



Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Augusta Frisco Depot
 other names/site number 015-0310-00006

2. Location

street & number 618 State Street not for publication
 city or town Augusta vicinity
 state Kansas code KS county Butler code 015 zip code 67010

3-4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

SEE SHPO FILE

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____
 Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		Total

Augusta Frisco Depot
Name of Property

Butler County, KS
County and State

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the State Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Rail-related

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE19thEARLY20thCENTURY AMERICAN MVMT

foundation: CONCRETE

Bungalow / Craftsman

walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT SHINGLE

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the current physical appearance of the property.)

Summary (Briefly describe the overall characteristics of the property and its location, setting, and size.)

The Augusta Frisco Depot (1909-1910) is located in downtown Augusta in Butler County, Kansas. The depot is in its original location on the south side of the east-west running St. Louis and San Francisco railroad tracks (no longer in service), at 618 State Street. With a rectangular layout, its dimensions are about 130' by 24'. (See Figure 2.)

Elaboration

Exterior

Built between 1909 and 1910, the brick depot sits upon a concrete foundation and features a rectangular footprint. The building's north elevation with a length of about 130' faces north toward the tracks and includes a freight area on the east end and a passenger waiting area on the west end. The exterior features red and

orange brick with Carthage stone trimmings, an asphalt shingle roof, wood windows (double hung, picture, & multi-pane), and a single brick chimney. The depot retains much of its historic fabric including the passenger waiting area (which was originally divided for men and women), the central ticket office housed in the orthogonal bay window on the north elevation, and the brick platform (along the north, west, & south elevations). In 1917, a separate building designated as Express & Baggage was added on the east side of the depot, with a width of 24' (in line with and equal in width to the original structure) and with a length of 30'; the original depot and this addition were separated by just 12'. (See figure 2.) This space of separation was later enclosed with orange brick, in contrast to the original red brick, in the 1930s. The hipped roof was significantly altered. Not only have the clay tiles been removed, but so to have the character-defining flared eaves.

East Elevation

The east elevation faces School Street, and includes the concrete foundation, red brick, Carthage stone trimmings, two small fixed wood windows that sit high on the wall. From this view, only a face of the addition, designated Express & Baggage, built in 1917 can be seen. This is the one side of the building that did not have a brick platform in front; although, the processional brick platform along the north elevation can be seen to the right when facing the east elevation.

North Elevation (trackside)

The longer elevation facing the railroad tracks is considered the façade of the depot. It would have been the first thing passengers saw when departing the train. Many components make up this elevation. A brick platform still spans the elevation, and the entire structure sits on a concrete foundation. Red brick with Carthage stone trimmings signify the original building (on the right) and the addition (on the left) built in 1917. They are separated by orange brick used to fill in the space between the structures in the 1930s. An orthogonal bay window juts out of the original depot, where the ticket office would have been. Large double-hung wood windows, tall swivel wood doors with clerestory windows, and a large sliding wood door (for freight purposes) make up the openings in the façade.

West Elevation

The west elevation faces State Street, and includes the brick platform, concrete foundation, red brick, Carthage stone trimmings, and one large double-hung wood window on the left. This elevation displays a wall that was originally completed in 1910. However, one known alteration is the window, which is now on the left, was originally on the right. Historically, a newsstand would have been located inside the building at this northwest corner where the window now exists.

South Elevation

The south elevation faces away from the tracks. Like the north elevation, it is a composition of various time periods, doors, and windows. The brick platform is present through most of the elevation; it is wrapped around the original depot built between 1909 and 1910 and even along the brick wall filled in, in the 1930s, but it ends there. The platform does not extend to the additional Express & Baggage building constructed in 1917. The red brick with Carthage stone trimmings likewise signify the original building (on the left) and the 1917 addition (on the right), and the orange brick was used to fill in the space between them in the 1930s. Large double-hung wood windows, tall swivel wood doors with clerestory windows, small multi-pane double-hung wood windows, small fixed wood windows, small multi-pane fixed wood windows, and a large wood sliding door (reached by climbing a few steps on a wooden platform – for freight purposes) represent all of the openings on this elevation. At one point two “out houses” were attached to the building west end of this south elevation, but they are no longer present (see figures 4-5).

