



EL PASO'S DURANGUITO ADDED TO LIST OF MOST ENDANGERED PLACES IN TEXAS

For Immediate Release

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BROWNSVILLE, Texas — Preservation Texas announced the addition of the **Duranguito** neighborhood in downtown El Paso to its Most Endangered Places list. at the 2018 Preservation Summit in Brownsville on Tuesday evening. The neighborhood has been at the center of an intense political and legal debate about the future of a proposed new public building that would result in the loss of Duranguito's historically-significant architectural and archaeological resources which date back to the earliest days of settlement in the city.

Preservation Texas's listing of Duranguito as one of the state's most threatened historic places is intended to raise broader statewide awareness of the issues that local preservationists are facing in El Paso and build increased support for their efforts. Saving Duranguito will ensure that the architectural and cultural fabric of downtown El Paso will retain its strength and authenticity.

"In the last few years, significant private investment in the rehabilitation of El Paso's downtown landmarks proves that historic preservation can be a major economic development strategy for El Paso," said Preservation Texas's executive director Evan Thompson. "Duranguito is a part of the cultural and architectural DNA of El Paso. Protection of its modest yet culturally significant historic resources is essential to preserving the city's diverse and authentic sense of place. Selectively saving the facades of certain buildings in the neighborhood is not preservation."

Designation of Duranguito's historic resources on the National Register of Historic Places would make federal and state tax credits available for up to 45% of the costs rehabilitating the neighborhood's historic buildings. Local preservation ordinances and voluntary conservation easements can provide long-term legal protection for the buildings.

"Large-scale new developments should be encouraged in areas immediately adjacent to the historic core of the city, and recent land-use planning proposals have identified sites in which a large public building could be built that would allow El Paso to have a first-class entertainment venue without requiring the demolition of Duranguito," said Thompson.

Since 2004, over 150 sites have been named to Preservation Texas's Most Endangered Places list, and only eight have been lost. Founded in 1985, Preservation Texas is a member-supported non-profit historic preservation education and advocacy organization based in Austin with a statewide board of

directors. Numerous sites in El Paso have been named to the Most Endangered Places list in recent years, including the Albert Fall Mansion that was saved through the leadership of the City of El Paso.

Other sites named to the Most Endangered Places list this week are **Ship-on-the-Desert**, a 1940s-era house in Guadalupe Mountains National Park; the mid-19th century **Neale House**, perhaps the oldest frame house in Brownsville; and six threatened **historic railroad depots in Central Texas**.

For more information about Preservation Texas, visit www.PreservationTexas.org or call 512-472-0102.

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