

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

JUN 6 1994
INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lamar Boulevard Bridge

other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number at Town Lake (Colorado River) n/a not for publication

city or town Austin n/a vicinity

state Texas code TX county Travis code 453 zip code n/a

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Courtney J. Purnell
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/11/1994
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Edson R. Beall

Entered in the
National Register

Date of Action

7.7.94

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Name of Property

Travis County, Texas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☒ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: road related (vehicular)
bridge

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: road related (vehicular)
bridge

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls n/a

roof n/a

other super structure: concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets 7-1 through 7-8.

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas**Description:**

This poured-in-place reinforced concrete, open spandrel bridge was completed in 1942 to carry the new Lamar Boulevard (also designated State Highway 20) across the Colorado River near downtown Austin, about one mile southwest of the State Capitol. The north approach roadway is built of fill to span a broad flood plain, while the opposite end of the bridge springs from a rapid rise in the south river bank. Concrete abutments at each end and five massive piers in the river bed brace six pair of segmental-arch concrete ribs. These ribs in turn support slender columns, or struts, that shoulder smaller segmental arches under the bridge deck. Four traffic lanes and a pedestrian walk on each side facilitate crossing of the river. Modest Art Deco detailing on the piers--spreading the lower mass of each through vertical flutes--and on the pedestrian balustrade--skillfully blending horizontal and vertical elements--firmly place the bridge in this stylistic period. The bridge is in excellent condition, and maintains a high degree of integrity from its original design and landscape enhancements.

The Colorado River flows southeast from the Hill Country of central Texas into a vast blackland prairie on its meandering way to the Gulf of Mexico. In the Austin area this transition creates a scenic blend of hardwoods and evergreens, limestone outcrops, springfed creeks, and tillable clearings, a combination that supported habitation in prehistoric times. The proximity to water, good building materials, grazing and arable land attracted Anglo settlement as early as 1835. In 1839 an approximately one-square-mile townsite for the capital city of Austin was laid out on the north bank of the river between Shoal and Waller creeks. Congress Avenue ran roughly north-south in the center of the new plan, terminating near convenient river crossings that connected the city with the south 'bank (see map, page 7-4).

By the late 1930s, Austin had grown in all directions beyond the original townsite grid. In 1939 the city began construction of a new north-south artery about nine blocks west of Congress Avenue, closely following Shoal Creek and linking subdivisions along the creek and in the wooded hills west of downtown. North of the city this new artery branched off State Highway 2 from Waco, wound south along Shoal Creek and crossed the Missouri (now Union) Pacific Railroad tracks just above the river plain. On the south bank the new boulevard connected with the Fredericksburg Highway (S.H. 20), S.H. 2 to San Antonio, and other city streets to new subdivisions. The bridge linking opposite river sides was

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Austin, Travis County, Texas

planned concurrently with the city's street development, but funding and construction for the bridge were the responsibility of the Texas Highway Department (now Texas Department of Transportation).

Construction of the bridge began on 27 March 1941, and by August a temporary construction bridge was complete (photo 1). All bridge components, except parts of the balustrades, are of cast-in-place, steel reinforced concrete. The five main piers, 105 feet apart, rise from spread footings upon stable limestone under the river bed (page 7-6). Paired segmental-arch ribs, each 8'6" wide and 2'3" thick rise just over 19 feet from the springline of each abutment and pier. A series of columns--which define the "open spandrel" design of the bridge--rides atop the extrados of each rib arch, terminating at a horizontal plane just above the apex of the ribs (page 7-7). The columns are then linked, for the length of the bridge, by small segmental arches. Columns and piers are topped by reinforced concrete floorbeams which are perpendicular to the roadway they support. The ends of the floorbeams are cantilevered about seven feet from each column and form compound-arch brackets under the pedestrian balustrades (photo 2).

The balustrades begin at each approach to the bridge as solid-panel concrete designs flanking the abutments (page 7-8; photo 3). Then for the length of the bridge the balustrades alternate between concrete columns and fabricated steel railings. The balustrade columns above each bridge pier and both abutments are massive and fitted to support streetlamps. The eight smaller columns between each pier column are 12" by 15" in plan, topped by neat pyramidal caps. The scale of the steel railings is appropriately massive in the top horizontal pipes, reduced gradually in the lower and middle horizontal members down to the small vertical balusters.

Statistics for the Lamar Boulevard Bridge were well publicized at the time of completion:

- + 11,330 cubic yards (CY) of structural excavation
- + 409.2 tons of reinforcing steel
- + 4,838.8 CY of concrete in the substructure (piers and abutments)
- + 3,061.4 CY of concrete in the superstructure
- + 659 feet in length
- + deck is 42-foot roadway (four lanes) and two 3.5-foot sidewalks
- + grade elevation (deck) 455 feet above sea level
- + Total Cost: \$303,900.

