

**Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance**

**Highway Name:** State Highway (SH) 128

**CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:**

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
128A	From SH 93-A south of Boulder east To SH 121-A in Broomfield
128B	From SH 287-C Cozy Corner east of Broomfield East along 120th Ave To the East Side Ramps at I-25 in Thornton

**Highway Location:**

Counties: Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, Adams  
 Length (Miles): 10.631

**OAHP Site Numbers (for previously recorded segments, if applicable)\*:**

<i>OAHP Site No.</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Assessment Date</i>	<i>Site Name</i>
5BF.50	Field needs data	2/5/1999	DENVER/BOULDER TURNPIKE, U.S. HIGHWAY 36 BETWEEN DENVER AND BOULDER
5BF.50.1	Officially not eligible>Officially not eligible>Field not eligible>Field not eligible	10/17/2006>02/18/2003>8/2004>12/23/2002	DENVER-BOULDER TURNPIKE, U.S. HIGHWAY 36

**Discussion of Site Forms (for previously recorded segments, if applicable):**

No Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory forms for previously recorded segments of this highway were identified in Compass.

**Historic Districts located within 250 feet of highway (OAHP Site Number and Name)\*:**

<i>OAHP Site No.</i>	<i>District Name</i>	<i>Assessment (If Applicable)</i>
None	No historic districts are found on or adjacent to this highway	

*\*Information based on data from Compass provided by OAHP*

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### Historical Data:

The current alignment of SH 128 extends from the junction of SH 93 south of Boulder and travels east to the junction of SH 121 in Broomfield. In Broomfield, the highway becomes discontinuous and begins again at SH 287 and Federal Avenue and travels east along 120th Avenue to the junction of Interstate(I)-25 in Northglenn. Together, the entire route extends 10.631 miles in length.

An eastern segment of SH 128 existed on early travel and state maps in the early 1920s. It originally extended from the eastern side of Broomfield from 120th Avenue and Federal Avenue east to SH 185 (Washington Street) (Salek). By 1965 maps show the eastern segment ending at the junction of I-25 and not extending any farther east. The extension west of SH 128 to SH 93 from its connection with SH 121 south of Broomfield and the U.S. Highway (US) US 36 interchange occurred sometime between 1956 and 1965 (Salek; USGS maps 1965, 1956). The final connection west to SH 93 occurred by 1966 (Project S 0022(2)). From 1939 to 1949, maps show a small segment east near Henderson, along the current alignment of SH 22 (See form for SH 22 for more information). SH 128 was realigned on the western segment near the Jefferson County airport in 1986 and again in 2012 (Projects CC-11-0128-02 and FAA(CC) 1281-03). Other improvements included a new intersection at Federal Blvd in 1966 (Project S00 68 (1) and recently in 2007 at I-25 and SH 128 (120th Ave) (Project IM-0253-173).

The historic themes for this area of Boulder County include coal and mineral mining, agriculture and ranching. The town of Boulder served as a supply town for the gold mining communities in the mountains west of Boulder. Shortly after the arrival of prospectors, settlers established farms and ranches, organized and built irrigation systems, founded farming communities, and organized communal agricultural societies. These ranches and agricultural communities helped supply the mining communities of the gold and coal industry and later, continued to provide important agricultural industries and economies for the region (Wolfenbarger, 2008: E-1).

The eastern segment of SH 128 traverses agricultural lands and the community of Broomfield. In the late 1890s, Brewer Adolph Zang owned the lands around 120th and Wadsworth Boulevard to grow crops for his brewery. By the mid 1950s, with the construction of the Denver-Boulder Turnpike (US 36) the area changed from agricultural farms to suburban development. In 1955, the Turnpike Land Company developed the former Zang property and planned a model community which became the City of Broomfield (City of Broomfield; Noel 2009: 332-333).

