

Update to ARRC's Whittier Terminal Master Plan



The community of Whittier, its harbor, roadways and adjacent railyard.

Background

The Alaska Railroad Corporation's (ARRC) land reserve in Whittier, Alaska, includes a busy railyard and marine facilities that serve as a key freight hub. Cargo from the Lower 48 arrives by vessels that dock at the railroad's rail-marine barge slip. Unloaded freight is then transported by rail or truck to points along the rail and highway corridors.

Situated on ARRC land and connected by rail, cruise company owned facilities welcome thousands of passengers to Alaska each spring and summer. They add to a robust visitor industry as travelers venture into other areas of the state via motorcoach or by train.

In more recent years, the community and private sector companies have pursued developments to tap into Whittier's potential. Likewise, over the past three years, ARRC has invested more on infrastructure by funding projects including railyard paving, drainage improvements, track reconfiguration and modification, and barge ramp rehabilitation. ARRC also demolished the old marginal wharf

to address safety concerns, and is now designing a project to replace a portion of that structure.

Project Purpose and Benefits

Ongoing public and private activity is fueling the momentum behind additional development in this strategic harbor town. In considering railroad investments moving forward, ARRC identified the need to comprehensively address a number of challenges. ARRC also seeks to develop an updated Master Plan that outlines potential infrastructure and operational improvements at this essential intermodal terminal. This project builds on the foundation of multiple previous planning efforts.

The *Whittier Terminal Master Plan* purpose is to ensure this regionally important port:

- continues to meet current and future demand
- identifies efficiency and capacity improvements
- assesses facilities near the end of useful lives
- considers interaction / support of community and commercial infrastructure

Project Scope

The project aims to complete a comprehensive master plan that will accomplish the following tasks:

- Evaluate the condition, performance, safety, efficiency, state of good repair, reliability, resiliency, and sustainability of the terminal facilities;
- Establish an integrated plan for future modernization, considering the unique interests of diverse stakeholders;
- Identify areas for rehabilitation of marine, terminal and upland infrastructure, and supporting operations;
- Explore alternatives for infrastructure elements;
- Produce an inclusive approach to address the terminal's challenges and invest where public benefits are the highest;
- Generate a roadmap for phased investments;
- Reduce the duration of, or eliminate, trains occupying the at-grade road-rail crossing
- Contribute to maintaining a secure facility.

Project Schedule

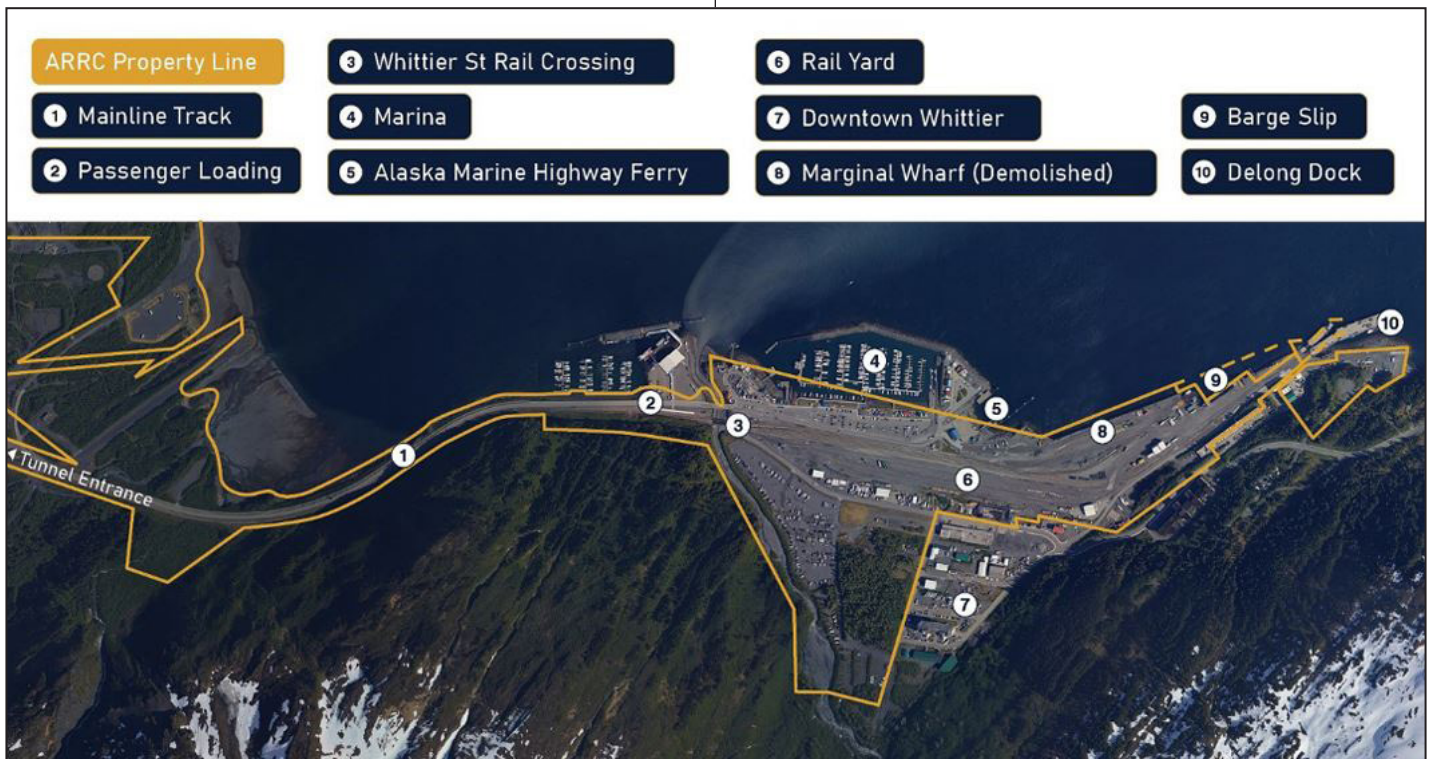
- 2021: Funding secured with a federal grant from the Maritime Administration (MARAD)
- 2022: Environmental review completed to produce a NEPA Categorical Exclusion.
- 2023: Procurement of services and studies to support the master planning effort.
- 2023-2025: Develop and complete the master plan and any supporting documents.

Project Cost and Funding

Planning cost is estimated to be \$1.5 million. In 2021, the Alaska Railroad was awarded a grant from the Maritime Administration (MARAD) Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP). This \$1.467 million grant is funded 80% by MARAD, with the 20% match funded by ARRC.

More Information

For more project information, email the Alaska Railroad at Info@WhittierTerminalMPU.com.



This map offers an overview of the railroad's land reserve in Whittier, along with key community facilities that will influence any future railroad investments in new or enhanced infrastructure.