



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: March 3, 2026

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Jane Riley, AICP – Planning Director (interim)
Subject: Downtown Sebastopol “Reimagining the Core” Study Alternatives

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RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. **Affirm that the City’s primary downtown priorities are safety, walkability, environmental sustainability, and business vitality**, and that future street design decisions should advance measurable improvements in these areas.
2. **Adopt the Planning Commission’s recommendation** to advance a preferred downtown street design framework that achieves these priorities by:
 - a. narrowing portions of Main Street to calm traffic and shorten pedestrian crossing distances,
 - b. retaining on-street parking on Main Street to support local businesses,
 - c. incorporating protected bicycle facilities on McKinley and Petaluma Avenue, and
 - d. establishing a two-way circulation framework for Main Street and Petaluma Avenue.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The “Reimagining the Core” effort evaluates how downtown segments of State Route 116 and State Route 12 can better function as both a safe community center and a regional corridor. Funded through a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant, the study included approximately 18 months of technical analysis, coordination with Caltrans, and broad community engagement.

Four conceptual alternatives were developed to address safety, circulation, multimodal access, and downtown vitality. Nearly 650 survey responses were received, and more than 1,000 community members participated through workshops, stakeholder meetings, business outreach, and online engagement. Feedback consistently prioritized improved safety, walkability, and a more vibrant downtown environment, while reflecting mixed perspectives on full two-way circulation.

The Planning Commission recommended a hybrid framework that blends the pedestrian and bicycle improvements of Alternative 3 with a two-way circulation structure consistent with Alternative 4. The recommended approach advances traffic calming on Main Street, retains on-street parking to support businesses, incorporates protected bicycle facilities on McKinley and Petaluma Avenue, and establishes a two-way downtown network.

Adopting this framework affirms the City’s priorities of safety, environmental sustainability, and business vitality, while positioning Sebastopol to pursue implementation funding aligned with measurable safety improvements, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction, and greenhouse gas reduction outcomes.

BACKGROUND:

Downtown Sebastopol has long functioned as both the heart of the community and a regional transportation corridor. The Sebastopol Downtown Plan was originally adopted in 1990, when SR 116 and SR 12 were already integral components of the downtown street network. Over time, increases in commuting, freight movement, and regional through-traffic have intensified vehicle volumes through the downtown core. This has heightened the



tension between the corridor's state highway function and its role as the City's primary commercial district and gathering place.

In 2022, the City secured a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant (STG) to reevaluate the downtown segments of SR 116 and SR 12. The study area includes Main Street (Burnett Street to McKinley Street), Petaluma Avenue (Burnett Street to McKinley Street), Sebastopol Avenue (Bodega Avenue to Morris Street), and McKinley Street (North Main Street to Laguna Park Way).

The effort responds to documented safety concerns. Sebastopol ranks poorly in statewide crash comparisons among similarly sized California cities, including high rankings in pedestrian-involved crashes across multiple age groups. In 2023, compared to 73 other similarly-sized California cities:

- Sebastopol ranks the worst in overall pedestrian safety (15 to 65 yr)
- 4th worst in pedestrian safety (>15 yr)
- 8th worst in pedestrian safety (65+)
- Sebastopol ranks 9th worst overall for all safety categories

These findings underscore the need to improve safety conditions for people walking and biking and to rebalance downtown streets toward a safer, more context-sensitive design.

Over approximately 18 months, the City and their consultant, Fehr & Peers, conducted existing conditions analysis, circulation studies, multimodal safety assessments, and coordination with Caltrans. Community engagement included multiple community workshops, business and stakeholder meetings, online digital engagement through the project website, email and social media outreach, and a final survey phase. Across these activities, the City engaged with and received input from more than 1,000 community members.

The following four conceptual alternatives were developed and are included in the attached documentation as presented to the community and Planning Commission.

- Alternate 1: Fine-Tune Today
- Alternate 2: Test the Two-Way
- Alternate 3: Walkable One-Way
- Alternate 4: Totally Two-Way

All alternatives incorporated narrower travel lanes, shorter crossing distances, midblock crossings, traffic calming measures, and protected or separated bicycle facilities. The key differences involved one-way versus two-way circulation, bicycle facility alignment, and parking impacts.

The final survey generated nearly 650 responses. Alternative 3 (Walkable One-Way) received the highest level of support, followed by Alternative 1 (Fine-tune Today), Alternative 4 (Totally Two-Way), and Alternative 2 (Test the Two-Way). Survey comments consistently emphasized improving walkability and safety, supporting downtown vitality, and addressing congestion concerns at the Highway 12/Highway 116 junction. Views on two-way circulation were mixed, with some advocating strongly for restoring two-way travel and others prioritizing pedestrian-focused improvements first.



At its February 10, 2026, meeting, the Planning Commission recommended advancing a hybrid concept that reflects both the community's preference for the pedestrian and bicycle improvements in Alternative 3 and the interest in two-way vehicle circulation reflected in Alternative 4. Specifically, the Commission recommended carrying forward the lane narrowing, shortened crossings, Main Street on-street parking retention, and protected bicycle facility alignment from Alternative 3, combined with conversion of Main Street and Petaluma Avenue to two-way circulation as described in Alternative 4. In effect, the Commission's recommendation blends the community-preferred safety and placemaking elements with the operational framework of a two-way downtown network.

DISCUSSION:

The Planning Commission's recommended approach advances a hybrid concept that blends the community-supported safety and placemaking improvements of Alternative 3 with the two-way circulation framework of Alternative 4. The concept reflects extensive public input prioritizing walkability, safety, and downtown vitality, while acknowledging ongoing concerns about congestion and network function.

The proposed framework narrows selected segments of Main Street to shorten pedestrian crossing distances and calm vehicle speeds. On-street parking would be retained on both sides of Main Street to continue supporting local businesses. Adjustments on Petaluma Avenue may be considered as needed to accommodate multimodal improvements and operational refinements.

The design also provides protected, separated bicycle facilities in each direction on McKinley Street and Petaluma Avenue. These facilities enhance comfort and safety for people bicycling and improve connectivity within the downtown network.

In addition, the framework includes conversion of Main Street and Petaluma Avenue to two-way vehicle circulation. While public feedback reflected both strong support and concern regarding this element, the Planning Commission concluded that the safety and network benefits of a two-way system warrant continued feasibility analysis and design development.

It is important to clarify that none of the alternatives evaluated in this study are intended to resolve traffic congestion associated with the Highway 12/Highway 116 junction. These corridors serve a state highway function and are influenced by regional travel demand beyond the scope of this downtown planning effort.

Identification of a Preferred Alternative will allow staff to proceed with conceptual design, coordination with Caltrans, refinement of operational details, and preparation of implementation strategies.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff's analysis of the Planning Commission's recommendation is described below.

Safety Performance

Recognized safety countermeasures, including lane narrowing, shortened pedestrian crossings, midblock crossing opportunities, and protected bicycle facilities. These elements are associated with lower operating speeds, improved yielding behavior, and reduced crash severity — particularly for vulnerable road users.



Transitioning to a two-way circulation framework further supports safety performance. Multi-lane one-way streets in compact downtown environments are often associated with higher operating speeds and greater crash severity¹. A two-way configuration typically results in more moderate travel speeds, improved driver awareness, and simplified wayfinding. In a context such as Sebastopol's downtown core — where pedestrian activity, storefront access, and short local trips are prevalent — a two-way system can better align street design with surrounding land use and activity levels. This framework allows the City to address documented pedestrian safety challenges through a cohesive, system-level approach rather than isolated spot improvements.

Environmental Performance and VMT Reduction

State policy increasingly prioritizes reduction of “vehicle miles traveled” (VMT) over delay reduction as the primary transportation-related climate metric. A two-way downtown network improves route directness and reduces out-of-direction travel, which can lower total VMT. Reduced VMT translates directly into lower carbon dioxide emissions and supports regional greenhouse gas reduction targets.

In addition, high-quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities encourage short local trips to shift from vehicle travel to active modes. Given Sebastopol's compact downtown and short trip distances, the opportunity to meaningfully reduce local VMT through design is significant. As well, City Council support for a two-way framework strengthens the City's ability to demonstrate measurable VMT reduction potential, which is a key scoring factor in competitive state and federal funding programs.

Business and Community Vitality

Downtown vitality depends on access, visibility, and a comfortable pedestrian environment. Retaining on-street parking on Main Street maintains convenience for customers and supports local businesses. Narrowed travel lanes and shorter crossings enhance the pedestrian experience, increasing comfort and dwell time — factors consistently associated with higher retail activity.

Two-way circulation can improve storefront visibility by allowing businesses to be approached from multiple directions and by reducing the perception of downtown as a pass-through corridor. A more intuitive and navigable street network supports visitor orientation, reinforces downtown identity, and enhances the City's role as a destination rather than a bypass route.

Grant Competitiveness and Implementation Strategy

State and federal transportation funding programs increasingly prioritize projects that demonstrate:

- Documented safety improvements;
- Measurable VMT reduction;
- Climate and greenhouse gas benefits;
- Active transportation enhancements; and
- Community and economic revitalization outcomes.

¹ Federal Highway Administration **Publication Number:** FHWA-HRT-17-098
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/17098/003.cfm?>



Consistency with Adopted Plans and Ongoing Initiatives

The recommended framework is consistent with and advances multiple adopted and ongoing City initiatives. It supports the City's Active Transportation Plan by prioritizing protected bicycle infrastructure and improved pedestrian crossings. It aligns with climate and greenhouse gas reduction goals by emphasizing VMT reduction and mode shift. It reinforces Complete Streets principles and context-sensitive design within the downtown core.

The project also complements ongoing and anticipated planning efforts, including the City's Priority Development Area (PDA) work and the Sebastopol Commons initiative, both of which envision a more walkable, mixed-use, and community-oriented downtown. Improving multimodal access and rebalancing the street network strengthens the City's capacity to accommodate a vibrant mix of land uses and community spaces in the downtown core.

Conclusion

All of the alternatives evaluated would advance the community's goals for safety, walkability, and downtown vitality. However, the Planning Commission's recommended hybrid framework offers the strongest alignment with measurable safety improvements, VMT reduction, and economic vitality outcomes, positioning the City most competitively for state and federal grant funding.

Next Steps

- City Council action tonight will establish the Preferred Alternative, which will be developed into a conceptual design and incorporated into the draft final report for this study.
- Staff and the consultant team will prepare a conceptual design and draft report, including a funding and implementation strategy identifying potential grant opportunities, phased approaches, and next steps to advance design and construction.
- The Planning Commission will review the conceptual design and draft report, and provide feedback prior to finalization. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 24, 2026.
- The draft report and conceptual design will then return to City Council for review and direction to finalize the report and formally conclude the study. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 21, 2026.
- If the City Council selects a preferred Alternative that is not one of the four Alternatives already studied, direct staff to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Consultant, not to exceed \$10,000 to perform the additional studies required (see Fiscal Impact section).

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

As discussed above and summarized below, community outreach has been a central component of this planning effort. Engagement activities included:

- Multiple community workshops
- Business and stakeholder meetings
- Online engagement through the project's digital engagement platform & website
- Email and newsletter outreach
- Social media and local media promotion
- Outreach to business owners and Chamber of Commerce representatives
- A final survey phase generating nearly 650 responses

Across these activities, more than 1,000 community members were engaged. Key themes consistently included:



- Strong prioritization of walkability and safety
- Desire for a more vibrant, people-focused downtown
- Concern regarding congestion at the Highway 12/Highway 116 junction
- Mixed perspectives on two-way circulation
- Interest in thoughtful, phased implementation

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comment received prior to the preparation of this Staff Report is attached. Additional public comments received prior to the City Council hearing will be distributed at the meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Consultant time required to develop conceptual design plans of the preferred alternative and prepare a written report with a funding and implementation plan is covered by the Sustainable Communities Grant (STG). Staff time required to prepare the agenda item is covered within existing budgeted salaries.

If the City Council selects a preferred alternative that has not already been studied under the STG Grant, including but not limited to the Planning Commission's recommendation, additional consultant costs would be incurred, including costs to study modifications to circulation, turning movements, lane configurations, or other operational elements beyond those evaluated in the four studied alternatives. The STG grant does not include funding for analysis beyond the studied scenarios. The scope of any additional work would depend on the Council's direction but is estimated to be between \$7,500 and \$10,000. These overages would need to be covered by the Planning Department budget, which has adequate salary savings to absorb the additional costs. This item is scheduled for Budget Subcommittee review for March 2, 2026.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS:

Goal 1: Community Vitality Enhance Sebastopol as a great place to live that values community health and well-being. Preserve Sebastopol's unique character.

Goal 2: Public safety Strengthen the public's safety and improve the quality of life.

Goal 3: Infrastructure Maintaining High Quality Infrastructure, Facilities and Services includes repairing/replacing outdated city facilities, improving streets, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.

1. *Includes Caltrans Grant – Sustainable Transportation*

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

Goal LU 1: Maintain Sebastopol as a Unique, Charming, and Environmentally Sensitive Small Town that Provides Residents, Businesses, and Visitors with Opportunities to Enjoy a High Quality of Life.

Goal LU 7: Emphasize and Advance Sebastopol's Role as a Market and Service Center for the West County by Providing for a Vibrant Downtown, Diversified Uses, and Community Services and Facilities.

Goal CIR 1: Provide a Transportation System that Promotes the Use of Alternatives to the Single-Occupant Vehicle and Facilitates the Efficient and Environmentally Responsible Movement of People and Goods Within and Through the City of Sebastopol.



Goal CIR 2: Maintain and Expand a Safe and Efficient Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Network that Connects Neighborhoods with Key Destinations to Encourage Travel by Non-Automobile Modes while also Improving Public Health.

Goal CIR 3: Coordinate Circulation Facilities with Land Use and Development Patterns to Create an Environment that Encourages Walking, Bicycling, and Transit Use.

Goal CIR 5: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Order to Reduce Congestion and Help Achieve Regional Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

Goal CIR 6: Maintain Parking Requirements and Practices that Complement the Desired Land Use Pattern while Minimizing Neighborhood Impacts.

Goal COS 6: Conserve, Protect, and Enhance Trees and Native Vegetation.

Goal COS 7: Improve Air Quality in Sebastopol and Reduce Air Quality Impacts from Future Development.

Goal COS 8: Reduce Emissions of Greenhouse Gases from City Operations and Community Sources.

Goal CD 1: Preserve and Enhance Sebastopol's Unique Character, Design, and Sense of Place as a Small, Compact Town.

Goal CD 2: Promote and Enhance the Downtown as a Safe, Active, and Attractive Environment.

Goal EV 1: Encourage Economic Development that Broadens the City's Employment Base, Attracts High-Quality Jobs, Provides Services and Goods that Reflect the City's Values, and Increases the City's Tax Base.

Goal EV 3: Protect and Increase the Economic Vitality of the City's Main Economic Sectors: Downtown and the Northern and Southern Gateways.

Goal EV 4: Emphasize Sebastopol's Role as a Market, Service, and Tourism Hub for the West County and as a Gateway to the Coast.

Goal EV 5: Enhance the City's Existing Businesses, Encourage Start-up Businesses, and Support Home-based Businesses.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. **Affirm that the City's primary downtown priorities are safety, walkability, environmental sustainability, and business vitality**, and that future street design decisions should advance measurable improvements in these areas.
2. **Adopt the Planning Commission's recommendation** to advance a preferred downtown street design framework that achieves these priorities by:
 - a. narrowing portions of Main Street to calm traffic and shorten pedestrian crossing distances,
 - b. retaining on-street parking on Main Street to support local businesses,
 - c. incorporating protected bicycle facilities on McKinley and Petaluma Avenue, and
 - d. establishing a two-way circulation framework for Main Street and Petaluma Avenue.
3. Direct staff to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Consultant, not to exceed \$10,000 for additional study as outlined above (only needed if the Preferred Alternative is other than Alternatives 1-4).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. The City Council could select one of the other studied Alternatives to move forward
2. The City Council could not select any Alternative to move forward, effectively ending this planning effort
(This Option is not recommended due to the potential requirement to return grant funds)



ATTACHMENTS:

1. **Alternatives Package** describing proposed improvements, including what is consistent across all alternatives, and the specific differences of each alternative, and an evaluation metric for each alternative showing how each alternative compares to the existing condition. Generally, the more apples in the score, the better the alternative addresses the issue/metric.
2. **Potential Cross Sections** for Each Alternative in Select Locations. Each subject to refinement as part of the conceptual design and future final design effort.
3. **Summary of Survey Results** as of Monday, February 2, 2026, including a summary of written feedback shared as part of the survey.
4. **Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes** from February 10, 2026.
5. **Community Comments Received by Staff** a compilation of all comments received by City staff related to the survey.
6. **Planning Commission Staff Report** from February 10, 2026.

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 2/26/26
 CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 2/24/26

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3), 21080.17, and 21080.66 in that there is no possibility that the selection of an alternative to study further will have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required at this time.

Administrative Services/Financial Approval: Approval Date: 2/26/26
Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes No N/A (Future budget impacts are not known at this time)

Account Code (if applicable) _____

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 2/26/26
 City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 2/26/26

EXISTING CONDITIONS

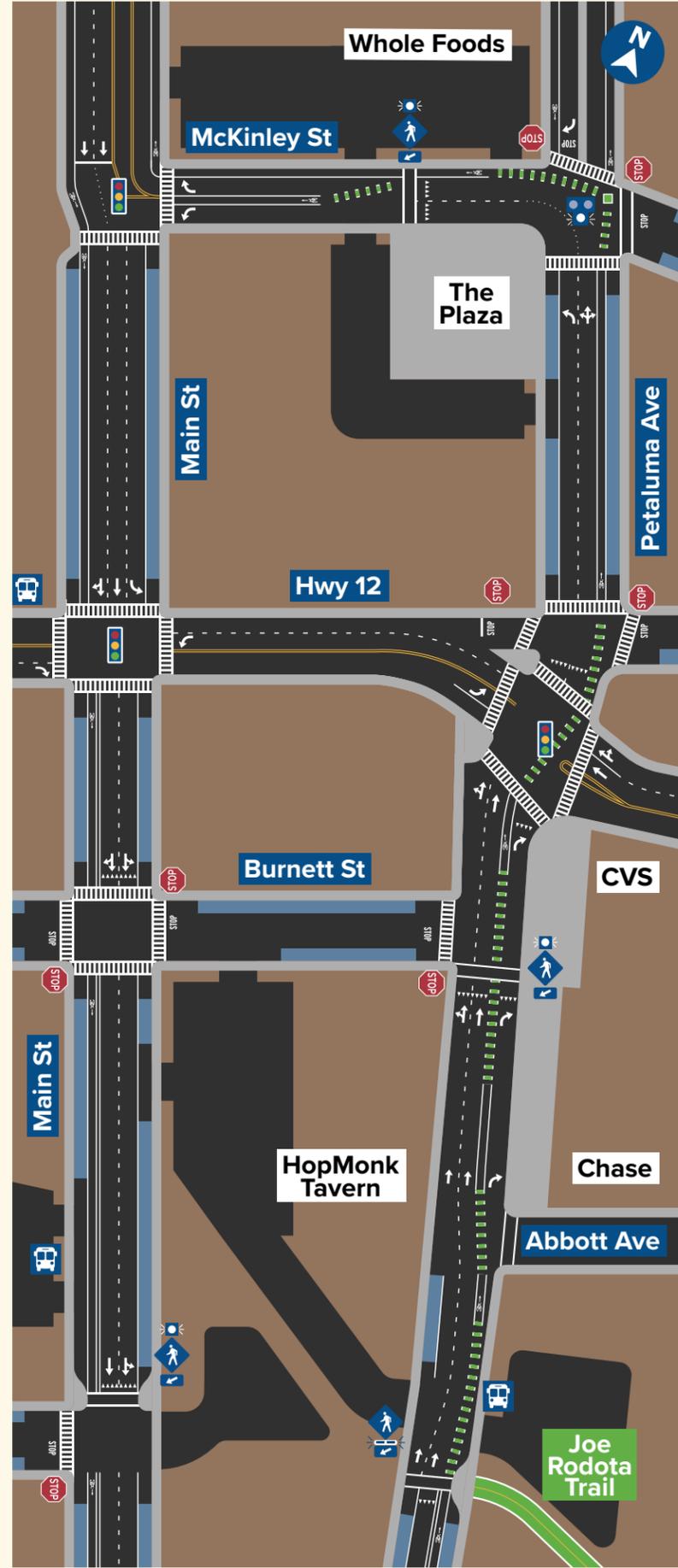
A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Sebastopol is embarking on an exciting journey to reimagine our downtown! The Reimagining the Core project is all about transforming the heart of our city, where State Routes 116 and 12 meet, into a place that feels safer, more welcoming, and easier to navigate whether you are walking, biking, driving, or taking transit.

Since our original Downtown Plan was created back in 1990, a lot has changed. We have seen more traffic, more trucks passing through, and longer commutes becoming part of daily life. In 2013, community members brought in experts from the American Institute of Architects to share ideas for improvement, and now, thanks to a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant awarded in 2022, we are taking the next step forward.

We aim to create a vibrant Main Street that reflects Sebastopol's unique character and community values, creates inviting public spaces where people want to linger, prioritizes safe and comfortable travel for those walking and biking, and supports thriving local businesses, while balancing the needs of local access and regional traffic circulation.

This project is about listening to what our community needs and creating a vision that works for everyone. We have heard that downtown Sebastopol should be a place where it is comfortable and safe to walk to your favorite coffee shop or restaurant, bike to meet friends, or stroll with your family. At the same time, we are committed to supporting California's climate goals by making it easier for people to choose alternatives to driving alone. By reducing regional through-traffic impacts and working closely with our local businesses, we are building a downtown that is vibrant, accessible, and ready for the future.



Key

-  Parking
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

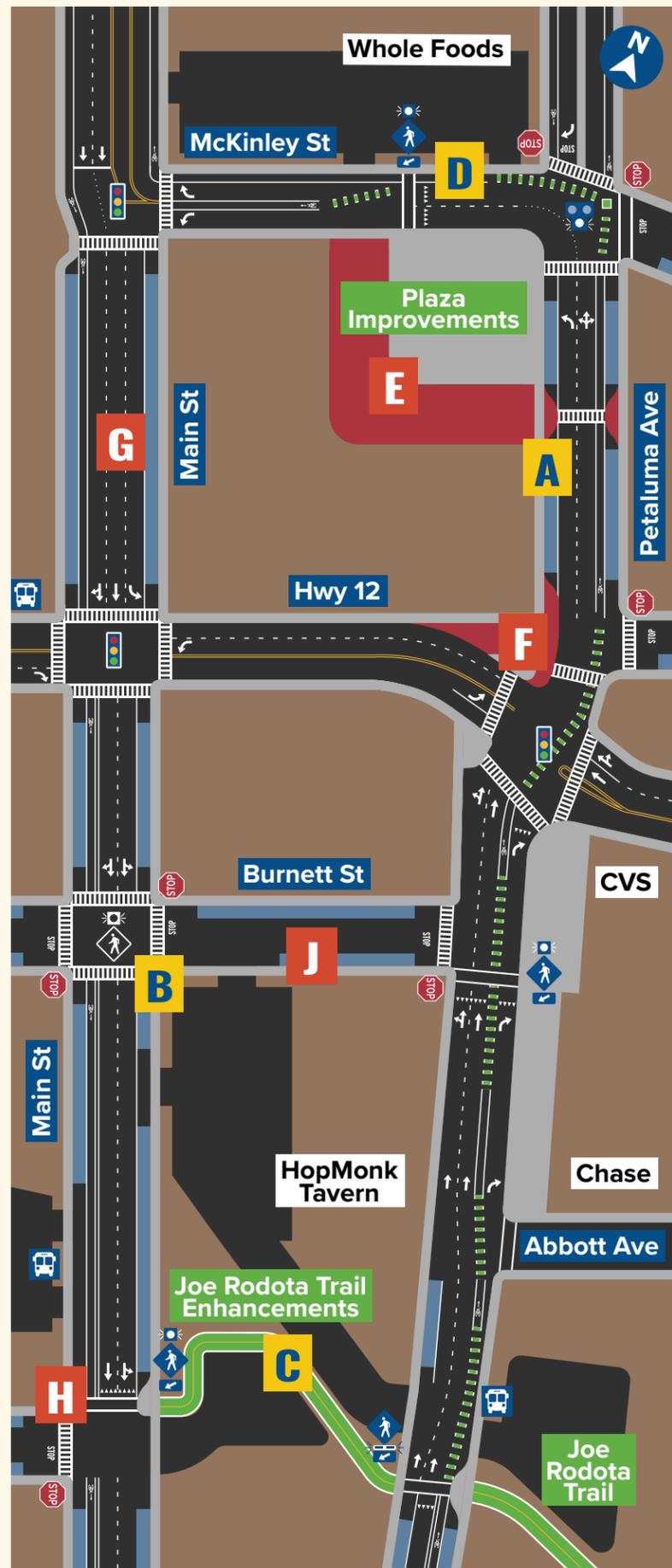
Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



This study builds upon previous and ongoing planning and design efforts, including adopted plans, programs, projects, and developments that together form the set of **baseline improvements** included in every alternative. Building on this foundation, this study identifies a suite of **streetscape enhancements** and **safety enhancements** that will fulfill the goal to further improve access, safety, and mobility for people walking and biking in and around downtown.

There are four alternative designs for implementing these enhancements. While all four alternatives share common objectives, they differ primarily in how traffic circulation is organized, where protected bicycle facilities are accommodated, and the degree to which additional pedestrian space can be created to help realize the community's vision for a more walkable, connected, and vibrant Sebastopol.

However, all four alternatives share the baseline improvements and a number of streetscape and safety features in common. These features and their placement within each alternative are shown on this map, and are illustrated in more detail within each alternative on subsequent pages.



- Key**
- Parking
 - New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - Stop Sign
 - Signal
 - Bus Stop
 - Bike Station
 - Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.

BASELINE IMPROVEMENTS

These are improvements already planned for and committed to in previous planning studies, approved developments, and current infrastructure design projects, and include several spot improvements for improved pedestrian and bicycle access, safety, and mobility:

- A** The Plaza Hotel project proposes a new mid-block crosswalk between the proposed hotel and the Plaza.
- B** The City is currently designing a new flashing pedestrian beacon for the intersection of Main and Burnett Streets.
- C** The Sebastopol Active Transportation Plan (ATP), adopted in January 2025, calls for an extension of the Joe Rodota Trail to connect the existing trailhead to Willow Street, as well as other bike blvd treatments along Willow and High Streets.
- D** The City's ATP also calls for improved pedestrian connections along McKinley Street to connect Main Street to the Barlow, and other locations of interest.

SAFETY AND STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS SHARED BY ALL FOUR ALTERNATIVES

These specific safety and streetscape enhancements are shared by all four alternatives:

- E** Plaza improvements, which are documented in the next pages.
- F** Remove the slip lane at the intersection of Petaluma and Sebastopol Avenues to create a permanent parklet.
- G** Install midblock crossing on Main Street with treatments to provide safe crossing to slow down traffic and create pedestrian friendly blocks.
- H** Improve connections Joe Rodota Trail to Ives Park via curb extensions, improvement crossing treatments.
- J** Establish Burnett Street as a Bike Blvd by prioritizing bikes, slowing down cars, and supporting additional east west bike connections.

