



## Roundabouts Will Make Oconee Roads Safer and Flow Better

The Board of Commissioners always makes safety a top priority when looking at road projects, especially when considering school entrances and the children who travel to and from these schools daily.

Roundabouts are a proven tool for improving safety at intersections, and the Board of Commissioners plans to install two roundabouts along Malcom Bridge Road, with a third funded by a developer of a new project near Malcom Bridge Middle School.

These will be the first roundabouts in Oconee County, and we are confident that they will greatly increase the safety and traffic flow of the Malcom Bridge corridor.

There are two primary reasons to install roundabouts: improving safety and improving traffic flow.

We have an additional goal of working with the Sheriff's Office to remove deputies from directing traffic in the roadways due to concern for their safety.

A quick look at traffic crash data demonstrates why we have concerns throughout the county.

We must find better and safer solutions that work for our busy intersections.

Roundabouts significantly reduce catastrophic accidents; when accidents do occur, they are typically sideswipes as opposed to t-bone impacts, and they occur at slower speeds.

Roundabouts are great at moving traffic while providing traffic calming. GDOT states that single-lane roundabouts can move 24,000 vehicles per day.

In fact, GDOT requires an examination of the feasibility of roundabouts for all intersection improvements along state routes because they view them as one of the best and safest options for vehicles.

The Federal Highway Administration lists the following safety benefits of roundabouts:

- More than 90 percent reduction in fatalities
- 76 percent reduction in injuries
- 35 percent reduction in all crashes
- Slower speeds are generally safer for pedestrians

Roundabouts also reduce congestion and prove to be efficient during both peak hours and other times.

They reduce pollution and fuel use and result in fewer stops.

Roundabouts complement other common community values and are aesthetically pleasing.

We have been communicating with the school administration since last fall to make sure they are aware of the progress on these plans and understand how they can contribute to project success, such as ensuring there is enough room on the school site for parents picking up their kids so vehicles do not block traffic flow.

Any time something new comes to an area, there is going to be concern.

Driving in roundabouts isn't difficult, and we will provide all the information we can on how to easily navigate them.

While stop signs and traffic lights may be more familiar, roundabouts allow for continuous traffic flow. With roundabouts, there's no more sitting at a red light or stop sign with no opposing traffic in the middle of the day. More importantly, roundabouts eliminate the risk that another driver may ignore that traffic signal, resulting in tragedy.

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