



**For Immediate Release:** 1/17/24

**Contact:** Office of Media Relations and Communications | (518) 471-5300  
| [public.info@thruway.ny.gov](mailto:public.info@thruway.ny.gov)

**TRAVEL ALERT: SOUTHBOUND THRUWAY (I-87) BETWEEN ULSTER AND ORANGE COUNTIES TO FULLY CLOSE TO ALL TRAFFIC SATURDAY NIGHT, JAN. 20, 2024, FOR AT LEAST 12 HOURS TO FACILITATE OVERPASS REMOVAL**

*Motorists Should Avoid the Area Starting Early Saturday Evening (Jan. 20) and Take Alternate Routes*

*Closure is Required to Safely Remove Remaining Portion of Brookside Road Overpass in New Paltz*

*Section of Overpass Over Northbound Lanes Was Successfully Removed This Past Weekend With Minimal Traffic Delays*

*Overpass Has Been Hit By Over-Height Trucks Ten Times in the Past Year*

The New York State Thruway Authority today announced that the southbound lanes of the Thruway (I-87) from exit 18 in New Paltz to exit 17 in Newburgh will fully shut down to all traffic at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, for at least 12 hours so contractors can safely remove the damaged Brookside Road overpass over the southbound lanes, weather permitting. The section of overpass above the northbound lanes was successfully removed this past weekend. **Motorists should seek alternate routes while this work takes place or avoid travel in the area during these times, if possible.**

Closed to traffic since May, the Brookside Road overpass has been hit by over-height vehicles 10 times in the past year and 28 times since 2019. These repeated collisions have resulted in considerable damage to the steel that supports the overpass and decreased the amount of weight it can safely carry. Following regular monitoring and multiple inspections, Thruway and consulting engineers have determined the overpass should be removed in the interest of public safety.

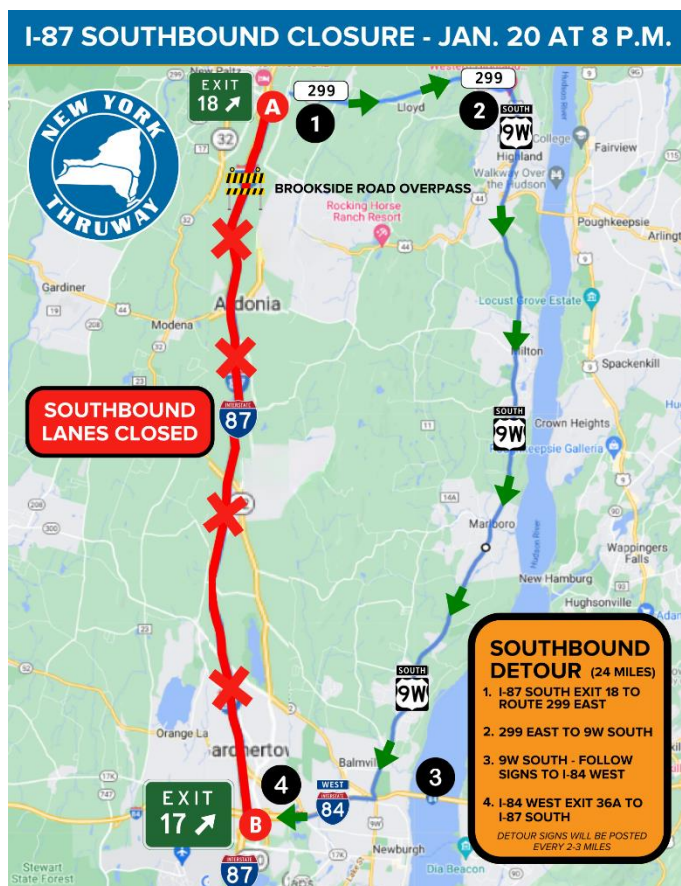
Built in 1954, the four-span continuous four-girder bridge carries Brookside Road (milepost 74.17) over the Thruway – one lane of traffic in each direction – in the town of New Paltz in Ulster County. It had a vertical clearance is 14.2 feet, which has been reduced to 14 feet due to the multiple bridge strikes in both directions, including one on Oct. 30 when its girders above the northbound lanes was struck by a truck hauling a forklift.

To limit impacts to Thruway motorists, this work is scheduled to take place on Saturday night into Sunday morning when traffic volumes are at their lowest. As a result, all southbound lanes south of 18 (New Paltz - Poughkeepsie - NY Route 299) will close at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, and are expected to remain closed for at least 12 hours. The southbound Thruway is expected to reopen the next morning, with traffic reduced from two travel lanes to one travel lane through the construction zone.

All southbound traffic will be detoured at exit 18 in New Paltz. The detour between the exits for traffic traveling southbound is 24 miles on local roads (see map). Motorists can follow the posted detour to eastbound Route 299 for five miles when they will turn right onto Route 9W south. After approximately 16 miles, vehicles will turn right onto Route 32 north, then turn left to enter I-84 west and should follow the signs to I-84 exit 36A enter the southbound Thruway at interchange 17 (Newburgh - Scranton - I-84 - NY Routes 17K and 300).

Motorists should expect reduced speeds on Routes 299 and 9W and may encounter heavy delays. Detour signs will be posted every two to three miles along the detour. Motorists should seek alternate routes to avoid this area.

The Authority is coordinating with state, county, and local authorities on this operation. Authority officials have briefed TRANSCOM, a coalition of 16 transportation and public service agencies in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, as well as transportation agencies in Pennsylvania. Tandem operators and trucking associations are also being notified of the impending closure.



Variable Message Signs on the Thruway and surrounding highways will advise motorists of the upcoming work, starting today.

During this work, both travel lanes in the northbound direction between exits 17 and 18 will remain open except in the construction zone, where the left lane will be closed.

Here's what motorists and residents should expect on the evening of **Saturday, Jan. 20**:

- **At 8 p.m. Saturday**, all traffic on the southbound Thruway will be required to leave the highway at exit 18 in New Paltz. In the northbound direction, the left travel lane in the construction zone will be closed.
- **Saturday night into Sunday morning** – Crews will work to remove the remaining portion of the overpass over the southbound lanes.
- **On Sunday morning**, the detour at southbound exit 18 will be lifted and two travel

lanes will be available except in the construction zone where there will only be one travel lane available.

- **On Sunday**, work will continue to remove the overpass, away from the travel lane.
- **The second travel lanes through the construction zone – in both the southbound and northbound directions – will open as soon as safely possible.**
- Inclement weather could cause this work to be rescheduled.

Motorists are urged to be alert, follow the posted work zone speed limits, and are reminded that fines are doubled for speeding in a work zone. In accordance with the [Work Zone Safety Act of 2005](#), convictions of two or more speeding violations in a work zone could result in the suspension of an individual's driver license.

For up-to-date travel information, motorists are encouraged to download its [mobile app](#) which is available to download for free on iPhone and Android devices. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic and navigation assistance while on the go.

Travelers can also visit the Thruway Authority's interactive [Traveler Map](#) which features live traffic cameras. Motorists can also sign up for [TRANSalert](#) e-mails, which provide the latest traffic conditions along the Thruway.

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