



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Agenda - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

6:30 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

****Special Meeting****

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

(Public participation on any item off the agenda. All public testimony is not to exceed 3 minutes for any individual, unless the Chair imposes other time constraints at the beginning of the agenda item.)

IV. THE EVENING BUSINESS

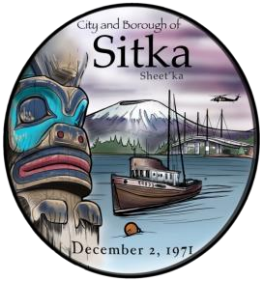
A [MISC 21-09](#) Discussion/Direction on Short-Term Tourism Plan

Discussion to include finalization of traffic and staging plans for Harrigan Centennial Hall, and discussion of future planning needs.

V. ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: More information on these agenda items can be found at <https://sitka.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> or by contacting the Planning Office at 100 Lincoln Street. Individuals having concerns or comments on any item are encouraged to provide written comments to the Planning Office or make comments at the Planning Commission meeting. Written comments may be dropped off at the Planning Office in City Hall, emailed to planning@cityofsitka.org, or faxed to (907) 747-6138. Those with questions may call (907) 747-1814.

Publish: November 12, 15



City and Borough of Sitka

PROVIDING FOR TODAY...PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

Coast Guard City, USA

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Spivey and Planning Commission Members

From: Amy Ainslie, Planning Director

Date: November 11, 2021

Subject: **Tourism Planning – Harrigan Centennial Hall**

Since our 10/6 meeting on Harrigan Centennial Hall (HCH) traffic and staging, staff has been working through analysis and recommendations for use on the campus. This has included Harrigan staff, Planning, Public Works, and the Harbor Department. We have also reviewed these plans with the Ports and Harbors Commission on 10/13 and 11/10.

In terms of the staff recommendation, these are the general provisions we operated under:

1. **Safety:** Safety is our number one priority. With the mass of people, and mix of vehicles (personal cars, taxis, tour vans and buses, etc.), we wanted any plan to minimize vehicle and pedestrian interaction.
2. **Space optimization:** While space is limited, it can be optimized by having proper staging and line formation. Therefore, our recommendations are based largely on making efficient use of space and identifying both vehicle space and corresponding queuing space. Heavy emphasis was placed on optimization of available public parking.
3. **Simplicity/Clarity:** While some level of confusion is unavoidable with this number of visitors, emphasis was placed on solutions that made directions and staging both simple and clear.
4. **Alleviating pressure on the parking lot:** The HCH/Crescent Harbor parking lot is a high demand parking area given its proximity to the harbor and the downtown area. In our planning process, efforts have been made to maximize available parking in this lot.

Enabling Factors for Recommendations:

1. **“Load and Go” Operations:** Given the limited space and high demand, excessive parking/idling times need to be curbed.
2. **Permitting:** In order to ensure more equitable and orderly access, a more structured permitting system will be needed for HCH summer operations. The details of that permitting structure should be included in “future planning needs”.

3. **Vehicle Restrictions:** In order to avoid pedestrian/vehicle conflict, some areas of the campus need to be restricted to pedestrian only use when cruise ships are in port. This largely affects the “tabletop” that connects Areas A and I, and the rear of the building. Further detail is provided below.

Per this diagram, the HCH campus has been divided into different areas; our recommendations are organized by use in each area. A larger diagram is also included as an attachment.



Area Label	Description
Area A	Harrigan Loop
Area B	Harbor Loop
Area C	HCH/Library Internal Parking 1
Area D	HCH/Library Internal Parking 2
Area E	Intermediary Plaza
Area F	Covered Area/Sidewalk
Area G	Tendering Area
Area H	Boat Launch & Rear Plaza
Area I	Crescent Parking Lot
Area J	Harbor Drive Curb Parking

Campus Plan Recommendations:

Area A

- **Concept:**
 - Option 1: Dedicate this area to large shuttles that transport passengers in mass from the HPR dock to downtown. The outer part of this loop (opposite the building, adjacent to green spaces), can be used for setting up stanchions or other queuing methods to line up passengers waiting to get back on shuttles.
 - Option 2: Utilize half of this area (the half closer to the Library) for large tour buses and the other half for the large shuttle service. Given that most tours are wrapping up their drop-offs/pick-ups by mid-afternoon, the entire loop could be dedicated to shuttle services after a certain time (~3pm) to accommodate the evening, “last call” rush.
- **Logistics:** The tabletop that connects the larger parking lot, I, to the large loop A will need to be closed to vehicular traffic. Passengers will unload on the sidewalk and be encouraged to

stay on sidewalks to disperse towards the Seawalk, downtown, or to tour vendors/outfitters. Closure of this tabletop will better separate cars and pedestrians.

