

**NOTE: These two resolutions are slightly different.**

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS**

**I MOVE TO APPROVE Resolution 2012-10 on first and final reading.**

*Sponsored by Hackett/McConnell 2012-10*

**I MOVE TO APPROVE Resolution 2012-10 S on first and final reading.**

**Sponsored by the Administrator with staff's recommendations. It is considered a substitute resolution.**

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2012-10**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA PROVIDING CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL OF THE SITKA SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTION PLAN**

- 11 **WHEREAS,** the City and Borough of Sitka Assembly considers outdoor recreation as beneficial to Sitka’s public health, quality of life and economy; and
  - 14 **WHEREAS,** the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan is the product of more than a year of active, community-wide planning; and
  - 17 **WHEREAS,** the plan was a cooperative partnership project between the US Forest Service, National Park Service, Alaska State Parks, City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Trail Works, Sitka Conservation Society, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, Chamber of Commerce, SEDA, Sitka Convention and Visitor’s Association, Sitka Schools and many individuals; and
  - 23 **WHEREAS,** the plan builds from a diverse spectrum of community perspectives including resident and visitor surveys; public meetings; individual, organization and business interviews and Assembly briefings; and
  - 27 **WHEREAS,** the plan presents the Sitka public’s view of future outdoor recreation priorities as facilities, programs and information/marketing projects; and
  - 30 **WHEREAS,** priority is given to projects that achieve economic, community and material sustainability; and;
  - 32 **WHEREAS,** this plan will help guide future Parks and Recreation activities in the City and Borough of Sitka as adjunct to the “2007 Comprehensive Plan” and “1991 Sitka Parks and Recreation Plan”; and
  - 35 **WHEREAS,** conceptual approval of the plan does not establish any obligation to implement projects but does establish a forum and opportunity for expanding community capacity through partnerships.
- 38 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska by this resolution affirms and conceptually approves the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan.

41 **PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED** by the City and Borough of Sitka Assembly on the 22nd day of  
42 May, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Westover,  
Mayor

47 ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
49 Serena Wild  
50 Deputy Clerk

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2012-10 S**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA REGARDING THE SITKA SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTION PLAN**

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- WHEREAS,** the City and Borough of Sitka Assembly considers outdoor recreation as beneficial to Sitka’s public health, quality of life and economy; and
- WHEREAS,** the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan is the product of more than a year of active, community-wide planning; and
- WHEREAS,** the plan was a cooperative partnership project between the US Forest Service, National Park Service, Alaska State Parks, City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Trail Works, Sitka Conservation Society, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, Chamber of Commerce, SEDA, Sitka Convention and Visitor’s Association, Sitka Schools and many individuals; and
- WHEREAS,** the plan builds from a diverse spectrum of community perspectives including resident and visitor surveys; public meetings; individual, organization and business interviews and Assembly briefings; and
- WHEREAS,** the plan presents the Sitka public’s view of future outdoor recreation priorities as facilities, programs and information/marketing projects; and
- WHEREAS,** priority is given to projects that achieve economic, community and material sustainability; and
- WHEREAS,** this resolution does not obligate the City and Borough of Sitka to implement specific projects and can be used to support expanding community capacity through partnerships.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska by this resolution appreciates the considerable efforts resulting in the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan.

**PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED** by the City and Borough of Sitka Assembly on the 22nd day of May, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Westover  
Mayor

ATTEST:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Serena Wild  
Deputy Clerk



# City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street Sitka, Alaska 99835

*Coast Guard City, USA*

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May 16, 2012

MEMO TO: Mayor and Assembly

FROM: Jim Dinley, Municipal Administrator

SUBJECT: Resolution of "conceptual approval" of Sustainable Recreation Plan

Resolution 2012-10, as submitted, "affirms and conceptually approves the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan." Based on my and staff reviews (copies attached), I suggest that this wording be modified.

