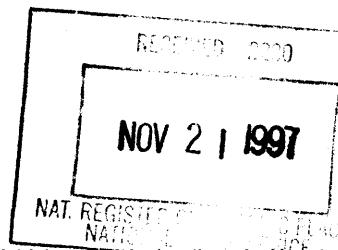


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1557

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name OCALA UNION STATION

other names/site number Union Station Plaza/MR2475

2. Location

street & number 531 North East First Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Ocala N/A vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Marion code 083 zip code 34470

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 11/7/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

[Signature] 12/22/97
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

OCALA UNION STATION

Name of Property

Marion, Florida

County and State

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)

- buildings, district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings, sites, structures, objects, total.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail related, COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail related, WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH and 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL, OTHER: Masonry Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, walls BRICK (vener), WOOD, roof ASPHALT, other STONE, METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1917 - 1946

Significant Dates

1917
1921

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Williams/Walkup, A.M.
MacKay, George

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS) with checkboxes.

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data with checkboxes.

Name of Repository

#

OCALA UNION STATION
Name of Property

Marion, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approximately 3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	3 8 9 5 8 0	3 2 2 9 6 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lisa L. Parks, Consultant; Gary V. Goodwin, Historic Preservation Planner

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date November, 1997

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Seaboard Coastline Railroad, Tax Department J910

street & number 500 Water Street, Suite 1208 telephone

city or town Jacksonville state Florida zip code 32202

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 amend 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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**OCALA UNION STATION
Ocala, Marion County, Florida**

SUMMARY

The Ocala Union Station, located at 531 Northeast First Avenue in the City of Ocala, Florida, is a complex comprised of three contributing one-story buildings, and a passenger loading platform/shed on a site of approximately three acres. The Union Station complex retains much of its original configuration. The main depot, telegraph tower, and adjacent express office were constructed in 1917 at the juncture of the Seaboard Air Line Railway tracks and the Atlantic Coast Line Railway tracks. The "L" shaped, masonry vernacular main depot has a concrete foundation. The Union Station restaurant, on the westernmost portion of the site was completed in 1921. The overall site has remained as originally designed, with the entrance to the complex along northeast First Street to the west; the originally designed landscaped island remains at the eastern entry. The original character and architectural integrity of the Ocala Union Station has been preserved, and it retains its place as a significant landmark within the City of Ocala.

SETTING

The Union Station complex is approximately one mile to the north of the original downtown center. The city has grown around the site, with warehouses to the immediate east and the historic residential neighborhood of Tuscawill Park and lake to the south and east. Entry into the Union Station site is from the west along northeast First Avenue, a commercial area. To the northwest of the site is Magnolia Avenue, a major artery into the downtown and one of the early entrances into Ocala.

The Ocala Union Station, represented by the main depot and the express office, was designed by the *Office, Engineer of Buildings, Seaboard Air Line Railway* in Norfolk, Virginia. The individual architecture was done by Mr. Williamson within that office. The contractor and supervisor for the project was Mr. A.M. Walkup of Richmond, Virginia. The Union Station Restaurant was a private concern, initially begun by the partners Mr. M.H. Temple and Mr. W.M. Davidson. Temple & Davidson contracted with George MacKay & Company for its construction.

The depot is located at the intersection of the Seaboard Air Line main line and the Atlantic Coast Line railroad tracks. The Seaboard Air Line tracks run along the northern boundary of the site and the Atlantic Coast Line tracks form the eastern boundary. The intersection forms an "X"; the depot is located within the southwest quadrant of the cross. The express office is within twenty feet of the depot, and remains in its original location to the immediate south. The passenger loading platform, with sheds, is located along both the Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line tracks to the north and east of these two buildings.

The 1921 Union Station restaurant, located approximately 210 feet from the depot, faces south, with its rear

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facade along the Seaboard Air Line track.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Passenger Depot

Exterior Features

The passenger depot was constructed in 1917. The depot is a one-story structure of an "L" configuration, with the lower extension of the "L" located along the northern boundary at the Seaboard Air Line main line track, and the remainder of the building extending toward the south and bordering the Atlantic Coast Line track which is to the east (Photo 1). The building consists of approximately 4,100 interior square feet, including a one story height polygonal telegraph tower.

The most prominent elevations of the structure are those viewed by the incoming trains, along the east facade and particularly the north facade (Photos 2 & 3). The main entrance for those approaching the station from the street side is located in the southwest corner of the main waiting room (Photos 4 & 5). The building originally had a separate waiting room for non-whites: the "colored" waiting room, which was also accessed from the western facade of the building. To the south was the original baggage room.

The depot, with its brick facade, is an example of a typical early 20th century masonry rail station. The deep red brick, laid in stretcher bond fashion, is accentuated by the white cast stone belt course which wraps the entire building immediately at and incorporating the sills of the sash windows (Photos 6 & 7). Contributing to the building's design are the over-sized flared eaves with hip and ridge rolls. The roof is covered with large diamond pattern shingles. Metal scrolled finials adorn the north and south ends of the ridge roll, where globe finials had been at the west end gable and atop the octagonal telegraph tower (Photo 8).

Flat, arched, brick lintels exist on both the windows and doors. Paired, wood, double hung sash windows, with one over one lights are along the northern facade and the portion of the structure beneath the telegraph tower. These features exist in the main ticket office as well. The windows along the east facade are unpaired, double hung, sash or pivot windows, separated by entry or baggage doors. The entry ways into the waiting room are enhanced by single pane transoms.

The telegraph tower elevates the structure's profile an additional story. The modified pentagonal tower, accommodates approximately 287 square feet, and is located at the intersection of the building's wings at the north end of the depot, facing the intersection of the rail lines. The telegraph tower has flared eaves and ridge seams which divide the tower roof into five sections. Unlike the main body of the structure, the tower is clad in

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wood. Similar to the main structure, flat arched brick lintels are over the paired, wood, double hung sash windows at the three sides closest to the intersecting tracks. Unlike the main structure, these windows have six over one lights.

Passenger Depot
Interior Features

The depot consists of several spaces, including what was originally the "whites only" waiting room at the northern end of the depot. This waiting room opened directly onto the Seaboard Air Line tracks to the north and onto the Atlantic Coast Line tracks to the east. The space is open, with views from the paired sets of windows. The double hung sash windows have single lights and are framed in a simple wood trim which is used for both the windows and doors. The doorways are oversized, originally designed with double doors.

The flooring is the original six inch square, smooth, red tile (Photo 9). Original ten inch wood baseboards with 1 1/4" moldings remain. The original wood tongue and groove wainscoting, four feet in height, has a simple molded cap. Above the wainscoting are the original plaster walls (Photo 10). The original beaded tongue and groove wood ceiling and crown molding remains. The wood picture molding occurs two feet from the ceiling.

