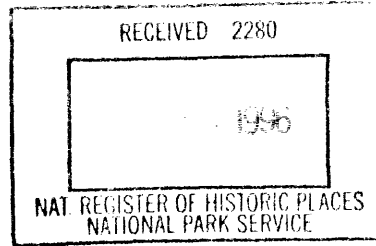


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



70-15-96

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
other names/site number Colorado Springs Airport, Inc., Square Mile Airport, Colorado Springs/5EP774

2. Location

street & number Peterson Avenue-ENT Avenue and Suffolk Street N/A not for publication
city, town Peterson Air Force Base N/A vicinity
state Colorado code CO county El Paso code 041 zip code 80914

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> objects
			<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

James Edward Hartman June 28, 1996
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Coral Shue 11-15-96

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Air Related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Culture: Museum

Government: Office and Maintenance
Buildings

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Moderne

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Stucco

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport District consists of the original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport buildings without the runways and landing strips. The District is 8.4 acres and includes 4 contributing buildings and 1 non-contributing building. The city airport developed from a single, dirt strip of land in the middle of a field to an international airport. The five buildings of this District provide an example of the architectural styles, physical layout and fabric of a late 1920s to 1940s airport. The District contains examples of Art Deco, Art Moderne and Spanish Colonial Revival architectural styles. For the past fifty years the military has played an important part as the leaseholder of the airport. This stewardship resulted in few modifications to the historic buildings. However, the physical setting has been eliminated with the conversion of the landing strips and runways to paved streets and relocation of flight activities to the modern, adjacent airport. The Historic District is surrounded by Peterson Air Force Base. U.S. Air Force plans call for the District to be visually united with landscaping and signage in recognition of its historic role along Colorado's Front Range. The District is composed of 5 buildings, 4 contributing and 1 non-contributing. The buildings are:

City Hangar (Building 979)

This building, built in 1928, was the first known permanent structure at the Municipal Airport. It is known as the City Hangar and is currently used as a storage facility by the Air Force. The hangar is a 100 foot square and is a Tregillus Standard Hangar built by the American Bridge Company of Chicago, Illinois. The hangar is a stucco covered Art Moderne building. The building's present condition is good, having undergone rehabilitation in 1991, including repair and painting the stucco exterior, a concrete floor and a new roof. However, it retains its original character. This structure is clearly recognizable as once having served as an airplane hangar. The original signal beacon is no longer present at this location, but is currently being utilized by Colorado Springs Municipal Airport. However, the City of Colorado Springs placed a non-operable replica of the beacon on top of the roof in recognition of the historical context.

Building 979 is a contributing resource to the District.

Spanish House/Caretaker's Residence (Building 999)

This building, built in 1929, currently is known as the Spanish House. It is currently used to house Distinguished Visitors by the Peterson Air Base Billeting Office. It was originally an administrative office, caretaker's residence and terminal with facilities for pilots and passengers grounded by inclement weather. The building measures 40 feet by 30 feet. The structure is stucco in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style that is a different, yet locally appropriate architectural style. Presently, the well maintained building is in good condition with evidence of few, external modifications. The interior of the building has been redone. A stucco fence was constructed approximately 10 years ago. At one time a garage and apartment building stood near the Spanish House, but is no longer present. Also, a well, now filled and covered, remains near the Spanish House.

Building 999 is a contributing resource in the District.

Broadmoor Hangar (Building 982)

Building 982, built in 1930, is known as the Broadmoor Hangar. It was owned by the Broadmoor Hotel (Colorado Springs) and served as a hangar for guests. It is similar to Building 979 and measures 100 foot square. The stucco covered Art Moderne building has been rehabilitated and is presently used as an office building by the United States Air Force. It retains many original hangar characteristics, especially the arched roof and wooden doors on the south end of the building.

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1926-1945

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

American Bridge Company

W.T. Mitchell and Son

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of air transportation for the state of Colorado. The District remains as one of the state's last physical links to the pioneering era of commercial air travel and the early development of airmail service (ca. 1926) in Colorado. It is also eligible under Criterion C as an example of a 1920-1940 airport. The airport terminal building is in Art Deco Style and includes glazed tile trim fashioned with zig-zag, fluting, and stylized bird motifs. Other contributing buildings provide examples of Art Moderne and Spanish Colonial Revival architectural styles. The District embodies the institutional application of Art Deco and Art Moderne themes in a public airport or airdrome. It is an important evolutionary link between early primitive aerodromes and early aviation institutional styles. Also, use of standard plan hangars, such as the City Hangar (Building 979), offers a physical link to the 1920s-1930s era of standardizing airport building designs. The Airport Terminal is one of the best surviving examples of 1930s style architecture as used at airports and is significant under Criterion C. Finally, under the management of the United States Army Air Corps and later U.S. Air Force, the District represents a significant trend in Colorado Springs' twentieth century history as a center of Air Force operations.

The Airport is significant as a District, with the component parts contributing to the significance of the whole. The four (4) buildings provide good examples of the architecture, physical layout and internal organization of early 1920s and 1930s airports.

At the time of construction there were two private airports in the area. The City of Colorado Springs needed air service for the mails. By having a city airport Colorado Springs moved into the future. The air mail route that included Colorado Springs was established as "Contract Mail Route #12" and ran from Cheyenne, Wyoming south to Pueblo, Colorado. It then connected with the transcontinental air mail route at Cheyenne that followed the same basic route the Pony Express had seventy odd years earlier. On May 31, 1926 the first airmail plane from Colorado Springs was christened and 3,187 pieces of mail left the city.

