UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

MISTORIC
Galveston Seawall
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Seawall Boulevard

CITY. TOWN
Galveston

STATE Texas

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

STATUS
- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE
- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: engineering

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
City of Galveston

STREET & NUMBER
City Hall

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Galveston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY. TOWN Galveston

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Texas Historic Engineering Site Inventory

DATE
1975

DEPOSITORY FOR HISTORY OF ENGINEERING PROGRAM, C.E. DEPT., TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

SURVEY RECORDS

CITY. TOWN
Lubbock

STATE Texas
On September 8, 1900, Galveston lost over six-thousand lives and millions of dollars in real estate from a devastating tropical storm. Therefore, after a city charter change, Galveston employed General H. M. Robert (U.S. Army-Retired), Alfred Noble and H. C. Ripley to design a protective wall for the city which could withstand the forces of hurricanes. Plans were submitted and by May 12, 1902, a contract was signed with J. M. O'Rourke and George Steinmetz in behalf of J. M. O'Rourke and Company, as construction contractors for the Galveston Seawall.

The general plan extended the wall from the Government Jetty, near the intersection of Avenue A and Eighth Street, to the Government Reservation on the Gulf of Mexico in the southern part of the city, at Avenue U and Thirty-ninth street. The original segment of the seawall was 17,593 feet long or about 3.5 miles long, 16 feet wide at the base and 5 feet wide at the top, and stood 17 feet above ground elevation with a granite riprap extending from the foot of the wall 27 feet toward the water. The seawall consisted of concrete weighing 20 tons per linear foot and was anchored on a round piling foundation. Piles were not less than 45 feet in length, 12 inches in diameter at the top and 17 inches at the bottom. Over thirteen thousand carloads of materials; 5200 cars of crushed granite, 1800 cars of sand, 1000 cars of cement, 1600 cars of piling, 3700 cars of riprap, and 5 cars of rods went into this protective structure.

The pile foundation prevents the wall from moving. Piles were driven into the ground 40 to 50 feet and cut off two feet above mean low tide. They were arranged in four rows, four feet from center to center longitudinally, and 4.5 feet center to center transversely, except the outer row near the toe of the seawall which was four feet in front of the next row. Between the outermost rows a wooden sheet piling was attached by stringers to the pile foundation to prevent sand from undermining.

After the piles were cut and sand made ready for the concrete, the concrete was formed 16 feet wide and three feet high. Upper portions of the wall were not connected to the base for expansion and movement if needed. From the base, the upper part of the wall rises 16 vertical feet. The back side of the seawall is vertical while the front has a curved face. Curved from two arcs, the wall causes storm water to spray back into the ocean. Corrugated steel bars placed on a 60 degree slope with the horizontal provide reinforcement for the wall.

Riprap protection consisting of large pieces of red granite, extend out from the toe of the wall approximately 27 feet. Specifications called for 50 percent of the rocks to be over 200 pounds a piece, 20 percent over 1000 pounds each.

The Galveston Seawall served its purpose in 1915, when it withstood one of the most severe storms to strike the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Some slight alterations were made at that time.

The Corps of Engineers made a major extension of the seawall in 1918, eastward from 6th Street to Fort San Jacinto. The total length was 10,300 feet.
The 1918 extension used the general construction methods employed in the 1902 seawall, although better equipment was available. Reinforced concrete sheet piles 9 inches thick and 35 feet long were used instead of the wood sheet piling for the last mile of this early extension of the wall. The sheet piling was placed in front of the seaward row of piles instead of behind, as had been the case previously. The riprap apron was omitted because the wide foreshore in front of the wall provided enough protection. Two sections were poured daily and after setting 48 hours they were stripped.

Since 1918 the wall has been extended several times. Approximately ten miles or nearly one-third of the ocean front of Galveston Island is protected from severe storms and waves from the Gulf of Mexico.
SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMERCE
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INDUSTRY
- INVENTION
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES October 1902 - July 1904

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Galveston Seawall has protected Galveston from the threat of further destruction, allowing it to grow into a modern and prosperous city. The Seawall is significant in that it represents positive action by a community manifested in a massive engineering effort to withstand the forces of nature.

On September 8, 1900, Galveston was exposed to the havoc of a severe tropical hurricane. Of the 38,000 citizens residing in Galveston at that time, 6000 were killed and 3600 homes were destroyed.

