

# AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY



## Director's Report

March 2021

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## Bridging the Digital Divide: Austin Public Library Donates Devices to Community Partners

In an effort to address the ongoing digital divide, the Austin Public Library (APL) coordinated a widespread device loan program in partnership with community organizations and area school districts. Through individual donations, funding from commissions and boards, the CARES Act, and operational funds, APL loaned laptops and hotspots to the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA), Foundation Communities, South Asian's International Volunteer Association of Austin (SAIVA), and City Departments to support families, individuals, and especially older adults who are isolated and lack access to online information and resources.

This effort was driven by a clear need observed in the community, further amplified by COVID-19. Emi Johnson, Director of Innovation and Improvement at APL, described the digital access needs of Austin's vulnerable populations, which became more critical under the pandemic. The Library found ways to leverage existing funding to provide the access to those in need through technology devices and services.

To Catherine Crago, Head of Strategic Initiatives and Resource Development at HACA, this loan represents an innovative means of helping HACA residents gradually develop digital literacy skills. As the loans are long-term, recipients of devices will have the opportunity to take digital literacy courses and eventually adopt those digital tools at their own pace.

Beyond the devices themselves, APL also offers support to assist and introduce recipients to virtual materials and resources. The Library's effort is to remove barriers in as many ways possible. Through community outreach, individuals may Book a Librarian and receive 1:1 assistance and instruction, or receive assistance by phone or live chat. Crago said, "This program liberates library resources so that they can be accessed by residents who are homebound or supervising children during the school day, or for health reasons are reluctant to leave the house during COVID."

Similarly, Foundation Communities has already felt the benefits of the newly donated devices. Kenya Lewis, Support Services Program Manager at Skyline Terrace, said that residents at the property are very excited about using the laptops, as well as the Book a Librarian service. Tonia Doering, Resident Services coordinator at Bluebonnet Studios, the other Foundation Communities property to receive devices, said that receiving laptops and hotspots will be a huge impact. "Austin Public Library providing these Chromebooks allows residents to connect with telehealth appointments, as many have weekly meetings with providers, and also allows residents to connect with employers and check work schedules." Prior to the loan, many residents would utilize the property's community computer lab, but COVID-19 has restricted the ability for multiple people to access this resource. With the device donation, residents can now remain in the comfort of their home when meeting with providers or working on resumes.

“For the populations of individuals who live at Foundation Communities, it means a lot for them to have different avenues of support. These devices are something that will be very beneficial to them - learning how to use technology when considering how things have shifted this year. Now residents are able to use the laptops to connect with virtual support groups and mental health support groups,” said Lewis.

Lori Burnett, Foundation Communities’ Program Manager with Supportive Services, echoed this sentiment. “For some individuals, loss of connection has exacerbated mental health issues. Providing an opportunity to connect with different folks, whether it be family, friends, or a meet-up group, is crucial to people’s overall health and well-being.”

For APL, this effort has strengthened the relationships with community partners. This influenced the Library to approach digital inclusion in a strategic way, said Johnson. “It also reminded us to address the needs equitably. As part of systems change, we had to re-evaluate our policies, the way we do business, and align to our priorities.”

Regarding future efforts, the Library and Austin Parks and Recreation have partnered to see that technology devices are in the hands of individual seniors who are unable to travel. Additionally, APL’s Community Services Outreach team will loan 150 hotspots to Austin Voices for Youth and Education, Refugee Services of Texas, and AISD’s Refugee Family Support Center. These hotspots will help students access school at home. Additionally, 120 hotspots will be allocated to Austin Public Health’s Faith-Based Task Force, and 30 hotspots and laptops will be loaned to Project Connect’s public participants.

-from *On the Digital Horizon*, City of Austin Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs, February 23, 2021

***Adrian Armstrong’s portraits portray what it means to be an African American living in modern America.***

## Adrian Armstrong Virtual Exhibition

Austin Public Library presents [Adrian Armstrong’s work February 4 through March 31](#)

Through portrait and figurative practices, Armstrong’s work explores black identity and how the black body is perceived in predominantly white American spaces. He aims to portray what it means to be an African American living in modern America. Often using himself as an “every man” symbol, Armstrong’s work touches on topics such as depression within the black community, systematic oppression and identity erasure; but on the other side of the spectrum explores nostalgia, growth, and success.

## Artist Bio

Adrian Armstrong is a multidisciplinary artist from Omaha, NE now living and working out of Austin, TX. Armstrong received his BFA from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln in 2014. His work expands throughout different mediums such as music, painting, and printmaking; but his primary medium of choice is ballpoint pen.

