



## PRESS RELEASE

### Ridership on Kitsap Fast Ferries Hits New Record in 2019

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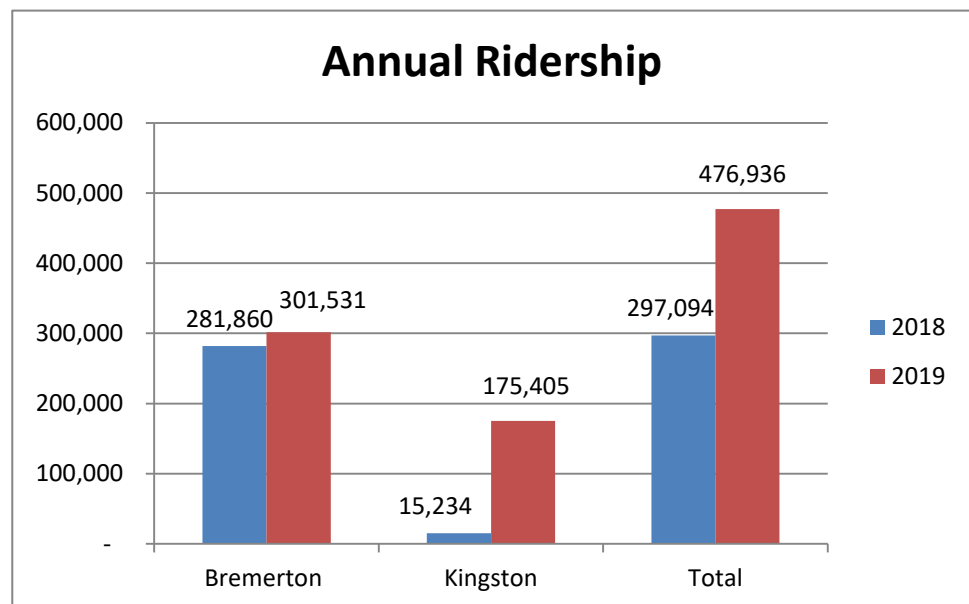
Contact: Sanjay Bhatt, Kitsap Transit Marketing & Public Information Director

360-824-4926, [sanjayb@kitsaptransit.com](mailto:sanjayb@kitsaptransit.com)

*This press release replaces an earlier version published on January 15 that contained incorrect figures.*

BREMERTON – Ridership on Kitsap Fast Ferries reached a new high of 476,936 passengers in 2019, up 61% over the year.

The growth in ridership – an additional 179,842 passengers between the two fast-ferry routes -- was driven primarily by the introduction of new passenger-only ferry service on the Kingston-Seattle route in November 2018. Other contributing factors included four weeks of two-boat test service on the Bremerton-



Seattle route starting in September 2019 and a joint campaign with Washington State Ferries in January 2019 to promote walk-up traffic to ferries over cars during the Alaskan Way Viaduct closure.

“These numbers are encouraging to see,” said Kitsap Transit Executive Director John Clauson. “We are grateful to the taxpayers of Kitsap County for voting in 2016 for a sales-tax increase to support this new service. The service is fairly new, so it’s too early to draw definitive conclusions about any trends in the data.”

From May through September, Kitsap Fast Ferries offers sailings all day on Saturdays. In 2019, the Saturday sailing schedule on the Bremerton-Seattle route was extended through October 19 to test the response of beaches in Rich Passage to a simulated two-boat schedule.

The Bremerton Fast Ferry service carried 301,531 passengers in its second full year, with an average of 25,128 passengers per month – up 7 percent from 2018, when it carried 281,860 passengers and an average of 23,488 passengers per month. The crossing time is approximately 30 minutes.

In addition to the two-boat test service, another key difference between 2018 and 2019 on the Bremerton route was the span of the sailing schedule: In the first four months of 2018, Kitsap Transit operated two roundtrips midday in addition to three roundtrips in the morning and three roundtrips in the afternoon. Starting in May 2018, the Bremerton Fast Ferry’s weekday sailing schedule eliminated the mid-day roundtrips and operated more afternoon and evening trips, which proved more popular with riders.

The Kingston Fast Ferry service carried 175,405 passengers in its first full year, with an average of 14,617 passengers per month. The crossing time is approximately 40 minutes.

Kitsap Fast Ferries’ ridership gain was tempered by construction on the Seattle docks: The one-week shutdown of Colman Dock last August forced Kitsap Fast Ferries to cancel 178 sailings. The Bremerton Fast Ferry carried 23,435 passengers that month, 20 percent fewer than in August 2018.

A series of snowstorms last February also had a significant impact. While the storms resulted in the cancellation of only 39 sailings, they severely limited Kitsap Transit bus service and likely kept many regular customers from traveling. The Bremerton Fast Ferry carried 17,210 passengers that February, down nine percent from a year earlier. The Kingston Fast Ferry carried 10,560 passengers that February, compared to 13,939 the previous month and 13,630 the next month.

“Our staff delivers a great experience to our customers, whether it’s on the ferry or on the docks,” said Raymond Scott, Marine Services Operations and Maintenance Manager. “We are looking forward to launching our Southworth fast-ferry service later this year. We are working with our partners at WSF and King County to coordinate our operations.”

The Southworth-Seattle route, the last of three routes in Kitsap Transit’s plan approved by voters, will offer a crossing time of approximately 24 minutes.

Nichols Brothers Boat Builders is under contract to construct two bow-loading vessels. Once the boats are delivered, one will be the primary boat on the Southworth route and the other on the Kingston route. The current primary boat on the Kingston route is the Finest, which will become a back-up vessel.

To dive deeper into Kitsap Transit’s fast-ferry data, visit [KitsapTransit.com/FastFerryData](https://www.kitsaptransit.com/FastFerryData).

#### **About Kitsap Transit**

Kitsap Transit has been operating friendly, convenient public transit since 1983. The transit agency for Kitsap County carried more than 3.8 million riders in 2018 across a multi-modal system of routed buses, passenger ferries, paratransit shuttles, vanpools, and worker/driver buses for the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

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