

Prepared for:



## **SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study**

*Community Engagement Summary - Spring 2025*

Prepared by:



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# INTRODUCTION

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This document summarizes feedback received by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) as part of a public comment period for the State Route 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. WSDOT, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, is conducting a PEL study to look at State Routes (SR) 3, 16, 166 and 304 in Gorst. SR 3 serves as the principal access route for Kitsap County and its communities, areas further on the Olympic Peninsula as well as the Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, which includes the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and homeporting of Navy aircraft carriers. The WSDOT study team will use the PEL study to explore ways to improve transportation in the area. The PEL Study will develop transportation solutions that align with Washington State's Transportation system policy goals (preservation, safety, stewardship, mobility, economic vitality, and environment).

The public comment period ran between February 19 and March 11, 2025. Community engagement during this time provided information about the study area, PEL process, Purpose and Need, range of alternatives and next steps. WSDOT gathered community and partner input to inform the study Purpose and Need and range of alternatives.

## Overview

The study team hosted a series of virtual and in-person community open houses in spring 2025. Attendees were invited to learn about the study components, ask questions, and leave formal comments on the study's draft Purpose and Need and range of alternatives.

The team also hosted community pop-up events, which resulted in reaching 41 people, four listserv sign-ups, and three written comments. The online open house attracted around 6,800 users and collected 510 comments. The in-person open houses had 111 attendees, garnered 46 new listserv sign-ups, and collected 30 written formal comments. The study team also received 15 comments through the study email inbox.

Information from the public comments informed the study's final Purpose and Need statements and range of alternatives.

# APPROACH

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## Public comment period promotion

The study team promoted the public comment period through a variety of channels to reach community members, study partners and interested parties. Notification methods included:

- A postcard mailer sent to 17,818 residents in the study area and translated into Spanish and Tagalog.
- A WSDOT press release.
- A WSDOT blog post.
- Social media posts on WSDOT social media accounts.
- Email invitations sent to the listserv.
- Targeted email invitations to tribal partners and advisory group members.
- Website updates.
- Posting physical copies of study information at local libraries.

See [Appendix A](#) for examples of promotional materials.

## Community pop-ups

The study team hosted two pop-up events at frequented locations in the Gorst area community on February 21, 2025.

- The Coffee Oasis (822 Burwell Street, Bremerton, WA 98337)
- Silver City Brewery (206 Katy Penman, Bremerton, WA 98312)

The study team shared basic study information, the draft study Purpose and Need and range of alternatives, and information for the virtual and in-person open house opportunities. These pop-up events allowed the study team to engage in conversation with 41 people that would have otherwise been unaware of the study's public comment period.

## Online open house

An online open house was live on [engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area) from February 19 to March 11, 2025. The online open house received 21,083 views and 510 comments and survey responses. The online open house shared the same information presented during the in-person open houses.

Open house materials and content are included in [Appendix B](#).

## In-person open houses

Two drop-in open houses were held at the Naval Avenue Elementary School (900 Olympic Avenue, Bremerton, WA 98312) on February 25 and 26, 2025 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The open house on February 26 was the originally promoted date. However, due to a misprint on the postcard notification, the study team held a second open house on February 25.

The study team used display boards and fact sheets to share information at the in-person open houses. Displays set up around the room, staffed by subject matter experts, covered the following topics:

- Welcome and sign-in: attendees had an opportunity to register for the listserv, connect with an interpreter if needed, take fact sheets, and get more information about study materials in language other than English.
- Study introduction: attendees received an overview of the PEL study process and timeline.
- Existing conditions: attendees received information about the existing conditions of the study area.
- Purpose and Need: attendees learned about the definition of a Purpose and Need statement and reviewed the study's draft statement.
- Range of alternatives: attendees reviewed maps and descriptions of the roadway, active transportation, and Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) alternatives currently under consideration in the study.
- Community engagement and next steps: attendees had the opportunity to provide written comments on the draft Purpose and Need statements and the initial draft range of alternatives and learn more about how to stay involved with the study.

The in-person open house on February 26 provided language services for people who use American Sign Language, Spanish and Tagalog. WSDOT offered translated fact sheets and had interpreters available to guide participants through the open house and help answer questions. The language services available at the open house were not used by attendees.

## Accessibility

The study team prioritized making study information accessible through several formats, including online and printed materials. In-person and online open house materials were available in Spanish and Tagalog. Translated comment forms and fact sheets were available at the in-person open house.

