

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

  X   New Submission                      \_\_\_\_\_ Amended Submission

### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

The Victory Highway in Nevada

### B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

The Victory Highway, Statewide, 1921-1926

Victory Highway/US 40 and National Numbered Highway System, Statewide, 1927-1939

### C. Form Prepared by:

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### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

_____	<u>Nevada SHPO</u>	_____
Signature of Certifying Official	Title	Date

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal Government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____	_____
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

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The Victory Highway	Nevada
Name of Multiple Property Listing	State

### **Table of Contents for Written Narrative**

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

	<b>Page Numbers</b>
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<b>I. Major Bibliographical References</b> (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	I-100

**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 250 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Statement of Historic Contexts

#### 1. Introduction

This section provides a state-level historic context that identifies the historic themes, National Register of Historic Places (National Register) areas of significance, and chronological period associated with the Victory Highway/U.S. Highway 40 (US 40) in Nevada. The historic context informs the registration requirements in the next section to identify and evaluate property types associated with the Victory Highway/US 40. It is to be used for completing determinations of eligibility for the associated property types for listing in the National Register and to complete individual National Register Nominations.

The historic context provides the overall history and physical development of the Victory Highway as an early named transcontinental named highway and its designation as a numbered U.S. Highway. It discusses how roadbed segments that carried the Victory Highway in Nevada fit within the development of early vehicular roadways in Nevada and later state and federal transportation policy and design as a U.S. Highway. The Victory Highway was just one of many transportation corridors that crossed Nevada in the early twentieth century for automobile travel; however, it emerged as the primary east-west route in the state.

Its history as the Victory Highway is associated with important national and state trends in early-twentieth-century transportation development under National Register *Criterion A* in the area of Transportation and for exhibiting important roadway design and construction under *Criterion C* in the area of Engineering.<sup>1</sup> The Victory Highway was an early cross-country automobile route that extended from New York City to San Francisco associated with the Good Roads Movement and widely promoted by private interests. It developed as the primary state route and the most heavily trafficked roadway in northern Nevada providing interstate connection to Utah to the east and California to the west. As such, the Victory Highway represents the most successful private campaign to develop transcontinental routes in Nevada initiated during the Good Roads Movement. The Victory Highway Association (VHA) and local boosters saw the economic potential and benefit of improved roads and established the route in 1921 largely on an existing system of unimproved roads in Nevada that roughly paralleled the earlier California Trail. The VHA worked to improve and promote the Victory Highway in Nevada through at least the mid-1930s. After its designation as a U.S. Highway in 1926, the Nevada Department of Highways (NDH) improved the Victory Highway as US 40 and played an increasingly important role in its development. The maintenance responsibility

<sup>1</sup> National Park Service, *Lincoln Highway: Special Resource Study, Environmental Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2004).

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of the Victory Highway fell on the NDH and it became the primary interstate connection in northern Nevada, as well as part of the national strategic network of roads in 1939 leading up to World War II. As a result, distinct chronological periods related to the VHA and NDH stewardship emerged for the Victory Highway/US 40 as reflected under the areas of Transportation and Engineering. The chronological periods are described at the end of the historic context.

Following the National Park Service guidelines for multiple property submissions, “the time period covered by the historic context is based on the period of time when the events significant to the historic context are known to have occurred.”<sup>2</sup> This MPDF provides a chronological period related to its role and use as a named transcontinental highway in Section E, *Statement of Historic Contexts*; however, the section also includes a discussion of the development of this highway after 1939 to address its history and physical development as a U.S. Highway, US 40. This period is provided to understand its development after its role as a named transcontinental highway and to assist in identifying and evaluating associated property types in Section F. This MPDF does not address the significance of U.S. Highways in Nevada and properties that fall outside the chronological period identified for the Victory Highway, 1921-1939. Associated properties prior to this period or after this period may possess historical importance for themes not addressed in this MPDF, such as its role as an early U.S. Highway, and may need to be evaluated for National Register eligibility for other themes and areas of significance separately.

As a linear transportation structure, the areas of Transportation and Engineering are the primary areas of significance for the Victory Highway/US 40; however, during the chronological periods, properties associated with the Victory Highway/US 40 in Nevada may represent other important themes. Associated property types may gain significance from the additional National Register areas of significance described below.

The Victory Highway/US 40 in Nevada facilitated commercial development in communities and way stations along the route. Businesses catering to travelers and tourists developed along portions of the highway to provide needed goods and services in addition to serving local residents. The presence of the highway led to substantial numbers of automobile-related businesses such as restaurants, motels, service garages, and gas stations in direct response to through traffic along the route. Auto-related commercial development in close proximity to the Victory Highway/US 40 serving

<sup>2</sup> National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, 6.

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the through-traveler represent an important trend in commercial development under *Criterion A: Commerce*.

Noted for its scenic landscape and outdoor recreation, tourism became one of Nevada's major industries beginning in the 1910s. Legislation passed in 1931 legalized gambling and enacted the most relaxed divorce laws in the country. As a direct result of this legislation, select commercial and recreational development along the Victory Highway/US 40, especially through Reno/Sparks, was specifically designed to accommodate the needs of the gaming public and temporary residents and divorcees in transition. In general, travel along the Victory Highway/US 40 to a variety of tourist destinations in Nevada was actively promoted by auto clubs; chambers of commerce; local booster groups; the hotel, motel, and gaming industries; and the VHA. As such, the Victory Highway/US 40 in Nevada served as an important tourist route and provided direct access to recreational attractions and destinations. Tourist attractions in close proximity to the Victory Highway/US 40 promoted to the through-traveler represent an important trend under *Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation*.

Depression-era federal work-relief programs enacted in the 1930s as part of New Deal legislation of the Roosevelt administration provided funding for road and bridge building and improvements that employed thousands of unemployed people in Nevada. Numerous projects completed under New Deal funding or labor were completed in the state during the 1930s. Projects that improved the Victory Highway/US 40 represent federal work-relief programs and are associated with important efforts to alleviate unemployment and improve transportation infrastructure under *Criterion A: Government/Politics*.

Portions of the Victory Highway/US 40 east of Fernley through Reno to the California border were co-signed with the Lincoln Highway, an earlier named transcontinental highway that crossed northern Nevada. The portion of the Victory Highway co-signed with the Lincoln Highway may gain significance for the themes and areas of significance identified in the MPDF titled *Lincoln Highway in Nevada, 1913-1939*.

The historic context and themes that follow provide an overview of the development of roads in northern Nevada and the establishment and evolution of the Victory Highway and its development as a U.S. Highway in northern Nevada. References to individual properties and projects in the historic context are provided as representative examples only and are not mean to serve as comprehensive list or to suggest that they meet the registration requirements; each property must be evaluated under this MPDF on a case-by-case basis.

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### 2. Establishing Transportation Corridors Across Northern Nevada, 1840s-1880

The Nevada landscape is represented by arid sandy deserts, grassy valleys, forested mountain slopes, and rugged mountains. Situated almost entirely within the Great Basin, a desert area that reaches into six states, Nevada can be divided into three main land regions from east to west: the Columbia Plateau, Basin and Range, and Sierra Nevada regions. The Columbia Plateau region encompasses land in the northeastern corner of the state, which consists of areas of lava bedrock cut by rivers into deep canyons, and open prairie near the Idaho border. Salt flats in Utah and a series of passes define the eastern edge of the Basin and Range region. The vast central Basin and Range region includes numerous north-south mountain ranges separated by broad valleys with streams.<sup>3</sup> Overall, the Great Basin includes the east-west Humboldt River, historically an important water source for those living and travelling through northern Nevada and paralleled by many of the early trails and overland routes, including present-day Interstate Highway 80 (I-80). The high rugged mountains of the Sierra Nevada define the western edge of the Great Basin along the California border. Collectively, these land features posed challenges to early travel across northern Nevada.<sup>4</sup>

#### (a) Early trails and overland routes

In the mid-nineteenth century travel corridors across many western states consisted of Native American trails and the wagon roads and paths forged by emigrant settlers and traders. Overland emigrants first traveled through northern Nevada in the 1840s on their way to California. Others followed, and by 1844 the various paths coalesced into a continuous wagon road between Missouri and California known as the California Trail. The main California Trail (see Figure 1) entered the northeastern corner of Nevada from Fort Hall, Idaho, and continued southwest to Humboldt Wells (present-day town of Wells), located at the headwaters of the Humboldt River and a popular stopping point. From there it continued west along the north side of the Humboldt River to Carlin Canyon, just past Elko, where it crossed over to the south side of the river and continued west to the Sierra Nevada mountain range. As outlined here, the California Trail was the precursor of the Victory Highway in Nevada.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> "The Geography of Nevada," *Nevada*, June 18, 2018, [http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/nv\\_geography.htm](http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/nv_geography.htm).

<sup>4</sup> National Park Service, National Trails Intermountain Region, *National Historic Trails Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide - Across Nevada* (National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), 4.

<sup>5</sup> National Park Service, National Trails Intermountain Region, *National Historic Trails Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide - Across Nevada*, 11–14.

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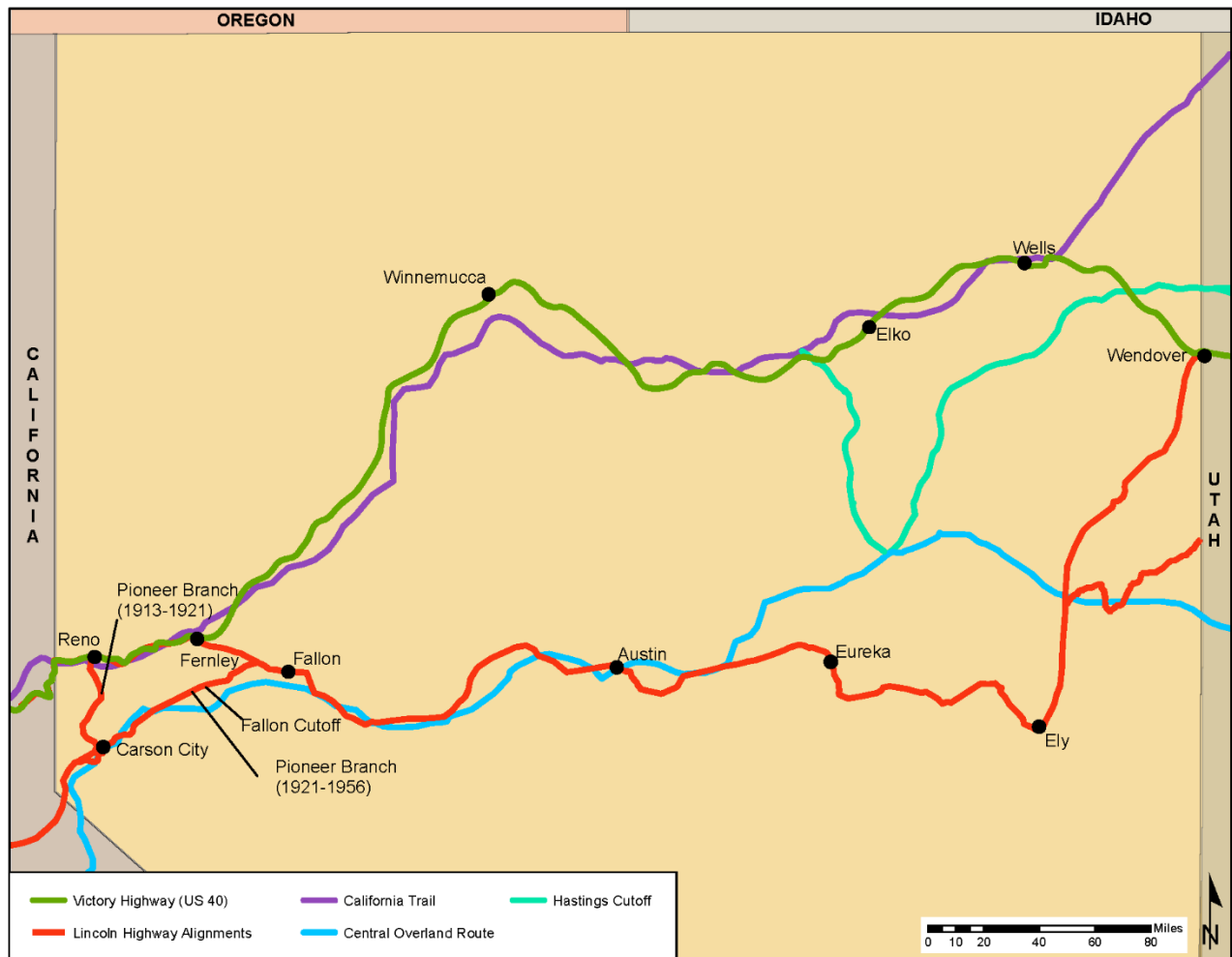


Figure 1. Early transportation corridors across northern Nevada.<sup>6</sup>

The discovery of gold at Coloma, California, in 1848 sparked a westward rush to California. In 1849 approximately 21,000 people traveled along the California Trail across Nevada toward the Sierra Nevada and California gold country. In July 1859 placer gold was discovered near present-day Dayton, Nevada, located east of Carson City, at the mouth of Gold Canyon. The discovery attracted people to the area, resulting in the establishment of the small mining camp of Johnstown.<sup>7</sup> In late

<sup>6</sup> Map created by Mead & Hunt based on the following sources: "California Trail System," Snowy Range Reflections, Journal of Sierra Nevada History & Biography, Sierra College: Fall 2009, vol.2, no. 2, available online at <https://www.sierracollege.edu/ejournals/jsnhb/v2n2/trails.html>; "Official Map of the Lincoln Highway," Lincoln Highway Association, available online at <https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/map/>. This map illustrates the general location of the main transportation corridors across northern Nevada during the early twentieth century. A detailed map of the Victory Highway is provided as additional information to this MPDF which reflects changes to its alignment over time.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph V. Tingley, Robert C. Horton, and Francis C. Lincoln, *Outline of Nevada Mining History*, Special Publication 15 (Reno, Nev.: Mackay School of Mines, University of Nevada, 1993), 12.

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1859 a rich silver ore deposit was discovered near Virginia City, Nevada, that created additional traffic along the California Trail as prospectors rushed to find their fortunes in the Comstock area of western Nevada. At this time, mining was on the decline in California and the discovery of this silver fueled a rush of people back from California to western Nevada, resulting in a demand for commercial goods, construction materials, and a means for transporting freight across the Sierra Nevada.<sup>8</sup>

### (b) The Central Pacific Railroad

The Victory Highway also followed the general route of the Central Pacific Railroad. The Central Pacific had its beginnings in 1862, when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act into law that provided federal aid for constructing a transcontinental railroad. The bill stipulated that the Union Pacific Railroad would build east to west and the Central Pacific would build eastward from California. Initial plans anticipated that the two railroads would meet somewhere between the Utah Territory and the border of Nevada and California. In 1863 the Central Pacific began laying tracks east from downtown Sacramento, California. Nevada achieved statehood in 1864, and by 1867 the railroad had reached the edge of the new state near the summit of Donner Pass in the Sierra Nevada. Once they reached Nevada, crews extended the railroad across the northern part of the state toward Utah. The route of the Central Pacific Railroad in northern Nevada generally followed the Humboldt River. Several towns were established along its path, including Reno in 1868. The two railroads met in 1869 at Promontory Point, Utah, signaling completion of the first transcontinental railroad. The railroad and others that followed became the preferred method of transportation across Nevada. Decades later the Victory Highway would follow a similar path across northern Nevada.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Early Roads in Nevada, 1880s-1920

Nationally, rail was the preferred method of transportation prior to the twentieth century, while the country's road system consisted of existing trails and wagon routes to serve routine local travel. During this period the more than 1.5 million miles of rural roads in the United States were, with only a few exceptions, largely unimproved, remaining unpaved with limited grading. Until the early 1900s funding for local roads came from right-of-way donations, local taxes, and statute labor. In states that retained the statute labor system, able-bodied male citizens living along a road were required to work on upkeep and road repair a certain number of days per year or pay the equivalent in cash.<sup>10</sup> Dense

<sup>8</sup> J.F. Bogardus, "The Great Basin," *Economic Geography* 6, no. 4 (October 1930): 328; National Park Service, National Trails Intermountain Region, *National Historic Trails Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide - Across Nevada*, 20; Charles Zeier, Ron Reno, and Mary Parrish, *An Archaeological Inventory of the Kings Canyon Road, Carson City, Nevada* (prepared for Carson City Planning Division and Parks and Open Space, February 2014), 26-27.

<sup>9</sup> "Central Pacific Railroad," *American Rails*, 2018, <https://www.american-rails.com/cpr.html>; "History," *Nevada DOT*, n.d., <https://www.nevadadot.com/mobility/rail-planning/history>.

<sup>10</sup> Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways, 1776-1976: A History of the Federal-Aid Program*, 43.



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population, trade, and industry in cities provided a strong base to fund thousands of miles of improved streets, and other improvements such as sewers and street lights. Although taxes and right-of-way donations amounted to a large investment at the time, the funds were spread so thinly in rural areas that few residents enjoyed adequate road service (see Figure 2).<sup>11</sup>



Figure 2. Image illustrating poor condition of many early-twentieth-century roads.<sup>12</sup>

Nevada generally followed the national trends, and early roads developed slowly. New road systems serving local traffic developed along the route based on the earlier California Trail that paralleled the Central Pacific Railroad tracks; eventually this became an auto trail. Improving and maintaining early roads was a continual challenge as Nevada was the least populated state in the nation prior to 1900 and lacked resources to support large-scale road building.<sup>13</sup> During this era Nevada public roads were supervised by county commissioners charged with the care and maintenance of all the trails and roads within a county, including the construction of new roads and bridges. Roads were financed through taxes levied on residents, and the sparse populations of Nevada's counties were often unable to adequately support these initiatives. Nevada's early road system also included privately

<sup>11</sup> Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways, 1776-1976: A History of the Federal-Aid Program* (Federal Highway Administration, 1976), 37.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Weingroff, "Federal Aid Road Act of 1916: Building The Foundation," *U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration*, August 16, 2018, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/96summer/p96su2.cfm>.

<sup>13</sup> Compiled and edited by Richard Forstall, *Population of States and Counties of the United States: 1790-1990* (Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of Census, n.d.), 105.

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owned toll roads operated under franchises issued by the county. As franchises lapsed, the roads gradually reverted to county ownership.<sup>14</sup>

### (a) Good Roads Movement

The "Good Roads Movement" emerged in the late nineteenth century in response to the poor general condition of the nation's road system.<sup>15</sup> Transporting goods to market was difficult over bad roads, which placed financial strain on farmers. As the disparity between urban and rural roads grew, residents and civic leaders who recognized the economic impacts of bad roads were among the first to advocate for improvements. Some states enacted "good road laws" in the 1880s to support road development; however, the Good Roads Movement really gained momentum when bicyclists joined the cause.<sup>16</sup> A group of cyclists organized as the League of American Wheelman in 1880, the first of many organizations to promote road improvements as part of the Good Roads movement.<sup>17</sup> Automobile enthusiasts joined the cause beginning in the 1890s and helped to bolster public awareness of the need for adequate road networks. With the motto "lifting our people out of the mud," Good Roads advocates pressured the federal government to reevaluate its role in the development, financing, and maintenance of roads. They also lobbied for state, and local involvement and financial resources in road building and maintenance activities.<sup>18</sup>

After 1901 mass production made automobiles more affordable to a large portion of the population. Consequently, the number of vehicles in use in the United States skyrocketed from around 55,000 vehicles in 1904 to almost one-half million in 1910.<sup>19</sup> Between 1910 and 1916 the country continued to experience a rapid increase in the number of motor vehicles, yet the overall mileage of improved roads increased slowly.<sup>20</sup>

Numerous national, state, and local groups were involved in road promotion through the National Good Roads Association, established by chapters in numerous locations across the country,

<sup>14</sup> Summit Envirosolutions, Inc., *A Transect Across the Great Basin: Reno, Nevada to Spanish Fork, Utah, A Class III Cultural Resources Inventory* (prepared for ENSR, February 2001), 4–5.

<sup>15</sup> Paul Daniel Marriott, "The Preservation Office Guide to Historic Roads," June 2010, 36, <http://www.historicroads.org/documents/GUIDE.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways, 1776-1976: A History of the Federal-Aid Program*, 42.

<sup>17</sup> Melissa Keane and Simon Bruder, *Good Roads Everywhere: A History of Road Building in Arizona* (Phoenix, Ariz.: Arizona Department of Transportation, March 2004), 25.

<sup>18</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska," Statewide, Nebraska, Section E, Page 2.

<sup>19</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska," Section E, Page 2.

<sup>20</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Third Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1921-1922* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1923), 18.

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including Nevada. For example, the American Automobile Association (AAA) was founded by motorists in 1902, and in 1908 AAA launched the *American Motorist*, a periodical that frequently featured articles in support of good roads. Between 1910 and 1915 the movement received regular coverage by League of American Wheelman magazine *Good Roads*, and other national publications such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Harper's Magazine*.<sup>21</sup> Local chapters of the Good Roads Association organized in Nevada, and by 1914 a statewide Nevada Automobile Association had been established, and local chapters such as the Carson Good Roads Association formed to accomplish road improvements at a regional level.<sup>22</sup> Efforts of these groups were a precursor to the development of private groups that designated and promoted early named transcontinental automobile routes.

### (b) Early federal and state involvement in road building

Federal involvement in road development began in the late nineteenth century and laid the groundwork for the improvement of existing local roads, and the formation of interstate road networks designed as named transcontinental routes. In 1893 the U.S. Department of Agriculture formed the Office of Road Inquiry, which was charged with examining the system of road management throughout the nation, investigating the best road building practices, and assisting with dissemination of the information.<sup>23</sup> The entity evolved into a resource of technical information regarding roads, and regularly released bulletins and circulars addressing road construction and administration issues.<sup>24</sup> Established in 1896, the Rural Free Delivery Service (postal delivery) broadened support for an adequate road system as local delivery could be denied due to poor road conditions.<sup>25</sup> The Office of Public Roads replaced the Office of Road Inquiry in 1905 with the passage of the Agriculture Appropriations Act. The new federal road agency continued testing, issued typical material specifications and testing procedures, and provided roadbed construction guidelines in 1911, and bridge specifications shortly thereafter.<sup>26</sup> Highway standards were also developed by professional trade organizations and a few individual states during this period.

<sup>21</sup> Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways, 1776-1976: A History of the Federal-Aid Program*, 76.

<sup>22</sup> "Modern Highways Are 100 Years Old," *Cruise-In, Celebrating Indiana Car Culture*, November 4, 2015, <http://cruise-in.com/tag/good-roads-movement/>; "Wyoming History, The Politics of Road Construction," *Western Wyoming Community College*, 2008, [http://www.wvcc.wy.edu/wyo\\_hist/lincolnhighway3.htm](http://www.wvcc.wy.edu/wyo_hist/lincolnhighway3.htm).

<sup>23</sup> Marriott, "The Preservation Office Guide to Historic Roads," 37.

<sup>24</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska," Section E, Page 1.

<sup>25</sup> Keane and Bruder, *Good Roads Everywhere: A History of Road Building in Arizona*, 25-26.

<sup>26</sup> Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *America's Highways, 1776-1976: A History of the Federal-Aid Program* (Federal Highway Administration, 1976), 46-47, 52.

