

➤ Alaska Railroad Seward Freight Dock Expansion Planning  
Senate Transportation Committee – March 31, 2026

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# ➤ Agenda

- Alaska Railroad Overview
- Port of Seward Master Planning
- Seward Freight Dock Expansion
- Questions



# ➤ Structure & Mission

**STRUCTURE:** The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) is an independent corporation owned by State of Alaska. Mandated to operate without state funds; responsible for financial and legal obligations.

**MISSION:** Through excellent customer service and sound business management practices, provide safe, efficient and economical transportation and real estate services that support and grow economic development opportunities for the State of Alaska.



Photo courtesy: Frank Keller

**ALASKA**  
RAILROAD

# Operating Information

## Operating Data

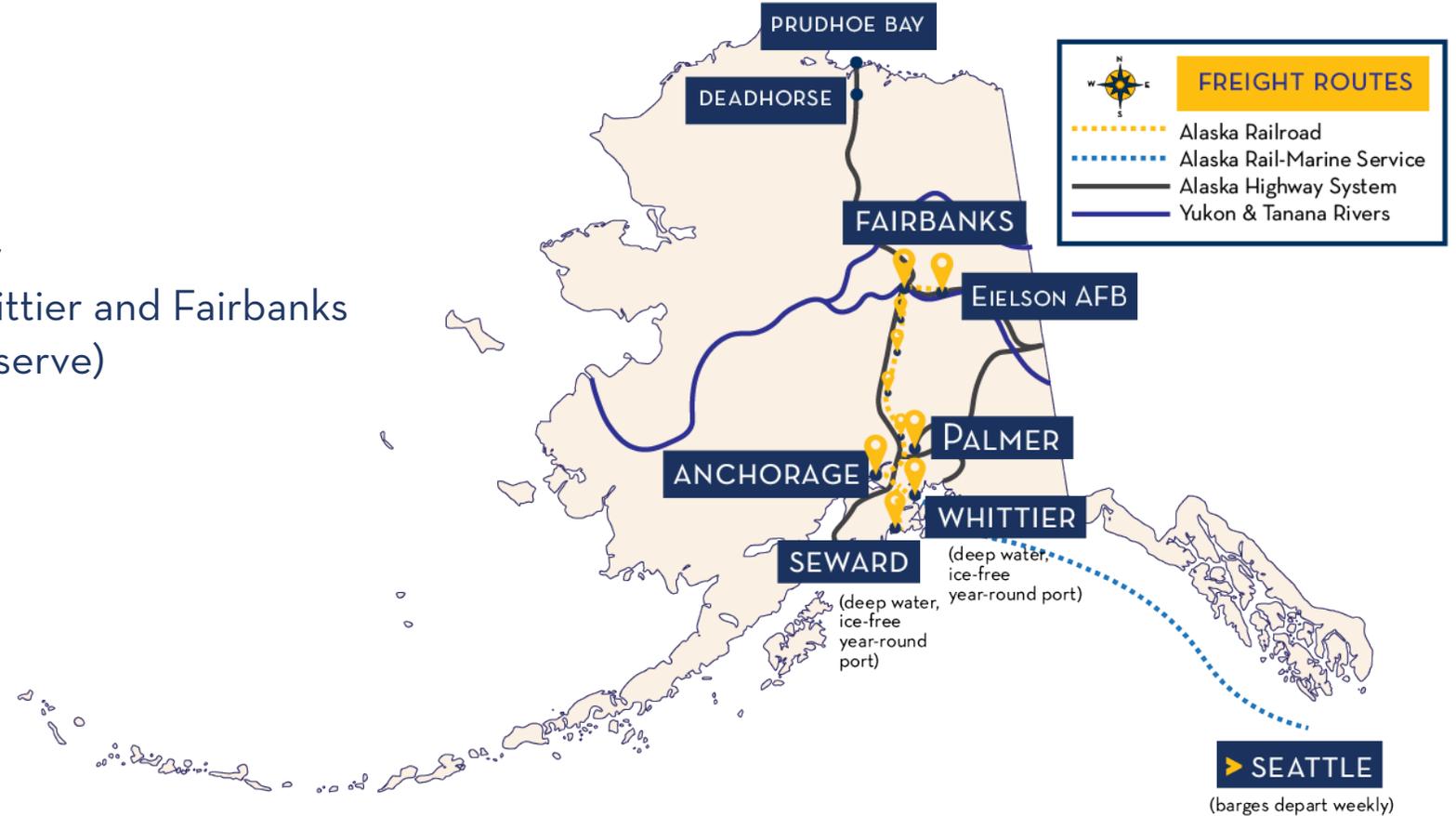
- 683 Total miles of track
- 1030 Freight cars (owned & leased)
- 45 Passenger cars
- 55 Locomotives
- Port facilities in Seward and Whittier
- Terminals in Anchorage, Seward, Whittier and Fairbanks
- 36,000 acres of land (operating & reserve)

