

# Watsonville Downtown Gateway Intersection Redesign

EA 05-1S400

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JANUARY 27, 2026  
WATSONVILLE TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
WATSONVILLE, CA



# Agenda

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1. Background / Timeline
2. Two Concepts / Comparison Overview
3. Project Status & Next Steps
4. Discussion / Request for Feedback

# Background / Timeline

Plan / Project	Findings / Recommendations
(2011) Pedestrian Safety Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Recommends <i>roundabout at Freedom/Main</i></li><li>- Recommends increased pedestrian crossing points at Freedom/Main</li><li>- Recommends refuge islands in the splitter islands</li></ul>
(2015) Bicycle Safety Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Recommends road diet on Main St in the downtown core</li><li>- Recommends <i>roundabouts along Freedom Blvd</i></li></ul>
(2019) Downtown Watsonville Complete Streets Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Calls for <i>enhanced pedestrian access and experience</i></li><li>- Focus on getting people through downtown</li><li>- Retains the preferred plan design of a road diet on Main St in the downtown core</li></ul>
(2023) Watsonville Downtown Specific Plan (Most current plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Calls for <i>placemaking; gateways to downtown</i></li><li>- Calls for a <i>roundabout at Freedom/Main</i> for balance of flow &amp; safety benefit</li><li>- Calls for road diet for traffic calming and enhancing pedestrian experience downtowns</li><li>- Focus on getting people to/from downtown</li></ul>
(2023) Caltrans Project Initiation Document- SR-152 Pavement & Complete Streets Project (EA 05-1P110)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Project Scope to be explored in the Environmental Phase<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class 4 bike lanes on Main St from Green Valley Rd to Freedom Blvd</li><li>- Increase pedestrian access at Freedom/Main St intersection</li><li>- Road diet/lane reduction on Main St between Freedom Blvd &amp; Beach St</li></ul></li><li>- <b>Does not/will not include a roundabout at Freedom/Main as such scope &amp; cost is beyond the project</b> (more on this to come)</li></ul>

