# New York State
# Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
# Statewide Interpretive Signage Program
**July, 2021**



Prepared for:

**NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.** | **Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

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Prepared by:

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Overview

Visitors that come to New York State Parks and Historic Sites are seeking valuable and memorable experiences.  When visitors are able to make visible and tactile connections to the landscape features and unique stories that make each site special, they have far more compelling and meaningful experiences.  However, creating a connection between visitors and places is a complex process.  In outdoor park settings, wayside exhibits are the primary tool for making this connection and for conveying the important stories of the place.

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservations (OPRHP) has developed a comprehensive Statewide Interpretive Signage Program (Program) to help guide the implementation of consistent wayside exhibits throughout all of the State's numerous parks and historic sites.

The primary goals of the Program are to improve visitor experience by providing them with a better understanding of the historic, cultural and natural resources through engaging interpretive signage, and to ensure that all signage presents a cohesive graphic identity throughout the state's parks and historic site system.  The Program is meant to complement the 2018 OPRHP Statewide Wayfinding Signage Program.  Both signage programs incorporate critical elements of the New York State Branding Guidelines (Jan 2015) which dictate acceptable colors and fonts for all NYS agencies.

### What Are Wayside Exhibits?

*Wayside exhibits are outdoor interpretive sign panels that are used to enhance visitor's enjoyment and understanding of a park or historic site.  Wayside exhibits combine vivid graphics and engaging text to tell a story and encourage a visitor to think about the landscape and events that happened there.*
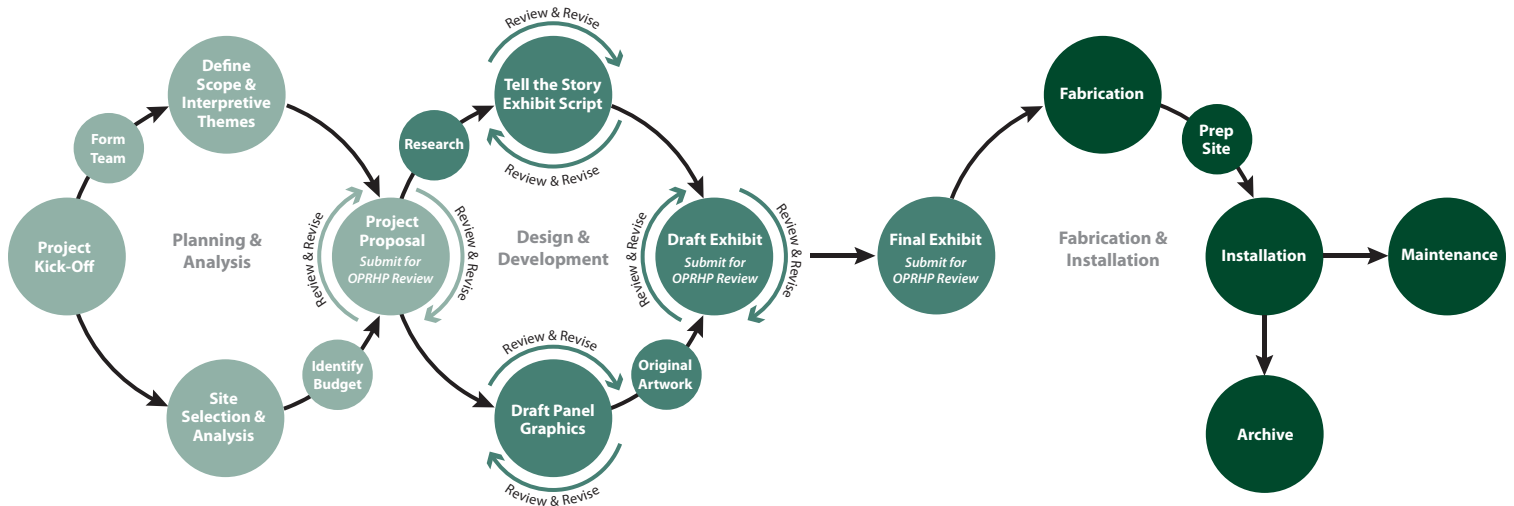
This diagram illustrates the sequence of events involved in developing a typical wayside exhibit. Each project can be broken down into the phases of Planning & Analysis, Design & Development, and Fabrication & Installation. At milestone points in the process there are opportunities for review and revision.

The Program will also help teams navigate their way through the design and review process of developing wayside exhibits: from the initial planning stages through design development, fabrication, and installation. The Program provides a range of sign sizes and formats to address the most common wayside exhibit needs. Emphasis has been placed on accessibility. Color contrast, legible fonts, and mounting heights are important considerations for accessible exhibits.

> *"The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation."*
> *Freeman Tilden*

## What are Wayside Exhibits?
Wayside exhibits are outdoor interpretive sign panels that are used to enhance visitors' enjoyment and understanding of a park or historic site. They can cover a wide range of topics, including nature and the environment, cultural heritage, and historical stories. In addition, the exhibit may be used to highlight points of interest that may not be readily visible to the visitor. Wayside exhibits are intended to remain open, accessible, and functional regardless of weather, time of day, or access to nearby services.

The desired outcome of the interpretive wayside exhibit panel is to do more than educate visitors about important facts. A successful wayside exhibit can inspire a meaningful and personal connection between the visitor and the resource. Because they are located directly adjacent to features in the landscape, they foster an immediate and direct association with the place. Successful wayside exhibits direct attention to the features they interpret, not to themselves.

Wayside exhibits combine vivid graphics and compelling text to tell a story that encourages a visitor to contemplate the landscape and the events that happened there. The goal is to reveal the significance of the place that is being preserved as part of the New York State Park and Historic Site system.

## What is Interpretation?
Interpretation can take many forms. Wayside exhibits are one example of an interpretive element that may also include museum exhibits, brochures, audio/visual materials, and publications. Interpretation turns factual information into a theme or experience that captures a visitor's interest, provoking their curiosity, getting them emotionally and even actively involved with the artifacts, landscape, and location. The result is a deeper sense of appreciation for the significance of the place.

Successful interpretation involves a lot of planning and research to develop the themes that are most appropriate for the particular story being told. By taking the facts and asking questions such as "Why should the visitor care?", and "How can a visitor connect with this information?" you can transform factual information into engaging interpretation.

## The Purpose of the Guidelines

This document sets forth guidelines for developing wayside exhibits in a consistent manner across the State Park and Historic Site system regardless of the message or story being told. The Program is intended to allow for a diversity of expression in a way that is needed to tell a story, while providing the public with a clear and consistent graphic identity that they will associate with the New York State Park system. For particularly large and complex parks, it is recommended that an overall interpretive plan be completed to aid in developing a comprehensive thematic framework to support park-wide interpretive programs.

The Program also provides guidance for the planning and approval process, the development of graphic and narrative components, and the fabrication, installation, and maintenance of a typical wayside exhibit. The Program is not intended to be a complete "how-to" manual, however Included within this document are numerous resources to assist park managers and OPRHP staff for developing successful wayside exhibits.

## How to Use These Guidelines

As you read through the Program, you will find that successful wayside exhibits require differently skilled people at various stages of development. Consider each step and ask yourself if you have the right skills available on your team, or if you will need to bring in a specially trained person at a certain stage in the development process. By familiarizing yourself with the entire process now, you will have a better idea of the skills required and when to best utilize them.



*Image courtesy of Stu Johnson/WEKU*

There are many things to consider and actions to be taken to evolve a wayside exhibit from an early vision to a finished and installed panel. The steps are grouped into the following sections:

1. Project Planning and Analysis
   - Developing a Wayside Exhibit Team
   - Site Analysis
   - Developing a Project Proposal and Budget
2. Design and Development
   - Tell the Story – Developing Interpretive Content
   - Panel Layout and Design
3. Fabrication and Installation

Layout templates are provided to guide graphic composition for the most common wayside exhibit needs. Within the provided layout templates, there is a large amount of flexibility to creatively express the elements of the story. Regardless, additional signage needs may occur. Regional sign shops and designers will be excellent resources when custom signs, or slight variations of the established layout templates, are needed. The fundamental graphic standards of the panel grid systems, colors, and fonts should be adhered to whenever possible in order to maintain system wide consistency throughout all New York State Parks and Historic Sites.

Digital vector template files in Adobe InDesign have been created for each sign type to be used by regional sign shops and other entities creating signs on behalf of OPRHP. A description of each template is included in Chapter 4 Graphic Standards. Digital templates may be found on the OPRHP Intranet in the Guidance Documents and on the Environmental Stewardship page.

# Chapter 2: Project Planning

## Where to Begin

Successful wayside exhibit design starts with visualizing the unique meanings and relationships of the site. Well-chosen graphics, captions, and quotes tell stories and make connections with readers far better than longer narrative material. A long list of facts, statistics, and technical terms may be important to the writer, but most park visitors have other things competing for their attention. If the messages are too long and difficult to understand they will lose their intended audience. The challenge is to create a wayside exhibit that visitors want to explore and can digest quickly.

The following considerations may be used as a starting point to help identify where wayside exhibits may be effective:

### Start with the Site

Wayside exhibits focus on specific features in the landscape and help visitors understand their importance to larger meanings and events. Outdoors, the physical landscape feature within the viewing area of the visitor is the "original object" that visitors have come to experience, and wayside exhibits are the caption. Envision yourself standing before a significant feature along a trail: Why did you stop where you did? If you only have 3 seconds to grab a visitor's attention, what will spark a connection to the site?

### Understand Visitor Experience

Visitors are out of their cars and on the move. What is the best location to capture their attention, encourage them to pause, and provide an interpretive moment? Don't expect anyone to read carefully crafted text until they have some desire to explore the interpretive panel. Aim to grab the attention of visitors for just a few moments and keep them engaged with a dynamic visual presentation that makes an easily apparent connection to their surroundings. Don't try to keep their attention away from the landscape for too long by expecting them to read in-depth information.

Comprehension of the entire story at this time isn't the objective because, after all, their experience should be of the park or historic site itself.

### *When to Use a Wayside Exhibit*

- *Site features or events need to be explained visually to be understood by most park visitors.*
- *The wayside exhibit is harmonious with the site and does not detract from the view or resource being interpreted.*
- *It is the best media to convey and illustrate the story.*

### Find a Connection

Assume you are standing in a special place with a group of visitors and can have anything you want to help reveal the hidden meaning or importance of the site. If you are standing on a nature trail dedicated to a famous botanist, you might want that person with you holding the plants that are unique to the place. On a battle site, you might want the soldiers around you, preparing for the upcoming conflict. In a tidal marsh you might like to have something to show the visitor what they can't readily see, such as the unique tidal patterns or one of the aquatic creatures that call the place home. Or perhaps you need to fly 200 feet above the site to see the different vegetative communities. What will reveal the meaning of the place? Think large.

This simple exercise has helped to visualize some of the narrative elements that may be needed to develop an effective wayside exhibit. Think about a graphic that will speak a thousand words. Put the soldiers back on the battlefield by developing an illustration of the site at the time of the battle. Is there a photograph of the botanist investigating a unique plant? Gather all the creatures of the marsh together in an illustrative collage, or perhaps develop a new

illustration of tidal patterns. Look for an aerial photo from above the site to bring a new focus to a subtle or forgotten landscape detail. As graphics and narrative text are developed it is important to remember that the actual landscape is part of the design solution. Always keep the wayside exhibit's purpose and context in clear focus.

## Developing a Wayside Exhibit Team
A successful, professional-quality project is collaborative process that requires a range of skills. It is worthwhile to take inventory of the expertise currently at your disposal and apply it to the tasks ahead. In some cases, specialized staff members within OPRHP may need to be recruited. In others, budgetary allowances should be made to hire people with a particular skill or of a certain profession.

There are many ways to structure an effective wayside exhibit team, but the following groups may be involved throughout the wayside exhibit planning, design, and implementation process:

- Park staff (include management and field staff of various disciplines and divisions, and even other parks and historic sites)
- An experienced interpretive planner
- Environmental educators
- Facility or landscape design specialists
- Current/potential partner and community organizations, including representatives of intended audiences such as visitors and advocacy groups
- Subject Matter Experts
- Historians
- Publication specialists such as editors and graphic designers
- Agency of Public Affairs and Community Relations

Regardless of the subject matter and scope of the project, a typical Wayside Exhibit Team is comprised of the following organization structure:

### Project Manager
The success of the project is the responsibility of the Project Manager (PM). They guide the team through the OPRHP approval process and manage the details of the project. The PM ensures the team has all the right skills available and is involved in hiring outside professionals when necessary. The PM will lead meetings, manage the budget, assist with developing interpretive themes, and identify exhibit locations and site concerns. The PM also watches the time line of the project, ensuring all team members or suppliers stay on schedule and meet their deadlines.

### Exhibit Planner
The Exhibit Planner (EP) will be involved in research, developing interpretive themes, selecting and editing appropriate graphics, and reviewing drafts of text. The EP will work closely with the Subject Matter Experts and exhibit designers to ensure that the exhibit is meeting the project goals and is effective at interpreting the themes of the project for the intended audience.

### Subject Matter Experts
The Subject Matter Expert (SME) is a person who has special skills or knowledge on a particular topic. The SME will largely be responsible for developing the narrative and ensuring that the facts presented are accurate and based upon the current thinking of industry experts. They will also be involved in editing the interpretive text and graphics throughout the wayside exhibit development process.

### Exhibit Designer
The Exhibit Designer (ED) is responsible for the design and layout of the wayside exhibit panel. The ED will work with the text and graphics developed by the EP and SME to create a graphic presentation that is pleasing to the eye and effective at catching the attention of visitors. The ED may also be involved in developing fabrication specifications,

preparing the fabrication ready packages, and coordinating with manufacturers. The ED may be a consultant or graphic designers from within OPRHP.

> ### *Wayside Exhibit Team at a Glance*
> *A successful, professional-quality project requires a range of skills and expertise regardless of the subject matter. A typical Wayside Exhibit Team is comprised of the following members:*
> - *Project Manager*
> - *Exhibit Planner*
> - *Subject Matter Experts*
> - *Exhibit Designer*

## Defining the Scope and Thematic Framework
Once you know what is important about your site and why people want to visit it, the next step is to develop an interpretive theme that will help to draw a connection between your site's significance and your visitor's interest. A clear interpretive theme is a critical part of the wayside exhibit planning process. It will provide an organized framework for making informed choices when you plan and design wayside exhibits and prepare interpretive and educational programs.

### What is an interpretive theme?
An interpretive theme is the central concept or main idea of any interpretive experience or wayside exhibit. A clear interpretive theme guides the planning and design of individual wayside exhibits, ensuring all wayside exhibits work together to tell a rich story about a site. An interpretive theme is usually expressed as a short, simple statement, that will help visitors comprehend and recall what is important about the place.

Interpretive themes will also tell Exhibit Planners and Designers which are the most important ideas and stories that should be conveyed to visitors. Think of the interpretive theme as being the umbrella that encompasses the entire story of what matters about your site. If you have more than one sign panel, the theme will be the thread that ties all the panels together.

### *What is an Interpretive Theme?*

*An interpretive theme is the central concept or main idea of any interpretive experience. A clear interpretive theme guides the planning and design of individual wayside exhibits that all work together to tell a rich story about the site.*

Interpretive themes can operate at two levels: primary interpretive themes and subthemes.

1. Primary interpretive themes are the most important, over-arching stories of a place.
2. Subthemes are the topics or smaller-scale stories that support the primary theme. Their narrower scope encourages the exploration of specific ideas in greater depth. Subthemes may be the specific topics used to develop individual wayside exhibits.

While developing the main theme for a park or site, the Wayside Exhibit Team may uncover other related ideas that might be of interest to visitors. These ideas will help form the content for sub-themes. Sub-themes support the main themes and can be used to break the big message into smaller, more manageable messages.

Good interpretive planning must be customized to meet the individual park's needs, conditions, and situations. Identifying interpretive objectives is a critical first step to the success of the project. These objectives will help focus the interpretive theme's development as well as the content of the interpretive sign panel.

