Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission
Historic Marker Program Policies

Introduction
The Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission is responsible for administration of the historic marker program, including the selection of annual marker recipients. To facilitate the process, the Commission follows these policies.

Policies
Historic marker programs are designed to be selective and based upon objective criteria, while still allowing a measure of flexibility.

A. Evaluation Criteria
The Historic Marker Committee of the Historic Resources Commission will review all applications and require each applicant to make a five-minute presentation to the committee at its annual meeting.

Qualifying Criteria (All applications must meet all five of the following):
1. Structure, neighborhood, site, event, or organization must be over 50 years old
2. Topic not currently marked in Forsyth County by any other marker or program, either public or private
3. Proposed marker location must be in a public right-of-way or subject to an access easement
4. Proposed marker location must be in public view
5. Is a historic marker the appropriate form of recognition for this site?

The Committee will evaluate applications based on the following weighted priorities:
Priority One: Each criterion met is given up to 5 points. (25 points maximum; 13 points minimum)
1.1 Marker topic has the potential to educate the public
1.2 Lesser-known historic structure, neighborhood, site, event, or organization
1.3 Marker topic addresses under-represented or marginalized history or community
1.4 Structure or neighborhood of historical or cultural significance that has been demolished
1.5 Historical or cultural event at specific site

Priority Two: Each criterion met is given up to 3 points. (15 points maximum; 7 points minimum)
2.1 Marker topic is broadly significant to the history of Forsyth County or Winston-Salem
2.2 Endangered or threatened structure, neighborhood, or site
2.3 Existing structure or neighborhood with historical or cultural significance
2.4 Historic designed landscape, such as a cemetery, farm, garden, or park
2.5 Organization with historical or cultural significance
Priority Three:  Each criterion met is given 1 point. (5 points maximum; 2 points minimum)

3.1 Topic fills a gap in the narratives covered by existing historic markers
3.2 Contributes to a more equitable geographic distribution of markers
3.3 Helps create a sense of place or identify an area
3.4 Recognizes a preserved or restored structure, neighborhood, or site
3.5 Application has scored in the top five for two consecutive years

B. Voting Process

At the annual Historic Marker Committee meeting, each applicant shall make a five (5) minute presentation to the Committee. After each presentation, the Committee will have the opportunity ask questions, and the public will have an opportunity to comment in support of, or opposition to, the application.

The Committee will evaluate each application using the criteria in Section A. The top two scoring applications in the City of Winston-Salem and the top scoring application in Forsyth County will be recommended for funding to the Historic Resources Commission.

C. Inscriptions

All final marker inscriptions will be drafted by Historic Resources Commission staff, reviewed by the Historic Marker Committee, and approved by the full Historic Resources Commission. Commission staff will provide the applicant, if applicable, with a courtesy draft to ensure significant information has been included. Commission staff and the Committee do not editorialize or speculate; marker text will only include widely acknowledged historical facts. Additionally, space limitations due to the size and configuration of the markers require concise statements.

D. Marker Format

Each marker will be of a roadside marker format and will be the same size and design, unless otherwise determined by the Commission.

E. Marker Rollover List

At the written request of the applicant, marker applications that are not selected by the Commission will be placed on a rollover list to be considered the following year. Applications will be removed from the rollover list at the request of the applicant. Applicants should be prepared to make a presentation to the Historic Marker Committee each year to assure full consideration. Inclusion on the list is not a guarantee that the application will be selected in the future.

F. Location

Markers within the City of Winston-Salem will be installed within the public right-of-way in the general area of the selected site. Markers for Forsyth County must be located on sites in the unincorporated areas of Forsyth County, or on property owned by Forsyth County. For markers recognizing sites along the State of North Carolina right-of-way, Commission staff will coordinate, upon approval of said marker application, with the appropriate adjacent property owner for an easement in which to place the marker.
G. Implementation/Timing
At a designated time each year, the Historic Resources Commission’s Historic Marker Committee will meet to review submissions. After this review, the Committee will recommend marker recipients to the Commission. The Commission will consider the Committee’s recommendations and vote on final marker sites for the year. An opportunity for public comment regarding marker sites under consideration will be provided at both the Committee and the Commission levels. Staff will prepare inscription text in accordance with the Policy above and provide it to the foundry for marker production. Markers are usually installed in the spring and fall of each year. The Commission typically holds two marker unveiling ceremonies during Historic Preservation Month in May, one for a city-funded site and one for a county-funded site.

H. Replacement Markers
If a publically-funded marker is damaged and must be replaced, the appropriate governmental agency may purchase a replacement marker (as funding allows). All reinstallations will be managed by Commission staff.

The Historic Resources Commission provides detailed information about the Historic Marker Program on the internet at:  https://www.cityofws.org/1366/Historic-Marker-Program