

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 16

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
016A	From the Frontage Road West of I 25-A in Fountain Southeast To (Old Powers Blvd) SH 021A North of Fountain

Highway Location:

Counties: El Paso
Length (Miles): 3.201

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 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:

SH 16 lies in El Paso County, at the south end of the Colorado Springs metro area. The current alignment of SH 16 extends from the frontage road west of the Exit 132 interchange on Interstate (I)-25, east as Mesa Ridge Parkway to the intersection of Mesa Ridge Parkway and SH 21, aka Powers Blvd, for a total of 3.118 miles. The highway ends where SH 21 begins.

The Colorado Springs area, which SH 16 serves, is part of the Colorado Piedmont, a region defined geographically as the rolling hills and stream-laced valleys that lie to the east of the Front Range. This area contains both the most urbanized corridor in the state and also wide swaths of rural farm and ranchlands, with its history firmly rooted in the events that profoundly changed the region from the 1850s well into the twentieth century. Prehistorically the region was the hunting grounds of the Comanche, who were later pushed south by the Cheyenne and Arapahoe. By the 1850s sparse European-American settlement in the form of scattered farms and trading posts dotted this area, with trails such as the Cherokee Trail crossing the plains and connecting with California-bound trails to the north. With the Pikes Peak Gold Rush, however, change was fast and intense. The urban core that became the metro Denver area sprang from commerce and transportation, i.e., the connection of the gold fields in the Rocky Mountains with the markets and cities to the east. Colorado Springs was developed first in the 1870s as an early tourist destination, with General William Palmer's vision of a resort city acting as a guide. The city became an elite enclave, known for a time as "Little London" for the proliferation of British tourists, many of whom stayed, and Colorado Springs would go on to become home to a high number of millionaires made from the Cripple Creek Gold Rush in the 1890s. With the advent of World War II and the post-World War II period, the Colorado Springs area became home to military installations like Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, and the U.S. Air Force Academy, installations that have had enormous impact on the history of infrastructural development in and around the city (Wyckoff 1998:101-103; Ubbelohde et al 1995:118;334-335).

SH 16 is a comparatively short, four-lane divided expressway that connects the northern area of the Fort Carson Army Base on the west side of I-25, with the bedroom communities in Security-Widefield and Fountain, on the east side of the interstate. Currently, bridges on the route carry traffic over I-25, Fountain Creek and the Fountain Creek Trail, Santa Fe Avenue (U.S. Highway [US] 85), and the BNSF railroad tracks. SH 16 was designated a state highway in 1970, and at that time stretched east only as far as US 85 / N. Santa Fe Ave (1.15 miles). By 1976 the designated highway had extended another .11 mi. east to Quebec St. in the Widefield subdivision. In 2007, Mesa Ridge Parkway was designated SH 16 the remainder of its route to Powers Blvd. Subsequent improvements performed in anticipation of growth in the number of troops and their families stationed at Fort Carson included upgrading of the diamond interchange at SH 16 and I-25, with a loop ramp from southbound I-25 to SH 16 completed in 2009 (Salek).

The highway's original alignment (MM 0 to MM .996) was constructed in the 1970s, less than 50 years ago, and the incorporation of the eastern segment (MM .996 to MM 3.118) is less than a decade old. It serves to connect the residents of relatively new subdivisions with the interstate highway and SH 21, which carries them to the commercial and business areas in Colorado Springs, just to the north. A review of sources did not reveal that this route represents important road engineering achievements, an important road type or subtype identified in the MPS, or that served to provide a historical connections to important themes; while it provides connection to Fort Carson from the newer subdivisions that serve as bedroom communities for the base, it is not related to the military history at Fort Carson since the road post-dates the base's historical development.

(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 16 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS. It does not possess historical significance.

Criterion A

SH 16 does not possess significance under Criterion A. It is not an example of an early or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (CHD), nor was it part of any important federal relief project. Research failed to indicate that this road has a direct association with any theme currently recognized as important to Colorado's history. Although it was improved and extended in association with anticipated growth in Fort Carson's personnel, this occurred less than 50 years ago. This event does not meet the National Register guidelines for age and does not meet the requirement of exceptional importance under Criteria Consideration G. As such, the highway does not possess significance under Criterion A.

