SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Range of Alternatives

Study overview

The Washington State Department of Transportation, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, is conducting a PEL study to look at SR 3, SR 16, SR 166 and SR 304 in Gorst. The WSDOT study team will use the PEL study to explore ways to improve transportation in the area. The SR 3 Gorst Area PEL Study will develop transportation solutions that align with Washington State's Transportation system policy goals (preservation, safety, stewardship, mobility, economic vitality, and environment).

Background

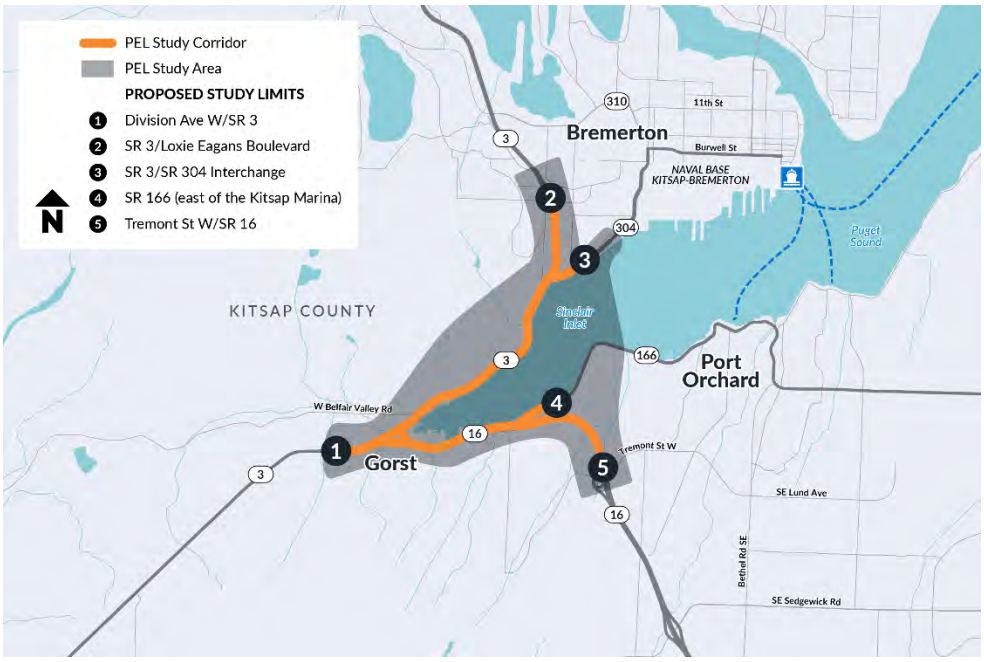
The study centers on Gorst, an unincorporated community in Kitsap County. SR 3 and SR 16 meet in Gorst, and congestion on these highways affects the entire region.

The two highways are the only land-based state routes to northern Kitsap County. SR 3 is the main access route for Kitsap County and is an important connection to the Hood Canal Bridge and the Olympic Peninsula.

The area is also a key hub for connection to the cities of Belfair and Shelton (via SR 3), Port Orchard (via SR 166) and Bremerton (via SR 304).

Bremerton is home to Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, the Navy's third largest fleet concentration in the United States. The Base connects to SR 3 via SR 304. SR 3 also serves more Department of Defense facilities north of Bremerton. This makes each highway important for matters of national security. The roads were built in 1964, and they do not meet current standards to withstand seismic activity such as earthquakes and tsunamis. The roads are also susceptible to natural disasters and sea level rise.

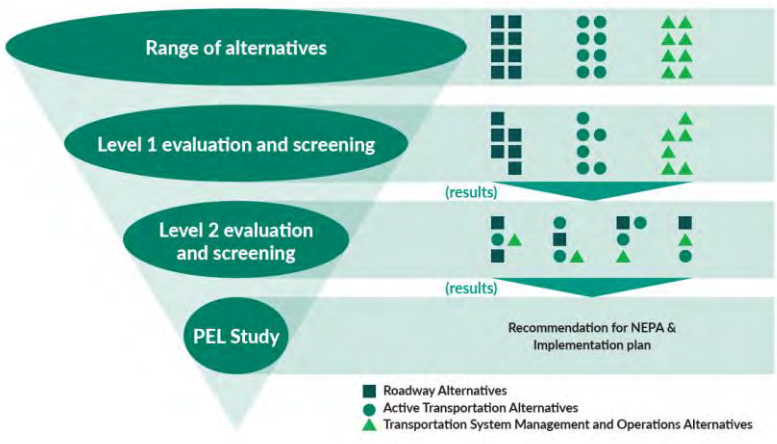
There are many factors to consider when developing transportation and environmental solutions in this area. Local community concerns include congestion, safety, access, and resiliency.



The proposed project limits for the PEL study are from the intersection of SR 3 and Division Avenue West, just north of the SR 3/West Loxie Eagans Boulevard interchange, just east of the SR 3/SR 304 interchange, SR 166 just east of the Kitsap Marina, and the SR 16/Tremont Street West Interchange.