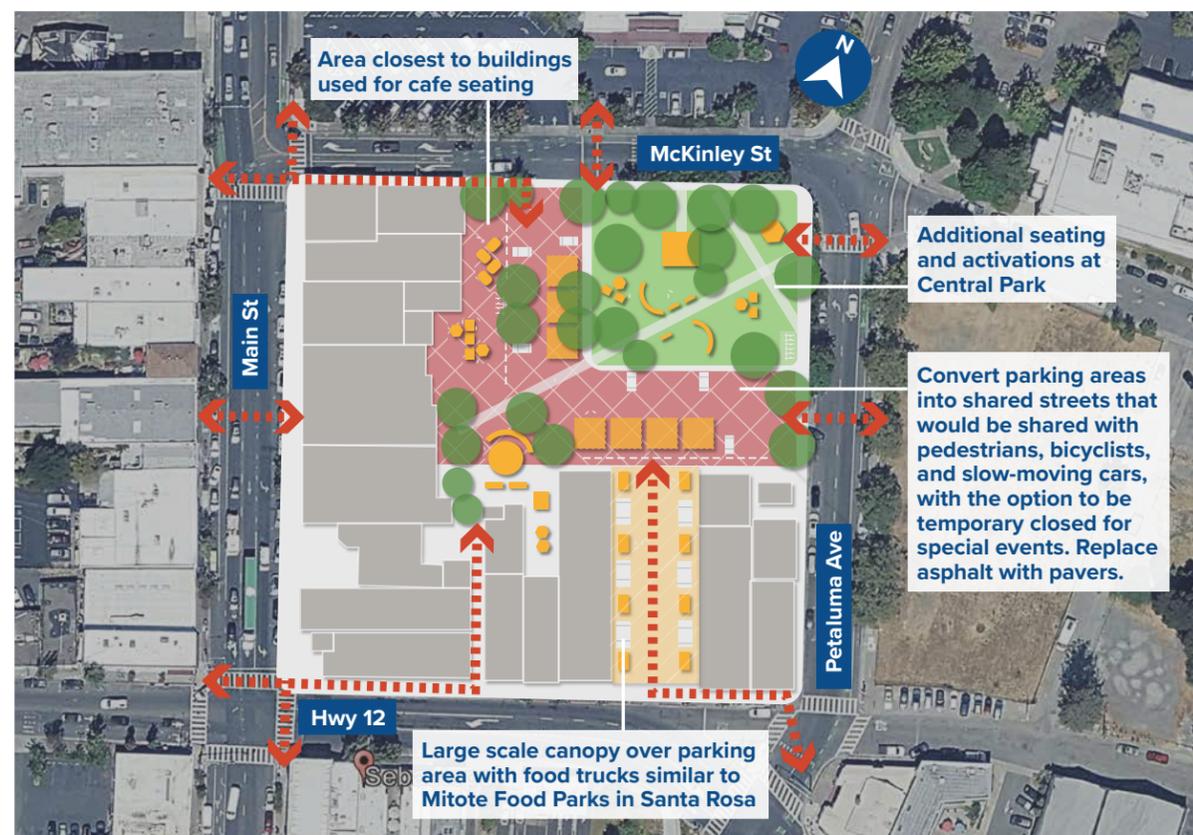
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT: THE PLAZA

Sebastopol's central park, referred to as "the Plaza", sits right in the heart of downtown Sebastopol and serves as our community's living room - a place where neighbors gather for concerts, festivals, farmers markets, and simply enjoying a beautiful day outdoors. This green space connects directly to our downtown shops and restaurants, making it a natural hub for both locals and visitors.

As we reimagine downtown mobility, there are opportunities to make the Plaza even more accessible and inviting. The parking area can be converted to a shared street that could be programmed with expanded

seating, lounging areas, dining, and food truck accommodations to bring more activity to the area.

Adjacent improvements could include safer, more visible crosswalks and pedestrian pathways leading to the park, better bike parking facilities, enhanced lighting for evening events, and upgraded park amenities that encourage people to linger longer. Creating seamless, comfortable connections between the park and surrounding businesses would help the Plaza truly anchor our downtown as a destination where people want to spend time, not just pass through.



STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT: JOE RODOTA TRAIL

The Joe Rodota Trail is an 8.5-mile paved pathway that connects Sebastopol to Santa Rosa, following what was once the Northwestern Pacific Railroad corridor. This beloved trail has become one of our region's most important car-free routes, used daily by commuters, recreational cyclists, families out for a walk, and runners enjoying the scenery. For many residents, it is the safest and most pleasant way to travel between the two cities without getting in a car. To maximize the trail's potential as a true alternative transportation route, improvements could focus on better connections between the trail and downtown Sebastopol, making it easier and more intuitive to transition from the trail to Main Street businesses.

This might include:

- clearer wayfinding signage
- increased landscaping for shade and ecological benefits
- dedicated bike lanes connecting the trail to downtown destinations
- improved trail surface maintenance
- better lighting in key areas
- additional access points that reduce barriers for people entering or leaving the trail

By strengthening these connections, the Joe Rodota Trail could play a large role in reducing vehicle trips and supporting our vision of a more walkable, bikeable community.



Existing terminus of the Joe Rodota Trail, looking west



SAFETY IMPROVEMENT: SEPARATED PROTECTED BIKEWAYS

A Class IV bikeway (separated bikeway) is a bike lane that includes a physical separation between the separated bikeway and the throughvehicular traffic. The separation may include, but is not limited to grade separation, flexible

posts, barriers, curb, or on-street parking. Caltrans provides design standards and guidelines, such as Design Information Bulletins (DIB) 89 and 94, for Class IV bikeways.

One-Way Lanes

One-way separated bike lanes are located on either side of the street alongside the direction of vehicle travel. One-way protected bike lanes can connect to shared lanes, standard bike lanes, or protected intersections. In areas where cars merge across the bike lane, drivers must yield to people biking. Green paint, dashed lane markings, and signs help make this clearer.



Two-Way Lanes

Two-way separated bike lanes have both directions of bike travel located on either side of the street. Two-way protected bike lanes also use physical barriers. Because bikes travel in both directions, intersections and driveways require extra care. Improving sight lines, slowing turning vehicles, and using clear markings all help increase safety



SAFETY IMPROVEMENT: CURB EXTENSIONS AND BULBOUTS

Curb extensions narrow the roadway visually and physically, making crossings shorter and safer for people walking. They also create space for things like benches, street trees, plants, and other street amenities. Curb extensions can be used on many types of streets—downtown, neighborhood, or residential.

Standard curb extensions are commonly used at intersections of roadways with on-street parking, and extend the curb outwards to the edge of the parking lane. This improves the visibility of people at the intersection and shortens crosswalks.

Midblock curb extensions narrow the roadway between intersections and may include bike cut-throughs. They are often placed in conjunction with mid-block pedestrian crossings.

“Curb extension” is a general term that can include a number of specific designs incorporated in planned improvements in Downtown Sebastopol.

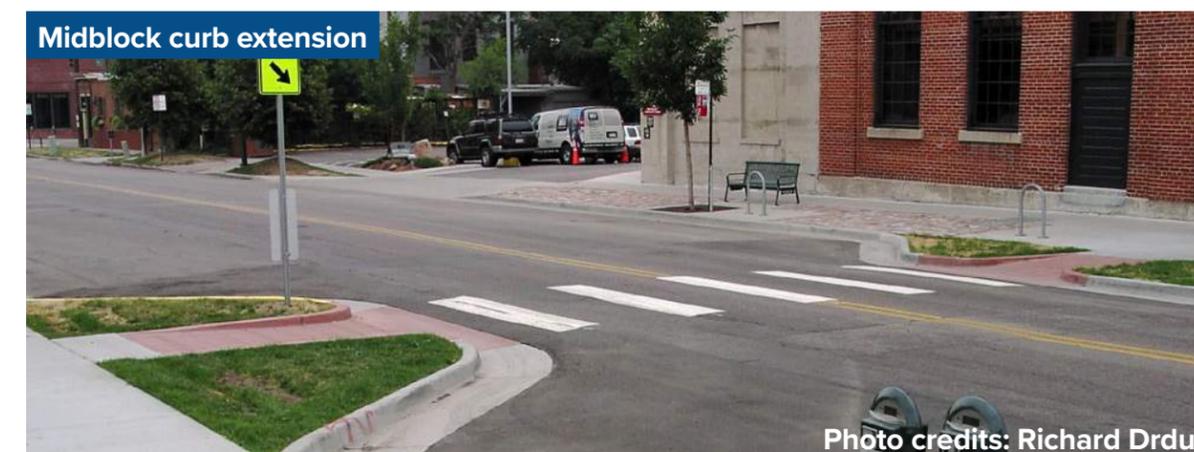


Photo credits: Richard Drdul

EVERY ALTERNATIVE IMPROVES SAFETY AND COMFORT FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND BIKING IN AND AROUND DOWNTOWN

The alternatives are presented in greater detail in the following pages. All four include a common set of safety and streetscape improvements recommended regardless of which option is ultimately selected. In addition to the specific common features explored previously such as improvements to the Plaza, each alternative also has shared design features intended to slow vehicle speeds, address known safety issues at intersections, and create a more comfortable walking and biking experience throughout downtown. These shared improvements include continuous, separated, protected bike facilities; lane width reductions to slow vehicle speeds; curb extensions and bulbouts at intersections to reduce crossing distance, increase space for people walking and biking, and improve sightlines; and traffic signal phasing and timing changes to promote low speed traffic, bike and pedestrian safety access and circulation. Each alternative also provides opportunities for streetscape improvements such as street trees and seating.



HOW DO THE ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS DIFFER?

While many improvements and safety features are consistent across all alternative concepts, they are different in the directionality of the traffic lanes and the location of the proposed protected bikeways.

Alternative 1: Fine Tune Today

Maintains the existing one-way traffic pattern (Main St SB, Petaluma Ave NB) with Class IV protected bike lanes in the same direction as traffic on each street. This option fine-tunes current operations while keeping familiar vehicle and bike flows.

Alternative 2: Test the Two Way

Converts Main St to two-way traffic while Petaluma Ave remains one-way. Petaluma Ave features Class IV protected bike lanes in both directions, improving bike connectivity while testing two-way traffic for vehicles on Main St.

Alternative 3: Walkable One Way

Keeps one-way traffic on both streets (Main St SB, Petaluma Ave NB) but provides two-way Class IV protected bike lanes on Petaluma Ave, prioritizing safe and convenient bike travel along this corridor.

Alternative 4: Totally Two Way

Converts both streets to two-way traffic and includes Class IV protected bike lanes in both directions on Main St, creating a fully two-way network for vehicles and a high-quality, two-way bike corridor for enhanced connectivity.



ALT 1: FINE-TUNE TODAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It maintains the existing one-way circulation pattern downtown while reducing the number of travel lanes in each direction. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities and other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through optimized signal timing and adjustments designed to minimize motorist delay.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

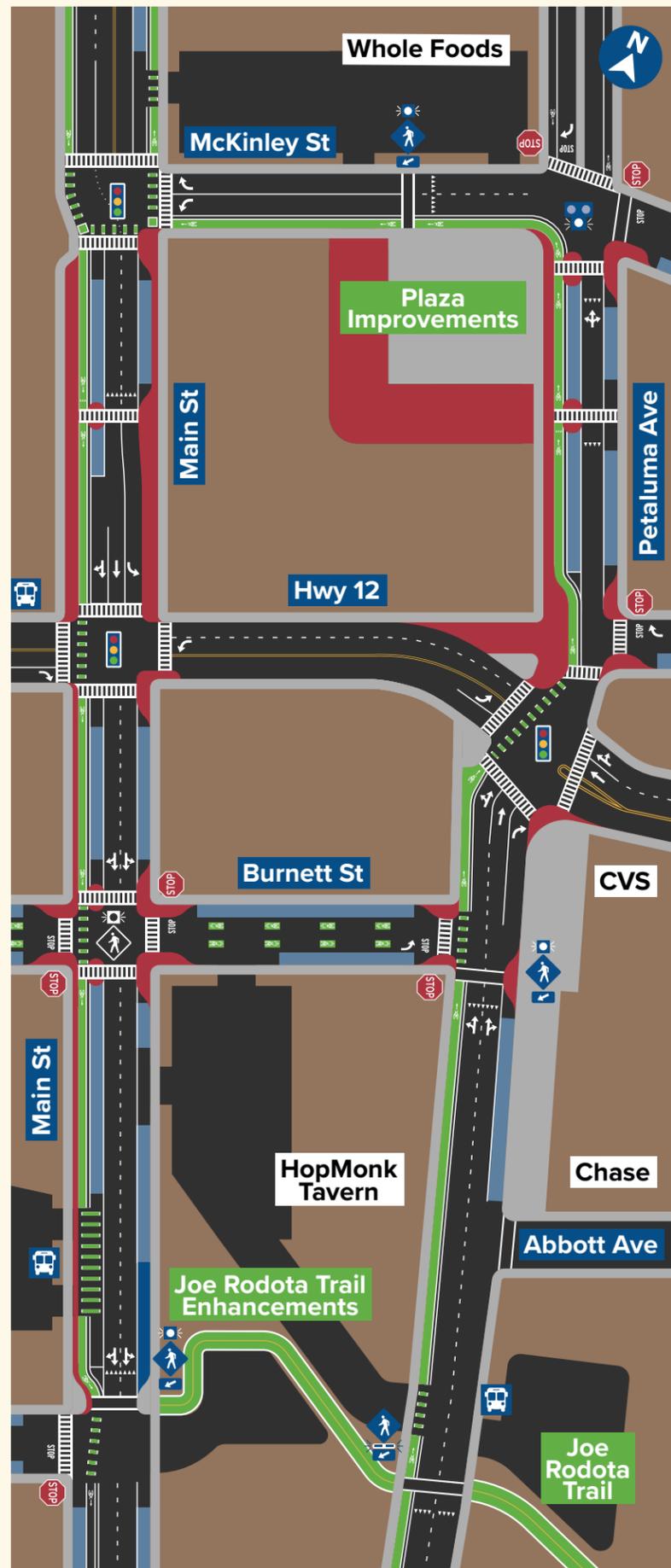
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

TOTAL
11

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 1



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



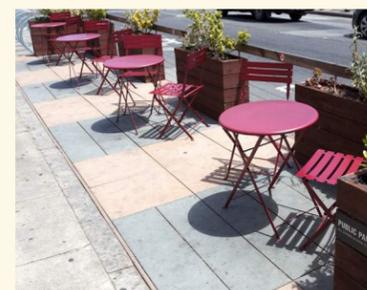
parallel seating



parklet seating



bulbout seating



small dining parklet



bike parking





ALT 2: TEST THE TWO-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It converts Main Street to two-way circulation with turn pockets provided only where turns are permitted, and the design is envisioned to function with minimal changes should the City choose to revert to the existing one-way couplet in the future. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities and other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through signal timing optimized to the extent feasible to support efficient traffic movement.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

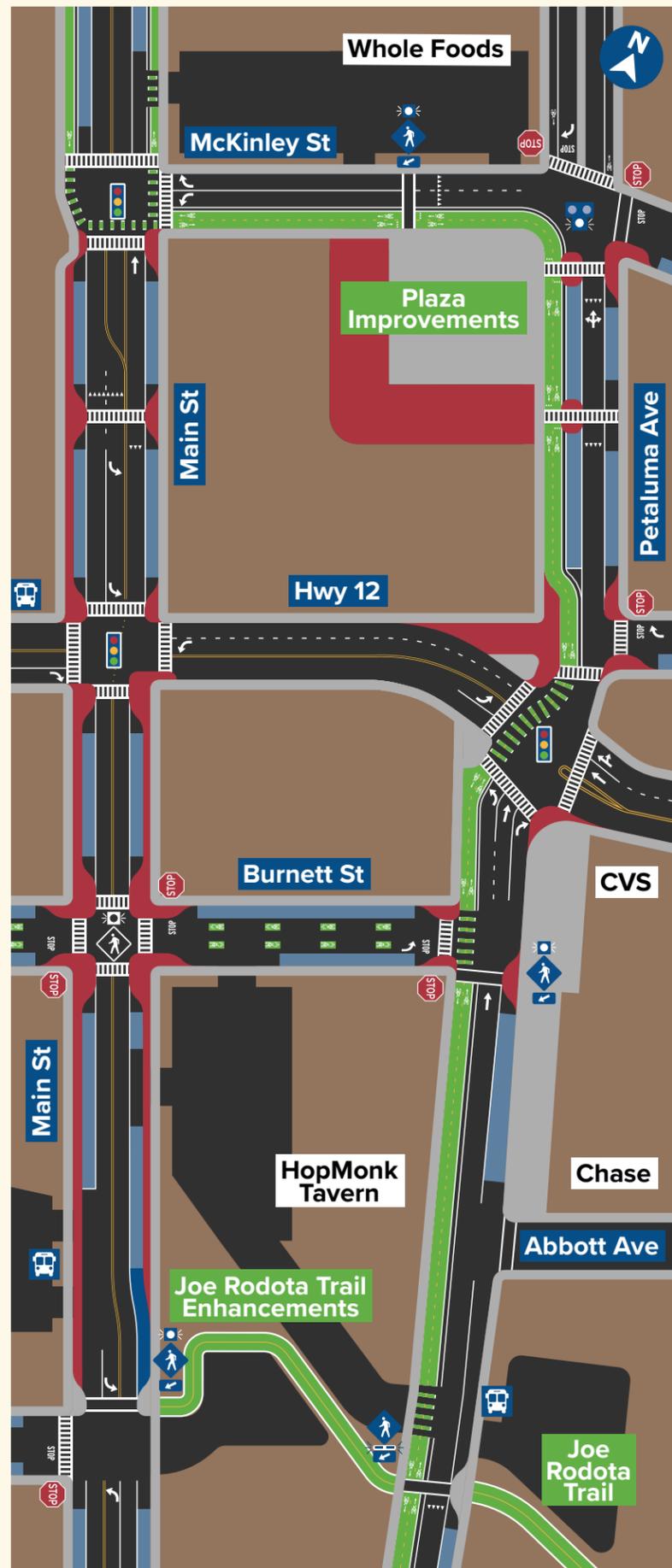
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

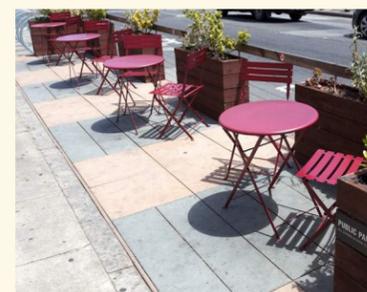
TOTAL
14

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 2



small vegetated bulbout

large bulbout

distinctive public art

parallel seating

bulbout seating

narrow street trees

bike parking

small dining parklet



ALT 3: WALKABLE ONE-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It maintains the existing one-way circulation pattern downtown while reducing the number of travel lanes in each direction. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities shifted entirely to Petaluma Avenue, maximizing opportunities for wider sidewalks and more robust streetscape amenities in the core of downtown. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through optimized signal timing and adjustments designed to minimize motorist delay.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1.5 / 4

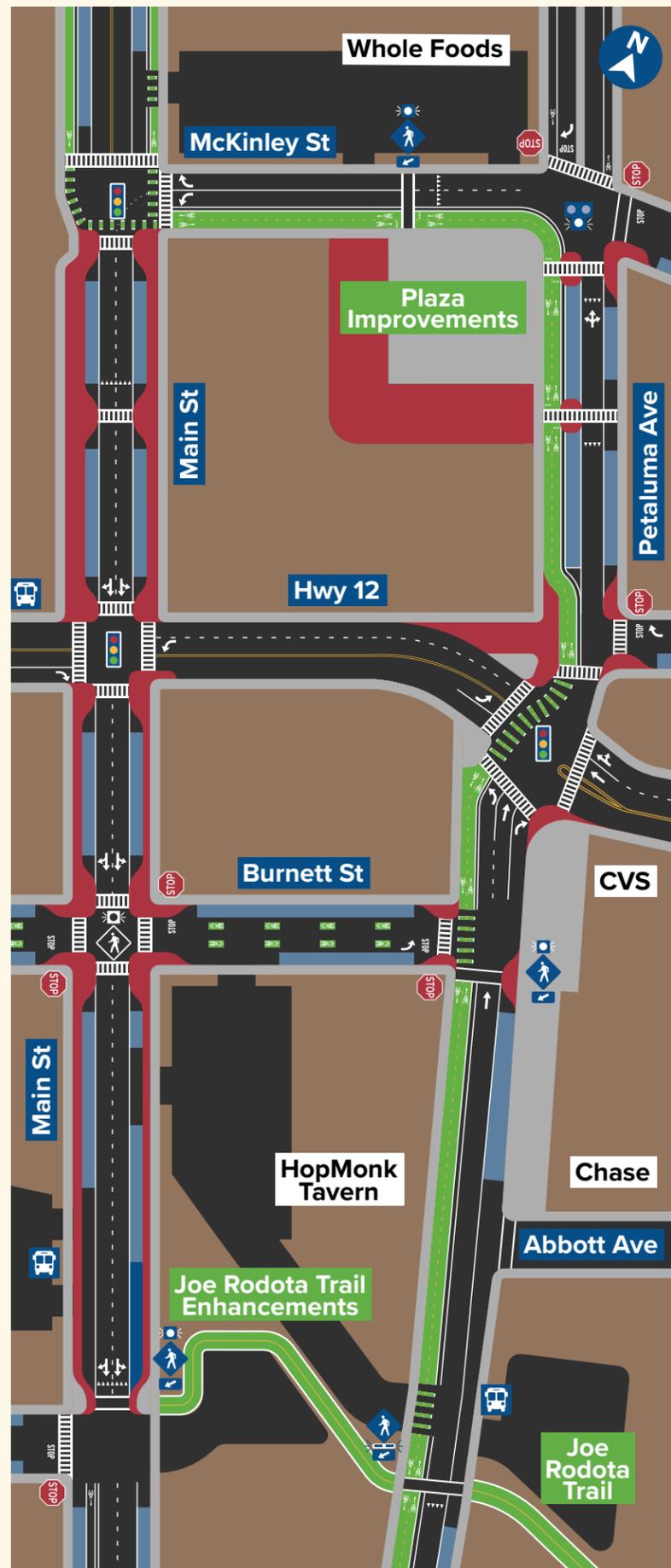
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL 14.5

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

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STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 3



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



parallel seating



parklet seating



bulbout seating



narrow street trees



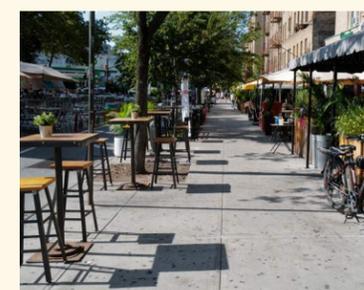
two-row street trees



bike parking



small dining parklet



full dining parklet





ALT 4: TOTALLY TWO-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It converts both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue to two-way circulation with turn pockets provided only where turns are permitted. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities consolidated on Main Street along with other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through signal timing optimized to the extent feasible to support efficient traffic movement.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1 / 4

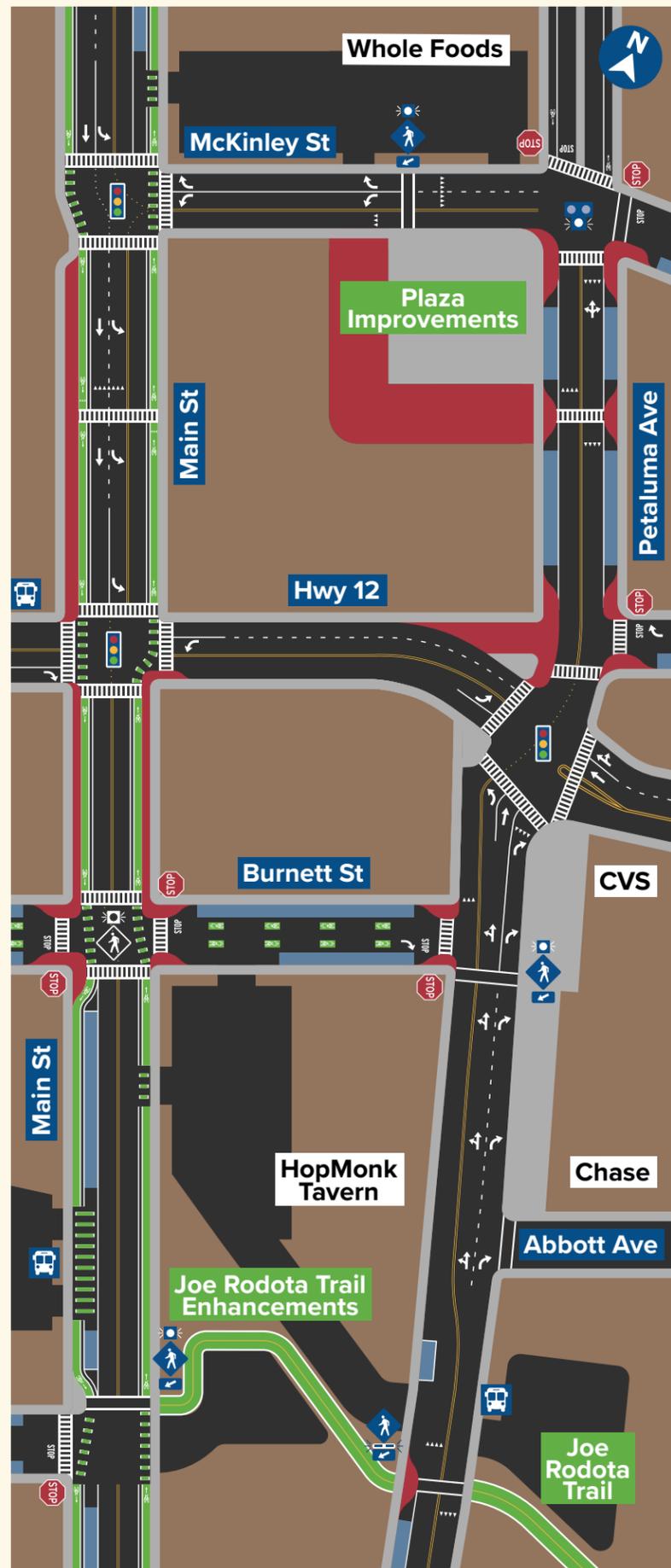
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL 12.5

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

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STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 4



