

Visually Speaking: ***Bringing Our Stories to Life***



**A Guide to sign development with
The Delaware & Lehigh National
Heritage Corridor**



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I. Introduction

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L Corridor) is a non-profit organization that connects people to nature, culture, communities, recreation and our industrial heritage. We work in partnership with private groups and interested citizens, county and municipal governments, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government to conserve cultural and natural resources in the five-county region of Pennsylvania that traverses the historic Delaware and Lehigh Canals. Since the Delaware & Lehigh's designation by Congress in 1988, it has been our mission to restore historic places, conserve green space for public use, and preserve and interpret our heritage to enhance life for generations to come.

One mandate of the D&L is to help visitors and residents navigate the Corridor and better understand its rich and complex history, culture, and landscape. Creating signs that direct travelers, welcome visitors, and interpret sites is an important means of fulfilling that mandate. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to enhance your site and the Corridor by adding proper signage.

A. Visually Speaking

Visually Speaking is a set of guidelines for the design of signs throughout the Corridor. The D&L has over 600 signs installed across the Corridor's diverse landscape. The standards set in Visually Speaking provide for a unity that links them all together, while allowing each site to tell its unique story.

All signs must conform to the standards found in Visually Speaking. Developed exclusively for the D&L by Cloud Gehshan Associates, Visually Speaking has set the standard for wayfinding systems across the nation. Copies of the guidelines and forms are available from the D&L office and online at <https://delawareandlehigh.org/visually-speaking/>

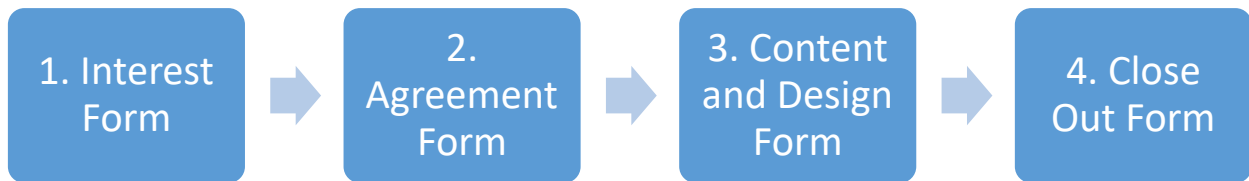
B. Using this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to inform landowners, partners, and the public on design, information, and installation requirements for Visually Speaking elements. This guide will focus on the development of interpretive signage, directional and directional wayfinding signage.

The Visually Speaking Process reviews the order of operations for landowners and partners when developing a Visually Speaking element.

II. The Process

Please use this executive summary as a review for what the Visually Speaking Process requires. Each of these are steps required to request, agree upon, design and fabricate the Visually Speaking element



1. Interest Form: This tells us what you are interested in making with the D&L. Have the following prepared prior to filling out the form:

- A sign type
- A location for the sign
- Available funding

2. Agreement Form: Establishes who the owners of the sign are, how much each partner is willing to contribute, and when the installation of the sign will take place. Please have:

- All financial information of landowners and partners established
- Signatures of all partners and landowners

3. Content and Design Form: When creating a new sign, landowners or project managers fill this out to tell the D&L what information will be on the sign. Additional assistance for content and design will involve an hourly fee:

- All landowner and partner logos or official seals in Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, JPEG, PNG or TIF image in at least 300 dpi
- Researched text
- Historically accurate imagery that is at least 300 dpi

4. Close-Out Form: This form records professional, volunteer, and equipment/supplies used during the installation of a sign. Values from this form are used as in-kind match when applicable. Please record and provide copies of:

- Receipts for purchased supplies and hours of rented equipment
- Time-sheets of employee time spent on the installation project
- Documentation of professional services on their letterhead

All signs require 4-6 weeks for fabrication after final design approval.

Delivery recipients will be notified the day before delivery by FedEx that their shipment is on its way. We cannot give earlier notification due to the fact that once the shipment has left the fabricator, it is in the hands of FedEx. At the time of delivery, it is suggested that 3-4 able-bodied individuals and/or a forklift be present to assist in removing the sign from the truck. Ensure that all necessary staff and equipment is prepared to accept the delivery.

6 months after the sign is delivered, the sign must be installed. If the sign is not installed within 6 months, the D&L will not reimburse the landowners or partners the agreed upon financial contribution towards the design and fabrication of the sign. This method is to ensure that all signs purchased by the landowners, partners and D&L are installed and properly utilized. Proof of installation is the submission of a Close-Out Form to the Visually Speaking Manger. All landowners or partners will then be reimbursed for their financial contribution.

III. Deciding on a Sign Type

A. Audience

Who is your audience? How will the sign be used by visitors? How are people traveling to or through the location?

This question is very important when picking a sign's style and location. As a multi-use trail, pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular drivers should be considered. Larger signs with bolder text is suggested for vehicular traffic while smaller slimmer signs might be best for pedestrian and on-trail use. For usage suggestions, please refer to the Sign Specification section starting on page 7 of this document.

B. Location

Where is the best location? What are the logistical constraints of the location? Are there security or safety concerns where the sign will be placed?

These are all questions landowners should ask themselves before beginning this process. Sites with few staff members will use signs as a substitute for active interpretation. Sites with on-site staff will use signs to supplement their existing programs or as a means of appealing to visitors in off-peak hours. Always consider replacing existing signage first before deciding to install new signage. Too much signage within an area can disrupt a visitor's ability to enjoy the site.

C. Information

What information do you want to tell your audience at this specific location?

What is the key information your audience needs to know? For directional signs, offer visitors key directions at decision points. For interpretive signs often the goal is to provide further explanation of what your audience is seeing, or to explain what used to occur in this location that they cannot see.

