

From: Gordon Stout <gords11@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 11:24 AM
To: McNulty, Liza
Subject: EIR Scoping item, safety at the proposed WETA Berkeley ferry dock
Attachments: WETA's Berkeley Ferry Dock Location-4.pdf; Harbor Safety Committee reports of Loss of Propulsion Jan and Feb 2025.pdf

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Please add the attached to the EIR scoping comments.

The attached documents describe a serious hazard for the proposed WETA ferry dock location, which I believe the EIR should carefully evaluate.

Thanks,

Gordon Stout

Parking-TDM Response for EIR April 05, 2025 G. Stout

Executive Summary

- The parking studies that have been reported do not provide a clear picture of recreational parking at the marina. Without a clear picture, good parking plans and a credible EIR are not possible. This needs to be fixed, and soon, if 2025 is going to provide usable data.
- From the data and experience that we do have, it does seem clear that existing recreational parking is often maxed out without the ferry.
- The marina is currently used by low-income patrons for whom paid parking would be problematic. Can parking management without paid parking be made to work? Paid parking has a negative impact.
- The Kittelson study describes a marina where patrons may need to park far from their desired destination, and then use wayfinding, shuttles, micromobility or walking to get where they actually want to go. This profoundly degrades the experience of spending time at the marina, and should be counted as a negative impact with no obvious mitigation in the EIR.
- If every parking lot is completely full of parked cars, the marina will be uglier than it is now.
- What can families with small children do when the only available parking is in parking lots distant from where they want to take their families?
- Were attempts made to persuade Genentech to get their ferry riders not to park in the South Cove parking lots?
- Dynamic Management: if this is actually a strategy, who within the city will advocate for keeping recreational parking available?

Waterfront Monitors Parking Counts Referring to the Kittelson study attached to the PRW meeting agenda, what is the availability of recreational parking in and around the South Cove? Dunno, darn it—the Kittelson study **still** does not have believable answers to this crucial question. Page 22/129: “The City of Berkeley Waterfront Monitors have been consistently collecting daily parking counts at the Waterfront since May 2021. The data is collected by counting the number of occupied spaces at each lot at 10 am and 8 pm, with the results recorded on a paper survey form that is later entered into a spreadsheet maintained by Waterfront staff.”

“Limitations: The data may not reflect peak utilization which could occur outside of the hours of 10 am and 8 pm. In Spring, 2024, staff began collecting data at additional time points (2 pm and 4 pm), which was not used for this study due to the comparatively limited number of data points”

Kittelson’s 10 am-8pm data **Limitations** caveat casts doubt on most of the report. In the November 18, 2024 Council Worksession, the WSP was paused to conduct a parking study to determine existing

conditions for parking. Unfortunately, the Kittelson study still relies on the 10 am- 8pm data (Figure 10). The WSP needs to remain paused until a credible parking study is conducted.

I am placing my exploration of the data question in **Appendix A** at the end of this document, because there are other issues I also want to cover:

Negotiate with WETA Why, oh why does Berkeley accept as a constraint whatever ridership goal WETA proposes? Berkeley is the entity with the obligation to BCDC to not allow ferries to encroach upon recreational use. Why are we not telling WETA that they must stop selling ferry tickets when parking overwhelms the marina? Isn't that the way around it ought to be? If we told WETA they could have 300 passengers per day, the marina might remain a great park.

The Intercept Survey has this:

- 16% (63 people) reported having cancelled their visit to the waterfront because they could not find a parking space. That is a disaster, especially if you have a car full of kids!

This is clear evidence that there is in fact not sufficient parking available.

- 16% of responses reported household incomes of less than \$50,000
- 10%, less than \$25,000

Unless we want the marina to be a park just for Berkeley's well-heeled, we should **not** implement paid parking here. The ferry riders will have those well-paying jobs that the Pier-Ferry project touted in selling itself to the City Council, so they should have much higher incomes than many of the recreational marina patrons. Ferry riders will be able to afford "penalty" tickets, recreational patrons may not.

