

GRANT APPLICATION

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# Heart of Tomball Alliance

## 2026 Economic Development Grant Request

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<b>Submitted To:</b>	Tomball Economic Development Corporation
<b>Applicant:</b>	Heart of Tomball Alliance
<b>Grant Purpose:</b>	Downtown Activation, Marketing, Safety Infrastructure & Small Business Growth
<b>Grant Amount Requested:</b>	<b>\$53,147.00 (plus applicable tax)</b>
<b>Annual Events Supported:</b>	7 downtown events
<b>Date:</b>	2026 - 2027

*Old Town Tomball | Tomball, Texas*

## Executive Summary

The Heart of Tomball Alliance respectfully submits this grant application to the Tomball Economic Development Corporation requesting funding to expand the marketing reach, economic impact, and visitor safety infrastructure of the Alliance's downtown programming. The Alliance's flagship Shop & Stroll events — along with its Fashion Show, Purse Bingo, and community fundraising initiatives — serve as primary economic drivers for the small businesses located in Old Town Tomball.

For the grant period, the Alliance is programming seven events — six running April through December 2026, plus a February 2027 Shop & Stroll that extends the grant's reach into the following year. This schedule reflects growing community demand and provides a consistent drumbeat of foot traffic and economic activity for downtown businesses year-round.

This request supports five core investment areas: regional marketing and paid advertising, professional ad management, website infrastructure, content creation, and visitor safety transportation. Together, these investments are designed to increase visitor volume, extend visitor dwell time, drive retail spending, and position Old Town Tomball as a premier shopping and community destination in the greater Houston area.

The total grant amount requested is \$53,147.00 (plus applicable tax), representing an annual investment in the long-term economic vitality of the Tomball downtown district.

### Budget Summary at a Glance

Category	Amount
Marketing & Advertising (7 events @ \$2,500 + ad management)	\$22,900.00
Event Production (7 events)	\$14,000.00
Website & Digital Infrastructure	\$9,997.00
Visitor Safety & Transportation (7 events)	\$6,250.00
<b>TOTAL GRANT REQUEST</b>	<b>\$53,147.00</b>

## About Downtown Tomball & The Case for Investment

### A Community Built on Character, Not Chains

Old Town Tomball is not a shopping mall. It is a living, working downtown district made up almost entirely of locally owned small businesses — boutiques, restaurants, gift shops, service providers, and specialty retailers — each one independently operated by a Tomball

community member. These businesses do not have the marketing budgets, national brand recognition, or built-in foot traffic that large retailers enjoy. They rely on the community showing up, and they rely on organized, coordinated efforts to make that happen.

What makes Old Town Tomball special is exactly what makes it economically vulnerable: its charm, its independence, and its small-town character cannot be manufactured. The historic district offers visitors something that no big-box retailer or regional shopping center can replicate — an authentic, community-rooted experience where every dollar spent stays local and every storefront tells a story. But without consistent investment in marketing, events, and visitor infrastructure, that character alone is not enough to compete for consumer attention in a region saturated with large commercial centers.

### **A Destination Competing in a Region Full of Options**

The greater Houston metropolitan area is one of the most commercially dense regions in the country. Tomball residents and visitors have no shortage of places to shop, eat, and spend their time. Old Town Tomball must actively position itself as a destination worth the trip — and that requires ongoing, strategic investment in the experience it offers.

Visitors who come to downtown Tomball do not visit a single store. They stroll. They discover. They return. When a visitor attends a Shop & Stroll event, they typically visit multiple businesses, dine locally, and often come back on a regular basis after discovering the district for the first time. That multiplier effect is what makes organized downtown programming one of the highest-return economic development tools available to a community like Tomball.

Driving visitors from Houston, Cypress, Spring, The Woodlands, and surrounding communities requires a sustained regional marketing presence — social media advertising, digital campaigns, email outreach, and a professional web experience that communicates the value of the destination before a visitor ever arrives.

