



State Thruway Authority and DOT to co-locate in new Transportation Resource Center

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According to governor Andrew Cuomo, the New York State Thruway Authority and the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) will co-locate in a new Transportation Resource Center (TRC) to be built on the site of the current Thruway headquarters.

"In today's economic climate, government must learn to find innovative ways to reduce costs to taxpayers," said Cuomo. "We recognized early on that merging resources was a key part of increasing the efficiency of state government, and have worked for the past several years to combine state assets where possible. Co-locating these two state agencies is a logical step that will achieve this goal while generating tax savings for hardworking New Yorkers."

The TRC will be completed in late 2017 and will house 2,000 employees, including nearly 1,400 from DOT and more than 600 from Thruway. Initially, DOT and Thruway worked with the State Office of General Services (OGS) to consider co-location at the state-owned building at 50 Wolf Road in Colonie, and after thorough analysis, it was determined that the building configuration could not meet employee or operational needs.

The co-location of Thruway and DOT will allow for the disposition of 50 Wolf Road, which will put a valuable piece of property on the tax rolls of the Town of Colonie and Albany County and generate long-term savings for state taxpayers. The existing obsolete Thruway headquarters, opened in 1969, will be demolished.

The interior spaces of the new facility will be designed with open floor plans, shared spaces and fewer enclosed offices to maximize communication and coordination. The facility will also be designed to maximize the use of natural light and feature the use of alternative energy sources to reduce the facility's carbon footprint and the impact on the environment.

DOT and Thruway offices will be grouped by function within the TRC. Administrative, engineering and operational staff of both entities will be in close proximity, sharing conference rooms, work areas, and other amenities. Functions such as traffic management and emergency response centers will be joined to ensure a more efficient and effective statewide response to major weather and other emergency events. In keeping with SAGE principles, coordination across all core functions of the agencies will be maximized while service duplication will be eliminated wherever possible. The new facility will include ample on-site parking for its employees and visitors.

The Thruway Authority will utilize a design-build approach for the TRC, resulting in innovative, cost-effective design and construction techniques as well as shorter construction time. Under design-build, teams of designers and builders submit a single bid to complete the project based on detailed owner specifications, and agree to deliver the completed project within a set time frame and at a fixed price. Under this approach, most of the risk relating to overrun costs or delays lies with the contractors rather than taxpayers and tollpayers.

Thruway Authority Chairman Howard P. Milstein said, "The Thruway Authority has developed substantial expertise with the design-build process through our groundbreaking work on the New NY Bridge to replace the Tappan Zee, the state's first major design-build project. We will use that expertise to deliver as economically as possible a much-improved work setting for Thruway and DOT employees as well as long-term cost savings and synergies for the state and the Thruway Authority."

Thruway Authority Executive Director Tom Madison said, "While the Thruway Authority will own and operate the Transportation Resource Center, no Thruway toll revenues will be used to support DOT costs relating to the project or ongoing operations, and both Thruway and DOT will see long-term cost savings. The project will be completed without impacting customer service or existing Thruway operations."

DOT Commissioner Joan McDonald said, "The Department of Transportation strongly supports Governor Cuomo's efforts to operate our state government more efficiently and cost-effectively, and the Transportation Resource Center will do just that. This project will enable us to provide better, more cost-effective services for New Yorkers and a more productive work environment for our employees."

OGS Commissioner RoAnn Destito said, "The Transportation Resource Center is a great example of how New York State government entities can work together more effectively, and how such collaboration can help make our workplaces more productive and efficient. Governor Cuomo has made taxpayer benefits a priority and this project will mean cost savings for New York taxpayers and tollpayers, improved services, and increased revenues for local governments in the Capital Region."

A request for qualifications for the project will be issued today, and pre-qualified bidders will submit proposals later in the year. A design-build firm will be selected by the end of this year, with construction expected to begin in mid-2015.