



DAVID CRAIG

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
CHAIRMAN, ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Assembly Committee on Transportation
Public Hearing, October 28, 2015
Assembly Bill 326 Testimony

Chairman Ripp and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to hear testimony on Assembly Bill 326.

This common sense legislation addresses the existing lack of meaningful authority municipalities have over whether a roundabout is constructed within their jurisdiction. What this bill merely says is that if the state or county government would like to construct a roundabout, the local municipal officials with jurisdiction over that area have to approve it first. This bill makes no commentary on the success or usefulness of roundabouts, but rather seeks to protect the voice of local officials and the citizens they represent, who will use the roundabouts the most. The bill further ensures the ability for local officials to effectively weigh in on whether a roundabout is the right option for their community.

I am not an opponent of roundabouts in general and I firmly believe that they do work well in some instances. However, what is indisputable are the consequences some of these projects have had in our state because they were not engineered and constructed to accommodate the needs of local traffic and industry. The rapid expansion of roundabout construction by the DOT should be accompanied by mandatory local input. After hundreds of roundabouts have already been constructed over the past decade and with dozens more yet projected in the years to come, Wisconsin should pursue a more balanced approach.

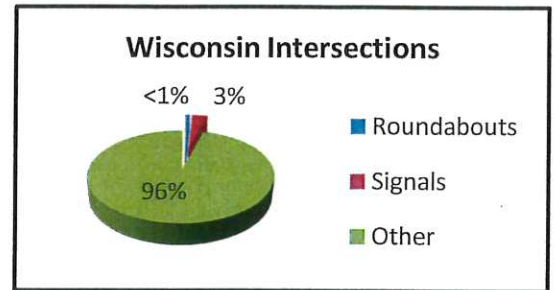
As a former local official, I served on a public works committee and took seriously my duty to balance the concerns of my constituents, the public safety of the community, and the expertise of our contracted engineer. This local engineer was every bit as qualified as state engineers to manage road projects. I truly believe that Wisconsin's municipal officials and engineers are capable of making these informed decisions - if we allow them to do so.

Thank you once again for hearing this bill, and I am happy to answer whatever questions the committee may have.

Roundabouts in Wisconsin

Intersection safety and efficiency is a key priority for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and every intersection is unique. Unlike other states that have adopted "roundabout first" policies, WisDOT evaluates design alternatives to determine whether a signal, roundabout or other control is best suited for the location based on safety, efficiency and estimated cost.

Roundabouts are found at less than one percent of the intersections on the state highway system. As of 2014, three percent of state-controlled intersections have traffic signals. Of the state's 331 roundabouts, 185 are on the state trunk highway system (STH) and 146 are on local highways.



Roundabouts may be considered as an alternative when building new intersections or when doing a complete reconstruction to correct safety or reduce congestion because roundabouts:

- Are proven to reduce the number of severe injury crashes and deaths
- Provide a good economic value
- Reduce delay and improve traffic flow
- Are a greener alternative with less vehicle idling, lower fuel emissions and less wasted fuel

Location	Number of Roundabouts	Percent of Total
STH	185	55.9%
Non-STH	146*	44.1%
Total	331	100%

*This is an estimate and may be underreported. Municipalities are not required to report roundabout construction to the state.

1. Do roundabouts save lives?

Intersections are among the most dangerous and complex traffic features that drivers encounter. According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data, 21 percent of all traffic fatalities and roughly 50 percent of serious traffic injuries can be attributed to intersections. Roundabouts almost completely eliminate fatalities and significantly reduce injury crashes.

A 2015 safety study produced by the University of Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Lab showed that fatal and severe injury crashes decreased by 40 percent at Wisconsin roundabouts. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found roundabouts are safer for two main reasons:

- Less potential for serious crashes (head-on and T-bone collisions are eliminated)
- Low travel speeds (less severe crashes result from lower travel speeds)

2. Do roundabouts reduce congestion?

Roundabouts can handle more traffic in the same amount of time because traffic is not required to stop – only yield. A study measuring traffic flow at intersections before and after conversion to roundabouts in Nevada, Kansas and Maryland found that traffic delays were reduced between 13 to 23 percent.

"In typical traffic engineering, there's a tradeoff between safety and operations. Generally, 'safe' equals 'inefficient.' Our research has shown roundabouts offer benefits in both safety and operations."

*David Noyce, Chair, UW-Madison
Civil and Environmental Engineering Department*

3. How much do roundabouts cost?

The construction costs of roundabouts and signalized intersections are generally comparable. Actual costs depend on site specific conditions. When an intersection is completely reconstructed, the construction cost of a roundabout versus a signalized intersection is considered to be about the same.

The estimated construction cost of a single lane roundabout typically ranges from \$1.2 to \$1.8 million. Multi-lane roundabouts typically range from \$1.8 to \$2.4 million.

