

Innovation on the I-70/79 South Junction Project in Washington County

by **Charles J. Niederriter**, Chief Operating Officer, Golden Triangle Construction Co. Inc.

Golden Triangle Construction Co. was the low bidder on a \$35-million project in the fall of 2011 to modernize and reconstruct the south junction of Interstate 70/79 in Washington County. The primary purpose of the three-year-long project was to construct a large fly-over bridge and new ramp system. The project would eliminate the severely curved ramp connecting I-79 northbound to I-70 westbound, which over the past 50 years had resulted in a tremendous amount of accidents. While this new design is definitely an innovative approach to solving an

unsafe condition, the purpose of this article is to focus on an innovative idea and a beneficial change that occurred during construction on another aspect of the project.

The final phase of the project included rebuilding the superstructures of both the eastbound and westbound I-70 overpass structures. With the recent emphasis on innovation and making the best possible use of transportation dollars, the idea of reconstructing two, four-span bridges that ultimately only need to span a single ramp from I-70 westbound to I-79 southbound seemed like a good opportunity for an innovative solution. This became even more apparent upon considering the methodology required to reconstruct the overpass structures. Since I-70 is such a highly

