

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Date listed: 08/16/2007  
NRIS No. 07000823  
Oregon SHPO

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classifications, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Southern Pacific Passenger Depot

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

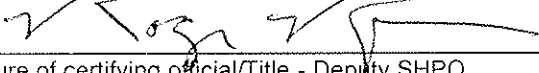
street & number 433 Willamette Street  not for publication

city or town Eugene  vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Lane code 039 zip code 97401

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant        nationally        statewide X locally.

  
Signature of certifying official/Title - Deputy SHPO

6-25-07  
Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of

       entered in the National Register  
       See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_

       determined eligible for the National Register  
       See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_

       determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

       removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

       other (explain):

\_\_\_\_\_

Southern Pacific Passenger Depot  
Name of Property

Lane County, OR  
County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property  
(check as many as apply)

Category of Property  
(check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private
- public - local
- public - state
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>		Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Craftsman  
OTHER: four-square utilitarian

foundation: CONCRETE  
walls: BRICK  
roof: ASPHALT: shingle  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

See continuation sheets.

Southern Pacific Passenger Depot  
Name of Property

Lane County, OR  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing).

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

TRANSPORTATION  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1908-1955

Significant Dates

1908  
1909

Criteria Considerations  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

Significant Person  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B removed from its original location
- C a birthplace or grave
- D a cemetery
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F a commemorative property
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance Within the past 50 years

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Southern Pacific Railroad

Narrative Statement of Significance  
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography (Cite books, articles, and other sources used in preparing the form on one or more continuation sheets) See continuation sheets

- Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36CFR67) has been requested
  - previously listed in the National Register
  - previously determined eligible by the National Register
  - designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
  - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

- Primary location of additional data:
- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: City of Eugene, Lane Co. Museum

Southern Pacific Passenger Depot  
Name of Property

Lane County, OR  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 1.19 acres

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 10 492671 4877784  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sally Donovan, president; and Anne McCleave

organization Donovan and Associates for the City of Eugene date August 2006, December 2006 (rev)

street & number 1615 Taylor Street telephone 541-386-6461

city or town Hood River state Oregon zip code 97031

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation sheets

Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

name c/o Russ Mecredy, City of Eugene Facilities Management

street & number 210 Cheshire Street telephone 541-682-2690

city or town Eugene state OR zip code 97401

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 18.1 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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### SUMMARY

The Eugene Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot in downtown Eugene, Lane County, Oregon was built in 1908 with features derived from a number of architectural styles. The brick building, laid in a Flemish-bond pattern, has a hip roof with wide overhanging eaves supported by heavy wood brackets, corbelled chimney, semi-circular bay on the north facade, two boxed bays on the south elevation, dormer windows decorated with lattice-shaped muntins, and tall one-over-one double-hung wood-sash windows capped with flat arches. The original wood freight doors are on the north and south facades of the baggage room. In 1955, a small non-compatible mail shed was constructed on the east end of the building. The interior of the depot is divided into five main areas; the waiting room/ticket area, baggage room, staff area, service area/restrooms, and the mechanical/telecommunication room. In 2004, the Southern Pacific Depot was rehabilitated and restored as a regional transportation center as part of the Multi-Modal Transit Station master plan commissioned by the City of Eugene. A new public plaza, on the west side of the building, was constructed in 2004. The associated office/bunkhouse, located west of the depot, is a contributing feature in the nominated parcel. It was also rehabilitated as part of the project.

### SETTING/LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot is located in downtown Eugene at the north end of Willamette Street, historically the main north-south street. In the Downtown Neighborhood, the depot borders the railroad tracks and W. Third Avenue on the north, the historic American Railway Express Building (*see footnote*) and a parking lot/chain link fence on the east, the station parking lot to the south, and the depot plaza and a parking area to the west.<sup>1</sup> Commercial businesses and governmental buildings are south of the depot, and the 1888 Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson Residence, a Queen Anne style house listed on the National Register, is at the base of Skinner Butte Park north of the depot.

A 13 ft. wide concrete platform/sidewalk extends around the south, west, and north perimeter of the depot. The dimpled texture and joint pattern of the original platform sidewalk was replicated during the 2004 rehabilitation project. Disabled ramps were installed at several locations to meet ADA requirements. The parking lots are paved with asphalt. West of the depot, a new public plaza includes period-style metal park benches and crook-necked light fixtures reminiscent of the historic light standards in the original depot park. Metal bollards separate the plaza from the parking areas to the west. The concrete surface of the plaza was scored in a square pattern and the southern edge of the plaza is curved. Installation of a public sculpture is planned at the south end of the plaza in the historic location of a fountain in the original depot park. The HVAC chiller borders the plaza on the west and is screened by a fence and landscaping, and the overhead utilities to the building were relocated underground during the rehabilitation. The office/bunkhouse, included in the nomination, is sited in the northwest corner of the west parking lot.

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<sup>1</sup> The American Railway Express Office is not included in the nominated area because it is under *separate* ownership and tax lot. The current owners of the Express Office do not want the building listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The building was constructed in 1909.

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### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

#### Depot Exterior

The Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot measures 30 ft. by 143 ft. with the longitudinal elevation extending east-west. One-story in height, the depot has a bell-cast hipped roof with five-foot eave overhangs. The roof is covered with architectural asphalt composition shingles with a low-profile ridge cap vent. A brick chimney with decorative projecting corner corbels caps the ridge near the west end (reconstructed in 2004).

Two brick box-bay windows on the south elevation define the outer edges of the interior waiting-room space. The bays continue through the roof forming dormers with low-pitched, hipped roofs, and wide overhanging eaves supported by exposed rafters. The two small wood sash windows in each dormer have lattice-shaped muntins; the window glass has been removed and interior vents (painted black) inserted behind the sash for the updated HVAC system. A rounded brick bay is located on the north facade, slightly west-of-center. The bay also extends through the roofline to form a rounded roof dormer with overhanging eaves supported by exposed rafters. Each frieze area of the south and north bays is embellished with recessed rectangular brick panels and projecting brick stringcourse above the dormer windows. These three bays have one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows. All the other depot windows are slightly recessed, one-over-one double-hung wood sashes with projecting brick sills and flat-arch lintels.

The broad eaves extend over the pressed-brick walls that are laid in a smooth-finish Flemish-bond pattern and joined with a tinted narrow-beaded flush-mortar joint. The eaves are supported by exposed rafters, large load-bearing notched, carved wooden brackets, and cross pieces that extend through the masonry walls. Two original baggage doors are located on the east end of the south and north facades. The doors are made of vertical tongue-and-groove boards secured by diagonal cross-bracing and capped with original three-light transoms. New period light fixtures flank the doors. An iron band is attached to the brick about three feet above the ground on either side of the north freight doors. These iron bands were applied to the brick as a way to protect the facade from the baggage carts. The outside corners of the freight/baggage doors are reinforced with iron posts and "bullet-shaped" concrete base stops.

All the doors in the depot have transoms above the opening. The waiting room doors on the south and north facades have windows in the upper section and two horizontal panels below composed of vertical tongue and groove boards. These doors were reconstructed from original drawings in the 2004 rehabilitation. Two other doors are located on the west facade. The central door consists of tall double doors made of vertical boards supported by diagonal cross bracing. A single four-panel door is north of the central door. Both doors were rehabilitated in the 2004 project and are capped with transoms. A slightly projecting concrete base extends around the perimeter of the station and some of the brick corners are reinforced with iron corner guards that extend up the corner about four feet from the concrete foundation. There are two coal chutes that are on the west end of the south facade of the depot. The coal chutes have iron doors hinged at the top and say "Majestic"

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in raised letters. New signs stating, "Eugene Depot," "Elevation 428 feet," "San Francisco 610 M," and "Portland 123 M," are centered under the eaves on the north, west, and south facades.

A mailroom shed was added to the east end of the building in 1955.<sup>2</sup> The small, one-story mailroom shed is constructed of board-form concrete and has large multi-pane, metal fixed windows on the east and south facades.<sup>3</sup> Three round iron posts support the corners. A slightly recessed door was originally located on the north facade but was enclosed to accommodate the break room for the depot workers. Originally open on the north facade, the mailroom shed was later enclosed to facilitate commercial and office use. Currently, there are two doors and a window on the north facade of the shed. The small shed is considered a non-compatible addition to the building.

### Depot Interior

The interior of the station was rehabilitated and upgraded to current building codes in 2004. Many of the original details and finishes were restored during the project. The original footprint of the station is divided into various functional areas: the waiting room, ticket counter, baggage room, restrooms/service area, and the mechanical and telecommunication rooms. The staff areas are located in the 1955 mailroom addition.

### Waiting Room

The waiting room is accessible from the "track side" and the "city side." Four sets of double doors and a single door with marble thresholds lead into the waiting room that is illuminated by tall, one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows with the original hardware intact. Formerly the ticketing area, the rounded bay on the north wall is now a seating area with a curved built-in wooden bench. Replica period-style wood benches are positioned in rows in the center and west side of the waiting room. The waiting room has plaster walls, a wood picture rail, and the original plaster ceiling. Some of the original faux stamped wainscot tile on the lower half of the wall is intact (areas where the tile was missing were restored). A varnished wood chair rail defines the top of the faux tile surface. The wood trim around the windows and doors was restored to the original varnished finish. Pendant globe lights are suspended from the ceiling. The floor is covered with terrazzo tiles laid in a diamond pattern. A central archway, flanked by two double-width openings, separates the waiting room from the ticketing area.<sup>4</sup>

### Ticket Booth

The ticket booth, on the east end of the waiting room, is made of a vertical tongue-and-groove stained wood, the ticketing counter has square, cherry wood columns that support the upper signage area that states, "TICKETING." The upper portion of the counter is enclosed with glass for security. The ticket booth floor is

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<sup>2</sup> The original blueprints show that the area between the passenger station and the Express House was intentionally kept as open space for the purpose of a future addition. Blueprints, City of Eugene Planning and Development Department, 1907.

<sup>3</sup> Building permit dated August 1, 1955. City of Eugene Planning and Development Department files.

<sup>4</sup> The archway was discovered in the preliminary rehabilitation investigation of the building. The archway was restored after the dropped ceiling was removed.

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covered with rubberized tiles, and the ceiling acoustic tiles. Combinations of cabinets and counters line east and west walls. A door from the waiting room opens into the north portion of the room and a wide opening in the east elevation of the ticketing room leads to the baggage room.

### Baggage Room

The baggage room has whitewashed brick walls, painted drywall ceiling, and the original 4 ft. by 4 ft. scored concrete floor with some of the dimple-texture finish remaining. The original freight doors, made of vertical v-groove tongue-and-groove boards secured with iron straps, are on the north and south facades of the room. Each door is capped with a tripartite transom window and slides on an iron runner. The doors slide into pockets on the north and south walls. A mechanical and storage mezzanine is built above the ticket booth behind the west wall of the baggage room, accessible by a ladder and door in the top of the wall. There are two original windows on the east facade of the baggage room. The northern window was made into a door during the recent rehabilitation project. This door internally connected the mailroom and the baggage room.

### Restrooms

The original restrooms, near the west end of the depot, were on the south side of the station opposite the current location. The restroom facilities were moved to the north side of the building, and enlarged to meet current program and accessibility requirements. Details from the original restroom finishes were replicated in the new restrooms. These include the use of white "subway" ceramic tiles on the walls, and small white and black hexagonal tiles on the floor. Because the ceilings in the new restrooms were lower than the original windows in the rooms, light-wells were built around the top of the windows to retain the window heights. Sinks and toilet stalls on opposing sides line the east and west walls of the women and men's restrooms. Samples of the original restroom floor tiles and toilet stall doors and marble partitions are located in the attic storage area. Vending machines are opposite the restrooms along the depot south wall. A small maintenance closet is on the west wall of the vending machine hall.

### Mechanical Room

The mechanical rooms are located in the west end of the building and include the new HVAC, electrical, fire alarm, and telecommunication systems. A mezzanine level, accessible by a ladder, includes much of the mechanical systems for the station. Even though a new heating system was installed, the majority of the original radiators were retained in the lobby of the building.

### Mailroom Shed Addition (Non-Compatible addition)

The Mailroom Shed, added to the depot in 1955, currently functions as an area for the staff. The staff areas include four main spaces: the restroom/locker room, break room, office, and conference room. All the finishes are new, including the walls, ceilings, and floors. The metal multi-pane windows on the south and east facades are original. The door at the west end of the mailroom shed that leads into the baggage area was reused from the station. A glass panel was installed in the door to visually connect the mailroom shed and baggage room. Originally, this building was open on the north side as a receiving room for mail. The north side was later



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enclosed to accommodate office space. Due to its age and modifications to the original shed design, the addition is considered a non-compatible addition to the original train depot.

### OFFICE/BUNKHOUSE

The contributing office/bunkhouse, approximately 20 ft. by 20 ft. square, has a hip roof covered with architectural asphalt shingles, a brick chimney on the south side, overhanging eaves, board soffits, drop tongue-and-groove siding, 4/4 double-hung wood-sash windows with simple wood trim, combination wood screen windows, corner boards, and a concrete foundation. The door is on the west facade. A low perimeter planting strip surrounds the building on all sides, and a sidewalk is on the west side. The interior has been rehabilitated and restored. The walls are a combination of beaded boards and vertical tongue-and-groove boards, and the floor was refinished to expose the original tongue-and-groove fir flooring. The ceiling is covered with bead board. Small access doors to the crawl space and the attic are in the floor and ceiling. The small structure may have been used as an office and built around 1880.<sup>5</sup> The building was later used as a bunkhouse.

It appears that the office/bunkhouse was originally located west of the depot. The building was moved to a site east of the depot in the 1950s. During the 2004 rehabilitation project, the building was relocated west of the depot near its original location. The bunkhouse and small yard offices were usually located at a distance from the depot.

### REHABILITATION AND ALTERATIONS

#### Pre-2004 Alterations

##### Exterior

- Two windows were lengthened on the north side of the depot at the west end during the historic period. The sills were lowered to the same level as the other set of four windows directly to the east. The same sill details were used.
- A window immediately to the west of the waiting room entrance doors on the west side of the bay was reconfigured into a door during the historic period.
- Half of the double door on the west facade was enclosed to provide a window for the former telegraph office, and an additional single doorway was added, styled after the other entries with a transom above and a decorative brick arch.
- Mailroom shed added to the east facade in 1955.

##### Interior

- Installation of a drop ceiling and fluorescent lighting.

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<sup>5</sup> Field investigation with Phillip Dole, AIA. Professor Emeritus, University of Oregon Architecture and Allied Arts, Eugene, Oregon. According to Professor Dole, the style and materials date to the 1880s.

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- Covered original arch between waiting room and ticket booth when ceiling was lowered.
- Removal of the ticket area and construction of a new counter on the east side of the waiting room.

### 2004 Rehabilitation

The Eugene Southern Pacific Depot was rehabilitated as part of a plan to develop a regional transportation center in the station. Completed in 2004, the project was funded by the City of Eugene and the Oregon Department of Transportation using Federal Highway's Transportation Enhancement grants. Since federal monies were involved in the rehabilitation, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), Executive Order 11593 was enacted. The depot was determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 2001, and in the Finding of Effect evaluation, the Oregon SHPO concurred that the rehabilitation project would have "No Adverse Effect" on the building or site. The depot was rehabilitated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

### Site

- Restored the concrete platform/sidewalk around building replicating the dimple texture in the concrete.
- Constructed a plaza on the west side of the depot.
- Relocated gas and electric meters away from front door.
- Placed utilities underground.

### Office/Bunkhouse

- Moved the Office/Bunkhouse from the site east of the depot to a location on the west side of the station.

