

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

MAP 1 - 1982

HISTORIC NAME: Northern Pacific Depot COUNTY: Aitkin  
 CURRENT NAME: CITY/TWP.: Aitkin City  
 LEGAL DESC.: See continuation sheet ADDRESS: Trackside location west of Minnesota Ave. (US Rte. 169)

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>  X  </u>	Excellent <u>      </u>	Local <u>  X  </u>	Primary <u>Transportation</u>
Structure <u>      </u>	Good <u>  X  </u>	State <u>      </u>	Secondary <u>      </u>
Object <u>      </u>	Fair <u>      </u>	National <u>      </u>	Others <u>      </u>
District <u>      </u>	Deteriorated <u>      </u>		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes   X   No        Restricted   X   PRESENT USE: Museum  
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes   X   No         
 OCCUPIED: Yes   X   No       

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1916 ORIGINAL USE: Passenger Depot  
 ORIGINAL OWNER: Northern Pacific Railroad ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Aitkin County Historical Society, 316 1st Ave. NE, Aitkin, MN 56431. Property leased from Burlington Northern Inc.	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <u>  X  </u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Aitkin County Historical Society, 316 1st Ave. NE., Aitkin, MN 56431.	UTM REFERENCE: Aitkin MN Quad. 7.5 15 / 445740 / 5153150
FORM PREPARED BY: Mark Haidet	
DATE: February 1981	

**DESCRIPTION:**  
 The Northern Pacific Depot occupies its original trackside location west of Minnesota Avenue (US Route 169) a short distance south of Aitkin's central business district. The Mission Revival style depot, erected 1915-16, is a rectangular brick structure resting on a concrete foundation. It consists of a 1½ story gable-roofed central office section flanked by single story hip-roofed wings. The east section originally housed separate men's and women's waiting rooms; the baggage room occupied the west end. The office section includes a rectangular bay on the track side and gabled dormers with fanlights. A stone watertable runs the perimeter of the structure beneath the regularly spaced rectangular windows. The structure's principal decorative features are its red clay tile roof and its scalloped, parapeted gable ends. A brick platform surrounds the structure. The depot retains its original interior and exterior design integrity. The Aitkin County Historical Society currently maintains a museum in the structure.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**  
 The Northern Pacific Depot in Aitkin is significant as a local landmark symbolizing the importance of the railroad in the growth and development of the community. Aitkin was founded shortly after the Northern Pacific Railroad constructed the initial rail line through Aitkin County in 1871. The small settlement quickly developed into the region's leading supply center for the extensive logging operations which accompanied arrival of the railroad and, later, as the area's foremost agricultural service center. By 1900 Aitkin's population had swelled to nearly 2000. Increased business and agricultural activity and heightened awareness of Aitkin's prominent regional position resulted in community demand for improved rail facilities. Aitkin's citizens considered the old depot grossly inadequate to meet the ever-increasing passenger traffic generated in Aitkin. Construction of a new depot quickly became a matter of civic pride. The Northern Pacific Railroad delayed action for several years before succumbing to mounting pressure in 1915. The depot served the community's passenger transportation needs until the 1940s when passenger service was discontinued. The railroad's significant role in Aitkin's development has been recognized by the Aitkin County Historical Society which acquired the depot for museum purposes in 1972.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aitkin Independent, 1910-1911.

Aitkin Independent-Age, 1912-1916.

Shober, R.H. Letter to Felix Kaplan of the Aitkin County Historical Society with an enclosed copy of the railroad's construction records. (Copy in Minnesota SHPO files).

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

That part of Burlington Northern Railroad Company right-of-way in the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 26 T47N, R27W described as follows: Beginning at the point of intersection of the west line of Minnesota Ave. and the south right-of-way line of said Burlington Northern Railroad Company, thence westerly along right-of-way line 235', thence northerly 80', thence easterly 235', thence southerly 80' to point of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper                       
*Albion L. Lyman*  
11/19/89

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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**Note: These changes apply to  
Northern Pacific Depot in Aitkin  
County, Minnesota.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** 82002926

**STATE:** MINNESOTA

**COUNTY:** Aitkin

**RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):**

**CITY:**

**VICINITY OF:**

**ADDRESS:** 20 Pacific St. S.W.

**CERTIFICATION DATE:**

**REMOVED DATE:**

**COMMENTS:**

*Nina M. Archabal*

**Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer**

JUN 17 1988

**Date**