# Two Project Concepts

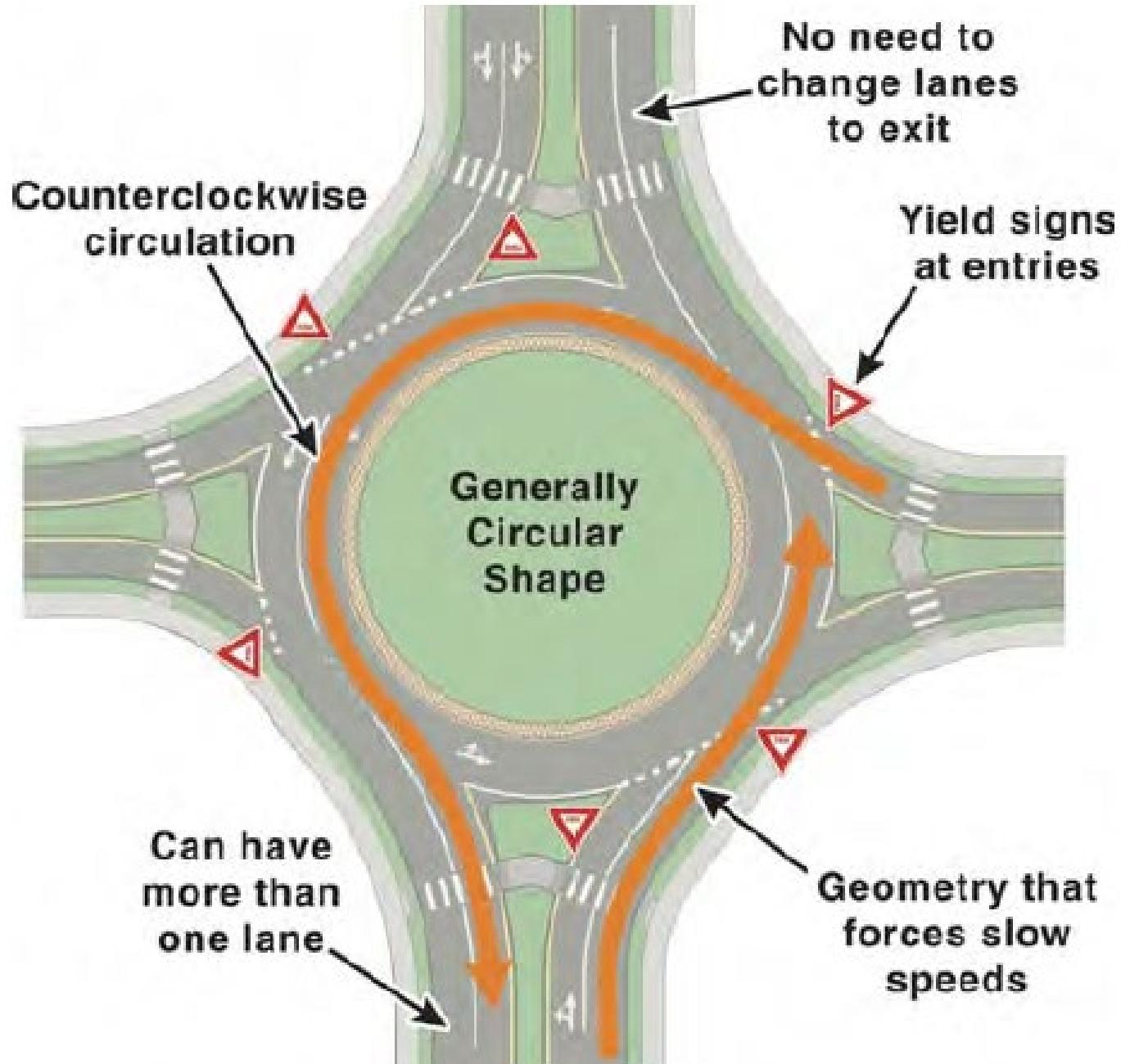
FOR CONSIDERATION  
AND FEEDBACK

DISCUSSION AT THE  
END

# Roundabout

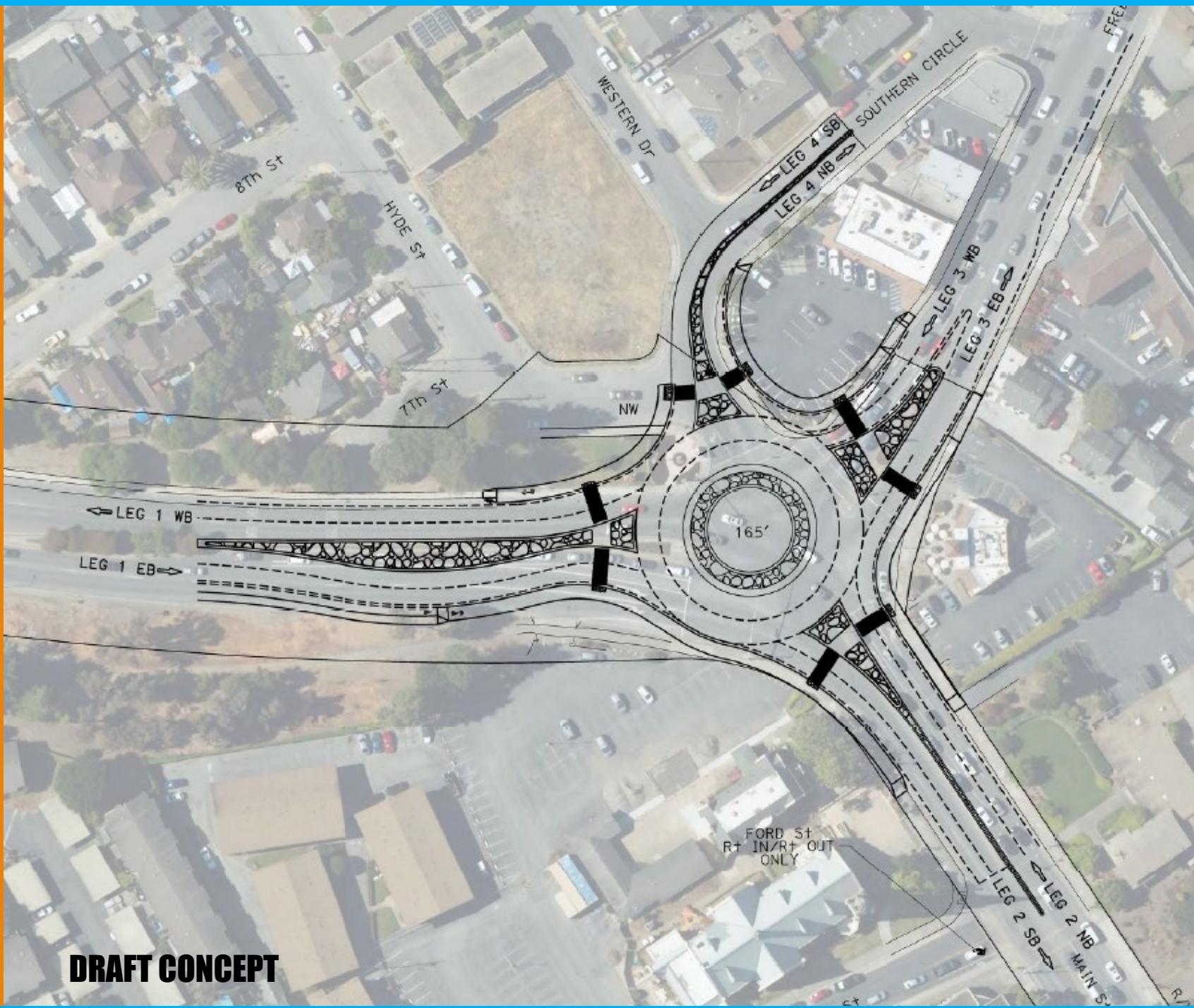
## Basic

- Dual lane roundabout was chosen based on preliminary operational analysis (consistent with 2023 Specific plan)
- Operational benefit
- Traffic calming benefits
- Safety benefit – less conflict point
- Special features allow for heavy-vehicle operations



