



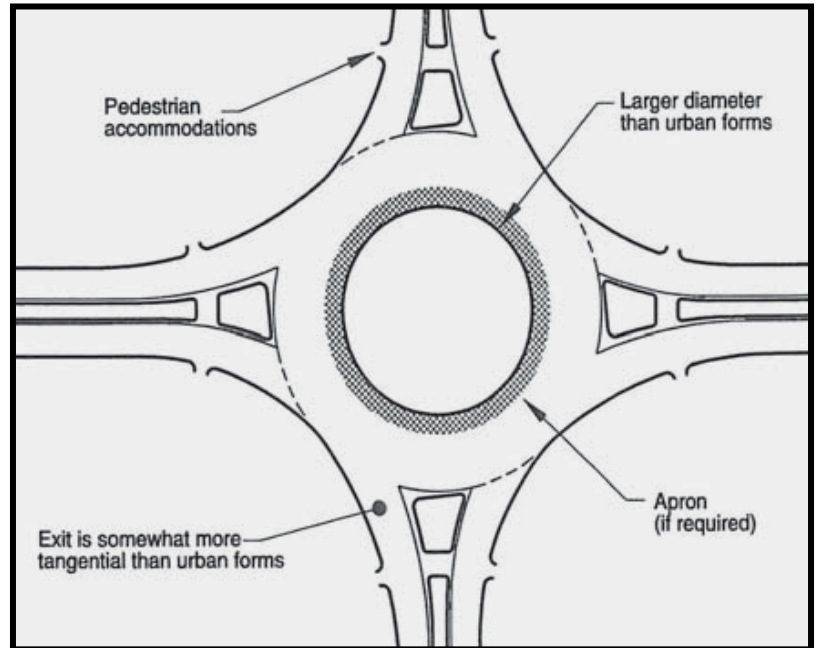
ROUNDABOUTS

Roundabouts have their naysayers, particularly citizens who do not want to slow down; however, that is what they are designed to do.

The town of Goffstown, New Hampshire recently installed one, and it is working well but the public still has not accepted it. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) installed a roundabout in the City of Keene and is pleased with the results.

What Is 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, which provides increased capacity. They measure 70-160 ft.



What Is 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 (8) with a 75% drop in collision 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 do not require any poles, timers, etc., which are required at signalized intersections, and drivers have no question about who has the right-of-way during power outages at these roundabout intersections.

The average cost of a traffic signal at an intersection is \$120,000 to \$250,000 and expensive electrical maintenance costs follow. Construction costs with roundabouts vary, but the average cost of a single-lane roundabout is approximately \$250,000, not counting the land acquisition. The maintenance costs are considerably less than with traffic signals.

Other Benefits

Installing roundabouts are environmentally friendly. Less pollution occurs due to the lack of traffic stopping and accelerating at traffic signals. 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.