston>
- **Read National Wildlife Foundation's Climate Resilient Galveston Report:** Climate Resilient Galveston provides local leaders and stakeholders a comprehensive assessment of climate risks facing the island and offers policy solutions designed to safeguard Galveston's local community and ecosystem.
 - <https://texaslivingwaters.org/deeper-dive/climate-resilient-galveston/>
- **Explore the Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve:** Discover how Artist Boat is actively protecting and restoring Galveston's coastal environment. Learn, volunteer, or take part in programs that help safeguard our shorelines and marine habitats.
 - <https://www.artistboat.org/coastal-heritage-preserve/>