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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 400 Carlsbad Village Drive (Elm Avenue) NA not for publication  
city, town Carlsbad NA vicinity  
state California code CA county San Diego code 073 zip code 92008

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private Land: NCTD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local Building	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Note: Only the building is being nominated.  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.  
Heade R. Craig Aug 25, 1992  
Signature of certifying official Date  
California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Entered in the National Register

Delores Byers 9/30/93

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social/Meeting Hall Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Gothic

Other: Folk Victorian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Wooden Posts

walls Wood

roof Wood

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**PRESENT AND HISTORICAL APPEARANCE**

The Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot, a combination station of Folk Victorian/Carpenter Gothic Style is located on its original site along the eastern side of the railroad tracks between Elm Avenue (Carlsbad Village Drive) and Grand Avenue in the City of Carlsbad, California (Figure #1 and #2). It was designed in 1887 by Santa Fe Railroad architect Fred R. Perris as a one story wooden structure roughly rectangular in plan view (24' x 64') with steeply pitched cross gables and long sweeping extensions which create a wide overhang around the periphery of the building. The structural form was pre-determined by its historic function and technologies of construction. The structure served as a passenger/freight depot form 1887 until 1960.

The only changes to the original fabric of the Depot, other than painting, occurred during an award winning 1987 renovation. The Carlsbad Depot still retains the majority of its original form and design elements. Still on its original site, the Depot has been maintained and the structure still reflects its original purpose (i.e. railroad passenger/freight depot). The basic plan, shape, roof configuration, materials and nature of the Depot's use all contribute a cohesive architectural statement to the streetscape and surrounding community plan. The Depot retains its integrity of setting and location. Renovations were made in materials compatible with the original, including return to its original colors. As such, the building is temporally recognizable and retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. (See attached figures for current and historical footprints and photographic comparisons). The Depot is described in terms of form and style below; both discussions reflect historical and current appearance.

**FORM:** In form, the Depot is a one story wooden structure roughly rectangular in plan view (24' x 64') with steeply pitched cross gables and long sweeping extensions which create a wide overhang around the periphery of the building. An approximate 10' wide raised platform extends the length of the north elevation and the northern one-half of the east and west elevations. Originally the

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interior was divided into five spaces: a slightly elevated area on the north end that was used for freight storage (24' x 27'). a small office (17' x 14') an the agents room (17' x 6') within the central area and the passenger waiting area (18.6' x 12') and baggage area (12'x 16') along the southern end. During the 1987 renovation, the baggage area was made into bathrooms and a storage area was created within a portion of the original freight house. The overall footprint of the Depot has not changed since its original 1887 construction. Prior to 1913, the surrounding station area contained a separate 92' long platform a mail stand and a water closet (privy). The mail stand was a standard painted Pierce mail crane. Plans for the privy indicate that it was approximately 8' x 13' with a single and lattice-bordered high hipped roof. Sides were 1" x 8" drop siding and the floor 1" x # " tongue and groove. The Depot itself was styled after similar depots in Encinitas and Elsinore (see attached plans).

The Depot is classified as a "combination station" (Price 1988:134). The term station refers to the Depot, the surrounding yards, side tracks and any associated outbuildings. There were three basic concepts for station design, each had to accommodate the position of the building to the tracks, pathways of arrival and departure, distance allowances for directional trains and covered passenger area. Typically, there are "country stations", "combination stations" and "union stations". The country station was usually a small box-like room providing a part-time office for one person. (This is the type of station that would have been at Fraiser's (Carlsbad) prior to 1887). The combination station usually had three rooms (an office, room for passengers and room for freight). They often had bay windows or at least a track-side protrusion (i.e. Carlsbad, Vista, Del Mar). The union stations were the largest and meant to serve a number of lines. (See attached Figures for 1888/1900/1926 Carlsbad Depot footprint).

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:** Architecturally, the building can be classified as containing wood frame Folk Victorian/Carpenter Gothic design elements; the terms "folk" and "carpenter" implying simple form of a defined style. The choice and combination of design elements selected by the architect were meant to reflect what was perceived as the best qualities of city and country; modern city conveniences melded with country ambiance. See Significance Statement).