Alternatives development and evaluation

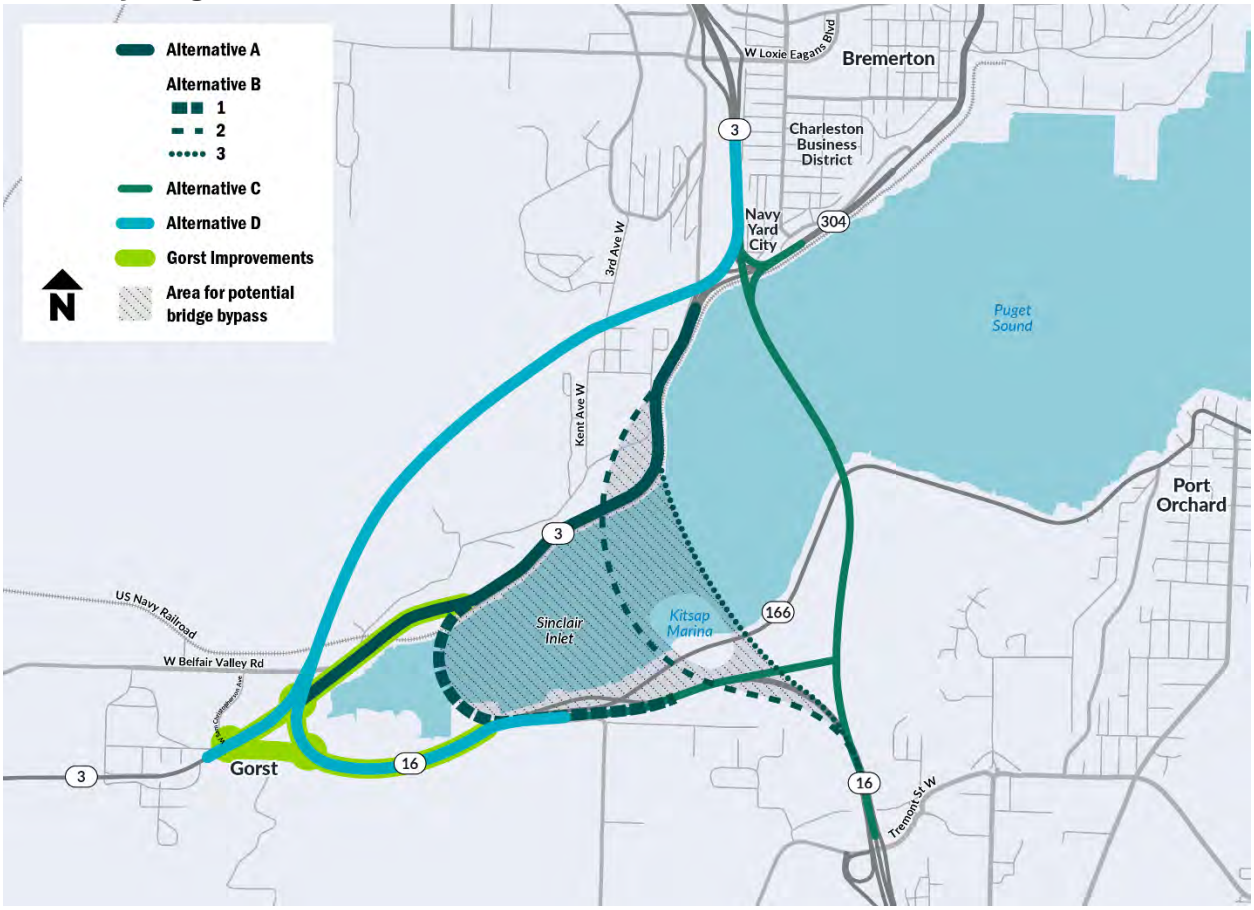
WSDOT has developed an initial range of alternatives to evaluate during the PEL study. The study team will conduct two levels of evaluation and screening of the alternatives. This screening process includes two levels of screening evaluations and assesses how each alternative meets the Purpose and Need, study goals, and potential environmental impacts and the best performing alternative(s). The alternatives screening will be complete in December 2025.



The study team developed a range of alternatives that address issues in the study area. Analysis of the alternatives may determine that mixing and matching options may best fit the area's needs. Several alternatives look similar but have unique design features that would change traffic flow, safety, and access.

The range of alternatives includes several design options.

Roadway range of alternatives



All alternatives under consideration include either additional general purpose or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and active transportation facilities.

