

*Times-Tribune editorial*

# Transit hub gets traction

The long-delayed transit hub project in downtown Scranton lurched forward last week when the County of Lackawanna Transit System board canceled an ill-fated design contract.

Now, the agency legally can bid the project to get it back on track. Several years ago it awarded the design contract, without soliciting proposals, to Highland Associates of Clarks Summit. COLTS subsequently was penalized nearly \$1 million for violating federal contract standards.

The project, on a 2.2-acre parcel west of the Mall at Steamtown, is an important one for the future of downtown Scranton and for the region. It will be the hub for an array of transportation services, including municipal and inter-city bus service and, eventually, for passenger train service from Scranton to the New York metropolitan area.

Since the train project has been delayed, the delay in the hub's construction has not been a serious issue. And a possible benefit of the rebidding is that the original design effort exposed some problems with the site, relating to track access, that should be addressed under the new specifications.

There actually is another benefit in the delay, in that construction of the \$12 million project could help to serve as economic stimulus. It will follow completion of the new Lackawanna Avenue bridge, which is nearby, and enhance the value of nearby properties that are in various stages of development.

All told, this might be the rare case where a construction delay has not adversely affected a public project.

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