



# AIA San Antonio

8 December 2009

## POSITION STATEMENT

### Further Investigation into the Economics of Energy Conservation

Before the City of San Antonio proceeds with further funding of the South Texas Project, the San Antonio Chapter of The American Institute of Architects recommends procurement of an independent, third-party study of the costs and benefits of the city's energy plan in comparison with the costs and benefits that could be obtained through energy conservation and efficiency measures.

Specialists in the field of energy, technology, and finance have raised significant questions about the accuracy of the plan's supporting statistics as provided by CPS. The citizens of San Antonio have the right to know that adequate time has been taken by the City to research the plan and its alternatives in a thorough and independent manner.

#### **AIA San Antonio believes an independent evaluation is needed for the following reasons:**

- Because buildings account for more than 70% of electricity use in the United States, and because research indicates that investment in building efficiency is the least expensive, most effective way to reduce energy consumption, The American Institute of Architects has adopted the 2030 Challenge, which can lead to significant reductions in energy consumption. *2030 Blueprint*, a white paper published by Architecture 2030, concludes that "The cost to build enough nuclear plants to produce just one Qbtu of delivered energy is \$222 billion. The cost to incorporate energy efficiency measures into residential and commercial buildings to negate the need for one Qbtu of delivered energy is \$42.1 billion".
- San Antonio has adopted the Mission Verde Plan, and has revised its building code to require more energy efficient buildings. CPS has initiated the "Save for Tomorrow Energy Plan" (STEP) and has recently adopted the 2009 Sustainability Report provided by Jeremy Rifkin. The initiatives are projected to continue reducing San Antonio's energy demand to levels below those predicted by CPS at the time it was decided to pursue expansion of the nuclear portfolio.

#### **AIA San Antonio prefers the following outcomes:**

- Mayor and Council will take the necessary time to proceed with an independent evaluation of the criteria thus far presented by CPS in support of the nuclear plan, so as to ensure that accurate, up-to-date figures for alternative energy costs, energy efficiency costs, and future demand are being used.
- The City of San Antonio will aggressively pursue those initiatives already in place through the Mission Verde Plan and the Rifkin Sustainability report; and will take account of these initiatives in calculating the costs and benefits of the South Texas Project.
- The City of San Antonio will make use of "The 2030 Challenge" in its efforts to reduce San Antonio's energy demand. By incentivizing more energy efficiency in new and existing buildings, we believe the city will bear less expense, create local jobs, and reduce energy demand – all in the near future.