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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OCT 23 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Santa Fe Depot
Other names/site number: Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (A.T. & S.F.) Railway Passenger Station
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 146 South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard
City or town: Oklahoma City State: OK County: Oklahoma
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

[Signature] Oct 19, 2015
Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official: _____ Date
Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain: _____)

for Alexis Abernathy
Signature of the Keeper

12/8/15
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related
VACANT/NOT IN USE
COMMERCE/TRADE:
specialty store

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (Santa Fe) Depot is a limestone, Art Deco style, combination freight and passenger railroad depot constructed in 1932-1934 in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma. The building was built in stages with construction starting in 1932 on the erection of the elevated track and express room on the depot site. Construction work started on the passenger and baggage section of the building in 1933 with the building being complete in 1934. The Santa Fe discontinued passenger service from the building in 1979, although freight trains continued to use the elevated track to the present time. Twenty years later, passenger service was reinstated with daily passenger train service to Fort Worth, Texas, via Amtrak's Heartland Flyer. As originally designed, the depot consisted of four elements: the elevated track and platform on the east, the above-grade passenger station on the north, the at-grade baggage and mail room in the center and the at-grade express room on the south end. The depot sits on the narrow, two-block long, station grounds that was reserved for the Santa Fe in the 1890 plat of Oklahoma City's original townsite. Although the elevated track was not constructed until the early 1930s, from the late nineteenth century, the north-south Santa Fe tracks effectively divided the historic warehouse area on the east side of the tracks from Oklahoma City's central business district on the west. Urban renewal and other revitalization efforts have resulted in a loss of the historic buildings to the west of the depot. As the only building on the east side of South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard (historically South Santa Fe Street) between Main Street and the Interstate 40 corridor and the only historic building on the

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thoroughfare from its named beginning at Southwest 3rd Street north to Main Street, the Santa Fe Depot is a critical link to the city's past. Now owned by the city of Oklahoma City, the building is slated to be an intermodal transportation hub for the capital city which will offer public transit and commuter rail opportunities with a possibility of expansion of the existing Amtrak service. The building will be rehabilitated as part of the conversion to the intermodal transportation hub. Previously, the building underwent several renovations, including in the late 1990s/early 2000s and the late 2000s. The work done to the building has been overall sympathetic to its historic character with the notable alterations to the exterior being the replacement of freight doors and removal of the loading docks in the baggage and express sections of the building, the addition of an emergency exit on the southeast side of the passenger section and the addition of an accessibility ramp on the northeast side of the building. The most noticeable alteration to the interior of the passenger section is the infill of the original newsstand area on the north side of the concourse. The baggage section remains much as it was historically with the express section undergoing more extensive work to facilitate its reuse. Currently, the baggage room is unused with a retail store located in the former express room. Despite the modifications, the Santa Fe Depot retains a fairly high degree of integrity and readily conveys its historic transportation and architectural significance.

Narrative Description

The oversize, one-story, flat-roofed, Santa Fe Depot is composed of four sections, each with different setbacks commensurate with its public function (photographs 1, 6 and 9). The highly public passenger section on the north side of the building extends to almost the street and is clearly the focal point of the building. The center baggage and mail room portion of the building is setback from the passenger section to allow a loading area along the front of it. The relatively narrow express, or freight, section of the building on the south side is setback even further to allow an elevated loading area, now gone, in front. Forming a physical and visual barrier, the historic elevated track forms a wall along the back (east) of the building.

The Santa Fe Depot stands out in downtown Oklahoma City as a monumental horizontal example of the Art Deco style. Characteristics of the style present on the exterior of the building include the geometric form of the building, sharply defined outlines, smooth wall surface, linear ornamental detailing which features the Santa Fe logo, and highly stylized fixtures. The interior of the building features many of the same characteristics, as well as the use of geometric patterns and bold colors.

The building is built primarily of Cordova Cream limestone with a granite foundation. On the lower part of the back wall and on the connecting corridor between the building and the adjacent elevated track and platform, the wall is clad with blond brick laid primarily in a running bond but with header bricks alternated with stretcher bricks in about every fifth course. The elevated track is primarily constructed of fill dirt and concrete with the island platform having a concrete floor and iron canopy.

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The passenger section of the building features its historic, aluminum, glazed slab doors with historic, multi-pane, aluminum transoms. The majority of historic freight doors in the baggage and express sections of the building were replaced after 1992 with modern, aluminum, glazed slab doors with divided transoms and full-height sidelights. Some of the freight doors were replaced with fixed windows. The historic aluminum windows in the building are a combination of multi-pane fixed and single and double casement. The double casement windows also feature a bottom ventilator pane which opened inward, as well as narrow fixed sidelights and transom. The windows typically have limestone sills.

The north elevation of the Santa Fe Depot fronts onto the adjacent parking lot which covers the remainder of the site north of the building. The façade features an almost full-width porch covered with a suspended metal canopy (photograph 2 and 3). The canopy, which visually divides the north wall into two sections, features ribbed aluminum trim which matches the other aluminum detailing highlighting the building. The above grade porch floor is granite with granite steps. A simple pipe railing extends along both sides of the steps. To the outside of the porch railing on both sides are limestone porch walls atop tall granite bases. Prominently located on each corner of the porch wall are highly stylized, aluminum, pedestal, light fixtures. Located behind the light fixtures on each side of the north wall is a double set of aluminum glazed slab doors. The doors continue to feature their original handles, consisting of double bars attached to vertical, aluminum, stylized mounts. Above each door is a five-pane aluminum transom. Centrally located between the two sets of doors on the north elevation are three, single, aluminum, fixed, casement windows. The windows are divided by the limestone pilasters which divide the upper wall.

The upper wall of the north elevation is highlighted by the geometric stepping of the roofline. The rectilinear lines of the side and back elements emphasizes the center, projected, folded parapet which prominently features the incised, painted black, "SANTA-FE" just above the line created by the two side bays. Below the name, the center recessed bay is divided by the pilasters with square capitals which divide the single windows below. The vertical spaces between the pilasters are ornamented with an incised geometric linear pattern of diamonds and angles which are topped by stylized Santa Fe logos, consisting of a cross in a circle. To either side of the center recessed bay are stepped out, rectangular bays which are flanked by the full-height, narrow, rectangular, end bays.

The different heights of the building, which emphasize the sharp outlines characteristic of the Art Deco style, are most noticeable on the west elevation and, particularly, in the north portion of the passenger section (photograph 3 and 4). The west elevation of the north portion of the passenger section of the Santa Fe Depot projects closest to the now six-lane thoroughfare extending in front of the building and is divided into three bays. Centrally located on the west elevation of the north portion of the passenger section is an open granite porch with a single center pipe railing and no sidewalls. Beneath the suspended, flat, metal canopy with ribbed aluminum trim on the west wall are three sets of historic doors which match the doors on the north elevation. The center set of doors is double with the doors to either side being single. All of the doors have multi-pane aluminum transoms with the double door being a continuous five-pane transom and the single

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doors being topped by a three-pane transom. The doors are separated by two pilasters which extend above the canopy along the upper wall. Immediately above the canopy are three multi-pane, aluminum, fixed windows. Echoing the door division below, the center window is about twice the width of the flanking windows. The pilasters separating the windows are topped by stylized capitals. Above the pilasters is the incised and black-painted words proclaiming "SANTA-FE." To either side of the porch, the west wall is ornamented with fluted bands. Matching the north elevation, the wall is also stepped. Each step has a flat roof with the center roof topped by a folded parapet. To either side of the center bay of the north portion of the passenger section, are shorter walls that each feature a long, narrow, fixed, multi-pane, aluminum window which consists of a center undivided pane flanked by narrower divided sidelights.

