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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

Brownsville to get \$298,230

By Christine Haines, Herald-Standard
11/04/2004

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BROWNSVILLE - More than a quarter million dollars is coming to Brownsville for community revitalization projects.

U.S. Rep. Jack Murtha announced Friday that a grant for \$298,230 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been approved for projects in Brownsville. The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority will administer the grant.

"We're expecting to get a contract from HUD shortly," said Andrew French, assistant executive director of HUD. "Most of the projects we've identified, we've gotten matching funds from other sources, so we were able to start on the planning stages."

Projects slated for funding from the grant include Phase II of the Brownsville Wharf project, development of a community room at Flatiron II, and development of the streetscape on upper Market Street.

Brownsville Mayor Norma Ryan said Murtha made a commitment to help Brownsville with the projects several years ago after visiting the borough. Murtha was impressed with the wharf project and asked how he could help. Ryan said the bulk of the grant will be spent on the wharf, including a face-lift for the wall facing the river, improved accessibility for riverboats such as those in the Gateway Clipper fleet, and docks on the Dunlap Creek side of the wharf.

"We'll also be improving the road and working toward

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handicapped accessibility," Ryan said.

Ryan said part of the grant will go toward improvements to the basement level of Flatiron II, installing heating and air-conditioning so it can be used for a community room, artifact storage and rental space.

Ryan said there isn't enough money in the grant to carry out the North Side streetscape project that calls for utilities to be moved underground, new signage and decorative lighting, but there will be enough to have schematic drawings done for the plan and to start implementation. Ryan said the streetscape project is designed to improve the first impression Brownsville makes on people entering town from the Lane-Bane Bridge on Route 40.

"The intent would be to design it over the winter and put it out for bids in late winter/early spring so we can start construction in the spring," French said.

Ryan said a portion of the grant money will also go toward roof repairs at Nemaocolin Castle and to improve handicapped accessibility at the Brownsville Free Public Library.

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