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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

This Multiple Property Documentation form of Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska is based on surveys and research completed for the Nebraska State Historical Society.

HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT IN NEBRASKA

Early State Road Legislation

In the nineteenth century much of the country, including Nebraska, had largely undeveloped road networks. The railroad dominated in the nineteenth century as the preferred method of transportation and the system of roads developed haphazardly.

Nebraska's first county road law pre-dates statehood, passed by the Territorial Legislature on January 26, 1856. The Legislature recognized the need to develop roads to connect settlements within the territory and passed the authority for constructing territorial roads to county government. With this permission, counties were able to impose taxes and appropriate labor to aid in constructing and maintaining roads.¹ The law stated that construction of roads was the responsibility of the individual counties affected. Therefore, the county was responsible for surveying public roads, maintaining them to standards spelled out in the law, and overseeing construction labor. Despite the legislation, roads throughout Nebraska remained poorly repaired and maintained. The majority of traffic on early roads was local in character; therefore, the condition of the roads was initially only the concern of individual townships.² These local roads often remained in poor condition because maintenance meant higher taxes.

An 1862 map prepared by civil engineer August Harvey indicates ten territorial routes in Nebraska. They were: Omaha City to Cedar Island, Plattsmouth to Archer and Kansas line, Brownville to Nebraska Center, Tekomah to Pawnee, Florence to Fontanelle, Nebraska City to Grand Island, Bellevue to Catherine, De Soto to Pawnee, a suitable point on the Platte River to Dakotah, and Pawnee to Nebraska Center.³

In the following years, the state began to recognize the need for good roads; however, they did not take responsibility for the construction of the roads. In 1879 the Nebraska Legislature passed a general road law reserving section line roads as public roads and granting individual counties the authority to build and maintain them. The required width of these roads was 66-feet. The law also authorized a tax levy to finance maintenance projects. Where previous legislation made road construction the responsibility of the county, it did not mandate the creation of roads. Because road construction was financed through local taxation, interest in road construction and improvement rarely extended beyond township lines. Men within a community would opt to do road construction work to pay off their tax levy, but expressed little interest in additional taxation to extend or complete the road. As a result, as early highways were delineated in Nebraska, they often followed poorly maintained existing roads that were largely section line roads.

The first state agency with road-related responsibilities was the State Board of Irrigation. Created on April 24, 1895, the State Board of Irrigation was charged with supervising irrigation practices to manage Nebraska's water resources, while preserving the integrity of affected waterways. Included in the board's responsibilities were overseeing the construction of State Aid bridge plans and specifications and it grew into the state agency that dealt with road issues.

The federal government formally became involved in roads in 1893 with the formation of the Office of Road Inquiry within the United States Department of Agriculture. The engineers within this office became involved with the "Good Roads" movement and the department evolved into a central source of technical information regarding roads. The Office of Road Inquiry was involved in data collection and released bulletins and circulars addressing road construction and administration issues.⁴

¹Koster, 11-12.

²Clinton Warne, "Some Effects of the Introduction of the Automobile on Highways and Land Values in Nebraska," *Nebraska History* 38, no. 1 (1957), 43-44; Koster, 2.

³Wardner G. Scott, "Nebraska Public Highways," *Nebraska History* XXVI, no. 3 (July-Sept. 1945), 164.

⁴Bruce E. Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1987), 9.

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The popularity of the bicycle and the introduction of the automobile raised public awareness of the need for adequate roads. In response to the poor condition of the nation's roads system, the "Good Roads Movement" emerged. By the 1890s, interest groups began pressuring the federal government to reevaluate its role in the development of roads. A group of bicyclists organized the League of American Wheelmen, founding the first of many organizations to promote road improvements as part of the Good Roads Movement. With the motto, "lifting our people out of the mud," they lobbied the federal and state governments for better roads.⁵ Advocates of the Good Roads Movement lobbied for federal, state, and local involvement and financial resources in road building and maintenance activities.

Rural Free Delivery Service (postal delivery), begun in 1896, also increased the awareness for an adequate road system and broadened the support for good roads, especially among those in rural areas who did not previously see the need. Mail delivery was required in all conditions and poor road conditions could prohibit this. Additionally, local applications for Rural Free Delivery Service were sometimes denied because of poor road conditions.⁶

The federal Office of Public Road Inquiry in 1899 continued with technical and promotional efforts to improve roads.⁷ One effort of the office was to develop a materials testing laboratory to test samples and identify suitable road materials. In 1905 the Office of Public Roads was created by the passage of the Agriculture Appropriations Act which terminated the Office of Public Road Inquiry and established a permanent federal road agency with an annual budget of \$50,000.⁸ Based on continued testing, the Office of Public Roads issued typical material specifications and testing procedures, as well as construction guidelines.

Road grading or dragging was imperative to maintain the state's early dirt roads. D. Ward King, a Missouri farmer, invented the "King road drag" method around 1904, to be used in areas that could not afford macadamized roads.⁹ The United States Department of Agriculture printed King's road dragging method in 1908 complete with a description of the materials needed to construct a drag and the proper technique in its use. They pointed out that unless the dragging was conducted immediately after a rain, the benefits would be lost. The drag had to be completed while the road was damp, so "the soft mud is troweled onto the road bed," and allowed to harden in the sun.¹⁰

The Automobile Arrives in Nebraska

In the early twentieth century few people seriously considered driving an automobile across the country. Although roads existed across the United States, there were no formally designated or direct transportation routes, and the majority of the roads were not improved.

By 1902 numerous national, state and local groups were involved in road promotion including the National Good Roads Association, 32 affiliates of the Automobile Club of America, and 18 state and 14 local road associations. Despite the early efforts of these groups, only 154,000 miles of the country's over two million miles of road were improved in 1904.¹¹ By 1904 Nebraska had 79,462 miles of roads, most of which were along section lines.¹²

By 1904 there were over 55,000 vehicles in use across the United States and by 1910 this had skyrocketed to approximately a half-million.¹³ The first automobiles in the state appeared by the turn of the nineteenth century. The statewide need for roads and state involvement in road construction was spurred by the state's increase in motor vehicle registration. With the introduction and popularity of the automobile, the State board sought legislation regarding motor vehicles. In 1905 the registration of motor vehicles was required. The legislature passed a motor vehicle registration fee of \$1.00 and responded to safety issues regarding speed limits, the operation of a vehicle near horses and the use of brakes, signals, and lights.¹⁴ In

⁵George E. Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Department of Roads, 1997), 7, 11.

⁶Seely, 27.

⁷Seely, 16-17.

⁸William Kaszynski, *The American Highway* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co, Inc., 2000), 30.

⁹John Stilgoe, "Roads, Highways, and Ecosystems," July 2001, <www.nhc.rtp.nc.us:8080/tserve/nattrans/ntuseland/essays/roadsb.htm> (Accessed 6 March 2002).

¹⁰D. Ward King, *The Use of the Split-log Drag on Earth Roads*, U.S. Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin 321 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), 5-8, 9-11.

¹¹Seely, 24 and 9.

¹²Nebraska Highway Advisory Committee, *Nebraska Highway Needs* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Highway Advisory Committee, 1948); Koster, 13.

¹³Koster, 7.

¹⁴Koster; iv, 14-15.

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1906, 1,087 vehicles were registered, but by 1910 it had risen to 11,339.¹⁵ Motor vehicle registration continued to soar in Nebraska with 211,750 autos reported in 1919.¹⁶

As the number of automobiles increased in Nebraska, the legislature recognized the need for improved roads. In 1911 the Nebraska Legislature changed the name of the board to the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage and increased its responsibilities to include road construction and maintenance.¹⁷ The Board was directed to elect a civil engineer to serve as the State Engineer. Registration fees for vehicles were raised by the Legislation to \$2.00 and the revenue was given to county road funds.¹⁸ The State Aid Bridge Act, which passed the same year, was the first legislative action resulting from this increased interest in roads. The act not only increased the state's authority over local road administrators, but it also resulted in increased local expenditures.¹⁹

The 1912-1914 Biennial Report of the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage stressed the economical benefits of earth roads. Basic road maintenance was outlined in the report:

An earth road should be properly graded wide enough so that two vehicles can pass easily; that the grade should not be crowded too much but should be left rather flat so that the travel can be over any portion of the road; and that after the grading has been done and the grade has been fixed, that it should be surfaced with clay and gravel, either one of which is nearly always readily obtainable in the vicinity. Then if the road is kept properly dragged, it will remain in a more or less permanent state and this work can be done at a very low cost.²⁰

Stone, sand, and soil road surfacing materials were found naturally in Nebraska and used in the creation of roads. Deposits of limestone and shale located throughout Nebraska were combined to create cement, the most important material used in some forms of later road construction. Niobrara chalk rock combined with Granerose shale, both occurring naturally in Nebraska, created high-grade cement, much of which was made near the town of Niobrara. Sand was used to create mortar and concrete for construction projects involving curbs, gutters, sidewalks, water pipes, sewers, culverts, bridges, and pavements. The Platte Valley was a large source of quality sand, ideal for road construction. In addition to the quality, high volumes of sand were available. The Platte Valley, stretching across the state, was serviced by railroads, making the resource to be shipped to many localities. Nebraska's varied soil types were ideal for construction purposes.²¹ In some cases sand was mixed with clay and used in the construction and grading of roads.

At the federal level, the Office of Public Roads and its predecessor the Bureau of Public Roads operated research programs focusing on practical issues of road construction including the construction and performance of various road materials. Concrete and bituminous materials were studied. The Bureau of Public Roads partnered with trade groups and professional organizations such as the Asphalt Institute and the American Society of Civil Engineers, state highway departments and universities on research. The Bureau of Public Roads also established a research journal, *Public Roads*, in 1918 to disseminate information to the states.²²

The "Named" Highways

The early twentieth century was the height of popularity for highways that were given distinctive and descriptive names. In Nebraska three of these highways were established and marked by 1913: the Lincoln Highway, the Meridian Highway, and the Omaha-Lincoln-Denver (O-L-D) Highway. The Blue Pole Highway, Grant Highway, Golden Rod Trail, Sun Flower Trail, Potash Highway, and Alfalfa Trail are just a few of the many other named early twentieth-century roads in Nebraska. As the automobile gained popularity and travelers made their way across the state and the country, these routes became well-traveled thoroughfares.

¹⁵Koster, 14-15.

¹⁶Koster, 20-22.

¹⁷Koster, iv.

¹⁸Koster 16.

¹⁹Warne, 44.

²⁰State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage, *Tenth Biennial Report of the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage 1912-1914* (Lincoln, Nebr.: State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage, 1914), 221.

²¹State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage, *Eleventh Biennial Report of the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage 1915-1916* (Lincoln, Nebr.: State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage, 1916), 325-445.

²²Seely, 107 and 109-110.

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During this period highways were initiated by private interests, composed of local, state, or regional associations who cooperated in the designation, promotion and improvements of cross-country routes. Citizen organizations, like the Omaha-Lincoln-Denver Transcontinental Highway Association, the Meridian Road Association, and the Lincoln Highway Association were formed to designate, promote, and improve regional and cross-country highways. These groups also lobbied state, federal and local governments to cooperatively plan and construct roads. Local commercial clubs, business associations, automobile clubs, and merchants often contributed labor and funds to bring major roads through their towns and improve local roads. These interest groups were significant in the ultimate development of a national highway system.

Road organizations promoted their routes through published guidebooks. These guidebooks advertised the group's highway by offering route directions and identifying locations of tourist services and sites of interest. Two national guidebook series identifying routes throughout the country were the *Tourist Information Bureau* and the *Automobile Blue Book*. In addition to the published road and route guides, gasoline, oil and tire companies often published state maps identifying early named highways. These state maps provided information on a variety of highways, but also served as a marketing piece and included the location of the sponsoring company's service stations. Companies such as the Standard Oil Company of Nebraska and Goodrich Tire published maps of the state of Nebraska.

Early existing traveled routes in Nebraska often became the delineations for the state's first highways. These early routes were largely created by linking sections of existing dirt roads, although these roads were often primitive and not substantially improved. In 1914, State Engineer Donald D. Price reported that Nebraska had three major highways: the Meridian, the Lincoln, and the Omaha-Lincoln-Denver highways. He also reported that these highways were in fairly decent condition, with the exception of portions in the western part of the state where they were merely deeply rutted trails. At this point in time only one-and-a-half percent of the total number of Nebraska roads had been "improved."²³

Limited governmental funds were available for road construction. In 1916 Congress passed the first formal highway policy with a regular appropriation of funding to the states. By this time the number of automobile registrations in the country had reached 2.3 million and the auto industry and motorists were heavily lobbying for programs and funds to improve roads.²⁴ The Federal-Aid Road Act, signed by Woodrow Wilson on June 11, 1916, was the first time the federal government was directly involved in road building efforts. Approximately, \$5 million was appropriated the first year with the funding escalating in annual steps to total \$75 million.²⁵ Funding, managed by the Secretary of Agriculture, was allocated by a formula based on a state's population, land area and road mileage. Under this act the federal government would finance up to 50% of the cost of construction, not to exceed \$10,000 per mile.

In order to obtain federal funds, each state's highway commission had to meet the Office of Public Road Inquiry's standards and approval. To participate in the Federal-Aid Program, a state had to:

- maintain a state highway department to administer the Federal-Aid act
- assume responsibility of all roads on which federal funds were spent (this could be delegated to local governments)
- classify eligible mileage in eligible systems based on traffic needs and services rendered
- agree to uniform standards of construction and design
- meet inspection requirements before bills were paid
- match federal funds under mutually acceptable standards.²⁶

The passage of the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916 discouraged the haphazard construction of roads by counties without state supervision. Through the requirement that states establish a highway department that met the Office of Public Roads approval states now had to have financial resources and encouraged engineering skills to be used for road design. The state highway commission had the responsibility for the preparation of plans and specifications and all construction and maintenance, while the federal government held the right to inspect all projects.²⁷

²³Koster, 17; Warne, 45

²⁴Seely, 24-25.

²⁵Seely, 43.

²⁶Nebraska Highway Advisory Committee.

²⁷Seely, 42-43.

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The Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916 forced Nebraska's State Board of Irrigation, Highways, and Drainage to take on a greater role in road development. Once Nebraska accepted federal funding, the state became responsible for the construction and maintenance of the highway system.²⁸

Wartime shortages hindered actual road construction following the passage of the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916. The first Federal-Aid road project in Nebraska, the Lincoln and Emerald Road (West O Street), began in July of 1918 and was completed the following year. The project was 5.44 miles in length and was estimated to cost over \$217,000. Road construction continued at a slow pace but, by 1918, 16 projects comprising 512 miles had been approved, contracts for 200 miles had been let, 1,600 miles had been surveyed, and plans had been prepared for 952 miles. Several other Federal-Aid projects in the state were completed by 1920, including: a paved portion from Dodge Street in Omaha to the Saunders County line, an earthen 12.53-mile stretch of the Geneva-Belvidere Road in Fillmore County, part of the Meridian Road, and the 25.87-mile long Seward-York-Aurora Road.²⁹

Under the Federal-Aid plan, approximately 5,000 miles of highway under a total of 88 route numbers were designated as the state highway system.³⁰ Maintenance of the state highway system was assigned to the counties. In addition, the legislature created the State-Aid Road Fund, financed by property taxes and appropriated in the same formula as the Federal-Aid. With the establishment of the state highway system, counties were required to form a system of county roads, under the jurisdiction of the County Board, not exceeding 20% of the total mileage in the county.³¹

After World War I, Congress transferred surplus equipment and materials from the War Department to state highway departments. Nebraska received 407 trucks, 74 touring cars, and miscellaneous equipment and tons of materials and supplies. The state sold surplus trucks, equipment and materials to county road departments to use for road construction and maintenance.³²

In 1919 the Nebraska Legislature restructured state government, replacing the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage with the Department of Public Works. The Department consisted of the Bureau of Irrigation, Water Power, and Drainage; the Bureau of Roads and Bridges; and the Division of Motor Vehicle Registration, all under the authority of the State Engineer. The Bureau of Roads and Bridges was responsible for the construction of all state and Federal-Aid roads and the building of all state bridges. It was divided into three sub-divisions: Maps and Plans, Road Construction, and Road Equipment, Repairs, and Maintenance. The Maps and Plans division was responsible for preliminary field investigations and surveys required in planning State and Federal-Aid roads. They also completed special designs for equipment, such as derricks, camp buildings, and wagons. The Division of Road Construction was responsible for all facets of construction, maintenance, and testing for State and Federal-Aid road projects. The Division of Road Equipment, Repairs, and Maintenance was responsible for outfitting counties with equipment, and keeping up with the general maintenance and repair of Department vehicles and equipment. The three divisions worked together to create and maintain Nebraska's earliest roads and highways.³³

Federal funding for highway construction was continued by Congress with the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1921. This act provided states financial aid for the construction of highways under the seven percent system in which each state was eligible for assistance for the construction of seven percent of its highways. Within two years, each state was required to designate three percent of their primary roads and four percent of their secondary roads as part of the federal-aid highway system and as a result, these roads were eligible for assistance.³⁴ Federal funding was to be matched by state funds on a 50-50 basis. Nebraska's certified mileage at the time was 80,272, allowing for 5,619 miles of roads to be funded under the seven percent system. Primary roads were designated as important intrastate routes and were to be developed

²⁸Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1923-1924* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1924), 14.

²⁹Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1919-1920* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1920), 579.

³⁰*Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1919-1920*, 755. A description of each numbered highway, including the terminus points, is located on pages 755-759.

³¹*Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1923-1924*, 14; Koster, 19.

³²Koster; 20, 28.

³³*Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1919-1920*, 535-539.

³⁴Seely, 74.

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into an integrated national road system that would allow easy intercommunication throughout the country. Road designs were required to adhere to the federal government's standards for minimum width, grade, and adequacy of roadbed type for the traffic load. States were required to submit their plans to the United States Secretary of Agriculture for approval.³⁵ The 4,500 miles of Nebraska's state highway system, established in 1919, were included in the 5,619 miles of road designated as post roads in 1921 and included in the seven percent total of roads eligible to receive federal aid.³⁶

Between 1917 and 1926 Nebraska spent over \$27 million on road construction of which just less than half, \$12.5 million, was furnished by the federal government.³⁷ The 1920s were a boom for highway construction and improvements nationwide with over \$10 billion invested in roads. Most states financed this significant road construction through increased taxation and bonds; however, Nebraska was not willing to go into debt or dramatically increase taxation to pay for improved roads. Road construction and maintenance in Nebraska was financed largely by federal aid and funds from property taxes. After 1925 road construction and maintenance funding was supplemented by gasoline tax and vehicle registration fees.

Nebraska's fiscally responsible pay-as-you-go policy challenged the Bureau of Roads and Bridges of the State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage to meet the state's growing highway needs and to keep up with the pace of road development in the rest of the country. This policy also forced the Bureau of Roads and Bridges to continually struggle to meet the financial match for federal funding. In an effort to control costs, Nebraska researched road materials and advocated dirt roads as a sound and economical option.³⁸

Research addressing road construction and materials was also the focus of many state road agencies. In 1915, the Nebraska Legislature provided that the State Highway Engineer work cooperatively with the Nebraska State University on the testing of materials for road construction. A cooperative agreement was reached with the Department of Public Works and the University of Nebraska in 1920 to test materials. Nebraska highway engineers were continuously looking for inexpensive, yet quality paving materials and this directed much of the material testing research. In 1919-20, 1,208 tests were completed to develop a new hard surface that would be cheaper than concrete pavement.³⁹

In 1918 legislation was enacted to provide funding for the maintenance of the state highway system. Prior to formal funding, maintenance had been recommended but often did not occur. The legislation allowed for the maintenance to be conducted state-wide and for skilled crews to grade highways and bring them up to standards. Maintenance crews were responsible for surface maintenance, repairing ditches, opening culverts, maintaining official road signs, snow removal, and the emergency repair of roads, bridges, and guardrails.⁴⁰

In 1926 the Nebraska Legislature passed a statute naming the Department of Public Works to maintain the state highway system, except for state highways within the corporate limits of municipalities with a population over 1,400. Other city and village streets in Nebraska were under the authority of municipal agencies, with no clear pattern of municipal management. Financing for state roads was provided for by setting aside 30 percent of all motor vehicle registration fees, and portions of the gasoline tax, first passed in 1925, as deemed necessary. Prior to this time, counties were responsible for state highway maintenance. The legislation also required highway construction and maintenance contracts, previously let by the counties, to be awarded by the Department of Public Works. The Legislature also gave the Department of Public Works the power to acquire right-of-way directly.⁴¹

As traffic increased, Nebraska highway engineers advocated the use of gravel for surfacing highways. In Nebraska, gravel was promoted because the state had a rich supply of a hard and fine gravel, largely taken from the Platte River, and the

³⁵Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1923-1924, 14.

³⁶Warne, 46-47.

³⁷"Roads and Road Building in Nebraska," *Nebraska Highways* 1, no. 3 (1927): 6.

