

TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION

WINTER 2007

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PPRTA updates	2/3
Top 25 accident-prone intersections	4
FREX changes/School legends	5
ITS expands	6

WINTER WEATHER STRETCHES CITY RESOURCES

Snowstorm after snowstorm mixed with pothole-producing freeze-thaw cycles have stretched the City's Street Division resources.

Multi-day storms reduced visibility and made driving conditions hazardous to the point of closing schools, roads, places of work and transit services between Dec. 20 and Dec. 26. Up to two feet of snow fell in the first storm, followed a week later by another foot of snow in some areas and lighter snowfalls in the weeks that followed. As a result, the Streets Division received more than 6,500 citizen service requests between Dec. 20 and Dec. 31.

Teamwork put a total of 62 City vehicles on the streets removing snow. Forty Street Division plows and eight pickup trucks and blades, 12 Parks Division heavy pickup trucks with blades and two pieces of heavy snow removal equipment brought down from the Pikes Peak Highway worked together to clear streets.

When not shoveling snow or breaking ice, the crews have been filling potholes. The months of freeze-thaw weather cycles have damaged Colorado Springs roads to the point where potholes are popping up across the city.



During just the two December storms, snow removal vehicles drove a distance almost equivalent to traveling around the world twice – 47,982 miles.

Potholes are created when winter weather patterns feature constant freeze-thaw temperature shifts. Moisture seeping into

cracks in the surface of a road freezes and expands. When the ice thaws, that space is left damaged and traffic driving over the spot causes the asphalt to crack and fail.

To tackle the issue, the Street Division assigned 12 separate crews to work from sunrise to sundown filling potholes with cold and hot asphalt mix. The City also hired private contractors to assist on major arterial roadways.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2006, the City Streets Division filled 18,115 potholes. In January alone, they filled 4,320.

SNOWSTORM COSTS* DEC. 20 TO JAN. 16

Materials	\$231,049
Overtime	\$297,668
Equipment (Fleet)	\$176,338
Contractors	\$65,871
Total	\$770,926*

*Not including Utilities, PPRTA, Traffic Engineering, and Parks and Recreation expenditures to date.



CITY/PPRTA CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES

The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) is the result of the region's joint need for revenue to fund transportation capital projects and maintenance. In November of 2004, voters approved a county-wide one-cent sales and use tax increase to fund PPRTA projects. Since collection began on Jan. 1, 2005, the City of Colorado Springs has used this revenue to begin making transportation and maintenance improvements throughout the community. Here's an update on some of those projects.

Improvements to Academy Boulevard are taking place at both Pikes Peak and Fountain (pictured) intersections. Among other improvements, both locations will benefit from widening, additional turn lanes, signal retiming and pedestrian ramp improvements. This project is currently on time for its Spring 2007 completion and within its \$1.85 million budget.

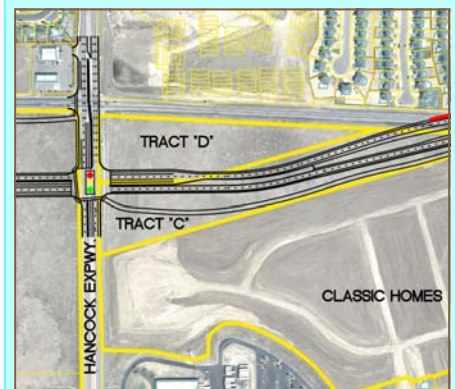


Improvements to the Fillmore Street and Union Boulevard intersection, currently under construction, will improve traffic flow and safety by adding through lanes, turn lanes, new traffic signals and a new storm drainage system. Improvements also include the City's first triple left turn lane. This \$2.602 million project should be completed this spring.



Eleven miles of improvements planned for the Woodman Road corridor from I-25 to US-24 will improve traffic operations, plan for future traffic needs, and implement bike and trail plans. On Jan. 24, the project hosted an open house for feedback on construction and aesthetic options. The City's portion of Phase I is estimated to cost about \$40 million with construction expected to begin in 2008.

