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## E. Statement of Historic Contexts

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### Summary

US Route 66 is significant as the first national highway linking Chicago with Los Angeles. It is associated with the explosive growth of automobile tourism and with the general theme of transportation in America between ca. 1920-1944. Through the years, Route 66 was improved to the current standards of the time, and in its various forms it represents the evolution of national automobile transportation from dirt track to superhighway. Route 66 appears today in several forms: abandoned and essentially in archeological context; as part of a local road system, such as a county road still in use; and within an urban setting that recalls the time when Route 66 was "The Main Street of America".

The period of significance identified for the route in Arizona begins in about 1920, when construction began on the road that would officially become US Route 66, and ends in 1944, with the passage of the Federal Highway Act. By this time, the pattern of development along Route 66 had become firmly established, and the road itself had essentially taken on its final form. The final phase of Route 66 is the era when the route was replaced by Interstate 40, beginning in 1956. This latter phase is outside the period of significance and theme identified in this nomination. The appropriate geographical context for this nomination is the State of Arizona because the Arizona Highway Department built and maintained the road, and historical events relating to the route reflect general trends within the state.

### Context

The beginnings of Route 66 lie in the ancient past, with aboriginal trails that linked trade partners from the Great Plains to coastal California. These trails, which followed gentle terrain and led to water sources, were used for centuries. After the United States acquired lands in the southwest from Mexico in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Congress sent exploratory parties to the area to assess its resources and search for transportation routes. These expeditions often followed the traces of prehistoric trails. Between 1857 and 1859, Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale traversed one such route when he constructed a wagon road between Fort Smith, Arkansas and the Colorado River along the 35th Parallel. Built for the Army at a cost of \$120,000.00, the Beale Wagon Road was among the first federally funded roads in the western United States. In the final decades of the 1800s, the dusty (or more often muddy) track guided thousands of settlers, ranchers, military personnel, and others west. Although other immigrant travelways, such as the Oregon Trail and El Camino del Diablo have become more celebrated in popular literature, the Beale Road was one of the major transcontinental transportation routes of the last century. The 35th Parallel featured a relatively mild climate, generally level terrain, and few antagonistic natives. It was an excellent corridor for travel, especially compared with the barren canyonlands to the north and hostile desert to the south. Railroad engineers followed the path of the Beale Road when surveying for the 1883 transcontinental Atlantic and Pacific Railroad. Towns and settlements soon grew up along the railroad, and roads linked the town's main streets. Route 66 grew from these foundations.

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During the Territorial years, from 1863 to 1912, Arizona had an inadequate road system. Individual counties had authority over road construction, but generally lacked the tax revenues or organization to carry out an effective road construction and maintenance program. The US Army, stage companies, and toll road entrepreneurs built and sometimes maintained horse and wagon roads. Railroads accessed many of the major towns in the Territory, and smaller spur lines led to mines and timber. The advent of the automobile in the early years of this century, consequent with Arizona's achievement of statehood in 1912, revolutionized the concept of road building in the state, and initiated a boom in road construction activity.

In the first decade of this century, the Territorial Legislature realized that the counties had neither the money nor the inclination to organize a system of roads to a consistent standard between counties. In 1909, they created the office of Territorial Engineer and established a road tax for the purpose of developing an intrastate road system linking major cities and towns. The first (and only) Territorial Engineer, J.B. Girand, planned a network of unpaved graded roads varying in width from 16' to 24' depending on projected traffic loads and terrain. The sparsely populated northern part of the state received little attention from the Territorial Engineer's office, and continued to suffer roads so muddy in winter that cars were shipped by rail between Ash Fork and Winslow.

When Arizona became a state in 1912, the Territorial Engineer became the State Engineer, and funding for road construction increased to keep pace with the rapid rise in automobile traffic, particularly the new phenomenon of tourist travel. Girand's plan for the state road network continued to be implemented. The decade of the teens saw the development of coast-to-coast as well as regional highways, largely because of influence wielded by the nationwide Good Roads movement. The Arizona Good Roads Association published a tour book with road maps in 1913 to publicize the state's roads. In it the publishers proclaimed that ". . . Arizona has . . . the best natural roads in the Union" but conceded that ". . . some difficulties are encountered in the remote sections." These difficult sections included the future path of Route 66, as the maps show winding roads with steep grades (Figure 1). Annotations describe the condition of various segments: "bad road--sandy & rough--no bridges--steep grades--many arroyas [sic] and washes" (Gallup to Holbrook); "roads fair--bad in places in wet weather" (Holbrook to Flagstaff); "beautiful forests and fair roads" (Flagstaff to Williams); "fair road--rough in places" (Williams to Seligman); "fair road--easy grades" (Seligman to Kingman); "good road--bad only in river bottoms--heavy grades at gold roads" (Kingman to Needles). In all, it was 483 miles of rough and tortuous dirt road with few, if any, signs to mark the way.

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It would be years before travelers in the northern part of the state saw any substantial improvement in the roads, although some bridges built during the teens did make river and canyon crossings easier. Maintenance continued to be a problem; volunteer groups would sometimes work on the roads rather than wait for state assistance. Local citizens petitioned for new state highways in their areas, with mixed results. One signed petition is attached to 1916 survey plans for a "proposed state highway" from Ash Fork to Williams which did not materialize until 1922. The state could not keep pace with the enormous demand for roads by a public increasingly fascinated with the automobile. Consequently, counties continued to be primarily responsible for roadwork in Arizona during the 1910s, and roads continued to reflect the counties' inadequate funding and organization. In 1916, the Federal Government came to the rescue.

