

Watsonville Downtown Gateway Intersection Redesign

EA 05-1S400

JANUARY 27, 2026

WATSONVILLE TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WATSONVILLE, CA

Agenda

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

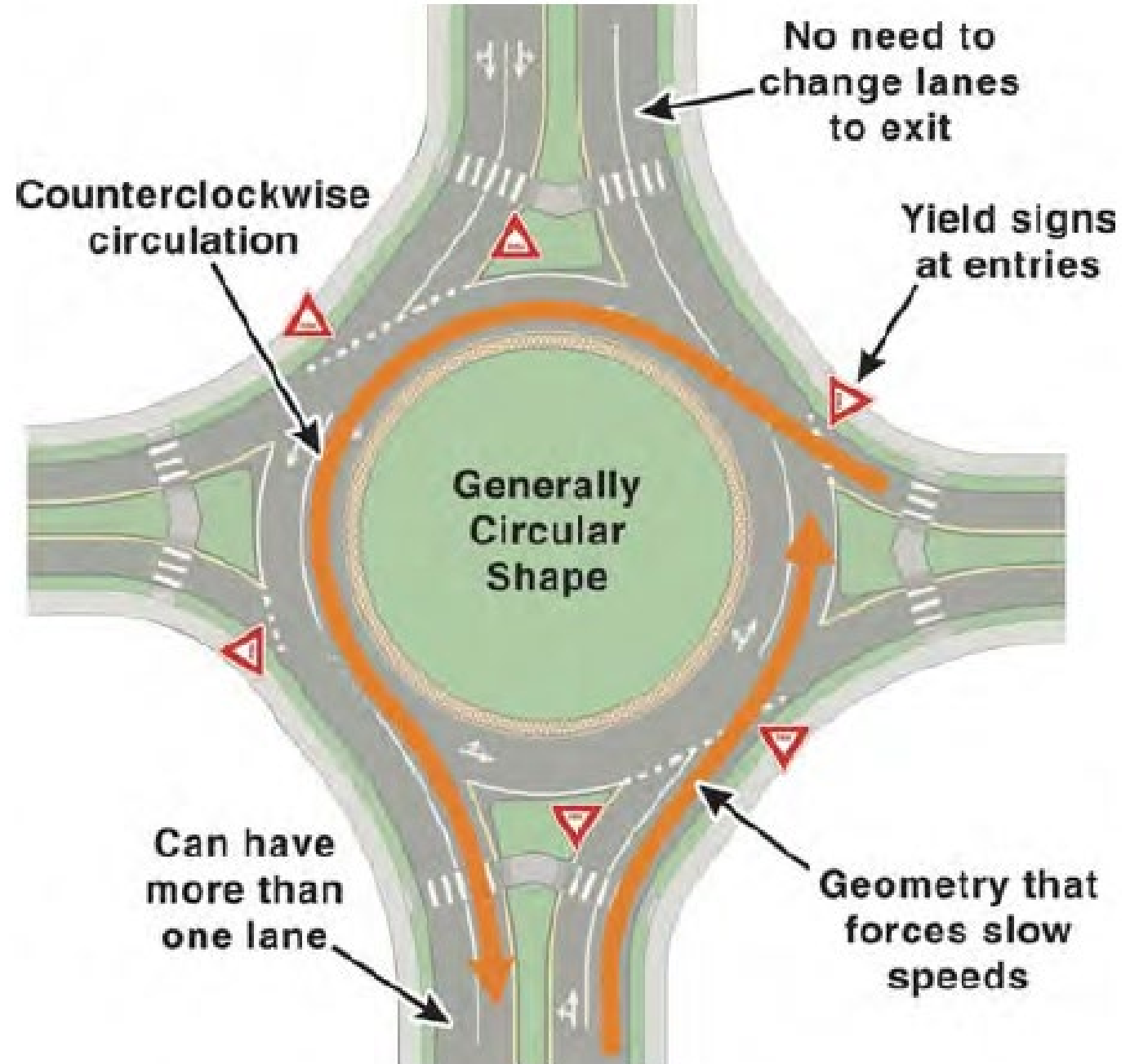
Two Project Concepts

FOR CONSIDERATION
AND FEEDBACK

DISCUSSION AT THE
END

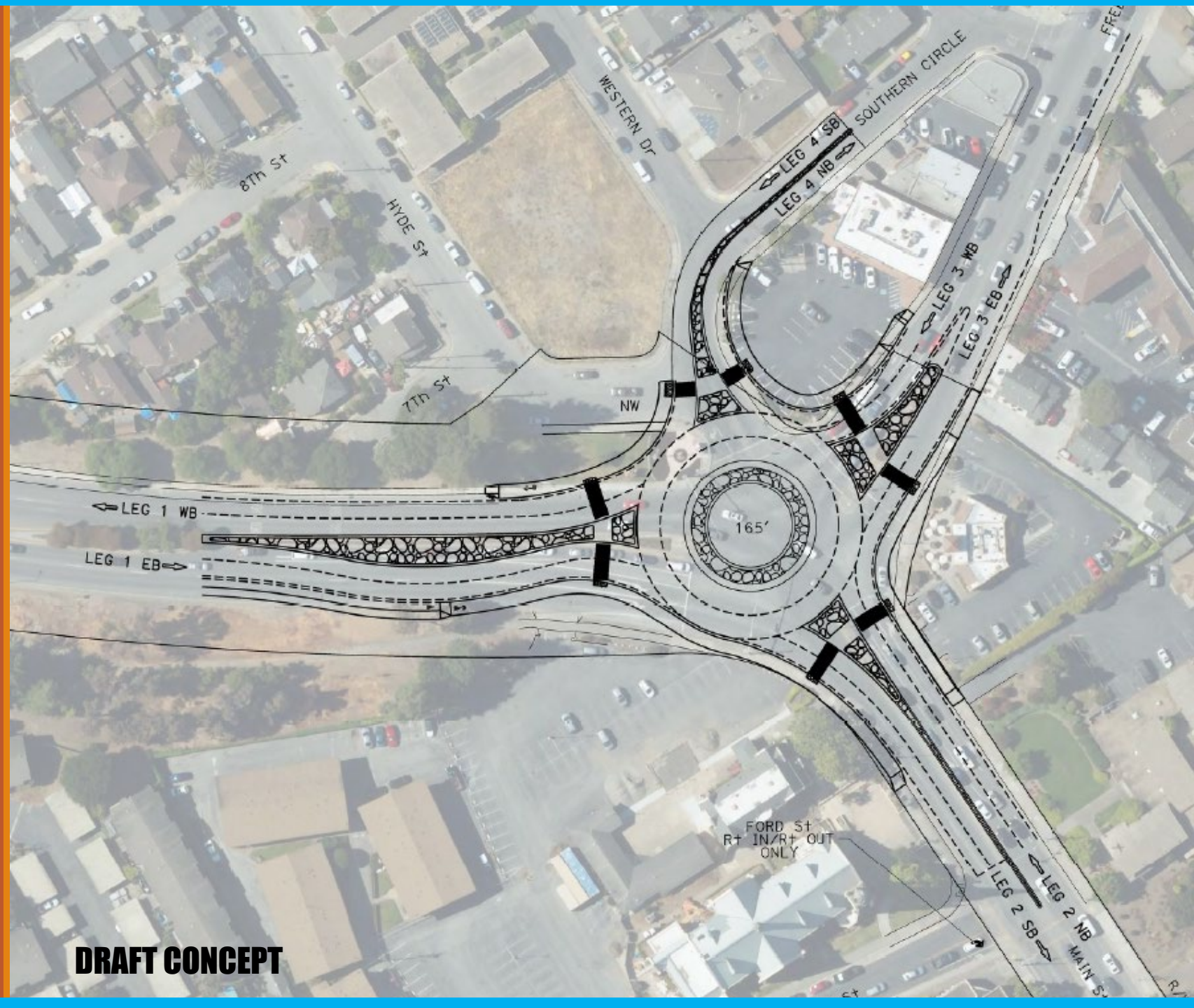
Roundabout Basic

- 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