# Alternative 1

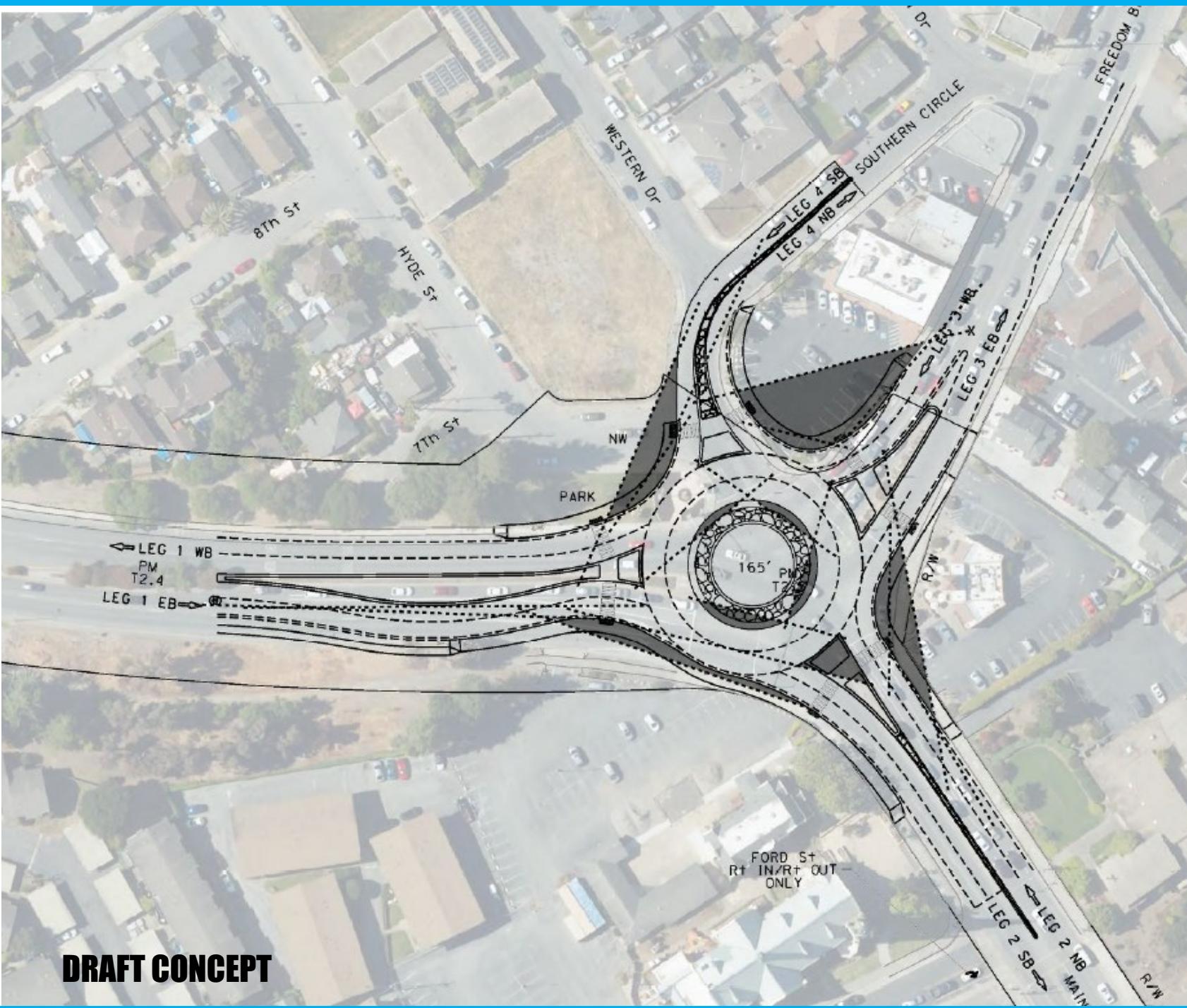
- Converts Ford St into a right-in-right-out
- Keeps access to all existing legs of the intersection
- Limits access btwn Hyde & Western
- Requires relocating Memorial Park to make use of Caltrans right-of-way
- Provides a 10' multiuse path for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate around the roundabout
- Likely to impact adjacent properties
- Preliminary Capital Cost Estimate (escalated): \$10.1 million
- Preliminary Right-of-Way Cost Estimate (escalated): \$9.4 million



