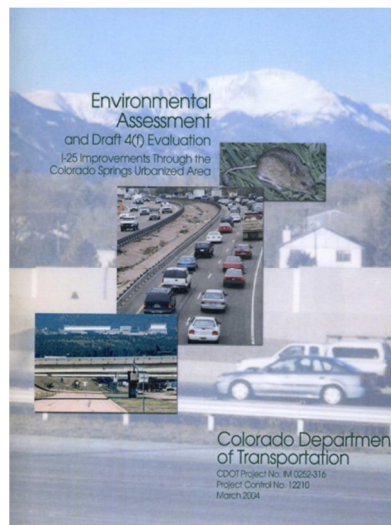




RE-EVALUATION, Mileposts 149 to 161

Interstate 25 Improvements through the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area Environmental Assessment



HISTORIC PROPERTIES TECHNICAL MEMO

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CDOT Region 2

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Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has prepared this technical memorandum to update findings with regard to historic resources described in the original 2004 Interstate 25 through the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area Environmental Assessment (EA) for the portion of the Proposed Action between Woodmen Road (Exit 149) in Colorado Springs and State Highway 105 in Monument (Exit 161). The purpose of the EA's Proposed Action is to relieve existing traffic congestion and address project future congestion on I-25 within the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area.

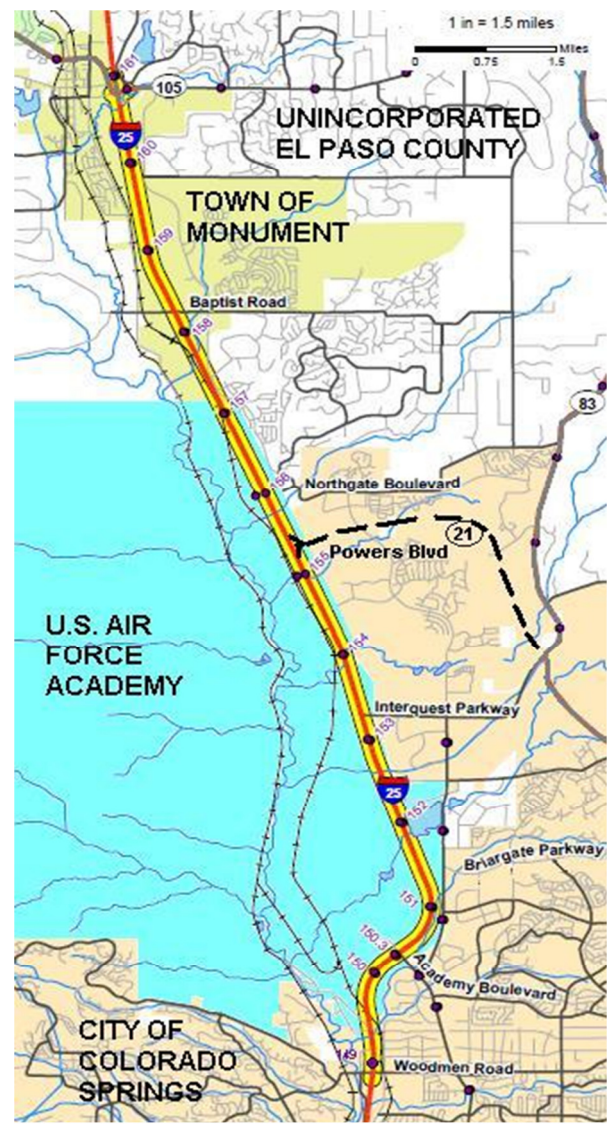
The I-25 EA originally evaluated impacts for the widening of I-25 between South Academy Boulevard (Exit 135) and State Highway 105 (SH 105), together with reconstruction of various I-25 interchanges within this corridor. Page 2-10 of the EA stated that, "Consistent with projected traffic demand in the I-25 corridor, the conceptual phasing for the Proposed Action calls for:

- (1) initially six-laning through central Colorado Springs, then
- (2) six-laning in northern El Paso County, and finally
- (3) adding HOV [High-Occupancy Vehicle] lanes through central Colorado Springs and widening to six lanes south to South Academy Boulevard."

