

WSF – SR 160/Fauntleroy Ferry Terminal Trestle & Transfer Span Replacement Project

Summary of March 2021 Virtual Community Meetings

Overview

Washington State Ferries (WSF) hosted two online community meetings on March 17 and March 18, 2021, to kick-off community engagement for the Fauntleroy Ferry Terminal Trestle & Transfer Span Replacement Project. These meetings were the first step in launching the planning process for the project. The purpose of the meetings was to:

- Provide an overview of the current facility, why the terminal needs to be replaced and how the project will be developed.
- Be transparent about what the project planning process will include.
- Share information and begin seeking input about:
 - The issues to be addressed by the project (purpose and need).
 - WSF's goals and plan for engaging the public throughout the planning phase.
- Foster a virtual environment providing information, an opportunity for all three communities to learn more and a time for the public to ask questions in one space.
- Encourage community members to apply for the Community Advisory Group (CAG).

The meetings were held online via GoToWebinar due to public health requirements restricting in-person gatherings at this time due to COVID-19. Video recordings of the meetings were [posted on the project website](#) on March 19. The recordings include the complete presentation from the project team.

This document includes a summary of all the questions and comments received during and after the two community meetings organized by theme. WSF will share this feedback with staff and consultants working on the project.

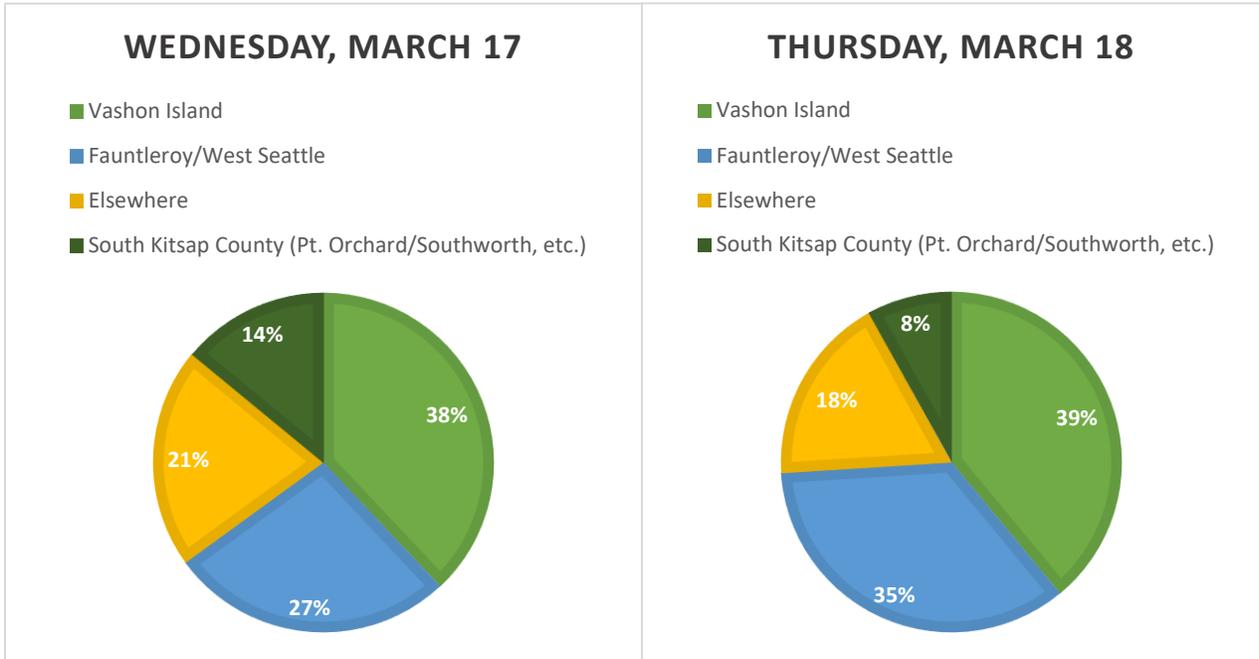
Attendees

- Wednesday, March 17 (11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.): 70 attendees
- Thursday, March 18 (6-7:30 p.m.): 90 attendees