- *Learning Objectives:* What do you want the visitor to learn?
- *Emotional Objectives:* What do you want the visitor to feel?
- *Behavioral Objectives:* What do you want the visitor to do?

### *Tips for a successful Interpretive Theme*

- *Present just one key concept.*
- *State the theme as a short, simple, complete sentence.*
- *Reveal the overall purpose of the exhibit, experience or activity.*
- *Be evocative and motivationally worded.*

## Supporting the OPRHP Mission

Each Park and Historic Site will have unique stories to tell. But as part of the statewide park and historic site system, each unique story should support the overall OPRHP agency mission to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors, and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources. The dedication of OPRHP employees and the adherence to a common set of values is fundamental to the successful achievement of the OPRHP mission. These guiding principles serve as a pledge to the people we serve and a commitment to ourselves and to each other.

### A Commitment to People

We are committed to serving and protecting the public to the best of our ability, with courtesy and respect. We are committed to our employees and volunteers, encouraging teamwork, self-improvement and mutual support.

### A Commitment to Preservation

State Parks and Historic Sites are unique and irreplaceable public assets. We are committed to wise acquisition, planning, and, where appropriate, development. We are committed to providing timely and professional care and maintenance and to our responsibility to future generations in whose trust we manage our resources. We are committed to encouraging all agencies and individuals to identify, evaluate and protect recreational, natural, historic and cultural resources

### A Commitment to Service, Access and Inclusion

The availability of recreational, educational and cultural opportunities to all is vital in today's society. We are committed to equal access and outreach to all segments of our society, recognizing individual needs and interests. We are committed to safety, security, creativity and accountability in providing our programs and services.

### Commitment to Leadership

We recognize the preeminence of the New York State Park and Historic Site System. We are committed to excellence, innovation and professionalism. We are committed to forging

**COMMITMENT TO SERVICE**

**COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE**

**RECREATION INTERPRETATION STEWARDSHIP**

**COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP**

**COMMITMENT TO PRESERVATION**

partnerships with others who are responsible for providing recreational, natural, historic and cultural services.

## Location Assessment

Once a Wayside Exibit Team has been assembled it is time to go out and look at the planned locations with the interpretive themes in mind. The foundation of all wayside exhibit development is the site investigation. The Wayside Exhibit Team should visit potential sites early in the development process. Seek the visual clues that reveal the significance of this particular Park or Historic Site. The physical placement of the interpretive signs will have a major impact on their effectiveness. This is also the time to determine how many sign panels will be needed. Start by thinking of the current state of the site or resource you want to enhance with an interpretive sign and ask yourself the following questions.

- What specific historical, archeological, geological, natural or social event took place here? Why is it significant?
- What are the key features the wayside exhibit should highlight? Is there anything you'd like the sign panel to draw attention to that is not readily visible?
- What rare plant life, animals, or artifacts should be pointed out so visitors don't miss them?
- Have a significant number of visitors demonstrated an interest in this site?
- How can interpretive signage help visitors get more from this experience?
- Are there any environmental or preservation practices now happening at this site? Could interpretive signage help to raise awareness of these efforts? Could it also help to lessen visitor impacts on the site by suggesting how visitors should behave?
- Is the placement of the sign in an accessible location?

### The Walk Through

Allow plenty of time to review each interpretive sign location. Acquire site surveys, topographical maps, and other suitable site references that may be available. Walk slowly through the area and document the stories that are most interesting. While scouting the area, check for any other attributes or hazards nearby that could affect where the sign panels are placed. The location should be accessible and near the primary path of travel.

Take photographs of the site to use as a reference while developing interpretive content for the sign panel. Select views that enhance the opportunity for visitors to make meaningful connections to the landscape or feature. Each wayside exhibit should be linked specifically to something visitors can see or experience at the site.

The following questions may be considered and discussed during the walk through:

- Where are the natural stopping points along a trail or overlook?
- Where can interpretive signs be placed to enhance the view and not block it?
- Where is the best place for the interpretive sign based on the sun, the direction from which visitors approach, or other features of the terrain?
- Will the height, angle, or positioning of the interpretive sign interfere with the view or feature being interpreted?
- Will the sign be within easy viewing distance of the feature being described? Will the information clearly match the feature?
- Are there any environmental concerns, such as wildlife habitat or nesting sites? Will natural processes be an issue, such as tidal patterns, seasonal flooding, or other events?
- Are there sensitive archaeological features that are of concern?
- Is the location prone to vandalism? Is durability a major factor?
- Will brush and vegetative growth eventually hide the interpretive sign?

## Wayside Exhibit Development Process

### PLANNING & ANALYSIS

**PROJECT KICKOFF**

**Form a Wayside Exhibit Team**

**Define the Scope of the Wayside Exhibit**

**Define the Interpretive Themes**

*A successful, professional-quality project requires a range of skills. Forming a team of the right people and clearly defining the scope and interpretive theme of exhibit early in the process will help ensure a successful wayside exhibit project.*

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**SITE ANALYSIS**

**Select a Site(s)**

**Begin Research**

*Park staff and subject matter experts work with exhibit planners and designers to choose the best site, orientation, and signage format for each wayside exhibit based upon site specific features, events, and interpretive themes.*

▶

**PROJECT PROPOSAL**

**Identify Budget**

**Prepare Proposal**

**Submit Proposal for OPRHP Review**

*A wayside exhibit proposal identifies the project's scope, including thematic framework, site photographs, cost estimates, schedule, and other pertinent project data for review and approval by OPRHP.*

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### DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

**TELL THE STORY**

**Research Information & Graphic Materials**

**Draft Narrative & Develop Artwork**

**Review & Revise Text**

*Guided by the project proposal, the exhibit planner and subject matter experts will research the wayside exhibit topic and develop interpretive materials.*

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**DRAFT EXHIBIT REVIEW**

**Graphic Layout of Draft Exhibit**

**Submit Draft for OPRHP Review**

**Develop Original Artwork**

*The exhibit planners and designers prepare a draft exhibit based on the provided grid formats. Procure any original artwork, use-rights, and second-language translations. Sumbit the draft wayside exhibit for review and approval by OPRHP.*

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**FINAL WAYSIDE EXHIBIT**

**Revise the Draft Exhibit**

**Develop Final Wayside Exhibit**

**Submit for OPRHP Final Review**

*The final wayside exhibit is the last step in the planning and design process. Assemble final text, photos, maps, diagrams, and arttwork for OPRHP final review and approval prior to fabrication.*

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### FABRICATION & INSTALLATION

**EXHIBIT FABRICATION**

**Assemble Production Package**

**Fabricate Panel & Base**

**Tactile Model Fabrication**

*Working with a contractor or regional sign shop, a production-ready package is assembled for the panel fabricator. Bases are fabricated and shipped or produced by regional sign shops. Work with a skilled model maker for tactile elements.*

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**INSTALLATION**

**Prepare the Site**

**Install Wayside Exhibits**

*OPRHP prepares wayside exhibit sites, making certain sites are safe and accessible. OPRHP installs exhibits according to installation plans and assembly instructions.*

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**ARCHIVE & MAINTENANCE**

**As-built and Backup Files are Archived**

**Clean Panels & Bases**

**Maintain the Site**

*After installation production files are archived and warranty and graphics-use records are appropriately filed. Park staff perform periodic inspection and maintenance.*

### Who is the Audience?

Observe and note how visitors use the site. It is important to find out as much as possible about your visitors because this information will help you craft the messages that are important to them. Observe how visitors use or ignore any existing wayside exhibits currently in place. Many of the answers to the following questions may be obvious, but it is worth doing some initial critical thinking about current and future visitors:

- Are visitors with disabilities able to experience the current wayside exhibits?
- Is English the first language of most visitors?
- Where do your visitors come from and when are they most likely to visit the site?
- What interpretive themes may be most interesting to your visitors?

### Review Existing Graphics:

If you have photos, illustrations, maps, or other images to tell the story, bring them along on the site visit. It is helpful to have an initial selection of graphics during the review and analysis of the potential sign locations. Look for images that convey meaning, provoke thought, or elicit curiosity about the site.

- Are the available graphics adequate to catch the attention of current visitors?
- Do you need to hire an artist to develop an illustration to tell the story? Are photographs more appropriate?
- Do you have access to historical images from local libraries, historical societies, museums, or educational institutions?
- Do graphics conveying natural processes require the input from environmental educators and scientists?
- Are tactile features such as raised graphics or sculptural elements needed to effectively tell the story?
- Are photographs and images reflective of the diverse, multicultural population we serve?

### Site Improvements

Evaluate each location for safety, accessibility and comfort, noting if any site improvements are needed. Improvements may include removal of vegetation or existing signs, pavements, and site elements. New features may also need to be constructed, such as new trails, surfaces, boardwalks, decks or overlooks.

As you plan the interpretive project, think what improvements can be made to include those with physical or visual impairments in addition to able bodied visitors.

- Are the wayside locations accessible to the physically challenged?
- Are there any lighting requirements for night use and security?
- Are existing grades suitable for visitors to pause and enjoy the wayside?

## Setting a Budget

There is no one price that can be applied to the various fabrication methods available for interpretive panels. This manual suggests that an approximate cost is up to $1,200 (2020 prices) per 2'x3' panel for fabrication only. These are not the only costs that the Wayside Exhibit Team will encounter. Designers, writers, artists, mounting systems and installation costs must also be considered.

A good starting point to determine an order of magnitude cost of the project is to contact other OPRHP regions/sites that have completed similar wayside exhibit projects. They will be able to tell you how much was spent, and how those costs were broken down. Be sure to ask about what services they received at no charge from volunteers. Your budget may need to include those services if you do not have OPRHP staff or volunteers to provide them.

Once you have an understanding of the associated costs, ask the following questions:

- How much money is budgeted for this project? Is signage part of a larger park improvement project?
- Does this project qualify for any funding or support from other organizations?
- Are there Friends organizations with financial, topical, or other expertise willing to assist with the signage campaign?
- Are there skills needed that are available through in-house OPRHP staff expertise or professionals willing to volunteer?
- What are the costs beyond production and installation, such as annual maintenance or replacement?
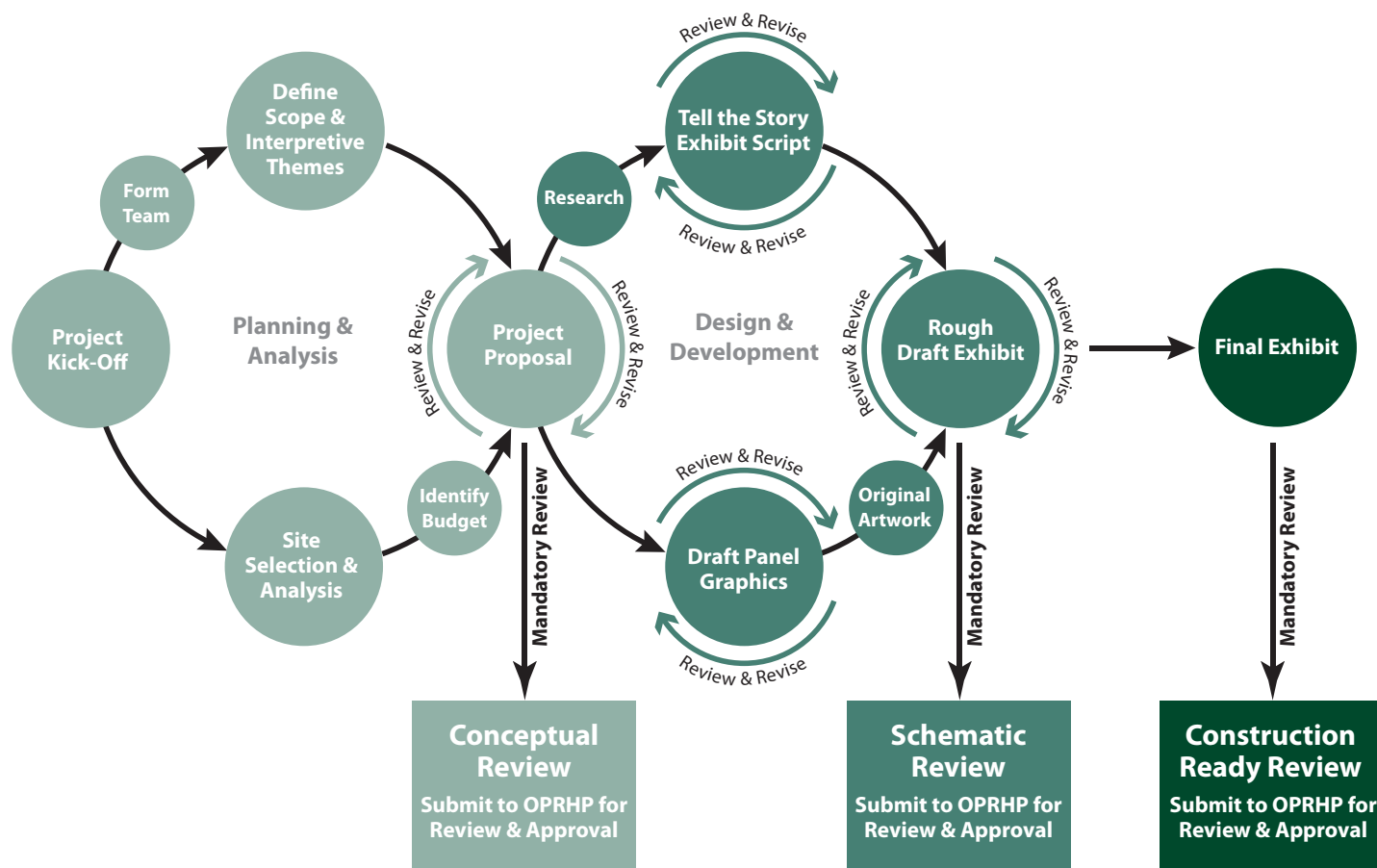
*This diagram illustrates a potential sequence of events involved in developing a typical wayside exhibit and the three OPRHP mandatory review points.*

## OPRHP Review Protocol

All interpretive signage and exhibit projects must be submitted for review and approval. Projects may receive additional review throughout the research and design phases, but there are three mandatory review points that all projects are subject to:

### Project Proposal (Conceptual Review)

Conceptual review and approval of a Project Proposal is required for all interpretive signage and wayside exhibit projects. Submissions should be made early in the planning and analysis process. Text and graphics at this stage of development may be very sketchy and include placeholders. This review is focused on articulating the interpretive themes, concepts, and project goals for each individual wayside exhibit. Review at this stage is particularly important when working with a consultant on wayside exhibits.

All projects will be reviewed by the Signage Review Team, which will vary with the content/intent of the sign/piece.

> *Reviewers:* Park Manager, Environmental Education or Historic Preservation Staff
> *Review Level:* Conceptual review to confirm direction and overall content

### Rough Draft Exhibit (Schematic Review)

A schematic design level graphic layout of the exhibit is submitted for review at the end of the design development phase of the project. Final artwork may not yet be complete, but all graphics and images must be represented in some fashion and text should be well developed. If significant design changes are made after schematic review, the project may be required to be re-submitted for review prior to moving to the final design stage.

All projects will be reviewed by Signage Review Team, which will vary with the content/intent of the sign/piece.

**Reviewers:** The team is generally comprised of the Park Manager, Environmental Education/Historic Preservation Staff, Subject Matter Experts (SME) and District Manager, but may vary depending on the park/site, location, and priority.

**Review Level:** General direction of the sign at a schematic level. The draft layout will show selected graphics and images, and draft text.

## Final Draft (Construction Ready Review)

Final review and approval is based on the submission of construction ready drawings and specifications. At this point in the project the graphic panel should be "print-ready" for fabrication and installation.

All projects will be reviewed by Signage Review Team, which will vary with the content/intent of the sign/piece.

