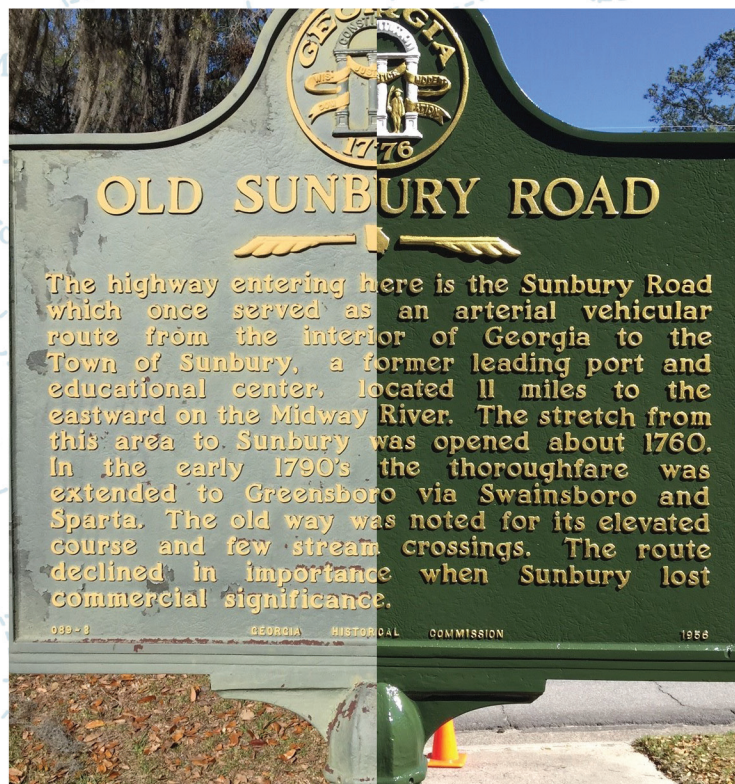




THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL MARKER PROGRAM





The Georgia Historical Marker Program

Whether erecting new markers or maintaining old ones, the Georgia Historical Marker Program ensures a future for Georgia's past. Started in the 1950s and administered by various state agencies for decades afterward, the Georgia Historical Marker Program has produced over 2,100 roadside markers across the state. Following the state's decision to stop erecting new markers in 1997, the independent Georgia Historical Society (GHS) took over administration of the program, erecting over 250 new markers since that time. While the existing older markers were maintained for a time by Georgia's Department of Natural Resources, funding cuts eventually left these aging historical resources without ongoing support. Then, in 2015, GHS assumed responsibility for coordinating the maintenance of markers erected prior to 1998 and owned by the State of Georgia.

Today, Georgia has a thriving, nationally recognized historical marker program that balances the care and maintenance of thousands of older markers with a vibrant and popular program for erecting new markers about previously unrecognized subjects. The marker program encourages the public—whether visiting a marker at its site, online, or via the mobile app—to explore, understand, and share the richly diverse stories of Georgia's past, thus shaping how we understand the present and who we will be in the future.



Maintaining Older Markers

In 2015, GHS became custodian of the state's existing historical markers. By coordinating the repair and replacement of missing and damaged markers erected by the State of Georgia, GHS helps to ensure that these historical resources will be available to the public for years to come. Maintenance work involves coordinating the repair and replacement of missing and damaged historical markers erected and owned by the State of Georgia.

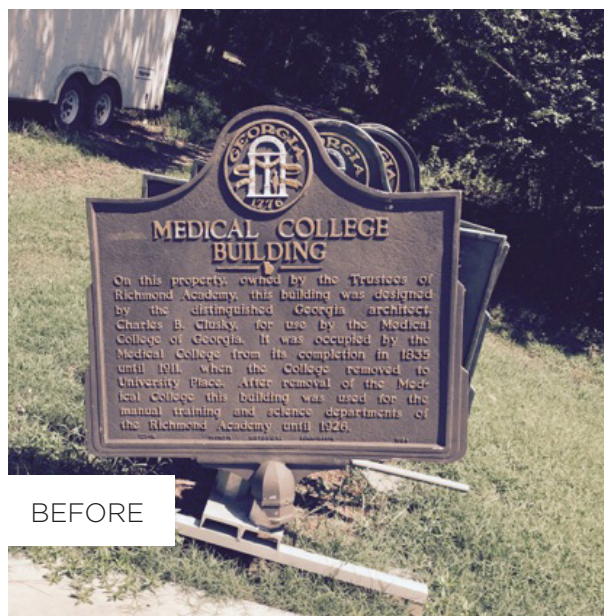
While GHS has taken the lead on addressing repair and maintenance issues associated with the safety and accessibility of these historical resources, the markers themselves remain the property of the State of Georgia. GHS does not remove historical markers because of concerns over existing textual interpretation.



