

Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center

**Environmental Assessment Re-evaluation
Technical Memorandum**

Prepared for:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is seeking to construct an Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) and associated improvements in the Ship Creek area of Anchorage, Alaska. The project includes construction of the following:

1. A new intermodal facility incorporated with and adjacent to the historic ARRC Anchorage Depot;
2. Enhanced parking facilities;
3. A pedestrian bridge/walkway connecting the E Street corridor to the intermodal facility and providing pedestrian access between downtown Anchorage and the Ship Creek area;
4. New and rehabilitated tracks; and
5. Miscellaneous other improvements.

An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued by FTA on June 10, 2003. Three alternatives were considered in the analysis and the 'Northside Alternative' was selected as the preferred alternative for implementation.

2.0 PURPOSE FOR RE-EVALUATION

Subsequent to issuing the Ship Creek ITC EA and FONSI, the project design has progressed, and the design team has developed various project details that deviate somewhat from the project description in the original EA.

In conformance with federal requirements for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this environmental re-evaluation summarizes the changes that have occurred since the publication and approval of the Ship Creek ITC EA and FONSI to confirm that the project remains environmentally acceptable for federal approval. The Environmental Reevaluation Consultation checklist is included in Appendix A.

3.0 PROJECT CHANGES

This section summarizes the changes that have occurred since the signed approval of the EA and FONSI. Specific elements that deviate from the original EA are described in this section. Drawings depicting the additional project area that has resulted from detailed design (Figure 1) and a revised landscape concept drawing (Figure 2) are included in Appendix B.

Railroad Track

1. Two new tracks will be constructed and two tracks will be rehabilitated/extended as follows.
 - a. The inside track closest to the depot will be rehabilitated and extended.
 - b. Track 1 (existing main) will be rehabilitated and shortened.
 - c. Track 2 will be constructed and will extend railroad north to Cordova Street. The inside track and tracks 1 and 2 comprise a passenger yard.

- d. Track 3 will be new construction and is a main track around the passenger yard, allowing ARRC passenger and freight trains to operate simultaneously.
2. Originally, maintenance access to the southernmost railroad switch was planned to be provided from the east side of the track. Once the design survey was completed, it was determined that there was not enough clearance between the track and an existing retaining wall to allow a vehicle to safely access the switch. Therefore, the access road was moved to the west side of the tracks, requiring placement of fill in wetlands. The total length of the access road will be approximately 1,700 feet, with 675 feet of new embankment and the remainder on existing fill. The filled area begins at the boat launch access road and continues southward along the tidal flats to the switch point. The road width is 13 feet. The approximate location of the maintenance access road is shown on Figure 1 in Appendix B.
 3. A gravel maintenance access road will be located between tracks 2 and 3.
 4. New trackage will now extend past Cordova Street to the east (railroad north). This extension was determined to be necessary in detailed design in order to maintain clearance from several leasehold buildings and to also provide adequate clearance between the switches and the crossing.

Parking

5. No parking garage will be constructed. ARRC completed technical and economic analysis that resulted in the recommendation that surface parking continue to be used for the following reasons.
 - a. The parking requirements will be less than originally estimated based on more recent Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA). The revised TIA calls for a total of 507 parking spaces as opposed to the 650 parking spaces recommended in the original EA.
 - b. ARRC constructed additional surface parking that is within reasonable walking distance to the facility subsequent to the time the FONSI was signed, reducing the amount of additional parking required at the intermodal facility. (See Appendix B – Figure 1)
 - c. The “Buttress” on which the parking garage was planned to be constructed is in a seismically sensitive area. This would require a waiver from the Municipality of Anchorage to allow construction on the site and would also require expensive construction techniques to mitigate the seismic risk.
 - d. Economic analysis indicated that construction of a parking garage was not financially feasible for a variety of reasons including the existing availability and current usage of parking in the project area, the low price of parking in downtown Anchorage, and the expense of constructing a parking garage in a seismically sensitive area.
6. ARRC proposes to meet the parking demand in each phase using existing and expanded surface parking lots. A summary of parking requirements by phase as well as a description of how the parking requirements will be met is presented in the following table. The parking areas are within reasonable walking distance of the intermodal facility, and will also be served by the Ship Creek Shuttle (a free shuttle service between the Ship Creek area and Downtown Anchorage). (More detail about the project phasing is found on page 4.)

Phase	Scope	Parking Requirements	Parking Available
1	Relocate existing utilities, construct 2 tracks, rehabilitate 2 tracks, site improvements	180 spaces	180 spaces in the existing parking lot south of the depot
2	Renovate historic depot, construct amenity building, reconstruct south depot parking lot and parking areas at east and west ends of depot	261 spaces	240 spaces in reconfigured lot south of the depot 58 spaces in the lots at the east and west ends of the depot 298 Total Spaces Available
3	Construct new departure lounge, platforms, and pedestrian connections	507 spaces	298 spaces as above 100 spaces in new paved parking area along Ship Creek Avenue 158 spaces in the existing ARRC lot between the A/C Couplet ⁽¹⁾ 556 Total Spaces Available

Note: (1) The A/C Couplet parking lot will be dedicated to Intermodal facility parking when Phase 3 construction is complete.

Terminal

7. The revised design is a combination of the “northside” and “southside” alternatives originally evaluated in the EA. In the current design, no new building will be located on the north side of the tracks except for a vestibule with stairs and an elevator for access to the pedestrian walkway. The cantilevered terminal area remains where it was in the proposed action, but the primary expansion occurs east of the existing terminal (similar to the “southside” alternative evaluated in the EA). The new design better integrates the existing depot into the overall design and retains the historic function of the building as a train depot.
8. The terminal now incorporates the existing historic depot with the project. The project includes:
 - a. Renovated space in depot: ± 9,000 nsf
 - b. New space in departure lounge: ± 18,000 nsf
 - c. New space in winter waiting room, M&E spaces: ± 8,000 nsf
 - d. New space in amenity building: ± 12,400 nsf

Access and circulation

9. Main access to the facility is from 1st Avenue rather than Ship Creek Avenue.
10. Pull contractor bus access is along 1st Avenue or within the passenger yard near the freight shed.
11. A revised traffic analysis indicated the appropriate traffic control devices at the North C Street intersections with 1st Avenue and Ship Creek Avenue are all-way stop control in the design year rather than the traffic signals as indicated in the EA. ARRC completed a traffic analysis and convened a diagnostic team consisting of specialists from ARRC, the Municipality of Anchorage, and the Alaska Department of Transportation to evaluate the safety of the crossing and the intersection.

12. The team's original recommendation was to close the C Street crossing due to safety concerns related to the width of the crossing (156 feet). Public concern with closing the crossing prompted ARRC to reevaluate the track layout and to reduce the width of the crossing so that it could be kept open. ARRC developed the current 4-track layout (as opposed to the original 5-track layout), reducing the width of the crossing to 116 feet.

Even though the crossing width was reduced, there is still concern with placing traffic control devices at the two intersections because they are only a couple of hundred feet apart and the crossing itself is over 100 feet wide, leaving little room for queuing of traffic. Therefore, the diagnostic team recommended all-way stop control at both intersections, with the option for future installation of traffic signals if traffic increases more than anticipated or if there are other concerns in practice with the all way stop control. A report summarizing the results of the diagnostic team analysis is included in Appendix C.

13. The Municipality of Anchorage (People Mover) has agreed to a public transit pick-up/drop-off area in front of the depot on 1st Ave. rather than at E Street and 2nd Ave.
14. No designated drop-off (roundabout) area will be located at E Street and 2nd Avenue; however, there will be a public area there containing the Eisenhower Memorial as originally planned.
15. Additional modifications to E Street are being completed by the Municipality of Anchorage as part of the E Street corridor project. The primary passenger drop off area to the ITC would be on 1st Avenue.

Pedestrian Walkway

16. Because there is no longer a parking garage, the proposed pedestrian bridge only connects to the proposed depot; however, there will be a circulation corridor at the edge of the parking lot to allow access between the pedestrian walkway and the 1st Avenue parking lot.

Project Phasing

With the progression of the design phase, the current proposed phasing for the project is summarized below. The phases may be broken down into sub-phases, depending upon the availability of funding.

- a. **Phase 1 – Track and Utilities.** This phase includes relocation of existing public utilities, construction of tracks 2 and 3, rehabilitation of the inside track and track 1, paving and site improvements, and construction of the switch maintenance access road.
- b. **Phase 2 – Depot Renovation and Amenity Building.** This phase includes renovation of the historic Anchorage depot, including expansion of the lobby area, upgrade of mechanical and electrical systems, and replacement of windows throughout the building. Additional depot renovations include the addition of a mechanical baggage handling system and modernized ticketing. This phase also includes construction of the Amenity building to the east of the depot. The Amenity building will house ARRC office space that is permanently displaced by the depot renovations, new facility and passenger services offices to accommodate a modest amount of future growth, and approximately 4,000 square feet of commercial transit-oriented lease space. This phase also includes reconstruction of the parking lot south of the depot and the smaller parking areas on the east and west ends of the depot.

- c. **Phase 3 – Departure Lounge and Pedestrian Bridge.** This phase will include construction of the departure lounge; platform improvements; the pedestrian walkway/bridge between Ship Creek Avenue, the Intermodal center, and E Street; and associated road improvements.

4.0 REVISED IMPACT ANALYSIS

The potential environmental impacts of the project alternatives were thoroughly described in the EA. The attached re-evaluation worksheet (Appendix A) presents an impact analysis of the changes to the proposed action. Only those categories in which impacts have changed based on changes to the proposed action are discussed. Documentation of additional consultation with various agencies is included in Appendix D.

5.0 REFERENCES

- Dowl Engineers. February 2006. Traffic Impact Analysis Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center. Prepared for ECI/Hyer Inc.
- ECI/HYER, Inc., Land Design North, and Stantec. July 28, 2005. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Schematic Design Report. Prepared for ARRC.
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA). June 10, 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Finding of No Significant Impact.
- HDR Alaska, Inc. March 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center: Air Quality Analysis Report. Prepared for ARRC.
- _____. April 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Environmental Assessment. Prepared for FTA and ARRC.

Appendix A
Environmental Reevaluation Consultation Checklist

Have any new or revised laws or regulations been issued since approval of the last environmental document that affects this project? (If yes, please explain.)

- NO
 YES

Section 4(f) legislation has been amended since the approval of the EA and FONSI. Section 6009(a) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Pub. L. 109-59, amended existing Section 4(f) legislation to simplify the processing and approval of projects that have only *de minimis* impacts on lands protected by Section 4(f). Section 6009 provides that de minimus effects are allowed if the activities, features, and attributes are not affected and there is concurrence by the SHPO on cultural resources and officials with jurisdiction over the property on other Section 303 resources.

IS THE LIST OF THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (NMFS AND USFWS) MORE THAN 6 MONTHS OLD?

- NO
 YES (STOP! Endangered Species lists and analysis MUST be updated.)

Updated coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service indicates that no listed threatened or endangered would be impacted by the proposed project changes under this evaluation (Stern – personal communication 2006; Smith – personal communication 2006).

Will the new information have the potential to cause a change in the determination of adverse impacts greater than described in the original environmental document in the following areas:

Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Land Use and Economics	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Acquisitions, Displacements, & Relocations	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Neighborhoods & Populations (Social)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Visual Resources & Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Noise & Vibration	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Ecosystems (Vegetation & Wildlife)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Water Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Energy & Natural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Geology & Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Historic, Cultural & Archaeological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Parklands & Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Construction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Cumulative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Will the changed conditions or new information result in revised documentation or determination under the following federal regulations?

Endangered Species Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Magnuson-Stevens Act	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Farmland Preservation Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Section 404-Clean Water Act	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Floodplain Management Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
CERCLA (Hazardous Materials)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Uniform Relocation Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Section 4(f) Lands	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Section 6(f) Lands	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Wild & Scenic Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Coastal Barriers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Coastal Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Sole Source Aquifer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
National Scenic Byways	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Will these changes or new information likely result in substantial public controversy?

Yes No

Comment:

Comments:

Grantee: Alaska Railroad Corporation

Signature: Barbara C. Hotchkin
Barbara C. Hotchkin

Date: 2/14/07

Title: Manager, Project Permits and NEPA

Submit this form, attachments, and a transmittal letter recommending a NEPA finding to:

*Federal Transit Administration, Region 10
915 2nd Avenue, Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002*

*phone: (206) 220-7954
fax: (206) 220-7959*

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
Transportation	No adverse impacts on traffic and transportation would result from the project. As originally proposed, a traffic signal and left turn pocket would have been installed at the intersection of North C Street and 1 st Avenue as well as at North C Street and Ship Creek Avenue to accommodate projected traffic to the facility and to improve safety.	Under this re-evaluation effort and the subsequent Traffic Impact Analysis (Dowl 2006), transportation facilities have been designed to have no adverse traffic and transportation impacts greater than described in the original environmental document. All intersections would be designed to provide a Level of Service (LOS) of C or better and to provide a safe crossing for both pedestrians and vehicles in accordance with the recommendations of the diagnostic team – see the Diagnostic Team Report in Appendix C.
Visual Resources & Aesthetics	<p>Views of the depot from the upper elevations of the park would have changed to include a parking garage with a park on top of it in the foreground. The rooftop park/parking garage, relocated Eisenhower Memorial, and enclosed skybridges would have provided public space affording views of the historic depot and mountains beyond.</p> <p>The visual impacts were to have been mitigated through designs that minimized obscuring views of the depot and which enhanced other views of the area. SHPO was to be involved with the project through final design to ensure that the building design was compatible with and minimizes visual impacts to the historic depot.</p>	<p>During design, the parking needs have been reexamined in more detail and the parking garage was determined to not be feasible, as discussed in the technical memo. Enhanced surface parking is proposed in largely the same location proposed in the EA (See attached drawing in Appendix B). Because the parking garage is no longer a part of the design, visual impacts as originally described in the EA would be reduced. SHPO was originally concerned that the view of the depot from the top of the bluff would be obscured. Because no parking structure would be built, the view of the depot down the bluff would be much as it is today, except that aesthetic improvements to the existing parking lot are proposed.</p> <p>Coordination with SHPO will continue through final design to ensure that the building designs minimize the visual impacts to the historic depot. Documentation of the continued consultation with SHPO is provided in Appendix D.</p>
Air Quality	<p>As part of the EA effort, ARRC performed an air quality analysis to determine the proposed project’s conformity with the State of Alaska’s Implementation Plan for Air Quality (HDR March 2003). The FONSI found that the Proposed Action would have no significant impact on air quality.</p> <p><i>Intersection CO Impacts:</i> The original air quality analysis showed there are no intersections in the project area that would degrade to LOS “D” or worse. Therefore, no quantitative CO impact analysis of intersections was required under Transportation Conformity rules (under 40 CFR 93).</p>	<p>Subsequent to the publication and approval of the EA and FONSI, in June 2004 the EPA reclassified Anchorage as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO). Despite the change, CO conformity analysis is still required.</p> <p><i>Intersection CO Impacts:</i> Similar to the original EA, intersections are being designed so that they result in no intersections with LOS below C. Consequently, no quantitative CO impact analysis of intersections is required.</p> <p><i>Parking Garage CO Impacts:</i> Recent design changes show the parking demand would be considerably smaller than originally planned and can be accommodated with surface parking. Additionally, economic conditions in the Anchorage area indicated that a parking garage is not feasible considering the availability of surface parking within a reasonable walking distance of the project. The existing depot parking area and Denali Credit Union Lease</p>

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	<p><i>Parking Garage CO Impacts:</i> The original air quality analysis considered a parking garage with 650 spaces. The estimated CO concentrations from the parking garage were less than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for CO. Therefore, no significant impact on air quality was anticipated.</p>	<p>(proposed for parking in the original EA) would be used as a surface lot, holding approximately 200 vehicles (as opposed to the original 650 vehicles in a parking garage. An additional 65 spaces would be provided to the east and west of the depot. Because the parking demand is considerably lower and the proposed lot has open-air ventilation (as opposed to the closed conditions of the parking garage) air quality impacts would be less than originally evaluated.</p> <p>The modified design would not result in any adverse air quality impacts greater than described in the original environmental document.</p>
<p>Noise & Vibration</p>	<p>The analysis for measuring noise impacts for rail facilities is based on FTA's <i>Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidance Manual</i> (April 1995). A screening analysis and additional noise and vibration assessment of noise-sensitive receptors verified that there would be no noise impacts to any of the noise-sensitive land uses based on FTA criteria. The FONSI found that the Proposed Action would have no adverse noise or vibration impacts on any of the identified receptors.</p>	<p>In May 2006, FTA updated their 1995 Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidance manual, which presents procedures for predicting and assessing noise and vibration impacts of proposed mass transit projects.</p> <p>The modified design includes a one-lane maintenance road to the switch point at the southwest end of the project area, which would need to be constructed for maintenance of the new tracks and associated switches and crossovers. The southern portion of the proposed access road is within 100 feet of the Coastal Trail, a recreational trail that runs along the current ARRC tracks. Noise affects of the maintenance road are not anticipated to be significant for the following reasons: (1) The existing trail already runs along the ARRC tracks and the maintenance road would be on the opposite side of the tracks from the trail. Quiet is not an essential element to the trail, given the noise environment where the proposed access road would be constructed. The area is also characterized by industrial noises from the small boat launch to the north, train traffic along the entire length of the proposed access road, and rail yard and port noise further to the north. (2) Vehicle volumes on the maintenance road are anticipated to be very light. The road would be used only 1 time per day by ARRC employees using small vehicles or work trucks to access the switch points, and would introduce negligible additional noise in comparison to the existing noise levels. (3) The trail along the segment where the maintenance road is proposed has been proposed to be relocated on an embankment more than 250 feet from the proposed maintenance road as part of a cooperative effort currently undergoing study by the Port of Anchorage, the U.S. Maritime Administration, and the Alaska District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to create a marsh along this segment of coastline. This reasonably foreseeable project would relocate the trail outside FTA's established noise screening distance for access roads (100 feet).</p>

