



Times Photo by Autumn W. Collins

Vehicles on Naylor Mill Road pass under a conveyor belt which has been built to move dirt from one location to another during the building of the Route 50 Bypass.

A belt of major proportions

■ Giant machine helps build 50 Bypass

By Scott Dewey
Special To The Times

SALISBURY — It doesn't take much to achieve skyscraper status on Delmarva.

State officials said the 16-foot object off Naylor Mill Road is really a huge conveyor belt moving dirt from a pit to the Route 50 bypass project site.

"This is the largest conveyor we've ever used in the state," Gee Williams, spokesman for the State Highway Administration, said of the 2½-mile-long machine. "A lot of engineers from around the state will be coming here to see it when it's working."

The conveyor belt, which took two months to assemble,

will move 1.1 million cubic yards or the equivalent of 60,000 dumptruck loads of earth from a pit to the project site adjacent to the Coca-Cola plant on Goddard Parkway.

The conveyor is the latest tool for engineers working on the \$65 million project to loop vacation traffic around Salisbury. The bypass should be completed April 15, 2003.

"Everything is going well," said Donnie Drewer, district engineer with the State Highway Administration. "Based on the construction schedule, we're right where we want to be."

Contractors spent much of the first 11 months working on two bridges — the west-bound

fly over bridge that will take motorists over Route 50 and the Naylor Mill Road bridge that will carry traffic over the Route 50 bypass.

Phase I — from west of White Lowe Road to east of West Road — started in April and will be completed in January of 2002. This portion will cost \$14.9 million.

Phase II — east of West Road to west of Scenic Drive — started in May and will be finished in January 2002. This phase will cost \$11.2 million.

Phase III — spanning east of Scenic Drive to Route 13 — will cost \$32.2 million. Construction started in June and will be complete by April of 2003.

The final phase consists of improvements to the existing Route 13 and Route 50 inter-

change east of Salisbury, near Hobbs Road. That started last month and will be finished by summer 2002. Phase III is the least expensive, costing \$5.8 million.

Among the most noticeable changes will be:

- A half-mile long barrier with an 18-foot high concrete screen west of the Jersey Road and Bypass intersection.

- Two large drainage ponds west of Johnson Pond.

- A steel frame for two 500-foot bridges across the Wicomico River at Johnson Pond.

- A partially relocated Naylor Mill Road with new traffic patterns between existing Naylor Mill Road and Route 50.

- A bridge to carry Route 50 business traffic to Salisbury over the Bypass.