Recreational Users are in a Losing Position They arrive late, when most of the parking lots have already been scouted by the ferry and charter boat riders. And many recreational patrons don't have the income for normal paid parking or the occasional expensive "oops—missed the time limit" tickets. Bad deal for them, we shouldn't let it happen.

Families can't readily move from one parking lot to another Say your minivan full of kids can't find a parking space in the West Cove lot to go to Adventure Playground. Are you going to park up on Marina Boulevard and somehow walk, shuttle, bike, or Uber your kids back to Adventure Playground?

Parking in the South Cove West Parking Lot This document shows in photographs that on four winter mornings, the three main rows of the South Cove West Parking Lot were mostly full by 9:00 a.m. with cars from Genentech ferry riders and fishing boat anglers. In response, I sent an email to Scott Ferris and Ali Endress (see forwarded copy) asking that the 199 Seawall lot be opened and Genentech be enlisted to persuade the ferry riders to park there. I am afraid this may be is an example of how effective Dynamic Management will be i.e., **not very**. The Genentech ferry customers still park in the South Cove West lot, which still overfills on sunny afternoons, and the 199 Seawall lot is still more often closed than not.

Parking Variability at the Marina (document, see separate email) A series of 16 Google Earth images shows dramatically different parking utilization on different days for a parking lot that BMASP has considered for a hotel site. An overflow lot is great for flexibility, but only if it doesn't have a hotel plunked down on it.

Berkeley Police Department Lot grabbed most of L-M dock, **the lot should be given back to the marina**, we can't afford to lose this much centrally located parking for something that would be better in Berkeley proper.



Parking Lot Closures Morning Parking lot closures are a useful strategy against ferry parking only if the closure covers the ferry departure time. But WETA projects departure times throughout the day:

WETA Berkeley Ferry Service Business Plan, Version 1.0, page 22:

Table 8 Berkeley to San Francisco Service (Illustrative Only)

	Depart Berkeley	Arrive San Francisco	Depart San Francisco	Arrive Berkeley
Weekdays AM	6:30	6:55	7:05	7:30
	7:05	7:30	7:40	8:05
	7:40	8:05	8:15	8:40
	8:15	8:40	8:50	9:15
	8:50	9:15	10:05	10:30
	9:25	9:50	10:40	11:05
	10:40	11:05	15:30	15:55
Weekdays PM	11:15	11:40	16:05	16:30
	16:05	16:30	16:40	17:05
	16:40	17:05	17:15	17:40
	17:15	17:40	17:50	18:15
	17:50	18:15	18:25	18:50
	19:05	19:30	19:40	20:05
	19:40	20:05	20:15	20:40
Weekend AM	8:30	8:55	9:05	9:30
	9:40	10:05	10:15	10:40
	10:50	11:15	12:05	12:30
Weekend PM	12:40	13:05	13:30	13:55
	14:00	14:25	14:40	15:05
	15:10	15:35	15:45	16:10
	17:00	17:25	17:35	18:00

