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INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 4, 2024

RE: Texas Pavilion/Institute of Texan Culture Building SAL designation

Dear Chairman Nau, Vice Chair McKnight, and Members of the Texas Historical Commission,

Preservation Houston's mission is to promote the preservation and appreciation of architectural and cultural historic resources in the Houston area. As part of the wider Texas community, we also stand in support of preserving sites of statewide importance. Today we write in support of designating the Texas Pavilion/Institute of Texan Cultures (ITC) building in San Antonio as a State Antiquities Landmark.

The ITC building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and historical significance. Built for the 1968 World's Fair in San Antonio, it is notable for its role in representing the state of Texas as a confluence of major civilizations with a diverse, multi-ethnic culture.

The ITC building's Brutalist design was the work of the prominent architecture firm Caudill Rowlett Scott (CRS), headquartered in Houston. CRS was known for its team approach and innovative and transformative work, becoming the largest integrated design firm in the nation by 1983. A partner in the firm, William Merriweather Pena, was an award-winning Mexican American architect whose contributions make the ITC one of less than 4% of sites on the National Register that reflect Latino history.

Demolition of the ITC building would be a significant loss for San Antonio and the state of Texas. The structure embodies HemisFair's representation of Texas, not as the stereotype of cowboys and oil tycoons, but as a blend of history and innovation that has made the state the diverse cultural hub it remains to this day. We support the designation of the Texas Building/Institute of Texan Cultures building as a State of Antiquities Landmark. Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathy Washburn
Interim Executive Director