

Winona hosts Women on Wheels biker gathering – 3B Canoeist rescued at Lake Winona – 4B WAPS debates in-the-works equity policy – 5B MN City youth baseball wins Lake City tourney – 6B

WAPS Board to vote on referendum

by ALEXANDRA RETTER

Winona Area Public Schools (WAPS) Board members will likely decide on July 21 about the scope and timing of a multi-million-dollar facilities referendum. For most of this year, the School Board has been planning an \$87-million referendum to go before voters in November, to repair,

upgrade, and expand all of its buildings. During its last meeting, consultants and some board members raised the possibility of delaying or downsizing the referendum.

In an interview earlier this month, School Board Chair Nancy Denzer said she hopes the board will make a decision on Thursday on what projects to pursue in a referendum and when to hold it. She and School

Board member Tina Lehnertz planned to review a recommendation for millions in upgrades from a task force to further facilitate Thursday's discussion, she said.

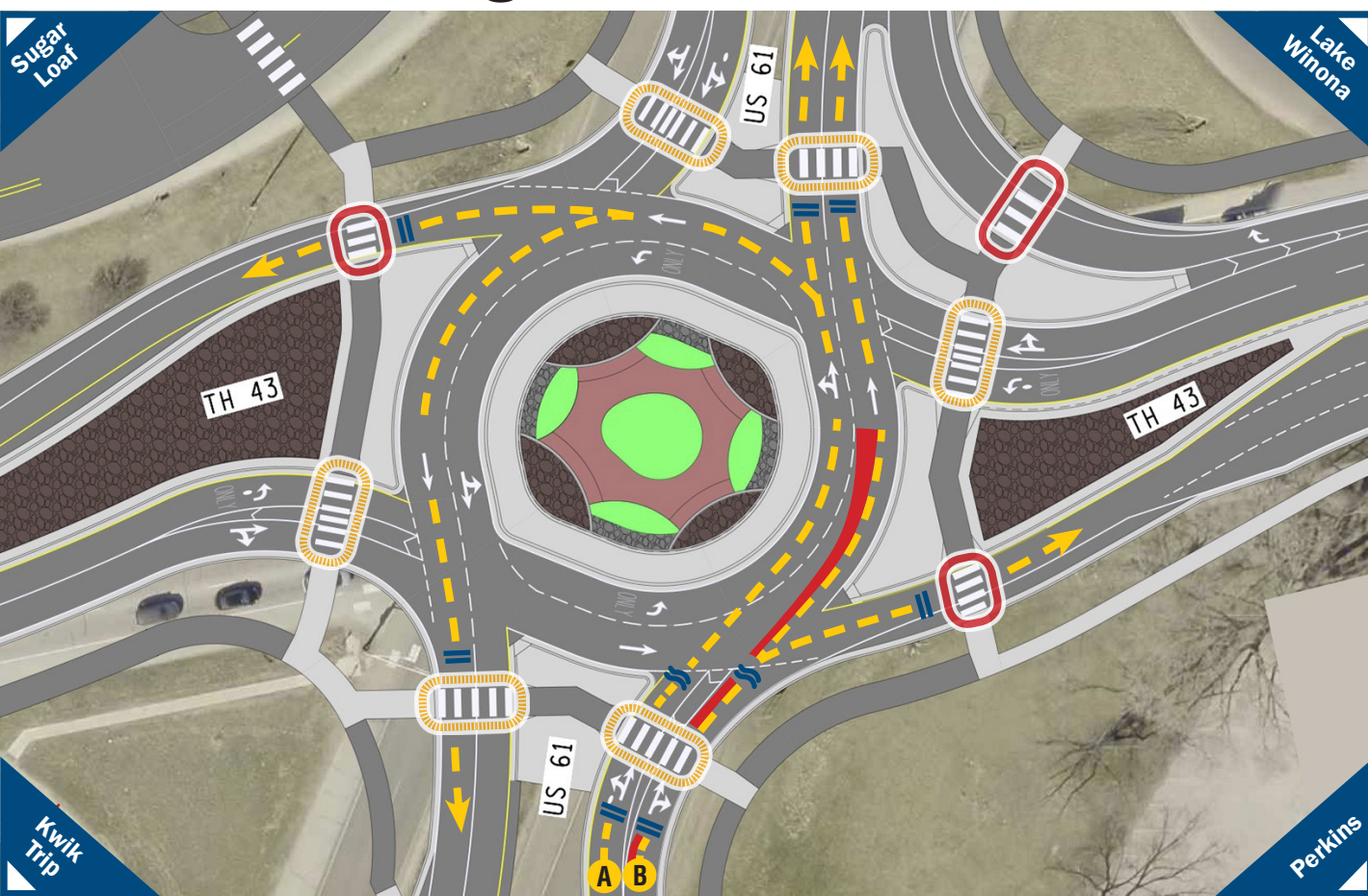
To hold a referendum this November, the School Board would need to submit information about it to the state by August 10.