Men and women have been fascinated with the possibilities of flight since ancient times. Leonardo da Vinci designed flying machines in the 1490s using bird wings for models. In 1842 William S. Henson of England patented a design for a steam powered airplane that never actually flew. Other innovations occurred in the middle and late 1800s including development of wings with curved airfoils and propellers with controllable pitch. However, the aviation movement received a major boost in 1903 when Orville Wright piloted the first, powered flight, 120 feet, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Within 6 years the U. S. Army paid the Wright brothers \$30,000 for the first military plane. The aerial transportation revolution was underway.¹

¹Flight history is covered in a number of sources. Particularly easy for the lay person to read are:

Heldreth, Charles H. 1001 Questions Answered About Aviation History. New York: Dodds Mead, 1969;

Smith, Henry. Airways: The History of Commercial Aviation in the U.S. New York: Russell and Russell, 1965; and

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository.

Edward J. Peterson Air & Space Museum
City of Colorado Springs, CO Records

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 8.4

UTM References

A

1	3	5	2	5	9	4	0	4	2	9	6	9	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated on the attached scale map. The west corner of the Historic District is located at the intersection of Ent Ave. and Peterson Blvd.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary, as indicated, includes the contributing and associated non-contributing buildings that make up the airport during the period of significance. Also included is their setting without incorporating other portions of the present Peterson Air Force Base.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steven F. Mehls, Ph.D. date March 1, 1996

organization Western Cultural Resources Management telephone (303) 449-1151

street & number 7765 Durham Circle city or town Boulder state CO zip code 80301

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 7 Page 2

Broadmoor Hangar (Building 982) (continued).

Several small additions on the north side altered the original footprint. The interior has been converted for office use and no longer possesses the characteristics of a hangar on the interior. The building is well maintained.

Building 982 is a contributing resource in the District. Its additions and interior remodeling do not detract substantially from the visual character of the hangar and continuity of the District.

Municipal Terminal Building/Edward J. Peterson Museum (Building 981)

Building 981 was constructed in 1940, opening for use in 1941. It was the City's first airport Terminal Building and is presently used as a museum by the United States Air Force. The building measures 40 feet by 70 feet and is constructed with stucco covered brick in an Art Deco style with glazed ceramic tiles embodying Egyptian inspired decorative bird motif on the tiles. The set back facade has colored tile ornamentation along the parapet. The windows have been painted but the original character remains. The building is well maintained. Continued "restoration" efforts by the Air Force include painting the building its original color, installation of original style doors and restoration of the foyer.

Building 981 is a contributing resource in the District.

Utility/Maintenance Building (Building 980)

Building 980 was constructed an unknown date in the late 1940s or early 1950s. It is a utility/maintenance building of stucco in an Art Moderne style. The building measures 80 feet by 40 feet. The building is situated off center and in front of the City Hangar. It has been well maintained.

Building 980 is considered a noncontributing resource in the District due to its lack of sufficient age. Further, the building was not used by the Original Colorado Springs Airport or the Army Air Corps during the period of significance (1926-1945). However, its style and fabric are in keeping with the character of the District and it is not visually intrusive.

At the present time the resource is enclosed by Peterson Air Force Base. The Edward J. Peterson Air and Space Museum will be composed of a space vehicle display area, a pedestrian mall, aircraft displays and the Historic District. Plans call for the District to be visually united with landscaping and signage in recognition of its historic role in the Colorado Springs area. An Historic District Design Plan (January, 1996) calls for the creation of pedestrian walkways, concrete aircraft display pads, circular planters, and site drainage, irrigation and lighting. Landscaping and walkways have been designed to provide a visual barrier between the historic district and the modern air base facilities that surround it. The plans enhance the visual and audible isolation within the District while limiting the sense of modern encroachment. The United States Air Force is managing the District in a such a manner consistent with preservation while recognizing that the airport is no longer an air transport facility. At present the Museum and Historic District have over 100,000 visitors a year. It is anticipated that the number will increase significantly after NRHP designation and implementation of the Historic District Design plan.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 2

For states such as Colorado, transportation always was a key element in growth and diversification due to distances between cities and mountainous terrain. Air transportation offered significant improvement in Colorado's connections with regional and national centers through shorter travel times. However, the growth of air transportation in Colorado was a twentieth century phenomenon that developed fully only after World War II.

In Colorado, the movement toward powered flight seems to have started early in the twentieth century when, in 1910, Louis Paulhan flew a Farman biplane near Denver's Overland Park. Prior to Paulhan's three day exhibition, there had been limited, unpowered flights in Colorado. For example, in June, 1871, Coloradans were treated to free balloon rides by the Lake Hippo-Olympiad and Mammoth Circus. Other balloonists followed to perform in Colorado. It is estimated that by 1900 as many as 500 professional and amateur balloon performers were active in the United States, with perhaps a hundred or more active in Colorado at any one time.²

Other uses for balloons soon appeared in Colorado. A military balloon station was headquartered at Fort Logan. The Fort served as the focal point for military experiments with aerial machines and devices. The Air Corps served its first duties during the Spanish-American War when Ivey Baldwin of Colorado took a military balloon to New York as part of the Atlantic Ocean coastal defense program. Other balloon aviators soon were deployed to Cuba and helped locate enemy troops outside Santiago. The danger of using balloons was emphasized when Spanish shrapnel hit an observation balloon and destroyed it.

