



PROJECT PROFILE

# Rochester City Hall

Investigation and Exterior Restoration | Rochester, NY



**CLIENT**

Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects, LLP

**BACKGROUND**

Rochester City Hall was constructed in 1885–1889 as a federal courthouse and post office, designed in the Romanesque style. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings. It is one of the contributing historic structures in a city with a rich architectural detailing. It was designed with masonry bearing wall construction and steel interior framing. The facade of the building is composed of sandstone, a layered sedimentary rock (arkosic sandstone) that was reportedly quarried in the Hartford Basin in Connecticut.

Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects (MCWBA) retained WJE to evaluate and make recommendations for restoration of the existing sandstone masonry as well as building mortar for the exterior of the city hall. The City of Rochester sought procurement to rehabilitate the masonry of the entire exterior envelope of the city hall. The scope of work also included cleaning and selective replacement of the masonry and consolidation of ornate architectural detail.

**SOLUTION**

WJE engineers prepared baseline drawings and performed a comprehensive field survey of existing conditions. The engineers evaluated alternative sandstone masonry treatments through a comprehensive material testing program in WJE’s in-house laboratory. Field trials of various stone treatments were implemented and evaluated, and mockups were conducted of select replacement and cleaning techniques.

Based on the results of the field trials, WJE developed alternative repair design approaches with the client and prepared construction documents for the implementation of the recommended repairs. WJE also provided bidding and on-call construction observation services.