### Depot Exterior

- Re-roofed, and installed new gutters and downspouts
- Cleaned and repointed exterior brick where necessary
- Restored chimney
- Repaired windows, doors, and trim, and repainted
- Replaced double entrance doors with doors matching original design
- Added exterior wall mounted lighting
- Added new door on the north side of the mailroom shed addition
- Installed new exterior signage
- Replaced HVAC system on the outside of building

### Depot Interior:

- Restored original height of ceiling and repaired plaster, and windows
- Repaired and reconstructed plaster walls and faux wainscot tiles
- Refinished wood trim around doors and windows, chair rail and picture rail
- Installed new terrazzo floor in waiting room

Southern Pacific Passenger Depot  
Name of Property

Lane County, OR  
County and State

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- Restored original arch between ticket booth and waiting room
- Built a new ticket booth and office area
- Installed benches in round bay that was originally the ticket booth along the north wall of the waiting room
- Installed two new interior five-panel doors
- Built new restrooms similar in design to the original rooms
- Installed equipment in the mechanical and telecom room at the west end of the building
- Built staff areas in mailroom shed addition
- Installed new HVAC system

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1908, the Eugene Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot and the contributing associated Office/Bunkhouse are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with the early development of Eugene as a major shipping and distribution center on the Southern Pacific Railroad's mainline that linked Portland, Oregon to California. The railroad brought greater economic flexibility, opened markets for shipping local crops and goods, and increased the number of permanent residents in the city. The depot, the third station erected on the site, represents the Progressive Era and the City Beautiful Movement when cities across the United States improved their communities by creating inviting urban environments as a way to attract more businesses and full-time residents. The new depot was viewed as the "gateway" to the town.

The Southern Pacific Passenger Depot and associated office/bunkhouse are also eligible under Criterion C as well preserved examples of railroad-related buildings in Eugene. The depot is designed with stylistic elements of the Arts and Crafts/Craftsman movement. The associated Vernacular style office/bunkhouse is a simple utilitarian building, void of decorative details. The depot is architecturally significant as an example of a type and period of construction that reflects stylistic and functional elements common to railroad depot designs. More stylized and substantial in its construction than other depots in smaller towns, the Eugene depot shows the importance of Eugene as a major hub on the Southern Pacific line and its position as the Lane County Seat. The depot is one of five remaining masonry depots built along the original Southern Pacific main line to California.

The period of significance dates from 1908 to 1955. The beginning date represents the construction of the depot, and the end date represents the last major alteration to the exterior of the depot when the mailroom shed was added to the east facade (non-compatible). The end date also signifies the decline of the use of the railroad and the end of the Southern Pacific's Shasta Line, one of the key railroad lines that connected Oregon and California. The Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot were listed as a Eugene Historic Landmark in 1979, and determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in September 2001, under Criteria A and C, as part of the 2004 rehabilitation process. The areas of significance include transportation and architecture.

The Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot and Office/Bunkhouse retain integrity of design, location, feeling, association, and material. The majority of the original materials, finishes, layout, and design were retained and restored in the 2004 rehabilitation project. A symbol of the city's early reliance on the railroad, the Southern Pacific Passenger Depot has been in continuous use since its construction in 1908.

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

#### Early Settlement of Eugene

The Kalapuya Indians were the first people to live in the Willamette Valley. Archeological evidence indicates that the Kalapuya occupied the area for several centuries. A hunting and gathering people, the Kalapuya

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frequently burned the grasses of the valley to clear brush and provide a better habitat for the game and vegetation they depended on for food. By the early 1800s, as explorers ventured into the Oregon Territory, the native Kalapuya population dwindled due to disease brought on by contact with Euroamericans.

Euro-Americans began arriving in the Willamette Valley in great numbers after the Oregon Trail was established across the country in the 1840s. After first settling in the northern Willamette Valley around present-day Portland and Oregon City, pioneers pushed further south in the valley and staked claims under the 1850 Donation Land Claim Act. The promise of free land brought a new wave of settlers into the Oregon Territory.

William Dodson, Felix Scott, Elijah Bristow, and Eugene Skinner were the first Euro-Americans to stake claims in what is now the Eugene area. Skinner's 1846 land claim of 640-acres included present-day Eugene and Skinner Butte, originally called the "high place" by the Kalapuyas. Although not prime agricultural land, Skinner's claim included a ferry crossing and suitable land to establish a townsite. By 1847, Skinner had built a log cabin on the west side of Skinner Butte for his wife Mary and their first child. Others settlers staked claims adjacent to Skinner in the late 1840 and 1850s, each bringing new skills, and interests to the region. The Skinner Post Office was established by 1850, and the initial townsite of Eugene, originally called Eugene City, was platted in 1851.<sup>1</sup> The same year, the Oregon Territory provisional government established Lane County with Eugene as the county seat. After the county was formed, Eugene City was resurveyed and platted. Schools, businesses, churches, lumber and flourmills, government buildings, and residences were erected in the new town plat under the guidance of the first mayor, Eugene Skinner. A millrace was built that served as the center of the industrial development of the city. Eugene City was incorporated in 1862 (and reincorporated in 1864 with some boundary adjustments).<sup>2</sup>

The same year Eugene was incorporated, Congress passed the Homestead Act, which allowed citizens to claim up to 160-acres of unclaimed public land, and receive title after making improvements and residing on the property for five years. The offer of free land attracted more settlers to Oregon and the Eugene area. At the same time (1862), Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act, which authorized the Central Pacific and Union Pacific companies to build a transcontinental railroad.

The second railway act was enacted in 1864, as a way to further stimulate investment in the railroads by giving away more land and subsidies for each mile of track laid. In 1865 and 1866, other railroad bills allowed for other railroad companies to construct railways and granted more free land to the railroad companies. The government wanted a rail system that would be used to facilitate commercial, postal, and military communication among the states. These acts stimulated interest and competition in developing a rail system in Oregon, particularly between Portland and Northern California, through the fertile lands of the Willamette Valley. This railroad would connect to the transcontinental line under construction by the Central Pacific and

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Skinner named the town Eugene City after her husband.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Carter and Michelle Dennis, *Eugene Area Historic Context* (Eugene, Or.: City of Eugene, 1995), 14.

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the Union Pacific.<sup>3</sup> At this time, Eugene City was only accessible by wagon/stage road, or by transport on the Willamette River. Consequently, the town welcomed the idea of a train connecting the valley with the rest of the country.

### **The Construction of the Oregon and California Railroad**

In 1868, construction of what would become the Oregon & California Railroad began when two competing companies initiated building a railroad from Portland through the Willamette Valley. The Oregon entrepreneurs wanted to be the first company to connect with the Central Pacific Railroad that was building the western portion of the transcontinental railroad from Sacramento, California, to Promontory, Utah. The rival railroad companies began rail construction on either side of the Willamette River in Portland, with Joseph Gaston and his supporters from Portland on the west side, and a group supported by Salem sponsors on the east side. Both factions started construction in April 1868.

The two companies engaged in a competition to cross the Clackamas River (20-miles upstream) by the end of December 1869. Incentives for the companies included loans from major financial centers, backed by federal land-grants, and subsidies. The federal government gave away land-grants in checkerboard patterns, and railroads could sell every-other square. Local and state governments also aided the financing for the construction of the lines. The two companies' legal and political battles enticed a Kentucky-born native named Ben Holladay. Holladay, who came west to operate the Pony Express, steamship, and stage operations, quickly involved himself in the railroad venture, and "threw his hat" in for the east-side company. Under Holladay's guidance, the east-side company won federal favor, and the last spike was driven on December 24, 1869. The east-siders claimed victory. In March 1870, Holladay purchased the west-side company and reorganized his railroad company under the name of the Oregon & California Railroad.

Still under Holladay's control, construction of the railroad pressed further south, reaching Salem in 1870, just in time for the State Fair celebration. The train reached Albany on December 25, 1870, and Harrisburg on June 25, 1871. As the railroad pushed further south, Holladay began negotiating with Eugene City for the placement of the tracks and depot. In an effort to gain more revenue for the railroad, Holladay asked the City for forty-thousand dollars to insure that the railroad would be built through the city, and not in the neighboring community of Springfield.

Although the city initially balked at the fee, the business people convinced the City that it would be worth the money. The first Oregon & California train arrived in Eugene on October 8, 1871. The *Eugene City Guard* reported upon the coming of the railroad, "Many of our citizens turned out to observe the process of track laying, and to witness the arrival of the first train of cars, which made its appearance at a late hour in the afternoon."<sup>4</sup> A wooden depot was built at the north end of Willamette Street, at the base of Skinners Butte, a

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<sup>3</sup> The Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads met at Promontory Summit, Utah for the driving of the golden spike on May 10, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> *Eugene Register Guard*, October 14, 1871, 3.

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strategic location in downtown Eugene. The depot served as both a passenger and freight depot.

Construction of the railroad south of Eugene continued, reaching Roseburg on December 3, 1872. Once there, construction came to a halt for nine years. "Holladay failed financially. Money acquired by sale of bonds in advance of construction had been spent with reckless abandon. Traffic revenue from the sparsely settled region was not sufficient to meet expenses, and when bond interest could not be met in 1873, Holladay was forced out and the property taken over by . . . German investors" represented by Henry Villard.<sup>5</sup>

After the Oregon & California Railroad reorganized and secured more funding, the company resumed construction of the railroad south of Roseburg in 1881. At the same time, the California & Oregon Railroad resumed construction north from Redding, California in 1883 in an effort to connect the Oregon and California railways. "The Oregon & California, and the California & Oregon railroads met in Ashland, Oregon near the border on December 17, 1887. By this time, the Central Pacific controlled the Oregon & California Railroad, placing the entire line between California and Oregon under the same name. At the same time, the Southern Pacific Railroad was incorporated. All affiliated railroads, including the Central Pacific, were then leased to the Southern Pacific."<sup>6</sup> The Southern Pacific railroad also acquired (by lease) the Oregon & California Railroad, marking an end to the reign of the Oregon & California Railroad.<sup>7</sup> Despite the legal and financial difficulties during the construction of the railroad through the Willamette Valley, the cities and towns along the line became dependent on the railroad for transportation of goods and passengers, and the City of Eugene was no exception.

### Eugene's Development and the Railroad Era

After the Oregon & California Railroad reached Eugene, the industrial development that originally centered on the Millrace began shifting to the railroad depot, and associated freight warehouses. Farmers and agricultural organizations expanded their operations both physically and economically, as evident in the storage and distribution warehouses that were built along the track by the depot. The railroad owned a ribbon of land, known as the Southern Pacific Reserve, which the railroad company leased to various lumber, general

<sup>5</sup> Erle Heath, "75-Years of Progress: An Historical Sketch of the Southern Pacific, 1869-1944," transcribed and edited by Bruce C. Cooper. *Bulletin*, 1944, [www.cpr.org/Museum/SP\\_1869-1944/index.html](http://www.cpr.org/Museum/SP_1869-1944/index.html). German investors sent Henry Villard to Oregon to look after their railroad interests. In succeeding years, Villard became a national figure in transportation affairs. He was president of the Northern Pacific when the company completed its transcontinental line into Portland in 1883, and was the organizer and leading figure in the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company, later a unit of the Union Pacific line into Portland.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> The Southern Pacific continued to expand its rail service to other parts of Oregon and the nation. Between 1887 and 1899, 2,630 miles of lines were added to Southern Pacific's operations, about 70 per cent of it being on the Pacific System. The principal western additions included construction and land acquisitions in California, stock purchase of the 300-mile narrow gauge Carson & Colorado railroad in Nevada and eastern California, completion of the Coast Line in California from San Francisco to Santa Barbara, construction and acquisition of a number of short main and branch lines in southern California, acquisition of the narrow gauge Oregonian Railway lines on the east and west sides of the Willamette Valley in Oregon, and expansion of lines in Texas and Louisiana.

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merchandising, fruit, and milling companies for their storage warehouses. The company also had its own warehouses that stood west of the passenger station. The railroad became the focal point of the city. By the early 1880s, a new wooden passenger depot was built at the base of Willamette Street. The second depot, a wooden structure designed with Victorian-style elements, was rectangular in shape, with a center projection on the north side, and a smaller storage area annexed to its east end. A separate freight depot and small office building were located northwest of the depot on the opposite side of the tracks.

Streets around the new depot were graded and gas lamps installed to light the area around the station. The railroad connected the town with other communities in Oregon (and eventually the nation), bringing greater economic flexibility, opening more markets for the shipment of crops and goods, and increasing the number of permanent residents in the city.<sup>8</sup> Residential development increased as more “high-style” homes replaced the simple structures of the 1860s and 1870s. The University of Oregon in Eugene was established by the state legislature a year after the first train came into the city, further solidifying the town’s permanency in the state. Larger brick commercial buildings replaced smaller wooden storefronts, as Eugene’s commercial core expanded further south of the depot along Willamette Street. Fraternal organizations, churches, and social organizations constructed buildings that were interspersed between the commercial and residential developments. By the end of the Railroad Era and the beginning of the Progressive Era, Eugene was on its way to becoming the commercial and cultural center of the southern Willamette Valley.

### The Progressive Era

Eugene’s Progressive Era during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is marked by a period of increased interest in social reforms and humanitarian activities, as new aid organizations, social groups, and public interest committees were organized and the city’s industry and commerce expanded.<sup>9</sup> “Overall it was a period of growth and prosperity, although the country experienced economic depressions in the 1890s and again in the late 1910s. By the mid-1880s, Eugene was firmly established as the main city in the southern Willamette Valley, and residents had overcome many of the hardships of early settlement. The population grew from less than 2,000 in 1884 to over 9,000 in 1910. The timber industry was well on its way to becoming the primary economic enterprise in Lane County and in Oregon, though agriculture continued to prosper.”<sup>10</sup> The rail transport helped expand these important regional industries.

During this period, the City Council worked to improve the city’s infrastructure, government buildings, water system, fire department, public transportation, public utilities, and park system, in an effort to attract more residents and businesses. Business blocks were erected and new residential neighborhoods spread out from the downtown core. The early 1900s were a prosperous time for the city. More churches, residences, and schools were built, and the University of Oregon continued to expand its curriculum and campus. Many social and fraternal groups formed to help the less fortunate and bring about social reform through education and outreach.

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<sup>8</sup> Carter and Dennis. *Eugene Area Historic Context*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*



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As new industries developed and the agricultural-based businesses grew, the relationship between the railroad and businesses became stronger, as productivity and demand increased.<sup>11</sup> Commerce increased as a variety of specialty businesses started to meet the demands of increasing population and wealth.

The city promoted construction of a streetcar line, a mule-drawn trolley system that was completed in 1891. The system served the area until 1903. In 1907, a new electric trolley system was completed in Eugene, and as a result, Willamette Street was paved for the first time. By 1910, the electric trolley reached the neighboring community of Springfield, which formed an important transportation link for both communities. At its peak, the electric railroad system operated three main routes, with two originating at the train depot. Another form of transportation also made its appearance in Eugene in the early 1900s: the automobile. By the mid-1910s, the impact of automobiles was reflected by the development of new auto-related businesses, and the number of paved streets in the town.

Eugene's local government included members of the community who worked to better the town and guide growth. In its expanded role, city officials helped stimulate commercial and residential development, and aided groups, such as the Eugene Commercial Club, who were involved in the national movement coined the "City Beautiful Movement." Architect and planner Daniel Hudson Burnham, director of architectural works for the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architect, inspired the principals of the movement and helped promote its value to civic leaders across the United States. While other social reformers of the time concentrated on improving sanitary conditions or opening missions, the City Beautiful architects and leaders believed the emphasis should be on producing attractive urban settlements, as well as healthy social environments, which in turn would inspire its inhabitants to moral and civic virtue.

