

ROUNABOUTS

ROUNABOUTS IMPROVE SAFETY

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

- 90% fewer traffic fatalities
- 75% fewer serious-injury 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* “Status Report Vol. 40, No. 9.”

INCREASED ROAD CAPACITY

- 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 traffic signals.

HAWK CROSSWALK BEACON

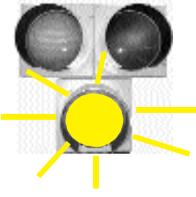
The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) is continuing to install a relatively new form of pedestrian crossing device known as the HAWK, or **H**igh-intensity **A**ctivated cross-**W**alk beacon. The HAWK is typically used at multi-lane roundabouts and mid-block pedestrian crossings of major roads.

WHAT IS THE HAWK?

The HAWK is a new form of pedestrian crosswalk beacon. It is referred to as a “beacon” rather than a “signal” because it is only lit when it is activated by a pedestrian pushing the crosswalk button. It has a different configuration than traditional signals, with two red lights next to each other above one yellow. There is no green light.

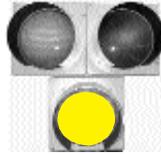
HOW DOES THE HAWK WORK?

When the pedestrian presses the button, approaching drivers will see the beacon **flashing yellow** for a few seconds, indicating they should reduce speed and be prepared to stop for a pedestrian in the crosswalk.



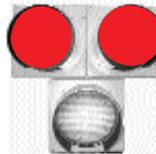
Flashing Yellow

The beacon will then change to a **solid yellow** light.



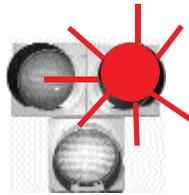
Solid Yellow

After the solid-yellow phase, the top two lights will turn **solid red**, indicating **drivers must stop**. When the beacon turns to **solid red**, the signal facing the pedestrians illuminates the **walk** symbol and emits a tone indicating to sight-impaired pedestrians that it is safe to cross.

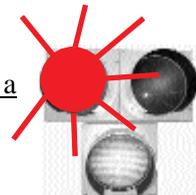


Solid Red

The signal then changes to a **flashing red**, and the pedestrian is shown a flashing **do not walk** symbol with a countdown timer.



Drivers are allowed to proceed during the flashing red **after coming to a complete stop** and making sure there is no danger to pedestrians.



Flashing Red

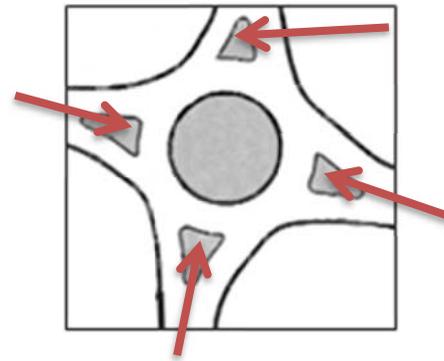
PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

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.

To cross at a roundabout, pedestrians should:

- Use the appropriate pedestrian crossing.
- **Stay out** of the center island.
- When traffic clears, cross the exit or entrance lane to the “diverter” island which separates the exit/entrance lanes.
- Continue across. These diverter islands provide safe havens where pedestrians can wait for traffic to clear.

The figure below indicates the diverter islands.



ROUNABOUTS OFFER IMPROVED AESTHETICS

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

BICYCLES IN A ROUNABOUT

Bicycles have the option to operate as either a motor vehicle (in a lane of the road) or a pedestrian (in the crosswalk). As a bicyclist approaches a roundabout, he or she should decide how to navigate through the roundabout.

- If proceeding as a motor vehicle, the bicyclist should move into the middle of the lane, operate as a motor vehicle would and obey the traffic laws. In addition, the bicyclist should indicate his or her route intentions through correct hand signals.
- If proceeding as a pedestrian, the bicyclist should exit the roadway, advance to the crosswalk, and follow proper procedures for pedestrian crossing.

POPULAR WITH DRIVERS

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

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



Baldwin/Indianwood/Coats Roundabout in Orion Twp.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING A ROUNDAABOUT

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.** 15-20 miles per hour is usually about the right speed for approaching and driving in a roundabout.
- 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 the roundabout.
- 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.
- 6. Emergency vehicles.** If you see an emergency vehicle coming, **exit the roundabout**; **do not pull over in the roundabout**.

WHAT IS RCOC?

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) maintains Michigan's largest county road system, with more than 2,700 miles of public roads (including more than 750 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
- ◆ More than 230 miles of state highway

SAFETY FIRST

As a matter of policy, major road improvements 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 \$2.5 million or more to pave a mile of gravel road.
- ▶ Pays \$8 million or more to widen one mile of road from two lanes to five.
- ▶ Is located in a state with a gas tax that was below the national average for decades.
- ▶ Is located in a state that ranks in the bottom nine states in per capita state and local road funding – and has for more than 50 years.

ROAD COMMISSION
for OAKLAND COUNTY
31001 Lahser Road • Beverly Hills • MI • 48025

**BOARD OF ROAD
COMMISSIONERS**
RONALD J. FOWKES
GREGORY C. JAMIAN
Andrea LaLonde

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

Updated 02/19

ROAD COMMISSION
for OAKLAND COUNTY

HOW TO USE A ROUNDAABOUT with HAWK Crosswalk Signals



Intersection of Maple and Drake roads, West Bloomfield

**A GUIDE TO THE USE OF
ROUNDAABOUTS FOR MOTORISTS,
PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS.**