



Amtrak Reveals Plans for Expanded Parking

Approved site plans for future parking at the Lancaster Amtrak Station will provide for 89 more parking spaces. The plan also allows for a local bus canopy, taxi drop off area and a Trailways Bus canopy.

The prior proposed plan, criticized by *NewsLanc*, only added 36 spaces, and those spaces were remote from the train station.

According to plans provided by Rettew

Engineers, the construction will take place in four stages to avoid undue hardship on travelers. Where possible, new spaces will be in place before existing spaces are removed or taken temporarily out of service.

The new plans call for: Amtrak Vehicle/Employee parking - 79; Short Term Parking - 25; and Long Term Parking - 211, for a total of 315 vehicle parking spaces.

Amtrak Station Planners Accounting for Lititz Pike Bridge Plans

NewsLanc readers have asked whether the plans for the Lititz Pike Bridge, scheduled for construction in 2012, align with the plans for the Lancaster City Amtrak Station renovations.

According to James Cowhey, the Executive Director of the Lancaster County Planning Commission:

"The bridge will just touch the Amtrak property

where Duke Street ends. The property line between Amtrak and the Brubaker lot is probably right around the center line of Duke Street. And that's where the bridge is going to line up.

"So it'll just touch the Amtrak station property a little bit. But what PENNDOT has told us is just plan ahead and we'll deal with that as they do the final design of the bridge, so the final impact will be minimal."

Study: Newspapers Deepening Cuts Take Toll on Content

An article appearing at MSNBC.com is headed *"Study: Shrinking newsrooms hurt quality. Stories are shorter overall, the survey finds, and coverage tends to be local."*

The report describes *"The many and deepening cuts at newspapers across the country"* and says this is *"starting to take a toll on their content."*

The article goes on to state *"The reasons for the newsroom cutbacks are well known: Newsprint costs*

have jumped, and advertising and circulation revenue have quickened their descent this year as advertisers follow readers online. Newspaper Web sites capture only a small fraction of the revenue lost as they sell fewer print ads, which fetch more money."

The study suggests that newspapers need to enhance their web counterparts to generate more revenues.

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EDITORIAL: Strange Proposal from a Democrat

According a July 22 editorial in the *New Era*, Commissioner Craig Lehman, a Democrat, has proposed a 1% county sales tax with the funds to be applied to reducing county real estate taxes.

Traditionally, the more affluent Republicans favor such a regressive tax because, proportionate to incomes, it falls far heavier on the poor and lower middle class than on the more affluent. Democrats prefer a property tax because, although everyone pays it either directly as an owner or indirectly as a renter, it is progressive in that those who are more affluent tend to live in more expensive residences.

(Economics 1A: Items subject to sales taxes take

“Not Just Around Christmastime”: Local Salvation Army Lives the Gospel

You’ve seen them in front of stores around the holidays - all bundled up, ringing those bells.

Maybe you’ve even tossed in some spare change. Among all the extravagance and commercialism, they serve as a stark reminder that there are many people who can barely even afford to eat.

They are the Salvation Army. And if there’s one thing Major B. Bryan Smith wants people to know, it’s that they’re not just around at Christmastime.

NewsLanc visited their impressive facility as part of its ongoing effort to uncover the inner workings of Lancaster - in this case, Lancaster’s hidden treasures.

Fundraising and food collection continue year-round, Smith points out. Private donations generate virtually the local chapter’s entire \$1.9 million annual budget.

This charity enables such services as the food assistance program, the clothes bank, the Latchkey children’s daycare program, the New Beginnings adult rehabilitation program, a kids summer camp, social service referrals, and chapel.

Like Water Street Rescue Mission, the Salvation Army is a religious, not-for-profit organization associated with evangelical Protestant Christianity. Unlike Water Street Rescue Mission, however, the

a much smaller percentage of the revenue of those who are more affluent.)

But apart from the issue of social equity, there is a huge practical reason not to adopt a sales tax. When New Jersey sought to assist blighted areas, it lowered its state sales tax to induce retailers to set up stores in the targeted area. By the same logic, raising Lancaster taxes above surrounding counties would discourage both retailers and shoppers.

And it certainly would be an impediment to attracting conventions and hotel guests for the \$200 million convention center project!

Salvation Army does not require chapel attendance for almost any of its services.

“There is no compulsion for you to receive services based on any kind of profession of faith,” Smith said. “We feel that the giving of food or the giving of time - that that is in and of itself a ministry.”

So how busy are they down on South Queen Street? Christy Salkeld, the Lancaster Salvation Army’s Family Services Coordinator, says that they see at least 150 people a week.

In the Latchkey daycare program, the Salvation Army partners with a number of nearby elementary schools to provide before- and after-school care for children whose parents are unable to immediately pick them up. They participate in recreational activities, get help with homework, learn how to help their parents or guardians with cooking and house chores, and even get breakfast and snacks. And not just any breakfast, says Melissa Schload, who directs the program. Breakfasts include pancakes, waffles, and donuts.

And the children have access to excellent facilities including a recently-completed gymnasium, modern classrooms, and a computer lab. The 15 Dell computers were purchased with a \$25,000 grant from the Ronald McDonald Foundation in 2001.

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