

# CHAPTER 7 OTHER TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

On Bainbridge Island, non-city transportation systems have an extremely important role in the movement of people, vehicles, and goods. Ferry and transit systems are the primary means of moving people to and from their destinations, from commuter trips to Seattle, to tourists visiting Bainbridge Island. This chapter describes each of these systems and their relationship to the Bainbridge Island transportation system.

## Ferry System



The Washington State Ferries (WSF) service is the primary provider of ferry transit services in western Washington. The Seattle-Bainbridge ferry run provides an integral connection between greater King County and locations east of Puget Sound to the Kitsap Peninsula and the Olympic Peninsula regions. System-wide, the WSF system carries more than 23 million passengers per year (2014 Washington State Ferries Rider Statistics Report).

### Washington State Ferry Operations

The Seattle/Bainbridge Island ferry provides daily crossings between Bainbridge Island and downtown Seattle’s Colman Dock. The 35-minute crossing covers 8.6 miles and connects Bainbridge Island and the SR 305 Corridor with downtown Seattle and the Interstate 5 and 90 Corridors. Two Jumbo Mark II Class auto/passenger ferries, the M/V Tacoma and M/V Wenatchee, serve the route. Each vessel has a travel speed of 18 knots and maximum capacity for 2,499 passengers, 202 vehicles and 60 commercial vehicles.

Table 7-1 lists the ridership, schedules, crossing times, and service frequencies for the Seattle-Bainbridge Island route and alternative ferry routes that serve the central Kitsap County region. These alternative routes include the Seattle-Bremerton (passenger-vehicle and passenger-only), and Kingston-Edmonds runs. The Seattle-Bainbridge run carries the largest share of ridership with more than 6.32 million passengers per year. The Kingston-Edmonds runs carries approximately 4 million annual passengers and the two Seattle-Bremerton ferries carry about 2.5 million riders.



Credit: WSF

Table 7-1. WSF Schedules and Headways

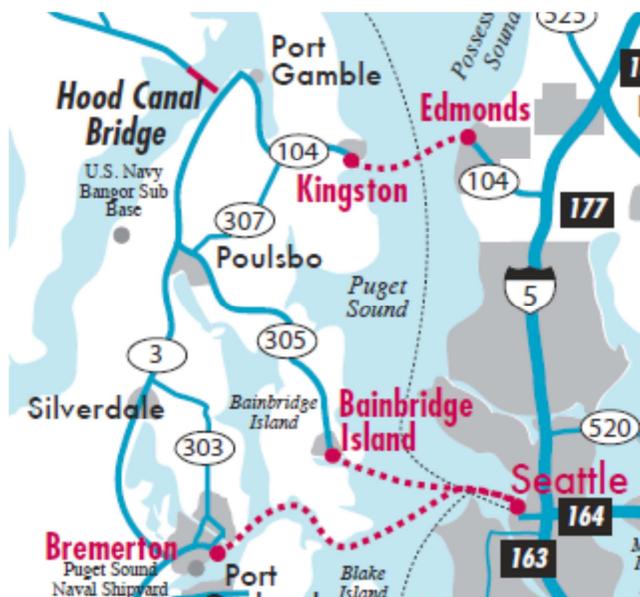
Route	2002 Ridership	Vehicles Carried	Hours of Operation (first-last sailing)	Crossing Time	Service Frequency
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Seattle/Bainbridge Island	6.72 million	2.19 million	4:45 am-2:10 am	35 min	40-50 min
Seattle/Bremerton	2.21 million	0.72 million	4:50 am-12:50 am	60 min	70-140 min
Seattle/Bremerton Passenger-Only	0.68 million	--	5:00 am-1:30 am	30 min	40-270 min
Kingston/Edmonds Ferry	4.49 million	2.34 million	4:55 am-12:55 am	30 min	40-70 min

Source: Washington State Ferries

**Figure 7.1 Ferry Routes**



**Ferry LOS**

WSF uses daily percentage of vessels at vehicle capacity as the measure of the Level of Service for ferry services. The methodology places an emphasis on using existing capacity as opposed to an earlier method of measuring length of wait times at peak sailings which emphasized commute times for motorists.

**Table 7-2 Ferry Operation LOS**

Route	Level 1	Level 2
Seattle/Bremerton	25% to 30%	50% to 60%
Seattle/Bainbridge Island	25% to 30%	65% to 75%
Edmonds/Kingston	25% to 30%	65% to 75%

Source: WSF 2009 Long Range Plan



Level 1 LOS represents the percentage of sailings at peak vehicle capacity. At 25% capacity, peak sailings are filled to capacity but other sailings are not. Exceeding the LOS standard is an indicator that adaptive strategies should be employed to reduce peak demand.

