



PRESS RELEASE

Fast Ferry Service marks one-year anniversary since launch

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Photos of fast ferry available upon request.

BREMERTON, Wash. – Kitsap Transit has carried more than 250,000 riders and completed 95 percent of scheduled sailings since launching its fast-ferry service a year ago today.

The 118-passenger ferry is running nearly full on its trips with passengers originating travel from Kitsap County: In June the ferry ran at 93 percent capacity to Seattle in the morning and 98 percent capacity returning to Bremerton in the afternoon.

“Thanks to the hard work of our Marine Services crew, our bus operators and all our support staff over the past year, we have been able to keep our promise to the voters of Kitsap County and deliver a reliable fast-ferry service to Seattle,” said John Clauson, Executive Director of Kitsap Transit. “We are proud of what we’ve done and are excited about the future as we prepare for the Kingston launch.”

While no specific date is set for the launch, Kitsap Transit is working on several fronts to start the Kingston-Seattle route later this year, including:

- Dock improvements are planned at the Port of Kingston’s dock to allow Kitsap Transit to operate and moor its fast ferry under a 50-year lease.
- The agency today opens an online survey for the public to provide critical feedback that will be used to finalize the sailing schedule for the Kingston fast-ferry service and plan services to support its success. The survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LZ236JL>
- The 350-passenger M/V Finest is undergoing a top-to-bottom overhaul at a Whidbey Island shipyard and is anticipated to be delivered in late September. The boat, acquired from New York Waterways, was part of the flotilla of ferries that evacuated Lower Manhattan on 9/11.
- Kitsap Transit is hiring staff to crew the vessels and process passengers on the dock.

“We want to deliver a reliable, outstanding experience to the community in Kingston,” said Darrell Bryan, Kitsap Transit’s Marine Services Director. “We will launch the service when we’re confident we have all the pieces in place and are ready to sail.”

When the Kingston service launches, Kitsap Transit initially plans to allow up to 150 passengers on each sailing, which is more than sufficient capacity under the agency’s ridership projections.

Unlike the Bremerton service’s launch, the Kingston service will start with a back-up vessel, the 172-passenger Melissa Ann. Kitsap Transit is leasing the vessel until it receives new bow-loading vessels.

“We do not plan to repeat the mistake of launching a fast-ferry route without our own backup,” Clauson said.

The Bremerton fast-ferry service had a rocky three-month startup with 80 sailings cancelled due to the Rich Passage 1 not being operable, and the majority of those issues were ultimately traced to problems in the exhaust system.

Last month, Kitsap Transit completed 99 percent of scheduled fast-ferry sailings, with only three sailings cancelled because of a shutdown of the Bremerton Transportation Center following a security threat.

The public can track the performance of Kitsap Transit’s fast-ferry program by visiting its data dashboard at <http://kitsaptransit.com/FastFerryData>.

About Kitsap Transit

Kitsap Transit has been operating friendly, convenient public transit since 1983. The transit agency for Kitsap County carried more than 3.59 million riders in 2017 across a multi-modal system of routed buses, passenger ferries, paratransit shuttles, vanpools, and worker/driver buses for the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

Hablar español?

Por favor llame al 1-800-501-7433 durante las horas normales de oficina. El personal de servicios al cliente se conectará con un intérprete para ayudarle a responder sus preguntas.

Nagsasalita ka ba ng Tagalog?

Paki-tawagan ang numero 1-800-501-7433 normal na oras ng trabaho. Customer Service kawani ay kumonekta sa isang taga interpretor upang tulungan sagutin ang iyong katanungan.