

## **APPENDIX I: Girdwood Trolley Alternative**

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This report presents a preliminary examination of construction and operation of a trolley line in Girdwood, Alaska.

### **Background**

After long discussion among the community, MOA staff and the Assembly, a transportation corridor was identified in the Girdwood Transportation and Commercial Areas Master Plan. This corridor reserves a route for a future connection, most likely by rail, between the Alaska Railroad and the Alyeska Prince Hotel. The identified corridor passes through the center of the developable eastern and southern portions of the Municipality's Crow Creek Neighborhood area. The Crow Creek Neighborhood Plan has identified an alternative to this corridor - a trolley line that could function both as access to the resort, and a transit system for the valley.

The Transportation and Commercial Areas Master Plan summarized the planning context for Girdwood that had been developed through a number of planning efforts since 1990. The public dialog engendered by these plans and by the Transportation and Commercial Areas Master Plan itself clarified Girdwood community goals. Consistent community desires have included:

- Create a town center with a unique identity and strong connections to the resort, the surrounding residential neighborhoods, and recreational facilities.
- Promote the continued growth and economic viability of the commercial areas of the community and connect them to one another.
- Expand the town core as a commercial and community center.
- Provide a variety of year-round resort/recreational opportunities for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike.
- Establish and preserve a system of open spaces.
- Preserve Girdwood's small-town character.
- Assure that physical development blends with the area's natural qualities.
- Create an effective multi-modal circulation system for improved community-wide access and linkage.

A streetcar line in Girdwood would support several of these objectives more effectively than a rail spur. Specifically, a trolley would:

- Serve and support the new town center by linking it to residences, the school and the resort. In contrast, the preferred rail spur alignment along the western edge of the valley would connect the "Valley Entry Multimodal Center" located near the junction of the Seward Highway and the Alyeska Highway with the Alyeska Resort. This alignment is not designed to serve trips to and from the town center or provide local trips within Girdwood.
- Be located within the developed areas of Girdwood, for the most part. To be successful, a trolley line needs to be located where the people are. In order to avoid conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians, the preferred rail spur alignment would lie entirely in undeveloped parts of the valley, including areas that could be set aside for open space in the future.

- Improve circulation and internal mobility while supporting the small town character of Girdwood. The rail spur, to the extent it would be visible, would at best be neutral in its effect on Girdwood’s small-town character.
- Contribute to Girdwood’s “multi-modal circulation system” by providing intra-Girdwood transportation as well as linking travelers with the Seward Highway and the Alaska Railroad. A rail spur would not provide local trips, but would do a superior job of delivering travelers from Anchorage or other points along the railroad to the Alyeska Resort.

## Concept

The concept is to replace the approved Girdwood transportation corridor that connects the Alaska Railroad with the Alyeska Prince Hotel. In place of the railroad corridor, a trolley line would be substituted on a new alignment connecting the two end points. The design concept is simple – a single-track trolley system connecting a Valley Entry Multimodal Center located near the Seward Highway with the Girdwood Town Center and the Alyeska Resort. Depending on the line’s route, it would also be possible to serve either the Girdwood School or the Day Lodge area. The concept calls for a simple streetcar system that would run replica trolleys resembling early 20th Century cars. Unlike the rail spur, which would be operated as a branch line of the Alaska Railroad, the trolley line would be operated as a transit service by an entity separate from the Railroad. No entity has been identified to operate and maintain the proposed system. However, there are numerous options available including not-for-profit organizations, contracted for-profit service providers, a design-build-operate-maintain consortium, and the Municipality of Anchorage.

The proposed system is designed to improve mobility in Girdwood, support pedestrian and other alternatives to the private auto, help reinforce the central role of the new town center, deliver vacationers and skiers to the resort without the need for car parking, be a fun and attractive way to move around Girdwood, and as a result be an attraction and a reason to visit.

## Why a Trolley?

A trolley or streetcar line is different from a railroad in a number of ways:

- Where railroad and light rail lines are designed so as to minimize road crossings and pedestrian conflicts, successful trolley lines are located “where the people are”. They travel more slowly, stop more frequently, and generally serve more as pedestrian accelerators than as rapid transit.
- Trolleys run on rails that are lighter and smaller than conventional railroad rail. Many trolleys constructed in the US have also been built to a narrower gauge (distance between the rails) than the standard railroad.
- Trolleys, or streetcars, are short single cars that can be run individually or connected to other trolley cars and run as a train.
- Trolleys were developed to run on tracks set in streets, and as a result can turn sharp corners and climb and descent somewhat steeper hills than a standard railroad.
- Trolleys are normally electrically powered, and as a result make less noise than a passenger train and generate no smoke.
- Trolleys are designed to provide service within a community or to make short trips between communities, not to run long distances between two cities.



