United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad Depot other names/site number: Pufferbelly Station/5ME4163

2. Location

street & number:	119 Pitkin Avenue	(N/A) not for publication
city, town:	Grand Junction	(N/A) vicinity
<u>state: Colorado</u>	code: CO county: Mesa	code: 077 zip code: 81501

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resource	s within Property
 (x) private () public-local () public-State () public-Federal 	<pre>(x) building(s) () district () site () structure () object</pre>	contributing 	noncontributing <u>0</u> buildings sites structures objects 0 Total
Name of related multiple property listing:		No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register0	

Protection.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

ant 3, 1992

State Historic Preservation Officer, Colorado Historical Society State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

- I, hereby, certify that this property is:
- (v) 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:) _

Villaria

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Date

Intered in the

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions) <u>Transportation/rail-related</u>	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions) 		
7. Description			
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
	foundations <u>Brick</u>		
<u>Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:</u> Italian Renaissance elements	walls <u>Brick</u>		
	roof <u>Ceramic Tile</u>		
	other <u>Terra Cotta Trim</u>		
	Wood		

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The design of the Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad depot was influenced by the Italian Renaissnce, a popular style in the United States, reflecting the City Beautiful movement in 1905 Grand Junction (Photo 1). Located on a corner of the downtown grid street system, the detached building sits at an angle relative to the other buildings which face the north-south and east-west streets. The station parallels the Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad tracks which lie west of the building. The primary building material is white brick with terra cotta used for accent details and ornamental scroll faces (Photos 2 and 3). Brick coursing is a simple common bond and brick pilasters characteristic of the style add relief to the facades on corners and between windows.

The main part of the building is a two-story rectangle with symmetrical bays and details on the track-side and street-side facades. There is a rectangular singlestory wing on the southeast end of the structure. The northeast facade of the main building has three vertical divisions, the central division being the street-side entrance. The slightly recessed entry has simple, large oak doors with a transom above. There is a single round-headed window on the second story of the central bay which has a stepped parapet wall above it. Two-story columns divide the central bay from the outside bays (Photo 4). The symmetrical bays on either side of the entry have three rectangular single windows on the first floor and three round-headed windows on the second floor directly above the first floor windows (Photo 5).

The southwest facade (facing platform and tracks) also consists of three vertical divisions (Photo 6). The flat-roofed protrusion of the first floor of the central bay has one centered rectangular window and a wooden identification panel across the top (Photos 7 and 8). Above the flat roof there is a single round-headed window on on the second floor. The symmetrical end bays have three rectangular windows on the

(x) See continuation sheet

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lower floor and three round-headed windows directly above on the upper floor. On both floors, the two windows nearest the center of the facade are on the curved wall, while the third window is on the flat wall of the main building. There are two entrances on the southwest facade-one on either side of the flat-roofed protrusion, each with double oak doors.

The northwest end of the building has three evenly spaced rectangular windows and three round-headed windows directly above on the second floor. Detailing of terra cotta on the eaves, cornice and around the windows is the same as on the primary facades of the building (Photo 9).

The single-story wing on the building has simple rectangular windows and large overhead doors evenly spaced on the long walls. Tie rods visible above the overhead doors attest to the quality of design and construction which has kept the building intact under the constant stress of trains rolling by since 1906 (Photo 10).

The roofs on the main building and the single-story wing are low-pitched hip roofs. There is also a low-pitched hip with curved ends over the curved walls on the northwest side of the building. All roofs are of red clay segmented tile. The roof eaves and cornice are embellished with terra cotta scroll faces and dentils (Photo 11). The end bays of the southwest side have nearly flat canopies over the entry and first floor windows. The canopy was originally of glass but has since been covered with wood. It is suspended by steel cables attached to the second story wall (Photo 12).

The interior space of the railroad depot primarily consists of a single, oval-shaped room with smaller spaces surrounding it on the periphery. Just inside the street entrance is a vestibule with a stairway to the second floor. Originally the stairway was an almost spiral oak structure, but has since been replaced by a less ornate, more conventional staircase. Glass and oak doors open from the vestibule into the oval waiting room. This room was once one of distinction. As the Daily Sentinel reported, "There is nothing to surpass this waiting room in Colorado or Utah, in point of finish, decorative effects and conveniences" (1). The room is sixty-six feet in length and thirty-three feet wide. The original ceiling height was twenty-two feet, finished in squares of cast plaster detail.

