



Veszprém-Balaton 2023
European Capital of Culture

Infrastructural Developments in Veszprém and the VEB2023 ECoC Region



GREETINGS

PÉTER LAMOS

*Managing Director
Veszprém 2030 Ltd.*

Infrastructure improvements related to the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme focused on upgrading the infrastructure to serve cultural and community programmes. These developments were primarily aimed at revitalising and reinterpreting the existing, disused and underused built heritage and public spaces of the city and region.

The aim was not to invest in greenfield projects, but to renovate and make use of the existing stock of high value buildings and properties to give vacant premises, squares and parks a niche function that would help to meet the cultural needs and increase the cultural offer of the city and region.

Our strategy is based on the premise that our existing valuable building stock carries the identity of our city and region, so their cultural revitalisation through the events of the programme series will create a link between past and present, opening up the future of their long-term use. Developments were delivered on schedule during or before

the title year, so that these facilities could host European Capitals of Culture events by 2023. They have become meeting points, new homes for communities and we hope they will serve residents and visitors for decades to come.

This was a great opportunity for us to continue to write the history of our city and region together. Looking back on the work that has been done, and taking in the many opportunities presented by the numerous buildings and public spaces that have been regenerated, I believe that we have used this opportunity well in order to create lasting value.

ALÍZ MARKOVITS

CEO

Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Jsc.

An important part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme is the preservation of built heritage; infrastructure developments that can provide a long-term venue for cultural and community programmes in Veszprém and the region. We have succeeded in regenerating and saving from decay a number of buildings that had been abandoned for a long time and which can serve both residents and visitors in a sustainable way, by providing these facilities with new functions. An exemplary site is the former Heim Pál Children's Hospital in Veszprém, where a building that had been in a poor state of repair for decades has been rebuilt as ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre, home to dance groups and sports clubs, and a venue for cultural and community events. Ruttner House is another example of salvaging heritage. The building stood completely unused for a long time, but today it can serve as a community accommodation for travellers and school groups visiting Veszprém, and as a visitor centre for the renewed Veszprém Dungeon, with direct access to the dungeon exhibition.

The list goes on with the restoration of the former Simoga House in the castle district, which has been reborn as an audiovisual community space and creative workshop,



or Fenyves Mill, which presents the heritage of the milling culture in Veszprém and the region through interactive exhibitions, activities and events.

Our vision was similar for the investments in the region: a number of existing buildings across the Bakony and around Lake Balaton were renovated to provide a venue for quality everyday recreation. The long list includes Modern Art Gallery in Balatonfüred, which is now home to contemporary art exhibitions, the Balatonfüred Congress Centre, a year-round venue, the historic synagogue building in Varpalota, and extraordinary Csingervölgy Nalley in Ajka, and, last but not least, the Krypton Factory, which is now used as a cultural and community space for local people.

It has been a delight to see the renewed buildings take their well-deserved new functions contributing to strengthening a cultural-creative region!

GYULA PORGA

Mayor of the City of Veszprém

When I was talking about the European Capital of Culture programme, I repeated ad nauseam that it should never be viewed to be an end, but always as an opportunity that opens up to us. We did not want to win the bid so that we could proudly hold the title; on the contrary, we wished to use the resources it would bring to create a more comfortable, liveable and inhabitable city.

The examples set by Pécs before us were less than awe-inspiring, but in 2010 it became clear that as European Capital of Culture, money can be raised for dream projects. I could mention the magnificent Kodály Centre or the Zsolnay Quarter, which was regenerated from a derelict industrial zone, and which would never have been completed in a regular, routine urban development way.

The ECoC year is like a big family holiday; when we can have more assets at our disposal, and our surroundings allow us to have more to accomplish in terms of culture. By winning, we have put Veszprém on a higher shelf and made ourselves believe that if we can put the greatest names behind us, we can do anything. Certainly, in implementing our own plans. And the most important thing is not to be strong and smart, but to be seen as strong and smart.



Who looks stronger and smarter than a winner?

Plus, we had something else besides appearances. At the inauguration of ActiCity, created from a dilapidated children's hospital, the Prime Minister said that he likes working with the people of Veszprém because we not only ask for money, but also put our own fair share into projects. In other words, we also take risks. And because we always deliver what we set out to do. That's called trust capital. It's what you build mountains and castles on. And that's exactly what we have done.

First, a strategy was formulated. Our needs were meticulously assessed. Then we took stock of the various resources and funding. Where to get funding, what to get funding for. Through the ECöC grant we were able to acquire precisely what we could not get elsewhere.

So we had a plan, we had the trust capital, and we had an international project that we had won in a competition.

Our aim was to use ECoC money available to us to clean up rusty areas, regenerate neighbourhoods, create spaces that meet the needs of local communities and, last but not least, make our city more attractive.

VESZPRÉM





ACTICITY – DANCE AND MOVEMENT CENTRE

On the outskirts of Veszprém city centre, the buildings of the former Heim Pál Children’s Hospital stood empty and abandoned for decades after the hospital closed its doors and moved to the central hospital building. The award of the European Capital of Culture 2023 title provided an opportunity to give a new impetus to efforts to regenerate the property. The aim, in addition to saving the buildings, was to bring together the scattered movement arts associations and groups, like classical ballet or folk dance, in the city in one place, in one building, to create a new and permanent venue that would provide a ‘home’ for these communities. Based on a concept by László Bélafi, Acticity Dance and Movement Arts Centre was created in collaboration with Anthony Gall, Australian-born Ybl Miklós Ybl Award-winning architect and his team.

ActiCity is a cultural meeting point which provides not only rehearsal spaces, space, but also training and performance venues for dance and movement groups that were previously scattered across the city. Classical ballet, various ballet and ballroom dance groups, folk dance groups and the latest trendy movement forms like rhythmic gymnastics and wall climbing can all be performed in one place, in an economical and sustainable way. The complex also offers opportunities for young children to develop their motoric skills and attitudes; parents can spend their time with their children doing sports and exercise, or have a coffee in the newly designed café or take a walk in the newly renovated landscape-garden. Parking at the facility is provided by a

newly built multi-story car park, the first in Hungary to be constructed from prefabricated elements with recycled metal supports.

The renovation also focused on the preservation of the surrounding environment and the park on the southern part of the property has been given a new look with special landscape architecture. Landscape architect Viktória Morgan worked with Apolka Szabados on the project. As a native of Veszprém, Viktória had witnessed the decline of the former building and was eager to get involved in the design process. As she says:

“The tree stock was in a very degraded state, so our main task was to design the park in such a way that it could serve its intended functions, while preserving as many trees as possible. To this end, we retained the existing trees in the ancient woodland park, which provides the perfect setting for quiet relaxation. In contrast, a more dynamic area was created at the back, which can be used for events, but also has enough benches and resting space.”

The buildings and property of the Acticity Dance and Movement Arts Centre were renovated over a period of 4 years from design to construction and opened its doors to the public on 12th May 2023. The development is the largest infrastructure investment in the European Capital of Culture programme, both in terms of floor space and cost.



