

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED **MAR 21 1975**  
DATE ENTERED **APR 3 1975**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**\* 1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
**El Paso Union Passenger Station**  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
**SW corner of Coldwell at San Francisco** — NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN  
**El Paso** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
**16**  
STATE VICINITY OF COUNTY CODE  
**Texas** **048-141** **El Paso** **141**

**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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input checked="" 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 Railroad Company**  
STREET & NUMBER  
**No. 1 Market Street**  
CITY, TOWN  
**San Francisco** VICINITY OF STATE  
**California**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **El Paso County Courthouse**  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
**El Paso** **Texas**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
**Historic Sites Inventory in El Paso County**  
DATE  
**1970** — FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
**Texas Historical Commission**  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
**Austin** **Texas**



7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Union Passenger Station, built in 1905 in the Neo-Classical style is located on the southwest corner of Coldwell and San Francisco Streets in the southwestern end of downtown El Paso. Designed by the Chicago architectural firm Daniel H. Burnham & Company, the station is primarily a symmetrical building with a six story bell tower on the northeast corner. Ornamentation is restrained, typical of Burnham's buildings after the turn of the century.

The east front of the building is defined by seven equal bays with a pair of windows in each bay. Two stories in height with a clerestory projection over the waiting room. The building was originally constructed of red brick, but was painted white in 1941 as part of a renovation program. A scored effect is achieved on the last bay on either end of the east front by the receding of a header course after each five stretcher courses. By contrast, the five central bays display a smooth brick surface. A simple entablature with dentils and modillions is capped by a balustrade with turned balusters.

A one story portico, three bays in length with four pairs of coupled columns, frames the entrance to the station. Capped with the same entablature and balustrade as that of the wall behind, the portico further alludes to the restrained quality of surface ornamentation. In like manner, a clerestory wall with rounded arched windows projects from the third level center section of the east facade. The same projection encircles the building and is recessed one bay from each of the outside walls. A low pitched hipped roof terminates the composition.

The dominant feature of the east facade, as well as the overall building, is the six story tower. Projecting from the northeast corner, the tower, as it exists today, resembles a Renaissance campanile. The transition from the Classical Revival of the two lower levels into the massive brick walls of the upper levels is somewhat abrupt. Only three small rectangular openings pierce the walls at these levels. Originally the sixth level was defined by a simple beveled water table from which the pair of rounded arches in the belfry projected. A tall spire with wide eaves dominated the composition. A major remodeling of the belfry in 1941 resulted in the removal of the spire and its replacement with a low-pitched, red-tiled roof. Each of the four facades of the belfry were also altered with a heavy projecting cornice replacing the simple beveled water table, and the framing of the twin arches in pilasters supporting an entablature.

(see continuation sheet)



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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

The north and south facades are symmetrical and relatively devoid of extraneous details. There are five bays on each side defined by a pair of windows in each bay. A stucco shed was added in 1941 on the ground level of the north facade alongside the tracks. This same shed extends around the back of the building until it intersects the Harvey House Restaurant wing.

The west facade, or back of the station, is symmetrical to the front. The Harvey House wing projects from the last two bays at the southeast corner. Rectangular in plan, the one story projection measures approximately thirty by eighty feet and is Romanesque in character. Windows are segmentally arched with one light per sash. A corbel table is substituted for the cornice on the station proper.

The plan of the station is as simple as the exterior composition. Designed according to a grid system with approximately fifteen feet between the columns, all offices open into a central waiting room. Rectangular in plan the room measures three equal bays in width and five equal bays in length, or approximately 45 feet by 90 feet. Much in the style of a covered atrium, the space has a ceiling height of 45 feet, the upper ten feet being comprised of a clerestory projection. Massive square columns project from the ground floor and support a heavy entablature at the third floor level. Beyond this cornice the rounded arched clerestory windows are spaced at equal intervals between the columns. A gallery with simple balustrade encircles the space at the second floor level, a design feature used frequently by Burnham's office during this period. Offices open onto this gallery from four sides.

Marble tiles form decorative patterns on the main floor of the waiting room. The ticket kiosk along the west wall was remodeled in 1969 to accommodate bus passengers while the new bus terminal was being completed. To the left of the kiosk on the west wall the doors enter the Harvey House Restaurant. A space three bays in length and one bay in width defines the entrance hall on the east side of the building. A stairway on both the north and south walls lead to the second floor gallery. Twelve oak double benches are the only furnishings in the waiting room.



# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1905

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Daniel H. Burnham

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The El Paso Union Passenger Station, a Neo-Classical railroad station built in 1905, is an important historical landmark representing El Paso's importance as a transportation center. Built as the first union station in the United States designed expressly for the purpose of handling international traffic, the depot marks an important epoch in the history of U. S. railroads.

Due to the existence of both the Santa Fe and Chihuahua cattle trails through El Paso in the early 19th century, as well as the city's important crossroads location, El Paso developed into a great railroad center in the 1880's. The El Paso Union Passenger Depot Company was incorporated on February 7, 1903, for the purpose of planning a new facility to meet the mounting passenger train movement on a national, as well as an international basis. The railroads forming the union were the Southern Pacific, Texas & Pacific, Santa Fe, and Nationale de Mexico.

The El Paso Union Passenger Depot Company chose R. O. Coltrin as the first president and J. C. Love as the first vice president of the new organization. Commissioned as architect for the proposed building was Daniel H. Burnham & Company of Chicago, one of the most influential architectural firms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Buchanan and Powers, general contractors for the project, began construction in 1904. Located in downtown El Paso at the intersection of San Francisco Avenue and Coldwell Street, the depot was completed in November 1905 and opened for business on March 1, 1906. The first year of operation saw 22 trains per day arriving and departing from the station.

The station as it originally existed was a structure in the Neo-Classical Revival style with a tower and steeple. This tower was reportedly used during Mexican Revolutionary times as a look-out. An exterior remodeling project in 1941 added various Spanish Colonial Revival motifs, a not too uncommon practice for the time. Other minor

(see continuation sheet)



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Moody's Transportation Manual, 1974 edition.

El Paso Times: 8-28-74, 8-30-74, 7-21-72.

Hines, Thomas S. Daniel H. Burnham and Company; Oxford University Press, New York, 1974.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY three *120M OK*

UTM REFERENCES

A | 1,3 | 3,5,8 | 3,4,0 | 3,5 | 1,4 | 3,0,0 |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joe R. Williams - Project Director; Stephen Smith - Restoration Const.

ORGANIZATION

Texas Historical Commission

DATE

March 14, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 12276

TELEPHONE

512-475-3094

CITY OR TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas

## 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.

SIGNATURE

*Joel Johnson*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE March 14, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*A. P. Martensen*

DATE

*4/15/75*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*[Signature]*

DATE

APR 2 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



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alterations were made in 1969 to accommodate the Greyhound Bus Lines while a new terminal was being built.

The depot saw more traffic during World War II than at any other time, as did most railroad passenger stations in the U. S. However, passenger traffic declined steadily after the War as the traveling public moved to the highways and airlines. Not many years passed before such immortals of the "High Iron" as the Texas & Pacific's "Sunshine Special" and "Texas Eagle," and the Southern Pacific's "Sunset Limited" and "Golden State Limited" rolled out of the station forever.

With the advent of Amtrak's assuming operation of the one daily passenger train in May 1971, the building was still maintained by the Depot Company. Today, high maintenance costs, falling plaster, and major plumbing leaks threaten the future existence of the building. The El Paso Union Passenger Depot Company ceased its operations in the building on February 28, 1974, and filed for abandonment of the facility with the Interstate Commerce Commission on May 28, 1974. Amtrak has assumed full operation of the facilities since that time, but is presently conferring with the Southern Pacific Railroad officials to sell the property to an interested buyer. Amtrak also hopes to build a new smaller station in the general vicinity to accommodate the meager passenger traffic. A great deal of publicity has been presented in the local news media during the past year concerning the demise of the old landmark. An historical landmark commission has recently been appointed under the mayor's Steering Committee for Citizen Participation in the Community Development Act. Tentative plans for adaptive reuse are pending.



75001970

El Paso

Property El Paso Union Passenger Station

State Texas

Working Number 3, 21.75, 441

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 9  
Maps 1

**CONTROL**

OK - pl  
3.21.75

**HISTORIAN**

Accept  
E. Smith  
4-1-75

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

HARVEY HOUSE ADDITION  
IS PRE 1935 PHOTO,

ACCEPT  
LEBOVICH  
3-24-75

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

Jandl  
3/25/75 ACCEPT

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

ACCEPT  
Cole  
3-27-75

**BRANCH CHIEF**

accept  
Dring  
4.2.75

**KEEPER**

Wm  
APR 2 1975

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered APR 3 1975

Federal Register Entry 6-3-75

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

INT:2106-74



PASSENGER STATION  
Union Depot, El Paso, Texas

92



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

El Paso Union Passenger Station

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Not known.