Congress passed the Federal Aid Road Act, also known as the Bankhead Act, on July 11, 1916. This law directed the Secretary of Agriculture to distribute highway construction funds and cooperate with state highway departments in the planning, construction, and maintenance of their rural roads. The US Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) became a new agency under the Department of Agriculture to administer the program and distribute funds. Arizona received \$3.7 million in aid to be distributed over a five-year period. Funds had to be matched by counties and no more than \$10,000.00 per mile could be spent on highways. Despite these disadvantages, and new levels of bureaucracy to overcome, the Federal program revolutionized the state highway system. The State Engineer's Office became the Arizona Highway Department (AHD) and soon grew to the largest state agency. In 1920, the department employed more personnel than all other state agencies combined and was also its largest contracting organization. Once the AHD infrastructure began functioning, the road which would become Route 66 could be surveyed and constructed.

For survey and construction purposes, the route was divided into small segments which could be built separately. For example, a 4.8 mile section of the highway between Ash Fork and Williams was known as Federal Aid Project No. 51. Major portions of the road across northern Arizona were reconstructed between 1920-23. The dirt travelway was graded, cinder surfaced, and widened to 14'-18' (the actual roadbed, with shoulders, tended to be several feet wider than this; see Figure 2 for road structure terminology). New bridges and culverts constructed at canyon and river crossings added to those few which had already been built in the 1910s. Many of these features were not built to standard plans and reflect the skills of local craftsmen. Although it was still a narrow, twisting, unpaved road with occasional steep grades, the improvement was remarkable.

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Boosters named this road the National Old Trails Highway, because the transcontinental route linked together segments of old trails. The US Government was considering several routes to be paved as national interstate highways, and promoters of the Old Trails Highway eventually convinced the government of the route's worthiness. It was known at various times as the Santa Fe Highway, the Postal Highway, the Grand Canyon Route, and the Will Rogers Highway, but none of those nicknames proved to be as enduring as the title Route 66, as it was officially designated in 1926. The government assigned route numbers based on geography. North-south routes had odd numbers and east-west routes had even numbers, starting with Route 2 on the most northern road between Maine and Idaho, and ending with Route 96 on the most southern highway in Texas. Route 66 received its famous name simply because it was the next number in geographic sequence.

US Route 66 ran for 2282 miles from the corner of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Boulevard in Chicago to the ocean at Santa Monica, California. Some 400 miles of the route passed through Arizona. In 1926, virtually none of Route 66 was paved. Yet another group organized to lobby for improving the road. The Arizona Route 66 Association determined that paving was the top priority for the road during one of its first conventions, held in Williams. Paving soon began on the main streets of towns through which Route 66 passed. Later, sometimes years later, the road was paved between towns. Because Route 66 linked the main streets of communities, it received yet another moniker: the Main Street of America.

Arizona, as elsewhere, experienced an explosive increase in automobile use during the 1920s. Private automobile registrations numbered 20 in 1900; less than one thousand in 1910; 34,000 in 1920; 69,000 in 1925; and 82,000 in 1927. Miles of roadway increased from about 6,000 in 1900 to about 22,000 in 1927, but engineering standards were no longer adequate for their heavy use. This was particularly true of Route 66, which for the most part remained unpaved. The magazine Arizona Highways, published by the Arizona Highway Department, described conditions of state highways. Excerpts characterize parts of Route 66 during the late 1920s: "[between Williams and Flagstaff are] 18 miles of narrow, crooked, poorly surfaced road which is particularly dangerous in dry weather due to raveling and innumerable potholes" and "[near Valentine it is] narrow and rough, with sharp turns."

Several factors may account for the relatively low standards of the ca. 1922 roadway. The \$10,000 per mile cap on Federal Aid road projects necessitated that costs be kept down. Because road fill and bridges were expensive, the road tended to follow the twisting contours of the land. It is doubtful that the new highway department or its contractors had equipment much more advanced than horse-drawn graders and explosives to do the work. At that time, the road was likely designed as a local or regional route that could be closed due to snow in the higher elevations. As an infrequently used road, it did not at that time warrant huge expenditures of money to upgrade it. In 1922, few would have predicted the substantial increase in use that the road would soon experience nor the technological innovations that would allow automobiles to travel at ever-increasing speeds.

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Aside from these considerations, roads are a reflection of geography and engineers' attempts to accommodate elevation change, canyons, rivers, and other natural impediments to travel. The various alignments of Route 66 illustrate the evolution of road engineering from coexistence with the landscape to domination of it. This is clearly illustrated in three alignments of the Route 66 corridor at Ash Fork Hill, between Williams and Ash Fork (dating 1922, 1932, and 1950; see Figures 3 and 4). This 1,700 foot escarpment was one of the steepest drop-offs along all of Route 66, and one of the most difficult to overcome. The 1922 alignment twists and turns as it ascends the side of the canyon without the aid of through cuts and fills to improve alignment. The 1932 alignment is far straighter than the 1922 alignment because deep cuts and fills formed a smooth landscape (Figure 5 illustrates a typical section of the 1932 plans). In 1950, engineers again realigned this troublesome section by blasting a new artificial grade straight up through the steep canyon. (The 1950 alignment is now covered over by Interstate 40 in this section.) Improved alignment and grades on the new roadway were justified by the increase in traffic load and higher speed limits.

The outmoded 1920s roadway had to be rebuilt, and once again aid came from Federal matching funds. Reconstruction occurred during the first years of the 1930s, and plans were designed to the latest engineering standards. These included a straighter alignment made possible by greater quantities of fill material to keep the grade as gentle as possible. Cuts through hills were minimized and side ditches built to facilitate snow removal in the higher elevations. Standardized concrete box and corrugated metal pipe culverts effected drainage where bridges were not needed. Route 66 connected the highway bridges already built during the 1910s and 1920s, and they therefore helped determine the route's location. Improved visibility and guard rails added to the safety of the road. Surfacing material was also improved, although the route was only oil surfaced at first.

