



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EASTBOUND I-70 RE-OPENED 17 HOURS EARLIER THAN ANTICIPATED

Lakewood, October 25, 2009 – Denver Transit Construction Group (DTCG), the West Corridor Light Rail construction contractor, completed work on eastbound I-70 17 hours ahead of schedule in anticipation of the storm front moving into the area. By ramping up operations overnight, DTCG’s subcontractor, Lawrence Construction, was able to reopen the highway by 10:30 a.m. this morning; minimizing the impact on traveling motorists as they made their way back into the Denver area this afternoon and evening.

All lanes of eastbound Interstate 70 between the 6th Avenue and Colfax Avenue exits closed at 8:00 p.m. Friday night, Oct. 23, and were originally scheduled to open at 5:30 a.m. Monday morning, Oct. 26. With the impending storm blowing into the area, DTCG proactively mobilized additional crews late last night and ramped up construction activities. While an approaching snow storm could have posed significant challenges to the weekend operation, the anticipation of increment weather paved the way for accelerated construction and avoided compounding impacts of weather and construction on motorists. Had crews not completed early, the contractor was prepared to tent off the area and continue activities throughout the day and night.

The joint decision by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and Denver Transit Construction Group to fully close the highway for West Corridor construction is unprecedented. By implementing directional full closures on I-70, construction activities that could have continued for several months were reduced to a few months of nightly lane closures and two weekend directional full closures. This methodology will significantly minimize the impact to commuters traveling on I-70.

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I-70 CONSTRUCTION

DTCG is building a light rail tunnel under I-70 through a “top-down” method of construction. This weekend’s closure allowed crews to shore up the support system under I-70 so they could come back later and dig out the tunnel. Now that work on eastbound I-70 is completed, work on the westbound lanes will begin. Motorists can expect nightly lane closures on westbound I-70 until November 12th and a similar full westbound closure during the weekend of November 13th through November 16th. Once the westbound bridge supports are in place, crews will move off of I-70 for peak ski season traffic.

The 12.1-mile West Corridor light rail project is the first of the FasTracks corridors to start construction. The West Corridor line will operate between Denver Union Station in downtown Denver and the Jefferson County Government Center in Golden; serving Denver, Lakewood, the Denver Federal Center, Golden and Jefferson County. The corridor is scheduled to open to the public in 2013.

The FasTracks investment initiative is RTD’s voter-approved transit program to expand rail and bus service throughout the RTD service area. FasTracks will create six new rail corridors, extend three existing corridors, build 18 miles of bus rapid transit service, add 21,000 new parking spaces, redevelop Denver Union Station and redirect bus service to better connect the eight-county District.

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