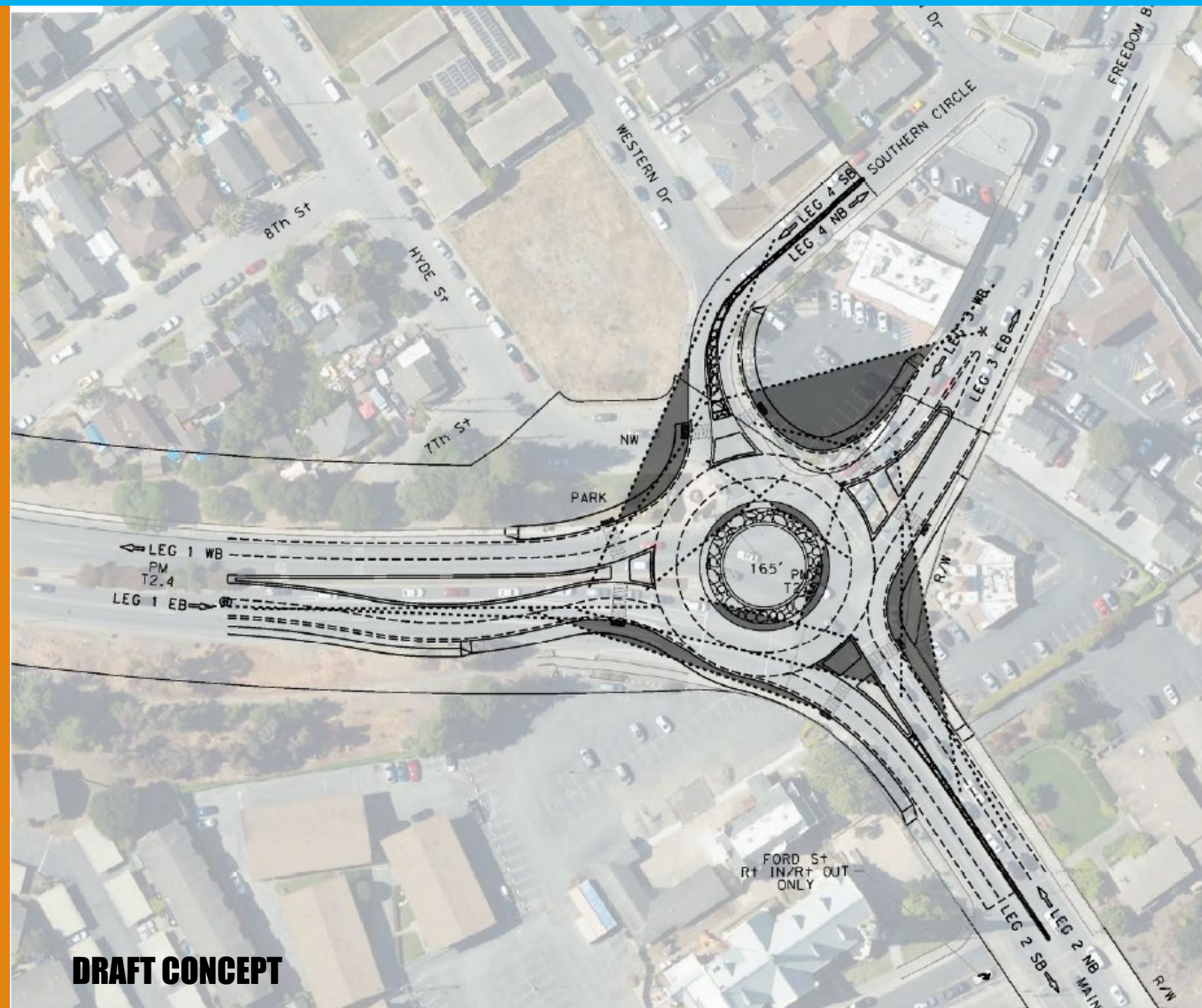
- Converts Ford St into a right-in-right-out
- Keeps access to all existing legs of the intersection
- Limits access btwn Hyde & Western
- Requires relocating Memorial Park to make use of Caltrans right-of-way
- Provides a 10' multiuse path for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate around the roundabout
- 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

