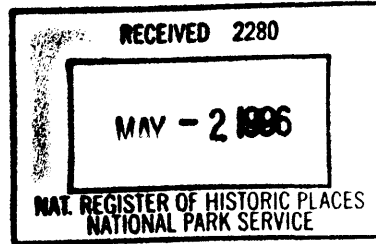


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations 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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Medford Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot (preferred)
other names/site number Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Station; Medford Depot

2. Location

street & number 147 North Front Street N/A not for publication
city or town Medford N/A vicinity
state Oregon code OR county Jackson code 029 zip code 97501

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]
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date April 22, 1996
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State of 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.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain): _____

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper
Edson H. Beall
Date of Action 6/3/96
Entered in the National Register

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Ownership options: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- Category options: building(s), district, site, structure, object

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

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: Contributing 1, Total 1.

Name of related multiple property listing (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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related; depot

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Craftsman

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, walls brick, stucco, roof terra cotta (tile), other stone: granite

Narrative Description

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 1

Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Constructed in 1910, the Medford Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot is a one story hipped-roof structure built of bearing masonry with brick and stucco exterior features. The depot building, the single best 20th century railroad related resource in Jackson County, remains on its original site in the center of the Medford commercial core and constitutes a dominant visual feature within the downtown of the city.

LOCATION:

The Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is located at 147 North Front Street, facing Front Street on the east and the railroad right-of-way to the west, within the central business district of Medford., seat of Jackson County, Oregon. A paved parking area to the north is included in the nominated parcel, an unnumbered portion of the original railroad right-of-way as shown on Jackson County Assessor's Map 37S-2W-25AA.¹ The property is entirely level with the exception of a small embankment rising from Front Street and is approximately 78 feet wide and 305 feet long. The Depot sits mid-way between 4th and 6th streets, at the head of East Fifth Street.

The Depot area is one of commercial use, predominately masonry structures dating from the early 20th century. Nearby buildings of historic significance include the Barnum Hotel (216 North Front, built 1915, National Register of Historic Places), and the Medford Central Fire Hall (110 East Sixth, 1908/1921 NR Nomination pending). The Medford B P O E Lodge (1915, National Register of Historic Places) is located at 200 North Central, visible from the Depot site down the Fifth Street corridor.

Opposite the railroad tracks, to the west, stand two warehouse structures dating from Medford's primary railroad era. The Pacific Seed and Feed Building (17 W. Fourth, c1927), the Pinnacle Packing Plant #2 [Kimball Fruit Company], located at 220 North Grape, 1925, as well as the Bates Candy Warehouse (160 N Fir, c1950), line the opposite side of the railroad right-of-way and accurately reflect the transportation corridor aspects of the area. To the south of the Depot, across Sixth Street, various financial and mixed

¹ At this writing, the remaining portion of the railroad reserve contains the depot site and the entire remaining Right-of-Way along the tracks between Sixth and Fourth Street. As an element in the transfer of the depot building and its associated ground [constituting the nominated property] a new tax lot number will be assigned to all those lands sold by Railtex to the present owners. No separate identification number for the nominated property is yet available, as per Scott Fraedrick, Jackson County Assessors Office, 8-September-1995. All physical descriptions in this document concern only that portion of the right of way included in the recent sale and which will be described by the as-yet-to-be assigned new Tax Lot identification number.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 2

Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

retail uses line the right-of-way. In two earlier transactions the Southern Pacific Railroad sold the north and south corners of the right-of-way adjacent to the depot. Both parcels are now separately owned and in use as paved parking areas.²

EXTERIOR:

Roof details:

The exterior footprint of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is comprised of three connected volumes, a larger central area [48'-0" wide by 64'-8" long] flanked by two slightly offset wings. To the north, the original baggage area is 34'-4" by 32'-0" long and to the south the boiler room is just slightly smaller at 34'-4" x 29'-4". All three volumes are below the imposing 6/12 pitched tile roof, with each volume reflected in the interconnected ridges.

Manufactured by the famed Gladding-McBean Company of northern California, the red terra-cotta tile roofing system has been in place since the original construction date. Described as Spanish or "S" tiles,

...the unique visual qualities of a clay tile roof often make it a prominent feature in defining the overall character of a historic building. (Grimmer and Williams, 1993:16)

As installed on the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot, the Gladding-McBean tile system employs numbered courses with overlapping field tiles and specialized valley, ridge and closure [eave] tiles that create a highly sophisticated and weatherproof roofing system. At present the great majority of the roof tiles are in excellent condition. Some deterioration has resulted from breakage and the lack of roof underlayment, particularly over the eaves.

Roof eaves extend approximately 7'-0" from the main wall surface, creating a waiting area for train passengers out of the southern Oregon rain. Such broad eaves were a typical feature of passenger depots throughout the Southern Pacific system and are a functional element of virtually all railroad depot design.³ The underside of the eaves on the Medford

² Tax Lot 11700 to the north is 70 x 150 in size. Constituting the former site of the Wells Fargo Express building it was sold by Southern Pacific in the early 1980s. Tax Lot 11800 to the south, 70 x 180 ins size, was sold by Southern Pacific c1990.

³ In testament to the crowds that waited below these eaves is the fact that much the west-facing elevation of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is highly decorated with pencil and carved graffiti.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

S P R R Passenger Depot is made of 1" x 4" [approx.] tongue and groove "beadboard" laid parallel to the ridge.

The eaves are supported by 6" x 8" beam, running the entire perimeter of the structure and resting upon projecting wooden out-riggers which are themselves supported by highly detailed brackets and cut granite corbels. (See photographs) Small blocks, with deeply scalloped ends, nest between the beam and the 6" x 6" outriggers, easing the construction of the corner supports, which project at a 45° angle from the building. These outriggers, supported by a put-hole in the main wall, are scalloped on the exposed end to match the detail of the nesting block. Additional eave support is gained from the curved 6" x 6" wooden brackets, each rising from a cut block of granite that is embedded into the main brick wall. These granite blocks are carved to form a slightly rounded shape with square cut margins. They were crafted and installed by the Oregon Granite Company of Medford and probably quarried at that firm's own quarry near John's Peak, west of Medford.⁴ The wooden bracket member is also scalloped at its end, a detail that ties the entire eave support system together and creates an important and visually elaborate design element of the Depot's exterior.

A single brick and stucco chimney rises at that southern end of the building, venting the original boiler room area. The brick cap and corner detailing matches that of the walls and each of the four sides is detailed with a double cruciform shaped pebble-dash stucco panel. Two attic vents are placed at the main ridge. Four sides of wooden louvers are below the small hipped-roof of each vent.

Foundation and Walls:

The walls of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot rise from a foundation formed by perimeter concrete walls and cast-in-place beams that support the concrete floor. A full crawlspace, ranging from 3' to 6' in height, is present below the six inch thick slab but does not appear to have been used for any purpose other than access.⁵

Predominately limited to names and dates, most of these inscriptions pre-date World War II and comparatively little modern graffiti disrupts their subtle effect on the exterior surface.

⁴ Mr. John Westerfield, personal communication with the Author, 8-September-1995. Mr. Westerfield and his brother continue to own and operate the Oregon Granite Company as various members of their family have done since the 1890s. The John's Peak area quarry is no longer in operation.

⁵ Two small manhole entries provide the sole access to the crawlspace area. Based on placement, these appear to have been intended primarily for access to plumbing fixtures in the bathrooms and for repair of the floor-mounted scale in the baggage area.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Above the concrete foundation, the bearing brick masonry walls rise from a stepped base. Visually divided with stucco panels, the walls of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot are highly ornamental in appearance. The bottom is of coursed brick in a header-stretcher-header pattern rising to frame a stuccoed panel. Rusticated brick "quoins" are present at all exterior corners and matching brick rustication surrounds each of the windows and doors.

The stucco panels are highly textured in a "pebble-dash" type finish with an uneven stucco mixture applied over the bearing brick. An interesting aspect of this mixture is the inclusion of fairly large pieces of broken coal, up to 1/2" in length, that add a visible texture to the mix. It is not clear if use of coal was typical of such work or if it was added specifically for the material's association with the railroad locomotive. Historic photographs indicate the original color of the stucco panels was quite light in color, yielding a stark visual contrast with the terra cotta red of the brick and roof tiles.

Windows and Doors:

Essentially two types of window sash are present on the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot. All double-hung wood sash, the windows of the main volume are 12/1 lights. In the two wings, and at the extreme NE of the main volume, slightly smaller dimensioned 8/1 light windows are present. Centered on the west-facing elevation, toward the track, is the rectangular projection that originally provided the stationmaster with an improved view of the train yard. Here the windows are similar in design to the remainder of the volume, arrayed in a mixed pattern of 9/1 and one central 12/1 window. All original wood sash survive and most remain operable. A few windows are damaged or covered with plywood. In one instance a lower sash is covered with sheetmetal for use by a vent.