## COVID-19 Update – Library Book Drops Open & Curbside Service Enhancements

Austin Public Library is providing a roadmap for future service changes as they relate to operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Wednesday, February 24, curbside service hours were extended. Curbside hours are now: Central Library, Mon & Tue Noon - 8 PM | Wed, Thur & Fri, 10 AM - 6 PM; Carver, Hampton Branch at Oak Hill, Manchaca, Milwood, North Village, Old Quarry, Ruiz, Spicewood Springs, University Hills & Windsor Park, Mon & Tue Noon - 8 PM | Wed, Thur & Fri 10 AM - 6 PM

Library cards are issued Monday through Friday, outside at the Austin Public Library locations providing curbside service.

The following practices are in place:

- Enhanced procedures for frequent cleaning and disinfecting common areas
- Use of protective gear such as masks and gloves by all staff - masks or face coverings are required, gloves are not
- Implementation of a teleworking policy that makes sense operationally and allows for social distancing in our facilities
- Adherence to existing policies for sick leave
- Frequent communication at all levels to facilitate cooperation and consistent best practices throughout the organization

## APL Weathers Winter Storm

During February's unprecedented winter storm, APL facilities were affected in the following ways:

- Howson, Ruiz, Southeast, Yarborough, and Central maintained power during the storm. All others lost power at some point during the cold weather.
- Water intrusion was found at four of our locations: Central, Faulk, Pleasant Hill, and University Hills

- Generators were used at three locations (Carver, Manchaca, and the History Center) to maintain our archives and critical IT structure.
- Very few of our books were damaged.
- Hampton at Oak Hill and Spicewood Springs branches had water outages, and no facilities had drinking water.
- Vandalism occurred at two locations: Terrazas - attempted break-in, broken glass doors and Pleasant Hill - broken window

Only one curbside branch remains closed - University Hills Branch. Repairs continue due to damage caused by a water pipe that burst.

During the storm, many APL staff volunteered for temporary reassignments to help out at the City's warming centers and water distribution sites.

# FACILITIES SERVICES

## FY2018 Bond Program Summary

### Description

The 2018 Bond Program for the Library Department consists of fifteen improvement projects located across the City of Austin. The projects are grouped into the following categories:



**2018 BOND**  
OUR COMMUNITY. OUR FUTURE.

- CLMP180 2016 Site/Civil Engineering Projects  
Hampton at Oak Hill Parking Lot Expansion; Cepeda Branch Trail
- CLMP282 Faulk /Austin History Campus - Faulk Library Archival Repository Upgrade; Austin History Center Interior & Exterior improvements
- CLMP286 Interior Renovation Projects - Old Quarry Branch Renovation; Little Walnut Creek Branch Renovation; Willie Mae Kirk Branch Renovation; Manchaca Road Branch Roof Replacement & Renovation; St. John Branch Renovation
- CLMP287 Roof Replacement & System Upgrades - Ruiz Branch; Carver Branch; University Hills Branch; Howson Branch; Spicewood Springs Branch; Yarborough Branch

### Status

- CLMP180 2016 Site/Civil: Cepeda Branch Trail Project is temporarily delayed while the new consultant is brought on board. New consultant is developing scope for trail construction. Hampton at Oak Hill Parking Lot Expansion Project Consultant is working with Watershed to determine project scope. A preliminary meeting indicated that site plan requirements could trigger a pond retrofit.
- CLMP282 Faulk Building & History Center Renovation: Design Kickoff and subsequent initial project definition with APL has started. A committee of APL employees and 2-3 outside archivists has been formed for the scoping phase or next 4-5 weeks. We will meet weekly to confirm the History Center requirements, SF, and adjacencies that make sense. We will then move forward with Schematic Design.
- CLMP286 Interior Renovations: The Consultant submitted draft APDN on February 14, 2021. Cost estimates will be submitted mid-March and then a meeting will be held with APL, consultant and Public Works PM to discuss.

- CLMP 287 Roof Replacement & System Upgrades: Consultant continues to work on preliminary phase report. Bad weather continues to affect the necessary work on the last branch which is necessary to complete the PER report.

## Schedule

The design and construction program's deliverables are revised to a 36-month timeline. All timelines are estimates and subject to change without notice. Program construction starts will be staggered to minimize impacts to existing levels of branch services.