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Austin, Travis County, Texas

The original limestone-block riprap, installed at each abutment to protect approach roadways from erosion and floodwaters, remains intact. Streetlamps were omitted at the time of opening on 15 July 1942, perhaps due to wartime material shortages and blackout precautions. (Another apparent victim of wartime material limitation was a dedication plaque, usually of bronze and typical of city, THD and New Deal public works projects before World War II; the bridge bears no evidence of plaque installation.) The present streetlamps, from 1955, rise from only 9 of the 14 balustrade columns built to accommodate them. The grass covered median at the south approach has been paved as a left-turn lane onto Riverside Boulevard. Post-war completion, under the northernmost arch span, of First Street and its associated half-cloverleaf connectors to Lamar are the only other major changes since 1942 within the nomination boundaries of the bridge.

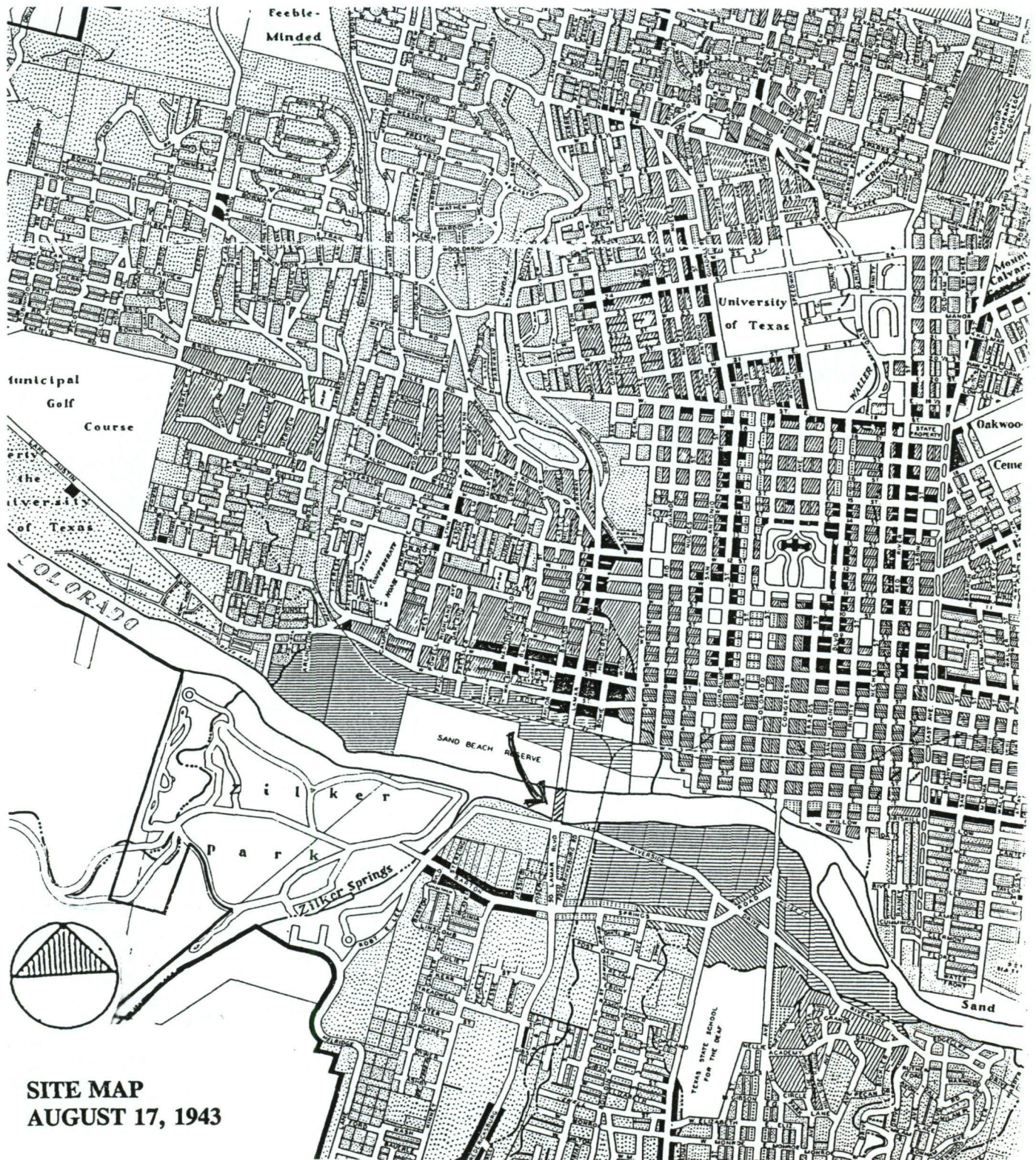
A long-planned grade separation at Lamar and the railroad, just north of the bridge, was completed on 30 November 1959 (photo 4). The building of Longhorn Dam in 1960 on the Colorado three miles east of Lamar Boulevard created Town Lake and established a relatively constant water level just below the springlines of the bridge ribs. Hike-and-bike trails carry recreational traffic under both the north and south spans as part of extensive park development along Town Lake in the 1970s. The Lamar Boulevard Bridge survives remarkably intact amidst these developments in a city that grew from a population of about 88,000 in 1942 to 465,000 in 1993.

