

Statement of the San Antonio Conservation Society regarding their compromise plan for the Alamo Museum, May 7, 2019

The San Antonio Conservation Society began advocating for the preservation and re-use of the Crockett and Woolworth Buildings after their purchase by the State in 2015. Since 2016 the Woolworth Building has been on the list of Texas' Most Endangered Landmarks.

Last year, we joined the Coalition for the Woolworth Building in celebrating the site's Civil Rights history as the first voluntary and peaceful integration of a Woolworth's lunch counter in the South during the national sit-in movement of the 1960s. Today we are sharing conceptual drawings that demonstrate how the Woolworth and Crockett Buildings can contribute to the new Alamo museum, showcasing the history of the 1836 battle, the mission that founded our city, and the civil rights milestone achieved here six decades ago.

We offered to share this compromise plan with local members of the Alamo Trust.

It is a true compromise plan.

This proposal combines the best of the old with the new to tell the full story of Alamo Plaza. We show how it is possible to reveal and interpret the western wall of the Alamo footprint, while preserving century-old buildings and an important site in the American Civil Rights movement.

Most of the northern wall's footprint, of course, remains under the Gibbs Building and Federal Building. Our proposal reveals the location of the mission's west wall by carving an arcade through the existing buildings, allowing pedestrians to preview exhibits in the new museum. A new central entrance, the arcade, and the four-story addition to the rear allow creative architectural expression for the new museum.

The arcade leads visitors to areas within the Woolworth Building footprint that include the approximate locations of the Treviño House that served as Travis' headquarters, and the Castañeda house. This option also includes space to interpret the Woolworth's lunch counter on the spot where integration occurred on March 16, 1960.

Moreover, these spaces are in the shade, inviting extended viewing year-round.

We hope that the architects for the new Alamo museum will consider the benefits of a design that reflects the complete history of the plaza.

We encourage the public to reach out to the General Land Office and city leaders with their reactions to our plan.

What better way to celebrate Historic Preservation Month than to repurpose these buildings.

These Places Matter!