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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

First of Three Construction Projects That Will Lead To Removal Of Henry Hudson Bridge Toll Plazas Set To Begin

MTA Bridges and Tunnels will begin work on the first of three Capital Improvement construction projects at the Henry Hudson Bridge that will result in the removal of the 1930s-era toll plazas beginning in 2017.

The projects, to be done consecutively, include the installation of Open Road Tolling (ORT) gantry-based equipment on both the upper and lower levels of the bridge; in-depth integrated equipment testing of the ORT system; and the removal of the concrete islands and toll booths from both the upper and lower levels of the bridge.

"We know our customers love the experience of driving without having to stop at a toll plaza," said MTA Bridges and Tunnels President James Ferrara, "so these projects are the next logical step in turning the Henry Hudson Bridge into a 21st Century tolling facility."

All-electronic tolling became the permanent toll collection method at the Henry Hudson Bridge in January after a successful pilot program that has improved traffic flow at the bridge and helped reduce emissions from idling cars.

"With these projects, the last original sections of the 1930's-era bridge will be replaced allowing us to modernize and achieve our state of good repair goals while continuing to provide seamless service to our customers," said Joe Keane, MTA Bridges and Tunnels Vice President and Chief Engineer.

The first of the three projects was awarded in February to El Sol Construction, of Queens. Work on the one-year, \$8.9 million project is set to begin next week, and will include installation of the overhead Open Road Tolling (ORT) steel gantries on the Manhattan-bound and Bronx-bound toll plazas and full-depth, asphalt and concrete pavement reconstruction at both toll plazas.

The work will take place at the Bronx-bound (north) and Manhattan-bound (south) plazas and will include 24/7 closure of one Bronx-bound parkway lane at the Dyckman Street exit to just before the toll plaza **beginning April 27** and lasting until November. One Manhattan-bound lane across the bridge will also be closed around-clock from June through November.

Construction will begin shortly on the Manhattan-bound toll plaza where two toll lanes on the left side of the plaza will be combined into a single, wider toll lane. By the end of the year, the bridge's three southbound lanes will funnel into wider toll lanes at the plaza, which will improve traffic flow for Manhattan-bound drivers, said MTA Bridges and Tunnels Project Engineer Thomas Cho.

The second Capital Improvement project involves the installation and in-depth testing of the ORT gantry equipment, a \$4.1 million contract awarded to TransCore in July 2014. The testing is expected to begin later this year and last through 2016. This project will determine the effectiveness of the equipment in capturing photographs of cars traveling at highway speeds, and continue Bridges and Tunnels investigation of back office collection of toll revenue.

The final contract to remove the current toll islands, toll booths and existing E-ZPass and all-electronic toll equipment is expected to be awarded in late 2016 or early 2017 with work expected to begin in spring 2017 and conclude in 2020.

The project will include removal and reconstruction of both toll plazas and the south approach roadways, new drainage, lighting, signs, utilities and landscaping at both plaza areas. The interior columns on the lower level of the bridge will also be eliminated; providing customers with improved unobstructed views of the approach to the Manhattan-bound toll plaza.

"Each stage of the various projects is being carefully designed to maximize efficiency and minimize disruptions to customers while this essential reconstruction work is done," said Cassandra Edghill, MTA Bridges and Tunnels Director of Bridges North.