

AURORA LANDMARK PROPERTIES

NOMINATION FORM

City of Aurora
Historic Preservation Commission



SECTION A: SITE INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTION

1. *Name of Nominated Site*

Historic Name: **Smoky Hill Trail**

Current Name: **Smoky Hill Trail Landmark Site**

2. *Address of Property*

Street Address: **23890 E Smoky Hill Road**

County: **Arapahoe**

Zip Code: **80016**

3. *Geographic Description*

P.M.: **6** Township: **5S** Range: **65W**

SE ¼ of SE ¼ of NE ¼ of SW ¼ of Section 19

UTM: **NAD83** Zone **13S** UTM East: **524881.38** UTM North: **4383282.91**

Quad Map: **Piney Creek** Year: **1966, rev. 1994** Map Scale: **7.5'**

Lot(s): **001** Block: **001**

Addition: **Forest Trace Subdivision, Flg No. 3** Year of Addition: **2015**

Boundary Description: **Site is bound to the north by East Smoky Hill Road, to the east by 23890 East Smoky Hill Road, to the west by N. Airport Blvd, to the south by 23870 East Smoky Hill Road, and to the south by the adjacent parking lot.**

Legislative Information

Aurora Ward #: **VI**

Colorado House District: **56**

Colorado Senate District: **29**

4. *Site Owner*

Current:

Name: **Ch Retail Fund II / Denver Forest Trace LLC**

Address: **3819 Maple Avenue** Phone: **Unlisted**

City: **Dallas** State: **TX** Zip: **75219**

5. *Preparer of Nomination*

Current:

Name: **Kim White** Date: **March 10, 2005**

Organization: **Aurora History Museum and Historic Sites**

Address: **15051 East Alameda Pkwy** Phone: **303-739-6661**

City: **Aurora** State: **CO** Zip: **80012**

Property Name: Smoky Hill Trail Landmark Site

6. Classification of Property

Type: building(s) district site structure object area

7. Condition of Property

excellent good fair deteriorated ruins
 original location moved (date of move _____)

8. Use of Property

Historic Trail

Current Sidewalk

9. Original Owner Unknown

Source of information Not applicable

10. Year of Construction Not applicable

Source of information Not applicable

11. Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist, or Designer Not applicable

Source of information Not applicable

12. Architectural style/Engineering type Not applicable

13. Description

(Describe the current condition and appearance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

14. Alterations

(Describe and date significant changes made to the original property on one or more continuation sheets)

Property Name: Smoky Hill Trail Landmark Site

15. Significance of Property

Nomination Criteria

- 1 – the property (district) exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community
- 2 – the property (district) is identified with a historic person or historic group significant to national, state, or local history
- 3 – the property (district) embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable to the study of a period, style, method of construction, or indigenous materials or craftsmanship
- 4 – the property (district) is representative as the work of a master builder or architect
- 5 – the property (district) contains the possibility of important archaeological discoveries in prehistory or history
- 6 – the district consists of a definite area which, due to its unique location or singular characteristics represents established and familiar visual features of the neighborhood, community, or city

Areas of Significance: Transportation and Settlement

16. Significance Statement

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

17. Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

18. Legislative Information

Aurora Ward #: 6

Colorado House District #: 40 or Name of Representative Debbie Stafford

Colorado Senate District #: 27 or Name of Senator Nancy Spence

U.S. House District #: 7 or Name of Representative Bob Beauprez

Property Name: Smoky Hill Trail Landmark Site

19. Photocopy of USGS Map showing location of site

20. Site Plan showing site boundaries

21. Photographs

22. Optional Materials

- a. Floor plans showing existing conditions**
- b. Landscape plan showing existing conditions**
- c. Sequential historic floor plans**
- d. Sequential historic site plans**

**AURORA HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Photographs of proposed panel site:



Northwest view



Southwest view



West view



West view, with Main St. in the background

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City Map:



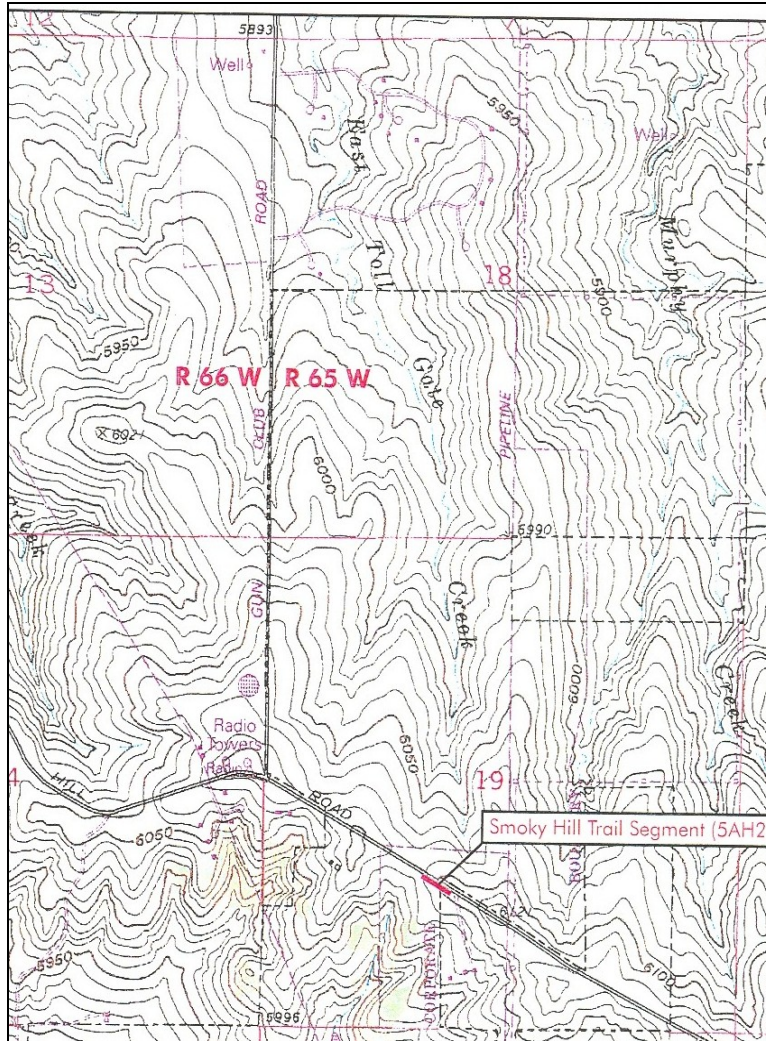
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USGS Map – Piney Creek, Colorado

(from “Smoky Hill Trail Segment, Arapahoe County, Colorado: Results of a Cultural Resources Survey,” 2004.)



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Bibliography

Arapahoe County Assessors Office. 2005. Parcel # 2071-19-3-007.

Jackson, Betty Radcliffe. 1976. *The Smoky Hill Trail*. H. F. Davis Memorial Libray, Colby Community College: Colby, Kansas.

Long, Margaret. 1953. *The Smoky Hill Trail: Following the Historic Pioneer Trails on the Modern Highways*. W.H. Kistler Stationary Co: Denver

Tucker, Gordon and Juston J. Fariello. February 2004. *Smoky Hill Trail Segment, Arapahoe County, Colorado: Results of a Cultural Resources Survey*. URS Corp. Project No. 22236633.00001.

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Description of Property:

The area that has been proposed for archaeological landmark site designation is located at approximately 24000 Smoky Hill Road; this is immediately south of Smoky Hill Road, about a quarter mile east of E-470 and southeast of the new Southlands Mall complex. This area is located in the southwest quarter of Section 19, Township 5, and Range 65W on the Piney Creek Quadrant Map (see Section Number 19, Page 1 of this document). It was originally on the top of a low hill along the ridge that ran between the drainages of Piney Creek (south) Toll Gate Creek (north).

Due to the widening of the Smoky Hill Road, this area has been the site of much construction and earth moving, and its original context has been compromised. The site, however, is still important as it served as one of the primary travel routes to Denver during the nineteenth century.