The waiting room portion of the passenger section of the depot is a long rectangular block attached to the south side of the north portion of the passenger section (photographs 5 and 6). This portion of the passenger section is divided into two bays. Towards the north, the waiting room portion is slightly recessed and contains four symmetrical windows. Each window consists of a double casement flanked with a transom, narrow sidelights and a bottom inwardly opening ventilator pane. Each window in this section of the wall is set within a recessed panel which features incised ornamental detail above the opening and a folded pattern below the limestone sill. The narrower second bay towards the south side of the waiting room portion of the passenger section, corresponding to the original womens restroom, features a centered matching window that is ornamented the same underneath the sill but features a more elaborate stylized design above the window.

To the south of the waiting room portion of the passenger section on the west elevation is the at-grade baggage and mail room section of the building (photographs 5 and 6). Constructed at the same times as the passenger section, the baggage section of the building is divided into five bays. The northernmost bay contains an above grade, centrally located, single, pedestrian entrance flanked by two windows. The original granite steps feature a pipe metal railing. The metal paneled door has a four-light, wire glass window in the upper portion. The window to the north of the door has been infilled with wood while the window to the south of the door has a three-pane metal window with a metal vent in the top. Both windows feature limestone lug sills and no header. The north bay is set apart from the other bays in the baggage and mail room section of the building by the height of the granite foundation which matches the height of the foundation in the passenger section of the building. The other bays in the baggage and mail room portion of the building have a taller granite cladding which extends to the current height of the replacement doors in each original freight openings. The freight openings in each of the other four bays now contain a modern, aluminum, glazed slab door flanked by equal-sized sidelights and topped by a symmetrical three-pane transom. Forming a continuous band above the four bays is a flat, suspended, steel canopy. Centrally located underneath the canopy in each bay is a metal pendant light. Above the canopy, each bay features an eighteen-pane, fixed, steel transom window. Symmetrically located between the transoms are the brackets from which the canopy is suspended. The upper wall of the baggage and mail room section is unornamented except for the curved limestone coping which encircles the building. Modern security lights have been added above the coping in two bays.

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The southernmost portion of the west elevation is the express section of the building which was constructed at the same time as the elevated track (photographs 5 through 8). Unlike the baggage and mail room section which is vacant currently, the express section is in active use for retail purposes. The express section of the depot is divided into seven bays, six of which are limestone with tall granite bases and the seventh is concrete.

Setback from the baggage and mail room section, the northernmost bay of the express section is offset from the rest of the express section. Originally, this portion of the express section served as the express office and, before and during construction of the passenger section, functioned as the passenger depot with exterior wood stairs providing access to the elevated loading platform. The northernmost bay is covered by the continuous steel canopy which extends above the four adjacent bays. Additionally, the five northern bays originally shared a concrete loading dock which was removed at an unknown time, leaving the current entries at grade level. The suspended steel canopy in the express section matches the canopy in the baggage and mail section of the building. Although not symmetrically placed, the express canopy also features three metal pendant lights that match those on the baggage and mail section canopy. A modern sign has been attached to the express canopy, towards the south side of the canopy, which provides the name of the current occupant, Pinkitzel Cupcakes & Candy.

Historically containing an overhead freight door, the opening in the northernmost bay of the express section now contains a modern, full-height, multi-pane, fixed, aluminum window which is topped by a striped cloth awning advertising the name of the current business. The next four bays of the express section contain matching modern storefronts, consisting of a center undivided glazed slab door flanked by divided sidelights and topped by a three part transom. However, only the north bay actually contains an operable door with the other storefronts featuring an undivided fixed window in place of the door. The four storefronts are topped by black cloth awnings which are different from the cloth awning over the north bay. In the sixth bay of the express section, which historically and currently was not covered by the steel canopy or fronted by a loading dock, now contains a double door, modern, storefront in place of the historic overhead door. The storefront consists of double, glazed, slab doors flanked by divided sidelights and topped by a transom which is now obscured by a striped cloth awning that matches the awning over the northernmost bay of the express section. Above each of the five storefronts, including the one in the sixth bay of the express section, are original clerestories. A historic photograph of the depot taken by Meyers Photo Shop and available at the Oklahoma Historical Society, shows the clerestories in the express section boarded over; however, other photographs taken by the same photo shop show the clerestories unboarded. Currently, the four clerestories over the center four bays consist of two six-pane fixed windows. The fifth clerestory, over the sixth bay, is larger and consists of three six-pane windows with the middle window operable.

The seventh bay in the express section of the west elevation is a two-part concrete wall which, according to the original plans and historic photographs, provided exterior access to the elevated track via metal stairs. Along the top of the concrete bay, which is shorter than the limestone bays, is a pipe railing painted yellow as a safety precaution. The narrower north part of the concrete

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wall is setback from the limestone bays of the express section but is projected from the longer section of the concrete wall. The north part contains a single, six-over-six, double hung, metal window that is located off-center to the north side.

The south elevation of the Santa Fe Depot consists of a series of stepped out walls (photograph 6). Beginning at the concrete bay of the express room, there is a narrow south wall that contains a narrow door opening from which the metal stairs extended to the top of the elevated track. The south limestone wall of the sixth bay of the express section of the building contains no openings. The south wall of the baggage and mail section of the building also contains no openings. The considerably wider south wall of the waiting room portion of the passenger section of the building contains a central, metal, double casement window with a bottom ventilator window. To the east of the window, there is a nonoriginal emergency entry which replaces an original window opening. The entry was added to the building as part of the late 1990s/early 2000s work to meet code requirements. The entry consists of a metal slab door with a metal transom. The above grade entry has concrete steps with a metal railing. Above the door, there is a modern light fixture. The other walls composing the south elevation in the north portion of the passenger section contain no openings.

The east elevation of the building is not readily visible. Based on historic photographs available at the Oklahoma Historical Society, exterior access to the connecting corridor between the passenger section and the underground tunnel was historically blocked by a decorative fence. Currently, on the northeast side of the passenger section and adjacent to the elevated track retaining wall, there is a concrete accessibility ramp with a metal pipe railing which extends south to the brick connecting corridor (photographs 2 and 13). The existing, modern, aluminum door with a single pane transom at the end of the ramp was originally a window opening that was modified as part of the late 1990s/early 2000s rehabilitation.

On the east elevation above the concrete rail along the elevated track, the north part of the passenger section features a triple window and ornamentation almost identical to the corresponding portion of the west elevation (photograph 12). The one difference is that instead of reading "SANTA-FE," the limestone upper wall of the east elevation features the incised, black words reading "OKLAHOMA-CITY." As mentioned previously, the lower wall of the east elevation is brick. South of the connecting corridor, corresponding to the historic Colored Waiting Room on the interior, there is a light well with about six windows of at least two sizes in the east wall. To the south of this, there is another brick connecting element which features a narrow six-pane metal window and a second narrow opening.

The fourth element of Oklahoma City's Santa Fe Depot is the elevated track and island platform (photographs 9 through 11 and 14-15). Built immediately preceding construction of the passenger and baggage sections, the elevated track to the east of the depot features a concrete retaining wall that is divided into false bays and topped with an ornamental concrete railing. The south part of the elevated track is indiscernible from the concrete bay of the express section of the building. On the elevated track, there are three sets of tracks laid in gravel. One set of tracks is located between the island platform and the building. The other two sets of tracks are situated

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on the east side of the island platform. The island platform consists of a concrete expanse that features a large metal canopy and two small flat-roofed buildings. The canopy extends almost the entirety of the block on which the depot is located. The north platform building contains the stairs that allow access between the interior of the depot and the platform. The concrete stairs feature a metal pipe railing along both sides and the middle. The building features an ornamental lower concrete wall, fixed windows on all sides and double glazed slab doors. The second platform building, which lacks the lower ornamented concrete wall of the north building, contains the elevator from the subway to the platform. This building also has fixed windows on all sides and a single glazed slab door. The lower walls of the building are metal with the adjacent taller elevator shaft being concrete.

