Sitka Strategic Plan 2023 Progress Report

Assembly Retreat | JANUARY 2024

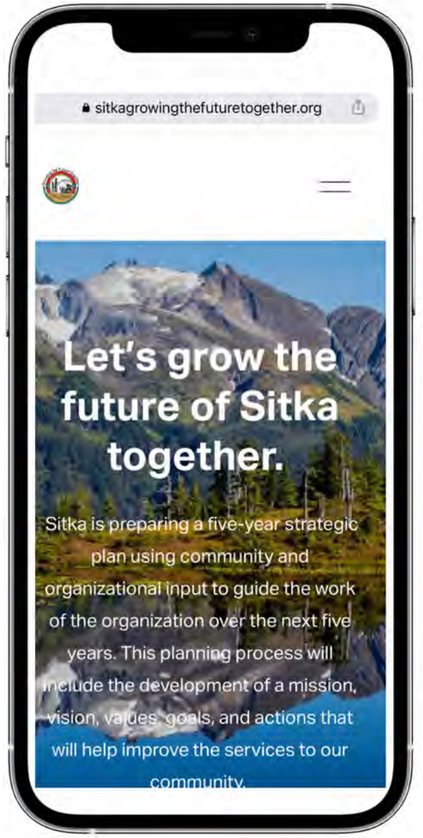
Presented By:

SSW CONSULTING

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

- The strategic plan is the first plan developed for CBS, it was adopted in September 2022
- The goals were developed with extensive public outreach including:
  - About 700 survey responses
  - Social Media
  - Focus Groups
  - Community Leader Interviews
  - Staff Survey
  - Website
  - Fact Sheet
  - Boards, Commissions, + Community Group Presentations
  - Utility Bill Mailer
  - Media Releases



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA (CBS) STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

Provide public services for Sitka that support a livable community for all

VISION

CBS is an organization that values everyone and proactively works together to serve the community. We are fiscally sustainable, supporting a diverse economy and well-managed infrastructure. We are innovative in seeking ways to protect and preserve Sitka's natural environment. We are a respected employer where people enjoy their work and provide valued public services.

VALUES

- ★ PEOPLE
- ★ INTEGRITY
- ★ SERVICE
- ★ INNOVATION
- ★ SUSTAINABLE

Growing the Future Together

Sitka, Alaska

GOALS

COMMUNICATION

Improve communications and strengthen relationships within the community and organization

QUALITY OF LIFE

Preserve the quality of life and affordability for all Sitkans

SUSTAINABLE

Align resources and financial and economic policies with CBS' goals for a sustainable community

INFRASTRUCTURE

Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

SERVICE

CBS is recognized as being a great place to work and excellent service provider to the community

Strategic Plan Road Map

This road map shows how the Assembly, community, and organization can get involved in identifying goals for CBS. The process repeats each year with the destination being continuous community and organizational improvement.

Growing the Future Together

Sitka, Alaska

GOAL 1: Preserve the quality of life and affordability for all Sitkans.

1.1 Convene community partners to develop a community-wide strategy to improve access to childcare	**Started + Ongoing**
1.2 Develop a plan to improve housing options for all in Sitka	**Started + Ongoing**
1.3 Identify opportunities to relieve the burden of utility costs	**Started + Ongoing**
1.4 Review the impacts and benefits of tourism, and develop policies that prioritize the quality of life for all Sitkans	**Started + Ongoing**
1.5 Convene community partners to develop an action plan that will address the challenges of food security	**Started + Ongoing**

GOAL 1: Preserve the quality of life and affordability for all Sitkans.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Weekly childcare meetings with Pathways Summit to collaborate on solutions
- Assembly funded a housing land study to identify best development opportunities for affordable housing
- City teams worked to develop long-term vision for capital improvements, replacements, repairs, + refurbishments)
- Assembly formed the Tourism Task Force in April 2023 to review impacts + benefits of tourism. (These conversations are ongoing)
- Community engagement around Lincoln Street closures
- City teams addressed food insecurity with the Library "seed library," and educational gardening courses + participated in development review for community garden plans this past summer.
- Department of Energy Section 242 incentive program qualified for an incentive payment

GOAL 2: Improve communications and strengthen relationships within the community and organization

2.1 Develop a communication and engagement plan to increase engagement and participation through storytelling and enhancing Sitka's communication tools and networks

Started + Ongoing

2.2 Identify opportunities to foster relationships with underrepresented groups/populations in the community and implement findings to improve service delivery to these groups

Started + Ongoing

2.3 Annually convene non-profits, city boards and commissions, and other community groups for a community summit to discuss community challenges, updates, and opportunities for collaboration

Not Started
Year 2-5

HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL 2: Improve communications and strengthen relationships within the community and organization

