

## **2007 Sitka Comprehensive Plan's**

### **Recreation – Oriented Goals and Policies, organized by topic**

#### General

2.13.1. To preserve and continue to enhance the quality of life by maintaining and expanding recreational opportunities for all residents along the existing road system, along trail systems, and in the outlying areas.

2.13.2 Enhance the attractiveness of Sitka as a visitor destination by providing a broad range of recreational opportunities. Encourage viewing recreational enhancements as economic development for the visitor industry.

2.13.3. Provide better and safer Sitka bicycle facilities for both transportation and recreational riders; to reduce bicycle/pedestrian/motorist conflicts; to remove physical barriers and meet ADA accessibility standards; and to provide a more viable alternative to motorized transportation.

2.13.4. In recognition of the fact that the current parks and recreation plan was drafted in 1991 and that there have been major changes in the municipality, the parks and recreation plan should be updated as resources follow.

2.13.5. The development of parks and recreation facilities should be based on a comprehensive system, which plans for their orderly development.

2.13.6. To improve Municipal, State, and Federal agency efforts to maintain existing recreation facilities, both indoor and outdoor and to conduct recreation planning. The objectives of a maintenance program are to keep the sites safe, well landscaped and useable.

2.13.7. To maintain a staff person to oversee and be an advocate for Parks and Recreation matters.

2.13.8. Community schools are outstanding recreation resource and should be supported to insure maximum use, as follows:

- A. School facilities should be open to the public year-around, and funding to do so should be a top priority.
- B. Coordination should continue among Community Schools, University of Alaska Southeast, and Sheldon Jackson College.
- C. Programs should be designed to accommodate the interests of all age levels.

2.13.9.

2.13.10. To utilize reclaimed landfill areas for recreation facilities, and:

- A. Continue to develop additional fields for general recreation use.
- B. Continue to develop the Granite Creek overburden site for recreation and support the existing uses.

2.13.11. New facilities should be developed and existing facilities modified wherever feasible to provide access to persons with disabilities.

#### Access to Recreational Opportunities

2.13.14. To support interagency cooperation to provide the public with more saltwater and freshwater access, including facilities such as shore-side picnic areas, shelters and parks, especially near harbors and other public facilities; boat launch ramps; and log haul out/cutting sites located away from boat harbors or boat ramps.

- A. Work toward developing additional shore-side recreation facilities and improve access and recreational use of Swan Lake.

2.13.15. To encourage that regional recreation systems be centered around the urban area. Various trails, cabins, shelters and moorings exist within the Borough. The local trail loops, cabins and marine parks should be constructed first and then expanded into a regional recreation system.

2.13.16. To support the maintenance and expansion of recreational opportunities on Harbor Mountain by the U.S. Forest Service.

2.13.17. Work toward providing secure kayak racks, safe and readily accessible saltwater access, and gear storage facilities at key launch/landing sites.

#### Greenspace and Landscaping

The City & Borough of Sitka is dedicated to managing, maintaining, and preserving public trees by informing the community, protecting and expanding the public tree resource, using proper arboriculture practices, and engaging partners to ensure the long term safety, health, viability, and aesthetic quality of public trees.

2.13.41. To create and maintain a program of urban landscaping which includes:

- A. Landscaping for all public facilities.
- B. A street greenery program, especially in the Central Business District.

2.13.42. Support the Tree and Landscape Committee's implementation of a Community Forestry Program and the Sitka Landscape Plan

2.13.43. Provide information and guidance to the public about the benefits of trees and landscaping, about proper tree selection and pruning.

### Maintain cabins

2.13.20 Encourage and assure that cabins and shelters are checked often and maintenance provided if needed, to urge other agencies and groups to cooperate with the Forest Service to help with maintenance; and to provide assistance including funding, materials, transportation and labor.

### New cabins

2.13.18. To encourage the U.S. Forest Service to continue to identify needs and locations for future cabins and shelters. Criteria for new cabin construction should include: close proximity to Sitka; accessibility; a variety of recreational opportunities in the area; a nearby water source; with a priority for beach cabins on sites that are easily accessible by boat.