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The State of Nevada did not actively participate in road improvements until 1911, when the legislative session gave the State Engineer general supervision of road work carried out by convict labor.<sup>27</sup> With an appropriation of \$20,000, some initial road work was completed in Ormsby County (present-day Carson City); however, once the funds were exhausted, work ceased. In 1912 the state legislature established a Nevada State Highway that would run from the border east of Ely west through Eureka, Austin, Fallon, Reno, Carson City, and into California (roughly the Lincoln Highway/US 50 route). Lack of state funding prevented the construction of the road, and subsequent legislation allowing counties along the route to sell bonds to pay for construction also failed to raise sufficient funds. Thus, the Nevada State Highway was not completed by the state.<sup>28</sup>

### (1) **Federal Aid Road Act of 1916**

In 1916 the U.S. Congress passed the Federal Aid Road Act, which was the first formal federal highway policy with a regular funding appropriation distributed to the states. By this time the number of automobile registrations in the country had reached 2.3 million, and the auto industry and motorists were heavily lobbying for programs and funds to improve roads.<sup>29</sup> This funding had been a long-time goal of organizations associated with the Good Roads Movement that were influential in the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916. Managed by the federal Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, funding for road construction and maintenance was allocated to states based on a formula incorporating a state's population, land area, and road mileage. Under the 1916 Federal Aid Road Act, the federal government would finance up to 50 percent of the cost of construction, not to exceed \$10,000 per mile. To qualify for available aid, states had to form a department to oversee road construction and maintenance, provide matching funds, and agree to meet exacting federal standards for design and construction of roads.<sup>30</sup>

### (2) **Establishment of the Nevada Department of Highways**

The Nevada Department of Highways (NDH) was established during the state legislative session of 1917. Proposed project plans for a new road network were first submitted for approval to the district BPR in Salt Lake City by the NDH and then to the national office in Washington D.C. for final approval. During its first year, the NDH began to piece together portions of the old California Trail and abandoned sections of the Central Pacific Railroad grade from Wells to Lovelock to form State

<sup>27</sup> Nevada Department of Transportation, "1.2 Nevada Department of Transportation," *Nevada Department of Transportation*, 2017, [ftp://ftp.nevadadot.com/DesignManual/2005\\_3\\_1/PDDM/Body/1\\_2.htm](ftp://ftp.nevadadot.com/DesignManual/2005_3_1/PDDM/Body/1_2.htm).

<sup>28</sup> *First Report of the Board of Directors Department of Highways, 1917-1918, State of Nevada* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1918), 9; Steven F. Mehls, *Report of the Historic Mitigation Work at the Big Springs Ranch Land Exchange, Elko County, Nevada* (Elko: Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office and BSR Associates, July 25, 1999), 3.

<sup>29</sup> Bruce E. Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 24-25.

<sup>30</sup> Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers*, 43.

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Route 1 (also U.S. Route 1), which later coalesced into the Victory Highway. Further road and bridge work by the NDH was delayed by World War I, largely due to steel shortages, but resumed again after the war's conclusion in 1918. In general, the state and federal programs were designed to infuse road and bridge construction with money and engineering expertise.<sup>31</sup>

Initially, highways in Nevada were designed with a narrow, elevated embankment. Borrow ditches were created to build up the embankment, which consisted of fill and culverts that formed a base for the graded travel surface (see Figure 3). In the early 1920s standard plans were designed for roads and many related features such as pipe and box culverts and bridges less than 20 feet long. Due to the varied conditions encountered statewide, the NDH did not feel the use of standard plans was an economical approach for longer bridges, and they were designed on a case-by-case basis.<sup>32</sup>

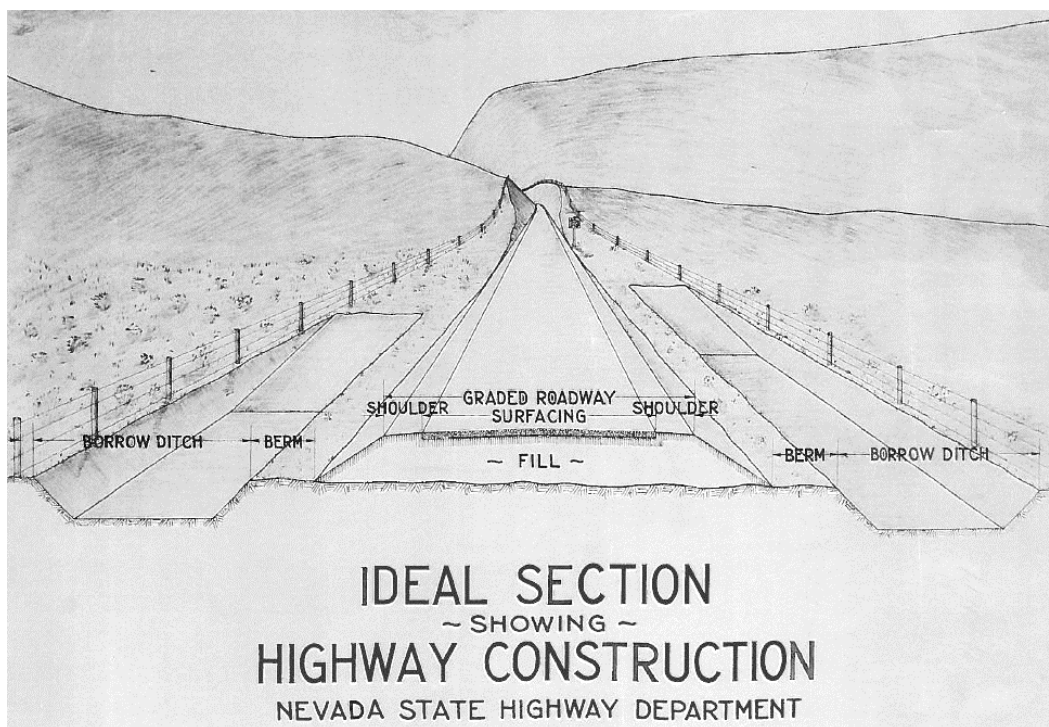


Figure 3. Undated image of an ideal section of roadbed by NDH illustrating typical highway construction.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Joseph King, *Spans of Time* (Prepared for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, 1993), 17; Bruce E. Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 47; First Report of the Board of Directors Department of Highways, 1917-1918, State of Nevada (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1918), 9..

<sup>32</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1921), 14.

<sup>33</sup> Image courtesy of the Nevada Department of Transportation.

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Early highway design by the NDH was influenced by the existing conditions, available materials, labor, equipment, and funds rather than strict application of engineering standards of the day. Before the 1920s roads were generally not hard-surfaced outside of Nevada's major population centers, and improved rural roads were those with a graded or graveled travel surface. Severely hampered by a limited budget, the NDH located roads where the least amount of earthwork would be encountered due to the high cost of excavation for cuts and fill. Consequently, few early roads were straight or smooth and instead had numerous vertical curves and variation in grades.<sup>34</sup>

The conditions in Nevada led to challenges and conflicts with the BPR over issues such as roadway location and widths. In particular, the NDH argued that the BPR standard width of 24 feet for primary routes was not practical in rural Nevada. The disagreement on widths came to a head in 1920. The NDH submitted plans to widen and improve an existing 15-foot roadway to 20 feet (Project No. 32, Humboldt County) as that was the maximum width finances allowed and the NDH did not believe the amount of current and projected traffic warranted the extra width. In other rural areas where the existing single-lane roads were 6-7 feet wide, the NDH proposed a roadway width of 9-10 feet while the BPR would not approve less than 12 feet.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the BPR rejected many of roadway improvement plans from NDH.

This impasse become so troublesome for the NDH that James Leonard, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NDH, with support of Nevada Governor Emmet Boyle, wrote a letter to the BPR that cited the examples above and stated that Nevada's challenges required certain allowances. The letter stressed the NDH did not believe in cutting construction quality, but that it is absolutely necessary to carefully monitor finances and build nothing at a higher quality than necessary. In closing, Leonard invited members from the Washington office to come see for themselves the financial and physical challenges faced in Nevada.

As a result, a conference was held in Reno in July 1920, attended by the NDH, the district BPR engineer, and the U.S. General Inspector for the Western U.S. The parties agreed that for roads in outlying areas or where traffic did not require a wider roadway, the BPR would approve roadways with an overall embankment width of 18 feet or more and a travel surface width of 10 feet or more.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 12-13; State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1929-1930* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1930), 61.

<sup>35</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 11-13.

<sup>36</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 12-14.

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This was the first of many exceptions the BPR granted the NDH to transform existing rural, single-lane, earthen trails into improved highways of the day.

### (c) Named transcontinental highways

Demand for better roads continued to increase, and when federal and state support for good roads lagged behind public demand, private groups took initiative to keep the cause moving forward. To meet the increased need for improved roadways and fill the gaps between local funding sources required to meet state matching funds, these private groups took on the task of designation and construction of transcontinental automobile routes along networks of existing local roadways. As a result, through the 1910s and early 1920s the primary impetus for road construction was through private auto trail associations, which determined a route, gave it a name such as the "Overland Trail," and promoted the road.

One method for promoting and securing support for a particular route was to give it a name. Named highway associations lobbied local governments for road improvements and secured sponsorship from automobile-related industries, such as gas stations and automotive products and services. Each route was marked with its own symbol, painted along the roadside on telephone poles or other available surfaces (see Figure 4).<sup>37</sup> Guidebooks promoted the highways by offering route directions and identifying locations of automobile-related services and sites of interest for travelers. In addition, gasoline, oil, and tire companies often published state maps identifying early named highways and included the location of the sponsoring company's service stations.<sup>38</sup> Many of these routes were transcontinental, such as the Lincoln Highway and Victory Highway, as well as some regional or state routes.

<sup>37</sup> Richard Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System," *Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation*, November 18, 2015, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/numbers.cfm>.

<sup>38</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska," Section E, Page 4.

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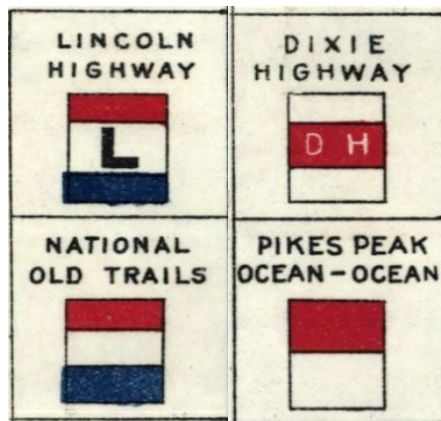


Figure 4. Sample of auto trail symbols.<sup>39</sup>

The Lincoln Highway, the first named highway to span the continent from coast to coast, was established in 1913 and set the stage for many subsequent transcontinental named highways that followed. Carl Graham Fisher envisioned a transcontinental highway that was toll-free and paved, with auto-related industries supporting development of the Lincoln Highway.<sup>40</sup> The Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) was headquartered in Detroit and led by Henry Joy. Initial tasks of the LHA included promotion of the highway and finding a suitable route. Towns across the country lobbied the LHA to be included along the new transcontinental route, which was announced on August 26, 1913. The highway started in New York City and passed through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California, ending in Lincoln Park in San Francisco.<sup>41</sup> In Nevada the Lincoln Highway passed through Ely, Eureka, Austin, Fallon, Fernley, Sparks, Reno, and Verdi. For more on the Lincoln Highway see the MPDF titled *Lincoln Highway in Nevada, 1913-1939*.

The success of the Lincoln Highway fostered other named highways. The Pikes Peak Ocean-to-Ocean (PPOO) Highway was another early transcontinental highway. The PPOO Association was formally organized in St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1914 with the vision of a highway that shared termini with the Lincoln Highway, but took a more northerly route at points in between and relied on government action for road improvements. The organization made cooperative arrangements with

<sup>39</sup> "General Map of Transcontinental Routes with Principal Connections" (American Automobile Association, 1918), Library of Congress Geography and Map Division.

<sup>40</sup> Lincoln Highway Association, *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* (Detroit: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1916), 18; Kristina Crawford, "Evolution of Automobile Roads in Nevada," *In-Situ: Newsletter of the Nevada Archaeological Association* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 2; National Park Service, *Lincoln Highway: Special Resource Study, Environmental Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2004), 3.

<sup>41</sup> Brian Butko, *Greetings from the Lincoln Highway, America's First Coast-to-Coast Road* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2005), 17-19.



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existing named highway associations, and initially followed the National Old Trails Road, another early named highway, east of Illinois and the Lincoln Highway west of Salt Lake City. In a 1917 mid-summer meeting, the PPOO Association debated routing for a "western extension," looking for an alternative entry into California besides the Lincoln Highway.

As a result, the Overland Trail Club (OTC) organized in Reno in February 1917 to promote a northern highway across Nevada that followed the Humboldt River. Led by President W.H. Goodin, the new organization became politically active in support of highway along a corridor bypassed by the Lincoln Highway. Goodin attended the PPOO mid-summer meeting and made a convincing argument as to why the northern Humboldt River route should be adopted as the western extension from Salt Lake City to Reno. The PPOO Association debated alternatives and chose the route advocated by the OTC.<sup>42</sup>

Beginning in the spring of 1917 the OTC actively participated in the construction of a highway segment over an old abandoned railroad grade from Lovelock to Reno, a distance of approximately 100 miles. Local members secured monetary donations from businesses in both cities to fund improvements, including drainage culverts. The work was completed by the OTC and local businessmen on Sundays and holidays, creating a passible road in a short period of time.<sup>43</sup> This same route across northern Nevada was designated State Route 1 by the NDH in 1917 and eventually became a portion of the Victory Highway.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> "Nevada Highway Will Be Marked," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, May 16, 1921, 4; Mehls, *Report of the Historic Mitigation Work at the Big Springs Ranch Land Exchange, Elko County, Nevada*, 8; Richard F. Weingroff, "The Pikes Peak Ocean To Ocean Highway," *U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/pikes.cfm>.

<sup>43</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 51.

<sup>44</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 50.

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### 4. The Victory Highway, 1921-1926

#### (a) Establishment of the Victory Highway

Following World War I Americans took to the roads in greater numbers as automobiles became more affordable and the country's economy boomed. During this period a national discussion considered suitable memorials for fallen and returning troops. The debate centered on traditional stone monuments versus commemorative roads. In a 1919 *Chicago Tribune* article, Windsor T. White suggested "useful and health-giving" highways, or victory highways, as a suitable monument versus a "cold and lifeless stone obelisk." White also recognized the economic benefits of good roads and suggested a "great system" of victory highways, and in 1920 a group of Topeka, Kansas, businessmen met and began formulating a plan to establish such a highway.<sup>45</sup>

George W. Stansfield, a successful Topeka druggist and president of the chamber of commerce, was a road enthusiast and avid tourist. Stansfield met Ben Blow, chief engineer of the Good Roads Department of the California Automobile Association, on a trip to California (see Figure 5). Blow had traversed the country's roads and was well-connected with state highway departments and officials at the BPR; from these connections he learned where plans for road improvements might center. The two men exchanged ideas and both recognized the value of a practical and scenic highway route with the potential of future development.<sup>46</sup> Together they harnessed the national sentiment and fostered the concept of a Victory Highway: a permanent linear monument commemorating those, living and dead, who served in World War I (see Figure 5).<sup>47</sup> Stretching from New York to California through the nation's approximate geographic center of Topeka, Kansas, the route was to feature bronze statues at each termini depicting doughboys saluting each other across the country. In addition, pairs of bronze soldiers were to mark state boundaries, and a bronze grouping depicting an eagle hovering protectively over its nest was to mark each county line. The base of these statues would bear the names of the soldiers from both counties who lost their lives in World War I. Memorial trees were to line the route to commemorate local servicemen and beautify the highway.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Windsor White, "Victory Roads Suggested as War Memorial," *Chicago Tribune*, January 26, 1919, sec. 8, 8.

<sup>46</sup> "Victory Road Memorial To War Heroes," *Dayton News*, September 6, 1925, 52.

<sup>47</sup> "National Memorial Highway Is Planned to Honor Veterans," *Nevada State Journal*, August 30, 1921, 8.

<sup>48</sup> "National Memorial Highway Is Planned to Honor Veterans," 8.

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Figure 5. 1921 image of Blow (left) and Stansfield (right) pointing to the western and eastern termini of the Victory Highway.<sup>49</sup>

The Victory Highway Association (VHA) was organized and incorporated on September 2, 1921, according to the laws of the state of Kansas.<sup>50</sup> The VHA was headquartered in Topeka, with Stansfield elected president and Blow named general manager. A Victory Highway advisory board (board of directors) formed in October 1921. The new board included some of the most illustrious names in industry and politics of the day, such as Luther Burbank, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Coleman DuPont, Senator Capper, Senator Curtis, Harvey Firestone, W.T. Sesnon, Gov. Sproul of Pennsylvania, Gov. Mabey of Utah, and Miss Anne Morgan of New York.<sup>51</sup>

At this time Congress was in the process of revising the 1916 Federal Aid Road Act. Senators Oddie and Pittman and Congressman Arentz of Nevada worked to secure more federal road-building aid for large western states with a high percentage of public land, and thus a low tax base.<sup>52</sup> The Federal

<sup>49</sup> "Victory Highway Campaign Opens," *Motor Land*, September 1921, 25.

<sup>50</sup> "Business Entity Search: Victory Highway Association," *Kansas Business Center*, August 16, 2018, <https://www.kansas.gov/bess/flow/main?execution=e1s5>.

<sup>51</sup> "Victory Highway Directors Named," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, October 8, 1921, 8.

<sup>52</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1929-1930*, 19.

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Highway Act of 1921 provided \$75 million of matching funds to states for highway construction, with the caveat that each state designate 7 percent of its total mileage as "primary" routes, which would be the only roads eligible for federal funds. With the prospect of substantial federal aid becoming available, named highways vied for designation as the primary route in each state. In Nevada both the LHA and the VHA lobbied for the designation as a primary route.<sup>53</sup>

### (b) Determining the national route of the Victory Highway

The Victory Highway route was planned "to serve the people in times of peace and government in time of war."<sup>54</sup> The VHA insisted on routing based on practicality and attractions of the route, not on contributions of the cities along its length. As opposed to many other named highways, the overall alignment of the route was determined first, then assistance sought from intersecting municipalities. No detours to participating cities or detours around non-participating cities were made.<sup>55</sup> This national level of planning diverges from the model used for other named highways, including the Lincoln Highway. Some areas of the country presented particular challenges, such as sparsely developed Utah and Nevada, which lacked the population base to support large road building initiatives. In those states, the VHA recognized that state and federal aid would be imperative in the highway's success.

Consequently, great care was taken in laying out the highway to ensure federal aid along its entire length. As such, the Victory Highway became the first transcontinental highway to be designated that was improved and maintained using government funds with government supervision, rather than local assistance and commercial interests. Instead of constructing a new highway alignment, the VHA directors adopted a policy of utilizing the existing road system in cooperation with state highway engineers en route and consulting with engineers of the BPR, which ultimately resulted in the shortest and most direct transcontinental route.<sup>56</sup>

From New York City to the VHA headquarters in Topeka, the Victory Highway followed the National Old Trails Road, which included over 1,000 miles of paved surface (see Figure 6). From Topeka to San Francisco the route followed segments of the California Trail, Overland Trail, and PPOO.<sup>57</sup> In Nevada the east-to-west Victory Highway travelled along pre-existing State Route 1, which passed through Wendover, Silver Zone, Wells, Deeth, Elko, Carlin, Battle Mountain, Winnemucca, Lovelock,

<sup>53</sup> Steven F. Mehls, "Historic American Engineering Record, Victory Highway HAER-NV-41," 2006, 9, Library of Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov>.

<sup>54</sup> "Victory Highway to Be Ready in 1922," *Nevada State Journal*, July 21, 1921, 6.

<sup>55</sup> "Victory Road Memorial To War Heroes," 52.

<sup>56</sup> "Hays Backs Victory Highway," *Hayes Free Press*, June 8, 1922, 1; "Victory Highway Will Swing Tourists to St. Louis, Vesper Says," *The Saint Louis Star and Times*, December 17, 1922, 35.

<sup>57</sup> "An Auto Traffic Center," *The Topeka State Journal*, October 5, 1921, 6.

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and Fernley, where it converged with the main alignment of the Lincoln Highway. From that point the two highways were cosigned and traveled on through Sparks, Reno, Verdi, and the California state line.



Figure 6. 1922 map of the Victory Highway showing roadway surface.<sup>58</sup>

### (c) Promoting the highway

With the route set, the task of the VHA shifted to securing support for the highway and attracting members to join the association. Blow and Stansfield campaigned along the route, stressing the economic benefits of the highway at numerous speaking engagements. The men stated, "Every city and town between San Francisco and New York is a (potential) member of the co-operative movement for the installation of this highway, and every one of them is to profit by it." VHA members visited locations along the route to negotiate with city officials and automobile associations for support. Local teams, consisting of area businessmen led by a VHA member, formed to secure memberships for the VHA, often through patriotic-themed membership drives. For an annual fee of \$5 members received maps put out by the association and emblems to place upon their automobiles.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> "Victory Highway on First Birthday Has More Hard Surface Than Any Other Road," *The Topeka Daily Capital*, September 13, 1922, 12.

<sup>59</sup> "Take Up Highway, Victory Route Is Subject of Chamber of Commerce Forum Meeting," *The Topeka State Journal*, October 4, 1921, 1.

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In addition, cooperation was sought from local and national women's organizations and from the American Legion for fundraising to install the planned bronze statues. It was thought the statues of doughboy sentries at each state line would further motivate participation in improving the road.<sup>60</sup> To complete this work, VHA officials engaged noted sculptors and ornithologists, experts in birds, to ensure the most accurate and beautiful bronze design. Once adopted, the design was standardized and copyrighted.<sup>61</sup>

Stansfield stressed the VHA's vision to "mark and advertise the Victory Highway [so] that in a short time it will be the best known of the transcontinental routes."<sup>62</sup> Stansfield and Blow purported that a well-marked highway would draw the most tourists, and well-marked businesses would encourage them to stop and spend money.<sup>63</sup> Accordingly, emphasis was put on marking or "signing" the highway with distinctive yellow and black signs (see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Image of a c.1925 Victory Highway sign.<sup>64</sup>

The VHA envisioned participating merchants and businesses along the route, such as motels or garages, would become official "Victory" businesses, to further promote the highway. For a rental fee of \$25 per year, special signs denoted a "Victory Business" approved and recommended by the VHA as the best accommodations or services at a fair price. While some participating businesses retained their original name, others such as the Victory Motel in Wells, Nevada, adopted "Victory" into their official name (see Figure 8). The VHA also worked to develop motels in areas that lacked accommodations, in an effort to make a cross-country journey on the Victory Highway comfortable and appealing to travelers.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> "Take Up Highway, Victory Route Is Subject of Chamber of Commerce Forum Meeting," 1; "Victory Road Memorial To War Heroes," 52.

<sup>61</sup> "Eagle Groups In Heroes' Memory," *The Manhattan Mercury*, April 1, 1926, 8.

<sup>62</sup> "An Auto Traffic Center," 6.

<sup>63</sup> "Take Up Highway, Victory Route Is Subject of Chamber of Commerce Forum Meeting," 1.

<sup>64</sup> Jeff Shardell, "Victory Highway Sign," *AA Roads Shield Gallery*, accessed August 8, 2018, <https://www.aaroads.com/shields/show.php?image=NV19160401>.

<sup>65</sup> "Take Up Highway, Victory Route Is Subject of Chamber of Commerce Forum Meeting," 1.

