

# CHAPTER 7

## Public Involvement





## 7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement activities include the project's coordination with and outreach to agencies, tribes, and the public, including community organizations. Agency, tribal, and public involvement activities for the Mukilteo Multimodal Project began in 2004, and have included public, agency, and tribal meetings, online meetings, and stakeholder briefings. Over the course of the project, WSDOT and FTA have provided many opportunities for agencies, tribes, and the public to provide input on the project's purpose and need, range of alternatives, and potential impacts.

WSDOT and FTA have an extensive communications program to involve the public, agencies, and tribes in developing this EIS in accordance with NEPA, SEPA, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, WSDOT Executive Order E1025.01, the WSDOT Centennial Accord Plan and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This chapter describes the efforts conducted through the publication of the Draft EIS, and outlines the additional involvement and coordination activities that the project team will conduct throughout the rest of the environmental review process. FTA's regulations implementing NEPA emphasize the importance of public involvement in the EIS process. Similarly, Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU requires FTA to "(1) Extend an invitation to other Federal and non-Federal agencies and Indian tribes that may have an interest in the proposed project to become 'cooperating' or 'participating' agencies (2) provide an opportunity for involvement by agencies and the public in helping to define the purpose and need for a proposed project, as well as the range of alternatives for consideration in the impact statement, and (3) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in and comment on the environmental review process."

### 7.1 Outreach Goals and Objectives

An open public involvement process with ample opportunities to inform and involve the public, agencies, and tribes results in better projects. Stakeholders should have opportunities to interact with and receive responses from project team members on issues of interest or concern throughout each phase of the Mukilteo Multimodal Project. The project's *Coordination Plan (Appendix H)* outlines the goals and objectives of the public involvement process, and discusses the various communication methods (such as briefings and materials) used throughout project development.

### 7.2 Agency Coordination

As detailed in the *Coordination Plan*, agency coordination is led by FTA with support from, and in conjunction with WSDOT, and includes early and continuous information exchange with the appropriate agencies. Its intent is to work

cooperatively to identify and resolve issues that could delay completion of the environmental review process or could result in denial of any approvals required for the project.

### 7.2.1 Lead Agency

FTA is the NEPA lead agency supervising the preparation of the EIS by WSDOT. WSDOT is the SEPA lead agency. See the *Coordination Plan* for a description of lead agency responsibilities.

### 7.2.2 Cooperating and Participating Agencies

Under SAFETEA-LU, participating agencies are those federal and non-federal agencies and tribes that may have an interest in the project. Cooperating agencies are by definition participating agencies, but with a higher degree of responsibility and involvement in the environmental review process. Cooperating agencies are any other federal agencies, tribal governments, state agencies, and local agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise with respect to any environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIS. Such agencies have been invited to serve as cooperating agencies. See the project’s *Coordination Plan* for further information on the role of cooperating agencies. Table 7-1 lists cooperating agencies and Table 7-2 lists participating agencies.

**Table 7-1. Cooperating Agencies**

Cooperating Agencies	
City of Everett	City of Mukilteo
Community Transit	Port of Everett
Samish Indian Nation	Snohomish County
Sound Transit	Stillaguamish Tribe
Suquamish Tribe	Tulalip Tribes
U.S. Air Force	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Table 7-2. Participating Agencies**

Participating Agencies	
Federal Highway Administration	Island County
National Park Service	Puget Sound Regional Council
U.S. Coast Guard	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Washington State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Washington State Department of Ecology	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

As required by SAFETEA-LU, FTA and WSDOT have provided opportunities for comments by agencies and tribes on the purpose and need for the project and the range of alternatives to be considered. Most recently, this occurred during the scoping period in 2010. WSDOT also briefed a number of the participating agencies during development of the Draft EIS. Several agencies reviewed and commented on methodology reports and offered comments on a preliminary draft of the Draft EIS.