Interior

Upon entering the building through the door at the west end on the north elevation, one is surrounded by space and light. Marks on the wood floor depict where the original ticket counter would have been, separating

the women's waiting area (on the right) from the men's (on the left). Two restrooms were added at an unknown date at the southwest corner of this space. This space has a dropped acoustical tile ceiling and fiberboard walls, which cover the historic plaster and wainscoting. The original woodwork surrounds the windows and doors. To proceed through the space one turns left, and as one walks east, on the left we see the ticket office (represented by the bay window on the exterior). One goes through a single doorway to get to the next space, which was designated for freight. The freight area features a platform floor that sits about 4 feet above ground level, which is accessed by steps on the right. This elevated floor is constructed of wood. The large wood sliding doors are visible on the north and south walls of the space. The east wall of this space originally served as the exterior wall with two windows centered on this elevation. The sashes have been removed to serve as a crude doorway into a small space that was filled in during the 1930s (between the original depot (1909-1910) and the 1917 baggage addition). The space drops back down to ground level and features a brick floor and a historic wood garage door. The eastern-most part of the building, constructed in 1917, is only accessible from the exterior.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1909-1960

Significant Dates

1909

1917

1930s

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

The St. Louis & San Francisco Railway Company

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the construction of the depot in 1909 and ends with 1960 when passenger service on the Frisco line came to an end.

Statement of Significance *(Provide a brief history of the property and justify why this property is locally significant.)*

Summary

The Augusta Frisco Depot (1909-1910) is nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places. It is nominated under Criterion A for its association with local transportation history. The 100-year-old depot exists in its original location and on the site of a former Frisco depot that had burned in 1909. It was built as a combination depot to serve both passenger and freight traffic. It originally featured a stylistic hipped roof with clay tiles and flared eaves, but these features were removed when the most recent roof repairs were made. An added bonus to the future restoration efforts is the availability of ample records, newspaper articles, photos and plans for the structure.

Elaboration¹

Railroad Background

In the early 1800s in the United States, dirt roads and waterways were the primary accesses of travel. Technological advances and the development of the rail system in the early- and mid-1800s opened up the interior of the growing nation. By the late nineteenth century train tracks joined the two ends of the country, impacting industry, military, and everyday life for millions. Exchanging materials from the west with goods from the east had been a frustrating task, as it was expensive and time-consuming. Railroads changed the country's perception of time, space, and distance; materials and goods would become more readily available, cities would thrive, and towns would grow. In fact, the settlement and development of the majority of the middle and western part of the United States, Kansas included, was largely dependent upon railroads.

The St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Line, or "Frisco," began as a transcontinental railroad called the South-West Branch.² Like other railroad companies, it went through a variety of names, mergers, and acquisitions throughout its history in Kansas. It first entered Kansas in 1879 when it brought the short line known as the Missouri and Western. One of the first major communities it built to was Wichita, which at that time was served only by the Santa Fe. Lines to mining towns, such as Galena, were also built. The company's emphasis changed from that of a transcontinental line to a regional carrier in the Ozarks and the southern Great Plains – in Kansas, primarily in the southeastern quarter of the state. With all of its subsidiaries, it was the fifth largest railroad in the state according to track mileage by 1910 with nearly 650 miles.³ For a period in the twentieth century, it was under the control of the Rock Island, but when that company entered bankruptcy in 1933, the Frisco had several lines that put it in good shape to recover after the Great Depression. One reason was that it had lines to several military posts, which enjoyed high traffic during World War II. In 1980, it eventually became a part of Burlington Northern with most of its original lines intact.⁴

Depot Background

Railroad depots emerged as buildings used for shipping and receiving goods along rail lines, the handling of passenger arrival and departure, and as communication centers for the operations of the railroads. Many

¹ Additional historic context regarding railroad development in Kansas can be found in: Deon Wolfenbarger, "Historic Railroad Resources of Kansas" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (Topeka: Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, 2001). Accessed online at:

http://www.kshs.org/resource/national_register/MPS/Historic_Railroad_Resources_Kansas_mps.pdf

² This paragraph on the Frisco line is taken from "Historic Railroad Resources of Kansas," E-38-39.

³ *A History of Railroad Construction and Abandonment Within the State of Kansas* (n.p., Kansas Corporation Commission, Transportation Division, 1 October 1972), p. 19.

⁴ Robert Collins, *Ghost Railroads of Kansas* (David City, NE: South Platte Press, 1997), p. 34.

towns in Kansas owed not only their very existence, but also their continued survival to the railroads. Depots were the center of activity in Kansas towns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the quality and size of a depot said much about a community's prosperity. After all, the depot was the first building seen by an incoming visitor, and the last one seen when they left. News arrived there in the form of mail, newspapers, and telegrams. People and goods came and went with punctual regularity. No other building in town was used as frequently and by as many people.

The Augusta Frisco Depot

The St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Line was the first rail line to arrive in Augusta. The line was completed and a wood frame depot was built in May 1880 by the Frisco Line. For the majority of Kansas communities, the depot was one of the first buildings in town, and they were generally crude structures, sometimes just portable shacks or old box cars, hastily built during the initial phase of railroad construction. On March 26, 1909, the original Frisco depot burned to the ground. Comments in the local paper stated that no one regretted the destruction of the depot "as it was an eyesore to every man who took pride in our town." It went on to say, "It is hoped that the Frisco officials will realize the importance of Augusta, present and future and put up a modern building large enough to accommodate two or three times the present business of the company." By August 1909, the new Frisco was under construction to promote passenger service. An important transportation, agriculture, and freight import and export point for the region, following the loss of the original structure the Frisco Company hurriedly rebuilt the depot in less than a year. While awaiting the new facility, business was conducted out of boxcars.

The second Augusta Frisco Depot (1909-1910) was a combination depot, the most common depot property type in Kansas. Combination depots nearly always had three rooms – one for each of the various functions or uses of the building. There was a passenger waiting room at one end, a central office for train operations, and a freight-baggage-express package room at the other end. Combination depots were rectangular buildings with the long axis parallel to the tracks. Most were one-story, with gable roofs being the most common, and the hip roof less so. Because of the need for lower construction costs, railroad companies were prompted to refine the craft of architectural standardization.

Like many depots, the Augusta Depot was probably built from a standardized plan and varied little in plan from combination depots except for perhaps size, level of architectural ornamentation, and construction materials. The plan for the Augusta Depot is almost identical to one of Frisco's six standard combination drawings "Depot No. 4," which typified the road's thinking about small-town combination station design. The Augusta Frisco Depot has a hipped roof; the Frisco concluded that a hipped roof was preferable to a gable one because it unquestionably added distinction without dramatically escalating costs. Admittedly, bridge and building crews found the hipped roof consuming more materials and taking longer to install. Roof eaves generally had a wide overhang, both for visual effect of making the building appear larger and for the functional purpose of providing shade. The Augusta Depot originally had a clay tile roof, which was commonly employed to indicate permanence and higher status of such depots. And, though many of the combination depots were frame with siding varying from board-and-batten to clapboard and with shingles sometimes used as decoration, the depot in Augusta was constructed with a brick exterior. The brick construction was somewhat rare due to the expense of the brick, and the small town location of the depot. Consequently, the Augusta Frisco Depot structure may be the only brick constructed Frisco depot existing within the entire state. (*Kansas Preservation Vol 25 Nov-Dec 2003*). The Augusta Depot had separate waiting rooms for women and men, and because it was also constructed with brick, the depot had features of a larger community. One of the most distinctive features of the combination depot was the large bay window located close to the center of the building trackside, which is another feature of the Augusta Depot. This bay corresponded on the interior with the central office and provided the station agent with an unobstructed view of the main track in either direction.

The Augusta Frisco Depot is relatively intact and has not been unoccupied for long periods of time. It is structurally sound and retains much of its original composition. The depot itself is the sole remaining structure from the original Augusta Frisco Station Complex, initially constructed by the St. Louis and San Francisco

Railroad Company beginning in the early 1880s. It was joined at one time by attending structures including a circular wooden water tower, several loading ramps and freight docks, livestock holding pens, a freight house, section house, flag house, waterman's house and other railroad buildings. A motor car, which made four round trips on the Frisco line each day between Augusta and Wichita, was added in April 1917. This was in addition to the present train schedule making a total of seven trains each way, each day. In March 1952, Frisco leaders met with city officials to discuss the discontinuance of passenger service. However, the Kansas Corporation Commission turned down their bid in July keeping the passenger service intact. The Frisco Depot underwent a major remodel in December 1954. Interior modifications were made including layout of offices, lowering of ceilings, addition of restrooms, and overhead gas heating costing approximately \$9,000. In October 1960, passenger service on the Frisco line came to an end. Frisco eventually abandoned the rail line and depot altogether, however a segment of the rails in front of depot were left intact. The depot itself, abandoned by the Frisco (later the Burlington Northern railroad) in 1984, was sold to private parties. In the early 1990s, the depot was sold to a private citizen who opened a pawn shop called, "The Trading Station" until it was purchased by the City of Augusta in 2005.

The Decline of Railroads

Railroads had achieved most of their physical growth by World War I. The nation's mileage reached a peak of 254,037 miles in 1916, while Kansas achieved its peak in 1917 with 9,367.3 miles. Kansas was among the top states in the country. However, some companies had overextended their systems and many operated with financial losses. Railroad earnings in constant dollars from 1900 through 1917 failed to keep pace with inflation. The failure of the railways prompted the federal government's experimentation with nationalized railroads during World War I (1917-1919). When war was declared on Germany in 1917, the railroad presidents signed a resolution stating that they would, in effect, operate their lines as a single "continental railway system." In 1917, the National Railroad Administration Board – also known as the United States Railroad Administration (USRA), organized under President Wilson, discontinued trains with few passengers entirely, and towns not on direct lines for freight saw reduced service. On the other hand, the Transportation Act of 1920 returned the railways to the private sector and strengthened the 1887 Interstate Commerce Act, making it difficult for companies to resume their pre-war discriminatory rate practices.

The Great Depression had a major impact on the economics of the railroad industry. Companies that were already financially strained were forced out of business, and the consolidation of companies that began in the last century continued with ever-larger companies being formed. Modernization of railroad facilities was seen as critical to the survival of rail companies in light of a new threat – the development of other modes of transportation.

Even after the economic woes of the Depression were faced, the financial stability of railroads did not improve during the 1930s due to the increasing competition for both passenger and freight traffic from automobiles and long-haul trucking. Air passenger service increased more than a dozenfold in the decade between 1930 and 1940 to over a billion passenger miles. Airmail service, introduced in 1918, further reduced the need for rail express mail services.

The railroad companies did not sit idly by during this decline, however. They began to aggressively market passenger trains in the 1920s; much in the same way they had promoted land sales decades earlier, with promotional campaigns aimed to combat the lure of the highway. To appear up-to-date and modern, streamline trains were introduced with design elements borrowed from the Art Deco, Moderne, and Streamline movement of the 1930s. Diesel engines, which were 50 percent cheaper to operate and offered increased locomotive power, were another twentieth century railroad technology.

The decline in railroad traffic due to the new modes of transportation was briefly halted during World War II, but began again in earnest after the war. From that point on, railroad companies would continue to merge, abandon lines, streamline, and consolidate their operations in an attempt to survive. Lines in Kansas would be

abandoned at a comparatively slow but steady rate. 100 miles were abandoned in 1940 and 112.6 in 1967, but most years saw between thirty to fifty miles per year abandoned up through 1972.

The Disappearance of Depots

Depots were among the last rail-related buildings to be removed; however, their location within the railroad right-of-ways left depot buildings extremely vulnerable to demolition. More than 80 percent of Kansas depots have already been demolished, and many of those remaining have been moved from their original locations.

For several years, the Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS) has recognized not only the historical significance of depots, but also the fact that these resources are threatened. In 1993 and 1994, two articles listing all of the known extant depots in the state were published in *Kansas Preservation*. At that time, KSHS received information about approximately 350 depots remaining from what once numbered around 1,800. Of those depots that remained, several had already been moved from their original sites, and many more were threatened with demolition. From the information gathered as a result of these articles, it became even more apparent that historic depots were rapidly disappearing from the Kansas landscape.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Alexander, Edwin P. *Down at the Depot: American Railroad Stations from 1831 to 1920*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1970.

Collins, Robert. *Ghost Railroads of Kansas*. David City, NE: South Platte Press, 1997.

Davis, Kenneth S. *Kansas: A Bicentennial History*. New York: W.W.Norton & Company, Inc., 1976.

Grant, H. Roger. *Kansas Depots*. Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1990.

A History of Railroad Construction and Abandonment Within the State of Kansas. N.p., Kansas Corporation Commission, Transportation Division, 1 October 1972.

Transportation Enhancement Grant Application: "Augusta Frisco Station Centennial Restoration Project". City of Augusta, 2009-2010.

Wolfenbarger, Deon. "Historic Railroad Resources of Kansas" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Topeka: Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, 2001.

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: **Kansas Historical Society**

Augusta Frisco Depot
Name of Property

Butler County, KS
County and State

- 5 of 14 East elevation (short side) and north elevation, facing SW
- 6 of 14 East section of north elevation, showing 1917 baggage section, facing SE
- 7 of 14 Freight door in the 1930s infill section on the north elevation, facing S
- 8 of 14 West half of north elevation, facing SW
- 9 of 14 West elevation (short side) and north elevation, facing SE
- 10 of 14 Interior, freight area, facing NE
- 11 of 14 Interior, freight area, facing SW
- 12 of 14 Interior, freight area showing door to office and waiting area and ticket window, facing W
- 13 of 14 Interior, weighting area, facing NW
- 14 of 14 Interior, office space, facing NW

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name City of Augusta

street & number 113 E 6th Street telephone 316-775-4510

city or town Augusta state Kansas zip code 67010

Figure 1: Augusta Frisco Depot - between 1910-1917.



Figure 2: Augusta Frisco Depot - plans, 1917.

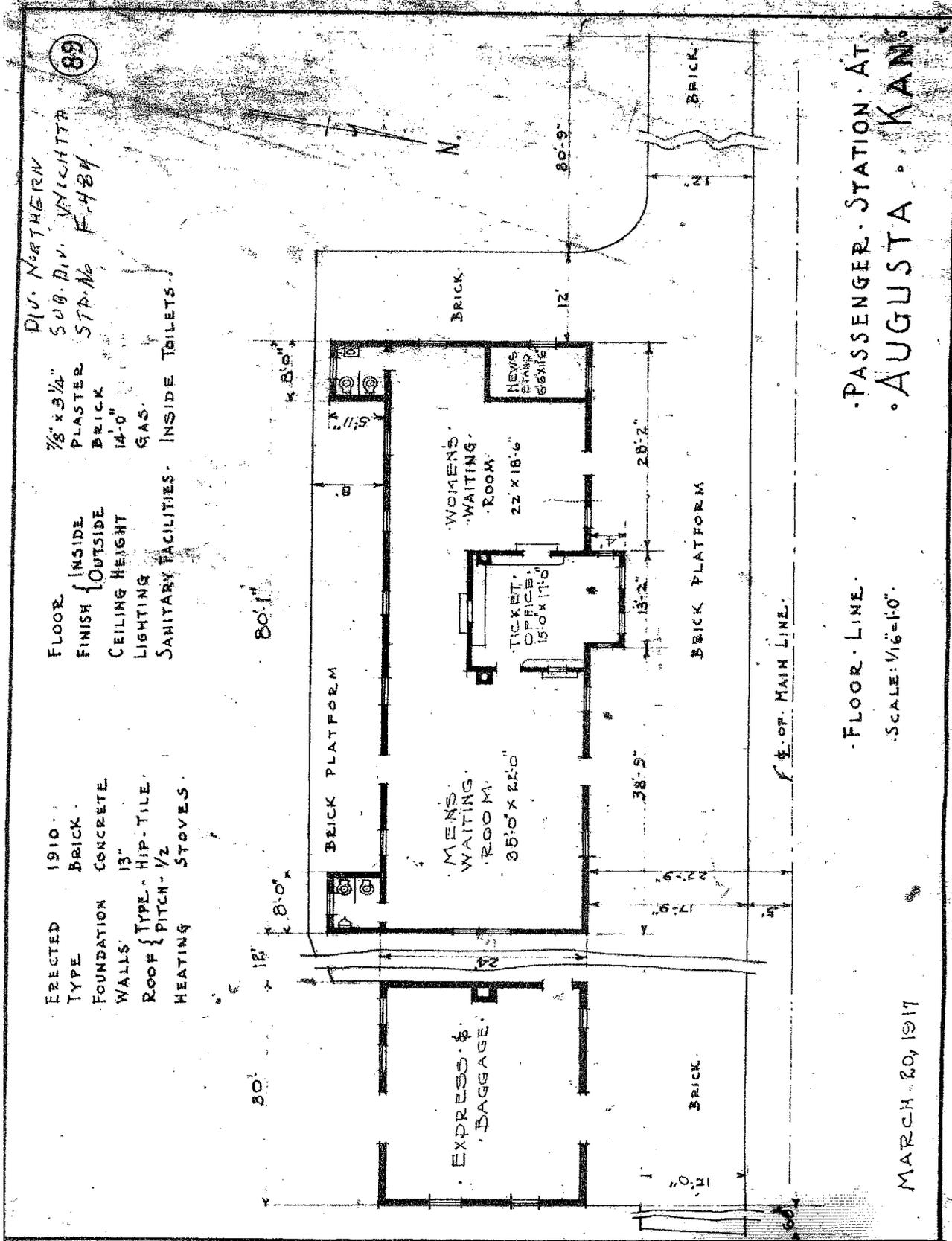


Figure 3: April 1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Augusta, KS (Sheet 3)

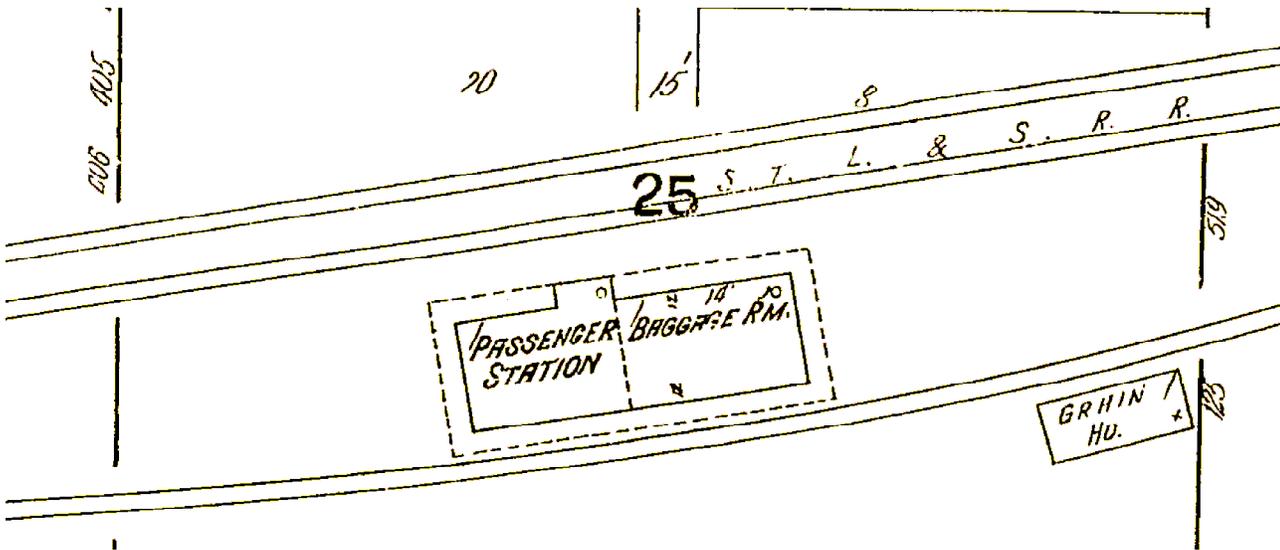


Figure 4: November 1917 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Augusta, KS (Sheet 4)

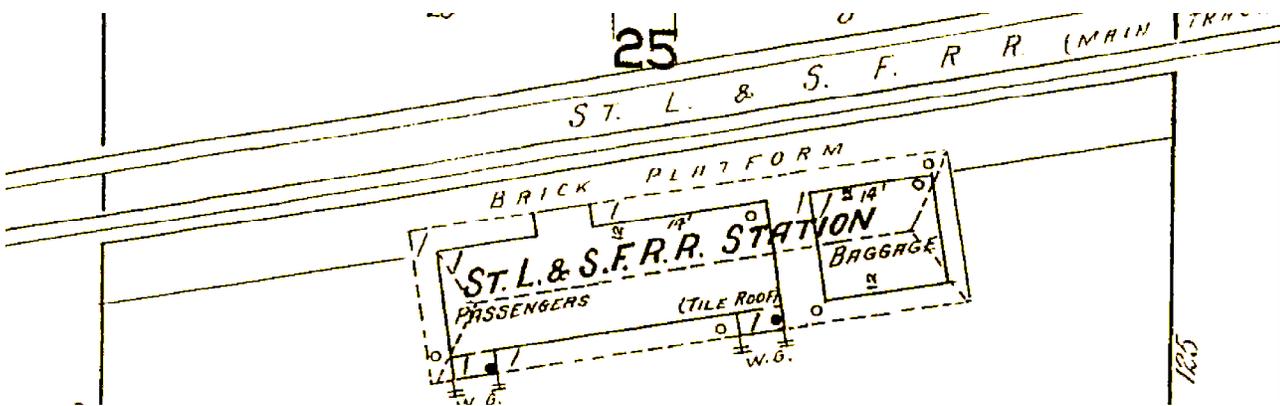


Figure 5: July 1923 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Augusta, KS (Sheet 3)