The net effect of these physical aspects of a trolley line, when applied to Girdwood, is to have a line much closer to existing streets, businesses and residences that would become part of the fabric of the Girdwood community. It would be both a distinctive element of the community and a way to move people from one end of Girdwood to the other and to a multitude of places in between.

It is, of course, possible to buy ersatz trolley cars built on a bus chassis than run in the street. Buses or bus trolleys are more flexible than a rail trolley line, but are also less attractive to riders

and tend to generate much less related development along the route. Rail lines have a visible permanence that can attract investment. The difference applied to Girdwood can be best summed up as: a rail based trolley line would become part of Girdwood and the “Girdwood experience”, and would likely encourage complimentary development. A bus trolley would be essentially a cute shuttle bus.

The function of a trolley, compared to a railroad spur, would be:

- To serve community trips as well as visitor trips. It would transport people living or staying near the line to the Girdwood town center, the school, and the ski area. It would be possible to stay in the parts of town served by the trolley and go skiing or to the resort without driving.
- To also carry passengers from the rail line to the hotel, although a transfer would be required at the Girdwood rail station.
- To function as the local transit system for Girdwood, rather than as a branch line of the Alaska Railroad. As a result the trolley would cost more to operate.

**“Vintage streetcars have proven to be a popular and viable local transit option in a number of communities.”**

**- Congress for the New Urbanism**

### Physical Feasibility, Impacts

In comparison to a standard railroad, a trolley line can be built with steeper grades and sharper curves. This greater physical flexibility has allowed trolley lines to be built in and to serve urban contexts. The primary advantage to Girdwood of a trolley line is that it can be routed closer to housing and businesses in order to serve local trip needs as well as visitor travel. Because a trolley can follow urban streets and because it can follow the contours of the land a little more closely than can a regular railroad or a light rail line, a trolley could both move visitors from a connection with the Alaska Railroad along Turnagain Arm and carry residents from point to point within Girdwood.

If the trolley is powered by overhead electric lines, the impacts of a passing trolley on nearby residences are also generally much less noticeable than those of a passing passenger train. Noise impacts are lessened in several ways:

- Because the trolley uses electric traction motors, rather than diesel engines, there is no engine noise and no exhaust;
- Trolley cars and rails are lighter than standard railroad engines, cars and rails, thereby generating less wheel-on-rail noise; and
- Trolleys generally operate as a single car or as short trains of two to three trolleys coupled together rather than as a longer train of engine plus passenger cars. As a result, the duration of the noise from a passing trolley is shorter than from a typical passenger train. As an offsetting factor, trolley cars would pass by more frequently than would railroad trains.

Visual impact is the one primary impact of a trolley line that exceeds that of a rail line. Electric power is fed to the trolleys through overhead wires, or centenary. The wire is suspended above the rails and is hung from wooden poles spaced roughly 100-150 feet apart.

The Girdwood Valley begins at sea level along Turnagain Arm and increases in elevation as one moves up-valley from the Arm. The elevation at the Alyeska Prince Hotel is approximately 250 feet above sea level. Assuming a line of 4 to 4.5 miles in length, an average grade of about one percent would be required. In reality, grades of up to three to four percent for short distances could be required in order to deal with local topography, existing development, and desired intermediate destinations. These potential grades are reasonable for both the rail spur contemplated in 1999, and a trolley line. The trolley line, however, could climb and descend more steeply – eight to ten percent grades – and turn much more sharply in order to minimize cuts and fills, and neighborhood and environmental impacts.

### **Alternative Alignments**

The fundamental alignment issues would involve avoiding negative impacts to existing development and environmentally sensitive areas while providing service to parts of Girdwood that would be most valuable to the community and to visitors. The following community areas and facilities are those that would be most important for a trolley line to serve:

1. New Town Center
2. Alyeska Prince Hotel
3. Lower Valley (Seward Highway-Alaska Railroad)
4. Alyeska Day Lodge
5. Girdwood School
6. Existing Residential Neighborhoods
7. Future Residential Neighborhoods

Elements 1-4 were established in the rail line study of 1999 as primary destinations of the rail line, with the Alyeska Day Lodge as a desirable, but not essential service destination. Elements 5-7 are elements that can be added and served more readily by a trolley than a rail branch line. Illustrations of the alignments studied in the 1999 Rail Corridor Assessment are discussed below. The preferred railroad branch corridor is shown in Figure 1.

