

City of Rancho Cordova Roundabout Feasibility Study

Community Workshop #1

Meeting Summary

Introduction

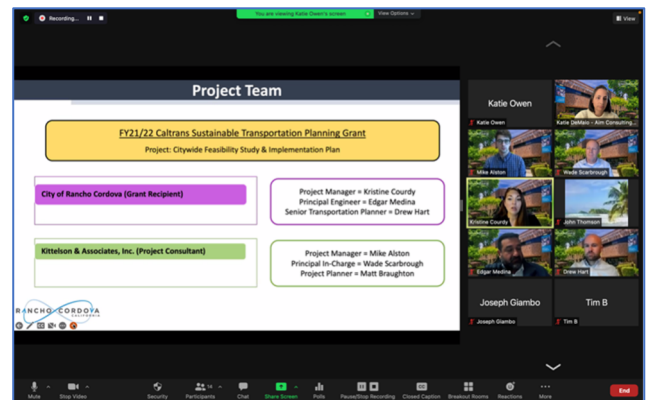
On Wednesday, October 12, 2022, from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m., the City of Rancho Cordova held its first virtual community workshop about the Roundabout Feasibility Study, wherein participants had a chance to learn about roundabouts and provide feedback on potential locations and implementation. A total of 41 community members registered, and 19 community members attended the meeting, which was hosted virtually through Zoom to create the most flexibility and accommodation for participants. The project team also hosted six community members in person at City Hall.

About the Project

The City of Rancho Cordova received a grant to begin the Roundabout Feasibility Study, which explores the possibility of constructing roundabouts in new and existing intersections throughout the city. There are many benefits of installing roundabouts including fewer and less severe crashes, reduction of traffic congestion, less vehicle pollution, creating a sense of place and a “gateway” into the community, and lower maintenance costs compared to traffic signals. The study will evaluate and prioritize potential locations, create an implementation plan including conceptual designs, and develop guidelines for additional roundabout locations in the future.

Community Workshop Purpose & Format

As the first community outreach effort of the Roundabout Feasibility Study, the purpose of this community meeting was more to inform and begin the conversation with the public. Specifically, the virtual community workshop educated participants the benefits of roundabouts and why the city is considering them as well as created a space for community feedback on roundabouts themselves and where they should be considered for installation.



Introducing the project team from the City & from Kittelson.

Following a presentation, Katie DeMaio of AIM Consulting led the project team in facilitating a large group discussion where participants asked questions and provided input through the virtual “chat box” or by verbally asking questions. The project team concluded the community workshop by reviewing project’s next steps and plans for future outreach events.

Presentation

City of Rancho Cordova’s Project Manager Kristine Courdy began the meeting by welcoming everyone, introducing the team, and introducing the project in a high-level way.

First Poll

Katie then facilitated two polls to gauge participants’ connection to the project and background with roundabouts:

- 1) How people are connected to Rancho Cordova (resident, work, recreation, visit with friends/leisure, other); and
- 2) What are your general thoughts/attitude about roundabouts (Likert scale ranging from “very negative” to “very positive”).

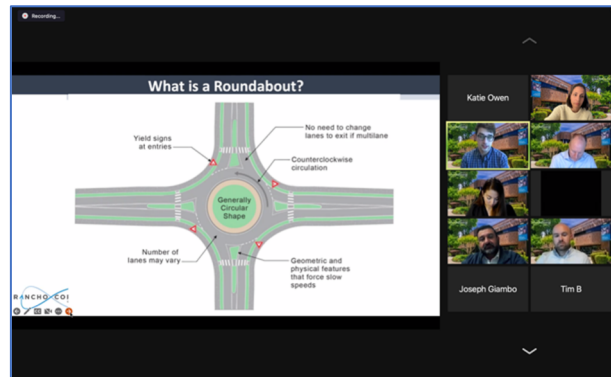
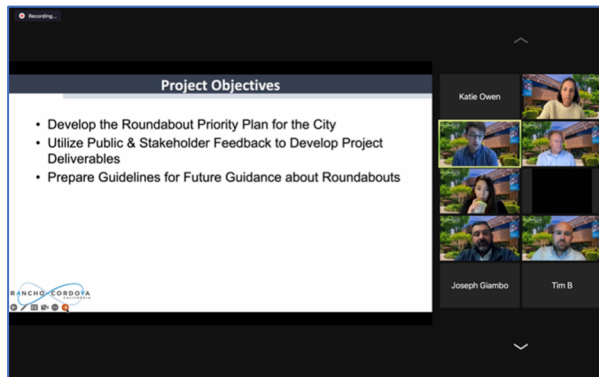
Most people are indeed residents and/or work in Rancho Cordova, and there were mostly positive feelings about roundabouts. In addition to the digital poll results below, three in-person submissions all noted they are residents. Two are “very positive” about roundabouts and one is “neutral.”

