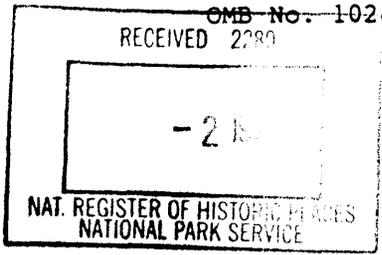


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

=====

1. Name of Property: Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
=====

Historic name: Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot

Other names/site number: N/A

=====

2. Location

Street & number: Railroad Avenue not for publication: N/A
City or town: Saint Helena vicinity: N/A
State: CA county: Napa code: 055
Zip code: 94574

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 Daniel Abeyta Deputy SHPO 11/26/96
Signature of certifying official Date

 California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification:

Cat: Late Victorian

Materials:

foundation: Concrete
roof: Composition Shingles
walls: Wood
other: Brick

Narrative Description: (See continuation sheet)

=====
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)

- 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.

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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance: Transportation, architecture

Period of Significance: Circa 1895 - 1946

Significant Dates: Circa 1895

Significant Person: N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Southern Pacific Railroad

Narrative Statement of Significance: (See continuation sheet.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Rebecca A. Yerger, Consultant, 1705 Rainier Ave., Napa, CA 94558

Published

Munns, Judith, The Napa County Historic Resources Inventory - St. Helena Depot. Napa County, 1978.

Swett, Ira L. & Aitken, Harry C., Jr., Napa Valley Route. Glendale, CA: Interurbans, 1975, pp 306-308 & 547.

Wichels, John, Railroads in Napa County ... Why They Came and Why They Failed. Napa, CA: Napa County Historical Society, 1979, pp 1-4, 6, 7, 14-17.

Yenne, Bill, The History of the Southern Pacific. New York: Bonanza Books, 1985, pp 58 & 59.

Newspapers:

St. Helena Star - October 24, 1879 - 2:2; July 2, 1880 - 3:1; November 13, 1885 - 3:5.

Napa Daily Journal - January 3, 1904 - 2:1; April 26, 1904 - 2:2.

Napa Register - June 13, 1890 - 3:4; August 23, 1900 - 3:3.

Maps:

Sanborn - St. Helena: 1891 & 1899.

Interviews

Conversation with Ellen Halteman, CA State Railroad Museum Librarian, on March 29, 1996.

Conversation with Ron Rodgers, President of Napa Valley Model Railroaders, on April 8, 1996.

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	546180	4262050	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

_____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: Napa County Assessor's Parcel Number 009-193-003.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries encompass the historic building and its immediate setting.

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/title: Rebecca A. Yerger, Historic Preservation Consultant

Organization: N/A date: April 23, 1996, Revised October 3, 1996

Street & number: 1705 Rainier Ave. telephone: (707) 226-6843

City or town: Napa state: CA zip code: 94558

=====
Property Owner
=====

Name: Depot Associates, contact Bill Bylund

Street & number: 1560 Railroad Avenue telephone: (707) 963-1466

City or town: Saint Helena state: CA zip code: 94574

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

The Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad depot is a one- and two-story, frame, privately owned commercial building. The depot, circa 1895, was constructed in the typical Southern Pacific Late 19th Century Victorian style with a rectangular plan and horizontal orientation emphasized by the long one-story loading and freight wing. The shingled gable roof has deep overhangs supported by embellished trusses. The formerly open loading platform roof is supported by square posts ten feet on center. In 1996, the open loading area was enclosed with recessed plywood siding. The seams are concealed with vertical battens. A noncontributing one-story addition was attached to the west elevation of the formerly open loading area in 1996. The depot walls are finished with horizontal tongue-and-groove siding with decorative vertical board and batten rising above the doors and windows to the wall/eave junction. The second story of the southern office section is finished with rectangular cedar shingles and stickwork. The chimneys are brick. The brick foundation was replaced with a concrete perimeter system in 1996. The interior reflects the functional purpose of the depot in the ticket, passenger and freight areas possessing minimal detailing. The interior has received moderate alterations but maintains most of its original floor plan, materials and detailing. The depot is east of Main Street in downtown St. Helena, fronts onto Railroad Avenue between Adams and Fulton streets. The depot is set along the eastern line of its city lot. The original tracks, situated within a separate parcel, run parallel to and just east of the depot. Located along the northwest property line is a noncontributing 1996 two-story office building. The balance of the depot lot has no significant landscaping with a paved parking lot to the west of the depot building. The depot is in excellent condition. The repair and renovation of the depot has been approved by the National Park Service. The depot maintains a significant portion of its historic fabric and integrity.