The first six "Whereas" statements do a good job of providing background information about the plan. The seventh cannot be used as a guide to future CBS parks and recreation activities as this plan has not been vetted by CBS and may be inconsistent with existing CBS plans. The last one, "conceptual approval of the plan does not establish any obligation to implement projects" could be modified to better reflect the Assembly's authority to consider and authorize any specific CBS project rather than provide "concept approval" for all projects listed in the plan. I concur with staff concerns about specific projects and do not recommend blanket affirmation and concept approval for all Tier 1 projects in the Plan, of which at least 29 show CBS as "Lead".

If the Assembly "affirms and conceptually approves the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan" as stated in the resolution, it has committed to support the projects as well as their prioritization as Tier 1 without any formal project analysis, review, or specific project approval. This is stated on page 8 under the "Process to Select First Tier Projects": "the most important criterion for prioritization, was that partners were willing to commit in good faith to make a project go forward."

I therefore suggest the Assembly acknowledge that the plan provides suggested projects to establish a forum and opportunity for expanding community capacity through partnerships and appreciates the considerable efforts resulting in the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan." See Resolution (S).

This acknowledgement of the plan would be a positive statement without a blanket endorsement of its projects and priorities.

**City and Borough of Sitka**  
**Finance Department**  
**Memorandum**

**To:** Jim Dinley, Administrator  
**From:** Jay sweeney, Finance Director  
**CC:** Michael Harmon, Public Works Director  
**Date:** 5/16/2012  
**Re:** Sustainability of the Outdoor Recreation Plan

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I would like to strongly echo and underscore the comments made by Michael Harmon, Public Works Director as to the sustainability of the Outdoor Recreation Plan

To speak frankly and bluntly, from my perspective very little of our public infrastructure in Sitka is sustainable given the current level of taxation and user fees, and this would include our recreation facilities and programs. We fool ourselves if we think otherwise.

As we all know, substantial portions of our existing infrastructure has been funded through Federal and State of Alaska support and grants. This type of funding is a trap, however, in that it causes two distinct ramifications to occur which we, in Sitka, are now beginning to experience:

- As “free” infrastructure ages, repair and maintenance costs rise and no sustaining source of revenue (i.e., taxes or user fees) is in place to pay for the rising costs. Federal and state aid is notoriously difficult to obtain for routine maintenance and repair.
- Citizens never have to experience “doing without” or slow savings programs to acquire infrastructure. As a result of getting many facilities for free, citizens develop an entitlement mentality where they expect someone else to always pay the bill. As a result, they are less willing to pay, in increased taxes, for the maintenance and repair of infrastructure acquired for free.

In Sitka, we are the lucky beneficiaries of living in the right place, and the right time, where marvelous projects to improve our recreation and quality of life have been funded, essentially, for free. These projects provide for a recreation program expansive in scope which often surpasses that of much larger cities. This includes numerous parks, sports complexes, lakes, hiking trails, and municipally-sponsored recreational opportunities

In my opinion, our municipal recreation program has expanded past the point of sustainability unless we, as a community, agree to additional taxation. At the same time, we currently have no shortage of ideas for additional new infrastructure projects to make our sustainability problem even worse.

Prudent fiscal management and planning at this point in time should involve a frank discussion within the community as to how to shrink, as opposed to expand or maintain, the scope of our recreation infrastructure to a manageable and sustainable level, given citizen willingness to tax themselves. Unwillingness to accept reality here, and reluctance to tackle this sustainability problem head on with eyes wide open, will serve to create a legacy of dilapidated or abandoned recreational infrastructure for future generations.

