

NEWS FROM:



**COLORADO**  
Department of Transportation

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Media note: Some short videos and additional pictures are available for use [here](#).

## US 36 to reopen early between Lyons and Estes Park

*Highway to open substantially ahead of schedule*

**LARIMER COUNTY** – The Colorado Department of Transportation and Flatiron Constructors will reopen US 36 between Lyons and Estes Park substantially earlier than originally expected.

The opening of the road will happen by Sunday, at the latest, but could happen as early as Friday afternoon, depending on weather and progress made. Residents and others interested in the exact timing of the opening can sign up for email alerts by emailing the project team at [us36milepost8@gmail.com](mailto:us36milepost8@gmail.com).

The one-mile section of this highway closed March 9 to install a deep drainage culvert beneath the roadway and was slated to reopen April 6.

Project officials are attributing the early completion of work at Mile Point 8 to lower-than-anticipated traffic counts, favorable weather conditions for much of the last three weeks, and Flatiron's ability to work around-the-clock.

"The Flatiron Construction and CDOT team really accomplished something extraordinary here. They worked together around the clock, through winter storms, kept emergency services moving during a global pandemic and built major safety features on US 36 ahead of schedule. I'm so impressed with this team's ability to get the public moving between Estes Park and Lyons earlier than expected," said Brian Varrella, CDOT Region 4 Resident Engineer.

Crews worked day and night in a variety of weather conditions to accomplish quite a bit in a short time. In just 20 days they:

- Created a temporary detour to maintain emergency service access
- Excavated more than 10 feet of roadway to install the 14 feet by 10 feet concrete box culvert segments
- Poured more than 150 cubic yards of concrete to build a large wingwall for the culvert
- Improved sight distances along a 500-foot stretch of roadway through rock blasting, scaling and excavation of 3,000 cubic yards of rock
- Backfilled the box culvert and rebuilt the roadway

"The project team would like to thank commuters, first responders, business owners and residents for their patience and support during this time. While full closures are always impactful, the work completed in less than three weeks would have taken many months to complete under single-lane closures," Varrella said.

While US 36 is back open for travel between Lyons and Estes Park, there will be intermittent traffic interruptions including traffic stops and periodic short-term lane closures as construction continues through early 2021. Work will continue in the corridor to tunnel a new pipe under the roadway to put the Little Thompson River back into its historic channel. Crews will continue to replace guardrail and install fiber optic cable for safety cameras.



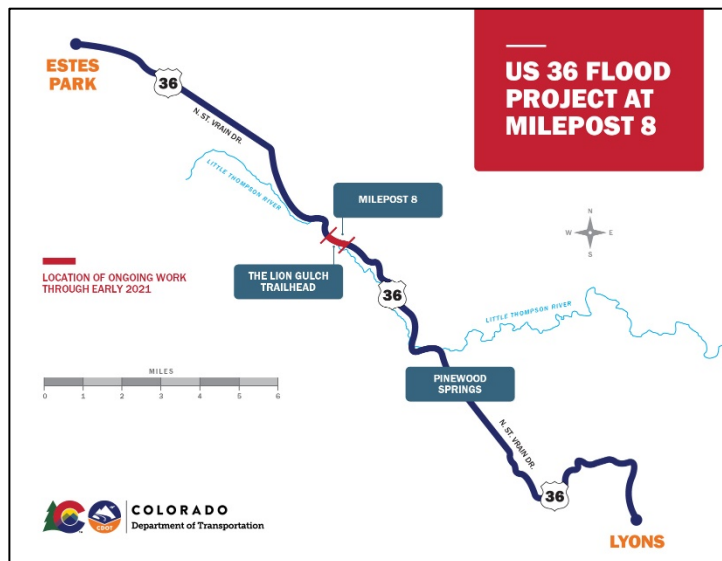
## WHY THIS PROJECT IS NEEDED

The purpose of this project is to improve overall safety, reduce future closures and permanently fix the damages caused by the 2013 flood. The 2013 floods were devastating to this region, and this project will help decrease the impact of future floods. This will be accomplished by installing two major drainage structures under US 36. This will return the Little Thompson River back to its original, natural channel. This project will also increase safety for everyone using the roadway by increasing visibility around a blind corner, as well as increasing the size of the shoulder.

The increased shoulder will make travel safer for cyclists and motorists, as well as increase space for safe snow removal. This will be accomplished through light blasting of the surrounding walls. This project is also being completed in conjunction with another project to install fiber optic cable for future cell towers in the area. Flatiron Construction will be installing conduit under the road to allow fiber optic to be run through later in the year. This will eventually increase cell coverage and add safety cameras to the corridor.

## PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

- Project Phone Line - (720) 543-9078
- Project email - [us36milepost8@gmail.com](mailto:us36milepost8@gmail.com)
- Project website - [us36milepost8project.codot.gov](http://us36milepost8project.codot.gov)
- Sign up for weekly project updates - Please log onto the project website and fill out the right-side form to "Subscribe to Project Updates."



## REMEMBER: SLOW FOR THE CONE ZONE

The following tips are to help you stay safe while traveling through maintenance and construction work zones.

- Do not speed in work zones. Obey the posted speed limits.
- Stay Alert! Expect the unexpected.
- Watch for workers. Drive with caution.
- Don't change lanes unnecessarily.
- Avoid using mobile devices such as phones while driving in work zones.
- Turn on headlights so that workers and other drivers can see you.
- Be especially alert at night while driving in work zones.
- Expect delays, especially during peak travel times.
- Allow ample space between you and the car in front of you.
- Anticipate lane shifts and merge when directed to do so.
- Be patient!

## WHOLE SYSTEM. WHOLE SAFETY.

To heighten safety awareness, CDOT announced its *Whole System – Whole Safety* initiative. This project takes a systematic statewide approach to safety combining the benefits of CDOT's programs that address driving behaviors, our built environment and the organization's operations. The goal is to improve the safety of Colorado's transportation network by reducing the rate and severity of crashes and improving the safety of all transportation modes. The program has one simple mission—to get everyone home safely.

## ABOUT CDOT

CDOT has approximately 3,000 employees located throughout Colorado, and manages more than 23,000 lane miles of highway and 3,429 bridges. CDOT also manages grant partnerships with a range of other agencies, including metropolitan planning organizations, local governments and airports. It also administers Bustang, the state-owned and operated interregional express service. Governor Polis has charged CDOT to further build on the state's intermodal mobility options.