

Robotics center Phase 2 likely complete by 2010

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Graphic photo courtesy of Calhoun Community College

Construction of Phase 2 of the Alabama Robotics Technology Park at Calhoun Community College is projected to begin in July with completion scheduled for September 2010.

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Staff Writer

A projected timeline shows Phase 2 of the Alabama Robotics Technology Park opening in September 2010.

Ed Castile, executive director of the Alabama Industrial Development and Training Institute, told the park's advisory committees last week that construction of the \$9.3 million Calhoun Community College project should begin in July.

The park's executive board formed two advisory committees of representatives from two-year colleges, four-year universities, secondary education, industry and government and military representatives.

The committees held their first quarterly meetings last week at Calhoun's Aerospace Training Center.

Castile said he expects the U.S. Army, NASA and other military contractors as well as private industry to use the \$9.3 million Phase 2 facility for robotics research, development and testing.

Second phase

The second phase will feature a track that's under a mile in length with an observation tower for testing of unmanned vehicles. He said the test track will allow vehicles to get up to 40 mph.

The test track will include an obstacle course. A house on the property will be moved near the obstacle course for testing of unmanned robots in a confined area. There will also be auto repair-like bays with lifts that allow testers to easily work on and store their test vehicles.

The 30,000-square-foot interior will have a large open area divided into 5,000- to 6,000-square-foot suites with control panels that feature the necessary fiber wire. At least two of the areas will be on a raised floor for security purposes.

The building will have conference and meeting space. Calhoun would provide staff and students in areas designated for any welding, fabrication or tooling that the building's clients might need.