

History of Western and the Bellingham Waterfront

- Late in 2002 the City and Port of Bellingham joined forces to begin studying the potential of redeveloping Bellingham's waterfront by forming the Waterfront Futures Group.
- During the March 18, 2004 Board of Trustees meeting, then President Karen Morse distributed a document developed by the group that introduced the proposal for an off-campus site of Western Washington University. Later that spring, an Academic Waterfront Planning Committee was appointed to discuss whether and how WWU might participate in the proposed development on the waterfront.
- The Academic Waterfront Planning Committee began by drafting principles to guide campus discussion.
 - During fall quarter 2004, the committee solicited reactions to the principles and ideas for possible waterfront projects, and held forums to encourage and inform input.
 - Brief pre-proposals were solicited by the committee to gain a better idea of the range of programs or functions that might be pursued, with an initial submission deadline of April 15, 2005. These were brief conceptual proposals, consistent with the Guiding Principles.
- Twenty five pre-proposals were submitted. These proposals were received from individuals, groups, departments, colleges, and interdisciplinary groups for programs and projects that might feasibly be located on the waterfront. Two forums in May 2005 provided an opportunity for public review and discussion of the pre-proposals.
- In 2006 Western confirmed the waterfront as a location for possible expansion in its 2006 Strategic Action Plan.
- The Bellingham Waterfront Futures Group is convened for the first time in 2003 and concludes its work in 2005.
- The Bellingham Waterfront Advisory Group is convened for the first time in 2005 and approves the sub-draft plan developed by staff of the Port and City of Bellingham for the waterfront development in the fall of 2012.
- On August 8, 2008 Western's Board of Trustees approved the development of an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between WWU and the Port of Bellingham that allows for the creation of a "development entity."
- Following Western's August 8 meeting, Commissioners from the Port of Bellingham unanimously approved the development entity at their August 19 meeting.
- At its June 12, 2009 meeting, a draft of a Character Study for Western at the Waterfront was presented to WWU's Board of Trustees.

- In the fall of 2009 a smaller Western Waterfront Planning group was created out of the larger Academic Waterfront Committee. This group developed a white paper that broke down Western's waterfront planning into three phases. The white paper was discussed in an interactive session to the Board of Trustees at its April 15, 2010 meeting. The document is considered a continual work in progress and serves as the current planning document for Western waterfront development.
- The Viking Development entity has its first meeting on Sept. 11, 2009. The group votes that the organization will be officially formed as a Washington not-for-profit corporation and that the organization's name will be changed to Western Crossing Development.
- After approval of Western's Board of Trustees and the commissioners of the Port of Bellingham, Western Crossing Development is issued a Certificate of Incorporation as a non-profit corporation in October 7, 2009.
- Between 2009 and this meeting, three formal presentations are made to the Western Board of Trustees providing updates on the on-going development process, and briefings are provided on a regular basis in closed session on potential real estate transactions between Western and the Port of Bellingham.
- Phase I for a Western presence at the Bellingham waterfront is realized when Western's and Bellingham Technical College's Technology Development Center at the west side of the Bellingham waterfront is dedicated on September 28, 2010.
- In April of 2013, a land acquisition working group composed of Western and Port staff begin intense discussions on the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate a sale or swap of Western's Hannegan Road property for Port land in the Waterfront District.
- On June 6, 2013, the City of Bellingham Planning Commission approves the Master Plan for Waterfront Development by a 7-0 vote.
- On June 12, 2013, the Board of Directors of Western Crossing vote 5-0 in support of a Memorandum of Understanding that provides a broad framework for agreement between Western and the Port of Bellingham that defines how land can be moved into Western Crossing, to enable development of the Western presence in the Waterfront District.
- On June 14, 2013, the WWU Board of Trustees unanimously authorized the sale or exchange of the Hannegan Road property through Western Crossing Development. The action also delegated to the President or his designee, authorization to sign such papers and documents as may be necessary to effectuate the sale or exchange of the Hannegan Road property.