

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert

Other names/site number: Wenger Creek Culvert/Bowman Run Culvert

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Lincoln Way East over Bowman Creek

City or town: South Bend State: IN County: St. Joseph

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☒

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☐

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☒

Public – Federal

☐

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☒

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

0

Noncontributing

0

buildings

0

0

sites

1

0

structures

0

0

objects

1

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Filled Spandrel Stone Arch Bridge

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: limestone

walls: STONE: sandstone

STONE: limestone

roof: N/A

other: Asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert has been known by other names since it was first constructed in 1895. The culvert functions as a comparatively large quarried, cut stone arch bridge that carries Lincoln Way East over Bowman Creek on South Bend's east side. The stone is a variegated sandstone with buff and pinkish hues and is called "Killbuck Stone" for the quarries in Killbuck Township, Holmes County, Ohio from where it originated. The bridge measures sixty-six feet wide plus stepped retaining walls, twenty-six feet long, and rises over twenty feet from the creek bed. The arch itself measures approximately ten feet tall and sixteen feet wide.

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Narrative Description

Nomenclature

The name “Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert” is a combination of both descriptive and historic terms used since the structure was constructed in 1895. Bowman Creek was, at that time, also called Wenger Creek for the Wenger farm through which it flowed in this location. The term “culvert” was also used when it was constructed in 1895, typically in combination with Wenger, so often “Wenger Culvert” is used in newspaper accounts of its construction. The name Bowman was also associated with the creek from farms further south and became more commonly used in the early 20th century. The term “culvert” is somewhat of a misnomer given the scale of the structure. It is, for all intents and purposes, a stone arch bridge that spans the creek to carry Lincoln Way East, or Vistula Road as it was known when it was constructed in 1895.

Setting

Bowman Creek flows through South Bend’s southeast side and empties into the St. Joseph River on its south bank approximately two hundred feet north of the culvert. The creekbank is heavily wooded in this area preventing good views of the overall scale of the structure (photos 02, 07). Only the side walls, or railings, that rise above grade are noticeable to passersby (photos 01, 06). In this area, Lincoln Way East is mostly lined with small commercial buildings. This area is bordered by the river on the north, the Grand Trunk Railroad Bridge-Lincoln Way Overpass (seen on the right side of photo 07) on the east, and Sample Street on the west. Sample Street has an intersection with Lincoln Way East before it crosses the St. Joseph River. This section of Lincoln Way East is approximately six hundred feet long with the culvert near the middle of it.

Structure

The Bowman culvert carries the asphalt roadbed of Lincoln Way East, flanked by concrete sidewalks, which combined is a width of sixty feet (photo 07). The culvert’s stone side walls that form railings are twenty-six feet long and approximately two feet wide. The side walls are composed of buff/pinkish quarried, cut blocks of “Killbuck” sandstone, two courses high (photos 01, 06). The end blocks have chiseled or dressed corners to give the appearance of rusticated panel-faced block (best seen in photo 02). The walls have buff-colored stone caps, pitched to the center, for an overall height of thirty inches. Taller, buff-colored stone blocks, with low-pitched pyramidal tops, terminate each end of the wall. Through stippled chiseling and age, these end caps also have a more rusticated finish on their face (photo 08). These caps are two-feet square. While the north wall is entirely intact, the south wall is missing two sections of its stone cap and also has a modern steel guardrail fastened to its east end (south side of the wall, photo 06). The mortar joints are fairly tight but largely deteriorated. The walls sit on the outside edge of a wide stone base, at grade, that caps the arch underneath and likely functioned as a curb before road grade was raised. This is exposed on the south wall but covered by the sidewalk poured right to the inside face of the north wall (photo 02).

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The portal/arch walls of the barrel-vaulted structure (north and south walls) are composed of ten courses of rusticated stone, plus two courses that compose the side walls, to give an overall height of approximately twenty-two feet to the sandy creek bed below. The full-round arch is approximately ten feet tall and sixteen feet wide with rusticated voussoirs that form the arch (photo 03). The voussoirs are cut with flat tops, stepped down from three middle stones that combine to compose a keystone at the center. Rusticated stones form the whole arch structure, between the portal arches.

The bridge features wing retaining walls, approximately thirty-five feet long, extending from each corner of the arch (photos 05, 08). The retaining walls are stepped and composed of ten courses of rusticated stone. Each course of stone is capped by a wider stone with dressed corners to give a rusticated panel-face design (photos 03, 04). Both the retaining walls and portal walls of the bridge feature large, chiseled holes in most of the stones to allow for a crane and steel lewis system of lifting the stones into place (photo 03). There also appear to be mason's marks in the capstones of the southwest wing wall (see photo 04), and potentially in other walls.

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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.)

