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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Construction Of New \$12.4 Million Southbound Harlem River Drive Ramp To Robert F. Kennedy Bridge Begins In September

#### *Street Detours And Temporary Ramp In Place Through December*

The Harlem River Drive southbound ramp leading onto the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge will be closed beginning Sept. 12th through the end of the year as part of a nearly \$12.4 million Capital Construction project to replace the nearly 50-year-old ramp. A temporary ramp will be constructed in its place, giving motorists access to the RFK Bridge ramp at 125th Street after a brief detour through local streets.



The Harlem River Drive southbound ramp, which leads onto the RFK Bridge Harlem River Lift Span, will be demolished and replaced beginning in September under a \$12.4 million Capital Construction project. The ramp is shown here with yellow arrows.

The work, originally planned for the 2013-2015 Capital Budget, was accelerated after a recent inspection showed severe deterioration to the 20,800-square-foot ramp, due in part to its age and the result of several harsh winters. "We reached a point where it was no longer possible to just keep patching," said RFK Facility Engineer Rocco D'Angelo. "The ramp has reached the end of its useful life and

needs to be replaced before another winter approaches."

Motorists who frequently use the Harlem River Drive will begin seeing construction of the temporary ramp, which will be built about 400-feet before the existing ramp. Once the temporary ramp is completed, demolition and replacement of the original ramp will begin. The project is expected to be completed by December.

Motorists using the temporary ramp will exit onto 1st Avenue near 127th Street, follow detour signs that will take them to 125th Street and onto the existing ramp heading towards the RFK Harlem River Lift Span. Signs will be in place to direct motorists.

The work is being done by Defoe contractors of Mount Vernon, N.Y., under an eight-month design/build contract that was awarded in June. Under the terms of the contract, Defoe has agreed to the goal of hiring state-designated minority-owned subcontractors and women-owned subcontractors for 10 percent each of the work.

This project is part of the nearly \$1 billion in capital improvements planned over the next 15 years for the sprawling Robert F. Kennedy Bridge, which connects Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens and serves a combined average of 170,000 vehicles daily.

The RFK Bridge, which includes the suspension span over the East River, the Harlem River Lift Span, the Bronx truss over Bronx Kills and 14 miles of roadways that merge at a junction structure on Randall's Island, is the oldest of the MTA's seven bridges and two tunnels. Built during the height of the Great Depression and one of the first Public Works Administration projects, the 75-year-old bridge opened to traffic on July 11, 1936.

Known as the Triborough Bridge throughout the region, the bridge was renamed in honor of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy in November 2008.