

Benton CSAH 3 (Golden Spike Road) Preliminary Design

February 7, 2011 Open House Comments and Responses

Type of Concern	Comment or Question Received	Design Team Response or Acknowledgement
Roundabouts	Roundabouts are safer for everyone when they are utilized correctly and people get used to them	Yes, roundabouts are safer than conventional intersections. Studies have shown reductions in crash rates of 39%; Injuries reduced by 76%; and fatalities were reduced by 89%.
	How will the roundabouts help handle all the existing "in & outs" along 2nd Street?	Access to properties will be maintained. For improved safety, it may be desirable to explore opportunities to reduce the number of driveways on some sites
	I much prefer roundabouts in this area as opposed to traditional traffic lights or stop signs	Roundabouts serve traffic more efficiently than traffic signals or stop signs during peak hours. In off peak hours, it is often not necessary to stop at all at a roundabout.
	Roundabouts will serve to reduce the speed on this stretch of road another positive!	Roundabouts are effective to reduce speed through intersections and work well to transition from high speed rural conditions to slower speed urban conditions
	I drive one of the St. Cloud round-abouts every day to and from work. I'm not a big fan of them. The one I drive is on County Road # 134 and Pine Cone Road. They claim to keep the traffic moving and I question that. In my experience it keeps some of the traffic moving in certain directions and can stop other traffic going in other directions just like a Stop sign or traffic light. For example during rush hour – the traffic coming on # 134 from the west slows down to enter the round about, they come in bumper to bumper, they want to go north on Pine Cone road, so they start the left turn and have the right away, the cars behind them want to go north also so they are bumper to bumper coming in and heading north, the traffic coming from the east has no chance of entering the round about because they have to yield the of the right away to the bumper to bumper traffic going north on Pine Cone. Sometimes the car heading west isn't paying attention when there is a single car break and they miss the opportunity to enter the round about, again causing traffic to pile up. I really don't see the benefit.	In addition to the safety benefits (expressed above), roundabouts will serve traffic volumes of similar or higher magnitudes as traffic signals or stop signs with less delay and shorter queue lengths. When a heavy traffic movement (like the situation described to the left) has uninterrupted access to the roundabout, it is true that the next counterclockwise entry point may need to wait for a gap, but it is rare that the uninterrupted flow condition sustains for very long. Each time one vehicle leaves the traffic stream, or enters the circle from a different entry point which has right of way over the heavy movement, a gap is created that can be utilized by others. The CSAH 3 roundabouts are being designed with multiple lanes of entry or exit as needed to serve the heavy movements and minimize delays for the minor movements.
	I've . . . heard the round abouts are more expensive and without seeing the benefit I don't support this project and wish you would reconsider.	Roundabouts are typically not more expensive than traffic signals and turn lanes. In this case, roundabouts will serve the needs without replacement of the existing CSAH 3 bridge over TH 10. The signalized option considered required turn lanes on the bridge which would have lead to its replacement and significantly higher project costs.
Trucks	Many large trucks use these highways and roundabouts are hard for them to negotiate	The roundabouts will be large enough to serve trucks. A semi-tractor pulling a 53 foot trailer has been accommodated in the design as an expected regular user through the intersections. The design will also be able to serve double bottom trucks. The central island of the roundabouts will have a concrete apron intended to carry the rear trailer wheels as the truck makes its way around the circle. Truck movements through a roundabout are slower but can be negotiated safely. Smaller vehicles should "give way" to trucks in a roundabout similar to how drivers are accustomed to doing in a conventional intersection.
	Will the roundabouts allow for large trucks? A significant amount of 18-wheel trucks haul materials into the Industrial Park as well as school buses.	
	Trucks drive up on the curbing or making really extended turns so they don't hit the curbing which seems like it takes them forever to go through if we put that many of them on the Golden Spike with church, school and industrial traffic, I see bottlenecks happening.	
	Semi-trucks really slow the traffic down when they go through roundabouts.	

