

Barge Berth Engagement Session: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is Metro Vancouver hosting a series of engagement sessions rather than a town hall meeting?

Metro Vancouver hosted a public engagement session in October 2023 and invited Southlands, Deering Island, and other community members to share their feedback on the Barge Berth Project and Iona Projects. The feedback received was compiled into an engagement summary report and shared with our project team. As part of Metro Vancouver's continued engagement for the Barge Berth, we are hosting this information session to ensure the input of Salish Park and Musqueam Park leaseholders is heard and considered.

This session will follow the same format as the October 2023 session and will provide opportunities for participants to have discussions with staff. The session will provide information about the project and allow interested participants to share their feedback with staff and through feedback forms (online or printed copy).

All the questions and comments received during the session will be reflected in our summary report, which will be posted to the Iona Projects website and shared with the project team and third-party consultant completing the site selection study

2. Is there any new information at this March 2024 engagement session about the Barge Berth?

The format of this session is the same as previous sessions. As site selection studies and engagement with other interested groups continue, there are some minor updates to the project materials. This includes updating renderings to better reflect nearby communities, and including some additional information about Site 2 regarding logging in the area.

3. What is the importance of the barge berth project? Why is it required?

Construction of the new Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (IIWWTP) will require a significant amount of sand and construction materials. The project site is currently only accessible via one two-lane road that is also used by major industries, businesses, and nearly 370,000 annual recreational users to Iona Beach Regional Park. The project needs to consider alternate transportation methods to bring materials to the site to improve transportation efficiency and safety for road users on Sea Island and throughout the region.

The project team identified using barges and surrounding waterways to transport materials as a safe and efficient means of transporting materials. In order to facilitate barge transportation, a new barge berth is required because adequate facilities do not exist on Iona Island.

Using barge transportation opens up additional access to the project site and significantly reduces truck traffic destined for the project and as a result, the amount of trucks required

through the region. Use of barge transportation will reduce truck traffic destined for the project by approximately 500 dump trucks per day.

Not only does barge transportation improve transportation efficiencies and traffic volumes through the region, it also has a considerable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for the transportation of materials to the project site.

4. What is the difference between a barge berth and a barge terminal?

The main difference between a barge berth and a barge terminal is their size and usage. Berths are smaller and used specifically as a docking point to load and unload materials. Terminals are larger, more complex facilities and include storage of materials and cargo, often including multiple berths, connections to road and rail infrastructure and offices.

The proposed barge berth for IWWTP construction will be used to load and unload materials for construction. The design will consist of a dock and in-river piles to securely anchor the barges and a conveyor system to move materials between the barge and the shore.

5. Can the work be completed without barges? If not, why?

The site location is currently only accessible by one two-way road. As one of the largest projects in the Lower Mainland, project construction requires a significant volume of materials. The road is an essential artery for major transportation hubs including the airport, cargo and logistics businesses, local businesses and recreational access to Iona Island. Given the access constraints and high volume of users who rely on Ferguson Road, identifying alternate transportation options was essential for transportation efficiencies, and the safety of other road users.

Barge transportation is a safe and efficient transportation option that significantly reduces the amount of truck transportation required for the site, prioritizes the safety of all road users, improves transportation efficiency, reduces emissions and reduces transportation costs.

While truck transportation will still be required for some equipment and deliveries, the project is able to significantly reduce truck transportation requirements if barge transportation can be accessed.

6. What are the locations? Have the locations been finalized?

No, the barge berth location has not been finalized. Metro Vancouver is evaluating three potential barge berth locations that were determined by an initial assessment. Only one site will be used. The initial assessment identified the following locations based on selection criteria and historical information:

- Two kilometers west of the project site at the mouth of the North Arm of the Fraser River
- 300 meters east of the project site, across from Deering Island, where a barge berth was used for the construction of the existing Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant
- On the south side of Iona Island in McDonald Slough

Metro Vancouver's Iona Project Management Team will review the studies being completed by a third-party consultant and community feedback received to select one location to progress design and construct a barge berth. Selection criteria include functionality, cost, schedule, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) interests, community and stakeholder impacts, and ecological impacts.

7. Why wasn't the community involved in determining the location of the barge berth?

The location has not been finalized; Metro Vancouver is in the process of determining the berth location from three potential options. These options were determined from initial review of the selection criteria and historical information. Studies are being completed to assess environmental impacts, functionality, cost, and impacts to stakeholders and the community. Input received as part of this session, including through online feedback form, will be compiled into a summary report. The report will be posted to the project website and will be shared with the third-party that is completing the studies and project team.

We welcome community feedback throughout the IWWTP Projects and are hosting this engagement session to provide information specific to the barge berth project and provide opportunities for community feedback.

In addition to the community, location selection will consider xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) interests, local businesses, road users, and the environment. Metro Vancouver will need to select an option that balances these interests and regulatory requirements.

8. Have impacted Indigenous communities been notified?

Metro Vancouver engages with 14 First Nations on the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects, and is working closely with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), whose primary reserve lands are across from the treatment plant.

Updates about the projects, including the barge berth have been communicated to the First Nations communities. Priorities identified by xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) that will be considered in selecting the barge berth location include:

- Supporting fish and fish habitat
- Designing ecosystems that support traditional harvesting
- Allowing xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) access for traditional resource use, cultural practices, and knowledge transfer

9. What mitigation measures will Metro Vancouver introduce to reduce noise, air quality, and light impacts and ensure the health of residents is not impacted?

Metro Vancouver is evaluating three potential locations and will select one location for the barge berth. More information about mitigation will be available once a location is selected.

As part of the site selection process, studies are taking place that consider public health, safety, and potential construction impacts. The results of these studies will be made available once complete and will be used to inform the barge berth location, design and identify mitigations.

It is Metro Vancouver's responsibility to adhere to Transport Canada regulatory standards to ensure safe use of the navigation channel and to ensure safety for employees and nearby residents.

In addition, we will ensure that construction standards for noise, dust and air quality with the City of Richmond are met. Operational needs and mitigation measures will be confirmed following design and we will provide updates to the community.

10. How can people who are not in attendance provide feedback/what are next steps for engagement?

All materials at the engagement session are available on the project webpage (metrovancover.org/iona). People who are unable to attend are invited to review the session materials and provide feedback. An online and hard-copy feedback form will be available for this session until March 13, 2024 at 11:59 pm PST.

Metro Vancouver will compile all feedback received as part of this information session into a summary report that will be shared publicly on the project's webpage, with the Metro Vancouver Liquid Waste Committee and Board, and with the third-party completing the site selection study. Metro Vancouver will share the results of the site selection study once it is complete.

The project team welcomes feedback throughout the project by email at ionawwtp@metrovancover.org or by phone at 604-432-6200.

Contact Us:

Metro Vancouver Information Centre:

We have a dedicated team to answer your questions, listen to concerns, and share feedback with the project team for consideration in project planning.

Phone: 604-432-6200 (Monday to Friday from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm)

Email: ionawwtp@metrovancover.org

For more information, visit: metrovancover.org/iona