

Hello again! This is Derek Firenze with your local news and commentary for Thursday, October 19, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

Constructions on the Discovery Road Bikeway and Sidewalk Project originally scheduled for October 9 will now begin on October 30 between the Rainier Street roundabout and Salish Coast Elementary School. Drivers are warned to find alternative routes during the seven-month construction period to avoid delays.

This three-quarters of a mile project will provide a new bikeway and new sidewalks for a stretch that has been notoriously difficult for anyone without a car. In addition, the project includes enhanced pedestrian crossings, street lighting, water and sewer upgrades, stormwater management using drainage swales and other low-impact strategies, as well as enhancements to the wetland on the north side of Discovery Road across from Howard and Eddy Streets. The east end of the project will tie into the existing sidewalk and bikeway by Salish Coast Elementary School, and the west end will tie into the Rainier Street roundabout.

The Discovery Road Project is made possible through three grants received by the city which include the state Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Program funding for over \$1.4 million, federal Regional Surface Transportation Program funds totalling more than \$600,000, and a grant from the state Transportation Improvement Board for almost two and a half million. The city's matching funds brings the current total project budget to \$5.5 million. Despite the delay, construction should still hopefully end in the spring of next year.

A new fast ferry has been announced for the Seattle to Bremerton route with an entirely new design. The new vessel design is named Foil Ferry, a 150-passenger all-electric fast ferry. Construction of Foil Ferry is estimated to cost \$14.1 million, plus another million for owner construction management and oversight. In the long term, however, maintenance costs (including battery replacement every eight years), are predicted to be 35% less than conventional fast ferries. The designers claim Foil Ferry will require less than one-third the energy of conventional fast ferries. Because it is an all-electric vessel, Foil Ferry emits no greenhouse gasses or pollutants. The design also generates less noise than an internal combustion-powered craft and offers reduced motions relative to non-foiling hulls. In addition, the design should produce negligible waves as the hull flies above the water's surface. This wake reduction compared to traditional vessels is important for protecting sensitive shorelines such as those along Rich Passage which makes up a significant portion of the Bremerton–Seattle route.

The pilothouse includes a novel automated object-detection system borrowed from the autonomous vessel market to reduce the risk of collisions. The risk of colliding with objects in the water such as logs and even whales remains a primary concern to vessel operators. To further address this issue, Foil Ferry's design has a patented collision absorption system that would allow the vessel to come to a controlled stop in the event of a strike with a large object while foilborne, mitigating the risk of injury to passengers and damage to the vessel. Foil Ferry has a takeoff speed of 20 knots and is optimized for a cruising speed of 30 knots. The vessel should be able to complete each crossing in 32 minutes and a round trip on a single battery charge.

The Bremerton–Seattle route was selected for the preliminary design based on the high route ridership, moderate range, existence of key infrastructure, and the opportunity to demonstrate Foil Ferry's low-wake properties on a route with multiple boats in operation. And if successful, we might see more of this design even closer to home.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Brinnon Fire Department is raising that recognition by highlighting Jenni Glasco, a Firefighter/EMT, who's not only a breast cancer survivor but also a shining example of resilience and determination. In 2017, Jenni first became concerned about a lump in her breast. After an MRI, she received the devastating news. Her battle with breast cancer included chemotherapy, radiation, and a double mastectomy. But Jenni's spirit did not waver. After 14 grueling months, she emerged stronger and full of life, embarking on a new journey, completing her EMT training. Not stopping there, she graduated from the fire academy over a year ago becoming a certified firefighter/EMT. But she's not done yet. She's continuing to move forward now as a paramedic student. In announcing her story, the Brinnon Fire Department made sure to note how proud they are to have her and what an invaluable asset she's been while acting as an inspiration to us all.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Derek Firenze. Thanks for listening.