
CHARLES PANKOW BUILDERS, LTD.

Gateway Center

MTA Headquarters and Transportation Plaza - Los Angeles, California



Charles Pankow Builders, Ltd. A California Limited Partnership

Gateway Center

In the first half of the 1990s, Downtown Los Angeles saw only one high rise being built; the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Headquarters building at Gateway Center, along with the development of an inter-modal transportation facility.

Created by a joint development venture between Catellus Development Corporation and the MTA, Gateway Center includes the MTA headquarters office building with complete build-to-suit interior improvements, an MTA garage, two Gateway garages, a bus plaza, an east portal or terminal (ticketing area), an MTA plaza, a campanile and arcades. In addition, structural foundations for two future high-rise buildings have been built into the parking structure perimeter.

A key milestone in the successful start of the project was Pankow's willingness to guarantee a 28 month construction schedule on the office portion of the project. This allowed the MTA to take occupancy in time to avoid a \$4,000,000.00 penalty under an existing lease. The MTA moved into their new headquarters two weeks ahead of schedule. To meet this milestone, the entire project was fast-tracked with each phase of design receiving bonded guarantees for price and then built, long before designs for later phases were complete.

MTA Headquarters Office Building

The centerpiece of this \$250 million transportation complex is the 28-story, 627,000 square foot office tower that includes a 350-seat boardroom/auditorium, a 7500 square foot cafeteria and a pistol range for training the MTA police. The tower was built using 8,500 tons of structural steel and clad with 307,000 square feet of natural stone exterior skin.

Granite and smooth Minnesota Limestone made up the exterior skin, while 25 types of stone from eight different countries were used in the main lobby area.

After Pankow began the erection of the structural steel, the city of L.A. required an extensive modification to the moment

1. *Landscaped pedestrian access (Arroyo).*
2. *East Portal - Two hundred tetrahedral shaped frosted and etched glass assemblies make up the skylight dome.*
3. *MTA Office Headquarters - Second floor elevator access.*
4. *Entrance to MTA Office Headquarters.*



Specifications

MTA Office Tower: 627,000 SF
Parking Garage: 1,250,000 SF
Bus Plaza: 150,000 SF
East Portal: 56,000 SF
TOTAL: 1,983,000 SF

frame welds due to lessons learned from the Northridge earthquake. Consequently, additional plates were welded to the top and bottom of the beams at the beam to column connections. This additional welding was incorporated into the construction sequence without delay to the project.

Parking Challenges

The parking levels beneath the MTA office tower were constructed using a combination of precast and cast-in-place concrete. Steel columns were put in place at the second subterranean parking level, transferring the load down into the concrete columns. The use of the concrete columns at the lower garage levels and having Pankow self-perform all the concrete work on site, shortened the overall construction schedule by several months over using an all-steel structure. This was due to the ability to start vertical concrete construction long before steel members could be procured and delivered to the site.

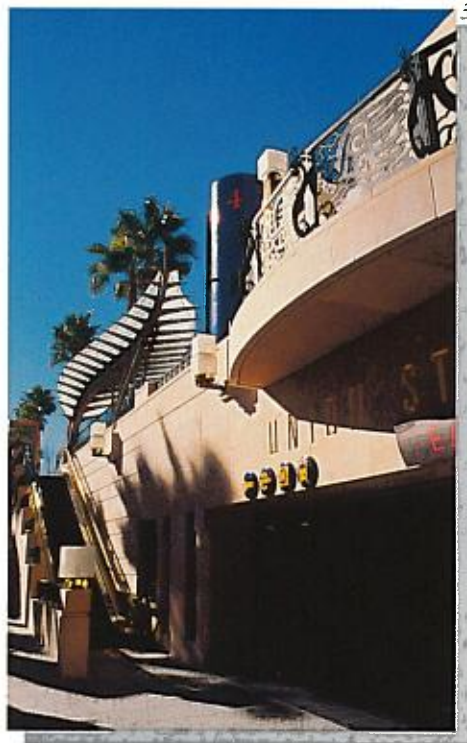
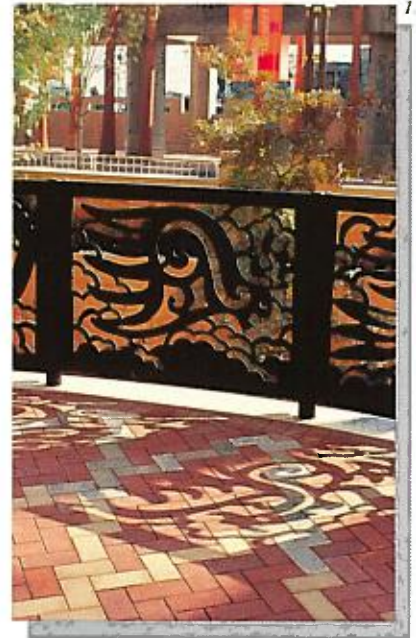
By working closely with the city, Pankow was able to start construction on the office tower's below-grade excavation, foundations and parking structure 14 months prior to receiving the formal building permit for the above-grade tower. Within these 14 months, Pankow had topped out the tower frame.