# Alternative 1

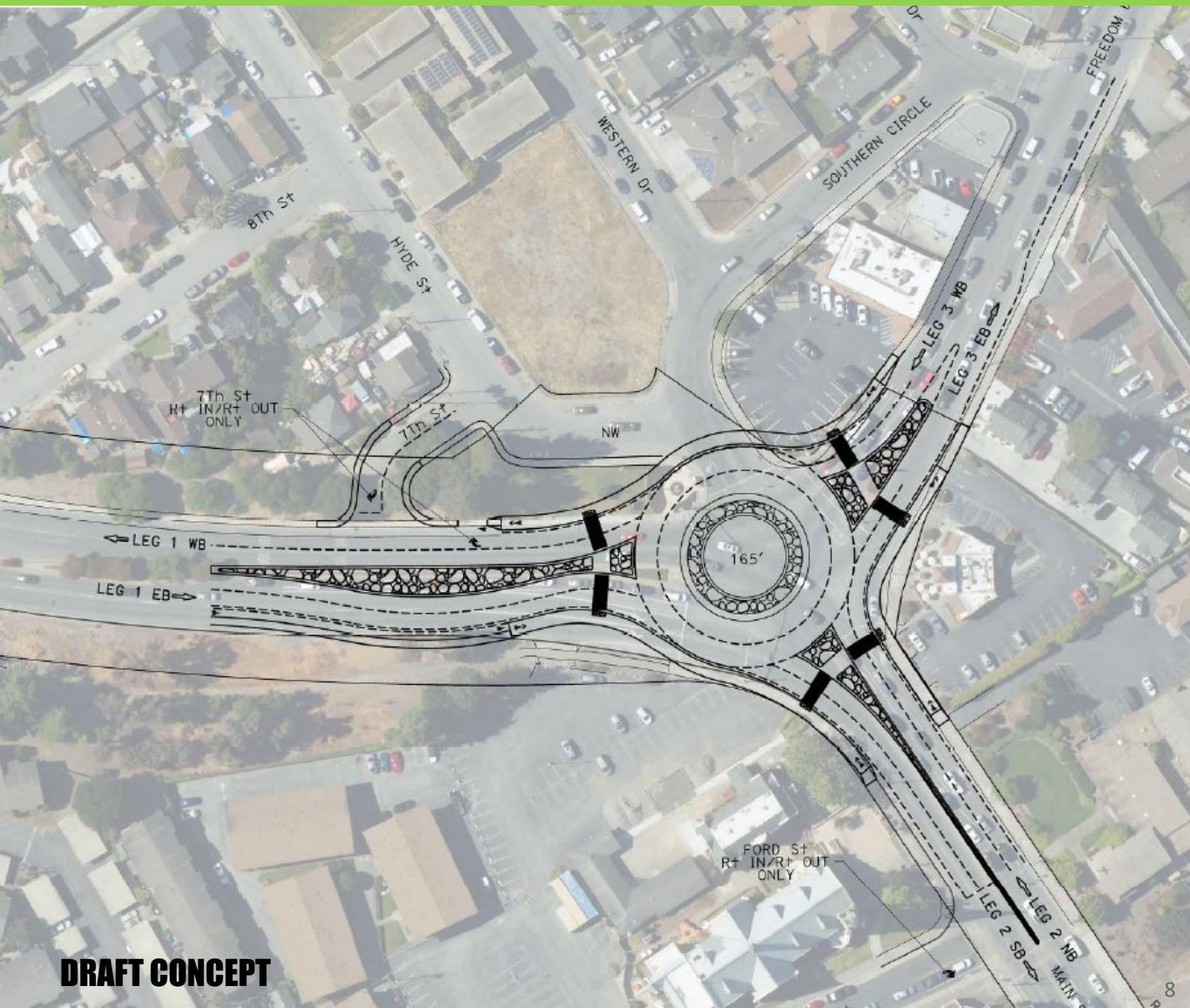
## Combined Sight Distance Diagram

- Roundabout design is based on traffic volume, circulating and approach speed, design vehicles, sight distance and entry and exit geometry.
- To ensure sight distance are maintained and line-of sight is not blocked, areas within sight distance diagram have to be acquired.
- Therefore, sight distance diagram can help estimate potential right-of-way impacts before the Right-of-Way Phase.



# Alternative 2

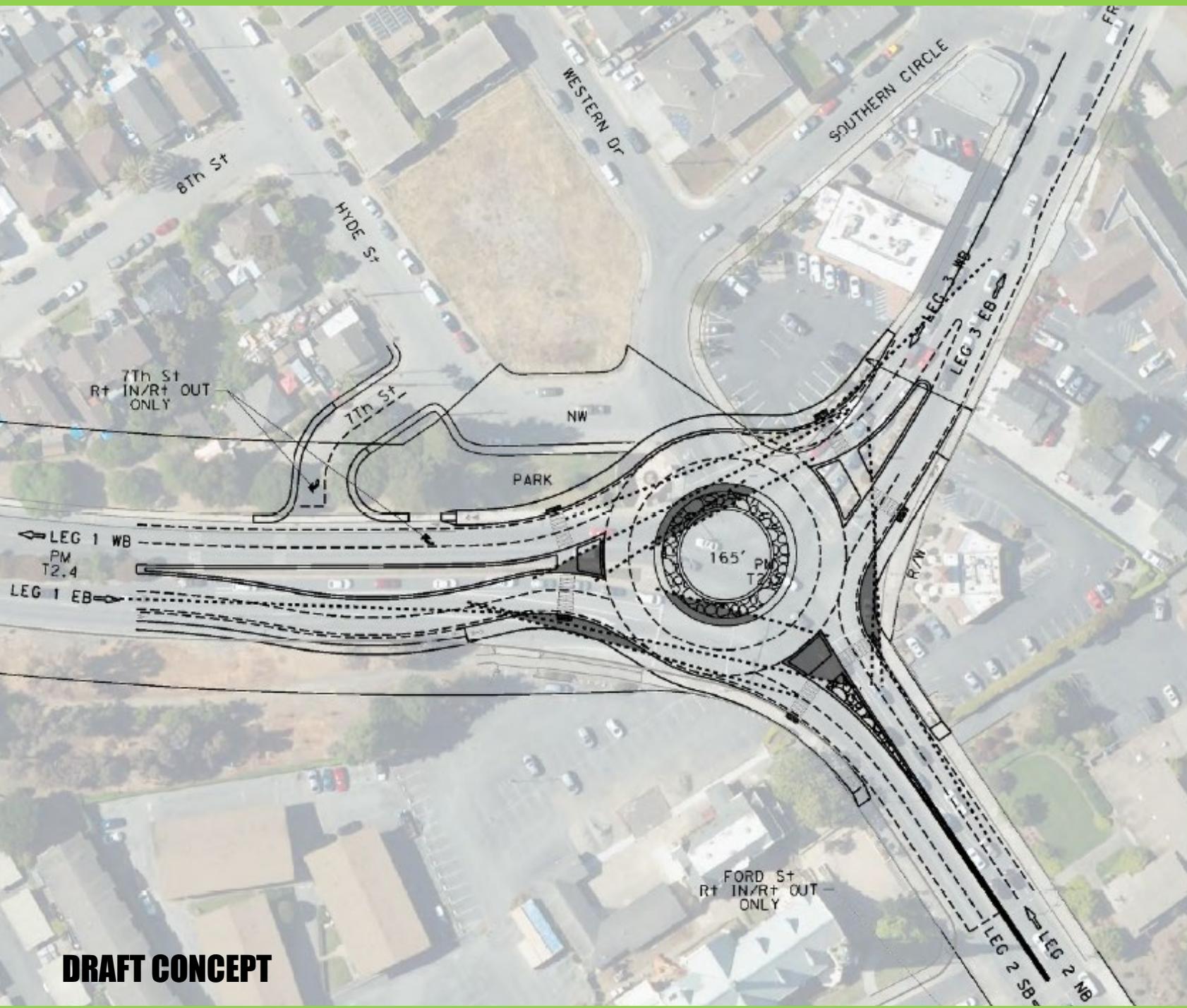
- Converts Ford St into a right-in-right-out configuration
- Removes access to Western Dr and potentially adds right-in-right-out neighborhood access west of the roundabout
- Allows emergency vehicle access through rolled curb or other methods
- Requires relocating Memorial Park
- Provides a multiuse path for pedestrians and cyclists
- Has the least impact of options on adjacent properties
- Preliminary Capital Cost Estimate (escalated): \$9.6 million
- Preliminary Right-of-Way Cost Estimate (escalated):  
\$PENDING



