



C  
MEDIA CONTACT: Lewis Vetter, President  
The Conservation Society of San Antonio  
210-621-7872 (cell) 210-224-6163 (office)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Friday May 16, 2025 at 11:30 AM

**CONSERVATION SOCIETY SUIT DENIED, LANDMARK TEXAS PAVILION  
“ALREADY GONE”**

The Conservation Society of San Antonio was denied an emergency injunction by the 15<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals today in its lawsuit against the University of Texas at San Antonio and the City of San Antonio regarding the Texas Pavilion building in Hemisfair. “We are frustrated that the merits of our case for injunctive relief have not been heard, allowing the building to be demolished,” said President Lewis Vetter.

“Once again, a public building is being destroyed with public dollars and no public hearing. This bodes poorly for the other historic properties owned by UTSA, including the Kallison Block across from City Hall and the former Southwest School of Art. If they did it once, they can do it again.”

Vetter said that the progress of demolition of the structure since the suit was filed March 26 has been extensive. “They have removed or prepared for removal almost all of the wall panels. The bridge leading to the building is gone, as is the fountain that symbolized how Texans came together out of so many cultural influences. Even if we were to succeed in our appeal, there is little left to save. It is already gone.”

On Monday, April 14, the District Court granted ‘Pleas to the Jurisdiction’ filed by COSA and UTSA, meaning those entities could not be sued due to their sovereign immunity and that the district court did not have jurisdiction. The Conservation Society argued that UTSA and the City were not acting legally, but these claims were never heard.

Crews were seen removing giant concrete wall panels with a backhoe on Tuesday, April 8 and reducing them to rubble. A month later, the bridge to the building and its iconic fountain were no more.

UTSA and the City see demolition of this historic structure as required piece of the multi-billion-dollar Project Marvel. The Conservation Society of San Antonio repeatedly said that the structure could be a part of Project Marvel.

# # #

## **BACKGROUND**

The original suit, filed in District Court on Wednesday, March 26, asked for a halt to the demolition being undertaken by the University of Texas at San Antonio following the administrative approval of a demolition permit last December by the Texas Historical Commission. The petition claims that the demolition violates the original 1967 deed that transferred the property from the City of San Antonio to the State of Texas and that a required federal review of the demolition did not occur. The legal action references the City's statement about Project Marvel, which will utilize federal funding, and UTSA statements about "monetizing" the ITC site.

"UTSA and the City of San Antonio have moved forward with the demolition of the Texas Pavilion without following the requirements of the Texas Antiquities Code and those of the National Historic Preservation Act," said Lewis Vetter, President of the 100-year-old Conservation Society of San Antonio. "The Texas Pavilion should be part of Project Marvel," he added.

The Conservation Society has been pushing for public hearings on the future of the building since 2022, and successfully listed it on the National Register of Historic Places and as a State Antiquities Landmark in 2024. "Those designations mean that certain procedures need to be followed, and they were not," said Vetter.

The Conservation Society began in 1924 and was pivotal in the preservation of the San Antonio Missions beginning with restoration of the San Jose Granary in 1933, creation of a National Park in 1978 and nomination as World Heritage Site beginning in 2006. The Society was instrumental in the creation of the River Walk and has preserved hundreds of sites, including Casa Navarro, the Aztec Theatre, Ursuline College, the Rand Building and Yturri-Edmunds House and Mill. The Society provides over \$100,000 in building and educational grants to San Antonians each year, has over 1100 members and offers a range of educational programming and resources.