³⁸Koster, 26.

³⁹Koster 24-25.

⁴⁰Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1919-1920, 697-699.

⁴¹Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1925-26* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1926), 74; Koster 32.

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state's low rainfall made it an economical choice for state highways.⁴² A 1928 article in *Nebraska Highways* described the fine quality of the state's gravel for use as a road material:

(G)ravel in Nebraska is distinctly different from the class of roads usually referred to as 'gravel roads' or 'sand gravel roads' or 'sand clay roads' in other states. From the standpoint of materials, Nebraska gravel lies between the above classes and has generally been satisfactory. It partakes of the smoothness of the sand clay road and has the wearing and carrying capacity of the best gravel roads of other states. The material is fine enough so that the surface does not ravel and with proper and continuous maintenance, which it must have, can be kept in good condition.⁴³

Despite the limited use of hard surfacing in the state, Nebraska still ranked fourteenth in the nation in 1929 in state highway mileage that was graveled or better.⁴⁴ During this period when Nebraska highway engineers were advocating gravel roads, the Bureau of Public Roads was continuing to research and test improved paving materials including asphalt, concrete, and the quality of aggregate.⁴⁵

To lessen overall expenses, the Department of Public Works planned to relocate or shorten the highways when paving was needed. Rather than completing a relocation project, the department would wait until paving or surfacing was needed, then relocate the segment and pave or surface the new section. These route relocations allowed state engineers to create more direct routes and increase safety by eliminating hazardous railroad crossings or sharp curves and were designed to save drivers time and money. By the close of 1928, Nebraska had 8,012 miles of state and federal highways, including 165 miles of paved roads and 3,761 miles of gravel roads. During the late 1920s hard surfacing of roads began to be advocated. Both concrete and asphalt were used for hard surfacing, while gravel was falling out of favor for major roads. By the end of 1930 it was estimated that 368 miles of state highways had been paved, with more paving projects scheduled for the coming years. In 1929, the Nebraska Legislature had provided funds for the approximately 100 miles of paving annually. In order to complete paving projects as efficiently as possible, special attention was given to creating direct routes, curves with long radii, and long sight distances. The Department of Public Works adopted several standards including distances, widths, and smoothness.⁴⁶

Although regional and national organizations marked the named highway routes in the early twentieth century, but there was a need for a uniform system for marking interstate roads and presenting warning signs. In 1918 Wisconsin became the first state to adopt a state highway numerical numbering system to alleviate the haphazard system of named trails. The movement for a nationwide system of highway routes and road signs was proposed at an annual meeting of the American Association of State Highway Officials in 1922. The association, formed in 1914 of senior state and federal highway officials, had a role in shaping many aspects of road policy including building, financing, and maintenance. By 1925 the association adopted a national numbering system plan including the standard design for signs a uniform sign to mark roads carrying the same name or number between states. In an effort to diminish the confusion surrounding named routes and unify the national highway system, the Federal Department of Agriculture accepted a numbered system of highways in 1925. The uniform white shield sign had bold black text and the only variation was the name of the state. The state's name was included in the top portion of the sign, and the highway number appeared in large bold text on the lower portion. Odd numbers were used for north-south routes using numbers that ended in 1 and 5 for principal routes and even numbers were assigned to east-west roads with principal routes designated using multiples of ten.⁴⁷ Several interstate routes were selected for marking in Nebraska including: Lincoln Highway, U.S. Route 30; the D-L-D Highway, U.S. Route 38; Washington Highway, U.S. Route 75; Cornhusker Highway, U.S. Route 77; Meridian Highway, U.S. Route 81; and Platte Valley Highway, U.S. Route 26.⁴⁸

⁴²Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1923-1924, 31.

⁴³"Report of Nebraska Department of Public Works," *Nebraska Highways* I, no. 11 (July 1928), 4.

⁴⁴Koster, 27.

⁴⁵Seely, 101-102.

⁴⁶Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1927-1928* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1928), 13; Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1929-1930* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1930), 65.

⁴⁷Kaszynski, 60.

⁴⁸*Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1925-26*, 65.

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When this took effect in 1926, the new numbering system affected 145 roads or 76,000 miles of road across the United States. In the spring of 1926, the Nebraska Department of Public Works began placing numbered state highway markers along highways in the state. The state highway marker adopted by the state was a diamond shaped sign, 15-inches square, with a covered wagon graphic on the upper half and the route numbers on the lower half. The sign was black and white, which made it easy to distinguish from the yellow and black danger and warning signs. In addition to placing route signs along highways, the state placed signs along the highways that were designed to inform motorists. Signs were located at various points along the highway that gave the distance to the next town and other important places ahead. The names of streams were marked at crossings with signs on the right side of the road and on either side of the stream.

Danger and warning signs, in compliance with the American Association of State Highway Officials and the Federal Bureau of Roads, were also placed throughout the state in 1926 to increase safety. These signs came in four shapes and all were yellow. The diamond shape was used to mark a hazard within the road, such as loose gravel, new fill, a narrow bridge, or a curve. The square shaped marked hazards outside the road, such as crossroad traffic or school children. The circular shape was used only to mark railroad crossings. The octagon shape was used only for stop signs. Nebraska was in line with the rest of the nation in highway marking. Over 50 percent of the states, including Nebraska, had erected the standard signs by the close of 1926; the remaining states were scheduled to comply by the end of 1927. In order for the standardized highway signs to be effective, they had to be seen by the motoring public. All advertising signs had to be removed from the right-of-way to ensure that they would not conflict with the highway markers.⁴⁹

In 1928 the legislature mandated stop signs to be placed on 6,200 miles of Nebraska roads. Signs were placed at the entry of side roads into main highways. These signs gave highway traffic the right-of-way and required all approaching vehicles to stop and wait for traffic to clear before proceeding across intersection.⁵⁰ Nebraska continued to conform to the national signage standards set by the American Association of State Highway Officials and all signs purchased in Nebraska after January 1, 1936 met the most recent set of standards recognized by the association and the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads.⁵¹

Road Development Through the Depression and World War II

New Deal programs and federal relief of the 1930s provided jobs and funding that contributed to the construction and improvement of roads throughout the country and the state of Nebraska. An available workforce of the unemployed, lower wages, and lower costs for building materials allowed Nebraska to save money during the period. Road construction saw a period of unprecedented progress. Federal funding increased for highway construction in the 1930s. In 1931, \$80 million dollars in emergency Federal-Aid was made available to the states to supplement their required matching funds. In 1931-32, Nebraska received \$4.25 million in emergency federal-aid. During the hard times of the Depression, this allowed states to continue with highway construction and put unemployed people to work. The following year, a second emergency relief act was passed by Congress with stipulations. States were required to pay a minimum wage rate (30 cents per hour for unskilled labor and 50 cents per hour for skilled labor) and give hiring preferences to locals and ex-servicemen with dependents. To employ as many people as possible, laborers were hired for only a 30-hour workweek.⁵²

During the 1931-1932 biennium, both paved and oiled roads were being completed across the state. By the close of 1932, it was estimated that 663 miles of pavement had been completed in the state. At the same time, progress was being made on the construction of oil-surfaced roads. Prior oil surfacing work had been relatively experimental and was restricted to small projects. By 1932 it was believed that enough experimentation had been completed at that oil-surface work had a proper place in the highway construction program. Oil-sand surfacing was constructed by the application of an asphaltic road oil and a small amount of very fine material to a sand base and thoroughly mixing them with discs or blades to a depth of five inches. When no free oil remained in the mixture it was spread and ready for traffic. In some cases work was required on the shoulders and back slopes to prevent sand from blowing or washing away. During the 1931-1932 biennium 292 miles of oil-surface roads were completed and an additional 248.7 miles of oiled roads were completed during the 1933-1934 biennium.

⁴⁹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1925-26, 65.

⁵⁰"Highway Markers," 10.

⁵¹Bureau of Roads and Bridges, Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the Bureau of Roads and Bridges of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1935-36* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Bureau of Roads and Bridges of the Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1936).

⁵²*Twentieth Biennial Report for 1933-1934*, 189; Koster 41.

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⁵³ In 1933 the State Engineer was given the additional duties of Director of Motor Vehicles, Chairman of the State Planning Board, and Director of Highway Safety and Patrol.⁵⁴

Road material testing in cooperation with the University of Nebraska continued into the 1930s on hard surface materials. Testing proved that a bituminous surfacing would be durable for traffic and weather conditions in the state. The initial cost of construction was lower than that of concrete paving and local materials could be used, also costing less than concrete. Although Nebraska continued to use gravel for highway surfacing projects, they were beginning to move towards more permanent hard surfacing materials that would require less maintenance. Gravel surfacing projects gradually dwindled in the 1930s and hard surfacing projects became more popular across the state, especially in populated and high traffic areas.

As the Depression continued, the Nebraska Legislature offered measures to assist taxpayers and the counties. In 1933 motor vehicle registration fees were lowered to lessen the tax burden on individuals and the counties received an increased share of the gasoline tax. Both of these measures decreased the state funds available for highway construction.

A total of 198 Civil Works Administration (CWA) projects were completed under the supervision of the Department of Roads and Irrigation. They included construction of new earth roads, widening, cuts and fills, producing and placing gravel surfacing, construction of bridges and drainage structures, widening bridges and culverts, improving railroad crossings, painting bridges and guardrails, removing and relaying brick pavement, slope and ditch protection, landscaping and roadside planting, constructing and repairing patrol sheds and equipment yards, preparing maps and plans, testing and inspecting materials, and other various tasks.⁵⁵

After the suspension of the CWA on March 31, 1934, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) began organizing work divisions. CWA projects that had not been completed prior to March 31, 1934, were transferred to FERA and continued as work relief projects. Over 150 work relief highway projects had been approved under this system by November 1, 1934.⁵⁶

Several large paving projects were awarded in 1935-36 in an attempt to close the remaining five open patches on Nebraska's principal highways.⁵⁷ In 1935, U.S. 30 was the first highway to be hard surfaced across the state, including both concrete and bituminous materials. At this time, projects were also completed on U.S. 6 and U.S. 8 resulting in completely paved highways.⁵⁸ These projects totaled over \$1.5 million, with the state funding approximately one-half and federal matching funds covering the remainder.⁵⁹ Asphalt evolved as the material of choice for highways, although most of Nebraska's lesser-used county section line roads remain to this day as well maintained gravel surfaces.

Highway beautification projects began in 1934 when the federal government passed the National Recovery Act. Under the act, the Federal Bureau of Public Roads required that at least 1% of total funding to each state be used for "the appropriate landscaping of parkways or roadsides." The act advocated roads that conformed to their natural setting, including sensitive siting, conserving soil, selective tree cutting, and appropriate plantings. The state roads department cooperated with local civic organizations and assisted with several improvement projects by contributing plans, layouts and consultation. In 1934 the department built its first rest area or roadside park on the southside of U.S. 20 near the Bryan Bridge, southeast of Valentine.⁶⁰

By 1940, Nebraska had a highway system of 11,220 miles of which only 9,000 miles were maintained. Of the 9,000, 4,784 miles were graveled, 3,804 miles were hard-surfaced, and 412 miles had dirt surfacing.⁶¹

⁵³Nebraska Department of Public Works, Bureau of Roads and Bridges, *Nineteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1931-1932* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, Bureau of Roads and Bridges, 1932), 41-45; Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, Bureau of Roads and Bridges, *Twentieth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Roads and Bridges 1933-1934* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, Bureau of Roads and Bridges, 1934), 49.

⁵⁴Bureau of Roads and Bridges, Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Twenty-Second Biennial Report of the Bureau of Roads*, 1938, 16.

⁵⁵*Twentieth Biennial Report for 1933-1934*, 190-191.

⁵⁶*Twentieth Biennial Report for 1933-1934*, 195.

⁵⁷The Biennial Report did not specify the five remaining open patches.

⁵⁸*Twenty-First Biennial Report of the Bureau of Roads and Bridges 1935-36*, 77-78.

⁵⁹"Ask Paving Bids on No. 6 Highway; Opened July 23," *The Morning Spotlight*, 2 July 1936, 1.

⁶⁰*Twentieth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Roads and Bridges 1933-1934*, 56; Koster 46-47.

⁶¹Koster, 43.

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For national security, the War Department and the Public Roads Administration identified a system of roads known as the Strategic Network of Highways to access military bases, defense manufacturing plants, and other strategic sites. In Nebraska three main routes were designated as a top priority for materials and were eligible for federal funds made available in the Defense Highway Act of 1941:

- US-75 from Kansas to Omaha
- US-30 and US-30A (Fremont to Omaha spur) from the Missouri River to Omaha and then the Wyoming state line
- US-81 from the Kansas line north to Norfolk continuing on US-275 from Norfolk to O'Neill, and then on US-281 from O'Neill to the South Dakota line.⁶²

The Defense Highway Act of 1941 further restricted the activities of state highway departments. Federal funds were limited to the Strategic Network of Highways, construction of roads to military bases and defense manufacturing plants, construction of airfields and advanced engineering surveys for projects to be initiated after the war. A major war effort project undertaken in Nebraska was the completion of the state's first four-lane divided highway on December 8, 1941. Highway 73/75 from the south city limits of Omaha to Fort Crook (currently Offutt Air Force Base) consisted of 6-miles of two, 22-foot concrete lanes separated by a 10-foot grass median. The road led to the Glenn L. Martin Bomber Plant at Fort Crook.⁶³

During the War, the Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation shifted its efforts to defense-related activities and assisted the Army and Navy engineers with the design and construction of ordnance plants and airfields. The department provided information regarding soil conditions within the defense areas, rented out survey equipment for engineering work, and collected scrap materials. Work was postponed on active highway contracts so that contractors could assist in Army and Navy projects⁶⁴

After the U.S. became involved in World War II, road construction activities in general stopped, with the exception of roads needed for military purposes. Restrictions on critical building materials during the war forced the department to change design and construction standards and reduce or eliminate the use of critical materials in new construction. At first metal was the only critical material that the department had to do without. Later restrictions included lumber, asphalt products, cement, and other materials. The American Association of State Highway Officials' Committee on Standards suggested changes in design and construction standards to reduce or eliminate the use of critical building materials. These suggestions were used to the fullest extent possible in the design of highway construction in Nebraska and non-critical materials were used whenever possible. In the case of concrete structures it became necessary to remove almost all steel reinforcement because metal was restricted to military use. Several projects had to be postponed until materials were made available, while some designs were deemed adequate without the steel reinforcements, but became more expensive due to the additional amounts of concrete needed.⁶⁵

Near the end of World War II, in 1944, the condition of Nebraska's highway system was similar to its pre-war state with a total of 9,119 state highway miles, with only 4,050 miles paved. Overall the condition of the roads was poor due to their general neglect and deterioration during the war. In a post-war report to the roads committee of the U.S. House of Representatives the Department of Roads and Irrigation stated that over half of the state's 1,200 miles of concrete pavement was over 10 years old and in need of repair and 40% of the state's bituminous surfacing was inadequate.⁶⁶

Post World War II Road Development in Nebraska

In order to address road deficiencies nationwide, a post-war highway program was implemented by the 1944 Federal-Aid Highway Act. Three categories of funding were established: (1) federal-aid primary roads based on the previously used Seven Percent System; (2) feeder or secondary roads, including farm to market roads, rural free delivery routes and public school bus routes; and (3) highways in urban areas with a population over 5,000. Within Nebraska's highway system, roads eligible for funding included 5,630 miles of primary roads, 9,800 miles of feeder or secondary roads, and roads within 18

⁶²Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Twenty-Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1941-1942* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1942), 5.

⁶³*Twenty-Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1941-1942*, 5.

⁶⁴*Twenty-Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1941-1942*, 6-7.

⁶⁵*Twenty-Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1941-1942*, 6, 109.

⁶⁶Koster, 49, 57.

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cities with populations over 5,000. Nebraska was initially scheduled to receive approximately \$8.5 million in funding annually; however, funding was reduced and the program was cut back in 1946.⁶⁷

As federal funding was limited and roads remained deteriorated following the war, the state of Nebraska reviewed its road system situation. In July 1947, a 35-member Nebraska Highway Advisory Committee, composed of private citizens, was established to assess the state's present and future highway needs. This committee was the predecessor of the State Highway Commission established in 1953. The committee's assessment identified over 6,500 miles of the state highway system that was defective and estimated the cost of repair to exceed \$259 million. They recommended the adoption of a 20-year program of highway improvement, which upon completion would result in a completely modern and adequate highway transportation system.⁶⁸ To finance the improvements, the gasoline tax and motor vehicle registration fees were raised in 1949 to increase funds available for road construction. Together these taxes would produce \$5 million in revenue, with \$4.5 million earmarked for matching federal-aid highway funds to provide \$9 million for state highway construction. This legislation was repealed in a November 1950 referendum, by voters who were not willing to pay for or did not understand the need for highway financing.⁶⁹

In addition to limited funding, the Department of Roads and Irrigation faced continued material shortages after the war. It was anticipated that steel, used as a reinforcement material, would be readily available in the years immediately following the war for highway construction. However, steel continued to be in short supply into the early 1950s, creating an obstacle in the development of an accelerated highway program. The shortage of skilled engineers also affected the department. Trained engineers who had left the department for the war effort were failing to return to positions in Nebraska's Department of Roads and Irrigation, often taking more lucrative positions elsewhere.⁷⁰ By the 1953-1954 Biennium, the required materials were no longer in short supply and delayed highway projects were back on schedule.⁷¹

Over the years the routes were relocated and new highways were constructed. Gradual improvements included the widening and paving of roads, the creation of shoulders, the addition of signs and safety measures to the road. Nebraska was quick to comply with federal standards and although they did not abandon gravel surfacing when much of the nation had moved to hard surfacing, Nebraska was constantly experimenting with new and innovative road surfaces.

By 1950, Nebraska's state highway system included 9,578 miles of road, of which 5,062 were graveled, 4,386 were hard-surfaced and 130 miles were dirt. In addition to maintaining the state highway system, the state by this time was also responsible for maintaining streets and highways in communities with populations under 2,500.⁷² In the 1950s converting Nebraska's gravel highways, which still included over half of the system, to hard-surfacing was a priority of the Department of Roads.⁷³ With funding remaining tight, the need for highway improvements in Nebraska began to be determined through the establishment of a Sufficiency Rating. The rating took into consideration surface conditions, economic factors, safety and service. The rating system process was described by John W. Hossack, former State Engineer, as follows:

Basically, you drove every mile of highway in the state and analyzed it as to its condition, width, and all the various things that would have to do with the condition, life, and service rating of that particular section. Then, every highway got a grade. Kind of like a report card, it got a grade from 0 to 100.⁷⁴

In 1953 the State Highway Commission was established by the Nebraska Legislature and replaced the Highway Advisory Commission. The State Highway Commission was formed to promote better relations between the public and the Department of Roads and Irrigation and to act as a liaison between citizens, the agency, and the governor. The State Highway Commission also served as an advisor to the State Engineer, establishing broad policies and forming a trunk

⁶⁷Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Twenty-Sixth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1945-1946* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1946), 1, 4.

⁶⁸Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Twenty-Seventh Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1947-1948* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1948), 3; Koster, 63.

⁶⁹Koster, 66.

⁷⁰*Twenty-Seventh Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1947-1948*, 3.

⁷¹Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Thirtieth Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1953-1954* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1954), 3.

⁷²Nebraska Highway Advisory Committee, 19.

⁷³Koster, 57-59.

⁷⁴Koster, 68. The quote was from George Koster's 1985 interview with John W. Hossack, former State Engineer.

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highway system to be financed with revenue generated from highway user taxes.⁷⁵ In 1957 the Nebraska Legislature divided the Department of Roads and Irrigation into three separate agencies: Department of Roads, Department of Motor Vehicles, and Department of Water Resources. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) included the Bureau of Highways and the Safety Patrol (in 1967 renamed the Nebraska State Patrol).⁷⁶

The Interstate System

The earliest plans for the national Interstate system were included in a 1939 Federal Bureau of Public Roads report that advocated the construction of a special system of direct interregional highways, with necessary connections through and around cities that would meet the requirements of the national defense in time of war, as well as the increasing demands of traffic. However, the project was delayed by World War II and the diversion of funds into mobilization of the war.⁷⁷ Further steps were taken in 1944, when the Federal-Aid Highway Act called upon the states and the Bureau of Public Roads to designate a national system of interstate highways, not to exceed 40,000 miles in total connecting state capitals, principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers by direct routes. Finally, the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act authorized construction of the 40,000 miles proposed in 1944. In passing the act, Congress declared it essential to the national interest to provide a national system of interstate highways for early completion, as authorized under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944.

General road construction and improvements increased in the late 1950s and continued in the 1960s. Over 500 miles of construction was completed on state highways in 1962. Construction projects were generally geared towards modernizing highways that had become inadequate due to increased traffic loads and deterioration. It was a goal of the Nebraska Department of Roads to maintain and improve to replace gravel surfaces and highway routes across the state. During these decades, the planning, design and construction of the interstate became the central focus of the Nebraska Department of Roads and the State Highway Commission. The Nebraska Department of Roads, the State Highway Commission, and the governor were responsible for developing and selecting the actual route within the general corridor outlined by the federal government.

