



Construction begins on \$10.7 million Route 787, Cohoes conversion project

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Cohoes, NY According to governor Andrew Cuomo, work has commenced on the \$10.7 million project to convert Route 787 into a boulevard, creating a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly gateway to the Spindle City. The project will restore the connection between the east and west sides of the city with a roadway featuring updated crosswalks and a landscaped median. Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of next year.

“This transformative project on Cohoes Blvd. combines smart urban planning with significant safety enhancements that will make Cohoes better for residents and visitors,” governor Cuomo said. “Making it easier to cross between the east and wide sides will open up new business opportunities and reconnect neighborhoods, spurring regional growth and economic development for years to come.”

Last year, governor Cuomo announced the conversion project, which will address Route 787 through the city limits, from just south of Dyke Ave. to just south of the approach to the Cohoes Waterford Bridge. This area of Route 787 is known locally as Cohoes Blvd.

New York State Department of Transportation acting commissioner Paul Karas said, “Safety is our top priority and this project will enhance safety, connect neighborhoods and support future economic growth. Governor Cuomo has made smart transportation investments like this across New York State, improving the quality of life for everyone who lives, works and visits.”

The redesign of Route 787 adds raised pavement to its three intersections in the city—at Dyke Ave., Bridge Ave. and Ontario St. A first for the Capital Region, the “terraced” intersections will increase visibility for pedestrians and motorists, and will slow motor vehicle speeds with a gentle-but-noticeable, four-inch rise and descent on the road surface. Both the approaches to the intersections and the crosswalks will be brick red. The color contrast and raised elevations will help alert drivers to pedestrians. Narrower shoulders, new curbs, “your speed” radar signs, and a slight horizontal shift for traffic heading northbound toward Dyke Ave. also will encourage motorists to drive more slowly.

Once the traffic-calming project is completed, the speed limit is expected to be reduced from the current 40 miles per hour. The project will also include two pull-off areas in each direction for police vehicles to park for traffic safety enforcement.

The project will also add a tree-lined grassy median and a multi-use path, contributing to the gateway feel. The 10-foot wide multi-use path along the east side of the road will connect with new, dedicated bicycle lanes on Dyke Ave. as part of the Empire State Trail and its connection to the Mohawk-Hudson Bikeway.

Furthermore, the pedestrian enhancements at the road's three intersections will help bolster the connection for all those who cross the boulevard for work, school, shopping and more between Cohoes' Van Schaick Island and Simmons Island neighborhoods on the east and the downtown, Cohoes Hill and the Harmony Mills neighborhoods on the west.

For pedestrians, six-foot wide refuge islands at the median with pedestrian signals and push-buttons will be added at each of the three intersections and the distance across each intersection will be reduced:

At Dyke Avenue, the crossing distance will be reduced from 93 feet to 70 feet.

At Bridge Avenue, the crossing distance will be reduced from 82 feet to 70 feet.

At Ontario Street, the crossing distance will be reduced from 96 feet to 73 feet.

New lighting will also be added to the Dyke Ave. intersection; lighting already exists at the other two intersections. The project will also add a new sidewalk connection to the Waterside Senior Apartments on Dyke Ave.

Albany County executive Daniel McCoy said, "The traffic-calming measures that will begin this month, from enhanced crosswalks to tree-lined medians, are critical to ensuring pedestrian, cyclist and driver safety in our community and I thank the governor for making it a priority. This investment in our infrastructure that better connects our municipalities is also key to economic development and will pay dividends down the road."

Earlier this summer, NYSDOT and the governor's Traffic Safety Committee unveiled a new public service announcement and social media campaign focused on the importance of respecting flagging personnel. This year's work zone safety campaign, "Flaggers have families too," is designed to remind motorists that flagging personnel are not attempting to disrupt traffic - they are simply doing their jobs and want to get home safely at the end of each work day.

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