

# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Meeting Agenda - Final

### Planning Commission

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Wednesday, April 17, 2024

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 24-04](#) Approve the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes.

Attachments: [4-March 20 2024 DRAFT](#)

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

*(Public participation on any item off the agenda. All public testimony is not to exceed 3 minutes for any individual, unless the Chair imposes other time constraints at the beginning of the agenda item.)*

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

B [MISC 24-04](#) Modification of a utility easement at Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision.

Attachments: [Shotgun Alley Utility Easement Modification](#)

VI. REPORTS

C [MISC 24-03](#) Housing Summit Update and Sitka Tribal Housing Needs Assessment.

Attachments: [Community Housing Meeting Presentation](#)

[Tribal Housing Needs Assessment March 2024](#)

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

D [CUP 24-03](#) Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 343 Wortman Loop in the R-1 LD single-family and duplex residential low density district. The property is also known as Lot 20A, Block 1, Lot Line Adjustment of Lots 20 and 21, Block 1 Cascade Creek Subdivision. The request is filed by Karen Case. The owner of record is Karen Case.

Attachments: [CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Staff Report](#)

[A CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Aerial](#)

[B CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Plat](#)

[C CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Floor Plan](#)

[D CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Photos](#)

[E CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Density Map](#)

[F CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Renter Handout](#)

[G CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Applicant Materials](#)

[H CUP 24-03 Case 343 Wortman Loop STR Affidavit](#)

- E**      [VAR 24-05](#)      Public hearing and consideration of a zoning variance to reduce the southwest front setback from 14' to 5' at NHN Jarvis Street in the C-1 general commercial district. The property is also known as the Remainder of Lot Three (3) US Survey 3695. The request is filled by Andrew Hinton. The owner of record is Alaska Mental Health Trust, State of Alaska.

**Attachments:** [V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Staff Report](#)

[A V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Aerial](#)

[B V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback U.S. Survey 3695](#)

[C V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Site Plan](#)

[D V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Floor Plans](#)

[E V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Photos](#)

[F V 24-05 Sitka Homeless Coalition Front Setback Applicant Materials](#)

## **VIII.      ADJOURNMENT**

*NOTE: More information on these agenda items can be found at <https://sitka.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> or by contacting the Planning Office at 100 Lincoln Street. Individuals having concerns or comments on any item are encouraged to provide written comments to the Planning Office or make comments at the Planning Commission meeting. Written comments may be dropped off at the Planning Office in City Hall or emailed to [planning@cityofsitka.org](mailto:planning@cityofsitka.org). Those with questions may call (907) 747-1814.*

*Publish:*



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Minutes - Draft

### Planning Commission

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Wednesday, March 20, 2024

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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#### I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Katie Riley (Acting Chair), Wendy Alderson, Stacy Mudry, Robin Sherman  
Excused: Darrell Windsor, Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)  
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis  
Public: Randy Hughey, Caitlin Way, Ariadne Will

Acting Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

#### II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

#### III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 24-03](#) Approve the March 6, 2024 meeting minutes.

M-Mudry/S-Alderson moved to approve the March 6, 2024 meeting minutes.  
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

#### IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

#### V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie provided an update on the short-term rental report. Only about a third of the permit holders had responded to the report. Riley asked if the report was mandatory and if there were penalties for non-completion. Staff confirmed the report was mandatory and the commission could decide any additional conditions to add to permits or void the permits. The April 3 meeting was canceled and Ainslie would be attending the Alaska Municipal League's Housing Summit and Infrastructure Development Symposium.

#### VI. REPORTS

B [MISC 24-02](#) Update from Sitka Community Land Trust.

Randy Hughey, Executive Director of the Sitka Community Land Trust (SCLT) provided an update. SCLT had received a 2.17 million federal grant for affordable housing. They would be constructing a six unit apartment building that would have rentals at below market rates. SCLT would soon be looking for more land and would be requesting the commission's support when identifying a new site.

**VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS****C**     [CUP 24-02](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 419 Marine Street in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 31, Block 26, Spruce Glen Subdivision. The request is filed by Caitlin Way. The owners of record are Caitlin Way and Lesa Way.

Ainslie introduced a conditional use permit for a short-term rental (STR) at 419 Marine Street in the R-1 single-family/duplex residential district. This was the applicant's primary residence. The house was in the process of being converted into a duplex with a studio unit on the second floor. The applicant had a building permit and a condition of approval was added that a certificate of occupancy must be issued before the unit was used as a STR. Maximum capacity was four guest with quiet hours set from 10pm-6am and there were four parking spaces available on the property. Staff recommended approval. The applicant Caitlin Way was present and had no additional information. There was no public comment. Commissioners had no discussion and Sherman stated this was an ideal STR which made an existing home more affordable for a year-round resident.

**M-Sherman/S-Mudry moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 419 Marine Street in the R-1-single-family/duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 31, Block 26, Spruce Glen Subdivision. The request was filed by Caitlin Way. The owners of record were Caitlin Way and Lesa Way. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

**M-Sherman/S-Mudry moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 voice vote.**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Acting Chair Riley adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.**





### MODIFICATION OF UTILITY EASEMENT

The current owners of **Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision, according to Plat 2017-4, Sitka Recording District, First Judicial District, State of Alaska**, agree to realign the existing **Utility Easement** within Lot 2 originally created **per legal document filed under serial number 2019-000111-0, Sitka Recording District**, creating a new utility easement alignment across Lot 2 more particularly described in the attached Exhibit A easement drawing. This realignment is for the benefit of the owner of Lot 2 to avoid placing utilities in an area that could be developed in the future. When this Modification of Utility Easement is executed upon recording, the original easement alignment is vacated.

The purpose of the easement is to provide for buried utilities crossing Lot 2 for the benefit of the owner of Lot 3.

The owner of Lot 2, Ryan Nichols (the “**Grantor**”), hereby grant and convey to the owner of Lot 3, Barth Hamberg (the “**Grantee**”), the realigned utility easement along, and under, certain real property of Grantor being more particularly described in the attached Exhibit A to (a) survey, construct, install, operate, use, maintain, test, inspect, modify, replace, renew, reconstruct and remove improvements related to the operation of a water and sanitary sewer utility service system, (b) remove, cut and trim trees with to maintain a root-free zone over the utilities.

The Grantor shall not (a) erect, construct, install or maintain (or permit to be erected, constructed, installed or maintained) any building, other structure, or obstruction of any kind in, on, under, over or upon the utility easement; (b) change the grade of the utility easement without prior written authorization from Grantee, which authorization may be granted or withheld in Grantee's sole discretion. In addition, the Grantor shall leave in place survey markers placed during construction of the utilities marking the location of the utilities.

The Grantee, at its sole cost, shall maintain, repair, replace, and service the utility service lines as reasonably necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the utilities. Upon completion of any work contemplated or permitted by this agreement within and upon the utility easement, the Grantee, at its sole cost, shall restore the above-ground condition of the utility easement or applicable portion thereof as nearly as practicable to substantially the grade existing immediately prior to the commencement of the work by the Grantee.

In addition, the Grantee agrees that in connection with its use of the utility easement, the Grantee shall, at its sole cost, promptly repair any damage caused to the utility easement, or any adjacent real or personal property of Grantor as a result of Grantee's exercise of the rights granted by this agreement; provided written notice thereof is given to the Grantee within a reasonable period of time after the occurrence of such damage at the address provided for notices below, or such other place as Grantee may designate in writing. For the avoidance of doubt, Grantee shall not be obligated to repair any damage to any improvements located on the utility easement, or any adjacent real property belonging to the Grantor to the extent such improvements were constructed, erected or otherwise placed on or about the utility easement in violation of the terms and conditions of this agreement.

The grant of this utility easement is in perpetuity and shall run with the land and shall be binding and effective on all future owners of Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision, or any others deriving benefit from said easement, until such time as said easement is vacated by the owners of Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision, and the City and Borough of Sitka.

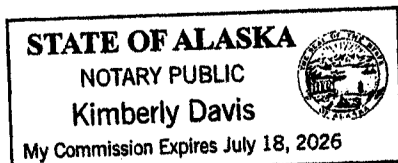
LOT 2 PROPERTY OWNER

3/6/2024  
Date

Ryan Nichols  
Ryan Nichols  
Owner, Lot 2, Cedars Subdivision

STATE OF ALASKA           )  
  ) ss:  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT   )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 6 day of March, 2024, by Ryan Nichols.



[Signature]  
Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska  
My commission expires: July 18, 2026

SIGNATURES CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

Initials RN BH



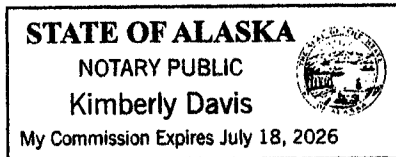
March 14, 2024  
Date

**LOT 3 PROPERTY OWNER**

[Signature]  
Barth Hamberg  
Owner, Lot 3, Cedars Subdivision

STATE OF ALASKA )  
 ) ss:  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 14 day of March, 2024, by Barth Hamberg.



[Signature]  
Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska  
My commission expires: July 18, 2026

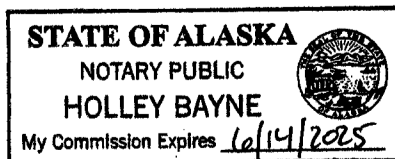
3/14/2024  
Date

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA**

[Signature]  
By: John Leach  
Its: Municipal Administrator

STATE OF ALASKA )  
 ) ss.  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 14 day of March, 2024, by John Leach, Municipal Administrator of the CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA, an Alaska home rule municipality, on behalf of the municipality.

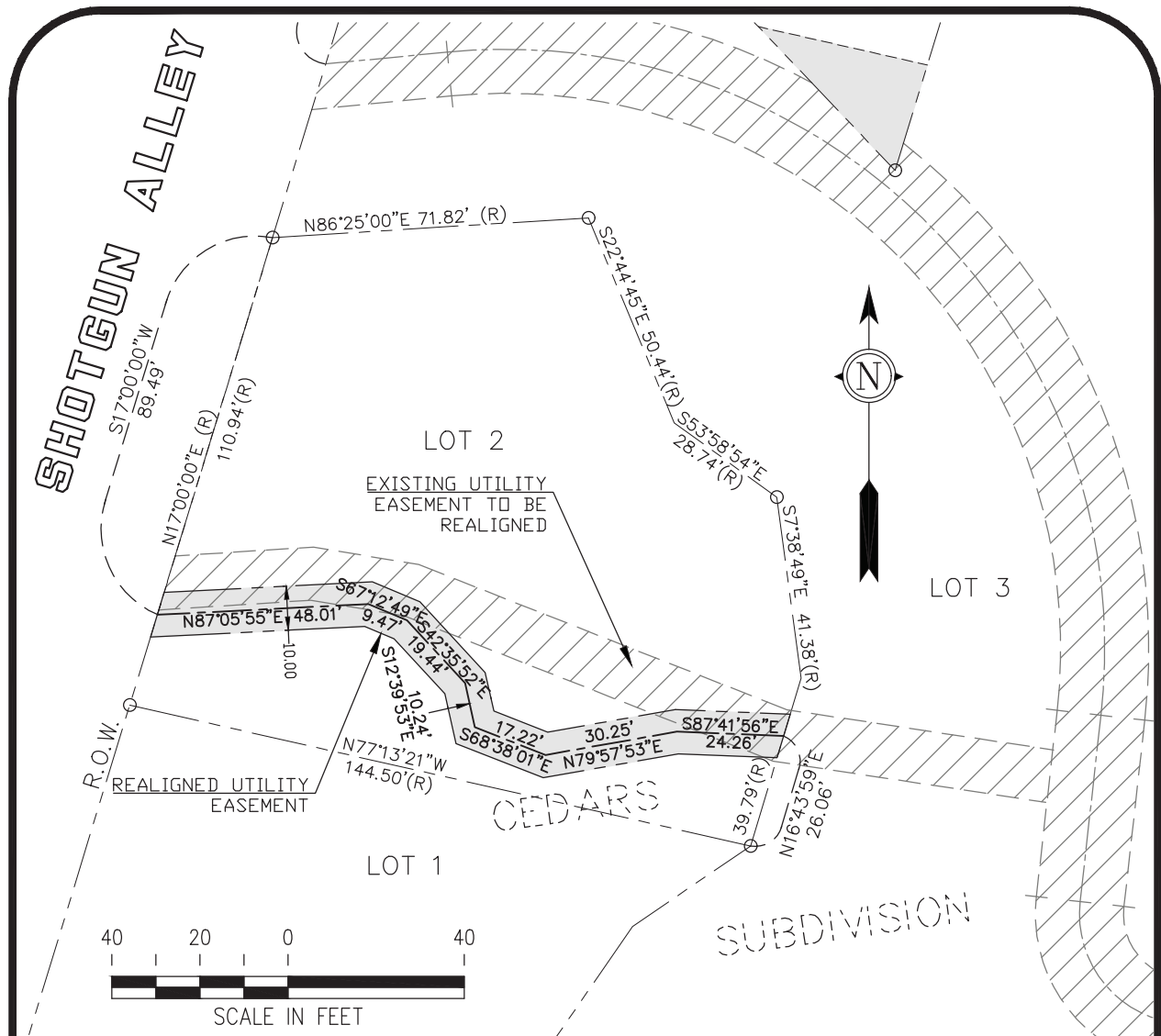


[Signature]  
Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska  
My commission expires: 10/14/2025

AFTER RECORDING RETURN TO:  
Barth Hamberg  
203 Jeff Davis St.  
Sitka, AK 99835

Initials [Signature]





**EASEMENT DESCRIPTION:**

A TEN FOOT WIDE UTILITY EASEMENT THE CENTERLINE OF WHICH IS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A 1 1/2" ALUMINUM CAP ON A REBAR LOCATED AT THE NORTHWESTERLY CORNER OF LOT 2 CEDARS SUBDIVISION AND A POINT ON THE BOUNDARY ALONG THE SHOTGUN ALLEY RIGHT-OF-WAY, THENCE S17°00'00"W A DISTANCE OF 89.49 FT. ALONG SAID BOUNDARY AND RIGHT-OF-WAY TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE CENTERLINE OF THIS EASEMENT;

THENCE N87°05'55"E A DISTANCE OF 48.01 FT., THENCE S67°12'49"E A DISTANCE OF 9.47 FT., THENCE S42°35'52"E

A DISTANCE OF 19.44 FT., THENCE S12°39'53"E A DISTANCE OF 10.24 FT., THENCE S68°38'01"E A DISTANCE OF 17.22 FT., THENCE N79°57'53"E A DISTANCE OF 30.25 FT., THENCE N87°41'56"E A DISTANCE OF 24.26 FT. TO A POINT ON THE COMMON BOUNDARY WITH LOT 3 FROM WHICH THE SOUTHEAST PROPERTY CORNER OF LOT 2 BEARS S16°43'59"W A DISTANCE OF 26.06 FT.; SAID EASEMENT ENCOMPASSING 1590 SQUARE FEET MORE OR LESS.



**NORTH 57\***

**LAND SURVEYING LLC**

(907) 747-6700 215-F SMITH STREET, SITKA, AK

MAILING ADDRESS - 2007 CASCADE CREEK ROAD,  
SITKA, AK 99835

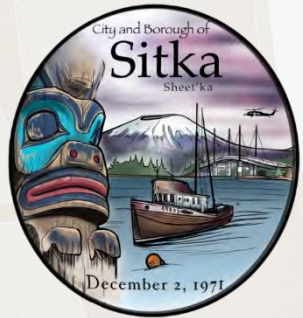
EMAIL: north57landsurveying@yahoo.com

**SUBJECT: EXHIBIT A**

**LOT 2, CEDARS SUBDIVISION  
(PLAT# 2017-4, SITKA, ALASKA  
RECORDING DISTRICT)**

SCALE: 1" = 40'

FILE No. 40157-04



Why is it so hard to find affordable housing in Sitka?

*And what can we do about it?*

**Robin Sherman, Sitka Tribe of Alaska**

**Amy Ainslie, City and Borough of Sitka**

**April 11, 2024**



# What is affordable housing?

**Housing is affordable when housing costs are not more than 30% of household income**

- For homeowners, housing costs = mortgage + property taxes + insurance + utilities
- For renters, housing costs = rent + utilities

**Households that pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered to be “housing cost-burdened.”**

**Households that pay more than 50% of their income for housing are considered to have “extreme housing cost burdens.”**



# Affordable housing costs based on income

	Annual household income	Monthly affordable housing cost
150% of median	\$ 142,892	\$ 3,572
Sitka median income	\$ 95,261	\$ 2,382
80% of median	\$ 76,209	\$ 1,905
50% of median	\$ 47,631	\$ 1,191
30% of median	\$ 28,578	\$ 714

# Types of affordability

**Unsubsidized housing:** housing that is available for sale or rent at the lower end of market prices, making it affordable without any financial support from government agencies or nonprofit organizations

**Subsidized housing:** housing that has financial subsidies from a government agency or private organization to make it affordable to households based on their income



# Types of housing subsidies

## Housing supply subsidies:

- Free or low-cost land
- Grants to pay for the cost of infrastructure and/or materials and labor

## Housing demand subsidies:

- Downpayment & closing cost assistance
- Subsidized interest rates
- Rental vouchers
- Rent subsidies
- Home energy assistance



# Types of restrictions for subsidized housing

**Eligibility – typically based on funding source**

- **Income restrictions**
- **Demographic restrictions, e.g. veterans, Native people, first-time homebuyers, age, special needs**

**Duration:**

- **For homeownership, subsidies may come with restrictions on sale of property**
- **For rental properties, subsidies may make the property affordable for a limited period of time, or forever**



# Subsidized housing in Sitka

## Rentals:

- **BIHA Housing**
- **Sawmill Creek Apartments**
- **AHFC Housing Vouchers**
- **AHFC Housing: Swan Lake Terrace & Paxton Manor**

## Homeownership

- **S'us' Héeni Sháak - Sitka Community Land Trust**
- **AHFC and USDA Rural Development home loans**
- **BIHA rent to own program (not currently active)**
- **BIHA closing cost assistance**



## Homeownership affordability

**2023 average market price of new home in Sitka: \$531,323**

*Monthly costs with interest rate subsidy & reduced downpayment for income-eligible homebuyers*

Price	\$ 531,323
5% downpayment	\$ 26,566
Loan amount	\$ 504,757
Subsidized interest rate	5.88%
Monthly mortgage payment	\$ 2,877
Monthly taxes & insurance	\$ 374
Monthly utilities	\$ 250
<b>Total monthly cost</b>	<b>\$ 3,501</b>

## Homeownership affordability

### Who can afford to buy a home at average price of \$531,323?

*Total monthly cost with subsidies for income-eligible homebuyers: \$3,501*

	Income	\$3,501/month as % of income
Median Income	\$ 95,261	44%
80% of Median	\$ 76,209	55%
50% of Median	\$ 47,631	88%
30% of Median	\$ 28,578	147%

Income required to make this monthly payment affordable	\$ 140,050
Affordable monthly cost for median income household	\$ 2,382



## Market housing affordability in Sitka: rentals

**2023 average monthly market rent, all unit sizes,  
both apartments and whole houses, adjusted for utilities: \$1,364\***

*\*Yeah, we don't believe that, either. Unfortunately, this data is collected in March*

	Annual income	Average rent as % of income
Sitka median income	\$ 95,261	17%
80% of median	\$ 76,209	21%
50% of median	\$ 47,631	34%
30% of median	\$ 28,578	57%

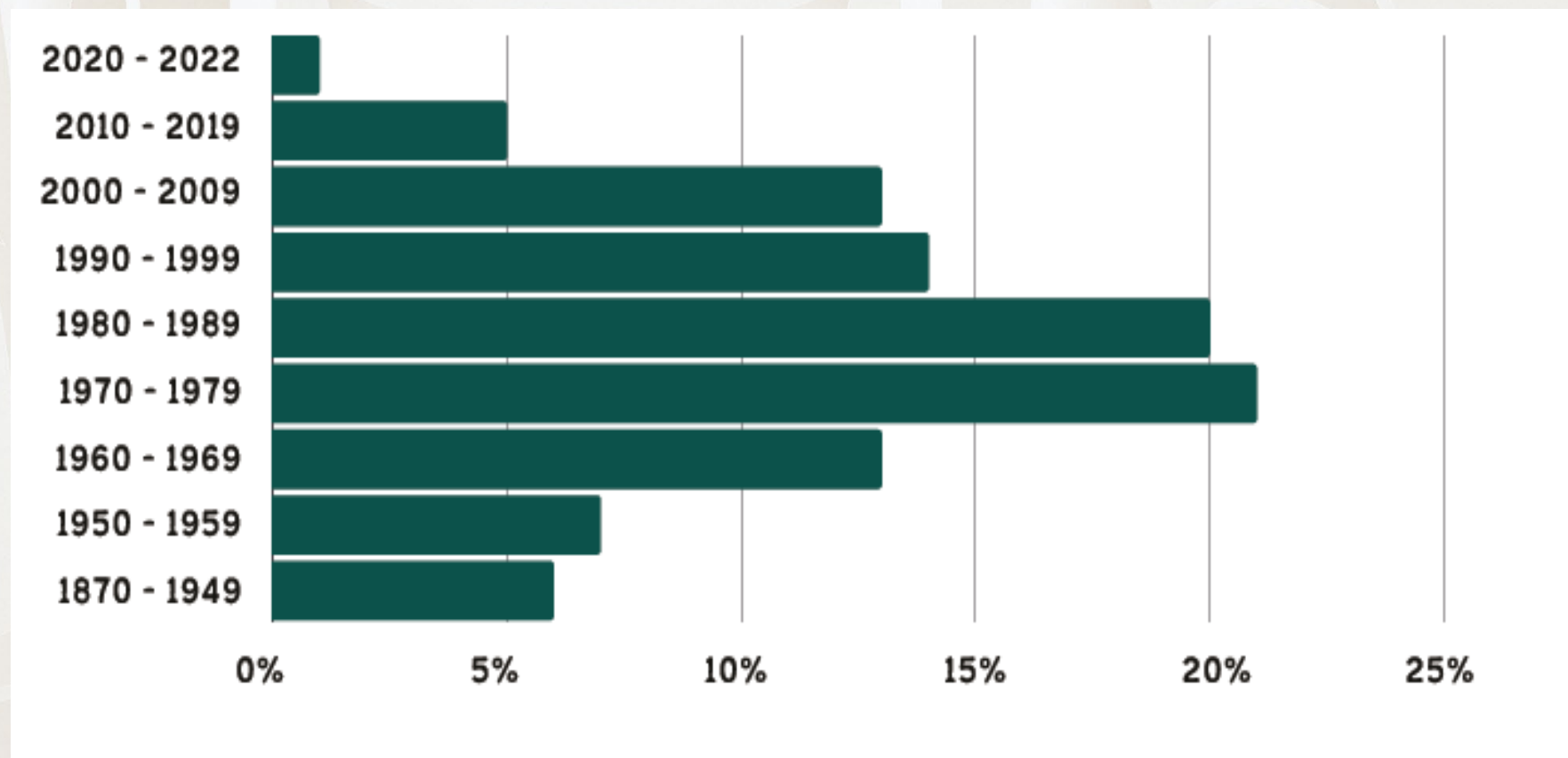


## Unsubsidized housing in Sitka: rentals

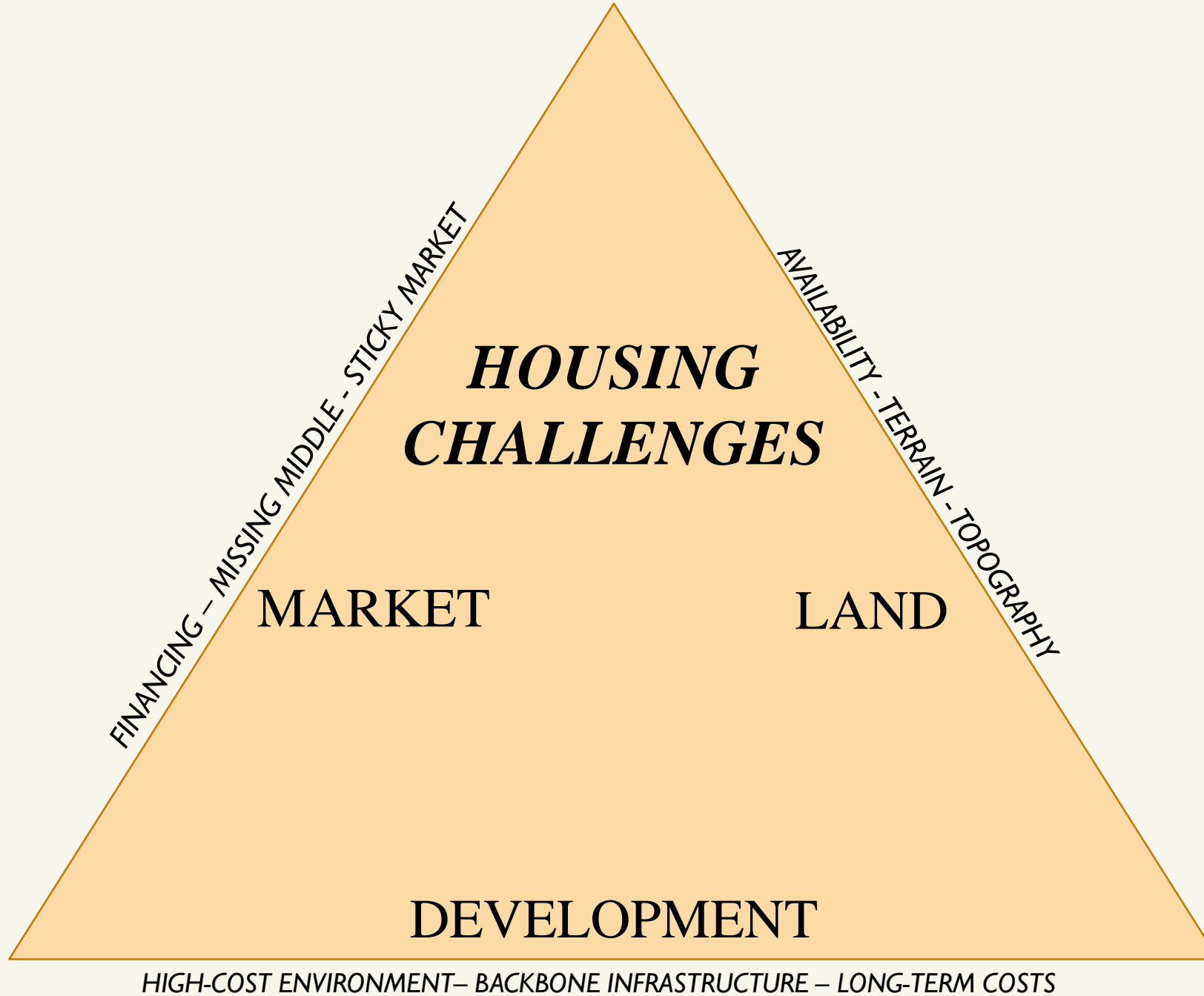
- 2022 occupied rental units: 1,232; this does include subsidized units but does not include vacant units that are used only on a seasonal basis – that is about 129 additional units, or 10% of units occupied year-round.
- Three separate rental markets: year-round renters, seasonal & short-term workers, and seasonal visitors all compete for rental housing
- 2023 total # of short-term rental listings on online platforms: 149 units, this does not include workforce housing that is rented by employers or employees for the summer season only
- 2023 average price of short-term rental for listings on online platforms: \$302 per night

