



## THE VIRGINIA AVENUE TUNNEL

# The Virginia Avenue Tunnel Project Reaches One-Year Construction Milestone June 3, 2016

In May, CSX and its project partners celebrated the one-year anniversary of construction of the Virginia Avenue Tunnel (VAT) project in Southeast Washington, D.C. The goal of the project is not only to rebuild the 3,800-foot tunnel with a modern, two-track structure capable of transporting double-stacked containerized goods safely and efficiently, but also to complete this project the right way – safely, efficiently and in a way that respects our neighbors and leaves a great neighborhood even better than we found it.

Since CSX broke ground on construction in May 2015, the project team has made significant progress on building the first of two new structures to improve the flow of rail traffic through the mid-Atlantic region, reduce rail and highway congestion, improve the environment, and position the Greater Washington region and the nation for economic growth.



*Crews construct a new tunnel structure east of 11th St.*

During the first year of construction, the construction team completed all Phase 1 site preparation, including utility relocation work, and finished Phase 1 demolition, removing the roof from a 370-foot section of the old tunnel. The first permanent new tunnel structure has started to take shape east of 11th Street, and in several areas construction crews reached the final depths of excavation.

Additionally, crews have finished building several street decks to ensure continued access throughout the area, started constructing retaining walls, and drilled more than 90 percent of the total piles. The construction method of drilling piles (as opposed to driving them) was specifically chosen for this project since it produces less

noise and vibration. This is just one of several construction methods used to minimize potential disruption to neighbors. To make sure those construction methods are effective experts are monitoring noise, vibration and air quality throughout the project area, and releasing public reports each month. Since CSX broke ground on the construction of the tunnel, more than 5,400 hours of monitoring have been completed.

As with every project CSX undertakes across its 21,000-mile network, the company's highest priority for the Virginia Avenue Tunnel project is ensuring the safety of employees and community residents. CSX has taken special safety measures to protect workers and the public during construction, including extensive security fencing, barricades, signage and lighting to prevent unauthorized access to construction zones and train operations; dedicated railroad police; and closed-circuit cameras throughout the project area. Moreover, to date, more than 230 workers have received safety training and CSX and its design-construction partner Clark/Parsons J.V. have hosted numerous safety presentations.

Recently the construction team gathered to celebrate “Safety Week” and the one-year construction anniversary. At the event, construction crews signed a safety pledge to reaffirm their commitment to safety and placed stickers on their helmets to commemorate the safe construction work completed on the project since the team broke ground.

Throughout the pre-construction phase and first year of construction, the VAT project team actively engaged with neighbors through face-to-face monthly coffee meetings, quarterly Open House meetings, meetings at the local senior center, the project website, Twitter page, email blasts, flyers, and even text message alerts. To date, the project team has made more than 48,900 contacts with local residents through these channels. As this project moves forward, CSX will continue to engage with neighbors to ensure they have the latest project updates and tools they need to communicate with the project team.



As part of the one-year anniversary celebration, the VAT project team and construction crews signed a “Safety Pledge” reaffirming their commitment to completing this project safely.

“We’re proud of the progress we’ve made during our first year of construction and we appreciate the support of our design and build partner, Clark/Parsons, our dedicated construction crew, and our neighbors,” said Chuck Gullakson, assistant vice president - National Gateway / Virginia Avenue Tunnel. “We look forward to continuing to work together to build a better, safer Virginia Avenue Tunnel and leave this great neighborhood even better than it is today.”



VAT Chief Project Engineer Chuck Gullakson meets with community members and answers their questions at a quarterly Open House public meeting.

The entire construction process is expected to take approximately 30 to 42 months, and we invite you to stay up-to-date during each phase of construction by visiting the project website at [www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com](http://www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com). You can also follow @VATNews on Twitter, sign up for text message alerts and email blasts, or stop by the Community Office at 861 New Jersey Avenue S.E.