The Crow Creek Neighborhood Land Use Plan identifies two possible trolley alignments, based on routes explored by the rail study, and tempered by the much different trolley line goal of being in the midst of activity and popular destinations, rather than to be as separate from existing development.

Because portions of each alignment can be connected to portions of alternative alignments, it is most reasonable to present and discuss alignment segments that can be mixed and matched to produce roughly ten different alignments, shown in Figure 1 and described below.

**Segment A1:**

Starting at a station near the Alaska Railroad Girdwood station and the proposed Valley Entry Multimodal Center, this segment curves to the north and runs up-valley along the road alignment identified in the Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan as a needed local collector serving future development north and west of the Alyeska Highway. It then curves to the east, crosses the southernmost tip of the HLB Crow Creek Neighborhood area, and follows the proposed Hightower-Crow Creek Road connector to the intersection with Hightower Road.

This segment would be positioned to be within walking distance of the existing development along Alyeska Highway, and located so that it could possibly be in the median of the future collector parallel to but west of the Alyeska Highway. It would pass a “block” north of the new Girdwood Town Center, not ideal, but still within an easy walk of the attractions there.

**Segment A2:**

Same alignment as Segment A1 from the Alaska Railroad/Multimodal Center to a point north of the Agostino Mine Road, where it would diverge from the Segment A1 alignment to run east to the Alyeska Highway, and then turn and run along the highway between the separated pedestrian path and the roadway. It would follow Crow Creek Road from its intersection with the Alyeska Highway, and turn right to follow the proposed Hightower-Crow Creek Road connector and Segment A1 to its end at Hightower Road.

Positioned to generate greater initial ridership than Segment A1, Segment A2 would be more visible and would run through the center of lower valley activity. A negative attribute of this option is the number of streets and driveways that would need to be crossed. It would also pass a “block” north of the new Girdwood Town Center as it rejoins Segment A1.

**Segment B:**

Beginning at a connection with Segment A1 north of the intersection of the Crow Creek Road and the Alyeska Highway, the short Segment B runs south and east to cross Crow Creek Road (and at this point connect with Segment A2). It then runs along the north side of the Alyeska Highway to Hightower Road, where it would turn to run north along Hightower Road to the intersection of the proposed Hightower-Crow Creek Road connector.

This segment provides an alternative route to serve the New Town Center, passing fairly closely to two sides of the central block of the town center. While more difficult to locate and engineer, B would be a more visible, accessible and therefore more successful alignment than either A1 or A2.