Arizona received more than five million dollars of National Recovery highway funds in the summer of 1933 as part of President Roosevelt's sweeping unemployment relief programs. Most of this money was slated for use on State Highways, primarily to complete the paving projects which had been ongoing for several years. The AHD planned to complete the final realignment of Route 66 between Seligman and Kingman and pave the entire route. In 1938, US Route 66 became the first completely paved transcontinental highway in the United States, which was one factor adding to its popularity as the road west. Another factor was a matter of geography.

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As Route 66 was completed to the modern engineering standards of the day, events began along its path that would cement the road into the folklore of America. On April 14, 1935, the first of a series of dust storms swept through the Great Plains and precipitated one of the greatest migrations in our country's history. That migration of farmers and ranchers led from the Great Plains Dust Bowl to California, primarily along Route 66. Between 1935 and 1940, some 350,000-500,000 migrants made the trip. They comprised nearly one quarter of all entrants to California. John Steinbeck referred to Route 66 as the "Mother Road" in his novel of the Dust Bowl migrations, The Grapes of Wrath. The image of the westward-bound Joads, tin lizzie piled high with belongings and people, has become a part of America's collective memory.

But Route 66 also had a more lighthearted image, one of hope and optimism. Many traveled toward California not to escape despair, but to seize opportunity in the growing west. There were longer, older, and easier roads on which to travel, but none defined the quest for the American Dream better than did Route 66. In the mid-1930s, it was estimated that 65 percent of the nation's westbound and 50 percent of its eastbound traffic traveled on Route 66. As the economy improved in the late 1930s, Americans began to take vacations by automobile, and the scenic wonders along Route 66 made it a destination in itself. Arizona offered many attractions along the way, National Parks like Petrified Forest and Grand Canyon, cool mountain vistas, and the Navajo Reservation, the nation's largest. America had a love affair with Native American culture, fueled by popular "Cowboy and Indian" motion pictures. Western movies conveyed a stereotyped image of Native Americans, one perpetuated by business owners along the way. Although teepees and war bonnets associated with Plains tribes were not authentic to Arizona, they became the banner of Route 66: found in curio shops, on neon signs, and billboards. Motels were even shaped like "wigwams". Arizonans obliged the traveling public with every convenience; restaurants, curio shops, campgrounds, gas stations, and that new phenomenon: motor courts (which evolved into motels).

Towns along the route began to expand to capture the tourist trade. An interesting result of the lure for westward-bound tourist business is that most towns tended to expand eastward, with each new business hoping to be the first to capture the trade. Route 66 changed the geography of every small town along its way. Before the advent of automobiles, towns tended to be centralized around a plaza or crossroad (often next to a railroad station) with businesses in close walking distance and multistoried hotels to accommodate more people on a small town lot. Mobility redefined American's sense of space, and perhaps unfortunately, encouraged strip development. The increase in traffic in the late 1930s kept the AHD busy improving the road. Many sections of Route 66 were realigned, widened, and repaved between 1940 and 1943. Business boomed along Route 66, the road was one of the finest of its time, and America had a new sense of optimism. It would not last long.

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World War II brought with it gas rationing, highway department austerity, and a near cessation of tourism. Road construction slowed dramatically and numbers of registered vehicles per capita dropped between 1940 and 1945. Route 66 saw heavy use from the military, who transported war materials and personnel during those years. Military training facilities brought numerous people to Arizona who appreciated and remembered its good climate and scenic attractions. After the war, many would return to live or vacation in the state.

Toward the end of World War II, and perhaps because of the national mood for a strong defense, Congress passed a law which eventually spelled doom to Route 66. Among other things, the Federal Highway Act of 1944 authorized an interstate highway system of up to 40,000 miles to connect major metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers, and to help serve in the national defense. Although this provision was not acted on until 1956, the 1944 act set the stage for the onset of the interstate highway system and profound change in Federal highway policies.

Following the war, floodgates opened to tourism, growth, and development in Arizona. Between 1945 and 1960, the state's population more than doubled, vehicle registrations more than tripled, and number of vehicles per capita doubled. Post-war prosperity brought an unprecedented increase in automobile travel to the state, and to Route 66 in particular. Towns once again buzzed with activity, and cash registers rang the chime of good times. To attract the influx of wealthy tourists, entrepreneurs built larger, more modern motels, cafes, and curio shops along the road. The post-war period was a prosperous one for Route 66, but the change was in magnitude only. The basic appearance of the road changed little from the pre-war period. Although the development of Route 66 essentially stopped in 1944, it continued to play an important role in the national transportation network until Congress initiated the construction of the interstate highway system in 1956.

Route 66 was celebrated in song, in books, and on the silver screen. The most famous tune about the road is Bobby Troup's "(Get Your Kicks On) Route 66", written while the World War II veteran traveled to California to seek his fortune. Arizona was immortalized in the song with the line: ". . . Flagstaff, Arizona--don't forget Winona, Kingman. . ." But the fame and fortune had a downside, overcrowding on the road.

Although Route 66 received constant maintenance through the years, it had again become obsolete by the late 1940s. Traffic congestion worsened, especially in the small towns along the way. One in seven accidents in Arizona occurred on Route 66, giving rise to another, less-flattering name for the road: "Bloody 66". Sections were realigned to straighten out particularly dangerous curves--the famous Ash Fork Hill in 1950, and the Oatman grade in 1951 are two notable examples. Nevertheless, it became obvious that the highway was outdated and too congested. All of the nation's highways were in a similarly deplorable condition. The Federal Government once again stepped in, providing the monetary means for change.

