



City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street Sitka, Alaska 99835

Coast Guard City, USA

May 15, 2015

Andy Hughes, Southcoast Region Planning Chief
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
P.O. Box 112506
Juneau, AK 99811-2506

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Thank you for your letter of March 16, 2015 and attached newsletter and STIP Needs List for Sitka. We noted the needs list did not include all the projects listed in City and Borough of Sitka Resolution 2010-22 that the Assembly requested be added to the Needs List (see copy enclosed), and others which were approved by the Assembly for submittal to the Alaska State Legislature and Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for FY'2016 (see enclosed project requests). Please add these projects to the STIP Needs List:

Road Projects

- Reconstruction of Sitka's Failing Paved Roads is included in the City and Borough of Sitka's FY'2016 Legislative Priorities. The following high-priority roads are included in this request:
 - DeGroff Street (\$1,890,000 – Full Reconstruction)
 - Lincoln Street – Harbor Drive to Metlakatla Street (\$2,600,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - Brady Street – Halibut Point Road to Gavan Street (\$410,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - Cathedral Way (\$150,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - Lake Street – Sawmill Creek Road to Peterson Street (\$3,600,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - American Street (\$250,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - Barracks Street – Seward Street to Race Street (\$140,000 – Full reconstruction)
 - Kashevaroff Street – Edgecumbe Drive to Kimsham Street (\$210,000 – Repave)
 - Marine Street – Seward Street to New Archangel Street (\$1,900,000 – Full reconstruction)
- Road to Resources – Granite Creek to Starrigavan (\$7,400,000—New construction)
- Lincoln Street Improvements – Harbor Way to Harbor Drive (\$1,900,000)

Trails and Paths

- Cross Trail Multimodal Pathway Project – Please incorporate Phase 6 (Kramer Avenue to Starrigavan) to Need ID 28452. Phase 6 is funded for planning and design by a FLAP grant and should be reflected as a priority transportation project. This modified project can be titled Cross Trail Multimodel Pathway and eliminate the phase numbers and locations. The description could be “Design, complete environmental clearance, permit, and build remaining phases of the Cross Trail Multimodal Pathway.
- The Sawmill Creek Road Bypass Trail, National Historical Park to Raptor Center, which was included in 2010 CBS Resolution 2010-22, was apparently not added to the Needs List. It remains an active priority. This project entails resolving the safety issues with uncontrolled pedestrian crossings on Sawmill Creek Road where the National Historical Park pedestrian pathway crosses to the Raptor Rehabilitation Center, a major visitor destination. This project may qualify for FLAP funds. Please add this project to the Needs List.
- Harbor Drive Seawalk Construction (subsequently renamed Sea Walk Phase II) was also included in CBS Resolution 2010-22 but not added to the Needs List. This project is also an active priority. CBS obtained FLAP grant funds for design and planning for this project. Including this partially funded project in the Needs List helps secure additional FLAP grants. Please add this project to the Needs List.

City and Borough of Sitka also requests that DOTPF delete the Needs List ID 26108 Edgecumbe Drive Pavement Rehabilitation Project and Needs List ID 26111 Jeff Davis Street Reconstruction. These projects are funded and planned for construction in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

City and Borough of Sitka appreciates your notice that the Southeast Alaska region has been expanded and renamed. This is an excellent opportunity to reiterate our request as detailed in the December 29, 2010 comment on the DOTPF transportation planning process under the Non-Metropolitan Local Official Consultation Process (NMLOCP). CBS requested, at a minimum, that a Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) be established for the Southeast Alaska region. Although this recommendation was not favorably received, City and Borough of Sitka resubmits this request to give Southcoast communities a “seat at the table” with DOTPF and improve the inadequate two-way communication and cooperation that could greatly benefit the Southcoast region. Please see enclosed December 2010 comment letter for more information.

