



## **StEPS-UT HISTORIC STRUCTURES & LANDSCAPES MODULE**

### **Introduction to Stewardship of Historic Structures & Landscapes**

#### **HANDS-ON ACTIVITY #2 = 60 minutes**

#### **Walking Assessment of the Rio Grande Depot**

#### **Historical “Character-Defining” Features**

##### **PURPOSE:**

The primary purpose is to identify historic “character-defining” features that should be preserved and interpreted. A secondary purpose is to evaluate current and potential uses and activities that could go on in the building.

##### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- 1) Prior to touring the building, review packets of information about the building (5 minutes).  
Packet includes:
  - Summary history of the building
  - Floor plan
  - Several historic and recent photos
- 2) Walk through the building as a group.
  - Mezzanine/2nd floor
  - Main floor: Grand Lobby, South Wing (Research Center), North Wing (restrooms and restaurant)
  - Rear of building
  - Front of building, including South-end connector with Archives Building
- 3) Identify and make notes about what you observe:
  - Significant large-scale architectural features
  - Important historical details that exist or once did (according to historic photos)
  - Alterations, both good and bad

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##### **Observations:**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

JUL 17 1975

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED SEP 25 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Station

AND/OR COMMON

Rio Grande Station

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

3rd South and Rio Grande

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Utah

VICINITY OF

CODE 049

COUNTY

Salt Lake

CODE

035

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE  
☐ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☒ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Rio Grande Railroad

STREET &amp; NUMBER

#1 Park Central, 1515 Arapahoe Street

CITY, TOWN

Denver

VICINITY OF

STATE

Colorado

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorders Office

STREET &amp; NUMBER

City and County Building

CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Utah Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1972

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Utah State Historical Society

2 CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

## 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

#### Architectural Description:

Style: The original plans for the Station called for a building that was described (in 1908) as "French Renaissance" in style. The actual building varies considerably from original elevations and features elements of both Renaissance Revival and Beaux-Arts styles. The architect of the Station was Henry S. Schlachs of Chicago. He had previously designed St. Paul's Church in Chicago and the Rio Grande Station at Grand Junction, Colorado.

Description: The following is a description of the station site and building from The Salt Lake Tribune August 14, 1910.

"The depot site is a piece of property 1452 feet long and 330 feet side only four blocks from the exact commercial center of the rapidly growing city of Salt Lake. The impressive station building is 417 feet long by 98 feet wide. It centers on Third South Street, one of the main business thoroughfares and has in immense approach or foreground on the town side and large, roomy, covered platforms paralleling the tracks on the railroad side.

The center portion of the building contains a waiting room 144 feet long by 83 feet wide, with a clear height of 58 feet from floor to ceiling. This large room is lighted by three immense arched windows on each side (each 28 X 30 feet) through green opalescent glass. The interior of the waiting room is treated in an adaptation of a classic style of architecture similar to the exterior, the color scheme being brownish red and gray for the walls with a deep brown for the ceiling. All of this, combined with the green light through the windows, gives the room a dignified quietness.

In the wings of the building at each end of the waiting room are provided all the accessories necessary to every large railroad depot. In one end are the baggage, express and parcel rooms, while in the other end are provided everything necessary for the comfort of travelers, including men's smoking room, women's retiring room, restaurant, etc. In the center of the large waiting room are the ticket offices, news stand, telegraph and telephone offices and other conveniences for the traveling public.

In the second story of the main structure are the railroad companies' offices.

The heating and lighting plants have been located in a separate building at the south end of the property, some 500 feet from the main building. The best of material of the various kinds has been employed in the structure. For the exterior there is a marble base of white Colorado-Yule marble five feet high all around the building. The balance of the exterior is in terra cotta and red New Jersey rain-washed brick. The roofs are of red tile. The building is absolutely fireproof and is treated on the interior with tile floors throughout and with marble wainscoting, all harmonizing with the general color effect of the different rooms."

The above account quite accurately describes the condition of the building today. The building is in good structural condition and only minor modifications have been made since 1910, the year of the station's completion. The cost of the building was \$750,000.

# 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 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 1910 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry S. Schlachs

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to the architectural significance of the Denver and Rio Grande Station, the building is important for several other reasons. Several historical events, such as the arrival and departure of soldiers during World War I and World War II, the arrival in Utah of prominent public officials as well as other famous people, are associated with the station.

Perhaps of more importance, the station is a tangible monument of the conflict between George Gould, son of the famous financier Jay Gould, and Edward H. Harriman. George Gould constructed a transcontinental railroad to compete with the Union Pacific line which was under the control of Harriman. In order to establish a transcontinental route it was necessary for Gould to finance the construction of a railroad from San Francisco to Salt Lake City. This railroad, financed by the Gould interests, was the Western Pacific. The large debt incurred by Gould in financing the railroad led Robert G. Athearn in his book, Rebel of the Rockies: A History of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad, to describe the Western Pacific as an albatross hung by Gould around the neck of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad. At Salt Lake City, the Denver and Rio Grande railroad, constructed from Denver to Salt Lake City in 1883, connected with the Western Pacific to form the last link in Gould's transcontinental railroad system. In order to provide facilities for the district offices of both the Denver and Rio Grande railroad and the Western Pacific, and to provide a modern, impressive station to lure travelers from the Union Pacific, the Rio Grande station was constructed. It stands today as a reminder of the financial struggles for control of the nation's transportation by the railroad barons during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The station, which has been a major Salt Lake City landmark since 1910, serves as a symbol of a by-gone era when railroad transportation was the best form of overland travel available.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Salt Lake Tribune August 14, 1910

E. V. Fohlin, Salt Lake City Past and Present, Shelton Publishing Company, SLC, 1908  
Robert G. Athearn, Rebel of the Rockies: A History of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1962

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,2 4,2,3,7,0,0 4,5,1,2,6,2,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                          
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                          
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D                          
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Powell, Preservation Historian Allen D. Roberts, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Utah State Historical Society

DATE

July 2, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

603 East South Temple

TELEPHONE

(801) 328-5755

CITY OR TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Melvin T. Smith*

TITLE Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE July 7, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

*Ronald M. Buerke*

DATE

9/25/75

DATE

9/24/75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Adel*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE

Architectural Features:

Plan: As described, the building is long and narrow in plan and consists of a large center section flanked symmetrically by two smaller side wings.

Massing: The major sections are rectangular in shape and are relieved only by the recessions of detailed areas such as the bays, pilasters and quoins.

Roof: Hip roof, covered with tiles.

Exterior ornamental detailing: Major decorative elements include engaged pilasters of stone with abbreviated Roman entablatures as capitals; stone quoins; large, Roman-arched front window bays which are multi-paned, splayed and deeply recessed; classical keystones (one with a stone eagle) and stone medallions; stone balustrade across the level of the second floor; Roman entablature style frieze under deep eaves and boxed soffit; dentil bands above frieze; corbeled stone belt course deliniating the level of the second floor; square window and doors bays throughout (except three main windows) with decorative stone lintels and frames, and deeply recessed; decorative metal gutters; original wall mounted lamp fixtures.

Interior Features: The interior is largely original, although the color scheme has been changed in secondary areas. Reddish-brown marble provides a wainscoting for the otherwise plastered walls. Engaged pilasters appear to support the second story walkway with a traditional entablature style band making an interior transition between floors. Detailing is classical and included dentil bands, egg & dart motives, Italianate cartouches and brackets, beamed ceilings, and an overall richness through ornamentation.















