

GORST WATERSHED SWOT ANALYSIS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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INTRODUCTION

The consultant team and agency partners have prepared a Gorst Creek Watershed Characterization Report addressing appropriate locations for development, ecological restoration, and ecosystem protection and conservation. An inventory map folio has also been prepared identifying natural and built environment conditions throughout the watershed. The completed analysis provides the basis for the land use planning process. The purpose of the land use planning process is to create a roadmap to allow for development of those areas that are least sensitive to development pressures from an ecological perspective, while protecting, restoring, and conserving land area that is critical to supporting ecological processes related to water flow within the basin. In addition there may be areas that have a moderate sensitivity to development but with best management practices can be sensitively developed with low environmental impacts. The Gorst Land Use plan therefore begins with a watershed inventory and analysis, which will become the underlying framework for the Gorst Land Use Plan. The first step in the land use plan process is to review the watershed inventory and analysis and develop both a *preliminary* "SWOT" analysis and *preliminary* guiding principles, both of which will be the subject of a public visioning workshop and advisory committee meeting.

Preliminary SWOT Analysis

A "SWOT" analysis is an exercise that considers the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the Gorst Watershed. The definitions of the terms are:

- Strengths (Positive, Internal): Positive attributes currently present in Gorst
- Weaknesses (Negative, Internal): Local issues or characteristics that limit the opportunities for Gorst
- Opportunities (Positive, Internal and External): Areas where Gorst can remedy its weaknesses (learning from others, state-level assistance, aggressive marketing, targeted investment, etc.)
- Threats (Negative, Internal and External): Trends that threaten Gorst's future and attractiveness

Tables 1 through 4 on the following pages review strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the following topic areas:

- Economy: the prosperity or earnings of this place, including features that support a successful, flourishing, or thriving financial condition;
- Environment: natural ecological systems and resources

- Land Use, Open Space, and Recreation: human use and management of land including areas that have human-built structures offering places for living, working and leisure activities, and areas without structures that are accessible to the public
- Transportation, Public Services, and Utilities: the movement of people and goods in the area; services provided by governments to its citizens such as police, fire, parks, etc.; and the provision of water, wastewater, power, telecommunication, and other infrastructure providing services consumed by the public

Preliminary Guiding Principles

Guiding principles can be drawn from all the information developed to date including the SWOT as well as the Gorst Creek Watershed Characterization Report and Inventory Map Folio. The Guiding Principles are meant to provide a vision, parameters, or essential ingredients that steer the preparation of the Land Use Plan. The principles are draft and will be tested and refined through public meetings described above.

- Make Gorst a place to stop
- Facilitate development of economically valued land
- Identify and prioritize land that can be more intensely developed with less environmental consequences
- Promote green infrastructure for both new and existing facilities, such as by identifying areas to target for stormwater retrofits
- Support development incentives and evaluate options such as mitigation banking, transfer development rights (TDRS), and other tools
- Identify and protect critical areas
- Prioritize areas to be protected and restored
- Protect and enhance water quality/quantity for fish and wildlife habitat as well as for human use
- Create a cohesive and attractive urban character in the Gorst urban growth area (UGA) such as by improving building design, and creating and enhancing public spaces such as parks, pedestrian corridors and streetscapes
- Allow an environmentally sustainable pattern of forestry, low density residential, small scale employment, and recreation uses in the rural areas of watershed
- Improve transportation mode choices including transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and autos, recognizing local as well as regional travel needs

TABLE 1. ECONOMY

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed recreation opportunities: trails, fishing, shellfishing, golf course, park • Waterfront development opportunities: Waterfront development will increase land value and is developable with aesthetics • New sewer, water, and power infrastructure decreases developer cost • Land is inexpensive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Existing land use is ripe for redevelopment • Location near other job hubs: Located near SKIA, airport, and Puget Sound Naval Station (PSNS), creates a need for residential/commercial to support jobs/industrial • Through point for all persons heading to the Peninsula • As a nexus point, the highway frontage of SR 3 connects Bremerton, Shelton, Gig Harbor, Tacoma, SKIA, PSNS, and Bainbridge Island • Pass through traffic - opportunity to attract customers if providing desirable commercial, mixed use • Ecosystem services - such as natural recharge potential reduces costs to engineering clean water • Bremerton has excellent reputation as “can do” with developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access due to topography near water • Stigma – Gorst is synonymous with traffic congestion, unattractive buildings, and seedy highway commercial retail • Low population • Low income households • Significant critical areas (hard to develop large land areas): steep slopes, rivers, wetlands, poor soils in the low lands and bedrock in the uplands, potential increase in structural costs • Utilities • Lack non-motorized access and parking to the waterfront • Blighted current conditions negatively impacts development • Limited / poor transportation
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance marine waterfront and protect forestlands by low impact development (LID), and development incentives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhance salmon habitat and water quality • Reduce commuter trips by providing both short-term (hotels) and long-term (apartment/houses) housing plus commercial to support this use • Frontage road to improve traffic • Change image by streetscape corridor enhancements, design standards, and annexation • Through new development, and job and housing opportunities, increase incomes, property values, and tax base • Cluster development in economically high value areas to protect underdeveloped areas • Consider tax incentives for new businesses that locate in Gorst (e.g. reduced or no B&O taxes; lesser hotel/motel taxes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further degradation of marine waterfront by development or inaction • Traffic issues prevent planned/desired development • Urban decay or image cannot be overcome to sustain development • Inability for jurisdictions to agree on regulations/zoning • For ecologically-valued properties, owners may protest ecological classification • Economy stays depressed long-term • Will watershed plan limit opportunities for developing City utility lands in the future? • State transportation improvements could reduce developable property

