

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 3

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
003A	From U.S. 160A at (Dominguez Dr) in south Durango North To U.S. 160A in Durango Begin (Santa Rita Dr)

Highway Location:

Counties: La Plata
Length (Miles): 2.568

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>
5LP.6654	Field eligible	2/8/2002	US HIGHWAY 550, STATE HIGHWAY 19

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

One Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory form (5LP.6654) for previously recorded segments of this highway was identified in Compass, but corresponds to U.S. Highway (US) 550. The roadway currently designated SH 3 was previously designated as part of US 160 and US 550. US 550 was previously recommended as field eligible and recommended as possessing historical significance as part of this study. US 160 was also recommended as possessing historical significance as part of this study.

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 3 is approximately 2.5 miles long and serves as a local road that extends from its junction with U.S. Highway (US) 160 (at Santa Rita Drive) in Durango to the northeast and then turns southeast, parallel to US 160, to a point located southeast of the bridge that crosses the Animas River along US 160 where it ends.

Historic state highway maps indicate that the transportation corridor that eventually carried present-day SH 3 was established by the late 1860s and later (according to Salek and historic highway maps), SH 3 carried older alignments of both US 160 and 550. By 1982 a bypass was constructed south of the Animas River and the old route of US 160/550 was designated SH 3. At the time of designation, SH 3 ended at 8th Avenue and 2nd Street in Durango then in 2002 SH 3 was extended further to connect to US 160/550 along Santa Rita Drive.

Both US 550 and US 160 were recommended possessing historical significance as part of this study - additional information can be found in the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory forms for these highways.

(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 3 formed a portion of US 160 and US 550 until 1982 and is historically associated with the early history of the routes. As such, this highway is classified as a Cultural Route and an Engineered Route - the same as US 160 and US 550 - under the classification system in the MPS.

Criterion A

Under Transportation, the portion of the SH 3 associated with the earlier history as a portion of US 160 and is noted as a Cultural Route for its use as an early Native American trail under the area of Transportation at the state level. As an Engineered Route under Transportation, SH 3 represents efforts of the Colorado Highway Department (CHD) by the 1920s to open the southern portion of the state by linking the eastern portion of US 160, which crossed the continental divide/San Juan Mountains, and thereby linking the southeastern and southwestern portions of the state. This highway possesses significance for its earlier history as part of US 160 to provide direct and important east-west connections serving as a link for conveying agricultural goods in southern Colorado to market centers and other prominent transportation corridors within the region and state in the area of Transportation at the state level. As part of US 550, the highway derives significance as an early road project that provided important and primary access and opened this previously inaccessible region of the state in the area of Transportation at the state level.

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

Historically SH 3 was associated with the history of US 160 and US 550 (See the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory forms for US 160 and US 550 for more detail). US 160 serves as an example of a prominent project by the CHD and was among the first roads designed and constructed for motorized vehicular traffic across the continental divide in the state. As an Engineered Route, US 160 appears to possess significance at the state level in the area of Engineering, exemplifying bold engineering solutions and application of safety standards during the 1930s to address the challenges associated with constructing highways in mountainous terrain and challenging site conditions; however, the segment of US 160 crossing the continental divide is located to the east of SH 3.

US 550 was a significant north-south route in the region and reflects an early road project that provided important and primary access for mining activities in the San Juan Mountains and opened this previously inaccessible region of the state. Research and literature review yielded no evidence to indicate the segment of roadway designated as SH 3 represents the application of innovative or important engineering design or construction techniques based on topography or challenging site conditions. Significance under Criterion C for its early history and association as one component of US 160 and US 550 is better demonstrated by those portions of the routes that cross the continental divide or other mountain passes noted on the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory forms for US 160

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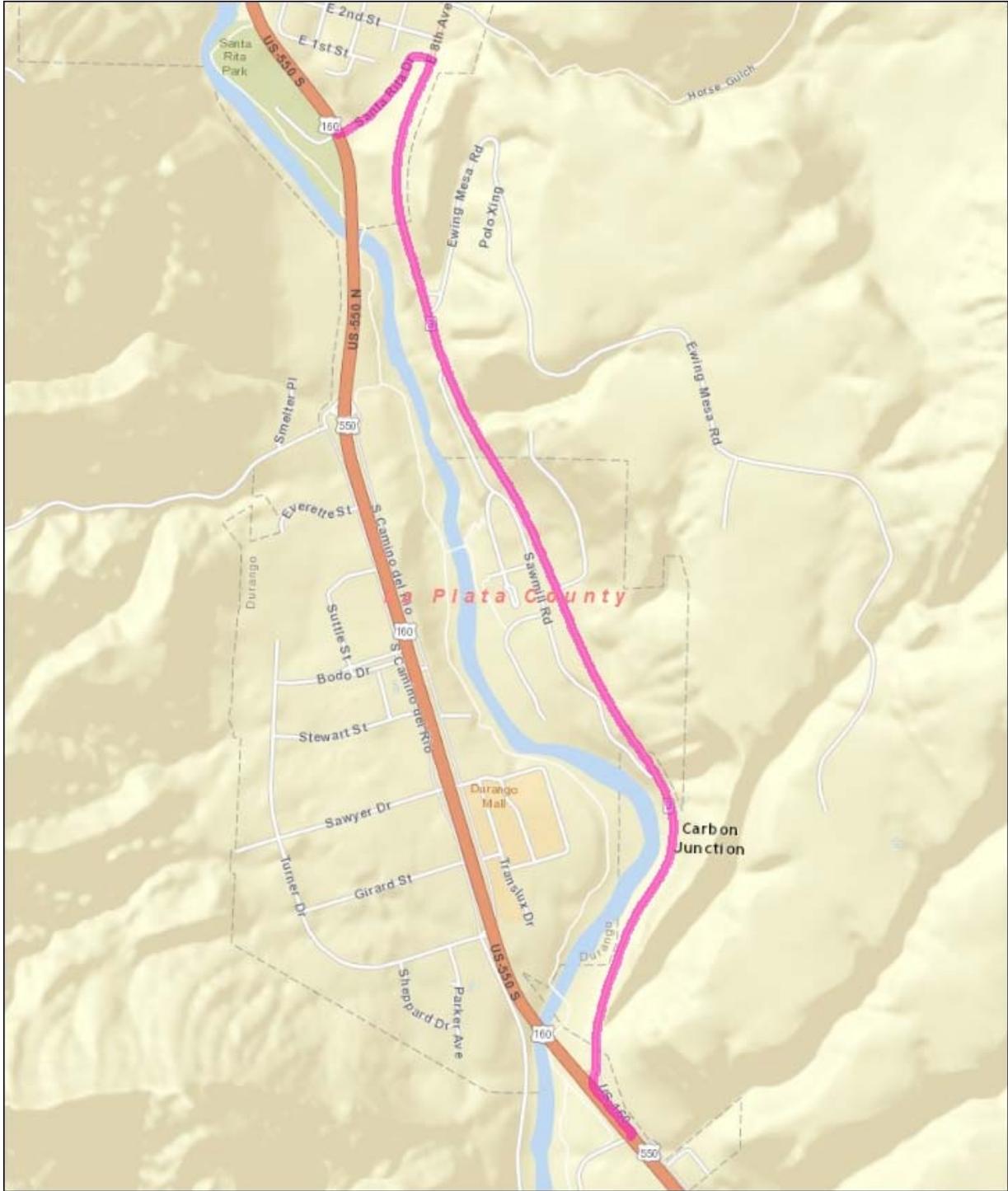
and US 550. SH 3 does not possess significance under Criterion C.

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 3
- County Boundary

SH 3

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