

MP 7689



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Michigan Avenue Bridge

other names/site number Columbus Drive Bridge, FMSF# HI06672

2. Location

street & number Columbus Drive over the Hillsborough River  not for publication

city or town Tampa  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33602

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Elissa Lotan, Deputy SHPO 8/7/17  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Jon [Signature]

9-25-2017

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

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

Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPD

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENGINEERING/Pony Truss Swing Bridge

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls N/A

N/A

roof N/A

other Steel

Concrete

**Narrative Description**

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

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

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

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Engineering

### Period of Significance

1926-1967

### Significant Dates

1926

### Significant Person

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Arch: Sprague, Norman S. and Martin, R.D., Engineers

Blder: Mt. Vernon Bridge Co. and Roberts Supply Co.

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_

Michigan Avenue Bridge  
Name of Property

Hillsborough Co., FL  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	3	5	4	8	6	2	3	0	9	4	3	9	6
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
2															

3															
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
4															

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ruben A. Acosta; W. Carl Shiver, Ph.D., Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date June 2017

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional items

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

### Property Owner

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

name Milton Martinez, Chief Transportation Engineer, Transportation and Stormwater Operations Division

street & number 306 East Jackson Street telephone (813) 274-8998

city or town Tampa state Florida zip code 33602

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

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

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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**SUMMARY**

The Columbus Drive Bridge spans the Hillsborough River north of downtown Tampa. Originally named the Michigan Avenue Bridge, the bridge was built between 1926 and 1927, and consists of twelve spans extending 470 feet across the river. The moveable span is a pony truss bobtail swing span. The swing span is flanked by eleven concrete approach spans with a tee-beam design. Originally supporting pedestrian sidewalks and two vehicular lanes flanking paired streetcar tracks, the bridge now carries four lanes of vehicular traffic and two pedestrian sidewalks across the Hillsborough River. Decorative elements of the functional structure include the metal balustrade with the finials on the pedestrian walkway of the swing span and the classically inspired balustrade with urn-shaped balusters topped by a concrete cap on the pedestrian walkway of the approach spans. A wood frame tender's house with a glass second story addition is located along the north elevation of the eastern approach span of the bridge. The bridge was built by Roberts Supply Company of Lima, Ohio, while the steel truss swing span was fabricated and erected by the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company of Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The bridge retains a high level of integrity.

**SETTING**

The Tampa Bay metropolitan area, which includes the cities of Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and their extensive suburban areas has a population of over 2,000,000 permanent residents. Located in the western part of central Florida, Tampa is situated at the mouth of the Hillsborough River on Tampa Bay—an inlet to the Gulf of Mexico. The city is the seat of Hillsborough County, a major center of finance and large banking holding companies and investment firms. With its nearby beaches and other attractions, sporting facilities, and climate, many thousands of tourists each year add substantially to the economic vitality of the area. The 2010 U.S. Census stated that Today Tampa was a city of 335,709 residents in a county of about 1,229,226.

The Columbus Drive Bridge is located along the Hillsborough River, upstream of the major downtown bridges such as the North Boulevard, Laurel, and Cass Street Bridges along a portion of the river that flows towards the southeast. The surrounding neighborhoods are primarily residential in character, with little to no commercial or industrial development on the eastern approaches to the bridge, and limited commercial development along Columbus Drive to the west of the bridge. Average daily traffic on the bridge is 25,500 cars in 2014.<sup>1</sup>

**DESCRIPTION**

The Michigan Avenue Bridge is a 470-foot-long structure which carries Columbus Drive, originally known as Michigan Avenue (photo 1). Originally configured to support a single streetcar line flanked on each side by

