

# **Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee (LIFAC) Meeting**

**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 6:30 pm**

Lummi Island Fire Hall

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Nancy Ging called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

## **ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Charles Bailey, Rhayma Blake, Cris Colburn, Jim Dickinson, Patricia Dunn, Nancy Ging

**Also in Attendance:** Roland Middleton-Whatcom County Public Works Special Projects Mgr., Richard Hudson-Senior Master, Cassandra Shoenmakers-Project Mgr. (kpff); Lummi Island residents: Bill Fox, Bill Lee, Wynne Lee, Beth Louis, Joan Moye, Tom Philpot, Mary Ross, Mike Skehan; Off-Island residents: Sharon Chase, Barbara Craig, John Craig, Joan Dow, Claudia Grandy, Jaime Grandy, Bobbie Jo Gregor, John Gregor, Diana Newell, Bryan Unruh, Margaret Unruh, Howard Vanderkiefert, MaryAnn Vanderkiefert, Victor (No last name), and Theresa Waters.

## **FLAG SALUTE**

## **OPEN SESSION:**

**Mike Skehan** – Thanked Whatcom County Public Works and consultants kpff for considering and making changes in recent documents based on island input. He considers the updated ferry demand projections in Task 2 to now be a reasonable forecast for years 2040 and 2060.

**Bobbie Jo Gregor** from 2595 Lummi View Drive – Highlighted comments from her prepared statement (attached) outlining her shock at the letter received in December 2017 from Whatcom County Real Estate Division notifying them that the county would be taking their home as part of the ferry location project. There was also a 14-page contract received in February 2018 for first right of refusal. They have owned their property since 1952 and believe they should not be asked to sacrifice their home. She and her husband John support Lummi Island and place the responsibility of this situation on Whatcom County.

**Barbara Craig** from 2591 Lummi View Drive – This has been her home since 1975. They have added solar panels and new siding recently and feel they should have been informed sooner. She feels that tidal and weather conditions make this a less than ideal place for a dock. She is meeting with Lummi Nation tomorrow. She knows that those on Gooseberry Point are supporting 45% of every ferry crossing but do not want to support it with their houses.

**Jaime Grandy** from 2581 Lummi View Drive – She and her wife Claudia have had three people offer to buy their house but have lost money when they have to provide the disclosure about the Whatcom County offer. She considers it a camouflaged lien against the property.

**Stuart Rich**, Protect Lummi Island Committee (PLIC) President - Invited attendees to the PLIC's first Town Hall meeting, April 12, 2018 at 6:30 pm at the Beach School. There will be a second Town Hall meeting in May. He reassured others that this is still early in the planning process.

**Nancy Ging**, LIFAC Chairman – Encouraged all to stay informed by providing their email address. She reassured attendees that LIFAC is still in an information-gathering phase of the project and thanked them for their attendance. Preliminary recommendations from the consultant issued on March 14<sup>th</sup> include three Gooseberry Point terminal location options. Her understanding is that the Gooseberry Point lease will not be renewed at the terminal's current location and that the current dock is in need of replacement. She

appreciates their positive attitude as we work towards solution.

**Roland Middleton** of Whatcom County Public Works – Offered to meet either one on one or with a group to answer questions and concerns. He explained that the first contact with property owners in projects with the potential of seeking federal grants must include the disclosure with regard to eminent domain. Whatcom County Public Works has no intention of using eminent domain and wants to work with willing sellers. He apologized that the letters “hit that hard” and said he had not read the letters until they had been sent. There is no intention to take anyone’s home.

If Gooseberry Point homeowners do not wish to sell, that will change the Level of Service (LOS) of the Lummi Island ferry system. He explained the three alternatives:

1. Fix the terminal facility to handle a new ferry and replace the deteriorating trestle at its current location, then relocate the terminal in 2046 when the lease expires.
2. Move the terminal to the West on Lummi Nation property where there is limited space for queuing and no space for parking.
3. Look at fee lands (as suggested by Lummi Nation when the TIGER grant application was written) for queuing and parking for walk-ons and dry dock.

Without the fee lands, Whatcom Public Works needs to ask LIFAC to reconsider its LOS. Whatcom County Public Works and the consultant kpff are assisting LIFAC, which is determining the LOS which includes restrooms, queuing, and parking on both sides. He assured those from Gooseberry Point that they are part of the decision-making conversation. Whatcom County Council is the ultimate decision-maker.