After the 1900 storm, the City of Galveston decided to reorganize its government completely. A reorganization committee was created and consisted of three lawyers: Col. Walter Gresham, F. D. Minor, and R. Waverly Smith. After examining several charters and documents, they invented the city commission form of government. Commissioners were placed directly in charge of specific departments (e.g. Finance and Revenue, Street and Public Property, Waterworks and Sewerage, and Police and Fire).

On November 22, 1901, the County Commissioners Court appointed a board of engineers to report on a means for protecting the city. The board was made up of General H. M. Robert, former Chief of Army Engineers, Alfred Noble, and H. C. Ripley. The board's purpose was to decide on the safest and most economical means of protecting the city, elevating and refilling lots and land from overflow during a storm, and designing a breakwater or seawall of sufficient strength and height to prevent overflow from the Gulf.

In order to finance the construction of the seawall, Galveston obtained indirect funds from the State. All state taxes of the surrounding area went to Galveston to finance the construction.

Work on the seawall commenced in October of 1902 and was finished by July of 1904. J. M. O'Rourke & Company were contractors, with George Boschke, chief engineer for the city of Galveston.

The original segment of the wall stretched 17,593 feet in length. The back side was vertical with a curved face to turn incoming water back into the Gulf. It was 17 feet high, 16 feet wide at the bottom, and 5 feet wide at the top. The wall had a riprap toe extending 27 feet out from the wall. In 1918 the seawall was extended 10,300 feet.
A grade-raising project was financed by the city with some assistance from the state of Texas. The contracted cost of moving the sand for the grade-raising was $2,080,745. This sum did not include the cost of the vast effort of individuals and city and county governments in related operations. More than 2000 private dwellings were raised to new levels. Larger buildings, which were more economical to raise than to tear down and rebuild, were lifted by the ordinary methods of house-raising. New foundations were then built under them before the sand-fill reached their sites. Smaller buildings were supported on posts, carefully braced to prevent the inward rush of water and sand from undermining them. Until proper connections could be made, owners of such raised houses and businesses received their supply of gas through connecting garden hoses. The level of the populated portion of the city was raised as much as 20 feet in places to provide a solid backing for the newly completed seawall and to prevent water from tropical storms from ever reaching dangerous levels in the city.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Galveston Grade-Raising was the necessary relocation of all public services in the city. Such services included water, gas, sewers, and street railway tracks. The streets in the populated districts were raised an average of 8 feet, which required a corresponding rise in the level of street railway tracks, poles, sidewalks, fences, and buildings of all kinds. Because of the depths to which all sewers and other underground pipes would have become buried in the grade-raising operations, it was deemed necessary to raise them also to correspond to the new grades. The altered levels for the sewer pipes proved to be a benefit to the citizens of Galveston because their changed level gave the entire system the grade necessary for proper drainage.

In order to raise fences and other structures too bulky to move, a braced post method similar to that used on the smaller houses was used. Gas, sewer, and water mains, after an initial period of trial and error experimentation, were raised by excavating down to the mains and lifting them progressively a little at a time by chain blocks on tripod derricks, and then filling the trenches under them so as to avoid breaking joints and interrupting service. Once raised to a level where they could no longer be supported on the soil, the mains were carried on temporary supports and when at their proper new grades they were braced by firm struts nailed to timbers driven into the ground on either side of the mains. When thus supported the mains were able to withstand the inward rush of sand and water that buried both mains and supports.

In 1915 Galveston was struck by another tropical storm. Had it not been for the seawall and grade-raising, Galveston would probably have been wiped out.

Today, evidence of the grade-raising is not obvious to the unknowing observer. The seawall has been extended greatly, and is presently over 10 miles in length and protects virtually the entire Gulf side of Galveston Island.

"Bulwark of Protection" (pamphlet). Galveston: U.S. Army Engineer District.

The Galveston Seawall stretches along the seaward side of Seawall Boulevard from 8th Street to 39th Street.

Acreage includes only the original (1902) segment of the Galveston Seawall.
"Concrete Mixing and Handling Machines for the Galveston Seawall." Engineering News, XLIX, No. 3 (January 15, 1903), p. 55.


The Seawall is without doubt one of the most important structures in Galveston. The large bibliography submitted with the nomination would appear to support the claim of NALT significance.
PHOTO #1 of 6

Galveston Seawall

Galveston, Texas

Photo Credit: History of Engineering Program

Date of Photo: January 1973
Negative filed at History of Engineering Program, C. E. Dept. Texas Tech Univ., Lubbock, Tx.
View: Looking northeast along seawall near southwest end

MAR 23 1977
AUG 18 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Galveston Seawall
Galveston, Texas
Photo Credit: History of Engineering Program

View: North to seawall from pier at 25th St.

