



## SR 3 Gorst Area Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

### Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 Summary

June 2025

#### Meeting purpose

The purpose of the second Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting was to:

- Share engagement updates to date
- Present Level 1 screening outcomes and solicit feedback

#### Meeting logistics

Wednesday, June 4, 2025, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Virtual meeting on Zoom

#### Meeting attendees

**WSDOT study team:** Ashley Carle (WSDOT), Mark Krulish (WSDOT), Ally Bradley (WSDOT), Erinn Ellig (Parametrix), Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix), Hayley Nolan (PRR), Morgan Calder (PRR), Kate Shannon (PRR)

**Community Advisory Group members:** Brian Watson (Bicycle Teacher), Carrie O’Hora (resident), Connor Dahlquist (resident), John Willett (resident), Laura Pugh (resident), Marco DiCicco (Bremerton SD), Rick Feeney (Kitsap County Non-Motorized Advisory Committee), Robin Salthouse (Kitsap Environmental Coalition), Roger Gay (resident), Rudy Baum (Kitsap Public Health District), and Sandy Pernitz (resident and business owner).

#### Meeting notes

##### Opening and study updates

The study team opened the meeting by reviewing Zoom logistics and the meeting agenda. The team quickly revisited the PEL process and highlighted that we are in the “Evaluate & Screen Alternatives and Identify Red Flag Environmental Impacts and Potential Mitigation” phase. The team also reviewed the CAG agreements set during the first CAG meeting.

#### Community engagement

The study team shared a summary of recent engagement efforts. The outreach resulted in around 540 comments from community members. Winter engagement included:

- In-person and online open houses
- Postcard mailing to 17,818 residences
- Flyers posted at 13 community locations around Gorst and Bremerton
- Two community pop-ups.

The team recently engaged business owners in the Gorst commercial area to learn about business access needs and transportation challenges. WSDOT invited 70 business owners to participate in an online survey and information sessions.

The study team asked CAG members what they have heard about the project from the community. The CAG members offered the following:

- Roger Gay shared that the community is eager for something to be done, above all else the community wants to see some progress made on the transportation issues within the corridor.
- Rick Feeney shared concern that the work on roundabouts planned at Division Street and Sam Christopherson Avenue may affect traffic before SR 3 solutions are implemented.
  - Ashley Carle (WSDOT) confirmed that WSDOT is tracking and coordinating both projects. The Sam Christopherson roundabout is being designed to be compatible with the Gorst PEL Study alternatives. The Division Street intersection project is also being coordinated internally.
- Laura Pugh heard concerns that there is not yet outreach to property owners in potentially impacted areas. Laura also emphasized need for engagement of underserved neighborhoods, citing Sherman Heights, West Hills, Navy Yard, Sand Dollar and Gorst.
  - Hayley Nolan (PRR) expressed appreciation to Laura for raising this concern and shared that the study team is planning outreach to property owners later this summer.

