

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes    
no

Property Name: Bridge Number 1015501 Inventory Number: F-4-154

Address: Ridge Road over I-70 City: Middletown Zip Code: 21702

County: Frederick USGS Topographic Map: Middletown

Owner: State of Maryland Is the property being evaluated a district?  yes

Tax Parcel Number: N/A Tax Map Number: 66 Tax Account ID Number: N/A

Project: Historic Highway Bridge Program Agency: MDOT SHA

Site visit by MHT Staff:  no  yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property located within a historic district?  yes  no

<i>If the property is within a district</i>		District Inventory Number: _____
NR-listed district <input type="checkbox"/> yes	Eligible district <input type="checkbox"/> yes	District Name: _____
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Non-contributing but eligible in another context _____		

<i>If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)</i>	
Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

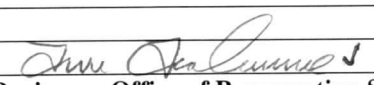
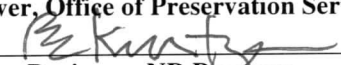
Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

**Description**

The Maryland State Roads Commission developed Bridge Number 1015501 to carry Ridge Road over I-70 in Frederick County. Completed in 1971, the bridge was designed by the Baltimore County engineering firm of Green Associates. The structure is classified as a Steel Deck Arch bridge. The overall length of the bridge is 388 feet, with a span of 250 feet between the column footings. The overall width of the deck is thirty-five feet, with a curb-to-curb width of thirty-two feet. The deck features concrete outer parapets and steel guard fencing. Concrete plaques, bearing the date of completion, are located at each end of the deck.

The superstructure consists of the deck and an underlying system of steel floor beams, stringers, and braces. It is supported by a substructure of vertical steel "H" columns, which bear on two large, steel, open spandrel arches. The stringers are aligned with the length of the span and are oriented perpendicular to the floor beams. Below the floor beams and stringers are a series of steel diagonal braces which are joined with the beams, vertical columns, and fascia girders by steel gusset plates. A second series of diagonal braces runs between the inner faces of the steel arches. The deck of the bridge is of reinforced concrete slab construction with concrete parapets and steel guard fencing. The deck rests on steel deck pans. At each end of the bridge, the

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: _____	
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	3/2/2020 Date
 Reviewer, NR Program	12/20/11 Date

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arches spring from reinforced concrete footings seated on ledges cut into the bedrock. Reinforced concrete abutments and wing walls are located at each end of the deck where it meets the rock slope. Expansion joints are located above both abutments and concrete drain troughs are found under the expansion joints. Steel bearing assemblies, designed to allow for movement, are situated at the interface of the columns and the abutments.

**Historic Context**

*Metal Arch Bridges*

Iron and steel arch bridges evolved from early types of arch bridges constructed in more traditional materials, such as stone. First developed in England in the mid-eighteenth century, the metal arch evolved out of advances within the iron industry. By the mid-nineteenth century, the metal arch had been introduced into Maryland and the United States at large. The form gained unprecedented popularity in Maryland following the Civil War. Few nineteenth-century metal arch bridges survive in Maryland. One example is the Sparks Road Bridge in Baltimore County, a steel through arch bridge constructed in 1888. Another important example was the Cedar Avenue Bridge in Baltimore City. The steel deck arch bridge was designed by Baltimore architect Charles H. Latrobe and was constructed in 1890. It was demolished during the 1960s (P.A.C. Spero 1995:139-141).

While the construction of steel arch bridges lost popularity around the turn of the twentieth century, by the 1930s, the SRC had resumed constructing steel arch bridges in Maryland with the aid of Federal Public Works Administration grants. Two prominent surviving examples from this era are the Howard Street and Guilford Avenue Bridges in Baltimore City. Both bridges are examples of the steel through arch type. The Howard Street Bridge was erected in 1928 (rehabilitated in 1981) and the Guilford Avenue Bridge was constructed in 1930 (rehabilitated in 1990) (P.A.C. Spero 1995:141). Surviving bridges in Maryland of the deck arch form from this period are of concrete construction. One example is the U.S. 40 Patapsco River bridge in Baltimore County, an open spandrel deck arch bridge erected in 1936. Nationally, numerous examples of the steel deck arch type survive from the 1930s. Examples include the Henry Hudson Bridge in Bronx, New York (1936).