The concept of a new Eugene Southern Pacific Depot coincides with this movement that spread throughout Eugene as a way to beautify and attract more visitors and full-time residents to the city. It was also during this time that the Southern Pacific expanded its operations under the direction of Edward Harriman, who became president in 1901. More than \$240,000,000 was spent during his eight-year administration (Harriman died September 9, 1909) on reconstruction and new equipment, erecting new railroad stations, and constructing or purchasing new lines.<sup>12</sup> As a result of this railroad expansion period, and the lobbying efforts of prominent Eugene business people who wanted to improve the "gateway" to the city, plans for the new Eugene depot began in December 1907.

### The New Depot

Vice-president and manager of the Southern Pacific Railroad, J.P. O'Brien, initiated plans for a new passenger depot in Eugene after intense lobbying by prominent members of the Eugene community. On February 28, 1908, the *Morning Register Newspaper* announced that a new depot would be constructed in Eugene. That same day, the City of Eugene signed a contract with the Portland Bridge and Building Company to construct the

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>12</sup> Heath, "75-Years of Progress: An Historical Sketch of the Southern Pacific, 1869-1944."

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depot at a cost of \$40,000 (\$10,000 for the grounds).<sup>13</sup>

Plans specified a 32 ft. by 143 ft. pressed-brick building with a concrete foundation, slate roof, steam heat, and electric lights.<sup>14</sup> The interior of the depot was designed with a furnace and waiting/ticketing room, office, and baggage room, and the exterior design had elements of the Craftsman and Richardsonian-influenced architecture. The Southern Pacific's engineer in the Portland office (no name cited) drew the plans for the station.

Construction of the new depot started shortly after the Southern Pacific made the announcement. The old depot was moved north of the tracks to continue its daily function while allowing the new depot to be sited near the original location. The new building was placed only ten feet southeast from the original footprint and encompasses a larger area compared to its predecessor's 20 ft. x 80 ft. footprint.<sup>15</sup>

By June, the new depot was completed. The grand opening was celebrated on June 24, 1908, and drew people from all over Eugene and Portland. The *Eugene Daily Guard* described the opening:

The occasion is the opening of the fine new passenger station of the Southern Pacific Co. and the commencement exercises at the University of Oregon. The streets of the city are in gala attire and each citizen is vying [sic] with his neighbor in making the visitors feel that they are welcome. The excursion train arrived at the depot five minutes ahead of time. A crowd of a thousand or more people was waiting for it and as the locomotive puffed into the station the citizens warmly welcomed them.<sup>16</sup>

The dedication took place on the depot's south platform with a welcome speech by Dr. Kuykendall stating that "Eugene was proud of its new depot and appreciative as well as happy."<sup>17</sup> He then presented Southern Pacific's General Manager, Mr. J.P. O'Brien, with a special key to the depot. Before opening the door, Mr. O'Brien spoke about Eugene's business people who "visited his office about a year ago, made for the purpose of asking for a new depot, and complimented them upon the business-like manner in which they negotiated for the improvements, which...had a great deal to do with his immediate promise to build the depot as soon as it could be done."<sup>18</sup> O'Brien then proceeded to open the door and invited guests and Eugene citizens in to view the interior. The *Morning Register*, on June 24, 1908, also complimented Eugene and its citizens by writing:

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<sup>13</sup> City of Eugene Planning Department, "Brief History of the Southern Pacific Eugene Depot," draft report prepared by Rebecca Ossa, August 8, 1997, 1.

<sup>14</sup> The pressed brick for the exterior was shipped from Portland.

<sup>15</sup> Ed Austin and Tom Dill, *The Southern Pacific in Oregon* (Edmonds, Wa.: Pacific Fast Mail, 1987), 76.

<sup>16</sup> *Eugene Register Guard*, June 25, 1908, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

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Eugene typifies the twentieth century idea of progress in the empire of the west... Eugene's progress is an open highway that any other city in Oregon may travel to like success. If there is any mystery connected with Eugene's wonderful advancement it lies hidden behind the energy of our citizenship. Today Eugene is a city of 10,000. Eugene has learned the lesson that you cannot build a city without the requisite material, which consists chiefly of paved streets, electric lines...[and] a \$40,000 pressed brick depot.<sup>19</sup>

The waiting room of the new station was symmetrically arranged in a rectangular configuration.<sup>20</sup> The ticket office was centrally located within the north bay, and the ticket counter was made of wood panels below and decorative iron-grillwork above. The openings on the south interior wall were symmetrically arranged with a series of three windows flanked by the two entrance doors and end windows. The offices and other auxiliary rooms were separated from the waiting room by full interior walls. The east wing housed the large baggage room, which measured approximately 36 feet in length, a sleeping room, and a storage closet. The west wing consisted of the women's lounge, men's restroom, yardmaster and telegraph offices, boiler room, and locker room. Eugene residents were pleased with the new depot, which became a source of pride in the community.

A new freight depot was also constructed further west of the depot. A small office building was also erected between the depot and freight building (likely the extant building in the nominated area). Directly across from the freight depot were the Southern Pacific stockyard's building and a grouping of houses. These were common railroad buildings associated with the passenger depot. A water tower, and the American Railway Express building, stood east of the depot.

### Depot Park

After the completion of the depot, Eugene civic leaders again started lobbying the railroad to further help beautify the railroad yards. As a result, plans were made for a park surrounding the depot. The park was part of the City Beautiful Movement to visually improve the city, especially the areas first seen by visitors. The civic leaders hired W.F. Chance, a Portland landscape architect, to design the park as a gateway to the town. The design was completed in February, 1909, and was described in the February 23, 1909, *Morning Register* newspaper:

The curb line of Willamette Street will be combined in a broad curve to the east and west, leaving a wide drive to approach the Depot and Express Office to the west and the platform to the left. As the Depot divides the thousand-foot space in two parts, each part will have a distinctive feature. That to the west will have an Alpine garden or rockery. The ferns, plants,

<sup>19</sup> *Morning Register*, June 25, 1908, 4.

<sup>20</sup> The following descriptions of the interior and its alterations are based on the original blueprints and the current interior's appearance. Blueprints and alteration memorandum courtesy of City of Eugene Planning and Development Department, Aug. 1907, and 1979, respectively.

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and flowers for these rooks have to be ordered from New York. The eastern half will have its special attraction in an Italian rose garden. Several cozy walks will lead up to this and through the Common Council, the park will be artificially lighted, thereby making the improvement doubly valuable, making it a point of attraction by night as well as day. It will be the first time in the history of Oregon that a community and a railroad corporation have worked hand in hand for a civic improvement of this kind, with the merchants and citizens, through their commercial club, as intermediary.

By June 1909, Depot Park was completed. The City of Eugene, the Commercial Club, Southern Pacific Railroad, and local businesses and citizens, coordinated and financed the construction of the park. An opening celebration took place on June 23 to the delight of the community. Decorative lampposts lined the tracks and depot grounds, while two concrete block columns and a central fountain marked the entrance to Willamette Street near the depot, the entry into downtown Eugene. The park was laid out with a formal rose garden at the eastern extent of the park, designed in a rectangular pattern, with a criss-cross walkway culminating in the circular fountain in the center of the rose garden. The area west of the rose garden was designed in a less formal manner with meandering paths interspersed with alpine plants and lawn areas. The water tower was also integrated into this garden area. A drive was designed in front of the station with a row of evergreens bordering the north side.

Another alpine garden, west of the depot, had a curvilinear border with rockery on the eastern side, and planted with a combination of evergreens and lawn areas.<sup>21</sup> The park was a source of community pride for many years. The automobile's popularity also impacted the Southern Pacific Depot and its grounds. Sometime between 1956 and 1968, Depot Park was removed and replaced with a parking lot. Only some of the southern evergreens remained at this time.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Automobile Era and World War I**

Eugene continued to grow as the Automobile Era ushered in a new period of expansion, and new hotels and restaurants were built in the immediate vicinity of the depot. Many new commercial buildings and residential subdivisions were constructed. In the mid-1910s, a variety of transportation modes were used throughout the city and Oregon, including the train, electric streetcar, horse and buggy, automobile, and a new flying machine, the airplane. By the early 1910s, the Portland, Eugene, and Eastern Company (PE&E) built a streetcar system that serviced many nearby towns. In 1915, the company sold the streetcar system to the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad owned the system until it ceased operation in 1927, when the automobile became the favored mode of transportation. The Southern Pacific petitioned the City Council to replace the streetcars with buses.

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<sup>21</sup> The western boundary of the new plaza completed in 2004 mimics the curve of the original west garden area.

<sup>22</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1948, 1956, and 1968. The 1968 Sanborn map shows the limits of the park suggesting some of the gardens were still intact.

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The Oregon Electric Railway Company built a rail line on the east side of the Willamette River that serviced Eugene to Portland passengers. A new depot, designed in the Georgian Revival Style by A.E. Doyle, was completed in 1914, just one block south of the Southern Pacific Passenger Depot. The line became popular with those traveling frequently to Portland until 1933, when the company ceased operation of the electric line.<sup>23</sup> The area around 5<sup>th</sup> and Willamette streets became a transportation hub.

The Southern Pacific Railroad continued to impact the development of Eugene as the company expanded its holdings with the completion of a rail line between Eugene and Coos Bay in 1916, and adding more daily passenger trains between Eugene and Portland. Entry into World War I by the United States in the spring of 1917 put additional pressure on railroads across the nation. Less than a week after war was declared, the nation's railroad executives organized the Railroads' War Board to coordinate operations of the country's rail facilities. Government control and operation of the nation's railroads became effective at noon on December 28, 1917.

"Over Southern Pacific lines and elsewhere throughout the country, railroad facilities were consolidated, in some respects, for unified operations. The war ended less than eleven months after the government took over the railroads, but the properties were not returned to private operation until March 1, 1920, making a total of approximately 26 months under federal control."<sup>24</sup> Out of wartime operations, however, the railroads, the government, and the nation's shippers gained valuable experiences in operating an efficient railroad service that relied on a coordinated degree of teamwork. After the war, the Southern Pacific started planning for an increase in the railway's capacity, and implementation of its rehabilitation and development programs.

From 1923 to 1930, the Southern Pacific completed several important projects. The railroad constructed a new line from Arizona through Phoenix, rebuilt the Nevada-California-Oregon line to standard gauge, and completed the Cascade Line (Natron Cut-off) from Natron, Oregon, near Eugene, to Black Butte, California.<sup>25</sup> The 270-mile Cascade Line/Natron Cut-off provided a route with lower grade, less curvature, and shorter distance than the original line built over the Siskiyou Mountains during the late 1880s. The new Cascade Line became the main Southern Pacific route between Oregon and California. To accommodate the weight of the new line's locomotives, a new bridge was built in 1926 spanning the Willamette River near Eugene. During this period, the Southern Pacific also decided to build a new terminal yard in the Eugene area.<sup>26</sup> The new terminal yards were started in 1925 and completed in 1929 on a 205-acre site northwest of the passenger depot, outside the town center. The railroad's maintenance shops were moved to the new yards in 1925 and a state-of-

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<sup>23</sup> Carter and Dennis, *Eugene Area Historic Context*, 63. The Eugene Electric Station is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is currently used as a restaurant.

<sup>24</sup> Heath, "75-Years of Progress: An Historical Sketch of the Southern Pacific, 1869-1944."

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> The Southern Pacific originally purchased land in the adjacent community of Springfield for its new yards, but the City of Eugene offered the railroad free land if the company would build the new terminal yard in Eugene. The company accepted and sold the land in Springfield in favor of the Eugene location.

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the-arts railroad tie plant supplied products to locations as far away as San Francisco.<sup>27</sup> As a result, Eugene became an important hub on the Southern Pacific line.

Automobile usage and ownership soared during the 1920s, as cars became more commonplace in Eugene. A new sense of freedom in travel followed, as people did not need to rely as heavily on train schedules. Auto-related service and sales buildings were erected across town, and in an effort to accommodate the increase in auto usage, the State Highway Commission began construction of the Pacific Highway through the Willamette Valley to California in the early 1920s. Despite the wide use of automobiles, the Southern Pacific remained a popular means of transportation through the 1920s.

### **The Great Depression and World War II**

The prosperity of the 1920s gave way to the Great Depression of the 1930s. Profitable operating revenues of the late 1920s started a downward spiral as the depression began. By 1930, revenue dropped to the lowest point in ten years. As a result, both freight and passenger service suffered. Railroad expenditures were confined to those necessary for operating purposes and safety, and some branch operations were consolidated, and even abandoned, as a way of saving money. By 1933, the total number of employees on the transportation system dropped by half.<sup>28</sup>

The decline in railroad revenue inspired the Southern Pacific to develop innovative ways to increase use of the rail system. The introduction of new equipment and services promoted railroad usage. The company began using air-conditioning in the cars, provided expedited overnight merchandise freight trains, offered special low fares for passengers on coach trains, and introduced the popular priced "meals select" in dining cars.<sup>29</sup> Since freight traffic produced the majority of the company's revenues, the Southern Pacific developed ways to expand its handling of merchandise freight through rail-truck coordination. This partnership helped lagging freight business. The Southern Pacific also began replacing older passenger trains with streamlined, lightweight, and luxuriously comfortable passenger trains. Thus, a new era of modernized services was initiated during the 1930s depression.

As World War II began, rail transport became more important. As an integral part of the war effort, the railroad transported troops and supplies all over the country. The slogan, "Victory Trains Come First" was announced immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack. The Southern Pacific pledged to help in the war effort despite a shortage of people to staff the trains. Every serviceable locomotive and car was put back into operation. The Southern Pacific's 1,400 miles of north-south lines through Oregon and California connected with transcontinental rails that transported thousands of people into ports from Portland to San Diego. These ports supported much of the entire Pacific offensive that provided weapons and supplies for the war. Passenger travel increased dramatically during the war, as service men and women made several train trips during training

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<sup>27</sup> The new railroad terminal yard was built about a mile west of the passenger depot and yards.

<sup>28</sup> Heath, "75-Years of Progress: An Historical Sketch of the Southern Pacific 1869-1944."

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

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before being shipped overseas. After the war, trains remained an important means of transport for returning service personnel.

### Post-World War II Era

Much of the post-war growth of Eugene focused on the automobile. Auto-dependent residential suburbs were platted, and automobile-related businesses proliferated such as drive-ins, large auto show rooms, auto-courts, and motels. Airplane travel became more economical and the bus system expanded. Massive road construction projects were undertaken as the interstate freeway system was built across the state. Large acreages of land in the Eugene area were annexed into the city, which resulted in new roads and an increase in the region's population. Eugene also emerged as a hub for the timber industry and one of the major oil distribution centers for the southern Willamette Valley.

An increase in automobile usage and post-war prosperity caused a decline in the use of trains for freight and passengers. Instead, the trucking industry gained popularity over rail transport. Farmers liked the ease of shipping perishable goods, and often solicited cheaper and swifter services from truck drivers, or relied on their own automobiles to distribute goods. Consequently, heavy reliance on the railroads gradually broke down. In 1955, the Southern Pacific's Shasta Line, a major connector line between Oregon and California, was abandoned, further diminishing the use of rail transport. Much of the once cherished Depot Park was also removed to make way for parking lots, and in 1955, a mailroom shed was added to the east facade of the depot (a non-compatible addition). The depot continued its use as a passenger depot until 1960, when the last passenger train left the station. From 1960 to 1983, the Southern Pacific only used the depot as its District Freight Office, sharing it with the Evergreen Boxcar Company.

### Recent History

In 1971, the Southern Pacific leased the west half of the building to Amtrak. In 1993, the Southern Pacific Transportation Company sold the depot, office/bunkhouse, and Express Building to Jenova Land Company.<sup>30</sup> The company owned the property until the City of Eugene purchased the depot and office/bunkhouse (not the Express Building, see footnote 30) in 2003 as part of a plan to develop a regional transportation center in the station. The first phase of the project included the rehabilitation of the station and platform, construction of a plaza on the west side of the depot, and relocating and rehabilitating the historic office/bunkhouse. Completed in 2004, the City of Eugene and Oregon Department of Transportation funded the project through the Federal Highways Transportation Enhancement grants.