## Alternative 2

### Combined Sight Distance Diagram

- Sight distance diagram for option 6 is within Caltrans R/W
- There are still impact to some parcels, but less severe.



# Draft Concept Comparison

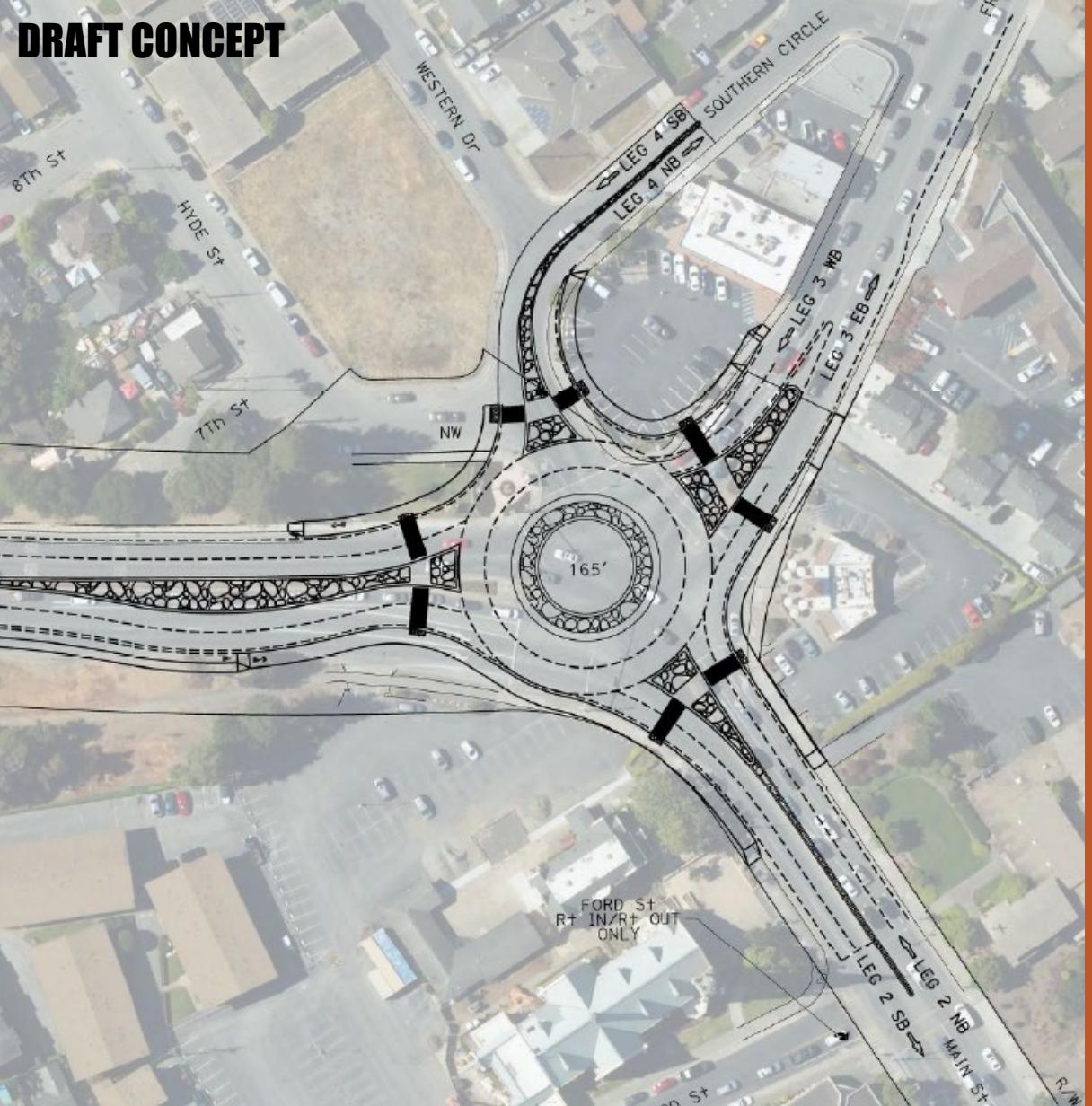
## 4-LEGGED ROUNDABOUT

- Converts Ford St into a right-in-right-out
- Keeps access to all existing legs of the intersection
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- Requires relocating Memorial Park to make use of Caltrans right-of-way
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- Likely to impact adjacent properties
- Preliminary Capital Cost Estimate (escalated): \$10.1 million
- Preliminary Right-of-Way Cost Estimate (escalated): \$9.5 million

## 3-LEGGED ROUNDABOUT

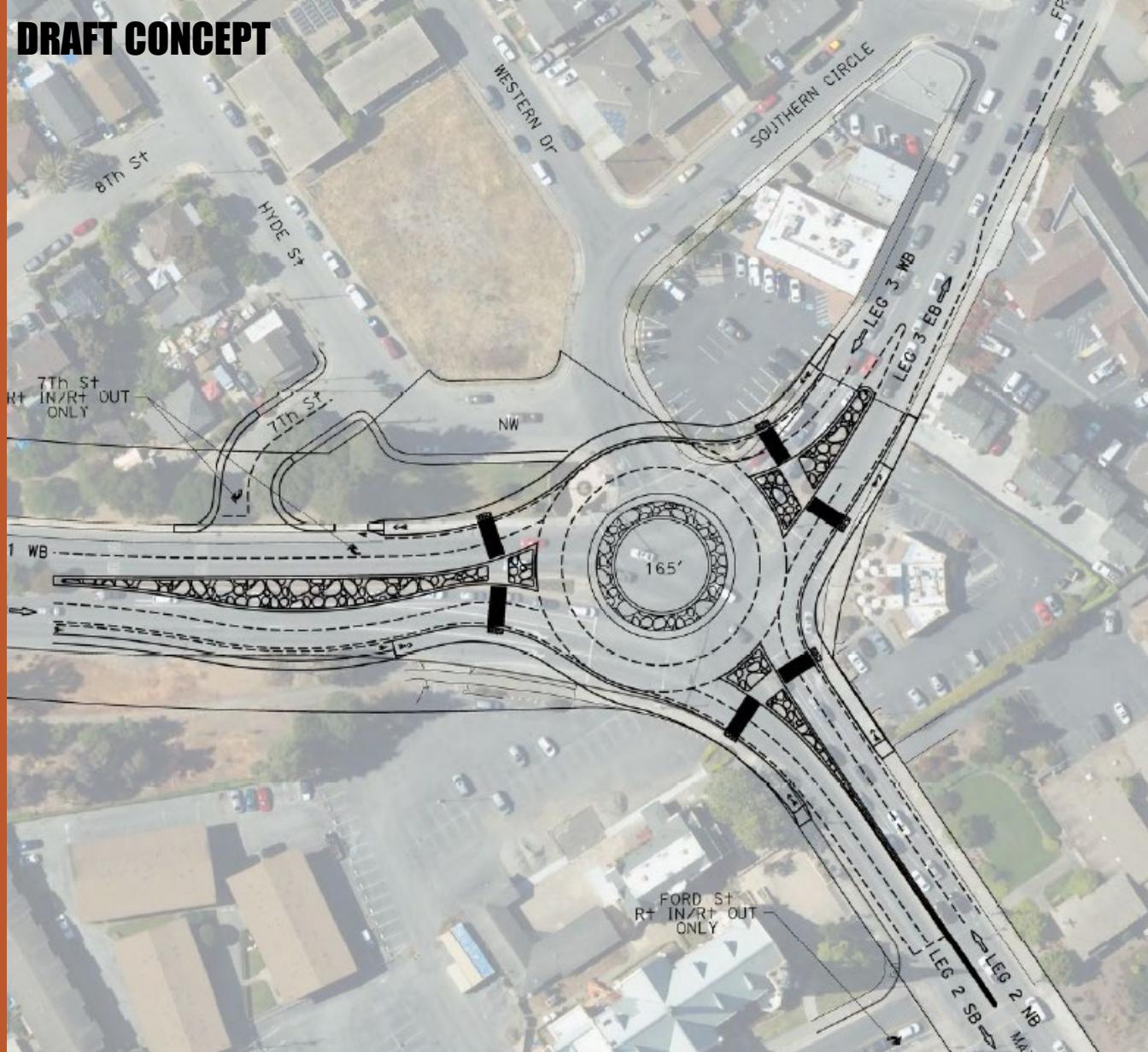
- Converts Ford St into a right-in-right-out configuration
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**DRAFT CONCEPT**