A challenging part of constructing the parking levels below grade was working around active city streets and a freeway ramp. During construction, surrounding city streets had to be rerouted in order to construct the subterranean parking levels and then moved back over the top of the parking structures. Vehicles were routed around the site via a temporary two-lane passage in order to continue access to the nearby freeway ramp, which remained open at all times.

The structure also straddles the city subway system which cuts diagonally through the site.

Below Grade Waterproofing

Because the parking structure extends below the water table, the garage was designed for resisting upward ground water pressure and used extensive waterproofing reminiscent of building a "boat." This waterproofing system began with a three inch "base" or "rat slab," followed by bentonite waterproofing panels, a two inch protection slab and then topped with a 14-inch reinforced structural concrete slab. Dewatering the site and filtration of contaminated ground water prior to its being pumped back into the Los Angeles River was ongoing until the below-grade structure was water-tight. During this process, a total of 150,000,000 gallons of water were pumped out at a rate of 18,000 gallons per hour.



1. Michael Amescua's cut black steel Guardians of the Rail surround the corner park of the Bus Plaza.
2. Telephones are conveniently placed throughout the arroyo pedestrian access area.
3. The Arroyo connects pedestrian access from the bus plaza to the East Portal.

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1. MTA Office Headquarters - Interior lobby entrance.

2. Beam Bed - In all, 3100 beams & columns were precast by Pankow on site.

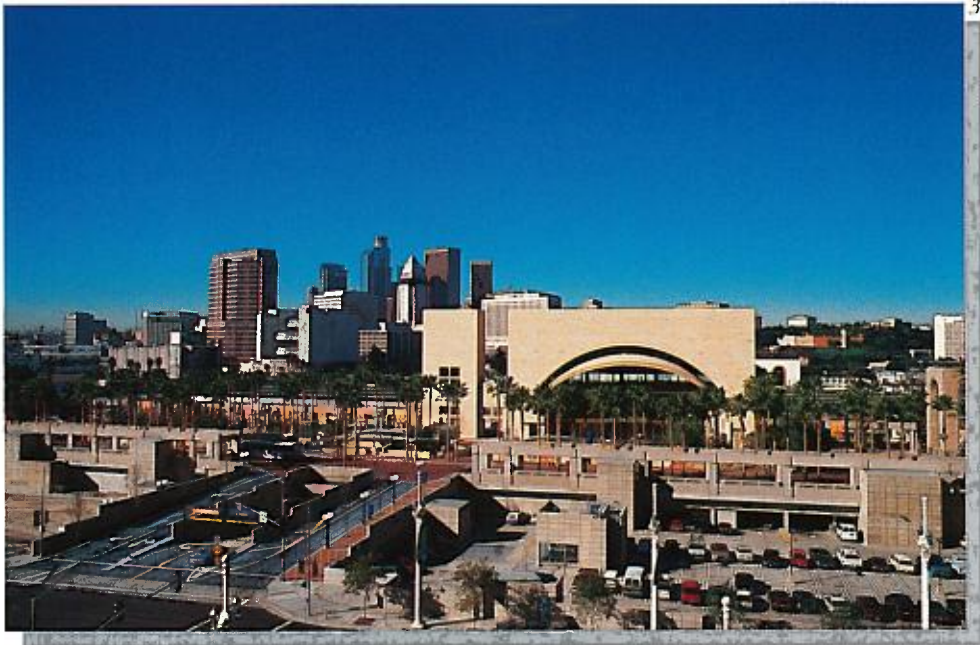
3. Gateway Center - Aerial view during construction.



Owner: Union Station Gateway
MTA/Catellus Development Corporation
Developer: Union Station Gateway, Inc.
(A joint development of Catellus
Development Corporation and the MTA)

Architects: Ebrenkrantz & Eckstut Architects,
McLarand Vasquez & Partners, Inc.
Structural Engineer: Martin & Huang International, Inc.
Construction duration: 31 months

1. *Security and Information Booth.*
2. *Exterior plaza level entrance of East Portal.*
3. *Downtown Los Angeles is only minutes away from Gateway Center's Bus Plaza and East Portal.*



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