MUKILTEO MULTIMODAL PROJECT

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Summary

JANUARY 2012

Washington State Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Washington State Ferries

MUKILTEO MULTIMODAL PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUMMARY

Prepared for:

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Washington State
Department of Transportation

Washington State Ferries

January 2012

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MUKILTEO MULTIMODAL PROJECT
SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PREPARED PURSUANT TO:

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, §102 (42 U.S.C. §4332); Federal Transit Law (49 U.S.C. §5301(e), §5323(b) and §5324(b)); 49 U.S.C. §303 (formerly Department of Transportation Act of 1966, §4(f)); National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, §106 (16 U.S.C. §470f); Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. §1536(a)(2)), Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (16 U.S.C. §1855(b)(2)); Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668); Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10 (33 U.S.C. 401); Clean Water Act, Section 404 (33 U.S.C. 1344); Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments); Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice); Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management)

by the

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

and the

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

with the cooperation of

CITY OF MUKILTEO
CITY OF EVERETT
SNOHOMISH COUNTY
PORT OF EVERETT
SOUND TRANSIT
COMMUNITY TRANSIT
SAMISH INDIAN NATION
STILLAGUAMISH TRIBE
SUQUAMISH TRIBE
TULALIP TRIBES
U.S. AIR FORCE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

1/13/2012

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Federal Transit Administration

Date of Approval

1/13/2012

Megan White
Director of Environmental Services
Washington State Department of Transportation

Date of Approval

ABSTRACT

The Washington State Department of Transportation, Ferries Division proposes the Mukilteo Multimodal Project to improve the operations, safety, and security of facilities serving the mainland terminus of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route in Washington State. The ferry route is part of State Route 525, the major transportation corridor crossing Possession Sound, which separates Island County from the central Puget Sound mainland. The proposed project is located in the city of Mukilteo and the city of Everett in Snohomish County, Washington. This environmental impact statement (EIS) evaluates the No-Build Alternative and three Build alternatives for their potential effects on the natural and built environments. Mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, or compensate for anticipated impacts are also discussed in this EIS. The Build alternatives evaluated are: Existing Site Improvements, Elliot Point 1, and Elliot Point 2.

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A 45-day period has been established for commenting on this document. Comments may be submitted in writing or may be made orally at the public hearings. Written comments should be submitted to Paul W. Krueger at the address above. Public hearings will be held on February 22, 2012 in Mukilteo, WA and February 23, 2012 in Clinton, WA. All comments received by March 12, 2012 will be considered by the project administrators and will be included in the formal record.

Fact Sheet

Project Title

Mukilteo Multimodal Project

Proposed Action

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Ferries Division (also known as Washington State Ferries [WSF]) proposes the Mukilteo Multimodal Project to improve the operations, safety, and security of facilities serving the mainland terminus of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route in Washington State. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has provided funding during the project's planning phase and may be a source of construction funding. FTA and WSDOT are making this proposal available for public review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

The proposed project is located in the city of Mukilteo and the city of Everett in Snohomish County, mostly west of the Mukilteo/Everett city line. The area under consideration begins on the eastern edge of Mukilteo Lighthouse Park and extends to the eastern edge of the U.S. Air Force's Mukilteo Tank Farm in the city of Everett and adjacent to the Port of Everett Mount Baker Terminal. In a separate action, the U.S. Air Force would need to transfer property rights or otherwise make the property available before any alternative on the Mukilteo Tank Farm could be developed.

This environmental impact statement (EIS) documents the analysis of the No-Build Alternative and three Build alternatives. These alternatives are summarized below.

No-Build includes what would reasonably be needed to maintain the existing ferry terminal at a functional level. Under the No-Build Alternative, an improved multimodal transportation facility to meet future demand or operational needs would not be developed. Instead, the No-Build Alternative assumes that maintenance and structure replacements would occur in accordance with legislative direction to maintain and preserve ferry facilities. WSF would make no major facility investments to improve the operation, safety, security, or capacity at the terminal.

Existing Site Improvements reconstructs, expands, and realigns the terminal and its related facilities on and around the current site. A new transit center would be constructed and the existing vehicle holding area would be reconfigured. New toll booths, operations buildings, and a new passenger building would be constructed. New overhead passenger loading ramps would connect to the second story of a new passenger building.