In-person open house attendees were invited to share comments through written comment forms that modeled the online open house feedback questions. QR codes and links to the online open house allowed in-person attendees to type comments into the online comment forms if they preferred.

# SUMMARY OF INPUT

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This community engagement period provided the opportunity for community members and study partners to ask questions and share comments directly with WSDOT staff and subject matter experts. The study team collected 558 comments during the 30-day public comment period.

Questions and comments are organized by key themes below. A full comment list is available upon request.

## Draft Purpose and Need

Many participants left positive comments supporting the draft Purpose and Need statements.

- Some participants approved of the statements as written.
- Some participants commented generally on the study's importance or expressed gratitude for moving the work forward.

### *Mobility*

- Many participants commented on congestion and mobility through the Gorst interchange.
  - A few participants noted that Gorst is a bottleneck that impedes inter-regional mobility.
  - Some participants commented that congestion in Gorst has grown worse over time with population growth.
  - Some participants noted the lack of existing active transportation infrastructure and wanted to see a greater emphasis on active transportation and other alternatives to reduce the number of cars on the road.

“...I believe the most important thing to fight this issue is to make it easier to make car-free trips. In general, when we build bigger roads, we invite more cars. When we build safe and accessible alternatives, people use them. These multimodal alternatives will also increase safety in the corridor.”

“I appreciate the inclusion for non-vehicle travel alternatives and highly encourage every alternative to be considerate to these needs in our communities and environment. Please allow for wide shoulders for bikes. I also highly support a vehicle ferry between P.O. and Bremerton, as is possible. Thank you.”

### *Safety*

- Some participants are concerned about roadway safety and/or how Gorst's current traffic infrastructure influences potential for fatal and serious crashes.

- Some participants specifically noted drivers making left turns across multiple lanes of traffic, and/or changing lanes while driving above the posted speed limit.
- A few participants noted that Gorst’s current roadway increases emergency response times and/or delays due to crashes.

“As a paramedic who works in Kitsap, the Gorst area causes trouble for us for responses and transports to outside facilities in other counties. Every day at work we have to decide the best course for transport based on the time due to congestion. Along with that, when there is congestion we have to slog through it due to no other way around by ground and no shoulders to effectively pass. Part of the Kitsap EMS protocols state if we are east and south of Gorst, to head to hospitals in Gig Harbor or Tacoma due to drive times. These transports remove us from our response areas for longer periods of time and reduce the availability of first responders in the area. Being able to reach the hospital in Silverdale faster and safer would help everyone.”

- A few participants commented that Gorst residents are inequitably impacted by roadway conditions and driving behaviors that may lead to crashes.

“Too many cars merging on this area. Very dangerous on SW Bay Street. The speed limit is too high, and too many cars. People live here and can’t get out of their driveways. Very, very dangerous.”

### *Resiliency*

- A few participants noted current and future environmental challenges in the area.
  - A few participants mentioned large-scale natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, and sea level rise.
  - A few participants wanted to see a greater focus on the construction impacts to local wildlife and habitats.
  - A few participants noted that traffic delays in Gorst lead to increased emissions and reduced fuel efficiency.

### *Socioeconomics*

- A few participants commented on how current infrastructure influences Gorst’s economic health, had mixed feelings about the economic future of Gorst.

“Under most of these concepts, the business in Gorst will close.”

“Purpose and need statements are good and cover the broad needs of the region. Could include more on economic impact of the Gorst bottleneck.”

“I concur that improving the passage through the Gorst area is necessary and would boost the economic development of the area.”

“Focus on traffic flow, local businesses should not exist in Gorst and if they are forced to move that is a bonus. This is a freeway, not a shopping district.”

### *Urgency*

- A few participants noted that Gorst traffic has been an issue for decades and wanted to see greater urgency reflected in the statements of purpose and need.

“I am wonder why it took SO LONG for this. I lived in Port Orchard 20+ years ago and it was a mess back then. Way past it's due.”

“I’m a little disheartened to see another study. Other than population and volume, nothing has changed from the previous studies. Let’s get this done!”

## **Draft Range of Alternatives**

Many comments supported Alternative C, with some supporting Alternatives B and D.

- Participants who supported Alternative B did not share a clear consensus on a preferred sub-alternative.

Many participants supported alternatives with a bridge.

