



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Telephone: (804) 367-2323 Fax: (804) 367-2391

**Application to Propose Placement of a New
Virginia Historical Highway Marker**

Before completing this application, please read the information below explaining the procedures and criteria for the marker program. Please note that not all applications will be approved. You may submit this application and accompanying material to:

Jennifer R. Loux
Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Loux at (804) 482-6089 or Jennifer.Loux@dhr.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Board of Historic Resources, the body responsible for approving highway markers, convenes in March, June, September, and December. The deadlines for submitting applications for the board's consideration are as follows:

December 1 for the March board meeting;
March 1 for the June board meeting;
June 1 for the September board meeting;
September 1 for the December board meeting.

The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) will process up to 15 marker applications per quarter, on a first-come, first-served basis. Any applications received after the first 15 will be deferred to the next board cycle.

When filling out this application form, please type or print clearly; if additional space is needed, use 8.5 x 11 inch paper. An electronic version of this application is available at www.dhr.virginia.gov. **Please Note:** All submitted materials become the property of DHR and will not be returned. DHR cannot begin formal review of a marker proposal until a complete application packet is received.

Marker Criteria

(Approved by the Board of Historic Resources, 8 December 1993; revised 17 March 2016 and 13 December 2018)

The state historical highway marker program documents facts, persons, events, and places prominently identified with the history of the nation, state, or region. The text for each proposed marker shall be reviewed and edited by the manager of the marker program and the staff of the Department of Historic Resources and, with the location, shall be approved by the Board of Historic Resources.

No marker shall be erected to commemorate a living person.

In order for an historic event to be eligible for a marker, the event must have occurred at least fifty years ago. Likewise, a place or person must have attained its significance at least fifty years ago, although there are exceptions if the event, place, or person is of extraordinary historical significance.

The size and shape of the state marker shall be that presently in use. Only the following shall appear on the marker: the seal of Virginia; identification code; title; text; name of the Department of Historic Resources; and the year the marker was approved.

Markers shall be erected in safe locations, at or close to the places being described, and where they will be visible to the public. When a marker is to be placed in a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) right-of-way, VDOT shall approve the site and install and maintain the marker. When a marker is to be placed in a locality's right-of-way, the local public works department shall approve the site and install and maintain the marker.

Additional Information about Topic Eligibility

Subjects of primarily local importance are not eligible for state highway markers.

Marker proposals will not advance to the Board of Historic Resources when it is impossible to authenticate or verify the information to the satisfaction of DHR staff.

Buildings, historic districts, archaeological sites, cemeteries, etc., listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or the National Register of Historic Places do not automatically qualify for highway markers. Each application will be evaluated on its own merits.

The following types of churches may qualify for state historical markers: (1) colonial churches, (2) emancipation/reconstruction-era churches, (3) churches that were the first of a denomination in a locality, and (4) churches that present significant architectural qualities. Most other churches would more appropriately be noted on a local marker.

Exceptions to any program criteria will be determined on a case-by-case basis by DHR staff.

How to Develop and Submit a Marker Application

1. Research and Write a Proposed Marker Text

Research the topic by consulting primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are materials produced at the time of the historical event in question (such as deeds, letters, or newspaper articles), while secondary sources include articles or books written later. DHR places a higher value on primary sources. It is often helpful to seek assistance from local and regional historical associations and governmental entities when conducting your research. Please photocopy your sources and submit them to DHR with your application.

Write a roughly 100-word text, following the “Highway Marker Writing Style” (see Appendix 1 near the end of this packet). The text must demonstrate that the topic rises beyond the local level of significance.

Please keep in mind that markers are erected not to “honor” their subjects but rather to educate and inform the public about a person, place, or event of regional, state, or national importance. Markers are not memorials. They are intended to present historically accurate information in as objective a fashion as possible. Therefore, texts will not editorialize or assign value judgments.

Unless there is sufficient documentary evidence to establish authenticity without question, no “firsts” or other superlative terms will be used. As markers are designed to last for decades, please also avoid making observations in the text about current conditions of buildings or land.

Please submit your proposed text with the understanding that DHR staff will edit it in consultation with you.