Elliot Point 1 relocates the ferry terminal from its current location to the eastern portion of the Mukilteo Tank Farm in both Mukilteo and Everett. This alternative also provides a transit center near the ferry terminal. A new passenger building and a maintenance building would be located overwater upon a new concrete trestle. An

overhead passenger loading ramp would connect to the second story of a new passenger building. The Tank Farm Pier and the existing ferry terminal would be removed. First Street would be realigned and extended as a four-lane roadway from SR 525 to the Mount Baker Terminal in the city of Everett. The alternative also includes modified intersections; a modification to the Sound Transit Mukilteo Station; the development of sidewalks and bike lanes, parking areas, toll booths, ferry vehicle holding areas, and a shoreline promenade on each side of the new ferry dock; and the restoration of part of Japanese Creek to an open stream.

Elliot Point 2 relocates the ferry terminal from its current location to the central portion of the Mukilteo Tank Farm, with the vehicle holding area to the west of the terminal and the transit center and parking to the east. This alternative would remove the current terminal and the Mukilteo Tank Farm Pier and develop the same types of marine facilities as Elliot Point 1, but would require fewer supporting piles than Elliot Point 1, less overwater construction, and would be closer to shore. Passenger and maintenance buildings would be on land. Roadway improvements would include a realignment and extension of First Street as a four-lane roadway to the central section of the Mukilteo Tank Farm. The Sound Transit commuter rail station would be modified with relocated parking, and a new bus transit center and parking areas would be built on the Mukilteo Tank Farm site. The alternative would also develop sidewalks, bike lanes, and a shoreline promenade on each side of the new ferry dock.

Project Proponent and Co-Lead Agencies

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Anticipated Permits and Approvals

Federal

- Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
  - National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106
  - Section 4(f) Impact to Historic and Recreation Resources
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10 Permit
  - Clean Water Act, Section 404 Permit
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - Endangered Species Act, Section 7(a)(2) Biological Opinion
  - Disturbance Permit (Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act)

- National Marine Fisheries Service
  - Endangered Species Act, Section 7(a)(2) Biological Opinion
  - Incidental Harassment Authorization (Marine Mammal Protection Act)
  - Biological Opinion (Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act)

State

- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
  - Hydraulic Project Approval
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
  - Authorization for use of state-owned aquatic lands
- Washington State Department of Ecology
  - Clean Water Act, Section 401 Permit
  - Coastal Zone Management Consistency Determination
  - National Pollution Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Stormwater General Permit
- Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
  - National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 Consultation

Local

- City of Mukilteo and City of Everett
  - Substantial Shoreline Development Permit
  - Critical Area Application
  - Essential Public Facility Permit
  - Engineering Permit
    - Shoreline Variance
    - Zoning Variance
    - Grading and Clearing Permit
    - Right of Way Permit
  - Building Permit

Authors and Principal Contributors

This Draft EIS was prepared under the direction of the United States Department of Transportation FTA and WSDOT. The list of individual authors and contributors is included in *Appendix D, List of Contributors*.

Date of Issue of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

January 27, 2012

Date of Public Hearing

Mukilteo
February 22, 2012
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
(brief presentation at 6:00 PM)
Rosehill Community Center
304 Lincoln Avenue
Mukilteo, WA 98275

Clinton (Whidbey Island)
February 23, 2012
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
(brief presentation at 6:00 PM)
Clinton Community Hall
6411 Central Ave
Clinton, WA 98236

Comment Period and Subsequent Environmental Review

The 45-day comment period on the Draft EIS begins January 27, 2012. WSDOT and FTA will accept comments through March 12, 2012. Comments can be emailed to mukilteocomments@wsdot.wa.gov. The public can access the Draft EIS and comment online at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/. Comments may be sent to:

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After considering the public, agency, and tribal comments, WSDOT will select a Locally Preferred Alternative. It is anticipated that a Final EIS will be prepared and issued in the first half of 2013. The Final EIS will include responses to comments on the Draft EIS. FTA is anticipated to issue a Record of Decision after publication of the Final EIS.

