

This Time a Roundabout: Intersection Overhaul at M-37 and M-115



CHALLENGE: An extremely tight schedule; Elmer's only had three weeks to see the entire roundabout project through from start to finish.

SOLUTION: Used robotic station control for subgrade elevations, fast-tracking the project and eliminating necessary manual staging with the exception of curb and gutter.

OWNER: Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

CONTRACT AMOUNT: \$1,194,088.16

LOCATION: Mesick, Michigan

DESIGN ENGINEER: Patrick Middleton

DATE STARTED: September 4, 2013

DATE COMPLETED: September 26, 2013

PARTNERS: Zimmerman Electric, Martin J Concrete, PK Contracting, Diane Dukes Inc., Give-Em-A-Brake

SELF-PERFORMED: 84%

In years past, drivers heading south from Traverse City on M-37 had to be especially cautious when they reached the intersection at M-115. The junction between these two Michigan highways never seemed like it should have been a big problem, but dozens of accidents over the years and plenty of complaints from drivers calling the spot the most dangerous intersection in the state forced the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to pay attention. After considering numerous options for the M-37/M-115 intersection—including a new traffic light system—MDOT decided that a roundabout would be the best option to facilitate safer driving. Enter Team Elmer's to handle the heavy lifting.

The project was the third and final phase of an ongoing collaborative effort between MDOT and Team Elmer's this year to make M-37 a safer place for drivers. After replacing a section of M-37 earlier this year, as well as straightening and reducing the grade on a curve-ridden passage on Sherman Hill, Team Elmer's returned to the highway yet again after Labor Day to implement the new roundabout at the M-115 intersection.

Elmer's had their work cut out for them. The M-37/M-115 intersection has long been a busy section of highway, surrounded by businesses that make their revenues from stop-in drivers. Since the MDOT detour circulated most travelers around the M-37/M-115 hub, those businesses were worried about the roundabout project cutting off their source of customers for possibly months at a time. In order to prevent substantial disruption, Team Elmer's put their noses to the grindstone, commencing the project on September 4 and putting the finishing touches on the roundabout after just 21 days of work. That's what we call a fast track!

Throughout those three weeks, Elmer's worked methodically through complicated procedures involving existing electrical wiring, replacement gutters, and overhauled storm drainage systems. Robotic equipment allowed Elmer's to error-proof the project and execute the perfect subgrade elevation without arduous staking by hand, while gravel bases and torn up roadways quickly transformed into exquisite pavement and fully-restored surrounding landscapes. By the time the lines were painted and the pavement and traffic control signs were positioned around the roundabout, the once-dangerous M-37/M-115 intersection was no more, replaced by a system that will leave no question as to which driver has the right of way. With any luck, the intersection's accident count will now drop to zero.

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Roundabout By The Numbers

Days Worked	21
Aggregates Used	5583 Tons
Bituminous Coal Used	7184 Tons
Amount of Curb Laid	5408 Linear Feet
Amount of Pipe Laid	891 Linear Feet
Amount of Concrete Delivered	747.25 Cubic Yards
Size of Sidewalk	8448 Square Feet