- A few participants commented on the positive aesthetics of bridges.
- Some participants shared concerns about the environmental and/or ecological impacts of bridge construction.
- A few participants had questions about the impact of bridge construction on tribal lands and waters.

### *Active transportation*

- Some participants supported design alternatives which included improvements for active and multimodal transportation.
  - Some participants expressed interest in scenic walking or biking paths around Sinclair Inlet.



- A few participants hoped that additional parking and carpool facilities would reduce congestion by encouraging commuters to take ferries or other forms of transportation.

### *Resiliency*

- Some participants supported alternatives which showed the greatest resiliency.
  - Some participants cited expected population growth and traffic demand as reasons for supporting Alternatives B, C, and/or D.
  - A few participants commented that Alternative C would provide greater environmental protection and coastal resilience.
  - A few participants supported Alternative B due to the minimal impact on shorelines and surrounding land.
- Some participants are concerned about the environmental and ecological impacts of the range of alternatives.

### *Local businesses*

- Some participants considered the impacts to Gorst residents and businesses in their comments.
  - Some participants supported alternatives which would create the least disruption for Gorst businesses during construction.
  - A few participants supported alternatives that would divert non-local traffic away from the Gorst curve.

### *Safety*

- Some participants shared negative feedback about the alternatives with roundabouts, citing other drivers' behavior and lack of knowledge around proper use.

“Whatever is done, please DO NOT build a roundabout!!!”

“Roundabouts in the middle of highway flow, great way to back traffic up 60 mph to 25. People dislike roundabouts.”

- Some participants considered safety in their assessment of the design alternatives.
  - A few participants supported alternatives that would separate non-motorized traffic from roadways
  - A few participants wanted alternatives that would minimize the need for lane changes around the Gorst curve

“Traffic congestion in Gorst is due to lowering speed to navigate the turn safely. This makes it obvious that a higher speed alternative would be the way to alleviate the congestion.”

- Some participants supported alternatives which would allow drivers to maintain more consistent speeds.

## General comments

- What are the needs of the Marina inside the inlet? How will they be impacted by these changes (including the possible addition of a bridge)? How will working boats accessing this part of the inlet be impacted?
- Some participants commented on the study cost and funding.
  - A few participants suggested a toll or fee structure to support the proposed bridge construction.
  - Some respondents were concerned that (existing and anticipated) state and federal budget deficits would ultimately render these proposals unfeasible.
- Some participants commented on the traffic impacts of commuter behavior to and from Naval Base Kitsap and suggested partnering with the U.S. military to reduce demand.
  - A few participants suggested staggering shift times throughout the day.
  - A few participants wanted to see more options for carpool and/or public transportation to and from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.
- A few participants felt that Belfair residents were not equitably represented in the current drafts and wanted to see greater attention toward Mason County residents commuting along Highway 3 and local arterials.

“I am in favor of improving the 16->3 interchange. My concern is that the Sunnyslope Hwy 3 intersection will suffer. It is already dangerous with the continuous stream of cars from the amazon roundabout. The Gorst stoplight if turned into a roundabout will make south bound traffic a similar obstacle. What about a roundabout at Sunnyslope and State Route 3? Thank you for your consideration.”

- A few participants requested other opportunities to provide feedback, such as a public survey, or by sending a presentation they had prepared.

## NEXT STEPS

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The study team used community input to inform and finalize the study Purpose and Need and range of alternatives for the PEL study. The team then presented community findings to the Technical and Executive advisory groups. The final Purpose and Need and range of alternatives will move forward into the PEL study.

WSDOT plans to complete the PEL study in March 2026.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A: Notifications

Postcard mailer:

### You're invited!

The Washington State Department of Transportation is studying alternatives to relieve congestion and improve resilience to climate change along State Route (SR) 3 in the Gorst area. The SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study will explore ways to improve transportation in the area and define what a future improvement project may include.


We want your input on the study Purpose and Need statement and the draft range of alternatives. WSDOT will carefully consider all comments for inclusion in the PEL study.

#### In-person open house

Tuesday, February 25, 2025  
4:30 to 6:30 p.m.  
Naval Avenue Elementary School Gym  
900 Olympic Ave  
Bremerton, WA 98312

#### Online open house


Open now through March 2, 2025



[engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area)

Para obtener más información sobre el estudio PEL de la SR 3 de la zona Gorst, venga al evento abierto al público y/o visite nuestra página web interactiva, disponible en español. Queremos contar con su opinión sobre la declaración de objetivos y las necesidades del estudio y sobre el borrador de las diferentes alternativas.