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<sup>1</sup> Bridge Statistics for Tampa, FL” City-Data.com <http://www.city-data.com/bridges/bridges-Tampa-Florida7.html>, accessed March 20, 2017.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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vehicular lanes and pedestrian sidewalks, the structure now supports four automobile lanes flanked by two pedestrian sidewalks. Oriented on an east-west alignment, the bridge is composed of a main swing span flanked by seven approach spans on the west and four approach spans on the east (photo 2). Reinforced concrete abutments are on each shore and feature horizontal lines cast into the concrete to mimic stone courses. The approach spans consist of shallow arched beams on piers constructed of cast-in place reinforced concrete. The piers and arches carry the roadbed, while the walkways on the north and south sides of the bridge are supported by reinforced concrete cantilevers. Neoclassical concrete balustrades line the walkways on both sides of the bridge (photo 3). At the western end of the southern balustrade, a metal plaque lists the The Tampa Developers, Florida Interurban Rapid Transit Railway Co., and the City of Tampa as responsible for the erection of the bridge (photo 4). Modern stoplights and moveable barriers located on the approach spans protect the swing bridge and activate prior to the opening of the bridge (photo 5).

The main span is a 164 feet 3 inches long by 55 feet wide steel pony truss swing span with an asymmetrical design (photo 6). The road deck is placed at three-quarters up the truss, with the chords of the trusses piercing it (photo 7). The deck consists of poured reinforced concrete over the pivot point of the bridge and steel grate in the cantilevered section of the bridge (photos 8-9). The truss's lower chords from the long arm of each truss extend down farther at the pivot point, a characteristic identified only on this bridge in the Florida bridge inventory.<sup>2</sup> A small plaque on the west inclined end post of the south truss reads that the swing span was fabricated by the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company in 1926 (photo 10). The pedestrian walkways on the swing bridge feature metal pipe railings with decorative finials on the main posts and darts within the railing itself. At several points, the walkways bump out along the bridge, coinciding with the locations of barrier gates or stoplights.

The bridge tender's house is located on the north side of the bridge, to the east of the swing span (photo 11). The original tenders house is supported by four reinforced concrete piers. It was a shed roofed building with two windows on the east side, one on the south, and one on the west. The current 1/1 sash windows do not appear to be historic. As part of a complete rehabilitation of the bridge in 2012, the bridge tender's hut was modified to improve sightlines for the bridge operator. A flat roofed glass operator's cabin was constructed atop the historic tender's house. A metal circular stairway connects the addition to a reinforced concrete landing that was added to the rear of the platform supporting the tender's house. The design was reviewed by the Florida State Historic Preservation Office for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and was intended to minimize its impact upon the overall composition of the bridge.

Modifications

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<sup>2</sup> Elaine Lund, Kisa Hooks, and Joan Deming. *The Historic Highway Bridges of Florida*. Florida Department of Transportation, Environmental Management Office. December 2012., pg. 5-47.

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TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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The laminated redwood decking of the swing span was replaced with concrete during the late 1960s at the same time the streetcar tracks were removed. The tender's house is original but was altered with the addition of a second story and the installation of plate glass windows. The span control panel was moved from the north sidewalk to the tender's house. The wood fender system flanking the waterway was replaced in the 1960s and again in 1989 due to marine traffic. Between 1990 and 1993, the bridge underwent repairs including replacement of the electrical system, repairs to deteriorated concrete and steel elements and the installation of slope-faced concrete barriers along the approach spans between the traffic lanes and the pedestrian sidewalks. A complete restoration of the bridge was finished in 2012. The restoration was an \$8.75 million joint project largely funded by the city and county. About \$6.85 million was from community investment tax dollars. Nearly \$2 million of the cost was covered by a federal grant issued through the Florida Department of Transportation. Work included replacing the bridge's mechanical elements and control system, road upgrades, paint, structural repairs to concrete and steel and reconstruction of the tender house.<sup>3</sup>

Integrity

The bridge retains a very high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association and feeling. Major changes to the bridge's design and materials have been limited. The removal of the bridge's streetcar tracks is associated with the demise of the transit system as a whole and reflects a broader pattern across the state and nation. Repairs to the bridge have necessarily required the replacement of materials due to the effects of corrosion and wear, but the replacement materials are in kind and match the historic materials. The most significant change to the bridge was the modification of the tender's house in 2012, but as the bridge was considered eligible for the National Register by the State Historic Preservation Office, the modification was guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as part of the compliance process, and the new tender's house does not detract from the overall design or operation of the bridge.

