

Frequently Asked Questions

20th / Penrose / Packer / Moyamensing Intersection Traffic Calming Project

What is traffic-calming?

Traffic calming is intended to slow vehicle speeds and “calm” traffic. It alters driver behavior, reduces risk of crashes, and improves conditions for non-motorized street users.

Will the changes cause more congestion?

Traffic volumes at this intersection can be accommodated by a single lane roundabout without significant delays. There may still be some congestion at the intersection during the morning and evening peak periods, however there will be significantly less delay during all other times of the day. This improvement is due to the continuous flow of vehicles in roundabout where vehicles only yield until a gap is available versus waiting at a red light. When no conflicting traffic is present at the intersection, vehicles can slowly proceed through the intersection without needing to stop.

Are SEPTA depot/garage operations impacted?

Access to/from the SEPTA Southern Depot on 20th Street will be maintained as it currently operates. The lane for left turns from Moyamensing into the depot and the right turn slip lane from Moyamensing Avenue onto 20th Street will both be maintained. All existing driveways to the depot will remain operational once the Penrose roundabout is constructed. Buses traveling through the roundabout will not need to use the mountable center island truck apron.

How will a roundabout impact local businesses?

Access to all businesses will be maintained during construction and when construction is complete. Adjustments to various driveways will be required to tie into the new proposed curb lines. When construction is complete, properties located on Moyamensing Avenue west of the intersection will have access to Penrose Avenue via a right-in/right-out intersection. They will not have direct access to the new roundabout. Access will be maintained to the Penrose Diner with the modification that all vehicles exiting the Diner onto Penrose Avenue from the driveway closest to the intersection must turn right. If a drivers' destination requires them to travel southbound on Penrose Avenue, they would turn right, travel through the roundabout, and exit the leg for southbound Penrose Avenue.

Are there additional features or enhancements?

Upgraded lighting is proposed as part of this project. In general, roundabouts offer the opportunity to provide an attractive entry or gateway to the neighborhood. However, requirements must be met to ensure that it is safe. For example, hard objects and vertical elements in the center island directly facing the entries could be a safety hazard. Coordination for beautification opportunities at the intersection is ongoing.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

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Will it be more difficult to cross when walking?

Crossing at a roundabout is generally easier and safer for a pedestrian than crossing a traditional signalized intersection as pedestrians will only cross one direction of traffic at a time. To cross at a roundabout, pedestrians should use the marked crosswalks, wait for traffic to clear, cross the exit/entrance lane to the island which provides a refuge to wait for traffic to clear the other direction. Pedestrians should not cross the circular roadway to the center island.

How do you navigate this roundabout on a bike?

Bikes should ride counterclockwise (in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic). Bicycles can be operated as either a motor vehicle (in a lane on the road) or on the shared-use path. If proceeding to the shared-use path, the bicyclist should exit the roadway and follow the dedicated bicycle lane portion of the shared-use path. When crossing the intersection using the shared-use path, bicyclists should advance to the crosswalk, and follow proper procedures for pedestrian crossings. If proceeding as a motor vehicle, the bicyclist should move into the middle of the lane, operate as a motor vehicle would, and obey the traffic laws. In addition, the bicyclist should indicate his or her route intentions through correct hand signals.

How will trucks fit?

Trucks (and buses) will have full access at the intersection. The largest trucks (such as 18-wheelers) may need to utilize the mountable center island “truck apron” to complete their path. The truck apron is designed for large vehicles to turn without striking fixed objects or other road users.

Will the changes be difficult to navigate?

A roundabout at this intersection offers slower speeds, fewer conflict points, and easier decision making as compared to the traditional signalized control. Roundabouts reduce and simplify the number of places where motor vehicles could potentially conflict with other intersection users (vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians). The roundabout is designed to slow vehicles as they enter, travel through, and exit the circular intersection. The lower design speed is likely to improve safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Will stadium-traffic change the roundabout after following special events?

Operations at the roundabout regarding yielding and right-of-way procedures will be consistent at all times. A significant increase in traffic volumes, such as during a special event, compared to typical operations could result in increased queuing. The location allows for increased queues during these times since there are no traffic signals within close proximity to the intersection. The police department shepherds traffic to major highways during special events as efficiently as possible. This occurs predominantly south and east of the stadiums. If it is determined that police are needed to control the intersection during special events, they could plan to regulate the roundabout or close certain legs to allow for better ingress or egress operations that are the most beneficial to maintaining traffic flow.



Visit phila.gov/streets for more information on traffic-calming policies.