

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Lincoln Street electric streetlights  
other names/site \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 105, 120, 147, 174, 189, 210, 217, 242, 275, 290 Lincoln Street n/a not for publication  
city, town Twin Falls n/a vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Idaho code ID county Twin Falls code 083 zip code 83301

### 3. Classification

| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                       | No. of Resources within Property  |                  |
|---|--|---|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)       | contributing  | noncontributing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local       | <input type="checkbox"/> district          | _____   | _____ buildings  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> site              | _____   | _____ sites      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> structure         | _____   | _____ structures |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object | <u>10</u>   | _____ objects    |
| Name of related multiple property listing:  |  | <u>10</u>   | _____ Total      |
| <u>n/a</u>                                  |  | No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>n/a</u> |                  |

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Thomas J. Green  
Signature of certifying official

3-19-92  
Date

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Antonio G. Pico 4/27/92  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

h Signature of the Keeper Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Functions or Use**

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: Street furniture/object  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: Street furniture/object  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

No style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials  
(enter categories from instructions)

foundation n/a  
walls n/a  
n/a  
roof n/a  
other cast-iron  
glass

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:  
 nationally       statewide       locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G    n/a

| Areas of Significance<br>(enter categories from instructions) | Period of Significance | Significant Dates |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Community Planning and Development</u>                     | <u>ca. 1920-42</u>     | <u>ca. 1920</u>   |
| <u>Science</u>  | _____                  | _____             |
| _____   | _____                  | _____             |
| _____   | Cultural Affiliation   | _____             |
| _____   | <u>n/a</u>             | _____             |
| _____   | _____                  | _____             |

|                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Significant Person | Architect/Builder             |
| <u>n/a</u>         | <u>Cutter, George Company</u> |

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

X See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

|   |            |                    |                      |   |            |            |            |
|---|------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|
| A | <u>1/1</u> | <u>7/0/8/4/6/0</u> | <u>4/7/1/5/3/4/0</u> | B | <u>   </u> | <u>   </u> | <u>   </u> |
|   | Zone       | Easting            | Northing             |   | Zone       | Easting    | Northing   |
| C | <u>   </u> | <u>   </u>         | <u>   </u>           | D | <u>   </u> | <u>   </u> | <u>   </u> |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

X See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Elizabeth Egleston, State Architectural Historian

organization Idaho State Historical Society date 2/4/92

street & number 210 Main Street telephone (208) 334-3861

city or town Boise state Idaho zip code 83702

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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The subjects of this nomination, the Lincoln Street electric streetlights, consist of ten lights on cast-iron posts placed in a symmetrical zigzag pattern between the 100 and 200 blocks of the above-mentioned street. Located on the east and west sides of the street in a residential neighborhood, the lights are placed very close to the curb, so that they have not been obscured by the landscaping, and thus remain an integral part of the streetscape.

The streetlights consist of a square base with four panels, an octagonal shaft, a rectangular "cornice," and a circular light globe. The name of the manufacturer, George Cutter, is evident on the panel that faces the street. Eight are painted dark green; two are painted white.

Little evidence exists for the historic appearance of the lights near the time of their installation, which was prior to 1920. Given the nature of cast-iron streetlights, however, there is little room for disparity between historic and present appearance; thus, they have preserved a high degree of integrity. Most of the houses on Lincoln Street appear to have been constructed during the 1930's, so that while the lights are not encompassed by their original setting -- a platted, but empty subdivision -- they are surrounded by buildings of a vintage that meet the fifty-year requirement of the National Register. Their design, workmanship, materials, feeling, association and location are intact.

The condition of the streetlights provides the only variable between the original and historic appearance. Once the City of Twin Falls stopped supplying electric power to the lights, in 1978, the maintenance fell to those who own the residences in front of the lights, with inconsistent results. At this writing, the posts in front of 120, 210 and 242 Lincoln Street show substantial signs of rust; others are in need of painting. The post in front of 290 Lincoln Street has a distinct list. The globes of several lights have been broken by vandals. Despite this lack of repair, the lights continue to convey their original purpose -- that of stability and urbanity in this young community.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1 Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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The Lincoln Street electric streetlights in Twin Falls, Idaho, are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A. They are a significant feature that documents the growth and development of this urban center of the state's south-central region. As the only ones of their style and vintage in Twin Falls, the Lincoln Street lights represent the city's effort to provide civic amenities. Their installation is tied both to the history of the use of electricity in the community and to the development of the city.

In 1904, Twin Falls and other nearby towns were created almost overnight as settlers arrived in the region to reclaim newly irrigated land. Such reclamation was possible because of the construction of the Milner Dam and its related canal system built under the auspices of the Carey Act of 1894. This legislation provided federal land to settlers in arid areas after private investors supplied the capital to build the necessary dams and canals. The investors would recoup their money by selling water rights to the settlers, and once the farmers had successfully reclaimed their land, they could apply for a deed.

