

# **Interpretive Heritage Plaque Toolkit**

**A Guide to Effective Interpretive Plaques**

*Updated August 2025*



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## Overview

The Interpretive Plaque toolkit is a project of the Bruce County Cultural Action Plan. This toolkit provides checklists, templates, examples, and guidelines to assist organizations and municipalities with the implementation of an interpretive plaque project. By providing a comprehensive guide, the toolkit helps build local capacity to design and implement their own personalized projects.

Supporting information to guide the contents of this toolkit came from a variety of sources. Research of both academic and grey literature was conducted on best practices and design standards. Consultation with specialists in fields such as exhibit design or accessibility was conducted throughout the process of creating the toolkit. Additionally, several existing plaque toolkits were referenced.

The interpretive plaque toolkit includes:

- A clear definition for interpretive plaques
- Best practice guidelines for
  - Planning an interpretive plaque project
  - Crafting an interpretive plaque
  - Implementing an interpretive plaque
- An inventory of current interpretive plaques within Bruce County
- An analysis of the context for current interpretive plaques
- A collection of templates, checklists, examples, and resources to assist with future interpretive plaque projects.

Specifically, the best practice guidelines cover:

- Building a team and a cost estimate, research, evaluation of subject significance, site selection, and accessibility inclusion
- Interpretive writing, visual layout, plaque and plaque base materials, and draft review
- Plaque installation, maintenance, storage, and removal

This toolkit is designed to guide you through every stage of an interpretive plaque project, from initial planning to completion. The collected best practices have proven to create effective interpretive plaques. The provided templates and checklists give a foundation for starting a new project and help guide progress. This toolkit also provides helpful guidance for improving existing interpretive plaque programs and best practices for managing interpretive plaques.

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## 1.0. Context and Overview

Bruce County's Cultural Action Plan fosters cultural sustainability. One of the goals of the Cultural Action Plan is to develop and maintain cultural assets, recognizing culture as a component towards

opportunities for growing and developing economic activity, quality of life, and sense of shared experiences. Under **Strategic Direction 2.1**, one identified action is to research the best practices for implementing an inclusive interpretive panel program and share the results with stakeholders and municipalities. This objective will be achieved through this Interpretive Plaque Toolkit.

### Cultural Action Plan: Strategic Direction 2.1

Promote diverse cultural representation by sharing lesser-known stories and encouraging new collaboration between cultural organizations.

This toolkit contains:

- Best practices for planning, creating, and implementing interpretive plaques;
- An inventory of interpretive plaques in Bruce County in **Appendix A**;
- The current context for interpretive plaques across Bruce County discussed in **Appendix B**; and,
- A collection of templates and examples to aid interpretive plaque creation.

The introduction of this toolkit will help build cultural capacities through guidance and resources. It will support municipalities in developing their own interpretive plaque programs.

### 1.1. Heritage Sites and Interpretive Plaques

The cultural heritage of Bruce County is plentiful and diverse. Heritage is rooted in the activities of Indigenous host nations, pioneers, the founders of our early communities, veterans, early industries, and historical institutions. The County also boasts a deep maritime history with its waterfronts along Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Many people, groups, events, and places important to our shared history have been commemorated with interpretive plaques across the municipalities within Bruce County. These plaques come in a variety of ages, styles, and materials, ranging from

old cast metal plaques located in early hamlets to new interpretive panels designed into community parks.

Heritage sites are common across the county, with many sites that relate to various historical people, families, businesses, organizations, and more. Some sites are architecturally significant, with buildings displaying great examples of historical styles, such as Colonial Revival or Regency styles. Often, these sites differ from heritage sites as their significance is specific to design disciplines, and they may have a less prominent impact on the whole community. Other times, they may be both architecturally and historically significant.

## 1.2. Defining Interpretive Heritage Plaques

### Interpretive Heritage Plaque

An **interpretive heritage plaque** is a permanent flat tablet medium that utilizes text, images or symbols for storytelling dedicated to local history and cultural heritage. They typically commemorate a **person, group, place, or event** of historical significance. A place may include built or natural heritage. Interpretive heritage plaques are located on historical sites, in public spaces, or along **heritage corridors**. They aim to educate, provide context, and identify places of historical significance. This signage should explain the significance of the subject to the local community.



*Walkerton Market Garden Park Interpretive Plaque*



## Interpretive Informational Signage

**Interpretive informational signage** is closely related to interpretive heritage plaques. These signs are permanent flat tablets that utilize text, images, or symbols for educational purposes, which may also include a storytelling element.

The difference between these signs and interpretive heritage plaques is that interpretive informational signs generally use storytelling to describe local ecology (e.g., Animal life, trail vegetation, safety measures) or assist with wayfinding. They do not provide information regarding local history or cultural heritage. They do not celebrate or honor any **person, group, place, or event**. If they describe natural heritage, the information is more informational than commemorative. The best practices regarding the design of these plaques differ from interpretive heritage plaques.

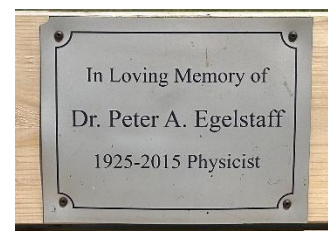


*Kincardine Recreational Trails Informational Sign*

## Commemorative plaques

Other types of plaques exist in the public realm that should be differentiated from interpretive heritage plaques.

**Commemorative plaques** are permanent flat tablets that may use a combination of text and graphics to commemorate a person, group, place, or event, but text is limited to recognition. These plaques do not include a storytelling element. Since commemorative plaques are simpler and contain less detail than interpretive plaques, they have a different design process. The information provided in this toolkit applies to **interpretive plaques only**.



*Dr. Peter A. Egelstaff  
Commemorative Plaque,  
Station Beach, Kincardine*

## Importance of Interpretive Plaques

Interpretive plaques are important for our communities. They play a key role in identifying heritage sites but their role in community culture goes beyond recognition. Their presence can promote care for local cultural heritage assets. Beyond public appreciation, interpretive plaques can further develop community pride in local heritage.

Interpretive plaques can affect personal identity and understanding of the world. Messages written in plaques can influence behavior, educate, or evoke emotion in readers. They are also great tools for building context, as they enhance the perception of sites, cities, or regions by allowing both locals and tourists to better understand and appreciate the stories of places.

### Interpretive Plaque Considerations

- Accessibility
- Inclusion
- Legibility
- Relevance
- Language
- Appeal

Interpretive plaques are a great type of media for many reasons. They often receive more visitor engagement than some other types of media, they are relatively cheap, and they can be viewed at a visitor's ease at any hour of the day.

## 2.0. Planning an Interpretive Plaque

This section will outline best practice standards and suggestions for planning an interpretive plaque project. This includes guidance on:

- [Building a team and a cost estimate](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Significance evaluation](#)
- [Site selection](#)
- [Creating accessible plaques](#)
- [Creating inclusive plaques](#)

### 2.1. Building a team and cost estimate

When planning a new interpretive plaque, there are considerations beyond the design of the plaque itself. First, the project for designing the plaque may involve a small team, and could include a writer/editor, subject-matter expert, community partner, and graphic designer. Some of these positions may be occupied by a single person or multiple people.

## Interpretive Plaque Team



Implementing a plaque also requires a cost estimate. Some costs to consider are the planning costs, labour costs, image rights, fabrication, installation, maintenance, and storage. These costs will vary by project.

### 2.2. Research

Before installing an interpretive plaque, careful and ethically conducted research must be done. This research should include a range of primary and secondary sources, as well as traditional knowledge, oral histories, and community stories which can be obtained through community engagement and co-creation with local stakeholders. The accuracy of information may be verified through consultation with a subject-matter expert.

Primary sources include quotes, diaries, letters, photos, drawings, or inventories from someone directly related to the site or subject.

Secondary sources include books or articles written by individuals not directly related to the site or subject.

Information can be obtained from resources including private collectors, professional photographers, museums, libraries, archives, conservancies, newspapers, art galleries, universities, stock houses, and historical institutes. An inventory of recommended sources for heritage research is available in **Appendix C**. An additional research summary form is in **Appendix D**.

### 2.3. Significance evaluation

A plaque may be created to commemorate local subjects with clear historical and cultural connections to the local area. The commemorated subject should be rare,

unique, or among the first of its type, which can be verified through research.<sup>1</sup> Subjects of national or international importance may also be commemorated by a plaque if there is a demonstrated connection to local communities.<sup>2</sup> Confirm that a proposed subject will not create a duplicate of an existing plaque.

When proposing an interpretive plaque for a site, ask if it is needed to communicate information that is not readily available at the site or if a plaque is needed to promote public awareness and management of a site.

A checklist for significance evaluation is available in **Appendix E**.

## 2.4. Site Selection

Before planning the location for an interpretive plaque, you may want to observe how local visitors use existing plaques through surveying visitor behavior at current sites. Afterwards, evaluate potential sites for safety, accessibility, and comfort. Interpretive plaques should be placed where there is the most traffic, with little vandalism, no barriers to accessibility, and where the presence of a plaque will **enhance** the beauty of the setting. Popular places include welcome areas or areas where people are likely to linger (e.g., community parks). A plaque should be oriented so that the subject is visible from the plaque if related to a site or landmark. This includes aligning the direction of the plaque towards the desired direction of visitor attention. It should also be oriented towards a light source of sufficient ambient light (a minimum of 10 foot-candles, which is the light level of a dim porch light).

Placement should also consider other dangers, including:

- Traffic hazards
- Sun exposure
- Shadow impacts
- Legal restrictions (Is the municipality responsible for this area?)
- Landowner or neighborhood opposition

As well as environmental conditions, including:

- Wind-blown sand
- Tree residue

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Heritage Trust, “*Criteria for Provincial Plaque Program*,” accessed June 13, 2025, <https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/pages/programs/provincial-plaque-program/criteria>

<sup>2</sup> City of Toronto, *Draft Commemorative Principles* (City of Toronto, 2021), <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/87d7-Draft-Commemorative-Principles-for-Web.pdf>

- Dirt
- Bird droppings
- Moisture
- Rock surfaces

A checklist for site selection is available in **Appendix E**.

## 2.5. Creating accessible plaques

Accessibility must be central to the design of interpretive plaques at all stages. Removing barriers in panel format, layout, and location is critical to creating accessible and inclusive interpretive plaques.

The following chart gives guidelines for these three steps to enhance accessibility:

*Table 1. Enhancing Interpretive Plaque Accessibility*

Enhancing Interpretive Plaque Accessibility	
Stage of Design	Guidelines
Plaque Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose plaque base that allows wheelchairs to pull under the plaque.</li> <li>• Use a minimum 32" clearance to allow wheelchair users to pull under the plaque.</li> <li>• Use a plaque panel that does not have sharp edges.</li> <li>• Angle the plaque at 45 degrees for best legibility.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
Plaque Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a relevant site that is accessible 24/7.</li> <li>• Ensure that the path towards the plaque is made of accessible material (e.g., pavement).</li> <li>• Choose a location that does not disrupt the flow of foot-traffic.</li> <li>• Place a minimum of 2' from the curb (if applicable)</li> <li>• Create a level, firm, hard, pad to place the plaque on.</li> </ul>

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<sup>3</sup> Smithsonian Accessibility Program, *Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design* (Smithsonian Institution, 2023), <https://resources.museumsontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Smithsonian-Guidelines-for-Accessible-Exhibition-Design.pdf>

## Enhancing Interpretive Plaque Accessibility

Stage of Design	Guidelines
Plaque Layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a clear hierarchy of elements.</li> <li>• Create a strong contrast between text and background.</li> <li>• Write out full names of acronyms and abbreviations when they first appear in text.</li> <li>• Use examples or analogies to explain complex ideas.</li> <li>• Consider braille lettering or raised, high-contrast lettering for headings.</li> <li>• Consider tactile elements such as raised images or artifacts.</li> <li>• Use QR codes in the design to read out plaque text.</li> </ul>

### 2.6. Creating inclusive plaques

#### Inclusive Storytelling

Generally speaking, there is an underrepresentation and limited commemoration of the histories and associated places of Indigenous communities, women, Black migrants, immigrants, LGBTQ+ communities, and other marginalized groups. New interpretive plaques in Bruce County have been made to recognize ethnocultural groups, such as the series erected in Market Garden Park in Walkerton to commemorate the first Chinese immigrant to settle in Walkerton. More examples of inclusive storytelling can help improve recognition of previously underrepresented groups.