In some instances, roundabouts provide cost savings to the local community, developers and the department. Some examples include:

- In nine interchange/overpass locations, where roundabouts were constructed as part of the I-41 project in Green Bay, an estimated \$1.7 million was saved, largely because a narrower 5-lane bridge could be built instead of 10 lanes leading to the Mason Street roundabouts.
- The five roundabouts on WIS 145 at Cabela's Way, Richfield, were a lower cost and faster solution than intersections with traffic signals. The roundabout design required less right of way, as well as fewer lanes at the interchanges, which meant narrower bridges and on/off ramps.
- The development of Pabst Farms (County P/Sawyer Road), in Oconomowoc, required upgrading to a full interchange. The four roundabout designs allowed shorter, less costly bridges, reduced right of way, and

Roundabouts in Wisconsin

avoided a more costly multi-lane eastbound on-ramp and acceleration lanes that would have required widening Lake Nemahbin bridges.

- On I-43 at Racine Avenue in New Berlin, the installation of roundabouts at the two interchange ramps saved approximately \$1 million by eliminating the need for additional bridge width and associated lane width that would have been required for an intersection with traffic signals.
- Working jointly with the village of Saukville and developers, roundabouts were chosen in place of signalized intersections on WIS 33 east of I-43. Roundabouts fit with the developer's plans and allowed reduced right of way and lane widths.

4. Are roundabouts the preferred WisDOT intersection design?

Roundabouts are not a silver bullet. Roundabouts can achieve safe and efficient traffic operation and reduce congestion when detailed technical analysis and sound engineering principles are applied to the design. In situations where minor improvements will solve the problem, signalized intersections may be more appropriate.

5. Does public input influence roundabout consideration?

The department believes in the importance of communicating early and frequently, especially on projects that contain features that may be new to the community. Staff meets with local officials, businesses and community members to get input early, when a transportation concern is first identified, through the design phases. Where safety concerns were not the primary factor for a roundabout project and community opinions were opposed, other intersection designs were typically selected. In some cases, communities have requested roundabouts for a particular location, but the engineering review did not support its selection.

6. Is public opinion on roundabouts changing?

Research has shown that the number of people who favor roundabouts more than doubles as they gain experience with them. A survey by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety showed that before construction, the number of drivers in favor of roundabouts was only 31 percent and those strongly opposed was 41 percent. Follow-up surveys after roundabout installation showed those in favor increased to 63 percent and those strongly opposed dropped to just 15 percent.

7. Are there environmental benefits from roundabouts?

While cars and trucks are increasingly cleaner and greener, vehicles idling at a signalized intersection still emit pollutants and gases into the atmosphere. Stops and starts use more fuel. Because roundabouts reduce the number and duration of stops, they also reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption. In a study of 10 intersections in Virginia, the savings amounted to more than 200,000 gallons of fuel per year.

8. How does the department facilitate large vehicles travel through roundabouts?

WisDOT recognizes the importance of providing safe, efficient travel and accommodating the freight industry in delivering goods and services, as well as other large vehicles such as emergency vehicles, buses and farm equipment. WisDOT remains committed to implementing the latest roundabout technology and research with its roundabout designs. Unique roundabout design features can be implemented and have been implemented on WisDOT roundabouts to accommodate oversize/overweight trucks.

9. What needs to be done to decrease the fender-bender crashes occurring at roundabouts?

Despite the growing number of roundabouts across the nation, for some drivers, roundabouts are new. Safely maneuvering a roundabout requires drivers to be alert and follow three key rules:

- Slow down
- Choose the correct lane
- Yield to all lanes

Note: Failing to follow these basic rules can increase non-injury crashes.

WisDOT provides outreach materials to local communities, including driver educators, to help motorists adjust to driving roundabouts. A video tutorial and other materials are available on WisDOT's web site www.wisconsin.gov. The Division of Motor Vehicle *Motorists' Handbook* includes a special section with information on how to drive in a roundabout.



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

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DATE: October 28, 2015

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Transportation
The Honorable Keith Ripp, Chair

FROM: Tom Rhatican, Assistant Deputy Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 242 (requiring approval by a municipal governing body before construction of highway roundabouts)

Chairman Ripp and Committee Members:

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) would like to provide some important background information and commentary to committee members as you consider 2015 Wisconsin Assembly Bill 242 (AB 242). AB 242 relates to requiring approval by a majority vote from the affected municipal governing body prior to the construction of highway roundabouts.

The Department is convinced that roundabouts are a useful tool to enhance the safety and operations of Wisconsin's highway system and is opposed to AB 242 because adding the requirement for a majority vote:

1. Is unnecessary given that WisDOT is already coordinating extensively with stakeholders including: state and local officials, businesses, and the general public.
2. Creates risks for project delays and additional costs.
3. May unintentionally preclude the construction of a significant traffic and safety improvement because of initial (temporary) concerns.

Communication, discussion and outreach vital to WisDOT project development

Prior to construction, interactions and discussions with local officials are vital elements of the Department's environmental process. WisDOT follows a well-defined public involvement and environmental process on every project to reach a preferred alteration alternative. State and federal laws (NEPA & WEPA) already exist and govern the formal aspects of these processes for the more highly complex projects; and

correspondingly, state and federal policies control them for less complicated projects. Highway projects that include roundabouts hold at least one public informational meeting, and often hold more.

