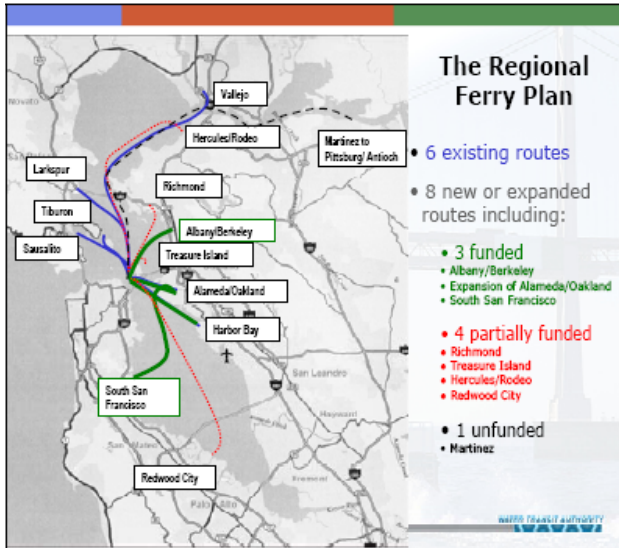


## **BERKELEY/ALBANY FERRY NEWS**

This is the first in a series of newsletters published by the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (WTA) designed to keep you up to date on the proposed Berkeley/Albany ferry route. Please let us know what you think by visiting our website at [www.watertransit.org](http://www.watertransit.org).

## **BACKGROUND**



The WTA's July 2003 Implementation and Operations Plan (IOP) identified a limited number of new ferry routes which could provide cost effective transit service. Those routes, including new service to either Berkeley or Albany, were evaluated at a broad level in the Authority's Program Environmental Impact Report. Regional Measure 2, which increased tolls on the Bay Area's state owned bridges to pay for additional transit and transportation projects, included \$12

million in capital funding and \$3.2 m/year in operating funds for commute ferry service for Berkeley/Albany. However, RM2 states that funding will be transferred to another ferry site in the east bay if the "WTA does not have an entitled terminal site within the Berkeley/Albany encatchment area by 2010 that meets its requirements."

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS UNDERWAY**

The WTA has defined four potential ferry terminal sites in Berkeley and Albany that will be studied further in an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS): Two sites are in the Berkeley Marina - near the Double Tree dock and just south of the Berkeley pier. One site is near the Albany-Berkeley city boundary - at the foot of Gilman Street - and one site is in Albany -at the foot of Buchanan Street. The environmental impacts of each site will be studied in the EIR/EIS.



Two scoping meetings are scheduled to solicit comments on the scope of the EIR/EIS and the alternatives that should be considered.

- **Thursday, March 08, 2007, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM at the North Berkeley Senior Center, MLK and Hearst.**
- **Thursday, March 15, 6:30PM – 8:30 PM Albany City Hall, 1000 San Pablo Ave.**

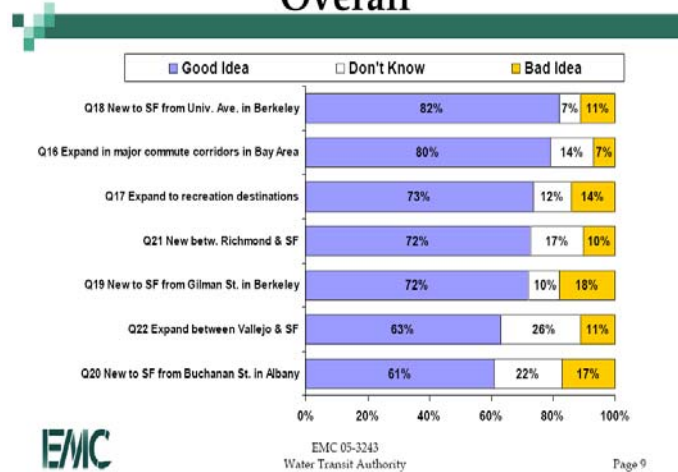
Public hearings on the draft EIR/EIS are scheduled for early 2008. The EIR/EIS is expected to be completed in 2009.

Based on available information, potentially significant issues related to construction and operation of a Berkeley ferry terminal include possible traffic impacts along University Avenue as well as impacts to recreational users at the Berkeley Marina. Potential major issues at the Albany sites include possible impacts to the shoreline, impacts to rafting birds, and impacts to habitat (eelgrass). These and other potential environmental impacts will be fully evaluated in the EIR/EIS.

### EARLY POLLING SHOWS SUPPORT FOR BERKELEY/ALBANY FERRY SERVICE

In April, 2005, WTA conducted telephone interviews of 600 randomly selected registered voters in Berkeley and Albany. The majority (80%) of those surveyed in both cities felt that expanded ferry service on major commute corridors in the bay area was a good idea, especially if service were accessible from University Avenue in Berkeley. They were most likely to support expanded ferry service if there were public transit to the terminal and if the terminal were ADA accessible and convenient for bicyclists.

## Establish/Expand Service Overall



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Is the Berkeley/Albany ferry funded?

Regional Measure 2, approved by voters on March 2, 2004, allocates \$12 million for the purchase of 2 vessels, and over \$3 million per year in operating funds. While Berkeley does have an RM2 commitment of operating funds, it does not have a specified funding source for the terminal construction. The funding plan for Berkeley includes use of the \$2.5 million annual Federal allocation as well as any future Federal earmark. A Federal earmark for Berkeley terminal construction was the top priority on this year's legislative agenda. Congresswoman Barbara Lee was the primary advocate for funding for the Berkeley ferry in the current Transportation Appropriations Bill.

**How long will the ferry ride to San Francisco take?** Depending on the terminal location selected the trip time could range from 22 minutes to 30 minutes.

**What is the schedule for design, construction and start of ferry service?** Initial ferry service is scheduled to begin the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2011. This timeline is dependent on funding availability and timely completion of the EIR/EIS (4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 2009), design (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, 2010) and construction (1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2011).

**How much will it cost to ride?** The fare is expected to be comparable to existing ferry service services and the BART fare from Berkeley to San Francisco.

### How can I give input to the studies?

Comments on the technical studies and the Draft EIR/EIS can be submitted in writing to John Sindzinski, WTA Planning Manager, at [Sindzinski@watertransit.org](mailto:Sindzinski@watertransit.org) or in person at the scoping meetings and public hearings as discussed above.

*In October 1999, The State of California formed the Water Transit Authority (WTA), a regional agency mandated to create a plan for new and expanded water transit and related services in San Francisco Bay. The Authority's mission to build and operate a cost-effective, convenient and environmentally responsible ferry system that will increase regional mobility within the Bay Area.*