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<sup>30</sup> Although the Express Building was built about the same time as the depot and is associated with early transportation systems, the property is on a separate tax lot and owned by a private company. The property owners do not want the building listed in the National Register.

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### THE EUGENE DEPOT: ARCHITECTURE

#### Components of a Railroad Station

Southern Pacific Railroad stations were constructed to handle passengers, freight, and other commodities. Stations often included several buildings and structures according to the usage and size of the community served. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, common buildings at a station included depots (passenger and freight), towers, warehouses, offices, crew bunkhouses, and maintenance facilities. Prominent signs, visible from the tracks, displayed the station's name.

The most common and prominent building in a station complex was the depot. The depot size and style were dependent on their function, and importance of the community they served. Depots accommodated passengers and/or held freight, and sometimes housed railroad staff. Depots ranged in size and type from small shelters, consisting of a platform and protective covering, to larger, high-style buildings that conveyed the prominence of county seats or state capitols. "Other depots housed a combination of uses including indoor facilities for passengers, baggage, and freight, plus an office for the agent. Stations in remote locations or in newly platted towns were built with living quarters for the agent -- sometimes as a second story. Larger towns often received separate passenger and freight depots. In many cases, an older combination depot would be remodeled into a freight depot and a new passenger facility erected."<sup>31</sup>

Other structures commonly found in stations were switching towers, maintenance buildings (tool sheds and larger buildings to service railroad equipment), offices, warehouses, bunkhouses, and sometimes, stock-holding pens/buildings. Separate water tanks were also often present (these structures were replaced when diesel surpassed steam). All major railroads also had one or more terminals with shops for light and/or heavy repairs, and modifications of locomotives, cars, and other equipment. Shops included an assortment of structures; additional roundhouses, a boiler house, blacksmith, erection shop, parts warehouse, and engineer's office.<sup>32</sup>

The Eugene Southern Pacific Station includes typical features standard to railroad stations all over Oregon and the nation. The 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Eugene shows the relationship of the Southern Pacific station buildings and structures. From Pearl Street on the east to Lincoln Street on the west, the station complex extended over one-third of a mile, and included a pump house, water tank, the passenger depot, Depot Park, an office, and separate freight depot. Station buildings were also on the north side of the tracks, and included a stockyard area and crew. The Southern Pacific Reserve area, also on the north side of the tracks, included several businesses that leased railroad land for warehouses. The American Railway Express Agency building, east of the depot, was expanded in the late 1910s. The company often located its buildings adjacent to railroads, taking advantage of the easy access to rail transport.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Railroad Historical Society, Inc, "Railroad buildings and structures," [www.rrshs.org/information/info.htm](http://www.rrshs.org/information/info.htm).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> "Early in 1860, the Pony Express concept was formed and operated from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California. The end of the Pony Express came in 1861 when the telegraph line connected Omaha and San Francisco and officially ended on Oct. 26, 1861.



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### Depot Architecture

Railroads, including the Southern Pacific, used many standard designs for their depots and other railroad buildings. During the later part of the 1800s, railroads began regularly utilizing standard designs as a way of saving money on engineering and construction costs. Publications such as the *American Architect and Building News*, *Engineering News*, *the Railroad Gazette*, and Walter Gilman Berg's 1893 book, *Buildings and Structures of American Railroad*, advised engineers, architects, and builders on selecting the correct materials, interior arrangements, finishes, and styles for depots. In Berg's book, he stressed how to plan depot interiors. He "advocated locating the ticket booths at the front of the building facing the track with a bay window, and placing doors in the waiting rooms enabling passengers entering from the outside to pass directly from the ticket window to the train platform.

Style selection was influenced by the station's importance, the surroundings, and the desires of the railroad management and, sometimes, the community. Berg favored a bold, yet original, graceful architectural effect that adapted to the surroundings."<sup>34</sup> Berg also suggested that well-known Boston architect Henry H. Richardson's artistic and picturesque passenger depots serve as inspiration for future depot designs. Although not common in Richardson's other building types, some of his depot designs were more linear in nature and had hip roofs with wide bell-caste eaves. The wide eaves were both aesthetically pleasing and sheltered passengers. Railroad engineers and architects used many of Richardson's design concepts when developing depot plans well into the twentieth century.

### Southern Pacific Depot Designs

Many of the earlier depots on the Southern Pacific main line from Portland to Ashland were constructed according to standard plans. The depots in smaller communities often utilized the "Southern Pacific Standard Plan #22," which was designed in the Victorian/Stick or Queen Anne styles. Generally long and narrow wood frame buildings, these depots fit between the tracks, and had second stories that served as the living quarters for the stationmaster. The floor plan consisted of the lobby, ticket office, passenger waiting room, and freight office. The bay window, for the telegrapher, allowed the operator an unobstructed view up and down the tracks. Other standard Southern Pacific designs constructed in the same styles in the late 1800s and early 1900s included smaller, one-story buildings with no living quarters (living quarters often were detached).<sup>35</sup>

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On November 1, 1866, Wells Fargo & Co. purchased the stage and Pony Express operations from Ben Holladay. At this time, there were several express companies; however, by 1914 there were only seven. During World War I these seven companies were consolidated at the direction of the Federal Government into one nationwide organization, the American Railway Express Agency. In 1929, the nation's railroads bought the express business and changed the name to Railway Express Agency." "Railway Express Agency, 1899-1907," Technology, Invention, and Innovation Collections, #260, Archives Center, National Museum of American History. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/archives/d8260.htm>.

<sup>34</sup> Michigan History On-Line. "Depots of Distinction," [www.michiganhistorymagazine.com/extra/transportation/rails/stations/stations\\_of\\_distinction.html](http://www.michiganhistorymagazine.com/extra/transportation/rails/stations/stations_of_distinction.html).

<sup>35</sup> Examples of these one-story and 1½-story wooden buildings include the Southern Pacific depots in Springfield, Brownsville, and Canby (list not complete).

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The depots built in county seats (and state capitals) along main lines, especially the second- or third-generation depots, were generally larger buildings, more stylized, and made of masonry. These depots were often modified version of standardized Southern Pacific plans, and their individual designs were influenced by the community's needs, civic organizations, and funding.

### **The Eugene Station and Passenger Depot**

Designed by the railroad staff in the Portland engineering office, the Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot has characteristics of several styles. The low horizontal appearance, wide eave overhangs, large wood brackets, tall double-hung windows, and diamond-pane dormer windows are reminiscent of the Craftsman style, and the red-brick construction and semi-circular bay are characteristics of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.

The depot's design combined simple forms with careful detailing to give the station utility and beauty. Like many small American stations in this period, the building's long, narrow rectangular form parallels the railroad track. Constructed of masonry, the exterior of the depot was laid in a smooth, Flemish-bond pattern. The deeply set windows, set either in pairs or in series, show the thickness of the walls. A distinctive feature in the design was the semi-circular bay located slightly off-center on the north side (track side) of the building. This feature was important in the function of the depot as well, as trainmasters had an unobstructed view of the tracks and oncoming trains. The bay penetrated through the roof and created a semi-circular dormer with diamond-pane windows.<sup>36</sup> Other decorative features in the design included transom windows above paneled, double-entrance doors, two hipped-roof dormers on the south facade with diamond-pane windows, and a corbelled chimney. A large rolling baggage door was located on the north and south facades.

The interior of the train station was designed with the passenger in mind. The large waiting room had scored plaster wainscoting resembling subway tiles, varnished wood window trim, rounded bay window, and a high picture rail. The comfort stations for both men and women were designed for the ease of travelers (relocated in 2004 to the north side of the building during the rehabilitation). The service/mechanical rooms were located at the ends of the building, away from the public area. The attached baggage area was designed for the convenience of the passenger and railroad employees.

### **Other Masonry Southern Pacific Depots on the Original Mainline**

The Southern Pacific Passenger Depot is an architectural symbol of Eugene's early reliance on the railroad for passenger and freight transport. Although there were many depots built in Oregon along the Southern Pacific lines only five other masonry depots dating from this period remain along the original mainline from Portland to Ashland: Albany (1908), Eugene (1908), Medford (1910), Roseburg (1912), and Salem (1918).<sup>37</sup> Most of these

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<sup>36</sup> The bay area originally functioned as the ticket office and now is part of the waiting room. Blueprints, City of Eugene, Planning and Development Department, 1907.

<sup>37</sup> The Klamath Falls Passenger Depot, built along the Natron Cuff-off, is also a masonry building but was constructed later when the new line was completed.

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depots share similar characteristics to Eugene's depot with the exception of the Salem's Beaux Arts building. All of these depots are built in county seats. Eugene and Albany are the oldest of the masonry depots.

Albany, Linn County, Oregon (1908):

The Albany Passenger Depot, built in 1908 concurrently with Eugene's depot, was constructed of cast concrete block. The one-story building has a hip roof, wide eave overhangs, corbelled chimney, boxed bays, and tall double-hung windows. A porte-cochere is located on the end of the building to shelter passengers. Currently undergoing rehabilitation, the depot will be used by Amtrak (transportation center).

Medford, Jackson County, Oregon (1910):

The Medford Passenger Depot is a one-story building that has a hip roof, tall decorative brick and stucco chimney, wide eave overhangs supported by large brackets, multi-pane, double-hung, wood-sash windows, and boxed bays. The exterior is covered with a rough stucco surface decorated with brick quoins, stringcourse, and door and window trim. The building was restored in 1996 and is currently used as Porters Restaurant.



Roseburg, Douglas County, Oregon (1912):

The Roseburg Passenger Depot, built in 1912, is a one-story building that has a clipped gable roof, brick chimney, dormers, wide eave overhangs, multi-pane, double-hung, wood-sash windows, and boxed bays. The upper portion of the depot is covered with a rough stucco surface and the lower portion with brick. The stucco gable ends are decorated with half-timbering.

The Roseburg Station Restaurant is currently located in the building.



Salem, Marion County, Oregon (1918):

The Salem Southern Pacific Railroad Depot was completed in 1918. The third Southern Pacific passenger depot in Salem, the Beaux-Arts style building provided a gateway to Oregon's capital. Designed by Southern Pacific architect J.H. Christie, the depot has a balustrade on the parapet, projecting cornice, brick facades decorated with contrasting door and

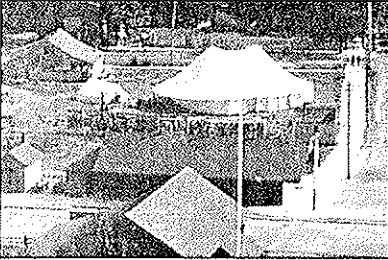
window lintels, four colossal Ionic columns between recessed Roman arch entrance bays, round and tripartite windows flanking the entrance, and lower side-wings housing ticketing, baggage, and restrooms. The Salem depot is the most elaborately designed depot on the Southern Pacific's mainline through Oregon, and reflects the importance of the state capital. The depot has been restored and is used as an Amtrak station.

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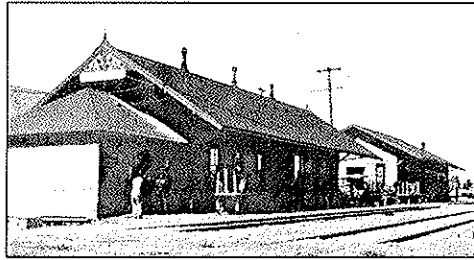
## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

### Other Eugene Depots



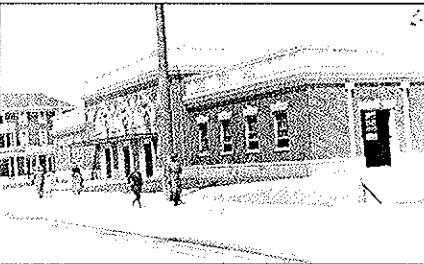
Depot No. 2: Contextual view,  
1905. Courtesy of Lane County  
Historical Society, Eugene, Oregon.



Depot No. 2: Victorian Style depot,  
built 1880s. Courtesy of Lane County  
Historical Society, Eugene, Oregon.

Oregon & California Train Depot No. 1 &  
2 (Razed):

By the early 1880s, a new wooden  
passenger depot was built at the base of  
Willamette Street. A wooden structure  
designed with Victorian-style elements,  
the depot was rectangular in shape with a  
center projection on the north side and a  
smaller storage area annexed to its east  
end.



Eugene Oregon Electric Station:

Designed by the firm of Doyle, Patterson, & Beach in the Georgian Revival  
style, the Eugene Oregon Electric Station was built from 1912-14. The brick  
and stone building has a hip roof, rectangular plan, brick construction,  
Palladian windows over the three entrance doors, classical detailed cornices,  
and lower side-wings. The building was used as a depot until the 1930s, and  
currently functions as a restaurant.

Courtesy of Lane County Historical  
Society, Eugene, Oregon, No. GN  
4392.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Verbal Boundary Description:

The Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is located at 433 Willamette Street in Eugene, Lane Co., Oregon on Tax Lot 2201, Map #17 03 30 43 of the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 30, T17S R3W of the Willamette Meridian. The nominated area includes two buildings, the Southern Pacific Passenger Depot and associated Bunkhouse. The nominated area of Tax Lot 2201 excludes an 11.78 ft. wide by 1,017.02 ft. portion of the property, which extends northwesterly along the spur track and can be described using the points and boundaries of the legal description of Tax Lot 2201 as follows:

Beginning at a point on the East margin of Lincoln Street, said point being North 005" East, 107.03 feet from the North margin of Fourth Avenue; run thence along said East margin of Lincoln Street North 005" East, 11.95 feet to a  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch iron rod 25 feet distant from, when measured perpendicular to, the centerline of the spur tracks, said  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch iron rod also being the northwest corner of sand deed No. 9273694; thence leaving said East margin and running along a line 25 feet southerly from the centerline of the spur tracks the following course: South 8015" East to a point at the perpendicular intersection of the northerly extension of the east boundary of deed No. 8957361; thence South along said extension to the northeast corner of deed No. 8957361; thence North 80 54" west 368 feet to a  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch iron rod; thence along a line parallel with and 36.78 feet distant from, when measured perpendicular to, said spur track centerline North 80 15" West, 649.02 feet to the point of beginning, containing an area of 0.27 acres, more or less.

The nominated portion of Tax Lot 2201 is 1.19 acres more or less.

### Boundary Justification:

The nominated area includes the depot and bunkhouse, the two buildings historically associated with the Southern Pacific Railroad's presence in downtown Eugene, and the majority of the land that once included the Depot Park.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

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### PHOTOGRAPHS

Printed on an Epson Stylus Photo 2200

Ink Type: Epson UltraChrome Pigmented Inks

Paper Type: Epson Premium Glossy Photo Paper

Location: Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot

433 Willamette Street

Eugene, Lane County, Oregon

Photographer: Sally Donovan, Donovan and Associates, Hood River, Oregon

Date of Photographs: August 27, 2006

1. Looking west, contextual view of depot parking area with bunkhouse in background.
2. Looking west, contextual view along rail line on the north side of depot.
3. Looking west, paved plaza immediately west of depot.
4. Looking northwest, south facade of depot.
5. Looking northeast, south facade of depot.
6. Looking east, west facade of depot.
7. Looking southwest, north facade of depot.
8. Looking northwest, south and east facade of depot mailroom shed addition.
9. Looking south, round bay window on north facade.
10. Looking south, entrance to freight room of depot on north facade.
11. Looking north, detail of depot chimney.
12. Looking northeast, detail of depot brackets.
13. Looking east, interior of depot waiting room.
14. Looking west, interior of depot waiting room.



