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CDOT Begins Traffic Signal Safety Improvements Today on US 160/US 550 Through Durango

*Some single-lane closures at major intersections through town,
most work done at night to minimize impacts*

DURANGO – The Colorado Department of Transportation begins a traffic signal improvement project today, Tuesday, October 18, on US 550 through the city limits. The project adds left-turn arrows at all intersections on US 160/US 550 through Durango starting at US 160 and SH 172 east of town and progressing west then north along Main Avenue (US 550) to 32nd Street (the signal at Animas View drive, or the 3800 block, is already equipped with a protected left-turn arrow.)

Through the project's completion on November 18, work will consist of adding and/or replacing left-turn arrow traffic signal heads, changing pavement markings at some locations, making curb and gutter improvements at some locations, upgrading curb ramps at College Drive and altering the median island at Dominguez Drive on the east side (at New Country Auto). Also included will be minor concrete installation work and asphalt patching.

Specifically, the project will install "left-turn only," or "protected" left-turn arrows at the intersections, which will be in use during peak daytime hours. At night, during periods of lower traffic volumes, the arrows at these intersections will indicate "permissive" left turns. Motorists will experience the following:

DAYTIME PROTECTED LEFT TURNS: A solid green arrow indicates a "protected left turn," meaning motorists can turn left while oncoming traffic is stopped. Then, that arrow goes to a solid yellow, as the protected left-turn time is running out, then to a solid red arrow, indicating that no left turns are permitted.

NIGHTTIME PERMISSIVE LEFT TURNS: During off-peak hours (which will vary with time of week and time of year) motorists will encounter a flashing yellow arrow, indicating the motorist is permitted to turn left when it is safe to do so (through traffic will have the right of way). Then the arrow will turn solid red, indicating the motorist may NOT turn left.

"Because the left-turn flashing arrows operate with different controls, the signal timing system through town will be operating manually until all of the signals are converted," CDOT Project

Engineer David Pickren said . “Until the project is complete, the signal timing system will not perform as well as it had been. We are asking motorists to please be patient during this transition period.”

After the signal work is complete, CDOT will implement an updated signal timing program that will improve the traffic flow along the US 160/US 550 corridor.

Crews will work mostly at night, starting at 6 p.m. and finishing well before the morning rush hour (exception will be some daytime side-street striping in November).

TRAFFIC IMPACTS and work details at specific intersections:

- **DOMINGUEZ DRIVE:** Crews are currently working at the Dominguez Drive intersection. The inside westbound left-turn lane will be closed for approximately two weeks for concrete median work. The outside left turn/through-lane will remain open for westbound movements. The purpose of this median removal and additional restriping at this location is to enable simultaneous left turns from opposing directions—this will decrease signal cycle time and greatly improve traffic flow. (Currently, left-turn movements operate on a “split phase,” during which time traffic from only one direction can make left turns.) The work at Dominguez will likely wrap up November 18, the project’s completion date.
- **NIGHT WORK:** While work continues at Dominguez, crews will also continue operations to the north at each intersection, with majority of the work being performed at night after 6 p.m., to minimize impacts to motorists and businesses. Motorists can expect single-lane closures and minor delays at affected intersections, though intersections will remain open and operational.
- **DAY WORK:** Some daytime, weekday work may include pavement markings on side streets, due to cold temperatures in November. Motorists can also expect some short-term left-turn lane closures on US 160/US 550 at minor intersections.
- **COLLEGE DRIVE:** Expect sidewalk closures for up to two weeks at College Drive and Camino del Rio (US 550). When work is complete, only the north side of the intersection will allow pedestrian movements—this will increase both safety and traffic flow at this busy intersection.
- **32nd STREET:** The westbound inside lane (from City Market) will be for left-turn movements only; the outside lane will be restriped for through/left/right-turn movements.

The project was contracted to Technology Constructors for \$587,100.

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