Beyond the formal requirements for public informational meetings, the Department believes in the importance of communicating early and frequently, especially on projects that contain features that may be new to the community, and provides the following types of opportunities for local officials, businesses, and the general public to provide input:

- Discussions with local officials, to include area legislators, either before or at the Operational Planning Meeting (OPM) which signals the beginning of the public involvement for the project
- Early meetings to define the purpose and need for the project and the corresponding project scope.
- Meetings to identify the appropriate alternatives
- Ongoing meetings to review and evaluate the alternatives as they are more fully developed
- Meetings to screen and eventually select the preferred alternative
- Mailings and social media and the web are also used to keep interested and affected parties informed
- Project team members will attend municipal meetings (committee, board, council) to provide information and answer questions

Identifying suitable alternatives to address safety and efficiency

Every intersection is unique. The Department conducts an intersection control evaluation (ICE) process that reviews eight characteristics (safety, operational analysis, right of way impacts, costs, practical feasibility, pedestrians and bicyclists, oversized/overweight freight network and environmental impacts) of the design alternatives to determine whether a signal, roundabout, stop condition or other type of intersection control is the best alternative.

Intersection safety is a key priority for the Department, and an important initiative in Wisconsin's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Intersections are among the most dangerous and complex traffic features that drivers encounter. According to the national Highway Traffic Safety Administration data, 21 percent of all traffic fatalities and roughly 50 percent of serious traffic injuries can be attributed to intersections

A 2015 safety study produced by the University of Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Lab showed that fatal and severe injury crashes decreased by 40 percent at Wisconsin roundabouts. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found roundabouts are safer for two main reasons:

- Less potential for serious crashes (head-on and T-bone collisions are eliminated)
- Low travel speeds (less severe crashes result from lower travel speeds)

Roundabouts improve traffic flow and provide other benefits

In addition to safety, research has shown that roundabouts offer benefits in operations, environmental impacts and provide a good economic value:

- Roundabouts can handle more traffic in the same amount of time because traffic is not required to stop – only yield.
- Because roundabouts reduce the number and durations of stops, they also reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption.
- The construction costs of roundabouts and signalized intersections are generally comparable. When an intersection is completely reconstructed the construction of a roundabout versus a signalized intersection is considered to be about the same.

Roundabouts are not a universal solution

Roundabouts are but one piece of a broader Department design safety initiative that also includes traffic signal improvements, upgrades in signing and pavement marking technologies, traffic signals that respond to varying traffic conditions, and geometric improvements.

Roundabouts are not the perfect solution for all intersections. They are found at less than one percent of the intersections on the state highway system. In situations where minor improvements will solve the problem, signalized intersections may be more appropriate.

Where safety concerns were not the primary factor for a roundabout project and community opinions were opposed, other intersection designs were typically selected.

In some cases, communities have requested roundabouts for a particular location, but the engineering review did not support its selection.

Public opinion changes with experience

As with anything new, it takes time to adjust. The public's attitude towards roundabouts continues to evolve. NCHRP and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have conducted several studies, between 1998 – 2014, on the public's attitude toward roundabouts both before and after construction. These studies were done on a number of single and multi-lane roundabouts at different locations across the country, and they all show that opinions quickly change when drivers become familiar with them. Driver opinion changes from a large majority being negative/opposed during design to a large majority being positive/in-favor within a year after construction.

We have seen a similar opinion shift in Wisconsin. We've had many communities admit that despite their early objections, they are now pleased with the roundabout. The Village of Hobart actually sent the department a letter describing how village officials and town residents were pleasantly surprised with the final roundabout product and its smooth traffic flow.

WisDOT roundabout design evolves to address freight operations

Over several years, the Department has developed and published design standards and a process in the Facilities Development Manual (FDM) to accommodate both legal-size trucks and oversize/overweight (OSOW) trucks for its intersections, including both roundabouts and standard intersections. Understanding the importance of freight movement in Wisconsin, the Department placed a high priority on developing these processes, and is recognized as one of the national leaders in designing to accommodate large trucks.

The process starts with the design team identifying the large trucks to be accommodated by:

- Coordinating with the Departments freight operations specialists on truck movements in the area
- Obtaining similar information from local officials, businesses, and industries
- Coordinating with the WI Motor Carriers Association

Roundabouts on the state highway system are designed for the largest legal-size vehicles allowed in Wisconsin. These 'design vehicles' need to be able to navigate the roundabout at a reasonable speed without being too disruptive to its operational needs.

In addition to the largest legal-size vehicles, designers also address the needs of OSOW truck movements primarily based on the frequency of their trips through the roundabout:

- For higher frequency trips, the OSOW truck is accommodated more similar to a 'design vehicle.'
- For low frequencies trips, the OSOW truck is treated as a 'check vehicle'. Designers analyze the roundabout to verify the OSOW truck can 'get through' albeit at low speeds and maybe requiring assistance.

WisDOT has regularly been monitoring and evaluating the performance of roundabouts including how they accommodate trucks. There are many competing design criteria for intersections. WisDOT has learned that we can improve the geometry related to truck movements without unduly sacrificing the safety aspects of roundabouts.

Correspondingly, a few years ago, we implemented design processes for three different types of multi-lane roundabouts depending on the truck movements at that location.

