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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 27, 2023**

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## **City to begin DeLeon Plaza expansion**

*PHOTO #1: As part of the DeLeon Plaza expansion project, the grassy seating area on the north side of the plaza will be gently sloped to meet the new paved performance area. The water feature and restroom awning shown in this conceptual rendering are not within the project scope approved by the City Council but could be added later.*

*PHOTO #2: This bar chart from the City of Victoria's downtown master plan shows residents' support for different downtown public space ideas.*

*PHOTO #3: This conceptual rendering shows what the expanded DeLeon Plaza could look like with the City's traditional lighted Christmas tree and other decorations.*

*PHOTO #4: The DeLeon Plaza expansion project will include a performance pavilion, space for food trucks and covered seating. The water feature shown in this conceptual rendering is not within the project scope approved by the City Council but could be added later.*

Downtown Victoria's most iconic gathering place is getting a facelift in time for the bicentennial celebration next year.

The City Council awarded the contract for the DeLeon Plaza Expansion Project to Lauger Companies during the Council's June 20 meeting. The project will include:

- Sidewalk/ADA improvements, including sloping of the lawn to meet the new pavement
- Drainage improvements
- A performance pavilion
- Restroom and storage facility
- General amenity improvements such as shaded seating and more trash cans
- Improvements to the area in front of the Six Flags monument, where the new statue of Victoria's founding couple, Martín de León and Patricia de León, will be located

Also, the Marsha Shanklin Foundation has donated \$300,000 toward the installation of a water feature at the plaza. The inclusion of the water feature is being postponed to give staff time to explore options.

Construction will begin in July and finish in March 2024, prior to Victoria's bicentennial date of April 13, 2024.

**Part of the master plan**

The City of Victoria's [downtown master plan](#) notes the impact that DeLeon Plaza has made on the countless residents who've visited to attend a festival, watch a performance or rest beneath the shade of the plaza's stately oak trees.

Residents who provided input on the master plan agreed that DeLeon Plaza is one of downtown's greatest assets. Residents expressed strong support for updating the plaza.

The master plan recommends expanding DeLeon Plaza and implementing a permanent performance space to increase the potential of this area and expand the types of programming that will be offered year-round. The plan lists the expansion as one of its "10 Highest Impact Projects" that will help to spur downtown development.

The need for public restrooms downtown was another common theme during the development of the master plan. The inclusion of restrooms in the plaza expansion will help to meet this need.

### **How it's funded**

Most of the funding for the project comes from the federal American Rescue Plan Act and from the Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation, which allocates Type 4B sales tax revenue for economic and community development.

The City Council has expressed an intent to use ARPA funding for transformational projects that will provide long-term economic and quality-of-life benefits.

### **Good news for parking**

To increase the number of parking spaces available for special events, the Victoria Main Street Program is actively pursuing **joint-use parking agreements** with property owners near the plaza and in other locations downtown.

Under a joint-use parking agreement, a property owner enters into an operating agreement to make spaces available to the public at certain times of day. Joint-use parking is more cost-effective than adding new lots or garages, and it takes advantage of strategic existing locations.

### **Stay connected**

To learn more about the downtown master plan, visit [www.victoriatx.gov/masterplans](http://www.victoriatx.gov/masterplans).

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