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



parallel seating



bulbout seating



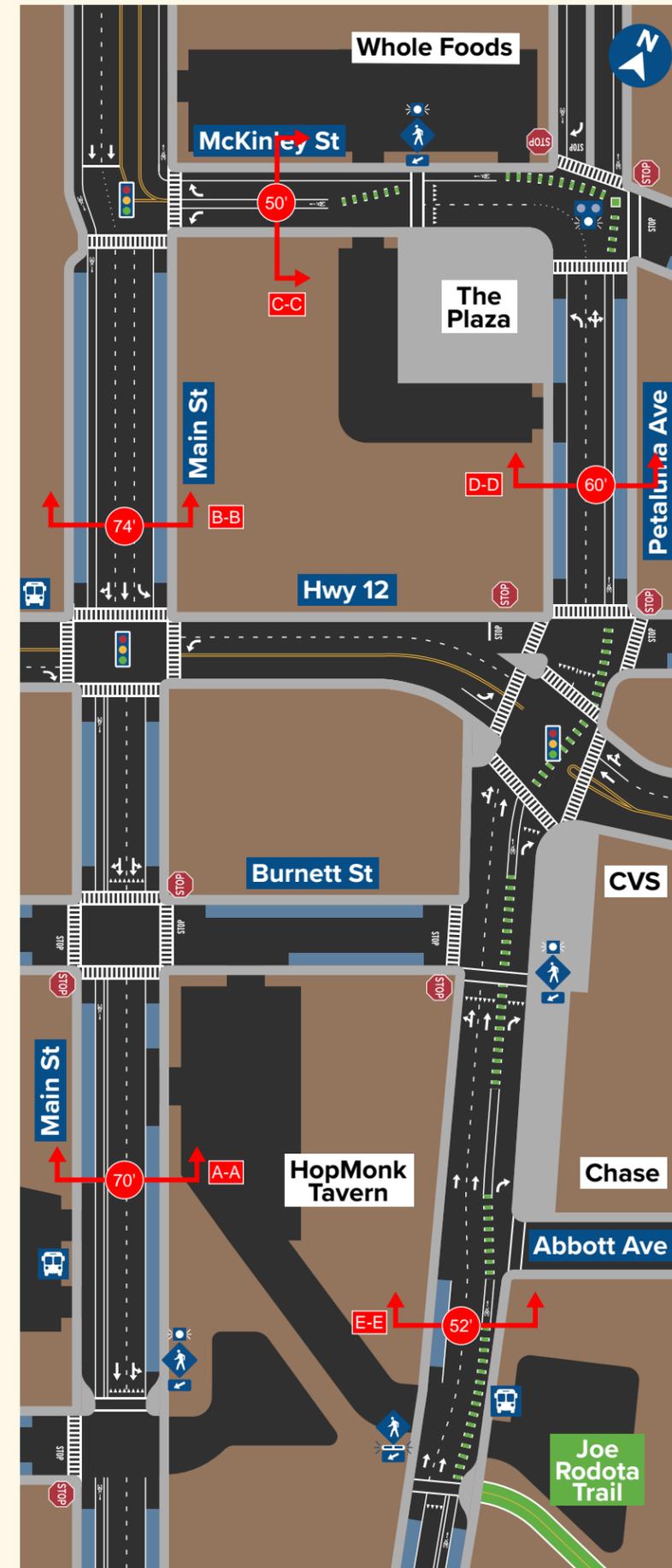
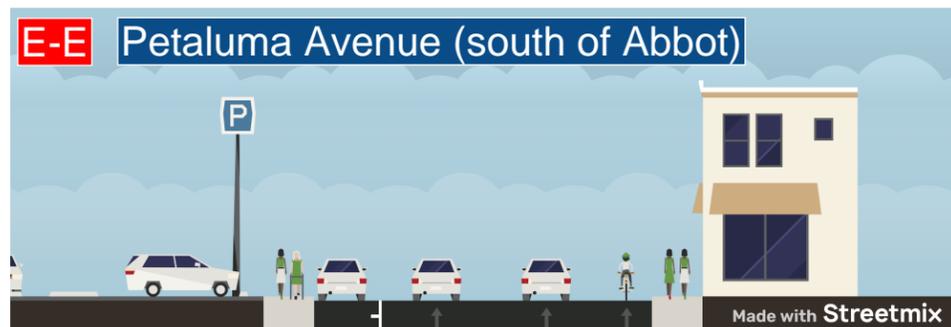
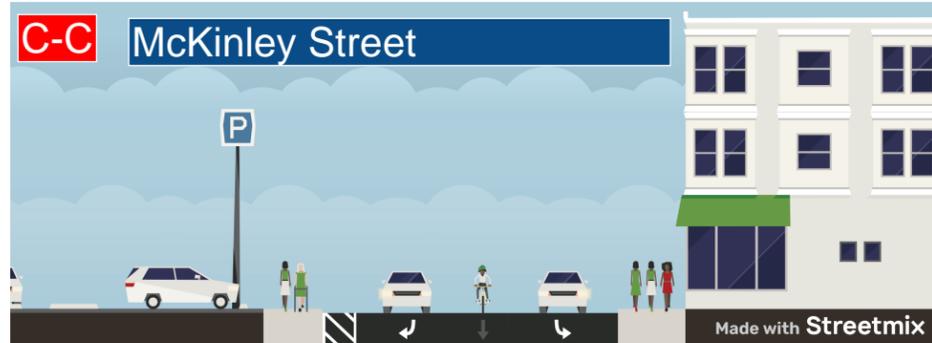
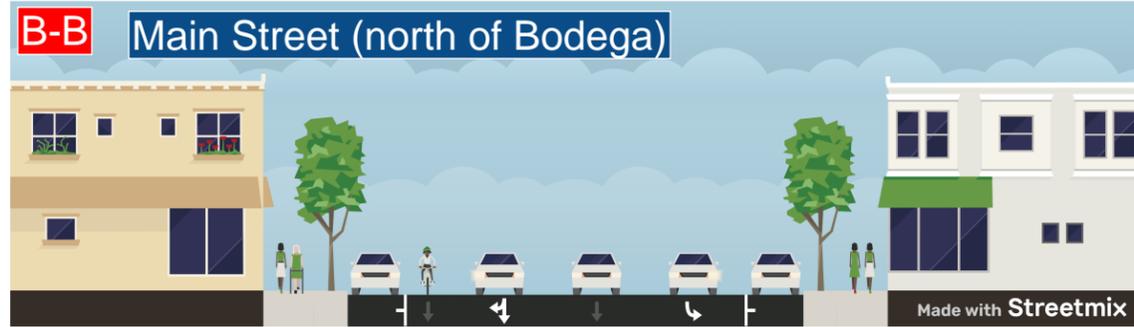
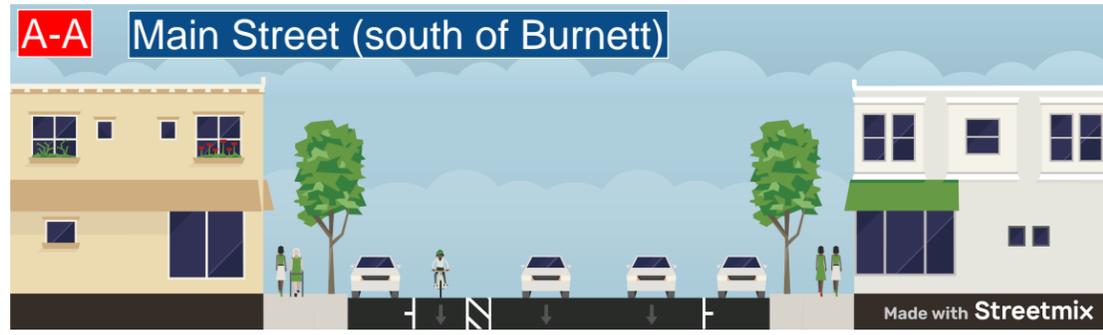
bike parking



pedestrian street fair



EXISTING CONDITIONS



- Key**
- Parking
 - Stop Sign
 - Signal
 - Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

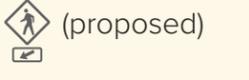
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ALT 1: FINE-TUNE TODAY

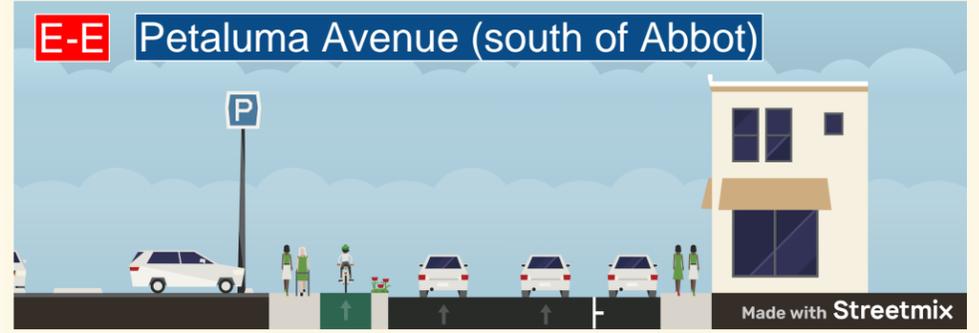
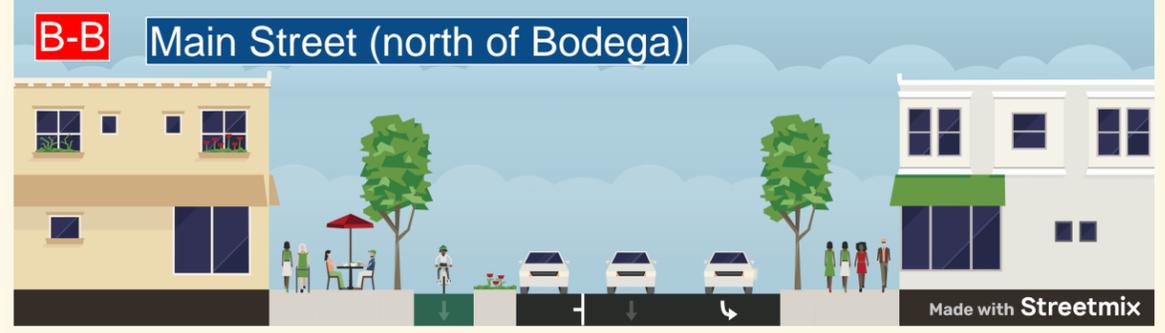
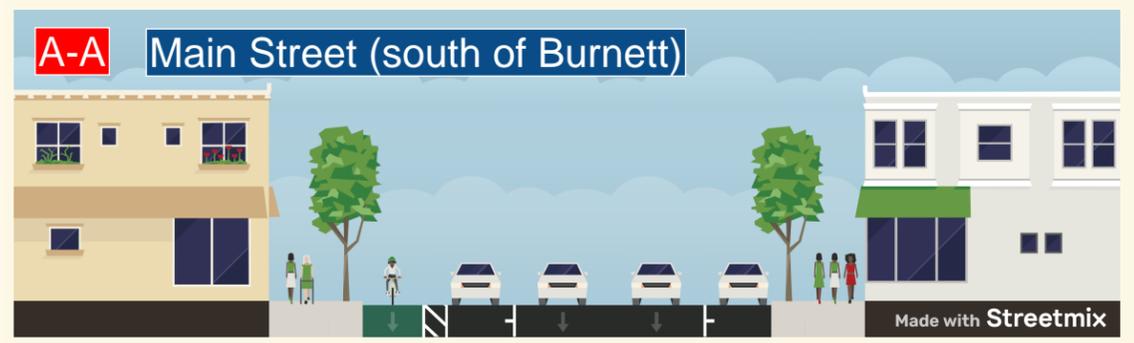
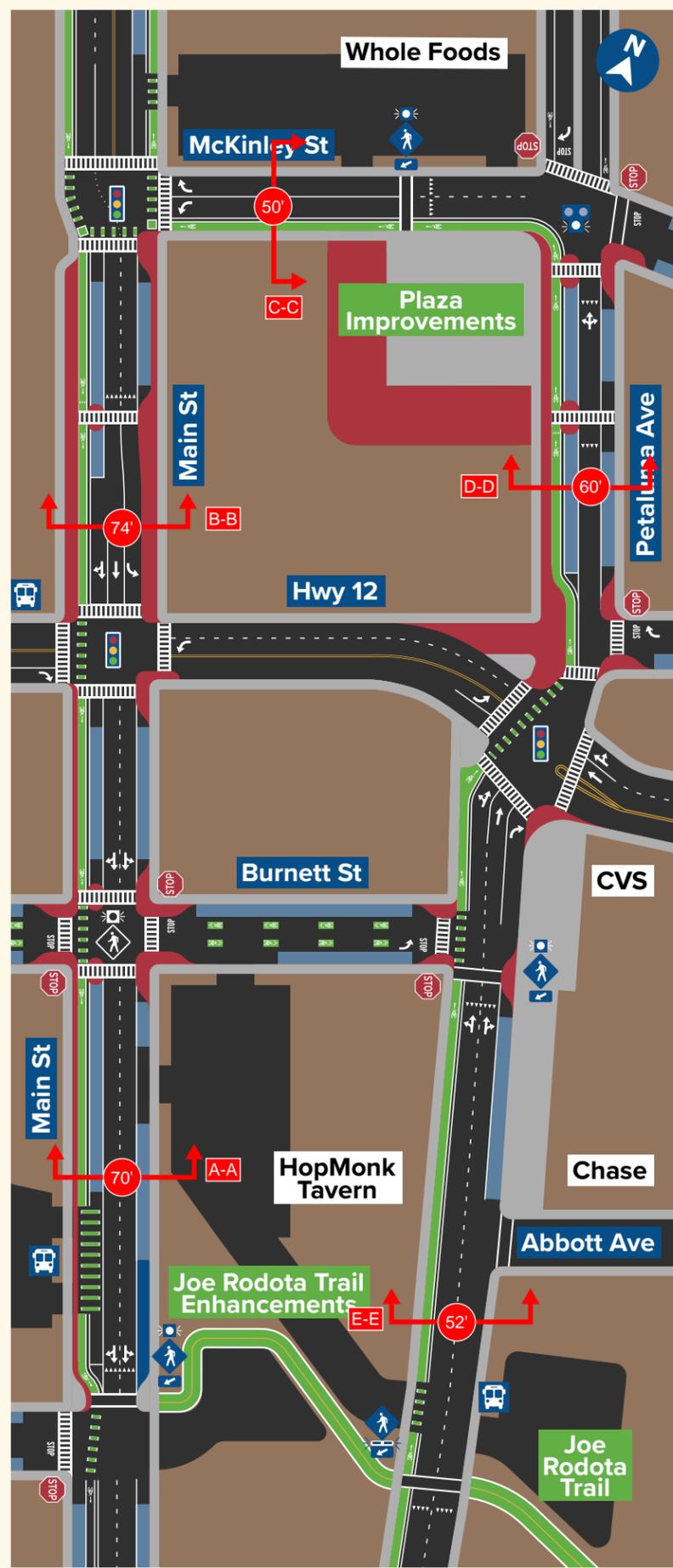
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
2.5 / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
2.5 / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
2 / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
2 / 4
 -  **Community Support**
2 / 4
- TOTAL 11**

Key

-  New Pedestrian Spaces
-  Parking
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Station
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
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-  (proposed)

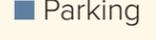
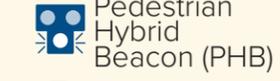
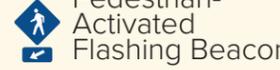
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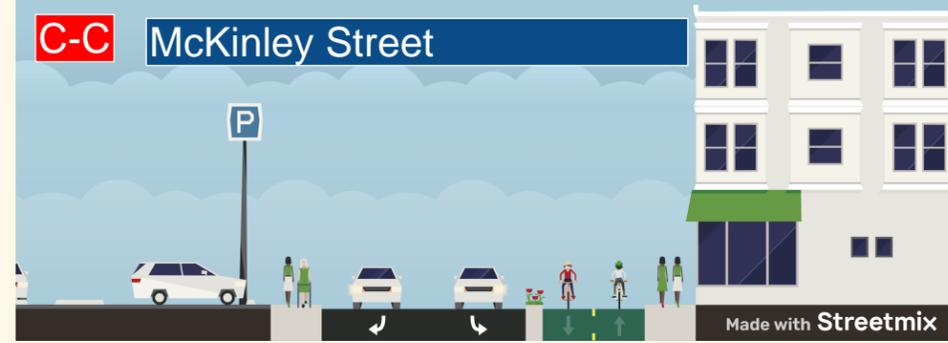
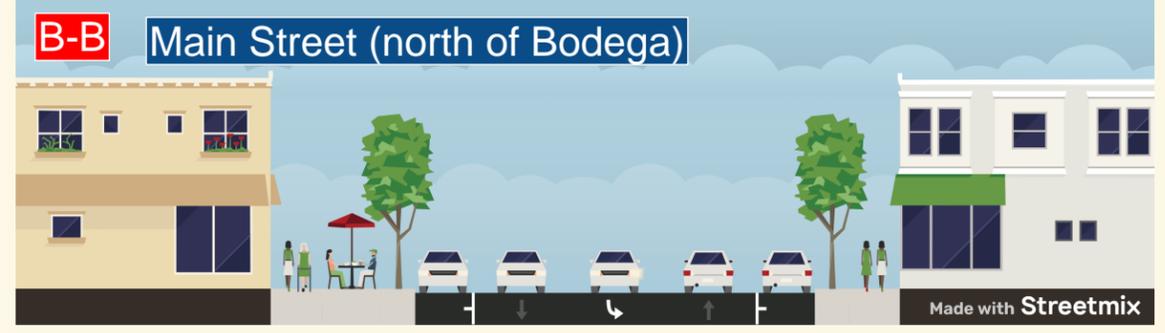
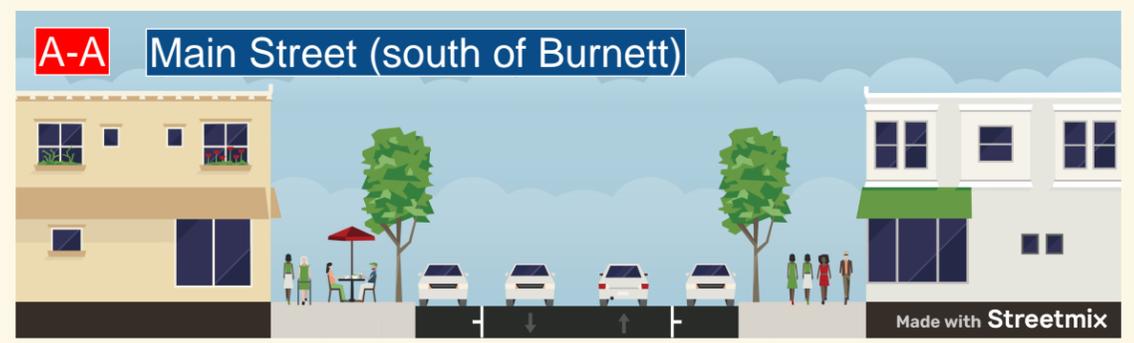
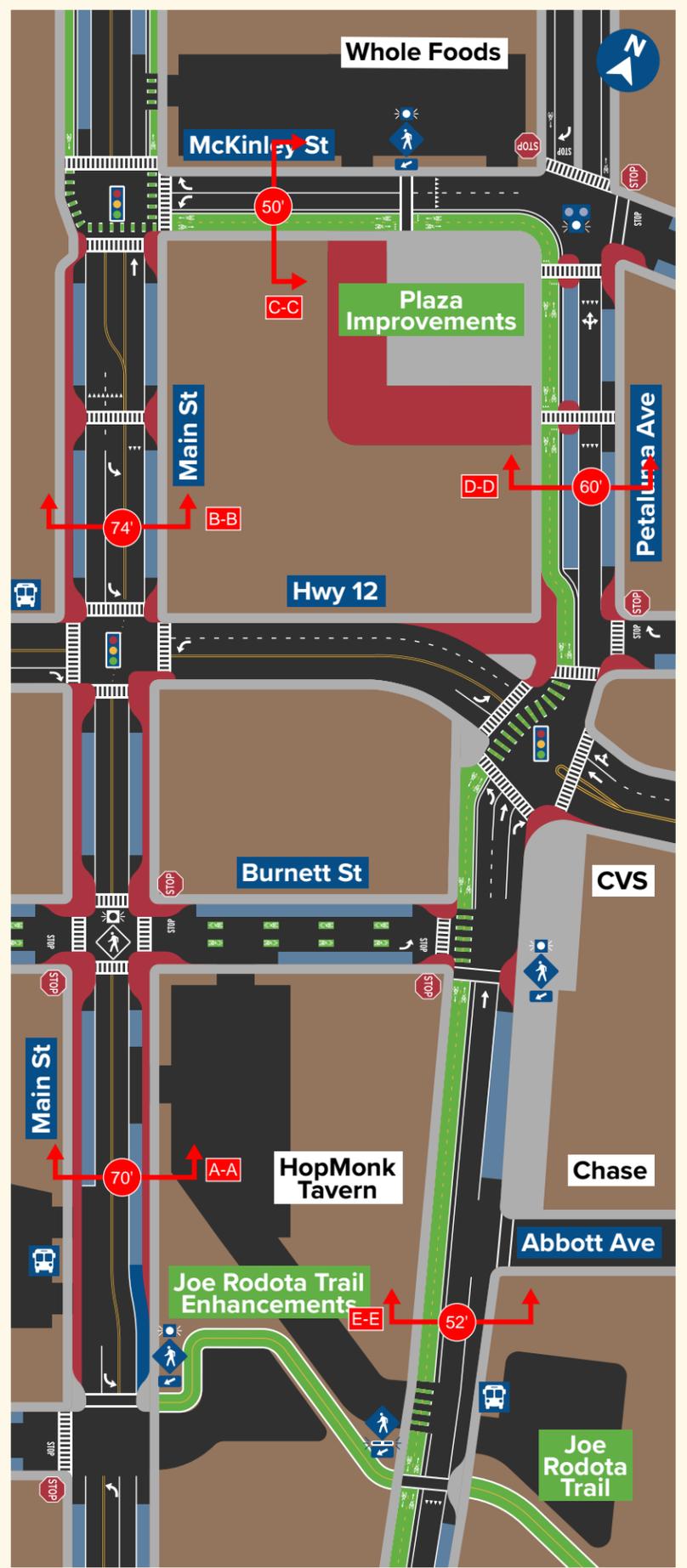
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
 **3** / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
 **2.5** / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
 **2** / 4
 -  **Community Support**
 **3** / 4
- TOTAL**
14

- Key**
-  New Pedestrian Spaces
 -  Parking
 -  Separated Bike Lanes
 -  Stop Sign
 -  Signal
 -  Bus Stop
 -  Bike Station
 -  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 -  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 -  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 -  (proposed)

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ALT 3: WALKABLE ONE-WAY

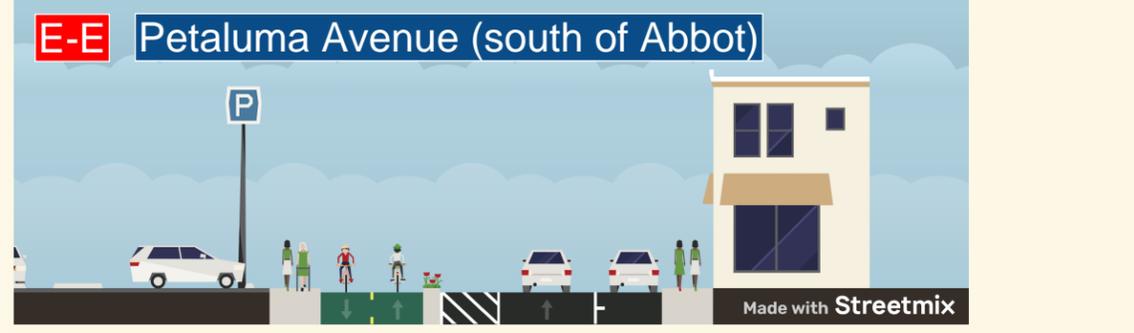
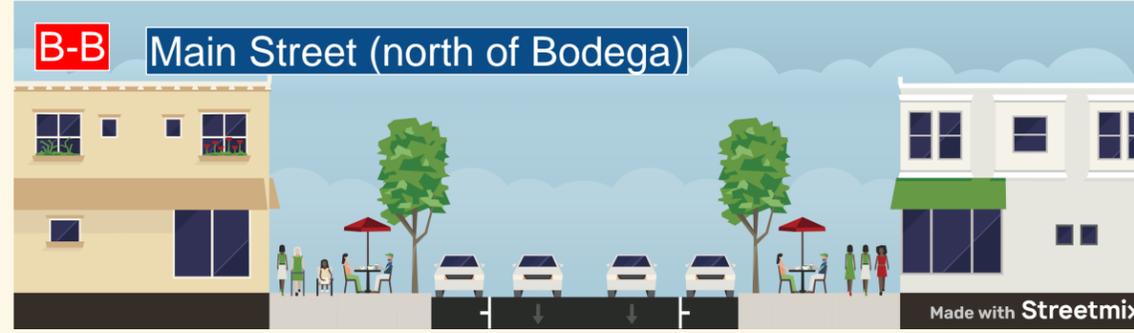
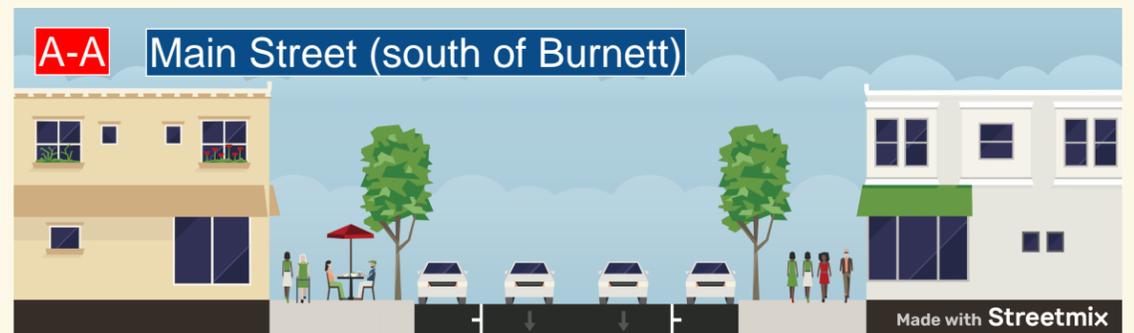
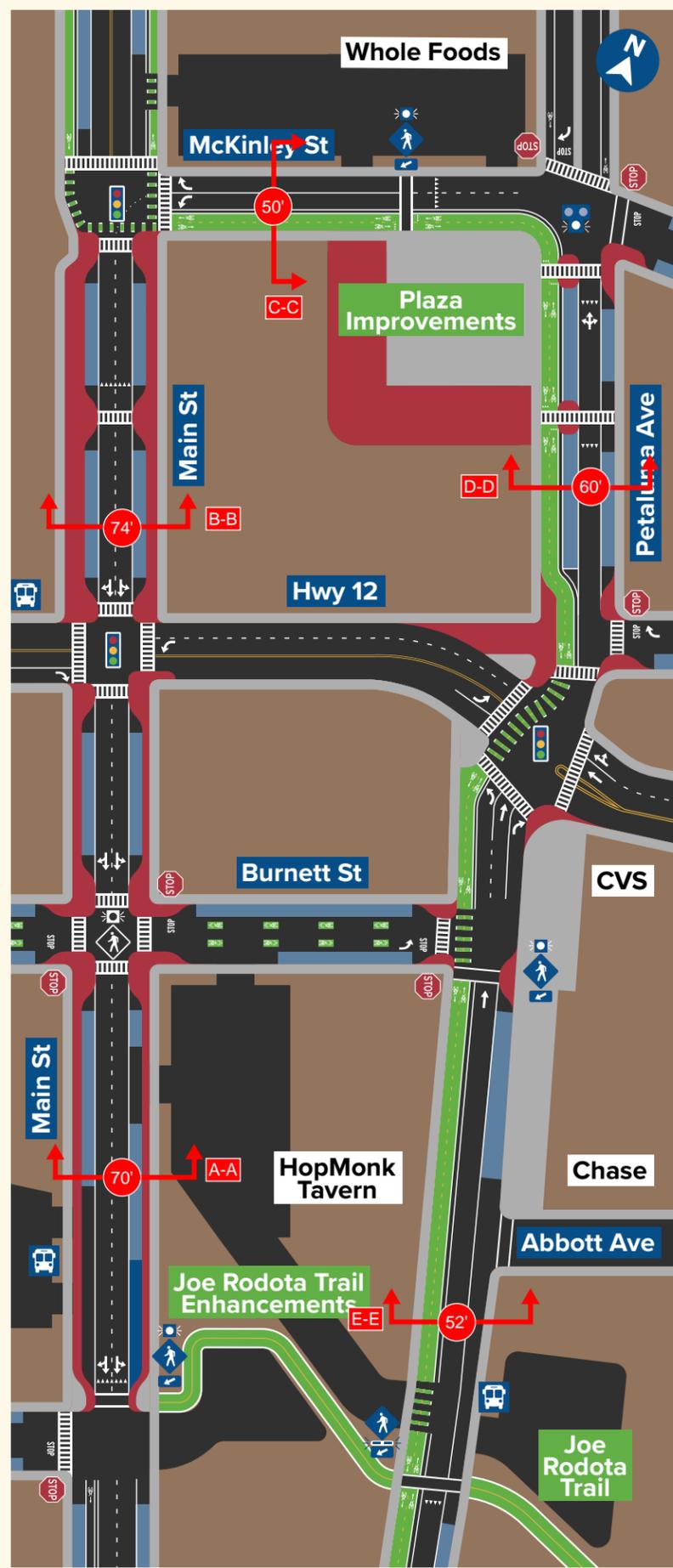
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
 **3** / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
 **1.5** / 4
 -  **Community Support**
 **3** / 4
- TOTAL 14.5**

Key

-  New Pedestrian Spaces
-  Parking
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Station
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  (proposed)

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ALT 4: TOTALLY TWO-WAY

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Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1 / 4