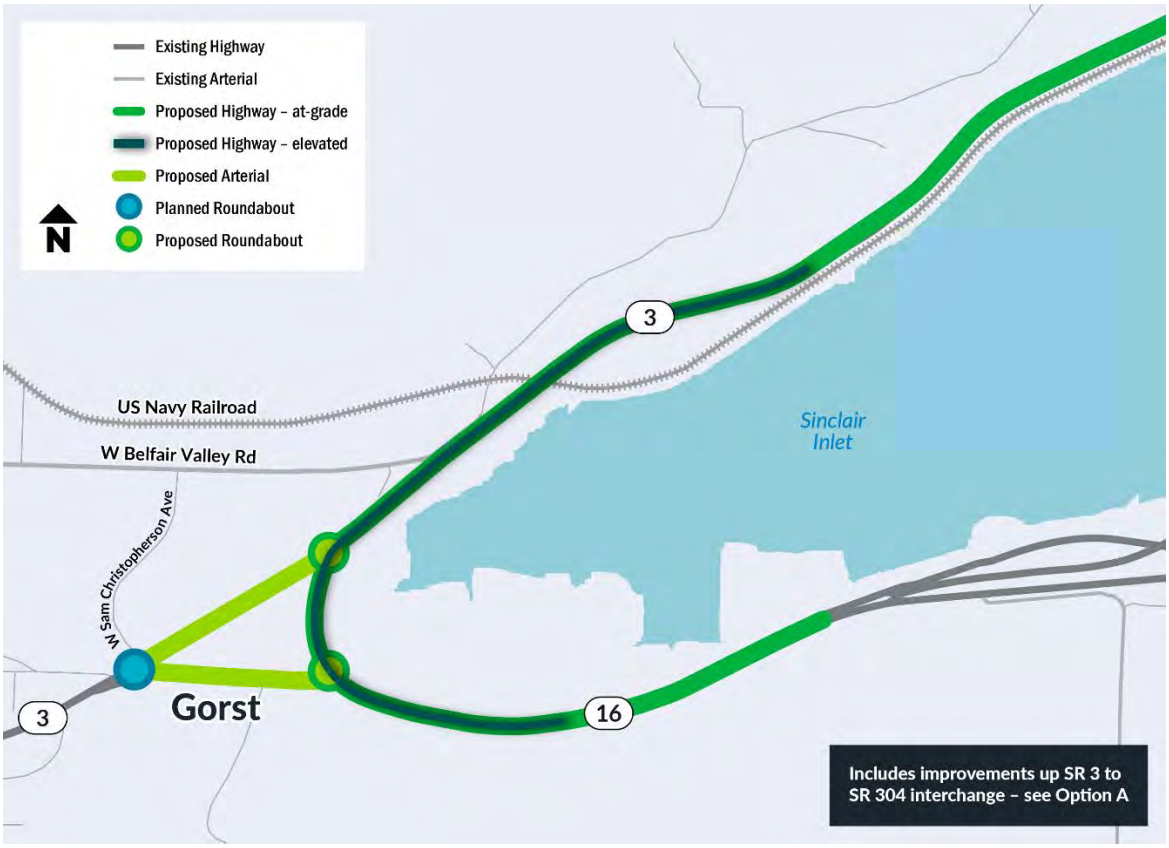
Alternative A: Widen SR 3

Alternative A widens SR 3 to three lanes in each direction between SR 304 and Gorst. This alternative would maintain the existing at-grade highway and may alleviate congestion through the Gorst area by modifying driveway access. The existing ramps in the Gorst area at the SR 3/SR 16 merge would remain. The added lanes along SR 3 would either be general purpose or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Alternatives A-1 and A-2 describe variations in the Gorst area at the SR 3/SR 16 merge to separate regional highway users from local access along the Gorst commercial area.

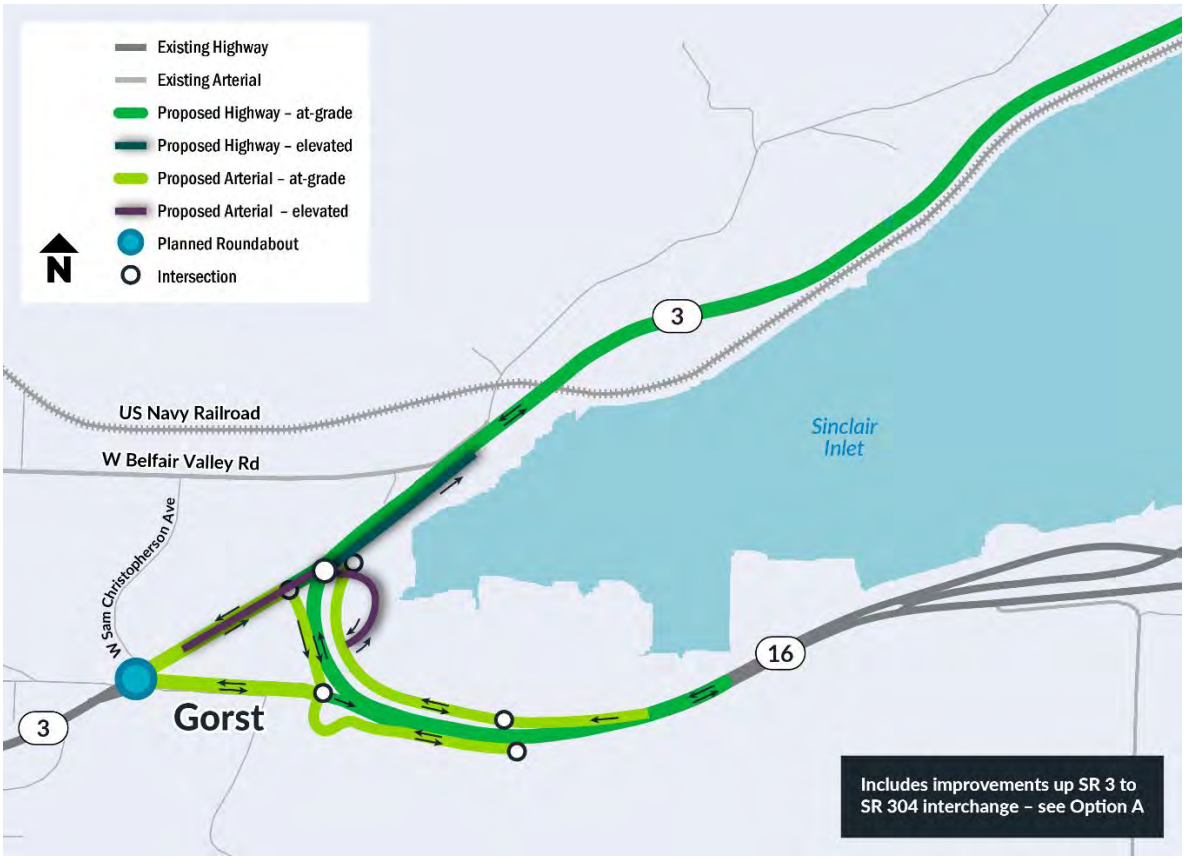
For Alternative A, active transportation facilities could be built along the existing SR 3/SR 16 corridor.