***The 2018 Bond Program for the Library Department consists of fifteen improvement projects located across the City of Austin.***



# FY2012 Bond Program Summary

## Description

- Proposition 18: Library, Museums and Cultural Facilities \$13.4 Million

### 6014.041 Cepeda Branch

#### Scope of Work

Site Drainage Remediation and Interior Renovation of 8,110 SF Facility



#### Status

A Request for Council Action (RCA) to award the construction contract to Balfour Beatty Construction Group will go before the City Council on March 25 in the amount of \$505,505.00 plus a \$50,550.50 contingency, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$556,055.50

#### Budget / Cost

Appropriation \$1,311,839; Obligated \$581,789.95; Balance \$730,049.05

#### Schedule

- Construction Start March 25, 2021
- Substantial Completion September 25, 2021

### 6014.015 Zaragosa Warehouse Fire Sprinkler Upgrade

#### Scope of Work

Replacement of Sprinkler System (life safety) in 20,000 SF Facility

#### Status

Notice to Proceed was delayed to February 22, due to the extreme weather conditions present on February 15 (and indeed the entire week). But construction on the site officially kicked off on February 22, 2021 with Balfour Beatty Construction Group accepting keys to the Warehouse and instructions on how to disarm/rearm the alarm system every day.

#### Budget / Cost

Appropriation \$1,044,965; Obligated \$1,032,324.67; Balance \$12,640.33

### Schedule

- Construction Start February 22, 2021
- Substantial Completion August 22, 2021

## 6014.037 University Hills Branch Parking Lot Expansion

### Scope of Work

The work of this project comprises the construction of a new asphalt 29 parking space parking lot expansion at the existing University Hills Branch Library.

### Status

The Rebid process has begun, with a new Solicitation released with advertisement dates of February 8, February 15, and February 22. A project Pre-Bid Conference (online) was held on Tuesday, February 23; and a potential bidder's Site Visit was held on Thursday, February 25 (with 3 interested prime | general contractors in attendance). The Bid Opening will be March 11 at 3 PM.

### Budget / Cost

Appropriation \$1,532,458.00; Obligated \$761,327.75; Balance \$771,130.25

### Schedule

- Estimated Construction Start March 2021
- Estimated Substantial Completion September 2021

## Pleasant Hill

### Scope of Work

Phase I Roof replacement and HVAC system overhaul for 8,851 SF facility. Phase II consists of interior improvements and maintenance repairs and upgrades to the exterior.

### Status

Phase II (Interior Improvements) is pending finalizing the JOC Contract. The maintenance repairs and upgrades are currently underway.