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
		<p>Refined design has also altered the track alignment slightly near the depot and east of North C Street such that there are two fewer tracks near the closest noise sensitive receptors that had been identified in the original analysis, including the Comfort Inn. Horns at the grade crossings would be the dominant source of noise in this area. For certain receptors with the track realignment, the Ldn would increase approximately 1 dB and other receptors would see about a 1 dB decrease. There is approximately a 3 dB “cushion” between the project noise and the impact criterion. Likewise with vibration projections, the tracks would have to be moved further than they are to reach the impact criterion. Therefore, the updated noise analysis does not change the previous assessment of “no impact” to the previously identified sensitive receptors.</p> <p>The May 2006 FTA criteria for noise impact indicated that campgrounds and recreational facilities are now considered as a Category 3 land use, thus requiring assessment of an RV park located near the intermodal center. The analysis resulted in a determination that the RV park would experience a “Moderate Noise Impact”, which does not require mitigation. Additionally, the RV park property is leased from ARRC. Article 1.09 of the lease states "Proximity to Rail Operations. Lessee has agreed to lease this parcel with the understanding that it is adjacent to a railroad mainline track used by passenger and freight trains at various time during a 24-hour day which results in noise and ground vibrations and periodic blocking of road crossings."</p>
Ecosystems (Vegetation & Wildlife)	Wetlands: Installation of the additional tracks connecting to the freight line at the west end of the project area would require filling a small ditch-type wetland of approximate 0.16 acre in size. The EA indicated that it was uncertain if the wetland was under the jurisdiction of the Corps of Engineers, but if it was, the ARRC would obtain a wetland permit and adhere to the terms and conditions of the permit.	<p>The only change of note in the refined design is the maintenance road proposed in the southwest end of the study area.</p> <p>Wetlands: Under the refined design, 0.21 acre of ditch wetland would still be filled. In addition, the new maintenance road needed along the track and associated switches and crossovers would require filling approximately 0.43 acre (3,674 cubic yards of material) of intertidal wetlands along Knik Arm. Estuarine emergent wetlands (E2EM1P) and unvegetated wetlands (E2USN) exist on the west side of the railroad embankment where the access road would be located. The vegetated areas (not on the existing embankment or mud flat) are dominated by alkali grass, sea arrow-grass, Lyngbye’s sedge, soft-stemmed bulrush, Alaska plantain, and glasswort. Although these are relatively high-value wetlands, the impact from the access road would be minor because the loss of intertidal wetlands would be small in proportion to the amount of similar</p>

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	<p>Habitat: Development of the ITC at the proposed location would have no impact on vegetation or wildlife habitat, due to its location in a highly developed industrial area, already cleared of vegetation. Likewise, no impact is anticipated on birds or mammals in the project area</p> <p>EFH: Development of the project would have no significant impact on fish or EFH since the alternative was outside of the Ship Creek stream corridor.</p> <p>T & E Species: Coordination with the USFWS and the NMFS indicated that no protected species exist in or near the project area. Therefore, the project would have no impact on populations or habitat of species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.</p>	<p>wetland available in Knik Arm of Cook Inlet. It is anticipated that mitigation would include an in-lieu-fee based on the Anchorage credit-debit methodology. Coordination and consultation with Corps of Engineers is ongoing.</p> <p>Habitat: The area in which the access road would be located is utilized, to a small degree, by shorebirds and potentially ducks and geese. Small rodents and furbearers may pass through the area on occasion. The impact from the access road on habitat would be negligible because the loss of habitat is small in proportion to the amount of habitat available. Moreover, its value as habitat is lessened by its location directly adjacent to the existing rail line.</p> <p>EFH: The access road would be located within an intertidal area along Knik Arm. Intertidal habitat within Knik Arm is designated as EFH. Per additional consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), EFH would not be impacted; therefore, an EFH assessment is not required. However, NMFS recommended that the Corps of Engineers permit would stipulate that an in-lieu-fee based on the Anchorage credit-debit methodology be implemented as part of the wetlands impact mitigation. Documentation of the NMFS consultation is included in Appendix D.</p> <p>T & E Species: Additional coordination with USFWS indicated that there are no listed species within the area. Therefore, no impact to threatened or endangered species would occur. The Cook Inlet beluga whale is a candidate species for the threatened and endangered species list. NMFS is currently preparing a review status of this species under the Endangered Species Act, which is likely to be completed this fall. NMFS said the access road would not impact this species (See Appendix D). The modified design would not result in any adverse ecosystem impacts greater than described in the original environmental document except as described in Wetlands, above.</p>
Water Resources	<p>Flood Zone: The new terminal building, siding tracks, and platforms would be located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain. However, due to the location of the project within a developed industrial yard, the surrounding area was not a natural flood storage area and does not support natural and beneficial floodplain values. The Proposed Action would not result in significant floodplain</p>	<p>The only change of note in the refined design is the maintenance road proposed at the southwest corner of the study area. Other refined design components have similar or identical impacts as described in the EA.</p> <p>Flood Zone: The new access road (as well as most of the remaining project area) would be located within the FEMA 100-year floodplain for Knik Arm. Since Knik Arm is such a large waterbody (essentially the ocean), the volume of fill or the structures placed within the flood prone area for this project would not</p>

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	<p>encroachment and would not impact a regulatory floodway. A flood hazard permit would be required for the proposed development in the 100-year flood zone.</p> <p>Coastal Zone: Project components as analyzed in the original EA fell within the coastal zone for the Alaska Coastal Management Plan as well as the Anchorage Coastal Management Program, and would be subject to the policies of both plans.</p> <p>Water Quality: The Proposed Action would not cause any significant water quality impacts. BMPs would be employed during construction to control erosion and sedimentation.</p>	<p>cause an increase in water surface elevation during floods. The maintenance road and modified design components would not change the tidal flooding elevation or impede tidal flooding. Nonetheless, a Flood Hazard Permit would be required for project areas within the floodplain.</p> <p>Coastal Zone: As with the original project components, the access road would be subject to an Alaska Coastal Management Program Consistency Determination; a Coastal Project Questionnaire would be required. Modifications to the project are anticipated to be consistent with the ACMP.</p> <p>Water Quality: Because Knik Arm is being flushed by extreme tidal action and is a highly sediment laden waterbody, it is not expected that the access road construction would adversely affect water quality. As with the other project components, BMPs would be used to avoid any potential adverse affects to water quality from the maintenance road.</p> <p>The modified design would not result in significant water resources impacts.</p>
Geology & Soils	<p>Grading and construction would result in minor impacts to the geological/soils environment. With proper design, there would be no significant impacts to existing or planned improvements due to geologic, soils, or seismic conditions.</p>	<p>The modified design has similar affects as found in the EA on geology and soils. One notable exception is that previously, the parking garage would have been terraced into the bluff above the existing depot. That bluff is along a buttress constructed after the 1964 earthquake and is seismically sensitive. Because the parking garage has been eliminated from the project, the potential impacts associated with that seismically sensitive area are eliminated. The modified design would result in less adverse geologic or soils impacts than described in the original environmental document.</p>
Public Services	<p>Coordination with the MOA (People Mover) resulted in locating a public transit pick-up and drop-off area at E Street and 2nd Avenue.</p>	<p>Under the proposed changes, primary access to the depot would be from 1st Avenue rather than Ship Creek Avenue. The MOA public transit pick-up/drop-off area would be located in front of the depot on 1st Avenue rather than at E Street and 2nd Avenue, as previously described in the EA. As in the original EA, there would be a public area there containing a plaza/seating area and the Eisenhower Memorial. Additional modifications to E Street are being completed by the MOA as part of the E Street corridor project. All transit riders to the depot would be dropped off on 1st Avenue, thus requiring a shorter walk. The modified design would not result in any adverse public service impacts greater than described in the original EA.</p>
Utilities	<p>The proposed action would require several utility relocations and temporary utility service disruption</p>	<p>In addition to the utilities impacted as described in the original EA, the access road would impact at least one culvert and sewer lines. Mitigation efforts to</p>

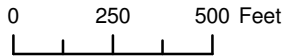
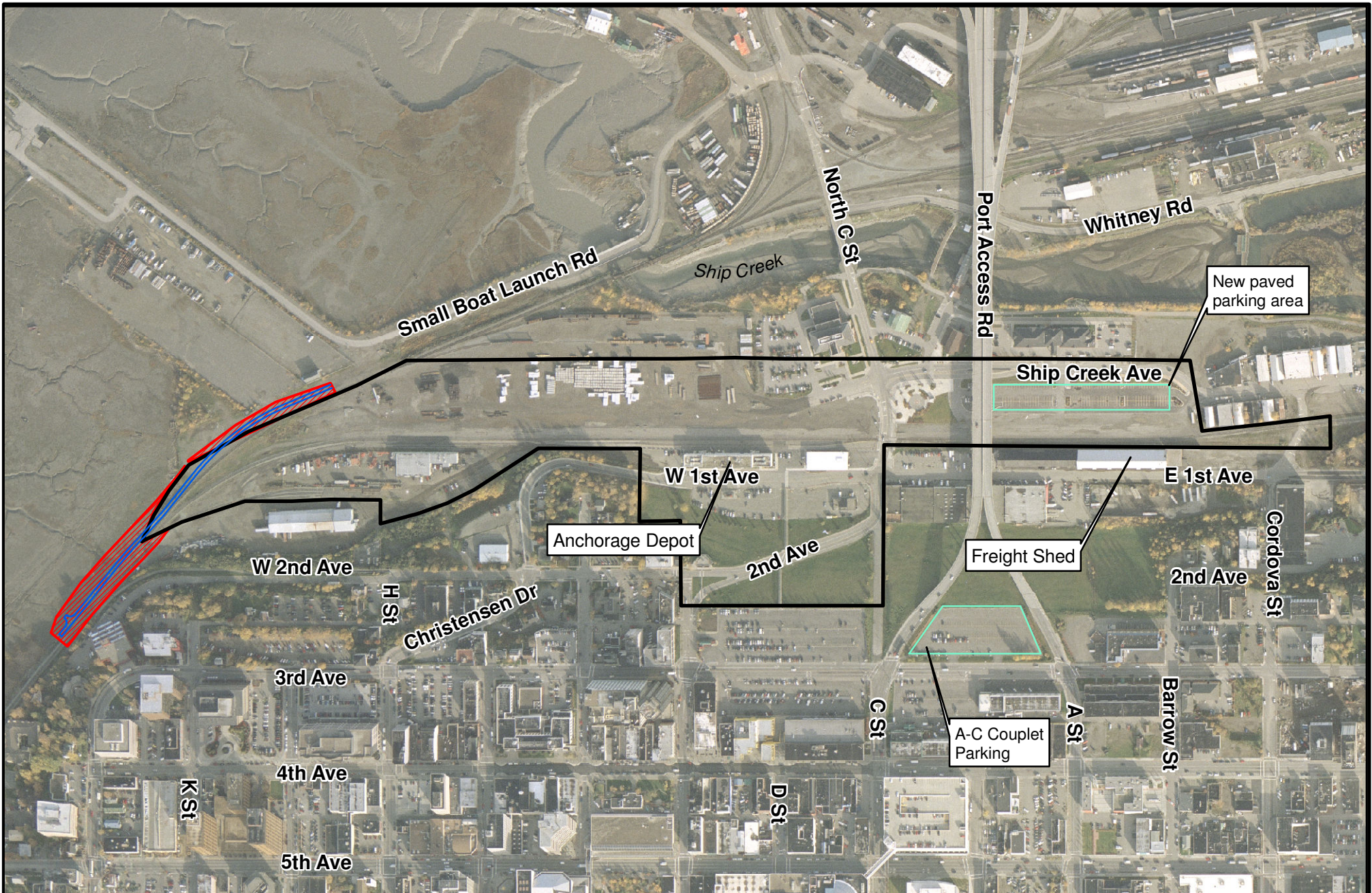
Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	during construction. Efforts to minimize utility disruptions would be implemented.	minimize utility disruptions would be implemented. The modified design would not result in any adverse utility impacts substantially different than those described in the original environmental document. In fact, the number of utility lines impacted would be less than as described in the EA, as a result of the proposed track design changes. Under design changes, approximately only one-third of the originally-impacted sewer lines would have to be relocated. ARRC would continue coordination with affected utility owners throughout the design process and as construction progresses.
Historic, Cultural & Archaeological Resources	Consultation with SHPO for the original EA indicated that the proposed action would have no adverse effect on the depot, assuming compatible design (attention to scale, massing, and form) and integration of the existing depot to preserve its functionality. To insure that no significant impacts occur to the depot, ARRC agreed to continue consultation with the SHPO throughout the planning and final design stages. SHPO would be contacted to provide design review at appropriate intervals to ensure that any potential effects are mitigated. In addition, should previously undiscovered cultural material be found during construction, potentially harmful activity would be stopped and the SHPO notified immediately.	Coordination with SHPO has been ongoing and would continue. In a letter dated March 24, 2005, (Appendix D) SHPO confirmed that the track construction, removal of underground fuel storage tanks, and relocation and new construction of underground utilities would not affect historic properties. Because the previous design relocated most passenger services to a new building on the north side of the existing depot/tracks SHPO was concerned that the existing lobby might not be used and that the depot may end up ceasing to be used as a train depot. The modified design better integrates and uses the existing depot and retains the use of the existing depot and lobby as a waiting/ticketing area for passengers. The modified design would not result in any adverse historic, cultural and archaeological resource impacts greater than described in the original environmental document. ARRC has continued to work with SHPO throughout the design effort, most recently in February 2006 (minutes are attached in Appendix D). The section 106 consultation process will be completed during final design as architectural materials are finalized.
Parklands & Recreation	Construction of the parking garage would have required use of a portion of Quyana Park, a Section 4(f) resource, which would change the use and function of the terrain in that portion of the park. The project would have used approximately 1.62 acres of the 10.92-acre park on the park's lower elevations. The following are some of the mitigation measures identified in the FONSI to minimize harm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimize the viewshed impacts from 3rd Avenue by terracing the parking structure and keeping the structure as low as possible. 	As final design has progressed, the parking garage was determined not to be feasible as described in the technical memo. Parking demands were reevaluated because a significant amount of additional parking was constructed since the original EA was published. Surface parking currently available in the project area was determined to be adequate to meet the project needs. In lieu of the parking garage, the project now includes enhancing and upgrading the existing parking lot south of the depot. Based on the proposed parking lot layout, less than 0.25 acre of the Quyana Park area would be impacted (1.37 acres less than described in the 2003 EA and Section 4(f) evaluation). The drawing in Appendix B depicts the modified parking lot footprint that would be constructed within Quyana Park. By eliminating the parking garage, viewshed impacts from 3 rd Avenue have been substantially eliminated. Views down the hillside

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace an amount of park/open space equal to or greater than the amount used for the parking garage. ▪ Create a bus drop-off area on the roof of the parking structure to eliminate the need for city buses to descend into the Ship Creek Valley. 	<p>would be much as they are today (views of a hillside with parking in front of the historic depot). The view of the sky bridge remains similar to that described in the EA.</p> <p>Appropriate mitigation/enhancement measures would be incorporated into the project. They include: (1) addition of landscaping to improve the appearance of the parking area, and (2) rehabilitation of the Eisenhower Memorial and expansion of the plaza area of the memorial. In accordance with recent federal Guidance for Determining De Minimis Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources (USDOT 2005), the impacts on Qu yana Park appear to constitute a <i>de minimis</i> impact. See letter to MOA in Appendix D.</p>
Construction	<p>The project would include increased noise and dust and temporary local effects on air quality. Other minor adverse construction impacts would include short-term delays for users of the depot, intermittent delays in traffic to move large machinery around the site, and temporary closure of a portion of Qu yana Park. Additional construction impacts, such as traffic delays, would be mitigated through development of traffic control plans and timing construction to minimize disruption.</p>	<p>Under design modifications to the Proposed Action, construction impacts would not result in adverse impacts substantially different than described in the original environmental document. The access road would result in temporary impacts during in-water construction activities. These impacts could include increased turbidity in Knik Arm from the placement of fill due to construction activities associated with the placement of approximately 2,700 cubic yards of fill. As described in the EA and FONSI, appropriate measures, such as use of BMPs, would be undertaken to control soil erosion and sedimentation. Temporary impacts to Qu yana Park would no longer occur.</p>
Cumulative	<p>Several other developments in the Ship Creek area have been proposed that could potentially contribute to cumulative effects on resources. No significant cumulative impacts were identified.</p>	<p>The potential cumulative effects of project alternatives were described in the 2003 EA. Since then, other plans and projects within the general area have begun or been furthered in environmental analysis or design. These projects include the Port of Anchorage Marsh Project; the Knik Arm Ferry; the Knik Arm Crossing bridge project; and a railroad capacity improvements project.</p> <p>Coordination with the Port of Anchorage and Corps of Engineers regarding the Marsh Project, located south of the small boat launch, has occurred and would continue. That project largely results in net improvements for trail users and marsh habitat, and therefore, there are no significant cumulative impacts. The ARRC is continuing coordination with the Mat-Su Borough and the MOA to ensure there is adequate transportation infrastructure (i.e. road upgrades and pedestrian walkways) in the design of the Knik Arm ferry landing in the Ship Creek area. The Mat-Su Borough conducted a supplemental EA in 2006 to incorporate these design considerations. An EIS is currently underway for the Knik Arm Crossing bridge project, which has been in the planning stages for</p>

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
		<p>several decades. Several piers have been proposed in the Ship Creek Valley for a future roadway viaduct connection at Ingra-Gambell. The proposed pier locations are east of the intermodal center study area. There would be little cumulative impact associated caused by the piers relative to the impacts described in the ITC EA.</p> <p>The ARRC is concurrently working on another project to make capacity improvements along the four-mile track corridor between the railroad depot and southward to Tudor Road. Under the capacity improvements project, the ARRC is considering placing a parallel track along the existing single track. If the capacity improvements project moves forward, the second track would be placed on the embankment fill constructed for the access road and additional embankment fill would need to be placed further seaward to accommodate the displaced access road.</p> <p>Close coordination should continue between the ARRC and other project teams to ensure adequate design and transportation infrastructure to safely accommodate the increased activity.</p>
<p>References</p> <p>Alaska Railroad Corporation. 1999. Ship Creek Development Master Plan, Public Review Draft. Produced under the direction of ARRC President, Bill Sheffield. Prepared by Land Design North.</p> <p>Dowl Engineers. February 2006. Traffic Impact Analysis Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center. Prepared for ECI/Hyer Inc.</p> <p>ECI/HYER, Inc., Land Design North, and Stantec. July 28, 2005. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Schematic Design Report. Volume 2. Prepared for ARRC.</p> <p>Federal Transit Administration (FTA). June 10, 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Finding of No Significant Impact.</p> <p>HDR Alaska, Inc. March 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center: Air Quality Analysis Report. Prepared for ARRC.</p> <p>____. April 2003. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Environmental Assessment. Prepared for FTA and ARRC.</p> <p>HMMH, Inc. 2006. Personal communication between HMMH Noise and Vibration specialist Carl Hanson and HDR planner Leslie Robbins regarding revised noise and vibration impacts.</p> <p>January 2003. Anchorage Rail Capacity Improvements Project Noise and Vibration Study. Prepared for HDR Alaska, Inc. and the ARRC.</p> <p>National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). September 1, 2006. Personal communication between NMFS biologist Brad Smith and HDR planner Leslie Robbins regarding the listing status of the Cook Inlet beluga whale.</p>		