A few suggestions can help with inclusive storytelling through interpretive plaques:

- Prioritize the commemoration of groups currently underrepresented in civic spaces, including Indigenous communities, Black communities, women, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized groups
- Select a group to commemorate through research and community engagement to determine connection to a local area
- Guide commemorations to underrepresented groups with the principle of co-creation with members of these communities. Share authority with

communities through active engagement of community members in decision-making<sup>4</sup>

- Consider opening applications for local community groups to propose subject for commemoration
- Consider partnering with local community organizations to co-create and co-promote new interpretive plaques
- Center the voices of groups that are most historically impacted by the commemorated subject during community engagement<sup>5</sup>
- Reflect the language and perspectives of the local community

Allowing community groups or individuals to nominate subjects for an interpretive plaque gives the public the opportunity to see subjects important to their identity commemorated by the municipality. This can help identify and recognize previously underappreciated or undiscovered contributors to our shared local heritage.

A template form that can be used to collect interpretive plaque recommendations is available in **Appendix F**, accompanied by a distributable invitation card example that prompts the public to fill out the form in **Appendix G**.

### Cultural Sensitivity

Creating inclusive interpretive plaques begins with mindful language. Cultural sensitivity and respect for all identities are critical to ensuring the writing is welcoming and inclusive.

Some guidelines are:

- Use proper language when discussing people with disabilities.
- Use gender-inclusive writing
- Avoid defining people by a problem, negative experience, or negative event.
- Provide 1-2 sentence overviews on interpretive plaques for those who cannot read the entire text.

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<sup>4</sup> City of Toronto, *Draft Commemorative Principles*.

<sup>5</sup> City of Toronto, *Draft Commemorative Principles*.

- Consider using bilingual signage if the commemorated subject is linked to the histories of Indigenous or ethnocultural communities.
- Consider QR codes linked to pages that translate plaque text to the user-device's set language.

### Proper language for disabilities

- Avoid saying, “the disabled,” and instead, say, “persons with disabilities.”
- Avoid saying, “living with a disability,” as it implies burden.
- Avoid terms such as “special” or “special needs.”
- Avoid framing stories to make a person’s accomplishments seem significant only because they have a disability.

Further guidance is available at: [A way with words and images: guide for communicating with and about persons with disabilities - Canada.ca](#)

### Gender inclusive language

- Consider using singular “they” when referring to a non-binary person.
- Respect and affirm the identities of relevant subjects by using their requested pronouns/neopronouns.
- Avoid or replace common expressions that use the words “man” or “woman.”
- Avoid or replace gendered titles such as “fishermen,” or “waitress.”

Further guidance is available at: [Gender-inclusive writing: Guidelines for writing to or about non-binary individuals - Writing Tips Plus - Writing Tools - Resources of the Language Portal of Canada - Canada.ca](#)



## Engaging with Underrepresented Groups

Designing inclusive interpretive plaques requires community engagement and collaboration with historically underrepresented groups. Working with these groups calls for genuine intention, respect, and unique approaches to communication.

Here are some suggestions for working with underrepresented groups:

- Engagement should be led by those with strong cultural competence
- Staff must adapt to the needs, perspectives, and concerns of the audience
- Ensure conversation occurs in a safe, neutral space, potentially facilitated by a neutral third party
- Recognize that you can better reach out to underrepresented groups through their own trusted media sources (e.g., radio shows in different languages)<sup>6</sup>
- Maintain open, ongoing, two-way communication
- Identify options for mutual gain and emphasize shared opportunities and objectives
- Ensure any commitments are clear and recorded

## 3.0. Crafting an Interpretive Plaque

This section will outline best practice standards and suggestions for crafting an interpretive plaque. This includes guidance on:

- [Interpretive Writing](#)
- [Visual Layout](#)
- [Materials](#)
- [Draft review](#)

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<sup>6</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. *Successful Strategies Facilitating the Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in Customary and Demographic Governance: Lessons from the Field* (Kathmandu: International IDEA, 2012).

### 3.1. Interpretive Writing

#### Length

The average reader has an attention span of around 45 seconds when reading interpretive panels.<sup>7</sup> When designing your plaques, best practice suggests following the 3-30-3 rule, providing information for readers to obtain in 3 seconds, 30 seconds, and 3 minutes. The following chart describes how you can appeal to these times:

Table 2. *Appealing to the 3-30-3 Rule*

Appealing to the 3-30-3 Rule	
Time	Content
3 Seconds	The title and main image should draw visitors in within 3 seconds of viewing the interpretive plaque.
30 Seconds	The main body text and supporting elements should be able to convey the main message of the plaque within 30 seconds to the viewer.
3 Minutes	The entire plaque (including all images and supporting captions) should be understood within 3 minutes of viewing the plaque

Since plaque sizes vary, word counts alone are less appropriate for choosing the best length for an interpretive plaque. There are still guidelines to consider that can improve the legibility and flow of your plaque. The following suggestions are general guidelines for word counts:

- Keep individual sentences to under 15 words
- Keep paragraphs between 40-75 words
- Keep total word count around 250-300 words (For a standard 24" x 36" plaque)

#### Tone

Interpretive plaques should engage the reader using a personal, active writing style. Plaques should be created with a clear communication goal, which generally fall into one of three types:

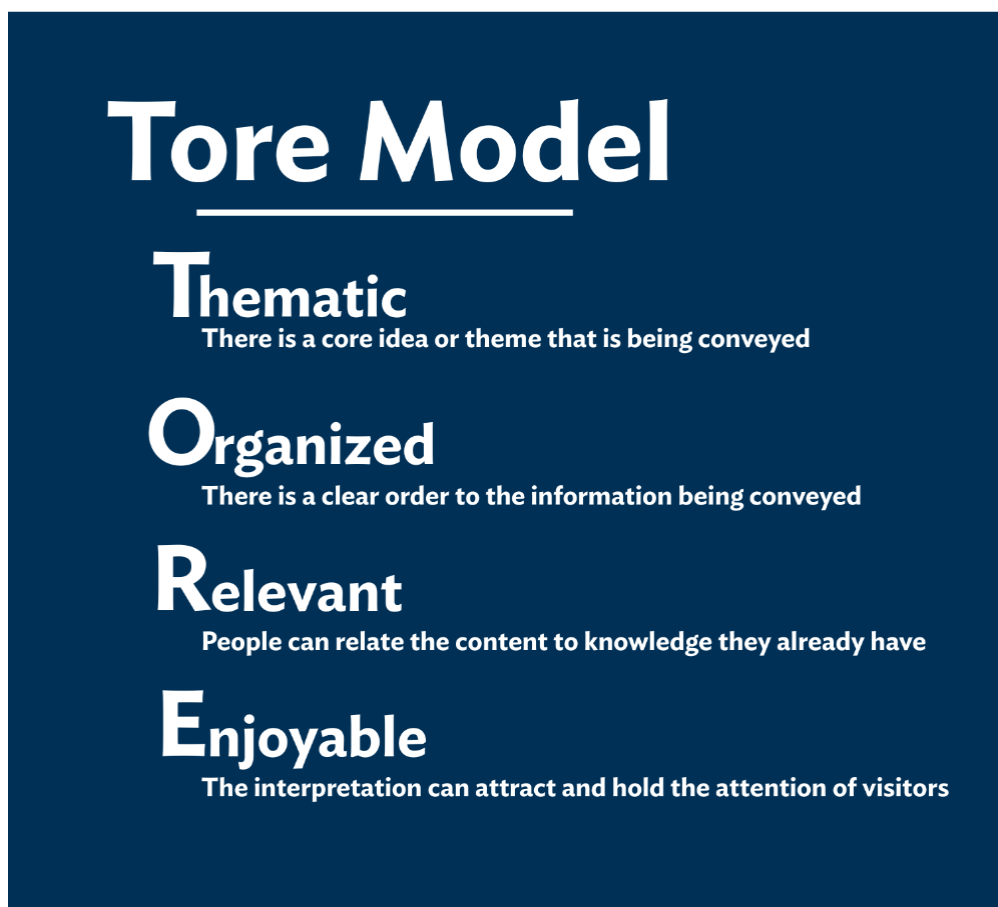
- **Conceptual or knowledge goals**
  - What do you want visitors to understand?
- **Emotional or affective goals**

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<sup>7</sup> Vaughan, Jason, *Marking History: Guidelines, Best Practices, and Templates for Interpretive Signage in Anne Arundel County* (Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning Cultural Resources Division, 2020).

- What do you want visitors to feel?
- **Attitudinal or behavioral goals<sup>8</sup>**
  - What do you want visitors to do?

Consider the TORE model when starting a heritage interpretation project to create an effective plaque.



Plaques also require simple and plain language to include readers of all ages, reading levels, and backgrounds. To achieve this, consider the following guidelines:

Table 3. Interpretive Plaque Language Guidelines

Interpretive Plaque Language Guidelines	
Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open with an attention-grabbing title</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to tell the entire story</li> <li>• Overwhelm the reader with data</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Ola Wetterberg et al., *Handbook of Best Practice: Heritage Interpretation: A Look from Europe* (Göteborg: TEHIC, 2024), <https://www.europeanheritagehub.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Handbook-of-Best-Practice-Heritage-Interpretation-a-look-from-Europe.pdf>.

Interpretive Plaque Language Guidelines	
Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a regular theme</li> <li>• Address questions that may be inspired by the site</li> <li>• Maintain an eighth grade reading level</li> <li>• Use simple “subject-verb-object” sentence structure</li> <li>• Use plain language that sounds natural when read aloud</li> <li>• Use active verbs</li> <li>• Use language that addresses the audience</li> <li>• Refer the viewer to their surroundings</li> <li>• Create connections to well-known events</li> <li>• Incorporate lively calls to action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use slang</li> <li>• Use technical jargon</li> <li>• Use passive verbs</li> <li>• Assume the reader has any prior knowledge of the subject</li> <li>• Read like an essay</li> <li>• Ignore context</li> <li>• Use long sentences</li> </ul>

## Font

Fonts should be appealing, professional, and legible. A single panel should stick to **two fonts**, generally with a **simple serif** for titles, captions, and credits, and **sans serif** for main body text. Slab fonts (e.g., Roboto Slab) are also commonly used in interpretive plaques.

