

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 Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Passenger Depot
other names/site number 24CA271

2. Location

street & number River Drive North n/a not for publication
city, town Great Falls n/a vicinity
state Montana code 030 county Cascade code 013 zip code 59401

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register n/a

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.

Signature of certifying official Marella Sheffy Date 6-9-88
Montana SHPO

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. Patrick Andrus 10/13/88
 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 of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: depotnot in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Mission Revivalfoundation concretewalls brickroof tileother _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Passenger Depot in Great Falls shares design characteristics with the passenger stations in Butte and Missoula, Montana. All three buildings are located on well-exposed sites, exhibit Mission style tile roofs, and possess exaggerated, square towers visible from great distances in the cities. The tower of the Great Falls depot rises high above the trees along River Park on the Missouri River and has been a landmark in the Great Falls since its construction in 1915. Although the railroad tracks have been removed, the depot's setting otherwise retains a high degree of integrity.

The passenger depot in Great Falls is a two-story building approximately 45' x 250' in dimension with a massive concrete foundation and brick superstructure. The exterior brick, furnished by the local Anaconda Copper Mining Company, was known as "flash" brick. This is the only building in Great Falls in which this burned, unevenly fired brick was used. The square tower rises 135' from the sidewalk to the topmost roof tile, and serves as a giant guide post to the station. The railroad's trademark is set in tile on each of the four sides of the tower. The trademark designs measure 17' by 10' and are placed 100' above the ground. Each sign panel is made up of scores of little pieces of high grade tile set in cement mortar. The joints between the tiles are pointed with colored mortar to match the adjoining pieces, and the overall effect is that of one unbroken piece even at close view. The tiles were made by the American Encuastic Tile Company of Marion, Ohio. These trademark signs on the Great Falls depot gained notoriety as the first of their kind to be used on any railway station in the United States.

The ornamentation of the tower was carried throughout the building, as evidenced by the tiled gabled roof, the blind arcading in the gable ends and the use of limited terra cotta detailing used to enliven the patterned brick work used for belt coursing, the corbelled parapet, and the decorative chimney cap. Although the depot has suffered extensive alterations throughout the interior, the exterior of the building remains essentially intact and a true representation of the times and trade it served.

The windows of the depot are now covered with plywood, and many have been replaced with newer units. However, the original configuration of the first story passenger waiting room has been preserved and consists of a pair of narrow, wooden, one-over-one, double hung units flanking a fixed central pane, with a tripart transom above, which was topped by a round-headed fanlight with radiating

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mullions. The second story windows were one-over-one double hung units, and have been replaced with single sheets of glass. Those of the one-story, baggage and express office portion of the building were large fixed units with multi-light transoms above.

Pressed metal canopies supported by chains are attached to the building above the main entrance doors on the northwest elevation (track-side), the southeast elevation (city-side) and over the two doors at the base of the tower.

Much of the significant interior detailing of the depot was removed during a major renovation that occurred in the early 1970's after the building had stood vacant for fifteen years. Most of the original decorative plaster of the ceiling in the waiting room was preserved, however, as was the decorative iron stairway from the waiting room to the second floor. The ceiling of the second floor was replaced ca. 1972 and six sky lights were installed in the gabled roof area facing west.

The interior of the depot was converted into a mall-like shopping area as a result of this renovation. Decorative wall plaster and tile wainscotting were stripped to expose the building's brick bearing walls. The ticket office, lunch counter, and news stand were demolished. A new entrance foyer through the east doors was constructed and a mezzanine of approximately 800 square feet was built in the original two-story waiting room and ticket office. The smoking room, baggage room and express room were converted into a restaurant, with the kitchen housed in the express room and the remaining floor space utilized for dining. A sprinkler system was installed, and new men's and women's rest rooms were installed. The doors opening onto the train platform, the freight doors, and the doors to the carriage stand have all been replaced or boarded up. The shopping mall closed a few years ago and most of the weathered wood partitions have been removed from the waiting room area. A new renovation of the depot is now planned that will result in the construction of executive office suites.