Summary

Wisconsin residents and businesses rely on WisDOT to develop and maintain a safe and efficient transportation network as one of the foundations of a strong economy that will create jobs and enhance the quality of life in our state. It is our responsibility to help

everyone involved understand the safety and operational improvements that can result from properly applying sound engineering practices.

WisDOT continues to require and to value the input of local officials and their citizens as we work to provide the traveling public with the safest and most cost-effective highway system. However, we oppose AB 242 adding the requirement for a majority vote from the affected municipality for the reasons noted above:

- WisDOT already has regulations and policies in place on conducting outreach and soliciting local input, and often exceeds the minimums when roundabouts are involved.
- Trying to obtain the majority vote requirement to the end of WisDOT's current practices can add potential risks that may delay projects and increase their costs (redesign and delayed construction).
- Studies have shown that many municipalities can be apprehensive and negative toward implementing the first roundabout in their community; however, these attitudes can change dramatically after the roundabout is in operation for about a year.
- WisDOT does not want to miss an opportunity to make a significant permanent safety and traffic improvement because of initial (temporary) public concerns.

Additional information on Wisconsin roundabouts can be viewed on the Department's website at: wisconsinroundabouts.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Nate Yahn, WisDOT legislative advisor, at (608) 266-1114.



American Council of Engineering Companies of Wisconsin

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608-257-9223 | acecwi@acecwi.org | www.acecwi.org

**Testimony of Kevin Kuhlow, PE
American Council of Engineering Companies of Wisconsin
Before the Committee on Transportation
Wisconsin Assembly
On AB 326
Municipal Approval of Highway Roundabout Construction
Madison, Wisconsin
October 28, 2015**

Good morning Chairman Ripp and members of the Committee. My name is Kevin Kuhlow and I am a professional engineer, specializing in transportation, employed by Ayres Associates in Madison. I am also a member of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Wisconsin. Today, I am here to offer testimony for information only on the role of professional engineers during the roundabout design process.

As a member of the American Council of Engineering Companies, I'm speaking on behalf of professional engineers across the state of Wisconsin. We join the bill's author in stressing the importance of well-planned and safe roads in Wisconsin. Our members are designing and protecting Wisconsin's future with professional engineering solutions. It is the *only* organization in the state that represents the business side of the professional engineering industry. ACEC WI represents 79 premier engineering firms with more than 170 offices across Wisconsin and nearly 4,000 employees. The vast majority of member firms design our state's transportation infrastructure, which includes roundabouts. As a trade association representing professional engineers across the state of Wisconsin, we are invested in educating the public on the uses and benefits of infrastructure improvements.

Professional engineers design roundabouts and other infrastructure improvements with the public's best interests in mind. Supported by design principles and studies, engineers believe the roundabout is a safe, effective and environmentally friendly intersection design option. It is chosen only after careful consideration, through an intersection control evaluation - and not at any and every intersection.

The roundabout is just one of the items available in the professional engineer's design tool box. Like the tools we have at home, roundabouts, signal lights, stop signs and yield signs all have their place and purpose. Engineers are trained to know the right tool for the job. However, there are also checks along the way. Professional engineers use the National Environmental Policy Act process to evaluate potential environmental effects and take into account public input when determining the appropriate intersection design that is in the public's best interest. The decision to design a roundabout is a calculated decision; not all intersections are appropriate for roundabouts. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation requires an intersection control evaluation (ICE) for each intersection under investigation. Safety, operational analysis, construction costs, right-of-way impacts, operation and maintenance costs, pedestrian and bike accommodations, environmental impacts and practical feasibility are all taken into account as part of the ICE process. By comparing intersection alternatives, the engineer can compare apples to apples. During the ICE process, WisDOT presents all available

intersection types to the public. ***The Department then makes the decision with local participation and input.***

Roundabouts are not unique to Wisconsin. In fact, they are used across the country and the world. Wisconsin is one of 23 states across the country embracing the roundabouts as a design solution. In the Midwest, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota all have active roundabout programs.

There are a number of reasons why roundabouts often win out as the tool of choice:

1. Roundabouts are safe.
2. Roundabouts are efficient.
3. And roundabouts are environmentally friendly.

Even with these benefits in mind, as with any design decision, the professional engineer carefully analyzes the location, data, costs and potential impacts before recommending a roundabout. Throughout this process there are opportunities, through public information meetings, for affected residents, business owners and elected officials to offer input. In the end, the professional engineer recommends the right tool for the job. Due to the benefits associated with the roundabout, it is often favored as an effective tool to safely maneuver vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles through an intersection.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. For additional information on roundabouts and the design decision-making process, please reference ACEC WI's whitepaper on roundabouts.



TO: Members of the Assembly Transportation Committee

FROM: Jason Culotta
Director, Tax and Transportation Policy

DATE: October 28, 2015

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 326

Assembly Bill 326 would require municipal approval for the construction of roundabouts on highway projects within a municipality.

The proliferation of the construction of roundabouts has led to a number of conflicts with the movement of commercial trucks. There are instances of regular truckload traffic experiencing product damage due to navigating through roundabouts.

Particular focus must be paid to the impediment to commerce that roundabouts can create for over-size/over-weight (OSOW) truck moves.

