

Paris-Inspired Plaza Coming to Downtown Tucson

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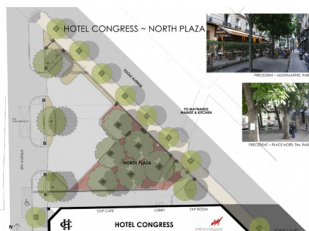
Monday, 03 August 2009 14:08 - Last Updated Monday, 03 August 2009 14:26



In recent months, you may have noticed a large, dust-ridden lot just outside the north entrance of downtown Tucson's Hotel Congress. Despite its historic roots, the hotel—which has been a Tucson landmark for 100 years—is about to feel new again. No, it's not a hotel renovation that will be taking place, but rather an outdoor renovation of sorts. Soon, a new tree-lined plaza will grace the streets just outside the charming hotel.

The Hotel Congress Plaza, which is scheduled to be finished on the same day as the reopening of the 4th Avenue underpass, will be triangular in shape and will more than triple the outdoor seating that is currently available at Hotel Congress. One of the many functions of the plaza will be to provide outdoor concert and event seating for year-round events. In addition to Hotel Congress's Cup Café and Club Congress, nearby Maynard's Market and Kitchen will also have the opportunity to host outdoor events at the new plaza.

The new plaza is being built by NAC Construction of Tucson, and was designed by Bob Vint of Vint & Associates. In addition, landscaping decisions were consulted on by Lisa Ribes and Jeff Rhody. Vint, for one, is excited about the possibilities that the plaza could bring. "This will strengthen the good things that are already here and make new investments in downtown more favorable. We have the beginnings of a really great downtown, and the Hotel Congress deserves a lot of credit for leading the way," he said in a recent press release.



Originally, the Hotel Congress Plaza space was a part of East 10th Street. However, Richard and Shana Oseran (who, with business partners Todd and Rebecca Hanley are responsible for revitalizing downtown's East End), purchased the site many years ago to make more room for Hotel Congress parking. Now, this parking lot will be extended and reconstructed, so as not to lose the much-needed extra parking spaces.

The inspiration of the Hotel Congress Plaza stems from the look and feel of European streets. "We wanted to create the ambiance of a delightful Parisian plaza, with brick-on- sand pavers and lots of trees to provide shaded areas where the public can meet, eat, drink and enjoy the urban experience," Shana said in a recent press release. "In Europe, plazas are where people gather and enjoy life. We hope this will set a trend in downtown Tucson where these open spaces are so needed".

For more information, visit www.hotelcongress.com.