

INFRASTRUCTURE

‘MOVING FORWARD’



KEVIN RIVOLI, THE CITIZEN

The New York State Thruway at Exit 40 in Weedsport.

Thruway begins \$98M project in Cayuga, Onondaga counties

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A \$98 million project will resurface a large section of the New York State Thruway in Cayuga and Onondaga counties.

The project involves 61 lane miles of the superhighway from west of exit 40 (Weedsport/Auburn/Route 34) to east of exit 39 (Syracuse/Fulton/Interstate 690/Route 690). Portions of the roadway will be repaved and the concrete pavement will either be replaced with asphalt or repaired.

Guidrail improvements, new reflective line striping and the installation of milled-in audible roadway delineators, or “rumble strips,” along the shoulders are also part of the project.

“New York is investing in vital infrastructure projects that strengthen our transportation system, support local communities and drive economic growth,” Gov. Kathy Hochul said in a statement. “We’re building on historic progress in revitalizing transportation infrastructure, and we have another

strong year planned ahead.”

The project is part of the New York State Thruway Authority’s capital plan. More than \$600 million in contracts will be awarded for projects in 2026, up over \$133.5 million from last year. The authority said its one of the largest single-year investments in its history.

The \$2.8 billion capital plan will replace or rehabilitate 150 of the Thruway’s 819 bridges, according to the authority, and resurface more than 1,500 lane miles of the highway.

“The Thruway Authority is committed to enhancing safety and reliability of the 570-mile system, modernizing our roadway and providing essential upgrades to our infrastructure,” said Frank Hoare, executive director of the Thruway Authority. “With a historic five-year capital program, the Thruway Authority is reinvesting toll revenue back into the system, maintaining the Thruway as one of the safest superhighways in the nation, with some of the most affordable toll rates.”

The project in Cayuga and Onondaga counties is expected to be completed in fall 2028. There could be some disruptions to travel, such as lane closures, during construction.

The contractor is Slate Hill Constructors, a Warners-based firm.

The project will revitalize a busy section of the Thruway. Approximately 38,000 vehicles travel along that portion of the highway every day, according to the Thruway Authority.

“This Thruway improvement project will enhance safety, improve travel and strengthen a vital transportation corridor that supports our residents, businesses and local economy,” Cayuga County Legislature Chairman Jonathan Anna said. “We appreciate the governor’s commitment to investing in infrastructure that keeps Cayuga County connected and moving forward.”

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POLITICS

Hochul says she’s the leader of the state’s Democratic party

NICOLETTE CAVALLARO
The Staten Island Advance

Gov. Kathy Hochul defended her self-described moderate approach to politics and her position in the Democratic party during an interview with the Newsday editorial board.

Hochul positioned herself as the definitive leader of New York’s Democratic Party despite recent primary victories by Democratic socialist candidates she did not endorse in New York City.

“You’re looking at the leader of the



Hochul

party in New York state,” Hochul said to Newsday. “I’m not changing who I am. I will always be this moderate individual who looks at both sides, who’s very pragmatic, who solves problems.”

For her own re-election race in November, Newsday asked whether Hochul’s Republican challenger, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, might have

been a weaker opponent than Rep. Elise Stefanik, who dropped out of the race in late 2025.

Hochul acknowledged that Stefanik “had the ability to raise a lot of money” and articulate her positions with a national following, but said polling shows she would have won that matchup as well.

According to previous reporting by the Advance/SILive.com, a new poll conducted by the Siena Research Institute at Siena University showed that

the Democratic governor has a 43-44% favorable-unfavorable rating, up a little from 41-46% in April. Her job approval rating stands at 53-42%, up from 48-44% in April.

Blakeman’s favorability improved to 25-21%, an increase from 17-19% in April.

Although both candidates saw their favorability increase in the latest poll, Hochul holds a 20-point lead over Blakeman in a head-to-head matchup (52-32%). That is a jump from the 16-point lead she held in April (49-33%).