Steel arch bridges were constructed in Maryland during the postwar period, but in small numbers. As in the prewar period, these bridges mostly embody the through arch form and are monumental in scale. The state constructed the steel through arch Blue Bridge, which carries MD 942 over the Potomac River in Allegany County, in 1954. The two other extant examples include the Chesapeake City Bridge in Cecil County (1948, determined eligible) and the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore (1976). Like the Blue Bridge, they are examples of the through arch type, but are colossal in scale, with lengths ranging between 4,000 and 9,000 feet. The Ridge Road Bridge at I-70 is a rare example of the steel deck arch type in Maryland. The bridge reflects a resurgence in the use of the type in America during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is very similar to the C.R. 4 Bridge at I-77 in Tuscarawas County, Ohio (1969) in terms of its design and dimensions. The bridge is also very similar to the Center Avenue Bridge in Emsworth, Pennsylvania (1973). A number of examples were also constructed in the west during the highway modernization campaigns of the postwar period, such as the Glen Canyon Bridge in Coconino County, Arizona (1958). While metal arch bridges constructed in the automobile era did not attain the degree of flexibility and adaptability seen in steel girder and reinforced concrete structures, the metal arch form represents the technological continuity of bridge design and development in America during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (P.A.C. Spero 1995:138-141).

**Extant Arch Bridges in Maryland**

Bridge	Type	Location	Date	Total Length/ Deck Width (feet)	NRHP/Awards
Ridge Road over I-70	Steel Deck Arch	Middletown, Frederick County	1971	388/35	Consulting Engineers Council of Maryland Award, 1973
Blue Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Allegany County, Potomac River at MD 942.	1954, 1996 rehab	318/28	Eligible
Old Monocacy River Rt. 40	Concrete Deck Open	Frederick County	1942	465/N/A	

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National Pike	Spandrel Arch				
Sparks Road Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Baltimore County, Sparks Road at Gunpowder Falls	1888, 1990 rehab	178/15	Eligible
U.S. 40 Patapsco River Bridge	Concrete Deck Open Spandrel Arch	Baltimore County	1936, 2014 reconstruction	334/50	Eligible
Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Harford County, U.S. 40 over Susquehanna River	1939, 1988 rehab	7,749/48	
Clifton Avenue Bridge	Concrete Open Spandrel Arch	Baltimore City, Clifton Ave. over Western Run	Rebuilt to older design in 2000	226/40	
Howard Street Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Baltimore City, Howard Street at I-83	1928, 1981 rehab	979/55	
Chesapeake City Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Cecil County, MD 213 at Chesapeake City	1948, 1978 rehab		
Guilford Avenue Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Baltimore City, Guilford Ave at I-83	1930, 1990 rehab	321/40	
Francis Scott Key Bridge	Steel Through Arch	Baltimore City, I-695 at Baltimore Harbor Patapsco River	1976	9,091/58	

*Maryland Roads in the Modern Era and the Development of I-70*

The Federal Highway Act of 1956 enabled the development of a 41,000-mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, developed between 1956 and 1972. The new system represented a civic infrastructure development project of unprecedented scale in American history and promised to improve the safety and efficiency of the nation's roads (Lewis 1997:251). The new interstate highways were paid for through the Highway Trust Fund, which received its revenues from federal taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel, and from user fees and excise taxes. The federal government assumed ninety percent of construction costs while the states were responsible for the remaining ten percent. In Maryland, the new legislation and funding model aided the completion of ongoing projects, as well as new interstates such as I-70. The ninety percent federal funding component had a limited "shelf life," which prompted the Maryland State Roads Commission (SRC) to initiate a "Go Program" to ensure that all of the state's highway construction priorities were met prior to the expiration of federal funding. These priorities included the development of the Washington beltway, I-95, and I-70 from Baltimore to Washington County (Counihan 2008:68-71).

I-70 is the principal east-west highway in Maryland, and its route traverses ninety-three miles across the state, from Hancock in Washington County to I-695 in Baltimore. The I-70 project was first announced by the SRC in 1959 as a replacement of U.S. 40, which featured numerous connections at grade that were banned under the new controlled-access interstate highway system (*The News*, 26 October 1965:9). The interstate was completed in stages during the 1960s. In 1965, work was completed on an 18-mile segment of I-70 between the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the community of Clear Springs, Maryland in Washington County. The segment of I-70 between Hagerstown and Frederick was completed in 1969. The next phase of the project involved upgrades to modernize the segment that extends between Frederick and West Friendship (Howard County), which was developed previously during the 1950s as a divided highway relocation of U.S. 40 (*The News*, 26 October 1965:9). By

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December of 1969, I-70 had been completed to the Baltimore City line (*Baltimore Sun*, 17 December 1969:52). Several years after the interstate was completed, in 1973, the portion between Hancock and Frederick was designated the Eisenhower Memorial Highway (U.S. Department of Transportation 2018).

