

## Appendix D



# **Crossing Over: A Collaborative Neighborhood Process**

**Stakeholder Final Report  
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## Introduction

Crossing Over: A Collaborative Neighborhood Process was designed to address problems created by Guemes Island ferry traffic and parking in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood of Anacortes, Washington. This report presents the findings of this two part process conducted in August of 2006 and outlines recommendations and action plans developed by the project participants.

The Guemes Island ferry terminal is located near the downtown area of Anacortes in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood and is owned and operated by Skagit County. The ferry operated from this terminal provides ferry service to unincorporated Guemes Island. Many ferry users park their vehicles in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood and walk aboard the vessel for the short crossing. The number of walk-on passengers leaving cars in Anacortes sharply increases during holidays and summer months and has increased significantly since car fares doubled in 2005. The volume of cars parked in Anacortes far exceeds the limits of available parking space during times when car ferry service is disrupted for maintenance and passenger-only service is substituted. These periods of disrupted service are referred to as 'haul-outs' when service is interrupted for planned maintenance and 'outages' when service is unexpectedly disrupted due to mechanical failure of the dock or vessel.

Past attempts to address the problem in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood have included; increasing available parking by building a new public lot near the terminal, requests from 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents to zone parking for residents only, coordination by the ferry manager with the City of Anacortes during haul-outs and outages to allow parking at the nearby city park and a discussion between the island ferry committee and the city council to explore other parking options. While some of these attempts have resulted in some short term relief, no long term or sustainable solutions were achieved.

Unlike previous attempts to resolve the traffic and parking disputes, Crossing Over was specifically designed to bring residents of both communities together for opportunities to meet each other, to gain a shared understanding of the issues and to work together on solutions. This approach was intended to foster the formation of enduring relationships and a shared sense of community as the foundation upon which any resolutions would be built.

Previous research conducted within the two groups indicated that while each group had a strong individual sense of community there was a lack of inclusion of each other within that sense of community. This was more notable among Island residents who did not perceive the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood as members of their community in contrast to 6<sup>th</sup> Street area residents who were more likely to view Island residents inclusively (see Appendix A for a brief comparison of each area's sense of community). The process design of Crossing Over was deemed an instrumental component of potential outcomes which were projected to include both tangible agreements to resolve the issues and less tangible but equally important relational outcomes.

these objectives through facilitated small group activities. An evaluation tool was used at the end of each meeting to measure how well each objective was achieved.

The objectives of the first meeting included:

- Developing/strengthening relationships between participants from each community
- Hearing and understanding each other's perspectives and experiences
- Creating a group vision for the future
- Planning for our next steps

The objectives of the second meeting included:

- Finalizing the group's vision
- Developing concrete action steps to achieve this vision
- Planning for implementation and future collaboration

## Results

First meeting:

Through small group dialogue, all participants in the first meeting had an opportunity to hear each other's experiences concerning parking and traffic in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood (see Appendix B). This was the first opportunity most participants had to meet members of the other community and the first occasion for a face to face conversation about these issues. Responses collected from evaluations demonstrate that participants did build relationships and achieve a greater understanding of each other's perspectives (see appendix C). Comments from evaluations included:

"Seeing and hearing from 6<sup>th</sup> Street area residents in a stress-less environment (was beneficial)".

"It was wonderful to meet and talk with the people on Guemes Island who really care about the problems on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. This was a great beginning to solving the problem".

"Surprised to find that some Anacortes 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents are so limited in the parking they have available. I'll be even more aware of the on street parking situation".

"I am happy that I had the opportunity to let 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Street residents know that we understand their frustrations with Guemes cars and parking problems".

In addition to relational work participants also crafted a vision of what the situation will look and feel like when it is resolved and each community's needs are met. The small group responses in this area (see Appendix D) were compiled after the meeting and the following vision was adopted at the second meeting:

*The 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood and Guemes Island wish to promote a feeling of shared community and respect. We are committed to realizing our vision by working together and with the governments of the City of Anacortes and Skagit County in order to:*

respect were made along with plans for more comprehensive communication between the communities. Plans that involve the support of others include development of a County protocol for responding to citizen concerns and collaborative activities with SKAT to increase public transportation options.