Galveston Co. MAR 23 1977

AUG 18 1977
SEA WALL GRADE RAISING
STARTED DEC. 12TH 1903.
FINISHED FEB. 19TH 1904.

SEA WALL BOULEVARD AND SIDEWALK
STARTED FEB. 19TH 1906.
FINISHED FEB. 20TH 1912.

COUNTY JUDGE, GEORGE MANN,
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
F. A. M. GOFF, FIRST PRECINCT,
FRANK H. PABST, SECOND PRECINCT,
A. W. WOLSTON, THIRD PRECINCT,
H. A. HEATS, FOURTH PRECINCT.

COUNTY CLERK, GEORGE RIGGS,
COUNTY AUDITOR, JOHN M. MURCH,
COUNTY ENGINEER, ASS'T. CO. ENGINEER,
PHOTO #3 of 6

Galveston Seawall, Galveston, Texas

Photo Credit: History of Engineering Program

Negative filed at: History of Engineering Program, C.E. Dept., Texas Tech Univ., Lubbock, Texas

View: 1912 Seawall Construction Monument at Seawall Blvd. and 23rd St.

MAR 2 3 1977

AUG 1 8 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Galveston Seawall
Galveston, Texas
Photo Credit: Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas
Date of Photo: November 18, 1926
Negative filed at History of Engineering Program, Civil Engineering Dept., Texas Tech U., Lubbock, TX.

View: Pouring seawall footings in 1926 extension of Galveston Seawall.

Galveston Co.
Galveston Seawall, Galveston, Texas

Photo Credit: Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas

Negative filed at History of Engineering Program, Civil Engineering Dept., Texas Tech U., Lubbock, Texas

View: Original segment of Galveston Seawall soon after construction

MAR 23 1977

AUG 18 1977
Galveston Seawall
Galveston, Texas

Galveston Co.
Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas

Date of Photo: Circa 1903

Negative filed at History of Engineering Program, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

View: Construction crew working on initial section of Galveston Seawall

AUG 18 1977
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE  TEXAS

Date Entered  AUG 18 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coryell County Courthouse</td>
<td>Gatesville, Coryell County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erath County Courthouse</td>
<td>Stephenville, Erath County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Victoria County Courthouse</td>
<td>Victoria, Victoria County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Bolivar Lighthouse</td>
<td>Port Bolivar vicinity, Galveston County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val Verde County Courthouse and Jail</td>
<td>Del Rio, Val Verde County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galveston Seawall</td>
<td>Galveston, Galveston County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliphant House</td>
<td>Milam vicinity, Sabine County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower
Hon. Lloyd Bentsen
Hon. W. R. Poage
Hon. Omar Burleson
Hon. John Young
Hon. Jack Brooks
Hon. Robert C. Krueger
Hon. Charles Wilson

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission
P. O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711
November 29, 1995

Ms. Carol Schull
Keeper of The National Register
National Park Service
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Carol,

Thank you for making time to discuss the proposed Seawall mural project with me. Enclosed is a copy of the proposal put forth by a Galveston artist for this project. (Please excuse my margin notes, this was my only copy.)

As we discussed, the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900, the worst natural disaster ever to strike the United States, will be marked on September 8, 2000. The Seawall was built subsequent to that storm as a measure of protection against future hurricane winds and water. It is Galveston Historical Foundation's intention to initiate the nomination of the Seawall as a National Historic Landmark during calendar year 1996 with the hope that by the year 2000, the Seawall will be recognized as a National Historic Landmark. We think this is an appropriate and effective commemoration of the anniversary of the Great Storm. My question is whether the painting of the proposed mural along the water elevation of the seawall will affect its eligibility to be selected as a National Historic Landmark. Also, I would ask the question whether or not this mural would affect its placement on the National Register of Historic Places?

I would appreciate any comments you might offer, any direction you might give. There is a public meeting on December 4; it would be helpful to receive your comments by then. I apologize for the shortness of response time, and appreciate your effort to meet that deadline. Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Betty A. Massey
Executive Director

[Handwritten notes on the document]
SEEWALL '96

THE SEA WALL MURAL PROJECT
SEEWALL '96 -- PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Many cities are using murals to attract tourists. In an attempt to contribute to the special character and uniqueness of Galveston's island community, local artist Peter Davis has conceived the idea of SeeWall '96, a 2.4 mile mural which would be painted on the landmark Seawall, spanning from 61st Street down to 27th Street. Once completed, the mural would break all records as both the largest and longest mural in the world, measuring 117,600 square feet.

