



**TO:** Bond Oversight Committee

**FROM:** Susan Daniels, Capital Planning Office, Committee Staff Liaison  
Sara Behunek, Capital Planning Office, Public Information

**DATE:** August 29, 2014

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INQUIRY ABOUT NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Bond Oversight Committee with answers to questions Committee members raised at the Committee's June 18, 2014 meeting. The Committee asked for the maximum occupancy of the New Central Library as well as initial cost estimates and funding decisions regarding the New Central Library.

The maximum occupancy for the New Central Library will be 3,768 persons.

The following is a timeline of Council Resolutions and major milestones that led to the New Central Library's \$120 million in funding.

**February 2005:** City Council forms Bond Election Advisory Committee.

**April 2005:** Staff presents Needs Assessment to City Council. Staff proposed a New Central Library with one-third of the space unfinished for future build-out. The project cost was estimated to be \$106.9 million. Staff also worked with the Austin Public Library Foundation to propose creating a library trust with \$10 million in Block 21 proceeds.

**April 2005-January 2006:** Bond Election Advisory Committee meets to discuss proposed projects, collect public input and put together a recommendation for a bond package.

**Oct. 25, 2005:** Facilities subcommittee of the citizen Bond Election Advisory Committee recommended full build-out. Staff revised the cost estimate to \$124.7 million based on discussions with the Committee.

**February 2006:** The Bond Election Advisory Committee presented a recommendation to Council to fund a New Central Library with \$90 million of general obligation bond funds. The Committee was presented with \$1.1 billion in proposed bond items and had a target bond package of \$600 million. The Committee ultimately recommended a \$614 million package that aimed to balance capital needs throughout service areas and position the city for future growth.

**Nov. 7, 2006:** Austin voters authorized \$90 million in general obligation bonds for the New Central Library.

**Feb. 14, 2008:** City Council selected the Seaholm South Substation site for the new Central Library because of its adjacency to Shoal Creek and the expected popularity of the destination as the western gateway to downtown.

**Dec. 11, 2008:** City Council approved the selection of a joint venture composed of Lake | Flato Architects, Inc. / Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Incorporated as the project design team for a New Central Library.

**Fall 2009:** The City hosted public input sessions throughout the city to involve the community in discussions about features desired in their New Central Library.

The results of the public input and recommendations from a library consultant resulted in the design team and City staff recommending that the project budget be increased to \$120 million to provide for construction of an iconic, landmark facility that met the “Library for the Future” design possibilities as well as the demands of the selected site. The key concept of the Library for the Future model is creating flexible spaces that can be readily changed as library needs evolve. Rather than building isolated spaces to serve a single purpose, the Library for the Future provides blended, multi-use spaces.

**Dec. 9: 2010:** To achieve the \$120 million project budget in addition to the \$90 million from the 2006 Bond program, City Council approved repurposing \$10 million in Block 21 sale proceeds to construction costs; issuing \$15 million in contractual obligations for the specialized technology, equipment, and furniture required to build a “library for the future”; allocating \$4 million for library collections/materials annually from the General Fund FY 12-15; and adding \$1 million in retail, parking, and event rental-supported debt.

**May 30, 2013:** The City hosted a ground-breaking ceremony for the New Central Library, which will be a six-story, 198,000-square-foot building with two stories of underground parking.

**By end of 2016:** Expected project completion.

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