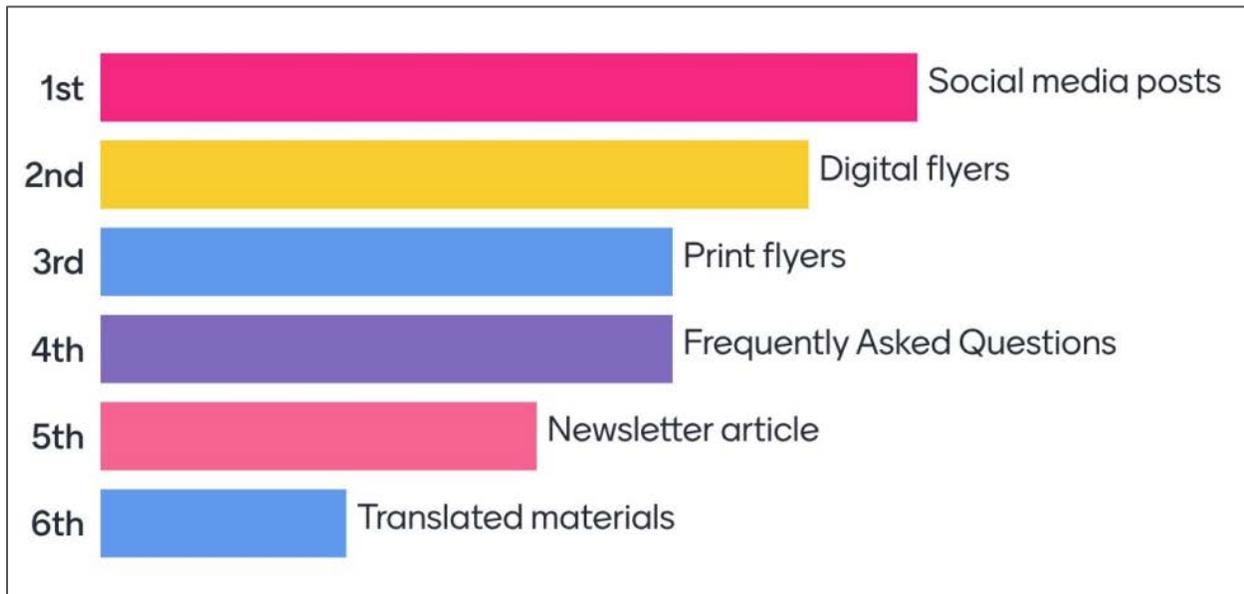
### The CAG's role in engagement

The study team reminded the CAG that in addition to their role of helping represent the community perspective, a key responsibility of the CAG is to help share information and get others engaged in the study. With additional engagement opportunities coming later this year, the team shared several prompts to get the CAG thinking about ways they can support engagement efforts for the study.

**Mentimeter #1:** Where will you share project information in your community?  
Meeting participants responded to this question using a word cloud format.



**Mentimeter #2:** What materials would be most helpful to share with the community?



Additional suggestions shared in the chat included:

- Sharing information through Kitsap Public Health District website and social media
- Promoting digital flyers, social media, posts, and FAQs
- Translating materials to reach the larger immigrant community in the area
- Buying billboard ad space on one of the billboards in the corridor

## Level 1 alternatives evaluation process

The study team explained how the range of alternatives were evaluated during Level 1 screening. Using the study's Purpose and Need, goals, and understanding of existing conditions, the study team developed the Level 1 screening criteria. The 'Needs' criteria served as the primary input and the 'Goals' criteria served as the secondary input. The 'Other measures' criteria include feasibility, construction impacts, maintenance complexity, and consistency with local planning efforts. The team did not eliminate, or screen out, any alternatives based on study goals during Level 1. The study team is screening out alternatives that don't meet the Purpose and Need or show fatal flaws.

## Community-focused evaluation criteria

The study team shared details on more community-focused criteria:

- **Mobility:** provides congestion relief, minimizes traffic diversion on local streets
- **Safety performance:** Improves safety performance in terms of serious and fatal crashes for vehicle modes, improves safety performance for active modes
- **Active Transportation:** Minimizes total elevation gain and/or challenging grade changes and optimizes user experience for active travelers, promotes directness of travel to regional destinations
- **Improve access:** Provides transportation access for communities that face social and economic obstacles, including transit and active transportation facilities

- **Economic vitality:** Supports access for businesses, supports business viability in the study area
- **Environmental:** Right of way (property) impacts, minimizes or avoids socioeconomic impacts
- **Other:** Right of way (property) impacts, minimizes or avoids socioeconomic impacts

The study team posed this question to CAG members:

**Mentimeter #3:** From the community perspective, which criteria are most important?



## Level 1 evaluation outcomes

The study team presented the draft outcomes of the Level 1 screening process. The team walked through the key features, benefits, and limitations of each alternative and shared which options are recommended to advance, modify, or eliminate from further consideration. CAG members were invited to share input on each alternative based on the prompts below, considering things like mobility, access, effects on local businesses, safety, and sense of place.

