

US 50 West: Purcell Boulevard to Wills Boulevard (Milepost 309 to Milepost 313) and McCulloch Boulevard Intersection Improvements (Milepost 307)

Project Number: STA 050A-022
Project Code: 19056

Parks and Recreation Resources Technical Report

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FHU Reference No. 112407-02

February 2014

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Ave. | Avenue |
| Bld. | Boulevard |
| CDOT | Colorado Department of Transportation |
| EA | Environmental Assessment |
| LWCF | Land and Water Conservation Funds |
| PACOG | Pueblo Area Council of Governments |
| PEL | Planning and Environmental Linkages |
| Rd. | Road |
| ROW | right-of-way |
| US 50 | US Highway 50 |

1. Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) for proposed improvements to US Highway 50 (US 50) from Purcell Boulevard (Blvd.) to Wills Blvd. and the intersections of US 50 and Purcell Blvd., Pueblo Blvd., and McCulloch Blvd. (i.e., US 50 West EA) (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**).

The Proposed Action includes elements of the recommended Preferred Alternative identified in the *US 50 West Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study (US 50 West PEL Study)* (2012a). The PEL recommended Preferred Alternative identified improvements to address peak-hour congestion and above average crash rates along US 50 from Swallows Road (Rd.) to Baltimore Avenue (Ave.) (**Figure 3**). Appendix A2, *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a), and A3 of the EA, *US 50 West Implementation Plan* (CDOT, 2012b), include additional information on the PEL Preferred Alternative.

This evaluation of parks and recreation resources has been prepared in support of the US 50 West EA. Parks and recreation resources are important community facilities that warrant consideration during the development of transportation projects. These resources include parks, trails, and open space areas that provide residents and visitors opportunities for recreation, including both passive and active activities. The assessment included an evaluation of the effects of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

1.1 Project Description

1.1.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would include widening 3.4 miles of US 50 to include a third eastbound lane from Purcell Blvd. to Wills Blvd. The Proposed Action would also provide intersection improvements at the Purcell Blvd./US 50, Pueblo Blvd./US 50, and McCulloch Blvd./US 50 intersections (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). The intersection improvements at Purcell Blvd. and McCulloch Blvd. would modify the northbound to eastbound turn lane geometry to US 50, and add a channelizing curb island for improved traffic flow and pedestrian/bicycle refuge. Intersection improvements at Pueblo Blvd./US 50 would include an eastbound through lane, an eastbound deceleration lane and ramp onto Pueblo Blvd., and a northbound ramp and acceleration lane onto eastbound US 50. The proposed improvements would also include widening the eastbound bridge at Wild Horse Dry Creek (CDOT Structure K-18-CW). The bridge improvements would include extending the existing piers within the Wild Horse Dry Creek drainage area, adding a third eastbound lane, and incorporating a multi-use pedestrian/bicycle trail on the bridge to accommodate a proposed future multi-use trail on the southbound side of US 50. The multi-use trail would be a separate project to be built by others. The Proposed Action would also include drainage improvements and water quality features.

The proposed transportation and water quality improvements would be constructed within the existing CDOT right-of-way (ROW). Permanent easements for drainage would be required in three locations adjacent to CDOT ROW. The main text and figures of the EA provide additional detail about the Proposed Action, while Appendix A1 of the EA includes project drawings.

1.1.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would include any transportation projects that have not been built, but for which funding has been committed. As identified in the *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a), the No Action Alternative assumes that no major capacity improvements would occur along US 50 from Swallows Rd. to Baltimore Ave. (CDOT, 2012a). However, the No Action Alternative would include routine maintenance to keep the existing transportation network in good operating condition. The main text of the EA provides additional detail about the No Action Alternative.