Setting

The depot lot is situated between the former Southern Pacific tracks to the east, Railroad Avenue to the west, the California Department of Forestry facility to the north and the circa 1877 Sherry House building to the south. Fulton Lane is just north of the California Department of Forestry station, while Adams Street is south of the Sherry House office building.

Two noncontributing buildings, constructed in 1996, are also situated on the depot lot. One is located near the northwest depot property line. This building is a two-story, wood frame and clad structure. The second floor is set back to reduce the mass and visual impact of the building. The hip roof extends past the west facade of the building creating a second-floor balcony. The building has minimal detailing. It is painted goldenrod like the depot to further reduce its visual impact. The second building is a one-story addition attached to the west facade of the loading area of the depot. This building will be described within the depot description.

The depot parcel has no significant landscaping features. From the western facade of the depot westward to the eastern line of Railroad Avenue, the lot is paved and has

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

concrete walks and curbs. This area serves as a parking lot and loading zone as it did historically.

Building - Exterior

The following elements are common throughout the depot, unless otherwise noted:

The original brick foundation was replaced with a concrete perimeter foundation system in 1996 to increase seismic safety.

The entire depot was built in the wood-frame construction method. The first floor wall surfaces are finished with horizontal tongue-and-groove siding with vertical board and batten rising above the doors and windows to the wall-eave junction. Directly above the board and batten is a plain band. The entire exterior wall surfaces are painted with the traditional Southern Pacific yellow (goldenrod). The windows, although varying in size, are basically the same - double-hung, wood sash with multi-paned upper portions. The single doors are paneled with multi-paned glazing in the upper 60% of the doors. The freight doors are paired with recessed wood panels which slide open on an interior track. The exterior door and window surrounds are plain. The vertical pieces extend from floor to ceiling creating panels.

The roofs of both the one- and two-story sections of the depot are gable and finished with composition shingles. The eaves extend beyond the exterior wall surfaces approximately three feet, creating large overhangs. To meet fire code requirements, a sprinkling system, attached to the exterior wall surface, wraps around the entire depot just below the overhangs. These overhangs are supported by ornamented trusses. The lower edge of these wood trusses have a curvilinear surface. The roof fascia is plain. The missing and deteriorated fascia was replaced in 1996 with compatible, in-kind materials and styling. Approximately 85% of the original wood gutter system was also missing due to deterioration. The original gutters were replaced with Ogi design, painted galvanized steel gutters in 1996.

The southern third of the depot is two stories. This portion of the depot possesses the greatest amount of architectural detailing, especially at the second-story level. The wall surface of the second floor is finished with a grid pattern of stickwork beginning at the second-story floor level and rising three feet. This stickwork is laid over vertical tongue and groove. Above and below the stickwork are plain bands. Above the top band and rising to the eaves, the wall is finished with rectangular cedar shingles. These wall treatments are found on the east, south and west elevations.

Near the northeast corner of the east facade, at the first-floor level, is a door which leads into the ticket office. Just south of that door is a square, projected

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bay with five windows. Adjacent to this bay to its south is another door which leads into the passenger waiting room. Two large windows are placed near the waiting room door.

Visually separating the first and second stories is a large overhang - about three feet deep. Its construction, materials and support trusses are identical to the depot roof. This overhang wraps around the office wing and at the east and west elevations the overhang is incorporated into the one-story gable roof.

The second floor of the east facade has four windows centered within the wall surface. Directly below the windows is a projecting ledge, approximately one foot deep, supported by trusses. Directly above the windows is an overhang similar to the first floor, only 18 inches in depth.

The south elevation has two pairs of long windows symmetrically placed within the first- and second-story wall surfaces. The western window of the second floor has a platform at its sill - probably constructed to support an air-conditioning unit. During the repair and renovation of the depot in 1996, the air-conditioning platform was removed.

The west facade, like the east, has a door into the ticket office at its north corner. A smaller, projected square bay with two small multi-paned, hinged windows is just south of the ticket door. Next to this stairwell bay, to the south, is the waiting room door. Three windows are positioned to the south of the waiting area door.

