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BC FERRIES LAUNCHES ENGAGEMENT ON NEW MAJOR VESSELS Replacement of four ferries provides opportunity for community input

VICTORIA – BC Ferries will be building up to five new ferries to replace four existing vessels and invites customers and communities to join conversations about the new vessels and to provide input that will help shape their future onboard experience. The new ferries will potentially add capacity to the Metro Vancouver – Vancouver Island routes and replace the Queen of New Westminster, Queen of Alberni, Queen of Coquitlam and Queen of Cowichan that currently serve those routes. The new ships are being specified to deliver enhanced environmental sustainability and offer flexibility to meet changing travel demands into the future. BC Ferries expects the new ferries to enter service in the mid-2020s.

The engagement runs from March 12 to April 12 and customers can provide their feedback online at bcferries.com/about/nextgen or participate in customer engagement sessions on board the Metro Vancouver – Vancouver Island routes. Focused stakeholder workshops will also be held.

“This is an exciting project and we invite our customers to join the conversation,” said Mark Collins, BC Ferries’ President & CEO. “There is still a lot to be decided as we work to keep fares affordable, reduce our environmental impact, plan for future flexibility and enhance the onboard experience for customers. We want to hear your thoughts on the project, and your ideas about how we can improve your experience when travelling with BC Ferries. This is an opportunity to get informed and provide feedback on the newest additions to our fleet as they are being designed.”

When it comes to designing the ships, BC Ferries’ technical teams are identifying options to minimize underwater radiated noise (URN) and reduce environmental impact. The company has been an early and active participant in efforts to understand and mitigate the effects of URN. Each new class of ship BC Ferries builds is quieter than the ships they replace. For more information on BC Ferries’ long-term plans, see our [Underwater Radiated Noise Mitigation Plan](#) and [Clean Technology Adoption Plan](#).

BC Ferries is also identifying the operational needs around size and capacity, speed and maneuverability, space allotments and other technological requirements. In addition to sharing information about the project and its key considerations with customers and the community, the company is also interested in hearing about how to improve the customer experience on board the new vessels, including:

- Improvements and services related to accessibility (e.g. hearing induction loops, removing barriers to customer access and travel, etc.)
- Food and beverage options, type of service and seating options

- Design of children’s play areas
- Enhancements to outdoor areas, seating types and new ideas
- Design of the pet areas
- Enhancements for foot passengers and customers who ride bicycles
- Innovative technologies BC Ferries might adopt
- Suggestions for lowering GHG profile
- Any new or innovative ideas to enhance the customer experience

“One of the complexities of designing a new ferry is working within weight, space and cost restrictions,” said Collins. “This means we need to carefully think through each aspect of the design.”

The feedback received through engagement will be used to help inform the detailed design of the vessels. The vessel design will be shared with customers and communities as the project progresses so they can understand where their input was used, and where it wasn’t possible to incorporate feedback and why.

The acquisition of the ships is a major capital expenditure that requires the approval of the BC Ferries Commissioner under Section 55 of the Coastal Ferry Act. Subject to a favourable decision, BC Ferries expects to award a contract to build these vessels next year. For more information on this project visit bcferries.com/about/nextgen.

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