Source: Economic & Planning Systems

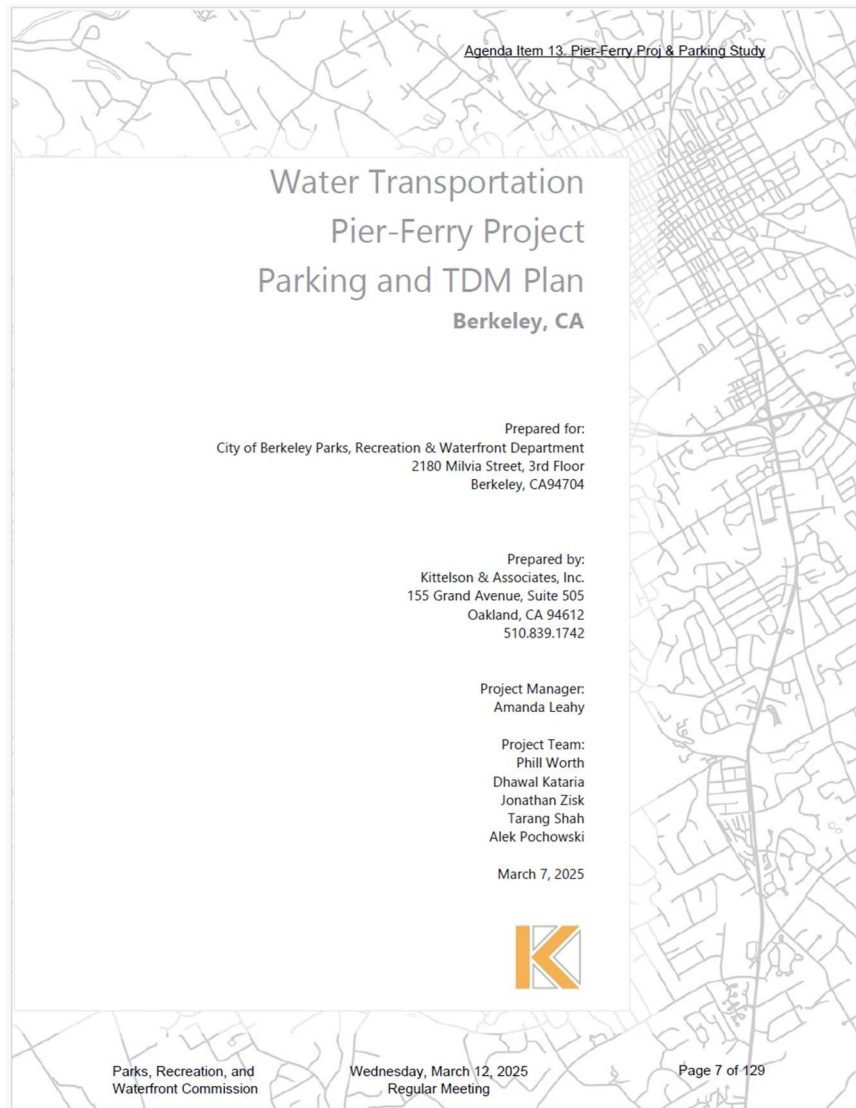
All day, every day! Parking lot closures will not be a useful strategy against this kind of schedule.

How ugly do we want the Marina to become? Larkspur (below) is an example of a ferry terminal with adequate parking. Despite those kinda cool triangular roofs, it is butt ugly. I have never felt moved to go there to relax or connect with nature or boats.

I will not love the version of the Berkeley Marina that is envisioned in this report. I think we should not build it. The Marina is a beautiful, beloved park, please let's keep it that way.



Appendix A: Which data is the basis for which tables and charts?



On page 22/129 Table 2 is placed right after the Waterfront Monitors data gathering description, which is almost exclusively gathered at 10:00am 8:00 pm. Kittelson notes:

“Limitations: The data may not reflect peak utilization which could occur at times other than 10 am and 8 pm. In Spring, 2024, staff began collecting data at additional time points (2 pm and 4 pm), which was not used for this study due to the comparatively limited number of data points.”

But 10 am data misses most recreational parking, so most of the charts of parking utilization are misleading. Trying to figure which of the data is 10 am only is not easy, see below.

Table 2 data is clearly from the Waterfront Monitors and is 10:00am 8:00 pm data.

3.2. Existing Parking Utilization

The City of Berkeley Waterfront Monitors have been consistently collecting daily parking counts at the Waterfront since May 2021. The data is collected by counting the number of occupied spaces at each lot at 10 am and 8 pm, with the results recorded on a paper survey form that is later entered into a spreadsheet maintained by Waterfront staff. The data collection methods have been refined over time to better support parking management objectives. Kittelson reviewed data from May 2021 to February 2024. During data processing, some lots had to be merged for various reasons, such as a lack of physical boundaries between them or combined data reporting for adjacent lots.

Limitations: The data may not reflect peak utilization which could occur at times other than 10 am and 8 pm. In Spring, 2024, staff began collecting data at additional time points (2 pm and 4 pm), which was not used for this study due to the comparatively limited number of data points.

Table 2 measures parking utilization by lot for average and peak weekdays and Saturdays. Across all lots, parking utilization averaged around 31% on weekdays and 49% on Saturdays. Peak weekday parking was 50% utilized, while peak Saturday parking was 79%. This Waterfront-wide peak period occupancy estimate is a conservative aggregation of each lot's individual peak utilization. It is therefore likely that, even during peak periods, the Waterfront has more than 300 available spaces, spread across various lots.