Original free-standing wooden seating remains. The simply designed benches are located along the interior walls, with a "double loaded" bench occupying the center of the room (Photo 11). This center bench has been constructed with seating created back to back, facing both the northern tracks as well as the ticket windows. The benches are 3.5 feet in height with seat bottoms and backs of closed wooden slats.

The brick fireplace is a focal point of this area. Centered on the west wall of the waiting room, the chimney breast of deep red brick projects into the room approximately one foot and extends to the ceiling. Above the mantle piece, the brick veneer forms a 6 foot high by 3.5 foot wide panel inset with a 2 inch return (Photo 12). The mantel is of heart pine. The brick veneer is used to create a stepped or corbelled effect with smaller panel insets created on either side of the firebox. A flat arch tops the facing above the firebox.

On either side of the fireplace along the west wall of the waiting room are doors leading to the restrooms. The main ticket office is in its original location, along the southern wall of the waiting room (Photo 13). The location of the original ticket window openings remain.

A secondary ticket office was created prior to the 1940's in order to separate the operations of the two train companies. The secondary ticket office was created along the southeast wall of the main waiting room, extending the original wall slightly (approximately two feet) into the main waiting room and extracting space on

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the south side of the wall from the secondary waiting room. Two ticket windows open into the main waiting room and one opens into the secondary waiting room. The wainscoting from the structure's original construction exists along the east wall, while a wainscoting with wider wood panels has been used on the remaining interior walls (Photo 14).

The secondary waiting room lies to the south of the two ticket offices. This room retains the original exposed wainscoting. Original crown molding, picture molding, tongue and groove ceiling, and five-panel interior doors consistent with those of the main waiting room have been retained. The ticket window into the main ticket office is original and incorporates a simple molding (consistent with that of the original windows) and shelf design with wood brackets. A fireplace built to the same specifications as that of the main waiting room occupies the center of the southern wall (Photo 15). The flooring is tile, incorporating both the square tile of the main waiting room as well as a rectangular tile used in only a limited area south of the center of the room. Single, double hung, sash windows on each of the east and west walls provide natural light to the room.

A component of the original depot was the baggage room at the southernmost end of the structure. Built as part of the original building, the baggage room does not have a direct interior connection to the remainder of the structure. Access to the baggage room is strictly from the exterior. Three inch, diagonal, wood siding is original and covers the interior of all of the exterior walls of this room and its closet. A partition had been constructed which divided the space, creating a hall effect at the north end. The original sliding pocket doorways are intact, originally installed to handle the large baggage carts. The two doors, with their exposed sliding rails, are at the north ends of the east and west walls, and have a two-light transom. The original concrete flooring is visible in the hall area. Original window frames for pivot windows, consistent with those in the restrooms, exist on each of the four exterior walls.

The interior finishes of the telegraph tower include natural finished wood tongue and groove walls and ceiling. The flooring is natural finished wood planks. The window frames are also natural finished wood. The tower is only accessible through a vertical ladder from the baggage room closet to the attic space.

Express Office

Exterior Features

The express office was built simultaneously with the passenger depot in 1917, and reflects the same structural system of wood frame with concrete foundation and masonry style as that of the depot. Consistent with the depot, the express office exterior is a deep red brick facade, laid in stretcher bond fashion. Like the depot, the facade is accentuated by a sandstone belt course which wraps the entire building, and incorporates the sills of the sash windows (Photo 16). Mirroring the depot, the express office retains over-sized flared eaves with hip and

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ridge rolls. The roof is also covered with large diamond pattern shingles. Adorning the north and south ends of the ridge roll are metal scrolled finials.

An addition was placed on the east facade; yet, the original exterior wall was left intact and exposed from the addition's interior, retaining the structure's entire exterior walls and facade (Photos 17 & 18). A single, red brick chimney, reflecting the corbelled cap of the depot, is located along the south slope.

Flat arched brick lentils exist on both the windows and doors. The windows are double hung sash, with one over one lights. Two original entry doors exist, centered on the west and east walls, flanked by single sash windows. The six foot entries consist of original, paired six-panel wood doors aligned with the two-light transoms.

The soffit of the over-sized eaves are the original wood tongue and groove. A simple metal gutter, and original ground level downspouts are adjacent to the corners of the building. Metal corner guards, reflective of the lower profiled guards of the depot, protect the brick corners of the building. Similarly, the taller corner guards are found at the entries and extend to the top of the beltcourse.

Express Office

Interior Features

The interior of the express office has had a low-height partition added along the north wall and an open loft area was created on the south end. The remainder of the space has been left open. Little original ornamentation is evident within its original 1,200 square feet. The partitioning conceals the original wood tongue and groove wainscoting along the north wall. The original wainscoting, however, is visible along the remaining exterior walls. Above the wainscoting are the plaster walls with a sand texture finish, and simple wood crown molding.

Consistent with the depot, the ceiling is the original wood tongue and groove. Unlike the depot, there is no picture molding. The windows are single-light double hung sash, with simple wood trim. The door frames reflect the same simple wood trim. The flooring was originally concrete, and has been resurfaced with additional concrete.

Union Station Restaurant

Exterior Features

The Union Station restaurant was built in 1921 in keeping with the 1917 design of the adjacent depot of the Ocala Union Station. The structure was built on the station site in an area previously identified on the station drawings. Located along the Seaboard Air Line tracks, the structure is approximately 210 feet west of the depot

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on the north side of the Union Station complex, and within 26 feet of the track to the north (Photo 19). The contractors, George MacKay & Company, were charged with constructing a building which was in keeping with the main passenger depot, both on the exterior and with regard to certain finishes on the interior.

The Union Station restaurant is a long, relatively narrow, rectangular structure that reflects its original interior design which accommodated a long "lunch counter". The frame structure is on a concrete foundation with a brick veneer. Wood siding has been applied on the south elevation at the west end, and to the west elevation. The original brick facade remains beneath the siding. Built as a commercial structure, the building was originally designed with a storefront on the south (front) facade. The entry doors were to the immediate east of the storefront. The original entry doors, now covered with exterior siding, are paired wood doors with an eighteen inch high transom spanning the width of the entry. Two service doors are located on the north facade abutting the tracks. These are glass paneled doors, the upper portion glass with two vertical wood panels beneath. A 3'4" single-pane transom is above. The narrow east facade has a similar entrance on the north end. Brick detailing on the building includes brick flat arches above the door transoms.

The windows on the south (front) facade are single pivot windows. The sills are cast stone, recessed into the brick. A single, double hung, sash window is located at the southeast end of the front facade and one on the east facade. The north facade facing the tracks has a series of single double hung sash wood windows, with one pivot window at the west end of the facade. Brick is used ornamentally in the brick flat arches above the windows.

A sandstone belt course, like that of the passenger depot, wraps around the building and is incorporated into the sills of the windows. The cast sills of the pivot windows which occur above the belt course reflect the horizontal emphasis and use of "stone" as decorative elements.

