

From: hsbell <hsbell@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 23, 2019 12:19 PM
To: Community Development Email
Subject: Concern around lake rd/Everett Street roundabout

To Whom It May Concern,

Our Neighborhood of Camas, The Village at Round Lake, is greatly concerned about the City's proposal, and overall placement, of a traffic roundabout at Everett Street and Lake Road. The sole access and egress to our neighborhood 30 homes is dependent on safely making turns between 35th Ave and Everett Street, just north of, but excluded from, the proposed traffic circle. Currently, the only way in which we can easily and safely turn on to Everett Street is when the traffic signals at the previously mentioned intersection change. This allows us, as well as any one parked in the overflow parking lot of Lacamas park, to have a break in the traffic, which in the morning is almost constant due to the northbound high school drivers and southbound commuter traffic. Safe access/egress from 35th Ave to Everett Street is also problematic in the summer as there is a huge increase in recreational use and demand for the activities provided by Lacamas and Rounds Lakes.

I ask that you please perform a detailed traffic flow and efficiency study during both the academic school year, as well as Summer months, to best determine the safety and effectiveness of the roundabout and its placement with particular attention to 35th Avenue.

Sincerely,

Hillary Hanson

Village At Round Lake Home Owner

3557 NE Franklin Rd

Camas, WA 98607

Lauren Hollenbeck

From: Jim Hodges
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 4:01 PM
To: hsbell
Cc: Lauren Hollenbeck; Curleigh (Jim) Carothers; Steve Wall
Subject: RE: Concern around Lake Rd/Everett Street Roundabout - SEPA 19-21
Attachments: FAQ Board 4.5.19 - 20200107 E-Mail.pdf

Hello Ms. Hanson –

Thanks for submitting your comments regarding the roundabout improvements at Lake Road and Everett Street. I understand your concern that installation of a roundabout will reduce gaps in traffic flows on NE Everett Street, especially during peak traffic events. From what you have mentioned below, it sounds like you and your neighbors currently have to wait for the existing traffic signal to change so traffic on Everett Street can clear enough to allow a left-turn southbound. The alternatives analysis for this project evaluated six different design options. Three of these were focused on development of more robust signalized intersection, and three were different variations of a roundabout design.

As the traffic signal operates now, traffic flow on Everett is stopped to allow vehicles from Lake Road to turn left or right onto Everett Street. During this signal phase, vehicles stack-up on Everett Street until the signal changes and releases traffic moving north and south on Everett. The effect of the signal stopping traffic in all directions is to create a “platoon” of vehicles heading north and south once the signal turns green. Sometimes this stacking of vehicles on Everett can extend to the north far enough to actually prevent a left-turn from NE 35th Avenue. This “platooning” creates a steady stream of cars without any gaps once the signal turns green. Also, pedestrian crossings at the intersection essentially stop traffic flow in all directions, so more vehicles will tend to stack-up during this signal phase. As you have pointed out, the area is a popular recreation area in the summer which creates much more pedestrian traffic.

Roundabouts operate differently. Roundabouts actually tend to create more gaps in traffic flow because traffic is continually moving through the intersection. All traffic must slow to negotiate the roundabout, but it doesn’t generally have to stop. Since traffic continues to move through the intersection, the “platooning” I mentioned above doesn’t have an opportunity to occur. The effect of traffic moving through a roundabout will create numerous random smaller gaps that will accommodate one or two vehicles at a time to enter Everett from NE 35th Ave. The general rule with a roundabout is that “everyone must slow down but no one has to stop.” Traffic speeds typically decrease in the vicinity of a roundabout, and lower speeds result in larger gaps and easier access from side streets. The current roundabout design will move the intersection to the south about 230 feet, which will also tend to increase gaps. Finally, there was special consideration given to the movement of pedestrians through the intersection. This relates to providing safer opportunities for pedestrians to move on all legs of the intersection, as well as the potential impact of pedestrians on vehicle movement through the intersection. Our final design shows an alternative that will have pedestrians crossing the intersection one-lane at a time. This configuration allows pedestrians to be isolated to looking at traffic in one lane from one direction before deciding to make a crossing to a protected island.

A detailed traffic study and analysis was completed by our Traffic Engineering consultant, Kittelson & Associates. Early-on when evaluating different design alternatives, the design team looked at the potential for decreased gaps on Everett north and south of the roundabout. The conclusion was that available gaps would generally be increased with a roundabout vs. a larger signalized intersection since traffic won’t have the opportunity to stack-up at the intersection, as I mentioned above. The design takes into account growth for the next through year 2040.

