

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

AUG 21 1984

date entered

SEP 20 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Southern Pacific Depot

and/or common Southern Pacific Depot

2. Location

street & number 559 El Camino Real

N/A not for publication

city, town San Carlos

N/A vicinity of

state California

code 06

county San Mateo

code 81

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name California Department of Transportation

street & number 1120 N Street

city, town Sacramento

N/A vicinity of

state California 95814

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. San Mateo County Hall of Justice and Records

street & number 401 Marshall Street

city, town Redwood City

state California 94063

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California has this property been determined eligible? yes no

(Published by Peregrine Smith, Inc., date Sale Lake City) 1973 federal state county local

depository for survey records c/o Dr. David Gebhard Department of Art History, University of California

city, town Santa Barbara

state CA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed in the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival Style in 1888, the San Carlos Southern Pacific Depot is a one-story stone masonry building. It consists of separate depot and baggage rooms of large sandstone blocks laid in random ashlar. The depot and baggage rooms are joined by a covered breezeway. The multi-hipped roof is clad in cut slate and has wooden ridge and finial details. A round tower with a conical roof projects from the track-side of the depot, having served as a ticket office. Semi-circular arched fenestration, characteristic of the Romanesque Revival, dominates the track-side (east) elevation. Except for minor alterations to the building and removal of the original landscaping, the depot retains its original appearance and fabric. It has a remarkably high degree of integrity.

Multi-light windows placed in a large round arch illuminate the waiting room. The transom over the east entrance consists of a multi-light window also within a round arch. The massive semi-circular arch is repeated in the fenestration of the baggage door. Tower fenestration is rectangular, with 4-light single-hung windows topped by multiple (15) small panes. The upper portion of the tower is lit by 15-light pivotal windows. The fenestration on the streetside (west) elevation is rectangular, consisting of 15/4 windows in single application with multiple-light transoms.

The eaves of the main roof are broad and projecting, supported by lathe-turned braces; the braces are in turn fastened to vertical timbers set on projecting stone pedestals. The main hipped roof wraps around the tower between the upper and lower fenestration. The eaves of the conical tower roof are boxed and supported by a dentil course. The projecting angled ladies' room also has boxed eaves. Other architectural details include two stone chimneys in the main building, large sandstone voussoirs forming the arch rings of the various fenestration, a projecting rounded stone base course, and redwood gutters.

The building is only slightly altered: a porte cochere on the west side was removed in the 1920s. During the restoration following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the original entrance porch was enclosed in concrete walls, textured and scored to imitate the masonry of the original building. (Please note that the appended plan and elevations, published in 1898, appear to be the original plans rather than the as-built version. There are slight differences in details, notably the chimney window which appears in the rear elevation but was not constructed.)

Interior features such as light fixtures, desks, ticket counter, etc., have been removed over the years, with most probably disappearing after the depot ceased its railroad function in 1967. Today, extant interior features are limited to a Romanesque-arched fireplace in the main waiting room area, and tongue-and-groove wall panelling and cooler in the former operator's living space in the upper floor of the tower.

The depot is the only structure on the property. The rest of the grounds consist of a commuter parking lot, with a small area of landscaping at the south end of the parcel.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1888 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The San Carlos Depot is significant under criterion "a" and "c"; for its role in the early development of the town of San Carlos, for the quality of its architecture and the rarity of the Richardsonian Romanesque style for California railroad buildings.

Its design reflects a sophisticated and highly artistic expression of the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style of architecture. The use of this style for a railroad station, while common in the East, was exceedingly rare in California. It is a good example of a type, period and method of construction and is a rare example as well. The San Carlos Station is the only depot on the Peninsula to use stone masonry construction or to employ the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival idiom.

In 1887, the San Carlos Land Company was formed to finance the development of the future townsite west of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks (Mahany 1965). These early developers focused their advertising promotions on convenient access to rail transportation afforded by the presence of an imposing and beautiful depot (Walkup 1889). The depot thus served as a catalyst for the development of San Carlos as a commuter-oriented suburban community. San Carlos was the only town on the Peninsula at that time whose economic base relied on a commuting population rather than local industry or commerce. The town grew slowly, however, and as late as 1906 the depot was the only public building in town and the center of social activity. Over the years it served as the town's first community church, library and post office (Mahany 1965) while operating continuously as a train depot until 1967. After 1967, the depot was occupied variously by the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce and by a real estate company. At the time of acquisition by the California Department of Transportation the building was vacant. In early 1984 a restaurant opened which utilizes the main waiting room area for customer seating, while former station agent spaces serve to house the kitchen. The baggage room is vacant. The building is still a stop on the peninsula rail commuter service, but a ticket agency and passenger waiting room is no longer maintained.

9. Major Bibliographical References

American Railway Bridges and Buildings. Chicago: B. S. Wasson & Co., 1898.
 Mahany, E. Through the Years in San Carlos. San Mateo: San Carlos Villagers, 1965.
 Walkup. San Carlos Land Company Map. San Francisco: Lathrop Flint Co., 1889.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 2.753

Quadrangle name San Mateo

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0
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5	6	5	5	0	0
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4	1	5	1	2	2	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Portion of Blocks 4 and 5, and that certain tract of land lying between said blocks, as said blocks and tract are shown on the map entitled, "Town of San Carlos, San Mateo County, (continued)"

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A		N/A	

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Denise O'Connor/Staff Architectural Historian

organization California Department of Transportation date February 2, 1984

street & number 1120 "N" Street telephone (916) 324-6694

city or town Sacramento state California

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Maria Mitchell-Coleman

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 8/14/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

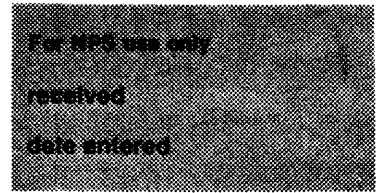
date 9-20-84

for Shelores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:
Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 6

Page 1

Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

Historic Sites Project of the Junior League of
San Francisco, Inc.

(Published as Here Today, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1968)

1968 x local

Records at Junior League of San Francisco, Inc.
2226 Filmore
San Francisco, CA
415-567-8600

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 4

California", which map was filed in the Office of the Recorder of said county, on September 4, 1888 in Book "B" of Maps, page 19, and a copy entered Map Book 1, page 76, said portion being described as follows:

COMMENCING at the intersection of the southeasterly line of that parcel of land described in that certain deed to Gilmore Oil Company, a corporation recorded September 23, 1941 in Book 975, page 389 (33168-E), Official Records of San Mateo County, with the northeasterly line of the strip of land described in the deed to the State of California, recorded April 7, 1938 in Book 775, page 475 (28544-D), Official Records of said county, last said line being also the northeasterly line of El Camino Real; thence along last said line S. 42° 32'42" E., 998.26 feet; thence N. 48° 40'20" E., 97.45 feet; thence N. 39° 15'34" W., 229.27 feet; thence N. 41° 49'19" W., 343.63 feet; thence N. 40° 58'10" W., 184.50 feet; thence N. 40° 58'10" W., 245.16 feet; thence N. 41° 19'40" W., 98.36 feet to the southeasterly line of Holly Street; thence along last said line S. 47° 27'18" W., 57.89 feet to the northeasterly line of said Gilmore Oil Company parcel, then southeasterly along that line approximtely 100' then southwesterly along that line to point of beginning. The bearings and distances used in the above description are on the California Coordinate System, Zone 3.

Boundaries are drawn on the lines of the historic (and current) station plat.

Southern Pacific Depot
559 El Camino Real
San Carlos,
San Mateo County,
California

Sketch Map

