



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 15, 2016

PennDOT Secretary Announces Funding for Lafayette Street Interchange

PA Turnpike Commits \$66 Million in New Capital Budget for Design, Construction

Norristown, PA – PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards announced today that the public-public partnership involving PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and Montgomery County has reached a significant milestone to boost regional mobility in the growing corridor.

“The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission recently committed to fully fund the design and construction of a new interchange between the Turnpike and the Lafayette Street extension near Norristown,” Secretary Richards said.

The Turnpike’s recently approved, 10-year capital plan provides full funding of \$66 million through 2024, which will cover all phases, including engineering, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and construction.

“This project will help improve mobility and access for Montgomery County residents, and I am delighted as a Turnpike Commissioner to be able to make this announcement,” Richards added.

The new interchange will be a full on/off connection located between the existing Valley Forge and Norristown exits, and will be designed to utilize the Turnpike’s cashless tolling system.

The interchange will tie into the Lafayette Street Extension Project currently under construction, which Montgomery County initiated and manages in partnership with PennDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The Lafayette Street Extension Project is a \$100 million effort that is improving highway access and mobility into downtown Norristown and Plymouth Township. Funded 80 percent by the FHWA and 20 percent by Montgomery County, it is currently under construction and consists of three phases:

- The first phase, which extended Lafayette Street past its former limit at Ford Street into Plymouth Township, finished construction in early 2015.
- The second phase, currently under construction, is improving local roads in preparation for the eventual interchange and includes widening Ridge Pike between Ross Street and School Lane; realigning, rebuilding and signaling Fairfield Road and Diamond Avenue; and connecting the extended Lafayette Street into Diamond Avenue.
- The third phase is on schedule to begin construction in the spring of 2017 and will widen and rebuild the existing Lafayette Street in downtown Norristown.

Together, the new Lafayette Street interchange and the Lafayette Street Extension Project will spur economic redevelopment in Norristown and strengthen one of Plymouth Township’s busy

retail and industrial centers. Completion of the interchange will provide drivers with a direct ¾-mile route into downtown Norristown to access its many restaurants and theaters, 2,600 jobs, the Montgomery County Courthouse complex, the Schuylkill River Trail and the SEPTA Norristown Transportation Center. Plymouth Township's Ridge Pike and Conshohocken Road corridors, which are adjacent to the new interchange, contain numerous large companies employing approximately 2,000 people.

Joining the Secretary were Montgomery County commissioners Josh Shapiro, Val Arkoosh and Joe Gale.

"This is the culmination of over 15 years of planning, engineering, and construction," said Arkoosh, who is also chair of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

"We are proud to have the Turnpike Commission join Montgomery County, FHWA, and PennDOT to collaborate together in this exciting public-public partnership," said Shapiro, chair of the Montgomery County commissioners.

"The interchange is the critical piece to connecting downtown Norristown into the highway system and bringing an economic renaissance to the county seat, much like the completion of the I-476 Blue Route has done for Conshohocken," added Gale.

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