

Fact Sheet

The New Major Vessels

Moving ahead on the future of ferry service in BC



Some of BC Ferries' largest vessels have been serving the coast for well over their planned 45-year lifespans, with the *Queen of New Westminster* even turning 61 this year. They've performed reliably for decades, but as they age, they require more complex maintenance and are increasingly prone to unpredictable issues, especially during peak seasons when sailings are more frequent and vessels are under greater operational pressure.

To start to address these challenges, BC Ferries will be building four New Major Vessels (NMVs). These new ships will replace the company's oldest vessels and provide greater capacity on the busiest routes. They'll help deliver more reliable service, make progress on how BC Ferries prepares for projected traffic growth of 15% over the next decade, and support the people and communities that depend on coastal ferry service every day. BC Ferries is doing everything possible to address current capacity constraints now, while still planning for a future where demand continues to increase.

Designing vessels for the future

The NMVs will be diesel-battery hybrid vessels, designed with the flexibility to convert to full electric operation once shore power infrastructure is in place. They will carry more people and vehicles, offering on average 52% more passenger space and 24% more vehicle capacity than the vessels they replace.

Beyond capacity, these ships are designed with sustainability and customer comfort in mind.

New Major Vessels will offer:

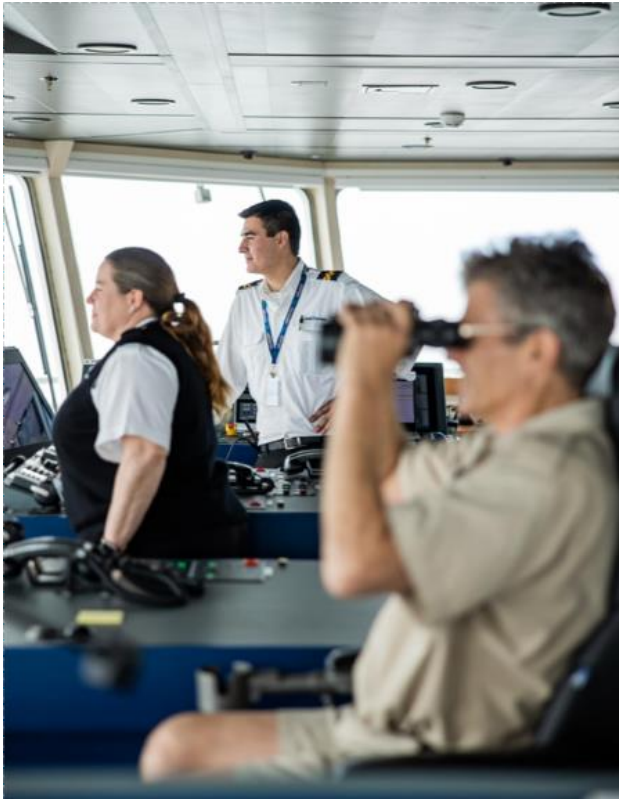


52%
more passenger
space



24%
more vehicle
space

Features include propellers that are specifically engineered to minimize underwater noise and associated impacts on at-risk whales, accessible walkways and elevators, indoor pet lounges, and designated play areas for families.



Reflecting on a rigorous procurement process

BC Ferries' shipyard selection was based on a rigorous, transparent international procurement process. Shipyards were evaluated based on their technical capabilities, projected costs, identified risks, and their ability to meet delivery timelines, among numerous other criteria. Proposals that demonstrated the ability to deliver high-quality vessels that met the company's environmental and operational standards, while also considering affordability pressures, were prioritized.

CMI Weihai was selected for its world-class technical and engineering abilities, supported by excellent in-house design capabilities. The shipyard has a proven record of building modern ferries for some of the largest ferry system operators in the world, such as Stena Line, Grimaldi, and DFDS, as well as Canadian operator Marine Atlantic. Its ability to deliver a Transport Canada-compliant

vessel on time and to the highest standards of safety and quality was key to its selection. It also offered strong overall value, balancing design, cost, risk, and timely delivery capability—all of which are essential for a project of this scale and importance.

Ensuring oversight and accountability

Strong oversight is built into every step of the project. Throughout construction, BC Ferries will have a dedicated on-site team at the shipyard, supported by additional contracted technical experts. This team will be tasked with conducting regular inspections, monitoring contract adherence, ensuring compliance with safety standards and managing quality assurance processes—working alongside regulatory bodies to ensure every phase of construction meets Canadian and international standards. The American Bureau of Shipping, acting on behalf of Transport Canada, will provide classification and compliance monitoring.

Establishing value for BC and Canada

Although the vessels are being built abroad, long-term benefits will be realized here at home. BC Ferries will continue to invest locally for the NMVs' ongoing maintenance, engineering, logistics, and warranty work. In their first 10 years of service, it's anticipated that BC Ferries will invest over \$230 million locally for refits and scheduled maintenance on the four currently approved NMVs. Across the vessels' 45-year lifespans, this represents an estimated local investment of over \$1 billion. The NMVs are also estimated to generate approximately 9,195 job-years of employment, over \$851 million in wages, and contribute \$2.5 billion in economic output for BC over their service lifetime.

Local engineering firms, shipyards, and marine suppliers will support these vessels throughout construction and their operational lifespans.

Through its shipbuilding contract, BC Ferries will have oversight of the major equipment providers selected for the build and will ask them to demonstrate either an existing regional presence or plans to establish one, ultimately supporting capacity and jobs in BC's marine sector.

Making the right choice for BC

This is the largest capital project in BC Ferries' history and the right decision for BC's coastal ferry system.

In 2024, a single vessel breakdown resulted in major disruption to company travel, not to mention over \$14 million in costs and lost revenue to the company, highlighting the kinds of challenges that accompany aging ships.

The NMVs represent a smart, future-ready investment in BC's ferry system. BC Ferries has selected a shipyard that has the capability to build and deliver on a dependable timeline, replacing aging vessels, protecting service on BC Ferries'

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\$14M

In costs and lost revenue to the company

busiest routes, and reducing the chance of further costly disruptions. Featuring modern diesel-battery hybrid technology, improved accessibility, and customer-focused amenities, these ships will offer a better experience for the millions who rely on the major routes each year.

Backed by strong oversight and strict safety and environmental standards, the NMVs will deliver lasting value at home, support local jobs and marine expertise, and create over \$2.2 billion of expected economic impact in BC.

This is more than fleet renewal—it's a long-term commitment to delivering clean, reliable, and resilient ferry service for coastal communities for generations to come.

For more information on the New Major Vessels project visit:
bcferries.com/in-the-community/projects/new-major-vessels