Two sets of wooden double doors on the east-facing elevation open onto North Front Street. Doors are 7'-4" wide, each with a large single glass panel over two recessed wooden panels, forming a total opening 6'-4" in width. A fixed transom band of 12-lights is above each doorway. Both west-facing entryways are accessed from a short flight of concrete steps to accommodate the rise in elevation from North Front Street.

On the west-facing elevation, opening onto the tracks, the original doorway, matching those described above, survives south of the stationmaster's projecting bay. The northern entryway, presumably designed as were the others, has been modified with a replacement modern door and fixed plywood panel. The original transom panels survive above both west-facing doorways.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Three large sliding "freight" doors are present. Each of these doors is built up of solid vertical planking divided into four panels by 8" wide stiles and rails. Two diagonal braces divide the upper panels. The original fixed 16-light transom is present above each freight door. At the northern wing (the baggage area), twin freight doors open to both the east and the west. On the east-facing elevation an 11' wide concrete loading dock extends to North Front Street. While apparently not original, (as evidenced by a break in the surface character between the dock and the small concrete apron below the eaves) this feature predates 1946-1947 according to historic images. The west-facing freight door of the baggage area survives but remains partially hidden by the insertion of temporary entry doorway. The third freight door is centered on the south-facing end elevation, originally providing access to the boiler room.

Known Alterations, Exterior

With the exception of the few minor and reversible alterations to doorways and windows described above, little change to the original exterior of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot has been identified. Early historic views of the building taken prior to the 1920s show that the roof was originally designed without the twin attic vents now present. It is not clear when these features, certainly in response to excessive moisture or heat build-up below the tile roofing, were added. The vents do not appear to be in place in an aerial view of downtown Medford taken in 1925. It is known that the vents were built prior to the winter of 1946-47.⁶

INTERIOR:

Baggage Area [North wing]:

Occupying the entire north wing, the original baggage area of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot retains its full height ceilings, approximately 16' above the concrete flooring, which is stippled in a skid-resistant pattern. Walls are exposed brick, painted and orange-brown, with some stained fir wainscot. Unlike the public spaces, the brick and brick corbelling in the baggage area is left exposed and there is no cove at the ceiling level.

Wainscot is 74" high and made from 3½" beadboard with a cap and bevel detailing. In some locations small rounded shelves project at the corner, possibly for flowers or other

⁶ See SOHS aerial photo Neg. 9454, taken in either March or May 1925, and an un-numbered photo in the SOHS collection that shows the depot covered in the unusual snowfall that blanketed downtown Medford in late 1946.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

decorative uses. As designed, the majority of the baggage area was a single large volume, with office space and the baggage counter flanking the set of double doors that lead to the central waiting room area. At some unknown time, probably circa 1960s, the baggage area was divided by substandard 2x4 construction to create several inserted volumes. Along the entire north end a half-height volume provides both an office area [west] and what was apparently an employee lounge [east]. The upper portion, accessed via an open 2 x 4 and plywood stair flight, is used for storage.

At the southern end of the baggage area the original stained fir baggage counter survives, projecting out from the wall near the entrance to the waiting area. A half-height volume of substandard 2x4 and plywood construction encloses this area, creating a small office or storage space. The interior retains the original stained wainscot panels. To the east of this space is a small l-shaped storage room that also retains original fir wall surfaces.

A single stool bathroom at the west half of the baggage area was apparently provided for railroad employee use, with easy access to the office spaces of the main volume. Door trim throughout the baggage area is predominately original, with 6" wide plain board, crown, and door hardware. Finishes are dark stained fir. Original 5-panel stained fir doors open onto the bathroom and east storage room. The twin entry doors into the waiting room are also original, with a single large light above a single wood panel base. One translucent glazed panel, presumed to be original, survives while the other panel has been replaced with standard clear glass.

Centered on the entry door to the waiting area, near the center of the baggage area, is the remains of the original floor scale for weighing baggage. Steel rails define the opening, now filled with concrete.

Waiting Room [Central Volume]:

As an important public space in Medford, the original interior design of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot was considered quite elaborate. The interior of the primary volume, in the center of the building, served a number of purposes including both ticket sales, waiting areas, and men's and women's restrooms. While subsequent alterations following the cessation of passenger service have obscured much of this original grandeur, most of the original elements remain in place, hidden by paint or overlaid materials.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Walls and Ceiling:

In describing the public area of the new depot upon its opening, the *Medford Mail Tribune* reported

...The interior of the building is especially elaborate. The walls are tinted above the panel wainscoting, which is of Oregon fir stained to a dark brown. This woodwork is worthy ...[of]... any private residence in the city. The main waiting room is of splendid proportions. At one end is found the entrance to the ladies' waiting room, off which are elaborate lavatories finished in Tennessee marble. (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 19-October-1910, 1:4)

Original ceiling height in the waiting room area is approximately 20' although at present a suspended T-bar ceiling reduces that height by about four feet. Above the T-bar the coved edge and picture molding both survive. The coved corner detailing is of sufficient depth to hide the corbeled bricks which project from the exterior wall to support the roof joist system. Wall surfaces are all original plaster over brick, or lath and plaster for interior partition walls. Some surfaces are currently covered with either Celutex or similar wood-fiber panel-type material.

The 6'-0" wainscot of "Oregon Fir" surrounds the entire perimeter of the main public space. Built of plywood panels and narrow battens, the wainscot is of a two panel design. The upper, smaller panel is 13½" wide and 19¾" tall and the larger lower panel is of the same width, 28" tall. The 8" high base is of Tennessee marble [presently painted] and capped with a ¾" half-round sanitary molding. Base plinths are present at door surrounds, projecting ¼" to ⅜" beyond the base.

Windows and Doors:

Interior window trim is of 6" wide plain board with cap and surrounding built-up moldings that flow into the chair rail of the wainscot. Larger 16/1 windows are vertically placed so that sill height is consistent with the middle rail of the wainscot. The smaller 12/1 windows rest directly on the chair rail with the combined effect creating quite harmonious and well-thought out interior design scheme. Door trim for both original interior and all exterior doors is a continuation of the chair-rail/cap design, flowing around the doors as they extend above the wainscot.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

All interior trim was originally the dark stained fir as found in the baggage area [described above] and is at present painted a light tan color. Some doors are painted, others remain the original stained fir.

Other:

Cast iron radiators, generally 36" wide, survive around the perimeter of the waiting room spaces. Modern HVAC equipment is inappropriately placed within the volume at both the NE corner of the waiting room area and along a non-original partition wall toward the south. The floor of the central volume waiting is partially of exposed concrete, divided into 36" squares, but without the stippled texture found in the baggage area. Various vinyl and linoleum has been overlaid in most locations of the central space, an indication of the varying uses of the building following the end of passenger travel.

The wooden ticket counter survives although it has apparently been relocated from its original position parallel to the track. Built of dark stained fir to match the wainscot, the 22'-6" long counter has a slight projecting curved portion and the counter top is visually supported by wooden "corbels" that project from the paneled front. The base is of the same Tennessee marble found elsewhere. Various drawers and cabinets provide storage space. Several other original or early-appearing counters designed in compatible fashion survive in the building although their original location or function are not known at this time.

Restrooms:

Actually located within the southern wing, adjacent to the main volume, the two public restrooms were originally accessed off the men's and women's waiting rooms of the central volume. Original 3-panel door and door surround survive to the men's restroom which retains a single Tennessee marble stall divider between its two stools. A wall mounted tank provides water to the two original porcelain urinals.

The women's restroom is accessed via a relocated entry door, following the re-arrangement of the waiting room area, that opens off of the short hallway. (See floorplan) Full ceiling height reveals a similar coved detail as found in the main waiting area.⁷ Original Tennessee marble stall dividers and chrome or nickel-plated hardware all survive.

⁷ Located within the smaller wing, the ceiling height of the bathrooms is approximately 16', or about 4' lower than that of the central volume.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

A small janitor's closet is located between the two restrooms and retains its original stained wainscot and other detailing.

Known Alterations, Central Area Interior:

In addition to the various changes described above, most notably the reduction in ceiling height by the installation of the suspended T-Bar and the painting of the wainscot and other trim, the main space of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot has been altered by the construction of several new interior spaces and the relocation of several walls that originally defined the men's and women's waiting rooms at the south end. In most cases these spaces have been designed in a compatible, if poorly executed, fashion with an attempt made to replicate the panels of the wainscot and the details of the door surrounds.

