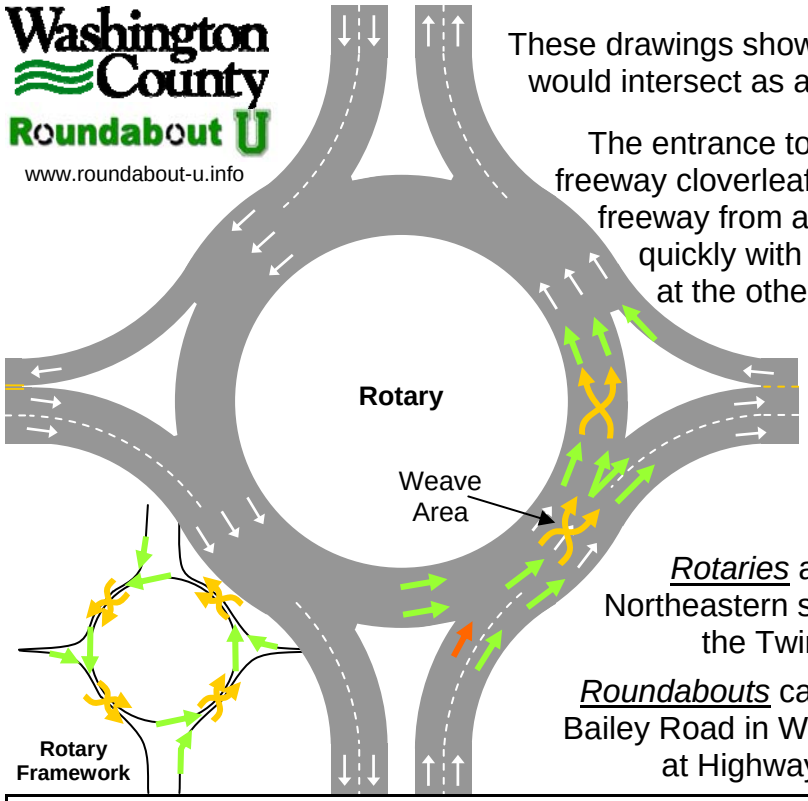
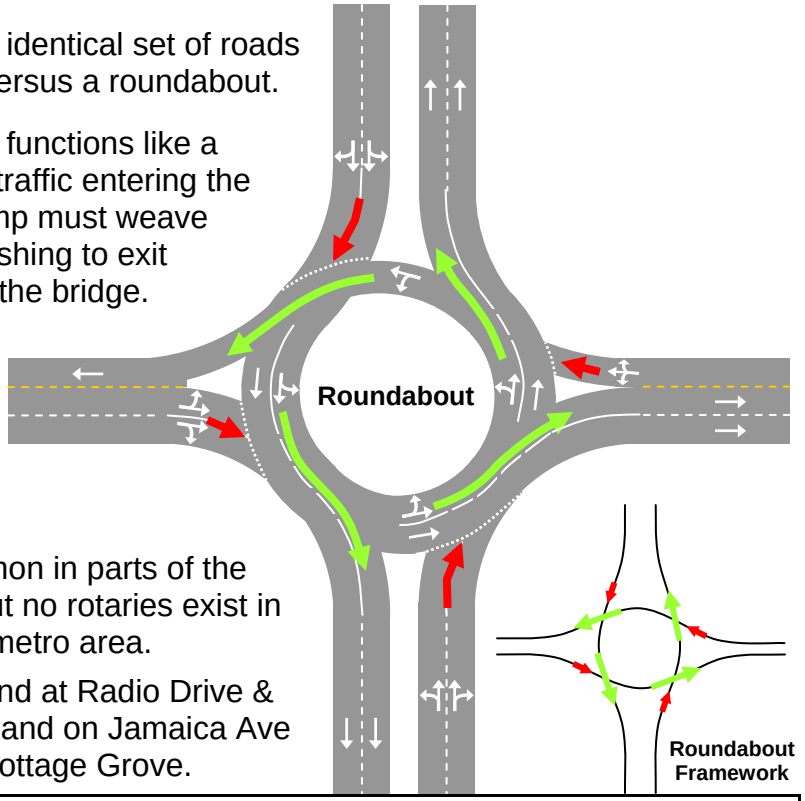
How is a ROTARY Different from a Roundabout?

Washington County Roundabout U
www.roundabout-u.info

These drawings show how an identical set of roads would intersect as a *rotary* versus a roundabout.

The entrance to a *rotary* functions like a freeway cloverleaf, where traffic entering the freeway from a loop ramp must weave quickly with traffic wishing to exit at the other side of the bridge.





Rotaries are common in parts of the Northeastern states, but no rotaries exist in the Twin Cities metro area.

Roundabouts can be found at Radio Drive & Bailey Road in Woodbury and on Jamaica Ave at Highway 61 in Cottage Grove.

Rotary	Modern Roundabout
It is typical to enter a rotary alongside traffic that is circulating in the inside lanes, like a freeway cloverleaf loop entrance where the ramp entrance lane continues under or over a bridge to the next exit.	Entering traffic must always yield to ALL traffic in the roundabout, regardless of which lane they are in, just like crossing a one-way road.
No intersections occur in a rotary, only adding and dropping of lanes. The right lane usually does not need to yield, but must find a gap to change lanes. The left entry lane must merge or yield before entering.	A roundabout is a series of “crossing intersections” where traffic entering the roundabout must **yield** the right of way to all traffic from the left.
The circle is usually not striped, though multiple vehicles may travel side by side. Lane changes occur after you have entered the circle.	The circle is striped as a spiral. Never change lanes in a roundabout. Choose your lane before entering, just like at a standard intersection.
Entering drivers who wish to circulate must change lanes while circulating and weave with vehicles trying to exit.	No lane changes occur within a roundabout. Except for vehicles that are turning right, entering a roundabout is a “crossing” movement.
A rotary is typically large, with entry speeds of 40 mph or higher.	A roundabout is generally small; speeds are rarely more than 25 mph.
Rotaries work well at low volumes, but very poorly under heavy traffic conditions. Most were designed in the 1940’s or earlier.	Roundabouts are able to handle heavy traffic and are used for efficiency and safety. Roundabouts were developed in the 1960’s.
Entry may be controlled by yield signs, merge signs, or no signs at all.	Entry is always controlled by yield signs for maximum efficiency.