No single font is ideal for all interpretive plaques. Choose a font based on guidelines and relevance to the subject or site. Avoid using all-capital letters and instead opt for a mix of lowercase and uppercase letters. Avoid script or italic fonts because they are also difficult to read, as well as fonts with wide variations in stroke width, light fonts, or numbers and letters that closely resemble each other.<sup>9</sup>

Some suggested fonts include:

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<sup>9</sup> Smithsonian Accessibility Program, *Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design*.

Table 4. Suggested Fonts

Suggested Fonts	
Sans Serif	Serif
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bookman</li> <li>- Chicago</li> <li>- Courier</li> <li>- Helvetica</li> <li>- Source Sans Pro</li> <li>- Roboto</li> <li>- PT Sans</li> <li>- Proxima Nova</li> <li>- Arial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Century Schoolbook</li> <li>- New York</li> <li>- Palatino</li> <li>- Times</li> <li>- Source Serif Pro</li> <li>- Playfair Display</li> <li>- Merriweather</li> <li>- Georgia</li> </ul>

For the best legibility, design for readership from 1-4' from the plaque.<sup>10</sup> Smaller font sizes are more difficult to read, so ensure that the smallest text (typically credits or captions) is no smaller than 24pt size.<sup>11</sup>

Table 5. Font Size for a Standard Interpretive Plaque

Font Size for a Standard 24" x 36" Interpretive Plaque	
Section	Point Size
Title	90-108pt
Subtitles	40-48pt
Body text	30-36pt
Captions	24pt

Consider that suggested font sizes vary by plaque size and typeface.

Use left-justified text to give a more professional appearance and make your plaque more accessible. Determining line spacing is not necessary for lines containing 52-65 characters, but larger bodies of text require larger leading to remain legible for readers with low vision.<sup>12</sup> You can use ratios as a guideline for line height to get appropriate line

#### Line Height Ratios

- Titles: Font Size x 1.2
- Body, Subheadings, and Captions: Font Size x 1.5

<sup>10</sup> Redwood Community Action Agency, *Humboldt Bay Interpretive Signing Manual* (Eureka, CA: Redwood Community Action Agency, 2002), <https://www.nrsrcaa.org/interp/manual/>

<sup>11</sup> Walters, Corinne, *Effective Signage to Manage Recreation at OSU's Research Forests* (Honors thesis, Oregon State University, Honors College, 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Trapp, Suzanne, *Towards Effective Interpretive Signs, Trails, and Wayside Exhibits*.

spacing, but because fonts are unique, include observation when choosing legible line spacing.

### 3.2. Visual Layout

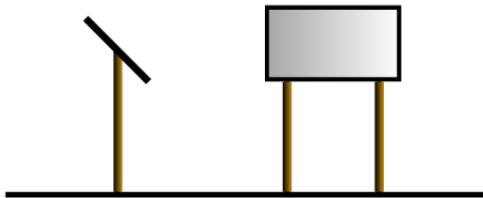
The layout for interpretive plaques is expected to differ by municipality, subject, or even site. These are general guidelines to follow when developing your own print for an interpretive plaque to create the most effective and appealing plaque.

#### Format

A **low-profile wayside exhibit design** is the typical format choice for interpretive heritage plaques. Upright waysides are also common but are generally for interpretive informational signage. The base for any plaque should match the surrounding environment's materials and colours.

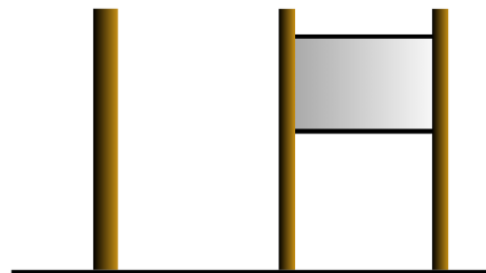
#### Low-profile wayside exhibit

Side view      Front view



#### Upright wayside exhibit

Side view      Front view



There is no ideal panel size for all interpretive plaques, so choose an appropriate panel size based on the quantity of content being conveyed, while considering aesthetic appeal, legibility, and accessibility.

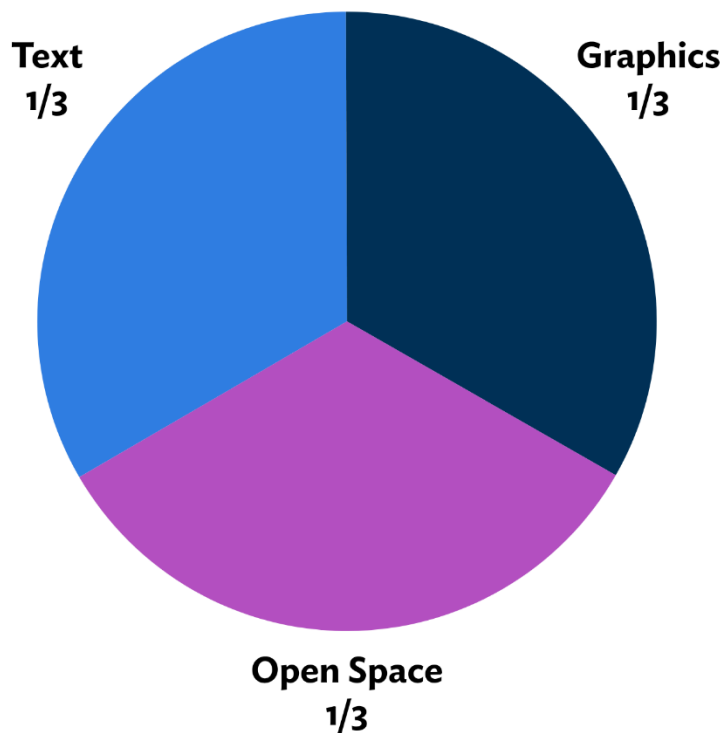
Common panel sizes include:

- 18" x 24"
- 24" x 24"
- 24" x 36"
- 42" x 24"

## Content

Best practice suggests a rule of thirds for interpretive plaque layouts. There should be an equal split of space, with 1/3 containing text, 1/3 containing graphics, and 1/3 left as open space.

### Interpretive Plaque Layout Breakdown



The plaque should also maintain a clear hierarchy of importance throughout the entire plaque, with a clear title, subtitles, and body text and graphics scaled by importance.

Consider the design elements of balance, simplicity, unity, emphasis, sequence, line, space, and texture. Some recommendations to achieve these design elements include:

Table 6. Designing Interpretive Plaques Using Design Elements

Designing Interpretive Plaques Using Design Elements	
Design Element	Considerations
<b>Balance</b> Designing visual elements to balance their visual weight for aesthetic appeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a symmetrical or asymmetrical balance of visual weight</li> <li>• Use asymmetrical balance to enhance visual interest</li> </ul>
<b>Simplicity</b> Removing unnecessary elements and minimizing the number of features in a design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember “less is more”</li> <li>• Avoid using graphics for decoration</li> <li>• Avoid excessively detailed backgrounds and borders</li> </ul>
<b>Unity</b> Creating harmony in a design through consistency, repetition, variety, proximity, and alignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain consistent text, graphic styles, colours, and width of empty space</li> <li>• Use lines or borders that show boundaries</li> <li>• For a series of plaques, maintain the same layout style</li> </ul>
<b>Emphasis</b> Using different strategies to focus the reader’s eyes on key features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use contrast, shape, or size to emphasize important features</li> <li>• Isolate important features</li> </ul>
<b>Sequence</b> Guiding the viewer through the plaque in a planned order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Order information by importance from the top left corner to the lower-right corner</li> <li>• Understand that readers start with graphics, then move to text</li> </ul>
<b>Line</b> The use of lines to evoke different emotions, convey messages to the reader, or support other design elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use lines to direct the viewers’ attention to features</li> <li>• Remember that strong vertical lines suggest power, while strong horizontal lines suggest peace</li> </ul>



## Designing Interpretive Plaques Using Design Elements

Design Element	Considerations
<b>Space</b> Using the open space not occupied by other features to emphasize other design elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use open space primarily along borders</li> <li>• Aim for 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the design area to be open space</li> </ul>
<b>Texture</b> Visual or tactile characteristics that create an added sense of dimension to select features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use differences in texture to communicate emphasis, separation, or unity.</li> </ul>

The plaque should start with one main image aligned with the title and main text. The most important information should be first in the main body text. The following text should be organized in tiers that distinguish importance.

Only one or two supplementary images should accompany the main image of the plaque. These images should be captioned to avoid overcrowding the main body text with information. The organizational logo should be subtly integrated into the plaque design to avoid taking attention away from the main content.

### Graphics

Images and other graphics should be relevant and high quality. Selected images should relate directly to the plaque subject while avoiding showing anything that is already readily visible. High-quality images can be collected from a variety of sources, including archives, photographers, historical societies, or libraries.

Here are the suggestions for maintaining high quality graphics in the final plaque:

**Ideal Resolution**  
300 DPI

**Minimum Resolution**  
150 DPI

\*Resolution at final plaque scale

A good resource for high quality historic images is the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre's Online Collections. In some circumstances, BCM&CC will provide Bruce County municipalities with high quality images for interpretive plaques at no charge.

To use an image from the Online Collections, contact the Archives at BCM&CC at [archives@brucecounty.on.ca](mailto:archives@brucecounty.on.ca) or 226-909-2426 and provide:

- The requested image's identification number(s) (e.g.AX975.044.001)
- Explanation on how the images will be used
- The date for when the images are needed by

Once connected with Archives staff, they will explain whether a fee will be requested and provide a **Reproduction Order Form**. This lists the images to be provided and the terms of use to be agreed upon.

Ensure that all graphics used have been properly credited. References can be included in image captions, plaque borders, or a webpage accessible by QR code. If using images from the BCM&CC Archives, your image credits may need to include ID numbers.

Verify that image-use permission agreements have been signed and documented and that the negotiated fee for usage of the desired graphics has been paid if necessary. An image-use permission agreement template is available in **Appendix H**.

The quality of the final layout is critical for the professional appearance of the interpretive plaque. If a poor-quality layout is exported, images may become pixelated, text may become less legible, and the final plaque will appear unprofessional. The two recommended image file formats for final layouts are PDF files and TIFF files, while JPEGs are generally not suitable.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The LA Group, *New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Statewide Interpretive Signage Program* (New York Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, 2021).

Table 7. Image File Formats

Image File Formats		
File Format	Description	Suitable for Final Layout
Portable Document Format (PDF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widely supported format</li> <li>• Maintain image quality</li> </ul>	Yes
Tagged Image File Format (TIFF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widely supported format</li> <li>• Popular among photographers and designers</li> <li>• Maintain image quality</li> </ul>	Yes
Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go-to file format for digital images</li> <li>• Widely supported format</li> <li>• Loss in image quality from compression</li> </ul>	No

## Colour

A sign with multiple colours and illustrations is more likely to be read than one with a simple black-and-white design. When designing an interpretive plaque, choose one predominant colour, along with 1-3 accent colours. The predominant colour can be chosen through three different methods:

- Colour related to the theme of the interpretive plaque
- Colour that compliments the surrounding site
- Colour that matches branding or the colour scheme of a plaque series

Avoid combinations of colours that are indistinguishable by those with colour blindness. These include:

- Red and Green combinations
- Blue and Yellow combinations

Use colour properly to make interpretive plaques accessible for those with perceptual difficulties. This can be done by:

- Printing text on a solid background
- Having a contrast ratio (difference between luminescence of foreground text and background) of 4.5:1 for main text and 3:1 for titles<sup>14</sup>
- Avoiding fluorescent or very bright colours
- Defining labels with colours to give visual clues
- Avoiding colours that are difficult for the eye to focus on, such as pale blue or violet<sup>15</sup>



An online resource for checking colour contrast: [WebAIM: Contrast Checker](#)

### Template

A grid template plaque at the standard 24” x 36” size is available in **Appendix I**. This template includes broad guidance for logo placement, title placement, QR code placement, and a grid with margin spaces to guide design. An example plaque following the provided template is also available for reference in **Appendix J**.