**Reviewers:** The team is generally comprised of the Park Manager, Environmental Education/Historic Preservation Staff, Subject Matter Experts (SME) and District Manager, but may vary depending on the park/site, location, priority

**Review Level:** Final review before fabrication. The final layout will show a complete graphic layout of the exhibit panel, including all graphics and text. All graphics and images must be attributed.

## Submission

Submit materials via e-mail to:

***signage.review@parks.ny.gov.*** Materials will be uploaded into Teams or other platform for the review team assembled specifically for the project. Expect 7-10 days turnaround for comments.

# Chapter 3: Design & Development

## Introduction

Once you have established what is most significant about your resource and have an interpretive theme to support it, now is the time to start developing the content that will tell your story. You should gather as much information as possible that illustrate and relate to your primary interpretive themes and subthemes. This information may include photographs, maps, illustrations, documents, historical stories, anecdotes, folklore, facts, figures, and quotes, etc. This is a job for the Exhibit Planner and Subject Matter Experts on the Wayside Exhibit Team.

Your team may consider consulting with a historian or research professional to help with this process. While you will likely gather more information than is needed, the purpose of this research is to ensure that you have the best, most comprehensive information available to tell your story. You may find that additional information you uncover is useful for complementary communications, such as a brochure or website.

## Telling the Story

Few people come to parks and historic sites for the express purpose of looking at wayside exhibits. For this reason, the message must be carefully crafted to succinctly illuminate the feature, and to quickly immerse people into the resource. Vibrant and compelling graphics will attract people's attention to the panel, but to keep their interest the title and text must be short and intriguing. The first sentence should entice the visitor into wanting to know more. If the exhibit shows the audience something predictable or full of academic jargon, they will move on without engaging.

The best interpretive signs make one point and one point only. Start with a place. Tell a short, captivating story. Leave readers wanting to know more. It sounds simple, but space is limited and the audience fleeting. Visitors may linger at a wayside for 45 seconds or less. Can something of value be read in that short time? A wayside exhibit is not a book. The more text that is displayed, the less likely people will read it.



*Historical photographs and artwork can augment historic remains or highlight landscape elements that are no longer present.*



*Locate the wayside in proximity to landscape element being interpreted. Do not block the view, and do not show photos of what the visitor can readily see.*

*Compelling photographs can reduce the amount of text that is needed. Created by the National Park Service.*



*In some cases, bilingual exhibits may reach a wider audience. Created by the National Park Service.*

## Tips for Successful Exhibit Text

Visitors will have an easier time taking in the panel's story if it is written in layers. Start with the big idea, then drill down into the smaller stories. Convey the theme of the panel, or series of panels, in the title or heading. This should be short and catchy as you only have a few seconds to grab and hold visitors' attention. Use subheadings to introduce subthemes and additional detail. This will divide up the text, attract attention, and allow visitors to take in information quickly. When developing wayside exhibit text remember the following:

### The 3/30/3 Rule

Research shows that you only have three seconds to catch the visitor's attention. It takes thirty seconds for them to make the decision to read the sign, and they only spend about three minutes in reading and digesting the entire sign message.

### Interpretive Writing Should:

- *Provoke the reader's attention and reveal the main point of the exhibit quickly.*
- *Always be written around a clearly defined interpretive theme.*
- *Always be reviewed and edited to make sure the story, message and vocabulary are clearly understood.*

### Provoke the Curiosity of the Audience Quickly

The most powerful sentence should be at the beginning of the text. After writing the draft wayside exhibit text, find the best sentences. Try them out at the beginning or work them into the title instead of leaving them in the middle or at the end of a paragraph.

### Put Text into Hierarchies

Provide a hierarchy of importance to the information. If all text is treated with the same emphasis, then there is no clear hierarchy of importance to any of the content. The title, headings, subheadings, and captions should be able to tell the general story. Some visitors may only read the title and look at the main graphic. Others may read the main text and some captions. A few may read it all. Sometimes ideas that started out in the main text find a better fit as a sidebar or a caption.

### Write in "Plain English"

Avoid unfamiliar terms, academic jargon, and buzzwords. Make the text readable to a wide range of visitors. Help visitors relate the exhibit's topic to their own lives through familiar terms and personal language. If certain topics require the use of terms that may not be familiar to the general public, use the opportunity to educate them.

### Limit the Amount of Words

The most successful waysides are succinct and concentrate on only one subject. Don't try to tell the visitor everything of interest at the site.

A good rule of thumb is to convey the key ideas in less than 45 seconds.  Get a stopwatch and have someone read a draft of the text out load.  Did they stumble on hard-to-pronounce or not widely known words?  If so, rewrite the text in layman's terms.

### Use Text that Encourages Visitor Interaction

Write to the audience as if you are talking directly to them.  "Look for the…", "Can you hear the…", "Touch the…", etc.  Interpretation should be intriguing in addition to being informative.

### Stay Connected to the View

Do not take for granted that readers will automatically understand the link between the story and the place where they are standing.  Be careful not to describe what they can see readily with their own eyes.  Additionally, don't interpret stories and resources that are "near here." Stick to what is right at the site.

### Stay Focused

*It is easy to get sidetracked during this step. Stay focused on the project goals and the interpretive themes.*

### The "So-What?" Test

Wayside exhibits should help people discover something meaningful and worth their time. Evaluate the content by applying a couple of questions: "So what?" and "Why should I want to know this information?" By relating the message to the everyday life of the audience they are more likely to care about the subject matter.  Write for the reader's benefit, not for a sense of what people ought to learn.  Think about the visitor's sense of place and address the moment of curiosity and the questions that are inspired by the place.



*A hierarchy of text quickly conveys the main ideas.  Main body and sidebar text provide additional information on the theme and subthemes.  Pull quotes entice readers with a brief phrase.  Created by OPRHP.*
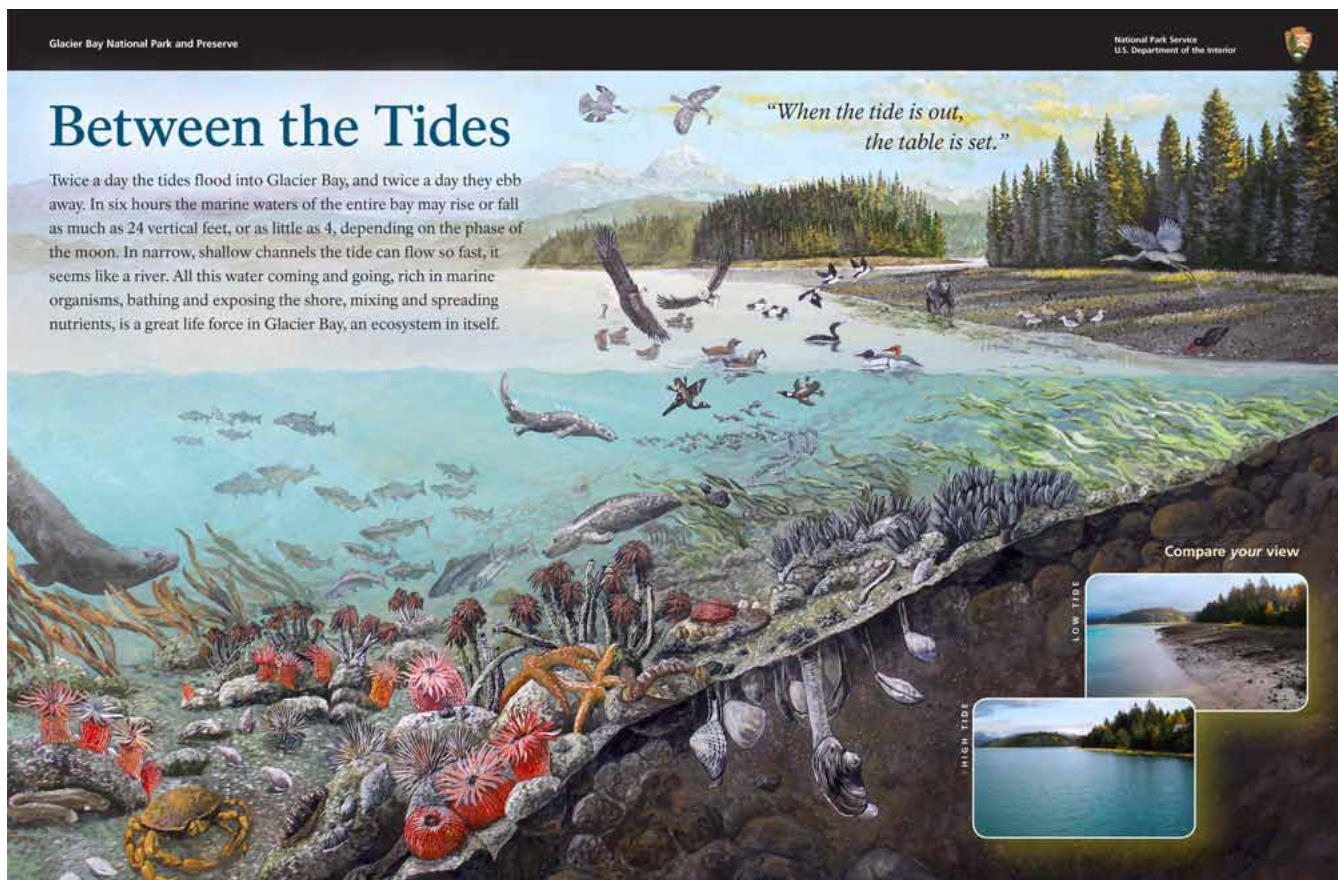
*Custom artwork can reduce the amount of text that is need.  The title is used to introduce the story and engages the visitor.*

*A "pull-quote" highlights a critical element of the story.*

*Created by the National Park Service.*

### Edit, Edit, Edit!

Every professional writer knows that text only gets better with each new draft.  If you are writing your own panels, challenge yourself to go through the text several times to weed out unnecessary words, find simpler ways to saying things, and make the story more engaging.  Read it out loud in the context of the layout and a photo of the site.  Have several people who are unrelated to the project review the draft.  Get feedback from other writers, interpreters, educators, and general-knowledge-only readers.  Cut away everything that can be eliminated.  The craft of writing good wayside exhibits often depends on subtraction as much as creativity.

See the "Diversity, Equity and  Inclusivity" section of this chapter for additional information on creating successful exhibit text.

## Tips for Successful Exhibit Graphics

Compelling graphics are more successful at attracting and engaging visitors than anything else.  They are capable of conveying stories in concise and dramatic ways.  With this in mind, it is important to obtain strong graphics to replace as many words as possible.  Use engaging graphics, photos, and maps to reveal and illustrate the story, but don't show images of what visitors can see for themselves.  When developing wayside exhibit graphics remember the following:

### Simplifying Ideas

Create a graphic to demonstrate a complex process.  Always find a visual way to express what you may prefer to write.  The more graphics that are provided, the better chance a visitor will want to spend time understanding the message.

*Graphics and powerful images are often more effective at conveying complex ideas than large amounts of text.*
*Created by the National Park Service*

### Selection
Choose photographs to show past or historical elements and scenes, not something that is current and right in front of the visitor. Choose photographs that show the visitor something about the landscape that is not within view, or perhaps future views to illustrate what the site may become.

### Contrast
Look for black and white photographs with a strong contrast between shades. The image needs to be legible in varying qualities of daylight and atmospheric conditions. Consider using a color tint for the graphic that relates to other elements of the panel in place of black.

## Creating New Illustrations
There are many instances when no existing graphics and photographs are available to make a compelling wayside exhibit. In these instances, it may be necessary to hire an artist to create images to explain the significance of a site. New illustrations will require a larger investment in time and money beyond the other items of the wayside exhibit development process. To avoid delays and extra costs, start developing new illustrations early and progress them in tandem with the overall exhibit layout.

### Selecting the Artist
Finding an artist who has expertise in representing the subject matter of the exhibit is a critical step. Does the project require images that capture wildlife, historical scenes, or architectural details? The artwork must be place-specific so visitors can easily relate the images to the actual landscape. Regardless



*Simple Illustrations can quickly convey a concept and appeal to children. Created by OPRHP.*

of their experience, an artist will need a lot of details and direction to adequately prepare draft materials for review. Additional research and direction may be needed to flesh out ideas that were not anticipated at the start of the project. The artwork may inspire a different approach to telling the story.

### Review and Approval

Creating artwork is a time consuming process with intensive review and revision involved at multiple stages throughout the development process. Invest a lot of time up front in determining what the graphic should show. Once a direction has been decided upon, avoid going back to change it later. This will only add time and cost to the project. The biggest changes should happen at the early reviews. Later reviews are for fine-tuning the details only.

Storyboards or thumbnail sketches are typically the first step of the process. These quick, hand-drawn diagrams are used to build consensus on the basic content, focus, perspective and composition of the exhibit. Thumbnail sketches will be used to establish accurate details, dimensions, and compelling compositions within a wayside panel layout. The sketches should incorporate space for text and take into account the required margins and bleeds required by the manufacturer.

Once a sketch has been reviewed and approved, a full color rendering is developed. The full color rendering will also need to be reviewed and corrected for accuracy. The artist may be working at a size that is different than the final wayside exhibit, and therefore producing actual size review copies of the work-in-progress is critical to ensure that it contains the level of detail that is appropriate for the size of the wayside. Consider reviewing the work-in-
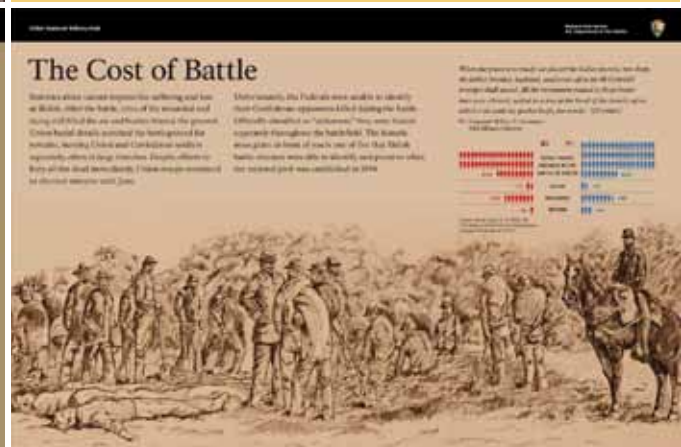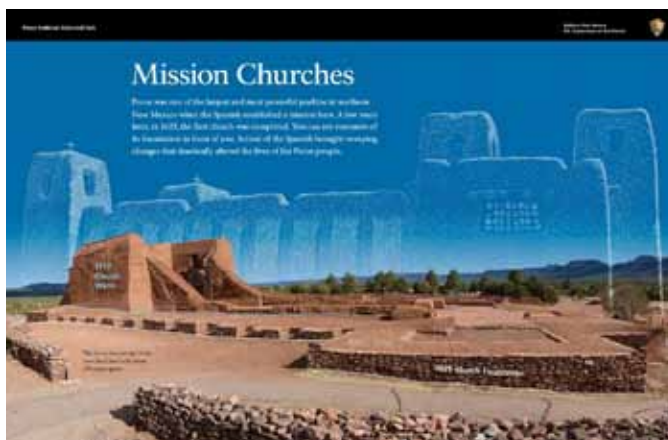


*Custom Illustrations and transparent or cutaway views are effective tools to reveal complex landscape processes, showing how structures are built, and revealing how things work.*
*Created by the National Park Service.*

progress on site of the wayside exhibit to ensure that the graphic adequately represents the message.  Once a full color rendering has been approved, final art is scanned at high resolution and placed within the final wayside exhibit layout.

## Maps

Wayside exhibit maps differ from the maps published in brochures and websites.  Wayside exhibit maps can only be viewed while the visitor is standing in front of it and they cannot be carried away for further reference.  Wayside exhibit maps must be clear, uncluttered, and site-specific.  The wayside exhibit audience is a pedestrian audience, therefore the "You Are Here" marker is an important orientation feature on a wayside map.  Wayside exhibit maps should provide only the necessary information to assist a visitor travelling to a particular destination, or to show a relationship in the landscape.  They should not include all the information that may be included in the official park map or other publications.