This spring, the School Board received a recommendation from a facilities task force

for \$85.5 million of building upgrades, including adding on at the elementary and high school level, remodeling elementary and high school classrooms and addressing deferred maintenance throughout the district. The task force began their work last year after the School Board initially

see **REFERENDUM** page 8a

How to navigate new roundabout



by CHRIS ROGERS and CESAR SALAZAR

The first of four new roundabouts in Winona is expected to open sometime next week, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). Following months of road work, MnDOT contractors are putting on the finishing touches on a new roundabout at the intersection of highways 61 and 43, meaning some Winonans might have to brush up on their roundabout-driving skills.

The new roundabout will be one of the busiest — if not the busiest — in Minnesota, and replaces a set of stoplights that MnDOT officials said was one of the

see **ROUNDBOUT** page 5a

Base map from MnDOT; infographic by Monica Veraguth

On northbound Hwy. 61:

A — Use the left lane to go straight, turn left, or make a U-turn.

B — Use the right lane to turn right or go straight.

// — Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk

⦿ — Yield to traffic in the circle.

⦿ — Crosswalks with flashing lights.

⦿ — Crosswalks without flashing lights.

— Semi-trailers in this lane might encroach on the inside lane.

Give them extra space.

Winona still working on ERC-police-fire plan

by CESAR SALAZAR

Following the July 5 public hearing for the proposed police-fire-community center at the East Rec Center (ERC), where the vast majority of commenters were strongly opposed to the city's plan, city officials are continuing work on the proposal. City staff members said they are talking with St. Stan's parish in an attempt to acquire the St. Stan's school property.

Some of the City Council members said they are waiting to hear back from St. Stan's in order to help make a decision on the project's proposed location at the ERC. The current view for some of these council members is that if St. Stan's is willing to sell the property, then they can discuss the suitability of the location for the proposal, but if St. Stan's isn't willing to, then the council must decide on what direction the project should take next. One council member, Pam Eyden, said the city needs to go back to the drawing board.

"In general, there's a belief that it's a done deal," Mayor Scott Sherman said. However, he said, "We have an idea of

see **ERC** page 8a

WAPS OKs higher contracts with unions

by ALEXANDRA RETTER

Labor contracts settled earlier this year between Winona Area Public Schools (WAPS) and three unions are projected to decrease the district's reserve funds. Those decreases may bring reserves below the level the School Board set in policy, which could affect the district's credit rating and increase the cost of borrowing as the School Board considers an \$87-million facilities referendum.

WAPS' 2023 budget is based on the assumption that it would increase pay 0.5 to 1.5 percent while creating the 2023 budget. The increase for one of the contracts settled earlier this year was in this range, while the increases for two other contracts were greater than the range, meaning they will cost the district more than was budgeted.

