

#	Date Rec'd	Subject	Citizen/ Group	<p align="center">Citizen Comments on New Whatcom Waterfront Planning – January 2007</p>
<i>Last Update</i> <i>12/31/2006</i>				<p><i>Citizen comments received from citizens submitting comment to the Port and City and through the New Whatcom website through January 2007. Prior month comments can be viewed on the website in separate monthly documents.</i></p>
268	1/31/07	Skipped Charter Operations	<p>“Ham Hayes” <hhayes@biztran.com></p>	<p>To: Waterfront Advisory Group Date: Jan 31, 2007 Subject: Comments with regard to Skipped Charter Operations in the Bellingham Bay-San Juan Islands region relative to Bellingham’s waterfront redevelopment.</p> <p>Bellingham and nearby communities in Whatcom County have a long maritime history in ship/boat building, marine maintenance and repair, commercial shipping and passenger operations, recreational boating and marine support industries.</p> <p>Skipped charter operations such as Gato Verde, Valhalla Marine Adventures, Shawmanee and Pacific Sea Taxi, among others, are an important piece of a growing local visitor and tourism industry. These charter operations offer a unique service by opening up affordable boat-tour access to the nearby San Juan Islands further enhancing the regional, national and international image of Bellingham and Whatcom County as a multi-dimensional recreation destination.</p> <p>Bellingham, including Fairhaven, is one of two major marine portals to the world class vacation and marine recreational area bounded on the south by the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the west by Victoria, BC/Vancouver Island, the north the Canadian Gulf Islands and lower mainland BC and the east by the shorelines of Whatcom and Skagit counties and Bellingham Bay. There are over 250 islands in this area with numerous villages, bays, coves, wildlife habitats and reserves and marine parks. Bellingham hosts a significant fleet of passenger and charter service companies providing passenger and auto ferry service to Alaska, passenger ferry services to Victoria, BC and the San Juan Islands, whale watching and fishing charters, and skipped and bareboat charter operations serving Bellingham Bay, the San Juan Islands and Canadian waters. These passenger and charter operations generate direct employment as well as ancillary tourism including accommodation, dining and shopping revenues to city and county businesses. These operations are recognized regionally, nationally and internationally and help place Bellingham on the “must go-to places list” of vacationers and visitors. These operations also help support the marine maintenance, trades and chandlery businesses in the area as well. In short, these operations are a major asset to the local economy in that they provide critical services to visitors and vacationers to one of the two major outdoor attractions of the region (Mt Baker and the North Cascades being the other).</p>

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				<p>Continued'</p> <p>Besides being an economic contributor to Bellingham and the area, charter operations are part of the cultural and social fabric of the working waterfront. Part of this working waterfront fabric is the interrelationships between the charter operations and the rest of the marine trades industry. Another key part is the relationship with local residents who use these services for vacations, day trips and transport to island lodging, and with the local merchants who provide partnerships and logistical support. The values that Bellingham and Whatcom County residents hold for the environment, quality of life and success are all part of the legacy this working waterfront fabric provides.</p> <p>Skipped charter operations are not well supported by the current harbor infrastructure. We would like to see the waterfront redevelopment effort include improved infrastructure and operational support. We have laid out a set of specific recommendations, some of which could be implemented by the Port independently of infrastructure changes. These recommendations are as follows:</p> <p>Moorage: Charter operations should be co-located in the same dock area, or have an adequately sized common touch and go dock. Year-round moorage with dock box, water and electricity dedicated to skipped charter vessels. Safe (i.e. sufficient dock width) and easy access for passengers with minimal water movement created by vessel traffic and/or wind. Preferably the first dock at base of the ramp. Visible to foot traffic & public spaces. Convenient to pump-out facility and fuel dock. Hazardous materials disposal area. Convenient to passenger support services such as dining, shopping, provisioning.</p> <p>Parking: Client and employee parking areas with an option for long-term parking. Enforced loading zone at the top of the moorage ramp for charter customers</p> <p>Office Space: Central location for operator offices close to parking and top of the ramp. Possibly a ticket kiosk.</p> <p>Storage: 100sf-200sf / operator within 1/4 mile</p>

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				<p>Continued'</p> <p>Signage: Standardized clear directional signage from the interstate and other arterial surface streets to the dock.</p> <p>Rest Rooms: Clean heated rest rooms within 300' of the dock ramp.</p> <p>Other: Good lighting, locked gate with surveillance camera at night, free/cheap wirelesses internet, dock carts, regular ramp and dock maintenance & cleaning.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted for: Gato Verde - Todd Schuster Pacific Sea Taxi - Sean McNamara Shawmanee - Don and Kay Beattie Valhalla Marine Adventures - Ham Hayes</p> <p>by: Ham Hayes Valhalla Marine Adventures</p>