- ☐ 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENGINEERING

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1895-1975

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Kissner, John N.

Meighan, John F.

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins when the bridge was constructed in 1895 and concludes in 1975, the fifty-year cut-off for eligibility. Unlike many routes that receive decreased significance due to bypass construction, the Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert continues to carry the most important thoroughfare between St. Joseph County's largest commercial centers, South Bend and Mishawaka. The year 1913 is noted as an important date since it was in that year the road was designated part of the Lincoln Highway system across the United States.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A/transportation. The bridge was built as part of St. Joseph County's bridge infrastructure by the county board of commissioners in 1895 to improve the important connection between the county's largest cities, South Bend and Mishawaka. Officials planned for the bridge to carry an electric trolley line connecting South Bend and Mishawaka, which it did. The need to accommodate the additional weight explains the extremely robust nature of the bridge. The bridge is also eligible under criterion C/engineering for its full-round arch construction composed of large, quarried, cut stone. It appears to be one of the oldest extant vehicular bridges in the county.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION

Early stone bridge construction was carried out by masons using regionally available materials during the early to-mid 19th century. This was prior to the broader movement and availability of stone cut from quarries, like sandstone quarries in Ohio and limestone quarries in Indiana, that was carried by railroads. Even after Bedford limestone became widely available, officials in some Indiana counties persisted in selecting locally quarried stone for stone arch bridges. For bridges in northern Indiana, where local quarries did not exist, fieldstone was used to a limited degree for abutments supporting wood or steel structures. With the arrival of railroads, more robust stone bridge building occurred through the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century, but not in any great number in northern Indiana, except, to no surprise, those bridge projects carried out by railroads. Concrete quickly replaced stone for bridge construction by the first decade of the 20th century because it more easily conformed to site conditions, spans, and was easier to form in place.

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Roman arch design and construction of bridges was based off the erection of full-centered or semicircular arches in which the line of pressure passes through the center of each stone in the arch ring until carried vertically into the substructure. However, in concrete construction, individual masonry units were unnecessary since form-poured concrete creates a monolithic mass. As steel reinforcement was introduced in concrete construction, greater spans could be achieved.

When the Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert was built in 1895, it was a product of bridge engineering toward the end of the popular use of stone construction and near the early experimentation of concrete construction. By the first decade of the 20th century, most bridge building engaged the use of concrete for either abutments for steel bridges, or for abutments and the arch structure itself.

The Bowman stone structure provided for both engineering and elegance in its construction. The full-round arch, which measures sixteen feet wide and approximately ten feet tall, features an arch composed of voussoirs cut flat at the top to give the archway some prominence (photo 03). The archway steps up to the center to three stones that collectively form a keystone. The portal is the front of a true masonry barrel vault that carries the roadbed above it. The carefully dressed masonry units of the bridge give the structure a measure of distinction. The sidewalls of the bridge, and capstones, feature hand chiseling on the outside corners to provide a rusticated panel-face appearance (photo 01). Hand chiseled stippling is apparent in the side faces of the capstones (photo 08). While the portal sides of the bridge are rarely seen today from passersby, it seems clear that the St. Joseph County Commissioners wanted a structure to convey something more than just a utilitarian culvert when it was commissioned in 1895. This may have been in part to its prominent function as an entry into South Bend from the east, the trolley line that was proposed to pass over it, and, at least by 1917, Kreighbaum Park was located just upstream in view of the structure.

Vistula Road, which became Lincoln Way East in 1913, was an important route between South Bend and Mishawaka and further east to Elkhart that generally followed the south bank of the Saint Joseph River. The route followed an old "Indian trail" as it meandered along the south bank of the river. It was surveyed about 1830, making it one of the oldest routes in St. Joseph County, though these early survey records were lost. It was surveyed again in 1873 as the city began to expand to the east along the upper part of Vistula, nearer the city center.¹ The Bowman Creek, then referred to as Wenger Creek, created a fairly large ravine as the creek emptied into the St. Joseph River from its south bank, approximately two hundred feet away from the current structure. At least earlier on, travelers on Vistula Road probably crossed further upstream where the ravine would be shallower. However, by 1863, the road appears to cross the creek in about its current location.

In 1830, or shortly after, the creek was dammed in this area by Samuel Studybaker (correct spelling; distant relative of the Studebaker family) for the purpose of waterpower for a sawmill.

