

Status Report on the Pasadena Central Library and discussion of plan for Seismic Upgrades

November 29, 2021
Item #21





Executive Summary

Libraries and Information Services

- Pasadena's Central Library is an important City institution
 - > One that delivers on equity to City residents
 - > Home to a wide variety of programs and services for nearly 100 years, hosting hundreds of events and community meetings annually
 - > Residents agree that Pasadena's libraries play a critical role in educating our community's children and youth; the Central Library is a major part of Pasadena history, and an important architectural building
 - > A structural assessment of the Central Library discovered that it is not safe in the event of an earthquake, forcing the closure of the building until seismic retrofit and restoration is completed



Background

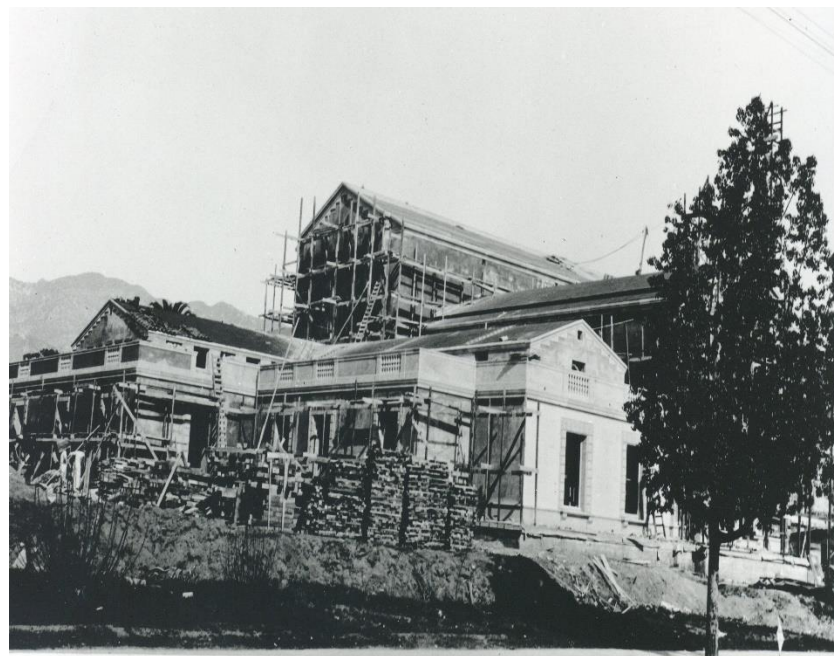
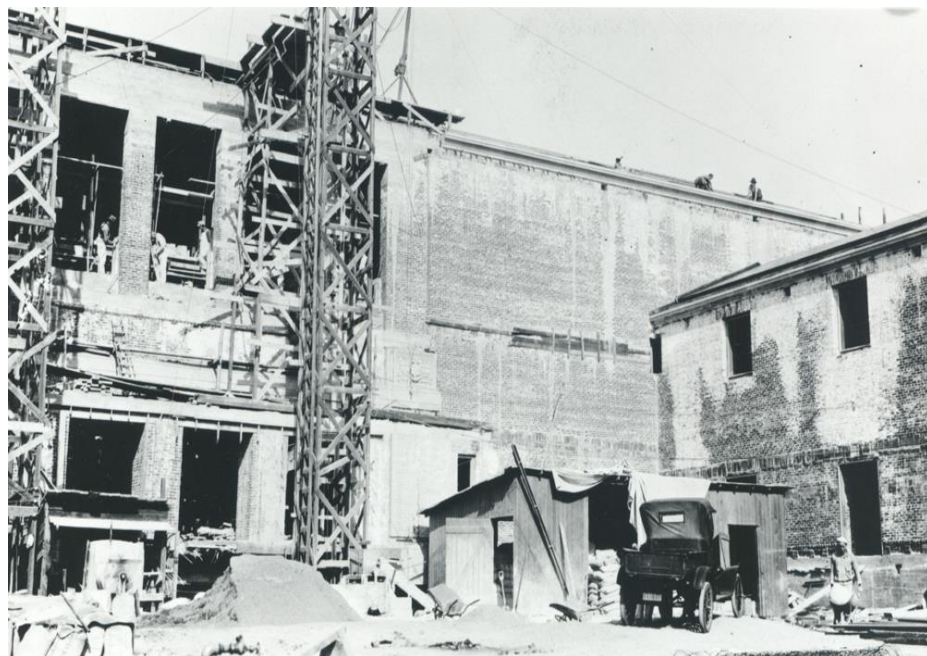
Libraries and Information Services

