

**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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Lafayette Street Bridge

other names/site number Kennedy Boulevard Bridge; FMSF# HI00640

**2. Location**

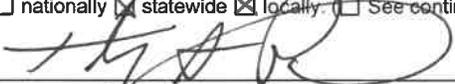
street & number Kennedy Boulevard and Hillsborough River  not for publication

city or town Tampa  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33602

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally.  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 12/20/2017  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain) _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Lafayette Street Bridge

other names/site number Kennedy Boulevard Bridge; FMSF# HI00640

**2. Location**

street & number Kennedy Boulevard and Hillsborough River  not for publication

city or town Tampa  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33602

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain) _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Bridges of Florida MPS

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Bascule Bridge

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof

other Concrete

Metal

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

**Period of Significance**

1913-1967

**Significant Dates**

1889

1896

1913

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Edwards Construction Company, Builder

Oswego Bridge Company, Designer

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_

Lafayette Street Bridge  
Name of Property

Hillsborough County, Florida  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than 1

**UTM References**

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1   7	3   5   6   2   6   8	3   0   9   2   1   4   5
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lucy D. Jones; Edited by Andrew Waber and Ruben A. Acosta

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation, DHR, FL Dept. of State date June 2017

street & number 500 S. Bronough St. telephone 850-245-6430

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Tampa

street & number 306 East Jackson Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Tampa state FL zip code 33602-5223

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, Florida
County and State
Florida's Historic Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   7   Page       1      

**SUMMARY**

The Lafayette Street Bridge, now known as the Kennedy Boulevard Bridge, crosses the Hillsborough River between downtown Tampa on the east and the University of Tampa on the west. Originally constructed in 1913, the current bridge combines the historic bascule central span, piers, and bridge tender houses, with reconstructed arched spans and retaining walls on the western approach. The Lafayette Street Bridge was the third bridge constructed on the site, which was the location of the first road bridge across the Hillsborough River. The bridge consists of a historic double-leaf steel Scherzer bascule with modern reinforced concrete arch approaches. Flanking the bascule are two small, historic neoclassical or beaux-arts keeper's houses with red tile roofs. The bridge retains a good level of integrity, despite the reconstruction of the flanking arches by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 1995.

**Setting**

The Tampa Bay metropolitan area, which includes the cities of Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and their extensive suburban areas has a population of over 2,000,000 permanent residents. Located in the western part of central Florida, Tampa is situated at the mouth of the Hillsborough River on Tampa Bay—an inlet to the Gulf of Mexico. The city is the seat of Hillsborough County, and is a major center of finance and large banking holding companies and investment firms. With its nearby beaches and other attractions, sporting facilities, and climate, many thousands of tourists each year add substantially to the economic vitality of the area. The 2010 U.S. Census stated that today Tampa was a city of 335,709 residents in a county of about 1,229,226. On the west side of the Kennedy Boulevard Bridge is the University of Tampa while on the east side are large hotels and the Tampa Riverwalk.

**Physical Description**

The Lafayette Street Bridge was originally constructed in 1913. In 1995, an extensive rehabilitation program required the demolition and reconstruction of the original reinforced concrete arch spans. The work was reviewed by the state historic preservation office for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which resulted in a signed Memorandum of Agreement. The work followed the original bridge plans as closely as possible while meeting modern engineering and safety requirements established by the Florida Department of Transportation. Following the rehabilitation, both FDOT and the Florida SHPO consider the bridge eligible for the National Register.

The bridge itself consists of three spans across the Hillsborough River, which cross the river at an angle to the main channel (photos 1-2). The central span consists of the original skewed double-leaf Scherzer bascule bridge, approximately eighty feet wide and 120 feet long (photo 3). The central span forms a parallelogram and is constructed of riveted steel beams. The roadway is a toothed steel grate, while perforated steel panels form the walkways (photo 4). The balustrades on the bascule bridge are of painted steel, and concrete curbs separate the roadway from the walkway.

Two historic oval piers anchor the bridge in the river and provide space for the rolling lift mechanisms and the bridge keeper's houses, which contain the controls for the bridge. The piers are constructed of

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
----- Name of Property
Hillsborough County, Florida
----- County and State
Florida's Historic Bridges MPS
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   7   Page       1      

reinforced concrete, and feature a solid concrete parapet wall, which is set off from the main body of the pier by a decorative cornice.

A small bridge tender's house is located at either end of the bascule (photo 5-6). The eastern house is on the south side of the bridge and the west house is on the north side of the bridge. Each house is square in plan, with triple 3/1 windows on two sides, a glazed entry door and 4/1 window on one side, and a pair of 4/1 windows on the side opposite the entry. The bottom half of the houses is plain concrete, while the windows are flanked by fluted pilasters. Angle brackets support a basic cornice. Each house has a pyramidal Spanish tile roof capped by a copper roof vent. The eastern house has a large bronze plaque indicating the bridge's original construction date and those involved in the planning and construction of the bridge (photo 7).

Two reinforced concrete arched spans link the bascule span to shore. Each span consists of a single segmental arch that connects the bridge pier to shore. Each span has a neoclassical concrete balustrade extending its full length. Large neoclassical, five-globe streetlights on fluted columns are placed along the balustrade at each end of the span, with a total of four per span (photo 8). The current streetlights are replacements of the historic lights, which they match in design and configuration. These lights are symbolic of civic infrastructure in Tampa. Both the roadway and walkways are poured concrete. A concrete curb separates the roadway from the walkway. Midway each span is a modern signal and a gate that descends to block traffic prior to opening the bridge. These spans are modern reproductions of the original spans, which were replaced in 1995 due to severe deterioration of the original reinforced concrete after over eighty years of continuous use.

The western approach of the bridge consists of a 500-foot reinforced concrete retaining wall on the north side facing a park which is part of the University of Tampa (photo 10) and a 100-foot retaining wall on the south side. Both retaining walls are topped by a concrete neoclassical balustrade. Shallow rectangular piers with a blank panel connect the arch to the western approach. A small plaza is located on the north side of the approach where it meets the western arched span. The half-hexagonal plaza features a solid concrete parapet wall. On the north side, a concrete neoclassical staircase of two flights of stairs flanked by a balustrade descends to park level (photo 11). A modern iron gate is located at the top of the staircase and is flanked by two neoclassical streetlights. The difference in the length of the retaining walls results from the sloping topography of the site. All of these walls were replaced in 1995 due to deterioration of the concrete and the need to replace the original wood foundations.

