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Friends of Frog Ferry Announces Effort to Undertake Study of a Passenger Ferry service Between Vancouver, Wash., and Portland, Ore.

Let's operate with facts and determine whether a sustainable passenger ferry service in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area is a viable alternate means of transiting the region

PORTLAND, Ore.—Organizers held a press conference this morning to address an effort to administer the research necessary to launch a commuter ferry service that would travel from Vancouver, Wash., to downtown Portland, stopping at several major locations along the way. The ferry system is being proposed by [Friends of Frog Ferry, a 501\(c\)\(3\)](#), as an alternate route to connect Portland and Vancouver.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, City of Portland, committed his support to the effort and urged other civic transit agencies to contribute to funding the feasibility studies that are needed to learn about costs and operational requirements as well as qualify for federal funding support. Wheeler said, "I am committed to being a regional partner in this effort and look forward to working closely with Metro on funding. I encourage transit agencies and the private sector to join me in learning about the feasibility of a passenger ferry service for our community."

The passenger ferry service leaders have presented to Metro, ODOT, PBOT, City of Vancouver and TriMet leadership.

The proposed ferry system would launch with a daily passenger ferry from Vancouver to downtown Portland as well as upwards of eight stops in downtown Portland, which would be able to carry 149 passengers and include bicycle storage. Multiple feasibility studies need to be conducted to learn about passenger travel needs (points of origination and destination), infrastructure needs, cost, local and federal financial support from public agencies, and how the service would synch with other modes of transit in the region. The key studies include: Transit Modeling Study; Triple Bottom Line Study (economic,

environmental and social impact); Passenger Ferry Service case studies; Funding Strategy and a Finance Plan (mapped to the findings and an Operational Plan). Cost has been kept very low due to the extensive network of pro bono private sector participation to include government affairs, public affairs, legal, event planning, website development, printing and graphic design.

Recognizing the potential benefits to the region, whether that's creation of tourism dollars or a better method for employees to reach their jobs in less time, several business leaders today voiced support of a ferry system along the banks of the Willamette River. Supporters of bringing a ferry system to the metro area include City of Portland, Port of Portland, Port of Vancouver, Working Waterfront Coalition, Greenbrier Companies, TriMet, Portland Business Alliance, CREDC, Greater Portland Inc., Stevens Water, Central Eastside Industrial District, Travel Oregon, Zidell Yards, OHSU, Vigor Industrial, Daimler Trucks North America and others. The news conference was held on the Portland Spirit at its Caruthers Dock location in southeast Portland, near the base of the Tilikum Crossing, with Dan Yates, President of the Portland Spirit welcoming supporters of the initiative

Susan Bladholm, Founder and President of Friends of Frog Ferry said, "As the Portland metro area grows, so does congestion on our roadways, interrupting our quality of life. We must improve our transportation infrastructure as nearly every river city in the world currently does and reduce the burden we're putting on our roads and provide a new mode of transit. A ferry system would play an important role in a larger transportation plan to benefit the region."

Bladholm and other organizers want to hear from metro area residents and encourage people to voice their opinions at frogferry.com.

According to a 2006 [Willamette River Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study](#), several key requirements needed to be met in order to contribute to a successful ferry service: population growth, longer auto commute time, a large group of supporters, and improved technology that ensures a low wake to minimize riverbank erosion. All requirements have now been met since the study was produced 12 years ago. For the anticipated service, the nearly 600 commuters during rush hour equates to 500 cars on the road (based on Columbia River Crossing Bridge research) and more than three and one-half miles of traffic. Ferry infrastructure is scalable; once riverside access is created, adding boats—meaning additional capacity—is relatively easy much like adding additional buses to a busy service line.

Other potential benefits to a commuter ferry include the preservation of the environment and air quality. There is also potential for new jobs to be created for operation of the ferry system, as well as the need for skilled workers who could help build, maintain and repair the passenger ferry or other watercraft that would be added to the fleet down the road. Passenger ferry service benefits the passengers who have an easier and likely shorter commute to the office, but it also benefits those on the roadways, competing with less traffic as well as those living in the area, as it improves air quality.

"We have significant interest in creating a sustainable ferry system that could provide transit for our employees living in Vancouver who commute to our Swan Island plant and offices," said Matt Markstaller, Daimler. "It will also help create and retain jobs in the area for skilled workers tasked with building, maintaining and repairing a ferry system and its fleet of ships."

Friends of Frog Ferry aims to find enough support and funding to launch the first phase of a ferry system by Summer 2022. Depending on the success of phase one, expansion plans include additional stops on the east and west banks of the river which may include St. John's, Pearl District, Oregon Convention

Center, Salmon Springs, OHSU/Zidell Yards, OMSI, Milwaukie/Oregon City and Lake Oswego. Future potential routes beyond the Willamette River corridor could include Camas to Gresham, Downtown to Portland International Airport, and Downtown to the airport and up the Columbia River Gorge.

For more information about Friends of Frog Ferry and a potential interstate commuter ferry, and to show your support for the initiative, visit www.frogferry.com.

About Friends of Frog Ferry

Friends of Frog Ferry 501(c)(3) was founded in 2018, by Susan Bladholm, who started the passenger ferry initiative to reclaim the Columbia and Willamette rivers as an alternate transportation option. Most major river cities around the world use their waterways to ease the burden on freeways and roads. The last [survey](#) to be completed in Portland on the use of passenger taxis was done in 2006. It's time for Portland to re-examine the option of its waterways to provide an alternate mode of transportation. Using our city's waterways would ease clogged freeways, bridges and side streets. It would also provide a pleasing commuter and visitor travel option and increase the livability of our Portland and Vancouver, Wash., neighborhoods. Frog Ferry, a potential name for a commuter ferry, derives from a Chinookan myth about the creature Frog teaching local people how to fish, thereby being a symbol of good fortune. The logo is used with permission by two Chinookan artists, Chief Tony Johnson and tribal artist Adam McIssac.

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