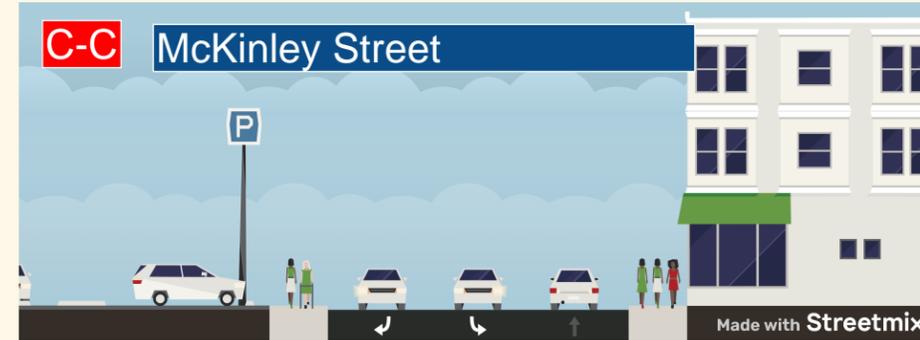
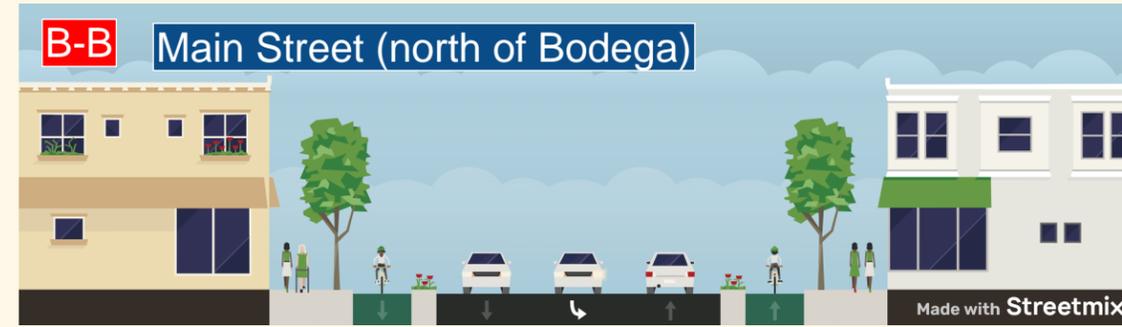
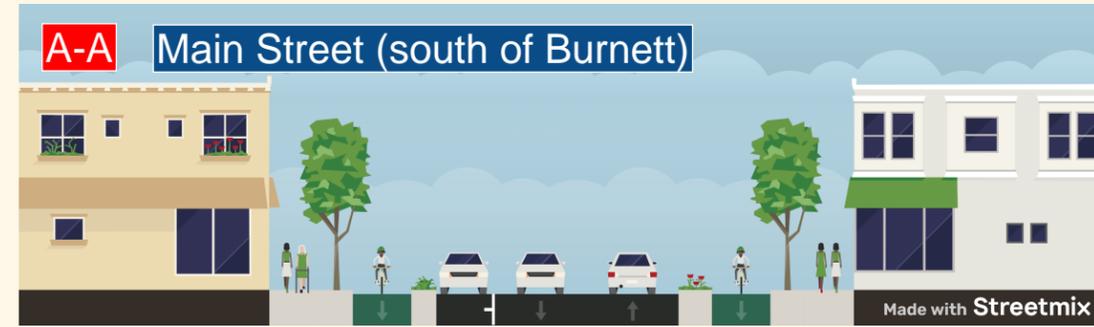
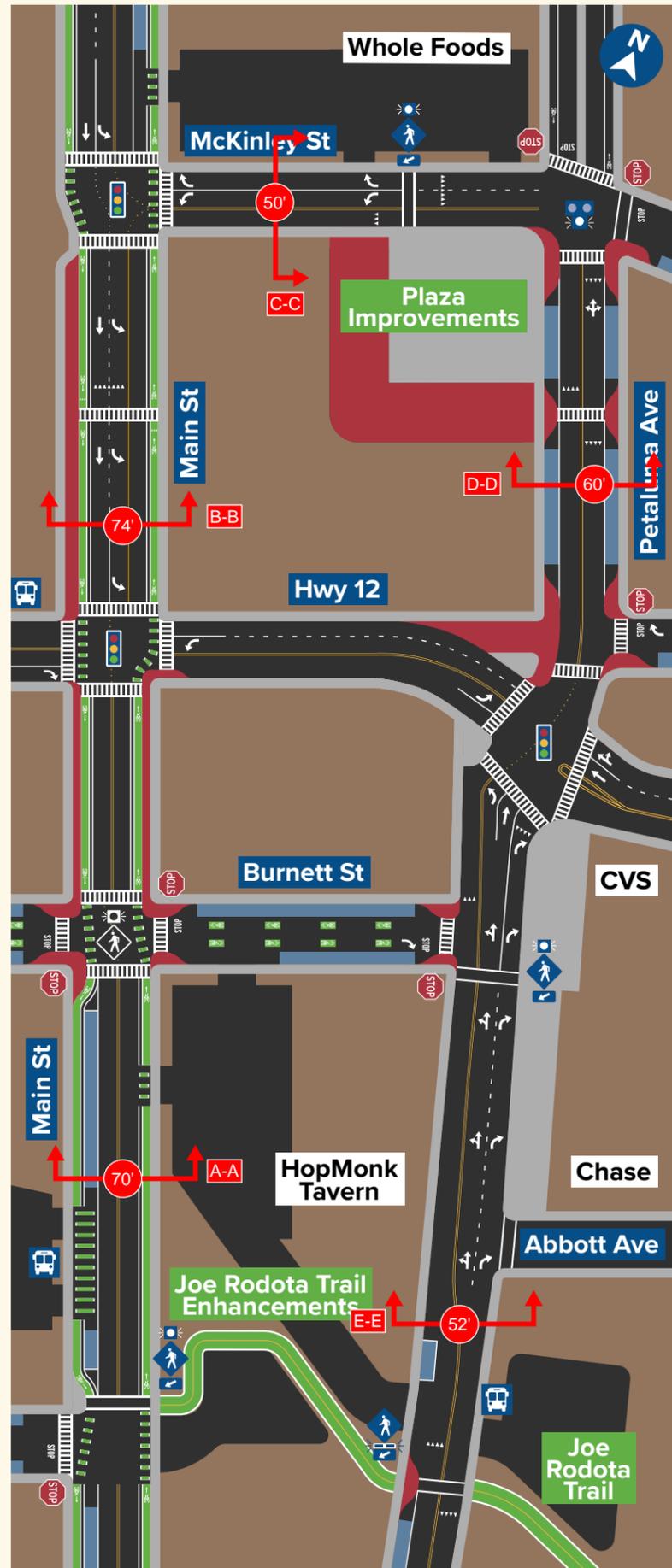
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL
12.5

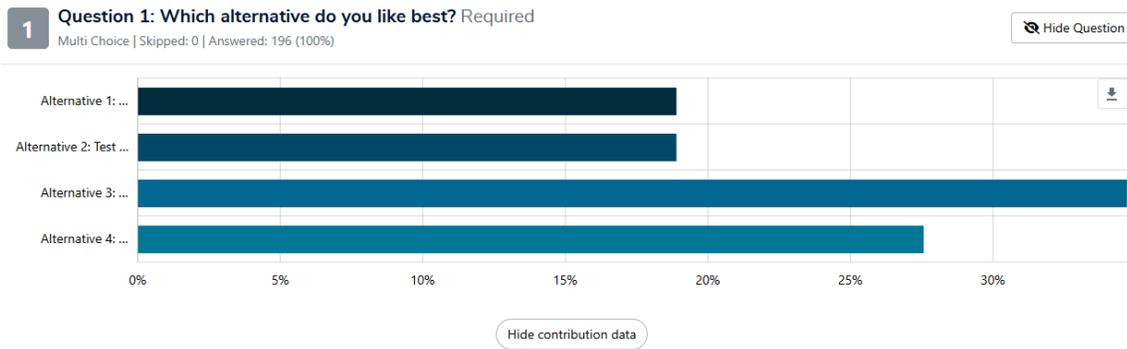
- Key**
- 🚶 New Pedestrian Spaces
 - 🚗 Parking
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚦 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
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 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



Summary of Survey Results

As of 3pm on Monday, February 3, 2026, **196 votes** have been cast on the survey. Approximately 35 percent of respondents voted for Alternative 3 (Walkable One-Way), approximately 28 percent of respondents voted for Alternative 4 (Totally Two-Way), and about 19 percent of respondents voted for Alternatives 1 and 2.



| Answer Choices | Percent | Count |
|---------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Alternative 1: Fine-Tune Today | 18.88% | 37 |
| Alternative 2: Test the Two-Way | 18.88% | 37 |
| Alternative 3: Walkable One-Way | 34.69% | 68 |
| Alternative 4: Totally Two-Way | 27.55% | 54 |
| Total | 100.00% | 196 |

Survey Outreach and Promotion

Outreach to promote the online survey included the following activities:

- Email announcement to a local stakeholder email list
- Email announcement to the full project email list
- News article posted on the City website
- E-blasts distributed via the City website to relevant subscriber lists
- Inclusion in the City’s January/February newsletter, both emailed and printer with water bill mailer
- Social media posts on City channels, including Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor
- Press release distributed to local media outlets, including the Sebastopol Times and the Press Democrat
- Flyer distribution downtown and to local businesses

Overall Summary of Responses

The dataset reflects a large volume of survey responses in which commenters selected one of four conceptual alternatives for downtown circulation and streetscape, with many responses indicating a preference without additional explanation. Where reasoning was provided, comments focused heavily on:

- Walkability and downtown vitality

- Safety for people walking and biking
- Traffic congestion and flow
- Business access and parking availability

A recurring theme across all alternatives is frustration with existing congestion related to the Highway 12 / Highway 116 junction and skepticism that any option fully resolves regional through-traffic.

Broadly, responses show a clear philosophical split between those prioritizing vehicle throughput and minimizing congestion (often favoring the existing one-way configuration or limited change) and those prioritizing walkability, placemaking, and reduced vehicle dominance downtown (often favoring enhanced pedestrian space even at the expense of traffic capacity). Many commenters explicitly note that Sebastopol functions as a regional crossroads, creating tension between local downtown goals and regional traffic realities.

Several commenters express concern about two-way conversions, particularly related to left-turn conflicts, emergency access, driveway conflicts, and traffic congestion, while others view two-way streets as essential for business visibility, intuitive navigation, and restoring a small-town feel. A subset of respondents favors testing changes temporarily before committing to full build-out, citing uncertainty in traffic modeling and desire for data-driven outcomes. Some of the reasoning for votes that were provided as part of the survey are summarized below.

Alternative 1: Fine-Tune Today

Supporters generally favor maintaining the existing one-way configuration, citing historical precedent, safer and smoother vehicle flow, fewer left-turn conflicts, and concerns that lane reductions or two-way conversions would worsen congestion. Many commenters emphasize that downtown is the intersection of two highways and argue that traffic movement must remain the priority. Several also prefer this option for bicycle safety, noting a preference for bike lanes provided on both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue, and fewer conflict points. Opposition to other alternatives often centers on parking loss, emergency vehicle access, and skepticism of pedestrian-focused features given current traffic volumes.

Alternative 2: Test the Two-Way

Commenters supporting this option often describe it as a compromise or pilot approach, appreciating the ability to revert if conditions worsen. Reasoning includes improving intuitiveness, potentially benefiting businesses, and balancing walkability with traffic needs. Several respondents express interest in experimenting before committing public funds, especially given uncertainty around traffic impacts. However, even supporters frequently note that it does not fully solve congestion and call for broader solutions (e.g., roundabouts, bypass routing, or regional traffic management). Some bicycle advocates expressed skepticism about the proposed two-way cycle track on Petaluma Avenue and limited bicycle connections to Main Street.

Alternative 3: Walkable One-Way

This alternative receives strong qualitative support from commenters prioritizing walkability, pedestrian comfort, downtown vitality, and safety. Supporters emphasize wider sidewalks, outdoor seating, street trees, protected bike lanes, and a calmer downtown environment. Some argue that one-way traffic reduces conflicts and is safer for pedestrians and cyclists than two-way operation. Critics, however, question whether through-traffic can realistically be accommodated through

reduced lanes and worry about congestion spillback, parking loss, and access challenges given Sebastopol's role as a regional connector. Some bicycle advocates expressed skepticism about the proposed two-way cycle track on Petaluma Avenue and limited bicycle connections to Main Street.

Alternative 4: Totally Two-Way

Supporters of full two-way conversion argue it would reduce confusion, improve business access on both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue, restore a traditional downtown feel, and potentially improve traffic flow by dispersing movements. Some see two-way streets as a way to reclaim local control from Caltrans and improve placemaking flexibility, such as temporarily closing Main Street for periodic events. Opponents raise concerns about left-turn delays or restrictions, driveway conflicts, potential increase for conflict points, perceived bike safety concerns, and gridlock, particularly during peak periods and school traffic. Several note past experience with two-way operations as evidence against reverting.



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Incorporated 1902
Planning Department
7120 Bodega Avenue
Sebastopol, CA 95472
707-823-6167
707-823-1135 (Fax)
www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us

UNAPPROVED DRAFT ACTION MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2026

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on February 5, 2026.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

- Present:** Chair Fernandez,
Vice-Chair Koelemeijer,
Commissioner Fritz,
Commissioner Harper
- Absent:** Commissioner Kanzler
- Staff:** Jane Riley, Contract Planning Director
Tori Henkel, Permit Technician
Zulema Higgins, Admin Technician

****Chair Fernandez postponed item 6B to the next regular Planning Commission meeting.**

- 3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**
 - a. **8100 Valentine Ave project**
 - b. **Grocery Outlet**
 - c. **Housing Issues like The Canopy prices, Woodmark, and traffic issues**
 - d. **Lack of the Community understanding what the City needs**
 - e. **Grocery Outlet**

4. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 27, 2026

Vice-Chair Koelemeijer made a motion to approve the minutes of January 27, 2026, as submitted.

Commissioner Harper seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0-1

Ayes: Commissioners Harper, Fritz, Vice-Chair Koelemeijer, Chair Fernandez

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Kanzler

6. REGULAR AGENDA:

- A. Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Grant “Reimagining the Core”, the goal of this item is for the Planning Commission to identify a preferred alternative to recommend to the City Council for their March 3, 2026, meeting. Once the preferred alternative is agreed upon, the consultant will develop conceptual design plans, a draft, and a final report for the Planning Commission and City Council in April of 2026.**

Commissioner Fritz made a motion to move forward with Alternative 4, a “totally two-way” system of vehicular circulation using the pedestrian improvements and design of Alternative 3 with both bike facilities and a two way cycle track on Petaluma Avenue, keeping parking on both sides of Main Street, improved pedestrian crossing infrastructure, with the potential of the removal of parking on Petaluma Ave along the plaza block.

Vice-Chair Koelemeijer seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0-1

Ayes: Commissioners Harper, Fritz, Vice-Chair Koelemeijer, Chair Fernandez

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent: Commissioner Kanzler

- B. Discussion of Creation of Parks Commission Ad Hoc Committee was postponed to the next regular meeting.**

7. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES: None

8. PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT was given by staff.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting of the Sebastopol Planning Commission at 8:55 p.m. The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on February 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

From: Aamil Rick Targow [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2026 5:12 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Two-way traffic disaster

Dear City Council Members:

This is oppose the two-way recommendation from the Planning Commission.

First, of course, returning to two-streets downtown was opposed by a clear majority of respondents to the plans.

Second, however, I would remind the Council that before the switch to one-way streets, considerably less traffic was making its way though town.

Third, there are currently significant backups in the North- and South-bound directions in heavy-traffic times. I live on Eleanor Ave., and so to leave or return to my house, I must either turn onto or off of Petaluma, or attempt to cross it. Yesterday, at 3:30 p.m., I was heading to the City and saw the Northbound traffic stop-and-go all the way back to Handline. Now imagine that traffic if, rather than three lanes the last block before 12 (right turn/through/through-and-left-turn), there were only two lanes to handle left turns, right-turns, and through traffic. And how difficult would it be for me and my neighbors to cross Petaluma when there were two lanes of traffic, and left-turning cars at the intersections to boot.

Now, it is perhaps true that Petaluma would have much less traffic if Main Street were two-way, but that merely shifts the problem to the Southbound traffic coming into town, for which there is no parallel road to relieve the congestion, and which now often backs up in the late afternoon for much of the way up the hill, even to Murphy or above. At least there are three lanes in the last block before 12, but imagine if there were only two, with all of the left-turning traffic onto 12 occupying one of those two lanes, leaving the other for through travel and right-turners.

I saw what happened to the traffic on Petaluma when the little-used bike lane eliminated one of the car lanes. Please don't make things worse with the Planning Commission's ill-considered recommendation. Follow the guidance of the majority of your constituents who responded to the survey.

Thank you.
Aamil Targow

From: wdr2 [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 7:52 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Main Street

Dear Members of the Sebastopol City Council,

Please do not waste too much of your meeting time or any of the city staff's time exploring two-way traffic on Main Street. As a friend of mine who was once mayor of Sebastopol told me, this topic has already come up countless times in the past and, no matter what kind of proposal is developed, CalTrans will never approve it without a viable Highway 116 Sebastopol bypass. Never.

Thank you,

Bill Roby

From: Lisa Pierce [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2026 12:54 PM
To: Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Amie Windsor [REDACTED]; Laura Hagar
[REDACTED]

Subject: About Those Traffic Safety Ratings- Please share with Council & Planning Commission

Lately, we've been hearing about how dangerous Sebastopol is for pedestrians and bicyclists. (The Press Democrat wrote about this on Feb. 19th.) *"In 2023, the city was ranked worst — or most dangerous — out of 74 California cities of similar size for pedestrian safety, according to the state." "The city also ranks in the bottom third for bicycle safety, with 2023 the latest year for which data was available. Sebastopol also has one of the highest collision rates on its roadways when compared to cities of similar size"* This data comes from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). There are some things we should understand when looking at these rankings.

1. OTS groups all cities by population and then ranks them according to number of accidents. Cities with a population between 2,501-10,000 are in Group F. Sebastopol's latest population on the OTS website is 7,338, putting us slightly on the larger side for Group F.

Here's the problematic issue: Sebastopol's OTS *accident* counts include the entire area with a "Sebastopol, 95472" address, which has a population of approx. 28,000. Most cities don't have a large percentage of their population living outside their city limits. So, we are basically comparing apples and oranges.

With our entire population of 28,000 being more accurately considered, we would belong in Group D (pop. 25,000-50,000) and ranked with other larger cities in that group, since the accident data comes from the greater Sebastopol area. Our safety ranking would look quite different within Group D.

2. The other problematic issue with the TSO ranking has to do with traffic counts. Because Sebastopol has two busy highways going right through downtown, we have much more traffic than most cities with a similar population size.

For example: Calistoga has approx. 5,300 vehicles going through their town on an average day. Sebastopol has closer to 30,000. Since Calistoga is also in Group F, it's no wonder they score better than we do. Their streets are much quieter than ours. Remember, grouping is determined by population, not vehicle counts. Calistoga's population, according to OTS is 5,181. (Note: OTS uses DVMT, a different traffic count metric. Calistoga's DVMT: 5,181. Sebastopol's DVMT: 31,020.)

So, in conclusion, the ranking from OTS can be misleading. When we compare Sebastopol, 95472 both with population (28,000) and compare traffic counts, we look better as far as safety goes. Of course, any accident is one too many, and there are always ways we can improve.

Rather than relying on TSO's ranking, the Sonoma County Transit Authority's Dashboard gives us a much clearer and more detailed understanding.

Another resource for more detailed information is the 95 page "Local Road Safety Plan" produced by the City of Sebastopol in 2023. The image below shows all traffic accidents, including pedestrian and bicycle accidents within City limits from 2015-2020. As we can see, during this time period, the majority of the accidents happened outside of the current study area in the heart of downtown.

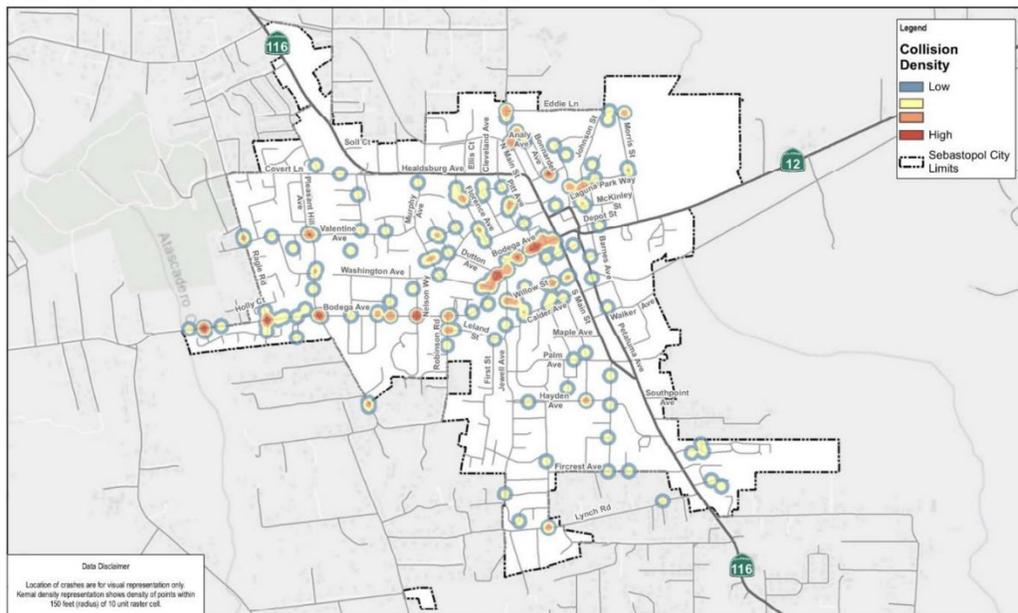


Figure 10 Collision Density on City Roads (2015-2020)

From: Lisa Pierce [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 8:56 AM
To: Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: FYI: 1990 Bypass Feasibility Report

Mary, please distribute to Council & Planning Commissioners. Thanks!

In case anybody has not seen this Feasibility Study from 1990, here it is. It's one of many studies done to look at the feasibility of doing one or more bypasses so traffic can avoid downtown. If we are to consider a bypass option, it's well worth looking at all the previous studies.

I think there is a growing understanding and recognition that our traffic will continue to worsen without some kind of bypass.

Thank you,

Lisa Pierce

From: mary k killian [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 2:05 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Please do not go back to 2-way traffic downtown. Big mistake.

February 25, 2026

Dear Sebastopol City Council member,

I am a longtime resident of Sebastopol.

I want to make it known that I am against the plans / idea of returning to the 2-way traffic in our downtown.

I bought my home on Jesse Street in 1999. I do all of my shopping in town, I drive regularly through town, I walk through town. The one-way traffic in town has been a wonderful improvement. Please do not make the mistake of going back to 2-way traffic in town. Please see the letter written by Lisa Pierce that was in the Sebastopol Times recently; I fully agree with her analysis and questions; waiting for cars to turn left creates a terrible back-up. Also I have thoroughly appreciated how the one-way traffic in town supports my safety in walking and shopping downtown. And it allows me to park in front of my favorite downtown shops for the time it takes to shop. Please do not upend our city by changing the roads yet again.

Thank you,

Mary Killian

[REDACTED]

Sebastopol, CA.

95472

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Patty Holden [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2026 9:23 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Traffic plan issues

City Council members,

The Planning Commission recommended the fully two-way option for downtown traffic without explaining what will happen south of Hwy 12 (Bodega Ave.). I live on Eleanor Ave and would be significantly impacted by this plan. I am unable to attend the March 3 meeting but want to share my concerns.

The problems created if two-way traffic continues south on Main St. and Petaluma Ave are:

1. If there are no turn lanes, cars turning left will quickly back up traffic.
2. Trying to cross either Main St or Petaluma Ave against two-way traffic will be very difficult and dangerous.
3. Is there really room for protected bike lanes with two-way traffic?
4. What happens to street parking that many people rely on?
5. What happens on garbage pick-up days and traffic is trying to pass the trucks against two-way traffic?

Unless these issues are addressed and resolved, it makes no sense to continue the two-way traffic pattern south of Hwy. 12. The one-way system south of Hwy. 12 should stay as it is.

I urge you to carefully consider and clarify these questions before approving the fully two-way street option south of Hwy. 12.

Thank you for your attention.

Patty Holden

From: Paul Fritz [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2026 11:15 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Jane Riley <jriley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] Workshop Series: Making Streets for Everyone

Hello Council Members,
In light of the Caltrans grant discussion next week, I thought some of you might be interested in the workshop below. Unfortunately it is not happening prior to the decision about the grant, but some of you may be interested as we move from planning to implementation of the plan.

Cheers,
Paul

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: America Walks <social@americawalks.org>
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2026 11:00 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] Workshop Series: Making Streets for Everyone

[View this email in your browser](#)



Making Streets for Everyone: A Walkability Workshop for Elected and Government Leaders



Walkable communities are beneficial for safety, health, and the economy — but changes to streets and land use can spark debate and resistance...

Making Streets for Everyone is a new virtual workshop series designed to give elected officials and government leaders the knowledge, tools, and confidence to advance walkable, people-first communities!

Across four interactive sessions, participants will learn:

- The fundamentals of street design
- How street design impacts safety, health, and economic vitality
- Policy and funding tools communities can use to implement change
- How to communicate the value of walkability using real-world examples

This series is designed for leaders who want to do the right thing, but may not always know the best path forward or how to build durable support. Participants will leave better prepared to advocate for policy and funding changes to build better streets for their communities.

How It Works:

- Four one-hour live sessions held every three weeks
- Pre-session readings and recorded materials provided to support deeper learning
- Led by nationally recognized experts in walkability, public health, and transportation policy
- Opportunity for discussion and Q&A

Program Details:

- Launch: March 20, 2026

- Schedule: Weekly Zoom meetings, 2 p.m. ET / 11 a.m. PT
- Cost: \$400 per participant

This is an opportunity for government leaders to learn from experts and each other in a focused, practical setting designed to support real-world decision-making and lasting community impact!

[Learn More & Sign Up](#)

Join the Movement

Your donation is tax-deductible and supports nationwide efforts in creating walkable, equitable, and inclusive communities and public spaces.

Thank you!

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From: paul l [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 8:03 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Traffic Study Seems Flawed

Dear City Council, We live on Bloomfield Road South of town. We have followed and did the Survey noting it did not give an option of no change at all. Reading in the Sebastopol Times it seems that the Traffic Study was in fact more of a concept of a plan with no real quantitative analysis. And would guess it is too late to ask for your money for the survey back and do a real one? Have to wonder really what this all means. But real people and real solutions seem a minimum to ask our fine City Sebastopol.

The Lynch Family off [REDACTED]

From: RonPro [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2026 7:52 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Public Comment

Those of us who have been here long enough know that two way streets of bygone years, when traffic was half the quantity, was unworkable. Trying to make a left turn with oncoming traffic slows both directions. Please think about that!
(The Two way switch is a very expensive repeat of a previous mess. Planning commissions sometimes can have egos with agendas, no disrespect.)

Plan:

Put one, one way bike lane, 4 ft wide on Main(east) and Petaluma Hill (west). separated from car lanes by yellow flex posts.

2 one way car lanes on Main and Petaluma Hill.

Shallow speed bumps to lower speeds. Lit pedestrian crossing walkways.

We fixed this once in 1985. This worked until oversized bike lanes robbed us of a traffic lane on Petaluma Hill.

Ron Jenkins

Ron Jenkins

Hiking & Biking Trails – Water Activities – Nature Tours – Environmental Preservation



Promoting Ecotourism and Green Travel
213 Elbridge Ave. #G, Cloverdale, CA 95425
www.ecoring.org

February 24, 2026

Sebastopol City Council
citycouncil@cityofsebastopol

Dear Council Members,

EcoRing is a nonprofit organization that promotes ecotourism and green travel in the North Bay. Our Partners are businesses in the tourism industry in Sonoma, Marin and San Francisco counties. We also advocate for the infrastructure that would allow tourists to travel safely without their automobiles using rail transit and bicycle paths.

We urge the Council to convert some of the parking to attractive green spaces, bicycle parking and bus seating.

The costs of climate change have already been enormous and will increase in the future. It is mandatory that we discourage driving which produce carbon pollution while encouraging active transportation with bike parking and more off-road pathways.

Please bring this issues to the attention of all of the other Council Members. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Coates".

Executive Director

██████████ or ██████████



City of Sebastopol Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2026
Agenda Item: 6A
To: Planning Commission
From: Planning Staff and Consultant
Subject: Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Grant
Recommendation: Planning Commission to review, consider, and recommend a preferred alternative to City Council, which may be one of the presented alternatives with suggested revisions or enhancements.

Introduction:

As part of the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Grant, the City has been exploring opportunities to improve mobility, safety, and economic vitality in downtown Sebastopol. The intent of the plan is to produce a plan for the downtown segments of State Route (SR) 116 and SR 12 to address safety, sustainability, accessibility, connectivity, economic development, and mobility for all transportation modes and reduce the reliance on vehicle travel, while supporting the City’s land use and housing goals.

The study area includes portions of Main Street, Petaluma Avenue, McKinley Street, and Sebastopol Avenue within the downtown zone that are under Caltrans jurisdiction. Specifically, the study area includes Main Street from Burnett Street to McKinley Street, Sebastopol Avenue from Main Street to Barnes Street, Petaluma Avenue from Willow Street to McKinley Street, and McKinley Street from North Main Street to Laguna Park Way (See Figure 1 on next page).

Description:

In response to community workshops held in November 2024 and May 2025, four project alternatives were developed to address a wide range of community feedback and advance a more walkable and vibrant downtown. Tonight, the consultant team will present the four alternatives, the evaluation metrics used to score them, and a summary of community survey feedback on each option. The objective of this meeting is for the Planning Commission to recommend a preferred alternative to City Council, which may be one of the presented alternatives with suggested revisions or enhancements. The Commission–recommended preferred alternative will then be presented to the City Council in March.

Following City Council confirmation of the preferred alternative, the consultant team will prepare conceptual design plans and a draft and final report for Planning Commission and City Council’s review and adoption in April 2026 to align with the grant deadline.