2.13.19. To give high priority to creation of “hike in” cabins or shelters, accessible from the road system.

### Trails & Hiking

2.13.26. To vigorously support the implementation of the 10 year 2003 Sitka Trail Plan and Memorandum of Understanding.

2.13.27. To cooperate, to the maximum extent possible, with the signing partners of the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan: Sitka Trail Works, Inc, USDA FS, NPS, Sitka Tribe of Alaska and the AKDPOR, in order to develop the proposed trail system and to achieve the Goals of the 2003 Plan as stated below.

- A. Set a clear direction for maintaining managing and promoting Sitka Trails,
- B. Create a prioritized trail construction and reconstruction plan,
- C. Provide diversified recreational opportunities, for pedestrians, bicyclists, skiers, snowmobile and 4 wheelers, and person with disabilities, throughout the Sitka Trail system,
- D. Pursue trail construction and maintenance coordinated with the local non-profit Sitka Trail Works, Inc., and state and federal agencies,
- E. Develop an annual action plan to accomplish these goals through the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan MOU process
- F. Promote public awareness of the cultural and natural wonders accessible from the Sitka trail system.

2.13.28. To give as much support, and assistance possible to the development and implementation of trail projects on which the City and Borough of Sitka is the lead agency, as listed on pages 6 and 7 of the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan. They are:

- A. Sawmill Creek Road Improvements
- B. Sitka Cross Trail Extensions:
  - Indian River to Starrigavan
  - Indian River to Thimbleberry Lake
- C. Indian River Trail Connection (Sawmill Creek to Indian River Trailhead)
- D. D. Japonski Island Pathway

E. Sitka Harbors Kayak Improvements

2.13.29.To work toward developing an on-going trail maintenance program on Borough lands and public easements to maintain, repair, clean and improve the area trails in cooperation with Sitka Trail Works and the other state, tribal and federal agencies that are partners to the Sitka Trail Plan.

2.13.30.To support the involvement of community volunteers in trail maintenance activities with Sitka Trail Works and the Adopt-A- Trail program.

2.13.31.To participate and support the SEATrails program which promotes and makes trails available region-wide to travelers on the Alaska Marine Highway System and seeks to improve the quality of experience for the hiking visitors.

2.13.32.To support efforts to secure trail funding through resolutions and letters of support to federal, state and private funding entities.

2.13.33.To develop, where appropriate, a system of user fees for commercial operators utilizing the trail system and to dedicate these fees to trail maintenance costs.

2.13.34.To recognize and support the unique role of Sitka Trail Works, Inc, a local non-profit membership organization, acting on behalf of local residents that support of the development of the trail system and dedicated to the implementation of the Sitka Trail Plan.

2.13.16.To support the maintenance and expansion of recreational opportunities on Harbor Mountain by the U.S. Forest Service.

2.13.36. To support the maintenance of the facilities created in Starrigavan Development (STARR) Cooperative Project of the U.S.Forest Service and Alaska State Parks. This trail has significantly increased hiking and other recreational opportunities in the scenic Starrigavan area.

ATVS

2.13.35. Explore the need for one or more trails suitable for ATVs (all terrain off road vehicles). The Forest Service is encouraged to continue its cooperative efforts with ATV riders to develop and to expand the ATV trail in upper Starrigavan Valley.

Road system 1<sup>st</sup>, then regional

2.13.15.To encourage that regional recreation systems be centered around the urban area. Various trails, cabins, shelters and moorings exist within the Borough. The local trail loops, cabins and marine parks should be constructed first and then expanded into a regional recreation system.

### Camping

2.13.22.To establish a fee-based overnight campground within walking distance of downtown Sitka.

2.13.23.To support the Forest Service's maintenance of Starrigavan and the maintenance and renovation of Sawmill Creek Campground.

2.13.24. Identify a site for and support the development of a fee-based, hike-in, tent camping area close to town.

### Marine Parks

2.13.25.To encourage that Alaska State Marine parks designated within the City and Borough of Sitka, Magoun Islands/Port Krestof, Sea Lion Cove and Big Bear/Baby Bear Bays, be maintained for future recreational use. Both sites have numerous anchorages and campsite areas and are heavily used for fishing, hiking, hunting, kayaking, camping, beach combing, photography, wildlife viewing, and scuba diving.