The second story of the west facade has three centered, wide windows with an identical overhang and ledge as the east elevation. Only the northern third of the ledge still existed. A new ledge of compatible and in-kind materials and design was installed in 1996 to replace the missing original. Near the top of the west facade wall surface were two holes. These openings were cut by firefighters while extinguishing either the 1989 or 1993 fire. Traces of smoke damage could be seen around the southern window. The missing exterior cedar shingles have been replaced with new cedar shingles. The wall surface was painted with goldenrod-colored paint in 1996.

The north facade at the first-floor level consists of two small walls at its east and west corners. The second-floor level has a window near its west corner. A small projecting wing is centered between the east and west corners. Both the west and east walls have small double-hung windows near their southern corners. The north wall has a centered, louvered, wood vent. The western portion of the main north elevation is solid. The entire north facade, at the second-floor level, has no stickwork, only the shingling.

The centered wing has a north-facing gable roof which intersects the east-west facing primary gable roof of the two-story section of the depot. Piercing the main roof are two brick chimneys. One is centered along the south wall and the other near

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

the center of the north wall. Both of the chimneys were dismantled and then reconstructed with reinforcement bars to increase seismic safety. A steel bar was attached to each chimney and anchored to the roof ridge in 1996. The main roof had two large firefighting openings - one on each slope of the roof. The damaged areas were repaired and the roof was resurfaced with composition shingles in 1996.

The one-story wing makes up the majority of the depot. The east and west elevations are identical with one exception. The east side no longer has its exterior wood-plank loading dock. The actual cause and date of its removal are unknown.

Near the southern corners of the east and west facades are paired, wood-paneled doors with fixed, multi-paned transoms. These doors once slid open to a baggage storage room. These doors were fixed into place in 1996.

To the north, at the foot of the loading dock stairs, are single, hinged, wood-paneled doors with fixed multi-paned transoms. These doors led to small restrooms which contained only a water closet (toilet). The small bathrooms were removed in 1996. These doors lead to interior commercial spaces.

At the top of the three steps of the platform stairs are large, paired, paneled wood doors with identical transoms. They once slid open to the enclosed freight room. Approximately 24 feet north are two more identical freight room doors. Both sets of doors are fixed in place as of 1996. Approximately 10 feet north of the northernmost freight room doors, on both the east and west facades, is a small double-hung, aluminum-frame window, installed in 1996.

The north wall of the enclosed freight room has two multi-paned fixed windows near its center.

The remainder of the original depot was once open to the east and west. In 1996, this portion of the depot was enclosed with rustic plywood siding. The paneling was attached to the interior side of the trusses and posts, creating an appearance of recessed panels. Installed within the panels at regular intervals are six small aluminum-frame, double-hung windows on the east side. On the west side, three identical windows were installed, two in the northern third and one at the southern end. A wood-and-glass paneled door is located near the center of the west elevation. Near this door and extending westward 30 feet is a one-story addition to the depot.

The first nine feet extending from the depot is visually delineated from the depot with geometric glazing. The wall surface of this area is comprised of a gridwork of fixed glazing and matte-finished aluminum framing. The overhang, trusses and posts original to the depot are intact and integrated into the interior.

The remaining 21 feet of the westward projection is surfaced with rustic plywood siding. The southern elevation contains a glass door, flanked by a glazed door surround at its center. The northern elevation contains one window at its center,

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identical to those added to the depot. The west elevation is 35 feet in dimension, with identical siding and three windows. The gable end of the roof faces west.

The northernmost end and wall of the depot has a wood-and-glass panel door at the center as well as a small window, like the others, near the west corner.

The original west elevation exterior loading dock and platform were repaired and restored in 1996, with the exception of the area occupied by the addition. The one-story freight wing also has a shingled gable roof. The gable end faces north with a minimal eave.

Interior

The first floor level of the entire depot maintains its original floor plan. The original spaces have been adapted to meet current commercial needs through the use of temporary partitions. The depot has been divided into four business suites. These divisions were made at logical points, such as the first and second floor of the two-story portion of the depot are two separate suites. The interior also maintains its original materials and detailing, except where noted. The condition of the interior is excellent. All repair and restoration work was completed in 1996, unless otherwise noted.

The interior of the depot, like the exterior, possesses only a modest amount of decorative detailing. Found throughout the interior of the two-story section of the depot are the following elements: plain door and window moldings with the vertical pieces extending above the top sill and ending in a point; wood-plank flooring; vertical tongue-and-groove wood wall finishes; original door and window hardware and paneled-wood doors.