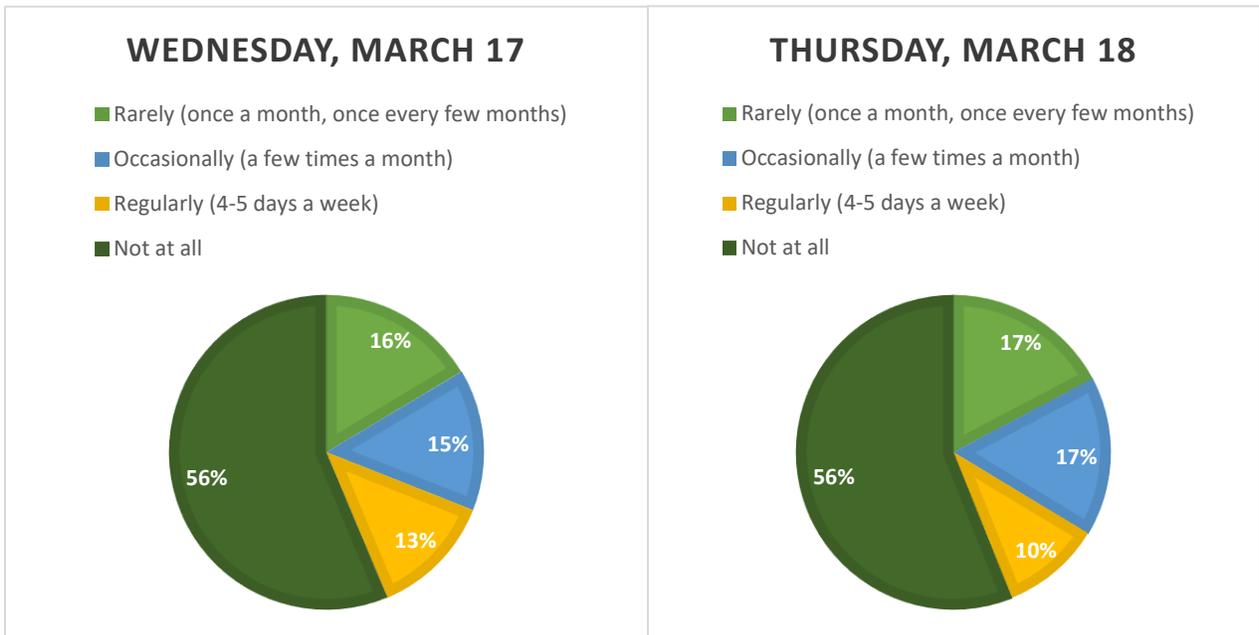
Polls

Meeting participants were invited to participate in two polls at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting attendees represented a mix of people from the communities served by the Triangle Route and people with a range of frequency riding the Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth ferry—see results below. Note: Some attendees said their response to how frequently they ride the ferry was based on today's travel patterns and would be lower than normal use due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Poll question 1: Where are you joining us from?



Poll question 2: How frequently do you ride the Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth ferry?



Questions and Comments

WSF accepted questions and comments from attendees throughout the meeting and both meetings included a question-and-answer (Q&A) period. For the March 17 meeting, the Q&A period runs from minutes 29:14- 1:19:00 of the meeting [video](#) and the March 18 Q & A period runs from minutes 27:04 – 1:25:00 of the meeting [video](#).

All questions and comments received during the meeting and comments received via the project inbox in the week after the meeting are included in this summary grouped by key themes below.

Note: Longer comments that span several themes have been broken up and assigned to multiple categories.