## Marlene Campbell

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**From:** Marlene Campbell [campbell@cityofsitka.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 16, 2012 2:27 PM  
**To:** 'jimdinley@cityofsitka.com'; 'Colleen Ingman'  
**Cc:** 'campbell@cityofsitka.com'  
**Subject:** FW: Resolution 2012-10

**From:** Marlene Campbell [mailto:campbell@cityofsitka.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 16, 2012 12:11 PM  
**To:** 'jimdinley@cityofsitka.com'  
**Cc:** 'Chris Brewton'; 'Michael Harmon'; 'Jay Sweeney'; 'Colleen Ingman'  
**Subject:** Resolution 2012-10

The following is a summary of some of the direct impacts to City and Borough of Sitka from “First Tier” projects listed in the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan. This document represents much work by community representatives supportive of improving recreational opportunities in Sitka, but it is a “wish list”, not an actual development plan. The document states on page viii: “This action plan represents a major first step in improving recreation in three primary ways: 1. Reaching agreement on ‘first tier’ priorities based on community and partner input . 2. Increasing the capacity of Sitka to carry out projects by solidifying partnerships between Sitka’s primary players, and by promoting projects that can increase visitor spending, which in turn can expand local revenue (such as sales tax) to support further improvements. 3. Providing an approved plan that documents community support and can be used to leverage outside resources.” The project ideas are very creative, but none of them have been technically analyzed for feasibility, cost, adverse impacts to CBS, and other issues; several are technically not feasible; and some are harmful to CBS interests. The “seven key criteria that were used to help prioritize the many project ideas included in this action plan” as listed on page 7 (Financial Sustainability, Min. Adverse Impact, etc.) do not represent a technical analysis sufficient for “rating” projects.

The process which was conducted to select First Tier Projects involved community and community goals but was never vetted by CBS, which has “Lead” many of the projects. On page 8 the Process to Select First Tier Projects states “and finally, the most important criterion for prioritization, was that partners were willing to commit in good faith to make a project go forward.” The Assembly ultimately makes this decision for CBS projects, and the Assembly has not had any formal involvement in actually reviewing, selecting, prioritizing, and committing to move these projects forward.

The sheer number, development and maintenance costs of First Tier projects proposed in this document for which CBS is listed as “Lead” are staggering (this is a rough tally):

- Center of Town First Tier Projects (page 10) – CBS Lead 8 out of 10 projects.
- Road System First Tier Projects (page 12) – CBS Lead 3 out of 6 projects.
- Out of Town First Tier Projects (page 14) – CBS Lead 3 out of 9 projects.
- Special Uses First Tier Projects (page 16) – CBS Lead 5 out of 12 projects.
- Special Users First Tier Projects (page 18) – CBS Lead 10 out of 15 projects.

CBS is listed as a “Lead” in approximately 29 projects, and a “Primary Partner” in various others. Many of these projects are large, costly, complex, involving multiple partners, and with considerable long-term maintenance and other impacts to CBS. They represent an excellent brainstorming of ideas from various interests in the community for what could be good projects, but there is no critical analysis of these proposals to provide a realistic base for project prioritization and planning. Some are detrimental to the City’s best interests.

For example, In Out of Town First Tier Projects is included “Link to road system/better access (bridge over Votapah)” page 16. This is actually the Vodopad River according to USGS, the outlet stream for the Green Lake Dam, which Chris Brewton discusses in his memo. This project would never be permitted by FERC due to its direct conflict with the City’s

large hydroelectric project on this dam. Another example of a project which directly conflicts with CBS planned development is in Road System First Tier Projects on page 12 "Mountain Bike Trails" at Granite Creek area. The expansion of the Granite Creek rock quarries to accommodate more rock for Sitka's future development is planned for this same area.

The Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan is an excellent brainstorming of possible recreation project ideas, but it is not an action plan. The proposed resolution does an excellent job of summarizing the effort from the public that went into it, but concept approval would imply endorsement of all the projects and their Tier 1 and CBS Lead status, which would infringe on the Assembly's project approval process.

The attached comments by Christopher Brewton and Michael Harmon need to also be considered when determining the response to this plan.