As a manufacturing state, Wisconsin businesses produce a wide range of goods, including a significant number of factories that produce OSOW finished products. Moving these loads from the point of production to final destination often involves a range of obstacles including:

- low utility lines and bridges;
- monotube light and railroad warning fixtures which cannot be swung out of place;
- street improvements such as bump-outs for pedestrian crossings, raised medians at intersections, and stoplight fixtures in medians; and
- roundabouts built with hard outside and inside curbs and raised medians.

It seems to both manufacturers of OSOW products and the specialized truck carriers who move those products that the state Department of Transportation and some local units of government often do not take the special needs of moving these loads into consideration when designing and constructing roundabouts along freight corridors.

Assembly Bill 326 would begin to address some of these concerns by requiring municipal approval prior to the construction of roundabouts.

Please support passage of Assembly Bill 326.



RIGGING & CRANE RENTAL INC.

805 S. 72nd Street • Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214
Phone: (414) 453-5335 • Fax: (414) 479-8517

My name is Wayne Kokta, Transportation Manager for Dawes Rigging & Crane Rental, and DST Inc. with over 200 employees in the State of Wisconsin. I am also a member of the Specialized Carriers and Riggers Assoc. Truck Permitting Committee, in Washington DC. With over 1300 member companies in over 43 nations.

I am here today to speak in favor of AB 326.

The heavy haul industry serves, utilities, manufacturing, infrastructure, institutions, and government.

Over the last decade or so, we have been forced to utilize longer and longer equipment to accommodate the distribution of weight on our highways and bridges. It is not unusual to see units in the 135' – 165' length, as well as being overweight, overwidth and overheight. Two to three times the length of a normal Semi Truck.

Wisconsin has built hundreds of round-a-bouts in the state over this same time period. 40 were just recently added to the Green Bay, Fox River Valley, Hwy 41 project. Many of these are decimating our Heavy Haul routes, and although the State has begun to create protected corridors for movement of these loads, it is becoming very difficult to get to them from our customers facilities. We would take an off ramp to avoid a low bridge, cross over and go straight onto the on ramp and continue on our route, (Ramp Off-Ramp On). Now many intersections like this have a round-a-bout in the middle. We would also take a frontage road (usually the old hwy besides the new one) to avoid a low bridge, then cross over the top of the bridge. The new idea recently is to put four round-a-bouts in these areas, one on each frontage road on both sides of the highway, with one on each of the on/off ramp areas.

The time will come where an emergency replacement power transformer, a new Boiler for a hospital or school, a Bridge Beam, emergency response equipment, heavy construction equipment or the shipment of a Wisconsin manufactured product, will become impossible to move.

We need a bill like AB 326 to move forward. Give the local government time to digest what is being proposed in their areas, and consider the impact to their constituents, business, employers, and emergency services.

Thank You.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne P. Kokta". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne P. Kokta – Transportation Manager
Dawes Rigging & Crane Rental / DST Inc.
Members – Specialized Carriers & Riggers Association.