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<sup>3</sup> "Columbus Drive Bridge to close for repairs" [Tampa Bay Times](#), February 2, 2012.



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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

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**SUMMARY**

The Columbus Drive Bridge is significant at the local and state level under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The bridge is one of only three remaining bobtail swing spans in Florida. The architectural embellishments signify both the affluence of the era and the importance given to the bridge's place at the confluence of Hillsborough Bay and the Hillsborough River. The bridge was built in 1926 as a joint project of Tampa Developers Incorporated, the Florida Interurban Rapid Transit Railway Company, and the City of Tampa. The bridge was built by the Roberts Supply Company of Lima, Ohio, while the swing span was constructed and installed by the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company of Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The age, type, aesthetic qualities, landmark position, and association with the 1920s expansion of Tampa all contribute to the bridge's historical value. The Columbus Drive Bridge is also significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Transportation and Community Planning and Development, primarily based on its association with the growth and development of Tampa during the early part of the 20th century. Tampa Developers Incorporated initiated the construction in connection with the establishment of the Michigan Park Subdivision on the west side of the Hillsborough River. Like the other bridges over the Hillsborough River in downtown Tampa, it served to strengthen the connection between the east and west sides of the Hillsborough River as Tampa developed, particularly around the Land Boom years.<sup>4</sup> The bridge contributes to the **Florida Historic Highway Bridges Multiple Property Document Submission** under **Early Twentieth Century Historic Context and the F.10 Property Type: Swing Bridges**.

The period of significance for Criterion A is 1926-1967, as the bridge provided a vital transportation link over the Hillsborough River ever since its construction and it facilitated the urban development of northeast Tampa throughout this time period. Under Criterion C: Architecture and Engineering, the period of significance is 1926-27, coinciding with the design and construction of the bridge.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Columbus Drive Bridge is locally significant under Criterion A: Transportation and Criterion A: Community Planning and Development. It is also significant at the state level under Criterion C: Architecture and Engineering. Tampa shared in the Florida Boom of the 1920s. The city benefitted from federal spending during and after the First World War, which resulted in an expansion in the city's port facilities and improved transportation connections including highway and railway improvements.<sup>5</sup> An extensive streetcar system connected Tampa to its manufacturing centers in Ybor City and West Tampa, its port facilities along the bay, and new residential suburbs such as Tampa Heights and Hyde Park. Following the war, tourism also spurred the

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<sup>4</sup> Tampa Historic Preservation Commission, "Historic Bridges on the Hillsborough River," Local Multiple Properties Landmark Designation Report (Tampa, FL: City of Tampa, 2006), F-1, F-3.

<sup>5</sup> "Historic Bridges on the Hillsborough River," E-3



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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

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city's economy as thousands of visitors traveled to the Tampa Bay area during the winter. Many of these were "tin-can tourists," or middle class travelers that took holidays via automobile, which due to mass production and installment financing, was now widely available to a broad swath of Americans.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, the city's cigar industry was at its peak in the 1920s, with hundreds of thousands of cigars rolled by thousands of Hispanic, Italian, or other immigrant workers that lived in ethnic neighborhoods such as Ybor City and West Tampa.

Transportation

The Michigan Avenue bridge was by the City of Tampa between 1926 and 1927 as a new crossing of the Hillsborough River upstream of the Laurel Street Bridge. In contrast with bridges further downstream, the Columbus Drive bridge was designed as a bob-tail swing bridge by Pittsburg-based engineer Norman S. Sprague and by R. D. Martin, a City of Tampa engineer.<sup>7</sup> This type of bridge swings on an off-center pivot, providing greater clearance for river traffic. The bridge was a vital transportation link for Tampa's northern suburbs, carrying a streetcar line, two lanes of traffic, and pedestrian walkways. Columbus Drive, as Michigan Avenue was renamed in 1933, became a significant thoroughfare in northeastern Tampa and allowed for the development and expansion of West Tampa, Tampa Heights, and Riverside Heights.