DATE OF PHOTO ca. 1935

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Southeast oblique of exterior of station.

PHOTO NO. 2

# 1089

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

# 1089







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**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Not known.

DATE OF PHOTO

ca. 1905

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Northeast oblique, front of station.

PHOTO NO. 1

#289

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#289







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**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

El Paso Union Passenger Station

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas.

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Southwest oblique, interior of station (waiting room).

PHOTO NO.

9

#309

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

#309





EL PASO

ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE



El Paso Union Depot

Form No. 10-301a  
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

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Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

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**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Northwest oblique, exterior of station.

PHOTO NO. 7

# 4089

By

JERRY LITTMAN

Date

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3** PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas.

**4** IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Northeast oblique, exterior of station.

PHOTO NO. 5

# 5089

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#5089







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**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Northeast oblique, front of station

PHOTO NO.

3

#689

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#689





UNION PASSENGER STATION

UNION  
PASSENGER  
STATION



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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El Paso

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COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3** PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4** IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

East facade, exterior of station.

PHOTO NO. 4

#789

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El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO

January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Southeast oblique, exterior of station.

PHOTO NO. 6

#839

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#839





LADIES  
ROOMS

← LADIES  
ROOM

THE  
STATION  
OFFICE



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El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Millard McKinney

DATE OF PHOTO January 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Southeast oblique, interior of station. (waiting room)

PHOTO NO. 8

#9089

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

#9089



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

El Paso Union Passenger Station

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**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

El Paso

STATE

Texas

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE United States Geological Survey