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Building upon the 1944 Federal Highway Act, Congress passed the Interstate Highway Bill in June of 1956. It authorized an Interstate System of 41,000 miles to be built at a cost of 100 billion dollars (the Interstate system took over 30 years to build and cost nearly 275 billion dollars). One fourth of that amount was slated for modernization or rerouting of rural interstate highways. The plan became the largest public works project in United States history. The new highways conformed to improved design standards that included limited access, a minimum of two traffic lanes in each direction, and bypasses around every city and town along the way. Work soon began on the new highway in Arizona, now designated Interstate 40, but it took more than a decade and over 375 million dollars before much of it was open to traffic. By bypassing several sections of winding road, Interstate 40 reduced the mileage across Arizona from 376 miles to 359 miles. The largest bypass ran for 84 miles south of Route 66 between Seligman and Kingman. Although this bypass meant economic disaster to the small towns along the way, it also preserved the longest driveable section of Route 66 in the country, 137 miles. The final six mile segment of Interstate 40 bypassing the town of Williams, Arizona was opened on October 13, 1984. Bobby Troup sang his famous song "Route 66" at the ceremony which marked the end of the last remaining portion of Federally-designated Route 66 in the United States.

Much of historic US Route 66 still exists. It endures as the main street of many towns. Some sections are now used as state and county roads while others lie abandoned with weeds growing up in their long-forgotten centerline. Interstate 40 sliced through much of Route 66, burying parts of it and separating other sections. Land managers tore up some of the old roadbed to eliminate the "eyesore". But the impression of Route 66 survives on the landscape to remind us of the early days of automobile transportation in America, and the exciting era of national discovery.

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## F. Associated Property Types

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I. Name of Property Type: ABANDONED ROUTE 66

II. Description

Abandoned sections of Route 66 appear today essentially as archeological sites. No longer accessible by automobile and long forgotten, these sections lie exposed to natural forces of disintegration. In some areas, land managers ripped up sections of the road to either deny access or return the alignment to a more natural appearance. The pavement in other areas varies in condition from intact to broken with weed-filled cracks. Bridges, culverts, curbing, guard rails, right-of-way markers, centerlines, and other associated features usually remain in place. Because Route 66 generally followed the same alignment, abandoned sections from different periods of road building tend to merge. They are often separated into abbreviated segments by Interstate 40. Associated properties are only occasionally found in these sections (with the possible exception of camp sites). Viable businesses, homes, and other properties were rarely denied access following realignment projects.

III. Significance

The Arizona Highway Department realigned many segments of Route 66. Major projects occurred in the early 1930s and 1940s. As new sections of road were built, old sections were abandoned. Some abandoned sections became local service roads, but others fell into disuse largely because access was blocked off. These unused abandoned sections represent Route 66 while it was in its heyday as a major transcontinental highway. They also represent early highway engineering standards. They are associated with the explosive growth of automobile tourism and with the general theme of transportation in America between ca. 1920 and 1944.

IV. Registration Requirements

To qualify for National Register listing, an abandoned segment of Route 66 should retain integrity of design, workmanship, location, feeling, association, and setting (defined below).

Association

The property must have been a part of US Route 66 between 1926 and 1944. Segments built prior to 1926 qualify only if they became part of official Route 66. Historical data, such as engineering plans, old maps, or photographs should verify that a property is associated with historic Route 66 and not earlier or later alignments. This may exclude a few segments of the preceding roadways, which are ineligible because they were not in the national highway system, but rather part of a local road network. They will be referenced for documentation purposes as appropriate.

Design, Location, Workmanship

The property must retain the essential features that identify it as a highway. These features include the original cross-section template (comprised of cut banks, fill slopes, road bed, grade, etc.), original alignment, and associated features like culverts and bridges, although a small number of these features may have been removed or damaged. Decades of abandonment have exposed these sections of road to the damaging effects of nature. Gully washes, slumped cut banks, overgrown vegetation, and other such conditions are acceptable as long as the overall appearance and character of a highway alignment are retained. Segments which have been widened would qualify only if the modification occurred during the historic period. Pavement

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is an inherently fragile feature of highways that is routinely covered over and replaced. Some early alignments of Route 66 were never paved. Therefore, while original pavement would be a desired feature of nominated alignments, it is not a registration requirement.

Feeling and Setting

Feeling and setting are somewhat subjective registration requirements. Nominated segments of Route 66 should be of sufficient length to preserve the feeling and setting of a continuous road. While measured limits cannot be reasonably set for this requirement, an ideal would be an uninterrupted view down the road to the horizon (see exception, below). Short segments exposed only in the center strip of Interstate 40, for example, would not qualify for listing. The setting should reflect the general character of the historic period, with minimal intrusive elements. Associated properties from the historic period which line the old route add to the historic setting and feeling of the road.

The close proximity of Route 66 to Interstate 40 presents some interesting integrity questions. I-40 has divided historic Route 66 into individual segments nominated as single properties. These segments often form isolated, uninterrupted sections distinctly separated from other sections by long intervals. In other cases, a long alignment may be bisected once or twice by Interstate 40, or another intrusive road. When a long alignment is so bisected, it will still meet the registration requirements because of the strong historical and physical association of the divided segments, and the fact that intrusive road will in all likelihood represent a later manifestation of the east-west transportation theme (that is, I-40).

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I. Name of Property Type Rural Route 66

II. Description

These segments of road provide local access from Interstate 40 and remain in active use. As Route 66 was realigned through the years, these access routes were abandoned to the control of local agencies such as counties and national forests. The agencies provide routine maintenance in the form of patching, paving, and grading. These sections date from the earliest alignments of Route 66 (ca. 1921) into the 1950s. Earlier sections generally remain unpaved graded roads, while later alignments are paved. They most often retain original pavement, culverts, bridges, right-of-way markers, and other features. Associated properties (curio shops, gas stations, tourist camps--both active and abandoned) can occasionally be found along these sections.

III. Significance

When Route 66 became established as a national highway, businesses, homes, and attractions developed along the roadway. As realignments were built away from these areas, local access had to be maintained. These segments continued in use under local designations and jurisdictions. They are found in rural settings, but often have associated buildings or structures to which access was provided. These abandoned sections represent Route 66 while it was in its heyday as a major transcontinental highway; they were often an economic link between remote communities. They are associated with the explosive growth of automobile tourism and with the general theme of transportation in America between ca. 1920 and 1942. They also represent early highway engineering standards.

