



Gregory J. Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

January 21, 2009

David Moseley, Assistant Director
Ferries Division, Washington State Department of Transportation
2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, Washington 98121

RE: Washington State Ferries Draft Long-Range Strategic Plan, December 2008

Dear Mr. Moseley:

Thank you for providing the City of Seattle the opportunity to comment on Washington State Department of Transportation's Ferries Division Draft Long Range Strategic Plan, 2008-2030. The recently released plan represents a change in direction from past draft plans. To address constrained financial resources, the new plan's two options, "Plan A" and "Plan B", include significantly reduced service and capital programs than presented in previous plans. With a greater focus on financial sustainability, both plan options identify significant funding gaps over the plan's 22-year planning horizon.

Still, we are pleased to see several strategies and recommendations in both Plan options that the City of Seattle supports:

- Colman Dock is prioritized and funded as a preservation project. Colman Dock is the busiest terminal in the system and a gateway to Seattle. This is an aging facility that is in need of significant upgrades to address the terminal building and the wooden dock trestle on which it sits.
- Use of adaptive management to: reduce the need for large facilities; ensure better use of the system throughout the day (not just peak hours); and, maximize walk-on use. This includes use of reservations, transit enhancements and pricing. These strategies are appropriate in the context of Seattle's dense, urban environment.

However, addressing growth demands from South Kitsap and existing concerns with the current Southworth-Vashon-Fauntleroy service triangle are key issues to resolve in this plan. Draft "Plan A" includes an option that had not been previously discussed with City of Seattle representatives or community members. This plan option presents no service changes (except for phased vessel replacement with

slightly larger vessels), the expansion of Fauntleroy's overwater dock and the addition of overhead passenger loading. The City of Seattle does not support this recommendation.

Past letters from the City (July 21, 2006, from myself and September 27, 2005, from SDOT Director Crunican) have stated that Fauntleroy has limited capacity to accommodate vehicular demand and the City would not support expansion of Fauntleroy. I request that Washington Ferry System (WSF) staff work closely with City of Seattle staff to evaluate this alternative and look for other options to include in a final plan.

Washington State Ferries has worked without a long-range plan for many years; we support your efforts to finalize a plan. As the plan is revised for approval, we look forward to working closely with WSF and the legislature. If you have any questions regarding the city's comments, please feel free to contact my office or Seattle Department of Transportation Director Grace Crunican at 684-5000.

Sincerely,



GREG NICKELS
Mayor of Seattle

CC: Tim Ceis, City of Seattle Deputy Mayor
Grace Crunican, Seattle Department of Transportation Director
Kevin Desmond, King County/Metro General Manager
Kjristine Lund, King County Ferry District Executive Director