Table 2: June Parking Utilization at the Berkeley Marina, 2021-2023

Parking Lot	Existing Capacity	Utilization (taken spaces, % of spaces occupied)							
		Average Weekday		Peak Weekday		Average Saturday		Peak Saturday	
D&E lot	129	31	24%	42	33%	41	32%	67	52%
Spinnaker Way Lot	36	14	39%	29	81%	36	100%	71	197%
Marina Blvd	150	41	27%	59	39%	59	39%	91	61%
Spinnaker Way	127	45	35%	67	53%	77	61%	90	71%
J, G, H, & I Lot	115	39	34%	57	50%	44	38%	90	78%
K&K lot	92	49	53%	77	84%	73	79%	87	95%
South Cove East /West Lot	182	62	34%	110	60%	108	59%	191	105%
J&M ³ Lot	91	40	44%	64	70%	43	47%	55	60%
D Lot	72	28	39%	41	57%	46	64%	87	121%
Seawall Drive	90	24	27%	38	42%	35	39%	77	86%
Skates/N Lot	137	10	7%	31	23%	41	30%	64	47%
Totals	1,221	383	31%	615	50%	603	49%	970	79%

Source: Kittelson & Associates, Inc. 2024

Note: The peak Saturday utilization for Spinnaker Way Lot exceeded the capacity due to data collection error in which some of the Launch Ramp Paid parking was counted as the adjacent Spinnaker Way Lot.

Figure 3 presents the same data, **(Average and Peak Utilization by Lot)**

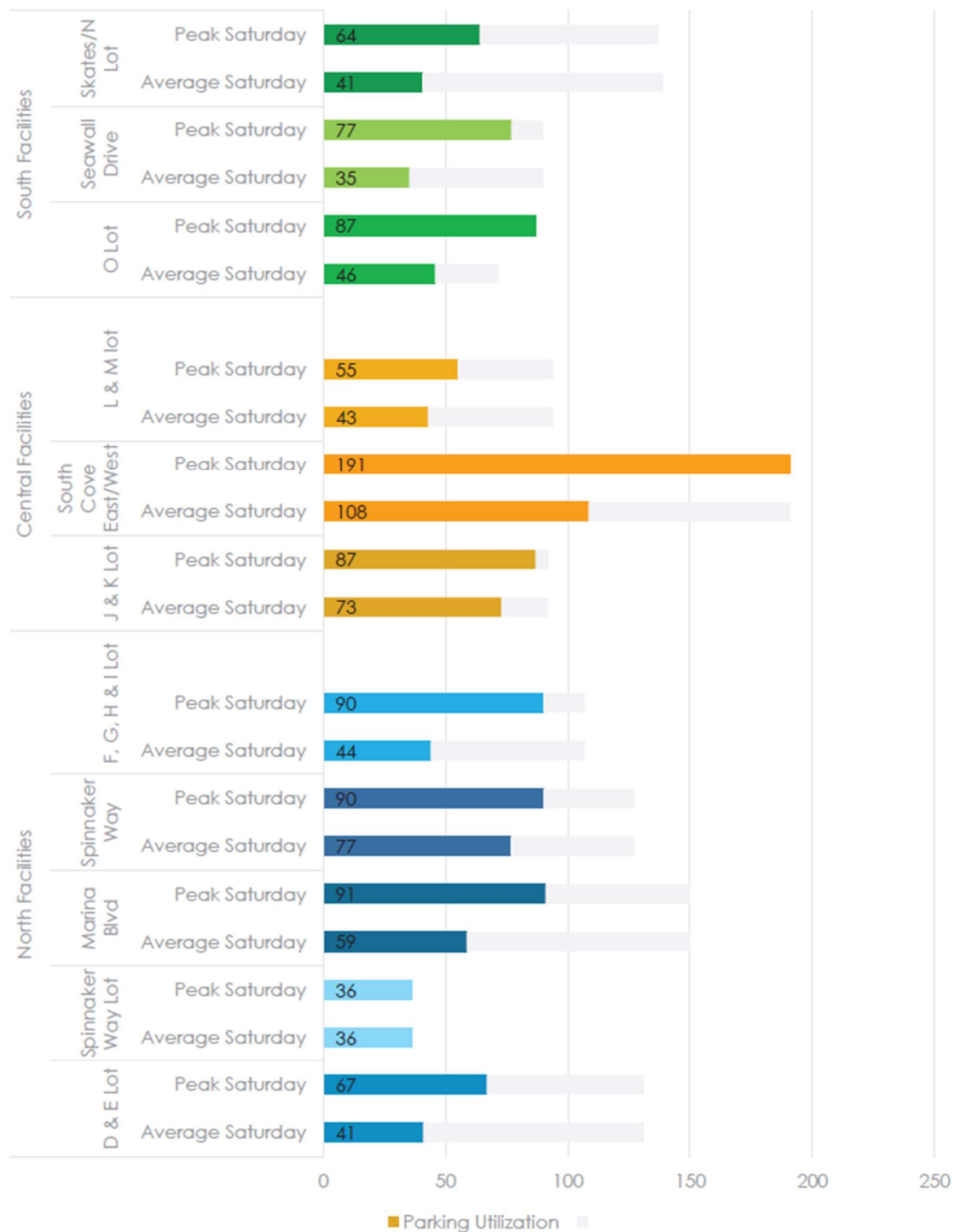
3.3. Time of Day Utilization describes the Quality Counts, Figure 4 is Quality Counts Data, but it is averaged across many parking lots and is therefore not very useful

