

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only
received **AUG 5 1985**
date entered

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

historic Northern Pacific Railway Depot and Freighthouse

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 1st Avenue North (no street numbers) N/A — not for publication

city, town Staples — vicinity of N/A

state Minnesota code 22 county Todd code 147

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Burlington Northern, Inc.

street & number 1111 Third Avenue

city, town Seattle — vicinity of N/A state Washington 98101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Todd County Courthouse, Register of Deeds

street & number 215 1st Avenue South

city, town Long Prairie state Minnesota 56347

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society
Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Northern Pacific Railway Depot was built in 1910, adjacent to extensively developed rail service facilities at the division headquarters and yards located at Staples. When built, the depot building accommodated passenger, baggage and express facilities on its lower floor, and offices for the division headquarters on the second floor. Both the depot and an accompanying freight house are sited on a narrow strip of land bordered by the railway yards on the south and 1st Avenue on the north. The depot lies slightly west of 4th Street Northwest, Staples principal commercial street. The freight house is approximately 800 feet west of the depot.

The depot building is rectangular in plan and oriented with its long side parallel to the street and the tracks. It is of brick construction above a poured concrete foundation. Face brick is cream colored pressed brick laid in a butter joint. Single story portes-cochere measuring twenty by twenty-four feet extend from the east and west sides of the depot. The depot building itself measures one hundred fourteen by forty feet.

The styling of the building is Classical Revival. Its form and detailing are simple, a typical characteristic of buildings designed by staff architects of the N.P. Railway's Engineering Department. Stone belt courses are placed at the water table and below the first floor window openings. All window openings are flat arched, and contain double-hung sash. First floor openings are surmounted by fixed upper lights, whose sash are divided into several lights. The roof is hipped. Large hipped dormers are placed at the centers of the north and south side roof sections; smaller hipped dormers originally flanking these and on the east and west roof sections have been removed. At the first floor level, an awning runs continuously around the building even in height to the roofs of the portes-cochere.

Passenger, baggage and express facilities are located on the first floor. The main waiting room, approximately forty feet square, lies west of the center of the building. A ladies waiting room and toilet are at the west end. The baggage and express room is at the far east end of the building. The ticket office lies between the baggage and waiting rooms, and has a projecting bay window which overlooks the tracks. A stairwell between the baggage room and the ticket office provides access to the upstairs offices.

The second floor offices are arranged along a double-loaded central corridor. A small stair off the corridor leads to the attic. Originally used as sleeping rooms for trainmen in transit, it is now used for storage.

The buildings exterior and interior public spaces are in remarkably good, intact condition. The terrazzo floors, glazed brick wainscot, and plaster walls and ceiling on the waiting rooms have not been altered from their original appearance. The roof has had asbestos shingles applied. Several of the upper floor windows have had their sash replaced by plywood panels.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" 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 ca.1902, 1909-10 **Builder/Architect** N.P. Railway Engineering Department

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Northern Pacific Depot and freighthouse in Staples, Minnesota are significant as the sole surviving structures of what were originally extensively developed yard facilities at the railway's division headquarters. The railway dominated the development and the economy from 1889 until well into the twentieth century. Located on the main line of the Northern Pacific line, the Staples depot is also significant as an extremely well-preserved example of the type of work produced by staff architects of the railway.

In 1889 the Northern Pacific rerouted its main line to run between Little Falls and Staples, where it relocated its division headquarters. Prior to this date the community of Staples Mill was only a hamlet whose economy centered around a lumber mill. The railway replaced the mill as the center of the town's economy, and brought in many people to work at the shops and offices that it built. Most early buildings on the yards were frame, but brick was used in the seventeen stall roundhouse and in the boiler and sand houses. Gradually all the frame buildings were replaced by more permanent brick structures. One reason for this may have been the threat of fire. Many buildings in the commercial district of Staples burned in 1899; the railway's freight house burned in 1902.