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*Figure 8. The Victory Motel in Wells, Nevada.*

The California Highway Association, which was active in western states outside California, was instrumental in initial efforts of marking the new highway in the west, having completed engineering surveys, fabrication, and installation of Victory Highway signs across California and Nevada earlier that same year.<sup>66</sup> By October 4, 1921, the route was marked between San Francisco and Colby, Kansas. It was anticipated that the remaining route from Kansas to New York would be marked by the fall of 1922.<sup>67</sup>

Several tactics were taken to ensure the maximum number of travelers on the Victory Highway. A plan was adopted to mark side roads of important towns or places of interest as 'Victory byways' in order to increase the area of reach, or influence, and funnel traffic towards the main east-west Victory Highway route.<sup>68</sup> Touted as a premier heritage tour, the Victory Highway was also promoted as the most scenic transcontinental route. Information on historic sites and natural features along the national route was highlighted in newspaper articles and other tourist publications, although research did not reveal specific examples in Nevada. Another tactic included beautifying the route with a

<sup>66</sup> "Nevada Highway Will Be Marked," 4.

<sup>67</sup> "Victory Highway to Be Ready in 1922," 6.

<sup>68</sup> "Victory Highway Project Is Sound in All Respects," *The Topeka Daily Capital*, October 9, 1921, 35.

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memorial tree-planting program endorsed by the American Legion and developed by Luther Burbank. The VHA promoted the planting of trees as individual memorials to soldiers, sailors, and nurses across the country by asking chambers of commerce along the route to endorse tree-planting efforts by local organizations. The first tree was planted in Topeka by the wife of Governor H.J. Allen.<sup>69</sup>

A series of Victory Highway offices established along the length of the highway encouraged travel along the route, supplied maps, and gave road information. By 1922 at least 10 of these Victory Highway branch offices were located west of Topeka.<sup>70</sup> Maps offered to motorists contained complete details on the main route as well as Victory byways, and two types of maps were produced. Strip maps were printed on durable cardboard and covered the distance between Victory Highway offices, thus ensuring the traveler would stop at each issuing location. Maps showing the entire route from coast-to-coast were also offered. For the dedicated cross-country traveler, the VHA created a deluxe log book to include maps, illustrations, and directions for travel along the Victory Highway in easy stages, complete with travel accommodation recommendations. A further enticement: travelers who completed a transcontinental journey along the Victory Highway earned a Victory Highway medal, which were available from each terminal office at New York or San Francisco.<sup>71</sup> As the VHA persisted in efforts to promote the route for cross-country travel, the Victory Highway became more popular. Maps and logs were updated every year and the mileage and information contained within each publication was checked by state highway engineers for each state along the route. By the 1923 season, the Victory Highway was on all standard automobile touring maps, including the Tib Route books, Rand McNally, and Clason maps.<sup>72</sup>

The first Victory Eagle monument dedication took place on Armistice Day 1923 on the Victory Highway at the Shawnee-Douglas County line in Kansas. A solemn unveiling ceremony included three volleys fired while taps played. A day later the second Victory Eagle was dedicated in Pottawatomie County, Kansas.<sup>73</sup> A total of six monuments were eventually erected, including one at the Nevada-California border (see Figure 9).<sup>74</sup>

<sup>69</sup> "American Legion In Sympathy With Aim of Victory Highway," *The Indianapolis Star*, September 5, 1926, 51; "National Memorial Highway Is Planned to Honor Veterans," 8.

<sup>70</sup> While it is likely a Victory Highway office was located in Reno, research did not confirm this definitely or reveal the location of any other branch offices in Nevada.

<sup>71</sup> "Take Up Highway, Victory Route Is Subject of Chamber of Commerce Forum Meeting," 35.

<sup>72</sup> "The Victory Highway," *Hayes Free Press*, June 14, 1923, 2.

<sup>73</sup> "Touring the New Victory Highway," *Concrete Highway Magazine*, April 1924, 24-25.

<sup>74</sup> Margaret Moran, "Rare World War I Monument Back on Display in Truckee," *The Record-Courier*, July 19, 2013, <https://www.recordcourier.com/news/local/rare-world-war-i-monument-back-on-display-in-truckee/>.



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Figure 9. Eagle monument at the Nevada-California border, c.1925.<sup>75</sup>

**(d) The Victory Highway in Nevada**

The beginnings of the Victory Highway in Nevada are intertwined with its relationship with the state's other transcontinental route: the Lincoln Highway. The future of both roads was influenced by unresolved differences on the preferred route into the state from Salt Lake City from two competing groups, each with their own convictions on where the primary east-west route should cross the state.

**(1) The Goodyear Cutoff controversy**

By 1918 Nevada already had a transcontinental highway: the Lincoln Highway. However, its route across western Utah and eastern Nevada was beset with difficulties. In general, the Lincoln Highway route was laid out over existing roads; however, this was not possible in all locations and new roads were constructed in time to shorten the existing route. The LHA planned to shorten the route between Salt Lake City and Ely, Nevada, by 50 miles by constructing a road across the Great Salt Desert. Deemed the Goodyear Cutoff due to generous support of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, this segment initially had the support of Utah Governor William Bamberger. Through its highway commission, the state negotiated a contract with the LHA to build the cutoff.

<sup>75</sup> *Eagle Monument Nevada Border Victory Highway*, Photograph, c 1925, Donner Summit Historical Society, <http://www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org>; Note: this monument is extant. Erected in 1928, it has been moved three times, from its original location at the California state line into storage due to vandalism in the 1970s, until it was restored and reinstalled at the Truckee, California, train station in 1998. In 2011 the monument was again moved to the Truckee Town Hall Lobby, where it remains on display.

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Even while negotiations were taking place for the Goodyear Cutoff, Salt Lake City businessmen and northern California interests favored a different shorter and more direct highway route across northern Nevada. Northern California business interests feared that traffic along the Lincoln Highway would be diverted south at Ely to Los Angeles along the Midland Trail. The new northern route would connect Salt Lake City to Wendover at the eastern Nevada border and run west along the Humboldt and Truckee Rivers to Reno following an alignment previously promoted by the Overland Trail Club (prior to formation of the VHA). From Reno this route continued on through Sacramento and terminated in San Francisco. California interests favored the Wendover route as a strategy to funnel travelers into northern portions of their state. The Wendover route promised to boost tourism in northern Nevada towns along the highway, which drew support of local merchants, and certain Utah interests favored this route due to perceptions it retained more tourist dollars in Utah. Conversely, Ely, Nevada, had close commercial ties to Salt Lake City; hence, Ely merchants and mines heavily supported the Goodyear Cutoff.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the developing opposition, the state of Utah honored its contract with the LHA and slowly continued work on the Goodyear Cutoff through 1918; however, the target completion date of July 1, 1919, came and went and the road was not completed. The LHA continued funding for the Goodyear Cutoff but a Nevada Lincoln Highway consul inspection in August 1919 showed that work had ceased and construction equipment had been removed to Salt Lake City. Utah Governor Bamberger, who had previously supported the Lincoln Highway, claimed the state was out of money and the equipment needed elsewhere. As the Goodyear Cutoff fell into disrepair, Ely businessmen boycotted Salt Lake City businesses, and enticed the Nevada Consolidated Copper Company to join them. The boycott drew the attention of Utah officials and businessmen who worked to resolve the controversy, although no assurance was given that this segment of the Lincoln Highway would be completed.<sup>77</sup> The resulting long and protracted struggle between the LHA, Utah, Nevada, California, and factions within each state over construction, routing, and financial impact of the proposed highway came to be known as the Goodyear Cutoff controversy.

### (2) *The Victory Highway established as a primary state route*

Established during the Goodyear Cutoff controversy, the route of the Victory Highway in Nevada provided a timely alternative for northern businessmen to rally around. In 1921 the VHA came onto the scene in Nevada and immediately sought cooperation from state and local groups to ensure success of the highway across the state. Reno was quick to embrace the new highway to aid in

<sup>76</sup> Mehls, *Report of the Historic Mitigation Work at the Big Springs Ranch Land Exchange, Elko County, Nevada*, 8–11.

<sup>77</sup> Mehls, *Report of the Historic Mitigation Work at the Big Springs Ranch Land Exchange, Elko County, Nevada*, 11–12.

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continued growth.<sup>78</sup> The VHA absorbed the OTC and PPOO Association and adopted the Wendover route into Nevada and the northern route into California via Elko and Winnemucca, into Reno. Many members of the absorbed clubs became active in the VHA, such as former president of the OTC, W.H. Goodin. Goodin was named to the VHA board of directors in September 1921.<sup>79</sup>

As 1921 came to a close, so did the controversy of which highway, Victory or Lincoln, would be named primary state route through Nevada. Utah selected the Wendover road as a primary highway and improved 40 miles of the Victory Highway west of Wendover. The NDH chose the Victory Highway as a primary state highway, thus securing state and federal aid for the route across both states. With this connection, the Victory Highway satisfied the Federal Highway Act's stipulation that primary routes must be interstate in nature.<sup>80</sup>

In a December 8, 1921, *Topeka Daily Capital* article, VHA president Stansfield praised the virtues of the Wendover cutoff and expressed optimism regarding the completion of a comfortable road over "those Nevada deserts which for years have been the main barrier between the East and the West."<sup>81</sup> As a primary route through Nevada, the Victory Highway was entitled to 60 percent of federal aid money, which translated to \$2,040,000 in 1922, for the state.<sup>82</sup> Once the primary route funds were allocated to the Victory Highway in Nevada and Utah, the Lincoln Highway was relegated to a secondary status, resulting in a decline in maintenance of the Lincoln Highway.<sup>83</sup>

Utah and Nevada's choice of the Victory Highway as their primary route was not easily accepted by the LHA. Many northern Nevada communities celebrated, while those to the south were angered. The LHA decided to challenge the decision, which gained support amongst northern Nevadans. Having secured a hearing with the Secretary of Agriculture Henry C. Wallace, the LHA meticulously prepared its case and created *A Brief for the Lincoln Highway in Utah and Nevada*, an in-depth study filled with information and statistics intended to prove their argument.<sup>84</sup>

The hearing on May 14, 1923, lasted all day. Gael Hoag, Field Secretary of the LHA, argued the case for the Lincoln Highway Route while Utah Governor Charles Maybey, ex-Governor William Spry, and employees of the Utah Highway Commission represented the Victory Highway. Secretary Wallace did not hand down a decision that day, and it was not until June 6, 1923, that the

<sup>78</sup> Elmer R. Rusco, "Alternate Visions of Reno," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* XXVIII, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 10–11.

<sup>79</sup> "W.H. Goodin Becomes Victory Road Director," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, September 13, 1921, 10.

<sup>80</sup> Mehls, "Historic American Engineering Record, Victory Highway HAER-NV-41," 9.

<sup>81</sup> "Nevada Road Commission Adopts Victory Highway," *The Topeka Daily Capital*, December 8, 1921, 3.

<sup>82</sup> "Victory Highway, Designated Primary Route, to See Early Construction Work in Nevada," *The Sacramento Union*, January 22, 1922, 16.

<sup>83</sup> Mehls, "Historic American Engineering Record, Victory Highway HAER-NV-41," 9.

<sup>84</sup> Mehls, "Historic American Engineering Record, Victory Highway HAER-NV-41," 15–16.

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announcement of his endorsement of the Victory Highway route came. Thus, the Lincoln Highway's secondary position was solidified.<sup>85</sup>

In 1924 the VHA announced its western headquarters at the National Automobile Club in San Francisco. This cooperative arrangement was made expressly to provide promotional materials to direct California bound tourists more effectively. All Victory Highway offices would distribute maps, information, and publicity, directing travel to the western headquarters to promote not only touristic opportunities to be found in California, but also the agricultural and commercial possibilities the state promoted for settlement once travelers reached California.<sup>86</sup> C.D. Babcock of the National Automobile Club expressed this new affiliation with the VHA was "the first step in the expansion of national scope" of promoting a great transcontinental route bringing thousands of visitors to California.<sup>87</sup>

### (3) **Funding of the Victory Highway**

Making improvements to roads in Nevada and other western states through which the Victory Highway extended was a challenge that the VHA met through creative partnerships and initiatives. General manager Ben Blow was instrumental in securing cooperation and aid from powerful organizations in Nevada and the region. In September 1921 Blow and C.C. Cottrell, manager of the Good Roads Bureau of the California Automobile Association (CAA), met with groups of highway supporters across Nevada to raise support, and money, to improve the route of the Victory Highway. Cottrell, a former Nevada state highway engineer, felt his California ties were more influential in aiding Nevada road building than his former position.<sup>88</sup> Efforts continued that fall and on November 26 Blow met with the CAA in Sacramento, which pledged \$150,000 in support of road building in Nevada. Northern California interests were to raise the money, most of which would be dedicated to providing a passible road across Nevada. A planned tourist information office at Salt Lake City would funnel travelers from the east into Sacramento and San Francisco versus other routes (Midland Trail) into southern California.<sup>89</sup>

In 1922 the VHA committed to improving the highway between Salt Lake City and Reno, and secured support for the project at a February 10 meeting in Reno. In attendance were members of the Utah and Nevada state highway commissions, state highway engineers from both states, the state highway engineer of California, and VHA manager Ben Blow. The highway officials of the three states

<sup>85</sup> Mehls, "Historic American Engineering Record, Victory Highway HAER-NV-41," 16.

<sup>86</sup> "Headquarters For Victory Highway," *Nevada State Journal*, August 31, 1924, 8.

<sup>87</sup> "Victory Highway Affiliated With New Auto Club," *Oakland Tribune*, August 24, 1924, sec. 10, 44.

<sup>88</sup> "Blow States Purpose," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, September 1, 1921, 6.

<sup>89</sup> "Highway Decision to Be Made Soon," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, November 28, 1921, 3.

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pledged to rush the improvements to be completed that year utilizing \$1,523,000 in state and federal road funds. A well-organized effort to raise matching funds in support of road improvements across Nevada was led by the newly formed Utah, Nevada, and California Highway Association. Headquartered in northern California, this regional association committed to raise an additional \$200,000 through public subscription.<sup>90</sup> A trip to California in October 1922 led to \$12,000 raised in one day as Blow made his way through speaking engagements in San Francisco and Sacramento, securing donations from civic groups, merchants, and automobile dealers.<sup>91</sup>

#### **(4) Highway design and construction, statewide and the Victory Highway**

By 1922 the NDH adopted a construction policy to handle present and immediate future needs as traffic increased. The roadbed and surface were designed such that they could easily and economically be widened and/or resurfaced with the same or higher quality material. The minimum roadbed width was widened to 20 feet with culverts built to 24 feet to accommodate future widening. Single-track surfacing widths remained 10 feet wide, and when the traffic became heavy enough to warrant two lanes, the surfacing was increased to 15 or 18 feet.<sup>92</sup>

The expense of maintaining rapidly wearing gravel surfaces led to early experimentation with asphaltic surfaces in the early 1920s. The NDH, in conjunction with the BPR, placed six types of asphaltic wearing surfaces on Project 14 (Minden to 3.45 miles north) that varied in thickness, method of application, and grade (quality) of asphalt used. This experiment led to the development of an economical wearing surface customized to Nevada conditions that was subsequently adopted elsewhere.<sup>93</sup>

#### i. Improvements to the Victory Highway

In the 1920s progress made to improve the Victory Highway was due to federal aid as a primary route and efforts of the VHA raising matching funds. The first segment of the Victory Highway to be improved was completed in 1921 between Zola (near Oreana, Nevada) and Mill City.<sup>94</sup> Due to the heavy traffic, the surface in Sparks/Reno and from Reno to the California state line were the first to be paved with concrete. Some additional urban sections in Reno were completed in 1922 and the segment to the state line in 1925 (see Figure 10).<sup>95</sup>

<sup>90</sup> "Victory Road Is Paved One," *Goodland Republic*, February 23, 1922, 1.

<sup>91</sup> "Coming His Way, Victory Highway Manager Meeting With Success in West.," *The Topeka State Journal*, October 28, 1922, 8; note: these funds were part of the initial \$150,000 pledged by the California Automobile Association.

<sup>92</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Third Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1921-1922*, 93.

<sup>93</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Third Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1921-1922*, 96.

<sup>94</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1919-1920*, 57.

<sup>95</sup> "Local Happenings," *The Manhattan Mercury*, March 28, 1922, 3.

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*Figure 10. c.1925 image of the Victory Highway/Route 1 west of Reno.<sup>96</sup>*

In the 1924 biennium, the NDH completed or had under construction just over 239 miles of the Victory Highway. Projects included grading and gravel travel surface improvements and limited hard-surface pavement improvements in communities. Select examples include 20.5 miles of highway completed between Elko and Halleck, 11.6 miles completed between Halleck and Deeth, 30 miles under construction between Moor and Silver Zone Pass, and 19 miles of grading and gravel surface between Deeth and Wells, which included a 44-foot reinforced-concrete bridge over the Mary's River and a 75-foot steel truss bridge over the Humboldt River.

In early October 1925 grading and graveling improvements to a 130-mile stretch of the Victory Highway, between Lovelock to Battle Mountain, were complete. Work took place under difficult conditions as the summer months brought heavy rains. W.H. Goodin, as director of the VHA in Nevada, reported "We are making fine headway with our road building program and will have all our road completed from Lovelock to the Utah line by November 1, except ten miles just east of Wells."<sup>97</sup> The same year the Wendover cutoff in Utah was complete, which was marked by a dedication ceremony held in West Wendover, Nevada (see Figure 11).

<sup>96</sup> Image of Victory Highway/Route 1 between Reno and Verdi c.1922. Photo courtesy of the Nevada Department of Transportation (PowerPoint images).

<sup>97</sup> "Another Victory Highway Link Now Completed," *Oakland Tribune*, October 4, 1925, 49.

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Figure 11. Dedication ceremony in West Wendover, Nevada, marking the completion of the Wendover Cutoff in Utah, 1925.<sup>98</sup>

*ii. Promotion of the Victory Highway and commercial development along the route*

Nationally, the Victory Highway was promoted as having more points of scenic interest than any other transcontinental route, through newspaper articles espousing the many advantages of the highway, listing historic sites and other amusements. However, research on the Victory Highway in Nevada did not reveal articles calling out specific points of scenic or historic interest in the state. A cooperative effort between chambers of commerce along the highway was launched in early 1922 to increase tourist travel. Western organizations started the initiative when chambers of commerce in San Francisco, Sacramento, Reno, Wells, Salt Lake City, and Denver wrote to chambers of commerce in eastern cities to initiate the campaign. The western chambers urged their eastern counterparts to encourage prospective tourists to travel the Victory Highway to California and points in between. In response, eastern chambers of commerce in cities such as Dayton, Ohio; Wheeling, West Virginia; Wilmington, Delaware;

<sup>98</sup> Kerrie Supanich, "West Wendover, Nevada Celebrates Over 80 Years of Highway History in Style," *Cision PRWeb News Center*, June 22, 2007, <https://www.prweb.com/releases/2007/06/prweb534147.htm>.

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and others agreed, and the western organizations reciprocated by encouraging tourists to travel the highway to cities in the east. The VHA supplied touring information to cooperating chambers of commerce, which were also supported by local Victory Highway committees.<sup>99</sup>

### iii. Auto-tourism

By the 1920s auto touring was a popular pastime and increasing numbers of Americans responded to the call of the open road. The built environment along the Victory Highway evolved accordingly as businesses catering to travelers developed along the route. In addition to gas stations and auto garages, entrepreneurs opened stores where provisions specifically oriented to travelers were available, or restaurants where a hot meal could be enjoyed. Signage became larger to be noticeable from the road.

The motel emerged during this period in response to auto travelers' need for parking, replacing hotels. Early motels featuring small detached cabins arranged in an L or U shape with parking were known as cabin courts and provided direct access to parking for each room. Other amenities, such as gas, food, or other services, often developed nearby. In areas lacking overnight facilities, travelers would camp next to their vehicle. Early auto campgrounds offered a place to camp and perhaps a nearby well, store, or gas station. By the end of the mid-1920s many offered furnished cabins with kitchenettes and running water.<sup>100</sup> In 1924 E.F. Whitton, owner of Weiland Park (later renamed Coney Island Resort), opened the Coney Island Auto Park at E. 4th Street and Galletti Way (see Figure 12).<sup>101</sup> The California-Oregon-Washington Tourist Association touted it as "Reno's best auto park" in 1927, with amenities such as camping spots, cabins, running water, electricity, plus a store, restaurant, and barber shop.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1923, to June 30, 1924, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1924), 27.

<sup>100</sup> Andrew Wood, "U.S. 40 Begins (1929-1945)," *4th Street Prater Way History Project*, accessed August 8, 2018, <http://4thprater.onlinenevada.org/era/us-40-begins>.

<sup>101</sup> Alicia Barber, "Coney Island Resort Site, Wieland Park," *Reno Historical*, accessed May 29, 2018, <http://renohistorical.org/items/show/88>.

<sup>102</sup> "Victory Highway, U.S. No. 40, Reno to Rawlins via Salt Lake City" (Grants Pass, OR: California-Oregon-Washington Tourist Association, 1927), side 2.



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Figure 12. a c.1928 advertisement for the Coney Island Auto Camp.<sup>103</sup>

*iv. Overview of the Victory Highway route across Nevada, east to west*

The following account of the Victory Highway in Nevada provides a snapshot of the route generally during the late 1920s and early 1930s, from east to west. The account is derived from two historic guidebooks: the 1926 Mohawk-Hobbs Guide and the Works Progress Administration Guide to 1930s Nevada (published in 1940). This overview is not meant to be comprehensive and only provides a representative description of the route and road-related amenities along the route during its heyday of use as a named highway. Subsequent realignments occurred along the route later in the 1930s and the post-World War II (postwar) period. The description is divided into sections for organizational purposes and provides a brief history of notable towns, physical features of the road, and its development.

Utah state line to Wells

From the east, the Victory Highway entered Nevada on the outskirts of Wendover, Utah, just north of present-day Wendover Boulevard (see Figure 13). In the early 1920s the town had not yet extended into Nevada; however, a service station offered mechanic services, lunch, and refreshments on the Nevada side. The junction with the Lincoln Highway was one-half mile further west. The segment of the Victory Highway between the Utah state line to Wells was newly graveled in 1926. Travelers passed through an unsettled desert environment and over Silver Zone Pass (5,940 feet) and Pequop Summit (6,967 feet).<sup>104</sup> The highway had a curvy alignment ascending Pequop Summit, with cuts, embankment, retaining walls, and pavement. This segment was dotted by small supply points such as Oasis, 5.8 miles east of Pequop Summit, which featured amenities such as gas stations, lunchrooms, and tourist

<sup>103</sup> Barber, "Coney Island Resort Site, Wieland's Park."

<sup>104</sup> Howard F. Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides" (Mohawk Rubber Company, 1926), 10; Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada* (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 115–17.

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cabins. Smaller stops offered camp sites, spring water, and gas, and other stops along the road had no amenities, such as Moor, a former railroad section house 9.3 miles east of Wells. Continuing west, the roadbed was gravel and allowed for fast travel (see Figure 14). The route followed 6<sup>th</sup> Street through Wells, a supply point for livestock growers that developed into a bustling town at the foot of the Ruby Mountains. In 1926 Wells boasted two hotels, a lunchroom, and a garage with tow-car service to meet traveler's needs, and in the 1930s the local prosperity was described as "reflected in the oiled streets and modern public facilities."<sup>105</sup> Wells eventually gained several hotels with commercial signage to attract the attention of auto-travelers.