D. Sign Type

What type of sign is best?

Each sign in Visually Speaking has an intended use, appropriate information and audience. You have to match your needs to the correct sign type to find the best sign. In some cases, there may not be an appropriate sign style in Visually Speaking for what you are trying to accomplish. Please contact the Visually Speaking Manager if you have concerns or questions.

E. Cost

How much will it cost me?

The D&L's Visually Speaking Manager will not be able to provide a final amount until the Agreement Form has been provided by the D&L Visually Speaking Manager and signed

by landowners and partners. A ballpark estimate is provided in Sign Specifications starting on page 7 of this document.

IV. Sign Specifications

A. Interpretive Signage

Each interpretive panel tells a different story, but we want to keep the elements of each sign consistent. Please refer to the following definitions for an explanation of each sign element. Figures follow each of the explanations for a better understanding of each sign's elements.

1. High Profile Interpretive Signage (Panel or Kiosk)

Description: Single-sided outdoor upright (like a poster) fiberglass panel 48" tall by 36" wide and base display. Can be arranged as a stand-alone, double or triple panel displays as kiosks. Provide information/education to the public about the D&L National Heritage Corridor and its partners.

Purpose: To provide additional background information, general location information or historical interpretation about site-specific information or regional information.

Audience: Pedestrians.

Suggested Locations: Placed where pedestrians are walking through trailheads, parks, outside museums or along the trail. Signs are not suggested for narrow parts of a trail, areas without sidewalks, or near high-traffic intersections/roadways. Signs cannot block or impede the view of the primary resource.

Estimated Cost (Panel) \$1,000 panel and frame
\$500 - \$600 panel only

Estimated Cost (Kiosk) \$2,500 for 3 high-profile panels and base
\$2,000 for 2 high-profile panels and base
\$500 - \$600 panel only

The D&L have created many high-profile interpretive panels which are applicable to sites throughout the Corridor. Please consult the D&L Visually Speaking Manager if you wish to see a list and sample of these designs.

Elements of High Profile Interpretive Signage

- Title:
 - Creative and expressive heading for your sign. Capture the essence of the panel's information.
 - **Maximum** 30 characters and 1 line.

- Logos:
 - Must be of landowner and organizations who funded and helped design the sign. Give recognition to the landowners and partners who contributed towards the sign. Landowner must be included.
 - 2 – 4 logos/official seals in high-quality electronic format (AI, InDesign, EPS, PDF, JPEG or PNG)
 - Submitted via email or uploaded on our website.

- Text:
 - Provide important or interesting information without overburdening the reader. Avoid technical language. Assume your audience is an average high school student. Must be accurate and factual. This might require historical research into the topic, if it does not already exist.
 - 250 – 300 word limit, **maximum** 5 paragraphs

- Quote:
 - Give the story a human voice. Can be important figure in your organization, a historical celebrity that commented on the site, or a local who knew the site well. The most effective quotes will be the most unique, witty, or colorful.
 - 20 – 30 characters **maximum**
 - Please consult the D&L Historian if you have questions finding an appropriate quote.

- Dates:
 - A range of years that represent when the site existed or when significant events took place.
 - Format of YYYY – YYYY.

- Pictures and Graphics:
 - Historic photographs, drawings, charts or graphs describing important trends, or diagrams showing how artifacts worked.
 - **Maximum** 3 images at a **minimum** of 300 dpi and submitted via email or on the online form.

- The D&L can provide contact to a contracted designer. Services by the designer will be an addition to the final price and will be 100% funded by the landowner or partners.
- Captions:
 - Identify the subject of a graphic and tie it into the main text
 - Many readers will look only at the graphics and captions and not read the full text, making the captions an important means of telling your story. Each caption stands alone as a bite size story so that readers leave with at least one message.
 - **Maximum** 45 characters or 2 sentences long.

DATES

1831-1932

Mules and Men

LOGOS



TITLE

"You didn't dare to be mean to your animals on the Delaware. Boy, they'd arrest you right away. I chewed tobacco a little and if I left the pack sticking out of my back pocket, when I went by mule he would pull it out of my pocket. I often gave him some. It was good for them."

Joe Reed
Boatman

QUOTE



Each mule... The mule was...
each mule...
each mule...

TEXT

MULE POWER

Mules provided the power to move boats along the Delaware Canal. The mule is the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse. Compared to a horse, the surefooted mule ate less, had stronger endurance and better health. It was natural for a team to pull **twenty-five miles or more** under their hooves each day.

OUTFITTING A MULE

Equipment included a harness, fly net, bells, hat and feed bag. **Canallers owned their mules** and harness, often bought from the coal company's stables and equipment stores.

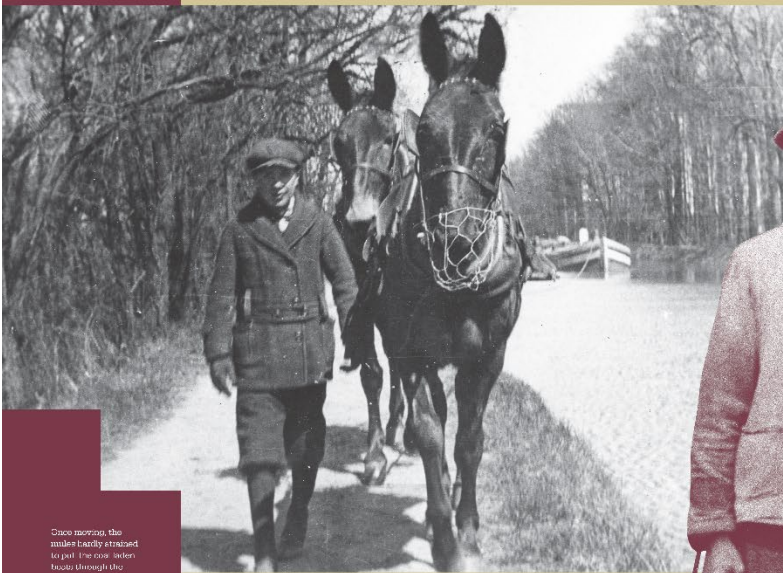
A MULE'S DAY

The working day for the mules began with grooming, light feeding and harness fitting. Some mule drivers fed their team the first meal after working an hour, claiming the animals stayed healthier that way. When the tow line went slack it was time to feed the mules. The driver hung a feed bag around each animal's neck allowing it to **eat while working**.