In addition to the tangible agreements and commitments achieved in each group, evaluation responses (see Appendix E) for the second meeting continued to indicate strong outcomes along the relational level. Responses included these comments:

*"I feel like we know each other well enough now to just call any of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street people and offer to help with something".*

*"Before meetings I did not know the 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents-it was good to meet them".*

*"As a community we have more power together".*

*"It was good to see the elected officials and department officials participate in a sincere way. If we could maintain this spirit of cooperation it would be very uplifting".*

A shift in the previous perception of the communities as separate entities can be seen by the agreement to add the 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents to the Guemes Island phone directory, a private directory published by an island organization. While having practical value as a communication tool this agreement might also be seen as a gesture of inclusion and recognition of a new shared sense of community.

## Public Transportation

	<i>Can be accomplished in the short term</i>	<i>Can be accomplished in the long term</i>
<i>We can do by ourselves</i>	<p>Islanders will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data on Island: what ferry runs to target with Community Van</li> <li>• Help people fill out the web based surveys at the Guemes Island Library</li> <li>• Identify pool of Islanders to serve as volunteer drivers for Community Van</li> <li>• Assist Islanders with signing up for Dial-a-Ride service</li> <li>• Utilize Linetime.org and The Evening Star to publicize information</li> </ul>	<p>Continue collaboration with SKAT director and 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood.</p>
<i>We can do with the involvement of others</i>	<p>SKAT agrees to provide a Community Van to Guemes Island</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data with SKAT Web based survey tool on what ferry runs to target with Community Van</li> <li>• SKAT and GIFC will collaborate on Survey questions</li> <li>• SKAT will train and certify the volunteer drivers, provide fuel and insurance coverage.</li> <li>• Community van will use the SKAT dispatcher</li> </ul> <p>Coordinate SKAT and Ferry schedules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will have a public process to approve changing the SKAT Anacortes run to go in an Easterly loop.</li> </ul>	<p>SKAT bus will stop down at the ferry dock rather than top of the hill at ferry landing.</p> <p>Seek special needs grant to increase coordination of the two transportation systems (ferry and SKAT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve State and local elected officials</li> <li>• Start by being successful with the Community Van on the Island</li> </ul> <p>Have actual SKAT route on the Island.</p> <p>Have dialogue with State officials to let them know what we are doing and to keep them informed in preparation for possible long term funding requests.</p>

Table 2

**Element:** Recommend public transportation alternatives that will diminish the need for Islanders to park in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood.

## Next Steps

The group made the following recommendations for future activities:

- Share contact information with all participants so that plans begun in Session two can be completed.
- Have periodic Crossing Over follow-up meetings.
- Have a Crossing Over meeting one month in advance of ferry haul-outs.

Contact information has been distributed to all participants. A conversation will be held with the Guemes Island and Pilgrim Congregational churches to discuss sponsorship of future meetings.

## Conclusion

In an editorial in the Seattle Times published on April 16, 2006, Victor Bremson discussed the creation of a new kind of activism that stresses engagement and reconciliation. Bremson wrote:

Carl Anthony of the Ford Foundation teaches that the primary way to create successful change within a community is to bring all the factions together to simply share their individual stories....The payoff for all this hard work comes in the form of creating stronger communities and more-easily implemented solutions.... It is still critically important to speak our truth, but I believe that we must learn to do it without creating so much separation. I suspect if we do we will find out that we are not that far apart.

The work done by Crossing Over participants attests to the power inherent in people simply coming together with a willingness to share and hear all perspectives and to proceed from the mutual understanding founded in this initial step. Though divided by a swiftly flowing channel of water, Crossing Over participants discovered, as Bremson predicted, that they are not that far apart. Comments from two participants in particular highlight this discovery:

*"My impression is that both Islanders and Anacortes residents want the same thing and will work together for a solution"*

*"I feel that there is much more unity of task and understanding".*

The agreements achieved in the Crossing Over process are more enduring, sustainable and likely to be implemented because they are based on the relational outcomes of understanding, trust, and collaboration also accomplished within the process. Both communities can only benefit from the relationships begun in these initial steps as they continue future collaboration.