Photograph taken March 26, 2003



Photograph taken March 2, 2005

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Alterations:

The Smoky Hill Trail was the shortest overland route to Denver from Kansas for travelers in the mid-nineteenth century, although it was also the most difficult one due to lack of food and water sources. The Smoky Hill Trail branched into three separate trails near Limon, Colorado, the North, Middle and South branches of the Smoky Hill Trail. The Middle Smoky Hill Trail, also known as "Starvation Trail," ran roughly along the same path that Smoky Hill Road follows today, and was used primarily from the 1850s until the 1870s.

An archaeological exploration of this area was conducted in October 2003, in order to determine whether the ruts found in this area were a segment of the Smoky Hill Trail. The findings were inconclusive as to whether the ruts in the ground were the exact ruts from the Starvation Trail, but evidence of Native American occupation and use of the area was uncovered. After the exploration was complete, Smoky Hill Road was widened, and the surrounding landscape was changed to make way for the street improvement.

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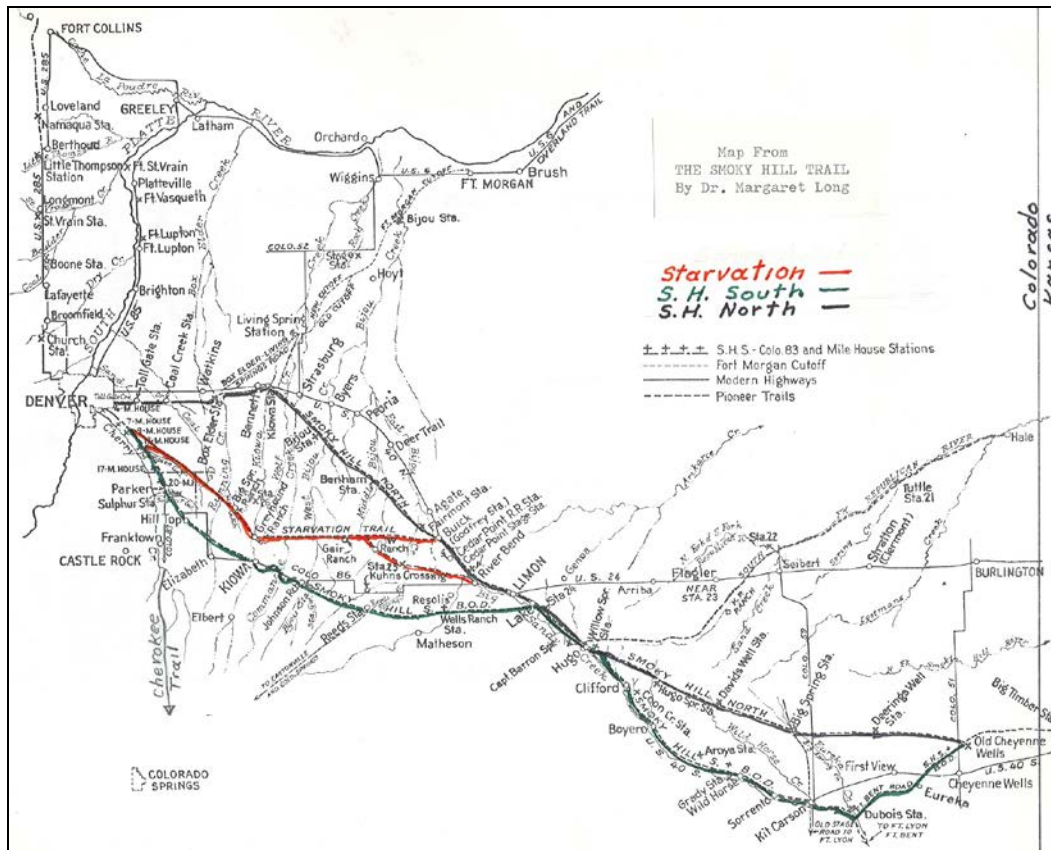
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Significance: The Smoky Hill Trail was the shortest overland route to Denver from Kansas for travelers in the mid-nineteenth century. It branched into three separate trails near Limon, Colorado: the North, Middle and South Branches of the Smoky Hill Trail. The Middle Smoky Hill Trail, also known as “Starvation Trail,” ran roughly along the same path that Smoky Hill Road follows today, and was used primarily from the 1850s until the 1870.

The Starvation Trail was given its name due to the lack of food and water resources along this route; it continued to be used despite of its perils because it was the most direct route into Denver. Travelers on this route included settlers, supply wagon trains, and overland mail services.

