

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New signs to direct visitors to area sites

Sen. John Wozniak helps JAHA fund the project

Over and over again, operators of businesses and tourist attractions in the Johnstown area have heard that it's hard to navigate the downtown area if you're not familiar with it. Starting this week, more than 70 directional and welcome signs will go up all over downtown and Cambria City, designed to make traveling through the area easier and friendlier.

The need for such signage was pointed out in a traffic study completed several years ago by Gannett Fleming, Inc., a Harrisburg-based engineering and planning firm. In addition to traffic flow recommendations that are currently being implemented, the study advised a signage program to help people find their way to public buildings, parking garages, tourist attractions, hospitals and other frequently-visited places.

"The Johnstown Area Heritage Association operates the Johnstown Flood Museum and the Heritage Discovery Center, and our experience had long been that visitors have a hard time finding one or both of our facilities," said Richard Burkert, executive director of JAHA. "The study confirmed what we already knew was a problem, and gave us the hard data we needed to do something about it."

The project is funded by a community revitalization grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community of Economic Development, which was obtained for JAHA by Sen. John Wozniak. The City of Johnstown became involved in the project, agreeing to maintain the signs once they are installed, and the project proceeded under city authority.

The signs are installed under a special signage agreement between the City of Johnstown and PennDOT.

Gannett Fleming, in conjunction with JAHA and the City of Johnstown, drew up a plan for what signs were needed and where they should be placed. Public input was also sought in the development of the plan. A total of 68 directional signs are included, as well as six welcome signs placed along major roads into Johnstown.

After a competitive bid process, the Andrew Nissly Company of Lancaster was awarded the contract to manufacture and install the signs, which are dark blue and feature the Johnstown logo developed by the Johnstown/Cambria County Convention & Visitors Bureau at the top. The cost of the manufacture and installation of the signs totaled \$65,188, which was completely covered by the grant.

The foundations for the signs were installed last week, and the signs themselves are expected to be up by the end of this week, weather permitting.

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