Impact Category	Impacts as Initially Disclosed	Project Changes
	<p>August 8, 2006. Personal communication between NMFS biologist Brad Smith and HDR planner Leslie Robbins regarding the listing status of the Cook Inlet beluga whale.</p> <p>_____. April 4, 2006. Personal communication between NMFS biologist Brad Smith and HDR planner Leslie Robbins regarding threatened and endangered species.</p> <p>Port of Anchorage (POA). January 31, 2006. Port of Anchorage Marsh Project. Final 35% Design Report. Prepared for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Port of Anchorage. Prepared by Tetra Tech, Inc.</p> <p>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Municipality of Anchorage. December 1, 2000. <i>The Anchorage debit-credit method: A method for determining development debits and compensatory mitigation credits for aquatic areas in Anchorage, Alaska.</i></p> <p>U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). December 13, 2005. Memorandum from USDOT to Federal Highway Administration regarding Guidance for Determining <i>De Minimis</i> Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources.</p> <p>U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). July 27, 2006. Personal communication between USFWS endangered species biologist Charla Stern and HDR planner Leslie Robbins regarding threatened and endangered species under USFWS jurisdiction within the project area.</p> <p>_____. As accessed 3-28-06. USFWS Threatened and Endangered Species System (TESS) website. http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/StateListing.do?status=listed&state=AK</p>	

Appendix B
Reevaluation Figures



Date: 01/24/07 | Data Source: HDR, MOA, ARRC; Aerial Photography: 10-4-05.
 File: Z:\09585 ARRC\38647 Ship Creek EA Reevaluation\GIS\working\Fig1.Updated.Project.Area.mxd

Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Environmental Assessment Re-Evaluation

- Legend**
- Original Project Area
 - Additional Project Area
 - Proposed Access Rd under Re-eval



Figure 1
Updated Project Area



Appendix C
Diagnostic Team Report

Final Diagnostic Team Report
September 6, 2006
Ship Creek Intermodal Project
North C Street Crossing

This diagnostic team was composed of:

Tom Brooks, Alaska Railroad Corporation Engineering (ARRC)
Bill Coghill, DOWL Engineers
Russ Frazier, ARRC Signals
Bob Kniefel, Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)
Ron Martindale, Alaska Department of Transportation (AKDOT)
Judi Shapiro, ARRC Engineering

Other participants included:

Blake J. Adolfae, ARRC
Deborah Allen, ARRC Project Management
Marc Araneta, Denver Signal Design
Mike Bonde, Denver Signal Design
Tom Jubin, Denver Signal Design
Brian Meissner, ECI Hyer
Mark Peterburs, ARRC
Mike Pochop, TNH-Hansen
Ron Rypinski, URS
Michael Thompson, ECI Hyer

Results Summary: Based on the results of the diagnostic team analysis, the width of the crossing at North C Street, that is the distance along North C Street occupied by the track crossing, will be limited to approximately 116 feet (a reduction of approximately 30% from the originally planned, 5-track, 156-foot wide crossing). Crossing gates will be installed, and a centerline barrier will be installed on North C Street between 1st and Ship Creek Avenues to prevent vehicles from going around the crossing gates. Signage, gates, and barriers will be placed on both the east and west sides of the street to warn pedestrians of the multiple tracks, and to remind them to pay attention and be alert.

Need and Purpose:

The Ship Creek Intermodal project increases the number of tracks that cross North C Street as well as the width of the crossing. Concerns with traffic and pedestrian safety at this crossing prompted formation of a diagnostic team. The primary purpose of the diagnostic team was to review potential options and make a recommendation relative to the North C Street crossing based on the technical analysis and public input.

Summary of Discussion (1st Diagnostic Team Meeting):

The first diagnostic team meeting was held on February 3, 2006. A summary of the discussion and the conclusions and recommendations of the team are presented in the following paragraphs.

Description of Original Proposed Crossing: The proposed railroad crossing at north C Street consists of 5 tracks and will be approximately 156 feet wide between the crossing gates (see attached figure: Original Plan).

Parameters/Concerns Key to the Evaluation of the Crossing:

- Public safety is paramount to the Diagnostic Team's recommendations.
- During the tourist season, motorists unfamiliar with the local traffic patterns could result in an increase in traffic accidents and liability to the City and the railroad.
- Local residents who are familiar with the local traffic patterns may be more tempted to drive around crossing gates because they will become familiar with the potential delay that may be encountered if they have to wait for a train.
- Options to be considered by the diagnostic team include grade separation, closing the North C Street crossing, street improvements, and other feasible options.

Traffic Analysis:

- General:
 - Trains will block the North C Street crossing for approximately 2 hours during the morning (including the peak hour) and 2 hours during the evening (non-peak hour) if North C Street remains open.
 - The distance between 1st Avenue and Ship Creek Avenue totals approximately 300 feet. The cross section of the 5 tracks encompasses approximately 156 feet, leaving little room for traffic queuing.
 - The current average daily traffic (ADT) on North C Street is 2000 vehicles.
 - If North C Street is closed, the ADT on 1st Avenue will be 3000 to 4000 vehicles.
 - The intersection of 1st Avenue and North C Street will reach traffic level of service F in the construction year unless 4 way stops or traffic signals are installed. Note that construction year refers to the year that the entire Ship Creek Intermodal facility is constructed, not just the track improvements.
 - Four way stop control at the intersection of 1st Avenue and North C Street poses potential traffic safety issues including having cars stopped on the tracks and difficulty stopping at the bottom of the grade at 1st Avenue and North C Street during the winter.
 - Traffic signals pose potential traffic safety issues including car backup on the tracks (although traffic signals may allow queuing to be cleared quicker than stop signs) and confusion to motorists for some turn movements.
- Grade Separation:
 - North C Street grade separation is not feasible due to ramp distance requirements. There is not adequate room to construct the grade-separated crossing due to the locations of Ship Creek, area roads, and the train yard.
- Closing North C Street Crossing:
 - It would not be desired to encourage a significant amount of traffic to use the A-C Couplet to access the area north of the tracks due to the difficulty of making the left turn from the overpass ramp.
 - A new pedestrian crossing will be required across the tracks to serve pedestrians on a temporary basis until the grade-separated pedestrian crossing is constructed as part of the intermodal project.
 - Alternate route(s) for vehicles will be needed if the North C Street crossing is closed.
- North C Street Remains Open:
 - The railroad crossing warning time would have to accommodate an additional 11 seconds of delay time to allow traffic to clear the distance of all 5 tracks at the crossing.
 - There are significant concerns that vehicles or pedestrians would become impatient with the long waiting times and would drive/walk around the crossing gates.
 - When crossing from south to north, there is concern that vehicles and pedestrians would be unable to see a train on the main track when trains are staged in the passenger yard and may be tempted to go around the crossing gates.

Conclusions/Action Items Resulting from the 1st Team Meeting:

- The diagnostic team concurred that it would be better to close North C Street and provide alternative routing for local traffic.
- DOWL Engineers will prepare a Draft Design Study report to identify and evaluate traffic routing alternatives.
- The diagnostic team will meet again to evaluate the alternatives once the design study report is complete.
- Once the alternatives are developed, they should be presented to ARRC management, ARRC leaseholders, and the general public for input.

Summary of Discussion (2nd Team Meeting):

The second diagnostic team meeting was held on March 17, 2006. The diagnostic team reviewed and discussed the alternatives proposed in the design study report (DSR) prepared by DOWL Engineers. A summary of the discussion and the conclusions and recommendations of the team are presented in the following paragraphs. The attached figure: Alts Presented to Public, which includes a graphic representation of the alternatives.

Alternatives Considered: Four traffic flow alternatives and three pedestrian alternatives were reviewed and discussed. An additional traffic flow alternative was proposed and one alternative was dropped in favor of a modification to one of the pedestrian crossing alternatives. Alternatives considered and discussed are described below.

- The traffic flow alternatives that were discussed included the following:
 - Option 1 – 1st Avenue / Cordova: This option routes traffic from the intersection of 1st Avenue and C Street eastward along 1st Avenue to Cordova Street and then northward to Ship Creek Avenue.
 - The advantages of this option include:
 - Reduces the number of track crossings from 5 to 1
 - Eliminates need for traffic control devices at C/1st and C/Ship Creek intersections
 - Eliminates grade concerns with southbound approach at C/1st intersection
 - Addresses 1st/Cordova intersection safety issue
 - Better alignment of Cordova Street
 - Reduces congestion near Intermodal Facility
 - Option to extend train platform length
 - The disadvantages of this option include:
 - Cost to upgrade 1st, Cordova, and Ship Creek to Industrial Collector Standards
 - Temporary pedestrian track crossing until Intermodal Facility overpass is constructed or use Cordova Street
 - Longer travel times for traffic
 - Potential impacts to parking along 1st Avenue
 - Eagle Street may have to be closed at times if ice creates dangerous stopping/safety conditions at the intersection with 1st Avenue and Cordova Street.
 - Option 2 – 1st Avenue to New Alignment Adjacent to the A Street Bridge: This option routes traffic from the intersection of 1st Avenue and C Street eastward along 1st Avenue to a new northward alignment adjacent to the west side of the A Street Bridge.

- The advantages of this option include:
 - May be low cost
 - Minimal property/ROW impacts
 - Option to extend train platform lengths
 - The disadvantages of this option include:
 - Crossing of 6 tracks including track to freight shed
 - Major sight distance issues at Ship Creek due to bridge abutments
 - Grade concerns with southbound approach at intersection of 1st and new alignment
 - Traffic signals needed at Ship Creek Avenue end of new alignment
 - It was recommended that this option be dropped due to having concerns similar to C Street. It was also recommended that this be considered as a pedestrian crossing due to the proximity to C Street and local businesses.
 - Option 3 – 1st Avenue to New Alignment east of the A Street Bridge: This option routes traffic from the intersection of C Street and 1st Avenue along 1st Avenue to a new northward alignment that cuts through the middle of the Freight Shed, across a shorter distance of 5 tracks and the parking lot, to Ship Creek Avenue.
 - The advantages of this option include:
 - Reduces distance involved with crossing 5 tracks
 - Eliminates need for traffic control devices at C/1st and C/Ship Creek intersections
 - Eliminates grade concerns with southbound approach at C/1st intersection
 - Option to extend train platforms
 - Would line up with option 4
 - The disadvantages of this option include:
 - Requires removal of the Freight Shed, side platform, and track (possibly Historical building)
 - Cost to upgrade 1st, Cordova, and Ship Creek to industrial Collector Standards
 - Longer travel times for traffic
 - Temporary pedestrian crossing of tracks until Intermodal Facility overpass is constructed
 - Potential impacts to parking along 1st Avenue
 - New northward alignment may cross tracks at turnouts
 - Road/track grade concerns at 1st Avenue
 - Option 4 – Extend 2nd Avenue Eastward to New Northward Alignment: This option routes traffic along 2nd Avenue extended along the bottom of the AKDOT slope, under the A Street Bridge behind the soft drink distributor, to either a new northward alignment that cuts through the middle of the Freight Shed, across a shorter distance of 5 tracks and the parking lot, to Ship Creek Avenue or to an intersection with 1st Avenue, eastward to Cordova Street, and northward to Ship Creek Avenue. This option could also be extended to Cordova Street as a variation.
 - The advantages of this option include:
 - Reduces the distance involved with the crossing of 5 tracks or reduces crossing to 2 tracks at Cordova Street
 - Eliminates need for traffic control devices at C/1st and C/Ship Creek intersections
 - Eliminates grade concerns with southbound approach at C/1st intersection
 - Option to extend train platforms
 - Reduces congestion near Intermodal Facility
 - The disadvantages of this option include:

- Needs to be incorporated with option 1, 3, or New option 2
 - Cost of AKDOT right-of-way and construction of an entirely new road
 - Requires removal of the Freight Shed, side platform, and track (possibly Historical building) if option 3
 - Cost to upgrade 1st, Cordova, and Ship Creek to industrial Collector Standards
 - Longer travel times for traffic
 - Temporary pedestrian crossing of tracks until Intermodal Facility overpass is constructed
 - Potential impacts to parking along 1st Avenue
 - New northward alignment may cross tracks at turnouts if option 3
 - Road/track grade concerns at 1st Avenue if option 3
- Option 2a – Barrow Street to 1st Avenue to New Crossing or to Cordova Street: This option was recommended for inclusion into the DSR in place of the original option 2. It routes traffic from 3rd Avenue northward on Barrow Street, to 1st Avenue, and then to either Cordova or a new northward alignment past the east end of the Freight Shed, across 2 tracks, to an intersection at the “S” curve of Ship Creek Avenue. Variations to this option also include combining it with option 1 from 1st Avenue and option 4 from the extended 2nd Avenue.
 - The advantages of this option include:
 - Reduces the crossing of railroad tracks from 5 to 2
 - Would provide a closer crossing than Cordova and could replace Cordova Street crossing
 - Eliminates stopping/safety concerns at 1st/Eagle Street intersection
 - Eliminates need for traffic control devices at C/1st and C/Ship Creek intersections
 - Eliminates grade concerns with southbound approach at C/1st intersection
 - Option to extend train platforms
 - Reduces congestion near Intermodal Facility
 - The disadvantages of this option include:
 - Relocation of side loading ramp at Freight Shed
 - Cost to upgrade 1st Avenue and Ship Creek to industrial Collector Standards
 - Temporary pedestrian crossing of tracks until Intermodal Facility overpass is constructed
 - Potential impacts to parking along 1st Avenue
 - Cost of AKDOT right-of-way if combined with option 4
- In addition to the current routes used by pedestrians, crossing alternatives that were discussed included the following:
 - From 1st Avenue past the east end of the existing depot, across the 5 tracks, to Ship Creek Avenue. This option is meant to be the future Intermodal Facility walkway and will be revised accordingly.
 - From C Street near 1st Avenue, parallel to the tracks, northward adjacent to the west side of the A Street Bridge, to Ship Creek Avenue by way of the plaza. A variation of this route was recommended as the preferred pedestrian alignment. The route would be from 1st Avenue adjacent to the west side of the A Street Bridge directly to Ship Creek Avenue.
 - From C Street/1st Avenue along 1st Avenue to the Cordova Street crossing. This would significantly lengthen the distance for pedestrians to cross the tracks.

Other Items Discussed:

- Grade separation from Barrow Street over 1st Avenue and the tracks to Ship Creek avenue. The major concern cited was the ability to get down to connection with Ship Creek.
- It was noted that trucks will continue to block portions of 1st Avenue until the soda distributor implements their plan to relocate.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- The diagnostic team generally agreed that the preferred option would include closing the C Street crossing and routing the majority of traffic through the Cordova crossing. This option includes upgrading 1st Avenue, Cordova Street, and Ship Creek Avenue to collector standards.
- It was recommended that all options be presented to the public through various meetings and presentations.

Public Involvement Summary:

After the second diagnostic team meeting, the proposed options were presented to the public through a variety of means, including the following.

- Anchorage Municipal Area Transportation Study Technical Committee meeting
- Government Hill Community Council
- Downtown Community Council
- Tenants and Neighbors Meeting
- General Public Meeting

Although there were several people in favor of the closure of the crossing, the majority of the public was against the closure. During the public comment period, ARRC received a number of written comments. A summary of typical questions received during the public meetings along with ARRC responses, as well as a summary of the written comments received (with responses) is presented at the end of this report.

Because of the public's concern over the closure of the crossing, ARRC management decided not to close the crossing, and directed the design team to develop alternative track layout(s) that would reduce the number and width of the tracks crossing C Street.

Preferred Alternative

The design team developed several alternatives that would allow operational flexibility yet also reduce the width of the crossing at North C Street. After several iterations, an alternative that eliminated one track and one platform and reduced the spacing on the other tracks was developed. This alternative reduced the width of the crossing to approximately 116 feet, a nearly 30% reduction from the original 156 foot wide crossing. An additional benefit of this option is that all bus traffic will be located primarily to the south of the tracks, thus improving safety and eliminating the need for additional crossing signals for the bus lane at the North C Street Crossing. See attached figure: Final Preferred Alternative, which depicts the current proposed alternative.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- Construct the preferred alternative as listed above.
- When the complete intermodal facility is funded constructed and traffic volumes increase as estimated in the Traffic Impact Analysis Report, reevaluate traffic conditions and needs to determine the appropriate traffic control devices for the North C Street intersections with Ship

- Creek and First Avenues (all way stop control or traffic signals).
- Install centerline barriers to prevent motorists from driving around the crossing gates.
 - Install appropriate signage warning motorists and pedestrians of the multiple tracks and reminding them to be alert and watch for trains.

Public Involvement Summary

Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
North "C" Street Design/Construction Options Issue
Anchorage Rail Reserve Tenant Briefing
Noon – 2:00 p.m. Monday, April 24, 2006, Anchorage Historic Depot
Meeting Summary

Railroad Personnel: Deb Allen, Project Manager; Karen Morrissey, Real Estate Director; Tom Brooks, Chief Engineer; Mark Peterburs, Director of Projects; Barbara Hotchkin, NEPA / Environmental Specialist; Stephenie Wheeler, Public Involvement Officer; Tim Thompson, Public Affairs Officer; Andrew Donovan, Leasing Manager; Jim Kubitz, Vice President, Real Estate; Governor Bill Sheffield, Chairman of ARRC Board of Directors.

Railroad Consultants: Brian Meissner, ECI/Hyer (architect), Bill Coghill, DOWL Engineers (traffic/crossing design)

Tenants: (NOTE: 130 invitations were sent to lessees and permittees of record as of 4/10/2006). 18 people representing 14 tenants signed in. Sign-in sheet is attached.

Attendees were invited to have a box lunch, view project boards, and ask questions prior to the presentation.

Handouts:

1. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Fact Sheet
2. SCITC North C Street Issue Public Involvement Process
3. Power Point slide on Roadway Options
4. Power Point slide on Pedestrian Options

Presentation

At 12:45 p.m. Deb Allen welcomed the tenants and explained the purpose of the meeting was to glean input from tenant representatives regarding concerns they have with proposed North C Street crossing options. Ms. Allen introduced Brian Meissner to start the Power Point presentation.

Mr. Meissner explained the purpose of the Ship Creek Intermodal Project, and delivered a brief project status report. He then explained how the issue of possible North C Street closure came to the forefront through project final design and engineering process.

Mr. Meissner introduced Mr. Bill Coghill (DOWL), who outlined key concepts of the crossing traffic study, diagnostic team analysis, and design options.

Questions & Answers

- Q. *Why do you have to close the street now, when there isn't that much traffic on it? Why can't you wait until we have the commuter rail traffic and additional passenger trains?*
- A. Consideration of crossing closure isn't driven by the level of train activity, but rather by safety. The configuration of adjacent roadways / intersections, the width of the 5-track crossing, and signalization requirements make this a very complicated situation.