Middleton shared that additional parking, especially during dry dock, is a priority identified in the recent survey of islanders. Several attendees from Gooseberry Point currently provide parking options to islanders during dry dock.

Middleton was asked why Fairhaven was not being considered for the mainland terminal. He explained that Fairhaven is owned by the Port of Bellingham, not the county, and is available for emergency landings. But queuing space is not available and the ferry would have to be significantly larger and more seaworthy. It would also require a change of school district for the island. Barbara Craig said that her understanding was that Fairhaven was the top choice in a study conducted by Western Washington University. John Gregor said they are looking for a win-win for everyone, and Fairhaven does not sound like a win for the Island. There must be some options with Lummi Nation. Middleton offered to meet to discuss further and that those on Gooseberry Point should attend future meetings.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 3/6/18 Meeting Minutes – Colburn** moved and **Bailey** seconded a motion that they be approved. The motion carried.

#### **LIFAC INTERNAL BUSINESS**

1. **Proposed Work Session meetings: 4/26 and 5/24, 6:00 pm at Civic Center** – The meeting proposed for 5/24 was changed to 5/23 to accommodate Dunn’s schedule.
2. **PLIC 4/12 Town Hall meeting** – Ging requested that LIFAC members who attend assume a listening role. She has issued a statement that there may be a quorum of LIFAC members present. Rich shared that Ging had agreed to answer questions, if necessary.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Update from Richard Hudson, Senior Master of the Whatcom Chief**
  - a. Interviews for 3 crew member positions take place tomorrow. There are 22 applicants.
  - b. Today’s dock maintenance went well.
  - c. A blown hydraulic hose on the island side was the cause of an emergency 1.5 hour shut-down

two weeks ago. Dunn appreciated the use of social media in communicating information about the shut-down. A skiff was launched from Gooseberry Point, in answer to Bailey's question about procedures.

- d. Several indicated they planned to attend the "Focus on Ferries" meeting hosted by North Sound Transportation Alliance on 4/13/18.

**2. Update on Ferry System Improvement Project** – Middleton clarified that this ferry system project has been established by LIFAC (not Public Works). He asked Bill Fox that if he is aware of something that is being done in error to please let us know so it can be addressed. Fox stated that Middleton erred by saying this project was about LIFAC and not the county since LIFAC is strictly an advisory committee. County Council is the ultimate decision maker. Fox also stated that it is inaccurate that Public Works cannot talk to Port of Bellingham about docking in Fairhaven. Fox has talked to the Port and says they would be happy to lease the ferry landing at the end of C Street to the county. There is a functional ramp and 74 acres of parking. Middleton said he was unaware of this information. Fox stated it had been forwarded to the county repeatedly. Middleton suggested Fox should pass information about a Cornwall/C Street option on to LIFAC and if they would like to recommend that option to County Council, that is something to be done now before a replacement boat is built. Ging asked why this option has not been brought to a meeting before. Fox said he had posted it in a public place and copied the county at the same time. Colburn asked why he has not brought the option to the LIFAC meetings. Fox claims that there is not a public record of LIFAC meetings. Ging stated that LIFAC works to be transparent and posts minutes on the county website and his Public Records requests cost taxpayers money. Middleton reaffirmed that Public Records requests are part of the job. Fox said he would send Middleton a link to all the information he has discovered. Colburn rebutted that this is the forum for public input. Dickinson defended the use of the online Nextdoor Lummi Island as an unedited forum. He prefers the Ferry Task Force structure of allowing public input at the start, on topic, and at the end vs. LIFAC's current structure of 3-minutes at the start. Ging suggested Dickinson notify the Council office when he has completed his Open Meeting training. Dunn supports Ging's use of public process and suggests that documents regarding Fairhaven be sent directly to LIFAC in order for them to be a part of this study. Blake recalls that a C Street option was deemed not possible in the past. Middleton stated that the County Council resolution directed that this project look only at Gooseberry Point. Bailey commented that we have strayed from civil discourse, and that Antholt's study in 2015 concluded that Fairhaven is not a practical alternative. As requested, LIFAC members introduced themselves to new attendees. Colburn, as the longest standing committee member, explained that Middleton's and Shoemakers' involvement on this goal-oriented ferry replacement plan is evidence of collaboration, progress, and community-building. At this point, Colburn left the meeting to catch his ferry, and Ging apologized for her loss of temper in a public meeting.

