



**Washington State Ferries
Long Range Plan Policy Advisory Group**

July 27, 2017

Washington State Ferries | 2901 3rd Avenue, Seattle

Alki Room

Noon – 2:00 p.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome

Stephanie Cirkovich, Washington State Ferries (WSF) Community Services and Planning Director, welcomed the group to the first WSF 2040 Long Range Plan Policy Advisory Group (PAG) meeting. Stephanie facilitated introductions and thanked participants for their involvement, highlighting the important role of the group in developing the plan.

Laura LaBissoniere Miller, facilitator, reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives which included kicking-off the PAG, clarifying the Long Range Plan focus and scope, gathering input on key areas of interest and priorities for the plan, and reaching agreement on group roles and responsibilities.

Overview

Ray Deardorf, WSF Senior Planning Manager, gave a presentation to the group on the ferry system, Long Range Plan background, requirements for the 2040 plan, and potential additional topics that could be considered.

Discussion

Stephanie invited the group to ask questions and share their key interests for the WSF 2040 Long Range Plan. Laura facilitated a roundtable discussion, calling on each participant to ask questions and provide input. Overall, participants shared interest in ferry system reliability, safety, accessibility for all riders, multimodal connections, and planning for future growth and transportation needs. The following is a summary of the questions and comments provided.

- John Powers, Kitsap Economic Development Alliance, expressed support for the ferry system and long range planning effort. John emphasized that access to both west and east sound communities is critical to promoting a vibrant regional economy.
- Victoria Compton, San Juan Islands Economic Development Council, acknowledged the importance of statewide planning for long term population growth and encouraged the group to also continue to consider ferries are a critical lifeline for the San Juan Islands.
- Patrick Yearout, Ivar's, identified access to ferries and surrounding businesses and affordable fares as key topics for the plan.
- Paul Parker, Washington State Transportation Commission, expressed interest in working with WSF to develop a sustainable financial strategy and focus on multimodal connections between ferries and the rest of the state transportation system.
- Jill Lazo, U.S. Coast Guard, asked the project team about expectations and information needs from the Coast Guard. Jill identified the following topics: terminal improvements, international



safety and security, facility inspections, vessel replacement, passenger ferries and associated crewing requirements, and emergency preparedness.

- Deborah Hopkins, San Juan Islands Visitor's Bureau, echoed Victoria's comment that ferries are a lifeline for San Juan Islands residents and economy. Deborah's key interest is maintaining reliable ferry service by providing standby ferries and replacing and maintaining vessels. She also encouraged WSF to focus on sharing positive stories with local media and requested zip code and demographic data about WSF customers.
- Rex Oliver, Bainbridge Chamber of Commerce, said WSF serves two key rider groups on Bainbridge Island: commuters and tourists. Rex cited concerns about the configuration of the Bainbridge terminal, recent economic impact of fast ferries to Bremerton, intergovernmental coordination, and interest in redeveloping WSF's Eagle Harbor Maintenance Facility as a retail center.
- David Miller, Lighthouse for the Blind, said WSF provides a critical connection to affordable housing on the west side of Puget Sound. Other interests include affordable fares, including WSF in the regional ORCA pass to streamline access to reduced fares, designing accessible facilities, and attention to customer service for visually impaired riders.
- Dan Coon, AAA Washington, commented that WSF is part of the statewide transportation system. Dan encouraged WSF to consider accessibility to terminal facilities, affordable fares, reliable service and vessels, multimodal connections from "door to door," tourism, and planning for advancements in transportation technology.
- Geri Poor, Port of Seattle, identified several key interests including coordination with the Port to move people and goods to/from Sea-Tac International Airport and along the Seattle waterfront; engaging freight representatives; equity; workforce development; sustainability; and interface with terminal neighbors.
- Demi Allen, Squeaky Wheels, expressed interest in assessing and planning for new transportation modes and technology, such as car/bike sharing, autonomous vehicles and policy decisions to actively shift mode share toward bicycles and pedestrians.
- Tony Kurdy, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, said as a major employer with over 14,000 civilian employees working 24-7, shipyard employees need access to reliable ferry service and sailings that align with work shifts.
- Andrew Hamilton, Southworth Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC), expressed concern about the Fauntleroy terminal configuration, aging terminal infrastructure, and vessel reliability.
- Jim Corenman, San Juan County FAC, identified the following interests: reliability; accommodating growth with increased ferry capacity; commercial freight; and improving the aging Anacortes terminal. Jim noted the San Juan Islands vehicle reservation system helped manage demand but capacity needs and demand are now invisible and not tracked.
- Walt Elliott, Kingston FAC, requested discussion questions in advance to review with the entire FAC Executive Council. Stephanie asked Walt to highlight some of the FAC's primary issues. Walt explained reliability of service, affordability, and multimodal connections are critical to the FAC. After the meeting, Walt sent additional comments via email from the Kingston FAC (see end of this meeting summary).
- Dave Hoogerwerf, Clinton FAC, encouraged WSF to integrate a "door-to-door" transportation strategy to align with WSDOT's strategic plan. He noted planning for increased walk-on passengers requires strong multimodal connections at both terminals. Dave asked WSF to measure ferry queues in level of service analysis.



- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise, expressed interest in discussing the integration of ferry system level of service with local plans. Key interests include prioritizing multimodal connections and regional transportation needs.
- Blake Trask, Cascade Bicycle Club, commented that cyclists have a strong interest in using the ferry system to access communities, noting each terminal and route have specific issues and access needs. Data collection is critical to accurately forecast bike ridership. Blake asked about how WSF will apply practical solutions to get people from point A to B and accommodate growth in pedestrians and bikes.
- Jacqueline Gruber, Downtown Seattle Association, could not attend the entire meeting but submitted comments via email. Her constituency's interest is in encouraging pedestrian growth and access to ferries, including multimodal connections to the Seattle waterfront.

Stakeholder Engagement

Hadley Roderio, WSF Strategic Communications Manager, provided an overview of the community and stakeholder engagement program and timeline, highlighting the multiple opportunities for engagement and diverse range of audiences. Hadley encouraged the group to provide feedback on concurrent public processes happening in ferry-served communities and opportunities for collaboration.

Roles and Responsibilities

Laura reviewed roles and responsibilities for the PAG and the WSF project team. The role of the PAG is to provide strategic advice on prioritizing needs; represent communities' interests and concerns; review and provide feedback on draft plan elements; collaboratively engage with PAG members; and assist in building support for the plan. The WSF project team will provide information; attend PAG meetings to answer questions and inform discussion; consider and address PAG input when developing the plan; and report back on how the project team considered and addressed input in decision-making. Laura asked the group to review the roles and responsibilities document and provide comment. The document will be finalized at the next PAG meeting.

Additional Questions and Comments

Participants provided the following additional question and comments:

- How will WSF consider passenger-only ferries in the Long Range Plan? Passenger-only ferries could help manage growth.
- Consider electronic fare system to reduce wait times.
- FAC members requested meeting materials one month in advance to review with individual FACs.
- Participants would like the plan to address emergency and seismic preparedness
- The PAG requested a roster of all members.

Next Steps

Ray reviewed next steps including developing the scope of the plan and hiring a consultant team to develop the plan. The next PAG meeting will be scheduled in late September. WSF promised to provide a regular meeting schedule for all upcoming meetings. Stephanie thanked the group for their time and contributions to the discussion.

Attendance:

Meeting Attendees:

- Demi Allen, Squeaky Wheels
- Dan Coon, AAA Washington
- Jim Corenman, San Juan County FAC
- Walt Elliott, Kingston FAC
- Andrew Hamilton, Southworth FAC
- Dave Hoogerwerf, Clinton FAC
- Deborah Hopkins, San Juan Islands Visitor's Bureau
- Tony Kurdy, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard
- Jill Lazo, U.S. Coast Guard
- David Miller, Lighthouse for the Blind
- Rex Oliver, Bainbridge Chamber of Commerce
- Paul Parker, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Geri Poor, Port of Seattle
- Blake Trask, Cascade Bicycle Club
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise

Participating by phone:

- Victoria Compton, San Juan Islands Economic Development Council
- Jacqueline Gruber, Downtown Seattle Association
- John Powers, Kitsap Economic Development Alliance
- Patrick Yearout, Ivar's