- Q. *Why do you have to construct all of the tracks now? Just build what you need for right now, not all five tracks.*
- A. There is currently one track in place alongside the depot. The furthest one out on the plan would be the main line that would allow through traffic to go by the depot without stopping. The other tracks would be used for loading and unloading and managing train traffic. The current plan is to build tracks 1 and 2 (closest to the depot) and the Main track 5 (closest to Ship Creek Avenue). Even if tracks 3 and 4 are not built until the future, the distance to get over the tracks on the crossing will still be too wide for us to provide a safe crossing.
- Q. *Why do you have to build the five-track structure by the depot? Can't you move it somewhere else in the yard, like further toward the inlet, or further inland?*
- A. There is virtually no room in our already congested Anchorage yard to build the passenger tracks. In addition, it makes sense to build tracks for loading and unloading passengers beside the passenger depot. Passenger trains continue to lengthen. Even if we moved the depot further toward the inlet, the trains would still stretch from the southern corner to approximately C Street.
- Q. *Why can't you move the train servicing function to a different location? Trains are serviced by a contractor anyway, and that can happen anywhere. It doesn't have to happen by the depot. That way you could have fewer tracks.*
- A. Train service can be done on any track, but as previously noted; track space within the existing yard is at a premium. Additionally, the inefficiency of moving trains back and forth between the depot and the yard is expensive and time consuming. With the new configuration, trains will be able to have light service and mandatory Federal Railroad Administration inspections and checks near the depot, freeing up storage space in the yard.
- Q. *My business relies on straightforward access from downtown. If you close C Street and people have to go around, they will stop coming.*
- A. The last thing the railroad wants to do is to hurt the businesses that have invested early in the Ship Creek redevelopment. We are committed to working with businesses to continue to encourage a healthy business climate. Directional signage may be something the railroad can do to ensure would-be patrons can find your businesses. Any ideas are welcome. Additionally, with the new traffic pattern, traffic would pass immediately in front of the businesses on Ship Creek Avenue as well as the new parking lot.
- Q. *What are you going to do ensure the safety of the intersections? Coming down C Street is already steep and it can be hard to stop in the winter. The same is true of Cordova.*
- A. Option 1 includes road improvements to 1st Avenue, Cordova and part of Ship Creek. These will address intersection safety with all-way stop configuration and revised traffic right-of-way on Cordova in particular.
- Q. *Did you consider building a pedestrian overpass to address pedestrian safety?*
- A. Yes. However, there is concern over whether people would actually take time to climb stairs to go over an overpass. The plan is to funnel pedestrian traffic over a designated and signaled at-grade crossing area as an interim measure. Eventually, the Intermodal

center's pedestrian overpass will provide safe passage over the tracks and the at-grade crossing will be closed.

- Q. *Will any of the road options hook into the A-C Street Overpass?*
- A. No. All of the road options are under the A-C couplet.

Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
North "C" Street Design/Construction Options Issue
Public Open House

4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, 2006, Anchorage Historic Depot
Summary

Railroad Personnel: Deb Allen, Project Manager; Karen Morrissey, Real Estate Director; Tom Brooks, Chief Engineer; Mark Peterburs, Director of Projects; Barbara Hotchkin, NEPA / Environmental Specialist; Stephenie Wheeler, Public Involvement Officer; Tim Thompson, Public Affairs Officer, Andrew Donovan, Leasing Manager; Pat Gamble, President and CEO; Jim Kubitz, Vice President, Real Estate.

Railroad Consultants: Brian Meissner, ECI/Hyer (architect), Bill Coghill, DOWL Engineers (traffic/crossing design)

Participants: (NOTE: 2,008 invitations were sent to community and government leaders, residents of Government Hill, past open house attendees, and others who have expressed interest in the ITC project, as of 4/10/2006).
66 people signed in. Sign-in sheet is attached.

Handouts:

5. Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Fact Sheet
6. SCITC North C Street Issue Public Involvement Process
7. Power Point slide on Roadway Options
8. Power Point slide on Pedestrian Options

Presentations

At 5:20 p.m. Deb Allen welcomed the public and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to glean input from the public regarding concerns they have with proposed North C Street crossing options. Ms. Allen introduced Brian Meissner to start the Power Point presentation.

Mr. Meissner explained the purpose of the Ship Creek Intermodal Project, and delivered a brief project status report and update on current design activities. He then explained how the issue of possible North C Street closure came to the forefront through project final design and engineering process, and resulted in formation of a Diagnostic Team to study and analyze the crossing safety. The Diagnostic Team consisted of representatives of the Municipality of Anchorage, the Alaska Department of Transportation, the Alaska Railroad, and the design team.

Mr. Meissner introduced Mr. Bill Coghill (DOWL), who outlined key concepts of the crossing traffic issues. Mr. Coghill summarized the results of the various design team meetings, as well as the options that were developed for traffic and pedestrians, and the recommendations of the Diagnostic Team.

Mr. Meissner introduced ARRC President and CEO Pat Gamble, who thanked the attendees for their important contribution to the design process. He assured the audience that the Railroad was conducting a thorough public involvement process and that public comments will be taken into consideration. Mr. Gamble noted that the ARRC is an important part of Ship Creek operations, and that the railroad's needs must be considered as a part of the whole.

Questions & Answers

- Q. *Why can't you move the depot toward the inlet, thereby avoiding the C Street crossing altogether?*
- A. The growing length of passenger trains dictate how far the depot can be from the corner near the inlet. Already they stretch from the corner to nearly the depot, so nothing would be gained by moving the depot back toward the ocean.
- Q. *How long can we expect C Street to be closed during track construction?*
- A. The contractor who is awarded the construction job will develop a construction plan that considers road closure and traffic interruption. It is not possible to say with certainty how long the road will be closed during construction, but we can estimate a single closure of 30 days or several shorter term closures of perhaps 3-5 days each.
- Q. *What if there is an earthquake or some other disaster closes the A-C couplet. How will people from Government Hill and Elmendorf get through if the road is closed?*
- A. If the road is closed, the tracks would still remain level with the roadway. In an emergency, we could remove "breakaway" gates to allow traffic through.
- Q. *Engine #1 sits on a pedestal in front of the depot. Some time ago there was an effort to restore this steam engine, but the restoration was never finished. Is Engine #1 going to be fully restored and where will it go within the scheme of the new ITC and depot?*
- A. We will look at how the historic steam engine can fit into the Intermodal plans. Mark Peterburs is investigating this further.
- Q. *Why can't we keep C Street open for local residents and restrict tourist access. They've already closed off East Bluff Road, so we're already restricted to travel on the A-C couplet. If you take away the North C Street route, it will be very inconvenient for resident travel.*
- A. It would be very difficult to restrict road usage to just residents. Tourists would undoubtedly end up using the road as well, just by following resident traffic. Additionally, residents, being familiar with the area, are often less cautious at railroad crossings. This could increase the chances of a serious or fatal incident.
- Q. *The Railroad should close North C Street crossing during the summer, but keep it open during the winter.*
- A. The whole point of closing the road is because of safety. Safety will be an issue at the crossing regardless of season or number of trains due to the width of the crossing and the signalization as discussed previously.
- Q. *If any of the roadway options (1-4) are chosen, who would pay for the roadwork?*
- A. The Railroad. The budget includes road upgrades for any of the options to close North C Street and re-route traffic. On the other hand, if the road were kept open, the cost to signalize the crossing would leave no money for roadway upgrades based on the current level of funding.

- Q. *What is the big deal with the old freight building on 1st Avenue?*
- A. It is eligible to be on the National Register of Historic Places. This makes it more difficult to move or demolish.
- Q. *Have you considered the activity on 1st Avenue (Odom) and the width of the road with improvements?*
- A. Yes. We are looking to upgrade the roadways to industrial collector standards as shown on the slide in the Power Point presentation. In the case of 1st Avenue, we would need to leave enough room to accommodate the truck / van loading/unloading activity at Odom's building. Therefore, it is likely that sidewalk would only be provided on one side of the road.
- Q. *If North C Street is not closed, what can we anticipate in terms of temporary crossing closures for train traffic?*
- A. Because of the signalization requirements, the need to clear the wider crossing, and the low visibility factor, we anticipate that the crossing would be closed longer for a five-track crossing than for a one-track crossing. The crossing could be closed about 2 hours in the morning and the evening when the tracks are blocked with the Fairbanks trains.
- Q. *There are a lot of plans for the Ship Creek area, including Port of Anchorage plans, Knik Arm ferry crossing activity, possible Knik Arm Bridge, Ship Creek Trail, etc. All of the projects should get together and coordinate, instead of doing their own planning piecemeal.*
- A. The Railroad is actively engaged with the public process for other Ship Creek area projects. We are paying attention to the planning of other entities and are coordinating with their planners.
- Q. *I tried to get the city to widen the sidewalk along Christianson Drive to allow for bike traffic. It makes sense to widen the sidewalk and then have a bike/pedestrian bridge come off of Christianson to alleviate the summer pedestrian traffic congestion.*
- A. ARRC considered a pedestrian bridge from Christianson in early planning for the Ship Creek Intermodal project. However, after careful review, it makes more sense to connect up with the E Street redevelopment project as a gateway to Ship Creek.
- Q. *You say that the historic depot is being preserved as part of the Ship Creek Intermodal project, but the new components of the ITC (departure lounge and skybridge) are not at all the same as the historic depot's architecture. Why don't you preserve more of the architecture of the old depot?*
- A. ARRC has worked closely with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to use some of the interior architectural elements in the new structures. For instance we will include interior wooden elements of the historic depot in the new building structures, such as the "to Trains" sign in the depot. We are also incorporating wood that will be salvaged from the old ARRC warehouse that is scheduled for demolition as a ceiling element in the new building. The intent is to retain some elements and the function of the historic depot, and carry some of those elements into the new structures for continuity and meshing of the old and the new. Blending of the new facilities with the historic structure will be

complementary, rather than simply reproducing the architecture of the depot in the new building.

- Q. *Is it possible to consolidate the five tracks so that they are not so spread out?*
- A. From an operations and safety standpoint, it works best for the railroad to have some distance between tracks. This leaves room to allow for passenger platform safety standards and allowance for circulation (elevators and escalators), and Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, and considers activity surrounding the bus lane. That is not to say it isn't possible to condense the tracks, it is just best from an operational standpoint to have them spread apart as in the design concept.
- Q. *Do you have a mock up of what train traffic will look like one year from now, five years, 10 years, 20 years from now, so you can see what the traffic would be like ... would it be continuous throughout the day or more concentrated during certain times of the day, like it is now.*
- A. The project's Environmental Assessment does project passenger train traffic into the future. A main goal of the ITC is to accommodate train traffic growth for the next 30 years. The EA is available online. It is expected that most passenger traffic will continue to occur primarily in the morning and evening in the near term. Once commuter service is a reality, passenger traffic will still continue to be concentrated in the morning and the evening; however, there will also be more trains mid-day. Freight traffic as it continues to grow will be spread throughout the day as it is now.

Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
North "C" Street Design/Construction Options Issue
Public Comment and Response Summary

- Q. *North C Street should only be closed in the summer.*
- Q. *Do not close C Street – use temporary closure.*
- A. The whole point of closing the road is because of safety. Safety will be an issue at the crossing regardless of season or number of trains due to the width of the crossing and the signalization.
- Q. *Your pedestrian option should include a foot bridge like at Abbott and Birch from 1st Avenue & Christiansen near the railroad tracks – this will reduce pedestrian and bikers from coming in front of your depot.*
- A. ARRC considered a pedestrian bridge from Christianson in early planning for the Ship Creek Intermodal project. However, after careful review, it makes more sense to connect up with the E Street redevelopment project as a gateway to Ship Creek.
- Q. *I did not see a non-denominational chapel in your next phase.*
- A. We appreciate the comment.
- Q. *I attended the open house for public comment on the north C street closure on April 25, 2006 (sic), however I was unable to be present for the public comment period. Hence I am submitting my input by letter.*
- I have been a resident of Anchorage for over 30 years and have watched the community's considerable growth due to oil and tourism. With growth comes change, especially within the intermodal transportation system. Several of the roads in the Anchorage bowl have been rerouted, closed, or changed to one way. In each case the public outcry was deafening. People, by nature, are resistant to change.*
- I believe this is no different. Business owners in the area that rely on tourism should embrace the change. Rerouting north C street will add no more than a few minutes travel time to the established route. Having a first class transportation hub connected directly to the airport will bring hundreds more people to the area to spend those dollars. Also to spend tens of millions of dollars to construct a depot at the airport to transport air travelers to downtown by rail and not have the proper facilities in place to receive them is a travesty that reflects poorly on our city and the rail road.*
- In closing, I support the closure and rerouting of north C street in order to continue as planned with the ITC. I respectfully request that this letter be added to the public comment record.*
- A. We appreciate the comment.
- Q. *About Option 1 – I drive the Ship Creek Shuttle over winter and summer, and I feel that Option 1 is the best route. It's already there. You would have to do minimal upgrade.*

You wouldn't have to put in new routes and then take them down (wasted money). The hill at Cordova, I've been going down for five years and I have not had any problems.

A. We appreciate the comment.

Q. *My main concern is the evacuation of the Port area and Government Hill. By closing C Street it takes 25% of the evacuation routes away. In the case of a tidal wave, Whitney and Ship Creek road don't offer any high ground evacuation. If a system is in place that C Street would be open in case of emergencies it would be a relief to those of us who work in the port area.*

A. If the road is closed, the tracks would still remain level with the roadway. In an emergency, we could remove "breakaway" gates to allow traffic through.

Q. *The facility looks superb, it ties Downtown to your facilities as well as Ship Creek. The primary problem is the closure of C Street and the routing of traffic under the A-C bridge. In a major seismic event, the bridge may collapse, effectively blocking traffic from the port and related industries. Suggest you consider engineering a fix on the north end of A/C bridge that would provide egress to the port, Elmendorf, and Government Hill.*

I also don't think routing the traffic down 1st Avenue works. That is a pretty narrow area between Anchorage Cold Storage and the old sheds.

A. Thank you for your comment. If the road is closed, the tracks would still remain level with the roadway. In an emergency, we could remove "breakaway" gates to allow traffic through.

We are currently in the process of evaluating 1st Avenue to determine the level of upgrades that would be required. Based on the existing road width, there is currently adequate width to allow the road to be upgraded to collector standards; however, sidewalk would only be placed on one side of the road (likely the north side) to avoid pedestrian/vehicle conflicts in front of Anchorage Cold Storage.

Q. *Please close permanently the C Street crossing. It should have been closed when the C Street overpass was built. Project ITC has been a long time in coming. Great work on everyone's part. I look forward to its opening.*

A. We appreciate your comments and support.

Q. *Option 2 looks to be the best on roadway options due to the number of tracks to cross and the distance from the station. What is not good is the sight distance due to the buildings.*

A. Thank you for your comments. We will take this into consideration as we continue to evaluate the options from an engineering perspective.

Q. a) Whatever route is selected, please assure that the vehicle WB-67 is taken into consideration when designing the intersections. Please assure stop signs are set back allowing trucks ample opportunity to complete turns. b) Until the commuter rail is built some 50 years from now, provide non-summer access over the tracks through access control gates. c) Provide contingency plans for emergency evacuation from the Port of Anchorage if the A Street bridge is unusable. d) Please provide a classification count of trucks this will directly impact.

- A. a) WB-67 vehicle is the design standard that is being used for the road design. b) The whole point of closing the road is because of safety. Safety will be an issue at the crossing regardless of season or number of trains due to the width of the crossing and the signalization as discussed previously. c) Thank you for your comment. If the road is closed, the tracks would still remain level with the roadway. In an emergency, we could remove “breakaway” gates to allow traffic through. D) This information will be provided as available.

Alternative 1 - Existing Scheme

Description: Tracks 1, 2, and 5 constructed in Phase 1

Tracks 3 and 4 are future construction

156 feet crossing gate to crossing gate

Bus lane between platforms

C Street Closed

One 25 car platform (platform 1)

One 18-20 car platform (platform 2)

Winter use platform adjacent to depot

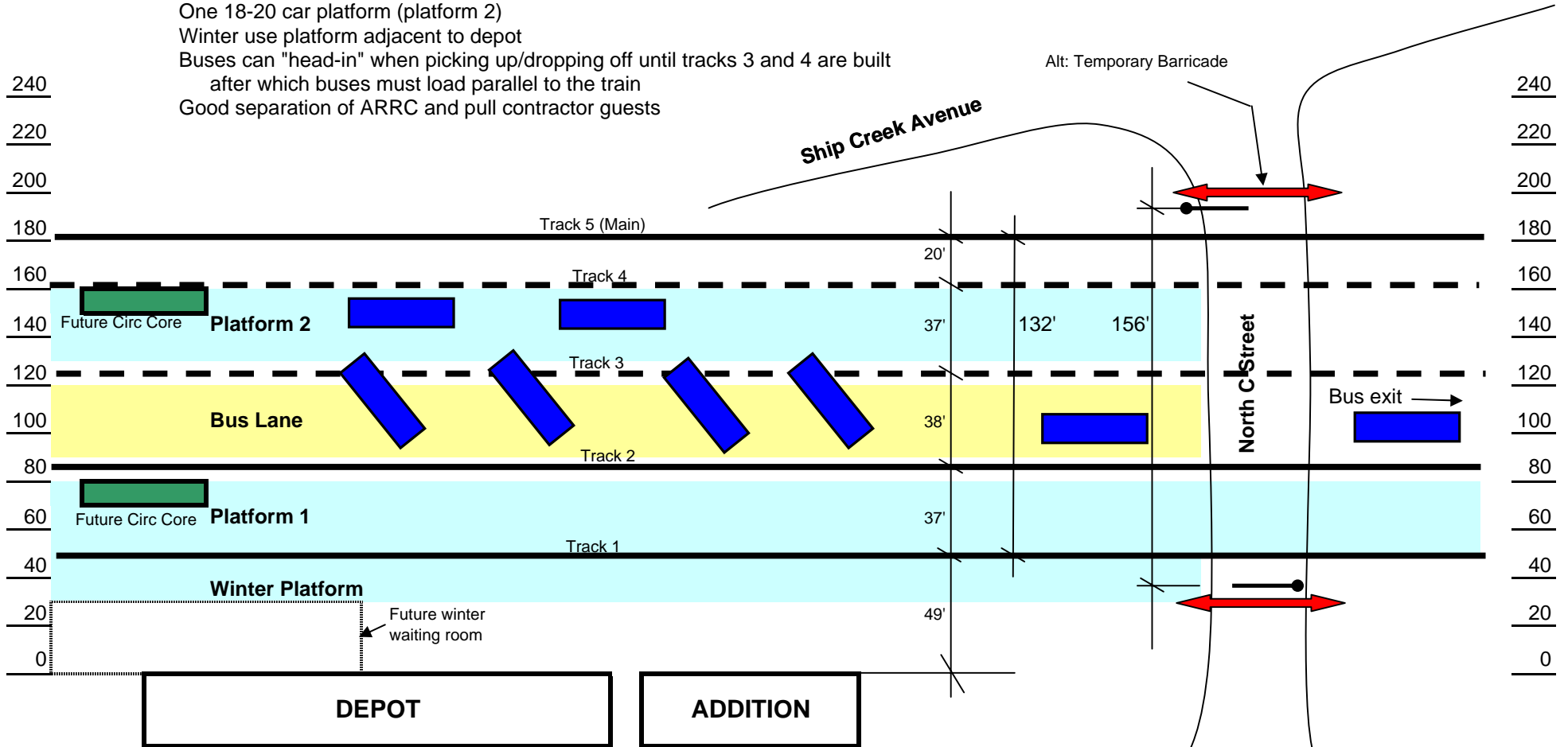
Buses can "head-in" when picking up/dropping off until tracks 3 and 4 are built

after which buses must load parallel to the train

Good separation of ARRC and pull contractor guests

Alternate: Temporary Closure

There is currently not adequate funding to build the C Street Crossing and complete the road upgrades required by MOA.