2. Methods

Information was collected about the existing and planned parks and recreation resources within and adjacent to the Proposed Action (parks and recreation resources study area) by reviewing information collected on parks and recreation resources from the *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a), reviewing geographic information system data, and reviewing current comprehensive, land use, parks, and recreation master plans. Additional inventory details about parks and recreation resources were obtained, such as ownership, size, and amenities from accessing individual municipalities' websites in July and October 2013. Research focused on using the most current version of information available online. The following documents were referenced to obtain information about existing and planned parks and recreation resources within the study area:

- Pueblo Bicycle and Trails Map, Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG), April 2010
- Pueblo West Bike and Trails Map, PACOG, April 2010
- Honor Farm Park and Open Space Master Plan, City of Pueblo, August 2007
- City of Pueblo Parks and Trails Map, City of Pueblo, May 2009
- City of Pueblo Trails System Map, May 2012
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) database

Figure 1. Proposed Action - Purcell Boulevard to Wills Boulevard

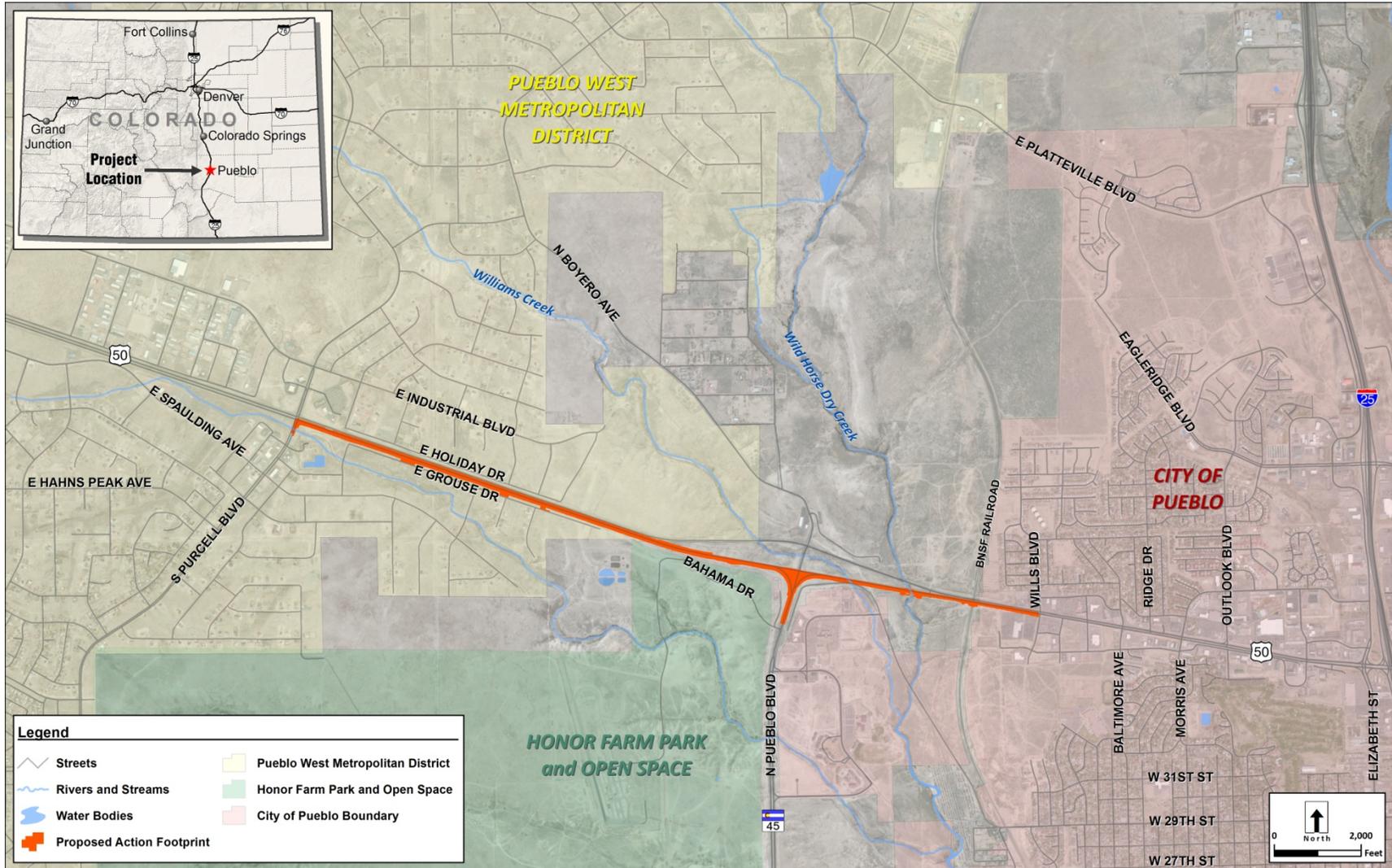
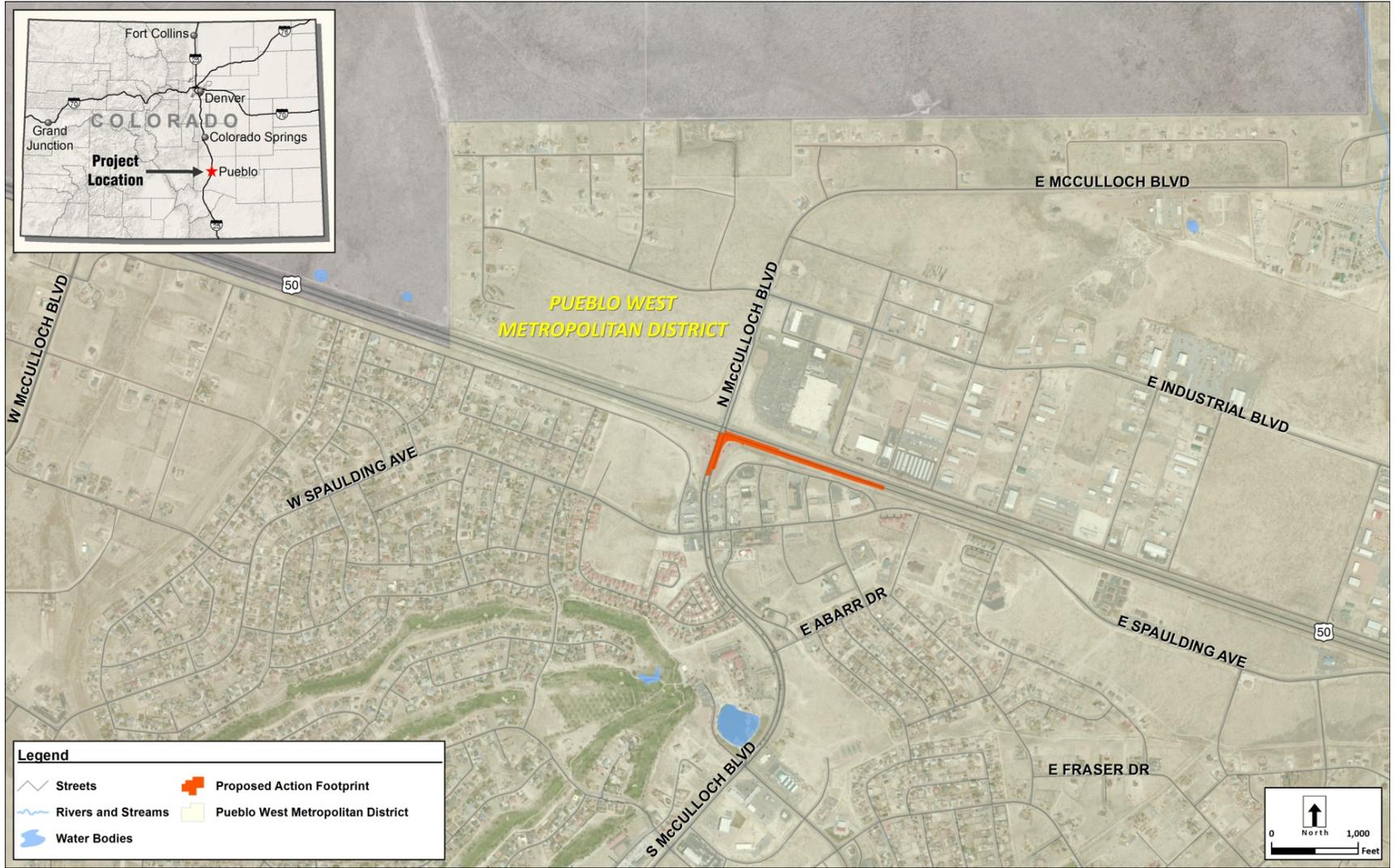
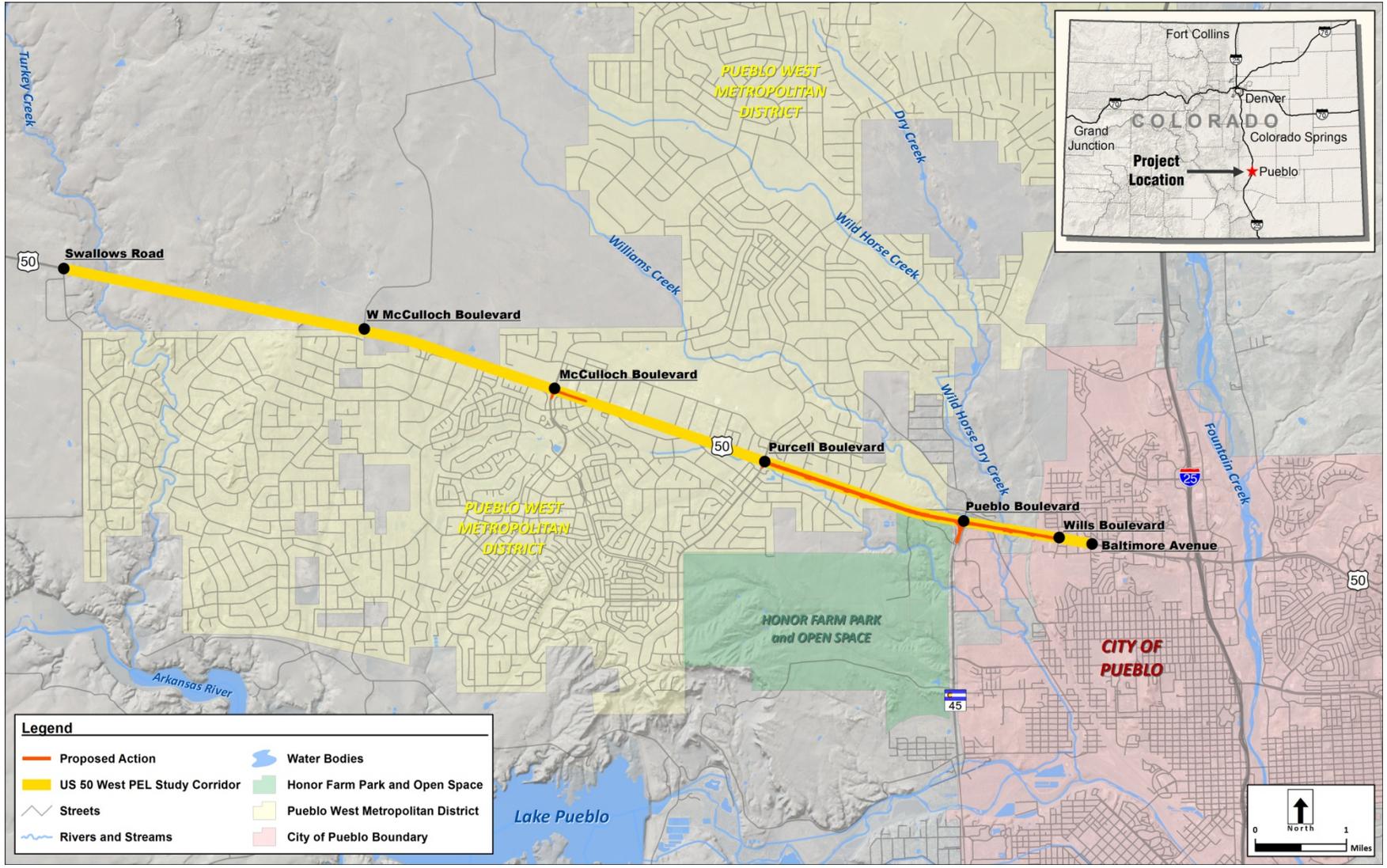