Community engagement

- Will future community engagement be done virtually or in person?
 - How will WSF balance the different needs of the communities served by the Triangle Route?
 - Will there be a portal to use to send comments after today?
 - How will these questions and comments be shared with the public?
 - How long will community engagement process last?
 - We're glad to see a broad group of stakeholders -- will be interesting to see how this unfolds.
 - Thanks for your comments about listening and considering other groups. Collaboration is key.
 - I'm a West Seattleite and feel that most of us like having the ferry here. Just a comment that while Fauntleroy is very vocally against the ferry, I don't think they reflect the (silent) majority of West Seattle.
 - Suggest proactively engaging Comunidad Latina de Vashon. They've been active in lobbying the school district for better outcomes for Latinx students. I think it would mean a lot to them to be contacted.
 - Suggest posting updates on the "What's Happening in Manchester" and "Port Orchard" Facebook pages.
 - There are other similar community pages - Harper and Southworth, I believe.
- **Community meeting format**
 - Even after we are able to meet in-person, I'd like to suggest some virtual meetings for those of us who have difficulty attending other events.
 - Please continue to offer virtual meeting options regardless of COVID conditions.
 - I concur that virtual meetings are actually easier for my engagement.
 - Thank you for hosting this virtual meeting. I really appreciate the open-minded and optimistic attitude being shared.
 - Great Meeting! Kudos to all. This meeting format is very successful and allows for easy participation, data collection, and distribution. Looking forward to the summer meeting and the news of progress!
 - Thank you for the virtual meeting today.
 - **Advisory Groups**
 - Is the membership for community advisory group limited to a certain number?
 - Is there a good estimate of how frequently the community advisory group will meet?
 - Will each of the advisory groups carry the same weight with regards to their input in the process?

- Will tribes be a part of the Executive Advisory Group?
- What are criteria for people who want to apply for Community Advisory Group?

Ridership forecasts and traffic model

- Commuter student[s] ridership will increase numbers of walk ons. Ridership today, doesn't capture non-pandemic ridership, of course. Please factor this community in both their school and sports schedule. The reduced triangle schedule very much impacted the Vashon commuter students negatively.
- Is population growth in Kitsap Co for next 20 years part of long-range planning?
- How is WSF addressing dynamic nature of ridership and what is the planning for growth in the future (e.g., how people riding the ferry during COVID has changed)?
- Is there a requirement to plan for future growth?
- Will there be a survey of ferry riders about their origin and destination?
- Will the team consider building a traffic simulation model for the dock?
- I took a look at the 2013 Origin/Destination survey results for the Fauntleroy ferry routes and have a few questions. What time periods were used? Please define PM Peak and AM Peak time periods. There didn't seem to be any origin/destination data broken out only for drivers. Will you please add that for the 2021 survey? Since a majority of the ridership utilizes a private vehicle, it makes sense to know where the vehicles are going. This info for only vehicles can inform the planning for the terminal and ferry routes. Likewise, separate pedestrian info can help with transit scheduling. There is a large group of West Seattle Residents who attend school on Vashon. The majority of these students walk on the ferry. Is there data on what percentage of pedestrian vs vehicle ridership has West Seattle as a destination? Data on students commuting back and forth from West Seattle to Vashon? I wonder if this might skew the data somewhat. What plans are there for a drop-off/pickup zone for ferry passengers? Students are often dropped off in the small parking area. Sometimes WSF staff yell at drivers for doing this. No-one should be yelled at when there is inadequate parking and no drop-off area available. Parents typically wait on the surrounding neighborhood streets to pick up after school. This annoys neighbors but there really are few alternatives.
- People who usually commute on the ferry - they are either working around White Center, Burien, Tukwila and Renton or SeaTac airport.
- Specifically, I was wondering what the population growth of Kitsap Co./Vashon is for the next twenty years is expected to be.

Impacts of COVID-19 and West Seattle Bridge Closure

- How is the change in ridership [due to COVID-19] being considered as part of the project planning?
- The impacts of COVID and potential traffic pattern changes will not be known until after the design is completed and construction may be underway.
- I answered the last question about frequency of use of ferries with "rarely". That's been the case the past year, but only because of, and during, the pandemic lockdown/restrictions. Once those are lifted, for me and I suspect many others, frequency of travel will increase. For my wife and I, being retired, it may only go from once every 2 or 3 months to 1 x per month, which would still be in the "rarely" category, but for others returning to their offices, for those who are in that category and were working remotely, it might be daily?
- Prior to the pandemic and then the West Seattle Bridge closure, my wife and I traveled to Seattle weekly. For a dozen years, my wife had been volunteering one day a week with a nonprofit located in Seattle's Roosevelt district and those weekly trips for her volunteer gig were