Alt: Temporary Barricade

Ship Creek Avenue

North C Street

Bus exit

DEPOT

ADDITION

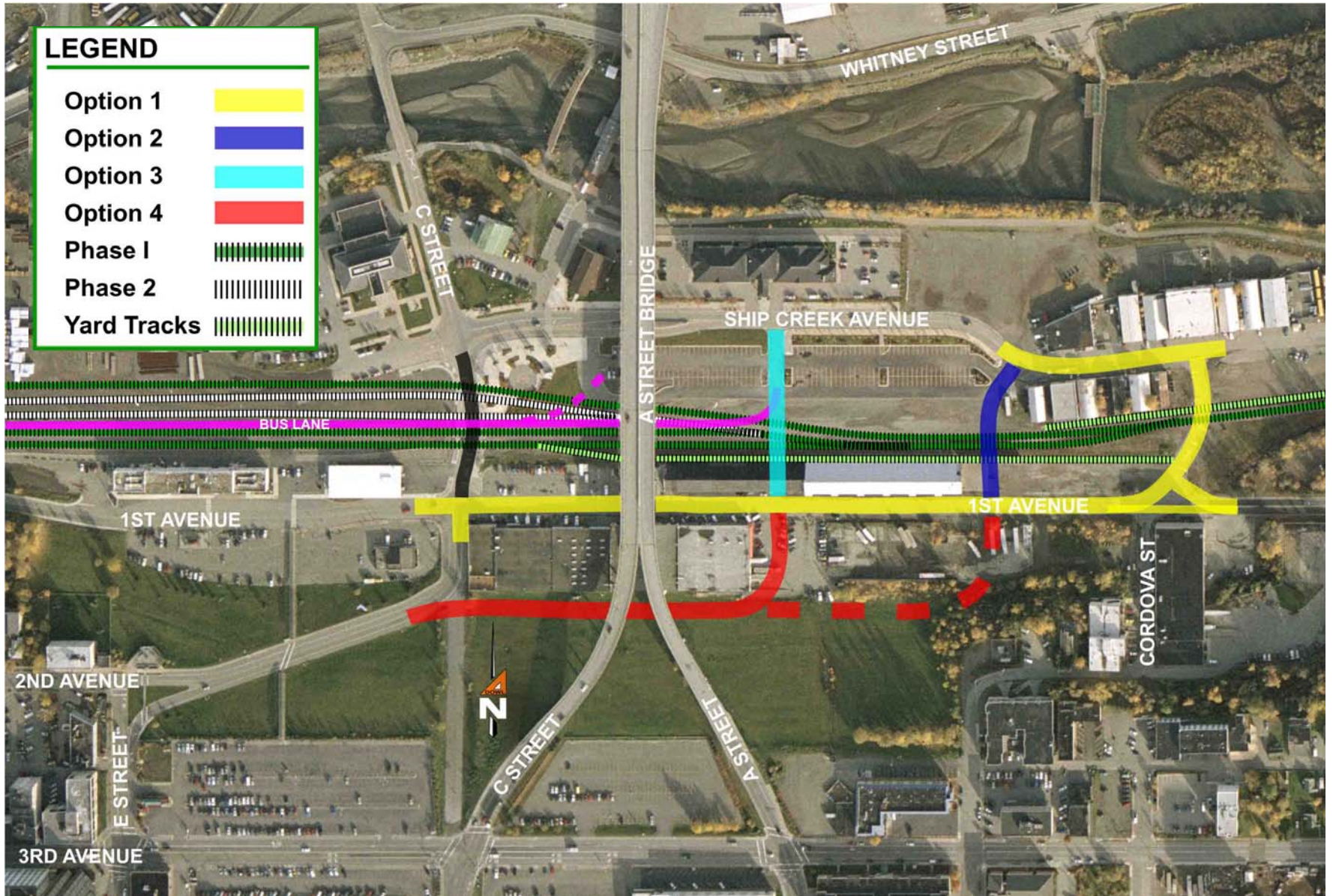
Legend:

- Phase 1 track construction
- Future track construction
- Crossing gate
- Tour bus

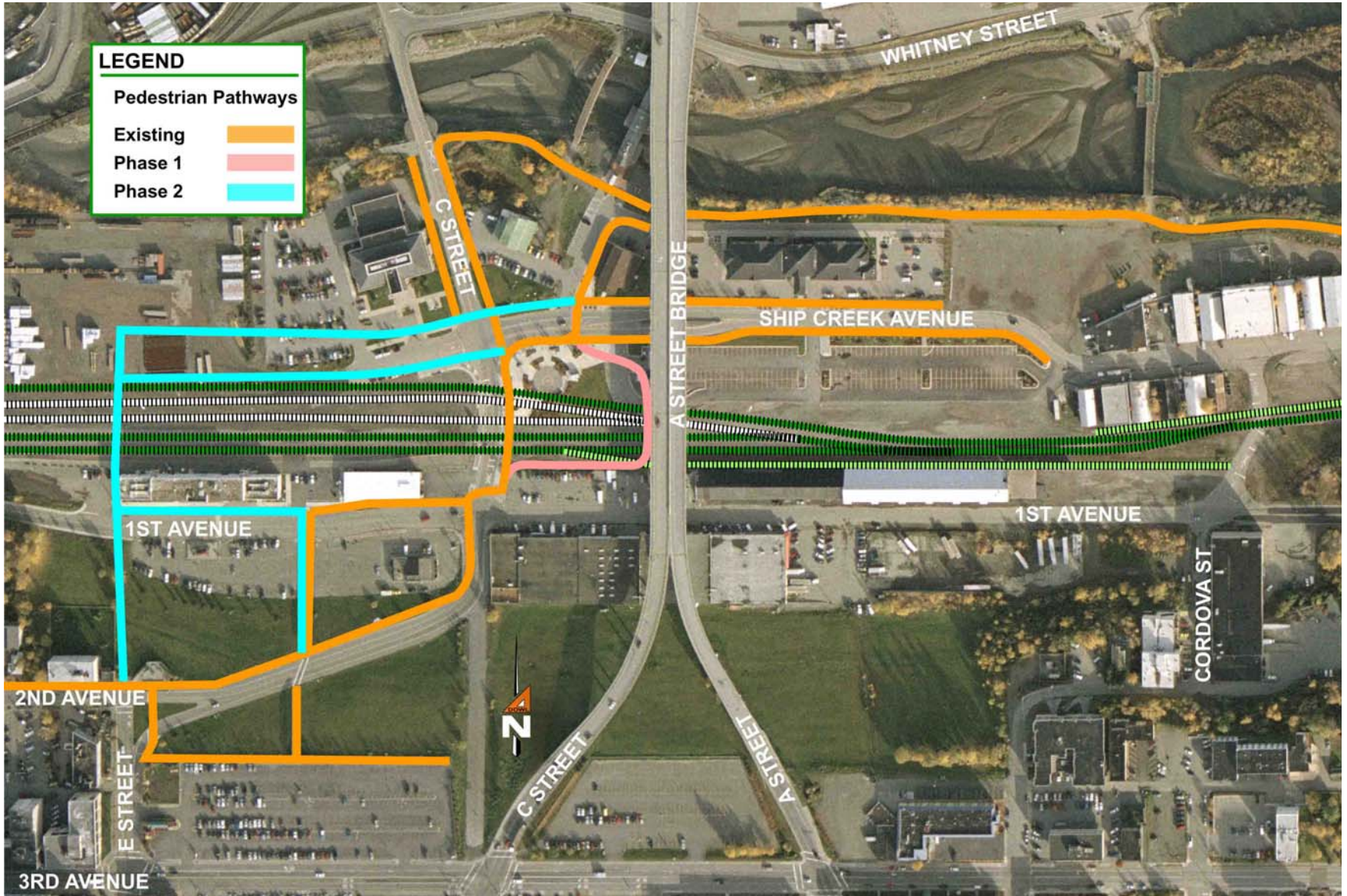
ARRC Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center



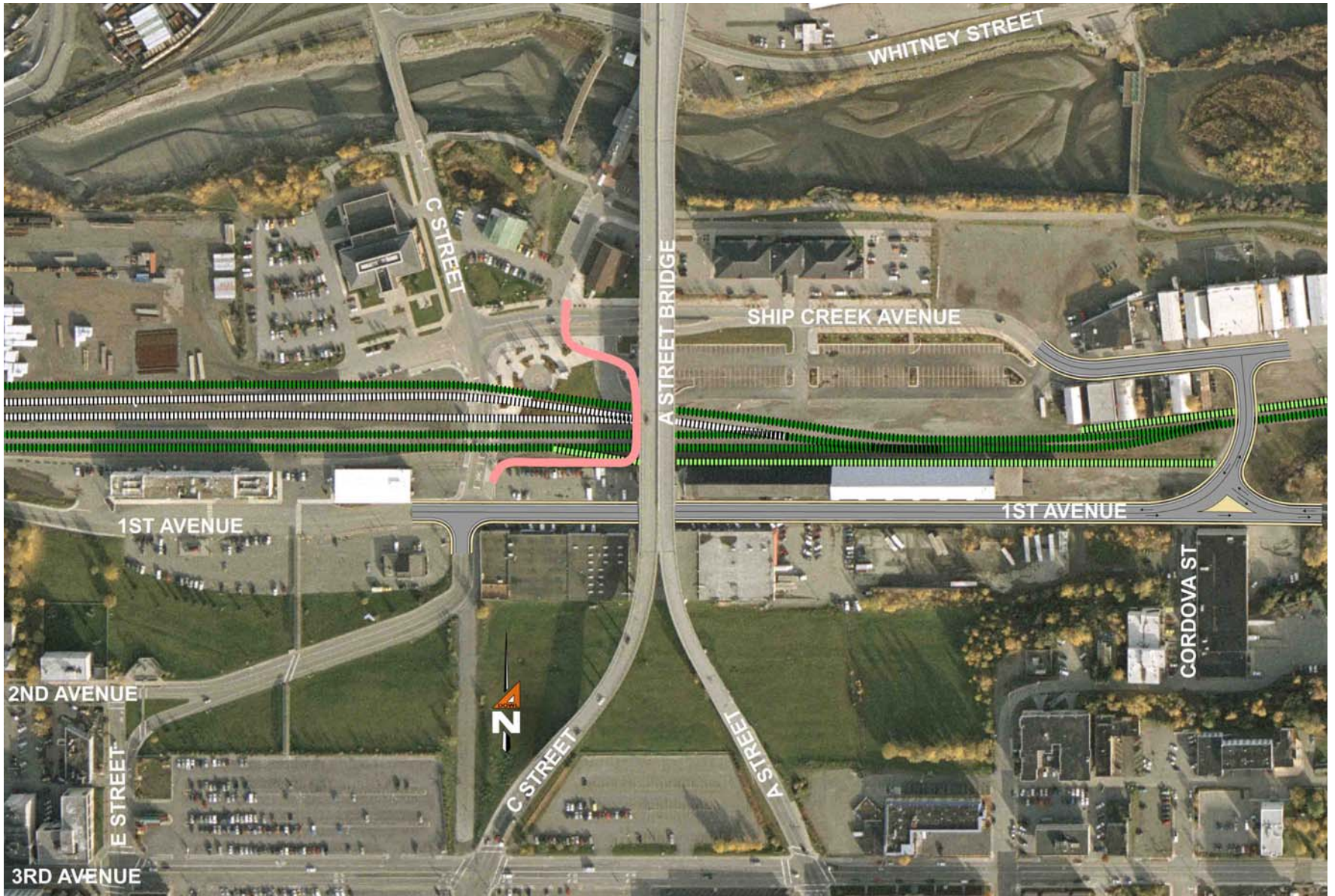
C Street Closure Options



Pedestrian Access Routes

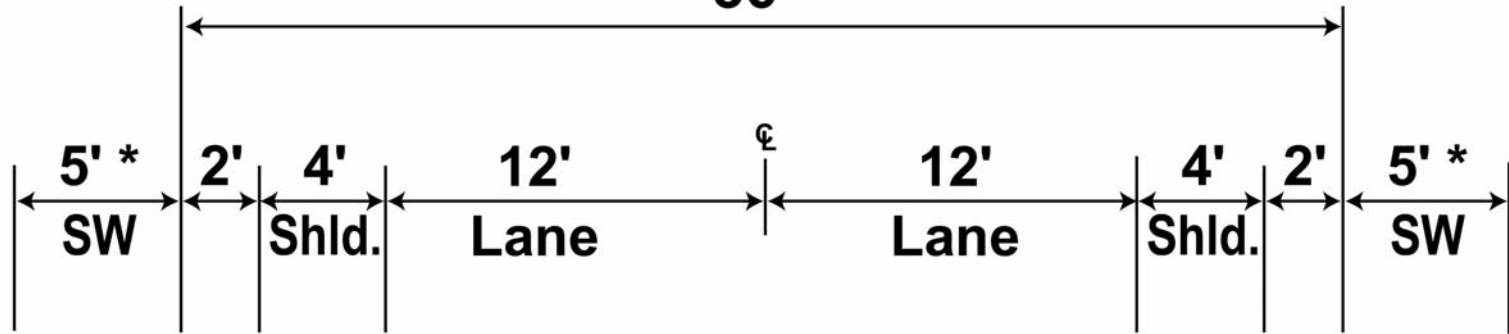


Option 1



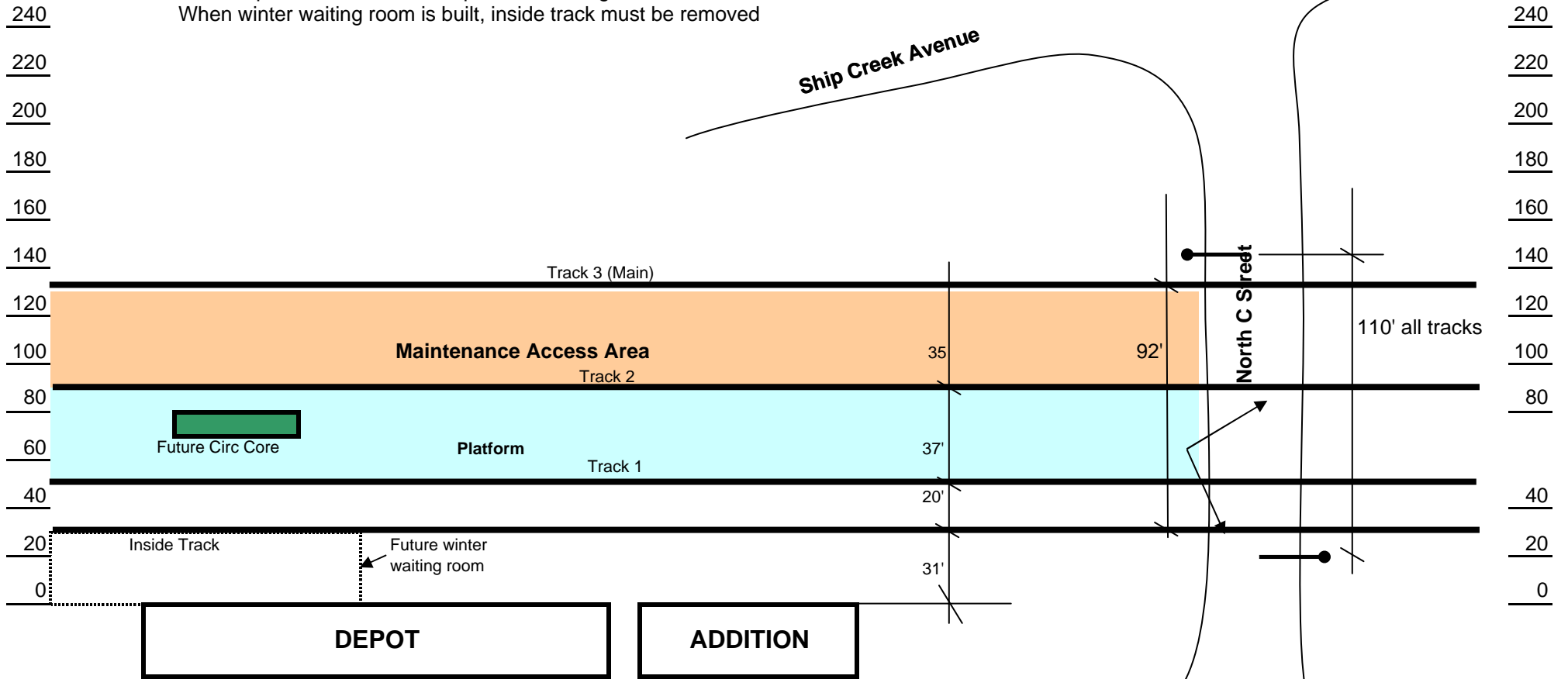
Industrial Collector Section

36'



Preferred Alternative - New tracks 2 and 3, Rehab Inside Track and Track 1

- Description:** Tracks 2 and 3 constructed in phase 1
 The inside and track 1 are rehabilitated
 Track 3 is the main
 Approx 110' feet crossing gate to crossing gate after phase 1 (C Street Open)
 92 feet track centerline to centerline
 One platform only
 All bus traffic remains south of tracks in depot area
 NO bus train conflict
 Good separation of ARRC and pull contractor guests
 When winter waiting room is built, inside track must be removed



- Legend:**
- Phase 1 track construction
 - - - Future track construction
 - Crossing gate
 -● Future Crossing gate
 - Fence

Appendix D
Continuing Coordination

SHPO COORDINATION



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION X
Alaska, Idaho, Oregon,
Washington

915 Second Avenue
Federal Bldg. Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002
206-220-7954
206-220-7959 (fax)

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Ave, Suite 1310
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Subject: **SECTION 106 CONSULTATION**
Anchorage Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
SHPO Code 3130-2R Alaska Railroad

Dear Ms. Bittner:

As you are aware, the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) plans to construct the Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) project with funding from the Federal Transit Administration. In my February 5, 2003 letter to you, I provided a commitment to continued consultation with your office on this project during the design phase, and indicated that the Section 106 process would be completed prior to the initiation of construction. You provided your concurrence with this approach in a letter dated March 7, 2003. On June 9, 2003 FTA issued a finding of no significant impacts (FONSI) for this project. The purpose of this letter is to request your concurrence in a finding of "no effect" on historic properties for certain limited construction activities while consultation with your office continues for the design of the ITC and parking garage.

