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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED MAY 17 1992

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).

1. Name of Property

historic name Tekamah City Bridge other name/site number NEHBS Number BT06-49

2. Location

street & number U.S. Highway 75 over Tekamah Creek city, town Tekamah state NE county Burt code 021 zip code 68061

3. Classification

Table with 4 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, Number of Resources within Property (Contributing, Noncontributing), and Total. Includes counts for buildings, sites, structures, and objects.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0 Name of related multiple property listing: Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870-1942

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.

Signature of certifying official: Bob Kuschendorf, DSHPS Date: 5/6/92 State or Federal agency and bureau: Nebraska State Historical Society

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

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

5. National Park Service Certification

Entered in the National Register

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register see continuation sheet determined eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper: Delores Byrum Date of Action: 6/29/92

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Function (enter categories from instructions)  
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Function (enter categories from instructions)  
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)  
OTHER /concrete rigid frame bridge

Materials (enter categories from instructions)  
foundation N/A  
walls N/A  
roof N/A  
other N/A

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located in Tekamah, the Tekamah City Bridge spans Tekamah Creek and has changed little since its period of significance. Other than maintenance-related repairs and the removal of the original street lights, noted below, the bridge remains largely unaltered as it continues to carry vehicular traffic. The Tekamah City Bridge today retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A description of the structure follows:

span number:	1	construction date:	1934
span length:	48.0'	construction cost:	\$49,343.01
total length:	51.0'	current condition:	good
roadway wdt.:	47.0'	alterations:	original lamp standards have been removed; the balustrade appears to be re-aligned

superstructure: concrete rigid frame  
substructure: concrete  
floor/decking: concrete  
other features: ornate metal balustrade

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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

	statewide
Applicable National Register Criteria	C
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	N/A
Areas of Significance	Engineering
Period of Significance	1934 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)
Significant Dates	1934
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Significant Person	N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer)	Nebraska Department of Roads
(Fabricator)	Lincoln Steel Works, Lincoln NE (guardrails)
(Builder)	Koehler Construction Company, Sterling NE

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

The Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation's 1933-34 **Biennial Report** includes two photographs of the old Tekamah City Bridge, a tired-looking Pratt half-hip pony truss, and two views of the attractive new concrete structure that replaced it. The report singles out the Tekamah Bridge and a Dodge County underpass, describing them as "monolithic concrete structures of solid concrete without joints from the bottom of one footing, up and over the span, and down to the bottom of the other footing." It continues that "the slab or deck takes the form of a very flat arch with a comparatively thin slab at the crown. This feature promotes economy and, being of a curved arched shape, it naturally lends itself to a beautifying architectural treatment." The Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges designed this concrete rigid frame structure in February 1934. The project (Project NRM 23-C) was funded using federal relief money, specifically a program which required 25-percent of any appropriation to be used for urban highways. On March 20, 1934, the bureau awarded a construction contract for the bridge to the Koehler Construction Company of Sterling, Nebraska for \$49,343 (the Lincoln Steel Works fabricated the ornamental guardrails). The Deputy County Superintendent of Highways recalls a dance held on the bridge to celebrate its completion later in 1934. The bridge rests on continuous concrete retaining walls, which appear to have been part of a larger project to channelize Tekamah Creek through the town.

The concrete rigid-frame style, developed in Westchester County, New York, in the early 1920s, became especially popular for federal relief projects during the 1930s. Both picturesque and practical, the flat-arched design appealed to proponents of urban beautification. The Tekamah City Bridge is significant as an early Nebraska example of rigid-frame construction, and one considered worthy of note by contemporary engineers. Today it and the Saddle Creek Underpass (NEHBS No. DO09: 322-114) in Douglas County also built in 1934, are the oldest examples of this structural type in the state. The Tekamah City Bridge is also important as an example of Depression-era federal relief funding which not only improved the nation's infrastructure and provided jobs for the legions of unemployed but also, for the first time, allowed the use of federal highway funds for construction in urban areas.

For further contextual information regarding bridge building in Nebraska, registration requirements, and property types, see related multiple property listing "Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870 - 1942."

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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Nebraska Department of Roads, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure Number S075 13280; Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, **Twentieth Biennial Report, 1933-34**, pp. 84, 92-93; Interview with Burt County Deputy Superintendent of Highways, 24 July 1989; City Council Records, 23 July 1934, located at the City Clerk's Office, Tekamah Auditorium, Tekamah, Nebraska; field inspection by Lon Johnson, 24 July 1989.

\_\_\_ 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:)

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property    less than one acre  
Cadastral Reference    S19, T21N, R11E  
USGS Quadrangle        Tekamah, Nebraska - Iowa (7.5 Minute Series, 1970; photorevised 1983)  
UTM References        zone 14    easting 730990    northing 4628510

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 51 feet by 49 feet, which is centered on the UTM point listed above. Included within this rectangular parcel are the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, and approach spans.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated structure includes the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, any approach spans and the property on which they rest. These boundaries encompass, but do not exceed, all of the property that has been historically associated with this bridge.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title	Clayton B. Fraser, Principal		
organization	Fraserdesign and Hess, Roise and Company	date	30 June 1991
street & number	1269 Cleveland Avenue	telephone	303-669-7969
city or town	Loveland	state	Colorado
		zip code	80537

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