

# bensalem park & ride project

**Location:** Bensalem Township, Bucks County, District 6-0

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**Completion Date:** 11.01.97

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**Construction Cost:** \$16,733,538

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**MPMS #:** 12872

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**Themes:** Accommodate all modes of travel

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**Project Overview:** The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) operates an extensive mass transit network throughout the City of Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs. PennDOT worked closely with SEPTA on several Inter-modal Transportation Projects to ease commuter access to train stations and, thereby, encourage greater use of mass transit to relieve congestion on regional highways. One of these projects involved the construction of a major park-and-ride facility in the northern suburbs of Philadelphia.

Cornwell's Heights station had limited parking capacity (for only about 200 cars) and is only accessible from the local road system, despite being located adjacent to Interstate 95 and PA Route 63 (Woodhaven Road). These two highways are major collector roads for commuters traveling to and from Philadelphia. I-95 carries over 80,000 vehicles per day and Route 63 carries an additional 60,000 vehicles per day. In addition, 53 trains stop at Cornwell's Heights station each weekday. During morning peak hours trains run approximately 20 minutes apart, providing a swift 35-minute trip to Center City.

PennDOT partnered with SEPTA to build a new 1,600 space park-and-ride facility and new passenger platforms to improve the operations at the station. Additionally, AMTRAK added Cornwell's Heights as a regional rail stop and committed to constructing a passenger terminal at this facility within the next 10 years. Since its opening in 1997, the Bensalem Park & Ride has seen steadily increased usage and is approximately 50% full each day. When major reconstruction starts on I-95 it is anticipated that additional commuters will find this to be a convenient alternate to I-95 construction congestion.

**Lessons Learned:** Determine upfront which design process will be used to manage the project (PennDOT's or the transit agency's). Consider this technique even if PennDOT is to be the lead agency. Early coordination with DEP and ACOE is necessary to ensure the smooth processing of permits. Early mitigation of wetland impacts through a separate construction contract relieved agency concerns.

Key factors in mass transit facility utilization are the appearance and safety of the facility. A well lit, attractive station will encourage usage and SEPTA committed and constructed new inbound platforms as part of the project.

**Awards:**

- PQI-Highway Support/Enhancement Award in 1998 (annual award on projects that enhance existing transportation system and integrate the overall transportation network)

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