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**EXTERIOR STRUCTURAL AND DESIGN ELEMENTS:** (See attached plans for identical Encinitas and Elsinore stations). Although renovated in 1987, the following description applies to both original historical elements and current appearance. Wall Treatment: The exterior contains horizontal shiplap wood siding painted cream with dark green as trim accent. The building has eighteen foot ceilings with nine foot high doors. Roof: The roof is a steeply pitched cross-gable with boxed pediment and a decorated boxed cornice with frieze. An oval decorative element and stick work with horizontal venting element appear under the gables. There is roof cresting along peak and sheet metal flashing. The long, sweeping extension from the eaves create a wide-overhang. Massive lattice-worked braces, evenly spaced around the entire periphery of the building extend from wall to roof to below window transoms. CHIMNEY: The Depot contains two interior chimneys which extend from top of roof. They are plain in design and composed of brick. WINDOWS: The Depot contains tall, narrow Victorian style nine light windows (large central light with sash divisions near edges). These occur as singles, doubles and triplets. Vertical strips extending beyond top and bottom of window lengths serve to "frame" them. Sixteen light transoms occur above. DOORS: Wood slab doors and large sliding doors for freight area. DECKING: Extending the entire northern length of the building and approximately one-half the length of the east and west elevations is a wooden deck composed of 2" x 2" supported by 4" x 4" redwood posts.

In 1987, through a State Historic Preservation Grant supplemented by individual donations, Wayne Donaldson, a noted architect in historic preservation and restoration, supervised the Depot restoration. No documented changes to either the interior or exterior of the building had occurred prior to this date. Work was done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Projects and the essential characteristics were not changed. Exterior work involved restoring the exterior of the building to its original colors, installation of a new fire retardant wood shingle roof, replacement of roof cresting, exterior stairs and broken window panes, repair of existing wood louvers, replacement with in-kind missing/deteriorated boards of the freight deck and wheel chair access, plumbing and electrical upgrading to code, installation of new railing, reinforcement of existing masonry chimney below ridge line and repainting of existing "Carlsbad" Depot sign. Interior changes occurred in the southeast

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corner where restrooms were upgraded. The 1987 restoration of the Depot demonstrated meticulous attention to detail and only where necessary were portions of original siding, window panes, freight decking and detailing replaced. Based on comparative data there have been on alterations, additions or other changes that over time have affected the historic integrity of the building. (See enclosed Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot Rehabilitation Plans).

City of Carlsbad, California, Resolution No. 8921 (1986) designated the Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot as Historic Site H-1. In 1988, the restoration project was one of ten winners in Save Our Heritage People in Preservation Program. It was awarded the Civic Award for the high quality of restoration work and for the fact that it is on its original location and has, without compromising its integrity, been readapted for a public use. The same year the project was awarded Special Commendation in Historic Preservation by the City of San Diego.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation, Settlement

Commerce, Architecture

Period of Significance

1887 - 1943

Significant Dates

1887

Dates span time period

important for transportation,  
settlement and commerce.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Perris, Fred R.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Late Victorian/Carpenter Gothic styled Santa Fe Depot, constructed in 1887 by Architect Fred Perris is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The building conveys a tangible feeling of Carlsbad's and San Diego County's history by its association with a series of events and social/economic patterns that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Carlsbad's history through the inter-twined themes of rail transportation (1887-1957), commerce (1887-1960) and settlement (1887-1890's). The building is also significant under Criterion C as the only pre-1900, in situ depot of this particular style remaining within the County of San Diego. The Santa Fe Depot embodies the distinctive characteristics of a method and style of construction used in the late 19th century, the selected style of which emotes the Victorian ideals of rural "country" living. The physical structure retains original qualities that reveal function and technology of its construction. Although a 1987 restoration has occurred, the changes are compatible with the original and were conducted in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Preservation Projects.