INTERIOR

The west entry of the Santa Fe Depot, located in the north portion of the passenger section, opens onto a rectangular vestibule that features matching interior doors as the exterior doors on the north and west elevations (photograph 17). The vestibule leads into the commodious concourse which has an elaborate, bold patterned and colored, Art Deco style, coffered ceiling which features stylized, Art Deco, aluminum, light fixtures specially designed for the building (photographs 18 through 20). The walls of the concourse are limestone blocks with various decorative detail, including vertical banding on the pilasters flanking the former newsstand. The terrazzo floor of the concourse, as well as generally throughout the passenger section of the building, is a geometric patterned, pink, gold and green.

Centrally located off the concourse were originally a newsstand on the north side and the ticket office on the south side. The newsstand has been blocked in as part of the late 1990s/early 2000s work to create a private drivers' room. An oversize historic photograph of the depot now obscures the original newsstand opening. On the east and west sides of the newsstand, there are two entry halls which correspond to the entries on the north elevation of the building (photograph 16). The entry halls also feature decorative, plaster, coffered ceilings, although not as elaborate as in the main concourse.

The ticket office features a full-width wooden counter with a granite top. The floor in the ticket office is plain gray tile with cream colored plaster walls. To the west of the ticket office is a large entryway to the main waiting room. The main waiting room also features a coffered, plaster, decorative ceiling, along with Art Deco pendant lights, paneled wainscoting and geometric patterned, pink, green and gold terrazzo floor (photographs 21 and 22). Originally, there was a women's lounge and restroom on the south side of the main waiting room.

To the east of the ticket office is the smaller, rectangular space that was originally the Colored Waiting Room (photographs 23 and 24). Featuring a replacement patterned ceiling with flush rectangular florescent lights, the Colored Waiting Room has light green walls and pink, green, and gold terrazzo flooring laid in a geometric pattern. Historically, the segregated restrooms were located on the south end of the Colored Waiting Room with the men's lounge and restroom located to the south of this. A baggage checking lobby, red cap office and janitor room were

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located between the historic men's rooms and women's rooms on the south end of the passenger section. As part of the late 1990s/early 2000's work, this entire corner of the building was reworked to create two, larger, modern restrooms accessed by a new corridor and, in the area formerly occupied by the women's lounge and restroom, new mechanical and storage rooms.

Off the east side of the concourse, is another vestibule that connects the tunnel to the building through doors that match the original main entry (photograph 25). This vestibule now has exterior access via the accessibility door added in the late 1990s/early 2000s. The barrel-arched tunnel has been painted with train-related images (photographs 26 and 27). The tunnel currently ends on the east side in a storage room with the elevator located to the south side and the concrete stairs to the platform on the north side (photographs 28 and 29).

The interior of the baggage and mail section of the building is currently not in use and is unadorned with concrete and metal columns and its historic asphalt block floor (photograph 30). The interior of the express section is in use for commercial purposes. Accordingly, the space has been changed from its historic freight appearance to appeal to a modern commercial aesthetic, including a detail obscuring black paint scheme.

INTEGRITY

Overall, the Santa Fe Depot retains a fairly high degree of historic integrity. Exterior changes to the building include the addition of an accessibility ramp on the northeast side, addition of an emergency exit on the south elevation of the passenger section, replacement of all front freight doors with modern storefronts and removal of the loading docks in front of the baggage and express sections. The modifications were apparently made in the late 1990s. The accessibility ramp and emergency exit were included in the late 1990s/early 2000s renovation plans for the building. The loading docks and historic freight doors remained on the building in April 1992 when Jocelyn Lupkin photographed the building as part of the SHPO-sponsored Reconnaissance Survey of Central Oklahoma City.

The accessibility ramp does not interfere with the ability of the building to convey its significance due to its location off the northeast (rear) side of the building which also allows it to provide easier access to the elevator to reach the train platform. The emergency exit in the east corner of the south elevation of the passenger section is also not highly visible and addresses a necessary code requirement. The replacement of the freight doors and removal of the loading docks are visible changes but as the dimensions of the openings were not changed and the storefronts are easily discernible as being modern modifications, this alteration does not overly impede the understanding of the building.

The interior of the passenger section of the building retains a fairly high degree of integrity, particularly in the retention of original terrazzo flooring, smooth stone walls and highly ornamented plaster ceilings, often with elaborate Art Deco style light fixtures. The enclosure of the newsstand area does modify the original configuration of spaces, as does the remodeling of the southeast corner of the passenger section to allow for modern restrooms. Both of these spaces

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are relatively minor with the primary spaces of the passenger section interior, including the concourse, two waiting rooms, entry halls and vestibules, retaining a high degree of integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

In sum, the Santa Fe Depot ably conveys its historic and architectural significance as an excellent example of an Art Deco style depot in downtown Oklahoma City. Both the exterior and the interior of the building possess a good degree of historic integrity, including the characteristics of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance
1932-1979

Significant Dates
1934
1979

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Sanders, Leo, contractor
F.M Spencer & Sons, contractor

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Santa Fe Depot is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with rail transportation in Oklahoma City and under Criterion C as an excellent example of an early 1930s, Art Deco, combination passenger and freight railroad depot. The period of significance for the building extends from 1932, when construction began on the express section and elevated track, through 1979, when passenger service through the Santa Fe Depot was discontinued. Although less than fifty years ago, the end date of 1979 is significant as the termination of passenger service through the Santa Fe Depot also ended ninety years of continuous passenger rail service in Oklahoma City. Given the crucial ongoing role that rail transportation historically played in Oklahoma City's development, the cession of passenger service marked the end of a significant transportation era. Accordingly, the depot meets Criteria Consideration G as a property possessing exceptional importance achieved within the last fifty years.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

By 1887, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (Santa Fe) Railway Company had a rail line extending south from Arkansas City, Kansas, to Oklahoma Station, Indian Territory. The railroad buildings at Oklahoma Station were located in the same general vicinity as the existing Santa Fe depot in what is now downtown Oklahoma City. On April 21, 1889, the seven buildings which marked the future site of Oklahoma City were aligned along the Santa Fe tracks in the bend of the North Canadian River. The following day, Oklahoma City came into being following the first land run which opened the Unassigned Lands to non-Native American settlement. From its overnight formation, the city matured rapidly. By June 1889, a scant two months after the land run, the town boundaries were set at Seventh Street on the north, Walker Street to the west, Seventh Street to the south and the Santa Fe Railway line on the east. The total population stood at 4,138 people, with the majority being male.¹

As surveyed and approved in September 1890, the plat for Oklahoma City's original townsite was bounded on the east by the Santa Fe right-of-way. As shown on the plat, the Santa Fe station grounds extended from Reno Avenue on the north to Grand (now Sheridan) Avenue on the south. The road running north-south on the east edge of the subdivided blocks was named Santa Fe Street (now South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard).²

¹ Roy Stewart, *Born Grown: An Oklahoma City History* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Metro Press Inc., 1974), 146. See also Susan Allen and Cynthia Smelker, *Final Survey Report: Intensive-Level Survey of the Central Park, Jefferson Park and Paseo Neighborhoods in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*, (available Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: March 1994), 10-13.

² *Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Territory, 1890*. Plat map available Oklahoma County Clerk's Office, <http://clerkpi.oklahomacounty.org/plat/>, accessed 8 January 2015.

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During the 1890s, Oklahoma City grew primarily within the original townsite and to the northeast. By the turn of the twentieth century, Oklahoma City was booming with several industries, including two cotton gins, a flour mill, ice factory and three railroads. In addition to the Santa Fe which was present before the city, this included the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific (Rock Island) which arrived in the city in 1895 and the Saint Louis-San Francisco (Frisco) which entered the city in 1898.³ The Missouri-Kansas-Texas (Katy) added a fourth rail line into Oklahoma City in 1903.

