

Riverford Road Roundabouts – Fact Sheet

Project Need

The State Route (SR)-67 / Riverford Road (Rd) interchange is a complex system of interconnecting roadways in the community of Lakeside. The 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.

Project History

The need for improvements in this area was first identified by Caltrans in 2009 as part of a study of traffic conditions along SR-67. Most of the SR-67 and Riverford Road interchange is located within Caltrans right-of-way.

On February 3, 2016, the County approved the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP) Specific Plan. This project is expected to create many new jobs, but it will also increase traffic in the area. Without improvements, the added traffic would worsen existing congestion.

As part of the approval process for USDRIP development projects in 2019 and 2020, the Developer was required to mitigate both immediate and long-term traffic impacts near the SR-67 and Riverford Road interchange.

The Developer's mitigation is provided through a fair-share cost agreement, which is based on an independent traffic study that estimated the number of additional vehicle trips expected from the development.

The Developer, Lakeside Land Company, completed the following Caltrans documents to establish an appropriate project to mitigate the anticipated traffic impacts:

Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) Report (Approved by Caltrans January 2020)

Project Initiation Documents (PID)

Project Study Report – Project Development Support (PSR – PDS) (Approved by Caltrans June 2022)

Alternatives

As part of the Caltrans Project Study Report (PSR)-Project Development Support (PDS) Document, eight (8) alternatives for improving this corridor's interchange were analyzed. Each alternative was evaluated utilizing peak traffic volumes collected in 2019 and projected out to the year 2045. Each alternative was modeled with the traffic data and produced a Level of Service (LOS) letter grade. LOS grades are based on delay times to pass through the intersection.

Alternatives included combinations of new signals, adding turn lanes, and replacing both SR-67 bridges to widen Riverford Rd. The roundabouts alternative was the only and preferred alternative

that provided an acceptable LOS at all intersections and provided the most safety and operational benefits for the community now and in the future. Both one-lane and two-lane roundabouts were analyzed, in which the 2-lane was required to meet acceptable LOS.

Project Purpose

The Project will improve overall operations, circulation, and provide a more “complete street” that includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities and is accessible for all users at the SR-67/Riverford Rd Interchange. Modifications to the SR-67 and Riverford Rd interchange will improve local and regional traffic, facilitate transit services, and improve multimodal connectivity within the community.

Project Improvements

The County of San Diego Department of Public Works (DPW) Riverford Rd Roundabouts Project will consolidate four existing intersections into two roundabouts on either side of the SR-67. Each roundabout will be two lanes, and the approach legs will be either one lane or two lanes to enter the roundabout based on the peak-hour average daily trips (ADT).

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. The design of all approach legs has ensured a safe traveling speed entering the roundabout. This includes the SR-67 off-ramps, which may have vehicles traveling at higher speeds when they initially exit.

Vehicles

The Project is being designed to fit within existing constraints to minimize project costs. This includes avoiding both modifications to the SR-67 bridges and exceptionally large retaining walls along slopes. Each entry point to the roundabout was analyzed to ensure vehicles slow down enough to safely enter and navigate the roundabout, but also maintain enough speed to maximize efficiency.

The Inscribed Circle Diameter (ICD) of the southern roundabout is 163' and has an average speed of 22 mph entering the roundabout and an average speed of 18 mph when circulating in the roundabout. The ICD of the northern roundabout is 185' and has an average speed of 20 mph entering the roundabout and an average speed of 18 mph when circulating in the roundabout.

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 can get through the roundabout utilizing mountable curbs and truck aprons when navigating turns or circling the roundabout.

Bicyclists

The Project will include shared-use sidewalks that are extra wide to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists. The Project will maintain and connect the existing bicycle facilities on Woodside and North Woodside Avenue.

Pedestrians

In addition to including shared-use sidewalks throughout the corridor providing safe passage and connectivity to future improvements, the Project also includes raised crosswalks at all crossing locations within the roundabout boundaries. The raised crosswalks provide an additional level of safety for pedestrians, and the splitter islands provide refuge while waiting to cross. All crosswalks are located in areas where the speed of vehicles is already being reduced by the design to enter and negotiate the roundabout.

Environmental Review

Potential environmental impacts from construction of the Project were evaluated through thirteen technical studies prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):

- Air Quality Analysis Report
- Aquatic resources delineation report
- Archeological Survey Report
- Biological site conditions assessment
- Coastal California gnatcatcher focused surveys report
- Community Assessment Report
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis Report
- Historic Properties Survey Report
- Least Bell's vireo focused surveys report
- Natural Environment Study report
- Phase I Environmental Assessment
- Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment
- Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum

Results of the technical studies concluded that no significant effects on the environment would occur. Minor sensitive vegetation removal will occur during construction; however, impacts will be either restored onsite through hydroseeding or plantings and offsite via restoration of designated biological mitigation areas.

Environmental Document

Based on the results of the technical studies, the Environmental Document will be a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), prepared pursuant to CEQA State Law, which describes reasons a proposed project will not result in significant effects on the environment and includes measures for avoiding or mitigating potential effects.

Environmental Document Approval

The Draft MND underwent a public review period in August/September 2024. The County sent notifications to residences and businesses adjacent to the project and to nearby neighborhoods when the public review period began. The notifications were sent via mail and explained how and where to access the MND and supporting documents and how to contact County staff with comments.

After public comments were received, addressed by County staff, and responses provided to all who commented, the Final MND was approved by Director of Public Works to certify that the document was complete and in accordance with CEQA.

Right-of-Way

The Project's current footprint will require acquisition of additional land rights to accommodate the Project improvements. Land rights will be acquired through purchase of different easements (Road, Slope & Drainage, Temporary Construction). It is anticipated that two vacant parcels of land will be purchased in their entirety, as well as parts of other properties adjacent to the project.

Construction

Construction is estimated to span between Summer 2028 to early 2030. The duration will be refined as design progresses and the optimal construction phasing is analyzed. Nightwork and detours may be effective methods to reduce traffic impacts and durations.

Project Cost and Funding

The total construction cost is estimated to be \$29.0 Million with an overall project cost of \$43.0 Million, which includes environmental studies, design, easement acquisitions, utility relocations and Caltrans design and construction support.

Project Schedule

Caltrans Project Approval, Fall 2023 – Summer 2025

(35%, 50% Level Designs)

& Environmental Document Approval

Plans Specifications, and Estimate Summer 2025 – End 2026
(90%, 100%, Final Level Designs)

Right-of-Way Appraisals & Acquisitions Summer 2026 – Summer 2027

Utility Relocations Late 2026 – Summer 2028

Construction Summer 2028 – Early 2030

Future Adjacent Projects

Woodside Ave Sidewalk Improvement Project (between Marilla Dr and Vine St)

This project will construct sidewalk and water quality features along the south side of Woodside Ave between Marilla Dr and Vine St. The project is in design and construction is anticipated to start in 2025.

Woodside Ave Sidewalks Gap Project (between Riverford Road and Marilla Dr)

This project will construct approximately 1200ft of sidewalk along the south side of Woodside Ave between the end of the Riverford Road Roundabouts Project and the existing sidewalk just west of Marilla Dr. The project is currently unfunded.