Bigitahin ang aming mga sa-personal at online na open house, na masari sa Tagalog, para maututo pa tungkol sa SR 3 Gorst Area PEL Study. Gusto namin ang inyong komento sa pahayag na Layunin at Pangangailangan ng pag-aaral at ang draft na hanay ng mga alternatibo.




**PROPOSED STUDY LIMITS**

- 1 Division Ave W/SR 3
- 2 SR 3/Losie Egans Boulevard
- 3 SR 3/SR 304 Interchange
- 4 SR 166 (east of the Kitsap Marina)
- 5 Tremont St W/SR 16

KITSAP COUNTY

**SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study**



Website sharing open house information:

### Pop-up events

In February, we hosted two community pop-up events. One was at Coffee Oasis on Burwell Street and the other was at Silver City Brewery Taproom on Katy Penman Avenue, both in Bremerton. Members of the study team shared materials to introduce the study, shared the draft Purpose and Need statement and range of design concepts and gathered input from the community.

### Open house

Visit our online open house beginning in February 2025 to learn more about the SR 3 Gorst Area PEL Study and share input on the study Purpose and Need statement and the range of alternatives. The online and in-person open houses will be available in English, Spanish and Tagalog. Visitors will have an opportunity to submit comments and questions to the study team.

### Online open house

An online open house was held from Feb. 19 to March 11. The online open house covered a draft Purpose and Need statement and a draft range of alternatives for SR 3 in Gorst and the surrounding area.

### In-person open house

An in-person open house was held Wednesday, Feb. 26 at Naval Avenue Elementary School in Bremerton. The open house gave 110 attendees the opportunity to view the draft Purpose and Need statement and range of design concepts and have conversations with our study team.

Copy of the WSDOT blog post promotion:

### Planning a future to help relieve Gorst congestion

By Mark Krulish

'Gorst gridlock' is a trend we'd like to leave behind in 2024.

If you follow the latest trends on social media, you'll see people sharing their 2025 "ins and outs." Something we'd like to leave behind is the State Route 3 congestion in Gorst.

Traffic through SR 3 in Gorst is a challenge, to put it mildly. SR 3 and SR 16 are the only land-based state highways connecting the Kitsap Peninsula to the rest of the Puget Sound region. All roads literally lead to Gorst.

It's also a complex area. There's a Navy base nearby and a railroad crossing over SR 3. That makes it an important route for moving people and goods. We will also have to look at any barriers to fish along SR 3. We'll also have to consider how any change in climate could affect the roadway.

But before we fully reimagine how travel through Gorst will look in the future, we're undertaking a Project and Environmental Linkages study.

As they say it on social media, it's so in!

This is an opportunity to hear from a lot of people. It allows us to get early input from local agencies, tribes, the United States Navy and you. This helps us better understand issues and priorities for all travelers before we draw up potential fixes. It also makes the environmental review process for any future projects much faster.



Targeted email to study partners:

#### Targeted email

Subject: SR 3 Gorst PEL Study – online open house live now

Hi [partner name],

Thank you for your interest and involvement in the SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. Over the last several months, our team has been making progress on developing the study purpose and need statements and the initial range of design options, or alternatives, for the area. We are hosting an in-person and online open houses this month to share these updates with the community.

- **Online open house:** online at [engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area), February 19 through March 11
- **In-person open house:** Wednesday, February 26, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Naval Avenue Elementary School gymnasium (900 Olympic Avenue, Bremerton, WA 98312)

**We're hoping for your help in sharing this information with the broader community.** During the listening sessions in October 2024, some of you mentioned email distribution lists and social media pages that you would be willing to post to about the project. I'm including some example messaging and images for you to use if you're interested.

We hope you'll participate in these events. We are interested in and committed to hearing your input throughout the PEL study. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or suggestions.

Thank you,

## Appendix B: Open house photos and materials

Photos from the in-person open house:



Study team member talking to a community member about the PEL process.




Community members leaving written comment at the open house.



Display boards:

### Study overview


The Washington State Department of Transportation is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study to look at State Routes 3, 16, 166 and 304 in Gorst. The WSDOT study team will use the PEL study to explore ways to improve transportation and resiliency in the area.



