

July 9, 2008

Motorists have a better way to get around near Sylvan Lake

Sylvan Lake... Motorists near Sylvan Lake have a new way to get around the former four-way stop at the Highways 11A and 20 intersection.

A new European-style roundabout recently replaced the intersection, which marks the second time this type of intersection will be used on a rural highway in Alberta. A similar roundabout opened to traffic in the fall of 2007 at the junction of Highways 8 and 22 west of Calgary.

The Sylvan Lake roundabout's circular lanes were recently opened to traffic while construction will continue on the roundabout's centre island. Motorists are advised to use caution in the area and obey all signs and flag people.

Government chose the \$3.5-million roundabout as a solution to the intersection because:

- There are fewer conflict points, lower collision potential, and lower collision severity compared with traffic signals.
- Vehicles travel at lower speeds and in the same direction, which also improves safety.
- Traffic moves more efficiently than a four-way stop.
- Vehicles need not always stop at the intersection as they would at a stop sign. This reduces traffic congestion, noise, fuel consumption and emissions.
- It will accommodate projected traffic for the next 20 to 30 years.
- It costs significantly less (\$3.5 million) than an interchange (\$20-plus million), plus an interchange would not be warranted at this intersection for at least 20 years.

Approximately 7,800 vehicles per day use Highways 11A and 20 near their junction during the summer months and traffic increases significantly during summer weekends.

Some motorists may find the roundabout confusing or intimidating the first time they go through it, but single, circular-lane roundabouts have proven to be very easy to use. Instructions for using a roundabout can be found on Page 72 of the *Basic Licence Driver's Handbook*, available at www.transportation.alberta.ca/531.htm on Alberta Transportation's web site.

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Attachment: How to use a roundabout.

Media inquiries may be directed to:

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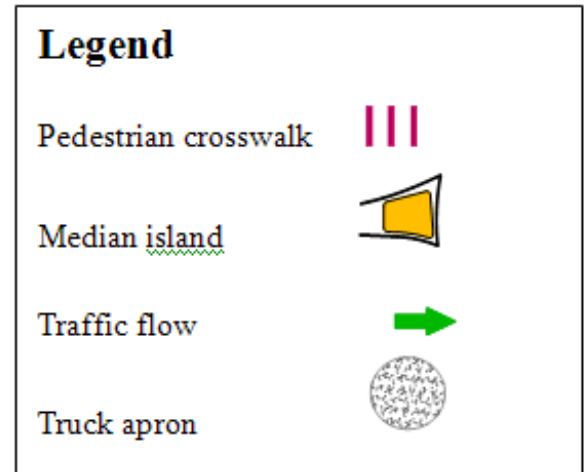
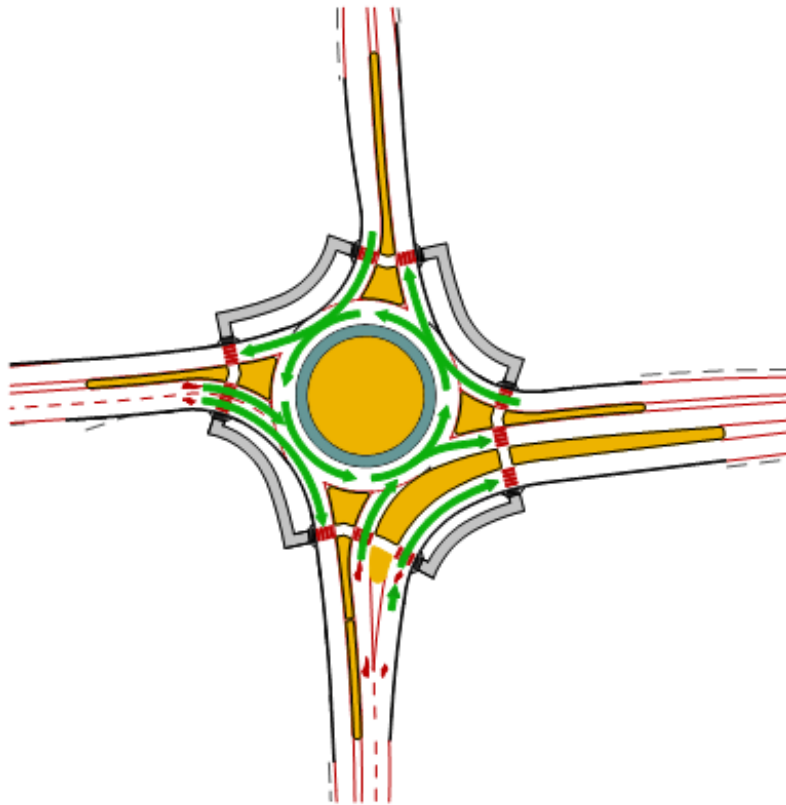
780-427-0623

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To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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How to use a roundabout



- Pedestrians have the right-of-way at marked crosswalks; vehicles must yield to them.
- Traffic entering the roundabout must always stay to the right of the median island and yield to traffic already in the roundabout.
- Vehicles entering the roundabout must yield to the vehicle on the left.
- Vehicles travel in a counter-clockwise direction.
- Drivers must signal for a right-hand turn and use caution when leaving the roundabout.
- Large vehicles may drive on the truck apron (the patterned concrete part of the centre island) to go around the intersection.

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