¹ "Track Still Goes On" *South Bend Tribune*, 9 Sept 1895. Pg. 5. Col. 2

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Studybaker was the original owner of a 150-acre farm that was bordered by Miami Street (then called Turkey Creek Road) on the east, Sample Street on the north, and the river in its northeast corner. M. L. Wenger purchased the farm after Studybaker's death and owned the property during construction of the culvert in 1895. A newspaper article notified residents that a piece of early South Bend history had been excavated during construction of the culvert when workmen found the foundation and timbers of the old Studybaker dam. The pieces "were found to be none the worse for their long period of interment in sand and water (and) were in as good condition as when placed there by the pioneer 65 years ago."² The 1863 map of St. Joseph County shows the 150-acre tract owned by Wenger with large farm parcels to the south and southwest (owned by D. Bowman and J. L. Bowman, between which is H. Studebaker).³ The creek flowed through these parcels and it appears to have had a bridge at this location by this time.

Prior to 1855, most bridges in Indiana were either privately built by landowners or were constructed by private companies who may have required the payment of tolls. The state legislature authorized county governments to construct or financially assist with the construction of bridges in 1855. By 1870, county governments had the sole responsibility for constructing bridges, which is essentially still in place today. Crossing waterways up to this point was done either by way of fords or ferries. Eventually, open wood structures were built, then later, wooden spans were built on stone abutments. Stone arch bridges were being introduced at the same time.

By 1893, the St. Joseph County Commissioners were being criticized for the condition of the "Wenger Bridge" on Vistula Avenue. The South Bend city engineer and building commissioner deemed the bridge to be unsafe for travel and that repairs would be more costly than replacement. Since 1892, the commissioners had been promising to replace the structure but committed not to replace it for another eighteen months from June of 1893. In 1892, they had instructed civil engineer, John F. Meighan, to prepare plans for a stone arch culvert to replace the old wooden bridge. The replacement was estimated at \$10,000 for either a stone arch or steel bridge on stone abutments. It was anticipated that the bridge would be closed for use despite an outcry by people in both South Bend and Mishawaka. It was also the route many farmers used into South Bend. It was called "one of the most important crossings in or about the city."⁴ The city of South Bend, in conjunction with the county, repaired the bridge in August 1893. State law required that any bridge built within the corporate limits of a city, costing more than \$500 (in 1893) would be fully born by the county.⁵

An announcement in 1894 provided even more incentive to provide a more adequate bridge over Wenger Creek. The General Power & Quick Transit Company incorporated on April 3, 1894, with the express purpose of building an electric streetcar line between South Bend and Mishawaka, using Vistula Road on the south side of the St. Joseph River and on Mishawaka Avenue on the north side of the river. The project called for "independent bridges...erected at Bowman's (Wenger) Creek, Springbrook, and Lang's glen."⁶ It was expected that with the

² "Vistula Avenue Culvert" *South Bend Tribune*. 25 April 1895. Pg. 4. Col. 4

³ Map of St. Joseph County (IN). M. W. Stokes. Printed by Chas. Shober, Philadelphia: 1863.

⁴ "Wenger Bridge Repaired" *South Bend Tribune*. 23 Aug 1893. Pg. 8. Col. 3

⁵ "The Wenger Bridge" *South Bend Tribune*. 21 June 1893. Pg. 4 Cols. 1-2

⁶ "A South Side Line" *South Bend Tribune*. 4 April 1894. Pg. 4. Col. 2

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construction of the trolley line, the river would become a more desirable location for residences. The road enjoyed prominence as a main route into the city and it soon began to be lined with middle-class houses from the mid-1890s into the early decades of the 20th century.

The county commissioners followed through with plans to construct a new bridge over Wenger Creek in 1895. The stone culvert designed by Meighan, sixty-six feet wide and arch sixteen feet in diameter with wing walls, was placed out for bid by the commissioners. In order for the retaining wing walls to be constructed, each about thirty-five feet long, South Bend Mayor Schafer entered a contract with M. L. Wenger for use of his land. The general design was to follow the design created for the crossing of the Lake Shore Railroad further upstream on the creek. Specifications included cut stone with native fieldstone to form the arch (which did not appear to occur). The general grade along Vistula was to be lowered east of the bridge and raised at the bridge and the overall cost was anticipated to be \$12,000.⁷ On March 14, 1895, the St. Joseph County Commissioners accepted and opened twelve bids for the project. It was awarded to the lowest bidder, John N. Kissner (sometimes spelled Kessner) of Warsaw, Ohio. The overall cost was anticipated to be \$10,000. Kissner provided a quote to use Beria stone at 75 cents a cubic yard or Killbuck stone at 65 cents a cubic yard. The commissioners selected Killbuck stone. This is a product that was quarried in Killbuck Township, Holmes County, Ohio. Kissner no doubt had experience using the stone and was from adjacent Coshocton County, Ohio. It was anticipated that the project would be done by the middle of August.⁸