**The Gorst area experiences these transportation factors:**


- **Congestion:** SR 3 and SR 16 are the only land-based state routes to northern Kitsap County. Congestion on these highways affects the entire region.
- **National security:** Bremerton is home to Naval Base Kitsap and SR 3 serves other Department of Defense facilities further north. This makes the area important for matters of national security.
- **Climate resiliency:** The roads are susceptible to natural disasters and climate change effects like rising sea level.

SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study



### What is Planning and Environmental Linkages study?


A Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study is a collaborative approach to transportation decision-making. This approach identifies environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process. This allows WSDOT to consider potential benefits or challenges the project may present to natural, built, and cultural resources in the study area.



**Engagement during PEL**


Community and partner engagement is a critical part of the PEL process. Input from the community, study partners, and advisory groups will inform the SR 3 Gorst Area PEL study. There are several ways to get involved during the PEL study. WSDOT will invite groups for briefings and present at in-person meetings in the community. We also plan to host neighborhood pop-up events and in-person and online open houses, like this one.

SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study




### What we're studying during PEL

WSDOT identified key focus areas for the study. WSDOT identified focus areas through early exploration of transportation and environmental existing conditions and challenges. Previous studies and data collection and consultation with the Suquamish Tribe and Skokomish Indian Tribe also informed these focus areas.

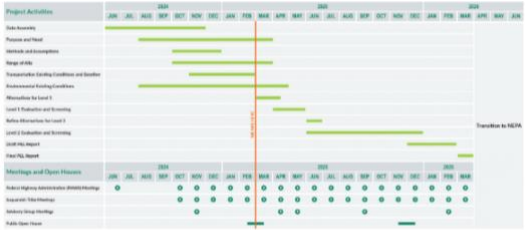


- **System resiliency:** The ability for the system to withstand growth, climate changes and environmental events.
- **Cultural and treaty resources:** Fishing rights and any areas of cultural or archaeological significance.
- **Enhancing safety performance:** Reducing fatal and serious crashes.
- **Removing fish barriers:** Supporting salmon recovery in compliance with state laws.
- **Mobility for all modes of transportation:** Transit, school buses, freight, emergency vehicles, cars, trucks, and active transportation.
- **Access:** Safe access to local businesses and neighborhoods.
- **Active transportation:** Increasing safety for people who walk, bike or roll through the facility.
- **Navy Railroad Bridge:** Looking at options for future compatibility with the Navy Railroad Bridge.
- **Existing conditions:** Understanding the natural and built environment.


SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study



### Timeline



SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study



### Access to translated content

¿Quiere ver los materiales del evento abierto al público en español?  
Utilice este código QR o visite el enlace del sitio web para ver el contenido traducido. En este evento habrá intérpretes de español.  
[engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area-spanish](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area-spanish)

Gusto mo bang maranasan ang mga materyales ng open house sa Tagalog?  
Gamitin ang QR code na ito o bisitahan ang link ng website para sa isinalin na nilalaman. Maghanap ng Tagalog na tagapagsalin na magagamit sa kaganapang ito.  
[engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area-tagalog](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area-tagalog)



SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study



### Share your comments and stay informed

We want your input on the draft range of alternatives and draft Purpose and Need statements. WSDOT will carefully consider all comments for inclusion in the PEL study.

**How to provide comments**


- Visit the comment table at this event to share written or verbal comments.
- Visit the online open house to share comments online.

[engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area](https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-3-gorst-area)


**Stay informed**

We appreciate your time and hope you'll keep in touch as we move into the next phase of the project.

- Register for our listserve to receive email updates on study progress via email or text.
- Visit our study website for more information during the planning process.
- Contact our team through the study inbox anytime at [SR3ConstNews@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:SR3ConstNews@wsdot.wa.gov)



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## Display boards:

### Purpose and Need

The Purpose and Need statement provides criteria for screening the range of alternatives considered in a PEL study.

The **Purpose** explains the problem that the agency is trying to solve. The **Need** includes the supporting data and information that shows a problem currently exists or is likely to occur.

**The study team developed goals that align with the Purpose and Need:**

- Equitable access:** Meet the transportation needs of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.
- Economic vitality:** Efficiently move people and goods, while improving access to businesses in the study area.
- Environmental:** Avoid, minimize and mitigate potential environmental impacts, including on cultural and archaeological resources, from recommended alternatives.

Please visit the comment table at this event or the online open house to share your comments on the draft Purpose and Need.