Community Planning and Development

As the city of Tampa continued to grow in the 1920s, new neighborhoods north of West Tampa and Tampa proper required a new crossing of the Hillsborough River upstream of the Laurel Street Bridge. In 1926, the city of Tampa, in partnership with the Florida Interurban Rapid Transit Railway and the Tampa Developers Corporation, constructed a new bridge along what was then called Michigan Avenue to connect West Tampa with Tampa Heights.<sup>8</sup> This was only one year after Tampa's annexation of the formerly independent city of West Tampa, which was founded in 1895 on the west side of the Hillsborough River as a second center of cigar manufacturing after Ybor City.<sup>9</sup> The bridge would facilitate residential development along the Hillsborough River, providing Tampa's northern suburbs direct access to the northern edge of West Tampa. This includes Tampa Heights, the city's oldest residential suburb, which developed starting in the 1890s as land was subdivided, streets platted, and streetcar lines constructed linking the area to Tampa proper.<sup>10</sup> Michigan Avenue was the southern border of this district, and the construction of the bridge and streetcar line across the Hillsborough River facilitated travel by the neighborhood's working and middle class residents to manufacturing jobs in West Tampa.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Kimberly Hinder, Unpublished draft of National Register Nomination for the Michigan Avenue Bridge, 2005. (Florida Master Site File), 7-1.

<sup>8</sup> "Historic Bridges on the Hillsborough River," F-3.

<sup>9</sup> W. Carl Shiver and Larry S. Paarlberg, "West Tampa Historic District" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. (Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Archives, March 4, 1985) 8-3, 8-4.

<sup>10</sup> W. Carl Shiver, "Tampa Heights Historic District" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Tallahassee, FL: Bureau of Historic Preservation, August 4, 1995) 8-3; 8-4.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

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The key figure behind the Columbus Drive Bridge was Allen J. Simms, a real estate developer who moved to Tampa in 1906 and invested heavily in residential and commercial project in the city's burgeoning suburbs.<sup>11</sup> Simms was president of Tampa Developers, Inc, which was developing a residential neighborhood north of West Tampa, across the Hillsborough River from Riverside Heights.<sup>12</sup> The development plans included the construction of a bridge across the river to provide access to the new development. Partnering with the city and Tampa's streetcar line, Simms hoped to capitalize on the ongoing Land Boom; however, development stalled following the collapse of the Land Boom between 1926-1927, and the areas north of West Tampa were not fully developed until nearly thirty years later during the post-World War II period.<sup>13</sup>

The construction of the Columbus Drive Bridge followed a pattern established by earlier bridges across the Hillsborough River, such as the Lafayette Street (Kennedy Boulevard) bridge, which were designed to facilitate development on the west side of the river. The Lafayette Street Bridge, the oldest road crossing of the river, led to the development of the Hyde Park residential suburb to the southeast of downtown Tampa, and the streetcar line it carried facilitated transportation between the new city of West Tampa and the center of Tampa. The Columbus Drive bridge was constructed as a speculative investment by the City, the streetcar company, and developers, who thought the construction of a bridge would spur development and increase property values. This coincided with the Florida Land Boom, a real estate craze that dominated the state in the early 1920s before its collapse in 1926. This cooperation is visible in the funding for the bridge, where the city provided \$100,000 of the total \$312,000 cost of the bridge; Tampa Developers, Inc., and the streetcar company provided the remainder.<sup>14</sup> The final cost of the bridge exceeded the original estimates and totaled \$429,000, with the city providing \$150,000 and Tampa Developers the remainder.<sup>15</sup> In total, three bridges over the Hillsborough River were built during the Land Boom and coincided with speculative development: the Columbus Drive Bridge, the Platt Street Bridge, and the Cass Street Bridge.<sup>16</sup> These bridges were part of a city-wide infrastructure program which was funded by municipal bonds.<sup>17</sup>

Engineering

The Columbus Drive Bridge is a rare surviving example of the bobtail swing bridge type, as identified in the Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPD, Property Type F.10. Swing bridges feature a movable span that rotates around a pivot point, which may be placed in the center of the bridge, or less commonly asymmetrically

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<sup>11</sup> Kimberly Hinder, Unpublished draft of National Register Nomination for the Michigan Avenue Bridge, 2005, Florida Master Site File HI6672 (Sarasota, FL: Archaeological Consultants, Inc., 2005), 8-4.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 8-5

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 8-4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 8-5.