**Alternative 1 (Option 2)**

**DRAFT CONCEPT**

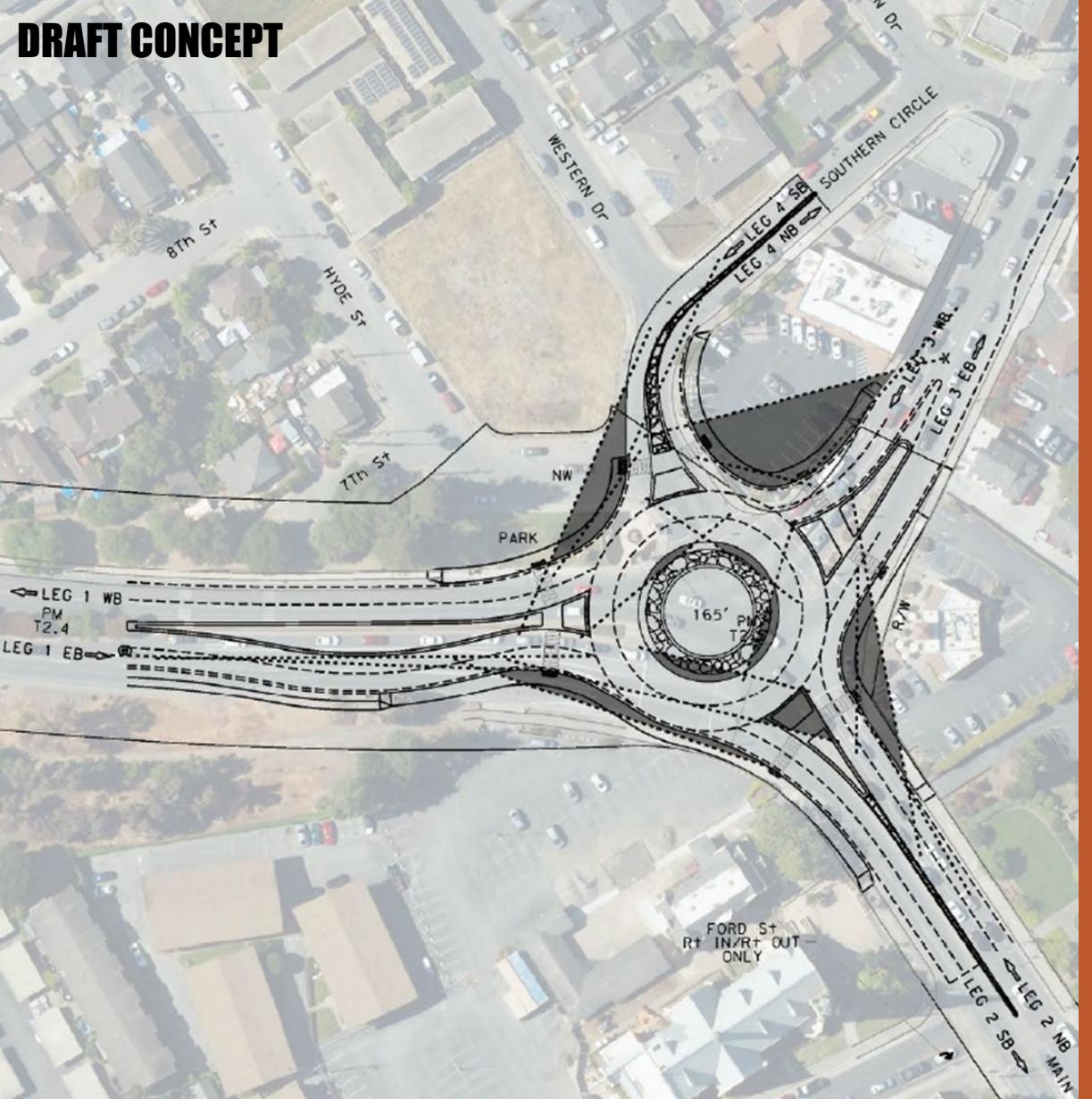


**Alternative 2 (Option 6)**

## Concept Comparison

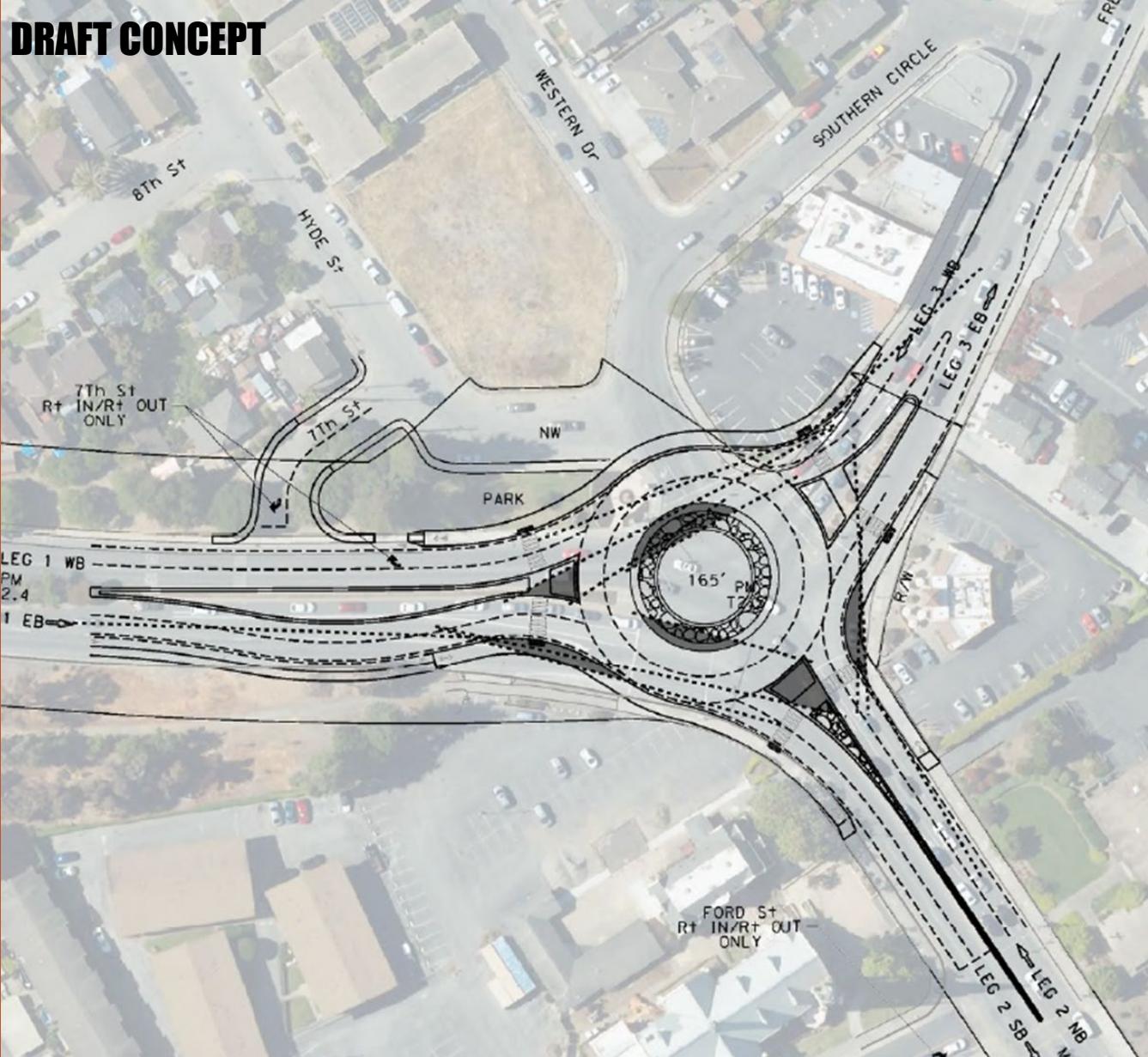


## DRAFT CONCEPT



Alternative 1 (Option 2)

## DRAFT CONCEPT



Alternative 2 (Option 6)

## Concept Comparison



# Status & Next Steps

## Watsonville Downtown Gateway Intersection Redesign

EA 05-1S400



### Status

- Project Initiation Document (PID) must be complete and signed by June 30, 2026

### Work Completed

- Traffic Operations completed phase 1 of an “Intersection Safety & Operational Assessment Process” (ISOAP):
  - Evaluated operational needs of the intersection
  - Explored operationally acceptable intersection alternatives, including a roundabout
- **(Aug 2025)** Project Design met with City staff who provided direction to pursue the roundabout and to ensure we consider neighborhood access and minimal right-of-way impacts.
- Project Design created roundabout concepts based on the operational needs data
- **(Dec 2025)** Project Design presented the concepts to City staff for guidance on the variations
  - Two concepts emerged for further evaluation
- Preliminary cost estimates were created for the two concepts

# Status & **Next Steps** (cont.)

## **Watsonville Downtown Gateway Intersection Redesign**

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### **Next Steps (PID Phase- pd by Caltrans):**

- Receive feedback from the City Manager and City Council
- Receive public feedback through the Watsonville Traffic Advisory Committee (today)
- Refine the two concepts based on feedback
- Finalize the Project Initiation Document describing the baseline scope of this project & provide to City