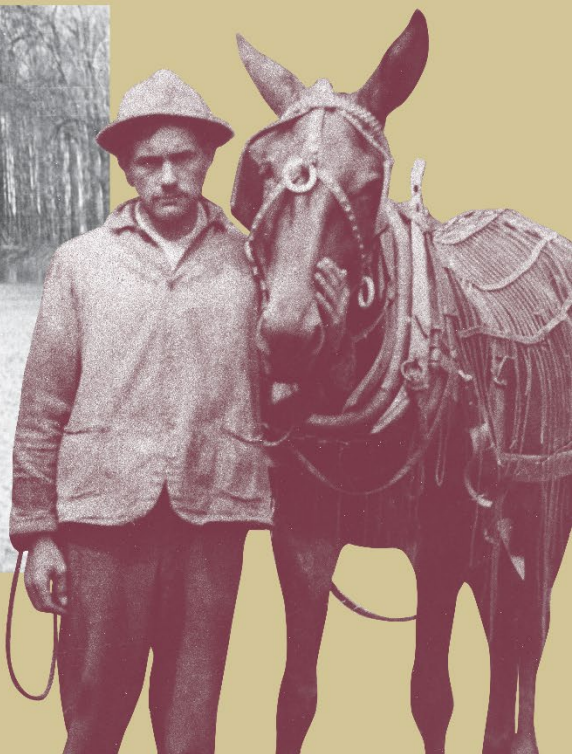
Mules had an unusual form of relaxation. According to one boatman, Howard Swope, if the mules seemed tired during the day, the driver "...would let them have a roll or two in a nearby field and then continue on for several more hours as the mules would then be as fresh as if they had a nap."

The drivers, quite attached to their teams during the long hours together, fondly bragged about the mules' **intelligence and instinct**. A well trained team traveled the towpath unattended for miles, allowing the driver to rest on the boat.

300 dpi IMAGES



Close morses, the mules barely strained to pull the coal laden boats through the channel.



CAPTION

Long working hours provided time for the driver to grow attached to the strong mules. Notice the fly protective gear.

2. Low Profile Interpretive Signage

Description: Single-sided stand-alone outdoor waist high interpretive fiberglass panel 24" wide by 18" tall and base display.

Purpose: To provide additional background information or historical interpretation about site-specific information about something that you can see.

Audience: Pedestrians.

Suggested Locations: Primarily on a trail or sidewalk. Must be placed directly on location so the user can look at the information, graphics and the place, element or artifact. Cannot be connected to another low-profile panel, must be stand-alone.

Estimated Cost - \$750 panel and frame
\$250 panel only

The D&L have created many low-profile interpretive panels which are applicable to sites throughout the Corridor. Please consult the D&L Visually Speaking Manager if you wish to see a list and sample of these designs.

Elements of Low-Profile Interpretive Signage

- Title:
 - Creative and expressive heading for your sign. Capture the essence of the panel's information.
 - **Maximum** 25 characters and 1 line.

- Logos:
 - Must be of landowner and organizations who funded and helped design the sign. Give recognition to the landowners and partners who contributed towards the sign. Landowner must be included.
 - 2 – 4 logos/official seals in high-quality electronic format (AI, InDesign, EPS, PDF, JPEG or PNG)
 - Submitted via email or uploaded on our website.

- Text:
 - Provide important or interesting information without overburdening the reader. Avoid technical language. Assume your audience is an average high school student.
 - Must be accurate and factual. This might require historical research into the topic, if it does not already exist.
 - 200 – 250 word limit, max 3 paragraphs

- Quote:
 - Give the story a human voice. Can be important figure in your organization, a historical celebrity that commented on the site, or a local who knew the site well.
 - The most effective quotes will be the most unique, witty, or colorful.
 - 20 – 30 characters **maximum**
 - Please consult the D&L historian if you have questions finding an appropriate quote.

- Dates:
 - A range of years that represent when the site existed or when significant events took place.
 - Format of YYYY – YYYY.

- Pictures and Graphics:
 - Historic photographs, drawings, charts or graphs describing important trends, or diagrams showing how artifacts worked.
 - **Minimum** of 300 dpi and submitted via email or on the online form.
 - The D&L can provide contact to a contracted designer. Services by the designer will be an addition to the final price and will be 100% funded by the landowner or partners.

- Captions:
 - Identify the subject of a graphic and tie it into the main text.
 - Many readers will look only at the graphics and captions and not read the full text, making the captions an important means of telling your story. Each caption stands alone as a bite size story so that readers leave with at least one message.
 - **Maximum** 45 characters or 2 sentences long.

QUOTE

From Mountain to Market

TITLE

"A few miles above Easton, the Lehigh was pocked with white water at almost every turning. To navigate it seemed impossible."

