



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chair Spivey and Planning Commission Members

**From:** Amy Ainslie, Planning Director

**Date:** July 15, 2022

**Subject:** Potential changes to Lincoln Street Closure

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The Short-Term Tourism Plan directed staff to close Lincoln Street on days with 3,000 or more cruise ship passengers. The Assembly requested two caveats during adoption of the plan: that the threshold for closures be based on actual passenger count rather than total capacity, and that the Administrator make adjustments to the closure (including timing, thresholds, etc.) if the need arose during the summer.

Effective June 20<sup>th</sup>, the Administrator made an adjustment to the threshold, raising it to 4,000 passengers rather than 3,000. This change came as a result of observational data about street usage and public comments submitted.

Since that time, CBS has had increased difficulty in obtaining actual passenger counts. Public comments have been received that the street is being closed when there may not truly be 4,000+ passengers in town. In order to best meet the intent of the plan for Lincoln Street closures, the basis for the closure may need to be adjusted again.

While not an exclusive list, staff sees three primary options to move forward with:

1. The “Do Nothing” Option: Keep the closures running as-is, recognizing that closures may inadvertently occur on days with fewer than 4,000 passengers.
2. Rebase the closure threshold on capacity rather than actual count. If based on capacity, the threshold would likely be raised to 6,000 passengers.
3. Create a fixed schedule for certain days of the week.

The up-to-date cruise calendar with passenger counts and anticipated closures can be viewed at this link: <https://visitsitka.org/partner-services>

Given the Commission’s role in the plan, the Administrator requested a review/recommendation by the Commission before altering the closure basis.