combined with trips to Costco and other errands. Between the lockdown and the West Seattle bridge closure, all that ended and given the uncertainty of when the West Seattle Bridge my wife decided 12 years of volunteering with a non-profit that far away was enough and has no plans to resume. Living where we do, on Maury Island, it's easier to now do our occasional medical appointments, Costco runs, etc. in Tacoma and we have shifted all those runs to the south end ferry, and even then, it's maybe once every two months. Being with Kaiser Permanente for medical, it was easy to shift from the Seattle facilities to Tacoma. [I finish] by saying that I mention all this as an example of how the West Seattle Bridge closure has affected at least this household's traveling pattern, shifting it to the Tahlequah/Point Defiance run in our case, and maybe other households as well???

- [Additionally,] I have no idea how many people have moved to, and will move to, Vashon, who are "remote workers" who have discovered they can live anywhere and work remotely, displacing those whose homes they bought who commuted off the north end, and will reduce ferry traffic? I know a number of folks who used to commute from Seattle area residences to offices in downtown Seattle, who have been working remotely the past year, and whose offices have no plans to ever have them return to their former offices. In at least one case, their company has since moved into half the office space elsewhere, in anticipation that they will continue to have many of their workers continue to work from home indefinitely. In those cases, these workers are now looking at moving out of their current residences to locations such as Vashon, from where they would continue to work remotely, whereas they previously would not have considered Vashon due to the commuting issue. Such folks would not use the ferry nearly as much as whoever previously resided in the home they might buy. Obviously, this is a big unknown, and I offer these comments as something to consider. I don't know how you would figure out how to predict this effect.
- My ridership pattern has been greatly reduced by the pandemic.
- If you want to look for a 'quick win', run one or two trips from Vashon to Coleman dock for as long as the W Seattle bridge is down. I know it isn't your task to fix traffic problems in Seattle, but they aren't managing traffic to town from W Seattle very well, and it would make travel to Seattle and points north a lot easier. Just pick a time, 7 days per week, and watch what happens!
- Shifting transportation demands will occur post Covid, post bridge repairs, post link light rail. No crystal ball here, have to wait for traffic studies.
- The flow of traffic into the neighborhood is not flowing smoothly with the fact that riders are exiting primary southbound with the closure of the West Seattle bridge.

Terminal and route operations and challenges

- Does WSF have a good understanding of today's challenges with dock capacity?
- How have the sailing schedule changes made in spring 2019 been working?
- Are there planning efforts for interim fixes to address the congestion in the area?
- Will changes on Fauntleroy Way be included for changes to terminal?
- How are the [sailing schedule changes made in spring 2019] performing and how were they performing pre-COVID?
- Will passenger only service be added only based on demand from riders?
- What do you expect in terms of impacts to service during construction?
- During commuting hours there are signs prohibiting left turns onto the ferry dock from the detour route. Please get rid of them. They don't actually stop commuters from making the turn.
- I'm sure you'll be closely watching the impacts from the new Southworth passenger-only service starting soon.

