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Montgomery County commissioners happy with progress of Norristown's Lafayette Street extension

By [Dan Clark](#), *The Times Herald*

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Leo Bagley, transportation planner for Montgomery County Planning Commission, talks with Montgomery County commissioners during tour of the Lafayette Street Extension Project in Norristown Thursday, July 31, 2014. Photo by Gene Walsh/Times Herald Staff.

NORRISTOWN — The Montgomery County commissioners took a tour Thursday to see the progress of what county officials are calling “the largest local infrastructure project in Pennsylvania” and found they were pleased with it.

Leading the tour was Leo Bagley, a transportation planner at the Montgomery County Planning Commission, who has helped to oversee the first phase of the construction project.

“We’ve been at this for a long time,” said Bagley. “What this is going to look like, with the landscaping we’re doing, is we’re going to change the look of how people come out of Norristown.”

The first phase of the road construction involves extending Lafayette Street from Ford Street in Norristown to Conshohocken Road. Aside from paving the roadway, crews need to put up 12-foot sound walls along a stretch of the extension to stop noise made by cars from bothering residents who live on Ridge Pike. Crews will also begin creating a landscaped median. The first phase of the project, which started in August 2013, is expected to be completed late in the fall.

Commissioners’ Chairman Josh Shapiro said he could not be prouder of the county’s investment into the project.

“Behind us you’re looking at the largest local infrastructure project in Pennsylvania,” Shapiro said. “We’re on time and this is going to be a transformational project for the community.”

Shapiro said that several of the materials for the project, including the rocks and the dirt, come from Montgomery County.

“We believe in Montco first. We believe in investing in Montgomery County supplies and Montgomery County labor and that’s what’s happening here along Lafayette Street,” Shapiro said.

“This project is going to make a huge difference for how people get in and around Norristown and get in and around our region,” commissioners’ Vice Chairwoman Leslie Richards said.

Commissioner Bruce L. Castor Jr., said it was good to see continued progress on the extension and is good for residents of Montgomery County.

“It’s exciting for the people of Montgomery County to know that years of planning actually does produce a project of this scale,” Castor said.

Phase two of the project will extend Lafayette Street to Diamond Avenue in Plymouth Township. Phase two will also reconstruct and widen Diamond Avenue from the Pennsylvania Turnpike bridge to the Norristown border at Ross Street. The second phase of the project is expected to be completed by the spring of 2016.

According to an [online brochure](#), the third phase of the project will include reconstructing the existing Lafayette Street from Barbadoes Street to Ford Street. Construction for the third phase of the project is expected to begin in 2013.

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