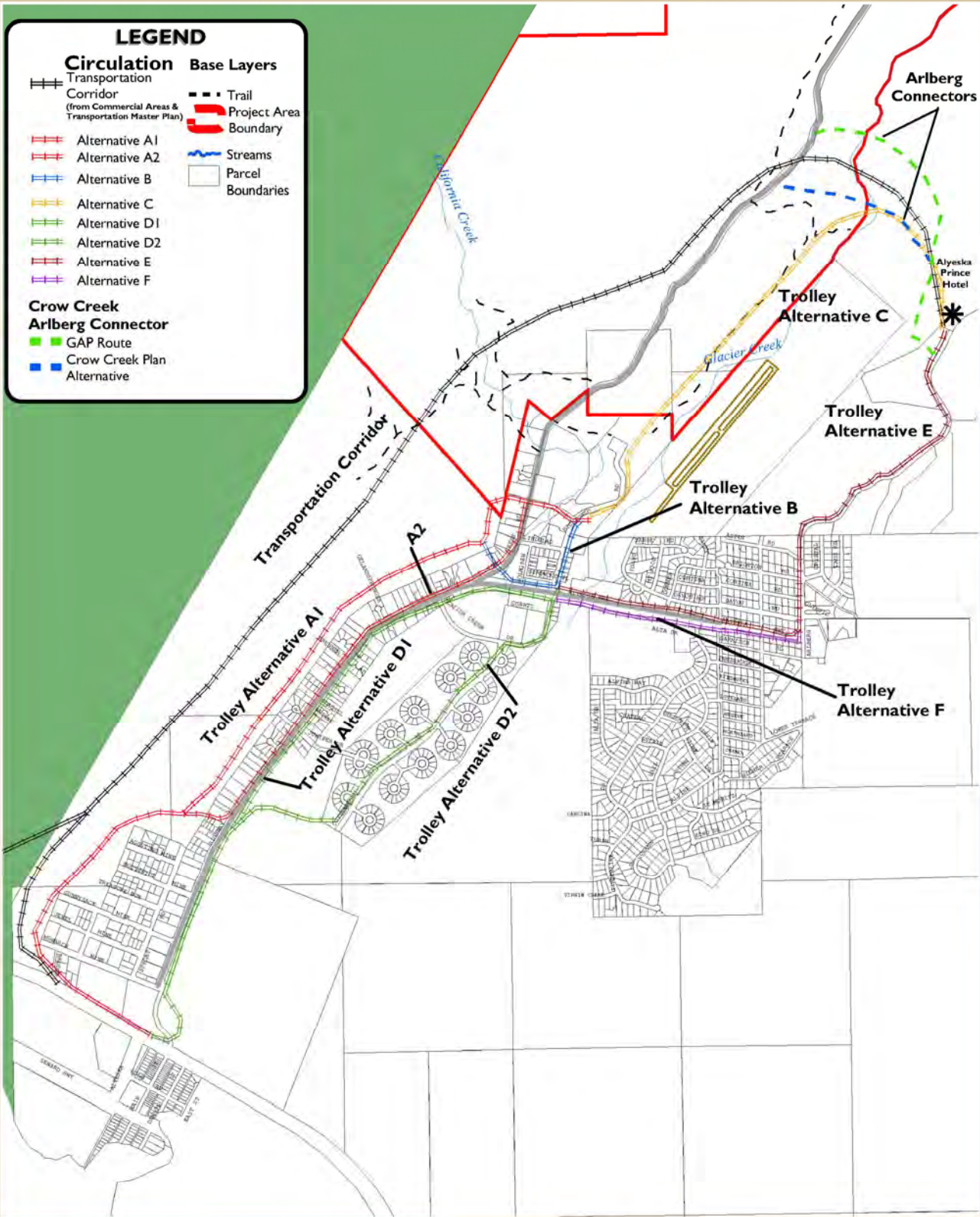
**Segment C:**

Segment C begins at the intersection of Hightower Road and the proposed Hightower-Crow Creek Road connector, and runs up-valley to the west of Glacier Creek along the eastern edge of the Crow

Creek Neighborhood area and the “Matrix” area proposed for residential development. It would then meet the proposed Arlberg Connector and share a bridge with the road across Glacier Creek, and reach the Alyeska Prince Hotel from the north.

**LEGEND**

<b>Circulation</b>	<b>Base Layers</b>
Transportation Corridor	Trail
Corridor (from Commercial Areas & Transportation Master Plan)	Project Area Boundary
Alternative A1	Streams
Alternative A2	Parcel Boundaries
Alternative B	
Alternative C	
Alternative D1	
Alternative D2	
Alternative E	
Alternative F	
<b>Crow Creek Arlberg Connector</b>	
GAP Route	
Crow Creek Plan Alternative	



**Crow Creek Neighborhood Plan**  
 October 2004  
 Prepared for the Municipality of Anchorage Heritage Land Bank

MAP NOTES:  
 - Property information is provided as a public information service and is not a warranty, representation, or endorsement.  
 - Topographic information is based on 2004 data.

**CIRCULATION**

Providing a connection with the school and library, this segment would be positioned to serve the proposed Crow Creek Neighborhood. As it would be developed before, or at the same time as much of the residential development, both the trolley line and the development could be configured to maximize the benefits of the proximity of the trolley and minimize conflicts. The significant cost of a bridge across Glacier Creek could be mitigated through sharing the bridge with the Arlberg Connector.

**Segment D1:**

Segment D1 begins at a station near the Alaska Railroad Girdwood station and the proposed Valley Entry Multimodal Center. It would leave to the southeast, running under the Alyeska highway parallel to the Alaska Railroad, then turning to the north to run along the east side of the Alyeska Highway to its intersection with Hightower Road.

This route would be visible and would be located well in terms of lower valley activity, but would require users from the west side of Alyeska Highway to cross the road before boarding or after alighting from the trolley.

**Segment D2:**

A variation of Segment D1, this potential element would diverge from the D1 alignment as it approaches the south extent of development on the east side of the Alyeska Highway, run east to the “squirrel cage” plats, turn north to run up the center of the squirrel cages to connect with the Alyeska Highway at its intersection with Hightower Road.

Although relatively free of conflicts with existing development, this segment would also pass by few prospective riders until/unless commercial or residential development comes to the squirrel cage area. It would position the line well, though, to pass under the Alyeska Highway at Hightower Road.