For the year 2012, CDOT has received funding to begin the second phase, which involves widening I-25 to six lanes in northern El Paso County. The EA calls for eventually widening I-25 all the way to SH 105. The 2012 project will begin north of Woodmen Road (Exit 149) and may be able to widen I-25 to the North Gate Interchange (Exit 156) or slightly beyond, perhaps to Black Squirrel Creek. To be prepared for possible additional funding availability in the near future, CDOT's current EA re-evaluation effort is covering all Phase 2 improvements. Therefore, the study area for this re-evaluation extends northward all the way to Monument. See Figure 1.

The I-25 EA included a new connection with Powers Boulevard (now State Highway 21

Figure 1. I-25 EA Re-evaluation Project Vicinity



[SH 21]), following SH 21 eastward to just past the Powers Boulevard/Voyager Boulevard interchange. The design and analysis of this connection in the I-25 EA superseded what was proposed earlier in the North Powers Boulevard EA that was approved in 1999. The current EA re-evaluation also includes this portion of Powers Boulevard from I-25 to just east of Voyager Parkway.

Summary of the 2004 EA Historic Resources, Impact, and Mitigation

The historic resources survey report for the I-25 Improvements through Colorado Springs EA was completed in 2003. It resulted in the identification of 228 properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) that were 45 years or older. Of these properties, 31 were eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Properties identified between Woodmen Road and SH 105 in that survey included the Santa Fe Railroad (5EP1003.9), the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) (5EP595), Reynolds Ranch (5EP2223), and two bridges over Pine Creek (5EP807, 5EP3358).

The Section 106 consultation process resulted in *no adverse effect* to the USAFA for the construction of additional lanes within the existing Interstate 25 easement, but the reconstruction of the interchange at I-25 at North Gate, and the relocation of the Ackerman Overlook resulted in an *adverse effect* to the USAFA because construction of these improvements resulted in an additional 48.4 acres of additional easement from the USAFA.

Mitigation for the adverse effects was outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between FHWA, SHPO, CDOT, the USAFA, and the City of Colorado Springs that was signed in September 2004. Mitigation included Level II archival photography of the segment of I-25 on USAFA property that would be affected by the proposed improvements. This archival documentation was approved by SHPO in December 2004.

Changes to the Project that Would Affect the Resource Differently

Since the EA was approved in 2004, the Baptist Road interchange was reconstructed (I-25 Exit 158), and the COSMIX project widened I-25 from South Circle Drive (Exit 138) to North Academy Boulevard (Exit 150). A Section 4(f) Evaluation that addressed the use of a segment of abandoned historic US Highway 85 (5EP5133.2 near Baptist Road) was approved in March 2009.

As noted above, the I-25 EA Phase 2 project now includes the I-25/North Powers connection from I-25 to just east of the planned Powers/Voyager Parkway interchange. This action was initially documented in a 1997 Environmental Assessment (*Powers Boulevard Extension North, Woodmen Road to Interstate 25*). The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the I-25 Improvements through Colorado Springs EA discussed the connection of Powers Boulevard, which includes modifications to the North Gate Interchange.

Changes in Resources, Analysis Data, Analysis Methods or Applicable Regulations

I-25 Improvements through the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area EA

The update to historic properties for Phase II included a file search of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) Compass database to identify properties documented or entered into the database since the 2003 report was completed. The search was based on the original APE boundary map. The OAHP file search resulted in a total of fifty-eight resources within the APE boundary. An analysis of the data indicates that, with the exception of three resources, the sites were identified as officially not eligible, field not eligible, or isolated finds. The three eligible resources in this search include segments of abandoned US Highway 85 (5EP5133.1, 5EP5133.2) both of which were recorded by CDOT history staff, and 5EP4461, a trash scatter determined officially not eligible.

CDOT also requested a search of El Paso County Assessor records for parcels within the APE with buildings constructed between 1954 and 1967 to be consistent with the 45-year age cut-off used in the original study. Because GIS shape files for the original APE were not available, a 1,320-foot buffer along both sides of I-25 between Woodmen Road and SH 105 was identified. That search resulted in the identification of 702 unique parcels within the buffer area. Of those, 60 parcels included a building construction date within the 1954-1967 timeframe. None of these parcels will be directly affected by the second phase of the project so no additional resources were documented based on this research.