<sup>16</sup> "Historic Bridges on the Hillsborough River," F-1.

<sup>17</sup> Hinder, 8-4.

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placed (the bobtail design). These bridges are often constructed of a steel truss supporting the road deck and rotating on a concrete pier. The bridge's other spans are reinforced concrete tee-beams on concrete piers, and are early examples under Property Type F.5: Beam Bridges.

The Columbus Drive bridge was designed by Pittsburg-based engineer Norman S. Sprague, who collaborated with one of the City of Tampa's engineers, R. D. Martin.<sup>18</sup> The swing span is the most significant aspect of the bridge's design, as it is unique in Florida and represents a departure from standardized bridge designs that were increasingly popular in the 1920s and later. Unlike other swing bridges which utilize a deck truss (where the truss is below the roadbed) the bridge uses a pony truss design, where the roadbed is located halfway between the top and bottom of the truss. In addition, the trusses vary in depth, with a deeper truss located over the pivot, presumably to better handle the stresses generated by the motion of the bridge and to accommodate the heavier weight on the short side of the bridge, which balances the longer swinging portion over the river channel. This portion of the bridge was manufactured by the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company in Ohio, and shipped to Tampa for assembly by the Lima, Ohio based Roberts Supply Company.<sup>19</sup> In addition to the swing span, the bridge consisted of eleven reinforced concrete spans resting on concrete piers. These are significant for their age and as early examples of reinforced concrete construction. The spans consist of tee-beams cast in place with steel reinforcing rods to counter tension that occurs at the base of beams. The tee-beam design would be very popular in the 1930s and 1940s, until replaced by newer designs and the introduction of pre-stressed reinforced concrete.

The Columbus Drive Bridge is among the rarest bridge types identified in the state by the Florida Department of Transportation. Among road bridges surveyed in 2010, only ten swing bridges remain in use in Florida, and of these, only three are of the bobtail design. The Columbus bridge is unique in its use of a pony truss to support the road deck; no other bridge in Florida has a similar design.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Hinder 8-1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Elaine Lund, "Florida's Historic Highway Bridges," Draft National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Document Form (Sarasota, FL: Archeological Consultants, Inc., 2013), F-42; Hinder, 8-8.

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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Hinder, Kimberly. Unpublished draft of National Register Nomination for the Michigan Avenue Bridge, 2005. Florida Master Site File HI6672 (Sarasota, FL: Archaeological Consultants, Inc., 2005).

Lund, Elaine, Kisa Hooks, and Joan Deming. *The Historic Highway Bridges of Florida*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Transportation, Environmental Management Office, December 2012.

Lund, Elaine. "Florida's Historic Highway Bridges," Draft National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Document Form. Sarasota, FL: Archeological Consultants, Inc., 2013.

Shiver, W. Carl, and Larry S. Paarlberg. "West Tampa Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Archives, March 4, 1985.

Shiver, W. Carl. "Tampa Heights Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Tallahassee, FL: Bureau of Historic Preservation, August 4, 1995.

Tampa Historic Preservation Commission. "Historic Bridges on the Hillsborough River." Local Multiple Properties Landmark Designation Report. Tampa, FL: City of Tampa, 2006.

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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary follows the footprint of the current bridge and abutments along W Columbus Drive, from N Riverside Drive on the east to N Rome Avenue on the west. See attached maps.

**Boundary Justification**

The above described boundaries encompass all of the historic resources of the Michigan Avenue Bridge.

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MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE  
TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

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**Photographs**

Name of Property: Michigan Avenue Bridge

City or Vicinity: Tampa

County: Hillsborough

State: Florida

Photographer: Ruben A. Acosta

Date Photographed: April 26, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. Michigan Avenue Bridge. View NW.
2. Michigan Avenue Bridge. View SE.
3. Pedestrian walkway. View W.
4. Dedication plaque. View S.
5. Road deck, gates, bridge tender's house, and swing span. View NW
6. Swing span, Michigan Avenue Bridge. View SE.
7. Detail, pony truss. View E.
8. Concrete road deck over swing span pivot. View E.
9. Steel grate road deck, swing span. View W.
10. Detail, manufacturer's plaque. View W.
11. Bridge tender's house showing 2012 glass addition. View W.

