



# I-25: The New Pueblo Freeway



ILEX STREET TO CITY CENTER DRIVE

Colorado Department of Transportation

August 2018 eNewsletter

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## Ilex Team Plans for Colorado State Fair

Each year more than 480,000 people visit the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo. The State Fair is the largest summer event in the state providing a significant economic benefit to both the City of Pueblo and the state. This year's Fair runs from August 24 to September 3. Naturally, that makes minimizing construction impacts a high priority for the I-25/Ilex Design-Build team!



*Please forward/share this email with others who may have an interest in the Ilex Design-Build project.*

[For a PDF version, click here](#)

To minimize impacts to the Fair and inconvenience to the traveling public, the Ilex project team has phased its construction work to help ensure access to the Fairgrounds.

Although there is a significant amount of construction related to the Ilex project underway on the interstate and bridges in Pueblo, the team is keeping access to the Fairgrounds as unrestricted as possible.

## Current Design Work

- Landscaping & irrigation plans complete
- ITS Design nearing completion

## Current Construction

- All roadway and structural work is complete on the I-25 over Indiana segment. Staining touch-ups to be completed in spring for 100% completion
- Work is complete on the Mesa bridge structure, signing & roadway. Staining touch-ups this spring for 100% completion

## Construction activity to accommodate the Fair:

- No daytime lane closures on Interstate-25, Northern Avenue bridge, Mesa Avenue bridge or Indiana Avenue bridge
- The southbound Santa Fe on-ramp will be open
- City Center Drive southbound I-25 on-ramp is closed, but detour signs are in place to guide motorists to alternate routes
- The Truss bridge remains closed with traffic remaining in its current traffic pattern

The Colorado State Fair began in 1869 when approximately 2,000 people converged for a horse exhibition in what eventually became the City of Pueblo. Every year since, Pueblo has remained the home of the Fair, which was only canceled once in its entire history. In 1917, during World War I, the Fair was canceled when the horse stables and open space at the Fairgrounds was needed by the Army National Guard for training.

Congratulations to all those who work so hard year-round to make this fun, educational and historic event possible.

- US 50C Truss Bridge over Arkansas River painting & deck pour this spring
- Northern Ave bridge completed Phase 3, finalizing slab on SE corner, waterproof membrane & asphalt ongoing
- Clark and D Street cul-de-sac sidewalk, lighting & landscaping completing this spring
- MSE walls along SB I-25 on-ramp from Santa Fe Ave
- Grading & finalization of Pond A by Gruma Ave
- MSE walls at I-25 bridge over Thomas Phelps Creek Trail complete
- Storm drainage installation on the north and south approaches of the project
- Demolition of existing NB I-25 beginning April

### Upcoming Construction

- Phase II Construction of D Street Bridge, Iron Phoenix, CML & Gruma
- Pile driving at all mainline bridges
- MSE wall construction at all mainline bridges

### Project Schedule

**Northbound I-25:** Spring 2015 to Spring 2018

**Southbound I-25:** Fall 2017 to Winter 2018

**Bridge Rehabilitations:** Summer 2015 to Spring 2018

**Final Configuration:** December 2018

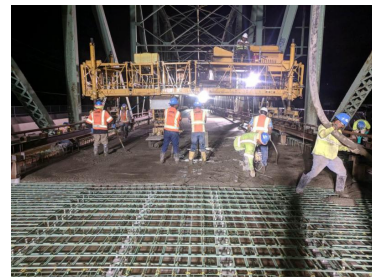
**Project Completion:** April 2019

### Ilex Project as Seen From the Sky

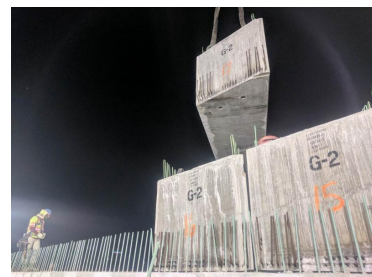
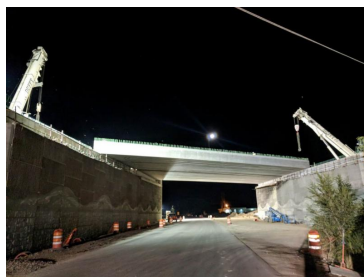


*Filmed August 2018*

### I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project Photos



*Truss bridge deck pour*



*Girders being set for I-25 bridge over Gruma Drive*

### Environmental Mitigation: Painting the Truss Bridge

Newly built construction isn't the only aspect of infrastructure projects. Sometimes, historic structures need to be renovated so they continue to perform, be useful and admired for future generations.

