



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Roosevelt Weeks, Director of Libraries *Roosevelt Weeks*

**THROUGH:** Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager

**DATE:** October 7, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Travis County Archives at John Henry Faulk (Resolution No. 20220609-068)

---

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to the request for the City Manager to explore the use of the Faulk Library Building as a shared archive facility for the City of Austin and Travis County. [RESOLUTION NO. 20220609-068](#) directed the City Manager to explore the use of the Faulk Library Building as a shared archive facility for the City of Austin and Travis County, and to work with Travis County staff to assess cost sharing and logistics, while ensuring that the combined archives do not infringe upon or detract from the planned Austin History Center (AHC) space.

### Background

Renovation of John Henry Faulk (JHF) for increased archival space is occurring now and expected to be completed late fall 2023.

Over the course of the last few months Austin Public Library leadership staff have met with Travis County staff members to discuss the feasibility of a shared archives.

Travis County Archives (TCA) currently consists approximately 5,000 SF of space for their collections and staff. They have a staff of two full-time employees and two part-time employees. In addition to office space, they require space for collection preparation, digitization of materials, and space for customers.

The renovations of the John Henry Faulk (JHF) building are expected to be completed by late fall 2023. In addition to infrastructure upgrades and repairs, the main result will be archival storage space on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Staff workspace will be available at various points on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> floors. All spaces for public access will be in the AHC building.

### Options

Both Austin Public Library/Austin History Center staff and Travis County Archives staff are focused on providing an excellent customer experience for our collective customers. Two options were discussed.

#### Option A: A Shared Archives

This option is for a shared archives. The Travis County Archival collections would be hosted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of John Henry Faulk and be made accessible to customers and staff through the library's catalog and finding aids. The Travis County collections would be stored with the AHC collections, but on separate high-density shelving in a temperature and humidity controlled environment. While these collections would remain property of Travis County, Austin History Center staff will be able to access Travis County collections for use by staff and customers. Travis County Archives staff will have the same access to AHC collections. Specified protocols must be adhered to when retrieving, using, and replacing both collections. Security access to the AHC and JHF buildings will be controlled by APL. Staff work and archival preparation space will be available for TCA staff at JHF.

The Reading Room (at AHC building) would be used by staff and customers of both Austin History Center and Travis County Archives to access all collections. The customer experience will be consistent no matter which staff or collections they are working with.

#### Option B: A Shared Facility

The option of a shared facility that would maintain separate collections, staff, customer Reading Room and hours, and all operations for both Austin History Center and Travis County Archives. The planned renovations of the John Henry Faulk building make this proposal a little more challenging as the work being done does not allow for public access of the building and the ability to separate into distinct, secure spaces.

#### **Recommendation**

Library and Travis County staff recommend and agree that Option A: A Shared Archives is the path to take. We can work through this option to come to an agreement for a shared archive facility. We recommend that conversations and negotiations continue in order to develop a detailed cost-sharing model. We look to provide this cost-sharing model before the end of the calendar year.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at [Roosevelt.Weeks@austintexas.gov](mailto:Roosevelt.Weeks@austintexas.gov).

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Dana Conners, Assistant Director, Austin Public Library  
John Daniels, Facilities Process Manager, Austin Public Library  
Danielle McGhee, Division Manager, Austin Public Library