### 7.2.3 Tribes

FTA and WSDOT are committed to government-to-government consultation with Native American tribes on projects that may affect tribal rights and resources. The Mukilteo waterfront area is recognized as the site of the signing of the Point Elliott Treaty of 1855, and its cultural history predates that event by a thousand years or more. It lies within the traditional territory of the Snohomish people (one of seven tribes that now occupies the Tulalip Indian Reservation), but the point was also a landmark for neighboring Native American peoples that lived or traveled within lower Puget Sound and the Salish Sea.

FTA and WSDOT will continue to engage in consultation with affected tribes throughout the process in accordance with the following documents and regulations:

- **NEPA** calls for federal agencies to invite the participation of any affected federally recognized Native American tribe in the environmental review process.
- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act** requires that federal agencies consult with federally recognized tribes and the State Historic Preservation Officer and others regarding potential impacts and mitigation on historic properties prior to making decisions that could affect those properties.
- **Government-to-Government Relationship with Tribal Governments**, a Presidential Memorandum dated September 23, 2004, and Executive Order 13175 dated November 6, 2000, require that federal agencies operate within a government-to-government relationship with federally recognized tribal governments.
- **SAFETEA-LU** requires that federal agencies coordinate with tribal governments by inviting them to be “participating agencies.” Participating agency status provides tribal governments an additional method to engage in the environmental review process, but it does not supersede government-to-government or Section 106 consultation. As participating agencies, tribes are afforded an opportunity to comment at specific project milestones outlined in SAFETEA-LU.

- **WSDOT Centennial Accord Plan** was created in accordance with Washington State’s 1989 Centennial Accord and the 1999 Centennial Accord Implementation Guidelines. The Centennial Accord Plan mandated that each state agency must have a procedure to implement effective government-to-government relations. The WSDOT Centennial Accord Plan includes the WSDOT Secretary's Executive Order on Tribal Consultation (E1025.01), a Dispute Resolution Policy, and detailed descriptions of the programs, services, and funding available to tribes from key WSDOT divisions and offices.
- **WSDOT Executive Order E1025.01** directs WSDOT employees to enter into consultation with tribes on all decisions that may affect tribal rights and interests. It defines consultation as respectful, effective communication in a cooperative process that works toward a consensus, before a decision is made or an action is taken. Consultation with governments occurs independently of the public participation process. Representatives of tribal governments and tribal members have equal access to the public participation process.

See the *Tribal Consultation Plan (Appendix H)* for further information about tribal coordination efforts, including contacts, correspondence, and dates of meetings with tribal representatives. Table 7-3 lists the tribes invited to participate in the development of the EIS.

**Table 7-3. Tribes Invited to Participate in the EIS**

<b>Federally Recognized Tribes</b>
Lummi Tribe of the Lummi Reservation, Washington
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe of the Muckleshoot Reservation, Washington
Nooksack Indian Tribe of Washington
Samish Indian Tribe, Washington
Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe of Washington
Snoqualmie Tribe, Washington
Stillaguamish Tribe of Washington
Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation, Washington
Swinomish Indians of the Swinomish Reservation, Washington
Tulalip Tribes of the Tulalip Reservation, Washington
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe of Washington

FTA and WSDOT are coordinating with the non-federally recognized Duwamish and Snohomish tribes as interested parties.

## 7.3 Public Involvement and Outreach

### 7.3.1 Public Involvement Approach and Timeline

The following sections outline public involvement for the Mukilteo Multimodal Project to date and how WSDOT and FTA will approach public involvement through the Record of Decision. Public involvement activities have been and will continue to coincide with major project milestones.

### 7.3.2 Public Involvement History

Since the Mukilteo Multimodal Project was initiated in 2004, WSDOT and FTA have provided frequent opportunities for interested members of the public, agencies, and tribes to engage, share concerns, and discuss specific project details with WSDOT staff. Public involvement activities to date have included public meetings, agency and tribal meetings, online meetings, and stakeholder briefings.

The environmental review process for the Mukilteo Multimodal Project began with a NEPA EA process in 2004. WSDOT held two public EA scoping meetings in the fall of 2004. Early in 2006, upon review of comments from the public, agencies, and tribes and completion of environmental discipline studies, FTA and WSDOT determined that the potential impacts to natural and cultural resources would warrant a more detailed analysis and an EIS should be prepared instead.

