TRANSPORTATION
(Less than $5M)

Pioneer Highway/Fir Island Road Intersection

AGENCY: Skagit County Public Works   **CONTRACTOR:** Colacurcio Brothers, Inc.   **CONSULTANT:** Reid Middleton, Inc.

OVERVIEW: Skagit County had been seeking to improve the traffic flow and safety at the awkward intersections of Pioneer Highway at Fir Island Road, and Main St/Conway Frontage Road at Fir Island Road (project intersections) since 2000, but without success. These closely spaced intersections, 110 feet apart, caused safety and operational concerns. Located 800 feet west of the Interstate 5 (I-5) southbound ramps, the intersections were free-flowing for the major roadways and stop-controlled for the minor roadways. Although, the County had a proposed design for a single-lane, five-leg roundabout they were unable to implement the plan due to budgetary issues.

However, their fortunes changed in 2013, when the County's proposal for a roundabout was selected to receive a FHWA Quick Response Safety Program federal grant. FHWA grants are awarded based on the safety benefits of a project, but grant winners are only given a six-month deadline to obligate the construction funds. One challenge of this project was taking a concept and developing it into full construction documents, while securing environmental permits within such a short period of time. By undertaking the project the Skagit County hoped to improve the safety of the intersection and eliminate fatal and disabling crashes, which had been calculated to cost society upward of $2 million, while improving the level of service (flow) through the intersections. Thanks to the efforts of all involved on the design and construction teams, this project was completed on time and approximately 12% under budget. The roundabout is operating efficiently, provides a welcoming gateway to the Skagit Valley, and has been well received by the community.

Roundabout sleeve line installation

Beginning of project

Project completion (Photo by Torey Nelson)