



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MEMORANDUM

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TO: MAYOR A. NUTTALL AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: L. MUNNOCH, PLANNER, EXT. 4416

WARD: ALL

NOTED: M. BANFIELD, RPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: NINE MILE PORTAGE PLAQUE UPDATE

DATE: NOVEMBER 27, 2024

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update on motion 24-G-053, from March 27, 2024, which states:

"NINE MILE PORTAGE SIGNAGE That staff in the Development Services Department be directed to consult with the Ontario Heritage Trust regarding the location, design and content of the signage for the Nine Mile Portage and report back to the Heritage Barrie Committee."

On May 28, 2024, the Nine Mile Portage Plaque was discussed at the Heritage Barrie Committee meeting. The attached correspondence from the Ontario Heritage Trust was provided to Committee Members, identifying that the sign has been decommissioned and returned to the Ontario Heritage Trust.

There is a City of Barrie owned installation relating to the Nine Mile Portage in Memorial Square and Meridian Place. Further to Staff Report 18-G-175, and as was adopted on September 17, 2018:

"... the Kiwanis Club of Barrie be recognized with signage in the area of the Nine Mile Portage Tiers for a period of 25 years (ending September 30, 2043) to identify the Club's sponsorship contribution of \$175,000."

Comments from the Heritage Barrie Committee indicated a desire to explore making a new application to the Ontario Heritage Trust, for a new plaque through its Provincial Plaque Program. The criteria to make application are attached, in addition to these criteria, the Ontario Heritage Trust has identified that consultation with local indigenous communities would also be required, to support any future application.

To proceed with an application to the Ontario Heritage Trust, there will be staff resources and financial costs associated with this work. The Ontario Heritage Trust requires government agencies to contribute the full amount of funds associated with the project (as identified in Appendix "B"). It is unknown at this time what the total cost may be.

Any further recommended action would come by way of the Heritage Barrie Committee.

Attachments: Appendix "A" - Letter from Ontario Heritage Trust, dated April 24, 2024
Appendix "B" - Ontario Heritage Trust's Provincial Plaque Program Criteria Webpage

APPENDIX "A"



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April 24, 2024

Liam Munnoch
Planner
City of Barrie
70 Collier Street
Barrie, ON L4M 4T5

Re: Nine Mile Portage Provincial Plaque – City of Barrie

Dear Liam,

In follow-up to our conversation in March, I wanted to share more information about the Ontario Heritage Trust's provincial plaque to "Nine Mile Portage".

In 2017, the Nine Mile Portage plaque was removed from Meridian Place Park, by the City of Barrie, for landscaping work. The plaque was stored by the City of Barrie, but over time we lost track of the plaque. Meanwhile, the City of Barrie created new interpretation, which tells a more detailed and nuanced story of the former portage.

In 2022, a member of the public contacted the Trust to ask about the status of the 1957 Nine Mile Portage plaque and began an informal campaign to locate it and have it reinstalled. The plaque's location was soon discovered in municipal storage.

The Provincial Plaque Program is the Trust's oldest program. Since 1955, the Trust has unveiled 1,289 plaques to commemorate a variety of subjects in communities across the province. In 1957 the Ontario Heritage Trust, then called the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, unveiled a provincial plaque to Nine Mile Portage in the vicinity of the former portage location. The unveiling ceremony was arranged by the Barrie Chamber of Commerce and was attended by representatives of the provincial government, Barrie Town Council, township officials from the County of Simcoe, and members of the Archeological and Historic Sites Board.

Over the last several years, the Trust has made a concerted effort to share stories of all people of Ontario, providing a forum to look back over more than 10,000 years of this province's history. In 2018 the Trust undertook a review of its provincial plaque program to better understand its inventory, its challenges and gaps. Many plaques were identified that include outdated language that Ontarians would no longer find acceptable, and even more were identified to present an incomplete interpretation and singular perspective, particularly related to land and European settlement.

The Trust has begun the work of revisiting plaques that have been identified as having incomplete stories or outdated language and, in some cases, the Trust has decided to retire certain plaques altogether.

