

# Central City Business Improvement District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Meghan Dougherty  
720-560-0177  
Lindsey Zimmerman  
303-860-1040

## **CENTRAL CITY HIGHWAY TO PROVIDE VISITORS A QUICK, EASY AND SCENIC TRIP TO HISTORIC MOUNTAIN TOWNS**

### **Central City Business Improvement District Celebrates the Launch of *A 10-year Vision in the Making--the Central City Highway--at a Special Event***

October 3, 2003 (Central City, Colorado)—The narrow, twisting road to Central City is about to get a lot straighter and shorter. The Central City Business Improvement District (CCBID) celebrates today the construction start of the new \$38.3 million Central City highway. When finished next fall, the new four-lane road will provide a quick, easy and scenic transportation option for drivers traveling to Central City and other historic mountain communities.

Kicked off today at a celebration event, the CCBID is also launching a naming contest asking the community to help create a name for Colorado's next great highway, scheduled to open November 2004.

Central City's new highway is an 8.4-mile, four-lane highway that runs from Hidden Valley at I-70 Exit 243, straight into downtown Central City. The roadway has a total paved width of 64 feet that includes 8-foot wide shoulders on each side, with locations along the road for scenic pullouts. The maximum grade along the roadway is eight percent, which is similar to the grade on the eastbound frontage road to I-70 at Floyd Hill. Rock-catch ditches are being constructed to help prevent falling rock from bouncing onto the roadway and a south exposure of a majority of the road will accelerate snowmelt. The highway will be maintained and patrolled by Central City.

"Central City's vision for a new highway has been carefully nurtured and sustained by local businesses for the past 10 years," said Joe Behm, chairman of the Central City Business Improvement District. "It was important for us to take the time to create a superior highway without burdening the taxpayers with the cost of paying for it. It was worth the wait." The highway bonds will be repaid by taxes collected within the Central City Business Improvement District.

Estimated to take only 12 minutes from its I-70 exit into Central City during good weather, the new Central City highway has been designed to accommodate every type of visitor to the area. In

addition to providing a modern, quick road for gaming patrons, the highway will also be a scenic route for tourists and skiers to travel to the local mountain communities. Scenic viewpoints allow for visitors to the area to see wildlife, such as bighorn sheep and mule deer, as well as to enjoy views of the mountain meadows and hillsides along the way, including a number of old abandoned gold mines.

Once visitors arrive at Central City, they can enjoy many historic sites, such as the Central City Opera house, built in 1878, the Gilpin History Museum or an original schoolhouse built in 1870.

“While Central City has had a resurgence of development as a gaming town, it still retains the historic charm of its mining roots, with many historic sites worth visiting. The preservation of historic mining districts and towns was the reason that voters passed the limited gaming law in the first place,” said Buddy Schmalz, mayor of Central City. “Central City has done a great job of historic preservation and our new road will make it an easy, relaxing trip for people to enjoy the beauty, culture and history of the great mining era in Colorado,” he said.

The Central City highway is the result of a collaborative effort that includes local and regional government agencies, local businesses and private landowners. Although a private road, The Central City highway is being constructed to meet or exceed Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) standards and has approval for connection to the I-70 Hidden Valley interchange. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Central City, Clear Creek County and Idaho Springs has been put in place to address the criteria for future development along the Central City highway corridor.

The road is being constructed by the design/build team of Ames Construction and HNTB Companies. Past Ames Construction projects include the initial construction at DIA, the DIA taxiways, Highway 285 improvements as well as many other highway, railroad and airport construction projects across the country. HNTB may be best known in Colorado for its engineering of I-70 through Glenwood Canyon. In addition, the engineering consulting firm of Sellards & Grigg is providing construction administration and oversight. Sellards & Grigg is a local engineering and land surveying firm that has provided consulting engineer services to municipal, state and federal clients over the past 36 years. For more information on the new highway or to submit entries for the CCBID’s “Name the Highway” contest, visit [www.centralcityhighway.com](http://www.centralcityhighway.com)