Use of the trail declined dramatically, and ultimately ceased, after the completion of the Kansas-Pacific Railroad in 1870, which connected Denver to the eastern United States.



Smoky Hill Trail Map from *The Smoky Hill Trail* by Dr. Margaret Long

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Photographs of proposed panel site:



Northwest view January 7, 2006

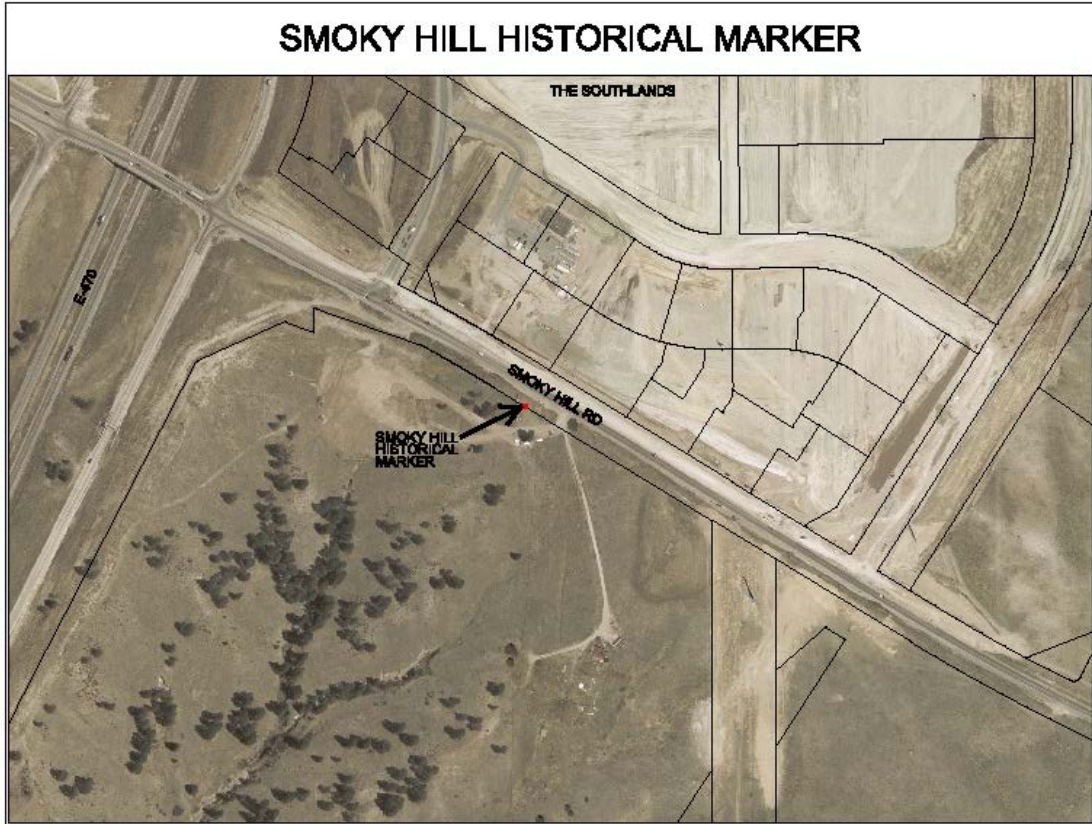


West view January 7, 2006

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Aerial photo of landmark site

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Exhibit A

Legal Description for Smoky Hill Trail Landmark Nomination

The location of the proposed Smoky Hill Trail Landmark site situated in the SW 1\4 SE 1\4 NE 1\4 SW 1\4 of section 19, T 5 S, R 65 W, 6th Principal Meridian, City of Aurora, Arapahoe County, Colorado, more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the South 1\4 corner of Section 19;

Thence N 22-57-56 W, a distance of 1587.39 feet to the center of a 4 foot by 4 foot parcel, said parcel being the location of above mentioned Smoky Hill Trail Landmark site and future historical marker.

The above described parcel contains 16 square feet more or less.

Basis of bearing is east line of the Southwest 1\4 of Section 19, T 5 S, R 65 W, 6th Principal Meridian, being N 00-04-40 E.