One such structure related to the I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project is the Green Truss Bridge, located where Santa Fe Avenue crosses the Arkansas River. The Truss Bridge is a 'Pratt' style truss which was part of an enormous public works program to revitalize the City of Pueblo after the massive flood of 1921. Spanning approximately 286 feet, it is a monument to Pueblo's rich history. It is the oldest and longest remaining bridge of its kind in Colorado.

## Stay Connected

**Website:**  
[Colorado Info Project](#)

**Email:**  
[i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com](mailto:i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com)

**Hotline:**  
(719) 470-2270

## Quick Links

[Project Website](#)  
[CDOT Website](#)

## Sign Up to Receive Enewsletters

To receive future Ilex Design-Build project eNewsletters and construction notices, send an email to [i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com](mailto:i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com)

## What the Project Involves

The Ilex interchange is the first segment to be constructed as part of the New Pueblo Freeway.

The project consists of replacing bridges on I-25 between Ilex Street and City Center Drive in Pueblo. Work includes rehabilitation of bridges on northbound I-25 over Santa Fe Avenue (US 50C), I-25 over Indiana Avenue, on the Santa Fe Avenue (US 50C) bridge over the Arkansas River, and on Northern Avenue and Mesa Avenue over I-25.

Structurally deficient bridges on I-25 over Gruma Drive, the Union Pacific Railroad, and Ilex Street will also be removed and replaced.

When working on historic structures, a proper balance must be struck between historic preservation, and public health and safety. This month, the Truss Bridge will get a new coat of paint. An important part of the work plan is ensuring that various precautions are taken to protect the Arkansas River below.

Painting the bridge its original signature green color is a complex project, given the size and age of the bridge. One concern when dealing with old structures is the possible presence of legacy lead-based paint. Although previous abatement of lead-based paint has already taken place on the bridge, extraordinary efforts will ensure that no material enters the Arkansas River or surrounding areas during this painting project.

To achieve this, the entire bridge is sealed with containment material sewn together to encapsulate the top, sides, and bottom of the structure. Fully encapsulated, the bridge will be pressure washed and painted in two sections.

Next, all wastewater and debris will be vacuumed, contained, tested, and treated or disposed of properly in a waste disposal facility.



*Truss bridge encapsulated*

It is the Ilex project team's highest priority to mitigate any adverse effects to Colorado's precious waterways. When the job is complete, the public will see a bridge that looks as good as it did back in the 1920s!

## **Dog Days of Summer Can Mean Danger on a Construction Site**

Summer is the busiest time for construction projects, yet the most dangerous for construction workers. Working on a construction site during the summer heat, with asphalt reaching temperatures of 300°F or more, can result in serious illness or even death. Anyone working outside and exposed to extreme heat may experience symptoms of heat-related illnesses (HRI), such as heat cramps, heat rash, heat exhaustion, fainting, heat stroke and other symptoms.

According to the Department of Occupational Safety and Health, heat-related illness is also linked to injuries from falls, equipment operation accidents and other incidents. Such incidents can happen when someone with heat stress becomes fatigued, dizzy, confused or disoriented.

Since heat can lead to other issues and potential incidents, it is important that anyone exerting energy while outside in



Interchange ramps will be lengthened to provide safer transitions onto and off of the Interstate, especially the 1st Street ramp to southbound I-25. Roadway curves will be softened to improve visibility and provide a smoother ride for motorists.

Local roadway improvements are included at D Street, Ilex Street, Bennett Street cul-de-sac, Clark Street cul-de-sac, and along Santa Fe Avenue.

Bridges will be widened at City Center Drive and I-25 over Santa Fe Avenue (widened to the median).

Noise abatement will also occur along some segments of I-25.

### Project Partners

- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Federal Highway Administration
- City of Pueblo
- Pueblo County
- The Community

### Funding

State of Colorado revenues from a safety fee placed on vehicle registrations have helped fund the Ilex Design-Build project.