Initially, it was thought that the old wood bridge could be relocated to another crossing upstream, at the Midway Street crossing, but ultimately it was deemed unusable. The city of South Bend participated in the project by underwriting the cost of cutting and filling of grade leading up to the structure. Work began by Kissner by mid-April 1895 and included a “large force of men employed in putting in the foundation and stone for the culvert is arriving (by rail) daily.”⁹ A newspaper article on June 7, 1895, provides some insight into how the bridge was constructed. It states that a new steam engine was placed on the south side (of the bridge) to “help along the slow method of lifting the large stone by horsepower. An engine on each side of the culvert will make the work go much faster.”¹⁰ The county commissioners encouraged the public to go view the construction project described as “the best improvement in the bridge line ever made in the county.”¹¹ By mid-July, it was reported that the stonework was completed on the bridge with only minor tuckpointing required.¹²

By the end of July 1895, the stone structure was complete and only grading needed to be completed. The city of South Bend paid half, and the other half was paid by property owners along the stretch of Vistula that needed to be graded to serve the structure. Daniel Billington was the contractor charged with completing grading. The physical appearance of the bridge and newly graded street provided “indications that residents of Vistula Avenue will have one of the

⁷ “Wenger Creek Bridge” *South Bend Tribune*. 08 Feb 1895. Pg. 4. Col. 2

⁸ “Contract Awarded” *South Bend Tribune*. 15 March 1895. Pg. 8. Col. 3

⁹ “Wenger Bridge Improvement” *South Bend Tribune*. 19 April 1895. Pg. 5. Col. 4

¹⁰ “The Vistula Avenue Culvert” *South Bend Tribune*. 7 June 1895. Pg. 4. Col. 2

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Meetings & Announcements. *South Bend Tribune*. 16 July 1895. Pg. 8. Col. 2

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prettiest streets in the city when the work is completed.”¹³ Sentiment about the work on the culvert and grading along Vistula remained positive through 1895, as tracks were being laid for the streetcar line and the broad, level roadbed offered beautiful views of the St. Joseph River by those using the road and for houses being constructed on the south side of Vistula.¹⁴ Construction of a brick sewer along Vistula Avenue was part of the overall infrastructure plan, while track for the streetcar line continued to be laid into the fall of 1895. The route was projected to be a charming ride from South Bend to Mishawaka with the river on one side and valleys and hills on the other which could not “be excelled for picturesque anywhere.”¹⁵

A newspaper article the following spring shows how the bridge became a focal point in the neighborhood. Entitled “Love on the Wenger Culvert” the article states that “as the evening hours grow longer the gathering of lovers on the big stone culvert that spans Wenger Creek on Vistula Avenue increases in numbers, and when trolley car motormen turn their search lights on the groups various stages of love making can be seen by the passengers.”¹⁶

The construction of the bridge came at a time when the county commissioners were considering construction of a new county courthouse in South Bend. Advocates for using local fieldstone granite, based on projects undertaken by the Studebakers and Olivers, were making their case in newspaper articles. One such article provides an insight into freight costs for shipping Killbuck stone from Ohio to South Bend on the railroad. The stone used for the Wenger culvert was described as “foreign stone” which cost \$3200 for it to be shipped by rail. It was then estimated that using stone from outside the county could cost as much as \$48,000 to ship, and that local farmers should be paid for removing stone and local stonecutters used to build the courthouse.¹⁷

Ultimately, the courthouse was not constructed of local fieldstone granite. However, the county commissioners continued the use of stone for smaller culverts crossing Wenger/Bowman Creek when they awarded a contract to M. H. Garwood for a structure at Midway Street (now Indiana Avenue) and roads in Madison Township.¹⁸ It appears that Garwood had constructed a number of these smaller structures in the county during the mid-1890s. The structure on Indiana Avenue over Bowman Creek is extant and while smaller, has similar side walls with caps, indicating the same design by Meighan. The Bowman Creek crossing at Dubail Street is a c. 1920 concrete bridge. Only the south side of the Broadway Street crossing is visible; it is also a c. 1920 concrete balustrade on the southwest corner of Broadway and Dale Streets. Large portions of the creek are covered and underground between Broadway and the railroad tracks to the north.

Between 1910-1912, because of consistent flooding along Bowman/Wenger Creek, plans for installing a massive concrete sewer line in the creek bed was contemplated.¹⁹ Due to its enclosed

¹³ “The Wenger Culvert Fill” *South Bend Tribune*. 01 Aug 1895. Pg. 5. Col. 3

¹⁴ “Making a Fine Road” *South Bend Tribune*. 20 Aug 1895. Pg. 5. Cols. 1-2

¹⁵ “Track Still Goes On” *South Bend Tribune*. 9 Sept 1895. Pg. 5. Cols. 2-3

¹⁶ “Love on the Wenger Culvert” *South Bend Tribune*. 01 May 1896. Pg. 4. Col. 4

¹⁷ “Who Pays the Freight?” *South Bend Tribune*. 19 July 1895. Pg. 4. Cols. 1-2

¹⁸ “Culvert Contracts Awarded” *South Bend Tribune*. 24 Sept 1895. Pg. 5. Col. 4

¹⁹ “Sewer Resolution Passed” *South Bend Tribune*. 29 Dec 1911. Pg. 5. Col. 7

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nature in much of the city today, it is evident that much of this was undertaken except in a few areas, such as the Lincolnway East and Indiana Avenue crossings.