- Planning needs to follow the flow of traffic off of the boat regardless of the distinction of different government agencies. As post pandemic ridership increases, there will be an increasing offload bottleneck directly impacting the schedules in a domino effect that throws off the schedule throughout the busy times. Cross communication between agencies seems critical.
- Doesn't seem like you recognize Vashon is dependent on Ferries - we have no other option. That should be part of the baseline!
- Speaking of Schedules... the Tahlequah Ferry has a GAP in service that absolutely needs to be dealt with. I believe it's lunch hour perhaps. There's nothing worse than racing to get to the terminal before that GAP happens, and you can miss the ferry because of the TIME CRUNCH. Cars pile up waiting.
- A very important part of the Fauntleroy terminal project, as identified on your website (<https://wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr160/fauntleroy-terminal/home>), is the set of challenges presented as follows: Long-standing operational challenges, including: Challenges with vehicles queuing on Fauntleroy Way, with only one shoulder holding lane to serve two destinations. A small terminal, with only enough dock space for approximately 80 cars, that is served by three 124-car Issaquah class ferries using a single slip. It will not be helpful if the terminal project does not solve these problems. Only if enough dock space is provided to allow at least one-ferry's capacity on the dock will the current difficulties with loading, on-time sailing, and rider dissatisfaction be removed. In short, by the time of the completion of the Fauntleroy terminal project, the dock must be able to hold at least 124 cars. Other suggestions for solving these problems have been met with resistance and are probably untenable.
- FVS statistics are exemplary in the WSF 2019 Performance measures report-WSDOT, available at [WSDOT.gov](https://wsdot.wa.gov). FVS terminal loads 124 car dual destination sailings with full boats leaving on time. "Complaints have plummeted." Quote from [WSF], March 2021 meeting. Queues moving past our houses at a slow roll allow for easier access to driveways. Complaints here in Fauntleroy have decreased too. Line cutters generating blaring horns continue, and police have been super helpful. The FVS route is the only route to improve its on time performance in the entire system during the interval 2016-2019. It operated at 91.6% on time performance in 2019, above system average. PD-Tah is only terminal in the system to achieve 95% on time, has no holding area, benefits from one way tolling. This is important information for the three communities to be aware of. Schedule changes and dock operational changes improved the FVS performance; not increased holding. Kudos to the WSF problem solving teams and the dock operation staff. The WSF Long range plan has volumes expected to increase by 15% by 2040, about half of the expected changes for system as a whole. The addition of the 3rd 124car vessel later this year will add 10% capacity to the route. The additional 5% long term capacity needs could be met by policies to shift vehicles to low demand times. Boats do not leave full for the majority of sailings from Fauntleroy due to lack of demand/volume. We have a rush hour demand from 2-7pm westbound weekdays, and 9am-2pm weekends. A vehicle will in general make the ferry before or after those times. Dual destination sailings should be implemented on weekend rush hours in addition to weekdays. There are not queues other times if all else is operating well. Queues form (of course) if boats are out for any reason such as emergency maintenance, lack of availability of coast guard crew, emergency medical transports from Vashon, or marine travel conditions delays (fog) to name a few.
- Clearly Vision Zero with 25mph speed limits and moving from 4 lanes to 2 on Fauntleroy has been successful to reduce safety problems along that street, including those generated by ferry vehicles with u-turns needed for access during these bridge problems. [WSF] said at the FCA meeting not much has changed at the dock since 1950's. Well. It doubled in size, toll booths added, terminal building added, staff relief building added, van and carpool lots added, marked increased lighting structures and megaphone announcements, passenger walkways

expanded, 2 houses were condemned, 2 pump stations built adjacent, sewage was contained, dynamic signage installed, a park was established, Rapid Ride and other public transit increased, ride share companies formed, bike ridership increased, traffic problems led to inability to unload the boats requiring police, parking was restricted on Fauntleroy way, Zone 3 parking was installed, and Fauntleroy Way did not become a freeway. Maybe other things changed too. Just a partial list. Would encourage open mind about SDOT carpool lot. If that facility could move upland to behind Fauntleroy School Building, then "The Choke Point" problem could be improved and the ride sharing program possibly increased.

- How can WSF correct the misinformation about the FVS run? The FVS terminal is the only terminal in the entire system that improved its on time performance from 2016-2019. It operated above system wide average at 91.6%. The boats leave full for dual destination weekday rush hours. The only terminal in the entire system that achieved the goal of 95% on time performance was PD-Tah, leaving from the south end of Vashon. How can WSF get the news out that ferry service to Vashon and Southworth on this route and at this terminal is above average?
- Have you considered allowing residents priority?
- Further data not measured by WSF, but anecdotally provided by riders is the consistent sailing of vessels that are not fully loaded, typically during rush hour. Unused space on sailings is a direct reflection of lost revenue. Additional costs, again unmeasured by WSF, are the personal costs borne by riders forced to watch boats sail unfilled while waiting in line at the booths. Finally, the neighborhood bears the cost of unnecessarily long lines on Fauntleroy, which bring with them a public safety problem.
- Is there another ferry route in the system with similar challenges to Fauntleroy that we could learn from?

