

News FROM THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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For Immediate Release

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Bridge of Lions reopening ceremony date announced

Ceremony set for 10:00am on Wednesday, March 17

After meeting with the project team for the rehabilitation of the Bridge of Lions earlier this week, the City of St. Augustine announced today that the ceremony marking the reopening of the Bridge of Lions will be on Wednesday, March 17 at 10:00am. The public is invited.

The ceremony will be on the west approach to bridge and will include brief remarks by officials, a ribbon cutting, and a procession lead by a group of selected pedestrians and followed by antique vehicles representing the decades of the bridge's service. At that point the general public will be allowed to walk over the bridge before it will be brought into full service by switching vehicular traffic from the temporary bridge to the Bridge of Lions.

The selected pedestrians, 27 in all and called *The '27 Club* because the bridge first opened in 1927, will be the official first pedestrians to cross the restored Bridge of Lions, marking its reopening. The names were drawn last fall from more than 750 entries. The Ancient City Auto Club will provide vehicles representing the decades of the bridge's service.

In preparation for the traffic switch, the temporary bridge will be closed to all vehicles and pedestrians on the night of Tuesday, March 16 and will not reopen. From the time it is closed until the Bride of Lions is opened, all traffic will be detoured to State Road 312.

This detour includes those attending the re-opening ceremony as there will be no pedestrian or vehicular access to the event from the east approach. After the procession of antique vehicles has crossed the bridge, only then may pedestrians access the bridge from the east.

Parking for the event is available throughout the downtown and at the Historic Downtown Parking Facility. More information regarding parking may be found at www.vicparking.com.

Following the reopening of the Bridge of Lions, the project continues with the dismantling of the temporary bridge and installation of landscaping, a phase that will take approximately a year. The completion of the entire project will be marked by the return of the two lion statues from which the bridge gets its name.

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