In 1913, Vistula Road became part of the network of routes strung together and designated the Lincoln Highway. Not only was this an important development for the city of South Bend connecting it to the entire country, but housing and commercial growth also continued to expand along the former pioneer route. From that time to now, the route has been known as Lincoln Way East (see Developmental History).

In 1928, the state created a more direct route for the Lincoln Highway between Fort Wayne and Valparaiso. This southern alignment became U. S. Highway 30, however, the old alignment continued to serve its purpose of connecting major cities across north-central Indiana. Lincoln Way was adopted as part of Indiana's original highway transportation network in 1919 and carried the designation of Highway 2. By the 1930s, it was designated Highway 33 and U. S. Highway 20 was routed on the north side of the river between South Bend and Elkhart. Construction of the U. S. 20 Bypass around the south side of South Bend and Mishawaka to Elkhart, which opened in 1998, provided a route around the cities entirely. In more modern times, Lincoln Way East was designated State Route 933. Despite the bypass, the old Vistula-Lincoln Way route remains the most important link between the downtown commercial centers of St. Joseph County's largest cities, South Bend and Mishawaka.

John F. Meighan (1846-1924), who designed the Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert, was an accomplished civil engineer well before he became assistant city engineer in South Bend in 1888. He had previously worked in Cincinnati, where he was born, and Mexico, before being elected county surveyor in Carroll County, Indiana. He was appointed city engineer in 1900 by Mayor Schuyler Colfax. Some of the largest projects he was involved in were electric power plant dams known as the Hen Island Dam east of Mishawaka, and Berrien Springs (Michigan) Dam.²⁰ John N. Kissner (1855-1911), who constructed the culvert in 1895, was an accomplished civil works contractor from Warsaw, Ohio who transitioned from building stone bridges to concrete bridges in the early 1900s.²¹ Some of Kissner's early work was in railroad construction in Ohio, as well as gas well drilling. By 1907-1909, Kissner was doing dam and canal work outside Coshocton, including construction of a massive six-mile dam for the state of Ohio.²²

Historic bridges in St. Joseph County mostly fall in the era of concrete bridge construction, beginning in the 1910s. These are large spans, particularly those crossing the St. Joseph River, and small spans alike, such as those smaller structures that cross Bowman Creek upstream from the stone culvert. Aside from these and a few railroad structures of similar composition of concrete or concrete abutments and steel trusses, few bridges of the same age or material composition of the Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert remain in South Bend or St. Joseph County. One significant exception, age-wise, is the Darden Road Bridge (former Water Street) over the St. Joseph River. The steel Pratt through truss was built in 1884-1885 by P. E. Lane of

²⁰ "John F. Meighan Called by Death" *South Bend Tribune*. 22 April 1924. Pg. 1. Col. 2

²¹ "John Kissner Enters Reward" *Coshocton (OH) Morning Tribune*. 16 Nov 1911. Pg. 1. Cols. 3-4

²² "Big New Six Mile Dam Will Be Ready for Use Saturday" *Coshocton Daily Times*. 30 Oct 1908. Pg. 1. Cols. 6-7

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Chicago. A few other WPA-era stone bridges were constructed for pedestrians or light vehicular traffic in city parks during the 1930s. This lack of comparables to the culvert raises the structure's level of significance in the city and county.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

The Lincoln Highway

The Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert served as part of the infrastructure for the nationally significant development of the Lincoln Highway when Vistula Avenue was designated as part of the route in 1913. A National Park Service study of the route identified approximately seventy road-related resources during their reconnaissance period of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana. This include the Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert, identified as the Bowman Run Culvert in the survey.

The Lincoln Highway was the nation's first established coast-to-coast highway, providing travelers a route from New York to California through Northern Indiana. The road, established in 1913, began in New York's Times Square and terminated at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. The highway played an important role in the development of the automobile's influence on the way of life in 20th Century America²³ representing a shift from railroad dominated travel to automobile use.