Finally, City and Borough of Sitka requests that DOTPF engage with CBS and Sitka Airport users in a meaningful planning process for the Sitka Airport, before any large-scale deviation from the Sitka Airport Master Plan occurs. Rather than dealing with each lease lot development application without regard to the impacts it will have on the entire airport including future lease lot and general aviation impacts, the City and Borough of Sitka requests to review the entire near-term Sitka Airport Master Plan development proposals. A detailed discussion is needed to determine how DOTPF and CBS, as well as airport users, can cooperate to ensure that Sitka Airport development can proceed consistent with the Master Plan and will not cause adverse consequences for Sitka Airport and its users.

DOTPF's response to the above requests would be much appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Sitka's transportation needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Gorman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Gorman
Municipal Administrator

Enclosures

cc: Senator Bert Stedman
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Verne Skagerberg, DOTPF
Mayor McConnell and Assembly
Michael Harmon, Public Works Director

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

RESOLUTION 2010-22

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA IN SUPPORT OF SITKA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS FOR THE STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP)

WHEREAS, the City and Borough of Sitka wishes to work with the State of Alaska to upgrade Sitka’s streets, pedestrian facilities, utilities, harbors and docks, airports, trails, and other transportation facilities, regardless of ownership; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT-PF) is beginning work on the 2012-2015 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), a rolling three year plan for transportation projects utilizing State funds or Federal funds provided through the State; and

WHEREAS, the ADOT-PF has asked communities to nominate additional items for the STIP “Needs List”, “a state-maintained list of transportation priorities for the State, including community nominated and community-owned and maintained infrastructure”, and the deadline for nominations is September 13, 2010; and

WHEREAS, only projects on the Needs List can be considered for inclusion in the STIP;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, that the following projects are the Sitka City and Borough’s STIP priorities (highest are prioritized) for the State Transportation Improvement Program, and the Assembly requests that they be included on the Needs List:

Priorit

<u>Y</u>	<u>Project Name</u>
1	Sitka: Halibut Point Road Pavement Rehabilitation
2	Sawmill Creek Road Reconstruction (Roundabout to Jeff Davis)
3	Paving Failed Collector Streets
4	Sawmill Creek Road Upgrade - Stage 3 (Whale Park to SCIP)
5	Paving Failed Arterial Streets
6	ANB Harbor Replacement
7	Intermodal and Harbor Systems Analysis
8	Airport Terminal Expansion
9	Seaplane Facility Relocation and Upgrade
10	Baranof Warm Springs State Dock Reconstruction
-	Nelson Logging Road Upgrade
-	Sawmill Cove Industrial Park Waterfront Development
-	Upgrade State Eagle Way and Old Harbor Mountain Road
-	Commercial Passenger Vessel Visitors Facilities Improvements
-	Granite Creek Road Improvements
-	Crescent Harbor Sidewalk Widening
-	Katlial Street Widening

- Monastery Street Sidewalk Construction
- Baranof Street Sidewalk Construction
- Sawmill Creek Road Surface Treatment (Bridge to End of Route)
- Blue Lake Road Upgrades
- Green Lake Road Upgrades
- New Harbor Construction
- Parallel Taxiway, Phase I
- Parallel Taxiway, Phase II
- General Aviation Apron and Lease Lot Development, Phase I
- General Aviation Apron and Lease Lot Development, Phase II
- General Aviation Apron, Lease Lot Development, Phase III
- Terminal: Sitka FT Mooring Modifications
- Sitka Access EIS
- Sitka Community Ride
- Sitka, Alaska - Transit Needs
- Halibut Point Road Bridge Replacement
- Takatz Lake Road Construction
- Safe Routes to Schools Projects
- Lightering Facility Breakwater Construction
- Upgrade State Highway Sidewalks to ADA Requirements
- Mass Transit Bus Pullout Facilities on State Highways

