



I-25: The New Pueblo Freeway



ILEX STREET TO CITY CENTER DRIVE

Colorado Department of Transportation

February 2017 eNewsletter

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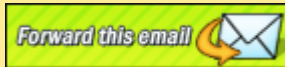
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Please forward/share this email with others who may have an interest in the Ilex Design-Build project.

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Current Design Work

- Storm drainage nearing completion
- Final lighting, signing & striping plans being finalized
- Landscaping & irrigation plans nearing completion

Current Construction

- Deck replacement on the northbound I-25 bridge over Indiana Ave. has started
- Work is nearing completion on the

Phelps Creek Trail Area Boasts Rich Locomotive History

Pueblo's Phelps Creek Trail area is undergoing construction as part of the Interstate-25/Ilex Design-Build project, but some may not be familiar with its rich locomotive history.

The property in the Iron Phoenix area was once used for the Missouri Pacific "MoPac" Railroad, one of the first to be built west of the Mississippi River. The Colorado Eagle train was inaugurated in June 1942 as the very last of its "Eagle" fleet, and ran west from St. Louis to Pueblo to Denver.

The luxurious Colorado Eagle featured first-class Pullman service and accommodations such as the popular "Planetarium Domes," a diner lounge, sleepers, a standard diner, and a grill/chair-coach, among other amenities. The Colorado Eagle held its own against other westbound competition and, though it had many setbacks, survived on the until becoming part of Amtrak on May 1, 1971.



Photo of the Colorado Eagle, courtesy of American-Rails.com

While MoPac's Eagle fleet wasn't as successful as some of the West's other well-known trains such as the Super Chief or California Zephyr, it was popular enough that the Eagle name still continues under Amtrak today.

rehabilitation of Mesa Ave. over I-25

- Piers & pier caps for the CML bridge over the railroad under way
- Embankment operations between the I-25 bridges over Gruma & UPRR (railroad) under way
- US 50C Truss Bridge over Arkansas River rehabilitation
- Northern Ave bridge rehabilitation
- Clark and D Street cul-de-sac and drainage construction
- Mechanically Stabilized Earth walls from Gruma to City Center Drive
- Storm drainage installation on the north portion of the project

Upcoming Construction

- Construction of the bridges over Gruma & the UPRR will resume
- Bridge over Phelps Creek Trail and UPRR easement
- Mechanically Stabilized Earth Walls adjacent to I-25 from Phelps Creek Trail north to UPRR

Project Schedule

Northbound I-25: Spring 2015 to Fall 2017

Southbound I-25: Fall 2017 to Fall 2018

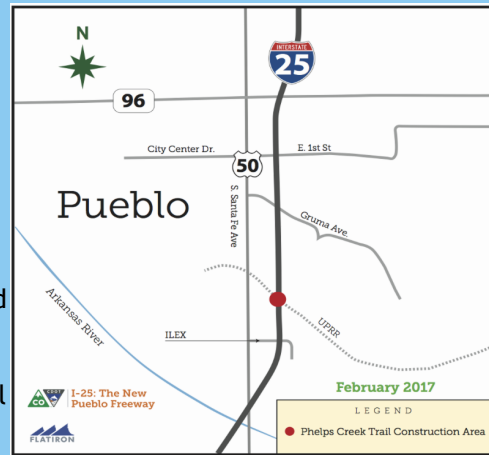
Bridge Rehabilitations: Summer 2015 to Summer 2017

Anticipated Completion: Fall 2018

Work is beginning in the Iron Phoenix area this spring, as design has reached completion after a year-long approval process with Union Pacific Railroad. Due to unforeseen changes by the railroad, a redesign was necessary to include a two-span bridge crossing over the Union Pacific Railroad and Phelps Creek Trailway over the I-25 bridges over Gruma & UPRR (railroad) under way. This design change was partially responsible for the I-25/Ilex project completion pushing into 2018.

As part of the mitigation commitments for the project, an informational sign will be included on site documenting the historical significance of the area.

The I-25/Ilex Design-Build team is proudly constructing a newer, safer and more functional road transportation project for Pueblo, while honoring the rail transportation history of the past in the Iron Phoenix area.



Northern Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation in Full Swing

The I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project includes the rehabilitation of several bridges, including the Northern Avenue Bridge over I-25. Construction began in early February with setting barrier and work on repairing the deck, or surface, of the bridge.