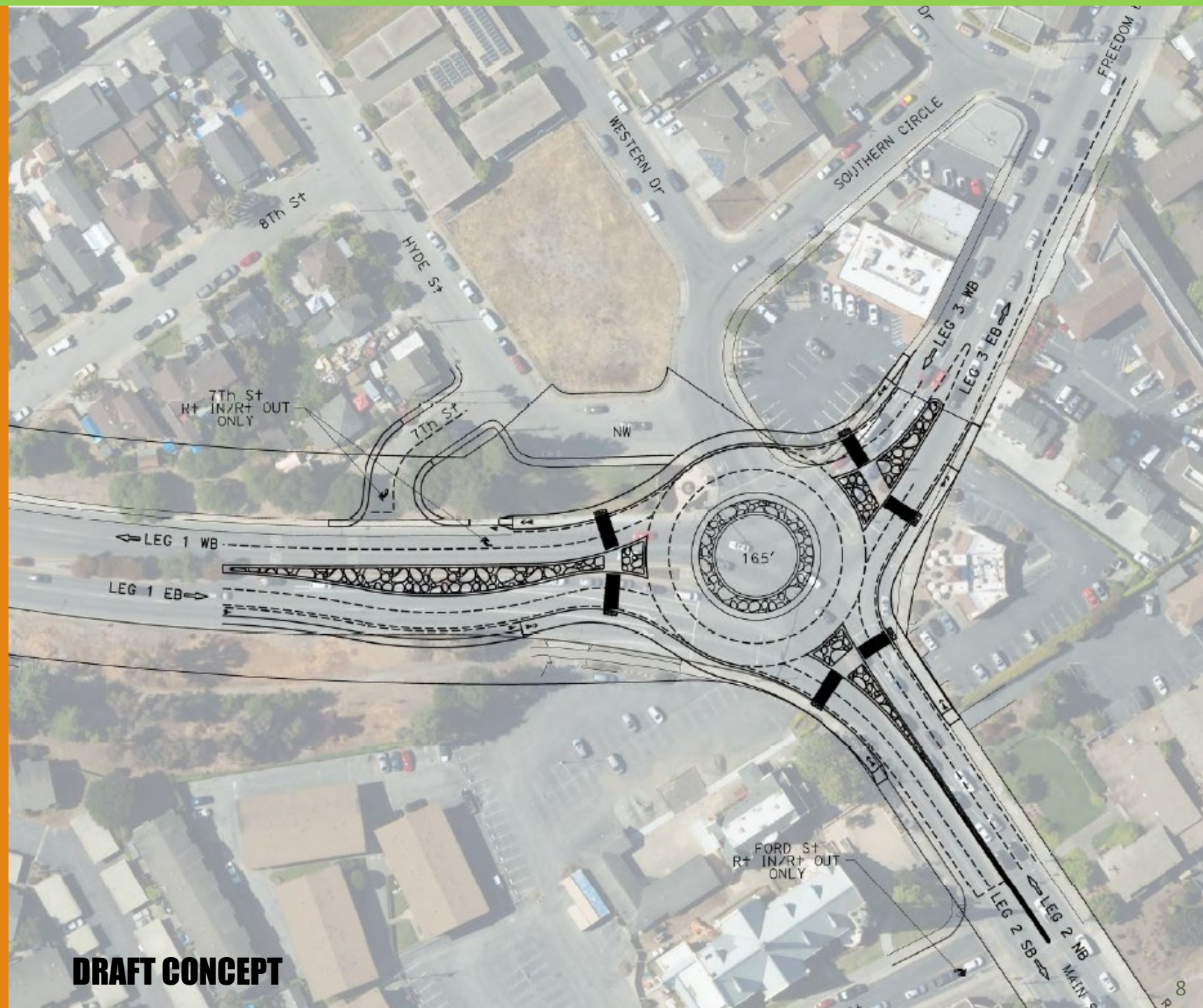
- Roundabout design is based on traffic volume, circulating and approach speed, design vehicles, sight distance and entry and exit geometry.
- To ensure sight distance are maintained and line-of sight is not blocked, areas within sight distance diagram have to be acquired.
- Therefore, sight distance 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):