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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

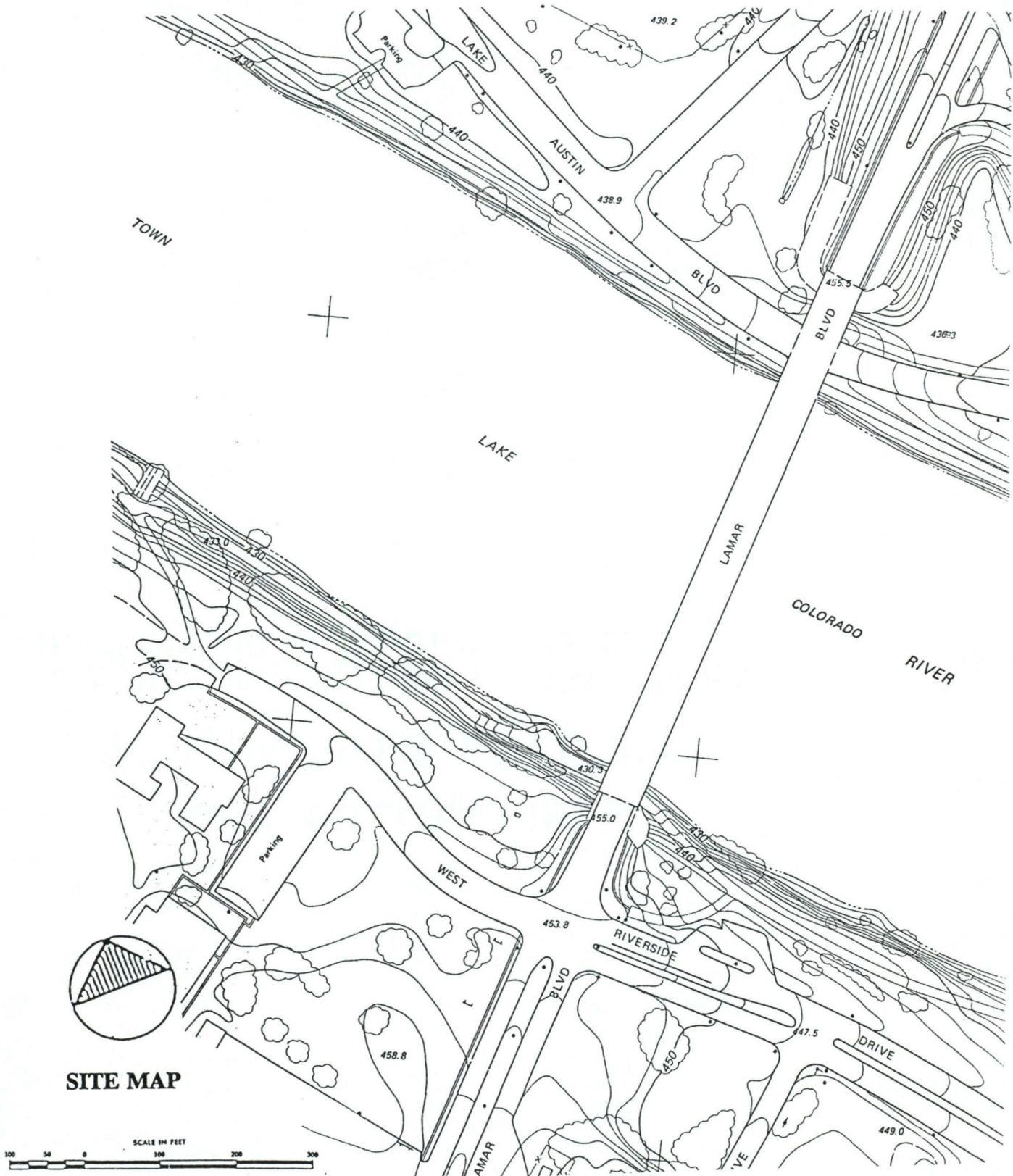


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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas



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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

SEE REVERSE

OLD COUNCIL TREE
BOND
100% COTTON FIBER

OLD COUNCIL TREE
BOND
100% COTTON FIBER

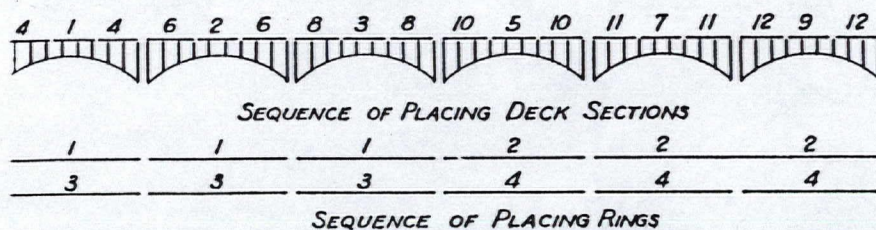
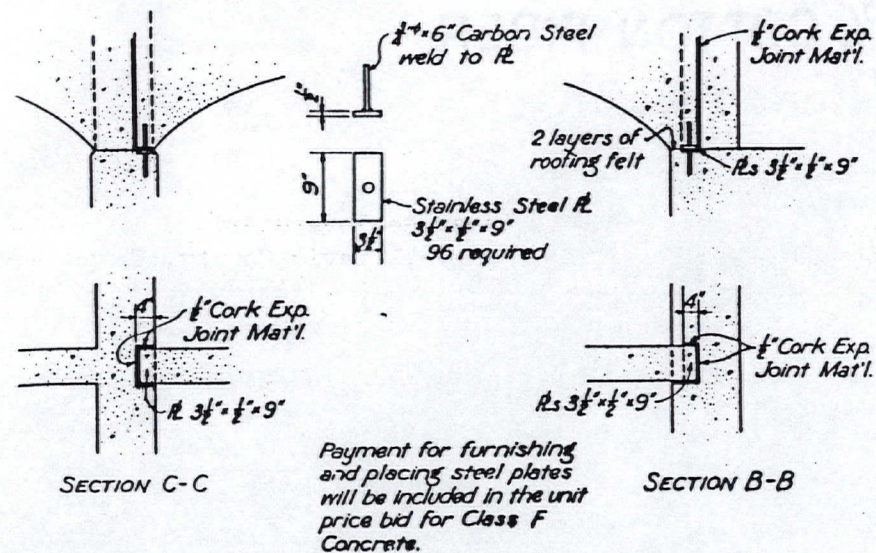
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Section number 7 Page 7