SR 3 Gorst Area  
Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### Draft purpose statements for the study

- Mobility:** Improve person throughput and reduce congestion and delay for all vehicle modes.
- Safety:** Improve existing safety performance in terms of fatal and serious injury crashes and promote designs with fewer conflicts and greater separation for vulnerable roadway users.
- Active transportation:** Provide active transportation access with connections to local active transportation facilities.
- System resiliency:** Implement a climate resilient design that supports anticipated future travel demand growth.

Congestion on SR 3 results in traffic delays, especially in the morning and evening commute hours.

SR 3 Gorst Area  
Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### Draft need statements for the study

#### Mobility

- The SR 3 and SR 16 corridors experience high travel demand and congestion during peak travel periods and the corridors have limited capacity to accommodate additional future vehicle travel demand.
- The SR 3 and SR 16 corridors provide important transportation and mobility for Department of Defense facilities and operations in Kitsap County, essential for troop deployment and military logistics support during a national emergency. Congestion and delay in the corridors have the potential to reduce military mobility during a national emergency.
- SR 3, SR 16, and SR 304 experience freight truck reliability and delay issues and are key freight corridors in the state, connecting key freight hubs and military facilities including the Port of Bremerton, the Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, Bangor, Naval Base Manchester, and other ports located in Kitsap and Jefferson Counties.
- Emergency response times are impacted by traffic congestion and a lack of shoulders along SR 3, which emergency services use to respond to emergencies and connect to regional medical facilities.
- Transportation infrastructure in the SR 3 corridor that does not meet modern vertical clearance standards hinders the movement of freight and military vehicles.

#### Safety performance

- Crashes resulting in fatalities and serious injuries have occurred in the SR 3, SR 166, and SR 16 corridors, including crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists.

#### Active transportation

- The SR 3, SR 16, SR 166, and SR 304 corridors lack dedicated active transportation facilities.

#### System resiliency

- SR 3 and SR 16 in the Gorst area are vulnerable to coastal hazards that include tsunami inundation, flooding from multiple sources, future sea level rise, and heavy precipitation events due to climate change. High tides combined with heavy rainfall cause periodic flooding along SR 3 that impacts mobility and resiliency of the transportation system.
- The Gorst area may contain deficient structures that are vulnerable to failure following an earthquake, which would exacerbate mobility impacts to the region.

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### Transportation existing conditions

The study team collected data on existing conditions of the natural and built environment in the study area.

**Summary of existing conditions:**

- SR 3 and SR 16 experience high travel demand and there is limited roadway space to accommodate future demand.
- SR 3 and SR 16 provide important transportation and mobility for Department of Defense operations.
- SR 3, SR 16, and SR 304 experience freight reliability and delay issues.
- A lack of shoulders and congestion on SR 3 impacts emergency response times.
- Infrastructure doesn't meet current standards and hinders movement of freight and military vehicles.
- Limited transportation options for people without access to a personal vehicle, specifically active transportation and transit options.
- Fatal and serious injury crashes have occurred in the corridor.
- The Gorst area is susceptible to coastal hazards.

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Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### Existing conditions: Traffic, active transportation, transit and safety

#### Traffic

- Congestion leads to travel times increasing by 26 percent in the morning (northbound travel) and 130 percent in the afternoon and evening (southbound travel) compared to when traffic is moving freely.
- Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton and Washington State Ferries traffic influence vehicle congestion in the area.
- Regional and local traffic mix in the Gorst area, contributing to longer commute times.

Congestion in the Gorst area affects the entire region.

#### Transit

- Mason Transit and Kitsap Transit provide service in the study area. Mason Transit Route 3 and Route 23 operate along SR 3 in the study area.
- Naval Base employee buses operate between Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton and Bangor.
- The Bremerton Ferry Terminal provides connections to Seattle, Annapolis, and Port Orchard via vehicle ferries and foot ferries.

#### Active transportation

- There are no continuous active transportation facilities and very few safe crossing locations in the area.

#### Safety

- The area needs safety improvements for both motorized and nonmotorized users of the corridor.

Category	Count
TOTAL FATAL CRASHES	1
TOTAL SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES	11
TOTAL NONSERIOUS INJURY CRASHES	10
TOTAL BICYCLIST INJURY CRASHES	1
TOTAL CRASHES	23

Source: WSDOT, 2018

SR 3 Gorst Area  
Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### Existing conditions: Freight and Naval Railroad Bridge

#### Freight

- SR 3 is a key freight facility between Gorst and Bremerton, with trucks moving 10,470,000 tons of goods each year.
- Movement of oversized vehicles is limited by the Naval Railroad Bridge, which does not provide enough clearance.
- Today, oversized vehicles travel along local streets (Union Avenue W, 3rd Avenue W, Kent Avenue W, Sherman Heights Road, W Belair Valley Road, W San Christopher Avenue and Division Avenue W) to get around the Naval Railroad Bridge.
- The SR 3 corridor is included in the Strategic Highway Network, a network of highways important for the movement of military equipment and personnel.

