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Central NY News

Work begins Monday on \$65 million I-690 bridge project in Syracuse

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[Under Interstate 690](#)

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Syracuse, N.Y. -- The traffic cones begin going up Monday as a contractor for the state begins work on a two-year, \$65 million project to replace bridges that carry Interstate 690 over Teall Avenue and Beech Street in Syracuse.

The work will not include replacing intersections near the bridges with traffic circles, a proposal once under consideration.

That helped cut the cost of the project by \$11 million from the original \$74 million estimate presented to the public at project meetings last year.

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About 100,000 vehicles a day travel I-690 on the east side of Syracuse.

At times, the work will require closing the Teall Avenue exits.

The westbound off- and on-ramps will be closed to all traffic this year. The eastbound on and off ramps will close in 2018.

Crane Hogan Structural Systems led the team that designed and will build the project. T.Y. Lin International, Stantec Consulting Services, Terracon and Barton & Loguidice rounded out the team, the DOT said.

Electronic signs on I-690 east and west of the project area activated earlier this week warned motorists work would begin Monday. But the signs didn't say what the work was for. The state announced the project Thursday.

The Teall-Beech project will replace the single-span bridge that carries the interstate over Teall Avenue.

It also replaces the current 15-span elevated highway over Beech Street with a single new span. The highway leading to the bridge will go up new embankments supported by retaining walls. The embankments replaces the current 14 other bridge spans.

There's another change as well. Plans to use a Styrofoam like material that doesn't compress to create the embankment have been ditched. Instead construction crews will compress the soil and minimize excavation.

This area of Teall Avenue and Beech Street will be reconstructed, as will the I-690 interchange with Teall Avenue, to improve traffic movement and reduce congestion, especially during the morning and afternoon rush hours, the DOT said.

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Teall Avenue will be widened to accommodate a second northbound left turn to westbound I-690. The work will include utility upgrades as well.

The work became necessary after state inspections in 2014 and 2015 identified structural deficiencies in bridges supporting the highway in that area. The stretch of I-690 between Teall and Beech has reduced sight lines, narrow shoulders, and inadequate bridge railings too.

During construction, traffic on I-690 will be reduced to two lanes in each direction using on-site crossovers. Work will begin soon underneath the median to strengthen it before the crossovers are installed, said DOT spokesman Gene Cilento.

The crossover pattern will not be in place during the winter of 2017-2018 and all ramps will be open. The DOT expects traffic to begin using the new bridges by the end of 2018, with the final paving work taking place in the spring of 2019.

"By modernizing the Teall Avenue and Beech Street bridges and the roadways around them, we are improving safety for motorists and pedestrians, now and into the future," said New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Mathew J. Driscoll.

Charley Hannagan writes stories on breaking news, the western Onondaga County suburbs and transportation. Contact her anytime: [Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | 315-470-2161.

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