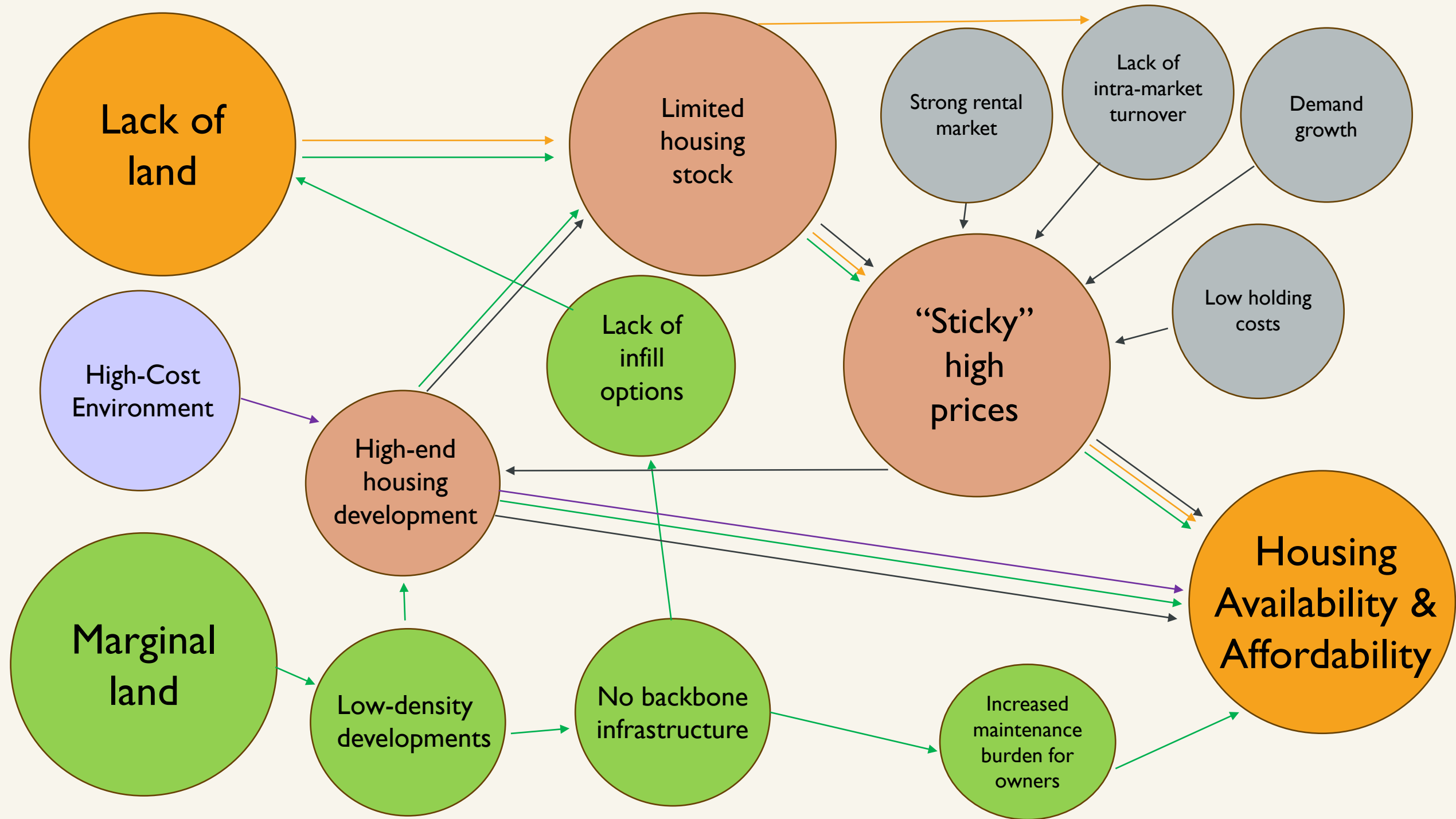


# Sitka Housing by Year of Construction









## **New Affordable Housing in the Works**

- **Sitka Community Land Trust affordable rentals (4 units)**
- **BIHA affordable rentals 8-plex**
- **Sitka Homeless Coalition Hit'xi Sáani rentals (12 units)**
- **BIHA extension of Herb Didrickson St. – new affordable lots**
- **City-owned land study**



## **Action priorities**

- **Create new housing at higher densities**
- **Develop incentives for creation and retention of year-round housing**
- **Develop strategies to prevent displacement of mobile homes**
- **Create neighborhood of tiny homes with communal building & child care space**
- **Work with state & federal partners to create a wet climate housing research center**
- **Investigate options for expanding BIHA capacity and services**
- **Identify local housing champions**
- **Create a local housing network to advance these and other ideas to increase housing supply and affordability**



# SITKA TRIBAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**FINAL REPORT**

**MARCH 2024**





# SITKA TRIBAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2024

## **Commissioned by Baranof Island Housing Authority**

Board of Commissioners  
Lillian Feldpausch, Chairman  
Martha Moses, Vice Chair  
Lesa Way, Treasurer  
Vacant Seat, Secretary  
Gail Roderick, Commissioner  
Executive Director Cliff Richter

## **With support from Sitka Tribe of Alaska**

Tribal Council  
Lawrence “Woody” Widmark, Chairman  
Yeidikook’áa, Vice-Chair  
Lesa Way, Treasurer  
Lillian Feldpausch, Secretary  
Louise Brady  
Martha Moses  
Frederick Olsen, Jr.  
Alana Peterson  
Rhonda Stiles  
Chief Executive Officer Alicia Gassman

## **Research team**

Meilani Schivens, Rain Coast Data  
Michael Fredericks, SALT  
Leah Mason, Baranof Island Housing Authority

## **Authors**

Robin Sherman, Sitka Tribe of Alaska  
Meilani Schijvens, Rain Coast Data  
Leah Mason, Baranof Island Housing Authority  
Michael Fredericks, SALT

## **Cite this document:**

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## **Acknowledgements**

The cover and elements of this report feature totems located at the Katlian Street office of Baranof Island Housing Authority. These totems were carved by Tommy Joseph. Photographs of the totems were taken by Leah Mason. Thanks to BIHA and STA staff and the broader community who participated in gathering data and attending meetings. Gunalcheesh!



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**“Native people can no longer afford to live here.”**

Joy Klushkan, Housing Director, Baranof Island Housing Authority

In 2023, Baranof Island Housing Authority engaged Rain Coast Data to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Tribal housing needs in Sitka. The purpose of the study was to inform the development of housing and housing-related programs for Tribal citizens in Sitka. Sitka Tribe of Alaska provided financial and technical support for the project.

**The assessment included the following components:**

- Review and analysis of publicly available demographic and housing data
- An online survey of 310 Alaska Native and other Indigenous households in Sitka
- A shorter online survey of 178 Sitka Tribe of Alaska citizen households outside Sitka
- Interviews with 20 community leaders
- Presentation of data to BIHA and STA staff, BIHA Commissioners, STA Tribal Council members, and to Tribal citizens at a community meeting, with opportunities for input

This report highlights key findings and strategies identified as important to BIHA’s future planning for projects and programs and suggests next steps toward addressing Tribal housing needs in Sitka.

## KEY FINDINGS

**Sitka is losing Native residents – especially younger residents – at a disproportionate rate**

Between 2000 and 2022, the percentage of Sitka residents who are Native declined by 13 percent, which is more than twice as fast as the overall rate of population decline in the community. The population of Indigenous residents of Sitka under the age of 20 declined by nearly a third over that period. Factors in the loss of Alaska Native residents include both outmigration and a decline in births.

**Tribal citizens are being squeezed out of Sitka’s increasingly tight housing market**

Native households are disproportionately impacted by the constrained supply and high prices for housing in Sitka. The average 2023 market value of a single-family home in Sitka is \$531,323; homeownership is increasingly out of reach for Native households with an average income of \$73,700. Native households are significantly more likely than all Sitka households to rent their homes, and to pay rent at a level that strains their household budgets.

**Vulnerable individuals are relying on family, friends, and emergency shelter**

The tight market is especially challenging for specific populations of Native individuals – young adults, and those with low incomes, disabilities, evictions on their record, or a history of involvement with law enforcement. Vulnerable individuals who cannot secure rental housing are relying on family, friends, and emergency shelter. Thirty percent of Tribal households surveyed reported that they had other people staying in their homes over the past year because family or friends could not afford a place to live.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## KEY FINDINGS

### **Sitka's Economic Health Depends on Housing that is Affordable for the Local Workforce**

The local population is shrinking and aging. Notwithstanding the fact that the Native population of Sitka is declining disproportionately to the general population, Native households on average are still younger than the population of Sitka as a whole. Tribal citizens outside Sitka are an additional untapped workforce and path to reversing demographic decline. Sixty-nine percent of STA citizen households outside Sitka reported that they were interested in moving to Sitka, and 28 percent were interested in moving within five years. These households identified the cost and availability of housing as the top barrier to moving to Sitka.

The seasonal nature of Sitka's economy creates special housing challenges. Tourism, construction, and seafood businesses offer seasonal employment, but residents of the community need year-round income to afford housing. Strong demand for vacation rentals and seasonal workforce housing is putting pressure on Sitka's housing supply and raising prices. The result is that year-round residents of the community are increasingly competing with both tourists and employers for a limited supply of rental units. Compensation for essential year-round workers is not keeping up with the cost of housing in Sitka.

### **Current Development Models will not Produce the Housing that Tribal Households Need**

While Sitka is building more housing, the current pipeline of new units is not adequate to meet the needs of Native households. High development costs preclude the private production of units affordable to Tribal households and constrain Tribal and nonprofit developers from meeting existing demand. These problems will not be resolved by market forces. Different types of housing, development strategies, partnerships, and new sources of funding will be required to ensure that Sitka's Tribal citizens can afford to continue to live in their traditional homeland.

### **Short-term Solutions and Priorities**

Addressing the challenges in Sitka's housing market will take time and resources, but there are opportunities and priorities for short-term action.

Seventy-eight percent of survey respondents in Sitka reported that making housing more energy efficient was their top priority. Weatherization, other home energy improvements, and energy subsidies represent the best short-term opportunities to reduce the cost of housing for Tribal citizens.

Mobile homes represent nine percent of Sitka's housing stock, and they are one of the most affordable year-round housing options available to Tribal households. However, these units are in poor condition, are difficult to maintain, and expensive to heat. They are also located on privately-owned land that is prime for redevelopment. The long-term future of Sitka's mobile home parks is at risk. Securing mobile home parks and replacing existing units should be a community priority.

# INTRODUCTION

**Baranof Island Housing Authority (BIHA) is the Tribally Designated Housing Entity for Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA). STA created BIHA in 1980 to address housing needs of Tribal citizens and other residents of Baranof Island. BIHA is the only housing authority in Sitka. Its current programs include housing development, rental housing, closing cost assistance, Tribal rehabilitation/home repair, student housing vouchers, and financial literacy. Past programs include Tribal homeownership and weatherization.**

BIHA receives its primary funding through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Indian Housing Block Grant program. This program enables BIHA to provide housing services to eligible STA Tribal citizens and other Indigenous residents of Sitka. Additional sources of federal, state, and local funding support BIHA programs that are not subject to HUD rules and regulations under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act. BIHA currently manages a portfolio of 84 dwelling units. Seven percent of these units are part of BIHA's Home Purchase programs. Eighty-nine percent of BIHA units are rented at or significantly below HUD Fair Market Rent. Sixty-nine percent of the rental dwellings are rented based on 30 percent of household income.



Andrew Hope Street, Sitka . Alaska. BIHA Low Rent Program Photo Credit: Leah Mason 2022

Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) is the federally recognized Tribal government for Sitka. STA has 4,663 enrolled citizens, including 1,663 citizens in its service area in Sitka. STA developed its most recent five-year strategic plan with input from local citizens in 2022. Expanding housing programs to meet the needs of Tribal citizens was the priority identified by the largest number of individuals who participated in developing the plan. STA generally relies on BIHA to provide housing programs and services to its citizens.

The STA Tribal Council approved \$3 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding for BIHA to support development of new Tribal housing, with the condition that BIHA commission a study of Tribal housing needs to guide use of the funds. BIHA worked with STA to develop a scope of services for the project, including development of a community profile, a community housing inventory, detailed demographics on Alaska Native and other Indigenous households in Sitka, projections for future community growth, and a gap analysis. BIHA procured consulting services for the project. Rain Coast Data and its subcontractor, SALT, were selected as consultants.

In addition to using the results of this assessment to inform use of STA ARPA funds, the research will be used to update BIHA's current strategic plan, and to support requests for new housing resources.

# METHODOLOGY

## **Review and analysis of existing data**

Rain Coast Data reviewed and analyzed publicly available demographic and housing data, including US Census data specific to the Alaska Native and American Indian population for the City and Borough of Sitka, as well as data from the Alaska Department of Labor, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, University of Alaska Center for Economic Development, the Sitka assessors' database, AirDNA, Zillow, Southeast Conference, and the Sitka Municipal Code.

## **Survey research**

BIHA and STA worked closely with Rain Coast Data to develop a survey plan for the needs assessment. The primary research target was Alaska Native and other Indigenous households in Sitka, with a focus on STA citizens, but STA also wanted data from its citizens outside Sitka, which represent almost two-thirds of Tribal enrollment.

Rain Coast Data developed a web-based survey instrument with input from BIHA and STA. The survey included 33 questions for Alaska Native and other Indigenous households in Sitka and ten questions for STA citizens outside Sitka. Copies of the survey are available from BIHA upon request.

The survey was administered electronically from October 11 through November 21, 2023. Households eligible to take the survey were informed about it by email and through traditional and social media. Paper copies and survey assistance services were available to survey participants. All eligible households that completed the survey were entered for prize drawings.

### *Sample size*

A total of 310 eligible households in Sitka responded to the survey, representing 44 percent of all estimated Alaska Native and American Indian households in the community. The survey findings have a 95 percent confidence level with a 4.2 percent confidence interval at this response rate. There are an estimated 709 Alaska Native or American Indian households in Sitka, which is approximately 21 percent of the 3,421 occupied households in the community. Rain Coast Data received 176 survey responses from STA citizens outside Sitka.

## **Interviews**

Between August and December 2023, Rain Coast Data conducted stakeholder interviews with 20 individuals representing 17 organizations across the Tribal, public, private, and nonprofit sectors in Sitka. A list of individuals interviewed and their affiliations is included in Appendix A. Interviewees were asked how housing availability and affordability impacted their organizations, hiring practices, clientele, and program offerings.

## **Community and stakeholder meetings**

Meilani Schijvens (Rain Coast Data) and Michael Fredericks (SALT) traveled to Sitka for a week in January 2024 to present research findings and gather additional community input. Findings were presented to the STA Tribal Council and BIHA Board of Commissioners, STA and BIHA staff, and to Tribal citizens at a public meeting. The consulting team led discussions and provided a written summary of feedback and comments. Participant lists for both internal and community meetings are included in Appendix B.

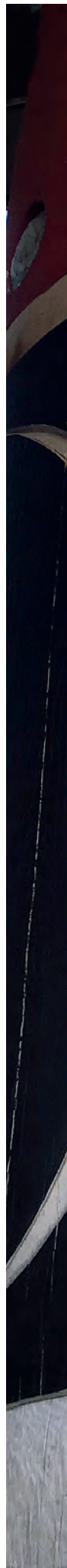






Photo Credit: Meilani Schijvens 2024

### **Note on Terminology and Data**

Persons enrolled in Sitka Tribe of Alaska are referred to as STA Tribal citizens. In describing individuals and households who are eligible for enrollment in STA or any other federally recognized Tribe, or who are eligible for services and benefits by virtue of being Indigenous, the terms “Native,” “Alaska Native,” and “Indigenous” are preferred. When referring to US Census data, this report also uses the term “American Indian.”

The Census reports data on individuals who identify as “Alaska Native or American Indian” alone, or in combination with other races. Census data on Native households is limited to households with a head of household who identifies as “Alaska Native or American Indian;” in most cases, the data is limited to heads of households who identify as “Alaska Native or American Indian alone.” For this reason, Census data excludes many Sitka households that include individuals who are citizens of Sitka Tribe of Alaska or other Tribes, but are not the head of household, including spouses, children, parents, and other relatives of a non-Native head of household.

The survey conducted for the needs assessment was open to any household in Sitka with a member who is Indigenous. The authors believe that the survey data is more representative of the housing needs of Native people in Sitka.

# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Sitka Demographics

There were 2,062 Alaska Native and American Indian residents of Sitka in 2020, representing 24 percent of the total population of Sitka.

**TABLE 1: INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF SITKA 2020**

SOURCE: 2020 US Census Data for Redistricting accessed on the Alaska Department of Labor website, <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/census-data/redistrict?value%5B0%5D=4424>

	NUMBER	% OF TOTAL
Alaska Native or American Indian Population Alone	1248	14.8
Alaska Native or American Indian in Combination	814	9.6
Total Alaska Native or American Indian Population	2062	24.4

According to the US Census, between 2000 and 2022, the percentage of Alaska Native and American Indian residents of Sitka declined by 13 percent – a loss of 280 Indigenous individuals – while the general population declined by five percent.

**Fifty-eight percent of the decline in Sitka's population between 2000 and 2022 was due to the loss of Native residents.**

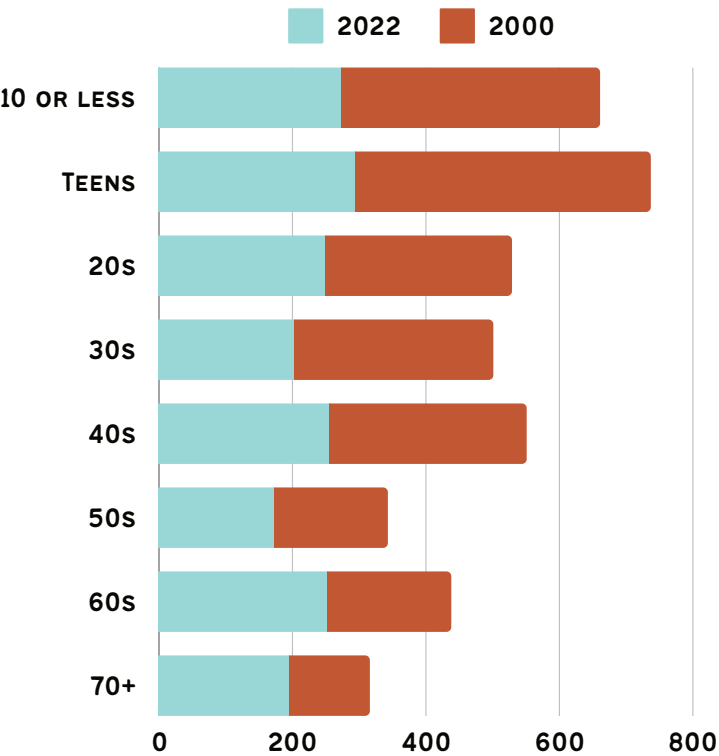
The population of Indigenous residents of Sitka under the age of 20 declined by nearly a third over that period.

State demographers believe that the decline in Sitka's Native population is due in part to outmigration to Juneau and Ketchikan, as well as a decrease in births. [1]

The most recent estimates indicate that the Native population of Sitka continues to decline at an accelerated rate relative to the overall population of Sitka. Between 2020 and 2022, the Native population of Sitka declined by 1.5 percent, compared to just under one percent for the entire population.

