



## PRESS RELEASE

### Kitsap Fast Ferries inaugurates Bremerton-Seattle service

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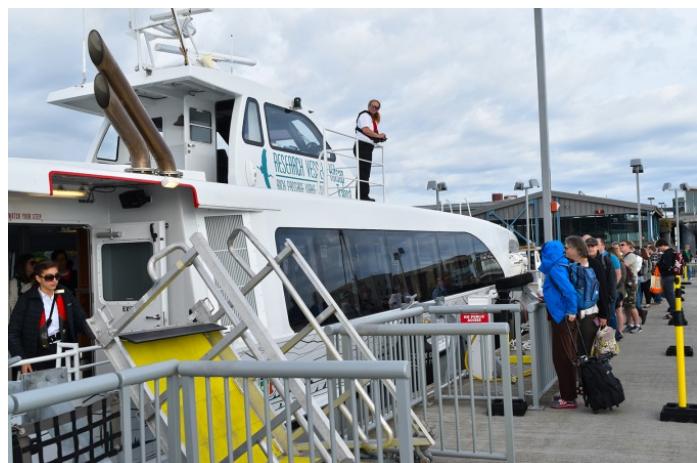
BREMERTON, Wash. – Kitsap Transit began passenger ferry service today between Bremerton and Seattle, a big milestone after more than a decade of work.

The first sailing from Bremerton at 5:40 a.m. carried 78 passengers, while the first sailing from Seattle at 6:15 a.m. had 69. Here are the passenger counts on Monday's 12 sailings:

Scheduled departure time	Departed from	Passenger Count
5:40 AM	Bremerton	78
6:15 AM	Seattle	69
6:50 AM	Bremerton	91
7:25 AM	Seattle	19
8:00 AM	Bremerton	69
8:35 AM	Seattle	26
3:25 PM	Bremerton	46
4:00 PM	Seattle	115
4:35 PM	Bremerton	68
5:15 PM	Seattle	118
5:50 PM	Bremerton	40
6:25 PM	Seattle	100

"We are very pleased so many people rode on the first day of passenger service," said Kitsap Transit Executive Director John Clauson, who talked with riders on Monday.

"It's a great day for the people of Kitsap County," Clauson said. "We now have a half-hour connection to downtown Seattle for



Bremerton, and in the not-too-distant future, Kingston and Southworth too."

The Kingston-Seattle service is slated to begin next summer, Southworth-Seattle in 2020. Monday's launch comes more than a decade since Kitsap Transit began work to restore a fast-ferry service. In September 2003, Washington State Ferries ended passenger-only ferry service between Bremerton and Seattle after property owners along Rich Passage sued the state over damage to beaches they blamed on the state's large passenger-only ferries.



"Kitsap Transit owes a debt of gratitude to a lot of people who worked hard to make this day happen," Clauson said.

Under Richard Hayes, former executive director of Kitsap Transit, the agency assumed a federal wake-research grant, developed a prototype research vessel called the Rich Passage 1 and organized leaders in Kitsap County to get behind the effort, Clauson said.

After assuming the federal grant from the state, Kitsap Transit received critical support from Norm Dicks, then a U.S. Congressman, and U.S. Sen. Patty Murray in securing additional federal funding to continue wake research and build the Rich Passage 1, Clauson said.

On the state level, Kitsap Transit enjoyed strong support from its legislative delegation in a 2015 transportation revenue package, Clauson said, including Senators Jan Angel and Christine Rolfes. Sen. Angel was the prime sponsor of a provision that enables local transit entities like Kitsap Transit to create voter-approved ferry districts.

And on the local level, leaders like Bremerton Mayor Patty Lent and the Friends of the Fast Ferry group – led by Steve Sego, Coreen Haydock, Wes Larson, Jon Rose and Jeremy Stitt – helped Kitsap Transit build community awareness of the fast-ferry plan, which voters approved last November.

Clauson said he also appreciated the Kitsap Transit board's ongoing support for the project over the many years it took to bring to fruition.

On Monday morning, Kitsap Transit offered passengers a selection of branded promotional gifts – a tote bag,



foldable water bottle, lunch sack, cellphone wallet, or sunglasses.

"We still have a lot of work to do," Clauson said, "but it's worth taking a moment to pause and say, 'We did it.'"



#### **About Kitsap Transit**

Kitsap Transit has been operating friendly, convenient public transit since 1983. The transit agency for Kitsap County carried more than 3.5 million riders in 2016 across a multi-modal system of routed buses, passenger ferries, paratransit shuttles, vanpools, and worker/driver buses for the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.