

Frequently Asked Questions Roundabouts

Why is the roundabout needed at Glacier View Drive and Comox Avenue?

Due to high volumes of traffic on Comox Ave, it is difficult for traffic on Glacier View and Aitken to turn onto Comox Ave. As traffic volumes increase into the future, this problem will continue to get worse. The Town's 2011 Transportation Study recommended that a roundabout be installed to address the traffic issues. This recommendation was reaffirmed as part of the Town's 2020 Transportation Master Plan Update. Please review the Transportation Master Plan (<http://bit.ly/3io96bR>) for more information.

Why is the roundabout needed at Rodello Street and Comox Avenue?

Due to high volumes of traffic on Comox Ave, vehicles moving north and south at this intersection are seeing long wait times to be able to turn onto Comox Ave in any direction. The new roundabout will help cars move optimally in all directions and decrease wait times at the intersection. This is especially important as the area is expected to see additional development into the future. The Town's 2020 Traffic Master Plan Update recommended that a roundabout be installed at Rodello and Comox to address the traffic concerns. The Town confirmed this recommendation through an independent investigation of the intersection. This report can be found at <https://www.comox.ca/rodelloroundabout>

What are some of the benefits of a roundabout?

According to ICBC, [reference document on single-lane roundabouts](http://bit.ly/3gLLr4G) (<http://bit.ly/3gLLr4G>), there's 76 per cent fewer injuries/fatalities and 35 per cent fewer collisions in roundabouts. They also suggest these other benefits: slower vehicle speed, improved safety for cyclist and pedestrians, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

What about the safety of motorist through roundabouts?

At traditional intersections with stop signs or traffic signals, some of the most common types of crashes are right-angle, left-turn, and head-on collisions. These types of collisions can be severe because vehicles may be traveling through the intersection at high speeds. With roundabouts, these types of potential-serious crashes are essentially eliminated because vehicles travel in the same direction and at low speeds.





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What about the safety of pedestrians through roundabouts?

Roundabouts serve many different purposes and have been proven to increase pedestrian safety. There are fewer potential conflict points for pedestrians and motorists than in a typical intersection. Due to the design, pedestrians crossing roundabouts only have one direction of traffic to cross at a time. There are protected pedestrian refuge areas built into the design where pedestrians can wait safely for an opportunity to cross. Sidewalks are placed around the circumference of the roundabout and connect to the various crossing points. Pedestrians are never directed to the centre island of the roundabout. The design of roundabouts slow vehicles and the direction of traffic flow eliminates right-angle and head-on collisions (this is what occurs in other intersections and often cause serious injury).

How are cyclists accommodated at a roundabout?

The Town has included separated bike lanes into the roundabout designs that parallel the sidewalk. Cycle crossing locations are paired with pedestrian crossing locations. Cyclists can share the travel way with the vehicles in a roundabout if they feel comfortable doing so. Since motorists are going slow through a roundabout, cyclists can comfortably move to the centre of the lane to travel through the roundabout.

How do drivers react in a roundabout when an emergency vehicle approaches?

In a roundabout, emergency vehicles always have the right-of-way. This means that if you see an emergency vehicle before you enter the roundabout, pull to the right and stop to let the emergency vehicle use the roundabout. If you are in the roundabout, take the nearest exit, then pull to the right and let the emergency vehicle pass you.

How are large trucks and fire equipment accommodated at roundabouts?

The design of these roundabouts will accommodate the turning movements of the larger transportation semi-trailers coming into Comox and the fleet of fire trucks too. The Town utilizes the Transportation Association of Canada and Province of British Columbia's guidelines when designing roundabouts. The turning movements of large semi-trailers has been modelled and used to design the roundabouts.



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What are the approximate size of the roundabouts?

The Rodello roundabout will have an inscribed diameter of 35m and the Glacier View roundabout will have an inscribed diameter of 34.5m. These are smaller than the one at Pritchard and Knight Road which has an inscribed diameter of 40m. The roundabout at Glacier View Dr. is the first phase of a larger roundabout scheduled for future growth and development in this area.

Why put the roundabouts in close proximity to each other?

The roundabouts were identified in the Town's 2011 Transportation Master Plan. Both the Glacier View Dr. and Rodello St. intersections were identified as having a limited or failing level of service. This evaluation was reconfirmed in that traffic management study updated in 2020. There is about a 500-metre separation between the two roundabouts and each one will support separate neighbourhood concerns.

Is there funding from developers to support the construction of the roundabouts?

The Town will be using development cost charges to fund the roundabout at Rodello. The Glacier View Dr. roundabout is smaller and development cost charges will not be used.

Drivers are unfamiliar with how to drive in roundabouts, how do you see this working in Comox?

There are a few roundabouts in the Comox Valley, two at prominent locations; the Pritchard and Knight Road location in Comox and the Willemar Avenue and Cumberland Road location in Courtenay. Roundabouts do not require any new driving skills. At all roundabouts, drivers must always yield the right-of-way to vehicles in the circulating roadway. The geometric design of the approach to the circulating roadway dictates the speed that drivers will be travelling (designed for 30km/h). Roundabouts simplify the driver's decision-making process. First yield to pedestrians on the sidewalk, then check for traffic approaching from the left. If there is traffic, yield and wait for suitable entry. If clear, make the turn and enter the traffic stream. When exiting a roundabout, signal your intention and keep watch for pedestrians or cyclists who are going to use the crossing facility on the exit.



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Additional Information on Roundabouts

- Studies of intersections in the United States converted from traffic signals or stop signs to roundabouts have found reductions in injury crashes of 72-80 per cent and reductions in all crashes of 35-47 per cent (Retting et al., 2001; Eisenman et al., 2004; Rodegerdts et al., 2007).
- Based on the results of a 2004 study (Eisenman et al., 2004), it's estimated that the conversion of 10 per cent of the signalized intersections in the United States to roundabouts would have prevented approximately 51,000 crashes in 2018, including 231 fatal crashes and about 34,000 crashes involving injuries.
- In three communities where single-lane roundabouts replaced stop sign-controlled intersections, 31 per cent of drivers supported the roundabouts before construction, compared with 63 per cent shortly after (Retting et al., 2002). Follow-up surveys conducted in these six communities after roundabouts had been in place for more than one year found the level of public support increased to about 70 per cent on average (Retting et al., 2007).

Reference: <https://www.iihs.org/topics/roundabouts>

For information on the Comox Valley Sewer Conveyance Project, visit:

<https://connectcvrd.ca/conveyanceproject>

To keep to date with the latest news on roundabouts in Comox, visit:

- <https://www.comox.ca/roundabouts>
- <https://www.comox.ca/glacierviewroundabout>
- <https://www.comox.ca/rodellorroundabout>



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