1. Identify your purpose here in Rancho Cordova?			
Resident			
Resident; Work			
Resident Work			
Resident; Work; Recreation			
Resident; Work; Recreation			

1. What are your general thoughts/attitude about roundabouts?			
5- Very Positive			
5- Very Positive			
5- Very Positive			
4 - Slightly Positive			
4 - Slightly Positive			
2- Slightly Negative			

Detailed results from the first two live poll questions in Zoom.

Mike Alston, Project Manager from Kittelson & Associates, Inc., began the formal presentation, which provided an overview of the benefits of roundabouts, addressed common questions, and shared the four-phase process for the study. A link to the presentation is included on the Project website.



The presentation started by stating objectives, then defining what a roundabout is so as to discuss benefits.



Second Poll

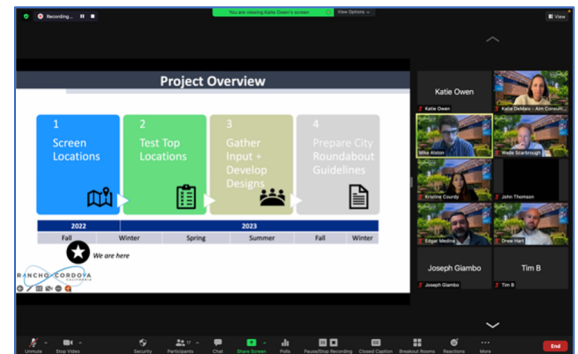
Following Mike’s presentation, Katie facilitated a live poll asking people “Do you feel you have a better understanding of roundabouts?” A lot of participants have a better understanding of roundabouts because of the presentation. This was also reflected in the three in-person poll answers: two understand them better while one remains “already an expert” (written in). Following the live poll, Mike Alston continued the presentation, now focusing on the Rancho Cordova Roundabout Feasibility Study.

1. Do you feel you have a better understanding of roundabouts?			
Yes - I understand them better			
Unchanged			
Unchanged			
Unchanged			
Yes - I understand them better			
Unchanged			
Yes - I understand them better			
Unchanged			
Yes - I understand them better			

Detailed results from the live poll question.

Project Overview

A high-level project schedule was shared, demonstrating the four phases of the project: screen locations using existing data such as traffic volumes and bus routes, test top locations by looking at the specifics at desirable intersections and overlaying design sketches, gather input and develop designs, and prepare city roundabout guidelines as a formal report. The entire project is anticipated to conclude by the end of winter 2023-2024.



Project overview, demonstrating the four phases.

Third Poll

As a transition into the Question & Answer session, Katie asked two questions for the third poll:

- 1) *What is the top priority you would like the City to emphasize for roundabout project opportunities?* Answer options: maximum safety benefit, social equity location emphasis, bike route locations, others (participants were encouraged to utilize the Zoom chat box to share additional priorities).
 - o 88% of participants selected safety.
 - o Two of the three people in person also selected safety (one of whom added “air quality”), and the third noted bike route locations.

1. What is the top priority you would like the City to emphasize for roundabout project opportunities?				
Maximum safety benefit				
Maximum safety benefit				
Maximum safety benefit				
Maximum safety benefit				
Maximum safety benefit				
Social equity location emphasis				
Maximum safety benefit				
Maximum safety benefit				

2) *Has the information presented today changed your thoughts on roundabouts at all?*
 Answer options as a Likert scale ranging from “significantly less favorable opinion” to “significantly more favorable opinion”

