

HISTORIC NAME: Rock Island Depot

COUNTY: Rice

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Faribault

LEGAL DESC.: See continuation sheet

ADDRESS:
off 3rd Street and 1st Avenue NE

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

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes _____ No X Restricted _____

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No _____

Unoccupied

OCCUPIED: Yes _____ No X

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1902 ORIGINAL USE: Railroad Depot

ORIGINAL OWNER: Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railway ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: City of Faribault
208 1st Avenue NW
Faribault, MN 55021ACREAGE: Less than one acre XLOCAL CONTACT/CRG.: Rice County Historical Society,
P.O. Box 5, Faribault, MN 55021UTM REFERENCE:
Faribault Quad. 7.5

FORM PREPARED BY: Britta Bloomberg

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DATE: April 1981

DESCRIPTION:

The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Depot is located on the west bank of the Straight River, two blocks east of downtown Faribault. The tracks of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific run on either side of the building, and the original brick platform on the east side is mostly intact. A good portion of the riverfront property in the vicinity is vacant; the Theopold Mercantile Co. Grocery Building (Depot Square) is just west of the building and is the only building in the nearby area.

The 1902 depot is constructed of red brick with rough cut limestone utilized in the lower walls. Stone is also used for sills and a continuous band at the tops of the windows, creating a polychrome effect on the brick. The plan is basically rectangular, and the dominant element of the design is the large hip roof with deep overhanging eaves. The roofline is broken on the east and west facades by gable-roofed pavilions and near the north end by a brick chimney. The east pavilion features a three-sided bay. Fenestration consists of regular rectilinear openings, excepting the arched transom over the west entry and the paired transomed windows in the east bay. Five ornamental brick arches are also centered in the pavilion gable ends, accented by ornamental stone projections at either side.

The depot was constructed for use as a passenger depot and originally contained four rooms. The central pavilion area, housing office and entry, was flanked by men and womens' waiting rooms to the south and north; a baggage room occupied the room to the north of the ladies waiting room. After the 1930s, the building was converted to use as a combination passenger/freight depot, and fenestration alterations were made to the baggage room and ladies waiting room at this time.

The depot has been closed for a decade, and all window and door openings have been boarded. Despite ten years of neglect, the building has suffered a minimum of abuse and retains remarkable design integrity and rehabilitation potential. The railroad's riverfront property is presently for sale.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Depot in Faribault is significant as an important completing component of the railroad network linking Faribault to the major cities of central and southern Minnesota and beyond. It is also significant as the best extant representative of the trackside facilities constructed in Rice County's six platted communities where the railroad played a major developmental role. The depot was constructed in January, 1902 by the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern and turned over to the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific in June of the same year. The line was the last major

(see continuation sheet)

Significance - continued

link of Faribault's rail connections, which had begun in 1864 with the construction of the Minnesota Central (now Milwaukee Road) from Minneapolis to Mendota and Faribault and in 1866 to Owatonna. In 1882 the Minnesota Central constructed a line from Red Wing to Waterville, making east-west connections for Faribault (now serviced by the Chicago Great Western). The construction of the Burlington/Rock Island line in 1902 from Comus (located five miles north of Faribault) to Albert Lea provided more direct access to St. Louis and Chicago markets. Its construction completed Faribault's rail network and secured for the city a position of regional importance as a trade and distribution center, which it has since retained. Although Rice County is crossed by both the Straight and the Cannon Rivers, and four of its platted communities (Faribault, Northfield, Dundas, and Morrystown) were founded as "river towns" and were important early milling centers, all of the towns in the county owe a large part of their growth to the railroad. The Rock Island Depot in Faribault, the heart of Rice County's railroad network, is the best extant trackside facility remaining in the county and represents the prominent role the railroad played in the area's development. It was the fourth depot to be constructed in Faribault, preceded by a Milwaukee Road depot in western Faribault (a "replacement" structure of more recent construction remains on the original site) and two Chicago Great Western depots on the riverfront near 12th Street Northwest (1883, now gone) and near First Street Northwest (late 1890s, also gone). A Milwaukee Road depot (1888) also remains in Northfield but is a substantially altered "replacement" structure (constructed in the 1880s, remodelled in the 1940s).

Bibliography:

Clark, George L., History of Transportation and Roads in Rice County, April 23, 1976.
Sanborn Insurance Company maps, 1905, 1921, 1930.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Part of the east half of block 47 Original Town of Faribault and part of vacated 2nd Avenue N.E. between blocks 47 and 48 described as follows. Begin at a point on the north lot line of lot 1, block 47, 190 feet east of 1st Avenue N.E. Commence Nly 198 feet to the south lot line of lot 5, block 47; thence Ely 160 feet, to a point in vacated 2nd Avenue N.E.; thence Sly 198 ft.; thence Wly 160 feet to point of beginning.