BEFORE



AFTER

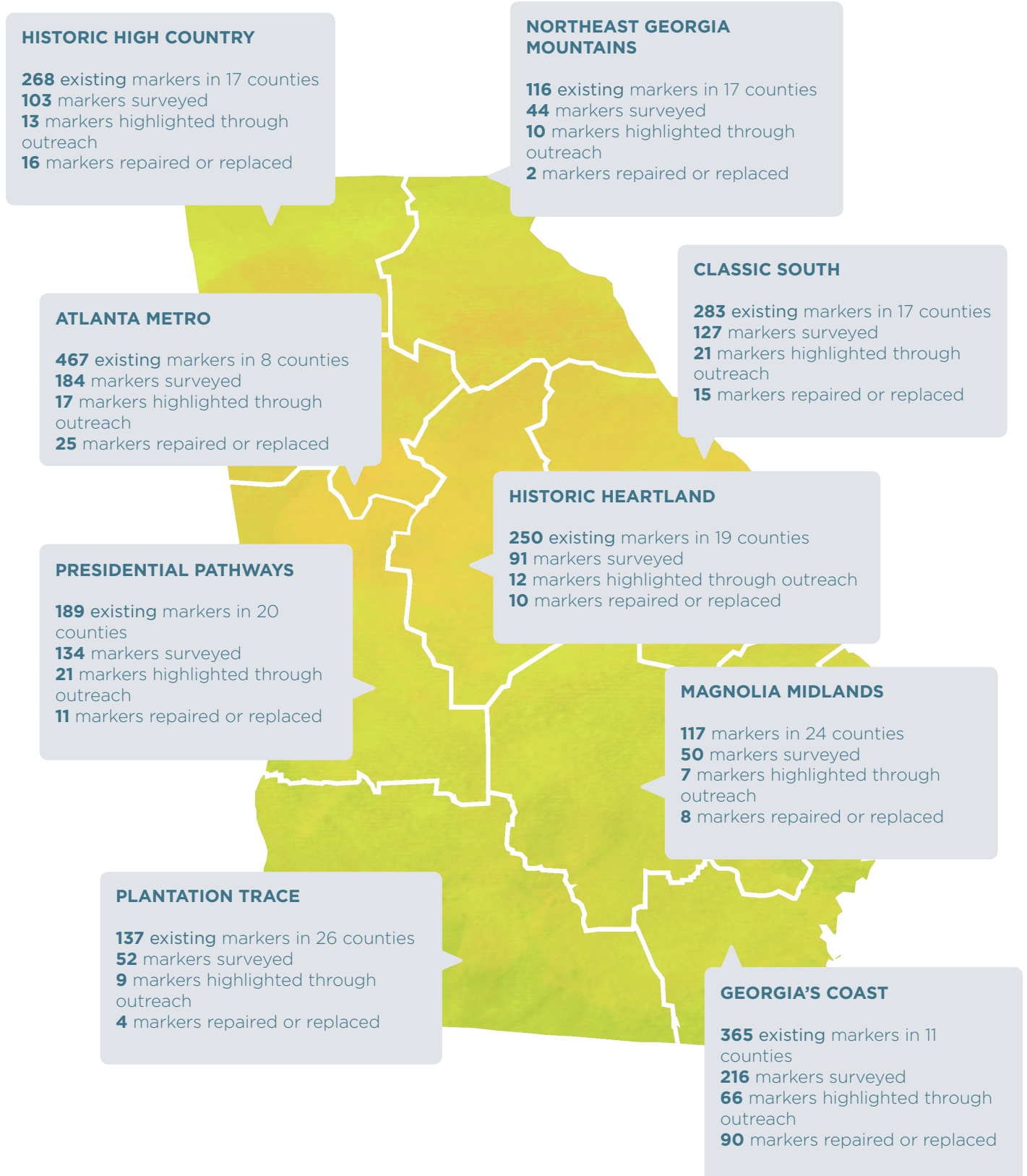


BEFORE



AFTER

Marker Maintenance Program: Statewide Impact, July 2015–July 2019



Erecting New Markers

The popularity of the Georgia Historical Marker Program continues to grow. GHS regularly receives three times more applications than can be approved in a given year. Communities across the state recognize markers as valuable tools for sharing their local stories, whether as resources for economic development focused on tourists and travelers, or as educational tools for residents and local students.

