

# The Trinidad News

## Girder work to continue on I-25

**By Randy Woock**  
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The Colorado Department of Transportation's I-25 Trinidad Project is approaching the final stretch of phase two.

CDOT Project Engineer Lowell Lester addressed Trinidad's city council last Tuesday about the project's recently completed work and what else to expect soon.

In December, CDOT's main contractor on the project, Lawrence Construction, completed laying the brickwork on Commercial Street by the I-25 North on-ramp. It also installed eight more bridge girders for the I-25 overpass between Nevada Avenue and University Street, and began structural work on the girders that it is still currently conducting. "Most of the stuff they did was up in the air and in the girders," Lester said.

Also, subcontractor Castle Rock Construction continued paving the mainline of I-25 and completed the off-ramp at Main Street.

In February, Lawrence Construction plans to continue the structural work on the girders, installing deck panels and preparing for the drop girders located directly over the railroad tracks. "They hope to do that (the drop girders) in the last week of February or the first weeks of March," Lester said.

Other upcoming aspects of the I-25 Project include beginning the paving of the both shoulders alongside the Interstate. More work on storm drains along I-25 is also planned for the coming spring, as well as more retaining walls. Underground work for the laying of conduits for streetlights is also expected in the near future.

"They still plan to be done (with phase two of the project) by July," Lester said. "So, we'll be seeing a lot more (in) March, April and May."

The I-25 Trinidad Project is divided into phases. Phase one, begun in 2003, concerned an extension of Highway 12 that involved a bridge over the Purgatory River and was completed in the summer of 2004. Phase two of the I-25 Trinidad Project, currently ongoing, is scheduled for completion in July.

The main focus of phase two is the replacement of I-25 from Van Buren St. up to Goddard Ave. CDOT also plans to reconstruct the old I-25 viaduct, build bridges over Main St. and Commercial St. and construct on-ramps and off-ramps at both of those streets.

Phase three of the project is currently planned to begin mid-2009 and finish in 2011. The I-25 Project was one of the projects named by CDOT as a "shovel-ready" recipient of federal stimulus funds at a meeting last month in Pueblo, should a federal stimulus package be approved in the U.S. Senate as it was last week in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The total amount of the \$819 billion stimulus package to be directed to Colorado is still unknown. Colorado's share has been estimated as around \$600 million-\$1 billion. It is also currently unknown what amount of that would be directed toward transportation infrastructure projects like the I-25 Trinidad Project.