## Operating Statistics

- Half a million+ passengers
- 3.9 million tons of freight (2025)

## Employees

- 695 Full-time year-round employees
- 109 Seasonal hires
- 2/3 are members of 5 unions



# Port of Seward - ARRC Reserve



Rail Yard

Barge Basin

Freight Dock

Passenger Dock

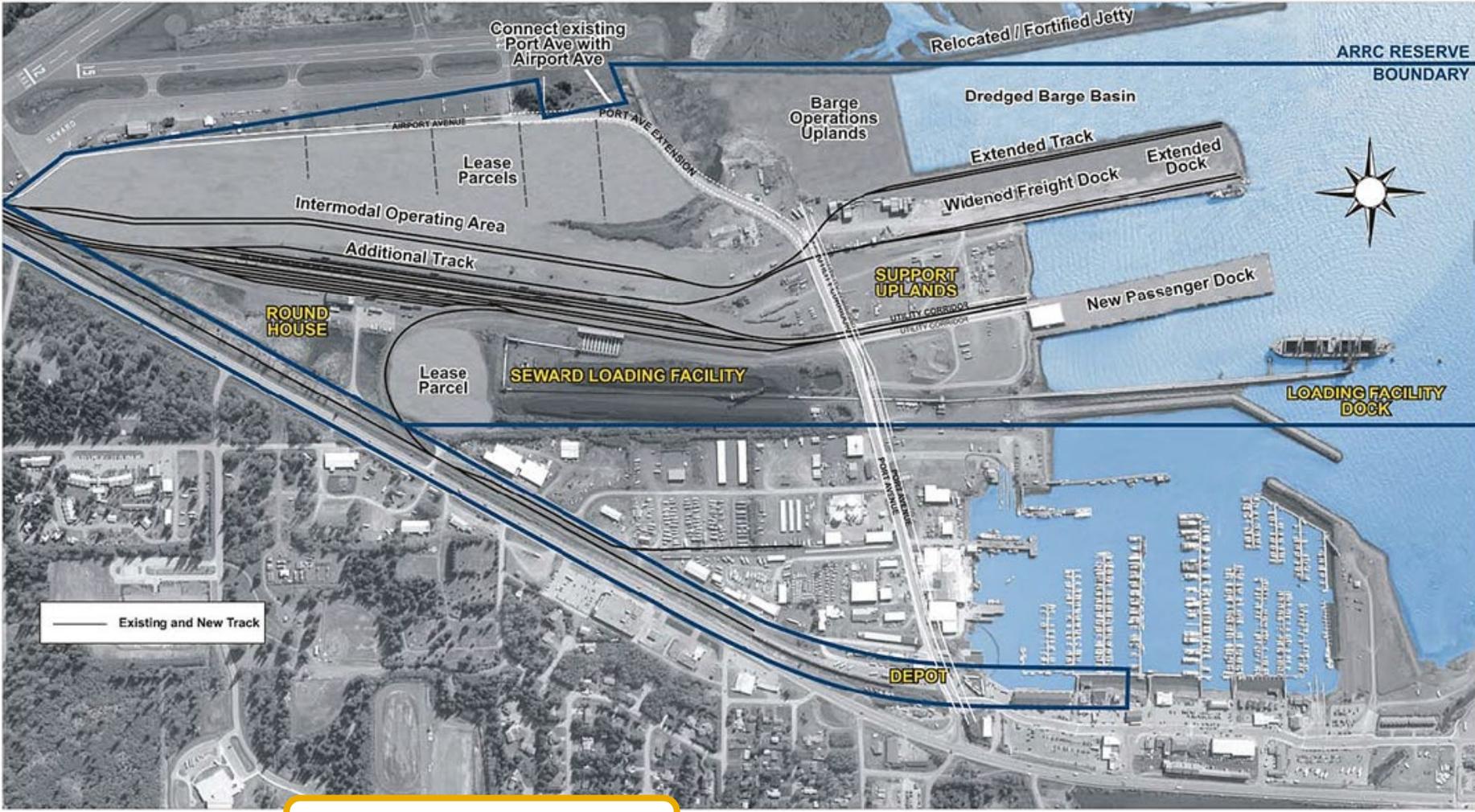
Energy Dock



# 2017 Master Plan: Railport Seward

ARRC pursuing Master Plan recommendations:

- Passenger dock and terminal replacement
- Freight dock expansion
- Upland development
- Transportation corridor improvements
- Real estate parcel leasing



# ➤ Seward Passenger Dock Replacement



- \$137M new Seward Passenger Dock and Terminal Facility
- Necessary to replace aging infrastructure
- Funded through ARRC revenue bonds secured by 30-year pier usage agreement with Royal Caribbean Group, guaranteeing 140,000 guests annually; will operate as open dock
- Double-berth pier with floating barge dock will be able to accommodate wide range of vessels, including Quantum class cruise ships and side-loading marine highway vessels
- At 41,500 sq ft of enclosed space, new terminal will be largest building for community events in Seward
- \$50M shore power project funded by EPA grant with developer match
- Construction commenced in 2025, on track to welcome ships May 2026

# ➤ Seward Freight Dock



- Owned and operated by Alaska Railroad
- Year-round, deep-draft port with air, road and rail access
- 620 x 200 ft dock facility (non-uniform width)
- Serves barges, small container ships, breakbulk, fishing, and military vessels
- Receives containerized freight, mining inputs, building materials, oil & gas development materials, fuel





