



I-25: The New Pueblo Freeway

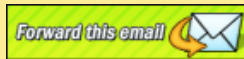


ILEX STREET TO CITY CENTER DRIVE

Colorado Department of Transportation

January 2019 eNewsletter

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

[To view a PDF, click here.](#)

Current Design Work

- Landscaping & irrigation plans complete
- ITS Design nearing completion

Current Construction

[CLICK HERE](#) to view Construction Update - August 2018

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

City Center Southbound I-25 On-Ramp Opens

An important connection from the I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project to downtown Pueblo and the Riverwalk was reopened a few weeks ago - the southbound I-25 on-ramp at City Center Drive.

The on-ramp closed last July for five months to reconstruct the interstate access lane, providing added safety with a longer acceleration lane and wider shoulder. The longer on-ramp offers plenty of time for motorists to achieve highway speeds prior to merging into traffic. The profile of the ramp is also less drastic as compared to the old on-ramp which had a large gain in elevation in a short distance.

The new on-ramp also allows merging traffic more sight distance to appropriately judge merging safety. It is a continuous lane with the deceleration lane for the southbound off-ramp to Santa Fe Avenue.

CDOT Project Manager Jennifer Billings says, "We thank everyone for their patience during the ramp construction. The new ramp and continuous acceleration/deceleration lane provides Pueblo greater access to and from downtown."

I-25 Motorists Traveling in Final Alignment

Motorists are now driving on the final traffic alignment on Interstate-25. Final completion of the I-25/Ilex Design-Build project is scheduled for April 2019.

Until then, construction work will continue as some activities must wait for warmer temperatures. Some lane closures are to be expected through spring.

Final construction and project work includes:

- Striping
- Paving
- Landscaping
- Staining

The final paving will enhance ride quality for motorists.

The Last Piece of the Puzzle: Filling the Hole at Gruma

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Website:
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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.

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.

The I-25/Ilex Design-Build team had one last area of roadway to complete before traffic could shift to the new southbound roadway. This area is between Gruma Drive and the Union Pacific/BNSF railroad bridges.

"The bridges were complete, but there was a big hole with an elevation difference of approximately 30 feet between the bridges that needed to be filled in order to connect the bridges to the roadway," explained Jennifer Billings, CDOT Project Manager.



Before



After

To accomplish this, approximately 16,000 tons of fill material was brought to the area by tandem trucks (smaller hauling trucks) to fill the hole, and then was graded by a bulldozer.

This fill process was necessary because the bridges are relatively close together. Construction of the Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) wall required crossing the bridges, as there was no access off the existing highway.

The MSE wall is more than 500 feet long and nearly 50 feet high. It connects the bridges, holds the dirt in place and provides the structure for the roadway.

This process took approximately one month, but once completed it meant traffic could move to its final configuration.

Ilex Project Walls Begin Receiving Finishing Touches

The I-25/Ilex Design-Build Project places a strong emphasis on aesthetics, including designing and staining some of the new walls to match other construction around Pueblo, such as can be seen along the Riverwalk.

Scott Derr Painting began treatment on the Ilex project's wave panel and ashlar stone panels using an opaque stain. The base coat was applied using a sprayer, followed by four colors - flesh, beige, suntan and sunshine - which were each applied by hand using brushes and sponges to create the custom look. It took approximately two hours to complete a 50-square-foot area of aesthetic treatment.



Before and after hand painting.

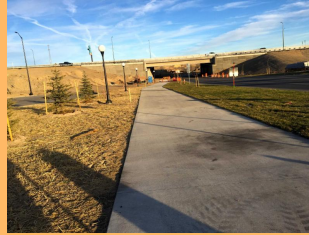
Local roadway improvements are included at D Street, Ilex Street, Bennett Street cul-de-sac, Clark Street cul-de-sac, and along Santa Fe Avenue.

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.

This process is temperature-dependent, however, so a Scott Derr team will return this spring to finish staining the walls and bridges -- one of the many details making the Ilex project especially unique!

Ilex Team Begins Landscaping Efforts



Landscaping at the D Street & Santa Fe Ave intersection

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)

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.

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