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Development	With the reduced labor force from Crystal Cabinets, Stearns, and Komo Machine, the roundabout into Industrial Park seems like less of a priority but in the long-term, is probably beneficial to facilitate future growth both in the Park itself as well as the entire corridor and potentially a big-box store on the former Design Line property.	This preliminary design exercise sets the stage to have the project ready when development growth is imminent or if project funding becomes available from outside sources.
Trails	The trail is a welcome addition to this stretch [of CSAH 3] I am very interested in the development of an all access trail for peds and bikers - let's extend it to Foley! As a member of the APO Trails advisory and an employee of the Central MN Council on Aging, I urge strong consideration for trail accommodation as part of the road improvement	Trail improvements are planned along the north side of CSAH 3 with intersection crossings occurring at the roundabouts. The existing sidewalk on the north side of the bridge over Highway 10 will be utilized.
Safety	The proposed western-most roundabout for vehicles traveling east bound Hwy 10 exiting onto Golden Spike Rd is the key intersection for me. When school is in session, this may rank as among the most dangerous intersections in the city just prior to 8am on weekdays. Many car collisions occur at this point- due in large part to the traffic volume, often slippery winter surface, and the near-blind overpass from Hwy 10. On sunny days, the sun itself is a hindrance looking to the east. As shown, I like the design improvements.	Entering the roundabout from the Highway 10 exit ramps will be easier and safer than the existing situation which is controlled by stop signs for ramp traffic but free flowing for CSAH 3 traffic.
	You will also have young fast drivers (students) along with slower elderly drivers (church goers) confused by the round abouts, probably causing a lot of accidents in the round abouts.	We expect there to be a learning curve for all drivers at these roundabouts. Some driver uncertainty and possible confusion will occur. However, the speeds are low, so this is not expected to result in a lot of accidents. The operation of the roundabouts will improve as drivers become familiar with them including choosing the appropriate lane to be in depending on their destination.
	For safety, approaches within a one-half mile of the interchange need un-interrupted traffic to allow access to the highways	Access to TH 10 will be well signed. Other than the learning curve described above, we do not expect that access to TH 10 will be difficult or less safe.
Impacts: traffic and construction	How is our property going to be affected?	The design team will meet with each affected property owner as needed to explain any impacts or listen to any concern.
	A roundabout at CR 1 and CR 3 would destroy valuable commercial property at that site	The design team will work with property owners resolve site access issues to the extent possible. Extensive commercial development in the corridor can not occur without intersection improvements. Other types of intersection improvements (i.e. intersections with center medians and traffic signals) usually create similar concerns regarding site access.
	A significant amount of dirt fill will need to be hauled- particularly on the western-most roundabout. Will this impact or require the displacement of the Holiday station or business across the street from them?	We do expect the project to impact the sites adjacent to the west roundabout at TH 10. We are reviewing options to minimize these and we do not anticipate "displacement" .
	It was . . . stated last night that my parent's home on Golden Spike is in jeopardy and this concerns the whole family.	We understand concerns related to the possible taking of a family residence and are interested in helping you plan for that event.

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Design Questions or Suggestions	Within the scope of this plan, will 2nd Street (near Benton Drive and the new bridge) be widened to a 4-lane at this time?	Planning for improvements on 2nd Street between 2nd Avenue and TH 10 will occur as a separate study by Benton County.
	I was curious to see the current CSAH 57 and Hwy 10 west-bound situation...is it too close to simply direct traffic along the same path onto Hwy 10 as it is currently situated as opposed to the wide loop-around?	Yes, the existing intersections are too close together. Combining CSAH 57 and the TH 10 east ramp junction into a common intersection results in the safest and most cost effective solution.
Study Process	What is the time frame for the beginning of the project?	No specific schedule has been established for construction. Moving the project forward will be dependent upon development activity in the corridor and availability of project funding.
	Thanks for the opportunity to provide input	We encourage continued participation in the process.
	I was wondering if any of the plans you displayed yesterday in Sauk Rapids yesterday are available online?	Project information will be made available on the Benton County and City of Sauk Rapids websites: See - www.co.benton.mn.us or - www.ci.sauk-rapids.mn.us