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# HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

## **Capitol Update By Senator Howard Marklein September 11, 2015**

### *Roundabouts in Wisconsin*

Roads and transportation infrastructure are important investments in our communities. This year alone, the State Department of Transportation will spend over \$3 billion on transportation needs. Taking a closer look at transportation in Wisconsin is essential. One trend that emerges when looking at transportation spending and priorities is a familiar story to many of us: a significant increase in the number of roundabouts in our communities.

According to the Department of Transportation there were just seven roundabouts on State Trunk Highways in 2005. Ten years later, there are 223 in our state. Nationwide there are 22 states, including Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, and Indiana that are now incorporating roundabouts. Roundabout use is increasing dramatically nationwide.

I recently introduced a bill aimed at giving our local communities more say in whether roundabouts should be constructed. Senate Bill 242 makes it a requirement for the Department of Transportation to receive approval from municipalities when a roundabout is proposed. I believe our local elected officials understand traffic patterns, including pedestrian and business patterns, in their communities better than bureaucrats in Madison. If the DOT were required to obtain local approval for roundabouts, it is my hope this may enhance the communications between DOT and local officials. With the Department of Transportation increasing use of roundabouts, the goal is to ensure communities have a decision in the process and to ensure that these roundabouts benefit our areas.

Currently, the Department of Transportation indicates that installation costs are similar between roundabouts and signal intersections. The Department estimates it costs anywhere from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million to install roundabouts or signalized intersections. I also asked the Department to provide figures on what it costs to maintain both of these intersections. A single lane roundabout costs roughly \$7,500 to maintain over a year while a four signal intersection costs roughly \$13,100 annually.

<b>Estimated Annualized Cost of Roundabouts and Signalized Intersections</b>	
<u>Intersection Infrastructure Type</u>	<u>Estimated Annualized Cost</u>
<i>Single Lane Roundabout</i>	\$7,500
<i>Multilane Roundabout</i>	13,500
<i>Four Signal Intersection</i>	13,100
<i>Eight Signal Intersection</i>	24,500

Source: WI Department of Transportation

While roundabouts may save the state money long term on maintenance costs, they can be disruptive to local traffic flow and patterns, especially when truck and semi traffic is considered. With an increasing amount of roundabouts, I feel it is important to ensure communities have a voice in whether or not they are beneficial and appropriate.

For more information and to connect with me, visit my website <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/17/marklein> and subscribe to my weekly E-Update by sending an email to [Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov). Do not hesitate to call 800-978-8008 if you have input, ideas or need assistance with any state-related matters.