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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

\$50 Million Design-Build Project Underway At Robert F. Kennedy Bridge's Manhattan/Queens Ramp

A \$50 million design/build project to reconstruct the Manhattan/Queens ramp at the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge is underway with a new traffic pattern that shifts motorists to the left as they enter the ramp and then merges ramp traffic with mainline traffic just south of the Bronx toll plaza.

The current two roadway lanes will be maintained during peak driving hours throughout the project. The new traffic pattern went into effect this week. The 26-month project to reconstruct the 54,000-square-foot ramp includes removing the old concrete deck, replacing the steel support stringers, and constructing a new concrete deck. Work is expected to be completed by fall 2014.

"It will be a seamless transition for motorists," said Bridges and Tunnels Senior Project Manager Adam Rose. By constructing a temporary, two-lane wide bridge between the ramp and the main roadway over an area that was open, unused space, drivers will now merge from the ramp onto the main roadway leading to the RFK's Queens suspended span, allowing the rest of the ramp to be shut down for construction.

"This ramp was constructed in 1967 and as anyone who has driven over its multiple deck patches knows, the roadway deck has reached the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced," Rose said. "Once completed, the new Manhattan/Queens ramp will last for many decades to come."

It is the second design/build contract used by MTA Bridges and Tunnels on a roadway structure. The first was the \$9 million successful reconstruction of the southbound RFK Harlem River Drive ramp in 2011.

"The design/build format accelerates the overall process so that as portions of the design are completed, construction on those portions begins. The design is also tailored to meet the contractor's means and methods, which helps reduce construction costs, makes construction oversight more effective and reduces the need to redesign elements of the project," said RFK Bridge Assistant Facility Engineer Justine Tietjen. Using this method will save at least a year in the overall schedule for reconstructing the ramp.

The contract was awarded in June 2012 to Halmar International, of Pearl River, N.Y., and its design partner, Hardesty & Hanover. The team has been working beneath the roadway since July.

This work is part of the nearly \$1 billion in capital improvements planned through 2016 for the sprawling Robert F. Kennedy Bridge, which connects Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens and carries an average 170,000 vehicles daily.



Example of a section of the RFK Bridge's Manhattan/Queens ramp showing multiple roadway patches. The RFK Bronx toll plaza is to the right. The fenced area is where the temporary bridge roadway was constructed.