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 had a significant impact on the development of Nebraska's highways and the volume of traffic they were able to serve. The legislation increased appropriations to states for Primary, Secondary, and Urban Highway construction and made a provision for a 41,000-mile Interstate Highway System. The Legislation authorized a 13-year construction period for the Interstate, which would be extended as states faced routing and funding difficulties. The entire system was anticipated to cost over \$27 billion, with the states responsible for only ten percent of the construction costs and the federal government covering the other 90 percent of costs. The intentions of the Interstate Highway System were described as follows:

Consisting of routes of highest importance to the Nation, which connect the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers, including important routes into, through, and around urban areas, serve the national defense, and connect at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in the Dominion of Canada and the Republic of Mexico.⁷⁸

The Interstate Highway System became the focus of the Nebraska Department of Roads. Work in Nebraska began almost immediately after the 1956 federal legislation was passed, and the construction was planned for four phases over an anticipated 15-year time line. In Nebraska, it took 17 years to complete the construction of the Interstate across the state. Despite a slow start in 1956 and 1957 and the struggles over the location of the highway, interstate construction picked up momentum and the majority of the interstate was completed in the 1960s. On October 19, 1974, the interstate was fully opened with the completion of a five-mile section west of Sidney. The final cost of completing I-80 in Nebraska was \$390 million, or about \$857,000 per mile.⁷⁹ Although behind the schedule outlined in the 1956 Highway Act, Nebraska was the first state to complete its main line Interstate system. Nationally, only 28,000 of the 41,000-mile Interstate system outlined in the

⁷⁵Koster, 69-70.

⁷⁶In 1981 the Nebraska State Patrol became a separate state agency.

⁷⁷James C. Creigh, "Constructing the Interstate Highway in Nebraska: Route and Funding Controversies," *Nebraska History* 72, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 44.

⁷⁸Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Thirty-First Biennial Report of the Department of Roads and Irrigation 1955-1956* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1956), 1.

⁷⁹Curt McConnell, "I-80 Changed Car Travel in Nebraska." *Lincoln Journal Star*. 29 March 1999, 14x. The "Golden Link" was meant to symbolize the "Golden Spike" that symbolically completed the first transcontinental railroad.

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1956 Highway Act were completed by the end of the 1960s. Routing controversies and right-of-way acquisition in urban areas delayed the completion of several sections for extended periods in some states.⁸⁰ The Interstate through Nebraska was completed in 1974.

Conclusion

From a random, haphazard system of unimproved dirt roads to modern hard surfaced highways and the completion of Interstate 80, automobile routes have been greatly transformed in Nebraska in less than a century. Rutted pathways evolved into the early named highways promoted by local citizen groups, which in turn developed into a system of state and federal highways that have been continuously improved for safety and efficiency. In Nebraska, as in the rest of the country, road development was influenced by both state and federal funding and road building standards.

The introduction of the Interstate in the 1960s ended the heyday of the earlier transcontinental highways, such as U.S. 30, which presently are designated as state or federal routes. Interstate 80 across Nebraska now serves as a national transportation thoroughfare and the state's major highway. The Nebraska Department of Roads has worked to improve not only the Interstate and an expressway system, but all highways within the state. Increased safety and the addition of modern surface materials have been a major focus of these improvements.

The Nebraska Department of Road's eight district offices manage approximately 9,950 miles of highway. These roads represent the evolution of the Nebraska highway system: roads following rutted trails and township lines to paved secondary roads connecting communities, the modern Interstate connecting Nebraska with the nation, and the urban freeway express system. All of these roads are vital to the state's transportation system.

THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY IN NEBRASKA

Development and Promotion

The broad Platte River valley in Nebraska was a natural corridor of travel. In the mid-nineteenth century it was the route of the Oregon-California Trail, the Mormon Trail and Pony Express. The Nebraska territorial legislature also authorized early cross-country roads that followed the Platte River. Next to come was the transcontinental Union Pacific Railroad in 1866. The Lincoln Highway, established in 1913, was another milestone in the evolution of the Platte River valley as a route for the nation's travel; a trail of the twentieth century and the nation's first transcontinental automobile route.

In a promotional booklet issued by the Lincoln Highway Association for its 1913 meeting in Detroit, the road in Nebraska was described:

At Omaha the state of Nebraska is entered, following the historical Overland Trail up the broad and prosperous Platte river valley. The entire distance across the length of this state is, approximately, 450 miles. The route is natural and easy. It affords opportunities for constructing a picturesque roadway such as cannot be equaled in any state in the union.⁸¹

The Lincoln Highway, developed and promoted in the early twentieth century, was to be a paved, toll free and cross-country highway. The Lincoln Highway Association and community supporters along its route propelled the highway into national significance as a major east-west transcontinental route.

In September of 1912, Carl Graham Fisher conceived of a paved and marked transcontinental highway that would be toll free, for use by all who sought the most direct route from the east to the west coast. As an entrepreneur, Fisher was founder of the Prest-O-Lite Company and one of the largest promoters of the Miami, Florida land boom. In 1911 he received national attention when he paved the Indianapolis Motor Speedway with brick and inaugurated the Indianapolis 500 automobile race.⁸²

In the fall of 1912 Fisher presented his plan at a dinner party. With open ears, leaders of the Indianapolis automobile manufacturing industry listened to the idea, praised the plan, and began offering their assistance. The businessmen knew,

⁸⁰Kaszynski, 192.

⁸¹"Lincoln Highway Unchanged," *Columbus Telegram*, October 3, 1913, page 7.

⁸²Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 5.

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however, that the outcome of the highway depended not only on their own enthusiasm and capital, but also the support of the general public. Due to the overall lack of improved roads, Fisher had no problem gaining interest from the people. Soon after, his dream of building a passable route from one coast to the other became a nationwide initiative to connect the oceans.

Three months after Fisher's initial announcement, he received a letter from Henry B. Joy, president of the Packard Motor Car Company. The letter not only contained a pledge of money, but it also offered an idea that would further the public's excitement and have profound patriotic appeal.⁸³ Joy's intention was for the highway to memorialize Abraham Lincoln.⁸⁴ Knowing that the original name, the Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway, was not as inspiring, Fisher was quick to adopt the new name of the Lincoln Highway. The following spring Fisher called together several automobile manufacturers and other highway supporters for informal meetings. It was not until the July 1, 1913, meeting, however, that the Lincoln Highway Association was officially organized. After electing officials, the men announced the purpose of their organization. The statement read as follows:

To procure the establishment of a continuous improved highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, open to lawful traffic of all description without toll charges: such highway to be known, in memory of Abraham Lincoln, as 'The Lincoln Highway.'⁸⁵

Although they had announced the highway's establishment, the Lincoln Highway Association still did not have a formal route mapped. The highway was to start at New York City and end at the western terminus of San Francisco. The Association's goal was to have the route paved in time for the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. With the termini announced, the organization did not disclose any information about the points through which the route would pass between the two coasts. Knowing that the success of the project depended on contributions of the public on a nationwide level, Fisher first wanted to gain support from the nation in its entirety, not only the towns, counties, and states on the route. The association appointed a team to research and determine the highway's exact route.

Henry Joy, the first president of the Lincoln Highway Association, stated that the most important factor in determining the route was directness. Other factors included the need to take advantage of easy terrain and natural paths while avoiding the congestion of large cities.⁸⁶ By August 26, 1913, the route was announced. The coast-to-coast highway started in Times Square and traveled west for 3,389 miles, ending at Lincoln Park in San Francisco. After going through New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the route traversed the Midwest states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. From there, the route turned southwest to cross the Missouri River. The Lincoln Highway crossed Nebraska and went on to California via Wyoming, Utah, and Nevada.

In Nebraska, the Lincoln Highway largely followed the Platte River route. The 450-mile route in Nebraska, designated in 1913, entered Omaha in the east from Iowa, crossed 13 counties and 47 towns, and exited at Bushnell near the state's western border with Wyoming. The Lincoln Highway connected these main communities across the state: Omaha, Fremont, Columbus, Grand Island, Kearney, North Platte, Ogallala, Sidney, and Kimball. The main route of the Lincoln Highway traveled through western Nebraska going northwest from Big Springs, west of Ogallala, into Wyoming. An optional route or loop, referred to as the "Colorado Lincoln Highway Feeder" traveled southwest from Big Springs to Denver and resumed with the Lincoln Highway in Cheyenne, Wyoming. In the mid-1920s the loop from Big Springs to Colorado was abandoned as part of the designated Lincoln Highway route.

On October 8, 1913, Central City, Nebraska, became the first city in the country to ratify the Lincoln Highway Proclamation. Over 200 road proponents met and unanimously chose to support the transcontinental highway in Nebraska.⁸⁷ That same month, leaders of the Lincoln Highway Association called for a nationwide celebration to dedicate the highway in the memory of Abraham Lincoln. They asked state executives along the route to proclaim October 31, 1913, as the day of celebration. H. E. Fredrickson, Nebraska's first state counsel of the Lincoln Highway Association, described the preparations underway for Omaha's celebration:

⁸³Hokanson, 9.

⁸⁴William Kaszynski, *The American Highway* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co, Inc., 2000), 38.

⁸⁵Hokanson, 11.

⁸⁶"History and Facts," *The Lincoln Way*, n.d., <<http://www.paus30.org/history.html>> (Accessed 9 August 2001).

⁸⁷Carol Ahlgren and David Anthon, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automotive Age," *Nebraska History* 73, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 173.

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I have eight large loads of old street car ties and three barrels of good burning oil for our bonfire, \$100 worth of fireworks and the mayor and others for short speeches. Most of our retail stores will be decorated in red, white, and blue.⁸⁸

Throughout Nebraska, communities celebrated with symphony performances, luncheons, fireworks, parades, bonfires, and patriotic speeches about the benefits of the highway and its namesake. For example Nebraska's celebrations included: the Symphony Club performing in Ogallala; Fredrickson leading the celebration in Omaha by lighting the bonfire in view of 10,000 spectators; and farmers near Kearney placing torches along 20 miles of the highway.⁸⁹ Excitement and celebration of the route, on a smaller scale, was evident well into the following year. In February of 1914, the owner of Kearney's Midway Hotel, L. A. Dennison, erected a sign in the tower of his building. Lighted with electricity, the red, white, and blue "L" kept with the patriotic spirit of the named highway. Furthermore, the entire length of the highway through Kearney was lit with 100 watt bulbs and the road through town was renamed "Lincoln Way."⁹⁰

Although the counties and towns through which the route crossed were celebrating, many communities vying for the highway were left disappointed and withdrew their pledge of financial assistance. As a result of the loss of financial contributions, the Lincoln Highway Association realized that they obtained less than half of the funds needed to meet their goal of a paved road by the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. Since the success of the highway depended on public enthusiasm, the organization was determined to retain community interest and support and quietly postponed their plans to pave the highway in its entirety. To rally support, the Lincoln Highway Association came up with promotional devices to increase the highway's popularity.

One promotional scheme was the development of "Seedling Miles." The Lincoln Highway Association preached that "Great oaks from little acorns will grow; long roads of concrete from 'seedling miles' will spring."⁹¹ The concept of seedling miles was to hard-surface small sections of road through donations that would, in turn, encourage communities and states to continue improvement along the entire route. In 1916 *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* described seedling miles as "strips of standard concrete road surface." The road guide further explained that the first seedling miles were constructed with cement donated by the Lincoln Highway Association and cement producers with hopes that the traveler would "appreciate the value of hard-surfaced roads" and encourage similar construction throughout other sections of dirt road through donations.⁹²

Although many communities along the Lincoln Highway applied for seedling miles, these applications were delayed and sometimes lapsed because of legal or financial difficulties. Suppliers abandoned or delayed their offer of donated concrete because of mill strikes, congestion on the railroads, or wartime demands. Although it sometimes took months or even years, many communities accepted offers for a seedling mile and waited out the delays. Donations by the Portland Cement Company and local sponsors provided for the construction of a few a mile-long stretches of hard surfaced highway in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Nebraska. Generally, the seedling miles were constructed of concrete, one mile in length, and were located on the edge of town. On November 3, 1915, Grand Island, Nebraska celebrated as it became the first city in the state to complete a seedling mile.⁹³ This stretch of road was located just east of town. District School Number 74 on the road was renamed Seedling Mile School.⁹⁴ Two weeks after Grand Island's seedling mile was completed, Kearney exhibited a finished seedling mile, 15 feet in width, 5 feet wider than the recommended 10 feet.⁹⁵

Exceeding all others, both within Nebraska and nationally, the most remarkable seedling "mile" was near Fremont. Throughout the span of the Lincoln Highway, the seedling "mile" near Fremont was the longest measuring six miles. In 1914, the Association's State Consul in Nebraska, George F. Wolz, convinced the Fremont Commercial Club to donate \$8,000

⁸⁸The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade that Made Transportation History* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1935), 70.

⁸⁹Ahlgren and Anthone, 173.

⁹⁰"Lincoln Highway Marked in Kearney: Midway Installs Big Sign and City Will Light Street," *Kearney Daily Hub*, 18 February 1914.

⁹¹Tom Anderson, "Hall County's Seedling Mile Holds Memories of Nation's First Transcontinental Highway," *Prairie Pioneer Press* 25, no. 10 (October, 1991).

⁹²*The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 1916, 30.

⁹³Ahlgren and Anthone, 176, and U.S. West Research, Inc., *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Hall County, Nebraska* (July 1995), 47-48. Available at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebr.

⁹⁴"History of Our School," *Seedling Mile Elementary School*, 8 November 2000, <<http://www.gi.esu10.k12.ne.us/SDGI/smileweb/historyadult.html>> (Accessed 3 March 2002).

⁹⁵Ahlgren and Anthone, 176.

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dollars to purchase 3,000 barrels of cement.⁹⁶ Although the war delayed cement shipment until 1918, the concrete section began at the northern boundary of Fremont and provided a paved road westerly for six miles.

The Fremont seedling mile also was the first section in the state to incorporate new methods of highway construction. New construction methods used for the Fremont seedling mile included the use of a moving concrete mixer, the piping of water to the mixer, and delivery trucks transporting a batch of concrete. The Fremont seedling mile was only the second area of road in Nebraska to be constructed under the 1916 Federal-Aid Road Act.⁹⁷

After this 6-mile section of road was paved with concrete and other seedling miles were completed, the hard surface sections of the Lincoln Highway began to convert skeptics of concrete as a road surface material. In a letter to the Lincoln Highway Association's national headquarters in Detroit, Wolz outlined the condition of the highway in August 1919. He expressed that, with tourists and trucks traveling through Fremont daily, the condition of the road was better than ever before.⁹⁸ The Lincoln Highway Association had proven the value of a hard-surfaced highway. After 1919 cement manufacturers no longer felt it was necessary to donate materials or labor toward these seedling miles and no other promotional seedling miles were constructed. Nationally, seedling miles had been constructed in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska.⁹⁹

Most areas of the route, particularly segments of the Nebraska route, remained a dirt trail that only grew more apparent with every vehicle that drove the highway and created deeper ruts. It zigzagged along section line roads or paralleled the Union Pacific Railroad. To make the route easy to follow, the Lincoln Highway Association painted telephone poles with stripe of red, white and blue and markers to designate the route. The markers consisted of metal signs featuring Lincoln's profile or a 21 inch band around telephone poles painted with the Lincoln Highway insignia—a red, white, and blue stripe and the "L" for Lincoln Highway.¹⁰⁰

The Lincoln Highway Association did its part to promote the road. Members gave radiator emblems to anyone who subscribed to the organization and requested car manufacturers who were association members to place the "L" insignia on their products. They sold lapel buttons, pennants, and stickers with the association's insignia as well as portraits of President Lincoln and framed copies of their proclamation. One of the association's most crafty promotions was to solicit school-aged children for pennies. In return, their affiliated school would receive certificates of membership.¹⁰¹

Efforts of the Lincoln Highway Association continued strong until the late 1920s. When the Lincoln Highway nationally became part of the system of federal numbered highways, the road was broken up nationally into several numbered highways. In Nebraska, the Lincoln Highway became Route 30. As the federal designation occurred, numbered route signs replaced Lincoln Highway markers, initiating the demise of the promotion of this and other named highways. Following the termination of the active Lincoln Highway Association in December 1927, small promotional efforts continued. In 1928, Gael Hoag, the last paid representative of the association, took the final official coast-to-coast tour of the highway. Hoag also arranged for approximately 3,000 concrete directional markers to be constructed with a small bronze bust of Lincoln and a directional arrow. On September 1, 1928, Boy Scout troops across the country erected these concrete markers in one of the last efforts of the Lincoln Highway Association.¹⁰²

Following the Road Across Nebraska

The early route of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska traveled west from Omaha, generally following the route of the Platte River valley and the Union Pacific Railroad line across the state. The Lincoln Highway was developed largely by connecting

⁹⁶The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade...*, 134-53; The Lincoln Highway Association, *A Picture of Progress on the Lincoln Way* (Detroit, Mich.: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1920), 23, states that the seedling mile was seven miles; Ahlgren and Anthone, 176, states the cost of barrels was \$5,000.

⁹⁷The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade...*, 135.

⁹⁸"The Forum" (Detroit, Mich.: The Lincoln Highway Association, August 15, 1919).

⁹⁹The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade...*, 135; Hokanson, 82.

¹⁰⁰"History and Facts"; Grant L. Shumway, ed. *History of Western Nebraska and Its People*, vol. 2 (Lincoln, Nebr.: The Western Publishing & Engraving Company, 1921), 323.

¹⁰¹The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade...*, 119-20.

¹⁰²Chris Lewis, "Ambition Paved the Way," *The Lincoln Highway: An Introduction to America's First Transcontinental Road for the Automobile*, October 7, 1998, <<http://www.ugcs.caltech.edu/~jlin/lincoln/papers/tribune/ambition.html>> (Accessed 15 August 2001).

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a system of existing roads. The earliest roads served local farm-to-market transportation, often described as “wagon roads,” and the more developed “postal roads,” which accommodated Rural Free Delivery (RFD) mail service to rural areas.

In many places, section-line roads were identified as the route of the Lincoln Highway. This system resulted in a zigzag of left and right turns; “stairstep” routes.

However, much of the original route of the Lincoln Highway in the state was to be located on railroad right-of-way. When the Union Pacific Railroad Company developed railroad lines across the state, the federal government granted as much as a 400-foot right-of-way as a subsidy. However, because the railroad did not require this much right-of-way, they leased portions of it to counties to use as public roads. Many of these existing county roads were incorporated into the route of the Lincoln Highway. The 1915 “Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway” stated that in Nebraska “(f)requent crossings of the Union Pacific Railroad are encountered, and tourists are cautioned to use extreme care, although normally the trains can be seen for long distances before the approach.”¹⁰³ By 1919, about 160 miles of the highway was located on Union Pacific right-of-way.¹⁰⁴

Early improvements to the Lincoln Highway were hampered in Nebraska because the road was located in the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. The expenditure of Nebraska’s federal aid on any portion of the Lincoln Highway that followed on the outer 50 feet of the railroad’s right-of-way was prohibited.¹⁰⁵ As a result, nearly one-third of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska was not eligible for the federal assistance appropriated by the 1916 act. It was not until late 1919 that the federal government agreed that federal aid could be used on these portions of the Lincoln Highway. After agreement was reached, federal money, as well as county and state money, was concentrated to improve the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska. The official history of the Lincoln Highway Association states that the agreement with Union Pacific in Nebraska brought about the longest realignment of the Lincoln Highway in the United States.¹⁰⁶ Nearly half of the total 450 miles of the highway would be located on Union Pacific right-of-way.

In 1919 the state of Nebraska designated the Lincoln Highway as part of the state highway system and continued to improve the route. By the start of 1920 more than \$615,000 in state and county money had been used to improve the Lincoln Highway, including relocation of the road in some sections. This money, in addition to a \$3,000,000 bond issue, helped pay for new construction of more than 63 miles in Dodge, Hall, Dawson, and Lincoln counties.¹⁰⁷ The road construction was on completely new routes and the process occurred gradually on a county-by-county basis.¹⁰⁸ The April 1919 issue of *Nebraska Highways*, the official publication of the Nebraska Good Roads Association, made reference to the upcoming realignment outside of Grand Island. The article read as follows:

The Nebraska highway department secured the right-of-way for a new route that would parallel the Union Pacific road west of Grand Island. Eight miles could be saved between Grand Island and Gibbon. Improved construction methods will insure a better road.¹⁰⁹

The Lincoln Highway was still bound to section line roads laid out by the township and range land survey system. Due to this, the Lincoln Highway made endless 90-degree turns and crossed many railroad grades. A series of Lincoln Highway reroutes involved straightening the right angle-turning, known as “stairsteps,” by relocating the Lincoln from section roads to new alignments that were more direct. In 1917 the Lincoln Highway in Dawson and Lincoln Counties was relocated to the edge of the Union Pacific right-of-way, bypassing miles of stairsteps. This relocation included the Gothenburg stairstep on the south side of the Platte River, which was eliminated with the opening of the North Platte River Bridge, shortening the Lincoln Highway between Gothenburg and North Platte by 18 miles.¹¹⁰ By 1928 the stairstep routing was eliminated.