Construction on the Austin Bluffs Parkway interchange at Union Boulevard, to improve safety and traffic flow, began in January 2007. In addition to the interchange, the project includes new ramps and turn lanes to and from Austin Bluffs, pedestrian features on a new trail, an extended frontage road to serve the University and neighborhoods on the north side of Austin Bluffs, sidewalks, noise walls, landscaping, and stormwater drainage controls. This \$35.5 million project should be completed in late 2008.



To provide better East-West connections, the City and County are pursuing the creation of a new expressway, the Milton E. Proby Parkway. Through stakeholder input and study, the project team has come to a preferred alignment. Construction on Phase I is expected to begin in 2010 with an anticipated cost of \$51.5 million.

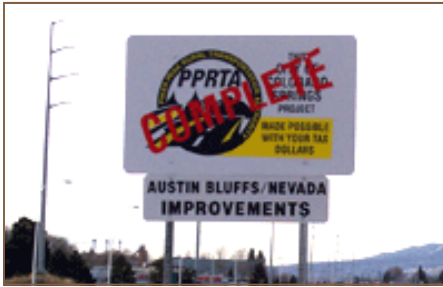


Improvements to Union Boulevard between Pikes Peak and Constitution avenues include rebuilding deteriorating curb and gutter and resurfacing the road. When finished, improvements will mean better pedestrian access and a reduction in traffic congestion. The just over \$3 million project is in budget and final resurfacing should conclude this summer.

More information on these projects and others can be found on the City's Web site, www.SpringsGov.com. Click on "Transportation Education."



FIRST COMPLETED PPRTA PROJECT



Once construction ended in December 2006, a project to make improvements to the Austin Bluffs Parkway and Nevada Avenue intersection became the City's first Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority funded finished project.

The changes, designed to reduce congestion and improve safety, included additional turn lanes, acceleration lanes, and a new traffic signal. The project came in under budget and on time.

PPRTA SMALL PROJECTS DESERVE BIG APPLAUSE TOO

In 2006, approximately \$2 million was allocated to fund Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA) small projects in Colorado Springs, such as traffic signal construction, roundabout modifications, or adding auxiliary traffic lanes. The goal is to fund improvements with the greatest benefit to the traveling public for the least cost.

The City has many small projects planned for 2007. An example of a project begun in 2006 but wrapping up in 2007, is a northbound right turn lane on Academy Boulevard at

Jamboree Drive. The new lane will allow better access to commercial shopping areas and help maximize vehicle capacity.

Another 2007 small project example are improvements at Cresta Road and Parkview Boulevard to address neighborhood and school zone concerns. The City will install handicap ramps and extend sidewalks for pedestrians safety.

Smaller PPRTA projects may not have the same prominence as larger projects, but they too are providing residents with safer, more efficient means of travel.

Safety improvements on Dublin Boulevard to address neighborhood concerns about traffic and pedestrian access were also part of the 2006 PPRTA small projects program. This project lowered Dublin Boulevard medians near the entrance to Cottonwood Park to provide better sight distance for drivers exiting the park. Since the improvements, vehicle drivers and pedestrians report feeling more comfortable entering and exiting the park.



During Construction



After Construction



During Construction



After Construction

In 2006, a PPRTA-funded small project allowed modifications to a concrete drainage crosspan on Pikes Peak Avenue at Hayman Terrace. This drainage pan created an unintentional speed dip for 25,000 daily motorists, requiring vehicles to slow down to five miles per hour. Grade improvements to raise the dip now mean motorists can travel at the speed limit.

2006 TOP 25 ACCIDENT-PRONE STREET INTERSECTIONS

Colorado Springs' top 25 accident-prone intersections saw lower accident rates last year than they had in 2005.

Each year, the Police Department rates the City's accident-prone intersections based on traffic volume, the number of accidents and accident severity. While traffic enforcement and engineering improvements occur on an ongoing basis, the top 25 accident-prone intersection list is an important tool because it allows the City to:

- Complete a more comprehensive analysis on these locations to examine which accidents were due to random driver error (e.g. drunk driving, falling asleep, or being distracted) or if conditions exist where actions by the City can enhance safety with targeted law enforcement, education or design changes.

- Generate public awareness so drivers pay particular attention at these locations.
- Increase law enforcement at these locations.