**CRITERION A**

**HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE**

Transportation: 1887-1943

Commerce: 1887-1943

Settlement: 1887-1890's

The Carlsbad Depot, constructed in 1887, was the site of Carlsbad's first commercial and public building and served continuously from

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1887-1960 as Carlsbad's sole railroad stop for incoming and outgoing passengers and goods. Further, the very settlement and growth of the City of Carlsbad was the result of railroad influence along the Southern California coast. As such, the Depot has played a vital role in Carlsbad's history. Though built as transportation centers for people and freight, train depots often served other functions within a community. When it opened in 1887, the railroad shared space with the telegraph and Wells Fargo Offices. For a brief period from 1915-1920, it also housed the only general store in the community.

Compared to other major California cities, San Diego's first railroad line was slow in coming. San Francisco had become the terminus of the first trans-continental line in 1869. By 1876, the Southern Pacific had reached Los Angeles. In 1881, California Southern began building a line from San Diego to San Bernardino, via Oceanside and Fallbrook. The coming of the railroad and the subsequent rate wars between the two railroad giants, Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, caused a huge population boom and speculative land development throughout the San Diego area.

The California Southern, with its link to a trans-national railroad, proved crucial to the transformation of the San Diego region from a sparsely populated farming community with little to no direct outlet to a series of small cities of emerging industry, mercantile and agricultural expansion. The tremendous wealth bestowed on the railroads by the government gave extraordinary power to the men who controlled the lines. The Northern-Pacific, Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads all received land grants of up to 20 square miles for every mile of track laid. They hoped to sell these granted lands and increase rail usage by spurring population growth. Potential land investors were given cheap transportation. Advertising in the form of excessive accolades dominated the presses of the east and Europe. Advertisement by the railroads began the myths of the "good life" and "Eden on earth" that are still perpetuated in relationship to the Southern California Coast.

The California Southern Railroad was first put into service to Carlsbad in 1881. Its chosen route determining the very origin of the town. The California Southern was organized in 1880 by Tom Nickerson following Frank Kimball's successful negotiations with

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Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (AT&SF). In 1881, they built a yard and station in National City on land that Kimball had donated. By this date, seven firms had contracted to grade thirty sections of the railroad. Pay was \$1.75/day and by Man the local newspaper reported that between 1500 and 2000 men were working on grading different portions of the line. The completion of the line needed the construction of 241 wooden bridges to by-pass the natural barriers along the coast. The iron rails were purchased in Europe and brought around the horn so that the Southern Pacific could not interfere with delivery. Tracks reached Fallbrook in January of 1882. By 1882, operations were blocked in Colton and Santa Fe took control of the line. The line over Cajon Pass washed out several times and after 1891 was not rebuilt. Instead, the "Surf Line" was constructed from San Diego to the north, providing a more direct link between San Diego and Los Angeles.

By 1889, the California Southern, the Central California and the "Surf Line" became know as Southern California Railroad entirely owned by Santa Fe. After 1906, the lines only carried the Santa Fe name. Over the years, Santa Fe built depots in National City, San Diego, Del Mar, Encinitas, Carlsbad, Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, Escondido and Fallbrook.

The current wood frame Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot, measuring 24' x 64', was built in 1887 replacing the open shed country station that had served the area since 1881. The first station master was John Faucher who began his duties prior to the completion of the Depot. The coming of the railroad and the subsequent rate wars caused a huge population boom and speculative land development throughout Southern California. The Carlsbad Depot was in continuous operation from 1887-1957 as a passenger station bringing settlers and tourists. The line linked the Southern California coast with Los Angeles and through transfers, with the rest of the nation. From 1887-1960 the Depot also served as the only freight station in Carlsbad. Thus allowing catalog houses, merchandise and goods to enter the community and, when a secure water source was created, the exporting of vegetables, fruits and world famous bulbs and flowers.

Similar architecture was used on other local stations of the era. The stop was originally know as Frazier's Station, referring to the man who in 1883 homesteaded the area and through drilling

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discovered the famous mineral springs. For a time it only served as a brief watering spot. Frazier, before moving here, had lived in Los Angeles and was founder and director of the Los Angeles' Good Samaritan Mission. His previous humanitarian role with the Mission carried into his new life and he offered sips of his water to the railroad tourists. Many of them returned to their homes with claims of having been cured of long-standing ailments after tasting the Carlsbad waters. By 1884, a small farming area and cluster of homes had sprung up around the springs and Depot. During the height of the land boom, thousands of passengers were travelling to the San Diego area, passing and eventually stopping at Frazier's Station. Fame regarding the curative powers of these waters spread and, within three years, Frazier's Station became a destination in itself. Between 1886-1888, the Southern California land boom caused by a competitive railway system reached its peak.