Date of Final Action

To be determined.

Location of Background Data

In addition to the Draft EIS, technical reports and other supporting documentation are available for review at the following locations:

Washington State Department of Transportation
Washington State Ferries Division
2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98121

or

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/

Cost of Document and Availability for Review and/or Purchase

Additional copies of the Draft EIS can be obtained in CD-ROM or print format by contacting Paul W. Krueger, Project Environmental Manager at the contact address listed above. Electronic files are also available at:
http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/

Consistent with the Paperwork Reduction Act and FTA policy to minimize taxpayer costs, FTA will print and distribute the executive summary of the Draft EIS together with a CD-ROM of the complete Draft EIS. Printed copies of the complete Draft EIS are available for $20.00, which does not exceed the cost of printing and mailing. Copies of this document in CD-ROM are free and available upon request. Printed copies of the Draft EIS are available for viewing at selected Everett and Sno-Isle public libraries and the City of Mukilteo public library (for library locations see *Appendix F, Distribution List*). Readers may view the Draft EIS online at:
http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/

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S. SUMMARY

S.1 The Mukilteo Multimodal Project

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Ferries Division (also known as Washington State Ferries [WSF]) proposes the Mukilteo Multimodal Project to improve the operations and facilities serving the mainland terminus of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route in Washington State. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has provided funding during the project's planning phase and may be a source of construction funding.

WSDOT and FTA are preparing this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). FTA is the federal lead agency for the NEPA environmental review process. WSDOT is the state lead agency for SEPA.

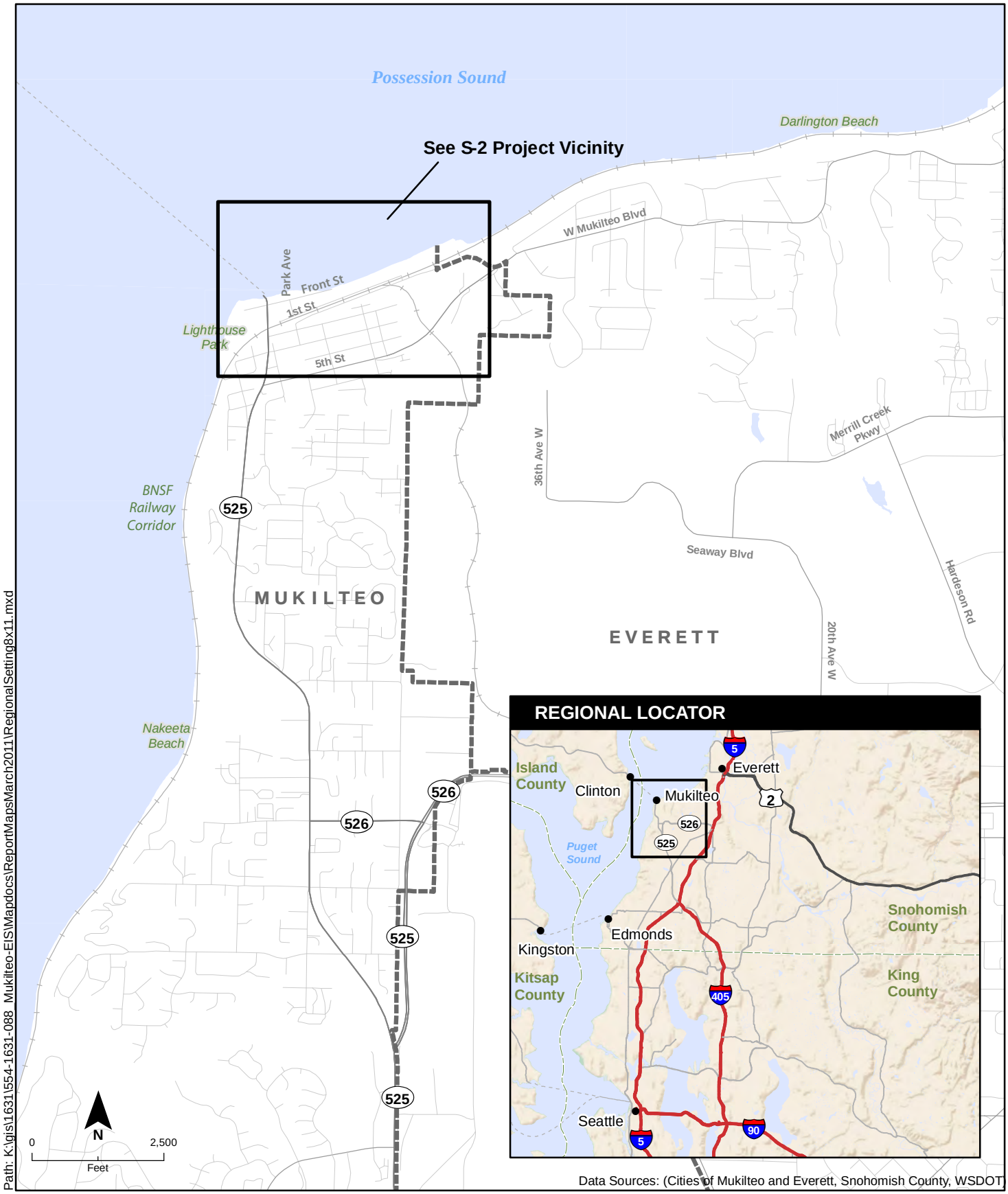
The ferry route is part of State Route (SR) 525, the major transportation corridor across Possession Sound, which separates Island County (Whidbey Island) from the central Puget Sound mainland. The Mukilteo-Clinton route is the second-busiest in terms of vehicle traffic in the state ferry system, and it has the third-largest annual ridership. Figure S-1 shows the regional setting and Figure S-2 shows the general project area.

