

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING A ROUNABOUT

*Roundabouts are different than traditional intersections and require some different driving techniques. Here are the steps to follow as you navigate a roundabout:*

- 1. Slow down as you approach the roundabout** — 15-25 miles per hour is usually about right for driving in the roundabout, depending on its size.
- 2. Pick your lane.** Look for the lane-use signs as you approach the roundabout, choose your lane before entering the roundabout and stay in it until you exit the roundabout.
- 3. Yield.** When approaching the roundabout, always yield to pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles in all lanes (the yield sign will show you where to yield).
- 4. Look left.** Vehicles in the roundabout have the right of way. If there is no traffic in the roundabout, don't stop. If traffic is present, wait for an opening and then enter.
- 5. Give way to large vehicles.** Allow large vehicles the extra turning radius needed to navigate the roundabout. Never pass or drive next to a large vehicle in the roundabout. If you see an emergency vehicle coming, exit the roundabout; don't pull over in the roundabout.

## WHAT IS RCOC?

The Road Commission for Oakland County maintains Michigan's largest county road system, with more than 2,700 miles of public roads (including more than 700 miles of gravel roads). Only the state highway system is larger.

RCOC also maintains:

- ◆ Approximately 90 bridges,
- ◆ Approximately 1,500 traffic signals,
- ◆ Approximately 150,000 traffic signs and
- ◆ More than 230 miles of state highway.

## SAFETY FIRST

As a matter of policy, major road improvement projects are conducted by the Road Commission based on a safety ranking system. At RCOC "Safety First" is more than a motto.

## RCOC:

- ▶ Is separate from county general government and receives no direct revenue from property taxes.
- ▶ Receives the majority of its funding from the state and federal fuel taxes and the state vehicle registration fee.
- ▶ Has congested roads due to the tremendous growth in the county in past decades.
- ▶ Receives no direct revenue from economic growth and development.
- ▶ Pays \$1.5 million or more to pave a mile of gravel road.
- ▶ Pays \$6.5 million or more to widen one mile of road from two lanes to five.
- ▶ Is located in a state with a gas tax below the national average.
- ▶ Is located in a state that ranks in the bottom nine states in per capita state and local road funding -- and has for nearly 50 years.

**ROAD COMMISSION**  
for OAKLAND COUNTY

31001 Lahser Road • Beverly Hills • MI • 48025

## BOARD OF ROAD COMMISSIONERS

**RONALD J. FOWKES**

**GREGORY C. JAMIAN**

**ERIC S. WILSON**

**Dennis G. Kolar, PE**  
*Managing Director*

**Gary Piotrowicz, PE, PTOE**  
*Deputy Managing Director*  
*County Highway Engineer*

### RCOC MISSION STATEMENT

RCOC strives to provide the public with leadership in:

- Safe and convenient roads
- Sound financial management
- Responsive and dependable service
- Respect for the environment
- Sensitivity to community concerns

## HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE ROAD COMMISSION?

### CALL, WRITE OR VISIT:

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES  
2420 PONTIAC LAKE ROAD  
WATERFORD, MI 48328  
**(877) 858-4804**

TDD: (248) 645-9923

OR, visit RCOC online at

**[www.rcocweb.org](http://www.rcocweb.org)**

Updated 04/12

**ROAD COMMISSION**  
for OAKLAND COUNTY

# MODERN ROUNABOUTS



*The intersection of Maple and Drake roads in West Bloomfield Township.*

## A NEW INTERSECTION DESIGN THAT IS:

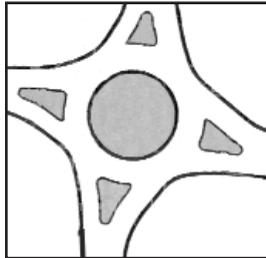
- ▶ **IMPROVING SAFETY**
- ▶ **ADDING CAPACITY**
- ▶ **ENHANCING AESTHETICS**

# ROUNDABOUTS

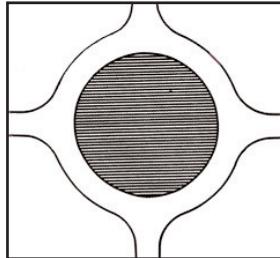
The modern roundabout, a relatively new form of circular intersection, is an alternative to traditional signalized intersections. It was developed by traffic engineers in England, who, after a substantial amount of research, concluded that the roundabout is the safest, most efficient design for many intersections.

## ROUNDABOUTS ARE NOT TRAFFIC CIRCLES

Modern roundabouts are not the same as the traditional traffic circles that were built around the U.S. in the first two thirds of the 20th century. In fact, there are some significant differences:



*A modern roundabout*



*A traditional traffic circle*

- ▶ In many traditional traffic circles, before entering the circle, traffic must come to a complete stop then make a 90-degree turn into the circle. In a roundabout, traffic merges into the circle at a much lesser angle — vehicles do not have to come to a full stop at the circle, but simply yield and merge into traffic.
- ▶ Roundabouts are generally much smaller than traffic circles, which reduces vehicle speed within the circle, thus reducing the likelihood of accidents.

## ROUNDABOUTS IMPROVE SAFETY

Studies\* indicate intersections converted from traffic signals to roundabouts result in:

- 90% fewer traffic fatalities
- 75% fewer injury crashes
- 37% fewer crashes

The crashes that do occur tend to be much less serious and rarely fatal, because they are typically low-speed sideswipes and rear-end collisions, rather than the head-on, left-turn and high-speed broadside collisions that occur at signalized intersections.

\*Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's "Status Report Vol. 40, No. 9."

## INCREASE ROAD CAPACITY 30-50%

- Continuous travel through the intersection, at a reduced speed, actually gets you there sooner than the stop and go of a traditional signalized intersection.
- Roundabouts at the intersections of two-lane roads can allow the two-lane roads to carry additional capacity, in some cases nearly as many cars as a four-lane road with signals.

## POPULAR WITH DRIVERS

Numerous studies nationwide have demonstrated that drivers like roundabouts. That has been the case locally as well.



*The roundabout at the intersection of Maple and Drake roads in West Bloomfield Township.*

A 2010 survey conducted by West Bloomfield Township reported that 66 percent of respondents were in favor of constructing additional roundabouts in the future.

## ROUNDABOUTS OFFER IMPROVED AESTHETICS

- Most people think roundabouts look nicer than signals.
- Opinion surveys in Maryland, Colorado and Vermont found that 80-90% of area residents liked their new roundabouts.
- The central island can provide space for landscaping.

## PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Crossing at a roundabout is generally easier for a pedestrian than at a traditional signalized intersection. This is because in a roundabout, the pedestrian is only crossing one direction of traffic at a time.

Pedestrians should use the appropriate pedestrian crossings and stay out of the

center island. Simply look for exiting or entering traffic and cross the exit or entrance lane to the "diverter" island which splits the entrance/exit lanes, and then continue across. These diverter islands provide safe havens where pedestrians can wait for traffic to clear.

In some instances, the Road Commission has provided pedestrian-crossing devices to aid all pedestrians.



## VIEW ROUNDABOUT VIDEO

To view RCO's video "Getting to Know Roundabouts," point your Web browser to [www.rcocweb.org](http://www.rcocweb.org), click on "Videos" in the "Quick Links" section and then select the "Getting to Know Roundabouts" link.