## Appendix B

### *How has the situation affected you personally?*

#### Session one

#### Small group discussion

(Compiled in themes)

#### **6th Street Neighborhood Resident's Experiences:**

- Debris thrown in yard in 6<sup>th</sup> street neighborhood
- Damaged landscaping
- When a car waiting in the ferry line parks diagonally across the intersection (to prevent cars from coming down I street and cutting in line) it makes it impossible for me to get in my driveway
- My drive way is often blocked
- Many houses don't have off street parking.
- There is no alley parking by some homes.
- Small lot size prevents homes from having driveways so residents have to park in front of homes
- Some 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents have to park in front of homes due to disabilities
- Ferry users speed and run the stop sign to catch the ferry.
- U-turns on 6<sup>th</sup> Street to get into ferry line
- Felt disrespected
- I have a lack of privacy in my home
- My bedroom faces the street and the noise is disturbing
- No room for visitor parking on 6<sup>th</sup> street
- I used to cherish the quiet after 6:00. It is now noisy in the 6<sup>th</sup> street neighborhood

#### **Islander's Experiences:**

- I parked on someone's lawn and received a gracious note and I felt so bad
- I feel bad about the effect on 6<sup>th</sup> Street folks
- I feel guilty when I park in front of people's houses
- Annoyed by 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents who park in front of their homes to prevent others from parking on the street
- Pleased when a 6<sup>th</sup> Street resident helps me
- Enjoy looking at and smelling the flowers on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and I
- Hauling things from the car such as groceries and bundles is especially difficult
- When I have a load to carry the parking situation is a burden
- The handicap parking spots along the fence by the dock do work well
- The times that the ferry is out of service are especially difficult
- The lack of parking in outages is a problem
- I have to use a car because of mobility limitations
- Lack of public transportation forces Islanders to park in 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood

## Appendix C

### Session One Evaluation Responses

*Which parts of tonight's process were most helpful, comfortable or productive and why?*

- The small group discussions really produced creative thinking/ideas/commonalities
- Small groups-very good exchange of ideas
- It was great to hear each perspective. I like your questions.
- To hear others ideas and problems
- Listening to the 6<sup>th</sup> Street group
- Pleased with the cooperation of the two groups
- Getting together with Anacortes residents to learn their concerns-and our commonalities. Why? Because its relationship is prone to be confrontational.
- Like the circle for chairs! Like Marilee's preview of discussion/focus. Going around my small circle one-to-one to express my thoughts. Safe space created for discussion. Ending with appreciation statements.
- Getting in the group and finding out everyone's problems on both Anacortes side and Guemes side
- Small group discussion – many ideas and concerns and solutions
- All were encouraged to speak and all ideas honored
- Breaking into small groups was good. Need more Anacortes people. Very friendly atmosphere.
- Circle discussions – everyone on board
- Small group visioning – well facilitated by Roger
- Group discussion. Everyone got to say what their concerns were and think about solutions.
- Vision development and sharing. (unnamed participant)'s information about 6<sup>th</sup> Street viewpoints of Anacortes residents.
- Asking how each is affected by the lack of parking. Hearing what individual needs are.
- Talking to 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents. Seeing them in person and hearing their concerns.
- Chance to be heard
- Love the "appreciation"

*Which parts of tonight's process were not helpful, comfortable or productive and why?*

- Holding others to ground rules. Not assuming other's reasons.
- I think it would be better to have the groups in different spaces so the noise level is not distracting
- It was all helpful
- None were unhelpful
- None really
- Can not think of anything here
- it was all helpful

*What are your recommendations for future processes on this topic, including suggestions for our next meeting?*

- Is it possible to get someone from the County to answer questions?
- Remembering older people have small views and don't always communicate well. Takes more time.
- Include additional people from both communities. Decide what to do with the outcomes of the process so that they would be used by decision makers.
- Very sorry will not be at next meeting. I would like continuing meetings with City and County to get serious about implementing viable ideas soon – no more delays.
- I think the Commissioners should attend these meetings and represent their people.
- It's all good
- Invite County and City folks involved in signage, parking
- The focus has been on Anacortes but the Guemes terminal needs to be addressed as well
- If using small groups, mix people up
- All groups should have an easel and papers to work from. A method of collecting data – how many parking infractions, how many tickets, rude incidents, a compilation of who or what needs to be addressed. DATA, DATA, DATA. How many Guemes residents leave cars on the other side permanently?
- More people involved from town and island. How can the concerns get to the decision makers and people who can make things happen.

