

FAST FERRY PROJECT

The Project



The evolution of high-speed, low-wake catamaran ferries for urban commuter travel has meant that longer routes within our harbour can be serviced efficiently and reliably. The objective of the Halifax Harbour Fast Ferry Project is to develop a commuter ferry link between the existing Downtown Halifax Ferry Terminal and Mill Cove in Bedford. Purcell's Cove will be explored as a possible next stop for ferry service.

The preliminary service plan is for a 16 minute trip from Bedford to the downtown ferry terminal and a 10 minute trip from Purcell's Cove. The new terminals will have plenty of parking for park-and-ride, and be well connected to bus routes. Although the cost of riding the ferry has not been determined, it will be fully integrated with the existing transit system with, perhaps, a small 'upgrade' fare for this premium service.



The Ferry Network

In addition to our existing network (shown in yellow), consideration is being given to developing two other routes (red). Other possible locations for future terminals (green) exist around the harbour.

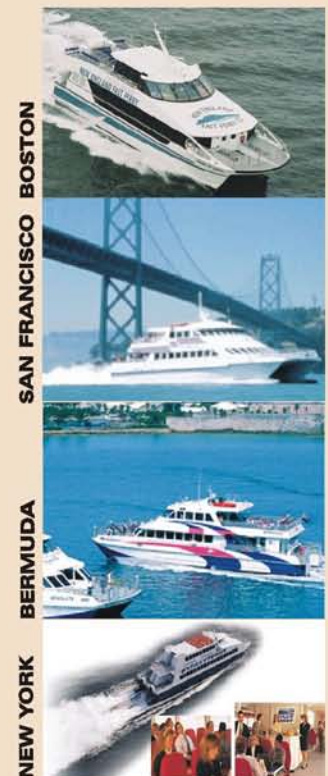


Existing	Proposed	Longer Term
● Halifax	● Mill Cove	● Birch Cove
● Dartmouth	● Purcell's Cove	● Wright's Cove
● Woodside		● Shannon Park
		● Fairview Cove
		● Eastern Passage

Locations are approximate only

In other cities...

Fast ferry networks are becoming popular in other harbour cities.



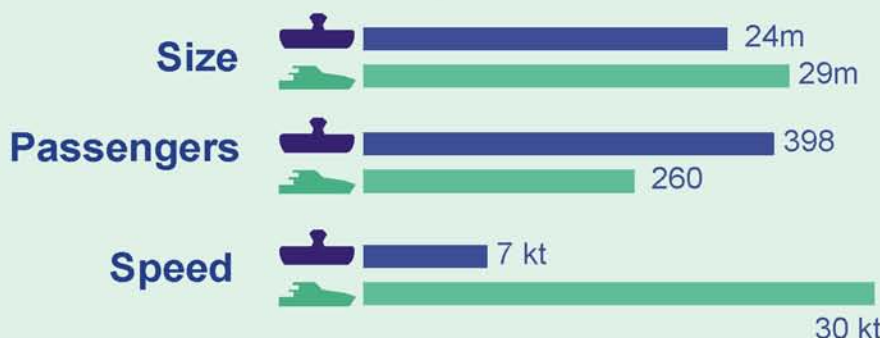
BOSTON
SAN FRANCISCO

BERMUDA

NEW YORK

How the New Ferries Compare to our Current Ferries

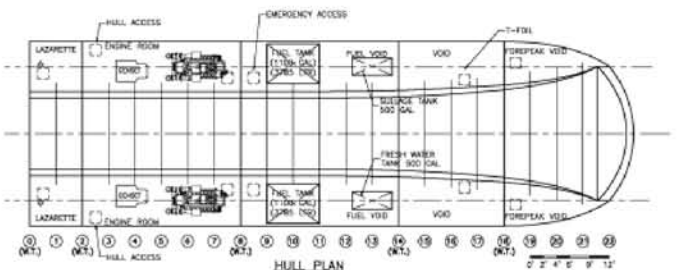
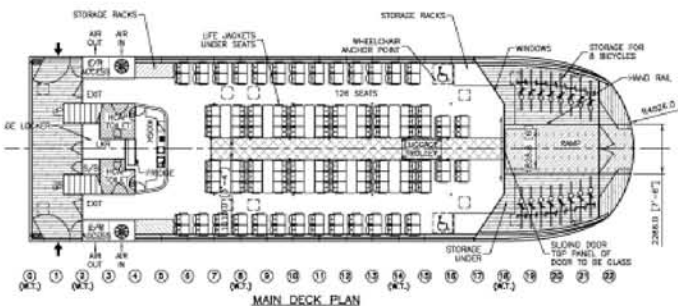
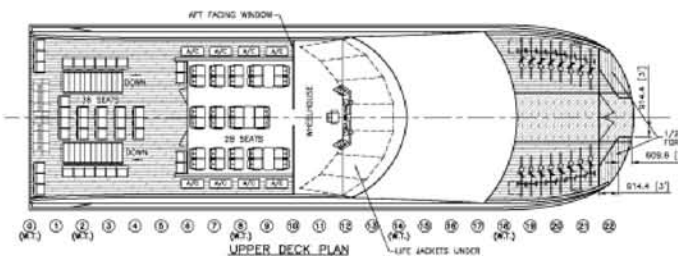
Our new catamaran ferries are about the same size as our existing ferries, but carry fewer passengers since most will be inside the vessel and all must be seated. The biggest difference is that the catamaran ferries can reach top speeds of four times that of our existing ferries.



The Vessels:

The vessel shown below is a 29m catamaran designed in Australia by Crowther Design. Although this design may not ultimately be the one selected for use in the Halifax Harbour Fast Ferry Project, it does have the size and features we are looking for.

Although the vessel can operate at speeds of up to 30 knots, it is planned to be run at speeds of 26-27 knots. At that speed, it can come to a dead stop in two boat lengths. It has a maximum draft of 1.7 metres. The vessel can carry between 200 and 250 seated passengers depending on design features. There is inside seating on two decks and 38 seats outside at the rear of the upper deck. Up to 18 bicycles can be stowed on the bow.



The Benefits:

Halifax Regional Municipality's Regional Plan includes the goal of supporting alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips and implementing opportunities for enhanced transit service.

With their quick trip times, the ferry routes from Mill Cove and Purcell's Cove both have great potential to attract people who currently make commuting trips downtown by car through congested areas such as the Bedford Highway and the Armdale Rotary.

For a new ferry route to thrive, the terminal must attract a number of walk-up customers in addition to park-and-ride and transfers from bus routes. At Mill Cove, the need for walk-up traffic is expected to be well-supported by the current phase of the Bedford waterfront development plan. At other locations, such as Purcell's Cove, the feasibility or desirability of adding new population around a ferry terminal will be evaluated in the regional plan.

An expanded ferry network provides a unique opportunity to develop high-speed, high-capacity transit links without the concern or cost of leasing rail lines or managing schedules inherent with commuter rail, or creation of bus-only lanes and smart signal systems necessary for bus rapid transit.

Other features of an expanded ferry network include:

- Brings development and activity to the waterfront
- Important link in emergency response when weather conditions close or damage land routes
- Safest mode of urban transit

The Next Steps:

Before proceeding towards implementation of the Halifax Harbour Fast Ferry Project, the following steps will be undertaken:

- Market survey to confirm ridership estimates
- Environmental impact scoping to evaluate issues with other harbour stakeholders
- Facility site selection and pre-design
- Research similar urban commuter networks

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