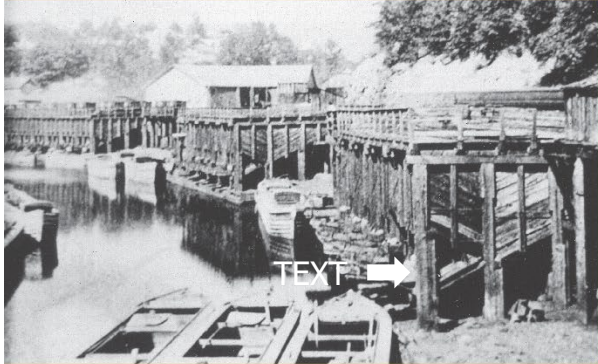
Josiah White, Co-founder of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company

LOGOS



DATES

1829-1942



TEXT

TEXT

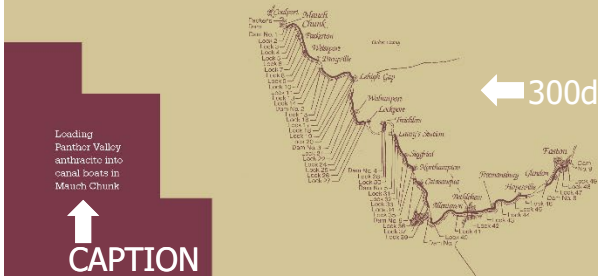
Pennsylvania's anthracite (hard coal) lay entombed within isolated, rugged mountain valleys north and west of the turbulent Lehigh River. Anthracite spelled money to those who knew of markets downstream, but low-cost transportation challenged prospective coal barons. By the beginning of the 19th century, eager businessmen struggled toward a solution.

A civil engineering feat of its time, the Lehigh Navigation tamed an almost 1,000 foot elevation drop between White Haven and Easton. Creatively designed, it used dams, hand-dug channels and calm river straits to weave a path downstream. It eventually became known as the largest capacity and longest running towpath canal in America. The section between Mauch Chunk (today's Jim Thorpe) and Easton still offers towpath trails and watered sections.

Though successful longer than most due to location and industries it spawned, the canal finally closed. Costly floods, railroad systems, evolving highway networks and declining coal sales eventually took their toll. The last boat floated peacefully along the canal the evening before the flood of 1942. An era and lifestyle ended.

Each boat captain warned locktender's of their approach through some type of horn. Conch shells were popular.

18"



300dpi IMAGE

Loading Panther Valley anthracite into canal boats in Mauch Chunk

CAPTION

B. Directional Signage

These signs provide the opportunity to direct visitors to or through a site, welcome visitors, and list specific regulations. The text on these signs should be short and simple so that visitors can read them while passing by in a vehicle or on foot.

Directional signage comes in a variety of shapes and sizes, each with a specific purpose. For this information and more, please read through the following sections on Directional Signage.

1. Main Entrance (Large and Small)

Description: – 52” x 60” (Large) or 55” x 37” (Small) fiberglass panels mounted on two aluminum posts.

Purpose: Indicate to visitors they have arrived to their destination. Main entrance signs are used to indicate that they are at an important part of the Corridor’s story.

Audience: Primarily vehicular drivers. Pedestrians and cyclists are a secondary audience.

Locations: At the entrance of a trailhead, park, museum, or heritage site. Best in high visibility locations that alert drivers that they have arrived at the location. Can be along the edge of a parking lot or at a road intersection. They are not used on-trail due to their size.

Estimated Cost: \$3,500 large entrance sign
 \$2,800 small entrance sign

Elements of Main Entrance (Large and Small) Signs

- Title:
 - Typically the trailhead name or name of destination visitors are arriving to.
 - Large Main Entrance: **Maximum** 25 characters.
 - Small Main Entrance: **Maximum** 15 characters.

- Sub Text: Line 1: Landowner

 Line 2: The County, Municipality, Township, Borough or Bureau of the sign’s location. Must not be a duplicate of Line 1.

 Line 3: (Optional) “Access To:” if trailhead has river trail access, boat launches or adjacent trails. Museums, historic locations or hours of operation

Line 4: (Optional) “Access To:” if trailhead has river trail access, boat launches or adjacent trails. Museums, historic locations or hours of operation

- Large Main Entrance: **Maximum** 50 characters per line
- Small Main Entrance: **Maximum** 30 characters per line
- Logos:
 - Give recognition to the landowners and partners who contributed towards the sign. Landowner must be included. Other logos will be partners who contributed funding towards the sign.
 - Large Main Entrance: **Maximum** 3 logos
 - Small Main Entrance: **Maximum** 3 logos
 - **Minimum** 300 dpi JPEG or PNG. Adobe Illustrator, EPS or InDesign files are preferred.

60"

52"



Large main entrance sign.



Small main entrance sign.

2. Pedestrian Blade (Directional Post)

Description: – 80”x9” fiberglass “blade” with aluminum support placed perpendicular to the D&L Trail or in urban locations with pedestrian traffic. Contains up to four locations and trail partner logos. Provide pedestrian on-trail users information to indicate direction and distance to up to four locations and sites.

Purpose: To tell pedestrians the direction and distance to four locations and sites.

Audience: Pedestrians and cyclists.

Suggested Installation Locations: Primarily perpendicular to the D&L Trail.