The original chimneys are exterior on the south (front) facade and on the west (street side) elevation. Built with brick, the chimneys retain the corbelled design of the passenger depot and express office. They have been clad in wood siding.

The eaves, while oversized, are not as flared as those of the depot and express office. The soffit reflects the wood tongue and groove design consistent with that visible on the express office. The current roof is sheet metal, 5-V crimp.

Union Station Restaurant
Interior Features

The interior of the Union Station Restaurant is long and narrow. The 1,880 square foot space was designed to

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incorporate a substantial amount of natural light with a series of double hung sash windows along the north wall facing the Seaboard Air Line track. This placement of windows also allowed the patrons significant views of the incoming and departing trains.

The original plaster walls remain, with the exception of the front entry area which has been partitioned and paneled with wood. The original wood wainscoting with large, approximately four inch cap molding, exists along the plaster walls. Portions of the original concrete floor have been covered with vinyl tile.

In addition to the wood wainscoting, the ceiling is wood, tongue and groove, consistent with that of the other Union Station buildings. A simple wood crown molding exists at the ceiling. Vent openings or hatches of lattice wood exist along the east-west axis of the space. Each of the windows has simple wood trim and a stool. The doors have a simple wood trim, as do the transoms.

Passenger Loading Platform And Shed

The platform and shed were integral to the original Union Station project. The platform and shed form a "V" at the intersection of the tracks, with 250 feet of platform extending both north along the Seaboard Air Line track and eastward along the Atlantic Coast Line track (Photo 20). An overhang was constructed from the eaves of the depot at the north track entry to the platform shed to provide for weather protection. A similar extension is still visible on the eastern (track) side of the express office.

The shed is approximately 12 feet in total height. It is supported by a 7 5/8" diameter metal column with a 16" diameter cylindrical metal base which extends 18" in height. The shed itself was originally constructed of wood tongue and groove sheathing which has since been replaced by plywood. The shed is supported by large wood brackets, some of which are original and others are replacements (Photo 21). The brackets begin along the column approximately 9 feet from the platform and join with a horizontal member at the top of the column. Resting upon these structural supports are 4"x12" horizontal beams running the length of the shed, which in turn support the exposed rafters. The wood sheathing can be seen between the rafters.

The roof of the shed has a "V" shaped inverted slope, allowing water to run to the center. Alternating columns have been designed to serve as roof drains, connecting to a drain line under the concrete floor.

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**OCALA UNION STATION
Ocala, Marion County, Florida**

SUMMARY

The Ocala Union Station fulfills Criteria A and C at the local level for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in the areas of transportation and architecture. Under Criterion A, the Ocala Union Station complex (depot, express office, restaurant, and passenger loading platform) has significance in the area of Transportation as Ocala's only remaining historic railroad complex. Under Criterion C, the passenger depot has further significance as a good example of a Masonry Vernacular depot. The building represents the traditional, one-story, red brick railroad depot commonly built in the early 20th century used for combination passenger travel and shipment of freight. A one-story, wood frame observation tower enhances this typical depot. The station was built in 1917 in response to the public's continual call for a union station; one which would represent the town well to newcomers and persons traveling through Ocala. The station is an example of the authority that the State Railroad Commission had during the early 1900s, as it was the Commission which required the two major railroads, the Atlantic Coast Line Railway and the Seaboard Air Line Railway, to jointly construct and operate a union station, though each already had limited facilities within the city.

Ocala Union Station was designed by one of the two railroads ordered to construct it; the Seaboard Air Line Railway. The Ocala station, designed by railroad staff, was in keeping with other passenger depots of the period which served Seaboard Air Line patrons. The design is representative of a twentieth century railroad station as executed in a masonry material.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

City of Ocala - Early Transportation History

The town of Ocala was originally platted in March of 1846, within the County of Marion which was formed on March 14, 1844, only slightly preceding the designation of statehood for Florida on March 3, 1845. The City of Ocala was officially incorporated in 1868. The original plat of Ocala contained eighty blocks, ten from north to south, eight from east to west, with a center block reserved for the public square. During the very earliest years, Ocala was a trading center, attracting those engaged in business, but few persons were taking up residence within the town, preferring to establish homesites in the country and in areas conducive to acquiring large tracks of land for agriculture.

Increasing the access to Ocala, the new county seat, was viewed as essential. Initially, the effort was focused on establishing new roads which would connect with routes previously used by the army. As part of this advancement, an old road to the Ocklawaha River was reopened, at the crossing known as Sharpe's Ferry. This type of activity signaled the importance of water transportation for an inland city such as Ocala. The inland

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waterways were the main commercial and economic life lines for many interior cities. Steamboating provided access to Marion County via the Ocklawaha from the St. John's River. Poled barges were used to transport cotton and other agricultural products; logs and lumber were shipped via the river on barges and in rafts of logs. Steamboating was used in Florida as a vehicle for transporting supplies to troops during the Seminole War.

Due to its central location, Ocala and Marion County were strategic sites for the Confederacy during the Civil War. But the war itself had a very significant negative effect on the City of Ocala. By 1865, the population of the town dropped to barely 200 residents. The once stately plantations were abandoned, fields were deserted, and prices for cotton and staple crops had dropped sharply. Reconstruction would be long and hard. Measures to attract settlers back to Ocala included promotion of the fine citrus producing lands (where it was advertised that "only a very moderate capital" investment was necessary to enter the business). New hybrids were developed, and citrus became a major component of the economic base during the rebuilding years in the 1870's.

It was during the 1870's that the travel writers discovered the Ocklawaha and Silver Springs. Publicity about its unsurpassed beauty spread quickly and became a required stop for many visiting Florida, including Harriet Beecher Stowe; President Abraham Lincoln's widow, Mary Todd Lincoln; Thomas A. Edison; scientist John Le Conte; and southern poet, Sidney Lanier. Tourism was expanding due to the natural beauty of the area. It would be sometime later, however, before Ocala would benefit more directly from the reputation of the nearby natural wonders.

By 1880 Ocala had a population of 803, but by the end of the decade the city had grown to over 2,900 residents. By that time, Ocala was one of Florida's largest towns and a principal commercial center as well as a well recognized tourist resort within the peninsula. Beginning in the 1880's, the creation and extension of new railroads contributed substantially to the growth of Ocala.

Ocala Railroads

In 1879, a short rail line from Silver Springs to Ocala was put into operation using a locomotive. It was known as the Silver Springs, Ocala and Gulf Railroad. When it turned unprofitable, it was leased for a tramway transporting goods until the Peninsular Railroad began service with a branch to Silver Springs. In April 1881, The Peninsular (later known as the Florida Central and Peninsular, and eventually becoming part of the *Seaboard Air Line Railway* system) extended a branch to a site just northeast of the City of Ocala, with wagons providing the service directly into Ocala. The train was providing daily service. By June 3, however, rails had been laid into Ocala and a depot built. The presence of a railroad line directly into the City was met with great fanfare and celebration, including a big picnic and ball, despite the line's existence for only a work train.

