

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Oregon Short Line Passenger Depot
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number South Montana Street n/a not for publication
city, town Dillon n/a vicinity
state Montana code 030 county Beaverhead code 001 zip code 59725

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *Maude Sheffy* Date March 9, 1990

State or Federal agency and bureau MT SHPO

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Entered in the
National Register

Alvina Byers

4/19/90

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Rail-related

Transportation: Rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Other:
Arts and Crafts

foundation Concrete
walls Brick

roof Asphalt shingles
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Oregon Short Line Passenger Depot is located on the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way directly across South Montana Street from the commercial district of Dillon, Montana. A 1910 photograph of the new Arts and Crafts style brick depot shows immediate surroundings of dirt, mud, and standing water. Later photographs indicate that some landscaping had been done, but there is little evidence to indicate that the original landscaping plan for the depot grounds consisted of anything more than fenced, grass-covered areas partially outlined by assorted deciduous and coniferous trees flanking the building, which appear similar or identical in width and location to those existing today. The railroad tracks run approximately fifty-two feet from the west side of the depot. In front of the depot is a car parking area, a paved lot with spaces for perpendicular parking.

The boundary chosen for this nomination includes the depot and its immediate environs, from the railroad tracks to the road and including the areas of park land on either side of the building. These boundaries have been chosen because they represent the portions of railroad land immediately relevant to the depot in terms of historical use.

The Oregon Short Line Passenger Depot is a two-story brick building with gently sloped hipped roof with widely overhanging eaves. A two-story, intersecting, gable-roofed section projects approximately 6' to both the east and west to mark the primary entrances for the passenger section of the building. The flared eaves of the gable-roofed portion are supported by decorative wooden brackets. Covering the roof are rectangular, green asbestos shingles. Originally, a series of gabled dormers interrupted the expanse of the wide hipped roof, but these unfortunately were removed during the 1970s.

The exterior walls of the depot are constructed of stretcher courses of red brick with corner quoining executed in cast concrete. Further decorative effects are achieved by cast concrete banding at the window sill and lintel levels and the

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molded concrete brackets supporting the two projecting square bay windows of the east elevation. The wooden knee braces that support the wide overhang of the roof are now painted white, although historic photographs indicate a darker color.

The use of multi-paned wooden windows adds considerable interest to the depot building. The double-hung windows are generally composed of 16-over-one lights and are matched by the high, 16-light fixed windows of the baggage area to create a consistent rhythm. The two bay windows on the southeast elevation are composed of 16-over-one double-hung units flanking a large, central, undivided window. Upper story fixed windows are either 20-light or 25-light units. Transom windows over the primary entrances are composed of 12 lights while those over the freight doors have 20 lights. An alteration that likely dates to the historic period was the addition of small, 12-light windows that were cut into the double, two-panel entry doors. The lively pattern of the multi-paned windows is enhanced by their white paint color, and period photographs indicate that the windows were painted a light color historically.

The rooms of the passenger section of the depot are arranged so as to center upon the two-story projecting portion of the building where the main entrance, vestibule and ticket office are located. To the south of the ticket office is the general waiting room, and to the north is the former men's waiting room. These rooms are of equal size, about 30 feet in length according to record, and have matching window arrangements. The entryway features a men's bathroom on the north side and a women's to the south, both with working plumbing.

The main entrance boasts a large ticket window framed with stained varnished wood, which appears to be in good condition. Illumination is achieved by means of a single, metal-shaded light hung near the ceiling. The right-hand side of the entryway has upon its wall a large map showing Union Pacific routes in the United States. The ticket office retains some of the original equipment and cabinets, although some of the wooden cabinets in this room appear to be later additions because they are painted in contrast to the stain and varnish used elsewhere.

The general waiting room possesses a long, wooden bench said to be original, as well as a large radiator near the west-side windows. The board floor is painted a light, grayish color. The plaster walls are painted in pale pink and green, and the plaster both on the walls and on the ceiling shows some damage. The room

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is lighted by metal-shaded, suspended lights, possibly the originals. The wooden window and door moldings remain in good condition. The painted cabinets or lockers located in the southwest corner of this room are most likely fairly late additions.

The upstairs portion of the depot is reached by means of a wooden staircase separated by a door from the general waiting room. The walls of the stairwell have been covered with sheetrock and the stair treads are worn but seem solid. The upstairs room runs the length of the gable-roofed portion of the building. The floor consists of thick wooden planks, and is set at the sill level of the upper story windows. The ceiling and the other surfaces remain unfinished.

The remainder of the depot consists of the baggage room at the south end of the building. One or two small offices are located in the baggage room, but the main area consists of open storage space roughly 45 feet in length, with a wooden platform built up about four feet from floor level. The walls and ceiling are of plaster-and-lath construction, painted white, and show several damaged areas.

