



Guidelines for New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker  
Nominations

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The New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker Program is jointly administered by the Division of  
Historical Resources and the Department of Transportation.

# Guidelines for New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker Nominations

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## Introduction

*Guidelines for New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker Nominations* includes information about the nomination process, the Criteria for Approval, and the requirements for a complete nomination submission.

Beginning in 2023, nominations are due on or before **November 1** and are evaluated by the Division of Historical Resources' (DHR) staff and the State Historical Resources Council (SHRC).

DHR's purpose in erecting markers is to educate the public about New Hampshire's history, not to honor, memorialize, or commemorate persons, events, or places. Because Historical Highway Markers are not honorific in nature, they do not serve the same purpose as monuments, statues, memorial plaques, or war memorials.

There are two types of Historical Highway Markers that sponsors can nominate – state-funded and co-operative. State-funded markers are paid for by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and by statute can install up to 10 markers per year; however, the number of markers funded through this program depends on the availability of funds in DOT's biennial budget. Co-operative markers are paid for by the marker sponsor and a co-operative agreement is executed between the sponsor and the State of New Hampshire/DHR. DOT is responsible for the installation of the marker, at no cost to the sponsor.

## Program Priorities

The New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker strives to cover a breadth of topics in our state's history and recognizes that there are some gaps in the current marker inventory. To that end, marker proposals that meet the following criteria are more likely to be selected for production:

- Has the potential to educate the public
- Addresses a topic that the program has not extensively covered
- Addresses the history of a community that has been marginalized or underrepresented
- Reflects a breadth of historical significance that extends beyond the locality, preferably demonstrating statewide or national significance
- Contributes to a more equitable geographic distribution of markers

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For more information on the New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker Program, please visit the DHR's website at <https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/markers/>.

To search the interactive map of New Hampshire's Historical Highway Markers, please visit <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/46535b10bf374c508fc46b462df5e15>.

Follow on Instagram @nhhistoricalmarkers

If you have any questions about the New Hampshire Historical Highway Marker Program, please send an email to [amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov).

## Criteria for Approval of State Historical Highway Markers

The following criteria for approving state historical highway markers was adopted in 2023. It is very important that the Criteria for Approval provided with the nomination form be carefully read and thoroughly understood. When reviewing nominations, DHR staff and the SHRC makes an informed decision using these criteria as well as the quality of the submitted nomination.

- The nomination is clear and organized and includes thorough documentation (with selected copies/scans and bibliographies from reliable primary and secondary sources) and verification of the facts claimed.
- The person, place, event, organization, or innovation to be marked had a significant impact and has demonstrated historical significance. The significance of the subject, particularly for continuing events and organizations, must be historically established rather than of contemporary interest alone. Marker subjects less than fifty years in the past may require special justification. DHR recognizes that continuing scholarship may help validate the subject's impact on its times or its significance from a more recent historical perspective.
- The subject to be marked has a substantial connection to New Hampshire.
- An Historical Highway Marker cannot be approved for a living person. Subjects must have been deceased for a minimum of five (5) years. The significance of an individual's accomplishments must have had a measurable impact on history and sufficient time must have elapsed to evaluate that impact based on credible documentation.
- People, places, events, and innovations already marked with existing monuments or markers may receive less favorable consideration for an Historical Highway Marker.
- Nominated subjects reviewed and disapproved by the DHR three times in succession are not eligible for review panel consideration for a period of three years.
- Places listed in the National Register of Historic Places and/or recognized as National Historic Landmarks may be considered for an Historical Highway Marker. These places will not be automatically approved by the DHR for designation because the approval criteria for those designations are different. Nominations for these places are subject to all these criteria.
- Places of worship and cemeteries/burial places generally will not be approved unless the nomination demonstrates that the subject meets demonstrated historical significance.

## Nomination, Approval & Installation Process

1. Any municipality, agency, organization, or individual may propose a marker to commemorate significant New Hampshire places, persons, or events. In recommending a marker for Commissioner approval, the DHR takes into consideration the distribution of markers by geographical regions, chronological periods, and historical themes. Preference is given to placing markers at locations that are not already adequately marked.

Submissions must be received via email to [amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov) no later than **November 1**.

2. All nominations are reviewed by DHR staff and the SHRC. Upon Commissioner approval, DHR staff notify applicants of the outcome.
3. If a nomination is not approved, the sponsor may submit revised nominations for the same subject three years in succession. Any nomination that is rejected three years in succession may not be submitted again for another three years.