Moving down to **Section 6.0 Review of Parking Counts**, Figures 6, and 7 are identified “Source: *Parking Counts by Waterfront Staff, Data Compiled by Kittelson & Associates, Inc. 2024*”

Figure 8 and 9 are presumably from the same 10 am data, and Figure 10 also has a subhead *Source: Parking Counts by Waterfront Staff, Data Compiled by Kittelson & Associates, Inc. 2024*. Figures 8 and 9 show the Figure 10 data, so also are Waterfront Staff numbers, i.e., 10 am data.

The map figures (eg 8 & 9) don’t have figure names/identifiers, and like many of the figures and tables don’t identify which data set they are drawn from. Very frustrating.

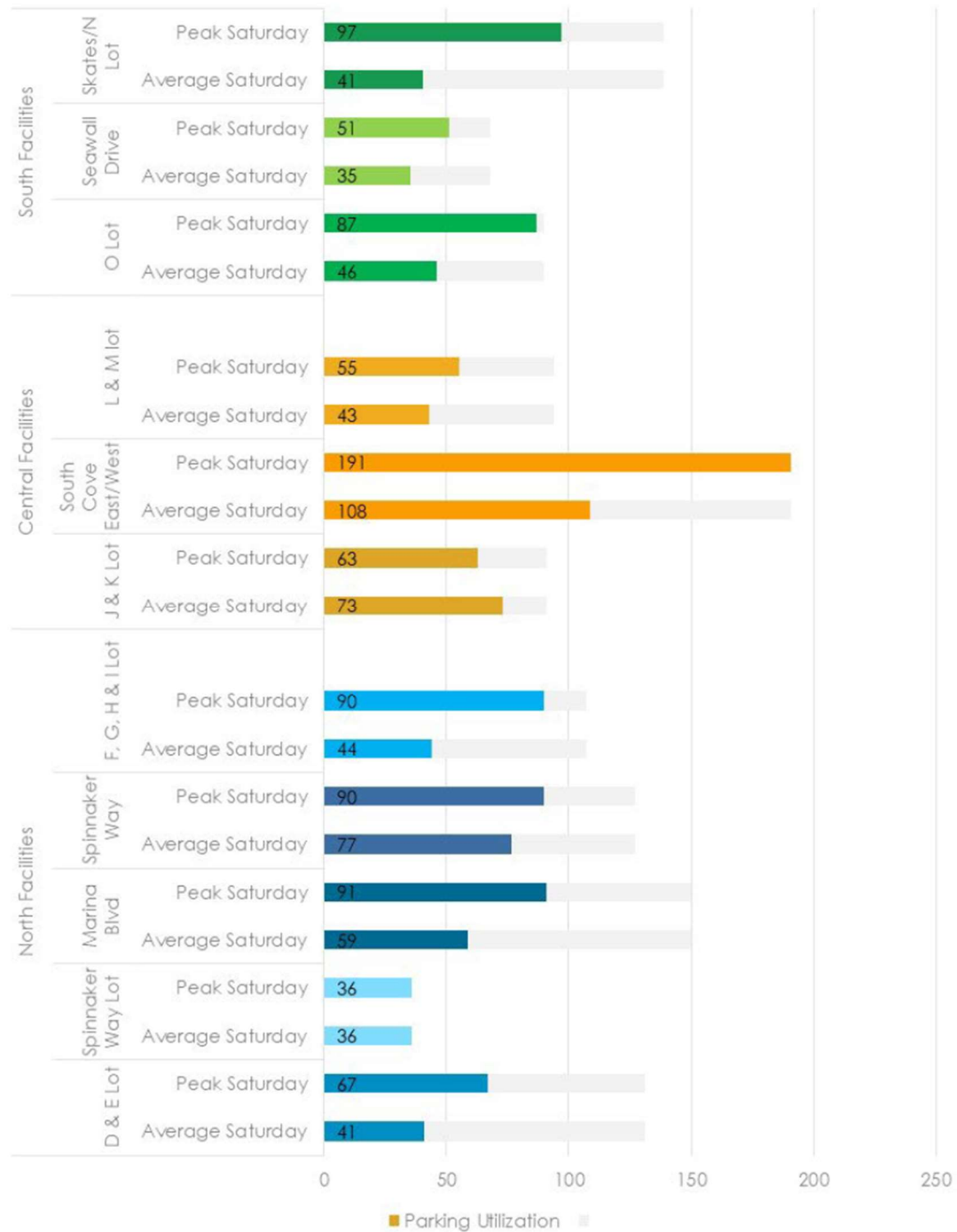
Figure 10: Parking Utilization on Weekends (Average Saturday vs Peak Saturday)



Source: Parking Counts by Waterfront Staff, Data Compiled by Kittelson & Associates, Inc. 2024
Note: Data does not include Seawall Drive/Shorebird Lot.

Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

Here is a puzzle. Below is a figure presented at the Council Worksession November 18, 2024. Not identical to Figure 10 above, what's that about? Which one is accurate and which one is not?