IV. Registration Requirements

Rural Route 66 should retain integrity of design, workmanship, location, feeling, association, and setting (defined below).

Association

The property must have been a part of US Route 66 between 1926 and 1944. Segments built prior to 1926 qualify only if they became part of official Route 66. Historical data, such as engineering plans, old maps, or photographs should verify that a property is associated with historic Route 66 and not earlier or later alignments.

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Design, Location, Workmanship

The property must retain the essential features that identify it as a highway. These features include the original cross-section template (comprised of cut banks, fill slopes, road bed, grade, etc.), original alignment, and associated features like culverts and bridges, although a small number of these features may have been modified or replaced. Segments which have been widened would qualify only if the modification occurred during the historic period. Pavement is an inherently fragile feature of highways and is routinely covered over and replaced. Some early alignments of Route 66 were never paved. Therefore, while original pavement would be a desired feature of nominated alignments, it is not a registration requirement.

Feeling and Setting

Feeling and setting are somewhat subjective registration requirements. Nominated segments of Route 66 should be sufficiently long enough to preserve the feeling and setting of a continuous road. While measured limits cannot be reasonably set for this requirement, an ideal would be an uninterrupted view down the road to the horizon. The setting should reflect the same general character of the historic period, with minimal intrusive elements. Associated properties from the historic period which line the old route add to the historic setting and feeling of the road.

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I. Name of Property Type Urban Route 66

II. Description

Route 66 linked the "Main Streets" of towns and cities along its path. In these town settings, the road is flanked by historic buildings within downtown centers (often designated historic districts like Flagstaff, Williams, and Kingman). Motels, gas stations, restaurants, curio shops, and other tourist facilities flank the highway at the periphery of the towns.

III. Significance

Route 66 essentially began in the main streets of towns and cities and expanded from there to link neighboring communities. These centers were focal points for the route, and the first segments to be paved. The downtown center and strip of tourist-related businesses represent the geographic changes brought by auto-mobility and reflect Route 66's heyday as a major transcontinental highway. Urban Route 66 is associated with the explosive growth of automobile tourism, the general theme of transportation in America between ca. 1920 and 1944, and, (in this instance) with the role of Route 66 in community development).

IV. Registration Requirements

Urban Route 66 should retain integrity of design, workmanship, location, feeling, association, and setting (as defined below). This requirement will exclude segments of commercial strip developed after 1944, although some isolated associated property types may be present.

Association

The property must have been a part of US Route 66 between 1926 and 1944. Segments built prior to 1926 qualify only if they became part of official Route 66. Historical data, such as engineering plans, old maps, or photographs should verify that a property is associated with Route 66 and not earlier alignments or local roads. Endpoints will largely be determined by the presence of associated roadside businesses from the historic period.

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Design, Location, Workmanship

The property must retain the essential features that identify it as a highway within a town center. These features include the original cross-section template (usually comprised of road bed only in this setting), original alignment, and associated features like culverts and bridges, although it is recognized that a number of these features may have been modified or replaced. Segments which have been widened would qualify only if the modification occurred during the historic period. Pavement is an inherently fragile feature of urban roadways and is routinely covered over and replaced. Curbs and sidewalks in this setting are also subject to replacement. Therefore, while original pavement, curbs, and sidewalks would be a desired feature of nominated alignments, it is not a registration requirement.

Feeling and Setting

In a town center environment, feeling and setting requirements can be more easily applied. The exact beginning and end points of nominated segments can be determined by a survey of roadside structures, much in the way that downtown historic districts are delineated. A majority of associated properties should date from the historic period (pre-1944) and should represent typical commercial buildings or roadside businesses from that period. The setting should reflect the character of the historic period, with minimal intrusive elements. Associated properties from the historic period which line the old route add to the historic setting and feeling of the road.

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### G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

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Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

This multiple property nomination is presently confined to the various manifestations of historic US Route 66 within its original right-of-way, 66 feet to each side of the road centerline. Several additional associated property types from the historic period which line the old route add to the historic setting and feeling of the road. They form additional potential categories of property types which could be linked to the Multiple Property context. These properties are not, however, included in this nomination.

The multiple property nomination for Route 66 in Arizona initially includes excellent examples of each defined property type found within the boundaries of the Kaibab National Forest (KNF) and its headquarter town, Williams, Arizona. Intensive survey of the route was contained within KNF boundaries; the author examined other sections of the route throughout Arizona in a more cursory manner. Identification of abandoned alignments was enhanced through the use of aerial photographs and old maps; sections were then field-checked for condition and integrity. In the field, the road and associated features were measured, described, and photographed. These observations were checked against archival source material to verify the identification of the route.

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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary location of additional documentation:

|                                     |                                    |                          |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | State historic preservation office | <input type="checkbox"/> | Local government |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other State agency                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | University       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Federal agency                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other            |

Specify repository: Kaibab National Forest

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### I. Form Prepared By

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name/title Teri A. Cleeland, Archeologist  
organization Kaibab National Forest date August 2, 1988  
street/number 800 S. Sixth St. phone (602) 635-2681  
city or town Williams state Arizona zip code 86046

