

Seward Passenger Dock Replacement Project

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) seeks to replace the existing passenger dock and associated terminal facilities within ARRC's land reserve in Seward, Alaska. The initial project will construct a new dock, provisional passenger terminal facilities, and associated upland improvements. Future project elements will include constructing a new permanent passenger terminal building.

Purpose and Goals

The project purpose is to replace the existing passenger-related marine infrastructure. Project goals include:

- Replace the existing cruise passenger terminal – including dock, building, and upland facilities – to permit continued passenger marine dockings in Southcentral Alaska.
- Provide opportunities for new entrants into the market.

Project Background

Built in 1966, the existing Passenger Dock is a pile-supported pier dock with a concrete deck. It measures 736 feet long and 200 feet wide. The dock provides support and moorage space for freight vessels and non-cruise vessels during the visitor off-season.

The dock's pile foundation has experienced significant corrosion over its half-century lifespan, which limits the dock's remaining useful life and has resulted in weight restrictions.



The Dale R. Lindsey Alaska Railroad Intermodal Terminal building is located on the northern end of the Passenger Dock. The 26,555 square foot, steel-framed rectangular structure features a flexible layout and a capacity accommodating up to 1,675 people.



Outside of the cruise ship season, terminal building space is available to rent as a venue for sports practice, community festivals, conferences, weddings and other celebrations or events. Traffic staging to support cruise ship activities takes place in a five-acre area north of the terminal. The area is used for loading and unloading passengers and luggage from buses and trains.

Adjacent to the existing terminal is the 35-year-old coal loading facility. Its primary purpose was to unload coal from railcars, convey the coal to storage, and load coal into bulk ships for international export. This facility has not operated since 2016 and there are no current plans to bring it back into operation.

In 2015, ARRC initiated the *Seward Marine Terminal Expansion Planning Project* (also known as *Railport Seward*) to consider current and anticipated long-term needs at the Alaska Railroad's Seward Marine Terminal. The project included three studies – *Passenger Traffic*, *Freight Traffic* and *Transportation Connectivity*. Completed in 2017, these studies resulted in a *Master Plan* supporting development

strategies to meet current and future demand.

Within the *Master Plan*, ARRC considered several different passenger terminal replacement concepts. The plan recommends replacing the aging dock, and constructing a new passenger terminal building and associated facilities.



Seward marine master planning considered harbor, railroad docks and uplands, and roadway connectivity.

Project Scope

The project includes these components:

- A new passenger dock capable of berthing two cruise ships measuring from 80 to 1,080 feet long, and provide for off-season freight vessel operations.
- Provisional cruise passenger facilities to provide for interim embarking/disembarking of cruise passengers after the existing on-dock building is demolished.
- A cruise passenger terminal building with an open space capable of accommodating anticipated cruise passenger traffic for the next 50 years.
- Construction logistics will be phased to minimize interruptions to cruise and rail passenger traffic between May and September during construction.



The existing dock and terminal building serve as an intermodal hub, with bus, train and marine connectivity. The dock structure is nearing the end of its useful life.

Cost and Funding

The *Master Plan*-recommended full build-out concept is now estimated to cost \$79 million.

In 2019, the State of Alaska awarded about \$4 million in FY20 Designated Legislative Grants with money drawn from the Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Tax revenues. These grants are being used to fund planning, design and project management costs that precede construction.

In January 2022, the ARRC Board of Directors authorized the railroad to pursue up to \$60 million in funding through ARRC's statutory authority to issue bonds, subject to state legislative approval, to complete dock design and construction. ARRC is evaluating potential funding sources for the permanent passenger terminal building.

Project Schedule

The project schedule reflects short- and long-term infrastructure objectives:

Seward Passenger Dock

February 2022 – Request for Proposals (RFP): Solicit proposals for a progressive design build concept and plan for the passenger dock.

March 2022 – Proposal Due Date: Proposals due from interested parties. The project team will review proposals to determine the most qualified contractor, best-suited plan to meet project goals, while comparing efficiencies and costs.

April 2022 – Notice to Proceed with Pre-Construction Phase: Selected contractor will be directed to perform pre-construction phase activities.

May to September 2022 – Finalize Pre-Construction Phase: Finalize design, obtain environmental approvals, and negotiate selected contractor's submitted construction services cost proposal.

October 2022 – Notice to Proceed for Construction Phase

April 30, 2024 – Substantial Completion Deadline: Project progress is sufficient to accommodate berthing of at least two vessels at the dock.

April 2025 – Final Completion: The dock is complete and ready for full operation.

Provisional Passenger Facilities

February to August 2022 – Design Building: Design provisional passenger terminal building.

October 2022 to April 2023 – Construction: Construct provisional facilities to accommodate passengers for the summer 2023 cruise season.

Cruise Passenger Terminal Building

TBD – Design and construct a permanent passenger terminal building (s) to accommodate cruise passenger activity.

For More Information

- Visit the ARRC website's Projects section for more information on the master planning effort – www.AlaskaRailroad.com > [CORPORATE > Projects \(Seward Capital Projects dropdown\)](#)
- For public comment or inquiry, use Public_Comment@akrr.com or call ARRC's Regulatory & Corporate Communications Officer Stephenie Wheeler at (907) 265-2671.