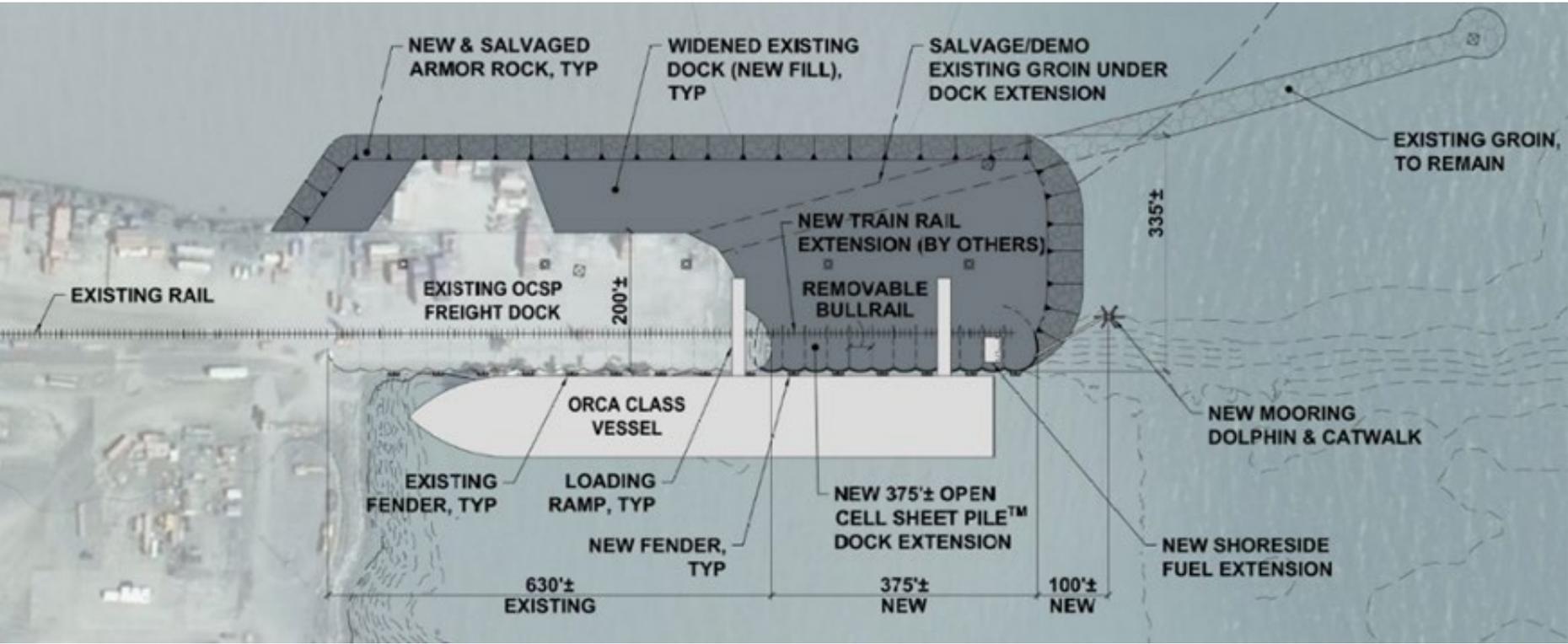
# ➤ Critical Infrastructure for Alaska LNG Project

- Seward Freight Dock expected to serve as primary pipe intake port (supplementary/surge capacity offered by Port of Alaska, Whittier, Port MacKenzie)
- 89-ft flatcars with engineered rack/bunk systems, targeting 6-7 80-ft double joints per car
- Pipe moves operate as fixed weekly train schedules (2x steady, 3-4x surge), either direct transfer to spur locations or to Fairbanks rail terminal for transloading
- Anticipating ~175 pipe train starts over 18-month window
- All expansion plans discussed today can be adapted to prioritize AKLNG logistics needs



# Freight Dock Master Plan Recommendations

## Freight Dock Expansion Plan



### Current Dimensions:

- 620 ft long
- 200 ft wide (variable width)

### Freight Dock Expansion Project Original Scope:

- Extend to 1000 ft
- Widen to 300 ft along entire length

### Purpose:

- Accommodate cargo growth
- Promote region's key industries
- Serve rural communities

