



Nov. 8, 2007

## **Elliott Bay Water Taxi announces record season as King County Ferry District considers funding for year-round operations**

**The 2007 season of the Elliot Bay Water Taxi saw ridership increase by 32 percent, easily eclipsing the waterborne transit service's record 2006 numbers.**

A total of 161,331 riders used the West Seattle-to-downtown waterborne service this summer, as compared with 122,650 riders last year. The extra revenues generated by this record ridership allowed King County to keep the [Water Taxi](http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/oto/water_taxi.html) ([http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/oto/water\\_taxi.html](http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/oto/water_taxi.html)) in operation during October weekday commute hours.

The ridership announcement came as the [King County Ferry District](http://www.metrokc.gov/council/ferry_district.aspx) ([http://www.metrokc.gov/council/ferry\\_district.aspx](http://www.metrokc.gov/council/ferry_district.aspx)) – which consists of all 9 members of the King County Council — met today to consider the proposed system plan.

“The Water Taxi’s record year shows the public’s enthusiasm for transportation alternatives beyond roads and rails,” said Board member [Dow Constantine](http://www.kingcounty.gov/constantine) (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/constantine>). “The Ferry District will allow us to take the Water Taxi to year-round operation, while expanding waterborne transit to other communities on Lake Washington and Puget Sound.”

Under the proposed plan, the King County Ferry District would assume operation of the Elliott Bay Water Taxi and the Vashon Island-to-downtown passenger-only ferries. Up to five demonstration routes across King County could be also be funded under the proposed plan.

Members of the public who testified to the Ferry District Board of Directors praised the District for its willingness to use the region’s abundant waters to supplement the public transit system.

Former Port of Seattle Commissioner Jack Block, Sr., credited the District with “a strong and a bold move to advocate the rebirth of the Mosquito Fleet.”

Officials from the cities of Kenmore, Des Moines, and Renton told board members that they were eager to participate in demonstration routes.

Patti Mullen, executive director of the West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, applauded the concept of year-round Water Taxi service, saying: “The Elliott Bay Water Taxi will be providing the community with a gift—the gift of a reasonable commute.”