The School Board in June unanimously approved WAPS' contract with the Plant Operations and Maintenance Employees Union. The

see **UNIONS** page 8a

Teens shine in new theater group



Photo by Alexandra Retter

From left, Madalyn Glasbrenner, Greyson Kemp and Madison Gorka rehearse an upcoming community theater musical, "Deep in the City," which is based on a Greek myth.

by ALEXANDRA RETTER

Playing Athena in an upcoming community theater musical was an opportunity for Madalyn Glasbrenner to act again. Glasbrenner loved performing in musicals throughout high school, so she wanted to get involved with a show this summer. "My character is really confident and very wise. I describe her as a

warrior princess," Glasbrenner said. She continued, "It's a really fun character to portray because we can't always be that confident all the time, so being able to be on stage and be this powerful, mighty person is super, super cool."

A new community theater, Sugar Loaf Theater, is putting on the production. The show will be its first. The musical, named "Deep in the City," is based on a

Greek myth about Poseidon and Athena competing to be Athens' patron god.

Local high school student Seamus Schwaba wrote the musical, and he is directing it. "I really wanted to write something hopeful, because I think right now, that's what the world needs," he said, noting people have faced a pandemic

see **THEATER GROUP** page 8a

the winonapost ... proud to be your community newspaper for over 50 years • official newspaper of the city of Winona

contact us: 507.452.1262 | fax: 507.454.6409 | email: winpost@winonapost.com | P.O. Box 27, 64 E. 2nd Street, Winona, MN, 55987 | [f](https://www.facebook.com/winonapost) [i](https://www.instagram.com/winonapost)

BROSNAHAN LAW FIRM P.A.

PAUL BROSNAHAN

507-457-3000 | 24-Hour Emergency: 507-450-2422

Located in Winona | Helping families throughout Minnesota & Wisconsin

Helping Injured People
after car and cycle crashes.

www.brosnahanlawfirm.com

Roundabout

continued from page 1a

worst hot spots for crashes in Southeast Minnesota. Congestion and delays were also an issue at the intersection. MnDOT officials believe the new roundabout will address these issues by reducing serious crashes and improving traffic flow.

Roundabout 101

1. Slow down. Slow down and be ready to stop as you

approach the roundabout.

2. Get in the correct lane. Watch for overhead signs and lane markings indicating which lanes to use and get in the correct lane before entering the roundabout.

3. Yield to pedestrians. Under state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. Watch out for pedestrians both as you enter the circle and as you exit. Drivers may need to stop in the roundabout to yield to pedestrians crossing an exit lane. "This is the only time vehicles would possibly stop in the circle," MnDOT District Six Traffic Operations Engineer David Tsang said.

4. Yield to traffic in the circle. Vehicles in the round-

about have the right-of-way over vehicles looking to enter the roundabout. Look left and wait for a break in traffic to enter the roundabout.

5. Don't stop to let vehicles in. A common mistake among drivers is stopping in the middle of the roundabout to let other vehicles enter the roundabout. Don't stop in the circle except to yield to pedestrians or avoid a collision.

6. Avoid changing lanes in the roundabout. While changing lanes within the roundabout is technically allowed, most roundabout guides advise against it. "Once you're in the circle, you generally want to follow whatever is designated for that lane, but obviously if there's no one in the center lane, there's no reason why you couldn't signal in the circle to try to change [lanes]," Tsang said. "... It's generally not recommended, but it's allowable. You just have to be careful," Tsang said.

7. Use your signal, thoughtfully. Tsang and District Six Director of Public Engagement and Communications Mike Dougherty said that signaling when exiting a roundabout is not required by law, but it's a good idea. It helps everyone know what to expect, Dougherty said. There is one exception: Tsang advised against using a right turn signal when using the center lane to exit straight ahead, as other drivers could misinterpret it as signaling a lane change.

8. Give large trucks extra space. Semi-trailers in the outside lane might straddle both lanes as they enter the roundabout or encroach on the inside lane as they go around the circle. Tsang said that while it's possible for semi-trailers to navigate the roundabout without encroaching, it's a good idea for other drivers to give them extra space.