Figure 2. Proposed Action – McCulloch Boulevard/US 50 Intersection



50 US 50 West Environmental Assessment

Figure 3. US 50 West PEL Study Corridor



3. Existing and Planned Parks and Recreational Resources

The Honor Farm Park and Open Space (managed by the City of Pueblo Parks and Recreation Department) is the only existing park and open space resource located within the study area, in the area west of Pueblo Blvd. and south of US 50 (**Figure 4**). The Honor Farm Park and Open Space is 2,373 acres and includes the following features: a natural park, open space, a motorsport park, an off-highway vehicle park, a model airplane park, roadway and utility sites, and private development.

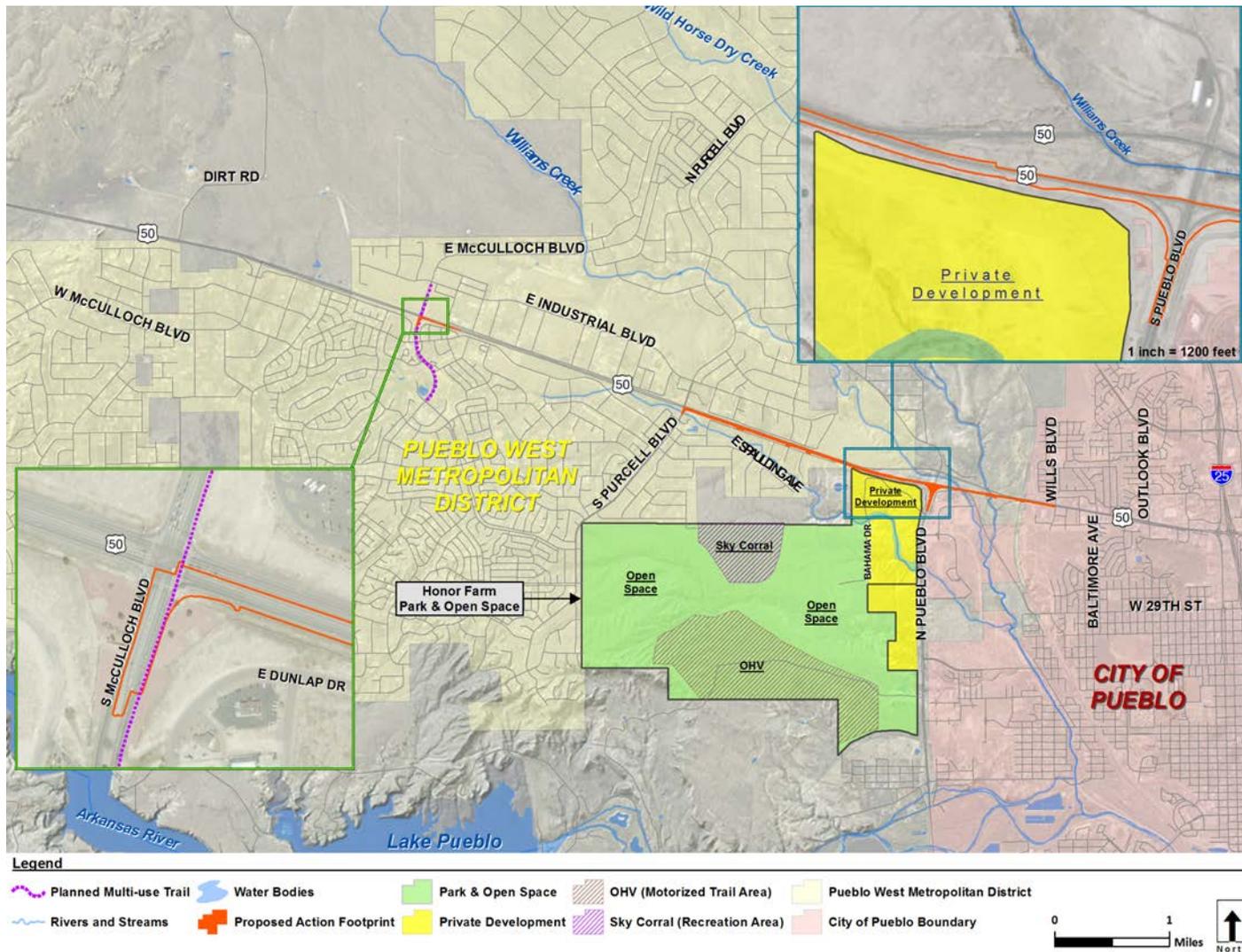
Coordination with Pueblo West and the City of Pueblo has been ongoing through the development of the Proposed Action. In October 2013, the City of Pueblo confirmed that there have not been any changes to the August 2007 Honor Farm Park & Open Space Master Plan and no construction or subdivision platting has been or is currently scheduled.