### **Alterations and Integrity**

The Lafayette Street Bridge has good integrity, despite modifications over time. The central section, composed of the Scherzer bascule, mechanism, piers, and bridge tender houses, is the most significant portion of the bridge and retains a high level of integrity as it is mostly original to 1913. These elements were inspected and repaired in-kind where necessary as part of the 1995 rehabilitation. The bridge tender houses were returned to their original 1913 appearance, based upon historic photographs, paint analysis, and surviving architectural drawings (figure 1).

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Lafayette Street Bridge
----- Name of Property
Hillsborough County, Florida
----- County and State
Florida's Historic Bridges MPS
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   7   Page       1      

However, the two flanking arches are not original, but are replacements dating to 1995. The Florida Department of Transportation declared arched spans flanking the central bascule inadequate for the modern loading of the bridge due to the early system of reinforcement and the then deteriorating concrete. As such, FDOT determined to replace the arched spans with new reinforced concrete arches, which followed the original architectural design of the spans but which were built to modern engineering standards and featured a significantly higher level of reinforcement. The spans also featured reproduction concrete neoclassical balustrades and decorative lamps. To improve pedestrian safety, low, impact resistant concrete barriers separated the road lanes from the sidewalks.<sup>1</sup>

Other modifications to the bridge included repairs to the historic retaining walls on the west side of the bridge and the replacement of the concrete balustrades flanking the walkways along the length of the bridge. Portions of the northwest retaining wall supporting the plaza and stairs to Plant Park, along with a portion of the southwest retaining wall were also replaced as part of the 1995 rehabilitation. The original walls were poured concrete resting on wood pile foundations. The new replacement walls replicate the historic exterior appearance of the retaining walls, but rest on concrete foundations and are stabilized using tie rods that extend diagonally towards ground level under the roadway. At the same time the retaining walls were repaired or replaced, new concrete balustrades conforming to the historic designs except in the diameter of the balusters were installed. This allowed the installation of electrical conduit within the base of the balustrade, which facilitated the running of electrical wires for the light posts, traffic signals, and other electrical equipment above the deck of the bridge.<sup>2</sup> Other modifications include the replacement of warning lights, traffic gates, and streetlights over time.

Originally, the bridge carried both road and streetcar traffic over the river. Streetcar tracks were embedded in the roadways and an overhead trolley wire was carried across the bridge on steel gantries. Two gantries were located on the bascule, and held a short overhead rail which allowed transmission of power for the streetcars when the bridge was closed but which would move with the bridge when it opened, allowing for an un-obstructed channel. The steel gantries, trolley wire, and tracks were removed sometime in the 1950s, following the cessation of streetcar service in 1947.

Despite these modifications, the most significant portions of the bridge retain a good level of integrity, including location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association and feeling. The Scherzer bascule retains its original design and materials, and is still operational. While the reinforced concrete arches of the bridge were rebuilt in 1995, they follow closely the original plans of 1913. Most of the concrete retaining walls are also original to the 1913 bridge, with only limited replacements.

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum of Agreement Submitted to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation between the Federal Highway Administration, Florida Department of Transportation, and the Florida State Historic Preservation Office.

<sup>2</sup> Florida Department of Transportation and Greiner Engineers, Architects and Planners, *Final Plans for State Project No. 100080-3536 State Road 60* (Feb 11, 1993).

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 1

**SUMMARY**

The Lafayette Street Bridge is being nominated for listing in the National Register under Criterion A: Community Planning and Development, Criterion A: Transportation at local level, Criterion C: Architecture at the local level, and Criterion C: Engineering at the state level. The period of significance extends from its date of construction in 1913 to 1967. The bridge is the oldest surviving example of Scherzer bascule bridge engineering in the city of Tampa. Now known as the Kennedy Boulevard Bridge, it is the third incarnation of the bridge constructed here. The bridge was originally built for streetcars, horse carriages, automobiles, and pedestrian traffic. By the 1920s, the bridge was primarily handling automobiles and pedestrians. It continued to function as a streetcar bridge until 1947. The Lafayette Street Bridge was an immediate success and had a profound impact upon both the suburban development of Tampa. The bridge's design inspired an entire generation of bridges built in the Tampa area that fueled development on both sides of the Hillsborough River.

This bridge is being listed under the Florida's Historic Highway Bridges Multiple Property Listing under Associated Historic Contexts: Early Twentieth Century (1900-1941), Bridge Materials: Concrete, and under Associated Property Type F.11: Bascule Bridges.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

History of Tampa

The city of Tampa has its beginnings in the 1820s, when the United States government constructed Fort Brooke on east bank of the Hillsborough River in 1824. This fortification became particularly important during the Second Seminole War in the 1830s and 1840s, and it was at this time that the settlement grew. The city of Tampa was formally incorporated in 1849. The continued existence of the community relied heavily on its location along the Hillsborough River and Tampa Bay. With only limited settlement on the interior of Central Florida, however, the city saw very limited growth during this time. The port of Tampa was too shallow for the larger ships that operated in the Gulf of Mexico. There were no reliable interior roads or railroads linking the city to the rest of the state. The Florida Railroad, which was finished in 1860, was the first rail line to connect the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of Florida. The railroad selected Cedar Key as its western terminus and Gulf port, bypassing Tampa.<sup>3</sup>

The city of Tampa's fortunes turned around considerably after the Civil War. The major catalyst for its growth began with the arrival of Henry Plant and the Plant System of railroads, shipping lines, and hotels. Plant was a northerner from Connecticut whose businesses dealings in the south began with the founding of the Southern Express Company. This company made a fortune during the Civil War operating express services for the Confederate government, which Plant shrewdly reinvested in commodities other than Confederate currency. After the war, Plant began purchasing a number of failing southern railroads. They were consolidated and expanded into a larger system of railroads known as the

<sup>3</sup> Lucy D. Jones, "Tampa's Lafayette Street Bridge: Building a New South City" (master's thesis, University of South Florida, 2006), 9-13.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   8   Page       2      

Plant System. The System also included steamship lines and hotels. After much negotiation, Plant selected the city of Tampa to serve as the Gulf port and southern terminus of his railroad. He accomplished this through his acquisition of the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad and the completion of the line from Tampa to Sanford in 1883. In 1887, the United States government declared the Port of Tampa an official port of entry, opening up the port to direct international trade.<sup>4</sup>

