



## New Amtrak station waiting for tracks to be moved

By Barbara Miller

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Rendering of new Amtrak station that will be built in Middletown. (PennDOT)

Don't look for the new Amtrak station in Middletown to start going up for another two years, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation says.

It will take another two years of track work before construction of the new platform and station can begin along Route 230 at the end of Ann Street.

Completion of the project isn't expected until 2021-22, as long as the track work begins as planned, said Richard Kirkpatrick, spokesman for Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

The new \$24.4 million station and platform will replace the existing station on Mill Street, which isn't accessible to handicapped persons.

To make room for the new platform between Amtrak's two sets of tracks, Norfolk Southern has to first move about a mile of its track at a cost of about \$6.5 million.

A year ago, Norfolk Southern was expected to start that work, but it still hasn't begun.

"Given the uncertainty of the railroads' track schedules, a firm completion date was never set," Kirkpatrick said. "Track work construction schedules are contingent upon the availability of the Amtrak and Norfolk Southern workforces," he said.

Once the Norfolk Southern work is completed, Amtrak is expected to start moving its track in 2019, which will cost \$4.3 million.

The station design is under review by Amtrak, Kirkpatrick said.

The project also involves a public-private partnership with a team of private developers called Keystone Connections, which has submitted a preliminary proposal to build the station and related development. Details on what the project will look like are expected to be released in June, after Keystone's proposal is evaluated and scored.

A new 400-space parking area will be built, and there will be room for retail shops and possibly a hotel, officials said last year.

A pedestrian bridge will be built over Route 230, linking the Penn State Harrisburg campus to the station and downtown Middletown. And Emaus Street will be extended to West Main Street.

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The project also involves \$2.6 million in site preparation, completed in 2016, which included demolition of the former A. P. Green warehouse.

Planning for the new station has been underway since at least 2009.

*source: [www.pennlive.com](http://www.pennlive.com)*