*I would like to know if anything changed for you as a result of your participation tonight. Would you say a few words about how you felt before the meeting and how you feel now? For instance: Did anything surprise you? Will you do anything differently? Do you have a different opinion about the situation? Did you gain any new insights, impressions or understandings tonight? Do you have different feelings about your own community or the adjacent community? Other thoughts on changes?*

- My impression is that both Islanders and Anacortes residents want the same thing and will work together for a solution.
- Seeing and hearing from 6<sup>th</sup> Street area residents in a stress less environment.
- Surprised to find that some Anacortes 6<sup>th</sup> Street residents are so limited in the parking they have available. I'll be even more aware of the on street parking situation.
- I feel very good about the whole process-talking with the Anacortes residents.
- I have even stronger resolve to work on this whole transportation issue.
- I hear a commitment from all parties to resolve issues.
- I am frustrated about getting to my parking space (in front of house), I feel this will get resolved. Thanks!
- It was wonderful to meet and talk with the people on Guemes Island who really care about the problems on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. This was a great beginning to solving the problem.
- I am happy that I had the opportunity to let 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Street residents know that we understand their frustrations with Guemes cars and parking problems.

## Appendix D

### ***When we have completed our work together and handled this problem what will the situation look like?***

#### Session one

#### Small group discussion (Compiled in themes)

#### **Create Caring Community:**

- Questionnaire responses on both sides of the channel would be the same
- We would create a sense of respect and a shared sense of community

#### **Community Education:**

- Everyone would know where to park and line up
- Everyone who uses the ferry (locals, visitors or newcomers) knows about the issues in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood
- Ferry users would know what to do, where to park, where to line up and there would be a way to communicate that to those who do not know
- Signage and striping on streets
- Education of "off-islanders" about the issues
- Readable and clear signs for parking and ferry traffic

#### **Conditions in 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood:**

- Anacortes residents are not inconvenienced by ferry parking
- No drive ways would be blocked
- Parking available for 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood residents in front of their homes for those who need it
- No litter in 6<sup>th</sup> Street area from ferry users
- There would be no more illegal U-Turns
- No more speeding in 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood
- There would be a cross walk
- No ferry users parked on lawns in 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood

#### **Provisions for ferry users with physical challenges:**

- Handicapped parking is close to ferry and on solid ground
- Non handicapped parkers are not using handicapped parking spaces
- There would be a safe and easy to use way to stage groceries and bundles at the dock before parking
- There would be a way for people who need it to get up the hill such as golf carts

#### **New Parking Lot:**

- There would be convenient access to the lower level parking from the new lot
- This is a secure parking lot
- It is clear who is responsible for security in the new parking lot
- Discourage long term parking on Anacortes side by charging a fee
- Access to new lot would be finished and paved
- Handicap parking would be accessible

## Appendix E

### Session Two Evaluation Responses

Which parts of tonight's process were most helpful, comfortable or productive and why?

- Small Groups
- Input from individuals and officials in each group
- I was happy to think that some progress could be made
- Having elected officials who could actually take action on the issues.
- Small Groups
- Small group discussions and having real answers from Municipal representatives
- Having the City administrators impart information. Constructive dialogue.
- Learning how interested and willing SKAT is to be helpful.
- Pointing out to the County representative that collaborative communication means two way.
- Being able to speak directly with Dean Maxwell [mayor] and Don Munks [commissioner] about how responsibilities are shared with the 6<sup>th</sup> Street parking lot and street issues.
- Results of small groups were positive. Great to have city and county staff there.

Which parts of tonight's process were not helpful, comfortable or productive and why?

- All was good
- Evening hours not convenient
- (unnamed participant) got huffy when effects of the changed ferry schedule on residents on Guemes and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets were discussed.

What are your recommendations for future activities to address the issue of parking and ferry traffic in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood of Anacortes?

- Keep it going
- On-going contact with both sides
- To get SKAT to be flexible for Guemes people
- Continued follow up on "action items". Progress reports
- Small group meetings to implement ideas
- Make sure the momentum continued with leadership and continuing cross/channel activities (ie: Guemians help with 6<sup>th</sup> Street tasks).
- Social get-togethers (pot-luck) etc. with both groups. Community information via names and numbers via local phone/email booklet.
- We must maintain momentum of the group towards what we've set out to do and hold one another accountable to get it done.
- Continue quarterly or semi-annual meetings.
- Compile a directory so that all participants can continue to communicate their issues and concerns and work together to influence the city and county to work together.
- Have on-going meetings to continue dialogue and problem solving.