



SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOPS NEW LONDON, CT – SEPTEMBER 26, 2002

As part of the Public Outreach effort for the Long Island Sound Waterborne Transportation Plan, two Community Planning Workshop sessions were held in new London, CT on September 26th, 2002.

At each session, the study team began by convening a “plenary session.” During the plenary session, the study team presented an overview of the study process and key issues, responded to questions about the study, and led an open group discussion of two main topics:

- The role and potential for new/expanded waterborne services to address local and regional transportation problems – problems and opportunities.
- Participants’ visions for waterborne transportation in 20 years.

The plenary session was followed by a “breakout session” where participants met together in small groups and recorded ideas on maps. Participants were also invited to complete and return comment cards provided for their use.

This Summary consists of a record of both plenary sessions, followed by a combined summary of the ideas from the breakout sessions. This Summary is intended to document the workshop outcomes for the public record. All suggestions regarding specific sites, services and/or facilities represent the views of workshop participants, and do not constitute findings or recommendations by the study team or its sponsoring agencies.

WORKSHOP SESSION #1 AND #2

Questions and Answers

- Are you including the Southeast Connecticut Council of Governments in the study? *They have not been involved to date, but will be added to the study mailing list and invited to join our Advisory Committee. [Note: Jim Butler from Southeast Connecticut Council of Governments attended Session #2.]*
- What is the study timeframe? *The study timeframe is through the year 2025, but there will be a range of recommendations covering both near-term and long-term opportunities.*

- Does the proposed rail freight tunnel between New Jersey and Brooklyn factor into this study? *The tunnel proposal addresses a different geography and need than this study. The idea is to create a direct freight connection between Long Island and the national rail network to reduce the need for trucking across the Hudson River. Our study is looking at reducing the need for trucking and auto trips across Long Island Sound and along the coastlines of Long Island and Connecticut.*
- How is the market analysis being conducted? *Baseline data on passenger origin-destination flows is being obtained from the NYMTC "Best Practices" regional travel demand model. Baseline data on freight origin-destination flows is being obtained from a commercial database called "Transearch." The baseline data is being modified with a household survey of travel preferences, with a review of other recent travel surveys as available, and with external adjustments for reasonably anticipated changes in land use and travel patterns.*
- These services are seasonal. What happens in the off-season? *Some of the tourist destinations, like the South Fork beaches, are very seasonal, but the demand for many services is year-round. Modern ferry equipment can operate in all four seasons. The Bridgeport-Port Jefferson and Cross Sound Ferry operate year-round with very few trips cancelled due to inclement weather.*

Issues, Recommendations and Visions

- New London should be strongly considered for a "Port Inland Distribution Network" facility to receive container barges from Port Newark/Elizabeth. The local impacts are manageable and we are "ready to go."
- The Transportation Strategies Board plan will represent Connecticut's official position on a variety of transportation issues, including ferries. It will be submitted on December 15th.
- You need to consider the impact of legislation that prevents dredging and dumping spoils within 15 miles of the coast.
- There is an opportunity for a feeder service operating from New London to the east. Ferries need to integrate with and enhance rail service.
- There is an opportunity to divert "through freight" to the water, by loading trucks onto ro-ro barges. This may be a bigger opportunity than for passengers. It would depend on giving trucking companies a better alternative than the all-highway route, by "leap-frogging" them around congestion. You would just move the container or trailer, not the driver. Ferries become more attractive when they allow trucking companies to complete more trips in a shorter time period.
- Suggest separate freight and passenger services at New London. These "multi-modal centers" would be coordinated with Amtrak and there could be a common ticket for both. Around 90% of current cross-sound business is leisure travel and

only 5% is truck. The rail lines do not provide enough clearance for double-stack containers.

- The seamless connection of ferry transportation and parking is important to make the overall trip fast and easy.
- Suggest service to the South Fork of Long Island. Ferries can handle 30% of the peak market between New England and the South Fork. A site at Fort Pond Bay would allow for seamless connection between the ferry and the LIRR. On the North Fork, waters are not as navigable west of Orient Point, and Greenport has limited channel capacity. Sag Harbor is a small, dense village and is too congested for ferry service.
- New London to Manhattan is a potential market.
- Other potential markets might include local service – a water taxi within the harbor. Pfizer has two sites on either side of the Thames and has run a water shuttle. This would reduce traffic on the I-95 bridge.
- Should also consider using ferries for intercity service along the east coast.

SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT SESSION NOTES AND DRAWINGS

- There should be a passenger only ferry from Fenwick (near Old Saybrook) to Orient/Greenport. There could also be a one-per-day automobile ferry serving that same route.
- There should be a small ferry route (40 passengers max.) between East Haven and the Wading River area.
- There should be additional ferries between the Madison (CT) area and Waterville (Long Island); and between Norwalk and Sunken Meadow as required by future demand.
- There should be a ferry service between Greenwich, CT and Bayville, Long Island.
- A Thames River ferry service consisting of small (40 person) vessels should be established with stops up and down both sides of the river between Groton and New London and several ferries exclusively running between Groton and New London.