

Bastion Square sprucing up image with \$100,000 grant from council

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A \$100,000 injection from Victoria's downtown investment fund is to bring new life to Bastion Square.

City lights will be fixed up first at a cost of \$17,500.

It's up to Bastion Square merchants and property owners to decide how the rest of the money will be spent, Victoria's downtown co-ordinator Elizabeth Low said Friday.

Bastion Square representatives are meeting early next month to form a society, she said. A steering committee already set up includes city and square representatives.

The city's move to help fix up the square follows a plea from square merchants and property owners in March that the historic site needed a shot in the arm.

They complained that drugs deals took place in the dimly-lit square at night and called for landscaping, better lighting, food vendors and up-graded steps to Wharf Street. An 80-name petition accompanied the proposal.

Earlier, \$100,000 had been allocated to improving Government Street but Ald. Suzanne Hansen told committee of the whole Thursday it was not high on the city's priorities.

About \$84,000 remains for revitalization in the downtown investment fund, out a \$1.9 million received by the city from Cadillac Fairview for selling part of Broad Street.

Low is hoping to prepare a report next month on how the fund has been used.

She is also working on developing a downtown business improvement area, which would concentrate on marketing and promotion.