

# New brown signs promote local attractions

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TOM DEKLE NEWS/PHOTO EDITOR

The directionally challenged already have something to cheer about this year.

So do area attractions and the tourists who like to visit here.

Two new brown signs directing people to the downtown historic district in Bardstown and Nelson County attractions have already been placed on the Blue Grass Parkway at each of the Bardstown exits — Exit 21 and Exit 25. Another 21 guide signs will soon follow at key intersections and routes into and through town.

The signs on the parkway promote the downtown district in general, while the additional signs will promote specific attractions which pay a fee to be included.

There is no specific installation date for the additional signs, but the project is supposed to be complete by the end of February, according to Rita Riley, director of Bardstown Mainstreet.

The brown sign program here is a joint project of the Mainstreet program and the Bardstown-Nelson County tourist commission.

The Kentucky Department of Transportation runs the brown sign program through its cultural and recreational supplemental signs program.

Riley said the application process started a little over a year ago.

“We realized that there was no sign off the Blue Grass Parkway promoting the downtown district,” said Kim Huston, president and chief operating officer of the Nelson County Economic Development Agency.

Phase one of the project involved placing the new brown signs on the parkway. Phase two involves placing 21 additional directional signs along key routes around Bardstown.

“Those signs will start directing people to each of our tourist attractions in Bardstown and allow more of our attractions to be featured,” Huston said.

Named attractions include: Historic Downtown, My Old Kentucky Home, Stephen Foster - the Musical, Civil War Museum, Old County Jail, Kentucky Railway Museum, The Old Talbott Tavern, Wickland, Bourbon Heritage Center, Makers Mark Distillery, Jim Beam Distillery, Bernheim Forest and Springhill Winery.

For inclusion on the signs, attractions must fulfill certain criteria, including: Open a minimum of eight hours a day, five days a week, one of which is a weekend; located within 15 miles of the intersection where the sign is placed; on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; meet criteria set forth in the Cultural Heritage Certified Sites program and a cultural heritage certified site.

Signs are limited to four panels each, listing up to four attractions.

There is a one-time cost for inclusion on a sign, to be paid for by the attraction itself.

The Kentucky Tourism Development Cabinet is expected to provide half the funds to cover manufacture and installation costs, while the remainder is provided through local tourism funds.



TOM DEKLE/THE KENTUCKY STANDARD - A new brown sign at Exit 25 on the Blue Grass Parkway promotes Bardstown Historic District and Makers Mark Distillery. More signs on routes into and through Bardstown will be added to promote additional area attractions.