Level 2 represents the percentage of sailings at peak vehicle capacity. Standards are set to 65% to 75% for routes that reflect the ability to spread demand throughout the day due to more time flexibility amongst customers. Exceeding the LOS standard is an indicator that additional investment is needed to address capacity.

The WSF Long Range Plan forecast that percentage of vessels sailing at peak capacity will not exceed 67% through 2030, nor exceed the LOS threshold of 75% for the peak summer month of August. Thus, capacity improvements in the planning period are not driven by the LOS standard.

### ***Kitsap Transit Passenger-Only Ferry Proposals***

WSF discontinued passenger-only ferry service in 2003. A private company, Aqua Marine and the Port of Kingston have attempted to restore high speed passenger-only service from Kingston and Seattle. Both services have proven to be financially unsustainable due to limited ridership and high passenger fares. The Port of Kingston ended its service in 2012.

Kitsap Transit proposed to develop a passenger-only ferry service directly to Seattle supported by a sales tax increase in Kitsap County in 2003. This proposition was not supported by the voters at that time. In 2016 Kitsap County voters approved the Kitsap Transit passenger-only ferry proposal, and service will be implemented to serve Bremerton, Kingston, and Southworth in coming years.

### ***Ferry System Issues***

The primary issue for ferry service is funding. With citizen initiatives to reduce car tab fees and the erosion of the gas tax with more fuel efficient vehicles, transportation funding has been in decline. Since the taxpayer backed tax cuts in the early 2000's, WSF has been faced with raising fares, deferring maintenance of its fleet and terminals, and foregoing expanded operations. Challenges include:

- Maintain operating funding to provide 80% fare box recovery
- Fund vessel maintenance and replacement reserves
- Fund terminal reconstruction including the Seattle Ferry Terminal
- Develop long range plans and funding strategies for expanding services including investments in expanding existing service, additional routes, and multimodal transportation to meet more sustainably the region's growing transportation needs. Examples may include upgrading the Edmonds-Kingston ferry terminals to better serve bus and other multimodal transportation, introducing ferry service from Southworth to Seattle and upgrading walk-on capacity and level of service to Bainbridge Island using three smaller auto capacity ferries to reduce traffic congestion impacts to SR 305.



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### **Recommendations for Ferry Services**

The City supports the retention and expansion of ferry systems to reduce the dependency on the Bainbridge Island terminal and SR 305, and to promote a more convenient and equitable ferry system. Elements of the recommendations include:

- *Parity of ferry services* – The City promotes services closer to home origins to reduce demand at the Bainbridge Island ferry terminal and on SR 305. Examples include vehicle/passenger ferry service from Southworth to Seattle, and high speed passenger-only ferry service from Kingston to Seattle, and direct bus service from Kitsap County to King County via the Kingston-Edmonds Ferry.
- *Ferry Priority* – The City supports the WSDOT and Kitsap Transit’s programs to encourage non-SOV use through priority boarding and through the development of facilities for bicycles and pedestrians.
- *Passenger Ferry Options* – The City supports passenger-only ferry services through public and private initiatives.
- *Walk-on and bicycle capacity* - The City supports long range planning for capital improvement expenditures to enhance walk-on and bicycle capacity at peak sailings.
- *Motorized capacity* – The City supports long range planning for capital improvement expenditures to maintain a two-boat maximum wait-time for motor vehicle capacity at peak sailings.
- *Fare box recovery* – Maintain affordable fares for service to Bainbridge Island and Kitsap County. The City supports long range planning and investment for State funding to subsidize operation and maintenance for the ferry system.

### **Kitsap Transit bus and other services**

Kitsap Transit, as the public transit service provider in Kitsap County, serves the County including the City of Bainbridge Island. Bus service is provided for commuter hours to and from the ferry terminal. Kitsap Transit has an Access program providing transportation for seniors and disabled persons who are unable to use regular-route buses. Starting in June 2014, BI Ride service was introduced providing daytime intra-island bus service. Kitsap Transit also provides park-and-ride lots, vanpool programs, and rideshare programs.

### **Existing Routes**

Eleven bus routes serve Bainbridge Island providing service mainly to and from the Winslow ferry terminal. Figure 7-2 shows the routes as they relate to the roadway system and areas of the Island.

