

Tappan Zee Bridge/ I-287 Environmental Review

At present, the Thruway Authority, MTA Metro-North Railroad and the New York State Department of Transportation are undertaking an environmental review for the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor. This study is evaluating a short list of alternatives to address increasing congestion in the corridor as well as the condition of the Tappan Zee Bridge. The draft recommendations include alternatives ranging from maintaining the existing Tappan Zee Bridge to building a new structure with commuter rail.

While the environmental review is progressing, the Authority must fulfill its responsibility to maintain and operate the Tappan Zee Bridge. Regardless of the outcome of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the deck replacement project is a necessary interim measure that will improve service and protect the safety of the traveling public.

The deck replacement does not preclude any of the alternatives from advancing, nor will this work in any way influence the ultimate course of action.

Project Schedule

Work will begin in the Spring of 2007 and is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2008. The project will begin from the Rockland County shore in the northbound direction for replacement of the deck from span 1 to 20 and from span 174 to 178 on the main span followed by southbound direction covering the same spans. In 2008, the deck replacement will be performed on spans 21 to 173 in both directions

Project Highlights

- Deck replacement work will be scheduled primarily between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. to minimize the impact on motorists.
- 22 percent of the deck has already been replaced under previous contracts. This project will replace an additional 40 percent of the deck, focusing on the most critical areas including the lanes that bear the most truck traffic.
- To address any deterioration to the steel, and to expedite the work, the steel under the deck, safety walk and rail will also be replaced as it is faster to cut away both the deck and steel together than to remove only the deck.
- Four of seven lanes will be replaced by using a prefabricated superstructure system.
- Deck replacement materials will be manufactured off-site, which will improve quality, reduce noise on-site, lower costs and shorten the duration of the project.

For More Information

This brochure is part of a public information program launched by the Authority to keep the public informed of the progress of the project. Information about the project will also be broadcast to motorists via electronic Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) along the highway and by Highway Advisory Radio, 530 AM in the Tappan Zee Bridge Corridor, as well as 1610 AM in the Newburgh area. Project updates will also be sent regularly to the media.

Visit the Authority's website at www.nysthruway.gov for up-to-date project information. The Authority welcomes your questions and comments about this project.

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TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE DECK REPLACEMENT



NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY AUTHORITY

Introduction

Beginning this Spring, the New York State Thruway Authority will replace a significant portion of the deck of the Tappan Zee Bridge to improve service and ensure the safety of its customers.

This project is part of the Authority's commitment to fulfill its responsibility to maintain and operate the bridge by continuing to make the necessary investments to assure safe and efficient travel for the thousands of motorists that cross the bridge daily.

The Authority is implementing a number of strategies to minimize the impact of this project on travelers:

- Deck replacement work will be conducted primarily during off-peak, overnight shifts, generally from 8 p.m. until 6 a.m.
- The Authority will limit the contractor's day work, permitting single lane closures as needed.
- Deck replacement materials will be manufactured off-site, reducing noise on-site and shortening the duration of the project overall.

Work is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2008.

Existing Bridge Conditions

Construction began on the Tappan Zee Bridge in 1952, and the bridge opened to traffic in December, 1955. It was designed with a capacity of 100,000 vehicles per day. It has carried considerably higher volumes of traffic than originally intended, currently carrying an average of 140,000 vehicles and peaking at 170,000 vehicles per day.

Over the past 50 years, the Authority has completed several significant projects to address structural deck and steel needs on the Tappan Zee Bridge, focusing primarily on the portion of the bridge east of the main span. Recent inspections and increased emergency maintenance repairs indicate that the structural deck and fascia structural steel on the western portion of the bridge have deteriorated significantly.

The increased need for maintenance and repair of the bridge has also resulted in more frequent unscheduled lane closures, resulting in traffic delays for bridge travelers.

Is the bridge safe? Absolutely. The Authority follows a diligent program of inspection and maintenance that includes daily reviews to complement biennial inspections. A 70-member crew, headed by a professional engineer, performs daily work necessary for inspection and preventive maintenance (including painting) of the bridge.

Innovations to Reduce Construction Time and Impacts

The Authority will follow the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer (ACTT) initiative, delivering a safe, efficient, and innovative deck replacement.

ACTT is a process that aims to streamline project schedules and contain costs while enhancing safety and improving quality in corridor projects. ACTT workshops bring together multidisciplinary teams of national transportation experts to evaluate projects in order to shorten construction time, and improve safety and quality.

In June 2005, experts from around the country joined the Authority's transportation professionals in an intensive, two-day conference focused on the Tappan Zee Bridge Deck Replacement. The nationwide team affirmed the Authority's approach and made recommendations that would save time and money while reducing construction-related congestion and improving work zone safety.

FHWA selected the Deck Replacement Project for this workshop's focus because of:

- the immediate need for the repairs;
- the function of the bridge as a lifeline structure connecting New York City to points north and west;
- the limitations imposed by an unremitting traffic stream;
- and the magnitude of the project.

