



NE 45th Street Viaduct Project

West Approach Replacement



Fall 2009

The NE 45th Street Viaduct is scheduled to be replaced during the summer of 2010

The NE 45th Street Viaduct's existing west approach is nearing the end of its structural life and needs to be replaced to maintain a safe and efficient travel corridor for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is planning to replace the 468-foot west approach during the summer of 2010, and evaluate the east approach and main span for seismic retrofit needs, minimizing the need for long-term maintenance and short-term fixes. The project is part of the City of Seattle's Bridging the Gap program, and will cost roughly \$30 million.



Aging timbers under the west approach

The NE 45th Street Viaduct is a major thoroughfare in Northeast Seattle. It connects Interstate-5 and the University District to the Northeast Seattle neighborhoods, including University Village, the University of Washington's Husky Stadium, Seattle Children's Hospital, and businesses along Sand Point Way NE.

The 730-foot viaduct was originally constructed in 1938 and portions of the structure are nearly 70 years old. The viaduct has had several retrofits and partial reconstructions throughout its lifetime; first in the last 1960's and more recently in 2002.

Project Map



What will the bridge look like after it is replaced?

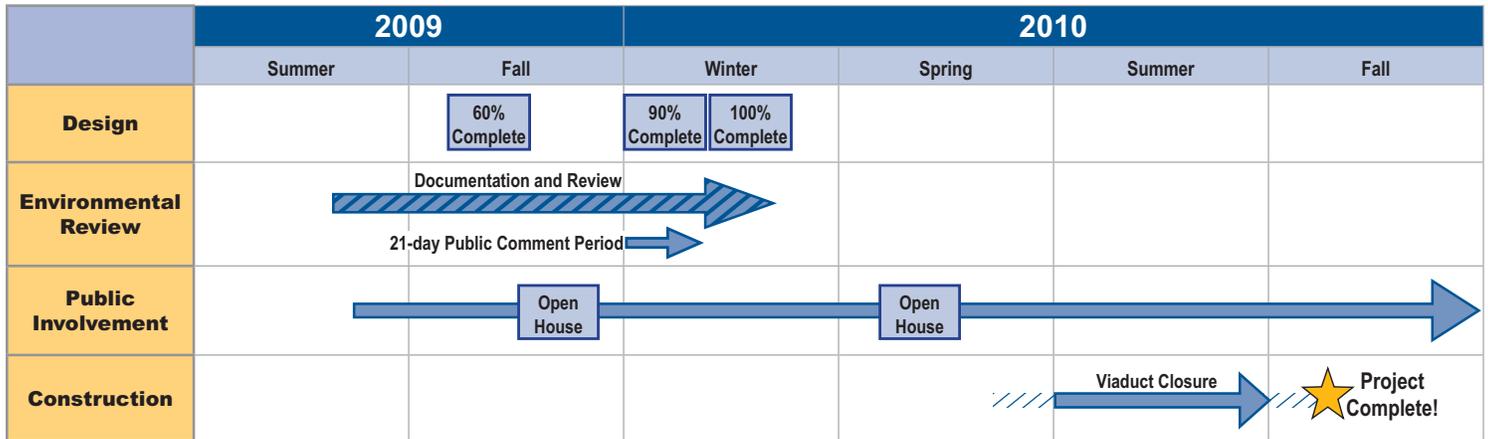
The cross section of the roadway will stay the same, with two westbound lanes, one eastbound lane and a designated pedestrian pathway. An initial traffic analysis indicated that a major widening of the roadway was not necessary. Current and future traffic congestion is caused by nearby intersections, not the number of lanes on the existing viaduct. The replacement of the west approach will also not preclude SDOT's ability to make future capacity or safety improvements to the structure at a later date.

The west approach will be replaced with a Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) Wall, which uses pre-made concrete panels backfilled with material placed in compacted layers to support a new road surface. The main span and east approach will also be evaluated for seismic retrofit needs.



Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) Wall

Project Schedule



The project is currently in the final design phase. **Construction is scheduled to begin in June 2010 and last for up to four months.** During that time, the NE 45th Street Viaduct will be closed completely for drivers and pedestrians. SDOT made the decision to move forward with the full-closure construction phasing option after gathering input from the local community. There was overwhelming support for a full-closure of the viaduct to allow for a shorter construction timeline (up to four months versus 18 months with a partial closure) and a reduced length of time needed to detour drivers and pedestrians around the construction area.

SDOT will host a public open house in late fall to present the preliminary bridge design, construction schedule and draft detour and traffic control plan.

We are anticipating the potential impacts

We know there are questions and concerns regarding access to and from businesses, institutions and events in the local area during construction, and we will continue to work with the public to best anticipate and address these issues in advance. We understand the importance of planning ahead to ensure that the community is aware of the project and emergency vehicles, transit, pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists can continue to travel safely in the project area during construction. SDOT is currently considering a list of potential pedestrian and roadway improvement projects to implement prior to construction that will enhance safety and target areas where increased traffic is anticipated along detour routes.



NE 45th Street Viaduct seen from University Village

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is the \$365 million levy passed by Seattle voters in 2006. It enables much-needed work by SDOT, such as roadway paving, sidewalk development and repair, bridge maintenance, and tree pruning and planting. It also supports the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, enhanced transit connections and large Neighborhood Street Fund Projects.



Stay in touch

For more information about this project please visit the project Web site:

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/45th-bridge.htm>

If you have questions or concerns please contact us:

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