- What are the potential community benefits?
- What are the potential negative community impacts?
- What do you think of the evaluation outcome?

## Roadway alternatives

### Alternative A – Widening Existing SR 3

Alternative A: the most similar to existing conditions, widening would be along the existing alignment. Lower performing for mobility but high construction and maintenance performance.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend advancing.

### **Comments and questions received**

- Laura Pugh acknowledged the benefits and impacts of this alternative citing faster implementation resulting from using existing infrastructure while expressing concerns for more congestion during construction, climate vulnerability, and property displacement.
- Connor Dahlquist shared concerns that widening the existing corridor creates induced demand and only provides short term relief to the problem. Marco DiCicco expressed agreement with this sentiment, sharing this alternative involves “kicking the can down the road” and the resulting construction would worsen congestion.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) confirmed that this would be the simplest alternative to implement and not the most robust long-term solution and recognized concerns about induced demand.
- Will Maupin asked about the feasibility of extending the roadway into three lanes in each direction in addition to active transportation measures while avoiding the railroad.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) shared that this alternative would require significant right-of-way acquisition and blasting into the bluff to make space for roadway expansion.
- Rick Feeney asked whether further expansion into the Sinclair Inlet is being considered, since the shoreline is already artificial.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) responded that no, WSDOT is not considering building further out into the water.

### **Alternative A-1 – Elevated Structure through Gorst**

Alternative A-1: Elevated structure through Gorst would bypass the regional SR 16 to SR 3 traffic. Potential constructability challenges. Exploring a design revision to confirm feasibility.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend modified design.

### **Comments and questions received**

- Brian Watson expressed concerns over the negative visual impact of this alternative, with concern for Gorst’s character and beauty. He compared it to Seattle’s former Alaskan Way Viaduct and how its eventual removal improved the waterfront experience and appearance.
- Rick Feeney agreed with Brian, highlighting Seattle’s experience as cautionary.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) acknowledged the concern and confirmed a revision is underway to develop a version that avoids placing the structure directly above the existing SR 3. The current draft is unlikely to advance in its current form and may be modified.

### **Alternative A-2 – Frontage Roads**

Alternative A-2: Frontage roads for local traffic with access to SR 3 and SR 16 via slip ramps and an elevated roundabout would separate regional traffic through Gorst. Provides mobility and local access improvements.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend advance.

### **Comments and questions received**

- Rudy Baum asked if frontage roads would help to provide access to businesses.

- Hayley Nolan (PRR) confirmed that's one of the goals—improving separation between local and regional traffic for better access and safety.
- Robin Salthouse questioned if additional frontage roads would allow enough room for businesses given how tight the curve is at present.
- Rick Feeney inquired about the lane configuration and if this solution involves three lanes in each direction.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) confirmed that there would be three lanes in each direction north of Gorst. Through Gorst, there would be two regional lanes in each direction plus separate frontage roads. The team will study how the configuration handles projected traffic volumes during Level 2 screening.

### **B Alternatives – Bridge Alternatives (B-1, B-2, and B-3)**

The B Alternatives: Range of bridge alignments across Sinclair Inlet to move regional traffic out of Gorst.

Alternative B-1 – provides mobility improvement, but initial evaluation identifies fatal flaws because of construction impacts and long-term maintenance access.

Alternatives B-2 and B-3 - provide mobility improvements without fatal flaws of Alternative B-1. Two lanes make it less compatible with HOV.

- **Screening outcome:**
  - Alternative B-1: Recommend not advance.
  - Alternatives B-2 and B-3: Recommend advance.