- In June of 1923, voters approved funding for construction of the Central Library, City Hall, and the Civic Auditorium
 - > Construction of the Central Library began on May 19, 1925, which is why the year 1925 is carved in Roman numerals over the front entrance
 - > Central Library was dedicated on Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1927
 - > A historically sensitive restoration and renovation project for the building occurred between 1984-1990
 - > Central Library was given the National Preservation Award by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in October of 1990



Construction of Central Library 1925

Libraries and Information Services





Central Library Circa 1927

Libraries and Information Services





Background

Libraries and Information Services

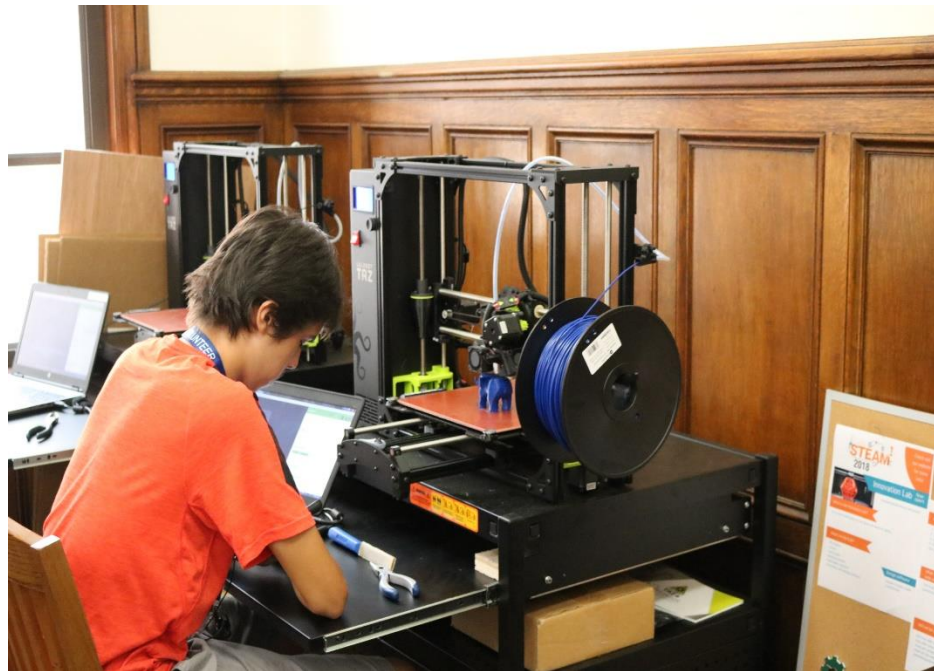
- Central Library has served as a hub of civic activity since its opening, and remains a vital community resource
 - > Central Library provides access to computers, Wi-Fi, and high-speed internet for job searching, research, or other personal use
 - > The iLab is housed at Central Library, providing the community access to maker equipment such as 3-D printers, Carvey machines, sewing machines, and more
 - > Central Library serves as the repository of Pasadena's local history archives, providing historical documents, papers, photos, and research



Community Meetings and Programs at Central Library

Libraries and Information Services







Background

Libraries and Information Services

- The operations of the Library and Information Services Department are funded primarily by the General Fund, supplemented by a voter-approved parcel tax
 - > The parcel tax was initiated in June 1993, in an effort to prevent service reductions to City libraries; it has since been renewed twice, with greater levels of support each time
 - > The current parcel tax will sunset in February 2023, which is what prompted the assessment of the building's general condition and various systems



