



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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ICYMI: Governor Shapiro and DEP Secretary Shirley Highlight Administration's Work to Speed Up Permitting, Create Jobs, and Drive Economic Growth at Future Amazon Data Center Site in Bucks County

Falls Township is one of the first sites chosen for Amazon's historic initial \$20 billion investment to build AI campuses across Pennsylvania — creating at least 1,250 high-paying jobs and positioning the Commonwealth as a national leader in innovation.

Governor Shapiro's work to speed up and improve Pennsylvania's permitting processes is helping the Commonwealth compete for and secure major economic development projects — creating thousands of good-paying jobs and driving statewide economic growth.

Falls Township, PA – Yesterday, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Jessica Shirley** joined executives from NorthPoint Development, elected officials, and labor leaders at the **Keystone Trade Center** to highlight how the **Shapiro Administration's** efforts to speed up and improve Pennsylvania's permitting process are helping the Commonwealth land major economic development projects and create thousands of jobs and economic growth across the Commonwealth.

The Governor's visit follows an [announcement](#) in June that Amazon Web Services (AWS) will invest an initial **\$20 billion** — the largest private sector investment in Pennsylvania history — to build multiple high-tech cloud computing and AI innovation campuses across the Commonwealth, including a site at the redeveloped Keystone Trade Center in Falls Township. The project will create thousands of high-paying tech, construction, and supplier jobs, while establishing Pennsylvania as a national leader in artificial intelligence and next-generation technology.

To support this growth, the Commonwealth is investing an initial **\$10 million** to expand workforce training, vo-tech, and career and technical education (CTE) statewide — ensuring Pennsylvania workers have the skills to succeed in

the jobs of the future. Reflecting that leadership, Code for America recently [ranked](#) Pennsylvania among the top three states for AI readiness in its July 2025 Government AI Landscape Assessment.

“My Administration is proving that government can work at the speed of business — and that when we work together, we can bring game-changing projects like this Amazon data center campus to Pennsylvania,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “This project is part of the largest private sector investment in Pennsylvania history — an initial \$20 billion commitment from Amazon to build state-of-the-art data center campuses across the Commonwealth, including right here in Bucks County. We’re not just talking about economic development, we’re delivering it: creating thousands of good-paying jobs, generating new revenue for our local communities, and making it easier for companies to build and grow in Pennsylvania. From modernizing our permitting processes to investing in workforce development, we’re creating real opportunity for Pennsylvania workers and families — and ensuring the future of AI and innovation runs right through the Commonwealth.”

The [Falls Township data center project](#) is one of many major developments benefitting from the **Shapiro Administration’s** efforts to make government move at the speed of business. Commonwealth agencies, including DEP, worked closely with NorthPoint and local partners to ensure necessary environmental permits were processed quickly and responsibly.

“At DEP, our mission is to protect Pennsylvania’s air, land, and water — and to partner with individuals, communities, and businesses to tackle today’s environmental challenges and prepare for the future,” said **Secretary Shirley**. “Under the Shapiro Administration, we’re focused on making DEP a more predictable, transparent, efficient, and consistent agency for everyone we work with — from local leaders to companies like Amazon. That’s why we’ve launched new tools to improve the experience of working with DEP, including the Governor’s PAYback Program, which returns application fees if we don’t make a permitting decision within a set timeframe. I’m proud to say we’ve issued over 68,000 permits with zero refunds — a real point of pride for our staff across the Commonwealth who are delivering results every day.”

The [Office of Transformation and Opportunity \(OTO\)](#) has worked closely with DEP and NorthPoint Development to keep the permitting process on track — including accelerating the review of the project’s air quality permit, which was completed in less than four months instead of the standard six. Additional permits are being processed faster than typical processing times, including a key construction erosion and sediment control permit, which is on track to be reviewed by mid-October — two and a half months ahead of the standard timeline — ensuring the project continues to progress without delay.

This project is part of the [PA Permit Fast Track Program](#), which **Governor Shapiro** [launched last fall](#) to help major development and infrastructure projects navigate permitting, licensing, and certification processes more efficiently. The Shapiro Administration is working with NorthPoint Development to coordinate and process permit applications in a timely manner — and permit processing information is posted on [the FastTrack dashboard](#).

The Keystone Trade Center — once home to a major steel mill — is being reimaged as a hub for advanced technology and logistics. NorthPoint’s ongoing redevelopment has already attracted global tenants — and the Commonwealth’s proactive permitting support is helping unlock even more potential. Since breaking ground in 2022, NorthPoint has transformed the site into a modern logistics campus, with more than 5.5 million square feet already leased to top-tier global, national, and regional tenants.

“NorthPoint Development is proud to stand alongside Governor Shapiro and the Commonwealth to advance economic growth in Pennsylvania,” said **Jeremy Michael, EVP of Digital Infrastructure, NorthPoint Development**. “With the Governor’s support and the leadership of the Office of Transformation and Opportunity, we’ve completed over 90 percent of the site-wide remediation at the Keystone Trade Center, developed more than 5 million square feet of new warehouse and distribution space, and created thousands of permanent and construction jobs. The PA Permit Fast Track Program is a shining example of public-private partnership in action — eliminating delays, cutting red tape, and providing a clear, efficient path to get projects off the ground quickly and responsibly. We’ve seen real improvements in transparency, permitting timelines, and agency collaboration. Fast Track is helping sites like Keystone stay on schedule and win investment — that’s government operating at the speed of business.”