The second floor of the two-story section served as living quarters. The second-story floor plan was altered at an unknown date. At that time, the ceiling height of the second floor was lowered. But it has been restored to its original height. The staircase is situated along the west portion of the north wall. At the top of the stairs, facing east, is a wall. To the left, or north, is the bathroom door. The small restroom has a water closet and lavatory along the west wall. A small window is centered on both the east and west walls. The north wall contains the door to a once unfinished storage area. The walls and ceiling have been finished with textured sheet rock and paint. The room houses air treatment, communication and electrical systems. The north wall of this area has a small, louvered, wood vent.

To the right, or south, of the top of the stairs is a short hallway with three doorways. The west-facing doorway leads to the smallest room. Both this room and the hallway suffered extensive fire damage. All the fire-damaged materials were either salvaged and restored or, if severely damaged, replaced with matching materials.

Near the northeast corner of this small room is the enclosed chimney. The northwest corner of the room has a small alcove with a window. About 60% of the west wall is

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occupied by a large window. The south wall holds a pocket door near its southeast corner which leads to the largest room.

The north wall of the largest room has not only the pocket door but another doorway near its northeast corner leading to the hallway. About two-thirds of the west wall is filled with two large windows. The south wall has one long window near its center. The enclosed chimney is located near the southeast corner. The east wall holds the entrance to the southeast room.

The southern east room is slightly smaller than the northern east room. The common wall between the two rooms is solid. Two large windows flank the common wall to the north and south. These windows occupy about 75% of the eastern walls of both rooms. The south wall of the southern room had a doorway to a storage area near its west corner. The storage area has been incorporated into the main room by removing the dividing wall. A long window within the exterior south wall is situated near the room's southwest corner.

The northern east room is entered from the hallway. Its storage closet was along the north wall and has no window. The storage area has been incorporated into the main room by removing the dividing wall.

Descending the U-shaped stairwell, the bottom stair turns south to face a hallway. To the right, or west, is the door to the exterior. To the left, or east, is the door to the ticket office and the former passenger waiting area.

The waiting area is the largest of the first-floor rooms. Three large windows beginning at the north corner occupy about two-thirds of the west wall. At the west corner of the south wall and extending to the western window was a circa 1950 kitchen cabinet with a sink which has been removed. Centered on the south wall is the enclosed chimney for a wood-burning stove. Just east of the chimney is another long window. At the north corner of the east wall is a door to the exterior. Two large windows are just to the south of the door. A few feet to the west of the door, the north wall contains the original interior ticket window. This opening possesses all of its original woodwork and detailing. Beneath the opening is a ledge supported by milled brackets. The waiting area has been converted into five smaller work spaces - two to the east and three to the west - with a central hallway. These modifications were made using temporary partitions. The hallway, heading north, leads to the former ticket office.

The south wall of the former ticket office contains the interior ticket window. The projected square bay occupies about 75% of the east wall. The bay has five windows, the three facing east served as exterior ticket windows. The bay is flanked by two false posts topped with brackets which attach to an exposed ceiling joist. Adjacent to the bay and near the north corner, is a door leading to the exterior which has been fixed in place.

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
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The hall door is located at the southwest corner of the ticket office. A few feet to the north is a doorway to a small office and storage area. This small room is located beneath the stairwell and contains the enclosed chimney. A doorway into a new workspace is just to the north of the stairwell room. Within this workspace is the original west-facing exterior door, which is fixed in place. A second door, also fixed in place, is located near the northwest corner of this workspace and once led to the enclosed baggage and freight rooms.

Near the center of the former baggage claim room, on both the east and west hallway walls are two pairs of sliding doors which have been fixed in place. The north and south walls of this room are solid except for the new hall archway in the south wall. The east exterior wall also has a pair of sliding doors facing the other two pairs which are also fixed in place. Both this room and the hallway suffered extensive fire damage. All the fire-damaged materials were either salvaged and restored or, if severely damaged, replaced with matching materials while this space was converted into five workspaces using temporary partitions.

The interior access to the enclosed freight room no longer exists. The enclosed freight room is in its original state. The flooring is large wood planks. The wall framing is exposed and the roof trusses are also open and visible. This open-roof truss system continues to the north end of the depot.

