



Town of Fulton Hotel Occupancy Tax Application

Date Application received (To be completed by Town)		
Official Name of Organization/Entity: Texas Maritime Museum Association, Inc.	Is the Organization/Entity a non-profit? Yes	Date Organization/Entity Founded: 1980
Organization/Entity Mailing Address: 1202 Navigation Circle, Rockport, TX, 78382		
Organization/Entity website: www.texasmaritimemuseum.org		
Name and Title of Person authorized to act on behalf of Organization/Entity for this application ("Applicant"): Ashley Pieprzycza, Chief Financial Officer	Organization/Entity Phone: 361-729-1271	Organization/Entity email: finance@texasmaritimemuseum.org

FUNDING REQUEST DESCRIPTION

Name of Project/Event: Texas Maritime Museum 2025-2026		Project/Event date(s): 7/1/2025-6/30/2026 Fiscal Year
Estimated number of room nights that will be occupied at local hotels, motels, and short-term rentals by attendees of your event(s) or project(s)? 3,000	Estimated number of annual attendance at your event(s) or project(s)? 17,000	Will you charge admission/if yes, how much? No
Do your promotional materials/website note area lodging that can host attendees? Yes, website does	Have you negotiated a lodging rate at any local hotels, motels, and short-term rentals? No	
Project/Event location(s): 1202 Navigation Circle, Rockport, TX, 78382	Total Amount of funds requested: \$10,000	

In the space below, please describe each project/event for which funding is sought, and explain how each project/event will directly enhance and promote tourism and the hotel/motel/short-term rental (STR) industry in the Town of Fulton:

Please See Attached

FUNDING CATEGORIES AUTHORIZED BY TEXAS LAW


(Please indicate which funding categories apply to your project/event – multiple categories may be selected)

	Check box below the appropriate category or categories	Amount requested for each category
The acquisition of sites for the construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing, operation, and maintenance of convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or both.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The furnishing of facilities, personnel, and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$5,000
The encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at or in the immediate vicinity of convention centers; or • located elsewhere in the municipality or its vicinity that would be frequented by tourists and convention delegates 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$5,000
Signage directing the public to sights and attractions that are visited frequently by hotel guests in the municipality;	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The promotion of tourism by the enhancement and upgrading of existing sports facilities or fields if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the municipality owns the facilities or fields. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	

ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby certifies to the Town of Fulton that, to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief, the:

1. Project(s)/event(s) for which financial assistance is sought will be administered in accordance with Federal, State, and local law;
2. HOT funds received as a result of this application will be used solely for the project(s)/event(s) described herein;
3. Applicant has read, understand, and will conform to the Town of Fulton HOT guidelines and policy;
4. Figures, facts, and representations made in the application, including any attachments hereto, are true and correct.



Applicant's Signature

Date: 7/11/2025

Ashley Pieprzyca

Printed Name

Chief Financial Officer

Title

Narrative

History

The concept for the Texas Maritime Museum came to fruition in the mid-seventies at Rockport-Fulton's annual fall festival, Seafair. Each year, a group of local maritime history enthusiasts gathered to share their personal collections with the public. The establishment of the Museum was a community wide project headed by a few dedicated members. The Texas Maritime Museum Association was incorporated in 1980, received a 501(C)(3) designation in 1985, and was named the official Maritime Museum of the State of Texas by action of the State Legislature in 1987. Building construction began in 1988 and the museum opened its doors to the community in 1989. The Texas Maritime Museum continues to grow in stature and recognition for its excellent collection of Texas maritime artifacts and history, special exhibits, events, school programming, and continuing education opportunities.

August 5, 2005, marked the Museum's accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums, a significant accomplishment in our history. This accreditation demonstrated that the Texas Maritime Museum met the highest standard of excellence and achievement through leadership, professional operation, continued commitment to institutional improvement, and public service and accountability through the fulfillment of our mission.

The completion of the Robert J. Hewitt/ O'Connor Hewitt Foundation Maritime Collections and Education Center was the next phase in the museum's ongoing commitment to excellence. The exterior was completed in May 2009, and the interior work was finalized in April 2012. The new facility added a 1,200 square foot educational space and expanded the museum's collections space significantly.