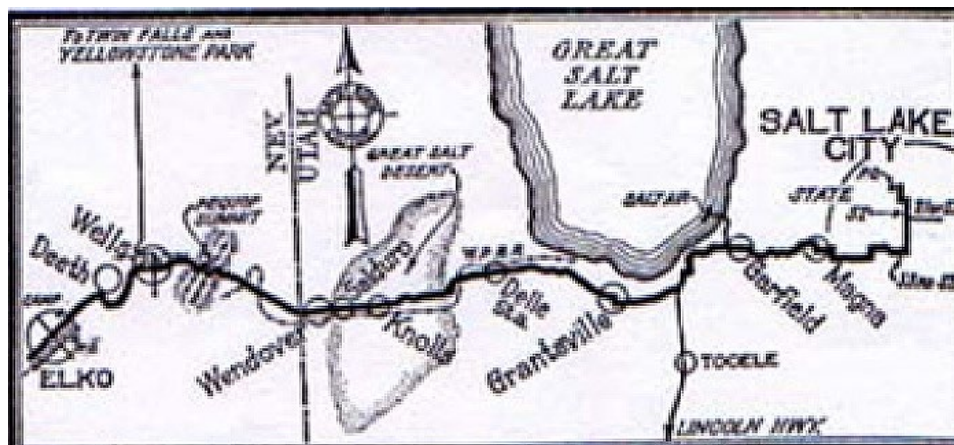


Figure 13. 1927 map of the Victory Highway from the Utah state line through Wells to Elko.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 10; Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 117.

<sup>106</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 10.

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Figure 14. c.1927 photo of the Victory Highway west of Moor, Nevada, showing gravel roadbed.<sup>107</sup>

### Wells to Elko

Leaving Wells, the route was graveled in the 1920s and classified as “a fast road” as it continued through small communities and ranch land (see Figure 15).<sup>108</sup> The small community of Deeth, 19.5 miles east of Wells in the Star Valley, only offered emergency lodging. Two grade-separation structures were built near Deeth between 1934 and 1936.<sup>109</sup> One-half mile east at Halleck, only gas and limited supplies were available, with good and free camping space available approximately 5 miles west of town. This section is characterized by long expanses of the Victory Highway that could be seen in this flat open land. In 1926 the Elko City Auto Camp was located 0.8 miles east of the city, and featured a fine dining room, laundromat, and 20 cabins under construction. The route followed present-day West Idaho Street through Elko, county seat of Elko County and the largest city between Salt Lake City and Reno. Originally a freighting point on the Central Pacific Railroad, Elko became the chief trade and service center for an area geographically equal in size to New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island combined. The city offered a wide array of shops, hotels, restaurants, and garages to serve the traveling public.<sup>110</sup> Auto-related commercial development in Elko grew to include concentrations of motels along the Victory Highway with signage aimed to attract the motoring public.

<sup>107</sup> *Victory Highway, West of Moor, Nevada*, Photograph, 1927, University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu//linchigh>.

<sup>108</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 10.

<sup>109</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Tenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1934, to June 30, 1936, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1936), 47.

<sup>110</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 10; Nevada Writer’s Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 121.

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Figure 15. *The Victory Highway east of Halleck, c.1927.*<sup>111</sup>

Elko to Battle Mountain

From Elko, the route continued west along the Humboldt River through agricultural valleys (see Figure 16). Between Elko and Carlin, a distance of 22.1 miles, the roadway surface was gravel. West of Carlin, the ascent and descent over Emigrant Pass (6,125 feet) were considered “easy grades.”<sup>112</sup> The original route followed the Humboldt River making use of a pre-existing railroad grade (present-day Chestnut Street east of Carlin) through steep Carlin Canyon. A stone retaining wall was constructed at the east end in 1938, enhancing its scenic qualities.<sup>113</sup> The alignment was narrow and winding through the canyon and featured two pull-outs to allow for passing or a brief stop to enjoy the views. Continuing west, Carlin was established as a railroad town in 1868 and it offered limited accommodations for tourists in the 1920s, beyond a spring. Leaving Carlin, the route featured a gravel road allowing fast travel as it continued northwest through sage-covered foothills of the Tuscarora Mountains and over Emigrant Pass (see Figure 17). Just west of the pass was Emigrant Spring, an early watering hole, and Primeaux, a tourist stop. In 1927 Primeaux featured a store, service station, and furnished cabins.<sup>114</sup> The route featured a gravel surface as it continued west through Dunphy and across a wide desert valley to Battle Mountain. Established in 1868 as a station supporting mining camps, Battle Mountain developed into railroad and mining town and was promoted for its rich mineral industry and famous Betty O’Neal Silver Mine “open to the public

<sup>111</sup> *Victory Highway. East of Halleck, Nevada*, Photograph, 1927, University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/linchigh>.

<sup>112</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 9.

<sup>113</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eleventh Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period of July 1, 1936, to June 30, 1938, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1938), 23; Note: picnic accommodations constructed in the early 1950s further enhanced the travelers experience through the canyon.

<sup>114</sup> “Victory Highway, U.S. No. 40, Reno to Rawlins via Salt Lake City” (Grants Pass, OR: California-Oregon-Washington Tourist Association, 1927), side 2.

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and worth seeing.”<sup>115</sup> The city amenities included an auto campground, hotel, and two garages.<sup>116</sup> Battle Mountain continued to develop touristic draws along the route, including hotels, casinos, and restaurants with commercial signage aimed towards the motoring public.

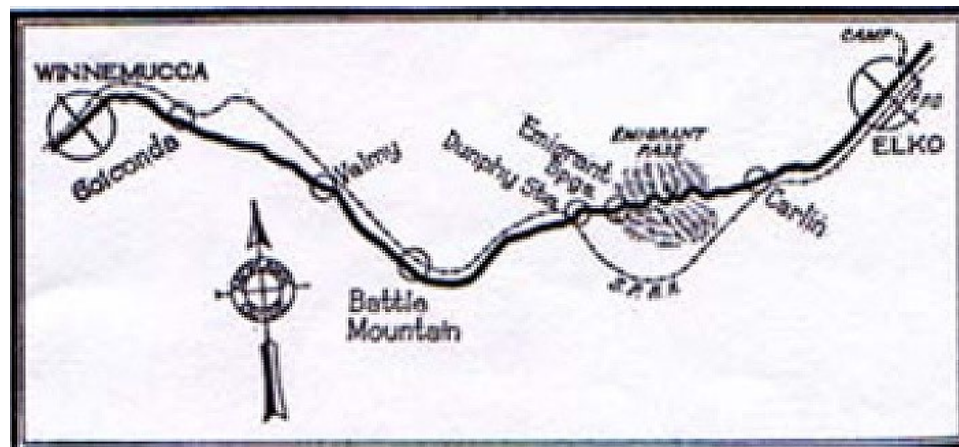


Figure 16. 1927 Map of Victory Highway from Elko through Battle Mountain to Winnemucca.<sup>117</sup>



Figure 17. Grade-separation structure on the Victory Highway between Carlin and Battle Mountain, c. 1927.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 127.

<sup>116</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 9; Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 127.

<sup>117</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 10.

<sup>118</sup> Image courtesy of Special Collections, University of Nevada-Reno Library.

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### Battle Mountain to Winnemucca

Leaving Battle Mountain, the route continued through the flat desert valley to Valmy, a railroad settlement that offered water, cabins, and gasoline to travelers by the 1930s. The surface was gravel, allowing for fast travel from Battle Mountain west through Valmy, over Golconda Summit (5,154 feet) and on to Golconda. Originally the route east of Golconda followed the Central Pacific Railroad grade from Valmy northwest through Iron Point and on to Golconda. In 1926 the alignment was moved to the present roadway corridor through dramatic cuts in the mountain over Golconda Summit.<sup>119</sup> Established in 1861 as a shipping center for stockmen, Golconda offered lodging, two garages, and camping space. The Golconda Hot Springs were once known for their therapeutic qualities and became a welcome respite for travelers.<sup>120</sup> The route continued over Winnemucca peaks and into the city of Winnemucca. Established at the site of an 1850 trading post, and a later stage-coach stop, Winnemucca prospered when the Central Pacific Railroad came through in 1868 and the town was made a division point.<sup>121</sup> Of special interest to tourists was the "best hotel between San Francisco and Salt Lake City," the Hotel Humboldt. Other amenities included several hotels, garages, and a city campground.<sup>122</sup> As with other communities along the route, Winnemucca commercial development continued to offer services to travelers with the addition of motels with commercial signage aimed to attract their attention.

### Winnemucca to Lovelock

The route between Winnemucca and Lovelock, a distance of 72.6 miles, was touted as a fast gravel road (see Figure 18). Travelling west 12.9 miles water was available for radiators, but not for drinking water. Another 14.5 miles west through the desert valley, the route passed through Mill City, Imlay, Humboldt, and Oreana, all small communities with limited accommodations for travelers except for Humboldt, which contained a small store, gas, and campground. Continuing on to Lovelock, travelers enjoyed the "fine fast gravel" through the Big Meadows. Lovelock had two hotels, two Chinese restaurants, a free city campground, and a new pay campground at the Victory Highway Service Station and Garage.<sup>123</sup> The Victory Highway through town was paved and featured curb and gutter and signalized intersections by the late 1930s (see Figure 19).

<sup>119</sup> Murphy, ed., "Timeline for the Victory and Lincoln Highways," n.d., Author's files, 664 Spring Creek Parkway, Spring Creek Nevada, accessed June 12, 2018.

<sup>120</sup> Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 129.

<sup>121</sup> Nevada Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 130.

<sup>122</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 9.

<sup>123</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 9.

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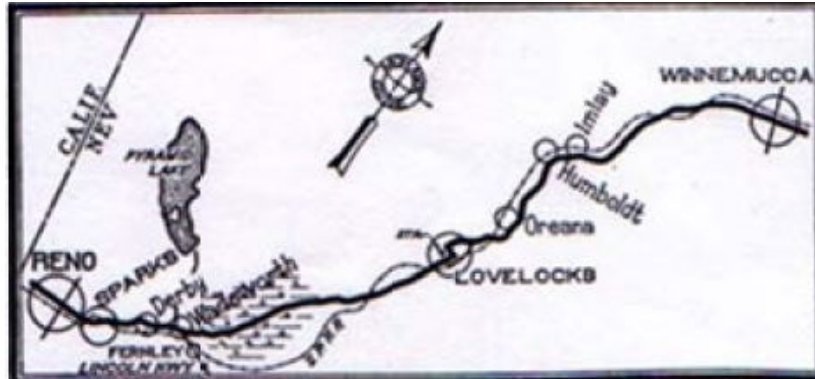


Figure 18. 1927 map of the Victory Highway from Winnemucca through Lovelock and on to Reno/Sparks and the California state line.<sup>124</sup>



Figure 19. c.1930s view of the Pershing County Courthouse from the Victory Highway/US 40.<sup>125</sup>

Lovelock to Wadsworth

The route between Lovelock and Wadsworth was graded dirt for the first 16.5 miles, then continued across the Carson Sink as a narrow gravel road that was built upon a former railroad grade (see Figures 20 and 21). Travelers were warned that no supplies were available on this

<sup>124</sup> Hobbs, "Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides," 10.

<sup>125</sup> Image courtesy of Special Collections, University of Nevada-Reno Library.

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stretch; however, stops included a railroad section house, with water for radiators, and a hot spring. Approximately 15 miles east of the junction with the Lincoln Highway, travelers were warned to “use extreme care” due to the soft shoulders.<sup>126</sup> At Fernley, a trade center and terminal of a branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Victory and Lincoln Highways converged and were cosigned westward to the California state line. The route followed Main Street through Fernley, and curved north through the concrete-and-steel Fernley Underpass, constructed in 1936 under the Work Project Grade Crossing Program, a New Deal federal work relief program developed to eliminate grade crossings, before continuing on to Wadsworth 3 miles to the northwest. Prior to 1904 Wadsworth was an important Central Pacific Railroad division; the rail division was subsequently moved to Sparks. In the 1920s Wadsworth was a small tourist supply point with modest accommodations, which included a hotel and free auto campground at Wadsworth Garage. The guidebook notes a “fine side trip” to Pyramid Lake 25 miles north, for fishing and a “marvelous” sunset.<sup>127</sup>



*Figure 20. Narrow road on old railroad grade south of Lovelock, 1922.*<sup>128</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 8.

<sup>127</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 8.

<sup>128</sup> *Old Railroad Grade 20 Miles South of Lovelock, Nevada, Victory Highway*, Photograph, 1922, University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu//linchigh>.



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Figure 21. The Victory Highway through the lower end of the Carson Sink, c.1927.<sup>129</sup>

### Wadsworth to Sparks/Reno

Leaving Wadsworth, the route featured a narrow graveled and graded travel surface that gradually ascended through the Truckee River Canyon on the north side of the river (see Figure 22). Derby was the only stop noted on this stretch, lying roughly 5.5 miles to the east of Wadsworth it offered lodging, meals, gas, telephone, and campground space. Continuing west, the travel surface was dirt for the last 12 miles before entering Sparks/Reno.



Figure 22. The Victory Highway approximately 3.1 miles west of Wadsworth, c.1927.

### Reno/Sparks

Upon entering Sparks, the highway was paved with concrete, curb, and gutter, through Reno and on to the California state line in the 1920s. Sparks was established in 1904 after the Southern Pacific Railroad (Central Pacific) decided to straighten the railroad alignment and

<sup>129</sup> Lower End of Carson Sink on the Victory Highway, Nevada, Photograph, 1927, University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln>.

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move the roundhouse and machine shops from Wadsworth to a new location east of Reno.<sup>130</sup> In 1926 amenities for the traveling public included a large garage with tow service and a free city campground. The route into Reno continued west along 4th and Virginia Streets. The Washoe County seat and largest city in Nevada with permanent 16,000 residents during this time period, Reno offered a range of accommodations and services geared towards tourists, including “over 1,500 people annually that come for a six weeks’ visit and a divorce.”<sup>131</sup> Amenities included several hotels and motels, casinos, cafes, garages, auto courts, and campgrounds (see Figure 23).<sup>132</sup> The many facets of Reno include the neon signage that has developed downtown near casinos, restaurants, and clubs.<sup>133</sup>



Figure 23. c.1928 image of Reno Auto Court (nonextant) at Toano and E. 4<sup>th</sup> Streets.<sup>134</sup>

### Sparks/Reno to California state line

Traveling west from Reno, the highway ran through a curving valley and passed two campgrounds within the first mile before going on to Verdi 10.4 miles to the west. Verdi, an old lumber town, was the site of the Truckee River Power Company and offered travelers two hotels and a garage. The route crossed the California state line at a point 23 miles east of Truckee, California.<sup>135</sup> This segment is notable because it was paved early and required

<sup>130</sup> “Town Building (1868-1912),” *4th Street Prater Way History Project*, n.d., <http://4thprater.onlinenevada.org/era/town-building>.

<sup>131</sup> In 1926 the waiting period for a divorce was six months, which was further lowered to three months in 1931.

<sup>132</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 7–8.

<sup>133</sup> Nevada Writer’s Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 145.

<sup>134</sup> Wood, “U.S. 40 Begins (1929-1945).”

<sup>135</sup> Hobbs, “Mohawk-Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides,” 8; Nevada Writer’s Project of the Work Projects Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Nevada*, 159.

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extensive rock cuts and cut-and-fill to traverse the foothills of the Sierra Nevada near the state line. This challenging project was completed in the mid-1920s (see Figure 24).<sup>136</sup>



Figure 24. Image of rock cut one-quarter mile east of the California state line.<sup>137</sup>

**(5) Victory Highway as a prominent named transcontinental route**

Between 1921 and 1925 marks the period of designation and active promotion by private interests to improve the Victory Highway. During this time its historic identity was firmly rooted in its use as an early named transcontinental highway and the primary east-west corridor across northern Nevada. As a result of the Federal Aid Road and Highway Acts of 1916 and 1921, the NDH assumed a greater role providing state improvements of highway construction. Subsequent legislation heightened the role of both state and federal governments in transportation policy nationally and in Nevada. This led to its dual role as both a named highway and part of a national road network designated and planned by state and federal government.

<sup>136</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Fifth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1925, to June 30, 1926, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1926), 17–18.

<sup>137</sup> Undated photograph courtesy of the Nevada Department of Transportation.

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### 5. Victory Highway/US 40 and National Numbered Highway System, 1927-1939

#### (a) Continued promotion of the Victory Highway as a U.S. Highway

By 1925 road associations had named over 250 routes nationally.<sup>138</sup> Even with maps and guidebooks, the abundance of named highways and lack of regulations on signage often made navigating the state's roads challenging, especially when the routes intersected. As a result, in 1926 the Association of American State Highway Officials (AASHO), along with a joint board of federal and state highway officials (Joint Board), developed a national highway numbering system for interstate roads (U.S. Highways) to provide uniform routing and signage across the nation.<sup>139</sup>

Except for a few miles near each coast, the Victory Highway became U.S. Highway 40 (US 40) along its entire length, including the entire portion within Nevada.<sup>140</sup> The VHA accepted the new designation with the position that they continued to fill an important role as a booster of the highway. In a June 1926 *Indianapolis Star* article officials of the VHA stated, "the Federal designation of highways does not indicate that promotion work...is part of the program of the Federal government...and that therefore the necessity for highway associations such as the Victory Highway Association, which has for its purpose the exploitation, development, memorial marking, and improvement of one of the great national roadways, is still in existence." Herbert G. West, then president of the VHA, stressed that the organization would continue to support Victory Highway improvements and serve the touring public and community members along its length. VHA maps showed the U.S. highway designation given to the Victory Highway, US 40, during the 1926 touring season.<sup>141</sup>

As promised by the VHA, the highway continued to be promoted and recognized as the Victory Highway through the 1920s and 1930s. Regardless, named highway signs were replaced with numbered federal highway shield markers as part of the new U.S. Highway System plan. Road maps showed named highways such as the Victory Highway as cosigned as early as 1926 (see Figure 25); however, named highways largely disappeared from road maps within three years.

<sup>138</sup> Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System."

<sup>139</sup> Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System."

<sup>140</sup> Jack E. Duncan, *To Donner Pass from the Pacific: A Map History Covering 150 Years of California's Lincoln Highway, Victory Highway, US-40, I-80, Henness Pass, Pacific Turnpike, and Dutch Flat Donner Lake Toll Roads from 1852 to 2002* (N.p.: J.E. Duncan, 2004).

<sup>141</sup> "Victory Highway Is Now Famous As Federal Road," *The Indianapolis Star*, June 6, 1926, 61.

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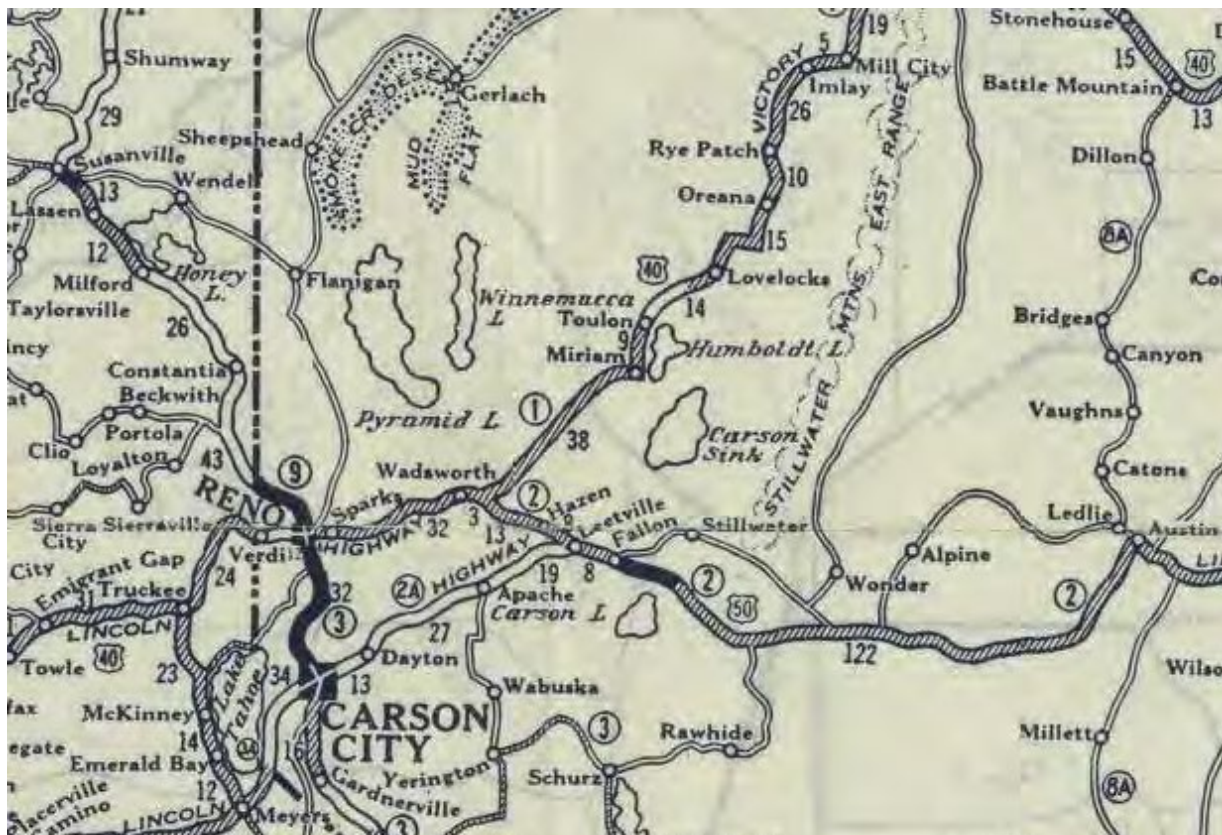


Figure 25. 1926 Rand McNally and Company Auto Map. Note both highway names and federal numbers shown. Also note realignment of the east/west highway corridor in west Sparks.<sup>142</sup>

### (b) Continued improvements

By the late 1920s the NDH recognized that early roads were deteriorated and under-designed to handle the current traffic levels, including much of the Victory Highway. The NDH viewed the use of gravel for a travel surface as temporary in nature, which would serve as a permanent foundation for future improvements.<sup>143</sup> In general, as traffic increased, gravel roads were rapidly becoming a serious and expensive maintenance problem that necessitated widening and resurfacing.<sup>144</sup> In 1927 the NDH outlined a plan, in conjunction with the BPR, to develop a program of reconstruction and

<sup>142</sup> Rand McNally and Company, "California, Nevada," 3,000,000 (California, Nevada: Rand McNally and Company, 1926), David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, [https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~214296~5501628:California-Nevada,-City-of-Santa-Ana?sort=Pub\\_List\\_No\\_InitialSort%2CPub\\_Date%2CPub\\_List\\_No%2CSeries\\_No&qvq=w4s:/when%2F1926;q:short\\_title%3D%22California.%2BNevada.%22;sort:Pub\\_List\\_No\\_InitialSort%2CPub\\_Date%2CPub\\_List\\_No%2CSeries\\_No;lc:RUMSEY~8~1&mi=2&trs=3](https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~214296~5501628:California-Nevada,-City-of-Santa-Ana?sort=Pub_List_No_InitialSort%2CPub_Date%2CPub_List_No%2CSeries_No&qvq=w4s:/when%2F1926;q:short_title%3D%22California.%2BNevada.%22;sort:Pub_List_No_InitialSort%2CPub_Date%2CPub_List_No%2CSeries_No;lc:RUMSEY~8~1&mi=2&trs=3)

<sup>143</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Sixth Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1927-1928* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1928), 21.

<sup>144</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Sixth Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1927-1928*, 17.