### **Comments and questions received**

- Roger Gay expressed concern that this alternative would just move the blockage point and shift the bottlenecks.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) shared that evaluation shows B-2 and B-3 would significantly reduce congestion, particularly at the SR 3/SR304 interchange during the afternoon peak commute hours. The solution would separate regional and local traffic.
- Laura Pugh acknowledged the benefits of regional and local traffic separation and sea-level resilience. She expressed concern over property displacement, earthquake risks, and potential underperformance during peak hours.
- Carrie O'Hora shared appreciation for the concept but expressed concern over ecological disturbances involving disruption to ecological clean-up sites along the bay and erosion hazards on the south side.
- Robin Salthouse asked if the bridge option would offer an active solution to toxins from tires and polluted stormwater emitting straight into the inlet.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) confirmed that all alternatives involve full stormwater treatment, eliminating direct runoff entering the inlet.
- Marco DiCicco asked how the team is considering the grade for Alternative B-2, expressing concerns over speed and safety implications. He also noted the presence of homes and a pond or wetland in the area and expressed concern for property owners and potential environmental disruption.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) acknowledged the area he is referring to likely includes Wright Creek and an estuary, which are known environmental features. He

shared that all fish barriers touched by alternatives will be replaced to improve fish passage.

- Kirk confirmed that right-of-way impacts are expected where the alternative widens the roadway beyond the current four lanes.
- Regarding road grades, Kirk shared the bridge alternatives would descend from the higher southeast (Port Orchard) side toward the northwest and would feature moderate 3-4% grades. Kirk acknowledged concerns over speed and noted that curve safety will be closely evaluated during Level 2 screening.
- Kirk expressed gratitude for this feedback and reiterated that WSDOT has not selected an alternative. Public input is critical to evaluating the full range of trade-offs.
- Will Maupin raised a question about the railroad overpass and whether it would still need to be raised if Alternatives B-2 and B-3 bypass parts of the existing route.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) described that despite the bypass, there may still be enough traffic demand on the local road (especially for Gorst-Bremerton access and the shared use path) to require two lanes in each direction. He stated that the existing railroad bridge does not have sufficient width to accommodate two travel lanes in each direction plus a shared-use path, so replacing the railroad bridge may still be necessary in both B-2 and B-3. The study team is analyzing traffic operations to determine the need to replace the railroad bridge for the B Alternatives.
- Rick Feeny raised concerns about the potential cost and residential impacts of building new alignments, particularly around SR 166 and the elevated neighborhoods.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) responded that while there may be some property impacts, they are expected to be minimal near SR 166, with more significant impacts occurring on the SR 3 side near Windy Point to the SR 304 interchange.

## **Alternative C**

Alternative C: Direct bridge alignment via Ross Point to re-route all highway traffic from existing SR 3 alignment along Sinclair Inlet. Provides mobility improvement. Higher cost. Modifications to alternative C-1 to avoid Ross Creek mitigation sites and complex new SR 3/304 interchange were implemented to create the modified alignment over Sinclair Inlet in alternative C-2 which maintains existing SR 3/SR 304 interchange.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend advance.

## **Comments and questions received**

- Robin Salthouse raised concerns about the effectiveness of roundabouts in locations with heavy, one-directional traffic flow, such as during Naval Shipyard shift changes.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) clarified that regional through-traffic would bypass the roundabout entirely. The roundabout shown on diagrams would serve only interchange ramps, not the main roadway, and would be placed below the main bridge structure.
- Rick Feeny echoed concerns about bridge-induced bottlenecks, referencing backups in the Purdy area after the Tacoma Narrows Bridge expansion.

- Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) confirmed that their current traffic models do not assume widening of SR 16, but even within those constraints, Alternatives B and C are performing well. More detailed traffic analysis is planned for Level 2 screening.

### **Alternative D**

Alternative D: Inland alignment to re-route all highway traffic from the existing alignment along Sinclair Inlet. Provides mobility improvement but would include substantial residential displacements.

- **Screening Outcome:** Recommend modify.