2. Suggest a Suitable Marker Location

Be sure in your application to specify the highway route number and the physical site of your proposed location. Please provide either a street address or a description such as “U.S. Rte. 11, 0.2 miles south of Virginia Rte. 270.” Mark the location on a street or highway map and submit it with the application. The site you suggest should be in the public right-of-way.

If the marker text refers to a specific physical property, we ask that you provide the property owner's contact information and signature on page 11 of the application.

Please see step 6 below for more information about the site-selection process.

BE SURE TO NOTE: If your proposed site lies within the corporate limits of a city or town, or on a secondary road in Arlington County or Henrico County, see Appendix 2 at the end of this packet. You will need to obtain a letter indicating the locality’s willingness to install and maintain the marker, as VDOT does not handle markers in the listed jurisdictions. For all other counties and localities, VDOT is responsible for approving sites and erecting markers.

3. Submit Your Application Packet to DHR for Review

DHR will make every attempt to present a marker at the applicant's desired board meeting. However, scheduling depends on the complexity of the subject, the amount of additional research required by DHR staff, and the amount of revision required to the text. DHR cannot guarantee that marker applications submitted by the appropriate deadline will be presented at the subsequent board meeting, even if they are among the first 15 received.

4. Work with DHR in Revising or Refining the Marker Text

DHR staff will check the factual accuracy of the proposed marker text, conduct additional research if necessary, and edit the text for clarity, brevity, thoroughness, and educational value. Staff will work closely with the sponsor to produce a mutually agreed-upon text. Staff will then send the text to the Marker Editorial Committee, a group of outside scholars who will evaluate the potential marker's historical accuracy, writing style, and level of significance. If the committee accepts the text, DHR staff will present it to the Board of Historic Resources for official approval.

5. Await the Final Decision of the Board of Historic Resources

DHR will notify the sponsor of the date and time of the quarterly board meeting at which the marker will be presented. The meeting is open to the public, and sponsors may attend. After the meeting, DHR will send the sponsor a copy of the board-approved text. The board has final authority regarding the topics and content of all state markers.

6. Meet with the Virginia Department of Transportation or Local Public Works Department

If a board-approved marker is to be placed in VDOT's right-of-way, DHR will notify VDOT and ask that a traffic engineer meet with the sponsor to review the proposed site. VDOT is responsible for approving the site and may select another location if the sponsor's choice is incompatible with traffic safety. VDOT will provide a post and will install the marker at no charge to the sponsor.

If a board-approved marker is to be placed outside VDOT's jurisdiction (that is, within the boundaries of an independent town, city, or on a secondary road in Arlington or Henrico County), DHR and the sponsor will work with the locality's public works department to secure site approval for the marker. For a list of towns and cities that maintain their own roadways, please see Appendix 2 to this application. In some localities, the sponsor may be responsible for paying for a post (\$175) and/or for the installation of the marker.

Criteria for Marker Placement:

Safety

It is expected that travelers will need to pull off the road to read the marker, and then reenter the highway; they must be able to do so conveniently and safely. Markers must be placed so that they do not block drivers' lines of sight when making turns or create traffic hazards when travelers stop to read the marker.

Markers also must be placed where they are least likely to be struck by motor vehicles or otherwise endanger motorists. Curves, industrial or commercial intersections, congested areas, and similar hazardous places should be avoided.

Accessibility

Ideally, the marker should be placed as close as possible to the site it describes. Sometimes, however, because of traffic conditions, the remoteness of the site, or other reasons, the marker must be placed some distance away. The marker should be placed in a safe but relatively high-traffic area, so that it can be accessed by the largest possible number of travelers. Given the choice between a secondary road and a primary road, the marker will be placed on a primary road if both locations are equally safe. Markers are not permitted on interstate or other limited access highways, except in safety rest areas or at welcome centers.

Cost efficiency

It is more cost effective to place the marker at an existing turnout or wide shoulder than it is to construct a new one. VDOT will not construct a pull-off area to accommodate a new marker. In some cases, this consideration may result in a marker's placement at a site other than the one requested by the sponsor.