**3. Update on Consulting Work** – Shoemakers

- a. **Schedule** – Kpff is still in the evaluation phase. Draft technical documents are being sent to LIFAC as they become available. Kpff has captured feedback from Skehan and Bailey in the ridership model. Funding alternatives are still under development. The vessel and terminal alternatives will inform the final cost projections. Middleton suggested that this is the time to refine Alternative 3 based on understanding Gooseberry Point homeowners' input regarding parking. Kpff wants to have time to include the information from the 2<sup>nd</sup> public input meeting in the final draft. The following dates were discussed:

**May 1** – LIFAC meeting

**May 9** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Input Meeting with kpff

**May 16** – PLIC Town Hall Meeting

**TBD** – LIFAC Work Session

**June 5** – Final draft report from kpff

**June 13** – Final Recommendation by LIFAC

## NEW BUSINESS

1. **Public Preferences** – Ging proposed a third and final public input survey of preferences be conducted after the second kpff public input and PLIC meetings in May. PLIC has also discussed the possibility of an all island survey mailing. Using a mailing would allow property owners living off-island to participate. It would not be limited to just island property owners, allowing those on Gooseberry Point to participate as well. Beth Louis has offered to help develop this third survey as she did with the previous surveys. The questionnaire would not be an educational tool, but would be a reminder of the trade-offs involved and solicit preferences. Only 9 of the 264 responses in the last survey were not online allowing for faster analysis. Ging suggested using a similar methodology, allowing 2 to 3 weeks for response. Dunn moved and Bailey seconded a motion to adopt the methodology of an all-island mailing in co-operation with PLIC to survey community preferences primarily electronically with paper questionnaires made available. Louis asked whether there will be enough information available about the Gooseberry Point terminal location to make an informed choice. Middleton clarified that there will be significant costs to each of the alternatives under consideration. Expenses will be paid with taxes, grants, and County Road Administration Board (CRAB) funds. An attendee from Gooseberry Point asked whether the survey link would be announced in the Bellingham Herald. Ging reiterated that these would be preferences (not a vote) for LIFAC to consider in its final recommendation to County Council. The motion passed 5-0. Wynne Lee suggested using the LICA post office box for questionnaires returned by mail.
2. **Timeline** - Middleton commented that the timeline being followed is aggressive and if more time is needed, it should be taken. It may be unwise to assume use of the fee lands. But if the July 24 recommendation date to County Council is missed, the project will not be part of the Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) budget. Dunn clarified that it also needs to be in the State Transportation Improvement Project (STIP) budget as well in order to apply for federal and state funding. A placeholder for the project (without a vote of the Council) is problematic. The Ferry System Improvement Project would become a stand-alone project requiring a unanimous vote of the County Council to move forward. Middleton added he has never seen that happen in 29 years. Application for the CRAB funding deadline is next spring. If that is missed, we cannot reapply for CRAB funding for an additional four years. The goal is to move forward to establish the LOS. Dunn prefers to get the project into this year's budget and TIP and make changes in the future as necessary. If changes require less money, that is not a problem. If they require more money, then the project requires the entire approval process again. There was agreement that both process and progress are important.
3. **Comments on Drafts** – Bailey distributed Ridership Model, Vehicle Alternatives, and Vessel Cost analysis comments (attached). Schoenmakers shared that contingency costs had yet to be considered. Also, the hybrid pilothouse option has a delta of roughly \$220,000. Kpff will compile and address all comments received. Comments should be submitted in writing. Dunn suggested calculating payback periods for deltas showing both with and without grants. Dickinson distributed suggestions for an expandable ferry and cost projections suggested by his discussions with Matt Nichols (attached).

**ADJOURN** – The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Good Evening

My name is Bobbie Jo Gregor and I live at 2595 Lummi View Drive. My husband and I have been out of town since last October and have only returned to Bellingham last Monday.

In December of 2017, we received a letter from the Whatcom County Real Estate Division. It was three paragraphs and it quite simply stated that the county was notifying us that they would be aquisitioning our home for a Lummi Ferry Relocation Project. I hope you might be able to understand how totally shocked we were.

We called the letter's author and were assured we shouldn't worry and that we could meet with him upon our return home.