TABLE 2. ENVIRONMENT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed supports variety of terrestrial and aquatic habitats including wetland, riparian, estuarine, and forest habitats • Undeveloped character: The watershed is mostly undeveloped • City ownership of forested watershed: City owns/operates most land as forest; the forest habitat blocks in City ownership are in the top 10 percent for importance in Puget Trough Ecoregion • High value land is less constrained: Perceived highest economic land has lower ecological value • High recharge value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing marine areas, stream corridors, and other habitat may continue to degrade as development/infill continues • Complexity of federal, state, and local permitting • Environmental Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste “HTRW's” on waterfront and within the system (e.g. landfill).
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and prioritize land that can be more intensely developed with less environmental consequences • Innovative techniques under the Growth Management Act, e.g. clustering, mitigation banks, TDR (if there are development rights to transfer within the watershed or other areas of unincorporated Kitsap County) • Create a code that incentivizes development in areas with lower ecological value • New sewers can reduce impacts of existing remaining septic systems • Re-forest degraded forest area • Stormwater retrofits including low impact development techniques • Change perceptions about green being expensive through education and outreach; show it is demonstrably cheaper to rely on existing ecological processes than to try to pay to replace them • Create a programmatic permit approach – develop a streamlined permitting approach, which identifies and prioritizes mitigation opportunities in advance, and steers development towards less environmentally sensitive areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs of environmental improvements such as stormwater retrofits, landfill remediation, and stream and wetland enhancements • For ecologically-valued properties, owners may protest ecological classification • Perception that green is expensive • Haphazard development

TABLE 3. LAND USE, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>In addition to economic strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is land capacity: Mostly undeveloped or under-developed land • Views of water could be attractive for new housing opportunities • Commercial uses attracted by large volume of traffic • Existing recreation – Otto Jarstad Park and golf course • Shoreline Master Program promotes public access to waterfront 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unattractive corridor commercial area: Urban area has many older outdated structures, confusing street system, lacks streetscape, and lacks a sense of place and human scale (no pedestrian access to waterfront) • Little residential uses to provide stability and complete community • Existing businesses could inhibit adjacent redevelopment • Some underperforming and unattractive existing businesses will be grandfathered in • Land capacity and economic analysis is not complete – unknown information and uncertainty of success • Development restricted by environmental conditions and high ecological value, based on Watershed Characterization report and environmental stewardship • Stigma
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a land use plan that addresses a complete community including housing, jobs, and recreation over the life of the plan • Create policies and development standards that promote compatible development and transitions from higher to lower intensity uses • Create design guidelines in Gorst UGA to create quality development and attract investment; add incentives for new business owners to remodel • Design planned action ordinance to facilitate permitting speed and decrease risk • Demonstrate green development is cost effective through education and outreach • Increased value of land may motivate existing non-conforming to sell or change use • Improve environment through implementation of innovative techniques such as TDR or mitigation banking, tax incentives, Corrective Action Plan implementation, and future smart development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TDR's could include infrastructure improvements • Meet GMA goals by protecting critical areas and clustering development • Complete streets approach with multiple modes and streetscapes • Added parks and open space could be identified along waterfront as part of shoreline public access and in the broader watershed to promote education, healthy active lifestyles, and ecological conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that green is expensive • Inability for jurisdictions to agree on regulations/zoning • No one else shows up which decreases opportunity • Third party lawsuits due to land use restrictions • State transportation improvements could reduce developable property

TABLE 4. TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC SERVICES, AND UTILITIES

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a nexus point, the highway frontage of SR 3 connects Bremerton, Shelton, Gig Harbor, Tacoma, SKIA, PSNS, and Bainbridge Island. • New sewer, water, and power infrastructure decreases developer cost • Reasonable utility rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited / poor transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very low level of service due to large amount of vehicular traffic and less transit service ○ High cost, long time-frame to improve level of service ○ Lack of rail ○ Low priority to resolve • Ecologically costly improvements proposed by WSDOT
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add non-motorized access along shoreline, and secondary roads such as West Belfair Valley Road to strengthen multiple modes and recreation opportunities • Extend urban utilities to full UGA • Develop low impact development standards and stormwater retrofit program • New sewers can reduce impacts of existing remaining septic systems • Identify future alternative roadway bypass network to calm other major routes and create opportunities for local circulation • Complete streets approach with multiple modes and streetscapes • Seek opportunities to increase transit by partnering with Kitsap Transit such as seeking a park and ride location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding more growth could exacerbate traffic flow concerns