S.2 The Mukilteo Ferry Terminal Area

The existing Mukilteo ferry terminal is located in the city of Mukilteo in Snohomish County, Washington, west of the Mukilteo/Everett city line. The shoreline in this area faces north to northwest and runs primarily east-west within the project area. West of the existing terminal are Elliot Point and Mukilteo Lighthouse Park.

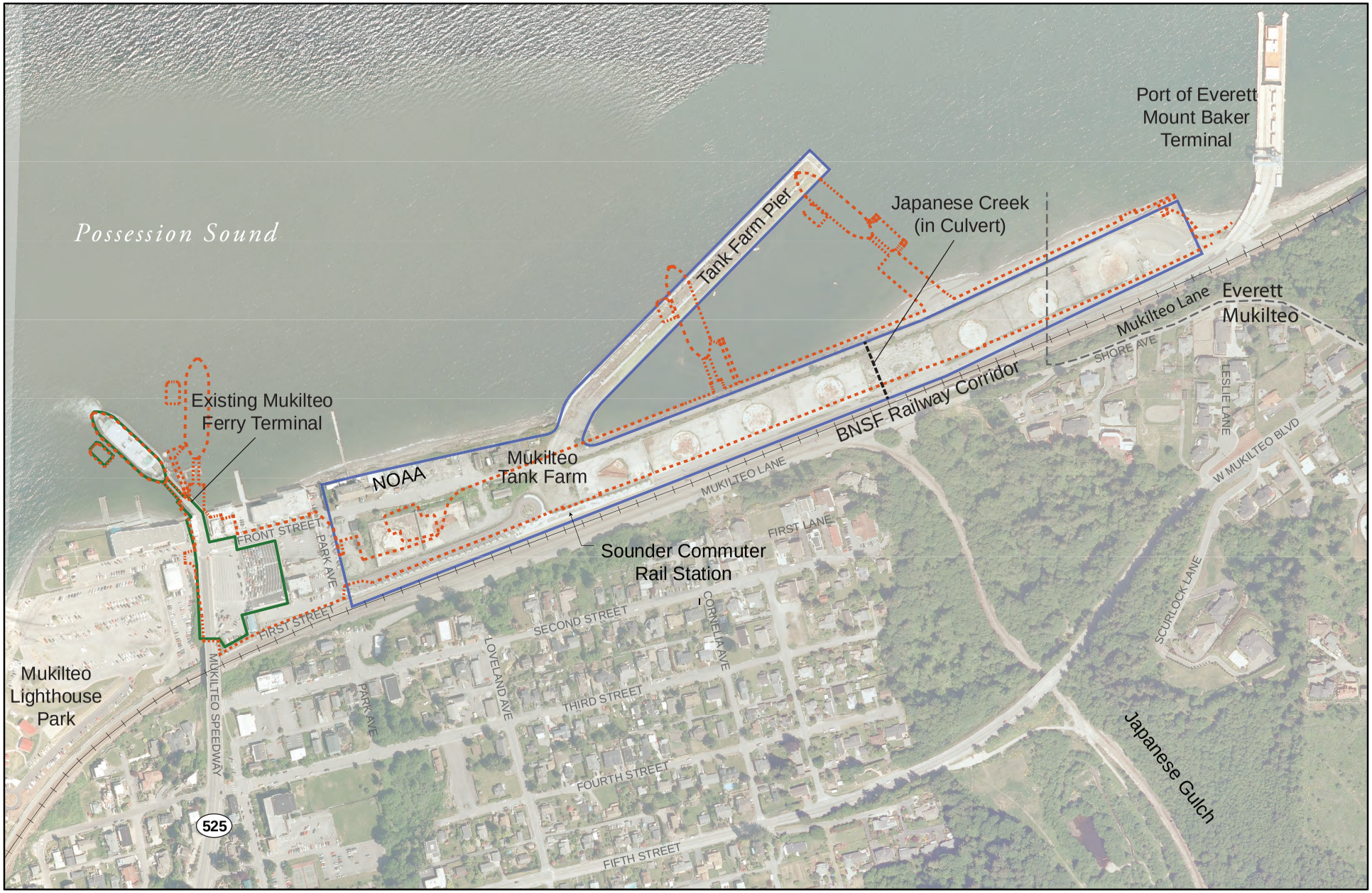
The point and its original shoreline area include several important historic and archaeological sites, including a buried shell midden created by Native American peoples, with deposits dating back over 1,000 years. In fact, the name Mukilteo is derived from a Salish name meaning "a good place to camp". To the east of the existing terminal is a 20-acre property, currently owned by the U.S. Air Force (Mukilteo Tank Farm). The property includes a research facility operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service; the research facility is also known as the NOAA Mukilteo Research Station. The U.S. Air Force property also includes lands and a large pier formerly used for fuel storage and loading. The Mukilteo/Everett city line is at the eastern end of the Mukilteo Tank Farm. The Mount Baker Terminal, a marine-to-rail intermodal facility operated by the Port of Everett, is located just east, in the city of Everett.

