

Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

On behalf of the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), we want to put on the table greater recognition that historic preservation plays in minimizing greenhouse gas emissions. We advocate for recycling/rehabilitating existing/historic buildings & structures instead of demolishing these buildings and hauling off the debris to the landfill. We contend that existing/historic buildings represent an energy investment that should not be dismissed as being insignificant or "sunk" costs, particularly in view of greenhouse gas emissions required for constructing replacement buildings of comparable size.

We also note that while new construction may well incorporate energy saving designs and systems, what is overlooked is the significantly greater energy expenditures needed to extract, transport, process, and manufacture materials (often with negative impacts to environmental quality) used to assemble and construct new buildings.

In the updated State Historic Preservation Plan for 2021-26, DAHP has included a task to get a better idea of the energy investments in existing/historic buildings and the energy investment/greenhouse gas emissions that would be needed to replace a prototypical building with new construction. The goal of this task is to quantify what is lost by demolition and what additional costs are incurred by new replacement construction even when using green building standards. We would invite Dept. of Ecology to join with DAHP and the historic preservation community in helping to implement this task.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.