Having said all of that, I have asked our Traffic Engineering consultant to collect additional traffic counts for NE 35th Avenue and to perform a gap analysis based on the collected information. I expect this effort to take at least two weeks. From experience I also understand that it's not always easy to summarize and convey technical information in an e-mail, and it's clear to me that you and others in your neighborhood are concerned about the potential of longer wait times at NE 35th and Everett. With this in mind, I'd be happy to schedule a time meet with you and others if there's a desire to discuss your concerns in more detail. I note that we have scheduled another public project meeting for 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 23rd at the Lacamas Lake Lodge on Lake Road near the intersection. I hope to have the gap analysis completed prior to that meeting so I can share it with you. Additionally, I have also attached some FAQ information that was displayed at our second Open House Meeting for the project on April 9, 2020 that relates to the traffic gap issue. I'm happy to answer any other questions you may have.

Thanks Much, Jim

James Hodges
Capital Projects Manager
616 NE 4th Avenue
Camas, WA 98607
www.cityofcamas.us | jhodges@cityofcamas.us
Phone: 360.817.7234 | Fax: 360.834.1535



- Q. How will construction impact traffic? Can it happen outside peak traffic hours?**
Most construction will not have a significant impact on traffic, because the majority of the new construction can be completed outside of the existing T-intersection. Efforts will be made to further minimize disruption, including performing work in the existing roadway during non-peak-time periods during the day and over the summer, when school is not in session.
In comparison, a signalized intersection would have had a more significant impact on traffic, because the footprints of all signalized concepts overlapped the existing T-intersection and would result in longer and more frequent traffic delays.
- Q. Can there be a bridge crossing over or a tunnel running under the intersection for pedestrians and bicyclists?**
A bridge or tunnel would limit crossing options, likely requiring some people to travel out of their way to cross. For both the roundabout options, the proposed street-level crossings are simple enough that people would likely find them more comfortable and convenient than walking or biking out of their way to use a bridge or tunnel.
A “midblock” crossing just south of the Round Lake parking lot could also be considered, allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to cross only two lanes of traffic with potential aid from a flashing beacon alerting motor vehicle traffic to their presence.
- Q. Why not include replacement of the existing bridge north of the Lake Road/Everett Street intersection regardless of the alternative selected? It should all be fixed now, not later.**
It comes down to funding and timing. A bridge replacement is anticipated to more than double the construction cost and construction time for the project. Per the community survey, a timely remedy for the congestion problem is strongly preferred by the community. Although funding has not yet been acquired for this project, the City is confident that it can acquire the funds in the near future for the proposed intersection improvements. However, the City anticipates that it would take much longer to acquire funding for the bridge replacement, which would slow down the entire project significantly.
- Q. There isn't enough parking for the recreational facilities there now; how will this project impact parking availability and will it improve the issue of people parking along the shoulder of the road?**
Neither of the roundabout options being considered will impact the existing parking lot at Round Lake immediately north of the intersection. Although a new parking lot is not included in the scope of this project, the City and County are both very aware of the current parking challenges and are working together to find a solution.
The planned roadway and intersection improvements will include curbs, sidewalks, and bike lanes. While these enhancements will improve access and mobility, they will also eliminate places for people to park illegally on the shoulder of the road within the project limits – something that many community members cited as a current frustration. The project will also add a sidewalk along NE Lake Road from Lacamas Lake Lodge to the intersection, allowing people wishing to access the Round Lake area to use the Lacamas Lake Lodge parking lot and walk safely to the Round Lake trail network.

Project Update

From January through March 2019, the City of Camas project team, assisted by engineering firms PBS, Kittelson, and BergerABAM, completed several initial planning steps, including a project design alternatives analysis, stakeholder interviews, two project advisory committee meetings, a presentation to Camas City Council, Community Open House 1, and an online survey.

- At the Community Open House 1 on February 26, the project team shared details about the planning process and presented two main concepts under consideration: a signalized intersection and roundabout intersection.
- Based on community and stakeholder comments, emails, and survey feedback, combined with analysis of several factors, including safety, accessibility, environmental impact, and projected growth, one concept stood out as best meeting the needs of the Camas Community: **the roundabout concept**.
- Subsequently, on March 18 the project team recommended the roundabout concept to Camas City Council and discussed the potential for **two options**.

Next Steps

- **April 9:** The project team will share the two roundabout options at Community Open House 2 and ask for input on their preferred option, by way of a visual voting map and for those not present, an online survey. This information and the online survey will also be made available through City of Camas social media, the Camas Connect App, the project website, www.cityofcamas.us/lakeroad, and local media outlets.
- **May 6:** These preferences will be shared with Camas City Council for consideration.
- **Ongoing:** Based on direction provided by Camas City Council, the project team will prepare a final design and seek funding needed for construction.

For a better understanding of the benefits of the roundabout option, please read through the following questions and answers inspired by your questions, comments, and survey remarks.

What we've heard so far...

reduce long wait times accommodate growth
provide bicycle access
implement pedestrian safety add center turn lanes
add sidewalks protect our environment minimize construction delays
minimize impacts to wetlands reduce traffic congestion build safe crossings
provide roundabout usage education

Your Input is Important!