The following guidelines for successful wayside exhibit maps follow recommendations developed by the NPS:

### Purpose
When planning a wayside exhibit map, it is important to establish a clear intent.  A different graphic solution may be more appropriate.  Only those elements which are relevant to the purpose of the map should be shown.

### Size and Scale
The size and scale of the map is based on its purpose, the amount of space available in the wayside exhibit panel layout, and the geographical area, and content of the map.

### Content
Determine what geographical information and labels to include on the map.  Only those elements which are relevant to the purpose of the map should be shown.  Consider the wording used on the map to be sure it doesn't conflict with the other signage used in the park or the wording used in the wayside exhibit text.  Refer to the official park map for consistency among media.

### OPRHP Map Standards
*OPRHP has map standards in place utilizing GIS software that are used in official park maps for publications, websites and orientation graphics. The wayside exhibit maps should look, feel, and function like the official park publication maps but only show the information that is relevant to the particular interpretive experience.*

### Orientation
In general maps work best when north is at the top of the map, however wayside maps often work better when they are oriented in the same direction as the viewer.

Under the following circumstances, a map should be oriented North:
- Maps which show a large area (entire park or an area that includes features that cannot be seen from the location of the wayside exhibit.
- Maps used in more than one location with different "You Are Here" markers.
- Maps used on kiosks.
- Maps used on upright exhibits.
- Visitors are likely to have a published map in hand and may use it for cross-reference.

A map can be oriented in the direction of the viewer when:
- It shows a small area with features that can be readily seen from the location of the wayside exhibit.
- It is used on a low-profile exhibit.



*Example of OPRHP map standards.  Created by OPRHP.*

*Examples of tactile elements*
*Created by the National Park Service*

## Models and Tactile Elements

Wayside exhibits are primarily a visual medium. For people with limited or no vision, tactile elements provide an opportunity to experience and understand the details and information that sighted people do. Since models have little or no language barrier, they also help sighted visitors better understand the scale and context of large sites that may have complex topographic and landscape features.

Tactile elements can be integrated into flat panels, or they can be stand-alone or separate structures. No matter the chosen format, tactile elements will be custom items that require additional planning, design, and fabrication considerations. There are many ways to create tactile elements. Common approaches are bronze bas relief sculptures, molded fiberglass, and carved high density foam. Each process will have its benefits depending upon the site specific application.

## Image Attribution

It is important to correctly credit image creators for their work. In most cases, if you're using a pre-existing image, you're legally required to attribute it, and failing to do so may lead to legal proceedings. Finding sources and getting waivers takes time and should be accounted for in the project schedule. Luckily, image attribution is quite straightforward. Attribution can take a variety of forms, and it is standard practice for it to be negotiated into any licensing agreements as part of the work's usage terms. To make sure images are correctly attributed, include the following details and make sure they are clearly displayed next to the relevant image (ideally directly underneath):

**Title:** The title of the image

**Author:** The name of the creator

**Source:** The source or URL where the image is hosted

## Exhibit Styles

The program provides a variety of standard sizes and formats to choose from, depending upon the message being conveyed and where the exhibit is located.

### Low Profile Exhibits

Low profile exhibits often tell a story or interpret a specific site feature. They should be oriented so that the visitor can relate the message on the panel to what they are looking at in the landscape. They are designed as a caption of the landscape feature and are meant to compliment what visitors see. Low profile exhibits are not intended to stand alone or be read independent of the feature being interpreted. The most popular sizes are 24"x36", 24"x42", and 18"x24".

### Upright Exhibits

Upright panels are typically used to provide practical orientation information (You are Here) mapping, safety tips, and highlighting special destinations found within the park or historic site. The most popular size for upright exhibits are 24"x36" and 36"x48". Avoid using upright exhibits for interpretation along a trail and in front of historic sites or landscape features where they may block the view of the resource they are interpreting.

## Understanding the Options

### Low Profile
For use in interpreting a specific feature on the landscape
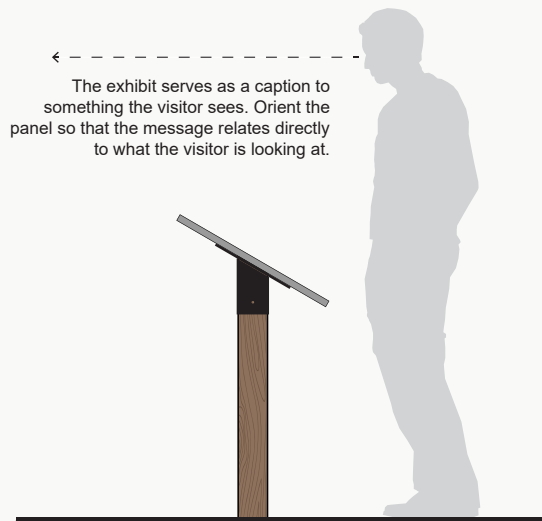
**OR**

### Upright
For use with providing orientation information, mapping, safety tips and highlighting special resources

The exhibit serves as a caption to something the visitor sees. Orient the panel so that the message relates directly to what the visitor is looking at.

The exhibit serves to introduce visitors to a specific area and are often found at trailheads, entrances, and decision points. They contain a balance of orientation information with interpretive messaging about the significance of the site.

Upright exhibits often introduce visitors to a trail or a specific area of the park or historic site. They are often found at trailheads, entryways, and decision points. Upright exhibits must help visitors decide whether to invest the time and energy required to reach the destination described. They should answer the questions related to a safe, comfortable, and meaningful experience. "Why is this trail here, and what is there to see or do?", "Do I have the time and ability to safely set out on this journey?". A careful balance of the site significance and the need-to-know orientation information will vary based on the complexity of the site.

Upright exhibits are an opportunity to reinforce basic rules and safety information before someone heads out into a park or historic site. However, just like low profile exhibits, they must attract an audience through compelling graphic presentation and story lines. Avoid creating upright exhibits that are a long list of "do not" symbols and regulatory information.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity

OPRHP is dedicated to promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in all its endeavors, especially our interpretive signage and wayside exhibits. We consider Equity as being fair or impartial, offering equal access to information for all; Diversity as valuing and including different perspectives, be they age, culture, economic background or physical and cognitive abilities; and Inclusion as removing barriers of all kinds that may deprive some people of the opportunity to enjoy or participate.

In order to design for greater accessibility, we need to better identify and understand the diverse range of people who may need access to our designs. The diversity of our audience should be a core consideration from the very outset of our planning and will, very likely, lead to a richer and more thoughtful approach. The Statewide Interpretive Signage Program has been developed with accessibility for all in mind: from sign location and construction, to

the selection of typefaces, to the creation of the content using the concepts of scannability and hierarchy in presenting information.

What types of barriers should be considered while designing wayside exhibits? Beyond what have been historically regarded as disabilities, accessibility must also consider the wide range of human diversity in how we think, what we sense, and how we move our bodies. Human beings exist on a wide spectrum of ability and circumstances. We have all experienced or will experience a condition that is a barrier to full access, so we should design our signage keeping this in mind. First, we need to identify and understand the diverse range of people who may need access to our programs, which will vary from park to site based on the people who visit. Certainly, physical mobility limitations must be considered when selecting a site and style for signage, but there are many other barriers for access for people with low-vision, language limitations, and cultural differences. In addition, sensory and cognitive impairments which must be addressed through thoughtful project design.

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Accessibility standards, building codes and safety requirements address many of the physical/mobility and low-vision limitations. The 2010 ADA includes specific guidance on a variety of topics which have been incorporated into the Program. The ADA standards may be accessed at www.ada.gov.

### Siting Considerations

Wayside exhibits should be located in predictable and easily approachable locations. Interpretive information can be longer and more complex than wayfinding signage and will require viewers take more time to read,

### *Write for a Range of Reading Levels*

*Visitors to the site will have a wide range of education and reading levels. In order to make the exhibit accessible to as many people as possible, write for a grade 6-8 reading level. Use short, every-day words. Information is available on-line to check the reading level of your text. Look for the Gunning Fog Index or Flesch-Kincaid Readability Tests.*

so allowing for enough area around a sign is important. People tend to read this type of information up close, typically within 3'-0" of the information, particularly if there are maps, photos, and graphics displayed.

### Accessible Language and Writing

State park and historic site visitors may have a variety of sensory and cognitive conditions which may affect their ability to understand signage content. It is important that all park visitors have equal access to the information presented in the wayside exhibit. "Accessible language" is language that accommodates people of all ages and abilities, including those with low-vision, cognitive impairments, people with lower literacy skills, and speakers of English as a foreign language. Using accessible language makes it easier for the wayside exhibit to convey the messages, and for the audience to understand them.

Some qualities of accessible language include:
- Writing out the full names of acronyms and abbreviations, at least the first time they appear in the text.
- Using examples and analogies to explain or support complicated ideas.
- Avoiding the use of jargon, slang, and highly technical words, the meaning of which is usually understood only by a particular subgroup.

### Language Access

English may not be the first language for many of the visitors that come to our parks. Therefore, it is important to provide translations of text to languages commonly used by visitors. Demographic studies are available for each park to assist in determining which languages the signage should receive additional translation.
- Alternative languages may be accessed by QR code or other technological means.
- Translations are available through the OPRHP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer in the Public Affairs Unit.

Making any project 100% accessible is a challenging goal; however, we can strive to create accessible signage for our visitors if we consider the full range of human experience when we begin planning.

# Chapter 4: Graphic Standards

## Design Grids

The OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program uses design grids to ensure consistency throughout the system.  Design grids are used as an underlying organizational device to help the designer organize text and graphic elements into a strong, attractive composition. The prescribed columns and squares ensure that there is enough open space within the composition and that a bottom bar with park name and agency logos is consistently located. From the reader's viewpoint, a consistent layout conveys a sense of state ownership and the type of experience that can be expected in a State Park or Historic Site.

Design grids, originally developed by the National Park Service, are considered the most versatile system in use today for interpretive signage.  They are used by many park systems and agencies around the country including the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, The NYS Canal Corporation, NYS Thruway Authority, and many others.  The OPRHP grids provided here are an adaptation of the standard NPS design grid.  Use of the grid system along with other graphic elements, such as logo placement, color, and typography, will create a strong visual identity for all OPRHP interpretive signage.

The grid system is provided as a guide for arranging elements: it is not intended to be a restrictive or rigid layout tool.  The bottom bar in pantone 350C with park and agency identifiers in white, standard typography, color palettes, and the NYS holding shape are the only standard elements that are found on all exhibits.  These ensure that all signs present a recognizable brand identity throughout all Parks and Historic Sites.  Beyond these standard elements, individual expression according to interpretive message, graphic composition, and site considerations is encouraged.

The Program provides four grid sizes to address the most common wayside exhibit panel dimensions.  Other standard sizes may be made available for use in unique situations (for instance, multi-lingual panels) but are not provided within these guidelines. Sample graphics illustrating the application of the design grids in various scenarios are included in the following pages.

Design grids are provided as full scale Adobe InDesign files with built-in type styles and the appropriate NYS OPRHP identity elements. Digital template files may be found on the OPRHP Intranet in the Guidance Documents and on the Environmental Stewardship page.

## Grid Format A - Low Profile 24"x36"
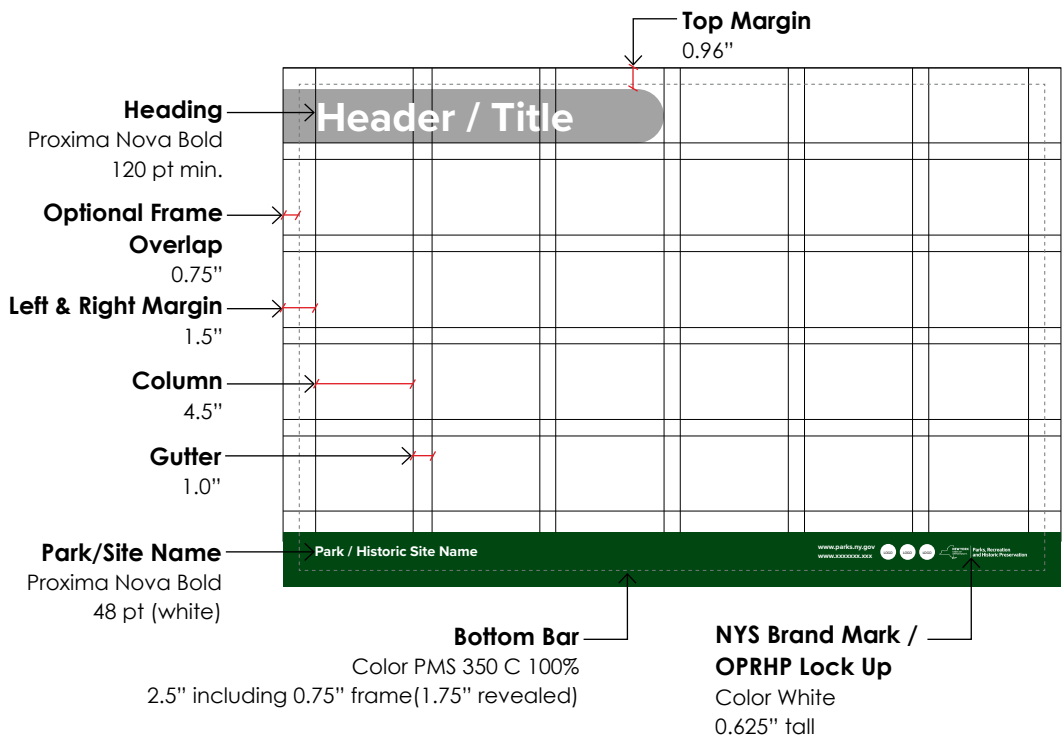
**Top Margin**
0.96"

**Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Optional Frame Overlap**
0.75"

**Left & Right Margin**
1.5"

**Column**
4.5"

**Gutter**
1.0"

**Header / Title**

**Park/Site Name**
Proxima Nova Bold
48 pt (white)

Park / Historic Site Name

www.parks.ny.gov
www.xxxxxxx.xxx

**Bottom Bar**
Color PMS 350 C 100%
2.5" including 0.75" frame(1.75" revealed)

**NYS Brand Mark / OPRHP Lock Up**
Color White
0.625" tall

**Text Standards**

**Heading/Title**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Subheadings**
72 pt min.

**Main Body Text**
28 pt min.

**Sidebar Headings**
42 pt min.

**Sidebar Text**
24 pt min.

**Caption Text**
16 pt min.

## Grid Format B - Low Profile 24"x42"
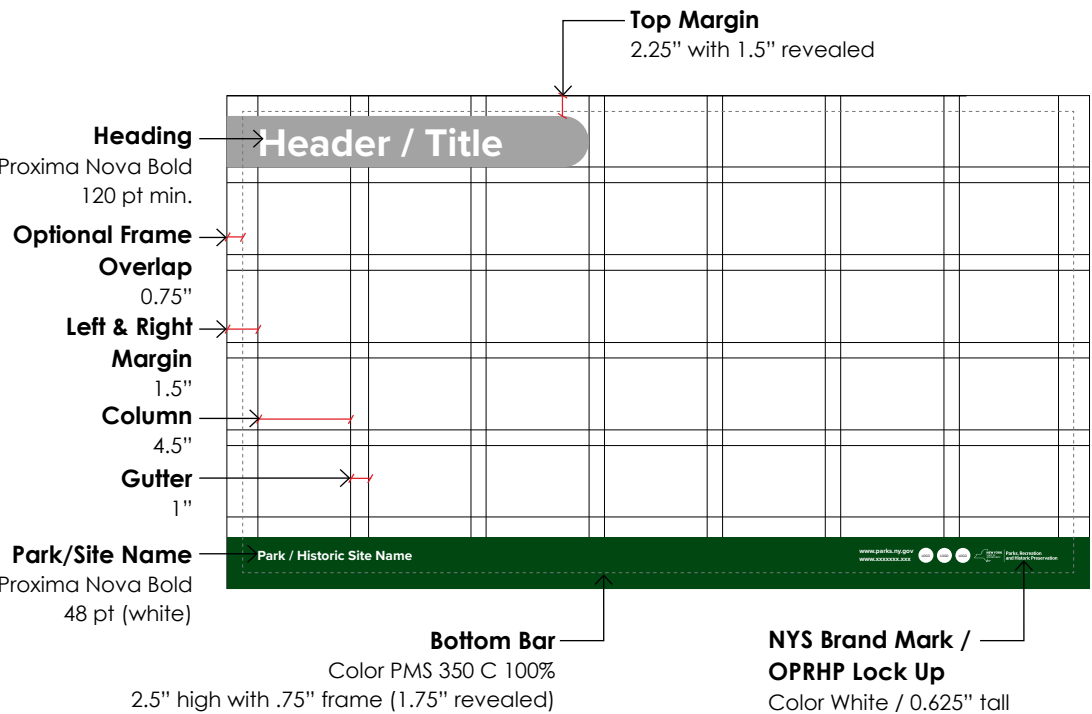
**Top Margin**
2.25" with 1.5" revealed

**Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Optional Frame Overlap**
0.75"

**Left & Right Margin**
1.5"

**Column**
4.5"

**Gutter**
1"

**Header / Title**

**Park/Site Name**
Proxima Nova Bold
48 pt (white)

Park / Historic Site Name

www.parks.ny.gov
www.xxxxxxx.xxx

**Bottom Bar**
Color PMS 350 C 100%
2.5" high with .75" frame (1.75" revealed)

**NYS Brand Mark / OPRHP Lock Up**
Color White / 0.625" tall

**Text Standards**

**Heading/Title**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Subheadings**
72 pt min.

**Main Body Text**
28 pt min.

**Sidebar Headings**
42 pt min.

**Sidebar Text**
24 pt min.

**Caption Text**
16 pt min.

## Grid Format C - Low Profile 18"x24"

**Top Margin**
1.0"

**Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold
100 pt

**Frame Overlap**
Frame not
recommended on
18"x24" panel

**Park/Site Name**
Proxima Nova Bold
30 pt (white)

**Header / Title**

**Left & Right Margin**
.75"

**Column**
3.25"

**Gutter**
.5"

Park / Historic Site Name
www.parks.ny.gov
www.xxxxxx.xxx
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

