

## 2. Evaluation Criteria

This section addresses the criteria used for evaluating the significance of Nebraska's bridge population, from 1947 to 1965, and integrity considerations. Section 3 outlines the evaluation methodology. Eligibility recommendations in Sections 4 and 5 are based on National Register Evaluation Criteria and Integrity Considerations.

### A. Applicable National Register Criteria

National Register Criteria for Evaluation, informed by the *Historic Context for Nebraska Bridges, 1947 to 1965*, were applied to bridges in the study pool. The historic context provides historical background on Nebraska bridges and transportation and establishes the framework for bridge evaluation.

The National Register Criteria for Evaluation, established by the National Park Service, are outlined in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* and *National Register Bulletin 16: How to Complete the National Register Form*. The particular relationship of each Criterion to Nebraska's bridges is described below.

- *Criterion A: Events – Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.*

*Criterion A* recognizes bridges that have an important association with single events, a pattern of events, repeated activities, or historic trends that are significant within the context of Nebraska's transportation and bridge-building history.

- *Criterion B: Persons – Properties that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.*

*Criterion B* recognizes bridges that illustrate the important achievements of a person who was significant in Nebraska's past. Structures must be compared to other properties associated with the work of the individual to identify those that best represent a person's historic contributions. Architects, artisans, artists, fabricators, and engineers are often represented by their works, which are eligible under *Criterion C*. Therefore, the significant works of engineers or bridge-building firms are generally eligible under *Criterion C*, not *Criterion B*, and it is unlikely that bridges from the subject period are significant under *Criterion B*.

- *Criterion C: Design/Construction – Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

*Criterion C* recognizes bridges that have distinctive design or construction characteristics that demonstrate the following: (1) the pattern of features common to a particular class of resources, (2) the individuality or variation of features that occurs within the class, (3) the evolution of that class of resources, and/or (4) the transition between classes of resources. Most bridges will be evaluated under *Criterion C* because their significance involves design and construction.

- *Criterion D: Information Potential – Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history*

*Criterion D* is most often applied to archaeological properties and it is unlikely that any Nebraska bridges from the subject period would be eligible under *Criterion D*.

## **B. Integrity considerations**

A bridge's historic integrity must also be considered when determining eligibility. According to *National Register Bulletin 15*, historic integrity is "the ability of a property to convey its significance." To be listed in the National Register, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register Criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. The overall integrity of a structure, as well as its character-defining features, are considered when evaluating National Register significance. Changes to character-defining features, such as the truss system of a truss bridge, will influence the assessment of a structure's overall integrity and ability to convey its significance more than changes to non-character-defining components, such as abutments.

Within the concept of integrity, the National Register Criteria recognize seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The seven aspects of integrity, as considered for Nebraska bridges in the subject period are:

*Location – The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.*

*Design – The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.*

*Setting – The physical environment of a historic property.*

*Materials – The physical elements that were used in the original design and construction of a bridge.*

*Workmanship – The physical evidence of the crafts used in the construction of a bridge.*

*Feeling – A bridge's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.*

*Association – The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.*