SCALE 1:24,000

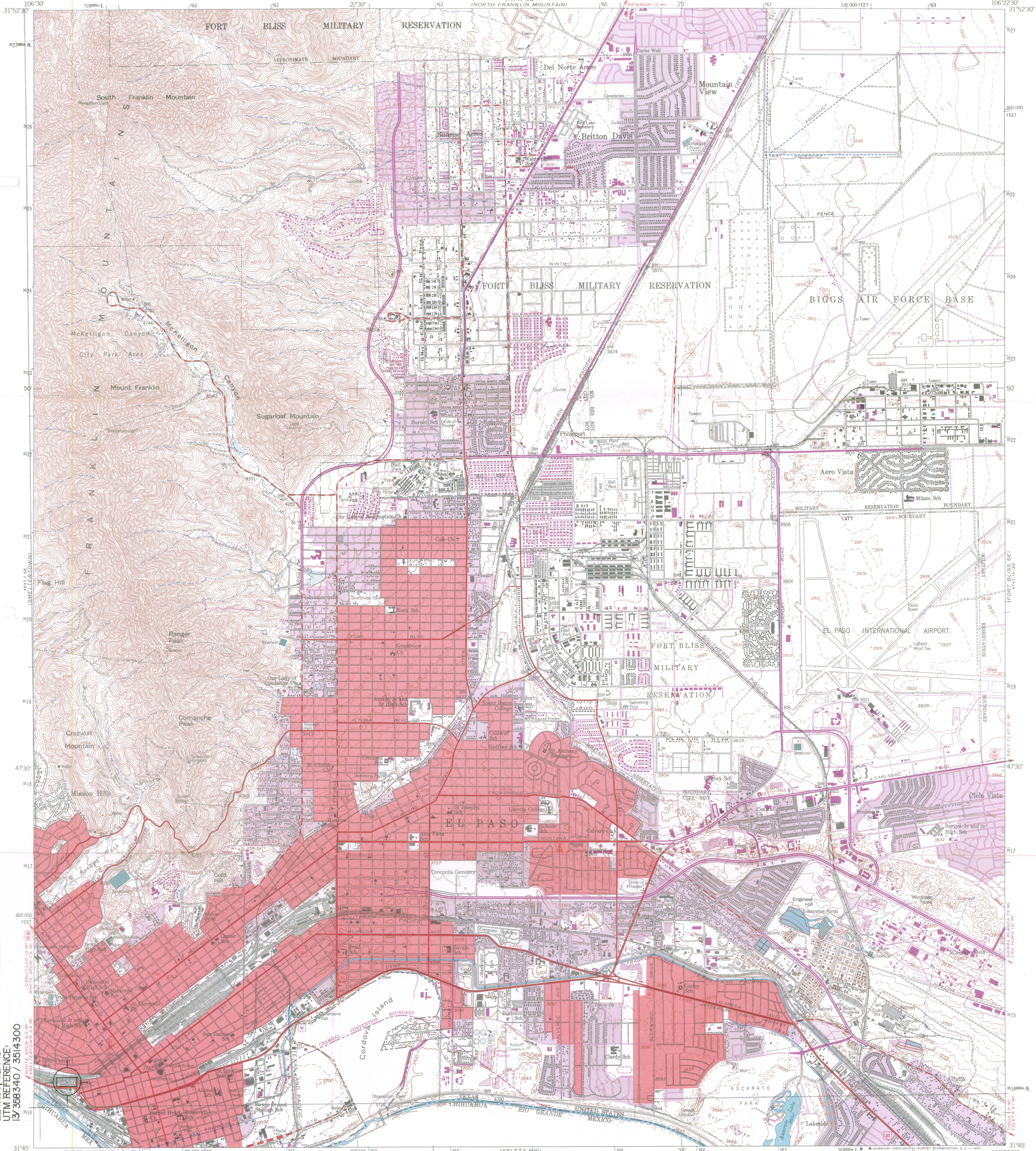
DATE 1967

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

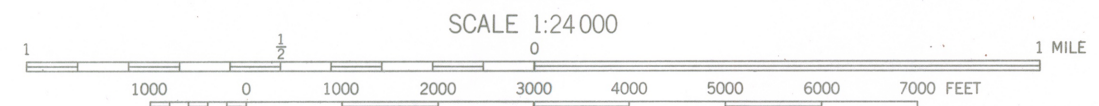
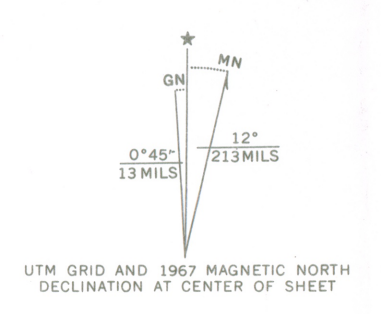
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES





EL PASO UNION PASSENGER STATION  
S.W. CORNER OF COLDWELL AT SAN FRANCISCO  
EL PASO, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE:  
13 368340 / 3514300

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1954. Photography field annotated 1955  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 13, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown  
Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from  
aerial photographs taken 1967. This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



SCALE 1:24,000  
DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5 AND 10-FOOT CONTOURS  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route



EL PASO, TEX.  
SW/4 FORT BLISS 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3145-W10622.5/7.5  
1955  
PHOTOREVISED 1967  
AMS 4747 IV SW-SERIES V882

FEB 19 1974

3106-1482

15



TO: PR-1100 L ST

The attached is White House bulk mail and/or Secretary mail that comes under your area of jurisdiction. We have made a list of the attached with a suspense date for the reply on or before MAY 7.

Your office is responsible for the final typing and signature of the attached.

Please send us a copy of each reply with incoming after it has been signed.

Ira Whitlock, LS

APR 30 1975



EL PASO UNION PASSENGER DEPOT COMPANY  
EL PASO, TEXAS

R. O. Coltrin  
President

089-94/513-11

April 17, 1975

The Honorable Rogers C. B. Morton  
Secretary of the Interior  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have recently been notified by Mr. Joe R. Williams, Director, National Register Programs for Texas, of the Texas Historical Commission that the El Paso Union Passenger Station, Coldwell and San Francisco Streets, El Paso, Texas, has been nominated by the Texas Historical Commission for submission to the National Register of Historic Places. In reviewing the criteria in evaluating potential entries to the National Register it appears the only basis upon which this building could qualify for the designation would be on the basis of a unique and distinctive architecture.

The original building was designed by Chicago architect Dan Burnham and constructed about 1905. Mr. Burnham was one of the more famous architects of his era and the Union Depot at El Paso was, prior to 1941, one of the few examples of his works in the Southwest.

In 1941, at the insistence of the Women's Beautification Committee of El Paso, the original spire of the tower was removed and replaced with a plain hipped roof configuration to "improve the appearance", the slate door was painted, the exterior brickwork painted and other modernization performed. This remodeling quite changed the general exterior character of the building, to the extent that it is no longer



a classic piece of architecture of the early part of the century. Its architecture can be termed modified 1940's, rather than turn-of-the century. Apparently the citizens of El Paso were not impressed with its original appearance. In addition, considerable remodeling has taken place to the interior of the building from time to time which has affected change in the floor plan and interior design of the building.