The basic theme of SeeWall '96 is a time line of Gulf Coast beach and marine life. Beginning with pre-historic marine organisms, the mural will trace the evolution of sea life to present time. From there, the work will focus on the desecration of our natural environment, followed by a section on beach revitalization efforts and the current trends of conservation, recycling and renourishment. The final section of the mural will be a return to an "ideal" natural marine environment. Intertwoven throughout the mural will be a section on Galveston's beach history, including the devastating hurricane of 1900 and the recent beach nourishment project.

Public participation will be the key component to the project. Once the project art director and resident artists have created a paint-by-number outline, the public will be invited to actually create the SeeWall. Volunteers from all over the Galveston area will be recruited to paint the mural over a two weekend period. Mural artists, including students, teachers, professionals and volunteers, will be assigned to groups of ten who will paint a section of the mural. A resident artist will be a part of each team, assisting and advising during the painting effort and doing final touch-ups.

The goal for SeeWall '96 is to expose and promote the rich and varied experience of the Texas coastal region. It will celebrate our successes and warn about the potential for failure in our fragile relationship with the natural environment. As it strives for this ultimate goal, it will also promote Galveston as a tourist attraction and let the world know something we've known all our lives -- Galveston is a great place to be!

Since the Seawall is on the Nat'l Register, doesn't this need THC approval? What happens when it starts to fade? Who will maintain this? It sounds like a great big billboard to me.
SeeWall '96 will provide a multitude of promotional and public relations opportunities that will greatly enhance awareness of this unique community project and of Galveston as a tourism destination.

The public participation aspect of SeeWall '96 will require a time frame of approximately three weeks from start to finish, once all preparatory work has been completed. Timed to coincide with the beginning of the beach season, the project should be launched with a kick-off festival on the beach, possibly coordinated with the April Adopt-A-Beach cleanup. Arrangements will be made with the Galveston school system and the public will be invited over the next two to three week period to participate in actually painting the mural. Another spectacular event would be staged to mark the grand finale of the creation of SeeWall '96. Following its completion, the mural will continue to be a source of interest both to the media and to tourists visiting the Island.

A comprehensive advertising, public relations and promotional campaign will promote participation in and extensive media coverage of this visual, interactive event. Exciting promotional extensions of the project are endless -- from enlisting the participation of corporate partners and Galveston-area school children to tying in media partners and conducting a dynamic, statewide and regional media blitz.
## BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paint Supplies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Block Filler</td>
<td>1 coat; 2,352 gallons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Base Coat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paint</td>
<td>2 coats; 9,408 gallons</td>
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<td><strong>Art Director</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Artists</strong></td>
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<td>2 Primary</td>
<td>4 months; $10,000 each</td>
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<td>200 Resident</td>
<td>2 days; $100/day</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Touch-Up Fee</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Supplies and Materials</strong></td>
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<td>File Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Overhead Projectors</td>
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<td>2 Generators</td>
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<td>Extension Cords</td>
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<td><strong>Contingency</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Project Cost</strong></td>
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<td>$147,398</td>
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</table>

Expenses not included: Festival costs (i.e. tents, loudspeakers, concessions, etc.); logistics (i.e. storing and distributing paint); and future refurbishing of mural.
Dear Ms. Massey:

We have received your letter of [date] regarding the proposed painting of a mural on the Galveston seawall to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 10,300-foot portion of the seawall built in 1918, which was listed in National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston.

The mural, proposed to fill the seaward elevation of wall for a distance of 117,600 feet from 27th to 61st street, would have a substantial impact on the historic integrity of that portion of the wall that is listed on the National Register and lies between 27th and 39th street. While the proposed subject matter would be of popular interest, the painting would seriously alter the historic character of the functional, steel-reinforced concrete structure. It would also negatively affect historic portions of the wall that might be eligible for listing in the National Register but are not included in the current nomination, such as the 10,300-foot segment constructed in 1918. In cases where a National Register property is severely diminished by alterations or destruction after listing, the eligibility of a property may be reconsidered and the property, if found to have lost its historic integrity, will be removed from the National Register.

Your letter indicated that the Galveston Historical Foundation is interested in having the seawall considered for National Historic Landmark designation. Although the nomination, which was completed in 1976, recommended that the property has national significance, the statement of significance does not provide sufficient historical context on the importance of the seawall from a national perspective to support this recommendation. Additional documentation will be needed if you wish to pursue possible landmark designation for this property.