**FIGURE 1: AGE OF SITKA RESIDENTS 2000 - 2022**

SOURCE: Alaska Department of Labor Alaska Population by Age, Race (Alone or in combination), Sex and Borough Area, April 2000 and July 2022

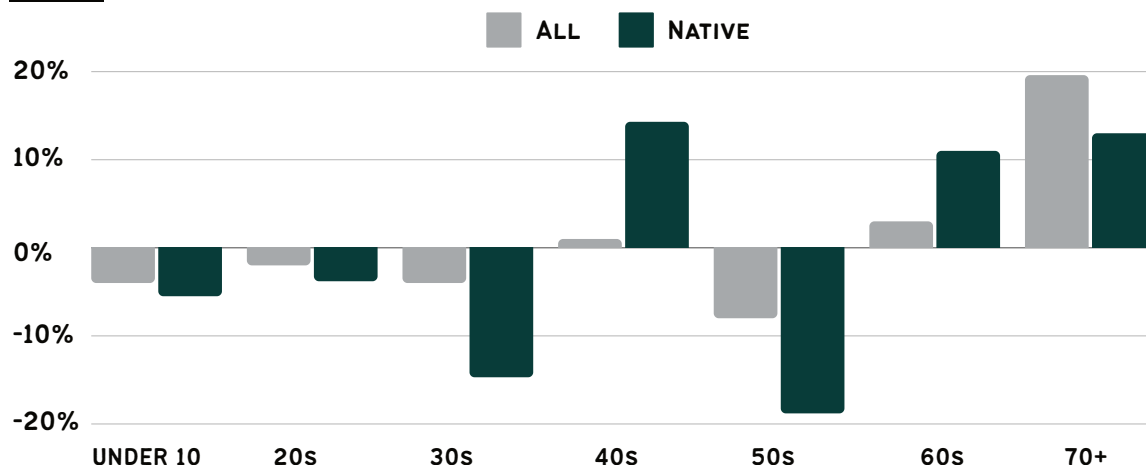


# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

The number of Indigenous residents of Sitka under the age of 40 fell by seven percent, which was twice the rate of decline in all Sitka residents under 40. The number of Indigenous residents over age 70 increased by almost 20 percent between 2020 and 2022, compared to a 13 percent increase in all Sitka residents over age 70. **Figures 2 and 3** show changes and differences in Sitka's Native population compared to the general population.

**FIGURE 2: CHANGES IN SITKA POPULATION BY AGE 2000 - 2022 (%)**

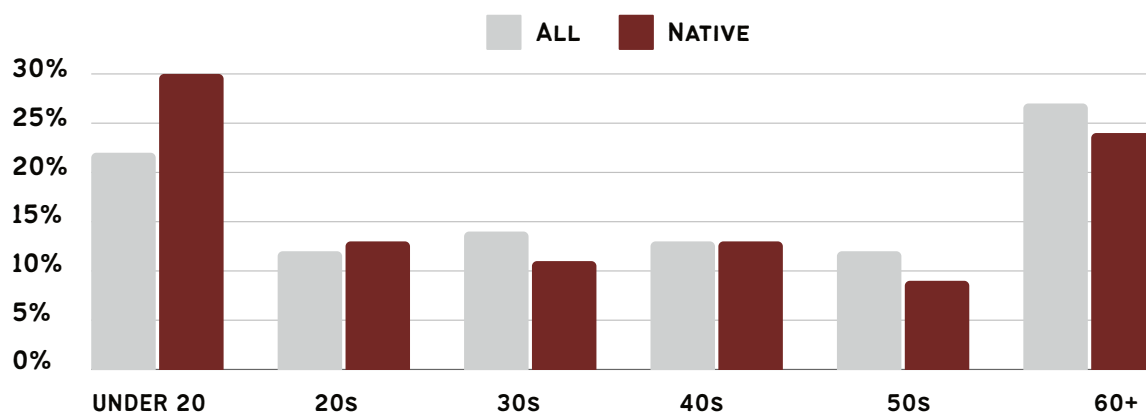
SOURCE: Alaska Population by Age, Race (Alone or in Combination) and Hispanic Origin, Sex and Borough/Census Area accessed on the Alaska Department of Labor website, <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/data-pages/alaska-population-estimates>



Notwithstanding recent population trends, the Native population in Sitka is still younger than Sitka residents overall, most notably with respect to children.

**FIGURE 3: SITKA POPULATION BY AGE 2022**

SOURCE: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. Alaska Population by Age 2022



Based on demographic trends, the Alaska Department of Labor projects that the population of Sitka will continue to decline by 18 percent, or 1,479 individuals over the next 30 years. If the population of Native residents declined by 18 percent over that period it would represent a loss 341 Indigenous residents.



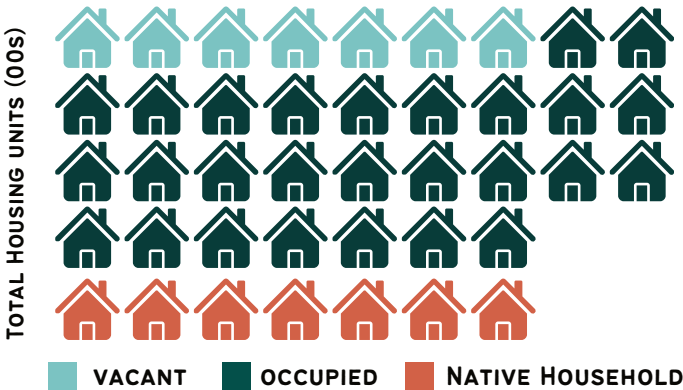
# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Sitka Housing Characteristics

There were 4,139 housing units in Sitka in 2020, including 3,421 occupied units in the month of April, when data is collected.[2]

There were an estimated 709 Alaska Native and American Indian households in Sitka in 2020, representing 20.7 percent of all occupied housing units in the community.[3]

**FIGURE 4: NATIVE-OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS IN SITKA 2020**  
SOURCE: US Census 2020



## Sitka Household Income

The needs assessment survey asked respondents to report their income. Based on responses, the average income of Native households that responded to the survey was \$73,700, compared to average income of \$104,872 for all residents of Sitka.[4] A third of households surveyed reported income of \$40,000 or less.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development establishes income guidelines for eligibility for housing programs based on household size and geography. Income limits are expressed as a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI).

**TABLE 2: 2023 HUD INCOME LIMITS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE FOR SITKA**

PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD								
INCOME TIER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low 30% of AMI	\$22,750	\$26,000	\$29,250	\$32,450	\$35,050	\$37,650	\$40,250	\$42,850
Very Low 50% of AMI	\$37,900	\$43,300	\$48,700	\$54,100	\$58,450	\$62,800	\$67,100	\$71,450
Low 80% of AMI	\$60,600	\$69,250	\$77,900	\$86,550	\$93,500	\$100,400	\$107,350	\$114,250

Sixty-two percent of households that responded to the survey reported income within HUD’s definition of low income. Thirty-seven percent of households surveyed had incomes in the very low income range, and 19 percent would qualify as extremely low income by HUD guidelines.

**TABLE 3: SITKA NATIVE HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN HUD CALCULATED INCOME LIMITS (%)**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)

HUD CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low - 30% of AMI	33%	18%	18%	13%	9%	18%	33%	NA
Very Low - 50% of AMI	52%	41%	31%	30%	14%	36%	50%	NA
Low - 80% of AMI	77%	56%	56%	57%	55%	64%	100%	NA



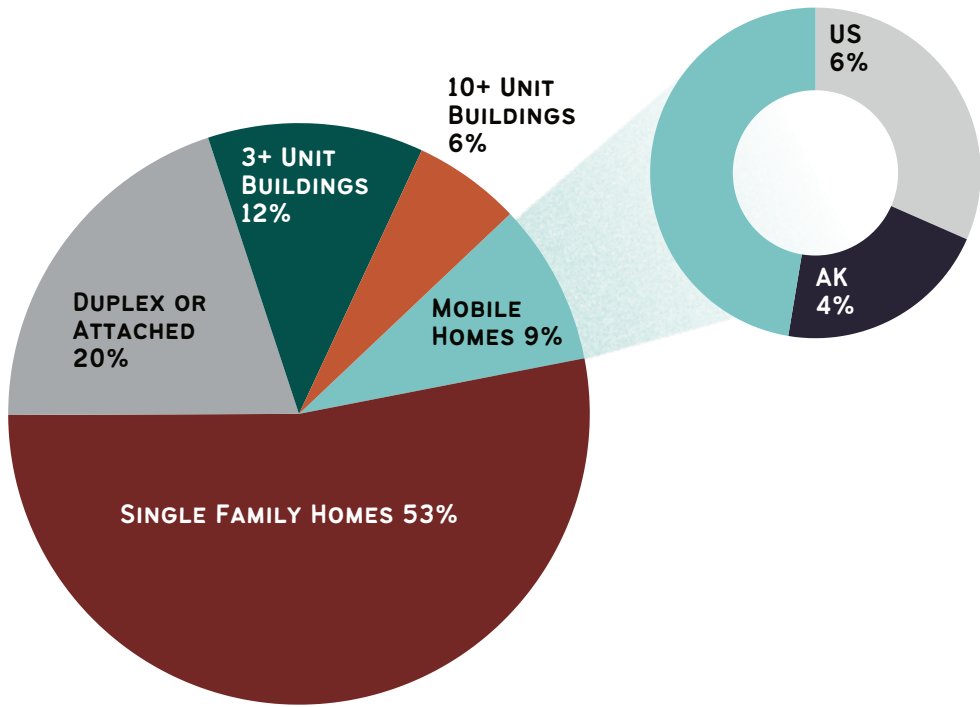
# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Housing Stock

More than half of the housing stock in Sitka is single family homes. Sitka has a high percentage of mobile homes relative to Alaska and the nation. Mobile homes are nine percent of Sitka’s housing stock, compared to four percent for the state, and six percent for the nation. [5]

**FIGURE 5: SITKA HOUSING STOCK BY TYPE (%)**

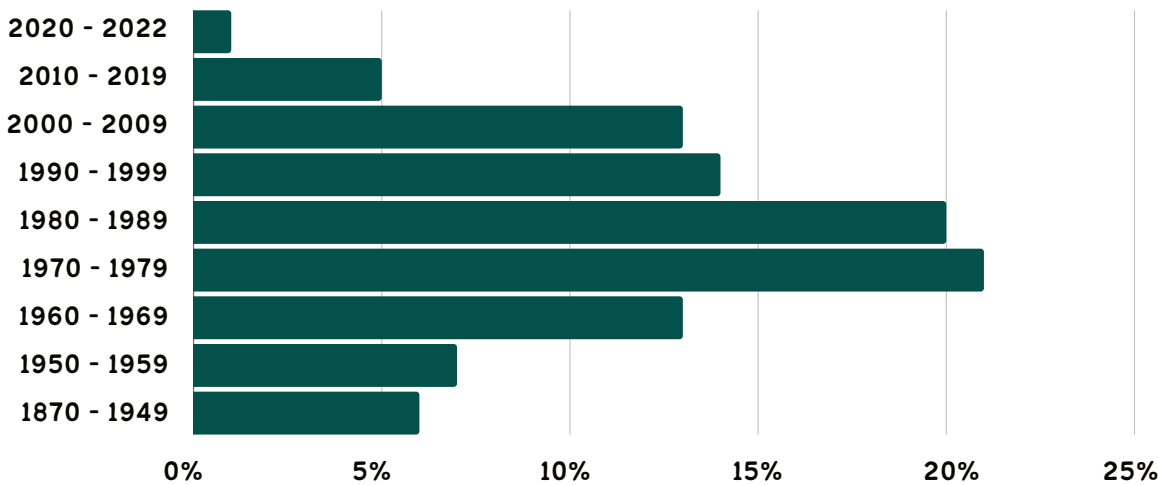
SOURCE: Sitka Assessor’s Database, downloaded November 13, 2023.<https://www.cityofsitka.com/departments/Assessing>



Most of Sitka’s housing stock is nearly 50 years old or older. Housing production peaked in the 1970s and has slowed in recent decades. Sitka’s mobile homes are, on average, the oldest housing in the community. The average mobile home in Sitka was built in 1976.

**FIGURE 6: SITKA HOUSING BY YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION (%)**

SOURCE: Sitka Assessor’s Database, downloaded November 13, 2023.<https://www.cityofsitka.com/departments/Assessing>



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

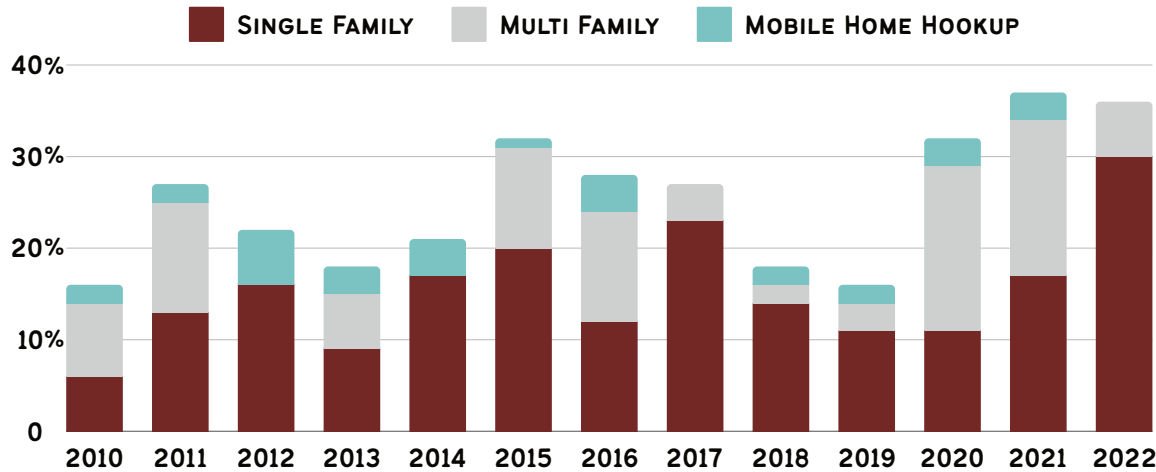
## Sitka Housing Characteristics

Since 2010, 326 new housing units have been permitted in Sitka, including 199 single family homes. The pace of permitting new housing units has accelerated in the past three years. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and the Alaska Center for Economic Development, Sitka built more units of housing per capita in 2021 – 4.3 units per 1,000 residents – than any other area in Alaska with the exception of the Mat-Su region.

The increase in construction is driven partly by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium’s efforts to meet the need for housing created by its new hospital facility.

**FIGURE 7: NEW UNITS PERMITTED IN SITKA 2010 - 2022 (%)**

SOURCE: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, based on the quarterly Alaska Housing Unit survey of local governments and housing agencies.

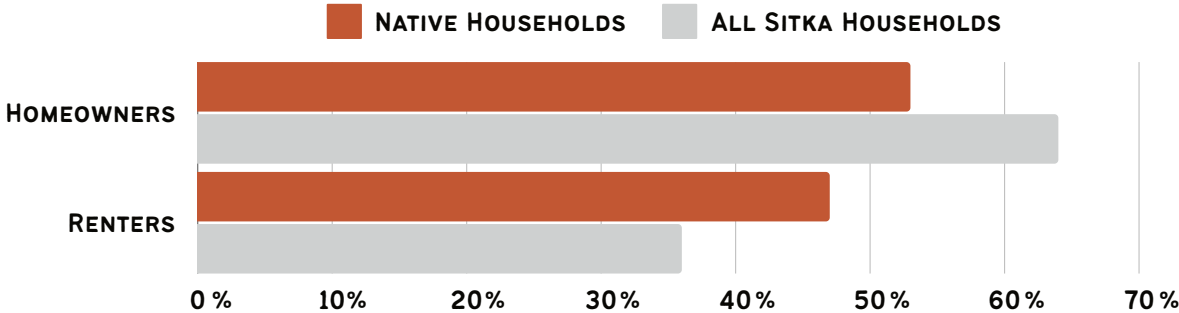


## Housing Tenure

Native households in Sitka are much less likely to own their homes than other residents. Forty-seven percent of households that identified as “Alaska Native and American Indian Only” in the U.S. Census in Sitka are renters, compared to 36 percent of Sitka households overall.[6] The housing needs assessment confirmed data from the US census; 48 percent of survey respondents in Sitka reported renting their homes.

**FIGURE 8: HOUSING TENURE OF SITKA-BASED NATIVE HOUSEHOLDS 2020 (%)**

SOURCE: US Census 2020



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

**Fifteen percent of households surveyed for the needs assessment reported that they live in mobile homes, compared to nine percent of all Sitka residents.**

## ***Mobile Homes***

Sitka's mobile homes are, on average, the oldest housing in the community. The average mobile home in Sitka was built in 1976. These units were for the most part not designed for Alaska and are at or well past the expected design lifetime for units manufactured during this period.



Trailers, manufactured homes and combinations with stick-built additions at Oceanside, Coles, and Arrowhead trailer park sites. Photo credit: Leah Mason 2024

## ***Length of Tenure***

On average, 73 percent of households that responded to the needs assessment survey have lived in Sitka more than 15 years. Eighty-four percent of the surveyed households have lived in the same place in Sitka for the past five years. Six percent of survey respondents reporting moving at least three times in the past five years.

## ***Extent of Local Ownership***

According to the Sitka assessor's database, 91 percent of residential homes and 93 percent of mobile homes in Sitka are owned by a person or entity with a local address. Eight-five percent of condominiums in Sitka are owned by a person or entity with a Sitka address, as are 70 percent of local apartment buildings.



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Sitka Tribal Household Composition

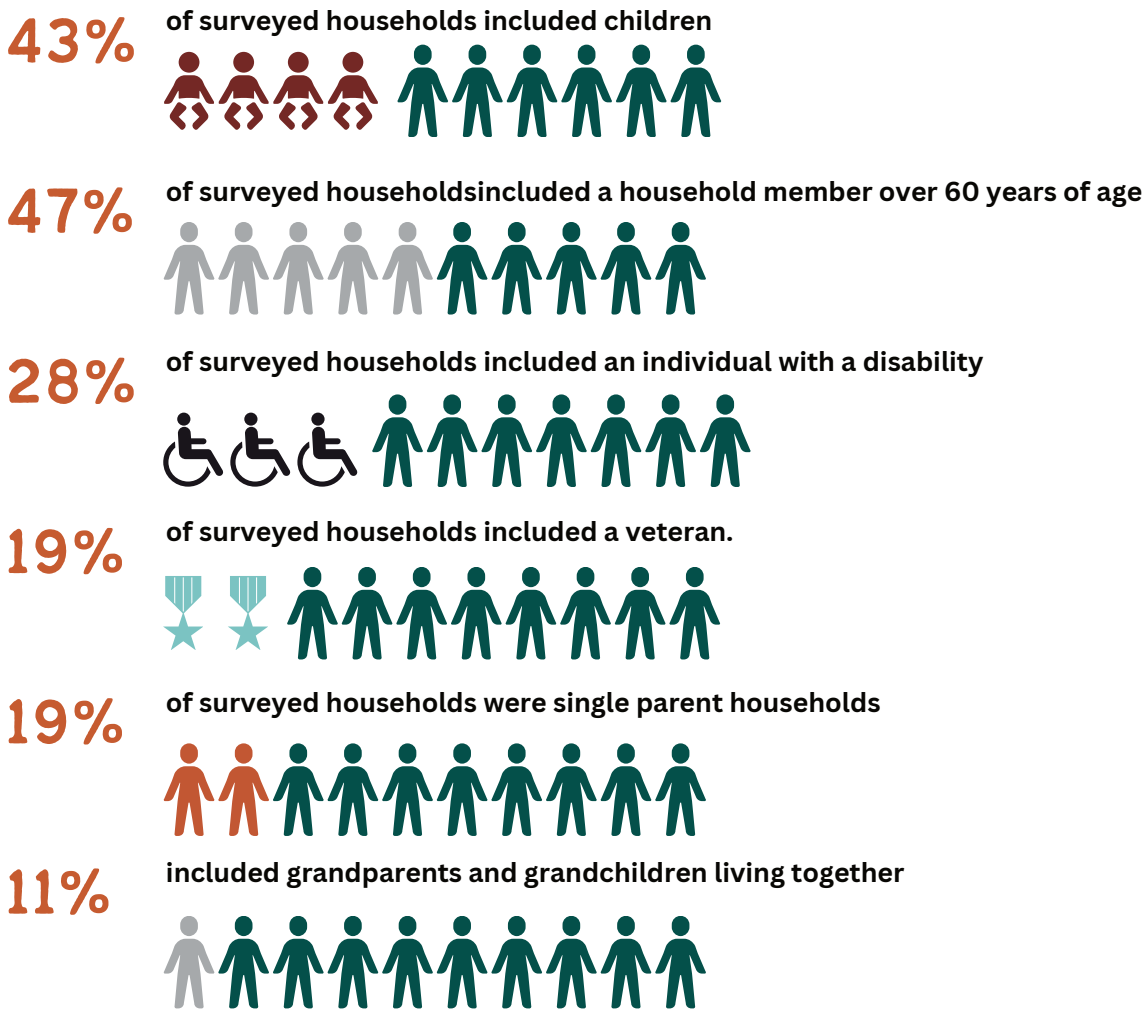
The average size of the Tribal households surveyed for the housing needs assessment was 2.9 individuals. This figure applied to both the Sitka-based Tribal households, and Sitka Tribe of Alaska Tribal citizens currently living outside of Sitka.

Household composition is important in considering housing needs. Many Tribal households in Sitka include Elders, children, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

Nearly one-fifth of Native households are headed by a single parent, and more than ten percent are multi-generational, with grandparents and grandchildren living together. [7]



**FIGURE 9: VULNERABLE PERSONS IN SITKA-BASED TRIBAL HOUSEHOLD**  
SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Household Survey (2023)





# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

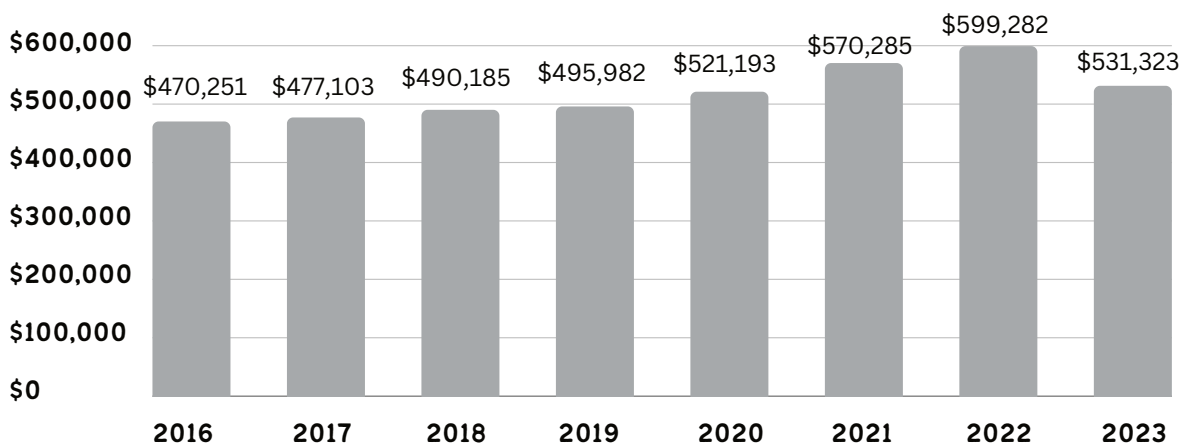
## Housing Costs, Availability and Affordability

### Market Value of Single-Family Homes

Single family homes comprise just over half of Sitka's housing stock. The market value of these homes has increased significantly in recent years. A decrease in market value in 2023 is likely associated with higher interest rates.

**FIGURE 10: AVERAGE MARKET VALUE OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES IN SITKA 2016-2023**

SOURCE: Zillow, Sitka single family resident analysis



### Market Rent

According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, median rent in Sitka adjusted to account for the cost of utilities was \$1,354 per unit. This is comparable to median rent statewide. The survey is conducted in March, so does not capture costs or vacancy rates between May and September during Sitka's period of peak demand for rental units. For this reason, the data in **Table 4** likely overstates vacancy rates and understates costs for year-round rentals.

**TABLE 4: SITKA MARKET RENT COSTS AND VACANCY RATES 2023**

SOURCE: AK Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section, Alaska Rental Market Surveys.

TYPE AND SIZE	MEDIAN ADJUSTED RENT	VACANCY RATE	UNITS SURVEYED
1 Bedroom House	\$1,121	25%	12
2 Bedroom House	\$1,457	6.9%	29
3 Bedroom House	\$1,889	5.7%	35
4 Bedroom House	\$2,449	14.3%	7
0 Bedroom Apartment	\$1,403	0	19
1 Bedroom Apartment	\$1,156	6.4%	94
2 Bedroom Apartment	\$1,404	4.1%	98
3 Bedroom Apartment	\$1,639	3.8%	52
Sitka Average	\$1,364	5.7%	352
Alaska Average	\$1,381	5.9%	17269

# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

**The average price of a short term rental unit in Sitka in 2023 was \$302 per night. This represents 22% of average monthly adjusted market rent.**

## Housing Costs, Availability and Affordability

### Seasonal Rental Market

Sitka's housing market is responding to growing demand for seasonal short-term rentals. According to AirDNA, a national source of data on short-term rentals, peak-season public listings for short-term rentals increased by 52 percent between 2021 and 2023.