# Columbus Drive Bridge


Columbus Drive and  
Hillsborough River.  
Tampa, Hillsborough County  
Florida

UTM:  
17R 354862 3094396

Lat/Long:  
27.966756, -82.475589

Datum: WGS84

## Legend

 Proposed National Register Boundary

Date: 3/21/2017

1:2,000

0 80 160 320 Feet

0 15 30 60 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community





# Columbus Drive Bridge

Columbus Drive and the Hillsborough River.  
Tampa, Hillsborough County  
Florida


UTM:  
17R 354862 3094396

Lat/Long:  
27.966756, -82.475589

USGS Quad: Tampa

Datum: WGS84

## Legend

 Proposed National Register Site

Date: 3/21/2017

N

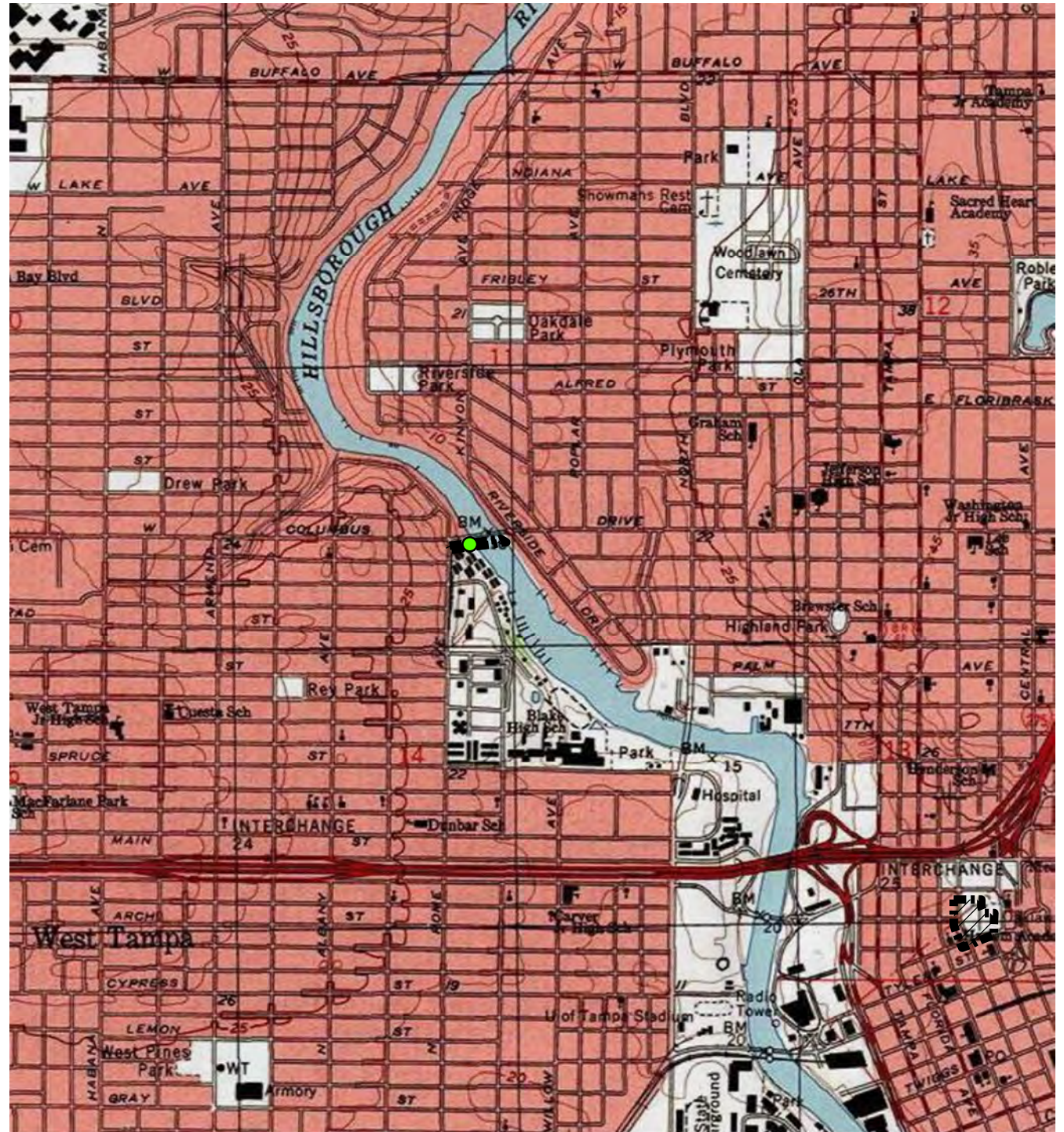


1:24,000

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Feet

0 250 500 1,000 Meters

Basemap Source: 2013 National  
Geographic Society, i-cubed















WALK  
  
ACROSS  
BRIDGE

DANGER  
SIGNAL



MICHIGAN AVENUE BRIDGE

ERECTED 1926 JOINTLY BY  
THE TAMPA DEVELOPERS  
INCORPORATED

A. J. SIMMS, PRESIDENT

THE FLORIDA INTERURBAN  
RAPID TRANSIT RAILWAY CO.

CALVIN A. OWENS, PRESIDENT

THE CITY OF TAMPA

PERRY G. WALL, MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

W. J. BARRITT

JAMES McCANTS

S. L. LOWEY, SR.

W. A. ADAMS

COMMISSIONERS

W. LESLEY BROWN, CITY MANAGER

R. D. MARTIN, CITY ENGINEER

NORMAN S. SPRAGUE, PITTSBURGH, PA.

CONSULTING ENGINEER

ROBERTS SUPPLY CO., LIMA, OHIO

CONTRACTORS























THE  
MT VERNON  
BRIDGE COMPANY  
MT VERNON  
OHIO  
1926





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 8/9/2017      Date of Pending List: 9/19/2017      Date of 16th Day: 10/4/2017      Date of 45th Day: 9/25/2017      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years         |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      9/25/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



# CITY OF TAMPA

Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

Planning & Development Department

Architectural Review & Historic Preservation

May 1, 2017

Ruben A. Acosta  
Survey and Registration Supervisor  