WETA's Berkeley Ferry Dock Location



On November 23, 2018 a Golden Gate Ferry rammed a dock at the San Francisco Ferry building, check out the bow damage in the picture above and this [video](#). Fortunately, there were no serious injuries and damage was relatively minor, about **\$3 million**. The [cause](#) of the accident appears to have been the captain's unfamiliarity with a recently upgraded control system

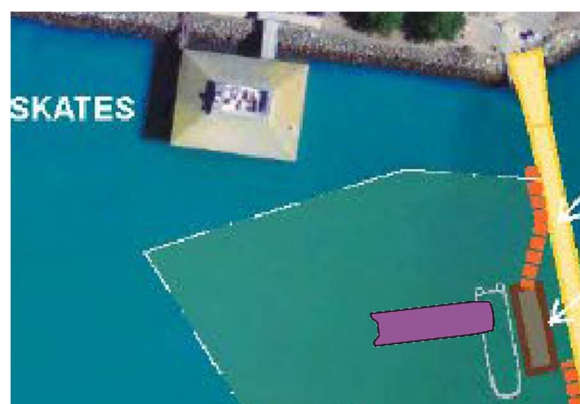
Consider the possibility of a similar loss of control accident happening at the dock location proposed for the Berkeley WETA ferry (see below). In the usual westerly summer winds (“Wind Direction” arrow in the figure), an inbound ferry will come in along the “Ferry Approach” arrow, then make a 180° turn in the “Ferry Turning Basin” so it ends up pointed upwind when it gets to the dock. But the summer afternoon winds are often well above 25 mph, and the waves are substantial. The 180° turn would at the very least give the ferry captains a good chance to demonstrate their skill.