Although SH 128 was constructed as a transportation link between farming communities in the area, it was one of many rural roads in the region and did not provide connections to regional markets to function as an important farm-to-market route. SH 128 was a secondary road, connecting to more important and heavily used roads such as SH 121 and US 287. A review of sources did not reveal that SH 128 represents important road engineering achievements, or that it is otherwise an important road type or subtype identified in the MPS.

By the mid 1950s, another industry in the area was the Rocky Flats Plant. The Rocky Flats Plant was first built in 1951 and was in operation from 1952 to 1989. Rocky Flats was part of the nationwide nuclear weapons manufacturing complex during the Cold War. Rocky Flats workers commuted to the plant via SH 93. Until 1964, SH 93 was the only access point for workers until an eastern gate was opened via SH 128 and Indiana Street. SH 128 provided a transportation link from the community of Broomfield to SH 93. Research indicates that SH 128 provided a secondary link to the Rocky Flats Plant and was not a primary access road for workers to the plant.

(Unless otherwise indicated, sources used in the preparation of this section included state highway maps, the Highways of Colorado by Matthew Salek, Highways to the Sky: A Context and History of Colorado's Highway System, Colorado State Roads and Highways, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, plans in the Online Transportation Information System (OTIS), and site forms for previously surveyed resources in Compass when available.)

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**Not Significant - No historical significance identified**  
 **Significant - Historical significance identified (see details below)**

**Property Type and Areas of Significance:**

A detailed explanation why this highway possesses historical significance is provided in the Significance Statement below.

**Cultural:**

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)

**Engineering:**

Subtypes

- Farm-to-Market Road
- Limited Access, Multiple-Lane, Divided Highway/Freeway
- Highway Bypass

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)
- Engineering achievement (Engineering)

**Aesthetic:**

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)
- Engineering achievement (Engineering)
- Landscape architecture (Landscape Architecture)

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### Historic periods of highway construction:

- Pre-territorial (pre-1861)
- Territorial and pre-automobile state roads (1861-1890)
- Automobile age (1890-1930)
- Depression and World War II (1930-1945)
- Postwar Interstate Era (1945-1973)
- Completion and Augmentation of Interstate System (1973-2000)

### Level of Significance:

- Local
- State
- National

### Significance Statement:

SH 128 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS.

#### *Criterion A*

As an Engineered Route, SH 128 does not possess significance under Criterion A. The road provided access to the Cold War nuclear facility Rocky Flats twelve years after the plant opened. Because it isn't associated with the original development of the plant, this indicates it was a secondary access road and not the primary connector for workers and materials at the plant. Research failed to show that this highway represents an early or prominent road construction project of the Colorado Highway Department (CHD), or the connections it provides from any subsequent highway improvements. As such, the highway does not possess significance under Criterion A.

#### *Criterion B*

Research did not reveal this highway to be directly associated with the events or work of a person important in history, nor does research indicate the highway represents the efforts of a specific individual to secure construction of this highway for the economic development of a community or area of the state. Therefore, this highway does not possess significance under Criterion B.

#### *Criterion C*

As a representative example, a state highway that exhibits physical features indicative of an important type or subtype identified in the MPS reflecting its original design or important variation may possess significance. A state highway may also possess significance for particularly important engineering achievements.

This highway is not considered to be an early or prominent project of the CHD. Research and literature review yielded no evidence to indicate the use of innovative or important engineering design or construction techniques that serve to distinguish this highway from other roads and does not appear to exhibit important engineering innovations or important later modifications. The highway's design and construction appear to fall within the established standard practices of state highway design and construction of the time and the highway does not possess significance under Criterion C.