Area B

- Concept: This loop will be dedicated for van and bus tour operations. Vans and buses will enter the lot from Lincoln Street, loop around the Harbor Drive side of the lot, and then line up along the curb. Passengers will utilize plaza space between B & F for queuing. Vans and buses will also exit the parking lot via the Lincoln Street connection.
- Logistics: Parking (approximately 3-4 spaces) may need to be limited in the corner of the lot immediately adjacent to the Harbor Drive/Lincoln intersection so that buses can make the turn. With the tabletop closed, this will increase curb space for vans/buses. Queuing of passengers is critical to keep things organized and prevent vans/buses from idling for extended periods of time. This loop will likely require the most active management to keep efficient.

Area C

- Concept: This lot will largely be unchanged, though some parking spots may be used for overflow tour vending/outfitting if not all can be accommodated in other areas.

Area D

- No changes proposed.

Area E

- Concept: No substantive changes proposed. However, we do emphasize that this area could be well utilized to aid in queuing and loading of passengers on to shuttles. If the “outer loop” portion of Area A is used for passenger lines, groups will be walked to E, across the tabletop in A, and then loaded on to buses to depart. This may be particularly important in the case that COVID mitigations are still in place next season that require separate shuttles for each cruise line/ship.

Area F

- Concept: This area will continue to be used for tour vendors/operators to have signs/liaisons staged. Some vendors (primarily the youth vending tables) may continue to be staged in this area depending on the demand/pressure for space. Some passenger queuing space may be needed on the side of the museum.

Area G

- Concept: This area’s use is highly dependent on tendering, as security requirements for tendering may limit use of the area. Per the most current cruise schedule (subject to change), it is anticipated that we will have 31 days of one ship tendering, 11 days of two ships tendering, and 2 days of three ships tendering throughout the season. On non-tendering days or one ship tendering days, the area of G closest to the I parking lot may be used for queuing space.
- Logistics: The bollards that block vehicle traffic located in G will be up when either ships are tendering to Crescent Harbor or on days that ships that shuttle passengers to HCH are in port.

When tendering, vehicles cannot pass through this area for security reasons. When ships are not tendering, the plans for Area H will require bollards in G to be up.

Area H

- Concept: This area will be utilized for outfitters and as open plaza space. This will remove outfitters from the I parking lot. If overflow space is needed (i.e., there is more demand for outfitting space than H can accommodate), Area C will be utilized, or potentially new area can be created adjacent to sidewalk on the Lincoln Street side of the Net Shed.
- Logistics: Vehicular access to this area needs to be restricted in order to prevent pedestrian/vehicle conflict. Given the blind corners around the back of the building, inattentive pedestrians looking at the view, and outfitters needing staging space, staff highly recommends limiting vehicular access when either ships are tendering into Crescent Harbor or when ships that shuttle passengers to HCH are in port. Staff will work to stage outfitters in such a way that the launch is accessible on non-ship days.

Area I

- Concept: Maximize public parking in this lot.
- Logistics: It is possible that 3-4 spaces may need to be blocked on ship days so that the Area B concept can work. These could be turned into short-term parking (less than 24 hours) to make them available on non-ship days.

Area J

- Concept: This area could be utilized as a taxi bank. It is controlled by ADOT, so CBS will need ADOT consent to utilize this space for a dedicated purpose. Therefore, we cannot yet guarantee utilization of this space.
- Logistics: Some signage will be required to reserve the space as well as direct passengers to this area. If we are unable to secure this space from ADOT, back-up plans for taxis are under consideration in Areas A and B.

Other Considerations

- This influx of passengers will demand more support staff at HCH and for the Harbor Department, at least on a seasonal basis.
- In order to disperse passengers throughout town, more attractions/excursions will be needed, however, this will place more pressure on space at HCH and at Crescent Harbor. New permitting structures may be needed to adequately manage the operational and financial demands this level of activity brings.

Staff will be available at the meeting to help answer questions or engage in more discussion. The HCH and Crescent Harbor areas are a highly-valued community assets, and we want to make our best efforts to balance the needs for use of these limited spaces.

HARRIGAN CENTENNIAL HALL (HCH)

TRAFFIC & STAGING PLAN SUMMER 2022

STAFF ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

PRESENTED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR THE SHORT-TERM TOURISM PLAN

11/17/2021

OVERVIEW & CONTEXT

- HCH identified as critical to downtown traffic and passenger dispersion
- Meetings:
 - 10/6 Planning Commission
 - 10/13 Ports & Harbors
 - 11/10 Ports & Harbors
- Staff review: HCH, Planning, PW, Harbors

AREA DIAGRAM



Area Label	Description
Area A	Harrigan Loop
Area B	Harbor Loop
Area C	HCH/Library Internal Parking 1
Area D	HCH/Library Internal Parking 2
Area E	Intermediary Plaza
Area F	Covered Area/Sidewalk
Area G	Tendering Area
Area H	Boat Launch & Rear Plaza
Area I	Crescent Parking Lot
Area J	Harbor Drive Curb Parking

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Safety

Safety is our number one priority. With the mass of people, and mix of vehicles (personal cars, taxis, tour vans and buses, etc.), we wanted any plan to minimize vehicle and pedestrian interaction.