The enclosed freight area has four sets of paired sliding doors which are fixed in place. Each set, two facing east and two facing west, has transoms. The interior track system for these doors is visible above the door frames. Located between the northernmost sets of sliding doors is the opening in the floor where the freight scale was once set. A new north wall was installed approximately nine feet south of the original north wall. Within this nine-foot area a small, double-hung, aluminum-frame window was installed within both the east and west facades. The original north wall still has two side-by-side, multi-paned fixed windows.

The formerly open freight and passenger loading area has square posts every 10 feet on center. The posts attach to the headers above and have decorative brackets on each side. Above the header and joists, the wall framing is open and visible. The open roof trusses are identical to the enclosed freight room.

This area of the depot has been enclosed to be utilized as commercial space. This space includes nine feet of the enclosed freight room. The east side of the loading area contains seven workspaces. All but one have a small window centered within their east walls. A hallway runs the length of the loading area. The west side has six workspaces and a hallway. The northern two rooms, as well as the southernmost room, have a small window facing west. The work area centered within the west side contains an exterior door near its north corner.

These spaces were created with temporary partitions. The open roof trusses are intact and appear as they have historically.

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
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A one-story addition is attached to the west elevation of the former loading area. The southern addition wall is attached to the original north wall of the freight room. For the first nine feet, the north and south addition walls are comprised of a gridwork of glass with matte-finish aluminum framing. Within this first nine feet, the original depot overhang, trusses and posts are intact and appear as they have historically. The addition is a separate building, essentially.

The balance of the westward projection is 21 feet. The west wall of the addition is 35 feet. The northern third of the interior space of the addition is an office with a small window facing west and another facing north. The remaining two-thirds of the addition is one large room, 21' x 22'6". This space has two west-facing windows, a south-facing glass door with a glazed door surround and a large, semi-circular reception desk which occupies a third of the northeast corner of the room.

Integrity

The Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot had suffered from the effects of neglect, fire and the elements, but it did and does retain its integrity of location, design, construction and a large percentage of its original materials. The 1996 National Park Service-approved rehabilitation and adaptive re-use project reversed the impact of neglect. This effort has restored the structural, and further enhanced the historical integrity of the property. The adaptive re-use modifications and additions comply with the philosophies and standards of the Secretary of the Interior. The depot remains today much as it did in circa 1895.

The Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot possesses most of its original historic fabric and still conveys a sense of time, place, feeling and association.

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

Narrative Statement of Significance:

The Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot embodies the traditional pattern book architectural details, style, construction, design and layout of a circa 1895 Southern Pacific station. The depot is the only example of this style in Saint Helena and is therefore eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The period of significance for the Saint Helena Depot runs from the time of its construction, circa 1895, to 1946. The depot is where the community received and shipped its products and goods, greeted or said good-bye to friends, embarked on a journey or debarked from one. Southern Pacific and its Saint Helena Depot were the primary mode of transportation and the essential link to the outside world. The Saint Helena Depot is also eligible for placement on the National Register under Criterion A in the category of transportation and subcategory railroad depot.

For efficiency of time, materials and money the Southern Pacific Railroad Company created a pattern book of master plans for all of their smaller stations. There were numerous variations on the master plan. These variations were functional as well as ornamental. The general use and function as well as its location determined which variation(s) would be used for a particular depot.

The master plan for the late 1800s consisted of a wood-frame construction usually with late-Victorian (Queen Ann) ornamentation. The office area for ticket sales, business operations plus living quarters for the station master were within the same general area of the depot. Generally, to maximize square footage while minimizing the impact on available land, this portion of the depot was two-story. This two-story portion also had a secondary function, the elevation afforded a better vantage point to view and survey the property.

The master plan also included baggage and freight areas as well as loading platforms. The size and variations of these areas were determined by the designated use and function of the depot which was determined in part by the community's needs.

The master plan also encouraged faster railroad growth. Southern Pacific had all the materials cut to size and packaged for numerous depots at one site. When a new depot was to be built, all the materials were shipped from the main construction yard to the proposed new depot site. The building was constructed and available for use in a relatively short time.

The Saint Helena Depot is the only intact example in Saint Helena and Napa County. In Yountville, a community 10 miles to the south of Saint Helena, is another Southern Pacific depot. The former station has been converted into tourist shops. It was constructed shortly before the Saint Helena Depot. The Yountville station maintains only its two-story section. The freight and loading areas were demolished in the 1970s. The Yountville station has modern fenestration and door openings, hardware and glazing, although it does maintain its general configuration and

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
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rectangular wall shingling. The Calistoga depot did serve as a Southern Pacific depot, but it was built by an earlier train company, circa 1868, and therefore possesses no Southern Pacific traits.