¹⁰³ The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway. Detroit, Michigan: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1915, page 100.

¹⁰⁴ Columbus Telegram, May 1919, section 1, page 1.

¹⁰⁵ The Lincoln Highway Association. *A Picture of Progress on the Lincoln Highway*. Detroit, Michigan: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1920, page 23.

¹⁰⁶ Ahlgren and Anthone, 177-78.

¹⁰⁷ The Lincoln Highway Association, *A Picture of Progress on the Lincoln Way*, 23.

¹⁰⁸ Ahlgren and Anthone, 177-78.

¹⁰⁹ “Will Shorten Grand Island to Kearney Road,” *Nebraska Highways* 2, no. 7 (April 1929): 5.

¹¹⁰ Kevin Patrick, “Lincoln Highway in Nebraska” Draft Historic Context, Fall 2002. Available at the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, Lincoln, Nebr.

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Those that paralleled the railroad were the subject of great interest to government officials and the Lincoln Highway Association. The Union Pacific supported the realignment, which minimized train wrecks caused by cars crossing the tracks. The realignments eliminated grade crossings, while shortening the route.

In addition to the Union Pacific Railroad agreement, funding made available by the 1921 Federal-Aid Highway Act also led to improvements and realignments of the Lincoln Highway. Beginning in the late 1920s route changes occurred in Platte County as efforts continued to eliminate railroad crossings. Lincoln Highway Director Hoag, State Consul George Wolz, and State Engineer Roy Cochran traveled the Lincoln Highway across Nebraska to determine which railroad crossings should be eliminated. They agreed to eliminate six of the seven crossings between Columbus and Grand Island, shifting the route in this section to the south side of the tracks. In April 1930 State Engineer Cochran reported additional improvements and changes to the Lincoln Highway. Cochran noted that the segment from Columbus to Schuyler had been paved and a viaduct would be built at Columbus. In addition with the upcoming paving of a 2-mile stretch at Schuyler, the highway would be paved from Omaha to Columbus.¹¹¹

By the mid-1920s the popularity of named highways reached new heights. The large number of named roads, along with an increased use of motor vehicles, caused great confusion regarding the highway system. To improve this situation a numbered system of U.S. highways was established in 1926. The department designated 145 roads, or 76,000 miles across the United States as part of a national, uniform system of marking highway routes. Much of the Lincoln Highway route through Nebraska became part of U.S. 30, which extended from New Jersey to Oregon. The new numbered route, however, made several deviations from the original Lincoln Highway.¹¹² The name, Lincoln Highway, remained associated with the route for many years after its designation as U.S. 30.

By 1930 several new sections of road were constructed for the new numbered route. The most significant route changes occurring during this time was the bypassing of towns. For example, the original Lincoln Highway and its Grand Island seedling mile was bypassed with a new stretch of U.S. 30 by 1930.¹¹³ The community of Big Springs in Deuel County was also bypassed to the north with the new U.S. 30. The greatest bypass change was the relocation of U.S. 30 around Nebraska's largest city, Omaha, and Council Bluffs, Iowa. The route was moved north of Omaha to the town of Blair, where the newly constructed toll-free Lincoln Memorial Bridge crossed over the Missouri River. This resulted in the redesignation of the route of the Lincoln Highway to follow the new U.S. 30 route through Blair.

The July 30, 1930, issue of the *Omaha World-Herald* stated that the rerouting of the highway would have little affect on traffic. However, what outraged local citizens was not entirely the rerouting, but instead the manner in which the redesignation came about.¹¹⁴ Without notifying Omaha or Council Bluffs officials, several crews of workers went to remove the Lincoln Highway markers from the original route to the new one in the middle of the night.¹¹⁵ Two days later the *Omaha World-Herald* printed the Lincoln Highway Association's rebuttal. Gael S. Hoag, secretary of the organization, stated that "Lincoln Highway" was a copyrighted name. Therefore, the markers which line the highway are private property, owned by the association, and could be placed where they saw fit. He went on to explain that, because the markers were private property, they only need permission from the towns in which the signs were to be placed and not from the places they were removed.¹¹⁶

Dirt to Hard Surface: Driving the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska

Throughout the early history of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska, road maintenance and improvement was an ongoing endeavor. In 1914, a year after the Lincoln Highway was established, the State Board of Irrigation, Highways, and Drainage Biennial Report stated that the route was "in fairly good shape through the state excepting at the western portion, where there is room for a large improvement."¹¹⁷ The eastern portion of the highway was graded, but the west section, having not been

¹¹¹Carol Ahlgren, "The Lincoln Highway Comes to Platte County," *The Lincoln Highway Forum* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1998): 10-11.

¹¹²U.S. West Research, Inc., *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Platte County, Nebraska* (July 1996), 85. Available at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebr.

¹¹³Anderson, 3.

¹¹⁴"Omaha Protests Lincoln Highway Change in Route," *Omaha World-Herald*, 23 July 1930.

¹¹⁵Ahlgren and Anthone, 178.

¹¹⁶"Strong Protests as Omaha Loses Lincoln Highway," *Omaha World-Herald*, 25 July 1930.

¹¹⁷State Board of Irrigation, *Tenth Biennial Report of The State Board of Irrigation: Highways and Drainage 1912-1914* (Lincoln, Nebr.: State Board of Irrigation, Highways and Drainage, 1914).

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graded was only made up of deeply rutted trails. For the next several years, with the exception of the seedling miles, much of the road surface remained dirt.

One touring guide of the period described the highway. "Good dirt road through absolutely level country. In dry weather good time can be made. Slippery in wet weather; use care."¹¹⁸ In its description of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska, the 1916 official road guide proclaimed that, "the tourist will find many indications that assure the complete future improvement of this section of the Lincoln Highway." It highlighted the seedling miles at Grand Island and Kearney and made reference to the amount of money spent in this state on improvements.¹¹⁹ However, the fifth edition of the road guide, published eight years later, explained that permanent improvements were still pending for many of Nebraska's roads.¹²⁰

In the summer of 1919, an army caravan of nearly 100 vehicles crossed the United States by way of the Lincoln Highway. The convoy resulted out of a campaign for better roads and to create a national highway commission to disburse federal funds.¹²¹ One of the caravan members on this trip was Lieutenant Colonel Dwight D. Eisenhower, who later served as 34th President of the United States and became a major proponent of the national interstate highway system.

The purpose of the convoy was two-fold. First, the caravan was to test the motor vehicle for army transportation, but more importantly, the caravan was to test road conditions of the highway and promote improvement. The trip pointed out the poor condition of the highway and the need for a good transcontinental route, especially in the West. Due to the poor conditions in Nebraska, it took the caravan 10 days to cross the state. On August 5th the convoy was held up for seven hours near North Platte. Their heavy trucks were stuck in quicksand that appeared dry on the surface due to evaporating water. In a telegram sent to Washington, First Lieutenant E.R. Jackson stated that the 200-foot stretch of highway as the "worst stretch of road we have yet encountered."¹²² This stretch of the Lincoln Highway would prove to be a problem for the road department for at least another decade.

After the caravan crossed Nebraska, the Army reported that the entire length of the highway in the state was dirt, with the exception of some city streets and the three areas of seedling miles at Grand Island, Kearney, and Fremont. West of Dawson County, the road at this time remained no more than a rutted trail.¹²³

In 1919 there was still more than 1,800 miles of dirt road across the entire length of the Lincoln Highway, or approximately 50 percent of the national highway.¹²⁴ Nebraska's highway department reported that by the mid-1920s many improvements were continuing to be made to the Lincoln Highway. The reports showed a general trend between 1923 and 1926 toward paving, or at least upgrading much of the highway from an earth to graveled surfacing. Other improvements included constructing and strengthening drainage structures and culverts to help control flooding. By the mid-1920s, only 84 miles of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska was still dirt road.¹²⁵ The remainder of the route in the state featured gravel roads, a small number of brick roads and concrete sections - including seedling miles in Grand Island and Kearney and a 6-mile long seedling mile in Fremont. Near the community of Elkhorn, a brick section was laid in 1920 using a technique where bricks are set in sand over a concrete foundation.¹²⁶

A 1927-28 biennial report of the Nebraska Department of Public Works stated:

On account of the traffic on the Lincoln Highway, particularly east of North Platte, and on account of soil conditions, difficulty was experienced in maintaining this road in good shape. The soil near the Platte River is about 18 inches to 24 inches deep and is underlaid with river sand. During the spring

¹¹⁸ TIB Automobile Route Book, 1918. Kansas City: TIB Automobile Route Book Company, page 248.

¹¹⁹ *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 1916, 101.

¹²⁰ *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, Fifth Edition (Detroit, Mich.: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1924), 371.

¹²¹ Bruce E. Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1987), 52-53.

¹²² Tom White, "The Khaki-Colored Caravan," *Nebraskaland* (November 1999): 24-25, 30.

¹²³ White, 30.

¹²⁴ White, 24.

¹²⁵ *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 1924, 372.

¹²⁶ Bob Adwers and Kathleen Fimple, "Lincoln Highway," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, October 1987. Available at the Nebraska State Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, Lincoln, Nebr.

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and fall, water rises up to within about 12 inches of the surface causing the surfacing of the road under heavy traffic to become wavy and pitted.¹²⁷

By the 1929 and 1930 report, the trend in improvements shifted to paving the highway. By this time, portions of the highway that were not paved were surfaced with oiled gravel. Only small sections of gravel road remained into the early 1930s. As Nebraska's constitution prohibited a state debt of more than \$100,000, road improvement projects in Nebraska often had to be constructed on a gradual basis, as state and federal funding became available.¹²⁸

According to the November 6, 1935 issue of the *Omaha World-Herald*, the paving was complete on the Lincoln Highway. Reporting on a celebration, the headline read, "Lincoln Highway Now Hard-Surfaced Across State; North Platte Celebrates." A ribbon-cutting ceremony formally opened a 30-mile stretch of paving west of North Platte and officially finished Nebraska's first cross-state, hard-surfaced highway. Designated by then as U.S. 30, the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska consisted of 323 miles of concrete paving and 139 miles of bituminous material.¹²⁹

The heyday of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30, as the state's major transcontinental route came to an end with the construction of Interstate 80 across the state in the 1960s and early 1970s. After the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 authorized the National System of Interstate Highways, controversy on where the new interstate would cross Nebraska ensued. In 1959 five state senators of Nebraska's Unicameral Legislature introduced a plan that would build the interstate adjacent to U.S. 30 and incorporate its two lanes into the new four-lane superhighway.¹³⁰ After it received much criticism from the Nebraska Department of Roads the bill failed. Interstate 80, however, was built paralleling U.S. 30 but did not directly incorporate the highway into the route. In 1974, Nebraska celebrated the completion of Interstate 80 in Nebraska, celebrated by the laying of a "Golden Link" near Sidney.

Conclusion

The construction of Interstate 80 through Nebraska eventually led to a decrease in transcontinental travel on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Although the highway's heyday may have ended with the opening of the Interstate, the significance of this highway in Nebraska is evident by the extant cultural resources found along its route.

¹²⁷Nebraska Department of Public Works, *Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Department of Public Works 1927-1928* (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Department of Public Works, 1928).

¹²⁸"Lincoln Highway Now Hard-Surfaced Across State: North Platte Celebrates" *Omaha World-Herald*, 6 November 1935.

¹²⁹"Lincoln Highway Now Hard-Surfaced Across State: North Platte Celebrates," *Omaha World-Herald*, November 6, 1935.

¹³⁰James C. Creigh, "Constructing the Interstate Highway in Nebraska: Route and Funding Controversies," *Nebraska History* 72, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 48.

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F. Associated Property Types

Evaluation Methods

In order to qualify for listing, resources must have a documented association with the Lincoln Highway by applying the four National Register of Historic Places "Criteria for Evaluation." The evaluation of potentially eligible properties will include examples of one of the identified related property types and meet one or more of the National Register criteria. Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 resources must retain integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling and/or association of a historic period(s).

Application of the National Register Criteria

Related property types are evaluated for eligibility applying the four National Register criteria. An individual resource or historic district may qualify for the National Register under one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion A – Event

A property is eligible for the National Register for significant associations with a single event, a pattern of events or activities, or historical trends in the development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Related property types will qualify for the National Register under Criterion A for history and association with transportation, commerce, travel patterns and development along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 during a historic period(s). These may include the promotion or development of the highway, pioneering or advancement of road construction, or representative of highway-related travel or commerce.

A property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for significance associations with a single event, a pattern of events or activities, or historical trends in the development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. They will qualify for the National Register under Criterion A for history and association with transportation, commerce, travel patterns and development along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 during a historic period(s).

Criterion B – Person

A property is eligible for the National Register if the property conveys a strong association with a person significant to the history and development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 during a historic period(s). Under Criterion B the specific contributions of an individual must be identified and documented and the associated property must best illustrate the person's significant achievements. These may include a property that best represents an individual's importance in the promotion or development of the highway, contributions to the pioneering or advancement of engineering or road construction, a person that advanced or innovated a type of roadside business or highway-related commerce, or those of a person whose contributions to the development of the highway can be specifically articulated. Criterion B can be identified with business people who promoted the Lincoln Highway as an organization that depended on local support for the development and promotion of the highway. When federal and state support became available, the highway became a focus of government, not necessarily by the promotion of individuals. In some cases, a person's residence or business building could qualify if no associated highway-related properties are found.

Criterion C – Design/Construction

A property that is eligible for the National Register must be significantly associated with the history and development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 during a historic period(s). Under Criterion C resources must embody a distinctive characteristic of a type, period or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic value, and/or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. They may exemplify a design, construction method, architecture, engineering or construction type, a type of roadside business building possessing architectural qualities, innovations or an evolution in road building or an associated roadside business type. Under Criterion C, "type, form and function" or distinctive architecture or engineering most often represents significance under this criterion.

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Criterion D – Information Potential

Criterion D is usually applied to archeology, in the case of historic highways, “historical archeology.” They must have yielded or have the potential to yield information data and address research questions. In very rare cases, an early alignment of the road will qualify for listing under Criterion D if it could yield information about early road engineering and construction methods. In these cases, historical documentation would otherwise found to be inadequate. Through investigation, information may be learned about a period of road design and construction prior to the development of standard specifications, such as if archival records are inadequate and research fails to yield information. Properties must remain sufficiently intact to potentially yield information. Appropriate study techniques would have to be employed. Non-extant historic buildings or structures would not qualify under this criterion since documentation is commonly available or other examples of a type remain extant.

Criterion Considerations

In some cases National Register “Criterion Considerations” should be applied to the eligibility of related property types associated with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30. Two Criterion Considerations are most likely to apply:

Criteria Consideration B: Moved Properties

Properties that have been moved may be eligible for the National Register for their association with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 if they retain an orientation, setting and general environs similar to the original and should maintain a location, connection and physical association with the highway. A moved property will be significant primarily for architectural or engineering value or if it is the surviving property most importantly associated with a historic person or event.

Criteria Consideration G: Properties Less Than 50 Years Old

Properties associated with U.S. 30 may include resources that are less than 50 years old, applying requirements of Criterion Consideration G. Properties less than 50 years old should be rare, highly intact, exceptionally distinctive or important, or a single example of a property type.

Period(s) of Significance

Historic resources represent the context of history and development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 as a component of the automobile transportation network from its origins of the Lincoln Highway Association in 1913 through c.1960, when the 50-year cutoff for the National Register period of significance is approached. Properties must have an association with the highway during the period(s) of significance. Some resources may predate the establishment of the Lincoln Highway in 1913 but could be evaluated within a period of significance if they became associated with the Lincoln Highway and achieved significance due to this association. In some cases Criterion Consideration G may be applicable when beyond the 50-year cutoff for the National Register of Historic Places.

Integrity

Properties must retain acceptable levels of historic integrity to qualify for the National Register. The aspects of integrity are: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A property or group of properties that meet one or more of the National Register criteria and retain sufficient integrity should be considered potentially eligible for the National Register if dating to a period(s) of significance.

Several resource types were once prevalent on Nebraska’s highways but are now disappearing from the highway landscape. The relative scarcity and availability of comparable properties should be used to inform the degree that alterations affect a property’s historic integrity. Many highway resources are deteriorating, vacant, or no longer in their original use. However, this does not usually affect the historical association and may not affect the historic integrity of these resources.

Alterations completed within period(s) of significance generally will not diminish the historic integrity of the property. Property types associated with highway construction and roadside travel on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 changed or evolved due to many factors, including roadway improvements and marketing techniques. In these cases, alterations may not diminish integrity and may have themselves achieved significance.

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Fewer alterations should be present on resources that are ubiquitous highway resources, as numerous examples in better physical condition can better represent the property type. To be eligible for the National Register these should retain a higher degree of physical integrity.

Significant alterations occurring beyond the period of significance of the 1960s will diminish the overall integrity of a resource, disqualifying it from National Register listing. Significant alterations include major changes made to buildings and structures such as structural alterations, additions or façade changes.

Levels of Significance

Resources associated with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 can be evaluated at local, statewide or national levels of significance. The highway traversed many states nationwide. Since there are only limited surveys that have been accomplished across all of the states through which the Lincoln Highway/U.S.30 traversed, significance at a national level has not been applied since a comparative study cannot be made of resources in each state. A national level of significance is, therefore, beyond the scope of this document.

Statewide significance can be applied under Criteria A, B, C and/or D. Statewide significance should be applied to related property types that represent an aspect of the history of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30, such as those considered as major components representative of the highway system as a whole. Properties may include those that are now rare, uncommon, or relate to a particular body of resources that can demonstrate statewide impact or association. A property significant at the state level will possess historical associations that extend beyond a local area.

Local significance can be evaluated under Criteria A, B, C and/or D. Significance may be applied to related property types found on or near the routes of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 frequently. It will apply to resources that served local and regional trade but bear a documented association to the highway. Resources of local significance include those that are ubiquitous and found in many, if not all, locales.

Related Property Types

Property types are buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts. For the purpose of this document, historic highway resources are identified as properties associated with transportation, commerce, a personage, architecture or engineering and/or research potential. Historic highway resources encompass a wide range of property types. A discussion of the prominent property types and examples related to the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 includes:

- Gas Stations: Filling Stations and Service Stations
- Automobile Agencies, Garages and Dealerships
- The Automobile Row and Commercial Strip
- Commercial Districts
- Truck Transport and Associated Sites
- Tourist Sites
- Markers, Signing and Monuments
- Campgrounds, Tourist Parks and Comfort Stations
- Wayside Areas and Parks
- Boarding Houses, Hotels, Cabin Camps, and Motels
- Roadhouses and Rural Crossroads Stores
- Restaurants, Food Stands, Diners and Drive-ins
- Man-made Landscape Features
- Natural Landscape Features and Viewsheds
- Bridges and Culverts
- Roadways

Gas Stations: Filling Stations and Service Stations

Description

The gas station was developed in the early twentieth century to provide petroleum and other products exclusive to the automobile. They grew rapidly in number with the phenomenal acceptance of the automobile and as numbers of

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motorists that took to the road. The gas station became a marketing operation of both large companies and the hundreds of small independent companies and operators. The gas station as a marketing outlet is represented by the following: the "filling station" and the "service station." Their type, form and function can be described as the "curbside pump;" "shed," "house," "house with canopy," "house with bays" and "oblong box."¹³¹

The early "drive up" source of gasoline was the "curbside pump" placed in front of businesses, such as automobile agencies, garages, dealerships, liveries, implement shops, hardware and general merchandise stores. With a pump and underground storage tank this was a convenient and effective source for a fill of gasoline. However, the proliferation of these curbside filling stations soon came to the attention of city officials especially when located in the larger, more concentrated commercial districts. Their underground storage tank and pump often required the operation to be placed in the public right-of-way. Concerns about fire hazards, odor, noise, and pedestrian and traffic conflicts were voiced. Fire and zoning ordinances enacted in larger cities during the 1910s and 1920s eliminated curbside operations. Curbside pumps, however, remained a fixture in small villages and rural crossroads stores.

The first off-street, drive-in "filling station" is so-named because it offered only a limited line of products and services, mostly a fill of gasoline. Among the first were utilitarian "sheds," which began to appear in the decade of the 1910s. Some types were prefabricated; others built as common sheds and self-built for local operations and taking their cues from utilitarian buildings used by dealers in grain, lumber and coal or those familiar to petroleum operations used at oil yards or bulk stations. As oil companies began constructing these sheds in neighborhoods and downtowns where aesthetics were important the appearance of the shed station was objectionable. These utilitarian structures were sometimes eliminated in the highly concentrated commercial districts by local zoning ordinances.