Interstate highway construction provided economic stimulus to both the national and state economies during the 1950s and 60s, and formed part of the modernization program launched by Maryland Governor Millard Tawes (1959-1967) (Callcott 1985:180). In 1960, SRC Chairman John B. Funk compared the economic benefits of interstate highways to that of railroads a century earlier in enabling the movement of goods and raw materials between western Maryland and population centers in the east, such as Baltimore (*The News*, 19 November 1960:11). At a ceremony marking the opening of the initial segment of I-70 in Washington County in 1965, Governor Tawes highlighted the benefits to commerce, tourism, and travel afforded by the new highway, and in his remarks stated that the interstate formed "part of a freeway system which in a few short years will stretch all the way from the great metropolitan markets of Baltimore and Washington through the mountains of Garrett County and beyond" (*The News*, 26 October 1965:9). Similarly, a 1963 highway needs study, prepared within the context of the "Go Program," emphasized the potential benefits of interstate highway development while maintaining and enhancing local road networks and connections:

If Marylanders and visitors to our State are experiencing difficulty now moving around; in going to and from work; to the store, to worship; to recreational sites; in making all the trips necessary and desirable in modern living, it is certain to increase ... Many of these needs exist today, many must be fulfilled in the immediate future and others over a longer period of time if Maryland is to continue to maintain free channels of movement so that orderly growth can continue unimpeded (Maryland State Roads Commission 1963:12).

Planning of I-70 between Hagerstown and Frederick began in 1962, when the SRC unveiled seven proposed routes for this segment (*The News*, 22 January 1962:12). By 1964, SRC planners, local officials, and business interests in Frederick and Washington Counties had expressed their preference for a northern route, designated as alternative B-1, which paralleled U.S. 40, beginning just west of its juncture with U.S. 40-A. The Bureau of Public Roads, a federal agency charged with approving all plans for interstate highways, preferred a cheaper southern route, designated as alternative B-5, that bisected the community of Braddock Heights at the intersection of Ridge Road and U.S. 40. The B-5 option would have required the construction of an interchange on top of Braddock Mountain, including a new auxiliary road connecting Ridge Road and U.S. 40-A, and the local residents of Braddock Heights were opposed to this option and its potential disruptions to their community (*The News*, 23 January 1964:37). After months of negotiations, the Bureau of Public Roads endorsed the proposed B-1 alignment in March of 1965, provided that the costs of its construction could be kept near that of the B-5 route (*The News*, 4 March 1965:1). SRC engineers subsequently met with Ridge Road property owners to discuss their plans and to solicit feedback on the proposed location of I-70 at Ridge Road (*The News*, 31 December 1965:2). The SRC filed the first land condemnation suits in May of 1966 (*The News*, 18 May 1966:9).

The Ridge Road Bridge over I-70 in Frederick County was designed under Federal Aid Project No. I-70-1(72)48; I-70 underpass at Ridge Road. The bridge was designed by Baltimore-based consulting engineers Green Associates, who also designed the segments of I-70 in Frederick County located immediately to the east and west of the Ridge Road Bridge. The Ridge Road Bridge project was undertaken by the SRC as Garrett County Contract No. F-605-21-772. Original drawings for the bridge prepared by Green Associates are dated May 1969. However, the cover sheet for the drawings indicates that the SRC approved the project the previous year, between June and November of 1968. This suggests that the design had been initially developed sometime during or prior to 1968. The only revision to the plans involved substituting a chain link fence for railing in 1971 (SHA Bridge Records).

The Ridge Road Bridge was designed within the context of federal efforts to improve the aesthetic qualities of the nation's highway system. The Highway Beautification Act, passed in 1965, was championed by First Lady "Lady Bird" Johnson, and it allowed designers to integrate functional safety requirements with improved highway aesthetics (Counihan 2008:111-112).

The arched design of the Ridge Road Bridge was suggested by the Federal Highway Administration, "as a fitting monument to the unusual beauty of the site," located atop Braddock Mountain (*The News*, 26 May 1972:3). The bridge has also been referred to as the "gateway to Western Maryland," and I-70 forms part of the National Historic Road Scenic Byway, which was created by the state in 1988 (Counihan 2008:75).

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Bids for the Ridge Road Bridge were received on June 17, 1969, and the contract was awarded to C. William Hetzer, Inc. of Hagerstown, who performed all of the supervisory work and arranged for the construction of the bridge, which was fabricated by the Pittsburgh Des Moines Steel Company of Baltimore and Pittsburgh. Work on the bridge began on August 25, 1969 under the supervision of Thomas G. Mohler, State Highway Administration District Engineer for Frederick, Carroll, and Howard Counties. When building the bridge, special plans had to be made during blasting work through Braddock Mountain to avoid excessive disturbance of the rock formations. The bridge was opened to traffic on May 26, 1972. Upon its completion, it served as a main connecting artery for Braddock Heights to the south and Shookstown and Gambrell Park to the north, linking U.S. 40 and U.S. 40-A (Old National Pike) (The News, 26 May 1972:3). Pointing to the importance of this crossing, and its scenic qualities, the Ridge Road Bridge is the only large, monumental bridge constructed over I-70 between Frederick, Maryland and the Pennsylvania state line.