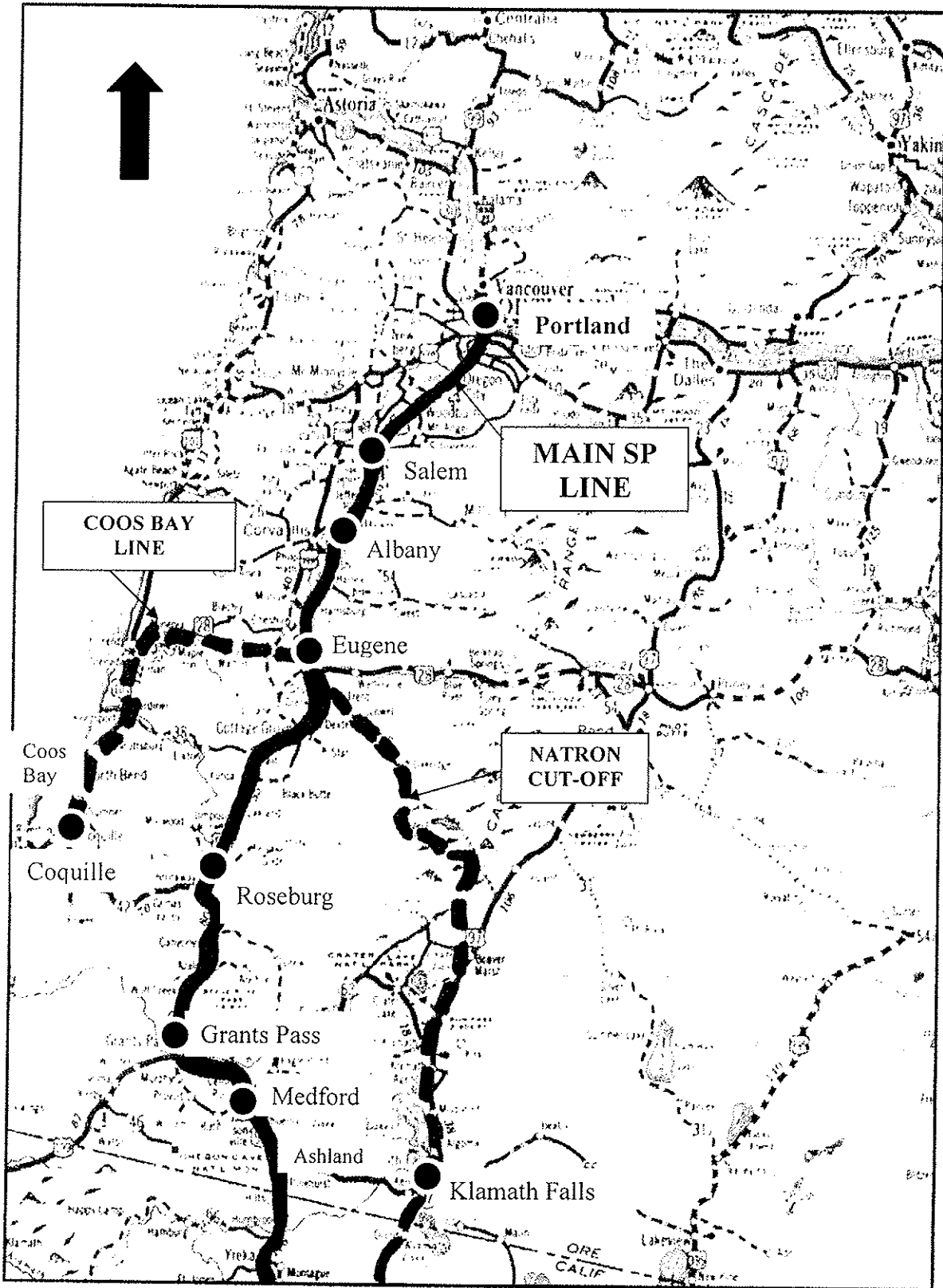
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

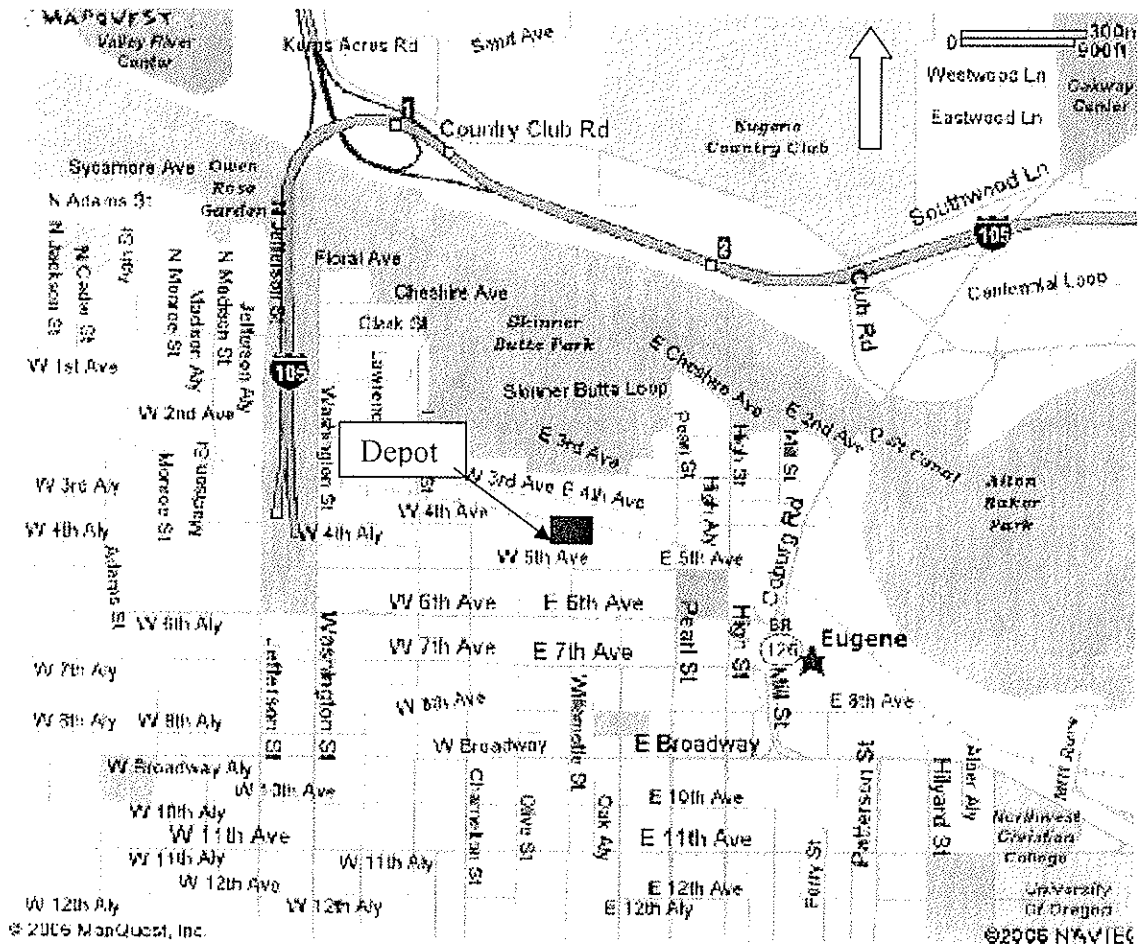
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ Page 2

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15. Looking north, interior of depot round bay window.
16. Looking northeast, interior of depot freight room.
17. Looking southeast, interior of depot freight room.
18. Looking southwest, interior of depot freight room, rolling freight door and door pocket.
19. Looking north, interior of depot women's restroom.
20. Looking southwest, bunkhouse located west of depot.
21. Looking southwest, interior of depot bunkhouse.



Map of Southern Pacific Railroad Mainline connecting Portland, Oregon to California, and later routes.



**City Map  
Eugene, Oregon**

FOR ASSESSMENT  
AND TAXATION  
ONLY

S.W.1/4 S.E.1/4 SEC.,30 T.17S. R.3 W.W.M.  
LANE COUNTY

SCALE 1" = 100'

SEE MAP 17 03 30

17 03 30 43

NAD 83/91

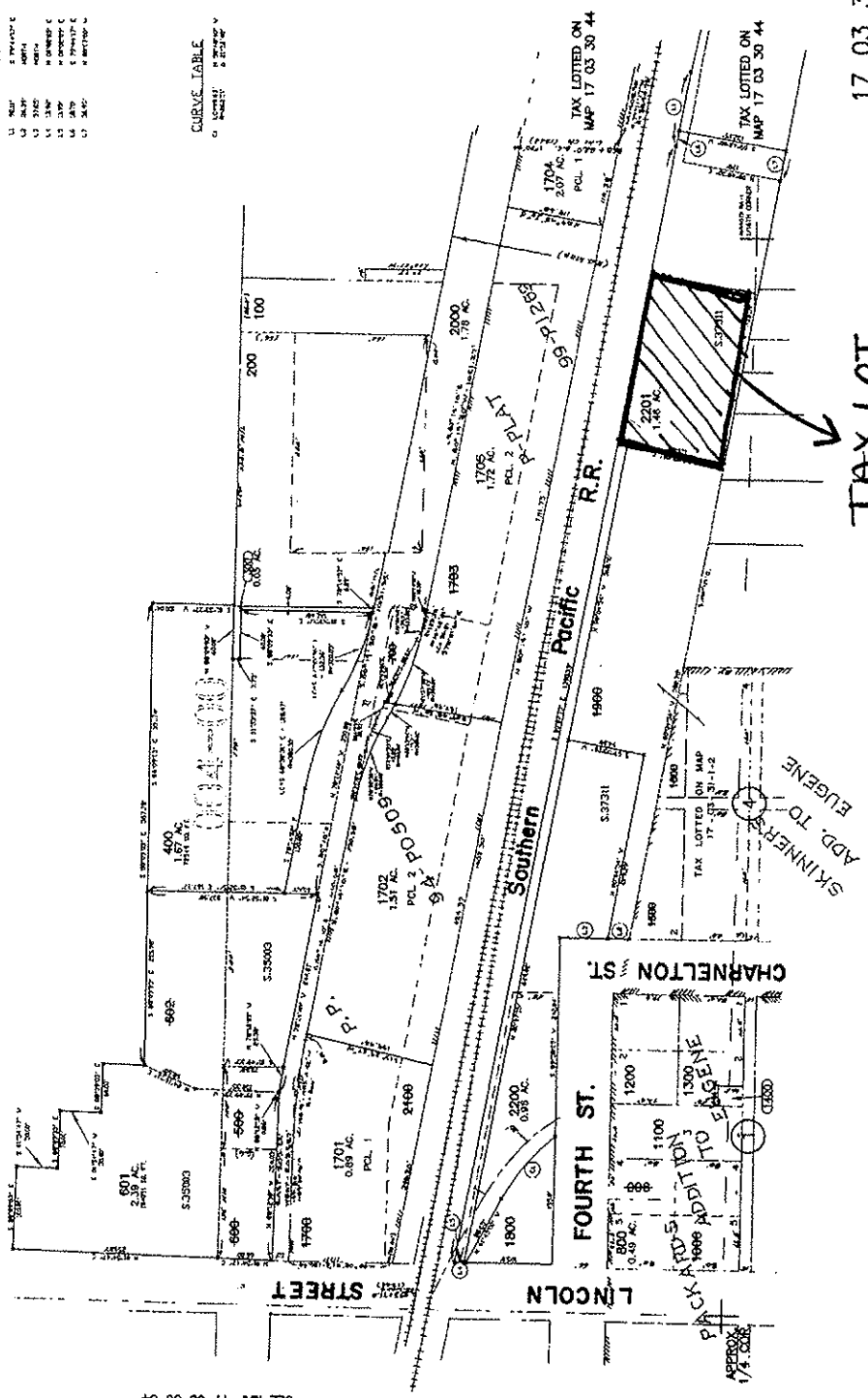
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SEE MAP 17 03 30 44



SEE MAP 17 03 30 34

SEE MAP 17 03 31 12

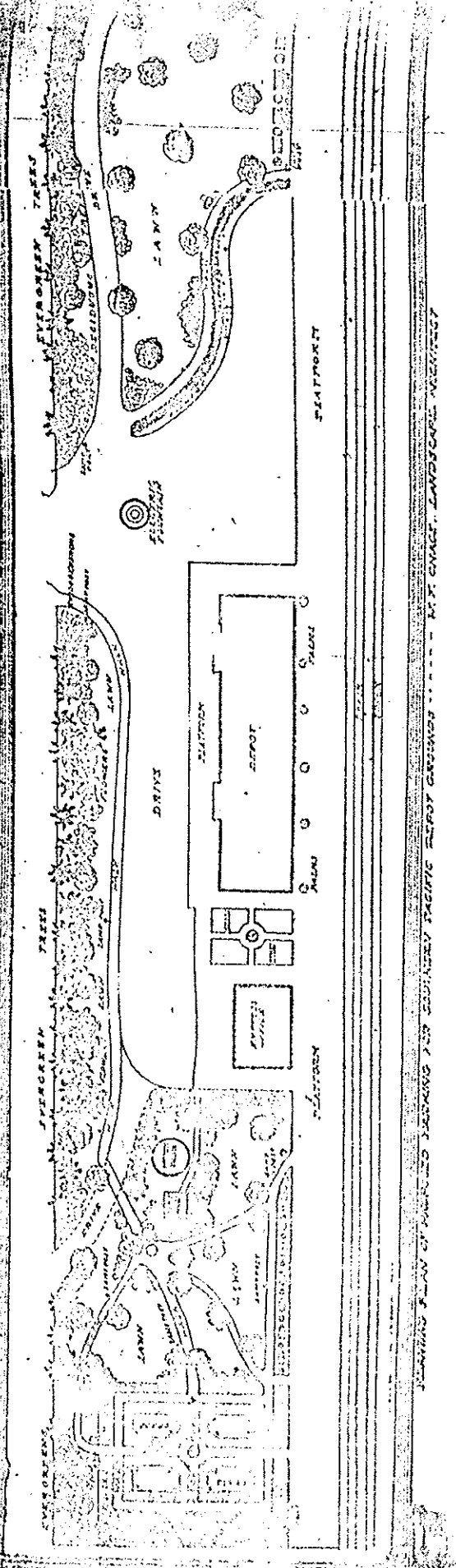
17 03 30 43

TAX LOT  
2201  
(nominated area)