After the Spanish-American War, aeronautical activities in Colorado centered around popular stunts and activities such as aerobatics. Balloon rides and other forms of exhibitionism were common at parks, circuses and county fairs throughout Colorado. At the same time, inventors such as John E. Cooper and Joseph Evans Cooper of Cripple Creek experimented with new designs for lighter than air craft. Charles Morgan of Gunnison utilized an electric motor on a gas-filled airplane. As many as nine Coloradans actively worked on developing lighter than air craft at the turn of the twentieth century. Further encouragement for this work occurred with the Kitty Hawk flight. After the Wright Brothers success at Kitty Hawk, George O. L. Davidson established the Davidson Flying Machine Company to sell stock for the purpose of construction of large, powered aircraft. The shop was located behind Davidson's residence in Montclair. A series of mishaps and an explosion destroyed the aircraft plant and Davidson abandoned Colorado for London.³

Increasingly successful public flights nationwide spurred the Denver Post in July 1909 to offer prizes totaling \$10,000 for successful flights in Denver or Colorado. A number of local residents including John Conkie of Trinidad, John Cage of Denver and George Ady of Denver indicated their interest in participating. The contest had two parts, the first a round trip to or from Denver of at least 40 miles; and the second, a trip of at least twenty miles. The flying machines had to carry a pilot, a passenger and fuel for a 125 mile trip. The maximum speed was to be 40 miles per hour. Despite initial interest, no one tried to actually fly. Paulhan's 1910 flight, mentioned above, spurred more interest in flight and in developing practical aircraft suitable for flying in the Rocky Mountains.

Stewart, Oliver. Aviation: The Creative Ideas. New York: Paraeger, 1966.

²The Denver Post, February 1, 2, 3, 1910; and The Rocky Mountain News, February 2, 3, 4, 1910.

³H. L. Scamehorn, "The First Fifty Years of Flight in Colorado." University of Colorado Studies # 2, November 1961: 102-121.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 3

The same year the Mathewson-Marr Aeroplane Company opened to provide reasonably priced, \$3,000-\$3,500, flying machines. The firm closed in less than a year but did manage to open an airfield and training school for aviators in Denver.⁴

Public exhibition flights were numerous in the years 1910-1916. However, World War I significantly changed the face of aviation. During U.S. participation in the war, the Air Service grew to include 78,000 officers and men and included 25 flying fields in the United States. Aircraft production jumped to 23,000 machines per year. During World War I Denver, Buena Vista and Leadville attempted to become training fields, but Colorado never had a military flying field during World War I. Also, local manufacturers were not successful in obtaining many government contracts. However, World War I did prove the practicality of aircraft for a variety of purposes including speedier communication and movement of people and supplies. Based upon some success with mail delivered by aircraft, in 1918 the Post Office Department and the U.S. Army Air Service established airmail service between Washington, D.C. and New York City. Other routes were planned to provide transcontinental service.

After World War I newly trained military pilots returned home with an interest in furthering civilian aviation. Airplane demonstrations and air shows became common immediately after World War I. The East Denver aerodrome became a permanent flying field in 1919 with passenger service to Colorado Springs and Estes Park. The Broadmoor Hotel was the southern terminus and neighboring fields were used as landing strips. Air travel between Colorado cities was slow to grow but other arenas more than made up for the lack of growth.

Within two years after World War I, transcontinental mail service was operational. Following the old Pony Express Routes, airmail service was designed to be operated by private businesses once those enterprises became reliable. Operations expanded, but under federal control. As routes became well established and the volume of business increased, more private contractors became interested in the mail service. In 1925 Congress gave the Postmaster authority to turn airmail over to private contractors.

Numerous small air carriers took advantage of the opportunities to carry the mails. The 1925 Congressional authorization (Kelly Act) provided revenues and stimulated the growth of airline companies, ground facilities and support industries. Within Colorado the Kelly Act encouraged two companies to bid for Route 12, from Pueblo to Cheyenne with stops in Colorado Springs and Denver. Anthony F. Joseph of Colorado Airways Corporation began providing service in May, 1925. The rent and later purchase of land for the Colorado Springs Airport in 1926 follows part of a national trend to increase services to aviators as a result of mail contracts. Nichols Field and the Pine Valley Air Strip were located on north Nevada Avenue. These were small, one airplane strips that did not have a significant growth potential or the capabilities required by mail contractors.

In 1926 the City of Colorado Springs rented 640.2 acres for \$250 per year for the "Colorado Springs Airport, Inc." Early the next year the city negotiated to buy the land from the Sarah de Coursey Parrish estate for \$17,000 for the purpose of developing a municipal airport. Additional funds were spent on lighting. The field consisted of two relatively short, gravel runways on the square mile tract of land. The land purchase resulted from the urging of city Postmaster, E. E. Ewing and Robert Rhea, a local resident with a mail order business. Others in Colorado Springs used airplanes for business including Western Air Service that made trips to New York City's Fifth Avenue to purchase ladies hats.

Air mail service began out of the Colorado Springs airport May 31, 1926. Mr. James (Jimmie) F. Donahue carried the mail to the airport twice daily from the 1930s to the 1960s. In addition to delivering the mail, Jimmie Donahue started charging for

⁴The Denver Post, July 26, 1909, July 30, 1909, August 15, 1909, September 15, 1909.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 4

his daily trips to the airport and commercial ground transportation was started. The Air Lines Cab Service was formed, owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Donahue and had the only permit to operate on the property until 1963. Mr. Donahue was something of a local celebrity and spent many hours perfecting the act of going from a speeding car to the trailing rope ladder hanging from the side of an airplane. In August, 1930 the Federal Aviation Agency certified that Jimmie Donahue parachuted from a height of 21,171 feet at the Colorado Springs Airport, establishing a new world record. His world record stood until 1937.