### **Consulting Engineer**

The Baltimore County-based engineering firm of Green Associates designed Bridge Number 1015501. Green Associates was established in Towson, Maryland in 1952 by engineer Allen I. Green (Benjamin 1988). Erik W. Wolf served as the company's vice president and chief engineer. In 1957, the company named Marshall McCord as chief civil engineer, Ernest F. Sigel as chief mechanical-electrical engineer, Richard R. Reikenis as head of structural engineering, and Robert Czaban as head of the highway section. J. Elmer Dunham served as the company's chief field engineer (Baltimore Sun [BS], 26 May 1957:38). The firm designed industrial facilities, highways, and bridges, and prepared numerous studies for local and state government agencies. In 1961, the firm designed a power plant expansion at the Rosewood State Training School (BS, 1 October 1961:C10). In 1965, the firm served as architects and engineers for the design of a new steel processing plant for H. Klaff & Co. in Baltimore County (BS, 14 September 1965:27). In 1970, Green Associates, with offices in Boston, Long Island, Sewickley, Pennsylvania, Towson, Atlanta, and Miami, was ranked seventy-fourth on the list of the top 500 engineering firms in the nation by *Engineering News-Record* magazine (BS 14 June 1970:F7). The company was one of four Baltimore firms contracted for the design of I-95 between Baltimore and Washington, which was completed in 1971 (BS, 21 June 1971:A12). In 1973, the firm received an award from the Consulting Engineers Council of Maryland for the design of the Ridge Road Bridge over I-70 in Frederick County (BS, 22 July 1973:F7). In 1974, Allen Green was charged with paying thousands of dollars in kickbacks to Maryland Governor Spiro T. Agnew to secure lucrative state contracts (Erlandson 1974-a). Green was subsequently expelled from the American Society of Civil Engineers (Erlandson 1974-b). Green was also sentenced to serve eighteen months in federal prison and was fined \$5,000 (Erlandson 1974-c). Following Green's indictment, the Towson and Atlanta branches were sold and rebranded under new ownership as Century Engineering (Grant 1974:K7).

### **Significance**

The Ridge Road Bridge over I-70 in Frederick County is an important and monumental expression of the drive to modernize America's highways during the postwar period and is historically significant under **National Register Criterion A** in the area of **Transportation**. In addition, the bridge is an outstanding and rare example of the steel deck arch type in Maryland. Its sleek yet classic lines and modern materials reflect the desire to recast the American highway system during this era of modernization. The bridge demonstrates significance for the strength of its design sufficient to justify eligibility under **National Register Criterion C** in the area of **Engineering**. The Period of Significance is 1971, the year of completion.

The Ridge Road Bridge is significant under Criterion A as an embodiment of the highway modernization campaigns of the second half of the twentieth century. The development of I-70 occurred during the 1960s, a transformative period of highway modernization in America. An important regional roadway, I-70 was designed as a replacement for U.S. 40, meeting the modern standards of a controlled-access interstate highway. Planning for the bridge occurred during the administration of Maryland governor Millard Tawes, who regarded modern interstate highway construction as an important economic stimulus for the state, linking central and western Maryland with urban population centers such as Baltimore. The bridge, as a distinctive and large structure, contributes strongly to the context of postwar highway and bridge development, while reflecting federal initiatives during the 1960s to beautify the nation's interstate highway system.

The bridge is equally important as a work of design and engineering. Steel arch bridges were constructed in Maryland beginning in 1890s. Historically, they have not been the most common type constructed in the state compared with concrete and stone bridges. Along with important surviving prewar examples in Baltimore City, the state's documented postwar steel

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arch bridges are primarily of the through arch type. The Ridge Road Bridge is a rare example of the deck arch type in Maryland, a significant and classic type within the context. The bridge is a monumental and noteworthy work, drawing on a bold use of the arch, a classical form, but rendered in a clean, modern, industrial aesthetic arising from the use of steel. At almost 400 feet, its span represents a modern application of a traditional form to the engineering problems of postwar infrastructure development. As such, the bridge represents a strong expression of postwar modern engineering and civic design, supporting eligibility under Criterion C.

**Integrity**

The Ridge Road Bridge over I-70 maintains good integrity of Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association relative to its 1971 Period of Significance. Location and setting remain strong, as the bridge is located in a rural, scenic area of the state, and the immediate stretch of roadway where the bridge is located has seen little development. The bridge also exhibits sufficient integrity of Design, Materials, and Workmanship. Maintenance records and on-site survey indicate that the bridge has undergone no dramatic alterations and retains its character-defining features, which include its arched form, steel superstructure, deck, abutments, wing walls, and railing. As a result, the bridge continues to evoke the Feeling and Association of postwar modernism and a significant late twentieth-century interstate highway bridge.