THE HISTORY OF THE BUILDING

The building of the former Heim Pál County Children's Hospital on the outskirts of downtown Veszprém was built with special care. The plans for the central building were drawn up by Miklós Ybl and Lajos Ybl, while construction was supervised by master builder Kálmán Csomay from Veszprém.

In the beginning, the building was used as the Royal Hungarian State Children's Asylum. In 1901, a decision by Minister of the Interior Széll Kálmán launched a nationwide programme for the construction of shelters, which included the design and construction of such a facility in Veszprém. The plot of land for the construction of the building was donated to the town by Bishop Károly Hornig of Veszprém. It was there, in 1904, under the leadership of director and chief physician József Cseresnyés, that the institution began its operations, providing a home for more than 1,100 children in its first year of operation.

The function of the Children's Shelter was transformed during the Second World War: as the hospital in Veszprém was hit by Soviet bombing, which practically destroyed the children's ward, this function was moved to the shelter building.

Heim Pál County Children's Hospital - the first children's hospital in Hungary to be named after the eminent paediatrician and university professor Pál Heim - opened on 1st January 1954. Continuous improvements to the building and the property allowed for the addition of new functions, such as a new laundry building to meet the needs of the central hospital, and the addition of a dermatology and STD department.

From 1977, the Children's Hospital ceased to exist as an independent institution and continued to operate as the children's department of Veszprém County Csolnoky Ferenc Hospital until the new wing dedicated to children's patients was completed in the head institution. With the handover of the new, state-of-the-art children's building on 12th July 1995, Heim Pál County Children's Hospital closed its doors for good and stood empty for over 20 years until the emergence of ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre.





AUER HOUSE

World-famous violinist, music teacher, conductor and composer Leopold Auer spent his childhood in the house at 1 Thököly Imre Street in Veszprém. The building was privately owned for a long time before the municipality bought the property and its long-awaited renovation began in November 2022.

The dilapidated property, vacant for decades, was bought by Veszprém lawyer János Mongyi in the early 2000s. He started a complete renovation and transformation of the property, setting up their own residential unit in the streetfront wing of the house. Besides renovating the roof structure and the garden, he started to build additional living quarters in the rear wing and the attic: However, he sadly succumbed to a serious illness and eventually passed a way. His family was unable to continue the work.

Taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture

programme, the Municipality saw the right time to purchase the property, which is now a nationally listed monument.

Renovation work has resulted in the addition of two residential units on the first floor and a third one in the attic. The apartments offer the cultural institutions of Veszprém the opportunity to provide accommodation for the artists and cultural professionals they invite from home and abroad. The rear extension of the building houses an instrument-making workshop and a showroom, which will also host exhibitions, readings and small concerts. There, you can admire master violin maker Elemér Sümegi's workshop, where you can admire the process of making and repairing instruments, quite similar to the Italian workshops that open right onto the street. In the courtyard, an auditorium and a stage have been set up to take advantage of the sloping terrain, offering the opportunity to hold artistic events, concerts and functions.



LEOPOLD AUER AND THE HOUSE

For the people of Veszprém, the house that still stands at 1 Thököly St is of special significance, as it was in this simple home that Lipót Auer, violinist and music teacher, spent his childhood (Veszprém, 1845 - Loschwitz, 1930).

Born in Veszprém, he was a pupil of Lipót Liedl, and later studied with Dávid Ridley-Kohne at the Pest-Buda Music Conservatory, before continuing his studies in Vienna and Hanover. He gave his first concert in Pest in 1856, at the age of 11, and then toured all over Hungary as a concert prodigy.

In 1866 he was a concertmaster in Hamburg, and from 1868, a teacher at the St Petersburg Conservatoire, a musician at the Tsar's court and a founding member of the first major Russian string quartet. It was at his his famous

chamber music recitals that works by contemporary Russian composers (including those of Tchaikovsky) were performed.

From 1872 and 1908 he was solo violinist of the Russian Tsarist Ballet, concert director of the Russian Musical Society and later conductor of its orchestra. He became a Russian citizen and was promoted to the position of Privy Councillor of the Tsarist Court. After the 1890s, he travelled around Europe as a violinist and conductor, living in Dresden before returning to St Petersburg.

In 1918, he moved to New York, where he worked mainly in music education. In 1927, at the age of 82, he still conducted the New York Philharmonic.





FOTON AUDIOVISUAL CENTRE

The oldest inhabited part of Veszprém is the dolomite rock surrounded by the Séd stream, the area of today's Castle. The picturesque Baroque and Neoclassical castle district, home to numerous ecclesiastical, scholarly, scientific and artistic institutions, is a busy tourist destination. Simoga House, located next to the castle gate, is part of its rich architectural heritage. George Simoga, the head of a wealthy industrial family, rebuilt the existing buildings in 1798. The castle has been home to bishops and scholars over the years, but it was also the headquarters of the municipal committee of the Communist Youth League and a popular hangout for young people during the socialist era. Today it is home to House of Arts, a contemporary art exhibition space and a training and education centre. But it was not the only building the Simoga family left as a legacy in the Castle. They also built an annex to the main building, initially used as stables. This part of the building also used to house an exhibition space, a café and a restaurant, but as its technical condition deteriorated and the necessary renovation work failed to be carried out, it lost its functions and was disused for decades.

The European Capital of Culture 2023 programme opened up the opportunity to transform and renovate the building. With the involvement of architects Attila Szilvási and Orsolya Nóbik, the concept of the building's rebirth took shape after careful excavation and preparation work.

The old stable building was transformed into a modern café, exhibition space and media lab, while the extension of the building was turned into a multifunctional event space for art films. The exterior spaces of the building were also transformed, with the renewal of the courtyard of the Fire Watchtower, one of the symbols of Veszprém, and the creation of an outdoor stage to bring life to one of the oldest monuments in the Castle.

The revived building is home to audiovisual arts and is the central venue for the Hungarian Motion Picture Festival, attracting artists, professionals and visitors to the city and the region. Alongside mainstream films, there is an equal share of old classics and cinematic delights from Japan, Brazil and around the world. Cinema fans have been enriched by a downtown cinema that offers everything from matinees to mainstream Hollywood films to arthouse movies.

The creation of FOTON Audiovisual Centre is also a good example of the concept of the infrastructural improvements of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme: a long-neglected building has been renovated and given new functions, which contribute to meeting the cultural needs and increasing the cultural offer of the city and the region. It opened its doors on 14th June 2023 and has been continuously welcoming visitors since that day.



FORMER SIMOGA HOUSE

The house next to the medieval castle wall (17 Vár Street) is part of the so-called Simoga House, built in 1798 by lawyer and poet György Simoga, lawyer of the Veszprém Chapter. As recorded in the 1749 census, the lawyer's grandfather and father also lived there. Simoga ran a tree nursery in the garden next to the courtyard at the end of the 18th century. He once had a stable, coach house and a carter's lodge built next to the castle wall on the western end of the site. In the courtyard stood the cathedral's cantor's dwelling.