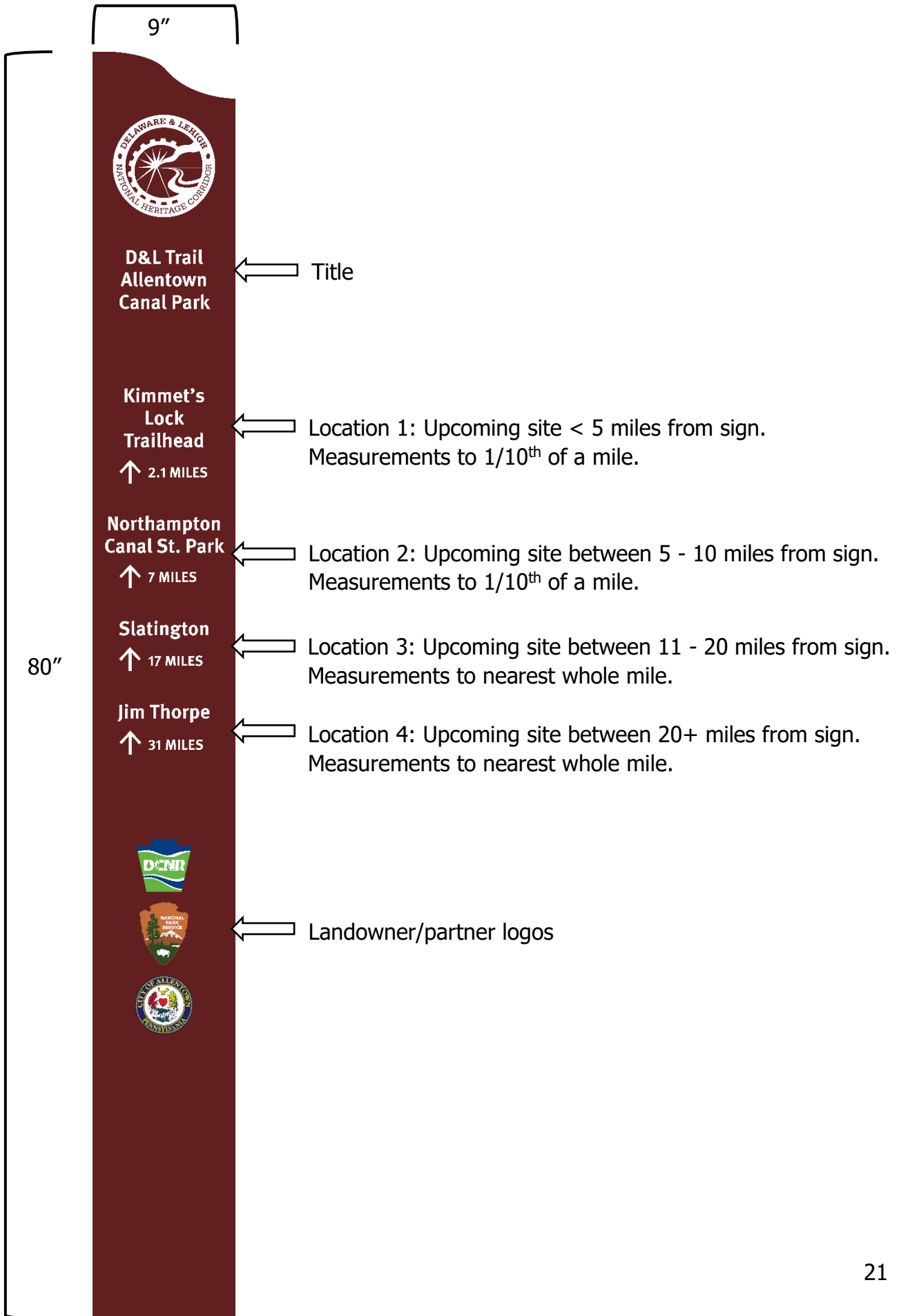
Estimated Cost: \$1,600

Elements of Pedestrian Blade Signs (Directional Post)

- Title:
 - Typically the trailhead name or name of destination visitors currently are at.
 - **Maximum** 25 characters. **Maximum** 2 lines.
- Locations:
 - Provide information to trail users on upcoming trailheads and towns along the D&L Trail.
 - **Maximum** 4 locations. **Maximum** 25 characters. Can be up to 2 lines
 - The following regulations are placed to allow variety in locations on the pedestrian blades:
 - Location 1 – must be upcoming trailhead or interest point under 5 miles from pedestrian blades location. Distances may be to a 1/10th of a mile.
 - Location 2 – must be a trailhead or interest point 5 – 10 miles from sign. Distances may be to a 1/10th of a mile.
 - Location 3 – must be a town 11 – 20 miles from sign. Distances are rounded to the nearest whole mile.
 - Location 4 – must be a town 20+ miles from sign. Distances are rounded to the nearest whole mile.
- Logos:
 - Give recognition to the landowners and partners who contributed towards the sign. Landowner must be included.
 - **Maximum** 3 logos.

- **Minimum** 300 dpi JPEG or PNG. Adobe Illustrator, EPS or InDesign files are preferred.

The D&L have created a GIS system that accurately identifies each trailhead and town along the D&L Trail. Contact the Visually Speaking Manager for a consultation on suggested locations.



3. Directional Vehicular

Description: Double-sided fiberglass panel mounted on 11' surface-mounted or buried aluminum post. Fiberglass panels may contain one, two or three messages (single, double or triple unit message). Each side of panel can contain different messages and directional arrows.

Purpose: Leads visitors to sites open during expected hours throughout the year. Promote the location of museums, historical sites and D&L trailheads. Messages cannot contain specific business establishments (Movie Theatre, Farmers Market, or Shopping Plaza).

Audience: Primarily vehicular drivers. Secondary pedestrians.