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Ocala remained the terminus of the line until the summer of 1882 when Tropical Florida Railroad Company extended the line southward to Wildwood. That same year, a narrow gauge transportation line, the Florida Southern Railroad, was built to Ocala from Palatka and Gainesville via Rochelle. This line provided a second route for tourists and new homesteaders into Ocala, and served as a vehicle for the transport of products and raw resources from farms, groves, forests and mines. The Florida Southern Railroad extended its route southward to Leesburg and Brooksville. Florida Southern Railroad was to become a wide gauge line when it later became a part of the Plant System, which was eventually merged into the *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad* system.

In 1885 a short line (known as the "Dunnellon Short") was laid from Ocala, via Dunnellon to Homosassa near the Gulf by the Silver Springs, Ocala and Gulf Railroad. This line was to become a part of the Atlantic Coast Line system as well.

An early passenger station in Ocala was located at the southwest corner of Osceola and Fourth Streets. This depot was later moved adjacent to the Ocala House and served the Florida Southern Railroad.

The first depot of the "Dunnellon Short" was along what is now the Seaboard Air Line tracks where today's Pine Street highway passes over. This depot was abandoned when the line joined the Plant System. The Plant System operated its station on Osceola Street between Silver Springs Boulevard and Broadway.

Historical Development of the Ocala Union Station

It was the Ocala Board of Trade which began soliciting opinions from its members and the citizens at large as to whether a union passenger station were desired, and if so, what was the preferred location. The Ocala Weekly Star newspaper was strongly behind the idea and wrote in its favor. The arguments put forward in support included the station's ability to increase convenience to the town folks, providing it were properly located, adding "but it would impress all travelers, either stopping or passing through, with a better opinion of the importance and advantages of the city and section." The year was 1912 and the attainment of a union station lay in the hands of the State Railroad Commission. At the time, it was said that a Railroad Commissioner was in favor of the idea but perceived that the people of Ocala could not agree on the location for such a station.

Several sites were discussed: The existing location of the Atlantic Coast Line passenger station was under consideration. It was said to be more convenient to about two-thirds of the people than any other place in the city could be. It was located in the business center, and moreover, it was close to the homes of nearly all the large and increasing number of people who had homes at Lake Weir. The feeling at the time was that the Atlantic Coast Line would probably retain its existing passenger station indefinitely.

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The crossing of the Seaboard and Atlantic Coast lines was thought to be a likely location. However, according to the Ocala Weekly Star, "crossings are the worst possible place for a station of this sort." It was added that this particular crossing was at the site of the Seaboard freight yard and at the bottom of an Atlantic Coast Line grade, further rejecting the crossing site from consideration, in their point of view.

Two other sites were prominently mentioned at the time. One was at the north end of the City, which was distant from the center of the population. The second was at the Seaboard crossing at what was then Exposition Street. Limitations associated with this site were the requirement that the Atlantic Coast Line would not reach it without building half a mile of track, which would require the condemnation of a large amount of property; a prospect which was not likely to be well received by the railroad.

It was editorialized by the Ocala Weekly Star that the best site for a union passenger station would be between Magnolia and Main streets. The area had vacant ground which was likely to be acquired at a fair price and the railroads could lay their tracks on "equal terms". "It would be in a good and imposing portion of the city, would be almost as convenient to the mass of the people as the Coast Line station now is, and more so than the Seaboard." The newspaper was clear in its views that the station should not be built in a "thinly settled portion of the city. Any portion of the town where the station is located will soon be thickly settled, and there will be crowds around it when the trains are due from the day it is opened. Safety against trains lies in watchmen and gates and not in futile attempts to dodge the center of population. Let us have a union station, and let us have it in a good-looking and convenient portion of the city, instead of putting it where the citizens will have to pay the back men a month's lodge dues for every round trip to the metropolis or the lake."

It was not until October 13, 1914 that the Railroad Commissioners of the State of Florida held a public hearing in Ocala to discuss the request for a Union Passenger Depot. The Railroad Commission notified the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company, the Seaboard Air Line Railroad Company, the Ocala Northern Railroad Company and the Ocala & Southwestern Railroad Company of the hearing. The content of the hearing was to "consider the said matter and to consider and determine whether or not they ought to require you, or any two or more of you to join in the erection of a joint passenger station or union depot, and to consider and determine, the site, dimensions and arrangements of such joint passenger station or union depot and with what conveniences and facilities the same ought to be equipped". The notice was issued by the sitting chairman of the Railroad Commission, R. Hudson Burr.

The hearing was held as scheduled. Included in the opening remarks of Chairman Burr was a statement that, while the Commission would give careful attention to the request and act on that request at the earliest moment, the Commission was "not in favor of ordering it done just at this time, when the financial condition of the railroads are in such an unsatisfactory condition, and, in fact, not till ample time had elapsed for these conditions

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to have been overcome." The Chairman reiterated that the Commission had recently ordered many improvements to be made by the railroads, and that the railroads were applying for leave to discontinue certain pieces of work but were being forced to continue.

Members of the community as represented by the Ocala Board of Trade's citizens committee of ten, pleaded their case. It was noted that within a two hour period, starting at noon each day, seven trains arrived, and two more were to be added to the schedule by the following week. Counting departures, the numbers were doubled. The transfer of the passengers and their baggage from one depot to another was cited as an undertaking, involving much expense and in many cases, the connections could not be made in time when a train was late. Persons would be required to remain over in the city on those occasions. Additionally, the heavy transfer of mail from one station to the other was noted as a problem which could be prevented with the new union station.

Mention was made of the limited size of the Atlantic Coast Line depot, where sometimes 100 passengers were to be accommodated in a facility sized for a quarter of that number. Policing two stations was cited by the city attorney, Frederic R. Hocker, as an added expense. A man had to be present at both due to the arrival and departures of the trains being so closely timed at the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Railroad stations.

Comments were made on the conditions of the two stations, with neither depot felt to be of adequate quality. The Seaboard Air Line was particularly faulted for being "almost rotten and entirely inadequate from every standpoint."

It was at this public hearing that a Mr. Brand, speaking for Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, stated that "if forced into a union depot his road would not maintain the present depot also as had been asserted." Both Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line cited declining business in both passenger and freight departments. Seaboard Air Line's spokesman, Mr. Parsons indicated "thousands of cars of freight less were moving each day than a few months" earlier, and "his road was handling no phosphate and little lumber and naval stores in Florida, where formerly these were its greatest source of tonnage."

Comments from the representatives of the two local railroads confirmed their dire financial straits. The Ocala Northern was being operated by the federal courts and had no funds for a union station. The Ocala & Southwestern stated it was only operating a freight schedule, and that was at a loss.

