

Special Report

Update from the Sitka Community
Playground Group





We envision an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible, low-maintenance, safe, vibrant community space at Crescent Harbor Park that honors Sitka's natural surroundings and cultural diversity while inspiring multi-generational play.

VOLUNTEER GROUP

WHO is building the playground?

The playground project is led by the Sitka Community Playground volunteer group in partnership with the [City and Borough of Sitka](#) Parks and Recreation Department and Committee, the [Sitka Health Summit](#), and [Southeast Alaska Independent Living](#) (SAIL).

WHY are you building a playground?

We have playgrounds in Sitka, but the schools' playgrounds are closed to public use during the day and none of the playgrounds in town meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessibility and safety standards. Sitka needs a 21st-century playground that promotes healthy, creative play.

WHO is paying for the playground?

The Sitka Community Playground volunteer group is raising funds through grants, awards, and donations and soliciting in-kind contributions. Volunteers will provide much of the labor and support during the build. The City and Borough of Sitka will continue to maintain the playground.

HOW much is the playground going to cost?

The budget to design and build our ADA-accessible, low-maintenance, safe and vibrant community playground is \$570,000-\$710,000.

WHEN will the playground be ready?

Using previous feedback and fresh ideas from Design Day held in April 2016, we began designing the playground with Sitka-based Anderson Land Planning. Fundraising efforts are underway and we plan to have the playground built for summer 2017.

WHERE is the playground going to be built?

Community support was strongest to use the existing Crescent Harbor Park playground site plus one of the three adjacent tennis courts (approximately 12,000 square feet total). The site is at the heart of the Sea Walk, which draws residents and visitors to the area, and is within walking distance of at least four preschools. Some parking is available adjacent to the site, while a large parking lot at Harrigan Centennial Hall and the Sitka Public

Library is just a short walk away via the Sea Walk. The City Parks and Recreation Committee, Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Commission and neighbors voiced support for the site. In January 2015, the Assembly passed [Resolution 2015-02](#) supporting the Crescent Harbor Park site.

WHAT is the history of the project?

The last upgrade to the Crescent Harbor Park playground was in 2000. The City Parks Division and Parks and Recreation Committee have listed playground upgrades as a deferred maintenance priority since 2006. The Assembly has listed the playground project as a State Legislative priority for three years. This project would expand the footprint of an existing playground at Crescent Harbor Park to allow accessibility and safe spacing around play structures, which will require less maintenance and reduce liability.

In 2011, the [Sitka Health Summit](#) selected a community playground as a goal. Guided by a playground consultant, the community developed a potential design. Unfortunately, the group lost momentum.

In May 2014, the unexpected death of Sitkan Sandra Gelber, a physical therapist who was passionate about health and helping children with special needs, helped energize efforts to once again build an accessible and safe community playground. The group plans to honor her memory at the site.

We've reviewed previous work, researched other Alaskan community playgrounds, and hosted public meetings and a Design Day to get community feedback on possible sites and designs. Additionally, the playground group garnered support from neighbors, nearby preschools, and secured the Crescent Harbor Park site with Assembly approval.

In October 2015, the [Sitka Health Summit](#) again selected the playground project as one of three

community wellness priorities and awarded the current project \$2,000. In late 2015, the [SouthEast Regional Health Consortium](#) (SEARHC) awarded the project a \$10,000 grant to assist with the design process. The [Crossett Fund](#), which provides seed money to projects and programs that support children's health in Southeast Alaska, awarded \$20,000 to the project. The Sitka Women's Club awarded the group a mini-grant of \$250 in May 2016. The Sitka Rotary presented a \$2,000 check to the group in June 2016. A big THANK YOU goes out to all of our financial supporters.

With the City's support, grant funding, private donations, and community and volunteer input and enthusiasm, the Sitka Community Playground volunteer group is moving forward!

WHO designed the cool logo?

Local artist Cara Jane Murray created the fantastic artwork to represent our group!

JOIN US!

To volunteer, call **Bridget at 747-1771** or email sitka.community.playground@gmail.com. Our group meets at least monthly. Like us on Facebook ("[Sitka Community Playground](#)") to find out about meetings and check out our website at www.sitkacommunityplay.wix.com/home for more information.

DONATE NOW!

SAIL will process your tax-deductible donation. **Be sure to specify that your donation is for the Sitka Community Playground.**

- Online: www.sailinc.org/sitka-community-playground
- Phone: (800) 478-7245
- Mail: SAIL (Sitka Community Playground Project), 514 Lake St. Ste. C, Sitka, AK 99835

THANK YOU to everyone at SAIL for sponsoring the playground project. We couldn't do this without you!



 Like us on Facebook "[Sitka Community Playground](#)"

SAVE OUR PLAYGROUND!

WHO: Sitka Community Playground Volunteer Group and YOU!

WHAT: We are fundraising to keep Crescent Harbor playground OPEN, but it must be revamped to meet required safety and ADA accessibility standards so EVERYONE can play safely.

WHY: Crescent Harbor playground could be closed, like the Moller Park playgrounds, because of safety concerns.

WHEN: We need fundraising volunteers and donations NOW! We want to have the playground ready for SUMMER 2017.

**DONATE
NOW!**

Our goal is to raise \$75,000 locally.

Our project sponsor, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, will process your tax-deductible donation. **Be sure to specify that your donation is for the Sitka Community Playground.** Contact SAIL:

ONLINE

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PHONE

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MAIL

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 Like us on Facebook "**Sitka Community Playground**"



Draw yourself swinging,
then spruce up the page with color!

ARTWORK BY SITKA'S CARA JANE MURRAY

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THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE SITKA COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND!

(FINANCIAL DONORS AS OF 07/2016)

SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships
(SEARHC MAPP)

Sitka Health Summit

The Crossett Fund

Sitka Women's Club

Sitka Rotary

Harry Race Soda Fountain

Linda Trierschild

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