At the north end of the central volume an original doorway was removed or covered by the expansion of office area [which extends into the baggage area]. The original doorway opening to the women's restroom was also removed, the entry being relocated to the newly created hallway. (See floorplan) At both the NE and along the south wall, new partition walls create new office spaces. In the NE space the original wainscot survives in with the new partition walls using a compatible paneled design.

The installation of modern HVAC systems has been done without any regard for the visual character of the interior, a function of the non-public nature of the depot's use since 1955. Various other systems improvements, including AC and communications cabling have been handled in a similar, surface-mounted, fashion. None of these relatively recent modern alterations and additions are non-reversible and in no situation do they seriously impact the overall integrity of the interior.

The present status of one element of the original design remains unknown, pending the removal of the Celutex, paint, and other changes to the interior wall surfaces. On 11-October-1910 it was reported that "Huge Pictures" would decorate the new depot.

Nineteen huge pictures, four by six feet in size, have been received by A.S. Rosenbaum, local agent of the Southern Pacific company, which are today being placed in position upon the walls of the new depot....The pictures are principally of local orchards. In addition there is a huge picture of the prize winning car of Spitzenburg [apples] grown by Tronson and Guthrie. Aside from the orchards, local scenery is also presented. (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 11-October-1910, 3:5)

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Although presumably photographs, it is not entirely clear if these large images were paintings or not.

Boiler or Furnace Room, [South wing]

Used to hold the boiler and store coal for its operation, the extreme southern portion of this wing (south of the restroom area) is a single volume divided into thirds by partial height brick partition walls, creating three stalls. The center stall holds the boiler itself while the two outer spaces were used to store coal. The entire space is exposed brick with little detailing, as might be expected given its functional nature. There are no significant alterations discernible in this area.

GROUND AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

Little of the original landscape vegetation survives at the depot. Several built features of the grounds, however, remain and play an important role in the defining the character of the building. The area west of the depot, between the building and the mail rail line, is surfaced with concrete, scored to form approximately 6' x 6' panels with a "stippled" type finish to reduce slipping under wet conditions, as is found in the baggage area. This surface extends the entire length of the west elevation and partially wraps around the both the north and south end elevations of the building. Portions of a similar surface survive along North Front Street as well.⁸

Just outside the nominated parcel, the curbing surrounding the parking area of what is now Tax Lot 11800, carries the incised designation "1917," presumably an indication of a period of development affecting the Depot grounds.

SUMMARY:

Upon its completion, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot represented a well-thought out and comprehensive approach to building function and design rarely seen in southern Oregon. The unknown designer utilized a uniform palette of materials and color that, in the words of the local press, presented an appealing whole. "Everything from the electric fixtures to the baseboards harmonize, the whole forming a splendid effect and one delightful to the eye." (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 19-October-1910, 1:4)

⁸ This type of surface treatment appears to have been common in Medford. Small panels of similar texture survive further south on Front Street, in front of the 1906 Medford Central Fire Hall, which also served as Medford's City Hall at the time of the construction of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

Today, more than eighty-five years since its construction and forty years since the last passenger train left Medford, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot reflects the loss of concern for appearances that its original public use engendered. Alterations and installation of modern systems have been undertaken with a functional rather than aesthetic intent. Nevertheless, that functional approach also limited any serious attempts to modernize the interior in any substantive and irreversible manner. Virtually all of the original elements of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot remain in place. As a result, both the interior and exterior of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot retain a remarkably high degree of integrity in the use of materials, workmanship, and overall character to the original design of the building. The Medford S P R R Passenger Depot continues to create a "splendid effect" that admirably relates the building's original function and appearance and accurately conveys the associations for which it is significant.

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.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1910-1927

1910

Significant Dates

1910 (Dedication, October 18, 1910)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Southern Pacific Railroad (attributed)

Builder: R. W. Wakefield

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

City of Medford Department of Planning
Jackson County Deed Records

Medford SPRR Passenger Depot

Jackson County, Oregon

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.54 acres

Medford East, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 10 510420 4685950
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 Geroge Kramer, M.S.

organization Historic Preservation Consultant date October 16, 1995

street & number 386 N Laurel telephone 541/482-9504

city or town Ashland state OR zip code 97520

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 Southern Oregon and Pacific Brewing Company, c/o Rodger Whipple

street & number PO Box 1537 telephone 541/899-1458

city or town Jacksonville state OR zip code 97530

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.).

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 1A**MEDFORD SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD PASSENGER DEPOT - Preferred
(SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD PASSENGER STATION, 1910)**147 N Front Street
Medford
Jackson County, Oregon**COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**

The railroad passenger station constructed at Medford by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1910 is an excellent, exceptionally well-preserved example of a standard design type remaining on its original site in western Oregon. It stands on the SP's main line, at the intersection of Front Street and East 5th in an commercial industrial section of the downtown core. The rectilinear building of brick bearing wall construction is aligned with its long axis paralleling the tracks, which lie on the east. The single story building measures 48 x 126 feet in ground plan and is formally composed as a core volume for passenger lobby and ticket counter with subordinate boiler room and freight sections at south and north ends, respectively. The telegrapher's bay of the original ticket office is centered on the east, trackside facade. Exterior elevations are visually pleasing and distinctive with buff-colored pebble-dashed stucco and rusticated red brick framing elements, water table, and corner trim. The dominant hip roof, with its configuration corresponding to the division of main and end sections, is covered with red mission tiles manufactured by Gladding McBean and Company of northern California, the paramount source on the West Coast for quality architectural terra cotta. Attention is drawn to the fact that even ridges and valleys are clad with interlocking tiles. All windows and doors are original, including glazing in the distinctive pattern of many small lights in transoms and upper sash.

The general architectural vocabulary is derived from the Arts and Crafts movement, and includes noteworthy features. While the broad, sheltering overhanging eaves are typical of railroad station buildings of the era, the methods of supporting them vary. The application provides a good description of the creative system used at Medford, where outrigger beams are carried by nested brackets in a system that is both efficient and decorative and incorporates corbels of locally quarried granite. The interior is in a good state of preservation, although the passenger lobby has been overlaid with some new surface materials. The ceiling, for example, has been lowered from its 20-foot height with acoustical tile. Marble bases, wainscoting of fir plywood and battens, architrave frames for wall openings, and a bowed ticket counter with paneled front are intact, though with the exception of the ticket counter, paint has obscured the original dark stained finish of the woodwork. Modifications to the building are minor, most are reversible, and all are carefully noted in the application.

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The Oregon and California Railroad, constructed south from Portland beginning in 1868 to meet the line being built north from Sacramento, was of paramount importance to the agricultural and industrial districts of western Oregon because of its tie-in to the transcontinental network. Whole settlements were relocated to align with the route, and new towns sprang up in anticipation of its completion. Medford was one of the communities whose fortunes were tied to the railroad. The town was platted in 1883, a year before freight and passenger service extended to the Rogue River Valley. Then, shortly after the Southern Pacific's takeover and completion of the last section of the Sacramento-to-Portland line over the rugged Siskiyou, the network was joined in 1887 at Ashland, a few miles to the south of Medford.

Medford's first depot of wood frame construction was opened south of the present location in 1884. It was replaced by another frame building in 1900. The ultimate station, the nominated property, responded to the city's importance as a central shipping point for the new fruit packing industry which arose in the Rogue River Valley. From 1908 onward, the Southern Pacific Railroad took part, along with the industry, in promoting Medford and its environs to tourists, settlers and investors. Proponents point out that Medford was for a time the second largest rail point in the state after Portland. The town campaigned for a new depot befitting this status, and the company complied. A site two blocks north of the turn-of-the-century depot was acquired for construction in the momentum created by aggressive development policy fostered by the late company head, Edward H. Harriman [d.1909].

Medford's prominence as a rail center commenced to fade in 1927 when the Southern Pacific's main route was realigned to the southeast, through the Klamath Basin [Natron Cutoff]. With the decline of freight and passenger traffic in Jackson County, facilities at Ashland were closed and services were consolidated at Medford. The Southern Pacific finally closed its secondary route over the Siskiyou in 1994. The line was acquired by Railtex, Inc., which reopened it under the name California and Oregon Pacific Railroad. The Medford depot was sold to the present owner-organization, which plans an adaptive use rehabilitation.

The railroad passenger station meets National Register Criterion C as one of the best preserved stations occupying an original site in western Oregon. Its design was notably pleasing and well-executed. The station meets National Register Criterion A as the only remaining building in Jackson County's principal city and government seat that is associated with the heyday of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The application provides a clear picture of the central role the station held in community life and local economy to 1927. Based on traditional use and the title shown on the station's 1910 dedication program, proponents argue that the word "depot" is historically correct. Accordingly, the preferred listing title is: *Medford Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot*.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

The Medford Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot was constructed in 1910 and marks the culmination of the railroad's development in the City of Medford, Oregon. Significant for its association with the railroad, as well as for its design and architecture, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is nominated under both Criterion "A" and "C" to the National Register of Historic Places.

