

Targeting traffic and technology

\$18M project will ease congestion at UAlbany NanoCollege

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The New York State Department of Transportation announced on Thursday, April 12, that construction has begun on a much-anticipated project aimed at easing traffic congestion and accommodating the growth expected from the University at Albany NanoCollege's \$366 million expansion project.

The improvement project, with a price tag of \$18 million, will see the installation of a two-lane roundabout

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at the Fuller Road/County Road 156 intersection, which averages 30,000 cars a day, and the realignment of Washington Avenue Extension to the north. A flyover bridge, currently under construction, will remove about 20,000 cars daily from the intersection and provide better access to the NanoTech Complex.

Actual construction will cost \$14.5 million, with the rest of the remaining \$3.5 million coming from design, construction inspection and utility work.

"Since taking office, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has made infrastructure investment and notably transportation infrastructure that links with economic development one of the cornerstones of his policy to regenerate New York," said NYSDOT

Commissioner Joan McDonald. "Reliable, efficient transportation and strong prosperous economic growth go hand in hand. Gov. Cuomo recognizes that high tech is becoming

the backbone of the Upstate economy and this project facilitates growth at the NanoTech campus."

New sidewalks will also be added to improve access for pedestrians and

bicyclists and a 10-foot bicycle lane will connect to existing bike trails. New bus bays on Washington Avenue Extension will provide safer stopping areas for riders.

The traffic project is

a three-way partnership between NYSDOT, Albany County and Fuller Road Management Corporation (FRMC). FRMC will fund 45 percent of the project.

"This is a great example of a partnership between public entities to improve our transportation infrastructure for motorists, pedestrians, bicycles and transit users," said McDonald.

Albany County Executive Dan McCoy said the project will help keep Albany County in the limelight and is a sign of things to come.

"To be part of a project of this magnitude, make no mistake about it, there's more to come. ... Making it friendly and easier for people to get here to showcase what we're doing, this is what it's about," said McCoy. "Without partnerships we're not going to get anywhere and to be competitive in today's market ... we need to be in the global market and this is putting not

only Albany County in the global market but the State of New York and this nation."

According to NYSDOT, much of the construction work along 3.5 miles of Washington Avenue and Washington Avenue Extension and a half-mile stretch of Fuller Road will be done without impacting traffic.

Congressman Paul Tonko praised the project, saying it will create jobs, support the local economy and improve the quality of life for residents.

"Investments in construction and infrastructure are vitally important to businesses and residents alike," said Tonko.

Ballston Spa-based construction contractor W.M. Schultz Construction, Inc. is heading up the project. Most of the construction is expected to be completed by the fall, with minor work on Fuller Road finished next summer.