Finding the correct lane

Because the 61/43 traffic circle is a multi-lane roundabout, drivers will need to figure out which lane to take. Drivers don't need to feel like they are going in blind, though. The legs leading up to the roundabout will have overhead signage and road markers indicating which lane to take. The signage will be far enough ahead to give time to drivers to decide, according to Dougherty.

Permanent overhead signage may not be ready in time for next week's expected opening, but, if not, there will be temporary signage in place prior to the roundabout opening, Dougherty said.

There are differences in the lane structure on Highway 43 and Highway 61. On Highway 43, the inside lanes of the roundabout are specifically designated for only left turns. This contrasts with Highway 61's inside lanes, on which drivers may turn left or go straight.

Check out the infographics on pages 1A and 5A to see which lanes to use in the new multi-lane roundabout.

Pedestrians

At the old intersection of highways 61 and 43, pedestrians had to cross up to six lanes of traffic in a short time window. With the new roundabout, pedestrians will only have to cross a lane or two at a time and will only have to worry about traffic coming from one direction at a time, thanks to median islands breaking up the different legs of the roundabout. However, there will be no stoplight to halt vehicles for them.

Pedestrians should wait for a break in traffic to step out into the crosswalk and make eye contact with oncoming drivers to ensure they do, in fact, see them and will stop. "You don't just step off the curb without looking," Dougherty said. "You need to — as you do at any intersection you're at — make that eye contact with the motorist and make sure they're stopping."

At the roundabout entrances, drivers will already be prepared to stop, but both motorists and pedestrians should be extra careful at roundabout exits, where drivers may be thinking about accelerating down the highway and less focused on being prepared to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk. "If you're crossing an exit leg, you should be extra careful," Tsang advised. He said, "Human nature says while I'm in the circle, I want to get out of the circle." He added that MnDOT strongly encourages pedestrians at the exit lanes to make eye contact before stepping out and "don't automatically assume that the vehicle will wait for you."

At all of the two-lane crossings, there will be flashing lights — which pedestrians can activate by pressing a button — telling drivers to stop at the crosswalks. On two legs of the 61/43 roundabout, there will be no flashing lights. These are both crosswalks that only cross one lane, at the roundabout exits for northbound and southbound Highway 43 (see infographic page 1A). Tsang and Dougherty said that because there's only one lane to cross, MnDOT officials did not believe flashing lights were needed there.

Asked if those two crosswalks would benefit from flashing lights, Tsang responded, "It could benefit, but like I said earlier, it's one lane. It's not a multi-lane, and generally speaking we try to capture the attention of the motorist if there are two lanes." He added, "We could put one in if the city wanted."

MnDOT added some flashing lights to the design in response to previous concerns from Winona City Council members.

Semi-trailers

Tsang also said that semi-trailers will be something that drivers will have to be more cautious about. For trucks on the inside lane, the center of the roundabout circle will have the truck aprons — a mountable curb — to allow truck drivers to have some extra leg room, but in the outside lane, semi-trailers might need to straddle both lanes on occasion. "You could expect some drivers encroaching into the other lane, and you've got to pay attention as you enter the circle," Tsang said.

Construction will affect north side of roundabout

The north side of the 61/43 roundabout may look and operate slightly differently than shown in the infographics while construction and lane closures continue on Mankato Avenue. Traffic on Mankato Avenue from Highway 61 to Samia Street will continue to be shunted, with two opposing lanes diverted onto one half of the street, until construction wraps up this fall. While those construction closures are still in effect, traffic on the northside of the roundabout may be temporarily rerouted, Dougherty said. Watch for orange signs.

