



# Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center

## PROJECT FACTS

### Project Scope

The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) is pursuing an Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) and associated improvements (pedestrian amenities, transit infrastructure, parking, track modifications, etc.) in the Ship Creek area. The Ship Creek ITC has been part of the vision and plans for the Ship Creek basin and Anchorage Downtown areas for several years.

The purpose is to facilitate connections between transportation modes (rail, air, marine, public transit, taxi, private vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian) and to improve links to the downtown Anchorage business district to meet passenger transit needs over the next 30 years.

A secondary goal is to provide an efficient and safe connection between downtown Anchorage and the Ship Creek area, creating better access for residents and visitors. The Ship Creek ITC project is designed to complement existing and projected developments in the Ship Creek area. Project components include:

1. A new intermodal transportation center with adequate baggage and passenger services, convenient and safe passenger boarding zones, well-defined arrival and departure areas and platforms, signage, appropriate security, along

with complementary retail and office space (i.e., news stands, transit-related offices, for example).

2. Pedestrian connections between the ITC and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) downtown, and between Ship Creek and 2nd avenues.
3. Public parking improvements and expansion.

### Project Benefits

- The ITC project addresses the inadequacy of ARRC's existing Historic Ship Creek Depot. The current facility has inefficient baggage handling, limited passenger service capability, and baggage handling and passenger loading/unloading activities that share a platform, resulting in conflicts. The depot location also affords poor traffic circulation and poor pedestrian access.
- The project constructs two new tracks and rehabilitates two existing tracks. This includes one new passenger track and one new main that will allow passenger and freight through traffic to bypass the intermodal facility without disrupting passenger operations. The new and rehabilitated passenger tracks will provide more flexibility in operations and provide the infrastructure for future commuter rail service.



*ECI/Hyer architectural design model view from the south.*



*Architect's pedestrian bridge rendering.*



## Facility Site Plan

to the Mat-Su Valley. By 2024, such service may handle 40,000 passengers / week, translating into an additional 1,000 commuters per day moving through the depot. The morning commuter period alone may include four train arrivals / departures between 7:00-9:00 a.m.

- The project addresses the inadequate parking areas and sidewalks leading to the depot.
- The project will accommodate an estimated 3% annual growth in mass transit via rail over the next 30 years. Projected rail traffic increases would require multiple trains on the platform, and construction of additional tracks and platforms to enable efficient, safe boarding.
- Long-term projections consider increased train activity via shuttle service from downtown to the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA), where ARRC's rail station opened in May 2003. By 2030, up to 60 trains may depart / arrive from the Ship Creek ITC per day – 10 trains would run in the critical morning time frame. This figure includes the shuttle service between TSAIA and downtown Anchorage, trains running between Anchorage and Seward, and trains running between Anchorage and Whittier. The long-term shuttle service projection assumes 30 minute headways (4 trains/hour), 12 hours per day.
- Projections also anticipate increased rail activity from development of commuter rail service
- The project takes into account other impacts from commuter service, including the need for parking for commuters that drive a vehicle into Anchorage at the beginning of the week, commute via train throughout the week, then drive their vehicle home at the end of the work week.
- The project recognizes that the current depot was designed as a train passenger waiting area, and is ill-equipped to interface with other modes of transportation. Project plans call for facilities and infrastructure that can accommodate pedestrian and vehicle traffic circulation, and efficient inter-modal transfers.

## Project Status

### NEPA

- Initiated public scoping on Sept. 23, 2002, regarding the project's purpose, need and proposed scope. Organized a public open house during the comment period, which ended October 24, 2002.
- An Environmental Assessment was released for public comment in mid-April 2003.
- A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued by FTA in June 2003.

- In spring 2006, the possible closure of North “C” Street was considered. An open house on the issue was held April 25, 2006. Due to public sentiment, this option was not adopted.
- EA re-evaluations will continue to be conducted as necessary if the scope of the project is modified.