Wainscotting on the walls runs to a height of about six feet, with evenly-spaced cast plaster columns running from the wainscotting to the ceiling. There are cast plaster moldings on the panels between columns. A curved seat is built into the southwest curved wall and three more benches are placed in the middle of the room. Although much of it has been covered with paint, the window trim and other interior woodwork are of solid oak. Originally there were four benches with round radiating heaters spaced between them (Photo 13).

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On the northwest side of the room there were two big windows opening into the ticket office. The windows were steel latticed and the counter under each was of solid marble. This decor has been replaced by a large curved counter without windows and a ticket office has been constructed within the northern end of the oval room.

There is a fireplace in an alcove in the far northwest corner of the building. Now used for storage, this space was originally intended as a small, cozy rest area. The ladies' room in the station was the finest of its day. Situated in the northeast portion of the depot, the large, triangular-shaped room was lavishly furnished with modern conveniences of the day. The gentlemen's smoking room was located in the southeast portion of the building. The room was similar in arrangement to the ladies' room but not as lavishly decorated. Both the ladies' and gentlemen's rooms have been made smaller as space was converted for offices and other uses, however, the toilet facilities in each room still exist in the original location.

The second floor of the depot has undergone the most changes since the building's construction. Originally the office space on the second floor was a mezzanine-like level on the northeast side of the building. The ceiling of the oval waiting room went to the second floor roof. Offices were occupied by the Western Union Telegraph Company and the railroad superintendent. There was also space for trainmen's private apartments. Sometime in the 1920s (2) the second floor was extended over the entire oval room to accommodate more office space. At that time, the stained glass in the upper level windows (Photo 13) was removed and the grand cast plaster ceiling of the oval room was obliterated. Much of the plaster work, however, does exist underneath the false ceiling of the second floor rooms. The latest renovation of the second floor was in the boom period of the early 1980s. Walls were added and refinished, the floors carpeted, and the lathe and plaster removed from the brick walls.

The one-story portion of the depot housed offices for Wells Fargo and Globe Express companies as well as the baggage room for railroad operations. While interior changes have been made, doors and windows replaced, and modern conveniences such as air conditioning units added, the part of this wing historically used for baggage is still used as such, and other commercial functions occupy the rest of the space.

In addition to the platforms, the site of the Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad depot has always had space for parking and pedestrian movement. There is still a large parking lot south of the depot and a concrete sidewalk runs the length of the northeast side of the building. Originally, the platform area was paved in brick but, over time, it has been replaced by concrete.

(1) <u>Daily Sentinel</u>. Grand Junction, Colorado. (April 17, 1906) p. 3.

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(2) Historic photographs indicate that the two-story ceiling of the oval waiting room was still intact until about 1920, but interviews with former railroad employees suggest that, by the 1930s, office space occupied the entire, expanded second floor.

In spite of the alterations the depot has retained integrity of materials, setting, location, feeling, association and much of its original design.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the relation to other properties: () Applicable National Register Criteria Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	nationally (x) statewi (x) A () B (x) C () D	de (x) locally
Areas of Significance		
(enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Transportation	1905-1942	1905
Architecture	1905	1905
Community Planning & Development	1905-1942	1905
	Cultural Affiliation	
Significant Person N/A	Architect/Builder Henry J. Schlack - Arc William Simpson Constr	

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

The Grand Junction Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad depot is historically significant under criterion 'A' for its representation of the contribution of railroad development to the Grand Junction community and to western expansion in general. The structure signifies the community development and economic processes that transformed Grand Junction from a pioneer settlement into a stable small town, and it continues to mark one of the main stops for both freight and passenger trains on this major east-west line through Colorado and the West. The depot is also architecturally significant under criterion 'C' as it is a beautifully designed building and unlike any other in the City of Grand Junction. It is one of a few remaining examples of turn-of-the-century railroad depot design and construction in the state, and it possesses high quality artistic details in both the exterior and interior design. It is the largest depot of this style in the state and has state significance for its excellent design.