The former men's waiting room contains the most substantial alterations. The lower panes of the windows have been painted green, apparently to facilitate privacy when the room was used as a sleeping quarters for train personnel. The ceiling, which was once most probably the height of the ceiling in the general waiting room, has been lowered by several feet and is covered with rectangular, white acoustical tile. The original light fixtures have been replaced with fluorescent lighting. A partition has been added on the east side which has cut off perhaps one-third of the room to form a small area used for storage. The walls are covered with dark brown, imitation wood panelling. The floor of this room area is covered with tan linoleum squares whose darker areas may indicate the location of long-present features such as the cigar stand. The original flooring may well have been tongue-and-groove fir, as in the general waiting room.

The depot retains excellent historic architectural integrity. Alterations to the exterior appearance of the building, with the exception of the removal of the roof dormers, are minimal.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture
Transportation

1908-1925

1908

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

The Oregon Short Line Passenger Depot is significant as a physical representation of the close historical relationship between the Union Pacific Railroad and townsites of Dillon, Montana. The townsites, in fact, originated as a terminus town for the railroad. The streets were laid out on either side of the tracks, with the railroad depot at the very center of the community, and the 19th century commercial district grew up to parallel the rail line. The subject of this nomination was the second depot to be built in Dillon. Completed late in 1908, this large passenger depot displays a level of stylistic sophistication and material quality not often encountered in depots located in communities the size of Dillon (with a population of 3,650 in 1910 and 3,970 in 1980). Thus, the Oregon Short Line Depot not only possesses architectural interest, but stands today as an indicator of the railroad's confidence in Dillon's future and of the skill of important local figures in securing a higher investment and more permanent commitment from the Union Pacific Railway in Dillon than many towns of similar size could claim.

The Dillon Oregon Short Line Depot exhibits numerous distinctive features of Union Pacific depots of the early 1900s, most notably the gently pitched overhanging hipped roof supported by decorative wooden knee braces. The brick wall surfaces are enlivened with cast concrete sills, lintels, belt coursing and quoining. Arts and Crafts styling is evident in the flared cross-gable projections, which lend a chalet feel to the two primary elevations. The symmetrically arranged, multi-paned, double-hung and fixed windows provide additional visual interest. Originally the building featured numerous gable-roofed dormers, which unfortunately were removed during a 1970s re-roofing. However, the building still retains a status as an unusually elegant representation of Union Pacific depot construction, which has enhanced the architectural character of the community for over 80 years.

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Efforts on the part of businessmen and politicians interested in local development to attract one of the major railroads to lay tracks into the Montana Territory began in earnest by 1867. However, not until about fifteen years later did the prosperity of silver mining within the region begin to make the existence of such a line desirable to the railroads as well. In May of 1880, construction superintendent Washington Dunn and chief engineer George Wolcott inspected the surveyed routes to the two burgeoning mining cities of Butte and Helena. As Butte promised the largest volume of ore and the greatest quantity of machinery shipments, that route was finally chosen. Dillon became the terminus of the new line heading north toward Butte from Utah.

The desired line would be built in 1880-1881 by Sidney Dillon and Jay Gould of the Union Pacific who had organized the Utah and Northern in 1878 as a branch line that would build a narrow gauge rail line north from the Union Pacific transcontinental line in northern Utah to the Montana Territory. To complete its route through southwestern Montana the Utah and Northern railroad required a section of bottom land between benches east and west of the Beaverhead River which had been used as a wagon route and offered a favorable river crossing. Difficulties were encountered when Richard Deacon, owner of a ranch along the proposed route, refused a right-of-way to the railroad. He threatened a court battle as difficult as he could make it if the railroad attempted to access the land by eminent domain. (Rumor had it that he had constructed a rifle pit on the upper part of his land as an additional precaution.) He informed the Utah and Northern that they could acquire the land in only one way: to buy the entire package for eight thousand dollars. Dunn believed that the railroad president, Sidney Dillon, and financier Gould would reject this offer. Dillon, in turn, offered the area businessmen a deal: if the local businessmen would buy the ranch and grant the railroad right-of-way, Dillon would establish a terminus camp on this property for the winter months, which would be a boost to the start-up of a new townsite. Deacon is reported as having been willing to talk, over dinner, at his ranch. However, he reputedly charged the businessmen one dollar per plate. When it became evident that the proposal was in earnest, Deacon raised his price to \$10,500. He apparently balked even when they offered to meet that price, until Howard Sebree and J. E. Morse offered to pay one hundred dollars spot cash, with the remaining balance to be paid by September 13, 1880.

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Lots in the new terminus camp/townsite were auctioned off by the owners on September 13, 1880 following completion of the purchase, and the profit of the townsite investors totaled \$3,500 dollars. The most expensive lot went for \$450. The new town, christened Dillon in honor of the president of the railroad rather than Washington as had been originally planned (Dunn objected), was laid out along the 200 feet of right-of-way which approximately paralleled the Beaverhead Valley.

The railroad reached the Dillon townsite on September 16, 1880, and the terminus moved from Red Rock to Dillon on October 5. The original freight depot served the town of Dillon for several years, providing a means of transporting products for the local ranchers. The Utah and Northern reach Butte by December of 1881.