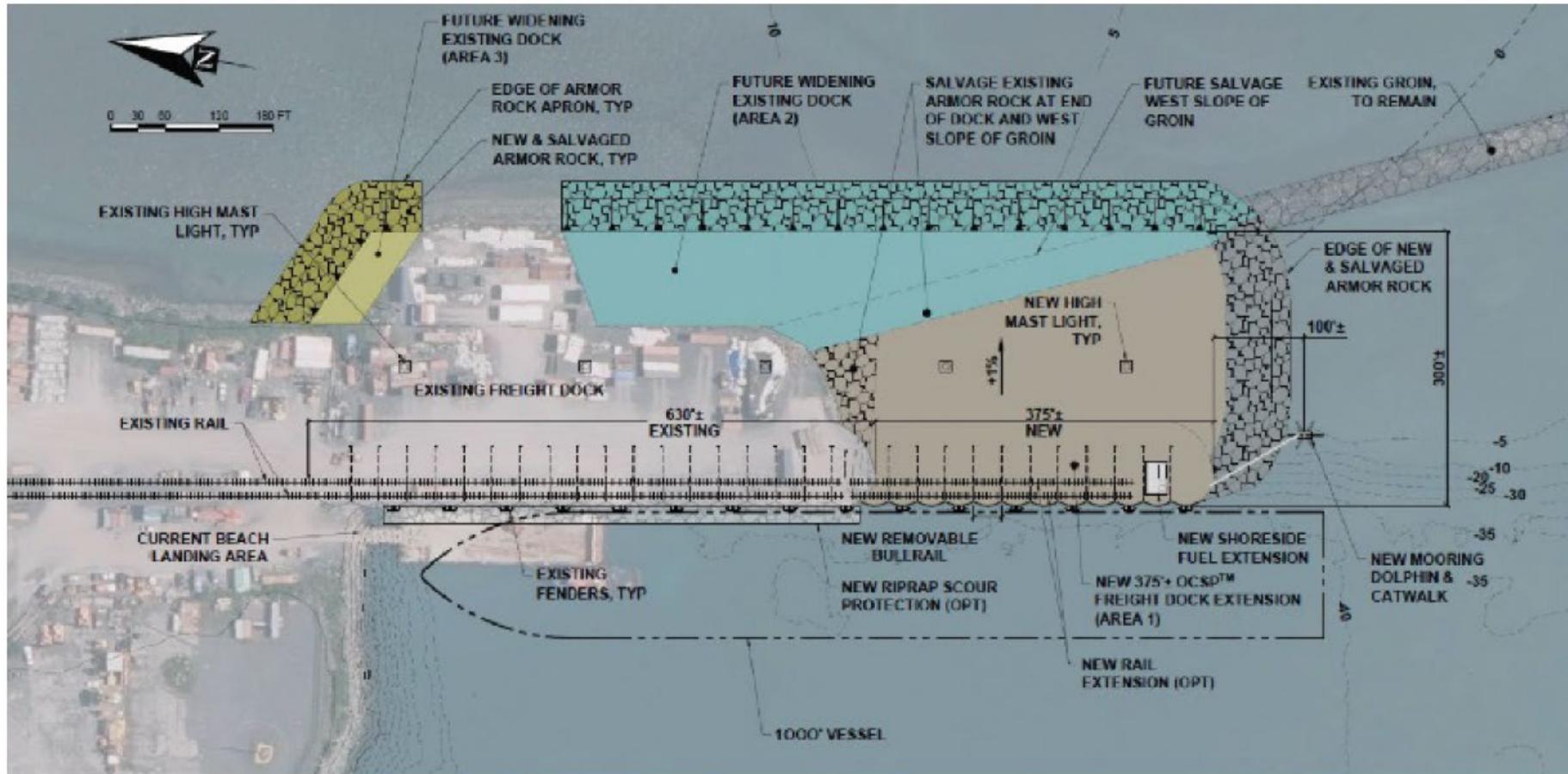
### Funding Plan:

- \$25M estimated project cost (2019)
- MARAD PIDP Grant



# Funding Delays and Project Phasing

- In 2020, ARRC was awarded \$19.8M MARAD PIDP grant; \$5.5M match funded by ARRC
- Pandemic affected delayed grant execution and caused significant construction inflation
- ARRC worked with MARAD to extend project timeline and reduce scope of work while maintaining primary project goals
- Re-scoped project will lengthen dock facility but not address widening



