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**PENNDOT RECEIVES ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE FOR ROUTE 309 CONNECTOR
PROJECT IN MONTGOMERY AND BUCKS COUNTIES**

Final engineering to start on five-mile long road connecting Sumneytown Pike & PA 309

KING OF PRUSSIA, PA (October 19) – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation announced its receipt of final approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the Categorical Exclusion Evaluation for the Sumneytown Pike-State Route 309 Connector project in Montgomery and Bucks counties.

FHWA's approval of this preliminary engineering and environmental document enables PennDOT to move forward with final engineering, right-of-way acquisition, utility clearance and construction of the five-mile long road that will run between Sumneytown Pike and Route 309 in Towamencin, Lower Salford, Franconia, Hatfield and Hilltown townships.

To build the new roadway to improve travel and relieve existing and projected traffic congestion in and around the affected municipalities, PennDOT will need to rebuild parts of Wambold and Township Line roads; construct a new two-lane road between Allentown and Cowpath road; realign Sumneytown Pike from Old Forty Foot Road to Freed Road; and build a direct connection from southbound Route 309 to the connector.

PennDOT plans to begin final engineering later this year, with construction expected to start in 2007. Construction is expected to take two years to complete.

During the project's preliminary engineering and environmental study phase, PennDOT identified a location for the new roadway; met with citizens and public officials to obtain public feedback and address concerns; and worked to balance impacts with the natural and cultural resources in the project area. Preliminary engineering and environmental study began in June 2001.

The Sumneytown Pike-Route 309 Connector project is financed with 80 percent federal and 20 percent state funds.

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