The arrival of Plant coincided with the emergence of three major industries that came into the area at this time: citrus, phosphate mining, and cigar making. Tampa's easy access to rail lines and international and domestic shipping lanes drew a significant amount of business. The citrus industry in the Tampa area goes back rather far, with the first grapefruit orchard planted by Odet Phillippe in 1823. As rail transportation improved, the cost of shipping produce to market decreased and the industry exploded throughout the state, increasing from one million to five million boxes of citrus between 1865 and 1893. The first phosphate deposits were found in Hawthorne, Alachua County, in 1883. Soon large deposits of phosphates were discovered throughout central Florida. One particularly large deposit, known as Bone Valley, covers a vast area that includes parts of Hillsborough County. Much of this was shipped overseas, and Tampa emerged as one of the largest phosphate shipping ports in the world. The cigar industry arrived in Tampa in the late 1800s after political unrest in Cuba and labor strife in Key West drove factory owners to seek new locations. In 1885, Vicente Ybor relocated his cigar factory operations in Key West to an area northeast of Tampa. Through the Ybor City Land and Improvement Company, he established a factory town known as Ybor City, which was annexed into the city of Tampa in 1887. The success of Ybor's operations in Tampa drew other cigar makers into the area. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tampa was as one of the largest cigar manufacturing centers in the world.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 14-19.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, Bulletin 16: *The Phosphate Deposits of Florida*, by George Charlton Matson (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915), 7-9; Florida Industrial and Phosphate Research Institute, Florida Polytechnic University, "Florida Phosphate Mining History," <http://www.fipr.state.fl.us/about-us/phosphate-primer/florida-phosphate-mining-history/>; L. Glenn Westfall, "The Evolution and Development of Mr. Ybor's City," [unpublished manuscript], 201-205.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
-----
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
-----
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   8   Page       3      

Early Crossings of the Hillsborough River



Hayden's Ferry at Jackson Street, c1880.  
 (Source: Dan Perez and Lucy Jones, "Lafayette Street Bridge" Tampapix.com, accessed 9 June 2017)

Due to the limited growth of Tampa prior to 1880, there was little need for a bridge. A small ferry service operated off the end of Jackson Street for the settlements on the west side of the Hillsborough River and for travelers seeking overland access to Safety Harbor or Clearwater. Known as Hayden's Ferry, this ferry service consisted of rowboats for foot passengers and flat barges for horses and wagons. A second ferry was operated from the end of Fortune Street. The limitations in transportation across the river stunted the growth on the west side of the Hillsborough River. This all began to change in the late 1880s, when Henry Plant constructed his monumental Tampa Bay Hotel on the west side of the river.<sup>6</sup>

By the late 1880s, Henry Plant began moving into the construction of hotels along his railroad lines. His inspiration was Henry Flagler, who by then just finished his highly successful Hotel Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine, which would become the first of a string of luxury hotels constructed along the Florida East Coast Railway. In July 1888, Plant bought fifteen acres of land on the west side of the Hillsborough River and began construction of the Tampa Bay Hotel resort, which was finished in 1891. With the large hotel came a need for more reliable transportation to the railroad terminal on the east side of the river. The city, recognizing the tremendous potential of the resort, began planning for a new bridge to cross at the end of Lafayette Street.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Jones, "Tampa's Lafayette Street Bridge," 10, 18-19, 21.  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 17-19.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   8   Page       4      

First and Second Lafayette Street Bridges

In 1888, with plans for the Tampa Bay Hotel underway, the Town Council of Tampa, working closely with the Hillsborough County Commission, which provided one-third of the cost for construction, awarded the new bridge contract to the King Iron and Bridge Manufacturing Company of Cleveland, Ohio. The first Lafayette Street Bridge was a wood and iron truss swing bridge. The King Iron and Bridge company encountered some difficulties during the construction of the bridge, which included a yellow fever epidemic that swept through Tampa at the time. After some delays, the company finished construction of the bridge in 1889. The effect of the bridge on the expansion of the city was tremendous. Development on the other side of the Hillsborough River grew exponentially. The Hyde Park Subdivision was laid out shortly afterwards as developers began selling land on the west side of the river near the bridge. By the early 1890s, as the city starting shifting towards the use of streetcars, it was clear that the first bridge was ill-suited for the purposes of the growing city.<sup>8</sup>

In 1895, the city authorized the construction of a new bridge across the Hillsborough River at the end of Lafayette Street. For this work, they hired the Florida Dredging Company from Jacksonville, Florida. This company was a partnership between noted bridge engineer Milo S. Cartter and the Merrill-Stevens Engineering Company of Jacksonville. The ironwork from the first Lafayette Street Bridge was repurposed for a bridge across Six Mile Creek east of Tampa. The funding for the second bridge became a central issue in the mayoral election of 1895. At issue was the proposed issuance of \$350,000 in municipal bonds used for debt settlement and infrastructure improvements. Despite his opposition to bonds, Frederick A. Salmonson, who won election by a narrow 50 vote majority, changed his position after assuming the office of mayor. Realizing that the city needed to settle its debts and that the partially demolished Lafayette Street Bridge needed reconstruction, Mayor Salmonson proposed a new city charter, which among other things created a Board of Public Works to manage the growing infrastructure in the city, which included a new sewer system. With the efficiency of the municipal government greatly improved, the city council approved the \$350,000 bond in June 1895, which was affirmed by a large majority in a local election held later that year. After some delays, the city was finally able to secure the necessary funding to finish the second Lafayette Street Bridge in 1896.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 24-27, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 32-45.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Lafayette Street Bridge