We're ALL You Need



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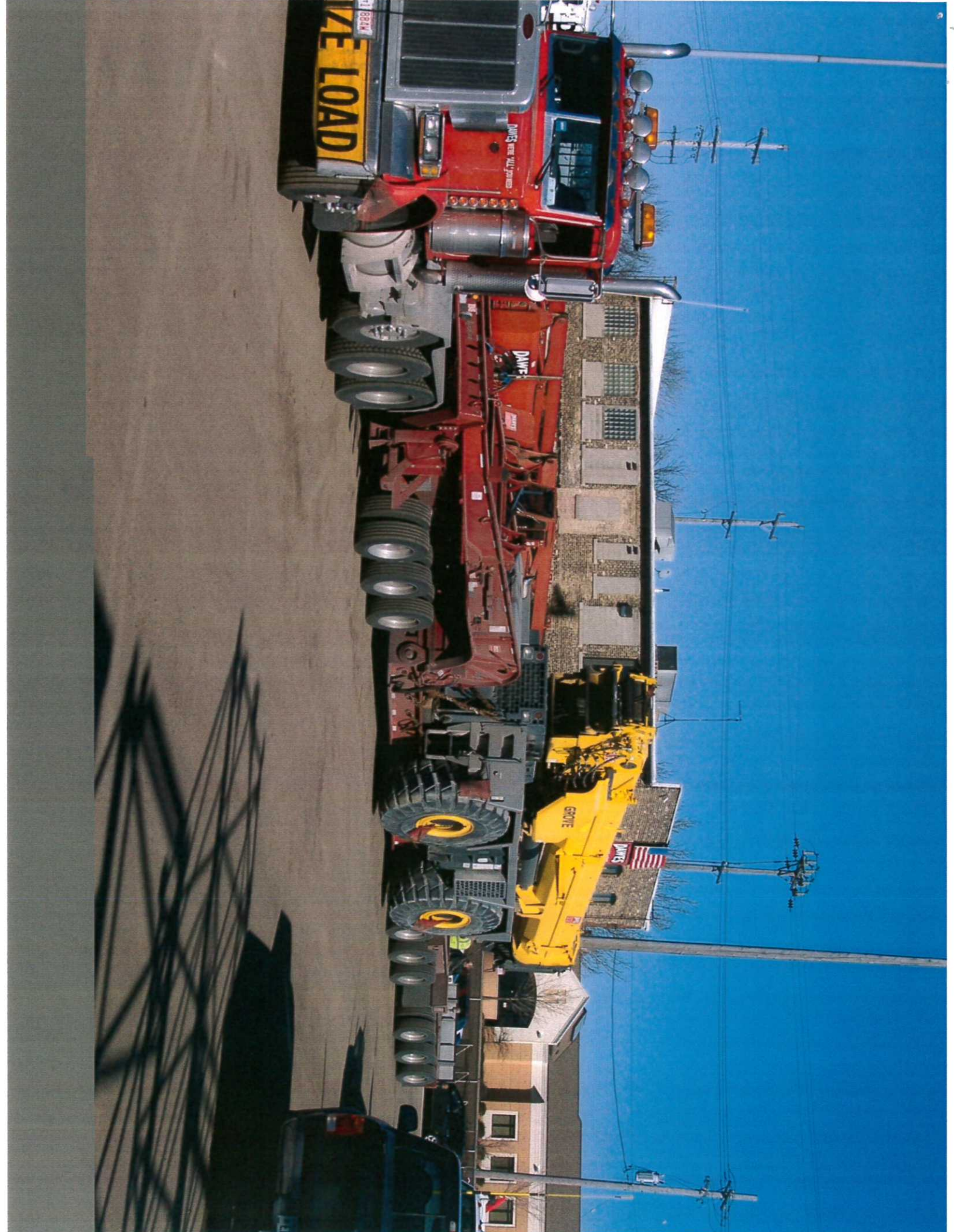
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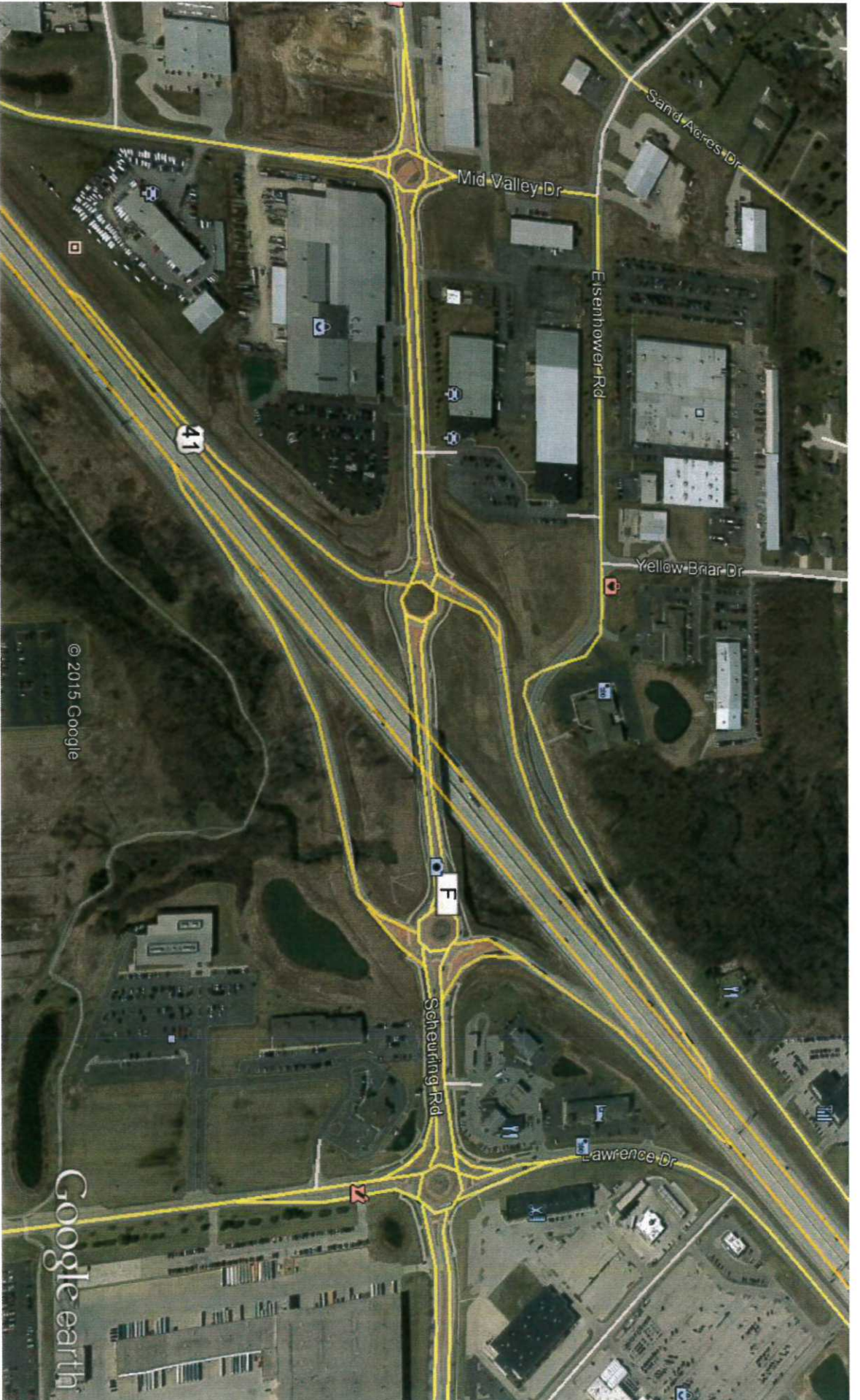
We're ALL You Need