Up next: E. Lake Blvd. to reopen, more roundabouts

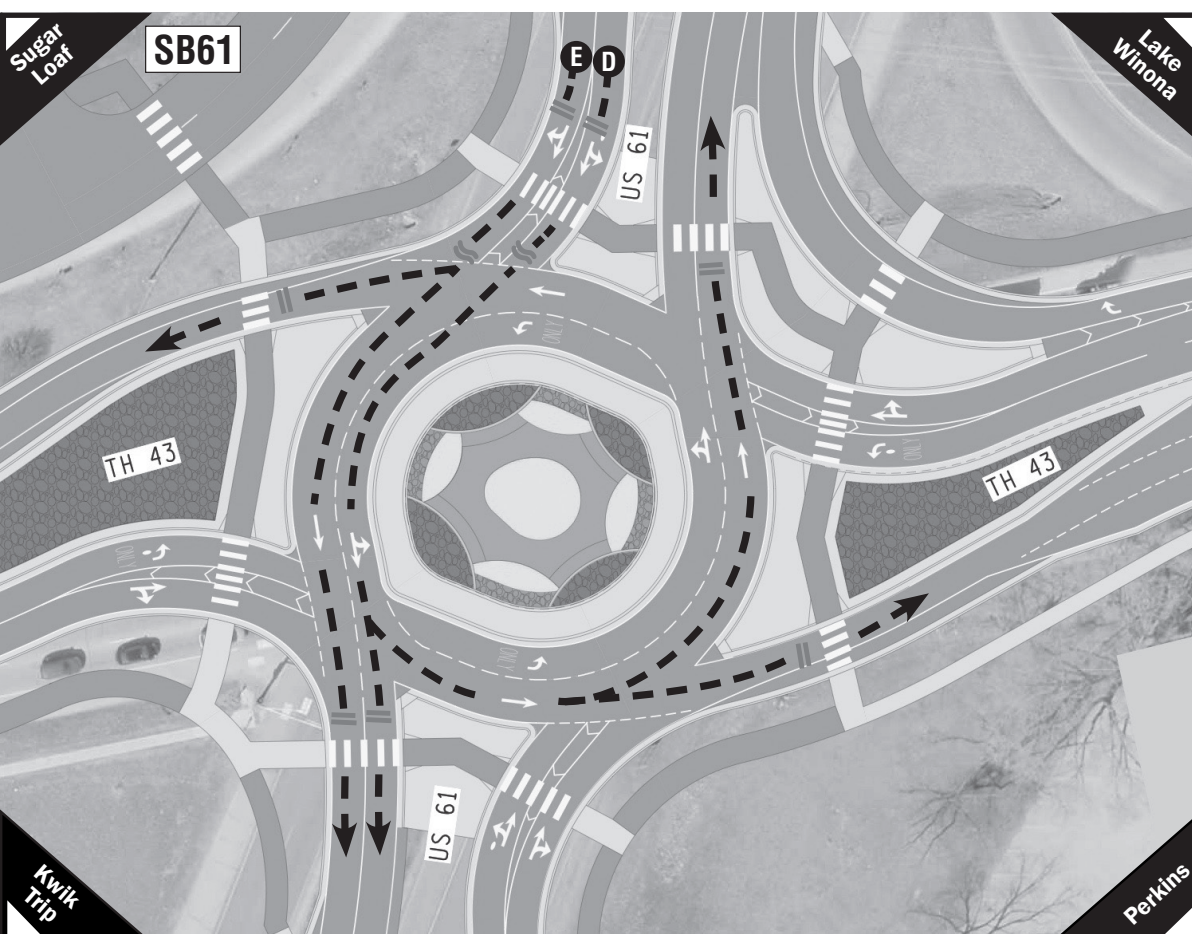
Along with the opening of the 61/43 roundabout, MnDOT is also planning to reopen East Lake Boulevard. Opening the boulevard will help alleviate traffic flow for residents there, according to Dougherty.

Dougherty said that Winonans will see the other three roundabouts on Mankato Avenue shaping up over the next several months. Currently, the MnDOT contractors are working on the west side of Mankato Avenue and will switch to the east side in the future. Dougherty also said that MnDOT expects the project's completion late this fall.

Check out roundabout videos

A collection of videos, including how-to guides for navigating roundabouts, is available on WinonaPost.com.