FINAL_Ferry Terminal Facility Feasibility Study - Berkeley Municipal Pier

See Page 34 (arrows added)

Zoomed-in image showing Dorado-sized (~300 passenger) ferry halfway through a 180° turn.



It is a very tight situation for a possible control loss. The inshore end of the ferry's dock is only 200 feet upwind of the rocky shore, and a 25-mph wind would soon push a disabled ferry downwind onto the rocks, which would be quite dangerous, or onto the Skates restaurant, which would be very dangerous indeed. Skates is built on tall, slender pilings (see next page) and might not survive wind and wave pushing a 135-foot-long ferry against and perhaps underneath it. Injuries and damage in such an accident would be very likely.

Information with some bearing on how likely a control loss event might be:

1. The meeting minutes of the Harbor Safety Committee of the San Francisco Bay Region for January and February 2025 described seven instances of loss of propulsion or steering in passenger vessels on the Bay. (see Harbor Safety Committee Reports of Loss of Propulsion Jan and Feb 2025.pdf, attached with this document).
2. Hyundai, Kia, and Genesis are recalling over 146,000 electric vehicles because a faulty part may cause them to lose power while driving. In addition to the main traction batteries, a typical EV needs another power source (e.g. a 12V battery) to run the controls. On an electric ferry, it is likely also a small battery, either backed up with a generator or not.
3. After the Baltimore bridge collapse caused by a power loss in a big container ship, USA Today summarized US Coast Guard data showing: At least 6,000 times in the past 22 years – an average of more than five times a week – crews on board massive cargo ships, oil tankers, container barges and even cruise vessels have reported what befell the Dali: a loss of power, loss of propulsion, loss of steering, or some combination of the three...

Docking Maneuvers:

- The ferry battery will be at a low state of charge when the ferry arrives at Berkeley, which may exacerbate some system failure modes.
- To the extent that the docking maneuvers involve dramatic steering or propulsion inputs, they may stress the control system and cause an incipient control failure to manifest as a hard failure during the docking.
- The 180° turn requires the skipper to shift attention from starboard to port, which can be tricky given that the ferry's beam is 34.5 feet.
- If the approach requires the ferry to drop backwards into position, the helmsman must look backwards to the dock, again, maybe tricky.
- If the loss of control occurs before the ferry slows for the 180° turn, the ferry's downwind speed will greatly reduce the available time to respond.
- A ferry going downwind at 20 knots would take just over a minute to travel 200 feet to the rocks. That does not leave much time to recognize and respond to a problem.

The best response to a loss of control event would probably be to drop an anchor. But an anchor would need to be dropped very quickly, given the short drift distance available.

- What kind of anchor should be used, and how much scope will the anchor need?
- Will the anchor be dropped off the stern or bow? There probably need to be two protocols, one for an anchor drop before the 180° turn and another for an anchor drop after the turn.

- Will the mud bottom be free of snags and debris that might keep the anchor from biting into the mud?
- Is there anything on the underside of the ferry that the anchor line could foul?
- Are there enough crew on the ferries to deploy the anchor quickly?
- When the anchor line comes tight, is there potential for injury to people near it?

The approach of the ferry to the dock and the dropping of the anchor would need carefully thought-out protocols, which ferry personnel would need to be well-trained to execute rapidly if a loss of control event occurs.

In my opinion, the WETA dock should be positioned in a less exposed site, for example inside the Marina or in a purpose-designed facility on the Golden Gate Fields shoreline.

This is a matter that should be carefully considered in the ferry project EIR.

Skates Restaurant Would Skates survive being hit by a 135-foot, 169-ton ferry?



Draft Minutes

Harbor Safety Committee of the San Francisco Bay Region

February 13, 2025

https://www.sfmex.org/wp-content/uploads/2025-02_HSCMinutes_DRAFT.pdf

Total of 29 entries, the four below were LOP for passenger vessels

Loss of Propulsion (17DEC2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel experienced a Loss of Propulsion on the port engine. Vessel moored safely at San Francisco Gate B and received permission for a one-time transit from San Francisco to Larkspur for repairs. Coast Guard issued the vessel an Operational Control, rectify Prior to Carriage of Passengers (Code 701). On 07JAN2025, vessel operator reported the root cause of the loss of propulsion as a failed fuel injector. On 21JAN2025, Coast Guard received a report that the vessel propulsion system operated as intended following satisfactory sea trials. Deficiency Cleared. Case pends.