On February 17, 2006, FTA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for the Mukilteo Multimodal Project. FTA and WSDOT requested public comments on the scope of the alternatives and the impacts to be considered, and held two public meetings in March 2006. They also held an agency and tribal scoping meeting for the EIS on March 21, 2006.

The Washington State Legislature put the project on hold in 2007 due to funding and constructability issues associated with the previously identified alternatives. In 2009, WSDOT Ferries Division released its Long-Range Plan, which presents a vision for the future of the ferry system that maintains current levels of service and includes limited terminal improvements. Within the framework of the Long-Range Plan, WSDOT and FTA re-initiated the environmental process in February 2010 with new project concepts for review and evaluation.

### 7.3.3 Recent Public Involvement

FTA and WSDOT reinitiated the environmental review process in January 2010. The purpose of the second scoping period was to reintroduce the revised project purpose and need, and gather input from agencies, tribes, and the public on the full range of potential alternatives and potential impacts.

WSDOT and FTA conducted a round of public scoping meetings in October 2010. Following a 30-day public comment period, the project team prepared a Scoping

Summary Report containing comments received during the scoping phase of the project. The project team used this scoping information to evaluate alternatives and develop the EIS.

General public involvement for the 2010 scoping period included:

- Targeted stakeholder outreach including briefings and interviews
- Four widely advertised in-person public meetings
- One online open house to reach residents who were unable or preferred not to attend a meeting in person
- An online comment tool that provided an easy and informative electronic method of learning about the concepts and submitting comments
- Notices and information on the project posted on the project website ([www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/)). This online resource has information on how to submit a comment and a library of project information.

### **Stakeholder Outreach**

WSDOT and FTA contacted a number of parties prior to the start of the 2010 public scoping comment period to gather insights from agency and tribal staff and community members about the project and to help refine the public involvement approach. This offered a chance to bring stakeholders up to date on the project and to establish a clear understanding of the process for developing and evaluating project alternatives.

WSDOT and FTA assembled a history of the 2004 through 2006 public process, focusing on past public comments and notes from briefings to community organizations and then reached out to stakeholders to share project information, update contact information, discuss and confirm past issues, and learn about new interests and concerns. Based on contacts established through this initial outreach and the lists of commenters and interested parties from previous phases of the project, WSDOT distributed an email invitation to the October 2010 public scoping meetings.

### **Public Notices**

WSDOT advertised the public comment period and scoping meetings through a variety of methods.

Display advertisements were placed in the *Seattle Times*, *Mukilteo Beacon*, *Edmonds Beacon*, *Everett Herald*, *Snohomish Tribune*, *South Whidbey Record*, *Whidbey News-Times*, and *Whidbey Examiner*. In addition, a *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* online advertisement was viewed 1,054,582 times; 1,153 readers clicked on the advertisement to link to the project website.

WSDOT sent e-mail announcements to 385 citizens on the project mailing list and 2,121 subscribers of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry route alert listserv. WSDOT hung posters at public libraries and government facilities in the project vicinity; on ferries serving the Mukilteo-Clinton and Edmonds-Kingston routes; and in terminals, bus shelters, and transit centers in Island County, Everett, and Edmonds.

WSDOT distributed a press release to local media, resulting in print, online, and television news coverage.

WSDOT also coordinated efforts with local cities and community organizations to include notification about the open houses on community calendars, websites, blogs, government cable TV channels, and e-mail listservs. WSDOT also helped spread the word about the public meetings and opportunities to comment using social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter.

The entities that posted announcements or distributed information are listed in Table 7-4.

**Table 7-4. Announcements and Information Posted by Cities and Organizations**

<b>City/Organization</b>	<b>Advertising Medium</b>
City of Edmonds	Announcement on website and government cable TV channel
Edmonds Chamber of Commerce	Chamber newsletter
Everything Edmonds	Community calendar
City of Everett	Facebook posting
City of Langley	Announcement on website
City of Mukilteo	Announcement on website; Facebook posting
City of Oak Harbor	Community cable TV channel, newsletter, website
Seattle PI Whidbey Island Blog	Blog
Sno-Isle Libraries	Facebook announcement
Town of Coupeville	E-mail announcement
Whidbey Daily News	Community calendar
Whidbey Island Community	Facebook posting

## **Public Scoping Meetings**

WSDOT and FTA held four in-person public scoping open houses in October 2010 to serve directly affected populations, and one online open house to increase participation among the broader community. All public meetings were held at publicly owned facilities that are accessible to the disabled and served by transit.