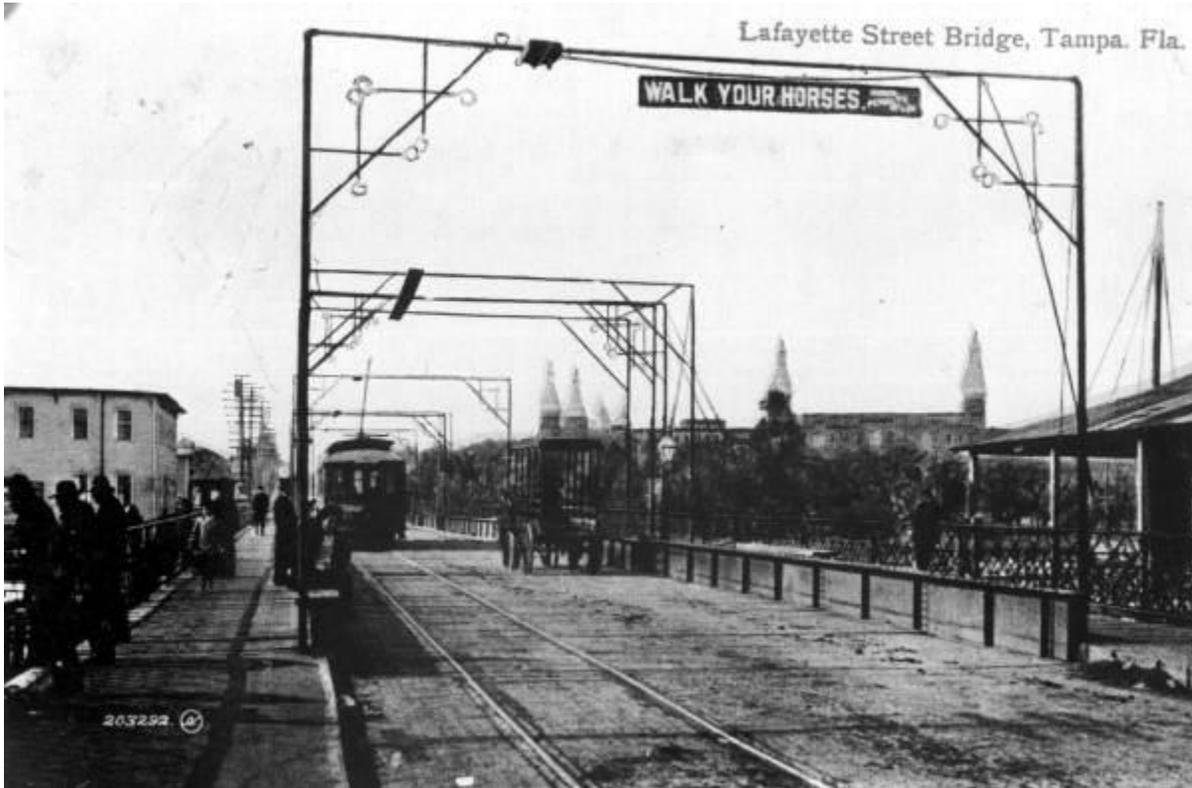
Name of Property

Hillsborough County, FL

County and State

Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



View of Second Lafayette Street Bridge, 1909

(Source: *Lafayette Street Bridge over the Hillsborough River - Tampa, Florida*. Not before 1913. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/138181>>, accessed 9 June 2017.)

The second bridge, like the first, had an immediate impact upon the development of the city. At this time, the implementation of electric streetcar lines throughout the city made it possible for workers to live farther away from their places of employment. In addition to handling pedestrian and horse carriage traffic, the second bridge also included streetcar tracks, greatly expediting streetcar service across the river. Very soon after its construction, however, significant problems in the new bridge arose. An architect noted that the sand covering the approaches would soak up too much water, rendering the bridge unsafe during a heavy rainfall. To fix this, the city paid to have the approaches paved. The bridge also had problems handling the heavier streetcars that traveled on it. The bridge was set rather low to the river. This bridge, which was a drawbridge, often failed as it either froze in the open position or did not open at all. The city was also quickly outgrowing the bridge and its unreliability became a further hindrance. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a renewed call for a new Lafayette Street Bridge.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 43-55.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 6

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Third Lafayette Street Bridge



View of Third Lafayette Bridge, circa 1920.

(Source: *Traffic running through the Lafayette Street Bridge - Tampa, Florida. 19--*. Black & white photoprint, 8 x 10 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/30003>>, accessed 9 June 2017.)

As early as 1907, the city of Tampa began pushing for the issuance of municipal bonds to finance a new round of comprehensive infrastructure improvements, which included the construction of a new Lafayette Street Bridge. The plan was tabled initially due to concerns over a national financial crisis that occurred at the time. In 1909, it finally went before the city’s voters but was defeated due, in part, to wariness over the high cost of the new bridge. There were some who proposed fixing the existing bridge. To help determine the effectiveness of repairing or replacing the bridge, the city hired engineer J.S. Hildreth as a consultant to inspect the bridge and give his recommendations. Hildreth believed that the best approach was to completely replace the bridge. Based upon his observations, the city decided to move forward with the construction of the third bridge in 1911.<sup>11</sup>

In 1912, the City of Tampa selected the Edwards Construction Company to build the third Lafayette Street Bridge. The bridge was to be an 80-foot wide reinforced concrete bascule lift bridge. The bridge

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 63-68.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
-----
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
-----
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   8   Page       7      

itself was designed by the Oswego Bridge Company. The city had actually selected the Oswego Bridge Company to do both design and construction the year before. Owing to questions raised over the legality of the selection process and disputes over proper bridge design, however, the city refused to go forward. As a compromise, the Oswego company agreed to release the city from the contract in return for the city purchasing its plans. These plans were then finalized by the firm of Boller, Hodge & Baird of New York, which is credited as the bridge engineers by a commemorative plaque on the bridge.<sup>12</sup>

Prior to the construction of the third bridge, the Edwards company first erected a temporary bridge across the Hillsborough River to avoid potential transportation problems, which opened in December 1912. Construction on the third Lafayette Street Bridge itself began in 1912 and continued through most of the following year. Due to unforeseen delays in the project, the city granted the company a four-month extension to the contract, moving the original July 1913 deadline back to November 1913. The Pennsylvania Steel Works provided and installed the metal lift and motors onto the drawbridge. The local electric company installed the tracks while the city paved the approaches, initially with brick then with asphalt paving.<sup>13</sup>

When the third Lafayette Street Bridge was finished in September 1913, it opened to much fanfare. A large formal opening ceremony took place in conjunction with the Gasparilla Festival held in February 1914. Over 1,800 people were present as the mayor formally dedicated the bridge. The citizens had much cause for celebration. The new bridge had some significant advantages over the previous one. The reinforced concrete used in constructing it was much cheaper to maintain than the all-metal bridge. The bridge itself was sixteen feet above the low water mark as opposed to just seven feet above on the old bridge. The center span was also 70 feet wide, which was sixteen feet wider than the previous bridge. This resulted in a 66 percent reduction in the number of times the bridge was raised. The bridge utilized arches to give it more strength. Its wider sidewalks greatly increased the bridge's walkability and the decorative balustrades made it more visually appealing.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 69-72.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 69-92.

