

## Coatesville Third Avenue Streetscape project approved and is out to bid

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The Amtrak train station in Coatesville is seen in this file photo. Plans are progressing for a new station may soon be constructed just east of the current location in an empty lot along Fleetwood Street.  
DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA FILE IMAGE

Staff Report COATESVILLE >> State Sen. Andrew Dinniman announced Thursday that the Third Avenue Streetscape Project, the first phase of revitalization work related to the new Coatesville train station, has received final PennDOT approval and is out to bid.

Design work is complete on the streetscape project and bids are expected in by the end of the month, Dinniman said. The project will be managed by the Coatesville Redevelopment Authority, under the supervision and guidance of PennDOT.

“We are getting ready to punch the ticket on work related to the new Coatesville Train Station,” said Dinniman, who serves on the Senate Transportation Committee. “I know city residents and those throughout the Coatesville region are eager to see the revitalization get rolling and this announcement marks a major step forward.”

The streetscape project aims to transform Third Avenue as a gateway into the city from the new train station. It will include the repaving of and significant improvements to the nearby parking lot of Mount

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Olivet United Methodist Church, which will be available to rail riders under an agreement being ironed out with the church.

Dinniman, D-19, of West Whiteland, said initial design work on the realignment of the station's location on Fleetwood Street is now complete, along with plans for commuter and bus access. Dinniman also said engineers and planners are conducting a review of conceptual designs and offering updates on transit-oriented development projects related to the new train station.



This empty lot just east of the current train station is in line to be the new home for Amtrak train riders in Coatesville. DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA FILE IMAGE

The Coatesville announcement comes on the heels of the groundbreaking on work on the first phase of the Paoli Train Station Project. Dinniman joined local, state and transportation officials to officially launch that effort last week. The Paoli project calls for significant upgrades and improvements including a new center high-level platform, elevators and ramps, a pedestrian overpass, improved parking, ADA accessibility improvements, and upgrades to the existing rail infrastructure

Coatesville and Paoli are two of five Chester County communities where work is either underway or on tap for major train station upgrades. Dinniman provided updates on the three other stations and related redevelopment work are as follows:

- **Downingtown** – A formal announcement is expected in April on plans for both the new Downingtown Train Station and commuter-oriented housing and neighborhood-style stores along the Brandywine Creek. The Hankin Group and PennDOT are working together on that project, which includes commuter access and parking, as well as residential, commercial and mixed-use units. Part of the agreement also calls for the demolition of the abandoned Sonoco Paper Mill, which closed in 2009 and has been an eyesore for residents and visitors.
- **Parkesburg** – At Dinniman's request, PennDOT's Deputy Secretary for Intermodal Transportation recently conducted a site visit to the Parkesburg Train Station and issued a rapid work order for short-term, priority improvements and upgrades. Dinniman plans to call a meeting with the deputy secretary and local leaders soon to update them on that information. Dinniman additionally announced that a majority of the design work on the West Bridge is completed.
- **Exton** – Work continues as scheduled on major updates and improvements to the Exton Train Station. That project calls for the construction of a station building with a ticket office, waiting area and restrooms, as well as new, raised platforms making the train accessible for those with disabilities and other improvements such as a waiting canopy and expanded parking.

Dinniman noted that work on both the Exton and Paoli stations was accelerated due to a federal judge's ruling on an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) lawsuit. Work on those projects is slated for completion next year.

"From Paoli to Parkesburg, our train stations are front doors to our communities and I will continue to work with local and state leaders and transportation officials to ensure that these projects are completed on time and that our new stations drive economic growth, attract businesses and new jobs, leverage private investment for redevelopment, and ease traffic congestion by providing a convenient and accessible alternative for commuters," Dinniman said.

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