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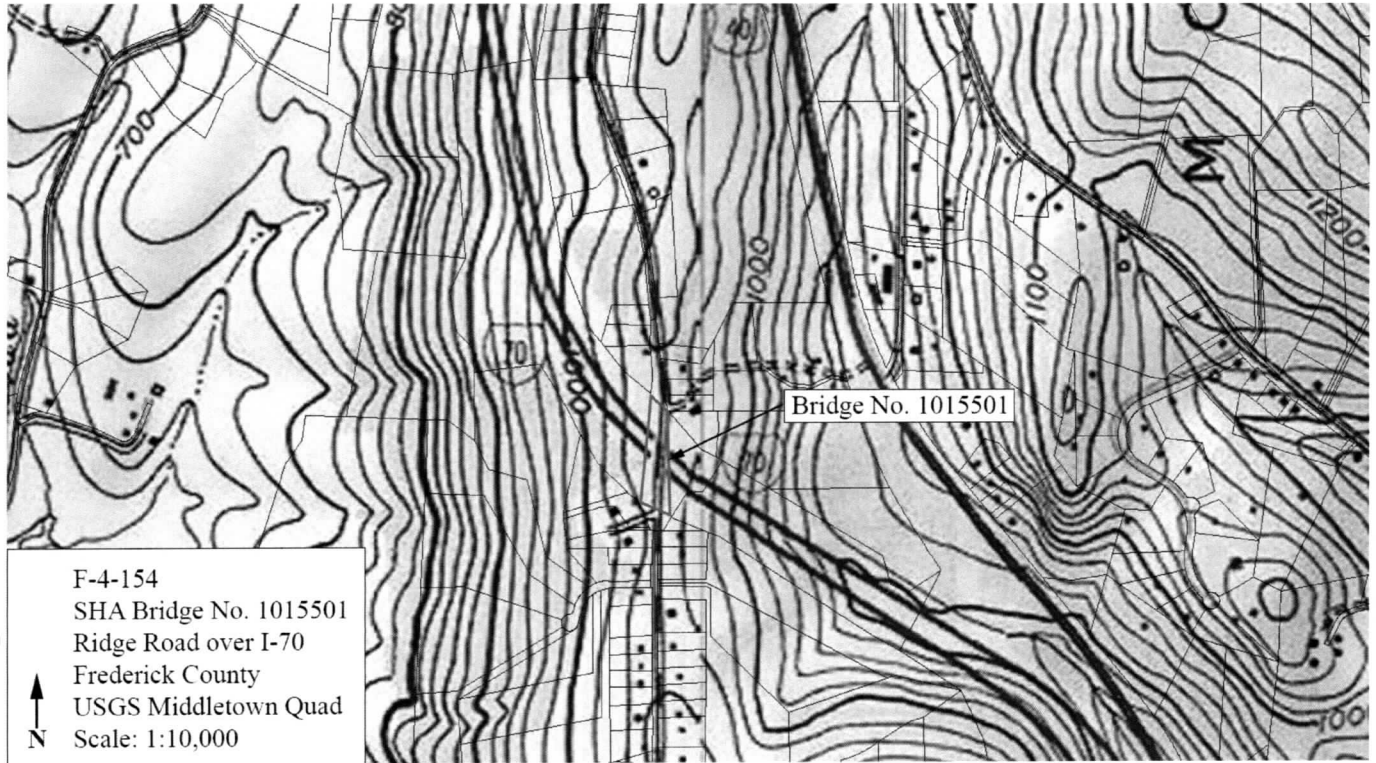
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Continuation Sheet No. 7