"We've heard it for years — major projects were on the horizon, and permitting was always the holdup. That's changed under Governor Shapiro's leadership," said **Jim Snell, Business Manager, Steamfitters Local 420**. "From day one, he sat down with labor leaders and business leaders, listened to what we needed to really jumpstart development in Pennsylvania, and he delivered. The permitting process is now faster, more transparent, and more accountable — without cutting corners. That makes a real difference for projects like this one with Amazon and NorthPoint, which are uplifting communities and creating real opportunities for our members. In my local alone — Steamfitters Local 420 — more than 850 members live in Bucks County, and many more from other trades will work on this site. These jobs matter. And thanks to the Governor and his team, we're seeing the kind of economic development that benefits workers, contractors, and entire communities across the Commonwealth."

"Governor Shapiro, your Administration has been instrumental in expediting regulatory reviews and permitting to help get this project across the finish line. Amazon doesn't invest in a place unless it sees a clear and predictable path forward, and your leadership made that possible here in Bucks County," said **Senator Steven Santarsiero**. "This data center is more than a project — it's infrastructure for the future. AI and innovation can't happen without the backbone of strong data systems, and locating this development right here in Falls Township puts us at the forefront. It's something we should all be proud of."

"When I talk to my constituents — many of them building tradespeople who live and work right here — they take real pride in what's happening on this site. And that wouldn't be possible without the building trades, without NorthPoint, and without a Governor who's doing what needs to be done," said **Representative Jim Prokopiak**. "Coming from local government, I know how often permitting can be a barrier. For years, businesses would say, 'It takes too long to get an answer.' You don't hear that anymore — not from the state. Now, people are saying, 'We're moving forward. We're moving faster.' That's a big deal. From eliminating red tape to launching initiatives like PA SITES, this Administration is creating real opportunities and bringing new jobs and economic development to communities across Pennsylvania."

Governor Shapiro's Work to Speed Up Government and Accelerate Economic Growth

From day one, **Governor Shapiro** and his Administration has prioritized delivering efficient, responsive government — and taken bold action to streamline Pennsylvania's permitting, licensing, and certification (PLC) processes to support job growth, business expansion, and economic development across the Commonwealth. The **Shapiro Administration** has:

- Released the first comprehensive [Economic Development Strategy](#) in nearly 20 years
- Business filing wait times have been slashed from 8 weeks to just 2 days on average — and as quickly as 1 day at best — helping entrepreneurs start and expand their businesses faster
- The Governor launched OTO to revolutionize how the Commonwealth handles permitting and licensing. In 2024 alone, OTO worked with over 200 businesses, resolving 60 discrete permitting challenges and engaging with more than 35 companies considering locating or expanding in Pennsylvania.
- Building on this progress, **Governor Shapiro** launched the **PA Permit Fast Track Program** — the nation's first multi-agency initiative to expedite major economic development and infrastructure projects.
- The Administration secured **\$16.9 million** in new funding through the first two budgets to modernize and speed up permitting. Thanks to this investment, DEP has reduced its permit backlog by 98 percent, fully eliminating the backlog for oil and gas permits.
- In June, DEP launched the [Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development \(SPEED\)](#) program for Chapter 102 Individual NPDES Permits related to stormwater discharges from construction activities. SPEED offers applicants the option to have a DEP-verified qualified professional conduct the initial application review, with DEP staff making the final permit decision — providing greater flexibility and predictability.

- **Governor Shapiro** [cut the time](#) to hire for Commonwealth jobs by 40 percent, filling nearly 600 vacancies tied to permitting, licensure, and certification, ensuring Pennsylvanians get timely service.
- Complementing this, the Governor launched [PAYback](#), a program that requires Commonwealth agencies to process completed permits, licenses, or certification applications by a guaranteed date or refund the applicant's fee — providing greater certainty for businesses and residents.

The **Shapiro Administration** has also accelerated professional licensure approvals to get qualified workers into their fields faster:

- Implemented multistate licensure compacts, enabling doctors, nurses, and physical therapists licensed in other states to begin practicing in Pennsylvania within days
- Reduced processing times for licenses: nursing from 25 to 5 days; doctors from 43 to 10 days; physical therapists from 31 to 3 days; and pharmacists from 26 to 5 days
- Turnaround times for cosmetology and barbershop licenses shrank from nearly two weeks to same-day issuance
- Teacher certification processing times dropped by 10 weeks, now averaging just 2 weeks, with the number of certifications steadily increasing annually

Since **Governor Shapiro** took office, his Administration has secured over **\$25.2 billion** in new private sector investments, resulting in more than **11,200 new jobs** across Pennsylvania.

The **Shapiro Administration** continues to move quickly and efficiently to process permit applications, get businesses answers, and land major deals that benefit the people of Pennsylvania. Learn more about the **Shapiro Administration's** efforts to support Pennsylvania's workers and businesses and spur the economy in the Governor's [2025-26 budget proposal](#) at shapirobudget.pa.gov and discover how the Administration is [creating economic opportunity](#) to build a stronger, more competitive economy for all Pennsylvanians.

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