### 3.3. Materials

Choosing the best material for an interpretive plaque depends on many factors, including cost, durability needs, colour needs, physical limitations, and topic. Installing an interpretive plaque also requires consideration for the material of sign supports. The following are widely used materials for interpretive plaques and plaque supports. For plaque panels options include Fiberglass Embedment, High Pressure Laminate, Porcelain Enamel, or Cast Bronze. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each material and how they relate to the needs of your interpretive plaque and selected site location.

#### Fiberglass Embedment Signs

<sup>14</sup> Level Access, “Why Contrast Checkers Matter for Web Accessibility,” WCAG, Accessed June 13, 2025, <https://www.wcag.com/solutions/why-contrast-checkers-matter-for-web-accessibility/>

<sup>15</sup> Trapp, Suzanne, *Towards Effective Interpretive Signs, Trails, and Wayside Exhibits*.

## 1. Fiberglass Embedment Signs

The most recommended material for interpretive plaques is fiberglass embedment. It has a long-lasting history of usage for interpretive plaques.<sup>16</sup> These plaques are produced with computer text and silkscreen graphics printed on a carrier sheet that is placed between reinforced layers of tightly woven fiberglass cloth, then resign saturated, baked, and cured.

### Pros and Cons of Fiberglass Embedment Signs

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional appearance</li> <li>Vandal resistant</li> <li>Weather, moisture, dirt, acid, and fire resistant</li> <li>Resistant to shattering, breaking, and scratching</li> <li>Graphics do not fade or delaminate</li> <li>Possibility for tactile elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High initial cost for planning and design</li> <li>Requires backing and framing material</li> <li>May require occasional buffing</li> </ul>

## High-Pressure Laminate Signs

## 2. High Pressure Laminate Signs

High Pressure Laminate (HPL) uses an inkjet print sandwiched between multiple layers of melamine and phenolic sheets that are pressed with high pressure and heat to form a solid HPL sheet. HPL is one of the most durable materials for outdoor signage available. It is also made from 30% recycled materials.<sup>17</sup> While highly effective, careful consideration should be given to whether a location's climate is dangerous for HPL signs.

### Pros and Cons for High Pressure Laminate Signs

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scratch resistant</li> <li>Graffiti resistant</li> <li>Weather resistant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vulnerable to high heats</li> <li>Vulnerable to moisture and water</li> <li>Colour fading</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> Gorski, Margaret, *Interpretive Sign Design Steps* (Great Falls, MT: Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, n.d). [https://lewisandclark.org/archives/grants/NFS\\_Interpretive\\_Sign\\_Design\\_Steps.pdf](https://lewisandclark.org/archives/grants/NFS_Interpretive_Sign_Design_Steps.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Ketchmark, Andrea, *Informational and Interpretive Sign Process Guidelines North Country National Scenic Trail* (North Country Trail Association, Accessed June 13, 2025).

- Excellent image quality
- Sustainable
- No delamination
- Cost-effective
- Difficult to repair

### Porcelain Enamel Signs

#### 3. Porcelain Enamel Signs

Porcelain Enamel is another popular material for interpretive plaques. These plaques are created by covering a piece of sheet steel in a thin layer of powdered glass, which is then heated to 1500 degrees Fahrenheit to melt and fuse enamel to the steel. This creates a smooth, hard, durable glass surface. It is expensive to use if the plaque contains more than two or three colours. Due to cost, it is best used in permanent, supervised locations.

#### Pros and Cons of Porcelain Enamel Signs

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fade resistant</li> <li>• Superior colour quality</li> <li>• Indefinite lifespan</li> <li>• Possibility for tactile elements</li> <li>• Scratch resistant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive due to hand illustrations</li> <li>• More susceptible to vandalism</li> <li>• Labour intensive</li> <li>• Susceptible to rusting in areas with high humidity</li> </ul>

### Cast Bronze Plaques

#### 4. Cast Bronze Plaques

There is already a large collection of local cast metal interpretive plaques. Bronze is less ideal for interpretive heritage plaques due to their limitations in providing detailed graphics, having higher cost, and susceptibility to patina formation. Despite this, they are popular for historical markers. These plaques are created by pouring molten bronze into a designed mold, then hand finishing the final product.

#### Pros and Cons for Cast Bronze Plaques

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clean, professional look</li> <li>• High durability and longevity</li> <li>• Weather resistant</li> <li>• Vandal resistant</li> <li>• Tactile lettering and graphics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graphics limited to large letters or simple line drawings</li> <li>• Smaller range of available colours</li> <li>• High cost</li> <li>• Heavy and difficult to install</li> </ul>

- Vulnerable to moisture and chemicals
- Patina formation

### Plaque supports and Other Considerations

Sign support materials include:

- Rock
- Painted steel
- Aluminum posts
- Wood

Alongside materials, there are also many different types of bases or mounts for interpretive plaques.

*Table 8. Mounting Options*

Mounting Options	
Type	Description
In-Ground Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posts set in a concrete poured into a hole</li> <li>• Require at least 36" depth to secure post in the ground</li> <li>• Effective for outdoor interpretive plaques</li> </ul>
Surface Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posts attached to hard surface using a plate and screws</li> <li>• Surfaces can be existing ground or installed concrete pads</li> <li>• Best method for hard surfaces, sites where topsoil is thin, or sites where digging is prohibited</li> </ul>
Wall Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plaque attached to a vertical surface using brackets</li> <li>• Mounting a plaque on a historical structure is not recommended</li> <li>• Best used for indoor settings, exterior walls, or kiosks</li> </ul>
Rail Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plaque attached to a railing using clamps</li> <li>• Rail mounts are often custom made, making them more expensive</li> <li>• Only feasible in sites with railings, such as overlooks, boardwalks, or porches.</li> </ul>

Consider the type of base that is most appropriate for your site. Base types that work effectively with low profile wayside exhibits include single post pedestal, double post pedestal, or rail mounts. Post pedestals can be either in-ground or surface mounts.

You may also want to consider other supplementary materials when creating interpretive plaques. There are anti-graffiti materials, which are classed as sacrificial or non-sacrificial, that can be applied primarily for graffiti protection.

<b>Sacrificial coatings:</b>	<b>VS</b>	<b>Non-sacrificial coatings:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sacrifice coating during graffiti removal</li> <li>• Shorter lifespan</li> <li>• Clear and do not hinder image of plaque</li> <li>• Easy to remove graffiti regularly</li> <li>• Require reapplication after removal</li> <li>• Best for high-risk areas to protect from graffiti</li> </ul> <p>Ex. Acrylic-based coatings</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not lose any coating during removal</li> <li>• Long lifespan</li> <li>• Clear and do not hinder image of the plaque</li> <li>• Graffiti removal requires special cleaning agents</li> <li>• Best for low-risk areas or plaques that do not require regular maintenance</li> </ul> <p>Ex. Aliphatic polyurethane</p>

Here is a list of trusted interpretive plaque manufacturers:

*Table 9. Interpretive Plaque Manufacturers*

<b>Interpretive Plaque Manufacturers</b>	
<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Page Graphics</b>	- (705) 888-0731 - <a href="mailto:info@pagegraphics.ca">info@pagegraphics.ca</a>
<b>Artech Signs and Graphics</b>	- (519) 527-2200 - <a href="mailto:artech@tcc.on.ca">artech@tcc.on.ca</a>
<b>Signmaker</b>	- (519) 389-2672 - <a href="mailto:sales@coracomputers.com">sales@coracomputers.com</a>
<b>Gemini Canada</b>	- (800) 265-0426 - <a href="mailto:canada@geminimade.com">canada@geminimade.com</a>
<b>Cox Signs Limited</b>	- (519) 881-1304 - <a href="mailto:sales@coxsigns.com">sales@coxsigns.com</a>
<b>Miller Photoplaques</b>	- (519) 794-4629

Be aware that most manufacturers only do cast metal plaques. For digital prints, contact Page Graphics or Miller Photoplaques.



### 3.4. Draft Review

Developing a draft of an interpretive plaque layout should be done with careful attention to factors related to the design, including accessibility and inclusivity. If reviewing an interpretive plaque for approval, note that all relevant steps have been taken. Consideration of the subject, location, research, content, format, colours, and materials should be taken to determine the completeness of the interpretive plaque project. A reference draft review checklist is available in **Appendix K**.

## 4.0. Implementing an Interpretive Plaque

This last section will outline best practice standards and suggestions for implementing an interpretive plaque. This includes guidance on:

- [Plaque installation](#)
- [Maintenance](#)
- [Storage](#)
- [Removal](#)

### 4.1. Plaque Installation

Installing an interpretive plaque requires a clear plan for who will install, maintain, and potentially replace it. Consider partnering with the local parks or public works department to assist with this.

Generally, in-ground post base installation requires:

- Digging a hole around 8"-10" in diameter and at the required depth to ensure the desired height for your plaque
- Adding several inches of tamped gravel or crushed stone to create a footing base
- Protecting and stabilizing the post
- Backfilling the hole with concrete
- Removing any braces and protective coverings

Installing a plaque on a surface requires:

- Finding or creating a sturdy, level base
- Fastening the base boot to the surface using concrete anchor bolts

The plaque installation process will depend on the type of interpretive plaque, the mounting base provided, and the landscape where it will be installed. Comprehensive installation instructions should be provided by your plaque manufacturer.

## 4.2. Maintenance

Although interpretive plaques are durable, regular maintenance is necessary. The upkeep of a plaque improves their usefulness, appeal, and lifespan. Interpretive plaques require maintenance twice a year but may require more if there are issues with vandalism. Cleaning can be done with mild soap and water, but some damage may require graffiti remover, paint, window cleaner, fiberglass wax, and in major cases, the replacement of the plaque. Also, conduct regular maintenance on the surrounding area to ensure that the plaque is accessible year-round.

Even with regular maintenance, interpretive plaques will require replacement after a couple of decades.

## 4.3. Storage

All plaques will eventually deteriorate, but proper storage and care can extend their lifespan. Plaques may require seasonal storage, occasional storage for inventory, or be stored after they are no longer on display. Some materials will require regular storing during the winter to avoid harsh weather conditions. Plaque materials that are weather resistant can be displayed year-round, unless in the case of an extreme weather event.

Proper storage should account for the following factors: neglect, improper handling, theft, extreme temperatures, humidity, fire, water damage, light damage, pests and biological hazards, and contact with harmful storage materials.