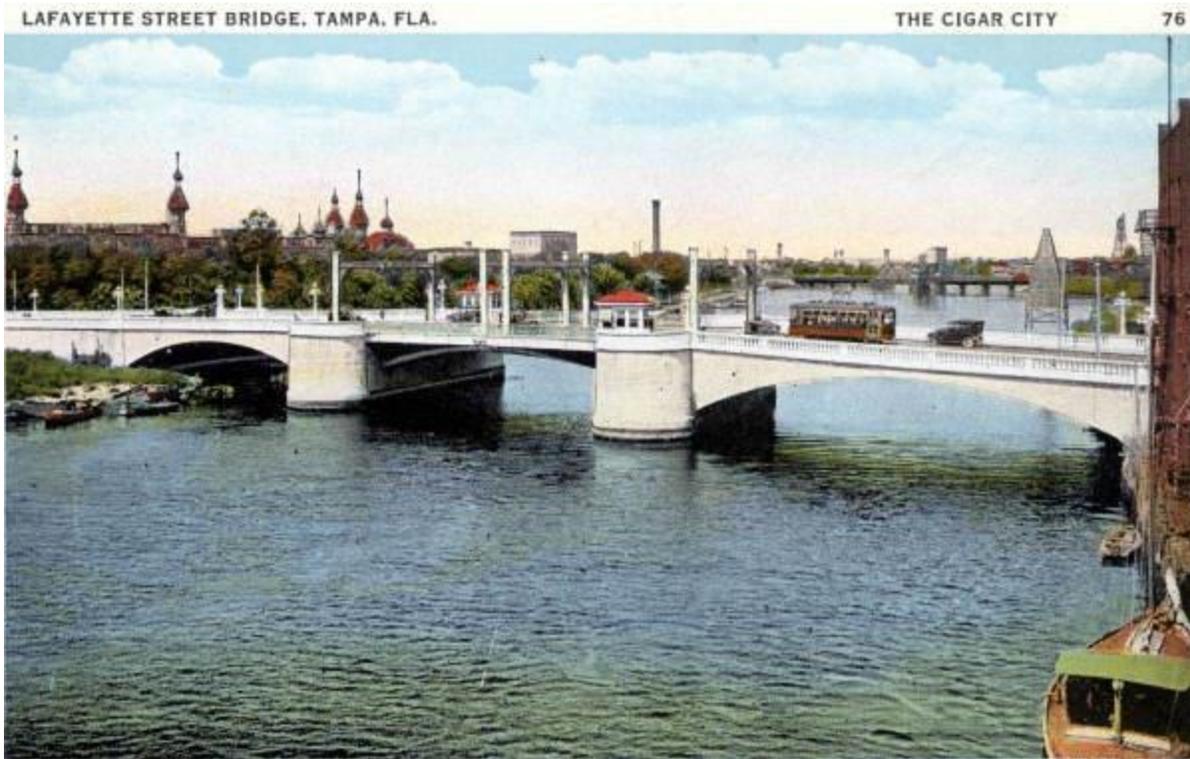
<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 92-101.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
-----
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
-----
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   8   Page       8      



View of third Lafayette Street Bridge. Note the reinforced concrete arches with bascule central span over the river channel (source: *Lafayette Street Bridge - Tampa, Florida*. 19--. Color advertising postcard, 9 x 14 cm. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/163047>>, accessed 9 June 2017.).

When the bridge was constructed in 1913, there were only a small number of automobiles on the road. So while it was built with cars in mind, it was primarily constructed to handle streetcars, pedestrians, and horse-drawn carriages. By the 1920s, automobiles made up the majority of the traffic found on the bridge. Streetcars remained in service until 1947, and the streetcar tracks remained in place until 1969. After the City of Tampa renamed Lafayette Street for President John F. Kennedy in December 1963, the name of the bridge changed to the Kennedy Boulevard Bridge, the name it currently holds.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1990s, the bridge fell into disrepair despite its sturdy construction. By this time, the bridge was handling over 26,000 automobiles a day, placing a significant amount of stress on the structure. To rectify this, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) worked closely with engineers and preservationists and came up with a successful solution to the problem which renovated the bridge while retaining much of its original appearance. Engineers successfully renovated and restored the historic balustrades and streetlights and also rehabilitated the two bridge tender houses using historic photographs and paint analysis. To accommodate modern safety requirements, the balustrade was made thicker, a concrete barrier was placed between pedestrian and automobile traffic, and extra steel

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 102.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 9

reinforcements were added underneath the arches. It was formally reopened in 1995 and has remained in near constant use since then.<sup>16</sup>

**Criterion C: Architectural and Engineering Significance**

The Lafayette Street Bridge meets the significance criteria set out in Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS, Property Type F.11: Bascule Bridges.

**Architectural Significance**

The Lafayette Street Bridge is a locally significant example of Neoclassical Beaux Arts architecture and the City Beautiful movement. The popularity of Neoclassical architecture and City Beautiful urban planning resulted from the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893. The exposition showcased architectural and planning principles developed at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and practiced by American architects such as Daniel Burnham, John W. Root, and Frederick Law Olmstead. The City Beautiful movement sought to improve the aesthetics and monumentality of American urban centers through the use of Neoclassical architecture and the principles of symmetry and order.

The Lafayette Street Bridge's overall design conforms to the principles of the Neoclassical style and City Beautiful movement. The bridge is a monumental crossing of the Hillsborough River, with a balanced and symmetrical design of two arches and a central bascule. The overall form follows the classical mode of arched bridges, with pronounced piers and decorative balustrades. The bridge tender houses also incorporate basic Neoclassical elements, including pilasters and cornices. As an architectural work, the bridge clearly contrasts with its more functional predecessors and set the model for other crossings of the Hillsborough river, such as the Platt and Cass Street Bridges.