Operators sought a better appearance for their stations. These often took the form of a "house" and "house with canopy." As the name suggests, the house type filling station took on the appearance or details of a domestic house. These were sometimes described as "bungalows," due either to their small size or architectural style and/or details. The typical house type consisted of an office, perhaps a storage or workroom and single restroom. Products and services were limited and included free air, water for batteries and radiators, lubricating oils, tire repair and a small line of automotive parts. Outdoor grease pits and hoists provided lubrication services. Among the first to apply an attractive style and standardized type were the architect-designed stations of the Standard Oil Company of Nebraska, built from 1914 to 1919. The house with canopy was similar to the house type, but had a canopy that extended over the pumps to shelter customers and employees in inclement weather.

Many filling stations were built by small independent retailers in a manner preferred by the operator, using designs worked out with local contractors or observations of industry trends. The house and the house with canopy were erected largely in the 1920s. The large oil companies chose a standardized design. One of the finest of examples was architect-designed for the Standard Oil Company of Nebraska and used statewide throughout the 1920s. Another example was the standardized stations built by the Continental Oil Company in Nebraska. Standardized designs allowed the public to easily identify the oil company and its products. The filling station sometimes took on other architectural themes as a marketing tool because the public was attracted by the "homelike" appearance, such as quaint cottages. These include the cottage types built by the Phillips Petroleum Company in Nebraska. Other styles included the Spanish Revival. Sometimes exotic themes were used, meant to attract the highest attention for pulling the motorist from the road.

During the 1930s, the filling station began to evolve into the "service station." During the Depression, gas sales sagged. Oil companies began to offer a much-expanded line of more profitable products and services, such as tires, batteries and accessories (in the trade, TBA) and automotive repairs. Existing filling stations sometimes adapted this new marketing technique. Canopies were removed to accommodate larger cars and trucks and either attached or detached service bays were added. Bays were equipped for services such as lubrication, car washing and automotive repairs. Probably the first to transition to the service station type were those of the Standard Oil Company of Nebraska.

¹³¹ Jakle and Scully, *The Gas Station in America*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1994 is referenced throughout this section to describe type, form and function.

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Some new stations kept the traditional appearance of cottages or other styles and were built with attached service bays, or the "house with bays." Examples of those built in Nebraska are the Sinclair Oil Company stations. They took on Spanish details of stucco exteriors and tile mansard roofs, but maintained the canopy.

But service stations most often adapted a new and very different type of gas station building, pioneered in the 1930s: the "oblong box." The Texas Company (Texaco) innovated perhaps the earliest and most prototypical of this modern, stylistic type in 1934. Oblong boxes were most popular in the 1950s through the 1960s. In contrast to the house types, the oblong box was designed to be both functional and to attract the motorist. Most often these stations were built in a prominent location along the highway, built in a streamlined, functional, rectangular form with a flat roof, and were constructed of brick or concrete block sometimes finished in glazed brick or porcelain-enameled panels. The oblong box often was painted with the oil company's trademark colors and included prominent signage. The interior space included an office, storage, a display area, workshop and service bays. The Standard Oil Company of Indiana and Texaco built a number of these service station types in Nebraska in the 1950s and 1960s, requiring a uniform design, signage and product line. Many service stations were once found on the commercial strip of larger towns.

Beginning in the 1970s the exterior details of the oblong box fell out of favor. Elements such as cedar shakes, brick facing, and gable roofs with cupolas were added to existing stations, such as those of the Standard Oil Company/Amoco. By the 1990s a new station type was introduced, the "convenience store," fronted by a large canopy sheltering the pumps. Sometimes alterations were made to the oblong box to serve as convenience store operation. Today, the oblong box as a type has been largely replaced with the convenience store and its monumental, freestanding canopy.

Significance

Gas stations located on or within close proximity to the historic alignments of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their association with the highway and the marketing of products and services for the traveling public. Under Criterion B a gas station may best represent an individual's importance in the promotion or development of the highway or a business person that built of a number of gas stations that advanced roadside business, related highway commerce or innovation of a marketing technique. A gas station may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as a distinctive example of a type, form and function or as a representative example of a distinctive architectural style related to trends in marketing of petroleum products. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Early examples are increasingly rare resources on the Lincoln Highway. Moved properties must retain an orientation, setting and general environs similar to the original and should maintain a location, connection and physical association with the highway. Gas stations may be vacant or have a new use, but must retain sufficient physical integrity that identifies their original use. Very few gas stations retain gasoline pumps or signage and this is not a requirement for the building's ability to convey significance.

The "curbside" station is only identified by the pump itself, an object not considered eligible in itself to the National Register of Historic Places. National Register criteria would not be applied since associated buildings primarily served other purposes, such as a livery, hardware or general merchandise store. Other examples are automobile agencies, garages or automobile dealerships; gasoline being only a supplement to their business (see "Automobile Agencies, Garages and Dealerships," below).

Common "sheds" were short-lived examples of petroleum marketing and soon supplanted by the more common type that came into use, the more substantial and attractive filling station.

Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied to "filling" stations. These buildings should be evaluated under Criterion A as early examples of the marketing of petroleum products and other offerings to the long-distance traveler. Under Criterion C the filling station may represent a type, form and function, such as the "house" and "house with canopy." The period of significance largely dates to the decade of the 1920s. Although they may display alterations and removal of the pumps, the filling station type should retain characteristic features of a period of significance in association with the highway. One example of the "house" type is a cottage-style station in Sutherland (LN08-041), built of brick and stucco with false half timbering. Another located in Sutherland (LN08-019), is finished in stucco with clipped gable and chimney.

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Two excellent examples of the "house with canopy" were identified on the Lincoln Highway. One is in Cozad, a frame and front gable filling station (DS02-055). The other is a frame, hipped roof filling station in Paxton (KH05-038). A rare, later example of a filling station is located near Grand Island, the Stuhr station (HL06-695), built in the Art Deco style. Services included tire repair and lubrication from a grease pit, still extant.

In some cases, early filling stations evolved into "service" stations. The canopy could have been removed to accommodate larger cars and trucks and either attached or detached bays were added to expand the business offerings. These changes to a property should not diminish the property's ability to convey integrity but rather the alteration(s) will convey the transition of the filling station to the service station in type, form and function. One example is a of a cottage style filling station in Shelton (BF14-074), which later incorporated two large additions on either side, one serving as a double garage bay. Others are found in Sidney (CN00-120) and Potter (CN08- 036).

Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied to those built specifically as a service station. The service station, which appeared in the 1930s and most commonly in the 1950s and 1960s, can accrue significance under Criterion A for petroleum marketing and its offerings to the long-distance traveler by providing expanded service and products. Criterion C can be met as a type, form and function, the "house with bays" and the "oblong box." Historical or architectural associations may also accrue to the marketing by large oil companies that once built numbers of service stations using standard plans, such as the Standard Oil Company and the Texas Company (Texaco).

An example of the "house with bays" is located in Sutherland (LN08-046), a brick cottage with attached service bay of the style used by the Phillips Petroleum Company. In Schuyler (CX06-080), a station was constructed consisting of both a canopy and attached service bay, built in a Spanish style with clay-tile mansard roof of a type built by the Sinclair Oil Company.

Examples of the "oblong box" built through the 1950s and 1960s are commonly found on the highway and in order to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register need to retain a high degree of integrity. Later alterations such as enclosed and downsized windows and service bay openings or additions/alterations to the building are not acceptable since these changes diminish the historic integrity of the property. An example of the "oblong box" built for the Standard Oil Company was located in North Platte (LN06-656, recently demolished). One of the best examples of the oblong box is located in Columbus (PT01-539). This building is faced with porcelain-enameled metal panels and a survivor of a commercial strip in Columbus. Others faced in porcelain-enameled panels are located in North Platte (LN06-715) and Sidney (CN09-135). Excellent examples less than 50 years old may meet Criteria Consideration G only when exceptionally distinctive or important. To be eligible under this criterion consideration, the property's appearance must retain excellent integrity of its period of original construction.

Beginning in the 1970s elements such as cedar shakes, brick facing, and gabled roofs with cupolas were commonly added and do not meet Criterion Consideration G because these integrity changes fall outside the period of significance of this Multiple Property Documentation form. By the 1990s the convenience store became the fashion. No examples of these stations have been recorded in historic building surveys of U.S. 30 due their recent construction date.

Intersections of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 often attracted more than one gas station. Single or multiple gas stations may anchor automobile rows or were once found in commercial strips in significant numbers (see "Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips," below).

Automobile Agencies, Garages and Dealerships

Description

The proliferation of automobile agencies, garages and dealerships corresponded to the phenomenal acceptance of the automobile. Travelers found these to be convenient for repair service, products and even for the purchase of automobiles themselves.

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The earliest sales of automobiles were through "agencies." Agencies became a marketing operation of the many automobile manufacturing companies, large and small. Few automobiles were offered for sale on-site, but rather the agent took orders for new automobiles. Automobiles arrived by railroad car and most were already spoken for by individuals who had submitted orders. Some agencies were operated from livery or implement dealerships. Front doorways to drive vehicles in and out characterize those properties built as agencies. They were commonly built of frame, brick or concrete block. Often, dealerships offered gasoline from a curbside pump or indoor pump.

"Garages" responded to the growing need for automotive repair and other services, such as automobile storage. Sometimes called "automobile livery" they represent the evolution from "horse and buggy" to the automobile. Some evolved from livery or implement dealerships. Those built as garages featured front doorways to drive vehicles in and out. They were often built of frame, brick or concrete block and are found in towns large and small. Often, garages offered gasoline from curbside pumps.

As automobile sales soared in the 1920s the first automobile "dealerships" began to appear across Nebraska. Dealerships offered a large stock of new automobiles and an expanded line of parts and services, such as automobile repairs. Dealerships featured display areas to show new automobiles, offered a large stock of parts that were housed in a separate parts room, and multiple indoor bays for automobile repairs and storage. Often, dealerships offered gasoline from curbside pumps. Dealerships varied in their construction methods and were typically of one-story construction. These early dealerships resembled commercial buildings of the period and were usually constructed of brick. Dealerships in larger cities were built to be large, fashionable and elegant. Two-story construction is found in larger dealerships. Elevators large enough to carry automobiles served the upper floors. Here storage was provided for an inventory of vehicles. Dealers in smaller communities built scaled-down versions. The Ford Motor Company established a significant number of dealerships during this period, selecting larger towns and county seats for their location.

As automobile sales declined during the Great Depression and during World War II few, if any, new dealerships were built. But with the soaring popularity and automobile culture that came in the period of post-World War II through the 1960s, new dealerships once again appeared. These new businesses often adopted the most modern of appearances. Therefore, dealerships constructed following World War II often displayed the rounded corners, glass block and oval windows of the Streamline Moderne style. Porcelain-enameled metal panels, pigmented structural glass, and glazed brick facades often complimented these designs. Pylon signs and large signage prominently displayed the name of the dealership and the manufacturer of the automobiles it offered. For new car display, large display areas with show windows faced the curbside to attract the most attention. A parts department specialized in the parts and accessories for the make and models of automobiles the dealership offered. Multiple service bays for repair services were incorporated into the design. Used car sales were made from an outdoor lot, sometimes covered with a canopy. Dealerships of this period were sometimes located on the newer routes U.S. 30 and the commercial strip.

Beginning in the 1970s auto dealers began to locate to larger lots far from the commercial strips. The main building was removed from the curbside and rows of autos were placed between the roadside and the building.

Significance

Automobile agencies, garages and dealerships were exclusive to the sale and/or servicing of automobiles. To be eligible for the National Register, the property's appearance should retain overall massing, materials, siting, and architecture of the property's period of significance. Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied. Those located on or within close proximity to the historic alignments of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for association with the highway and the marketing of products and services for the traveling public. Under Criterion B, however, they may best represent an individual's importance in the promotion or development of the highway or a prominent businessperson that advanced roadside business, related highway commerce or innovation of a marketing technique. They may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as a distinctive example of a type, form and function or architecture. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Moved properties must retain an orientation, setting and general environs similar to the original and should maintain a location, connection and physical association with the highway. Automobile agencies, garages and dealerships were built

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in large numbers along the highway and most possess significance at the local level. Those potentially eligible for the National Register may predate 1913 with the establishment of the Lincoln Highway through the 50-year cut-off date for National Register listing.

Automobile agencies are potentially eligible for the National Register as serving travelers along the Lincoln Highway by offering products and repair services. Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied. Facilities located on or within close proximity to the historic route alignments of the highway may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A. Automobile agencies may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as examples displaying a type, form and function for the sale and servicing of automobiles. Eligible facilities may pre-date or date from the beginnings of the route of the Lincoln Highway in 1913. Agencies that were constructed prior to the highway may be eligible for the National Register if a significant association with the Lincoln Highway is established. Automobile agencies were largely established to serve local and regional patrons. They should be evaluated at the local level. The period of significance dates from before the 1910s and throughout that decade. The physical integrity of these agencies is largely defined by the presence of front doorways to drive vehicles in and out. One example is in Elkhorn (DO05-004). Single or multiple agencies may be found on automobile rows (see "Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips" below).

Automotive garages also provided services for the traveler on the Lincoln Highway. They are common, once found in almost every community along the highway in response to the phenomenal acceptance of the automobile and the sometimes unreliable nature of early automobiles themselves. Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied. Garages located on or within close proximity to the historic routes of the Lincoln Highway may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A if an association with travel on the highway can be determined. For example, the Columbus Auto Company in Columbus (also called the "Automobile Blue Book" garage; PT01-524) was advertised in this series of guidebooks for the long-distance traveler. Garages may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as examples displaying a type, form and function when built exclusively for servicing automobiles. The period of significance dates from as early as before the 1910s through the 1930s, when gas stations and automobile dealerships began to dominate the repair business. Garages that were constructed prior to 1913 may also be eligible for the National Register if a later association with the Lincoln Highway is established. Integrity is largely applied to the presence of large front doorways. Two examples of a garage are located in Rogers (CX05-015) and Brady (LN01-029), both still retaining signing that state "garage." Many examples are found on or near the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Single or multiple garages may be found in automobile rows (see "Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips," below).

Automobile dealerships were established in larger communities in downtown commercial districts. The first period of significance for automobile dealerships begins in the 1920s through about 1930, when the Depression and World War II resulted in the decline in the sale of new cars. Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied. Dealerships located on or within close proximity to the historic alignments of the highway may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their association with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Automobile dealerships may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as examples displaying a type, form and function exclusive to the sale and servicing of automobiles. In most cases, the automobile dealership was built in a commercial style of architecture and located in or near the commercial business district. One example is located Sidney (CN09-109). Dealerships in larger cities were sometimes built to be large, fashionable and elegant. The Reineke Motor Company in Schuyler (CX06-044) was built in a commercial style, as was the Hendy-Ogier dealership in North Platte (LN06-554) and the Jackson Auto Dealership in Sidney (CN09-343). One in Central City (MK02-171) was a former Pontiac dealership. All are two-story buildings. The Gottberg Ford dealership (1921, PT01-003, Columbus Historic District, National Register of Historic Places) in Columbus is the finest example, a commercial style building incorporating terra cotta images of the front of an automobile at the parapet. The Gottberg Ford dealership also may accrue significance under Criterion B for association with prominent businessman Max Gottberg, who was associated with highway promotion. Single or multiple dealerships may anchor automobile rows (see "Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips" below). Although dealerships served the traveler on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30, they also served local and regional trade and will most often possess significance at the local level.

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The second period of significance for automobile dealerships dates from the post-World War II years through the 1960s. These properties are most common in larger towns along U.S. 30 and should retain a high degree of integrity. For example, an auto dealership building of this period was historically designed with large plate glass windows on the main façade to display automobiles. A dealership constructed during this era should retain this characteristic and functional feature to be eligible for the National Register. Criteria A and C are most likely to be applied. Newer dealerships located on or within proximity to the historic route alignments of U.S. 30 may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their association with the highway. They may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as examples displaying a type, form and function to the service and sale of automobiles. An example is found in North Platte (LN06-713), featuring a large display area, service bays and vintage Firestone sign. Examples of properties in this category that are less than 50 years old will need to meet National Register Criterion Consideration G. Automobile dealerships that began to locate to larger lots farther into the suburbs and away from the commercial strip in the 1970s to the present have not been recorded in surveys of U.S. 30 due to their recent construction date.

The Automobile Row and Commercial Strip

Description

The automobile row and commercial strip were established solely in response to the automobile. They are districts where automotive and transportation-related businesses were concentrated. They represent "new" forms of commercial districts.

The first type of automotive commercial district, known as the "automobile row," appeared in the late 1910s and 1920s when groups of automobile-related businesses located in or near established commercial business districts. The automobile row included gas stations, automobile agencies and dealerships, auto supply stores and repair garages. The automobile row not only served a large local and regional trade, but also provided the products and services for the traveler on the Lincoln Highway.

The "commercial strip" first developed in the post-World War II period when the automobile became engrained in American culture. Automobile-related businesses associated with what is most commonly referred to as "the strip" included motels, restaurants, private or franchised drive-ins, gas stations and automobile dealerships. They were developed remote from the business section of town in the time period when highways began to bypass the concentrated traffic of the business district. These commercial strips evolved rapidly due to changing marketing trends. Buildings and businesses continue to be replaced or remodeled at a rapid rate. Commercial strips are now dominated by businesses that date from the 1970s to the present.

Significance

The automobile row is characterized as a concentration of automobile related business buildings and would be evaluated as a district. These automotive districts provided products and services primarily for local and regional markets, as well as motorists on the Lincoln Highway. Criterion A would apply to the automobile row's association and location with travel on the Lincoln Highway. Under Criterion B, this group of property types will rarely represent an individual businessperson, since the cumulative number of businesses associated with this property type represents a larger body of individuals. Criterion C would be met as examples of properties that exhibit distinctive characteristics of type, period and method of construction. The period of significance is the late 1910s and 1920s. The rarity of well-preserved examples might warrant evaluation at the statewide level in and of itself. It may be part of an eligible commercial district. One automobile row that dates to this period has been identified in Columbus, once consisting of a Standard Oil filling station (1917, no longer extant), several automobile garages or agencies, the Gottberg Ford dealership (1921, PT01-003) and the Evans Hotel (1913, PT01-131), both located in the Columbus Commercial Historic District, (National Register of Historic Places, 1996).

The commercial strip developed in the post-World War II years through the 1960s and served the automobile "culture" of the period. Commercial strips may be eligible under Criterion A for an association with U.S. 30 as a district. Under Criterion B, these property types may rarely represent an individual businessperson, since the cumulative number of businesses represents a larger body of individuals associated with this type of roadside business or highway-related commerce. Criterion C would be met as examples of properties that exhibit distinctive characteristics of type, period and method of construction. A commercial strip will display distinctive architectural styles representing the marketing trends

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during this period. One individual survivor of a commercial strip is the Central Auto Electric Company in Kearney (BF05-444), a former United Motors company, built in the Streamline Moderne style with glass block, service bay and vintage neon signs. This commercial strip developed on the newer alignment of U.S. 30 away from the central business district. There has been a rapid evolution of the commercial strip, which continues to the present day. Commercial strips are now dominated by businesses of the 1970s through the present and Criterion G is not applicable.

Commercial Districts

Early highways were routed through towns and "main street" commercial districts, both to promote local support for the new highway and for motorists to take advantage of the offerings that were found in these districts. Automobile-related businesses located in these commercial districts served local and regional patrons but also provided services for the traveler. Commercial districts provided for the frequent stops and services needed by the early motorist, such as food, supplies, lodging and repair services. Individual and multiple automobile-related resources are found in towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Most numerous of buildings constructed in commercial districts were gas stations, automobile agencies, garages and automobile dealerships. Some larger commercial districts included an "automobile row" (see "Automobile Row and Commercial Strips, above). Brick pavement was often built in towns to improve their commercial areas in the 1910s and 1920s, some accommodating the route of the Lincoln Highway.

Several commercial districts on the Lincoln Highway mark the crossing of major regional or national roads. One is located in Columbus, where the Lincoln Highway merged with the Meridian Highway.

In the 1930s, highway development included the bypassing of communities that were once linked by the highway. The central business district may have also been bypassed and the proliferation of businesses related to roadside commerce declined.

Significance

Commercial business districts most often merit recognition for periods of significance predating the automobile, such as railroad transportation, commerce and architecture of an earlier period. However, commercial districts may include period(s) of significance when the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 passed through these commercial business districts, recognizing the types of businesses and services offered for the traveler. Conversely, the highway brought trade into commercial districts and was responsible for further development of business and commerce. Highway-related businesses would contribute to a larger historic district and can be evaluated under Criterion A for relationship with period(s) of growth and commerce. Criterion B would rarely be applied, since the cumulative body of businesses in a commercial business district represents a larger body of individuals associated with the development of a community's local and regional trade, but also highway-related commerce brought by the highway. Under Criterion C, contributing properties must display type, form or function or distinctive architectural styles representing property types related to the historic period(s) of the highway. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. In general, commercial districts will be eligible at the local level. An automobile row may also be part of a larger commercial district and eligible in and of itself (see "Automobile Row and Commercial Strip," above).