Marlene Campbell, Government Relations Director

## Colleen Ingman

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**From:** Michael Harmon  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2012 6:24 PM  
**To:** 'Goularte, Carol A -FS'  
**Cc:** James Dinley; Colleen Ingman; 'Gary Baugher'; Chris Brewton  
**Subject:** Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan

Ms. Goularte:

I would like to add my concerns about sustainability. In the last couple months we have worked diligently to analyze our infrastructure and overall financial health of the CBS from the standpoint of sustainable life cycle costs of our facilities. It is become very clear CBS is not on a sustainable course and there is no indicators that revenues will be increasing to support our current infrastructure let along addition amenities. It is simply inappropriate to suggest any increase in CBS infrastructure is to be considered "sustainable". Therefore, I am gravely concerned about any type of movement that would suggest CBS is supportive of projects that are not sustainable to own, maintain, operate, and ultimately replace.

I do not know the financial health of USFS. If USFS can afford to grow new facilities that is great. However, any and all new infrastructure listed for CBS is problematic. Even if we are not financially obligated to construct the additional facilities (i.e. 100% grant funding) it does not mean it is sustainable. In general, I have a hard time supporting pursuing outside funding for additional infrastructure that we cannot afford to maintain and replace in the future. We cannot afford to continue to support infrastructure growth that cannot be supported by our tax base. To say the projects identified for CBS ownership will bring in revenue that exceeds operations, maintenance, and replacement (i.e. sustainable) is an unrealistic. We are missing the big picture if we do not understand how this comes back full circle to taxes and ultimately Sitka's cost of living.

It has been an enlightening start to the new year in terms of the downturn in the economy and the overall health of the CBS budget. The definition of sustainability for CBS is looking like less rather than more. I cannot recommend CBS supporting the current MOA as I believe it would be disingenuous due to the lack of sustainable CBS funding and the factors provided by Mr. Brewton. In my mind, an MOA supporting only USFS projects would be appropriate and sincere.

Regards,

**MICHAEL HARMON, P.E.**

Public Works Director  
City and Borough of Sitka  
100 Lincoln Street  
Sitka, AK 99835  
Office 907-747-1823  
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[michael@cityofsitka.com](mailto:michael@cityofsitka.com)

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**From:** Chris Brewton [mailto:[chrisb@cityofsitka.com](mailto:chrisb@cityofsitka.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2012 4:02 PM  
**To:** 'Goularte, Carol A -FS'  
**Cc:** James Dinley; Colleen Ingman; 'Gary Baugher'; Michael Harmon  
**Subject:** Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan

Carol,

I had left a couple of messages for you on Friday & Monday but haven't heard back. I want to point out a couple of issues with the above referenced plan that I do not believe the City can consider supporting. Other City department's may have similar concerns as well but specifically for the Electric Department.



The project mentions a bridge across the Green Lake Dam outfall. That is not possible due to a couple of issues which were pointed out in a meeting held last year with Sitka Trail Works and USFS reps. The Electric Department will not support the idea of increased traffic to the Green Lake Powerhouse. This is the largest generation source for the community, it is a remote and unmanned facility and it contains a 69,000 volt switchyard. Encouraging additional foot traffic to this location is not a good idea. One malicious person could essentially put the town in the dark for an extended period of time. There is a fence around the substation but a significant safety risk if someone decides to climb over it.

Further, as I discussed with the STW & USFS reps, this is a FERC jurisdictional project. I called the FERC office responsible for the monitoring and safe operation of this project to discuss the proposed trail and outfall crossing and was informed FERC would never approve this. FERC is increasingly focused on dam safety and security and they see this as a significant risk, not including the huge increase in liability for the City.

The plan suggests PW department “institutionalize creative snowplowing” for the Green Lake and Blue Lake road. I’m not sure what that means, but the Electric Department not PW is actually responsible for keeping the roads accessible during winter months to maintain existing hydro resources. Due to the significant avalanche hazards on the Blue Lake Road in particular, I would think the USFS would be a bit cautious in encouraging additional usage and assuming that liability. Note that before each winter season, the Electric Department staff receive avalanche training and further exercise radio communication & protocols whenever any department personnel are in the area to ensure their safety.

Sorry for the late timing, but I wanted to point out these issues as I’m a bit surprised they are still in the plan despite information we cannot support any project that includes bridging the Green Lake outfall.

chris

Christopher Brewton  
Utility Director, Electric Department  
City & Borough of Sitka  
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