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oiling of gravel surfaced roads. After considering several types of surfacing, a treatment known as *bituminous surface mixing method* was adopted for use in areas where traffic warranted, and budget allowed.<sup>145</sup> Another surface treatment employed in this era was an "oil mat" the NDH developed as an economical solution to providing a satisfactory surface for the state's vast mileage when a bituminous surface was deemed too expensive.<sup>146</sup>

As a primary state route, the Victory Highway/US 40 benefitted from the higher share of federally supported NDH road improvements more than secondary routes. In 1928 it became the first hard-surfaced highway completed across Nevada; the Lincoln Highway was not completed until 1930.<sup>147</sup> Accordingly, 1929 traffic counts on the Victory Highway/US 40 showed tourist traffic increased 29 percent over the previous year.<sup>148</sup>

By 1930 the NDH's program of reconstructing existing roads had greatly overshadowed the construction of new roads. The narrow right-of-way (ROW) widths (50 and 60 feet) of early road design necessitated construction of deep borrow ditches, which were unsightly, difficult to maintain, and a hazard. The 1930 program resulted in the following characteristics of the roadbed: highway projects obtained more ROW whenever possible to accommodate a minimum roadway width 24 feet shoulder to shoulder and filled in the deep borrow ditches. The newly finished roadway now had flattened slopes where the terrain allowed, and drainage ditches 15 feet or more from the shoulder. The slopes were sufficiently flat, where possible, to allow driving on when necessary. The travel surface was rarely less than 18 feet wide, and through towns was often increased up to 20 feet or more. Realignment during this period were meant to solve issues of curves, sight line, and embankment that earlier improvements during the late 1910s and 1920s largely did not address.<sup>149</sup>

### (c) Early grade-separation projects

Through the 1920s the issue of railroad grade crossings was managed at the state level through a process of negotiation with the railroad companies. The state highway department submitted a proposed grade-separation project to the railroad company for consideration and negotiations began on the financing and construction; the railroad share varied from state to state and was generally 50

<sup>145</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1929-1930* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1930), 96.

<sup>146</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eighth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of December 1, 1930, to June 30, 1932, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1932), 31.

<sup>147</sup> Christine Adalia Fey M.S., "A Preservation Plan for the Lincoln Highway in Nevada" (University of Nevada, 1991), 35.

<sup>148</sup> "Both Highway Forty, Fifty Show Increase," *Nevada State Journal*, July 28, 1939.

<sup>149</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eighth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of December 1, 1930, to June 30, 1932, Inclusive*, 31, 66-67.

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percent or higher.<sup>150</sup> Due to the higher density of rail lines and road crossings in urban areas, grade-separation structures were generally addressed in towns earlier than in rural areas, and could be funded through city/state/railroad partnerships or municipal bonds.<sup>151</sup>

The NDH made a concerted effort to eliminate at-grade crossings on the Victory Highway through the 1920s. Overall, in 1922 there were 46 grade crossings on the State Highway System, and the NDH prepared plans to eliminate eight of them that biennium.<sup>152</sup> By the end of the decade, the number of grade crossings on the three transcontinental routes in Nevada (Victory, Lincoln, and Arrowhead Highways) was reduced from 50-60 to just five.<sup>153</sup> Early grade-separation projects completed by the NDH include the underpass of the Western Pacific Railroad constructed at Silver Zone in 1926 (see Figure 26) and a grade-separation structure at Fernley in 1928.<sup>154</sup>



Figure 26. c.1927 image of the railroad underpass at Silver Zone Summit on the Victory Highway.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Gibb Gilchrist, *Texas Highway Department 1927-1937*, N.p., 1937. Available at Photo Library, Texas Department of Transportation, Austin, Tex.

<sup>151</sup> "Proceedings, American Road Builders Association, Report of Committee on Highway Intersections and Grade-Crossing Elimination", New Orleans, Louisiana, January 11-15, 1937, 76-79.

<sup>152</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Third Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1921-1922*, 52-53.

<sup>153</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1929-1930*, 50.

<sup>154</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Fifth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1925, to June 30, 1926, Inclusive*, 13-14; State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Sixth Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1927-1928*, 31.

<sup>155</sup> *Underpass at Silver Zone Summit, Nevada, Victory Highway, 1927*, University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/linchigh?from=index;q1=victory highway](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/linchigh?from=index;q1=victory%20highway). Note: based on a review of Google Street View images, this underpass appears to be extant.

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### (d) The Transcontinental Highway Exposition in Reno

Improvements to the Victory Highway/US 40 in Nevada were well underway during January 1927, in anticipation of the opening of the Transcontinental Highway Exposition to be held in Reno in June of that year.<sup>156</sup> The event celebrated the completion of a highway system from the Atlantic to the Pacific, which attracted tourists and officials nationwide. A great hall designed in the Mission Revival style, the California Building was constructed at Idlewild, south of the Victory Highway/US 40 in West Reno, to host the exposition. Five huge tents erected nearby housed other auto-related activities, including an auto show highlighting Reno auto dealers.<sup>157</sup> The exposition inspired additional construction to promote the event, including the original Reno Arch, shown in Figure 27. The event kicked off Friday June 4 and ran for five weeks.<sup>158</sup> The exposition grounds became Idlewild Park, anchored by the California Building, and a later iteration of the Reno Arch remains in its original location.<sup>159</sup>



Figure 27. Nevada and California politicians dedicated the first Reno Arch on October 23, 1926. The text on the arch was subsequently changed to what it is today.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>156</sup> "Highway Building Well Under Way," *Modesto News-Herald*, January 23, 1927, 17.

<sup>157</sup> The California Building (ID No. 92001257) is individually listed in the National Register.

<sup>158</sup> "Great Automobile Show Opens in Conjunction with Highway Exposition," *Reno Evening Gazette*, June 25, 1927, 10.

<sup>159</sup> The California Building, NR ID No. 92001257, was listed in the National Register in 1992.

<sup>160</sup> Image courtesy of Special Collections, University of Nevada-Reno Library.



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### (e) Depression-era Road Construction in Nevada

#### (1) *Funding for road building prior to the New Deal programs*

Passage of the Oddie-Colton Bill in 1930 was a great boon to Nevada. Under this bill the federal government assumed the cost of building roads through unappropriated public lands, including costs of survey, highway construction and reconstruction, and maintenance of main roads. Due to the high proportion of public land in the state, 40 percent of the Victory Highway mileage in Nevada was eligible.<sup>161</sup> In addition to the Oddie-Colton Bill, Nevada benefited from early relief funds appropriated by Congress in 1931 and 1932 for road construction, which were essentially a loan program where states received an advancement that was to be paid back through deductions of future federal allotments. Nevada received \$1,049,000 of these funds, which, combined with regular federal aid allotments and other state revenues, funded construction projects on U.S. Highway routes in the state, including the Victory Highway/US 40.<sup>162</sup>

#### **Nevada's gaming and divorce industries and its effects on roadside buildings**

Nevada weathered the Great Depression and tourism recovered earlier than the rest of the nation. Legislation passed in 1931 to legalize gambling and provide quick divorces stimulated the tourism industry in 1930 and the following decades.<sup>163</sup>

Casinos developed as destinations providing opportunities to gamble, many located along the state's most traveled highways, including the Victory Highway/US 40.

The effects of the quick divorce services were primarily seen in motels after Nevada relaxed its already lenient divorce law by reducing the residency requirement from three months to six weeks. As a result, over 30,000 divorces were granted at the Washoe County Courthouse within the following decade, and Reno became known as the "divorce capital of the world."<sup>164</sup> Taking advantage of the influx of temporary residents seeking early divorces that traveled by automobile, some motels specifically advertised to this clientele, such as the Silver State Lodge along E. 4th Street in Reno

<sup>161</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Nevada Department of Highways, for the Fiscal Years of 1929-1930*, 23–25.

<sup>162</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eighth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of December 1, 1930, to June 30, 1932, Inclusive*, 10.

<sup>163</sup> "History of Gaming in Nevada," *Nevada Resort Association*, accessed September 16, 2018, <http://www.nevadaresorts.org/about/history/>; Guy Rocha, "The Great Depression in Nevada" (Nevada State Library & Archives, n.d.), [http://nsla.nv.gov/Archives/Myths/The\\_Great\\_Depression\\_in\\_Nevada/](http://nsla.nv.gov/Archives/Myths/The_Great_Depression_in_Nevada/).

<sup>164</sup> "Reno: Twentieth-Century Divorce Capital," *O.N.E. Online Nevada Encyclopedia*, accessed August 10, 2018, <http://onlinenevada.org/articles/reno-twentieth-century-divorce-capital>.

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(see Figure 28).<sup>165</sup> The University of Nevada, Reno, acknowledges that the Silver State Lodge was known for “Catering to the divorce crowd...offering rustic cabins, each with a stone fireplace, kitchen, and porch.”<sup>166</sup> Additional sources show motel owners were designing accommodations for extended stay comforts.<sup>167</sup>



Figure 28. The 1931 Silver State Lodge (nonextant), on a portion of the route cosigned as the Victory Highway and Lincoln Highways, catered to divorce-seekers.<sup>168</sup>

**(2) Federal aid and New Deal programs in Nevada**

Beginning in 1933, in an effort to pull the country out of the Great Depression, the Roosevelt Administration and Congress enacted an array of programs and agencies that came to be known as the New Deal. Beginning in 1933 passage of work-relief legislation put unemployed young men to work in the nation’s parks and forests. Legislation such as the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933 and the Hayden-Cartwright Act of 1934 provided funds for highway and bridge construction. The Federal Emergency Relief Appropriation Act (FERA) of 1935 marked a shift away from direct relief to states and provided a broad national works programs creating jobs for the unemployed. FERA funded the Works Progress Administration (WPA, later the Works *Projects* Administration), an agency that oversaw a wide variety of make-work projects, including highway and bridge improvements. Additional programs included the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and

<sup>165</sup> David Cavers, “Migratory Divorce” (Duke University School of Law, 1937), 97-98,

[https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5461&context=faculty\\_scholarship](https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5461&context=faculty_scholarship).

<sup>166</sup> “Silver State Lodge,” *Reno Divorce History*, accessed October 16, 2018, <http://renodivorcehistory.org/library/silver-state-lodge/>.

<sup>167</sup> Mella Harmon, “Silver State Lodge (Site),” *Reno Historical*, accessed October 16, 2018,

<http://renohistorical.org/items/show/21?tour=1&index=12>.

<sup>168</sup> Harmon, “Silver State Lodge (Site).”

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Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The increased federal support of highway construction during the depression years was an effective vehicle to put thousands of Americans back to work.<sup>169</sup>

New Deal programs and other federal support were instrumental in Nevada's economic recovery. Due in part to the efforts of Nevada Senator Key Pittman, the state received the highest per capita federal dollars of the states benefiting from the New Deal programs. In addition, Nevada was also first per capita in loans, CWA and CCC funds, and funds for public roads.<sup>170</sup> New Deal programs resulted in several projects completed along the state's roadways.

Utilizing New Deal-era federal funding, the Victory Highway/US 40 was improved across the state, including a section cosigned with the Lincoln Highway/US 50 in Sparks to create a more direct path through the area (see Figure 29). Instead of turning south at 15th Street, the new route veered onto B Street (Victorian Avenue) near the Coney Island auto campground to create a relatively straight path through Sparks. B Street and Prater Way were linked with the construction of an extension near Coney Island, creating the junction now known as the "Y." The new "B Street extension" and several miles of US 40 were paved in asphalt. The new stretch of highway was four lanes and 40 feet wide with parking lanes on both sides. Prater Way between B Street (now Victorian Avenue) and 15th Street, which by that time had grown into a popular tourist corridor, was bypassed. Business owners and operators along the Prater Way corridor protested the reroute. A group of business owners along the route sued the City of Sparks for loss of business and property values.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Mead & Hunt, Inc., *Historic Context for Louisiana Bridges* (prepared for the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, December 2013), 24–25.

<sup>170</sup> Rocha, "The Great Depression in Nevada," 1.

<sup>171</sup> "Park Motel and Park Grocery | 4th Street Prater Way History Project," *4th Street Prater Way History Project*, accessed August 24, 2018, <http://4thprater.onlinenevada.org/article/park-motel-and-park-grocery>; Wood, "U.S. 40 Begins (1929-1945)"; "Park Motel and Park Grocery | 4th Street Prater Way History Project."

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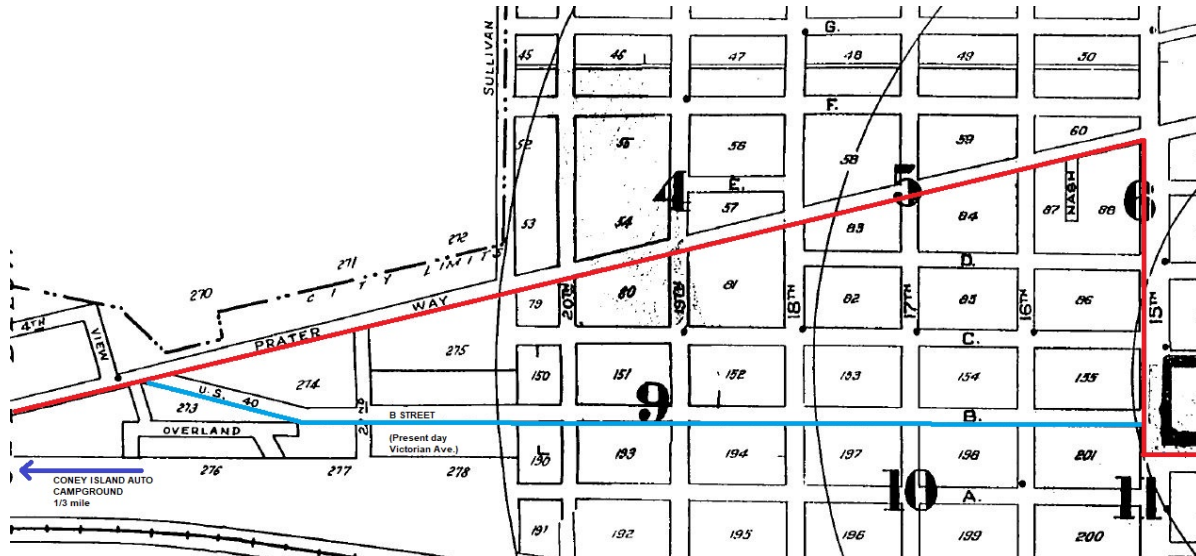


Figure 29. 1946 Sanborn fire insurance map of Sparks showing the 1934 US 40 reroute that created the “Y” junction at Prater Way and B Street.<sup>172</sup> The previous route is shown in red and the reroute in blue.

Other New Deal improvements occurred along the route through funding and labor under these depression-era programs. Examples include concrete paving through the city of Elko in 1936 and constructing a masonry wall, installing fencing along the highway, and widening and paving just under 17 miles with asphalt in Elko County in 1938.<sup>173</sup>

*i.* Grade-separation structures

In the early 1930s the inability of the railroads to support the volume of grade crossing improvements needed resulted in an increase of vehicle fatalities, while federal support available to states to fund road and bridge projects remained limited. New Deal legislation enabled federal and state highway agencies to respond to the crisis and assume the cost burden in order to make progress in grade elimination projects.<sup>174</sup> Legislation such as the NIRA, the Hayden-Cartwright Act, and the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act included funds to separate road grades at railroad crossings, reconstruct existing railroad grade crossing structures, and relocate highways to eliminate railroad crossings altogether. The increased

<sup>172</sup> “Sparks, Nevada, 1946,” 1:600 (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1946).

<sup>173</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Tenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1934, to June 30, 1936, Inclusive*, 47; State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eleventh Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of July 1, 1936, to June 30, 1938, Inclusive*, 47.

<sup>174</sup> “Proceedings, American Road Builders Association”, 77.

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focus on improving grade crossing safety resulted in a decrease in vehicular fatalities after 1935.<sup>175</sup>

The WPA, the largest of the New Deal programs, included funds for road and bridge construction and grade separation.<sup>176</sup> The WPA in particular put a great deal of emphasis on increasing safety for the travelling public through the elimination of at grade railroad crossings. Associated programs such as the Works Progress Grade Crossing Program (WPG) and the Federal Aid Grade Crossing Program (FAG) were created solely for the purpose of eliminating what was considered a primary public safety issue. In addition, an expansion of the 1938 federal aid program pertained to eliminating grade crossings: projects were entirely federally funded and were not restricted to primary highways but focused on the most dangerous crossings.<sup>177</sup>

New Deal programs enabled the NDH to construct new, or reconstruct existing, grade-separation structures along the Victory Highway/US 40 in Nevada. Some projects were undertaken individually, and others were in conjunction with highway projects in which the surface was widened and paved. Examples include grade-separation structures over Western Pacific Railroad near Dunphy and at Deeth, completed by 1936. The Southern Pacific underpass at Winnemucca was also widened that biennium.<sup>178</sup> As of June 30, 1936, all grade crossings on the Victory Highway/US 40 had been eliminated except for the little-used crossing over the Nevada Northern Railway near Oasis.<sup>179</sup>

### ii. NDH road-building activities

Between 1930 and 1940 the NDH continued to refine its highway design in accordance with the standards of the day, volume of traffic carried, topography, and materials available. The department also worked to design the embankment and travel surface so it provided maximum salvage value when additional improvements such as widening became necessary.<sup>180</sup> Materials became more standardized, such as asphalt, and in 1933 Nevada adopted tentative

<sup>175</sup> Mead & Hunt, Inc., *Historic Context for Louisiana Bridges*, Section 2, 24-25.

<sup>176</sup> Eric Arnesen, *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1540.

<sup>177</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1938-1940* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1940), 12.

<sup>178</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eleventh Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of July 1, 1936, to June 30, 1938, Inclusive*, 47.

<sup>179</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Tenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1934, to June 30, 1936, Inclusive*, 47.

<sup>180</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1938-1940*, 39.

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standard specifications for all road oils and cutback asphalts, in cooperation with the BPR and Asphaltic Institute.<sup>181</sup>

By the mid-1930s the NDH adopted a new highway construction policy geared toward safely accommodating fast-moving traffic. Highways were designed and realigned to provide the shortest distance between given points the road connected and to eliminate or flatten curves. The low cost of construction was sacrificed for shorter distances and improved alignment.<sup>182</sup> Research by the NDH, in conjunction with other state, federal, and private agencies, began in 1938 to address the issue of designing highways for higher speeds, led to changes in design standards. The emergence of "high type" of highway construction or reconstruction was first seen in the few years before World War II, which featured a wide strong base to withstand anticipated loads and a long-lasting surface. The NDH developed a method of grading gravel at the construction site, which cut costs of this base material in half.<sup>183</sup>

By 1940 NDH highway design included wider rights-of-way, wider paved travel surfaces, and wider shoulders (see Figure 30). Extended use of flat fill slopes and cut slopes, construction of footpaths for protection of pedestrians, and incorporation of landscape features in the general design were also seen. Major highways required a lane width of 12 feet minimum, with 11 feet minimum on roads with medium volume traffic and 10 feet minimum in width for roads with light traffic. For overall travel surface of two-lane roadways, this provides widths of 24 feet, 22 feet, and 20 feet, respectively. On all heavily traveled roads, except in mountainous areas due to excessive cost, NDH standards called for shoulders at least 7 feet wide.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>181</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Ninth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, for the Period July 1, 1932 to June 30, 1934, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1935), 55.

<sup>182</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Tenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1934, to June 30, 1936, Inclusive*, 53.

<sup>183</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Eleventh Biennial Report of the Department of Highways For the Period of July 1, 1936, to June 30, 1938, Inclusive*, 63–65.

<sup>184</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1938-1940*, 41.

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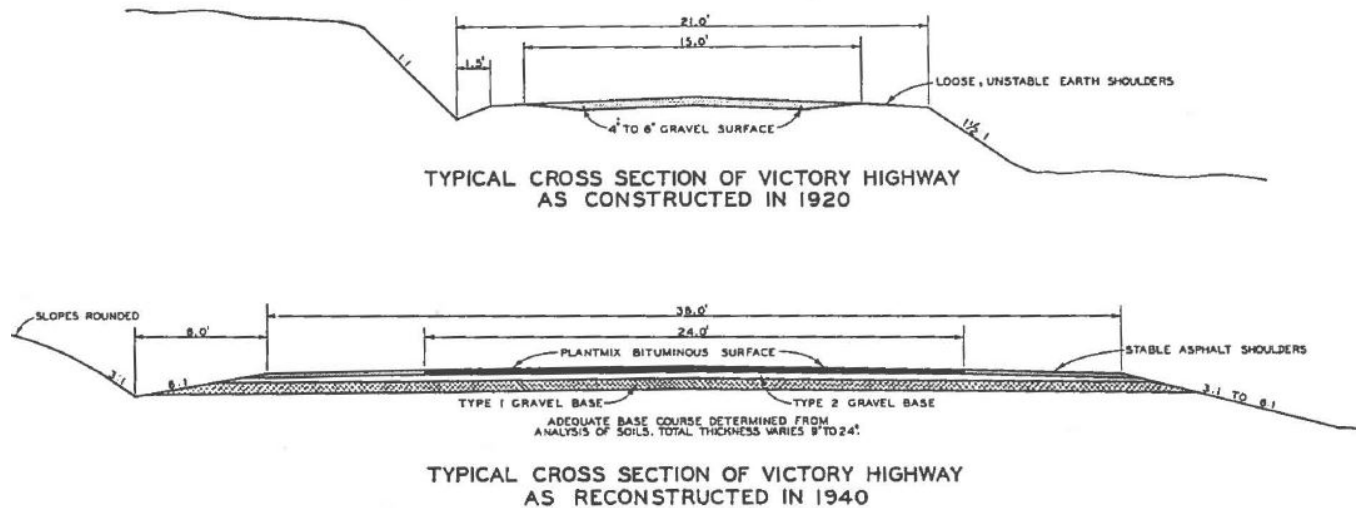


Figure 30. Evolution of road engineering illustrated in cross sections of the Victory Highway.<sup>185</sup>

### (3) Promoting the Victory Highway

In the early 1930s state branches of the VHA and LHA worked to promote their respective routes through Nevada. Elko newspapers reported that both organizations planned to spend \$6,000 annually on marketing campaigns. News of the Victory Highway's efforts reached the editor of the *Fallon Standard*, who attacked the Victory Highway supporters as trying to take business away from the Lincoln Highway. Tensions grew between the highway associations until a meeting was held in Elko in March 1930, during which delegates agreed to use shared road signs in Wendover and Fernley. In September 1931 promoters of both highways met in Fallon to organize a new joint association, the Victory-Lincoln Highway Association. A collaborative marketing campaign was launched in an effort to attract motorists to Nevada by utilizing billboards and newspaper articles extolling the virtues of both highways.<sup>186</sup>

The role of the VHA steadily decreased with the influx of state and federal support of highway construction, particularly through New Deal programs. Research has not revealed an exact point when the national organization disbanded; some local VHA branches in Nevada became inactive in the mid-1930s when members felt their mission was completed. However, the need to continue to promote the Victory Highway was recognized as late as October 1937, as reported by the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, when the Elko Chamber of Commerce was urged to revitalize the organization in

<sup>185</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways, 1938-1940*, 40.

<sup>186</sup> Fey, "A Preservation Plan for the Lincoln Highway in Nevada," 35-36.

