



BURLINGTON ROAD AND ILLINOIS ROUTE 47 INTERSECTION PROJECT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Won't this intersection become just another Randall Road at Fabyan Parkway?

Illinois 47 currently carries approximately 8,000 vehicles per day. Randall Road carries 35,000 or more. Regional planning agencies have projected that, at most, Illinois 47 traffic will double by the year 2030. Doubling is significant – but that's still only 16,000 vehicles, less than half of Randall's current volume.

The County's 2007 Transportation Plan highlights potential locations for roundabouts and Illinois 47 is not one of them. It also states to avoid placing roundabouts in intersections with "heavy flow of traffic." Why the change in plans?

This intersection was not originally considered for a roundabout by the County. When the study of this intersection started, the preferred design was as a traffic signal. It was only after more than a year of analysis, design, and comments from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and other agencies that a traffic signal was found to be, at best, an imperfect solution. Here's why:

If we build a signal here, we have to develop a high-speed intersection that meets IDOT design standards. After all, when the light is green, vehicles will come through at 55 mph (or more!) Both Burlington and Illinois 47 would need to have right and left turn lanes. These turn lanes would need to be long enough to allow turning cars to get out of the through lane, slow down and turn safely. This translates into a 12-foot lane, 280 feet long, for all four of the left turns and all four of the right turns. Add that to the medians and the shoulders required for a high-speed rural roadway, and you end up with a lot of pavement (four rectangles, 560 feet long and 48-64 feet wide, not including ditches, tapers or the intersection itself).

Meanwhile, a roundabout at this location only needs a single lane, 18 feet wide (big enough for trucks) for each approach, and another 18-foot-wide lane for each departure. Plus, the inside of the roundabout will be grass or landscaping, not pavement. In the end, the cost to build a conventional intersection, including the turn lanes and the traffic signal itself, is perhaps \$1 million more than the cost of a roundabout at the same location.

The information that the County put out makes it clear that a roundabout SLOWS traffic. How will slowing traffic on Illinois 47 relieve the rush-hour congestion?

Roundabouts "calm" traffic by slowing vehicles down. At most intersections on Illinois 47, that is absolutely something we would NOT want to do. However, this intersection is already a four-way stop. There have been very few crashes at this intersection since the stop signs were installed, so we know that having cars slow down here isn't a safety hazard. However, the stop signs can't handle the traffic that's there right now and cause traffic jams every weekday. Putting in a roundabout would allow traffic to move through faster than it does today because most vehicles won't have to come to a full stop.



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How will a roundabout at this location impact the possibility for future development?

There are a number of reasons to think that roundabouts will be no worse than stoplights for development by local businesses. You can probably think of gas stations or shopping areas you don't use simply because they're on the wrong side of the intersection and they're too hard to get to. With a roundabout, you're not trying to cross three lanes of stopped traffic to get to the corner – because there are no turns across traffic. You can go any direction from one leg of a roundabout, so businesses might only need one driveway (not two or three) for access. That makes a new business cheaper to build and easier to get to.

I've never driven a roundabout and figure many others haven't driven one either. Why does the County want to install something unfamiliar to local drivers?

Roundabout design has changed a lot in recent decades. The old traffic circles on the East Coast and overseas are nothing like the new roundabouts being built today. Roundabouts have proven to significantly reduce the number of crashes and improve traffic flow where they're built. Wisconsin, in particular, has a lot of new roundabouts in all different kinds of areas; searching "Wisconsin roundabouts" on the Internet will provide you with a lot of information. The County is confident that Illinois drivers will learn to use them as quickly and easily as Wisconsin drivers have. If you would like instructions on how to navigate a roundabout, click [here](#) for text and video options.