Chris@winonapost.com, local@winonapost.com



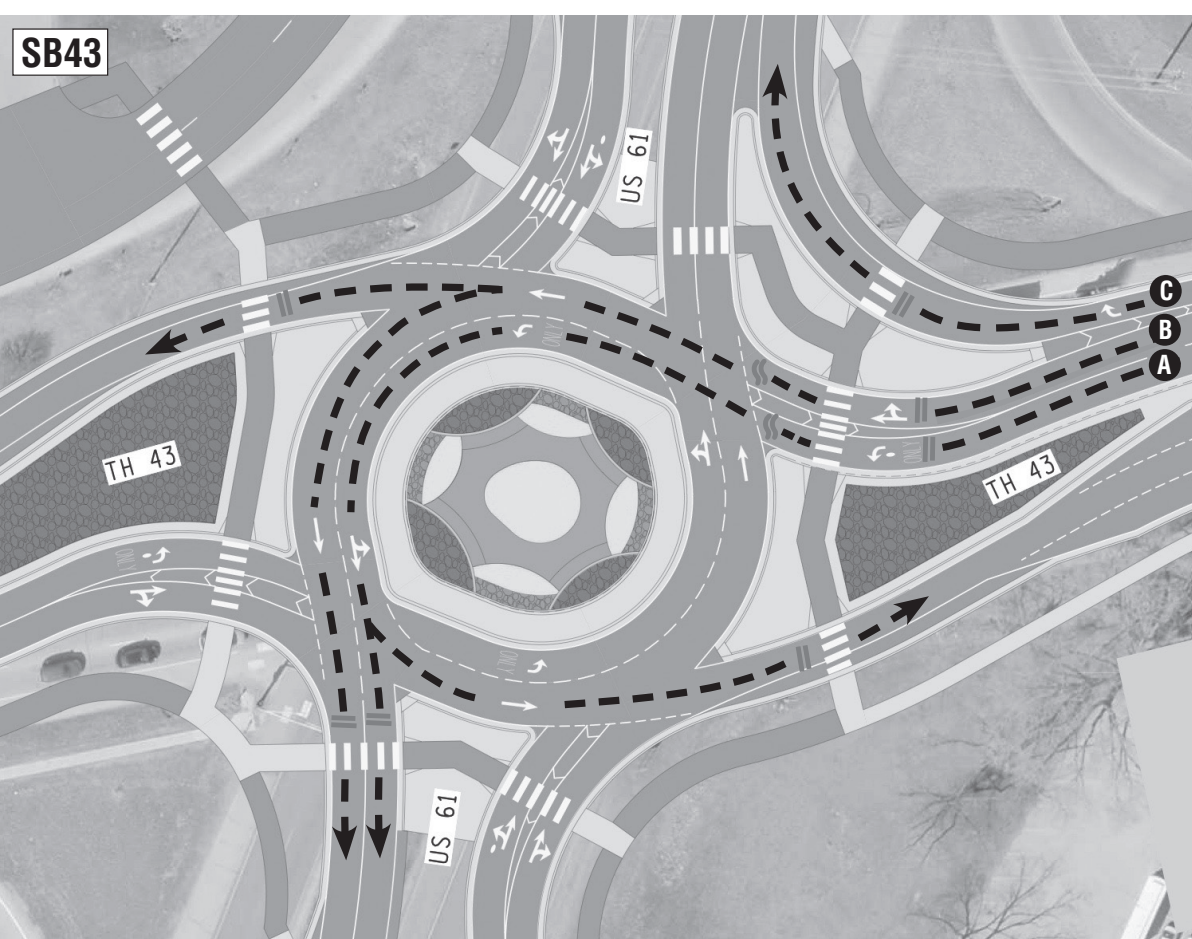
On southbound Hwy. 61:

D — Use the left lane to go straight, turn left, or make a U-turn.

E — Use the right lane to turn right or go straight.

// — Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk

SS — Yield to traffic in the circle.