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order to attract tourists away from the Lincoln Highway.<sup>187</sup> Traffic census figures released by the NDH showed that in 1939 both highways showed tourist traffic gains, and that the Victory Highway/US 40 percent gain (29 percent) was more than twice that of the Lincoln Highway/US 50 (nine percent).<sup>188</sup>

Aided by federal work-relief programs and burgeoning tourism industry, the State of Nevada enjoyed a budget surplus by 1935, and soon the news was broadcast across the country. Business leaders and policy makers promoted Nevada's economic recovery and modest taxes as part of the national "One Sound State" campaign in hopes of enticing wealthy residents to the state. The land around Lake Tahoe was marketed as a premier development opportunity for the well-to-do, and the campaign paid off when several millionaires moved to Nevada and built lavish estates. The increased revenue from property taxes boosted the state's coffers, and by 1939 the surplus was so large that property taxes were cut 20 percent, which essentially marked the end of the economic effects from the Great Depression in Nevada.<sup>189</sup>

### Green Books

#### *African American Migratory Experience*

Due to widespread discrimination, travel was full of potential danger for African Americans prior to 1967. Those seeking basic services on the road may not have clear information on which businesses would welcome their patronage. Recognizing the need for a travel guide to serve the African American community, Victor Green, a postal worker from New York City, patterned a guide bearing his name after a similar publication put out by the Jewish community. The Green Book outlined the businesses that served African Americans on the road, including hotels, gas stations, and restaurants, as well as a host of other businesses. Through his postal system contacts, Green was able to compile information from every state, Canada, and Mexico. While Green Books were not available for Nevada between 1938-1941 and 1948, versions were available from other years that proved invaluable for African American travelers. The passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 lessened the need for the Green Book, and three years later the last edition was published.<sup>190</sup>

Research revealed four tourist homes that were listed in the Reno Green Book near the Victory Highway/Lincoln Highway: Billie Ross, proprietor (520 Spokane Street, 1948), Mrs. Floyd Gardener, proprietor (875 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 1948), Hawthorne Guest House, J.R. Hamlet, proprietor (542 Valley

<sup>187</sup> "Victory Highway Group Suggested," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, October 16, 1937, 7.

<sup>188</sup> "Both Highway Forty, Fifty Show Increase," 10.

<sup>189</sup> Rocha, "The Great Depression in Nevada," 1-2.

<sup>190</sup> Kristy Totten, "Historic 'Green Book' Saved Lives Nationwide, Locally," *Nevada Public Radio*, March 27, 2017, <https://knpr.org/knpr/2017-03/historic-green-book-saved-lives-nationwide-locally>.



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Road, 1952), and New China (260 Lake Street, 1961). While none of these buildings are extant, future research may reveal additional Green Book-related resources that could further inform the African American travel experience between 1936 and 1967.

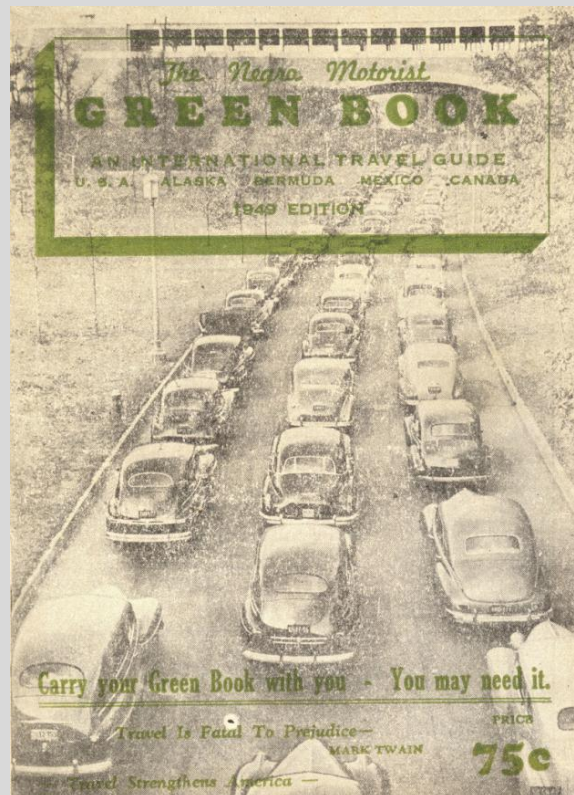


Figure 31. 1949 Issue of the Green Book.<sup>191</sup>

**(4) Build up to World War II and its effect on the Victory Highway/US 40**

The New Deal programs ended as the U.S. shifted its economy to prepare for entry into World War II, which had a major effect on the Victory Highway/US 40. In 1939 the Public Roads Administration and the War Department designated of a special system of interstate and interregional highways as a strategic network to carry troop movement and supplies. These routes were designated of primary importance and part of the strategic network by providing direct connections between cities and military facilities. Highways within the network were required to meet minimum design requirements

<sup>191</sup> Totten, "Historic 'Green Book' Saved Lives Nationwide, Locally."

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of "widths of roadway surface, shoulders, bridge loadings, etc." to handle "heavy and fast-moving" equipment.<sup>192</sup>

In Nevada, US 40 in the north (the route of the Victory Highway) and US 91 in the south (current I-15) were designated primary routes in the strategic network, while US 50 (the route of the Lincoln Highway) and US 6 (to the south of US 50 crossing central Nevada) were designated secondary routes in the strategic network. Designation as a primary route in the network secured funding needed to strengthen bridges and widen roadways to accommodate heavy military vehicles.<sup>193</sup> Generally, the NHD improved these routes to the minimum design requirements with one exception noted by the NDH:

Nevada's plans and specifications have always met these requirements with only one slight exception—on the strategic network the Army requires shoulder widening to permit parking, eight feet in width measured from the edge of the surfacing, each parking section to be 2,000 feet long, and constructed at 2-mile intervals. This was only a slight modification as practically all reconstruction projects were being designed with continuous eight-foot shoulders.<sup>194</sup>

Two projects completed on US 40 included a 28-mile stretch south from Battle Mountain that involved widening the 34-foot paved travel surface to a 48-foot wide paved travel surface; the second project involved widening and resurfacing a 17-mile stretch of US 40 extending north from Lovelock.<sup>195</sup> Further road work was delayed with the U.S. entering World War II and the diversion of funding and resources into the war effort.

### 6. US 40 During World War II and in the Postwar Era, 1940-1974

Wartime efforts had a direct effect on road building in Nevada and on US 40. Federal policies during World War II had a profound effect on the NHD, as funding cuts coupled with wartime shortages of labor and materials brought highway construction to a virtual halt. Approved projects were limited to those deemed essential to the war effort, such as those along primary or secondary strategic routes or along roads providing access to military or mining facilities.

This period reflects the function of the highway as a primary U.S. Highway and the effects of federal transportation policy carried out by the NDH, which was greatly strengthened by its designation as a

<sup>192</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1940, to June 30, 1942, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1942), 12.

<sup>193</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1940, to June 30, 1942, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1942), 12.

<sup>194</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1940, to June 30, 1942, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1942), 12.

<sup>195</sup> "Work Pressed on Highways," *Nevada State Journal*, May 4, 1940, 6.

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primary highway in the strategic network. This designation coupled with federal transportation legislation in 1941, 1944, and 1956 resulted in focused roadway improvements to provide interstate access and its role as the primary highway in northern Nevada and supplanting its identity and promotion as a named highway. As such, the history and themes during this period relate to US 40 and other larger national and statewide postwar trends and not the Victory Highway.

This MPDF provides the chronological period related to its role and use as a named transcontinental highway, the Victory Highway, 1921-1939. This section includes a discussion after this period to address its history and physical development as a U.S. Highway. This period is provided to understand how its role as a U.S. Highway differed from its role as a named transcontinental highway and is provided to assist in identifying and evaluating associated property types in Section F.<sup>196</sup>

### (a) Defense Highway Act of 1941

Mobilization for the war effort placed limits on civilian access to gas and tires and, as a result, substantially cut highway usage for travel, especially for recreational purposes. With the exception of roads needed for military purposes, road construction activities generally stopped leading up to and during World War II. The Defense Highway Act of 1941 further restricted the activities of state highway departments by limiting federal highway funds to improvements on the Strategic Highway Network, including the construction of roads to military bases, defense manufacturing plants, or air bases; and advanced engineering surveys for projects to be initiated after the war. In 1941 the BPR prepared a report on "Highways for National Defense" as a part of the war preparedness efforts leading up to entry into the war. US 40 had already been designated as a strategic route by 1939 and was reaffirmed in the report's listing of route priorities designated by the War and Navy Departments, which gave it priority in terms of federal expenditures.<sup>197</sup>

In this role, US 40 provided direct access to military facilities (see sidebar below). Along with providing access to military facilities, the NHD also kept busy in the interim, building flight strips and other projects for the military.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>196</sup> This MPDF does not address the significance of U.S. Highways in Nevada and properties that fall outside the chronological period identified for the Victory Highway, 1921-1939. Associated properties prior to this period or after this period may possess historical importance for themes not addressed in this MPDF, such as its role as an early U.S. Highway, and may need to be evaluated for National Register eligibility for other themes and areas of significance separately.

<sup>197</sup> Darcel M. Collins and Darryl Hampton, "Defense Access Roads," *Federal Highway Administration Research and Technology: Public Roads*, June 2012, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/12mayjune/02.cfm>; Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers*, 176-77.

<sup>198</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1942, to June 30, 1944, Inclusive* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1944), 7-8.

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### US 40's Connections to Military Facilities

As a primary highway in the strategic network, US 40 was an integral link in the transportation network providing access to several military installations that developed in northern Nevada during this era, including the facilities below.

- Reno Army Airfield – constructed approximately 9.5 miles north of US 40 by the Army Air Corps in 1942 and renamed Stead Army Airbase in 1951. The installation continued as an active base until 1966, when it was transferred to the City of Reno and subsequently operated as the Reno-Stead Airport.<sup>199</sup>
- Lovelock Aerial Gunnery Range – constructed northwest of Lovelock along US 40 in 1944, it was used for military training until 1965, when development of guided missile technology rendered traditional gunnery techniques obsolete.<sup>200</sup>
- Battle Mountain Flight strip – constructed 3 miles southeast of Battle Mountain by the U.S. Army Air Forces in c.1942, it was an emergency landing airfield for pilots training out of the Reno Army Air Base. It was closed after World War II and turned over for local government use by the War Assets Administration.<sup>201</sup>

### (b) Planning and development along US 40 in the war years

Wartime improvements on US 40 for the military and needed highway maintenance resulted in a large expenditure of state funds by the NHD to offset the shortfall in federal funds. The shortfall in funding for these activities was predicted by NDH and planned to be made up in the postwar years. In the meantime, highway survey and planning became a focus of the NHD until the end of the war. By 1944 the NDH had designed over \$3 million worth of projects ready to be funded in the postwar period, with equal weight given to interstate highways and secondary farm-to-market roads.<sup>202</sup>

World War II resulted in many businesses along US 40 contributing to the war effort. For example, in Reno local businesses increased output to support war efforts with the production of military supplies and many sold war bonds and stamps. Examples include a foundry, machinery works, food

<sup>199</sup> "History of Reno-Stead Airport," *Reno-Tahoe International Airport*, accessed August 24, 2018, <http://renoairport.com/airport-authority/reno-stead-airport-rtts/history-reno-stead-airport>.

<sup>200</sup> Loomis, *Combat Zoning, Military Land-Use Planning in Nevada*, 15–24.

<sup>201</sup> "Battle Mountain Airport," *Airports-Worldwide*, accessed October 8, 2018, [http://www.airports-worldwide.com/usa/nevada/battle\\_mountain\\_nevada.php](http://www.airports-worldwide.com/usa/nevada/battle_mountain_nevada.php).

<sup>202</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways for the Period July 1, 1942, to June 30, 1944, Inclusive*, 7–8.

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cooperative, and lumber yard along E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Reno. The war also introduced new building types; during this period Quonset hut buildings gained widespread usage, so much so that in 1946 the Nevada Equipment Company (currently Twin City Surplus, 1675 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street) constructed a showroom for the prefabricated Stran-Steel Quonset system buildings they sold (see Figure 32).<sup>203</sup>



Figure 32. 1945 photograph of E. 4th Street illustrating a four-lane highway corridor way with adjacent properties, including the Nevada Equipment Company's Quonset showroom as indicated by the arrow.<sup>204</sup>

### (c) Federal-Aid Highway Acts of 1944 and 1956 and the emergence of the Interstate Highway System and I-80 in Nevada

The passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 provided a nationwide federal appropriation of \$1.5 billion over a three-year period to modernize the nation's highway system. The act called upon the states and the BPR to designate a national system of interstate highways connecting state capitals, principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers by direct routes. The stipulations divided funding so that 45 percent was to be spent on the federal-aid highway system, 30 percent on secondary and feeder roads (those that branched from through routes), and 25 percent on urban extensions. Less than two months after the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, Congress declared that the war emergency was sufficiently resolved and authorized the postwar road program to proceed.

<sup>203</sup> "U.S. 40 Begins (1929-1945)," *History Project 4th Street-Prater Way*, n.d., 40, <http://4thprater.onlinenevada.org/era/us-40-begins>; Neal Cobb and Jerry Fenwick, *Reno Now and Then II* (Reno, Nev.: COPA, 2013), 145.

<sup>204</sup> Cobb and Fenwick, *Reno Now and Then II*, 145.

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Funds became available to states in late 1945 and construction programs began soon after. Initially, the NHD felt that the funds provided by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 (\$5,966,089 between July 1, 1946, and June 30, 1948) would go a long way toward catching up on road work deferred during the war. However, escalating costs of materials and labor associated with highway construction meant that the funds only covered approximately half the work originally planned. With safety and public convenience its highest priority, the NHD carefully weighed each project, and by June 30, 1948, all but a small amount of funds had been allocated. In the early 1950s, however, the NHD made limited progress improving the highways through Nevada due to ongoing challenges with inadequate personnel and funding. Nevada's highways needed an accelerated program of construction and maintenance to keep up with the ever-increasing number of motorists and tourists traveling across the state.<sup>205</sup>

The 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act allocated \$1.1 billion to states for the construction of 40,000 miles of the new federal Interstate Highway System, previously proposed in the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944. In passing the act, Congress declared it essential to the national interest to provide a national system of Interstate Highways for early completion. The act also increased Nevada's share of construction funds by almost 50 percent over previous congressional grant support, which included \$12 million dollars allotted in federal funds the first year. The NHD increased personnel over 20 percent to meet the new demands.<sup>206</sup>

The funding and construction projects authorized under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 resulted in the development of Interstate Highways in Nevada and throughout the nation.<sup>207</sup> Nationally, by August of that year three construction projects laid claim to be the first segments of the new Interstate Highway System: two in Missouri and one in Kansas. In Nevada, construction on I-80 also began in 1956 and continued through the postwar period. I-80 closely followed the route of US 40 (formerly the route of the Victory Highway/State Route 1).<sup>208</sup> US 40 was decommissioned by the State of Nevada in 1974 and construction of I-80 continued in segments until its completion in 1981. As segments of I-80 were completed, portions of former US 40 were obliterated or reverted to local roads. As a result, many businesses along US 40 shifted towards the nearest I-80 interchange.

<sup>205</sup> Nevada Department of Highways, *State of Nevada Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Department of Highways* (Carson City, Nevada, July 1, 1950), 12–13, 68; *State of Nevada, Biennial Report: Fiscal Years 1955-1956* (Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Highways, 1956), Table 14, 42.

<sup>206</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Biennial Report: Fiscal Years 1955-1956* (Carson City, Nev.: Nevada Department of Highways, 1956), 9–10.

<sup>207</sup> "U.S. Highway 50 - Nevada," *AA Roads, See the Road before You Go*, October 8, 2012, [http://www.aaroads.com/west/us-050\\_nv.html](http://www.aaroads.com/west/us-050_nv.html); National Park Service, *Lincoln Highway: Special Resource Study, Environmental Assessment*, 30.

<sup>208</sup> State of Nevada, Department of Highways, *Biennial Report: Fiscal Years 1955-1956*, 10.

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### (d) Postwar trends and US 40

In the postwar period Nevada was following national trends in which travel along most highways increased dramatically due to increases in automobile ownership and leisure activities. As a result, roadways were improved and often widened to meet national standards and auto-related commercial businesses emerged to serve travelers taking greater interest in scenic drives and trips to tourism destinations. US 40 during this period reflects postwar trends of businesses catering to tourists and the traveling public with the emergence in postwar roadside architecture such as motels, restaurants, and gas stations, unrelated to its use as the Victory Highway.

US 40 emerged from World War II as the key interstate connection linking Nevada to Utah and California and spawned a new era of auto-related commercial development in communities along its length during the 1950s and 1960s. Below are selected examples of postwar auto-related commercial and tourism development in communities along the highway.<sup>209</sup>

### (1) Wells

Smaller communities such as Wells also shared in the postwar commercial development along US 40. The c.1950 Victory Motel (226 6<sup>th</sup> Street) is the only extant example along the highway in Nevada of what appears to be an official "Victory" business (see Figure 33). Wells features several other mid-century motels, such as the c.1950 Lone-Star Motel (676 6<sup>th</sup> Street), c.1955 Wagon Wheel Motel (430 6<sup>th</sup> Street), and an Auto Camp/roadside park (734 6<sup>th</sup> Street).



Figure 33. c.1950 postcard for the Victory Motel in Wells.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>209</sup> Properties listed in the following sections are provided as representative examples only and serve to illustrate postwar property types and would need to be evaluated following the guidance in Section F to determine if they qualify for listing in the National Register under this MPDF.

<sup>210</sup> *Victory Motel*, Postcard, c.1950, published by Eric J. Seach Co., Salt Lake City, Utah.

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### (2) *Elko*

Commercial road-related development occurred along US 40 (present-day Idaho Street) through Elko in response to this postwar trend. Travel amenities include a c.1950 service garage and a Googie restaurant (now Chef Chengs, 1309 Idaho Street) and a concentration of mid-century motels provided lodging, including the Scottish Inn (650 W. Idaho Street), Stampede Motel (129 Idaho Street), Manor Motor Lodge (185 Idaho Street), Midtown Motel (294 Idaho Street), Centre Motel (475 3<sup>rd</sup> Street), and Thunderbird Motel (345 Idaho Street), plus several others, and practically all featured colorful neon signs. All date to the postwar period of US 40.

### (3) *Valmy*

Road-side pull-offs evolved into full rest stops developed by the NHD, as seen in the c.1960 rest stop at Valmy. The modest facilities consist of concrete-block restrooms that have metal gable-on-shed roofs with exposed beams (see Figure 34). Picnic facilities are located nearby. To the east in Carlin Canyon, two roadside pull offs were up-graded c.1955 to include picnic shelters, tables, and benches (see Figure 35).



Figure 34. Image of c.1960 rest stop at Valmy, with restrooms at left of image and picnic shelter at right.



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*Figure 35. Image of c.1955 pull-out in Carlin Canyon, with picnic shelter at right of image.*

**(4) Winnemucca**

US 40 retained a "Main-Street" feel in the 1950s and 1960s as it continued through Winnemucca (on present-day W. Winnemucca Boulevard). Several businesses catering to the traveling public developed in this era, including the c.1955 Sid's Restaurant (1995 W. Winnemucca Boulevard), c.1950 Park Motel (740 W. Winnemucca Boulevard), c.1960 Winnemucca Holiday Hotel (610 W. Winnemucca Boulevard), and a c.1960 Drive-In Restaurant (329 E. Winnemucca Boulevard). Similar to the Sierra Inn, the Scott Shady Court Motel (400 First Street) was not located on US 40 but employed prominent signage (four neon and one illuminated panel sign) visible from the highway to draw tourists. The complex evolved over time, beginning as a grocery store and service station in 1928, illustrating its association with the heyday of the Victory Highway as a named highway and subsequent changes to attract travelers as a later numbered U.S. Highway. For example, additional buildings were erected for lodging, including a wing of rooms with integrated carports and signage added c.1955 (see Figure 36).

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Figure 36. c.1955 office of the Scott Shady Court Motel.

**(5) Lovelock**

Lovelock gained several motels and amenities developed in this era to accommodate tourists, including the c.1955 Lovelock Inn (55 Cornell Avenue), the c.1955 Sierra Inn (Central Avenue), and a c.1950 Auto Garage (810 Cornell Avenue), as well as several restaurants and other businesses. Although the Sierra Inn was not located directly on US 40, the proprietor erected three prominent neon signs that were all visible from the highway (see Figure 37).



Figure 37. c.1960 Sierra Motel commercial signage visible from US 40.

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### (6) *Reno/Sparks*

As the largest community on the Victory Highway, Reno demonstrates the effects of increased automobile travel as tourism became an essential part of Reno's postwar economy. US 40 carried thousands of travelers every year who were headed downtown for gaming or further west to northern California. According to one count, motorists took 20,000 trips between Reno and Sparks on an average day in 1957.<sup>211</sup>

Reno's need for lodging continued to grow as auto tourism thrived. The term "motel"—a combination of "motor" and "hotel"—rose to prominence in this era, and motels with more rooms and features such as swimming pools and air conditioning lined US 40, where their characteristic neon signs were visible from the roadway.<sup>212</sup> While plentiful, these businesses were lucrative for their owners. A 1948 ad for the Hi-Way 40 Motel Court (currently the Hi-Way 40 Motel, 1750 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street) in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* boasted that its seven individual units netted \$8,000 per year.<sup>213</sup> By 1950 Robert B. Farris purchased the Shady Grove Auto Court, renovating the property and renaming it for himself (see Figure 38). In the 1950s newspapers advertised the Farris Motel's availability for rent by the day, week, or month, highlighting its kitchenette apartments and declaring "Divorcees welcome" to attract the many people who came to Reno to obtain a divorce.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>211</sup> "Postwar Prosperity (1946-1974)," *4th Street Prater Way History Project*, n.d., <http://4thprater.onlinenevada.org/era/postwar-prosperity>.

<sup>212</sup> "Postwar Prosperity (1946-1974)"; Land Use Planning Policy Program, Department of Geography, University of Nevada, Reno, *Reconnaissance Survey of East Fourth Street from Lake Street to El Rancho Drive, Reno, Washoe County, Nevada* (prepared for the Regional Transportation Commission, Reno, Nevada, October 11, 2011), 27.

<sup>213</sup> "Business Opportunities - Hiway 40 Motel," *Reno Gazette Journal*, April 20, 1948.

<sup>214</sup> Alicia Barber, "Farris Motel," *Reno Historical*, n.d., <http://renohistorical.org/items/show/45>; "Farris Motel," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, April 8, 1959; "Apartments," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, October 19, 1957.

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Figure 38. Postcard for the Farris Motel (currently Farris Apartments), 1752 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, c.1950.<sup>215</sup>

Reno's popularity as a destination for quick divorces continued to affect motel development along US 40/US 50. The Farris Motel's capacity for longer-term stays, which was common for motels along US 40 and throughout Reno, accommodated these customers. From the 1930s through the 1960s local lodging establishments received considerable business from Reno's booming divorce industry.<sup>216</sup>

Auto tourism along US 40 also boosted businesses such as gas stations and auto repair shops, restaurants, and bars. Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1949 and 1954 indicate a number of auto service, repair, painting, and bodywork establishments along the corridor (examples include 1500, 1900, and 1940 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street).<sup>217</sup> Restaurants and cafes, such as Casale's Halfway Club (2501 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street) and the Coney Island Bar (2644 Prater Way), expanded during the 1940s and 1950s to accommodate a larger customer base and serve full menus as established restaurants (see Figure 39).<sup>218</sup>

<sup>215</sup> Barber, "Farris Motel."

<sup>216</sup> Land Use Planning Policy Program, Department of Geography, University of Nevada, Reno, *Reconnaissance Survey of East Fourth Street from Lake Street to El Rancho Drive, Reno, Washoe County, Nevada*, 25.