2. Space Optimization

While space is limited, it can be optimized by having proper staging and line formation. Therefore, our recommendations are based largely on making efficient use of space and identifying both vehicle space and corresponding queuing space. Heavy emphasis was placed on optimization of available public parking.

3. Simplicity/Clarity

While some level of confusion is unavoidable with this number of visitors, emphasis was placed on solutions that made directions and staging both simple and clear.

4. Alleviating Parking Pressure

The HCH/Crescent Harbor parking lot is a high demand parking area given its proximity to the harbor and the downtown area. In our planning process, efforts have been made to maximize available parking in this lot.

ENABLING FACTORS

- Permitting
- Off-site staging
- Vehicle Restrictions

AREA A

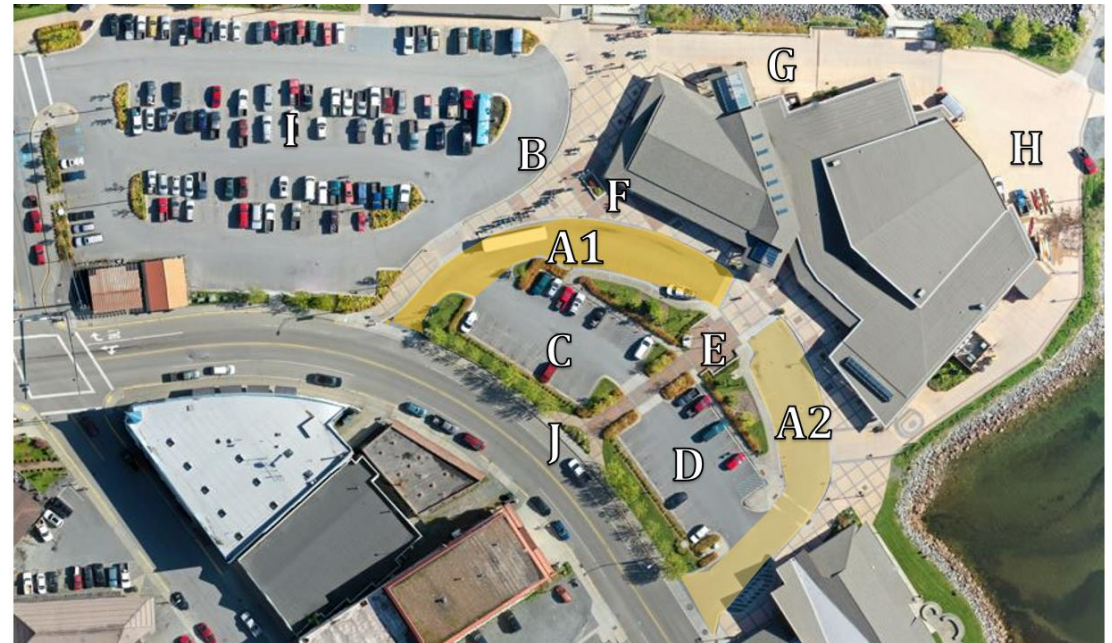
Option 1: Dedicated Shuttle Use

- Concept: Loop dedicated to large shuttles. Outer loop space utilized for queuing.
- Pro's: Maximizes space for high volume operation, prevents domino effects of bottlenecks/delays.
- Con's: Pushes all other bus traffic to area B, and lulls in shuttling demand underutilizes space.



Option 2: Shuttle & Large Bus Use

- Concept: A1 dedicated to large shuttles. A2 dedicated to large tour buses until late afternoon on moderate and large ship days.
- Pro's: Fully utilizes space throughout the day. Decongests Area B and Area I.
- Con's: Midday will have overlapping peaks in demand for shuttling and tour drop-offs or transfers, may become severely congested.



AREA B



Tour Bus Loop

- Concept: Loop is dedicated to smaller buses and vans. Passengers will be greeted by sale reps in Area F and queued in the plaza space between B and F. Temporary shelter options are being researched.
- Pro's: Decongests Area A and provides adequate space. Loading from sidewalk safer as opposed to outer loop of A. Many are turning right for SMC attractions; avoids intersection, roundabout, and SMC Road Project area.
- Con's: Will require active management to avoid long idle times. Depending on bus size utilizing loop, 3-4 parking spaces near intersection may need to be blocked on ship days.