The highway's origins are decidedly Hoosier. Indiana native Carl Fisher originated the idea and lead the charge to establish a good road across the nation. Fisher was the founder of Prest-O-Lite Company, manufacturers of automobile headlights. Calling a meeting of other automobile related industrialists, Fisher proposed his idea at the German Club in Indianapolis. With their help, and particularly that of Henry Joy, of Packard Motor Co. and Frank Seiberling of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., Fisher formed the Lincoln Highway Association. The association's chief goal was to build a continuous improved road across the country. Fisher first had the idea to name the road the Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway, but Henry Joy convinced him to name it in honor of President Abraham Lincoln.

On the day the LHA was formed in 1913, Carl Fisher led an entourage out of Indianapolis to find a suitable route to the Pacific Coast. The event was sponsored by the Indiana Automobile Association and the Hoosier Motor Club. Fisher made it clear that the route was not necessarily intended to be the path ultimately selected, but that did not stop the states, cities and towns along the way from investing resources to try to procure the route through their jurisdictions. Existing routes were used as much as possible across the country. The 1916 Lincoln Highway guide stated that the route followed the path of the nation as it progressed westward, and the highway's course held closely to the old trails of the east and in the west by early settlers.

Establishing the route of the highway was mixed with factors such as population centers, grade and land formations, and by influence of politicians. The original route touched these important

²³ US Dept. of the Interior, *Lincoln Highway Special Resource Study*

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population centers and by an account in the Lincoln Highway guide of 1916, the highway connected 60% of the nation's population and 67% of registered vehicles. These factors played a role in Indiana where it was formally announced that the highway would pass through Fort Wayne, Ligonier, Goshen, Elkhart, South Bend, LaPorte and Valparaiso. However, a unique situation developed whereby the desire for a southern and shorter alignment took precedence by 1927; new construction led the highway's route through smaller communities of Columbia City, Warsaw, and Plymouth. The Lincoln Highway retained its identity despite being designated as U.S. 30 in 1926 for thirty more years, until the Federal Aid to Highway Act was passed, bringing about the interstate system. At that time the name recognition declined.²⁴

When the Lincoln Highway was dedicated, Carl Fisher called for a nation-wide celebration to occur on October 31, 1913, a legal holiday at that time. Fisher asked clergy to reference the virtues of the martyred president, Abraham Lincoln, in their sermons on November 2. Indiana farmers, in keeping with Halloween, set jack-o-lanterns on fence posts lining the newly dedicated highway for miles. Carl Fisher proclaimed it appeared like a continuous bonfire and celebration. One of the best media promotional events occurred with a film developed about the highway in 1915. Cities along the route, anxious for good publicity, demonstrated their best. Vice President Thomas Marshall, a native of Columbia City, Indiana, spoke at a key banquet and celebration of the route in Fort Wayne for the film. In his speech, he lauded the concept and success of the highway.

Aiding the tourist with information

The Lincoln Highway Association, after they made the route selection in 1913, struggled with how to direct motorists on the road and how to provide them with critical information needed for travel. The LHA procured the renaming of streets to Lincoln Highway, Lincoln Way or Lincolnway in several cities, including most of the route's segments in Indiana. Other initiatives resulted in an infrastructure of consuls, control signs and stations, highway guides, and route markers.

Control stations and control signs were erected by 1918 to help motorists understand the distance of travel between cities and towns. Motorists could reset their odometer to the sign and gage it by the information provided in the highway guides produced by the LHA. The stations or signs were located at important intersections or landmarks. Frequently, control stations were located at community post offices if they were located on the route. In Elkhart County, Indiana, the control station was located at the county courthouse in Goshen. In smaller communities, control signs served much the same purpose and were painted in red, white, and blue and were often posted in front of hotels and garages that were featured in the highway guides.

An important network of volunteers kept the LHA informed of road conditions and became local advocates for the highway and road improvements. These individuals were called "consuls" and were frequently leaders or merchants in the Lincoln Highway communities. There were three

²⁴ Ibid

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levels to the consul structure: state consul, county consul, and local consuls in individual communities. The state consuls were appointed by the LHA, and the state consuls in turn appointed the county and local consuls. The consul's responsibility included a designated time to call into the LHA office with information each week, and mold public sentiment on the importance of good roads and specifically the Lincoln Highway. Tourists were encouraged to call upon the consuls in the communities they passed through, and the consuls names were listed in the highway guides.

With the establishment of the Lincoln Highway Association in 1913, proponents seeking to have the highway designated through their communities made arguments in their favor based on population bases and already established good roads. This was the case in 1913 as the Lincoln Highway followed an already established early road between Fort Wayne and South Bend, then from South Bend to Valparaiso. This northern route was not a direct route across the state but offered the inclusion of large population bases in Goshen, Mishawaka, South Bend, and LaPorte, utilizing existing, established routes such as Vistula Road between South Bend and Elkhart, following the south side of the St. Joseph River. An old Native American and pioneer trail known as the Sauk Trail provided the path between Dyer and New Carlisle and a trade route between Fort Wayne and Goshen was used for the east half of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana.

