

Indiana DOT plans 28 intersections for roundabouts

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INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Safety concerns are driving the [Indiana Department of Transportation](#) to plan the installation of roundabouts at 28 more intersections across the state over the next five years.

INDOT installed its first in Valparaiso nearly four years ago and two others last year along Indiana 32 between Noblesville and Anderson.

"It's a big jump from three to 30 roundabouts," INDOT Commissioner [Michael Cline](#) told the [Indiana Business Journal](#) (<http://bit.ly/Ar4f54>). "It's a little bit of a cultural shift for us."

Two years after building a roundabout on Indiana 130 in Valparaiso, total crashes there had fallen 6 percent and the number of injury crashes by 65 percent, according to the transportation department's LaPorte District.

The underlying reason for fewer injuries is the reduction in high-speed collisions.

"You have fender-benders rather than T-bones," Cline said.

A roundabout uses circular lanes to carry traffic in the same direction to the various spokes of an intersection. Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis is a roundabout. Suburban Carmel has more than 70.

Roundabouts slow traffic, but don't halt it like a traffic signal or stop sign. They maintain traffic flow, which generally results in reduced fuel consumption and less air pollution.

Eliminating traffic lights also reduces electricity use, which can run \$1,000 a year at some intersections.

The state and local government have won federal grants to partially pay for some of the roundabouts. Eight of the 12 roundabouts INDOT has planned for central Indiana are set for ramps serving an upgrade of U.S. 31 through Carmel.

INDOT also is using roundabouts on some new-terrain roadways, including the Hoosier Heartland Highway east of Lafayette.

Cline noted that roundabouts aren't without critics, including some who argue that they're inappropriate for roads heavily traveled by semitrailers. That concern can be addressed

by constructing pavement in the roundabout to accommodate trucks that have drivers who miscalculate the turn, he said.

However, Carmel Mayor [James Brainard](#) said roundabouts can create challenges at intersections with traffic volumes of more than 35,000 vehicles per day,

The [Indianapolis Department of Public Works](#) plans to build two federally funded roundabouts next year, spokeswoman [Kara Brooks](#) said. And the agency is considering more of them.

Cline said a number of cities and towns in the state often follow INDOT's lead. He predicted some of them now will look more seriously at roundabouts.

Information from: [Indianapolis Business Journal](#), <http://www.ibj.com>