In comparison, the Saint Helena Depot is much the same as it was when it was first constructed. It still possesses most of its original materials and hardware. The fenestration and door openings and materials are still intact. The Saint Helena Depot also possesses its freight and loading areas. By far, the Saint Helena Depot is the most significant example of a Southern Pacific depot in Napa County.

The Saint Helena Depot definitely illustrates the local application of the Southern Pacific master plan philosophy and aesthetics. The Saint Helena Depot is almost identical to numerous Southern Pacific depots throughout the U.S., such as the Beaumont Station in Beaumont, Texas circa 1886.

The one- and two-story Saint Helena Depot itself embodies the typical features and application of the late-Victorian, wood-frame Southern Pacific Railroad Company style. These elements are: the two-story office, waiting room and living quarters, extended eaves creating large overhangs throughout the depot, application of subdued decorative wall surfaces and Queen Ann ornamentation, one-story freight and baggage area with loading platform with symmetrical freight doors for ease of loading and unloading as well as a generally rectangular and symmetrical plan with efficiency and function the main concerns.

The exterior of the depot has received moderate alterations since its circa 1895 construction. In 1996, the depot was rehabilitated and modified as part of a National Park Service-approved commercial adaptive re-use project.

As part of this project, the open loading area was enclosed with rustic plywood siding attached to the interior side of the overhang posts, which reduces the mass and visual impact of the siding and enclosure. A total of 12 small, double-hung, aluminum-frame windows were installed primarily in the new exterior wall surfaces of the loading area.

Attached to the west elevation of the loading area is a 30' x 35' one-story addition. Its low silhouette and unadorned exterior surfaces offer no competition or conflict with the circa 1895 depot architectural rhythm.

The depot had suffered considerable damage due to neglect and especially fire and vandalism. The gable roofs had lost about 40% of their original shingles partly due to weathering but mostly due to the hole cut in the two-story roof by firefighters in 1989 and/or 1993. The fire also caused damage to the west facade of the second floor of the office wing. The primary damage was created by firefighting. Two holes near the gable end were cut while fighting the 1989 and/or 1993 fires. The other damage was smoke damage near the west second-floor windows. The east loading platform is gone. The date of its removal is unknown. The west platform was

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

seriously damaged by the elements. Weather as well as neglect also contributed to the deterioration of 85% of the wood gutters and portions of the fascia.

As part of the 1996 rehabilitation project, all fire-damaged materials were either restored and repaired, or, if severely damaged, replaced with compatible and/or in-kind materials. The entire depot roof was re-shingled with composition shingles. The gutter system was replaced with Ogi styled, painted, galvanized steel gutters.

Prior to 1996, the interior has received only minor alterations since its construction. At an unknown date, the second floor was remodeled, changing the floor plan and lowering the ceiling height. A kitchen sink and cabinet were installed, circa 1950, in the former waiting room area. Neither alteration significantly impact the historic integrity of the depot.

As part of the adaptive re-use portion of the 1996 project, the basic floor plan, permanent walls and decorative elements were left intact. The original configuration was reorganized into four suites. Within each suite, non-permanent walls and/or partitions were used to create the desired workspaces and areas. The circa 1950 kitchen unit was removed and the second-floor ceiling was returned to its circa 1895 height. Also, the walls creating the storage areas in the eastern rooms on the second floor were removed to enlarge the spaces.

The interior suffered some damage as a result of the 1989 and 1993 fires. Most of the damage was charring of the wood wall surfaces. The two areas receiving the most damage were the baggage claim room and hallway on the first floor and the small northwest room and hallway of the second floor.

As part of the 1996 rehabilitation project, all fire-damaged materials were either restored and repaired or, if severely damaged, replaced with compatible and/or in-kind materials.

The modifications made to the depot as part of the 1996 project have enhanced, not diminished, the historical integrity of the depot.

The office area contains the most ornamentation with decorative posts and brackets. The balance of the depot is purely functional and unornamented.