Residents lost no time constructing the conveniences and institutions they had known elsewhere, including that of electricity. With its location only a few miles south of the Snake River and Shoshone Falls (higher than Niagara Falls), Twin Falls is advantageously situated for hydropower, a necessary component for the development of electricity on a large scale. Three years before the opening of the Twin Falls tract for settlement, engineers studied the potential of Shoshone Falls to provide enough power for electric lights in the town of Shoshone, twenty-five miles north, and for an electric railway between Shoshone and the falls. This did not come to fruition, and efforts to obtain electric power from the falls did not occur until 1907, as discussed below. By this time the demand in Twin Falls for electricity was more immediate and meeting the demand more feasible than fanciful transportation systems toward the north. The population was rapidly growing, and electricity was needed to pump water to land not low enough for gravity-fed canals.

An early use of electricity not generated through hydrology was developed by the Shoshone Falls Power Company (formed in 1904). This consisted of a threshing machine and an Edison bipolar generator of 35 kilowatts that sent direct current a distance of four blocks in three directions radiating from the Hotel Perrine in downtown Twin Falls. This isolated station using direct current was typical of start-up power companies, because alternating current involved a more advanced technology and central stations required much more capital. But electric power on a small scale quickly became obsolete, and it was the financiers and engineers with the means and foresight to plan on an extensive scale who ultimately succeeded.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 Lincoln Street electric streetlights

To this end, the Great Shoshone and Twin Falls Water Company was formed by Pittsburgh investor William Kuhn in 1907. Kuhn and other investors took over the uncompleted work at Shoshone Falls, installing the first generator at that site. They also built hydropower plants at Lower Salmon Falls, Upper Salmon Falls and Thousand Springs, all waterfalls on the Snake River west of Twin Falls. Kuhn's intent was to build an electrical empire, and the company started to make inroads into both the Boise and the Pocatello markets. But Kuhn's financial interests suffered reversals, and his company was eventually absorbed by Idaho Power in 1915.

However, by this time electricity was well established in Twin Falls. It was used agriculturally, for irrigation pumps, and to light and heat homes. The date of the installation of the first electric streetlights in Twin Falls is unknown, but photographs that date as early as 1910 show that the city's streets were indeed illuminated. These early lights were hung from telephone poles and served function but not aesthetics. By 1917 cast-iron lampposts can be seen in photographs of the courthouse, city park, churches and commercial streets. Those near civic structures were elaborate, with five lights; those used to light commercial streets had a single globe. The streetlights provided a safe environment and increased property values. They not only eased public activities but also with their cast-iron posts became a decorative feature that complemented the civic and commercial architecture of this young town.

The Lincoln Street lights are associated with developers' efforts to devise attractive new subdivisions and represent a conscious attempt to create an urban landscape at an early date. The cast-iron posts were manufactured by the George Cutter Company of South Bend, Indiana, one of at least thirty manufacturers of street lighting. Their installation on Lincoln Street was typical of a national trend in which the use of ornamental electric streetlights was expanding from public areas to residential settings. The lights, with their symmetrical placement and relationship to the curb, provided a streetscape of style and cohesion, which the developers hoped would attract residents.

Research has not revealed the exact date of the installation of the lights along Lincoln Street, but oral accounts state that they were in place before 1920. Lincoln Street is part of the Blue Lakes Addition, the first subdivision of Twin Falls. The addition was developed by W. E. Sanger and his uncle, John C. Sanger, who moved to Twin Falls in 1908. They formed the Sanger Realty and Investment Company and purchased the sixteen blocks that comprise the subdivision in 1916 from one of Twin Falls' earliest settlers, Ira B. Perrine. The lights were installed before most of the houses were built; Sanborn maps indicate that only houses at the south end of the block were standing in 1920. Electricity was not provided until July 1, 1939, the cost to the city

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

## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3 Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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ranging from \$1.80 to \$3.85 per month depending on the degree of light. Frederick Sanger, W. E. Sanger's son, stated that although similar streetlights were installed on other streets west of Lincoln Street within the subdivision, those on Lincoln Street were the only ones in the Addition that ever had electric power and functioned as streetlights.

Because of budget constraints, the City of Twin Falls stopped paying the electricity bills for the lights in 1978. From this date maintenance fell to those who own the residences in front of the lights. At this writing, only the lights in front of 147, 189, 217, and 275 Lincoln Street are supplied with electricity and operate as streetlights.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1 Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

## **National Register of Historic Places**

### **Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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#### **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

A rectangular piece of land comprising the city right of way for Blocks 1 and 2 of Lincoln Street, bounded by Heyburn Avenue on the north and Addison Avenue on the south as the same appears in the plat of the Blue lakes Addition to the City of Twin Falls, Book 3 of Plats, page 29, records of the Twin Falls County Recorder.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 2

Lincoln Street electric streetlights

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### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The parcel is one contiguous parcel owned by the City of Twin Falls, being a platted and dedicated right of way for a city street, known as Lincoln Street, and constituting part of the land platted in the Blue Lakes Addition to the City of Twin Falls. It is the parcel historically associated with the subject of this nomination.