



# NEWS

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## **Ground Broken on Second Phase of Landmark Lafayette Street/Ridge Pike Road Project in Norristown and Plymouth**

**Norristown, PA (April 8, 2015)** – The Montgomery County Commissioners together with state and local officials today officially broke ground on the second phase of the landmark Lafayette Street extension project in Norristown and Plymouth Township, which includes the widening of Ridge Pike, realigning of key intersections, and eventually a connection with the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

“This is a great day for Montgomery County and particularly for Norristown and Plymouth Township,” said Josh Shapiro, chair of the Montgomery County Commissioners. “Eighteen months ago we stood about a half mile from here and talked about what would be, and now we can look back toward Norristown and see what is, and that makes what we are launching today even more exciting.”

What was launched today is the estimated \$12.9 million Phase Two of the project, which will:

- Complete the extension of Lafayette Street from Ford Street in Norristown to Diamond Avenue in Plymouth
- Widen Ridge Pike to 4 or 5 lanes from the Norristown line to the bridge over the turnpike
- Realign Diamond Avenue with Fairfield Road and signalize it
- Move the main north-south route between Norristown and Conshohocken from Lucetta Street and Conshohocken Road to Fairfield Road and Diamond Avenue. The Conshohocken Road intersection with Ridge Pike will be eliminated.

“The benefits of this project are numerous,” said Montgomery County Commissioner Val Arkoosh. “It will create a faster, more direct connection from downtown Norristown to I-76 and I-476 in Conshohocken, improve traffic flow along Ridge Pike, and significantly improve the safety of the section of Ridge Pike involving Conshohocken Road, Fairfield Road, and Diamond Avenue.”

Commissioner Bruce L. Castor, Jr. emphasized the safety point. “Over the last five years there have been 62 accidents at the Ridge Pike and Fairfield Road intersection, and another 46 accidents at the Ridge Pike and Conshohocken Road intersection,” Castor said. “Eliminating the Conshohocken Road intersection and improving and signalizing the Fairfield Road intersection will significantly improve the safety of this area.”

The Ridge Pike improvements will also significantly reduce or eliminate the backups on Main Street and Ridge Pike at Conshohocken Road.

Ground was broken on the \$14.2 million Phase One of the project in September, 2013. It extended Lafayette Street from its terminus at Ford Street to the spot where ground was broken today – a distance of about six-tenths of a mile. It also included the rebuilding and slight relocation of the Schuylkill River Trail. When totally completed and open, that stretch of Lafayette Street will have two lanes in each direction with a landscaped, 12-foot wide median.

Phase Two of the on-time overall project is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2017. The emphasis of the project will shift back to Norristown for Phase Three, which is expected to begin in early 2017 and be completed in late 2018. That section will involve Lafayette Street from Ford Street to Barbadoes Street. That portion of the project, expected to cost \$25 million, would include:

- Rebuilding Lafayette Street
- Widening Lafayette Street to four lanes, two in each direction, with a landscaped median from Ford to Mill Streets. It would remain four lanes to Barbadoes Street, but would have no median
- Demolition of the viaduct carrying the Schuylkill River Trail, bringing the trail down to street level surrounded by a linear urban park
- Rebuilding of the drop-off area for the Norristown Transportation Center
- Connection of the Schuylkill River Trail to the Chester County Trail at DeKalb and Lafayette Streets.

The contractor of the Phase One section was Allan A. Myers, Inc. The contractor for Phase Two is J.D. Eckman. The contract for Phase Three has not yet been awarded.