In 1804, the building became the property of Deputy of the Chapter Abbot-Canon János Hornyik, who bequeathed the property to the Chapter in his will in 1819. From 1887 to 1898 it was the home of Canon Gusztáv Jánosi,

titular bishop and poet, and between the two wars it was inhabited by Viktor Radványi (Reznyák) (1873-1943), a canon of singers.

After World War II, the building served for a time as the headquarters of the municipal committee of the Communist Youth League. In 1960, it was opened as a youth nightclub, and 30 years later, in 1990, renovation followed. The building and its surroundings did not undergo any major renovation afterwards; the deteriorating technical condition of the premises gradually led to disuse, and efforts to revitalise it were unsuccessful until the efforts dedicated by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme.





RUTTNER HOUSE

Ruttner House is located in Jókai Street, one of the oldest thoroughfares of Veszprém, along the western wall of the castle. The renovation of the old building, which had been stood derelict for more than a decade and a half, has brought life back to one of the city's most important monuments.

The main function of the renewed building is to provide hostel-style accommodation, helping to welcome larger groups of students, catering for backpackers who prefer to travel in a 'sharing economy' (community transport, shared rooms, shared service units, etc.), while respecting environmental sustainability. The accommodation has a communal area for interactive leisure and a unique and exciting design that meets the needs of today's times.

The work of engineers Rita Madarassy-Papp and István Zalavári was supported by the best art historians and archaeologists in the field, so that the conversion of the nationally protected monument could preserve the valuable structures and spaces of the building to serve the new function in a way that meets the needs of today's world. The bedrooms are located on the first floor, with separate bathrooms. Six guest rooms can accommodate a total of 33 guests with bunk beds and a disabled-accessible room.

Guests are catered for by a kitchen and dining room, with a café accessible from the street and the courtyard, so that chairs and tables can be set up on the paved courtyard during the summer, or for outdoor events in the courtyard.

In 2024, the renovation of the building was awarded a prize by the Hungarian National Committee of ICOMOS for its

outstanding architectural quality, the presentation of research results and the careful placement of the new feature.

The building will also serve as a reception area for the renewed Dungeon Visitor Centre. You can buy and validate tickets for the prison exhibition Man behind bars, take a lift up to the interior of the former dungeon.

DUNGEON VISITOR CENTRE

Veszprém Dungeon at 19 Vár Street was in operation as early as the 1700s. The dungeon and prison operated for centuries deep beneath Vár Street and behind thick stone walls. It was within its cold, damp walls that the prisoners of the county, awaiting sentencing and being punished, served their time. The prison, the last functioning dungeon in Hungary, was in use until 2003, when it was closed down after the new prison was built on the outskirts of the town.

In the context of the European Capital of Culture 2023 programme, the use of this unique site as an exhibition space has been a priority from the start of the programme. The dungeon exhibition opened in spring 2024 with a renewed form and a unique concept, entitled Man Behind Bars. This prison exhibition gives visitors a glimpse into the most personal stories of the prisoners, at the same time using interactive elements to offer a modern, 21st century exhibition experience. The exhibition aims to contribute to modern, 21st century experiential education, literacy and exhibition culture, and to engage visitors in a dialogue about moral issues such as the relationship and history of crime and punishment across the ages.



THE HISTORY OF RUTTNER HOUSE

One of the most prestigious old buildings on Jókai Street is the U-shaped house directly below the former prison, which was the home of the Ruttner merchant family from Moson County for several generations. Hardware merchant János Ruttner (1797-1862) came to Veszprém through marriage, acquiring a considerable fortune in a few decades. Ruttner found the house on then-called Hosszú Street the most suitable home for his family, and converted the ground floor into a shop. He also played a public role as a representative of the German bourgeoisie, serving as town treasurer, hospital administrator and, until 1845, on the town's external council. He rebuilt the former one-storey house with an axis perpendicular to the street into a U-shaped apartment block in the middle of the century.

After his father's death, his son Sándor Ruttner (1832-1899) took over the business, which he ran and even developed under the name 'János Ruttner's son'. He dealt in iron, spices and seeds. At the 1888 exhibition in Devecser, he was awarded a gold certificate for his excellent farm seeds and his outstanding wine (he also had vineyards in Badacsony). Following his father's example, he also became involved in the public life of the town and the county. He was elected to leading positions in various associations (fire brigade, shooting club, national casino, merchants' association, etc.). He was president of the

Veszprém Savings Bank for 15 years, and was elected councillor and then assembly member of the city.

In his autobiography, geographer Jenő Cholnoky wrote of Kálmán Ruttner, the third generation of the family: *"As a naughty child, we were once beating Kálmán Ruttner's shiny top hat, that of the school district president, into the mud when this pompous ironmonger marched up to some solemn meeting with the dignity of at least opening Parliament. Of course he made a big deal of it, but luckily for us everyone was amused, because Ruttner was not liked, and after some rebukes the wire that had been used to cause mischief was confiscated on the grounds that we might hurt somebody's eye."*

After Kálmán Ruttner's death, the shop was leased out, and several apartments were fitted out upstairs. Music teacher Zsigmond Láng and locksmiths József Bánhegyi and Ferenc Pásztori, among others, also lived in the building. At the suggestion of Dr. Ferenc Csolnoky, it was decided to set up an institute for the care of the poor lung patients on the ground floor of Ruttner House. For a short period, the District Court took one of the four-room apartments for its staff.

The building was renovated as part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme and was ready for use in December 2022.





DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

The building known to the people of Veszprém as the 'Meat Store' was originally built as a school in 1929 under Kunó Klebelsberg's school building programme and with the support of the Catholic Church. In 1980, at the initiative of architect Gyula Ruttkay, the red stone sections on the northern façade were taken down and incorporated into the western concrete retaining wall of the renovated building as a memorial. From 1984 to 1997 the building was used as a butcher's store of the Pápa Meat Company and then as a K&H bank branch. When the financial institution closed down, it stood disused for many years in the heart of downtown Veszprém. Thanks to the European Capital of Culture 2023 programme, the building has been home to the Digital Knowledge Centre for digital education and training of children and young people since spring 2022.

The centre is a free service for schools, where pupils can meet Bodri the robot dog, try programming mini-robots or even design in 3D, print small souvenirs and get an insight into the world of virtual reality. Young people can immerse themselves in the world of digital technologies through sessions and themed camps, while adults and active older people can also enjoy a range of exciting activities throughout the year.

As Ákos Fekete, Head of the Knowledge Centre, puts it, "it's not teaching technology that is done here: it's teaching with technology". In other words, the programme of sessions and camps focusses not only on digital mechanisms but also on time management, planning, teamwork and other important skills that can help children in their everyday lives.



GYÁRKERT (FACTORY'ARD) CULTUREPARK

The former wood products factory, known to the people of Veszprém today as Balaton Furniture Factory, was one of the oldest industrial plants in the city and is still in operation today. Its predecessor, Stern Hermann and Sons, was founded in 1896. The small factory made small tools and implements, and after setting up a forge, it also produced wheelbarrows, carts and wagons.

