## Name

**Historic** Galvez Hotel

**And/or Common**

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## Location

**Street & Number**

2024 Seawall Blvd.

**City, Town**

Galveston

**State**

Texas

**Code**

048

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## Classification

**Category**

- Building(s)

**Ownership**

- Public

**Status**

- Unoccupied

**Present Use**

- Temporary

**Access**

- Yes; Funding

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## Owner of Property

**Name**

KGM, Inc. Attention Denton A. Cooley, M.D.

**Street & Number**

Suite 1640 2100 W, Loop South

**City, Town**

Houston

**State**

Texas

**Code**

77027

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## Location of Legal Description

**Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, Etc.**

Galveston Courthouse

**Street & Number**

**City, Town**

Galveston

**State**

Texas

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## Representation in Existing Surveys

**Title**

None

**Date**

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**Depository for Survey Records**

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**City, Town**

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**State**

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Completed in 1911, the Galvez Hotel is a six-story stuccoed brick building exhibiting characteristics of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The structure's red tiled, low pitch roof, plastered walls, and mission parapets are associated with this style. The hotel was erected on Seawall Boulevard and faces south toward the Gulf of Mexico. The St. Louis architectural firm of Mauran and Russell designed the structure and employed a "U" floor plan.

Two five-story wings project to the sea and create a courtyard which has been landscaped with palms and oleanders. These wings display low pitch, red tile roofs with broad eaves and supportive brackets. Both the south and north facades present mission parapeted wall dormers which divide each roof into two sections. Also demonstrating mission parapets, the west elevation entrances are connected by a series of round arched windows and reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival influences on Mauran and Russell's design. A small one-story circular bay section protrudes from the west wing and contains a spacious ballroom. An identical bay extends from the east wing and houses the restaurant and kitchen.

The main section connects the hotel's two projecting wings and contains the majority of the rooms. The central bay rises eight stories and is capped with a hipped roof. Four hexagonal towers with metal ribbed vaults extend from each corner and reveal the broad eaves and elaborate brackets. The top windows are framed with pilasters and are crowned with round arches. Six-story wings flank either side of the central bay and feature gable roofs terminated by the familiar mission parapets. A small four sided tower with a hipped roof protrudes near the southeast corner of the main section.

Originally facing north (away from the Gulf), the main entrance features a porte cochere. The hotel's name and its adopted emblem, Count Galvez' coat of arms, highlight the mission parapet of the porte cochere, a grand entrance for the many prestigious guests who stayed at the Galvez. The first floor was comprised not only of the ballroom and restaurant, as previously mentioned, but also of offices, service rooms, a large lobby and a loggia overlooking the Gulf. Two elevators provided easy transportation to and from the lobby and the 275 rooms.

The only alterations include the replacement of the original windows with modern fixed glass openings, probably in the early 1970's. Initially, the walls were pink, but have since been painted white. In 1950, a small, one-story motel was attached to the east facade, but the current owner, in his rehabilitation plans for the Galvez, intends to raze this addition to provide more parking space for the hotel.
## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Galvez Hotel stands as the oldest large beach hotel in Galveston. Designed by the St. Louis architectural firm of Mauran and Russell, the impressive six-story structure displays features characteristic of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture and represents one of the few examples of this style in Galveston. Facing the Gulf of Mexico, the Galvez was constructed in 1910-1911 on the 2000 block of Galveston's famous Seawall Boulevard.

During the late nineteenth century, Galveston was among the southwest's most important cities. Besides its prominence as the leading port and commercial center for Texas at that time, Galveston was regarded as one of the nation's most celebrated resort communities. Thousands of tourists visited the city each year to take advantage of Galveston's beaches. The Beach Hotel, a massive four-story frame structure designed by Nicholas Clayton, served as the city's only large beach hotel. In 1898, a fire destroyed the building, and Galveston was left without a major tourist facility.

Plans to replace the structure with another hotel were shortlived because of the infamous 1900 Galveston hurricane. Approximately six thousand lives were lost in the storm, and the city's once flourishing economy was devastated. Because of the severity of damage, recovery was slow; however, the citizens were determined.

