

**Moving Ahead Together on the Sunshine Coast**  
**Next Steps – From Ideas to Solutions**  
February 2021



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## Next Steps – Summary

We now begin the work of turning the ideas we proposed through the Phase II of engagement into tangible solutions. This process will require significant engagement from internal BC Ferries teams and the community. These efforts will follow a three-step process:

1. **Internal workshops with BC Ferries staff** (January – February) – BC Ferries staff from a variety of departments will come together to brainstorm tangible solutions for each of the ideas proposed, using the feedback received through engagement as the starting point for their discussions.
2. **Workshops with key stakeholders** (February – March) – We will bring the solutions developed through internal workshops to key stakeholders including members of the Project Working Group who wish to remain involved, Ferry Advisory Committee members, and other stakeholders as appropriate. Through these workshops we will refine and adjust solutions before we bring them to the community for feedback.
3. **Community feedback** (March – April) – Where appropriate, we'll bring suggested solutions to the community for feedback. Where solutions are simple, for example enhancing the information available on our website, we may opt to simply implement the solution, provided key stakeholders agree with this approach. Where solutions are more complex or potentially impactful, for example changes to reservation processes, we will bring them back for wide community input prior to implementation.

### Breaking Our Conversations Down

The Moving Ahead Together engagement has covered a wide scope of topics and ideas. To keep conversations manageable, and to ensure the right stakeholders can be at the table for discussions, we will break the engagement down into four key conversations:

1. [Improving travel certainty and reservations for the Sunshine Coast](#)
2. [Improving the travel experience for those taking more than one ferry](#)
3. [Operational changes to improve the medical travel experience](#)
4. [Enhancing communications to make planning and travelling easier](#)

## Conversation One: Improving Travel Certainty and Reservations for the Sunshine Coast

These engagement efforts will focus on improving certainty for Sunshine Coast travellers, with a particular focus on how we can do this using our recently upgraded reservation system. With the new system in place, we can make modifications we couldn't before, allowing us to better adapt our processes to support the unique travel needs of the Sunshine Coast community.

Through engagement we will explore how we can modify reservations to better meet the needs of the Sunshine Coast community, including:

- Dynamic reservation allocations that can help spread demand over the day and support the unique travel patterns on the Sunshine Coast, e.g. key commuting, commercial traffic, and medical travel times
- The potential to stagger the release of reservations to support those who require greater flexibility in their travel plans
- Ensuring availability for commuters, last-minute travel, and unexpected changes in plans
- Ensuring reservations don't create barriers to travel for particular user groups (e.g. sports teams) or demographics (e.g. those for whom cost can be a barrier)
- The potential to support travellers using TAP and MAL forms through the reservation process
- Mitigating the potential for one individual to purchase multiple "just-in-case" reservations

Timing:

- January – February: BC Ferries staff workshops
- February – March: Key stakeholder workshops
- March – April: Community feedback

## Conversation Two: Improving the Travel Experience for Those Taking More than One Ferry

These engagement efforts will focus on ways of making travel less stressful for those connecting between the Upper and Lower Sunshine Coast and Gambier-Keats. We will look at both our processes (e.g. reservations) and our operations (e.g. loading, unloading, terminal check-in etc.) to explore how different solutions or a combination of solutions could be used to improve travel for those taking more than one ferry.

Through engagement we will explore:

- The challenges and possibilities for coordinating Upper and Lower Sunshine Coast sailing times
- Opportunities to accommodate unexpected delays for those taking more than one ferry
- Reservation processes and policies that address the needs of travellers taking more than one ferry (e.g. less certain travel times can mean reservations are less accessible/useful for those connecting through the Lower Sunshine Coast)
- Opportunities to pilot operational changes at the terminal and on the vessel that may make travel easier for those connecting through

Timing:

- January – February: BC Ferries staff workshops
- February – March: Key stakeholder workshops
- March – April: Community feedback

## Conversation Three: Operational Changes to Improve the Medical Travel Experience

These engagement efforts will explore what we can do at our terminals and on our vessels to make it easier and more comfortable for those travelling with medical or specific accessibility needs. With a focus on what happens when a traveller arrives and is en route with us, these conversations will specifically explore operational adjustments that can reduce stress during the journey.

Through engagement we will explore:

- Processes to help ensure access to elevators and space to load/unload mobility aids once on board
- Processes to help ensure top-deck placement for those requiring it (*Note: Transport Canada permits passengers to remain on the lower vehicle deck on the Langdale – Horseshoe Bay route*).
- Easy and efficient processing at terminals for those travelling with TAP or MAL forms
- Communication between vessel and terminal staff to ensure ease of loading/unloading for medical travellers

Timing:

- January – February: BC Ferries staff workshops
- February – March: Key stakeholder workshops
- March – April: Community feedback

## Conversation Four: Enhancing Communications to Make Planning and Travelling Easier

These engagement efforts will focus on ways we can improve the information available to help customers plan their travel, and travel easier the day of their trip. We will explore how to match the information customers want with the information we generate, or have the potential to generate, based on the historical and current data we have available. We will also explore gaps or improvements to our current communications, looking for ways to make information easier to find, and understand.

Through engagement we will explore:

- Specific improvements to the information available about current conditions
- Specific improvements to the information available about expected (future) conditions, e.g. busiest sailing times
- Specific improvements to information flow once at the terminal
- Making information about medical travel and travel for those with accessibility needs easier to access and understand
- The development of a mobile app (will require additional engagement as app is developed)
- How to promote/encourage travel by foot when possible

Timing:

- January – February: BC Ferries staff workshops
- February – March: Key stakeholder workshops
- March – April: Community feedback

## Considerations that will not be discussed in our next conversations

Some of the ideas offered through engagement will not be included in our next conversations. Below is a list of those ideas and an explanation of why they will not be moving forward at this time.

| Idea  | Why idea is not moving forward at this time  |
|---|--|
| 1. Resident priority  | Additional community input and consensus is required to define what this program would look like, and who would qualify. Concern around potential impacts on tourism, commercial and other economically-critical travel to/from the Sunshine Coast.  |
| 2. Two-ship service   | Out of scope for this engagement. Part of longer term planning and investment.   |
| 3. Use fare structures to encourage use of less-busy sailings | These fare structures are already in development and due to be rolled out on our Metro Vancouver – Vancouver Island routes in 2021. Once these structures are successfully in place, we will look at implementing them on our other routes. This will require further consultation with the community when the time comes. |
| 4. Consider changes to schedules & fleet deployment           | We expect COVID-19 restrictions will continue to have an impact on travel demand into 2021. We will not explore specific schedule changes at this time, but will continue to monitor the return of traffic as restrictions ease and make schedule adjustments as required.   |
| 5. Changes to TAP and MAL programs                            | Both of these programs are currently administered and managed by the Provincial Government. The feedback provided through the Moving Ahead Together on the Sunshine Coast engagement regarding these programs has, and will continue to be shared with the appropriate provincial ministries.                              |