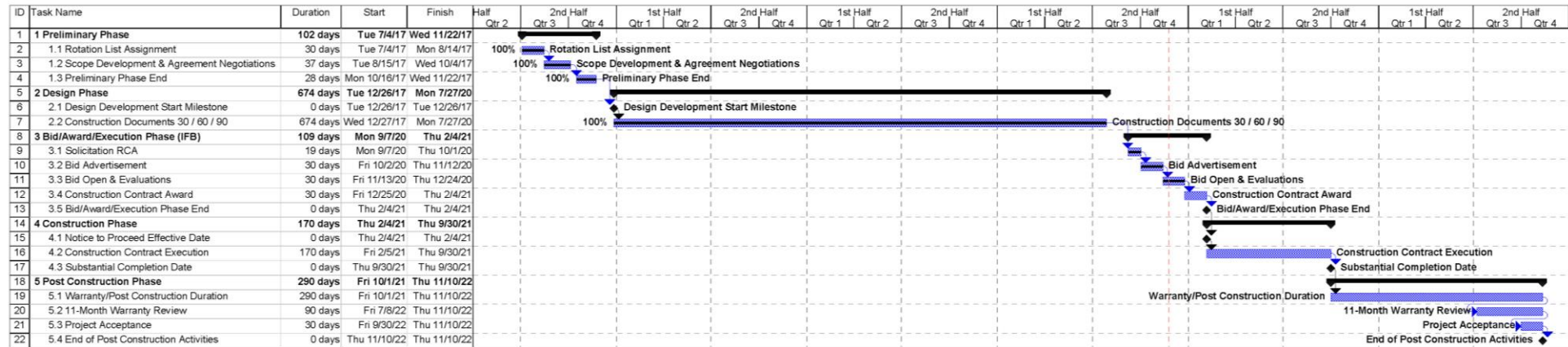
### Budget / Cost

Appropriation \$1,206,627; Obligated \$1,088,080.12; Balance \$118,080.12

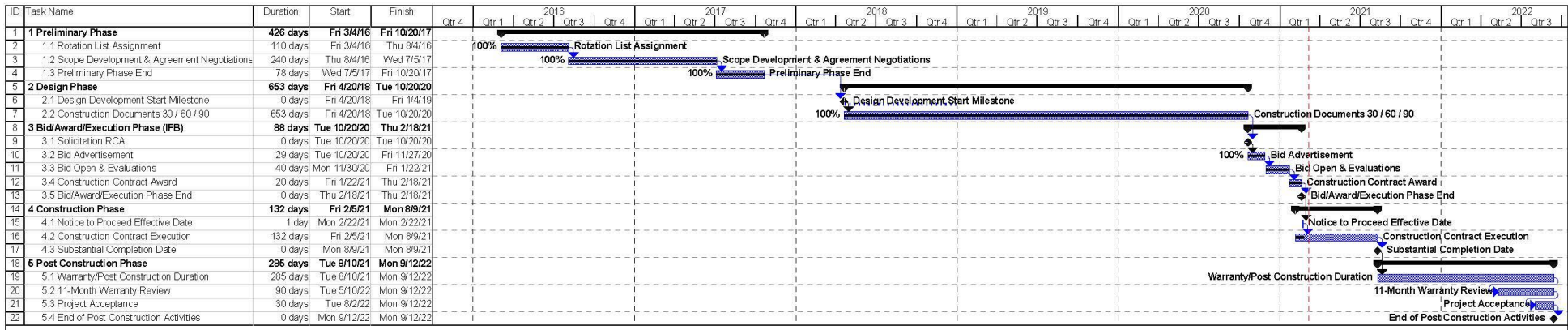
**Schedule**

- Interior Construction Start TBD
- Exterior Maintenance Repairs and upgrades are underway.

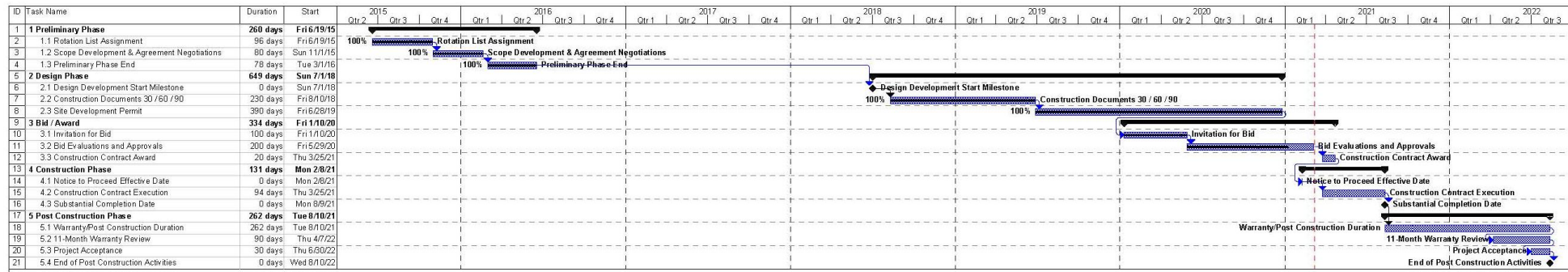
## Cepeda Branch Renovations



# Zaragosa Warehouse



## University Hills Branch



# Cepeda Branch / Hampton Branch (Site/Civil) Report

## Project Description

The Cepeda Branch Library Trail Project was initiated to provide a safe, well-lighted pedestrian pathway from



the Cepeda Branch Library property at 651 N Pleasant Valley Road through to Gonzalez Street under the adjacent East Seventh Street overpass.

The Will Hampton Branch Library at 5125 Convict Hill Road has experienced heavy use by the community since the facility first opened its doors in 1997. The community facility is public-facing and adjacent to the equally popular Dick

Nichols District Park. The project consists of adding 22 parking spaces to the existing parking lot.

## Status

- Cepeda Branch Trail Project is temporarily delayed while the new consultant is brought on board. New consultant is developing scope for trail construction,
- Hampton at Oak Hill Parking Lot Expansion Project Consultant is working with Watershed to determine project scope. A preliminary meeting indicated that site plan requirements could trigger a pond retrofit.