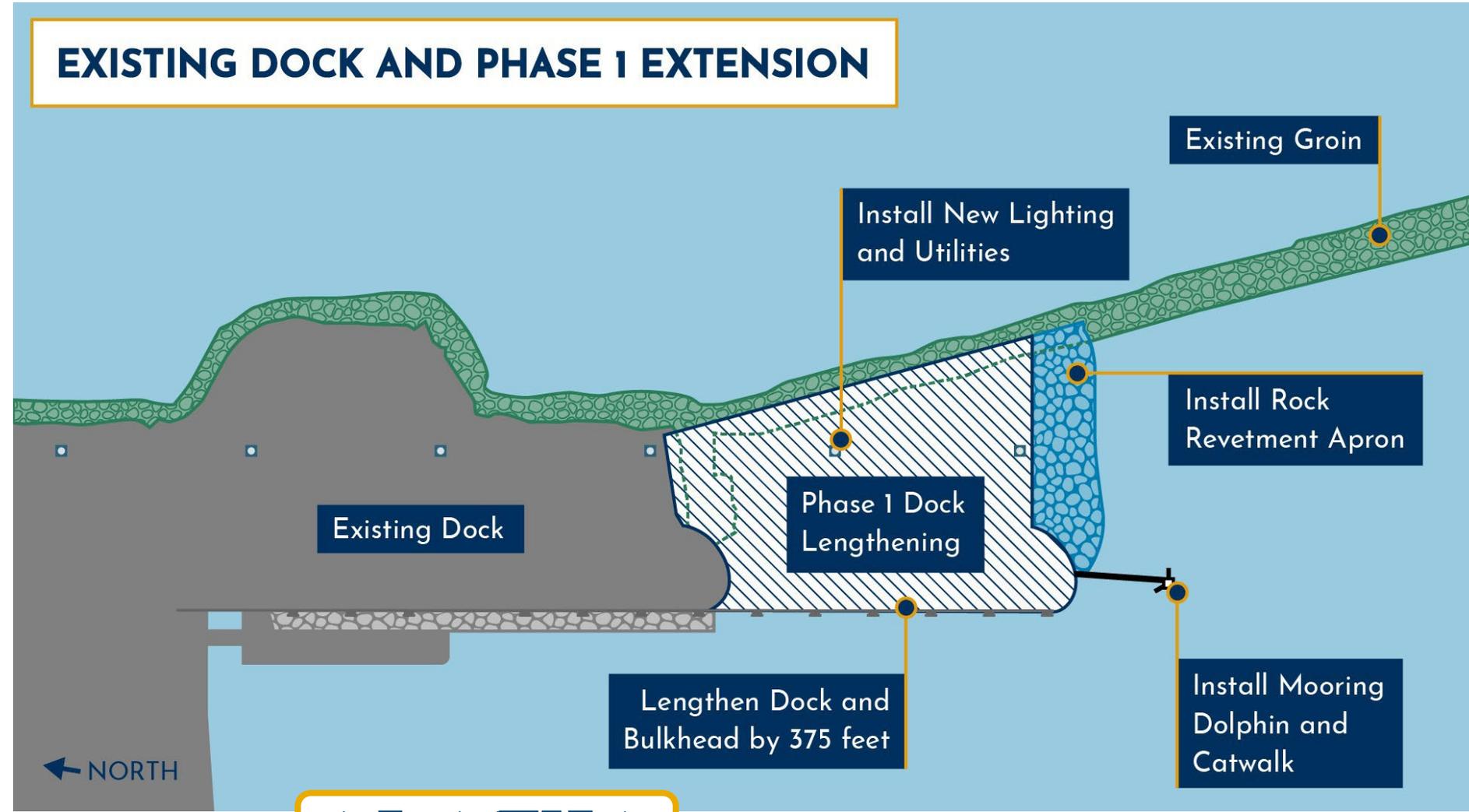
# Phase 1: Freight Dock Lengthening

\$25M project, funded by MARAD PIDP grant with ARRC match

Construction to begin late 2026, completed 2027

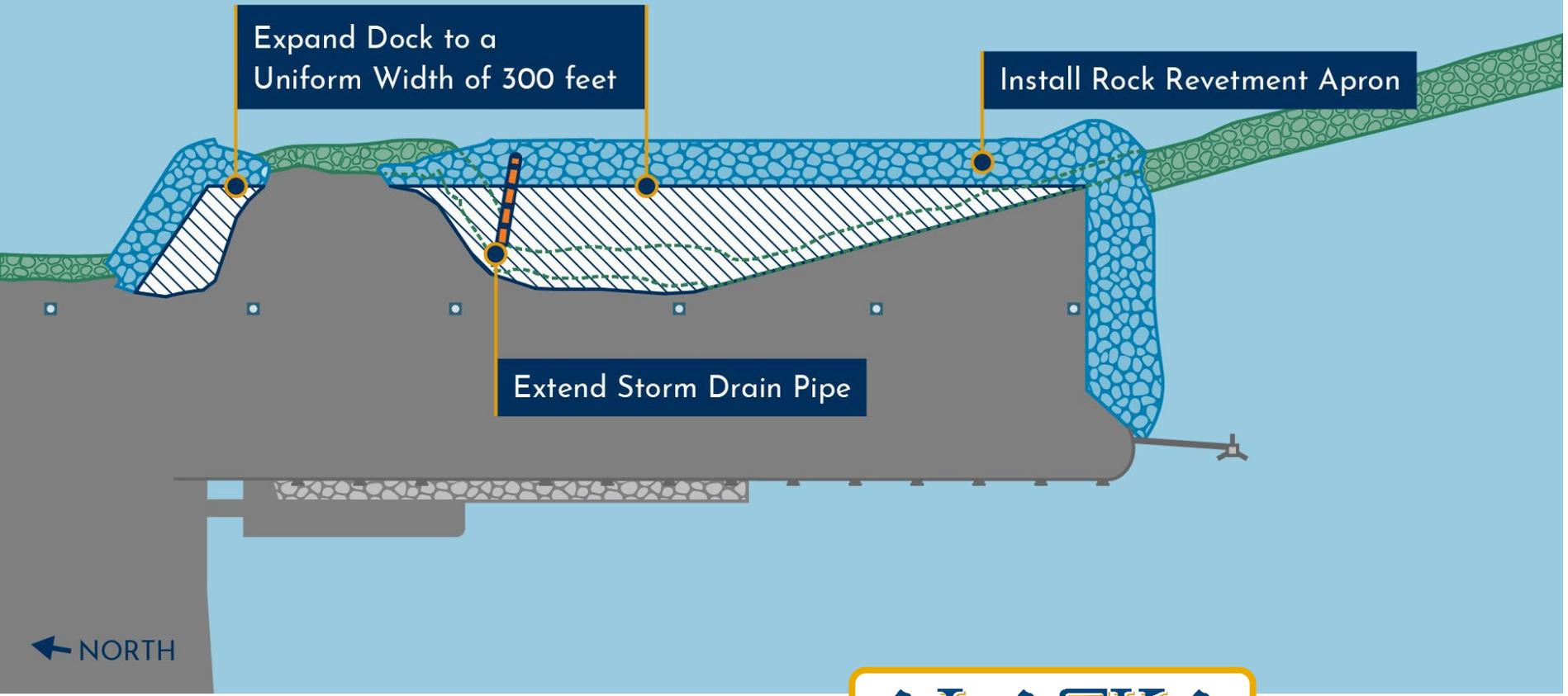
### Key Benefits:

- Improve freight intermodal operations
- Accommodate larger and more diverse vessels
- Allow simultaneous berthing
- Increase terminal capacity
- Improve efficiency
- Enhance safety
- Uplands and corridor improvements



# Phase 2: Freight Dock Widening

## IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED FOR BUILD GRANT FUNDING



Estimated \$8.5M project cost

Pending FY2026 USDOT BUILD Grant application (100% funding program)