MEDFORD — A "RAILROAD" TOWN:

In Fall 1883, as the lines of the railroad slowly wound their way south from the Roseburg, Oregon terminus over the mountainous divide between Douglas and Josephine County, the surveying crews moving through the Rogue River Valley elected to follow the comparatively flat route along the banks of Bear Creek. Moving in a south-easterly direction from Central Point toward the fledgling towns of Phoenix and Talent before ending at the valley's most populous community, Ashland, the final route would bypass the county seat at Jacksonville, and run through the open central plain of the valley floor.

Businessmen C. W. Broback, I. J. Phipps, Conrad Mingus and C. C. Beekman, a prominent Jacksonville banker, had purchased a large tract of this land and on October 27, 1883, each deeded a portion of his property to the Oregon and California Railroad Company. The railroad agreed in return to build a depot and establish a townsite. (Atwood & Lutz O'Harra, 1985:7)

Surveyor J. S. Howard laid out the new town, named "Medford" by railroad engineer David Loring after Medford, Massachusetts. The townsite plat was filed with Jackson County on December 20, 1883 and established 82 blocks, regularly divided into lots along a standard grid pattern.¹ A broad right of way, bisecting the town into half, was labeled "Oregon and California Railroad Depot Grounds" and was deeded to the railroad company. North-to-south streets were letter-named, east-to-west streets were numbered, with the townsite divided into quadrants by the right-of-way and Seventh Street. Commercial and residential development began even before the tracks reached the new community.²

¹ See Jackson County Deed Records (JCD) Volume 16, pages 11-13.

² The track-laying crews arrived in Grants Pass, in Josephine County, in early December 1883 and designated the city as its "Terminus" until Spring. Construction apparently continued southward, weather permitting, and laying crews had reached the Talent vicinity by late January 1884. In April, Ashland was designated as the new "Terminus" and would remain so until 1887 when the line over the Siskiyou Mountains into California was finally completed.)

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A visit to the new town of Medford, four miles below Phoenix...revealed to use that the 'foundations of the city' are already being laid. Several piles of new lumber were seen here and there all over the town site...(Ashland Tidings, 21-December-1883, 3:5)

Medford, the newest town in Southern Oregon, is an important station of the railway, and is regarded as likely to become a very important shipping point. Its position is in the center of the Bear creek valley, about four miles east of Jacksonville, and about midway between Phoenix and Central Point. It is the shipping point for a large section, including Jacksonville, a portion of the Applegate county, and a good part of the surrounding valley. In the winter of 1883-84, about forty wooden buildings were put up and the foundations of a brick building of considerable size were laid...(Walling, 1884:375)

EARLIER SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOTS:

Having been literally established by the railroad, Medford's economy during the 19th and early 20th centuries was substantially focused upon the depot and railroad right-of-way. Commercial development began at Front Street, facing the tracks and continued east, along Seventh Street (now Main), toward the former Stage Road (renamed Riverside in 1908).³ It was not until 1902 that the first brick commercial structure would be built "west of the tracks."⁴

Medford's first railroad depot was built in 1883-4. It was a simple wood-framed gable volume, typical of the depots used throughout the southern Oregon area.⁵ This first depot was located on the east side of the right-of-way, between Main and 8th streets, south of the nominated property. Long considered too small for the bustling Medford community, in 1899-1900 a substantially larger depot, also wood-frame, was constructed by the

³ See Medford City Council Minutes, 18-January-1908.

⁴ This is the I. W. Thomas Building, located at 131-135 West Main Street. (Kramer, 1994:67.1 and 67.2)

⁵ The initial rail line into the Rogue River Valley and the construction of the Medford depot was undertaken by the Oregon and California Railroad Company, headed by the legendary Henry Villard. By 1887, as the line was finally completed over the Siskiyou, that company had been acquired by the Southern Pacific Railroad who were responsible for all subsequent depot development.

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railroad a short distance to the south. The first Medford depot was loaded onto a flat car and shipped to the community of Talent where it remained in use until 1935.⁶

Though greeted with substantial excitement upon its completion, the second Medford depot was erected just prior to a phenomenal period of population and economic growth that saw Medford pass Ashland in population and permanently transformed the city into the leading commercial area of southern Oregon. As the population swelled, increased pear and apple orchard development in the surrounding valley spurred the construction of a number of Medford-based packing facilities, many located within the right-of-way. Together these two factors generated huge volumes of traffic on the Southern Pacific line. Improved shipping technology allowed area orchard products to be shipped nationwide and local booster groups worked in conjunction with Southern Pacific to promote Medford and the Rogue River Valley to potential tourists and investors. In 1908 Southern Pacific's "Tourism Bureau" published the first of its brochures promoting Medford. The Southern Pacific also offered "Colonist Rates," inexpensive one-way tickets for those intent upon relocating to the southern Oregon area. By 1909 Medford had become the second largest rail point in Oregon, a fact the local press lost no opportunity to proclaim as justification for an improved depot facility. Amid such booming demand the wood framed depot built in 1900 quickly came to be seen as inadequate and outmoded. Local boosters began to agitate for a newer, masonry structure that would reflect Medford's booming prosperity.

It was not until Edward H. Harriman (1848-1909) became President of the Southern Pacific Line that the Medford's wish for a modern depot was acted upon. Though in control of the Southern Pacific line for less than a decade, Harriman embarked upon a huge development program, expending more than \$240,000,000 in eight years. (Wilson & Taylor, 1956:110) As reported later, the construction of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot stemmed from Harriman's visit to Medford and his appreciation of its booming growth.

Mr. Harriman turned to General Manager [J. P.] O'Brian and said 'Build these people a depot and give them the best there is.' Mr. Harriman's death followed shortly thereafter and it was not until Judge Lovett, Harriman's successor, visited Medford that the Southern Pacific took the matter up. While here, Mr. O' Brian informed Judge Lovett of his predecessor's orders and Lovett immediately reiterated the order...(MMT 19-October-1910, 6:5)

⁶ See *Medford Mail*, 15-June-1900, 5:3 and Kramer, *City of Talent Historic Context Statement*, 1994:28.

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In January 1910, the Medford *Mail Tribune* announced that J. P. O'Brian, manager of the Southern Pacific in Oregon, would arrive the next day to make a final decision on the site of the company's new \$40,000 depot. "There has been considerable discussion as to the location. Some favor the present site while others [prefer] a site two blocks to the north." (MMT 11-January-1910, 1:5)

The day after Mr. O'Brian visited and selected the site at Fifth and Front streets, the *Mail Tribune* published a large, full width headline that announced "Start Work on \$50,000 Depot in 10 Days."

The new depot will be the largest in Oregon outside of Portland, which is fitting, as Medford does the largest railroad business. It will be the same size as that in Walla Walla, Washington and considerably larger than those recently erected at Eugene and Albany, being designed, as Mr. O'Brian stated, with a view toward Medford's future growth...Construction will commence within thirty days, probably within ten days. (13-January-1910, 1:1)

In an editorial published the same day titled "Another Step Forward For Medford," editor and manager George Putnam wrote that the depot was "...designed to fill every need of a city of 50,000 inhabitants, which shows that the Southern Pacific is building for the future, realizing Medford's future." (MMT, 13-January-1910, 4:1-2)

CONSTRUCTION AND OPENING: 1910

In early February 1910 Southern Pacific solicited bids from contractors and plans were made available for inspection.

The plans and specifications for the building are now in the hands of local agent A. S. Rosenbaum and can be seen by any local contractor who wishes to place a bid for the work. ...The plans are most elaborate and when the building is completed Medford will have as fine a depot as is to be found in the state...(MMT, 9-February-1910, 1:1)

By the 20th of February the Southern Pacific had awarded the bid to Portland contractor Robert W. Wakefield who was also selected as the contractor of the new depot planned

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for Grants Pass, to the north.⁷ Wakefield announced his intention to sub-contract much of the Medford project to local firms and construction was set to begin immediately.⁸ In late February Fred Beagle, an engineer with the Southern Pacific Company, staked out the Fifth and Front street site. (*MMT*, 27-February-1910, 1:7) On March 12th ground was broken under the direction of J. C. Bigham, Wakefield's local crew leader, and work on the excavation for the foundation began.

