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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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REGISTER

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 an 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.

historic name SPARTA NASHVILLE, CHATTANOOGA, AND ST. LOUIS RAILRO other names/site number N/A 2. Location street & number DEPOT STREET city or town SPARTA state TENNESSEE code TN county WHITE cod 3. State/Federal Agency Certification As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certification	N⊄Anot for publication NZAvicInity de 185 zip code 38583_
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certi	by that this Ty nomination
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering propertion of the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered in nationally statewide plocally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.) Signature of certifying official/Title Date Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historiate of Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuations)	es In the National Register of In my opinion, the property ered significant rical Commission
Signature of certifying official/Title Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
4. National Fair Service Certification	opal Register Date of Action

Nashville, Chattanooga Name of Property	, and St. Louis Depot	Wh <u>ite Co</u> County and	unty, Tennessee State	
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Res (Do not include pre	sources within Property viously listed resources in the	/ e count.)
🖾 private	Ď building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing ·	
public-local	☐ district	1	1	buildings
public-Statepublic-Federal	☐ site ☐ structure	0	0	sites
Es public r outra.	□ object	0	0	structure
		0	0	objects
		1	1	Total
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from	instructions)	
TRANSPORTATION/Train	Depot	TRADE/Warehou	ıse	
		-		
7. Description				
Architectural Classification		Materials		
(Enter categories from instructions)		(Enter categories from	instructions)	

foundation <u>Concrete</u>
walls Brick; Stucco

roof __Asphalt

other Wood; Iron

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets

OTHER: Combination Depot

shville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Depot	White County, TN
Name of Property	County and State
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of Property 1.5 acres	Sparta 332NW
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1 1 6 6 3 7 8 6 0 3 9 7 7 8 8 0 Northing	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 Lynn Niedermeier and Carroll Van West	
organization Center for Historic Preservation	date June 10, 1992
street & number Box 80, MTSU	telephone 615-898-2947
city or town <u>Murfreesboro</u>	· TN 27122
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form:	
Continuation Sheets	•
Maps	
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the pr	roperty's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having	g large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs	
Representative black and white photographs of the pro-	roperty.
Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) Property Owner	
Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) Property Owner	
Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) Property Owner Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)	
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 Tom Crosslin street & number _301 Morningside Drive city or town _Sparta	telephone 615-836-3383

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Depot Sparta, White County, TN

Architectural Description

The Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot is located on the south side of Depot Street, in a commercial and light manufacturing district one block west of Bockman Way, at the terminus of the railroad tracks in Sparta, Tennessee. Built in 1917 for the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad, the property is a good example of a standard-design "combination depot," so called because the single structure acted as passenger shelter, freight house and business office.

The one-story building rests on a concrete foundation has a rectangular shape approximately 30 feet by 140 feet. passenger and business section at the east elevation is slightly wider and has a slightly higher roof line than the freight section at the west elevation. The exterior walls are stucco and red brick, with wooden doors and wooden sash window frames of two over two lights with approximately 60 percent original glass. Red bricks are used as a stylized shouldered architrave to surround and define the window and door openings of the passenger section of the depot before wrapping around the freight section as a decorative band of ten bricks in width. Three foot high iron guards protect the corners of the building. medium-pitch hip roof is covered with rag-based red asphalt shingles and has an overhang of approximately five feet. for decorative brackets supporting the open gable of a square bay window projecting south from the business office, the roof eaves are unbracketed. A concrete loading dock extends from the west elevation of the building, and a concrete ramp and extend along the track (south) facade of the freight room and some 50 feet beyond its west elevation.

A few months after purchasing the property in 1985, the current owner took steps to restore the exterior to its historic appearance. Most of the roof covering had disappeared, and after some research, he replaced it with a traditional red roof of asphalt shingles. He painted the stucco white and replaced broken windows with clear or frosted glass, where necessary, to match existing windows. Seeking to match as closely as possible the "company colors" of a Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis

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Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Depot Sparta, White Co., TN

Railroad depot, he painted the window frames and freight doors green, and the roof eaves yellow. For reasons of security, and to protect the building from trucks using Depot Street, the owner erected a chain link fence around the site and installed fourfoot-high concrete pillars in the sidewalk along the street (north) facade of the depot.

The passenger waiting room, located at the east elevation of the building, is accessible through a door, flanked by a window on each side, in the middle of the east elevation. Another door, flanked by a window on each side, opens on the track facade of the waiting room to allow access to the tracks. The north wall of the waiting room has three windows.