The outcome of the public hearing was known by November 20, 1914, when a public notice was issued of the State Commission's orders to have the railroads build the Union Station. The notice declared that the station was "to be located at the crossing of the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railways, near the present Seaboard depot." In order to give the railroads ample time to provide the facilities, the order did not require the

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work to begin until November 1, 1915, to be completed within six months thereafter.

A month before construction was to have begun by order of the Railroad Commission, the railroads entering Ocala asked for a six month delay. Before the local Board of Trade, Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line cited they were running more trains per day than they did in prosperous years, but were doing half the passenger business of two years earlier, and the freight business was lighter. In recognizing the hardships of the railroads, the businessmen present were agreeable to the delay. However, they requested a few concessions associated with the upgrade of local crossings as a small contribution to the people of Ocala. The Board of Trade voted to support the railroads' request before the Railroad Commission for an extension on the start of construction until May of 1916.

The Railroad Commission granted the request from Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railways for a six month extension on the construction of the Ocala Union Passenger Station. This revised the new construction date to be "on or before the 1st day of May, 1916 and that the same shall be completed and ready for use within six months thereafter." In no other respect was the Railroad Commission's "Order Number 470 to be altered or amended." It was clear that Ocala was being affected by the economic difficulties of the times.

In November 1915, the Ocala Weekly Star reported that the Railroad Commission had purchased or secured an option on the land which was to be the site of the Union Station. The site was to be just *north* of the Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line crossing. The Star, while stating its preference for a different site was ready for the construction of the station to begin.

By March 1916, The Star was reporting that the Seaboard main line would be running along the north side of the station, placing the station on the *south side* of the track and thus making it "more convenient for the town people, giving the majority access to the railroad without first crossing the Seaboard tracks." It was also reporting that the Uptown Station of Atlantic Coast Line may not be abolished. However, by April of that same year, the evidence showed the station was under construction on the *north side* of the Seaboard tracks. The Star wrote bitterly about the location being on the wrong side of the track from the main part of the city and that the proposed station was "about 50 per cent of the station Ocala should have."

Though work had commenced on the site to the north of the Seaboard track, subsequent action was taken. By June 1917, the Ocala Weekly Star reported that the deed to the property on the *south side* of the tracks, the H.B. Masters Company warehouse site, had been transferred to Atlantic Coast Line and the Seaboard Air Line Railroads. Following the demolition of the Master's warehouse, portions of the structure which had been constructed on the north side were being dismantled and rebuilt as part of the station complex on the south side. The new structure was being expanded beyond that of the structure which had stood idle for a year. Once

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begun, construction proceeded at a rapid pace. The Ocala Union Station was completed in December of 1917.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Significance of the Ocala Union Station

The railroad played a critical role in the historical development of the City of Ocala. Being an inland city, it depended upon train travel as a major source of contact with places beyond. The Ocala Union Passenger Station provided a visible and favorable impression to not only the new comers detraining at the station, but to those passing through on the train as well. Union Station also was the telegraph office for the City.

The Ocala Union Station was conceived of during an economic period which was difficult for the country and for the railroad industry, as well. Though the need for a union station was supported by the town's people, the two major railroads, the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railways which were to fund the station, were resistant. Because the railroads were private, for-profit entities, they were regulated by the State Railroad Commission. The fate of the railroads relative to the requirements for upgrading or constructing new facilities lay partially in the hands of these Commissioners. The country and the railroads had been rebuilding since the Civil War less than fifty years earlier. Now the country was facing a new war, World War I. The economic strains were being felt before the official entry of the United States into the war. The Railroad Commissioners were mindful of these financial hardships, as evidenced by their intent not to require immediate action on behalf of the railroads to construct yet another union station. Clearly, economic factors played a part in the delay of the construction of the station. Even the initial design was scaled back before being altered for the final version.

The Ocala Union Station was the product of two of the country's, and certainly two of the State of Florida's, foremost railroads, the Seaboard Air Line Railway and the Atlantic Coast Line Railway. These railroads were primary players in the opening up of Florida to development and for tourism. The Station was built during the administration of John Skelton as president of Seaboard Air Line, and it was he who was responsible for the great expansion of the company following the Civil War years, and its national growth. Reflective of the status that Ocala held at the time, the Plant system of railroads even purchased a luxury hotel, the Ocala Hotel, to serve patrons within the city. Though these railroads were certainly competitors in many regards, they jointly funded the construction of the Ocala Union Station. Under the terms of the joint contract, the railroads would alternate management of the station, while still sharing expenses. The Station became the passenger station for the City, replacing the previous stations of the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railways.

The Union Station's role in the history of Ocala includes its associations during war times. Referred to at times as the union station plaza, the depot saw numerous "troop trains" come through with soldiers bound for duty

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during World War I. During World War II the station was possibly the busiest site in town, transporting soldiers to training camps. The period of World War II brought particularly high use of the trains and the depot. Ocala was viewed as a good respite site for soldiers training at Camp Blanding, and out of necessity, the public turned more extensively to train travel during this period, as cars, tires and gasoline was being rationed.

Historical Significance of Union Station Restaurant

The Union Station Restaurant was built in 1921, four years after the Union Station Depot and Express Office were completed. The restaurant was constructed on the Union Station site in a location which had been designated on original Seaboard architectural drawings for an unspecified structure.

This period of the early 1920's was the beginning of the economic "boom" that would come to full force in Florida by 1925. Temple & Davidson were proprietors of a predecessor restaurant at the station, the American Cafe, which was located along the Atlantic Coast Line tracks a few yards from the station. Because of the great success of that venture, the owners began the construction of a new restaurant which would become the Union Station Restaurant.

In June 1921, Mr. W.M. Davidson purchased the half interest of his partner, Mr. M.H. Temple, in the station restaurant. It was the favorable impressions the newcomer from High Springs, Mr. "Shorty" Davidson, had of Ocala and its possibilities that persuaded him to purchase the American Cafe and the new Union Station Restaurant which was still under construction. Upon its completion, Mr. Davidson moved the popular American Cafe into the new building, renaming it the Union Station Restaurant.

As a restaurant catering to the traveling public, waiters and waitresses during the 1920s wearing sailor caps bustled along the side of the train, rapidly taking orders from train passengers, and quickly returning with the completed order. It was considered to be a particularly popular place to spend time. The structure remained the Union Station Restaurant until after World War II.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Context

The Ocala Union Station was designed by the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company. Built in 1917, the original plans were begun as early as 1915. The 1921 Union Station Restaurant was built in keeping with the design of the Depot and Express Office. The style of the station was consistent with other railroad depots of the period, in particular other Seaboard Airline Railway depots.

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Architectural Significance

The plans for the Ocala Union Station Office were provided by the Office of Engineer of Buildings of Seaboard Air Line Railways in Richmond, Virginia. A Mr. Williamson was listed as the architect. Due to the building's construction being the responsibility of Seaboard Air Line Railway, it was not surprising that the project contractor and supervisor was Mr. A.M. Walkup who was also of Richmond. The Union Station Restaurant, as a local project, was contracted to George MacKay & Company of Ocala.