## Schedule

See Gantt Chart

## Budget

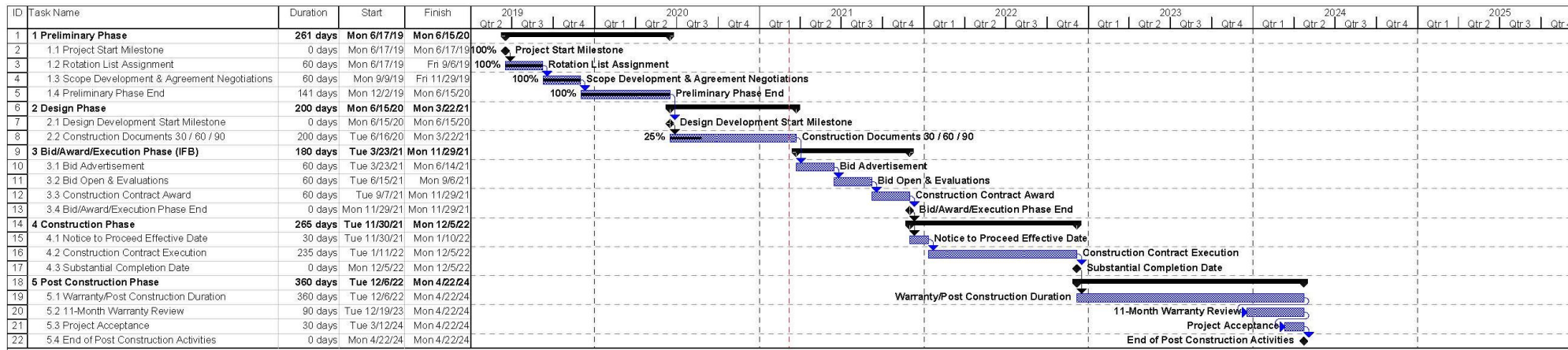
- Hampton Parking Lot Expansion: Appropriation \$751,000; Obligated \$84,082.72; Balance \$666,917.28
- Cepeda Branch Trail: Appropriation \$307,000; Obligated \$48,693.48; Balance \$258,306.52

## Other Issues

Unknown until scope is determined.



## Cepeda Branch / Hampton Branch Monthly Schedule





# Faulk Building / Austin History Center Monthly Report

## Facility Improvements & Archival Repository Expansion

### Project Description

The Faulk Library and Austin History Center are grouped together to meet the growth demands of the City's burgeoning population by adding much needed archival storage space, security for collections, and upgrading environmental controls. The campus will be reinforced as a single destination that will facilitate seamless interchanges between the Faulk Building, the Austin History Center, adjacent Wooldridge Square and many nearby historical sites.



With sustainability as a project goal the work to the Faulk Building includes but is not limited to modifying the 2nd and 3rd floors of JHF to meet minimal archival storage standards. Removing existing carpet and providing a sealed, epoxy-coated concrete flooring finish. Additional work includes upgrading the building M/E/P and Elevator Retrofit. Infrastructure upgrades at the Austin History Center include wheelchair lift replacements, lead-based paint abatement, renovation of worn finishes, lighting retrofit, and renovation of exteriors to redress structural and aesthetic improvements.

### Status

Design Kickoff and subsequent initial project definition with APL has started. A committee of APL employees and 2-3 outside archivists has been formed for the scoping phase or next 4-5 weeks. We will meet weekly to confirm History Center requirements, SF, and adjacencies that make sense. Then we will move forward with Schematic Design. (All while engaging the public and other private groups for input and updates).



Surveying is in progress and a Commissioning agent will be onboarded this month. Lead and Asbestos is also a concern, and we will need to review existing reports from the ALMAGG BSD team while in design.

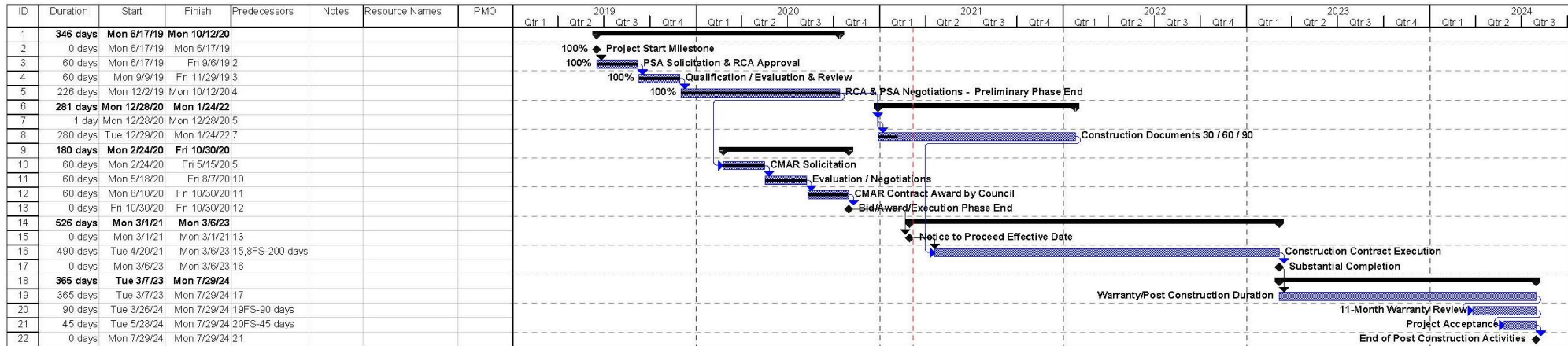
## Schedule

The winter storm coupled with an additional scoping meeting has added approximately 3 weeks to the schedule. APL requested this work be done in a 36-42 month range which we will still be holding at 37 months depending on construction. We will still try to recoup this in the design phase. (See Gannt Chart)

