

Roundabouts

Roundabouts have their naysayers, particularly citizens who don't want to slow down however, that's what they are designed to do.

The town of Goffstown recently installed one. It's working well but the public still has not accepted it. The NHDOT installed a roundabout in Keene and is pleased with the results.

What's a Roundabout?

A modern roundabout has two main traffic-controls, each with its own benefit: yield at entry (gives traffic in the circle the right-of-way), causes traffic to slow down, and flare, provides increased capacity. They measure 70-160 ft.

What's Not a roundabout?

People often confuse traffic circles with roundabouts. Unlike roundabouts, traffic circles require a full stop before entry and have a much larger diameter of 300-400 ft. to enable higher speeds.

Considerations

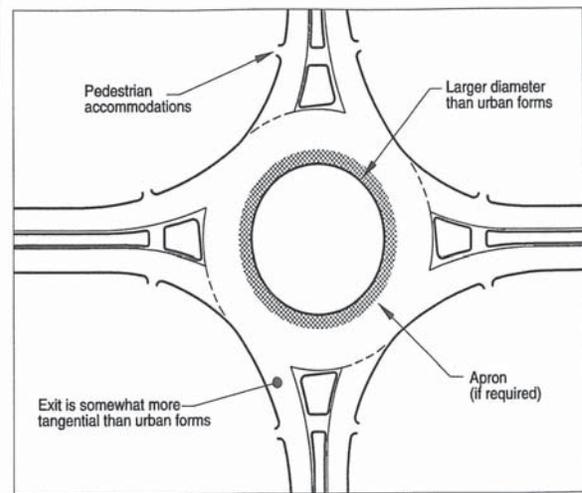
When considering installing a roundabout, consider these factors.

Safety. There are 32 conflict points in a single-lane intersection. When a roundabout is used, the number drops to eight with a 75% drop in accident risk. The roadway curvature of the roundabout reduces speed, which provides drivers with more time to make decisions and lessens impact severity.

Pedestrians are better protected. The space between splitter islands and entrances allows them to pause while crossing the street.

Low cost. Roundabouts don't require any poles, timers, etc... normally required in an signalized intersection. Drivers have no question about who has the right-of-way in power outages at these intersections.

The average cost of a traffic light at an intersection is \$120,000 to \$250,000 and expensive electrical maintenance costs follow. Construction costs with roundabouts varies but the average cost of a single-



lane roundabout is around \$250,000, not counting the land acquisition. The maintenance costs are considerably less than with traffic lights.

Other benefits

Installing a roundabouts are environmentally friendly. Less pollution occurs due as there is a lack of traffic stopping and accelerating at lights. It also provides for greater capacity; since traffic is moving continually and the circle can hold more traffic at once. U-turns are much easier in curves and the islands allow for aesthetic creativity with landscaping.

Source:
KUTC Newsletter, Summer 2006, p 3-4



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