The raw material was wood from the Bakony forests. The factory's first heyday was in the mid-1920s, when it also made period furniture, but its main profile was still that of a carriage and wheelbarrow manufacturer. At this time (1922) the headquarters building at 10 Budapest Road was built, which, with its impressive proportions, is still one of the industrial monuments of Veszprém that should be protected. In 1978, Balaton Furniture Factory started to grow rapidly: it purchased 60,000 square metres of land on Házgyári Road, in the city's emerging industrial zone, where it built new factory buildings. Balaton Furniture Factory moved out of the city centre in 2007.

The two hectares of land left behind, located right next to the bus terminus in Veszprém, remained a scar in the eyes of the locals for a long time. However, in 2021, new processes were launched linked to the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme, and on the doors of Gyárkert Culture Park opened on 5th May 2023.

The former abandoned industrial site was reborn as GyárKert, a community park that in the 2023 ECOC year hosted Hungarian and international artists such as Paul Kalkbrenner, Kraftwerk, Paolo Nutini, Majka and Péter Geszti, and provided a venue for several city events like Winter GyárKert, where snowmobile and ice skating rinks were open for visitors to enjoy in the winter of 2023.

Factory'ard was also home to a special installation: the Garden of Communities, designed and created by the Hello Wood team as a central architectural feature of the park, designed as a symbol.

"For each municipality participating in the VEB2023 programme, we designed a unique container planted with a tree seedling, with the name of the municipality clearly displayed on the side. In Veszprém, the central site of the European Capital of Culture 2023, we set up the Garden of Communities, consisting of 116 planters, which promotes the eternal values of community cooperation," architect Balázs Szelecsényi told Octogon architectural magazine.

The installation has won two prestigious architectural awards: the Big See Wood Design Award 2023 and ArchDaily's Building of the Year 2024.



THE DIMITROV BUILDING

The property on the corner of today's Dózsa György Rd and Toborzó St, which covers nearly an acre, was home to the families of the bishop's regents (József Szentirmay, Jenő Reé and Béla Zsitnyánszky) from the 1870s until 1944. During the wars, the well-defended estate-governor's mansion was quickly spotted by German and later Russian soldiers. In 1944-45 they set up their headquarters here, and from 1951 to 1956 the property was occupied by the headquarters of the State Protection Authority (ÁVH) in Veszprém. The building was demolished in 1965 and replaced by the new county community centre, built between 1970 and 1973, and named after labour movement leader Georgi Dimitrov (1882-1949) in honour of the Bulgarian relations of the time. In the following decades, the name became so ingrained in the minds of Veszprém citizens

that many people went to the 'Dimitrov' when visiting the cultural centre, and this lasted for the years even after the millennium. The hexagon-shaped theatre hall hosted international choral and chamber orchestra festivals and national TV meetings between 1973 and 1990. The County Cultural Centre later became a municipal community centre as its importance dwindled, but the building was finally vacated when the institution moved and no permanent functions were moved there. The building, which stood empty for more than ten years, has now become home to Hangár Popular Music Centre, a rehearsal room complex providing music training as part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme. The former theatre space is now being used to develop CODE, the Centre of Digital Experiences, a venue for digital arts.



HANGAR POPULAR MUSIC CENTRE

One of the core missions of HANGÁR is to strengthen the music community in the city and across the region. This is why Hangár is a long-term investment, continuing to act as a vibrant and nourishing music hub in the life of Veszprém after 2023. Located in the former Dimitrov building, HANGÁR offers music fans a freshly equipped, soundproofed rooms with modern sound equipment and instruments in two-thirds of the office building. HANGÁR offers both individual and group music-making opportunities in dedicated rehearsal rooms and a fully equipped studio. For those who seek more than amateur music education, HANGÁR is the place to go. With professional teachers and conditions, students have the chance to move on to bigger stages.

CODE – CENTRE OF DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

The former Dimitrov building is set to become a grandiose centre for digital experiences, with a hexagonal central hall of several hundred square metres, offering a wide range of ever-changing experiences. Equipped with state-of-the-art audiovisual technology and constantly evolving exhibition content, it will offer visitors a unique experience entering the club of similar museums and exhibition spaces that already exist around the world. Because of the properties of its halls, CODE offers 3D applications and interactive games for the young and the elderly alike. The digital-audio-visual experience spaces showcase natural phenomena, scientific

processes, historical battles, architectural and artistic periods, styles and works of art in a novel immersive environment. CODE's declared aim is to create a modern cultural tourist attraction based on up-to-date technologies that can keep Veszprém on the horizon of visitors' interest as a new institution, unrivalled in the region.

CODE EXPERIENCE SPACES

The Exhibition Space, located on the ground floor of the building, will host permanent and temporary digital and analogue installations, while the Hexagon, a former theatre space of almost 400 square metres on the first floor, will be used as a venue for 360-degree projected performances. The Hexagon is also planned to host hybrid events such as theatre and music screenings. The former stage and behind-the-scenes area will be converted into a 60-square-metre studio space for interactive and three-dimensional projections and screenings, with a capacity of 25-30 visitors per session.

EXHIBITIONS AND EDUCATION

CODE will present the grand masters of international art and the giants of Hungarian visual and photographic art in constantly renewed temporary exhibitions, providing a breakthrough opportunity for education and science, and offering exciting, interactive 3D and VR experiences for children and youth.





LACZKÓ DEZSŐ MUSEUM

The Museum of Veszprém County was founded in 1903 and from the very beginning, it aspired to have a building of its own. The first director, Piarist monk Dezső Laczkó, worked with much perseverance to raise the necessary funds for the construction by 1907. The building was designed by István Medgyasszay, a famous Art Nouveau architect and an enthusiastic user of folk motifs. It was Medgyasszay that gave Veszprém its first buildings made entirely of reinforced concrete, among them the museum. The foundation stone was laid in March 1914. The building was completed in 1923, as the Great War had halted construction, and after the collection had been moved in, it was officially opened in 1925. The museum building, especially the decorative balustrade and the staircase railing, displays floral motifs of folk art. Yet this is even more closely linked to the museum's collection, as this pattern appears in the embroidery of Róza Szegedy, whose legacy was bequeathed to the museum.

Since its opening, it was the last few years that saw the building undergo major renovation. The building was renewed from basement to attic under the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 ECoC project.

Accessibility of the listed heritage building was the most notable achievement: a new lift was installed, and the entrance was made barrier-free by means of a ramp. The cladding was also replaced, the deck was refurbished, replacing locally damaged elements, the closing slab was

insulated and the attic will be fitted with a ventilation machine room for a special industrial humidifier to ensure optimal humidity control. The entire high and low voltage network was also replaced. The heating system was likewise been modernised. The heating, which was formerly connected to the hospital's system, is now switched to a new boiler from the adjacent Music School building.

The exterior and interior windows and doors were replaced and refurbished in accordance with heritage requirements, and the stone and façade sculptures, stone plinth and interior stair elements were restored. The entire stone floor was polished, sealed and impregnated. Waterproofing was carried out in the basement and a drainage system was installed behind the building to channel off rainwater.

