Belfair's 1st roundabout gets state approval

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A road project that generated heated debate earlier this year recently passed a new milestone, setting Belfair up to potentially get its first roundabout.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) last week approved the intersection control analysis for the proposed roundabout, located where Log Yard Road meets state Route 3, north of the downtown area.

Patrick Holm, SCJ Alliance Consulting Services project manager, said in an interview with the Shelton-Mason County Journal that getting the approval from WSDOT means the project is sticking to its anticipated timeline. The next step will be completing a "plan for approval" package, outlining the geometry of the roundabout.

News of WSDOT's approval comes at the one-year anniversary of the completion of the state Route 3 widening project, which provided new sidewalks along the highway in downtown Belfair and added a turning lane.

"One of the benefits of a roundabout is that you can shift traffic," Holm said, which would make it easier to keep traffic flowing during the construction process.

Holm said he would remind residents that even with the roundabout, the traffic issues won't change until changes happen on a larger scale.

Plans for a new road meant to divert traffic from going to the downtown area, informally known as the Belfair Yard Road, could be the site of Belfair's first roundabout.

SR3: DOT gives the A-OK

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Bypass, but officially renamed the SR3 options, consulting services said the roundabout would affect traffic the least.

During an April 24 meeting at the HUB Center for Seniors, Holm said the process of selecting a type of intersection, regulation, safe and most efficient, is designed to find the intersection that can be put in for the longest amount of time. Holm said he was concerned about traffic that could affect the area, but most residents said they would be a continuing concern.

The focus of the roundabout is to bring more targeted traffic issues by building its new facility on Log Yard Road. MTA said they were most concerned about the roundabout in the intersection.