

OT News

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The city of Long Beach is working on repairs to the *Queen Mary* to get it ready for public viewing again.
photo by Scott Varley, Daily Breeze

Long Beach says *Queen Mary* enters 'Final Stages' on critical repairs

The most recent repairs have kept the ship on track
for a re-opening in early 2023

by Kristy Hutchings ... Long Beach Press-Telegram

Some critical repairs on Long Beach's legendary *Queen Mary* have been completed, city officials announced on November 28th, with a slew of others slated for completion in early 2023 — keeping the ship on track for a public re-opening in the next few months.

The *Queen Mary* originally closed to the public in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But by that point, the World War II-era ship had already fallen into massive disrepair under the management of its previous operators, Urban Commons, prompting the ship's continued closure.

Urban Commons declared bankruptcy and gave up its 66-year lease in 2021, bringing the *Queen Mary* back under city control for the first time in 40 years. A few years prior, the city gave Urban Commons \$23 million to fund major ship repairs — but a 2021 city audit found that those repairs were never completed.

In June, the city approved a contract with Evolution Hospitality, LLC, to take over the *Queen Mary's* operations and oversee the repairs, which included replacing the ship's boilers, elevators and restrooms, plumbing repairs, and parking upgrades — all deemed necessary to ensure a safe reopening.

Under that agreement, Evolution is responsible for the ship's overall maintenance and *Queen Mary*-related events for the next five years, but Long Beach will continue overseeing major capital improvements necessary for the ship's overall restoration and preservation.

The city and Evolution estimated in June that the \$2,870,500 repairs would be completed, and the ship would reopen, by October. But when that date came and went, Long Beach pushed back the re-opening date once again and allocated another \$1 million from the city's Tidelands Area Fund to pay for more repairs.

That \$1 million cost, though, will be covered by revenue generated through city-issued permits that allow filming and special events on the ship even while closed.

"In just 10 months since the city's acquisition of the lease, the *Queen Mary* has begun to receive the necessary care and commitment it deserves," Mayor Robert Garcia said in the Monday release. "I look forward to getting people back on board to enjoy this historical treasure once again."

Since the summer, according to the release, Long Beach has reinforced and extended the ship's bulkheads — which prevent water from entering the vessel and largely improve the *Queen Mary's* overall structural stability — and begun work on the installation of an automated bilge pump system, which is a critical safety mechanism necessary to discharge water from the ship in the event it gets inside.

"These repairs, in addition to the removal of 20 deteriorated lifeboats earlier this year," the release said, "have drastically reinforced the overall structural integrity of the ship, allowing for additional safety improvements to be conducted."

With those major repairs completed, Long Beach will spend the next few months installing an emergency generator — which is capable of generating enough power to operate the bilge pump system — interior and exterior lighting, other safety equipment, and two boilers which will allow for hot water on-board.

“Approximately 75% of the critical repairs inside the ship — electrical, plumbing and metal fabrication-related work — is expected to be complete by the end of this year,” Long Beach said, “with the remaining internal critical repairs to be completed in early 2023.”

Aesthetic upgrades — including interior and exterior painting, flooring, and railing — will be completed leading up to and following the ship’s public re-opening.

“Over the course of this year, the *Queen Mary* has received the attention and preservation it deserves,” said First District Councilwoman Mary Zendejas. “I look forward to soon welcoming visitors back onboard to enjoy this historic, beautiful landmark of our great city and that it remains a family friendly attraction for many years to come.”

Long Beach, with its Monday update, also launched a new [Queen Mary Updates webpage](#) — which includes information about the ship’s history, its economic impacts on the city, and short- and long-term preservation goals.

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The article is being shared with the SSHSA Southern California Chapter Membership as
an update on the status of the Queen Mary.