A track lighting system was installed in the exhibition areas and internal shading was also provided. In addition, the entire building was redecorated, retaining the original wall paintings found during the restoration work. The lobby furniture and lighting fixtures in the guest rooms were renewed, reflecting the decorative motif of the building.

Overall, the result is an exhibition building that accommodates the demands of the modern visitor, while respecting the conservation of artefacts – a building which, with the support of the programme, is now a home worthy to house the new permanent exhibition.





GREEN CITY

Since 2015, the City of Veszprém has been actively involved in the creation of the Veszprém Cultural Quarter, the environmentally conscious renewal of the former Szent Miklós (Saint Nicholas') Hamlet. The area stretches from Theatre Gardens through Calvary Hill, Erzsébet grove and walkway, the University of Pannonia campus to the perimeter of the ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre.

The area of Calvary Hill in Szent Miklós Hamlet is one of the oldest inhabited parts of Veszprém. The 13th-century parish church of St Nicholas, built on top of a dolomite rock outcrop, is now only a ruin of a monument. During the 19th century, the hill of Szent Miklós Hamlet was surrounded by a total of 9 burgesses' houses on the west and north sides. At the end of World War II, the houses were heavily bombed and their remains were demolished and their sites were partially landscaped. Although several attempts were made to renovate the church ruins, the developments remained incomplete and there was no proper access to the site.

The University of Pannonia is the leading higher education institution in the Central and Western Transdanubian region. Founded in 1949, it has a long tradition of excellence and a high academic profile, covering almost all fields of study. A campus worthy of this tradition and past was the envisioned by the university and the city administration when the project concept was conceived. A cornerstone of the concept was to create a physical link between the campus and the urban areas by bringing the fences down and creating a unified urban neighbourhood by restoring the urban fabric.

Closely linked to the development was the surface parking area in front of Laczkó Dezső Museum, which is sandwiched between the two areas. The existing differences in level and ground structure of the university area allowed for the creation of underground parking spaces, which are difficult to construct in the city; this provided a solution to the problem of removing and relocating parking spaces both in front of the museum and on the former sports field of the university. Another important element of the concept was to open the doors of the previously secluded higher education institution to the city, thus fostering the development and strengthening of local identity among students and the openness of the city's inhabitants to the events taking place within university walls. This principle was symbolised by the demolition of the fence along Erzsébet Promenade, which transformed around two thirds of the university's external area into a public space. The area has been given a complex green reconstruction in the form of a high-quality playground and a sports and recreation park for young people and adults, complete with a heated community space in the form of a pavilion.

The new footpaths developed in this way have also been extended to the Calvary Hill area, making the St Nicholas' Church ruins accessible from several directions, including barrier-free access. The square is made even more liveable by a café wedged into St Nicholas' Hill, so that everyone from children to adults can find a recreational opportunity to suit their needs.



RENOVATED VESZPRÉM RAILWAY STATION

The Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme also saw the renovation of Veszprém's railway station. The refurbishment included the interior and exterior renewal of the station building and the modernisation of the adjacent passenger areas. The project included the refurbishment of the passenger areas of the station: the external façade, the platform areas, the passenger lounges and the platform furniture of the central platform. Access to the building is via a wide pavement with new paving stones; the underpass is glass-covered and a new double railing makes it easier for passengers to use the stairs safely. In addition to the renewed underpass ramp, two covered shelters were installed on the central platform to increase passenger comfort. Thanks to the improvements, both the city and platform sides of the concourse are now accessible, and the passenger lounge has been given a new look with new tiling, suspended ceilings and lighting.

In addition to the existing passenger information system, the static passenger information elements in the renovated

areas have been renewed and a new dynamic passenger information system has been installed in the waiting area. In addition, a food and beverage vending machine has been placed in the building, and new street furniture has been installed in the station lobby and on the central platform. On the west side, a covered 'summer lounge' has been created, also equipped with a dynamic passenger information system, ticket vending machines, benches and bicycle racks. A new pedestrian link has been created between the station building and the P+R car park.

As part of the development, a model project of a pet-friendly station has also been implemented in Veszprém, the first such project in Hungary. Drinking fountains equipped with dog drinkers are available for passengers with dogs, and dog chip readers have been installed in the accessible areas in cooperation with 'Our Common Cause for Animal Protection Foundation'.



ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In preparation for increased visitor numbers due to the cultural events and activities of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme, a tender opportunity was opened for existing accommodation facilities. In order to expand capacity, Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Jsc. launched an open call for tenders with a budget of HUF 800 million at the beginning of 2021, to which three hotels in Veszprém successfully applied: Hotel Historia

Malomkert, Betekints Wellness and Conference Hotel and Oliva Hotel and Restaurant. Thanks to the tenders, a total of 50 rooms and 113 new beds were added to Veszprém's four-star hotel offer, increasing the previously available capacity - 160 rooms - by more than 30%. Betekints Wellness and Conference Hotel added 15 rooms and 40 beds, Hotel História Malomkert 17 rooms and 37 beds, and Oliva Hotel and Restaurant 18 rooms and 36 beds.



SZÉL STREET CEMETERY

The Szél Street Israelite Cemetery was opened in the 1730s by Jewish families who settled here. Burial on the site ceased in 1882 due to the extremely rocky terrain. Over a century and a half, some 450 deceased were buried here. In the course of the last century, some of the gravestones in the cemetery were removed and many were damaged or buried underground over time.

After the German occupation, in June 1944, the Jews of Veszprém and part of the surrounding area were moved to the Veszprém ghetto, from where they were deported to Auschwitz in July 1944. In 1945, the survivors of Veszprém who had returned home from the death camps and the labour camps re-established the community of the faith. In 1946 the once flourishing congregation counted 106

members. By 1949, the number had dwindled to 84, and it has continued to decline in recent decades.

Several parts of the former Szél Street Israelite Cemetery have declined in recent decades. The fence was missing, some of the gravestones were covered with earth, others were lying scattered around. The Jewish community of Veszprém contributed greatly to the rise of Veszprém, and their tragedy is a great loss to the city. Their memory was honoured by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme by supporting the renovation of the former Jewish cemetery, which included the landscaping of the area. Salvageable gravestones and monuments were restored and a new fence was built.



KISKUTI TAVERN

Kiskuti Tavern is one of the most romantic inns with a garden, located in remote Betekints Valley, at the foot of the hills, sheltered from the wind, in a picturesque natural setting on the Séd stream. It is probably named after the 'little well', the basin of the spring built next to it. A veranda once ran along the south side of the tavern, with a huge cellar opening into the hillside. The building is separated by a carriage path from a vast garden, planted with linden trees and bog-spruces, where hardwood tables and benches awaited the hikers who came to rest and revel. In summer, the garden was a place for beer drinking and bacon roasting, while in winter, tobogganists were warmed by Aunt Ági Hossoff's hot tea and mulled wine.

In the early 1930s, József Hosoff opened a guest book for the tavern guests, which he has kept, with major interruptions from the 1950s, up to the present day.

The filming of the movie *The Golden Peacock* in Veszprém in 1943 was also recorded in this book. Director László Cserépy and actors Antal Páger, Alice Szellay and Mária Sulyok left memorable entries in that guest book. "The Golden Peacock brought me here in August 17, 1943. The Golden Peacock took me away from here on August 17, 1943."