- Increased social media engagement. Messaging included: Hiring/vacanacies, staff kudos, collaboration + partnership with other agencies
- Open Finance launched online - live City spending available to public
- Balancing Act budget simulation tool available online for Sitkans
- Tax Payers Receipt live online to showcase dollars spent based on approved budget
- Community engagement to help residents better understand utility bill system via the Community Renewable Energy Strategy
- Parks + Rec program offers additonal services like open gyms, facility rentals, summer programming + more

GOAL 3: Align resources and financial and economic policies for a sustainable community

3.1 Develop a fiscal policy that includes guidelines for areas of fiscal operations such as debt management, infrastructure replacement, metrics for fiscal health of funds, reserves, and other areas.	**Started + Ongoing**
3.2 Prepare financial forecasts and life cycle models for all assets to bring resources in alignment with the City's top priority needs.	**Started + Ongoing**
3.3 Convene economic partners to explore the addition of business support services and employment training programs.	**Not Started Yr 2-5**
3.4 Identify and implement policies that will balance the economic benefits of tourism with the impacts on Sitkan's quality of life	**Started + Ongoing**

HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL 3: Align resources and financial and economic policies for a sustainable community

- Harbor Rate Study is underway (currently being scoped)
- Harrigan Center Hall - A.V. maintenance
- Building condition assessments (including all CBS-owned school buildings) have been initiated to enhance capital improvement planning for the Building Maintenance Division
- Administration established a new annual process for the public to submit project proposals using CPV funds when there is a surplus of CPV funding available

GOAL 4: Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

4.1 Identify and pursue funding to address existing capital needs and deferred maintenance	**Started + Ongoing**
4.2 Develop asset management plans for future capital investments	**Started + Ongoing**
4.3 Identify the levels of service for CBS's infrastructure and identify the resources needed to support these levels	**Started + Ongoing**
4.4 Collaborate with public land management agencies and stakeholders to maintain and develop sustainable active transportation infrastructure, including parks, fields, cabins, trails, and water access	**Started + Ongoing**

HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL 4: Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

- Secured Safe Streets for All Action Plan to identify safety hazards, maintenance needs, and active transportation improvements
- Applied for $2.5M (30%) of Green Lake Phases II and III
- CBS applied for $9.5M to fund critical projects that were identified as legislative priorities and high risk areas of the grid.
- Denali Commission Program grant submittal and award for $1 million to purchase a haul out lift for the Gary Paxton Industrial Park Haul Out project
- Department of Energy Section 247 incentive program for Phase II and III of the Green Lake Rehabilitation project for $3.3 million.
- Department of Energy Section 242 incentive program qualified for an incentive payment
- Department of Health, Healthy & Equitable Communities funding of $133,774 for the Crescent Harbor High Load Dock net Shed project

HIGHLIGHTS: GOAL 4 PART 2

GOAL 4: Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

- Applied for Community Transportation Program (CTP) grant to support the Katlian Avenue Paving and Improvements project
- Applied for Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program grant for $150,000 to fund a condition assessment for two CBS-owned bridges: Granite Creek Landfill Bridge and Sawmill Creek Powerplant Access Bridge
- CBS developed and implemented an unanticipated event capital fund in FY24. A shorter capital emergency response time is expected for future unanticipated events
- The Public Works Department has a nearly fully staffed Engineering Division to help manage the many capital projects that are underway. Working on projects that have been in the deferred status for some time. Having these staff available to work on concept and design planning improves CBS's eligibility for grant funding

HIGHLIGHTS: GOAL 4 PART 3

GOAL 4: Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

- Planning for the development of a Park and Recreation Asset Management plan
- Developed thorough asset inventories for all Public Works Assets
- Added signage to further identify the location of the Sitka History Museum in Harrigan Centennial Hall. Upgraded theater lighting and to bring the HCH auditorium lighting up to current configurations.
- A $1 million federal grant was awarded for the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy to identify the community's desired level of service with regards to reducing carbon-based energy usage and electrification
- Acquired and installed a geographically diverse data center backup system as part of our disaster recovery plans.
- Department of Energy Section 242 incentive program qualified for an incentive payment

HIGHLIGHTS: GOAL 4 PART 4

GOAL 4: Plan and invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations

- CBS has partnered with Western Federal Lands and Alaska Department of Transportation to develop Phase II of the Sitka Sea Walk – Construction anticipated in fall of 2024
- CBS and Sitka Tribe of Alaska are coordinating and collaborating on the development of the Rocky Gutierrez Airport Terminal Improvements Project and Sea Plane Base Relocation and Improvements Project.
- CBS is actively coordinating with the GPIP Board and the Assembly to develop the GPIP Haulout Project
- CBS received grant funding through MARAD for the Marine Service Center Sea Wall Replacement Project
- The Crescent Harbor High-Load Dock/Net Shed Refurbishment Project is moving forward and anticipated to begin construction in 2024
- CBS is moving forward reviewing construction options for the Crescent Harbor Restroom Replacement Project