Table 7-3 provides details about the origins and destinations of the routes, the 2014 ridership levels, hours of operations, and service frequency. Most service is provided to meet peak morning and evening demand related to ferry terminal travel, with little or no mid-day service. Service also tends to be one-directional with transit vehicles “deadheading” back (not in service) to meet the demand from arriving ferry passengers.

A total of 534,226 annual passengers in 2014 used the Kitsap Transit routes that serve the ferry terminal (Routes 33, 90-106). WSF reports 3,087,786 walk-on passengers for 2014. If the



assumption is made that all of the ridership also used the ferry system, approximately 1 out of every 6 ferry riders use Kitsap Transit service.

Figure 7-2 Kitsap Transit Routes





**Table 7-3. Kitsap Transit Services**

<b>Route</b>	<b>2014 Ridership</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>	<b>Service Frequency</b>
# 33 – Silverdale/Bainbridge	29,500	4:30-7:45 15:30-19:45	45-50 min
# 90 – Poulsbo/Bainbridge	254,200	4:50-8:05 15:50-20:05	45-50 min
# 91 – Kingston/Bainbridge	97,500	4:45-8:10 15:45-20:10	35-50 min
# 93 – Manzanita	35,600	4:55-7:40 15:55-19:40	40-55 min
# 94 - Agate Point	21,400	4:50-7:40 15:55-19:40	40-55 min
# 95 - Battle Point	38,000	4:50-7:40 15:50-19:40	45-55 min
# 96 – Sunrise	27,800	4:50-7:40 15:50-19:40	45-55 min
# 97 – Crystal Springs	36,500	4:50-7:40 15:50-19:40	45-55 min
# 98 - Fort Ward	26,200	5:00-7:40 16:00-19:40	45-55 min
# 99 - Bill Point	26,700	4:50-7:40 15:50-19:40	45-55 min
# 100 - Winslow Shuttle	28,300	5:30-7:40 16:30-19:40	45-50 min
# 101 – Ferncliff Shuttle	--	7:00-13:45	45-60 min

*Source: Kitsap Transit (www.kitsaptransit.org)*



### Park-and-Ride Lots

Kitsap Transit has developed a number of park-and ride facilities along SR 305 and in North Kitsap County at hubs where passengers can leave a vehicle prior to boarding a bus. Park-and-ride facilities are used by Kitsap Transit bus riders, and also serve as meeting locations for vanpools and carpools.

Table 7-4 indicates the park-and-ride facilities located on transit routes that serve Bainbridge Island as identified by Kitsap Transit.

**Table 7- 4. Park-and-Ride Facilities**

<b>Park-and-Ride Facility</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Spaces</b>	<b>Served by Bus Routes</b>
Clearwater Casino	Suquamish	96	90, 91
Georges Corner	Kingston	225	91
Gateway Fellowship	Poulsbo	138	33, 90
Liberty Bay Presbyterian Church	Poulsbo	75	33, 90
No. Kitsap Baptist	Poulsbo	57	90
Poulsbo Junction	Poulsbo	35	33, 90
Poulsbo Church of Nazarene	Poulsbo	100	90
Suquamish United Church of Christ	Suquamish	65	91
American Legion Post	Bainbridge Island	5	98
Bethany Lutheran Church	Bainbridge Island	80	94
Island Church	Bainbridge Island	37	93
Day Road	Bainbridge Island	25	90, 91

*Source: Kitsap Transit (www.kitsaptransit.org)*

Kitsap Transit assessed use of park-and-ride facilities in 2014. Table 7-5 summarizes the park-and-ride lots' capacity, the number of observed vehicles, and parking utilization rates for the lots on Bainbridge Island.



**Table 7-5. Park-and-Ride Lot Utilization**

<b>Park-and-Ride Facility</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Observed 2014</b>	<b>Parking Utilization</b>
American Legion	5	10	200%
Bethany Lutheran Church	80	65	81%
Island Church	37	18	49%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>76%</b>

*Source: WSDOT Office of Urban Mobility*

The study shows that area park-and-ride lots are well used and still have adequate capacity. It appears that additional capacity at the American Legion location would be a benefit if a lease can be secured.

