

Watch as First Street is reshaped

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Check it out

To watch a live feed of work taking place on First Street, go to www.1ststreetstc.org. Click on "See the live Web cam" link for a view from Hotel Baker, 24 hours a day.

Want to keep an eye on the First Street redevelopment project in St. Charles?

Don't bother leaving your desk.

A video camera mounted atop the Hotel Baker provides a live feed to the a city Web site, www.1ststreetstc.org.

In addition to offering a live view of the project 24 hours a day, the camera — housed in a weatherproof bubble — snaps still photos several times an hour.

The city plans to compile the images in a time-elased video documenting the monumental reconstruction project, slated for completion in 2012.

"To be able to chronicle that progress over a period of time is a great thing," City Administrator Brian Townsend said. "You can basically see years worth of construction in five minutes."

Townsend should know.

Previously a municipal employee in Schaumburg, he took part in a similar effort to capture the construction of a convention center and hotel.

"It was very successful there," he said. "There was a lot of interest in the project, and this gave people the option of seeing it happen."

In St. Charles, the camera is mounted on the east side of the hotel at 100 W. Main St.

It centers roughly on the area between Prairie Street and Route 64, where the bulk of the \$105 million reconstruction is taking place.

Townsend said the city also intends to put together occasional, online slide shows as different parts of the project, such as the construction of a new Blue Goose Super Market,

"People don't have to worry about us surveilling them," Townsend said. "This isn't a Big Brother situation."
