



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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~ MEDIA ADVISORY ~

SAFETY BEACONS INSTALLED AT THE MLK PARKWAY ROUNDABOUT

Notification will help drivers recognize when pedestrians are present

Beginning on Tuesday, December 28, motorists will be alerted to stop when pedestrians are using one of nine crossings on the Martin Luther King Parkway Roundabout in Springfield. While the roundabout has always complied with safety standards, some regular users of the pedestrian crossings asked City staff if additional tools were available to further enhance the safety of pedestrians. The new **R**ectangular **R**apid **F**lashing **B**eacons (RRFB's) provide that additional level of safety by displaying flickering lights to notify drivers that someone is trying to cross.

These devices are similar to the traffic beacons that were recently deployed on Main Street, by ODOT and International Way, by the City of Springfield.

How they work:

When a pedestrian needs to cross the street, they activate the beacon by pushing a standard crossing button. This displays a flickering light and notifies the driver that someone is trying to cross. Drivers are required by Oregon law to stop for pedestrians who are trying to cross the street in a cross walk. The flicker flash of the beacon sends a positive message to the driver, that a pedestrian is present and attempting to cross the street. Once the pedestrian has crossed all the way across the travel lane that the driver is in and half of the next lane, the driver can continue with their trip.

Background:

The roundabout was constructed and opened in 2006 and was built with accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists. At that time, and still to this date, the project met all requirements for pedestrian access and utilized best practices for pedestrian safety. Recently, new tools for enhancing pedestrian safety have become available and the City has taken advantage of these devices that were not available for use previously.

Studies of RRFBs installed around the country document that drivers will STOP 80% to 95% of the time. However, pedestrians need to be sure that the vehicles have stopped before trying to cross and must still take responsibility for their own safety. Simply because the lights are on does not mean that the drivers will stop every time.