The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) Seward Marine Terminal assets include three docks — the Loading Facility, Passenger (west), and Freight (east) docks.

**Project Scope**

**Freight Dock Expansion**

ARRC is expanding its Seward Freight Dock by lengthening the existing structure from 620 feet to 1,000 feet into deeper water, and include a mooring dolphin and catwalk 100 feet beyond the deck area. The structure will also be widened from 200 feet to 320 feet along its entire length.

Occurring entirely within ARRC’s land reserves, expansion will improve freight intermodal operations (ship-to-train, ship-to-truck or ship-to-barge). Expansion design will accommodate larger vessels and more vessel types (freight, cruise, research, military, fishing and barge). Design will increase terminal capacity, improve loading and unloading efficiency, and enhance safety by providing additional:

- short- and long-term berthing space
- capacity for simultaneous berthing
- capacity to service larger ships
- roll-on/roll-off compatibility

**Roadway Connection**

ARRC’s three docks are accessed along Port Avenue. The project’s corridor improvement component will extend Port Avenue through railroad property to connect to Airport Avenue. This roadway link will improve traffic circulation in the Seward Port area, resolving user conflicts and safety hazards. The connection will also enhance access to
Dock Expansion Concept

Alaska’s highway system, allowing heavy commercial traffic to more directly intercept the Seward Highway.

Project Purpose

Project goals include:

- Expand terminal and vessel service to accommodate growing freight cargo
- Increase opportunities for freight rail business
- Promote the region’s key industries
- Provide essential transportation services to Alaska’s rural communities.
- Promote port roadway safety and efficiency, allowing greater separation and safety margins between onshore freight movements and cruise passenger pedestrian movements

In 2017, ARRC completed an extensive Seward Marine Terminal Master Plan, supported by three studies, including Passenger Traffic, Freight Traffic and Transportation Connectivity. The Master Plan provides a comprehensive analysis of the port facilities, customer base, and services offered within ARRC’s Seward Marine Terminal. The plan also identifies opportunities for economic development from dock upgrades and greater uplands connectivity.

Status of Projects

- Environmental work and preliminary engineering for the dock extension occurred in 2013 and 2014, laying the groundwork for federal funding requests.

Project Background

Constructed between 2000 and 2002, the Freight Dock was originally 200 feet wide by 620 feet long. It is supported by a sheet pile bulkhead on the west side, a riprap and armor rock fill slope on the east side, and a combination of the two on the south side. The existing dock is outfitted with a series of fenders on the west side. A catwalk and mooring dolphin were installed at the end of the dock to aid in berthing vessels. The west basin adjacent to the dock was dredged.

Dock expansion began in 2007 when ARRC widened a section of the dock from 200 feet to 320 feet.
Marine terminal and upland development plans call for a widened and lengthened freight dock and port-to-airport roadway connection.

In 2020, ARRC initiated the Seward Freight Dock and Corridor Improvements Project and federal funding was secured. Given COVID-19 financial impacts (including money available for the grant’s matching contribution), the project timeline is tentative. A preliminary schedule below assumes use of the construction manager / general contractor (CM/GC) procurement method.

**Project Cost and Funding**

- Partial dock widening and fill (two-thirds of an acre) in 2007 cost $248,000, funded by ARRC.
- 2013-2014 dock lengthening environmental and preliminary engineering budget of $1.7 million funded by ARRC.
- In October 2020, ARRC received a $19.8 million Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration (MARAD). The grant will underwrite nearly 80% of the $25.3 million Seward Freight Dock and Corridor Improvements Project. The $5.5 million match will be funded by ARRC and/or other non-federal sources.