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

SEE REVERSE



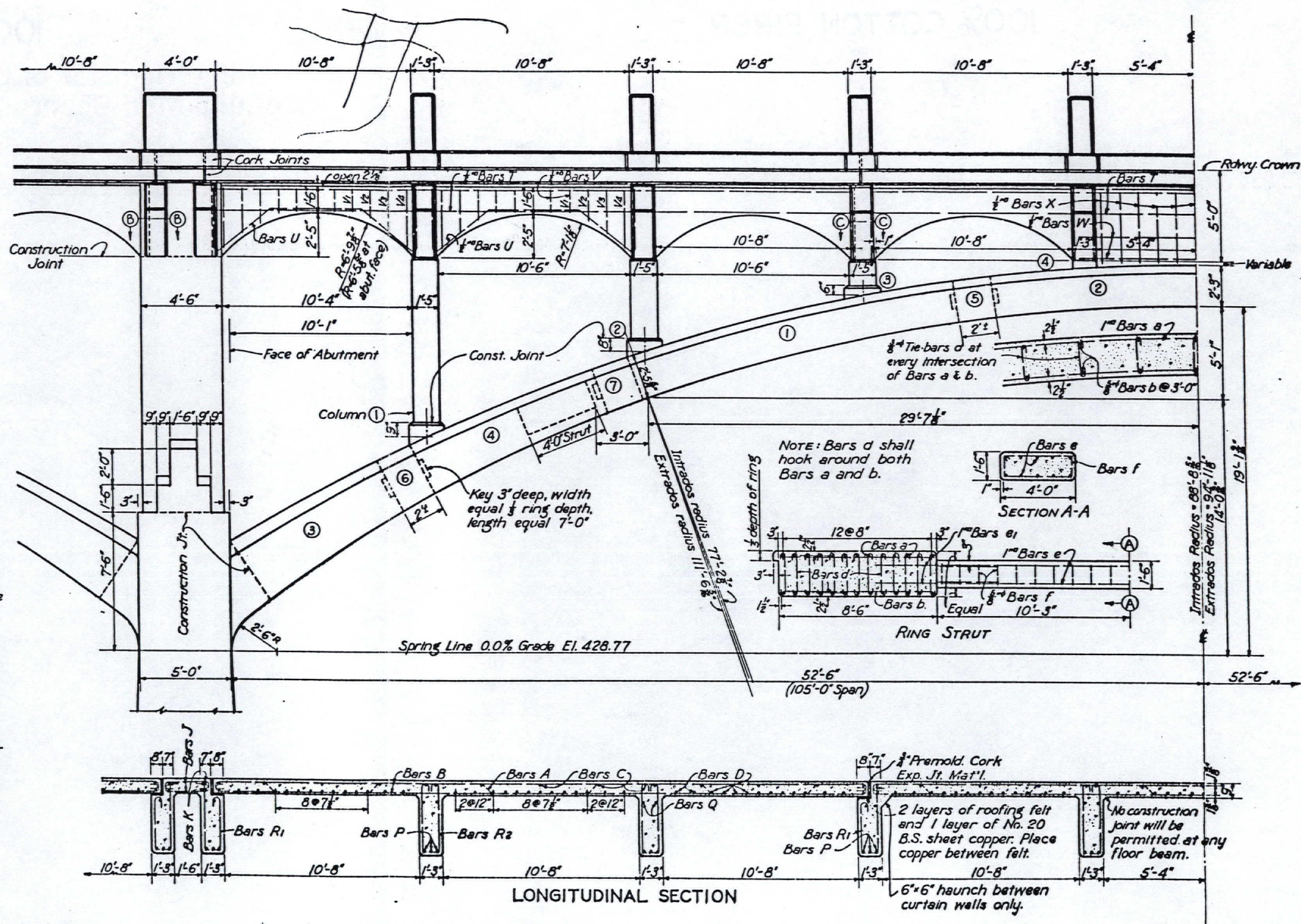
NOTE: Arch rings shall be placed in the sequence shown above. Rings having the same sequence number need not be placed simultaneously, however, all rings having the same sequence number shall have the centering removed simultaneously. This procedure cannot be varied. The short side of the footing of Pier No. 3 shall be placed on the side of pier adjacent to the first rings placed and decentered.