The portion of the project ARRC proposes for construction in 2005 involves track construction on the north side of the existing Depot, removal of underground fuel storage tanks, and relocation and new construction of underground utilities. Four new tracks would be constructed and the existing main line would be replaced between the south end of the project area northward to approximately the Cordova Street crossing. The new main line would be fenced, and would be located on the outside of the other four tracks (furthest from the depot). The four inner tracks would comprise a passenger yard where passenger loading/unloading, bus loading/unloading, and baggage operations would take place. The total length of track proposed for construction as part of the passenger yard and new main line is approximately 8,750 linear feet. Two approximately 10,000-gallon underground fuel tanks located behind the Depot would be removed, and some of the utility work associated with the project would be completed. The goal of the 2005 utility work is to construct a utility corridor beneath the track to allow for ease of future access and to relocate existing utilities that may be impacted by the new passenger yard. These activities are unrelated to the design of the new ITC and parking garage and their potential impact on the existing Depot.

Based on the information provided by the ARRC, we find that

- the proposed construction activities will not directly or indirectly affect the Depot, and
- proceeding with these construction activities will not affect the consideration of alternatives for the design of the ITC or avoidance, minimization or mitigation of any adverse effects on the Depot.

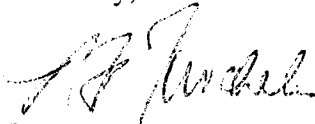
We request your concurrence in these findings and in the finding that no historic properties will be affected by the activities described in this letter.

Consultation with you will continue during the design of the ITC and parking garage to complete the Section 106 process. Please let me know if you consider the Section 106 process complete for the track and underground utility portion of the project, and concur that the limited construction activities described above can begin this year.

It is my understanding that representatives of ARRC or its consultants (ECI/Hyer) have met with you to provide information during the design process. I would be interested in knowing if you are satisfied with the consultation to date, and if you have any suggestions to improve that consultation effort.

Please contact Jennifer Bowman, FTA, at (206) 220-7953 or Barbara Hotchkin, ARRC, at (907) 265-2313 if you have questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



R.F. Krochalis
Regional Administrator

Cc: Barbara Hotchkin, ARRC

STATE OF ALASKA

F
FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

550 W. 7th Ave., SUITE 1310
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-3565
PHONE: (907) 269-8721
FAX: (907) 269-8908

March 24, 2005

File No.: 3130-1R FTA ✓
3130-2R ARRC

SUBJECT: Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center, Anchorage

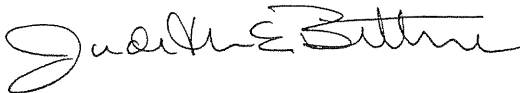
R. F. Krochalis
Federal Transit Administration
915 Second Avenue
Federal Building, Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002

Dear R. F. Krochalis,

The State Historic Preservation Office received your correspondence on February 22, 2005 and maps on March 23, 2005. We have reviewed your referenced undertaking for conflicts with cultural resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Your scope of work for 2005 involves track construction on the north side of the Railroad Depot (ANC-362), removal of USTs, and relocation and reconstruction of underground utilities. Based on the maps, it does not appear that ANC-362 will be impacted. We concur therefore that no historic properties will be affected by the current scope of work. We look forward to continued consultation with you regarding future phases of the Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center project.

Please contact Stefanie Ludwig at 269-8720 if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Judith E. Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer

JEB:sl

Cc: Barbara Hotchkin, Alaska Railroad Corporation

Ship Creek Intermodal Facility
Project No. 2104/2.1.5

March 02, 2006

Memo to File

RE: Phase II – Historic Depot
SHPO REVIEW MEETING

Attendees:	Judy Bittner	SHPO
	Doug Gasek	SHPO
	Greg Fosberg	ECI Hyer
	Mary Knopf	ECI Hyer
	Michael Thompson	ECI Hyer



The above referenced meeting was intended to serve as a progress review (50% Design Development), since the last schematic design presentation to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in September 2005. We met at the Lobby space of the Historic Depot Building on February 27, 2006, where model train displays were set-up for a Fur Rondy event. The following minutes record discussions that took place:

Building Exteriors:

- Current plans in Phase II include minor patching of the exterior finish and painting.
- Initial surface preparation and clean-up measures for the exteriors will include proper work methods and protective equipment as required by OSHA for the lead-based paints utilized in the existing. Sand-blasting, or other destructive methods to clean the exterior would not be considered.
- Window Replacement: Several manufacturers produce historical replicas of double-hung windows, however matching the large size format of the Lobby windows may limit the number of Suppliers. Marvin windows does fabricate units to match the over-sized units as in the Lobby. We confirmed the scope of work included window replacement in the entire Depot Building.
- Glazing would be a double insulated glass, divided lite and spacer bars to match visually the existing divided lite panels.

ARCHITECTURE
PLANNING
INTERIORS
DEVELOPMENT

101 WEST BENSON
SUITE 306
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

(907) 561-5543
(907) 562-3213-FAX

- SHPO suggested investigating retaining the existing with additional storm panel added to the opening interior. This would limit the operable unit function for ventilation.

Project Additions:

- A two-story office addition with penthouse mechanical space would be added to the East end of the existing Depot.
- An addition to the North side would house Mechanical/Electrical service features for the entire phased project, as well as the winter waiting area off the centralized lobby. Exterior canopy would extend to the East. The Mechanical / Electrical portion would be a single story element in Phase II, and extended to three stories with Phase III. Exterior finish materials being considered are concrete and metal panels.
- Upper Penthouse on the Depot Bldg would sit back from the existing parapet, with a width approximately the same as the raised parapet at the front, and a height approximately 6 feet above the main parapet. Exterior materials being considered are concrete and metal panels. The investigation continues.



Interior Lobby Spaces:

- Entry Vestibules with exterior doors and cased interior opening are presently located on the interior side of the Lobby Space. The new plan removes the Northern side vestibule due to location of the Baggage Claim system and access to the winter Waiting area. The South Vestibule has been relocated to the Building exterior with additional exterior canopy. Exterior shear panels are introduced in the same area. SHPO suggested preference to maintaining the present location of the South Vestibule on the Lobby interior.
- The existing Ticketing Booth is located at the Northwest corner of the Lobby. This space was being removed in its entirety in the new plan, allowing for access to the Winter Waiting area. SHPO suggested preference to maintaining the existing area, with a possible function as concession. They spoke of “little compartments” adding to the character of the space.

- The proposed Gift Shop appeared very transparent with glazed wall panels. The Gift Shop will be furnished with lots of racks for merchandize, and may “look messy” from the Lobby Space. SHPO suggested additional (solid) walls.

Interior Finishes:

- Lobby Floor Tile: The existing quarry tile floor is nominal 6X6 (5-7/8 inch) with wide (9/16 inch) grout joint. SHPO suggested preference to maintaining the original floor material and matching color/size as close as possible. “Find something similar, transition materials and decorative tiles could be introduced.”
- Wainscot wall tile: Glazed ceramic wall tile with cap rail was planned to be replaced in the new design, since the area increased in size significantly (increasing required quantity) and materials would be difficult to match. This condition would occur on both wall and column covers. SHPO suggested preference to maintain the existing CT wainscot , and attempts to salvage for reuse where applicable. For note; the existing material displays numerous surface cracks across the face, and appears to be vulnerable to any salvage operation.
- Ceilings and Soffits: Discussed plans for a future soffit, running continuous on the North side of the Lobby, concealing service runs (ducts, piping, and conduit) above running between the North Mechanical area to the East Office Addition. The new soffit would be a linear wood material at approx 9 foot elevation. In the existing ceiling coffers, South of the column bays, a suspended ceiling would be installed between beams, consisting of painted Gyp Wallboard, with radiant ceiling panels for heat. Color of the ceiling to blend with existing surfaces. Height of the ceiling would be maximized, allowing enough clearance to conceal new sprinkler piping and other related service runs.



Miscellaneous Features:

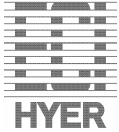
- Light Fixtures: Existing surface-mounted globe fixtures located between beams, centered on the bay are not the original fixtures. Photographs of what we assume to be the original fixtures are

Recipient's Name
Date
Page 4

available (see attached), and we'd attempt to match, or come close to matching along the South side of the Lobby.

- Signage: Wood signage with carved text exist above portals and openings to the Vestibules, Ticketing counters, and Restrooms. SHPO suggested preference to salvage these items and reuse in the various related areas.
- Totems: Existing totems (1) are memorial features on the exterior and will remain undisturbed.

For note, and as referenced in the Schematic Design Narrative, Appendix C, permit authorization through SHPO for concurrence under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Coordination with SHPO required, with ultimate goal of obtaining a concurrence with the "Finding of No Effect to Historic Properties". If SHPO does not concur with this finding, formal consultation under Section 106 would be required, including development of a memorandum of Agreement between SHPO and the ARRC. In addition, a Section 4 (f) Evaluation under the Department of Transportation Act would be required.



Please contact our office should you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,
ECI/Hyer, Inc.

Michael Thompson
Architect

Attachment: photograph

cc	Judy Bittner,	SHPO
	Doug Gasek,	SHPO
	Deb Allen	ARRC
	Mark Peterburs	ARRC

XX/jmt

Recipient's Name
Date
Page 5



WILDLIFE RELATED CORRESPONDENCE

Project: Ship Creek EA Re-evaluation/ Access Rd	Project No: 09585-38647
Date: August 1, 2006 9:30am	Subject: Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
Call to: Larry Peltz, NMFS, Marine Habitat Resource Specialist	Phone No: 907-271-1332
Call from: Leslie Robbins, HDR planner	Phone No: 907-644-2058

Discussion, Agreement and/or Action:

Larry Peltz, marine habitat resource specialist at National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and I had a phone conversation this morning (based on our recent email correspondence) regarding whether an EFH assessment would be necessary for the re-evaluation effort for the Ship Creek Intermodal Transit Center Project. Of relevancy to his (NMFS) jurisdiction is the proposed maintenance access road to be placed in approximately 0.33 acres of intertidal area within Knik Arm, immediately seaward of the existing railroad embankment. A copy of the email is attached at the end of this phone record. I had asked him whether or not an EFH Assessment would be necessary, with such an insignificant amount of fill being placed adjacent to existing embankment.

Larry said that in most places the proposed fill wouldn't be such a big deal. However, he said that the Ship Creek is a sensitive area to everyone, especially with the proposed Knik Arm Bridge and on-going work at the Port of Anchorage, among other projects. Larry said the proposed fill for the maintenance road would have no significant long-term lasting effects on EFH. He said EFH would not be impacted. He concluded that an EFH Assessment would not be necessary; however, he said that the Corps of Engineers permit should stipulate that an in-lieu-fee based on the Anchorage credit debit methodology should be done as part of mitigation.

Email to Leslie Robbins of HDR Alaska, from Larry Peltz, of NMFS, on 8-1-06

Leslie,

Based on the map you sent and the description below, it looks like the maintenance road will be an intertidal fill of several acres. The Port of Anchorage fish studies conducted by Pentec showed that juvenile fish moved into the upper intertidal areas on high tides and fed on insects located in the vegetation. I suspect that the area in question would fit in this category. If this is the case, I would recommend you do an EFH Assessment. You could take this email and flesh it out a little and have a completed assessment. I would recommend that the railroad minimize the intertidal fill. I will also request from the Corps of Engineers that mitigation be required, probably in-lieu-fee based on the Anchorage credit debit methodology. These are the same terms that will be used with the the Port of Anchorage Expansion and the Knik Arm Bridge if built. Let me know if you have any other questions.

Email to Larry Peltz, of NMFS, from Leslie Robbins, of HDR Alaska on 7-31-06

Larry,

I'm working with the Alaska Railroad on a re-evaluation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) that was conducted for the Ship Creek Intermodal Transit Center (located in the vicinity of the existing Anchorage downtown train depot). The FONSI for the EA was signed in June 10, 2003. The project includes:

1. A new intermodal facility adjacent to the historic ARRC Anchorage Depot;
2. Enhanced parking lot;
3. A pedestrian bridge/walkway connecting the E Street corridor to the intermodal facility and providing pedestrian access to the Ship Creek area;
4. Four new passenger tracks; and
5. Miscellaneous other improvements.

Subsequent to the signing of the EA and FONSI, project design has progressed and the design has been modified to include a maintenance road adjacent to the existing railroad embankment to access the switch points associated with the new tracks, switches and crossovers (as already federally-approved in the EA). The maintenance road would be approximately 675 feet long and 13 feet wide. The maintenance road would be placed immediately seaward of the existing railroad embankment. I have attached a figure depicting the project area.

At the time of the EA, there was no EFH involved. I understand, through HDR's EFH consultations for the Knik Arm Crossing and Ferry projects, that Knik Arm is EFH for several groundfish species (Pacific > cod, Sculpin, and Walleye polluck) and for all five Pacific salmon species. However, in talking with our in-house fisheries biologist, he seemed to think that the footprint of the proposed maintenance road, given the location - immediately seaward of the existing embankment, is not EFH, and therefore would not impact EFH, and consequently an EFH Assessment would not be required.

Would you please confirm with me that an EFH Assessment would not be required for the maintenance access road? If you need additional information to make your determination, please let me know.

Thank you.
Leslie

Deb Allen - FW: Beluga whale - T&E listing status

From: "Robbins, Leslie" <Leslie.Robbins@hdrinc.com>
To: "Deb Allen" <AllenD@akrr.com>
Date: 9/5/2006 5:37 PM
Subject: FW: Beluga whale - T&E listing status

Deb, per our conversation this afternoon....

From: Brad Smith [mailto:Brad.Smith@noaa.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 01, 2006 10:49 AM
To: Robbins, Leslie
Subject: Re: Beluga whale - T&E listing status

Hi Leslie; I can respond to your questions as follows:

1. Belugas are unlikely to use this immediate area owing to its elevation. It is possible during an extreme high tide that a whale may approach within several hundred feet of the road location, but water depths would still be limiting.
2. ESA listing would not change how impacts would be evaluated, but under what laws and authorities such evaluations are made. If they are listed, we would also designate critical habitat. Any Federal agency proposing an action within the critical habitat would have to consult on the impacts of that action on both the whales and their CH.
3. I do not have a complete description of the work to be done here, but similar (and more significant) work now going on for filling along the north edge of the Port of Anchorage was considered not to result in a "take" of beluga due to construction noise or other impacts to the animals. From that perspective, it would be appropriate for a Federal agency to find this work would not affect beluga whales. If the CI beluga become listed, and the Federal action agency determines "no effect", no further consultation is required, nor does NMFS have to concur with such determination. However, I cannot say whether this work could be found to have "no effect" on critical habitat until it becomes designated. So, it is not certain we could make any call at this time that would hold up in the future.
4. Again, if it gets listed and CH is designated in upper CI, the authorizing Federal agency would do the following prior to committing and funds or permitting any work: 1) write of contact NMFS for a list of species/CH in the project area, 2) determine whether the work "may effect" these concerns' if not, consultation ends, 3) if they find species/habitat may be affected, the action agency requests informal consultation with NMFS. They have the option of preparing a Biological Evaluation of the action to determine whether the action is likely to adversely affect these resources. Otherwise, the action agency and NMFS staff discuss the project and ways to mitigate and impacts. 4) if informal consultation and/or the BE conclude "not likely to adversely affect" species or CH, and NMFS concurs, consultation ends. 5) if the action agency finds the work is likely to adversely affect (the threshold here is whether the work would reach the level where "take" occurs), or if NMFS does not concur with a "not likely to adversely affect" determination, formal ESA consultation is initiated. This requires 135 days for consultation and preparation by NMFS of a Biological Opinion for the action. Formal consultation for this work would also necessitate the preparation of an Incidental Take Statement, which exempts the agency from the prohibitions of the Act, and acquiring an Incidental Harassment Authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (our regulations link the ESA and the MMPA here by requiring both Acts to be

satisfied.

Hey, you asked.....

Robbins, Leslie wrote:

Brad, I have attached a record of our phone conversation from last spring and included this email you had sent to me last month.

In summary, the Alaska Railroad is placing an access road immediately west of their existing track embankment, extending southward from the Anchorage small boat launch (see attached Figure1). The project will entail constructing a 675-foot long and 13-foot wide access road within the Knik Arm intertidal area adjacent to the existing track. Approximately 3,680 cubic yards of fill would be placed into 0.43 acres of intertidal area. The purpose of the road is to provide access to track switches associated with the Intermodal Transportation Center near the existing railroad depot.

My understanding of our conversation was that there would be no impact to belugas from the access road fill, but I would like confirmation. The potential for impact seems to be non-existent, given the limited acreage of near shore mudflats affected as compared to the habitat available in all of Cook Inlet. Would you please clarify the following questions we have regarding belugas and the project?

1. Do belugas use this area? Have they ever been documented this close to shore in this area?
2. In the event listing does occur at or near the end of the year, how would that change the evaluation of impacts associated with this project? (It doesn't seem that the impacts would change, regardless of the beluga's status - listed or not listed).
3. Can you give a determination now that would not require additional consultation if the status changes?
4. If the status changes and further consultation or action on the Railroad's part is needed, what would they need to do? Is a biological assessment required? What would it need to contain, given the remote chance of any adverse effect associated with this project.

Thank you for your help.
I look forward to hearing from you.

Leslie Robbins
HDR ONE COMPANY | *Many Solutions*
2525 C Street, Suite 305 | Anchorage, AK | 99503-2632
Phone: 907.644.2000 | Direct: 907.644.2058 | Fax: 907.644.2022
E-mail: Leslie.Robbins@hdrinc.com

From: Brad Smith [<mailto:Brad.Smith@noaa.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 08, 2006 8:25 AM
To: Robbins, Leslie
Subject: Re: Beluga whale - T&E listing status

NMFS is now preparing a review of the status of the CI beluga, and has also been petitioned to list the whales as endangered species. The petition starts a formal 12 month process, but because we had initiated a status review, it is likely we will not take that long. I expect the review to be completed this fall. Any recommendations would then have to go through DC, where I cannot make a prediction as to timing.