#### *Funding sources for the project:*

Bridge Enterprise


RAMP (Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships)

the heat, whether work-related or recreational, should take care to avoid heat illness issues. Here are 12 tips:

1. **Water, water, water.** Drink plenty of proper fluids the night before a work/recreation day and continue to drink fluids (i.e., water or sport drinks) throughout the day. Remember that we not only need water, but electrolytes as well, which can be gained from drinking sport drinks. Plan to make water easy to reach and keep it at a cool, drinkable temperature. Avoid soda pop and energy drinks.
2. **Stay in good physical shape.** Hit the gym or walk the oval a few times after dusk to work out possible heat stress. Cut down on or eliminate on tobacco.
3. **Eat right.** Avoid high-fat, greasy fast food. Try to eat a lighter meal during hottest time of the day.
4. **Be aware of the 'post lunch dip' effect of drowsiness.** Circadian rhythms govern our sleep/wake cycle and this after-lunch interval is a tough one. Minimize fatigue by easing up on the mid-day meal.
5. **Get your sleep.** REM sleep is harder to achieve in hot weather. Try to keep sleeping rooms cool.
6. **Timing is everything.** Whenever possible, plan your outdoor activity to avoid direct sun or move up the start time. If being out in direct sun can't be avoided, schedule frequent rest breaks in a shaded area.
7. **Dress to stay cool.** Engineered fabric athletic and recreational garments can reduce the heat load on the body. They offer trans-evaporative cooling, ultraviolet and insect protection.
8. **Avoid going in and out of air-conditioned climates.** That's a body slam each way in terms of adjusting.
9. **Be alert for signs of heat stress.** The order of seriousness is: a) Heat cramps - usually from poor hydration; take it easy, drink water, put feet up. b) Heat exhaustion - knock off for the day, go someplace cool, rehydrate, rest. c) Heat stroke - call 911.
10. **Plan for heat stress avoidance.** Heat stress avoidance steps include maintaining proper hydration, pacing yourself, avoiding prolonged strenuous exertion, staying covered up in direct sun, etc.
11. **Cover your head.** A wide-brim hard hat is good head covering against the sun. Add a neck protector or wrap-around sun visor to maximize protection. Use sunblock on any exposed skin.
12. **Cool it down.** The neck and head largely govern heat load, because a lot of blood flows through these parts of the body. That's why cooling "bandanas" are so effective; they keep direct sun off the head and neck.

### How to Merge Effectively in Traffic

Of all the reasons for traffic congestion, lane closures tend to bring out the most anxiety and confusion because many

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of us don't understand the optimal way to merge from two lanes into one.

Most assume as soon as they see a notice of a lane closing ahead, they should immediately move over to the remaining open lane. People who wait to merge until just before their lane ends often receive honks, cars attempting to block their path, and abrupt braking for the merging cars.

**Surprisingly, those who wait to merge until just before the lane ends are the ones doing it right.**

Merge points are specifically designed to operate in a "zipper fashion" so traffic keeps flowing. Each car should alternate or "zipper" into the remaining open lane just before the point of closure.

Most driving educators don't provide instruction on the correct way to merge, so drivers that get over into the through lane right away may feel cheated and get angry at drivers who wait to merge following the proper "zipper" technique.

Here is how it works: in the event of an impending lane closure, drivers should fill in both lanes equally. Just before one lane ends, cars should take turns alternating, filling in the open lane carefully and then resume full speed. According to traffic engineers, when motorists merge correctly in the zipper fashion, it is faster, safer, and can reduce backups by almost 40 percent on average!



*CDOT Late Merge - How to merge within a work zone*

Because the zipper merge only works as well as the number of people who are aware of it, CDOT is working to educate the traveling public.

"There is usually increased congestion through construction projects when vehicles merge into a single lane too soon, creating unnecessary backups prior to the work area," said CDOT Project Manager Jennifer Billings. "It may seem counterintuitive to many people, so we are providing "zipper merge" education to make it easier for traveling through some of our closures this summer. When a zipper merge works effectively, drivers rarely need to brake at all, thereby keeping traffic moving," said Billings.

## Additional Project Information

For more information about the I-25 Ilex Design-Build project, visit the [CDOT website project page](#). To receive future Ilex Design-Build project e-newsletters and construction notices, send an email to [i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com](mailto:i25ilex@PublicInfoTeam.com) requesting to be added to the email list.

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