The large, masonry building stands on its original site and has been continuously utilized and maintained by its owner, the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad since its construction. The railroad and station have always been an integral part of the Grand Junction community. Its design, setting and materials are recognizable as a public building, bringing it an added sense of distinction. Today, as when originally constructed, the depot is widely regarded as a downtown landmark, and it continues to house daily operational facilities of the railroad.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

George Crawford and his Grand Junction Town Company platted the original townsite of the City in 1881 and, as early as the fall of that year, Mr. Crawford initiated one

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of the most far-reaching actions of the company--negotiations with the Denver and Rio Grande railroad. In late November of 1881 Mr. Crawford wrote to officials of the railroad portraying Grand Junction as "the city of the future of the Grand River". (1) The railroad must have been equally enthused about the potential for Grand Junction for on November 22, 1882 the first Rio Grand locomotive steamed to a stop on the railroad property located at the extreme southwest corner of the town plat. Thus, this new town with its few residents was already on the main line of one of the region's largest railroads.

The railroad provided Grand Junction with more than just transportation. As George Crawford had foreseen, it became one of the most important factors in the development of the town. The railroad brought new residents, businesses, and even early tourists to the Grand Valley. It was also primarily responsible for transforming the new town of Grand Junction into the major transportation and business center on the Colorado western slope--a distinction it still holds today. The city did and still provides goods and services to surrounding communities in the Grand Valley and beyond. When Grand Junction was designated as the seat of Mesa County in 1883, its regional prominence grew stronger.

To support its activity in Grand Junction, the Rio Grande bought a large share of town company stock, purchased enough land to build a major repair facility and switchyard southwest of First Street and Pitkin Avenue, and was on its way to becoming one of Grand Junction's largest employers. The first railroad depot was a simple log structure which was replaced in early 1884 by an impressive Queen Anne style wooden station. This structure served the railroad and community well as they grew and prospered together.

By the turn of the century, Grand Junction was a prosperous small city on the western slope of Colorado. Having continued a steady growth since its establishment in 1881, Grand Junction boasted a city population of 3,503 in 1900 and its enthusiastic citizens felt indeed "it was the future metropolis of western Colorado." (2) The city was clearly no longer a pioneer settlement--it had been transformed into a stable small city.

The early years of the century saw even greater prosperity in Grand Junction. Between 1902 and 1905, a steady increase of well-built homes and fine business blocks marked the growth of the community. In 1904, more than a half million dollars was spent on erecting new buildings, and one hundred new dwelling units costing from \$1,500 to \$6,000 were built in the first half of 1905. At the lowest estimate, a total of \$600,000 was expended in 1905 for buildings, including two large business blocks and a new electric plant. This prosperity affected nearly every industry of Mesa County and the Grand Valley. The fruit growers of the region reported a banner crop in 1905, while the Chamber of Commerce doubled its membership in the same year. The estimated population of Grand Junction by 1905 was 7,000.

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At this time, the Denver and Rio Grande, Colorado Midland, and two smaller lines were headquartered in Grand Junction. The importance of this point along each of the lines was so great that a larger, more substantial depot was deemed necessary. Construction of a new depot, just south of the wooden structure, was started on April 6, 1905. The fine quality design and construction of the station was commensurate with the needs of this growing city, its trade, and traffic.

Construction was delayed for a few months, and some people believed for a time that, because the old station had received a new coat of paint, the hope for a new station had been dashed. However, in September of 1905 the citizens were assured that the contract had been let as white bricks were being unloaded at the site of the new depot.

Designed by Chicago architect, Henry J. Schlack, who also designed the Salt Lake City depot, the structure became a familiar downtown landmark even while under construction. The depot was one of the most handsome, conveniently located, and, at a cost of \$60,000, one of the costliest small railroad stations of the West. The stained glass for the upper story windows reportedly cost \$5.00 per square foot and an additional \$15,000 was spent on improving the grounds around the depot.

