

**12. IN RE: COUNTY ENGINEER...ADOPTION OF THE CLERMONT COUNTY
ROUNABOUT ENHANCEMENT POLICY...22-0802-005...RATIFIED**

Moved by Commissioner Painter, seconded by Commissioner Corcoran, that the Board of County Commissioners approve the following recommendation:

Recommendation of Jeremy P. Evans, County Engineer, to adopt the *Clermont County Roundabout Enhancement Policy*, setting forth the criteria *for approval and placement of mounding and landscaping within and around roundabouts on County and Township roads*, to be implemented and administered by the County Engineer, as attached hereto and made a part hereof effective upon approval.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Corcoran discussed protection of landowners surrounding roundabouts, and discussed the issue of roundabout sizing at the intersection of Woodville Pike and Deerfield Road, where a roundabout has been proposed. Sukie Scheetz explained that there are different types of roundabouts in varying sizes that can address the need for continuous traffic flow. There is a consultant in place to discuss this project. Commissioner Painter asked for clarification regarding to which this policy would apply. The policy will apply to county and township roads not state, federal or municipal roads.

Upon roll call on the foregoing motion, the vote was as follows:

Commissioner Painter, Yes; Commissioner Corcoran, Yes; Commissioner Batchler, Yes.



Clermont County Roundabout Enhancement Policy

August 2022

DEFINITIONS

CENTRAL ISLAND – the raised area in the center of a roundabout around which traffic circulates.

LANDSCAPING - an area devoted to or developed and maintained with native or exotic planting, lawn, ground cover, trees, shrubs, and other plant materials, paved or decorated surfaces of rock, stone, brick, block or similar material.

ROUNDABOUT - a circular intersection with one-way traffic flow around a central island. Roundabouts within Clermont County are considered part of the highway system (as are other types of intersections).

ROUNDABOUT ENHANCEMENT – landscaping installed and/or maintained within the roundabout intersection.

ROUNDABOUT EXTERIOR – the area adjacent to the roundabout, outside of the circulating roadway and the approach legs.

SPLITTER ISLAND – a raised or painted island separating traffic entering and exiting the roundabout on each approach; the splitter island also serves to deflect and slow entering traffic, as well as providing a refuge for crossing pedestrians.

VERTICAL LANDSCAPE ELEMENT – Upright vegetation in the landscaping which may include tall, narrow plant material, such as trees, or tall grasses.

AUTHORITY

The Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 5543, enables the Clermont County Engineer to have general charge or in some cases, review and monitoring authority of construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance, and repair of all bridges and highways within the county, under the jurisdiction of the board of county commissioners, and construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, or improvement of roads by boards of township trustees.

PURPOSE

These regulations focus on the approval and placement of mounding and landscaping within and around roundabouts. These regulations are designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public at roundabouts through clear sight lines, elimination of obstructions, and avoidance of driver distraction.

ADMINISTRATION

These regulations shall be implemented and administered by the Clermont County Engineer. These regulations will be applied to all roundabout projects through the typical project review process.

JURISDICTION

These regulations shall be applicable to all roundabouts designed or intended for motor vehicle use on county or township roads. These regulations do not apply to state, federal or municipal roadways.

Section 100 – General Items

- A. Roundabouts provide landscaping opportunities not possible for traditional intersections. The primary objectives and considerations of incorporating landscaping into a roundabout design are to:
- Make the central island the focal point, reducing entire viewing areas across from the entry point and thus improving safety
 - Improve the aesthetics of the surrounding area, which shall be secondary to ensuring driver and pedestrian safety.
 - Provide visual guidance to the roundabout
 - Reduces glare in the roundabout environment
 - Avoid obscuring the vehicles in the roundabout or signage to the driver
 - Maintain adequate left entry sight distance and right exit sight distance for vehicles
 - Clearly indicate to drivers that they cannot pass straight through the intersection
 - Mitigate erosion

Landscaping plans must give consideration of future maintenance requirements to ensure traffic is not unduly interrupted during maintenance activities.

- B. Maintenance agreements with the Clermont County Board of Commissioners are required for all roundabouts which are landscaped with any plant materials other than turf grass.
- C. All Board of County Commissioners maintenance agreements for any roundabout landscaping shall be executed before landscaping commences.
- D. Roundabout landscaping shall not constitute a present or future financial burden on Clermont County, unless otherwise specified in the maintenance agreement or other agreements approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

- E. A person aggrieved by the decision of the Board of County Commissioners may appeal to the Clermont County Court of Common Pleas, as provided by and under the authority of Chapter 2506 of the Revised Code.