**Engineering Significance**

The Lafayette Street Bridge is a significant early example of bascule bridge construction in the city of Tampa, Florida. It is the oldest bridge of its type still standing in Tampa. Designed by the Oswego Bridge Company and built by the Edwards Construction Company, this reinforced concrete arched bridge features a metal movable double-leaf center span that opens, allowing for shipping traffic to go underneath. This bridge is also a very early example of reinforced concrete used for bridge construction, built just five years after the first reinforced concrete bridge in the United States was built in Philadelphia.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 103-105.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Lafayette Street Bridge

Name of Property

Hillsborough County, FL

County and State

Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   9   Page     1    

---

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Florida Industrial and Phosphate Research Institute, Florida Polytechnic University, "Florida Phosphate Mining History," <http://www.fipr.state.fl.us/about-us/phosphate-primer/florida-phosphate-mining-history/>.

Jones, Lucy D. "Tampa's Lafayette Street Bridge: Building a New South City." Master's thesis, University of South Florida, 2006.

U.S. Geological Survey. Bulletin 16: *The Phosphate Deposits of Florida*, by George Charlton Matson. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915.

Westfall, L. Glenn. "The Evolution and Development of Mr. Ybor's City," [unpublished manuscript].

Memorandum of Agreement Submitted to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation between the Federal Highway Administration, Florida Department of Transportation, and the Florida State Historic Preservation Office. May 7, 1992.

Florida Department of Transportation and Greiner Engineers, Architects and Planners, *Final Plans for State Project No. 100080-3536 State Road 60*. Feb 11, 1993.

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
-----
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
-----
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   10   Page   1  

---

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary encapsulates the footprint of the current bridge, from the eastern embankment of the Hillsborough river across to the western shore, and includes the western bridge approach's northern and southern retaining walls.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary is the footprint of the current Kennedy Boulevard Bridge, historically known as the Lafayette Street Bridge. It is the property historically associated with the bridge.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Lafayette Street Bridge
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page Figures

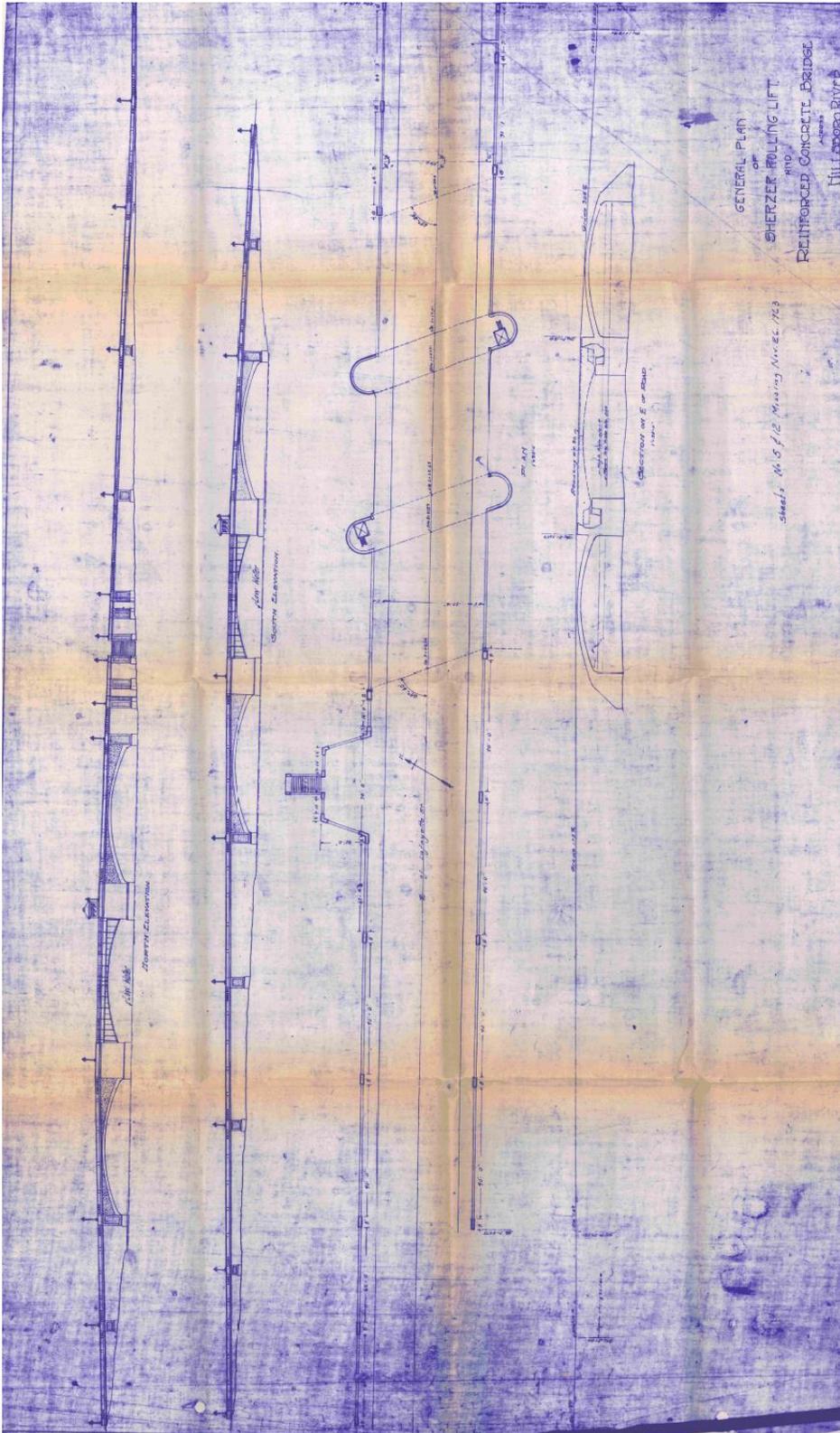


Figure 1: General Plan of the Lafayette St. Bridge., 1912

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

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

Lafayette Street Bridge
-----
Name of Property
Hillsborough County, FL
-----
County and State
Florida's Historic Highway Bridges MPS
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Photographs

Page 1

**Photographs**

Name of Property: Lafayette Street Bridge

City or Vicinity: Tampa

County: Hillsborough

State: Florida

Photographer: Ruben A. Acosta

Date Photographed: April 25, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. Lafayette Bridge, north elevation, view southeast.
2. Lafayette Bridge, south elevation, view northwest.
3. Central Scherzer bascule span, view west.
4. Roadway, Scherzer bascule span, view northwest.
5. South bridge tender's house, view west.
6. North bridge tender's house, view west.
7. Commemorative plaque, south bridge tender's house, view east.
8. Streetlight and balustrade, south side of west span, view west.
9. Underside of east arched span, view west.
10. North retaining wall, west approach, view southwest.
11. Staircase, west approach, view south.