Approximately 160 people attended the meetings in Whidbey Island, Mukilteo, Edmonds, and Everett and 15 people participated in the virtual online open house.

At all open houses, WSDOT provided meeting attendees with a project fact sheet and the *Community Guide to Scoping and the Project Concepts*. Project team members answered questions and explained the concepts to participants. WSDOT staff gave a presentation on the project history, the concepts under consideration, and opportunities to get involved. Following the presentation, WSDOT offered participants the opportunity to provide comment, which was captured by members of the project team and included in the *Scoping Report* (WSDOT 2011).

Information from the open houses, including copies of the boards, presentation, and handouts, is posted in the Project Library section of the project website: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/).

Throughout the public comment period, members of the public had the option to submit comments by completing a paper comment form, using the Google Map comment tool, sending a letter to WSDOT and FTA, or sending an e-mail to the project team.

### **Public Comments Received During 2010 Scoping**

WSDOT received approximately 365 public comments during the scoping period at public meetings, by mail, e-mail, and online using the Google Map comment tool.

#### **Key Themes**

Several key themes emerged from the public comments collected during this time. Overall, comments were overwhelmingly positive about the project and the need to improve the existing terminal. The majority of commenters supported the Mukilteo Elliot Point concepts, followed by the Existing Site Improvements concept. There was little support for the Edmonds or Everett concepts. Please see the *Scoping Report* (WSDOT 2011) for this project for a full summary of comments received.

Key public scoping comment themes included:

- Strong opposition to moving the terminal to Edmonds or Everett
- Support for additional parking for commuters and Whidbey Island residents
- Concerns for traffic and safety
- Support for strong multimodal connections
- Support for adding a second slip

### **7.3.4 Recent Agency and Tribal Involvement**

WSDOT and FTA received feedback from agencies and tribes early in the environmental review process and have engaged in continuous consultation since then. During the scoping process, WSDOT hosted meetings with agencies and jurisdictions in an effort to distribute project information and obtain feedback.

Complete meeting summaries and detailed information is available in the *Scoping Report* (WSDOT 2011). Table 7-5 provides details on agency and tribal coordination meetings.

**Table 7-5. Agency and Tribal Coordination Meetings**

<b>Reinitiation Meeting</b>		
<b>Date /Location</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	
February 10, 2010 Mukilteo City Hall	Berger ABAM City of Everett City of Mukilteo Community Transit DAHP Ecology ESA, Adolfson Everett Transit FHWA INCA Engineers Inc. Island County Mukilteo School District Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District National Park Service	Port of Everett Representative of Senator Patty Murray Samish Indian Nation Skagit River System Cooperative Snohomish County Department of Public Works Sound Transit Suquamish Tribe Tulalip Tribes U.S. Air Force U.S. Coast Guard U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Washington State Attorney General's Office WDFW
<b>Pre-Workshop Meeting</b>		
May 5, 2010 Mukilteo City Hall	Berger ABAM City of Edmonds City of Everett City of Mukilteo Community Transit Everett Transit	INCA Engineers Inc. Island Transit Port of Everett Sound Transit
<b>Workshop Scoping Meeting</b>		
<b>Date/Location</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	
June 10, 2010 Mukilteo City Hall	Berger ABAM City of Everett City of Mukilteo Community Transit DNR Ecology EPA Everett Transit FHWA INCA Engineers Inc. Island Transit Naval Station Everett NOAA Port of Everett PSRC Representative of Senator Maria Cantwell	Representative of Senator Patty Murray Samish Indian Nation Skagit River System Cooperative Snohomish County Sound Transit State Senator of Washington, 21st District Suquamish Tribe Tulalip Tribes U.S. Air Force U.S. Coast Guard Washington2 Advocates WDFW

