A Culture of Reuse: Deconstruction & Historic Preservation

Stephanie Phillips
City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation
Hi, we're OHP!

We’re a City department charged with safeguarding the cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability that preserves San Antonio’s unique sense of place, economic competitiveness, and authenticity.
Intersection of historic preservation & deconstruction

San Antonio's policy initiative through a preservation lens
In 1963, Penn Station in New York City was demolished.
In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was passed.

- National Register of Historic Places (NPS)
- State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs & THPOs)
- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards
Grants for programming, survey, education, and community revitalization

Guidance for local Historic Design Guidelines & Standards

Historic Tax Credit Projects
What happens before a historic building comes down?
Community advocacy
Public hearings
Documentation
PRESERVATION

RELOCATION

DECONSTRUCTION & REUSE

LOSS
If a historic feature or material is deteriorated beyond repair or missing, it should be reconstructed or replaced in-kind.
Like an organ donor, a structure may have reached the end of its life, but its pieces could help extend the lives of dozens of other historic structures.
San Antonio's Deconstruction & Salvage Policy Initiative
Salvage & Deconstruction

- **Sustainability & Environment**
- **Historic & Cultural Preservation**
- **Waste Reduction**
- **Workforce & Economy**
- **Public Health**
- **Equity**

**Deconstruction Advisory Committee**

- Solid Waste Management Department
- Office of Sustainability
- Development Services Department
- Neighborhood and Housing Services Department
- Metro Health
- Build San Antonio Green
- Habitat for Humanity
- Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)
- Local demolition, salvage, and house moving contractors
- Developers and real estate industry representatives
- UTSA Construction Science and Architecture educators
- The Conservation Society of San Antonio
- Community advocates
- Local architects and designers
This initiative is not about if a building comes down, but rather how a building comes down.
Conveying to the public and elected officials that deconstruction was historically common via archival research & images
Making it local - reuse was part of our history!
Granite New Life

THE OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING (above) before it was demolished in 1935 to make way for new Federal Building. The granite columns, which supported arches on second story of this structure, now are being used in renovation of Speir Building (R).
A foundation for material circularity & circular economy policy
The laws of physics haven't changed. However, the quality of building materials has.
Training a workforce
Community Engagement
WHEREAS, On November 16, 2019, Build San Antonio Green hosted its 19th Annual Solar Festival at Hemisfair; and

WHEREAS, The City’s recent adoption of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan prioritizes strategies to reduce landfill waste and encourage a circular economy of materials through reuse; and

WHEREAS, The City’s Deconstruction and Salvage Initiative, led by the Office of Historic Preservation, aims to explore both architectural and creative reuse of reclaimed building materials; and

WHEREAS, The City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation, as a leader within the international Climate Heritage Network, promotes historic preservation and building reuse policies that address the impacts of climate change on built and cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Solar Festival organizers have agreed to the pardoning of a wood turkey constructed from reclaimed building materials, known as Sally the Salvaged Turkey, to remind us of the role we all play in achieving waste reduction goals.

Now, therefore, I, Ron Nirenberg, Mayor of the City of San Antonio, in recognition thereof, do hereby proclaim Sally the Salvaged Turkey PARDONED FROM THE LANDFILL.

Ron Nirenberg, Mayor
Innovation & tech

How can the City quantifiably reduce the volume of reusable/recyclable building materials that end up in the landfill by developing a digital tool that connects sellers and buyers of salvaged materials?

Hi, Refinder team!
Engaging nationally across sectors

DECONSTRUCTION THINK TANK: FEBRUARY 2020

Link to Final Agenda: bit.ly/SAThinkTank
Engaging internationally in the growing Climate Heritage movement

CLIMATEHERITAGE.ORG
“Never demolish, never remove or replace, always add, transform, and reuse!”

- Rallying cry from French architects Lacaton & Vassal
Contact

Stephanie Phillips
stephanie@sapreservation.com
linkedin.com/in/stephaniemariephillips

www.SApreservation.com

www.SAreuse.com - our brand new reuse website!