Expanded passenger and freight operations followed closely the air mail service routes. Charles A. Lindbergh's solo flight to Paris in 1927 enthralled Americans and resulted in increased levels of enthusiasm for air travel. New passenger routes developed as airlines expanded their services and decreased their dependence on mail routes. By 1931 approximately 3,600 air travelers arrived or departed from Denver Municipal Airport (subsequently renamed Stapleton International). Approximately one third of those traveled the Denver to Pueblo route that included a stop in Colorado Springs.

In 1928 the Colorado Springs runways were graded to smooth out some "buffalo wallows," and the first hangar (Building 979) was built. Despite the somewhat primitive conditions, in January 1929 the City Council voted a two dollar daily charge for storing planes in the city hangar. Also during the January, 1929 City Council meeting, W. A. Rice, an expert mechanic, was named Caretaker and Field Manager. The city paid him \$125 per month to arrive at the airport by 8:30 a.m. and stay until dark. He was allowed to live on-site. The first administration building, which Rice also used for a residence, was completed in July, 1929 for \$8,000. Today this building is known as the Caretakers Residence or the Spanish House (Building 999). Constructed of stucco in a Spanish Colonial Revival Style, the building served as an office and had quarters for the superintendent/caretaker and rooms for stranded pilots and passengers.

The growth of air travel was slow during the 1930s. The ravages of the Great Depression played no small part in the declining public interest in civilian aviation as attention focused on other projects. However, as evidenced by WPA actions, government programs helped pave and upgrade airports throughout the United States. Coast to coast travel in and out of Colorado remained relatively low in volume. In 1937 United Air Lines began service from Denver to San Francisco, Chicago, New York and other cities twice daily. This increased air traffic in and out of Colorado dramatically.

In 1930 the Broadmoor Hotel constructed a hangar for \$12,000 (Building 982). It was advertised as a fireproof hangar and used by guests and businessmen traveling to the resort. In 1942 the hangar was purchased by the City of Colorado Springs. The Air Force began leasing the hangar as a storage area in 1958. From 1967 through 1984 the Air Force improved the structure adding electrical outlets and repairing the roof. In 1986 the structure's interior was refurbished and the exterior altered by the addition of a side door and window.

After construction of the Broadmoor Hangar, the complex consisted of two short gravel runways with lights, at least two hangars and the small administration/residence building.

Despite the poor condition of the runways, complaints from aviators and airline officials went unanswered until 1935 when the City of Colorado Springs submitted runway improvement plans to the Department of Commerce. On August 24, 1936 a telegram arrived from Washington, D.C. stating that no air mail would arrive at the Municipal Airport until the runways were repaired. The same day the City Council, State Officials and engineers from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) announced plans for improving the runways. Three runways 1,400 feet by 150 feet were to be built at a cost of \$61,174. The WPA had 140 men working seven days a week to rebuild the runways. The airport reopened on October 11, 1936 using only the North-South runway. The other runways opened as they were finished. In 1941 the military and the WPA again rebuilt the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 5

runways for the City of Colorado Springs.

Just as routes increased and became more numerous, so too did the speed and safety of air traffic. In 1940 2.8 million passengers traveled utilizing 19 companies. In 1930, 43 companies had carried 384,506 passengers.

In 1941 the first municipal terminal (Building 981) at the Colorado Springs Airport was constructed by W. T. Mitchell and Son. The timing coincided with the increase in passenger traffic over the previous decade. Architecturally the building was a show-piece. The Art Deco style stucco covered brick building has a front center door, sidewalk and flag pole perpendicular to the tip of Pikes Peak. The structure was noted for its Art Deco use of glazed ceramic tile and embodiment of Egyptian derived decorative motifs, hinting at exotic, far-off places. The building served only briefly as the new terminal. With completion of the terminal mail was contracted to Continental Airlines.

The airport was enlarged in 1941 when the City of Colorado Springs purchased the Otis Kirkbride ranch and added 40 acres to the north side of the airport. This allowed for enlarged runways, additional runways and taxiway and coincided with increased efforts in the national defense program.

In 1942 the United States military began operations at the airport. At that time the passenger terminal building lacked taxiways and runways. New runways were constructed by Military Engineers and the WPA. A temporary terminal from 1942 until 1954 was part of a new, northern hangar built by Military Engineers and the WPA. The building was shared by all users until completion of a new terminal in 1954. Subsequently, the northern hangar was demolished.

In June 1943 the Army Air Corps 2nd Air Force relocated from Seattle, Washington to Colorado Springs. The Civil Air Patrol (CAP), the official all volunteer auxiliary of the Army Air Corps located western operations for the U.S. at the site. From Colorado Springs the CAP operations officer controlled the CAP wings of civilian aircraft loaded with everything from military mail to engine parts. As Headquarters and the center of command, over 50 flights departed or terminated daily at Colorado Springs. Seven women from the local area worked as CAP volunteers. Two later went on to fly for the famed Women Air Service Pilots (WASP).⁵

In 1945 control of the field was returned to Colorado Springs by the U.S. Government. It continued as a civilian facility until 1951 when the facility was leased to the military once again to provide support to the newly activated Air Defense Command headquartered at Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs.