The Ocala Union Station is similar to other Seaboard Air Line depots of the period. Prominent in the profile of the Ocala Union Station is the pentagonal telegraph tower. The Union Station tower was not only an aesthetic addition, but also one with critical functionality. The tower, which contained the switching gear for the crossing, is a second story element which added to the height of the otherwise one-story structure. This added height had the benefit of allowing visual verification of the signals received from approaching trains and confirming when to switch the tracks. The station also served as the telegraph office. The telegraph receptors remain on the north face of the tower.

The pentagonal tower is covered with a wood shake finish material. This contrasts with the red brick veneer of the remainder of the structure. The windows of the tower also contrast with those of the main body of the structure, the tower windows are multi-lights over a single pane while the double hung windows of the first story are one over one lights.

The brick veneer of the main body of both the depot and the Express Office is broken by the use of cast stone in a belt course at the window sill height. One of the most distinctive architectural elements of the Ocala Union Station Depot and Express Office are the over-sized flared eaves with hip and ridge rolls.

Contributing to the importance of the Ocala Union Station as a statement of public architecture of the period are the separate waiting rooms which were constructed. The main, larger waiting room was prominently located at the corner of the crossing, facing both the Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line tracks. This main waiting room was for "whites" only. The second and smaller waiting room was labeled the "colored" waiting room, meant to service African American patrons. While appointments within the room were generally the same, the size was considerably smaller and the restroom facilities of a lesser accommodation in the secondary waiting room. This remnant of the past reminds one of the earlier days of segregation.

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Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Ocala Union Station complex incorporate the original historic structures: These are the Depot, Express Office, passenger loading platform/shed adjacent to the railroad tracks of both the former Seaboard Air Line Railway and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and the Union Station Restaurant. Incorporated within the boundaries are the driveways and vehicle circulation and parking areas. A map of the proposed Ocala Union Station boundaries is attached.

The property is located at 531 North East First Avenue, Ocala, Florida: Township 15S, Range 22E, Section 17 (Refer to USGS map). The approximate size of the site is 2.97 acres.

Boundary Justification

A survey of the Ocala Union Station complex revealed a historic 1917 railroad passenger station depot, express office and passenger loading platform and a 1921 station restaurant built in keeping with the design details of the original depot. The boundaries for the National Register nomination have been drawn to incorporate each of these contributing elements and the vehicular circulation areas which were original to the Union Station site. Collectively these areas create a historic site. The absence of any of these elements would be to the detriment of the whole site.

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1. Ocala Union Station (Complex)
2. 531 North East First Avenue
3. Ocala, Marion County, Florida
4. L.L. Parks
5. 1995
6. City of Ocala, Planning Department
7. View of west facade of depot, passenger shed, and express office, camera facing east
8. Photograph 1 of 20

Items 1 through 6 above pertain to all photographs listed below, unless otherwise indicated.

7. View of north facade of depot, tower, and shed ,camera facing southeast
8. Photograph 2 of 20

7. View of east facade tower, and shed, camera facing west
8. Photograph 3 of 20

7. View of south facade of depot and express office, camera facing north
8. Photograph 4 of 20

7. View of depot entrance and exterior finish detail, camera facing north
8. Photograph 5 of 20

7. View of belt course, windows, and shed brackets, camera facing south
8. Photograph 6 of 20

7. View of northeast corner of the depot at track intersection, camera facing southwest
8. Photograph 7 of 20

7. View of tower, windows, and exterior finishes camera facing southwest
8. Photograph 8 of 20

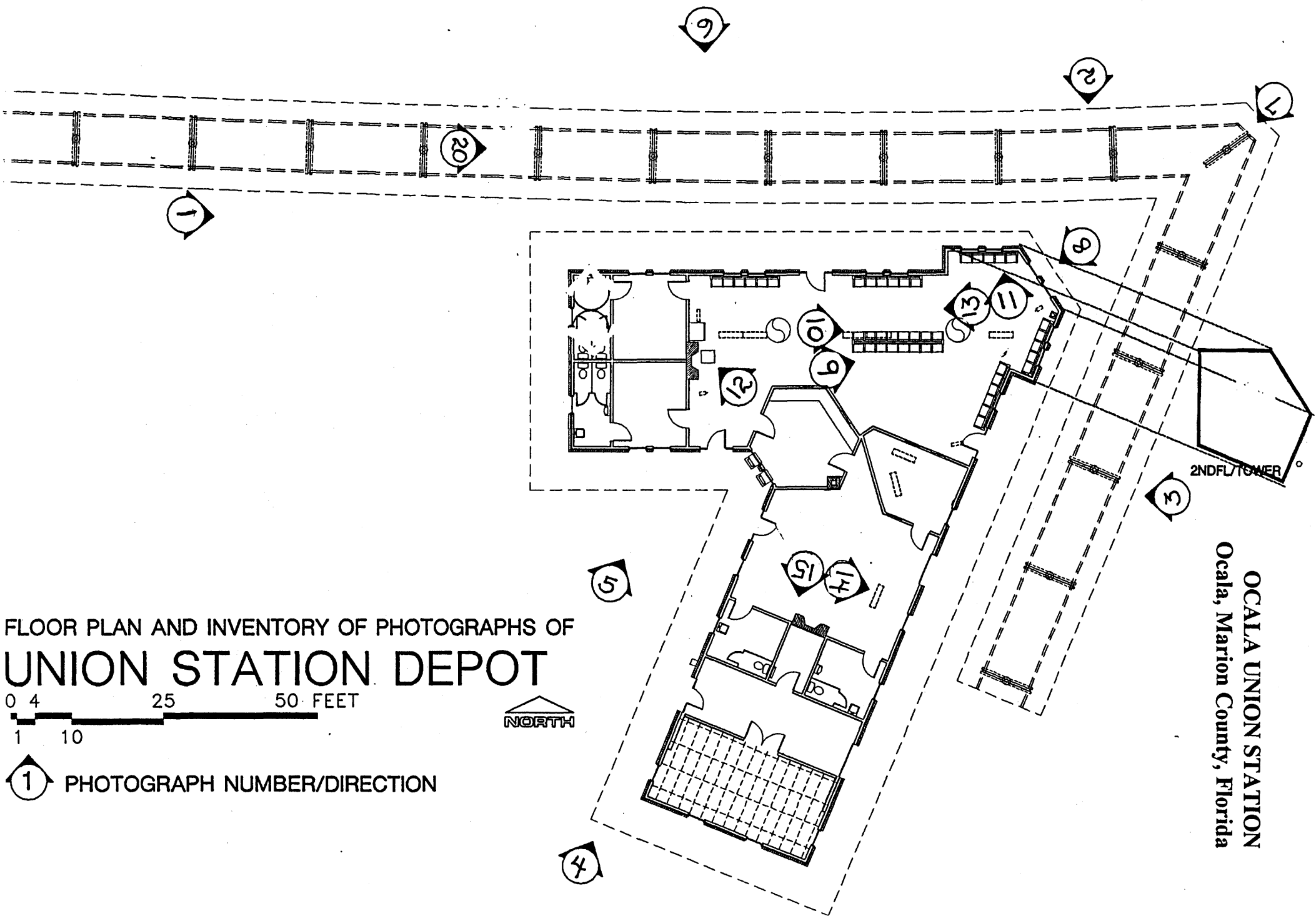
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7. View of depot interior floor, walls and ceiling, camera facing northeast
8. Photograph 9 of 20
7. View of, waiting room seating, camera facing northeast
8. Photograph 10 of 20
7. View of east wall of main waiting room seating, camera facing east
8. Photograph 11 of 20
7. View of close-up of fireplace, camera facing southwest
8. Photograph 12 of 20
7. View of south half of depot main waiting room, camera facing south
8. Photograph 13 of 20
7. View of east end of depot's secondary waiting room, camera facing east
8. Photograph 14 of 20
7. View of south wall in secondary waiting room, camera facing south
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7. View of front facade (west) of express office, camera facing east
8. Photograph 16 of 20
7. View of east and north facades of express office, camera facing southwest
8. Photograph 17 of 20
7. View of east facade of express office, camera facing west
8. Photograph 18 of 20
7. View of south facade of Union Station restaurant, camera facing northeast
8. Photograph 19 of 20
7. View of passenger shed brackets, camera facing northeast
8. Photograph 20 of 20