Terminal location/design

- Does WSF have a picture of the new project or know what the project is?
- Is WSF considering separate pedestrian and bicycle loading for efficiency and safety?
- Could moving the terminal to another location be considered?
- Can you consider improvements for storage and access along Fauntleroy Way as part of the project?
- Is WSF considering expanding the length or width of the dock?
- Will the study that will happen in the planning phase include options to expand, enhance, or move the terminal?
- Is there a plan to add a second ferry slip to the terminal as part of the ferry project?
- Will WSF run a larger class vessel at Fauntleroy, and if so, what size?
- Is WSF planning to expand dock to the North?
- Will it be in the same place?
- To help us understand the historical perspective, why was the terminal built at Fauntleroy? Basically, how did we get here?
- What about creating a Second Dock-Terminal that is located North of Fauntleroy Terminal, just around the corner from Lincoln Park? I believe that area lends a direct path to Alaska Ave, and to the West Seattle Freeway or other routes. "?" Just a thought
- Consider expanding downtown to accommodate another slip and save money expanding Fauntleroy. There is more room downtown.
- How will the alternatives consider space availability and potential for expanding the footprint? Does WSDOT anticipate potential need for eminent domain actions?

- Will alternatives such as: 1) a new dock in Des Moines, or 2) routing some peak hour ferries from Southworth/Vashon to downtown Seattle, be included as alternatives in the planning/NEPA process?
- Needs: If triangle route is expected to grow, we need more space to accommodate increasing ridership (for vehicle traffic off and on, walk-on waiting, queuing vehicles, parking, pick-up, and nearshore habitat improvements to mitigate impacts of terminal upgrades.)
- I'm a West Seattleite and feel that most of us like having the ferry here. Just a comment that while Fauntleroy is very vocally against the ferry, I do not think they reflect the (silent) majority of West Seattle.
- Fauntleroy DESPERATELY needs a larger holding area, TWO slips, *and more efficient toll booth processes.*
- For the record: "three keys to success" at Fauntleroy: 1. Passenger loading physically separated from vehicle loading such that both can occur simultaneously; 2. dock capacity that matches or exceeds vessel capacity such that departures are not delayed by fare collection; and 3 effective traffic control to minimize or eliminate the frustration, accidents, road rage and violence that regularly occurs on Fauntleroy Way SW.
- It sounds like the project is already constrained to just look at the trestle & span options, not the parking, traffic routing and the LARGER issues.
- Is the project coordinating with other construction projects in the area?
- I can't help but wonder if the Issaquah class ferries will be able to be electrified with all of their technical problems. So, if we have Olympic class ferries coming online in the coming decade maybe we need to size the dock for Olympic class and not Issaquah class vessels
- Queues form at every terminal in the system, even in Anacortes where WSF controls the road and has reservation systems. Paving paradise with more holding lanes did not solve problems there and won't solve problems here. Seattle City Council made a resolution in 1997 to minimize terminal size and vehicle volumes in Seattle. Colman Dock was not enlarged, and Fauntleroy is in Seattle.
- This is not a question, but more of a suggestion. In some way, I think there should be an addition of lane staging on land. From an environmental standpoint, I believe we will benefit from that.
 - ***Suggestions to redirect Vashon/Southworth ferries to downtown Seattle***
 - Has moving car ferry service downtown been considered or will it be?
 - Or perhaps; Southworth, goes directly to Seattle and Vashon directly to Fauntleroy?
 - Most ferry riders go downtown and beyond and do not need to go through W Seattle. Now is the time to use downtown sailings as a trial to see if it makes sense.
 - Issaquah class boats bring too many cars to this area. Please take these boats downtown and make our dock walk on only.
 - Will considering different services changes be part of the planning phase? For example, redirecting cars to Colman Dock?
 - What's OFF the table? (Such as redirecting Southworth cars to Colman Dock)

Planning and Environmental Process

- What is PEL?
- Are there limitations to what will be studied in the planning process?
- What is the NEPA process, when does it start, what does it include?

- Is this a PEL study to repair and replace the Fauntleroy Terminal as the legislature funded or can these funds be used to expand, enhance, or move this terminal?
- Please explain acronyms like NEPA just in case audience members don't know.