DHR staff is available to work with nominators to revise or strengthen their proposals or to provide technical assistance.

4. Once a topic has been favorably reviewed by DHR staff and the SHRC, it will be recommended to the Commissioner for approval. Upon Commissioner approval, DHR staff and the Commissioner will work with a marker sponsor to write text that is agreeable to both parties. DHR and the Commissioner are ultimately responsible for determining the accuracy of the text, whether it complies with established space, content, and style guidelines, and making final edits. The Commissioner has final approval of all proposed Markers.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT) contracts with a vendor to manufacture the markers and coordinates the installation of the marker, at no cost to the sponsor, whether the marker is state-funded or a cooperative marker.

5. DOT staff and sponsors work together to identify a mutually agreeable location for the marker's placement. The most appropriate location would be where the person lived or made an impact, where the event took place, or at the site being marked. While most locations are straight-forward, some require negotiation and discussion to determine the optimal site.

Upon agreement, the sponsor is responsible for obtaining permission from their local, state, and/or federal authorities and from any affected private parties. Proof of authorization and

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permission of the proposed marker location for traffic and other related safety concerns must be provided in writing to the Historical Highway Marker Program before a marker is ordered for manufacture.

6. **Sponsors are responsible for arranging dedication ceremonies.** DHR staff can provide guidance. Multiple nominators and/or sponsors may be involved in organizing the public dedication ceremony, although those identified as primary organizers will be the points of contact for DHR staff.
7. Upon installation of a state-funded marker, the State of New Hampshire/DOT assumes ownership of the marker and responsibilities for maintaining it. The ongoing maintenance and care of a co-operative marker is assumed by the sponsor.

**Need help?** Staff will review and comment on draft nominations. If you wish to have a staff review, you can:

- Email the draft nomination, including supporting materials, to [amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov).

**Please note that the draft must be received by August 30 for DHR staff to provide feedback.**

## Historical Highway Marker Nomination Checklist

Please use this checklist for reference as you collect and prepare your nomination materials.

### ☐ Contact Information

Please enter the information for the primary contact person for this project. The accuracy of this information is extremely important as all communication and correspondence regarding the review of this project will be sent to this person. Additional contacts can be added and will receive communication and correspondence; however, only one contact is designated as the primary.

First and Last Names:

Email Address:

Mailing Address:

### ☐ Marker Information

#### **Type of Marker**

- State-funded (paid for by DOT; may have limited budget)
- Co-operative (paid for by marker sponsor and installed by DOT at no additional cost)

#### **Title of Marker**

The title of the marker should be typed in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Titles may be up to two lines with no more than 45 characters in each line, including spaces.

#### **Draft Marker Text**

Please note that the DHR and Commissioner retain final approval of a historical highway marker's title and text. The information you provide in the initial nomination should be considered draft text subject to revision if the marker nomination is successful. DHR staff and the Commissioner will work with nominators to prepare the final marker title and text according to established guidelines for space, content, and style.

Consult the Style Guide for New Hampshire Historical Highway Markers at the end of this document.

The proposed text should state why the subject is distinctive and significant to the state's residents and visitors, and why it merits the special status conferred by a state marker. A footnote citation must cite the source of information for each historical fact presented in the draft text, with two sources that do not cite each other to support any superlative claims (oldest, first, etc.). Copies of the source material should be submitted.



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The standard format for a marker is up to 12 lines of text, at a maximum of 14 lines with no more than 45 spaces per line. A two-line title reduces the number of text lines by one. Each letter in a word counts as one space; spaces between words count as one space each; periods and commas are not counted. One space is allowed for a set of quotation marks.

### **□Historical Significance**

In addition to the draft marker text, provide a historical overview and specify fully the historical significance of the person, event, innovation, or site. Explain why this marker will have meaning for people from the whole state or country, not just from your own community. If of broader significance, be sure to describe the subject's New Hampshire connection.

A thorough, but concise historical overview helps reviewers understand how the subject being nominated for a historical highway marker fits into the bigger picture and provides the reviewers with the information they need to assess whether the subject had a significant impact on its times and has historical significance.

### **□Supporting Documents**

#### **Documentation**

The nomination must be accurate and supported with documentation. Reviewers consider many nominations and may be unable to consult sources listed in the nomination, so it is imperative to include pertinent scanned excerpts from valid primary and secondary sources, along with citations. This material should support the overview you have written and verify your argument for historical significance.