The railroad's facilities expanded between 1889 and 1910. A second, larger roundhouse was built between 1904 and 1909. Stock yards, used for the feeding and watering of cattle being shipped on the main line, were built in 1908. Of all the structures that were built, only the depot, the freighthouse, and several incidental shed buildings survive.

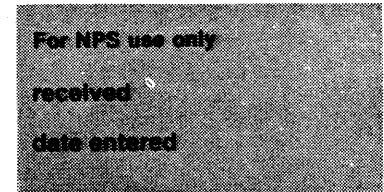
The combination passenger station and office building was constructed in 1909-10 from plans prepared by the staff of the railway's engineering department. The building is similar in design to other station facilities constructed in Minnesota at about the same time including Detroit Lakes (1908), Wadena (1910-13), and St. Cloud (1909). The Staples depot is larger, though, and is in better condition. The depot structure was erected immediately north of an older frame building that had been used for a depot. Following the completion of the present depot, this earlier building was removed.

The freighthouse is currently vacant. The depot serves as the regional passenger facility for the Amtrack passenger system, and its upstairs offices continue in railway use. Both depot and surrounding grounds are in very good condition, altered little since they were built.

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Northern Pacific Railway Depot and Freighthouse, Staples, MN



Continuation sheet Description, cont'd. **Item number** 7 **Page** 1

Surrounding the depot building is a platform of red-colored paving brick laid in a herringbone pattern. This paving extends approximately twenty feet on all sides of the building. Sixteen foot wide platforms also extend along the two tracks nearest the station. One of these tracks was used for west bound trains, the other for east bound. A third track was used for trains bound for Brainerd and Duluth.

A single story brick freight house lies approximately eight hundred feet west of the depot. This building, thought to be built in 1902 following the destruction by fire of an earlier frame freighthouse, measures approximately forty-five by one hundred twenty feet. The building has a low sloping gabled roof, and rests on an elevated poured concrete foundation. A wood platform extends along the front, track side of the building. Wooden doors in segmental-arched openings open onto both the track and street sides of the building. Unlike the depot, this building has not been well-maintained. Its brickwork needs repointing and has begun to deteriorate in several areas.

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Northern Pacific Railway Depot and Freighthouse, Staples, MN
Continuation sheet Bibliography Item number 9

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Fuller, Clara K. History of Morrison and Todd Counties, Minnesota,
Indianapolis, Indiana: B. F. Bowen and Co., Inc., 1915.

Northern Pacific Railway Collection, Division of Archives and Manuscripts,
Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Staples Commercial Club. Golden Anniversary Celebration, 1889-1939.
Staples, Minnesota: Staples World, 1939.

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Continuation sheet

Boundary Description

Item number 10

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Both the depot and freighthouse lie on unplatted railway right of way. Commencing at a point at the southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 16, Original Townsite of Staples, proceed 50 feet due south to a point of beginning. From the point of beginning proceed at an angle 10 degrees 30 minutes west of due south 150 feet; thence at a 90 degree angle northwesterly 1410 feet; thence at a 90 degree angle northeasterly 150 feet; thence at a 90 degree angle southeasterly 1410 feet to the point of beginning.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Northern Pacific Railway Depot and Freighthouse

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MINNESOTA, Todd

DATE RECEIVED: 4/23/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/12/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/29/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/06/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 85003613

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6.4.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

New Owners do not object to listing

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept
REVIEWER Edson Beall DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6.4.08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

April 21, 2008



Dr. Janet Matthews
Keeper, National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 2280, 8th Floor
1201 Eye Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Northern Pacific Railway Depot and Freighthouse, Staples, Todd County, MN

Dear Dr. Matthews:

The above property was determined eligible for listing in the National Register on September 11, 1985. It was not listed because the owners of the property officially objected.

The property has been acquired by new owners and they request that the objection be lifted and the property listed in the National Register. Please see their notarized letter.

If you have questions about this property, please contact Susan Roth, National Register Historian at 651-259-3451, susan.roth@mnhs.org or 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102.

Sincerely,

Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer