

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Texas and Pacific Passenger Depot (1911) is a two story brick building located adjacent to the central railroad corridor in the heart of downtown Bunkie. The term "no style" seems to be the most appropriate. Although the building has undergone some losses and alterations, it is still clearly recognizable as a depot and hence retains its National Register eligibility.

The ground floor consists of three rooms set in a line. These include a ticket office and separate waiting rooms for white and black passengers. There is also a small area cordoned off which was evidently used for luggage. A corner staircase ascends to the partial second story which appears to have contained offices.

The exterior features a pronounced horizontality with low tripped roofs and broad spreading eaves. In addition, windows are accented by horizontal concrete bands at the head, sill and transom levels. The entire building rests on a heavy stuccoed dado. A noteworthy exterior feature is a polygonal bay window set oriel style in the center of the second story on the side facing the tracks. This feature does not appear in a 1915 photograph of the depot, but it must have been installed shortly after that time. The interior features plaster walls and molded beam ceilings. The surface of the ceilings is sheathed in narrow gauge beaded board. (The walls and ceilings are presently covered with paneling and dropped acoustical tile. Some of the ceiling tiles have been taken down to reveal the original ceiling and wall surfaces.)

In addition to the interior modifications mentioned above, the building has undergone the following changes:

1. The second story roof originally had a pair of small non-functional dormers facing front and rear. These have been lost.
2. The entire first story was encompassed originally by a wooden fixed awning supported by metal columns with simple bracketed tops. About twenty years ago, this feature was lost.
3. The depot has also lost its original ornamental rafter tails.

The most noticeable of these alterations is the loss of the canopy; however, the depot retains its basic configuration, most of its detailing, and its trackside location. It is still obviously a railroad depot and would be easily recognizable to someone from the historic period.

Significant dates	1911-1940
Architect/Builder	Unknown
Criterion A	

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

The Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot is locally significant in the area of transportation as the only extant resource associated with the very important historical force of railroading in the town of Bunkie. Although the present depot does not date from the time the railroad arrived and founded the town, it does represent railroading as a crucial force in the town's development from its construction in 1911 through 1940. (The railroad continued in this role up to and past the fifty year cutoff for significance.)

Bunkie literally came into being because of the Texas and Pacific Railroad, which arrived there in 1882. Being on a main line railroad made it possible for Bunkie to flourish during the previously mentioned 1911-1940 period of significance as a cotton shipping point. Because of the rich alluvial soil in the area, agriculture has always been the mainstay of the economy, with cotton and sugar cane being the chief money crops. During the period of significance local farmers relied upon the railroad to transport thousands upon thousands of bales of cotton to market. Bunkie's location on the railroad also enabled it to attract various cotton related industries such as compresses and cotton seed oil companies. The dependence of these industries on the railroad is graphically illustrated on Sanborn maps (1923 and 1931) showing their location next to the tracks.

While the nominated depot is not Bunkie's freight depot (shown on Sanborn maps but no

longer extant), it is still a graphic reminder of the force which was the foundation of Bunkie's economy during the period of significance (1911-1940). As noted elsewhere, it is the only cultural resource left to represent railroading.

Major Bibliographical References

Sanborn Insurance Maps, Bunkie, 1909, 1923, 1931.

Various old photos of depot.

Saucier, Corinne L. History of Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana. New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1943.