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Crews Ready to Thread the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge

Threading the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge

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Brian Curtis, NBCDFW.com

Crews will start installing the suspension cables on the Calatrava-designed bridge over the Trinity River on Tuesday.

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Crews will begin installing on Wednesday a web of suspension cables on a "signature" bridge under construction in Dallas.

The Santiago Calatrava-designed bridge's soaring arch went up nearly a year ago. Workers are finally ready to begin putting the 58 cables -- 29 on each side.

Each cable will be attached to the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge through holes at the top of the arch.

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To hoist the cables, workers will attach the ends of the cables to lines hanging down from the top of the arch. A worker inside will then secure the cables.

"There is a ladder where you can climb all the way to the top of that arch," said Texas Department of Transportation spokeswoman Cynthia Northrop White.

PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

The installation will take months.

Depending on the weather, one or two cables will go up every day.

"The wind will be a factor. I believe the cutoff is around 15 miles per hour," Northrop White said.

Once the cables are in place, crews will pull them tight to hold up the roadway. In the final phase, support pillars under the bridge will be removed, with the bridge suspended in mid-air over the Trinity River.

The Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge was supposed to be one of three "signature" bridges in Dallas designed by Calatrava.

But a tight city budget has changed plans for another suspension bridge to replace the existing Interstate 30 bridge over the Trinity.

TxDOT will instead begin construction on a standard bridge next year.

On Wednesday, the City Council is expected to approve \$8 million to pay Calatrava to design a bicycle and pedestrian element for the project.

A replacement for an Interstate 35E bridge is the third "signature" bridge in the city's plan, but it has not been designed and no funding for it was ever identified.

NBC DFW's Brian Curtis contributed to this report.

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