<sup>217</sup> Sanborn Map Company, "Reno, Nevada, 1949" (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1949), Sheet 22; Sanborn Map Company, "Reno, Nevada, 1954" (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1954), Sheet 22.

<sup>218</sup> Alicia Barber, "Casale's Halfway Club," *Reno Historical*, 2017, <http://renohistorical.org/items/show/100>; Alicia Barber, "Coney Island Bar," *Reno Historical*, 2017, <http://renohistorical.org/items/show/110>.

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Figure 39. c.1940s image of Casale's Half Way Club.<sup>219</sup>

The prominence of these businesses in Reno was in line with Washoe County as a whole. A 1955 publication that classified payroll by industry showed retail (which included automotive, restaurants, and filling stations) and service industries (such as hotels and auto repair garages) as the two largest employers in the county, with 4,598 and 5,382 employees, respectively.<sup>220</sup> Tourist-based industries alone were responsible for a quarter of the wages paid to Washoe County employees, more than twice the national average of 11 percent in 1965.<sup>221</sup> That same year, Reno welcomed 5,885,000 tourists who spent \$172 million, 42 percent of which went to lodging, gas, and food.<sup>222</sup>

### (7) Rural road-related improvements

Postwar improvements along US 40 extended into rural areas and included upgrades to NDH maintenance facilities. For example, a concrete-block equipment garage was constructed c.1950 east of Pequop Summit. Along rural sections of the highway improvement typically included widening and the construction of culverts, underpasses, and overpasses to state and federal standards of the time.

<sup>219</sup> Barber, "Casale's Halfway Club."

<sup>220</sup> "Why Western Nevada Is the Place for Your Industry," 1955, Nevada State Historical Society.

<sup>221</sup> The Greater Reno Chamber of Commerce, *Reno, Nevada: Business and Industrial Development* (Reno, Nev.: The Greater Reno Chamber of Commerce, 1965), 16.

<sup>222</sup> Scholer Bangs, "Distribution: Nevada's Prize Industrial Plum," *Handling and Shipping*, December 1966.

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### 7. Summary

The Victory Highway was designated in 1921 through the efforts of private interests with the intent of providing a direct and scenic route from New York to San Francisco. Its promotion as a named highway continued until the 1930s. Designated a U.S. Highway in 1926, state and federal government transportation policy and design assumed an ever-greater role in the history and physical development of the route of the Victory Highway as its use and historic identify shifted from being primarily a named highway to a numbered U.S. Highway.

In 1939, with the onset of World War II, US 40 became one of two primary highways in Nevada designated in the strategic network, resulting in an infusion of federal funding that continued during and after World War II. This marked the transition of the Victory Highway from a named highway to a numbered U.S. Highway. After 1939, US 40 reflects state and federal government policy, funding, and standards, as well as larger national and state trends during the postwar period.

In summary, the Victory Highway/US 40 has three distinct chronological periods that relate to its historic use:

- 1921-1926 reflects the period in which it functioned as an early named transcontinental highway promoted by private interests and the VHA.
- 1927-1939 reflects the period when it was designated US 40 and its status as a primary highway gradually solidified as it began to secure state and federal funding for improvements and peaked when it was recognized as a primary route in the strategic highway network in 1939. This period reflects its dual-role as private interests continued to promote it as a named highway, while state and federal involvement began to develop the highway into a primary interstate route.
- After 1939, during World War II, and subsequent postwar trends reflect the end of its association as a named transcontinental highway, when it was recognized by the state and federal government as the primary interstate route in northern Nevada until it was decommissioned and supplanted by I-80 in 1974.

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### Associated Property Types

This section of the MPDF provides a consistent process to apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation to identify the associated property types, evaluate their significance, and assess their integrity. The associated property types of the Victory Highway are defined to be two main types:

- Roadbed segments and road-related structures: the linear structure of the roadbed and associated road-related structures constructed or improved as part of an alignment of the highway from 1921-1939.
- Individual properties and linear highway historic districts: roadbed segments with one or more road-related buildings constructed to provide auto-related commercial services or promoted as tourist destinations with a direct association to the Victory Highway, 1921-1939.

The *Statement of Historic Contexts* (Section E of this MPDF) concludes with three chronological periods that reflect the use of roadbed as the Victory Highway versus US 40. The first two chronological periods serve to define how associated property types derive significance with the Victory Highway through 1939 as follows:

- *Early named highway, 1921-1926* – this period reflects associated property types constructed and promoted as the Victory Highway and have a direct and important association with the Victory Highway.
- *Named highway/early numbered U.S. Highway, 1927-1939* – this period reflects associated property types that have a direct and important association with the Victory Highway and may illustrate both a time of active promotion and recognition of the route as the Victory Highway and its transition into an early numbered U.S. Highway.

After 1939 the highway's historic identity as the Victory Highway ended and its history and importance were related to the development of the U.S. Highway System and not as an early named transcontinental highway. Therefore, after 1939 the highway does not have a direct and important association with an early named transcontinental highway and it will not possess significance under the theme of the Victory Highway and the period of significance for a roadbed will not extend past 1939. This MPDF does not address associated property types constructed after 1939 that may possess significance for themes other than the Victory Highway, such as US 40. These properties should be evaluated under another context following the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

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Section E, *Statement of Historic Contexts*, establishes this chronological period related to its role and use as a named transcontinental highway; however, Section E also includes a discussion of the transition of this highway after 1939 to address its history and physical development as a U.S. Highway, US 40. This period is provided to understand how its role as a U.S. Highway differed from its role as a named transcontinental highway and is provided to assist in identifying and evaluating associated property types that fall within this chronological period.

A “direct” association must be established in evaluating roadbed segments. Direct association can be established through historic mapping or other research to confirm that the roadbed carried the Victory Highway. This information should be clearly presented in the evaluation. Establishing an “important” association with the highway is discussed below under Section 1(b), *Significance*.

### 1. Roadbed and Road-related Structures

#### (a) Description

The roadbed serves as the primary property type addressed in this MPDF. Segments of roadbed are classified as a linear structure. The basic elements of a roadbed include the visible components of the roadway such as materials and its physical form, including width, number of travel lanes, and shoulders; the foundation, or embankment, often raised, built to support the roadway components; the grade (vertical alignment) and curve (horizontal alignment) of the roadbed; and road-related structures.

Road-related structures are those identified in construction plans within the period of significance and may include the following:

- Bridges
- Tunnels
- Drainage features (may include culverts, gutters, drains, ditches, or dikes)
- Retaining walls
- Highway markers (including Victory Highway and US 40 markers and highway right-of-way markers, also known as “N-blocks”)



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- Safety controls and barriers (components may include guard rails, curbs, and pedestrian railings)
- Parking and sidewalks
- Landscaping features (typically only within the right-of-way)
- Overlooks and turnouts (connected to the road)
- Traffic signals and road-related signage
- Lighting
- Associated features related to the construction or operation of the roadbed
- Other engineered roadbed features

An entire alignment of roadbed or individual roadbed segments may be evaluated for significance. Typically, road-related structures were designed to function as part of the overall highway and lack sufficient size and scale to alone convey the historical significance of the Victory Highway. As such, they typically should be evaluated along with the roadbed segment and not individually.

### (b) Significance

A segment of roadbed and road-related structures may possess historical significance at the state level for its association with the history and development of the Victory Highway in Nevada. Evaluating the roadbed, in whole or in part, should consider the important themes, trends and events within the chronological period identified in the *Historic Context Statement* (Section E of this MPDF) and may require further research to understand its construction history and use as it relates to the Victory Highway versus its later history and use as a U.S. Highway. The first two chronological periods serve to define how associated property types derive significance with the Victory Highway through 1939 versus only for US 40 as follows:

- *Early named highway, 1921-1926* – this period reflects the beginning of the Victory Highway as an early named transcontinental highway and the active promotion and improvements by the VHA and other private interests. Roadbed segments dating to this period possess a direct association to the early history of the Victory Highway in Nevada.

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- Named highway/early numbered U.S. Highway, 1927-1939* – this period reflects roadbed segments that functioned as the Victory Highway and US 40 after implementation of the U.S. numbered highway system beginning in 1927. Promotion of the Victory Highway continued through this period; however, after its designation as a U.S. Highway the role of state and federal government agencies increased, and the use and improvement of the roadbed was increasingly related more to statewide and national transportation themes. Roadbed segments dating to this period may have associations with both the Victory Highway and US 40. Significance evaluations of roadbed segments must consider whether the history and importance of the segment, within the context of transportation, is most reflective of its role as the Victory Highway or as an early numbered U.S. Highway. In order for a roadbed segment to possess significance it must retain a direct association to the Victory Highway in Nevada and the statement of significance must clearly explain how the roadbed derives its association and illustrates its role as an early named transcontinental highway relative to its role as an early numbered U.S. Highway during this period. After 1939 the highway does not have a direct and important association with an early named transcontinental highway and it will not possess significance under the Victory Highway in Nevada context; therefore, the period of significance for a Victory Highway roadbed will not extend past 1939 (see above).

Portions of the Victory Highway east of Fernley through Reno to the California border were co-signed with the Lincoln Highway, an earlier named transcontinental highway that crossed northern Nevada. The portion of the Victory Highway co-signed with the Lincoln Highway may gain significance for themes and areas of significance associated identified in a separate MPDF titled *Lincoln Highway in Nevada, 1913-1939*. Segments of roadbed that were co-signed may be evaluated as a single entity provided the association with both named highways are addressed in evaluating significance.

A roadbed segment must be demonstrated to have an “important” association with the Victory Highway and must be established in evaluating roadbed segments. Important association can be established through the important themes, trends, and events within the chronological periods identified in Section E of this MPDF and may require further research. This MPDF assumes that each roadbed segment will be evaluated for importance on a case-by-case basis requiring an understanding of the history of the overall highway and how the segment under evaluation relates to the larger highway. Generally, segments will have a period of significance that does not begin before 1921 and will not extend past 1939; major alignment(s) during this period would generally have an important association; however, realignments, detours, or segments of road that were in use briefly or that served a secondary function and do not reflect the evolution, variation, or transition of the route may not demonstrate an important association.

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### (1) **Criterion A: Event/History**

A segment of roadbed and road-related structures may possess significance under *Criterion A: Transportation* for an association with important trends in twentieth-century transportation development. The Victory Highway was just one of many transportation corridors that emerged across northern Nevada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for automobile travel; however, after it was established it emerged as the primary east-west route. Its history as the Victory Highway is associated with important trends in early-twentieth-century transportation development. The Victory Highway was an early cross-country automobile route that extended over 400 miles from New York City to San Francisco that emerged from the Good Roads Movement and was widely promoted by private interests. It developed as the primary state route as the most heavily trafficked highway in northern Nevada and provided an interstate connection to Utah to the east and California to the west. As such, the Victory Highway represents the most successful private campaign to develop transcontinental routes in Nevada initiated during the Good Roads Movement. The VHA and local boosters saw the economic potential and benefit of improved roads and established the route in 1921 largely on an existing system of unimproved roads in Nevada that roughly paralleled the earlier California Trail and Central Pacific Railroad corridor. The VHA worked to improve and promote the Victory Highway in Nevada through at least the mid-1930s. After its designation as a U.S. Highway in 1926 the VHA continued active promotion of the route. In addition, the role of the NHD and its efforts to improve the Victory Highway, as US 40, played an increasingly important role in the history and development of the route as the primary highway providing an interstate connection in northern Nevada until it was designated as part of the national strategic network of roads in 1939. Segments of roadbed constructed and in use between 1921-1939 may qualify under *Criterion A: Transportation* representing a direct and important association with the Victory Highway in Nevada at the state level before its evolution to a primary U.S. numbered highway.

A segment of roadbed and road-related structures may also possess significance under *Criterion A: Government/Politics* for an association with Depression-era federal work-relief programs aimed to alleviate unemployment and improve transportation infrastructure. Enacted in the 1930s as part of New Deal legislation of the Roosevelt administration, these programs provided funding for road and bridge building and improvements that employed thousands of unemployed persons in Nevada and represent an important trend in twentieth-century government programs. Numerous projects completed under New Deal funding or labor were completed in the state during the 1930s. Projects that improved the Victory Highway prior to 1939 may qualify in the area of Government/Politics at the state level. A segment of roadbed and road-related structures must have a direct association to both the Victory Highway and to a specific project of a Depression-era, federal work-relief program to possess significance. A direct association must be made by establishing that the project received

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funding and/or labor from a Depression-era, federal work-relief program. Such evidence will typically be demonstrated by listing the Depression-era, federal work-relief program and project number and other details and will not be speculative.

### (2) **Criterion B: Significant Person**

This criterion is unlikely to apply to a segment of roadbed and road-related structures of the Victory Highway. Properties may possess significance under *Criterion B* if they convey a strong association with a person significant to the history of the highway. *Criterion B* may apply to segments of roadbed associated with an individual in Nevada who was the key figure in promotion or development of the route on a regional, state, or national level between 1921 and 1939. The specific contributions of the individual must be identified and be important in the history of the Victory Highway. The segment of roadbed must also best illustrate the person's important achievements related to the history and development of the highway. Mere association with the Victory Highway, such as involvement by an engineer or contractor in design or construction, alone would not render a roadbed segment significant under *Criterion B*. Distinctive works of road design or construction by engineers, designers, contractors, and artisans are typically recognized under *Criterion C*.

### (3) **Criterion C: Design/Construction**

A segment of roadbed and road-related structures may possess significance under *Criterion C* if they exhibit distinctive design features, important innovations, or an evolution in road-building practices or construction methods, or an important period of construction in the area of Engineering. All roads can display patterns of features common to their particular road type and can therefore generally serve as representative examples of the application of road design standards as specimens of the type or period under *Criterion C*. Therefore, mere representation of widespread highway design standards common to its time and construction is alone not sufficient to possess significance in the area of Engineering. A segment of roadbed and road-related structures may possess significance for engineering only if it represents important design and/or construction features such as an important variation of road features or an early evolution or transition in road technology or construction practices, that are deemed important in road design or that serve to distinguish it from other roads of the same type and period.

Examples may include efforts to traverse mountainous terrain or improvements that employed innovative construction methods to address challenging site conditions that may exhibit the use of innovative or important engineering design or construction techniques that serve to distinguish the design or construction of these segments from similar segments. Based on research for the historic context, much of the highway's design and construction appear to fall within the established standard

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practices of highway design and road construction during the period between 1921 through 1939 and this criterion is expected to apply less often than *Criterion A*.

### (4) **Criterion D: Potential to Yield Information**

This criterion is unlikely to apply to segments of roadbed or road-related structures associated with the Victory Highway. To possess significance for information potential, the information yielded must answer specific important research questions that cannot be otherwise answered. Roadbeds are designed structures whose physical development relates to engineering, technology, and building practices of roads, which is generally well understood and documented. Roadbed segments and road-related elements are unlikely to yield important information that cannot be discerned from archival records and plan sets. Earlier segments of roadbed were likely obliterated as improvements were made after 1921 and earlier wagon roads pre-dating the Victory Highway do not relate to the *Historic Context Statements* and should not be evaluated under this MPDF for its association with the Victory Highway.

As such, archaeological sites should be evaluated under another context following the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and not this MPDF.

### (5) **Criteria Considerations A through G**

None of the National Register Criteria Considerations are expected to apply to roadbed segments and road-related structures of the Victory Highway.

### (6) **Period of significance**

A segment of roadbed and road-related structures can derive significance from important historical associations or feats of engineering in state history under *Criterion A* or *Criterion C*. National Register guidance states the period of significance is the length of time when a property was associated with important events, trends, or activities, or attained the characteristics that qualify it for listing in the National Register. The overall chronological periods of development discussed in the *Statement of Historic Contexts* (Section E of the MPDF) related to the Victory Highway extend from 1921 to 1939. When evaluating and nominating individual segments of roadbed and road-related structures under this MPDF, a specific period of significance must be determined. Under *Criterion A: Transportation*, the period of significance for a roadbed and road-related structures will relate to when the segment served as a component of the Victory Highway based on its date of construction and continued use as part of the Victory Highway, likely ending in or before 1939. Under *Criterion A: Government/Politics* the period of significance will encapsulate the period in which the construction of

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the federal work-relief project commenced and ended. Under *Criterion C: Engineering*, the period of significance for roadbed segments is typically the date of construction or the date of the improvements found to have significance.

### (c) Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for the National Register, a segment of roadbed and road-related structures must not only possess significance, but also retain historic integrity. Per the National Register guidance, historic integrity is “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”<sup>223</sup> It is necessary to have a clear understanding of why and when a highway was important in order to identify the road’s essential physical features, and to understand which aspects of historic integrity are most important to convey its significance. In assessing historic integrity, a segment of roadbed needs to retain all of its essential physical features and most, if not all, of the seven aspects of integrity to provide a sense of time, place, and travel experience from the period of significance (see *Assessing integrity* below).

### (d) Essential physical features

Essential physical features of the Victory Highway include the following and must be from the period of significance:

- *Surface* – identifiable components that work together to comprise the physical form and materials of the roadbed. The physical form includes the roadway width, number of travel lanes, shoulders, and major features in the right-of-way essential in understanding its function and significance. Materials under this feature relates to the visible elements of travel surface and shoulders.
- *Embankment* – identifiable components include the raised foundation of materials built to support the roadway components consisting of a berm and slope.
- *Alignment* – identifiable components include the grade (vertical alignment) and curve (horizontal alignment) of the roadbed.

<sup>223</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1991, rev), 44.

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Essential physical features may also include:

- *Road-related structures* – identifiable components include one or more road-related structures listed in Section 1.A above that contribute to historic character the segment of roadbed.

Not all identifiable components need to be present to retain an essential physical feature. For example, some rural roadbeds may not have had shoulders (surface), some urban roadbeds may lack a raised foundation (embankment), and in other cases the identifiable components may be interrelated, such as urban roadbeds that will often retain their overall roadway width while the number of travel lanes may have increased or decreased. Guidance on assessing integrity is provided below.

Segments of roadbed are not required to continue to serve their historic function of carrying vehicular traffic to be nominated under this MPDF. Segments of roadbed closed to vehicular use and in recreational/trail use may meet the registration requirements if they retain their essential physical features. Segments of roadbed and road-related structures that are not of a sufficient size, scale, or length and that do not exhibit the essential physical features above cannot convey significance and are not eligible for listing in the National Register.

### (e) Assessing integrity

If the essential physical features of the roadbed are present, the segment of roadbed being evaluated must also demonstrate most, if not all, of the aspects of integrity important to conveying the road's significance and historic identity from the period of significance. Per National Register guidance, "It is not necessary for a property to retain all its historic physical features or characteristics. The property must retain, however, the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity."<sup>224</sup> The seven aspects of integrity as they apply to segments of roadbed and road-related structures, include:

- *Design* – The combination of elements that create the grade, curve, and physical form of the roadbed. Among other things, design encompasses alignment and roadway components related to its form and road-related structures.
- *Materials* – The physical composition of the roadway components, embankment, and road-related structures.

<sup>224</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1991, rev), 46.

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- *Workmanship* – Elements that reflect physical evidence of the labor and skill of artisans or master craft persons. Due to standardization and the widespread use of mechanization in road construction, this aspect of integrity is rarely expected to apply to roadway components or the embankment; however, workmanship may be evident in road-related structures (e.g., dry-laid stone retaining walls) or may be evident in New Deal federal work-relief construction.
- *Location* – The spatial location of the roadbed when constructed. Realignments of the Victory Highway through 1926 will generally not constitute a loss of integrity. Both the realignment and the bypassed alignment may have integrity if they retain their essential physical features from their period of significance. Realignments after 1926 need to be assessed for integrity of location based on the period of significance. (See Alterations below for more guidance on realignments.)
- *Setting* – The elements in the environment that comprise the character of the surroundings of the segment. The physical features that comprise the setting may vary along the length of the segment. Combined with other aspects of integrity, setting helps convey a sense of time and place.
- *Feeling* – Results from the presence of elements that evoke and express the historic character of the roadbed. Generally, this aspect of integrity is dependent on retaining the other aspects of integrity to add to a sense of time, place, and travel experience.
- *Association* – Located along the Victory Highway prior to 1939 and demonstrated by the presence of its essential physical features that convey its function and direct relationship to the historic themes.

Under *Criterion A*, design, location, association, setting, and feeling are generally the most important aspects of integrity and must be retained because they convey the function and establish its relationship between the road or road-related resources and the Victory Highway. The essential physical features convey a road's historic function from the period of significance. Under *Criterion A* the number of travel lanes and narrow shoulders are especially important roadway components. For roads with historic significance under *Criterion C*, design, materials, workmanship (if applicable), association, and location are generally the most important aspects of integrity and must be retained because they convey its function as a highway. The essential physical features demonstrate the important road design or construction related to engineering significance. Under *Criterion C* road-



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related structures may be essential features and width and material are especially important roadway components.

### (f) Alterations

Changes to the segment of roadbed and road-related structures outside the period of significance should be identified to determine if the changes impact essential physical features and to what degree the changes diminish the aspects of integrity. The size and scale of the change need to be considered to determine if the change is severe enough to diminish one or more aspects of integrity. Due to ongoing maintenance and changes in design and safety standards, segments of roadbed and road-related structures typically experienced steady changes that may be reflected within and outside of the period of significance. Typically, roadbed segments include changes to the travel surface material, such as changes in paving, changes to the embankment and travel lanes due to widening, and realignments.

In-kind replacement of the travel surface materials, such as replacing asphalt with asphalt, is a common change associated with highways and will typically not result in a loss of integrity. Resurfacing resulting in a new surface material (e.g., from gravel to asphalt) may result in a change to the essential physical feature and may result in the loss of integrity unless the resurfacing was done during the period of significance. Not all changes, including those to essential physical features, will diminish a road's historic integrity to the degree that it can no longer convey significance. For example, a small amount of widening may not result in the loss of essential physical features if the number of travel lanes, embankment, and alignment can continue to convey its historic identity from the period of significance.

Realignments of the Victory Highway through 1926 will not constitute a loss of integrity and realignments from 1927 through 1939 need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if the realignment is historically significant in its own right or should be considered a loss of integrity. Both the realignment and the bypassed alignment may possess integrity if they retain their essential physical features from their period of significance. Bypassed and abandoned bypassed segments are given greater allowance for integrity of design due to the degradation associated with natural processes such as erosion, washouts, and encroaching vegetation but must have sufficient length to convey a sense of connectivity from the period of significance. Sufficient length is demonstrated by having an uninterrupted view of the roadbed within the viewshed, which serves to provide a sense of automobile travel from the period of significance. Early alignments reflect lower travel speeds before efforts to flatten the grade and straighten the curves and may require less length, while higher travel speeds and flatter grade and straighter curves may require more length to retain integrity.

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In addition to assessing individual changes, the cumulative effect of multiple changes to the segment needs to be considered as it may collectively diminish aspects of historic integrity. Alterations completed within the period of significance generally will not diminish historic integrity.

### (g) Determination of eligibility

Roadbed segments or road-related resources that are demonstrated to have a direct and important association, possess significance, convey their essential physical features, and retain most, if not all, aspects of integrity are individually eligible for listing in the National Register as a structure.<sup>225</sup> Roadbed segments that do not retain integrity do not convey significance for their association to the Victory Highway and are not eligible for listing in the National Register. Historic boundaries should be delineated to include the extent of the essential physical features that retain integrity.