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Additional Documentation

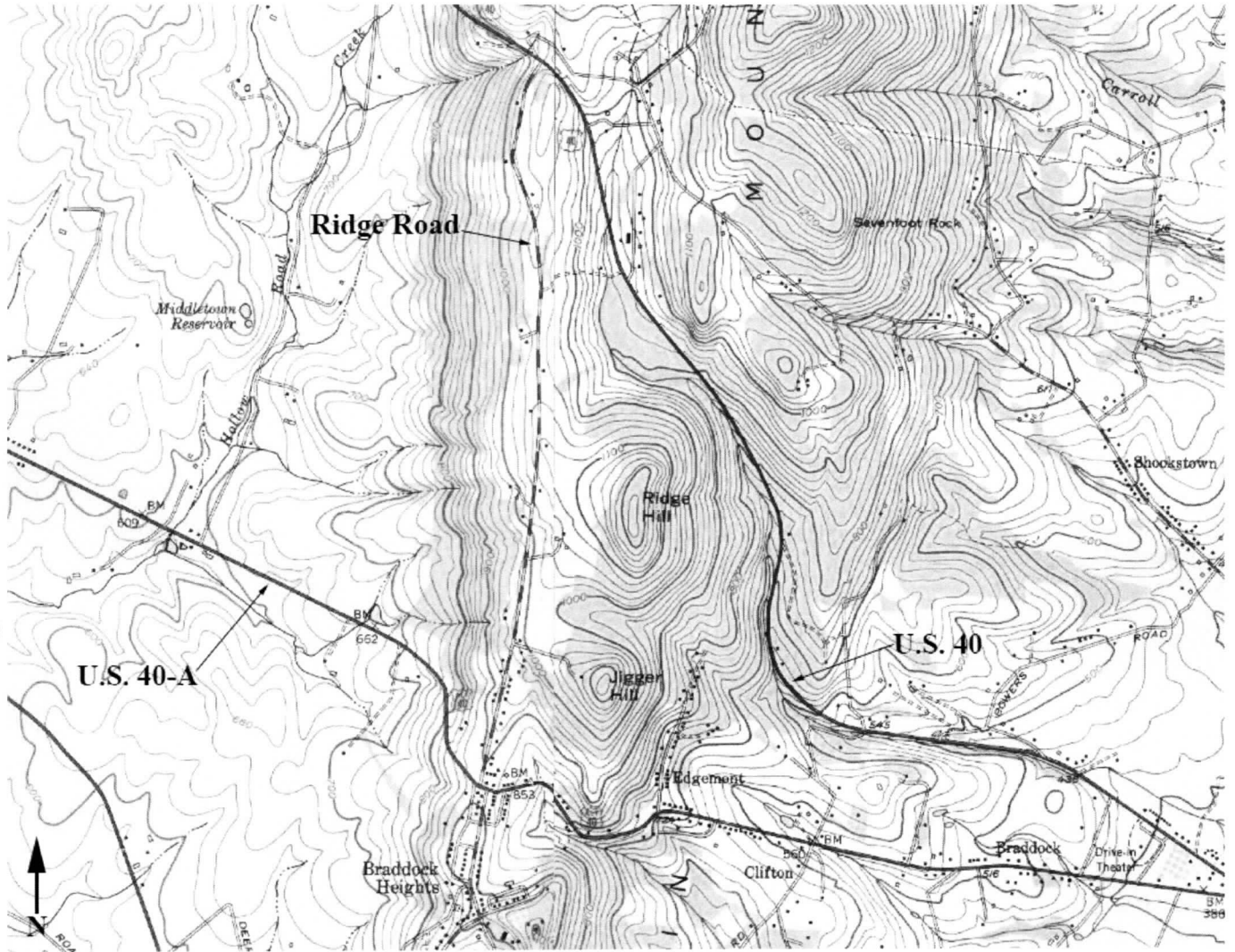


Locator map at 1:10,000 (USGS)

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Continuation Sheet No. 8

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Detail from 1953 Harpers Ferry and Frederick quads, scale: 1:24,000 (USGS)

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Construction of the bridge, c. 1970 (*Moving Maryland Forward*)

