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It's just a pipe, right?

Rochester First Avenue Sanitary Sewer Relief Trunkline



Some things are far more complicated than they seem. And others, more complicated than they might need to be.

The City of Rochester has always been renowned for the Mayo Clinic. But now, as it prepares for the expansion of medical facilities and continues to grow in commercial and cultural resources downtown, Rochester has become a global destination for health and wellness. With that growth has come the need for updated and upgraded utilities.



One of the major links in that utility infrastructure is a significant jump in sanitary sewer capacity, officially known as the 1st Avenue Sanitary Sewer Relief Trunkline. While technically it's 'just a pipe,' the 48" line will dramatically increase capacity for the downtown area and support the kind of future growth that the City foresees for the coming decades.

This 'pipe,' however, has to be installed along the bottom of a 25-foot deep trench down the middle of a major street that serves numerous significant businesses and agencies, none of which can suspend operations while they wait for the work to be completed. Adding to the complexity is the simultaneous construction of two other projects immediately adjacent to the trunk line: a new 6-story parking deck, and 20-story luxury hotel.



This project is a triumph of fast and responsive planning among the entities involved, including the City of Rochester, WHKS, and architects for the Ramp and for the Hotel. The 'pipe' had to be in the ground before the parking deck could set its footings. The nearby railroad required significant coordination. Asbestos and other contaminants were discovered and remediated. And the folks who rely on the services of the adjacent Salvation Army center needed to maintain their daily access. All under the close scrutiny of the public, the politicians and the media. The project is currently under construction and on schedule to be completed this summer.

When this simple 'pipe' is in place, it will be at the foundation of infrastructure that will support the City's growth for decades to come.

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