

## Guidelines for creating an Ohio Historical Marker related to the War of 1812

We have created this set of guidelines to aid your organization in creating, purchasing and erecting a historic marker related to the War of 1812. We hope this will help you in the planning process and help to avoid pitfalls along the way. If you have any questions regarding the marker program or a specific project, we recommend you contact the Local History Office at the Ohio Historical Society. They can be reached at 800.858.6878 or at [ohiomarkers@ohiohistory.org](mailto:ohiomarkers@ohiohistory.org) To learn more about the Ohio Historical Markers program visit them online at <http://www.ohiohistory.org/resource/oahsm/markers.html>

### Steps to Create a Marker

#### ***Background Research-***

*The first steps in your process will be to determine what historic fact or event you wish to mark, develop text for your marker, and then provide documented evidence that accompanies your text.*

1. Determine the site and/or event of historic significance that you wish to honor with a marker. If you have multiple sites or events, list them by priority as to their significance to the story you wish to tell.

All marker subjects must meet at least one of the following criteria of significance in order to be eligible for an official site marker. They must:

- Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history.
  - Be associated with persons no longer living who have made significant contributions to patterns of history and culture.
  - Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, style, period, method of construction, architecture, or represent the work of a master.
  - Yield, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
  - Be associated with ethnic groups who have made distinctive and significant contributions to history.
  - Embody characteristics of the state representing significant aspects of the physical or natural history of the earth and its life.
  - Represent popular stories or myths that, although not verifiable, are significant to history and culture.
2. Research your site and/or event to establish the text for the marker. Markers are available in single {repeated text} or double {different text} sides. Each side has space for about 130-140 words, so be concise. Save your source material, {journals, diaries etc.} because the text will be checked for historic accuracy.
  3. Every statement of fact in a marker text must have proof of truth. That means you have to prove that the fact is true. The most common way to do this is through the use of footnotes which cite the source of information. The source must be creditable—meaning 10 or 20 or 100 years from now someone checking that same fact would look at that source and say “yes, that’s true.” The best sources are ones that were created close to the event/person/place being marked—such as the uses of soldiers’ diaries and reminiscences—or ones that are “vetted”—like a book by a recognized authority in the field. Just saying you think it true isn’t proof; you have to show and share your sources.

*Historical Markers Program helpful hint: The Local History Office is able to turn around text quickly when the marker applicant includes copies of ALL sources of statements of facts in the application. When they have to track down documentation or sources themselves, it adds to the time it takes to review an application. Please include copies of all sources of information, but do not include your originals, for example the original diary from 1812.*

### ***Selection of Marker Location-***

*Determine where your marker will be located. It is best to have it as close to the area where the historic event took place, but also keep in mind it should be easily accessible to the public.*

1. Try to place the marker in a city, county, or Ohio Department of Natural Resources park located near to your historic site or event, for greater access. Use local your Master Gardner Club to set out the decorative plants. *Historical Markers Program helpful hint: Our only guideline about location is that the marker be accessible to the public. A marker can be on private property so long as the property owner does not bar the public from viewing the marker. You must include proof—generally a letter—demonstrating that you have the property owner’s permission to “plant” the marker.*

### ***Fundraising and Maintenance for the Marker-***

1. You are responsible for securing the funding for the marker. This has to be determined prior to your grant submission. No marker will be approved until it is paid for in advance.
2. Work with the community located closest to the proposed marker site, no town nor village is too small. Pick a possible host or sponsoring group, such as veterans groups, genealogical societies or historical societies. Present your idea to that group and get them on board with the project. Make a sketch of the marker and any proposed landscaping needed to enhance the site. Consider the use of your local Master Gardner program for landscaping ideas and for preliminary marker site sketches. Determine an estimated cost of the total project.
3. Work within the selected community and seek funding from businesses, civic groups, and students. Present a program at local schools, and organizations, tell the story of the site and/or event that you have chosen to honor. Get students involved, seek their help. Do not discount their desire to participate. The marker could be a class fund raising project. A good way to get students involved is to have them do the fundraising and then split the proceeds with the class.
4. Apply for a \$750.00 Ohio Historical Society Marker Grant. Total purchase price for a marker is \$2,500.00. You can apply for a grant twice each year, once in April and again in October. A limited number of grants are awarded each period, If you are turned down, resubmit your request during next grant cycle. It may take two or more tries before you’re successful. If you have the \$2,500 already, OHS markers may be purchased out right. *Historical Marker Program helpful hint: Please note the submission of a grant application is no guarantee that you’ll receive the grant—no matter how many times you submit.*
5. Make sure to raise enough funding to cover the cost of landscaping and site preparation. Seek in kind help from your local city parks division, township trustees, county commissioners, engineers, and local contractors.
6. Determine who will maintain the marker. This has to be listed on your application.

### ***Application for a Marker-***

*Once you have completed the steps listed above, it is time to download and complete an application form for your proposed marker.*

1. Your organization must complete an application for an historical marker.  
*Historical Marker Program helpful hint: All in all, if you follow the directions in the marker application, you'll be fine. You can download a marker application from <http://www.remarkableohio.org/Assets/MarkerApplicationForm.doc>*

### ***Promotion and Community Involvement***

1. Upon approval of the application and successful creation of your historical marker, plan a dedication ceremony which should involve the local mayor, city council, county commissioners, and major contributors in ceremony. Thank all contributors and list their names in a handout souvenir program as you may need to call on them again in the future.
2. Ask local dignitaries, historians, or those associated with the project to say a few words about the project and the significance of the historic event that you are marking.
3. The Ohio Historical Society strives to send a representative to each marker dedication to offer congratulatory words and a certificate.

### ***Must Do***

*Finally, no marker is made until two conditions are met:*

1. The applicant for the marker must sign off on the final draft of the text, approving it for production. Part of the job in the Local History Office is to collaborate with you to write a historically accurate and engaging text.
2. The marker must be paid for a full in advance.