“We do not expect to be very long in putting this building up,” stated Mr. Bigham, “as we are not going to waste any time. (*MMT*, 13-March-1910, 1:5)

By mid-April the concrete foundation was complete and contractor Wakefield's brick crew had arrived to begin work on the walls. Local firms also provided assistance in the construction of the exterior. “The Oregon Granite Company has a large crew of men at work getting out the granite for the building, all of which is to be carved and promises to give a rich effect to the building.” (*MMT*, 15-April-1910, 1:5) Other local contractors included Medford's Woods Lumber Company, which supplied over 150,000 board feet of lumber from its Glendale mill for use in the construction of the Grants Pass and Medford depots. (*MMT*, 26-April-1910, 2:1)

Construction proceeded rapidly. By mid-July Southern Pacific announced that the new depot would be open by September 1st. Delays in the arrival of materials, however, pushed the schedule back over a month and the dedication ceremony was finally set for October 18, 1910. Finishing touches were undertaken by day and night crews as the company rushed to have the building ready for the ceremony.

E. A. Hicks of the Oregon Granite Company has a large force of men at work in the new Southern Pacific depot, rushing the installation of the marble base about the foot of the panels in the waiting room...It was due to delay in the arrival this marble, which was especially ordered direct from

⁷ The Grants Pass Depot, also a masonry structure, was dedicated on 20-September-1910. (*Medford Mail Tribune*, 22-September-1910, 2:3). In 1960 the building was demolished and the site is now occupied by a Safeway market. See *Grants Pass Courier*, 31-December-1960.

⁸ Wakefield was the President of the Portland Bridge and Building Company and also a partner in the firm of Wakefield and Jacobson, General Contractors, both apparently firms of some size that operated out of offices in the Wells Fargo Building during the first two decades of the 20th century. The Medford press reported him as a “large contractor of Portland.” See R.L. Polk & Co., *Portland City Directory 1909* (R.L. Polk & Company: Portland, Oregon), 1374 and *Medford Mail Tribune*, 23-February-1910, 1:5.

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quarries in Tennessee, that the building was not completed during this past week. Practically every other detail has been completed...(MMT, 16-October-1910, 1:6)

The dedication ceremony began with the arrival of Train 11, from the north, bringing the Southern Pacific's officials to the platform. "The train was met by the Medford band and by some 500 local people. When the train drew in and stopped, for the first time in the history of Medford, passengers were discharged north of Main Street." (MMT 19-October-1910,1:3, 6:4)

William M. Colvig, President of the Medford Commercial Club, introduced Medford's Mayor, William H. Canon and Southern Pacific Manager, Mr. O'Brian, and at three o'clock O'Brian "tendered" the new depot to Mayor Canon, officially marking the building's completion.

'The Southern Pacific Company lines in Oregon formally dedicates the new passenger depot to the people of Medford and vicinity, Tuesday, October 18, 1910, not only in recognition of their substantial growth and commercial importance, but in celebration of Medford's admission into the ranks of cities having a population of 10,000 or more.' These words, which appear in the dedication souvenir issued by the Southern Pacific Company...sum up the feeling entertained for this city by the Southern Pacific. (MMT, 19-October-1910, 1:3)

Following the formal dedication, W. D. Fenton, head of Southern Pacific's legal department, "...spoke at some length urging a continuance of the kindly feeling between the officials of the corporation and the city."⁹ Finally, Colvig urged everyone to attend the new quarters of the Commercial Club, which also celebrated its opening this day, and the public was allowed to inspect the Medford's new railroad depot.

...the doors of the new depot were thrown open and a vast crowd flocked through the waiting rooms, while the guests of the city were taken for a spin...The new passenger depot will be open night and day from this time on. (MMT, 19-October-1910, 6:4-5, 6:8)

⁹ This was at partially in response a then-current dispute between the city's business community and the railroad over the high freight rates being levied on Medford freight.

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DEPOT DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The initial period of railroad depot construction in southern Oregon, undertaken by the Oregon and California Railroad, was characterized by simple wood-frame structures, predominately single story, with gable roof designs. After its acquisition of the line, the Southern Pacific continued to utilize standard plans, almost certainly developed in-house, for the second phase depot structures it built in the region's larger cities. In Ashland, designated the Division Station, a more elaborate multi-story hotel structure was constructed in 1888 and the earlier 1884 depot was converted to freight use.

At the turn-of-the-century in both Medford and Grants Pass, the two cities respectively emerging as the leading shipping points in Jackson and Josephine counties, the small original depot structure was removed and relocated by the railroad to a smaller community. The Medford depot went to Talent, as mentioned above and the Grants Pass depot was shipped north, to the community of Merlin. Both cities were awarded larger facilities, though still of wood-frame construction.¹⁰

Portland's Union Station was the first masonry depot facility in the Oregon, completed in 1893-94. By 1910, spurred by Harriman's massive development program, the Southern Pacific was moving completely toward masonry construction for its depots in larger cities along its lines. New brick or concrete structures replaced earlier wood frame buildings in a number of cities along the main north-south route including those at Salem, Albany, Corvallis, and Eugene, all completed prior to 1910.¹¹ Both the Medford and Grants Pass depots were a part of this construction program. The last masonry station built on the line was constructed in Roseburg, opening in 1912.¹²

As it had with the earlier wood-frame depots, Southern Pacific developed a basic model design for its masonry buildings and then modified it slightly for replication along its lines. The basic depot type which was either developed or emerged over time was of a broad, rectilinear design, usually a single story in height, and topped with a large hipped-roof and wide eaves, the latter to shelter waiting passengers. Brick, concrete, and other mixed

¹⁰ This second Medford depot is that discussed above, built in 1900.

¹¹ Several cities on the line east of Portland, built by the Union Pacific, also were favored with masonry depots during the early 20th century period. These include depots at Pendleton and La Grande.

¹² Discussion of the Oregon depots is found in Dill and Austin, *The Southern Pacific in Oregon*, (Edmunds, Washington: Pacific Fast Mail), 1987.

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masonry materials were all employed and the basic Southern Pacific depot became a recognizable and standard feature in the larger cities of southern Oregon.¹³

OTHER RIGHT-OF-WAY DEVELOPMENTS:

As the focus of the Medford economy and the central feature of the downtown commercial area, the Southern Pacific Right-of-Way between Front and Fir streets was home to a number of buildings and smaller built elements. In addition to the new passenger depot and the 1900 Southern Pacific depot, relocated slightly south and modified for freight use in November 1910,¹⁴ other structures related or dependent upon the railroad were also standing along the tracks. Industrial and commercial uses, most related to the fruit industry, occupied the area of the right-of-way west of the main tracks, all on land leased from the railroad company. In 1905 the Medford Commercial Club constructed an "Exhibit Building" along the tracks as a way to display and promote the valley to travelers. (*Mail*, 31-March-1905, 5:1) This striking building was dismantled and relocated to the NW corner of the intersection of Main and Front in 1910 in anticipation of the new passenger depot.¹⁵ (*MMT*, 27-March-1910, 8:1) Eventually serving as the Chamber of Commerce office, the Exhibit Building was sold to the Southern Pacific in 1943 and razed sometime thereafter. (*MMT*, 3-December-1943, 1:5)

In July 1910 the Wells-Fargo Express Company announced plans to build its own new facility. "The building will be a handsome one and will stand 100 feet north of the new Southern Pacific depot." (*MMT*, 10-July-1910, 1:5) Designed to compliment the new depot with a matching hipped-roof, the Wells-Fargo Express building was built of concrete and remained on this site as least as late as 1981.¹⁶ Used by Southern Pacific for various purposes, the site was sold to a local physicians group in the early 1980s and the former Express building was razed to create the present parking lot.¹⁷

¹³ The functional requirements of the depot logically led to certain requirements as well, with the same basic elements occurring in the Harriman-era depots of eastern Oregon. Harriman also owned a controlling interest in the Union Pacific Railroad, the primary line through that portion of the state.

¹⁴ See *Medford Mail Tribune*, 21-November-1910, 1:2.

¹⁵ The image of the exhibit building, with its huge hipped-roof and elaborate exterior detail was often reproduced in Medford booster-type publications. The building housed a variety of fruit and both agricultural and industrial products illustrative of the bounty of the Medford/Jackson County area.

¹⁶ See SOHS Photograph #4063, showing the building standing circa 1981.

¹⁷ Dale Matheny, personal communication with the Author, 5-September-1995. Mr. Matheny was a long time employee of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

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In 1910 as Medford looked forward to the construction of the new passenger depot, there was substantial interest in creating an attractive site to serve as the focus of downtown Medford. From the earliest announcements of the construction, Southern Pacific's intention was clearly that the grounds surrounding it would be "parked" to create a pleasing area within the city, in contrast to the previous industrial character of right-of-way.¹⁸

The depot grounds and right-of-way through the city will turned over to the ladies of the Greater Medford club to park and otherwise beautify. The stockyards and other structures along the track will be removed further south. (MMT, 13-January-1910, 1:1-2)

Shortly prior to the dedication ceremony a landscape architect, "Mr. Chase," probably a Southern Pacific employee, arrived to coordinate the plans for the depot grounds.¹⁹ Chase developed a "general plan" that was presented to the Greater Medford club.

