

Possible Motion

I MOVE TO approve Resolution 2014-05 on
first and final reading.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor McConnell and Assembly Members
Mark Gorman, Municipal Administrator

From: Michael Harmon, P.E., Public Works Director *MH*
Lynne Brandon, Parks and Recreation Manager *LB*
Dan Tadic, P.E., Senior Engineer *DT*

Reviewed: Jay Sweeney, Finance Director *J*
Stephen Weatherman, P.E., Municipal Engineer *S*
Gary Baugher, Maintenance and Operations Superintendent *GB*
Tori Fleming, Contract Coordinator *A*

Date: April 16, 2014

Subject: Sitka Sea Walk Phase II - Federal Land Access Program Grant
Application for Planning and Design

Background

The City and Borough of Sitka desires to apply for a MAP-21 Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Grant to provide preconstruction planning and design funding for the Sitka Sea Walk Phase II. Phase II would span from the Centennial Building to the O'Connell lightering facility with a connector to Lincoln Street, downtown shopping and Totem Square. The Sea Walk Phase I project from Harrigan Centennial Hall and the Crescent Lightering Facility to the Sitka National Historical Park boundary was completed in October 2013.

The Sea Walk has maintained consistently positive public support and has been included as a goal in many Sitka Community Plans over the years. It is included in the 2007 Sitka Comprehensive Plan, 2006 Sitka Visitor's Plan V1 and V2, the 2002 Sitka Non-Motorized Plan, the 2010 Sitka Passenger Fee Fund Downtown Master Plan, the 2011 Sitka Outdoor Recreation Action Plan. This portion of the walkway was considered during the 1996 O'Connell Bridge lightering facility development, but the funding was inadequate to include it at that time. An O'Connell Bridge seaward side walkway was also included in the 2000-2002 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to reduce unsafe pedestrian crossings of the highway. It remained a priority project in the STIP for 10 years until the program that was slated to fund it was eliminated.

Analysis

The FLAP grant program is designed to assist state agencies and municipalities with transportation projects that enhance access to federal lands, assist municipalities economically, and improve safety and transportation networks. Construction of trail and transportation facilities and projects that improve public safety for pedestrians are high priorities for funding. Applicants for funding are required to work closely and coordinate

with a federal land management agency (FLMA) in development of the project proposals. The Sea Walk provides direct access for visitors arriving at the lightering facilities and the Old Sitka Dock to the NPS Russian Bishop's House and Sitka National Historical Park. The Sitka National Historic Park Staff has indicated they will provide joint project endorsement.

The Sea Walk Phase II is an important component in the Sitka's downtown transportation network so should score well in the grant evaluation criteria. Limiting the request to planning and design fees at this time positions CBS better to receive grant funding both now and in the future once the design is completed. It is anticipated that the Alaska FLAP will receive \$7 million or more in each of the next five years.

The Sea Walk route around the seaward side of the O'Connell Bridge solves a long-standing, identified safety issue with pedestrians making uncontrolled crossings of the State of Alaska owned and maintained Harbor Drive. A comprehensive wayfinding signage system along with a designated pedestrian route will result in visitors moving in predictable ways. Not only is this a significant safety improvement, but also reduces the potential for visitor-resident conflicts and frustration.

Fiscal Note

The total Sea Walk Phase II FLAP Grant request would be \$200,000. The required local match funding is 9.03%. This match will be comprised of Commercial Passenger Excise Tax (CPET) proceeds and in-kind staff time to manage the project.

Sea Walk Phase II FLAP Grant	\$200,000
<u>Local Match</u>	
CPET Funds	\$13,060
City Staff In-Kind	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
	\$18,060

Recommendation:

Approve Resolution 2014-05 authorizing the City and Borough to apply for and execute a grant for the Sitka Sea Walk Phase II to the Federal Lands Access Program.

RESOLUTION 2014 - 05

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
SUPPORTING THE CITY’S APPLICATION TO THE ALASKA FEDERAL LANDS ACCESS
PROGRAM (FLAP) GRANT PROGRAM FOR PRECONSTRUCTION PLANNING AND
DESIGN OF THE SITKA SEAWALK PHASE II.**

WHEREAS, a grant from the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP), if awarded, will fund the planning and design of the Sitka Sea Walk from the O’Connell Bridge to the Harrigan Centennial Building with a connector to Lincoln St and Totem Square; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka Sea Walk project is a priority to the community of Sitka since the pathway links cruise ship lightering facilities with downtown shopping, multiple visitor destinations, including Sitka National Historical Park and will function with the new wayfinding system as the main thoroughfare for visitor circulation and flow within Sitka; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka Sea Walk is a publicly identified priority in the 2002 Sitka Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Sitka Tourism Plans 1.0 and 2.0, Sitka Downtown Master Plan and 2011 Sitka Outdoor Recreation Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, surveys of cruise ship visitors and independent travelers completed for the Sitka Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2010 indicate a desire for more walking and hiking activities and tours and these survey results also found that the majority of cruise ship visitors choose to walk during their visit; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka Sea Walk Phase II upon construction will complete the Sitka Sea Walk, a visitor enhancement and marketing tool as well as a very popular walking opportunity for residents; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka Sea Walk Phase II will be also be a safety improvement by reducing uncontrolled visitor crossings of Harbor Drive; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Municipal Administrator of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska is hereby authorized to negotiate, execute and administer any and all documents required for the application and acceptance of funding from the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program and to manage those funds on behalf of the City and Borough of Sitka.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 22nd day of April 2014

Mim McConnell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Colleen Ingman, MMC
Municipal Clerk