At the present time the building is in extremely poor condition, the plumbing system is almost completely gone, the window frames are rotted and jeopardize the securing of the glass, the structural trusses are loose and need rebuilding, evidence of vandalism is rampant with broken glass and the entire structure will have to be renovated inside and out, or removed. Amtrak is still using the building as a passenger station, however, we have received notice from Building and Health Department of the City of El Paso that it cannot be kept open unless major repairs are made. At the present time we are negotiating with Amtrak to construct a smaller compact depot facility on adjacent property to meet their needs at El Paso. Estimates by contractor for restoring the depot building exceed one and a half million dollars.

In view of this, we oppose the designation of the El Paso Union Passenger Station at El Paso for submission to the National Register of Historic Places. We believe that the substantial alterations that have taken place over the years to the building have changed its character so that it no longer possesses the unique qualities desired of historic buildings in the Register.

Very truly yours,

*R. O. Coltrin*



cc: Mr. Joe R. Williams, Director  
National Register Programs for Texas  
Texas Historical Commission  
Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711

Gen. (Ret) W. A. Harris  
Chairman, Bexar County Historical  
Survey Committee  
12200 Judson Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78233

Mr. John Giorgio  
Environmental Div., Room 1349A  
Interstate Commerce Commission  
12th and Constitution, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20423

Mr. F. S. King, Vice President-Operations  
National Railroad Passenger Corporation  
955 L'Enfant Plaza North, S.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20024



Therman  
5/13/75  
5-15-75  
CShull

MAY 16 1975

H34-PR

Mr. R. O. Coltrin  
President  
El Paso Union Passenger Depot Co.  
One Market Street  
San Francisco, California 94105

Dear Mr. Coltrin:

On behalf of Secretary Morton, thank you for your recent letter concerning the El Paso Union Passenger Station, El Paso, Texas, entered in the National Register April 3, 1975.

Listing on the National Register is Federal recognition that a property possesses historic values and is worthy of preservation. Inclusion of a property on the Register insures that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is given an opportunity to review and comment upon any undertaking licensed, funded, or executed by a Federal agency that may affect the property. In addition, preservation projects on properties listed in the National Register, in accordance with an approved State Historic Preservation Plan, can qualify for either acquisition or development grants-in-aid.

Listing has no other effect on the property; it does not affect, in any manner, the range of actions an owner could take as long as Federal financing is not involved; and it gives no governmental unit any authority or control over the property, its use, or disposition.

The alterations ~~to~~ the El Paso Union Passenger Station mentioned in your letter were also discussed in the nomination prepared by the Texas Historical Commission for this property. However, it is the opinion of the National Register that the building has retained sufficient integrity to warrant inclusion in the National Register. Also, in addition to its architectural significance, this property is important historically as a symbol of El Paso's role as a transportation center. Built as the first



Union Station in the U.S. designed expressly for international traffic, this depot marks an important epoch in the history of U.S. railroads.

We hope this information will be useful to you. If you have any further questions concerning this property or the National Register program, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely yours,

<sup>Acting</sup>  
Charles A. Herrington (Sgd.)

William J. Murtagh  
Keeper of the National Register

cc: Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee  
Post Office Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711 w/c inc. )

bcc: DG-Advisory Council )

Regional Director, Southwest Region )  
Director's Reading File  
DI  
PR )

FNP: J Thorman:fd 5-12-75

LS )  
BASIC FILE RETAINED IN PR



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      APR 8 1975

Name

Location

El Paso Union Passenger Station

El Paso  
El Paso County

Kellum-Noble House

Houston  
Harris County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower  
Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Hon. Richard C. White  
Hon. Barbara Jordan  
Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee  
Post Office Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

Mr. John Giorgio, Interstate Commerce  
Commission

Mr. Robert F. Crecco, DOT

PR      MMott/row

4/9/75



CONCUR FAX 35

NOV 19 1980



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
BY Robert G. [Signature]

1,sted  
4/3/75

NOV 19 1980

EL PASO Co.  
TX

Mr. Louis S. Wall  
Chief, Western Division of Project  
Review  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
Lake Plaza South, Suite 616  
44 Union Boulevard  
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

**COPY**

Dear Mr. Wall:

The City of El Paso, Texas, proposes to use financial assistance from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) to undertake improvements involving El Paso Union Station. The undertaking will have an effect on the station which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

UMTA determines that the proposed project will have no adverse effect on this property, a finding which the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer concurs. Documentation for this determination was submitted to you directly by the City of El Paso by letter dated July 26, 1979. This determination is submitted for your review.

