

Five new 'Welcome to Greater Hazleton' signs to greet motorists entering area

By **JIM DINO**

jimdino@standardspeaker.com

People entering the Hazleton area from virtually any direction will soon be greeted by friendly welcome signs.

With a grant obtained by the Mountain Council of Governments (MCOG), five more signs that read "Welcome to Greater Hazleton" will be added to three that are already up.

Those signs are on Route 924, at its intersection with Broad Street; along Route 93 at its intersection with the Airport Beltway, and on Route 424 — the South Beltway — at its intersection with

Route 309.

Dan Guydish, MCOG's executive director, said the new signs will be going up when spring arrives.

"The new Gateway signs will be installed this spring in Hazleton, West Hazleton, Beaver Meadows, Sugarloaf and Oneida Junction," Guydish said.

"The signs will read 'Welcome to Greater Hazleton,' with a small sign underneath that which says the municipality's name."

Guydish said plans are also moving forward to continue the beautification of Route 924.

The original Gateway beau-

tification project was done along Route 924, between Broad Street and the traffic light at the intersection with South Broad Street.

But the rest of the highway to Interstate 81 — which has a large median area — was never done.

"This project will begin at the intersection with Interstate 81, and go east toward West Hazleton," Guydish said. Meanwhile, Guydish said MCOG will be doing its joint bidding for winter road materials will be done earlier this year than last.

And two issues MCOG had considered in the past — which had been on a back

burner — will be brought back to the forefront in the near future.

"We're going to push forward with code enforcement," Guydish said. "We are going to enlist interested MCOG members in forming a code enforcement advisory committee, so we can start working on this issue.

"And we will be revisiting the regional police issue, bringing in a speaker soon.

"We will also look into the possibility of pool insurance for M-COG members, possibly for municipal insurance, and especially for health insurance," he said.



ELLEN O'CONNELL/Standard-Spe

A "Welcome To Hazleton" sign greets motorists on Route 9 as they enter Hazleton.