Placement on private property

State markers are usually placed in VDOT rights-of-way or on public property in independent localities. Under special circumstances they may be placed in an easement on private property.

7. Pay for the Manufacture of the Marker

DHR will order the marker from the foundry, Sewah Studios. The foundry will bill the sponsoring organization directly at the time the marker is shipped to the appropriate VDOT district office or local public works department. Markers currently cost \$1,770, including shipping. The foundry accepts checks or money orders in payment.

In certain localities the sponsor may be responsible for covering the expenses associated with installing a marker, such as purchasing a post (available from the foundry for \$175).

The marker is the property of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The name of the sponsoring individual or organization cannot be included on the marker. The marker is silver-painted cast aluminum with black uppercase and lowercase letters and is approximately 42 by 40 inches. The same text appears on each side of the marker.

8. Hold an Unveiling Ceremony

The schedule for ordering and manufacturing markers is determined by various factors including the workload of DHR, VDOT, local public works departments, and Sewah Studios. DHR cannot be held responsible for meeting local deadlines for any planned dedication event. For that reason, if a sponsoring organization or individual wishes to hold an unveiling ceremony, DHR should be notified and consulted well in advance about the schedule. The sponsor should not set a date for a ceremony until DHR and the foundry can confirm a realistic shipping date for the marker. DHR will try to send a representative to the ceremony to make brief remarks about the marker program. DHR, in consultation with the sponsor, will send out a press release to local media announcing the marker ceremony.

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Historical Highway Marker Required Information**

This information form is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the data necessary to evaluate a potential marker topic.

Proposed Marker Topic:
Address or Description of Proposed Marker Site: Please also attach a map showing the proposed location for the marker.
City or County where proposed marker would be located: If the marker is to be placed in a town or city, please see Appendix 2 to this application form.
Location of event being described, or site associated with topic, <i>if the marker will not be placed at the actual historic site.</i> If the two sites are different, please be sure to indicate each one on the map submitted as part of the application package.
How far away (e.g., yards, miles) is the historic site from the proposed marker site (if applicable)?
Why can't the marker be placed at the historic site discussed in the marker (if applicable)?
Is the proposed marker associated with a “mitigation” agreement stemming from a federal 106 environmental review project? If so, please provide details about who is involved with the project and the appropriate project codes.

Proposed Text for the Marker: Please consult “Highway Marker Writing Style” in Appendix 1 for guidance. Changes to the submitted text are likely to be made by DHR staff, the Marker Editorial Committee, and/or members of the Board of Historic Resources so that the final text conforms to the marker program’s criteria and writing style. Examples of recently approved texts are available from DHR upon request.

In addition to submitting your proposed text in this application packet, please also send an email containing your text to Jennifer Loux at Jennifer.Loux@dhr.virginia.gov. This facilitates the creation of an electronic file for the application.

Bibliographical Sources Consulted. A minimum of three sources is required. DHR staff will conduct a word-by-word fact check of all information presented on the marker. Please photocopy and submit all source material. Below, please list all documents, books, and articles you have consulted. You may use an additional sheet if necessary.

Source #1

Author

Title

Publisher

Publisher's location
[City and State]

Date of publication

Source #2

Author

Title

Publisher

Publisher's location
[City and State]

Date of publication

Source #3

Author

Title

Publisher

Publisher's location
[City and State]

Date of publication

Sponsor Information (For more than one sponsor, please use a separate sheet. The foundry will send the bill for the marker to the address provided below.)

Organization: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Daytime telephone
and area code: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

By signing this agreement you confirm that you have funding to pay for a state historical highway marker (\$1,770). In certain situations the sponsor could be responsible for expenses associated with installing a marker. The marker is and will remain the property of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

• • Signature required for processing all applications. • •

In the event of organization sponsorship, please provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact Name: _____

Title: _____

Email address: _____

Daytime telephone
and area code: _____

Author's Information

(If the author of the text is different from the sponsor, please provide that person's contact information here.)