We invite you to learn more and share feedback in any of the following ways:

Online: www.cityofcamas.us/lakeroad
Visit the City's project website for project details, upcoming events, and next steps.

Community Survey 2
Please take the community survey, available on the project website, from April 9 to April 20, 2019.

Contact us with questions, concerns, or comments:
Jim Hodges, City of Camas, Project Manager, 360-817-7234, jhodges@cityofcamas.us
James Carothers, City of Camas, Engineering Manager, 360-817-7230, jcarothers@cityofcamas.us

NE EVERETT STREET NE LAKE ROAD

Question & Answer

Intersection Improvements

Q. Are roundabouts safe for pedestrians and bicyclists?

Yes. Very few crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists have been reported at roundabouts. A recent study reviewed 6,771 reported crashes at 355 U.S. roundabouts over an average period of 5.9 years.



1.1%
Of total crashes
involved bicyclists

0.4%
Of total crashes
involved pedestrians

In general, it is safest for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross a single lane of one-way traffic. Both of the proposed roundabout configurations have single-lane entries and exits, with one exception (the northbound entry—which would have two lanes going one way). Roundabouts slow drivers down, giving them time to react and increasing the likelihood they will yield.

Whichever roundabout design is ultimately chosen, it will offer safety and accessibility to all pedestrians and bicyclists, including those with mobility and vision disabilities, in adherence with state and federal guidelines.

Q. What about school traffic?

Both the signalized and roundabout options presented in February 2019 were designed to address future traffic needs, as well as traffic associated with anticipated growth in local schools. Specifically, the project team reviewed traffic counts taken during various times during the day, including during peak school commute times, and looked at the most recent Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council predictive models for traffic conditions in 2040, which consider how much traffic is expected to be generated by future area land use, including schools.

Q. Aren't roundabouts confusing to high school students?

Research suggests that teens learn to navigate roundabouts more quickly than adults. For a good regional example, city officials in Kennewick reported that high school students picked up rapidly on how the roundabout installed near Southridge High School worked. Their observations were supported by comments from residents. The city aided understanding by providing informational how-to videos. The effectiveness of this roundabout encouraged Kennewick to build 25 more roundabouts in the following 19 years.



Preferred Alternative Option 1

Option 1 saves an existing American chestnut tree, but has greater impacts to the natural visual buffer between the roadway and Round Lake.

LEGEND

AVAILABLE RIGHT-OF-WAY

WETLAND / SHORELINE

PRIVATE PROPERTY

RCO PROPERTY

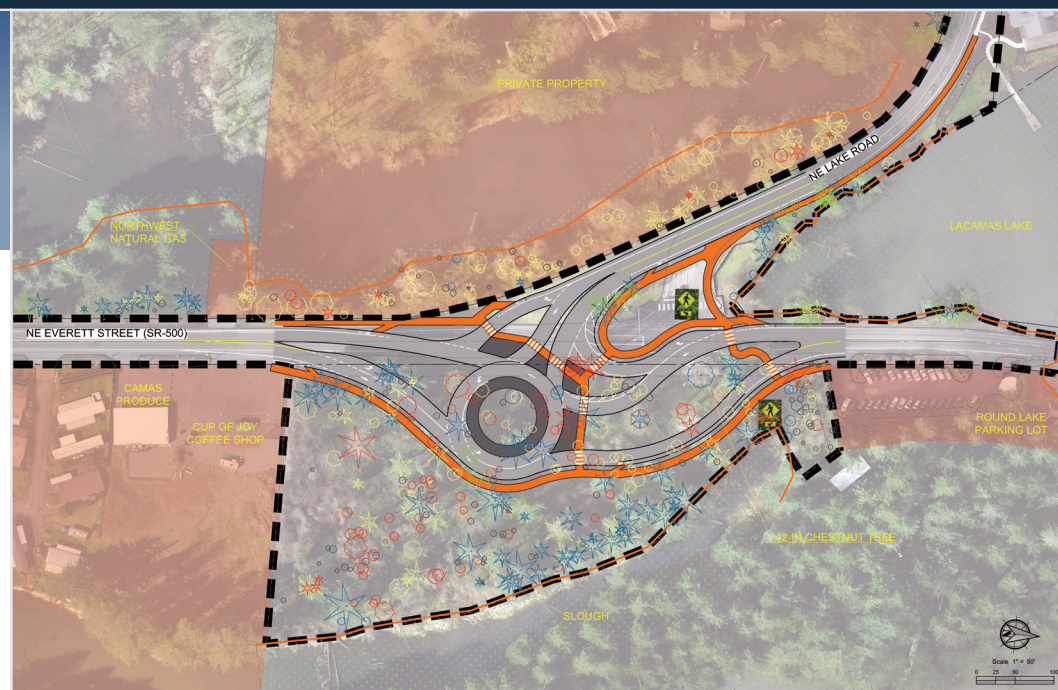
TREE - GOOD

TREE - FAIR

TREE - POOR

TREE - HAZARD

TREE - NOT SIGNIFICANT



Preferred Alternative Option 2

Option 2 removes the American chestnut tree, but provides a more natural buffer between the roadway and Round Lake.