Because there have been no changes to the project scope as identified in the EA, the effects determinations for resources identified in that survey are still appropriate and do not require updating. Mitigation for adverse effects to historic properties in the area between Woodmen Road and State Highway 105 was outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed in September 2004, and the mitigation for those resources was completed (with SHPO approval) in December 2004.

I-25 Connection to Powers Boulevard

CDOT also conducted a search of the OAHP Compass database for the Powers Boulevard project area and reviewed the 1995 survey report. The original survey resulted in documentation of three eligible resources, including the Reynolds Ranch (5EP2223), the Johnson Ranch (5EP2231), and an abandoned segment of the Santa Fe Railroad (5EP1003) which was converted to a trail (known as the Santa Fe Trail). The original project resulted in no effects to the two ranch properties, but it was determined that the railroad grade, which was converted to a trail, would be affected by the project. The trail was documented in a Section 4(f) Evaluation completed in 1997. In its evaluation of a modified alignment for this project in 2002, CDOT determined that there were no historic properties affected with regard to the three identified resources.

The updated OAHP Compass file search was based on the broad legal location that includes the proposed roadway alignment. It resulted in 43 resources from all site types, including prehistoric archaeology, historic archaeology, architectural, and paleontological. Of these resources, the Reynolds Ranch (5EP2223) is officially eligible to the NRHP (1995) and has been listed on the SRHP (1997). The Johnson Ranch (5EP2231) was determined officially eligible in 1995. The Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad Combination Car #60 (5EP3319/5CN65.2) was listed on the SRHP in 1999 and was located at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry near the North Gate interchange. In 2001, the car was relocated to the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic

Railroad in Antonito, Colorado. The other resources in the search are either officially not eligible or field not eligible.

A review of the right-of-way (ROW) plans for this part of the project indicates that the only resources in the corridor that will require ROW are vacant land and a single property with an assessor building date of 1999. In addition, the grading of the roadway alignment will not affect the Santa Fe Railroad Trail, which is on the west side of I-25. As a result, no additional resources were documented for these improvements.

Although there have been modifications to the roadway alignment identified for the 1997 *Powers Boulevard Extension EA*, this modification was reviewed internally by CDOT staff in 2002 and it was determined that no additional Section 106 consultation was required. The grading of the new alignment will not affect any known historic properties, and will result in right-of-way acquisition only from vacant land.

Section 106 Consultation

CDOT conducted a field visit to evaluate the Girl Scout Roundup sign located at milepost 152.3 on the east side of I-25. This wooden sign marks the location of the July 1959 International Girl Scout Roundup and was not evaluated as part of the 2003 historic resources study. The sign was evaluated and determined not eligible; however, it may be State Register eligible. There will be no direct effects to the sign, but the roadway will be shifted closer to the sign. Because CDOT has determined that the sign is not NRHP eligible, the project results in *no historic properties affected*. An extended segment of the abandoned US Highway 85 (5EP5133.2) was also documented for this phase of the project. The entire highway is considered NRHP eligible and the segment retains integrity. There will be no direct effects to the segment and the project results in *no historic properties affected* with regard to the highway.

To be consistent with the Section 106 consultation effort conducted in 2002-2004, CDOT forwarded the update and the eligibility and effect determinations concurrently to the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department, which was an invited signatory to the 2004 MOA. The U.S. Air Force Academy (also an invited signatory to the MOA) was contacted and requested to be copied on this correspondence. The National Park Service was consulted in 2004 regarding effects to the Cadet Area National Historic Landmark (NHL) at the USAFA; there are no updates regarding the NHL. This information was also forwarded to the City of Colorado Springs Historic Preservation Board, which is a Certified Local Government (CLG) and was a concurring party signatory to the MOA. Both the SHPO and the City of Colorado Springs Historic Preservation Board responded and agreed with CDOT's determinations of eligibility and effect for the re-evaluation. Copies of the correspondence is attached at the end of this memorandum. No comments were received from the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department.

Changes in Proposed Mitigation

There are no proposed changes to the mitigation outlined in the 2004 EA.