

FACT SHEET

In April 2007, the King County Ferry District (KCFD) was created to expand transportation options through water taxi services. King County Council members are the KCFD Board of Supervisors.



King County
Water Taxi

As the population of the Puget Sound region continues to grow, so will the pressure on the transportation system. By expanding transportation choices to include water taxis, the KCFD can prepare for continued population growth and address the quality of life issues related to managing traffic congestion and its impact on the environment. Water taxis (sometimes called passenger ferries or foot ferries) also promote economic development, provide tourism opportunities and connect communities.

Water Taxi Service

The KCFD currently operates two routes under the name King County Water Taxi:

- West Seattle/Downtown Seattle
- Vashon Island/ Downtown Seattle

When the Washington State Legislature cut funding for passenger ferry service, the KCFD stepped in to ensure continued service on the Vashon/Seattle route. The KCFD also took over the water taxi service between West Seattle and Downtown Seattle (previously the Elliott Bay Water Taxi).

The KCFD currently funds and oversees the operations of two existing water taxi services and is considering demonstration routes in other King County communities. The KCFD contracts with public and private agencies for operations; these partners currently include the King County Marine Division and Argosy Cruises.

Actual routes and implementation for the demonstration routes will be determined by the KCFD Board of Supervisors. Preliminary technical analysis for demonstration services has been completed. The public is invited to review information and provide comment throughout the process.

King County Ferry District Accomplishments

- Successful transition of two existing routes
- Free shuttle services
- Ongoing service and facility improvements
- New leased vessel
- Early launch of the 2009 West Seattle/ Downtown Seattle route
- Planning/technical analysis for demonstration projects
- Listening tour/ community involvement
- New service name/identity: King County Water Taxi

Benefits of water taxi service

- Provides an additional transportation choice
- Serves as an emergency alternative when roadways are closed or constricted
- Encourages economic development
- Connects communities
- Promotes tourism

Funding

The King County Ferry District is funded by a 5.5 cent (per \$1,000 assessed value) property tax which was levied beginning January 1, 2008 to fund ferry-related service and capital projects. This amounts to approximately \$22 per year for a \$400,000 home. The state passenger ferry account, federal grants, passenger fares, advertising and other promotional activities provide additional revenue.

How can I get involved?

Public and community involvement, research and planning is ongoing. Please visit the web site at kingcountyferries.org to learn more about opportunities for public input and to sign up to be on project mailing list.

For more information

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