The period of significance will include dates up until the time a number of the smaller communities were bypassed. The further development of some types of automotive-related businesses declined with the removal of the highway. In the Columbus, the removal of the highway from commercial districts eventually led to the creation of the commercial strip (see Automobile Row and Commercial Strip, above).

Where regional or cross-country highways intersected with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 commercial development was often more pronounced. As an example, the Meridian Highway and the Lincoln Highway converged through the Columbus business district. The Columbus Historic District (listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 1996) recognized, in part, commerce and architecture predating the arrival of the highways, but included periods of significance related to highway transportation, architecture and commerce. It includes a large number of automotive resources that are entered as contributing properties.

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Brick or concrete paving were commonly built to improve local commercial districts, but often for purposes other than the highway and predating the highway. However, they may be eligible under Criterion A as contributing to a larger historic district if documented as having been built to accommodate the route of the Lincoln Highway. Built by local governments, these would accrue significance under Criterion A as an early example of community development. Criterion B could be achieved for a local promoter or government official who worked for street improvements. An example was Phil R. Hockenberger, Sr. of Columbus who became frustrated with the city's progress in improving the streets approaching downtown Columbus (Columbus Historic District, National Register of Historic Places, 1996). Hockenberger became a city council member and worked with the city engineer and city attorney to develop paving districts. Criterion C may, in rare cases, be applied if construction techniques have special qualities.

Campgrounds, Tourist Parks and Comfort Stations

Description

The early motorist began to exercise the freedom of long-distance travel and the requirement to stop the car and get out and stay along the route. The early motorists brought their own gear and made makeshift camps along the roadside at convenient and attractive locations. This solution worked until the popularity of automobile tourism swelled after World War I, when the flood of travelers camping on the roadside, schoolhouse grounds or private property upset local residents. Leaving unsightly messes, these travelers were sometimes called "tin can" tourists.

Community leaders, however, saw the potential for campgrounds to encourage the motorist to stop in town and do business. In an effort to entice travelers, many communities began to establish simple campgrounds, offering a shaded grove, fire pits, picnic tables and outhouses. In the 1920s, some larger communities built municipal tourist parks with the support of local governments and commercial clubs. Highway associations, such as the Lincoln Highway Association, aggressively advertised the availability of these parks along the route. Conveniences such as a community building or shelter house, fireplaces, concrete slabs that were called "car washing floors," toilets, running water and showers, picnic areas, recreation areas, public telephones and/or electrical hookups were provided. Fees were often required to keep out undesirables and police patrols were sometimes assigned to the facility.

Business opportunities for privately owned operations also appeared in the building of private tourist parks. These often consisted of cooking facilities, showers and restrooms, electrical hookups, a shelter house or community room and/or concession stand.

The largest communities sometimes offered "comfort stations;" individual buildings that incorporated a community room, showers and restrooms.

Significance

Campgrounds and tourist parks are potentially eligible for the National Register since they were exclusively developed to serve travelers along the Lincoln Highway. They were often established by local "commercial clubs." It is important that eligible campgrounds and tourist parks retain features that convey their use by the traveler. For example, kitchen facilities, shelter houses, washrooms or shower facilities must be present for a tourist camp to be eligible. Moved properties must retain an orientation, setting and general environs similar to the original and should maintain a location, connection and physical association with the highway. Under Criterion A, they accrue significance as one of the earliest of accommodations for the motorist. Under Criterion B, these property types may include an individual's importance in the promotion or development of a specific campground or tourist park to enhance community trade and commerce. As a type, Criterion C may be met by an individual or a group of buildings or structures displaying type, form or function representative of these early transportation facilities. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. The period of significance dates from the 1920s through the 1930s. A municipal tourist park and one private operation were once located in Columbus, but are no longer extant.

A comfort station is eligible as an individual building if it retains integrity of its use and former functions. No comfort stations have been identified along the Lincoln Highway. Campgrounds, tourist parks and comfort stations remained popular into the 1930s.

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Wayside Areas and Parks

Description

Public wayside areas and parks offered amenities to the traveler. They provided stopping places and recreation for the motorist and included picnic areas and campgrounds. In some cases, provisions were made for public wayside areas along with construction of Nebraska highways. The first was developed in 1933-34 by the state's Department of Roads and Irrigation near the Bryan Bridge on Highway 20, consisting of plantings of trees and shrubs, benches, trails, a footbridge and water well.

The depression era "New Deal" program of the WPA built parks that offered amenities to the local public as well as the traveler on U.S. 30. These parks were built as designed landscapes consisting of shade trees, roads, stone entrances and sometimes a lagoon. Amenities to the traveler included shelter houses, fireplaces, picnic tables, restrooms, campgrounds and recreational offerings.

Significance

An example of a public wayside area is in Sunol (CN10-011). It was probably built by the efforts of the local public to attract travelers.

Parks provided attractive locations for the traveler. One example, Pawnee Park in Columbus (PT01-529), was built before the 1930s and was improved by the WPA during the Depression. It offered amenities to the traveler on the Lincoln Highway. Parks were designed landscapes consisting of shaded groves, lagoons/lakes, and/or picnic areas. Pawnee Park included stone fireplaces, lagoon and a swimming pool. It would accrue significance under Criterion A for association with U.S. 30, providing amenities to the highway traveler. Criterion B could be applied to a landscape architect who innovated or designed these types of parks or other wayside areas. Under Criterion C these parks would be significant as designed landscapes that included provisions for the traveler. These properties embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Parks would accrue statewide significance as most substantial and distinctive of any tourist amenity of this type.

Boarding Houses, Hotels, Cabin Camps and Motels

Description

Pioneering automobile tourists looked for boarding houses where they could rent a room after a day's drive. These establishments were located in or near the downtown commercial district and were built to accommodate railroad travelers, such as the traveling salesman. Boarding houses provided rooms, bathing and meals. Boarding houses sometimes only offered the longer stay with weekly or monthly rates for renters and traveling salesmen.

Like boarding houses, hotels were located in or near the downtown commercial district and were built near the railroad to accommodate railroad travelers, often predating the Lincoln Highway. They were not an ideal situation for motorists, who were unwilling to unpack their travel gear, did not want to leave their automobiles unattended, and did not want to enter the hotel lobby after a day of dusty travel. Another type was the "commercial" hotel, built in larger cities in the 1910s and 1920s and served local and regional patrons with amenities such as ballrooms and meeting rooms. Some of the larger commercial hotels, however, recognized the opportunities brought by the traveling public and later began to advertise as "motor hotels" as stops for the motorist.

By the 1930s private "mom and pop" businesspeople built accommodations for travelers to provide convenience, comfort and completely private accommodations in the form of one- and two-room cabins arranged in rows, right angles or courts. These were often called "cabin camps" and many were built on the edges of towns along U.S. 30. The motorist could drive up to their private cabin and unload their gear. Sometimes a shelter was connected to the cabins to provide protection for the automobile. The cabins were most often vernacular in form with frame construction and gable roofs. A house for the owners, common showers, restrooms and shelter houses were often part of the complex. A store, lunch counter, roadside or concession stand and/or gas station may have also been a part of a complex. The grounds were often park-like in setting with picnic areas and well cared for grounds. They sometimes provided campgrounds for the

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traveler. Exterior imagery and layout sometimes became aspects in attracting guests. Some owners utilized domestic architecture to give a "homelike" appearance. Others used exotic or fanciful themes or attractions designed purely to attract attention, such as teepees. Some cabin camps later adopted the newer form of the motel by connecting the cabins or enclosing the adjoining automobile shelters.

During the post-World-War II period, individual cabins slipped from fashion. The "motel" took over as the favorable form. The word "motel" is a contraction of motor and hotel. The word became the generic label for this type of highway-oriented accommodation. They consisted of single buildings with a string of rooms and parking provided so that motorists could drive up to their room. Motels generally date to the 1950s and 1960s, although several examples may predate this period. They were family operations with a combined office and living quarters for the owners, and sometimes a restaurant and/or gas station. They used prominent neon signs to attract the traveler. Some emulate styles such as the Spanish Revival. Motels were most often found along the commercial strips and the newer routes of U.S. 30 (see "Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips," above). The opening of the interstate in the late 1960s affected the viability of motels. National chain motels dominated the lodging industry in Nebraska in the decades following the 1970s, aggressively competing with the independently owned motels, with many ceasing business.

Significance

Boarding houses, hotels, cabin camps and motels represent the evolving marketing trend for lodging along the highway.

Boarding houses and hotels need not be along the route of the highway, since most were located in or near commercial districts for the convenience of the railroad traveler. In order for a boarding house or hotel to qualify for listing under Criterion A, an association in serving the traveler on the Lincoln Highway must be established. Criterion C will not be applied since type, form and function was unrelated to the motorist. They will date before the 1900s to the early 20th century. An example is a former hotel or boarding house in Shelton (BF14-069). A hotel of this period was identified in Chappell (DU02-060).

The commercial hotel or "motor hotel" offered lodging for the traveler and could accrue significance primarily under Criterion A. Under Criterion B, these property types may include an individual's importance in the promotion or development of the highway, highway-related commerce or was prominent in the development of this type of business. Criterion C is not applied since their type, form and function was unrelated to the motorist. One example of a commercial hotel on the Lincoln Highway is the Evans Hotel in Columbus built in 1913 (PT01-131, listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Columbus Commercial Historic District). Another is the Hotel Yancey in Grand Island (HL06-14, National Register of Historic Places). The Evans Hotel advertised itself in issues of the *Automobile Blue Book*, the guide for motorists: "On the Lincoln and Meridian Highways." The Hotel Yancey was advertised as a motor hotel.

Cabin camps will qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for providing lodging along the highway. Their location and operation were almost exclusively to serve the motoring public. Under Criterion B, this property type may include an individual's importance as one that advanced or innovated a type of roadside business or highway-related commerce. Cabin camps may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as examples of their type, form and function or as representative examples of a distinctive architectural style associated with this important type of lodging associated with the highway. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. A number of cabin camps were once located on U.S. 30. However, cabin camps are an increasingly rare resource along Nebraska's highways and these complexes should be evaluated as such. For the most part and due to their rarity, cabin camps should retain some examples of cabins and/or representative building(s) associated with the cabin camp. Cabin camps are often found in extremely deteriorated condition, but this condition may meet National Register guidelines if sufficient integrity is present. Statewide significance would accrue to cabin camps, due their rarity and since finely preserved examples are increasingly rare. One example includes a filling station in Shelton (BF14-074). This station is associated with a cabin camp, with extant buildings in the rear. The Chieftain (KH04-063) is located in Ogallala, consisting of a cabin court with concrete block double-units. Cabin camps were hit hard by changes to the routing of the road and change in travelers' preferences. Competition by motels affected the popularity of cabin camps.

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The most prominent example of a cabin camp, Shady Bend near Grand Island (HL00-033), was forced to close in 1977. By the early 1990s all of the cabins were destroyed. Today the only extant examples of this court are the main building and a roadside stand. The evolution of the Shady Bend cabin court symbolizes the development and the eventual extinction of these resources along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 in Nebraska.

Alterations to individual buildings or to a complex may be acceptable as some cabin camps adopted the newer form of the motel by connecting the cabins. These should be evaluated for their significance in representing the evolution of the cabin camp to the motel type.

Motels will qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for providing lodging along Highway 30. Motels may qualify under Criterion C as examples of their type, form and function or as representative examples of a distinctive architectural style associated with this prominent type. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Motels of the 1950s-1960s should retain the main buildings of the complex and should display few alterations. Motel types are commonly found on U.S. 30; therefore these resources should retain a higher degree of integrity to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register. Motel facilities may be vacant or may have a secondary use, but they remain eligible for the National Register if they retain sufficient physical features to identify their original use. Due to their commonality, local significance would be applied. Facilities that are less than 50 years old need to meet National Register Criterion Consideration G and will display excellent integrity.

Excellent examples of extant motels are found along Highway 30 in numerous towns. They include properties in Clarks (MK04-037) and Sunol (CN10-009). The Rainbow Motel in (CN05-033) and another (CN05-030) are located in Lodgepole. The Sidney Motor Lodge/Bright Motel (CN09-091) is located in Sidney and the Cedar Lodge Motel (LN06-703) in North Platte. The Bar Q Motel (CN00-122) near Sidney includes a neon sign. Examples that include owner's residences include a motel in Kimball (KM04-168), the Welsh Motor Court built in 1940 (KH04-106, National Register of Historic Places, 2005) in Ogallala and the El Palomino Motel in Sidney (CN09-088). Several feature gas stations and/or cafes, such as one found in Brady (LN01-030), the Elms Lodge (LN06-452) in North Platte, and an example in Chappell (DU02-070). Some take on stylistic features designed to attract the motorist. A motel located in Sutherland (LN08-44) gives the false appearance of being built of adobe and the Log Cabin Motel (LN06-692) in North Platte are examples.

Roadhouses and Rural Crossroads Stores

Description

The name "roadhouse" often conveys a disreputable meaning. Located in rural areas, the roadhouse offered liquor and food and began to appear in the 1920s and 1930s. Rural crossroads stores provided goods and services primarily for local farmers. Rural crossroads stores, often pre-dating the Lincoln Highway, offered groceries or other supplies for the traveling motorist. Some included curbside pumps for gasoline sales and were particularly located on the earliest routes. Roadhouses and rural crossroads stores were built to accommodate local trade. Both types were constructed as modest vernacular buildings.

Significance

Significance may be evaluated under Criterion A for association with these types of business establishments, which provided goods and services to travelers on the highway. Criterion C would not be applied since their type, form and function was primarily to serve purposes other than the motorist. The period of significance for rural crossroads stores will sometimes predate the Lincoln Highway. The roadhouse will date to the 1920s and 1930s.

No examples of rural crossroads stores or roadhouses have been identified although several were probably located on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30.

Restaurants, Food Stands, Diners and Drive-ins

Description

Dining options were a necessity for the long distance traveler and represent changing or evolving marketing trends. The earliest motorists often carried their own supplies of food, served and prepared at campgrounds and tourist parks. Before

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the 1920s, the automobile tourist had dining options at small, local restaurants. These operations opened in typical commercial buildings located within business districts through which the Lincoln Highway passed.

During the 1920s and 1930s an assortment of entrepreneurs began serving travelers along highways. The food stand provided a spot for highway travelers to pause, most often operated in conjunction with a private tourist campground or cabin camp. Local roadside stands were small and modest buildings. Food, supplies and refreshments were served. Open-air markets or roadside stands were also set up to sell locally grown produce.

Diners were located in commercial districts as small, local operations. They consisted of small and often prefabricated models sold by national manufacturers. Diners date to the 1930s and served local patrons as well as truckers and travelers.

Restaurants were located on the newer routes of U.S. 30 during the post-World War II years through the 1960s. The drive-in was an important milestone in the evolution of the earlier restaurant and diner. Restaurants and drive-ins served local and regional patrons, as well as travelers on U.S. 30 and were primarily located on the commercial strip of the larger cities (See Automobile Rows and Commercial Strips, above). The drive-in often consisted of a building with ample parking for cars. Drive-ins featured curb service dining, where customers pulled up to the curb. An attendant, commonly called a "car hop", brought food to the car. A large and distinctive sign was featured. Another distinctive feature of many was a canopy under which automobiles were parked so patrons and car hops were protected from the elements. Many included a curbside menu and call-in station where orders were placed. In larger towns most were located on the new "commercial strip." Drive-ins were both operated as family businesses or small regional chains. The chain operation followed distinctive and standardized designs and signage.

The most recent step in the evolution of the drive-in was the introduction of the modern fast-food restaurant in the 1950s, which reached Nebraska in the 1960s and 1970s. These nationally or regionally franchised fast-food companies emerged rapidly in the following decades. Modern fast-food restaurants typically followed a standard floor plan, exterior design and signage required of franchised chains, highly marketed by their name recognition. These standard designs allowed for easy recognition in any location across regions of the country. Most began to be located on the "commercial strip," replacing the family businesses and smaller chains.

Significance

Early restaurants located within business district of the 1910s and 1920s may rarely qualify for listing on the National Register individually but could be contributing to a National Register district under Criterion A (see Commercial Districts above). Criterion C would not apply since they were located in typical commercial buildings of the period and do not represent a particular type, form or function related to the highway or the traveler.

Diners date to the 1930s and served local or regional patrons, as well as truckers and travelers along U.S. 30. They were found in commercial districts. They may be eligible under Criterion A by association with highway travel on U.S. 30. Criterion C would be met by their type, form and function or a distinctive architectural style of a roadside type. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Diners must possess their original form, although some had later additions. The diner is a rare type in Nebraska. Examples of this property type should be evaluated in the context of the relative rarity of this resource.

Restaurants and drive-ins were established in the post-World War II era through the 1950s and 1960s through the present and served local and regional patrons as well as travelers, mostly found along the commercial strip. Restaurants and drive-ins may qualify for their association and location along U.S. 30 under Criterion A, serving local and regional patrons as well as the highway traveler. Both types may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C as distinctive examples of type, form and function or as representative examples of a distinctive architectural style associated with a type of roadside business exclusive to serving the motorist. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. Well-preserved restaurants and drive-in facilities may be individually eligible or contributing to a National Register district, the commercial "strip." They must retain characteristic features from their

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period of significance in order to meet National Register criteria for listing. In the case of drive-ins, the removal of original canopies, a most distinctive feature of some drive-ins, would make them ineligible. The properties should also display few alterations outside the period of significance. Drive-ins may be vacant or have a secondary use, but they may remain eligible for the National Register if they retain sufficient physical integrity to identify their original use and convey their significance. Properties less than fifty years old would require application of Criterion exception G. Others ceased operation with the competition brought by the more modern fast food outlets. An example of a locally-owned drive-in was recently demolished; the "Y-Knot" in Columbus, which was located on the commercial strip where U.S. 81 and U.S. 30 converged. A fine example of a drive in business is a former ice cream stand in Wood River (HL08-068) featuring a huge ice cream cone mounted on the front. The finest example of a restaurant is Hoke's Café (KH04-116) in Ogallala.

Franchised fast food outlets appeared nationally as early as the 1950s, but only entered Nebraska markets in the 1960s, 1970s, and into the present. No examples of fast food outlets have been recorded in surveys of U.S. 30 since all postdate an historic period of significance.

Markers, Signing and Monuments

Description

Signing helped guide the traveler on the route of the early highway and included markings on telephone poles and wooden or metal signs installed to mark the route and guide motorists to towns along the highway. The early markers of the Lincoln Highway consisted of metal signs or a 21-inch band around telephone poles painted with the Lincoln Highway insignia – red, white, and blue stripes and the "L" for Lincoln Highway. Signing was necessary for guiding the motorist but largely ceased after the designation of the highway as U.S. 30 in 1926. Federal and state signs erected beginning in 1926 soon replaced the early "signposting" once promoted by the Lincoln Highway Association. The highway also once included a profusion of billboards and other smaller advertising signs.

Markers or mileposts were built along Nebraska's highways to mark the highway. The finest examples erected in Nebraska are found on the Lincoln Highway. In 1928, Gael Hoag, the last paid representative of the Lincoln Highway Association, arranged for approximately 3,000 concrete directional markers to be constructed with a small bronze bust of Lincoln and a directional arrow incised and painted on the shaft. On September 1, 1928, Boy Scout troops across the country erected these concrete markers in one of the last efforts of the Lincoln Highway Association. Several are in private collections and museums; others are located in parks, substantially removed from their original site.

Monuments were sometimes placed along highways representing a commemorative event, not associated directly with highway travel. One series of monuments was erected across the state by a commission of the State of Nebraska and the Daughters of the American Revolution to mark historic trails of the nineteenth century.

Significance

Telephone post markers have weathered and have become non-extant with replacement of the utility poles. Metal signs are only found in museums or private collections. The later are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The most significant of markers along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 are those placed in 1928 by the Lincoln Highway Association. To qualify for listing, these markers must retain good integrity including location, design, setting and association. Markers should generally be in their original location. However, a marker moved slightly may be eligible for the National Register if it meets National Register Criterion Consideration B. For example, a marker moved for a street widening project may be eligible if it maintains a connection and physical association with the Lincoln Highway. These markers would be classified as "objects" and can be individually eligible or contributing to a section of eligible roadway. Examples of 1928 concrete Lincoln Highway markers, located on or near their original location, are found in Duncan (PT04-025), North Platte (LN06-711, 716, 717), Paxton (KH05-012, 030) and Sidney (CN09-117). In recent efforts to preserve the concept of the Lincoln Highway, many communities throughout Nebraska have painted telephone poles along the route and erected new signs and markers. Reproduction signs and markers are not eligible for the National Register.