No columns shall be placed until the last ring has been in place 3 calendar days. The placing of columns shall generally follow the sequence shown for deck sections. Symmetrical columns shall be placed simultaneously.

Deck sections shall be placed in the sequence shown above. Sections having the same sequence number shall be placed simultaneously, and at the same rate of placement and in the same manner, that is, the points of placement shall be symmetrical about $\frac{1}{2}$ of span at all times.

Top sections of pier shafts shall be placed before any arch rings are decentered.

NOTE: Numbers and dotted lines on the arch ring indicate the sequence of placing and the limits of the placements. Corresponding sections on the right half of the ring shall be placed simultaneously with those on the left. The centering shall be adjusted by means of wedges not earlier than 7 days after the last placement of concrete in the larger sections. The small sections, 5, 6 and 7, shall then be placed. Should the position of the ring, after the larger sections are placed, be within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the true position, no adjustment of the centering will be necessary. At least 24 hours shall elapse between the placement of any two adjacent sections. The centering shall not be removed until the last section has been in place 15 calendar days.



GENERAL NOTE
All concrete shall be Class F.
All corners not shown or noted chamfered shall be cast square and ground to a $\frac{1}{4}$ \" radius.

H-15 Loading (10' lanes)
 $f_s = 18,000 \text{ psi}$
 $f_c = 1000 \text{ psi}$
 $n = 10$
 $V = 180 \text{ psi}$
 $u = 150 \text{ psi}$

TEXAS STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
105'-0\" CONCRETE ARCH SPAN
COLORADO RIVER BRIDGE
LAMAR BOULEVARD-AUSTIN
Sheet 1 of 3



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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

SEE REVERSE

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Name of Property

Travis County, Texas
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations n/a
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Architecture

Transportation

Period of Significance

1941-42 (construction)

Significant Dates

1941-42

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Design: Texas Highway Department

Builder: Cage Brothers and L.A. Turner

Narrative Statement of Significance See Continuation Sheets 8-9 through 8-13.
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See Continuation Sheets 9-14 and 9-15.

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government City of Austin/Landmark Comm.
- ☐ University Austin History Center
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, TX
State of Texas, Dept. of Transportation

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Name of Property

Travis County, Texas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	4	6	1	9	6	6	0	3	3	4	8	6	6	0
Zone			Easting						Northing						
2	1	4	6	1	9	6	0	0	3	3	4	8	6	0	0

3															
Zone			Easting						Northing						
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See Continuation Sheet 10-16.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James W. Steely (with assistance from Jeff Twining and Claire Berry)

organization Texas Historical Commission date May, 1994

street & number P.O. Box 12276 telephone 512/463-6094

city or town Austin state TX zip code 78711

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

See Continuation Sheets 17 and 18.

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Texas, Department of Transportation

street & number 11th and Brazos Streets telephone 512/305-9501

city or town Austin state TX zip code 78701

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Austin, Travis County, Texas

Statement of Significance:

The Lamar Boulevard Bridge over the Colorado River was dedicated on 15 July 1942, connecting north and south Austin through a new street named for Republic of Texas President (1838-41) Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar. The reinforced-concrete bridge was designed by the Texas Highway Department's Bridge Division. Construction was supervised by THD Austin District Engineer D.E.H. Manigault. Cage Brothers and L.A. Turner of Bishop, Texas, won the construction contract. The overall appearance follows similar concrete open-spandrel designs dating from about 1900, as well as the popular adaption in the 1920s and 30s of Art Deco styling to engineering structures. Because of its finely crafted and unusually late open-spandrel design and its survival virtually unchanged since dedication, the bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C, in the Areas of Engineering, Architecture and Transportation.

The first European-descent settler credited with making a home in the present Austin area was Jacob M. Harrell, who pitched a tent about 1835 on the north bank of the Colorado River. In 1838 while hunting near the settlement of Waterloo and Harrell's homesite near the present Congress Avenue bridge, newly elected Texas President Mirabeau B. Lamar expressed interest in the landscape. In January 1839 Lamar encouraged the commission searching for a new republic capital site to inspect these Colorado River banks between wooded hills to the west and grassland prairies to the east. In May work began on government buildings and surveyor Edwin Waller laid out a new townsite on the north bank centered between two creeks. A prominent rise was the nucleus of the grid street system, and a smooth natural descent from the hill to the river accommodated the main street. The central rise became Capitol Hill, and the main street was designated Congress Avenue.

