

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 78

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
078A	From SH 165 A North of San Isabel east and Northeast To SH 45 A in Pueblo
078B	From Beulah Spur Connection - From SH 78-A northwest To County Road 213 and Penns Ave in Beulah

Highway Location:

Counties: Pueblo, Custer
 Length (Miles): 34.311

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>
None	No previously recorded segments are found on or adjacent to this highway		

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

No Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory forms (forms) for previously recorded segments of this highway were identified in Compass. However, SH 78 extends through a portion of Pueblo Mountain Park, a historic district that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and was constructed as part of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)/Works Progress Administration (WPA) project. The park is eligible under both Criterion A for its associations to entertainment/recreation, community planning and development, conservation, education, and social history as well as Criterion C for its landscape architecture and examples of Rustic style architecture.

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>
5PE.1663	Pueblo Mountain Park	Listed on National Register

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Historical Data:

SH 78 is approximately 34 miles long and extends southwest from SH 45 on the west side of Pueblo toward the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The highway has a small spur into the town of Beulah and winds its way through the Beulah Valley and mountainous San Isabel National Forest to its southern terminus at SH 165.

Historically, the trails, highways, and rural roads that made up the transportation network in this area facilitated travel and also made possible the transfer and distribution of the region's agricultural products. Settlement in Pueblo occurred in the early 1800s as a result of regional trade along the Santa Fe and Cherokee Trails, whose routes generally followed the Arkansas River Valley and subsequently formed portions of the route of present-day US 50. The community of Beulah was first established in the 1860s and was one of the earliest settlements in the area. Pueblo was established in 1870 and became a regional center of trade and industry due to its proximity to mining, agricultural areas, and New Mexico. William Jackson Palmer, an influential developer and railroad expansionist, platted another town, South Pueblo, on the opposite side of the Arkansas River, and established the new town as a stop on his Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in the early 1870s. Palmer had extended Pueblo's rail connections to the coalfields around Walsenburg and Trinidad by 1876, to the San Luis Valley by 1878, and to Leadville in the central mountain region by 1881. Combined with the entry of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad in Pueblo in the mid-1870s, these rail connections further solidified Pueblo as a significant center for trade in southern Colorado and facilitated the immense industrial growth of the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Wyckoff 1999: 144-145; Pueblo.org 2014; Kulkoski 1994: Section 8, Page 36).

Palmer also established the Colorado Coal & Iron Company (CC&I) in 1879. The company's first plant, the South Pueblo Ironworks, was located southeast of South Pueblo on a large tract of company-owned land. CC&I produced rails for the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and by the early 1880s was producing coal, pig iron, iron ore, rolled rails, and steel ingots. CC&I had several mining camps through the region. By 1890 CC&I had numerous smelters and factory complexes along the southern periphery of the city. CC&I was reorganized as Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I) in 1892 and purchased by John D. Rockefeller in 1903. Mining activities in this region were focused primarily in the foothills and mountains south and southwest of Pueblo with the smelters and industrial complexes located along the southernmost periphery of the city. As Pueblo prospered new housing, infrastructure, and amenities were introduced to meet the needs of the growing population that was more mobile than ever due to the rise in automobile membership. In 1919 a group of Pueblo businessmen formed the San Isabel Public Recreation Association (SIPRA) with the intention of creating a mountain park for use by Pueblo residents for picnicking and recreation. Creation of the park also had the support of the Pueblo Automobile Association and 600 acres were purchased near Beulah. Development on the park continued throughout the 1920s and included installation of pipelines and pumps, signs, roads, bridges, and cottages and other residential buildings. Funding for new projects at the park halted with the stock market crash of 1929. However, during the Great Depression work resumed under CCC and WPA projects that included completion of the Lake Isabel Dam and Reservoir and completion of work that had begun years prior before the economic decline of the early 1930s. Pueblo Mountain Park is listed in the National Register for its associations with Entertainment/Recreation, Community Planning and Development, Conservation, Education, and Social History as well as for its Landscape Architecture and examples of Rustic-style architecture. Landscape architect Arthur Carhart, who is credited with devising among the nation's earliest recreational plans for the National Forest Service, was instrumental in the design of Pueblo Mountain Park. According to the National Register Nomination for the park, Carhart used Pueblo Mountain Park as a model for developing comprehensive recreation plans for other National Forests across the country. Carhart's mentor, Frank Culley, was hired to design and supervise the construction of campgrounds at Squirrel Creek, South Hardscrabble Creek, and North Creek. As stated in the National Register Nomination, "these campgrounds appear to be the first designed and built by a landscape architect in a National Forest." A 1941 guidebook mentions "resort accommodations" along this route and also lists several other campgrounds this road provided access to located along the highway, including Boy Scout Camp Birch, the Pueblo Municipal Campground, Davenport Campground, Ophir Campground, and Florence Campground. As such, the southern end of SH 78 served as a popular and historically important recreational destination for residents of Pueblo and others traveling through the area (Deherrera et al 2012: 3-6; Harvard Business School, Colorado Fuel and Iron Corp 2012; Kulkoski 1994: Section 8, pages 48- 49; Colorado State Planning Commission 1941: 298-300).

