

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DEC 20 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Milwaukee Road Freight House
other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number 306 Seventh Street not for publication
city, town Rapid City vicinity
state South Dakota code SD county Pennington code SD 103 zip code 57701

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *[Signature]* Date 12/15/88
State or Federal agency and bureau SHPO

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- 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:) _____

[Signature] Entered in the National Register 1/19/89

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use
Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th CENTURY AND EARLY 20th CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick

roof Synthetics
other Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Located at Seventh and Omaha Streets in the heart of Rapid City, South Dakota, the Milwaukee Road Freight House is a single-story rectangular brick building with a partial raised basement. Lying along the tracks of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, the property is one and a half blocks north of the Rapid City Historic Commercial District, a community it served for many years. Omaha Street is an east-west traffic artery which separates this central business core from a memorial park and civic center complex. Dimensions of the building are 225 feet in length (east-west) and 50 feet in width. Rising from the partial basement and wrapped by a low parapet, the front (west) one-sixth of the property consists of office space. The remainder consists of warehouse space. Floor level is approximately four feet above existing grade. The prominent feature on each axial facade is a band of freight doors capped by a band of multiple-light windows. There are twenty freight doors on the south facade and eighteen on the north facade. Concrete wall caps and ornate entrance insets accent the west (front) facade. An arched roof covered with a synthetic roofing material caps the building.

The west facade consists of four bays with the entry door set off-center to the south. Windows on the west and east facades are metal-frame multiple-light units, while those above the freight doors are wood-frame multiple light units. Windows in the basement have been covered with plywood. All original openings remain intact.

Interior division of space has changed over the years. with the removal and addition of walls. A stair to the basement has been removed from the office section and replaced by a newer service stair in the warehouse section. A second floor of temporary construction has been added to a large portion of the warehouse space.

After the railroad abandoned its line into Rapid City in 1980, the Freight House was used as a building materials warehouse and as a land surveyor's office. It is now vacant and facing renovation as an office complex. Current exterior modifications are limited to a wood and gravel ramp added to the east end to accommodate fork-lifts and other machinery.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1923-1938

Significant Dates

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	3	6	4	1	9	4	0	4	8	8	2	0	5	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Quad.: Rapid City East, Scale: 1:24000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is contained within the legal description as recorded in the Pennington County Register of Deeds office: Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16; of Block 64; Original Townsite of Rapid City; Pennington County; South Dakota.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are based upon legally recorded lot lines of the parcel historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lee Geiger, Architect (w/technical assistance by John Rau, SHPO staff)
organization consultant to owner date November 22, 1988
street & number 613 Main Street telephone 605-348-6062
city or town Rapid City state South Dakota zip code 57701

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

Under Criterion A of the National Register Criteria, the Milwaukee Road Freight House is significant in the area of transportation, because it was one of the last major buildings constructed by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad in South Dakota and is the best surviving example of historic railroad properties in Rapid City. Under the South Dakota State Historical Preservation Plan, the property relates to the context labeled: IV. Permanent Rural and Urban Pioneer settlement, G.1. Transportation/Railroads.

Dakota Territory was organized in 1861. The earliest permanent settlement was in the southeastern corner of the territory stretching along the Missouri River. Little population growth occurred until the mid-1870s when the celebrated Custer Expedition proclaimed that paying quantities of gold existed in the Black Hills, at the western edge of present-day South Dakota. This announcement incited the illegal entry of thousands of persons seeking quick fortune despite the threat of attack by hostile Sioux, to whom that land had been promised in the Laramie Treaty of 1868. After two controversial negotiations, the U. S. Government ceded the Black Hills from the Sioux Indians in 1876.

In that same year, Rapid City was founded at the foot of the Black Hills to serve as a support community for area mines and ranches. Eventually it grew to be the second largest city in South Dakota. Very early in the life of the city, it became a regional hub of commercial and transportation activity, a role that continues today. In addition, during the last few years of the 19th Century and throughout the 20th Century, the city has served as an eastern gateway to the all-important Black Hills tourist traffic.

As in most cities and towns of the American West, the installation of railroad facilities was crucial to Rapid City's development. At first the region was served by only stage and dray lines. By the 1880s, branch railroads connected Rapid City to railroads in Nebraska and North Dakota, and numerous independent local lines linked area mines and logging camps with mills and supply centers. Yet, no railroads connected eastern South Dakota with the resource-rich Black Hills. Until 1889, the land between the Missouri River and the Black Hills belonged to the Sioux. After statehood was won for North and South Dakota and the present-day reservation system was created, these lands were opened to White settlement. Slowly thereafter, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad [CNW] and Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad [also called the Milwaukee Road] crossed the Missouri River and built lines from their respective terminuses of Pierre and Chamberlain. By the end of the first decade of the Twentieth Century, both companies had reached Rapid City, completing an intrastate railroad network. After completing its Rapid City line, the Milwaukee Road built a Pacific extension.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

The Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad was incorporated in 1872 by merging a number of smaller lines. Among its subsidiaries were: the Milwaukee, Milwaukee and Watertown, Racine, Jamesville, Milwaukee and Northern, Ontanagon and Brule River, Wisconsin Union, Menominee Branch, Chicago, and the Dakota Southern. Like its competitors, the Milwaukee Road bought land, platted towns, and promoted settlement along its lines. The company also became embroiled in local politics, such as its participation in a 1904 campaign to move the state capitol from Pierre to Mitchell.

