



Roundabouts Enhance Public Safety, Economic Development, and Cost Savings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 21, 2023

CONTACT: Joe Pradetto
PHONE: (951) 275-1140
EMAIL: jpradetto@yucaipa.org

(Yucaipa, CA) – With the 5th Street roundabout under construction, people want to know: Why roundabouts? Nationwide, cities and counties are turning to roundabouts. Roundabouts help improve traffic flow and safety, save money, and improve economic activity.

The 5th Street roundabout will be Yucaipa's sixth roundabout. The City began building roundabouts after a 2013 study of intersection alternatives. Compared to traffic signals and four-way stops, the study found roundabouts outperformed.

“Roundabouts are an innovative transportation method that enhance public safety and provide a cost savings for our community,” said Mayor Justin Beaver. “Roundabouts allow for the City to improve traffic circulation and incentive economic development, while being wise with our community’s tax dollars.”

Safer and More Efficient

Drivers slow down to navigate roundabouts as a natural reaction to the more narrow, circular design. Slower speeds allow many cars to enter the intersection at the same time. Because more cars can use the intersection at the same time, roundabouts can process 30 to 50 percent more traffic. This data is according to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Despite handling more cars, roundabouts reduce the number and severity of collisions. Head-on and T-bone collisions are the most dangerous. Roundabouts force cars into a pattern that reduce the odds of fatal collisions. Installing a roundabout can reduce injury accidents by 76 percent and fatalities by 90 percent, according to the FHWA.

Pedestrians prefer roundabouts because of their more narrow, speed-reducing design. The narrower streets are easier to cross, and the slower car speeds are safer. Roundabouts lead to a 40 percent reduction in pedestrian injuries.

Business-friendly

Roundabouts are business-friendly. Local businesses report a rise in foot traffic following the construction of a roundabout. After the installation of a roundabout, business owners noticed pedestrians felt more comfortable. Pedestrians could cross the street with ease and walk to more businesses.

Business owners have shared stories of new patrons noticing their business. Once they slowed down, drivers started to notice businesses they hadn't before.

Cost Effective

Roundabouts are cheaper to construct compared to signaled intersections. There are a few reasons roundabouts are more cost effective.

Signaled intersections have a 25-year life expectancy and need regular maintenance. Roundabouts have less equipment. This makes them less expensive to build and cheaper to maintain. It also gives them a longer life expectancy.

A more significant benefit of roundabouts is that they require less right-of-way leading into the intersection. This means the city needs to acquire fewer properties. Right-of-way acquisition accounts for a significant part of a project's cost. To acquire right-of-way, the City must buy the necessary property from surrounding homeowners. If a homeowner is unwilling to sell, the City would have to pursue eminent domain.

Eminent domain is a course of last resort. The process of eminent domain forces a property owner to sell their property without their consent. Proceedings can be lengthy, expensive, and disruptive to the homeowner. Roundabouts help avoid and reduce the need for eminent domain, a win for the City and property owners.

For example, when the City began the County Line Road Corridor Project, it studied its options. The City chose to build a roundabout because it needed less right-of-way. This saved about \$2.7 million and reduced the impact on surrounding homeowners.

Construction on the 5th Street roundabout will begin March 23rd. Construction will last 8 to 12 weeks, weather dependent. For up-to-date information on the 5th Street roundabout project, you may visit www.clrproject.com.

###