The second piece of communication from the county came in February (and there have only EVER been two) in the form of a 14 page contract in which we were offered money to give the county first rights to purchase our property. No personal contacts, no phone calls, no emails, no explanation, no information.

I have spent countless hours on the internet, my only access to any kind of information. It has not been easy, nor has it revealed much; at least much insight as to how, after all these years, our home becomes paramount to a county project.

My family has owned our property since 1952 when it was purchased from the Jones family. Since that time it has been all the way from a one room cabin to the wonderful home it is today and there are constant upgrades and improvements always going on.

My father in law built the house and he and his wife lived out their together in this home. My husband and I were married in the home in 1972 and our children and grandchildren have spent countless hours, holidays, celebrations, and family gatherings there. Upon our retirement, we also came to live at Gooseberry with the expectation that this would be our last home.

I know you may think I'm guilty of tugging on your heart strings, but I make no apology for doing so. I came tonight so you would all be able to at least put a face on one aspect of this issue. There are 8 homeowners and families suffering through this with us, so we're not alone.

There was a time when an internet search revealed the current 30 year I breathed a sigh of relief to learn that in 2011, the Lummi Nation and the County entered into a 30 year agreement. I certainly do remember that stressful time previously to the signing, when none of us knew what would happen if the ferry was no longer able to use it's current Gooseberry dock.

When you enter our home, there is a picture in the entryway. It's the Lummi Chief. You see, the ferry and Lummi Island have always been a part of our "beach lifestyle".

There has never been an out of town guest that we haven't taken to the island. Hikes, bike rides, artist tours, blackberry picking, a trip to the library, dinner at the Beach House Cafe; all experiences we cherish. I might toss in, my in laws first cabin was on Lummi Island and as a child, my husband spent every weekend riding the 6 car ferry.

The good and generous people of Whatcom county have been long time supporters your island lifestyle by continuing to help financially support this unique system of transportation. Our family supports this as well, but we believe that sacrificing our family homes is far beyond what anyone should be expected to do.

I am going to put the responsibility back on to the shoulders of the people who put us all here.....Whatcom County.

April 11, 2018

Dear Roland,

We would appreciate your passing this note to KPFF Consulting Engineers. Thanks.

Dear Mike and Cassandra,

Many thanks to you and your colleagues for your April 2<sup>nd</sup> response to our critique of the ridership model contained in our note of March 29, 2018.

In our reply we offer three suggestions for the Ridership model draft memo and then reflect on the use of economics in making complex public investment decisions.

### **The Ridership Model**

1. The draft text of the "Lummi Island Ferry Level of Service (LOS) Alternatives Analysis dated 30 March 2018 should be further revised to explain to a general audience how demand for passage varies with price (ferry fares). We offer the attached graphs of Annual Vehicles with Driver and Annual Pedestrians/Passengers (2004-2011) to replace Figure 1 and Figure 2.
2. The discussion of modeling begins at the top of page 6 with the statement "A series of econometric models are developed to relate ferry ridership to demand generators and costs." It would be helpful to spell out all the explanatory variables that comprise the  $Xt$  matrix of explanatory variables including demand drivers, suppressors/diverters and costs.
3. Table 23 on page 19 presents the results of the model projections of weekday and weekend ridership for each month in 2040. To make it more useful the table should be expanded to include the actual numbers of riders in each of these categories for the first year of the analysis (2004) and the most recent year (2017). A paragraph should be added comparing and contrasting the ridership in recent years with the ridership the model projects for 2040.

### **An Economic View of Ferry Planning**

Creating a new ferry system is a complex public investment decision. Every possible vessel represents a stream of social benefits and social costs that will extend over the many years of its planned service life. The optimal ferry is the one that produces the maximum net benefit—that is, the difference between overall benefits and overall costs over its lifetime.

Many benefits and costs can be easily measured in dollars. For example, benefits from passage on the ferry can be estimated as the amount people are willing to pay to use the vessel, and the

costs of building and operating alternative vessels can be estimated and compared for different sized boats with differing propulsion systems, operating and maintenance requirements, and fuels.

On the other hand, many costs and benefits are more difficult to quantify, such as affordability, environmental impacts, waiting time, scheduling predictability, safety, comfort, and convenience, among others. Ideally, we would like to be able to evaluate all of these impacts for each alternative design to rank each potential ferry by the net benefits it produces. The optimal choice is the vessel with the greatest net benefits. Social cost-benefit analysis is valuable because everyone, whatever their background, can understand and agree with it because the results are obvious.