The 540 percent increase in city population between 1900 and 1910, from 10,037 to 64,205, is credited largely to the railroads. With the advent of statehood in 1907 and the moving of the state capital to Oklahoma City in 1910, the city continued to flourish with the number of residents escalating to 91,295 in 1920. Over the course of the Roaring Twenties, Oklahoma City's population doubled to number 185,389 residents in 1930. Although much more modest, Oklahoma City continued to gain residents during the 1930s with a 1940 population of 204,424. The war years of the 1940s brought about more substantial growth so that 243,504 citizens called Oklahoma City home in 1950. The 1950s were another decade of substantial development with the 1960 population reaching 324,253. In 1970, Oklahoma City claimed 368,164 residents which increased to 404,255 in 1980.⁴

In 1901, the Santa Fe constructed an expanded stone depot on the site of their original depot grounds. Additionally, the other rail companies expanded their buildings and tracks to support the phenomenal growth of the city. Although the railroads were instrumental in Oklahoma City's early twentieth century growth, they also quickly became a point of intense contention as early city leaders had "failed to visualize just what location of tracks, passenger and freight depots through the main part of town would do" as the city grew. At-grade railroad crossings, which posed a substantial risk for injury and death, was one of the paramount concerns that led to a twenty-year fight to remove both the Rock Island and Frisco facilities in downtown Oklahoma City and elevate the Santa Fe tracks. In November 1911, it was estimated that the total cost of elevating all of the railroad track in Oklahoma City would cost between \$3.5 and \$4 million. In December 1911, the Oklahoma City city commissioners adopted a resolution asking the railroads to "abolish dangerous grade crossings by elevating tracks."⁵

In 1917, representatives of the railroads met with city officials to discuss the elimination of at-grade crossings in Oklahoma City, as well as the possibility of utilizing the Santa Fe site for construction of a union depot. Three years later, the chief engineer for the Santa Fe was again presented plans to elevate the Santa Fe tracks. The plan, developed by the State Corporation Commission, called for the tracks to be raised high enough to allow "all intersecting streets to pass under the tracks with a clearance of at least twelve feet." The issue arose again later in 1920

³ Allen and Smelker, 13-14.

⁴ Ibid, 13-14. See also Linda D. Wilson, "Oklahoma City," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, www.okhistory.org (accessed 22 March 2015).

⁵ Stewart, 147-148. See also *Daily Oklahoma*, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 5 November 1911 and 12 December 1911.

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with a proposal that the Santa Fe, following the example of the Rock Island and Frisco, sell their tracks in the central business district and the three rail companies build a new central depot. While the Santa Fe declined to give up their right-of-way, the railway company proposed to elevate its tracks through the city center in September 1920, although the plan also called for the closing of eighteen streets north of Main Street. Critics of the plan quickly pointed out that this would result in a significant drop in property values in the affected section of the city. Oklahoma City's industrial concerns also opposed the plans to change the existing rail situation in downtown Oklahoma City.⁶

In late 1922, the Santa Fe and Rock Island proposed to build a union station at their track intersection; however, this plan was not well received by the city residents. Two years later, the case went to the Interstate Commerce Commission with the city commissioners again proposing construction of a union depot on the Santa Fe site, removal of the Rock Island tracks and elevation of the Santa Fe tracks. Three of four rail companies countered with a proposal for a combined Santa Fe and Katy station and a combined Rock Island and Frisco station. With intense debate ensuing, the matter continued with little progress through 1925.⁷

The Santa Fe announced plans to rearrange its yards and elevate its tracks near the Canadian River in early December 1925. Estimated cost of the plans was put at \$250,000. The purpose of the track elevation was to construct a double track bridge over the river which was to be six feet taller than the river banks at the time. It was also noted that the track elevation project would facilitate the eventual elevation of all Santa Fe trackage in the downtown area. The changing of the yards was proposed for multiple reasons, including relieving traffic congestion at the railroad crossings near the depot.⁸

The debate over elevating the tracks, however, continued in 1926 with fears that if all four railroads elevated their tracks along their existing right-of-ways, Oklahoma City would end up with a wall completely encircling its downtown, separating it from the rest of the city. In 1927, the city engineers again had a plan ready to present to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Although this plan did not call for the Santa Fe to elevate their tracks, the city attorney noted that in his opinion the Interstate Commerce Commission should order the elevation.⁹

In mid-November 1927, the Santa Fe and the city council effected a settlement that called for the tracks to be elevated at an anticipated cost of \$3 to \$4 million and construction of new passenger and freight depots. By late March 1928, the railway company had a resident engineer's office established in Oklahoma City. An initial survey was in progress with work on final plans not anticipated to start for at least six months. Additionally, before work on elevating the Santa Fe track could begin, it was noted that the city must complete underground sewer work and the

⁶ *Daily Oklahoman*, 16 October 1917, 17 July 1920, 2 September 1920, 16 September 1920, 18 September 1920, 12 November 1920 and 18 November 1920.

⁷ *Ibid*, 28 November 1922, 1 December 1922, 17 November 1924, 18 May 1924, 19 November 1924, 21 November 1924, 21 November 1924, 22 November 1924, 24 November 1924, 25 November 1924, 26 November 1924, 20 October 1925 and 12 November 1925.

⁸ *Ibid*, 3 December 1925.

⁹ *Ibid*, 10 January 1926, 2 September 1927 and 11 November 1927.

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Rock Island tracks would have to be removed. In mid-October 1928, the Rock Island tracks continued to hold up the project.¹⁰

One year later, the city still awaited submission of final plans from the railroad. Additionally, the city estimated it would cost \$500,000 to widen the openings on many of the underpasses as requested by several “east side residents” with the city having to bear this additional cost. Shortly after this, work on the Santa Fe’s new double bridge over the Canadian River came to a halt, pending agreement on the track elevation plan. Concerned citizens again raised objection in mid-February 1930 to the elevation of the track, likening it to construction of “a Chinese wall built through the city.” In late September 1930, the city council voted that the city manager and city attorney resolve the east side residents’ concerns to allow the elevation project to progress. This action followed the State Corporation Commission’s declaration that the “lack of co-operation between railroads and the city” was responsible for the lack of progress on the Santa Fe’s plans. In late October 1930, an agreement was reached in which the city agreed to expend \$347,720 to provide wider underpasses at several key intersections. The Santa Fe filed the new elevation plans with the city in mid-November 1930.¹¹

Just days later city officials announced that all petitions related to the elevation project should be sent to the State Corporation Commission as the commission had “taken full jurisdiction in the matter.” With the east side residents fairly satisfied, new objections were brought by adjacent property owners at almost every intersection effected by the plan. In mid-December 1930, the protests caused “a growing belief among representatives of the Santa Fe Railway Co. and city officials that the Santa Fe tracks will not be elevated through Oklahoma City.” With the Santa Fe attorneys indicating the railroad “would do whatever was ordered by the commission, provided it could do so,” the city manager, E.M. Fry, remained committed to the elevation plan. Fry proclaimed that “I believe the elevation is for the best interests of the city and I will continue to fight for it.”¹²

With the issue continued through the New Year, the State Corporation Commission issued a temporary order during the second week of January 1931 to eliminate at-grade crossings on the Santa Fe rail line from Sixth Street south to Southeast Seventeenth Street. Within weeks, the Santa Fe indicated it accepted the commission’s order and would “proceed with the \$5,000,000 improvement program here as soon as possible.” In mid-February 1931, it was estimated that the track elevation project would be underway within sixty days. Additionally, the Santa Fe was also progressing on plans for the new freight and passenger stations called for in the commission’s order. Approval of the plans continued through May with the railroad company noting that the plans for the new depot would not be completed for some time.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid, 25 November 1927, 25 March 1928 and 12 October 1928.

¹¹ Ibid, 18 October 1929, 19 February 1930, 24 February 1930, 12 March 1930, 13 March 1930, 31 August 1930, 19 September 1930, 26 September 1930, 10 October 1930, 12 October 1930, 13 October 1930, 15 October 1930, 26 October 1930 and 12 November 1930.

