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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

## Murtha lands \$1.5 million for business park

By: Paul Sunyak, Herald-Standard  
11/24/2004

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Murtha

U.S. Rep. John Murtha (D-Johnstown) has secured nearly \$1.5 million in funding for the Fayette County Business Park, money that will greatly expedite its growth, according to the assistant executive director of the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority.

Andrew French said Murtha's procurement of federal funds represents "good news" that would permit the fledgling business park, located along Route 40 near Uniontown Mall, to continue steamrolling toward full build-out.

In the Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed by the U.S. House and Senate on Saturday night, Murtha obtained \$1 million for road development another \$485,000 for infrastructure development, both critical to the park's continued success.

According to a Murtha press release, the \$1 million for roads would permit Matthew Drive to be upgraded from Route 21 to New Salem Road, including improvements on Route 119 ramps, and for Matthew Drive to be fully extended through the park to Fan Hollow Road. That money would also fund construction of service and access roads, and utility installation.

The press release said the additional \$485,000 would extend sewer and water lines, and move earth to prepare sites for development and similar activity.

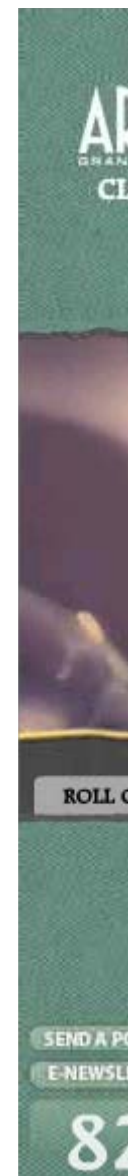
"That's very good news. We had funding in place to do a lot of the infrastructure work in the park that we've actually developed (so far)," said French. "This will allow us to extend Matthew Drive the full length, picking up where we've left off and going all the way to Fan Hollow Road and Route 40."

French also said the federal funds would help the authority make the required dollar-for-dollar match in order to qualify for \$2 million set aside for park development in the Pennsylvania capital budget.

"This \$1.4 million being supplied through Murtha will allow us to match a portion of that money and allow us to proceed with completing the infrastructure in that portion of the park," said French. "We were going to have to match the money no matter what. It was just a matter of timing ... The Murtha money allows us to proceed with these infrastructure improvements sooner rather than later."

Cindy Abram, Murtha's press secretary, said the only hitch in seeing the money awarded concerns the fact that the bill is being sent back to the House for deletion of a controversial provision.

Abram said that provision would enable the House and Senate Appropriations committees to examine the tax records of



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individual citizens. She said the deletion would not affect the eventual awarding of the money. "This provision has to be repealed. But that's the only thing, to the best of my knowledge, that's going to be affected. The whole bill has passed, but they have to repeal this provision," said Abram. "Absolutely, there's no question (the money will be coming)."

Like French, Robert Schiffbauer, South Union Township supervisor, was not aware of Murtha's procurement of such a large sum. However, Schiffbauer said Murtha should be thanked for his involvement and for helping address needs in Fayette County.

"This started back several years ago, where we had been working with PennDOT. Murtha and his staff came out several times to the park," said Schiffbauer. "He'd already procured \$400,000. ...It's great, fantastic (news). It's to address and accommodate the growth in the area.

"This is the most heavily traveled traffic intersection (Route 21 and Matthew Drive) in the county. This project widens Matthew Drive, it widens the bypass ramps for Route 119 and it allows for a better flow of the traffic on Matthew Drive, the Route 119 bypass and Route 21."

The upgrades funded by the Murtha money also permit further development of the county business park and the adjacent Widewaters development, said Schiffbauer.

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