Trails and Paths

- 1 Path Connection to Indian River Trail
- 2 Cross Trail Construction, Ferry Terminal to Harbor Mountain Road
- 3 Cross Trail Cascade Creek to Kramer Avenue
- Cross Trail Construction High School to Baranof, Charles, Yaw and Pherson
- 4 St.
- 5 Cross Trail Construction, Yaw Drive to Indian River Trailhead
- 6 Sitka: Halibut Point Road Multiuse Path
- 7 Cross Trail Pedestrian Access
- 8 Harbor Drive Seawalk Construction
- 9 Oja Way Path Upgrade
- 10 Japonski Island Walkway Construction
- 11 Moller Field to Lake Street Connection (Trail)
- 12 Cross Trail Construction, Indian River trailhead to Verstovia Trail
- Sawmill Road Bypass Trail, NHP to Raptor Center

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31 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, on this 24th
 32 day of August, 2010.

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 Scott McAdams, Mayor

36 ATTEST:

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38 _____
 Colleen Ingman, MMC

39 Municipal Clerk

CBS HIGHEST MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

PROJECT TITLE

Reconstruction of Sitka's Failing Paved Roads

Total Project Cost.....	\$11,000,000 (100%)
FY 2016 State Funding Request.....	\$11,000,000 (100%)
City and Borough of Sitka Federal Tax ID Number.....	92-0041163

City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) requests \$11,000,000 to reconstruct Sitka priority roads. Many of the Sitka's paved roads are failing. A sustainable road program would require up to \$2.7 million annually. Recognizing the critical nature of the issue and with no current local funding stream in place, the Sitka Assembly is considering a vehicle registration fee or other mechanisms to provide an estimated \$700,000 per year. Even with that level of funding, the local taxpayers need state participation in order to address the need and ensure that paved roads do not return to gravel out of necessity. The following high priority roads are included in this request:



An example of poor asphalt condition due to subgrade issues. This is indicative of the condition of many municipal roads in Sitka.

- DeGroff Street (\$1,890,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Lincoln Street – Harbor Drive to Metlakatla Street (\$2,600,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Brady Street – Halibut Point Road to Gavan Street (\$410,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Cathedral Way (\$150,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Lake Street – Sawmill Creek Road to Peterson Street (\$3,600,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- American Street (\$250,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Barracks Street – Seward Street to Race Street (\$140,000 – Full Reconstruction)
- Kashevaroff Street – Edgecumbe Drive to Kimsham Street (\$210,000 – Repave)
- Marine Street – Seward Street to New Archangel Street (\$1,900,000 – Full Reconstruction)

Cumulative Total RSL Cost
Total Road System



CBS LEGISLATIVE CAPITAL PROJECTS REQUESTS

PROJECT TITLE

**Road to Resources –
Granite Creek to Starrigavan**

Total Project Cost	\$7,400,000 (100%)
FY 2016 State Funding Request	\$7,400,000 (100%)
City and Borough of Sitka Federal Tax ID Number	92-0041163

Due in part to recent large construction projects – including the State Department of Transportation’s (DOT) airport, Sawmill Creek Road and Halibut Point Road projects – City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) and privately owned rock quarries in Sitka are near the end of their productive lives. There do not appear to be many opportunities for additional private quarries, leaving CBS as the primary source of construction rock products in Sitka. If additional quarries are not developed, rock materials for future development projects may need to come from outside of Sitka, greatly driving up construction costs. CBS is proposing to build a “Road to Resources” to help us develop additional quarries.

Laboratory testing indicates that rock from No Name Mountain, which would be made accessible by the proposed road, is of superior quality. A comparison of material testing results on a 2012 sample taken from No Name Mountain to the 2004 Alaska DOT Standard Specifications for Highway Construction indicates that this rock, when crushed, may satisfy the conditions of the Superior Performing Asphalt Pavements (“Superpave”) requirements. It is our understanding that no quarry in Southeast Alaska was able to provide Superpave-quality materials for the Halibut Point Road project, forcing the DOT to pay for aggregate imported from Washington State.

In addition, access to the Starrigavan Valley is required to develop a water well field which could provide an alternate source for drinking water for the community. Currently, CBS drinking water is provided from Blue Lake. Required maintenance at the penstock periodically causes this water source to be unavailable. The only other currently feasible source of drinking water is Indian River. This historical water source would require expensive filtration to meet current federal drinking water standards.

