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COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

Pa. Turnpike Commission Resumes Design of Six-Lane Widening Project *Milepost 320-326 project was originally suspended in March, 2009.*

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission announced today that it is moving ahead with the design of a total reconstruction and six-lane widening project in Tredyffrin and Upper Merion townships, Chester and Montgomery counties. Engineering development of the improvement project — located just west of the Valley Forge Interchange (Exit #326) between Mileposts 320 and 326 — was suspended in March, 2009.

Over the past 12 months, the Commission has been working closely with Tredyffrin Township, residents, special-interest groups and elected officials to address specific areas of concern the groups raised — primarily related to the project's stormwater management features — which initially led to the year-long suspension.

In an effort to better understand and address community concerns, the Commission organized a "Design Roundtable" in 2008 comprised of representatives of Tredyffrin Township, local homeowner associations, special-interest groups, elected officials and regulatory agencies. The Design Roundtable meets regularly with the Commission's project team to discuss and provide input on the project design. The Commission reconvened Design Roundtable meetings between October 2009 and March 2010 and simultaneously conducted special Legislative Briefings to update elected officials regarding the Design Roundtable talks.

"We believe sufficient progress has been made to enable us to proceed cautiously, gradually reinstating design work on this vital project, including right-of-way acquisition for stormwater purposes," said Frank Kempf, the Turnpike's chief engineer. "All of us who've been part of these discussions certainly recognize the significant value of this project in enhancing the movement of people and goods in the region, so we're quite pleased to be getting back to the drawing board."

The stretch of Turnpike between Valley Forge and Downingtown is the busiest four-lane section of the east-west mainline, used by more than 50,000 motorists daily.

When the Turnpike suspended engineering of the Milepost 320-326 project, it also shelved plans to construct a \$65 million "E-ZPass Only" Interchange linking Route 29 with I-76 in Chester County because it would have boosted traffic on the unimproved, four-lane highway resulting in increased deterioration in the pavement, level of service and safety. That Route 29 project, however, is not advancing yet.

"There are still noise issues that must be resolved on the Milepost 320-326 project before we can begin construction on the all-electronic Interchange at Route 29," Kempf said. "But we remain cautiously optimistic that we'll soon announce the restart of that project as well."

The Milepost 320-326 project — with an estimated construction cost of \$200 million — is tentatively scheduled to be built beginning in early 2013 with completion in late 2015. It is part of the Turnpike's \$2 billion total-reconstruction program begun in 1999 under which more than 70 miles of roadway have been reconstructed.

For more information on project updates or to sign up to receive E-Bulletins and Project Newsletters, visit the project web site, paturndpike.com/ConstructionProjects/mp320to326/.