

COLTS picks intermodal designer

County transit system hopes hub will be ready in 3 years

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A New Jersey firm has been selected to design the long-delayed intermodal transportation center in downtown Scranton.

The board of the County of Lackawanna Transit System on Tuesday authorized agency officials to enter into negotiations with Sowinski Sullivan Architects, Sparta, N.J., for a contract to provide

architectural and engineering services for the facility.

COLTS executive director Robert Fiume said Sowinski Sullivan was chosen from a short list of three firms that were interviewed after the agency issued a request for proposals in September.

Originally proposed in the late 1990s, the intermodal

center will be constructed in the 100 block of Lackawanna Avenue on property now occupied by a parking lot for workers at the nearby State Office Building.

It will serve as a hub for COLTS buses and other transportation services, including the proposed passenger rail service to metro-

politan New York if that comes to fruition.

Mr. Fiume said COLTS hopes the center will be ready for occupancy within three years.

In 2005, the COLTS board awarded an architectural-engineering contract for the intermodal center to Highland Associates of Clark's

Summit without seeking proposals from other firms. The Highland plans were scrapped after the Federal Transit Administration ruled in 2008 that the noncompetitive contract violated federal law and ordered COLTS to repay more than \$907,000.

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