



TOWN OF SIDNEY

PRESS RELEASE

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SAVE OUR FERRY

Planning is underway on efforts to save the international ferry service that operates between Sidney and Anacortes Washington. In December, Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire announced her intention to eliminate the service as a cost cutting measure, effective at the end of summer this year.

On Wednesday, January 7th, 2009 Sidney Mayor Larry Cross and Councillor Kenny Podmore attended a "Save the Ferry" meeting held at the Anacortes City Hall. Hosted by Anacortes Mayor Dean Maxwell, the meeting included representatives from the city's Chamber of Commerce and key stakeholders from the San Juan Islands, the county government, the county economic development agency and other interested parties. The meeting was an opportunity to share information and rally support for a campaign to save the ferry service and to develop a plan to move the campaign forward. Among the matters raised at the meeting was a sense that the economic benefits generated by the service far outweigh the savings suggested by the Governor.

Mayor Cross commented after the meeting: "I was impressed with the passion and deep concern of the participants on what a huge economic blow this would be to the greater Anacortes and Washington community. They are determined to save the run. Their concern is of course reflected in Sidney, and I'm sure across the Saanich Peninsula and indeed throughout the Capital Regional District".

Mayor Cross plans to move quickly to bring together key stakeholders to develop a strategy on the Canadian side to reinforce and support the plans of the partners in Washington State. Those stakeholder groups include the Sidney Business Association, the Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, the Sidney Sister Cities Association, the Community Arts Council of the Saanich Peninsula, the Districts of North and Central Saanich as well as Tourism Victoria. Mayor Cross proposes to request that the Sidney Business Association and the Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce jointly coordinate a process to bring the stakeholders together and advance the campaign.

For further information, a website has been created by the Anacortes Save Our Ferry Committee: www.saveourferry.net

Mayor Larry Cross, Town of Sidney may be reached for further comment at 250-656-1139