Bridges have periodically spanned the Colorado River at Austin since 1869. In November of that year, a pontoon bridge capable of carrying heavy wagonloads was completed to the foot of Brazos Street, one block east of Congress. A flood destroyed that bridge in 1870. After its reconstruction it was washed out again in 1873. The first "permanent" bridge into Austin was a wooden toll bridge constructed at the foot of Congress Avenue in 1875. (A railroad bridge was completed in 1881; see next paragraph.) Dry rot and a herd of cattle reportedly contributed to the toll bridge's collapse in 1883. The following year a new public bridge, a series of six double intersection Pratt through trusses, was constructed by the King Iron Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio. The latest Congress Avenue vehicular bridge--a 1910 poured-in-place reinforced concrete, barrel arch, open spandrel design--reflected new and durable technology of its time. The Kansas City firm of

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Austin, Travis County, Texas

Waddell and Harrington designed the \$210,000 structure, built by the William P. Carmichael Company. (The 1910 Congress Avenue Bridge was rehabilitated in the 1950s, and again in 1980 with a wider prestressed concrete girder deck and other alterations, but retains its original piers and distinctive open spandrel barrel arches.)

The International and Great Northern (later Missouri Pacific [MoPac], now Union Pacific) Railway spanned the Colorado in 1881 at the southwest corner of the Austin townsite with a series of stone piers and six wrought-iron double-intersection Pratt through trusses. These trusses were replaced in 1906 with a series of 14 plate girder spans, utilizing the 1880s stone piers.

Another Austin area Colorado River bridge was built about four miles east (downstream) of the Congress Avenue Bridge in 1889 at Montopolis. A devastating flood in 1935 destroyed this span. A new bridge designed by the Texas Highway Department (established in 1917) was completed in 1938 to carry S.H. 29 (now U.S. Highway 183) traffic across the river at Montopolis. These five steel Parker through trusses represented the state engineers' favored bridge type of the era, when prefabricated steel members could be assembled at remote sites for economical and efficient bridge compositions.

An earlier reinforced concrete, open spandrel bridge survives in Austin near the Lamar Boulevard Bridge, carrying Barton Springs Road across Barton Creek, a few hundred yards from its entry into the Colorado River. This triple-arch bridge of paired ribs was built in 1926 by the City of Austin as a two-lane span at the entry to Zilker Park. This bridge was enlarged in 1946 to four lanes with the construction of an additional set of piers and paired ribs on the north side, spaced slightly wider than the 1926 arrangement.

Austin grew modestly after the turn of the century, secure as the seat of state government and home of the University of Texas, but with a mercurial population due to these institutions. During the Great Depression of the 1930s Austin began to expand more rapidly as part of a national trend of urban growth, and as the result of jobs offered by numerous public works projects in the city. The city's population shot from 53,120 in 1930 to 87,930 in 1940. New Austin subdivisions of the 1930s expanded the city west into the hills and south of the river. The development of a comprehensive recreation park system centered on Zilker Park, about two miles southwest of downtown across the river, was a focus in the 1930s of New Deal labor programs. During this decade periodic flooding of the river was checked by a series of dams above Austin built by the new Lower Colorado River

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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Authority. As early as 1934 the city planned segments of a new north-south artery west of downtown, to tie new subdivisions together and to move regional through-traffic around the congested downtown area.

Construction of Lamar Boulevard by city and federally paid Work Projects Administration (WPA) crews began in 1939, the centennial of Austin's founding through the influence of President Lamar. Federal, state and local governments greatly expanded public works projects during the Depression to provide employment and receive much needed public facilities in return. Roads and landscaping projects proved popular and effective vehicles for this approach to economic crisis throughout the 1930s. [see "Work Projects Administration in Texas," Handbook of Texas Vol. III, p. 1132, for a detailed account of the WPA, 1935-42.] By the end of the decade Texas' economy had recovered sufficiently for state and local governments to finance a large share of public works projects, although federal assistance was now commonplace and often essential. Lamar Boulevard was justified beyond city needs as a component of the state highway system, as a more direct connection for Austin to the Fredericksburg Highway (S.H. 20), and as a western bypass around downtown for S.H. 2 between Waco and San Antonio.

Thus the Colorado River bridge for the new Lamar Boulevard was designed by state highway engineers, and was expected to receive funding from the U.S. Public Roads Administration's Federal Aid Program. But a disagreement over the planned load capacity, roadway width and elevation, and the need for a grade separation at the nearby intersection with the Missouri Pacific Railroad, caused the Texas Highway Department to leave the federal government out of financing (and regulating) the bridge's construction. Recovery of the state's economy and a successful state gasoline tax allowed the Highway Department to pay for the structure on its own. Accepting the total cost of the bridge, the State Highway Commission was able to shift \$400,000 in federal funds previously assigned to the Lamar bridge project to several other projects.

According to its contract with the City of Austin, the Texas Highway Department agreed to construct the Lamar Boulevard Bridge and its north and south approach roadways, from Fifth Street to Barton Springs Road. The city provided the Highway Department with free right-of-way and liability protection from claims arising from construction of the bridge.

The reinforced concrete, open spandrel design selected for the new bridge was a proven type, first utilized in the U.S. in 1898 by F.W. Patterson, an engineer with the Department of Public Roads in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The open spandrel rib arch

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design evolved from the open spandrel barrel arch design (exemplified by the 1910 Congress Avenue bridge). The newer design was economical, efficient and popular throughout the nation where plentiful supplies of cement, aggregate and steel reinforcing materials were available.