A great change occurred in Colorado aviation because of World War II. Shortly after Pearl Harbor the United States Armed Forces began purchasing or leasing aircraft from civilian fleets. Half of the aircraft in use in Colorado were lost to government lease with United losing thirty three craft and Continental losing six. Despite that loss, wartime brought increased acceptance of air transportation. Thousands of military personnel and civilians traveled and enjoyed the speed offered by air transport. These advocates of flight returned in the immediate post-war years to increase demands for service within the state. Colorado air efforts after World War II resulted in expanded networks to tie regional, national and international centers. Smaller, feeder, airlines appeared that connected remote locations with larger cities. At the same time, improvements in speed and physical design allowed for greater comfort during flights.

⁵Original NRHP nomination.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 6

Existing air strips and buildings that served in the early days of Colorado aviation are increasingly rare. Many strips, particularly those that were privately owned and were just runways with perhaps one or two service buildings, were converted to other uses. Larger aerodromes were modified, if possible, to accommodate changing aircraft. By the 1920's municipalities became involved in building air transportation facilities as the cost and demand for services increased. These types of facilities generally have been adapted and modified over time. A case in point is Denver's Stapleton Airport which has gone through many changes in the last 60 or so years as it grew from a small, regional airport to a national and later international hub. These changes resulted in the modification or destruction of original buildings and runways. The airport has been abandoned as inadequate for the 21st century, and Denver International Airport replaced it. Another example is the Pueblo Airport. Because of modernization efforts the Pueblo Airport no longer has associations to the early mail route and commercial terminals of the pre-World War II period. These factors increase the importance of the original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport as one of the last surviving examples of Colorado's early aviation heritage.

The original Colorado Springs Airport Historic District also is significant under Criterion C for the architectural styles and forms utilized. The Tregilus Standard Hangar was utilized. The use of standard hangar designs is representative of the growth and maturation of airport engineering design and construction maturation. Standardization is often the end result of consistent review of previously successful and unsuccessful design and construction techniques. Success follows when the ability to apply the lessons of previous experimentation results in a large enough data field to create the analytical review necessary. Furthermore, standardization is indicative of the increasing market demand for aircraft hangars; i.e., hangars are no longer an oddity or isolated construction challenge. The American Bridge Company produced adaptable standard designs that were suited to a variety of environmental and customer needs. These designs were compatible with American Bridge's previous experience utilizing steel and concrete. The result is the creation of a hangar that effectively provides a large, weather sheltered interior space free from interim roof support columns. Steel and concrete provide the strength necessary to produce the wide span. The techniques previously utilized in bridges were adaptable to this interior support network.

In addition to the engineering expertise demonstrated the original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport Historic District contains examples of the popular Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. Art Deco and Art Moderne were especially appropriate for use at an airport because the modern look they represented is often associated with transportation generally and aviation transportation in particular. Aviation represented the new, modern, cutting-edge technology. At the same time the buildings helped to convey that sense of technological innovation. The Egyptian Revival elements on the Terminal Building enhance the sense of the airport as a setting or gateway to far-off, exotic locales.

HISTORIC EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

1926-1940: Municipal Airport Period

- 1926 • 640.2 Acres is leased by the City of Colorado Springs. (Parcel is presently on grounds of Peterson Air Force Base.) The facility consists of two gravel runways.
- 1926 • Aviation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce approve incorporation papers for the Colorado Springs Airport, Inc. (May).
- 1926 • Contract Air Mail Route Number 12 (Cheyenne, Wyoming - Pueblo, Colorado) is established (May).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 7

1926-1940: Municipal Airport Period (cont.)

- 1926 • Inauguration of the Colorado Springs Airport and Air Mail service (May). '
- 1927 • Rented land purchased by the city for \$17,000 (Dec).
- 1928 • Local merchant uses aviation to deliver hats (Jan).
 - City hangar construction is finished (serves as the airport maintenance building since 1986).
 - The first full time employee is hired (Jan).
 - \$2.00 per day hangar fee is initiated (Jan).
- Runways are improved with grading.
- Colorado Springs holds 1st Air Show at the Municipal Airport (Aug).
- 1929 • The superintendent's/caretaker's residence is funded (Jan) and constructed (Jul).
 - 2nd Annual National Air Show (Aug).
- 1930 • Broadmoor Hotel hangar is constructed.
 - Giant 32 passenger "Fokker F-32" aircraft lands (Apr).
 - Jimmie Donahue sets world parachute altitude record of 21,171' at the Municipal Airport (August).
- 1932 • Western Air Express purchased by Varney Air Transport.
- 1935 • Airport runway improvement plans submitted to the Department of Commerce (Sep).
- 1936 • Airport closed for runway repairs after formal complaint from airlines to FAA (Aug).
- 1936 • Airport opens after new runway(s) built (Oct).
- 1937 • Varney Air Transport changes name to Continental Airlines and establishes the "Santa Fe Trail" route into Colorado Springs (Jul).
 - Area is Aerially Mapped for AAA working from the Colorado Springs Airport (and Denver) (Sep).
- 1940/41 • The first terminal building is constructed (serves as a museum for Peterson Air Force Base since 1986).

1941-1945: World War II Period

- 1941 • Additional 40 acres is purchased for expansion.
 - Airport beacon light is mounted on the City hangar.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 8

1941-1945: World War II Period (cont.)

