

= North Bank Depot Buildings =

The North Bank Depot Buildings , located in central Portland , Oregon , United States , are a pair of buildings formerly used as a freight warehouse and passenger terminal for the Spokane , Portland and Seattle Railway ( SP & S ) . Formed in 1905 , the SP & S was commonly known as the North Bank Road ( or North Bank road , " road " being short for railroad ) during the period in which these buildings were in use . The Portland buildings ' passenger facilities were also used by the Oregon Electric Railway after that railway was acquired by the SP & S. Located in what is now known as the Pearl District , the buildings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 . They were in use by the SP & S and its successor , Burlington Northern Railroad , from 1908 until the 1980s . Only the east building was used as a passenger station , and this usage lasted from 1908 until 1931 .

= = Location = =

The two matching , two @-@ story brick buildings face one another on opposite sides of NW 11th Avenue immediately north of Hoyt Street , the east building being at 1029 NW Hoyt Street and the west at 1101 NW Hoyt . Historically , they were known as the East and West Freighthouses of the Spokane , Portland & Seattle Railway . In references to passenger services , the east building was formally referred to as the North Bank Station ( or North Bank Passenger Station ) , but alternatively was known by various other names , including North Bank depot , Hoyt Street depot , Hoyt Street terminal , 11th & Hoyt Streets depot , 10th & Hoyt depot , or similar . Each building measures 50 feet ( 15 m ) by 200 feet ( 61 m ) .

= = Background = =

The SP & S was formed jointly by the Northern Pacific Railway ( NP ) and Great Northern Railway in 1905 , originally as the Portland & Seattle Railway , to build and ultimately operate new railroad lines connecting Portland with Seattle and with Spokane , but was renamed Spokane , Portland & Seattle Railway in early 1908 , before opening any track sections . The planned new railroad was commonly referred to as the " North Bank road " ( road being short for railroad or railroad line ) , or North Bank line , because the Seattle line would follow the Columbia River 's north bank as far as Kelso and the Spokane line would also follow the north bank , running east from Vancouver . East from Portland , the south bank of the Columbia already had a rail line , owned by the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company ( later absorbed by Union Pacific Railroad ) .

By September 1905 , Northern Pacific had already acquired the property for the future terminal buildings and rail yard ? a strip of land two blocks wide , from 10th to 12th avenues , and stretching north from Hoyt Street to the Willamette River . Construction of the railroad itself began in early 1906 . The new company needed freight storage and handling facilities in Portland , and to this end it built the two " freight houses " at 11th Avenue and Hoyt Street , in 1908 . SP & S passenger train service was originally expected to terminate at Union Station , located about 1 @,@ 600 feet ( 490 m ) to the east , but lengthy negotiations between SP & S and Union Station 's operator , the Northern Pacific Terminal Company , eventually reached an impasse . The Terminal Company was only partially owned by SP & S parent Northern Pacific Railway , and partially by competing railroads . With only a few weeks to go until passenger service to Portland was to be started , it was reported that SP & S would instead equip one of its new freight houses for use as a passenger station , in place of access to Union Station , at least temporarily .

= = Period of active use = =

Passenger trains began using the new station ? the east building , at 1029 NW Hoyt Street ? in November 1908 . The west building , used exclusively for freight , came into use at the same time , as SP & S initiated its operations in Portland . Trains operating from this station served routes within

the Pacific Northwest , including to Seattle , Spokane and Seaside via Astoria . The Portland ? Spokane train , named the Inland Empire Express , connected in Spokane with Great Northern 's Oriental Limited to and from Chicago and was advertised as the " Portland ? Chicago " service .

SP & S began shifting some of its passenger trains to Union Station in 1920 , and additional trains were shifted in 1922 , after new platforms and train sheds were constructed at Union Station for this purpose . However , only some trains used Union Station , including the long @-@ distance services to Chicago ( which began carrying through sleeping cars , Portland ? Chicago , at this time ) , while other trains continued to use the Hoyt Street station for a time . SP & S inaugurated passenger service between Portland and Vernonia in March 1923 , with two round trips per day ; a passenger @-@ only train ran to and from Union Station , but a mixed freight @-@ passenger train operated instead from the Hoyt Street station .

In 1912 , Oregon Electric Railway ( OE ) interurban passenger trains began serving the North Bank Depot , after that company laid new track through downtown Portland along Salmon Street and 10th Avenue to reach the terminal . OE was owned by SP & S ( acquired in 1910 ) . Electric interurbans departed from this station on journeys west to Hillsboro and Forest Grove , and south through the Willamette Valley to Salem and Eugene .

The last OE service to this station operated on June 19 , 1931 , after the company requested , and received , permission from the Interstate Commerce Commission to abandon that section of route because of declining ridership and worsening traffic congestion . The service was cut back to Front and Jefferson streets the following day , and OE moved its ticket office to that location . The tracks along 10th and Salmon streets were abandoned and soon removed . Just two years later , in May 1933 , the Oregon Electric discontinued all its remaining passenger service , becoming exclusively a freight railroad .

SP & S was merged with other railroads in 1970 to form Burlington Northern Railroad ( BN ) . The former North Bank Depot Buildings continued to be used by the railroad for freight purposes until the 1980s , and then were vacant for a time , until at least the mid @-@ 1990s .

= = Preservation and conversion = =

During the course of the 1980s , usage of the railroad yards adjacent to and north of the two now @-@ Burlington Northern @-@ owned warehouses declined to the point of their being nearly vacant . Redevelopment of the area as a mixed @-@ use neighborhood with residential and retail uses was envisioned , and in 1989 , the Portland Planning Commission approved a rezoning of a 40 @-@ acre ( 16 ha ) tract , along with a master plan to foster such change . By this time , the Glacier Park Company , a property @-@ development subsidiary of Burlington Resources , had taken over the former North Bank Depot Buildings from BN , and it was reported that the new master plan for the area would include renovation of these two Hoyt Street warehouses .

In November 1990 , Glacier Park sold the 40 @-@ acre site to a Portland @-@ based development company , Prendergast & Associates . It was determined that extensive clean @-@ up of contaminated soil from decades of industrial use would be needed before most redevelopment could proceed . Prendergast & Associates were predicting an approximately 20 @-@ year timeframe for redevelopment of the entire area of former railyards and associated buildings . The two former @-@ SP & S freighthouses were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 , as the North Bank Depot Buildings . At that time , they were vacant and had not yet been renovated . In the late 1990s , they were renovated and converted for residential use .