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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

| historic name       | Hastings Subway  |
| other name/site number | Hastings Underpass; NEHBS Number AD04-716 |

2. Location

| street & number                  | BNRR over Routes 281 / 34 and Burlington Avenue |
| city, town                       | Hastings                                       |
| state                           | NE                                             |
| county                          | Adams                                          |
| code                            | 001                                            |
| zip code                        | 68901                                          |

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Burlington Northern Railroad
Category of Property: structure
Number of Resources within Property:
- Contributing: 0 buildings
- Contributing: 0 sites
- Contributing: 0 structures
- Contributing: 0 objects
- Contributing: 1 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0
Name of related multiple property listing: Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870-1942

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination X 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 X does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
--- entered in the National Register
--- see continuation sheet
--- determined eligible for the National Register
--- see continuation sheet
--- determined not eligible for the National Register
--- removed from the National Register
--- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action
Located in Hastings, the Hastings Subway carries the tracks of the Burlington Northern Railroad over Routes 281 and 34, as well as Burlington Avenue. This underpass has changed little since its period of significance. Other than maintenance-related repairs, it remains essentially unaltered. The Hastings Subway today retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A description of the structure follows:

span number: 3  
span length: 42.0'  
total length: 63.0'  
roadway wdt.: 28.0'  

superstructure: steel, welded, continuous deck girder  
substructure: sloped concrete backwall abutments and open piers with pipe metal railings  
floor/decking: steel railroad tracks on gravel ballast  
other features: walkway portion of deck supported on cantilevered steel brackets

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See continuation sheet
8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Applicable National Register Criteria: C
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A
Areas of Significance: Engineering
Period of Significance: 1934 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)

Significant Dates: 1934
Cultural Affiliation: N/A
Significant Person: N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer) (Fabricator) (Builder): Burlington Northern Railroad
American Bridge Company
Mid-State Construction Company; Central Bridge and Construction Company

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations and areas of significance noted above.

Late in 1929 the City of Hastings approached the Burlington Northern Railroad, seeking to build an underpass at Burlington Avenue to increase safety and end traffic delays. The railroad company estimated that the structure would cost $85,000, and agreed to pay half the expense. The city put the issue of appropriating the balance to a popular vote, but the measure was defeated in 1931 and again in 1932. The project might have died there but for the federally sponsored National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933. As part of its appropriation, the NIRA offered funding to improve federal highways through cities. City, state and railroad officials leaped at the opportunity of federal funding, signing an agreement in December 1933 to improve U.S. Routes 281 and 6 through Hastings. As part of the project, Burlington Avenue was to be paved and an underpass constructed. The railroad prepared plans for the underpass, and the state agreed to oversee all construction. The City of Hastings was responsible only for paying damages, providing lighting, and performing minor maintenance. Excavation for the underpass began immediately, and the state awarded the construction contract by mid-April to the Mid-State Engineering Company. The Central Bridge and Construction Company also appears to have been a major contractor or sub-contractor. The American Bridge Company fabricated the superstructure, constructing it in nine separate 30-ton units. Specifications required the superstructure to be electric-arc welded. Given the limited number of trained welders, the state required rigid examinations of the welders before they were allowed on the site. Ceremonies marking the start of construction were held on April 25, and approximately 2,000 people were on hand, including Governor Charles W. Bryan, the state engineer, railroad officials and a sizable delegation of highway improvement boosters. The Hastings Underpass opened for traffic on November 10th, 1934, at a cost of approximately $80,142.30, all paid with federal funds. The Hastings Daily Tribune gave only brief notice of the bridge's unusual engineering, reserving its praise for the "wide sidewalks" and noting that the underpass "fills a long felt need for a means by which fire trucks might at all times be able to reach the first ward regardless of the railroad traffic." The newspaper further praised the underpass as the "first unit of a program designed to speed highway traffic through this city," with positive implications for the local economy. Fabricated and built during the formative period for large-scale welding, the Hastings Underpass is technologically significant as one of the earliest all-welded bridges in the country.

For further contextual information regarding bridge building in Nebraska, registration requirements, and property types, see related multiple property listing "Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870 - 1942."

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre
Cadastral Reference S12, T7N, R10W
USGS Quadrangle Hastings West (7.5 Minute Series, 1969)
UTM References zone 14 easting 551440 northing 4492530

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 63 feet by 30 feet, which is centered on the UTM point listed above. Included within this rectangular parcel are the bridge’s superstructure, substructure, floor system, and approach spans.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Demian Hess, Research Historian
organization Fraserdesign and Hess, Roise and Company
date 30 June 1991
street & number 1269 Cleveland Avenue
telephone 303-669-7969
city or town Loveland
state Colorado
zip code 80537
HASTINGS SUBWAY - NeHBS #AD04-716
HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
DEMIAN HESS
20 JANUARY 1990
ORIGINAL NEGATIVE AT NESHPo
VIEW: LOOKING NORTH
PHOTO 1 OF 1