

ABSTRACT

This report was prepared by Cultural Resource Specialist Margaret Slater and Planner Nancy Skinner of Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas (PB) at the request of the Maryland State Highway Administration Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering. John Wisniewski, PB Structural Engineer, assisted in the preparation of the report.

The purpose of the report is to present a historical context for small structures on Maryland's roadway system; small structures are those with a total length of less than 20 feet. The context was developed to provide materials to assist in the assessment of the eligibility of small structures for the National Register of Historic Places and will facilitate Section 106 consultation regarding these structures. The report contains: 1) historical overview of the development of Maryland's roadway system focusing, when possible, on small structures; 2) discussion of the types of small structures found on Maryland's roadways; and 3) guidance for assessing the state's small structures for National Register eligibility.

The report identifies two significant historical contexts for small structures: the first halves of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Within the two defined periods of significance, only certain types of small structures are potentially individually eligible for the National Register. Masonry arched structures built during the first half of the nineteenth century could be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for their association with development of the state's early turnpikes and the National Road and under Criterion C as examples of masonry arched construction. The structures must possess sufficient integrity to convey their period of significance. Surviving examples of masonry construction from this era are few in number. (Although there is no current evidence of the existence of such structures, pre-1800 structures could be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as examples of early Maryland roadway structures and possibly under Criterion D for the information that could be gleaned from them concerning pre-1800 construction techniques of roadway structures.)

Selected concrete structures built in the first half of the twentieth century could be eligible for the National Register. These include early twentieth century arches and arched culverts as well as concrete structures built according to the Standard Plans adopted by the State Roads Commission between 1912 and 1933. The concrete arches and arched culverts built during the first decade of the twentieth century are examples of experimentation with concrete for roadway structures, a development significant in structural engineering, and they could be eligible if they retain a high level of integrity. Certain concrete structures built according to the Standard Plans are also potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, as examples of the trend to standardize designs for small structures. Structures such as Standard Plan concrete slabs and girders, if they possess a high degree of integrity, could be eligible for the National Register. The box culvert, another concrete Standard Plan structure, is not eligible for the National Register because there are thousands of extant examples and because they are essentially non-descript and very hard to date. Although not individually eligible for the National Register, a box culvert could be a contributing component of a historic district if it retains sufficient integrity to convey the district's period of significance.

Both timber and metal beam structures were included in the 1933 Standard Plans. If timber or metal beam structures are identified that were built according to the Standard Plans, they could be individually eligible for the National Register. Both timber and metal beam structures could be considered contributing elements of a historic district if they possess sufficient integrity and date within the district's period of significance.

Other types of small structures discussed in this report are not individually eligible for the National Register because they do not fit within the significant historic contexts identified for small structures. These are the concrete rigid frame structure which, although not individually eligible, could be a contributing element of a historic district and pipes. Pipes are perhaps the most widely used small structure on Maryland's roadways and would neither be individually eligible for the National Register or eligible as a contributing element within a historic district because they are ubiquitous and possess no technological significance.