



**MEETING SUMMARY
LOCAL AGENCY REVIEW TEAM MEETING #5
FERRY FINANCING LEGISLATION
SPIKE EIKUM CONFERENCE ROOM, COLMAN DOCK**

JULY 24, 2008
1:00 – 3:30 P.M.

Note: This meeting summary represents notes from the Local Agency Review Team (LART) meeting, and is not a formal transcript. It is provided for the information of WSDOT/WSF, LART members, and other interested parties.

Meeting Attendees

<i>Present</i>	<i>LART members</i>
X	Heather McCartney, City of Mukilteo
X	Ian Munce, City of Anacortes
	Matt Shelden, Sound Transit
X	Greg Cioc, Kitsap County
X	Mike Bertrand, Town of Friday Harbor
X	Ann Sutphin, City of Seattle
X	Stephen Clifton, City of Edmonds
X	Mike Sudduth, King County Metro
X	Randy Brackett, Island County
	Phil Williams, City of Bremerton
	Mike Morton, Island County
	Kelly Dickson, City of Bainbridge Island
X	Rick Sepler, City of Port Townsend
X	Pete Rose, San Juan County
	John Clausen, Kitsap Transit
X	Stephen Kiehl, Puget Sound Regional Council
	Mary McClure, Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council

Staff:

Ray Deardorf, WSF
Celine Gihring, WSF
Michael Hodgins, Berk & Associates
Rob Berman, KPFF
| Laura LaBissoniere, PRR

Meeting Overview

Ray Deardorf, WSF Planning Director, welcomed attendees to the 5th meeting of the Local Agency Review Team (LART) and reviewed the meeting agenda. The agenda for the 5th meeting of the LART focused on the work plan and process for the remainder of 2008, key milestones, potential implications of baseline demand



scenarios and the impacts of recreational traffic on long range projections. Members were given the opportunity to provide feedback on several route level LRP packages, including an illustrative example of a hypothetical route. In addition the meeting provided an opportunity for members to share their community's perspectives on current ferry issues.

Roundtable: Perspectives from LART on Current Ferry Issues

LART members shared the following comments about current WSF activities from their community's perspectives.

- Mukilteo is working to sign a lease for additional parking. This involves closing a restaurant and will only be a temporary solution until an agreement is made on the relocation of the ferries.
- Mukilteo also reported on a recent City council meeting in which a number of topics related to ferries including implementing a reservation system and peak pricing.
- King County will begin to fund POF service.
- PSRC is in the middle of updating its long-range regional transportation plan, Transportation 20/40. They are also near completion of a passenger only ferry study and are meeting in one week to begin a discussion of the future reach of the study and how it will coincide with King County's POF service. The plan will be adopted in March/April 2010.
- WSF completed an extensive public outreach effort in June to begin a discussion of pricing and operational strategies. The meetings were structured differently than previous outreach efforts in that participants were divided into smaller work groups. This method proved successful and resulted in useful information.
- Port Townsend is observing success with the implementation of its new reservation system. Despite anticipating a negative response, the public has responded positively. The ferry terminal hasn't experienced long lines and people seem to be getting the message. The following lessons learned have been identified:
 - No penalty system allows people to make multiple reservations.
 - Kiosks need to be available at the terminal.
 - It is crucial for a marketing campaign to coincide with the implementation of a no reservation system to educate the public.

June FAC Meetings Update

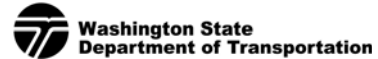
Ray requested feedback from the member's prospective communities on the June Ferry Advisory Committee Meetings.

- Vashon received positive feedback.
- Anacortes said the new outreach approach proved a success. Community members realize progress is occurring and now is the time to participate.
- San Juan County said the FAC meeting was appreciated and it succeeded in easing public fear of a cookie cutter solution. Participants felt listened to by WSF.

Completing the LRP: Schedule, Process and Milestones

Ray distributed a long range plan process and products handout which divided up three major milestones:

1. Packages of Options for Strategies, Services, and LOS by Route (September)



2. Draft Long Range Plan (November)
3. Final Long Range Plan (January)

Ray explained the process of moving toward a set of packages of strategies and services by route. The goal is to combine services, provide a consistent set of options and improve customer service. The packages range from low cost scenarios to higher cost investments. The purpose of these packages is to earn feedback from the community and summarize the findings in a draft plan by November. The plan should reveal how investments are prioritized; describe a range of potential investment levels and the relative costs and benefits of increasing funding levels for ferries. The Final Plan will also include a clear recommendation that identifies the Department's preferred level of funding and a justification for this choice.

Members provided the following suggestions and comments:

- The plan should be integrated with other transportation systems.
- Will you attempt to phase over 20 years?
- At what point does fare structure get put in place?
- Consider how vehicle/transportation scenarios will change over the next 20 years and be prepared to be flexible to changing demands. Consider a short-term planning framework.

Route-Level LRP Packages –Illustrative Example

Ray passed out a route level LRP packages illustrative document to showcase the development of different operational strategies. Based on a hypothetical route, the diagram shows a range of options and consequences. Ray asked the LART members for feedback on the format and content of the document. Michael Hodgins from Berk & Associates added that the categories would be internally consistent and the diagram presents the tradeoffs of different options.