**Segment E:**

Segment E constitutes the principal alternative to Segment C for the connection of the New Town Center to the Alyeska Prince Hotel. It begins at the intersection of Hightower and the Alyeska Highway, runs east on the north side of the Alyeska Highway. It turns onto Arlberg at the day lodge and follows Arlberg to the Alyeska Prince Hotel. The track would be located between the trail and the road.

This segment would provide a connection between the New Town Center, the Day Lodge area and the Prince Hotel and tram. It would offer reasonable access to a greater number of current residents and visitors than would Segment C, but would also be harder to engineer and locate, possibly requiring a trolley-specific bridge across Glacier Creek.

**Segment F:**

An alternative to Segment E, Segment F would connect with alternative D1 or D2 and also follow the Alyeska Highway to the Day Lodge Area, but would use the south side of Alyeska Highway from Hightower to the intersection with Arlberg. It would then follow the Segment E alignment from the intersection to the Alyeska Prince Hotel.

Segment F would offer both advantages and disadvantages when compared to Segment E. The south side of the Alyeska Highway adjoins a large undeveloped area, which would pose fewer

location conflicts. This area is identified for development in the Girdwood Area Plan, and plans for hotel and office uses are now in progress. The challenge of this route occurs at the intersection of the Alyeska Highway and Arlberg, where a crossing of the Alyeska Highway would be required to follow the west side of Arlberg to the resort.

### **Summary**

The choice of a preferred location should, in the end, be a product of consideration of a number of issues and competing factors, including:

- How effective would the route be at generating ridership? How many residents and visitors would have easy access to the trolley line?
- How effective would the route be at inducing additional complimentary economic development?
- How many conflicts with driveways and current auto movement would the route create?
- Would the route require taking any property that is not currently part of a road right-of-way or otherwise in Municipal or State ownership?
- Would the route require expensive structures, such as bridges over streams or tunnels under roads? Could these structures be shared with a planned road (such as the Arlberg Connector)?
- To what extent would the route support future development in parts of Girdwood where future growth is planned?

It is also possible to consider route development in phases. A phased development would have the advantage of allowing construction funding to be generated in two or three segments. The first phase with strongest ridership would be the Town Center to Alyeska Hotel segment, followed by the valley entrance to Town Center segment. The primary difficulty of this sequence is that the storage and maintenance facility would best be placed near the DOT maintenance yard located at the entrance to the valley. Consequently, the preliminary planning and cost estimating will assume construction of the trolley line at one time, with a possible phasing of the construction of terminals and shelters as funding permits.

### **Stations and Platforms**

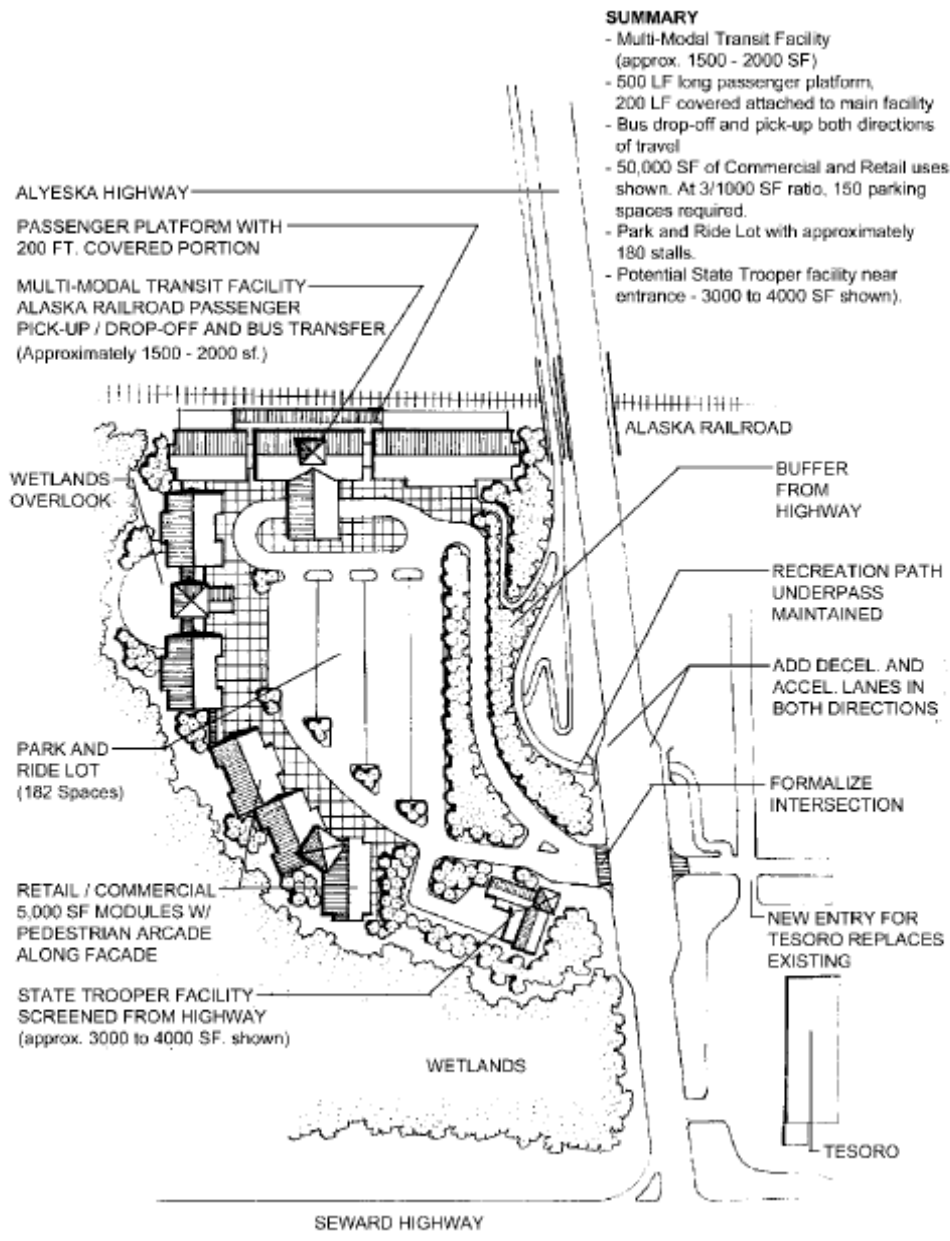
It is assumed that the line would have three principal stations: at the valley entrance, at the New Town Center, and at the Alyeska Hotel. Trolley stops would be located between these principal stations, and would feature shelters to allow riders to wait for the trolley out of the weather.