LEGEND

AVAILABLE RIGHT-OF-WAY

WETLAND / SHORELINE

PRIVATE PROPERTY

RCO PROPERTY

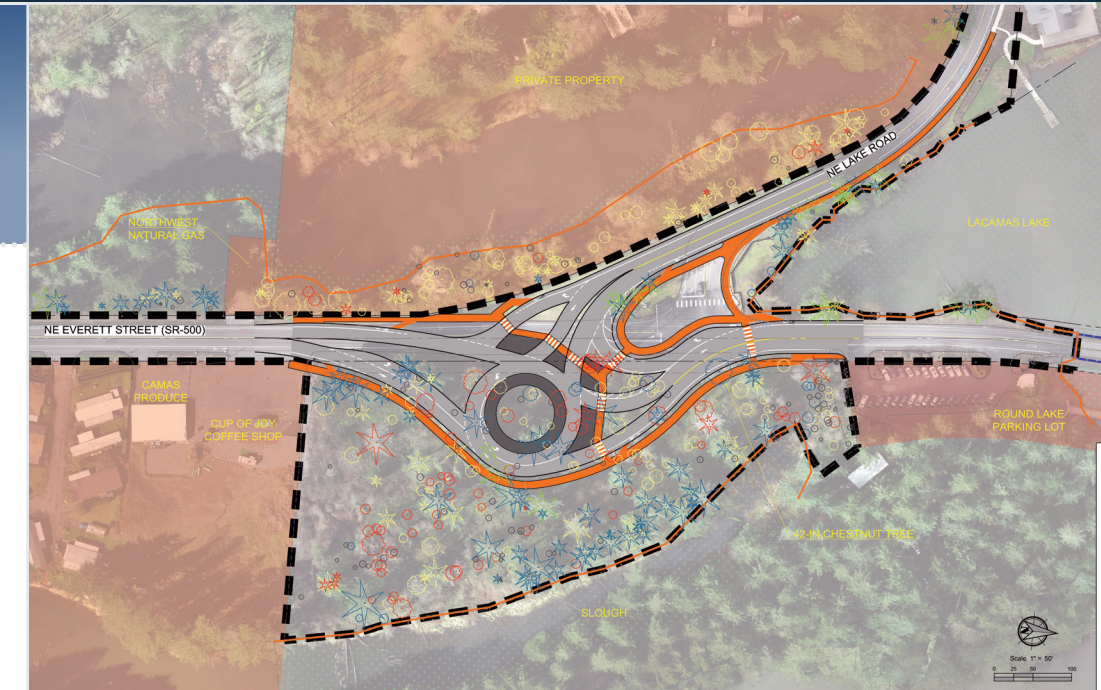
TREE - GOOD

TREE - FAIR

TREE - POOR

TREE - HAZARD

TREE - NOT SIGNIFICANT



Q. Roundabouts have continuous, non-stopping traffic. Doesn't that make it harder for pedestrians, vehicles, and bicyclists to enter and exit the main roads?

A roundabout can actually improve access. Its circular construction slows people down, creating more gaps and increasing yielding behavior. In this way, a roundabout is similar to a four-way stop without a signal.

In comparison, a signalized intersection would have resulted in longer waits for gaps in traffic because the lines of cars waiting for the signal are likely to block driveways and side streets near the intersection. Additionally, the gaps in traffic provided by a traffic signal are short lived due to the signal cycles allowing a new stream of traffic every time the light changes.

Q. How many trees will be impacted by each of the two roundabout options being considered?

Either roundabout option selected will require the removal of some trees. The anticipated number of trees impacted varies between the two preferred alternative options. Option 1 is anticipated to impact 159 trees (but saves the American chestnut tree) and Option 2 is anticipated to impact 146 trees (including the American chestnut). Several of the trees currently in the area have received a poor health assessment.

Q. How will each roundabout option being considered affect the natural visual buffer between Round Lake and NE Everett Street (SR 500)?

Either roundabout option selected will affect the natural visual buffer between the Round Lake Trail and NE Everett Street to some degree. The roundabout option that incorporates the existing American chestnut tree (Preferred Alternative Option 1) would create a new roadway closest to the trail and have the most significant impact on the natural visual buffer.

Whichever roundabout option is selected, new trees and foliage will be planted to mitigate the removal of existing trees and help restore the natural visual buffer. The area will also undergo ivy removal and other proactive efforts to support the health of the new and existing trees.