Listings in Sitka included 73 houses and 71 apartments in 2023. Thirty-five percent of listings were for one- bedroom homes, 28 percent were for two-bedroom homes, and 27 percent were for three-bedroom homes.

The average total price per night was \$302. This figure may be driven by a small number of high-value rentals, but it is worth noting that the average per night price for a short-term rental in the summer represents 22% of monthly adjusted market rent for housing in Sitka.

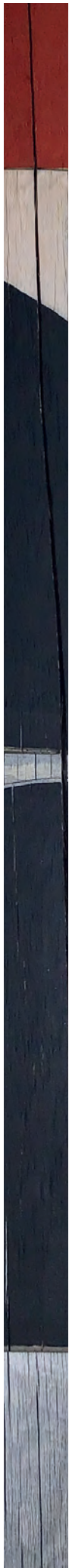
If the \$302 in average revenue for short-term rental units in 2022 was representative of revenue for all short-term rentals in Sitka, this would imply total revenue of \$3,177,031 in revenue for 143 Sitka short-term rentals reported by AirDNA. If those 143 units were instead rented at the average 2023 adjusted rent of \$1,364 a month, total revenue would be \$2,340,624. This calculation represents conjecture, but it also demonstrates the market forces that reward short-term rentals rather than year-round leases.

**FIGURE 11: SHORT-TERM RENTAL LISTINGS IN SITKA 2021 - 2023**

SOURCE: Zillow, Sitka single family resident analysis



The City and Borough of Sitka collects data on short-term rentals and bed & breakfast establishments that operate under conditional use permits. Short-term rentals are defined as properties that are rented for fewer than 30 days. Permits for short-term rentals are required in residential zones. A change in the zoning code in 2022 required owners to live on their property for at least 180 days a year to qualify for a conditional use permits for short-term rentals. Permits must be activated within 12 months of issuance and expire upon transfer of property ownership.



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

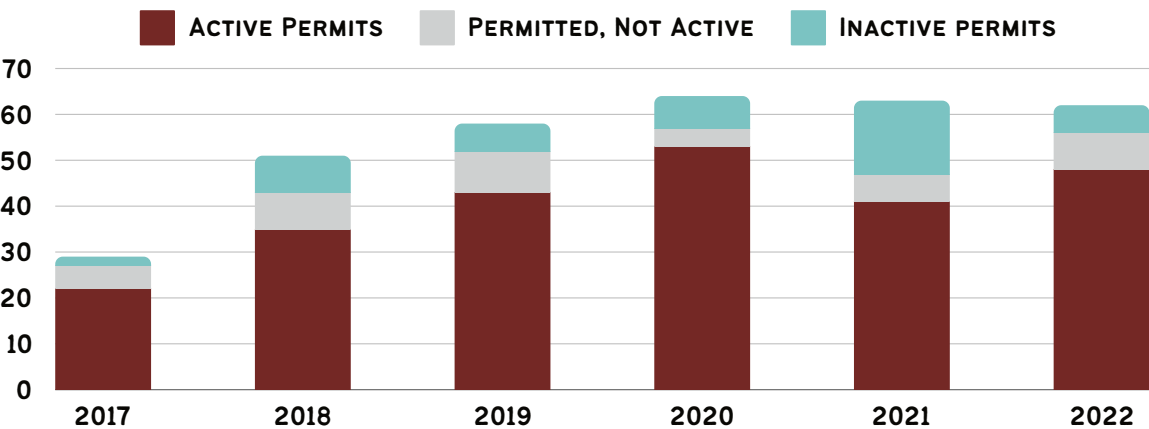
## Housing Costs, Availability and Affordability

Short term rentals are allowed by right in Sitka’s Central Business District, Commercial Districts 1 & 2, Waterfront District, General Island District and Recreation District.

***The City’s data on short-term rentals discussed below includes only units that require permits, not units permitted by right.*** Comparing the City data to information reported by AirDNA, it appears that approximately a third of the units reported by AirDNA in 2022 were operating subject to conditional use permits. **Figure 12** shows the increase in conditional use permits for short term rentals in Sitka between 2017 and 2022.

**FIGURE 12: CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS FOR SHORT TERM RENTALS 2017 -2022**

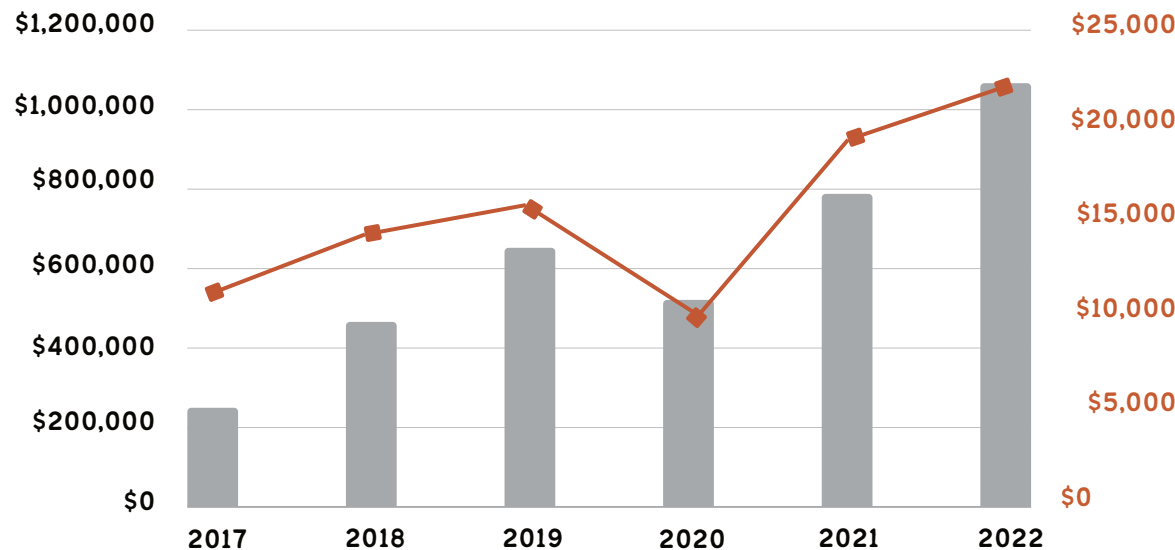
SOURCE: 2022 Annual Short-Term Rental Report, City and Borough of Sitka, April 5, 2023



**Figure 13** shows total nights rented, average number of nights rented, and revenue from rentals with conditional use permits, all of which increased at a much higher rate than the total number of short-term rentals with conditional use permits between 2017 and 2022.

**FIGURE 13: REVENUE FROM SITKA SHORT-TERM RENTALS WITH PERMITS 2017- 2022**

SOURCE: 2022 Annual Short-Term Rental Report, City and Borough of Sitka, April 5, 2023



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

The total number of rental nights reported by owners of short-term rentals with conditional use permits increased by almost 42 percent between 2021 and 2022, to 4,137. Average nights rented per permit was 86 nights in 2022, while the average revenue per permit was \$22,217 in 2022.

## Housing Cost Burden

Housing experts consider households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs – including rent, mortgage, property taxes, property insurance and utilities – to be cost-burdened. The percentage of renters burdened by housing costs has been increasing nationally.

According to the US Census, 51 percent of Sitka households that rent were cost-burdened in 2022. This is the highest rate of rental cost burden for any community in Alaska, but it is similar to the nation overall. Only 21 percent of all Sitka households that own their homes were cost-burdened in 2022.

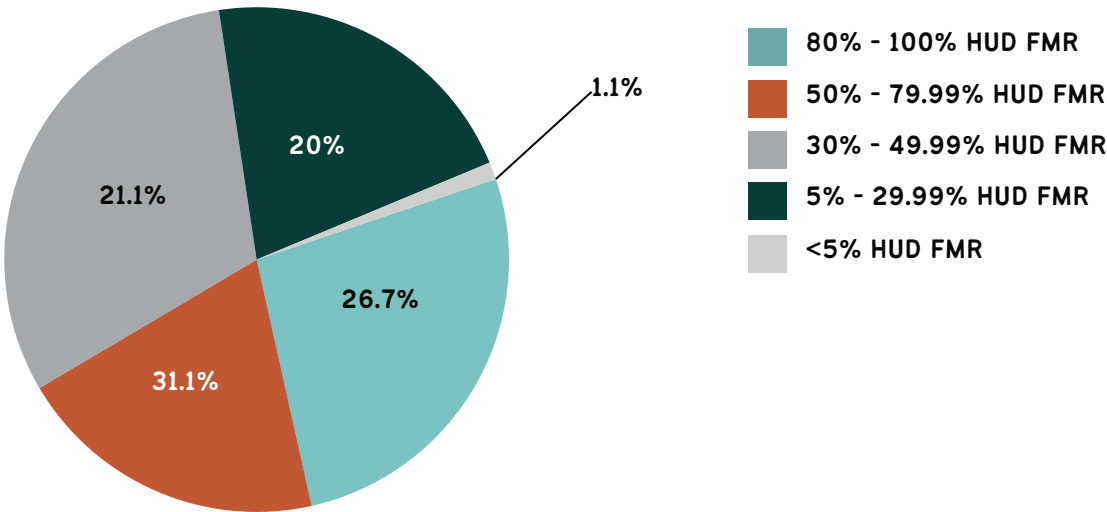
Native households in Sitka have lower incomes than Sitka residents overall, and they are significantly more likely to be renters compared to the general population.

The average mortgage reported by households that responded to the needs assessment survey was \$1,692; 17 percent of households surveyed reported owning a home without a mortgage. The average rent reported by survey respondents was \$1,060. This figure is lower than the \$1,364 average rent for Sitka, and there are several reasons why this could be the case.

First, the average rent for Sitka is adjusted for utilities, and it is likely that a majority of the survey respondents do not have utilities included in their rent. Second, eight percent of survey respondents were BIHA tenants, with rent subsidized based on income; the average rent of \$1,364 does not include subsidized units. Finally, Native households may be renting less expensive units based on their ability to pay. **Figure 14** shows the significant benefit that housing assistance programs provides to Tribal households renting in Sitka.

**FIGURE 14: PERCENTAGE OF HUD FAIR MARKET RENT PAID BY BIHA TENANTS IN 2023**

SOURCE: BIHA End of Year Assessment of Tenant Housing Costs 2023





# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Housing Costs, Availability and Affordability

### *Housing Cost Burden*

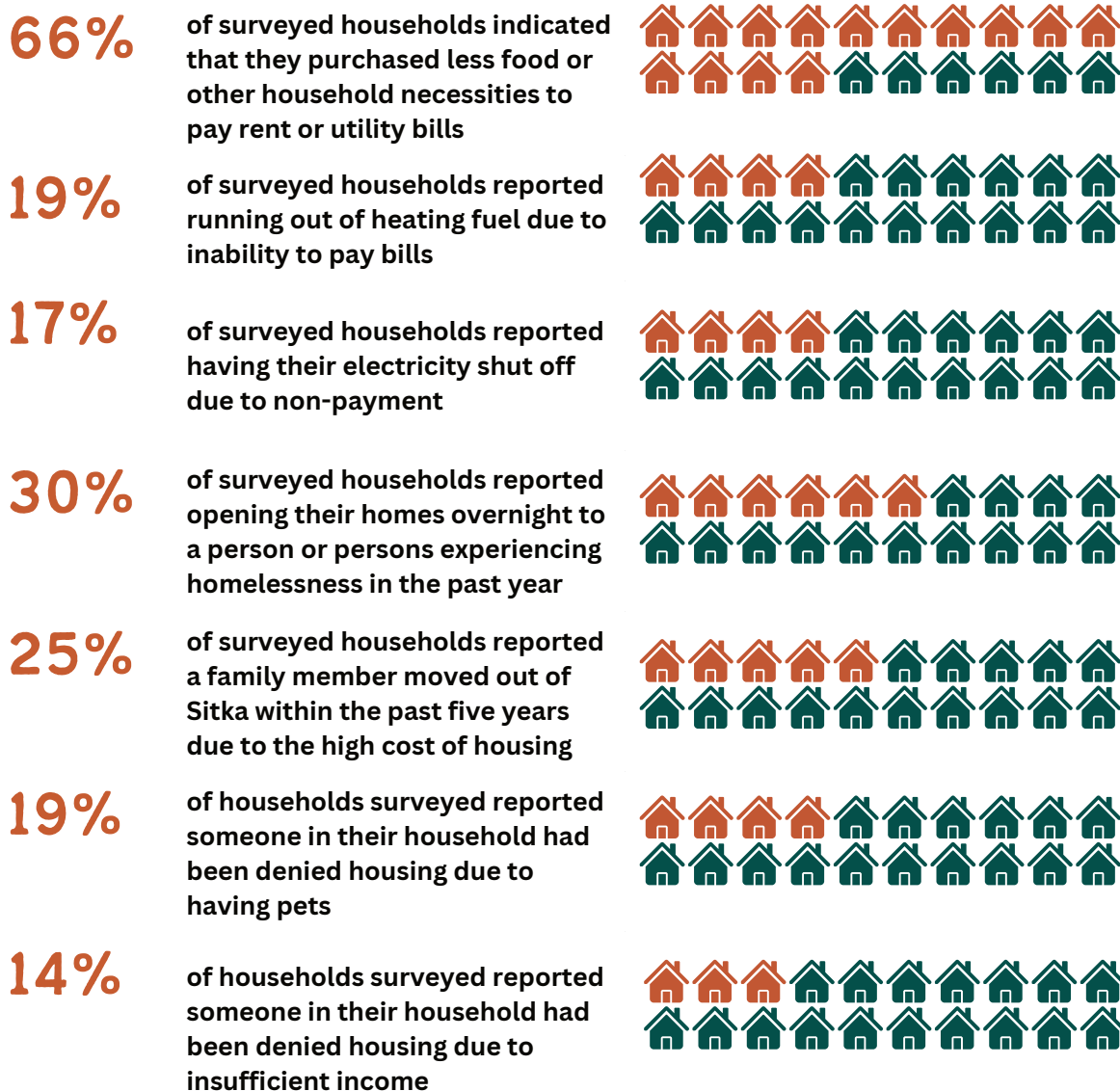
While the average income of Sitka-based tribal households that responded to the needs assessment survey was \$73,700, the average income of those who rent their housing was \$64,278.

According to the US Census, 58 percent of Alaska Native and American Indian households of renters Sitka were cost-burdened in 2022; this estimate only includes households with a Native head of household.

**The needs assessment survey did not include questions that would allow calculation of cost burden to compare to the Census data, but it provides other indicators of financial stress associated with housing costs.**

**FIGURE 15: INDICATORS OF FINANCIAL STRESS FOR SITKA-BASED NATIVE HOUSEHOLDS**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Housing Costs, Availability and Affordability

The needs assessment survey asked about specific issues associated with seasonal housing in Sitka. Twenty-eight percent of survey respondents reported opening their homes to family or friends in Sitka on a seasonal basis because they had nowhere to live in the summer.

## Housing Quality & Home Energy Use

### Home Condition

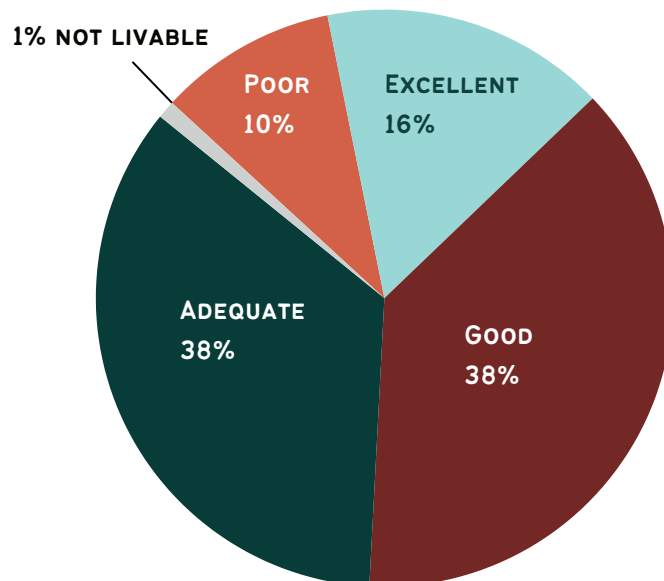
Just over half of Sitka Tribal households that responded to the housing needs assessment reported that their homes are in good or excellent condition, but 62 percent of survey respondents indicated that improving the quality of existing housing was important to their households, and 34 percent said that this was important to other households.

**Fifty-two percent of households surveyed reported the presence of mold in their homes, including six percent that reported severe problems with mold.**

**FIGURE 16: HOME CONDITION OF SITKA-BASED SURVEY RESPONDENTS (%)**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)

Households were asked to select the level of repairs or changes that they felt their current homes required. Excellent homes were those that required “no repairs or changes”. Good homes required “a few minor repairs”, while Adequate home required “repairs to improve living conditions”. Poor homes required “major repairs to make it safe and livable”. Only one percent of the surveyed households indicated that they were “...currently unable to live” in their homes.



**The survey also asked Sitka-based Tribal households about common home quality issues. While more than a quarter of the respondents indicated that their home had none of the listed issues, 28 percent had drafty windows.**

This finding is consistent with a 2017 analysis by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation indicating that 57 percent of homes in Sitka are unusually drafty compared to 36 percent in the state of Alaska more generally. This may be due to the age of Sitka’s housing stock, and the comparatively large percentage of older mobile homes in the community.

# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

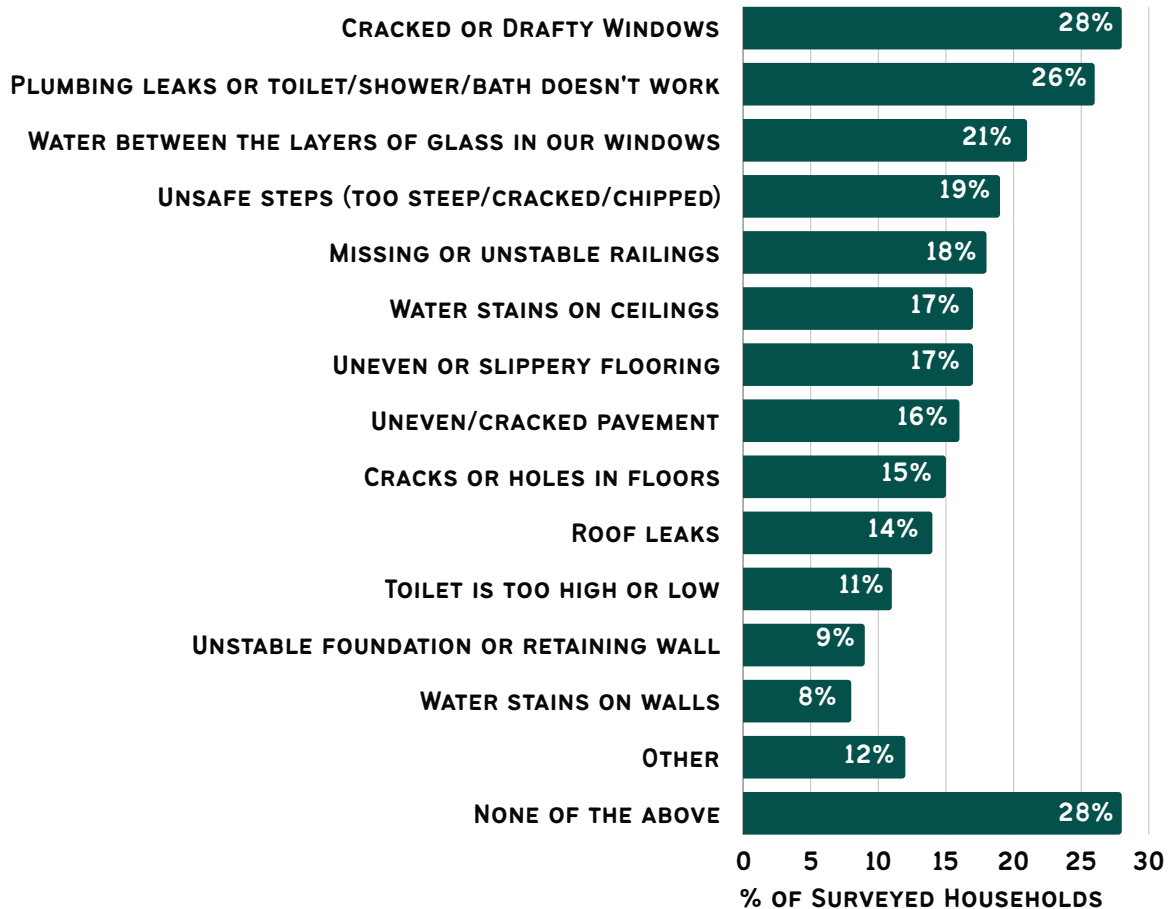
## Housing Quality & Home Energy Use

### *Presence of Other Housing Quality Issues*

**Figure 17** shows the common housing quality issues identified by Sitka-based survey respondents.

**FIGURE 17: HOUSING QUALITY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY SITKA TRIBAL HOUSEHOLDS (%)**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)



Comments made by survey respondents who selected the “other” option included drafty doors, water damage, carpenter ant infestation, heat not working, floor sagging, mold, lack of original foundation, lack of insulation, and cracks in walls or ceilings.



# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

## Heating and Utilities

Heating oil is the most common source of heat for Sitka-based Tribal households that responded to the survey, followed by electric baseboard heating.

TABLE 5: HOME HEATING SOURCES (SITKA-BASED RESPONDENTS)

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)

TYPE AND SIZE	PRIMARY HEAT SOURCE	USED FOR HEATING
Heating Oil	50%	25%
Electric Baseboard Heat	28%	6.9%
Electric Heat Pump	21%	5.7%
Wood or Pellet Stove	6%	14.3%
Gas or Propane	7%	0

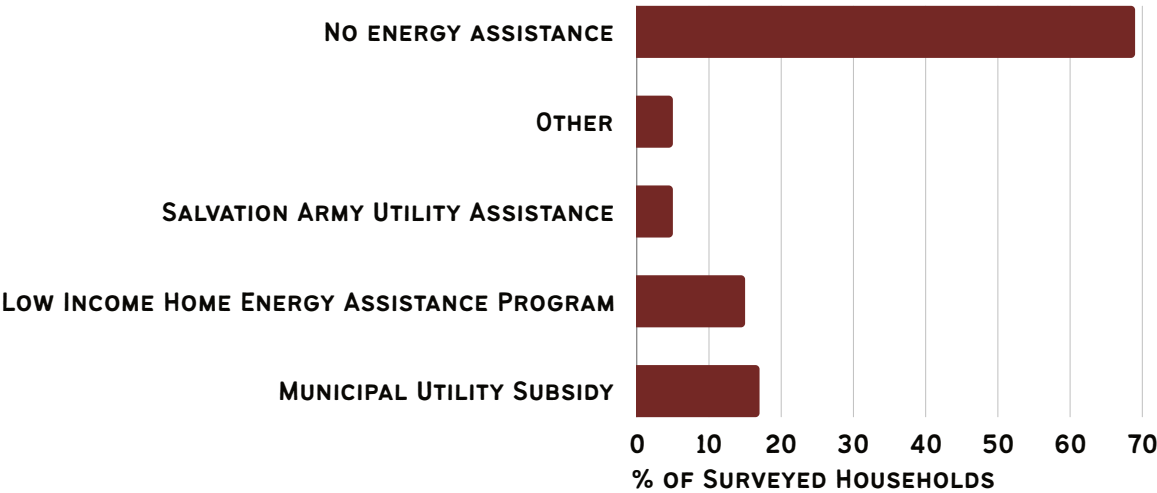
## Utilities Assistance

The City and Borough of Sitka offers a municipal utility subsidy of \$100 a month for income- eligible households. Households that receive SNAP, Medicaid, BIHA assistance, or free and reduced-price school lunch are eligible for the City program. Tribal households that earn less than 80 percent of area median income are also eligible for the Sitka Tribe of Alaska Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

In spite of the fact that a majority of households that responded to the needs assessment survey appear to have income that falls with HUD low income guidelines, fewer than a third of these households reported receiving any type of home energy assistance within the past year.