Alternative A-1: Elevated roadway



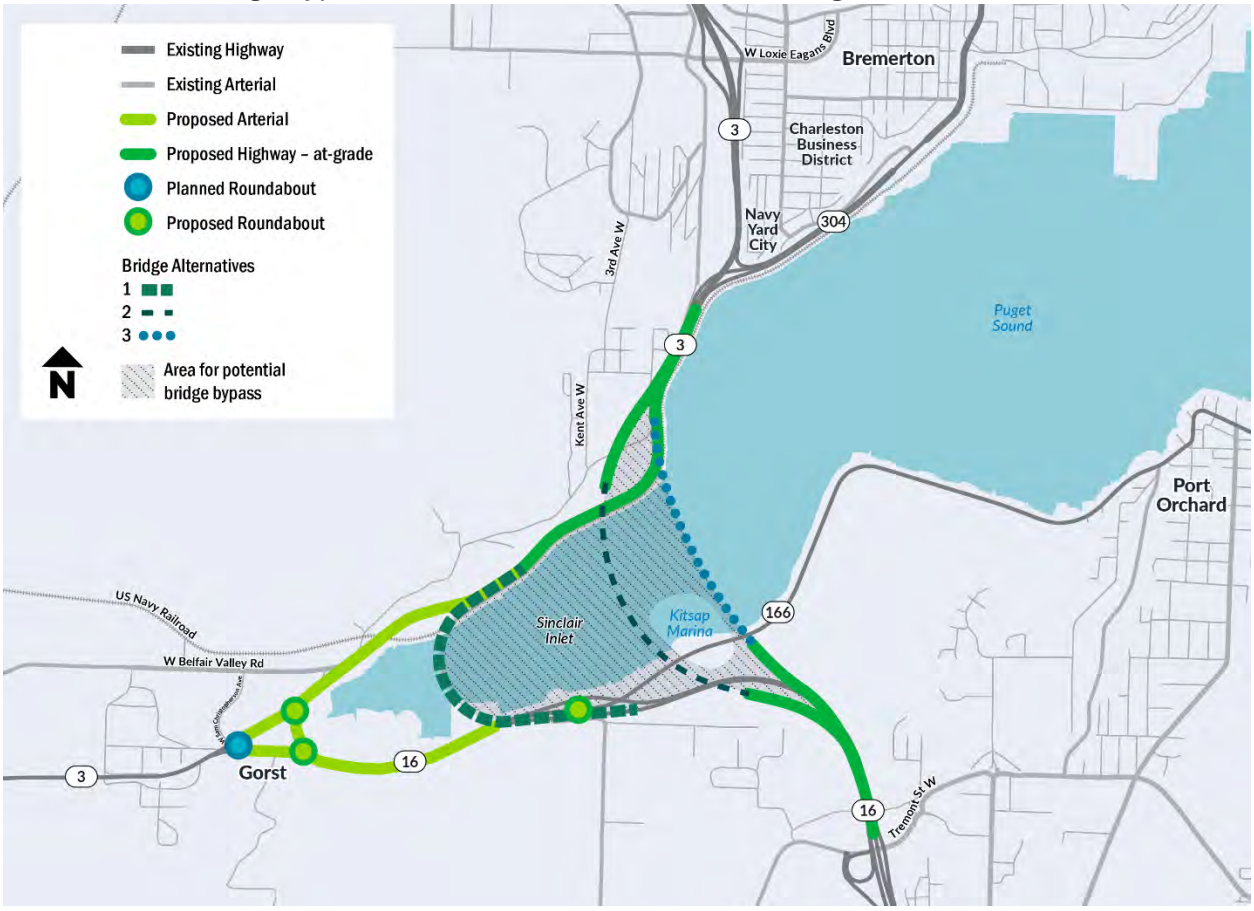
Alternative A-1 builds an elevated overpass that would move regional traffic above the Gorst commercial area to improve congestion and safety. This alternative elevates SR 16 east of Gorst until it passes over the U.S. Navy Railroad. Local traffic through Gorst would continue at-grade, below the elevated roadway. This would include two at-grade roundabouts, along with a planned roundabout at Sam Christopherson Road (currently in a design and construction phase), to allow for access to local businesses and residences.

