



Legislation Text

File #: 82639, Version: 1

Fiscal Note

The proposed resolution creates a new Historic Markers Program and authorizes the installation of up to 6 new markers in 2024. The cost of removal of existing dilapidated Sesquicentennial Markers is estimated at \$5,000 in 2024. This removal will be funded by the Historic Preservation Plan capital project (Munis project 10064). Fabrication and installation of up to six new markers per year starting in 2024 shall be coordinated with Public Works project budgets or use remaining capital funds from the Historic Preservation Plan project, Planning Division placemaking funds, and/or remaining yearly maintenance reserve from the City of Madison Neighborhood Grants. Installation of new markers would, in total, expend no more than approximately \$8,000 per year. No additional appropriation or allocations will be needed for the first several years of this project. If the program continues past the first few years, additional funds may be requested through the annual Capital Budget process.

Title

Creating a New Historic Marker Program and installing up to six new makers in 2024.

Body

WHEREAS, in 2006 the City of Madison's Sesquicentennial Committee created a marker program to Celebrate 150 years of Madison History through 12 historical markers placed within the original plat of Madison (the Yahara River to Park Street); and

WHEREAS, the Committee expressed the hope that these 12 plaques were meant to be the beginning of a city-wide project celebrating the many stories of Madison; and

WHEREAS, City staff assessed the condition of the of the Sesquicentennial plaques and found many to be in disrepair; and

WHEREAS, many Sesquicentennial plaques have dated language that needs to be rephrased; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 City of Madison Historic Preservation Plan places an emphasis on promoting historic preservation in Madison beyond the traditional plaques at designated landmark buildings in the following objectives and strategies:

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Objective 1a: promote cultural tourism and civic pride by sharing Madison's unique culture and character.

- *1a-i. Place plaques at existing buildings and places, lost buildings, and cultural sites to identify significant historical events and locations. Buildings and places should emphasize the actions and events associated with underrepresented groups including Native Americans, Latino/a, African Americans, Hmong, LGBTQ, and women.*
 - *1a-ii. Locate storytelling plaques at cultural and historical buildings and places throughout the city. Signage can assist in the promotion and understanding of Madison's unique culture and character. The buildings and sites can be identified on walking tour maps, social media, and online resources.*
- and

WHEREAS, the City finds that a new historic marker program will retain the Sesquicentennial program's original goals and meet new Historic Preservation Plan goals, while removing weathered and dated plaques

and replacing them with smaller, more durable plaques; and

WHEREAS, the new program shall utilize an interactive QR code or other technology that will allow for more interactivity while linking viewers to information and maps showing markers across the City; and

WHEREAS, City Staff has identified the following locations and topics for the first 6 markers:

- **2 Markers along Lake Mendota Drive celebrating some combination of Indigenous village areas/white oaks/dugout canoes:** Markers would celebrate Indigenous Culture at Lake Mendota Drive near, but not disturbing the location of several archaeological sites. Staff will work with Ho-Chunk Nation representatives to make sure that topics, language, and stories are accurate and culturally relevant for these markers and any others relating to the Ho-Chunk Nation. Marker installation will be coordinated with the Lake Mendota Drive public works project.
- **Marker celebrating Indigenous mound groups:** location to be determined.
- **Hill Grocery - First African American Neighborhood:** Language will be distilled from Sesquicentennial Marker and vetted to make sure that language and stories are accurate and culturally relevant.
- **Wisconsin Geology:** Location to be determined (could also be delayed and coordinated with John Nolen Drive and/or Monona Waterfront Project).
- **Outdoor Markets:** Located at Pinckney Street and East Washington Avenue, language from original marker to be reviewed/revise to better reflect underrepresented communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council creates a new Historic Marker Program for the City of Madison consistent with objective 1a. described above, and directs staff to remove the remaining Sesquicentennial Markers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that staff shall begin installation of six smaller, more durable 12" blue-enameled cast-metal plaques mounted on small poles or otherwise appropriately installed on private property with agreement of the property owner, City property, or the City's right of way and consistent with any applicable sign and traffic laws, ordinances, and regulations laws;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the markers erected as part of this Program are expressions of government speech of the City of Madison;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City staff shall aim to install new markers at a rate of about six (6) markers per year across the City, and wherever possible try to coordinate installation of new plaques with other public works projects to achieve installation costs savings; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that while the information included on the markers will be determined by the City consistent with the objectives in this resolution, and will be expressions of government speech. However, prior to finalizing the signs, City staff will reach out to historians, tribal nations, and other stakeholders to draft historically accurate language for a wide variety of stories fitting the goals of the City's Historic Preservation Plan.