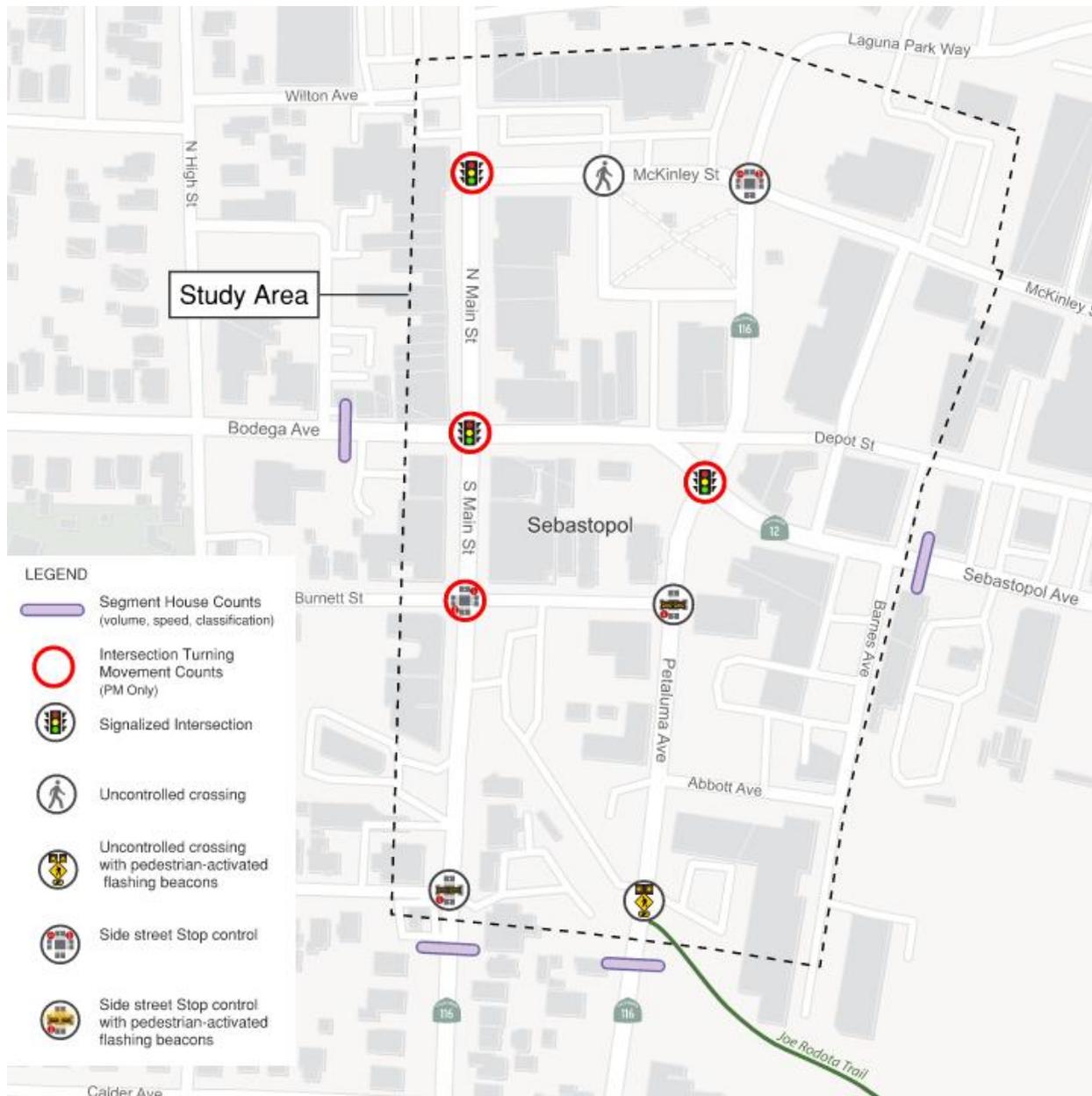


Figure 1 Study Area

Public Involvement:

Public engagement for this project has been conducted over the last 2 years and has consisted of the establishment of an interactive project website, community meetings, graphic displays at popular gathering places within the study area, and a number of surveys and meetings. As part of the most recent public outreach for the project, a survey for the community consisting of members of the public, business owners, local agency partners (Caltrans, SCTCA, Sonoma County Transit, etc.), along with members who frequent Sebastopol, was open from the beginning of January 2026 and will officially end February 8th, 2026. The survey for the preferred alternative was also posted on the City’s [website](#), the [Caltrans Sustainable Transportation project page](#), sent out via the City’s newsletter, email announcement to local stakeholder list and full project email list, social media posts, Press Democrat, flyer distribution

to downtown local businesses, and published in the Sebastopol Times. The following summarizes responses as of the writing of this staff report.

Summary of Responses to Preferred Alternative Survey

The dataset reflects a large volume of survey responses in which commenters selected one of four conceptual alternatives for downtown circulation and streetscape, with many responses indicating a preference without additional explanation. Where reasoning was provided, comments focused heavily on:

- Walkability and downtown vitality
- Safety for people walking and biking
- Traffic congestion and flow
- Business access and parking availability

A recurring theme across all alternatives is frustration with existing congestion related to the Highway 12 / Highway 116 junction and skepticism that any option fully resolves regional through-traffic.

Broadly, responses show a clear philosophical split between those prioritizing vehicle throughput and minimizing congestion (often favoring the existing one-way configuration or limited change) and those prioritizing walkability, placemaking, and reduced vehicle dominance downtown (often favoring enhanced pedestrian space even at the expense of traffic capacity). Many commenters explicitly note that Sebastopol functions as a regional crossroads, creating tension between local downtown goals and regional traffic realities.

Several commenters express concern about two-way conversions, particularly related to left-turn conflicts, emergency access, driveway conflicts, and traffic congestion, while others view two-way streets as essential for business visibility, intuitive navigation, and restoring a small-town feel. A subset of respondents favors testing changes temporarily before committing to full build-out, citing uncertainty in traffic modeling and desire for data-driven outcomes.

Further summaries of each of the preferred alternatives are provided in Attachment 3.

Recommendation:

The objective of this meeting is for the Planning Commission to recommend a preferred alternative to the City Council, which may be one of the presented alternatives with suggested revisions or enhancements.

Attachments:

1. **Alternatives Package** describing proposed improvements, including what is consistent across all alternatives, and the specific differences of each alternative.
2. **Potential Cross Sections** for Each Alternative in Select Locations. Each subject to refinement as part of the conceptual design and future final design effort.
3. **Summary of Survey Results** as of Monday February 2, 2026, including a summary of written feedback shared as part of the survey.
4. **Alternatives Scoring Matrix** showing how each alternative compares to the existing condition. Generally, the more apples in the score, the better the alternative addresses the issue/metric.
5. **Community Comments Received by Staff** a compilation of all comments received by City staff related to the survey.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

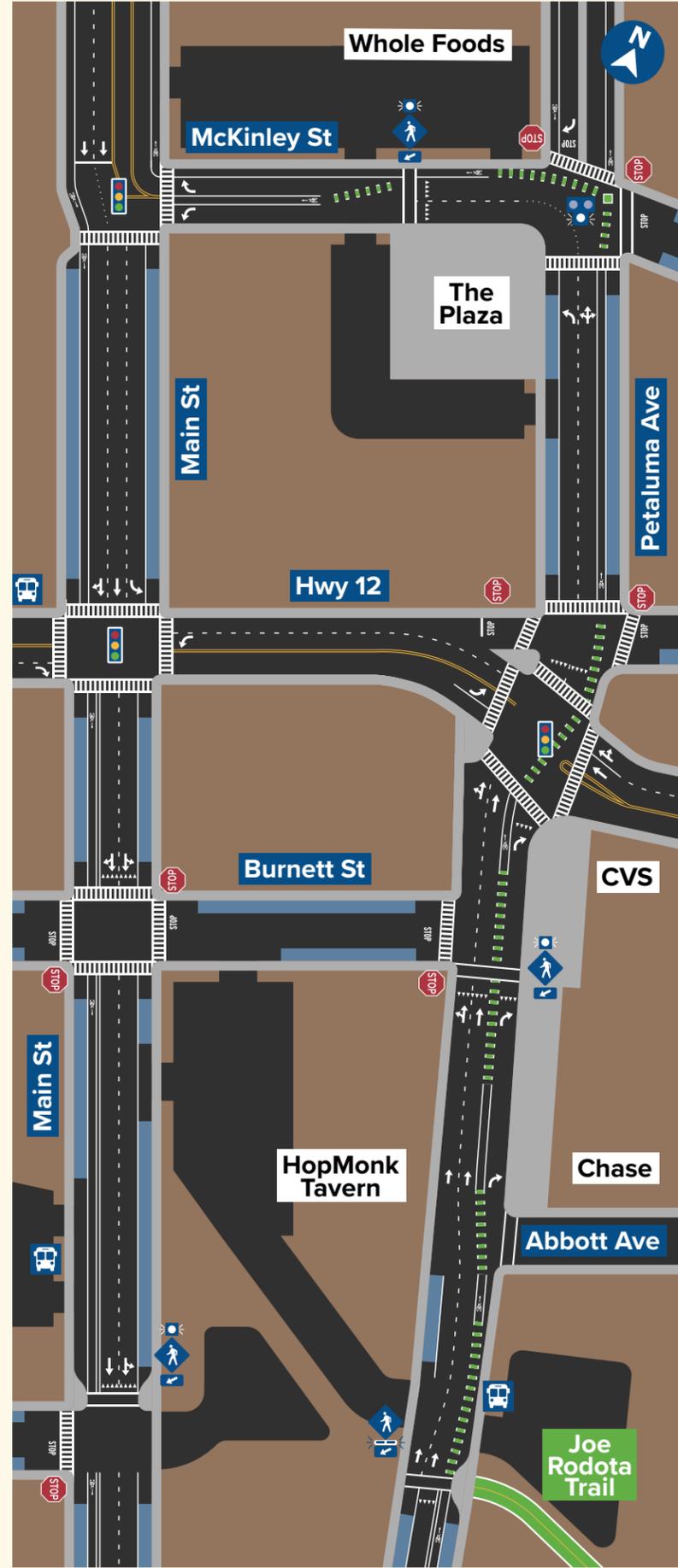
A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Sebastopol is embarking on an exciting journey to reimagine our downtown! The Reimagining the Core project is all about transforming the heart of our city, where State Routes 116 and 12 meet, into a place that feels safer, more welcoming, and easier to navigate whether you are walking, biking, driving, or taking transit.

Since our original Downtown Plan was created back in 1990, a lot has changed. We have seen more traffic, more trucks passing through, and longer commutes becoming part of daily life. In 2013, community members brought in experts from the American Institute of Architects to share ideas for improvement, and now, thanks to a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant awarded in 2022, we are taking the next step forward.

We aim to create a vibrant Main Street that reflects Sebastopol's unique character and community values, creates inviting public spaces where people want to linger, prioritizes safe and comfortable travel for those walking and biking, and supports thriving local businesses, while balancing the needs of local access and regional traffic circulation.

This project is about listening to what our community needs and creating a vision that works for everyone. We have heard that downtown Sebastopol should be a place where it is comfortable and safe to walk to your favorite coffee shop or restaurant, bike to meet friends, or stroll with your family. At the same time, we are committed to supporting California's climate goals by making it easier for people to choose alternatives to driving alone. By reducing regional through-traffic impacts and working closely with our local businesses, we are building a downtown that is vibrant, accessible, and ready for the future.



Key

-  Parking
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

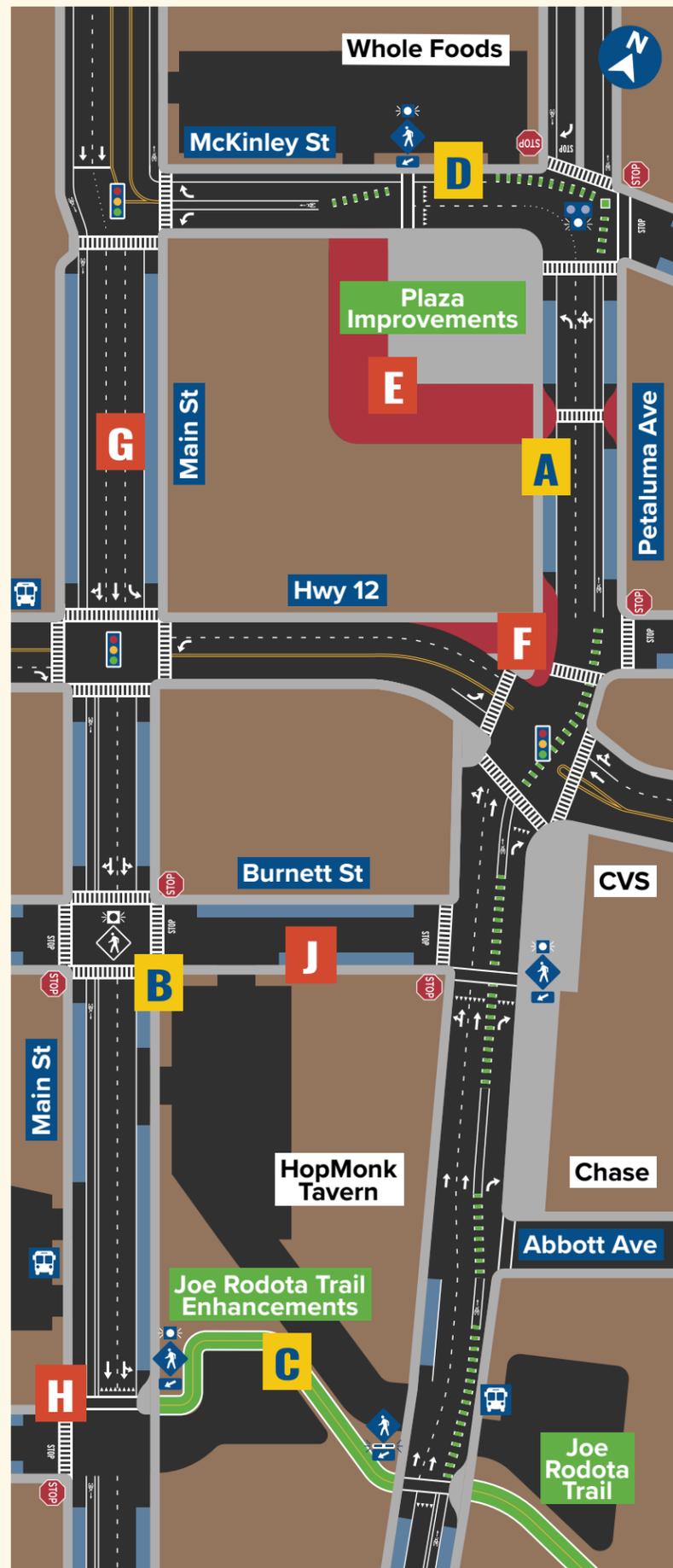
Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



This study builds upon previous and ongoing planning and design efforts, including adopted plans, programs, projects, and developments that together form the set of **baseline improvements** included in every alternative. Building on this foundation, this study identifies a suite of **streetscape enhancements** and **safety enhancements** that will fulfill the goal to further improve access, safety, and mobility for people walking and biking in and around downtown.

There are four alternative designs for implementing these enhancements. While all four alternatives share common objectives, they differ primarily in how traffic circulation is organized, where protected bicycle facilities are accommodated, and the degree to which additional pedestrian space can be created to help realize the community's vision for a more walkable, connected, and vibrant Sebastopol.

However, all four alternatives share the baseline improvements and a number of streetscape and safety features in common. These features and their placement within each alternative are shown on this map, and are illustrated in more detail within each alternative on subsequent pages.



Key

- New Pedestrian Spaces
- Parking
- Separated Bike Lanes
- Stop Sign
- Signal
- Bus Stop
- Bike Station
- Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
- Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
- (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.

BASELINE IMPROVEMENTS

These are improvements already planned for and committed to in previous planning studies, approved developments, and current infrastructure design projects, and include several spot improvements for improved pedestrian and bicycle access, safety, and mobility:

- A** The Plaza Hotel project proposes a new mid-block crosswalk between the proposed hotel and the Plaza.
- B** The City is currently designing a new flashing pedestrian beacon for the intersection of Main and Burnett Streets.
- C** The Sebastopol Active Transportation Plan (ATP), adopted in January 2025, calls for an extension of the Joe Rodota Trail to connect the existing trailhead to Willow Street, as well as other bike blvd treatments along Willow and High Streets.
- D** The City's ATP also calls for improved pedestrian connections along McKinley Street to connect Main Street to the Barlow, and other locations of interest.

SAFETY AND STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS SHARED BY ALL FOUR ALTERNATIVES

These specific safety and streetscape enhancements are shared by all four alternatives:

- E** Plaza improvements, which are documented in the next pages.
- F** Remove the slip lane at the intersection of Petaluma and Sebastopol Avenues to create a permanent parklet.
- G** Install midblock crossing on Main Street with treatments to provide safe crossing to slow down traffic and create pedestrian friendly blocks.
- H** Improve connections Joe Rodota Trail to Ives Park via curb extensions, improvement crossing treatments.
- J** Establish Burnett Street as a Bike Blvd by prioritizing bikes, slowing down cars, and supporting additional east west bike connections.

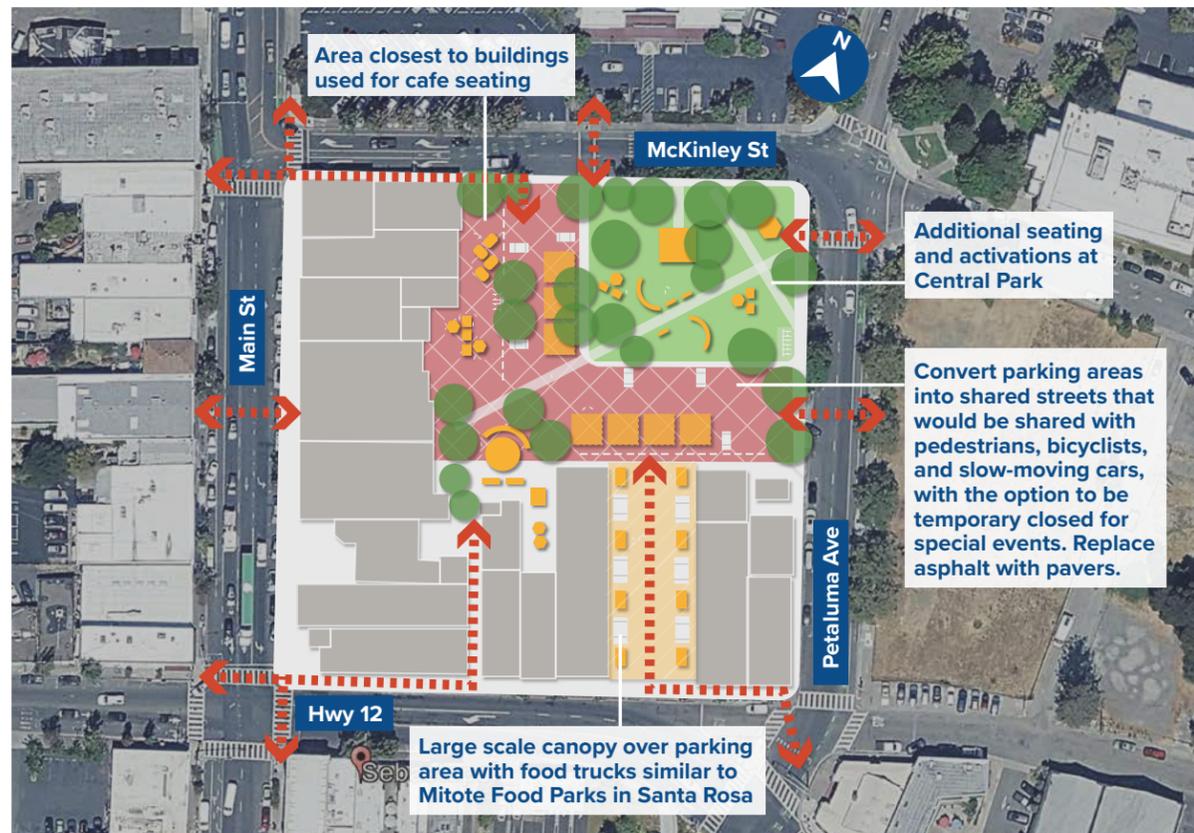
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT: THE PLAZA

Sebastopol's central park, referred to as "the Plaza", sits right in the heart of downtown Sebastopol and serves as our community's living room - a place where neighbors gather for concerts, festivals, farmers markets, and simply enjoying a beautiful day outdoors. This green space connects directly to our downtown shops and restaurants, making it a natural hub for both locals and visitors.

As we reimagine downtown mobility, there are opportunities to make the Plaza even more accessible and inviting. The parking area can be converted to a shared street that could be programmed with expanded

seating, lounging areas, dining, and food truck accommodations to bring more activity to the area.

Adjacent improvements could include safer, more visible crosswalks and pedestrian pathways leading to the park, better bike parking facilities, enhanced lighting for evening events, and upgraded park amenities that encourage people to linger longer. Creating seamless, comfortable connections between the park and surrounding businesses would help the Plaza truly anchor our downtown as a destination where people want to spend time, not just pass through.



STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT: JOE RODOTA TRAIL

The Joe Rodota Trail is an 8.5-mile paved pathway that connects Sebastopol to Santa Rosa, following what was once the Northwestern Pacific Railroad corridor. This beloved trail has become one of our region's most important car-free routes, used daily by commuters, recreational cyclists, families out for a walk, and runners enjoying the scenery. For many residents, it is the safest and most pleasant way to travel between the two cities without getting in a car. To maximize the trail's potential as a true alternative transportation route, improvements could focus on better connections between the trail and downtown Sebastopol, making it easier and more intuitive to transition from the trail to Main Street businesses.

This might include:

- clearer wayfinding signage
- increased landscaping for shade and ecological benefits
- dedicated bike lanes connecting the trail to downtown destinations
- improved trail surface maintenance
- better lighting in key areas
- additional access points that reduce barriers for people entering or leaving the trail

By strengthening these connections, the Joe Rodota Trail could play a large role in reducing vehicle trips and supporting our vision of a more walkable, bikeable community.



Existing terminus of the Joe Rodota Trail, looking west



SAFETY IMPROVEMENT: SEPARATED PROTECTED BIKEWAYS

A Class IV bikeway (separated bikeway) is a bike lane that includes a physical separation between the separated bikeway and the throughvehicular traffic. The separation may include, but is not limited to grade separation, flexible

posts, barriers, curb, or on-street parking. Caltrans provides design standards and guidelines, such as Design Information Bulletins (DIB) 89 and 94, for Class IV bikeways.

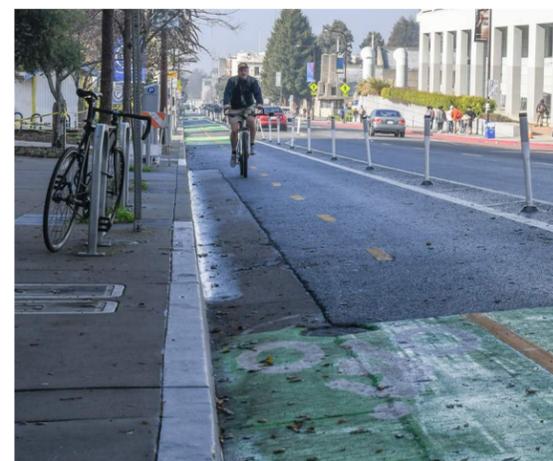
One-Way Lanes

One-way separated bike lanes are located on either side of the street alongside the direction of vehicle travel. One-way protected bike lanes can connect to shared lanes, standard bike lanes, or protected intersections. In areas where cars merge across the bike lane, drivers must yield to people biking. Green paint, dashed lane markings, and signs help make this clearer.



Two-Way Lanes

Two-way separated bike lanes have both directions of bike travel located on either side of the street. Two-way protected bike lanes also use physical barriers. Because bikes travel in both directions, intersections and driveways require extra care. Improving sight lines, slowing turning vehicles, and using clear markings all help increase safety



SAFETY IMPROVEMENT: CURB EXTENSIONS AND BULBOUTS

Curb extensions narrow the roadway visually and physically, making crossings shorter and safer for people walking. They also create space for things like benches, street trees, plants, and other street amenities. Curb extensions can be used on many types of streets—downtown, neighborhood, or residential.

Standard curb extensions are commonly used at intersections of roadways with on-street parking, and extend the curb outwards to the edge of the parking lane. This improves the visibility of people at the intersection and shortens crosswalks.

Midblock curb extensions narrow the roadway between intersections and may include bike cut-throughs. They are often placed in conjunction with mid-block pedestrian crossings.

“Curb extension” is a general term that can include a number of specific designs incorporated in planned improvements in Downtown Sebastopol.

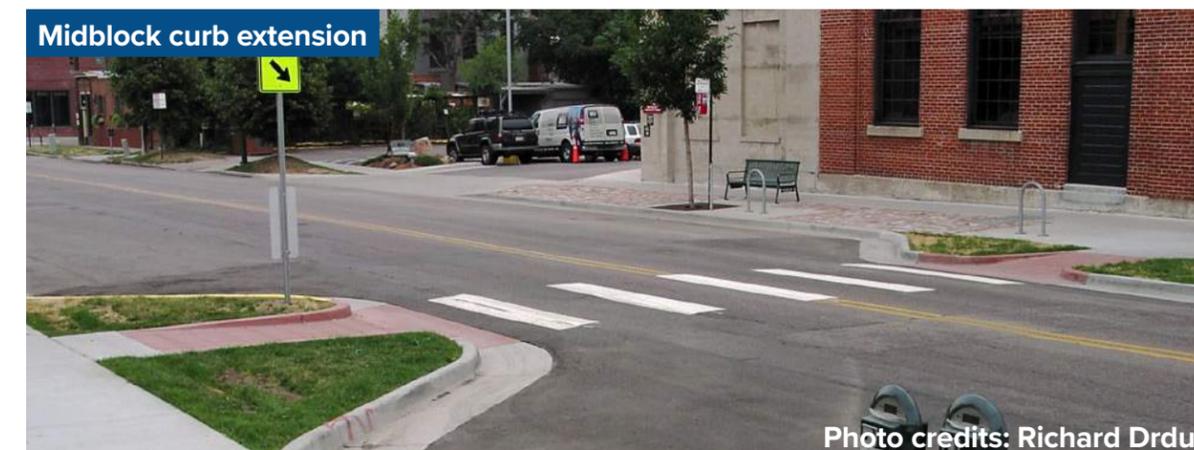


Photo credits: Richard Drdul

EVERY ALTERNATIVE IMPROVES SAFETY AND COMFORT FOR PEOPLE WALKING AND BIKING IN AND AROUND DOWNTOWN

The alternatives are presented in greater detail in the following pages. All four include a common set of safety and streetscape improvements recommended regardless of which option is ultimately selected. In addition to the specific common features explored previously such as improvements to the Plaza, each alternative also has shared design features intended to slow vehicle speeds, address known safety issues at intersections, and create a more comfortable walking and biking experience throughout downtown. These shared improvements include continuous, separated, protected bike facilities; lane width reductions to slow vehicle speeds; curb extensions and bulbouts at intersections to reduce crossing distance, increase space for people walking and biking, and improve sightlines; and traffic signal phasing and timing changes to promote low speed traffic, bike and pedestrian safety access and circulation. Each alternative also provides opportunities for streetscape improvements such as street trees and seating.



HOW DO THE ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS DIFFER?

While many improvements and safety features are consistent across all alternative concepts, they are different in the directionality of the traffic lanes and the location of the proposed protected bikeways.

Alternative 1: Fine Tune Today

Maintains the existing one-way traffic pattern (Main St SB, Petaluma Ave NB) with Class IV protected bike lanes in the same direction as traffic on each street. This option fine-tunes current operations while keeping familiar vehicle and bike flows.

Alternative 2: Test the Two Way

Converts Main St to two-way traffic while Petaluma Ave remains one-way. Petaluma Ave features Class IV protected bike lanes in both directions, improving bike connectivity while testing two-way traffic for vehicles on Main St.

Alternative 3: Walkable One Way

Keeps one-way traffic on both streets (Main St SB, Petaluma Ave NB) but provides two-way Class IV protected bike lanes on Petaluma Ave, prioritizing safe and convenient bike travel along this corridor.

Alternative 4: Totally Two Way

Converts both streets to two-way traffic and includes Class IV protected bike lanes in both directions on Main St, creating a fully two-way network for vehicles and a high-quality, two-way bike corridor for enhanced connectivity.