The requested funding would provide a road from the developed Granite Creek Rock Quarries area north to Nelson Logging Road, with a spur road north of No Name Mountain connecting to Halibut Point Road. This request would not only provide access to much-needed rock sources, but also provide a route for a future potable water supply line from Starrigavan Valley.

City and Borough of Sitka requests state assistance of \$7,400,000 to provide a Road to Resources to access additional rock for state, city, and private Sitka projects between Granite Creek and No Name Mountain. The project also would also provide an access route for a potable water transmission line from Starrigavan Valley to the community.

CBS LEGISLATIVE CAPITAL PROJECTS REQUESTS

PROJECT TITLE

Commercial Passenger Visitor Facilities – Lincoln Street Improvements

Total Project Cost	\$1,900,000 (100%)
FY 2016 State Funding Request	\$1,900,000 (100%)
City and Borough of Sitka Federal Tax ID Number	92-0041163

The City and Borough of Sitka requests \$1,900,000 funding from the State of Alaska to complete a capital project to enhance commercial passenger vessel services, enhance passenger safety, and support cruise ship visitor activities. Sitka has experienced a precipitous drop in cruise ship visitors from a high of 286,000 in 2006 to less than 100,000 in 2014. Efforts are underway to regain the visitor counts through dialogue with the cruise lines and investment in infrastructure which supports the visitor industry.

The 2012 Sitka Health Summit listed Downtown Revitalization as a top priority for the community. Lincoln

Street is the primary economic center for the cruise industry in Sitka. This project would replace the existing aging and failing asphalt, curb & gutter and sidewalk along the central business district of Lincoln Street from Harbor Way to Lake Street with new hardscape. Improvements will also include replacement of existing non-conforming wheelchair ramps with new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) wheelchair ramps and new enhanced pavement crosswalks. These improvements will support visitor activities within Sitka's downtown by improving the visitor experience and enhancing pedestrian safety and demonstrate to the cruise industry that Sitka is open for business.



An example of how new hardscape can enhance public space.



City and Borough of Sitka

PUBLIC WORKS

100 LINCOLN STREET • SITKA, ALASKA 99835
PHONE (907) 747-1894 • FAX (907) 747-3158

December 29th, 2010

Marcheta Moulton
DOT&PF – SWP Program Development
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

**RE: Non-Metropolitan Local Official Consultation Process (NMLOCP)
Request for Comments by 12/30/2010**

Dear Ms. Moulton:

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the State Department of Transportation (DOT) transportation planning process. There is no doubt that our community is seeking more input in the transportation planning process. Specifically, we are concerned about the lack of opportunities to improve this process to include non-metropolitan municipalities on a regional basis much like other states have been doing for over 20 years. Alaska is a young State with a relatively undeveloped transportation system making this planning process vitally important. However, it appears that our State may be taking a minimalist approach in allowing the lowest level of Federal requirements to drive the process.

It has been requested for our comments to consider the following basic essentials:

- How frequently community and borough officials are contacted
- What communication methods are used to work with local officials
- How transportation priorities are identified at the local and state levels
- If there is a clear way that projects are selected to be included on the state's priority list, and if the progress toward construction on those projects is transparent (for example, projects do not drop off the list after a period of time)
- Whether transportation decisions are linked with local efforts to create jobs or decisions about where community facilities like schools and health clinics are located

Unfortunately these basic essentials to transportation planning highlight the areas that are weak or nonexistent in regards to DOT's involvement in coordinating with the CBS. Our regional planning strategy is primarily run by email and postcard announcements requesting information such as comments, needs, or filling out STIP project applications. We are not aware of any organized regional transportation strategies developing the "Needs List" or what gets submitted to the STIP. The municipalities basically respond to the requested information, which is often unclear and then follow up to find out what decisions were made by DOT.