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Continuation Sheet No. 10

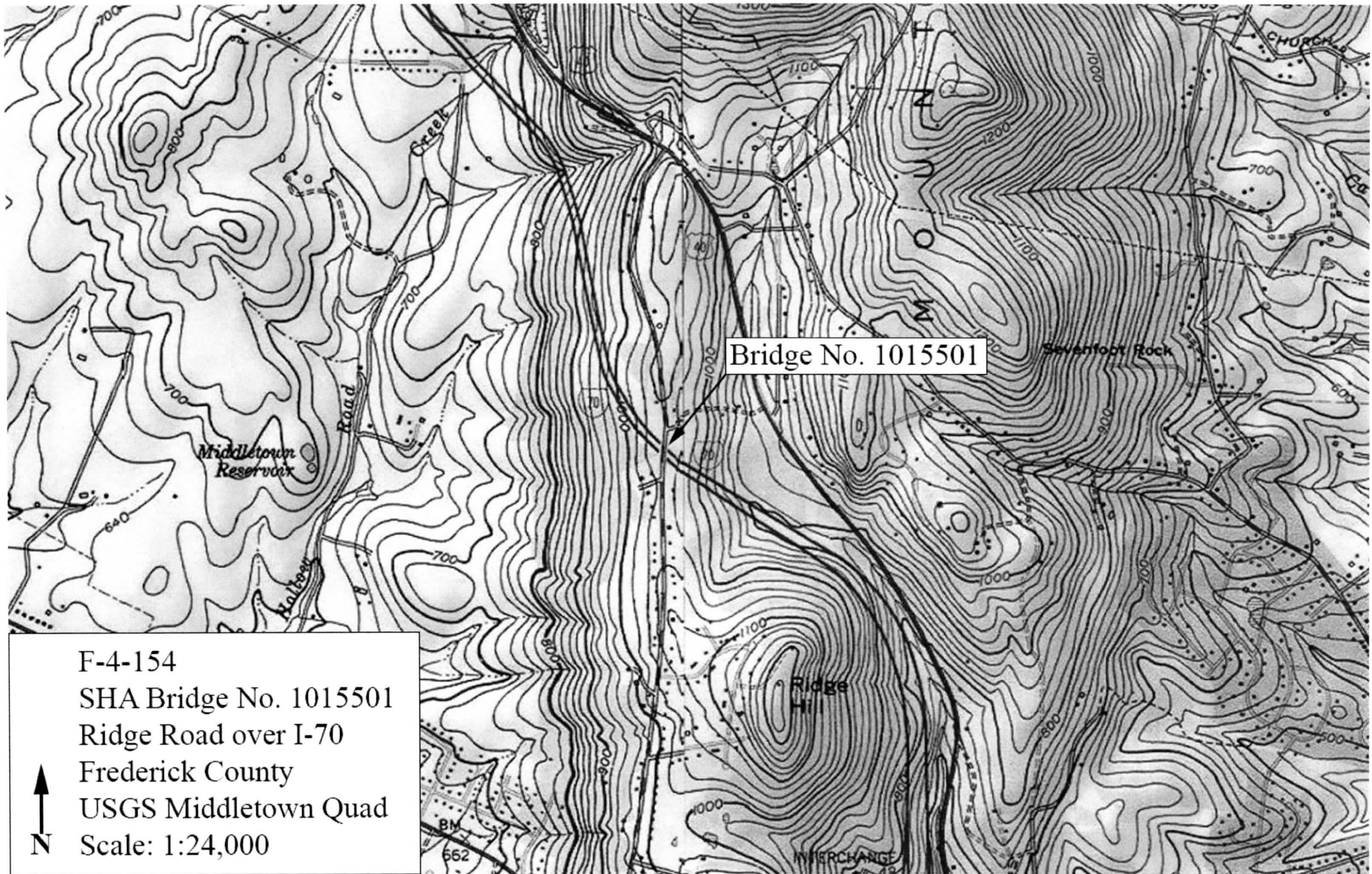
MIHP No: F-4-154



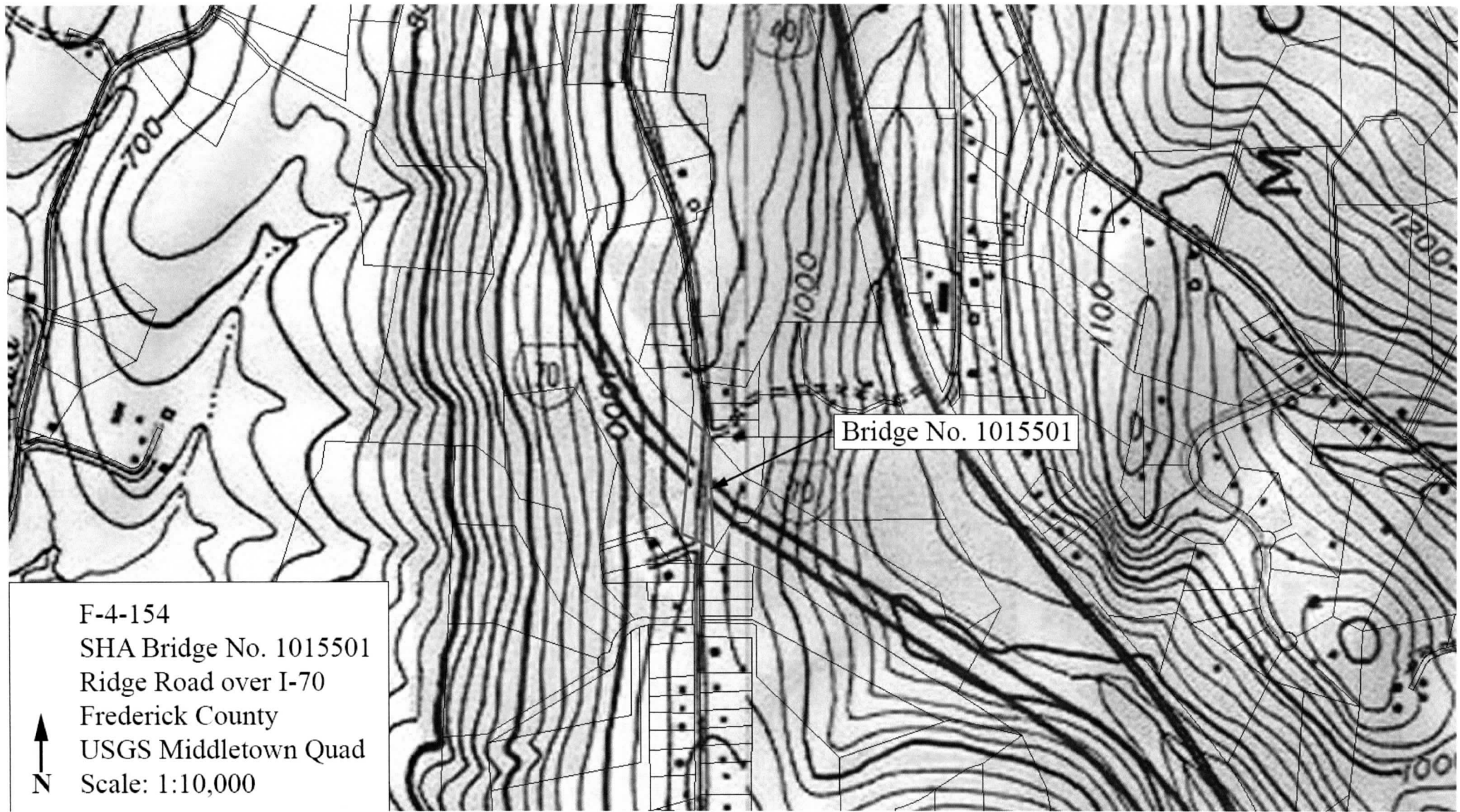
Photograph of the bridge at the time of its opening, 1972 (*The News*, May 26, 1972)

Prepared by: John Gentry, EHT Tracerics, Inc.

Date Prepared: October 2018



F-4-154  
SHA Bridge No. 1015501  
Ridge Road over I-70  
Frederick County  
USGS Middletown Quad  
Scale: 1:24,000



F-4-154  
SHA Bridge No. 1015501  
Ridge Road over I-70  
Frederick County  
USGS Middletown Quad  
Scale: 1:10,000





## Photo Log

**MIHP No.:** F-4-154

**MIHP Name:** SHA Bridge No. 1015501

**County:** Frederick

**Photographer:** John Gentry, EHT Tracerics, Inc.

**Date:** June 12, 2018

**Ink and Paper Combination:** True Black and White on Archival Quality Paper

**CD/DVD:** Verbatim, DVD-R, Archival Gold

<b>Image File Name</b>	<b>Description of View</b>
F-4-154_2018-06-12_01	View of bridge, looking northwest.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_02	View of bridge, looking southeast.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_03	View of bridge, looking southwest.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_04	View from beneath deck, looking south.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_05	View of the deck, looking south.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_06	View of the deck, looking north.
F-4-154_2018-06-12_07	Dedication plaque.



F-4-154

SHA Bridge No. 1015501

Ridge Road over I-10

Fredonia County

Tim Bowling

6/12/2018

01001 10 1015501 1015 0015 NW  
2 10 10 1015501 1015 0015 NW

A13 SHPO

View of bridge, looking NW.

1/7



E-4-15a

SLA Bridge No. 1015501

Ridge Road over James

Frederick County

Town Country

at 2/10/18

View of bridge looking SE.

2/10/18

View of bridge looking SE.

2/10



F-4-154

SLA Bridge No. 15501

Ridge Road over C. R.

Frederick County

John Gandy

3/2/78

Order to file in the office of the Clerk of the Court  
in the case of the above named parties.

113-5270

View of bridge, looking SW.

3/4



E.H. 5d

SHA Bridge No. 1015501

Ridge Road over 2, 110

Friedenck County

John Gentry

5/2/03

DATE IN SERVICE PROJECT ID# COUNTY HW  
E.H. 5d 1015501 110 110

110 5470

View from beneath deck, looking S.

4/7



F-4-154

SLA Bridge No. 101550

Ridge Road over I-70

Frederick County

John Steinhilber

6/2/00

STATE OF MARYLAND ROUTE 101550 BRIDGE NO.  
RIDGE ROAD OVER I-70, FREDERICK COUNTY, MD

MD SHPO

View of the deck, looking S.

5/9



F-4-154

State Bridge No. 1515501

Ridge Road over I-40

Frederick County

John Gentry

3/2/50 E

2 302 10 8115501 1515501 1515 02118 011  
00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00

MS 52/2

View of bridge on I-40 N.

6/11



1015500

1971

8-4-154

SHA Bridge No. 1015501

Ridge Road over 7-10

Frederick County

John Gandy

4/2/2018

Bridge No. 1015501 - 10111 10115 10119 10123 10127

R 10121 10125 10129 10133 10137 10141 10145

MD SHA

Dedication Plaque.

1/1