

STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mitchell Historic Properties announces agreement in principle for sale of iconic properties on Galveston Island, including Hotel Galvez & Spa and The Tremont House**

GALVESTON, Texas (January 9, 2020)—[Mitchell Historic Properties](#) (MHP), owners of the Hotel Galvez & Spa and The Tremont House, have agreed to sell these iconic Galveston Island properties to a well-established Texas-based hospitality management and investment group.

MHP and SRH Hospitality Galveston Investments, LLC (SRH), an affiliate of SRH Hospitality Holdings, LLC, are expected to close the deal within the first quarter of 2020. Terms will not be disclosed.

MHP, which is owned by the estate of the late George P. Mitchell, plans to contribute the majority of the proceeds to the [Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation](#).

“My parents, Cynthia and George Mitchell, had an unflagging dedication and devotion to investing in and supporting the Galveston community throughout their lives,” Grant Mitchell, president of Mitchell Historic Properties and board chair of the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, said. “The Mitchell family and the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation view this event as an opportunity for new energy and a new phase of commitment to the City of Galveston and its residents.

“As stewards of Mitchell Historic Properties and the properties my parents so lovingly preserved and revitalized, the Mitchell family has long seen its role as advancing economic development and enhancing quality of life in the Galveston community.

“With the pending transition of the hotels to very capable hands, we will now be better positioned to prioritize community impact in our remaining holdings. We will soon embark on a strategic plan for our properties on and adjacent to The Strand, engaging key community stakeholders, with the idea of social returns for Galveston as our guiding principle.”

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### **The Mitchells and Galveston**

Cynthia and George Mitchell always considered Galveston Island, where Mr. Mitchell grew up and where they had lived together just after their marriage, a second home.

They shared an affinity for this eclectic seaside town, and as civic leaders, looked for ways they could contribute to the town's fragile economy. In the 1970s and 1980s, they partnered to lead the revitalization of Galveston's historic neighborhoods and commercial districts. Over the years, they bought and carefully restored more than 20 commercial buildings, infusing resilience to a declining urban core.

Such rebirth was cause for celebration, so together they reintroduced the long-dormant Mardi Gras festivities to the island. Today, with more than \$150 million invested through Mitchell Historic Properties, the holdings total over 500,000 square feet of commercial space, loft apartments, and hotels, mostly within the Strand National Historic Landmark District.

Mr. Mitchell's commitment to Galveston's revitalization also helped the city's recovery from Hurricane Ike. Immediately following the devastating storm, which struck Galveston in 2008, the Mitchells launched a massive cleanup and restoration program in downtown Galveston, investing more than \$24 million for disaster relief, cleanup, and renovation of buildings and infrastructure damaged by Ike. In addition, MHP completed an \$11 million renovation of Hotel Galvez as part of the hotel's centennial celebration in 2011.

### **The Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation**

Since its incorporation in 1978, the late George P. Mitchell and Cynthia Woods Mitchell and the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation have distributed or pledged an estimated \$750 million in grants to myriad causes, programs, and institutions.

In 2017, the Mitchell Foundation formally launched a grantmaking program that honors Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell's interest in and love for the community of Galveston—Mr. Mitchell's hometown and the couple's "second home."

The foundation's Galveston Program's long-term objective is to drive a gradual transformation to safer, more livable neighborhoods and green spaces, affordable housing, equitable access to health care, social services, quality education, healthier environments, and greater employment opportunities on the island.

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As part of its Galveston Program, the Mitchell Foundation has helped catalyze and support [VISION GALVESTON](#), a project to empower the community members of Galveston to define a vision for the future of the city. The inclusive framework—which was refined with input from experts, a 200-plus member steering committee, and some 8,600 community residents and business owners—will act as a roadmap for Galveston leaders in developing its City Comprehensive Plan, and provide ideas for strategic plans developed by other organizations in Galveston.

“As we grow our Galveston Program over the coming years, it is our intent to expand our support and engagement on numerous fronts toward a better, more equitable quality of life for Galveston residents,” [Katherine Lorenz](#), president of the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, said. “In the near term, as we consider the future uses of Mitchell Historic Properties’ commercial buildings and, especially, their underutilized spaces, we hope to align closely with Vision Galveston and economic development-minded partners to leverage these assets for the benefit of the greater Galveston community.”

Both Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell were raised as children of meager means who, throughout their lives, believed in giving back to the community that made their success possible, and lending a hand to the less fortunate struggling to reach their potential.

As their fortunes grew in their many entrepreneurial ventures, they shared a vision that the majority of the wealth that they had created would be dedicated to making the world a more hospitable and sustainable place. In 2010, Mr. Mitchell signed [The Giving Pledge](#), an initiative created by Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett, as a public commitment to giving the majority of their wealth to philanthropy.

Mrs. Mitchell spent a lifetime supporting the arts, educational initiatives, and humanitarian issues that focus on the disadvantaged.

Mr. Mitchell was a renaissance businessman and entrepreneur known for his contributions to the economic revitalization of Galveston, his keen interest in science, and his passion for seeking sustainable solutions to complex problems.

The Mitchell Foundation, with offices in Austin and The Woodlands, is a grantmaking foundation that seeks innovative, sustainable solutions for human and environmental problems. The foundation works as an engine of change in both policy and practice in Texas, supporting high-impact projects and practices at the nexus of environmental protection, social equity, and economic vibrancy.

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“We’re keenly aware of Cynthia and George Mitchell’s legacy and the family’s importance to Galveston and the greater Galveston Island community,” Paul Barham, Chief Executive Officer of [Harrell Hospitality Group, LLC](#), a partner in [SRH Hospitality](#), and whose company will operate the hotels, said. “We understand this is no ordinary transaction and one that was not taken lightly by the Mitchells. It will be our honor and privilege to serve as the new stewards of these iconic landmarks, and we are looking forward to investing not only in the continued success of these historic properties but just as importantly in the Galveston community.”

“SRH has demonstrated an inspiring dose of passion for our hotel properties and shown themselves to be exceptional professionals of great integrity,” said Mitchell. “Galveston is fortunate to welcome SRH as new members of their business community.”

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