The William Simpson Construction Company out of Denver received the contract for the new Grand Junction depot. The company had done considerable work for the Rio Grande including construction of the station in Glenwood Springs. The station in Grand Junction, however, was much larger and more pretentious than the Glenwood depot. The new Grand Junction depot truly added "another item to the making of Grand Junction in its new role of being a city of first class". (3) Clearly the citizens of Grand Junction should have been and were proud of the building. After sixteen months of construction, the depot was completed and the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel reported it to be "... a credit to a city five times as large. The putting into service of this splendid railroad building marks an important era of local history." (4)

* * *

The Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad continues to be one of the backbones of the Grand Junction economy. The number of employees dropped after steam locomotives were replaced by modern engines in the 1950s, although the railroad is still one of the region's largest employers.

For many years, Grand Junction was a major stop for the Rio Grande Zephyr, one of the most famous trains in the United States. It travelled from Denver to Grand Junction, then to Salt Lake City and points west. The Zephyr was the last nongovernment owned long distance passenger train in the country and was famous for its vista-dome trips through the spectacular Rocky Mountains. The Zephyr cars were

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retired in 1983 when the Amtrak rail system took over the passenger route. After a dropoff in passengers on the Rio Grande Zephyr, the number of passengers grew dramatically when the new line's shiny new trains took over the route.

Amtrak continues to have a steady run of passengers including locals traveling to and from Denver, tourists, and cross-country travellers. The Grand Junction Denver and Rio Grande Western depot currently provides facilities for Amtrak's offices, ticketing, and passenger arrival and departure. The city continues to be an important link for both passenger and freight trains on routes between Denver, Salt Lake City and the West. Thus, this local landmark structure continues to serve the railroad and the community much as it has throughout the twentieth century.

* * *

The Denver and Rio Grande Western depot has architectural significance because of its distinctive characteristics typical of railroad depot design in the turn-of-thecentury West. Design emphasis was placed on creating a grand appearance on the exterior as rail passengers arrived at the Grand Junction stop. Similarly, the interior created a grand, yet pleasant setting to emphasize a sense of arrival and afford comfort to rail travellers.

The exterior of the structure is also significant because it is very typical of public buildings constructed in the early twentieth century during the City Beautiful movement which was taking place nation-wide. This large, stately building marked the edge of the neat, grid street system of the city and was (and is) easily recognized as a landmark for rail, trolley, pedestrian, and later vehicle traffic in the downtown area. The existence of such a fine building reflected the prosperity of the community to visitors and residents alike.

The interior and exterior architectural details of the depot are especially significant locally as its high artistic design and fine quality craftsmanship are unmatched in any other large building in Grand Junction. Of particular artistic value is the ornamentation, including the terra cotta foliated designs on the exterior and the cast plaster moldings and panels on the interior. Some notable details include the fine floral pattern on the exterior window surrounds, the unusual design of the keystones, and the acanthus leaves in relief on each side of the window arches. The paneled spandrels between the first and second floor on the exterior walls, the bead and reel molding below the entablature and cornice, and the double row of dentils below the cornice also exhibit high artistic design and craftsmanship. The high quality interior details are best exhibited by the squares of cast plaster detail on the ceiling of the second floor (now covered by a false ceiling, but intact) and the materials such as solid golden oak used for doors, wall details, and furnishings which still exist in the structure.

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- Underwood, Kathleen. <u>Town Building on the Colorado Frontier</u>. (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. 1987) p. 23.
- Rait, Mary. "Development of Grand Junction and the Colorado River Valley to Palisade from 1881 to 1931 - Part 2". Journal of the Western Slope. Vol. 3. No. 4. (Mesa State College. Autumn 1988) p. 12.

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- (3) <u>Daily Sentinel</u>. Grand Junction, Colorado. (October 6, 1905) p. 1.
- (4) <u>Daily Sentinel</u>. Grand Junction, Colorado. (April 16, 1906) p. 1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Colorado Historical Society. Architectural/Historical Component Form. Resource No. 5ME4163. July 23, 1982.

Daily Sentinel. Grand Junction, Colorado.