While marker applications are accepted January through July, the independent committee that reviews all applications meets only once per year to decide which markers to approve. The number of new markers approved is tied directly to funding from the General Assembly. The timeline for receiving and dedicating a new marker is approximately six months to one year from the time a marker application is approved.



Community Partners

A hallmark of the Georgia Historical Society's involvement in the marker program has been a commitment to working in partnership with communities across the state to protect and repair older markers and to encourage applications exploring new stories. To date, the following organizations, institutions, and governmental groups have worked with us in our maintenance efforts:

AT&T Pioneers	Colquitt County
Atlanta Beltline	Critz Auto Group
Athens-Clarke County Unified Government	Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site
Atlanta History Center	Evans County Historical Society
BATL	Evans County Road Department
Barrow County	Fayette County
Berrien County Historical Foundation	Forsyth County
The Brass Ring, Augusta	Fort Pulaski National Monument
Burke County	Fox Bow Farms Home Owners Association
Chatham Hill Association, Inc.	Fulton County
Cherokee County	Georgia Battlefields
Cherokee County Historical Society	Georgia College and State University
Christ Church Frederica	Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Parks and Historic Sites Division
City of Brunswick Public Works	Georgia Department of Transportation
City of Dallas	Georgia Military College
City of East Dublin	Georgia Southwestern State University
City of Greensboro	Gilmer County
City of Milledgeville	Glascock County
City of Savannah	Glynn County DOT
City of Tallapoosa	Gordon County
Cobb County	Gregory Bridge Company

Community Partners (continued)

Griffin Spalding Archives	Oak Hill and the Martha Berry Museum
Columbia County	Oglethorpe County
Harris County	Habersham County
Hebron Presbyterian Church	Pioneer Historical Society
Henry County Department of Transportation	Randolph County Historical Society, Inc.
Historic Augusta	St. Luke United Methodist Church
Historical Marker Restorations, Inc.	Savannah Technical College
Jackson County	SEDA
Johnson County Board of Commissioners	Sumter County
Kolomoki Mounds State Park	Talbot County
Lamar County	Taylor County
Lanier County Board of Commissioners	Thronateeska Heritage Center, Inc.
Liberty County Cultural and Historic Resources Committee	Thomas County Historical Society
Lower Altamaha Historical Society	Thomasville Landmarks, Inc.
Macon County	Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County
Macon-Bibb County	University of Georgia
Majestic Oaks Home Owners Association	Walton County
McIntosh County Roads	Warren County
Murray County	Washington County
Nacoochee School Maintenance and Grounds Department	Washington Presbyterian Church
New South Construction	Wilkinson County

Looking Ahead

As we continue to enhance program outreach, GHS has developed the following initiatives, scheduled for completion during the next twelve months:

- **GDOT Outreach Project** - GHS continues to develop the relationship with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in order to create a streamlined process for re-erecting and conducting maintenance work on the historical markers within the GDOT right-of-way.
- **Updated and enhanced online mapping and search functions** - available through the GHS website and mobile app, this will be the most comprehensive and up-to-date electronic database featuring official Georgia historical markers.
- **Online community resources** - including an updated *Using Historical Markers in the Classroom* guide for teaching local, state, and national history using existing historical markers; and a freely available online marker cleaning guide to support local efforts in promoting Georgia history.
- **Promoting markers as teaching tools** - providing online resources, including virtual field trips to Georgia schools and universities, such as SCAD and Kennesaw State University, that support the use of historical markers to explore local history and its connection within a larger national narrative and address topics and skills highlighted in both state and national education standards.



Historical Markers as Tools for Economic Development

Beyond their value as education resources, historical markers help drive economic development to rural areas. A 2010 study conducted by the Georgia Department of Economic Development states nearly 80% of all leisure travelers in the United States participate in cultural or heritage tourism. As most markers lay off the beaten path, history enthusiasts are required to venture off the interstate, which encourages the patronage of nearby businesses, restaurants, and related historic sites.

Further, GHS continues to enhance our award-winning online and mobile tools allowing users to create customized marker-focused driving routes throughout the state based on individual interest and travel itineraries. Since the creation of the Georgia Historical Markers app, the app has been downloaded approximately 5,000 times worldwide; and the historical marker pages of the GHS website have been viewed nearly 499,000 times since 2015. By promoting local history, the marker program helps support local economies as well as job creation and retention in communities across Georgia.