## Budget Estimates

Appropriation \$19,382,247; Obligated \$249,449.63; Balance \$19,132,797.37

## Faulk Library Building / Austin History Center Schedule



# Interior Renovations Monthly Report

## Project Description



Austin Public Library 2018 Bond Program Package CLMP286 Interior Renovations, combines five library branch projects with similar modernization and refurbishment scopes of work. The work requires project designs that are reflective of the emerging architectural styles of our region and sympathetic to the City of Austin initiatives including citizen participation in the design processes, Art in Public Places, and project team participation by minority and women-owned businesses.

The scope of Package “C” consists of selective demolition of the finishes of the existing building and renovations to the same that include interior finishes, floor finishes and base, new suspended ceilings and electrical service, lighting and plumbing, new gypsum drywall assemblies, storefront window systems and new furnishings. The project includes miscellaneous asbestos abatement. Compliance with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and the City of Austin Sustainability objectives are project goals. Projects which comprise Pkg. C are as follows;

- **The Old Quarry Branch**
- **Little Walnut Creek Branch**
- **Manchaca Road Branch**
- **Willie Mae Kirk Branch.**
- **St. John Branch**

## Status

The Consultant submitted draft APDN of February 14, 2021. Cost estimates will be submitted mid-March and then a meeting will be held with APL, Consultant and Public Works PM to discuss.

## Schedule

- Phase A Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) - 4 months
- Phase B Design Phase - 10 months
- Bid / Award / Execution - 8 Months (CSP/W Council approval of methodology)
- Phase D Construction 18 months

- Phase E Post Construction / Warranty - 12 months

Note: The design and construction program's deliverables are programmed for a 36-month timeline. All timelines are estimates and subject to change without notice. Program Construction starts will be staggered to minimize impacts to existing levels of branch services.

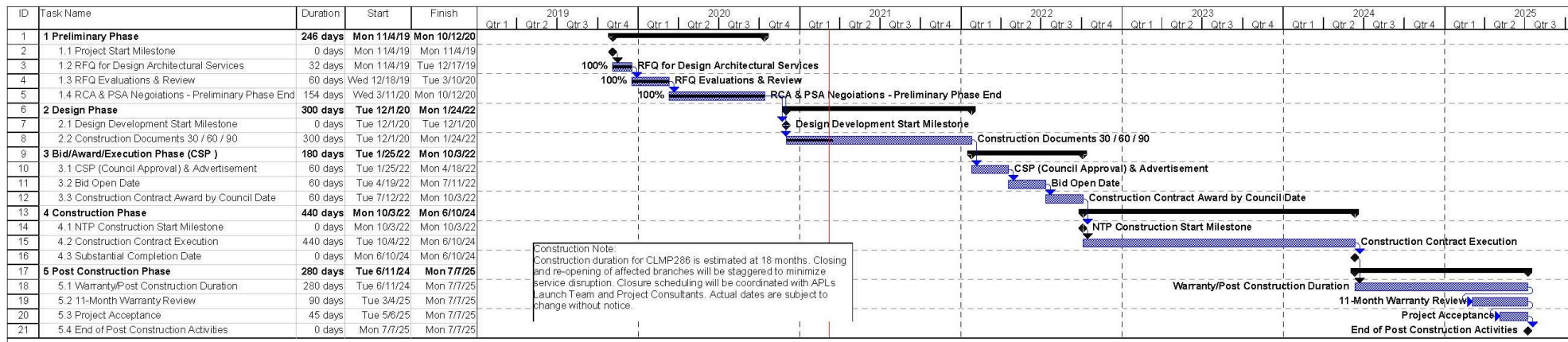
## Cost

Design Budget \$685,261; Construction Budget \$5,692,306

## Other Issues

None to date

## Interior Renovations Schedule





# Roof Replacements & Systems Upgrades Monthly Report

## Project Description

Austin Public Library 2018 Bond Program Roof Replacements & Systems Upgrades, combines six library branch projects with similar scopes of work for roofing system rehabilitation to extend the life-cycle and or HVAC Systems and controls upgrades. Warranty requirements for roofing systems shall be 20 years for leakage and weather and 10 years for HVAC Systems.