On 2005's list the top accident-prone intersection rated 4.85, while in 2006, the top rate was 4.17. The trend for fewer and less severe accidents continued all the way down the list. 2005's last slot rated 2.75 while the 2006 last slot rated 1.97.

Fifteen of the 2005 locations had lower accident rates, moving them off this year's list entirely. All of last year's top 25 accident-prone intersections were heavily monitored by law enforcement and five of those locations had engineering improvements made to them. Random fluctuations in the list also occur naturally.

The City's Police Department and Traffic Engineering Division staff often work closely to improve public safety on traffic issues. They plan to improve traffic safety in Colorado Springs by continuing to: monitor the most accident-prone intersections, enforce traffic laws, educate the public, pursue grants to fund improvements, and by launching a new programs such as replacing regular traffic signal light bulbs, as they burn down, with brighter LED light bulbs.



The Austin Bluffs Parkway and Union Boulevard intersection is a high accident-prone location. A major capital project is now under way to reduce these traffic concerns (see page 2).

STREET INTERSECTION AND 2006 ACCIDENT RATES

1. N. Powers Boulevard/Old Ranch Road	4.17	14. Airport Road/S. Murray Boulevard	2.57
2. S. 21st Street/W. Cimarron Street	3.83	15. E. Platte Avenue/N. Wahsatch Avenue	2.45
3. Centennial Boulevard/W. Fillmore Street	3.70	16. Dublin Boulevard/N. Academy Boulevard*	2.36
4. Briargate Parkway/N. Powers Boulevard	3.58	17. E. Fountain Boulevard/S. Academy Boulevard**	2.31
5. Highway 83/N. Powers Boulevard	3.10	18. E. Fountain Boulevard/S. Murray Boulevard	2.27
6. Austin Bluffs Parkway/N. Union Boulevard*	2.95	19. Airport Road/S. Powers Boulevard*	2.25
7. Airport Road/S. Academy Boulevard**	2.94	20. Constitution Avenue/N. Circle Drive**	2.14
8. Dublin Boulevard/N. Powers Boulevard	2.83	21. E. Woodman Road/N. Union Boulevard**	2.10
9. S. 26th Street/ W. Highway 24	2.82	22. N. Academy Boulevard/Palmer Park Boulevard	2.06
10. Barnes Road/N. Powers Boulevard	2.81	23. Galley Road/N. Murray Boulevard	2.05
11. N. Union Boulevard/Vickers Drive	2.76	24. Academy Park Loop/S. Academy Boulevard**	2.03
12. Maizeland Road/N. Academy Boulevard	2.74	25. Flintridge Drive/N. Academy Boulevard	1.97
13. E. Platte Avenue/N. Nevada Avenue	2.62		

*Planned project to be funded by the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority.

**Planned project to be funded by a Hazard Elimination and Safety grant.

FREX SERVICE WILL CONTINUE IN 2007

In fall 2004, the FrontRange Express (FREX) began transporting movers, shakers, and sleepers up and down the I-25 corridor. Every weekday FREX buses complete 18 round trips and every month they carry an average of 13,000 riders.

As a demonstration project, FREX has shown that a Front Range commuter service was needed, that it would be used, and that it has made a difference reducing congestion and improving air quality. But the grant that funded the first two and a half years of operation has ended.

To help recover some of the operating costs of existing FREX service, fares were increased in February by \$1 on most routes. Costs for fuel and operations have increased and FREX fares had to adjust. A recent study showed 84 percent of FREX passengers said they would support a fare increase to fund continued service.

Now, in addition to continued service, FREX riders have other great things to look forward to.

The Colorado Department of Transportation has awarded \$7.9



Movers. Shakers. Sleepers.

The new bus exterior graphics will feature updated, brighter versions of the design currently featured on FREX buses.

million to FREX to purchase 19 new suburban coach buses, arriving in summer 2007, to replace and expand the existing fleet. The new buses will have high-back reclining seats, overhead luggage racks, individual reading lights, and individual air vents.

DRIVING HOME SCHOOL ZONES

All schools have marked crosswalks, but a program in the City of Colorado Springs' Traffic Engineering Division is taking safety one step further.

Now, they are imbedding the word "school" in the roadway in 8-foot tall letters to let drivers know they're approaching a middle or elementary school zone. Twenty of these markings, called legends, were marked at seven schools last summer with plans to do the remaining 88 elementary and middle schools in the city over the next three years.

However, on Oct. 9, 2006, Council asked staff to speed up plans to slow down drivers in school zones by looking for ways to fund the \$300,000 needed to make improvements sooner.

Thanks to funding from the Pikes



"School" legends warn approaching drivers that they are about to enter a school zone and that elementary or middle school children may be in the area.

Peak Regional Transportation Authority, the City will be able to install all remaining school legends in 2007. The additional funding allowed the purchase of a thermoplastic marking machine that applies 1/16 inch-thick markings more quickly than previous methods,

allowing city workers to install more than 20 legends per day when surface temperatures are above freezing.

After funding was approved, the City went on to complete 135 school legends in 2006 with another 1,090 legends in the works for 2007.

CITY INTELLEGEN T TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM EXPANDS

Next time you watch a morning news traffic report, notice the live views of road locations often displayed. Those live traffic shots are provided to local television stations as a public service by the City’s Traffic Management Center.

Drivers can access the same live road views by watching SpringsTV, Channel 18, on weekdays from 7 to 9 a.m., noon to 1 p.m., or 4 to 6 p.m. Or, they can go to the City’s Web site, www.SpringsGov.com, and click

on “Traffic Cameras” for snapshot views updated every five minutes.

By monitoring traffic in key locations, the City is better able to manage congestion, check signal timing, check signal coordination, and assist with route information in the event of a major emergency.

To provide even better traffic information, the City is installing an additional 22 cameras throughout Colorado Springs over the next several months, bringing the total number up to 41.



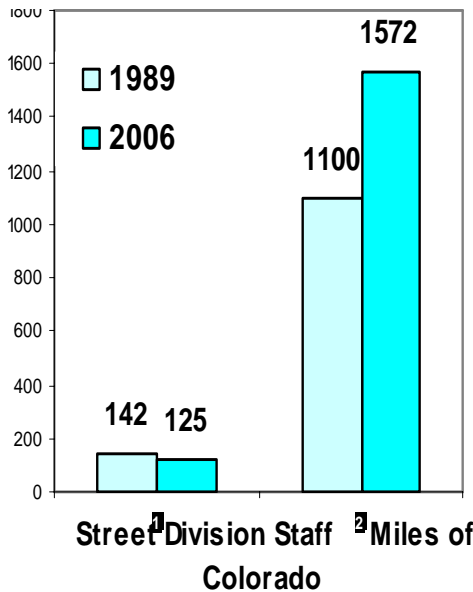
Traffic Management Center cameras allow the public and City staff to monitor traffic flow.

WINTER WEATHER STRETCHES CITY RESOURCES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Between Jan. 1 and Feb. 16, the City received more than 1,066 citizen service requests for pothole assistance. In that same time frame, the City filled 7,469 potholes. Despite this high volume, the Street Division has been able to maintain its 72-hour pothole response goal.

As of Feb. 12, the City already made several changes for improved response to snow and ice removal:

- A communications system allowing direct communication between the Street Division and assisting Parks and Recreation and Utilities vehicles.
- Increasing the number of available contractors for emergency operations.
- Improving the City’s capacity to take citizen reports by integrating administrative help from other divisions.



In 1989, the City had 142 staff in the Streets Division responsible for 1,100 street miles. In 2006, the City had 125 staff responsible for 1,572 street miles.

- Modifications to the City’s stormwater permit to allow higher concentrations of salt in traction and de-icing materials.

The City is also pursuing additional snow storage sites,

designated snow routes where no parking would be allowed during snow storms, a prioritized grid response system, expanded use of City vehicles, development of a winter operations command center, satellite storage locations and the possible addition of a northern streets facility.

The past mild winters have allowed the Street Division to perform with decreasing resources, but this year a budget appropriation is needed to cover the cost of these, and any additional, winter storms. According to Mayor Rivera, City Council will have to weigh funding response improvements against other City services as part of the 2008 budget process.

IMPORTANT WINTER NUMBERS
Pothole Hotline 385-6808
Automated Snow Hotline . . 457-7669