ALT 1: FINE-TUNE TODAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It maintains the existing one-way circulation pattern downtown while reducing the number of travel lanes in each direction. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities and other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through optimized signal timing and adjustments designed to minimize motorist delay.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

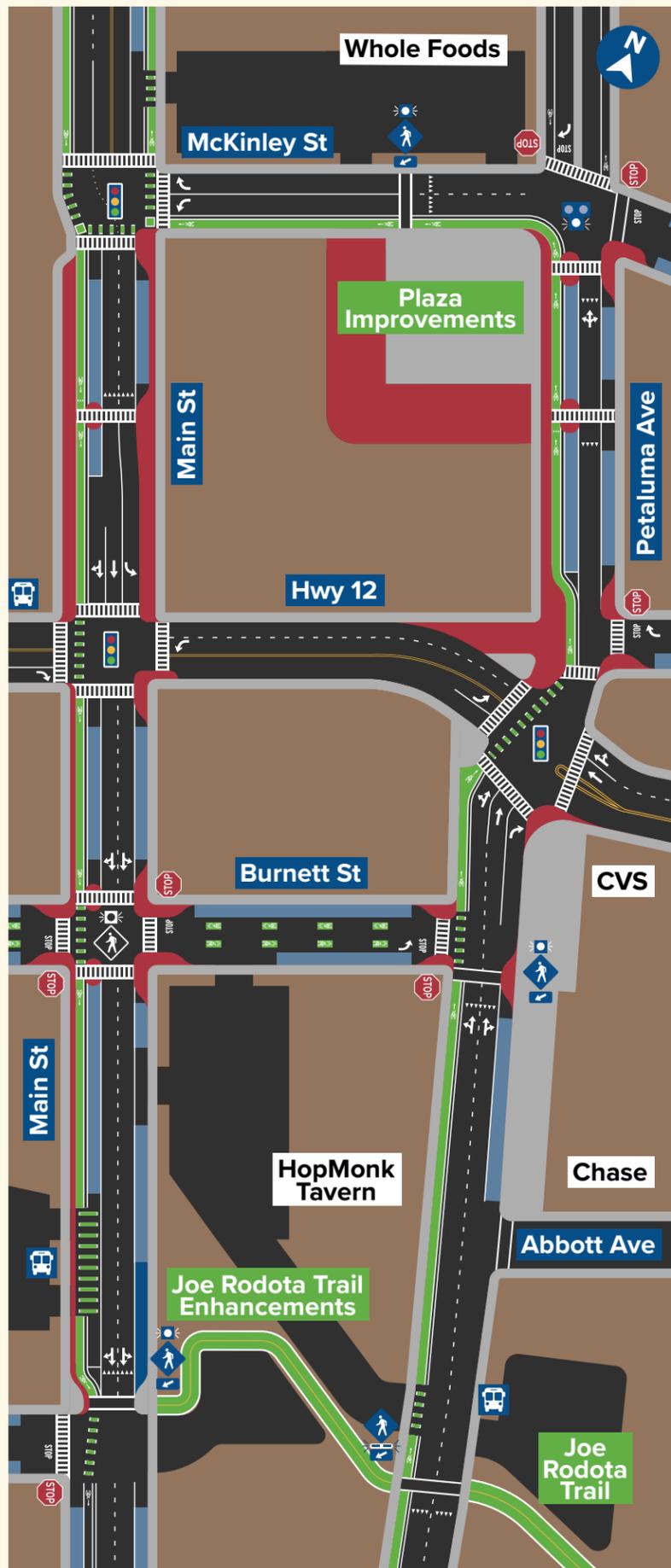
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

TOTAL 11

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 1



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



parallel seating



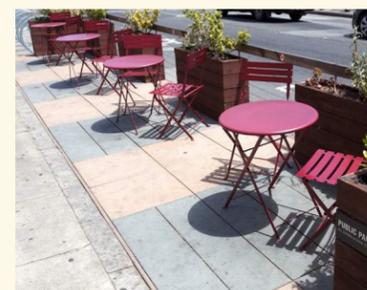
parklet seating



bulbout seating



bike parking



small dining parklet





ALT 2: TEST THE TWO-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It converts Main Street to two-way circulation with turn pockets provided only where turns are permitted, and the design is envisioned to function with minimal changes should the City choose to revert to the existing one-way couplet in the future. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities and other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through signal timing optimized to the extent feasible to support efficient traffic movement.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2 / 4

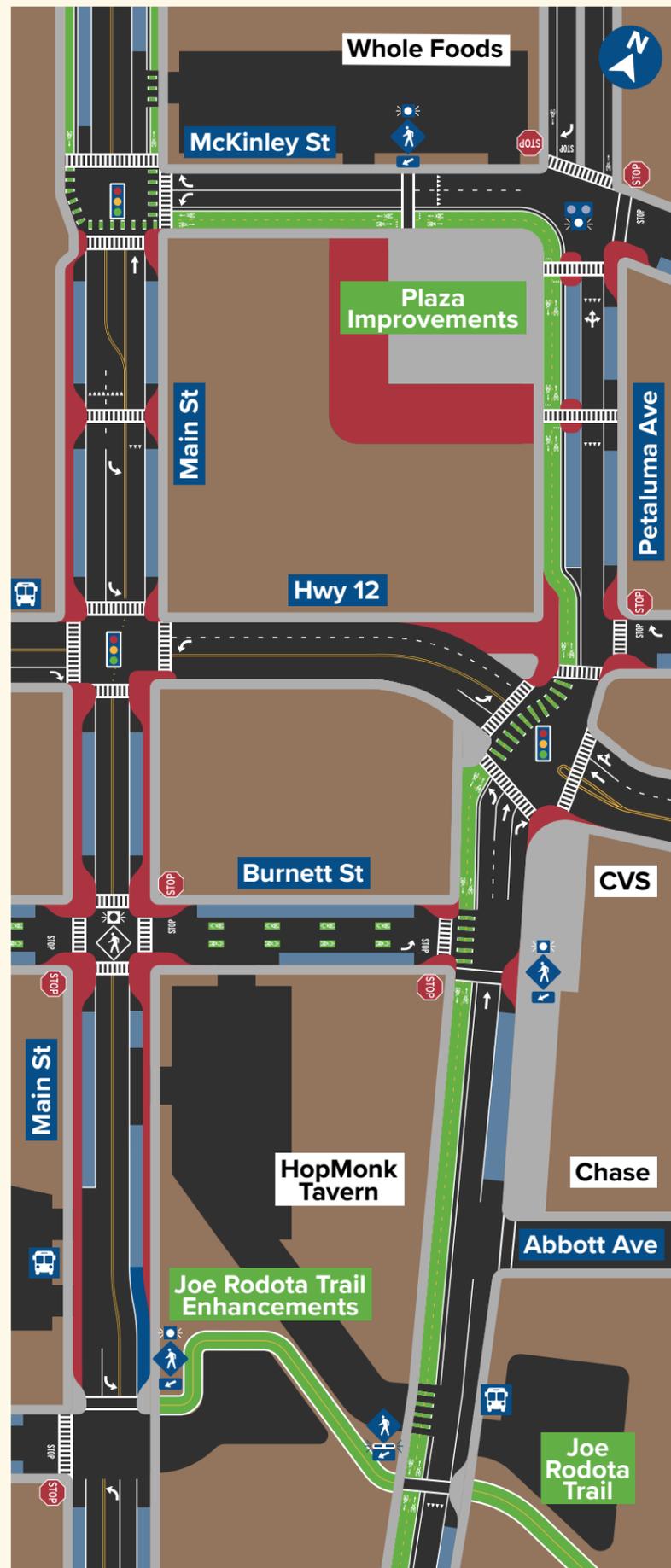
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

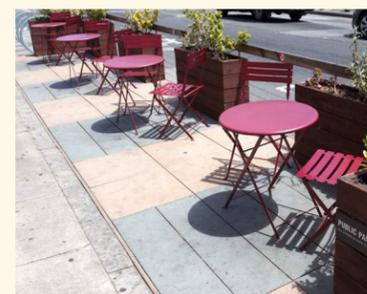
TOTAL
14

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 2



small vegetated bulbout

vegetated sidewalk extension

sidewalk extension with seating

parallel seating

large bulbout

distinctive public art

bulbout seating

narrow street trees

bulbout seating

bike parking

small dining parklet



ALT 3: WALKABLE ONE-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It maintains the existing one-way circulation pattern downtown while reducing the number of travel lanes in each direction. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities shifted entirely to Petaluma Avenue, maximizing opportunities for wider sidewalks and more robust streetscape amenities in the core of downtown. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through optimized signal timing and adjustments designed to minimize motorist delay.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3.5 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1.5 / 4

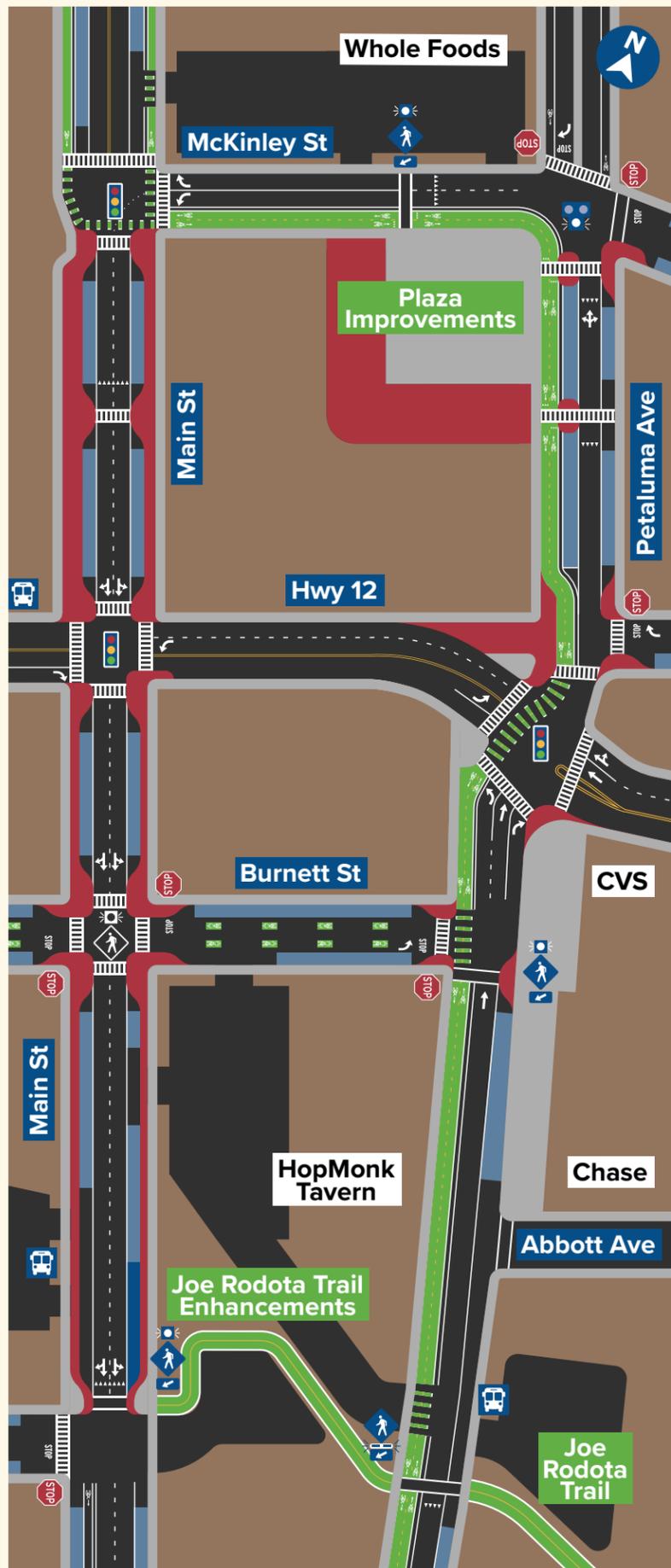
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL 14.5

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 3



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



parallel seating



parklet seating



bulbout seating



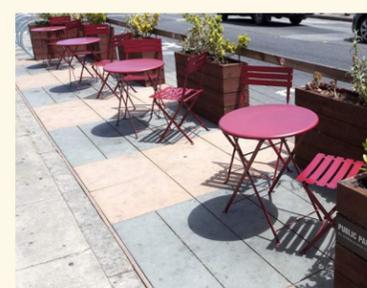
narrow street trees



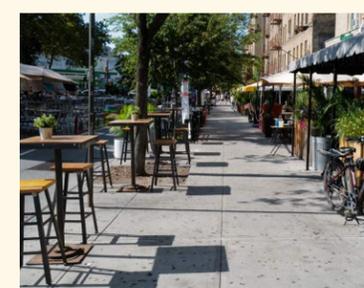
two-row street trees



bike parking



small dining parklet



full dining parklet





ALT 4: TOTALLY TWO-WAY

Enhances the Plaza and formalizes the Joe Rodota Trail extension to Main Street as part of its streetscape improvements. It converts both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue to two-way circulation with turn pockets provided only where turns are permitted. Safety is improved through fully protected bicycle facilities consolidated on Main Street along with other targeted measures, including shorter turn pockets. Traffic operations and overall flow are refined through signal timing optimized to the extent feasible to support efficient traffic movement.

Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1 / 4

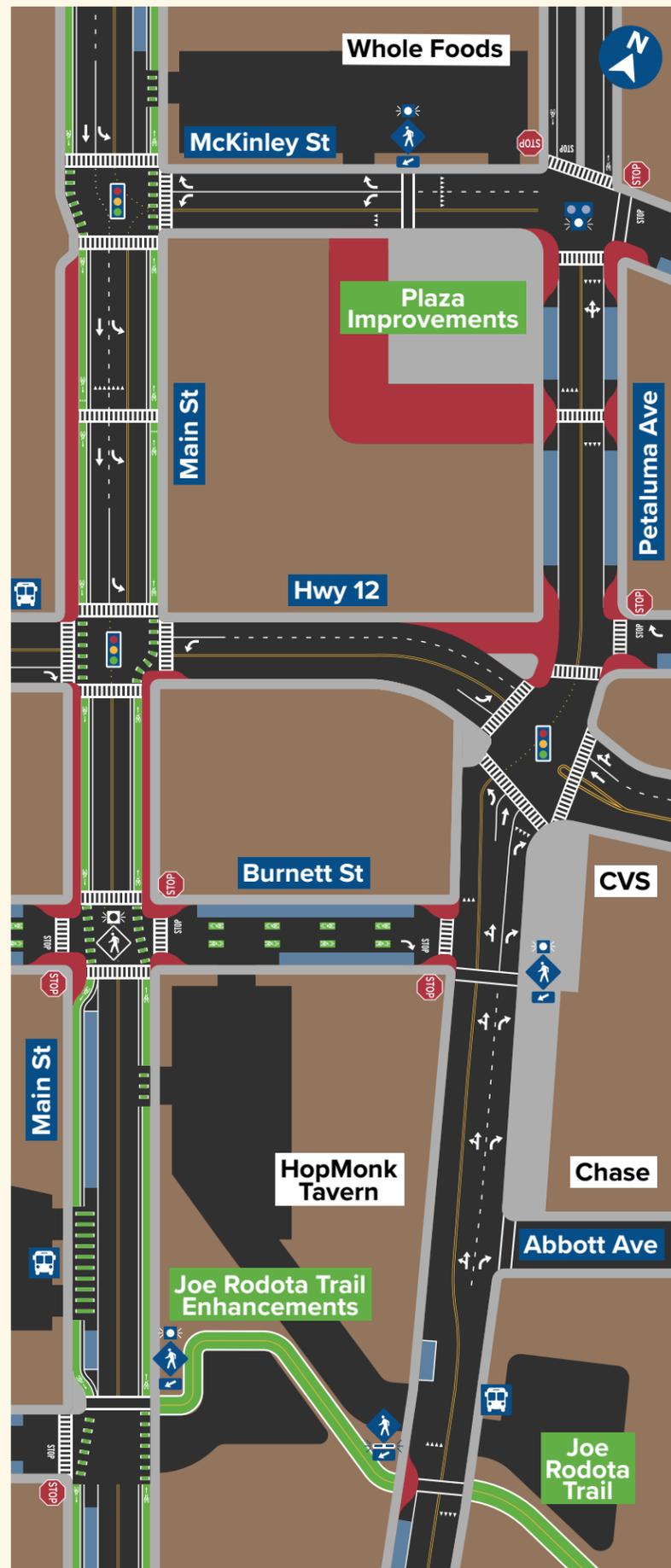
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL 12.5

- Key**
- New Pedestrian Spaces
 - Parking
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - 🛑 Stop Sign
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚶 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE WITH ALTERNATIVE 4



planters as bike lane delineators



vegetated sidewalk extension



sidewalk extension with seating



small vegetated bulbout



large bulbout



distinctive public art



parallel seating



bulbout seating

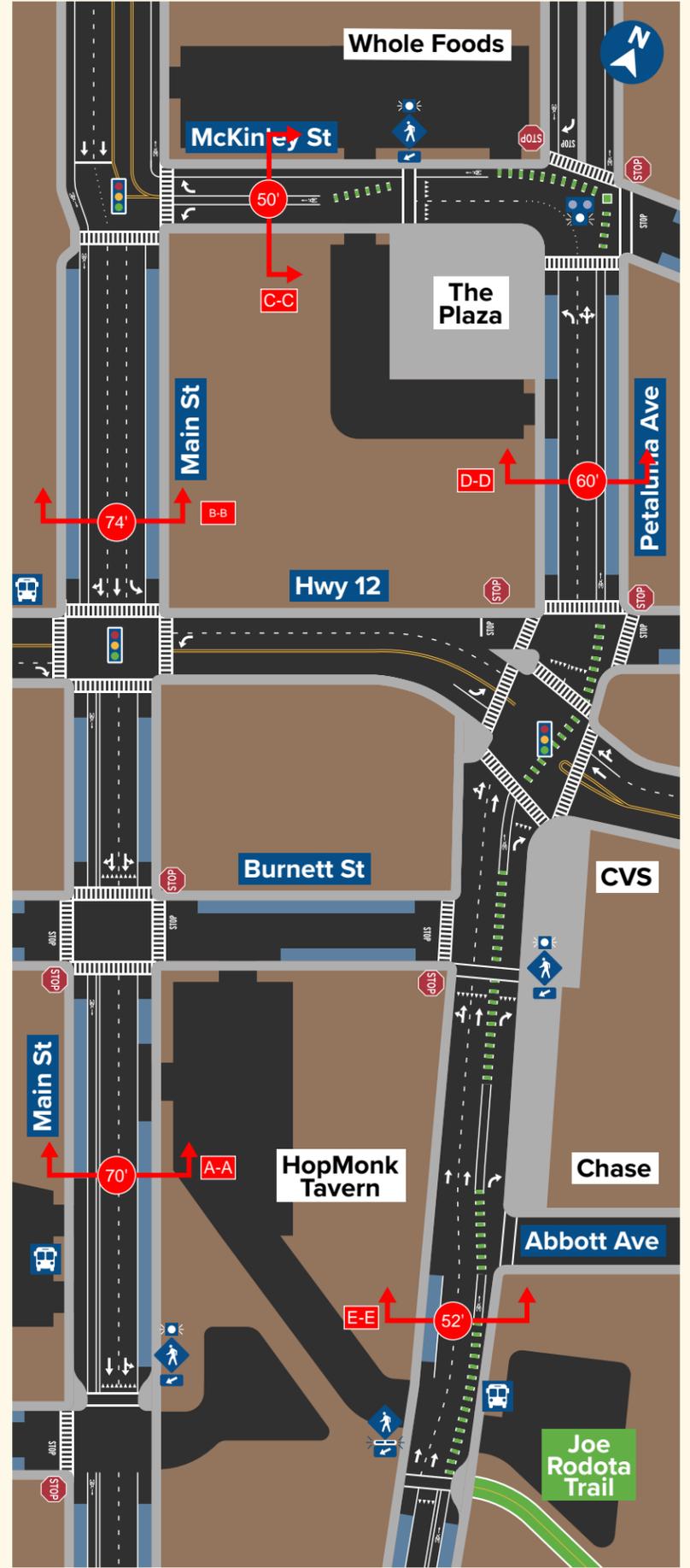
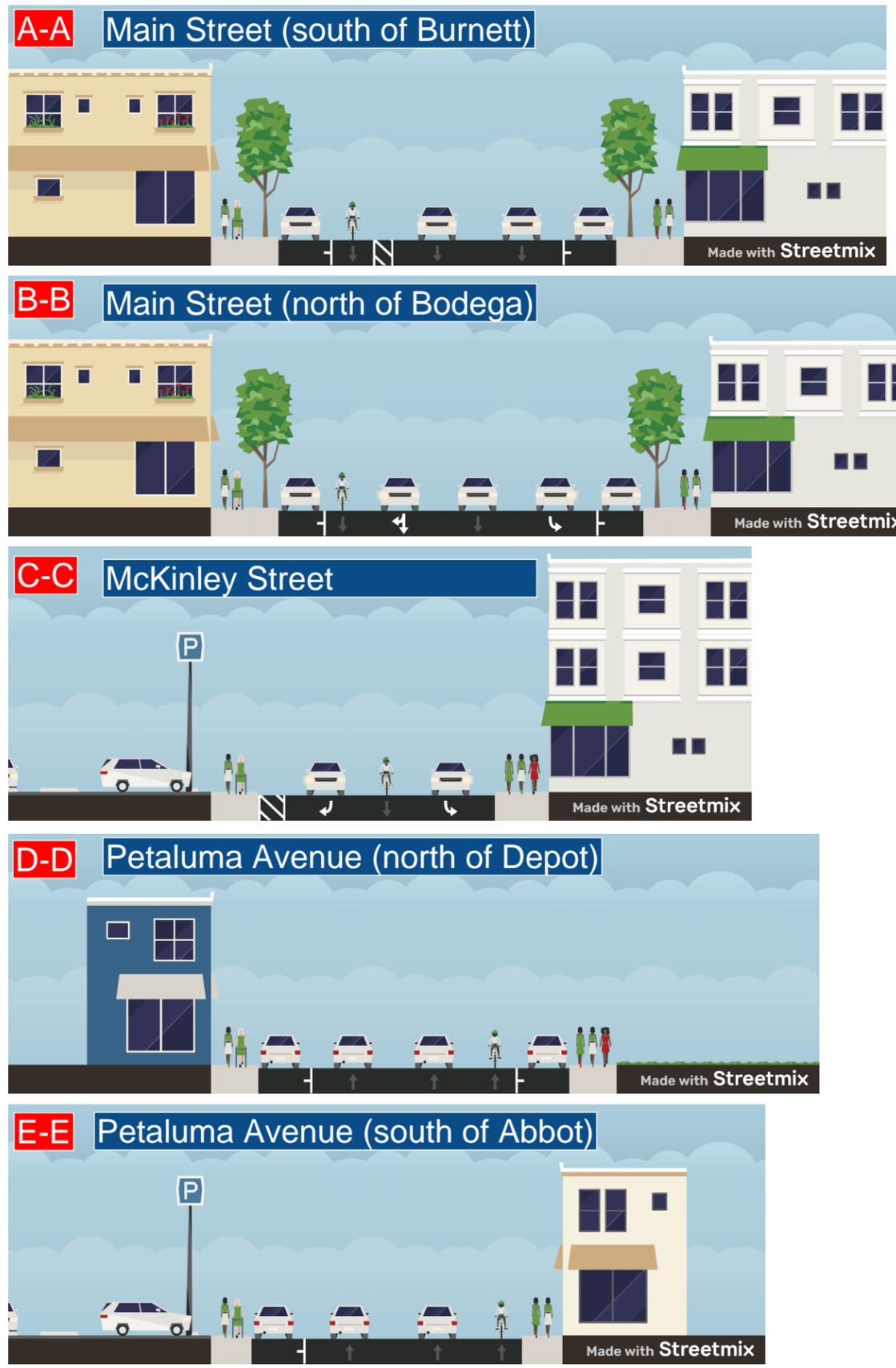


bike parking



pedestrian street fair

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Key

-  Parking
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.

ALT 1: FINE-TUNE TODAY

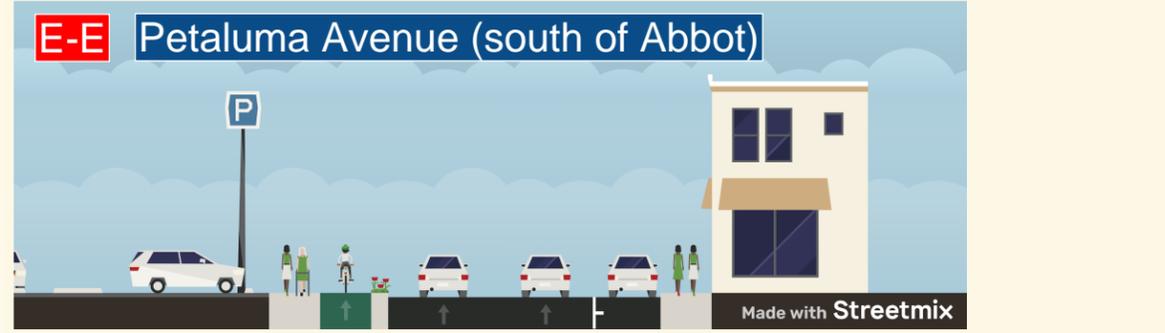
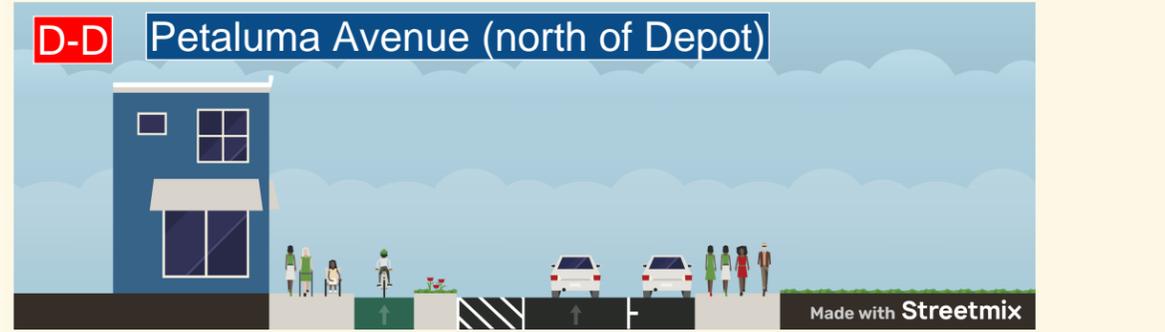
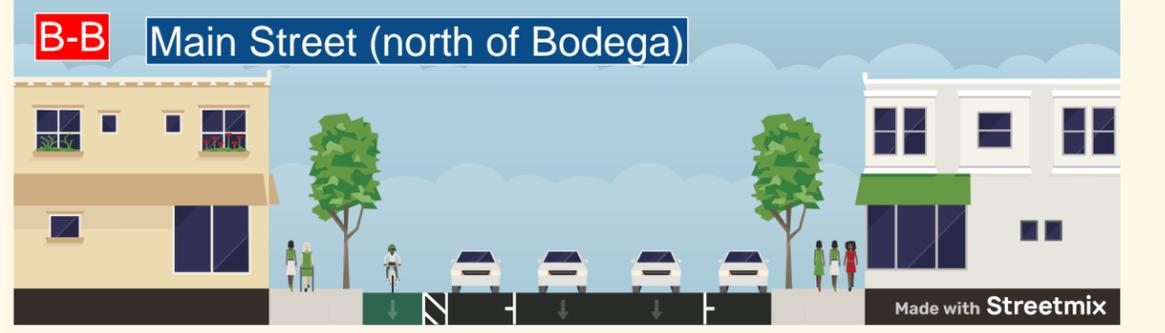
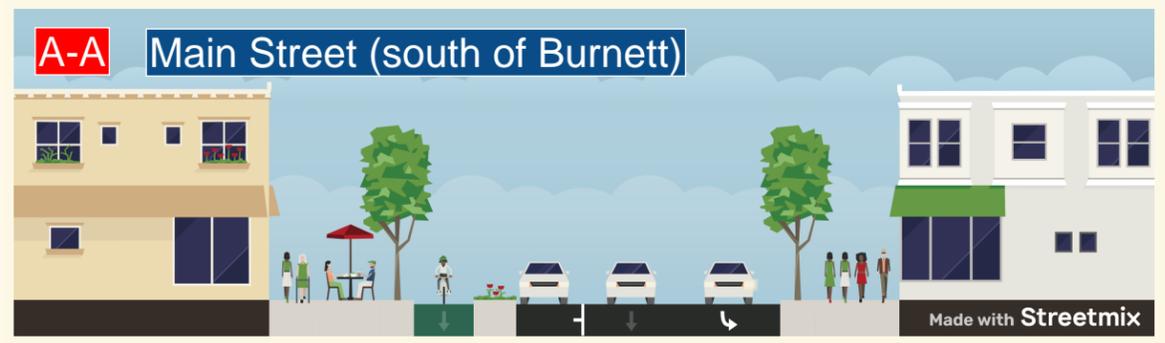
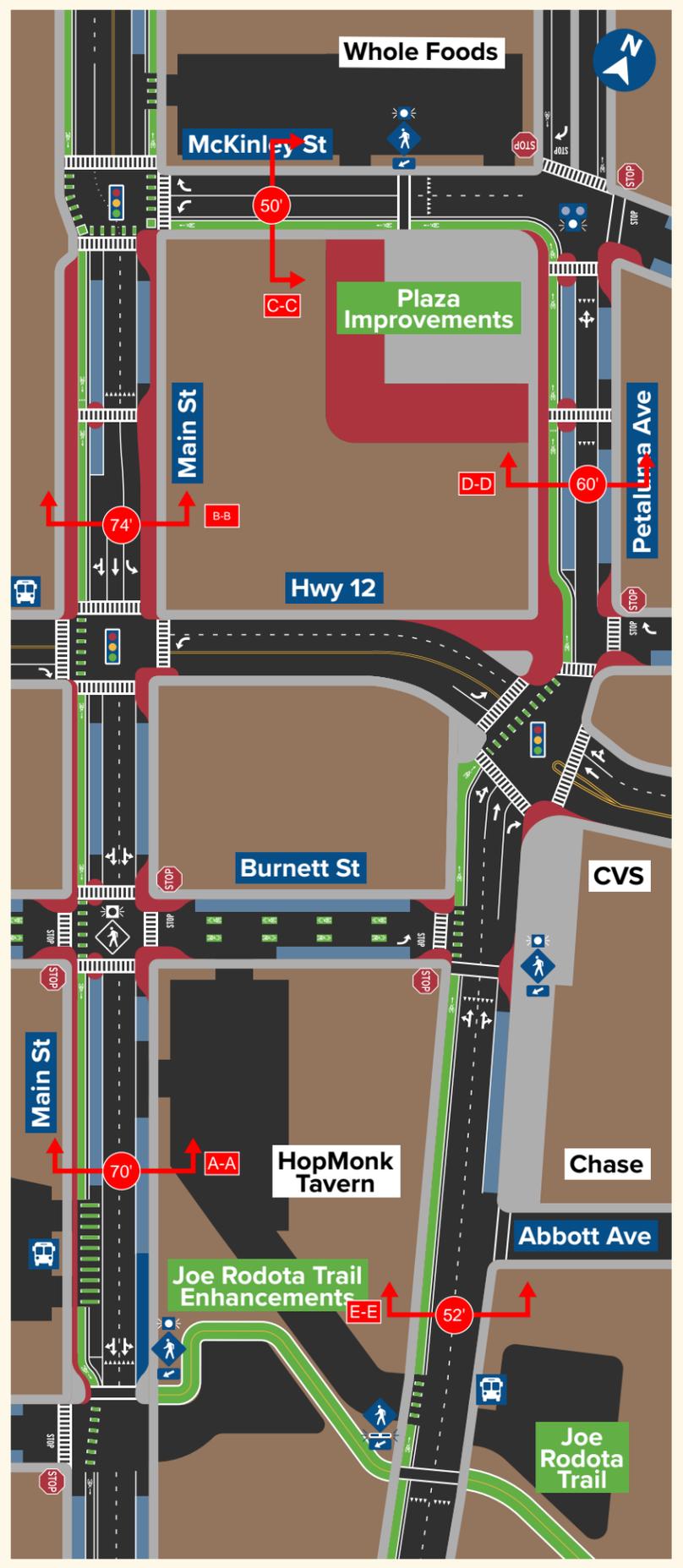
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
 **2.5** / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
 **2.5** / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
 **2** / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
 **2** / 4
 -  **Community Support**
 **2** / 4
- TOTAL 11**