In 1886, four Nebraska immigrants, among them Gerhard Schutte and Samuel Church Smith, eager to invest and enticed by railroad promotion, arrived in the area. They organized the Carlsbad Land and Mineral Company to develop the area's mineral water potential. They immediately purchased Frazier's land plus surrounding acreage totaling 400 acres and laid out the townsite of Carlsbad with the railroad line as the center. The promoters had the mineral waters tested and because of the similarities with curing waters in Carlsbad, Bohemia, they named the new town Carlsbad. By 1887, a town had developed centered around the railroad. The general north San Diego County area became a haven for primarily rich but landless English and immigrants from the midwest. Hotels were built adjacent to the railroad and by 1888 the Depot had been constructed to replace the original shed. The hotels were large Late Victorian structures and the small almost "home-like" Depot served as the entrance to the City. Hundreds of visitors from the U.S. and Europe were drawn to the area by the advertising of the railroad and speculators who touted Carlsbad as both a health resort and the ideal community for retiring or raising a family.

National depression and drought in the beginning years of the 1890's caused the total collapse of the majority of land boom era cities. Although Carlsbad remained on the map, population drastically dropped and the community, like most in California, entered a near thirty year period of little growth (1890-1914). Over the years, the railroad provided the only secure link to the

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outside world and supplies. In 1907, Santa Fe changed the station name to "Carl" to differentiate it from Carlsbad, New Mexico. It did not regain its name until 1917. During the early years of the 20th century, freight costs for shipments of goods from Los Angeles were as low as \$0.75 per 500 lbs. Again, the railroads were attempting to entice people to travel and ship by rail. The Depot housed the station offices, the post office and from 1915 to 1920, a grocery store, operated by then station master R. G. Chase, the Wells Fargo Office and the telegraph office.

With the advent of piped water into Carlsbad in 1915, the agricultural potential of the area was realized and Carlsbad entered a period of rapid growth. The railroad Depot became a focal point for carrying the cash crops away to markets in the north and south. By the early 1920's bulb and flower production soared in the area. These products were shipped via rail throughout the United States. Carlsbad became world famous for its Bird of Paradise and bulbs. The growing popularity of the automobile and the upgrading of roads through the 1920s and 30s added continued pressure to the stability of the railroad. Following World War II, a decline in rail travel nationwide was evident; passenger service at Carlsbad was discontinued in 1957; the Depot was officially closed in 1960.

During its 73 year use as a passenger and/or freight depot (1887-1957 passenger; 1887-1960), and ensuing 32 years as a core building within a growing community, the Depot has retained its physical appearance as its functions at times varied. After initial construction the Depot served as the telegraph and post office, Wells Fargo Express Office and general store. After all service was discontinued, the Model Railroad Club occupied the building for three years. In March of 1963, the building was leased to the City of Carlsbad for \$1 per year. Ten months later, the Depot was donated to the City. In May of 1966, it was sublet to the Depot Restoration Committee for minor roof repairs. In the recent past the structure has housed the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce, Carlsbad Convention and Visitors Bureau and Carlsbad Historical Society Archives.

The building still coherently illustrates its original function and intent. The Santa Fe Depot retains not only the ability to illustrate an architectural type from our past, but it also

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symbolically represents a series of important historical events of which it was, and is, a part.

Because of its basic flexibility, substance and style, it still stands and is used today 102 years after its construction. It structurally and symbolically stands as an important remnant of a past era. As a continuing part of the community, the Depot is able to illustrate and recall the romance and reality of the railroad and its all encompassing impact on the growth of a nation in terms of settlement and commerce. In microcosm, the Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot is a symbol of a transportation network that allowed a broad world-wide flow of people, goods and ideas into and out of a community. It provides a strong visual image of an historic era and it remains in a cohesive context similar to the one it helped foment.

