

## A Circular Solution for Byron, MN

The intersection was inconvenient and unsightly. In other words, hardly the kind of welcome that the City of Byron, MN wanted to extend to those who were driving into town.

10th Avenue, Frontage Road and Highway 14 all came together in a jumbled mess and WHKS was asked to make it safer, easier to navigate and more attractive.

We conducted a traffic study to look at the 10th Avenue and Highway 14 interchange and determined that dual left turn lanes were needed. But back up the road a short way, the intersection of 10th Avenue and Frontage Road got an 'F' on its Level of Service report card.

After looking at a slew of options that included traffic signals, side street stops, all way stops and even London Bobbies waving their arms to direct traffic, the best solution turned out to be a first for Byron. While a roundabout is untraditional, it has turned out to be functional, attractive, safe and economical.



When the firm proposed a roundabout, area residents were understandably skeptical. An unfamiliar idea, the roundabout is often confused with traffic circles or rotaries, both of which are poor designs and unacceptable solutions. But a roundabout offered some remarkable advantages: fewer accidents than a traditional intersection, slower vehicle speeds, fewer conflict points, safer for pedestrians, less expensive than traffic signals, and reduced pollution. And for good measure, it also offered less vehicle delay in a design that meets the 2032 traffic projections.

Being unfamiliar with roundabouts, area drivers are unsure of the rules when first navigating one. But once a driver had driven through one, they find it's not at all difficult.

The intersection was completed in the Spring of 2014 and any opposition to, or hesitation about the concept has evaporated. Congestion has been significantly reduced or eliminated. An adjacent businessperson, who at first opposed the idea, has said that the solution works great since construction was completed.

The Park-N-Ride that serves the Mayo Clinic traffic was expanded and the intersection is now an eye-catching gateway to Byron. Welcome signage, a bike trail, attractive plantings, and even a Christmas tree in the season have all been integrated as a part of this low-tech, low-cost, successful solution.