Key

-  New Pedestrian Spaces
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Station
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  (proposed)

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ALT 2: TEST THE TWO-WAY

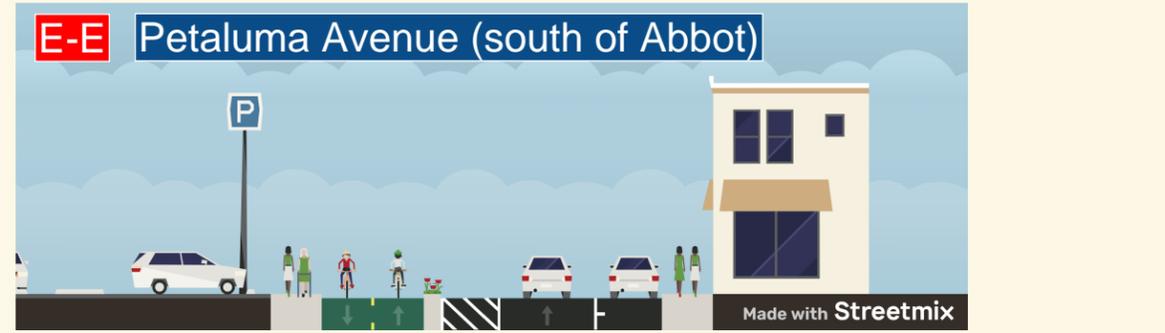
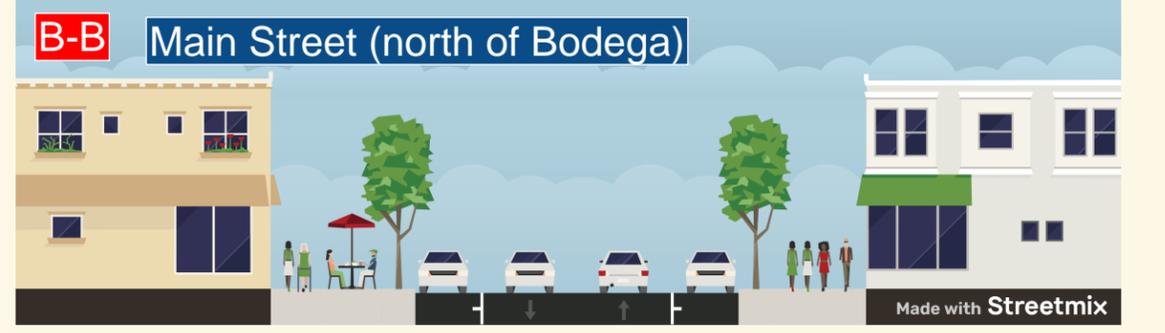
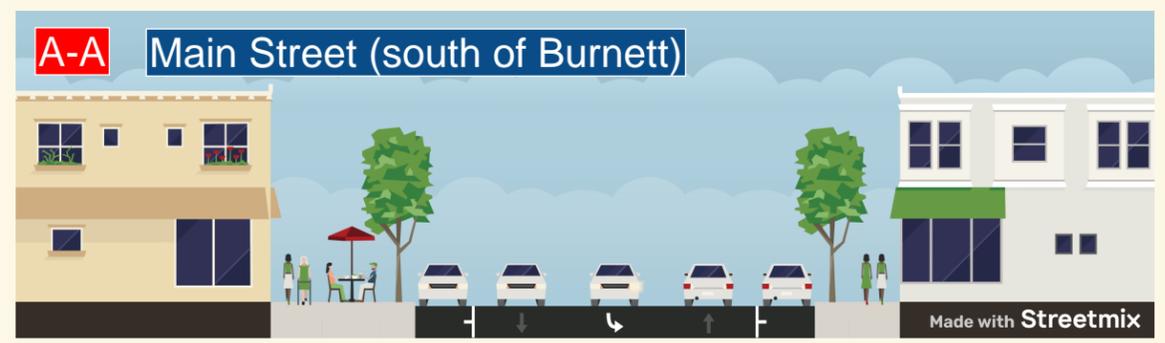
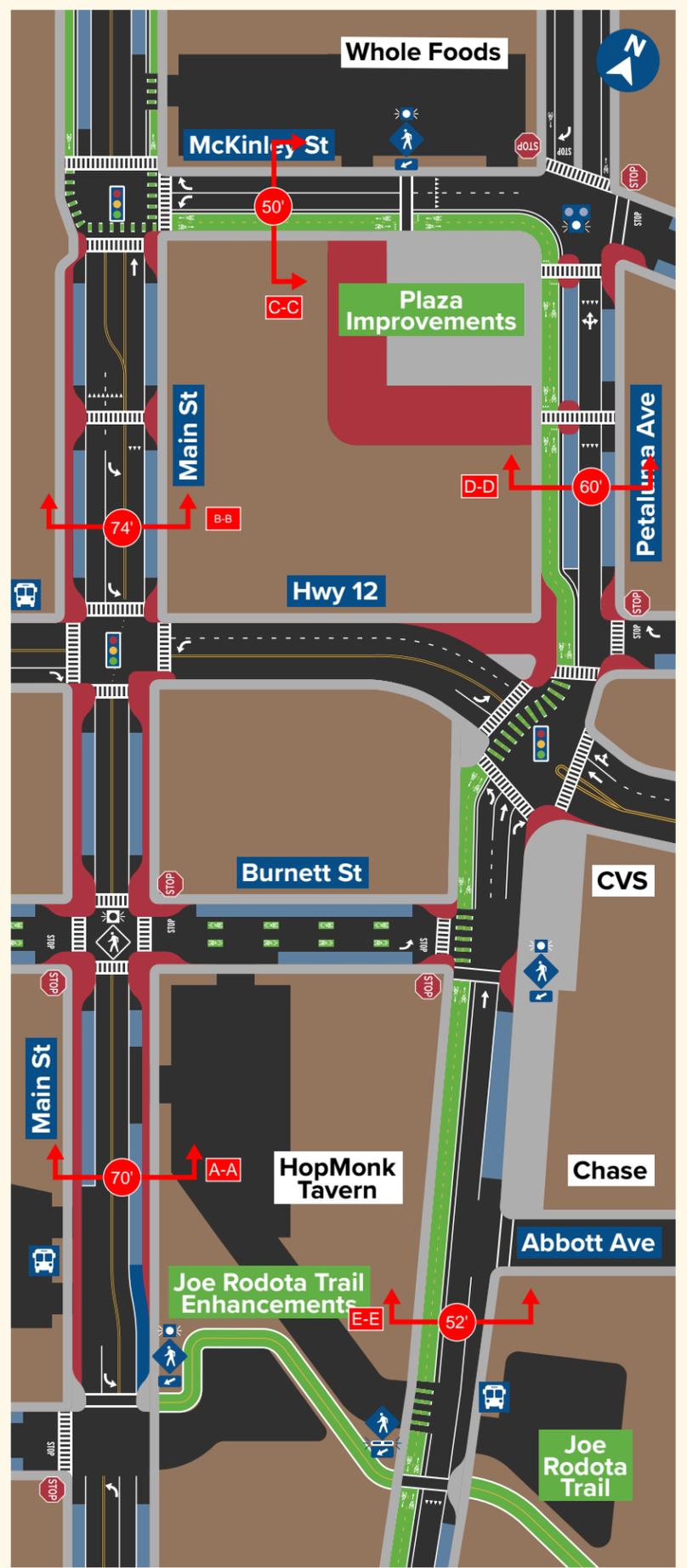
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
 **3** / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
 **2.5** / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
 **2** / 4
 -  **Community Support**
 **3** / 4
- TOTAL 14**

Key

-  New Pedestrian Spaces
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Parking
-  Signal
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Station
-  Stop Sign
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  (proposed)

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ALT 3: WALKABLE ONE-WAY

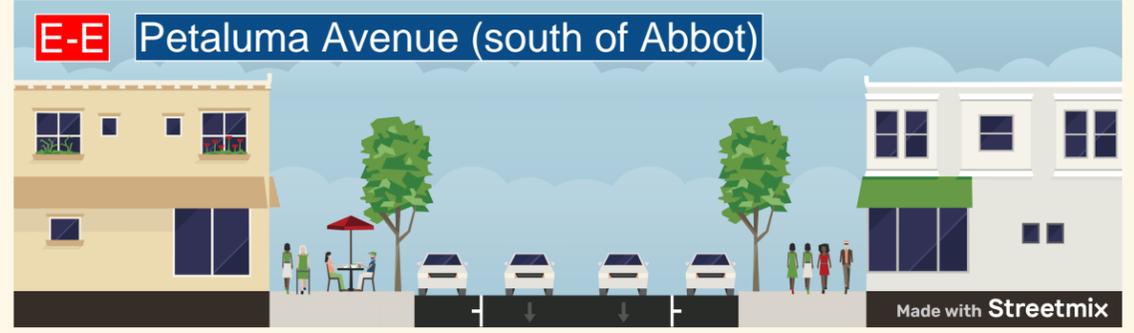
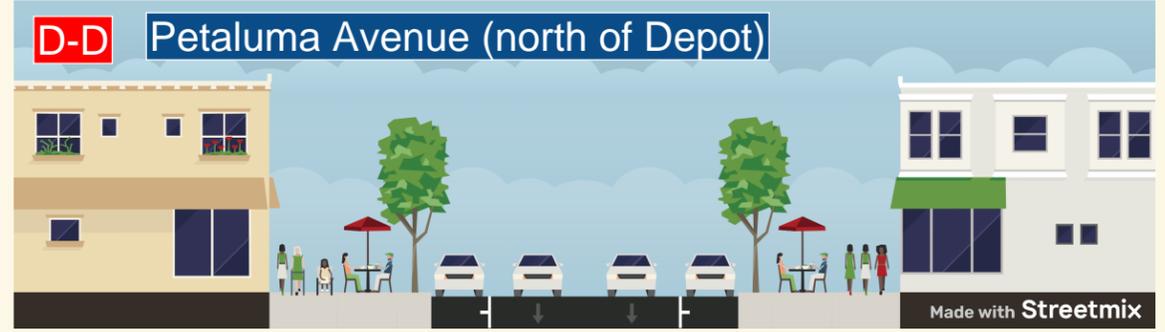
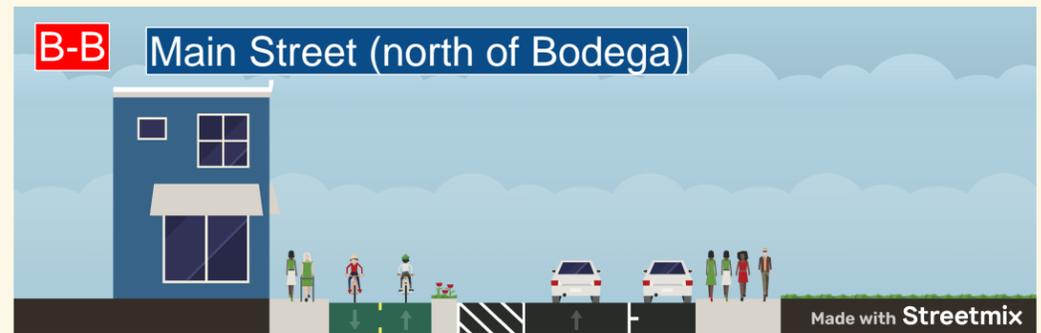
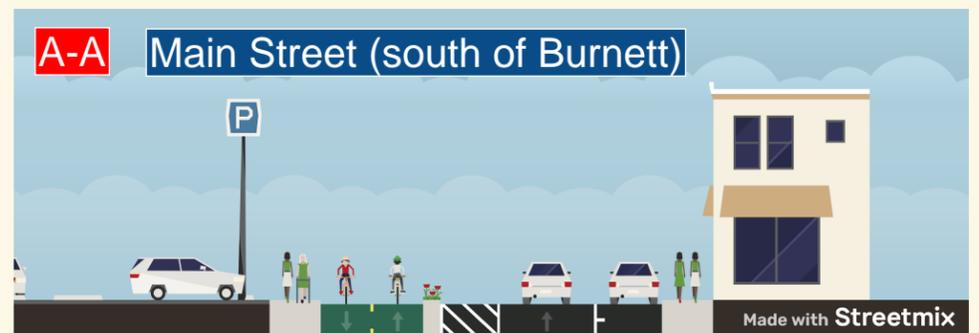
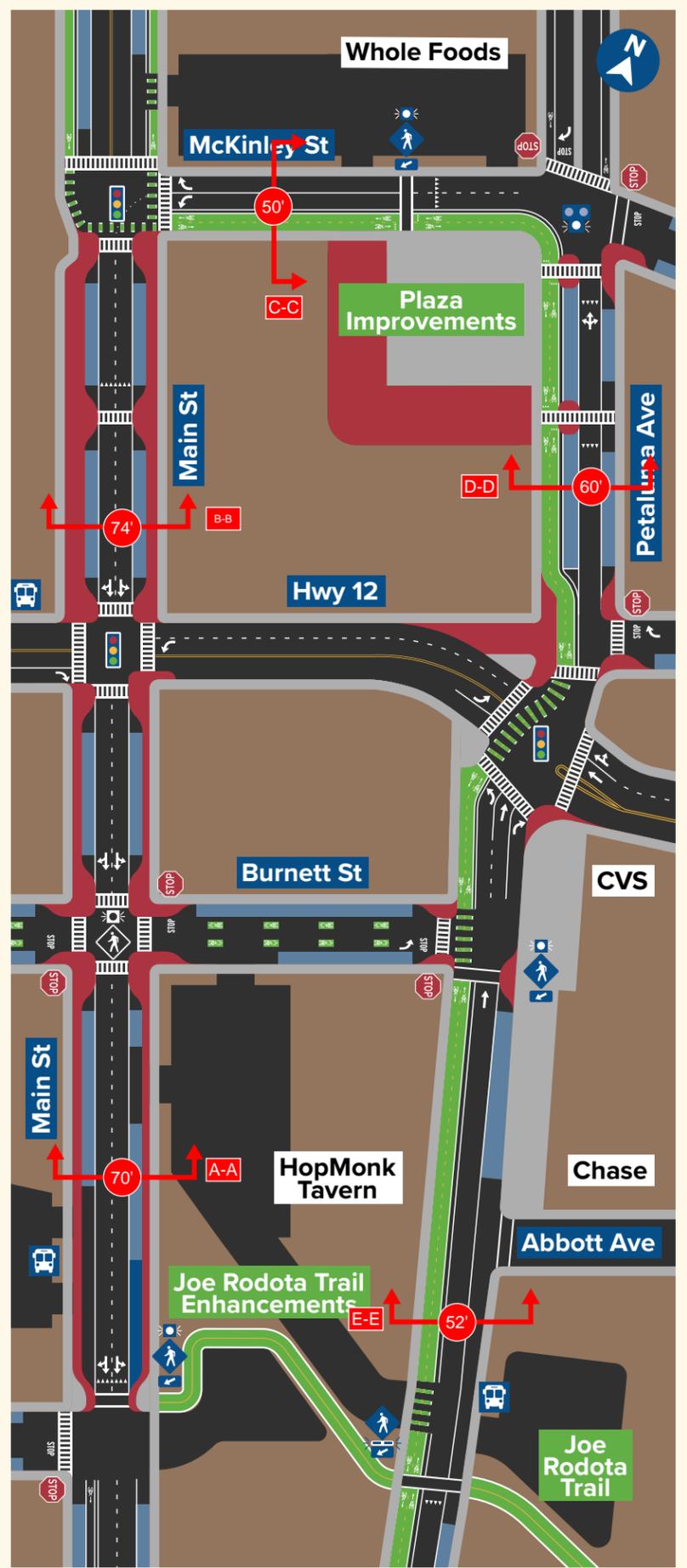
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-  **Safety and Comfort**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Access and Mobility**
 **3.5** / 4
 -  **Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place**
 **3** / 4
 -  **Feasibility & Cost**
 **1.5** / 4
 -  **Community Support**
 **3** / 4
- TOTAL 14.5**

Key

-  New Pedestrian Spaces
-  Parking
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Stop Sign
-  Signal
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Station
-  Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
-  Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
-  Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
-  (proposed)

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ALT 4: TOTALLY TWO-WAY

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Safety and Comfort

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Access and Mobility

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

Downtown Vitality & Sense of Place

🍏🍏🍏🍏 2.5 / 4

Feasibility & Cost

🍏🍏🍏🍏 1 / 4

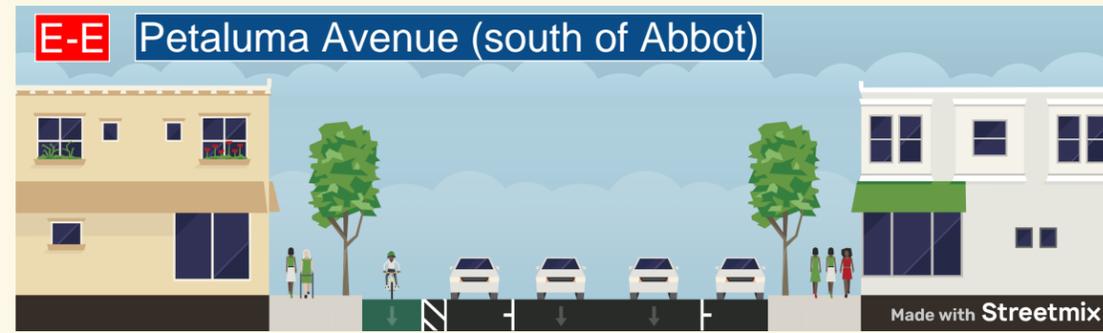
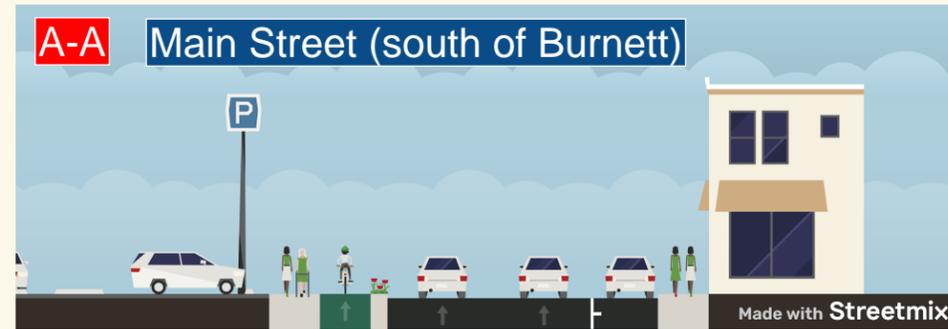
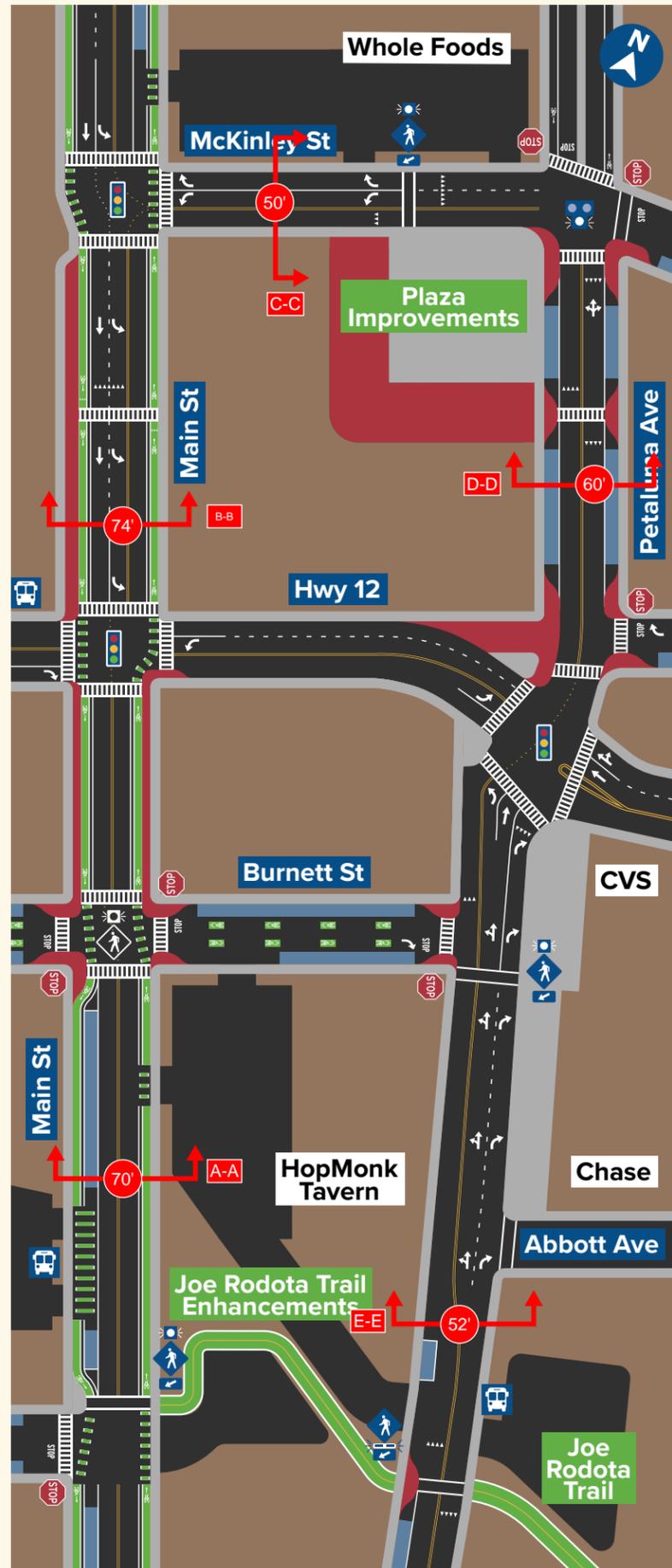
Community Support

🍏🍏🍏🍏 3 / 4

TOTAL
12.5

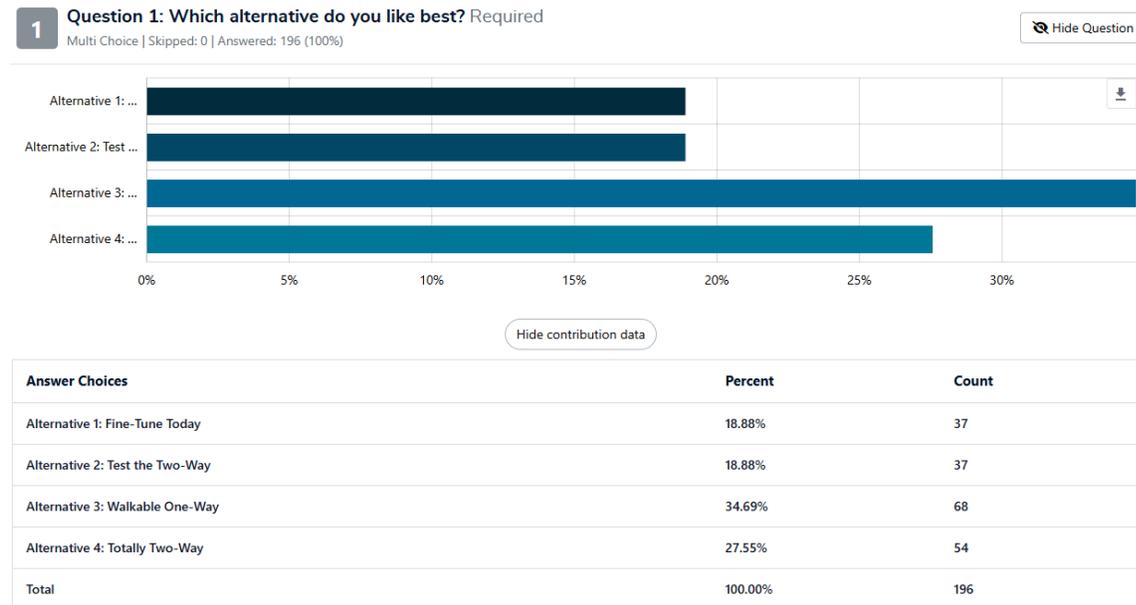
- Key**
- 🚶 New Pedestrian Spaces
 - 🚗 Parking
 - 🚦 Signal
 - 🚌 Bus Stop
 - 🚲 Bike Station
 - 🚦 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
 - 🚶 Pedestrian-Activated Flashing Beacon
 - 🚶 (proposed)

Not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. Additional engineering analysis and coordination will be required to determine final design.



Summary of Survey Results

As of 3pm on Monday, February 3, 2026, **196 votes** have been cast on the survey. Approximately 35 percent of respondents voted for Alternative 3 (Walkable One-Way), approximately 28 percent of respondents voted for Alternative 4 (Totally Two-Way), and about 19 percent of respondents voted for Alternatives 1 and 2.



Survey Outreach and Promotion

Outreach to promote the online survey included the following activities:

- Email announcement to a local stakeholder email list
- Email announcement to the full project email list
- News article posted on the City website
- E-blasts distributed via the City website to relevant subscriber lists
- Inclusion in the City’s January/February newsletter, both emailed and printer with water bill mailer
- Social media posts on City channels, including Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor
- Press release distributed to local media outlets, including the Sebastopol Times and the Press Democrat
- Flyer distribution downtown and to local businesses

Overall Summary of Responses

The dataset reflects a large volume of survey responses in which commenters selected one of four conceptual alternatives for downtown circulation and streetscape, with many responses indicating a preference without additional explanation. Where reasoning was provided, comments focused heavily on:

- Walkability and downtown vitality

- Safety for people walking and biking
- Traffic congestion and flow
- Business access and parking availability

A recurring theme across all alternatives is frustration with existing congestion related to the Highway 12 / Highway 116 junction and skepticism that any option fully resolves regional through-traffic.

Broadly, responses show a clear philosophical split between those prioritizing vehicle throughput and minimizing congestion (often favoring the existing one-way configuration or limited change) and those prioritizing walkability, placemaking, and reduced vehicle dominance downtown (often favoring enhanced pedestrian space even at the expense of traffic capacity). Many commenters explicitly note that Sebastopol functions as a regional crossroads, creating tension between local downtown goals and regional traffic realities.