Alternative A-2: Elevated roundabout



Alternative A-2 adds an elevated roundabout and two frontage roads through Gorst. Business access is provided by the frontage roads with an overpass between the east and west sides of SR 16. The elevated roundabout and frontage roads would allow regional traffic to continue along the at grade roadway without being disrupted by traffic accessing local businesses and residences.

Alternative B: Bridge bypass of Gorst and Naval Railroad Bridge



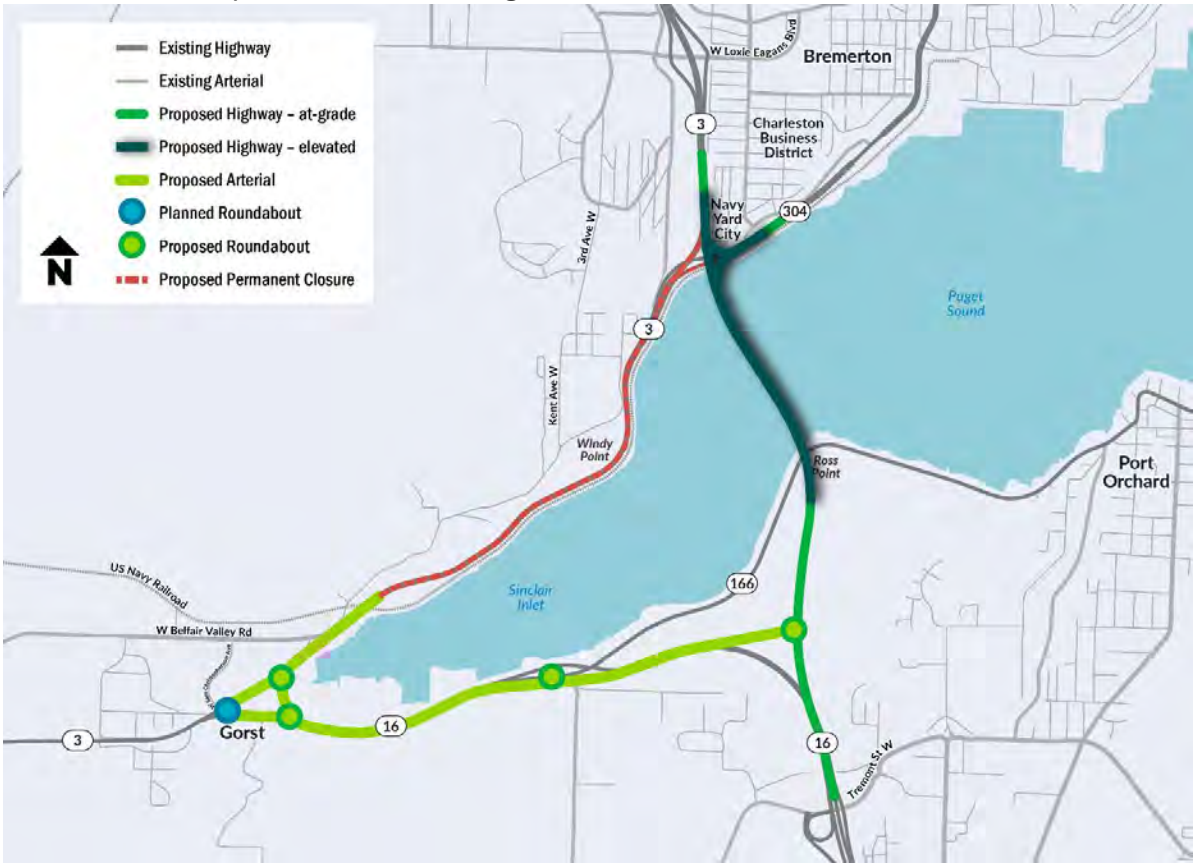
Alternative B builds a new bridge with two lanes in each direction across Sinclair Inlet to connect SR 16 and SR 3. The existing section of SR 3 between Gorst and the north end of the new bridge, and SR 16 between Gorst and the south end of the new bridge, would be used as an arterial roadway, for active transportation facilities, or both. The section of SR 3 between the north end of the bridge and SR 304 would be widened to three though lanes in each direction with additional auxiliary lanes as needed to accommodate merging traffic. This alternative connects to the planned roundabout project at the intersection of SR 3 and W Sam Christopherson Avenue and would add two roundabouts at the Gorst triangle. It would update the roads in between the roundabouts to follow design standards for lower speed arterials and to incorporate local business access and active transportation facilities. The SR 166 interchange with SR 16 would be modified to include a roundabout and new intersection with Anderson Hill Rd, allowing vehicles to access all directions at this intersection.