San Diego County contains sixteen depots representing the Santa Fe (9) and Spreckels (7) railroad interests. Four of the nine extant Santa Fe depots and one of the Spreckels' were constructed prior to 1900. However, of those, only the Carlsbad and National City Depots remain in their original locale. The National City Depot, however, is of completely different form and style. Therefore, the Carlsbad building is the sole, in situ structure of this particular style remaining within the County of San Diego. Conceived and constructed during the Southern California land boom of the late 1880's, it stands alone as a remnant of the railroad's role in the birth of a city. The Depot's style reflects the Victorian ideals the railroad and land speculators originally wished to convey when they encouraged settlement of this seaside community.

By 1860, in the United States, clear-cut stylistic distinctions were fading with styles overlapping, copying and modifying earlier forms. Carpenter Gothic, a simple form of Gothic Revival, was typified by steeply pitched roofs, decorated verge boards, wall surfaces and windows extending into gables, lancet windows with tracery and simplified cut-wood scroll design as embellishments (McAlester 1984:197-209). Structures of this genre built after 1865 generally contained stylistic detailing shared by the Victorian Era in particular the more ornate ginger-bread ornamentations. The newly perfected scroll saw allowed for intricate and fanciful decorative ornamentation. With the coming of the railroad, pre-cut detailing became conveniently available

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throughout the nation. The style was used in hundreds of pattern books for country/cottage homes between 1840-1880 in England and the U.S. Andrew Jackson Downing and John Ruskin stressed in the suitability of the style for the country for it was compatible with the natural landscape.

The railroad depot functions as a front door and a back door to a community; the station reflecting the ideals of the larger community. As such, railroad stations generally possess expressive qualities akin to public and institutional buildings in larger cities and in smaller cities they reflect the domestic architecture in scale and design. The choice and combination of design elements selected by the architect Perris for the stations along the San Diego North County Coast reflected the sense of country and the aspects of health, nature and "home" that the word was meant to connote. Architects of this genre strove to create structures which evoked the domestic virtues of protection, security, trust, abundance and optimism.

Since the early 1820's, suburban development evolved throughout the United States emphasizing areas of fertile soil, available water and clean healthful air as well as convenient access to other cities. This movement, professing the borderland good life, was fueled by the expanding railroad. By 1880, it had built into a flood of articles, books and even poetry that nearly overwhelmed publishers in the 1890's and succeeding decades. Many of the earlier settlers to the southern California coastal area were white middle class city dwellers from the midwest or England with limited personal capita. They had rural childhoods or had a sentimental attachment for the soil and sought refuge because of retirement, ill health or economic adversity. Promoters stressed those ideals to the class of settlers they sought to entice into their community. This type of thinking served as a motivational factor for the founders of Carlsbad, who dreamed of creating a town of gracious homes and small farms.

Through a concentrated and intensive advertising campaign throughout the eastern United States and Europe, the Carlsbad area immediately became famous as a spa/health resort; weekly, hundreds of travelers disembarked at the railroad station.

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As designed, the Carlsbad Depot made a strong but appropriate impression on users and viewers. Using a similar design genre, Perris was also responsible for the wood frame Victorian/Carpenter Gothic depots at Oceanside and Encinitas, as well as other depots outside the county; the former was demolished in 1946, the later extensively modified when, in 1972, it was moved to a non-trackside location in Leucadia. The Carlsbad Depot is architecturally significant because it is not only the earliest constructed building of the style extant in Carlsbad, but also because, within San Diego County, it is the only depot of this style constructed prior to 1900 that remains in its original location.

Although the Depot continued to operate as a passenger station until 1957 and a freight station until 1960, nothing of exceptional significance occurred within the last 50 years and the arbitrary date of 1943 is chosen to end the period of significance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre (approx .459)

UTM References

A 

1	1
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4	6	7	4	8	0
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3	6	6	8	8	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

That portion of land lying north of Carlsbad Village Drive, south of Grand Avenue; west of the 30' wide alley and east of a line running parallel to and 30' east of the center line of the 4th district main track.