FIGURE 18: UTILITIES OR ENERGY ASSISTANCE USED BY NATIVE HOUSEHOLDS IN 2023 (%)

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)



## Appliances

Survey respondents in Sitka were also asked about the type and age of appliances in their homes. More than a third reported stoves and refrigerators that were more than ten years old.

# SITKA DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING DATA

**More than three-quarters of respondents identified home energy efficiency as being important to their household.**

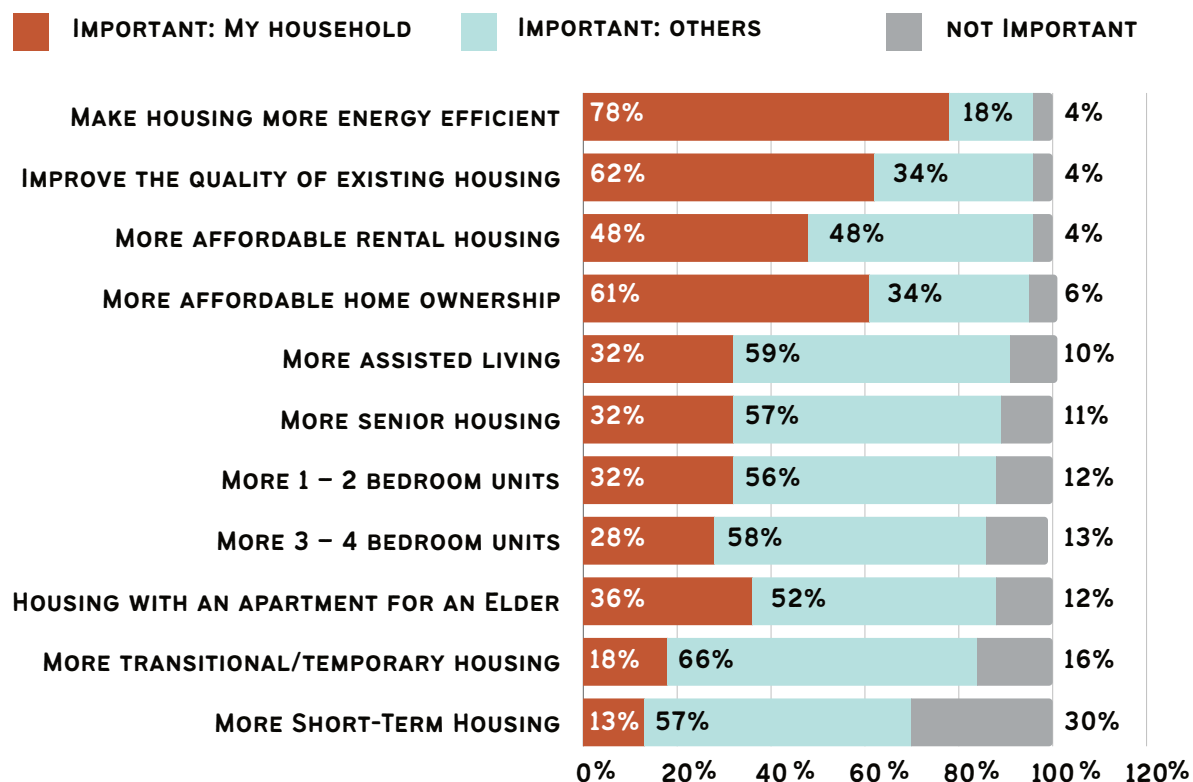
## Housing Needs of Sitka-based Tribal Households

The needs assessment asked Sitka households about a variety of housing needs.

**Figure 19** shows the responses to common approaches to improving housing for Tribal Citizens.

**FIGURE 19: HOUSING NEEDS REPORTED BY SITKA SURVEY RESPONDENTS (%)**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)



## Responses to Open-Ended Question

The needs assessment survey also included an open-ended question that allowed respondents to express interest in a type of housing that is not currently available in Sitka. Slightly more than a third of respondents provided answers to an open-ended question regarding other types of housing that isn't currently available in Sitka. The most common response was that Sitka needs more affordable housing.

## Awareness of BIHA Programs

Two-thirds of survey respondents were aware of BIHA's low rent housing program, but a majority were unaware of other BIHA programs available to help Native households with housing costs.

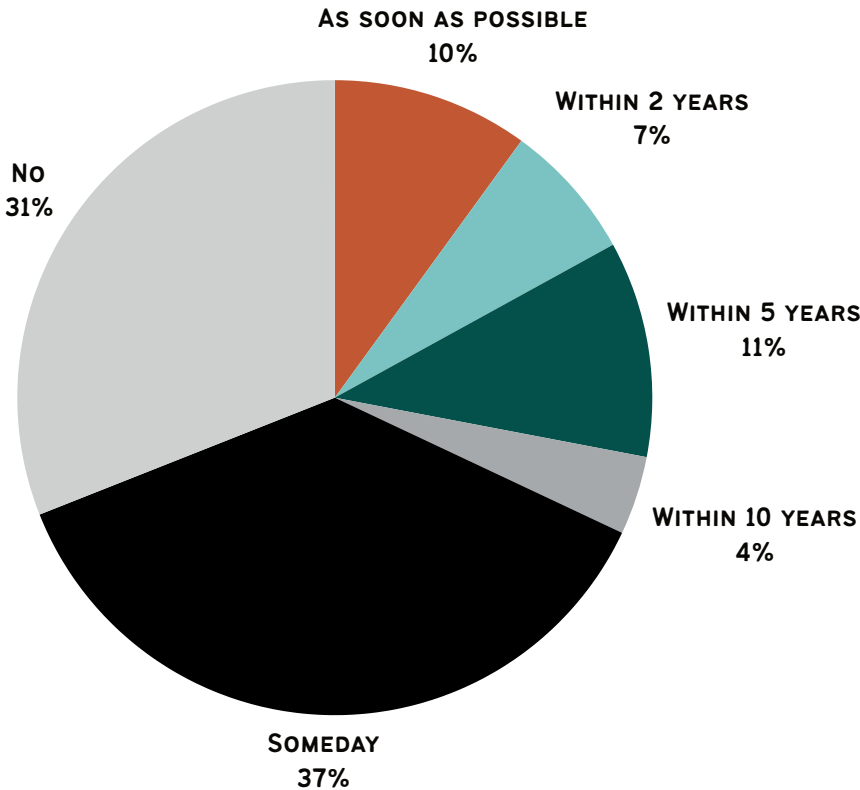
# STA TRIBAL CITIZENS LIVING OUTSIDE SITKA

## *Sitka Tribe of Alaska Tribal Citizen Responses*

Survey responses from Tribal citizens outside Sitka constitute a much smaller sample than respondents within Sitka, and results are thus less likely to be representative of the whole. It is notable, however, that 69 percent of STA citizen households that completed the survey indicated interest in moving to Sitka, including 28 percent – 49 households – that would like to move within the next five years.

**FIGURE 20: STA TRIBAL CITIZENS INTEREST IN MOVING TO SITKA**

SOURCE: Sitka Tribal Housing Survey BIHA (2023)



## *Considerations for STA Tribal Citizens Returning to Sitka*

Housing availability was the most important factor cited by STA citizens who expressed interest in moving to Sitka, cited by 85 percent of respondents, followed by access to healthcare (77%) and to be with family (73%). When asked about key housing barriers to moving to Sitka, two-thirds of respondents identified “finding a home we can afford to buy,” followed by “finding an apartment we can afford to rent,” cited by 53 percent of respondents.

Forty-six percent of responses to the survey from STA citizens outside Sitka came from households in Alaska – a third from Anchorage, a third from Juneau, and a third from other communities. Another 20 percent of responses came from households living in Washington state.

Most respondents to the survey from outside Sitka were not aware of BIHA housing programs.



# COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

Interviews with community leaders explored Sitka's housing landscape. Leaders described the local housing market and its impacts on employment, discussed barriers to expanding the housing supply, and explored opportunities and initiatives to address the problem.

Community meetings with the STA Tribal Council, BIHA Board of Commissioners, STA and BIHA staff, and STA Tribal citizens and community members generated additional information on local housing challenges, needs and solutions. The following is a short summary of key themes that emerged from community interviews and meetings.

## **Theme: Current Market Conditions**

### **There is a critical shortage of available and affordable housing in Sitka**

There is insufficient availability of housing at all levels of the market in Sitka. High prices and a tight market create the greatest hardships for households with lower incomes.

Native people, Elders, young people, and lower-wage workers are disproportionately impacted by the tight housing market. Households with pets are increasingly unable to find rental housing at an affordable price, or at all. Households with housing vouchers struggle to find landlords who will accept them.

Individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities, behavioral health challenges, or a history of involvement with law enforcement are increasingly unable to secure and retain housing, resulting in a growing population of Sitka residents who are living in shelters, outdoors, couch-surfing, or otherwise housing-unstable.

***"We have consistently had 17 – 21 individuals residing at SAFV over the last year," said Natalie Wojcik, Director of Sitkans Against Family Violence. "One individual has been applying for housing for two years without luck due to a \$30 theft charge from over five years ago."***

Several community members spoke about the need for supportive services and accessible units to help individuals with disabilities secure and retain housing.

While households with lower incomes are at the greatest disadvantage in Sitka's housing market, many moderate-income households are also struggling to buy their first home, rent year-round, or maintain homes that they have lived in for decades. These households may exceed limits on income or assets to be eligible for assistance, but are still not able to afford down payments, mortgages with high interest rates, or the cost of home repairs.

2 WHAT ARE SITKA'S GREATEST HOUSING NEEDS: PLEASE INCLUDE AS MANY HOUSING NEEDS AS YOU CAN IDENTIFY

affordable apartments  
mold free + draft free  
weatherization for all  
Lack of 1 & 2-bedroom affordable apartments  
secondary need: BIHA staff & others need to be trauma-informed so that they won't evict renters who suffer from mental illness caused by long-term historical & multi-generational trauma

Not getting stuck into year leases  
Cost of energy → weatherization & heat pumps less expensive than electrical  
programs for heat pumps in rentals close to town  
tribal citizens, maintenance & repair of homes & equipment inside  
rent relief for parents with children with disabilities like autism

Community members completed "Housing Action Plan" documents as part of facilitated discussions of the Sitka Tribal Housing Survey and Needs Assessment results. Housing Needs Assessment Community Meeting - 18th January 2024

# COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

## *Theme: Current Market Conditions*

### **2. The housing shortage is driving long-time residents of Sitka to leave the community and is a major barrier to recruitment and retention of employees.**

Individuals who are Indigenous to Sitka, with roots in the community that go back to time immemorial, have left the community or anticipate leaving due to inability to afford housing. Several Tribal citizens reported that their children want to move back to Sitka but cannot afford to do so.

Individuals who want or need to move to Sitka for employment are at an additional disadvantage in competing for scarce housing through the word-of-mouth market; many units available for sale or rent are not publicly listed. Virtually every employer interviewed had stories about offers of employment that were not accepted because candidates could not find a home to purchase or rent. Employers are also losing valuable employees who cannot afford to buy a home in Sitka or are unable to afford year-round leases. Several employers said that the shortage of available housing was hurting operations and growth.

***“We’ve had a number of our teachers move three times during the course of the school year,” reported Suzuk Huntington, Superintendent of Mt. Edgecumbe High School. She added that the school hired four new teachers in 2021. Three left after a year because they could not find affordable housing and the cost of housing was too high. The fourth employee left after two years.***

Lack of homeownership opportunities for families with children was a particular concern cited by leaders interviewed, who are worried about the housing shortage exacerbating a decline in Sitka’s population of adults in their prime working years, and loss of youth in the community.

### **3. Growing demand for seasonal and short-term housing is creating new challenges**

Demand for housing in Sitka peaks in the summer, when visitors seek short-term rentals, and tourism, construction, and seafood businesses need seasonal housing for employees. Demand for seasonal housing is creating strong disincentives for property owners to offer year-round leases.

### **4. The strong market may paradoxically contribute to a decline in housing quality.**

An extremely competitive market for both rental property and homeownership creates disincentives for property maintenance. Landlords can rent, and homeowners can sell their properties notwithstanding deferred maintenance issues, reducing the quality of rental housing and increasing the cost of homeownership.





# COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

## *Theme: Challenges*

### **1. Wages are not Rising at the Same Rate as Housing Costs**

Participants in community meetings underscored the fact that the critical shortage of affordable housing in Sitka is due in part to the fact that the cost of housing and other necessities has risen faster and more steeply than wages.

### **2. Shortage of Developable Land**

Sitka's topography, geology, hydrology, and high percentage of land in federal ownership limit the supply of land that can be developed for housing.

### **3. High Development and Construction Costs**

Development and construction costs are extremely high in Sitka due to a variety of factors, including topography, geology, and hydrology, transportation of materials by barge, and a critical shortage of local workers in the construction trades. The gap between the cost of developing new housing and affordable rent and mortgage payments is so large that the market cannot produce new units at a cost that is affordable to most Tribal citizens and residents of Sitka in general.

Photo Credit (Google 2024)



*Municipal planner Amy Ainslie cited the City's 2020 master planning exercise for development of 60 residential lots of 8,000 – 10,000 square feet on City-owned land in the Granite Creek/No Name Mountain area as an example. The study concluded that lot prices would need to be set at \$350,000 for the City to break even on road and infrastructure costs.*

Ainslie estimates that costs have increased by 50 percent since the study was completed, implying a break-even price of \$525,000 per lot. Ainslie explained that the high cost of new infrastructure also results in short-term development decisions that limit housing density and increase costs in the long term.

### **4. Meeting Demand for Seasonal Housing**

Employers are competing with renters and homebuyers to secure scarce housing for seasonal workers. Sitka needs more employee housing during the peak season for tourism and seafood processing, between May and September, but to date, there has been no collaboration among employers, or support from the public sector to address this need. Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium addressed its need for short-term housing for construction workers by purchasing a hotel. This may have solved one problem while exacerbating another. Hotels are fully booked during peak season, contributing to demand for short-term rentals. Some participants in community meetings expressed support for additional limitations on short-term rentals.



# COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

## *Theme: Challenges*

### **5. Regulatory and Funding Barriers**

Securing permits, funding, and financing for new housing development is time-consuming. Dan Delfino, Director of Housing Development for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, says that the execution phase of development projects can take three to five years, and a lot can happen over that time, including increases in costs for material and labor, and changes in demand and market conditions.

### **6. Trailer Parks and Residents at Risk**

Mobile homes offer some of the most affordable unsubsidized housing in Sitka, but the long-term future of trailer parks is uncertain. All are privately owned, and many are located on land that is prime for redevelopment for higher-value housing. Existing mobile homes were for the most part not designed for the climate in Sitka, and are past their useful life, in poor condition, and extremely energy inefficient.

## *Theme: Current Initiatives*

### **1. Existing Programs**

Results from the housing survey suggest that Tribal citizens and other Sitka residents may be unaware of existing programs that could help them with housing costs, including but not necessarily limited to LIHEAP, municipal utility subsidies, and BIHA home rehab and closing cost assistance.

### **2. Projects Under Way**

Sitka is building more housing than most communities in Alaska, and has several housing construction projects under way or in the pipeline that will add to the community's supply of affordable housing.

### *S'us' Héeni Sháak (Sitka Community Land Trust)*

The Sitka Community Land Trust is creating a community of smaller, limited-equity, affordable homes with long-term ground leases.



Photo Credit (LM 2024)

In March 2024, the Land Trust was notified that it will receive full federal funding to construct four rental units on the same property.

# COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

## *Theme: Current Initiatives*

### **Projects Under Way**

#### *Baranof Island Housing Authority*

BIHA expects to begin construction of eight new affordable rental units in 2024, and is in the planning stage for developing infrastructure for 15 – 20 new residential lots with funding from STA.

#### *South East Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)*

SEARHC is constructing new employee housing in conjunction with development of its new hospital.

#### *Hít'xi Sáani (Sitka Homeless Coalition)*

The Sitka Homeless Coalition is close to breaking ground on construction of the Hít'xi Sáani supportive housing community of 12 tiny homes for individuals with a history of chronic homelessness.

#### *Sitka Tribe of Alaska*

STA plans to offer a pilot energy assessment and heat pump installation program for Tribal citizen households in 2024.

### **3. Planning for Development**

The City and Borough of Sitka has committed \$750,000 in 2024 for a geotechnical and engineering study of the potential of municipally-owned land to support residential development. The Sitka Economic Development Association is planning to review the Sitka Zoning Code to identify possible changes to support residential development. Sitka Tribe of Alaska, BIHA, and the City are organizing a gathering of housing experts in March of 2024 to develop new strategies to increase the supply and lower the cost of new housing.

## *Theme: Opportunities*

### **1. Collaboration and Public Private Partnerships**

There is growing interest in collaboration between government entities at the Tribal, federal, state, and local levels, nonprofit organizations, and private landowners, developers, and businesses in collaboration to address Sitka's housing needs. One avenue for exploration is the possibility of housing development on publicly owned land.

### **2. New Types of Housing**

Participants in community meetings expressed support for exploring new housing types and models of development to increase the supply of housing in Sitka, including but not limited to supportive housing, tiny homes, reduced lot sizes, replacement of aging trailers, modular construction, and limited equity housing.

### **3. Energy Efficiency and Weatherization**

The cost of home energy is an important component of housing costs. There is strong support for weatherization and heat pump installation programs.

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

**The gap between household income of Sitka’s Native residents and the income required to support market rent and mortgages at current rates is wide and growing.**

“Native people can no longer afford to live here” was how Joy Klushkan, Housing Director for BIHA, summarized the results of the housing needs assessment. Demographic trends, the needs assessment survey, and community meetings suggest that lack of affordable housing is one of the forces driving the disproportionate decline in Sitka’s Native population. This problem will not be resolved by market forces. Community action across sectors will be required to ensure that Sitka’s Indigenous people can afford to live in their homeland.

**Short-term recommendations for addressing the affordable housing for Sitka’s Tribal residents include:**

## **Share Results of Tribal Needs Assessment**

Information developed for the needs assessment can inform development of housing and related services in Sitka. STA and BIHA should share the report widely with federal, state, and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, developers and funders of housing, Sitka employers, and community members.

## **Develop Additional Data**

This study was specifically designed to explore the needs of Tribal households in Sitka, which are approximately 24 percent of the local population. A study of community-wide housing needs would likely provide valuable information.

## **Pursue Low-Hanging Fruit and Address Critical Risks**

Government agencies at all levels, nonprofit organizations and private businesses in Sitka should significantly increase efforts to publicize existing housing-related programs to eligible households.

Tribal and local government and nonprofit organizations should actively pursue funding for weatherization, home energy assistance, and installation of renewable and energy-efficient technologies for homeowners.

Sitka’s mobile homes are a critical source of de facto affordable housing in the community, but they are in poor condition and expensive to heat. They are also located on privately-owned, unrestricted property that is prime for redevelopment for higher-value residential use. Sale of a mobile home park could result in a steep increase in lot rent, or eviction of unit owners, creating a crisis for households with low incomes. A community effort is needed to secure land for mobile homes, and eventually replace existing units with higher-quality, more energy efficient housing.







## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

### **Develop Structures and Mechanisms for Communication and Collaboration**

Solving Sitka's housing problems will require communication and collaboration within and across sectors. There are currently few avenues or opportunities for this to happen. Possible models include a collective action approach like the Sitka Health Summit, or working groups on specific housing challenges, such as increasing supportive housing, developing seasonal workforce housing, and securing and improving Sitka's mobile homes.

### **Explore Innovative Housing Solutions**

Further research is needed on housing types and models that can be developed at costs that are significantly lower than the cost of building traditional single family homes and apartments in Sitka. Local leaders should seek information from other Alaska and high-cost communities that are addressing the same problems.

### **Identify and Advocate for New Funding for Affordable Housing Development**

Addressing Sitka's housing crisis will require significantly more resources for housing development, housing subsidies, and housing-related programs. Advocating for more funding for housing should be a high priority for local and Tribal government, nonprofit organizations, private businesses and citizens in Sitka.

## APPENDIX A: LIST OF EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS

Baranof Island Housing Authority would like to thank all those who responded to our request for interviews and provided useful information for our future planning.

Name	Title	Organization
Amy Ainslie	Director of Planning & Development	City and Borough of Sitka
Sharon Joseph	Human Resources Generalist	City and Borough of Sitka
Lisa Gassman	Chief Executive Officer	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Denise Den Herder	Property Manager	SEARHC
Cory Isabell	Manager of Property Management	SEARHC
Suzzuk Huntington	Superintendent	Mt. Edgecumbe High School
Matthew Potter	Academic Vice Principal	Mt. Edgecumbe High School
Cliff Richter	Executive Director	Baranof Island Housing Authority
Carl DeLaCruz	Housing Officer	US Coast Guard, Sitka
Gary White	Executive Director	Sitka Economic Development Assn.
Dan Delfino	Director of Planning & Program Development	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
Randy Hughey	Executive Director	Sitka Community Land Trust
Rachel Roy	Executive Director	Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce
Dawn Georgia	Executive Assistant	Sitka School District
Eric Jordan	Longtime member	Alaska Longline Fishermen's Assn.
Emma Edson	Office Manager	North Pacific Seafoods
Norm Pillen	President	Seafood Producers Coop
Roger Schmidt	Executive Director	Sitka Fine Arts Camp
Joel Hanson	Program Director	Southeast Alaska Independent Living
Natalie Wojcik	Director	Sitkans Against Family Violence

## APPENDIX B: LIST OF MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Baranof Island Housing Authority would like to thank all those who responded to our invitations to hear the results of our research and provide their insights! Gunalcheesh!

### B1. COMMUNITY MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Paulette Moreno	Tisha Bagley	Keith Mork	Lana Williams
Burt Edenso	Ellen Bagley	Krista Perala	Leonard Watts
Andrew Roberts	Elizabeth Williams	Esther Diaz	John Horner Raffaele
Debi Gillian	Michael Giron	Harvey Kitka	Sonya Smith
Cheryle Enloe	Tinaa Dundas	Georgina Kitka	Jean Smith
Gary Klushkan	Karen Howard	Anthony Stevens	Donna Smith
Joy Klushkan	Linda Blankenship	Rob Allen	Noriss Howard
Martina Kurzer	Annabelle John	Robin Sherman	Cliff Richter
Larry Edwards	Nathan Bernhardt	Donna Lang	Leah Mason
Patrick Hill	Kris Karsunky	Pat Alexander	

## B1. STA TRIBAL COUNCIL, BIHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, STA & BIHA STAFF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Title	Organization
Lawrence Widmark	Tribal Chairman	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Yeidikook'áa	Vice Chair	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Louise Brady	Secretary	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Lesa Way	Treasurer, Commissioner	Sitka Tribe of Alaska, BIHA
Lillian Feldpausch	Council member, Commission Chair	Sitka Tribe of Alaska, BIHA
Rhonda Stiles	Council Member	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Frederick Olsen, Jr.	Council Member	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Martha Moses	Council member, Commissioner	Sitka Tribe of Alaska, BIHA
Audrey Hudson	Commissioner	BIHA
Lisa Gassman	Chief Executive Officer	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Anne Davis	Chief Operating Officer	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Cliff Richter	Executive Director	BIHA
Joy Kluskan	Housing Director	BIHA
Rick Paden	Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor	BIHA
Melanie Barker	Admissions & Occupancy Specialist	BIHA
Lucas Goddard	Development Project Manager	BIHA
Mary Ann Nells	Accountant	BIHA
Leah Mason	Financial Literacy Counselor & Comms Specialist	BIHA
Nathan Bernhardt	Maintenance Laborer	BIHA
Anthony Stevens	Maintenance Laborer	BIHA
Renée Wheat	Housing Specialist	BIHA
Josh Lawrence	Maintenance Technician	BIHA
Taylor Vieira	Finance and Administrative Director	BIHA
Robin Sherman	Communications Director	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Jessica Perkins	Sr. Director of Organizational Development	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Vera Gibson	Compliance Specialist	Sitka Tribe of Alaska

## NOTES AND SOURCES

1. Conversation, Meilani Schijvens of Rain Coast Data with State Demographer Eric Sandberg, Alaska Department of Labor.
2. 2020 US Census. Of the 718 vacant units reported in 2020, 42 percent were used seasonally, and another 18 percent were rentals that may be part of the seasonal short-term rental market.
3. Estimate by Meilani Schijvens of Rain Coast Data based on 2020 Census count of Alaska Native and American Indian individuals and average household size of Native households.
4. American Community Survey, Five year data for 2017 - 2022
5. Source: S2504 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2017-2021; U.S. Census Bureau. "Selected Housing Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP04, 2022.
6. Source: 2020 US Census Data: DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics H12C Tenure By Household Size (American Indian And Alaska Native Alone Householder); B25003G Tenure (two or more races householder); H4C
7. Survey data is reported for housing composition rather than Census data, which is limited to households with a head of households who is Alaska Native or American Indian. The survey data, which includes all households with a Native resident, is believed to be more representative of household composition for Sitka's Native population.









# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

## Planning and Community Development Department

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Case No: CUP 24-03  
Proposal: Short-term rental  
Applicant: Karen Case  
Owner: Karen Case  
Location: 343 Wortman Loop  
Legal: Lot 20A, Block 1, Lot Line Adjustment of Lots 20 and 21, Block 1 Cascade Creek Subdivision  
Zone: R-1 LD Single-Family and Duplex Low Density Residential District  
Size: 42,418 square feet  
Parcel ID: 2-4595-000  
Existing Use: Residential  
Adjacent Use: Residential  
Utilities: Existing  
Access: Wortman Loop

### **KEY POINTS AND CONCERNS**

- Applicant is requesting to rent out a one-bedroom apartment in their duplex.
- Parking is available on the property.
- Rental will be owner operated, owner lives on site.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Aerial  
Attachment B: Plat  
Attachment C: Floor Plan  
Attachment D: Photos  
Attachment E: Density Map  
Attachment F: Renter Handout  
Attachment G: Applicant Materials  
Attachment H: Affidavit

## **BACKGROUND/PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The owner/applicant would like to utilize their primary residence at 343 Wortman Loop as a short-term rental (STR). The home is located in the R-1 LD single-family/duplex low density residential district on a 42,418 square foot (SF) lot with a house footprint of 3,601 SF. The applicant is requesting the STR for the lower level, one-bedroom apartment with a maximum capacity of four guests. The property is well buffered by vegetation on the sides and rear of the property. There is adequate parking for two vehicles in the driveway adjacent to the apartment and access to the property is from Wortman Loop.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **1. CRITERIA TO BE USED IN DETERMINING THE IMPACT OF CONDITIONAL USES.<sup>1</sup>**

**a. Amount of vehicular traffic to be generated and impacts of the traffic on nearby land uses:**

Applicant does not anticipate any significant increase in vehicular traffic versus long-term residential use.

**b. Amount of noise to be generated and its impacts on surrounding land use:** Short-term rentals have the potential to create noise from transient guests. As the maximum capacity is set at four guests, there is potential for increased noise. It is anticipated that noise generated by guests would be minimal. Quiet hours are set from 10pm-7am.

**c. Odors to be generated by the use and their impacts:** Potential odor impacts are in line with similar residential uses. Renters are instructed on garbage handling. Garbage shall be disposed of in municipal containers and in accordance with Sitka General Code requirements.

**d. Hours of operation:** Applicant will use the second dwelling intermittently throughout the year and will live onsite in the other unit.

**e. Location along a major or collector street:** Accessed from Wortman Loop.

**f. Potential for users or clients to access the site through residential areas or substandard street creating a cut-through traffic scenario:** Access is on Wortman Loop. There are multiple ways to reach this property. The most direct is from Halibut Point Road to Davidoff Street/Charteris Street to Wortman Loop, or guests could utilize access via Edgumbe Drive. All of these routes are on State or municipally-maintained streets intended for moderate to high traffic.

**g. Effects on vehicular and pedestrian safety:** Visitors will be unfamiliar/less experienced with the road which can have mixed results (some may be more cautious, others less aware). However, this property is located on a developed street that is intended to handle moderate traffic.

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<sup>1</sup> § 22.25.010.E



**h. Ability of the police, fire, and EMS personnel to respond to emergency calls on the site:** Site is accessible to emergency services. Applicant does not anticipate a change from the current ability of emergency services personnel to access the site.

**i. Logic of the internal traffic layout:** The property has a large driveway with parking available for multiple vehicles. There is a second driveway where the rental is located with enough parking for two vehicles. Applicant anticipates one rental car with a four-guest max.

**j. Effects of signage on nearby uses:** Applicant has no signage proposed at this time. All signs shall comply with Sitka General Code.

**k. Presence of existing or proposed buffers on the site or immediately adjacent the site:** The property is well buffered by vegetation on the sides and rear of the property.

**l. Relationship if the proposed conditional use is in a specific location to the goals, policies, and objectives of the comprehensive plan:** A STR can help support the existing and growing tourism industry by providing transient guests with short-term housing options that allow the potential for more visitors to visit Sitka, bringing in money and creating opportunities for job creation and economic development. STRs also encourage housing redevelopment with the incentive of short-term rental income. However, STRs correlate with negative impacts to available housing stock for residents, long-term rental rates, and increased purchase prices for housing.

**m. Other criteria that surface through public comments or planning commission review:**  
None.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the request for a short-term rental at 343 Wortman Loop.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

1. Contingent upon a completed satisfactory life safety inspection.
2. The facility shall be operated consistent with the application, narrative, and plans that were submitted with the request.
3. The applicant shall submit an annual report beginning in 2025, covering the information on the form prepared by the Municipality, summarizing the number of nights the facility has been rented over the twelve-month period starting with the date the facility began operation, bed tax remitted, any violations, concerns, and solutions implemented. The report is due within thirty days following the end of the reporting period.
4. The Planning Commission, at its discretion, may schedule a public hearing at any time for the purpose of resolving issues with the request and mitigating adverse impacts on nearby properties upon receipt of meritorious complaint or evidence of violation of conditions of approval.
5. Failure to comply with all applicable tax laws, including but not limited to remittance of all sales and transient lodging tax, shall be grounds for revocation of the conditional use permit.
6. The property owner shall register for a sales account prior to the Conditional Use Permit becoming valid.
7. To mitigate the impact of odor from the short-term rental and comply with bear attraction nuisance requirements, the property owner shall assure all trash is deposited in appropriately secured trash receptacles and only placed on street for collection after 4:00 a.m. on trash collection day.
8. To mitigate parking and traffic impacts, property owner shall provide detailed parking and traffic rules, and shall ensure all parking for all uses (residential or short-term rental) shall occur off-street, on-site, and further that should off-site parking occur at any time, the conditional use permit shall be revoked.
9. Any signs must comply with Sitka General Code 22.20.090.
10. A detailed rental overview shall be provided to renters detailing directions to the unit, transportation options, appropriate access, parking, trash management, noise control/quiet hours, and a general condition to respect the surrounding residential neighborhood. The renter handout shall include an advisory note to tenants to be mindful of vehicle and especially pedestrian traffic in the area, and to exercise caution coming and going from the property in motor vehicles.
11. The property owner shall communicate to renters that a violation of these conditions of approval will be grounds for eviction of the short-term renters.
12. Failure to comply with any of the above conditions may result in revocation of the conditional use permit.

## **Motions in favor of approval**

- 1. “I move to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 343 Wortman Loop in the R-1 LD single-family/duplex low density residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property is also known as Lot 20A, Block 1, Lot Line Adjustment of Lots 20 and 21, Block 1 Cascade Creek Subdivision. The request is filed by Karen Case. The owner of record is Karen Case.”**
- 2. “I move to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report.”**

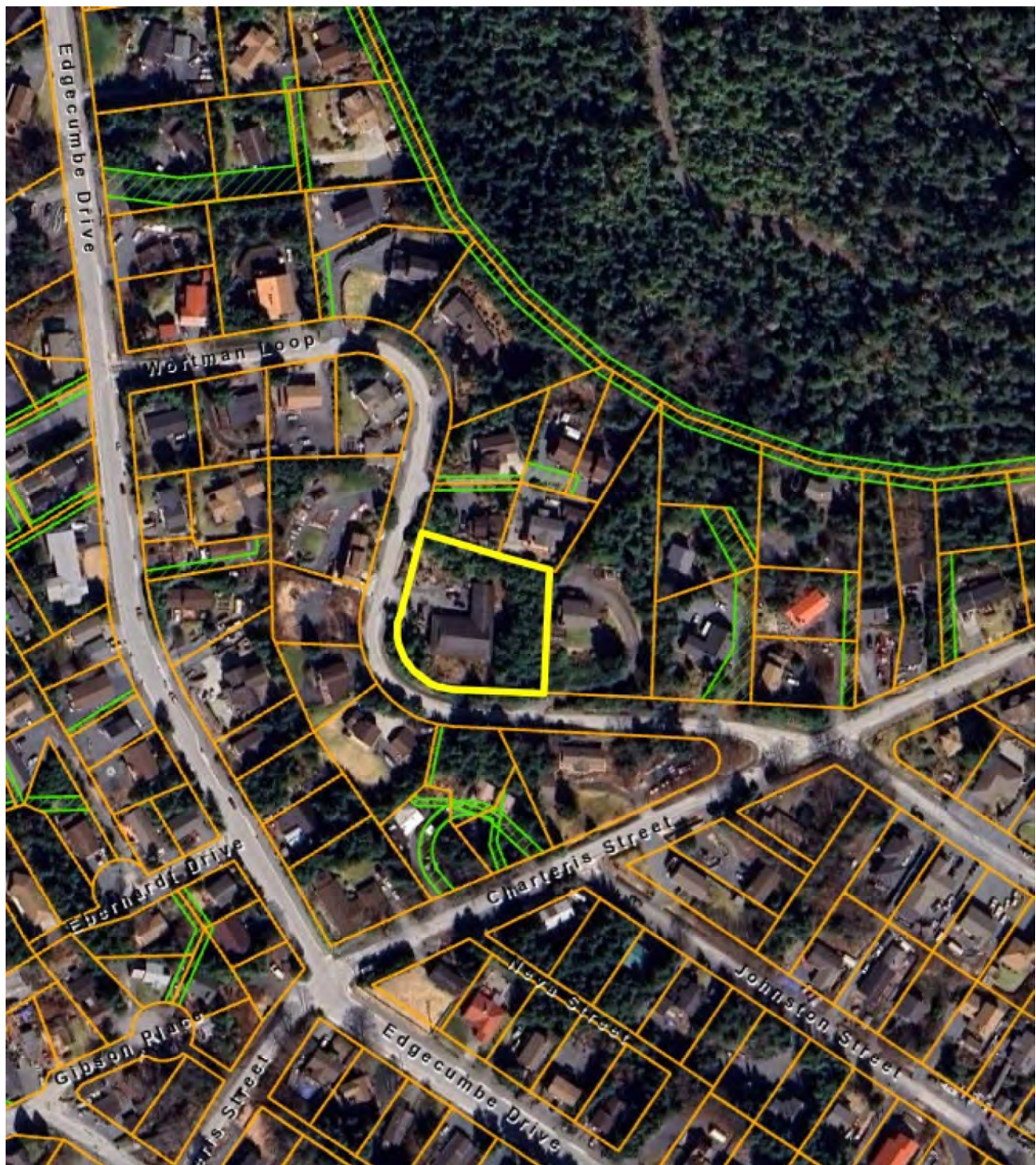
The Planning Commission shall not approve a proposed development unless it first makes the following findings and conclusions:<sup>2</sup>

1. The city may use design standards and other elements in this code to modify the proposal. A conditional use permit may be approved only if all of the following findings can be made regarding the proposal and are supported by the record that the granting of the proposed conditional use permit will not:
  - a. Be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare;
  - b. Adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity; nor
  - c. Be injurious to the uses, property, or improvements adjacent to, and in the vicinity of, the site upon which the proposed use is to be located; *because the property will retain its primary use as a residence and be monitored by the property owner to ensure that there are no resulting impacts or disturbances that would negatively affect health, safety, welfare, neighborhood character, or properties in the surrounding vicinity.*
2. The granting of the proposed conditional use permit is consistent and compatible with the intent of the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan and any implementing regulation; *specifically, Action ED 6.5 and goals to promote housing affordability, in this case, for the homeowner.*
3. All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are conditions that can be monitored and enforced; *because the property will be monitored by the property owner to ensure that there are no resulting impacts, and opportunities for redress to the Planning Department and/or Planning Commission.*
4. The proposed use will not introduce hazardous conditions at the site that cannot be mitigated to protect adjacent properties, the vicinity, and the public health, safety and welfare of the community from such hazard; *because no hazardous conditions are expected from the use of the property as a short-term rental.*
5. The conditional use will be supported by, and not adversely affect, adequate public facilities and services; or that conditions can be imposed to lessen any adverse impacts on such facilities and services; *because the property is located on a municipal right-of-way and is served by municipally maintained and operated utilities, no adverse impacts on such facilities or services are expected.*
6. Burden of Proof. The applicant has the burden of proving that the proposed conditional use meets all of the criteria in subsection B of this section; *because the applicant has met the burden of proof through information provided in their application packet.*

---

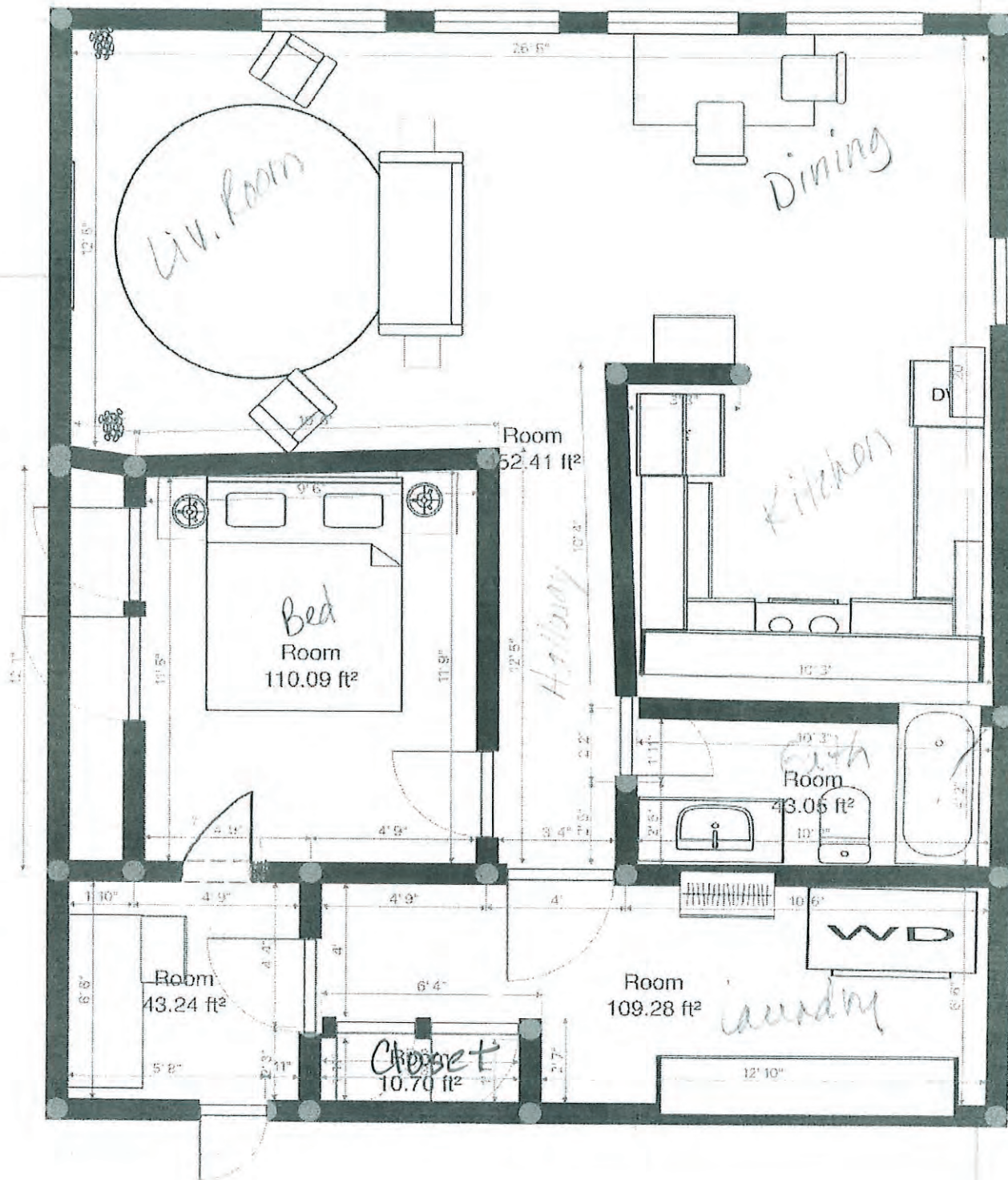
<sup>2</sup> §22.10.160(C)—Required Findings for Conditional Use Permits











343 Wortman Loop Apt.

Karen Case











# Welcome to Harbor Heights Inn!

Local family owned and operated in a quiet neighborhood; this newly furnished apartment offers all the comforts of home in a private, secluded Alaska setting.

This bright, roomy one bedroom, one bathroom rental boasts a queen size bed, in addition to a comfortable pullout couch. Cot and/or crib available upon request.

## Things to know

### House Rules

You'll be staying in someone's home, so please treat it with care and respect.

Please do not leave food or garbage outside the premises.

### Checking in and out

Checking in after 4 pm

Checking out before 11am

Self-Check in with keypad

### During your stay

Four (4) guests maximum

Pets on approval

Quiet hours 10pm – 7am

No parties or events

No smoking

*Additional note:* Absolutely no parties or events, smoking, loud music, etc...allowed at this rental.

### What the place offers

Free parking on premises

Private entrance

Washer and dryer

Bathtub and shower

Hair dryer

Bed linens, towels, wash cloths

Soap, toilet paper

Extra pillows and blankets

Hangers

Luggage rack



WIFI

Books, cards and games

45" Smart TV with Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV

Kitchen equipped with basic cooking essentials

Refrigerator w/freezer

Stove, oven

Microwave

Dishwasher

Toaster

Keurig Coffee maker: drip coffee maker and single serve cup option

Pots & pans, oil, salt & pepper, spices

Dishes, silverware, glasses, mugs, bowls, wine glasses

Baking dish, utensils

## Safety and Property

Smoke Alarm

Carbon Monoxide Alarm

Fire extinguisher

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Karen 907-738-6603

Rich 907-752-2441

**In case of fire please call 911**

## Cancellation Policies

TBA

## Before you leave

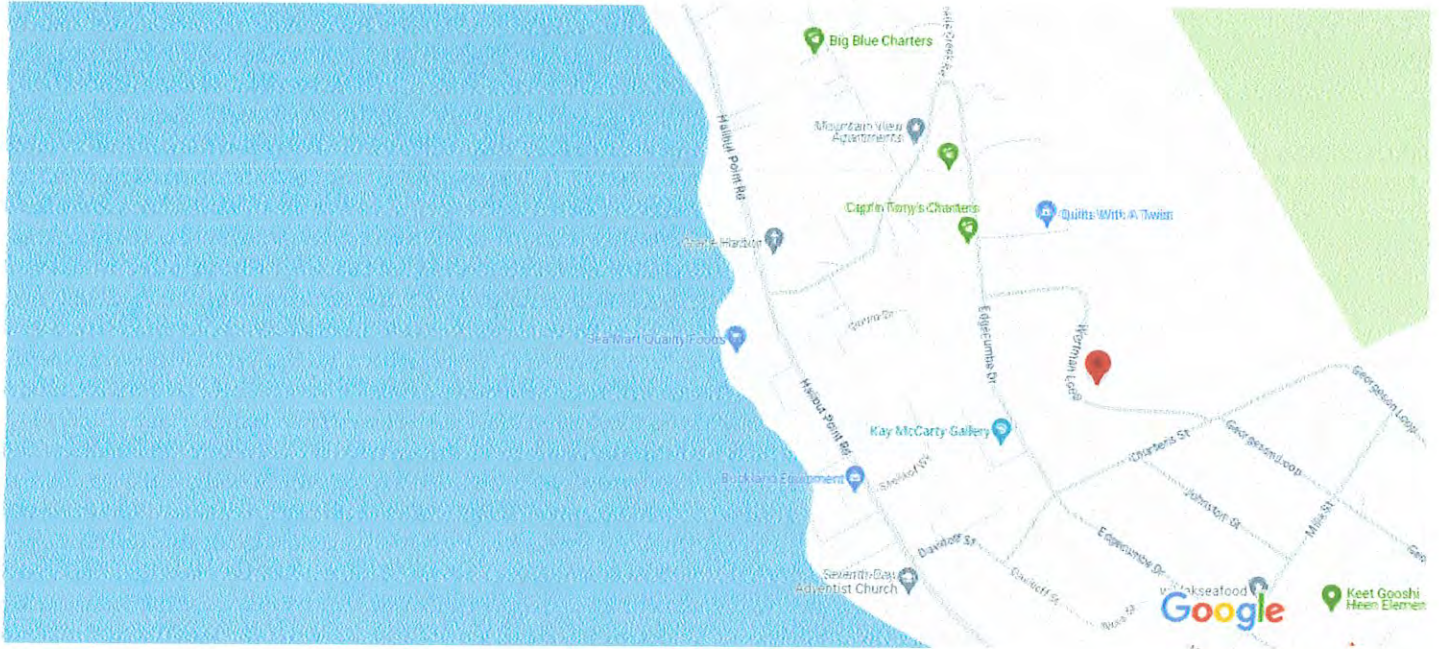
Please put used towels and rags in laundry room

Garbage day is Thursday. Please put bagged trash in dumpster on the porch on Thursday or your check-out day. Your host will handle trash from there.

Please turn off all lights, tidy up and lock the door when you leave.

Thank you!

# Google Maps 343 Wortman Loop



Map data ©2024 Google 200 ft



## 343 Wortman Loop Building



Directions



Save



Nearby



Send to  
phone



Share



343 Wortman Loop, Sitka, AK 99835





# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GENERAL APPLICATION

- Applications must be deemed complete at least **TWENTY-ONE (21)** days in advance of next meeting date.
- Review guidelines and procedural information.
- Fill form out completely. No request will be considered without a completed form.
- Submit all supporting documents and proof of payment.

### APPLICATION FOR:

☐ VARIANCE☒ **CONDITIONAL USE**☐ ZONING AMENDMENT☐ PLAT/SUBDIVISION

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

Changing long term rental to short  
term rental.

