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## Appendix E. Stakeholder Engagement Report

The team engaged key internal and external stakeholders to gather feedback on current processes and future growth opportunities. Stakeholders provided insights into their interactions with the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) and offered suggestions for addressing existing challenges, potential future developments, and opportunities for collaboration.

### E.1. Key Challenges

Several challenges were highlighted during the discussions with stakeholders, the most pressing being the congestion and logistical constraints at the terminal. The following issues were raised:

- *Waterfront Access Constraints:* With waterfront property at a premium, businesses like water taxis and kayaking operators are losing public access points. Stakeholders stressed the importance of maintaining beach access and preserving space for both commercial and recreational use along the waterfront.
- *Safety and Accessibility:* The area near the Alaska Marine Highway Ferry terminal is a pinch point, especially during peak tourist seasons, with high pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Improved infrastructure, such as pedestrian crossings and clear wayfinding signage, was recommended to ensure residents' and visitors' safety and ease of movement.

### E.2. Growth Needs and Opportunities

Stakeholders strongly desire growth and economic development for cruise and freight traffic, particularly considering it is a year-round, ice-free port and Whittier's growing role as the gateway to Prince William Sound.

- *Infrastructure Expansion and Modernization:* Much of the terminal's infrastructure, dating back to World War II, requires significant upgrades to ensure safe and efficient operations. Stakeholders emphasized the need for updated wharf facilities and transfer span, and the replacement of deteriorating bulkheads to support growing freight and passenger traffic. These upgrades will not only improve operational efficiency but also ensure long-term sustainability.
- *Coordination Across Agencies:* Improved coordination between ARRC, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), cruise lines, and local businesses is critical to optimizing traffic flow and ensuring operational efficiency. Synchronizing tunnel, train, and ship schedules could reduce congestion and make Whittier more accessible for freight and tourists. Stakeholders also suggested creating a priority tunnel lane for residents to help minimize traffic disruptions.
- *Expansion of Cruise and Freight Operations:* The expected growth in cruise traffic, particularly with the development of a new dock at the Head of the Bay, presents both opportunities and challenges. More cruise ships will bring increased economic activity

and pressure on the existing rail and road infrastructure. Increasing rail capacity for passenger trains and ensuring better scheduling of both freight and passenger services will be essential to accommodate this growth.

### E.3. Collaboration for Future Growth

Stakeholders highlighted several opportunities to improve the terminal's operations and support future growth through collaboration:

- *Partnership for Waterfront Access*: Ensuring continued access to the waterfront for commercial and recreational purposes was identified as critical. Stakeholders recommended closer collaboration between local businesses, ARRC, and DOT&PF to create solutions that benefit all parties.
- *Resiliency and Emergency Preparedness*: Natural hazards like tsunamis require comprehensive emergency plans. Stakeholders emphasized including detailed emergency response protocols and hazard mitigation strategies in the Whittier Terminal Master Plan to enhance Whittier's resiliency.

The stakeholder engagement process provided valuable insights into the challenges, growth needs, and opportunities for the Whittier Terminal. By addressing these concerns and identifying opportunities for collaboration, the Master Plan can help guide the terminal's development into a more efficient, resilient, and sustainable facility that supports economic growth and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

### E.4. Documentation

The following is the combined documentation from stakeholder engagement activities for this project.