This early route through Indiana spurred the development of buildings and road structures such as bridges and provided for a continuous flow of travelers through the designated downtowns. Like other Lincoln Highway towns, commercial growth in South Bend was directly influenced by the national route. Early automobile garages and service stations, magnificent hotels and road bridges were constructed during this first decade of the road's history. The commercial nature of the route remained strong even after the Lincoln Highway designation was routed further south. This is evidenced in the narrow area of commercial development near Bowman Creek that, since 1917, included gas stations and restaurants at the intersections of Lincoln Way East and Sample Street, near Bowman Creek, and Miami Street where one extant station remains.

South Bend-Mishawaka featured in Lincoln Highway Guides

With regard to understanding the Lincoln Highway during the era of its early origins, review of the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA)'s official "Lincoln Highway Guides" is important. The national association developed and printed guidebooks in 1915, 1916, 1918, 1921 and 1924. The guides, largely funded through the sale of advertisements for auto and tourist-related services, featured everything from the cost of the trip, mileage, equipment to take for touring, as well as lists of provisions. The guides provided road conditions, the names of "consuls" that could be contacted in most communities for support, maps, and control stations to aid tourists in understanding their location.

The 1916 guide indicated that Indiana was rapidly hard surfacing the Lincoln Highway with concrete as specified by the LHA. Five of eight counties the road passes through had spent \$871,000 in road improvements with 70 miles hard surfaced, some being brick, and others covered with native gravel and macadam. The most improved section was between Fort Wayne

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and South Bend. Each town along the route gained entry into the guidebook and it included its altitude, population, road condition, and the types of services available. Always listed first were the number of hotels and garages, generic for service and gasoline.

The following information is from the Indiana section of the Lincoln Highway in the 1916 guidebook concerning Mishawaka and South Bend:

Mishawaka: one hotel, one garage

South Bend: five hotels, ten garages. Extensive road improvements were made in 1915. The county consul was W. L. Kizer and touring information was available at the Oliver Hotel. The Oliver Hotel also had an advertisement announcing 250 rooms on the Lincoln Highway and they catered especially to auto parties with a convenient garage facility.

The 1918 Lincoln Highway Guide followed the same format as the 1916 guide, however, additional information like control stations, signs, and some tourist information was listed. As in the 1916 guide, the LHA's history and mission were described as well as a brief history of the communities the highway passed through. The number of garages and hotels both increased; the exact number of garages listed was eliminated in favor of "garages" in communities with multiple facilities. The following information is taken from the 1918 guide concerning Mishawaka and South Bend:

Mishawaka: one hotel, garages; highway was improved in 1917. The local consul was M. L. Williams and a control station was located at the post office.

South Bend: five hotels, garages; highway improvements were made in 1917 (concrete) and a control sign was located at the Oliver Hotel. Touring information was also available at the hotel, which had an advertisement in the guide.

An advertiser in the guide for the area was the Indiana Automobile Sales Company. It featured storage for fifty cars and was open all night. The proprietors offered car washing at night. Another advertiser was the 20th Century Garage that stated tourists received special attention and that it was the largest garage in the city (South Bend).

The highway had permanent improvements made in Fort Wayne, Ligonier, Goshen, Elkhart and South Bend in the previous years. The highway in the west part of the state had been largely covered with macadam, however, between 1918 and 1919 the state had planned to bring the highway up to perfect condition. Indiana had adopted a state highway commission due to the requirements of the Bankhead-Shackleford Act of 1917, to receive federal dollars for road improvements. The state was described as richly agricultural and that it offered pleasing scenic attractions.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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"Wenger Creek Bridge" *South Bend Tribune*. 08 Feb 1895. Pg. 4. Col. 2

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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 # _____

_____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_____ State Historic Preservation Office

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☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 563550	Northing: 4612827
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The north and south boundaries are lines parallel to and thirty feet north and south of the sides of the bridge and extend along the right-of-way for Lincoln Way East which is approximately 66 feet wide. Similarly, the east and west boundaries are lines parallel to and thirty feet east and west of the edge of the approaches. Nothing in this boundary description should be construed as intent to include adjacent private property.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

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The boundary described includes the outer extents of the bridge, its approaches, wing walls, and all parts of the bridge, and the portion of Lincoln Way East alignment that features approaches to the bridge.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: South Bend Historic Preservation Commission
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: August 8, 2024

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Bowman Creek Stone Arch Bridge
City or Vicinity: South Bend
County: St. Joseph State: Indiana

Bowman Creek Stone Arch Culvert

Name of Property

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Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: July 8, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at bridge's south side wall from Lincoln Way East

1 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at bridge's south side wall from Lincoln Way East

2 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at bridge's south portal wall

3 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at bridge's southwest retaining wall

4 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at bridge's southwest retaining wall

5 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at bridge's north side wall from Lincoln Way East

6 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at bridge's north side wall from Lincoln Way East

7 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at bridge's northwest retaining wall

8 of 8.