Appeal

The Texas Maritime Museum is requesting \$10,000 for Historical Preservation and Advertising in 2025-2026 from the City of Fulton HOT funds. The objective is to be a beacon for Rockport-Fulton as a tourist destination through our premier exhibits and the preservation of Texas maritime history that solidifies the Museum as the official maritime museum of the State of Texas.

Historical Preservation: \$5,000

As the official Maritime Museum of Texas, the organization is constantly working to preserve and protect Texas maritime heritage and history. The Museum has several unique artifacts within its collection that require constant care and monitoring such as La Tortuga or the Zavala Boiler.

The appeal for historical preservation is an ongoing issue that goes beyond artifacts. Historical preservation extends to the facility from the temperature and humidity to the exhibits and materials that help create a buffer to protect and preserve the artifact for generations. Equipment that the Texas Maritime Museum will require will consist of archival boxes, storage units, and other assorted tools to maintain high archival standards. Historical Preservation also includes preparation for any natural disasters, i.e. Hurricanes or tornadoes along with any effort to mitigate damage, damaging light, fluctuating humidity, and pests.

However, historical preservation goes beyond conservation and preservation of the artifact itself. Historical preservation goes to the dissemination and awareness of the piece and what it was used for. Historical preservation is intended to educate the public about the significance of various objects and exhibit them with the upmost respect and dignity that the piece deserves. In fact, the Texas Maritime Museum has several exquisite artifacts that require constant monitoring and upkeep due to rarity such as, La Tortuga and the Zavala boiler.

La Tortuga, considered the last known Texas Scow Sloop, was constructed in 1989-90 by a group of museum volunteers headed by Manuel Gauza who had worked with his father and grandfather. The Museum works diligently to maintain the boat in its original condition using authentic materials and techniques in the conservation process. This is an annual project that requires hundreds of man hours to preserve this unique artifact.

The Zavala boiler is from the Texas Navy vessel, *The Zavala*. The Texas Navy was officially formed in January 1836, with the purchase of four schooners: *Invincible*, *Brutus*, *Independence*, and *Liberty*. These ships, under the command of Commodore Charles Hawkins, became a vital component that helped Texas win independence. In 1837, it was recorded that all ships affiliated with the Texas Navy had been lost at sea, run aground, captured, or sold leaving Texas vulnerable to invasions from Mexico.

In 1838, the Republic of Texas President Mirabeau B. Lamar formed the 2nd Texas Navy, under the command of Commodore Edwin Ward Moore. The Texas Navy purchased for \$120,000 the warship vessel *Zavala*, a Texan Schooner-steamship, that was named after the Vice President of the Republic of Texas.

Returning to Galveston, *Zavala* encountered a terrible storm and ran out of coal, forcing the crew to burn anything they could put their hands on to avoid losing her in the storm. The vessel was

badly damaged and laid up in Galveston harbor where it was allowed to deteriorate to such a degree that by May 1842, she was scuttled to prevent her sinking.

In the 1980's the *Zalava's* final resting place, where she had rusted and withered away under layers of sand and silt was discovered. The Galveston Wharves rediscovered the Zavala and its boiler while executing an extensive archeological excavation. The Texas Maritime Museum was entrusted to maintain this rare artifact from the Naval History and Heritage Command. The boiler, the only surviving remnant from *Zavala*, at this moment, is another priceless piece of history that requires historical preservation. Due to its rarity, it is vital that the Texas Maritime Museum displays this artifact, disseminating its story, and other forgotten stories of our past.

The Texas Maritime Museum is working on new and exciting exhibits such as: Pirate LaFitte, 1554, Texas Navy, Maritime in the Civil War, Energy, Sport and Commercialization and more. These exhibits will allow the Texas Maritime Museum to use artifacts that have been stowed away. The HOT Funds will assist in bringing these exhibits to fruition, protect and preserve, and help disseminate their history to create a lasting impression on our guests.

Advertisement: \$5,000

The Texas Maritime Museum's marketing objective is designed to enhance the visibility of the organization by improving brand awareness and increasing the number of marketing impressions. The comprehensive plan is a result of extensive research, and the insights of marketing consultants, and gleans from the proven success of marketing strategies of leading museums across the state of Texas and throughout the Mid-West.

