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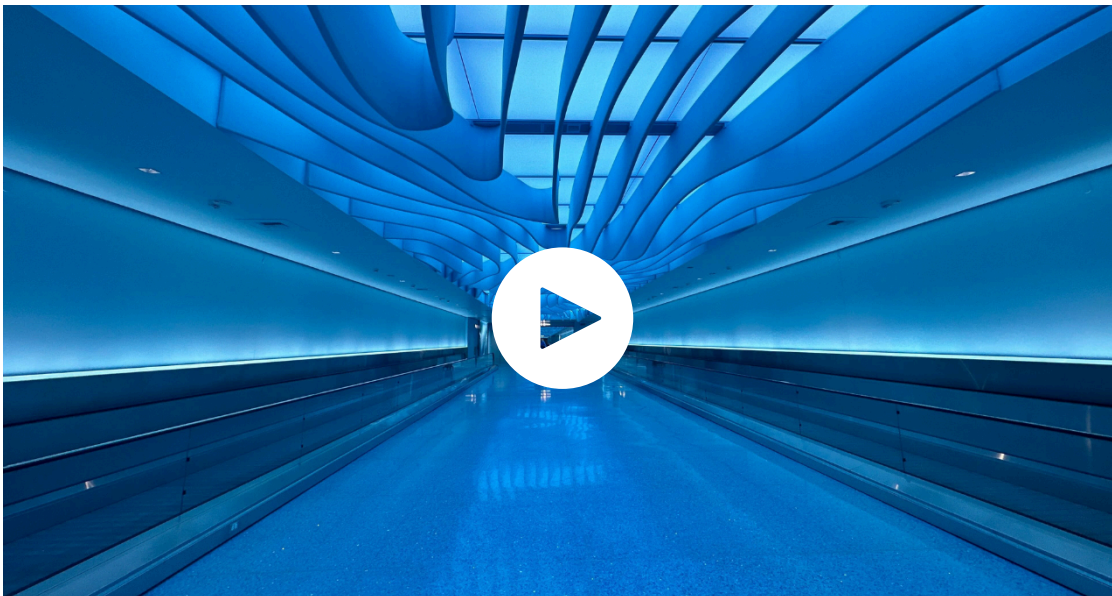


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Long-awaited 'River Tunnel' at SLC Airport gets sneak peek



By: Shanti Lerner

Posted 2:56 PM, Apr 03, 2024

SALT LAKE CITY — The new tunnel that weary passengers at Salt Lake City International Airport have been clamoring for since it opened in 2020 has finally seen the light of day with a special sneak peek view Wednesday.

[it opens on Oct. 22](#). Those looking to catch a flight can now walk through the front of the airport and directly into the new tunnel, bypassing the quarter-mile walk down Concourse A.



"This is going to make a huge difference," said Bill Wyatt, executive director of Salt Lake City International Airport. "It'll be state of the art, intended for a 21st Century airline industry; and I think the people of Salt Lake, the people of Utah, will be really proud.

"I think already are, frankly, of this airport."

LESS WALKING FOR TIRED PASSENGERS

While the journey will be shorter, the River Tunnel is the same length as its brother further down the concourse.

"So what we're trying to do, and I think we're doing it, is rather than waking up in the morning and looking not forward to a stressful day, you're looking forward to going in and out of this airport," Heuther added. "Like no other airport. There's a meditative quality to it, there's an inspirational quality to it."

Along with the new tunnel's beauty came an engineering feat nearly 10 years in the making, with engineers and other professionals brought in from all over the state and nationally to complete the project.

"We are under trained about 26-feet below the ground," said airport area manager Julito Ganchero. "And we may have about 12-feet of water above, or something that's groundwater. And that elevation fluctuates a little bit. But no worries, we got you covered. Literally."

WHY WASN'T IT BUILT FROM THE BEGINNING?

required pausing the entire construction of one concourse.

“For those of you who are familiar with the old airport, we're very close to being under the old Concourse D,” Wyatt pointed out. “So, we would have to have taken that out of commission, which would have meant basically closing the airport for several years while we completed this, and that was never really an option.”

FUN-NEL FACTS

The River Tunnel was created by California-based artist Gordon Huether, who also designed the newly-installed Peaks Art Installation that passengers see as they drive into the airport.

When designing the tunnel, Huether says he looked to the Beehive State for inspiration.

“The objective from the beginning was to celebrate the natural beauty of Utah,” he said. “And not not in a literal sense at all, that just try to capture the vibe of the nature of natural beauty here in Utah.”

The new tunnel will also feature 150 high quality state of the art speaker sound systems that will play music as passengers walk through.

Looking to impress friends and family? Here's some fun facts about the new River Tunnel:

- **Steel Piles:** There are over 32.95 miles of Steel piles of support- the approximate distance between SLC Airport to Park City
- **Rebar:** 3,825 tons of rebar reinforcing used
- **Concrete:** 97,438 of concrete used or the equivalent of 217.6 Boeing 747 planes
- **Tunnel Volume:** 25 Olympic-sized swimming pools
- **Length:** 1,175

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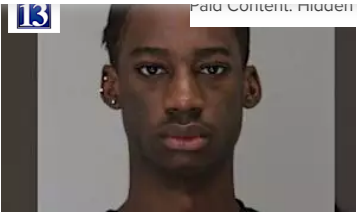
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