- This alternative includes a range of possible alignments that could be located anywhere within the hatched area shown in the map legend above. The crossing

alignments all function similarly but would have differences related to speed limit, bridge lengths, and marine navigation on the inlet.

- The alignment closest to the shoreline would have the shortest bridge. The bridge would need a tight curve, so would require a lower speed limit.
- The middle and furthest alignments would have longer bridge structures across the inlet. These bridges would be less curved so would allow higher speed limits.
- The alignment furthest from the shoreline would need to accommodate boats accessing the Kitsap Marina.
- The Alternative B alignment would bypass the Naval Railroad Bridge. Vehicles too tall to pass under the railroad bridge would use the Alternative B bridge.
- For Alternative B, active transportation facilities could be built on the bridge alignments and/or along the existing SR 3/SR 16 corridor.

Alternative C: Replace SR 3 with Bridge

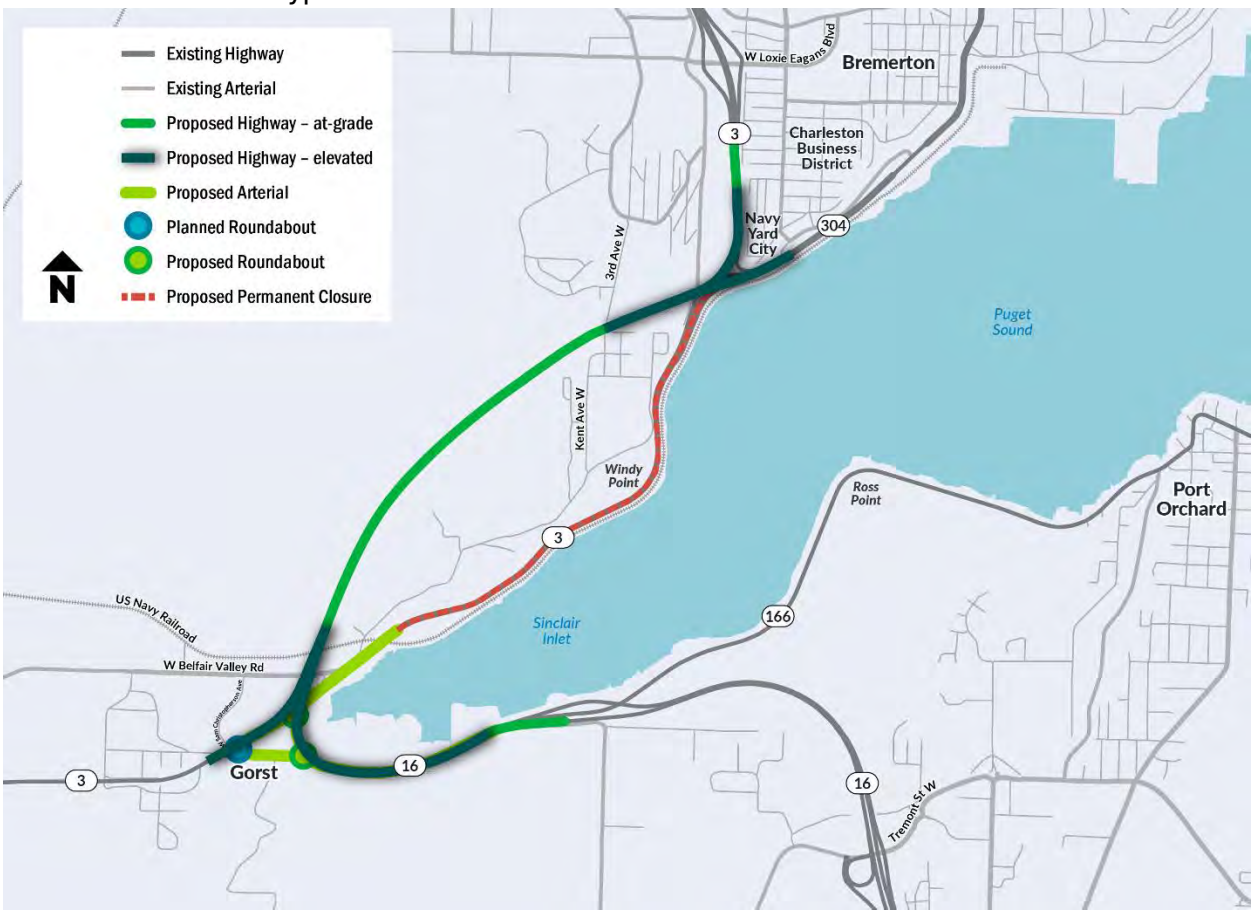


Alternative C builds a new bridge across Sinclair Inlet with three lanes in each direction that connects SR 16 to SR 3 and SR 304. An interchange where the bridge meets SR 3 and SR 304 would allow travel from both highways and to and from SR 16. The existing section of SR 3 from the north side of Gorst to the SR 304 interchange would be used as a local arterial roadway or potentially be closed to vehicle traffic. A portion of the existing SR 3 roadway along Sinclair Inlet could be converted to active transportation facilities.