### **Family, Community, and the Events That Drive the Economy**

Downtown Tomball's economic engine runs on community events. The Alliance's Shop & Stroll series, Fashion Show, and Purse Bingo are not just fun gatherings — they are proven economic drivers. These events bring hundreds of visitors into the district in a single day, generate direct retail spending, and create the kind of community moments that turn first-time visitors into loyal, returning customers.

Families come downtown for these events. They bring their children, meet their neighbors, discover new businesses, and leave with a deeper connection to the community they live in. That connection is the foundation of a healthy local economy — and it is built one event at a time.

The Fashion Show raised \$16,000 for Tomball ISD Culinary and Business Programs. Purse Bingo supports Ainsley's Angels. These events demonstrate that economic development and community impact are not competing priorities in downtown Tomball — they are one and the same.

### **Tourism as an Economic Multiplier**

Old Town Tomball draws visitors from well beyond city limits. Shoppers from the greater Houston area, day-trippers from surrounding suburbs, and travelers passing through the region all represent economic opportunity for the district's small businesses. Tourism-driven spending is among the highest-value revenue a small retailer can capture — visitors who travel specifically to shop in a destination district tend to spend more per trip and are more likely to purchase across multiple stores.

Capturing and growing that visitor base requires the kind of sustained, professional marketing investment that individual small businesses cannot afford on their own. The Heart of Tomball Alliance exists to provide that infrastructure collectively – but it cannot do so without the support of the EDC.

## Programs, Events & Economic Impact

### 2026 Event Calendar

The Alliance is programming seven events across the grant period, with six events running April through December 2026 and a February 2027 Shop & Stroll extending the grant's impact into the new year. This calendar creates a consistent rhythm of downtown activation and provides small businesses with reliable high-traffic days throughout the year, including what is traditionally a slower retail period in early spring.

Event	Month
Purse Bingo	April 2026
Shop & Stroll	May 2026
Shop & Stroll	July 2026
Fashion Show	August 2026
Shop & Stroll	October 2026
Shop & Stroll	December 2026
Shop & Stroll	February 2027

### Community Fundraising & Impact

In addition to driving economic activity, the Alliance's signature events raise funds for local organizations and schools, deepening the connection between downtown Tomball's economic health and the wellbeing of the broader community.

Event	Attendance	Community Impact
Fashion Show	180 attendees	\$16,000 raised for Tomball ISD Culinary & Business Programs
Purse Bingo	150 attendees	Benefiting Ainsley's Angels

## Marketing & Advertising Plan

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### **Paid Event Advertising**

Each of the Alliance's seven 2026 events will be supported by a dedicated paid advertising campaign targeting regional audiences across Facebook and Instagram. The Alliance has budgeted \$2,500 per event in paid ad spend, reflecting a strong investment in reach and visibility for each activation. This level of spend has proven effective in driving event attendance and introducing new visitors to Old Town Tomball.

### **Professional Ad Management — Modern Marketing & Media**

The Alliance has engaged Modern Marketing & Media to provide professional paid ad campaign management under their Paid Ad Management option at \$450 per month. This engagement includes up to two full ad campaign setups and management per month, multiple ad creatives within each campaign to test performance, ongoing optimization and performance monitoring, strategy adjustments leading up to each event, and performance reporting and recommendations.

This professional management ensures that the Alliance's ad spend is deployed strategically, creative assets are tested for performance, and campaigns are continuously optimized to maximize attendance and reach for every downtown event.

### **Website Design, Development & Hosting**

Modern Marketing & Media has also provided a comprehensive website proposal for the Alliance. The proposed website would serve as the central hub for the organization — supporting event promotion, member business visibility, new member recruitment, and community engagement. Every page is custom-designed, mobile-optimized, and built as a long-term growth asset for the Alliance.

