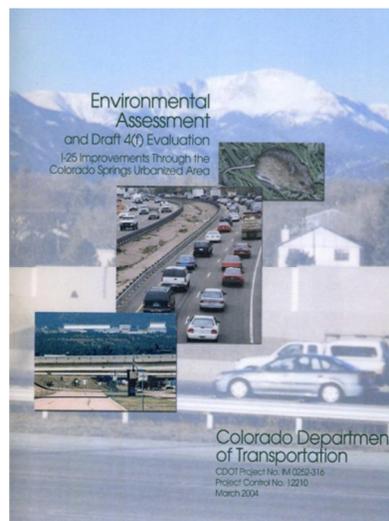




## **RE-EVALUATION, Mileposts 149 to 161**

### **Interstate 25 Improvements through the Colorado Springs Area Environmental Assessment**



## **ARCHAEOLOGY TECHNICAL MEMO**

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Prepared for:  
CDOT Region 2

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## Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has prepared this technical memorandum to update findings with regards to the socioeconomic conditions described in the original 2004 I-25 Environmental Assessment (EA) with regard to 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.

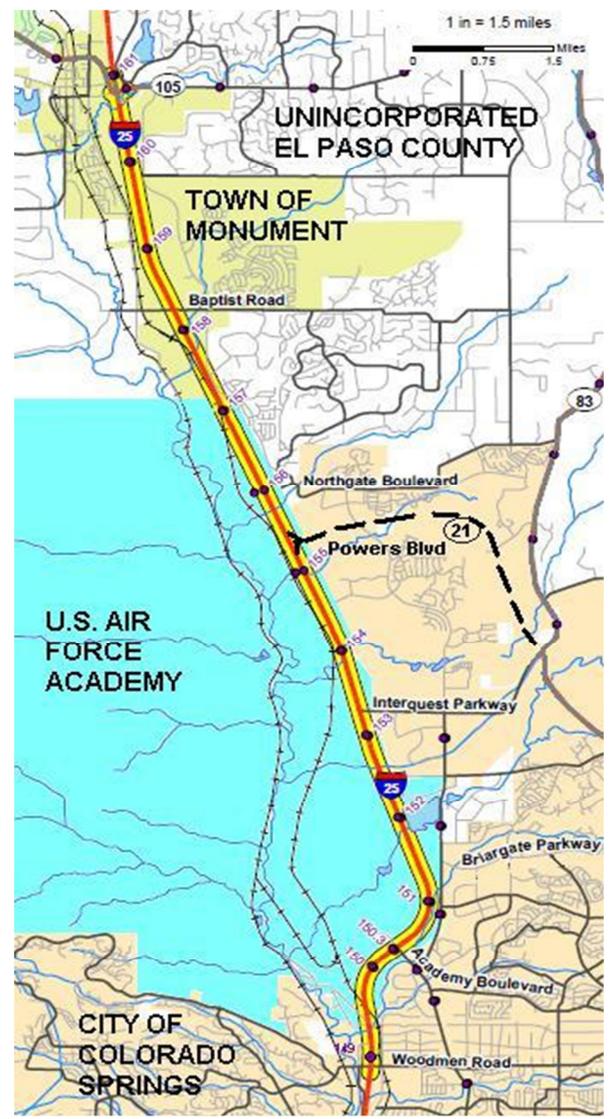
The I-25 EA originally evaluated impacts for the widening of I-25 between South Academy Boulevard (Exit 135) and SH 105, together with reconstruction of various I-25 interchanges within this corridor. Page 2-10 of the EA stated that, "Consistent with projected traffic demand in the I-25 corridor, the 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, meaning to widen I-25 to six lanes in northern El Paso County. The EA calls for eventually widening I-25 all the way to SH105. 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. Nevertheless, 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), 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.

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



## **Summary of the 2004 EA Archaeological Resources, Impact, and Mitigation**

The 2004 EA included research regarding known locations with archaeological resources within an area of potential effects along the I-25 corridor. It stated the following conclusion:

According to concept design plans, only one prehistoric site will be disturbed during construction associated with the Proposed Action, whereas the remaining four eligible and potentially eligible sites will be avoided and therefore not affected. Consequently, no additional research is necessary for these four locales. One prehistoric site cannot be avoided, therefore, in December 2002 the site was subject to a test excavation program to determine eligibility. Testing revealed the presence of intact buried cultural remains, and as a result the site is evaluated as NRHP eligible based upon its ability to yield data.

Four additional NRHP eligible or potentially eligible sites referenced were identified during the EA process. Three are located north of Woodmen Road but well beyond the impact area of the Proposed Action. A fourth site is located south of Woodmen Road.

Mitigation identified in the EA included specific steps to be taken for the one identified site, plus steps to be taken in the event that the Proposed Action resulted in discovery of any previous unknown sites.

## **Changes to the Project that Would Affect the Resource Differently**

CDOT has not proposed to change the project in any way that would affect archaeological resources differently from what was described in the EA. 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).

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

The NRHP eligible archaeological site referenced in the EA was located south of Woodmen Road and was subjected to controlled excavations in 2004 as mitigation of adverse effects. This locality was subsequently destroyed by COSMIX construction.

As of early 2012, no additional archaeological resources have been documented along the I-25 corridor between Woodmen Road and State Highway 105.

## **Changes in Proposed Mitigation**

The EA's specific mitigation for the one impacted site discussed above was completed as part of the COSMIX project.

## **Conclusion**

No archaeological impacts are anticipated with implementation of the I-25 Proposed Action in the EA re-evaluation area. If any currently undiscovered archeological resources are found anywhere within the I-25 corridor during construction, the CDOT staff archaeologist will be notified immediately to assess their significance and make further recommendations.

Summary of Previously and Currently Identified Archaeological Impacts and Mitigation

| EA 2004 – No-Action Alternative   | EA 2004 – Impacts of Proposed Action   | EA 2004 - Mitigation  | 2012 – What Has Changed   | Re-evaluation 2012 – Impacts of No Action  | Re-evaluation 2012 – Impacts of Proposed Action   | Re-evaluation 2012 – Mitigation   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to known archaeological sites.</p>                             | <p>A known archaeological site will be impacted near the I-25/ Rockrimmon Interchange. The site is a prehistoric campsite that has been assessed as being eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.</p> | <p>Prior to construction near the site, CDOT will have this site excavated by qualified archaeologists, in accordance with a formal treatment plan coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and consulting Native American tribes.</p> | <p>Appropriate excavation, assessment and documentation was conducted as mitigation for this site prior to the site's destruction as part of the I-25 COSMIX Construction project (Phase 1 of the Proposed Action).</p> | <p>No change. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to archaeological sites.</p>                                   | <p>No change. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to archaeological sites.</p>                                    | <p>No mitigation is necessary.</p>  |
| <p>The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to archaeological sites that have not yet been discovered.</p> | <p>The Proposed Action has the potential to impact archaeological resources that have not yet been discovered.</p>   | <p>If any currently undiscovered archeological resources are found anywhere within the I-25 corridor during construction, the CDOT staff archaeologist will be notified immediately to assess their significance and make further recommendations.</p>  | <p>No new archaeological sites have been discovered within the I-25 EA re-evaluation area, and the applicable regulations have not changed.</p>   | <p>No change. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to archaeological sites that have not yet been discovered.</p> | <p>No change. The Proposed Action has the potential to impact archaeological resources that have not yet been discovered.</p> | <p>No change. If any currently undiscovered archeological resources are found anywhere within the I-25 corridor during construction, the CDOT staff archaeologist will be notified immediately to assess their significance and make further recommendations.</p> |