# Lafayette Street Bridge

Kennedy Boulevard and the Hillsborough River.

Tampa, Hillsborough County  
Florida

UTM:  
17R 356237 3092133

Lat/Long:  
27.946488, -82.461346

USGS Quad: Tampa

Datum: WGS84

## Legend

 LafayetteBridge

Date: 6/9/2017

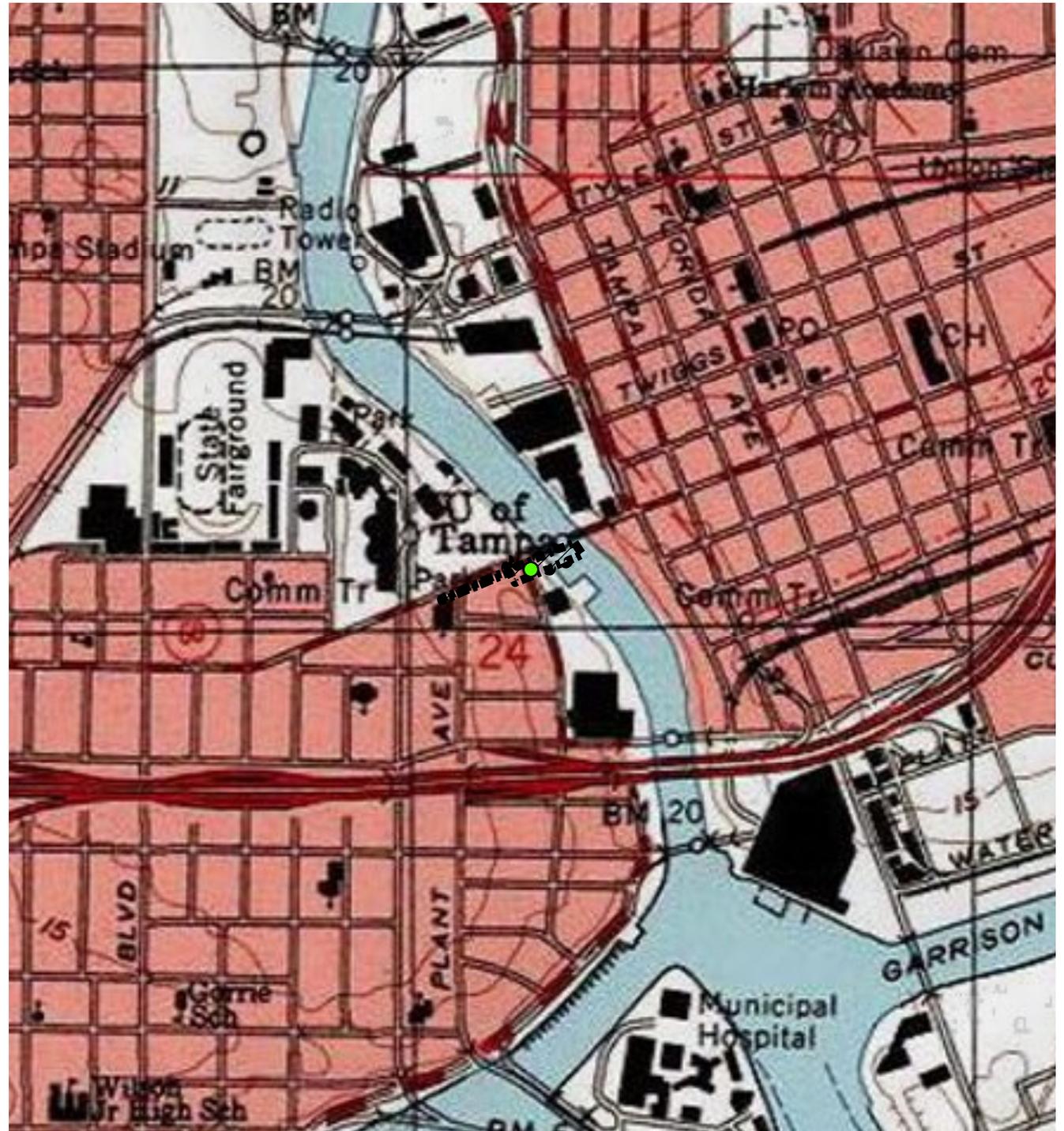
1:12,000



0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

0 125 250 500 Meters

Basemap Source: 2013 National  
Geographic Society, i-cubed



# Lafayette Street Bridge

Kennedy Boulevard and Hillsborough River

Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida

UTM:  
17R 356260 3092152

Lat/Long:  
27.946661, -82.461111

Datum: WGS84

## Legend

 LafayetteBridge

