

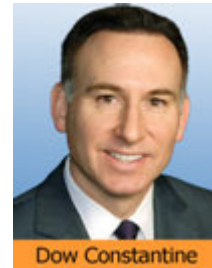


Aug. 9, 2007

## Water Taxi ridership shatters previous records

**Summer 2007 has seen a record-breaking number of passengers using the Elliott Bay Water Taxi. Ridership in May, June and July increased by 27 percent over last year's record numbers.**

The downtown-to-Seacrest Park run served a total of 22,259 riders during May, a 37 percent increase over May 2006. June ridership was also up 16 percent over the previous June, and July ridership rose 20 percent compared to last July. In the summer of 2006, the Water Taxi carried a record 122,650 passengers. So far, a total of 88,336 passengers have ridden the Water Taxi this summer.



The record ridership is expected to continue in August, as Southwest Seattle residents use the Water Taxi to avoid construction on Interstate 5. Multiple freeway lanes on I-5 will be closed from Aug. 10-29. To mitigate the effects of construction, the state of Washington has funded an extra morning Water Taxi run, paid for additional shuttle service, and purchased equipment that boosts boat capacity from 149 passengers to 250 passengers.

"The steady increase in ridership shows that the Elliott Bay Water Taxi has established itself as an important part of local transit service," said Metropolitan King County Councilmember [Dow Constantine](http://www.metrokc.gov/council/members/constantine/index.htm) (<http://www.metrokc.gov/council/members/constantine/index.htm>), whose district includes Southwest Seattle. "The Water Taxi will serve as an important alternate route into downtown Seattle, both during I-5 construction and during future work on the Alaskan Way Viaduct."

The Water Taxi could be converted from a summer service into a year-round operation through a King County Ferry District established this spring by the County Council. The ferry district could also allow King County to take over Vashon Island passenger-only ferry service and to study possible and test new waterborne transit routes throughout the county.