Robbins, Leslie wrote:

Brad,

Per a conversation I had with you in April, I was wondering what the status was, as of now, for the possible listing of beluga whales as an endangered species?

I'm asking on behalf of the Alaska Railroad and their proposed project of placing an access road immediately adjacent to their track embankment along the Knik Arm intertidal area. The Railroad is finishing up their environmental re-evaluation form and getting ready to submit it to the Federal Transit Administration. In April, you had said that the status was currently under review. Any change in the listing since our conversation in April?

Thanks for your response.

Leslie Robbins

HDR ONE COMPANY | *Many Solutions*

2525 C Street, Suite 305 | Anchorage, AK | 99503-2632

Phone: 907.644.2000 | Direct: 907.644.2058 | Fax: 907.644.2022

E-mail: Leslie.Robbins@hdrinc.com

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

4(F) RELATED CORRESPONDENCE



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION X
Alaska, Idaho, Oregon,
Washington

915 Second Avenue
Federal Bldg. Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002
206-220-7954
206-220-7959 (fax)

DEC 14 2006

Mr. Jeff Dillon, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
Municipality of Anchorage
PO Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

**Re: Alaska RR Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Project:
Quyana Park Impacts and Section 4(f) Issues**

Dear Mr. Dillon:

Your department worked with the Alaska Railroad Corp. (ARRC) during the preparation of the original 2003 Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) project. The project is being funded with a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). As part of the EA, ARRC performed a Section 4(f) Evaluation to assess potential impacts to Quyana Park from a proposed parking garage. FTA issued a finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in June 2003.

Since that time, design has progressed, ARRC has identified changes to the project scope, and FTA is now conducting a NEPA re-evaluation. Among other things, ARRC now longer plans to build the garage, relying on surface parking lots. A more detailed description of changes to the project is attached.

ARRC believes that the renovation of the First Ave. parking lot in front of the Historic Depot would require encroaching into Quyana Park, as shown on the attached conceptual landscape drawing. Less than .25 acres of parkland would be used. (There would also be minor use of park land to support a pedestrian overpass between Eisenhower Plaza and Ship Creek Ave.) ARRC proposes to mitigate this use of park resources by refurbishing and enhancing Eisenhower Plaza (which would not be relocated under the new plan), and expanding the plaza area; and also by providing a landscaped buffer between the parking lot and Quyana Park.

FTA believes that as mitigated, ARRC's project would not adversely affect the activities, features and attributes of Quyana Park, and that appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures have been incorporated into the project's design. Accordingly, we intend to issue a finding that the impact to Quyana Park is *de minimis* under revisions to Section 4(f) that were adopted in 2005. A more detailed discussion of the law is attached to this letter.

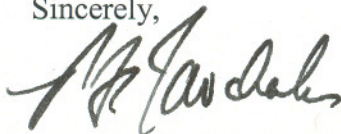
If you concur, we request that you provide notice and an opportunity for the public to comment on the matter before you reach a final decision. Proposed project modifications were previously presented to the public at numerous open houses and public meetings; however, FTA understands that these events addressed potential transportation impacts and not impacts to the public park and recreation resources. The law does not require a particular process or timeframe for the public comment. FTA believes a two-week comment period would be sufficient, following reasonable notice in a newspaper of general circulation, on MOA websites, and through other methods designed to inform interested parties. If the public input does not change your opinion (or FTA's), please give us your written concurrence with FTA's finding that this is a *de minimis* impact.

Please note that *de minimis* impact findings must be expressly conditioned upon the implementation of any measures that were relied upon to reduce the impact to a *de minimis* level. The implementation of such measures will become the responsibility of ARRC, with FTA oversight.

We would like to hear from you as soon as possible because this is an important consideration in the final design process for the Ship Creek ITC project. We also invite you to provide other comments you may have regarding the project.

Thank you very much. If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Dan Drais, FTA, at (206) 220-4307 or Daniel.drais@dot.gov.

Sincerely,



R.F. Krochalis
Regional Administrator

Enclosures: Memo Discussing Applicability of Section 4(f) De Minimis Provision
 Ship Creek ITC Section 4(f) Evaluation Figure 3 – Section 4(f) Properties
 Ship Creek ITC Section 4(f) Evaluation Figure 4 – Park Ownership
 Conceptual Landscape Drawing

cc (w/o enc.): Eileen Reilly

DEC 14 2000

MEMORANDUM

I. Description of Project Modifications Affecting Quayana Park

Parking Garage. The original Ship Creek ITC project included a new 650-stall parking garage on the footprint of the existing 1st Avenue parking lot just south of the Historic Anchorage Depot. The garage would have extended up the buttress slope into Quayana Park. A figure depicting the park area (labeled Figure 3 – Section 4(f) properties), as included in the original Section 4(f) Evaluation, is attached for reference. Figure 4 (also attached) shows land ownership in the area. Owners of record include ARRC (1 parcel, 0.25 acres), the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) (3 parcels, 2.31 acres), and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) (2 parcels, 8.36 acres). Proposed mitigation measures for impacts to Quayana Park included construction of a new park on the parking garage's roof and extending up the buttress slope to 2nd Avenue.

Based on the Section 4(f) Evaluation and other environmental analyses, FTA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on June 2, 2003. The EA and FONSI can be viewed at <http://www.akrr.com/arrc202.html>.

The garage's feasibility came into question as design progressed. ARRC eventually concluded that the garage was not technically or economically feasible for a variety of reasons, including:

- Numerous building restrictions on the buttress would make construction of the garage prohibitively expensive.
- Additional traffic analysis projected lower parking demand than the EA had.
- After ARRC prepared the EA, additional nearby surface parking was constructed, further reducing the need for onsite parking.

Having determined not to build a garage, ARRC developed a design for upgrading the existing parking lot. To meet current MOA standards for parking lots, including parking stall dimensions and circulation and access, and to provide landscaping to buffer the park from the parking lot, it requires a small amount of encroachment into Quayana Park. Please refer to the attached Conceptual Landscape Drawing of the project. The proposed layout shows that the improvements would affect less than 0.25 acres of Quayana Park.

Eisenhower Memorial/Pedestrian Overpass. The original project included a new bus stop and pedestrian drop off at the intersection of E Street and 2nd Avenue; relocation of the Eisenhower Memorial and ARRC Engine No 1, which would both be incorporated into the rooftop park; and a grade-separated pedestrian overpass between the Eisenhower Memorial plaza and Ship Creek Avenue. ARRC continued to coordinate with MOA, including People Mover, throughout the initial concept design phases of the project. There were several meetings with the E Street Corridor design team since the projects meet at the E Street and 2nd Avenue intersection. The design team concluded that the bus stop and pedestrian drop off would be better located on 1st Avenue in front of the Depot,

without relocating Eisenhower Plaza. This decision was driven primarily by space restrictions at the E Street/2nd Avenue intersection and the prohibitive cost of construction on the buttress.

The current plan retains the grade-separated pedestrian overpass, with minor use of the park for the structural supports for this overpass. Also, to mitigate for the use of 0.25 acres of Qu yana Park for the parking lot and these structural supports, the project now incorporates enhancements of the area near the existing Eisenhower Memorial. It rehabilitates and enlarges the Eisenhower Memorial area, and improves access to the memorial. The area would serve as the primary entrance to the pedestrian overpass between E Street and Ship Creek Avenue and over the expanded railroad tracks at the ITC. The intent is to upgrade the Eisenhower Memorial and provide an aesthetically pleasing, safe transition between Downtown and the Ship Creek area.

II. Section 4(f) Requirements and *De Minimis* Impacts

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 relates to impacts of Federal transportation projects on park and recreational lands, among other things. The law, now codified in two places (49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 U.S.C. 138), is implemented by FTA through regulations found at 23 CFR 771.135. Resources subject to Section 4(f) include any publicly owned public park, recreation area, or refuge or any publicly or privately owned historic site. In general, federally funded transportation projects may use these lands only if there is no other prudent and feasible alternative to the use of such land. If the use of Section 4(f) resources cannot be avoided, the project must include all possible planning to minimize harm to these areas.

Congress created an exception to the general rule in 2005. Section 6009 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) amends the Section 4(f) requirements to allow DOT to determine that certain minor uses of Section 4(f) land will have no adverse effect on the protected resource. When this is the case, and the responsible official(s) with jurisdiction over the resource¹ agrees in writing, compliance with Section 4(f) is greatly simplified. A *de minimis* determination relating to publicly owned parks thus requires that:

- The transportation use of the Section 4(f) resource, together with any impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation or enhancement measures incorporated into the project, does not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f);
- The official with jurisdiction over the property is informed of the federal agency's intent to make the *de minimis* impact finding based on that agency's written concurrence that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the property for protection under Section 4(f); and
- The public has had a chance to review and comment on the project's effects on the protected activities, features, and attributes of the Section 4(f) resource.

¹ The "officials with jurisdiction" are the officials of an agency or agencies that own or administer a Section 4(f) property and who are empowered to represent that agency on related matters

III. Use of and Impacts to Quyana Park

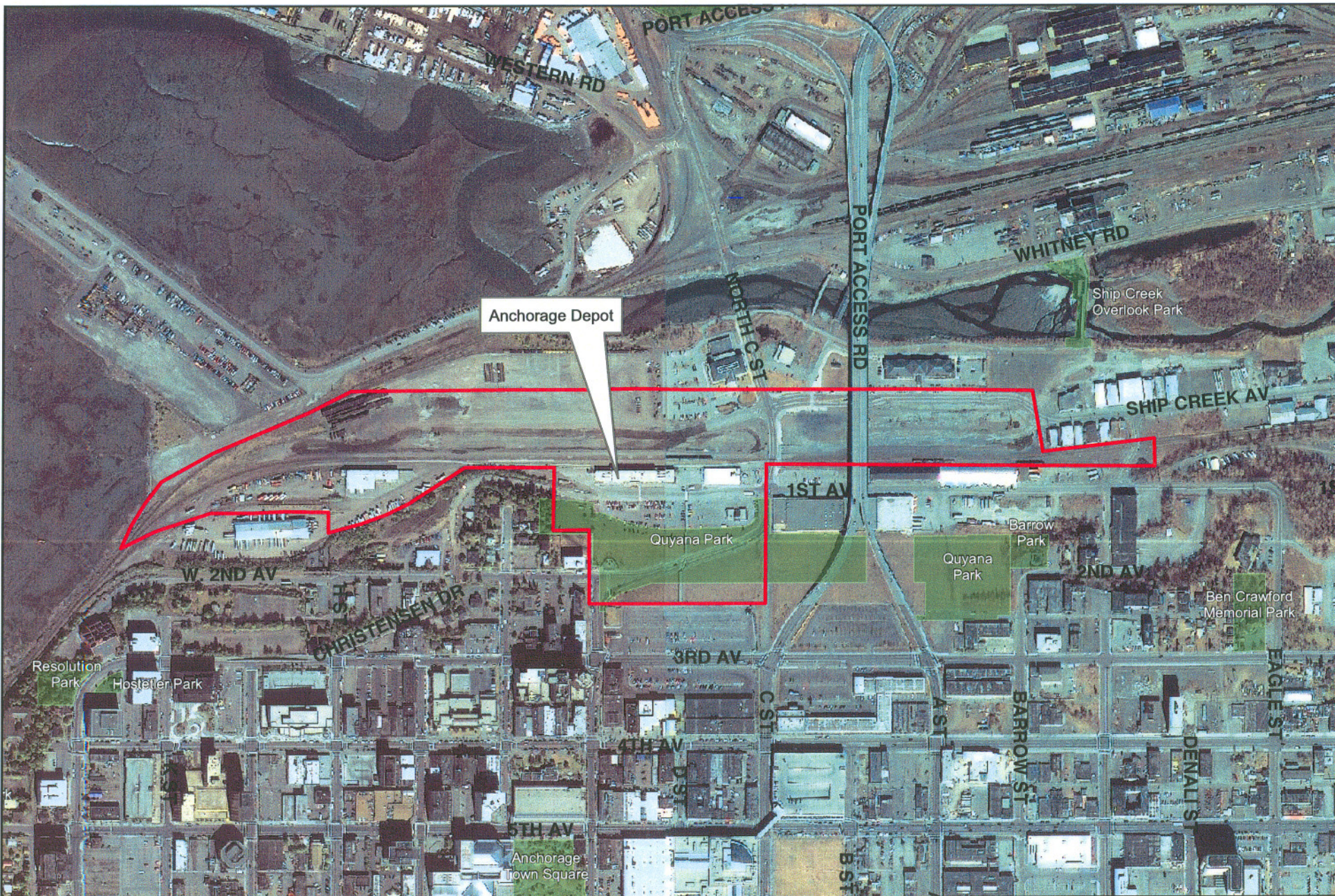
Residents and visitors primarily use the park for enjoying wonderful views of Cook Inlet and the Alaska Range to the north and northwest. The steep slope limits uses for other types of recreation. During the summer, downtown residents, workers, and visitors occasionally sit on the grassy slope and eat lunch. Tourists visit the Eisenhower Memorial. Limited skiing, snowboarding, and sledding occurs. An access road bisects the park diagonally, further reducing the park's use for recreational activities.

Use of and impacts to Quyana Park associated with the project have been avoided and minimized to the extent possible. The project would use about 0.25 acres at the northern edge of the park to expand the parking area, and minor additional area associated with structural supports for the pedestrian overpass. ARRC will incorporate into the project mitigation and enhancement measures including landscaping to buffer the park from the parking area, rehabilitation of the Eisenhower Memorial, and expansion of the memorial's plaza area.

Conclusion

FTA finds that the project's impacts on Quyana Park constitute a *de minimis* impact. Appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures have been incorporated into the project, and the project does not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f). The current uses of the park would be enhanced by landscaping, rehabilitation of the Eisenhower Memorial, and expansion of the plaza area of the memorial.

This finding is conditional. A final determination will be made after hearing from the official with jurisdiction over the park, and after the public has had notice of the project's impacts on the park and an opportunity to comment on them.



Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
Section 4(f) Evaluation



Figure 3

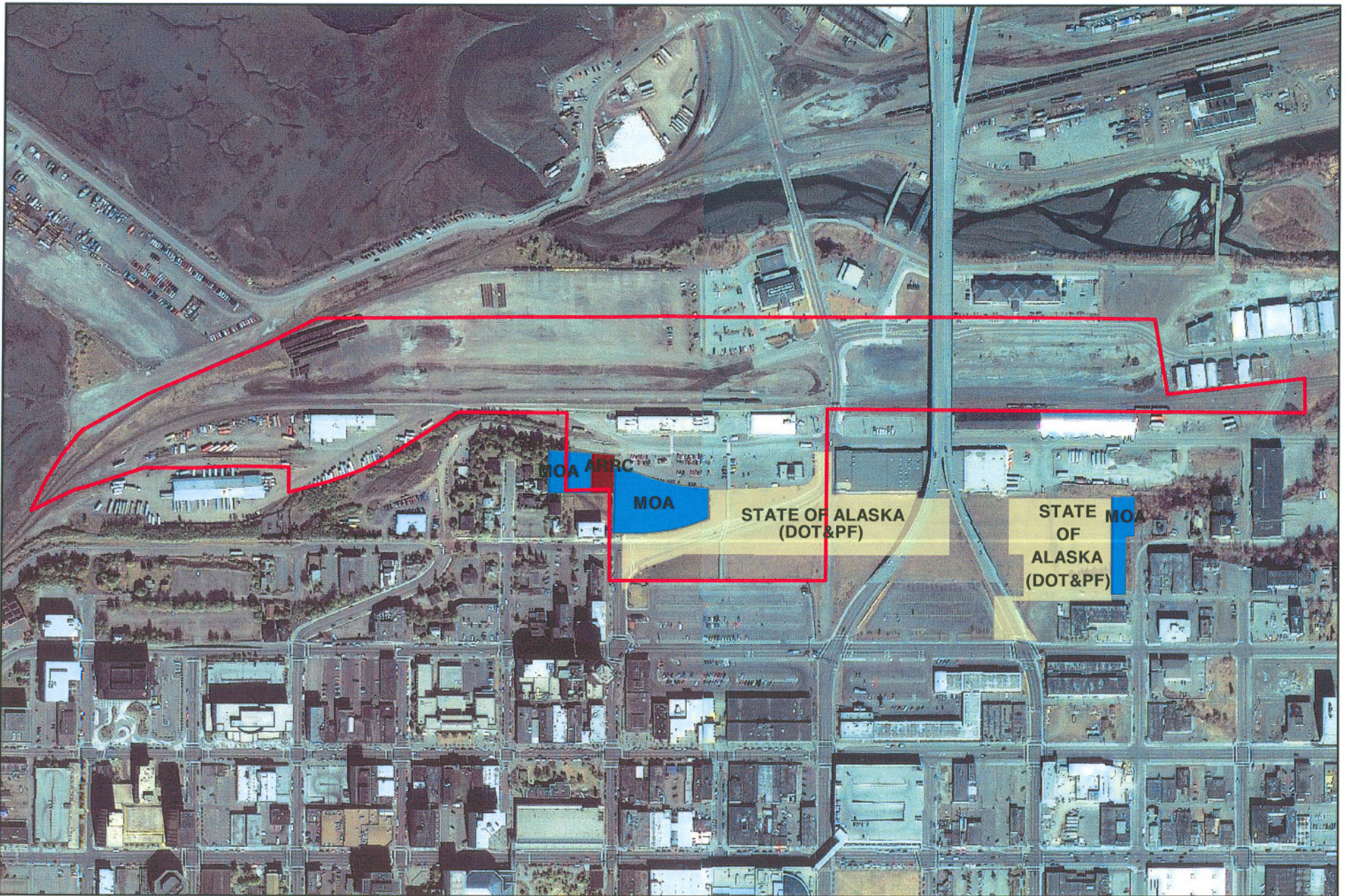
Section 4(f) Properties



- Legend
- Ship Creek ITC Project Area
 - Park
 - Historic Feature



Date: 02/24/03 | Data Source: Municipality of Anchorage
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**Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
Section 4(f) Evaluation**