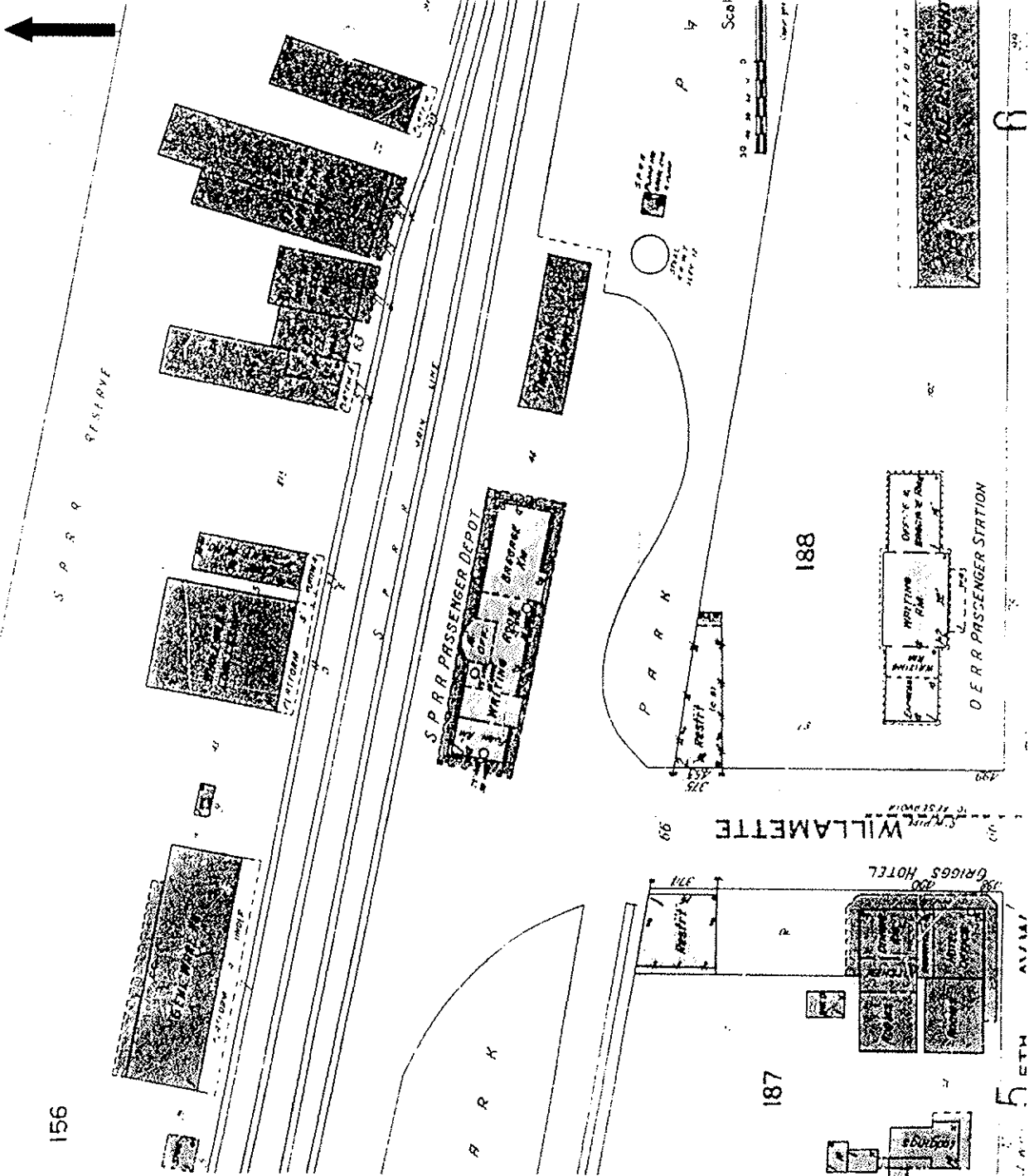
THE SUNDAY OREGONIAN, PORTLAND, MARCH 7, 1909.

# MAKING AN ATTRACTIVE PARK AT A RAILWAY STATION

EUGENE HAS PIONEERED A CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT WHOSE COST IS BORN BY THE MUNICIPALITY, THE COMMERCIAL CLUB AND THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC.

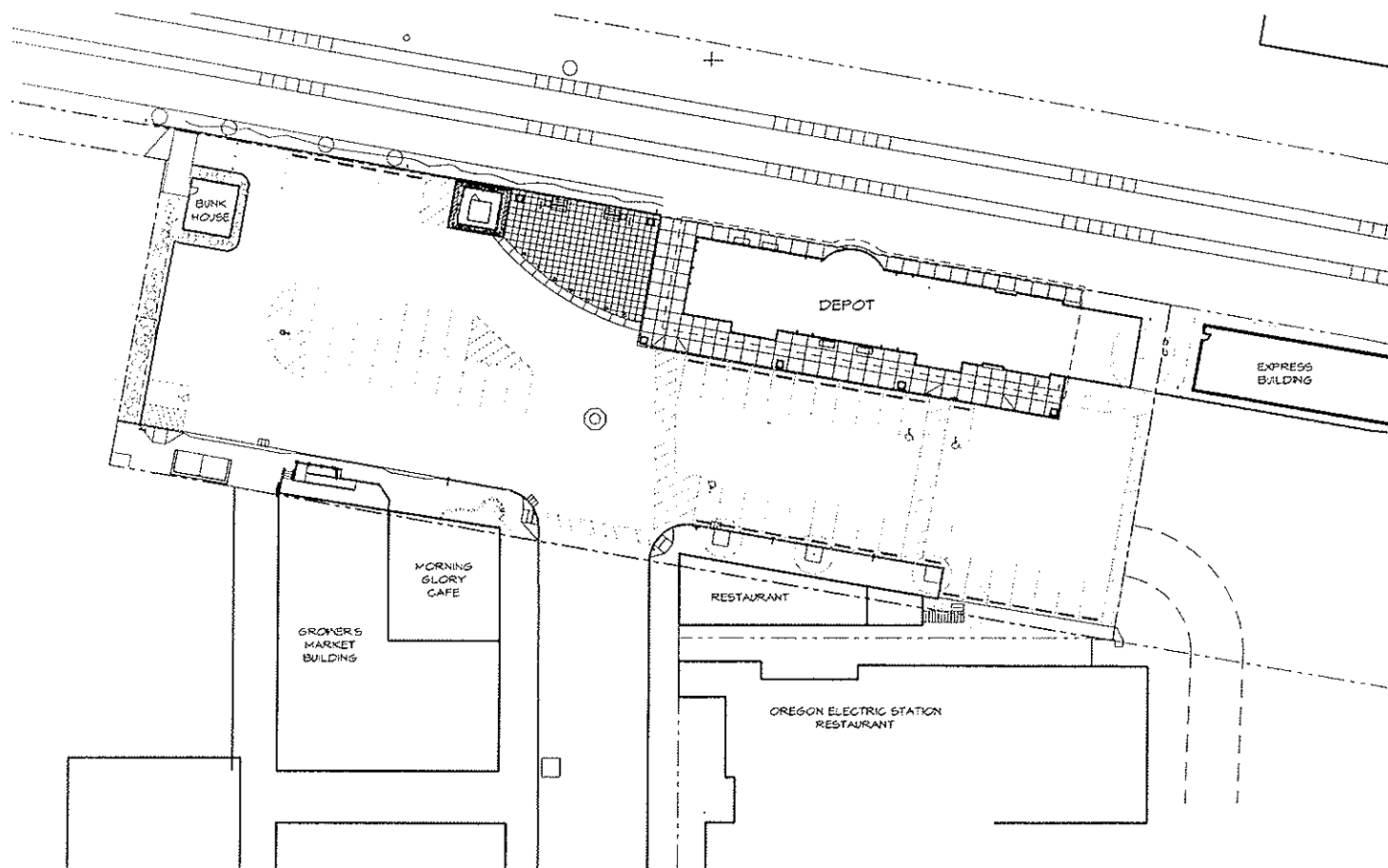


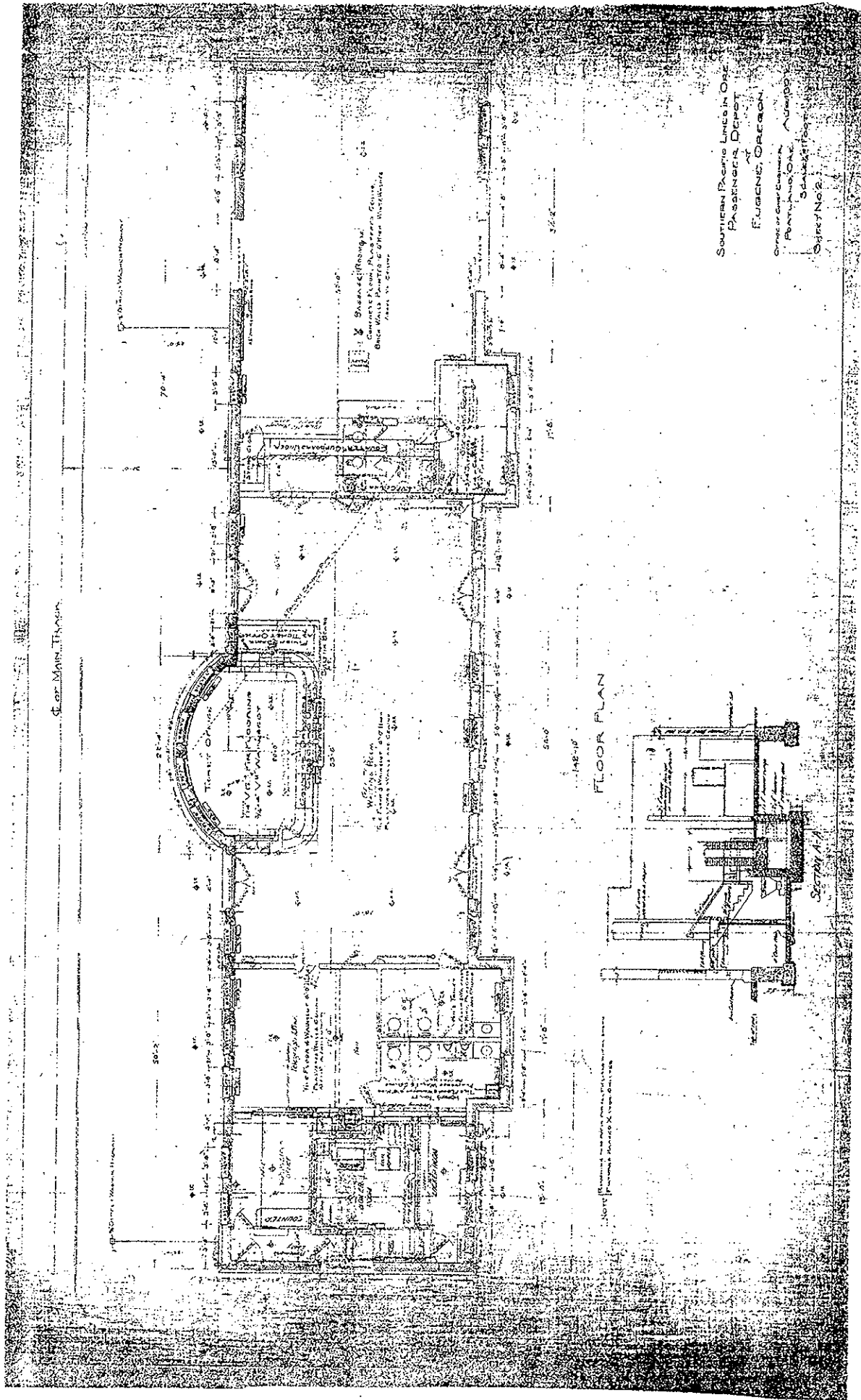
**Depot Park at SP Station**  
Illustrated in the Sunday Oregonian, March 1, 1909



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map  
1925

# Eugene Southern Pacific Passenger Depot Site Plan





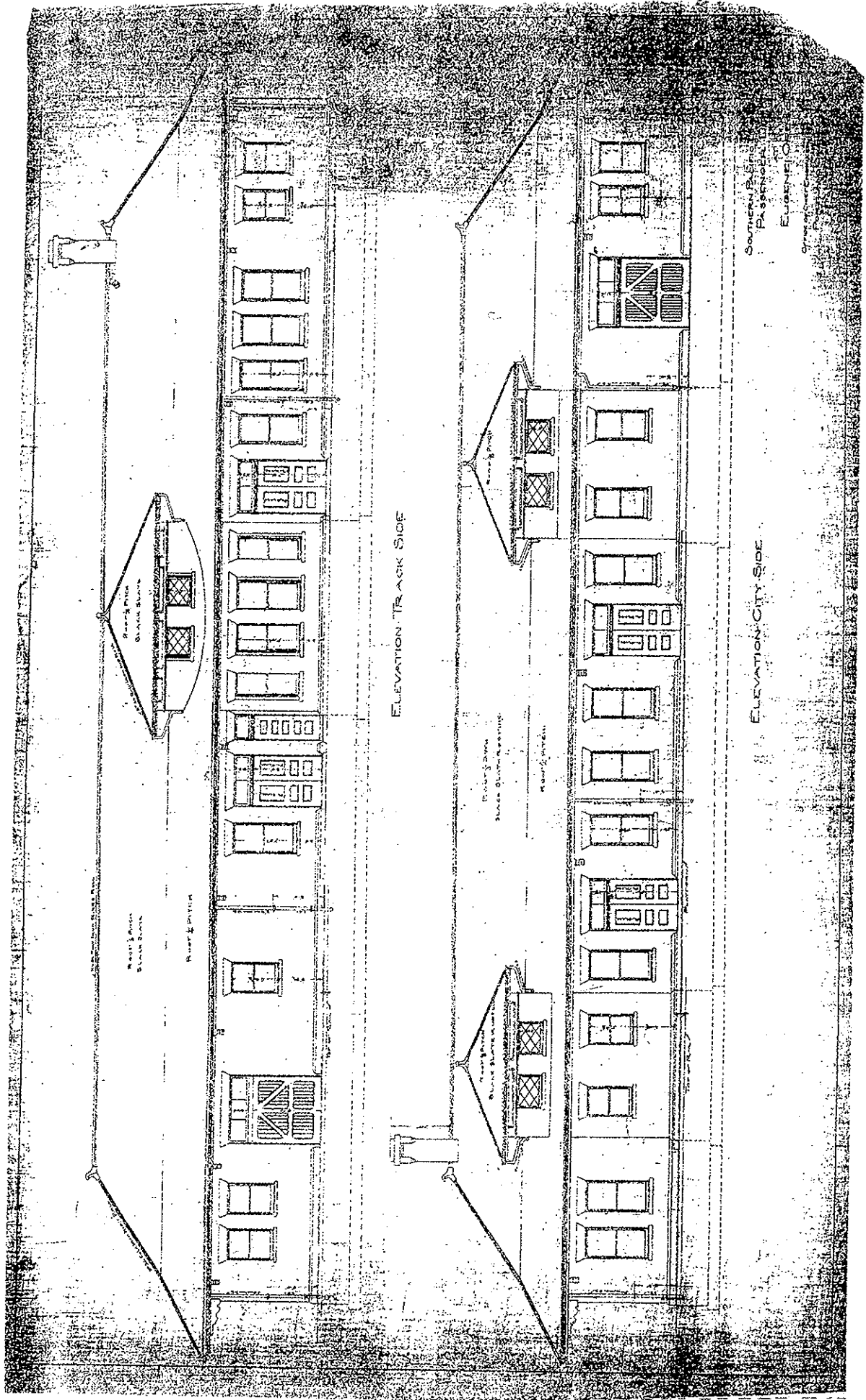
Southern Pacific Lines in Oreg.  
 Pasaketa Depot  
 Eugene, Oregon  
 Office of Civil Engineer  
 Portland, Ore. A 104100  
 Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"  
 Sheet No. 2