To create a strategic and transparent plan, CBS recommends implementing Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO). RTPO's can establish a consistent and meaningful method of making transportation decisions on a regional basis. Such a process could assure that all issues are brought out for open discussion and debated. This is an important element of the planning process that is currently absent in Alaska that could help determine the future direction and characteristics of each RTPO for years to come.

At a minimum, an RTPO should be established for Southeast Alaska. It would be important for the organization to embody some of the following basic essentials:

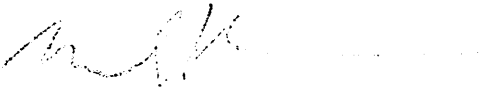
- An RTPO Organization should be a formal organization, with membership of boroughs, cities, and tribes within the region.
- The RTPO should determine its own structure to ensure equitable and acceptable representation by member governments.
- Once the RTPO is established, it should be subject to certification and consistency requirements.
- The RTPO should be established exclusively as a transportation planning organization.
- DOT would have an interlocal agreement that establishes the organization and defines duties and relationships.
- RTPO's would designate a Lead Planning Agency to staff the Regional Transportation Planning Program. The lead planning agency is the designated recipient for any regional transportation planning grants from DOT.
- DOT would develop a planning grant program to help support the RTPO's in developing comprehensive transportation plans and provide match money grants required for STIP projects.
- RTPO's would be responsible for developing and maintaining a Regional Transportation Plan that spans four years consistent with the STIP.
- RTPO's would also create a Transportation Policy Board, to provide policy advice to the RTPO. The RTPO would allow representatives of major employers, DOT, bus transit organizations, port districts/departments, tribal organizations, cities, and boroughs to participate in policy making. The Transportation Policy Board would provide a means of formal participation in the Regional Transportation Plan development for those not a member of the RTPO, but who have a major stake in regional transportation facilities.
- RTPO's would utilize the technical expertise of member jurisdictions and Transportation Policy Board members through technical advisory committees in the development and upkeep of the Regional Transportation Plan. A citizen participation process should be required as part of the Regional Transportation Plan Standards being developed for this program. RTPO's would provide for meaningful citizen participation at all stages in the regional transportation planning process.

It is difficult to decipher how Southeast Alaska's transportation priorities are being discussed and decided. Each jurisdiction should decide this for itself. The collective discussion of transportation issues under an RTPO process makes it easier to determine transportation costs and benefits leading to the adoption of effective strategies and policies. It should be the responsibility of each community to determine its regional vision, the transportation systems its citizens want to plan for, and the resources its citizens are willing to invest to achieve these goals.

For example, although our ferry service is a vital transportation rural highway that connects Southeast to the rest of the Nation, planning direction by DOT appears to be emphasizing ridership and revenue versus Level of Service (LOS). Highways commonly generate little to no revenue and are extremely expensive to operate and maintain. Transportation planning should be about maintaining or increasing the LOS, not based on revenue. Ridership should only dictate the size of the infrastructure needed to maintain a high LOS. Other States would never reduce the availability of their highways to increase the traffic volumes when the roads are open. Likewise, Alaska should not reduce the ferry availability to increase passenger volumes. A Southeast RTPO would better serve in developing such important planning policies and direction for the region.

CBS continues to strongly endorse a regional planning process that is about local citizens, private interests, public interests, elected officials, and resource agencies partnering to jointly determine a future for our local communities, boroughs, and regions. Starting on the required RTPO legislation should be a high priority for the State and DOT. The basic motivation for the planning process legislation should be driven by the need for a community/regional vision that supports how the community wants its transportation system to look and perform in the years ahead. CBS looks forward to cooperating with other Southeast Communities to implement this much needed Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

Sincerely,



Michael Harmon
Public Works Director

c: Senator Bert Stedman
Representative Peggy Wilson
Mike Korsmo, MTAB Chair
Shelly Wright, SE Conference
Kathie Wasserman, Alaska Municipal League
Jim Dinley, CBS Municipal Administrator
Marlene Campbell, CBS Government Relations Director