The building and its garden, which blends in well with the natural landscape, were disused for a long time, but thanks to the European Capital of Culture of Veszprém-Balaton programme, communities were able to take possession of it yet again. It can be a popular meeting place for traditionalists, but can also be host forest school activities and as a tavern and inn, since Kiskuti tavern is the starting point of Betekints Valley, Gulya Hill, Tekerés Valley and the nearby Csátár Hill hiking trails.



STREET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The Street Management Programme is a big-city (self-) consciousness-building project that aims to support businesses which, due to the size of the city and its perceived or real provincialism, are financially risky for investors. By supporting and realising these gap-filling developments, Street Management offers artists, tourists and professional visitors to Veszprém a wide range of opportunities to relax and recharge their batteries, while at the same time providing new, colourful and vibrant meeting points for the city's inhabitants.

Businesses opened under the Street Management Programme:

PAPÍRKUTYA (PAPER DOG)

Entering here can feel like you're in Budapest or Berlin, so it's nice to pull yourself out and say, no, this is Veszprém. In "Kutya" we have fun all day long – breakfast, lunch and in the evening we let off steam. Evening concerts of almost every genre are not only offered for free, but now include a ticketed entry, in preparation for the years to come. We are particularly proud that the Jazz Association and the National Cultural Fund are now sponsors of the venue. It's a great success that the programme structure here quickly found receptive ears and that international acts who are in town two or three days a week also work well at this venue. On the second or third day, they are a familiar face to the ever-growing audience and all artists leave with Veszprém firmly in their hearts. During their stay, they write songs and spend time with local musicians in the rehearsal rooms, becoming part of the city for a short while. Fortunately, word of Papírkutya has spread quickly among local musicians and they are increasingly happy to come and play in the centre of Veszprém.

KUNSZT!

KUNSZT! soon became a real landmark of Veszprém, where the public can choose from the unique creations of craftsmen and designers with links to the area and Lake Balaton in a sophisticated environment. The speciality of KUNSZT! is its pop-up store concept, its workshops, its community programmes and the sophisticated gastronomic offer that goes with them. In a local patriotic yet multicultural environment, Veszprém citizens can socialise at any time of day and tourists can mingle in the cultural life of the city.

FÜGE ICE-CREAM COURTYARD AND CAFÉ

Would you like to start the day with a nice breakfast in a café, sit on the terrace and enjoy a good ice cream at 8pm? Until Füge Ice Cream Courtyard and Café opened, it wasn't that easy. But that's not all that Füge does. It's also involved in the city's cultural life – you can meet the Night of the Cafés here or join the Pannon Várszínház meet-and-greet.

WINE&VINYL

The idea of Wine & Vinyl was conceived 4 years ago by a DJ formation. A place where the synergy between handpicked vinyl records and a selection of wines from Hungarian and international wineries guarantees that once you come here, it won't be your last visit. The wine bar offers a selection of natural wines, sparkling wines, prosecco, special batches from local wineries and a few international curiosities. The wine list changes every month and a half, as do the vinyl records on the shelves. Because at Wine & Vinyl, you can not only take home a bottle of your favourite wine of the evening, but also a selection of vinyl records.



SAIKO NO SUSHI

A taste of Asia in the Old Town Square area! Saiko no Sushi opened in the autumn of 2022 in the heart of Veszprém's city centre – at 24 Óváros Square – with the aim of bringing a new colour to the gastropalette of the City of Queens. Japanese specialties, sushi, pho soup, Asian noodles and drinks await hungry guests, but of course culture and community-building are also on the menu, to be enjoyed in the form of periodic programmes.

MIMOSA CAFÉ

In spring 2023, Kossuth Street in Veszprém was enriched with a new scene. Mimosa Café & Bar at 13 Kossuth Lajos Street welcomes all those who like to drink a coffee or a coffee speciality in a modern, stylish environment while walking around the city – but you can also taste cocktail specialities here any time of the day.

LOHONYAY RESTAURANT

Located at 26 Óváros Square, Lohonyay Restaurant was open from the early 20th century until 1951. It was not only a place to eat, but also a community space and meeting point. It was one of the most popular places in urbanising Veszprém. Since 1951, the restaurant's premises had either been empty or had been occupied by a succession of various catering businesses. However, the legendary restaurant was reborn in the summer of 2023, now with a classic menu and the original community-building aim of the restaurant, and with a renewed, family-friendly interior and a cosy terrace.

ABLAK A BABLAK

In July 2023, Ablak a bablak, a vegan restaurant and a mecca for vegetarians and vegans in Veszprém, opened at 4 Rákóczi Street, in a hall where, among others, barber Károly Francsics wrote his diary of events in 1848 and where the parents of violinist Lipót Auer used to live in their old age. The counter is filled with delicious cakes, pastries and sandwiches, and if you happen to be here at lunchtime, you can choose from a new menu every day, to be enjoyed indoors or on the terrace. It's also worth keeping an eye on the events at Ablak a bablak, as the restaurant is also a community space where you can enjoy gastronomic and cultural events.

DERCE DAIRY BAR

At 1 Kossuth Street, one of the busiest spots in the city centre, Derce Bakery, after several years of success, opened its new premises in October 2023. Derce's new location offers not only the usual high quality, delicious breads, baguettes, pastries and fine coffees, but also yoghurts, spreads, cheeses and cakes from the Tekeressvölgy Farm in Nemesvámos, among others, and sweets from the DESSZEReTlek confectionery of Balatonalmádi.



SMALL-SCALE BIDS UNDER THE STREET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

From the very beginning, one of the objectives of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme was to put Veszprém and the Bakony-Balaton region on the map of the Hungary and Europe not just as a seasonal region, but as a 365-day region. Thus, in the calls for proposals launched under the Street Management Programme, great emphasis was also placed on ideas that would enable Veszprém's hospitality establishments to provide adequate capacity for their guests in winter and summer. This has led to the renewal of several terraces in the city centre, including Chill Bistro, Elefánt Restaurant and Bárka, which are now ready to welcome visitors in all weather conditions.

In addition to the improvements to the terraces, the programme has also seen a number of multi-area improvements. Community spaces capable of hosting cultural events have been created, equipment has been renewed and modern technical equipment has been installed in the hospitality units.

Businesses renewed under small-scale bids include Incognito Café, Old Town Restaurant, Club Union, Terem Bar, Espresso, Old Town Market, Scorpio Irish Pub, Elephant Restaurant, Pizza Dellarosso, Martonfood Ltd, Bárka, and Chill Bistro.



JUTAS RUNNING CIRCUIT

Community planning for Jutas Road was launched in autumn 2021, with the aim of involving local residents in the preparation of infrastructure investments in the city's largest residential area. Locals were able to share their suggestions in online and offline forums, which was important because the image of a neighbourhood and the functions of its public spaces are shaped and made usable on a daily basis by the factors that truly serve the needs of local residents.