During the mid 1900's the entire city's grade was raised several feet, and a protective seawall was constructed to provide protection from future hurricanes. As the local economy was revived, efforts to construct a beach hotel became a priority. In early 1910, a group of prominent Galveston businessmen proposed that a new hotel facility be constructed to capitalize on the city's once popular beaches and help re-establish Galveston as a major tourist center. The project instigators included H. Kempner, Adoue and Lobit - Bankers, Hutchings and Sealy Bank, the Galveston Electric Company, and they conducted an intense advertising campaign to let the country realize that the city was effectively recovering from the storm. A St. Louis architectural firm, Mauran and Russell, was commissioned to design the new hotel. The construction
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Hartman, Betty, unpublished monograph, 1979 filed at Texas Historical Comm.
Hotel Monthly, March 1912.
National Register submission, prepared Galveston Historical Foundation,
Betty Hartman, researcher; filed at Texas Historical Commission.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 (approx.)
QUADRANGLE NAME Galveston, Texas
UTM REFERENCES
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
A 1 15 2 2 56 0
C 3 2 41 52 0
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
The nominated property is bounded by Avenue P, 19th Street, Sea
Wall Boulevard, and 21st Street, and forms the NW ¼ of Outlot 94.

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
Joe Williams; Project Director  David Moore; Historian
ORGANIZATION
Texas Historical Commission
STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 12276
CITY OR TOWN
Austin
STATE  Texas

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION
THE EVALUISHED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:
NATIONAL ___  STATE ___  LOCAL X
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I
hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE
TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer
DATE February 26, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE 4-9-79
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION
DATE 3-21-79
of the Houston-Galveston Interurban Railroad and the high number of reservations created such a demand that the hotel opened on June 11, 1911 before all construction was completed.

The building was named the Galvez, honoring Count Bernado de Galvez for whom the city was named. Offering 275 rooms, the hotel was equipped with the most modern facilities and was regarded as one of the "best arranged and most richly and tastefully furnished seaside hotels in America." Most of the staff was recruited from hotels all over the country, and its reputation was highly regarded. Many of America's most prominent individuals were guests at the hotel. President Franklin Roosevelt selected the Galvez during a vacation to Texas in 1937. Numerous well-known politicians, military men, movie stars and entertainers stayed at the hotel while in Galveston. Since its completion, the building has also been the scene for numerous important social events. The spacious ballroom with its separate entrance on the west facade often served as the location of parties and celebrations.

Despite the attempts of its citizens, Galveston never achieved the prosperity it had achieved prior to the 1900 hurricane. The Galvez continued to be an important enterprise, particularly during the late 1940's and early 1950's when gambling was popular in Galveston. However, when the gambling industry was shut-down in the mid 1950, the local economy became extremely depressed and the Galvez' prestige reflected the town's hardships.

In 1978, the hotel was closed when the current owners purchased the structure. Realizing its significance to Galveston's post 1900 development, the owners plan to rehabilitate the hotel preserving the building's historical integrity and helping the Galvez recapture its popularity as a fashionable seaside resort.

1 Hotel Monthly, March 1912, page 36.
Significance in history # for representing the city's deliberate attempt to recover from a major hurricane and regain position as major seacoast resort. Continued to be social center for Galveston.

The bldg is the oldest large hotel in Galveston and is one of the town's few examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Considering the large scale of the bldg, the alterations are not of major importance.

Significance as described above

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Galvez Hotel
2024 Seawall Blvd.
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo courtesy of Galveston Historical Foundation, 1978
South elevation
Photo #1

MAR 6 1979
Galvez Hotel
2024 Seawall Blvd.
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo courtesy of Galveston Historical Foundation, 1978
Eastern half of north elevation
Photo #2

MAR 6  1979
Galvez Hotel
2024 Seawall Blvd.
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo courtesy of Galveston Historical Foundation, 1978
Western end of north elevation
Photo #3

MAR 6  1979
Galvez Hotel
2024 Seawall Blvd.
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo courtesy of Galveston Historical Foundation, 1978
West elevation (21st St. entrance)
Photo #4
March 7, 1979

Dr. William Murtagh
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Galvez Hotel

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

As representative of the owners of the Galvez Hotel in Galveston, Texas, I hereby waive the right of notification in order that the review of this nomination may proceed as quickly as possible. The owner group understands the substance and implications of the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Thanking you in advance for your consideration, I am

Yours truly,

Denton A. Cooley, M.D.

Denton A. Cooley, M.D.
March 7, 1979

Dr. William Murtagh
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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As representative of the owners of the Galvez Hotel in Galveston, Texas, I hereby waive the right of notification in order that the review of this nomination may proceed as quickly as possible. The owner group understands the substance and implications of the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Thanking you in advance for your consideration, I am

Yours truly,

Denton A. Cooley, M.D.
March 9, 1979

Mr. Bill Lebovich
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a copy of the waiver letter which the owner of the Galvez Hotel, Dr. Denton Cooley, sent on March 7, 1979 to Dr. Murtaugh. As soon as I receive a copy of the National Register nomination from the staff of the Texas Historical Commission, I will forward that to you also.