LART members provided the following suggestions and comments:

- External transportation issues such as impacts to pedestrians and transit service providers are not included in this diagram. Based on this observation, the team decided the cost section should reflect a holistic representation of the issue. It should include all costs necessary to make ferries run properly.
- Cost should be listed at the top to provide a clear picture for the legislature.
- Inadequacies of the reservation system prevent it from being a cost effective, viable solution in all cases. (i.e. Mukilteo doesn't have the resources to enforce parking violations).
- Bicyclists and pedestrians need to be addressed and included in the long range planning.
- Combine findings with PSRC study to identify when passenger only ferries might be a good option.
- Consider the implications of increased ridership.
- Coordinate with transit—implement a regional fare incentive to passengers using both ferry and bus.
- Not enough direct goal/benefit connection—the relationship seems unclear.
- Be careful to define “peak” because in some instances, scheduling has driven peaks.
- Explain *why* the cost is higher for particular scenarios. (i.e. No reservation system causes the need for larger facilities.)



Michael explained that the final draft will include more detailed information and it may list more than three options to encompass a wide range of viable choices.

Baseline Demand and Recreational Demand

The Travel Forecasting Technical Review Committee conducted a study to address the impacts of recreational travel on traffic volumes. Ray distributed a presentation overview handout from a recent committee meeting on June 17 that summarized their findings. Although it is difficult to forecast, the committee developed a long range planning model, based on regional population and employment data that represents a weekday afternoon average during peak season. They aimed to investigate what other mechanisms were available to forecast recreational traffic but found it difficult to develop alternative methods that were as robust and accurate. They managed to develop a method to obtain travel growth trends based on estimates from the State Tourist Office; and tracked real expenditure growth for eight counties from 1991-2006. Based on this model, recreational traffic is projected to grow at a faster rate- 42 percent compared to 27 percent for overall traffic growth from 2006-2030. In particular, Mukilteo/Clinton and San Juan domestic routes show the highest increase with a larger seasonal swing. The committee is still conducting analyses on a route-by-route basis.

Ray noted that since recreational travel information is not as robust as other data, these findings are being treated as a sensitivity test, instead of incorporating them into the long-range forecast. For the routes affected disproportionately by recreational traffic, the team will consider this data in the range of traffic planning. Ray added that the Commission is also currently conducting a survey that may influence these findings.

Ray expressed gratitude to Celine Gihring and her team for delving into new ground and developing a method for analyzing this type of traffic. The implications of these results may trigger a much higher summer demand than other forecasts would have developed. In turn this may put more pressure on level of service.

LART members addressed the issue of how to identify different types of passengers. In response, Celine explained the process of identifying passenger origin, destination and trip purpose in a study conducted every 6-7 years. In addition, another periodic survey is completed every 2 years although its results are much less consistent because they are charged to develop survey methodology that can be repeated over time and with a different purpose in mind. They request less data about origins and destinations, however more sets of data provides more information.

Baseline Demand and LOS Impacts

Ray distributed another handout for LART review: LOS Implications of Baseline Seasonal Ridership Projects. This handout demonstrates when particular routes are projected to trigger level of service (LOS) standards. According to the document, Fauntleroy is an early trigger, followed by Edmonds/Kingston which is scheduled to trigger LOS during the middle of the next decade. Any growth in the San Juan market would trigger LOS threshold based on summer standards. Currently the San Juan corridor is below spring standards. The Fauntleroy-Southworth route exceeded the LOS standard in 2006.



Michael added that the transition to measuring LOS in terms of minutes will force the team to relook at all of these projections.

LART members inquired about the accuracy of the wait times projected on the handout, claiming they appear to be low estimates. Ray explained the labor intensive process of stamping passengers to measure wait times. The study is conducted every year in Mukilteo but hasn't been done system wide since 2003 because traffic has been fairly stable during this period. If there is a surge in ridership, then WSF will need to conduct a new analysis but this process is too resource intensive and needs to become automated before regular testing can occur.

Michael explained that the diagram captures the imbalance between the supply and demand of spaces. Although reservations are helpful, the imbalance persists. Ray added that it is a work in progress and LOS is an important component to consider as the team develops the plan for the fall.

Note: This data does not represent an equal analysis across the board but WSF will continue using it until current data can be provided. The Mukilteo/Clinton route is affected by concurrency.

Progress Update on Technical Work Elements

The transportation demand survey was conducted as a follow-up study to a survey completed in March. The responses to the first survey indicated a preference for a more detailed online structure. The questions were constructed to test people's sensitivity to pricing and views on the reservation system. This data will help to inform the forecasting process.

The Joint Transportation Committee is conducting a Commissions Funding Study to look at fleets and realistic vessel life expectancy. They are also studying vessel sizing to determine which size of vessels and fleets are most efficient. Over the next 21 years there will be a large number of vessels that need to be replaced and the cost will be quite extensive.

Ray thanked the LART for their comments and announced that the next meeting will be held Thursday, September 18 unless otherwise noted. The meeting was then adjourned.

Meeting Handouts

- Long Range Plan Process and Products Overview
- Route-Level LRP Packages—Illustrative Example
- Travel Forecasting Technical Review Meeting #8 Presentation Overview
- LOS Implications of Baseline Seasonal Ridership Projections