The ground between the new depot and the Exhibit building is to be parked, allowing for a driveway for teams and autos. Rose hedges and shrubs will border the parking. Between the Wells Fargo building there will be a gross of beds of flowers (*sic*) ...The plans are very good and when finished will make Medford the most attractive depot in the west. (MMT, 10-October-1910, 3:6)

The day after the dedication ceremony newspaper editor Putnam wrote "Now that the Southern Pacific has built and opened at Medford the finest passenger station on its line in Oregon, it is hoped that it will lose no time in making the depot surroundings fit the building...such action will improve the appearance of Medford a hundred percent. It will make Medford attractive to every tourist..." (MMT, 19-October-1910, 4:2-3)

Despite these intentions and hopes, it appears that architect Chase's plans were only partially realized. Aerial photographs of downtown Medford and the depot area show a huge expanse of greenery running from Main Street to the southern wall of the depot building with the block between Sixth and Main including the paved circular drive "for

¹⁸ Ashland landscape architect J. Gilbertson walked the grounds and made preliminary recommendations in early 1910 although these do not appear to have been acted upon any further. See *Medford Mail Tribune*, 4-February-1910, 1:4.

¹⁹ Newspaper accounts indicate Chase was not an area resident and quote him as stating that this is "...the first depot he has had enough interest in to inspect before it was finished." (*Medford Mail Tribune*, "Ambitious Plan to Park Grounds," 10-October-1910, 3:6)

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teams and autos.”²⁰ Smaller planted beds lined Front Street and the area immediately south of the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot appears to be either gravel or dirt. There is no indication that Mr. Chase’s proposal for extensive planting beds north of the depot was never acted upon and while no rose “hedges” are known to have been planted, one historic view (circa 1920) shows a cluster of what appear to be camellias in the center of the circular driveway. (See attached historic views)

PRE-WORLD WAR II PERIOD:

Despite the rise of the automobile as the primary form of travel, the railroad remained an important transportation and freight element within Medford for much of the pre-World War II period. “Jitneys” and other commuter trains ran between the towns of the valley, including some powered by internal combustion engines.²¹ The Medford S P R R Passenger Depot remained a transfer point for the Rogue River Valley Railroad, connecting Jacksonville and Medford, as well as the Pacific and Eastern Railroad (formerly the Medford and Crater Lake), which connected Medford to communities in eastern Jackson County.²² America’s involvement in World War I made the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot an important departure point for soldiers going off for training. Historic photographs show “Our Boys of Company 7” marching to the train in 1917 and many families gathered to send off their loved ones at the depot.²³

Through train traffic in Medford diminished substantially following the 1927 opening of the Natron Cut-Off which shifted Southern Pacific’s main line east, through Klamath Falls. The old main line, which required passage of the steep grades over the mountains south of Ashland, was relegated to secondary status and most passenger traffic between California and Portland now bypassed Jackson County and the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot.

²⁰ Sixth Street was not opened across the right-of-way until Summer 1927. See *Medford Mail Tribune* “Sixth Street Edition,” 14-September-1927.

²¹ These “McKean” cars were referred to as the “Whisky Locals” in reference to their frequent use by commuters from “dry” Grants Pass to “wet” Ashland and Medford.

²² The Pacific and Eastern was predominately associated with the significant timber developments in the Prospect and Butte Falls area although it maintained its own passenger depot east of Bear Creek near Main Street. The connection of the line with the main Southern Pacific Route occurred north of Medford and probably involved more freight than passenger travel.

²³ See Atwood & Lutz O’Harra, pages 73-74.

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The phenomenal population and agricultural growth of the 1910-era, growth that inspired Medford leaders to forecast their population as soon reaching 50,000, tapered off dramatically after 1912. Medford's population actually declined more than thirty percent between the census figures of 1910 and 1920.²⁴ Orchard production and the high volume of freight it generated also declined as a result of drought, lack of irrigation, and over-planting. Although the industry survived and still remains a major element of the area's agricultural economy, the combination of the Great Depression and the rise of motor freight substantially diminished the 1910-era booster-driven expectations for Medford's dependence on the railroad.

WORLD WAR II AND LATER:

With the declaration of the Second World War, the railroad recaptured some of its original primacy in the Medford vicinity. The construction of Camp White, a U. S. Army Cantonment or training facility, to the east of Medford resulted in a huge influx of rail passengers. Literally thousands of recruits arrived to Medford via the railroad, moving through the Depot before heading east to the military base. The Army took over the old Pacific and Eastern right-of-way as a spur line between the Medford area and Camp White.²⁵ Period reports relate the Medford Depot as hub of activity unknown since the 1910 Orchard Boom heyday.

In one ten-day period in 1943, a record of 20,000 troops were handled by the Southern Pacific through the small yard known by train crews as Government Yard. (Dill & Austin, 1987:257)

[After troops disembark] the train crew takes the now empty troop train away — for another load of Uncle Sam's most valuable assets — American fighting men. (*Camp White Rogue*, Volume 1, No. 2)

During the war, as gas rationing was established, an increasing number of military families, as well as general business and personal travel, again turned to the railroad. Freight

²⁴ In 1910 Medford's population was 8840 and apparently rose to over 10,000 by 1912. In 1920 the Census listed Medford with 5756, a substantial decline. Hal Hoss, *The Oregon Blue Book, 1933-1934*, (Salem, Oregon: State Printing Department, 1933), 142.

²⁵ The Pacific and Eastern track had been purchased by the Medford Corporation, a local timber concern in 1920. See LaLande, *Medford Corporation: A History*, (Medford, Oregon: Klocker Printing Co., 1979), 24.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

tonnage along the line also likely increased as the Rogue Valley's timber industry grew to supply the wartime needs of military construction.

With the end of the war, and the end of gas rationing, shippers and travelers returned to the automobile or truck as their primary transportation source. Passenger train service was continually reduced, eventually being limited to short run trains that connected the Rogue Valley with the main line. By 1952 all direct connection to the south had been eliminated and in 1955 the last passenger train connecting the valley to Portland was also discontinued, ending all passenger traffic through the Medford area. (O'Harra, 1981:156)

As Medford's reliance on the railroad freight declined, the Southern Pacific began to reduce its operations in the right-of-way area surrounding the depot, selling off large portions for private development. In 1953 the Portland architectural firm of Church, Newberry, and Roehr designed the First National Bank building, built upon the former site of the Exhibit Building. Other retail and commercial ventures, including the Acme Hardware Building and the C. L. Weintrout/Crater Lake Ford Building were constructed on former railroad land in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The wood frame freight depot, the 1900 depot relocated south following construction of the subject building, remained in use until 1962 when freight duties were moved into the 1910 building. Used for storage and the offices of Southern Pacific's motor freight division, the 1900 depot was razed in 1971.²⁶ In 1985 the Southern Pacific closed its freight depot in Ashland and moved those services to Medford as well, making the former passenger depot the sole operating Southern Pacific Railroad facility in Jackson County.

In December 1994, following the closure of the Siskiyou track over the mountains into California and Southern Pacific's announced plan to dismantle that line, the Medford Depot and the entire railroad line through Jackson County were sold to Railtex Incorporated. Railtex re-opened the Siskiyou line to freight service and continues to operate the line under the California and Oregon Pacific Railroad name. In August 1994 the Medford Depot and its site was acquired by the present owners. Current plans call for the complete restoration of the depot and grounds for conversion into a public dining and micro-brewery facility.

²⁶ The long-vacant site of the freight depot is now the downtown transfer point of the Rogue Valley Transportation District, providing bus service to the downtown Medford area.

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

SUMMARY:

With the post-1981 demolition of the Wells-Fargo Express building, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot became the sole structure standing east of the tracks in the right-of-way between Sixth and Fourth streets. Today, it is the only structure in Medford directly related to the Southern Pacific Railroad Company during its era of passenger service to the valley. The Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is one of only two standing depot structures in Jackson County related to the Southern Pacific Railroad.²⁷ As such, through its direct relationship to the railroad and its role in the development of Medford itself and Jackson County as a whole, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is significant under Criterion "A" for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Essentially unchanged from its historic appearance, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot retains a high degree of integrity to its original design, use of materials, and overall character. Located upon its original site and retaining a strong visual connection to the railroad tracks, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot remains a dominant visual landmark within the core commercial area of Medford. As the sole remaining southern Oregon example of the masonry depot structures built by the Southern Pacific along its north-south main line during the first decade of the 20th century, the Medford S P R R Passenger Depot is also significant under Criterion "C" for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

²⁷ The Ashland Depot Hotel, South Wing, (1888/1937) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991 following its relocation. A third depot, the small Rogue River Valley Railroad Depot, still stands in Jacksonville and is a part of that city's National Landmark District.

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Bibliography

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Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

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Section Number: 10 Page: 1

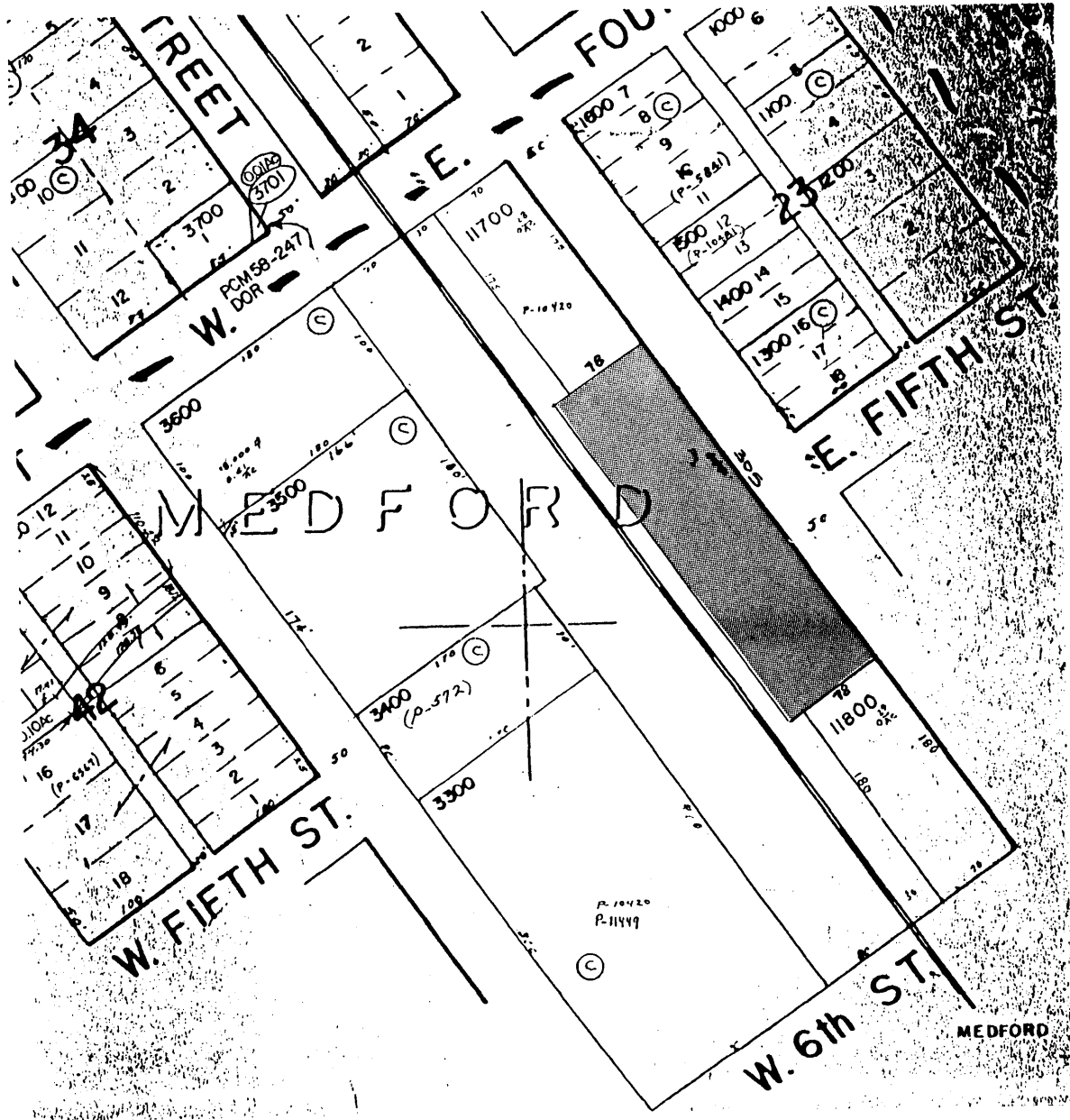
Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nominated parcel includes all that portion of the original Oregon and California Railroad "Depot Grounds" conveyed to the present owner by Railtex Incorporated in the Fall of 1995, essentially a rectangular tract with 305.90 feet of frontage along North Front Street that runs west 78.10 feet, toward the remaining right-of-way associated with the railroad track through the City of Medford, Oregon. The nominated parcel is described on Jackson County Assessor's plat 372W25AA. Please refer to Footnote #1 in Section 7 of this document for additional information.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

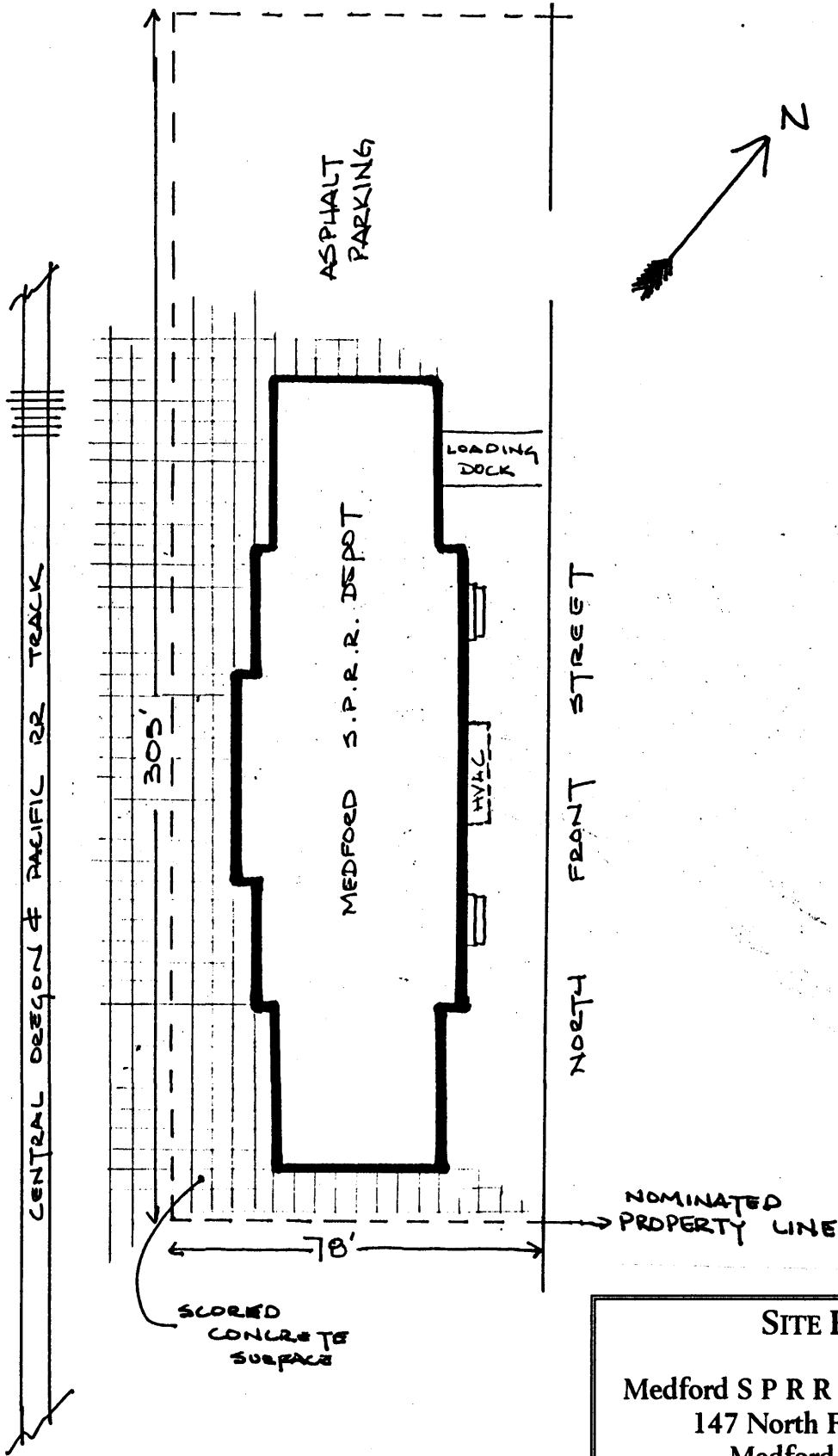
The nominated parcel includes the entire historic site of the Medford Southern Pacific Railroad Depot that remains associated with the structure. Essentially the parcel consists of the building footprint itself, the majority of the concrete passenger deck and a 78' x 120' asphalt parking area to north, being as shown in the attached site plan.