**Table 7-5. Agency and Tribal Coordination Meetings**

<b>Agency/Tribal Scoping Meeting</b>		
<b>Date/Location</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	
September 29, 2010 Mukilteo City Hall	Berger ABAM City of Everett City of Mukilteo Community Transit DAHP INCA Engineers Inc. Island Transit Lummi Nation Naval Station Everett – Operations NOAA Parametrix	Port of Everett PSRC Puget Sound Regional Council Representative of Senator Maria Cantwell Representative of Senator Patty Murray Samish Indian Nation Snohomish County Sound Transit Stillaguamish Tribe Tulalip Tribes U.S. Coast Guard U.S. Navy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Air Force Washington State Patrol

### 7.3.5 Recent Government-to-Government Consultations with Tribal Nations

FTA, working with the WSDOT Mukilteo Multimodal Project Tribal Liaison, formally contacted potentially affected tribes to assess their interest in the Mukilteo Multimodal Project. In particular, FTA contacted tribal governments representing the tribes who signed the Point Elliott Treaty because the Mukilteo shoreline is recognized as the area where the treaty was signed and is also an area within the treaty-protected usual and accustomed fishing and hunting grounds of four tribes. FTA and WSDOT have offered each potentially interested tribe the opportunity to act as a cooperating agency throughout the development of the EIS.

In addition to the agency and tribal coordination meetings listed in Table 7-5, Table 7-6 lists government-to-government meetings with the tribes. These meetings have covered a range of environmental and project implementation issues of interest to the tribes. As the Draft EIS process has continued, the key topics of discussion have been cultural resources, ecosystems, fishing, and the treaty rights of the tribes.

**Table 7-6. Meetings with Tribal Nations**

<b>Meeting with Tribes</b>	<b>Date</b>
Presentation to the Suquamish Tribe	March 17, 2010
Presentation to the Swinomish Tribe	March 17, 2010
Presentation to the Stillaguamish Tribe	April 15, 2010
Presentation to the Lummi Nation	April 29, 2010
Presentation to the Samish Tribe	May 12, 2010
Presentation to the Snoqualmie Tribe	September 1, 2010

**Table 7-6. Meetings with Tribal Nations**

<b>Meeting with Tribes</b>	<b>Date</b>
Presentation to the Tulalip Tribes	September 24, 2010
Post-Scoping Meeting with Lummi Nation, Samish Nation, Stillaguamish Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Swinomish Tribe, Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, and Tulalip Tribes	December 10, 2010
Archaeological and Cultural Investigations Status Meeting with DAHP, Lummi Nation, Samish Tribe, Snoqualmie Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, and Tulalip Tribes	February 3, 2011
Tribal Briefing with Lummi Nation, Samish Tribe, Snoqualmie Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Swinomish Tribe, Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, and U.S. Air Force	
Meeting with Tulalip Tribes	August 25, 2011
Meeting with Snoqualmie Tribe to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	August 26, 2011
Meeting with Stillaguamish Tribe to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 7, 2011
Meeting with Tulalip Tribes to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 7, 2011
Meeting with Samish Tribe to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 8, 2011
Meeting with Swinomish Tribe to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 8, 2011
Meeting with Lummi Nation to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 8, 2011
Meeting with Suquamish Tribe to discuss Cultural Resources Discipline Report	September 9, 2011
Meeting with Tulalip Tribes to discuss Natural Resources	October 19, 2011
Meeting with Tulalip Tribes	November 10, 2011

### 7.3.6 Public Involvement Methods

In addition to public and agency meetings and community briefings, WSDOT used a variety of communications methods to involve the public and key stakeholders in the environmental review process. To ensure project information is widely available, WSDOT maintains a variety of communications tools and materials. These materials will continue to be updated as the project continues.

Please see Table 7-7 for a list of public involvement methods used to date and those anticipated for the remainder of the environmental review process.

