



# Ridgefield Roundabouts Design Approach

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Roundabout Committee | Public Works Department

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## Purpose

This document outlines the design approach for Ridgefield's Roundabouts, focusing on safety, landscaping, art, lighting, irrigation, and maintenance. The goal is to create functional, safe, and visually appealing Roundabouts that reflect Ridgefield's identity while ensuring long-term sustainability.

## Safety

- Incorporate **knee walls** to slow errant vehicles and protect art and plantings.
- Ensure design elements do not encourage pedestrians to enter the Roundabout.
- Ensure pedestrians are visible when entering and leaving the Roundabout.

## Landscaping

- **Extensive use of native plants:**
  - Lower maintenance (minimal pruning).
  - Low water use, once established.
  - Supports pollinators, birds, and local wildlife.
- **Design principles:**
  - Natural forest floor approach. See the Maintenance Section below for more details on natural forest floor.
  - Wide diversity of native plantings - evergreen and deciduous.
  - Sustainable species with non-invasive roots.
  - Seasonal and year-round interest.
- **Additional features:**
  - Use of boulders and logs for natural appearance and habitat.
  - Mound the soil in the center of the Roundabout (approximately 18-inches higher in the center than the outside edge) and taper down at the outside edge to allow for mounding and equal visibility of Roundabout features while traversing the Roundabout.

## Art

- **Design goals:**
  - Creating beauty while reminding and informing the community of local history.
  - Support local artists.
  - Provide visual interest without distracting drivers.
- **Specifications:**
  - Scalable and vertical, easily visible from a distance.
  - Non-reflective materials.
  - Low maintenance.

- Avoid interactive features that could invite the public to enter the Roundabout (e.g., stairs, benches).

## Lighting and Irrigation

- Tailored to each Roundabout's design, location, and purpose.
- Flexible approach depending on specific goals.
- Compliant with city codes and regulations (no up-lighting)

## General Design Themes

The general design themes in all Roundabouts should establish unity through:

- Consistent use of native plants.
- Thematic elements tied to Ridgefield's identity (e.g., native birdlife, wildlife refuge, historic events and activities, etc.).
- Maintain taller plants in the center with shorter plants on the edge, balancing the movement around the Roundabout as traveling.

## Maintenance Standards

- **Adopt a forest floor concept:**
  - Allow leaves and plant matter to decompose naturally in order to maintain soil quality, reduce evaporation, and provide insect habitat.
  - Minimal blowing; no annual bark dust application.
  - Encourage plants to fill in naturally, shading out weeds.
- **Ensure:**
  - Ease of access for water, sewer, and utilities.
  - Plant resilience against weather events.
  - Accessibility for vegetation and utility maintenance.

## Conclusion

This design approach emphasizes safety, sustainability, and storytelling. By integrating native plants, local art, and thoughtful maintenance practices, Ridgefield's Roundabouts will serve as functional infrastructure while celebrating the city's identity and growth.