GOAL 5: CBS is recognized as being a great place to work and excellent service provider to the community

5.1 Develop a workforce development plan that outlines clear policies for staff training and professional development — **Started + Ongoing**

5.2 Prepare a succession plan that addresses development of the current workforce and future workforce recruitment and retention strategies — **Started + Ongoing**

5.3 Improve customer service levels and evaluate process improvements for service delivery — **Started + Ongoing**

5.4 Identify and develop necessary standard policies and procedures to promote organization-wide stability and service-level consistency — **Started + Ongoing**

5.5 Develop an internal communication and engagement plan and policies to improve the flow of information in the organization and increase employee engagement — **Started + Ongoing**

HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL 5: CBS is recognized as being a great place to work and excellent service provider to the community

- Public Works developed a new safety program to creating a safer working environment for all employees
- Public Works developed a Snow and Ice Management Policy to drive a better level of service to the community
- New administrative policies to help improve recruitment
- Implemented an HRIS system that combines payroll, benefits, time & attendance, and core HR for efficiency.
- Adopted early voting as another form of absentee voting
- Process improvement initiatives in Public Works and Library to improve services to the community
- Conducted an Employee Climate Survey
- An internal portal launched in 2023 that directs staff to a landing page that includes News within the organization, a workspace to share documents, policies, and procedures

DEC 2023 TOWN HALL FEEDBACK

PROGRESS

HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR? IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW HAVE THEY MADE SITKA BETTER?

DEC 2023 TOWN HALL FEEDBACK

CHALLENGES

WHAT CHALLENGES OR OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD CBS FOCUS ON IN THE COMING YEAR?

HOUSING

- Affordability
- Limited rentals + availability
- Limit short-term rentals
- Eliminate bed tax
- Rurality

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Maintenance + rehab of major city streets

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Prioritize community gardens – streamline permitting / lease process

TOURISM

- Issues throughout the community
- Reduce tourism until Task Force is ready to take action

HEALTH CARE

- Challenge SEARHC's policy - need to maintain medical status for home health

EMPLOYMENT

- Identify how diverse economy can be generated and proactively support local business that creates viable year round employment

DEC 2023 TOWN HALL FEEDBACK

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE PRIORITIZED?

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Priorities

- City support for year-round businesses
- City support for start-ups
- City support for expansions

TOURISM

Priorities

- Reduce cruise tourism
- Incentives for year round / disincentives for seasonal
- Quantification and qualitative analysis of impacts of industrial scale tourism

ENVIRONMENTAL

Priorities

- Reduce green waste being shipped off island
- Compost
- 9,000,000 gallons – quantify our exposure to fuel volatility and availability regulated emergency situations

RURALITY

Priorities

- Institute an explicit program to monitor for threats to Sitka's rurality, and protect it

OTHER

Priorities

- Save Lincoln Street
- Vacancy tax
- Food security
- Constructions materials

YEAR ONE PROGRESS COMMUNITY FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Survey Responses

Total participants: 101
- 40 community members
- 61 City and Borough of Sitka employees

Have you noticed any community improvements over the past year? If so, what are they and how have they made Sitka better?

- The Cross Trail to Starrigavan was completed, allowing more people to enjoy the benefits of time outdoors
- Totem Park walkway expansion
- Pacific High School green house construction
- More use of the turf field throughout the year has provided more diversity of activities for youth recreation
- Lincoln Street closure during tourist season
- Improved pedestrian safety on Sawmill Creek
- Additional bike lanes along SMC Road to improve safety
- More recreation activities for youth

YEAR ONE PROGRESS COMMUNITY FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Survey Responses

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What challenges or opportunities should CBS focus on in the coming year?

- Tourism issues:
  - Overcrowding from cruise ship passengers. It is placing a large burden on full time community members and making Sitka a less desirable place to live.
  - Preserving quality of life for residents
  - Transparent communication + control over tourism partners
- Utility bill support
- Affordable housing + more housing options
- Infrastructure: Street conditions, power, sewer, water

YEAR ONE PROGRESS COMMUNITY FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Survey Responses

Total participants: 101

- 40 community members
- 61 City and Borough of Sitka employees

What are your top three priorities for Sitka in the coming year?

- Balance, limit or manage tourism
- Control cost of living- housing, utilities, limit rate increases (groceries, harbor, etc)
- Sustainability
- Infrastructure
- Safety: limit drug abuse, road safety, pedestrian safety

NEXT STEPS

- Year two action prioritization
- Strategic Plan goal refinement
- Continued implementation of the Strategic Plan with an action framework for the organization

QUESTIONS + DISCUSSION

THANK YOU!

SSW CONSULTING