Project Team:

- Stephanie Cirkovich, Washington State Ferries
- Ray Deardorf, Washington State Ferries
- Hadley Rodero, Washington State Ferries
- Carmen Bendixen, Washington State Ferries
- Laura LaBissoniere Miller, PRR Facilitator
- Sam DeMars-Hanson, PRR Notetaker

Scoping Consultants:

- Paul Arnold, WSP
- Daniel Turner, WSP



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Appendix

- A. Kingston FAC Input on Planning Considerations
- B. FAC EXCON Planning Input



Kingston FAC input into the Long Range Planning Process 8/16/17

Principle interest areas

1. Affordable fares
2. Added capacity to reduce back-ups and to meet demand.
3. Reducing the near term and long term downtown ferry traffic congestion and its' impact on local traffic and business
4. Sustaining reliable service through operational strategies that address community needs, fully funded maintenance, back-up boats needed for planned maintenance, and standby boats for unplanned maintenance situations
5. Address improvement of business processes and cost reduction

Detailed input

1. Fares
 - Stay at or below baseline 2 ½% per year increases. Manage operating costs to stay within inflation rate
 - Using WSF's promotional fare authority, include strategies to increase rider usage
 - Separate fare increases from demand management strategies
2. Capacity
 - Include rider wait time as well as "percent boat full" in planning future service.
 - Consider current and projected population growth and demand in planning future capacity. Add service to support local economic growth, projected population growth as well as increases in tourist/weekender traffic. We believe that direct to Seattle POF will result in growth that will also increase demand to WSF service.
 - Plan to achieve three boats on Kingston Edmonds. Increased frequencies of sailings are needed to reduce traffic backups, improve dock management and customer satisfaction. It is preferred that this be two 200+ car ferries and one smaller e.g. 144 car boat. Alternatively three 160+ boats as a variant of the 144 car boats may meet projected needs.
 - Conduct an analysis on whether to continue with a standardized 144 car boat or to build variants of the basic design with greater car capacity
3. Traffic congestion
 - Include strategies to improve the holding area efficiency, utilization and capacity
 - Support the relocation of SR 104 in Kingston
 - Address the issues of traffic queued on the highway shoulders.
 - Pursue prompt implementation of commercial reservations system wide
 - Include WSDOT in strategies to address vehicle congestion at terminals
4. Service and reliability
 - Build sufficient boats to support current and projected service needs, have maintenance reserve boats and standby reserve boats. This requires legislative and WSDOT participation, and needs to include consideration of population growth and economic growth, both current and projected as well as increases in tourist and weekender traffic



- Continue with the 60-year lifespan assumption. New vessels should be built to achieve this. Plan on funding the Life Cycle Cost Model (LCCM) maintenance needed to support that lifespan. Underfunding maintenance defeats a 60-year life assumption
- Implementation of operational strategies should be independently assessed for each route. An economic and community impact assessment before implementing operational strategies that significantly affecting riders and ferry served communities. Many adaptive management strategies are not-appropriate for regular commuters for communities where travel time and mode are not discretionary.
- Include on-time arrival and missed sailings as a performance metric
- Consider different approaches to in-house maintenance recommended in the PVA report.

5. Business considerations

- Continue to consider LNG fuel feasibility
- Have a competitive bidding strategy for ferry support functions
- Pursue and implement cost reduction measures, such as automation, outsourcing, LNG fuel, and more efficient labor allocation
- Have business/operations reports that keep the public advised of the Long Range plan and its' implementation
- Use the pause in ferry construction to evaluate the design and how ferry acquisition can be modified to reduce acquisition and life cycle costs

8/21/17

At the Long-Range Plan Policy Advisory Group (PAG) meeting on July 27th, Ferries asked the question: “What are your key interests for the Washington State Ferries 2040 Long Range Plan?”

The Ferry Advisory Committee’s Executive Council’s response is below. These planning items are in addition to WSF’s statutory planning requirements, a summary of which is attached. Individual FACs may also send in responses to the question that address the interests of their specific routes.