Historic state highway maps indicate that a road along the general alignment of present-day SH 78 between Pueblo and Beulah was in place by 1916 and continued west to Silver Cliff; this road was designated Highway 44 at the time. The road was designated SH 76 by 1924 with a slightly different alignment southwest of Beulah and a "T" intersection at SH 165; the southern section as it exists today was established at this time. Plans from 1934 indicate that a portion of the road north of Beulah was improved as part of a Depression-Era federal relief project under United

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States Project Works (USPW) National Recovery State Road (NRS) Project No. 386; the road was designated SH 76 at the time. SH 78 served as a direct link between Pueblo and the recreational areas in the San Isabel National Forest as discussed above and the development of the road and recreational areas coincided.

(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 78 is classified an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS.

Criterion A

Segments of this highway were constructed by 1916, just a few years after the establishment of the CHD, and represent an early project completed by the Colorado Highway Department that possesses significance in the area of Transportation at the state level. SH 78 was improved as part of USPW NRS Project No. 386, a Depression-era federal relief program and the portions of the road that were improved under this project possesses significance in the area of Politics/Government at the state level for their association with federal work relief efforts during the Depression era. The northern portion of the highway (between approximately Beulah and Pueblo) served to provide a direct connection between important local recreational areas in San Isabel National Forest and Pueblo. These recreational areas, including the National Register-listed Pueblo Mountain Park, were developed by and for Pueblo residents shortly after SH 78 was established with SH 78 providing direct access to these recreational areas from Pueblo; by the 1940s travel literature lists this highway as providing access to these recreational areas. As such, this highway has a direct and important association with the development and use of these recreational areas in San Isabel National Forest and possesses significance in the area of Entertainment/Recreation at the local level. Although the highway passes through pastoral and agricultural land no evidence suggested that it served as an important farm-to-market road.

Criterion B

While the route of SH 78 provides access to Pueblo Mountain Park, which is historically important and associated with landscape architects Arthur Carhart and Frank Culley. Research did not reveal this highway to be directly associated with the design of the park or the work of these landscape architects. According to the National Register Nomination for Pueblo Mountain Park, by 1923, signs, roadwork, and some bridges were completed within the park, after the road was already established in 1916. The development and design of Pueblo Mountain Park reflects the work of Carhart and Culley while SH 78 is not associated with their work. As such, construction of the road does not express a particular phase in the development of either designer or an important aspect of the work of Carhart or Culley. Research did not reveal SH 78 to be directly associated with other persons 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. As such, this highway does not possess significance under Criterion B.