We appreciate very much your expediting the approval of the nomination of this important landmark structure.

Best regards,

Yours truly,

Peter H. Brink
Executive Director

PHB/aem
Enclosure

cc. Mr. Costa Kaldis

Truett Latimer,
Texas Historical Commission
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

DATE REC'D MAR 14 1979

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE (ATTACHED)
INFORMATIVE MATERIAL SENT
TELEPHONE CALL (ATTACHED)

DATE ACTION TAKEN

INITIALS

---

The document appears to be a form from the National Register of Historic Places, dated March 14, 1979. It includes fields for recording actions taken and initials.
March 9, 1979

Ms. Betty Hartman
Galveston Historical Foundation
P.O. Box 302
Galveston, Texas 77553

Dear Betty,

Enclosed is a copy of the National Register nomination for the Galvez Hotel. I appreciate you gathering information for me. We will let you know when the Galvez is listed on the National Register.

If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

David Moore
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

**NAME**

HISTORIC: Galvez Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

2024 Seawall Blvd.

CITY, TOWN

Galveston

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

9

STATE

Texas

CODE

048

COUNTY

Galveston

CODE

167

**CLASSIFICATION**

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**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

KGM, Inc.  Attention Denton A. Cooley, M.D.

STREET & NUMBER

Suite 1640 2100 W. Loop South

CITY, TOWN

Houston

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

77027

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Galveston Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Galveston

STATE

Texas

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE
Completed in 1911, the Galvez Hotel is a six-story stuccoed brick building exhibiting characteristics of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The structure's red tiled, low pitch roof, plastered walls, and mission parapets are associated with this style. The hotel was erected on Seawall Boulevard and faces south toward the Gulf of Mexico. The St. Louis architectural firm of Mauran and Russell designed the structure and employed a "U" floor plan.

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of the Houston-Galveston Interurban Railroad and the high number of reservations created such a demand that the hotel opened on June 11, 1911 before all construction was completed.

The building was named the Galvez, honoring Count Bernado de Galvez for whom the city was named. Offering 275 rooms, the hotel was equipped with the most modern facilities and was regarded as one of the "best arranged and most richly and tastefully furnished seaside hotels in America."1

Most of the staff was recruited from hotels all over the country, and its reputation was highly regarded. Many of America's most prominent individuals were guests at the hotel. President Franklin Roosevelt selected the Galvez during a vacation to Texas in 1937. Numerous well-known politicians, military men, movie stars and entertainers stayed at the hotel while in Galveston. Since its completion, the building has also been the scene for numerous important social events. The spacious ballroom with its separate entrance on the west facade often served as the location of parties and celebrations.

Despite the attempts of its citizens, Galveston never achieved the prosperity it had achieved prior to the 1900 hurricane. The Galvez continued to be an important enterprise, particularly during the late 1940's and early 1950's when gambling was popular in Galveston. However, when the gambling industry was shut-down in the mid 1950, the local economy became extremely depressed and the Galvez' prestige reflected the town's hardships.

In 1978, the hotel was closed when the current owners purchased the structure. Realizing its significance to Galveston's post 1900 development, the owners plan to rehabilitate the hotel preserving the building's historical integrity and helping the Galvez recapture its popularity as a fashionable seaside resort.

1 Hotel Monthly, March 1912, page 36.
### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY** 3 (approx.)

**QUADRANGLE NAME** Galveston, Texas

**QUADRANGLE SCALE** 1:24,000

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nominated property is bounded by Avenue P, 19th Street, Sea Wall Boulevard, and 21st Street, and forms the NW ¼ of Outlot 94.

### STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE**

**TITLE** State Historic Preservation Officer

**DATE** February 26, 1979

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**DATE**

**ATTEST:**

**DATE**

**CHIEF OF REGISTRATION**
March 14, 1979

Mr. Bill Lebovich
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Dept. of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a copy of the Register nomination for the Galvez Hotel (sent in a few weeks ago).

Please try to expedite.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Peter H. Brink
Executive Director

PHB/aem
Enclosures
cc. Constantine Kaldis
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE: TEXAS

Date Entered: APR 4 1979

Name

Galvez Hotel

Cartwright, Matthew, House

Location

Galveston

Galveston County

Terrell

Kaufman County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower

Honorable Jack Brooks

Honorable Ray Roberts

State Historic Preservation Officer

Mr. Truett Latimer

Executive Director

Texas State Historical Commission

P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station

Austin, Texas 78711

NR: Byers/bjr 4/9/79

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.