¹² Ibid, 20 November 1930, 22 November 1930, 23 November 1930, 27 November 1930, 7 December 1930, 9 December 1930, 10 December 1930 and 13 December 1930.

¹³ Ibid, 20 December 1930, 1 January 1931, 6 January 1931, 8 January 1931, 4 February 1931, 19 February 1931, 2 April 1931, 10 May 1931, 12 May 1931 and 14 May 1931.

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In June 1931, one of the contractors for the Santa Fe elevation project, Leo Sanders, announced that city residents would be given hiring preference in the elevation project. With employment opportunity anticipated for several hundred men, Sanders explained that “We have a lot of Oklahoma City men who need work, and they will get it before we will even consider applications from any others.” To ensure the residency of the workers, Sander’s employment office required presentation of “voters registration certificates or registration certificates from the unemployment relief committee that functioned last winter.”¹⁴

In mid-August 1931, the Santa Fe’s chief engineer, H.W. Wagner, announced that plans for the new passenger station were nearing completion. Wagner indicated the plans would be sent to contractors by November 1, 1931 with the new depot to be completed in the spring of 1932, at the same time the elevated tracks were finished. In mid-September 1931, work on the elevation project was set to resume following resolution of land condemnation proceedings related to the city’s project to straighten the river through construction of a new river channel. Sanders, in charge of obtaining the fill for the Santa Fe project, agreed to excavate the new channel at a cost of ten cents per yard. In late December 1931, Sanders predicted the south end of the fill would be complete by March 1932. At the same time, the Allen Construction Company reported it had seventy-five men working on constructing underpasses and “it was making satisfactory progress.” A delay on the north end of the fill was anticipated due to the city’s failure to complete the storm sewer adjacent to the railroad’s right-of-way. However, the sewer work could not be commenced until funds were available following approval of the municipal budget.¹⁵

Sanders announced in early February 1932 that the railroad could run trains over the south end of the elevated tracks in March 1932. Additionally, it was announced that work on the new passenger station was anticipated to start within sixty days. In late February 1932, “fills for the southern part of the project (were) completed, and fill sidewalls (were) finished on the north end and through the business district.” On March 23, 1932, the south part of the Santa Fe’s elevated track system was put into service. The next day, the local newspaper announced that arguments would be heard in district court concerning “the city’s demurrer in the \$250,000 damage suit of the Terminal Oil Mill Co., resulting from elevation of the Santa Fe tracks.”¹⁶

By mid-April 1932, the track elevation was complete from the Rock Island crossing to South Twenty-third Street. Additionally, the concrete retaining wall on the west side of the right-of-way was standing up to Sixth Street, less than one block from the north end of the elevation. Workmen also indicated that construction of the new depot would not be underway until July 1932 but the 1901 Santa Fe passenger depot would be demolished shortly. Train passengers would then utilize “old coaches” until the new depot was ready.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid, 19 June 1931.

¹⁵ Ibid, 16 August 1931, 1 September 1931, 16 September 1931, 27 December 1931 and 29 December 1931.

¹⁶ Ibid, 10 February 1932, 24 February 1932, 22 March 1932, 23 March 1932 and 24 March 1932.

¹⁷ Ibid, 18 April 1932, 26 April 1932, 28 April 1932, 29 April 1932 and 17 May 1932.

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Taking longer than anticipated, demolition of the “old” Santa Fe station was reportedly contracted to the Allen Construction Company by early July 1932. Materials from the turn of the twentieth century building were slated to “be used by the city to fill mud-holes in the unpaved streets.” In mid-July 1932, the old station was “abandoned;” however, the order to raze the building was still pending. The delay in the order was attributed to changes in plans for the new building anticipated to cost \$500,000. At the time, railroad officials predicted awarding the contract for the new passenger station in August. Additionally, the Santa Fe announced an addition to the freight depot, likely consisting of the existing baggage and mail room, which included the heating plant for the new passenger depot.¹⁸

With the retaining wall north of the depot site completed weeks earlier, the Allen Construction Company was set to start work on the retaining wall south of the depot building in early October 1932. Additionally, the company completed the excavation for the freight depot. For unknown reasons, the 1901 depot building remained standing while passengers utilized old refurbished railroad cars as they waiting on trains. Finally, in early December 1932, Santa Fe officials explained that the contract for wrecking the old depot in fact had not been awarded to the Allen Construction Company, although it was believed the company was the low bidder for the job. The local newspaper also raised question as to whether the railway company truly intended to construct a new building. According to the paper, “detailed plans have not been submitted either to the city or the corporation commission, only the preliminary sketches having been exhibited.”¹⁹

By late January 1933, the tunnels beneath the tracks to the passenger station were set to be completed within thirty days and “all other features of the track elevation work (were) moving rapidly toward completion.” However, through February 1933, railroad employees were still unable to provide information concerning when construction of the new passenger station would start. On March 11, 1933, Santa Fe Passenger No. 17 was the first train to run the length of the new elevated tracks through the city. Although the elevated tracks were in use, additional work was needed to complete the track project, mainly related to switches and street paving underneath the underpasses, which was anticipated to be done by the autumn of 1933.²⁰

About two weeks after the elevated track went into service, the Mayor of Oklahoma City, Clarence J. Blinn, announced that as it appeared doubtful that the Santa Fe was going to construct a new passenger station, it was his position that the city should not pay the \$350,000 cost for the expanded underpasses. Mayor Blinn noted that the construction of the depot was just as much part of the agreement as the track elevation. The Santa Fe general manager, F.A. Lehman, responded within days that depot plans were being worked on by the company’s architectural department. Lehman assured the city that the Santa Fe “had no intention of evading the program agreed upon when our track elevation contract with the city was signed.”²¹

¹⁸ Ibid, 8 July 1932, 12 July 1932, 16 July 1932, 17 July 1932, 24 July 1932 and 29 July 1932.

¹⁹ Ibid, 29 July 1932, 5 August 1932, 13 August 1932, 3 September 1932, 1 October 1932, 4 October 1932, 4 November 1932 and 8 December 1932.

²⁰ Ibid, 31 December 1932, 26 January 1933, 20 February 1933 and 11 March 1933.

²¹ Ibid, 23 March 1933 and 26 March 1933.

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In mid-April 1933, the local newspaper announced that the Santa Fe was to have a new station within two weeks. However, this merely involved replacement of the old passenger coaches in favor of using a portion of the express room, completed as part of the elevated track, for the new passenger station. The “new depot” opened to the public in mid-May 1933 with the “ticket windows and other essentials, such as cuspidors and seats” moved into the express office. Based on historic photographs in the John Moore and Stan Hall Collection at the Oklahoma Historical Society, the temporary passenger station in the northernmost bay of the express room included an exterior, covered, wooden stairway to the elevated tracks.²²

In early August 1933, construction of the elevated track was nearing completion with only the Second Street underpass requiring paving. At the same time, the city building department approved plans for the Santa Fe’s new passenger station. With the plans returned to the company for a final review, no date for start of construction was set, although it was anticipated to be prior to January 1934.²³

Unused for more than a year, demolition of the 1901 depot finally got underway in late August 1933. The demolition project was contracted to the T.A. Allen Construction Company who then subcontracted it to F.C. Lavine and his associates. The firm was given eighteen days to bring the existing building down as construction of the new passenger station was supposed to begin on October 1, 1933. The new building was to be “a swell palace of limestone and marble in keeping with the dignity of the Santa Fe’s newly elevated tracks through the city.” By mid-September 1933, only the tower remained standing on the old building.²⁴

Contrary to a construction start of October 1, 1933, copies of the plans for the passenger station were only sent to prospective bidders in mid-November 1933. Bids were anticipated to be opened in less than thirty days. The plans had also been altered through removal of the north wing which was to contain some office space and a Fred Harvey restaurant. With the contract awarded to F.M. Spencer and Sons of Topeka, Kansas, preliminary construction work was underway at the site with forty men on the project in late December 1933. The contract called for \$100,000 to be spent on the station by the contractor, excluding plumbing, lighting and interior finishes. Within days, excavation of the building’s foundation was well underway with an anticipated completion date before the end of January 1934. Concrete was then expected to be poured as quickly as the weather permitted.²⁵

By early March 1934, the building’s “concrete skeleton (was) growing like a healthy youngster,” with the foundation and upright piers completed, workmen pouring the beams and the framework nearly complete. With all groundwork completed by the start of April 1934, it was anticipated that the station would be ready for use in August 1934. Slightly behind schedule, the building

²² Ibid, 14 April 1933, 23 April 1933, 26 April 1933, 11 May 1933, 15 May 1933, and 16 May 1933. See also TAP, 174.