Currently, there are no multi-use trails along US 50 within the study area. A multi-use trail is a paved or improved path that is separate from the road for bicyclists, walkers, runners, etc. The study area contains several existing on-street bikeways, all of which exist along the roadway shoulders, but not as separate marked facilities (PACOG, 2010a; 2010b). A future multi-use trail was identified as part of the Preferred Alternative in the *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a). The *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a) identified a future 10-foot-wide paved multi-use trail along the south side of US 50 from McCulloch Blvd. to the existing sidewalk near Wills Blvd. The trail would include connections at intersections and proposed trails crossing US 50, such as at Wild Horse Creek.

Pueblo West is in the process of planning the Main McCulloch Blvd. Trail along the east side of McCulloch Blvd. from Joe Martinez Blvd. (south of US 50) to Industrial Blvd. (north of US 50) (**Figure 4**). This planned trail would have an on-grade crossing of US 50 at McCulloch Blvd. CDOT is currently coordinating with Pueblo West on the design of the trail crossing at US 50.

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife LWCF database (2012) was reviewed to determine if any park and recreation resources in the vicinity of the Proposed Action received funding through the LWCF. No properties in the vicinity of the Proposed Action footprint have received LWCF assistance, therefore, no Section 6(f) consultation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife is required.

Figure 4. Parks and Recreation Resources within Study Area



4. Impacts

4.1 Proposed Action

Construction of the project is limited to the existing CDOT ROW, with permanent drainage easements for off-site runoff in three locations adjacent to CDOT ROW. The runoff areas will be designed to be compatible with the future multi-use trail that is identified as part of the Preferred Alternative in the *US 50 West PEL Study* (CDOT, 2012a). The Proposed Action would have no impacts to existing or planned parks and recreation resources.

4.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts to existing or planned parks and recreation resources.

5. Mitigation

Mitigation for parks and recreation resources is not required for the Proposed Action or No Action Alternative. Coordination with Pueblo West and the City of Pueblo has been ongoing through the development of the Proposed Action. Appendix B of the EA includes documentation of coordination conducted to date. The design and construction of the proposed intersection improvements at McCulloch Blvd and US 50 will be coordinated with the planned Main McCulloch Blvd. Trail. The Proposed Action would accommodate the trail design so that there would be no future impact to existing or planned parks and recreation resources. Coordination with Pueblo West and the City of Pueblo will continue through completion of design and construction of the project.

6. References

- City of Pueblo Trails System Map. 2012. May 12.
- City of Pueblo. 2009. Parks and Trails Map. May.
- City of Pueblo. 2007. Honor Farm Park and Open Space Master Plan. Retrieved July 2013 <http://www.pueblo.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/653>
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