

**Main Street Vertical Lift  
Bridge**

J.T. Alsop Bridge  
Duval County  
FDOT #720022, 8DU1553

One of the premier historic bridges in Florida, the 1941 Main Street Vertical Lift Bridge, also known as the J.T. Alsop Bridge, crosses the St. Johns River in Jacksonville. This bridge is significant not only for its technology, but also for its visual importance as a defining element in the Jacksonville skyline. The entire bridge consists of 14 spans (11 steel girder spans and 3 Warren through truss spans) and extends a total of 1,680 feet. The steel frame lift towers rise to 200 feet, and the central lift span alone measures 365 feet in length. The lift mechanism is operated via a span drive system located on the movable span. The towers house the concrete counterweights. It is the largest of the four remaining vertical lift bridges in Florida, and it remains operable.



**Photo 5-53. Main Street Vertical Lift Bridge, Duval County (No. 720022)**

Construction of the Main Street Bridge cost approximately \$1.5 million and required 3,800 tons of steel, 460 tons of metal reinforcements, and 30,000 tons of concrete to create the appearance of strength, endurance, and grace possessed by this structure. Duval County voters approved the project in 1935. In 1938, the U.S. Bureau of Roads agreed to pay one-half of the costs associated with the project. In 1941, the Shell Products Company of Ohio, the Foundation Company of New York City, and the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company of Ohio contributed money to complete the construction of the bridge.

The Main Street Bridge retains its historic physical integrity, and was determined NRHP-eligible during the 2000 survey under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its role in facilitating the development of Jacksonville. It also meets Criterion C in the area of Engineering as a rare example of an extant vertical lift bridge associated with the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company of Ohio.