If you have any further questions, please contact Linda McClelland of the National Register staff at 202-343-9544 or Robie Lange of the National Historic Landmark staff at 202-343-0350.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register
National Register, Historic, and Education Programs

CC: Texas SHPO
Ms. Betty A. Massey  
Executive Director  
Galveston Historical Foundation  
2016 Strand  
Galveston Island, Texas 77550  

Dear Ms. Massey:  

We have received your letter of November 29, 1995, asking us to comment on the proposal to paint a mural on the Galveston Seawall, Galveston County, Texas, as part of the city’s commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900. As you know the 17,593-foot portion of the seawall built between 8th and 39th streets from October 1902 to July 1904 was listed in National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston.

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If you have any further questions, please contact Linda McClelland of the National Register staff at 202-343-9544 or Robie Lange of the National Historic Landmark staff at 202-343-0350.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Shull  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Register, Historic, and Education Programs

CC: Texas SHPO
Ms. Betty A. Massey  
Executive Director  
Galveston Historical Foundation  
2016 Strand  
Galveston Island, Texas 77550  

Dear Ms. Massey:  

I apologize for taking so long to answer your letter asking us to comment on the proposal to paint a mural on the Galveston Seawall, Galveston County, Texas, as part of the city’s commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900. Because of the furlough and the big snow storm here we gotten very far behind.

As you know the 17,593-foot portion of the seawall built between 8th and 39th streets from October 1902 to July 1904 was listed in National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston. The mural, proposed to fill the seaward elevation of wall for a distance of 117,600 feet from 27th to 61st street, would have a substantial negative impact on the historic integrity of that portion of the wall that is listed in the National Register and lies between 27th and 39th street. While the proposed subject matter would be of popular interest, the painting would seriously alter the historic character of the functional, steel-reinforced concrete structure. It would also negatively affect historic portions of the wall that might be eligible for listing in the National Register but are not included in the current nomination, such as the 10,300-foot segment constructed in 1918.

Your letter indicated that the Galveston Historical Foundation is interested in having the seawall considered for National Historic Landmark designation. Although the nomination, which was completed in 1976, recommended that the property has national significance, the statement of significance does not justify the national importance of the seawall. I suggest calling Historian Robie Lange, of our National Historic Landmark Survey staff at (202)-343-0350 to discuss the seawall and how national significance documented cover and be justified.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Shull  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Register, Historic, and Education Programs  

cc: TX SHPO  

bcc: 0001-Kennedy  
2200-Stevenson  
2550-Bowers  

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 2280  
FNP:LMccCLELLAND:MG:02\08\96:F:\NR\LTR-GAL
Ms. Betty A. Massey  
Executive Director  
Galveston Historical Foundation  
2016 Strand  
Galveston Island, Texas 77550

Dear Ms. Massey:

We have received your letter of November 28, 1995, asking us to comment on the proposal to paint a mural on the Galveston Seawall, Galveston County, Texas, as part of the city’s commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900. As you know the 17,593-foot portion of the seawall built between 8th and 39th streets from October 1902 to July 1904 was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston.

The mural, proposed to fill the seaward elevation of wall for a distance of 117,600 feet from 27th to 61st street, would have a substantial impact on the historic integrity of that portion of the wall that is listed in the National Register and lies between 27th and 39th streets. While the proposed subject matter would be of popular interest, the painting would seriously alter the historic character of the functional, steel-reinforced concrete structure. It would also negatively affect historic portions of the wall that might be eligible for listing in the National Register but are not included in the current nomination, such as the 10,300-foot segment constructed in 1918.

Your letter indicated that the Galveston Historical Foundation is interested in having the seawall considered for National Historic Landmark designation. Although the nomination, which was completed in 1976, recommended that the property has national significance, the statement of significance does not justify the national importance of the seawall. I suggest that the National Historical Landmark Survey discuss the potential significance of the National Seawall and Laws that might be documented.

If you have any further questions, please contact Linda McClelland of the National Register staff at (202) 343-9844 or Robie Lange of the National Historic Landmark staff at (202) 343-0350.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Shull  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Register, Historic, and Education Programs

cc: TX SHPO
Ms. Betty A. Massey
Executive Director
Galveston Historical Foundation
2016 Strand
Galveston Island, Texas 77550

Dear Ms. Massey:

We have received your letter of November 29, 1995, asking us to comment on the proposal to paint a mural on the Galveston Seawall, Galveston County, Texas, as part of the city's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900. As you know the 17,593-foot portion of the seawall built between 8th and 39th streets from October 1902 to July 1904 was listed in National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston.