**Bottom Bar**
Color PMS 350 C 100%
1.5" high

**NYS Brand Mark /
OPRHP Lock Up**
Color White / 0.625" tall
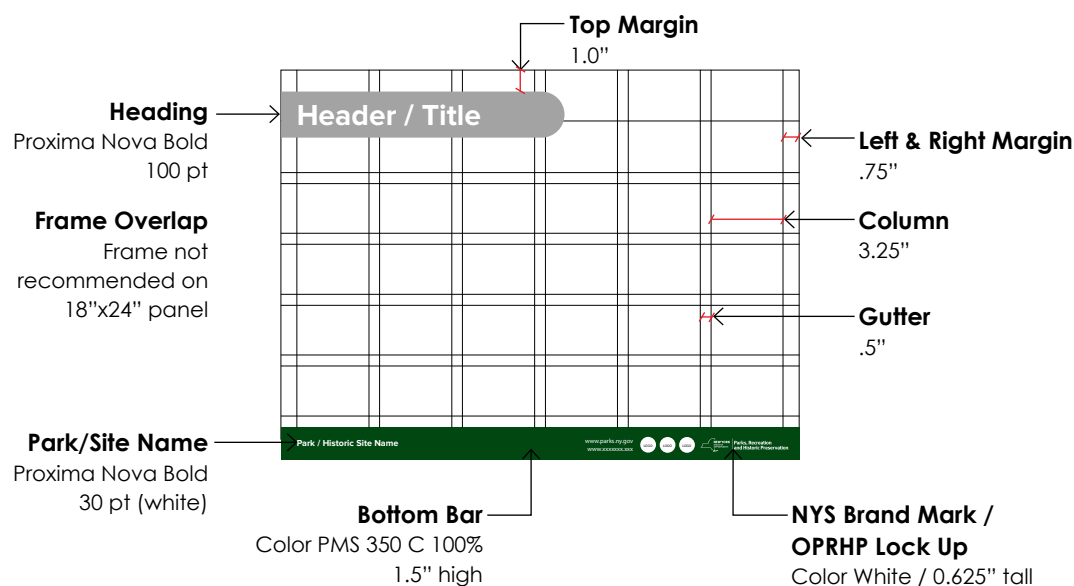
**Text Standards**

**Heading/Title**
Proxima Nova Bold
100 pt min.

**Subheadings**
38 pt min.

**Main Body Text**
24 pt min.

**Sidebar Headings**
38 pt min.

**Sidebar Text**
20 pt min.

**Caption Text**
14 pt min.

## Grid Format D - Upright 24"x36"
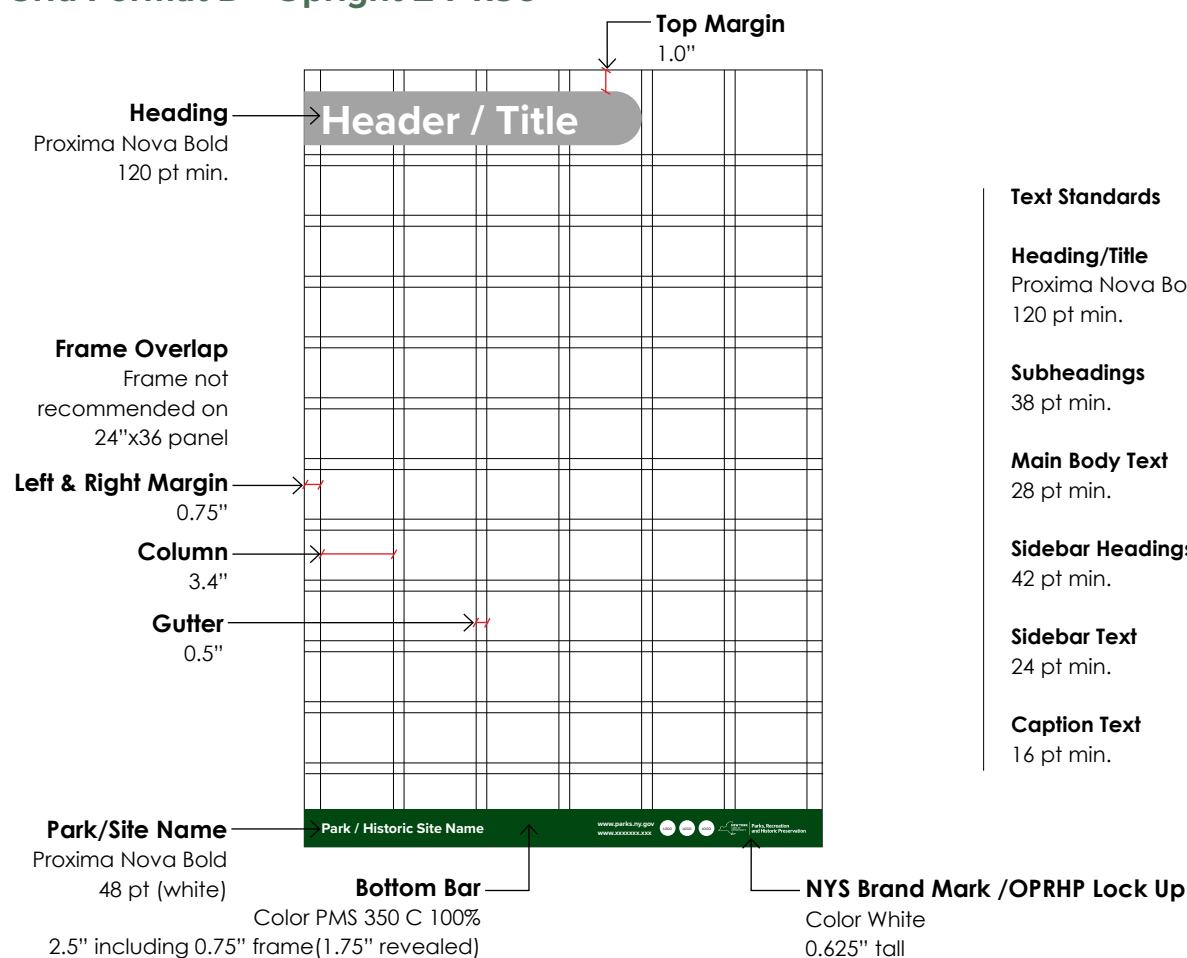
**Top Margin**
1.0"

**Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Header / Title**

**Frame Overlap**
Frame not
recommended on
24"x36 panel

**Left & Right Margin**
0.75"

**Column**
3.4"

**Gutter**
0.5"

**Park/Site Name**
Proxima Nova Bold
48 pt (white)

Park / Historic Site Name
www.parks.ny.gov
www.xxxxxx.xxx
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

**Bottom Bar**
Color PMS 350 C 100%
2.5" including 0.75" frame(1.75" revealed)

**NYS Brand Mark /OPRHP Lock Up**
Color White
0.625" tall

**Text Standards**

**Heading/Title**
Proxima Nova Bold
120 pt min.

**Subheadings**
38 pt min.

**Main Body Text**
28 pt min.

**Sidebar Headings**
42 pt min.

**Sidebar Text**
24 pt min.

**Caption Text**
16 pt min.

## Laying Out the Panel

Evocative text and compelling images are important building blocks for a successful wayside exhibit, however panel layout is just as critical to attracting and engaging the reader. A good layout directs the eye around the panel, emphasizing main points and highlighting the important elements and details.

The wayside development team should select from one of the grid templates provided in the program. The column guides are intended to provide guidance with text length, inset photo dimensions, proportions, and spacing. While the grid is useful starting point, it rarely determines the entire layout of the wayside panel. Rather, the composition of the main image, or the focus of the largest graphic, will often dictate how to best layout the panel. The title, or header, in the upper left corner of the grid is there for starter purposes only and is not locked in place.

Remember, wayside panels are more like billboards than books and publications. They should attract attention quickly, with impact and a single memorable message. The average person may only look at the wayside for 30 seconds. The panel layout should have a clear focus and hierarchy so that the main idea can be understood quickly from the headings, subheadings, and main graphics. Visitors who want to take more time can find additional details in the main body and sidebar text.

Even though layout templates are provided, it is usually a good idea to have a graphic designer or artist produce the finished, print-ready files. People spend entire careers developing and perfecting graphic design skills to create compelling layouts, so don't expect to get it down in short order.

## Applying the Design Grids

Below are two hypothetical panel layouts to illustrate how the same information can be laid out in different ways. Both utilize the same grid system as an underlying organizational device in their composition, yet the resulting layouts are quite different depending on the available design skills.

The basic option closely follows the grid template for line length, photo placement, and locations of sidebar text. The preferred option shows a more flexible approach to the grid system utilizing advanced graphic design techniques that provide for a more compelling wayside exhibit. Regardless of the design approach, both panels successfully present the same information.

On the following pages are several more examples that illustrate how to apply the design grids, as well as the graphic standards of fonts, backgrounds, accent colors, and images.



**Understanding the Options**

**Creative Use of the Grid (Preferred)**
This option utilizes the grid system as a layout device, but displays more creativity and advanced graphic design techniques

**OR**

**Strict Use of the Grid (Basic)**
This option shows a more direct use of the grid system as a layout device

## Sample Layout - Low Profile with Full Spread Image

This example utilizes a single primary image that spreads the entire panel for dramatic impact. Text and secondary images are placed directly over the primary image.

**Title**
Proxima Nova Bold 124 pt White
Holding Shape PMS 7682 C - 100%

**Main Body Text**
Garamond Regular 29 pt Black.
Text wraps around background image elements.

**Subheading**
Proxima Nova Bold 75 pt
PMS 130 C - 100%

**Sidebar Holding Shape**
PMS 7682 C - 100%.
Use of the NYS Holding shape
reinforces NYS brand identity.

**Sidebar Heading**
Garamond Bold 45 pt White

**Sidebar Text**
Garamond Regular 24 pt Black



**Background**
Full spread image.
Full spread imagery is particularly engaging
and should be utilized when possible. Custom
artwork can highlight the history or context of
the site that may not be visible.

**Sidebar Column**
A change in background color can draw attention
to a sub-theme, make copy easier to read, or set it
apart from the main text of the exhibit.

## Sample Layout - Low Profile with Multiple Supporting Images

This example shows how the composition of the main images determines the panel layout. The grid system is used as an underlaying organizational device, but it does not have to be used as a strict guide.

**Title**
Proxima Nova Bold 140 pt White
Holding Shape PMS 7682 C - 100%
Active words in the title do more than simply introduce the topic of the panel, they encourage visitors to explore and engage the information.

**Main Image**
Image screening on all four sides, bleeds over left edge. Image screening is graphic technique to soften photo edges and reduce the appearance of the underlying grid layout system.

**Photos**
Circular or organically shaped images soften the grid system. Supporting images are used to help explain key aspects of the theme.

**Main Image**
Silhouetted photographic images should be used when possible and should break out of the grid.



**Main Body Text**
Proxima Nova Regular 28pt Black

**Background**
PMS 5575 c - 40%

**Sidebar Text**
Proxima Nova Regular 24 pt Black

**Drop Cap**
Proxima Nova Bold 117 pt PMS 7682 C - 85%. Draws the eye and indicates where to begin reading.

**Accent Colors**
PMS 350 C - 40%

**Sidebar Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold 45 pt PMS 7682 C - 100%

## Sample Layout - Upright with Mapping & Supporting Images

This example shows how maps may be incorporated into wayside exhibits. The grid system is used to help with text line length, inset photo dimensions, and placement of mapping elements.

**Heading**
Proxima Nova Bold 140 pt White.
Holding Shape PMS 7682 C - 100%.

**Maps**
Diagrammatic mapping elements help orient visitors and should always be presented at the appropriate scale. This may result in the map fitting outside of the column grid.

**Main Body Text**
Proxima Nova Regular 28 pt Black Left justified text with ragged right edge allows for more natural reading of paragraphs.

**Background**
PMS 5575 C - 40% Textured with image of leaves.

**Maps**
Provide a "You Are Here" symbol to orient visitors whenever possible

**Main Image**
Silhouetted photographic images should be used when possible and should break out of the grid.

**Caption**
Proxima Nova Regular 19 pt Black. Captions can provide photo credits as needed.

**Pull-Quote**
Proxima Nova Bold 48 pt PMS 625 C - 100%

**URL's**
Proxima Nova Bold 23 pt White

**Photos**
Smaller images and supporting text provide additional information and may introduce subthemes.

# Fonts

Typography is a fundamental element of the graphic design standards for wayside exhibits. Typography can be used to direct the readers' attention, lead them to the most important information first, and maintain a sense of clarity, order, legibility, and structure throughout the wayside exhibit. Text can be used for more than just telling the story, it can also be treated as graphic elements that creates balance in the overall panel layout and complements the graphic imagery.

The NYS OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program follows the fonts dictated by the 2015 New York State Branding Guidelines.

## Proxima Nova

This font has been selected for its versatility and legibility. It offers many weights and styles, which provide a broad degree of design flexibility. Proxima Nova Bold should be used for all header, title, and subtitle text. Proxima nova can also be used for main body copy when a sans serif font is desired.

## Oswald

This font has been selected for its narrow footprint and diverse weights to use as accent text, such as subtitles, lists, captions, or a piece of information that needs to be called out.

## Adobe Garamond Pro

This font has been selected for its classic old-style serif typeface, and legibility in longer passages of text. Adobe Garamond Pro should be primarily used for main body copy.

## Georgia

This font has been selected for its elegant serif typeface and legibility when printed at small sizes. Georgia should be used for main body copy.

## Font Substitutes

When the primary type font (Proxima Nova) is unavailable for use due to the restrictions of media, use Arial in its place. Arial is readily available within word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation programs.