- 1941/43 • Caretaker/Managers home used as the Base Engineers Office.
- 1942/45 • Terminal building utilized first as the American Red Cross/Army Emergency Relief Center, and then as "Station Headquarters."
- 1942 • Through a lease with the City of Colorado Springs, Army Air Base, Colorado Springs is established at the site of the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport. The first mission of Colorado Springs Army Air Base was that of a Photographic Reconnaissance Operational Training Unit, or "PROTU," training aerial photo reconnaissance crews and technicians for combat duty. The primary aircraft assigned at the base were F-4's, the unarmed photo-reconnaissance version of the P-38E Lightning (6 May).
- Colorado Springs Army Air Base assigned to 2nd Air Force
 - US Government leases 383 acres for pilot training and support of Camp Carson. Runways are rebuilt and buildings and hangars are constructed. Railroad built into the new supply area
 - 1LT Edward Joseph Peterson, Operations Officer of the 10th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron loses his life as the result of a crash at Colorado Springs Army Air Base during take-off in an F-4 (P-38) on a training mission to Lowry Field, CO (8 August).
 - Colorado Springs Army Air Base is renamed Peterson Army Air Base (more commonly called Peterson Field) in honor of 1st Lt. Edward J. Peterson. Lt. Peterson was the first Colorado native flying fatality (13 December).
 - Civil Air Patrol Courier Service Unit established in Colorado Springs.
 - Broadmoor Hotel hangar purchased by City of Colorado Springs; Military facility named Peterson Army Air Field (Dec).
- 1943 • Six P-47 "Thunderbolts" land-flown by Women Air Service Pilots (WASP) pilots.
- Peterson Field is assigned to the 3rd Air Force. The new mission of the base is heavy bomber (B-24 Liberator) combat crew training by the 214th Combat Crew Training School (5 March).
 - City reimbursed \$108,750 from the Government for removing the runways from the City Hangars and new Passenger Terminal Building (Jun).
 - Peterson Field is reassigned to the 2nd Air Force (1 October)
 - Army Air Corps Commander (Col. Hutchison) holds Command assembly of Regional Civil Air Patrol personnel.
 - Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Ed Dudley and Lewis B. Maytag played an exhibition game of golf at the Broadmoor Hotel (Colorado Springs) with the proceeds to build a driving range on Peterson Army Airfield.
- 1944 • The mission of the base is changed to Fighter Pilot Training (P-40 Warhawks) under 72nd Fighter Wing.
- 1945 • Peterson Field is assigned to Continental Air Forces. The mission of the base is changed to Army Air Forces Instructors School.
- Control of Peterson Field was relinquished by the US Government back to the City of Colorado Springs following World War II.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 9

1946-1992: Post War Period

- 1946 • Peterson Field is declared surplus.
- 1947 • Peterson Field is reactivated.
- 1948 • Peterson Field is declared surplus and turned back over to the City of Colorado Springs (January 15)
 - Airport facility used again by the military (15th Air Force).
 - Fire destroys hangar with 11 planes, \$100,000 damage (Sep).
- 1949 • Air Force deactivates Peterson Field (15th Air Force moves to Riverside, Calif.).
- 1951 • Facility usage is re-leased to the Military (383 acres) for the 4600 Air Base Group (Jan.).
- 1953/54 • A red-brick terminal building including an air traffic control tower is constructed and serves as City of Colorado Springs passenger terminal until 1966, and as the airport's FAA air traffic control tower until 1979.

1946-1992: Post War Period (cont.)

- 1966 • The City of Colorado Springs moves passenger operations from the east side of the runways to the west side of the runways.
 - The City of Colorado Springs renegotiates with Air Force total of 992 acres (until 30 Jun 2066).
- 1970 • James F. Donahue enters Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame (Nov).
- 1976 • Peterson Field upgraded to a permanent status and renamed Peterson Air Force Base.
- 1979 • Peterson AFB is assigned to Strategic Air Command
- 1982 • Air Force Space Command is activated
- 1983 • 1st Space Wing is activated at Peterson AFB
 - Peterson AFB is transferred to Air Force Space Command
- 1985 • 2nd Space Wing is activated at Falcon AFB
- 1986 • 3d Space Wing is activated at Peterson AFB
- 1992 • 3d Space Support Wing and 1st Space Wing are deactivated and consolidated into the newly activated 21st

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 8 Page 10

Space Wing, Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB. Mission is to provide tactical warning and support attack assessment of sea-launched and intercontinental ballistic missile attacks against the continental United States and Canada.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 9 Page 1

REFERENCES CITED

Athearn, Frederick J.

1985 Land of Contrast: A History of Southeast Colorado. Bureau of Land Management, Colorado, Cultural Resource Series, No. 17 (Denver).

Athearn, Robert G.

1976 The Coloradans. University of New Mexico Press (Albuquerque). Blumenson, J. J. G.

Baker, Steven G.

1985 A Cultural Resource Inventory of Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado. National Park Service, Denver, Colorado.

Chappell, Mary H.

1990 Personal Interview by Roger D. Reddish, U.S.A.F.

City of Colorado Springs

1977 Early Airport History. MS, Public Affairs Office on Behalf of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport (Colorado Springs).

1977a Later Airport History. MS, Public Affairs Office on Behalf of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport (Colorado Springs).

Coleman, Robert H.

1985 Personal Communication and Sourcing of Personal Computer Files, Colorado Springs Municipal Airport.

Colorado Springs Municipal Airport

1937 Photo in Airport Managers Office.

Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph

1926 Newspaper, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

1927

1928

1930

1935

1936

1937

1940

1941

1943

Continental Airlines

1990 2929 Allen Parkway, Post Office Box 4607, Houston, Texas 77210-4607

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 9 Page 2

Croftt, George A.

1885 Croftt's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado A Complete Encyclopedia of the State: The Overland Publishing Company (Omaha).

Denver Post. The

1909 July 28, 30, August 15, September 15. Newspaper, Denver, Colorado.
1910 February 1, 2, 3, 1910

Donahue, James (Jimmie) F. and Dorothy R.