The HVAC Systems shall be upgraded to contribute to overall building energy goals, shall have low life cycle costs and capable of providing excellent indoor environmental quality while minimizing maintenance requirements. A Commissioning Agent (Cx) will assist APL Facilities Services with refining the HVAC functional requirements and roofing system rehabilitation requirements. Systems to be commissioned are Roof,

Air Conditioning, Heating Systems, Security / CCTV, PV Array and Sub-Metering devices. Work by related trades may include but is not limited to, asbestos abatement, steel, building automation, electrical and plumbing. Project will also feature upgrading of the roof drainage system including scupper's, repair and upgrade of lightning protection system. Projects which comprise CLMP287 are further described as follows;

- **Ruiz Branch** Roofing System
- **Carver Branch** Roofing System & HVAC Upgrade.
- **University Hills** Roofing System
- **Howson Branch** HVAC and Controls Upgrade
- **Spicewood Springs** Roofing System
- **Yarbrough Branch** Roofing System, replacement of clerestories, and upgrade of lightning protection system.

## Status

Consultant continues to work on preliminary phase report. Bad weather continues to affect the necessary work on the last branch which is necessary to complete the PER report. Minh Bruce no longer the point of contact from APL. New point of contact to be assigned by APL at a later date.

## Schedule

The Preliminary Project Schedule details as follows:

- Phase A Preliminary Phase - 2 months
- Phase B Design Phase - 10 months
- Bid / Award / Execution - 8 months (CSP/W Council approval of methodology)
- Phase D Construction - 18 Months
- Phase E Post Construction / Warranty - 12 months

Note: The design and construction program's deliverables are programmed for a 36-month timeline. All timelines are estimates and subject to change without notice. Program Construction starts will be staggered to minimize impacts to existing levels of branch services.

## Cost

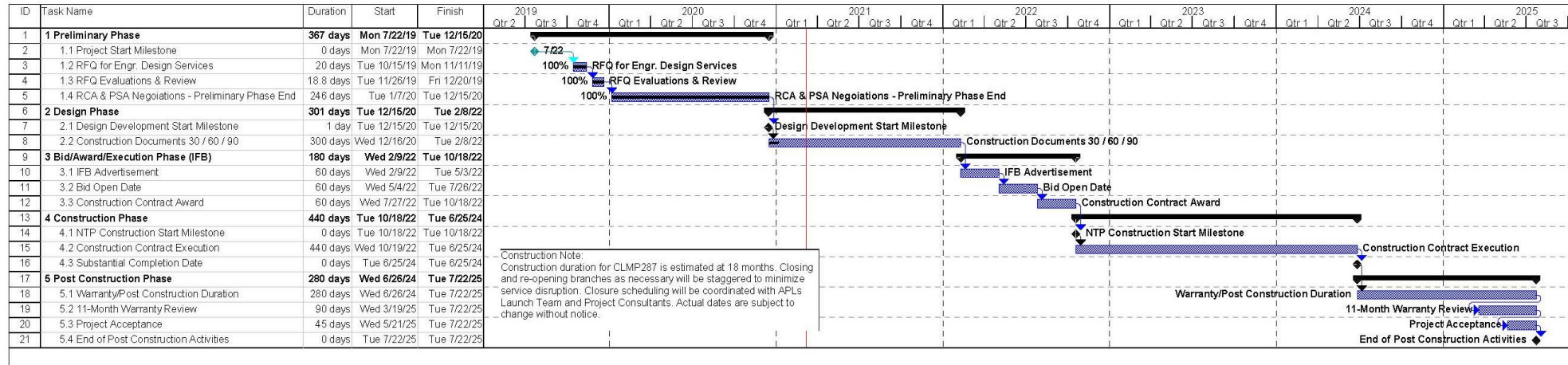
Design Budget TBD; Construction Budget TBD

## Other Issues

None to date



## Roof Replacements & Systems Upgrades Schedule



# AUSTIN HISTORY CENTER

## Programming & Outreach

- On February 5, the AHCA hosted its annual Angeline Eberly Luncheon, which went virtual this year. Over 300 people attended the presentation “Our Austin Story, Act II: All Aboard! The Train Comes to Austin” written by Austin playwright Paullette MacDougal and directed by Austin Playhouse Artistic Director Lara Toner Haddock. The performance was a historically-grounded glimpse of events that shaped Austin in the years following the Civil War, most notably the arrival of the town’s first rail service.

## Collections

- AHC staff finished processing 1 collection, the Japanese American Immersion Project Scrapbook.
- Forklift Danceworks donated 25 oral history interviews and transcripts created during their 2020 “Take Me Out to Downs Field” programming, documenting the history of Downs Field and African American baseball players and teams. Along with the recordings and transcripts, a small selection of photos, clippings, and baseball cards make up the collection.

