

From: Anvanews@aol.com

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To: anvanews@aol.com

Subject: notes and some history about the Roy Road / NM 313 Roundabout project

A few notes and some history about the Roy Road / NM 313 Roundabout project with a rant and venting about NMDOT.

My personal opinions – Steve Wentworth

In 2009, the New Mexico Department of Transportation – District 3, told the far north valley / Alameda community that there was going to be a roundabout installed at the intersection of Roy Road / NM 313.

NMDOT did a terrible job of working with the public and letting the public know about the project – public outreach was absolutely pathetic. We got poor information if we got any at all. The NMDOT District 3 Engineer bailed out of some public meetings because he and his staff were apparently afraid of the negative reactions they had created with the community about the project. Members of our community were angry and many had reached a point where they did not believe a single thing said by NMDOT. (Many in our community share those same types of thoughts today about the Albuquerque Department of Municipal Development.) It must be noted that all of the meetings were civil and productive.

Most didn't think the roundabout would work and most assumed traffic would become a dangerous nightmare on Roy Road (Tramway Rd) / NM 313 and the close-by intersections of Second and Fourth Street. The area is used by all sorts of vehicles – bicyclists going to Bernalillo, people towing horse trailers to semi-trucks – you name it - the area is very busy. Accidents were all too common at this poorly designed and dangerous area.

We believed the only good thing proposed to happen with the project was the reworking of the bridge over the AMAFCA North Diversion Channel to allow an area for pedestrian traffic. It was thought that the rest of the project was going to be a disaster.

We were wrong about the roundabout; it works and works well.

NMDOT did terrible job of letting people know how the roundabout worked. People drove in the wrong direction; they drove over the center island and most came to a complete stop wondering what to do at this strange traffic configuration.

The good news is that after a while people got use to driving the roundabout and traffic started to flow in a good manner. Accidents at the intersection have dropped.

Most who use the roundabout will admit that it was a good solution to a dangerous problem.

The community learned a few things with the experience. We will question the project managers, engineers and government officials about projects – we have learned that most projects improve when the public becomes involved. We are ready to demand good public processes about items that will involve or impact our community and

probably most important, many in the community try not to jump to conclusions when we don't have facts or experience with new or different things.

Bottom line: The roundabout works well, traffic flows smoothly and accidents have been reduced.

(Note: I put fingers to keyboard after hearing about the controversy concerning Rio Grande and Candelaria. I heard many of the same concerns and misconceptions we had about the NM 313/Roy Road roundabout and I thought it was important to share some information. I was not asked by anyone to express my viewpoints or my opinions. I have not studied the plans for the roundabout in question and I have not formed an opinion about the particular configuration. I must say, I am amazed at the public's reaction to this little local project when compared to the public's reaction to the I-25/Paseo del Norte project which will have a gigantic impact to the greater community. SW)

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Website: www.anvanews.com

Email: anvanews@aol.com

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