



NEWS

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Phase 3 of Lafayette Street Extension Project Breaks Ground

Norristown, PA (Dec. 8, 2017) – Federal, state, and local officials broke ground Thursday on the third phase of the Lafayette Street Extension Project, which is considered the largest local infrastructure project in the Commonwealth. Phase 3 will reconstruct Lafayette Street between Barbadoes Street and Ford Street, widen the street and sidewalk, relocate part of the Schuylkill River Trail, and create a new trail hub in Norristown.

“We are very pleased to take another step forward on the Lafayette Street Extension Project that showcases what is possible with smart, forward-looking investments in our infrastructure,” said Dr. Val Arkoosh, Chair, Montgomery County Commissioners. “This project will create safer and more efficient commutes for those who live or work in Norristown and encourage more people to visit our county seat for shopping and recreation.”

The \$90 million Lafayette Street Extension Project is expected to have practical benefits such as economic revitalization for Norristown, traffic congestion relief along Main Street, Ridge Pike, and Conshohocken Road, and improved access to government facilities. The Federal Highway Administration is funding 80 percent of the total project, while Montgomery County will fund the remaining 20 percent, or \$18 million, of the total project.

“The Lafayette Street Extension Project has been a collaborative effort between the county, Federal Highway Administration, and PennDOT, with the county investing \$18 million dollars in the total project – not to mention the countless hours of staff time - which will positively affect the surrounding community by directly connecting our county seat to the turnpike network,” said Ken Lawrence, Jr., Vice Chair, Montgomery County Commissioners.

The third phase, which broke ground Thursday, will last about two and a half years into 2020. It is expected to cost \$19.5 million, with the county’s share being \$3.9 million.

“This third phase of the Lafayette Street Extension Project will create safer streets in Norristown and give residents and visitors better access to the transportation center and the Schuylkill River Trail,” said Montgomery County Commissioner Joe Gale. “We are grateful to our federal, state and local partners in making this project a reality.”

Ground was broken on Phase 1 of the Lafayette Street Extension Project in 2013 and completed in 2015. This phase of the project included extending Lafayette Street from Ford Street in Norristown to Conshohocken Road, creating two lanes in each direction with a landscaped median; relocating and rebuilding the Schuylkill River Trail; and building a bridge over Ross Street along with sound walls to protect nearby residents from noise. It extended Lafayette Street towards an eventual PA Turnpike interchange, part of the larger effort to revitalize downtown Norristown by providing easy, direct access to the highway system.

Phase 2 of the overall project was completed ahead of schedule in November 2016 and came in \$300,000 under budget. It widened and made improvements along Ridge Pike, Diamond Avenue, and Fairfield Road.

Phase 3 will beautify the existing Lafayette Street and widen it to make a welcoming boulevard for eventual new traffic coming from the Turnpike interchange and make the Schuylkill River Trail more accessible to the public while connecting it to the popular Chester Valley Trail.

Cutline:

IMG_0696 (L to R): Representatives from Pennoni Associates, JBC Associates and PennDOT (in hard hats and vests); Scott Brown, Chair of the Montgomery County Transportation Authority; Sonya Sanders, Norristown Council President; Olivia Brady, Norristown Council; State Rep. Matt Bradford; Dr. Val Arkoosh, Chair, Montgomery County Commissioners; Ken Lawrence, Jr., Vice Chair, Montgomery County Commissioners; Valerie Scott Cooper, Norristown Council; Joe Gale, Montgomery County Commissioner; Charles Tornetta, Montgomery County Planning Commission break ground on Phase 3 of the Lafayette Street Extension Project in Norristown Thursday.