This alternative connects to the fish passage and roundabout project at the intersection of SR 3 and W Sam Christopherson Avenue and would add two roundabouts at the Gorst triangle. It would update the roads in between the roundabouts to follow design standards for lower speed arterials and to incorporate active transportation facilities. The SR 166 interchange with SR 16 would be modified to include a roundabout and new intersection with Anderson Hill Rd, allowing vehicles to access all directions at this intersection.

- The Alternative C alignment would bypass the Naval Railroad Bridge. Vehicles too tall to pass under the railroad bridge would use the Alternative C bridge.
- For Alternative C, active transportation facilities could be built on the bridge alignment and/or along the existing SR 3/SR 16 corridor.

Alternative D: Land bypass



Alternative D elevates the roadway along the Gorst commercial area and builds a new inland roadway alignment with three lanes in each direction for SR 3. This alternative elevates SR 16 along the Gorst commercial area, continues at-grade through the Sherman Heights area, then elevates again at a new interchange with SR 3. Local traffic through Gorst would continue underneath the elevated roadway and would maintain access to SR 16 and SR 3. This alternative connects to the fish passage and roundabout project at the intersection of SR 3 and W Sam Christopherson Avenue and would add two roundabouts at the Gorst triangle. It would update the roads in between the roundabouts to follow design standards for lower speed arterials and to incorporate active transportation facilities.

- The Alternative D alignment would bypass the Naval railroad bridge. Vehicles too tall to pass under the railroad bridge would use the Alternative D roadway.
- For Alternative D, active transportation facilities could be built in the new corridor and/or along the existing SR 3/SR 16 corridor.

Active transportation alternatives

The study team is also analyzing potential active transportation facilities in the study area. Active transportation facilities include safe routes and connections for people walking, biking, or rolling.

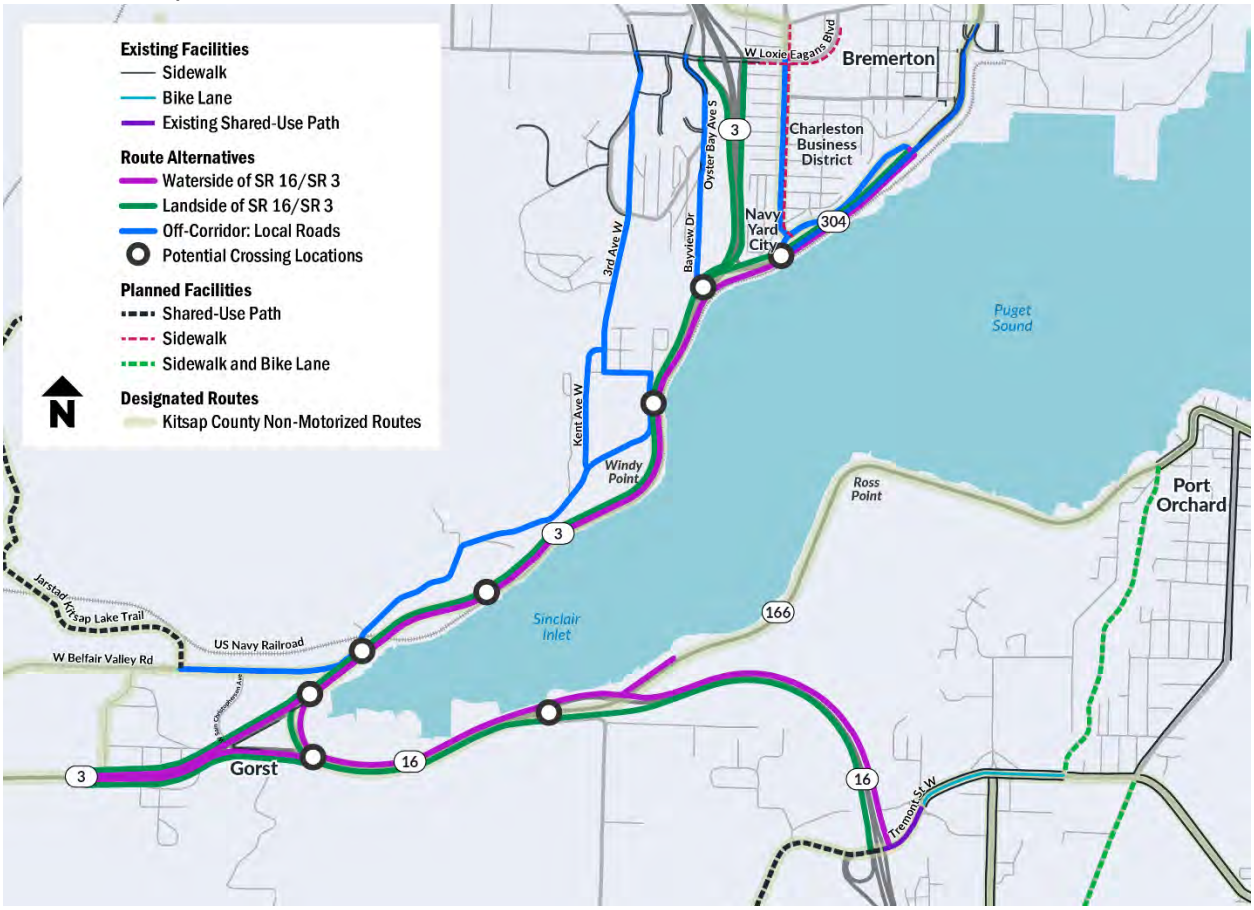
These active transportation facilities will be compatible with all the roadway alternatives. WSDOT is considering how alternatives would connect to existing local active transportation facilities, common destinations, existing infrastructure and residential areas. When studying these alternatives, the team will consider path directness, safety, accessibility for all users, and potential impacts from sea level rise and climate change.