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Advertising signs have largely been removed, many in response to highway beautification efforts of the 1960s and today's strict application of state and federal regulations. Those that remain are on the modern routes of the highway are contemporary in nature. Monuments marking commemorative events would usually not be eligible for association with the Lincoln Highway.

Truck Transport and Associated Sites

Description

The Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 developed as a highway of commerce. As improvements were made to the highway, it became an important east-west highway for truck transport. Trucks would eventually overtake the railroad as the transporter of many types of goods.

The Army convoy of 1919 first attempted to traverse the Lincoln highway as a show of the feasibility of truck transport. With improvements, such as graveled surfaces, truck transport became more feasible and transporters delivered a variety of products, both retail and wholesale, beginning in about the 1920s. Significant traffic on the highway occurred during the 1920s for the transport of agricultural commodities to local markets and livestock to regional markets. As the agricultural market saw a major decline during the Depression and drought of the 1930s, shipping of agricultural commodities and livestock on the highway declined.

For national security, the War Department and the Public Roads Administration identified a system of roads known as the Strategic Network of Highways to serve military bases, defense manufacturing plants, army airfields and other strategic sites. In Nebraska, U.S. 30 was designated under the Defense Highway Act of 1941. The Kearney Army Airfield, the Cornhusker Army ammunition plant in Grand Island and the Sioux Ordnance Depot near Sidney are examples of facilities built during the war effort of World War II.

Truck stops on U.S. 30 arrived in the 1950s and 1960s to service long-distance truck drivers as well as local and regional patrons. They combined a restaurant and large bays to service trucks. Gasoline was sold to the retail customer and diesel fuel for trucks. Examples found along U.S. 30 are mostly located on the edge of communities.

Much of the truck transport once following the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 has been diverted to the modern Interstate 80, which roughly parallels the former route of the highway.

Significance

Significance under Criterion A would accrue to properties that represent the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 as a route for truck transport beginning in the 1920s. With improvements to the highway, transporters delivered livestock and a variety of products both retail and wholesale. One example of a building that represents wholesale trucking is a former motor freight house in Columbus (PT01-88, Columbus Commercial Historic District, listed National Register of Historic Places, 1996). In some cases, Criterion B could be applied for association with important transporters along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30. Under Criterion C properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

Defense facilities once served by U.S.30 as part of the system of defense highways would not qualify for transportation, since highway transport only supplemented the primary functions of these facilities. However, if further research can confirm a section of roadway or structure associated with the construction of a defense highway, significance could be evaluated under Criterion A. Criterion C could be applied if a section of highway or structure displays a particular construction type built under defense programs. One example was the former Brownson viaduct (National Register of Historic Places, no longer extant) that once served the ammunition depot near Sidney. Due to wartime shortages, it was built of wooden pilings and deck. Associations with defense facilities could warrant a statewide level of significance and a period of significance dating during World War II.

Truck stops of the 1950s through c.1960 may be eligible under National Register Criterion A for association with commercial transport on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 and related commerce. Under Criterion B, these property types may include an individual's importance in advancing or innovating this type of roadside business. Several were

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associated with prominent businessmen who established these facilities and could accrue significance under Criterion B. Criterion C could be evaluated for type, form and function.

Tourist Sites

Description

By the 1920s, the Lincoln Highway became a popular route for individuals and families traveling across the country. From the 1930s through the 1960s, businessmen along the highway developed tourist stops, such as souvenir shops, museums, and sightseeing destinations to profit from the tourists traveling the highway. Some featured fanciful and exotic themes to attract the traveler. Tourist sites disappeared and closed when tourist travel was diverted to modern Interstate 80.

Significance

Tourist sites located on or within close proximity to the historic and current route alignments of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 may qualify for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their association with roadside commerce. Tourist sites were specifically established to attract travelers on the Lincoln Highway. Tourist sites may also qualify for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architecture as distinctive examples of a property type or as representative examples of a distinctive style.

Eligible tourist sites will most likely date from the 1930s through the 50-year cut-off date for National Register listing. Tourist sites that are less than 50 years old will need to meet National Register Criterion Consideration G. Tourist sites should retain characteristic features from their period(s) of significance in order to meet National Register criteria for listing. Tourist sites associated with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 should generally retain the appearance of their original function and use from the period(s) of significance. For example, the Covered Wagon Souvenir Shop near Kearney (BF00-158) served as one tourist site along the highway in Nebraska. This shop incorporated an icon of the West - a huge concrete oxen-drawn wagon to attract tourists. This attraction later included a gas station. Shady Bend Cabin Court outside of Grand Island (HL00-033) not only served the accommodation needs of the tourist, but also offered a tourist attraction. Capitalizing on the western theme, Shady Bend purchased several bison to graze in the field near the complex to attract visitors. The most recent and interesting example dates to 1964, Front Street in Ogallala (KH04-113), featuring a museum, café, souvenir shop and restaurant. The complex celebrates the "Wild West" with a row of with false front buildings and interpretation of this period.

The earliest examples of these property types should be evaluated in a statewide context of the relative rarity of these resources now extant along the Lincoln Highway. Tourist sites may display some modifications if these changes do not significantly change the historic appearance or use of the complex. More recent examples of this property type should retain a high degree of historic integrity with few alterations to be considered potentially eligible for the National Register. Tourist sites may be vacant or have a secondary use, but they may remain eligible for the National Register if they retain sufficient physical features to identify their original use and function in relation to the highway and automobile tourism.

Man-made Landscape Features

Description

Man-made landscape features often characterize the roadside. These included features that defined the road, giving feeling and association to sections of road.

In some sections, the road passed parallel through a grove of planted trees, making for an avenue of tree canopies. Some were planted in conjunction with "Seedling Miles." One important man-made landscape feature found along some highways consists of trees and shrubs planted by the CCC to improve the scenic experience of roadways. These trees and shrubs were often planted in popular varieties of the time, including locust trees, conifers and juniper shrubs.

Landscape features include shelterbelts, built to control wind erosion, and are often found along the section lines that once characterized the route of the early Lincoln Highway. Most shelterbelts were planted under New Deal programs, the "Prairie States Forestry Project" and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). They were planted in rows, featuring cottonwood, Siberian elm, Russian olive, cedar and other conifers.

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Significance

"Avenues" of planted trees would be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places when documented as the route and planted as a scenic experience specifically for the highway. Criteria A would apply. Existing avenues of trees were sometimes incorporated into the route of the Lincoln Highway, but not planted specifically for the highway. They would be part of the narrative description of the highway. One example is found in Duncan. Another was "Wooster's Lane" once located near Silver Creek.

CCC beautification projects would qualify for the National Register of Historic Places either individually or as part of a section of historic roadway and as an example of a specific type of improvement directly associated with the highway. Criteria A would apply, representing a movement to beautify the highway.

Shelterbelts follow the section line roads that were most commonly used as the route of the early highway and add to the landscape experience of the highway. They could be descriptive to an eligible section of roadway. Since shelterbelts were planted for purposes unrelated to the highway they would not be evaluated under National Register criteria as individually eligible as a highway related resource.

Natural Landscape Features and Viewsheds

Description

Natural landscape features of the highway characterize sections of the state through which the highway passed, such as hills, streambeds and rivers. The nature of these features often dictated where the early routes of the road were located and the types of construction applied to roads and structures built in response to local conditions. Most characteristic of the natural landscape is the broad Platte River valley.

"Viewsheds" give the road a characteristic of setting, feeling and association. They are broad visual landscapes, composed of terrain, patterns of fields and vistas descriptive of the landscape and agricultural setting in which the highway passed.

Significance

Natural landscape features are part of the narrative description of an historic road segment, giving context to eligible roads segments and their visual setting, feeling and association. Under Criterion A, these features give insight into how the routing of the early highway was determined. They may demonstrate construction methods applied to roads and structures built in response to local conditions under Criterion C. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. They can be difficult to delineate within the boundaries of a National Register nomination.

Viewsheds may be part the narrative description of the historic road by nature of setting, feeling and association although the boundaries are substantial and beyond the ability to delineate in a National Register nomination. For example, numerous view sheds characterize the route of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 as it traversed the broad Platte River valley and its natural or agricultural setting. These view sheds can encompass several miles of the broad Nebraska Plain in all directions.

Bridges and Culverts

Description

Early routes of Nebraska's highways incorporated existing bridges at streambed and river crossings predating the highway. These bridges were built in response to local conditions but the location of existing bridges accommodated the selection of the route on the Lincoln Highway. Existing bridges were of various types, either preferred by counties, county bridge contractors or the state engineer.

Several bridge types were located on the Lincoln Highway and are present along U.S. Highway 30. Extant bridges on the Lincoln Highway are small in scale and are largely single-span structures or modern concrete girder bridges. Pony-truss

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and through-truss bridges are examples of those once located on the highway. Metal truss bridges were generally constructed in Nebraska through the mid-1930s. Metal beam bridge types include simple stringer spans as early as the turn of the twentieth century, transverse joist girder bridges from the late 1910s to early 1930s and cantilevered stringer/girder bridges dating from as early as the late 1920s. Concrete bridges include concrete arch structures beginning in the 1910s and rigid frame bridge forms beginning in the 1930s in Nebraska. The concrete box girder bridge type is a post-World War II development.

State legislation in 1911 created the State-aid Bridge Fund to assist counties in the construction of bridges. By 1912 standard plans were developed by the state engineer for use by counties. State-aid bridges that were truss bridges were required to sustain a minimum twenty-ton load. The following year all counties using state-aid were required to use these standard plans. They included some 250 bridge configurations with fourteen-, sixteen-, or eighteen-foot wide roadways. Steel girder bridges were thirty to forty feet in length with fourteen- or sixteen-foot roadways. Bridges of the period from 1912 through the 1920s were mostly built using standard bridge plans. Truss bridges had either wood or concrete decks. Concrete structures gained popularity and in a 1912 report from Nebraska's state engineer types included small arch culverts, box culverts, slab bridges, girder bridges and concrete arch structures.

The first Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916 saw funds for road improvement and by 1919 standard bridge plans for twenty-ton capacity were widened to twenty feet. Transverse joist girder bridges were added to the state's standard plans in the late 1910s and cantilevered stringer/girder bridges date from the late 1920s. However, the through truss and pony truss were still the choice for lesser waterways.

Pile design for substructures underwent a change in the 1930s with open steel pile bents replacing pilings of wood. Superstructures of the 1930s included cantilevered spans and stringer bridges. Rigid frame bridge forms were built beginning in the 1930s.

Deprivations of material caused by World War II saw little, if any, new bridge construction occurring on U.S. 30. However, when road construction accelerated beginning in the 1950s into the 1960s, new bridges followed such as modern concrete girder bridges.

Most bridges on the Lincoln Highway are small in scale and are largely single-span truss structures. Most are modern replacement bridges.

Modern and historic culverts are located on the historic alignment of the Lincoln Highway. Older culverts, dating from the 1910s to 1920s, are concrete pipe and box culverts. Concrete culverts with obelisk shaped markers rising on each side to mark the road. These are of standard design adopted in state engineering specifications in the 1920s. Many of these culverts with markers have been altered over the years and have been damaged or broken off while others are fully intact. Many culverts have been removed or replaced over the years; others have been damaged but others are fully intact. Another type, the concrete box culvert is a post-World War II development.

Significance

Since the early routes of the Lincoln Highway were laid out to take into account existing bridges at streambeds and river crossings, bridges may predate the highway. Bridges are evaluated when along the documented route of the Lincoln Highway. They may be significant at the local level, although rare bridge types and major bridges will accrue statewide significance. They will fall within the period of significance, beginning in 1913, when existing bridges were incorporated into the earliest routes of the Lincoln Highway, through the period of significance ending in about the 1950s and 1960s. Bridges may also be contributing structures to sections of eligible road.

Under Criterion A, bridges may be individually eligible for their association with transportation, travel patterns and development of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30.

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Criterion B may also be applied to a bridge that best represents an individual's importance in the promotion of bridge improvements or construction of a particular bridge, the development or innovator of bridge construction, contributions to the pioneering or advancement of bridge engineering or construction, or a government official whose contributions to the development bridge construction can be specifically articulated as an example of his work on the highway. The Loup River Bridge (PT00-068, National Register of Historic Places, 1992) may be significant for its association with the lobbying efforts of prominent Columbus resident, Phil R. Hockenberger.

Individual bridges that possess a distinctive type, form or function and distinctive examples of engineering design or demonstrate a transition in bridge design may be eligible under Criterion C for engineering significance. Properties will embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. They may also demonstrate engineering improvements representing the evolution of roadways, evaluated as contributing structures.

One extant bridge marks a major milestone in the statewide development of the Lincoln Highway. The Columbus Loup River Bridge, built in 1932-1933, (PT00-068, National Register of Historic Places, 1992) carried both U.S. 81 and U.S. 30 at the intersection of these two major highways. It employed a rigid-connected Parker through truss. Another was the Roscoe State Aid Bridge near Roscoe (KH00-092, National Register of Historic Places, 1992). Although Criterion C for statewide significance as an engineering work was applied to these structures when listed in the National Register, Criterion A should also be applied.

Under Criterion Consideration B, moved bridges must retain an orientation, setting and general environs similar to the original and should maintain a location, connection and physical association with the Lincoln Highway. Major structural changes to a bridge may preclude its listing.

Culverts are small-scale resources that are common along many sections of the Lincoln Highway. They are not individually eligible for the National Register. However, early culverts will contribute to an historic segment of the road.

Roadways

Description

Many segments of road can still be driven, giving a sense of time and place with early travel on the highway. However, other sections of road may consist only of abandoned roadways and trails, long bypassed as new routes of the highway were identified and built.

The early route of the Lincoln Highway followed existing roads, which dictated where the earliest official route was designated. These roadways predate the organization of the Lincoln Highway. The earliest roads served local farm-to-market transportation and Rural Free Delivery (RFD) mail service to rural areas.

Section line roads were first established by the system of land surveys of Nebraska's territorial period. When section line roads were incorporated in to the route of the early Lincoln Highway, roadways often consisted of a zig-zag of left and right turns or "stairsteps." Section line roads were designated to be of a uniform right-of-way of 66-feet.

The most direct route, however, were those roads following the Union Pacific Railroad, which traversed at an angle. The railroad sometimes leased portions of its right-of-way to counties for use as local roads. Roads located along railroad right-of-way often jogged across the railroad tracks, making for sharp turns and dangerous crossings.

Early roadways on the Lincoln Highway consisted of dirt or simple trails, haphazardly maintained by local governments. Efforts of local citizens and "good roads" boosters sometimes supplemented local funding. In some cases, experimental segments were built to demonstrate a new construction technique and particular contractors advertised as "scientific" road builders, adopting methods of advanced road construction. Most significant of any associated with highway development on the Lincoln Highway were demonstration segments of concrete roads, "Seedling Miles," built by the Lincoln Highway Association in cooperation with local boosters.

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A goal of the Lincoln Highway Association was to shorten the route whenever possible to avoid the "stairstep" routes. Section line roads where the road jogged were gradually eliminated to make the highway most direct.

Another goal was to eliminate as many dangerous railroad crossings along the route as possible. In 1919, 160 miles or about one-third of the road was located on Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. An agreement was reached for federal funds to be applied to these highways in 1919 and resulted in subsequent realignments. This is said to have brought about the longest realignment of the Lincoln Highway in the United States. Nearly half of the total 450 miles of the highway eventually was located along the Union Pacific right-of-way.

The year 1916 marks the first federal-aid to states under the Federal-Aid Road Act. Following this act was the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1921, which provided states financial aid for the construction of seven percent of its highways. The mileage of the Lincoln Highway was included. As improved roads became the focus of highway development, roadways were commonly subject to improvements such as grading, gravel surfacing and realignments.

Roadways on the Lincoln Highway/ U.S. 30 exhibit other types of improvements both rare or, more commonly, evolutionary as improvements in the road were made. These included the elimination of sharp corners with radius curves and the elimination of railroad grade crossings by changing the alignments. Gravel surfacing was most commonly applied as road improvements. Between 1923 and 1926 the trend to improve dirt roads with gravel surfacing was favored by state highway officials. Brick was used in rare instances. By the mid-1920s, only 84 miles of the Lincoln Highway remained as dirt roads.

In the late 1920s, highway development included the bypassing of the smaller communities that were once linked by the highway. The central business district may have been bypassed in larger communities. Most often, the growth and development of highway-related businesses declined along the old route and businesses moved to the new alignments.

Federal-aid and federal emergency funding to put people to work during the Great Depression of the 1930s saw advancement of road construction and significant improvements to the highway as a result. Two emergency federal aid programs in 1930 and 1932 were authorized. Programs of the New Deal included the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and directed to highway construction. In 1935, Nebraska celebrated the Lincoln Highway as a paved road across the state.

Speed, efficiency and highway safety were among the goals of construction during this period. Roads were widened with the acquisition of additional right-of-way, railroad grade crossings were eliminated, guardrails installed and hard surfacing was applied.

After a hiatus of construction of road construction and maintenance during the World War II years, improvements resumed on the highway through the 1950s and 1960s when the entire route was further improved with new paved surfaces. Improvements continue through the present.

Several locations along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 mark the intersection of regional or national roads. One location is where the Meridian Highway/U.S. 81 converged with the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 at Columbus.

Significance

Roadways are linear resources and, obviously, the most exemplary property type of the historic highway. They are found as segments of road, most often where modern improvements or realignments have impacted their contiguity. They may also include bridges, culverts and other contributing property types.

Roadways must retain enough characteristic features of the road from the historic period(s) of the highway and must convey their significance and integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and/or association. They would embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period(s) or methods of construction.

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The first period of significance relative to roadways on the Lincoln Highway is defined as 1913 through 1916 with the formal establishment of the highway and the early efforts of local governments, "good roads" advocates and boosters affiliated with the Lincoln Highway Association. At the time most of the highway consisted of dirt roads and trails. The early road often followed the existing section-line roads of uniform 66-foot right-of-way. Other sections of road were located on Union Pacific right-of-way and varied according to the amount of right-of-way leased by the railroad. Some were limited to the outer 50 feet of the railroad right-of-way at the outer edge of the right-of-way. Beginning in this period, the dangers of railroad grade crossings had been identified. The right-of-way defines the boundaries of an early roadway.

A second period of significance begins in 1916 with the precedent-setting Federal-Aid Road Act, continues with the Federal-Aid Highway Act in 1921 and ends in the 1930s, when state and federal governments led road construction. Within this period of significance is the trend to improve dirt roads with gravel surfacing, the elimination of "stairstep" routes that followed section line roads, shortening of the route, and improvements and relocation to the Union Pacific right-of-way under an agreement reached with federal officials in 1919. In the late 1920s, highway development included the bypassing of the smaller communities that were once linked by the highway. This period represents the most significant advancement of road construction up until that time.

During World War II a hiatus of road construction and few improvements occurred. A third period of significance dates from post-World War II continuing through the 1950s and 1960s. Roads were further realigned and reflect the entire route of the Lincoln Highway that is now designated as U.S. 30. Sections developed after the 1950s and the 1960s have since been improved by modern and standard construction, new bridges, removal and replacement of pavement and the addition of paved shoulders. These road segments no longer retain sufficient physical integrity and do not meet Criterion Consideration G.

Roadways often represent more than one period of significance as the transition of highway development and improvements occurred. As in cases where the road was realigned and vacated, the period of significance will end when existing roads were bypassed and no longer designated as the route of the Lincoln Highway.

A roadway may be eligible under Criterion A as an example of a single event, a pattern of events or activities, the pioneering or advancement of road construction, transportation and travel patterns, development of the highway, or representative of highway-related travel or commerce. Early "stairstep" sections where the Lincoln Highway jogged along the section line system in Nebraska would be candidates for evaluation, as would sections where the highway followed the railroad right-of-way. Alterations to roadways, such as hard surfacing, paving, widening, removal of right angle corners with radius curves, and realignment may contribute to the significance of the road if they were completed during an historic period(s). Roadways may also be urban in nature (see Commercial Districts, above). Locations where the Lincoln Highway crossed regional or national roads may also be significant under Criterion A.

A roadway may be eligible under Criterion B for an association with a person if it best represents an individual's significance. This significance may be represented by a person's pioneering or advancement of engineering or road construction. This person may be significant as a government official whose contributions to the development of the highway can be specifically articulated for an association with a segment of road. An example of a personage was Phil R. Hockenberger, Sr. of Columbus who worked extensively with State Engineer Roy Cochran in the 1930s to advocate a new alignment of the Lincoln Highway through Columbus. Hockenberger also advocated for new bridges on the Platte and the Loup River Bridge (PT00-068, National Register of Historic Places, 1992) and a viaduct over the Union Pacific tracks, now replaced by a modern viaduct. It is important to note that many were built by state and local governments. An association with a specific person, such as a road engineer, may be lacking unless this association can be found for a person who pioneered or advanced a type of road construction found on the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30.