The BNSF Railway owns and operates a railroad that runs south of the Mukilteo ferry terminal and adjacent to the southern boundary of the Mukilteo Tank Farm. The BNSF tracks mostly follow the shoreline between Seattle and Everett. East of where the railroad crosses under SR 525, it borders the Mukilteo Tank Farm, and a rail spur connection extends to the Mount Baker Terminal. Sound Transit's Sounder commuter rail also uses the BNSF tracks. Its Mukilteo Station is located southeast of Park Street, between the Mukilteo Tank Farm and the BNSF railroad tracks.



City Boundary

Figure S-1. **Regional Setting**



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Existing Terminal
Project Area
Mukilteo Tank Farm
City Boundary

Figure S-2. **Project Vicinity**

S.3 Purpose and Need

The following purpose and need statement will guide decisions about the project.

S.3.1 Project Purpose

The purpose of the Mukilteo Multimodal Project is to provide safe, reliable, and efficient service and connections for general-purpose transportation, transit, high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs), pedestrians, and bicyclists traveling between Island County and the Seattle-Everett metropolitan area and beyond. The project is intended to:

- Reduce conflicts, congestion, and safety concerns for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists by improving local traffic and safety at the terminal and the surrounding area that serves these transportation needs.
- Provide a terminal and supporting facilities with the infrastructure and operating characteristics needed to improve the safety, security, quality, reliability, and efficiency of multimodal transportation.
- Accommodate future demand projected for transit, HOV, pedestrian, bicycle, and general-purpose traffic.