Google earth

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meters



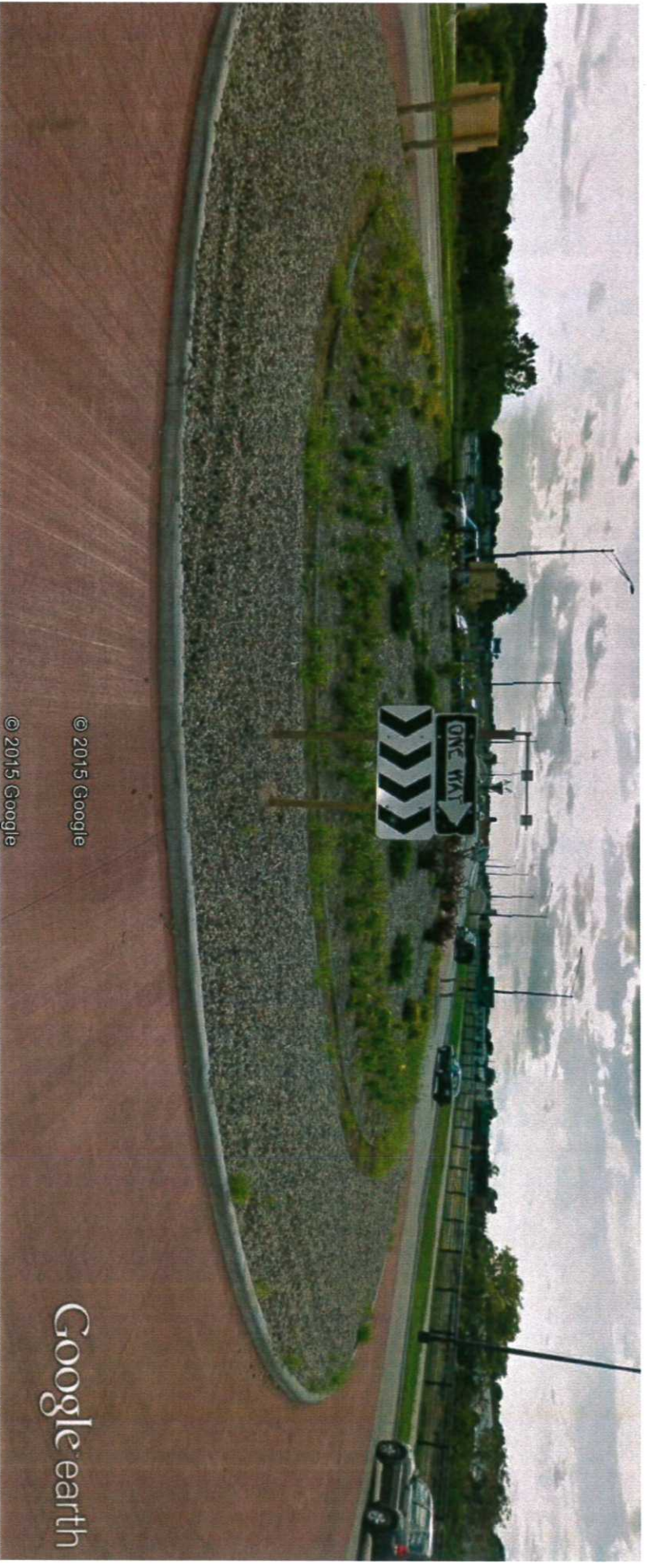
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Roads



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Roads



Roundabouts, Intersections & Interchanges – Barriers and Benefits to Specialized Transportation Carriers and DOTs

SC&RA

The Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association (SC&RA) is an international trade association of nearly 1,300 member companies from 43 nations. Members are involved in specialized transportation, machinery moving and erecting, industrial maintenance, millwrighting, crane and rigging operations, manufacturing and rental. SC&RA represents both national and multinational companies that operate oversize/overweight loads in every congressional district in the United States. Among others, we serve manufacturers, utilities, shippers in responding to the critical needs of the marketplace.

Background

Over the past decade, there has been an emerging change that is destined to impact intersections and interchanges throughout the United States, and in some states, more rapidly than others. As civil engineers work diligently to increase safety and efficiency at our nations cross roads, the primary focus has been on the volume of cars. The focus is arguably at the expense of trucks, and most notably, permitted specialized transport or oversize overweight (OS/OW) trucks. The increase in this alternative intersection design is occurring while load size and volume is also increasing, and unlike cars, OS/OW trucks cannot use every road and bridge.

A Common Goal – Safety

Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association shares in federal, state, and local efforts to increase safety at our intersections and interchanges. However, we believe this goal can be achieved in harmony with the needs of the specialized carriers operating equipment through these same intersections and interchanges.

