



The intersection of state Route 3 and state Route 302 in Belfair will likely need to be modified to accommodate increased truck traffic drawn by the State Route 3 Freight Corridor. The current northbound turn onto state Route 302 is nearly 110 degrees, and the shape of state Route 3 creates a blind corner for traffic trying to turn southbound. *Journal photo by Justin Johnson*

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alter its emphasis.

“They (the Legislature) want this to be for sufficient movement of freight, to move regional traffic between Shelton and Bremerton and make sure we have reliable regional access to jobs and goods,” she said.

Britton said that full funding for the project became available July 1, allowing it to move forward “in earnest now.”

She stressed that WSDOT is now using updated traffic data to form a better analysis of traffic flow in the area, which stretches between Lake Flora Road a few miles north of Belfair in Kitsap County to state Route 302 near its intersection with state Route 3, just south of the North Mason School District campus that hosts North Mason and James A. Taylor high schools and Hawkins Middle School. That data reveals a 10% increase in current p.m. peak-hour traffic volumes compared to 2013 on state Route 3 south of Lake Flora Road and south of state Route 106, but a 15% decrease north of Northeast Clifton Lane.

WSDOT used cellphone data along

with the familiar black road tubes stretched across roadways to measure traffic flow with the area affected by the project.

“We’re using cellphone data to figure out how much traffic will bypass Belfair by using the freight corridor,” she said. Current estimates show that 51% of northbound traffic during a.m. peak hours will bypass Belfair, 37% will avoid the area via the corridor during p.m. peak hours and the average weekday traffic will see 47% bypass Belfair’s business downtown district.

The next steps include updating the traffic analysis, completion of intersection control reports and refining alignment and connections to state Route 3.

Britton finished with a proposed timeline for the project, which calls for design to be completed by the second quarter of 2023, updating the environmental analysis and permitting by the fourth quarter of 2021, having engineering completed by mid 2023 and the project itself completed by 2025.

For questions or comments about the SR3 Freight Corridor, contact Britton at 360-874-3010 or at mbritton@wsdot.wa.gov.

BOCC hosts unofficial meeting in Belfair

Commission, residents hear updates on bypass, park and ride

By Michael Heinbach
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About 10 citizens attended Tuesday night's unofficial Board of Mason County Commissioners meeting at North Mason High School in Belfair. Those who came were treated to updates on the State Route 3 Freight Corridor — the project formerly dubbed the Belfair Bypass — and the future Mason Transit Authority park-and-ride facility on Log Yard Road in Belfair.

Danette Brannin, MTA general manager, told the audience the park and ride at Log Yard Road and state Route 3 is still in the design phase, but the first priority was to get final approval from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the construction permit of the proposed roundabout at the intersection. Once approved by WSDOT, Brannin said the project would soon go out to bid for about three weeks.

"The bid package is actually ready and it will be released by Sept. 1," Brannin said. "So then what that means is we'll put out the bid package, we'll have about a three-week window to accept bids, and then we'll have to take it to the MTA board for approval

of the contract."

Brannin added that if helps moving the project forward to an early October start of roundabout construction, MTA could hold a special board meeting in late September to approve a contract with a construction company.

SCJ Alliance, a Tacoma consulting firm, designed the roundabout and the proposed park-and-ride facility. The initial concept for the park and ride calls for a 45,000-square-foot building to serve as MTA's North Mason hub, more than 100 parking spots on the grounds, eight stalls for MTA bus storage, nine additional parking stalls for MTA use, a car-charging station, and a pedestrian overhang for those awaiting transportation.

As for the roundabout, designed to accommodate cars and trucks of all sizes via initial approval from WSDOT, Brannin said that weather permitting, construction should be completed within 90 days of starting the project.

She concluded by stating MTA hopes the entire park-and-ride project, including the roundabout, will be finished by the end of 2020.

For more information about the park-and-ride project, visit <http://www.masontransit.org/parkandrideproject>.

WSDOT Project Engineer Michele Britton followed with new information on the SR3 Freight Corridor, but gave a reminder that the Legislature renamed the Belfair Bypass project to

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