Criterion C

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

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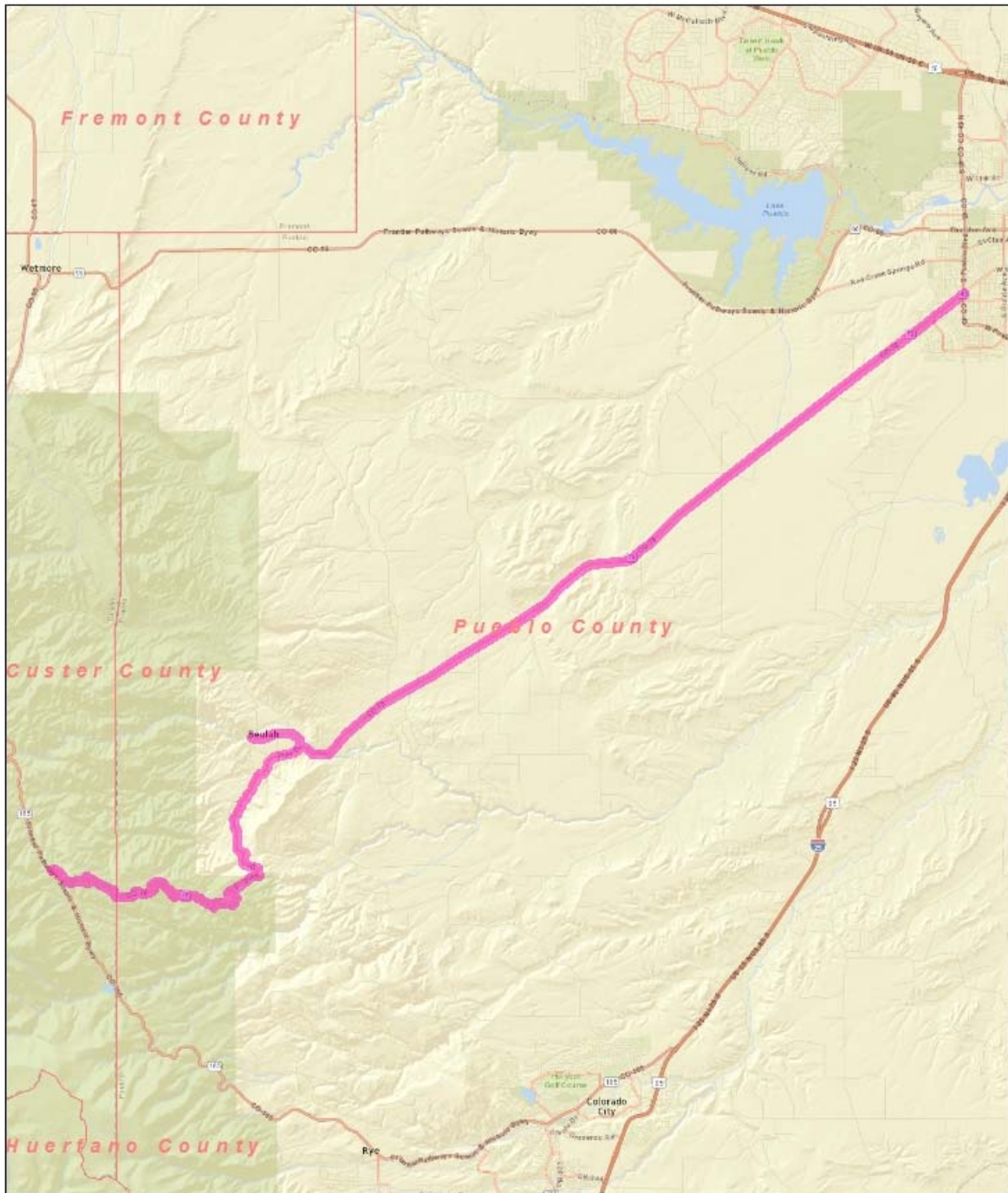
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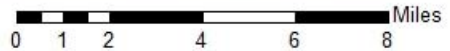
For a property to possess significance for information potential, the information yielded by the property must answer specific important research questions that cannot be otherwise answered. The technology of highway construction is well understood and documented. As such, this highway is unlikely to 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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- SH 78
- County Boundary

SH 78



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