The objective is to enhance the Museum's visibility with a focus on tangible data and end results, and an eye towards cost efficiency. The Museum's plan consists of a 4-step process to engage and attract visitors from the surrounding communities including Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Austin, and Houston, among others.

The 4-step process consist of:

- Engagement: Attraction Phase
- Content: Information Phase
- Experience: Physical Location
- Reflection: Data Analysis Phase

The Museum will use various methodologies that have consistently proven effective such as, Google Ads, Social Media, Geo-Fencing, E-newsletters, Behavioral Targeting. Along with using other methods like print ads and radio to attract and reach a broader audience to visit the Museum and our community.

Texas Maritime Museum

ANCHORED IN HISTORY



2025-2026 Marketing Plan



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Executive Summary

The Texas Maritime Museum's marketing plan is designed to enhance the visibility of the organization by improving brand awareness and increasing the number of marketing impressions. The comprehensive plan is a result of extensive research, and the insights of marketing consultants, and gleans from the proven success of marketing strategies of leading museums across the state of Texas and throughout the Mid-West.





Our objective is to enhance our visibility with a focus on tangible data and end results, and an eye towards cost efficiency. To accomplish this the Texas Maritime Museum's marketing plan is tailored to create maximum exposure and improve collaboration with other organizations within Rockport/Fulton and throughout Texas.

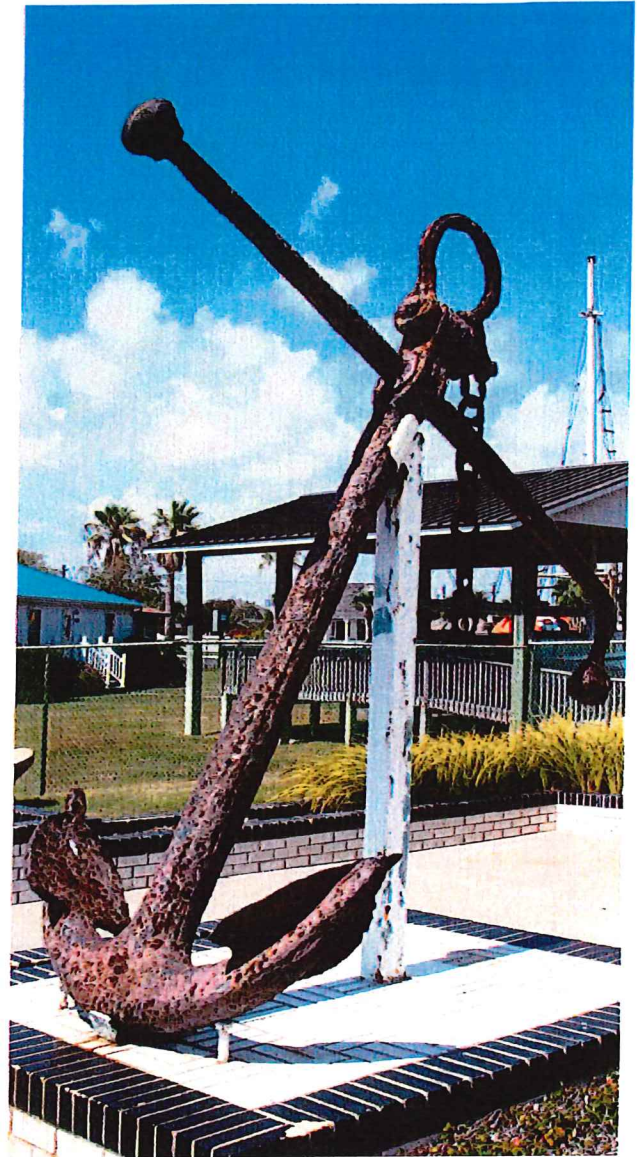
The plan consists of a 4-step process to engage and attract visitors from the surrounding communities to include Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Austin, and Houston, among others. The 4-step process consists of:

- | | | |
|----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | ENGAGEMENT | Attraction Phase |
| 2 | CONTENT | Information Phase |
| 3 | EXPERIENCE | Physical Location |
| 4 | REFLECTION | Data Analysis Phase |



From start to finish, each step is engineered to allow the Texas Maritime Museum the ability to track data based on marketing expenditures in selected community markets. At the conclusion the 4-step process, the Texas Maritime Museum can reflect on the data collected to determine which expenditures increased exposure.

