

1825

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

SEP 29 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Mendota Road Bridge  
other names/site number Bridge No. 90401; Water Street Bridge

2. Location

street & number Water Street over Pickerel Lake Outlet  not for publication N/A  
city, town St. Paul  vicinity N/A  
state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55107

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Minnesota Masonry-Arch Bridges, 1870-1945  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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.  
Nina M. Archabal 9/22/89  
Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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. Entered in the National Register 11/6/89  
 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Albion Byers \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

~~Transportation, road-related (vehicular)~~

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

~~Transportation, road-related, (vehicular)~~

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Stone-arch bridge

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other Stone, Limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Engineering  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1894  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1894  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
Engineer: City of St. Paul Engineer's Office  
Builder: Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Annual Report of the City Engineer of the City of St. Paul for the Year Ending Dec. 31, 1897. St. Paul: Pioneer Press Company, 1898

one. ( next page

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**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 an acre

**UTM References**

A 

1	5
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4	9	1	2	2	0
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4	9	7	4	4	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is defined by a rectangle measuring 30 feet east-west and 24 feet north-south, whose vertices coincide with the outside corners of the bridge's walls.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

Based on field measurements, as well as on measurements provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the boundaries enclose the bridge's superstructure and substructure, including wing walls.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jeffrey A. Hess, Historical Consultant date August, 1988  
 organization N/A telephone 612-338-1987  
 street & number 305 Grain Exchange Building city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota zip code 55415

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Description: Mendota Road Bridge

Perched on the bank of the Mississippi River across from downtown St. Paul, the Mendota Road Bridge is a single-span, stone-arch highway bridge that carries a paved road over the outlet of Pickerel Lake.

The Mendota Road Bridge is constructed of locally quarried, coursed-rubble, gray limestone, which was frequently used in St. Paul building foundations during the nineteenth century. The single semicircular arch springs about 18 inches above grade to create a clear span of 10-feet. Ring stones measure about 6 inches in width and 18 inches in height, with mortar joints 1-inch thick. As an ornamental flourish, the keystones protrude slightly from the arch face. Bordered by 3-foot-high stone railings, the roadway -- a blacktop surface over dirt fill -- forms a slight, but distinct, apex at the crown of the arch. This "humpback" is repeated in the lines of a stringcourse marking the roadway level and a coping surmounting the railing. Original plans show that the coping and stringcourse were intended to be of the same visual weight, an effect that has been slightly marred by the replacement of the original limestone coping with a concrete cap. Otherwise the bridge has experienced no apparent alterations, though the limestone is quite weathered. The bridge rests on foundations of wood cribbing, which extend beneath the entire width of the streambed. The bridge's overall width is 24 feet; the roadway is about 19 feet wide.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Significance: Mendota Road Bridge

The Mendota Road Bridge embodies engineering significance in the context of Minnesota masonry-arch highway bridges constructed during the period 1870 to 1945. The structure is notable as a rare example of a small-scale, nineteenth-century, city, stone-arch highway bridge that has not been significantly altered.

Designed by the St. Paul City Engineer's Office, the Mendota Roads Bridge was completed in 1894 for a total cost of \$1,520. With its 10-foot span, 24-foot width, and 19-foot roadway, the structure is the smallest of 5 masonry-arch highway bridges constructed by the City of St. Paul during the nineteenth-century.<sup>1</sup> Because of its diminutive scale, rubble masonry, and secluded location on the Mississippi River flats, the bridge resembles "country" stone arches built by rural Minnesota townships during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the Mendota Road Bridge rises above its country cousins in its concern for ornamentation -- as seen in the flourish of the protruding keystones and the echoing lines of the coping and stringcourse. As the contextual statement points out, ornamentation is one of the key features distinguishing city from country masonry-arch bridges. Most other narrow, nineteenth-century, stone arches in urban areas have either been demolished or widened with inappropriate concrete additions. It is truly remarkable that the Mendota Road Bridge has retained such complete design integrity, especially in regard to its humpbacked roadway and stone railings.

## Notes

1. Microfiche copies of the original plans for the Mendota Road Bridge, dated 1894, are on file in the St. Paul City Engineer's Office. These plans alternately refer to the structure as "Pickerel Creek Bridge on Lower Mendota Road" and as "Stone-arch Bridge on the Lower Mendota Road." Upon completion, the structure was called the "Mendota Road Bridge"; see, for example, the list of bridges appended to the Annual Report of the City Engineer of the City of St. Paul for the Year Ending Dec. 31, 1897 (St. Paul: The Pioneer Press Company, 1898). This section of the Mendota Road is now known as Water Street.