The next step is catalogued in 1907, when Mayor B. F. White, who had formerly been a freight forwarder for the railroad as well as Territorial Governor (during the period from April 1879 to November of that year) introduced at a City Council meeting a resolution to call to the attention of the railroad the need for a new depot. It was moved that a communication be sent to W. H. Bancroft, the general manager of the Oregon Short Line, outlining the need for the new depot. Mayor White's letter stressed that the old depot was inadequately small, in poor condition, and on the side of the tracks away from town development. Bancroft replied that the railroad considered it desirable to build a new depot on what he described as the town side of the tracks, but that a shortage of labor and difficulty in obtaining supplies had prevented the venture. Nevertheless, construction was begun early in 1908, and the new depot opened with a gala celebration on New Year's night.

Passenger trains at one time came into Dillon at the rate of two per day, but, as elsewhere, the increasing use of the automobile spelled the end of the station's use as a passenger depot. Passenger service to Dillon ceased during the mid-1970s. Yet Dillon, which had early enjoyed an academic focus as the site of the Montana Normal School, managed to survive.

The depot now exists as a representation of the character of Dillon as a community based upon its history as a railroad town. More directly, it reflects the financial and political development of the town: revenue was provided as a result of the passenger and freight traffic, and the railroad system provided

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an outlet for the economic production of local mining interests and local ranchers. Students attending the Montana Normal School used the depot in traveling between their homes and the school; machinery and ore shipped from Butte passed through this depot, as well as materials shipped into the State from the south. A 1907 newspaper article discussed the need for a new depot and stated that the old depot was handling as much as one thousand dollars a day in passenger and freight traffic. Thus, the depot functioned in the Dillon community as an important facet not only of the town's development but also of its continued existence.

Major Bibliographical References

Davison, Stanley R., and Rex C. Myers, "Terminus Town: The Founding of Dillon, 1880," Montana: The Magazine of Western History, Montana Historical Society, Autumn, 1980, pp. 16-20.

Dillon Examiner, Dillon, Montana, January 2, 1907, p. 1; January 9, 1907, p. 1 and p. 8; January 23, 1907, p. 1.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Beaverhead County Museum
Dillon, Montana

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property one acre (approximately)

UTM References

A 1,2 37,136,0 5,008,12,0
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary begins at a point along the Union Pacific Railroad line 75' northwest of the northwest corner of the depot building. From this point, the boundary runs southeast to the right-of-way of South Montana Avenue; then, southwest along South Montana Avenue to Reeder Street; then, northwest to the railroad line; then, northeast to the point of beginning.

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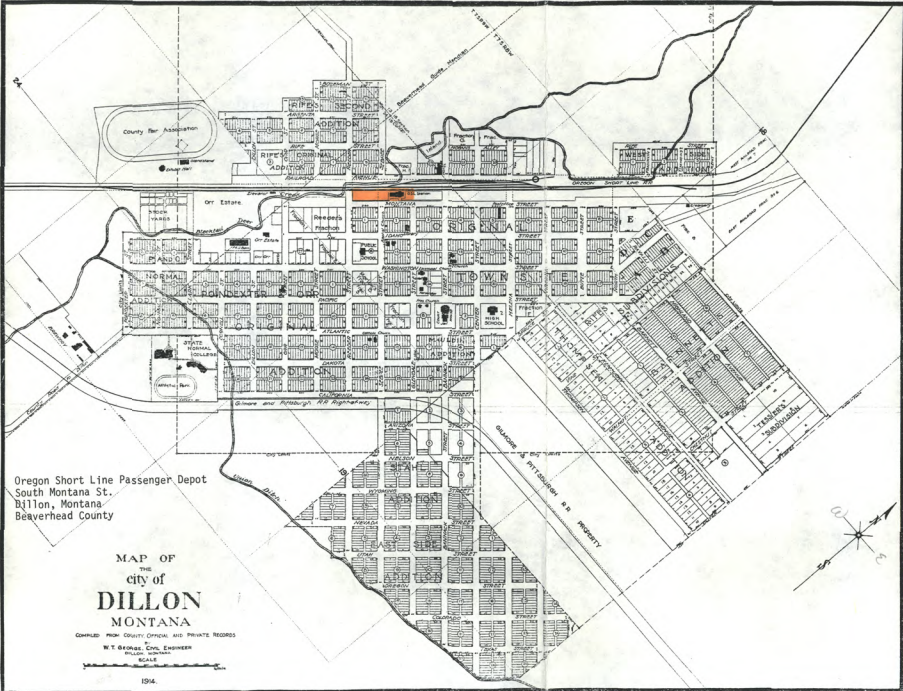
Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the landscaped park area and vehicular parking lot that have been historically associated with the depot building.
Township 7 south; Range 8 west; NW 1/4 section 19

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brenda Lynn Reed, SHPO Intern
 organization University of Montana date September 1989
 street & number Department of Anthropology telephone 406-243-0211
 city or town Missoula state Montana zip code 59802



Oregon Short Line Passenger Depot
 South Montana St.
 Dillon, Montana
 Beaverhead County

MAP OF
 THE
 city of
DILLON
 MONTANA

COMPILED FROM COUNTY OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE RECORDS

BY
 W.T. GEORGE, CIVIL ENGINEER
 PULLMAN, MONTANA

SCALE
 1" = 100'

1914.