Loss of Propulsion (23DEC2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel experienced a reduction in propulsion on the starboard engine due to a low fuel oil pressure alarm. Vessel received permission from the Coast Guard for one time transit to Alameda facility to identify root cause, provide tech report, and conduct sea trials. Coast Guard issued an Operational Control, rectify Prior to Carriage of Passengers (Code 701). On 01JAN2025, Coast Guard received an email outlining the root cause of the reduction in propulsion to be from an issue with the ECU connecting to the starboard main engine. Vessel replaced the ECU and completed satisfactory sea trials. Operational Control Cleared. Case Pends.

Loss of Propulsion (27DEC2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel experienced an engine stall while transiting in the San Francisco Bay. Vessel returned to Pier 3 in Alameda and determined the engine stall occurred due to a leaky fuel fitting. Vessel crew also found a loose connection at a fuel hardline which caused air intrusion into the fuel system. Coast Guard issued an operational control, rectify Prior to Carriage of Passengers (Code 701). Crew repaired the faulty connection and engine reached full RPM during satisfactory sea trials. Operational Control Cleared. Case Pends.

Operational Control (23DEC2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel received an operational control, rectify Prior to Carriage of Passengers (Code 701). Vessel reported loss of throttle control to port and starboard propulsion drives while mooring at Pier 41. On 26DEC2024, operator submitted a tech report that no abnormalities were found, sea trials conducted satisfactorily, and all systems operational. Operational Control Cleared. On 27DEC2024, during transit, the vessel experienced loss of throttle control to the port and starboard propulsion drives. Vessel moored at Pier 41. Coast Guard issued an operational control, rectify Prior to Carriage of Passengers (Code 701). Vessel received authorization for one-time transit to Pier 9 for maintenance and repairs. On 10JAN2025, the vessel conducted sea trials. While underway the operator completed several propulsion tests, including full ahead followed by full astern. On 14JAN2025, technicians reported that the throttles were calibrated to disable themselves until RPMs reduced below 70 when going from ahead to astern. Vessel installed new throttle controls. Operational control Cleared. Case Closed.

Draft Minutes

Harbor Safety Committee of the San Francisco Bay Region

January 9, 2024

https://www.sfmex.org/wp-content/uploads/2025-01_HSCMinutes_DRAFT.pdf

Total of 19 entries, the three below were LOP for passenger vessels

Loss of Propulsion (10NOV2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel experienced a loss of propulsion on their STBD engine due to loss of propeller while transiting to Richmond. The vessel returned to the pier and offloaded all passengers. Coast Guard issued the vessel an operational control (Code 60, Prior to Movement), with a one-time transit to Alameda for drydock. At drydock damage was found to have occurred to the strut, shaft, rudder, and cutless (sic) bearing. On 17NOV2024, Coast Guard attended vessel for sea trials, sea trials conducted satisfactorily. Operational Control Cleared. Case Closed.

Loss of Steering (22NOV2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel experienced a loss of steering; vessel operator reported issues with the STBD steering system while underway, with alternate jet propulsion available. Vessel returned to the pier. Coast Guard issued an operational control (Code 701, Prior to Carriage of Passengers). On 24NOV2024, vessel operator submitted tech report attesting to satisfactory repairs. Vessel conducted satisfactory sea trial. Operational Control Cleared. Case Pends.

Operational Control (02NOV2024): A U.S. flag passenger vessel was issued an Operational Control (Code 70, Prior to Carriage of Passengers). While departing the pier, the vessel lost power from one of two generators, reducing propulsion to approximately 66% power. Vessel safely moored and was issued the operational control. On 03NOV2024, operator notified Coast Guard that the issue had been resolved. Identified a failure of two electrical relays that send the key switch signal to the control system. Both relays were replaced, and sea trials conducted. Coast Guard received satisfactory tech report. Operational Control Cleared. Case Closed.