Section 200 - Central Island

- A. Roundabouts should provide vertical landscaping within the inner central island that: (1) help obscure the line of sight straight through the roundabout to provide drivers an indication that they cannot pass straight through the intersection, (2) make the roundabout more visible at night with vehicle headlights illuminating the central island, (3) promote lower speeds by restricting sight distance to minimal (but acceptable) levels.
- B. The only vertical landscaping that may be considered and approved for installation in the central island are mounding and landscape treatments with minimal consequence to any vehicle that may encroach on the non-mountable portion of the central island. This preference is more pronounced on high speed roads (above 40 mph).
- C. Central Island vertical landscaping is restricted to locations inside a simple closed curve that is smaller than the central island itself. The shape of that curve, designated the "allowable vertical feature (AVF) zone," is defined by:
 - o Stopping sight distance from every point on the circulatory roadway. This typically describes a circle within the central island.
 - o Intersection sight distance on each roundabout approach. Approaching motorists need adequate sight distance to circulating vehicles, and to vehicles entering the roundabout via the next leg upstream.
 - o Clear zone and minimum lateral offset.
- D. To provide the cross-roundabout obscuration and nighttime visibility required in part A, the vertical landscaping should be at least 3.5 feet above the surface of the circulatory roadway and approach roadways. This requirement only applies to areas within the AVF zone that will block the view of the opposite side of the roundabout. Vertical landscaping in all other portions of the AVF zone may be shorter than 3.5 feet.
- E. Low vegetation (less than 2 feet above the surfaces of the circulatory roadway and approach roadways) may be included in the central island outside the AVF zone.
- F. Vertical landscaping in the central island shall not provide an undue distraction to roundabout users. Vertical landscaping that attract excessive user attention to the central island, and therefore away from potential conflicts within the roundabout, are prohibited.
- G. Central Island landscaping shall not impact vehicles circulating the roundabout. The planting of trees, high bushes, or large plants in roundabouts should be limited and done in a manner that creates minimal risk to traffic and pedestrian safety. Any landscaping or mounding that, in the sole discretion of the County Engineer, creates a possible risk to traffic or pedestrian safety shall not be permitted, or if already installed, removed within a reasonable time period.

- H. Any local township zoning resolution that permits the installation of anything other than mounding and landscaping in a roundabout shall not supersede this policy.
- I. Vertical landscaping elements within the central island shall be designed to discourage pedestrian traffic to and through the central island. Street furniture that may attract pedestrian traffic to the central island including, but not limited to benches, bicycle racks, and fencing shall not be permitted. Furthermore any enhancements that are not exclusively mounding or landscaping shall be prohibited including, but not limited to, advertisements, walls, promotional signage, business signage, monuments, markers, fountains, displays of any nature whether permanent or temporary, or any object of any kind that in the sole determination of the County Engineer may impact traffic or pedestrian safety. The County Engineer reserves the right to reject any proposed roundabout enhancement. No roundabout enhancement shall be allowed if such enhancement will violate any state, local, or federal law, rule, regulation, or ordinance.

Section 300 – Splitter Islands

- A. Vertical landscaping on splitter islands, is limited to low landscaping with a mature height of less than 2 feet above the road surface.

Section 400 – Roundabout Exterior

- A. This section applies to areas adjacent to the roundabout – outside the circulating roadway and the approach legs.
- B. If vertical landscaping higher than 2 feet above the road surface are to be included adjacent to the roundabout, they shall not encroach on the following distances/offsets:
 - o Stopping sight distance on the approach leg to the yield line and crosswalk.
 - o Intersection sight distance on each roundabout approach. Approaching motorists need adequate sight distance to circulating vehicles, and to vehicles entering the roundabout via the next leg upstream.
 - o Sight distance to the crosswalk on the next downstream leg.
 - o Clear zone and minimum lateral offset.
- C. Vertical landscaping adjacent to the roundabout shall not provide an undue distraction to roundabout users. Elements that attract user attention away from potential conflicts, within or approaching the roundabout, shall not be allowed.