

## Elizabethtown train station parking lot opens

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Elizabethtown

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When Elizabethtown officials unveiled a \$9.3 million rehabilitation of the town's Amtrak station in May 2011, they described it as a "real gem."

But train riders were sometimes left searching for one of the station's more precious commodities: a good parking space.

With increasing ridership and only 45 marked spaces in the station's lot, competition for parking could be fierce.

A variety of temporary lots were set up while wrangling over the fate of a historic freight station slowed construction of the Amtrak station's planned overflow lot at the end of Wilson Avenue.

The freight station was demolished on April 30, and the parking project moved forward.

On Thursday, the new parking lot opened to commuters, nearly tripling the number of marked spaces at the station.

At the Elizabethtown Borough Council work session Thursday night, council members approved the final invoices for the project, which began in April and was completed a little ahead of schedule.

The 83-space overflow lot was part of the first phase of a \$2.5 million project that also includes construction of a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting the station to the downtown.

That work is expected to begin in "the next couple months," according to Roni Ryan, the borough's manager.

In addition to the overflow parking lot, the recent work at the station included the installation of a bike rack canopy, sidewalks, retaining wall and landscaping, along with platform banks, security cameras and the paving of Wilson Avenue.

With the opening of the new lot, borough officials said the overflow parking lot on Masonic Drive will close, with signs going up on Monday.

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At Thursday's meeting, council members approved invoices totaling \$390,700. Ryan said it was difficult to calculate the total cost of the parking lot and the other completed improvements, other than to specify that they are part of a \$2.5 million project. The work is being paid for with state and federal money.

Construction of the overflow parking lot included the demolition of a former Railway Express Agency station, which was built in 1912.

While borough officials had been working with the Elizabethtown Historical Society on several ways to preserve the station, those plans were not finalized in time.

*source: LancasterOnline.com*