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Essay: City Council should move forward with new RPD substation

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While it's a year that many of us would like to forget, 2020 will forever be remembered for the turmoil, fear, and health, social and economic crises our nation faced. The COVID-19 pandemic has systematically killed hundreds of thousands nationwide, irreversibly sickened countless more and crippled our economy.

Families have forever been changed, whether it's by the loss of a family member, the financial instability they face as they wonder if their job is next on the chopping block, or the loss of a job that has now forced them to go without.

Not a single community in our entire country was left unaffected in some way; and that obviously includes all of us here in Rochester.

We have been collectively forced to face the harsh reality that so much that affects our daily lives is out of our control. As the pandemic rages on, we've watched our friends and family lose jobs, and we've watched our local businesses suffer and close. We've come to the realization that Rochester's economic landscape will look different.

However, there is something we as a city can do that's a proven shot in the arm for any economy: build.

A first step to uplifting our economy and helping our communities, residents and businesses bounce back is to move forward with previously scheduled projects – we need to build the Rochester Police Department substation and neighborhood service center.

This project means more than 300 (safe, stable, well-paying) jobs during a time when for so many, secure employment is nonexistent at worst and tenuous at best. These are jobs for hardworking people who in turn, provide for their families and then have the ability to invest their paychecks back into our local economy.

2020 has been a year of unknowns and searching for answers to get back on the right track. While in many cases we're still searching, there is one thing we know: stopping construction and taking away good jobs from people in our community is never the answer.

The Rochester City Council has the ability to reinstate this project – to provide hundreds of people with good jobs when they're desperately needed. The members of Laborers' Local 435 stand ready to help build back a strong and solid Rochester.

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