### **Valley Entry Multimodal Center**

The Valley Entry Center would be designed and built to make it simple, safe, and easy to transfer to or from one's personal car, from the Alaska Railroad, or from a commercial motorcoach to the trolley. The center would accommodate visitors traveling to and from Girdwood by train and motorcoach, Anchorage residents and visitors in vehicles who would choose to leave their car at the center and travel up-valley by trolley, Forest Fair attendees, skiers, and others drawn to the idea of traveling to or touring Girdwood by trolley. It would also be located adjacent to the increasingly popular multi-use trail along Turnagain Arm, and to the roadside trail along the Alyeska Highway.

The center would be designed to provide shelter, restrooms, visitor information, and trolley, rail and bus schedules. Ideally, the site would also include private vendors providing restaurant, retail, coffee, or other goods and services related to travel to and from Girdwood.

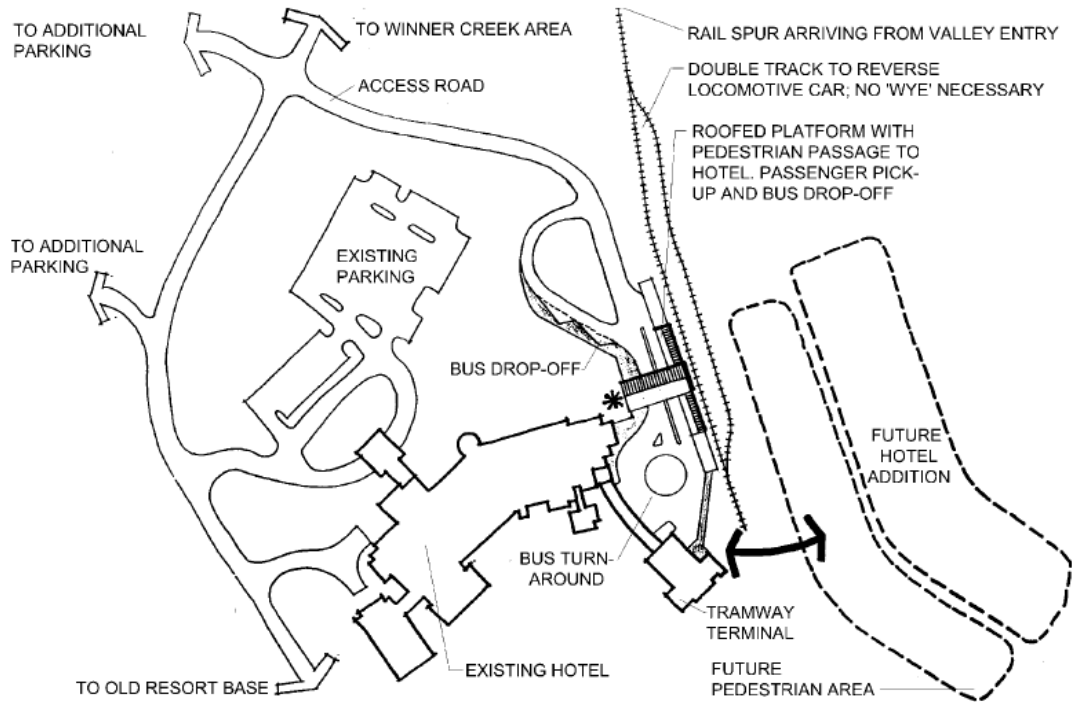
The Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan contains a multimodal center design concept, which is reproduced below as Figure 2. This conceptual layout is located west of the Alyeska Highway between the Alaska Railroad track and the Seward Highway. This site works well for a station oriented to the railroad and to vehicles. If the center is to also serve the trolley line, it would at least in part need to be located north of the Alaska Railroad tracks to avoid the need to cross the railroad tracks to reach the trolley line.