## Reference

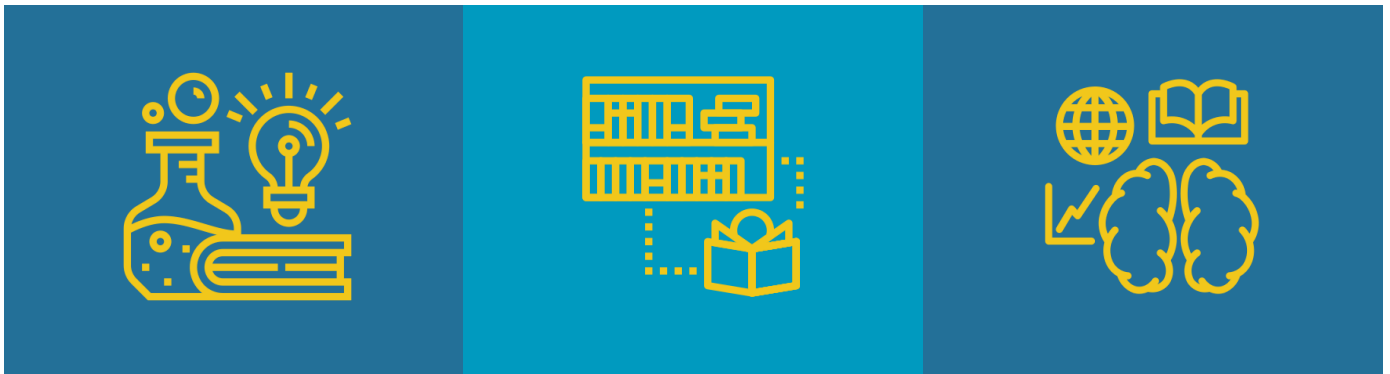
- The AHC’s expanded reference and e-document delivery service received 83 requests and completed 83 this month, delivering 9347 scanned items to researchers. While research topics vary, some of our efforts can have a profound personal affect, as evidenced by the following feedback:
  - *Can't thank you enough for scanning the entire report! And for sending it so quickly! ... This report is fascinating and helps me a bunch. More than you know.*
- During this time AHC staff helped researchers working on a historical marker application for the Manhattan Club, Austin’s secret gay-friendly club in the 1960s; the [artonthecorridor.org](http://artonthecorridor.org) website documenting the history of transportation corridors; and a historic resources survey study for the Hancock, North Loop, and Upper Boggy Creek neighborhoods.

# LIBRARY PRIORITIES

## Literacy Advancement

The Children's Team provided hands-on learning for 450 kids through our Take and Make kits. Experiences included small-motor skills, following directions, and creative expressions. Every Take and Make included a fun reading component focusing on self-selected reading options which are known to have a positive effect on reading scores.

The Teen Team continued to create material that would boost learning for teens and empower them to engage in enriching activities throughout the month. The team created literacy resources such as book talks and vocabulary-building activities.



## Digital Inclusion & STEM

In preparation for the loan of laptops and hotspots to community organizations, Reference Librarian Meg Simon, created a hotspot demo video explaining Wifi hotspots. This informative video goes into detail about how to use the hotspot, how to turn it on, the importance of turning it off when not in use, and other helpful information for the user. In addition, a Spanish video was created by the reference team.

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Community Archivist Program at the Austin History Center is dedicated to collecting and preserving the history of underrepresented and marginalized groups in Austin and Travis County. This program strives to provide historical recognition the histories of African American, Latinx and Asian Pacific American communities.

## Civic and Community Engagement

Library staff made 209 calls to customers over the age of 65 who haven't visited the library since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. They're letting customers know that the library is open for curbside and answering questions about connecting to the virtual collection.

The youth librarian at the St. John Branch holds the Webb Middle School English Language Learner Book Club weekly. English language learners read aloud graphic novels, short stories, and beginner chapter books.

## **Staff Development**

APL's Organizational Development staff have developed virtual versions of core employee training courses in reference services and records management and made the courses available on Niche Academy. Employees can access Niche Academy from home or at work.

## **Workforce and Economic Development**

The student engineering team from UT Texas Product Engineering Organization (TPEO) is working with APL on website enhancement projects.

# APL BY THE NUMBERS

## Virtual Collections Usage

### February

- eBooks 120,200
- eAudio 71,582
- eVideo 5,023
- eMusic 1,786
- ePeriodicals 13,694
- Total 212,085

### Programs

- 28 live virtual programs, 246 attendance
- 120 recorded programs, 1,724 attendance

### Social Media Engagements

- Instagram 2,808
- Facebook 1,842
- Twitter 115

### Website Page Views

- Library website 1,238,634

### Curbside Service

- Circulation 136,031

Roosevelt Weeks

Director of Libraries