**Table 7-7. List of Public Involvement Activities**

<b>Season/Year</b>	<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>Method</b>						
		<b>Stakeholder Briefings</b>	<b>Public Meetings</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Handouts</b>	<b>Database and Comment Tool</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>News Release</b>
Fall 2004	NEPA EA Scoping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Winter/Spring 2006	NEPA EIS Scoping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Summer/Fall 2010	Additional NEPA EIS Scoping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Winter 2012 (Anticipated)	Draft EIS Publication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Winter 2013 (Anticipated)	Final EIS Issuance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 2013 (Anticipated)	ROD Issuance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## **Project Website**

The project website provides up-to-date information and announcements about upcoming project milestones and public involvement opportunities, a project library, and contact information for the project. During the public scoping comment period, the website featured a public comment button that directed visitors to the Google Map comment tool. The project website address is [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/ferries/mukilteoterminal/multimodal/).

## **Database**

A WSDOT database tracks public, agency, and stakeholder comments, and facilitates e-mail updates about the project and public engagement opportunities.

The database includes key stakeholders; community organizations; interested residents; interested ferry riders; government officials; media; contacts made at public meetings and requests from the website, e-mail and other communication tools; and residents and businesses within 500 feet of the project area.

## **Information Materials**

WSDOT and FTA developed and frequently update the following items and distribute them at public meetings, project briefings, and other project-related events. All materials are also available on the project website.

### ***Project Timeline***

The project timeline provides a graphic overview of key milestones and corresponding public involvement opportunities.

### ***Fact Sheet***

The project fact sheet provides a brief overview, descriptions of each alternative, ways to provide comment, a schedule and milestones, and information on the purpose and need for the project.

### ***“Community Guide” to the EIS***

This document serves as an overview of the environmental review process. It is updated for each phase of the process. The *Community Guide to Scoping and the Project Concepts* included specific information about the public scoping phase.

### ***Google Map Comment Tool***

The Google Map comment tool is a web-based interactive map showing the Mukilteo Multimodal Project and alternatives. The user of this map can click on a geographic location and view graphics and descriptions of the proposed alternatives, as well as project benefits, potential impacts, and other information. In addition, the public is able to offer comments and feedback on a specific alternative.

## **Community Resources**

WSDOT tapped into existing community resources to share project information and encourage participation in the scoping process. These resources include community newsletters, blogs, Facebook pages for organizations in the project area, and websites.

## **7.4 Next Steps**

The release of this Draft EIS begins a 45-day period for review and comment, including public hearings. During this period, the public, agencies, and tribes have the opportunity to comment on the alternatives under evaluation and the associated environmental impacts.

### **7.4.1 Public and Agency Involvement during the Draft EIS Review Period**

The Mukilteo Multimodal Project Draft EIS describes and analyzes the project alternatives and potential environmental impacts. The Draft EIS was publicly released with a Notice of Availability published in the Federal Register and in SEPA. In conjunction with the release of this Draft EIS for public comment, WSDOT and FTA invited cooperating and participating agencies to review and comment.

Also in conjunction with the Draft EIS release, WSDOT and FTA are holding public meetings and hearings in Mukilteo and Whidbey Island and hosting an online informational open house. Public comments will be accepted by mail, e-mail, and in person at hearings during the 45-day comment period. Additionally, comments can be submitted online using the Google Map comment tool linked on the project website.

The following approaches have been used to notify the public about the Draft EIS availability:

- Public notices placed in local newspapers
- Press release sent to local media
- E-mail announcement sent to project listerv and Mukilteo-Clinton route alert listserv
- Notice posted on the project website
- Outreach and briefings with key stakeholders
- Posters displayed on vessels and in Mukilteo/Clinton ferry terminals

### **7.4.2 Final EIS**

FTA and WSDOT will continue to provide opportunities for public, tribal, and agency involvement through completion of the Final EIS.

After considering comments received on the Draft EIS, WSDOT will identify its Locally Preferred Alternative. FTA and WSDOT plan to complete and circulate the Final EIS to the public during the first half of 2013.

FTA is anticipated to issue a Record of Decision no sooner than 30 days after the Final EIS is released. This would allow WSDOT to move forward with securing funding, completing final design, starting construction, and then moving into operations.