



## **DOWNTOWN LANCASTER ROUNDABOUTS PROJECT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. What is the history of the project?**

The 1998 Downtown Lancaster Study focused on West Main Street to revitalize the downtown business district. In 2008, A Citizens Advisory Group proposed extending West Main Street to Aurora Street. Both of these plans focused on mixed-use development and walkability within the downtown area. In 2018, the Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy included recommendations for redevelopment of the former mall site into a mixed use, pedestrian oriented district; to put Pleasant Avenue on a road diet (reducing the width of the street) and creating a “Complete Street” (to improve mobility and access by all road users); and install landscaped roundabouts at the intersections of Pleasant / Central and Pleasant / Aurora. All of these planning efforts included public outreach opportunities for public input.

### **2. How does this project fit with other projects in the area?**

There are currently four projects that will impact downtown Lancaster:

- the Central Avenue bike lane project (construction 2020) will promote bicycle activity, which will be further improved with the Pleasant Avenue Complete Street being developed under this project.
- the West Main Street Extension project (construction 2020) will include the extension of West Main Street to Aurora Street, with a mini roundabout at the new intersection of West Main and Aurora Streets, and it is being coordinated with this project to minimize disruption along Aurora Street.
- the re-decking of the Aurora Street bridge over Cayuga Creek project (construction 2020) will be coordinated with the West Main Street project.
- The Roundabout/Complete Street project.

### **3. Has a traffic study been performed?**

A detailed traffic study for the West Main Street Extension was performed by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council that included the additional traffic expected from new development and included the two proposed roundabouts on Pleasant Avenue. The traffic study indicated that the roundabouts would provide a better level of service than the existing traffic signals under existing conditions and with the forecasted future traffic.

### **4. Where are the proposed roundabouts located?**

The signalized intersections of Pleasant Avenue at Central Avenue and Pleasant Avenue at Aurora Street would be replaced with landscaped roundabouts.

### **5. What are the goals of this project?**

The goals of the project are to reduce traffic congestion and delay, improve air quality, and improve pedestrian and vehicular safety, while advancing downtown revitalization efforts. The project will also include “Complete Street” design features along Pleasant Avenue between the roundabouts to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and automobiles.

### **6. How is the project funded?**

Funding for 80% of the project is from the Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program, with a 20% local match provided by the Village of Lancaster. The funding must be used to attain the goals of the program and cannot be reallocated to other uses.

### **7. Why are roundabouts proposed for these two locations?**

There are several proposed benefits to roundabouts:

- Slower Vehicle Speeds
  - Provides more time for drivers to judge and react to other drivers and pedestrians
  - Fewer and less severe crashes compared to signalized intersections
  - Makes for a safer and more comfortable pedestrian and bicycling environment

- **Crash Reduction**
  - Fewer vehicle to vehicle crash conflict points (reduces injury crashes by 76% and all crashes by 35%)
  - Fewer vehicle to pedestrians crash conflict points
- **Efficient Traffic Flow**
  - Increase in traffic capacity
  - Results in reduced vehicle emissions and fuel use
  - Reduces the need for turning lanes seen at signalized intersections
  - Less waiting for red signals to turn green
- **Reduced Costs**
  - No signal equipment to install and repair
  - Electricity and maintenance costs savings
  - Service life of a roundabout is 25 yrs. vs. 10 yrs. for traffic signals
- **Aesthetics**
  - The center island provides an opportunity for landscaping and art installations
  - Create “gateways” to activity areas, such as the Central Avenue business district and the future West Main Street development

**8. How do roundabouts accommodate large vehicles like tractor-trailer trucks or emergency vehicles?**

Roundabouts are designed with a truck apron, a slightly raised section of concrete around the central island that gives large vehicles and vehicles with trailers more space to navigate the turn. The back wheels of the oversize vehicle can ride up on the truck apron so it may easily complete the turn, while the raised portion of concrete discourages use by smaller vehicles.

**9. Is the roundabout safer for pedestrians? How?**

Although traffic signals provide lights that indicate when a pedestrian has the right-of-way, pedestrians crossing at traffic signals must still be vigilant of drivers making yielding left turns or making right turns on red, and drivers too often make tragic mistakes such as running red lights, often at high speeds. Roundabouts offer pedestrians much lower traffic speeds, better sight lines, shorter crossing distances, and less waiting time before being able to cross, putting pedestrians in greater control of their own safety. Also, most roundabouts include refuge islands that permit pedestrians to cross one lane/direction of traffic at a time.

**10. What impacts do roundabouts have on surrounding property?**

Right-of-way acquisitions will be needed from adjacent properties to maintain sidewalks around the roundabouts. The roundabouts will be designed to minimize impacts while maintaining design standards.

**11. How is the public being informed about the project?**

The design team (Mott MacDonald, EDR, Highland Planning, Watts Architecture & Engineering, Popli Design Group, and ROW Professionals) will engage stakeholders and the general public through a series of engagement activities throughout the course of the project. The team has conducted one-on-one interviews, pop-up engagement, door-to-door outreach, stakeholder and public meetings between November 2019 and February 2020. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the upcoming meetings with adjacent landowners and the public will take place online with a virtual meeting tool. A schedule of these engagement opportunities is available on the project webpage. All of the comments have been and will continue to be documented and considered by the Village and the project team.

**12. Will traffic detours be in place to redirect motorists?**

Details for traffic control during construction have not been prepared yet. It is likely that short-term detours will be used but maintaining access to residences and businesses will be a requirement for the contractor.

**13. How will parking be affected by the project?**

Parking is not expected to be reduced by the project, and options for the Pleasant Avenue “Complete Street” may include adding parking along the street.

**14. Where can I find more information about the project?**

More information can be found on the project webpage: [www.lancastervillage.org/downtown-lancaster-roundabout.html](http://www.lancastervillage.org/downtown-lancaster-roundabout.html). Comments may also be submitted from the webpage. Stay updated by following the Village on Facebook: VillageofLancasterNY, Instagram: @lancastervillageny and Twitter: @lancaster\_NY.