

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA**

**PRESS OFFICE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**SCRANTON, PA**--As part of an ongoing effort to modernize, repair and make County facilities work for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Majority Commissioners A.J. Munchak and Robert C. Cordaro today announced plans to renovate, modernize and make dramatic additions to the Lackawanna County Courthouse.

The Courthouse is located on the 200 block of North Washington Avenue. The original two story Lackawanna County Courthouse was constructed during the period of 1884 to 1887 with the upper floors being added in 1896. The rectangular Linden Street Annex was added in 1964. The current building is too small, out of compliance with current building codes and ADA requirements and is in major need of upgrades and repairs. Problems include: no functioning handicapped accessible elevator, damaged floors, plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems which don't work; some ceilings leak, while others have collapsed because of massive buildups of pigeon droppings; the current office space, courtrooms and security are insufficient in size and are no longer functional.

In short, due to years of neglect and a failure to invest, our Courthouse no longer works for the people of Lackawanna County. Upon entering office in 2004, Commissioners Munchak and Cordaro pledged to make the Courthouse and its Square a major priority. This crucial project will return the Lackawanna County Courthouse to its former grandeur, creating a modern, efficient facility to do the people's business, while once again becoming a focal point for downtown Scranton and all of Lackawanna County.

Ground-breaking is set for fall of this year and completion is anticipated for the fall of 2007. Departments that will be housed in the consolidated Courthouse include, Sheriff's Office, Public Defenders, Central Court, Adult Probation, Drug Treatment Court, Law Library, Clerk of Judicial Records, Court Administrator, Court Reporters, Jury Assembly, Domestic Relations, Courtrooms, Courthouse Holding Facility, Judge's Chambers, District Attorney and the Juvenile Probation Department.

The County's investment is estimated at \$48.5 million. The long overdue project creates over seventy-four thousand square feet of new space (29,000 square feet for the Linden Street addition and 45,000 square feet for the Spruce Street portion) while providing a complete renovation to the building's sixty-five thousand square feet of existing space. The plans maintain the historic integrity of this important structure while adding handicapped accessibility, enhanced security and modern technology. Remarkably, all of this is accomplished while dramatically increasing the functionality of the building.

The project design team consists of Highland Associates, Clarks Summit, architects, engineers and interior designers; L.R. Costanzo, Scranton, construction managers; and CEP Services Inc., Moosic, project manager.