FAC Executive Council input on Items for WSF’s Long Range Strategic Plan Strategies are needed to implement WSDOT’s “portal to portal” multimodal transportation direction that includes ferries. This concept needs to permeate the entire plan.

- All riders do not have access to transit or they are traveling to an area that does not have transit service. The Origin/Destination survey shows this. As a result, non-transit alternatives must be considered in the plan.
 - Parking needs should be identified for all routes and the facilities and, in collaboration with local governments, include strategies to meet projected needs.
 - Coordinated planning is needed with transit providers to address the availability of transit services and intermodal access on all routes. While dense urban centers have transit services and facilities at ferry terminals, transit is generally lacking at other terminals.
- Coordinated strategies (WSDOT, WSF, WSP and local governments) are needed to address ferry traffic usage and congestion at ferry terminals. This includes local government decisions that affect ferry riders.
- The Level of Service (LOS) definition was radically changed in the last LRP. As a result, the demand for ferry service is not being measured today. The current reservation system also lacks a means to assess demand. A process is needed to measure the degree to which the actual level of service being delivered falls short of rider needs. This data should be tracked and standards set for adding needed capacity.
- Planning should address future terminal and vessel capacity to meet the region’s projected ferry demand from population, growth, economic development and tourism.
- The plan should address the funding needed for its’ execution. This should include both capital and life cycle maintenance needs.
- The plan should address sustaining affordable fares for routine riders with the median income of ferry served communities
- The plan should include strategies to contain and, where possible, reduce system costs. This should include setting and tracking business performance metrics and targets.
- Review the Passenger Vessel Association Final report for actions not yet taken by WSF that address cost reductions, increased vessel availability, and service reliability.
- The vessel replacement plan should be based on the continuation of the basic 144-car ferry design with variants to optimize meeting operational needs, such as a stretch version for high vehicle demand applications and increased commercial truck capacity where that is critical e.g. the San Juan Islands.
- The impact of demand management strategies on riders and the economic development of ferry served communities must be evaluated prior to implementing those strategies.

- Vessel service, availability and reliability needs to be specifically addressed in the LRP. This includes both capital for new vessels and vessel maintenance funding.

For the Ferry Advisory Committee Executive Council

Dave Hoogerwerf and Walt Elliott, Co-chairs

Summary of RCW and proviso planning elements which impact riders

- Service standards that balance providing movement of people and goods and the needs of local communities (RCW 47.06.140 47.06.050, 47.60.375, 47.60.327, 47.60.365)
- Ensuring consistency with the regional transportation plans and local comprehensive plans for areas served by the state ferry system (47.06.050, 47.06.040)
- Consideration of regional and statewide vehicle and passenger needs, and local land use plans (47.06.050).
- Ensuring that ferry services are fully integrated with other transportation services (47.06.050)
- Providing for maintenance of capital assets needed to ensure reliability (47.06.050, 47.60.345)
- Assessing the role of private ferries (47.06.050)
- Considering the relief of congestion, the preservation of existing investments and downtowns (47.06..040)
- Considering the ability to attract or accommodate planned population, and employment growth (47.06.040)
- Considering the efficient movement of freight and goods (47.06.040)
- Vessel rebuild and replacement plan, vessel projected retirement dates, projected rebuild dates, timelines for vessel replacement (47.60.377, 47.60.375, budget proviso)
- Vessel replacement business decisions, design characteristics, procurement strategy, and fuel and maintenance considerations (47.60.377, budget proviso)
- Revaluation and review of operational strategies, Methods of shifting vehicular traffic, leveling vehicle peak demand (47.60.375, 47.60.327, 47.60.375, 47.60.286)
- Review of route vessel needs, allocation of vessels to routes, the vessel deployment plan and reserve vessel strategy (47.60.375, 47.60.300, budget proviso)
- Considering efficient balance of capital and operating investments to optimize service (47.60.365, 47.60.327)
- Considering alternate methods of collecting fares (47.60.327)
- Terminal seismic vulnerabilities and emergency preparedness plans (budget proviso)
- Reservation systems (47.60.327)
- Considering methods of improving on-dock operations, reorganizing holding areas (47.60.327, 47.60.300)



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- Considering route timetables and schedule modifications (47.60.327, 47.60.300, budget proviso)