The website includes eight custom-designed pages: Home, About Us, Events, Become a Member, Member Directory, Gallery, Election, and Contact. Key features include a dynamic events calendar powered by Events Calendar Pro, a filterable member directory with individual business profile pages, live social media feed integration, Google Analytics and Search Console setup, email sign-up form, payment processor setup, and full on-site SEO including schema markup and XML sitemap submission.

Website design and development is quoted at a one-time fee of \$7,949, with monthly hosting at \$150 per month (covering hosting, security, core WordPress plugins, and one hour of monthly update requests). Annual plugin costs include Events Calendar Pro at \$149 per year and Smashballoon Social Media Feed at \$99 per year.

## Visitor Safety & Transportation Initiative

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As event attendance has grown, visitor safety has become an increasingly important operational priority. During Shop & Stroll events, attendees moving between different areas of the downtown district are required to cross a heavily trafficked roadway on foot, creating a genuine safety concern and a friction point that discourages exploration of the full district.

The Alliance is proposing a dedicated circulator shuttle service that would operate continuously throughout each event, transporting visitors between designated stops across Old Town Tomball. This service would eliminate the pedestrian roadway crossing risk, improve the overall visitor experience, and encourage visitors to engage with the full breadth of the downtown district rather than staying in a single area. With five events planned for 2026, this service represents a meaningful and recurring safety investment.

Description	Calculation	Annual Cost
Cost Per Bus (5 hours @ \$125/hr)	$\$125 \times 5$	\$625 per bus
Per Event (2 buses)	$\$625 \times 2$	\$1,250
Annual Total (5 events)	$\$1,250 \times 5$	\$6,250

## Complete Grant Budget Summary

The following represents the full scope of funding requested under this grant application. All line items are calculated based on seven events and contribute directly to the economic development of Old Town Tomball through increased visitor traffic, expanded marketing reach, and improved safety.

Budget Category	Notes	Amount
<b>MARKETING &amp; ADVERTISING</b>		
Paid Regional Advertising	$\$2,500 \times 7$ events	\$17,500
Ad Management — Modern Marketing & Media	$\$450/\text{mo} \times 12$ months	\$5,400
<b>Marketing &amp; Advertising Subtotal</b>		<b>\$22,900</b>
<b>EVENT PRODUCTION</b>		
Event Materials	Décor, signage, supplies (7 events)	\$14,000
<b>Event Production Subtotal</b>		<b>\$14,000</b>
<b>WEBSITE &amp; DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b>		
Website Design & Development — Modern Marketing & Media	One-time fee	\$7,949

Website Hosting — Modern Marketing & Media	\$150/mo × 12 months	\$1,800
Events Calendar Pro Plugin	Annual license	\$149
Smashballoon Social Media Feed Plugin	Annual license	\$99
<b>Website &amp; Digital Subtotal</b>		<b>\$9,997</b>
<b>VISITOR SAFETY &amp; TRANSPORTATION</b>		
Circulator Shuttle Service	\$1,250 per event × 5 events	\$6,250
<b>Safety &amp; Transportation Subtotal</b>		<b>\$6,250</b>
<b>TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED</b>		<b>\$53,147.00</b>

### Budget Summary by Category

Category	Annual Investment
Marketing & Advertising (7 events @ \$2,500 + ad management)	\$22,900.00
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## Closing Statement

The Heart of Tomball Alliance is committed to the long-term economic vitality of Old Town Tomball. The businesses, visitors, and families that make up this community deserve a downtown district that is vibrant, safe, well-promoted, and built to last. This grant investment makes that possible.

The programs funded through this request do not simply produce events — they produce economic activity, community connection, and a destination identity that benefits every business in the district and every resident who calls Tomball home. With seven events planned across the grant period, the Alliance is making its strongest commitment yet to the growth and sustainability of Old Town Tomball. We are grateful for the Tomball EDC's continued partnership and respectfully request favorable consideration of this application.

*Heart of Tomball Alliance | Old Town Tomball, Texas*