One of the results of this community planning project, unique in Veszprém, was the Jutas Jogging Circuit, construction of which started in August 2022 and was completed in the summer of 2023. With the construction of the running track in the most populous district of Veszprém,

a gap-filling development was delivered, which was in great demand based on community surveys.

The Jutas Running Circuit is 3278 metres long and consists of two circuits. One is called the large circle, which is a wider stretch of road, and the other is the school circle, a narrower running track. The recortan-paved running circuit crosses several intersections of the Jutas housing estate and crosses pavements in several places, so the pavements at these intersections were renewed and signposted to indicate the route of the running circuit. These crossings and danger zones are marked by visual elements, black and white checkerboard-like figures reminiscent of the modernist geometric patterns of the 1970s.



SMALL-SCALE INVESTMENTS IN VESZPRÉM

Among the infrastructural investments in Veszprém, there are also small-scale micro-developments. Besides locations serving cultural needs, it was important to implement projects that assist the daily lives of locals and cater to everyday needs through smaller but quality improvements.

As part of this initiative, several car parks were opened in the city's frequented areas. For instance, a new parking area was established in Halle Street, next to Agóra Veszprém Community Centre, to provide sufficient parking space for visitors attending the centre's cultural programmes. Similarly, parking capacities were expanded in other parts of the city, such as Vilonyai Street and Kádár Street, where infrastructure for charging electric cars was also installed. Concurrently, Veszprém Public Utility Service Ltd developed a parking management system to consolidate the city's parking capacities, measure the occupancy of parking spaces, and establish conditions for traffic management.

For active daily life, a running track was created in Séd Valley, and the Folk Tales playground along with seven other city playgrounds were renovated. Additionally, outdoor play equipment was installed or refurbished in several educational and childcare institutions, including nurseries and crèches in Veszprém.

EÖTVÖS KÁROLY COUNTY LIBRARY – ZUG (NOOK)

One of the most outstanding buildings of Veszprém's turn-of-the-century architecture was probably built in several phases, the oldest of which, the long wing on Iskola Street, was probably already in place in the 1780s. Designed by Henrik Schmahl in 1902, the eclectic style building with neo-Gothic features was built for the Bishop's Estate Government. Today, it houses the County Library.

The 'nights Hall', located in the basement and formerly used as a warehouse, was transformed into a multifunctional space under the Veszprém-Balaton European Capital of Culture 2023 programme; a new meeting point for community programmes has been created within the walls of the historic building.

DÓZSAVÁROS LIBRARY BRANCH

Dózsaváros Library, popular among the people of Veszprém, has also undergone a number of upgrades, including expansion and accessibility improvements. The first floor hall has been enlarged; a kitchenette, a changing room and a barrier-free bathroom have also been added. To provide access to the hall, a new staircase was built following the

demolition of the previous one, and a new lift and barrier-free entrance and parking area were added by redesigning the entrance area of the building. The floor space of the adult library has also been enlarged: a reading room has been added and the entire mechanical, heating and electrical systems of the building, and existing paving, finishes and tinwork have been renovated. In the courtyard, a pergola area with a retractable tarpaulin has been added, along with new furniture and a portable sound system.

HANGVILLA

During its years of operation, Hangvilla Multifunctional Community Space, the former Séd Cinema building, has become one of the iconic cultural venues of Veszprém and a key venue of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme. Therefore, it was important to update the building's image and technical aspects in line with the standards of the programme series, and to modernise it in several aspects based on the experience gained in the 9 years of its operation. The café bar was relocated to a space surrounded by a spectacular glass wall, offering a more intimate reception area. The corridors and the gallery, which serves as an exhibition space, the chamber, the conference room and Espresso club's rooms have also been renovated.

PUMP TRACK

A pumptrack is an uninterrupted track with a succession of undulations and curves, and if the rider goes along at the right rhythm, or you could say, pumps the bike, scooter or any other rolling device at the right pace, they can go along without pedalling or propulsion, just by a series of swings. In Veszprém, an exact track like this built in the area under the Jutas Vitéz lookout, with support from the European Capital of Culture 2023 programme.

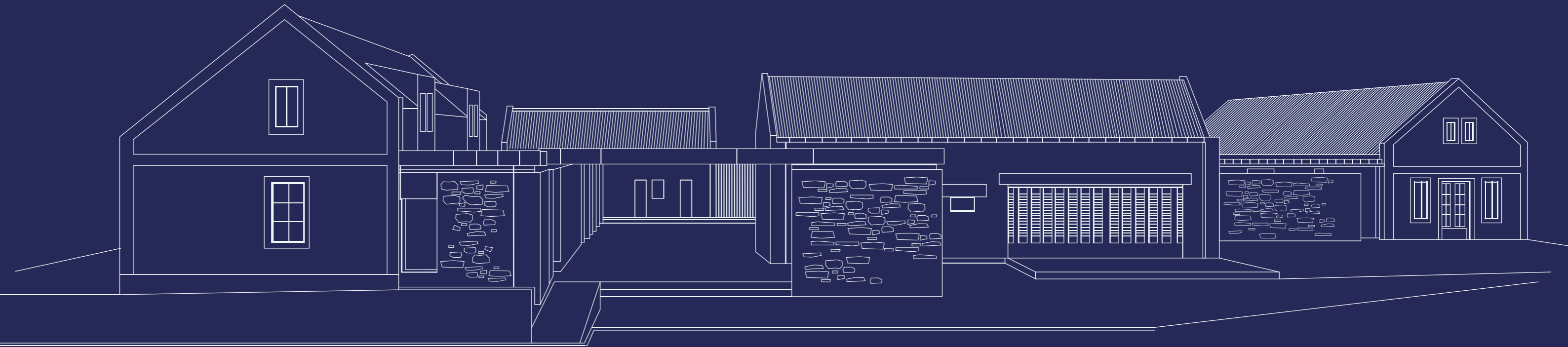
V-BUS & V-BIKE DEVELOPMENTS

The priority of sustainable transport modes was a key pillar of the mobility of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme. Local public transport in Veszprém is provided by V-Busz Kft, a 100% owned company of the Municipality. Not only on four wheels, but also on two wheels from 1 July 2023. This is the launch date of V-Bike, Hungary's first public bicycle system powered exclusively by electric bicycles, with 10 collection stations and 100 bicycles. In parallel with the renovation of the railway station, the 11th V-Bike station was built with the support of Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Zrt. The V-Bike public bicycle station with 13 docking stations is located next to the main entrance of the renovated reception building and was opened to passengers on 5 October 2023, at the same time as the renovated railway station building. As part of the project, 6 more V-Bike public bikes arrived in Veszprém in December.

The V-Bus fleet was completely renewed at the end of 2021, and in 2022 5 electric buses were added to the fleet. In addition to the low-floor, air-conditioned buses, the company was able to make significant improvements in passenger service as part of the preparations for the European Capital of Culture season. 15 cashless ticket vending machines were installed in the first half of 2023 at bus stops in the city centre, transport hubs and prominent districts, with a user interface in Hungarian and English for Veszprém residents and visitors. 7 busy bus stops have been equipped with outdoor passenger information displays, which inform passengers in real time of bus arrivals. 7 busy bus stops have been equipped with outdoor passenger information displays, which give passengers real-time information of bus arrivals.