JACKSON COUNTY ASSESSOR'S
 MAP
 — 37S-2W-25AA —
[nominated portion is shaded]

Medford S P R R Passenger Depot
 147 North Front Street
 Medford Oregon

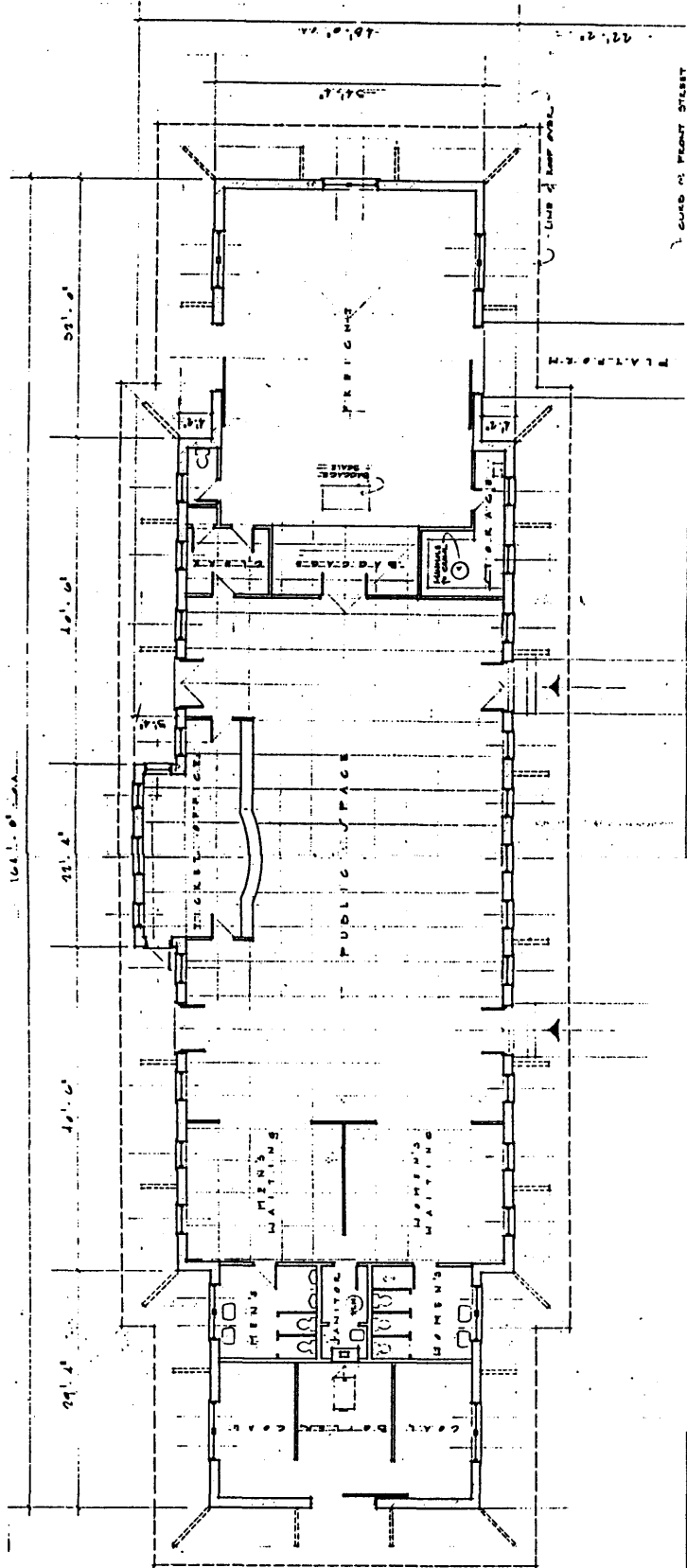
RECEIVED
 MAR 07 1996
 STATE PARKS AND
 RECREATION DEPARTMENT



SITE PLAN

Medford S P R R Passenger Depot
147 North Front Street
Medford Oregon

after Mike Cassella, Cassella Design



INTERIOR PLAN
 (AS BUILT)
Medford S P R R Passenger Depot
147 North Front Street
Medford Oregon
after Mike Cassella, Cassella Design

P H STOCK YARD

235

(63)

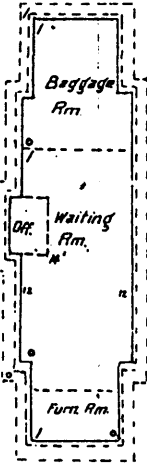
LEGION ENTER VALUE P H TRACKS

THE CUDRHY BRICKS. COS. W. HO.

235
(72)

ROGUE RIVER FRUIT & PRODUCE ASSN'S. W. HO.

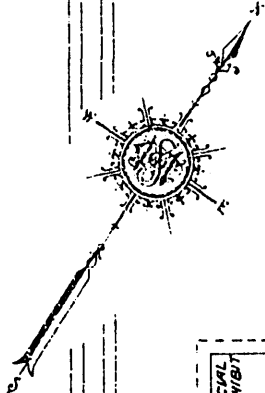
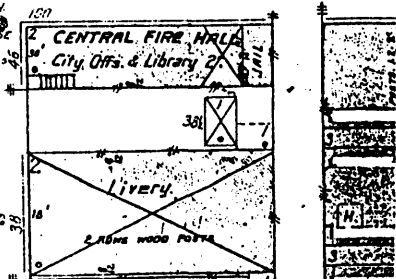
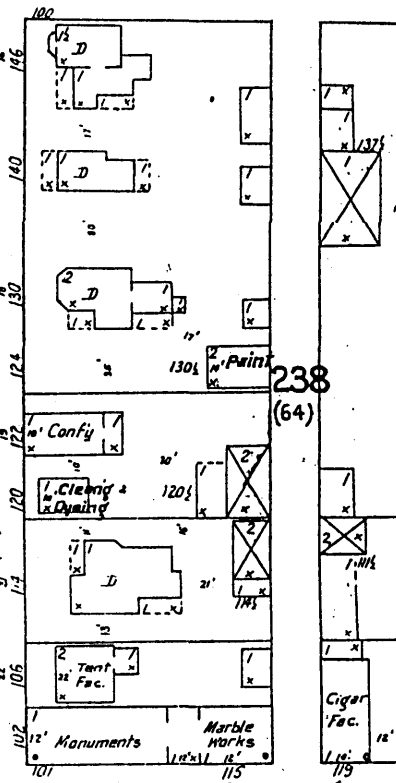
S. P. CO'S. PASSENGER DEPOT



FRONT (D)

6" W.P.

60' 5TH E.
60' 6TH E.



50



SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP
 — 1927, UPDATED TO 1937 —
Medford S P R R Passenger Depot
147 North Front Street
Medford Oregon

DEDICATION

Medford
Passenger Depot



SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY
LINES IN OREGON

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Section Number: PHOTOGRAPHS Page: 1 Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

1. Historic View: West- and North-facing elevations
Looking: SE, across tracks
Photographer: Frank Hull
Date of Photograph: c. 1911
Negative: Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection, Neg # 14946
2. Historic View: North-facing elevation, with train and crowd
Looking: South
Photographer: Unknown
Date of Photograph: c. 1911
Negative: Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection, Neg # 5177
3. Historic View: West-facing elevation,
Looking: SE, from across the main tracks
Photographer: Unknown
Date of Photograph: c. 1910-11
Negative: Terry Skibby Collection, Ashland
4. Historic View: Turning circle and Depot Grounds
Looking: NW, from modern-day Sixth Street intersection
Photographer: Unknown
Date of Photograph: c. 1915
Negative: Image from the R. Lohr Collection, Neg. in Collection of the Author
5. Current View: East-facing elevation
Looking: NW, from North Front Street
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author
6. Current View: West-facing elevation
Looking: NE, from across main tracks
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author

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Section Number: PHOTOGRAPHS Page: 2 Medford S P R R Passenger Depot

7. Current View: South-facing elevation [Boiler\Furnance Room]
Looking: North, from adjacent parking lot
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author
8. Current Detail: Freight Door, Boiler Room
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author
9. Current Detail: Eave and Bracket construction, SW corner
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author
10. Current Interior View: Central [Main] Space
Looking: North, over original ticket counter
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author
11. Current Interior Detail: Wainscot and entry to Baggage area
Looking: NW
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: August 1995
Negative: Collection of the Author