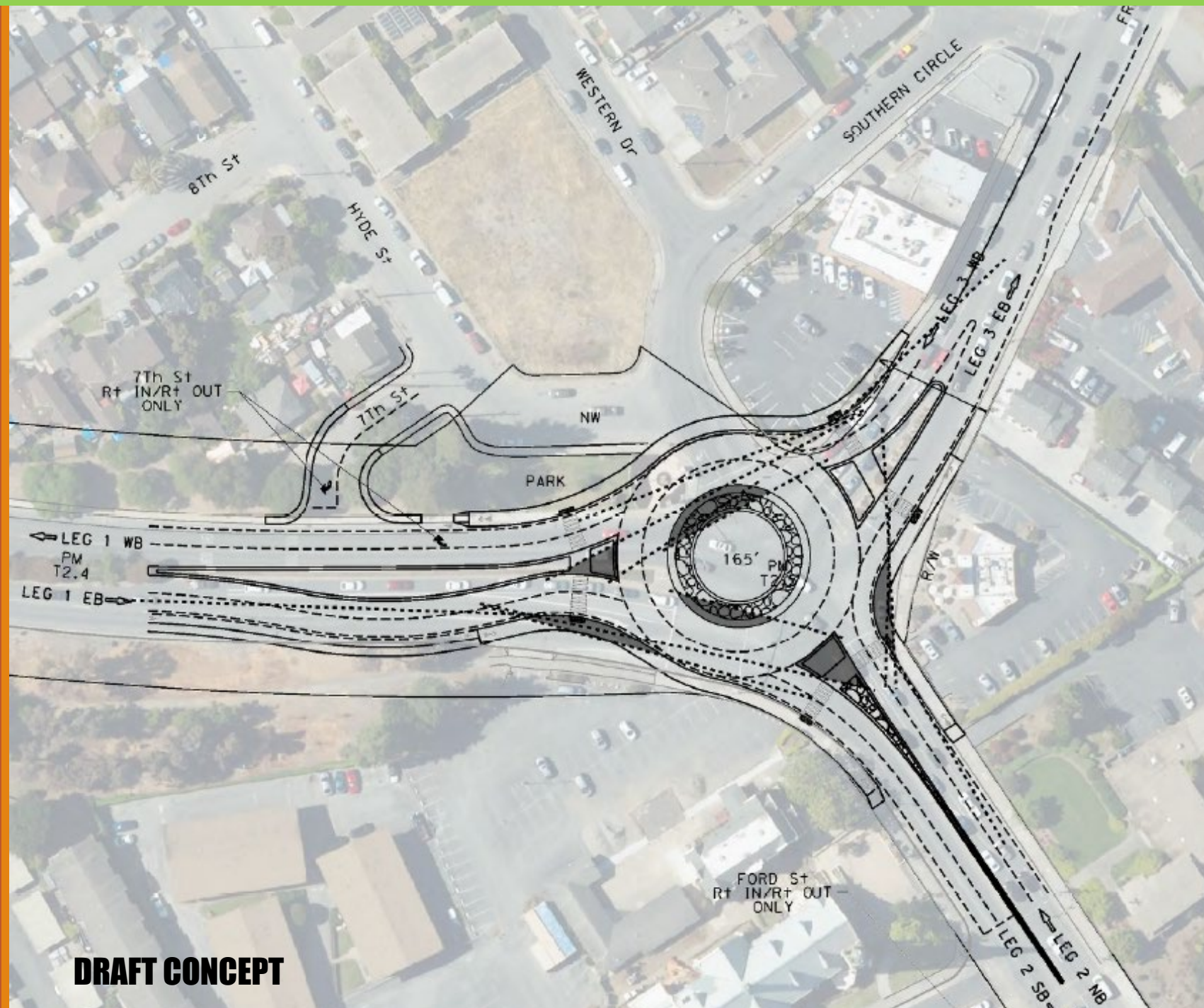
\$PENDING



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.