Organization: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Daytime telephone
and area code: _____

NOTE: If the marker text refers to a specific physical property, the Department of Historic Resources needs the property owner's information and signature prior to reviewing the proposal. Please provide the same below:

Owner (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss): _____

Firm: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Daytime telephone
and area code: _____

Owner Signature _____

Date: _____

Notification

In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Name
(Mr., Mrs., Ms.,
Miss., Dr., Hon.): _____

Position/Title: _____

Locality: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Daytime telephone
and area code: _____

Appendix 1

Highway Marker Writing Style

To ensure stylistic consistency among state markers, DHR staff will revise and edit draft texts. The goal is to provide as much accurate and interesting information as possible in a limited space. Sponsors can assist us by following these suggestions when writing their drafts.

- Aim for about 100 words, but it is better to be a little too long rather than too short in the first draft. Please be aware that a marker's final text must not exceed 700 characters (including spaces)
- Spell out numbers less than 10; otherwise, use Arabic numerals (one, two, etc., but 10, 237, 10,000, etc.)
- Do not use honorary titles such as Mr. and Mrs., but do use and abbreviate occupational titles and ranks (the Rev., Col., Maj. Gen., Dr., etc.)
- Use military style for dates; abbreviate months (7 Dec. 1941)
- Do not use commas before or after Jr., Sr., II, etc., (e.g. James Brown Jr. was secretary of the board)
- Write nicknames as follows: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson
- On Civil War subjects, write "Civil War," not "War Between the States." Give an individual's rank at the time of the event being discussed on the marker
- On Seven Years' War subjects, write "Seven Years' War," not "French and Indian War"
- On first use, give a person's full name as he or she used it or as it is best known (e.g. Alexander Graham Bell; Maggie L. Walker), but on subsequent use give only the last name

For advice on writing concisely and vigorously, refer to *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White. DHR uses the 17th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* as its authority on copy style.

Appendix 2

VDOT is not involved with highway marker installation or maintenance in certain localities, which are listed below.

Except for localities marked with *, which indicates that DHR has an existing agreement for marker installation, marker proposals for the following locations *must* be accompanied by a signed letter from the responsible locality stating that the locality agrees to have the marker on its public land, and that the locality agrees to install and maintain the marker. Proposals submitted without the letter will not be processed.

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Loux at (804) 482-6089 or Jennifer.Loux@dhr.virginia.gov.

Towns (for independent cities, see next section)

Abingdon	Chincoteague	Leesburg	Smithfield
Altavista	Christiansburg	Luray	South Boston
Ashland	Clifton Forge	Marion	South Hill
Bedford	Culpeper	Narrows	Strasburg
Berryville	Dumfries	Orange	Tazewell
Big Stone Gap	Elkton	Pearisburg	Vienna
Blacksburg	Farmville	Pulaski	Vinton
Blackstone	Front Royal	Purcellville	Warrenton
Bluefield	Grottoes	Richlands	Wise
Bridgewater	Herndon	Rocky Mount	Woodstock
Chase City	Lebanon	Saltville	Wytheville

Cities

Alexandria	Falls Church	Manassas Park	Roanoke
Bristol	Franklin	Martinsville	Salem
Buena Vista	Fredericksburg	Newport News	Staunton
Charlottesville	Galax	Norfolk	Suffolk*
Chesapeake	Hampton	Norton	Virginia Beach*
Colonial Heights	Harrisonburg	Petersburg*	Waynesboro
Covington	Hopewell	Poquoson	Williamsburg
Danville	Lexington	Portsmouth	Winchester
Emporia	Lynchburg*	Radford	
Fairfax	Manassas	Richmond*	

Counties

Arlington Co. and Henrico Co. (secondary roads only; call 804-482-6089 for further details)

IS YOUR APPLICATION COMPLETE? Please make sure you...

- Review Appendix 2 to determine whether your application needs to be accompanied by a signed letter from a local official.
- Include photocopies of at least three sources verifying the information that would appear on the marker.
- Submit a map indicating the proposed location of the marker.
- Provide the sponsor's signature on page 10.
- Paste your proposed marker text into the body of an email (or into a Word document) and send it to Jennifer.Loux@dhr.virginia.gov.