S.3.2 Project Need

The existing facility is deficient in a number of aspects, including safety, multimodal connectivity, capacity, and the ability to support the goals of local and regional long-range transportation and comprehensive plans, including future growth in travel demand. Those factors, which are further described below, demonstrate the need for an improved multimodal facility.

Safety and Security

Safety is WSDOT's top priority, and security at transportation facilities is a national concern. Safety and security come into play with this project in several ways: at the pedestrian/vehicle interface, with the general traffic flow in the SR 525/Front Street vicinity, and in maintaining safety and security for the facility itself.

- The Mukilteo ferry terminal has received few improvements since it was built in 1957. The existing timber structures, including the docking facilities, are beyond the end of their useful lives.
- The existing terminal does not meet current seismic standards. The existing facility is underlain by deep, potentially liquefiable soils that are highly susceptible to lateral spreading during an earthquake.
- Changed U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Department of Homeland Security protocols now require the ability to secure terminal areas when there is a natural disaster, heightened security alert, or other emergency. The existing facility has city streets within the terminal area and does not allow for a physical separation

between the terminal and open public areas, which increases safety and security concerns, and could require WSDOT to interrupt service or close the terminal to respond to an emergency or a heightened security alert.

- Collisions near the SR 525/Front Street intersection have included sideswipes, vehicle/pedestrian collisions, and collisions with parked vehicles.
- Because of congestion caused by ferry traffic, pedestrians often make high-risk decisions to cross the SR 525/Front Street intersection during breaks in ferry traffic; near misses between vehicles and pedestrians are common. Pedestrians who access the terminal area, transit facilities, surrounding businesses, and Mukilteo Lighthouse Park compete with vehicles for access to this intersection.
- Other inadequate facilities include a lack of passenger drop-off/pickup areas and poor bus access to the bus bay; both increase congestion and the risk of accidents.
- Passengers who are loading and unloading from the ferry or going between the toll booth and the terminal building must traverse routes that do not meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Transit Connectivity and Reliability

The current facility provides poor connections between transit, rail, and ferry modes, which significantly hamper the quality and reliability of the transportation system in this area and add to the overall transportation and safety problems related to the terminal. The major concerns are:

- Transit connections at the Mukilteo ferry terminal cannot adequately serve current or future needs. There are only two bus bays, located 200 feet away, uphill and across a major local street. The limited transit facilities are inadequate to support the current service, including staging and layover needs for transit operations, and they have limited boarding areas and amenities for transit riders. The current configuration would not allow bus service to be expanded. In addition, the Sounder commuter rail stops at the Mukilteo Station, approximately 2,000 feet from the existing terminal, and the streets between the ferry terminal and the station have missing or substandard pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Keeping the ferry on schedule is integral to multimodal connectivity and the ability of the system to meet growing demand by allowing passengers to make on-time connections to scheduled bus and train service. Inefficient vehicle staging slows fare collection, which delays departures. Lack of a dedicated HOV access lane makes it difficult to implement WSDOT's preferential program for carpools, and worsens operating efficiency. Also, pedestrians walking on and off the ferry use the same span that vehicles use. This requires passengers and vehicles to be loaded at separate times, which leads to system inefficiency and can cause delays that last throughout the day.

Growth in Travel Demand

The Mukilteo-Clinton route connects the two segments of SR 525, the major transportation corridor between Island County (Whidbey Island) and the Seattle-Everett metropolitan area. SR 525 is classified as a Highway of Statewide Significance. In addition to serving ongoing travel demand, SR 525 is needed to connect the communities and military facilities on the island for evacuations, disaster relief, and medical emergencies.

WSDOT's travel forecasts highlight the higher future demand for improved multimodal facilities serving the Mukilteo-Clinton route: WSDOT predicts a 73 percent increase in annual passengers (1,840,000 to 3,175,000) on the Mukilteo-Clinton route from 2006 to 2030.

The Mukilteo-Clinton route serves a high number of commuter trips, and growth in employment on both Whidbey Island and on the mainland is a primary reason for the predicted growth in trips by ferry. In response, the WSF Long-Range Plan calls for meeting the growing travel needs at the Mukilteo ferry terminal primarily through increasing the share of walk-on trips. This reinforces the need for improved connections and facilities between ferries and other modes, including transit, bicycle, and walking (WSDOT 2009).