1990 Personal Interview by Roger D. Reddish, U.S.A.F.

Eighmy, Jeffrey L.

1984 Colorado Plains Prehistoric Context: for Management of Prehistoric Resources of the Colorado Plains. MS, State Historical Society of Colorado (Denver).

H. L. Scamehorn

1961 The First Fifty Years of Flight in Colorado. University of Colorado Studies # 2, November 1961: 102-121.

Heldreth, Charles H.

1969 1001 Questions Answered About Aviation History. New York: Dodds Mead.

Henderson, Charles W.

1926 Mining in Colorado: A History of Discovery, Development and Production. U.S. Geological Survey, Professional Paper 138 (Washington, D.C.).

Hilman, Ross G. and William L. Tibesar

1984 Report on the Cultural Resource Inventory of 170 Acres of Land at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado. MS, Larson-Tibesar Associates (Laramie).

Ingersoll, Ernest

1883 The Crest of the Continent: A Record of a Summer's Ramble in the Rocky Mountains and Beyond. 1969 reprint of original by the Rio Grande Press, Inc. (Glorieta, New Mexico).

Madsen, William (Bill) P.

1990 Personal Interview by Roger D. Reddish, U.S.A.F.

Mayfield, Grace

1990 Personal Interview by Roger D. Reddish, U.S.A.F.

National Military Publications

1983 Pikes Peak Area Salutes Peterson Air Force Base. J.C. Blake Co., Inc. (El Cajon, California).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number 9 Page 3

Observer, The

1981 Magazine, Colorado Springs.
1982

Peterson Army Air Field

1943 Wingspread, Anniversary Edition, Peterson Field (Colorado Springs) Vol. 1, No. 43.

Pikes Peak Journal, The

1989 Newspaper, Manitou Springs, Colorado

Rocky Mountain News, The

1910 February 2, 3, 4, 1910. Newspaper.

Rothgeb, Harold L.

1977 Why Colorado Springs Didn't Build the First Solar Heated Airport in America. MS, Base Historians Office, Peterson Air Force Base (Colorado Springs).

Seventh (7th) Photo Group Association

1984 With the Eyes of the Seventh Photo Group Now It Can Be Told: The Photographic Story of the Seventh Photo Group - The Eyes of the Eighth Air Force. Seventh Photo Group Association (Phoenix).

Smith, Henry

1965 Airways: The History of Commercial Aviation in the U.S. New York: Russell and Russell.

Sprague, Marshall

n.d. Colorado Springs: From Prairie Town to Tourist Mecca. Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce.

Stewart, Oliver

1966 Aviation: The Creative Ideas. New York: Praeger.

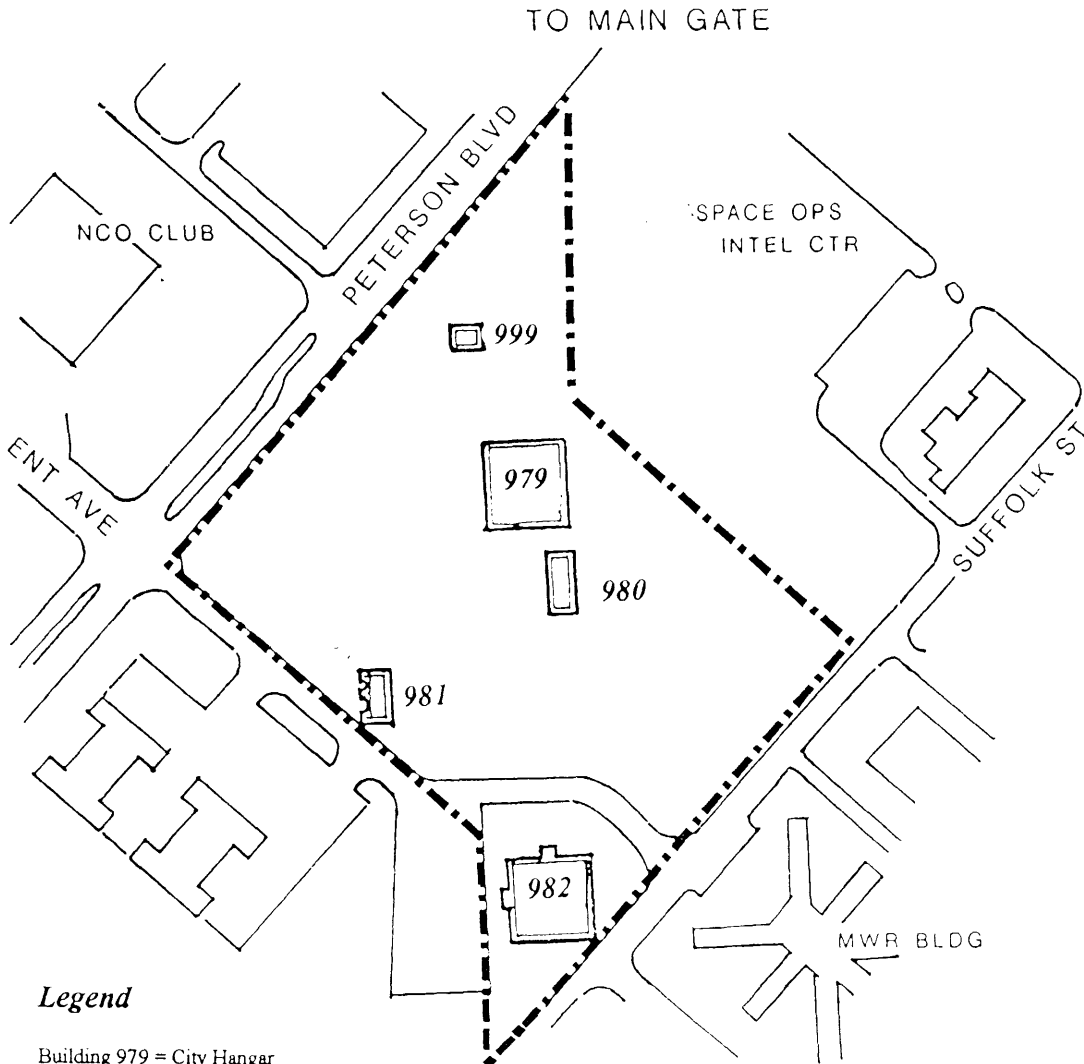
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number Add. Doc. Page 1