### PROPERTY INFORMATION:

CURRENT ZONING: R-1 LD

PROPOSED ZONING (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT LAND USE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED LAND USES (if changing): \_\_\_\_\_

### APPLICANT INFORMATION:

PROPERTY OWNER: Karen Case

PROPERTY OWNER ADDRESS: 343 Wortman Loop

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 343 Wortman Loop

APPLICANT'S NAME: Karen Case

MAILING ADDRESS: 343 Wortman Loop

EMAIL ADDRESS: Krobinsoncase@gmail.com DAYTIME PHONE: 907 738 6603

Case/McAlpin

Last Name

Date Submitted

343 Wortman Loop

Project Address



## REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

### For All Applications:

- ☒ Completed General Application form
- ☒ Supplemental Application (Variance, CUP, Plat, Zoning Amendment)
- ☐ Site Plan showing all existing and proposed structures with dimensions and location of utilities
- ☒ Floor Plan for all structures and showing use of those structures
- ☐ Proof of filing fee payment
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Marijuana Enterprise Conditional Use Permits Only:

- ☐ AMCO Application

### For Short-Term Rentals and B&Bs:

- ☐ Renter Informational Handout (directions to rental, garbage instructions, etc.)
- ☒ Documentation establishing property as primary residence (motor vehicle registration, voter registration, etc.)
- ☒ Signed Affidavit of Primary Residence for Short-term Rental Conditional Use Permit

**CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property described above and that I desire a planning action in conformance with Sitka General Code and hereby state that all of the above statements are true. I certify that this application meets SCG requirements to the best of my knowledge, belief, and professional ability. I acknowledge that payment of the review fee is non-refundable, is to cover costs associated with the processing of this application and does not ensure approval of the request. I understand that public notice will be mailed to neighboring property owners and published in the Daily Sitka Sentinel. I understand that attendance at the Planning Commission meeting is required for the application to be considered for approval. I further authorize municipal staff to access the property to conduct site visits as necessary. I authorize the applicant listed on this application to conduct business on my behalf.

Karen Case  
Owner

3.11.24  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I certify that I desire a planning action in conformance with Sitka General Code and hereby state that all of the above statements are true. I certify that this application meets SCG requirements to the best of my knowledge, belief, and professional ability. I acknowledge that payment of the review fee is non-refundable, is to cover costs associated with the processing of this application and does not ensure approval of the request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant (If different than owner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Case / McAlpin  
Last Name

Date Submitted

343 Wortman Loop  
Project Address



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORM  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

## APPLICATION FOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS AND B&B'S

Karen Case  
738.6603  
Rick  
752-2441

### CRITERIA TO DETERMINE IMPACT – SGC 22.24.010(E) (Please address each item in regard to your proposal)

- Hours of operation & quiet hours: 24 hrs.  
Quiet: 10 pm - 7 am
- Number of guests: Four (4) maximum.  
Designed for 2 (or 1).
- Location along a major or collector street: Wortman Loop  
Address: 343 Wortman Loop
- Amount of vehicular traffic to be generated and impacts of the traffic on nearby land uses: minimal - separate driveway. Has been a long term rental for 25 years.
- Potential for users or clients to access the site through residential areas or substandard street creating a cut through traffic scenario: Minimal
- Effects on vehicular and pedestrian safety: minimal - same as or less than what is currently in place.
- Ability of the police, fire, and EMS personnel to respond to emergency calls on the site: Fully accessible from Wortman Loop
- Describe the parking plan & layout: Separate parking for unit; enough room for 2 if necessary.
- Proposed signage: none at this time

Case/McAlpin

Last Name

3.5.24

Date Submitted

343 Wortman Loop

Project Address



- Presence of existing or proposed buffers (ie. Fences, boundary walls, natural barriers, etc.) on the site or immediately adjacent the site:

trees, plants nearly completely cover unit from street and neighbors

- Amount of noise to be generated and its impacts on neighbors: minimal if any

- Other criteria that surface through public comments or planning commission review (odor, security, safety, waste management, etc):

- Mitigation/ Management Plan (How will site be managed to ensure low/no impact on neighbors?)

Only 4 guests at most, only 1 vehicle per stay, will post quiet times, no gatherings allowed.

Case/McAlpin

Last Name

3.5.24

Date Submitted

343 Wortman Loop

Project Address



**REQUIRED FINDINGS (SGC 22.30.160(C):**

1. The city may use design standards and other elements in this code to modify the proposal. A conditional use permit may be approved only if all of the following findings can be made regarding the proposal and are supported by the record that the granting of the proposed conditional use permit will not:

Initial

a. Be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare;	
b. Adversely affect the established character of the surrounding vicinity; nor	
c. Be injurious to the uses, property, or improvements adjacent to, and in the vicinity of, the site upon which the proposed use is to be located.	
2. The granting of the proposed <u>conditional use</u> permit is consistent and compatible with the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the <u>comprehensive plan</u> and any implementing regulation.	
3. All conditions necessary to lessen any impacts of the proposed use are conditions that can be monitored and enforced.	
4. The proposed use will not introduce hazardous conditions at the site that cannot be mitigated to protect adjacent properties, the vicinity, and the public health, safety and welfare of the community from such hazard.	
5. The <u>conditional use</u> will be supported by, and not adversely affect, adequate public facilities and services; or that conditions can be imposed to lessen any adverse impacts on such facilities and services.	
6. Burden of Proof. The <u>applicant</u> has the burden of proving that the proposed <u>conditional use</u> meets all of the criteria in subsection B of this section.	

**ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Kare Case / Rnt Mcg

Applicant

3.5.24

Date

Case / McAlpin

Last Name

3.5.24

Date Submitted

343 Nortman loop

Project Address



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

## AFFIDAVIT OF APPLICANT RE PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR SHORT-TERM RENTAL CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

My full name is: Karen D. Case. The location of my primary residence in the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska is: 343 Wortman Loop (the "Property").  
I swear or affirm the following facts are true to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. This is an affidavit concerning my primary residence for my application for a short-term rental conditional use permit.
2. I have resided and/or will reside upon the Property for at least 180 days of the current calendar year.
3. I do not and will not claim any other property as my primary residence for any other local, state, or federal purposes, including tax exemptions.
4. I intend to continue utilizing the Property as my primary residence for at least 180 days of subsequent calendar years.
5. I understand that my permit, if granted, shall automatically become void if the Property is no longer my primary residence for at least 180 days of a subsequent calendar year.
6. I understand that my permit, if granted, is non-transferable as to persons and locations, and that the permit shall become void immediately upon sale or transfer of the Property.

Karen Case  
Signature

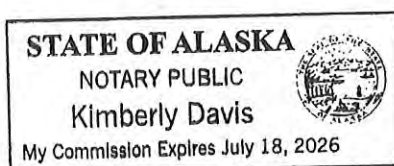
3.11.24  
Date

Krobinsoncase@gmail.com  
Email

907.738.6603  
Phone

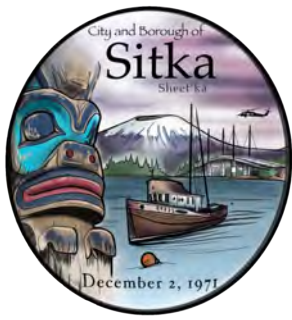
STATE OF ALASKA )  
 ) ss:  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT )

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 13 day of March, 2024, by Karen Case.



Kimberly Davis  
Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska  
My commission expires: July 18, 2026





# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

## Planning and Community Development Department

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Case No: V 24-05  
Proposal: Reduce front southwest setback from 14' to 5'  
Applicant: Andrew Hinton, Sitka Homeless Coalition  
Owner: Alaska Mental Health Trust, State of Alaska  
Location: NHN Jarvis Street  
Legal: Remainder of Lot Three (3), U.S. Survey 3695  
Zone: C-1 - General Commercial District  
Size: 710,028 SF (16.3 acres)  
Parcel ID: 3-0290-000  
Existing Use: Vacant  
Adjacent Use: Commercial  
Utilities: Jarvis Street  
Access: Jarvis Street

### **KEY POINTS AND CONCERNS**

- The proposal is to facilitate construction of a permanent supportive housing project.
- Topography of the lot hinders the buildable area.
- The property is a corner lot, further constricting buildable area.
- No negative impacts to ingress/egress or visibility anticipated.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Aerial  
Attachment B: U.S. Survey 3695  
Attachment C: Site Plan  
Attachment D: Floor Plans  
Attachment E: Photos  
Attachment F: Applicant Materials



## **BACKGROUND/PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing to reduce the front southwest setback from 14 feet to 5 feet to facilitate construction of a permanent supportive housing project that will have 12 residential units, a caretaker unit, and a services building. This will provide affordable housing for the chronically homeless and provide behavioral health services, employment services, and individualized support on-site.

There are development and building challenges on this property. It is an irregular shaped corner lot with difficult topography as it slopes considerably down towards Indian River. The Sitka Homeless Coalition has a 30-year lease with the Mental Health Trust for the front ~2 acres of the lot, partially in recognition of the difficulty of development on the remainder of the lot. While not immediately recognizable as such, the property is platted as a corner lot with two front setbacks as it abuts two rights-of-way (ROWs); Jarvis Street and the undeveloped Haley Avenue. As platted, these two ROWs only adjoin in one corner and do not intersect; the front corner of the property meets the adjoining corners of the ROWs (see the site plan for a depiction). This does mean that the two property lines abutting Jarvis Street and Haley Avenue are front lot lines and are therefore subject to a 14' front setback. However, the lot line abutting Jarvis street is ~810' in length, with only the first ~68' abutting the ROW. This means that the majority of the property line functions more as a side lot line, which warrants consideration of a setback more in line with its functional use.

## **ANALYSIS**

### *Setback requirements*

The Sitka General Code requires 14-foot front setbacks in the C-1 zone<sup>1</sup>.

### **22.20.040 Yards and setbacks.**

- A. Projections into Required Yards. Where yards are required as setbacks, they shall be open and unobstructed by any structure or portion of a structure from thirty inches above the general ground level of the graded lot upward.**

Alaska Statute 29.40.040(b)(3) states that a variance may not be granted solely to relieve financial hardship or inconvenience. A required finding for variances involving major structures or expansions in the Sitka General Code is “That there are special circumstances to the intended use that do not apply generally to the other properties. Special circumstances may include the shape of the parcel, the topography of the lot, the size or dimensions of the parcels, the orientation or placement of existing structures, or other circumstances that are outside the control of the property owner”.

---

<sup>1</sup> SGC Table 22.20-1

### *Justification*

In order for a variance to be granted, it must be shown that there are special circumstances warranting a variance. The topography of the lot in this case does warrant special consideration given the limitations on building space it creates. Additionally, the unique platting of the lot (i.e. the lack of an intersection between Jarvis Street and Haley Avenue) is a special circumstance warranting a variance, as a front setback is applied to lot lines that are more functionally sides.

### *Potential Impacts*

Generally, there are two primary concerns that arise when decreasing the front setback; safety of ingress/egress, and driver visibility. As shown on the site plan, the driveway will come out onto Jarvis Street from the front corner point of the lot. This should ensure that there is adequate space and visibility for ingress/egress. As currently developed, there are no concerns about visibility impacts for drivers on Jarvis Street and while there are no imminent plans to develop the remaining portion of Haley Avenue, these ROW as currently platted, do not connect together to form an intersection. With the setback reduction to 5', the corner of the building closest to Jarvis Street will be ~20' back from the north corner boundary of the ROW, and ~35' back from the existing gravel edge (staff added in these dimensional lines to the site plan). This also means that if an intersection of Jarvis Street and Haley Avenue is ever dedicated/platted, the proposed structure would still observe the standard 14' front setback from a new front property line.

### *Comprehensive Plan Guidance*

The Housing section of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan specifically sites the lack of transitional housing and homeless shelter, and the call to explore housing options and cooperative programs for at-risk populations, as a key challenges and opportunities for the future. Housing Action H 1.2i states, "Create housing for the homeless through public-private partnerships." The granting of this variance enables development of a challenging, publicly owned property for a private (non-profit) development of a homeless shelter.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval for granting the front setback reduction.

### **Motions to approve the zoning variance**

- 1. "I move to approve the zoning variance for a reduction to the southwest front setback at NHN Jarvis Street in the C-1 - General Commercial District subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property is also known as Remainder of Lot Three (3), U.S. Survey 3695. The request is filed by the Sitka Homeless Coalition. The owner of record is Alaska Mental Health Trust, State of Alaska."**

Conditions of Approval:

- a. The front southwest setback will be decreased from 14 feet to 5 feet. No encroachments over the property line are permitted.
- b. Building plans shall remain consistent with the narrative and plans provided by the applicant for this request. Any major changes (as determined by staff) to the plan will require additional Planning Commission review.
- c. Substantial construction progress must be made on the project within one year of the date of the variance approval or the approval becomes void. In the event it can be documented that other substantial progress has been made, a one-year extension may be granted by the Planning Director if a request is filed within eleven months of the initial approval.

**1) “I move to adopt and approve the required findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report.”**

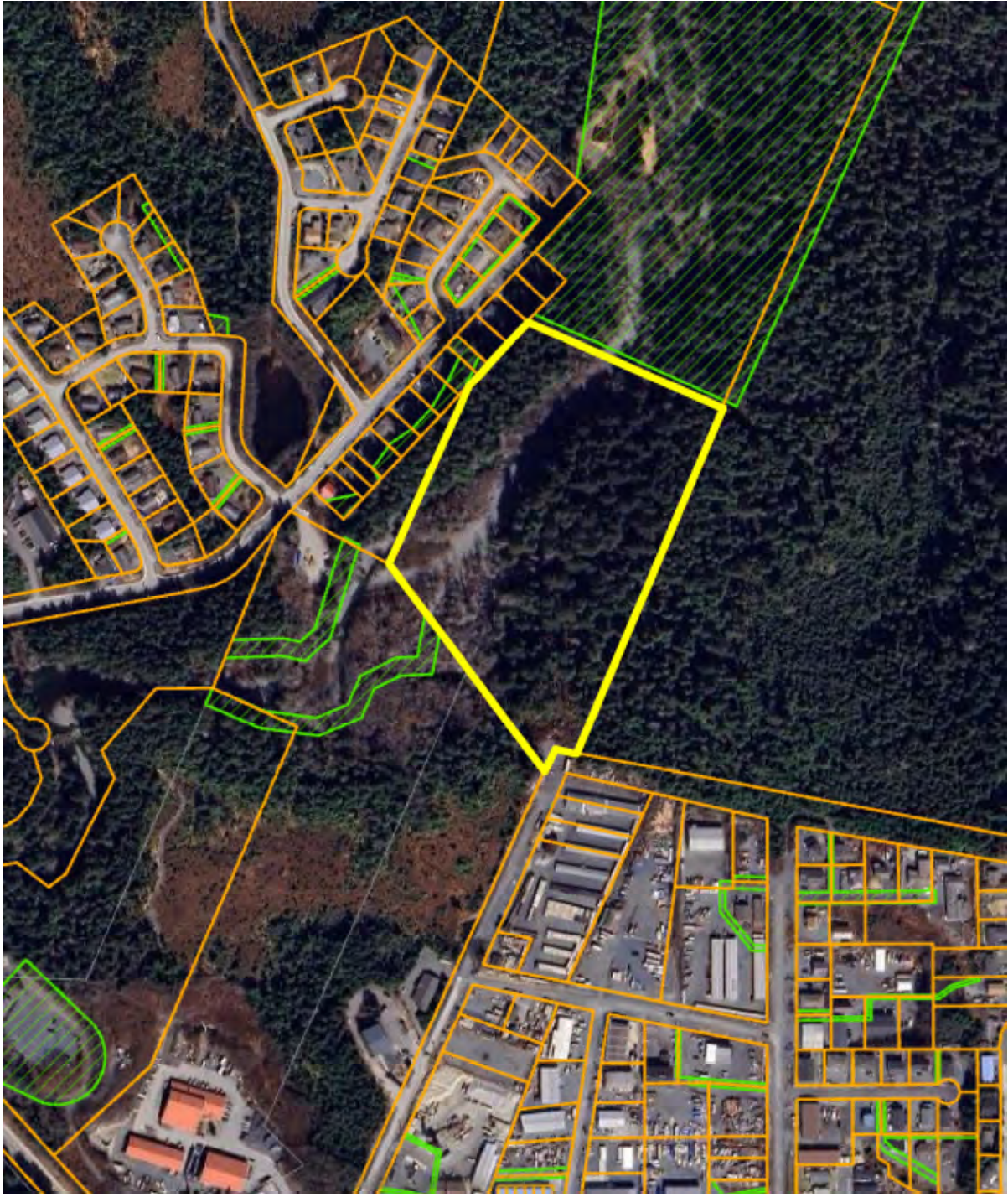
Before any variance is granted, it shall be shown<sup>2</sup>:

- a. That there are special circumstances to the intended use that do not apply generally to the other properties. Special circumstances may include the shape of the parcel, the topography of the lot, the size or dimensions of the parcels, the orientation or placement of existing structures, or other circumstances that are outside the control of the property owner; *in this case, the extreme topography and unique platting of the lot are special circumstances that warrant the granting of a variance.*
- b. The variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use possessed by other properties but are denied to this parcel; such uses may include the placement of garages or the expansion of structures that are commonly constructed on other parcels in the vicinity *because the granting of this variance is necessary to build a multi-family/social services structure, a substantial property right in the C-1 zone.*
- c. That the granting of such a variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property, nearby parcels or public infrastructure *because the site plan preserves safe ingress/egress and visibility, and because the proposal furthers an appropriate use of the property per the zoning and with regards to public infrastructure in the area.*
- d. That the granting of such a variance will not adversely affect the comprehensive plan *because it supports creative development of a property providing housing to the homeless through a public-private partnership.*

---

<sup>2</sup> Section 22.10.160(D)(1)—Required Findings for Major Variances







U. S. SURVEY  
No. 3695, ALASKA

EMBRACING  
LOTS 1 THROUGH 24

## SITUATED

ABOUT ONE MILE EASTERLY FROM SITKA, ALASKA

ON THE NORTHWESTERLY SHORE OF JAMESTON BAY

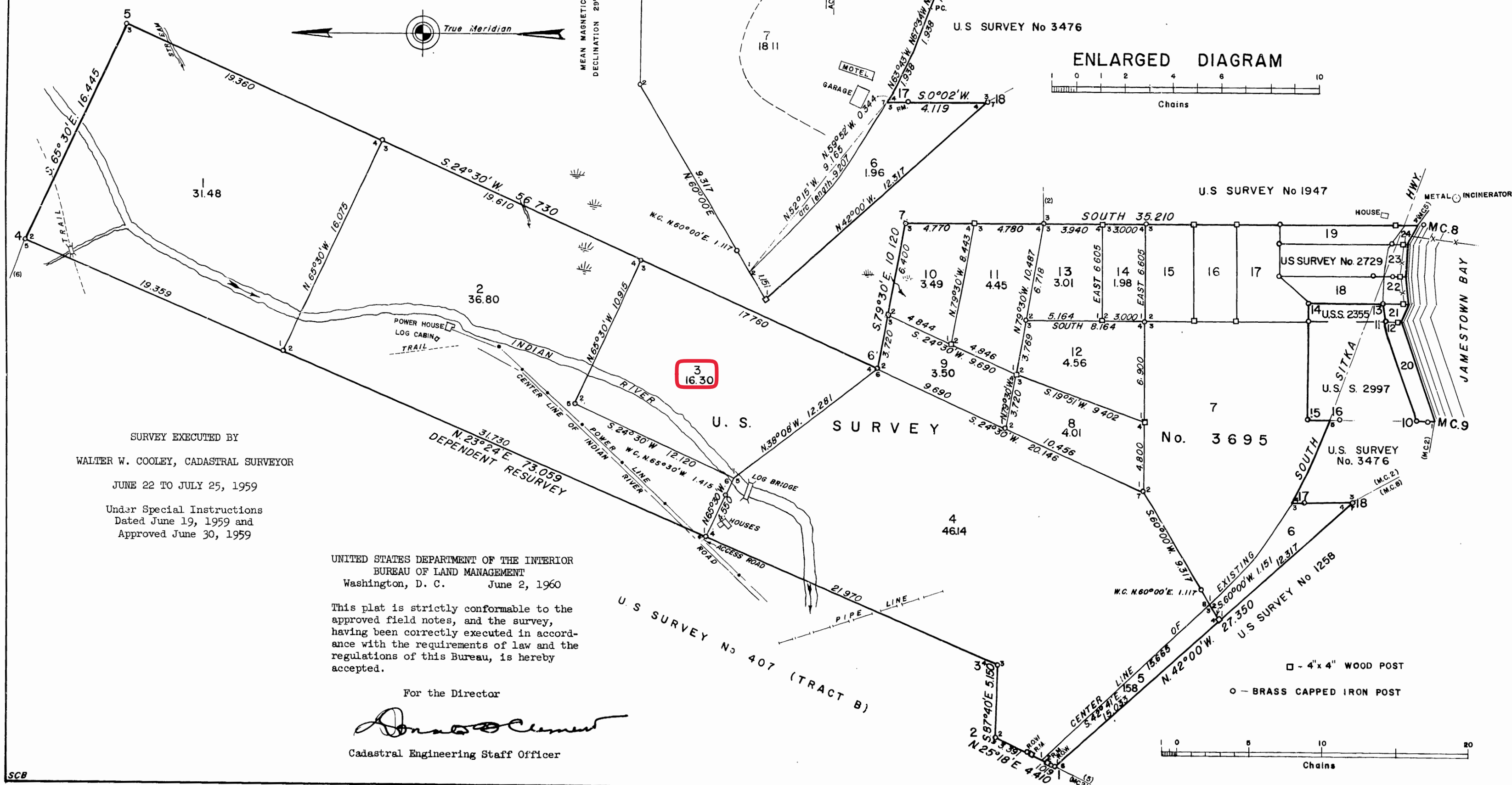
AND ADJOINING U.S. SURVEYS NOS. 1258, 31476, 2997.

2355, 2729, 1947, AND 407

AND DEPENDENT RESURVEY OF LINE 4-5, U.S. SURVEY NO. 407

Approximate Geographic Position  
Latitude 57° 03' N. Longitude 135° 18' W.

AREA: 187.75 ACRES



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Washington, D. C.                  June 2, 1960

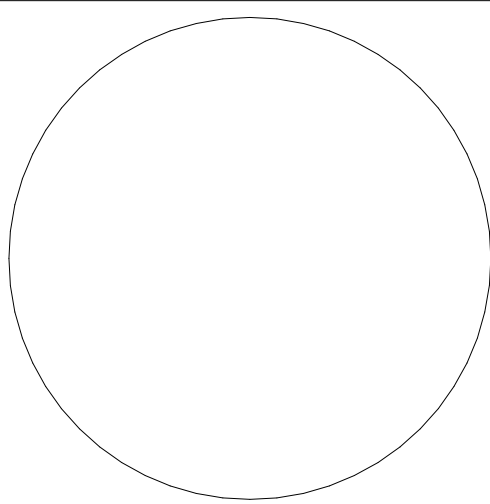
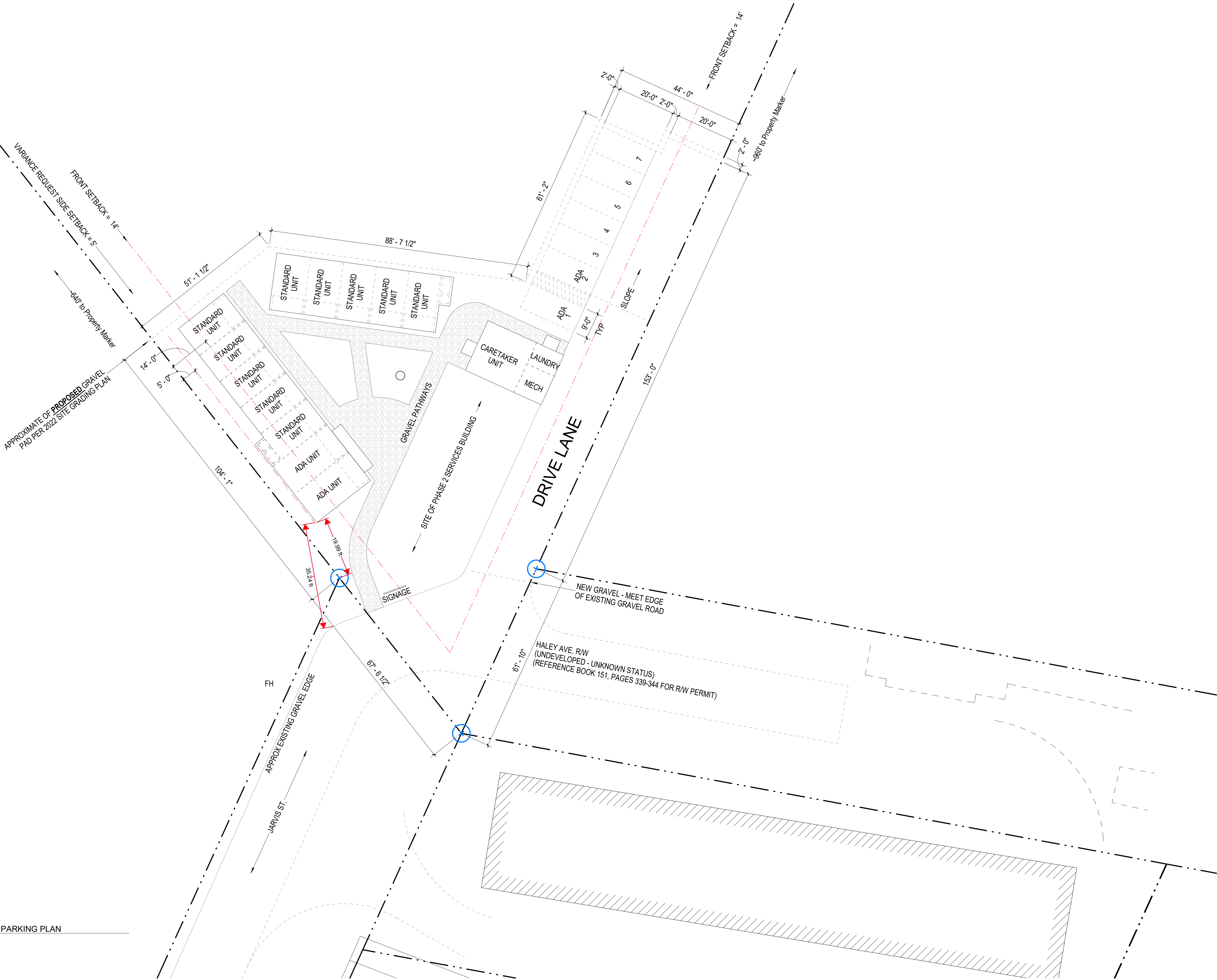
This plat is strictly conformable to the approved field notes, and the survey, having been correctly executed in accordance with the requirements of law and the regulations of this Bureau, is hereby accepted.