On southbound Hwy. 43:

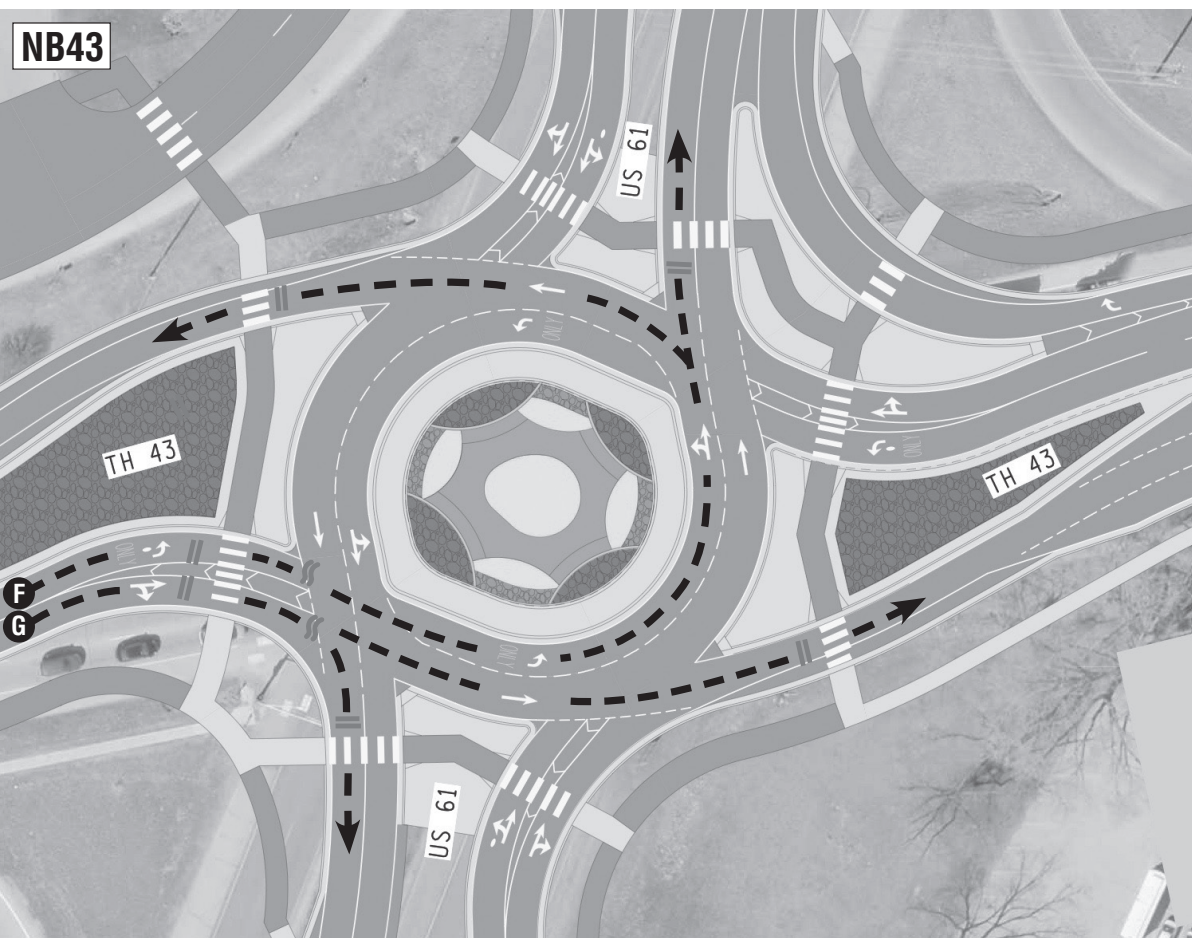
A — Use the left lane to turn left or make a U-turn.

B — Use the right lane to turn right or go straight.

C — Use the slip lane to turn right.

// — Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk

SS — Yield to traffic in the circle.



On northbound Hwy. 43:

F — Use the left lane to turn left or make a U-turn.

G — Use the right lane to turn right or go straight.

// — Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk

SS — Yield to traffic in the circle.