In the end, the goal of the Texas Maritime Museum is to enhance the Museum's brand, attract visitors to the Museum and to Rockport/Fulton, and increase visibility. To maximize effectiveness, the Texas Maritime Museum has included a review period in the plan to allow the organization to turn with the winds and capitalize on high performing strategies as needed.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Ables".

MICHAEL ABLES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Media Strategy

The Texas Maritime Museum's Media Strategy focuses on answering the essential questions: where are we marketing, and how are we marketing? This synopsis offers a well-developed, 360° perspective to marketing and the use of technology.



Target Markets

LOCAL MARKET: Rockport/ Fulton, Victoria, Corpus Christi, and Port Lavaca

PRIMARY MARKET: San Antonio, Houston

SECONDARY MARKET: Dallas, Waco, and Austin

Seasonally

Digital & social media will maintain an annual presence. The Museum has periods of increased attendance throughout the year. Texas Maritime Museum’s Plan is to market according to those periods to maximize high points and to increase attendance during the low points.

HIGH SEASON: January to March, May to July, September to November

LOW SEASON: April, August, December

Reaching Targets

San Antonio Streaming Radio

Houston Streaming Radio

Digital Geo Fencing

E-Newsletters

Google Ads

Social-Media

Texas Magazines

Behavioral Targeting

Texas Magazines

Texas Parks & Wildlife

Radio

SAN ANTONIO

Y100 KCYY-FM New Country

99.5 KISS-FM Rock

HOUSTON

99.1 KODA-FM Adult Contemporary

93Q KKBQ-FM New Country

General demographics range between 25 to 54. Male to Female Ratio: 51% to 49%. Weekly CUME Persons average: 300,000 per station

Digital Marketing

TARGET SEARCHES: History, Ships, Maritime

GEO FENCE: Targeting people based on their interest. Placing a GPS fence around locations to follow visitors once they enter or leave attractions.

SOCIAL MARKETING: Targeting people on social media based on their interests and demographics.



Partnership/ Collaboration

The Texas Maritime Museum's intention is to expand awareness beyond just the organization and collaborate with other non-profits to drive visitors to Rockport/Fulton. Visibility through unity becomes mutually beneficial for everyone.

The Texas Maritime Museum is working in collaboration with the Rockport Center for the Arts, Rockport/Fulton Chamber of Commerce, and as a part of the Passport to the Past Program.

The Museum is also now affiliated with the Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums (ROAM), as a benefit of the Museum Membership program. This feature of the Museum's membership program allows our members to enjoy the museum and others like ours. Through the reciprocal membership program, the Texas Maritime Museum offers equivalent benefits at other reciprocal museums, including 27 other museums in Texas and over 579 other institutions across the United States and abroad. This benefit includes discounted admission pricing, event discounts, and store discounts.

The objective of collaboration is to enhance awareness and increase visibility through partnerships. The Texas Maritime Museum is committed to collaborating with our local and national partners.



**2025-2026
MARKETING PLAN**

WWW.TEXASMARITIMEMUSEUM.ORG



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Tax Exempt and Government Entities
PO Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

TEXAS MARITIME ASSOCIATION INC
1202 NAVIGATION CIRCLE
ROCKPORT, TX 78382

Date: June 20, 2024
Employer ID number: 74-2097680
Form 990 required: Yes
Person to contact: Name: D Finley
ID number: 1001747347

Dear Sir or Madam:

We're responding to your request dated May 30, 2024, about your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in May 1980, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).

We also show you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509(a) because you're described in IRC Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax-deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If you're required to file a return, you must file one of the following by the 15th day of the 5th month after the end of your annual accounting period.

- Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990-EZ, Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations Not Required to File Form 990 or Form 990EZ
- Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Trust Treated as Private Foundation

According to IRC Section 6033(j), if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for 3 consecutive years, we'll revoke your tax-exempt status on the due date of the 3rd required return or notice.

You can get IRS forms or publications you need from our website at www.irs.gov/forms-pubs or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific time).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements