

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

HE-GVC-051
CS 2735
TH 100 Culvert (Bridge 5442)

Historic Name Other Name	TH 100 Culvert (Bridge 5442)	CS # SHPO Inv #	2735 HE-GVC-051
Location	TH 100 just S of Bridge 5399	Hwy District Reference	TH 100 Met W 8
City/Township County Twp Rng Sec USGS Quad UTM	Golden Valley, City of Hennepin 29N 24W Sec 19 Minneapolis South Z15 E472580 N4980580	Acres Rest Area Class	NA
Designer	Nichols, A R, Consult Land Arch	SP #	100-130-23
Builder	Works Progress Administration (WPA)	SHPO Review #	
Historic Use Present Use	Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam	MHS Photo #	013551.16-21
Yr of Landscape Design	1936	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	Nic 1.33
Overall Site Integrity	Intact/Slightly Altered		
Review Required	Yes		
National Register Status	Not Eligible, see Statement of Significance Also member of eligible NR district: Lilac Way Historic District District razed as part of TH 100 reconstruction.		
Historic Context	Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960 Federal Relief Construction, 1933-1943		
List of Standing Structures			
Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	Fieldwork Date
01	Bridge/Culvert	1936	11-04-97
02	Retaining Wall	1936	
NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table			Prep by Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 93
			Prep for Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
Final Report	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)		

■ BRIEF

The T.H. 100 Culvert (Bridge 5442) is a concrete box culvert with a 6'-wide span that carries a small stream under T.H. 100 in Golden Valley. It is located a few feet south of Lilac Drive N. and Bridge 5399. (Bridge 5399 carries T.H. 100 over the Soo Line Railroad -- formerly Minneapolis, Northfield, and Southern RR -- tracks.)

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Culvert. Built 1936 by the WPA. Bridge 5442 is a concrete box culvert that carries a small stream under T.H. 100. The structure is approximately 207' long and 66' wide. The opening of the box is about 6' wide by 6' tall. The culvert has 12' long wing walls that are about 10" thick. The box culvert has a smaller 1'-diameter round metal culvert and a 20'-long poured concrete chute above it. (The water is running out of the round culvert, down the chute, and spilling over the end of the box culvert into the stream.) The sides of the chute are raised and the chute is studded with small stones that have been carefully selected and imbedded in the concrete. The stones range in size from a potato to about 6" in diameter, and appear to have been gathered from the stream. The chute flares in width as it moves from the roadbed westward to the western end of the box culvert (where it is about 7' wide). The end of the chute is about 8' above the level of the water. The eastern end of the culvert was not examined due to difficult access and heavy traffic on T.H. 100.

Retaining Wall. Built 1936 by the WPA. Built off of the southern edge of the culvert's western end is a curving, limestone rubble retaining wall. It is built of tan coursed rubble limestone, and rises upward in six or seven curved steps. The wall retains the wooded hillside along the southern edge of the stream.

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The culvert is located at the base of the T.H. 100 roadbed, several feet below the elevation of the roadway. The stream flows west to east under the roadway. Immediately west of the culvert the stream was originally somewhat wider and had an oval shape that matched the curve of the Retaining Wall. West of Turner Crossroad (west of the site) the stream widens into a small pond. On the eastern side of T.H. 100 the stream also opens into a pond.

■ SETTING

The culvert is located in a wooded ravine that is about 300' from east to west and about 150' from north to south. The culvert is located a few feet south of the Soo Line (formerly Minneapolis, Northfield, and Southern RR) tracks and Bridge 5399 that carries T.H. 100 over the tracks. Blazer Park (also included in this inventory) is located several feet to the north (across the railroad tracks and Lilac Drive N.).

The site is located in a residential neighborhood. The western end of the culvert (which was the end examined in the field) is surrounded by Meadow Brook Elementary School on

the south, T.H. 100 on the east, Bridge 5399 on the north, and Turner Crossroad N. on the west.

■ **INTEGRITY**

Alterations

The western end of the culvert and the adjacent retaining wall are intact. The stream has been narrowed immediately west of the culvert. The site retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and, association. Its setting has been altered somewhat.

Notes on Condition

The culvert is in fair condition. The retaining wall is in poor condition and falling apart. Both are overgrown with trees.

■ **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The culvert was built in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as part of the original construction of T.H. 100. Bridge 5399 (located several feet to the north) was also built in 1936. The WPA's construction of T.H. 100 was one of the largest federal relief projects in the state. The planning and construction of T.H. 100 is significant in the history of transportation in the state. (See Statement of Significance and Additional Background Information near the end of this document.)

No original plans have been located. See historic photograph of completed structure (taken June 3, 1939) in Nichols photo album vol. 1, p. 33 (Mn/DOT Site Development Unit).

The culvert was undoubtedly designed by A. R. Nichols who was the Consulting Landscape Architect for the Minnesota Department of Highways during the 1930s through the early 1940s. Nichols designed the landscaping and roadside parks along the entire length of the "Lilac Way" as the original portion of T.H. 100 was called.

This culvert was one of seven properties (five parks and two other properties) recorded on T.H. 100 as part of this Mn/DOT Historic Roadside Development Structures Inventory. The seven properties are listed below as they appear on T.H. 100 from north to south:

- Graeser Park
- Graeser Park - South
- T.H. 100 and T.H. 55 Retaining Walls
- Blazer Park
- T.H. 100 Culvert (Bridge 5442)
- Lilac Park
- St. Louis Park Roadside Parking Area

At least two other parks along T.H. 100 have been demolished:

- Excelsior Blvd Roadside Parking Area (T.H. 100 at Excelsior Blvd)
- Glenwood Avenue Roadside Parking Area (T.H. 100 at Glenwood Ave.)

See Additional Background Information below for more information.

■ **PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS**

A series of Section 106 reviews was begun in 1993 in association with the proposed reconstruction of T.H. 100 (SHPO 93-0130, 94-3607, and 98-0306). A portion of T.H. 100 has been determined by the Minnesota Historical Society to be eligible for the National Register as the Lilac Way Historic District. The eligible district includes the roadway itself, as well as bridges, roadside landscaping features, and roadside parks. Survey and evaluation of the segment of T.H. 100 between T.H. 7 (on the south) and 50th Ave. N. (on the north) was conducted in 1994-1997, in part pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the FHWA, the SHPO, the ACHP, and the SHPO that was signed in 1997.

The 1997 MOA stipulated the following: For the northern segment of the project area (between Glenwood Ave. N. and 50th Ave. N.) -- photo documentation of National Register-eligible landscape features and development of a video presentation on the history and significance of T.H. 100. For the southern segment of the project area (between the Soo Line RR bridge south of Glenwood Ave. N. and W. 27th St.) -- an inventory of structures adjacent to T.H. 100 that predate 1947, and photo documentation of National Register-eligible landscape features. At the time of this writing (Spring 1998), the inventory had been completed and work on the other stipulations was underway. The documents that chronicle the Section 106 reviews (filed under SHPO review numbers 93-0130, 94-3607, and 98-0306) contain the MOA, several items of correspondence, and several reports (see primarily reports by Meyer et al. 1995 and Henning 1997).

■ **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The T.H. 100 Culvert (Bridge 5442) was built in 1936 by the WPA. The site is one of 23 properties in this inventory that were built by (or suspected to have been built by) the WPA. It is one of more than 60 properties in this inventory that were designed by, or attributed to, A. R. Nichols. The culvert was built as part of one of the state's largest federal relief projects -- the construction of T.H. 100 (the "Lilac Way") in 1934-1941. The Lilac Way was also one of the Roadside Development Division's largest, most well-publicized, and most visible, single projects.

This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that, despite the factors listed above, the site is NOT INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context because it does not meet the context registration requirements.

However, this property is located within the Lilac Way Historic District, which the SHPO has already determined is ELIGIBLE for the National Register under the "Federal Relief Construction, 1933-1943" historic context. It is recommended that the Lilac Way Historic District ALSO MEETS the registration requirements of the Roadside Development historic context. The culvert is a contributing element within the potential historic district.

As a member of the Lilac Way Historic District, this property may also associated with the "Urban Centers, 1870-1940" and "Tourism and Recreation in the Lake Regions, 1870-1945" historic contexts.

The culvert was not included in the Mn/DOT Historic Bridge Inventory.

■ **OTHER COMMENTS**

This property may require further evaluation for potential archaeological resources.

T.H. 100 past this site is a busy, multi-laned highway.

■ **REFERENCES**

Annual Report of the Accomplishments of Roadside Development Along the Trunk Highways in Minnesota. Minnesota Department of Highways. 1938 and 1939.

"An Appraisal Inventory of Work Done with W.P.A. and Other Federal Relief Funds Through the Functioning of the Department of Highways, State of Minnesota." Unpublished manuscript, 1938.