Trust staff reviewed the provincial plaque text and consulted with City of Barrie staff in order to prepare recommendations to its Board of Directors about the Nine Mile Portage plaque. I can confirm that at its meeting in December 2023, the Trust's Board of Directors indicated that the Nine Mile Portage plaque will be retired due to the outdated wording and the City of Barrie has interpreted the site with informational signage.

As directed, the 1957 Nine Mile Portage plaque will be retired, and Trust staff will work with City of Barrie staff to have the plaque shipped back to the Ontario Heritage Trust's main office. Interested parties can reapply for a new plaque to Nine Mile Portage and have it formally adjudicated during our yearly review of new plaque applications. Information about the application process, criteria, and cost-sharing amounts can be found on the Trust's website.

Should you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin Semande".

Erin Semande
Manager, Public Education and Community Development
Ontario Heritage Trust

APPENDIX "B"

Criteria

**Apply for a provincial
plaque**

The Provincial Plaque Program is a cost-sharing activity of the Ontario Heritage Trust. Applicants may submit only one application for a single plaque project in any given year. An original 1,000-word typed essay or background paper on the proposed subject with a list of sources used in its preparation must be submitted with the application. The Trust does not undertake projects that involve more than one plaque or a series of plaques on a given subject (e.g., a series of plaques along a trail or walking tour route).

Provincial interest is the major criterion by which applications for provincial plaques are assessed. The onus for making the case for the provincial interest of a subject rests with the applicant. Judgments about provincial interest are made within the context of a balanced and comprehensive view of Ontario's past.

The following criteria are considered when evaluating provincial interest:

- the extent to which a particular subject serves as a good representative example of an important theme in Ontario's heritage; this factor is most significant when few plaques to similar subjects exist within the program
- the degree to which the proposed plaque subject is a rare, unique or early example of its type; claims of this sort must be verified by the Trust's research
- the contribution that a plaque will make to the promotion and preservation of public awareness of its subject
- knowledge of the subject, including the availability and reliability of documentary proof and scholarly opinion that supports the claim of provincial interest
- the extent to which a subject is particular to Ontario or exclusively Ontarian; when all other factors are equal, subjects that are unique to Ontario take precedence over those that are more widespread
- the suitability of the subject for interpretation by means of a plaque
- the availability of a site for the plaque that is historically appropriate
- priority will be given to subjects related to under-represented themes or to the Trust's thematic approach

Cost-sharing

The Provincial Plaque Program is a cost-sharing program. At this time, the Trust asks that each applicant contribute to their project a minimum of \$6,500 as well as in-kind support. Private corporations and government agencies are asked to contribute the entire amount. There is no application fee for the program.

A commitment to contribute funds should be made by the applicant at the time of application. Payment is not required until after approval of the application and must be received in full prior to the casting of the plaque. The applicant does not acquire any ownership rights to the plaque by making a contribution to its cost. While the contributions of applicants and other sponsors are appreciated and will be acknowledged, only the Ontario Heritage Trust's name appears on the credit line of provincial plaques.

Successful applicants are also expected to assist in the coordination of a public unveiling event at the local level.

Present areas of focus

Since 1982, the Trust has provided both French and English text for all new and replacement plaques. Plaques may also be created in additional languages (e.g., Mandarin, Mohawk, Ojibwe, Gaelic, etc.).

The Trust works in partnership with community groups, governments and corporations across Ontario on provincial plaque initiatives. Please contact us to discuss your ideas.

Over the next several years, the Trust will focus on a thematic approach comprising specific themes and key commemorations, summarized below. The Trust is currently encouraging provincial plaque applications for subjects that fall within one of the following themes during the identified years:

- 2024: Adaptive reuse

In addition, the Trust encourages provincial plaque applications for subjects following these priority themes:

- Indigenous heritage
- Human rights and equality
- Women's history
- Celebrations of diversity and identity
- Community leaders and innovators
- Environment and natural heritage
- Sports and leisure

Subjects that fall outside of these priority areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.