REGION





MODERN GALLERY – BALATONFÜRED

Modern Art Gallery (MOMŰ) is located in two iconic villa buildings of Balatonfüred, in the reform-era part of the town, opposite to the villa of acclaimed actress and singer Lujza Blaha. MOMŰ features museum exhibition spaces as well as a library, a historical repository and a community space. The building complex, which is connected by a spectacular glass corridor and houses exhibitions from unique contemporary art collections, was awarded the Balaton House of the Year Award in the Public Building category in 2023.



CONGRESS CENTRE – BALATONFÜRED

Opened in 2023, Balatonfüred Congress Centre was conceived to be the venue for cultural events in Balatonfüred throughout the year. With a floor area of over 3,000 square metres, the building includes a foyer, an exhibition hall of almost 400 square metres, several section rooms upstairs and a 670-seat theatre hall with a balcony and an orchestra pit. The building, partly funded by a grant, boasts an exquisite green roof; it was this feature that earned the Cultural Facility Award at BigSEE Architecture 2024.



VILLA ROMANA – BALÁCA

The Hungarian National Museum, Villa Romana Balácsa – A Roman Villa rustica (Farm Complex) and Ruin Gardens is Hungary's largest villa farm that can be visited and displays Roman relics. In total, two hectares of the Mediterranean-style area are open to visitors - including a park, a dwelling house and a farm building, all furnished with thematic Roman tools. The project included the reconstruction of a protective structure over the central villa building.



BERNÁTH HOUSE – MARCALI

The interior of Bernáth House in Marcali was renovated in 2022. The aim of the project was to refurbish the interior of the building, modernise the electrical and heating systems, and purchase the necessary equipment for the interactive gallery. In addition, the regeneration of the park next to the building, which also houses the bust of Aurél Bernáth, has created a new community space in the town, suitable for cultural and artistic events.



KÁL SONES CREATION AND EVENTS HOUSE – SALFÖLD

In Salföld, on the site of the former school, on a 3,300 square metre site, a complex of buildings of almost 600 square metres has been created, including an exhibition hall, a covered outdoor stage plus changing rooms and storage space, a restaurant and a studio-cum-accomodation. The Creative and Events Centre hosts outdoor theatre performances in summer and concerts, exhibitions and a wide range of cultural events throughout the year.



PICTURE GALLERY – VÁRPALOTA

Várpalota combines centuries of fascinating built heritage. Thury Castle, with its four corner towers and strong stone walls, still stands at the centre of the city, recalling the final battles against the Turks. Surrounding it are buildings typical of each architectural period, including the Baroque Zichy Castle on nearby Castle Hill, now home to Trianon Museum. Thury castle is surrounded by churches of four denominations, including the prayer house of the Jewish community. The former synagogue has been renovated and is now home to the Várpalota Picture Gallery, hosting high-quality exhibitions, literary evenings and concerts. The aim was to create a cultural community space that both meets the requirements of the modern age and draws heavily on existing traditions.



KRYPTON FACTORY – AJKA

Ajka-Csingervölgy (Valley) was the ideal location for the construction of the world's first krypton factory, with its breathtaking natural environment and ozone-rich air. Imre Bródy's ingenious invention – the krypton-filled incandescent lamp – was made by extracting the noble gases needed for the industrial-scale production of krypton lamps from the air. The Ajka Krypton Factory was opened in 1937 and provided the raw material for the production of krypton burners for the United Incandescent Lamp and Electricity Company of Budapest for nearly a decade. From 2023, the renovated factory building hosts a Multicultural Experience Centre, dedicated to contemporary international art and community events.



VÖRÖSBERÉNY JESUIT MONASTERY – BALATONALMÁDI

The first mention of the Jesuit monastery in Vörösberény dates back to 1758. the church was consecrated in 1779, and the adjacent granary was also built in the 18th century. Recent improvements, which included re-paving, the creation of a covered terrace and landscaping, have allowed the exterior of the previously underused building to accommodate cultural programmes and community events since 2021.



BOTOND PAJTA (BARN) – KŐVÁGÓÖRS

Botond barn in Kővágóörs was conceived at the initiative of the Boundless Voices Public Benefit Foundation. The barn provides an open-air, yet covered venue for cultural events, barn dancing and community programmes in the settlement.



SZÉCHENYI PARK – BALATONKENESE

In the summer of 2023, Széchenyi Park in Balatonkenese was completely regenerated, offering recreation on the shores of Lake Balaton under the name Civil"TO"PART. As a result of the project, the park's green spaces were regenerated, modern rest areas were installed and a water stage was set up.



BALATONBERÉNY – RURAL MUSEUM

The Balatonberény rural museum – now a museum proper – is one of a few farmhouses that are over 150 years old, yet have been preserved in their original state almost in their entirety. The building has preserved the architectural features of the western part of Lake Balaton. Its earthen walls and thatched roof make it an outstanding treasure of architectural heritage. As part of the project, the roof structure, thatch, chimneys, windows, timber structures, beams and furniture have been disinfected and preserved. The museum has been equipped with community rooms and an outdoor exhibition area.



RURAL MUSEUM – BALATONEDERICS

In addition to presenting the local history collection, the Balatonederics rural museum also hosts temporary exhibitions, shows and folklore programmes. As part of the development project, the museum was upgraded in terms of cooling and heating, and a solar panel system was installed in the building.



SMART BENCH – KESZTHELY

A promenade has been created in Park Street, one of the busiest meeting points in Keszthely, next to the train and bus station, where a Kuube smart bench has been installed. The location, close to the vocational school, is a frequent meeting point for local young people, so the bench, which has two wireless and two USB chargers and also functions as a wifi hotspot, is in daily use. The solar-energy powered Kuube smart bench was designed, developed and manufactured in Hungary.



MILL GATE CULTURAL AND VISITORS' CENTRE – TÉS

A complete interior renovation of the old farmhouse in the centre of Tés village has given birth to the multifunctional Mill Gate Cultural and Visitor's Centre. The new building offers visitors an opportunity to learn about the history of windmills and mill culture. The development has also made the famous windmills of Tés more accessible.



OPEN-AIR THEATRE – LESENCEISTVÁND

The village of Lesenceistvánd has gained a quality outdoor stage with the replacement of the existing stage flooring, the construction of a new stage roof, and the purchase of sound equipment, visual equipment and technical devices for the auditorium. Since the summer of 2022, municipal programmes have been held on the stage.



COMMUNITY SPACE – UZSA

Born out of a partnership of five municipalities, the community space in the centre of an important participant in the Lesence region has been renewed. Not only has the building been renovated, but the event hall has also been upgraded with new equipment.



COMMUNITY SPACE – ZIRC

A community space has been created in the Antal Reguly Primary School in Zirc, a place to hold the institution's celebrations and events. The 300-square-metre space is multifunctional, with a recortan covering, so it can be used as a venue for a variety of school and city events in the future.