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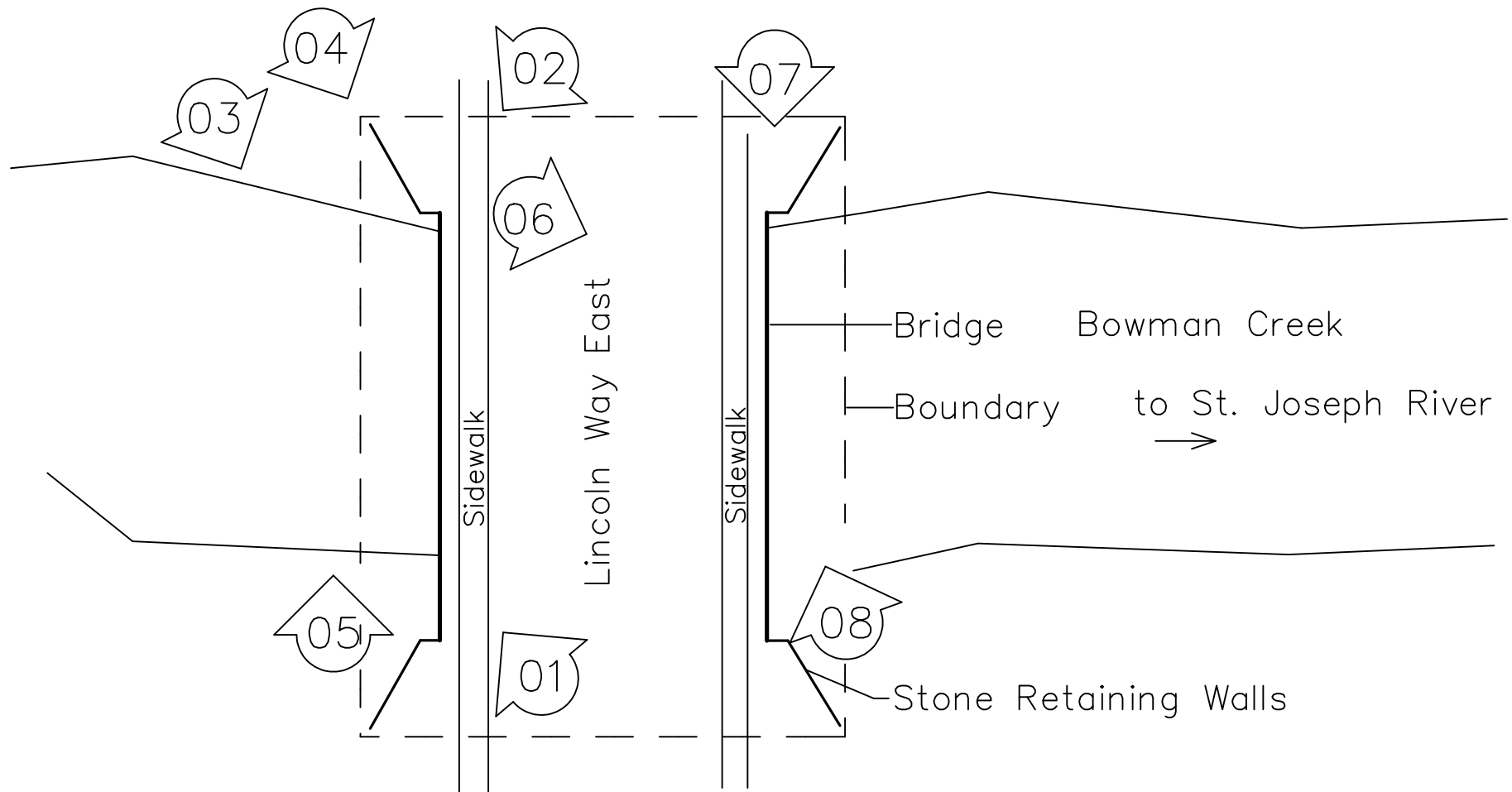
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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National Register of Historic Places Sketch Map

South Bend — St. Joseph County — IN



IN_SaintJosephCounty_BowmanCreekStoneArchCulvert_0001



IN_SaintJosephCounty_BowmanCreekStoneArchCulvert_0003



IN_SaintJosephCounty_BowmanCreekStoneArchCulvert_0004



IN_SaintJosephCounty_BowmanCreekStoneArchCulvert_0006



IN_SaintJosephCounty_BowmanCreekStoneArchCulvert_0008