Located near the north and west depot property lines is a two-story commercial building constructed during the 1996 project. The visual impact of its mass and scale are diminished by its unadorned wall surface as well as the setback of the second floor. The hip roof extends beyond the second-story setback creating a covered balcony which further softens the presence of the building.

Even with all the deterioration and loss of historic materials, the Saint Helena Depot still conveys its original design and function. The visual integrity and historic fabric of the building are still intact.

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

Napa County's development and growth were dependent upon a reliable railroad system. This was especially true for the smaller communities north of the City of Napa, such as Saint Helena.

The Napa River was not navigable beyond Napa. The roads were dusty, dirty and extremely crude with deep ruts. They were often flooded or impassable during the rainy season. The long drive from the City of Napa to Saint Helena and northward was an unpleasant one for the traveler and often proved damaging to many products and goods, especially fragile commodities such as fruits and wines.

The quest for a reliable transportation system began in the 1860s. By 1864, the Napa Valley Railroad Company was in full operation. The railbed from north Napa to Saint Helena and in Calistoga is the original location established in the 1860s. It provided service to all the county communities located within the valley floor including Saint Helena. The Napa Valley Railroad Company built the first Saint Helena Depot, circa 1868, on Railroad Avenue at the northeast corner of Hunt Street. The site of this first depot is one block south of the current depot.

In 1869, California Pacific Railroad Company purchased the financially ailing Napa Valley Railroad Company. California Pacific provided a more consistent and dependable service. For the next 23 years or so, California Pacific was the primary mode of freight and passenger transportation.

This railroad system was an essential ingredient in the development and growth of the agricultural and viticultural industries in Napa County. The trains were the only means of quick, safe and reliable transport of fruit, nuts, wine and so forth to regional and U.S. markets. This efficient system helped to establish Napa County and its products as viable and high quality. This in turn increased the demands for Napa County products.

In 1892, California Pacific was absorbed by Southern Pacific during a merger. The residents and businesses of Napa County applauded the change. Now they were a part of the largest railroad system in California and beyond.

Southern Pacific continued to meet the transportation needs of the county. At about the same time as the beginning of the Southern Pacific ownership of the county railroads, the vineyards of Europe, especially those in France, were being decimated by phylloxera. The winemakers of Napa County seized the opportunity to fill the void and establish the Napa wines as world class. In order to achieve this goal, the wines had to be transported in greater quantities and speed while still protecting them from major disturbance.

The greatest percentage of wineries, especially the larger wineries such as Beringer, Krug and Schram, were located in close proximity to Saint Helena. In circa 1895, Southern Pacific, in anticipation of greater freight loads, built the current Saint Helena Depot. The depot at Railroad and Hunt was much too small and inefficient to handle the increased freight demands.

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Saint Helena Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Napa County, California