Both the Chicago and Northwestern and the Milwaukee Road arrived in Rapid City in 1907. With the completion of this Rapid City line, the Milwaukee Road had 1,802 miles of trackage in South Dakota and was the state's largest rail carrier. Nevertheless, its network was a patchwork of mostly short inefficient lines that soon faced financial problems. Collapsing farm prices, a sudden end to free land available for settlement, and the advent of the automobile as a reliable form of transportation, all caused a severe decline in demand for railroads following World War One. As a consequence, the Milwaukee Road built very few new structures in the state after 1920.

However, the burgeoning tourist industry in the Black Hills offered some optimism for the corporation's Rapid City station. In 1923, the railroad erected a relatively large brick freight depot (or freight house as it was commonly called) just west of its circa 1915 passenger facility. Railroad companies built depots at their various stops from a variety of standard plans. Size, scale, stylistic embellishment, and building materials of these facilities often depended upon the size and importance of the community they served. High demand stops would earn large stylish depots usually of brick masonry construction, while small towns were served by two-or-three-room wood frame buildings. The Chicago and Northwestern and the Milwaukee Road used different plans; however, both lines generally preferred low buildings with gable roofs and wide overhanging eaves. Construction of the Freight House at Rapid City signals that company officials were confident that tourism in the area would create new markets for rail transportation of trade goods despite hard times. They were willing to commit to building a thoroughly modern brick structure with a long-span arched roof, an open storage area, and up-to-date styling.

The company was in and out of bankruptcy and receivership several times during the next five decades. Passenger service to Rapid City was curtailed in the late-1950s and to eastern South Dakota cities in the mid-1960s. Finally in 1978 the Milwaukee Road filed for abandonment of its South Dakota lines. Upon final abandonment in 1980, the State of South Dakota purchased 918 miles of Milwaukee Road trackage and have since leased much of it to the Burlington Northern Railroad and other smaller companies. Most of the buildings along the line were transferred to local governments or to private parties. A

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

recent leaseholder has opened the line from Chamberlain to as far west as Kadoka, but there is still no service to Rapid City. Today, the Milwaukee Road ceases to exist as a corporate entity.

The Chicago and Northwestern also suffered from the downturn in railroad transportation. In the 1950s, that line won approval of a plan to centralize its network, thus closing most of its small stations. Over fifty Northwestern depots in South Dakota were abandoned and liquidated in 1957. That policy has continued to the present day. No Northwestern facilities-- standing structures, bridges, or trackage-- remain in many parts of the state. The Milwaukee Road was more conservative in removing or demolishing its surplus property. Thus, in many areas surviving Milwaukee structures are the only extant railroad-related properties.

Except for part of a CNW roundhouse and a few other small service facilities, this is the case in Rapid City. The Milwaukee Road passenger depot is currently used as a restaurant and has been altered considerably from its original appearance. On the other hand, present owners of the Freight House plan to develop the property into an office complex using certified preservation incentives. Despite interior modifications over time, the building remains a good representative of the presence of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad in Rapid City. It is the best vestige of railroad history in the city.

The period of significance of the nominated property extend from its date of construction in 1923 to 1938, the established 50-year cut-off date for the National Register.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bohi, Charles W. and Roger Grant. Country Railroad Stations of the Milwaukee Road and the Chicago and Northwestern in South Dakota." South Dakota History. IX (n. 1, winter 1978): pp.1-23.

_____. The Country Railroad Station in America. Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Co., 1978.

Derleth, August. The Milwaukee Road: Its First Hundred Years. New York: Creative Age Press, 1948.

Fielder, Mildred. "Railroads of the Black Hills." South Dakota Historical Collections. XXX (1930): pp. 35-316.

Miller, David. "An Historical Profile of the Milwaukee Railroad's Significance in Central and Western South Dakota." Unpublished study for the South Dakota State Historical Preservation Center, Vermillion. N.d. (companion to 1979-1980 reconnaissance survey of Milwaukee Road features in South Dakota).

Plat of Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad Company Property Management Department, July 21, 1980. Pennington County, South Dakota, Register of Deeds.

Hammer, Kenneth M. "Dakota Railroads." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. South Dakota State University, 1966.

Quit Claim Deed. Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad Company to Robbins and Stearns Lumber Company, November 6, 1980. Pennington County, South Dakota, Register of Deeds.

Riegel, Robert Edgar. The Story of Western Railroads. New York: Macmillian and Company, 1926.

Telephone interview with David Miller by John Rau, November 22, 1988.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 1

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

1.
Milwaukee Road Freight House
306 Seventh Street, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
by Lee Geiger
November 1988
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
North and west facades, camera facing southeast
Photo No. 1

2.
Milwaukee Road Freight House
306 Seventh Street, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
by Lee Geiger
November 1988
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
South and west facades, camera facing northeast
Photo No. 2

3.
Milwaukee Road Freight House
306 Seventh Street, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
by Lee Geiger
November 1988
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
North and east facades, camera facing southwest
Photo No. 3

4.
Milwaukee Road Freight House
306 Seventh Street, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
by Lee Geiger
November 1988
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
South and east facades, camera facing northwest
Photo No. 4