SITE MAP

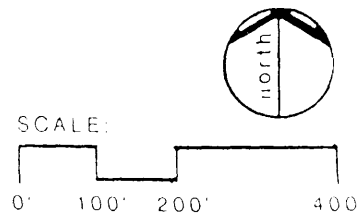


Legend

- Building 979 = City Hangar
- Building 999 = Caretaker's Residence (First Terminal)
- Building 982 = Broadmoor Hangar
- Building 981 = Municipal Terminal
- Building 980 = Maintenance Building (*Non-contributing*)

--- PROPOSED DISTRICT

ORIGINAL COLORADO SPRINGS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT



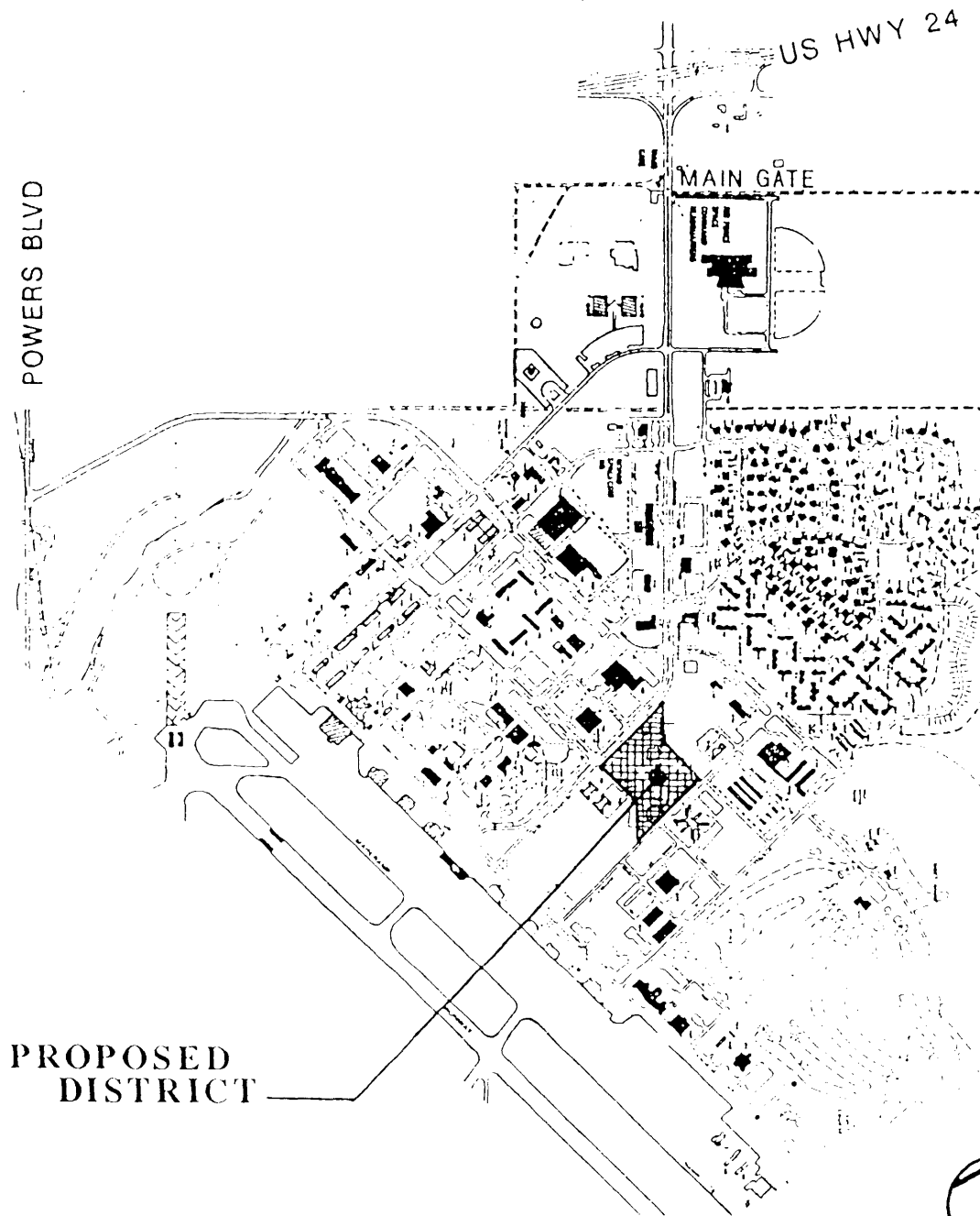
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Add. Doc. Page 2

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

VICINITY MAP



PROPOSED
DISTRICT

ORIGINAL COLORADO SPRINGS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

NOT TO SCALE



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Original Colorado Springs Municipal Airport
El Paso County, CO

Section number Add. Doc. Page 3

