

Wayfinding signs highlight destinations in New Baltimore



New wayfinding signs help guide residents and visitors to areas throughout New Baltimore.

September 30, 2021

Motorists and pedestrians navigating through the city of New Baltimore may have noticed new signage recently popping up in the community.

Three years after plans were announced to install a new wayfinding sign system in the city, the signs were finally installed in late September. Delays were caused by COVID-19.

The project was sponsored by the Art on the Bay Committee as a way to enhance navigation by highlighting businesses, amenities and outdoor destinations in the community.

“We are so excited to see our vision become a reality!” the committee said in a recent Facebook post. “The Art on the Bay Committee has worked so hard on this project from the initial design concepts through to the final installation.”



To find a design for the new wayfinding signage that would visually depict the community's values and identity, the group put out a call to area artists and designers. While the executive board received multiple creative submissions, it unanimously agreed a design created by Nino DiPilla best captured the heart of the city. The design illustrates the city's commitment to local businesses, art and innovation, as well as its dedication to the value of family recreation and a love for the lakefront.

Giffels Webster, a Detroit-headquartered consulting firm specializing in infrastructure, planning and land development solutions, received the 2020 Inspiring Planning Project Award from the American Planning Association's Private Practice Division for the city of New Baltimore Wayfinding Plan project.

"When we were reviewing options to direct residents and visitors toward some of New Baltimore's key downtown destinations, we wanted to be sure that we did so in a way that was simple, useful and visually appealing all at the same time," said Rod Arroyo, partner at Giffels Webster, in a 2020 release about the award. "It is rare to see the work of a local artist incorporated into official traffic signs, and we hope this project will serve as a benchmark for others."

Giffels Webster worked with the Wayfinding Plan Committee to identify locations and designs that would meet the committee's goals and comply with Michigan Department of Transportation standards. In May 2020, MDOT issued a sign permit, allowing the approved 2020 Wayfinding Sign Plan to be the guiding document for installation of signs along M-29, with additional signs along roads under the jurisdiction of the Macomb County Department of Roads.

The project was funded with proceeds earned from Art on the Bay, the fine art and crafts show that takes place each Labor Day weekend at New Baltimore's waterfront Walter and Mary Burke Park. The 2021 event brought between 5,000 and 6,000 people downtown over the two days and featured about 45 vendors.

As a nonprofit, Art on the Bay also provides mini-grants to support art education and the creation of public art in the city of New Baltimore and the Anchor Bay School District. Art on the Bay has helped the high school band compete in statewide events and supported building improvements for the civic club.

For more information about Art on the Bay, go to artonthebay.com or [facebook.com/artonthebay](https://www.facebook.com/artonthebay).

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