For Alternatives B, C and D that would establish a new corridor, a Waterside and Landside route would also be considered. These are not represented on the map below but would be included as part of the alternatives.

With all alternatives, active transportation connections will be made to the following points of the existing transportation network:

- SR 16 Tremont Street interchange
- SR 166 in the vicinity of the junction with SR 16
- SR 3/Sam Christopherson Ave intersection
- SR 3 Belfair Valley Rd
- SR 3 Loxie Eagans Road interchange
- SR 304/Charleston Beach Road intersection

Active Transportation Alternatives



Waterside route *(above in purple)*

Following the existing SR 3 roadway on the Sinclair Inlet side of the road, this alignment offers the most direct route for people walking, biking, or rolling. It has minimal grade changes, scenic views, and easy access to the shoreline of Sinclair Inlet. This alignment connects to existing bike lanes along SR 304 in Bremerton and the shared-use path along Tremont Street W in Port Orchard.

For this route, WSDOT will consider proximity to the railroad and potential driveway crossings. We will also consider effects on sensitive nearshore habitat and potential impacts from sea level rise. The route would need crossings in Bremerton, Gorst, and Port Orchard to access the facility.

Landside route *(above in green)*

The Landside alignment would be along SR 3 on the landward side of the roadway. Similar to the Waterside route, the Landside route provides a direct route for users between Gorst, Bremerton, and Port Orchard via the Tremont Street W interchange. This option has minimal grade change and wouldn't require crossings to access the facility. This alignment

connects to existing bike lanes along SR 304 in Bremerton and the proposed shared-use path along Old Clifton Road in Port Orchard.

For this route, WSDOT will consider the need for grading to make the path more accessible. We will also consider potential driveway crossings and uncontrolled traffic lanes at several interchanges along the route.

Off-corridor local roads *(above in blue)*
Instead of State Routes, these alignments use local roads along the study corridor. Local roads include National Avenue, Sherman Heights Road, and W Charleston Beach Road. Local roads can be safer because of lower traffic volumes and speeds. Local roads can also be steeper and provide a less direct connection for people walking, biking, or rolling.

Since these are local roads outside of WSDOT's jurisdiction, this alternative would require coordination with Kitsap County and the City of Bremerton.

Transportation System Management and Operations alternatives
In addition to the above alternatives, the PEL study will evaluate Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) non-roadway options. TSMO strategies help make existing transportation systems safer and more efficient. Using TSMO strategies focuses on affordable and quick solutions that work for different types of transportation, across different areas, and on all kinds of roads. The study team is considering the following TSMO strategies and working with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) representatives on the feasibility of the items on the bulleted lists below. WSDOT can provide support through grant and award programs for improvements to services, equipment, and infrastructure.

Navy

- Revisions to shipyard shifts (i.e. modifying the times when shifts begin and/or end to minimize overlap with typically busy travel periods)
- Assistance creating or expanding carpools or vanpools in coordination with Kitsap Transit
- Commute trip reduction policies, such as work hour flexibility or telecommuting
- Public transit incentives, such as bus pass subsidies
- Employee education and outreach regarding use of existing worker-driver buses
- Employee challenges and rewards for carpooling or using transit and active transportation

Kitsap Transit

- Additional worker buses
- Additional transit routes and increased frequency to fast ferry terminals
- Additional Park and Ride facilities
- Designated parking for carpool or vanpool

- Rideshare programs, 'Dial a Ride' service, and paratransit service
- Employee challenges and rewards for carpooling or using transit and active transportation

Bremerton/ Port Orchard

- Designated parking for carpool or vanpool
- Charge parking fees
- Commute trip reduction policies, such as work hour flexibility or telecommuting
- Employee challenges and rewards for carpooling or using transit and active transportation

Alternatives No Longer Considered

The following alternatives are no longer considered for this Study.

- Tunnel
- Extended bypass
- Roundabouts in Gorst without other highway improvements
- Rail use for transit
- Pedestrian- and bike-only bridge across Sinclair Inlet