



# CITY OF GAINESVILLE

## *Wild Spaces & Public Places*

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Memo

To: Cynthia W. Curry, City Manager  
Via: Phil Mann, Special Advisor to the City Manager  
From: Elizabeth (Betsy) Waite, Director, Wild Spaces & Public Places  
Date: March 21, 2024  
Re: Thelma Boltin Center - Project Update - Wild Spaces & Public Places

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This memorandum is offered as an update on the Thelma Boltin Center Wild Spaces & Public Places (WSPP) Project.

In August of 2019, the City Commission directed Wild Spaces & Public Places staff to pursue a comprehensive renovation of the Thelma A. Boltin Center.

On December 7, 2023, the City Commission narrowed the scope of work to include only repairs necessary to re-open the facility and approved the award of a Construction Manager at Risk Services contract to D.E. Scorpio Corporation. The new budget was reduced to \$3 million—**\$1.5M from the City's Wild Spaces & Public Places program budget** and a \$1.5M match from the County. (Please note that the possibility of applying for a Florida Historical Resources Special Category grant was also discussed which might increase the total project budget slightly).

On February 6, 2024, WSPP met with the design team at the Thelma A. Boltin Center to perform a walk-through of the facility to identify repair items.

On February 21, 2024, Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. confirmed they were under contract with the City of Gainesville and that project engineers would prepare an Existing Conditions & Remediation Report. That report, expected on March 30, 2024, will identify three objectives for each engineering discipline including:

1. Summary of existing conditions
2. Minimum remediation requirements
3. Additional recommendations

After reviewing the report, Scorpio will submit a proposal to price and prioritize each element of the work. The City of Gainesville will use this itemized list to determine which proposed repairs/renovations can be performed within the available budget. The expectation is that structural repairs, new roofing, mechanical systems and code-required modifications will consume the majority of the available funds.

Roof Repair:

**Caused by the failure of a supporting truss, the roof over the Thelma A. Boltin Center's auditorium stage has been in collapse for several years. The truss failure is what halted work on the 2019 renovation project.**

On September 26, 2023, city staff installed a tarp over the affected area to prevent additional water intrusion.

On February 20, 2024, a community member expressed concern to WSPP regarding the tarp and asked that we expedite roof repairs. However, it is not possible to re-shingle the roof until:

1. The failed truss is repaired
2. Structural integrity of the exterior wall is restored

On March 20, 2024, after installing plywood over the damaged roof, city staff replaced the existing tarp. Staff reported that no additional water intrusion or movement in the failing structural wall was found. City staff will continue to monitor the condition of the tarp and make repairs when necessary.

About the Architects

In over 30 years of operation, Wannemacher Jensen Architects has completed hundreds of **projects with historic preservation being a foundational value of the firm. The company's principal, Lisa Wannemacher, currently serves as the Chair of the St. Petersburg Community Planning & Preservation Commission (the equivalent of Gainesville's Historic Preservation Board) where she's been a member since 2014. Lisa will be overseeing the Thelma A. Boltin Center's restoration.**

Projected Timeline

**The project's design phase is anticipated to complete near the end of the 2024.**

Construction is anticipated to begin in mid-2025 and will take approximately 12-18 months. However, the project requires multiple permits that could affect this timeline.

Cc: Roxana Gonzalez, Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs