

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received JAN 2 1987

date entered JAN 29 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

RECEIVED

historic SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOT

AUG 26 1986

and/or common Southern Pacific Depot

OHP

2. Location

street & number 430 Orange St.

n/a not for publication

city, town Chico

n/a vicinity of

state California code 06

county Butte

code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Southern Pacific Land Company

street & number 1 Market St.

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of

state California 94105

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Butte County Recorder

street & number 25 County Center Drive

city, town Oroville

state California 95965

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Chico Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records City of Chico, Planning Office

city, town Chico

state California 95926

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The single-story, wood frame Chico Southern Pacific Depot is situated at the NW corner of East 5th and Orange Streets on the west side of a long parcel which includes a small paved and a larger unpaved parking lot. It sits in the midst of a mixed area of multifamily residences and small industrial/commercial warehouses and shops. The long, low profile rectangular structure stretches parallel to the railroad tracks. It exhibits the distinctive appearance of Stick-Eastlake style wooden depots constructed during the 1880s and 1890s which were still important features in many rural towns until fairly recently. Alterations are confined primarily to the waiting room; however, a 1986 fire damaged a portion of the roof. Restoration is planned.

The waiting-room/agent's office/baggage room at the southern end dominates the building. The high, hipped roof with flared eaves has a deep overhang which creates a band of constantly shifting shadow across the face of the building. The original shingle roof was overlaid with a seamed metal roof at some point. The ridge poles with decorative finials had been removed prior to the installation of the metal roof. The original flared brick chimney was replaced with a simple banded stack in the same central ridge location. Another brick chimney with an inverted metal funnel device is placed further to the north over the shed area,

Single gabled dormers extend from the east and west sides providing most of the building's ornamentation. Each gable features triple double-hung, 12/4 sash windows with curved brackets extending to the clipped and grooved bargeboard. The gable is clad with staggered shingles on a base of narrow vertical tongue and groove siding.

The body of the station is clad in drop siding with the surface divided into simple geometric panels formed by flat board molding. Windows are 4/4 double-hung sashed with an 18-light fixed window above each. They are all in pairs or triples except for one pair at the southeast corner which has only one 4-light sash under each multipaned fixed sash.

The roof on the west side extends over the track-side bay centered under the gable. One of the 4 windows in the bay was converted into a door at an early date. Three doors open from the east and 4 from the west side into the station. (date.)

The only ornament aside from the gables is the shaped kneebrace brackets extending from the molding to the exposed rafters which are characteristic of this style of depot and define the shadow line.

A long shed on a high raised cement foundation extends north from the waiting room section. It has a low hip roof with the same seamed metal roof over shingles and deep overhang.

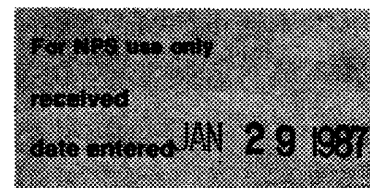
The design emphasis is concentrated on the south end but the whole structure is tied together with the use of flat molding dividing the surface into rectangular patterns and the same brackets extending along the eave line.

Narrow, open loading platforms extend along each side of the shed area. Five large, sliding doors open from each side to the long, open interior.

The interior of the depot has been renovated several times, e.g., in 1909, a women's "retiring room" was added. In 1984, due to community and county-wide efforts, the south end of the building was leased from S.P. by the city of Chico for use as the Amtrak waiting room. The former men's and women's waiting rooms were combined into one and new restrooms installed. The cumulative effect of these alterations has removed the historic interior character of the waiting room.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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A fire started in the shed section on April 5, 1986, which damaged the roof and the southern section of the shed area, then burned into the attic of the waiting room and destroyed portions of the roofs of the two cross gables; the eastern gable roof was the more heavily damaged. The exterior ornamental detailing on the gables still remains intact. The City of Chico is presently negotiating with Southern Pacific to purchase the depot. A local architectural firm has been hired to replace the damaged portions of the roof and stabilize the building until long-range restoration and adaptive reuse plans are defined. Original construction plans exist and will be used as a guide for an accurate restoration of fire-damaged areas.\*

The depot is the only historic feature located on the property; the eastern portion of the property is occupied by a paved parking lot. No other features exist within the nominated boundaries.

Resource Count: One contributing building.

\*NOTE: The City of Chico has adopted a three phase restoration plan:

Phase I: Restoration of the waiting room section to its appearance prior to the fire. Work is scheduled for completion by February 4, 1987.

Phase II: Stabilization of the warehouse section, including the roof and structural members. Work is scheduled to begin in January, 1987.

Phase III: Restoration of the warehouse section as funds are available.

The restoration work will utilize historic plans and photographs to ensure the highest possible level of historical authenticity.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1892

Builder/Architect unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The S.P. Depot was built in 1892 for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Its erection was the culmination of a nearly 15-year battle by the community to win replacement of the cramped and shabby depot which was originally provided on the same site in 1870 by the California & Oregon Railroad upon the inauguration of rail service to Chico. The principal significance of the depot is its historic function of providing area citizens with efficient access to the rest of the state and nation. Chico is located approximately 100 miles north of Sacramento. While much about its natural setting is desirable, its remote location obstructed its rapid connection to commercial markets. The Chico depot handled not only passengers but significant amounts of freight such as timber and agricultural produce.

No less significant was the S.P. Depot's function of providing a dignified arrival point for prominent public figures. Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy all made official campaign stops at which large, enthusiastic crowds greeted their rhetoric. During the Eisenhower campaign, vice-presidential nominee Richard Nixon left the train in Chico to make the historic phone call to General Eisenhower seeking to be kept on the Republican ticket despite damaging allegations about his connections to wealthy supporters. The "Checkers" speech evolved from Eisenhower's response to this phone call.

During the 1880s, railroad magnate, Charles Crocker, referred to in the Chico papers as "Charlie Crocker," stopped his private car at the Depot on several occasions to guide his friends around the town and the Bidwell Ranch.

More ordinary citizens associated the Depot with significant moments of duty or pleasure. Local soldiers left from there to participate in the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, and to subdue Pancho Villa. In a happier vein the community gathered to greet the circuses that provided popular summer entertainment as late as the 1950s. Scenes from the movie "Magic Town" were shot to the S.P. Depot.

Since 1983, the place of the depot in Chico has revived in concert with the provision of Amtrak passenger service. Rehabilitation of the depot's south end provided secure, comfortable waiting space. This space has been temporarily closed pending repairs to the building from damage suffered during a fire in April 1986. The growth in Chico ridership underlines the modern function still provided by this nearly 100 year-old structure. And the great show of community interest and support during the 1983-84 rehabilitation and following the 1986 fire indicates that it still holds an important place among the citizens of the area.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Chico Chronicle Record. Nov. 21, 1891

Chico Daily Enterprise. Sept. 16, 1909

Chico Record. Jan. 11, 1911; March 21, 1911

Historic photographs from CSU Chico, Meriam Library, Special Collections

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.56 acre

Quadrangle name Chico, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	0	5	9	9	0	0	0	4	3	9	7	4	8	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification City of Chico: 4-11-3-1

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 of Block 74 (excluding the railroad tracks) from Official Map of the City of Chico, recorded Jan. 19, 1863 in Book 1 of Maps, p. 43, Official Records of Butte County. Boundaries are drawn to encompass the depot on

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries its present 92½' x 265' (approximate) lot.

state n/a code  county n/a code

state  code  county  code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Giovanna R. Jackson & Michele Shover

organization Chico Heritage Association

date August 1986

street & number P.O. Box 2078

telephone (916) 345-2005

city or town Chico

state California 95927

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Matten

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11/19/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

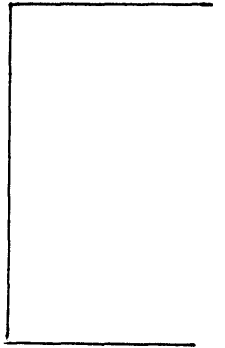
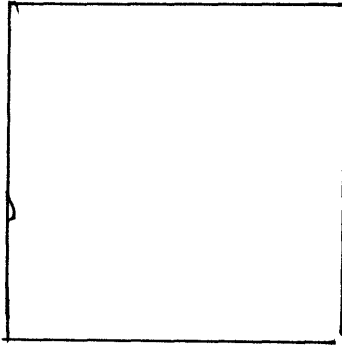
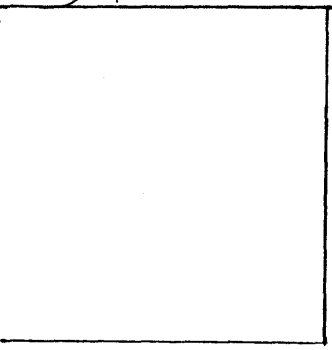
located in the

