



RE:

**2025.EX23.1
Improved Active
Transportation and
Water Access to Toronto
Island Park**

TO:

Mayor Chow and
Members of the
Executive Committee,
City of Toronto

DATE:

May 13, 2025

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Executive Committee,

The Waterfront Business Improvement Area (WBIA) is writing in support of item 2025.EX23.1 – Improved Active Transportation and Water Access to Toronto Island Park.

The Toronto Islands are an extremely important destination within our BIA for visitors from across the city. Our 2024 WBIA Toronto Inner Harbour Commercial Passenger Vessel Survey indicates that 683,000 passenger trips to and from the islands were taken using Water Taxis in 2024, in addition to the 1,390,358 round-trips taken by visitors on the Toronto Island Ferry Service.

We are strongly supportive of the formation of the Toronto Island Access and Inner Harbour Transportation Task Force to work on short- and medium-term access improvements, and to explore longer-term opportunities. By building upon the work undertaken with the 2020 Marine Use Strategy and by the Marine Coordination Committee, this Task Force has the opportunity to coordinate stakeholders, align capital investments, and accelerate implementation of a modern, integrated marine transit system that serves both residents and visitors.

In the long term, we believe that Toronto's Inner Harbour will be best served by an increased scale of marine transit and a connected network of points around the Inner Harbour where passengers can get to and from the island, as well as between points across the harbour by boat - whether that be by ferry, larger water-shuttles (SeaBus), or via water taxis. With the ongoing build-out and densification of areas such as East Bayfront and the Port Lands, and Bathurst Quay and Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, increasing docking opportunities and mooring positions need to be made available to facilitate connections to be made to and from these locations, as is illustrated by the significant increase in demand for water taxis since 2019.

We look forward to being further consulted by this Task Force to ensure that the perspectives of waterfront businesses, commercial marine operators, and local stakeholders are meaningfully included in shaping a well-connected, accessible, and economically vibrant harbour network.

Sincerely,

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2024 WBIA Toronto Inner Harbour Commercial Passenger Vessel Survey

	2019	2022	2023	2024	2023 24 % change
Water Taxis <i>Passengers</i>	209,952 amend. 2024	493,629 amend. 2024	560,000 amend. 2025	683,000 est. 2025	+22%
Private Charters <i>Charter Group Bookings</i>	1,689 amend. 2024	2,142 amend. 2024	1,970 est. 2024	2,048 est. 2025	+4%
Ticketed Public Excursions <i>Passengers</i>	370,425 amend. 2024	222,034 amend. 2024	292,309 est. 2024	307,004 est. 2025	+5%
Recreational Boat Rental <i>Motor, Sail, Paddle Rental Bookings</i>	-	-	21,263 amend. 2025	20,447 est. 2025	-4%
Peak Employment <i>Full Time & Part Time, Seasonal</i>	459 amend. 2024	592 amend. 2024	747 amend. 2025	842 est. 2025	+13%
Toronto Island Ferry <i>Round Trip Tickets</i>	1,278,505 City of Toronto	1,349,778 City of Toronto	1,502,883 City of Toronto	1,390,358 City of Toronto	-7%

Sources: Waterfront BIA Tour, Charter, Water Taxi, and Recreational Boat Rental Survey 2022, 2023, 2024
City of Toronto Open Data, Toronto Island Ferry Ticket Counts

Research Methodology:

A survey was circulated to the 26 Total Commercial Tour, Charter, Water Taxi, and Recreational Boat Rental Operators on Toronto's Waterfront

Survey results received from 21/26 operators - 81% Response Rate

- 5/6 Water Taxi Operators - 83%
- 13/17 Private Charter Operators - 76%
- 7/8 Ticketed Public Excursion Operators - 88%
- 4/5 Recreational Boat Rental Operators - 86%
- Estimations for non-participants were made based on known size of operations

All information presented in aggregate by industry segment to ensure privacy.