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# Shelby County building getting needed repairs

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The 40-year-old Vasco A. Smith Administration Building is getting a long-needed \$12 million renovation.

The 157,000-square-foot Downtown building houses about 500 Shelby County employees, but has several code and Americans with Disabilities Act issues that must be resolved, as well as an HVAC system with old water pipes that has deteriorated "and is springing leaks all over the place."

"Once we touch it, we have to bring the entire building up to code," says Cliff Norville, deputy administrator of support services for Shelby County government.

Instead of attempting to pass a resolution to fund the project all at once, Shelby County government is approving it in increments of \$1 million in the interest of fiscal responsibility, Norville says. While that approach could extend the project out for several years, he says that was the most likely and efficient way to get it off the ground given budget constraints.

"We'll determine how aggressive we want to be (as the project moves on)," Norville says. "It may take 12 years to do it, or it may take three to five years. A lot depends on what the county commission wants to do."

Archimania and [Self Tucker Architects](#) are partnering on the project, which could result in an additional 10,000 square feet of usable space in the building, says Barry Yoakum, a principal with Archimania.

The "new" space comes from design elements that will create more efficient use of space, Yoakum says. It will also eliminate a long-standing issue in the building: Several floors have either men's or women's restrooms, but not both.

Construction could begin in the next six to eight months. [Medfac Engineering LLC](#) is the project's engineer.

While the project is the first major Shelby County project for either architecture firm, Self Tucker principal Jimmie Tucker says the deal could lead to future jobs. Both companies have previously worked on projects for the state of Tennessee.

"This is an opportunity for two smaller firms to establish credibility to handle larger projects with Shelby County," Tucker says.

**Archimania**

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