

PROJECT NEED SUMMARY

BNSF is projecting a significant increase in train traffic over the next 7-17 years, going from 35-40 trains per day currently to 70 trains per day in 2020 and 104 trains per day in 2030 at our two rail crossings AT Main and Dayton Streets, usually blocking both of them at the same time. These numbers are based on fairly old information but represent the only reliable data available to the City. These numbers do not include the near-term potential addition of up to 18 trains per day hauling coal for export from the proposed expanded bulk-materials terminal near Bellingham, nor does it include the 9-11 trains per week in estimated unit oil trains from the Bakken oil fields now transiting Washington State.

The current situation already presents significant conflicts, delays, and safety hazards that will become debilitating as train numbers increase rapidly over the next decade, such as:

- Train passage completely halts ferry loading and unloading. This affects both vehicle traffic and walk-on passengers, decreases rider satisfaction, increases average trip duration, and reduces schedule reliability
- Train passage prevents timely delivery of emergency services to the water side of BNSF tracks where we operate a very active Senior Center, a Marina with storage for 894 boats, a nationally significant salt-water dive park, three separate waterfront parks, several office buildings, two 4- to 5-story condominium buildings, several single-family homes, a popular dog park and pet exercise area, three restaurants, and the State Ferry Terminal. All of these are frequent users of paramedic, fire, and police services. Delayed emergency responses of several minutes are not uncommon and will increase in frequency and duration going forward
- Each train sounds its whistle at 115+ decibels eight times at a distance of ¼ mile as it passes by all of the above developments. Between residents, ferry riders, beach visitors, trail walkers, and others in close proximity to the tracks these blasts are deafening and disruptive to their enjoyment or use of the Edmonds waterfront. This problem also limits desirability of future development at the Salish Crossing and Harbor Square properties which are significant keys to Edmonds' economic future

None of these issues are new. They have been obvious for a long time. The community went through a very intensive public planning process for several years that culminated in a plan to move the ferry terminal to Point Edwards in a project identified as Edmonds Crossing. This project enjoyed widespread popular and political support at the local, state, and national levels. Fund-raising for the project was successful in getting commitments that totaled approximately \$80 million by 2008. However, the cost estimate for the project was approximately three times that amount. With the economic downturn, the State Legislature eliminated budgeted funds for the project. Federal grants have also been withdrawn due to inactivity on the project. Because of these budget realities, the WSDOT Ferries Division did not include funding within the State's long-range transportation financial forecast which extends to the year 2030. We need a new plan.