Riverford Road Roundabouts - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why roundabouts?

Roundabouts have many advantages over traffic signals when constructed in the right location, including:

- They provide traffic calming, resulting in reduced speeds.
- The require less maintenance, have lower yearly operational costs, and have longer service life.
- The reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing vehicle idling time.
- The median islands provide refuse for pedestrians, allowing them to cross one direction of traffic at a time.
- They provide additional opportunities for landscaping in the community.

Here is a link to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Roundabouts page, which has a lot of great information and videos:
https://highways.dot.gov/safety/intersection-safety/intersection-types/roundabouts

Are roundabouts safe?

Yes, roundabouts have been shown to reduce the severity of accidents compared to stop-controlled and signalized intersections. This means less fatal, serious, and injury-related crashes. They reduce speeds through the intersection, and they reduce conflict points.

Not only are they safer for drivers, but roundabouts have also shown to be significantly safer for pedestrians as well. Roundabouts have designated crosswalks with pedestrian islands making it safer for pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time. Additionally incorporating raised crosswalks will elevate the pedestrians slightly, above street level, making them more visible to drivers and encouraging vehicles to slow down when approaching the pedestrian crosswalk. Furthermore, all crosswalks are located in areas where the speed of vehicles is already being reduced by the design to enter and negotiate the roundabout, and they are located outside of the roundabout to allow drivers to focus on pedestrian crossings separate from roundabout maneuvers (entering, circulating, and exiting).

We invite you to visit our roundabouts statistics page.

Most people in this community have never used a roundabout before; can the County assist in training and education?

Yes, we understand that there can be an initial adjustment period as drivers learn to navigate a roundabout. The County will continue to look for training and education opportunities as we get closer to construction and the opening of the roundabouts to traffic (currently anticipated early 2030). We will look at creating both a bird's eye view video, as well as a driver's eye video going through the roundabouts.

In the meantime, there are many videos on-line that help educate people, including these two:

Rules of the Roundabout
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peUf2NRdWxs

How to Maneuver a Modern Roundabout
https://youtu.be/OizPs_uiRZU

The County can also provide locations of existing roundabouts in the region if drivers are interested in experiencing driving through a roundabout.

With so much traffic coming off the SR-67, how will other directions be able to get into the roundabout?

Roundabouts work by maintaining continuous flow of traffic while controlling vehicle speeds before entering and through the roundabout. This is accomplished using roadway geometry (curves) and physical barriers (narrowing of lanes, splitter islands, raised crosswalks, etc.) and the specifically designed radius of the roundabout. Although vehicles may be traveling at high speeds on the SR-67, they will be forced to slow down as they approach and enter the roundabout.

Based on the traffic data collected, and the slowing of vehicles before they enter the roundabout, there will be gaps. It can be expected that some legs will experience short queuing before entering the roundabout, however, the LOS/Sidra analysis shows that all legs of the roundabout will operate at an acceptable LOS (see Fact Sheet for more details).

Additionally, the County used VISSIM software to model the proposed roundabouts while utilizing the collected and projected traffic data. The model shows the continuous movements of vehicles and how long delays, queues, and gaps will be. The model and summary will be shared at the public meeting and eventually added to the project website.

Can you provide examples of any roundabouts in California that take traffic directly off a highway?

Roundabouts are becoming more popular throughout California and here are a few examples to look at. The roundabouts in Truckee are most similar to our project.

I-80 / SR-89 Interchange in Truckee, CA
https://maps.app.goo.gl/53XzsAfnawZARiqn6

SR-29 / 1st Street Interchange in Napa, CA
https://maps.app.goo.gl/enf5cnE7GcZkEG6D8

Valle Road and La Novia Ave Intersection, adjacent to I-5 in San Juan Capistrano, CA
https://maps.app.goo.gl/mmCpAuqUKiYr9Zwf7

SR-1 / SR-68 Interchange in Monterey County, CA
https://maps.app.goo.gl/pLJHGKhYXPoedvVx7

What happens when large trucks or emergency vehicles enter the roundabouts?

Both roundabouts are designed for the largest truck and trailers allowed on the road, as defined by the state and federal guidelines. The roundabouts were additionally designed to accommodate special permit vehicles that have historically used routes through this area. This includes:

- Federal: Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) trucks with semitrailers of both 53 feet and 48 feet as well as Double Semitrailers of 28.5 feet each trailer and an overall unlimited length.
- State: California Legal Single and Double semitrailers (smaller than the STAA trucks).
- Permitted: Oversized and Overweight (OSOW) vehicles up to 135ft long.

Large trucks and trailers are able to get through the roundabout utilizing mountable truck aprons when navigating turns or circling the roundabout.

Emergency vehicles will also be able to navigate the roundabouts and vehicles should yield to the emergency vehicles in the roundabout similar to a standard roadway.

What will be the speed in the Roundabout?

As part of the design process, each roundabout is analyzed to confirm the fastest path vehicles would be able to navigate each part of the roundabout. It was determined that the southern roundabout has an average speed of 22 mph entering the roundabout and an average speed of 18 mph when circulating in the roundabout. The northern roundabout has an average speed of 20 mph entering the roundabout and an average speed of 18 mph when circulating in the roundabout.

What kind of lighting will be included?

Pole mounted streetlights will be located at the perimeters of the roundabout which will provide illumination for the entire roundabout. The exact locations of the streetlights will be determined as the design progresses.

Additionally, the center of the roundabout is raised to reduce headlight glare from the vehicles on opposite sides the of the roundabout.

Why are you putting a crosswalk across the SR-67 off-ramps?

One of the purposes of this project is to improve multimodal connectivity within the community. This includes shared-use sidewalks throughout the corridor providing multiple options for safe passage and connectivity on either side of SR-67.

All crosswalks are located in areas where the speed of vehicles is already being reduced by the design to enter and negotiate the roundabout, and all crosswalks are raised, making pedestrians more visible to drivers and encouraging vehicles to slow down further when approaching the pedestrian crosswalk.

As a function of roundabout design, pedestrians cross a shorter distance of only one direction of traffic at a time since the entering and exiting flows are separated. Crosswalks are located outside of the roundabout to allow drivers to focus on pedestrian crossings separate from roundabout maneuvers (entering, circulating, and exiting).

Can stoplights be added to control the flow of vehicles entering the roundabout?
Based on the traffic data, it has been determined that stoplights are not necessary at this location.

Can you use this Project funding at a different location/intersection instead?
This interchange currently experiences considerable operational deficiencies during peak-hours, which can result in excessive delays and significant queueing. This is mainly due to how closely spaced the intersections are on both sides of the interchange. Additionally, the overall existing geometry, the complex traffic signal timing and operations, and the limited available storage lengths all compound the condition at the SR-67 off-ramps. Traffic often queues and backs up onto the highway.

The project is moving now due to required traffic mitigation from active private development on the north side of Riverford Road.

When will I get another chance to engage?
The Project website is consistently being updated as the design progresses, and there is a comment section that will always be active. The public will also continue to have opportunities to provide input on the project during future community events, similar to the one held in July 2024 at the Lakeside County Library. The County values the community's input and will continue to engage with the Lakeside Community Planning Group and keep the public informed as the design progresses.