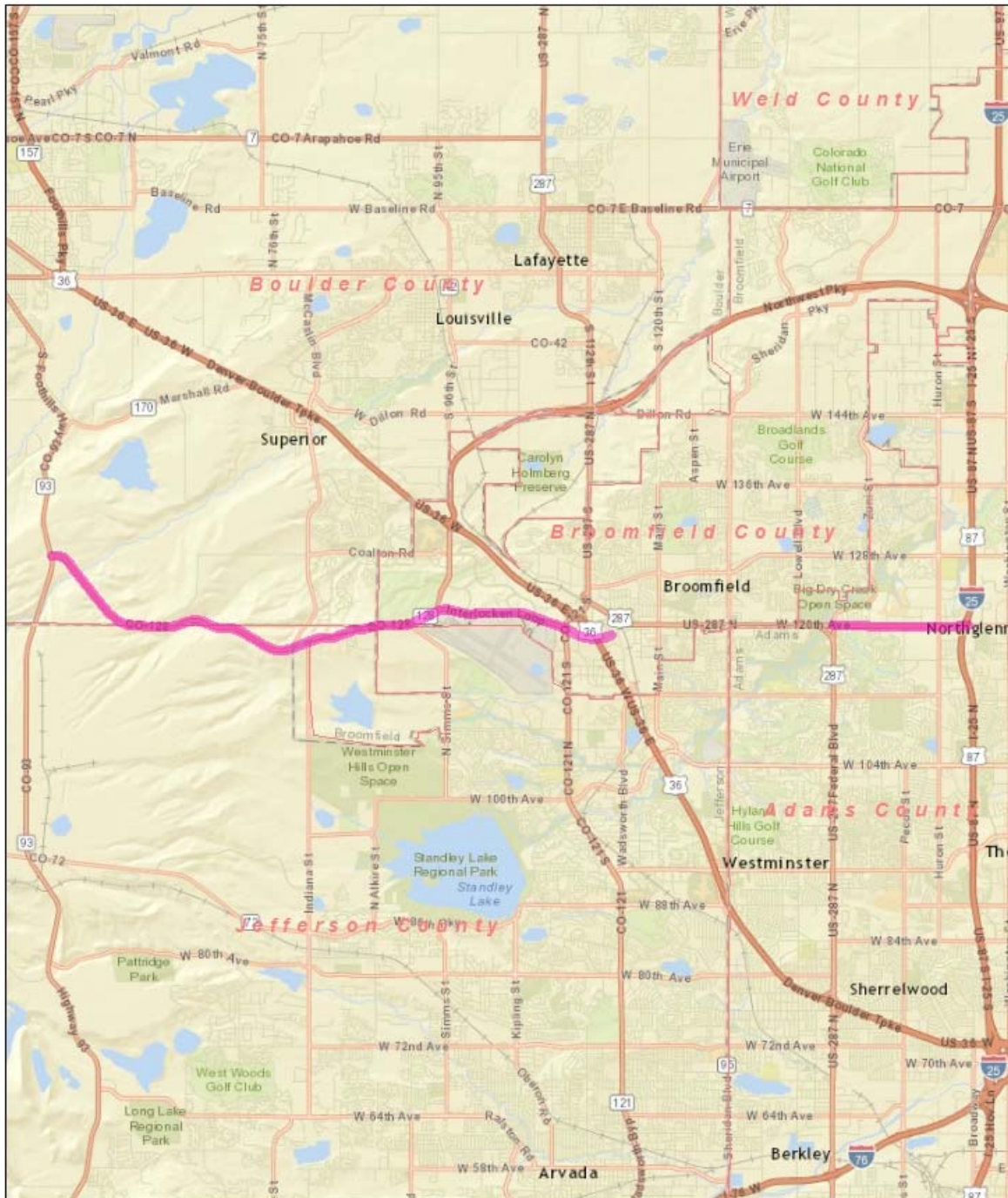
#### *Criterion D*

For a property to possess significance for information potential, the information yielded by the property must answer specific important research questions that cannot be otherwise answered. The technology of highway construction is well understood and documented. As such, this highway is unlikely to yield important information that cannot be discerned from archived plans and other records. Therefore, this highway does not possess significance under Criterion D.

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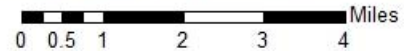
Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 128



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- SH 128
- County Boundary



**SH 128**



Map indicates the extent of the highway based on CDOT GIS data; portions co-signed with other highways may not be indicated.