### **Next Steps (project life- Watsonville task):**

- Watsonville & Caltrans need to seek discretionary funding for further development
- Project Report & Environmental Phase (PAED)
  - Identify any right-of-way needs and utility conflicts
- Design (PSE) & Right-of-Way Phases
  - Work with property owners to negotiate temporary & permanent easements/acquisitions
  - Utility relocation plan
  - Create 100% plans, estimate, and specification
- Construction

\*Watsonville may hire Caltrans to continue project development

\*\*Caltrans may assist Watsonville in identifying funding opportunities

# Summary

## We're here to get you there

- Caltrans recognizes the locally documented desire & benefits of:
  - Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access
  - The installation of a roundabout
  - The implementation of placemaking strategies such as gateways
  - The implementation of a road diet south of the intersection
- Caltrans SHOPP is focused on operational maintenance & safety
- Major enhancements come from local efforts & non-SHOPP funding
- Funding programs may include:
  - SCCRTC's Consolidated Grant Program (STIP)
  - Active Transportation Plan
  - Etc



## Discussion...

# Questions?

Caltrans is sponsoring the Project Initiation Document (first phase), before turning the final document over to the City of Watsonville for further project development.

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For questions during the Project Initiation Document phase, ending June 30, 2026:

- Please reach out to the **Caltrans District 5 Public Information Office (PIO):**
  - [Info-d5@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Info-d5@dot.ca.gov)
  - (805) 549-3138

\*Please reference project “EA” number 05-1S400

After June 30, 2026, please reach out to the Watsonville Public Works Department.