*Table 10. Storage Dangers*

Storage Dangers	
Factor	Solution
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a complete, up-to-date inventory of plaques, including subject, location, material, and condition</li> <li>• Schedule regular cleaning and maintenance of the storage area</li> <li>• Report any damages or incidents</li> </ul>

Storage Dangers	
Factor	Solution
Improper Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that plaques may be fragile or have fragile parts</li> <li>• Avoid handling with bare hands and use disposable gloves to avoid marking surfaces</li> <li>• Remove all accessories that may damage the plaque prior to handling it</li> <li>• Have a clear route for transporting the plaque</li> </ul>
Theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular checkups on the storage unit</li> <li>• Develop a strong security system, which can include security cameras, alarms, or access control measures.</li> </ul>
Extreme Temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the recommended temperature range in the storage area (recommended temperature range for storage is between 16 - 21 °C but may differ by your plaque material).<sup>18</sup></li> <li>• Monitor temperature</li> </ul>
Humidity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the recommended Relative Humidity in the storage area (30 - 50% relative humidity is generally safe for storing items, but this range may differ depending on the material of your plaques)<sup>19</sup></li> <li>• Install HVAC with dehumidification</li> <li>• Monitor RH</li> </ul>
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate fire hazards in the storage area</li> <li>• Keep a fire extinguisher readily accessible in the storage area</li> </ul>
Water damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate storage away from pipes if possible or inspect nearby pipes regularly</li> <li>• Locate storage above the flood plain</li> <li>• Cover plaques loosely with plastic sheeting for extra protection</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Conserv, "Archive Temperature and Humidity Recommendations," Conserve Blog, 2024, <https://conserv.io/blog/archive-temperature-and-humidity-recommendations/>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Storage Dangers	
Factor	Solution
Light damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a lighting intensity of 150 lux or less and UV content of under 75uW/lm<sup>20</sup></li> <li>• Eliminate external sources of daylight by using drapes, blinds, or boards</li> </ul>
Pests and Biological Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain regular cleaning and sanitation of the storage area</li> <li>• Prohibit smoking and the consumption of food or beverages in the storage area</li> </ul>
Harmful Storage materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the storage unit and any wrapping, padding, or support materials are made of materials that are not chemically reactive and have good long-term stability (e.g., polyethylene foam)</li> </ul>

#### 4.4. Removal

While some plaque materials have long lifespans, they all eventually require removal. If you have an existing plaque that may need removal, consider the following steps.

##### Criteria for Removal

First, determine whether the plaque needs to be removed. A plaque should be removed or replaced if it:

- Is damaged or deteriorated
- Has outdated or inaccurate information
- Is no longer relevant to its surrounding site
- Uses insensitive language
- Interferes with accessibility
- Contains a controversial subject

If a plaque is suspected to use insensitive language or commemorate a controversial subject, proper research and consulting should be carried out to determine if the

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<sup>20</sup> Mason, Janet, *Handling Heritage Objects* (Canadian Conservation Institute. Last modified December 14, 2018).

plaque is appropriate. Consider contacting subject experts or cultural leaders, such as the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. This should be done by a Municipal Heritage Committee or the team seeking to remove the plaque.

### Necessary Permissions

Next, permission needs to be granted from the owner of the plaque and any other relevant authorities, including specific government agencies or landowners. Determining the owner of a plaque may be difficult, especially for older plaques. Usually, the creator of a plaque is listed on the plaque itself within the top or bottom margins. If no contributors are listed, contact possible owners, which include the municipality, any local historical societies, or the County.

Finding the owner of an older plaque may require additional research. The [Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre Archives](#) has some resources that can assist with interpretive plaque research.

Plaques are places with the permission of the landowner, who also has the right to request their removal. Requests for removal should be directed to the organization or municipality responsible for managing the plaque program.

### Removal

Once it has been determined that a plaque needs to be removed and the required permissions to do so have been granted, the team responsible for installing and maintaining plaques may remove the plaque. This process depends on the type of mount and material. Generally, it requires unbolting or unscrewing the plaque, removing it from the surface, then cleaning up the site.

## 5.0. Glossary of Terms

### **Bilingual signage**

Bilingual signage is a sign, panel, or plaque that contains text in more than one language.

### **Commemorative**

An action to remember or celebrate something or someone.

### **Cultural Heritage**

The tangible items and intangible elements that carry the cultural features of a society and reflect the formation of a community from generation to generation.

### **Fen**

A type of wetland with peat accumulation rich in minerals from ground or surface water.

### **Hamlets**

A very small settlement smaller than a village

### **Heritage Corridor**

A linear landscape, usually some form of path, which contains a collection of cultural features.

### **Historical Significance**

The importance of a person, group, place, or event in the shaping of history.

### **Interpretive heritage plaque**

A permanent flat tablet medium that utilizes text, images, or symbols for storytelling dedicated to local history and cultural heritage, typically commemorating a person, group, place, or event of historical significance.

### **Interpretive plaque**

Referring to interpretive heritage plaques in this context.

### **Leading**

The distance between two lines of type

### **Lower-tier municipality**

Local municipalities operating within a two-tier municipal structure. In Bruce County, there are eight lower-tier municipalities.

### **Natural Heritage**

Features or areas of the natural landscape, including landscapes, ecosystems, species, geological formations, or natural landmarks, that play a role in a community's environmental and social values.

**Patina Formation**

A thin, surface layer that typically develops on metals due to environmental conditions. Can come in a variety of colours but is often recognized as green.

**Pow-wow**

A celebration and community gathering where Indigenous nations engage in activities to reconnect with their heritage.

**QR Code**

Square barcode that stores information in a pattern of black dots and white spaces.

**Quality of life**

Standard of well-being, happiness, and human flourishing for individuals or communities.

**Stakeholder**

All individuals or groups relevant to or involved in a project.

**Tactile Elements**

Components on a plaque that engage the sense of touch through different textures or shapes.

**Vandalism**

The act of causing intentional damage to public or private property.

**Visual weight**

The perceived force of a visual element in attracting the viewers' attention.

**Wayside Exhibit**

An outdoor interpretive panel display including text and graphics to explain the significance of a person, group, site, or event.

## APPENDIX A: Interpretive Plaques Inventory

The following list is a complete inventory of the identified interpretive plaques across Bruce County as of July 9, 2025.

Inventory of Interpretive Plaques		
Municipality	Community	Plaque Title
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Sawmill Remains
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Krug Brothers Site Plan
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	The Foundry
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Big Bruce
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	The Founder of Chesley
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Malcolm
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Cenotaph Plaques
Arran-Elderslie	Chesley	Centennial Plaque
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Apothecary's Hall
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Drug Store
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Steele Block
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Only Frame Store
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Hanna House
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Foundry Chimney
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Paisley City Roller Mills
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Samuel Thomas Rowe
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Hose Tower
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Founding of Paisley
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Blacksmith's Shop
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Porteous Bank of Canada
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The Elliot Block
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Historic Frame Building
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	The David Milne
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	David Milne
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	David Milne 2nd Plaque
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Isabella Valancy Crawford
Arran-Elderslie	Paisley	Paisley Women's Institute
Arran-Elderslie	Tara	William Hearst
Arran-Elderslie	Tara	Cyclone Taylor
Arran-Elderslie	Tara	The Founding of Tara



Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Williscroft
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Gillie's Hill Women's Institute
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Honourable Duncan Marshall
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Williscroft Women's Institute
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	First Council for Elderslie Twp. Names
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Salem Presbyterian Church
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Ebenezer United Church
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Dobbinton School Park
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	Lockerby Mill
Arran-Elderslie	Elderslie	McBeath Conservation Area
Arran-Elderslie	Arran	Mount Hope United Church
Arran-Elderslie	Arran	Centenary United Church
Arran-Elderslie	Scone	Scone School Park
Arran-Elderslie	Scone	Founder of Scone
Brockton	Walkerton	The Early Years
Brockton	Walkerton	From China, with Love
Brockton	Walkerton	The Golden Years
Brockton	Walkerton	Walkerton History 1
Brockton	Walkerton	Walkerton History 2
Brockton	Walkerton	Robert Sutherland
Brockton	Walkerton	Lobies Park
Brockton	Walkerton	Historic Walkerton Businesses
Brockton	Walkerton	Brockton Bridge 11
Brockton	Walkerton	Centretown Condos
Brockton	Walkerton	History of the Truax Dam
Brockton	Greenock	Cargill
Brockton	Greenock	James Donnelly House
Brockton	Greenock	Glammis
Brockton	Greenock	Lovat
Brockton	Greenock	Pinkerton
Brockton	Chepstow	Schmidt Lake
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	Ripley Open for Business
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	History of Lewis Park
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	Collective Co
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	82 Huron Street

Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	87 Huron Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	The Woodshop Gifts
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	75 Huron Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	77 Huron Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	48 Queen Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	56 Queen Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	54 Queen Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	52 Queen Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	46 Queen Street
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	Law Office
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	Huron Presbyterian Church Cemetery
Huron-Kinloss	Ripley	Huron Presbyterian Church
Huron-Kinloss	Lucknow	Lucknow Waterworks
Huron-Kinloss	Lucknow	Lucknow Pharmacy
Huron-Kinloss	Lucknow	McDonagh Insurance Brokers LTD
Huron-Kinloss	Lucknow	Donald Dinney Statue
Huron-Kinloss	Point Clark	Lighthouses of the Bruce Coast: Point Clark Lighthouse
Kincardine	Kincardine	The Kincardine Lighthouse
Kincardine	Kincardine	Lighthouses of the Bruce Coast: Kincardine Lighthouse
Kincardine	Kincardine	Enjoying Kincardine Beach
Kincardine	Kincardine	Kincardine Pier and Lake Huron Wrecks
Kincardine	Kincardine	Returning Home
Kincardine	Kincardine	Kincardine Port of Commerce
Kincardine	Kincardine	Life in Kincardine
Kincardine	Kincardine	The Wreck of the Ann Maria
Kincardine	Kincardine	Lighthouse and the Piper
Kincardine	Kincardine	The Phantom Piper
Kincardine	Kincardine	Sergeant Charles William Mann
Kincardine	Baie du Dore	Baie du dore
Kincardine	Kincardine	Sinclairs Corners
Kincardine	Kincardine	Bruce Township Hall
Kincardine	Inverhuron	Inverhuron Lime Kiln
Kincardine	Inverhuron	U.S.S. #1 Bruce & Kincardine (Inverhuron)
Kincardine	Tiverton	Douglas Point Nuclear Power Plant

Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Fairy Lake Nature Area
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Southampton Art School
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Southampton's Waterfront
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	H.M.S General Hunter
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	The Old Train Station
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	The Knowles Block
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	The Furniture Making Era
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Lighthouses of the Bruce Coast: Chantry Island Lighthouse
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Chantry Island Lighthouse
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Southampton Train Wreck
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Saugeen River Harbour
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Southampton Town Hall
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Captain John Spence
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Denny's Dam
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Dominion Plywoods Factory and the Mosquito Bomber
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Nodwell Iriquois Village
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Early Industries at Port Elgin Harbour
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	North Shore Road
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Cenotaph Park
Saugeen Shores	Saugeen Township	Dunblane Presbyterian Church
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Southampton's First Permanent Settler
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Art School
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Town Hall
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Fur Trading at Saugeen
Saugeen Shores	Southampton	Pioneer Park
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Nodwell Indian Village
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Emmet McGrath Pavilion
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Recreation at Port Elgin Beach
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Early Industries
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Port Elgin Library
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Founding of Port Elgin
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Port Elgin Downtown in the Early Years
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Jack Stafford
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	History of Port Elgin Fair

Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	John Kyle Park History of the Groves
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Lamont Sports Park History
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	Early Days of Playing Ball
Saugeen Shores	Port Elgin	History of Agriculture in Saugeen
South Bruce	Formosa	Bottle Cap Plaques
South Bruce	Teeswater	Olympian Jennie
South Bruce	Teeswater	Founding of Teeswater
South Bruce	Formosa	Church of Immaculate Conception
South Bruce	Mildmay	The Red Mill
South Bruce Peninsula	Sauble Beach	New Haines Dam
South Bruce Peninsula	Wiarton	Wiarton Willie
South Bruce Peninsula	Wiarton	Blue Water Beach Park
South Bruce Peninsula	Allenford	Heritage Bench
South Bruce Peninsula	Allenford	The Allenford “Powwow”
South Bruce Peninsula	Colpoy’s Bay	Heritage Bench
South Bruce Peninsula	Wiarton	Loss of S. S. “J. H. Jones”
South Bruce Peninsula	Wiarton	Tragedy Strikes the J. H. Jones
South Bruce Peninsula	Oliphant	Bruce Peninsula Portage
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Lion’s Head	Sir Wilfred Laurier Plaque
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Lion’s Head	Singing Sands
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Our Lighthouses
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Fathom Five’s Shipwrecks
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Little Tub: A Working Harbour
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Fishing History

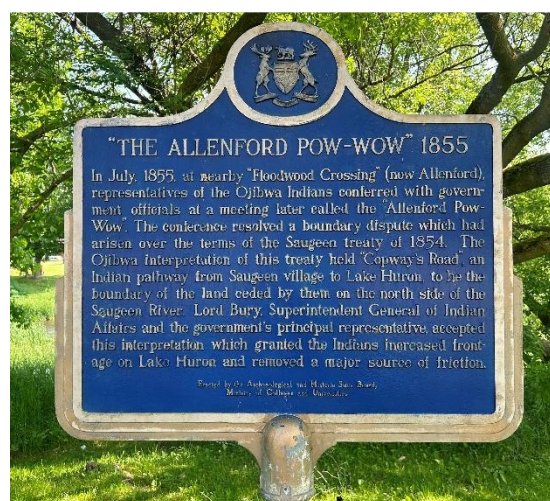
Norther Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Griffon
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	The Honourable William Grenville Davis
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Minch Anchor
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Northern Terminus of the Bruce Trail
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Schoolhouse Bell
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Bruce Peninsula National Park
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	The View from Here
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Ferry Ramp Plaques
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Escarpment Submergence
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	William Grenville Davis
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Head of the Harbour
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Flowerpot Island
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	Tobermory Ferries Over the Years
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	The Light of Big Tub
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Tobermory	From Fishing Village to Scuba Diving Centre
Northern Bruce Peninsula	Lion's Head	Sergeant John Pearson

## APPENDIX B: Current Interpretive Plaques

Across Bruce County's eight lower-tier municipalities, there is a large variety of existing interpretive plaque styles. Even within municipalities there is a wide range of different plaques, each made with different materials, covering different subjects, having different layouts, or being placed in different locations. The variety of subjects allows for much of Bruce County's shared heritage to be identified and commemorated, and many of the plaques provide detailed summaries of local history to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the subject.

### Provincial Plaques

While not created by the County or any municipalities, the Province of Ontario has many interpretive plaques that can be found within Bruce County, such as "The Allenford Pow-wow" plaque. These blue and gold plaques are part of the Provincial Plaque Program, which has erected nearly 1,300 interpretive plaques across Ontario. These plaques describe the history and cultural significance of people, groups, events, and places across Ontario. They were made in collaboration with local groups, such as the Bruce County Historical Society. These plaques have a distinct look, as cast-metal plaques bearing the Ontario Coat of Arms at the top, followed by a brief block of text in gold lettering on a blue background. There is an absence of any images or graphics, and since some of these plaques date back more than 60 years, some language used is not inclusive or culturally sensitive. New plaques are still being erected across the province through the Ontario Heritage Trust.



*"The Allenford Pow-wow" Provincial Plaque*

Municipalities can apply for a provincial plaque here: [Ontario Heritage Trust | Apply for a provincial plaque](#)



## Bruce County Current Interpretive Plaques

Most of Bruce County's older plaques are cast metal signs commemorating historical places or communities. They feature raised lettering and a sleek, professional appearance.

Modern interpretive plaques that have been erected recently across the county are more likely to adopt the wayside exhibit format. Wayside exhibits in Kincardine, Brockton, Saugeen Shores, and other municipalities use a mix of text and graphics, and some include additional features, such as QR codes or tactile elements. These plaques are much more accessible, more visually appealing, and often more inclusive. They are mostly located in public areas where they are likely to attract a lot of attention that also relate directly to the plaque's subject.

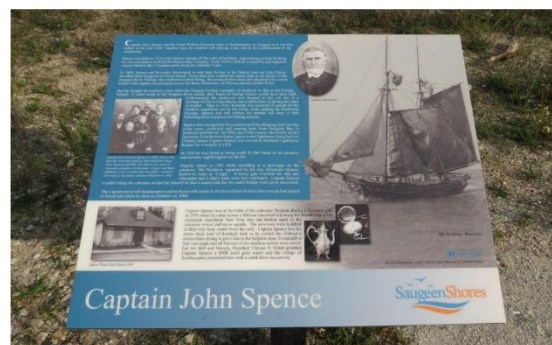


*Kincardine Phantom Piper Plaque*

The following sections provide better insight into the current context for interpretive plaques across Bruce County.

## Saugeen Shores

With two major population centers in Saugeen Shores (Port Elgin and Southamptton) and a long history of being a popular tourist destination, Saugeen Shores has developed a consistent and detailed interpretive plaque system. Plaques across Saugeen Shores follow a low-profile wayside exhibit format. They cover topics related to historical sites, boats, eras, events, and people. Their layouts retain a consistent blue gradient ribbon along the bottom of the panel that contains a large title and the municipality's logo. The contents of these plaques include an even mix of graphics, text, and clear space. Text is extensive and detailed in explaining historical importance, subject history, and the current context, with some plaques exceeding 600 words. The images follow a clear hierarchy, with one dominant image relating directly to the subject of the panel, accompanied by smaller supplementary images with short captions. Some panels done in collaboration with the Bruce County Historical Society also contain a link to [brucemuseum.ca](http://brucemuseum.ca) for additional information.



*Captain John Spence Interpretive Plaque*

These plaques are located at popular paths (e.g., Rail Trail) and junctions (e.g., Intersection of Morpeth and Albert streets, Southampton; Long Dock Beach, Southampton), as well as specific heritage sites (e.g., 201 High Street, Southampton; 124 Grosvenor Street South, Southampton). All sites are accessible, and the plaques are placed on level ground.

### South Bruce Peninsula

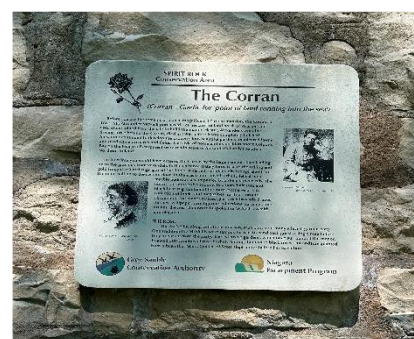
South Bruce Peninsula has a unique variety of interpretive plaque styles, including their own Heritage Benches, located in Oliphant, Allenford, and Colpoy's Bay. These are stone benches with short, engraved storytelling paragraphs about the area's history. More conventional plaque designs are also popular in South Bruce Peninsula. The plaques identified within South Bruce Peninsula are located along paths and give brief supplementary information to outdoor sights.



*Allenford Heritage Bench*

Interpretive **wayside exhibits** are used in natural heritage areas across the municipality, including large panels in the Spirit Rock Conservation Area. These vibrant plaques contain a balance of text, clear space, and images, and give detailed descriptions of the area's general history and the history of specific sites. These large panels emphasize local historical narratives over cultural significance or current context. Within Spirit Rock is another style of interpretive plaque located at the site of the Corran. These plaques are small square panels attached to the landmark walls but contain a great deal of text and images in a much smaller format.

Sauble Falls also contains wayside exhibit plaques that are used to enhance visitor experience by adding contextual information to sites along the trail. These plaques contain multiple subjects within individual plaques organized under subheadings. Each topic is given its own image and paragraph of text explaining its history. Note that there are more interpretive plaques in other natural areas such as the Petrel Point Boardwalk or Oliphant Fen that are also used to enhance visitor experience, however, these plaques are more informational about local ecology than interpretive about local heritage.



*Spirit Rock Corran Interpretive Plaque*

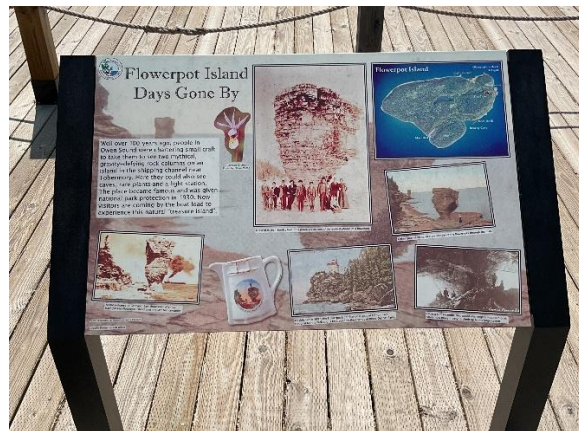


With most South Bruce Peninsula's plaques being in conservation areas, most are outside of the domain of the municipality, although they are within their borders.

### Northern Bruce Peninsula

Northern Bruce Peninsula has a large tourism industry built around its beautiful waterfronts. This is reflected in its current interpretive plaques. Many of North Bruce Peninsula's interpretive plaques are located along the waterfront and describe the maritime heritage of areas that are common tourist destinations. The municipality has a generally consistent wayside exhibit style for interpretive plaques, consistently providing large rectangular panels with vibrant colors, a balance of text, images and clear space, and detailed storytelling. Many of these plaques have been erected in partnership with organizations such as the Friends of Bruce District Parks.

Far North in Tobermory, modern plaques have been recently erected within the past 5 years, located adjacent to the Little Tub Harbour waterfront along pedestrian paths. Their layouts contain a faint image background with smaller supplementary images across the panel and a small paragraph of text. Text outlines cultural significance with a short snippet of local history in the top left corner of the panel, underneath a large title. Each image is also accompanied by a brief caption explaining the image.

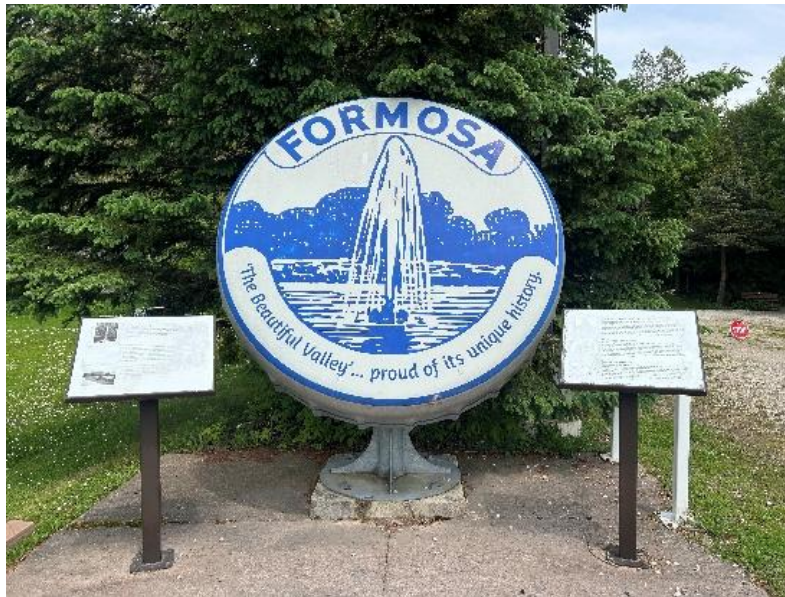


*Flowerpot Island Little Tub Harbour Plaque*

Lion's Head also has several wayside exhibits, with many at the destination, Singing Sands. These plaques deviate from the style in Tobermory, containing generally only one large image of the subject, followed by extensive, detailed text that explains cultural significance and local history. They cover common subjects such as historical figures. These plaques are also located along pedestrian paths, such as the trail entrance.