Background

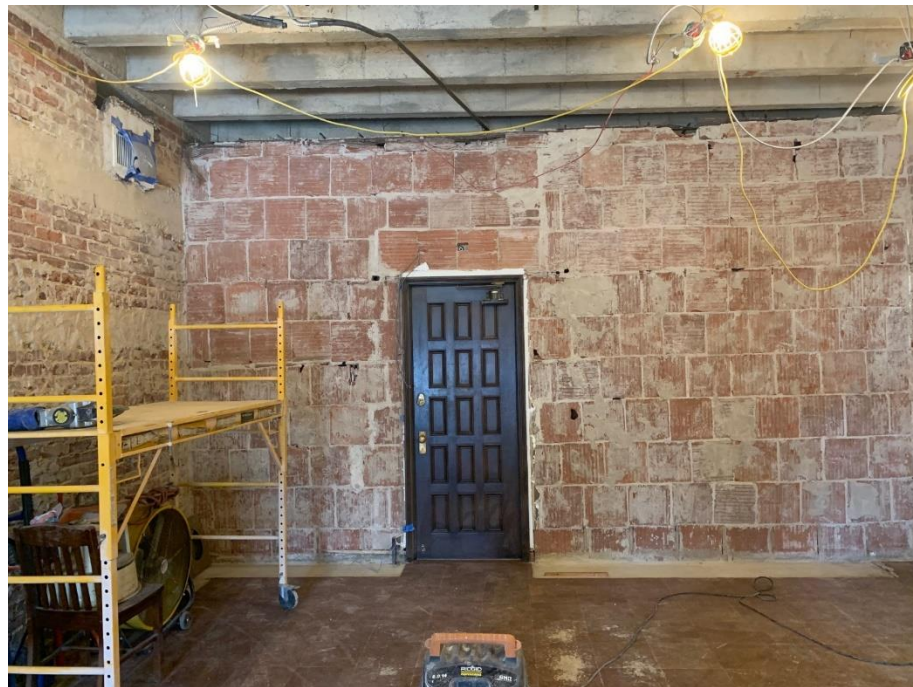
Libraries and Information Services

- It was revealed that most of the Central Library is unreinforced masonry walls that support concrete floors and beams
 - > Unreinforced masonry buildings are a hazard to life safety due to their potential to collapse during an earthquake
 - > The Central Library does not meet the Structural Performance Objectives recommended by the American Society of Civil Engineers
 - > The Central Library was deemed unsafe to occupy and was therefore closed in May



Exposed Interior Walls and Ceiling at Central Library

Libraries and Information Services





Background

Libraries and Information Services

- It is not possible to relocate all of the collections and materials that are housed at Central Library to the other library branches
 - > Staff is exploring options for the continued operation of programs and the relocation of the collections, including the use of Rose Palace to house a large amount of the collection, and leasing the vacant Jefferson School
 - > In support of the retrofit efforts, Assembly member Chris Holden secured \$4 million in funding through a grant from the State Library System to be used towards the design and engineering work



Background

Libraries and Information Services

- A seismic evaluation assessment is now complete, outlining the retrofit and building system needs of Central Library
 - > The rough order of magnitude cost estimate is approximately \$111 million
 - > Staff issued a Request for Proposals to select a qualified design team, versed in seismic retrofit and historic preservation; the work of the design team will take approximately two years
 - Pre-proposal meeting was last week; very well attended
 - > Once team is selected, establish an oversight/advisory group
 - Pasadena Heritage, CalTech, Local AIA Chapter and others



Parcel tax and project financing

Libraries and Information Services

- Current parcel tax expires in February 2023
 - > Recommendation is to continue existing structure and seek voter approval in November 2022
- Once sufficient details are developed regarding seismic retrofit
 - > Develop funding plan e.g. General Obligation bond or increase in parcel tax
 - > Seek voter approval in June or November 2024
 - > Continue to pursue grants and fundraising



Questions

Libraries and Information Services





Fiscal Impact

Libraries and Information Services

- The current parcel tax will generate an estimated \$2.84 million in Fiscal Year 2022
 - > For context, the annual debt service for a \$110 million bond at the current rate of 2.45% is approximately \$5.22 million
 - > An increase of 1.0% in rates would result in an annual debt service of \$5.95 million
 - > The estimated cost to support renovation financing will likely be at least two times that of the amount currently generated to support operations



Taxes by Parcel Type for FY22

Libraries and Information Services

- The following is a breakdown of taxes by parcel type:
 - > Single Family: \$40.86
 - > Condominiums: \$40.86
 - > Multifamily: \$26.83 per unit
 - > Nonresidential: \$298.99