

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORY

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Official West Virginia Highway Historical Markers Guidelines

Who may apply for a marker:

A group or organization such as a historical society, a family association, patriotic or civic group, landmark commission, church or school group, county commission or agency may apply. **An individual may not submit an application** but may work through a group to sponsor a marker. Such sponsorship must be identified by the group in its application. **The sponsoring group is responsible for purchasing the marker and continuing marker maintenance.**

How to apply:

Submit completed application (attached), and enclose all documentation necessary to support all statements made in the application. This documentation is critical in the subsequent evaluation process. Sufficient documented information must be provided so that the reviewers can clearly understand the significance of the subject that is being proposed and what resources are available to support the claim of significance. The application and submitted text will be reviewed and researched, and may be edited by the Highway Historical Marker Panel, who will decide what evidence is acceptable and sufficient for the determination of approval for each marker.

The process:

All completed applications are reviewed by the Historic Highway Marker Panel composed of Archives and History staff. If markers are considered viable, research is done to verify supporting materials. Recommendations will be made to the Cabinet Secretary of the Department of Arts, Culture and History, who has final approval. Once the application is approved and the marker text is written, the actual production of the marker and its subsequent installation may take from **six to nine months**. Only markers approved in this manner may carry the State Seal.

For questions regarding current pricing contact:

Ella S. Preece
Cultural Programs Coordinator
West Virginia Archives and History
ella.s.preece@wv.gov
304-558-0230

CRITERIA

The West Virginia Highway Historical Marker (WVHHM) program has the goal of commemorating places, events, or persons prominently identified with the history or prehistory of the nation, state or region and possessing some degree of unique significance in West Virginia in terms of history, architecture, or cultural life. The marker program cannot mark all historic places in West Virginia; not only would this be an impossible task, such a proliferation of historical markers could create obstructions to the flow of traffic and diminish the distinction of those markers designating significant sites.

Specifically, a site to be marked by a WVHHM must possess one or more of the following:

- A. The primary event or contribution of significance being recognized must have occurred twenty-five years or more before the date of application.
- B. Be the birthplace, grave site, homestead, or the site of the original location associated with an individual or individuals who are no longer living and who played a uniquely significant role in national, state or local history. **Please Note:** Significance implies contributions or leadership of an outstanding nature: individuals who, for example, served in the military or in Congress must have served with distinctions in some other capacity that is not purely of local note or importance. Requests to single out individuals to be recognized with a marker when many people have shared equally in an event of historical importance will not be approved.
- C. Be the known site of occupation, structures or formations of obvious significance to the prehistoric people of the state. No marker shall identify the precise location of, or be within two miles, of such a site, if identifying the site would endanger the site's preservation and integrity.
- D. Be a natural site possessing unique or unusual geological, scenic or historical qualities for this area or region.
- E. Be a building or collection of buildings that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or be the former or re-located site of such a building or collection of buildings.
- F. Be associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state or local history, but such must **have occurred twenty-five years or more** before date of application.

HIGHWAY HISTORICAL MARKER APPLICATION

To receive consideration for an official West Virginia State Highway Historical Marker, please provide the information requested below on this form. **The marker request must comply with the attached guidelines.**

Return form and documents to:

Archives and History
ATTN: Ella Preece
The Culture Center
1900 Kanawha Blvd., E – Bldg. 9
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

REQUIRED INFORMATION:

Missing information will result in your application being returned..

Contact Information:

Contact Person: _____

Sponsor (Organization or Group): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Marker Specifications:

Suggested Title(s) of marker: _____

Suggested Sponsor Line on marker: _____

Marker type: (check one)

- Single Sided (same subject and text each side)
- Double Sided (different subject and text on each side)

(application page 2)

Proposed address of site (street and number): _____

Property Name (if applicable): _____

City: _____ County: _____ Zip: _____

Marker GPS coordinates: Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

Is the marker: (check one)

Historic

Scenic

Prehistoric

Briefly describe the condition of the marker site:

Indicate relevance of location to subject of marker:

(application page 3)

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: (required)

Please enclose the following items with your application. Please note: These copies will not be returned, so do not enclose original materials.

- A sketch or map of the proposed location (Google Maps is acceptable).
- Briefly state the historical or other significance of the site. Please enclose the documentary references and copies of documents or printed materials that support the significance of the site with the application. **The application will not be considered without adequate documentation. Oral history can only be supplementary; it can not be used as primary/sole supporting documentation.**