Portion of APN 203-296-02-00

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes that property which is leased by the City of Carlsbad from the North County Transit District.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patricia Cratty, Senior Management Analyst date 7/2/93  
 organization City of Carlsbad telephone (619) 438-1161 x4395  
 street & number 2075 Las Palmas Drive state CA zip code 92009  
 city or town Carlsbad

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City of Carlsbad

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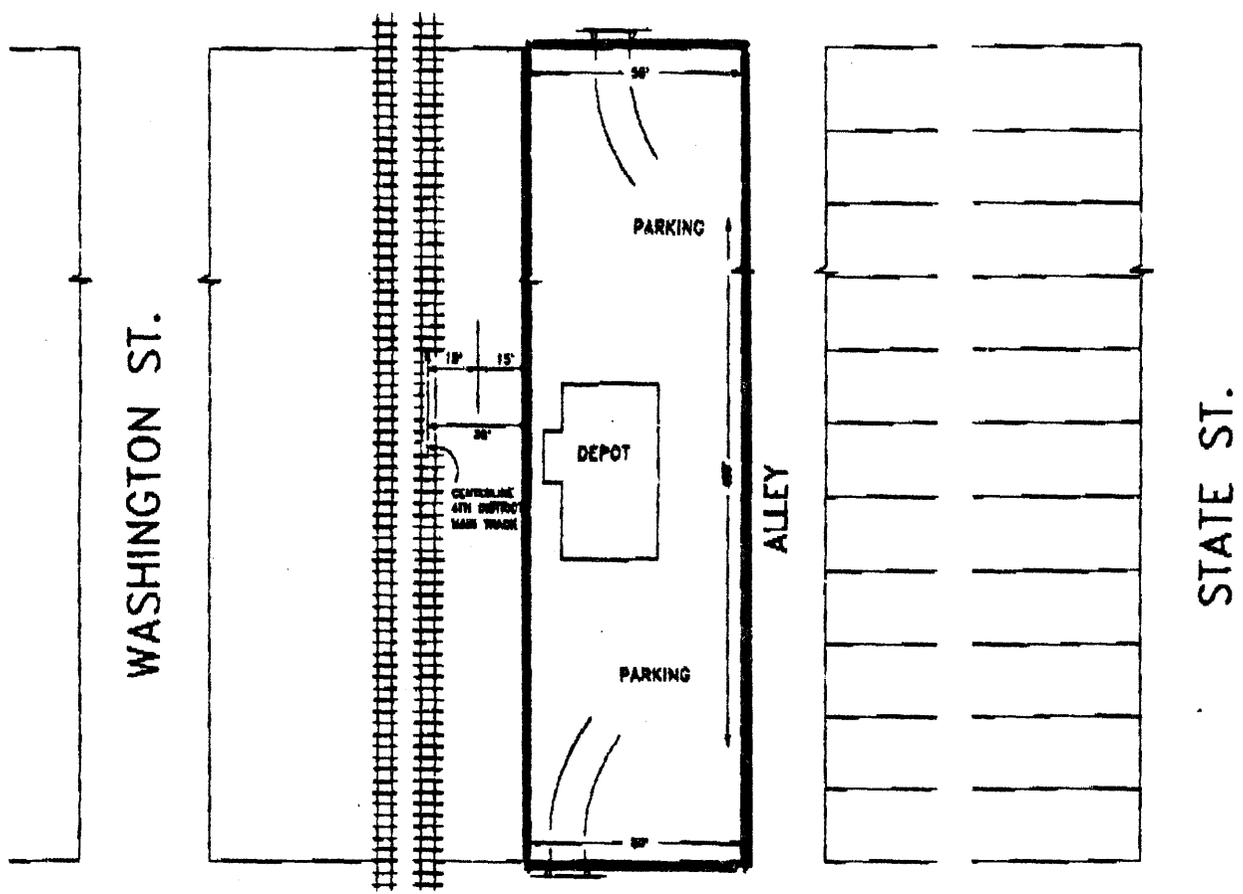
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# CARLSBAD DEPOT

Carlsbad Santa Fe Depot  
400 Carlsbad Village Drive  
Carlsbad, CA  
San Diego County

## GRAND AVE.



## CARLSBAD VILLAGE DR.

SCALE : 1"=40'  
8-24-95 \ C.W.