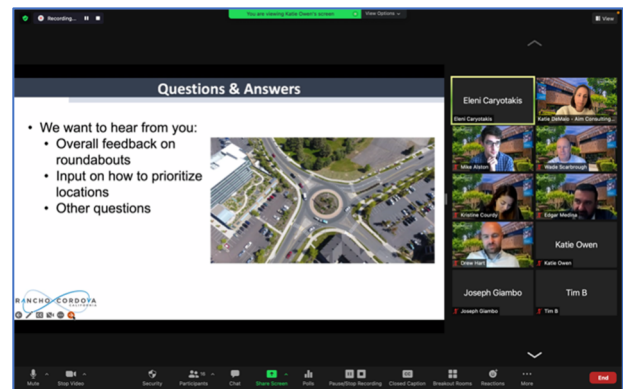
- A lot of opinions were unchanged, but there were a lot of favorable opinions coming in already.
- Again, this was reflected in the in-person results: one remained unchanged (“no change in expertise”), while two noted “significantly more favorable opinion.”

1. Has the information presented today changed your thoughts on roundabouts at all?				
4 - Slightly more favorable opinion				
3 - Opinion has not changed				
3 - Opinion has not changed				
4 - Slightly more favorable opinion				
3 - Opinion has not changed				
3 - Opinion has not changed				
3 - Opinion has not changed				

Detailed results from the live poll question.

Question and Answer Discussion

The meeting was then opened up for questions and answers. What follows is a summary of each question and the project team’s response:



The screen projected during the Q&A Session.

Participant 1 asked if the team has considered adding in Rancho Cordova Police ticketing information, specifically around failure to yield.

- The project team noted that they are including crash history, so it gets added in an indirect way. They don’t have anything as granular as ticket citations, failure to yield in particular – but it is a great idea, and it can be discussed as the project moves forward.

Participant 2 gets around town on a bike or foot. For roundabouts where bikes take a lane, how does the cultural element get tackled so that everyone can use it without issue? How do we help people know what the actual traffic laws are?

- If it’s a location where it is appropriate to have a bike lane on the approach roadways, then it may be the case for it to be appropriate to provide a bike lane outside of the roundabout to keep bicyclists off the roadway. If it’s a location where speeds are managed pretty well, then people on bikes can use the travel lanes.
- The City does have a Bike Master Plan which will also inform this project and the development of the guidelines. Once roundabouts are actually getting implemented, there will be a corresponding educational campaign in the community.

Zoom Chat: Participants started sharing possible intersection ideas in the chat box, including Coloma Road & Zinfandel Road, Olsen Drive & Calle Del Sol Way, Routier & Rockingham, Sunrise near the new developments, Aramon Drive & Chassella Way, and Rancho Cordova Parkway.

Participant 3 asked for a right-of-way clarification: if a test plot on the desired location goes over into private property, the city has to make an offer to buy that property, correct?

- The project team noted that right of way constraints are a consideration for each location and if required will follow the right of way acquisition procedures.

Participant 4 asked if the crash data will be provided to the public because there are a lot of hot spots/areas that need improvement but it's hard to suggest locations without access to true data.

- The project team noted that their intent is to share their work with the public as the Project moves along. The city also has a Local Road Safety Plan adopted by City Council earlier this year which captures crash history data from the past five years. That will be available on the City's website.

Participant 5 asked if intersections without streetlights can be prioritized.

- The project team noted they include traffic signals in the analysis. They have not used street lighting data, but that can be assessed as locations are tested.

Next Steps

Kristine Courdy concluded the meeting by sharing the next steps of the project, which reviewed the four phases shared earlier in the presentation. The next community workshop is planned for early 2023.

Two final comments/questions were made at the end of the meeting:

Participant 6 asked about road design, noting that the trend in traffic engineering is now toward traffic calming. That being the case, why are new roads in the newer parts of the city still being designed like highways?

- The project team shared that part of this project is creating guidelines to be taken into the development of future projects – so it is not just for how they implement roundabouts in existing parts of the city, but also as an integral planning element in the development of newer communities.
- The historic trend for a long time used to prioritize how to get the most cars through the fastest, but now the industry is seeing a shift toward traffic calming especially in neighborhoods – so people will start to see the newer developments incorporate roundabouts. But the project team doesn't want to just focus on the newer parts of the city – they want to look at where roundabouts would be appropriate treatments and design elements in all parts of the city.

Participant 7 commented that he believes only single-lane roundabouts should be used; multilane streets should be reduced prior to the crosswalks. Please design streets physically (narrowing lane widths, etc.) to reduce speeds approaching roundabouts to 15 mph or less, without relying on ineffective "speed limit" signs. Separate bicycle lanes would be great.