FLOOR PLAN AND INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF
UNION STATION DEPOT

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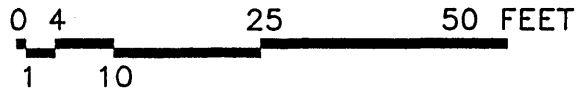


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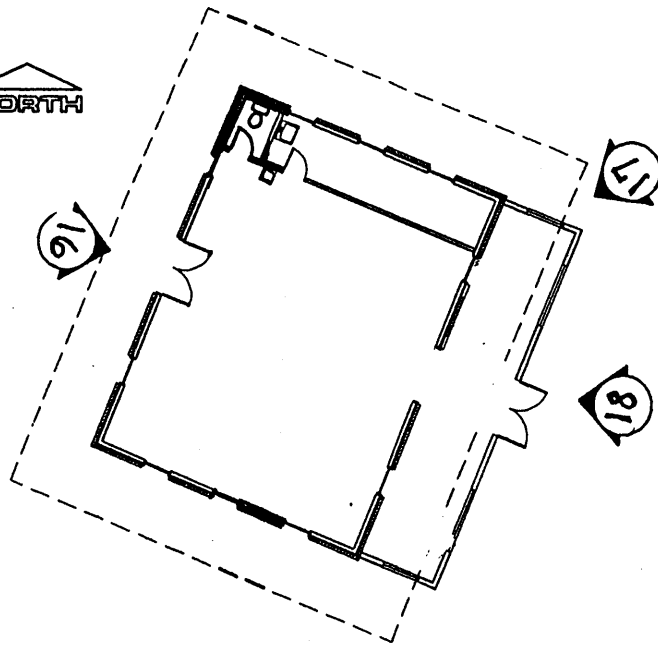
OCALA UNION STATION
 Ocala, Marion County, Florida

2ND FL/TOWER

FLOOR PLAN AND INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF
EXPRESS OFFICE



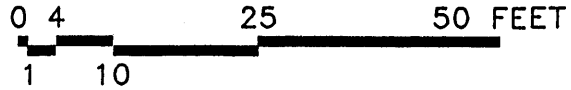
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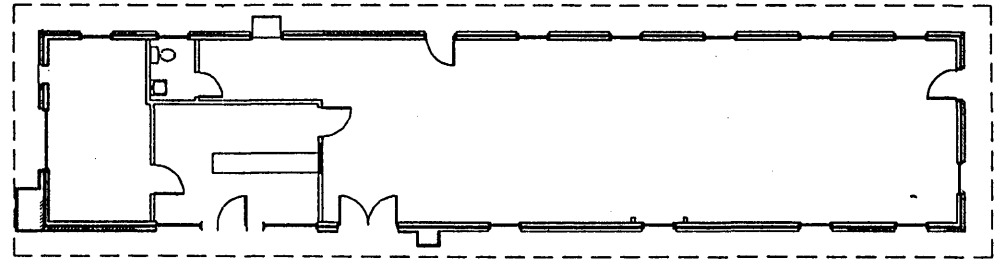
OCALA UNION STATION
Ocala, Marion County, Florida