## Choosing the Right Font

Primary Fonts are sans serif and are best used for headlines, subheadings and to highlight or call out special elements. Main Body Copy Fonts contain serifs and are best used for full paragraphs of the body text. The decorative added strokes of serif fonts help guide the flow of letters, word, sentences, and paragraphs because the serifs make it easier for the eye to quickly recognize distinctive letters. Generally it is best to use no more than 2 or 3 fonts on a wayside panel. The choice of type size is related to the reading distance, height and relative importance of the information.

## Primary Fonts

### Proxima Nova Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&***

### Oswald Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&***

### Proxima Nova Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&*

### Oswald Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&*

## Main Body Copy Fonts

### Adobe Garamond Pro

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&*

### Georgia

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&*

## Substitute Fonts

### Arial Bold

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&***

### Arial Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#$%^&*

The fonts are available through the Adobe
Cloud System and limited number of licenses
are available through GOER (Governor's Office
of Employee Relations)

## Colors

Color is a powerful tool in interpretive design and may be the primary element to catch a visitor's attention to a wayside panel from a distance. Color sets the stage for your interpretive message and set the mood for the story. Use of color on a panel can help indicate change of subject, highlight important information, and make the text more readable.

Color can also project an identity and association. For this reason the NYS OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program follows the agency and core color palettes dictated by the 2015 New York State Branding Guidelines. It is important that all wayside exhibits follow the colors presented in this manual. The integrity of these core colors provides a visual cue that the wayside exhibit is part of the NYS Park and Historic Site System.

## Using The OPRHP Color Palettes

The Program recommends that colors be chosen from one of the three provided color palettes. Color palettes have been developed to ensure adequate contrast, legibility, and OPRHP branding consistency. The three recommended color palettes should be sufficient for the majority of signage projects, however, unique interpretive situations may require other colors to be considered.

Colors selected from the palettes may be used for panel backgrounds, text, borders, and as accents to graphic images and photography. Regardless of which color palette is selected, Pantone 305 C shall be used as the background color of the bottom bar on all wayside exhibits. Color formulas for the entire palette can be found to the right. For additional information refer to the 2015 NYS Branding Guidelines.

### Palette A

| PMS 5575C (40%) |
| PMS 7682C |
| PMS 130C |
| PMS 350C |

### Palette B

| PMS 127C (30%) |
| PMS 130C |
| Cool Gray 10C |
| PMS 350C |

### Palette C

| Cool Gray 2C (40%) |
| PMS 625C |
| PMS 109C |
| PMS 350C |
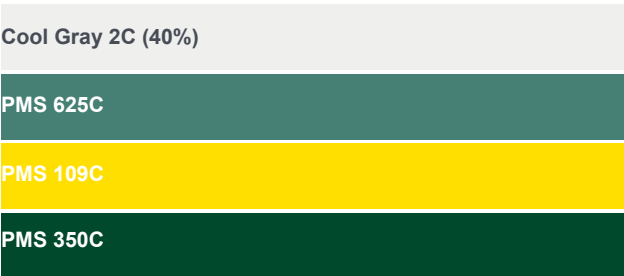
Pantone Matching System (PMS) is a universally recognized color matching system based on lithography printed inks. All color breakdowns are based on the Official Pantone Matching System 2015. Refer to the 2015 NYS Branding Guidelines for additional information.

## Palette A



PMS 5575C (40%)
Background

PMS 7682C
Progress Holding Shape
Graphic Accents
Text Accents

PMS 130C
Graphic Accents

PMS 350C
Bottom Bar

## Palette B

PMS 127C (30%)
Background

PMS 130C
Progress Holding Shape
Graphic Accents
Text Accents

Cool Gray 10C
Graphic Accents

PMS 350C
Bottom Bar

## Palette C

Cool Gray 2C (40%)
Background

PMS 625C
Progress Holding Shape
Graphic Accents
Text Accents

PMS 109C
Graphic Accents

PMS 350C
Bottom Bar

## Color Variations and Backgrounds

In most instances a white background will look stark and out of place on an exterior exhibit and should be avoided. Therefore the use of color and textures for the background of an exhibit is essential. When selecting a background color and texture, good judgment for contrast and legibility should be exercised. In all cases the backgrounds should not distract from the interpretive content being presented.

Below are several illustrations of ways that the color palettes can be applied to photographs and graphics for use as wayside exhibit panel backgrounds. These color variations and textures are examples only. Unique background textures will need to be developed to complement the specific theme and context of the interpretive exhibit.

*Leaf Background*
*PMS 5575 C*
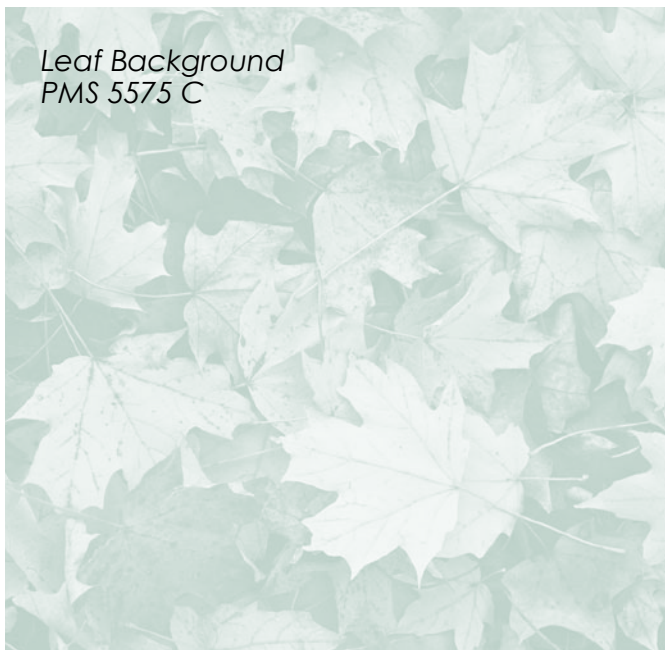
*Water Ripple Background*
*PMS 7682 C*
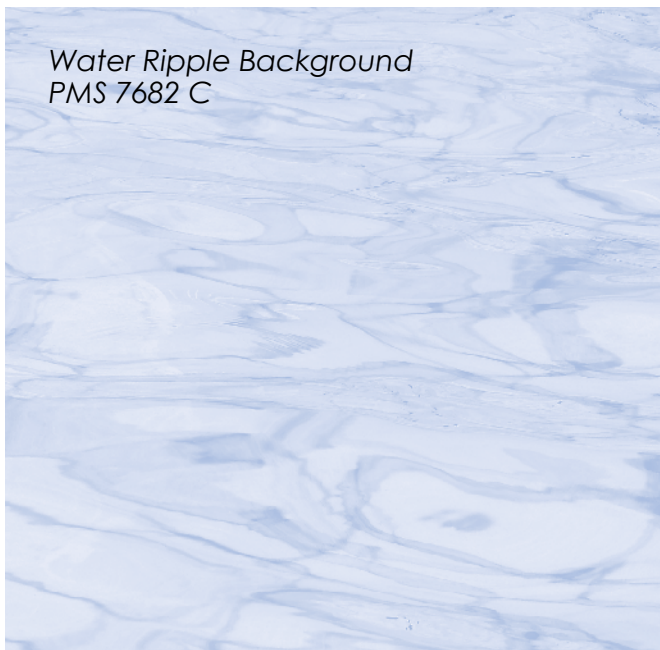
*Parchment Paper Background*
*PMS 127 C*

*Granite Background*
*PMS Cool Gray 2 C*

## The Progress Holding Shape

The Progress Holding Shape is a graphic device that provides visual enhancement in creating layouts, while simultaneously insuring a consistent look and feel across materials developed by different New York state agencies, offices, and programs.

The NYS Progress Holding Shape gets its inspiration from the anchor line device used in NYS logo lock ups.  It can be used to highlight headers and sidebars and can be used to hold images.  The progress holding shape can be positioned anywhere on the layout as long as it anchors to either the left or right edge of the panel layout.  Color selection can be from the recommended color palettes or filled with images.  The NYS Progress Holding Shape shall be applied to all wayside exhibit Headers.

As illustrated to the right, it can be used only in a horizontal format, and scaled larger or smaller to enable flexibility and variety in design.  For additional information on the NYS Logo and lockups, see the 2015 NYS Branding Guidelines.
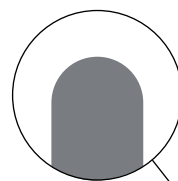
The Progress Holding Shape is based off the anchor line device in NYS agency branding.

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY.

**Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

The NYS Progress Holding Shape shall be applied to all Headers

The NYS Progress Holding Shape may also be used to highlight subthemes and secondary messages.



Discover Dobb's Ferry

Rich in History

Park / Historic Site Name

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# Chapter 5: Installation Standards

## Overview

The OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program consists of a standard group of post-and-panel components that are fabricated from self-supporting panels, mounting plates, and tubular aluminum or wood posts.  This method of construction has been designed so that wayside exhibits can be mechanically assembled by OPRHP regional sign shops.  Refer to the typical construction details for specific materials and fabrication guidelines.

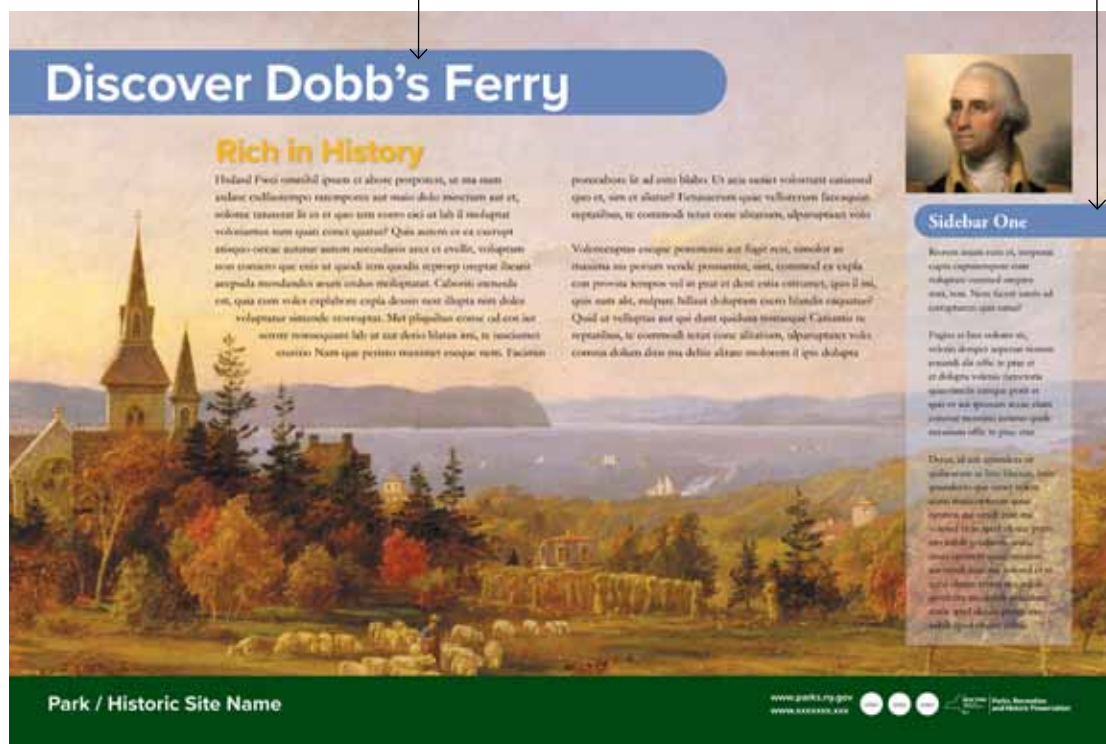As with the wayside exhibit layouts themselves, the recommended construction details are flexible.  Alternative fabrication and installation means and methods may be considered, but must be approved by the OPRHP Commissioner or designee to ensure a level of quality and consistency with the overall OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program and design intent.

## General Installation Criteria

Careful consideration should be given to the following construction guidelines for all wayside exhibits:
- Wayside exhibits shall be constructed from durable materials and shall be maintained in good condition.
- Wayside exhibit placement shall be planned to maximize visibility for the intended user while not obstructing pedestrian pathways.
- All freestanding signs shall be constructed to withstand a wind pressure of not less than 30 pounds per square foot of surface area.
- No sign shall contain any moving parts.
- Temporary or seasonal signage consisting of banners, pennants, ribbons, streamers, or similar moving or fluttering devices are subject to review and approval by the OPRHP Commissioner or designee.

## Footing Considerations

Particular care should be taken to ensure that sign footings and foundations are correctly designed to the type and size of the sign being installed.  Structural engineering may be required to confirm that a particular footing will be adequate for a sign at a particular site or location to ensure that the base will structurally support the signage components taking into account wind loads, the type of soil, and winter frost penetration.

## Materials For Sign Panels

Signs shall be manufactured using materials and fabrication processes as described in the typical construction details provided in this document.  Considering cost, advancements in digital printing technology, longevity of the product, and ease of production, digital printing is the clear choice for most wayside exhibit projects.  Two options that use digital prints are recommended: self-supporting high-pressure laminates and vinyl overlay that is applied to aluminum composite substrates.

### Digital High Pressure Laminate (HPL)

Digital High Pressure Laminates have become the industry standard for interpretive sign manufacturing for long-term exterior applications.  Due to their durability, vibrant graphics, and cost effectiveness, high pressure laminate (HPL) panels are the panel of choice for most wayside exhibit projects.

Digital High Pressure Laminate is a combination of specially developed, digitally printed paper which is impregnated with melamine resins, a special UV resistant over-laminate, and several layers of phenolic resin-impregnated kraft paper, all pressed under intense pressure and heat.  The process fuses the layers together into a very durable, solid core product.  HPL panels are typically warranted to not delaminate, peel, blister, crack or fade for a 10 year period from the time of purchase.

This method uses an outdoor durable inkjet technology and thus the sign graphic is printed directly from a digital file.  The high definition printing process delivers superior clarity, more intense colors, brighter whites, solid blacks and a nearly limitless range of colors.

# Understanding the Options

## Frameless Mount (Preferred)

For use with 1/2" thick self-supporting high pressure laminate sign panel

1/2" thick self-supporting high pressure laminate panel requires no frame or visible fasteners

3/16" min. aluminum mounting plate

1/2" thick HPL panels are blind mounted with fasteners that pass through the underside of the mounting plate into threaded holes on the back of the sign panel.

## OR

30"-32" height from finished grade
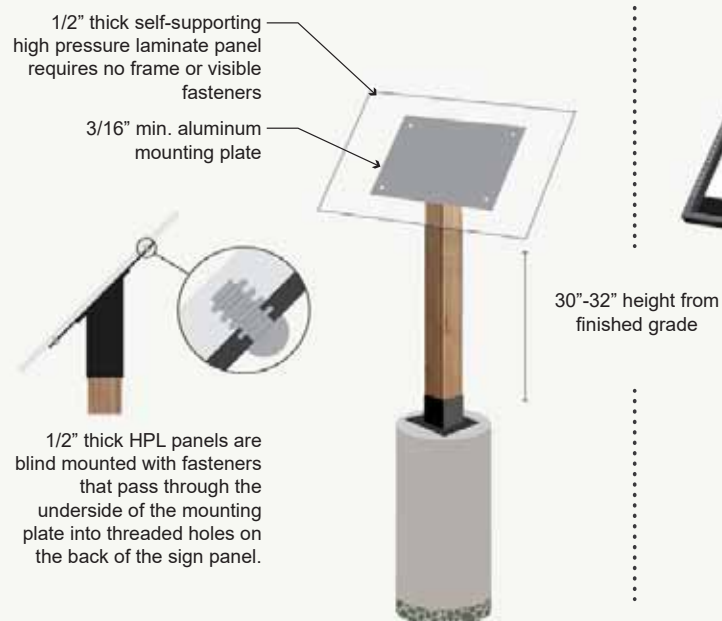
## Frame Mount (Basic)

For use with 1/8" thick non self-supporting aluminum panel with vinyl overlay

Removable top rail

1/8" thick min. aluminum panel with digitally printed vinyl overlay. Panel slides into channel at top of the frame

Powder coated aluminum frame and mounting system provided by manufacturer

Panel design should allow for 3/4" frame coverage around outside perimeter of sign panel.

