

Why is the City Rehabilitating BQE Central?

Why rehabilitation is needed now and what it will accomplish.

Work is Needed Now

BQE Central is more than 70 years old. Many parts of the structure have worn down over time. NYC DOT inspections have found cracked concrete, exposed steel, rust, water damage, and other signs of age. Some of the damage is on parts of the structure that support the highway.

The highway is currently safe because NYC DOT has made targeted interim repairs and limited stress on the structure by implementing automated enforcement against overweight trucks and reducing traffic to two lanes on the triple cantilever. However, these steps do not address the level of repair needed in the long-term and a larger scale project is needed to safely maintain the infrastructure.



Deck through holes over Old Fulton Street



Typical joint condition along the triple cantilever

Why not wait for a bigger plan?

The can has been kicked down the road for too long. The result is serious deterioration that can no longer be managed through temporary fixes. The City must pivot towards a rehabilitation plan to keep the structure safe and stable.

Waiting too long would make repairs harder, more expensive, and more disruptive to nearby communities and the region. 130,000 vehicles travel on the BQE daily, including 13,000 trucks. Further delay would result in removing trucks or all traffic from the highway and diverting them to local streets, creating unsafe conditions and severely impacting quality-of-life in surrounding neighborhoods.

NYC DOT will rehabilitate BQE Central now, while continuing to advance policies and initiatives that reduce long-term travel demand on the BQE and working with government and community partners on a longer-term plan for the full BQE corridor.

What Rehabilitation Means

Rehabilitation means repairing and strengthening the existing structure (extending its use for approximately 40 years), instead of replacing it (which would extend its use for 75+ years). The proposed work would repair the highway deck, walls, joints, and other parts of the structure. It would also improve drainage, lighting, and railings. The goal is to make BQE Central safer, extend its service life, and reduce the need for constant short-term repairs.

What are the public benefits of this project?

The main benefit is a safer and more reliable structure for 40 years. While the City and our partners work to shift more movement of people and goods to sustainable travel modes, right now we need to keep trucks and other traffic on the highway and off our local streets.

During this project, NYC DOT will also consider local street improvements near BQE Central where possible. We recognize the BQE's legacy and the burden it has placed on surrounding neighborhoods.

As the project moves forward, NYC DOT will pair this work with investments in safety, public space, and quality of life for communities with a focus on neighborhoods that have been most historically harmed by the impacts of the BQE.

To learn more, visit:

nyc.gov/bqe

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