The mural, proposed to fill the seaward elevation of wall for a distance of 117,600 feet from 27th to 61st street, would have a substantial impact on the historic integrity of that portion of the wall that is listed on the National Register and lies between 27th and 39th street. While the proposed subject matter would be of popular interest, the painting would seriously alter the historic character of the functional, steel-reinforced concrete structure. It would also negatively affect historic portions of the wall that might be eligible for listing in the National Register but are not included in the current nomination, such as the 10,300-foot segment constructed in 1918. In cases where a National Register property is severely diminished by alterations or destruction after listing, the eligibility of a property may be reconsidered and the property, if found to have lost its historic integrity, will be removed from the National Register.

Your letter indicated that the Galveston Historical Foundation is interested in having the seawall considered for National Historic Landmark designation. Although the nomination, which was completed in 1976, recommended that the property has national significance, the statement of significance does not provide sufficient historical context on the importance of the seawall from a national perspective to support this recommendation. Additional documentation will be needed if you wish to pursue possible landmark designation for this property. (Provide language regarding requirements for NHL consideration, etc.)
If you have any further questions, please contact Linda McClelland of the National Register staff at 202-343-9544 or Robie Lange of the National Historic Landmark staff at 202-343-0350.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register
National Register, Historic, and Education Programs

CC: Texas SHPO
Ms. Betty A. Massey  
Executive Director  
Galveston Historical Foundation  
2016 Strand  
Galveston Island, TX 77550  

Dear Ms. Massey:

I apologize for taking so long to answer your letter asking us to comment on the proposal to paint a mural on the Galveston Seawall, Galveston County, Texas, as part of the city's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1900. Because of the furlough and the big snow storm here we have gotten very far behind.

As you know, the 17,593-foot portion of the seawall built between 8th and 39th streets from October 1902 to July 1904 was listed in National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1977, as a significant work of engineering and for its role in the rebuilding and 20th century development of Galveston. The mural, proposed to fill the seaward elevation of wall for a distance of 117,600 feet from 27th to 61st street, would have a substantial negative impact on the historic integrity of that portion of the wall that is listed in the National Register and lies between 27th and 39th street. While the proposed subject matter would be of popular interest, the painting would seriously alter the historic character of the functional, steel-reinforced concrete structure. It would also negatively affect historic portions of the wall that might be eligible for listing in the National Register but are not included in the current nomination, such as the 10,300-foot segment constructed in 1918.

Your letter indicated that the Galveston Historical Foundation is interested in having the seawall considered for National Historic Landmark designation. Although the nomination which was completed in 1976, recommended that the property has national significance, the statement of significance does not justify the national importance of the seawall. I suggest you call historian Robie Lange, of our National Historic Landmark Survey staff at (202) 343-0350 to discuss the seawall and how national significance could be documented and justified.

Sincerely,

(Sgd) Carol D. Shull

Carol D. Shull  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
National Register, History and Education

cc: TX SHPO

bcc: 0001-Kennedy  
2200-Stevenson  
2250-Bowers

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 2280  
FNP:LMcCLELLAND:NLC:02\12\96:F:\NR\LTR-GAL
**NAME as it appears on federal register:** Galveston Seawall

**LOCATION street & number:** Seawall Blvd.

**city / town:** Galveston

**state:** TX

**county:** Galveston

**NPS REGION:** SW

**OWNER:** Private

**EXISTING SURVEYS:** HABS, HAER, NHL, NMAH

**FUNDED:** Yes

**EXISTING CONGRESS. DISTRICT:** 9th

**SOURCE of NOMINATION:** Federal

**WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?** Yes

**WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT?** No

**CONDITION:** Original site

**FEATURES:** Substantially intact

**ACCESS:** Yes

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:** Archaeology, Prehistoric

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE(S):** Seawall

**INTERIOR:** Not intact

**EXISTING:** Not intact

**EXISTING CONSTRUCTION:** Substantially intact

**CLAIMS:** Yes

**CLAIMS:** Yes

**FUNCTIONS:** Historical significance: Seawall

**ARCHITECT:**

**INTERIOR DECORATOR:**

**ARTIST:**

**ARTISAN:**

**BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:**

**NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP:**

3.5 mi. long concrete seawall; 18.5 ft wide at base, 8 ft wide at top; anchored on a sound concrete foundation.

Built, 1882-1884, as part of a recognition of the city's government and public service after the 1900 tropical storm that Galveston thousands of lives and millions of dollars.