Sincerely,

[Signature of Edward R. Fleishman]

Edward R. Fleishman  
Acting Director  
Office of Program Analysis

cc: Glen Ford, UMTA Reg. VI  
Karl Tesch, City of El Paso

GSA TELETYPE CENTER  
NOV 19 11 41 AM '80  
D.F.C. DENVER, COLORADO

RECEIVED  
FACSIMILE



MR  
LE  
DM

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 12-9-76  
Reviewer INITIALS: nesbitt

NR DOE 4/3/75

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: <sup>10</sup> El Paso Union Passenger Station

OTHER NAMES:

LOCATION: SW corner of Coldwell at San Francisco

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

El Paso

STATE

TX

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

sixteenth

COUNTY

code

El Paso

141

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## FEATURES:

INTERIOR

Substantially intact-1

unknown - 4

not applicable - 7

EXTERIOR

Substantially intact-2

unknown - 5

not applicable - 8

ENVIRONS

Substantially intact-3

unknown - 6

Not applicable - 9

Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION -

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

Unexcavated

UNALTERED

ALTERED

Reconstructed

Excavated

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED

Unknown

ACCESS -

Yes-restricted

Yes-unrestricted

No access

Unknown

historic district?

YES

NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?

YES

NO

IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?

YES

NO

IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE:

YES

NO

Saved?

YES

NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)

then- RR Station

now- RR Station

## SIGNIFICANCE:

ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC

ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE -4

ART

COMMERCE -6

COMMUNICATIONS

CONSERVATION

ECONOMICS

EDUCATION

ENGINEERING

EXPLORATION

INDUSTRY

INVENTION

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

LAW/Gov't/politics

LITERATURE

MILITARY

MUSIC

PHILOSOPHY

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

RELIGION

SCIENCE

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN

TRANSPORTATION -25

OTHER (SPECIFY)

entertainment

health

recreation

settlement

socio/cultural

urban & commun

planning

## Claims

"first" YES NO

"oldest" YES NO

"only" YES NO



ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

*Second Renaissance Revival with*  
NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL *elements*

architect/m-builder:

*and*  
D. H. Burnham & Co.

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

*and*  
builder/contractor: Buchanan & Powers

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role  
&  
appropriate date)

events

institutional (1) El Paso Union Passenger Depot Co.--formed in 1903 to build the station

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): *✓* 1905

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre) 3 acres

*✓*  
Brick, 2 1/2 stories, modified rectangle, flat roof with balustraded parapet and raised  
3rd-story hipped block with semicircular clerestory windows, interior chimneys,  
front center 1-story entrance portico with balustraded roof, 5-story NE corner bell  
tower with arcaded belfry; 2-story ~~xxxx~~ vaulted waiting room; renovation and  
remodeling, 1941. Second Renaissance Revival with Neo-Classical Revival elements.  
First union station in the <sup>U.S.</sup> United States built expressly for handling international  
traffic; rare example of the work of prominent Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham  
in the ~~xxxxxx~~ Southwest.



ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

*Second Renaissance Revival with*  
NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL *elements*

architect/m-builder:

*and* D. H. Burnham *and* Co.

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

*3* builder/contractor: Buchanan *and* Powers

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role & appropriate date)

events

institutional (1) El Paso Union Passenger Depot Co.--formed in 1903 to build the station

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1905

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre) 3 acres

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

*with central 3rd story block,*  
Brick, 2 1/2 stories, modified rectangle, ~~flat~~ flat roof with balustraded parapet and raised 3<sup>rd</sup>-story hipped block with semi-circular clerestory windows, hipped and flat roof sections, interior chimneys; 1-story ~~center~~ *front center* balustraded entrance portico with balustraded roof; 5-story NE corner bell tower *with* arched belfry; semi-circular clerestory windows above waiting room; balustraded roof parapet; 2-story vaulted waiting room; 1911 renovation and remodeling *1911* Neo-Classical Revival *with* built Built as the first union station *built* in the United States *elements.* designed *built* expressly for the handling of international traffic; rare example of the work of prominent Chicago architect D.H. Burnham in the southwest.