Biennial Report of the Commissioner of Highways of Minnesota. 1935-1936 (pub. Jan. 1, 1937; 1937-1938 (pub. Mar. 1, 1939); 1942-1944 (pub. Dec. 1, 1944).

Henning, Barbara J. *Phases I and II Cultural Resource Historical Investigation: T.H. 100 (Lilac Way) S.P. 2743.* Prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation by Rivercrest Associates, Inc., September 1997.

Lee, Rudolph. "Highway Department Approves 'Lilac Way' West of City." *Minneapolis Journal*, July 28, 1935, pp. 1 and 4.

"Lilac Way Here Soon." *Minneapolis Journal*, Jan. 30, 1938, p. 2.

Meyer, Scott B., Richard L. Mattson, Andrew J. Schmidt. *Phase I and II Cultural Resources Investigation for Trunk Highway 100 Reconstruction.* Prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation by The 106 Group Ltd., Feb. 15, 1995.

Nichols, A. R., comp. *Album of Roadside Development Projects.* 7 vols. Photo album prepared for the Roadside Development Division, Minnesota Department of Highways. Ca. 1937-1941.

■ **ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

T.H. 100 -- The Lilac Way

The Lilac Way Historic District has been determined to be eligible for the National Register as the most intact portion of the original western segment of T.H. 100. The eligible district is in two distinct segments, a northern segment (about 4.5 miles long) between Glenwood Avenue in Golden Valley and T.H. 52 (now CSAH 81) in Robbinsdale, and a southern segment (1.4 miles long) in St. Louis Park located between a set of Soo Line tracks south of T.H. 7 and W. 26th St.

Built between 1934-1941, largely by the WPA, Lilac Way (originally 12.5 miles long and running from T.H. 5 in Edina to T.H. 52 in Robbinsdale) was one of the state's largest federal relief projects. Lilac Way was the first section completed of the western leg of T.H. 100. The western leg of T.H. 100 was the first portion of a "Belt Line Highway" that, by 1950, encircled the Twin Cities with 66 miles of roadway. The National Register-eligible segment of Lilac Way is significant to the history of suburban development in the Twin Cities and regional transportation (affecting residential development, economic development, tourism, etc.), and significant as one of the state's largest federal relief projects. It is also significant for its distinctive roadside landscaping that features wayside parks, hundreds of native lilac bushes, other intact landscaping elements, and as an excellent example of the work of landscape architect Arthur R. Nichols.

T.H. 100 was originally a Public Works Administration (PWA) project funded by the Economic Recovery Act (ERA). When the WPA was created in 1935, T.H. 100 became a WPA project that employed between 2,500 and 3,000 men during that year alone. The project used almost 800 workers daily in 1935 and approximately 1,500 men daily at the peak of construction in 1937 (Meyer et al. 1995:78). The building of T.H. 100, like the Thompson Hill Overlook and T.H. 61 in Duluth (also in this inventory) was a large federal relief construction project that was established close to one of the state's large urban centers where unemployment was high. Some of the workers on the T.H. 100 project were ". . . formerly unemployed masons hired to build the stone benches, grills, and posts in the roadside parks" (Meyer et al. 1995:79).

Historian Barbara J. Henning writes that,

The belt line was intended to provide safe, efficient traffic flow, but also an aesthetically pleasing experience. Features designed to enhance the parkway experience included grade separations at railroad crossings and major intersecting highways, cloverleaf connections, limited access points to the highway, absence of private frontage, two lanes in each direction, a median between them, extensive landscaping, and small parks (Henning 1997:10).

Henning describes landscaping along the segment of T.H. 100 in St. Louis Park:

Landscaping for the highway, including the number and types of vegetation, was extraordinary in scope. A dozen types of evergreen trees totaling 420 plants headed the plant material list for St. Louis Park. There were 37 varieties of deciduous trees, shrubs, and vines. The total number of deciduous plants called for in the plan came to 23,505. The largest units were American elm (1,890) in several sizes, sumac (9,478), three kinds of spirea (2,199), Persian lilac (2,487), and common lilac (5,408). Uncommon examples, perhaps representing in-place plants, included limited numbers of butternut (1), ironwood (5), horse chestnut (1), and Chinese matrimony vine (32) (Henning 1997:12).

The Lilac Way's lilac bushes were an exception to the Roadside Development Division's general policy of not planting flowers or flowering shrubs along highways. The landscaping include more than 7,000 bushes of 12 varieties of lilacs and thousands of other vines and trees ("Lilac Way Here Soon" 1938).

See sources cited under References for more information.