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One potential property type includes tourist-related facilities like shops, service stations, restaurants, motels, developed campgrounds, etc., either active or abandoned. Although these could readily be added to this multiple property nomination, they are beyond the scope of this project. The nominated sections on the Kaibab National Forest contain few, if any, such properties. Most are on private land. Another potential property type includes the archeological remains of travelers in the form of isolated debris and temporary roadside camps. Intensive archeological survey along the roadside would be necessary to locate and document this property type. Additional property types could be historic bridges, culverts, and other engineering features that connected the various alignments of Route 66. A Thematic National Register nomination entitled "Vehicular Bridges in Arizona" resulted in National Register listing of several bridges associated with Route 66. These bridges include the following: Canyon Padre, Canyon Diablo, Walnut Canyon, Querino Canyon, Chevelon Creek, Old Trails Highway, and the Lithodendron Wash Bridges. The study excluded concrete box culverts as "intrinsically nonsignificant" within the defined context and criteria of the bridge survey. However, bridges and culverts may be considered significant for their association with Route 66. They are particularly important, and may be individually eligible for nomination, if they define the path of obliterated sections of Route 66 and retain integrity. Where the roadway is ineligible for listing because its cross-section template is destroyed, the associated bridges and culverts are a tangible reminder of the route's location. Furthermore, the handbuilt masonry culverts of the early 1920s are significant for their representation of pre-standardization in highway construction techniques and individual craftsmanship.

Engineering plans and reports for sections of the route were invaluable aids that provided information on precise locations, dates of construction, engineering concerns and standards, associated features like bridges and culverts, grades, cross-section templates, etc. Plans were located in the KNF right-of-way files, the Coconino County Courthouse, and at the Arizona Department of Transportation. The KNF right-of-way files provided additional information regarding dates of abandonment and disposition of the route, as well as dates of new construction. Early issues of Arizona Highways and the Williams News provided excellent technical and contextual information. The Multiple Property documentation for Vehicular Bridges in Arizona, completed for the Arizona Department of Transportation, also provided valuable information. Historic photographs from Williams, the Arizona State Capitol Archives and the National Archives; and oral interviews were helpful sources, particularly in determining integrity of setting. Route 66 is continually celebrated in print, and numerous secondary sources were examined.

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This document was developed in consultation with Architectural Historian Roger Brevoort of the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office regarding the concept and rationale behind the nomination. The Kaibab National Forest conducted the survey with the cooperation and support of the City of Williams, the Arizona Department of Transportation, and the Coconino County Highway Department, who have jurisdiction over parts of the nominated properties.

Because US Route 66 was an interstate highway and had nationwide impact, it can be considered nationally significant. However, the historic context "US Route 66 in Arizona ca. 1920-1944" is a practical construct in terms of political and temporal boundaries. Arizona is a logical boundary because the road building program was administered by the Arizona Highway Department and historical events relating to the route reflect general trends within the state. The requirement that only alignments known officially as Route 66 allows for easy verification and provides a relatively consistent starting date for the context. Furthermore, it recognizes the significance of the route within a national system, as opposed to earlier local routes. The end date of 1944 (the passage of the Federal Highway Act) is also logical because it altered Federal highway policies. Route 66 had essentially attained its final form, and a new era in Federal interstate highway administration was initiated. Although the road had essentially attained its final form in 1944, associated tourist-oriented properties continued to be constructed until the 1960s. These properties which post-date the period of significance may be evaluated for National Register eligibility in the future.

The property type definitions are based on current appearance, which is a function of current use. Properties can only be compared within defined types because they are functionally and morphologically distinct. Additional property types which could be added to the multiple property nomination have already been discussed.

National Register standards formed the basis for assessing integrity within property types. Integrity requirements for each property type were derived from knowledge about the condition of existing properties. Materials are not considered as important an aspect of integrity as others because the major material components of roadways, surfacing and pavement, are inherently fragile and often replaced. Roads are more a function of design than materials.

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Kaibab Recreation Plan. Ms. dated 1940, in Kaibab National Forest historical files, Williams, Arizona.

Williams Town Council meeting minutes: July 16, 1926; January 21, 1927; April 24, 1928; July 27, 1931; July 9, 1932.

MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND ENGINEERING PLANS

Maps:

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Kaibab National Forest, Arizona, 1944. In Kaibab National Forest historical files.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Williams, on file at Northern Arizona University Special Collections Library, Flagstaff.

Photographs:

Aerial photographs dated 1972 and 1986, on file at the Kaibab National Forest, Williams.

Arizona Department of Transportation documentary photographs c. 1940. Box 1-4, Arizona State Capitol Archives, Phoenix.

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National Archives: Forest Service photo collection, Washington, DC.

Plans:

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Ash Fork-Flagstaff Highway: US Highway 66, ca. 1932. In Kaibab NF historical files.

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**PERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

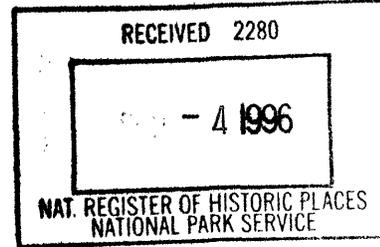
Agnes Bustillos, Williams resident since the mid-1920s, June and July 1988

Lois Donovan, Williams and Ash Fork resident since 1929, July, 1988

Edward Silva, Williams resident between 1900-1921 and 1984-present, July, 1988

Ronald F. Tissaw, Williams resident since 1949, August, 1988

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM**

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

\_\_\_\_ New Submission  X  Amended Submission

=====

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

=====

Historic US Route 66 in Arizona

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=====

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

=====

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

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=====

**C. Form Prepared by**

=====

name/title: Pat Stein, Arizona Preservation Consultants

street & number 2124 N. Izabel, Suite 100

city or town Flagstaff, Arizona, 86004

=====

**D. Certification**

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ( X  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Thomas W. Sullivan ASHPD 26 AUG 96  
Signature and title of certifying official Date

ARIZONA STATE PARKS  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

[Signature] 10/16/96  
Signature of the Keeper Date

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National Park Service

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Summary

This section amends the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled "Historic US Route 66 in Arizona" to cover the period from 1944 to 1956. The beginning and end dates for this period are defined on the basis of passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1944 and the Interstate Highway Act of 1956. A resurgence in tourism and civilian transportation following World War II created new and improved business opportunities along Route 66. This was the Mother Road's boom period, marked by unbridled commerce, the proliferation of "mom and pop" businesses, and fierce competition for the tourist's dollar.