A history of flooding on the Colorado River through Austin may have played a part in selecting concrete and the durable open spandrel design for the bridge. Internal highway department memos indicated that this bridge might sustain the loss of its deck and roadway approaches in a catastrophic flood, and that the concrete base structures would survive intact. The concrete design, they added, would be able to withstand "occasional submergence." Because of completion in 1940 of the Marshall Ford dam (impounding Lake Travis) upstream, the Lamar bridge deck was placed at 455 feet above sea level, 18 feet lower than the Congress Avenue bridge of 1910. Also, a highway department estimate (\$590,000) for construction of a metal deck truss bridge and railroad overpass at a higher elevation for Lamar Boulevard proved to be about \$80,000 more than a reinforced concrete bridge and associated railroad underpass at a lower elevation. The State's decision to omit the railroad underpass in 1941 brought the estimated cost of the Lamar Boulevard Bridge down to \$350,000.

The contracting team of Cage Brothers and L.A. Turner of Bishop, Texas, was awarded the project for a low bid of \$255,843.85 and work commenced on 27 March 1941. Concrete was supplied by C.A. Maufrais Company of Austin. Steel centering for casting the arched ribs, steel reinforcing rods, and fabricated steel railings were supplied by Alamo Iron Works of San Antonio. By January 1942, one month after the United States entered the Second World War and with these materials determined critical for the war effort, the bridge was reported 57 per cent complete.

Thereafter completion of the bridge and finally the dedication ceremony were presented to the public in a distinctly military light. The bridge was placed by federal officials on the "strategic military network of highways," according to a newspaper account, to hasten completion and justify procurement of construction materials, as well as use of WPA labor for the approach pavements and final landscaping. The dedication was planned for the same day that the U.S. Army's 95th Infantry Division was formally activated at Camp Swift near Bastrop, 35 miles east of Austin. With Governor Coke Stevenson presenting dedication speeches at each site with the same military personnel and parades of the same military equipment convoyed to Austin, the bridge dedication was scheduled to begin at 8:30 p.m., 15 July 1942. Stevenson noted, according to published reports, that

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because of the new dams on the Colorado, it was "possible for the highway department to build the bridge many feet lower than otherwise, saving thousands of dollars in cost, and many tons of materials that now have become needed for the war effort."

The five main piers exhibit modest Art Deco detailing in their splayed footings. The balustrade columns are each a miniature Art Deco skyscraper, reflecting the popularity in this era of consumer articles--radios, furniture, lamps--in the stepback motif of Art Deco, or Moderne buildings. Yet the overall visual effect of the arch combinations is akin to a Roman aqueduct, or even a Romanesque cathedral composition, the latter popular as an architectural revival style through the 1920s. Since many early Art Deco designs in the 1920s drew heavily from the Gothic Revival--for example the 1927 Gulf Building in Houston (N.R. 1983)--perhaps the bridge designers felt comfortable adapting the earlier medieval style--Romanesque--to practical engineering necessities. Despite this careful attention to aesthetics, state highway bridge engineer Percy V. Pennybacker described the bridge as "detailed severely plain."

The Lamar Boulevard Bridge served military convoys--and Austin citizens--well during World War II, then facilitated renewed suburban growth of Austin after the war. In the first decade of the Lamar bridge's use, Austin grew to a population of 132,459, largely through suburban growth west and south. Since its dedication, the bridge has survived periodic floods, though at less dramatic levels than anticipated. True to its design this bridge supports an unceasing load of motor vehicles, as well as bicycles and pedestrians utilizing an extensive lakeside trail system for which the bridge is now an important link. The bridge is an excellent and very late example of open spandrel concrete bridge design. It is also an attractive and efficient reminder of the transition era between New Deal optimism of the Depression and wartime dedication of resources and culture.

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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 16

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nomination encompasses the structure, Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River, from the extreme limit of the north abutment including its concrete balustrades at the sidewalk level and riprap terraces protecting the abutment, to the extreme limit of the south abutment including its concrete balustrades at the sidewalk level and riprap terraces protecting the abutment. (see map, page 7-5; see plan and elevation, page 7-6)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all elements of the bridge--immediate approaches above the abutments, and riprap terraces--as a complete unit of original and intact design elements from the 1940-42 bridge project.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ PHOTOS _____ Page 17

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photographer unknown
1941

Negative PICA 19476 on file with the Austin History Center, Austin, Texas
west (upstream) side of Lamar Boulevard bridge construction and contractor's
temporary bridge, camera facing south
Photograph 1 of 5

Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photographer unknown
1942

Negative PICA 03841 on file with the Austin History Center, Austin, Texas
east (downstream) side of Lamar Boulevard bridge construction
camera facing north
Photograph 2 of 5

Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photograph by Jim Steely, SPHO staff
1993

Negative on file with the Texas Historical Commission (SHPO), Austin, Texas
west (upstream) side of Lamar Boulevard bridge, riprap and balustrade details
camera facing south
Photograph 3 of 5

Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photograph by Jim Steely, SPHO staff
1993

Negative on file with the Texas Historical Commission (SHPO), Austin, Texas
east (downstream) side of Lamar Boulevard bridge, 1959 railroad grade separation in
distance; camera facing north
Photograph 4 of 5

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ PHOTOS _____ Page 18

Lamar Boulevard Bridge
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Lamar Boulevard Bridge at the Colorado River

Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photograph by Jim Steely, SPHO staff

1993

Negative on file with the Texas Historical Commission (SHPO), Austin, Texas

west (upstream) side of Lamar Boulevard bridge, from hike and bike trail

camera facing north

Photograph 5 of 5

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Lamar Boulevard Bridge

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Travis

DATE RECEIVED: 6/06/94 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/21/94
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/07/94 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/21/94
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 94000678

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 7.7.94 DATE *Entered in the
National Register*

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ applicable criteria
☐ justification of areas checked
☐ relating significance to the resource
☐ context
☐ relationship of integrity to significance
☐ justification of exception
☐ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



1

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CREDIT MUST BE GIVEN TO:

PICA 19476

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AUSTIN, TEXAS

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LAMAR BOULEVARD BRIDGE
AT THE COLORADO RIVER

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 5



2

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LAMAR BOULEVARD BRIDGE
AT THE COLORADO RIVER

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 5



LAMAR BOULEVARD BRIDGE
AT THE COLORADO RIVER

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 5



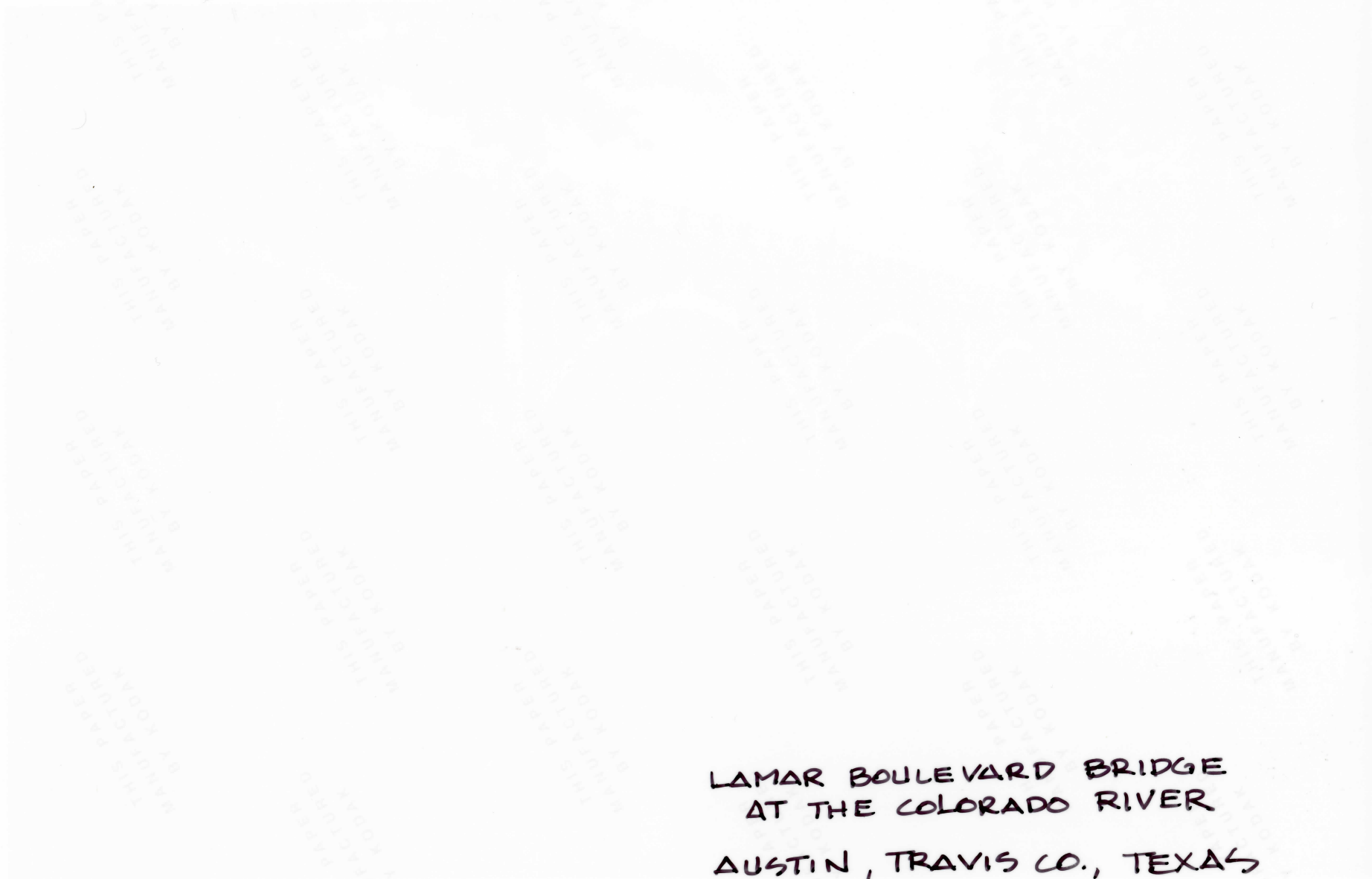
(4)

LAMAR BOULEVARD BRIDGE
AT THE COLORADO RIVER
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 5



5



LAMAR BOULEVARD BRIDGE
AT THE COLORADO RIVER
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 5