Environmental impacts

- Will replacing the dock help remove creosote and possible pollutants from the water?
- How are the environmental impacts to the natural area, water and Fauntleroy Creek being considered?
- Where does the Triangle route/this terminal rank in terms of WSF's priorities for electrifying the fleet?
- There are a number of fishery biologists and ecologists that live in the neighborhood -- let me know if you'd like me to reach out to see if they would be willing to serve on an advisory committee.
- Cove Park and its sandy beach had over 200% increase in its usage during Covid and remains a real treasure here. It will once again be destroyed during construction. I hope to be involved in making sure it comes back at the same site and size. Cove Park is on top of a street end, a space leased from Seattle by King County to allow access to its facilities on land and in the water. People will be quite vocal about even the temporary loss of access. Bike storage could be incorporated at the park in the future.
- How do you plan to keep the current neighborhood environment?

Project purpose/goals/need

- What are the overall goals of the project?
- Has WSF finalized the project's purpose and need?
- Why does the facility need to be replaced?
- Would you mind giving a quick explanation to the reason for a new terminal?

Safety

- What are the safety and monitoring efforts at terminal?
- Should we be worried while we're parked there?

Project Schedule

- What is the project timeline?
- Are there any other improvements WSF is planning to make in the next two years ahead of the project?
- When will construction start?

Funding

- Will funding for this project include both federal AND state sources?
- Is this project's funding in jeopardy because of West Seattle Bridge [funding needs]?
- What is the status of the legislation approving funding for improving efficiency at Fauntleroy Dock? An update on a legislature approved and funded effort should be provided at these virtual meetings.

Ticketing/fare collection

- Could GoodToGo be implemented to improve or speed up vehicle processing?
- Will WSF consider not charging for walk on riders and only vehicles?

- Is there a law that precludes WSF from implementing a passenger-rides-free policy on this route?
- Why hasn't WSF experimented with a good-to-go scanner in at least one of the toll booths, even if only for no-passenger vehicles?
- Idea for now: kids go off island for sports multiple times a week. This slows our ticket purchasing process more than anything. We need a 10 card pass for kids. I have not heard a good reason not to do this. Make it a different color if it gets confused with adult cards.
- The need for an expanded terminal at Fauntleroy is an extension of the priority placed on collecting tolls from passengers (not drivers).
- Passenger fare collection for the entire triangle route in 2016 was approximately \$2.1 million. The cost of passenger fare collection, namely a minimum of 2 personnel in the booths, and 1 personnel in the terminal building, is unknown and not provided by WSF, but surely approaches \$1 million annually. I personally believe that combining good-to-go with free passenger fares on this route would be a net positive impact to the revenue on this route, as long as dock personnel were reduced accordingly. But even if the loss of revenue were on the order of \$1 million annually, surely it is a cost advantage compared to rebuilding / expanding the dock. Without question, repurposing the existing dock to use good-to-go scanners for vehicles, and allowing all vehicle and walk-on passengers to board for free would allow vehicles to flow directly off of Fauntleroy and onto the ferry. This is exactly the process in place today for loading at Vashon. Vessels NEVER leave Vashon with unused space and cars on the dock.
- Ticket purchase directly through the mobile app! minimal clicks instead of directing users to the website.
- No question but a big vote yes to getting GoodToGo up and running at all of the ferry terminals.
- The 2040 Plan includes a number of actions under the "Manage Growth" theme to increase walk on ridership and spread-out demand. These include fare changes to promote walk ons, coordinating with transit to improve transit connections, how will these be included in the options to be studied?
- Operational and processing changes can meet or exceed needs at this terminal in the long term without major expansion to a 186-vehicle holding facility. Favor improved processing with electronic tolling or pre-ticketed solutions over markedly increased pavement over Puget Sound, over Lincoln Park, over Cove Park or along Fauntleroy way. The "need vehicle holding space 1.5x the vessel capacity metric" is as old as the dock itself.

Next Steps

In closure, WSF staff reminded meeting attendees that while community engagement is underway the team will be:

- Collecting data about existing conditions.
- Continuing coordination with our federal partners and refining the project's purpose and need.
- Recruiting for and launching advisory groups.
- Planning for next round of community meetings in summer 2021.

WSF shared the project email, website and contact information for any questions or comments. The meeting was adjourned.