OCALA UNION STATION
Ocala, Marion County, Florida

FLOOR PLAN AND INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF
UNION STATION RESTAURANT







① PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER/DIRECTION



①

OCALA RAILROAD DEPOT BOUNDARY SURVEY

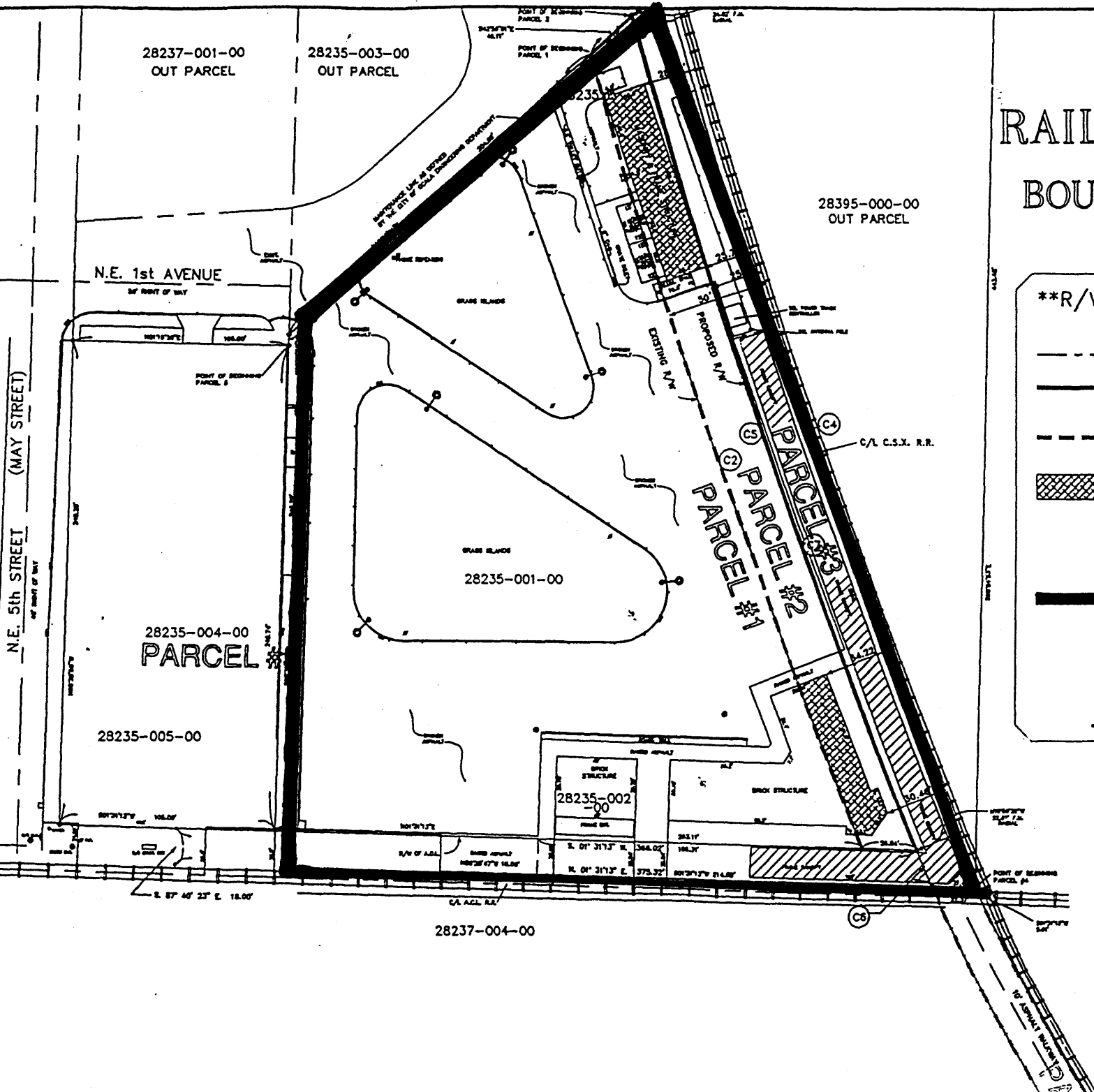
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-  C/L C.S.X. RAILROAD
-  PROPOSED 25' C.S.X. R/W PARCEL 3
-  EXISTING 50' C.S.X. R/W PARCEL 2
-  BUILDING STRUCTURES LOCATED BETWEEN THE EXISTING 50' R/W AND THE PROPOSED 25' R/W

— SITE BOUNDARY

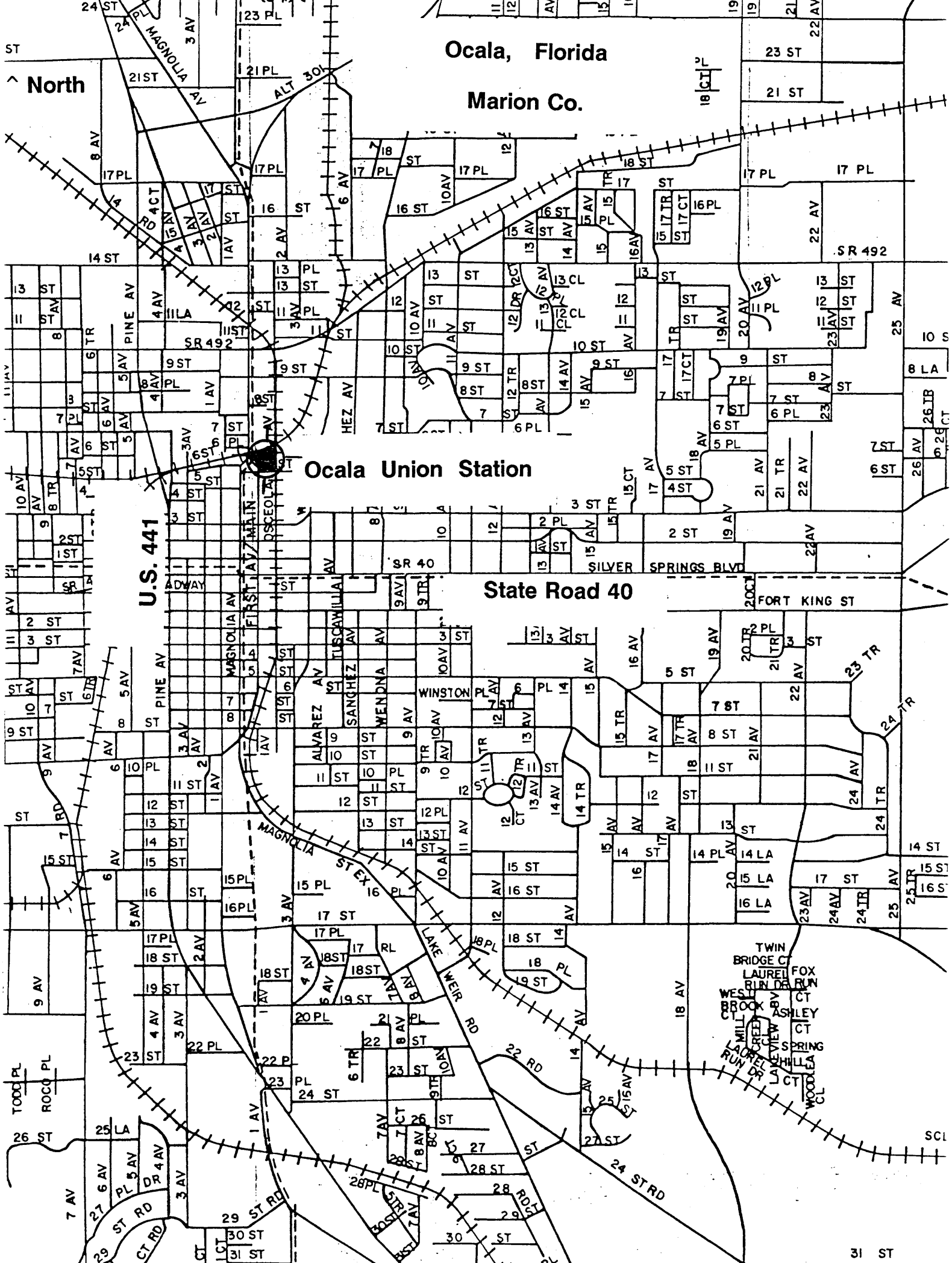
R/W Graphics Prepared by:
**OCALA/MARION COUNTY
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

FILENAME: NEWDEPOT.DWG
DATE: 05.15.96; REVISED 11.11.96
***R/W graphics for illustrative purposes only.*



Ocala, Florida

Marion Co.



North

Ocala Union Station

U.S. 441

State Road 40

TWIN
BRIDGE C
LAUREL
FOX
RIVER
DAVE
WESLEY
CREEK
LAUREL
VIEW
SUN
SPRING
WOOD
CL

31 ST