### **Transit System Issues**

Most transit agencies in the region, including Kitsap Transit, have not developed LOS measurements at this time. However, general assessments can be made about areas service frequency, capacity and access. Kitsap Transit has provided a morning and afternoon peak period transit service that meets the needs of many Island commuters. Mid-day (9:15am to 3:30pm) intra-island service is also provided. Review of the transit service reveals that the main issues are related to the expansion of transit services and improving the frequency of service. Issues related to transit include:

- With ferry passenger service expected to grow and increasing congestion on SR 305, ridership capacity for commuter buses is a critical element for achieving a viable multimodal transportation system. Capacity is an important aspect of level of service.
- With more congestion on SR 305 attributed to commuting to employment both on- and off-island, improving bus service within Kitsap County is an increasingly important element of a viable transportation system. Frequency of service and transfer efficiency are important aspects of level of service.
- Park-and-ride lots and bicycle parking at park-and-ride lots and bus stops are important to support commuters and encourage ridership.
- To better serve seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities, intra-island bus transit is an important element of an effective transportation system. Locations served and hours of service are important aspects for level of service.
- Improving access to the transit center near the ferry terminal is needed. Currently the pedestrian facilities are sub-standard and do not provide adequate accommodation for a wide range and number of users and there are no bike facilities on Olympic Drive.
- Improving access to bus stops is needed in Winslow and at the City's designated centers. Both lack of infrastructure and deficient infrastructure are barriers to access in some areas.
- Improving King County Metro transit services at the Seattle ferry terminal to provide better connections to popular destinations including the airport.



### **Recommendations for Transit System**

The City supports the development and improvement of transit services on Bainbridge Island and services that provide options for non-Island commuters.

- *Transit LOS* – Encourage Kitsap Transit to monitor system use to ensure that current and forecasted demand is met for the SR 305 Corridor. Monitor underserved island locations for transit service expansion as island development occurs.
- *Public Transit Ferry Access* – Support changes to transit services that promote ferry use, including service to Sea-Tac airport, popular destinations, and special events in the Seattle area.
- *Expansion of Island Transit* – Support the expansion of bus services on the island to better serve commuters, non-commuters, disabled users, residential areas, and neighborhood centers. This includes the Access Bus and BI Ride services.
- *Ferry Commute* – Improve service with high capacity buses as needed to meet demand. This should include expanding accommodation for riders with bicycles.
- *Route 90 to Poulsbo* – Improve frequency of service between the Bainbridge Ferry Terminal to the Poulsbo Transit Center with transfers to Kingston at Suquamish and Bremerton and other locations from Poulsbo.
- *BI Ride* – Extend hours of service to include evenings and Sundays.

### **Non-Motorized System Connectivity to Transit**

Active modes of transportation such as walking and bicycling are important to many island residents. The City has invested in planning and implementation for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to accommodate a wide range of users. Providing connectivity to transit is important for non-motorized improvements. Opportunities include development of a network of bike lanes that link commuters to the ferry terminal and regional and intra-island trail systems that link pedestrians and cyclists to transit stops along SR 305 and throughout the island.



### **Multimodal – Transportation Demand Management**

A key to the development of a multimodal system is through the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM). TDM is a series of methods and strategies that discourage the use of single occupant vehicles and encourage non-motorized and transit travel. TDM includes measures that provide travel alternatives such as transit, carpools, park-and-ride facilities, or passenger ferry service. TDM strategies are focused on increasing the use of alternatives to single occupant automobile trips through a mix of incentives and disincentives. These programs tend to be lower in cost than roadway or other capital projects.

While TDM programs may increase the number of person trips through a corridor by increasing use of buses, carpools, and diverting trips to off-peak hours, traffic levels may not decrease due



to unmet travel demand replacing any reductions from TDM programs (latent demand for travel).

There are many TDM programs currently in effect on Bainbridge Island. Agencies and major employers have implemented these programs to discourage single occupant vehicle (SOV) trips during commute periods.

The City of Bainbridge Island, Kitsap Transit, and Washington State Ferries have programs that encourage the use of transportation alternatives to the SOV.

Examples of TDM programs promoted by these agencies include:

