



CITY OF COLUMBUS

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Column #36 – The Orange Barrel Blues

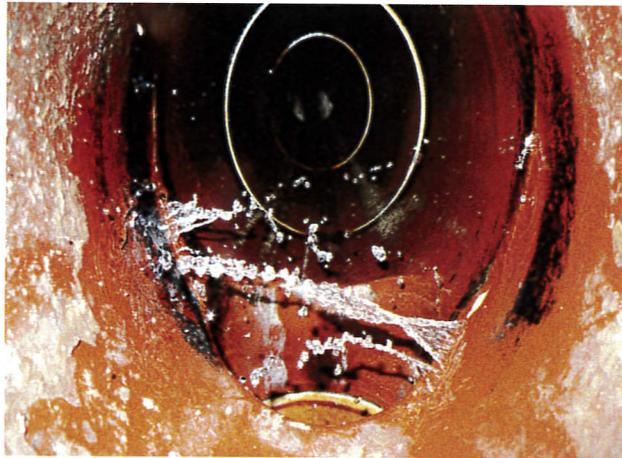
“Under the Clock Tower”

Jackhammers hammering, backhoes digging, the smell of asphalt adding heat to a humid summer day...for many in our community, this was and for some, still is a daily reality. These are the sights and sounds of the 2016 City Street Reconstruction Project. For all the times you needed to get to your friend’s house on Charles Street, or to pick up a tool at Caldwell Lumber, or even to get to the Presbyterian Church on Mill, I’m sure the frustration with the torn up street started to build. These feelings were no doubt multiplied for those who live on Charles, Mill, Church, Prairie, and Birdsey Street.

As frustrating as all the road construction has been this year, the reasons for all of it are long and simple. The City of Columbus’ infrastructure – the roads, the water and sewer utilities, the storm water drainage and the sidewalks need to be repaired. The City Council has supported efforts for the City to get back on a regular schedule to address street condition for some time, and 2016 was the year to help us “catch up”. It’s easy to describe what was done this year, as I listed above, but do you *really* know why it was done? Besides being aged, damaged and no longer sustainable, the material that was replaced was in dire need to come out. Below, I offer evidence to support that as the photos show the condition of what has been pulled out/crushed up/replaced.



An example of the street surface on Church Street, prior to construction. No more bumpy rides there.



Here's a photo of the interior of an old, sanitary sewer pipe, the water shown indicates a leaky and cracked sewer main. In all of the streets fixed this year, the water mains and sewer mains were all replaced. In most areas, storm sewers were added or replaced as needed.

The photos speak for themselves. I think it's clear that while everyone sees that prior to construction street surfaces in the project were full of ruts and potholes, that the water and sewer mains under the street were also in poor condition and needed an upgrade. The newly updated public infrastructure will service our community for many, many years to come. And City Officials will turn their attention to the next streets and other areas to address. Next year, anyone who many not have gotten the full "street reconstruction experience", will get a full dose of it as James Street is completely redone by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Pardon our dust, but "The Orange Barrel Blues" are likely our reality for the foreseeable future.

If you have any questions on this or any other issue before city government, please contact me down at City Hall at 623-5900 or via email at pvandersanden@columbuswi.us.

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