*Figure 2: Design Concept for Valley Entry Multimodal Center*

### New Girdwood Town Center

The location and design of the trolley station in the New Town Center would be a function of the alignment of the track through or near the Center. Similarly, the design would be a function of its location and relationship to pedestrian and auto flow, and adjacent buildings. Generally, an in-town station needs to be located where it is most convenient to users. These are often locations with little available space, so the design is very location dependent. The key elements would include shelter from rain and snow, information on when and where the trolley goes and the relationship of the route to landmarks and destinations in the Girdwood Valley.



**Figure 3: Design Concept for Rail/Trolley Terminal at the Alyeska Resort**

### Alyeska Resort/Alyeska Prince Hotel

The trolley terminal at the Alyeska Resort would need to be located to serve both visitors and hotel guests arriving by trolley to stay at the hotel as well as skiers who are traveling to the Resort to ski for the day. The Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan contains a schematic diagram of the rail spur access to the terminal and its relationship to the Resort, reproduced as Figure 3. The preferred rail spur alignment would approach the resort from the north, and would stop next to a station location northeast of the hotel and generally north of the tram terminal. This location offers easy access to both the hotel for guests and the terminal for skiers. The rail terminal also featured adjacent bus access and turnarounds. This general location would also be ideal for a trolley terminal that would serve both skiers and those destined to the hotel. A terminal for trolley Segment C that approaches the resort from the north could be located and would function similarly to the terminal proposed for the rail spur. Trolley Segment E, however, would approach the resort along Arlberg Road from the south. A terminal for this approach could be located similarly, although the approach from the south would require routing the ski run to the tram terminal over or

under the trolley track. The trolley line could also pass around the west side of the hotel, but such an approach would create more conflict with auto movement.

### **Trolley Stop Shelters**

Shelters at designated trolley stops would ideally be designed with a consistent theme that would reflect both Girdwood and make it immediately clear that the shelter serves the trolley. These structures would be a simple, three sided shelter, consisting of glass and wood. A design unique to Girdwood might be more expensive than an off-the-shelf bus shelter, but in the long run would benefit Girdwood and trolley ridership.

### **Cost Estimates**

#### **Trolley Cars**

Reproductions of vintage trolley cars currently cost \$600,000 to \$900,000 each, depending on features. These cars are made in the US, and are much less expensive than available off-the-shelf European street cars. The current cost of the Portland streetcars is about \$2 million per articulated unit. Service could begin with one car, but more realistically, three cars would be a practical minimum fleet. This would allow for two trolleys in regular operation, with a third in reserve to allow for maintenance and repair, and to provide additional capacity for special events and to shuttle large groups of passengers. Another option for handling peak loads would be to also acquire unpowered cars that can be coupled to a single trolley car to effectively double the capacity of a car without doubling the capital cost. It is unlikely, however, that this additional capacity would be needed at startup nor during the first few years of system operation.

The cars would include heat, but not air conditioning, and racks on the outside of the cars to hold skis. Bicycles should be accommodated either inside or outside the cars.

*Initial car capital cost:* Three trolley cars: \$1,750,000 - 2,700,000

#### **Track and Power**

The length of the line running from the Valley Entry Multimodal Center near the existing rail station to the Alyeska Prince Hotel would be 3.5 to 4.5 miles long, depending on the route selected. The alternatives that run north from the New Town Center to cross Glacier Creek along with a new street are generally longer than the alternatives that head east from the New Town Center.