FLOOR PLAN

SECTION A-A

Historic - Floor Plan  
 8091  
 1908



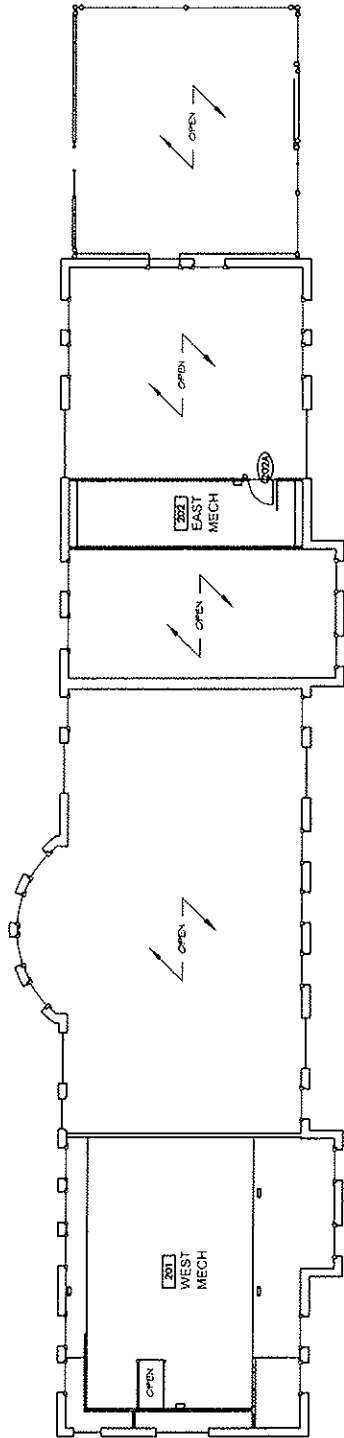
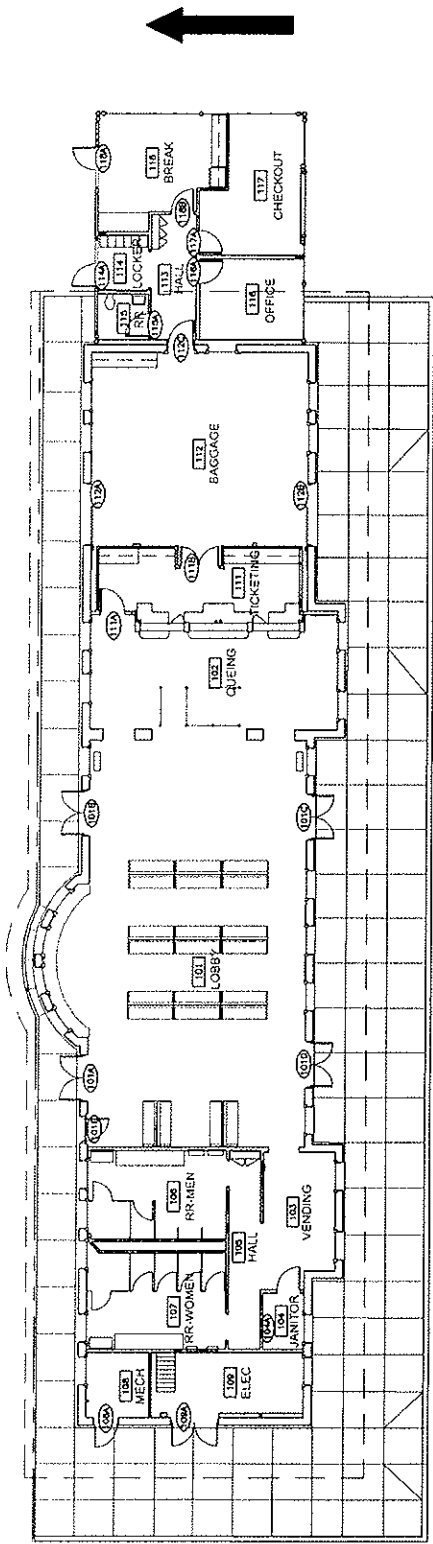


ELEVATION TRACK SIDE

ELEVATION CITY SIDE

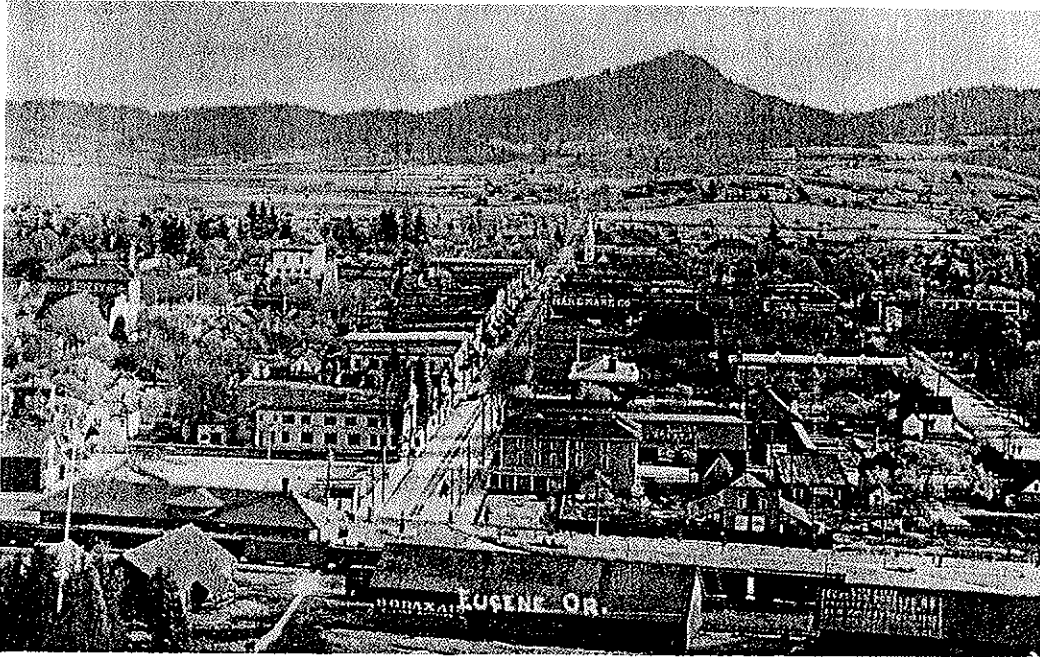
Southern Railway  
Pasadena  
Elevation 10

Elevations - Historic  
1908



**Floor Plan**  
 Source: The Eugene Depot: Multi-modal Transit Station  
 WBGGS Architecture and Planning  
 Eugene, OR

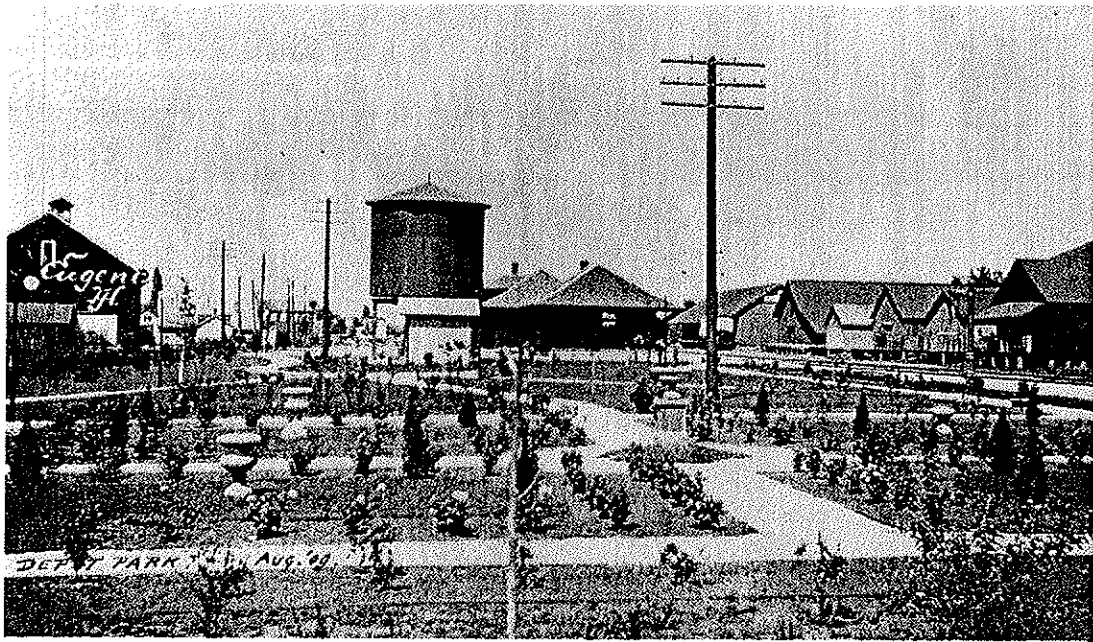
## Historic Photographs



Historic view of station looking south from Skinner Butte on Willamette Street, Southern Pacific Depot in foreground, 1910.



Historic view of Southern Pacific Depot looking southeast from tracks, c. 1908.

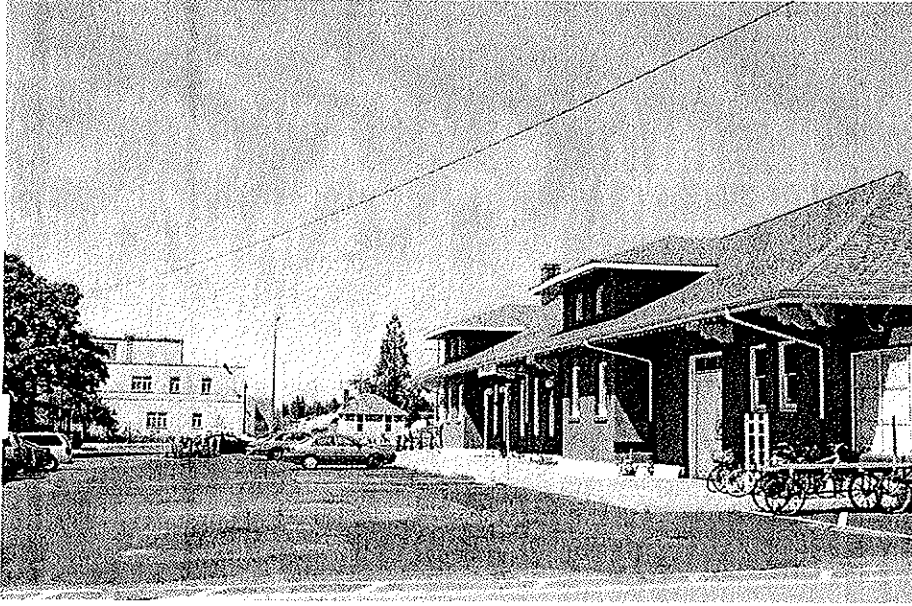


Looking west from the eastern extend of the Depot Park shortly after construction of the park, August 1909.  
Lane County Museum Photographic Collection.



Looking east from western extend of the Depot Park looking at the west façade of the depot, 8/17/1909.  
Lane County Museum Photographic Collection, #GN4341.

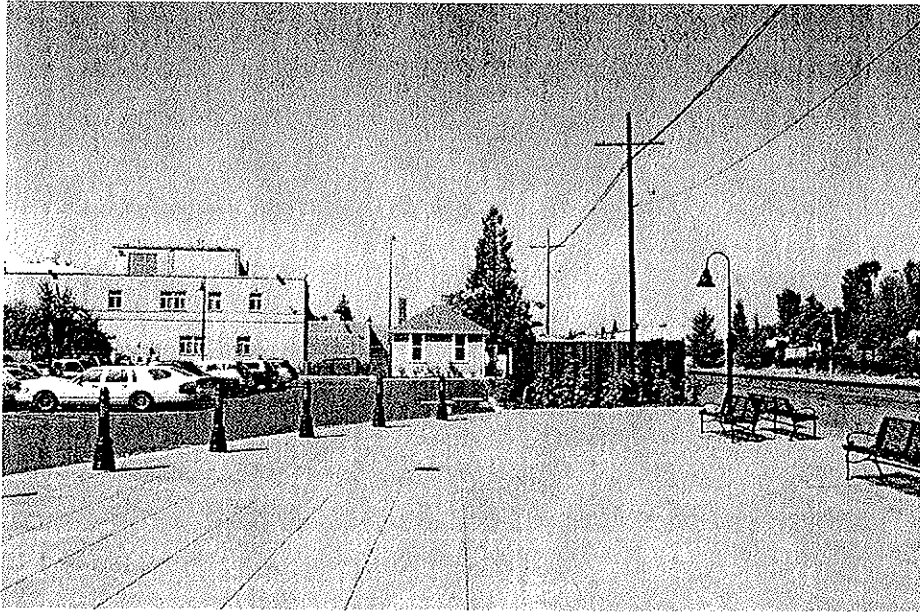
## Photographs



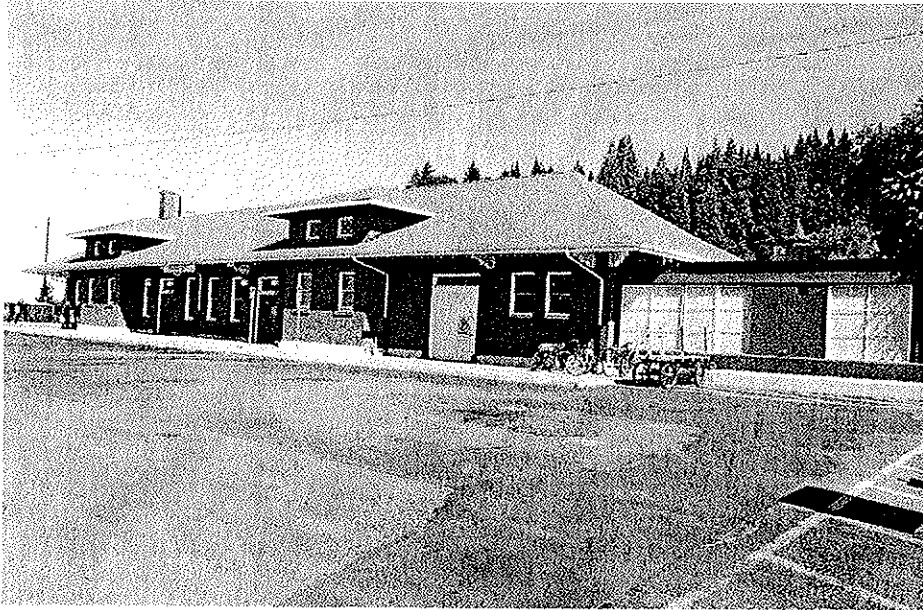
1. Looking west, contextual view of depot parking area with bunkhouse in background.



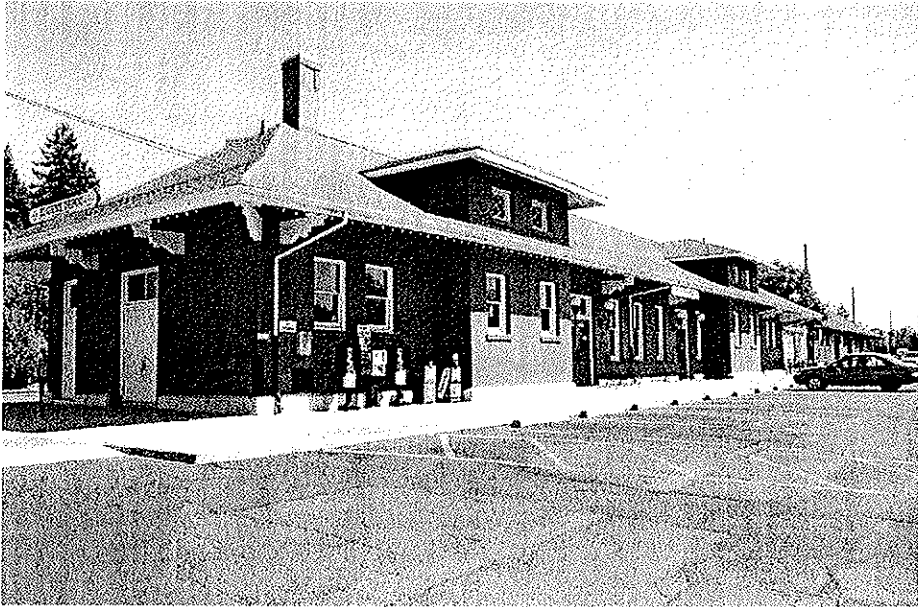
2. Looking west, contextual view along rail line on the north side of depot.