Division of Historical Resources  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Re: Michigan Avenue (Columbus Drive) Bridge, Nomination Proposal for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Acosta:

As Administrator for the City of Tampa's Historic Preservation Commission, I have reviewed the above-referenced nomination proposal and found that it satisfies the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, with the condition that the application is amended to address the following comments:

1. **Name of Property:** The historic name is Michigan Avenue Bridge. The current name is Columbus Drive Bridge.
6. **Function or Use:** The historic transportation functions were both road-related and rail-related, as the bridge originally carried streetcars.
8. **Statement of Significance:**
  - a. The summary for the narrative for this section includes a discussion of the bridge's significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture. As such, architecture should be listed in the Areas of Significance on the registration form, and this area should be further discussed in the narrative. The Multiple Property Documentation Form for Florida's Historic Highway Bridges states, "a bridge may be significant under Criterion C for its architecture and aesthetic design. Many early bridges constructed during the City Beautiful movement reflect high-style architectural elements. Especially popular were tender stations with Mediterranean Revival style motifs and Neoclassical Revival style urn-shaped balustrades seen in bridges throughout the state" (Sec.F, p.1).
  - b. The property type, per the Multiple Property Documentation Form is **F.10: Swing Bridges**, not F.11, as indicated on pages 1 and 4 of the narrative for Section 8.
  - c. On page 1 of the narrative for Section 8, correct the second sentence to state that the bridge is one of only three remaining bridges in Florida that have a bob-tail swing span.
  - d. Clarify on page 4 of Section 8 that the unique design of the bridge is its use of a pony truss both below and above the deck of a bob-tail swing span.