A reasonable trade-off of cost, potential service frequency and impacts would suggest a single-track trolley line with a passing siding located in the mid-section of the line. This simple arrangement would allow two cars to operate at the same time, beginning their run from each end of the line and passing at the time-based line midpoint. This simple operating format would need no signals or other controls.

Initial cost of track and bridges would depend on the alternative chosen, and whether the trolley line could share major bridge structures with an existing or prospective road. The line would be a single track line with exposed ties for most of the line and top of rail at street level in a few locations such as near the New Town Center.

*Trackage and Overhead Power:* \$ 7-9 million per mile, or \$25 to \$40 million.

## Stations and Platforms

Two levels of stations and a standard trolley stop platform are envisioned.

### *Multimodal Center Station*

A very rough (\$200-\$300 per SF) estimate of cost would tally as follows:

Multi-Modal Facility @ 1,500-2,000 SF = \$300,000 - \$600,000

Passenger Platform @ 500 LF = with 200 LF covered = \$25,000 - \$50,000

Parking @ 150-250 spaces = \$260,000 – \$440,000

Retail space would be constructed by private interests, or by a public-private consortium.

### *New Town Center Station*

Town Center trolley facility of 1,000:-1,500 SF = \$200,000 – \$450,000 depending on size and design.

### *Alyeska Resort/ Alyeska Prince Hotel Station*

Cost: \$200,000 - \$500,000, depending on size and degree of integration with existing hotel.

### *Trolley Stop Shelters*

Cost: \$10,000 - \$75,000, depending on design and manufacturability.

## Existing and Potential Markets for Trolley Service

### *Existing*

- Girdwood full-time and part-time residents – transportation within Valley to work, retail, skiing, school, post office and similar Valley destinations.
- Independent summer visitors from Anchorage – transportation from the Valley Entrance Multimodal Center to activities in Girdwood, and/or transportation within Girdwood.
- Independent summer visitors other than Anchorage – transportation from the Multimodal Center to lodgings and activities in Girdwood, and/or transportation within Girdwood during their stay.
- Cruise/tour package visitors – transportation from the Alaska Railroad at the Multimodal Center to the Alyeska Resort and/or transportation within Girdwood during their stay.

### *Future* – the above markets and

- Day skiers from Anchorage and nearby – transportation from Multimodal Center to Alyeska Resort and return.
- Independent winter visitors – transportation from Multimodal Center to lodgings and return, and from lodgings to ski resort and to restaurants.

These markets focus on transportation within Girdwood, and are significantly different than the markets outlined for the rail spur. As outlined in the Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan, the markets for rail passenger service on the rail spur are largely travelers moving from Anchorage and beyond to Girdwood or reverse. It is reasonable to assume that some of the markets for the rail spur mentioned in the Master Plan are unlikely to generate much traffic for rail passenger service on a rail spur running intermittently and infrequently. For example the “Valley residents traveling to and from the airport” market is unlikely to support rail service. For the foreseeable future, the number of valley residents traveling to the airport at any one

time will be too small to support rail service, or bus service for that matter. Much more likely modes for this market are private autos and shared-ride taxis.

### Ridership

A preliminary estimate of average daily ridership is shown in Table 1, below. These rough estimates are based on the year 2020 and a Girdwood population of approximately 5,000.

Market	Summer	Winter
Girdwood Circulation	450 -1,350	600-1,800
Summer Visitors		
Independents	280-420	
Tour Package	200-300	
Winter Visitors		200 off-peak - 450 peak
Total	930-2,070	800-2,250

### Community Impacts

The bulk of the impacts of a trolley system on the Girdwood Community would be positive. A trolley would

- Help provide focus to the physical and activity centers of the community;
- Provide an interesting and fun option for traveling around Girdwood for both residents and visitors;
- Reduce auto trips in the corridor it serves;
- Provide a better way to handle Forest Fair, ski race and other special event crowds;
- Provide an additional visitor draw that is consistent with the existing Girdwood environment and image;
- Provide a visitor draw that will bring additional visitors to both the Alyeska Resort and the smaller businesses in the Valley;
- Attract compatible investment to Girdwood;
- Enable pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development along the trolley corridor; and would
- Provide a low impact means to move package tour guests from a train or from buses at the valley entrance to the Alyeska Resort.

In the future, if a larger number of workers commute to jobs in Anchorage, a trolley system could provide a connection to bus or rail service to Anchorage, and could similarly bring commuters coming to Girdwood for work from a bus or rail connection at the head of the valley.