#### Naval Railroad Bridge

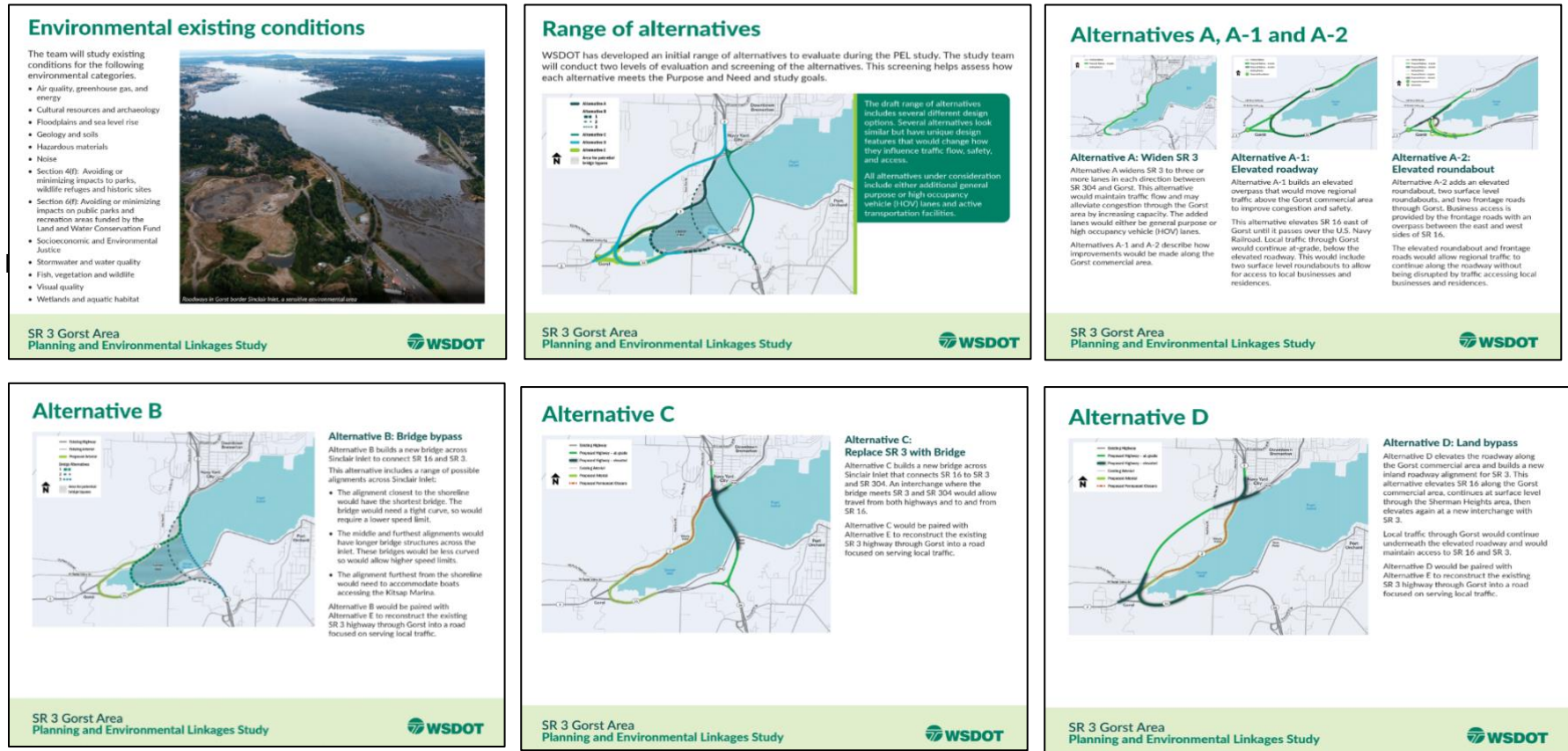
- The bridge was built in 1945 and is nearing the end of its service life.
- The structure is vulnerable to earthquakes.
- The bridge imposes mobility restrictions with a vertical clearance below the current standard.