3/4" frame overlay

Surface Mount Post Sleeve
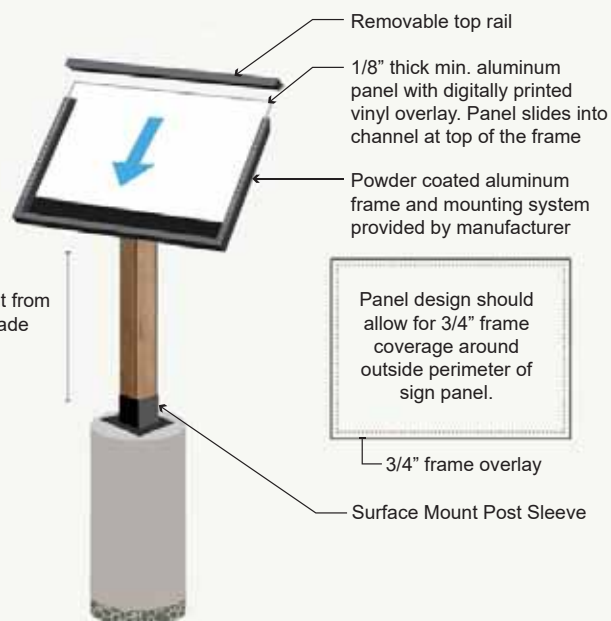
There are several thicknesses to choose from, but 1/2" is the minimum thickness recommended by the OPRHP Statewide Interpretive Signage Program as they are self-supporting and do not require any frames or panel enclosures. The panels are fitted with threaded inserts on the back of the panel for easy attachment to posts, railings, and walls without any visible hardware.

### Vinyl Overlay on Aluminum Substrate

Vinyl overlay is an adhesive vinyl sheet upon which the sign graphic is printed directly from a digital file. The vinyl sheet is then adhered to rigid aluminum composite substrate. The vinyl overlay system is a less expensive alternative to HPL panels. Vinyl overlays may also be the choice for installations where information changes often or when temporary signs are needed.

Because the overlay can easily be removed and replaced, and the aluminum substrate reused, updates or changes to the sign have significantly less cost. However, a vinyl overlay on an aluminum panel requires a frame for stability and mounting. Frames are manufactured from extruded aluminum components that vary from one manufacturer to the next. Panel design should account for at least a 3/4" frame coverage around the entire perimeter of the panel. Consult the chosen manufacturer for their unique frame requirements.

Digitally printed vinyl overlays require the application of a protective overlaminate film. This transparent film protects the printed graphics from UV damage, salt corrosion, and staining from graffiti and chemicals.

# Typical Construction Details

## Low Profile Self-Supporting HPL Panel

45° OR 30° TYP.

1/2" MIN. THICK SELF SUPPORTING SIGN PANEL FITTED WITH MANUFACTURER PROVIDED THREADED INSERTS

FLAT HEAD TAMPER RESISTANT SCREWS; PER PANEL MANUFACTURER'S REQUIREMENTS

12"x12" ALUMINUM MOUNTING PLATE WITH POST SLEEVE; POWDER COATED BLACK; COORDINATE BASE PLATE MOUNTING TEMPLATE WITH PANEL MANUFACTURER

THRU BOLT SLEEVE TO POST

4"x4" CEDAR POST

32" MAX / 30" MIN HEIGHT

SURFACE MOUNT POST SLEEVE; OPTIONAL

FINISHED GRADE

SIDE ELEVATION

REAR ELEVATION

6" MIN

18" FOR 36" WIDE PANELS
24" FOR 42" WIDE PANELS

SIGN POST FOUNDATION, TYP. (SEE FOOTING DETAILS)

NOTE:
1. PANELS GREATER THAN 24" WIDE REQUIRE DOUBLE POST SUPPORTS.
2. SINGLE POST SHALL BE USED FOR PANELS 24" WIDE OR LESS.

# Typical Construction Details

## Low Profile with Aluminum Panel and Vinyl Overlay

REMOVABLE TOP RAIL FOR PANEL
INSTALLATION AND REPLACEMENT

ASSUME 1/2" FRAME
OVERHANG

45° OR 30° TYP.

ALUMINUM FRAME; POWDER COATED
BLACK; COORDINATE BASE PLATE
MOUNTING HARDWARE WITH FRAME
MANUFACTURER

12"x12" ALUMINUM MOUNTING PLATE WITH
POST SLEEVE; POWDER COATED BLACK;
COORDINATE BASE PLATE MOUNTING
TEMPLATE WITH PANEL MANUFACTURER

THRU BOLT SLEEVE TO POST

4"x4" CEDAR POST

32" MAX / 30" MIN HEIGHT

PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF
2 DRAIN HOLES ON
BOTTOM RAIL OF FRAME

18" FOR 36" WIDE PANELS
24" FOR 42" WIDE PANELS

SURFACE MOUNT POST SLEEVE;
OPTIONAL

FINISHED GRADE

SIDE ELEVATION

FRONT ELEVATION

SIGN POST FOUNDATION, TYP.
(SEE FOOTING DETAILS)

NOTE:
1.  PANELS GREATER THAN 24" WIDE REQUIRE DOUBLE POST
    SUPPORTS.
2.  SINGLE POST SHALL BE USED FOR PANELS 24" WIDE OR LESS.
3.  ALL GRAPHICS SHALL BE DIGITALLY PRINTED ON FULL VINYL
    SHEETS.  VINYL SHALL BE EQUAL TO ENGINEERING GRADE 3M
    SCOTCHCAL ELECTROCUT.
4.  CLEAN AND PREPARE ALUMINUM SUBSTRATE PER
    MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS PRIOR TO APPLYING
    VINYL OVERLAY.  AT A MINIMUM THE SURFACE SHOULD BE
    CLEANED AND FREE OF ANY SURFACE CONTAMINATES (I.E. OILS,
    DUST PARTICLES, ETC.)  THE PANELS SHOULD BE CLEANED WITH
    ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL.  AVOID USING THINNERS AND CLEANERS
    USING SILICONE AS THEY MAY LEAVE A FILM RESIDUE THAT CAN
    INTERFERE WITH ADHESION.
5.  PROVIDE GRAFFITI PROOF AND UV PROTECTIVE LAMINATE FILM
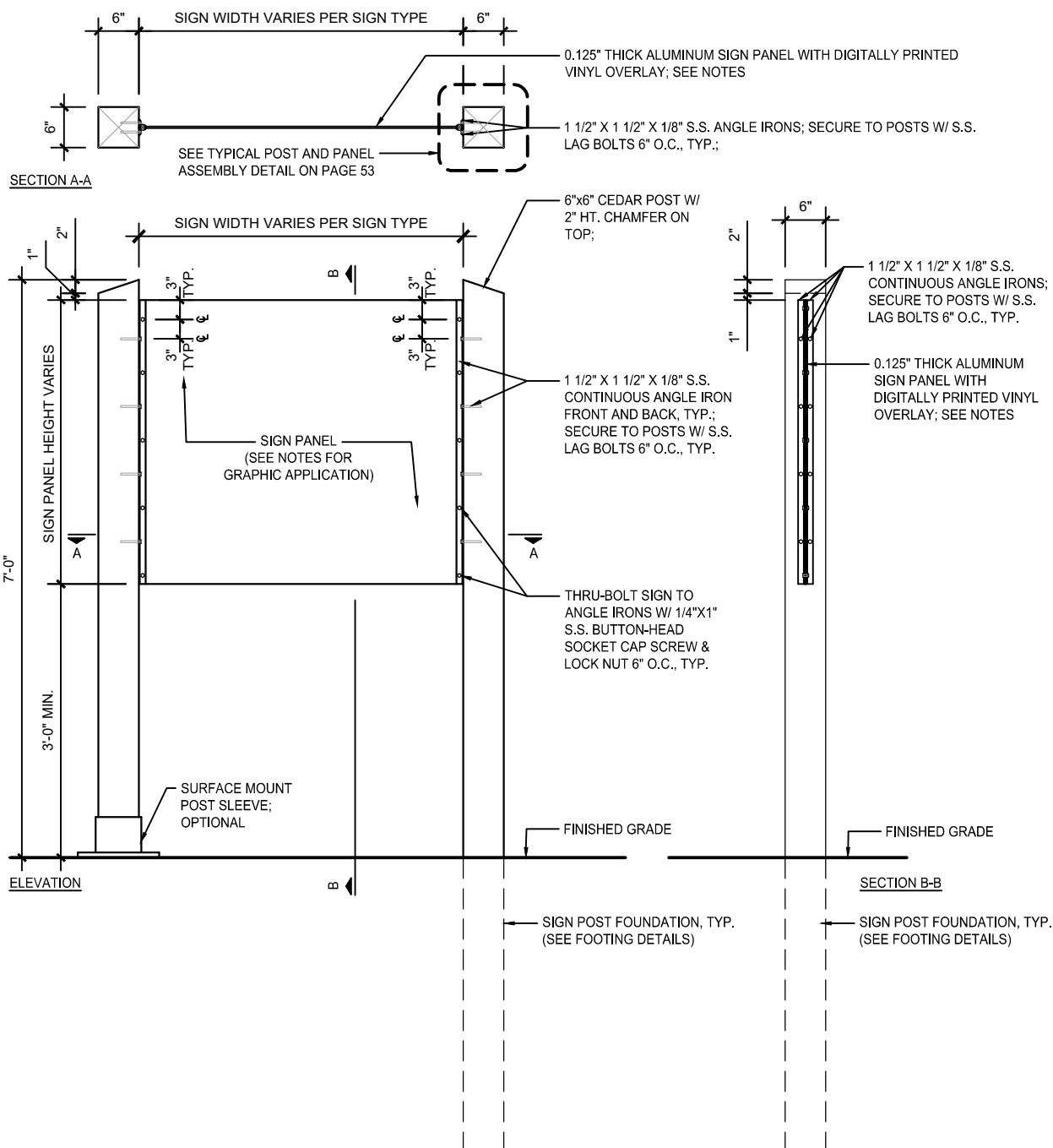    OVERLAY; TRAFFIC WRAPZ TW360 OR APPROVED EQUAL.

# Typical Construction Details

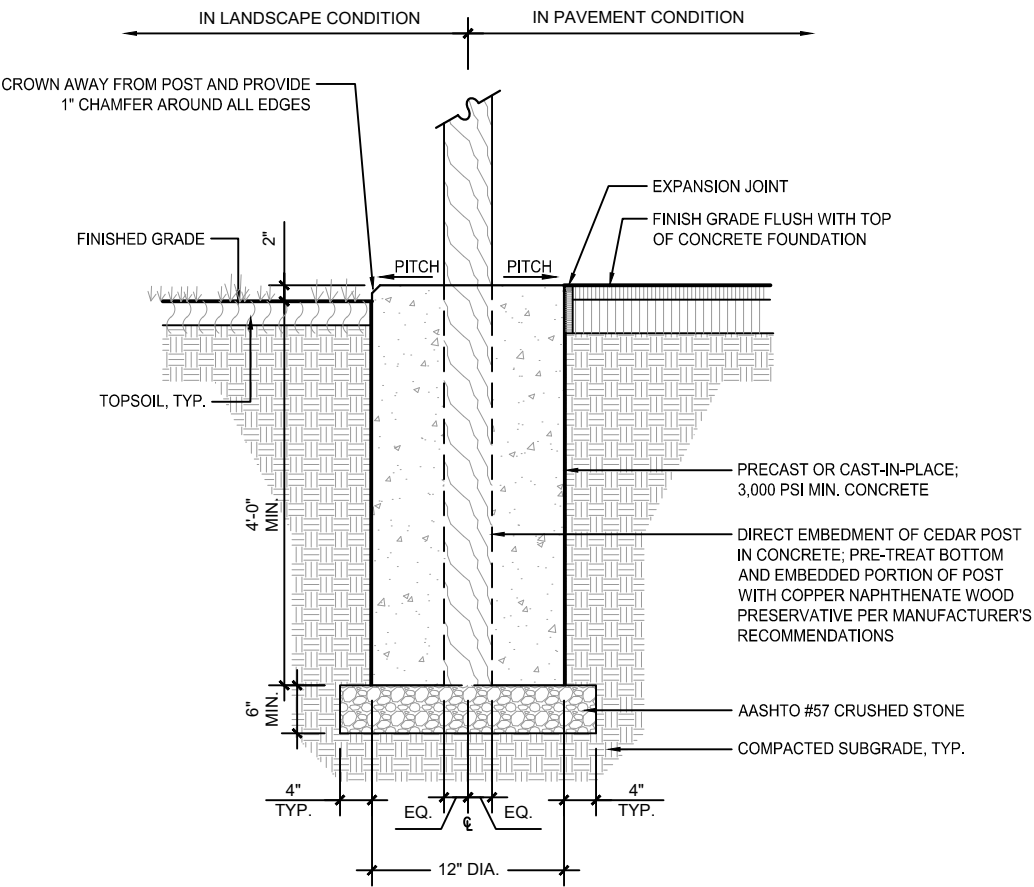## Upright Exhibit with Vinyl Overlay on Aluminum Substrate Panel

NOTE:
1. ALL GRAPHICS SHALL BE DIGITALLY PRINTED ON FULL VINYL SHEETS. VINYL SHALL BE EQUAL TO ENGINEERING GRADE 3M SCOTCHCAL ELECTROCUT.
2. BACK OF PANELS SHALL BE PAINTED PMS 350C.
3. CLEAN AND PREPARE ALUMINUM SUBSTRATE PER MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS PRIOR TO APPLYING VINYL OVERLAY. AT A MINIMUM THE SURFACE SHOULD BE CLEANED AND FREE OF ANY SURFACE CONTAMINATES (I.E. OILS, DUST PARTICLES, ETC.) THE PANELS SHOULD BE CLEANED WITH ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL. AVOID USING THINNERS AND CLEANERS USING SILICONE AS THEY MAY LEAVE A FILM RESIDUE THAT CAN INTERFERE WITH ADHESION.
4. PROVIDE GRAFFITI PROOF AND UV PROTECTIVE LAMINATE FILM OVERLAY; TRAFFIC WRAPZ TW360 OR APPROVED EQUAL.
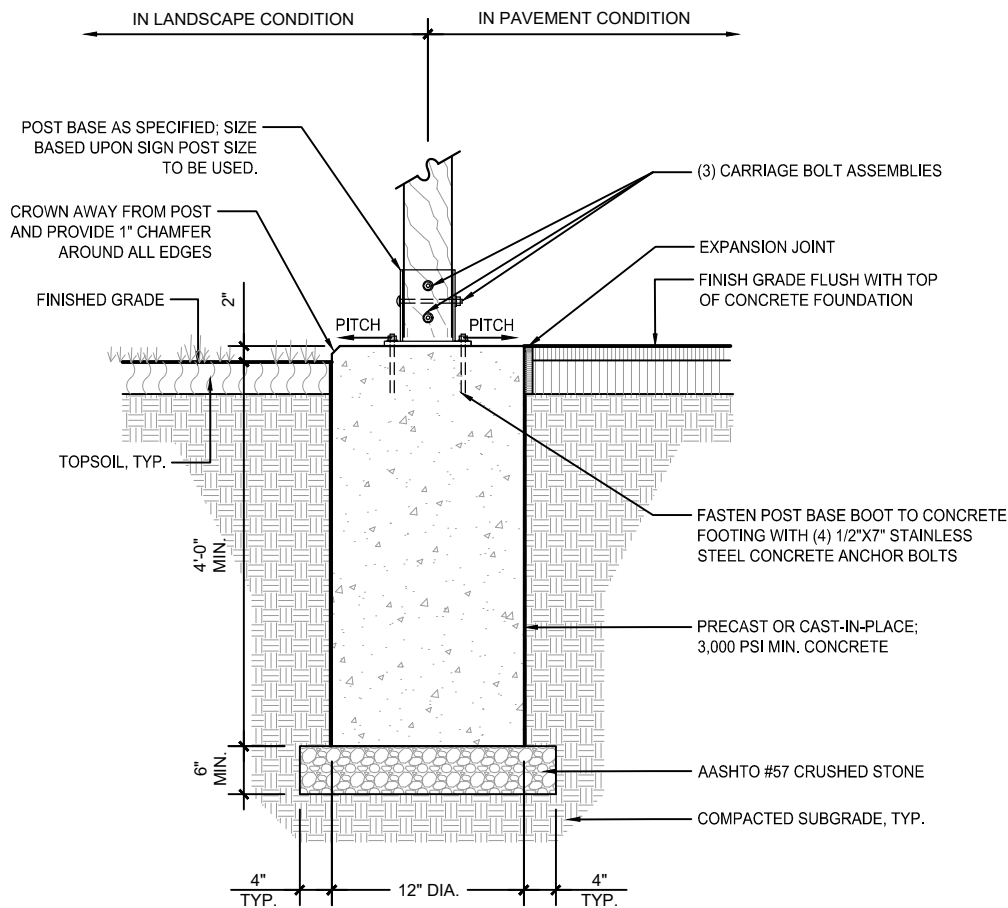
# Typical Construction Details

## Cedar Post Direct Embedment in Concrete



IN LANDSCAPE CONDITION | IN PAVEMENT CONDITION

CROWN AWAY FROM POST AND PROVIDE 1" CHAMFER AROUND ALL EDGES

FINISHED GRADE

2"

PITCH | PITCH

EXPANSION JOINT

FINISH GRADE FLUSH WITH TOP OF CONCRETE FOUNDATION

TOPSOIL, TYP.