AREAS C, D, & E



Parking Lots & Outfitting Overflow

- Concept: Largely unchanged for current parking lot use. Area C may be used for outfitter overflow depending on demand for Area H. Area E will be kept clear to aid in safe pedestrian crossing and queuing.
- Pro's: Preserves parking for HCH, Library, and downtown area. Removes outfitting from Area I.
- Con's: Some intermingling of vehicles and pedestrians. Adds traffic to the inlet and outlet of Area A.

AREA F



Tour Advertising & Vending Area

- Concept: Largely unchanged from current use as tour advertising and vending space. In late afternoon, may be needed for shuttle queuing. Available space for youth vending may be pressured – tbd.
- Pro's: Provides weather protected space for people & signs. Halfway point between Area A2 and B (if Option 2 for Area A selected).
- Con's: Can get congested when shuttles offload.

AREA G



Tendering Area

- Concept
 - 44 days during season with tendering
 - 31 one ship tendering days
 - 11 two ship tendering days
 - 2 three ship tendering days
 - With exception of 3 ship days, route all tendering to Crescent Harbor.
 - Allen Marine to utilize O'Connell Bridge Dock for transfer tours
 - On no-tendering or one-ship tendering days, one ramp available for smaller marine-based outfitters
 - On two or three-ship tendering days, smaller marine-based outfitters to use northern float
- Pro's: Dovetail security requirements and pedestrianization of Area H. Leaves O'Connell available for staging. Efficiency in Harbor Dept. support of tendering.
- Con's: Restricts vehicular access to rear of building and launch ramp

AREA H



Outfitting & Plaza Space

- Concept: Station as many outfitters in this area as possible, minimize visual impact for auditorium/conference rooms. Open space use as part of Seawalk. Bollards will be up on ship days to restrict vehicle access.
- Pro's: Reduces vehicle/pedestrian conflict in area with blind corners. Removes outfitters from Parking Area I. Launch can be utilized for kayaks, paddle boards, etc.
- Con's: Restricts vehicular access to rear of building and launch ramp.

AREA I



Parking Lot

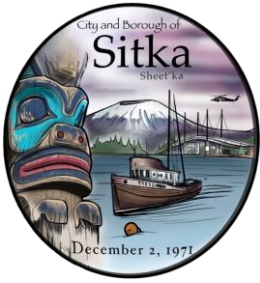
- Concept: Maximize available public parking. Look for opportunities to expand vendor space. Look for opportunities to expand parking space.
- Pro's: Parking already pressured – will be exacerbated next season.
- Con's: Longer walk to dock

AREA J



Taxi Bank

- Concept: Work w/ADOT to dedicate curbside space for taxi bank. Include high visibility signage.
- Pro's: Taxi's require more advertising/idle time - this creates dedicated space for those activities.
- Con's: Will need to ensure visibility to direct potential customers. Permission from ADOT required as not a CBS ROW.



City and Borough of Sitka

PROVIDING FOR TODAY...PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

Coast Guard City, USA

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Spivey and Planning Commission Members

From: Amy Ainslie, Planning Director

Date: November 11, 2021

Subject: **Tourism Planning – Future Planning Needs**

This session will be focused on indirect infrastructure, and particularly how they relate to future planning needs. As the focus of this plan is the 2022 cruise season, our ability to perform the necessary in-depth study is limited. However, in the joint work session between the Assembly and the Planning Commission in April, the need to map out future planning needs was mutually identified as a valuable deliverable from this plan.

Over the course of this planning effort, several future planning needs have been identified:

1. Impacts on CBS infrastructure/services: Roads, water and sewer, solid waste management, emergency response, harbors, and other public facilities/spaces (Harrigan, Library, City Hall, parks, trails, restrooms, etc.)
2. Community-wide impacts: Environmental impacts, housing, telecommunications, and traffic/congestion

The Commission should discuss additional planning areas needed and recommended work/planning efforts. While not exhaustive, staff would like to recommend the following:

1. Impact Study: A comprehensive impact study could take place in 2022 with data gathered during the season. The scope of this plan could be specific to CBS infrastructure or could be system-wide/community-wide. Opportunities to utilize CPET funds for offsetting identified impacts should be explored.
2. Traffic Study: CBS should request that ADOT perform a system-wide traffic study and that it be performed during the summer months. This will be critical data to support ADOT improvements in the future and can also be utilized by CBS in support of planning and grant application efforts.
3. Permitting Strategy: Across the board, CBS permitting procedures are disparate across departments, complex, and underdeveloped. Tourism adds pressure to permitting needs including transportation, vending, parking, and guiding services. Harrigan requires the most immediate attention, but all permitting would benefit from a comprehensive review/strategy.