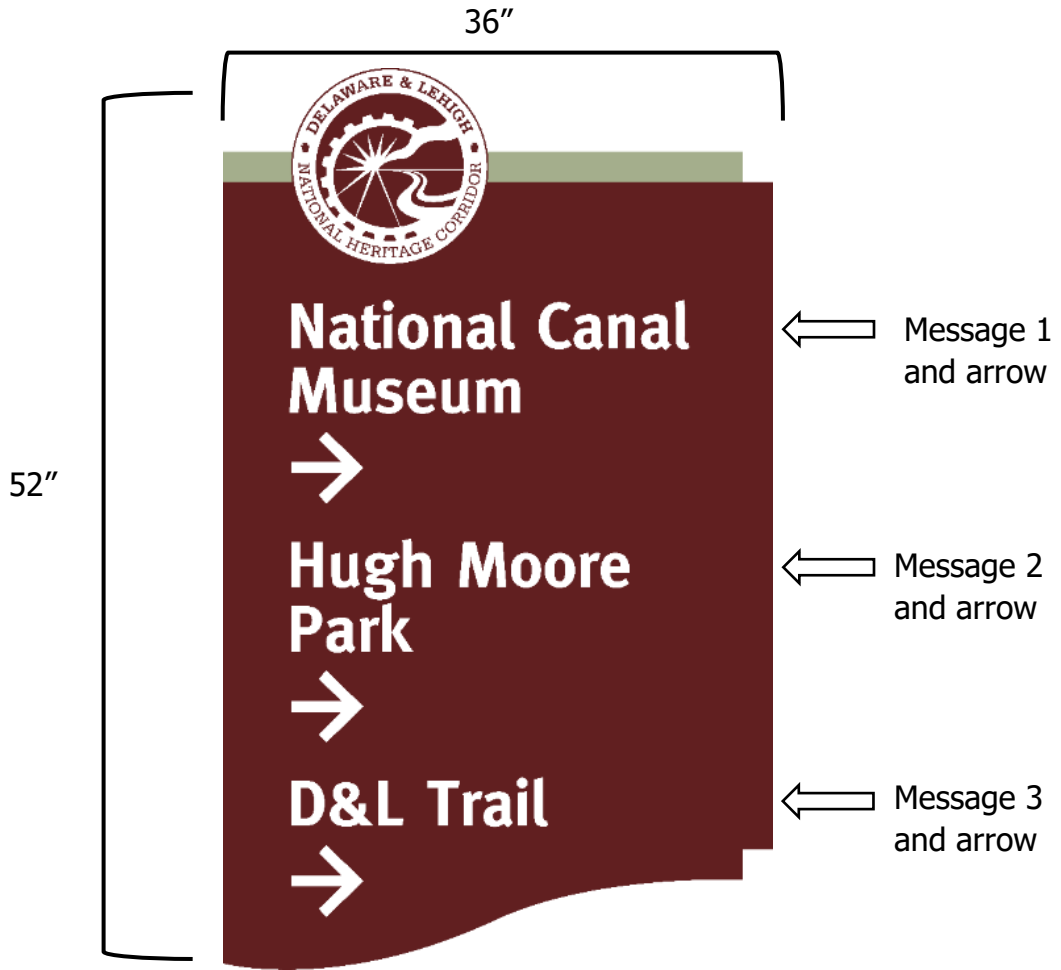
Location: Along roads or at intersections. May be used, but not ideal for high-traffic trail intersections.

Cost: \$4,000 per panel + post

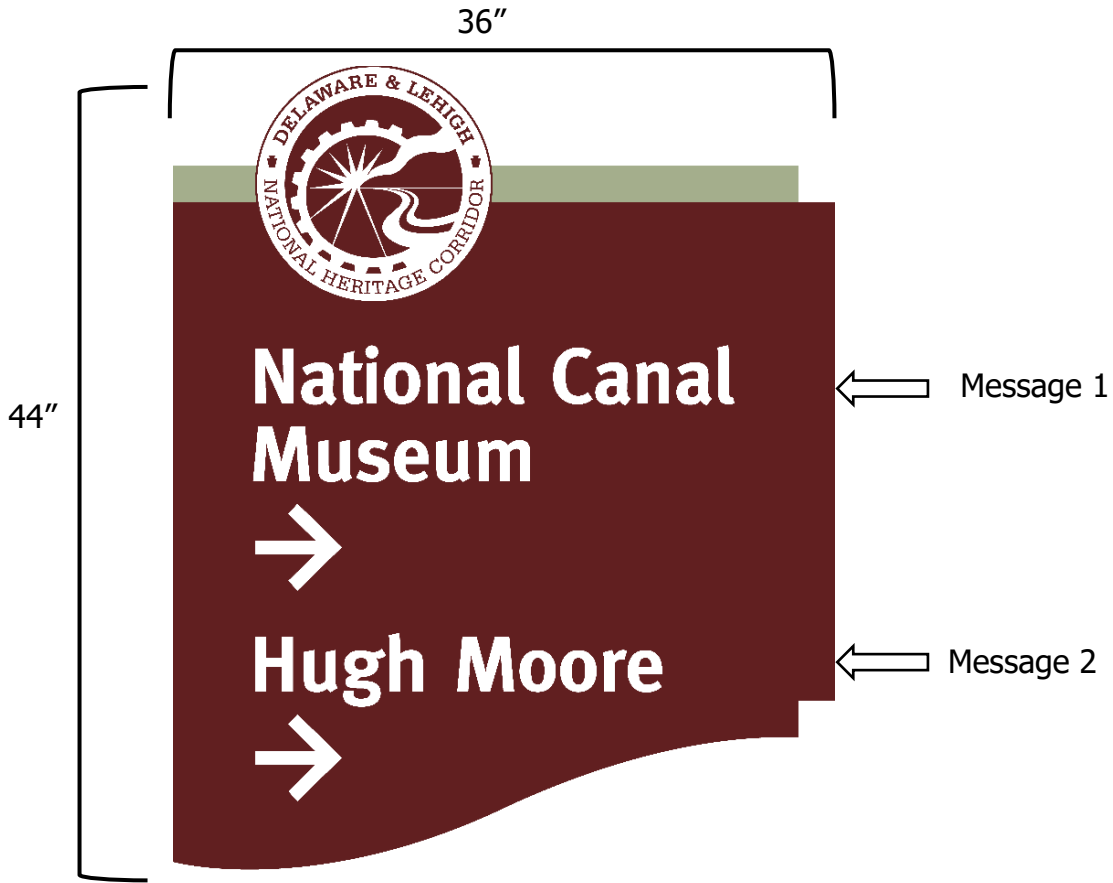
Please reach out to the D&L Visually Speaking Manager if you wish to install one of these signs. Prices may vary depending on the number of panels and messages.

