Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project
City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering
July 2017

Three Questions for Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer

Q: Tell us about your role with the Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project?
A: I have been involved in the project from the beginning, more than ten years ago, leading the team through multiple phases, including working closely with the community and our elected officials, the international design competition, the planning, design and environmental review processes, demolition of the old bridge and now, construction of the new viaduct. I work closely with our federal, state and City funders and of course our excellent engineering and design teams, and our contractor. The Bureau of Engineering has almost 500 active projects in our portfolio, but this project has been my personal passion since the beginning.

Q: What’s been the most exciting aspect of the project so far?
The 23 foundations columns of the viaduct are 10 feet in diameter and go as deep as 150 feet, making this an extremely seismic-safety bridge. I can’t tell you how exciting it was several months ago to see the first foundation hole being drilled and then the reinforcement cage being lowered into the ground. That was a great day.

Q: We’ve heard that the new viaduct will have LED-illuminated arches that can change color. What color(s) do you think the arches should be when the viaduct officially opens?
A: As a lifelong Dodger fan, I might vote for Dodger blue. Or maybe UCLA’s blue and gold. The colors of my alma mater. But no matter what color they are that night, it will be a beautiful sight.

Cool Community Features

The Sixth Street Viaduct will have many features that serve members of the community who are not accessing the new bridge via their car.

Many features were specifically designed for pedestrians and cyclists. For example, on both sides of the viaduct, sidewalks will range from 8’ to 10’ wide, wider than the standard city sidewalk. This makes it easier for people to walk together over the bridge, as well providing additional space for people with mobility challenges. There will also be bike lanes on both sides of the viaduct that are 10’ wide, giving cyclists a safe and fun way to cross the bridge away from pedestrians.

Also along the viaduct, there will be five sets of stairs connecting the ground to the viaduct sidewalk, giving people many paths to choose from when they choose to explore the structure.

Photo of the Month

What’s Happening in the River

This month’s photo is taken from the 4th Street Bridge looking south toward the 7th Street Bridge. The platform on the east side of the LA River was built so we could install a foundation column in the LA River that will help support the deck of the viaduct.

The platform will be in that location until the viaduct is fully constructed; it’s also in place to support the falsework that frames the columns of the deck of the viaduct over the river.

You can also see aqua dams in use in the channel. These inflatable dams help us redirect river flow while we are working in the river.

About the Project

The Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project is a new, 3,500-foot-long viaduct connecting Boyle Heights and the Arts District across the Los Angeles River. The original viaduct was built in 1932, but had significantly deteriorated due to "concrete cancer"; it was demolished in 2016. The new viaduct will have ten pairs of lit arches, bike lanes and wider sidewalks, along with stairway access and bike ramps connecting to 12 acres of recreational and open space under the bridge. The $482 million dollar project is the largest bridge project in the history of the city. The bridge is funded primarily through the Federal Highway Administration, with additional City support. The viaduct is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.

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And check out our website at www.sixthstreetviaduct.org.

The Bureau of Engineering is the City’s lead agency for the planning, design and construction management of the City’s public buildings and its public infrastructure. Engineering is also responsible for managing permitting for all construction that takes place in the public right-of-way, as well as managing the City’s state-of-the-art online mapping system, NavigatiLA. Engineering is committed to designing and building environmentally-sustainable projects that include extensive community input. Engineering projects and services support the City’s goals of creating a prosperous, livable and safe city for all residents and businesses.