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)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture
Transportation

1915-1925

1915

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

J.A. Lindstrand and Charles Ranson, architects
F.B. Walker, supervising engineer

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

A landmark in Great Falls, Montana and one of the city's most outstanding historic buildings, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Passenger Depot was completed in January, 1915, at a cost of \$150,000. The building was considered by officials of the railroad to be the finest depot of its kind on the Milwaukee Road between Spokane and Chicago. The depot's 135' tower rises above the city and still bears the Railway's insignia. Great Falls was the first depot in the United States to boast large tiled mosaics on its tower displaying the Railway's trademark. The architectural significance of the building is substantiated by its exquisite proportions, the incorporation of Mission style detailing, and the high degree of originality and sophistication evident in the design. It is one of the finest examples of early 20th Century railroad station architecture in Montana, and compares favorably with the Milwaukee Road's depots in Missoula (National Register: 4/30/82) and Butte (National Register: 10/15/66). Construction of the Milwaukee depot, which transformed its site along the banks of the Missouri River into a landscaped park, also spurred the city to urbanize this section of the city by depressing 1st Ave. North and building a pedestrian overpass that offered safe passage between the commercial core of the city and the depot.

The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway was the last of the transcontinental rail lines to traverse Montana. The line was constructed between 1907-1909, and consolidated Great Falls' position as a major urban center for central Montana. The population increase that followed the construction of the Milwaukee Road and the rapid settlement of the central Montana plains by homesteaders helped transform Great Falls into a major railroad center and marketing terminus, with numerous branch lines emanating from the city. Also, the arrival of this formidable competition forced to Northern Pacific Railroad to rebuild substantial portions of its rail line, upgrade service and reduce shipping rates. The depot was primarily utilized as a facility for passenger service and is a significant reminder of the importance of the railroad to the growth of the city and the State.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Great Falls Tribune: September 19, 1913; July 19, 1914; January 17, 1915; January 17, 1940; February 21, 1971; October 31, 1971; August 17, 1975; August 21, 1975.

"Historical and Architectural Survey of a Selected Area within the Great Falls Revitalization District," Historical Research Associates, Missoula, Montana, September 21, 1984.

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 approximately 3 acres

UTM References

A

1	2
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4	7	6	8	0	0
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5	2	6	1	3	2	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

see continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated land area is a triangular parcel that includes the landscaped area and parking lots immediately surrounding the depot building, bounded by the abandoned railroad lines to the north and south and 1st Avenue North to the west. The nominated three-acre parcel of land was landscaped by the Railroad in 1915 and continues to enhance the setting of the passenger depot.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karen A. Wells
organization Apollo Enterprises date February, 1988
street & number P.O. Box 738 telephone (406) 761-4400
city or town Great Falls state Montana zip code 59401

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The period of significance for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Passenger Depot extends from 1915 to 1925. During this decade, the depot played a very significant role in the history of transportation and commerce in Great Falls, Montana. By 1925, the Great Plains had largely been settled by homesteaders. Four years of drought, pestilence, and falling grain prices after the First World War precipitated one of the worst agricultural depressions in the State's history. New immigration to Montana virtually ceased and, instead, thousands of central Montana homesteaders lost their newly acquired farms to foreclosure. The economy of Great Falls was directly affected by the setbacks in the agricultural sector. The passenger depot played its most important role at the center of transportation and commercial activities in Great Falls between 1915 and 1925, although it did continue in operation until the 1950's.

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Boundary Description:

The nominated property includes that portion of the NE 1/4 of Section 11, Township 20 North, Range 3 East, M.P.M., at Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana, described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the northerly line of First Avenue North and the boundary line common to the rights of way of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company and the Great Northern Railway Company; thence northerly along said boundary line 400 feet; thence westerly at right angles to a point which is 24 feet southeasterly as measured at right angles to the center line of the Chicago, Milwaukee St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company's main track as now there established; thence southwesterly parallel to said track center line to a point on the westerly edge of the retaining wall along the easterly bank of the Missouri River; thence southerly along the west edge of said retaining wall to a point in the northerly line of said First Avenue North; thence easterly along said northerly line to the point of beginning.