

The Roundabout – A City Traffic Engineer's Perspective

1. Roundabout – A. Where flexibility is allowed into the engineering field where there really are no strict design standards. B. A common sense approach to assigning right-of-way at an intersection.
2. They certainly have their place within the City for placement. We currently have 3 of them designed and constructed, and we have at least 4 of them platted and scheduled to be installed in developments that will be constructed in the next 2 years.
3. They are an excellent option to implement at intersections where meeting a traffic signal warrant is not likely to happen but does carry enough traffic and pedestrians to warrant something more than a 2-way/4-way stop.
4. I like that they force the driver to slow down and be made more aware of his/her surroundings. A serious crash is much less likely to occur because of the exposure each driver has at the intersection.
5. Arterial/Collector or collector/collector street intersections are perfect candidates for roundabouts, as are oddly configured intersections.
6. They add to the scenery much more than a standard 4-way stop intersection or a traffic signal would.
7. They are all about efficiency. They allow the vehicle to remain in motion at an intersection vs. having to make an unnatural motion by stopping at an arbitrary stop sign.
8. They add to pedestrian safety by reducing the effective roadway width that they need to cross.
9. They not only reduce the number of emissions that a standard intersection would create, they require little to no annual maintenance as well.
10. They are an important “new” accepted tool that allows traffic engineers added flexibility in their design of intersections around the city. They are one more tool in the toolbox.