The Michigan Avenue (Columbus Drive) Bridge, constructed by a developer and a streetcar company in 1927, is an important part of the history of the community planning and development of the City of Tampa during the Land Boom Era. It exhibits elements of the Neoclassical Revival style in its design. Additionally, it is only one of three remaining bob-tail swing bridges in the state, and it features a unique truss design. The Columbus Drive Bridge, along with five other bridges in Tampa, received Local Historic Landmark designation as part of the



Acosta  
May 1, 2017

2

Historic Bridges over the Hillsborough River Multiple Properties Group in 2006. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places will bring additional recognition to this significant historic resource and promote its continued preservation. The distinction is well-deserved.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this nomination for the Michigan Avenue (Columbus Drive) Bridge.

Sincerely,



Dennis Fernandez, Manager  
Architectural Review & Historic Preservation



# CITY OF TAMPA

Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

May 5, 2017

Ruben A. Acosta  
Survey and Registration Supervisor  
Division of Historical Resources  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Re: Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:  
Kennedy Boulevard Bridge and Columbus Drive Bridge, Tampa, Hillsborough County

Dear Mr. Acosta:

I am writing to express my support for the nomination to list the Kennedy Boulevard and Columbus Drive Bridges in the National Register of Historic Places. Both bridges are designated as City of Tampa Local Landmarks and national designation will bring broader recognition to these important structures. Given the substantial benefit that the Kennedy Boulevard and Columbus Drive Bridges have provided to Tampa, listing on the National Register of Historic Places is merited.

Both the Kennedy Boulevard and Columbus Drive Bridges have played important roles in the early development of Tampa. For over a century, the Kennedy Boulevard Bridge, formerly known as the Lafayette Street Bridge, has provided commuters with a vital connection over the Hillsborough River and into Tampa's downtown. The elegant design of the bridge has acted as a distinctive gateway into the central business district and has facilitated the growth of the city, since its construction in 1913. The Columbus Drive Bridge, formerly known as the Michigan Avenue Bridge, provides a vital connection to the areas of West Tampa and Tampa Heights, which were originally only traversable via ferry. The inventive engineering of the bridge, with its off-center pivot operation, provides greater clearance for vessels that navigate this portion of the Hillsborough River.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the nomination of the Kennedy Boulevard and Columbus Drive Bridges to the National Register of Historic Places. I encourage the State of Florida National Register Review Board to favorably recommend the listing to the Keeper of the National Register.

Sincerely,

Bob Buckhorn



# CITY OF TAMPA

Bob Buckhorn, Mayor



~~100001669~~  
NP 100001669

June 28, 2017

National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C Street, NW (2280)  
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Columbus Drive Bridge, Tampa, Hillsborough County - Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express my support for the nomination to list the Columbus Drive Bridge in the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge is designated as City of Tampa Local Landmark and national designation will bring broader recognition to this important structure. Given the substantial benefit that the Columbus Drive Bridge has provided to Tampa, listing on the National Register of Historic Places is merited.

The Columbus Drive Bridge played important role in the early development of Tampa. The bridge, formerly known as the Michigan Avenue Bridge, provided a vital connection between the areas of West Tampa and Tampa Heights, which were originally only traversable via ferry. The inventive engineering of the bridge, with its off-center pivot operation, provides greater clearance for vessels that navigate this portion of the Hillsborough River. Today, the Columbus Drive Bridge continues to be an important part of the city's infrastructure and one that links modern-day Tampa to its past.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the nomination of the Columbus Drive Bridge to the National Register of Historic Places. I encourage the Keeper of the National Register to approve this nomination.

Sincerely,

Bob Buckhorn





## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

**RICK SCOTT**  
Governor



**KEN DETZNER**  
Secretary of State

August 4, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Florida's Historic Highway Bridges Multiple Property Submission Cover Document** and the **Michigan Avenue Bridge, Tampa Hillsborough County, Florida (FMSF# HI06672)**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ruben A. Acosta".

Ruben A. Acosta  
Supervisor, Survey & Registration  
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures