Lester Palmer Events Center

CIP # 4980 827 6000

Summary

In November 1998, Austin voters approved two bond election items for work in the Town Lake Park area. One was to allow the City to lease and convert Palmer Auditorium into the new Long Center for the Performing Arts and the other was to create the new Palmer Events Center. This new Palmer Events Center is intended to accommodate some of the events that are displaced by the conversion of Palmer Auditorium and removal of the City Coliseum. Once the new Palmer Events Center is completed in June 2002, the private sector, non profit group, Arts Center Stage will assume control of Palmer Auditorium for conversion into the Long Performing Arts Center.

Status

Bid Package 1, providing for the removal of the Riverside Center building at 901 W. Riverside Dr., was substantially completed July 6th 2000. Bid Package 2 construction included relocation of some existing utilities and placement of new as well as the placement of 376 drilled piers that will become the foundation for the new Palmer Events Center and Parking Facility. Bid Package 2 was substantially completed November 22, 2000. Bid Package 3 construction contract was awarded to MW Builders by Council November 9, 2000. This work includes construction of the new Palmer Events Center and Parking Facility and started on December 5, 2000. The Parking Facility was opened November 14, 2001, and the Palmer Events Center by June 2002. The access roads to the new Palmer Events Center and Parking Facility were substantially completed November 14, 2001 The first Landscaping contract for the area around both the Events Center and Parking Facility started in January 2002, with completion anticipated in August 2002. The new Palmer Events Center is on track to be open in June 2002 to allow the City to fulfill its commitment to the transfer the existing Palmer Auditorium to Arts Centerstage on June 1, 2002. Arts Centerstage is expected to immediately start their conversion into the future Long Ctr., for an anticipated completion in the fall of 2004.

Issues

An ongoing issue is maintaining construction progress and schedule.

A large Live Oak tree is being relocated on site by approximately 250 feet entirely through the donated efforts of Faulkner Construction of Austin and Environmental Design out of Tomball TX. Tree trimming has been donated by Davey/ Caldwell Tree Co. Food for the laborers involved is additionally being donated by Chuys, El Sol y La Luna, Taco Cabana, and HEB. A list of cash donors will be available soon but include TBG Partners, the Convention Center Department, the Joint Venture of Barnes Architects, Alan Y. Taniguchi Architects and Centerbrook Architects and Crocker Consultants.

Description

Guided by the general public, stakeholders and a Park Master Planning process, the new Palmer Events Center was placed in the park. The new Events Center will be approximately 130,000 SF and have a 70,000 SF exhibit area capable of subdivision into two simultaneous events. The facility will have two major entrances to serve each simultaneous event. One from the north off Riverside Dr. and the other from the south off Barton Springs Rd. The new Community Events Center is a smaller events type of facility that caters to local public events that are not large enough to be accommodated at the existing Convention Center.

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Description

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In addition there will be a series of meeting rooms of approximately 7000 SF used by smaller groups. A 1200 automobile parking facility will be constructed for this site within the same time frame as the new Events Center. The parking facility will be an elongated structure curving along the south side of Palmer Auditorium from the east and terminating into the new Events Center over where Bouldin Ave currently sits. Entrances to the new garage will be on both ends. The western end access will be from Barton Springs Rd. and the eastern entrance will be off Riverside Dr. This new parking facility will also serve as screening to the service yards of both the new Events Center and the converted Palmer Auditorium. The parking demand for the two facilities is in excess of the 1200 spaces to be provided in the garage and consequently the City has obligated portions of the One Texas Center and Town Lake Center garages for after hours use to meet the facilities parking needs. This project also will provide for the removal of the City Coliseum after the new Events Center is completed in 2002.

Basic Data

Project Contact:	Robert A. Holland, AIA, 404-4191
Project Manager:	same as contact
Estimated/Actual Construction Start Date:	April 2000 starts demolition. July 2000 start utilities and foundation work. December 2000 start main building contract. July 2001 start access roads construction. January 2002 start Cultural Landscape construction contract around Events Center
Estimated Completion Date:	June 2002
Amount Appropriated:	$48,300,000
Estimated Construction Cost:	$40,000,000 for all bid packages