Context

Toward the end of World War II, Congress passed an act that threatened the future of Route 66. The Federal Highway Act of 1944 authorized construction of a highway network to link major cities and industrial areas and thus serve in the national defense. As envisioned, the interstate network would replace Route 66 and other roads with approximately 40,000 miles of higher-speed, limited-access highways bypassing small towns. The 1944 Act was not adequately funded, however, and construction of the interstate system posed no immediate threat to most small-town, tourist-based economies for more than a decade.

The end of the war triggered a westward migration far greater than that of the Great Depression. Eight million people moved to the trans-Mississippi West; 3.5 of them moved into California. Many GIs passed through the Golden State on their way overseas, and, as veterans, decided to return there to live. Not all of them followed Route 66, but many of them did. One such veteran was Bobby Troup. In their 1941 Buick, Troup and his wife in 1946 drove west from Pennsylvania to Chicago and then turned down Route 66 to reach their southern California destination. Along the way the songwriter composed "Get Your Kicks on Route 66." Nat King Cole recorded it upon the Troups' arrival in Los Angeles, and the song became an immediate hit. Thus was born a piece of Route 66 folklore that became a musical roadmap for a generation of post-war migrants.

The end of the war stimulated not only migration but also tourism. GIs had fought to protect their rights, and one of those rights was to be able to get in one's car and drive on the open road. The Southwest became a particularly popular destination for such voyagers. Fueled with images of the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert, and cowboys-and-indians, unprecedented numbers of veterans and other motorists followed Route 66 to Arizona. The bible for many such travelers became *A Guide Book to Highway 66*, a pocket guide published by Jack Rittenhouse in 1946 that listed sights, accommodations, and other amenities along the route.

America on the move created new and improved business opportunities along Route 66. After years of the Great Depression, when money was scarce, and years of war, when

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goods were scarce, post-war Route 66 at last saw travelers with time to spend and money to burn. Old businesses thrived, while new ones mushroomed across the northern Arizona landscape. Entrepreneurs were able to make good money providing travelers with gas, food, lodging, auto repair services, and miscellaneous roadside attractions.

Commerce along Route 66 grew fiercely competitive in the post-war years as businesses developed innovative strategies to lure discriminating travelers and capture their dollars:

- Within towns, new businesses jockeyed for positions on the very edges of Route 66 so as to be the first signs of "civilization" to greet weary travelers; this pattern of new construction (seen clearly, for example, in Holbrook, Winslow, Flagstaff, Williams, and Kingman) contributed to urban sprawl and strip development rather than to continued development within traditional, centralized business districts;
- Pré-war businesses received facelifts designed to match travelers' perceptions of themselves as modern and sophisticated consumers. Tourist courts became streamlined into motels and added steam-heat, air-conditioning, swimming pools, and eventually television. Carports between units of tourist cabins were converted into rooms as travelers became more matter-of-fact about automobile ownership;
- Trading posts, traditionally located on the Indian reservations, established branches in towns; these curio shops, as many came to be called, sold the traveler all manner of souvenirs ranging from rubber snakes and plastic tomahawks to genuine Indian arts and crafts;
- Cafes (such as Old Smoky Barbeque in Williams) as well as auto service and repair stations offered 24-hour service;
- Cafes added motels, motels added service stations, service stations added groceries, and so forth, so that travelers need venture no further than the confines of one business to satisfy all possible needs;
- Entirely new types of tourist attractions developed, such as exotic animal farms, petting zoos (such as at Twin Arrows), and taxidermy museums (such as the Eldredge Museum in Flagstaff); and
- Away from towns, self-contained oases consisting of a motel, cafe, and service station -- all under one owner -- became familiar sights along Route 66 in Arizona, such as at Navajo and Winona.

The post-war period was still the era of pre-franchise, pre-chain, family-run businesses along Route 66 in Arizona, with at least one exception. Petroleum companies began selling franchises early, perhaps in the 1920s. By the 1930s and 1940s, the oil companies had standardized the architecture and signage of their franchised stations to such an extent that travelers developed brand recognition and even brand loyalty to virtually indistinguishable gasoline products.

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The key to post-war success along Route 66 lay in promotion and advertising. Along Route 66, highway signage was developed to draw attention, entertain travelers, let them know what lay ahead, and entice them to stop. Some businesses advertised through series of signs that heightened curiosity to irresistible levels as the target was approached; large yellow and black jackrabbit signs leading to the Jack Rabbit Trading Post near Joseph City exemplified this advertising technique in northern Arizona. Drawing on tourists' romanticized views of the Wild West, many establishments used signage with a cowboys and/or Indians motif, such as the Wigwam Motel in Holbrook, and the Twin Arrows and Two Guns trading posts between Winslow and Flagstaff.

In addition to highway signage and word-of-mouth advertising, Route 66 entrepreneurs developed tactics to get travelers to stop on the spot. Establishments were designed, painted, landscaped, and signed to have instant "eye appeal," to make a favorable impression on a motorist within five or ten seconds of viewing. Paint had to be fresh and clean, not faded or peeling. Of paramount importance were neon signs, preferably the large, colorful, and flashing variety. Neon proliferated to such an extent that visitors to Route 66 towns were less greeted than assaulted with a visual cacophony of frenetically flashing signs.

The bright lights began to fade along Route 66 as improved roads were constructed that bypassed its towns. The first Arizona community to endure such a fate was Oatman, bypassed in 1953 by a new portion of Route 66 that later became Interstate 40. For most Arizona Route 66 towns, however, the specter of bypassing did not loom large until passage of the Interstate Highway Act in 1956. Unlike the 1944 Federal Highway Act, the 1956 Act appropriated substantial funds for highway construction.

