

Civic Center Garage Gets Rustproofing

By Peter Goonan

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Several years ago, officials feared the structure could not be saved. SPRINGFIELD - A California Company will soon begin a *\$304,148 project to treat and control corrosion at the Civic Center Parking Garage, a continuation of improvements began two years ago.*

The Springfield Parking Authority, which owns the garage, recently hired Surtreat West of Calif., for the work scheduled to begin Aug. 27. The project should take five to seven days to complete. The municipal garage, at Harrison Avenue and East Court Street directly across from the Civic Center, was built 30 years ago. The garage contains 1,332 parking spaces.

The corrosion project, coupled with major repairs in 1999, should keep the garage in good shape structurally for many years to come with proper care, said Kathleen B. Pellegrino, authority Executive Director.

Prior to the repairs, it was feared the garage could not be saved and would have to be replaced at a *potential cost of \$17 million*, she said. Such a cost would not have been affordable and might have threatened a \$66 million convention center project for major renovations to the Civic Center, she said.

"We are now in the driver seat for the first time," Pellegrino said. "It is always nice to have more control."

Surtreat will use an advanced treatment that not only halts corrosion, but also seeps into the concrete and makes it stronger, Pellegrino said. The treatment will be followed by a 10-year warranty and regular testing during the warranty period, she said. The company will treat all decks above the first floor and all ramps.

The authority, which oversees all municipal parking garages and lots totaling approximately 4,500 spaces is financed by parking fees. In 1999, the authority spent *\$846,000* on improvements to the Civic Center garage, including repairs to the concrete floors, replacement and reinforcement of a section of the roof deck wall and replacement of 19 ramps. The roof deck was reopened after being closed for more than a year because of safety problems.

The corrosion treatment could not be afforded at that time. The garage will be kept partially open on weekdays during the project, Pellegrino said. Stuart Hurwitz, general manager of the Civic Center, said yesterday he is pleased the additional work is about to begin but hopes the garage will be fully open for a Latino concert scheduled Sept. 8.

"Anything they can do to upgrade the garage I think is wonderful," Hurwitz said. CUTLINE: (PHOTO - Page B2) The Springfield Civic Center parking garage is slated for corrosion-control treatment, the next step in improving its safety.