Beginning Feb. 6, traffic was reduced to a single outer lane in both directions on the bridge, with speeds reduced to 25 mph. This traffic switch was put into place so construction could occur on the inner/central lanes, and will be in effect until mid-March.

Once this work is complete, traffic will be switched to a head-to-head configuration on the northern lanes for construction on the southern half of the bridge. Pedestrian traffic will still have use of the sidewalk.



Northern Avenue Bridge

"We are always conscious of keeping traffic moving through areas during construction, and plan to keep lanes open whenever we can," said Mike Blasi, project manager for Flatiron Corporation. "Work on the Northern Bridge will be accomplished in three phases to keep traffic moving."

Work on Northern Bridge over I-25 consists of:
* Rehabilitating the structure

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Website:
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Email:
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(719) 470-2270

Quick Links

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To receive future Ilex Design-Build project eNewsletters and construction notices, send an email to 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

- * Creating a better transition to the roadway
- * Installing new bridge railing and guardrail
- * Improving sidewalk, fencing, pedestrian railing, lighting, signing, striping, and landscaping

Rehabilitation of Northern Bridge is anticipated to be completed by August 2017.

Mesa Bridge Reaches Substantial Completion



The Mesa Bridge and Roadway, as part of the I-25/Ilex Design-Build project, has reached substantial completion. The bridge underwent structure rehabilitation, as well as improvements to the roadway, sidewalk, fencing, lighting, and signing. The bridge will be complete with the addition of a pedestrian fence to be installed in February.

Ilex Project Team Takes Weather Precautions

One thing the I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project team can't control is the weather. Construction during the winter months can be tricky. A lot of planning determines what work can be done based on how cold the temperature gets.

Crews continue working through winter weather conditions to stay on schedule and within budget. However, not all activities can be conducted in cold weather, requiring careful planning and increased attention to job site safety.

Some activities dependent on winter temperatures include restriping, asphalt paving, and pouring concrete. "Asphalt paving is a primary activity that is restricted during cold weather, causing most asphalt plants to shut down during the winter months, so we need to plan our activities around that," said Mike Blasi, Flatiron Corporation project manager.

Even pouring concrete becomes tricky in colder temperatures. In extremely cold temperatures, concrete may not reach strength specifications and has the potential to freeze. When temperatures allow for a concrete pour during the winter, crews may utilize blankets and heaters to help with the curing process.

also be removed and replaced.

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.

Hot water is also sometimes added when concrete is batched to help with this process.

An added challenge to this winter's weather conditions were the Chinook winds that blew through our region in January, creating hurricane-strength winds.

"With forecasts of high winds, one of our biggest concerns is concrete blankets blowing," said Blasi. "To combat this we use heavy objects and concrete blocks to weigh down any light weight material that has the potential to be blown by the wind."

Large concrete pours with a lot of surface area are also a concern during high winds, because winds can dry out the top layer of concrete and cause surface cracking.

Most obviously, crane work is of great concern during times of high winds. "The crane has a wind meter, and if it reads too high, the team reschedules the work," said Blasi. "Activities such as girder setting causes the team to take wind very seriously, performing extensive calculations to ensure safety."

The project team does whatever it can to plan ahead for weather and keep construction on track. While quality, schedule and budget are always a top priority for the project team, most important is safety.

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

State and Federal Agencies Tour the Ilex Project

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) toured the I-25 Ilex project in November viewing firsthand the progress being made on southern Colorado highway reconstruction projects. FHWA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that supports state and local governments in design, construction, and maintenance of the nation's highway system. Through financial and technical assistance to state and local governments, FHWA is responsible for ensuring that America's roads and highways continue to be among the safest and most technologically sound in the world.

"It was a beneficial visit, as the FHWA members were impressed by the size and scope of the project and pleased by the progress so far," said Joe DeHeart, CDOT Resident Engineer.

This visit marks one of several from dignitaries, elected officials and agencies this past year, including Lieutenant Governor Donna Lynne's statewide summer tour, and the Colorado Transportation Legislation Review Committee's visit in July.

"Refuse to Lose" January Award Winner

Flatiron Construction, contractor for the I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project, introduced its "Refuse to Lose" awards program in November as part of its ongoing effort to establish a positive team

RAMP (Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships)

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environment and challenge everyone working on the project to go above-and-beyond.



January's Refuse to Lose Award winner was Kenny Thies, a Broom Sweeper Operator (in yellow jacket). He was nominated for going the extra mile with his responsibilities on the project and always having "a great attitude." Congratulations Kenny!

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 requesting to be added to the email list.