### South Bruce

There are few interpretive plaques in South Bruce, but the existing plaques come in a mixture of styles. The previously mentioned **wayside exhibit** style plaques are present in community areas such as public parks (ex. Lion's Wilderness Park; Formosa Lion's Park) and are located at their entrances or near distinct landmark pieces. The topics include general local history and site-specific history. These plaques feature a mix of text, clear space, and images. They are typically dominated by text organized under subheadings.



*Formosa Bottle Cap*

South Bruce also contains another style of interpretive plaques, popular in other municipalities such as Kincardine. These are **cast metal interpretive plaques** with golden lettering on a dark, brown background, which may include cast images or logos. These interpretive plaques are less vibrant than wayside exhibits and often do not contain colour images but are extremely recognizable. One example is the Formosa Brewery interpretive plaque, erected by the Algonquin Brewing Company and Bruce County Historical Society. This plaque is embedded in a large, landmark stone, and contains a cast image of a barrel at the top, followed by around 150 words of text briefly describing local significance and the site's history. A few smaller cast metal plaques are located at smaller heritage sites or buildings, with very brief descriptions of their respective sites.

## Kincardine

Kincardine has a unique mixture of interpretive plaque styles, due to the differences in age of plaques across the municipality. Older plaques were created by the historic Township of Bruce with a consistent format. These were small, cast metal signs on thin poles with the township logo at the top of the sign and short 50-70-word summaries giving brief summaries of local history underneath. Besides the Bruce logo, no other images are included in these cast metal plaques. Many were used to acknowledge early Hamlets that played a key role in the foundation of the community. This format is extremely convenient due to the small medium, so locations for these plaques vary, from street intersections to specific site locations.

This cast metal interpretive plaque format is also present in Inverhuron, with a slightly larger sign erected to acknowledge the historical Inverhuron Lime Kiln. This plaque is mounted on a thin pole, placed directly on the subject site. The cast text is around 150 words long and includes a single image.

Modern interpretive plaques in the Kincardine municipality also include the cast metal style. A handful of interpretive plaques have been recently erected, mostly to honour local people of importance (e.g., Phantom Piper), and are placed in popular areas where people linger, such as community parks. These plaques are large, rectangular, freestanding, thick plates with the same golden lettering and dark brown background. They are more text-dense than older plaques, with



*Kincardine Sergeant Charles William Mann Plaque*

100+ words that describe the subject's cultural significance, history, and in some cases, include invitations to readers to learn more about the subject. The Phantom Piper Plaque contains an engraved QR code that leads to more information. They also include a variety of cast images, including the Municipality of Kincardine's logo.

There are also many **wayside exhibit** plaques present in Kincardine at nodal points such as Station Beach or the Kincardine Lighthouse and Museum. These plaques contain a large title at the top, followed by text giving a storyline of local historical events, then images populating most space on the plaque.





*Kincardine Station Beach Plaques*

## Brockton

The age of interpretive plaques across Brockton also creates a diverse mixture of plaque styles. Modern **wayside exhibit** plaques have been erected recently in Walkerton, with older cast metal interpretive plaques being more present across Greenock Township.

In Walkerton, there is a mixture of interpretive plaque styles, but the most dominant style currently is the wayside exhibit. Walkerton has erected two series of wayside exhibits in their community parks. In Water Heritage Garden, there is a long series of interpretive plaques that each describe a different era in the history of Walkerton, collectively giving a complete timeline of the community.

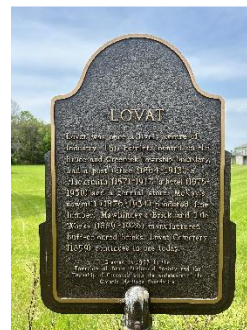
These plaques all follow the same layout, with a balance of images, text, and clear space, where text is dense and gives a detailed summary of local history, and images are styled like cut-out stickers and given small captions. These panels feature a unique stone-textured background. The Market Garden Park in Walkerton contains a similar series of interpretive plaques. These plaques are vibrant with coloured images and blocks of text detailing the history of the first Chinese immigrant to settle in



*Walkerton Market Garden Park Plaques*

Walkerton. The formatting for this series is consistent, with large titles in the top right corner, a mix of text, images, and clear space, with a greater emphasis on images, and QR codes that provide access to more information on the subject. This series features detailed text explaining local history, cultural significance, and current context. For all interpretive plaques within Walkerton, they are in areas where people are likely to linger.

Greenock Township has a different style of interpretive plaques that closely resembles the Township of Bruce's interpretive plaques. These plaques are cast metal signs erected on thin poles installed at historical sites and generally are used to acknowledge historical Hamlets or early community settlements that were critical to the community's foundation. These plaques, however, only contain a small amount of text detailing local history and current context, with no additional images or icons. Most of these plaques are rectangular, with a few outliers, such as the Lovat plaque, which is a vertical panel with a rounded crown.

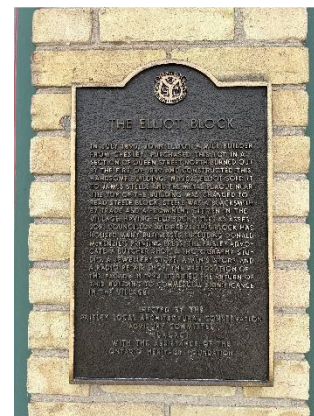


*Lovat Hamlet  
Historical Plaque*

### Arran-Elderslie

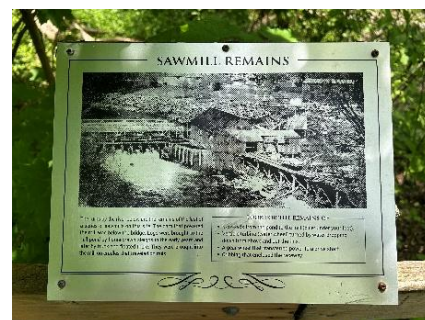
Arran-Elderslie is home to many interpretive plaques, with a variety of styles between and within its communities. The municipality has a larger collection of cast metal plaques, but there are a few wayside exhibits within Chesley.

In Paisley, there is a uniform interpretive plaque system for their Paisley Heritage Tour. These small cast metal signs are erected on thin poles or mounted to the sides of historical buildings and contain the Paisley logo at the top, followed by a longer body of text. These interpretive plaques are used specifically to identify and explain buildings of historical significance. Whether erected on a pole or attached to the building itself, these interpretive plaques are located directly adjacent to the sidewalk for easy accessibility. There are other plaques that differ from the uniform format of the Paisley Heritage Tour, but they generally contain the same amount of text, no images, and are cast bronze.



*Paisley Heritage Tour "The  
Elliot Block" Plaque*

Chesley contains a larger variety of interpretive plaque styles. Within their Heritage Trail, they provide a series of wayside exhibit panels that contain large titles, large pictures, and brief text that explains the history of locations along the trail, used to enhance visitor experience and provide context. These plaques are strategically placed along the trail corridor for easy viewing. There are also cast metal interpretive plaques in Chesley, such as one honoring the historic community of Scone, which is embedded in a large rock.



*Chesley Heritage Tour "Sawmill Remains" Plaque*

The style of embedding cast metal interpretive plaques in large rocks is common, especially in the community of Elderslie. The interpretive plaques in Elderslie represent larger entities than specific buildings or individuals, and typically acknowledge institutions, industries, or communities. These cast metal plaques are larger than the signs used in Paisley, and come in a rectangular shape, embedded in larger stones. Being much larger than the signs, these plaques are more restricted in location, often being the focal point of an area.

### Huron-Kinloss

Huron-Kinloss has a large collection of interpretive plaques, with both large- and small-scale wayside exhibits and a few other unique plaques. Across the municipality, panels maintain unity with thick ribbons at the bottom of the layout where the plaque contributors' logos are. Huron-Kinloss also has a unique approach to identifying historical buildings. Rather than using cast metal plaques, the municipality prefers interpretive panels.





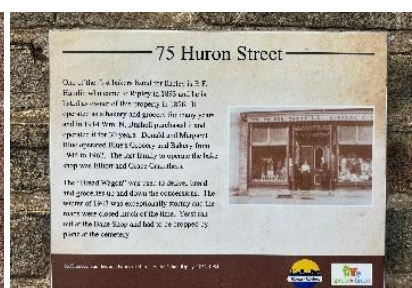
*Lighthouses of the Bruce Coast "Point Clark Lighthouse" Plaque*

There are a few large wayside exhibits at landmark locations and parks that describe specific focal points such as plaques at the Point Clark Lighthouse, Lucknow Waterworks, or Donald Dinnie Statue. They maintain a balance of text, space, and graphics, and are erected on single posts. Similar plaques also create context in local trails in Huron-Kinloss. On Lewis Trail, a pair of interpretive plaques describe the history and significance of the Huron Presbyterian Church and the Cemetery. They have large, legible titles, and are dominated by text, with a single image. There are also wayside exhibits along Apple Trail with informative text, and less focus on local heritage. Their design is similar to the plaques on Lewis Trail.

As well, smaller-scale wayside exhibits are very popular in Huron-Kinloss. Such plaques include one main image and large bodies of text and maintain a consistent layout in each community.



*Left - 82 Huron Street, Ripley Plaque*  
*Right - 75 Huron Street, Ripley*



Ripley has many mounted on the walls of downtown historical buildings to describe their history. A couple are present in Lucknow, including one on the wall of the Lucknow Pharmacy. These are mostly identical to the plaques in Ripley, except they are oriented in portrait-style, instead of landscape and do not feature a solid ribbon at the bottom.

There is one unique style of interpretive plaque in Huron-Kinloss that differs from all other plaques seen in other municipalities. On public garbage and recycling bins in Lucknow, panels are attached to the front-facing side of the bins that show singular historical images of nearby locations. Without text, the images still tell important stories about local history and heritage by providing context to pedestrians.