Elements of Directional Vehicular Sign

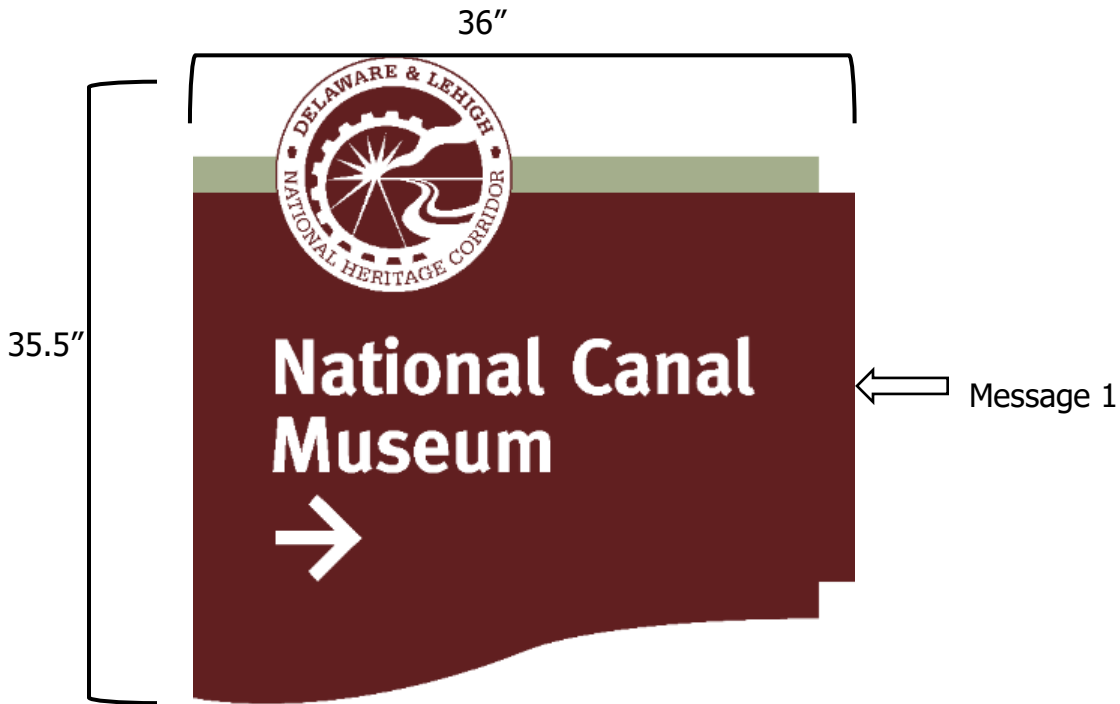
- Messages:
 - A combination of a site and its corresponding directional arrow. There can only be one site and one directional arrow for each message. Messages can contain different sites on each side of the panel.
 - **Minimum** 1 message. **Maximum** 3 messages.
 - **Maximum** of 30 characters and up to 2 lines each.



A Triple-Message Directional Vehicular Sign



Double-Message Directional Vehicular Sign.



Single-Message Directional Vehicular Sign.

C. Wayfinding Directionals

1. Mile Markers

Description: 6" aluminum signs mounted on 8' wooden posts (3' buried) indicating the approximate mile location on the D&L Trail or spur trail.

Purpose: Aid on-trail pedestrian traffic, landowners, emergency medical services, and D&L Staff in identifying their location along the D&L Trail.

Audience: Pedestrians and cyclists on the D&L Trail.

Locations: Whole or half-mile increments along the side of the D&L Trail. Not for off-trail navigation.

Cost: \$60 per directional wayfinding signs + post + hardware
\$12.50 per pennant (**minimum 4 per order**)
\$8 per 4" x 4" – 8ft wooden post (1 post per 2 signs)

Steel Posts are also available for an additional cost.

The D&L have created a GIS system that accurately identifies each mile and half-mile increment throughout the D&L Trail. Contact the Visually Speaking Manager for a consultation on installation locations.



2. Directional Wayfinding

Description: 6" aluminum pennant signs mounted on 8' wooden posts (3' buried) or existing structures directing on-trail users To Bristol, To Wilkes-Barre, To Trailhead or To Trail.