²³ Ibid, 4 August 1933 and 6 August 1933.

²⁴ Ibid, 25 August 1933 and 17 September 1933.

²⁵ Ibid, 14 November 1933, 29 December 1933 and 5 January 1934.

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opening was further delayed in early September 1934 due to the lack of lighting equipment, draperies and other furnishings. On the afternoon of September 18, 1934, the new Santa Fe passenger station, with its elaborate “futuristic,” “colorful mosaic” ceiling and specially designed, cast aluminum chandeliers opened “informally” to the public. A formal dedication of the Santa Fe’s improvements was held at the city’s Chamber of Commerce in early November 1934. The dedication on November 8, 1934 was led by Santa Fe president Samuel T. Bledsoe and “other principal officials of the road.”²⁶

With the depot facilities finally completed six years after the Santa Fe and city signed the \$5 million rail facilities improvement agreement, rail traffic continued to be a dominant transportation means in Oklahoma City. During World War II, 97 percent of the troops and 90 percent of the military equipment were transported via the railroad. It was estimated that of the seventy trains that rolled through Oklahoma every day during the war, fifty of those went through Oklahoma City. By 1956, seventeen passenger trains with from two to ten coaches passed through Oklahoma City daily. This was in addition to the estimated twenty-four freight trains that rolled through the city every day. However, the 1950s also brought improved highway and air facilities which began to erode the railroads dominance in the transportation of people and mail. In addition to the surge in the number of automobiles, the development of the interstate highway system in the 1950s had a significant impact on passenger rail travel.²⁷

By early 1965, only fourteen passenger trains ran through Oklahoma City daily. This included eight passenger trains on the Santa Fe line, four on the Frisco and two on the Rock Island. At the time, two former passenger lines, the Katy and the Oklahoma City-Ada-Atoka Railway, were hauling only freight. In May 1965, the Frisco petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission to discontinue their passenger lines which were losing money. Almost two years later, the Frisco ran their last passenger train on the St. Louis-Tulsa-Oklahoma City run in mid-May 1967. Six months later, the Rock Island discontinued its passenger run through Oklahoma City.²⁸

Less than five months later, the Santa Fe petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission to allow it to discontinue two passenger trains and the football trains to Norman. The football trains were special trains which ran between Oklahoma City and Norman on days the University of Oklahoma played home football games. The Santa Fe spokesman cited the reason as declining passenger business and the United States Post Office’s decision to eliminate its postal cars on the line due to cutbacks. The decline in passenger business, particularly for the football trains, was attributed to the opening of Interstate 35 which made “Norman more accessible by highway.” On a much broader scale, the loss of the Post Office contract meant a decline of almost \$35 million in annual revenue. According to a full page statement by John S. Reed, Santa Fe president, “The loss of mail on passenger trains was a sudden devastating blow to the continuance of services that were already marginal or being operated at a loss.” To sustain itself, the Santa Fe proposed

²⁶ Ibid, 4 March 1934, 3 April 1934, 5 September 1934, 18 September 1934, 6 November 1934 and 8 November 1934.

²⁷ Lucyl Shirk, *Oklahoma City: Capital of Soonerland*, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Oklahoma City Board of Education, 1957), 172-174. See also *Daily Oklahoman*, 10 March 1968.

²⁸ *Daily Oklahoman*, 9 May 1965, 15 May 1965, 2 May 1967 and 20 April 1970.

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discontinuing all passenger service except for a few key runs, including the Texas Chief which ran through Oklahoma City. By the end of November 1967, the State Corporation Commission reported that the Santa Fe was the only line with daily passenger service north and south through Oklahoma City. Statewide, the Santa Fe had two more daily pairs of passenger runs through Tulsa and one pair through the panhandle. Additionally, the Rock Island operated one pair of daily passenger trains through the Panhandle and the Kansas City Southern ran the Southern Belle and one other passenger train in eastern Oklahoma through Sallisaw and Heavener.²⁹

In early March 1968, the number of passenger trains running through Oklahoma was down to five with the Interstate Commerce Commission being asked to eliminate two of those. Four of the trains were on the Santa Fe with the Kansas City Southern still operating its run through Sallisaw. At an Interstate Commerce Commission hearing in February 1968, the Santa Fe petitioned for its Kansas Cityan and Chicagoan runs to be discontinued, leaving only the Santa Fe's twice daily Texas Chief run and the Kansas City Southern's single daily run to provide passenger service in Oklahoma. Although the discontinuation of the two passenger lines was protested, it was anticipated that within four months, the runs would be eliminated.³⁰

With the cutbacks completed in mid-May 1968, the Santa Fe's assistant president, E.M. Wheeler, noted that it was the interstate highway system, not airlines, which presented "the greatest challenge to the business of U.S. railroads." Wheeler explained that while bus transportation had stabilized over the last few years, "over 90 percent of American intercity traffic is by auto." With passenger service in the first quarter of 1968 down thirty percent from 1967, which was down sixteen percent from 1966, Wheeler also made a point that the remaining passenger trains were dependent "on the passengers' use of them." Wheeler justified this declaration by explaining that the company had spent more than \$1 million every year since 1958 on advertising its passenger service and had also "adopted various programs, such as credit card and discount plans, and lowered meal prices, in an attempt to encourage" passenger travel.³¹

The Kansas City Southern petitioned to discontinue passenger service in "extreme eastern Oklahoma" in 1969 with the line shut down within the year. In late 1970, with the Santa Fe the lone passenger service through Oklahoma City and Oklahoma, a new federal railroad corporation was posed to take over passenger service on existing lines. The Santa Fe's Texas Chief, running between Kansas City, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Dallas-Fort Worth with other stops, was considered an ideal route to be included in the new program. In addition to the stops being "served by interstate road hubs," the Texas Chief reached a greater overall population than the alternate Chicago-Houston route. Originally called the National Railroad Passenger Corp, or Railpax for short, the name of the federal program was changed to Amtrak in April 1971, just days after the Santa Fe announced it would join the program.³²

²⁹ Ibid, 5 October 1967, 6 October 1967 and 29 November 1967.

³⁰ Ibid, 20 February 1968 and 10 March 1968.

³¹ Ibid, 16 May 1968.

³² Ibid, 24 August 1969, 5 December 1970, 20 April 1971 and 24 April 1971.

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Despite the efforts of the Santa Fe and Amtrak, the last passenger train for ninety continuous years pulled out of Oklahoma City's Santa Fe Depot at 9:12 a.m. on October 2, 1979, carrying 49 passengers.³³ Although Amtrak reinstated passenger service through the Santa Fe Depot in 1999, the end of continuous passenger service is an event of exceptional significance. The Santa Fe was the first railroad in Oklahoma City. Thus, the Oklahoma City settlers that arrived via the railroad on April 22, 1889 arrived on Santa Fe trains. The Santa Fe is also the only railway company in Oklahoma City's history which maintained its original location, including both tracks and station location. Just as the 1932-1934 elevation of tracks and construction of a new depot to replace its turn of the century building was a momentous event, the cession of passenger service marked a major turning point in the history of Oklahoma City. No longer could residents hop the rails to nearby, or distant, towns and newcomers no longer experienced their first exposure to Oklahoma City by stepping from the Santa Fe Depot directly into downtown. Unlike many towns in Oklahoma, the discontinuation of passenger service was not caused by declining population as Oklahoma City's considerable population grew by over 30,000 during the 1970s. As indicated by the railway company, the primary contributing factor was the improvement in the federal highway system which made rail travel less appealing and reduced the postal service's dependence on railroads to transport the mail.