Legend

- Ship Creek ITC Project Area
- ARRC
- MOA
- STATE OF ALASKA

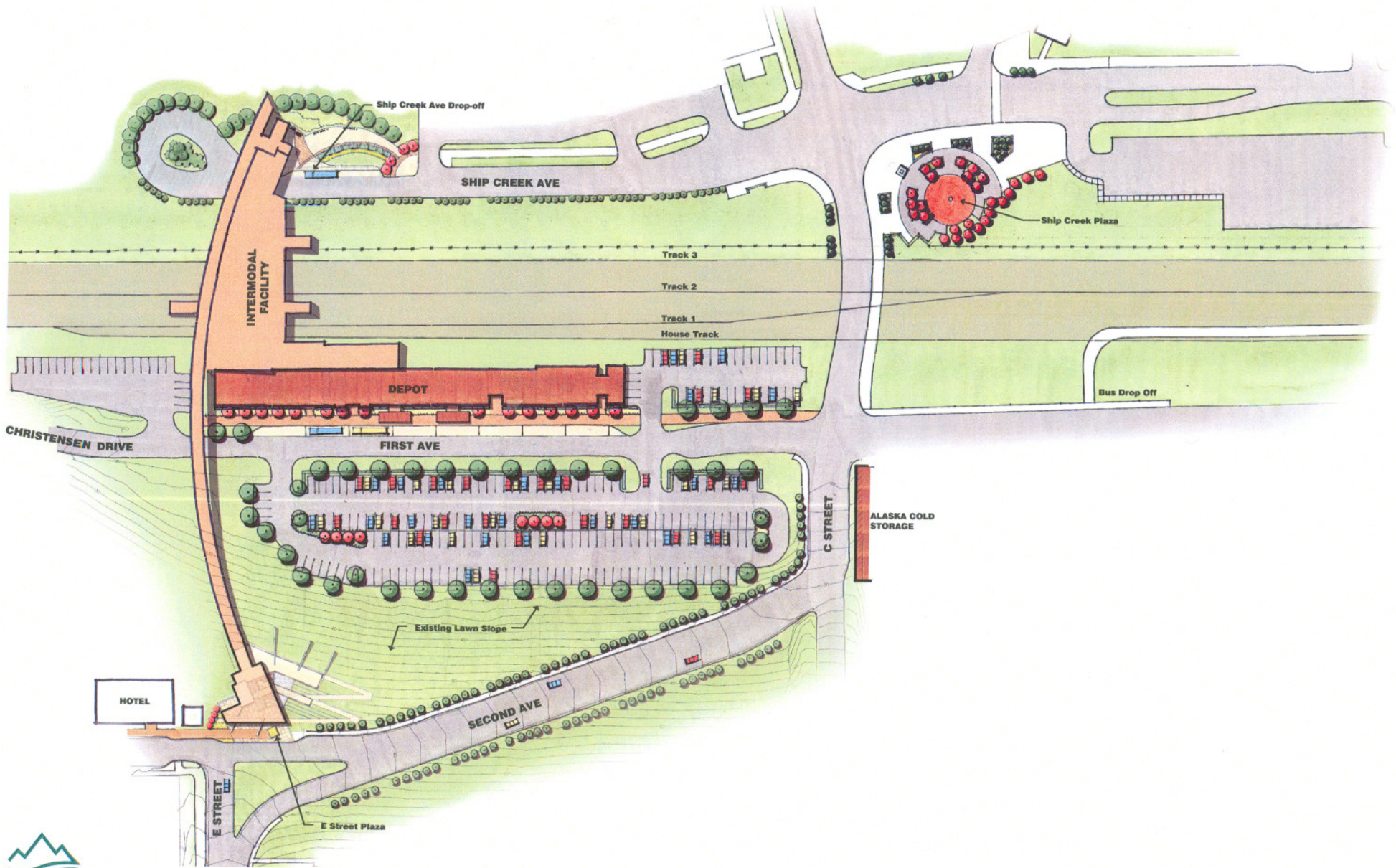


Figure 4
Park
Ownership



0 250 500 Feet

Date: 02/24/03 Data Source: Municipality of Anchorage
File: x:\09585\shipcreekitc\mapdocs\Figure2Sec4(f).mxd



Anchorage Daily News

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department requests public comments on revisions to plans for the Alaska Railroad's proposed Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center.

The revised plans would affect Quiyana Park, and currently call for expansion of a parking lot adjacent to 1st Avenue using approximately 0.25 acres of park area, adding landscaping adjacent to the parking lot, enhancing the Eisenhower Memorial adjacent to 2nd Avenue, and constructing a covered pedestrian walkway over the park with walkway entrance structure at 2nd Avenue and E Street. The revised plans eliminate a proposed parking garage with rooftop park area in Quiyana Park as well as proposed bus turnaround area adjacent to 2nd Avenue at E Street.

Information about the project is available at:

www.AlaskaRailroad.com/projects
The Parks and Recreation Department,
120 South Bragaw St.
or by visiting www.muni.org/parks

Information will also be available at:

The Alaska Railroad's Project Open House
scheduled for 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 24,
at the Historic Ship Creek Depot, 411 1st Avenue.

Please submit comments by:

February 3, 2007, to the Parks and Recreation Department,
P.O. Box 196650 Anchorage, Alaska 99519, or fax to the
Department at 278-6595, or email to koroseitj@muni.org.
For more information please call Parks and Recreation at 343-4503.





Ship Creek ITC EA Reevaluation - Quyana Park/Section 4(f) Analysis

PROJECT FACTS

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) worked with the Municipality of Anchorage Department of Parks and Recreation during preparation of the original 2003 Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) project. During preparation of the EA, a Section 4(f) Evaluation was undertaken to assess potential impacts to Quyana Park, which is located along the buttress slope between 1st and 3rd Avenues near the ARRC Anchorage Depot. Since that time, design has progressed (*See Figure 1 - Facility Site Plan*), various changes to the project scope have been identified, and an EA Reevaluation is being conducted. This fact sheet describes the changes relevant to Quyana Park, summarizes current U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requirements for impacts to parkland, describes the intent to make a determination that the project will have a *de minimus* impact on Quyana Park, and requests public comment related to that determination.

Project Modifications Affecting Quyana Park since the Original Section 4(f)

Parking Garage

The scope of the project originally included constructing a parking garage with a rooftop park on the footprint of the existing parking lot along 1st Avenue immediately south of the Historic Anchorage Depot and extending up the buttress slope into Quyana Park to 2nd Avenue. As design progressed, construction of the parking garage at the planned location was determined not feasible, primarily because the slope (the Buttress) was constructed after the 1964 Good Friday earthquake in order to stabilize the 4th Avenue slide area and there are numerous building restrictions on the slope that make construction on the slope prohibitively expensive.

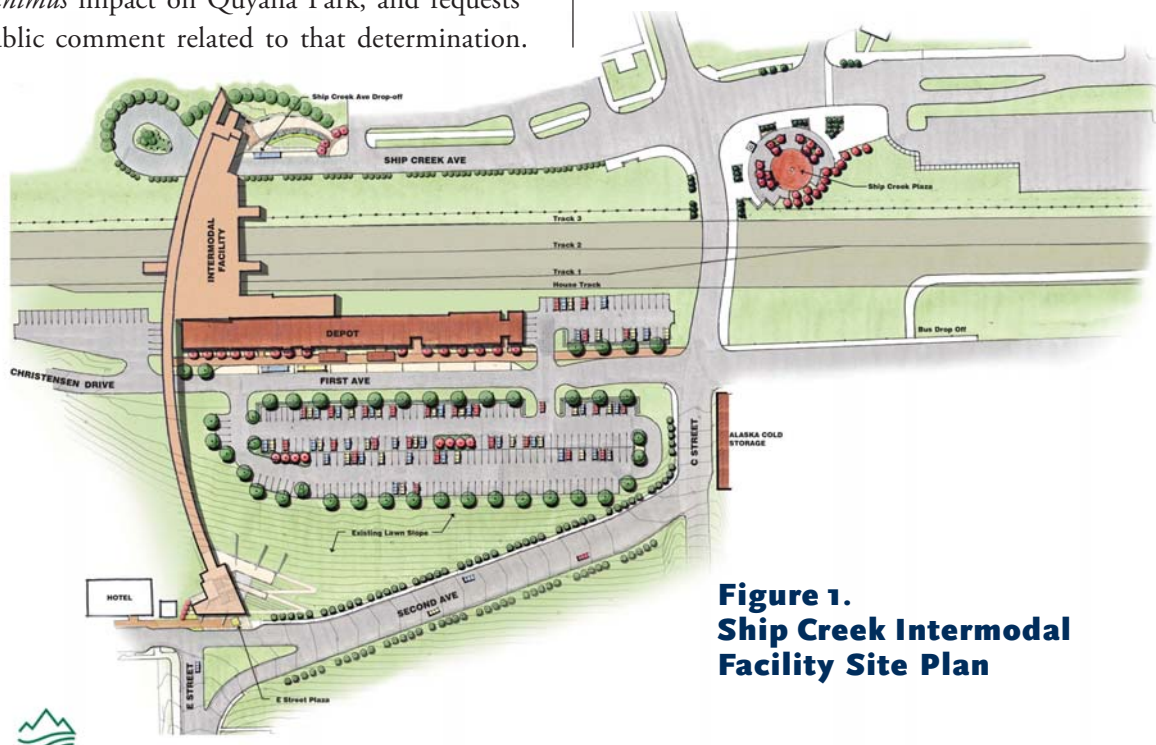


Figure 1.
**Ship Creek Intermodal
Facility Site Plan**

Since constructing a parking garage is not feasible, upgrades to the existing parking lot have been designed. To meet current municipal standards for parking lots, including size of parking stalls and adequate circulation and access, and to provide landscaping to enhance the appearance and provide a buffer between the parking lot and the park, a small area of the Quyana Park (approximately 0.25 acres) would be used.

Eisenhower Memorial/ Pedestrian Overpass

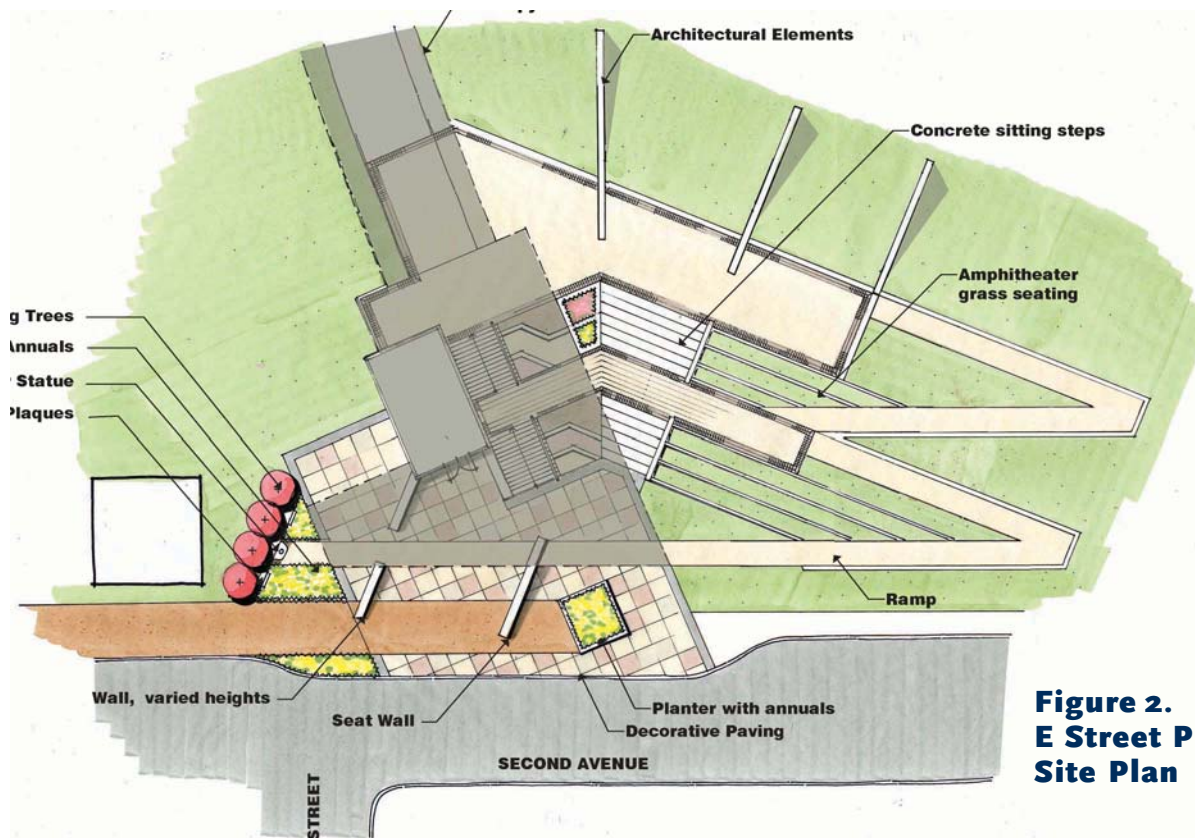
The original project included construction of a bus stop and pedestrian drop off at the intersection of E Street and 2nd Avenue; incorporation of the Eisenhower Memorial into the rooftop park; and a grade-separated pedestrian overpass between the Eisenhower Memorial plaza and Ship Creek Avenue.

In the current plan, the grade-separated pedestrian overpass would still be constructed, with minor use of the park for the structural supports for this overpass. Also, to mitigate for the

use of 0.25 acres of Quyana Park for the parking lot and these structural supports, enhancement of the area near the existing Eisenhower Memorial would be incorporated into the project. The Eisenhower Memorial area would be rehabilitated and upgraded to be somewhat larger than it is now, and access to the memorial would be improved. The area would serve as the primary entrance to the pedestrian overpass between E Street and Ship Creek Avenue and over the expanded railroad tracks at the intermodal facility. The bus stop would be located along 1st Avenue in front of the ARRC depot. (See Figure 2 - E Street Plaza Site Plan)

Section 4(f) Requirements and De Minimis Impacts

Section 4(f) refers to the original section within the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 that set the requirement for consideration of park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transporta-



**Figure 2.
E Street Plaza
Site Plan**

tion project development. Section 4(f) resources include any publicly owned public park, recreation area, or refuge or any publicly or privately owned historic site.

Since the time the original Section 4(f) Evaluation for this project was completed, the USDOT issued Guidance for Determining De Minimis Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources (December 13, 2005). Impacts of a transportation project on a Section 4(f) resource, such as Quyana Park, may be determined to be de minimis if:

- The transportation use of the Section 4(f) resource, together with any impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation or enhancement measures incorporated into the project, does not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f);
- The official(s) with jurisdiction over the property are informed of the intent to make the de minimis impact finding based on their written concurrence that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the property for protection under Section 4(f); and
- The public has been afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the effects of the project on the protected activities, features, and attributes of the Section 4(f) resource.

Use of, and Impacts to, Quyana Park

The park is currently used primarily by residents and visitors for enjoying views to the north and northwest, as the park offers a wonderful view of Cook Inlet and the Alaska Range, including Denali. As the park is on a steep slope, uses for other types of recreation are limited. During the summer, downtown residents, workers, and visitors occasionally sit on the grassy slope and eat lunch. Tourists visit the Eisenhower Memorial on its southern edge. A very limited amount of skiing, snowboarding, and sledding occurs. Second Avenue bisects the park diagonally, substantially

reducing the function of the park for recreational activities.

Use of and impacts to Quyana Park associated with the project have been avoided and minimized to the extent possible. As noted above, the project would use approximately 0.25 acres at the northern edge of the park to expand the parking area and provide a landscaped buffer between the park and the parking lot. Minor additional area will be required to accommodate the structural supports for the pedestrian overpass. Mitigation or enhancement measures that will be incorporated into the project include addition of landscaping to improve the appearance of the parking area, rehabilitation of the Eisenhower Memorial, and expansion of the plaza area of the memorial.

Public Comments Requested

ARRC encourages the public to submit comments regarding our determination of *de minimis* impacts to Quyana Park. The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department requests comments be submitted by January 26.

- Comments may be submitted to Parks and Recreation Department
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519
Fax to (907) 278-6595
Email to koroseitj@muni.org.
- Comments may be submitted to Alaska Railroad Corporation
Attn: Project Public Comment
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Fax to (907) 265-2365
Email: public_comment@akrr.com



Ship Creek ITC EA Reevaluation - Quyana Park/Section 4(f) Analysis

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we finalize the Re-Evaluation of the Environmental Assessment for the Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Your Comments:

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973
or voice 1-800-770-8255



Email public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365

COMMENT FORM



Municipality of Anchorage

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Mayor Mark Begich

Parks & Recreation Department

R.F. Krochalis
Regional Administrator, Region X
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
915 Second Avenue
Federal Bldg., Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002

February 9, 2007

Re: Alaska RR Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center Project: Quiyana Park Impacts and Section 4(f) Issues

Dear Mr. Krochalis:

The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department supports the revised plan concept for the Alaska Railroad Corporation's Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center as described in your letter of December 14, 2006. The Department believes that the revised project, together with proposed mitigation and additional mitigation recommended below, would not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of Quiyana (Quyana) Park.

The Parks and Recreation Department presented information about the revised plans and 4(f) Evaluation to the municipal Parks and Recreation Commission at its January 11 regular meeting. The Municipality posted information about the project on its web site and requested public comments. In addition, the Municipality published a notice of the revised plans in the *Anchorage Daily News* on January 20, and requested comments from the public during a two-week period. No comments were received.

The revised project would use approximately 0.25 acres of park land for a parking lot adjacent to 1st Avenue, and additional land for the elevated walkway terminus adjacent to 2nd Avenue and for the walkway supports. The proposed project as revised no longer includes a parking garage and associated roof-top park area.

Impacts to viewshed would be minimized by lowering the profile of the structures. Proposed mitigation includes enhancement to the Eisenhower Memorial adjacent to 2nd Avenue, and landscaping adjacent to the 1st Avenue parking lot.

Parks and Recreation requests the following additional mitigation for anticipated impacts:

- Provide water services and appropriate equipment for irrigation to maintain proposed landscaping and turf areas.

Community, Security, Prosperity

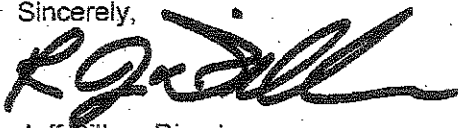
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- Provide additional landscaping to visually enhance structures and create appropriate buffers.
- Incorporate ornamental fencing in appropriate areas, such as along 1st Avenue, to continue the design theme of nearby Christensen Drive improvements.

Parks and Recreation looks forward to continuing to work with project designers and engineers as the project moves forward. We anticipate entering into a joint use agreement with the Alaska Railroad Corporation regarding shared use of parking and other property issues.

Please let us know if we may answer any further questions.

Sincerely,



Jeff Dillon, Director

Cc: Deborah Allen, P.E., ARRC
Barbara Hotchkin, ARRC
Mary Jane Michael, Executive Director, MOA Office of Economic and Community
Development