Scans of excerpts from essential published or unpublished primary and/or secondary source material must be attached to the nomination and listed in the bibliography. Try to limit material to about 20 to 25 pages and choose wisely the information which relates most directly to the focus of your nomination.

Here are some suggestions when compiling the supporting documentation:

- Three to four supporting documents are recommended.
- If nominating a National Register-listed property, including Section 8: *Significance* of the National Register form is advised.
- Newspaper articles can be useful but should not be heavily relied upon.
- Letters of support can accompany the nomination, but those from experts on the subject matter carry more weight than those from political figures.

### **Bibliography**

List the publications/sources from which information was gathered. At least 3 or 4 sources (primary and secondary) are ideal. If nominating a National Register-listed property, including Section 8: *Significance* from the National Register form is advised.

Author:

Title:

Date:

Publisher:

If the source of further information is an individual person, please furnish his or her name and contact information.

Name:

Email Address:

Phone number:

### **Petition & Local Governing Body Approval**

A petition asking for support of this marker topic and location, signed by 20 citizens of New Hampshire, must be submitted with the application. The proposed marker topic and location must be clearly stated at the top of each petition page for the petition to be valid. Additionally, written approval of the proposed marker location for traffic and other related safety concerns by the local governing body is required as part of the application packet.

The application will be deemed incomplete without written approval of the proposed marker location by the local governing body.

All completed applications submitted to [amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov) on or before November 1 of each year, will then be reviewed by Division of Historical Resources staff, the State Historical Resources Council, and then must be approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Once approved, the DHR requests the DOT to order the marker.

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### ☐Proposed Location

Please indicate the proposed location of the historical highway marker on a map as well as provide the below information.

If you can locate the proposed marker location with an address, complete the below fields:

Address:

County:

Municipality:

Zip Code:

### ☐Submission Requirements

Email all the above information to [amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:amy.s.dixon@dncr.nh.gov) on or before **November 1**.

## A Style Guide for New Hampshire Historical Highway Markers

### General

- Use full sentences, no sentence fragments, bullets or lists
- Avoid the use of subjective adjectives; for example, “the most beautiful” – unless it can be backed up by documentation
- Periods and commas go inside quotation marks
- Use only one space after a period
- Do not use a hyphen for an adjective ending in “-ly,” e.g., “highly regulated” not “highly-regulated”
- Hyphen as follows for age-related dates used as adjectives, e.g., “19th-century book” or “six-week battle”
- Use “and” instead of “&” – unless part of a trademarked name, e.g., “Boston & Maine Railroad”
- Capitalize “The,” “A” etc. when at the beginning of a proper name
- Within the body of the marker, follow standard capitalization rules in titles, e.g., prepositions are lower case
- On first use, give a person’s full name, but on subsequent use give only the last name
- Capitalize job titles only if normally done formally, e.g., “Professor John Smith” but not “Smith was a Professor”
- Use a comma after an introductory phrase, e.g. “In 1773, John Smith...” or “Signer of the XYZ, John Smith...”
- Titles of books, stories, poems go in quotations, not italics

### Numbers, Dates and Ages

- Spell out numbers less than 10; otherwise use Arabic numerals (one, two, etc., but 10, 100, 1,000, etc.)
- For ages over 10, always use Arabic numerals
- For ages of people: hyphenate throughout, e.g., “nine-year-old” or “27-year-old” NOTE: not for objects, e.g., “nine year old cheese”
- Write out ordinals when used as part of chronology, e.g., “Smith was the first to...”
- Use a numerical ordinal, e.g., “1st,” for rankings (e.g., Smith came in 1st place”) or as part of a formal name when normally presented that way, e.g., a regiment name
- Use a comma to separate thousands, e.g., “1,234”
- Hyphenate between a number and measurement when used as an adjective, e.g., “18-inch-thick walls”
- No apostrophe when referring to a century or decade as a time span, e.g., “1800s” not “1800’s”
- Write out “century,” so... “19th century” not “19th c.”

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### Abbreviations

- 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.)
- Abbreviate only the following months: *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.* and *Dec.* when writing dates (Dec. 7, 1941; March 17, 2021)
- Do not use commas before or after Jr., Sr., II, etc. (e.g., James Brown Jr.)
- Abbreviate state names – N.H., Vt., Mass.

Please note that the DHR with signoff from the Commissioner retains final approval of a historical marker's title and text. The information you provide in the initial nomination should be considered draft text subject to revision if the marker nomination is successful. DHR staff will work with the nominators to prepare the final marker title and text according to established guidelines for space, content, and style.