- *Ferry Terminal Parking Restrictions* – The City has limited amount of parking at the ferry terminal and charges an hourly or daily fee to reduce the number of persons who drive to access the ferry. As parking becomes more difficult or expensive, fewer drivers will desire to use the parking areas. On the other hand, restricted parking may increase the amount of drop-off/pick-up activity at the terminal or encourage parking in adjacent neighborhoods.
- *Commercial Parking Tax* – The City has charged a tax on commercial parking lots since 1999. The current rate is a 30% tax that provides funds for the City's general fund. This tax, if added to the parking fee, increases the out-of-pocket costs for automobile commuters, encouraging ridesharing, non-motorized travel, and transit use.
- *Carpool Parking Areas* –The City provides reserved parking areas for carpools at its ferry terminal lot. Providing reserved spaces or reduced parking rates encourages drivers to form carpools, increasing the occupancy of vehicles.
- *Rideshare Programs* – Programs that promote the formation of carpools and vanpools can increase the rate of vehicle occupancy by increasing the number of persons moved during peak times. Kitsap Transit has a program to match interested commuters with carpools and vanpools using the RideshareOnline.com database.
- *Vanpool Programs* – Kitsap Transit also administers a vanpool program that provides vans for commuters for a monthly fee. WSF provides additional incentives to registered carpools and vanpools through preferential boarding. Vanpools also receive a reduced ferry rate.
- *Land Use Policies* – The City's promotion of higher-density residential in the Winslow area promotes increased opportunities for residents to walk or use bus service rather than drive.
- *Parking Restrictions and Enforcement* – The development and enforcement of parking policies and rules may reduce undesired parking behaviors, such as in neighborhoods adjacent to the ferry terminal area. Types of parking restrictions include hourly parking limits and residential parking zones
- *Car sharing Program* – A car sharing program allows people to have access to a vehicle that they rent on an hourly and/or mileage basis. This type of program reduces vehicle ownership, encourages transit and non-motorized travel, and lowers overall driving behavior.



### ***Employer-Based Programs***

Major employers (100 or more employees) are required by the State's Commute Trip Reduction law to promote ridesharing and transit use by developing in-house incentive programs that encourage employees to use ridesharing, transit use, and non-motorized travel. Kitsap Transit administers the program within the county. According to Kitsap Transit data only two island employers have formal CTR programs. Each major employer is required to designate an in-house coordinator and develop a Commute Trip Reduction Plan indicating how the employer will meet the required trip reduction targets. Some of the examples of employer-based programs in use include.

- *Transit subsidies* – Employers can fully or partially subsidize the cost of monthly transit passes for their employees.
- *Flextime programs* – Employees are allowed to shift their work schedule to avoid travel during peak travel periods, or to meet transit schedules.
- *Telecommute programs* – Employees are allowed to work from home offices in order to reduce the amount of commute travel.
- *Guaranteed ride home program* – This program provides employees who commute by transit, carpool, vanpool, bicycle, or foot a free taxi ride in the event they need to return home on an emergency basis during mid-day or after working late evening hours.
- *Commute subsidies* – Employees are eligible for a monthly subsidy if they commute by transit, bicycle, foot or carpool to work.

### **Regional Coordination**

The Growth Management Act requires that cities coordinate planning efforts with adjacent jurisdictions, by county and region. This coordination effort is particularly important, where transportation plans by one jurisdiction may have a significant impact on its neighboring counterpart. Regional planning allows a long-range vision to be established for the region allowing predictability and consistency between jurisdictions, while still maintaining flexibility to meet community goals.

There are a number of regional plans that affect the transportation system of Bainbridge Island. Implementation of many of the regional concepts depend on the availability of funds in the future.

### ***WSDOT Plans***

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) identified a number of improvements to the state route system in its *Washington Transportation Plan* (WTP). In the Puget Sound Region, these projects are first identified in the Puget Sound Regional Council's *Metropolitan Transportation Plan "Transportation 2040"* (MTP) plan. This plan sets the transportation plans and policies over a 30-year period, with the emphasis on the first 20-year time frame. The MTP identifies improvements to the SR 305 Corridor.

- *SR 305 Corridor Improvements (Winslow Ferry Terminal to Agate Pass Bridge)* - Access management, intersection improvements, and HOV queue jump lanes improvements.



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### ***Consistency with IWTP***

These projects should improve the overall mobility of the SR 305 Corridors. The improvements along SR 305 between the ferry terminal and Agate Pass Bridge are unlikely to affect overall traffic levels, but may shorten transit travel times and enhance safety for bicyclists. The off-island improvements will complement the SR 305 alternatives considered on Bainbridge Island, but will not significantly affect the City's

traffic situation.

### ***Kitsap Transit Plans***

Kitsap Transit has plans to develop future alternatives to expand transit throughout its service area. Kitsap Transit has considered a variety of approaches including dedicated high-capacity bus service, passenger rail or monorail service, and passenger ferry services.

- ***High Capacity Transit Facilities:*** – This “long-range” concept of the high-capacity transit service would improve transit travel times by developing dedicated transit lanes. A Bus Rapid Transit system has been identified as a priority.

### ***Consistency with IWTP***

Any of the transit proposals would be compatible with the IWTP SR 305 Alternative A and Alternative B scenarios. Depending on the level of transit ridership, and the success of Transportation Demand Management programs to control single occupant vehicle use would likely improve SR 305 levels of service if constructed.