*Historical Images on Lucknow Public Garbage*

## APPENDIX C: Heritage Research Resources

Heritage Research Resources				
Resource	Type	Description	Location	Website
Bruce County Museum and Cultural Center (BCM&CC)	Museum	The BCM&CC provides historical exhibits depicting local heritage and contains an Archives and Research Room with physical records documenting the heritage of Bruce County.	33 Victoria Street N, Southampton	<a href="#">Homepage - Bruce Museum CA</a>
Bruce County Genealogical Society	Organization	This non-profit organization aims to support ancestry and family history in Bruce County. They have several resources, including their research collection, the Audrey Webster Underwood Collection library, which is housed in the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Center.	Port Elgin	<a href="#">Bruce County Genealogical Society - Serving Bruce County families ... past and present</a>
Bruce County Historical Society	Organization	The BCHS has contributed to several heritage projects and contains an inventory of research resources on their website. They also publish an annual yearbook and a twice annual newspaper.	33A Victoria Street N, Southampton	<a href="#">Home   Bruce County Historical Society</a>



## Heritage Research Resources

Resource	Type	Description	Location	Website
Library and Archives Canada	Library	This federal institution is concerned with acquiring, preserving, and providing access to Canada's documentary heritage. They provide many resources, including records, census data, published materials, and more.	395 Wellington Street, Ottawa	<a href="#">Library and Archives Canada</a>
Ontario Ancestors, Bruce and Grey Branch	Organization	Our local branch of the Ontario Ancestors, the Ontario Genealogical Society not-for-profit corporation, is primarily concerned with promoting genealogical interest. They also provide research resources for local community heritage and host events for networking.	Online	<a href="#">Bruce &amp; Grey Branch - Ontario Ancestors - The Ontario Genealogical Society - The Home of Family History in Bruce &amp; Grey Counties</a>
Saugeen Ojibway Nation Environment Office	Organization	This organization created by the Saugeen Anishnaabek primarily provides information on what the SON is doing to protect the land. Their	10129 Highway 6, Georgian Bluffs	<a href="#">Saugeen Ojibway Nation Environment Office</a>

Heritage Research Resources				
Resource	Type	Description	Location	Website
		website contains resources relevant to local Anishnaabek history and the history of our landscape.		
Metis Nation of Ontario	Organization	The Metis Nation of Ontario was created to represent individuals and communities that are part of the Metis Nation. Their website contains a list of resources relevant to the history of Metis communities in Ontario in the section “Resources on Metis Communities & History in Ontario.”	Suite 1100, 11 <sup>th</sup> floor, 66 Slater Street, Ottawa	<a href="#">Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)   Métis People &amp; Communities</a>
Canadian Virtual War Memorial	Digital Archives	This registry is for Canadians who died in service of Canada. It provides information on the stories and achievements of soldiers, veterans, and volunteers who served Canada.	Online	<a href="#">The Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM) - Memorials - Remembrance - Veterans Affairs Canada</a>
The History of the County of Bruce by Norman Robertson	Book	This book was the first publication by the Bruce County Historical Society. Published in 1906, this book provides information on the history of Bruce	n/a	<a href="#">The history of the county of Bruce and of the minor municipalities therein, province of Ontario,</a>

Heritage Research Resources					
Resource	Type	Description	Location	Website	
		County and its lower-tier municipalities.		<a href="#">Canada / cby Norman Robertson : Robertson, Norman, 1845-1936 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive</a>	
University of Calgary	Library	The University of Calgary has a digital collection of archived resources that includes historical content from Bruce County.	2500 University Dr NW, Calgary	<a href="#">Digital Collections</a>	
Bruce County Public Library	Library	The Bruce County Public Library has a variety of resources, including the Ancestry database and local history documents.	1243 MacKenzie Rd, Port Elgin	<a href="#">Bruce County Public Library</a>	
BCM&CC Online Research Page	Digital Archives	The online page for the BCM&CC has a research section that includes many useful resources, including historic newspapers, an inventory of artefacts and archives, and links to other useful resources.	n/a	<a href="#">Research - Bruce Museum CA</a>	

## APPENDIX D: Interpretive Plaque Research Summary Form

### Heritage Interpretive Plaque Research Summary Form

Section	Response
Title of Interpretive Plaque	
Researcher(s)/Author(s)	
Subject	
Location and Materials	
Reason for Commemoration	
Summary of Findings	
Proposed Graphics	
Relevant Stakeholders	
Methods of Research	
References	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX E: Subject Significance and Site Selection Checklist

### Heritage Interpretive Plaque Subject Significance and Site Selection Checklist

Criteria		Y	N
<b>Site Significance</b>			
1	The proposed subject is not a duplicate of existing plaques in the community		
2	The proposed subject is rare, unique, or among the first of its type		
3	The subject has a clear connection to the culture and history of the local community		
4	A local group or community identifies the subject as significant to community identity		
5	The site is embedded with meaning and heritage that is best conveyed through the presence of an interpretive plaque		
<b>Site Selection</b>			
1	The selected site is accessible 24/7 to the public		
2	The selected location for the interpretive plaque is in an area with high foot traffic		
3	The interpretive plaque will be highly visible		
4	The selected location for the interpretive plaque is/will be on level ground		
5	The selected site is safe and comfortable		
6	The selected location for the interpretive plaque has a low risk of vandalism		
7	The implementation of an interpretive plaque does not hinder the aesthetic value of the selected location		
8	The interpretive plaque is strategically located to show a clear relationship to the plaque subject (if applicable)		
9	The interpretive plaque will not be in direct sunlight		
10	Permission has been granted from the landowner to introduce an interpretive plaque (if applicable)		
11	Nearby properties have been properly consulted about the introduction of an interpretive plaque		
12	There are no regulatory restrictions on the installation of an interpretive plaque at this location		

# APPENDIX F: Interpretive Plaque Application Form Template

## Bruce County Interpretive Plaque Application Form

### Introduction

Complete this form to nominate a person, group, place, or event of local historical significance for an interpretive plaque in our community! Applicants must fill out all sections the best of their capabilities. Applications with more background research and available materials will be favored.

Before nominating a subject, please ensure that the selected subject meets the following criteria:

- The nominated subject has a clear connection to local heritage
- The nominated subject is rare, unique, or among the first of its type
- The nominated subject can be connected to a local site embedded with meaning
- The nominated subject does not already have an interpretive plaque in the community

### Application

#### 1. Applicant's Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Proposed Plaque Information

Nominated Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Plaque Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Local Importance of Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3. Optional Additional Information

**Brief description of the subject:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Supporting images or graphics:**



**Any associated community groups/organizations:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### 4. Signature and Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## APPENDIX G: Interpretive Plaque Application Invitation Card Example





## APPENDIX H: Image-Use Permission

### Image-Use Permission Agreement

Full name of image owner \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Requested Graphics

#### Compensation (Check one)

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- ☐ There is no financial compensation needed.

#### Terms and Conditions (Check all)

I, the sole and rightful owner of the requested images, acknowledge the conditions below and agree to the terms and conditions allowing the requesting party to use my images. I understand that, by signing this document, I am granting permission for the requesting party to use the requested images in accordance with the agreed-upon terms and conditions. I acknowledge that this permission does not transfer any rights, copyright, ownership, or exclusive usage of these images, which remain fully retained by me.

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Image Owner \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

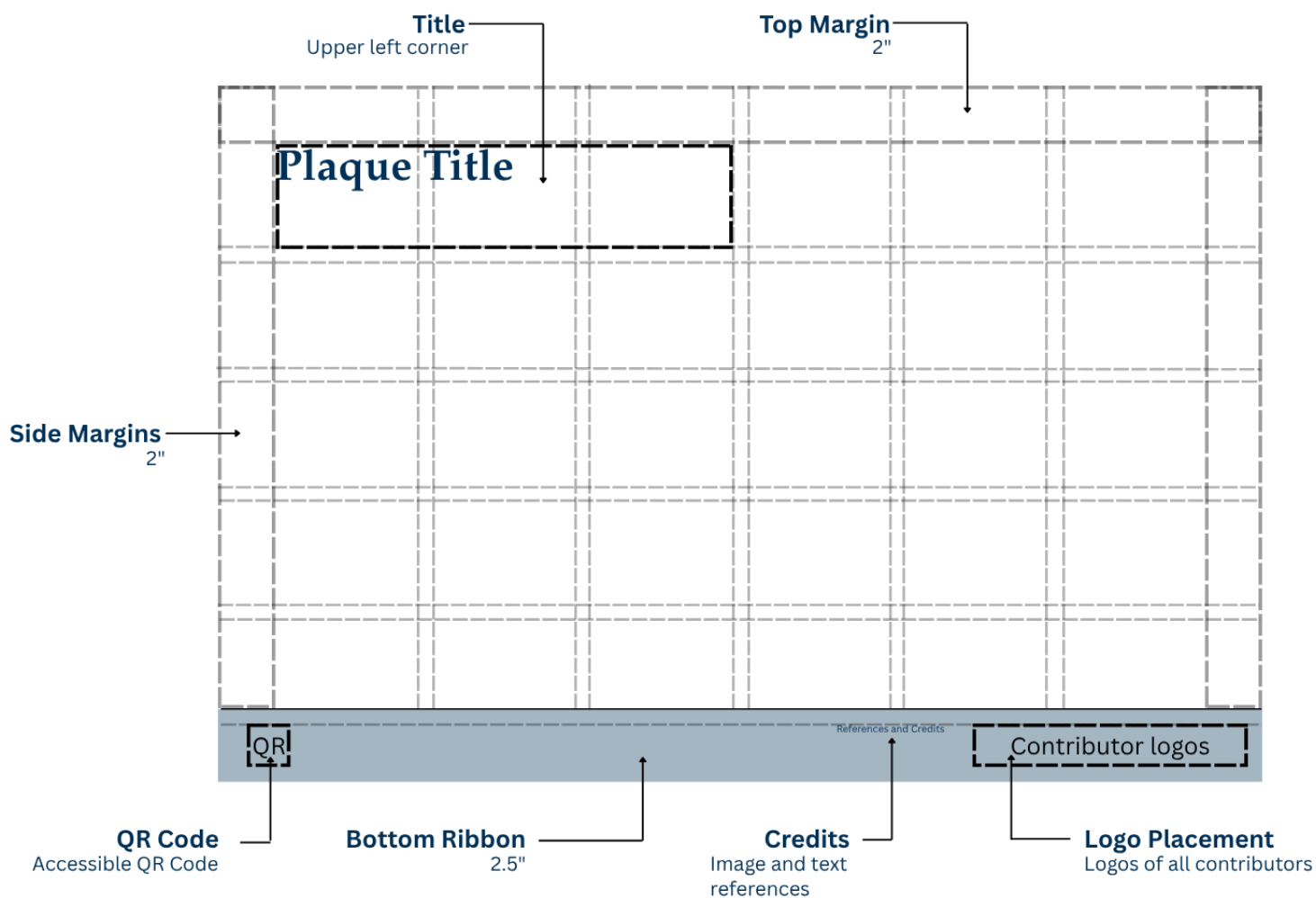
Requesting Party \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX I: Interpretive Plaque Grid

## Template for 24" x 36" Panel



### Font Minimums

**Title**  
90pt min

**Subheading**  
40pt min.

**Body text**  
30pt min.

**Captions**  
24pt min.

# APPENDIX J: Interpretive Plaque Example for 24" x 36" Panel



## APPENDIX K: Draft Review Checklist

### Heritage Interpretive Plaque Draft Review Checklist

	Task	Y	N
1	Consideration has been given to commemorating groups currently underrepresented in civic spaces, including Indigenous communities, Black communities, women, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized groups		
2	An appropriate subject with a clear connection to local heritage has been identified		
3	An accessible and relevant location has been selected		
4	Research has been conducted thoroughly, carefully, and ethically		
5	All facts have been verified for accuracy		
6	The project has been guided with the principle of co-creation with members of an underrepresented group (if applicable)		
7	Meaningful community engagement has been conducted thoroughly		
8	Relevant approvals and rights have been obtained		
9	Information on the plaque follows a clear hierarchy		
10	Plaque format and layout are accessible		
11	Text is professional, legible, and aesthetically pleasing		
12	Language use throughout the text is inclusive and sensitive		
13	An appropriate colour scheme has been selected for the interpretive plaque		
14	There is clear contrast between text and the background		
15	Appropriate materials have been identified for the plaque and plaque base		
16	Maintenance considerations have been considered and planned for		



For more information, please contact:

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