

## Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel Groundbreaking

### City of Akron Press Release

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#### Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel Groundbreaking Event

The City of Akron began work on the Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel – the largest component of the city's court-ordered Long Term Control Plan - with a "groundbreaking" ceremony this past Friday, Nov.6th on the banks of the Little Cuyahoga River, north of Downtown.

"This is the beginning of the largest construction project in the 190 year history of the City," said Mayor Jeff Fusco. "It's appropriate that we treat the start of this project as the historic event it is, as we embark on the work that will make our waterways cleaner than they have been since Akron became an industrial powerhouse in the 19th century."

Along with ceremonies launching construction, the City also unveiled the plans for the relocation of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath trail through the area, and will announced the name of Akron's Tunnel Boring Machine.

More than 770 cities nationwide are remediating Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO's) under the supervision of the U.S. EPA and federal courts. Akron's Long Term Control Plan is the most stringent in the nation. The Consent Decree was entered by the Federal Court in early 2014 at a price tag of \$1.4 billion (escalated).

Since 1987, Akron has spent more than \$390 million to improve its sewer system, to meet EPA requirements, including upgrades to Akron's wastewater treatment plant, the Akron Water Reclamation Facility in the Cuyahoga Valley.

Water quality in the Cuyahoga River has improved to a level that supports fish and bug life and facilitated the return of the Great Blue Herons at the southern gateway to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

#### The Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel

The Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel (OCIT) will have a 27-foot finished inside diameter and will be 6,240 feet long. It will begin at the Little Cuyahoga River north of the Mustill Store on the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath, and extend to Lock 1 of the canal at West Exchange Street in Downtown Akron. The tunnel will control combined sewer overflow at nine separate locations, and will store over 25 million gallons of combined sewer overflow.

The City has awarded the tunnel construction contract to Kenny/Obayashi JV, a Joint Venture that brings two experienced tunnel construction companies together.

"Their bid - well below our estimate- gives the City a formidable team to complete this intricate, yet massive, tunnel project." said Fusco. The City Engineer's estimate for the project was \$252,212,193 and the accepted bid is \$67 million dollars less. The tunnel is scheduled to be in operation by December 31, 2018.

#### Re Routing the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath

"Akron and Summit County were the first to complete the Towpath Trail through its boundaries," said Mayor Fusco. "It's one of Akron's most important recreational assets, and preserving it during this construction project has been a high priority."

The trail will follow Hickory Street between Memorial Parkway and North Street for the duration of the construction. The new route was developed in conjunction with the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, Metro Parks, the National Park Service, residents, numerous community meetings, and the Cascade Locks Park Association which operates the Mustill Store.

Hickory Street will be closed to through traffic to promote the safety of walkers and cyclists alike. A cul de sac will be installed to stop northbound traffic on Hickory Street and a second cul de sac will be installed to stop southbound traffic. The S-curve and steep topographic section of Hickory Street will be reserved for towpath traffic only.

“We have been part of the planning from the beginning,” says Dan Rice, President & CEO of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition. “This route will provide the thousands of users each year with a fresh way to look at the trail through the City.”

One change will be the inclines on Hickory Street, the steepest averaging 15% with another incline of about 10%. Some cyclists may choose to walk their bikes through this section of the new trail.

While the route is more difficult than the existing one, the detoured trail has been designed with the safety of Hickory Street residents, pedestrians and cyclists in mind.

Every effort will be made to create a signed, safe and enjoyable experience and the Towpath will continue to do what it does best – help users enjoy Akron’s culture, history, recreation and nature.

The new towpath location will allow the “Bike Aboard” program to continue on the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad at Northside Station.

The changes will keep the 101 mile stretch of canal open between Cleveland and New Philadelphia, and at the end of the project, the Towpath will be restored to its original location along the Little Cuyahoga River. Towpath maps with the new route will be available online at <http://www.ohioeriecanal.org>. The Mustill Store will remain open during the duration of work.

#### Naming of the Akron Tunnel Boring Machine

Akron Waterways Renewed!, the City’s initiative to address the City’s combined sewer overflows, announced the results of a contest for Akron residents to name the giant Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) that will excavate the 27-foot diameter, mile-long tunnel under Downtown Akron.

Phil Montgomery, Akron’s Deputy Service Director, said Akron’s machine will be named “Rosie.” The nomination from Ellet resident Michael Flynn recognizes Rose May Jacob and the hundreds of other “Rosies” that worked at Akron’s rubber factories during World War II, who turned out material and armaments for the allied effort.

Jacob died in December, 2014 at the age of 88. She was a junior at Kenmore High School when she began working at Firestone, where she helped rivet wings for C-47 warplanes.

Goodyear, Firestone and Goodrich recruited people from Akron high schools to work on the war effort. Rosie (as her friends called her) Jacob was quick to volunteer, even though it meant she had to attend school in the mornings and work an eight-hour shift until late at night. The desire to help the war from the home front was also personal to Jacob, as her two older brothers fought in the war. Jacob worked at Firestone Aircraft until the war ended in 1945.

Around the world, large tunneling projects have names for their machines that recognize local icons or the community's historic individuals, and according to tunneling tradition, a TBM cannot start work until it is given a name. "Since this is the largest construction project in Akron history, we asked our residents to come up with a name that is meaningful and one that honors someone who has meant something to this City," said Mayor Fusco. "Rosie Jacob and the hundreds of women war workers who share the title 'Rosie the Riveter' certainly meet that test."

#### Jobs Created by the CSO Project

Mayor Fusco reiterated at the ceremonies that Akron is using new construction delivery methods that will increase our chances of meeting our local labor and minority participation goals. The City of Akron has partnered with the Akron Urban League and Akron Summit Community Action, to provide job training to local residents. The proposal submitted by Kenny/Obayashi will exceed the city's 35% requirement for employment on the tunnel project. The joint venture is committed to employ 37.26% of its workforce from local residents. The contractor will exceed the City of Akron's and the State of Ohio's inclusion program goals - economically and socially disadvantaged women businesses at 3 percent and minority business enterprises at 12 percent. Project Labor Agreements will be used to promote efficiency of construction of the projects and providing for settlement of any labor disputes.