

McHenry Avenue / River Road

Temporary Roundabout

San Joaquin & Stanislaus Counties

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. *What is a roundabout?*

A roundabout is an alternative form of intersection traffic control. A modern roundabout is a circular intersection with **yield** at all entry points. According to studies, it is safer and more efficient than conventional stop-controlled intersections. Roundabouts were introduced in the U.K. but are gaining widespread use in North America. Typical characteristics of a modern roundabout include a Yield at Entry and a One-Way Traffic flow around the center island in a counter-clockwise direction. Roundabouts have the potential to reduce high impact collisions, traffic delays/queues and fuel consumption, resulting in improved air quality through reduced vehicle emissions.

2. *Why wasn't this done a while back if it is such a great idea?*

The project was originally anticipated to start construction in June 2016. However, due to right of way delays, the bridge/signal construction is not anticipated to begin until Spring 2017. This extended delay prompted staff to consider options to improve congestion in the interim.

3. *If I have questions whom should I contact?*

Please contact Firoz Vohra, Senior Engineer, Transportation Engineering San Joaquin County Public Works at (209) 468-3035.

4. *Where will this temporary roundabout be constructed?*

The temporary roundabout will be located at the intersection of McHenry Avenue and River Road, near the county line between San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties.

5. *When will construction begin?*

The changeover work to transform the existing four-way stop control to a temporary roundabout is anticipated to commence on April 6, 2016, weather permitting.

6. *How long will the changeover take?*

The actual work is anticipated to take approximately two weeks, assuming good weather.

7. *Will the roads be shut down during the changeover?*

During the course of the changeover week, traffic will be diverted within the intersection to allow crews to work. However, it will remain open for all traffic, with the exception of one anticipated closure on Saturday (April 16th) for a few hours to

complete signing and striping efforts prior to opening the temporary roundabout to the general public.

8. *Why is San Joaquin County installing a temporary roundabout?*

This temporary roundabout is a treatment to address the long backups of cars that occur on a daily basis at the intersection, particularly during morning and evening peak commute hours. This temporary roundabout will allow more traffic to move through the intersection compared to a stop control. A stop control only allows two directions of traffic to move at a time, and everyone must stop regardless. The temporary roundabout potentially allows for all four directions of traffic to move, and does not require all traffic to stop regardless.

9. *Why is it temporary? How long will it be temporary?*

It is temporary due to a future project involving a bridge replacement (Stanislaus Bridge) and a new signalized intersection (McHenry/River) scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2017. Once implemented, the signal project includes multi-lanes to alleviate backups at the intersection. The bridge project includes multiple traffic lanes and a bicycle lane.

The temporary roundabout will be in effect until the contractor for the major project needs to remove it to construct the new traffic signal, sometime after Construction starts in Summer 2017. More information on the Bridge / Signal Project will be posted on the website as we near the construction date.

10. *Are there roundabouts in San Joaquin County?*

Yes. There are a few in San Joaquin County - specifically in Woodbridge, the Tracy area, and the Cities of Lodi and Ripon.

11. *I'm not comfortable driving through a roundabout. Are there educational resources to find out more about them?*

Yes, follow the link below under "Tips and Guidelines For Roundabout Users." It shows videos and a brochure to help you become familiar with a roundabout. You can also see videos of roundabouts and how to drive them by searching on Youtube.com.

<http://sigov.org/pubworks/>

12. *I'm still not convinced that roundabouts are effective. What made you decide on a roundabout?*

There are many studies on the effectiveness of roundabouts. While they are not the solution for every intersection, they do provide multiple benefits in many cases – including improved safety through lower speeds and much fewer possibilities for accidents due to the one way control; reduced congestion; improved air quality; and lower maintenance costs. In this case, the vehicular capacity at the intersection of McHenry Avenue and River Road will improve with a changeover from a four-way stop control to a roundabout. Additionally, the County did a public outreach meeting at the

Escalon Community Center on February 23rd to get input on the proposed temporary roundabout. The consensus of those present was to move forward with the temporary roundabout, and to hold a follow-up meeting six months after it is operational to determine whether it should remain until the construction on the bridge/signal project begins.