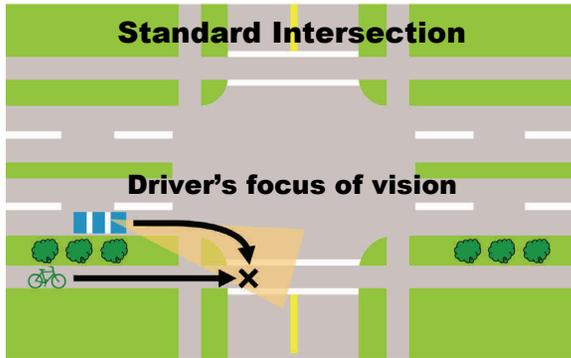


Are roundabouts safe for bicyclists? How should a bicyclist use them?

Roundabouts help to prevent one of the most common types of bicycle crashes in Washington County, in which a bicyclist riding on a trail and into a crosswalk collides with a turning driver who cannot, or does not, see the bicyclist approaching due to difficult sight lines, as shown in the figure below.



At a roundabout, crosswalk users cross at right angles to approaching traffic, improving the sight lines for both drivers and crosswalk users. Lower speeds also allow drivers and crosswalk users to better react to each other.

As with any other intersection, bicyclists may choose to ride through a roundabout as a vehicle, obeying all vehicular rules, including choosing the proper lane for their intended turn and yielding to anyone in the crosswalks.

A bicyclist may also choose to operate as a pedestrian, obeying all rules applicable to pedestrians. Dismounting from the bicycle is not required. As always, a bicyclist must use caution prior to riding into the crosswalk to ensure that there is a suitable gap in traffic which allows drivers to safely yield to them.

Local Examples of Roundabouts with Crosswalks

Single-Lane Roundabouts with Crosswalks

- County 13 (Radio Dr) at County 20 (Military Rd) in the City of Woodbury
- County 18 (St Croix Trail) at 5th Street North in the City of Lakeland
- County 18 at Upper 5th St, Division St, and 4th Street South in the Cities of Lakeland and Lakeland Shores
- County 19 (Keats Ave) at County 22 (70th St) in the City of Cottage Grove

Multi-Lane Roundabouts with Crosswalks

- County 19 (Woodbury Drive) at Lake Road and at Bailey Road in the City of Woodbury
- Highway 61 at Jamaica Ave in Cottage Grove
- Highway 61 at Broadway Ave in Forest Lake
- 66th Street at Portland Avenue in Richfield
- McColl Drive (Scott County 16) at Glendale Road and Lynn Avenue in the City of Savage

For more information, visit
www.co.washington.mn.us.
Click on "Roads and Transit",



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Washington County

Roundabout U

Roundabouts

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Pedestrians



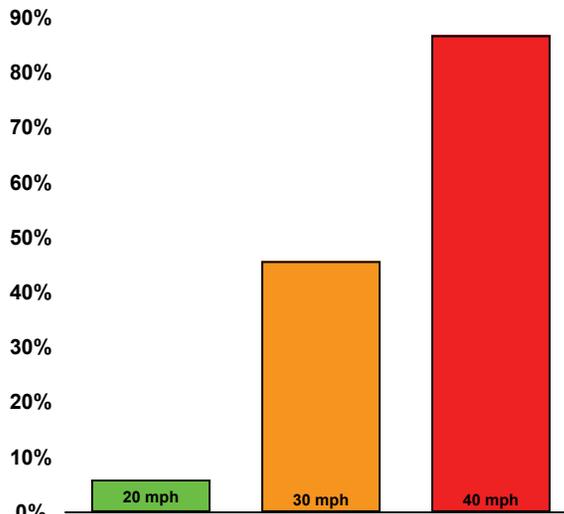
Roundabouts & Pedestrians: Are They Safe?

Roundabouts and traffic signals both rely on drivers to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalks. At traffic signals, drivers turning left or right must look for pedestrians and yield to them even when drivers have a green light. Long waits can incite pedestrians to take chances and cross against the signals. When drivers or pedestrians violate the signals, the results are often fatal. In fact, from 2006-2010 on state highways in the Twin Cities area, 28 of the 34 serious pedestrian crashes occurred at signalized intersections.

Unlike a traffic signal, the curvature of a roundabout forces even the most aggressive drivers to slow to approximately 25 mph at the crosswalks. Because of these lower speeds, drivers and pedestrians are better able to see and react to each other, and crashes are much less likely to result in serious injuries and fatalities.

Fatality Rate based on Speed of Vehicle

A pedestrian's chance of death if hit by a motor vehicle



[Source: U.K. Department of Transportation, Killing Speed and Saving Lives, London, 1987.]

How can pedestrians cross if traffic isn't being stopped by a red light?

Crossing a roadway at a traffic signal usually means having to cross six or more lanes of traffic at once, requiring about 25 seconds of walking to complete the crossing.

At a roundabout, pedestrians need to only cross one or two lanes at a time, needing less than 7 seconds to complete each crossing. Gaps of 7 seconds or more are plentiful, even on high-traffic roadways. Additionally, drivers are required to yield to pedestrians within the crosswalk, and the low vehicle speeds enable drivers to easily see and stop for pedestrians.

A recent University of Minnesota study of pedestrian activity at a multi-lane roundabout in Richfield found that most pedestrians were able to cross immediately without waiting, despite the fact that the roundabout is at the intersection of two very busy county roads. Of the pedestrians who waited for a gap in traffic, their average delay was still only 10.6 seconds. At a traffic signal, pedestrian wait times often range from 60 to 120 seconds to cross major multi-lane roads during daytime hours.

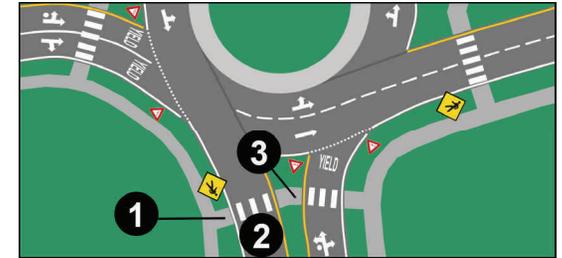
[Source: <http://www.its.umn.edu/Events/SeminarSeries/2011/fall/september29/index.html>]

What about rural roundabouts?

In rural areas, drivers are normally able to pass pedestrians who are lawfully walking along the roadway or shoulder. However, the design of roundabouts omits shoulders and prevents drivers from passing in order to ensure safe operating speeds. Therefore, even in rural areas, roundabouts typically feature separated sidewalks and crosswalks to ensure safe and efficient operations for drivers and pedestrians.

How to Cross at a Roundabout

Crossing at a roundabout can be as simple as walking in and out of a grocery store or shopping mall. Much like parking lots, there may be a lot of traffic, but they are all moving slowly and able to react to you.



- 1** As you approach the crosswalk, check for approaching traffic. As a pedestrian, you have the right to wait behind the curb until all traffic passes, or to begin crossing at which point drivers must yield to you. As with any crosswalk, Minnesota law forbids you from entering the crosswalk when drivers are so close that they cannot safely yield to you.
- 2** Once you step into the crosswalk, you have the right-of-way. Because traffic is moving slowly, drivers can see and yield to you much more easily than most other crosswalks. As with any crosswalk, always make sure that drivers see you, especially at night or when there are multiple lanes.
- 3** When you get to the middle, pause and check for traffic in the other direction. Once again, you may choose to wait until all traffic is clear, or you may enter if there is a gap large enough for drivers to yield to you.