



FAQs about the West Virginia Highway Historical Marker Program

- **When was the marker program established?**

It was implemented in 1937, during the Great Depression, to encourage tourism. The West Virginia Commission on Historic and Scenic Markers worked with the State Road Commission, Works Progress Administration, and Federal Emergency Relief Administration to place 440 markers during the first year alone. After World War II, markers were placed at the sites of most state-run facilities and schools. The West Virginia Historic Commission took over the program in 1963. Since the late 1960s, the program has been managed by the West Virginia State Archives, which is today part of the West Virginia Division of Culture & History.

- **Does the West Virginia State Archives keep a list of markers?**

The State Archives maintains files on each of the markers. Unfortunately, many of these files are outdated because markers have been moved and road names have been changed. In 1996, the Division of Culture & History was awarded a federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to survey the state's highway markers. An [updated markers guidebook](#) is now available.

- **Who pays for the markers?**

They were funded by the state until 1985. All markers placed since then have been funded by groups or private individuals. There are two styles of markers, both of which include the State Seal. The traditional cast aluminum is available for \$1,325 with the same inscription on both sides or \$1,425 with a different inscription on each side. The 80-gauge aluminum markers cost approximately \$350. Installation and transportation costs are approximately \$75. All prices are subject to change.

- **What subjects or events will be considered?**

The site, property, district, or community honored with a marker must possess some degree of significance in state or local prehistory (archaeology), history, natural history, architecture, or cultural life. A complete list of guidelines can be obtained from the State Archives.

- **How many markers are there?**

Approximately 1,000 markers have been placed in West Virginia. However, the recent survey indicates nearly 30% are no longer standing and a majority of the remaining markers are in dire need of repair.

- **How are markers maintained?**

There is no state funding to repair or replace markers. Some historical societies and civic groups assume the cost for refurbishing markers in their counties. Missing or damaged markers should be reported to the State Archives.