

**19
89** | **OVER
TWENTY
FIVE
YEARS**



Lancaster Development and Tully Construction Co. begin Albany Airport connector at Exit 4 of Adirondack Northway

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Colonie, NY According to governor Andrew Cuomo, the contract for the transformative \$50 million Albany Airport Connector at Exit 4 of the Adirondack Northway (Interstate 87) in Albany County, has been awarded. Field and surveying work is currently underway and major construction is expected to begin this winter. The project will be completed by the spring of 2020.

“The Capital Region is an international gateway for tourism and commerce, and this project

will not only transform the airport but make traveling and commuting easier for visitors and residents alike,” governor Cuomo said. “Coupled with our historic investment in Albany International Airport and airports all across upstate New York, this connector will help improve the quality of life for people across the Capital Region while enhancing economic development opportunities.”

The Airport Connector project, overseen by the State Department of Transportation, will ease traffic congestion and provide a more direct route to the airport for both commuters and visitors to the region. The project also complements a \$42.1 million project, which includes \$22.1 million in state funding, already underway to modernize Albany International Airport. The project, which was first announced by Governor Cuomo in August 2018 with expected completion in spring 2020, was awarded as part of the governor’s \$200 million Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition.

With initial survey work for the project now underway, the contractor — Lancaster Development and Tully Construction Co. — will procure equipment and materials and establish a field office. Clearing and grubbing, earthwork and drainage work for the new ramps, foundation work for the new flyover bridge, and preparation for utility relocations is expected to begin this winter.

Construction will be arranged to adhere to governor Cuomo’s Drivers First initiative to minimize impacts to Northway traffic. There will be few anticipated traffic impacts during the initial months of the project, with most of the work occurring off-road beyond the Northway and Albany-Shaker Road. Work occurring later in the project timeline that may affect travel lanes will be scheduled to occur when traffic volumes are lower.

The project will reconfigure the Exit 4 interchange by creating a flyover for northbound Northway traffic. The new ramp will travel over the Northway, loop behind and to the west of the Desmond Hotel and come to a new T-intersection with Albany-Shaker Rd., close to the airport. For southbound traffic on the Northway, a new off-ramp will be built to travel behind the Desmond Hotel and connect to a flyover ramp that will lead to the new intersection.

Project plans also call for a new, direct on-ramp from Route 155 (Watervliet-Shaker Road) at Exit 5 to the southbound Northway, eliminating the need for the existing frontage ramp off the southbound side of the highway.

On the northbound side, the on-ramp adjacent to the Times Union building will be extended all the way to Exit 5 for Route 155, creating a longer auxiliary lane that will make it easier for drivers to merge onto the northbound Northway and to depart the highway at Exit 5. A noise wall is planned to be built on the northbound side between Exits 4 and 5. The project will also convert the existing northbound Exit 4 off-ramp to allow for right-turn only maneuvers onto Wolf Road.

For travelers heading to the airport from the northbound Northway, the project will eliminate the need to travel through two additional traffic lights. For southbound Northway travelers, the project will eliminate the need to travel through one additional traffic light. Crash rates and travel times are expected to decrease as a result.

The project will also enhance connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists by providing sidewalks on the south side of Albany Shaker Road between the connector road and Wolf Road, as well as a shared use path between the Albany International Airport and the connector road. Construction of the airport connector road will also free up large tracts of commercially zoned parcels for redevelopment and improvement by the private sector.

An estimated 40,000 motor vehicles per day use Exit 4 at the Northway and an estimated 102,000 motor vehicles travel over Albany-Shaker Rd. at that location daily.

In October 2015, the Department of Transportation completed a \$22.3 million project to replace the bridges carrying the Northway over Albany-Shaker Road. This was the first of two phases of work planned at Exit 4. The 2015 project replaced two bridges that were built as part of the original Northway construction in 1959.

By using the best-value procurement process — which considers bidding contractors' proposed cost, technical expertise, past performance and proposed work schedule

— NYSDOT is accelerating the project, which is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 2020. Funding for the anticipated \$50 million project was included as part of governor Cuomo's \$100 billion Infrastructure Renewal Plan.

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