### **Comments and questions received**

- Marco DiCicco flagged major impacts to homes and school bus routes, stating that Alternative D would cut surrounding neighborhoods in half and would go right through a large condominium area.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) confirmed that this alternative has substantial right-of-way impacts.
- Brian Watson stated that Alternative D would negatively impact too many people.
- Roger Gay shared similar sentiments, stating it is not a good option.
- John Willett asked if the CAG will have an opportunity to vote on what alternatives move forward.
  - Hayley Nolan (PRR) clarified that the CAG is not a voting body, but the study team will use all input to inform the process, through evaluation, screening, and refinement of alternatives.

### **Active transportation alternatives**

#### **Active Transportation facilities—Off-corridor (local roads)**

Off-corridor local roads: uses local roads along the corridor, such as National Avenue, Sherman Heights Boulevard, and West Charleston Beach Road. Local roads may feel more comfortable because they have lower traffic volumes and speeds. However, they can also be steeper and provide a less direct connection for people walking and rolling. Potential for substantial property impacts, introduces more conflict points, and includes elevation gain and non-direct travel compared to on-corridor facility.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend not advance.

#### **Active Transportation facilities—On-Corridor**

On-corridor: Provides active transportation facilities with minimal elevation change and fewer conflict points with motorized vehicles compared to the off-corridor facilities.

- **Screening outcome:** Recommend advance.

### **Comments and questions:**

- Brian Watson shared appreciation for not advancing Sherman Heights Road as an active transportation alternative and for focusing on safer, more accessible routes.

## Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) alternatives

The study team shared that there has been ongoing coordination with the City of Bremerton, City of Port Orchard, Kitsap Transit, and the Navy to identify potential TSMO options. Most of these options are already in place and currently active, so they have not shown significant additional benefits yet. However, the team will continue to evaluate and compare these alternatives as the study progresses.

To close out the discussion of Level 1 evaluation and outcomes, the team asked the CAG what else they want the team to consider as we move into Level 2 evaluation.

- Brian Watson suggested implementing congestion pricing to discourage single-occupancy vehicle use and generate funding for infrastructure improvements, citing New York City as a successful example. He also emphasized that TSMO strategies should be prioritized over widening roads.
  - Marco DiCicco cautioned that congestion pricing could disproportionately impact low-income communities, particularly in Bremerton.
- Roger Gay stated that having detailed traffic origin-destination data would help the community and project team understand usage patterns and design more effective solutions.
- Laura Pugh urged the team to consider the socioeconomics of right-of-way acquisition, especially in underserved neighborhoods. She expressed apprehension on behalf of condo owners who “stand to lose a lot” in right-of-way acquisitions.
  - Hayley Nolan (PRR) expressed appreciation for her feedback on engaging property owners and that the study team will connect with her as we continue planning for that engagement.
  - Kirk Wilcox (Parametrix) shared that in the very early stages of the planning process, it is too early to determine what right-of-way acquisition will look like. At this stage, we tend to not prematurely engage property owners while there are still a wide range of alternatives in consideration as to not create alarm about particular properties being acquired. He shared that we cannot move forward with right-of-way acquisition until after the NEPA process is complete, which is a separate step beyond the PEL process.
- Rick Feeney noted that cost will be a major issue, especially with Kitsap County experiencing significant population growth
- Robin Salthouse shared appreciation for the study team’s approach to minimizing environmental mitigation needs when developing final alternatives.
- Several members requested that public presentations be held in more areas including South Kitsap, North Mason County and Bremerton.
- Carrie O’Hora suggested that the team bring three-dimensional models to future public meetings to better help the public visualize proposed alternatives.

## Next steps

The study team shared what is to come next for the study and ways to stay in touch with the team.

- Next CAG meeting in December 2025

- Optional active transportation workshop later this summer
  - Aug. 5 from 12-2 p.m.
- Upcoming engagement
  - Outreach to businesses and property owners later this summer
  - Open house in late 2025

***The meeting ended at 7:32 p.m.***