

Economic Goal

Increase year round employment and population in Sitka by:

Supporting local businesses, attracting new sustainable businesses, supporting efforts and enterprises to keep residents money “local”.

Objective 1- Maintain Sitka’s Vibrant Downtown

1. Create visitor-friendly walking routes and public spaces.
2. Invest in iconic features, outdoor attractions and service sectors.
3. Require window front displays in off season if downtown store is not open.
4. Encourage revitalization and redevelopment of dilapidated structures and/or vacant lots.
5. The City will monitor parking needs for commercial uses and set requirements at the lowest level to meet the community needs.

Objective 2 – Leverage Natural Resources

1. Manage city-owned waterfront to the best strategic advantage.
2. Leverage assets to create jobs and investments.
3. Structure utility rates to incentivize high-using businesses of electricity and clean water to Sitka.
4. Support heating conversions from fuel oil to electric heat.
5. Install electric vehicle charging stations in municipal parking lots.
6. Encourage public and private sector vehicle fleets to convert to electric.
7. The City will limit the amount of residential development in the commercial, industrial and waterfront zones to preserve economic lands for economic uses.
8. Support mariculture research and production.

Objective 3 – Develop Sitka’s Workforce

1. Participate in career technical training and mentoring opportunities.
2. Advocate for faster, more reliable cell and internet services.
3. Support local agricultural and food production business.
4. Strengthen collaboration between CBS, SEDA, Chamber of Commerce, Sitka Tribe of Alaska and other entities working on economic development and business initiatives.

Objective 4 – Promote Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Partnerships

1. Encourage local creativity and entrepreneurship.
2. Support public-private partnerships to achieve economic objectives and business growth.
3. Participate in small business and entrepreneurship networking, events and education.
4. Encourage sharing economy among individuals, businesses, non-profits and government.

5. Develop partnerships to conduct regional freight study and identify initiatives to lower rates such as cost sharing, back haul, and coordination amongst users.
6. Use a Triple Bottom Line approach to prioritizing projects, permitting and land sales. Seek a balance among economic, social-cultural and environmental attributes and return.

Objective 5 – Maintain Essential Infrastructure

1. The Sitka Airport is one of the City’s highest-value economic development assets and essential to almost every business in town. Work to modernize and expand services at the airport.
2. Plan and position airport uplands to become regional hub for passenger and freight services.
3. Maintain well-functioning infrastructure upon which commerce and economic activity depend.

Objective 6 – Support and grow existing businesses

Prosperous Fishing Fleet

- Leverage Sitka’s marine environment to best advantage for commercial fishing at a variety of scales.
- Provide a range of services to support commercial fishing.
- Develop a Marine Center at Gary Paxton Industrial Park to support the fishing fleet.
- Maintain healthy harbors.

Enhance Tourism

- Grow Sitka’s independent and cruise-related tourism work and enterprises.
- Minimize negative impacts to tourism.
- Market newly renovated Harrigan Centennial Hall nationwide for conferences and conventions.

Manufacturing

- Facilitate discussion on local manufacturing of small homes and/or cabins.
- Support general ship building and vessel construction enterprises.

Arts, Culture and History

- Respect intrinsic value of mix of Tlingit, Russian and Alaskan history. Diversity creates economic opportunities.
- Explore policies, programs and design guidelines that protect historical sites and local character.
- Support arts in bringing in community resources and driving economic activities.

Health Care

- Preserve and increase the healthcare workforce.
- Leverage Sitka’s position as a regional healthcare leader by focusing on efficiencies, filling specialty care gaps and preparing for increasing senior population.

- Expand availability of assisted living and long-term care in Sitka.

Education

- Increase use of Sitka's significant educational campuses, facilities, faculty, assets and programs that enrich our community.
- Support ocean related research opportunities and programs.

Objective 7 – Respond effectively to changes in the Economic Climate

1. Monitor economic conditions, remaining flexible, adaptable and resilient.
2. Minimize debt.
3. Foster a positive business climate through consistent regulatory, permitting and taxing.