Why Our Message is Important to You

Not only do specialized carriers move large and heavy OS/OW loads that are essential to our economy and lifestyle, they are also key partners with the road and bridge building industry carrying equipment and materials to and from DOT and local road and bridge projects. Unfortunately, when intersections and interchanges are designed and built in such a way that makes them impassable to OS/OW loads, our members are forced to travel a longer route that increases transport cost which are substantial (i.e. 100 plus mile detours and delays and associated costs) and ultimately passed on to the consumer, shippers and producers, including DOT's and local governments. This trend will make it more costly for a private company within a city, state, or region to ship their product, reducing their competitiveness which leads to a reduction, if not a complete loss of production and manufacturing, due to closure or relocation. In addition to the loss of existing business, future economic development and business development will not build or expand in these cities and states. For a DOT or local government road or bridge project, this means less work gets done with already limited funding and resources.

Poorly designed intersections and interchanges have a direct impact on transport costs and adversely impact a private company's ability to competitively produce and ship oversize/overweight products by creating barriers for OS/OW carriers.

Roundabouts (circular intersections) are a primary concern for our members as these are the most cumbersome and are by far the most notable alternative intersection type which states are embracing and building. Absent proper mitigation techniques, roundabouts contain the following design elements that can make the intersection or interchange impassable for OS/OW carriers:

- Barrier/un-mountable curbs throughout the intersection (entry, truck apron, outside, and exit). Roundabouts must be designed with industry friendly curbing. Abuse of tires, suspensions, etc. leads to premature failure.
- Fixed traffic signs, light poles and objects that cannot be removed (guardrail, fence, etc.).
- Center Islands – lacking or containing unusable truck aprons.
- Roadway, truck apron, and raised curbs that collectively cause low profile trucks to bottom out or contribute to rollovers.
- Narrow compact designs and lack of right turn bypass lanes.
- Inconsistent designs – there are no standard design roundabouts. Styles and sizes vary city to city and state to state. Most are too small for OS/OW vehicles and loads.
- Inconsistent signage – it appears there are no standard sign packages for roundabouts.
- High speed narrow approaches may contain a “chicane” (reversing curves) to slow traffic.
- Although it reduces agency cost savings, roundabouts must be designed larger with regard to equipment maintenance.

Other alternative intersection types are presenting challenges to specialized transport:

RTUC/U/Through/ & J Turns – are essentially various forms of a U-turn. Similar to roundabouts, these intersection types are often barriers to OS/OW transport especially those with small diameters and narrow entry with a single lane. This is especially true if the OS/OW vehicle is traveling on the intersecting roadway where barriers have been placed along the opposing roadway and within the intersection that prohibit the truck to continue moving straight through the intersection.

Signalized Monotubes – are fixed features and unlike previous signals, that could be temporarily moved or swung out of the way, monotubes are cost prohibitive to remove and reinstall. Monotubes present challenges for right turns and can be barriers for high loads for left turns and through movements as well.

Other emerging intersection types must be designed and suited to accommodate Specialized Transport:

Diverging Diamond & Single Point Interchanges are typically larger and provide carriers more room to move through and gently turn at an interchange. However these can be a barrier for overheight loads that detour via ramps from the main line to avoid structures. Signs, signal height, type and placement can present height barriers as well. We must insist on mountable or rolled curbs and extended horizontal and vertical clearances to safely transition back to the mainline route. DDI's built with single lanes and no shoulders on OS/OW routes can be barrier.

Displaced/Continuous Left – are innovative solutions to high volume left turn intersections and can be beneficial and safer for OS/OW carriers moving along multi-lane urban and suburban roadways and turning left onto other multi-lane roadways.

Outreach and Carrier Input Moving Forward

The FHWA is currently reviewing the other alternatives intersections and interchanges listed above and beyond the roundabout and have requested our input. Some states have asked for our input, either directly through the association, our individual members, or our partners in state trucking associations. We welcome these invitations and ask state and local governments to mandate our involvement in the planning design and ultimate intersection and interchange selection. We also encourage states to identify, preserve and protect OS/OW routes and connections to help designs determine where and when OS/OW mitigation is needed. We request a seat at the table to ensure barriers are not created for our members, their customers and the vital products they move, and we all rely on, over our nation's roads and bridges.

We invite and encourage you to utilize these resources well known and respected by our members for innovative contributions to Roundabouts and other alternative intersections.

-Peter Lynch Specialized Freight Solutions – Former freight operations program manager at WisDOT and key architect of the first OS/OW Freight Network and has provided innovative mitigations to roundabout designs and other alternative intersections to ensure these intersections are not a barrier to our industry. plynch@specialized-freight.com (920) 268-1935

-Mark Lenters and his design team GHD and formerly with Ourston Roundabout Design Engineers – has provided leadership and workable effective solutions to roundabout design to accommodate OS/OW while preserving the safety goals of a roundabout design. Mark.lenters@ghd.com (608) 249-4402

-Gene Russell, PhD – KSU Led a study through KSU about OS/OW and Roundabout Designs (Peter and Mark were key contributors to this study as well) which illustrates the need to balance roundabout designs and placement with OS/OW needs. geno@ksu.edu (785) 532-1588

Please feel free to call upon our association on matters related to this or any issue involving specialized transportation.

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