

staff developed a maintenance-of-traffic plan for both vehicles and pedestrians that would protect the public and minimize inconvenience, while allowing traffic to flow through the construction site. Further, a bridge task force steering committee was established that comprised two standing committees: marketing & communications and traffic & parking. Each committee was responsible for knowing the exact status of the project at all times and the impact on the city's logistics.

During the construction phase, the city employed a public liaison person to work with the businesses and impacted citizens—the stakeholders. The city developed a newsletter, bridge information and welcome center at the project site, telephone hotline, and website including a webcam to further keep the public informed. The city staff and construction team also planned a bridge construction coffee event where stakeholders could learn about the progress of the project and discuss any other questions arising as a result of the project.

A direct result of the effort to create these committees and put into place a project liaison was a well-informed public with respect and appreciation for the project. The relations between the city and the public were greatly enhanced.

Conclusion

This project highlights the importance of structural engineering as integrated into the overall project. The availability of the post-tensioned concrete superstructure to provide a thin structure depth, the ability of structural concrete to provide sculptural elements within the structure of the bridge and the flexibility in the form of the concrete structure allowed the structural engineers to succeed in delivering the client's key expectations.

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AESTHETICS COMMENTARY

by Frederick Gottemoeller

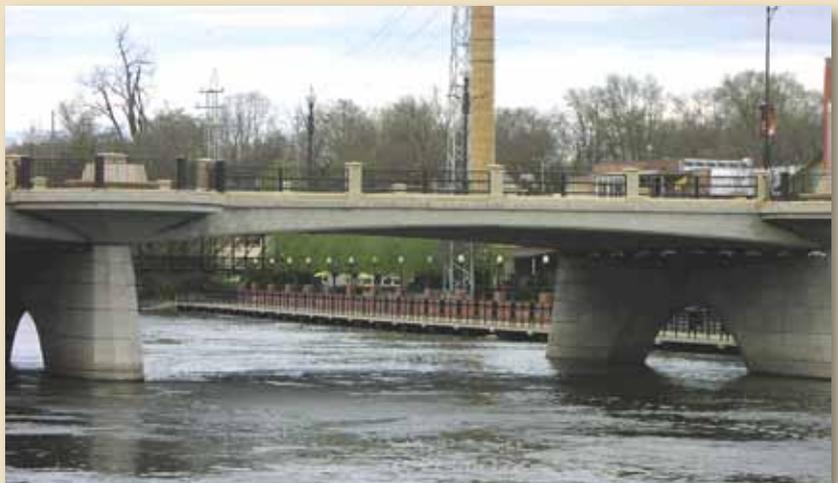
When the renowned architect I.M. Pei was asked to make a major addition to the Louvre Museum in Paris he asked, “How do we make history live and, at the same time, point the way to the future?” Every designer asked to replace a significant bridge in a historic area or town center faces the same question. Pei’s answer for the Louvre was a glass pyramid that looks nothing like the Baroque palace behind it, but which nevertheless has become a valued part of the Louvre and a famous landmark in its own right.

The designers of the Wilson Street Bridge have answered the question in a different way. They have combined a structure of amazing thinness, only possible because of modern high-strength concrete and post-tensioning, with traditional details that reflect the nature of its setting. Both the past and the future are expressed.

Because of its thinness, the bridge changes the whole appearance and use of the river. One imagines that the earth-filled arch there before occupied much of the volume below the roadway, blocking views up and down the river and any possible use of the riverbank. Now, almost the whole volume below the roadway is open and empty. The river is visible from bank to bank and into the distance, and the banks are attractive pedestrian amenities.

Most of the traditional details are above the roadway, where they relate to and provide continuity with Wilson Street beyond the bridge. The benches on the generously-sized overlooks are particularly well done. Rather than just pick a standard bench out of a park catalogue, the designers have custom-designed a feature that can stand up to the size and mass of the bridge. In fact, it is big enough to add significantly to the appearance of the overall structure. That, and the way the facets of the overlook soffit extend the facets of the pier nose, are just two examples of how the details reinforce the main lines of the structure.

The new Wilson Street Bridge is something the people of Batavia will be proud of for many years.



Shown at high water levels, the bridge opens up the space from bank to bank.
Photo: Henry G. Russell Inc.