4'-0" MIN.

PRECAST OR CAST-IN-PLACE; 3,000 PSI MIN. CONCRETE

DIRECT EMBEDMENT OF CEDAR POST IN CONCRETE; PRE-TREAT BOTTOM AND EMBEDDED PORTION OF POST WITH COPPER NAPHTHENATE WOOD PRESERVATIVE PER MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

6" MIN.

AASHTO #57 CRUSHED STONE
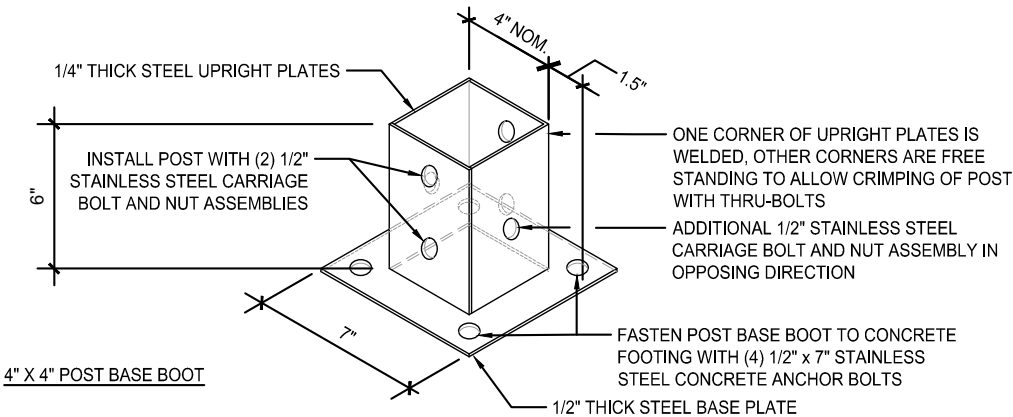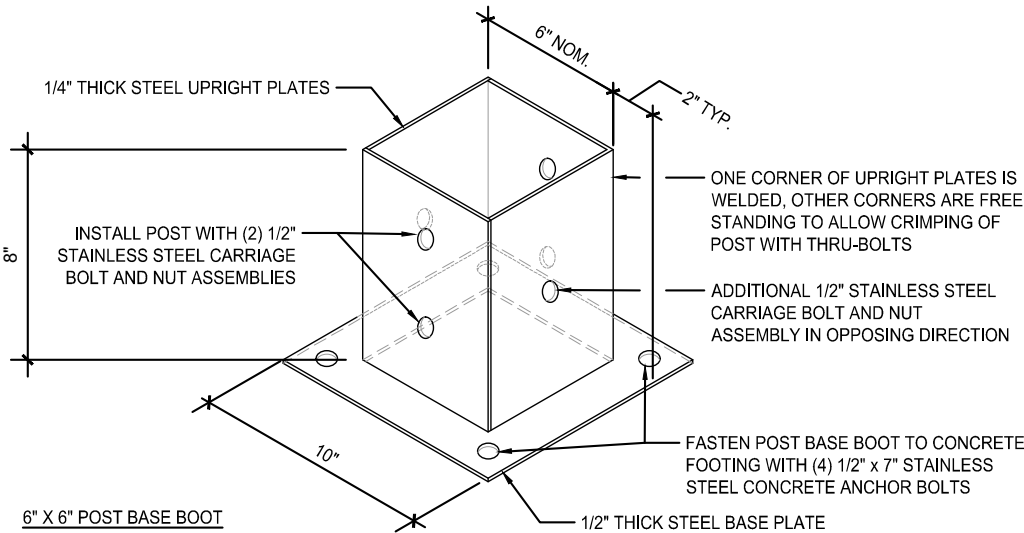
COMPACTED SUBGRADE, TYP.

4" TYP. | EQ. | EQ. | 4" TYP.

12" DIA.

44

# Typical Construction Details

## Surface Mounted Cedar Post with Post Boot Base

# Typical Construction Details

## Post Base Boot

1/4" THICK STEEL UPRIGHT PLATES

6" NOM.

2" TYP.

ONE CORNER OF UPRIGHT PLATES IS WELDED, OTHER CORNERS ARE FREE STANDING TO ALLOW CRIMPING OF POST WITH THRU-BOLTS

INSTALL POST WITH (2) 1/2" STAINLESS STEEL CARRIAGE BOLT AND NUT ASSEMBLIES

8"

ADDITIONAL 1/2" STAINLESS STEEL CARRIAGE BOLT AND NUT ASSEMBLY IN OPPOSING DIRECTION

FASTEN POST BASE BOOT TO CONCRETE FOOTING WITH (4) 1/2" x 7" STAINLESS STEEL CONCRETE ANCHOR BOLTS

10"

6" X 6" POST BASE BOOT

1/2" THICK STEEL BASE PLATE

1/4" THICK STEEL UPRIGHT PLATES

4" NOM.

1.5"

ONE CORNER OF UPRIGHT PLATES IS WELDED, OTHER CORNERS ARE FREE STANDING TO ALLOW CRIMPING OF POST WITH THRU-BOLTS

INSTALL POST WITH (2) 1/2" STAINLESS STEEL CARRIAGE BOLT AND NUT ASSEMBLIES

6"

ADDITIONAL 1/2" STAINLESS STEEL CARRIAGE BOLT AND NUT ASSEMBLY IN OPPOSING DIRECTION

FASTEN POST BASE BOOT TO CONCRETE FOOTING WITH (4) 1/2" x 7" STAINLESS STEEL CONCRETE ANCHOR BOLTS

7"

4" X 4" POST BASE BOOT

1/2" THICK STEEL BASE PLATE

NOTE:
1. POST BASE BOOTS SHALL BE GALV. STEEL, POWDER COATED BLACK FINISH.
2. POST BASE BOOTS SHALL BE SIZED TO ACCEPT ACTUAL SIZE OF TIMBER POST, WITH TIGHT SEAM FIT; USE OF SHIMS IS NOT PERMITTED.
3. SUBMIT SHOP DRAWINGS FOR APPROVAL.

# Chapter 6: Artwork Setup Guidelines

## Graphic File Formats

For best results, the preferred file format for the panel layout is Adobe Illustrator or Adobe InDesign. The standard wayside exhibit grids presented in this document are provided as full scale Adobe InDesign files with built-in type styles and appropriate NYS OPRHP identity elements. If a project is developed outside of the Adobe Suite, high resolution .eps or press ready .pdf files are acceptable for most manufacturers.

## File Set Up

Artwork files should be set up at 100% of final panel size with at least 1/4" of bleed on all sides. A 'bleed' is printing that goes beyond the edge of where the sheet will be trimmed. The bleed is the part on the side of a document that gives the printer a small amount of space to account for movement of the paper, and design inconsistencies. If your sign panel will be installed in a frame make sure that you account for the frame coverage. The ideal color space is CMYK, however many manufactures may need to color correct all files regardless so that they print correctly in their work flow.

## Collection

The final Adobe Illustrator or Adobe InDesign file is the preferred format for manufactures. Do not embed links into the layout file. It is often easier for manufacturers to color correct and assess the quality of linked files if they are sent as independent files with the overall job file. For this reason, the independent graphics included in the final panel designs should be provided to the manufacturer along with the panel layout file. Collect all layout files, links and fonts and organize them in a logical manner. If you are working in InDesign, the "Package" function will collect everything for you. Create a low-resolution PDF of each layout and name them "for reference" or something similar. Manufactures will reference these files for line breaks, drop shadows, transparency etc. to be sure that the final output files match what you see on your screen.

## What Graphic Format To Use?

For best results the preferred file format for all graphics is native Adobe Photoshop (PSD), Photoshop PDF (PDF) or Tagged Image File (TIFF). You will be placing graphic images into the InDesign or Illustrator design grid file, so you're limited to the formats supported by those applications. The application may be willing to let you place a wide variety of file formats, but that doesn't necessarily mean that all formats are of the same quality.

### Photoshop PDF

Stands for Portable Document Format. PDF is a file format developed by Adobe as a means of distributing compact, platform-independent documents. PDF captures formatting information from a variety of desktop publishing applications, making it possible to send formatted documents and have them appear on the recipient's monitor or printer as they were intended. A Photoshop PDF comes in handy because it can contain vector and type elements without rasterizing the vector content. This allows for nondestructive round trip editing in Photoshop.

### PSD

Stands for Photoshop Document. PSD can be produced from Adobe Photoshop to save images. You can edit the individual layers in this format, and the saved file can be further edited for details. It is one of the best image formats to maintain the quality of the images. Images with layers can further be edited to add effects or retouching. You need to make sure that the layers are not merged before saving the PSD file, so you can edit the file any time. Once merged, you can't get the layers back. The file size of PSD can be quite large, but it is the highest quality image format for printing.

### TIFF

Stands for Tagged Image File Format. TIFF is one of the most widely supported image file formats and is often used by photographers

and designers.  TIFF format is an industry standard designed for handling raster or bitmapped images.   TIFF files can be saved in a variety of color formats and in various forms of compression.  TIFF's use lossless compression to maintain image integrity and clarity.  You can use it with any photo editing software to edit images as long as you need.

## ABC ABC

*Lossless TIFF File*               *Lossy JPEG File*

### Avoid Using JPEG's (Joint Photographic Experts Group)

The JPEG is a "lossy" file format that is designed to compress photographic images into a small file size that is good for web pages and viewing on a computer.  However, more often than not, a JPEG is not going to look very good when printed at large sizes.  The loss of file quality causes noticeably blurry and pixilated results when printed, this is especially true for text and graphics that have hard lines and edges.

Lossy compression formats make it impossible for you to recover the original data, so not only is the image altered, but the effect is irreversible.  Worst of all, every time you save a JPEG, it gets compressed further and further, which can eventually lead to a downward spiral of blotchy, distorted images.

One common misstep with artwork graphics is trying to add resolution to low resolution JPEG files.  Opening a low-resolution JPEG file in a software such as Adobe Photoshop and increasing the file resolution is not acceptable.  JPEG's do not resize well.  They have a very specific set of defined pixels that will only stretch and appear jagged when resized.  Unfortunately, there is no way to add resolution to a file.  Simply saving the JPEG as a TIFF or PSD cannot create detail where there was none in the first place.  But a JPEG can remove detail where once there was some.

### What if JPEG is all I have?

If JPEG is the only file format you have for your graphics, it doesn't mean it won't print well, it just means you need to be extra careful with how you handle, store and share the JPEG.  All this means that if working with JPEGs is a must, you have to start with the biggest possible size.  Ideally you will have an original JPEG file that is at least 300 DPI at the size it will be printed.  Do not try to alter or save the JPEG several times before you print.  Based on the way JPEG's save and compress, each time you alter or save a JPEG it becomes a less useful for printing.  When you acquire a JPEG image, it is advisable to immediately resave the image as a TIFF or PSD file to prevent further compression.  Do all editing and resizing in Adobe Photoshop.

### File Resolution

Raster images (photographs) should be at or near 300 DPI at full size.  Keep in mind that if you intend to enlarge a photo or graphic, the resolution must be of sufficient size so that the image will not appear blurry once enlarged.  Very small graphics files as low as 150 DPI can still produce good results.  The person laying out the sign panel will need to make a judgement call as to the quality of the image.  If you have an image at a questionably low-resolution, work with the selected manufacturer to determine if it will produce acceptable results.  Files downloaded or copied from websites are generally not acceptable because of their limited resolution.

# Conclusion

From the shores of Long Island to the mighty Niagara Falls, New York's 180 State Parks and Historic Sites offer countless opportunities to escape from the grind of the everyday and create cherished and memorable experiences. Valuable experiences rely on the visitor's ability to make a personal connection to the site and an understanding of the rich historic, cultural, and natural heritage.  Wayside exhibits are often the best way to deliver that understanding and to reveal the unique stories found at each NYS Park or Historic Site.  The Statewide Interpretive Signage Program is a resource to help OPRHP navigate through the process of creating engaging interpretive wayside exhibits.

Successful interpretive signage involves an abundance of planning and research, and the Program provides a road map to help OPRHP navigate each step, from a new signage project's early visioning to final material selection and fabrication.  Adherence to the Program will insure that a clear and consistent graphic identity is presented across the NYS Parks and Historic Sites system.  However, the Program's guidelines have been formulated to include enough flexibility to permit a diversity of expression. This will allow each story to be brought to life, elevating the visitor's experience and immersion.
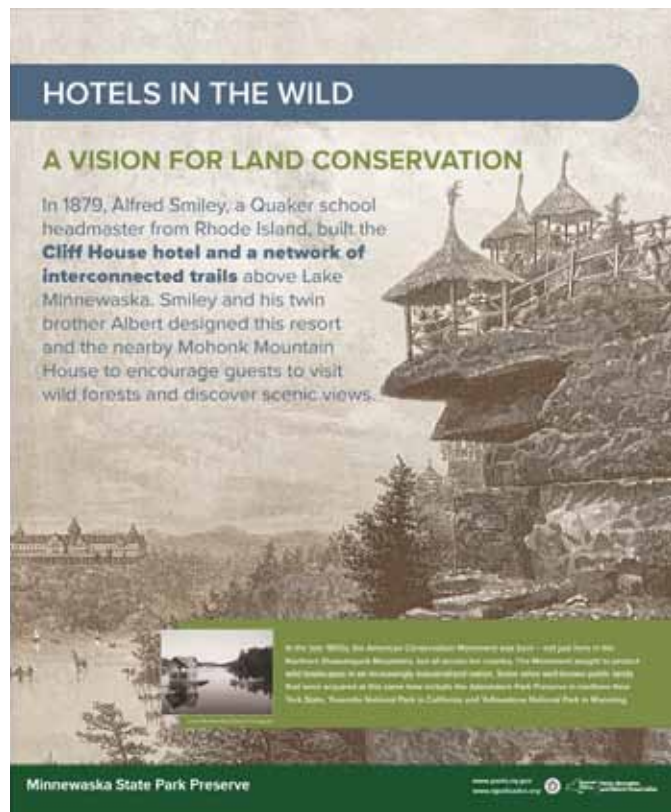


*Recent examples showing the application of the Statewide Interpretive Signage Program standards and guidelines for wayside exhibits at Minnewaska State Park Preserve.*
*Created by OPRHP.*