Several commenters express concern about two-way conversions, particularly related to left-turn conflicts, emergency access, driveway conflicts, and traffic congestion, while others view two-way streets as essential for business visibility, intuitive navigation, and restoring a small-town feel. A subset of respondents favors testing changes temporarily before committing to full build-out, citing uncertainty in traffic modeling and desire for data-driven outcomes. Some of the reasoning for votes that were provided as part of the survey are summarized below.

Alternative 1: Fine-Tune Today

Supporters generally favor maintaining the existing one-way configuration, citing historical precedent, safer and smoother vehicle flow, fewer left-turn conflicts, and concerns that lane reductions or two-way conversions would worsen congestion. Many commenters emphasize that downtown is the intersection of two highways and argue that traffic movement must remain the priority. Several also prefer this option for bicycle safety, noting a preference for bike lanes provided on both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue, and fewer conflict points. Opposition to other alternatives often centers on parking loss, emergency vehicle access, and skepticism of pedestrian-focused features given current traffic volumes.

Alternative 2: Test the Two-Way

Commenters supporting this option often describe it as a compromise or pilot approach, appreciating the ability to revert if conditions worsen. Reasoning includes improving intuitiveness, potentially benefiting businesses, and balancing walkability with traffic needs. Several respondents express interest in experimenting before committing public funds, especially given uncertainty around traffic impacts. However, even supporters frequently note that it does not fully solve congestion and call for broader solutions (e.g., roundabouts, bypass routing, or regional traffic management). Some bicycle advocates expressed skepticism about the proposed two-way cycle track on Petaluma Avenue and limited bicycle connections to Main Street.

Alternative 3: Walkable One-Way

This alternative receives strong qualitative support from commenters prioritizing walkability, pedestrian comfort, downtown vitality, and safety. Supporters emphasize wider sidewalks, outdoor seating, street trees, protected bike lanes, and a calmer downtown environment. Some argue that one-way traffic reduces conflicts and is safer for pedestrians and cyclists than two-way operation. Critics, however, question whether through-traffic can realistically be accommodated through

reduced lanes and worry about congestion spillback, parking loss, and access challenges given Sebastopol's role as a regional connector. Some bicycle advocates expressed skepticism about the proposed two-way cycle track on Petaluma Avenue and limited bicycle connections to Main Street.

Alternative 4: Totally Two-Way

Supporters of full two-way conversion argue it would reduce confusion, improve business access on both Main Street and Petaluma Avenue, restore a traditional downtown feel, and potentially improve traffic flow by dispersing movements. Some see two-way streets as a way to reclaim local control from Caltrans and improve placemaking flexibility, such as temporarily closing Main Street for periodic events. Opponents raise concerns about left-turn delays or restrictions, driveway conflicts, potential increase for conflict points, perceived bike safety concerns, and gridlock, particularly during peak periods and school traffic. Several note past experience with two-way operations as evidence against reverting.



STG Downtown Comments

From [REDACTED]
Date Wed 1/14/2026 4:12 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

I have submitted my preferences for the proposed changes to downtown. I'm not particularly fond of any of them. None of the proposed changes address the concerns which I and others raised at the last meeting on this issue. My major concerns have to do with changes which have evidently already been accepted:

1. The mid-block crosswalk between the park and the non-existent hotel is insane. I can only conclude that whomever proposed this has never driven northbound through town. There are effectively two crosswalks at the northern side of the intersection of Hwy 12 and Petaluma Ave. Pedestrians crossing to Screaming Mimi's without any traffic control make it difficult for northbound traffic to clear the intersection as it is. Putting a second uncontrolled pedestrian crossing mid-block will create even more congestion and probably block the intersection of Hwy 12 and Petaluma Ave.
2. The improvements to the park are ill conceived. The park is seldom used but for the Sunday farmers' market, and the proposed "improvements" won't increase the amount of use which the park gets. There are very few eating establishments on the park to take advantage of the proposed additional seating, but our transient and unhoused populations will probably approve of them. Removing existing parking around the park will make it even more difficult than it already is to park in order to shop downtown.
3. The bike lane improvements are totally unnecessary. Currently I seldom see the bike lanes getting any use whatsoever. Cyclists still ride on the sidewalk even though the bike lanes which exist are safe and available.

In general, I would like to see both Main Street and Petaluma Ave returned to two-way traffic. This could easily be accomplished by removing the current bike lane on Petaluma Ave and replacing it with a two bike lanes on Main Street which, I'm pretty sure, has adequate width to support two traffic lanes and two bike lanes.

Doug Yule
[REDACTED]



STG traffic plans

From Ed Myers [REDACTED]
Date Fri 1/16/2026 5:38 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hello,

I've completed the survey about the four proposed "improvements" to downtown circulation. My overall impression is captured by the saying "the road to ruin is paved with good intentions". I can't imagine that any conversion of the one way current system to two way traffic will do anything except create traffic backups on the two arterials, and send frustrated motorists onto the residential streets as a bypass. I already do that a lot of the time. Surely you must have done some modeling on the effect on traffic capacity and I'd be curious to know the results. And do we care about greenhouse gases any more - idling cars going nowhere worsen greenhouse gas emissions.

It's noble to carve out more space for bicycles; I'm a former bicyclist myself. That seems to be a theme of the improvements. But on my bicycle I avoided the arterials after a couple of unnerving experiences, even after the current bike lanes were in place, and I kept to residential streets. Since the residential streets are available to anyone, and you can get just about anywhere on them, I fail to see the need to carve out more traffic lanes for bikes on the arterials. Plus, bikes are maybe 1% of the vehicles that I see on the streets.

Ed Myers
[REDACTED]

"Music fills the infinite between two souls.
This has been muffled by the mist of our daily habits" - Tagore

--

This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com



Comment re Survey

From Holly Hansen <outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Date Tue 1/13/2026 5:27 PM

To Victoria Henkel <vhenkel@cityofsebastopol.gov>

From Facebook:

Can't you upload a picture of what it is today in the same format as your alternatives? I can't tell what's different.

Also, how is feasibility and cost measured, do you want the fewest number of apples or the most number of apples? It seems to hover between one and two, which is not really helpful in understanding anything.

This is a very ineffective way to present the options to the community, I feel more confused having looked at it.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)



STG Downtown Comments

From Janice [REDACTED]
Date Thu 1/15/2026 12:30 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Resending with the correct title.

- > On Jan 14, 2026, at 8:08 PM, Janice [REDACTED] wrote:
- >
- > Hi Planning Team,
- >
- > I am writing to express my concern that there is way too much focus on bike lanes .
- > Bicyclists have the entire trail to bike on and they can park their bikes off the trail for a visit if they would like to.
- >
- > Perhaps the bike lanes should be put on the trail and not through Sebastopol. We have a major traffic issue already and the bike lanes are not going to help at all. It's not going to make people want to bike more.
- >
- > For outdoor seating, spaces should be increased for restaurant seating. Not just random outdoor seating.
- >
- > Also, tear down the Rite-Aid for parking since the proposal is to eliminate parking around Central Park. No to slow cars there too.
- >
- > And no to Grocery Outlet.
- >
- > Disgruntled Resident,
- > Janice
- >

Dear Planning Commission, Planning Department and City Council,

I just received the updated plans for Reimagining the Core and have the following feedback.

- 1) It is not practical to route Bike Lanes through downtown via Main Street and Petaluma Blvd. There are simply too many cars. It is better to connect the JRT through Morris Street to Eddie Lane to the High School Road entrance to the JRT. People wanting to go downtown could go Morris Street to McKinley to the town plaza. Morris Street should become a bike and pedestrian pathway linking the JRT to the Laguna and downtown and the High School Road JRT link.
- 2) The plan must accommodate the 1200 students that attend Analy High School. There are easily 800 cars that come in and out of Sebastopol every single school day. This creates traffic on Highway 12, Petaluma Blvd, High School Road and Main Street. There are new drivers and young drivers. The plan must have a safe and efficient way to move school traffic from Highway 12 and Highway 116 to Analy.
- 3) Move bike lanes off of Petaluma Blvd. Very few people (less than 15 per month) use the bike lanes on Petaluma BLVD. The majority of the local community supports the Apple Blossom and Gravenstien separated bike/pedestrian pathways. Use these alternatives to 116 bike lanes.
- 4) No bike lanes around the town square or down Main Street. There is simply too much congestion to support bike lanes. Direct bikes to Morris Street or to cross and connect with Ives. If you connect bicycles with Ives, Ives needs to have a separate bike lane from the pedestrian pathway.

Thank you,
Kate Haug



Re: Help Shape the Future of Downtown Sebastopol!

From Holly Hansen <outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Date Thu 1/15/2026 1:40 PM

To Kenneth Epstein [REDACTED]

Cc Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hello Ken,

Thank you for your feedback. It has been forwarded to the project team.

You can also reach out to planning@cityofsebastopol.gov (cc'ed here) with any additional questions or comments.

All the best,
Holly



Holly Hansen

Contract Community Outreach Coordinator

City of Sebastopol

p: 707.494.5668

w: www.cityofsebastopol.gov **e:** outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov



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On Jan 14, 2026, at 5:24 PM, Kenneth Epstein [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello -

It is difficult to evaluate these options without knowing whether and how they impact parking on Main Street, Petaluma Ave, and Central Park. I reviewed the entire packet, and I did not see anything about parking.

Thanks,

Ken

Agenda Item Number: 9

On Jan 14, 2026, at 3:30 PM, Sebastopol Planning Department
<outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov> wrote:



STG downtown comments

From Kim Atkinson [REDACTED]
Date Mon 1/26/2026 1:12 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

The critical issues as I see them, (as someone who has been in Sebastopol since there was a train running down main street)

1) On Petaluma Ave, at Mimi's Ice cream, people try and cross going east at the junction of two state Hwys. People should either not cross there, or there needs to be a cross signal and cross walk timed properly. As it is, people try and cross at the wrong time, don't wait for traffic to pass, and create backups for people trying to get through town on Hwy 116. Someone is going to get hurt. If the hotel goes in, it will be even worse.

2) Where Petauma Ave (116) makes a hard left in front of Whole foods going around the plaza, who has the right of way? People coming from the police station (is that still Petaluma Ave or Laguna Pkway?) sometime cars turn on to Mckinly (116) in front of oncoming traffic with out waiting. Also coming from the Barlow on Mckinly onto 116 is not easy and there are no sign about who has the right of way.

A sign like" through traffic has right of way or similar would be helpful.

thank you. I will take the survey later, lots there to study.

Kim

Kim Atkinson
Sebastopol CA 95473
[REDACTED]



Re: Question1-too small to read

From Holly Hansen <outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Date Thu 1/15/2026 1:38 PM

To Larry Needleman [REDACTED]

Cc Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hello Larry,

Thank you for letting us know. Your feedback has been forwarded to the project team. You can also reach out to planning@cityofsebastopol.gov (cc'ed here) with any additional questions or comments.

All the best,
Holly



Holly Hansen

Contract Community Outreach Coordinator

City of Sebastopol

p: 707.494.5668

w: www.cityofsebastopol.gov **e:** outreach@cityofsebastopol.gov



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On Jan 14, 2026, at 6:53 PM, Larry Needleman [REDACTED] wrote:

I'm reading the survey on a 24" computer monitor and I still can't enlarge it enough to come close to reading it.

Larry Needleman



STG Downtown comments

From Michael Jacob [REDACTED]
Date Tue 1/13/2026 5:58 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

I strongly support alternate 3.

Fully protected bike lanes are key to encouraging more ridership.

Wider sidewalks encourage better use of the outdoors by merchants and more interesting walk ability.

Thank you for helping sheppard this important planning effort

Michael Jacob
[REDACTED]



STG Downtown Comments

From Nathanael Burt [REDACTED]
Date Wed 1/14/2026 3:47 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hi - I had a few additional comments on the core reimagining survey: <https://fp.mysocialpinpoint.com/sebastopol-reimagining-the-core/pick-your-alternative>

1. I would love to see all intersections have crosswalks in all directions. The intersection at 12 and petaluma is a prime example where it's really frustrating as a pedestrian to cross as I can't cross 12 from the CVS side of Petaluma.
2. I love that we're considering a more walkable downtown. The real driver for more successful downtown businesses isn't increased parking, it's increased foot traffic. We should be making downtown a pleasurable place to walk to and go for dinner on a Wednesday evening.

Best,
Nathanael Burt



STG Downtown Comments

From Rebecca Dwan [REDACTED]
Date Wed 1/14/2026 4:16 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Dear planning folks,

Thanks for sending the survey. None of the four choices sound good to me. Now that cars and trucks have gotten used to the multiple lanes on Main and Petaluma, the congestion would get even worse when forced into fewer lanes. With a bypass then we could proceed to bringing back a liveable Main Street. With proper transit, fewer people would use cars downtown. We need a transit hub with a multilevel parking garage.

All four alternatives include the "distinctive public art." I would vote against that. Art is a very personal-taste thing, and most of what we have in Sebastopol is disliked by more of us than anywhere else I know. Plant a tree or shrub, preferably a native, in those spots, please!

Lastly, what is this about "Central Park"? Is this a rebranding of the Plaza?

We want Sebastopol to be in the forefront of its avowed green/Green mission and be a leader in helping our environmental crisis with more transit and transit hubs, less light pollution, education for citizens on how to act locally to help the planet, and opportunities to engage youngsters in local community gardens, helping seniors, and setting up their own events in town that do not need car transport.

Please help.

Thanks for your attention,
Rebecca Dwan
Business owner in downtown Sebastopol since 1984



Fw: Downtown Planning Survey

From Victoria Henkel <vhenkel@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Date Wed 1/14/2026 7:42 AM

To Geoff Rubendall [REDACTED]

Cc Ashlee Takushi [REDACTED]; John Jay <jjay@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Eleanor Leshner [REDACTED]

Public comment below.

Victoria (Tori) Henkel
Permit Technician

City of Sebastopol | Planning Department
7120 Bodega Avenue | Sebastopol, CA 95472
(707) 823-6167 phone
www.cityofsebastopol.gov

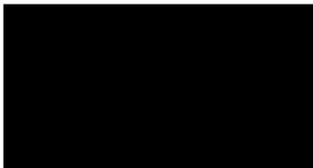


City offices are open Monday – Thursday, 7:30 am – 5:00 pm
Closed every Friday and on Holidays
(Upcoming Holidays: Jan.19, Feb. 12, Feb. 16)

From: SAS Camp [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 6:55 PM
To: Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Downtown Planning Survey

Thank you for your attention to this project!
I imagine a parking garage and much of downtown be for walking and biking only. Mixing vehicle traffic and pedestrians is dangerous and unnecessary. Just as societies have gotten so used to driving up to the front door of places, we can adapt again; to setting healthy boundaries.
Park the freeway speed vehicles at locations between highway and marketplaces(may need to build/designate more parking), then make available alternate transportation such as walking, biking, slow mopeds/scooters, and slow shuttles.

Rebekah Sammet





Survey of 'alternatives'

From Rose Cohen [REDACTED]
Date Fri 1/23/2026 8:15 AM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hello -

I just saw the survey regarding the 'alternative' downtown ideas.

I am not sure how to say this kindly, but this seems extremely out of touch with reality at this time. Hasn't Sebastopol been in a negative financial situation? It was not very long ago there was the change to include the bike lanes on 116, and better pedestrian crossing lighting, and now, that wants to be part of the redesign?

We all know traffic is problematic through town, and these 'alternatives' will do nothing to change that. Changing the "square's" name to Central Park doesn't make it one.

How much will these ideas cost to implement? Where will that money come from? How long will it take, while everyone lives with the construction disruptions?

The alternatives sound mostly like what will be a very costly beautification plan with questionable end results.

I live 2 miles south of town off of 116. Sebastopol is my town. I am not in favor of any of these ideas at this time.

Thank you,
Rose



FW: street alternatives

From John Jay <jjay@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Date Tue 1/13/2026 10:01 AM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

From: Serena Coltrane-Briscoe [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 9:32 AM
To: John Jay <jjay@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: street alternatives

Hi John,
I filled out the street alternatives survey the other day and wanted to add a comment to my response. I selected the Totally Two Way option, but wanted to add that I think there should be parking on at least one side of Main Street. This could be accommodated by not having a center lane the whole length of the block, among other options.
Thanks,
Serena

--
Serena Coltrane-Briscoe
Designer
MArch + LEED AP
[REDACTED]



Caltrans

From Denny Petersen [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 2:01 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Instead of revisiting the past, I suggest Caltrans fixes some potholes or repave a portion of highway 12 west of town, please
Sent from my iPhone



STG Downtown Comments

From Kristen OConnor [REDACTED]

Date Sun 2/1/2026 7:19 PM

To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

I am completely opposed to removing traffic lanes through town. Any plans adopted by the City should find create ways to re-route traffic without removing lanes. At certain times of day (school start and stop, beginning and end of work day), it already takes 15 minutes to travel 2 miles from one side of town to the other. Removing lanes will make this even worse, which is definitely a quality of life issue for many people, especially those of us who are NOT retired or self-employed and do not have the luxury to travel through town at off hours.

working people and students should be a priority. They shouldn't have to face longer, more annoying commutes in order to open up bike and pedestrian lanes that aren't even widely used.

I already find it annoying to sit in traffic every morning trying to get out of town, while the whole bike lane is empty. I sincerely don't want to see this intensified.



STG Downtown comments

From Nancy Dempsey [REDACTED]

Date Mon 2/2/2026 4:36 PM

To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hi,

Thanks for giving the residents of Sebastopol a chance to weigh in on this dilemma. No easy fix. I have lived in Sebastopol for 53 years, the last 23 in town.

I voted for the walkable mode but it is not without its issues. I think we need two lanes on Main St. and would like to see two lanes on Petaluma Ave. When the northbound traffic is already backed up to Fircrest Market, I turn on to Fircrest Ave. or Fellers Lane to avoid the backup to get to my home on Parquet St. The bike lane on Petaluma Ave. is not utilized and when I actually see a cyclist, it amazes me. No parent would let their child use those bike lanes. I wouldn't. Plus the bike lane is a convoluted snaking mess that is very confusing especially to out of town visitors. We need the bike lane on Petaluma Ave. for cars.

Since I live close to downtown I walk many places around town. I have experienced too many close calls with the traffic downtown and on adjoining streets and not just at Main and Bodega Ave. I suspect the neighborhoods will feel the brunt of any traffic changes and take "short cuts" to avoid downtown. I already do. This will make those neighborhoods more at risk for accidents. How about gentle speed bumps in those neighborhoods that are the short cuts? Anything we can do to slow the traffic.

Another issue I have is the newish California vehicle law that says cars should not park within 20' of a curb. There are very few red painted curbs in Sebastopol that conform to this law. Coming down Parquet St., which is at an angle pointing to the right, it is difficult to see either left or right for oncoming cars. Cars are parked right up to the corner. The neighbors all inch out slowly until there is a clear view. It is tricky.

Getting around the schools at drop off time is a zoo. Analy HS is a mess with so many cars backed up in either direction and on High School Rd. Can this be addressed for drop offs and pickups with the school? Have a flow of traffic rather than the willy nilly pattern that exists.

I could go on because I am very interested in being safe when I walk on any street in Sebastopol.

Thanks for reading this and hope we get the Cal Trans grant. Our traffic needs calming. Agenda Item Number: 9

Nancy Dempsey





* STG Downtown Comments for Feb. 8 deadline

From P. Dines [REDACTED]
 Date Wed 2/4/2026 11:58 AM
 To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hi - I'm writing to give feedback on the new "Reimagining the Core" proposals for downtown. I've been a Sebastopol resident for over 30 years and love this town.

AND sadly, while I appreciate the intentions, I have to vote NO to all the proposals - NO ACTION.

AND I'm disappointed that you didn't put that option on the online poll! Even though I understand that that is an option for the City Council. You FORCE people to say yes to one of them, distorting your survey, because it can look like people support one of these changes -- when they might not! There is no place for a whole group of people to respond in the survey! We're just invisible.

And, if it's too late to add that to the survey -- at least report the results of the survey honestly -- "for those who want a change, this is their preference". Or really, "when people were only given the option of these 4 proposals, this was their preference."

I'm debating right now if I have to pick the least awful of these changes just to be heard in the survey. I expect others wrestled with that too!

MY SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

1) I object to all of them because they all throttle traffic even more downtown. I think that harms all businesses downtown, which are already struggling, and makes it harder for people to get there and shop. Which reduces sales tax revenues for the City at a time of its financial difficulties and already-high sales tax. And I believe downtown traffic is already at "F" level on the City's General Plan!

The change to Hwy 12 downtown that was made a few years ago -- and reduced lanes -- really clogged downtown traffic flow to this day. Making it harder to get downtown, have appointments, do shopping, etc. I don't think that doing more of that makes any sense at all.

There's just too much traffic that goes through there. It is a hub for west county. It serves many people who simply can't bike or walk into town, no matter how many lanes they give the bicyclists. I don't think now is the time to make it harder for people to get to downtown.

2) And what happens with the already difficult parking situation downtown, and how does that also reduce business downtown?

3) Add to this the expected increase in traffic from the Grocery Outlet proposal. GO brags about them bringing more people downtown! That adds to traffic and requires more parking! Already the old Rite Aid lot is full from people parking. Where are those cars going to go when that building is in use again? Can't we have a lower-volume traffic use? Just to meet current needs! But also let's not make the situation double worse!

4) I think you all must do a traffic and parking study for BOTH these proposals BEFORE voting on them again. And also do a realistic economic analysis of the ripple effects on other Sebastopol businesses of EACH and BOTH of them. (Not just the GO proposals for THEIR profit, but not the harm to others.)

I feel like some people have a vision for downtown Sebastopol that doesn't connect with the realities here. And I'd rather that be realized on paper, not in crashing business in our downtown!

Thank you for your consideration of these comments --

Patricia Dines
Sebastopol, CA



Down town traffic plan

From rbcalley@gmail.com [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 2:00 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Good afternoon City Planners.

In all 4 of your traffic plans it looks like you are removing a lot of parking . Parking is already in short supply downtown.

I think down town business might further suffer with the loss of close parking. Yes some people might bike more down town with better bike lanes but that is not an option for people from out of town or with disabilities.

Sincerely
Rebecca Bondhus Calley
[REDACTED]
Sebastopol

Sent from my iPad



STG Downtown Comments

From Walter Muelken [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 1:44 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Background

I have lived in Sebastopol (city) since 1999 and until several years ago I walked everywhere (bank, drug store, library, Ives Park, etc).

Comments

Several "starters": 1) Next to pedestrian safety (and decreasing vehicle exhaust emissions), the primary concern when evaluating this realignment proposal should be the financial health of Sebastopol City government. And Sebastopol's financial health will be improved principally through increased sales and occupancy tax receipts. 2) I believe the general public "concern" with Sebastopol traffic flow is, deep down, really a concern about the quality and "sprightliness" of Sebastopol retail stores. People want Sebastopol to be a little more like Healdsburg instead of the tattoo parlors, nail salons, pizza parlors, and vacancies we seem to be specializing in.

With these "starters" in mind 1) I believe the City should do as little as possible to change the existing traffic flow. I think the worst thing that could be done would be to turn Main St. into two way. Can you imagine the delays that would be caused by cars waiting on Main St (heading south) to turn left (east) onto Sebastopol Ave. (route 12 toward Santa Rosa) if we had 2 instead of three lanes going south on Main? 2) I believe if the City or State want to improve pedestrian crossings (I think the new pedestrian crossing light to be installed on S. Main at Burnett is great), have at it. But a consideration should be maintenance costs (who is going to pay for watering and weeding the "planters"?) 3) I am all for more bicycle travel in the City. But I have seen little, if any, increase in bicycle use with the new bicycle lanes - particularly the lane on Petaluma Ave. (Under the rubric of "improving traffic flow" the City or State should delete the bicycle lanes on Petaluma Ave. and add another lane for cars - the reasons for which I am sure you have heard many, many times).

While I spent a major part of my working years figuring the best way to spend taxpayers' money (Federal Government - anti-poverty, environmental protection) I do not think the City should adopt the view that State money is "free". The City should be good stewards of all "public" funds and carefully consider the "return" for citizens.

Thanks for the time you all spend on this venture.

Walter Muelken
[REDACTED]



Re: One-Way vs. Two-Way Downtown: att: Paul Fritz

From Diana Badger [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 4:00 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hi Paul,

[REDACTED]

I'm studying the alternatives for downtown. My primary concern is as someone who regularly drives home from places north of town, to my home on the south of town. When I come through Main Street, I always choose to line up for the light at Hwy 12 and Main in the *middle* of the three lanes, because cars in the right lane that are going straight usually have to wait quite a while for those turning right, who have to wait for pedestrians to cross.

So for me, any option that would remove the 3 lanes from Main Street seems not feasible as it would slow traffic down a lot for people who just want to flow south. Even with a "turn pocket" for those turning onto Hwy 12 (which I note is mentioned in #2 and #4, but *not* #3), it seems that cars not in the only other, left turn, lane would frequently be backed up behind cars wanting to turn right (as they wait for pedestrians). Often there is more than one car that wants to turn right, so there can be quite a wait (depending of course on time of day). So it seems to me this would stop the whole traffic flow north to south pretty frequently and it could back up even further than it sometimes does (past Safeway).

Quite a few years ago I figured out this 'traffic hack' for myself, and think it would just add to the backup and congestion, if those of us hip to the fact that it's smarter to choose the middle lane could no longer do so.

Maybe you have something designed that would deal with this issue - great! - but I couldn't find it mentioned. I'd appreciate knowing about it, if so!

Thanks for your work for our town!

Diana Badger



STG Downtown Comments

From Jerry Newman [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 4:58 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Comments on survey choices:

I voted for option #3 with two concerns:

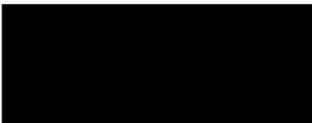
- the lack of a dedicated left turn lane onto Hwy 12 could create a traffic slowdown as the current dedicated left turn lane is often backed up and several light changes are sometimes required before one can turn on to Hwy12. Is there a way to modify #3 to dedicate a left turn lane?
- The lack of bike access to main street could create problems for those on bikes who wish to access the business on Main and makes it difficult for those continuing south bound.

Only Plan one address those issues, while plan 3 does create a more opportunity for businesses.

Jerry Newman

--

Jerry Newman





STG Downtown comments

From Katy Baumgras [REDACTED]
Date Wed 2/4/2026 10:52 PM
To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

I suggested changing 116 to two way but leaving Petaluma Hill Road one way and changing it back to two lanes and having a narrower bike lane like on the southbound road. Or the sidewalk on the East side could become a bike/ multi-use trail for bikes and pedestrians while faster bikes could be with the car traffic. And it could be two way, like the Joe Rodota Trail. Pedestrians could have the West side of the street. I ride my electric bike often in town, and I can go 25 mph to keep up with traffic if needed. I would like to see a bike charging station with a 110 outlet for electric bikes to use. I hope the traffic signals will be improved for the main northbound intersection.

Sincerely,
Katherine Baumgras



STG Downtown Comments

From Robert van de Walle [REDACTED]

Date Thu 2/5/2026 9:33 AM

To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hello,

I'm very disappointed that the "experts" haven't presented a solution for traffic obstruction at the driveway for Whole Foods. This single curb cut creates a hazard for everyone using this intersection. This driveway must be moved such that vehicles entering and exiting the parking lot cannot obstruct this intersection.

In addition, let's have some forethought about NB traffic turning into the new Grocery Outlet location. Again, this will be very close to an intersection and will likely lead to poor choices by drivers.

Robert van de Walle (*dwelling on Pomo land*)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



two way

From Dr. S Garcia [REDACTED]

Date Thu 2/5/2026 12:42 PM

To Planning <planning@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Thank you for taking my e-mail and undertaking this project. I think evaluating the two way is a promising idea and no matter what happens keeping the traffic light at the corner of McKinley Ave. and Main St. This is a busy intersection, and it only gets busier with pedestrians and truck traffic so for safety's sake keeping a traffic light at this location no matter what the outcome would be a positive development. Given the scope of this project, it is regrettable that 45° parking was not introduced on Main Street. Parallel parking always slows down the flow of traffic, and 45° parking increases the availability of precious space. If you are truly serious about making a positive outcome, stand on any Main Street corner for one hour and count the cars and then count the bikes. Now divide the number of cars into the number of bikes and that will give you the percentage of resources that should be dedicated to bicycles. Finally, as a heads up, no one from your project has come into our business in the Columbia Bank /Whole Foods shopping center and inquired about your project and our thoughts. I hope that we were just overlooked but that you are surveying the downtown business community.

Steve Garcia, MBA