

SURFSIDE BEACH, TEXAS

Surfside Beach, also known as Surfside and Folletts Island, at the mouth of the Brazos River on the Gulf of Mexico in southeastern Brazoria County, encompasses the site of old Velasco. The population was estimated at 1,208 in 1958 and reached a maximum of 2,301 in 1970, when the town had fifty businesses. Surfside Beach was incorporated in 1975 under the name Surfside but was renamed Surfside Beach in 1988. Its mayor is Larry Davison, owner of the local surf shop Breaker Sports.

Considered the "Cradle of Texas", Surfside is the home of the famous Fort Velasco. The actual Fort was located near the current City Hall. It was at this port that Stephen F Austin and the original 300 settlers first stepped foot on Texas soil in 1821. Eleven years later, in 1832, the first battle of Texas' war for independence was fought on her soil and it is also where Santa Ana signed the Treaty of Velasco recognizing Texas as an Independent Country.

Surfside Beach is a charming community steeped in rich history with beachfront houses, canal homes and local businesses. Void of skyscrapers and high rises, Surfside has the charm of coastal communities of yesteryear, with modern conveniences and a vision of the future.

Historical Markers state:

"Here was fought a battle-- the first collision in arms between Texas colonists and the Mexican military-- a conflict preliminary to the Texas War for Independence. On June 26, 1832, when Texans under John Austin and Henry Smith came down river with cannon for use against Mexican forces at Anahuac, they ran against the resistance of Lt. Col. Domingo de Ugartechea. As commander of Mexican forces at Velasco, Ugartechea refused passage through the mouth of the Brazos River to the vessel bearing the cannon to Anahuac. Some 112 Texans attacked the port at midnight, and after 9 hours under the fire of Texas rifles and cannon, the Mexican garrison was forced to surrender. The Battle of Velasco, brought on by a customs quarrel at Anahuac, was unknowingly fought after the dispute at Anahuac had been peaceably settled."

After the victory at San Jacinto 4 years later, President David G. Burnet moved the capital of the Republic of Texas temporarily to Velasco. Here the Treaty of Velasco, ending hostilities between Texas and Mexico, was signed on May 14, 1836.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 2.2 square miles (5.8 km²), of which, 1.8 square miles (4.6 km²) of it is land and 0.4 square miles (1.2 km²) of it (20.09%) is water.

As of the census of 2000, there were 763 people, 352 households, and 197 families residing in the city. The population density was 427.7 people per square mile (165.5/km²). There were 879 housing units at an average density of 492.7/sq mi (190.7/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 92.66% White, 1.97% African American, 0.52% Native American, 0.26% Asian, 0.26% Pacific Islander, 2.10% from other races, and 2.23% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 3.93% of the population.

There were 352 households out of which 19.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 43.5% were married couples living together, 7.4% had a female householder with no husband present, and 44.0% were non-families. 32.1% of all households were made up of individuals and 4.8% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.15 and the average family size was 2.68.

In the city the population was spread out with 18.6% under the age of 18, 5.8% from 18 to 24, 31.5% from 25 to 44, 33.2% from 45 to 64, and 11.0% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 42 years. For every 100 females there were 111.9 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 118.7 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$37,778, and the median income for a family was \$43,333. Males had a median income of \$30,556 versus \$25,625 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$24,081. About 10.4% of families and 12.6% of the population were below the poverty line, including 21.1% of those under age 18 and 3.8% of those age 65 or over.

Sources: The Handbook of Texas Online - Wikipedia Online- The Village of Surfside Beach City Website