Criterion B

Research did not reveal SH 16 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.

SH 16 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 1970s and the 2000's, and the highway does not possess significance under Criterion C.

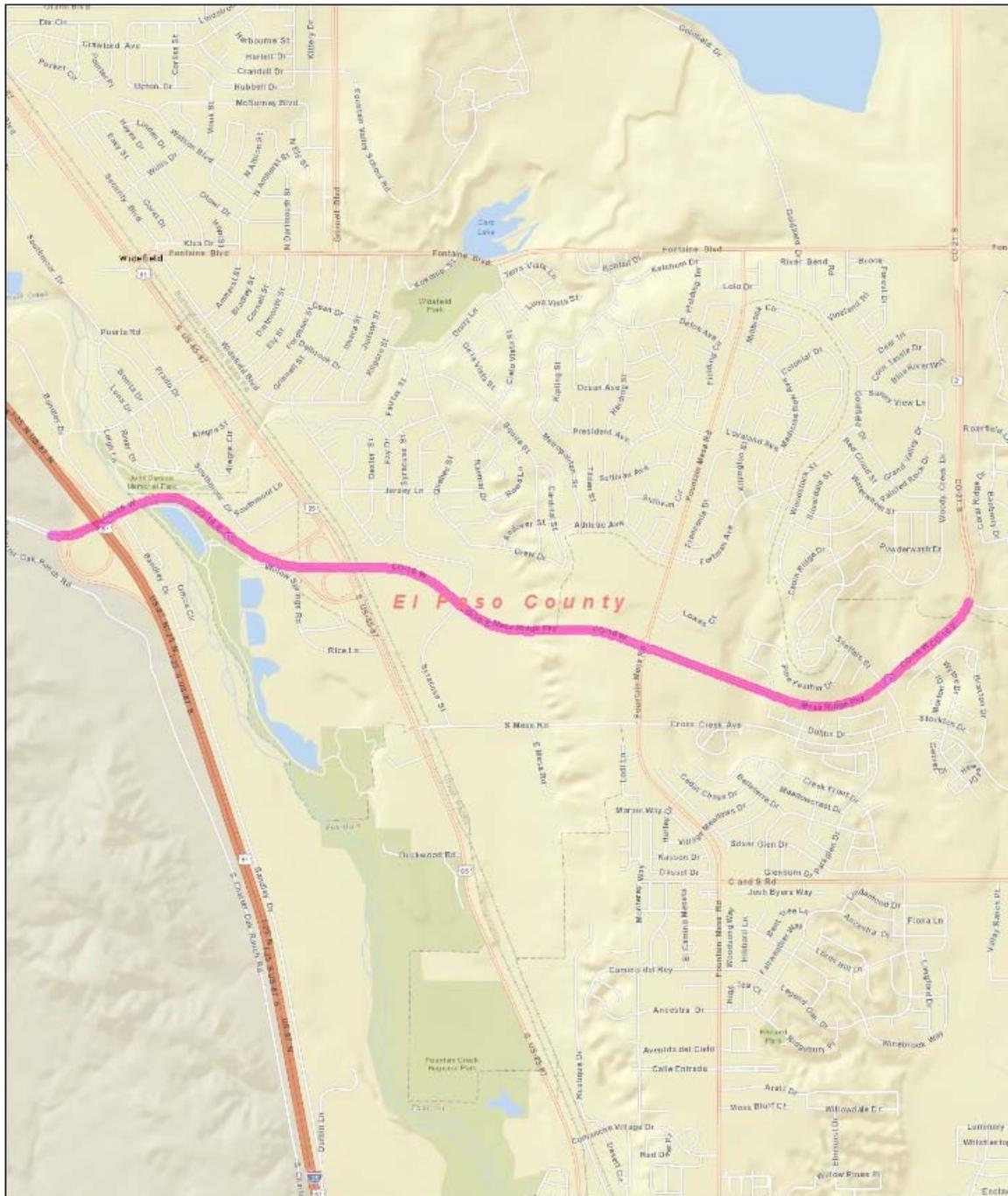
Criterion D

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.

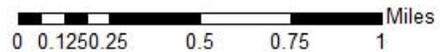
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- SH 16
- County Boundary

SH 16



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

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