Roadways may merit consideration under Criterion C when they exhibit fine characteristics of a distinctive type, form or function of road construction or engineering. They would embody the distinctive characteristic of a type, period or method of construction. They may be eligible as property types representing rare examples of early construction; a type of experimental road-building; or the advancement, evolution or transition as roads were improved. For example, an

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abandoned segment of road was built south of the earlier Loup River Bridge near Columbus with the aid of local boosters and farmers in 1914. This project used a pioneering sand-clay technique that was being advocated at the time. A rare brick section of the Lincoln Highway near Elkhorn (DO00-014) has already been listed on the National Register. Some types of road construction are common and conformed to standard specifications, such as those that are graded and gravel surfaced.

An early roadway may qualify for listing under Criterion D if it could yield information about early road engineering and construction methods. Significance can be applied to roadbeds that demonstrate significant advancement, construction techniques or experiment in which information is not found from other sources. If archival or historical references are lacking, archeological investigations may yield information of the very early period of road construction and the methods of construction used prior to the development of standard specifications. In this case, an appropriate research design would have to be developed. Examples of the original 1913 alignment are found on abandoned roads, having been vacated as newer and better routes were identified and where later improvements were not made. These locations offer the highest degree of integrity and the greatest potential for study since they remain sufficiently intact to potentially yield important information regarding the construction of early roads. One example is the demonstration site of a sand-clay construction technique built south of the former Loup River Bridge at Columbus with the aid of local boosters and farmers. These early sections of the Lincoln Highway remain in rare cases.

Roadways should be considered as major components representative of the highway system of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 as a whole and should be evaluated at the statewide level of significance. As such, statewide significance accrues to sections of roads that maintain a high level of integrity.

Segments of road may also include bridges and culverts. These structures will contribute to sections of road, where bridges and culverts can be listed as contributing structures.

Eligibility Recommendations

Eleven properties have already been listed on the National Register and possess association with the Lincoln Highway:

- Sidney Business Historic District, downtown Sidney, Cheyenne County (CN09, multiple)
- Fremont Commercial Historic District, downtown Fremont, Dodge County (DD05, multiple)
- Lincoln Highway, County Road 120, east of Elkhorn, Douglas County (DO00-014)
- Gloe Brothers Service Station, US 30 and 11th St. in Wood River, Hall County (HL08-066)
- Hotel Yancey (Yancey Motor Hotel), 123 North Locust St. in Grand Island, Hall County (HL06-014)
- Roscoe State Aid Bridge (State Link 51B over S. Platte River), .5 miles south of Roscoe, Keith County (KH00-092)
- Wheat Growers Hotel, 102 South Oak St. in Kimball, Kimball County (KM04-068)
- Columbus Commercial Historic District, downtown Columbus, Platte County (PT01, multiple)
- Columbus Loup River Bridge, US 30 over the Loup River in Columbus (PT00-068)
- Hotel Yancey (Hotel Pawnee), 221 East 5th St. in North Platte, Lincoln County (LN06-045)
- Welsh Motor Court, First Street between East B and East C Streets, Ogallala (KH04-106)

The Sidney, Columbus and Fremont historic districts include individual buildings that contribute to the larger historic district with a period of significance related to the time period when the highway passed through these cities.

As a result of the Nebraska Historic Highway Survey (see report dated August 2002), over 60 individual properties associated with the Lincoln Highway were identified as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Eligibility recommendations need to be evaluated prior to the preparation of a National Register nomination in order to identify if a property has retained the historic features and integrity that may make it eligible for the National Register. Additional site-specific research may be necessary to further evaluate the potential significance of these resources and criterion to be applied. The Nebraska Historic Highway Survey assessed the potential eligibility of resources primarily under Criterion A and Criterion C. Further research and evaluation may identify additional resources related to the Lincoln Highway that qualify for the National Register under one or more of the other criteria. The following list should not be considered comprehensive. The list of potentially eligible properties is organized by county following the Lincoln Highway

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from east to west. Site numbers assigned to the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) are indicated for each property.

Potentially Eligible Properties – Lincoln Highway

Resource name	Location	Potential National Register Criterion	NeHBS Site Number
<i>Douglas County</i>			
Automobile Agency	West side of Main Street between Railroad and Center Streets, Elkhorn	Criterion A,C	DO00-025 DO05-004
<i>Colfax County</i>			
Automobile Garage	Southeast corner of Center Street and Highway 30, Rogers	Criterion A,C	CX00-051 CX05-015
Reinecke Motor Company Garage	Northeast corner of 11 th and A Street, Schuyler	Criterion A,C	CX06-044
Service Station	Southeast corner of B Street and Highway 30, Schuyler	Criterion A,C	CX06-080
<i>Platte County</i>			
Pratt Truss Bridge	Duncan vicinity	Criterion A,C	PT00-271 PT00-145
Service Station	East side of Highway 30/81 between 7 th and 8 th Streets, Columbus	Criterion A,C	PT01-539
Lincoln Highway Marker	In Duncan	Criterion A	PT04-025
<i>Merrick County</i>			
Pontiac Auto Dealership	West side of 16 th Avenue between 15 th and 16 th Streets, Central City	Criterion A,C	MK00-156 MK02-171
Motel Court	Intersection of Green Street and Highway 30, Clarks	Criterion A,C	MK04-037
<i>Hall County</i>			
Shady Bend	East side of Shady Bend Road, near Grand Island	Criterion A,C	HL00-151 HL00-033
Stuhr Filling Station	1810 East Highway 30, Grand Island	Criterion A,C	HL06-695
Seedling Mile	Seedling Mile Road between Willow and Stuhr Roads, Grand Island	Criterion A,C	HL06-696
Drive-In	Southeast corner of Cottonwood and 9 th Street, Wood River	Criterion A,C	HL08-068
<i>Buffalo County</i>			
Covered Wagon Souvenir Shop	Kearney vicinity	Criterion A,C	BF00-247 BF00-158
Central Auto Electric	North side of 25 th (Highway 30) between A Avenue and Central, Kearney	Criterion A,C	BF05-444
Hotel	Northwest corner of Highway 30 and D, Shelton	Criterion A	BF14-069
Filling Station/Service Station (includes a cabin camp)	North side of Highway 30 between Phelps and Lincoln, Shelton	Criterion A,C	BF14-074
<i>Dawson County</i>			
Gas Station	801 East 8 th Street, Cozad	Criterion A,C	DS00-044 DS02-055
<i>Lincoln County</i>			
Commercial Garage	West side of Main Street just north of Highway 30, Brady	Criterion A	LN00-239 LN01-029
Motel, Gas Station and Café	Northeast corner of Main and Highway 30, Brady	Criterion A,C	LN01-030
Elms Lodge Motel Court	North side of 4 th between Bryan and Belmont Avenues, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-452
Hendy-Ogier Auto Company	217 East 4 th , North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-554
Service Station	1119 North Jeffers Street, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-656
Log Cabin Café, Gas Station, and Motel	South side of Highway 30 west of Webster Avenue, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-692
Cedar Lodge Motel Court	421 Rodeo Road Avenue, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-703
Lincoln Highway Marker	In North Platte	Criterion A	LN06-711
Auto Dealership and Garage	Southwest corner of 4 th and Cottonwood, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-713
Service Station	Northeast corner of 4 th and McCabe Streets, North Platte	Criterion A,C	LN06-715
Lincoln Highway Marker	In North Platte	Criterion A	LN06-716
Lincoln Highway Marker	In North Platte	Criterion A	LN06-717

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Filling Station	Northeast corner of Highway 30 and Maple, Sutherland	Criterion A,C	LN08-019
Filling Station	South side of Highway 30 between West County Road and Poplar, Sutherland	Criterion A,C	LN08-041
Motel	Northwest corner of Highway 30 and Oak, Sutherland	Criterion A,C	LN08-044
Filling Station/Service Station	Northwest corner of Spruce and Highway 30, Sutherland	Criterion A,C	LN08-046
Lincoln Highway Marker	In Sutherland	Criterion A	LN08-048
Keith County			KH00-094
Chieftain Motel	909 West Highway 30, Paxton	Criterion A,C	KH04-063
Front Street	519 East 1 st Street, Ogallala	Criterion A,C	KH04-113
Hoke's Café	Southeast Corner of East 1 st and B, Ogallala	Criterion A,C	KH04-116
Elms Motel	Northeast Corner of Highway 30 and G Street, Ogallala	Criterion A,C	KH04-122
Lincoln Highway Marker	In Paxton	Criterion A	KH05-012
Lincoln Highway Marker	In Paxton	Criterion A	KH05-030
Filling Station	North side of 1 st between Oak and Pine, Paxton	Criterion A,C	KH05-038
Deuel County			DU00-054
Hotel	802 2 nd Street, Chappell	Criterion A	DU02-060
Motel, Café, and Service Station	North side of Highway 30 between Wheatlands and Ochs Streets, Chappell	Criterion A,C	DU02-070
Cheyenne County			CN00-086
Mayfair Filling Station/Service Station	Sidney vicinity	Criterion A,C	CN00-120
Abandoned Bar Q Motel	Sidney vicinity	Criterion A,C	CN00-122
Hurst's Lodgepole Motel	Northwest corner of Simmons and Sheldon (Highway 30), Lodgepole	Criterion A,C	CN05-030
Rainbow Motel Complex	Northwest corner of Sheldon (Highway 30) and Newman, Lodgepole	Criterion A,C	CN05-033
Implement Dealership	North side of Sheldon (Highway 30) between Newman and Ober, Lodgepole	Criterion A	CN05-034
Automotive Garage	Northwest corner of Sheldon (Highway 30) and McCall, Lodgepole	Criterion A,C	CN05-036
Filling Station/Service Station	Southwest corner of Chestnut and Sherman, Potter	Criterion A,C	CN08-036
El Palomino Motel	Northeast corner of 23rd Avenue and Illinois Street (HWY 30), Sidney	Criterion A,C	CN09-088
Sidney Motor Lodge/Bright Motel	2031 Illinois Street (Highway 30), Sidney	Criterion A,C	CN09-091
Stickney Automobile Agency	1119 Illinois Street(Highway 30), Sidney	Criterion A,C	CN09-109
Lincoln Highway Marker	In Sidney	Criterion A	CN09-117
Service Station	Northwest Corner of 9 th Avenue and Illinois Street, Sidney Historic District (NRHP)	Criterion A,C	CN09-135
Jackson Auto Dealership	644 10 th Avenue, Sidney	Criterion A,C	CN09-343
Motel	Northwest corner of 1 st and Friend Streets, Sunol	Criterion A,C	CN10-009
Highway 30 Rest Area	Northeast corner of 1 st and Henry, Sunol	Criterion A	CN10-011
Kimball County			KM00-085
Garage/Service Station	504 Highway 30 and 3 rd Street, Kimball	Criterion A,C	KM04-159
Motel	Northeast corner of Highway 30 and County Road 43, Kimball	Criterion A,C	KM04-168

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G. Geographical Data

Resources of this Multiple Property Documentation submission will be located in the geographical area that encompasses the historic alignment of the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 in Nebraska. Resources will generally be located within a quarter mile of a historic or the current route alignment.

The Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 traveled through the following Nebraska counties from east to west: Douglas, Dodge, Colfax, Platte, Merrick, Hall, Buffalo, Dawson, Lincoln, Keith, Deuel, Cheyenne, and Kimball. The 1930 bypass route traveled through Washington County. Site numbers assigned to the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) are indicated for the selected route surveyed as part of the Nebraska Historic Highway Survey.

County	NeHBS Site Number
Washington	WN00-254
Douglas	DO00-025
Dodge	DD00-329
Colfax	CX00-051
Platte	PT00-271
Merrick	MK00-156
Hall	HL00-151
Buffalo	BF00-247
Dawson	DS00-044
Lincoln	LN00-239
Keith	KH00-094
Deuel	DU00-054
Cheyenne	CN00-086
Kimball	KM00-085

The Lincoln Highway/U.S. 30 traveled through the following communities from east to west: Omaha, Elkhorn, Waterloo, Valley, Fremont, Ames, North Bend, Rogers, Schuyler, Richland, Columbus, Duncan, Silver Creek, Havens, Clarks, Central City, Chapman, Grand Island, Alda, Wood River, Shelton, Gibbon, Kearney, Odessa, Elm Creek, Overton, Lexington, Cozad, Gothenburg, Brady, Maxwell, North Platte, Hershey, Sutherland, Paxton, Roscoe, Ogallala, Brule, Big Springs, Chappell, Lodgepole, Sunol, Sidney, Brownson, Potter, Dix, Kimball, and Bushnell. With the 1930 construction of the Abraham Lincoln Memorial Bridge across the Missouri River near Blair, the bypass route traveled through Blair, Kennard and Arlington and connected to the existing route at Fremont.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Survey Methodology

This Multiple Property Documentation submission of Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska is based upon a survey completed for the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Department of Roads in 2001 and 2002. See *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey, Historic Highways in Nebraska* (August 2002) for complete survey methodology and results.

Two past studies also informed the Multiple Property Documentation submission. In 1991, a statewide historic bridge inventory and statewide historic context for bridges was completed to identify and evaluate the eligibility of pre-1947 bridges in Nebraska. Information and eligibility decisions from the survey, historic context, *Nebraska Historic Bridge Inventory Management Plan*, and Multiple Property Document informed eligibility decisions regarding bridges along the surveyed highways for the 2001-2002 project. The Lincoln Highway and its resources were subject to an intensive study during the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey reconnaissance surveys of the following counties: Buffalo, Cheyenne, Dodge, Hall, Lincoln, and Platte.

The Nebraska Historic Highway Survey developed a statewide historic context addressing highway development in Nebraska and individual historic contexts for the following highways: Lincoln Highway, Meridian Highway, Omaha-Lincoln-Denver/Detroit-Lincoln-Denver Highway, Potash Highway, and U.S. Highway 20. These were selected as being among the most important regional or cross-country highways in Nebraska. Lack of funding limited the scope of work to these highways, although others achieved prominence for their routes in and through Nebraska.

To develop the historic context for historic highway development in Nebraska, archival research was conducted at the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Department of Roads. Resources found at the Nebraska Department of Roads included biennial reports, historic highway maps, and project database logs identifying road improvements and realignments. Other source materials included period highway guidebooks.

The *Historic Highway Development in Nebraska* historic context developed as part of the Nebraska Historic Highway Survey covers the beginnings of organized road development in the late nineteenth century and continues through 1974 and the completion of Interstate 80 in Nebraska. The historic context, *Lincoln Highway in Nebraska*, begins in 1913 with the organization of the Lincoln Highway Association through 1974. The historic context also outlines a time line of development and significant events related to the Lincoln Highway. Surveyed properties were evaluated within the *Historic Highway Development in Nebraska* and *Lincoln Highway in Nebraska* historic contexts. The historic contexts are included in Section E of this document. Section F discusses examples of property types and potential National Register significance.

Properties were selected for survey and documentation based on their identified or understood association with the highway based on their physical appearance. The reconnaissance-level field survey identified historic road features and road-related properties largely from visual inspection. Fortunately, many of the types of properties related to the highway are readily identifiable, such as bridges, gas stations, cabin camps, and motels.

Survey methodology was based on *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation* and the Nebraska State Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office *Historic Buildings Survey Manual*. Extensive consultation included Nebraska State Historical Society and Nebraska Department of Roads staff.

In rural areas, one identified historic alignment of the Lincoln Highway was surveyed. The survey was limited to one route in rural areas because it was expected that highway-related resources would be concentrated in urban areas. In communities, multiple historic alignments were surveyed in an effort to identify road-related properties. In both rural and urban areas, the reconnaissance survey focused on road-related resources that had an association with the highway, automobiles, and/or services to the traveler. Surveyed properties were generally constructed before 1960 and were located within a quarter mile of the right-of-way.

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Surveyed properties retained a minimal degree of integrity and convey a sense of function as a road-related resource. Alterations to a property completed prior to 1960 were evaluated as having the potential to contribute to the property's history. If the association of the property was not clearly identifiable, but the property had the potential to serve the traveler along the route, the property was documented. Partial complexes or representative buildings were surveyed although demolition and alterations may have diminished their historic integrity.

Previously surveyed identified road-related properties recorded in the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey were reevaluated as part of the Nebraska Historic Highway Survey. This survey program began in 1974 and is a county-by-county survey effort that includes documentation of over 60,000 properties that reflect the rich architectural and historic heritage of Nebraska. Previously surveyed properties that displayed a severe loss of integrity through major physical changes were not resurveyed. They can, however, provide for a comparative analysis with extant properties.

Surveyed properties were documented with black-and-white photographs and the recordation of locational information in the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey database. Surveyed properties were mapped on county road maps, town plat maps or USGS quadrangle maps, as appropriate. Surveyed properties are now entered in a Geographic Information System (GIS), maintained by the Nebraska State Historical Society.

Limitations and Biases of the Survey

This survey was limited in scope and scale to focus on the agencies' objectives within the project budget and schedule. The application of reconnaissance survey methodology was necessitated.

The field survey of each highway was limited in the number of alignments driven and resources readily identifiable, as described above. Because early alignments were chosen to capture the early history and evolution of the early twentieth century roadways, eligibility assessments focused only on selected routes. In rural areas, the original alignment was primarily chosen for field survey. Other alignments may identify additional properties. Minor realignments were frequent and can only be identified through additional research.

In urban areas, multiple alignments, often including the original alignment and a later downtown bypass alignment c.1930s, were surveyed. Post-1940 alignments in both urban and rural areas can continue to tell the story and evolution of road development and may hold significance in their own right.

As a reconnaissance level survey, research focused on the overall history of the road and property types, including limited historic research on individual properties. Field survey efforts focused on the visual identification with potential connection to the road, such as automobile travel or tourism. The survey largely included Criteria A and C. Further research on individual properties may identify other National Register criteria to be applied to property types. These are Criteria B for persons associated with the development and promotion of the road and Criteria D for research potential. In other cases, Criterion Considerations B and G can be applied.

The inherent limitations of reconnaissance level surveys and limited site-specific research is the challenge of identifying the historical association of a property and understanding its relationship to the highway. Without completing site-specific research it is unknown what role, if any, the property may have contributed to the highway. These and additional properties can be identified and documented based on further historical research or as a stepping off point of this Multiple Property submission. As historic properties are evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places, specific information will yield additional information only addressed in a cursory manner in this Multiple Property Documentation submission.

For many surveyed resources it is unknown if the business was established as a direct result of the highway through towns or if the business was established to serve local and regional patrons and the trade of the traveling public was a supplement to the business. This scenario may apply particularly to automobile services, such as gas stations, auto dealerships and garages. Additional research focused on individual resources could identify the property's history, level of association and significance.

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The “experience” of driving the historic highway or its setting may include natural features and viewsheds. In terms of the highway’s historic character, these properties are difficult to characterize and quantify as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Some resources have already been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. However, major associations to the historic highway may not have been fully developed and additional National Register criteria could be applied. These nominations should be reevaluated.

Finally, this Multiple Property Documentation submission can only determine local and statewide significance. Since there are only limited surveys that have been accomplished across all of the states through which the Lincoln Highway/U.S.30 traversed, significance at a national level has not been applied since a comparative study cannot be made of resources in all states. A national level of significance was, therefore, beyond the scope of this document.

As additional research uncovers more information, it is recommended that this Multiple Property Documentation submission be expanded and amended.

Values of the Survey

The project’s results and products will be used by both the Nebraska State Historical Society and Nebraska Department of Roads in future project planning activities. The Nebraska Department of Roads has participated in the project to facilitate project planning and development by proactively identifying and evaluating historic resources. The agencies will continue to update the Nebraska Historic Highways Survey and gain a better understanding of the state’s historic highways and related resources. Both agencies have roles in highway project planning and compliance with state and federal cultural resource regulations. The statewide context of highway development and the reconnaissance survey results will assist the Nebraska State Historical Society, Nebraska Department of Roads and the Federal Highway Administration in determining what road-related properties may be eligible for the National Register.

The agencies also have the desire to raise public awareness of the history of highway development in the state and the significance of road-related resources. The project’s products, including the survey report and this document, will serve as educational materials for the general public and school systems in advancing the awareness and knowledge of Nebraska’s highways and related historic resources. A publication on Nebraska historic highways is in the planning stage.

U.S. 30 has now been designated a “Nebraska Byway.” Through this designation, travel and tourism on the highway is promoted. This project has already been used to incorporate into promotional materials and to identify sites that enhance this byway’s “heritage tourism” efforts. The Nebraska Byways program is administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads and Federal Highway Administration including federal funds to support both the program and individual projects. Support for the program is provided by an advisory committee comprised of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development-Travel and Tourism Division, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and Nebraska State Historical Society.

Finally, there has become great public interest in the old Lincoln Highway, best evidenced by the number of publications and guidebooks already in print. Many are searching out the old highway as a travel experience. The national Lincoln Highway Association and its Nebraska chapter have been dedicated to raising awareness of the historic road.

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