## DESIGN

- A contract for design of the project was awarded in July 2004. The awardee is ECI/Hyer, an Anchorage-based architectural firm.
- The final preferred facility layout incorporates continued use of the existing historic depot within the new intermodal transportation center facility.
- The schematic design phase was complete in July 2005. Following ARRC Board approval, the design was unveiled to the public at an open house on October 6, 2005. Final design for Phase 1 (track embankment and utility work) was completed in early 2007.
- Additional design work will be accomplished in 2009.

## CONSTRUCTION

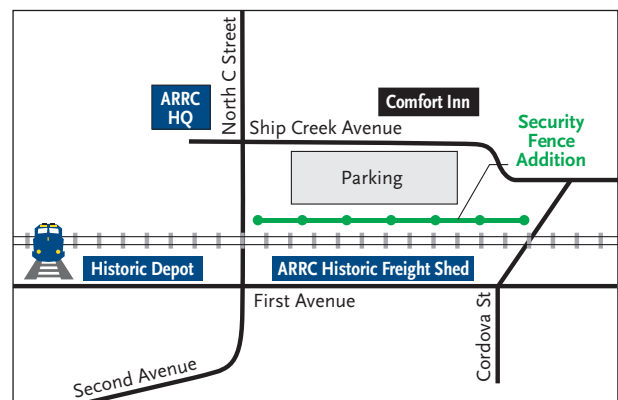
- Construction of the project’s first phase includes relocation of utilities and construction of two new tracks and rehabilitation of two tracks between the existing depot and Ship Creek Avenue.
- In June 2007, the Phase 1 contract was awarded to Pruhs Construction, which completed earthwork for track construction, utility



Earth work for additional tracks got underway in 2007.

relocation, electrical system and train signal equipment installation, and storm drainage construction in summer and fall 2008.

- ARRC internal forces are responsible for track construction. Crews completed track switches in summer and fall 2007, and constructed two of the new tracks during winter 2007-08. Work resumed on remaining track in September 2008 and was complete in April 2009.
- Phase 1 will likely be complete in 2009, with work during the year including storm drainage upgrades, existing track rehabilitation, new passenger platform construction, and finish work such as paving and landscaping.
- Phase 2a involves the Historic Ship Creek Depot. Thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Phase 2 work will begin in 2009-2010 to include exterior upgrades (such as painting), relocation of mechanical equipment from the roof top and wall mounts, boiler replacement, electrical system upgrades, and removal of an underground storage tank. These upgrades will allow for future depot re-configuration on the first floor.
- A separate transit enhancement and security project is also slated for 2009-2010 with ARRA funding. Nearly 1,000 feet of fencing will be added to maintain a physical barrier between train operations and general public access areas. Fencing will be installed between North C Street and Cordova along the parking lot across the street from the Comfort Inn (*see map below*).
- Pending funding, future Ship Creek ITC phases will include the following (*next page*):



- **Phase 2b** – The remainder of Phase 2 includes construction of a service/office building and completion of the depot reconfiguration to expand the depot lobby, modernize ticketing and baggage handline operations, and provide complementary retail space.
- **Phase 3** – Construct the new departure lounge over the tracks and construct a pedestrian sky-bridge connecting the project with downtown Anchorage.

## Project Costs

- Initial \$22.2 million funded for conceptual work, preliminary design, environmental documentation, final design and construction of Phase 1.

An additional \$3.75 million was funded 2007-2009 to continue Phase 1 work. Funding is 91% by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) with a 9% match by the Alaska Railroad.

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act channeled an additional \$7.425 million through the FTA to fund Phase 2 depot improvements in 2009-2010. Another \$300,000 in ARRA money is funding the fencing.

Phase 2 work in 2009-2010 funded by:



Phase 1 work on the additional tracks parallel to the depot continues in spring 2009 with expected completion by year's end.



ARRA "Stimulus" funding will add security fencing.