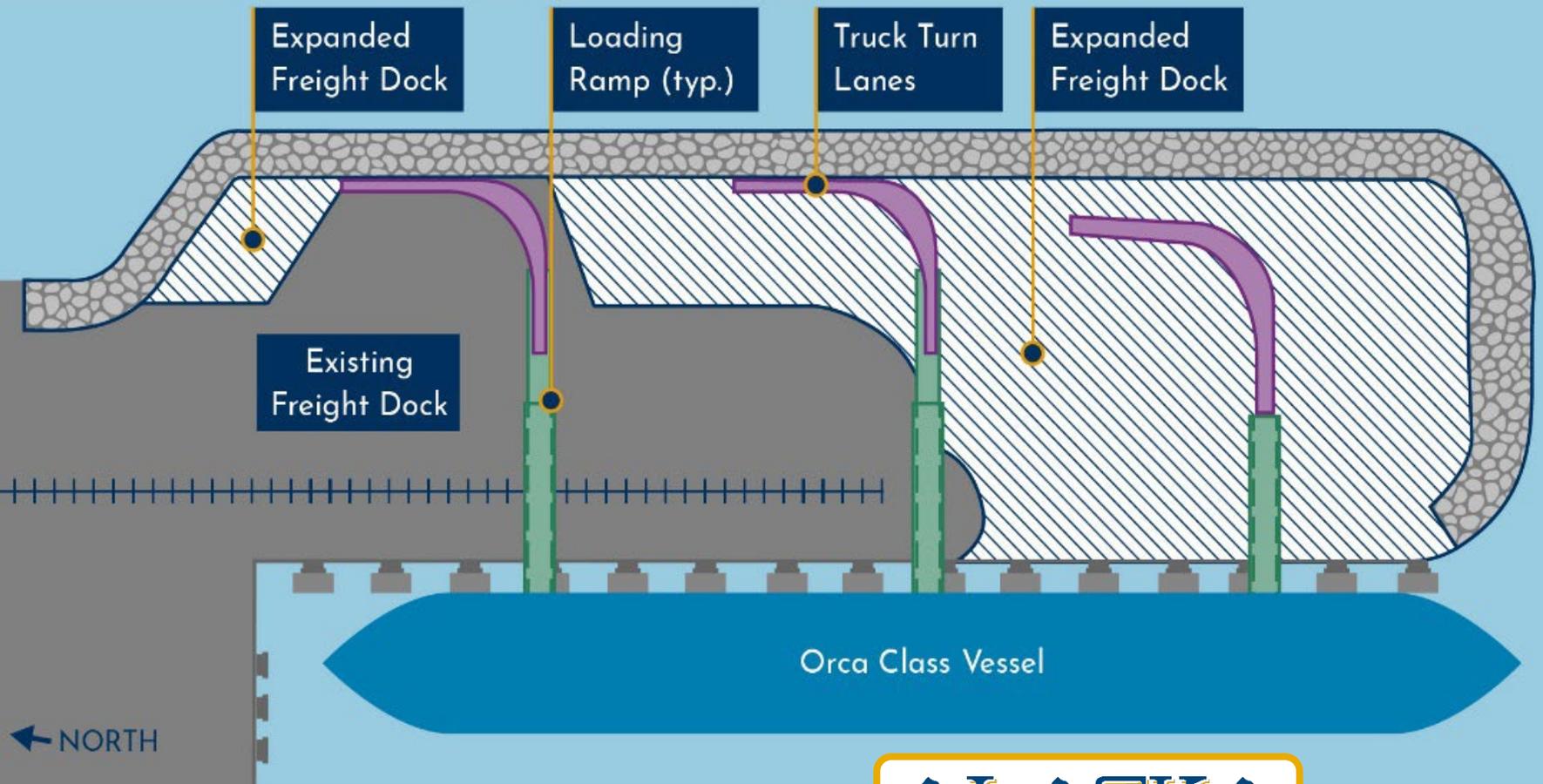
Will expand width of dock to uniform 300 ft

### Key Benefits:

- Increased dock space for vessel traffic (simultaneous berthing)
- Reduced congestion and increased efficiency
- Significantly enhanced supply chain resiliency for Port of Alaska

# Contingency for RO/RO Operations

## ORCA CLASS VESSEL UNLOADING RAMPS



Expanding to width of 300 ft is necessary to accommodate RO/RO loading ramp systems

Widening Seward dock would greatly enhance supply chain resiliency for Southcentral and Interior Alaska:

- Would allow for all three ramps
- Rail connectivity
- Proximity to Anchorage by road



# Thank You

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Photo courtesy: Ray Burton