Development of Caltrans Guidance and Policy on Roundabouts

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History of CT Roundabout Policy

- 1993 Policy Memo
  - “...may be considered under unusual circumstances where conventional design would not perform adequately”
  - “…where speeds and volumes are low…”
  - “…will not be considered at freeway interchanges.”

  - To improve safety or operations; NOT for the purpose of aesthetics or traffic calming
  - Intersection ADT ≤5000
  - Technical guidance content accurate, but vague

- FHWA Guide released June 2000
Roundabout Task Force Objectives

- Created a Multi-Disciplinary Team
- “Do roundabouts have a place on the State Highway System?”
- Determined Benchmark for Comparison of Findings – FHWA Guide
- Examined Existing Research
- Did We Need to Revise or Develop New Guidance Documentation?

- Each roundabout shall be developed according to the FHWA Guide and the CT Supplement.
- The primary application is to provide optimal safety and operations at intersections.
- All roundabout proposals are “conceptually approved” by HQ Design and Operations.
- Deviations from FHWA or CT Supplement must be approved by HQ Design and Operations.
- Does not specify operational analysis methodology.
Where are we now?

- “Reaction Mode” for roundabout implementation
- We need to be in “Proactive Mode” – Safety, Operational Improvement Projects
- Research Proposals
- Training and Peer Reviews
Barriers to Roundabouts in CA

- Lack of Awareness, Knowledge, Expertise
- Resistance to Change
- Differing Viewpoints – Some believe they are “right” or know what’s “superior.”
- Extreme High Volumes & Tight R/W in Urban Areas
- Current Funding/Prioritization Methods
- Litigious Climate – Deep Pocket State
- Commitment for Resources/Staff with Expertise
Where do we go from here?

- Research new findings that deviate from FHWA Guide
- National Uniformity- What are other states doing?
- Soliciting Executive Management Support
- Continue to examine safety issues with bicyclists, pedestrians, ADA
Thank You

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