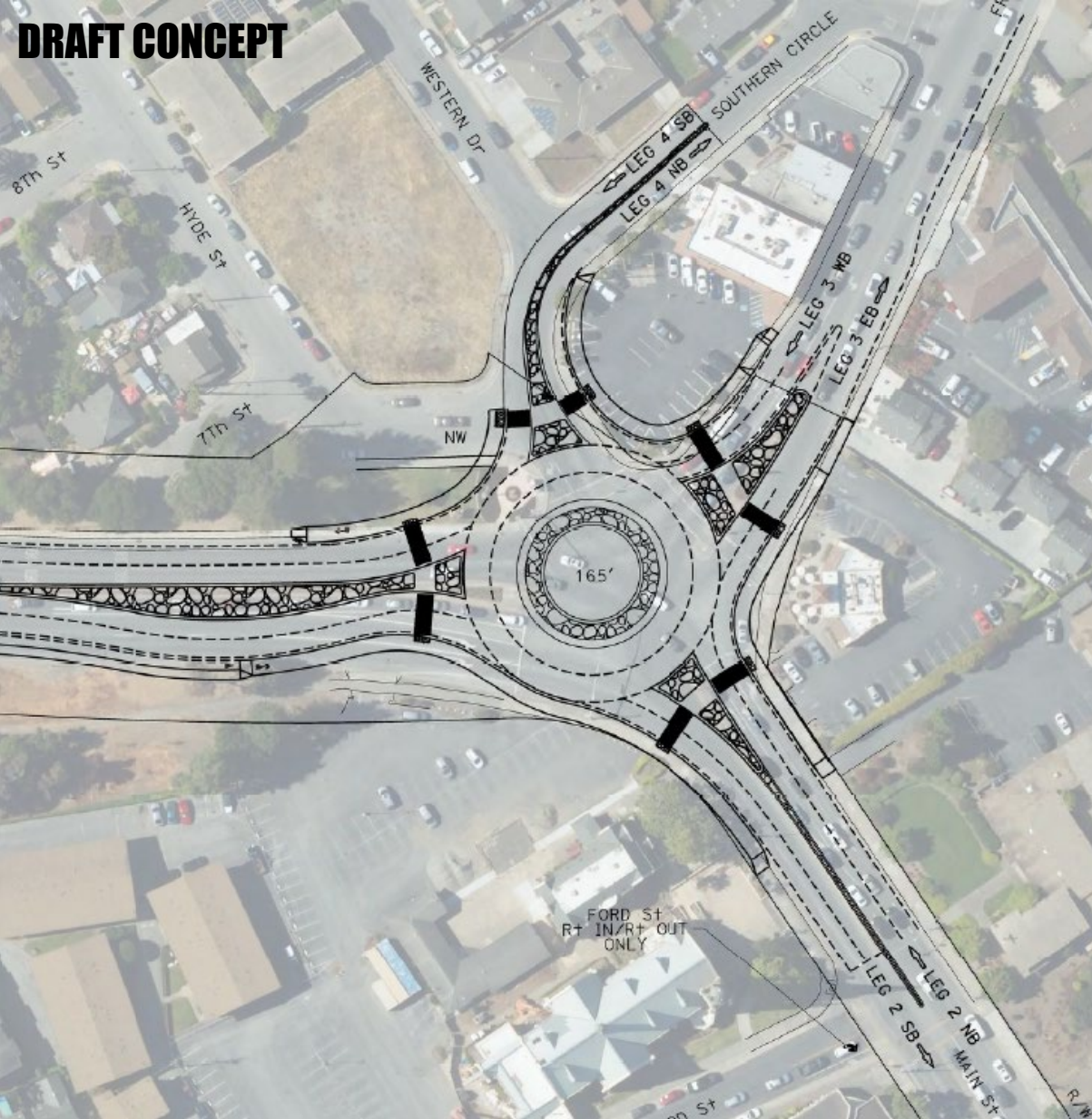
Draft Concept Comparison

4-LEGGED ROUNDABOUT

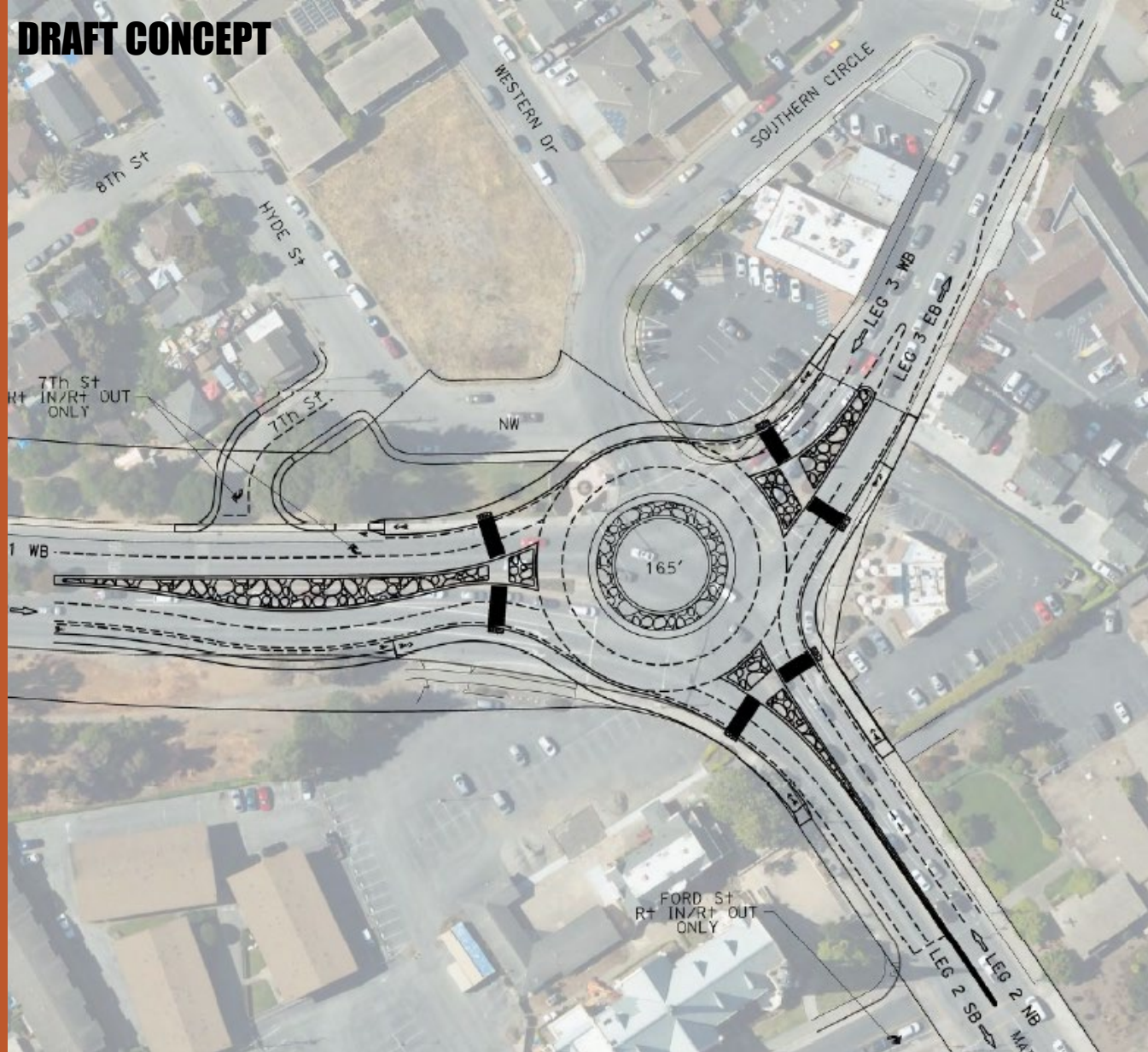
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- Preliminary Right-of-Way Cost Estimate (escalated): \$9.5 million

