

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JCC American Jewish Museum Presents “Commercial Street Bridge: Pittsburgh’s Next Engineering Marvel”

Open through August 31, 2026

American Jewish Museum at the JCC of Greater Pittsburgh
5738 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217



Commercial Street Bridge: Pittsburgh’s Next Engineering Marvel, on view at the American Jewish Museum (AJM) at the JCC of Greater Pittsburgh, explores the innovation, coordination, and skilled labor behind one of the region’s most essential yet often overlooked pieces of infrastructure. The exhibition brings together materials from the existing and replacement bridges, along with photography and documentation that highlight both the engineering process and the people who make it possible.



The Commercial Street Bridge carries the Parkway East over Frick Park and the Nine Mile Run valley, serving as a critical connection between Pittsburgh’s East End and surrounding communities. Built 75 years ago during a period of postwar expansion, it reflects a moment when infrastructure helped reshape how the region grew and how people moved through it.

Today, the bridge is being replaced through a PennDOT-led reconstruction project in partnership with Fay, S&B USA Construction (general contractor), HDR Engineering (design consultant), and Michael Baker International (construction manager).

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The new structure is being built adjacent to the existing span using Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) methods and will ultimately be slid into place—an approach that allows the current bridge to remain in service while minimizing disruption to Parkway East traffic. Engineers, steelworkers, union tradespeople, and specialty contractors carry out this work in carefully sequenced stages, much of it visible to the public as part of daily life in motion.

For the American Jewish Museum, the exhibition reflects a deeper set of questions central to Jewish communal experience: how communities move, connect, and sustain themselves across distance. Like many Jewish institutions in the United States, the JCC of Greater Pittsburgh operates across multiple sites—from the East End to Monroeville, the South Hills, and Morgantown—making travel, access, and connection part of everyday communal life.

In this context, the bridge becomes more than infrastructure. It becomes a symbol of the pathways that allow community to exist across geography: the routes between people, places, and shared responsibility. The exhibition invites visitors to consider these systems not as background, but as essential to how civic and communal life is built and maintained.

While construction brings unavoidable disruption, it also reveals the coordinated systems that keep a region connected. What may feel like inconvenience in the moment is part of a longer story of renewal, investment, and shared public life.

For most who cross it, the Commercial Street Bridge will remain simply a way through. This exhibition asks viewers to see it differently—as a record of collective effort, engineering ingenuity, and the quiet infrastructure of connection.

CONTACT

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