A ticket window in the middle of the west wall of the passenger waiting room looks into the main business office. Opposite the business office, on the north elevation of the building, is a trainmen's room flanked on each side by a lavatory and shower room. Access to the trainmen's room is through an interior door connecting it with the business office, and an exterior door in the street (north) facade.

A short hallway leads from the business office area past a small records room on the street facade of the building. This room has one window and is accessible from the hallway through an interior door.

The passenger and business sections of the depot described above have plastered interior walls and ceilings, and concrete floors.

The two sections of the freight area in the west section of the building consist, first, of a baggage room to the west of the business and records offices. Sliding doors in the street and track facades open into the baggage room, and each has a window to its west side. The baggage room has plastered walls, a concrete floor, and a high exposed-beam ceiling. The outside concrete ramp leading up to the freight platform begins just west of the south baggage room door.

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Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Depot Sparta, White Co., TN

The second primary area, a large freight room, is accessible through two sliding doors in the track facade opening onto the freight platform, and two elevated sliding doors in the street facade. At the east end of the freight room are two windows in the track facade, and one "full-length" window (two upper and two lower windows) in the street facade. This window provides light for a staircase, near an exposed chimney, leading down to the coal cellar. Another sliding door opens from the freight room onto the concrete loading dock at the extreme west elevation of the building. The freight room has a concrete floor with a built-in freight scale, unfinished brick walls and a high exposed-beam ceiling.

The interior of the building retains its original functional character. No alterations have been made to the interior and, aside from deterioration of some of the plaster, it remains in good condition.

A frame outbuilding, with galvanized metal siding and roof, erected about 1960 and used for storage, stands south of the depot across two sets of tracks. It has been painted a muted yellow color by the owner. It is a non-contributing (NC) property due to the date of construction.

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Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot Sparta, White County, TN

8. Significance

The Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot, constructed in 1917, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its local significance in transportation, and Criterion C, as a locally significant example of standardized, functional railroad architecture in Sparta, Tennessee.

The depot is associated with a pattern of railroad growth and monopoly that shaped economic and settlement trends in the southeast during the early twentieth century. Between 1902 and 1921, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, the parent company of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis, expanded its miles of track from 3,327 to 5,041 miles, representing an increase of 57 per cent. Some of this new construction took place in White County as the railroad extended its 1884 Bon Air spur line to the new coal towns of Clifty, DeRossett, and Ravenscroft near the border between White and Cumberland counties in an attempt to better exploit coal and mineral ores. As historian Maury Klein observed in his study of the Louisville and Nashville, "it is significant that none of the new trackage tried to extend the L & N's territory but rather sought to exploit the existing territory more fully. What might be called a more mature phase of interterritorial strategy had arisen and was flourishing . . . [in the] cultivation of the sources of coal and ore traffic." (pp. 397-98)

White County was a significant producer of raw materials, especially coal and timber products, during the early twentieth century. After the coal company built an underground shaft at Bon Air in 1902, that single mine produced an average daily tonnage of 350 tons for the next twenty years. The adjacent Eastland Mine also opened in 1902 and produced an average of 350 tons daily for the next thirty years. Sparta was home to the Sparta Spoke Factory, one of the largest such operations in the country.

Demand for raw materials increased dramatically during the First World War and great amounts of Cumberland Plateau coal and timber was shipped out of Sparta. Railroad historian Kincaid A. Herr, in his book The Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 1850-1959, concluded that for the line in general, "it was a time of great activity and prosperity [profits jumped over 300%] and the L & N's

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physical plant was put to it to keep pace with the demands made upon it." (p. 132) Even local chroniclers noted the massive amounts of raw materials passing through Sparta during the war years. White County walnut was especially in demand for use in gun stocks, first in orders from Allied nations and then, in late 1917 and 1918, for the U. S. Army.

Due to the increased traffic and demand for railroad services, the company in 1917 decided to replace the original frame Sparta depot, which housed only an office and freight room, with a new much larger brick depot. The new depot reflected the importance of the railroad, and the county's coal mines, to the economic life of Sparta. As the town's gateway, it symbolized local prosperity and confidence at the height of the wartime boom in demand for raw materials. Moreover, the depot served Sparta itself as the town's major contact point between the national corporate economy and the local market economy.

The Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot also embodies a trend in early twentieth century railroad architecture that balanced the cost-saving strategies of the railroads against the demands of a more sophisticated local community. The design achieved economy, functionalism and comfort under one roof. waiting rooms accommodated more passenger traffic on the line, while the spacious freight room and loading platforms handled the increased volume of timber, mineral, and agricultural products being shipped out of the county. Although a standardized design lay at the heart of the depot's plan, its roof line and minimal Craftsman-style exterior detailing reflected the use of minor architectural features and varying roof shapes to give uniqueness to the building. Particularly distinctive were the wide, overhanging, unbracketed roof eaves. The square bay window of the business office also helped to add variety to the form while the functionally-placed windows on east and west elevations, along with the decorative band of bricks, added rhythm to the building's appearance.

White County possesses one other extant depot, the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot at Quebeck, along U. S. Highway 70S southwest of Sparta. This small board and batten frame depot with decorative brakets belongs to an earlier period of railroad expansion, that of the 1880s when the railroad built its initial branch line between McMinnville and Sparta. The Quebeck depot's board and batten styling belongs to the Victorian era of architecture. Its small size devoted largely to a passenger

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waiting room speaks to the comparatively minor role that Quebeck played in the industrial and commercial history of White County.

The Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot is associated with and physically represents the peak of railroad influence in White County during the early twentieth century. Built in 1917, at the peak of wartime demand for local raw materials, the depot continued to serve the community as primary access to national transportation corridors until Depression era. Its brick construction spoke of its importance to the town and to the profits of the railroad. Its functional, Craftsman-influenced design reflected national trends in railroad architecture in the 1920s. But within a decade of the depot's construction, the popularity of the automobile, the building of the Memphis to Bristol Highway, the railroad's use of more centralized traffic management at its Tullahoma hub, and the closing of the Bon Air coal operations in the mid-1930s had combined together to lessen the transportation significance of the spur line from Sparta to Tullahoma. This small-town depot, like many others across the country, entered a period of decline. railroad abandoned the line approximately fifteen years ago. Tricounty Railroad Authority has since purchased and opened a line from Tullahoma to Sparta, but elected not to purchase the Sparta In 1985 the current owner purchased the depot and a surrounding 1.5 acre site from Seaboard System Railroad, successor to the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad. It is now used as storage for his furniture liquidation business.

The property also contains a small gable-roof rectangular outbuilding, constructed by the railroad for additional storage in 1960. It is a non-contributing (NC) building due to its date of construction.

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Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot Sparta, White County, TN

9. Bibliographic References

Crosslin, Tom. Oral Interview with Lynn Niedermeier, March 1992.

Goodspeed, Westin, et. al. <u>History of Tennessee</u>. Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887.

Herr, Kincaid A. <u>The Louisville and Nashville Railroad: 1850-1959</u>. Louisville: L.& N Magazine, 1959.

Klein, Maury. <u>History of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad</u>. New York: Macmillan, 1972.

O'Neal, Michael Ray. "Historic Railroad Depot Architecture in Middle Tennessee." M. A. thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 1983.

Seals, Monroe. <u>History of White County</u>. N. p., 1935.

Sparta Expositor, January 1902, Souvenir supplement.

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10. Verbal Boundary Description

Map 59-A, Block "B," Parcel 1, White County Tax Assessor's Office, Sparta, Tennessee.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the Sparta depot and all surrounding land currently under single ownership.

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Photographs

Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad Depot Depot Street Sparta, White County, Tennessee

Photographs by: Lynn Niedermeier and Carroll Van West

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

DMB Approve Inc. IVI----

Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Date: February and May, 1992

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

Nashville, TN

South (track) facade, facing west #1 of 12

South (track) facade, facing west #2 of 12

East elevation, facing west #3 of 12

North (street) facade, facing east #4 of 12

West elevation, facing east #5 of 12

Outbuilding, south of depot, north elevation, facing southwest #6 of 12

Original steam radiator, chair rail, passenger waiting room, facing northeast #7 of 12

Original bench, passenger waiting room, facing southeast #8 of 12

North wall, baggage room, facing northeast #9 of 12

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Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Depot Sparta, White County, TN

Ceiling beams and north wall, freight room, facing north #10 of 12

Freight door, freight room, facing east #11 of 12

Ceiling beams, freight room, facing north #12 of 12