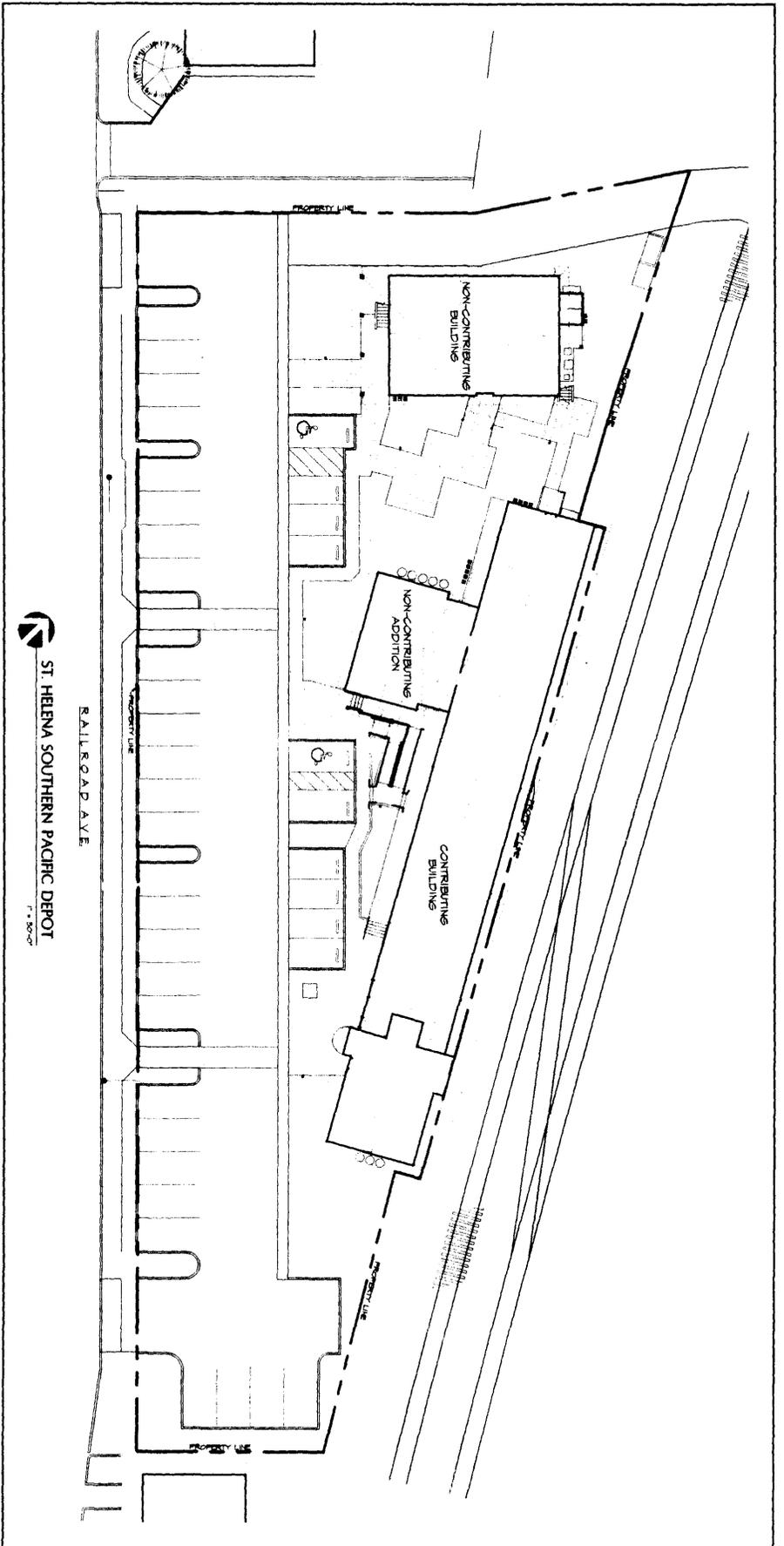
With the advent of the Napa Valley Electric Railway passenger service in 1908, Southern Pacific began to focus primarily on freight service and then abandoned passenger service altogether in 1929. As phylloxera destroyed local vineyards, other agricultural products increased, such as prunes. With the enactment of the Volstead Act (Prohibition), the remaining wineries received phenomenal demands for grape juice. Once again the Saint Helena Depot experienced an acceleration in freight service demands.

The Saint Helena Depot and Southern Pacific continued to be the most economical, quickest and reliable transportation system for Saint Helena's agricultural and viticultural businesses until post-World War II.

Around this time, trucks increasingly became the preferred mode of freight transportation. Over the next 30 years or so, Southern Pacific ran fewer and fewer trains through Napa County until the line and the Saint Helena Depot were abandoned in 1978.

The Saint Helena Depot provided an essential freight service to Saint Helena between circa 1895 and 1946.

The Saint Helena Depot retains a large percentage of its architectural integrity and historic fabric. The intent of its design remains clear. The setting for the depot remains the same as it did historically. Today the depot reflects its form, function and importance as a transportation center for Saint Helena and vicinity during its period of significance circa 1895 to 1946.



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PROJECT
 ST. HELENA
 SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOT
 DEPOT
 1500 - 1560 RAILROAD AVE.
 ST. HELENA, NAPA COUNTY (055) CA 94574

SHEET DESCRIPTION
 SITE PLAN

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Additional Documentation

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographer: Rebecca A. Yerger

Dates of Photographs: October 14, 1996

Location of Negatives: Rebecca A. Yerger, 1705 Rainier Avenue, Napa
CA 94558

Views of Photographs:

- 1) Southern Portion of East Elevation and North Facade of two-story section
- 2) South and East Elevations
- 3) Northern Portion of East Elevation of one-story Baggage and Freight Wing
- 4) East Elevation of the Formerly Open Loading Platform
- 5) South and West Elevations of Depot, South Elevations of the one-story and two-story 1996 Noncontributing Buildings
- 6) West and North Elevations of the Depot and one-story Noncontributing Building and Western corner of West Elevation of the two-story Non-contributing Building