Other Related Objectives

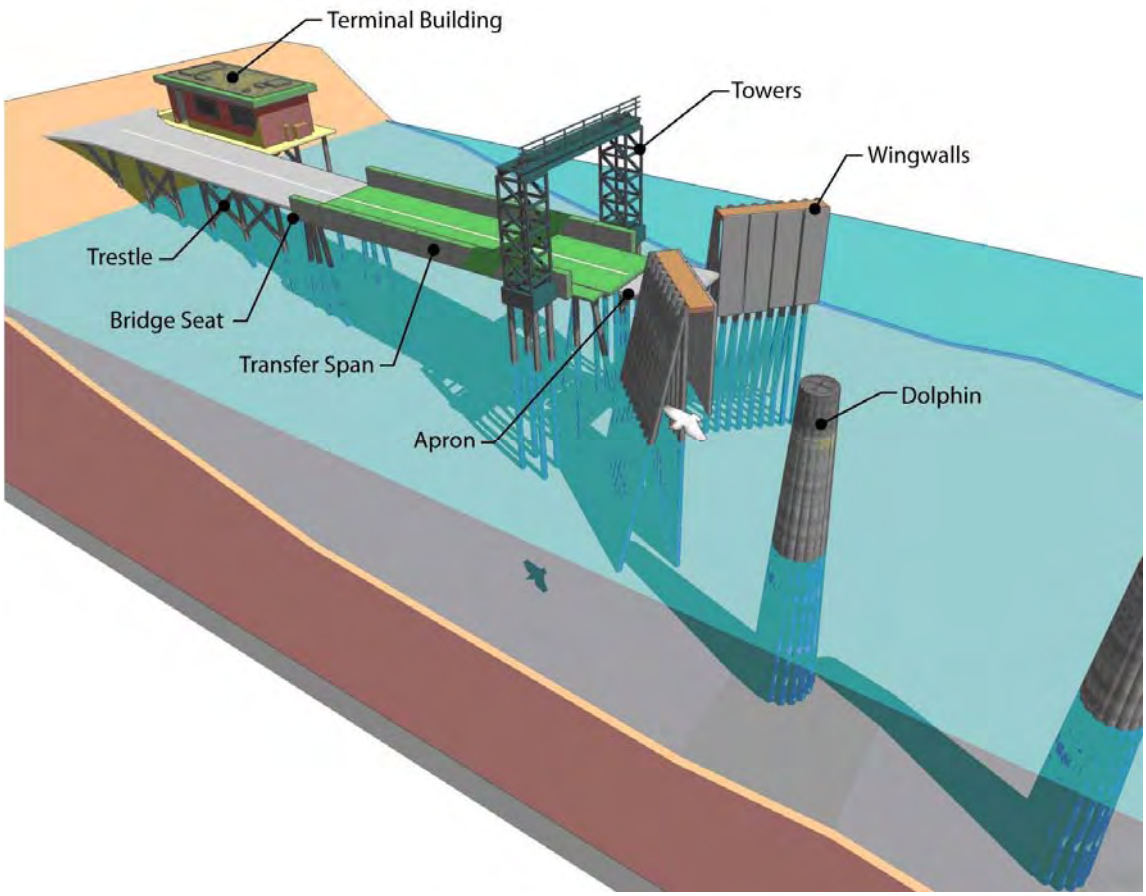
Through its public planning and outreach efforts, including public scoping comments, WSDOT has also identified environmental and project development goals to help guide the project.

- The project should be fiscally responsible and supportive of state, regional, and local transportation plans including, but not limited to, the *Washington State Department of Transportation Ferries Division Final Long-Range Plan: 2009–2030* (WSDOT 2009), as well as regional and local land use plans.
- The project should be sensitive to the rich cultural and environmental resources of the vicinity in a manner that respects and enhances these resources.
- The project should not preclude development of a second slip at the terminal in the future to provide operational flexibility or additional capacity.