(x) See continuation sheet

Pr	evious documentation on file (NPS):	
() preliminary determination of	Primary location of additional data:
	individual listing (36 CFR 67)	() State Historic Preservation Office
	has been requested	() Other State agency
() previously listed in the National	() Federal agency
	Register	(x) Local government

- () previously determined eligible by the National Register
- () designated a National Historic Landmark
- () recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- () recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

- () University
- () Other
- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data Acreage of property: ____.97 Acres UTM References 7110310 4326500 A 1 2 Zone Easting Northing D ____ C Northing Northing Zone Easting Zone Easting () See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is shown in a cross-hatched pattern on the enclosed portion of Mesa County Assessors Map 2945143. It is approximately 103' by 420' in size. Beginning at the northeast corner of the site, the line follows the southern

(x) See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property encompasses the original site owned by the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad upon which the depot was constructed.

() See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Kristen Ashbeck, AICP/Planner Organization: <u>City of Grand Junction Community Development</u> Date: <u>May 1992</u> Street & Number: 250 N. Fifth Street Telephone: (303)244-1430 City or Town: _____ Grand Junction State: CO Zip Code: 81501

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Fishell, Dave. <u>The Grand Heritage: A Photographic History of Grand Junction</u>, <u>Colorado</u>. The Donning Company/Publishers. Norfolk, Virginia. 1985.

Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings. <u>American Vernacular Design 1870-1940:</u> <u>An Illustrated Glossary</u>. Van Nostrand Reinhold Company. New York. 1985.

"Grand Junction Downtown Walking Tour". Unpublished manuscript. Museum of Western Colorado. Grand Junction, Colorado.

Matthews, Richard. Personal interviews. National Railway Historical Society, Rio Grande Chapter. Grand Junction, Colorado.

Pearce, Sarah J. <u>A Guide to Colorado Architecture</u>. Colorado Historical Society, June, 1983.

Phillips, Steven J. <u>Old House Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American</u> <u>Architecture 1600 to 1940</u>. American Source Books. Lakewood, Colorado. 1989.

Rait, Mary. "Development of Grand Junction and the Colorado River Valley to Palisade from 1881 to 1931 - Part 2". Journal of the Western Slope. Volume 3, Number 4. Mesa State College. Grand Junction, Colorado. Autumn 1988.

Sanborn Insurance Map. Mesa County, Grand Junction, Colorado. 1912.

Summer and Horn. The Booster Book: Grand Junction, Colorado. August, 1905.

Underwood, Kathleen. <u>Town Building on the Colorado Frontier</u>. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque. 1987.

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boundary line of Lot 1, Denver and Rio Grande Western Subdivision southwest to the first Denver and Rio Grande Western railroad track, then southeast along the track to a line which corresponds with the northern property line of Lot 2, Denver and Rio Grande Western Subdivision, then northeast to the right-of-way of South Avenue, then northwest along the right of-way line back to the point of beginning.

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NOTE: Information in items 1 through 5 is the same for all photographs except for those items in Photo 13.

Photo 1	 Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad Depot Grand Junction, Colorado Kristen Ashbeck 27 January 1992 City of Grand Junction Community Development Department View to northwest of street-side (northeast) facade 1
Photo 2	6) Terra cotta scrollwork on second floor windows - southwest facade 7) 2
Photo 3	6) Terra cotta details above street-side entry - northeast facade 7) 3
Photo 4	6) Street-side entry - northeast facade 7) 4
Photo 5	6) Fenestration - northeast facade 7) 5
Photo 6	6) View to northeast of track-side (southwest) facade 7) 6
Photo 7	6) Flat-roofed projection on southwest facade 7) 7
Photo 8	6) Identification panel - southwest facade 7) 8
Photo 9	6) View to southwest of northwest facade 7) 9
Photo 10	6) Single-story wing - southwest facade 7) 10
Photo 11	6) Cornice/eave detail . 7) 11

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Photo 12	6) Steel supports for canopy on southwest facade 7) 12
Photo 13	 3) Unknown 4) c. 1906 5) Museum of Western Colorado - Grand Junction, Colorado 6) Interior upon completion - looking to northwest corner 7) 13

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Denvert Rin Grande Raubroad Depot, Grand Tundlicin, Mesa County, CO Historic Photo, N.S.