We had hoped that KPFF's economic analysis would explore further the social impacts of the series of drastic fare increases from 2006 to 2011, which very much caused the most ferry-dependent families (commuters with children) to move off the island and less ferry-dependent people (the retired with no resident children) to move on. Unfortunately it was beyond the scope of the KPFF study, which assumes that fares are fixed over the lifetime of the future ferry.

Affordability is one of the stated goals of the ferry planning project. Because ferry fares constitute a major budget issue for island commuters, affordability is inseparably linked to fare structure. Therefore a major emerging challenge in the ferry planning process is to define affordability, to project revenue requirement for various ferry vessel capacities and to explore the demographic consequences of various fare levels.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Bailey & Richard Frye

**Comment on Task 4.1—Vehicle Alternatives Analysis draft memo**

April 11, 2018

## “Thinking about Throughput”

A key metric in evaluating the choice of vessel size is the maximum number of that can cross Hale Passage on the ferry per hour, that is, throughput.

Comment #1

Table 2 Voyage Models (p. 3) presents peak throughput for 20, 28 and 34 car vessel sizes for single lane loading/unloading and double lane loading/unloading. The Consultants should add a column to this table between these two columns which shows Time (minutes) for single lane loading and double lane unloading and the associated peak throughputs for this configuration. With the Whatcom Chief we have single lane loading/unloading on the Gooseberry and Lummi sides. In the next phase we could be having double lane loading/unloading with a new terminal at Gooseberry but still single lane loading/unloading at the Lummi end for a further period of years. An amended Table 2 will show peak throughput more accurately.

Comment #2

The vehicle layouts for the three vessel size options on pages 9-11 appears to show a more efficient loading pattern for the 34 car boat compared to the 28 and 20 car boats, because the 34 car boat adds two more vehicle spaces by staggering the alignment. That same layout pattern could add two vehicles to any multiple of four, including 20, 24, and 28, making boat sizes of 22, 26, and 30 useful options to consider.

The reason the Chief has been so successful for so many years is because of its ability to add or subtract runs to meet varying demand. So it is worthwhile determining what is the largest capacity modern vessel that could make up to five runs in two hours.

A boat that could make three runs an hour could have a peak throughput of:

20 car ferry	-->	60 vehicles/ hour
22 car ferry	-->	66 "
24 " "	-->	72 "
26 " "	-->	78 "

According to Table 2 (p. 3) the 34-car boat could have a peak throughput of 68 vehicles/ hour.

With three runs/ hour a 24-26 car vessel could exceed the hourly throughput of the 34 car vessel. It should be cheaper to build and operate than a larger vessel, yet still offer many years of excess capacity.

The question for the Consultants: What is the largest capacity boat that would be able to make 3 runs per hour?"

**Comment on *Task 4.4- Vessel Costs* draft memo**

April 11, 2018

One of Whatcom County's stated goals for the ferry planning process is to "Balance capacity against operating costs (fuel, personnel, etc.) to ensure affordable fares over the long run, including needs based fares."

Table 4 (p. 4) should be expanded to project for each year from 2018 to 2040 the following information for each vessel size:

1. Punch card fares for vehicles up to 8,000 lbs.
2. Ridership
3. Total fare box revenue
4. Operating costs (fuel & lube oil, repairs and annual maintenance, vessel insurance, other operating costs and system expenses)