## 2. Individual Properties and Historic Districts

This section addresses how to evaluate two property types: individual road-related properties and road-related historic districts. Both property types have similar requirements: one or more road-related properties that are located along and immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed that possesses significance and retains integrity as outlined in the requirements in the previous section. Individual road-related properties were generally constructed to provide auto-related commercial services, promoted as tourist destinations along the route, or otherwise had a direct association to the highway. Historic districts will be comprised of a concentration of individual road-related properties; because of this, many of the overall National Register eligibility requirements are similar. As such, the requirements below apply to both individual road-related properties and historic districts unless specially indicated.

### (a) Description

#### (1) *Individual properties*

Individual road-related properties are those that are historically related to the highway by providing auto-related commercial services, that were promoted as tourist destinations along the route, or

<sup>225</sup> Segments of roadbed are considered structures. On a practical level, segments of roadbed are recorded and are approached as components of one structure, similar to a linear historic district, with various roadbed segments either contributing to the overall highway by possessing significance and retaining integrity or not contributing to the overall highway by either lacking significance or integrity. When recoding a segment of roadbed contact the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office to ensure proper recordation in the Nevada Cultural Resources Information System (NVCRIS).

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otherwise had a direct association to the highway. Associated property types include the following historic functions:

- Lodging (auto campgrounds, cabin courts, motels, hotels)
- Food service (restaurants, diners, cafes)
- Automobile services (gas and service stations, auto showrooms and garages)
- Commercial signage
- Waysides
- Tourist attractions

An individual road-related property may derive significance for its association with the Victory Highway if it is located immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed that is found to both possess significance and retain integrity and falls within the period of significance of that segment of roadbed. Structures integral to the roadbed associated with the highway are addressed in Section F.1 and should be evaluated as part of the roadbed, not as individual properties. Additional properties along and immediately adjacent to the highway may have a direct and important association with the highway if they meet the same requirements as set forth for buildings below.

### (2) *Historic districts*

A concentration of individual road-related property located immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed that possesses significance and retains integrity may form a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction and be considered as a highway historic district. Collectively, the grouping will include an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties that convey the overall historic environment and illustrate their interrelationship with the Victory Highway within its period of significance. Per National Register guidance, "a district must be significant, as well as being an identifiable entity."<sup>226</sup> Guidance on determining significance and whether a concentration forms an identifiable entity is provided below.

### (b) *Significance*

An individual road-related property or highway historic district must be located immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed that is found to both possess significance and retain integrity. This requirement is necessary to establish a direct association with the highway. One or more individual

<sup>226</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1991, rev), 5.

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road-related properties that fall within the period of significance of the segment of roadbed may possess historical significance for an association with the history and development of the Victory Highway in Nevada, individually or collectively as a historic district.

Further intensive-level research is critical in establishing and documenting the historic function and use of an individual road-related property or historic district and establishing a direct association with the highway; the association to the highway cannot be speculative. Intensive-level research and documentation may include advertisements, newspaper articles, and promotional literature linking the property to efforts to provide services or serving as tourists attractions specifically to travelers along the route versus merely providing services to local residents. For individual road-related properties that were constructed prior to the period of significance of the associated segment of roadbed, a direct association with the highway within the period of significance needs to be demonstrated during the period of significance of the roadbed to possess significance.

Evaluating road-related properties and historic districts should consider the important themes, trends and events within the chronological period identified in the *Statement of Historic Contexts* (Section E of this MPDF) and requires research to understand the construction history and historic function and use as it relates to the Victory Highway versus its use to provide other functions unrelated to the highway or primarily to local residents and not the traveling public and tourists during the chronological period.

### (1) **Criterion A: History**

An individual road-related property or road-related historic district must possess significance for a direct and important association with the Victory Highway under *Criterion A* in the area of Transportation. This association is demonstrated through the location of one or more individual road-related properties along and immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed that is significant and retains integrity.

An individual road-related property or road-related highway historic district may also possess significance for an association with one or more supplemental areas of significance related to other themes of the Victory Highway identified in Section E. Supplemental themes include:

- *Criterion A: Commerce* – The Victory Highway in Nevada facilitated commercial development in communities and way stations along the route. Businesses catering to travelers and tourists

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developed along portions of the highway to provide needed goods and services in addition to serving local residents. The presence of the highway led to substantial numbers of automobile-related businesses such as restaurants, motels, service garages, and gas stations in direct response to through traffic along the route. Auto-related commercial development in close proximity to the Victory Highway serving the through-traveler representing an important trend in auto-related commercial development at the state level.

- Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation* – Tourism became one of Nevada’s major industries beginning in the 1910s based largely on its scenic landscape and outdoor recreational opportunities. Legislation passed in 1931 legalized gambling and enacted the most relaxed divorce laws in the country. As a direct result of tourism and this legislation, select commercial and recreational development along the Victory Highway, especially through Reno and Sparks to accommodate the needs of the gaming public, temporary residents, and divorcees in transition. Travel along the Victory Highway to a variety of tourist destinations in Nevada was actively promoted by auto clubs, chambers of commerce, local booster groups, and the hotel, motel, and gaming industries. As such, the Victory Highway in Nevada served as an important tourist route. Tourist attractions adjacent to the Victory Highway promoted to the through-traveler represent an important trend in auto-related tourism at the state level.

Further research may yield additional areas of significance under *Criterion A* if they relate directly to the highway during its period of significance.

### (2) *Criterion B: Significant Person*

This criterion is unlikely to apply to an individual road-related property or historic district along the Victory Highway. Properties may possess significance under *Criterion B* if they convey a strong association with a person significant to the history of the highway. *Criterion B* may apply to road-related buildings or historic districts associated with an individual in Nevada who was the key figure in promotion or development of the route on a regional, state, or national level between 1921 and 1939. The specific contributions of the individual must be identified and be important in the history of the Victory Highway. The individual road-related property or historic district must also best illustrate the person’s important achievements related to the history and development of the highway. Mere association with the Victory Highway, such as involvement by an architect, contractor, or figure associated with the promotion of the road, alone would not necessarily render an individual road-related property or historic district significant under *Criterion B*. Distinctive works of design or high

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artistic value are typically recognized under *Criterion C*. Properties found to possess significance under this criterion would likely derive importance at the state level.

### (3) **Criterion C: Design/Construction**

An individual road-related property or historic district may possess significance under *Criterion C* if it exhibits distinctive design features, important innovations, an evolution in building practices or construction methods, or an important period of construction in the area of Architecture. Under these aspects of *Criterion C*, individual road-related properties and historic districts are most likely to derive significance as distinctive examples of a property type, representative examples of a distinctive style or form, or by exhibiting high artistic value.

Historic districts will possess significance under *Criterion C* following the guidance of the National Register: A district must be significant, as well as being an identifiable entity. It must be important for historical, architectural, archeological, engineering, or cultural values. Therefore, districts that are significant will usually meet the last portion of *Criterion C* plus *Criterion A*, *Criterion B*, other portions of *Criterion C*, or *Criterion D*.<sup>227</sup>

### (4) **Criterion D: Potential to Yield Information**

Road-related buildings, structures, and sites were few and far between in the early years of the highway's designation. Former buildings, structures, and sites may have lost integrity as built environment properties but may offer important answers to understand the nature and early development of auto travel experience. Former buildings, structures, and sites may be eligible for National Register listing under *Criterion D* for the potential to yield important information about early travel along this highway; however, they may predate the establishment of this highway and care should be taken to determine whether a direct and important association exists with the Victory Highway. Former buildings, structures, and sites may address current data gaps, provide alternative theories, or reconstruct the sequence of archeological cultures for the purpose of identifying and explaining continuities and discontinuities in the archeological record for a particular area. Information that can be derived from archeological sites, and the value of such information, will vary among property types and will largely be affected by the extent of the remaining undisturbed features of the site. Integrity is based on the property's potential to yield specific data that addresses

<sup>227</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1991, rev), 5.

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important research questions and will need to be assessed on a property-by-property basis. The assessment of integrity will be evaluated based upon whether or not the significant cultural material remains sufficiently intact to convey valuable information. As such, archaeological sites should be evaluated under another context following the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and not this MPDF.

### (5) *Period of significance*

Under *Criterion A* the period of significance for the individual road-related property or historic district will correspond to the period of significance of the roadbed segment since it is the roadbed that establishes the association with the Victory Highway. Individual road-related properties constructed after the period of significance are not associated with the roadbed during its use as the Victory Highway, would not derive significance under Transportation for an association with the Victory Highway, and do not qualify for eligibility or as contributing resources to a historic district.

The Victory Highway traveled through towns and along downtown "main" streets and through way stations in rural areas with pre-existing properties that may have earlier had different earlier historic functions and uses. Individual properties constructed prior to the start of the chronological period identified in the *Statement of Historic Contexts* (Section E of this MPDF), 1921, may have a direct and important association and possess significance if they meet the requirements above.

### (c) *Eligibility requirements*

To be eligible for the National Register, an individual road-related property or historic district must not only possess significance, but also retain historic integrity. Per the National Register guidance, historic integrity is "the ability of a property to convey its significance."<sup>228</sup> The ability to convey significance requires a direct association with the highway. This is established by the presence of a segment of roadbed that possesses significance and retains integrity and to serve as a focal point around which other associated properties are organized in a linear fashion. Without an intact segment of roadbed located immediately adjacent to individual road-related properties or a historic district, they do not qualify for listing under this MPDF due to lack of association with the Victory Highway. To retain setting and feeling individual road-related properties and contributing resources within a historic district must have a strong physical orientation to the highway through location, signage, presence of storefronts, or other design features intended to catch the attention of travelers along the highway.

<sup>228</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1991, rev), 44.

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In assessing historic integrity, individual properties must retain their essential physical features and most, if not all, of the seven aspects of integrity to provide a sense of time and place from the period of significance.

### (d) Assessing integrity

#### (1) Alterations

Individual properties will be required to retain their essential physical features and those aspects of historic integrity deemed most important under each property type as described in the list of associated individual properties below. Generally, under *Criterion A*, location, association, feeling and setting are more important aspects of integrity because they establish the relationship of the property to the highway. On the other hand, generally integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are more important considerations for properties that are distinctive examples of a property type or architectural style under *Criterion C*.

Alterations completed within the period of significance generally will not diminish the historic integrity of the property. The evolution of the public's needs and tastes dictated that the services provided for the automobile traveler evolved with the times. Most service facilities, such as gas stations, hotels and restaurants, were built to provide a needed service to the public until demand changed. Thus, property types related to the automobile tourist often underwent a variety of changes to "keep up with the times" and the services that were expected by the traveling public. For example, the physical building form of a gas station evolved from a small structure to a service station with one or two service bays to repair vehicles. Other businesses such as tourist courts also evolved to provide expanded services to the traveler by adding a gas station and/or cafe. As such, some alterations over time are common for these property types. This MPDF acknowledges that modest alterations may be permissible when assessing integrity under Criterion A provided the property continues to convey its essential physical features from the period of significance or if it is a rare surviving example of a property type under Criterion C

Significant alterations or the cumulative effect or multiple modest alteration occurring outside the period of significance can result in the loss of essential physical features and/or diminish the overall integrity of a property, thereby disqualifying it from National Register listing. Significant alterations



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may include large additions, altered fenestration patterns, replacement exterior cladding, or removal of buildings or structures within a complex.

Several types of properties were once prevalent along the highway but are now disappearing from the highway landscape. For example, tourist courts and large multilevel hotels outside Reno appear to be a rare property type not commonly seen along the route today. The relative scarcity and lack of comparable properties should be used to inform the degree of alterations acceptable while still retaining their essential physical features and historic integrity. As a result, a larger degree of alterations may be acceptable for a rare property type, while few alterations may be acceptable for more common property types because other examples with better integrity can tell the same story.

Individual road-related properties are not required to retain their historic function to be nominated under this MPDF. Properties that are vacant or have been adaptively reused may registration requirements if they retain their essential physical features and those aspects of integrity important to understand its historic function and use during its period of significance.

### **(2) *Essential physical features and integrity of individual properties***

For individual road-related properties to possess integrity they must physically convey their historic function and association to the highway, which is demonstrated through retaining essential physical features and retaining most, if not all, of the seven aspects of integrity.

A list of typical essential physical features and integrity considerations by property type is provided below.

#### *i. Lodging (auto campgrounds, cabin courts, motels, hotels)*

##### Auto campgrounds

- Open space for car camping in a park-like setting
- Amenities may include a communal washroom or shower building, fireplaces, grills or facilities for cooking, picnic shelters, electrical hookups, and recreation areas
- May be a portion of a larger community park

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- May have associated parking lots or parking may be on the street
- Signage may be free-standing

Motels

- Accommodations provided in small, one-story, individual buildings (e.g., cabins, cottages, etc.) grouped together
- Arrangement of buildings in a row or in a U- or L-plan around an open space is common
- Rooms typically accessed from exterior doors
- Complex typically includes an office (often in a freestanding building)
- Amenities may include a communal laundry, store, gas station, or children's play area or other recreational facilities
- Parking area
- Signage may be on the building (may include a painted early highway marker or free-standing oriented to the road)

Hotels

- Accommodations provided in buildings that are two or more stories in height housing a large number of guests
- Rooms typically accessed from the interior by linear corridors
- Buildings housed guest amenities such as restaurants, ballrooms, lounges, small retail shops, and personal services (e.g., laundry, salons, barber shops)
- Prominent entryway often with a portico opening into a large lobby space
- Signage may be free-standing and/or located on the building

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Integrity

To meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion A: Commerce*, lodging properties should retain their essential physical features and integrity of location, association, feeling, and setting as these are important to establish the property's relationship to commercial development along the highway for automobile tourists. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are also needed but are less important to establishing the relationship to commerce. In order to meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion C: Architecture* as an example of a property type or architectural style, a lodging property should retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as these are important to demonstrate the property's significance as an example of a property type or an architectural style. In general, these properties should display few alterations to the massing, fenestration patterns, and historic materials unless it is a rare property type. Alterations to individual buildings of a complex may be acceptable if they were sensitive to the original design and the alterations were completed within the period of significance and thus are part of the evolution of the property. Removal of key components of a complex, such as the majority of the individual lodging buildings in a tourist court, will result in a loss of integrity under either *Criterion A* or *C*.

ii. *Food service (restaurants, diners, cafes)*

Restaurants, diners, and cafes

- Free-standing buildings often characterized by a simple rectangular form with a variety of roof types, such as flat, shed, or vaulted. Exteriors are typically unadorned commercial vernacular style or exhibit modest architectural features and may have plate-glass windows.
- Interior area for seating or ordering
- Interior area for food preparation
- Parking lot if in a free-standing building

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- Signage as free standing, attached to, or painted on building to catch motorist's attention
- Building form may serve as advertisement/signage (for programmatic architecture)

### Integrity

To meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion A*, food service properties should retain their essential physical features and integrity of location, association, feeling, and setting as these are important to establish the property's relationship to commercial development along the highway for automobile tourists. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are needed but are less important to establishing the relationship with the highway under *Criterion A*. Alterations may be acceptable if essential physical features are intact and the alterations were sensitive to the original design and were completed within the period of significance. For these properties to be eligible for National Register listing under *Criterion C* as distinctive examples of a property type or architectural style, they should continue to exhibit major characteristic features from the period of significance and retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

### iii. *Automobile services (gas and service stations, auto showrooms and garages)*

#### Gas stations and service stations

- Building with office and sales space
- Large entry doors or service bays for automobiles to pass into the building (if service station)
- Island for gas pumps (original pumps need not be present)
- Canopy extending outward from the building or separate free-standing canopy over pumps
- Curb cuts for entrance and exit

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- Signage as free standing, attached to, or painted on building to catch motorist attention

### Auto showrooms and garages

- Large open lot area and/or interior showroom with windows to display vehicles
- Large entry doors or bays for automobiles to pass into the building for repair (auto showrooms/dealerships must contain auto repair to meet registration requirements)
- Light standards to light open lot area to display vehicles
- Signage, free standing and/or attached to building, which may include a painted early highway marker

### Integrity

To meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion A*, automobile service properties should retain their essential physical features and integrity of location, association, feeling, and setting as these are important to establish the property's relationship to transportation on the highway. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are needed but are less important to establishing the relationship with the highway under *Criterion A*.

Alterations may be acceptable if character-defining features are intact and the alterations were sensitive to the original design and completed within the period of significance. For automobile service properties to be eligible for National Register listing under *Criterion C* they should continue to exhibit essential physical features from the period of significance and retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. In general, under *Criterion C* these properties should display few alterations to the massing, fenestration patterns, and historic materials, and continue to clearly convey their historic function. Very few gas stations retain original pumps; therefore, this is not a requirement for eligibility.

### iv. Commercial signage

- Two- or three-dimensional objects mounted on buildings or free-standing structures, such as poles or towers

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- Graphics, symbols, and/or text
- Illuminating elements for visibility at night

### Integrity

To meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion A*, commercial signage should retain its essential physical features and integrity of location, association, feeling, and setting as these are important to establish the resource's relationship to the commercial development along the highway for automobile tourists. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are needed but are less important to establishing the relationship with the highway. Alterations may be acceptable if significant features are intact, the alterations were sensitive to the original design, and alterations were completed within the period of significance. A certain level of alterations to wording or symbols may be acceptable to accommodate the needs of subsequent businesses if the overall form, design, and materials of the signage remain intact.

Signage may also be eligible for National Register listing under *Criterion C: Architecture* as distinctive examples of a property type. For commercial signage to be eligible for National Register listing under *Criterion C* as distinctive examples of a property type, it should continue to exhibit essential physical features from the period of significance and retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. In general, these properties should display few alterations to the design and historic materials even if the function of the business or other enterprise with which the signage may have been historically associated have changed.

Signage related to the highway must be immediately adjacent to a segment of roadbed date from the period of significance of segment of highway. Reproduction signage is not eligible for the National Register.

### v. Waysides

- Restroom facilities
- Parking area
- May include recreational features such as shelters and picnic tables and playgrounds

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- May include a spring and/or spring shelter
- Other recreational amenities such as playgrounds or vistas
- Signage, usually freestanding
- Setting, location may be selected to include scenic vistas

These properties are addressed in Section F.1 above as road-related structures. Typically, road-related structures were designed to function as part of the overall highway and may have been included in construction plans for the highway. These properties typically lack sufficient size and scale to alone convey the historical significance of the Victory Highway. As such, they typically should be evaluated along with a segment of roadbed and not individually.

vi.      Tourist attractions

- Buildings located adjacent to the roadside with a service counter or office area for staff to provide information, brochures, or directions to tourists
- Buildings may be modest, reflect popular architectural styles of the time period, or include elements of programmatic architecture (sometimes also called novelty architecture or memetic architecture) to catch the attention of customers
- Freestanding signage or attached to buildings or structures, which may include features specifically designed to catch the attention of customers, such as use of neon, bright colors, exotic fonts, symbols, or whimsical themes
- Restroom facilities
- Parking area
- May include recreational features such as shelters and picnic tables and playgrounds

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- Casinos have served as a tourist destination; their essential physical features may include prominent entrances, illuminated signage (often neon) on the building and free-standing along the Victory Highway, and massing may incorporate hotel amenities.

### Integrity

To meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion A: Commerce*, tourist attraction properties should retain their essential physical features and integrity of location, association, feeling, and setting as these are important to establish the property's relationship to commercial development along the highway for automobile tourists. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are also needed but are less important to establishing the relationship to commerce. In order to meet the requirements for National Register listing under *Criterion C: Architecture* as an example of a property type or architectural style, a tourist attraction property should retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as these are important to demonstrate the property's significance as an example of a property type or an architectural style. In general, these properties should display few alterations to the massing, fenestration patterns, and historic materials unless it is a rare property type. Alterations to individual buildings of a complex may be acceptable if they were sensitive to the original design and the alterations were completed within the period of significance and thus are part of the evolution of the property.

### **(3) *Historic character and integrity of historic districts***

A historic district consists of a concentration of contributing resources (intact examples of the property types listed above) with a direct relationship to the Victory Highway and form a concentration organized along the road segment in a linear fashion. A historic district derives its importance from being a unified entity that conveys a visual sense of the highway during the period of significance by the arrangement of historically and functionally related properties, even if it is composed of resources that lack individual distinction. A historic district qualifies for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as A *Significant and Distinguishable Entity Whose Components May Lack Individual Distinction*. Each resource within a historic district will have its own history and potentially contribute to the significance of the historic district for its own reasons and needs to be assessed for integrity on a case-by-case basis; therefore, this MPDF provides general guidance but does not provide prescriptive integrity thresholds to determine whether resources contribute or do not contribute to a historic district.

For individual road-related resources to contribute to a Victory Highway historic district, they must retain sufficient integrity to convey their historic function, which is demonstrated through retaining



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most, if not all, of their essential physical features, and retain most if not all of the seven aspects of integrity. Significant alterations or the cumulative effect or multiple modest alterations occurring outside the period of significance can result in the loss of essential physical features and/or diminish the overall integrity of a resource such that it no longer contributes to the significance of the historic district. Significant alterations may include large additions, altered fenestration patterns, replacement exterior cladding, or removal of buildings or structures within a complex which affects integrity of design, materials, feeling, setting and workmanship.

Intrusions from noncontributing resources along the segment of roadbed that are out of scale or detract from the linear nature of the historic district diminish the overall historic environment and the historic and functional arrangement of the resources along the Victory Highway which affects integrity of setting and feeling. The presence of a sufficient number of such intrusions will result in a loss of overall integrity of setting and feeling such that and it will not comprise a unified entity be eligible for listing in the National Register.

The boundaries of a district can contain resources or open spaces located adjacent to the roadbed that do not contribute to the significance of the district; however, the number of noncontributing properties must not detract from its ability to convey its sense of time and place and its historical environment from the period of significance.

### (e) Determination of eligibility

An individual road-related property or a historic district that is demonstrated to have a direct and important association, possess significance, convey their essential physical features, and retain most, if not all, aspects of integrity are eligible for listing in the National Register as a structure or a district. Those that do not retain integrity do not convey significance for their association to the Victory Highway and are not eligible for listing in the National Register. Historic boundaries should be delineated to include the parcels of the road-related properties the extent of the roadbed immediately adjacent to the properties.

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**Geographical Data**

The geographic area covered by this MPDF extends statewide along the alignments that historically carried the Victory Highway. Maps delineating known alignments of the Victory Highway are attached to this MPDF as additional information.

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### Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This MPDF is based on work completed in 2017-2018 by Mead & Hunt, Inc. (Mead & Hunt) for the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). This MPDF was completed as report NV18-037 for the Nevada Department of Transportation. Electronic GIS mapping of the route of the highway was prepared as part of this project and provided to NDOT.

Archival research focused on addressing the themes in the *Statement of Historic Contexts* (historic context), which covers the development of the Victory Highway/US 40 nationally and in Nevada. The historic context is a synthesis based on archival documents and primary sources such as state maps, NDH plans and biennial reports, and secondary source materials addressing the origins and development of Nevada's road system and U.S. Highways and, in particular, the Victory Highway. Research was completed at the Nevada State Library and Archives; the Nevada Historical Society; the University of Nevada, Reno, Special Collections Library and Archives; and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Special Collection Library; online sources; and the files of NDOT. Sources are listed in Section I, *Major Bibliographical References*.

Preparation of the MPDF included review of inventory forms for previously surveyed resources associated with the Victory Highway/US 40 provided by NDOT. NDOT requested this data from the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office's Nevada Cultural Resource Information System (NVCRIS) for non-archaeological resources.

Field review of the overall route and associated property types was completed in July 2018 by Mead & Hunt staff. Field review consisted of a windshield survey of the drivable portions of roadbed, which were mapped and inspected.

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