Historic Property Inventory Report

Location

Field Site No. CTG-1

DAHP No.

Historic Name: Mission Avenue Bridge

Common Name: Mission Avenue Bridge

Property Address: 1400 E. Mission Ave, Spokane, WA

Comments:

Tax No./Parcel No.

Plat/Block/Lot

Acreage < one

Supplemental Map(s)

Township/Range/EW	Section	1/4 Sec	1/4 1/4 Sec	County	Quadrangle
T25R43E	09			Spokane	SPOKANE NW

Coordinate Reference

Easting: 2407066

Northing: 867946

Projection: Washington State Plane South

Datum: HARN (feet)

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Identification

Survey Name: Centennial Trail Gap
Date Recorded: 06/07/2013
Field Recorder: S. Emerson
Owner's Name: City of Spokane
Owner Address: 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
City: Spokane
State: WA
Zip: 99201
Classification: Structure
Resource Status: Survey/Inventory
Comments:
Within a District? No
Contributing? No
National Register:
Local District:
National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name:
Eligibility Status: Not Determined - SHPO
Determination Date: 1/1/0001
Determination Comments:

Description

Historic Use: Transportation - Road-Related (vehicular)
Current Use: Transportation - Road-Related (vehicular)
Plan: Other
Stories: NA
Structural System: Concrete - Reinforced Concrete
Changes to Plan: Slight
Changes to Interior: Not Applicable
Changes to Original Cladding: Not Applicable
Changes to Windows: Not Applicable
Changes to Other:
Other (specify):

Style:	Cladding:	Roof Type:	Roof Material:
Vernacular	None	None	None

Foundation:	Form/Type:
Concrete - Poured	Utilitarian

Narrative

Study Unit
Transportation

Other

Date of Construction: 1909 Built Date
Builder: City of Spokane
Engineer:
Architect:

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places:Yes

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): No

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local): No

Statement of Significance:

The Mission Avenue Bridge was constructed in 1909, near the end of a decade during which the City of Spokane's population boomed, reaching 104,000 by 1910. It was also during a period often referred to as the bridge frenzy, beginning in 1907, when the city turned to concrete bridges as the way to ensure a lasting and durable transportation infrastructure. A driving force behind this effort was J.C. Ralston, a bridge engineer who sought to combine engineering excellence with artistic architectural design to construct aesthetically pleasing structures. Such activities continued into the late 1920s, leaving Spokane as truly a City of Bridges.

The Mission Avenue Bridge was preceded by an older structure at the same location. It was a three-section wood through-truss supported by timber pilings. As the old bridge was removed, the piers of the new bridge were built from temporary wood platforms. Wood false work was constructed to create the shape of the new structure. Cranes carried concrete mixed at a temporary mill to form the majestic arches. Finally the deck was built and the cantilevered walkway and balustrade were added. The metal railings of the balustrade were the first departure from the use of all-concrete balustrades on Spokane bridges.

The bridge is an excellent example concrete arch bridge construction, both in Spokane and Washington State. As such it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, under Criterion A, at the state level. It also retains outstanding integrity of its historic appearance and original construction materials and workmanship. The only detraction from perfect integrity is the removal of the original electric lamps from the balustrade and the installation of a metal rail along the top of the balustrade to increase its height in the interest of safety. The Jersey barriers that separate the pedestrian walkway from traffic are temporary measures and are not an integral part of the bridge structure. Thus, the bridge is also NRHP eligible under Criterion C, at the state level.

Description of Physical Appearance:

This structure is a poured concrete arch bridge spanning the Spokane River on E. Mission Avenue, in Spokane. It is described as a closed-spandrel concrete arch because there are no openings in the spandrel spaces between the arches. It consists of five spans, with the largest central span measuring 84 feet, for a total length of 348 feet. The bridge deck is 40 feet wide. Pedestrian walkways on either side of the bridge are supported by cantilevered concrete brackets. The bridge is anchored at each end by poured concrete abutments bolstered by rock. The balustrades consist of square-profile concrete piers, interspersed with wider rectangular-profile concrete piers, all joined by a metal railing. At a later date an additional metal rail was attached to the top of the balustrade to increase its height. The concrete walkway is separated from the asphalt road way by concrete Jersey barriers.

Major Bibliographic References:

Creighton, Jeff. Bridges of Spokane. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston. 2013.

Emerson, Stephen. Preliminary Cultural Resources Investigations for the Centennial Trail Gap Construction Project, Spokane County, Washington. Short Report 1173. Archaeological and Historical Services, Eastern Washington University, Cheney. 2013.

Photos

View to the northwest
Bridge, south side
2013

View to the northwest
Bridge, south side
2013

View to the northwest
Bridge deck and north balustrade
2013

View to the southeast
Bridge deck, west approach
2013