3. Looking west, paved plaza immediately west of depot.



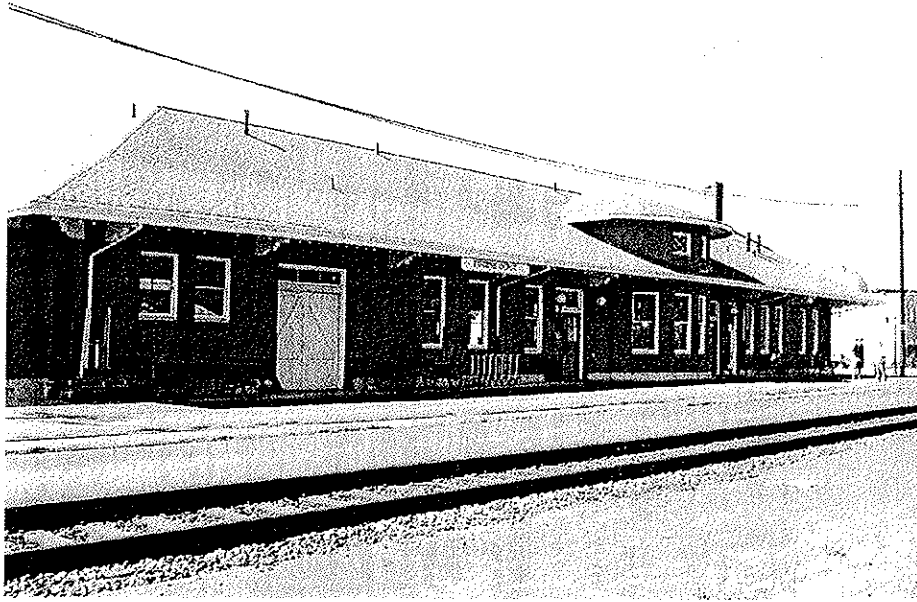
4. Looking northwest, south façade of depot.



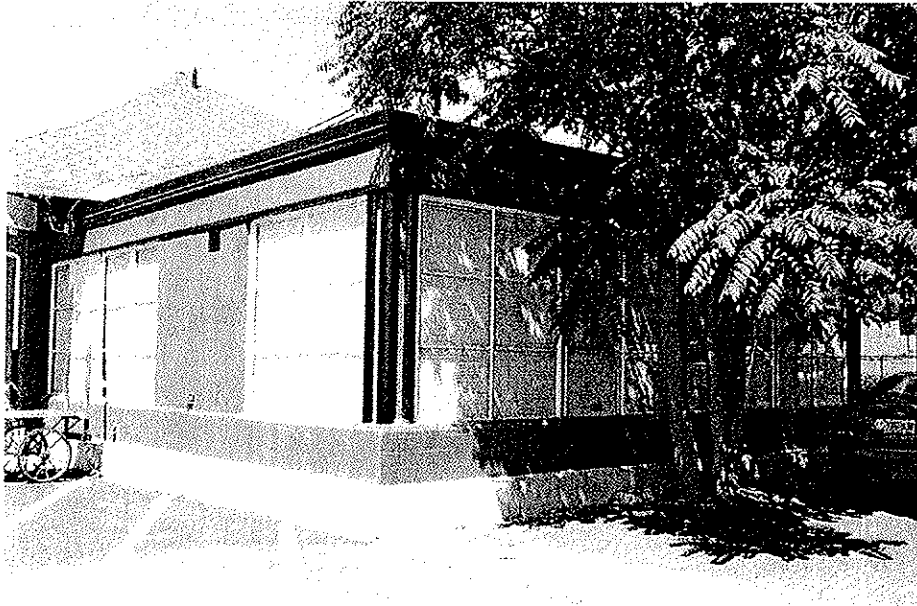
5. Looking northeast, south façade of depot.



6. Looking east, west façade of depot.

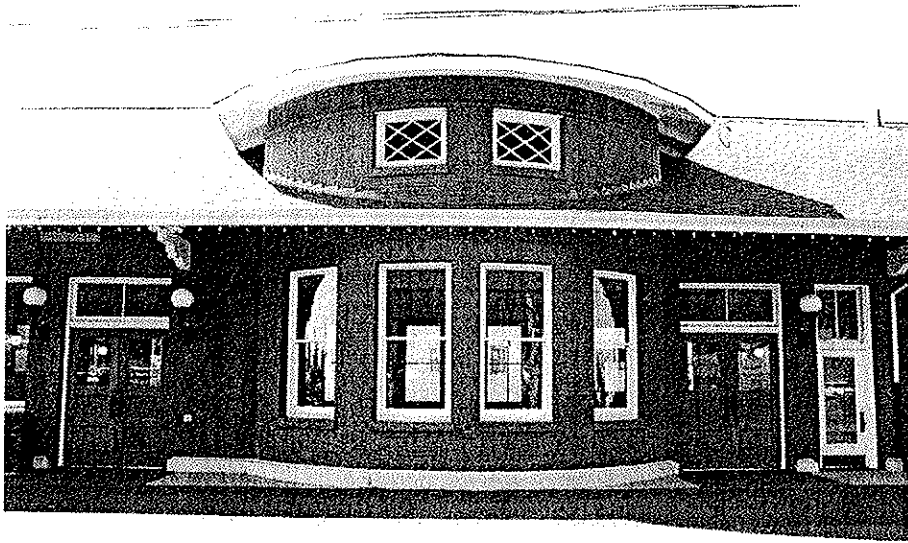


7. Looking southwest, north façade of depot.

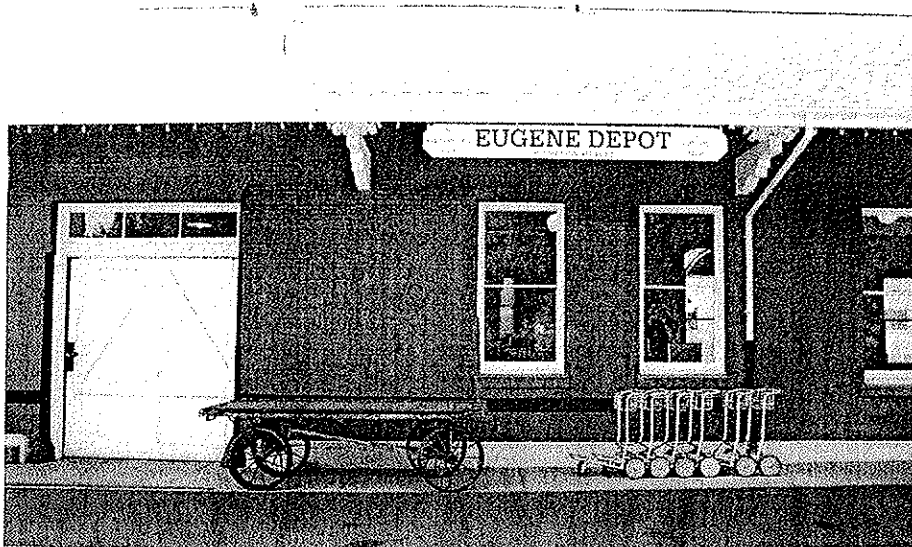


8. Looking northwest, south and east façade of depot mailroom shed addition.

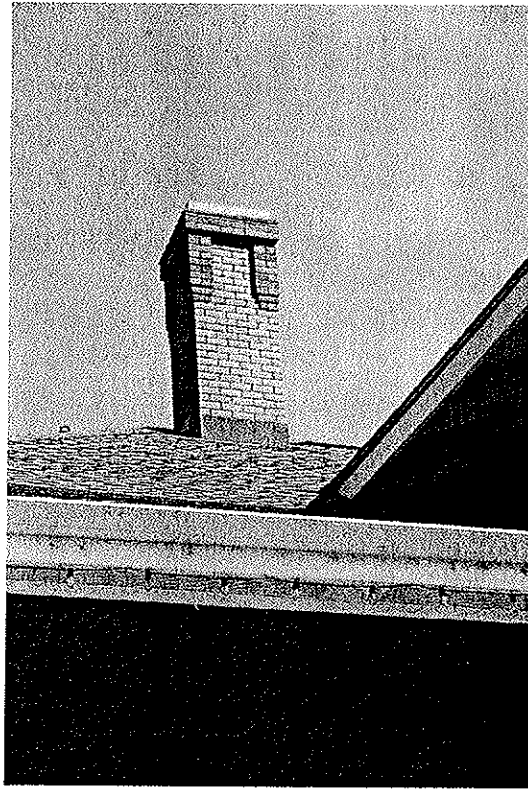




9. Looking south, round bay window on north facade.

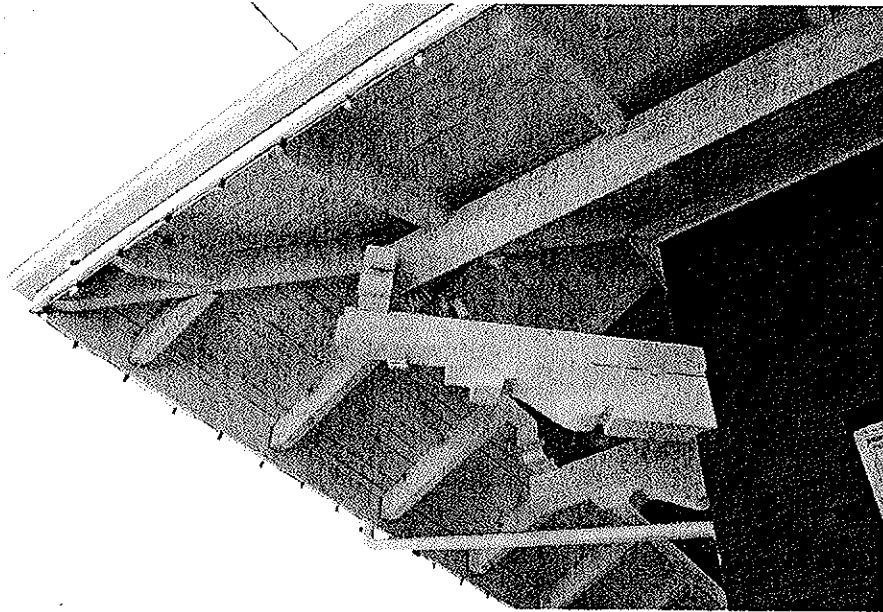


10. Looking south, entrance to freight room of depot on north facade.



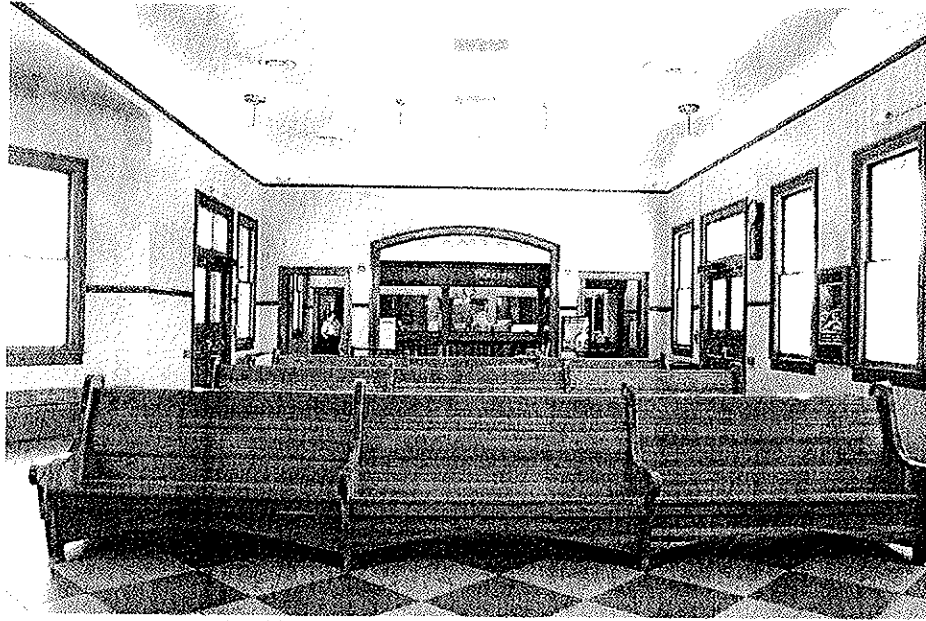
11.

Looking north, detail of depot chimney.



12.

Looking northeast, detail of depot brackets.



13. Looking east, interior of depot waiting room.



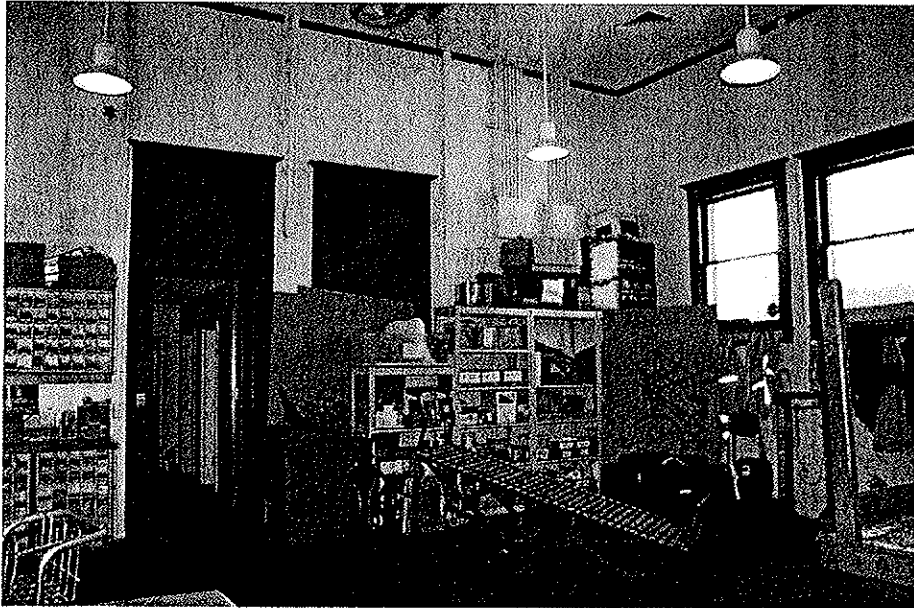
14. Looking west, interior of depot waiting room.



15. Looking north, interior of depot round bay window.



16. Looking northeast, interior of depot freight room.



17. Looking southeast, interior of depot freight room.

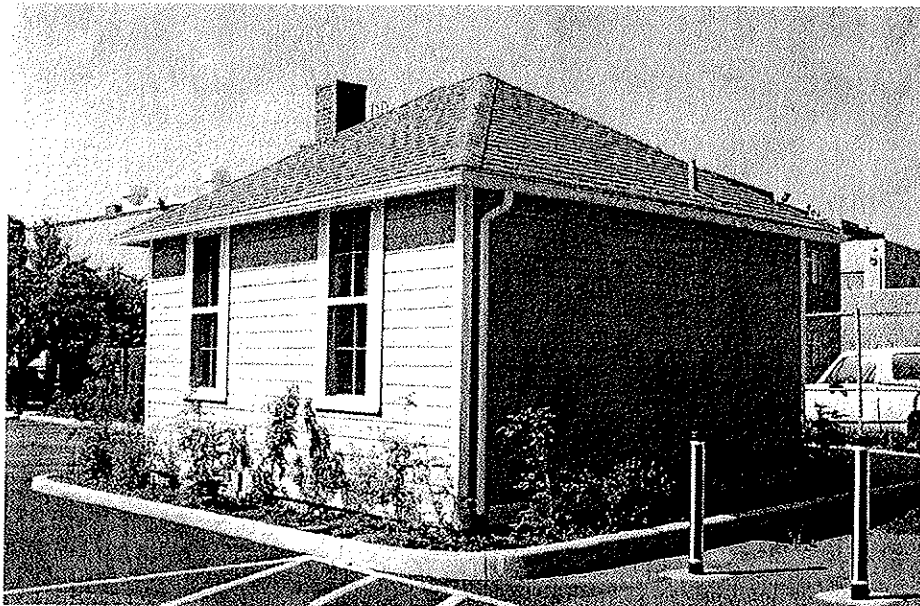


18. Looking southwest, interior of depot freight room, rolling freight door and door pocket.



19.

Looking north, interior of depot women's restroom.



20.

Looking southwest, bunkhouse located west of depot.



21.

Looking southwest, interior of depot bunkhouse.