S.4 Alternatives

The project is considering four alternatives:

- The No-Build Alternative, which maintains the existing facility but does not improve it; this alternative provides a basis against which to compare the effects of the "Build" alternatives
- The Existing Site Improvements Alternative, which would construct an improved multimodal facility by replacing the existing Mukilteo ferry terminal with an expanded terminal and multimodal center at the current site
- The Elliot Point 1 Alternative, which would relocate the terminal to the eastern portion of the Mukilteo Tank Farm as part of an integrated multimodal center and remove the existing terminal
- The Elliot Point 2 Alternative, which would relocate the terminal to the western portion of the Mukilteo Tank Farm as part of an integrated multimodal center and remove the existing terminal



Key Parts of a Typical Ferry Terminal

The three Build alternatives are the result of several years of planning by WSDOT and FTA, in coordination with other agencies, tribes, and the public. They represent three approaches to develop the project within a physically constrained waterfront area in a manner that supports the project's purpose and need while avoiding or minimizing impacts, particularly to the site of a shell midden that extends along much of the western waterfront.

S.4.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative provides a baseline against which to compare the effects of the Build alternatives. It includes what would be needed to maintain the existing ferry terminal at a functional level. Maintenance and structure replacements would occur in accordance with legislative direction to maintain and preserve ferry facilities, but WSDOT would make no major investments for improvements. Figure S-3 illustrates the planned maintenance and preservation activities currently assumed.

Nearly all of the ferry docking, loading, and unloading facilities would need to be replaced because they will have reached the end of their lifespan by 2040. The existing vehicle holding area would remain at its current location. The terminal supervisor's building, passenger and maintenance building, and the three existing toll booths would be replaced at their current locations. This alternative would not improve substandard conditions related to congestion, vehicular and pedestrian conflicts, poor sight distance, and security.

Key parts of a typical ferry terminal

fixed dolphin – *an assembly of steel piles or concrete drilled shafts supporting a concrete cap and a fendering system.*
floating dolphin – *concrete or wooden barge structures located offshore clad with a perimeter fendering system and anchored to the seabed; used to help guide the ferry into the slip.*
wingwall – *an assembly of steel piles or concrete drilled shafts supporting a steel or concrete cap and a fendering system to guide and stop the ferry at its loading and unloading position.*
tower – *currently used to house and support the cable and counter weight system that supports, raises, and lowers the outboard end of the transfer span. (the tower system will be replaced by hydraulic lifts regardless of the alternative chosen.)*
apron – *adjustable ramp at the end of the transfer span that accommodates varying water heights.*
transfer span – *movable bridge that allows the vehicles and pedestrians access on and off the ferry; it is the link between the ferry and the trestle.*
trestle and bridge seat – *over-water stationary pile-supported bridge structure that serves as a connection between land and the nearshore end of the transfer span for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic (pedestrians do not use the trestle if overhead pedestrian loading is available).*

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No-Build Alternative
Elements to be replaced
Ferry Traffic Control Light

Figure S-3. **No-Build Alternative**

S.4.2 Existing Site Improvements Alternative

The Existing Site Improvements Alternative would construct an improved multimodal facility by replacing the existing Mukilteo ferry terminal with an expanded terminal on and around the current site. Its key features are shown on Figure S-4.

All of the existing ferry facility marine and upland features would be replaced. The ferry dock and trestle would be rebuilt facing due north to provide a straighter alignment with SR 525. The Port of Everett's existing fishing pier and seasonal day moorage would be relocated. Options for relocating the pier include placing it to the west or to the east of the new trestle.

The existing vehicle holding area would remain at the same general location and would still store the equivalent of one-and-one-half 144-vehicle vessels (approximately 216 vehicles). Toll booths and a supervisor's building would be constructed nearby. A new passenger and maintenance building would be constructed east of the ferry access driveway expanding into areas currently occupied by other uses. Overhead passenger loading ramps would connect to the second story of the new passenger building.

Front Street and Park Avenue would become one-way streets, and First Street would be extended west to a new signalized intersection with SR 525. A new transit center would be constructed east of the vehicle holding lanes, combined with a parking area for ferry employees.