

# Water Taxi Accessibility

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

December 11, 2024



# Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

## October 17, 2024 (continued)

The Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends the Executive Committee to:

1. Request the Waterfront Secretariat, in consultation with the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, to present an update to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee at its December 11, 2024 meeting, on what they plan to do about inaccessible services offered by water taxi service companies such as; TikiTaxi, Toronto Harbour Water Taxi, and Pirate Taxi Toronto.
2. Request the Waterfront Secretariat to include an update on how they are making the Toronto islands more accessible overall in the presentation.

# Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

## October 17, 2024

### Origin

(October 1, 2024) Letter from Luke Anderson: Member, Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

### Summary

Toronto's private water taxi services are not accessible for those using mobility aids. Limited to using the City's crowded ferry service, people using mobility aids often find it challenging to get to Toronto Island and back in a manner that meets their needs for comfort, choice, and spontaneity. For a city with the largest disability population in Canada, consisting of residents, visitors and tourists, this is not an acceptable standard.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.DI9.7>

# Transportation to Toronto Island Park

- Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) ferry services to and from Toronto Island Park are fully accessible and transports 1.4 million people annually.
- Water taxis are independent operators, licensed by the City to dock in Toronto Island Park.
- In 2024 there were five licenced companies that operated 53 water taxis in Toronto's Inner Harbour.
- Private water taxi companies have agreements with various (non-City) landowners or leaseholders to allow for docking and passenger pick-up & drop off along Toronto's waterfront.
- Harbourfront Centre is the main group that leases to water taxis on the City-side. Ports Toronto/Waterfront Toronto also lease to groups that provide water taxis.



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# Transportation to Toronto Island Park (continued)

- PFR owns and maintains dock facilities in Toronto Island Park that are used by water taxi operators.
- PFR provides annual agreements for docking at seven locations between May and December.
- Taxis need a ramp and stabilizing mechanism to provide safe wheel-chair access.
- Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM) does not have leases with water taxi operators.
- The City's Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) does not regulate water taxis.
- Transport Canada regulates the operation of passenger vessels like water taxis.





# Waterfront water taxi pick-up locations

- Harbourfront Centre, Ports Toronto and Waterfront Toronto provide the locations for water taxi pick-up through agreements with private water taxi companies.
- Water taxi pick up locations along the waterfront are not City of Toronto properties that are managed through CREM.



# Water taxi pick-up locations in Toronto Island Park

- PFR's taxi docking locations have fixed (i.e. not floating) docks which are not currently considered fully accessible.
- These locations were selected based on operational input around safety and user travel patterns.
- Prior to 2025 operations, PFR will consult with water taxi operators to understand any limitations to full accessibility and identify opportunities to improve accessibility of their services.



# Toronto Island Park

Toronto Island Master Plan (TIMP) includes recommendations to improve transportation, including the following:

- Explore improvements for water taxi and shuttle services in alignment with the City's Marine Use Strategy.
- Ensure ferry landings are accessible through four seasons and support a consistent visitor experience for the park.
- Improve wayfinding to ensure water taxi landings are clearly marked and consistent in their design and accessibility.

Future improvements to City ferry landings will be designed to meet accessibility requirements. This process will include early and on-going engagement with the community on design options.



# Waterfront Toronto – Accessibility Guidelines

- Waterfront Toronto completed Waterfront Accessibility Design Guidelines in 2023 for Waterfront Toronto projects.
- Created in collaboration with the disability community and Waterfront Toronto's Advisory Committee on Accessibility.
- Build upon existing standards, including those that exceed minimum legislation such as the City of Toronto's Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG), highlighting requirements that are specific to Toronto's waterfront and that are not covered in other standards.
- The Guidelines provide specifications and requirements for elements and conditions that are unique to waterfront sites, including standards for water access that include details on gangways, floating docks and accessible boating.