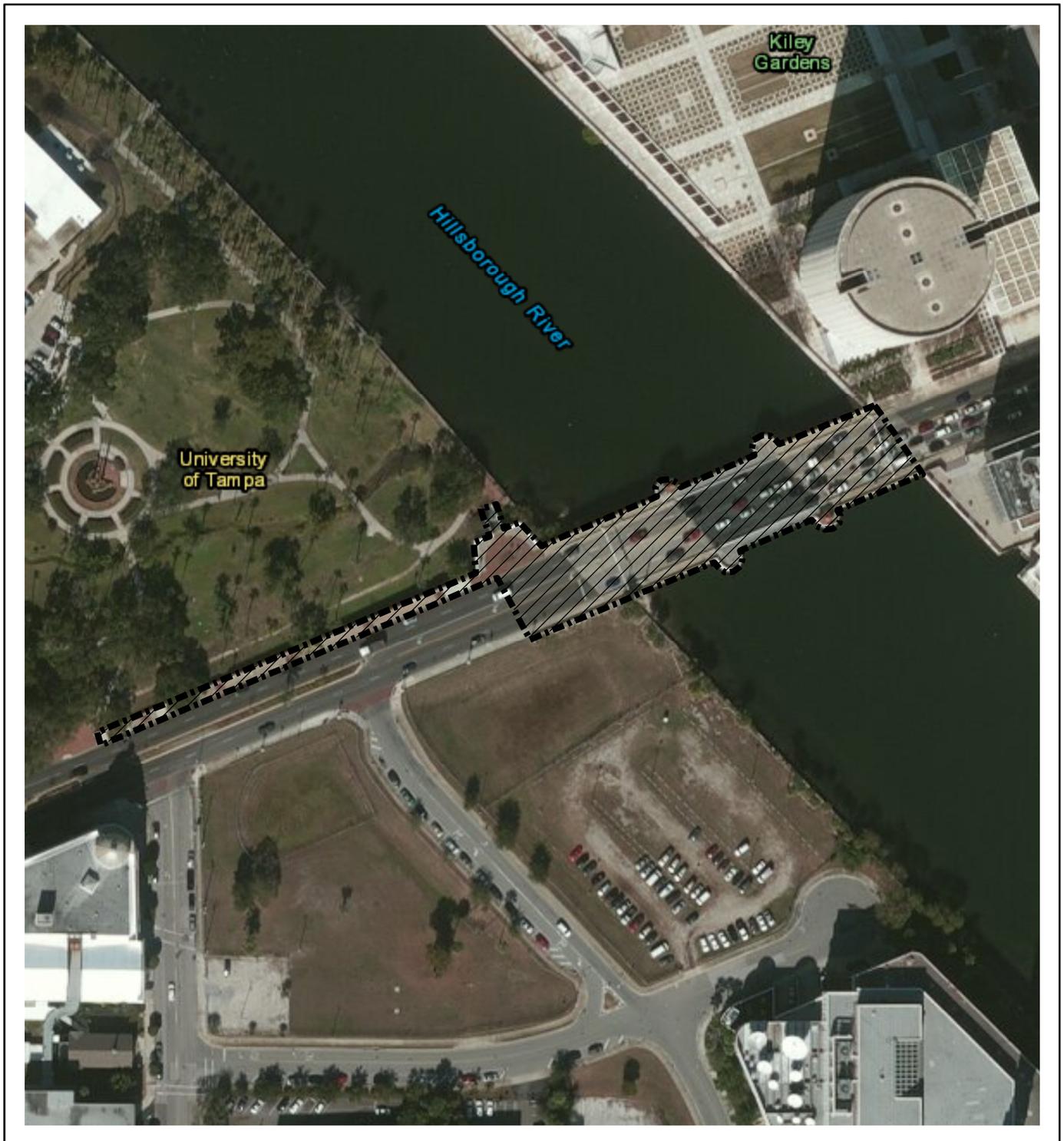
Date: 6/9/2017

1:2,000

0 80 160 320 Feet

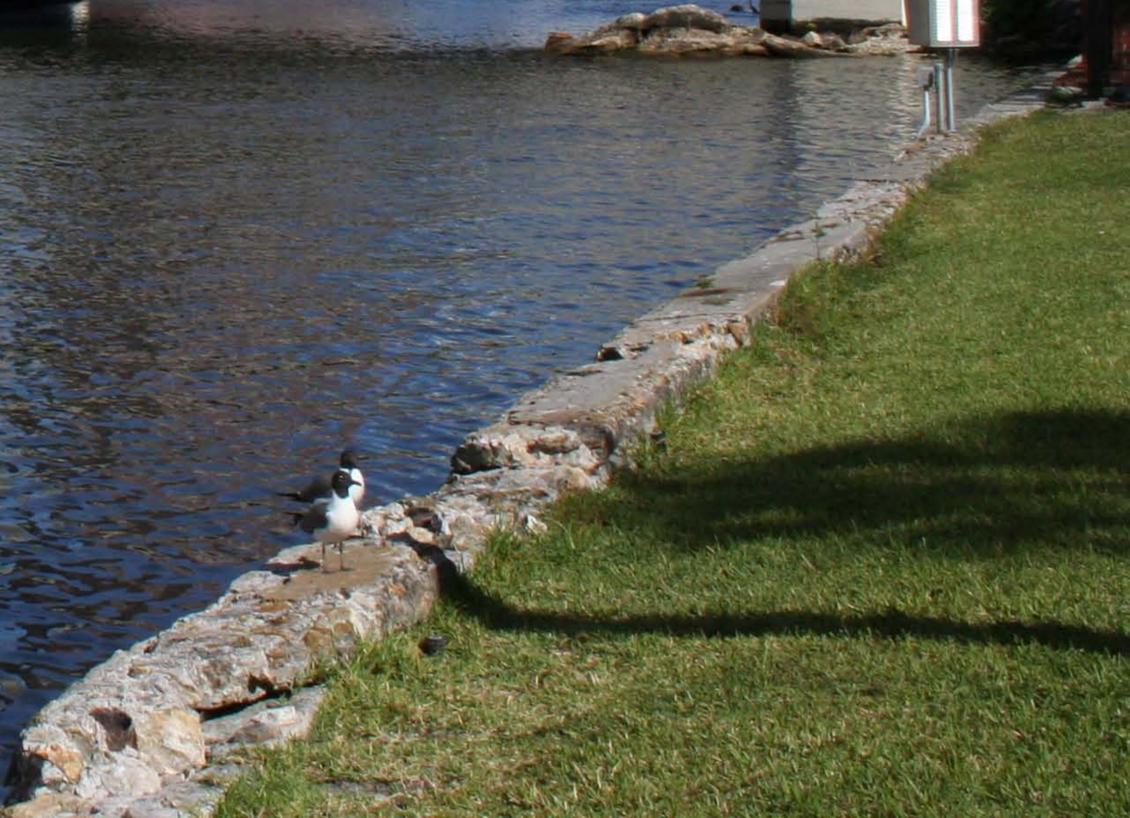
0 15 30 60 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community





aloft  
WALTON







BRIDGE OPENING  
CALL 866-335-9696  
2 HOUR NOTICE  
BY ORDER OF FDOT

CLEARANCE  
AT  
CENTER

-6

-8

-10

-12

SEE THE TO  
OF OPERATOR  
NECESSARY  
PERMIT  
CALL 866-335-9696







ERECTED 1913  
BY  
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS

D. B. MCKAY, PRESIDENT

H. C. MAC FARLENE

H. B. SNOW

T. N. HENDERSON

P. HOLTSINGER

BOLLER, HODGE, BAIRD

ENGINEERS

EDWARDS CONSTRUCTION CO., CONTRACTORS