For the Director

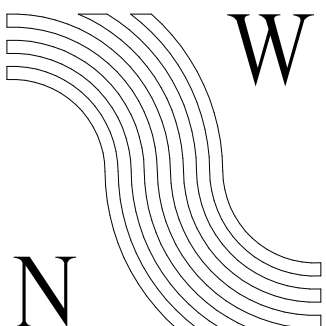
Cadastral Engineering Staff Officer



1 OVERALL SITE & PARKING PLAN  
1/16" = 1'-0"



01/17/2024



NorthWind  
Architects, LLC

126 Seward St  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Ph #907.586.6150  
www.northwindarch.com

IF THE ABOVE DIMENSION DOES NOT MEASURE ONE INCH (1") EXACTLY, THIS DRAWING WILL HAVE BEEN ENLARGED OR REDUCED, AFFECTING ALL LABEL SCALES.

Hitx'i Sáani 'Little Houses' Community

SITKA HOMELESS COALITION  
US Survey 3895 Lot 3  
SITKA, ALASKA

SHEET TITLE:  
SITE PLAN

CHECKED      Approver  
DRAWN        Author

issue      date      description

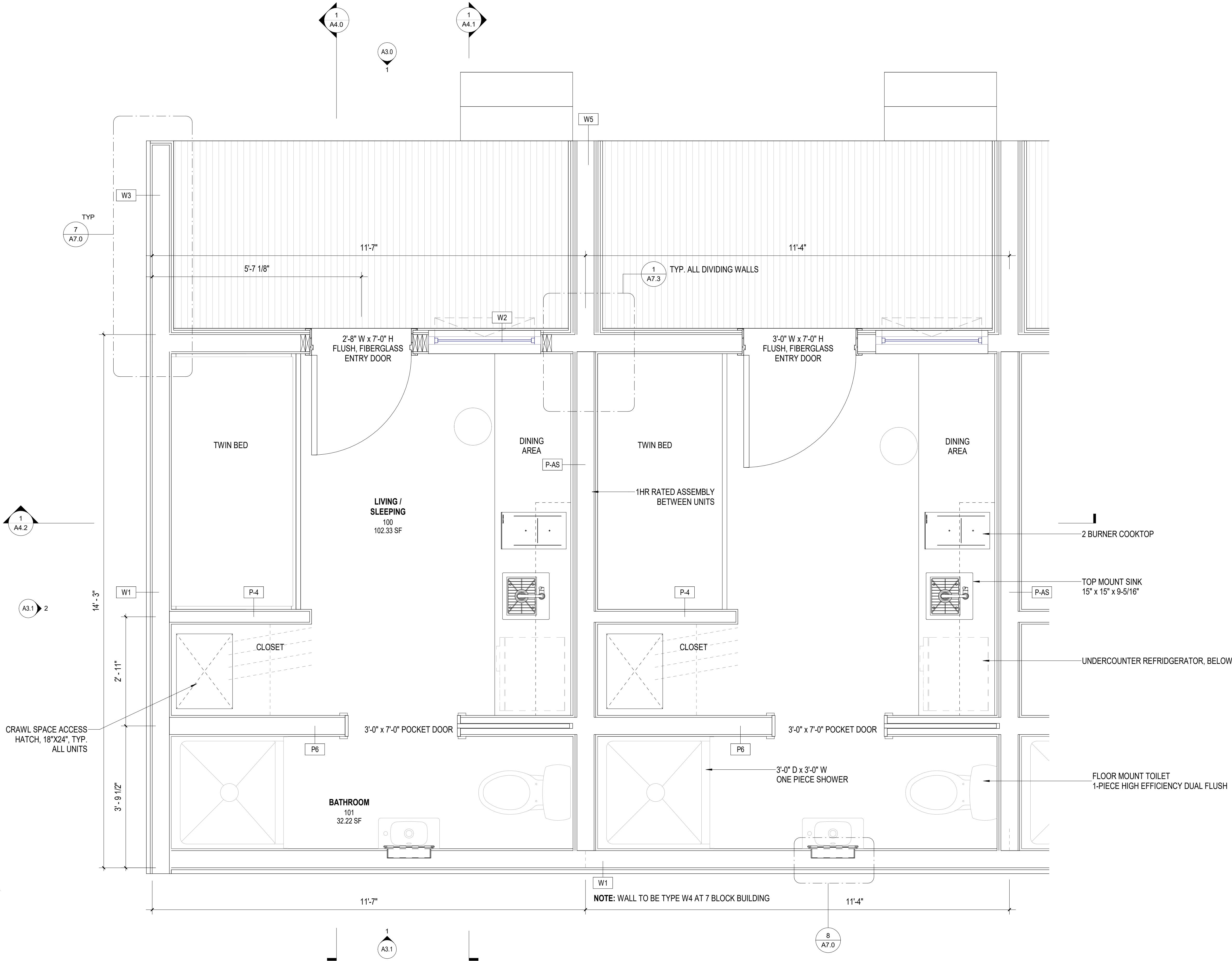
SHEET #

G1.1

ISSUE DATE

01/17/2024

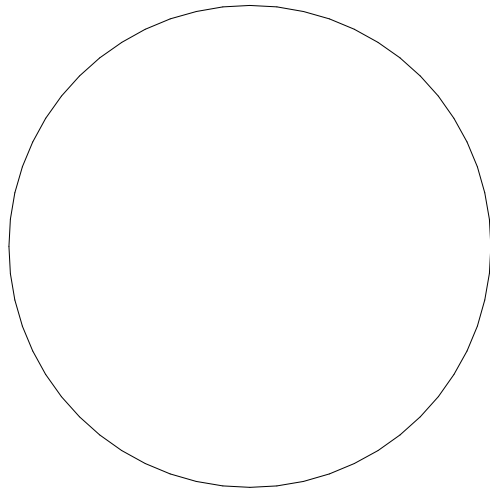




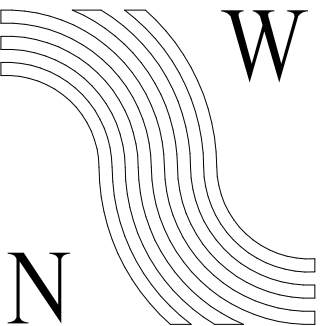
1 STANDARD SINGLE UNIT FLOOR PLAN  
3/4" = 1'-0"

GENERAL NOTES:

1. CONTRACTOR SHALL FIELD VERIFY ACTUAL BUILDING CONDITIONS AND DIMENSIONS. WHERE DISCREPANCIES OR CONFLICTS ARE FOUND, NOTIFY ARCHITECT PRIOR TO COMMENCING WORK.
2. DO NOT SCALE OFF OF DRAWINGS.
3. DIMENSIONS ARE TO GRIDLINE, FACE OR CENTER OF FRAMING UNO.
4. WHERE DOOR OPENINGS ARE NOT DIMENSIONED, LOCATE DOOR OPENINGS TO ENSURE 3" MIN JAMB FRAMING.



01/17/2024



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Architects, LLC

126 Seward St  
Juneau, AK 99801  
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IF THE ABOVE DIMENSION DOES NOT MEASURE ONE INCH (1") EXACTLY, THIS DRAWING WILL HAVE BEEN ENLARGED OR REDUCED, AFFECTING ALL LABEL SCALES.

Hitx'i Sáani 'Little Houses' Community

SITKA HOMELESS COALITION  
US Survey 3895 Lot 3  
SITKA, ALASKA

SHEET TITLE:  
STANDARD UNIT  
FLOOR PLAN

CHECKED      Approver  
DRAWN        Author

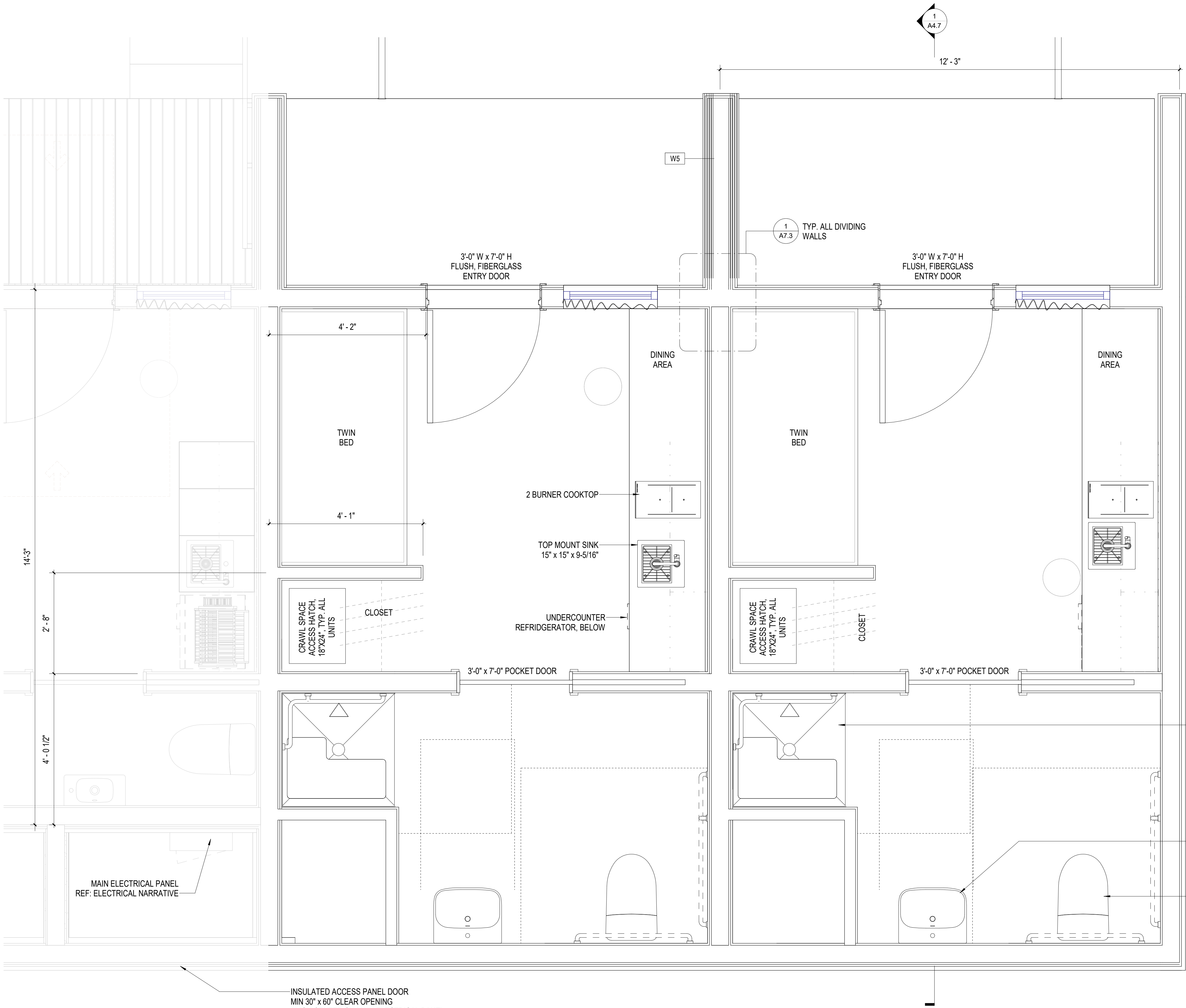
issue      date      description

SHEET #

A2.0

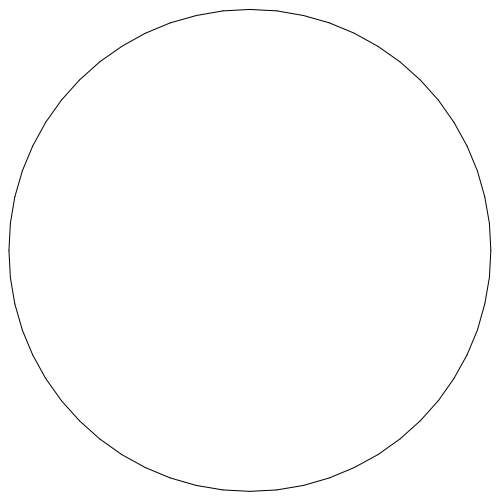
ISSUE DATE

01/17/2024

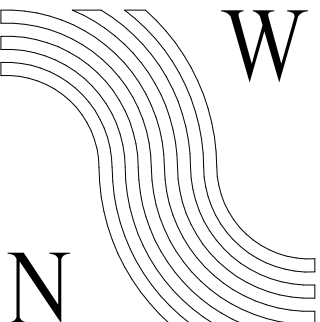


GENERAL NOTES:

1. CONTRACTOR SHALL FIELD VERIFY ACTUAL BUILDING CONDITIONS AND DIMENSIONS. WHERE DISCREPANCIES OR CONFLICTS ARE FOUND, NOTIFY ARCHITECT PRIOR TO COMMENCING WORK.
2. DO NOT SCALE OFF OF DRAWINGS.
3. DIMENSIONS ARE TO GRIDLINE, FACE OR CENTER OF FRAMING UNO.
4. WHERE DOOR OPENINGS ARE NOT DIMENSIONED, LOCATE DOOR OPENINGS TO ENSURE 3" MIN JAMB FRAMING.



01/17/2024



NorthWind  
Architects, LLC

126 Seward St  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Ph #907.586.6150  
www.northwindarch.com

IF THE ABOVE DIMENSION DOES NOT MEASURE ONE INCH (1") EXACTLY, THIS DRAWING WILL HAVE BEEN ENLARGED OR REDUCED, AFFECTING ALL LABEL SCALES.

Hitx'i Sáani 'Little Houses' Community

SITKA HOMELESS COALITION  
US Survey 3895 Lot 3  
SITKA, ALASKA

SHEET TITLE:  
ADA UNIT FLOOR  
PLAN

CHECKED      Approver  
DRAWN        Author

issue      date      description

SHEET #

A2.1

ISSUE DATE

01/17/2024

INSULATED ACCESS PANEL DOOR  
MIN 30" x 60" CLEAR OPENING  
ALIGN CENTER ON MAIN ELECTRICAL PANEL

3'-0" D x 3'-0" W ADA COMPLIANT ONE  
PIECE SHOWER  
• CONTROL WALL ON PLAN NORTH  
SIDE PER ANSI A117.1 608.2.1  
• GRAB BARS PROVIDED PER ANSI  
A117.1 608.3.1

WALL MOUNT VANITY SINK WITH MEDICINE  
CABINET/MIRROR ABOVE  
• BOD: KOHLER MODERNLIFE-K-77767-1-0  
• MOUNTED 34" AFF MAXIMUM

FLOOR MOUNT TOILET  
1-PIECE HIGH EFFICIENCY DUAL FLUSH

























March 27, 2024  
City & Borough of Sitka – Planning Commission  
100 Lincoln St.  
Sitka, AK 99835

Letter of Intent for Zoning Setback Variance for:  
NHN Sawmill Creek Rd  
US Survey 3695 Lot 3  
Parcel #: 3-0290-000  
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Commissioners:

We would like to make a formal request for a variance to seek relief of a required front setback for Sitka Homeless Coalition's Hitx'i Sáani 'Little Houses' Community Project. Sitka Homeless Coalition (SHC) plans to construct a permanent supportive housing project that will have 12 residential units, a caretaker unit, and a services building. The project will provide affordable housing for the chronically homeless as well as essential services, such as behavioral health services, employment services, and individualized support on-site.

Setback:

The platting for this property is unique as it is an irregular shape, coming to a point which critically bisects and disconnects two rights-of-ways: the Jarvis St. and undeveloped Haley Ave. rights-of-ways respectively. A strict interpretation of the requirements of the applicable zoning chapters would technically mean that this lot would have two front lot lines (lot lines adjacent to any public street) while also not quite meeting the definition of corner lot (no intersecting streets). This differs from initial lot setback interpretations and becomes an issue to the homeless coalition as it would decrease the buildable area on the building pad. The extent, shape and size of the building pad is limited due to topographic challenges that significantly constrain development as the lot slopes considerably and quickly away from Jarvis St. towards Indian River. The developed site building pad slopes significantly (~10'-15') into undeveloped wetlands along the NW & N boundaries and would take considerable fill and earthwork to level.

Due to this we are formally requesting a reduction in the required front setback requirement for one of the two front setbacks - the property line currently adjacent to Jarvis St. from 14' to 5', matching the minimum requirement for side setback.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,  
E. David Hurley, AIA  
Principal Architect  
NorthWind Architects, LLC

Andrew Hinton  
Executive Director  
Sitka Homeless Coalition

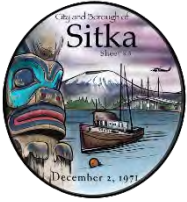
Sean M Boily AIA  
Principal Architect

James Bibb AIA  
Principal Architect

David Hurley AIA  
Principal Architect

126 Seward Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

p.907.586.6150  
f.907.586.6181



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GENERAL APPLICATION

- Applications must be deemed complete at least **TWENTY-ONE (21)** days in advance of next meeting date.
- Review guidelines and procedural information.
- Fill form out completely. No request will be considered without a completed form.
- Submit all supporting documents and proof of payment.

### APPLICATION FOR:

☐ VARIANCE☐ CONDITIONAL USE☐ ZONING AMENDMENT☐ PLAT/SUBDIVISION

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PROPERTY INFORMATION:

CURRENT ZONING: \_\_\_\_\_ PROPOSED ZONING (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT LAND USE(S): \_\_\_\_\_ PROPOSED LAND USES (if changing): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### APPLICANT INFORMATION:

PROPERTY OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY OWNER ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name

Date Submitted

Project Address



## REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

### For All Applications:

- ☐ Completed General Application form
- ☐ Supplemental Application (Variance, CUP, Plat, Zoning Amendment)
- ☐ Site Plan showing all existing and proposed structures with dimensions and location of utilities
- ☐ Floor Plan for all structures and showing use of those structures
- ☐ Proof of filing fee payment
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Marijuana Enterprise Conditional Use Permits Only:

- ☐ AMCO Application

### For Short-Term Rentals and B&Bs:

- ☐ Renter Informational Handout (directions to rental, garbage instructions, etc.)
- ☐ Documentation establishing property as primary residence (motor vehicle registration, voter registration, etc.)
- ☐ Signed Affidavit of Primary Residence for Short-term Rental Conditional Use Permit

**CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property described above and that I desire a planning action in conformance with Sitka General Code and hereby state that all of the above statements are true. I certify that this application meets SCG requirements to the best of my knowledge, belief, and professional ability. I acknowledge that payment of the review fee is non-refundable, is to cover costs associated with the processing of this application and does not ensure approval of the request. I understand that public notice will be mailed to neighboring property owners and published in the Daily Sitka Sentinel. I understand that attendance at the Planning Commission meeting is required for the application to be considered for approval. I further authorize municipal staff to access the property to conduct site visits as necessary. I authorize the applicant listed on this application to conduct business on my behalf.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I certify that I desire a planning action in conformance with Sitka General Code and hereby state that all of the above statements are true. I certify that this application meets SCG requirements to the best of my knowledge, belief, and professional ability. I acknowledge that payment of the review fee is non-refundable, is to cover costs associated with the processing of this application and does not ensure approval of the request.

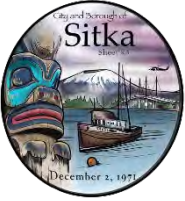
\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant (If different than owner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Submitted

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Address



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORM

### VARIANCE

#### APPLICATION FOR

- ☐ ZONING VARIANCE – MINOR EXPANSIONS, SMALL STRUCTURES, FENCES, SIGNS
- ☐ ZONING VARIANCE – MAJOR STRUCTURES OR EXPANSIONS
- ☐ PLATTING VARIANCE – WHEN SUBDIVIDING

**RATIONALE** - Alaska Statute 29.40.040(b)3 states that a variance may not be granted solely to relieve financial hardship or inconvenience. Explain why a variance is required for your project.

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#### POTENTIAL IMPACTS (Please address each item in regard to your proposal)

- TRAFFIC 

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- PARKING 

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- NOISE 

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- PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY 

---

---
- HABITAT 

---

---
- PROPERTY VALUE/NEIGHBORHOOD HARMONY 

---

---
- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 

---

---

Last Name

Date Submitted

Project Address

**REQUIRED FINDINGS** (Choose **ONE** applicable type and explain how your project meets these criterion):

**Major Zoning Variance** (Sitka General Code 22.30.160(D)1)

Required Findings for Variances Involving Major Structures or Expansions. Before any variance is granted, it shall be shown:

a. *That there are special circumstances to the intended use that do not apply generally to the other properties. Special circumstances may include the shape of the parcel, the topography of the lot, the size or dimensions of the parcels, the orientation or placement of existing structures, or other circumstances that are outside the control of the property owner. Explain the special circumstances:*

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b. *The variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use possessed by other properties but are denied to this parcel; such uses may include the placement of garages or the expansion of structures that are commonly constructed on other parcels in the vicinity. Explain the use/ enjoyment this variance enables:*

---

c. *The granting of such a variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property, nearby parcels or public infrastructure. Initial Here* \_\_\_\_\_

**Minor Zoning Variance** (Sitka General Code 22.30.160(D)2)

Required Findings for Minor Expansions, Small Structures, Fences, and Signs.

a. *The municipality finds that the necessary threshold for granting this variance should be lower than thresholds for variances involving major structures or major expansions. My request should be considered a minor zoning variance because:*

---

b. *The granting of the variance furthers an appropriate use of the property. Explain the use or enjoyment this variance enables:*

---

c. *The granting of the variance is not injurious to nearby properties or improvements. Initial Here* \_\_\_\_\_



**Platting Variance** (Sitka General Code 21.48.010)

- a. A variance from the requirements of this title may be granted only if the planning commission finds that the tract to be subdivided is of such unusual size and shape or topographical conditions that the strict application of the requirements of this title will result in undue and substantial hardship to the owner of the property. **Explain the conditions of the lot that warrant a variance:** \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- b. The granting of a platting variance will not be detrimental to the public safety, or welfare, or injurious to adjacent property. **Initial Here** \_\_\_\_\_

**ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date