3-LEGGED ROUNDABOUT

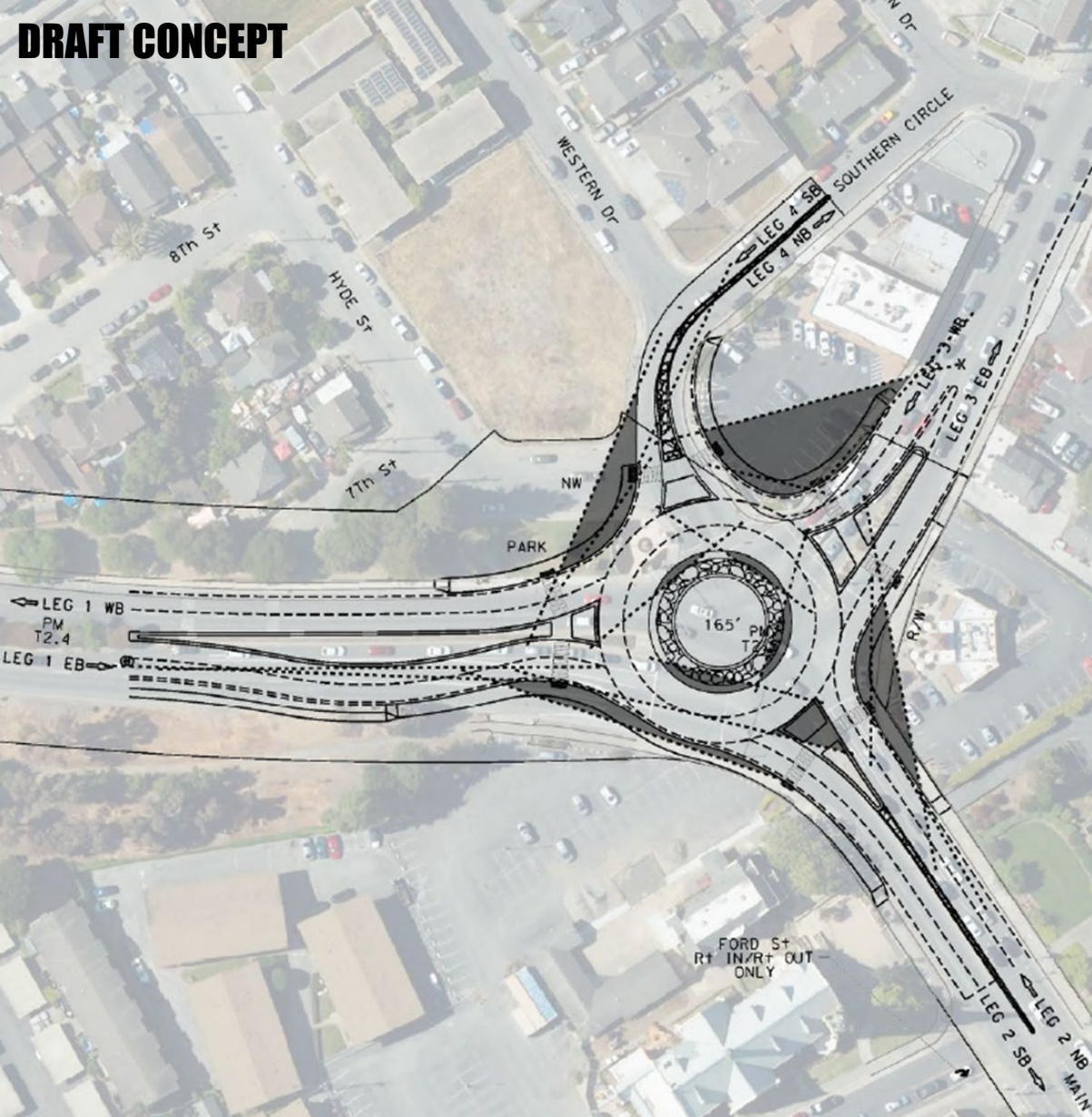
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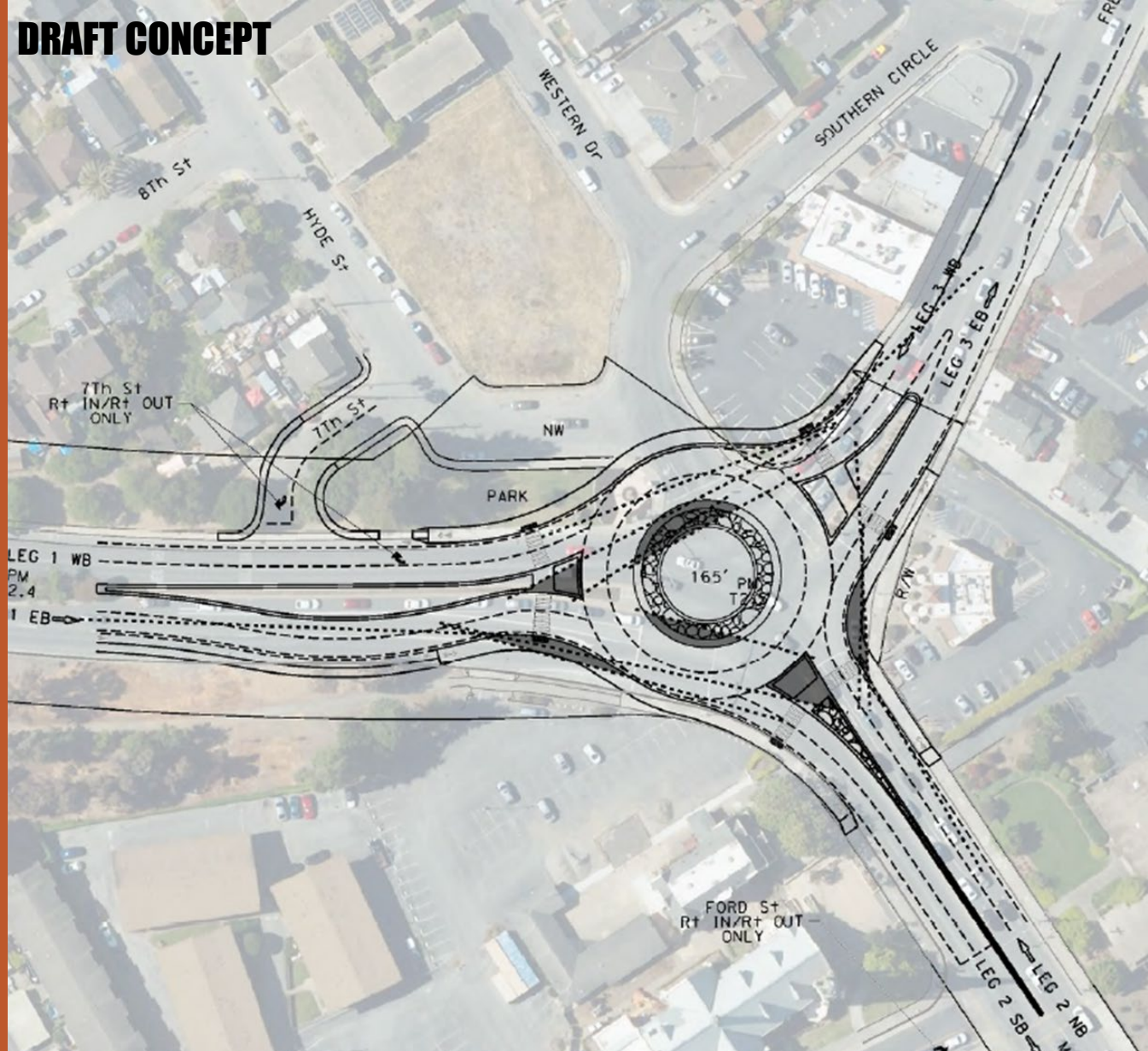
Alternative 1 (Option 2)



Alternative 2 (Option 6)



Alternative 1 (Option 2)



Alternative 2 (Option 6)

Concept Comparison

Status & Next Steps

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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.)

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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.

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
 - (805) 549-3138
- *Please reference project “EA” number 05-1S400

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