It is also notable that the Santa Fe line continued to carry passenger service for ten years longer than any other railroad in the state. Similar to other railway companies in Oklahoma, the Santa Fe began reducing passenger service in Oklahoma City during the mid-1960s. In 1967, the two other major lines in Oklahoma City, the Frisco and Rock Island, discontinued passenger service. Within two years, all of the other railway companies had eliminated passenger service in Oklahoma. Only on the Santa Fe road was passenger service continued through 1979.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to its historic transportation significance, the Santa Fe Depot in Oklahoma City is architecturally significant. The building is an excellent distinctive example of the Art Deco style in downtown Oklahoma City. Characteristics of the Art Deco style expressed on the Santa Fe Depot include the geometric form of the building, smooth stone wall surface, sharply defined outlines and the linear ornamental detailing of the building. Related directly to its dual function as both a passenger and freight depot, the building extends horizontally rather than vertically as was popular with Art Deco style buildings.

The as-built drawings of the Santa Fe Depot were approved by Chicago architect E.A. Harrison, reportedly a Santa Fe Railway Company architect. It is unclear if Harrison designed the building or simply certified the as-builts; as such, he is not listed under architect above. Other building evaluations have identified H.W. Wagner, the Santa Fe's resident engineer in Oklahoma City, as the architect for the building. The *Daily Oklahoman*, Oklahoma City's newspaper, did not specifically identify the architect for the building. The building repeatedly identified local contractor Leo Sanders as the contractor for the track elevation. Additionally, the newspaper

³³ Ibid, 2 October 1979.

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noted that the firm of F.M. Spencer and Sons from Topeka, Kansas, was the contractor for the construction of the passenger section of the building.

The Santa Fe Depot is not the only Art Deco style building in Oklahoma City's central business district. The Union Bus Depot, another transportation related building in the central business district, is also stylistically classified as Art Deco. The Union Bus Depot is located about five blocks west of the Santa Fe Depot and was constructed in 1941. However, due to differences in materials and expression, the two buildings are very different examples of the Art Deco style. The Union Bus Station utilizes cream colored brick in place of the Santa Fe Depot's Cordova Cream limestone. Additionally, the predominately rectangular Union Bus Station has a prominently rounded corner on the southeast corner which is clad with blue structural glass.

There are other examples of the Art Deco style in downtown Oklahoma City, most notably the Municipal Civic Center complex and the Oklahoma County Courthouse. Both the Civic Center and county courthouse were built at about the same time as the Santa Fe Depot in the mid-1930s. All of the government buildings are of the Public Works Administration (PWA) vernacular of the Art Deco style. The government buildings were also all built on the former grounds of the Rock Island's east-west tracks in the city core. The Civic Center complex is located five blocks west and two blocks north of the Santa Fe Depot with the County Courthouse one block east of the Civic Center. The Santa Fe Depot is easily differentiated from the government buildings, particularly in massing. Although oversized, the Santa Fe Depot has a horizontal massing while the government buildings are vertically massed. The corporate branding integrated in the decorative elements of the Santa Fe Depot also set it apart from the civic buildings.

The Santa Fe Depot is historically significant for its role in Oklahoma City's transportation history. The 1932-1934 depot building project and track elevation provided the city with a modern combination passenger and freight depot and relieved the city of the dangerous at-grade crossings that were the cause of injurious and deadly accidents for decades. The 1979 discontinuation of passenger service ended the ninety year continuous history of passenger rail travel to and from Oklahoma City. Despite declining revenue, passage service through the Santa Fe Depot lasted ten years longer than on any other line in Oklahoma. As an exemplary example of an Art Deco style depot, the Santa Fe Depot also possesses architectural significance. Although there are other Art Deco style buildings in downtown Oklahoma City, the Santa Fe Depot is a distinctive expression of the style.

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: _____

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 4.13 Acres MOL

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.465341 | Longitude: -97.512821 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

From the intersection of West Sheridan Avenue and South E.K. Gaylord, proceed 227 feet east along Sheridan Avenue to the east side of the railroad underpass, then 821 feet south along the east side of the railroad underpass to East Reno Avenue, then 221 feet west along Reno to South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard, then 818 feet north along E.K. Gaylord to the point of beginning. Unplatted part of the southeast quarter of Section 33, Township 12 North, Range 3 West, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the property historically associated with the Santa Fe Depot, including the elevated railroad tracks between West Sheridan and West Reno avenues. The elevated tracks, including the island-type loading platform, are part of the building. The building and elevated tracks were connected at the time of construction by the express section of the building and a tunnel that allows passage from the passenger section of the depot to the loading platform. The Santa Fe station grounds were recorded on the 1890 Oklahoma City Original Townsite plat and the land was never subdivided or platted further.

Santa Fe Depot
Name of Property

Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Form Prepared By

name/title: Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian,
organization: for City of Oklahoma City
street & number: 346 County Road 1230
city or town: Pocasset state: OK zip code: 73079
e-mail: archconsulting.savage@yahoo.com
telephone: _____
date: March 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
 - **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
-

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: **Santa Fe Depot**
City or Vicinity: **Oklahoma City** County: **Oklahoma** State: **OK**
Photographer: **Cynthia Savage**
Date Photographed: **11 December 2014**