Passage of the 1956 Act had a profound effect on Route 66 businesses in Arizona and elsewhere. Fear that high-speed, limited-access interstates would soon bypass their towns lulled many business owners into inaction and inertia. New construction was postponed until the exact routes of the new highways and their exits became known. Routine maintenance of existing businesses also suffered during the post-1956 period.

An equally serious threat to Route 66 businesses was the passage of a series of laws designed to limit roadside advertising. A 1958 federal law, updated in 1963, allotted a bonus of an additional half percent of interstate construction dollars to states that would ban the placement of billboards less than 660 feet from interstate rights-of-way. When the law expired in 1965, First Lady Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson took up the battle and fostered passage of the Highway Beautification Act. Among other things, the 1965 Act limited the number of signs that could be placed on interstate highways. The effect of this legislation on Route 66 towns was overwhelming: bypassed by interstates, small-town businesses could not let travelers know about their products and services via billboards along those highways.

Small Route 66 towns with economies based on tourism experienced recessions following passage of the Interstate Highway and Highway Beautification Acts. So devastating

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were the interstates on local economies that business owners came to recall not only the year, but also the date and time of day when the ribbon was cut that opened the interstate near their town.

The federal government projected that construction of the approximately 41,000-mile interstate network would require 100 billion dollars and approximately ten years. The system actually took three decades and close to 275 billion dollars to complete. Not one but five interstates were needed to replace "The Main Street of America"; in Arizona, Interstate 40 replaced Route 66. The last Route 66 town to be bypassed was an Arizona one, Williams, bypassed on October 13, 1984.

Route 66 earned a place in the hearts of the American people and was not forgotten. Through its long and distinguished history, the Mother Road provided a path for Dustbowlers and others seeking a brighter future. The road became a symbol of the search for a better life. Arizona today has the distinction of containing the longest (156 miles) intact stretch of Route 66, from Seligman to Topock. Each year, more and more travelers turn off Interstate 40 to experience this scenic and historical remnant of "the highway that's the best."

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I. Name of Property Type      Traveler Related Facilities

II. Description

These are businesses that historically provided goods and services to predominantly travelers along Route 66. They are buildings constructed as tourist courts, motels, cafes (diners), automobile service stations, and curio shops. Also included in this property type are businesses that were intended to lure, entertain, and sometimes educate travelers, such as the Eldredge (taxidermy) Museum in Flagstaff. Most of the properties are located within towns, usually at their Route 66 peripheries. Others occur along the route at points distant from any town or other roadside amenity.

These properties historically were pre-franchise, pre-chain, family-owned-and-operated businesses, with the exception of some service stations. Beginning in the 1920s, petroleum companies began to franchise gas stations. Franchised stations had standardized architecture and signage designed to foster brand recognition and brand loyalty.

III. Significance

Traveler related facilities associated with Route 66 represent the changing face of the tourism industry in northern Arizona. The architecture of the establishments mirrored a changing clientele. Prior to and during World War II, facilities tended to be rather low-key in design. Cabins at tourist courts -- simple, detached cottages resembling residences -- as well as cafes were designed to remind the traveler of home. In an era when the automobile was still considered a new and cherished toy, many tourist courts included carports. After the war, traveler related facilities changed to match travelers' perceptions of themselves as modern, sophisticated, and discriminating consumers. Travelers demanded the latest conveniences. Businesses responded by adding steam-heat, air-conditioning, swimming pools, and television. Tourist courts evolved into streamlined motels; carports were converted into rooms as travelers grew more blasé about car ownership. As travelers sought the exotic rather than the familiar in their journeys, Route 66 proprietors added new attractions: wild animal farms, petting zoos, taxidermy museums, and other roadside curiosities. To capture the fleeting attention of Americans on the move, Route 66 business owners hyped their establishments through promotion and advertising. They strove to develop facilities that, literally, could not be overlooked by passing motorists. Proprietors increasingly used large signs (often neon), clichéd but beloved design motifs (such as the cowboys-and-indians theme), and other visual gimmicks to attract customers. The roadside architecture of Route 66 in Arizona is therefore a living museum of consumer patterns and changes in those patterns wrought by the automobile, the Depression, World War II, and post-war conditions.

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## IV. Registration Requirements

Traveler related facilities should retain integrity of association, design, location, workmanship, feeling, and setting. Integrity of materials is not as critical because Route 66 properties were (until circa 1956) routinely maintained with modern, improved products to keep them attractive to customers.

Association

The property must have been a business catering mainly to travelers and must have been located along an official part of Route 66. Historical data such as engineering plans, old maps, or photographs should verify that the road running by the property was indeed part of Route 66. Historical sources such as informants, directories, maps (including Sanborn maps), or photographs should verify that the property had a travel related function. In addition, the property must have attained an age of at least fifty years.

Design, Location, Workmanship

The property must retain the essential features of design and workmanship that identify it as a traveler related facility. The property must still convey a sense of the building's historic appearance, although it need not be that building's *original* historic appearance. For example, a 1930s tourist court streamlined in 1946 into motel would qualify if the property still retains its 1946 design. Historical sources such as Assessor's Field Cards, informants, and photographs, as well as observation by a trained eye, should verify the sequence, nature, and extent of changes to the property. The property must also be adjacent to an alignment of historic Route 66.

Feeling and Setting

Feeling and setting are somewhat subjective integrity requirements. In the context of this multiple property form, nominated properties including cafes, tourist courts, motels, curio shops, and roadside attractions should still preserve the feeling and setting of the days of "mom and pop," family-owned-and-operated businesses. That is, they should still convey the notion of being rather unique and one-of-a-kind rather than part of a uniform and standardized chain or franchise. Gas stations are an exception, as many of them were franchised and their architecture standardized at an early date by petroleum companies such as Mobil and Esso.

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