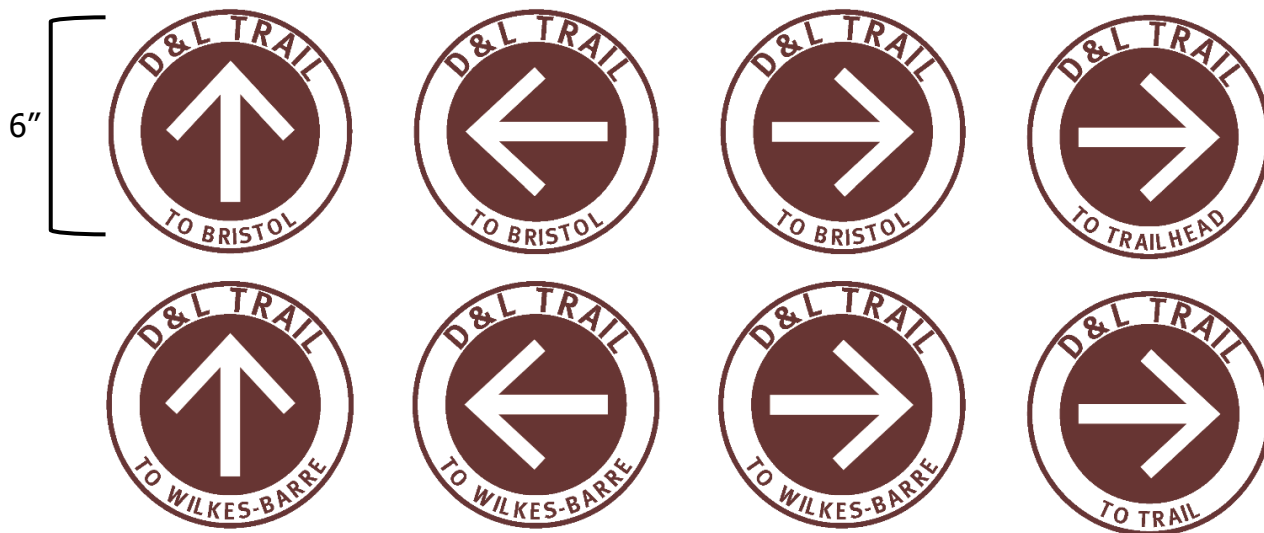
Purpose: Aid on-trail pedestrian, cyclists, landowners, or emergency medical services (EMS) in navigating the D&L Trail.

Audience: Pedestrians and cyclists on the D&L Trail.

Locations: On-trail only. Typically located at parts of the trail where navigation may become confusing or in need of "breadcrumbs" to help on-trail users.

Cost: \$22 per directional wayfinding sign + post + hardware
\$12.50 per pennant
\$8 per 4" x 4" – 8ft wooden post

Contact the Visually Speaking Manager for a consultation on installation locations.



V. Frequently Asked Questions

A. Why is the D&L doing this?

When the United States Congress established the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, it recognized our living landscape as nationally significant. The use of standard signage throughout the 165-mile Corridor conveys a unified image to locals and visitors alike. Your project will be a part of this larger corridor.

B. How much do signs typically cost?

The prices vary based on the type and number of signs ordered, the complexity of the design, and the size of the panels and location of delivery. Submitting sign orders in batches will lower the overall production cost. Ballpark estimates for interpretive, directional and wayfinding signs can be found in each sign type section starting on page 7.

Keep in mind:

To produce a new sign there are different steps depending on the type of sign. Below lists all the costs. The D&L has streamlined the process so many of these costs for the partner are reduced or non-existent, but in general there will be some cost to the partner.

- Design costs
- Research costs
- Production costs
- Installation costs
- Maintenance costs

Mile markers and directional wayfinding order will include the cost of four signs - two for immediate use and two will be in our main office for replacement.

If a sign requires assistance in design, photo editing, or logo editing from the D&L's contracted designer, additional costs will be added to the total cost of the sign and will be at the expense of the landowner or partner.

C. How soon can we expect our signs?

The D&L will submit your entire batch of signs for production as soon as all drafts are approved by landowners, partners and the D&L Visually Speaking Manager. The standard schedule for panel fabrication is approximately six weeks from the time of submission.

D. How are signs delivered?

Delivery recipients will provide a contact name, phone number and address for delivery in the Agreement Form. All delivery locations should be able to accept an 18-wheel truck. Smaller trucks cannot be requested because deliveries are performed by FedEx, not the fabricator nor the D&L.

Recipients will be notified the day before delivery by FedEx that their shipment is on its way. We cannot give earlier notification due to the fact that once the shipment has left the fabricator, it is in the hands of FedEx.

At the time of delivery, it is suggested that 3-4 able-bodied individuals and/or a forklift be present to assist in removing the sign from the truck. Ensure that all necessary staff and equipment is prepared to accept the delivery. If a lift gate is needed an additional \$80 fee will be applied to the final price.

6 months after the sign is delivered, the sign must be installed. Sign recipients should submit a completed Close-Out Form and all appropriate attachments to the Visually Speaking Manager. Project leaders (landowners or partner) will be reimbursed for their financial contribution towards the signs fabrication.

E. What happens after we receive the signs?

Signs will be delivered directly to you. Review the shipment against the final drafts and check for damage. **Report all problems within seven (7) days.**

Signs should be installed following sign manufacturer and Visually Speaking specifications within 6 months of delivery. The D&L can provide installation specification sketches to assist.

F. What can I do to expand the lifespan of my sign?

Over time environmental elements (UV from sun, wind, rain, hail, vegetation, etc.) and human elements (vandalism, physical damage) can reduce the lifespan of a sign. Develop a maintenance program with the Visually Speaking Manager to ensure your region will contain high-quality signage for many years to come.

Products and instructions for basic cleaning and TLC can be provided by the fabricator or the D&L. *Cleaning a sign just once a year can add a few years to the lifespan of your sign.*

VI. Contacts

Visually Speaking Manager

Maegan Ferry
610-923-3548 (extension 245)
gis@delawareandlehigh.org

Historian

Martha Capwell Fox
610-923-3548 (extension 237)
archives@delawareandlehigh.org

Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor

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www.delawareandlehigh.org

Updated by:

Maegan Ferry

February 2019