*Jim Dickinson*

Envisioned Expandable Vehicle Ferry for Lummi Island,  
3/24/2018

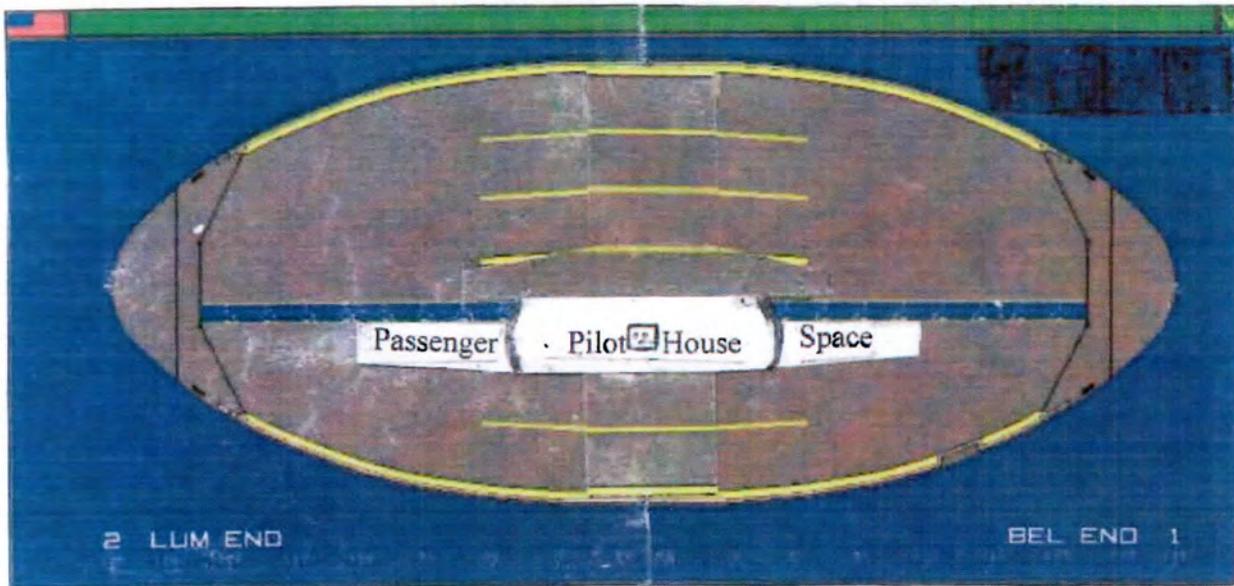
Alternate 1

Port Side view



T Class Ferry, 36 Vehicles, 150 Passengers, 164 Feet long, 8.0-8.5 feet Draft

Deck View



68 Feet wide, 6 lanes; Pilot house 1 Lane to port, goes above Wheel Chair Lane; WSF Bow Standard for Island compatibility.

Shortened version of very successful Pierce County Ferry Steilacoom II, design and engineering completed, may be expanded for future demand, for example: add 52 feet section for 54 vehicles, add 86 feet for 66 vehicles, add 112 feet for 72 vehicle capacity. All envisioned, under 100 tonne capacity, 54 car and longer will be K class vessels. Taken from envisions from drawings of Ferry Fan, John Richards. Jim Dickinson

Jim Dickson

New Ferry costs in one place. 1/21/2015, revised to 2018 Costs

All Boats listed herein have legal vehicle loading requirements.

2015

Ferry Size	Lightweight River Propeller Ferry Like Wahkiakum Ferry Oskar B	Seaworthy Propeller Ferry	Voigt Schneider Drive Ferry 2007 Design for Whatcom County
20 Car Ferry, 4 Lane	6 Million Dollars *1	8 Million Dollars	-
35 Car Ferry, 4 Lane	8 Million Dollars*2	10 Million Dollars	12 Million Dollars*3
35 Car –Expandable, 6 lanes	---	12 Million Dollars *4	---
54 Car Ferry 6 lanes	----	14.5 Million Dollars *5	----

2018, Costs, reflecting 3 % per year inflation

Ferry Size	Lightweight River Propeller Ferry Like Wahkiakum Ferry Oskar B	Seaworthy Propeller Ferry	Voigt Schneider Drive Ferry 2007 Design for Whatcom County
20 Car Ferry, 4 Lane	6.6 Million Dollars *1	8.71 Million Dollars	-
35 Car Ferry, 4 Lane	8.71 Million Dollars*2	10.936 Million Dollars	13.112 Million Dollars*3
35 Car –Expandable, 6 lanes	---	13.112 Million Dollars *4	---
54 Car Ferry 6 lanes	----	15.64 Million Dollars *5	----

\*1 Plans finished and available.

\*2 Modification of above \*1, costs include plans addition.

\*3. Plans available, although not complete, includes finishing of plans.

\*4 Plans available, price includes plan modification. Shortened Steilacoom II Hull, with small deck house, can be extended to meet future demand to maximum 72 cars

\*5 Complete Plans available. Steilacoom II clone, can be extended to meet future demand to maximum 72 cars

Other quotes are on a design build basis, plan cost, included in estimate, supplied by builder.

Quotes from Matt Nichols, CEO Nichol's Brother's Boat Builders 12/2014, 3%/yr added March 2018