Santa Fe Depot
Name of Property

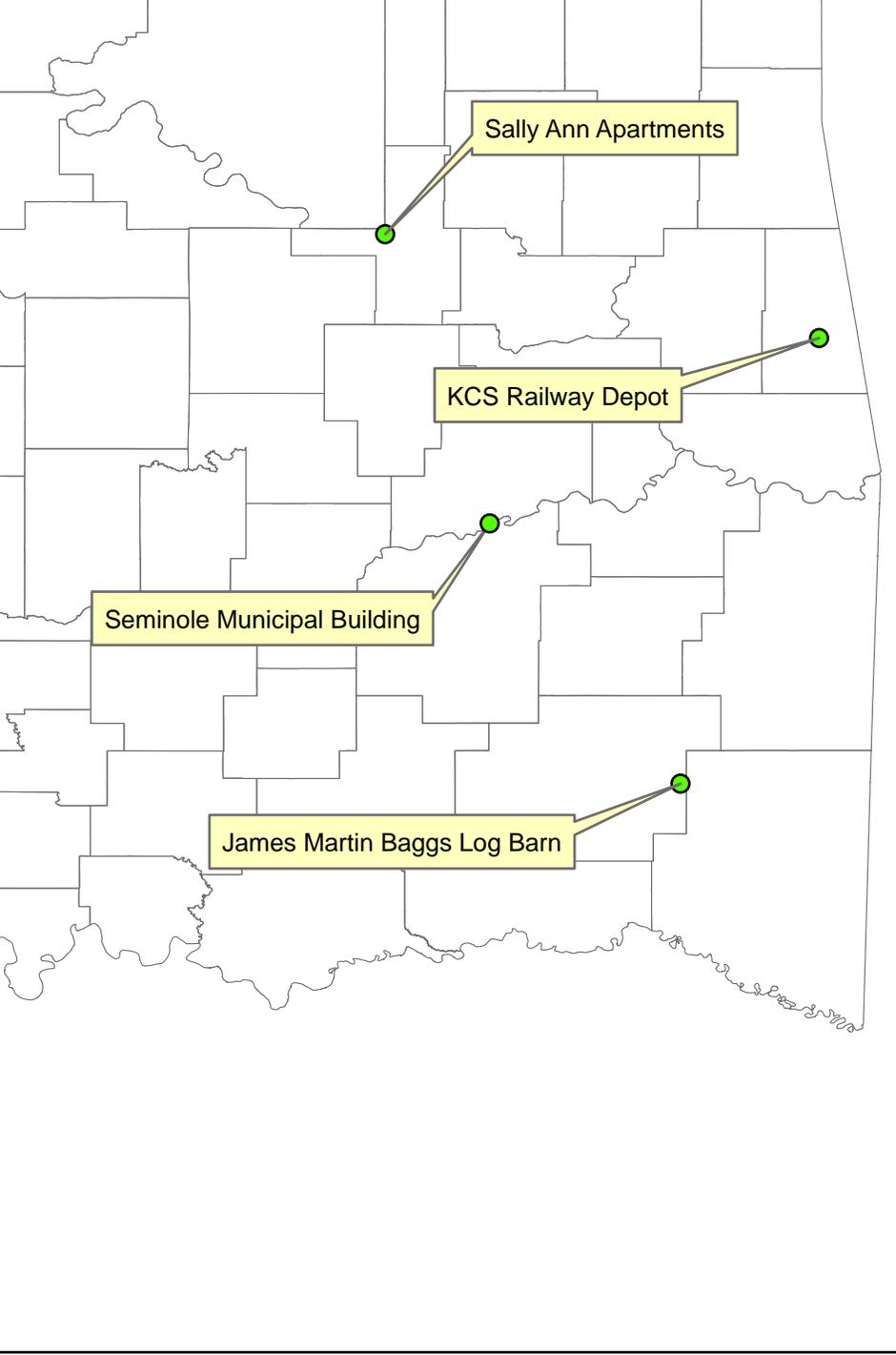
Oklahoma County, OK
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 0001:** Elevated Track and North Elevation, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0002:** North Elevation, camera looking south
- Photo 0003:** North (left) and West (center and right) Elevation, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0004:** West Elevation of Passenger Station, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0005:** West Elevation of Baggage Room (center) and Express Room (right), camera looking southeast
- Photo 0006:** West Elevation of Passenger Station (left), Baggage Room (center) and Express Room (right), camera looking northeast
- Photo 0007:** West Elevation of Express Room, camera looking northeast
- Photo 0008:** Elevated Track South of Express Room, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0009:** Elevated Track and Platform (left and center) and North Elevation (right), camera looking southeast
- Photo 0010:** Elevated Platform (left) and North Elevation (right), camera looking south
- Photo 0011:** Elevated Track (left), Elevated Platform (right), camera looking southeast
- Photo 0012:** East Elevation, camera looking west
- Photo 0013:** East Elevation (left), Parking Lot Elevated Track and Platform (center and right), camera looking northwest
- Photo 0014:** Elevated Platform, camera looking northeast
- Photo 0015:** Elevated Platform and Tracks, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0016:** Interior, Southeast Entry Hall, camera looking north
- Photo 0017:** Interior, Main Entry, camera looking west
- Photo 0018:** Interior, Concourse, camera looking northeast
- Photo 0019:** Interior, Concourse, camera looking northwest
- Photo 0020:** Interior, Concourse, camera looking north
- Photo 0021:** Interior, Waiting Room, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0022:** Interior, Waiting Room, camera looking northwest
- Photo 0023:** Interior, Colored Waiting Room, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0024:** Interior, Colored Waiting Room, camera looking northeast
- Photo 0025:** Interior, Vestibule, camera looking southeast
- Photo 0026:** Interior, Subway, camera looking east
- Photo 0027:** Interior, Subway, camera looking west
- Photo 0028:** Interior, Stairs from Subway to Platform, camera looking northeast
- Photo 0029:** Interior, Stairs from Platform to Subway, camera looking southwest
- Photo 0030:** Interior, Baggage Room, camera looking southeast

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 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Sally Ann Apartments

KCS Railway Depot

Seminole Municipal Building

James Martin Baggs Log Barn

Santa Fe Depot

146 South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Robert S Kerr Ave

Legend

 35.465341 -97.512821

 Santa Fe Depot Boundaries



Santa Fe Depot

146 South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Legend

-  35.465341 -97.512821
-  Santa Fe Depot Boundaries



Santa Fe Depot

146 South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Photo Key Map 1 of 2
Exterior Photographs #1-15

Legend

35.465341 -97.512821



W Sheridan Ave

Photo 1

Photo 9

Photo 10

Photo 11

Photo 2

Photo 14

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

SEK Gaylord Blvd

Santa Fe Depot

Photo 12

Photo 13

Photo 15

Photo 8

Photo 7

Photo 6

W Reno Ave



Santa Fe Depot

146 South E.K. Gaylord Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Photo Key Map 2 of 2 Interior Photographs #16-30

Legend

★ 35.465341 -97.512821

Photo 19

Photo 23

Photo 26

Photo 29

Photo 25

Photo 17

Photo 27

Photo 18

Photo 16

Photo 21

Photo 20

SEK Gaylord Blvd

Photo 28

Photo 24

Photo 22





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7

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Station →

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STATION





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LIMIT
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TURN

VIA

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CUPCAKES & CANDY

PINKITZEL

CUPCAKE

PARTIES

CHOCOLATE

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EXIT













EXIT





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STAIR
TO TRAINS

WELCOME TO
OKLAHOMA CITY





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Santa Fe Depot
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OKLAHOMA, Oklahoma

DATE RECEIVED: 10/23/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/27/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/14/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/08/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000874

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 12/8/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER *A. Benavidez* DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Oklahoma Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73117
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpon.htm

RECEIVED 2280

Founded May 27, 1893

OCT 23 2015

Nat Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

October 19, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Park Service 2280, 8th floor
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are pleased to transmit twelve National Register of Historic Places nominations for Oklahoma properties. The nominations are for the following properties:

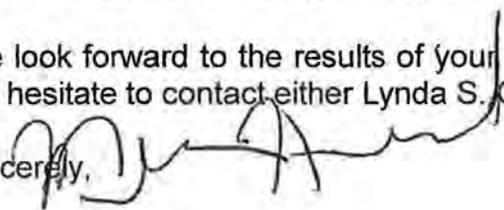
- a. Vannerson Homestead, South 7 miles on Highway 30 from intersection with Route 66, then 1.15 miles southwest, Erick Vicinity, Beckham County
- b. The University of Oklahoma Armory, 103 West Brooks Street, Norman, Cleveland County
- c. Fuksa, John and Mary, Farm, 1228 Marshall Road, Bison Vicinity, Garfield County
- d. Marshall Hall, 100 South University Avenue, Enid, Garfield County
- e. Public Library of Enid and Garfield County, 120 West Maine Street, Enid, Garfield County
- f. Robert R. and Minnie L. Kisner Mansion, 1111 West Wynona Avenue, Enid, Garfield County
- g. Santa Fe Freight Depot, 702 North Washington Avenue, Enid, Garfield County
- h. Lake Ponca Duck Pond Historic District, L.A. Cann Drive, Ponca City, Kay County
- i. Fairview Community Center, 206 East Broadway, Fairview, Major County
- j. Santa Fe Depot, 146 South EK Gaylord Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County
- k. Foyil Filling Station, 12243 S. Andy Payne Blvd, Claremore, Rogers County
- l. Belmont Apartments, 1314 South Denver Avenue West, Tulsa, Tulsa County

The members of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board), professionally qualified in the fields of architectural history and prehistoric archeology were absent from the public meeting at which each of these nominations was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. Therefore, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of Fuksa, John and Mary, Farm, Marshall Hall, Public Library of Enid and Garfield County, Robert R. and Minnie L. Kisner Mansion, Lake Ponca Duck Pond Historic District, Santa Fe Depot, and Foyil Filling Station was not present for the HPRC's formulation of its recommendation on the nomination. However, substantive

review of this nomination is not requested because the SHPO staff member possessing the requisite professional qualifications participated in the HPRC's deliberations on these noncontroversial nominations.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there may be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Lynda S. Ozan of my staff or myself.

Sincerely,



Melvena Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

MKH:lso

Enclosures