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

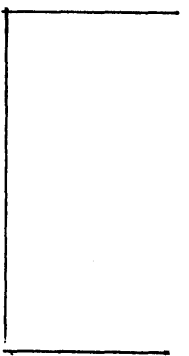
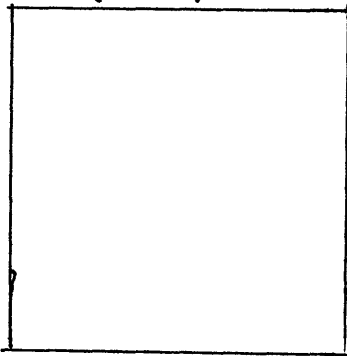
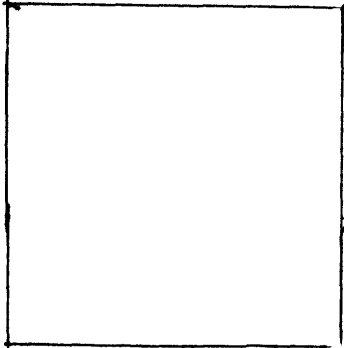
C 1

OAK Street



Walnut Street

(Highway 32)



CEDAR Street

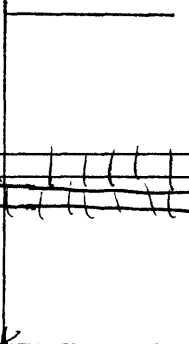
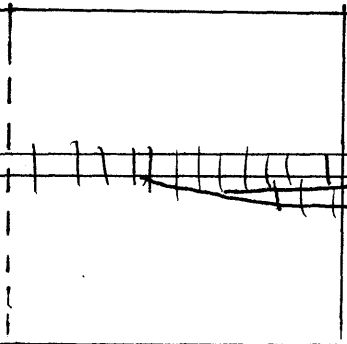
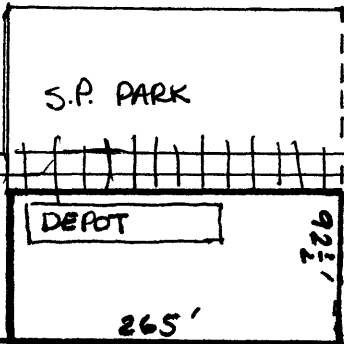
S.P. PARK

DEPOT

92'

265'

W. 5th Street

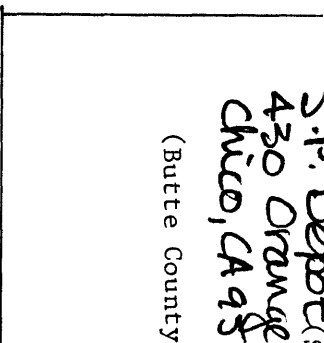
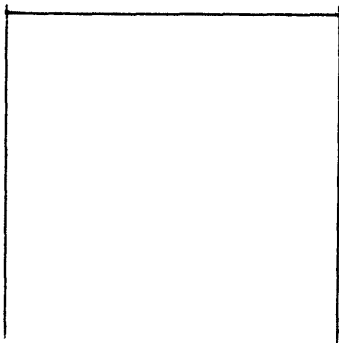
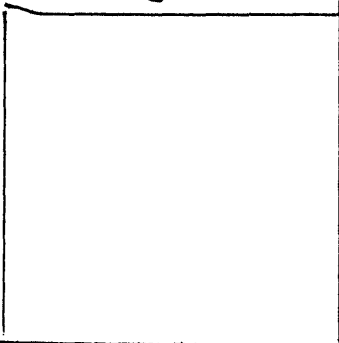


Orange Street

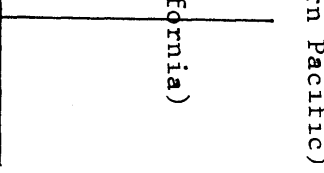
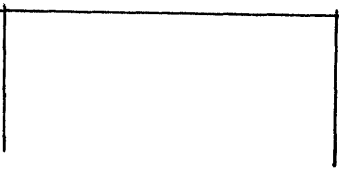
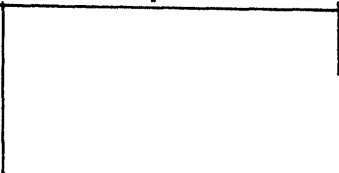
W. 4th Street

W. 3rd Street

Street



Cherry Street



Map not to scale

217 DEPOT (Southern Pacific)  
430 Orange St.  
Chico, CA 95928  
(Butte County, California)