The Naval Railroad Bridge, which crosses SR 3, is aging and will be assessed as part of the study.

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## Display boards:



## Display boards

### Alternative E



**Alternative E: Roundabout triangle**


Alternative E builds a triangle of roundabouts through Gorst. This alternative connects to the fish passage and roundabout project at the intersection of SR 3 and W San Christopher Avenue. It would update the roads in between the roundabouts to follow design standards for lower speed arterials and to incorporate active transportation facilities.

Alternative E would be paired with an alternative that diverts regional traffic from Gorst (Alternatives B, C, or D).

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### Active transportation alternatives



Active transportation facilities include safe routes and connections for people walking, biking, or rolling. These options will be compatible with all the alternatives.

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### TSMO alternatives

**Transportation System Management and Operations alternatives**

The PEL study will evaluate Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) non-roadway options.


- Vehicle ferry (Port Orchard to Bremerton)
- Shipyard shift revisions (i.e. modifying the times when shifts begin and/or end to minimize overlap with typically busy travel periods)
- Additional worker buses
- Additional transit service
- Additional parking, including park and ride lots or designated carpool or vanpool parking
- Assistance creating carpools or vanpools
- Commuter trip reduction policies, such as work hour flexibility or telecommuting
- Charge parking fees
- Public transit incentives such as bus pass subsidies
- Rideshare programs, 'Dial and Ride' service, and Paratransit service
- Employee challenges and rewards for carpooling or using transit and active transportation

Visit the comment table at this event to share your ideas for additional TSMO strategies.

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Fact sheet:


Spring 2025


## SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study


The Washington State Department of Transportation is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study to look at State Routes 3, 16, 166 and 304 in the Gorst area. The WSDOT study team will use the PEL study to explore ways to improve transportation and climate resiliency in the area.

The Gorst area experiences these transportation factors:

- Congestion:** SR 3 and SR 16 are the only land-based state routes to northern Kitsap County. Congestion on these highways affects the entire region.
- National security:** Bremerton is home to Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton and SR 3 serves other Department of Defense facilities further north.
- Climate resiliency:** The roads are susceptible to natural disasters (like earthquakes and tsunamis) and rising sea level.

WSDOT will work with its partners to define a Purpose and Need, identify a full range of alternatives, evaluate the alternatives and develop mitigation and implementation plans. The result will be a PEL Study signed by WSDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. It should be noted that this PEL study is following a regulatory process that will allow the purpose and need and alternatives to be revisited in the environmental phase. However, the steps we are taking today will ensure that we are not starting at ground zero once we transition into the NEPA phase.






SR 3 and SR 16 connect at Gorst Creek and the headwaters of Sinclair Inlet.

### PEL timeline

June 2024 – March 2026

### Funding

The Washington State Legislature appropriated \$75 million of state and federal funding over several years. The funding covers the PEL Study and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process(es), right-of-way acquisition, and partial design. There is currently no construction funding identified.



## SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### PEL process overview

A PEL study is a collaborative approach to transportation decision-making. This approach identifies environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process. This allows WSDOT to consider potential benefits or challenges the future study may present to natural, built, and cultural resources in the study area.

Long-range and Corridor Planning

NEPA and Design

Environmental and Transportation Data

Purpose and Need, Range of Alternatives

Red-Flag Environmental Impacts and Potential Mitigation, Screening of Alternatives

PEL Study Report and Implementation Plan

Agency, Tribal, Project Partners & Public Coordination

### Engagement during PEL

Community and partner engagement is a critical part of the PEL process. WSDOT is engaging the public, tribes, federal, state and local agencies, community-based organizations, and active transportation and transit groups. WSDOT is also engaging the Suquamish Tribe and Skokomish Indian Tribe, who traditional lands include the Kitsap Peninsula.


Ways we are seeking input during the PEL study:

- Community, executive, and technical advisory groups
- Briefings and meetings
- Neighborhood pop-up events
- In-person and online open houses

### Stay informed

There are several ways to stay connected and share feedback as we continue the PEL study. We welcome you to:

- Visit our project website for more information and to register for the study listserv.
- Contact our team through the study inbox anytime at [SR3GorstArea@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:SR3GorstArea@wsdot.wa.gov)



Scan QR code to visit project website  
[bit.ly/SR3GorstArea](http://bit.ly/SR3GorstArea)

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