### Organized Recreation and Team Sports

2.13.48. To support organized sports activities offered through non-profit organizations, parent-run clubs, and Community Schools.

This support can be demonstrated by continuing to maintain and develop ballfields, park areas, and indoor facilities.

2.13.49. Encourage and assist in the development of a broad array of youth recreational activities, programs and facilities.

2.13.50. To identify specific programs in an updated recreation and parks community needs assessment including specific consideration for family activities, and teen and youth activities.

2.13.51. To develop Municipal Park Use policies considering and/or coordinating use of ballfields, tennis courts, golf, parks for picnics, ATVs, etc., to enable better use of existing outdoor facilities and to improve outdoor facility scheduling.

2.13.52. Increase and improve recreational options for youth by constructing a concrete skate park.

2.13.53. To maintain the municipally owned rifle range as well as access to the range by the Nelson Logging Road in recognition of the important role that gun use plays in Sitka for shooting sports, recreation and subsistence hunting, and bear protection. The Sitka Sportsmen's indoor pistol/rifle/archery range and trap shooting facility should also be supported.

### Visitor Industry

2.13.54. To enhance the visitor experience in Sitka by providing conveniences and information and by improving the scenic qualities of the townscape, as follows:

- A. Support efforts to clean up and landscape publicly owned portions of the downtown area. This includes lawns, landscaped areas and street trees.
- B.
- C. Mark crosswalks near the bridge and in the Castle Hill area.
- D. Provide additional benches throughout the downtown area, especially in the vicinity of the cruise ship docks.
- E. Landscape the areas along the side and back of the Harrigan Centennial Hall and improve the appearance of the area around the canoe.
- F. Install more signs marking historic sites and public services. An attempt should be made to develop signs using symbols that are internationally recognized.
- G. Encourage the development of recreation facilities, which provide opportunities for older visitors.
- H. Support the development and maintenance of recreation vehicle facilities for visitors, both public (e.g., Sealing Cove) and private (e.g., Sitka Sportsmen RV Park).
- I. Encourage the development and upgrade pedestrian facilities to accommodate potential increase in visitor numbers. Continue to advocate for a pedestrian walkway under the bridge and along the waterfront.
- J. Establish a mechanism for soliciting donations from the visitor industry that would be dedicated to the construction and maintenance of facilities used by visitors.
- K. Support and promote Sitka's Native culture in efforts to market the community.

### Winter Sports

2.13.55. To address the unmet need for winter sports opportunities in Sitka. The following are some which should be actively supported and developed where feasible: cross-country skiing trails (including marking existing trails), ice skating (including development of a multipurpose facility), sledding, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

2.13.56. Work toward the development of a facility to permit safe enjoyment of sledding and other snow sports.

### MULTI-NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS / PARKS AND GREEN SPACE IN MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

2.13.46. Encourage developers to dedicate land for a local multi-neighborhood play park during the development and planning of major subdivisions if there is an unmet need for this type of park in the vicinity of the major subdivision.

A. The City will, when feasible, take over ownership and management of sites designated for a multi-neighborhood play park if the proposed site meets all criteria for a multi-neighborhood park.

B.

C. Investigate funding mechanisms for the development of a multi-neighborhood play area.

2.13.47. Developers of major subdivisions are strongly urged to dedicate land to green space.

- A. Green space is undeveloped land, unsuitable for use as a multi-neighborhood park. Green space is principally accessible to and used by residents of a major subdivision.
- B. The City, when feasible, will take over ownership of raw land in major subdivisions, but upon conveyance is not obliged to develop it further. If the green space meets the criteria established in section 21.13.44 for use as a multi-neighborhood park, further development by the City will be considered.
- C. Major subdivisions need to show proposed green space for consideration at the time of preliminary plat submission to the Planning Commission.
- D. Options for funding the acquisition and development of green space that serves a single neighborhood or provides restricted access to the general public, needs to be determined but it follows that these costs should be borne by the residents of the major subdivision.
- E. Developers of major subdivisions are strongly encouraged to leave undeveloped green corridors, in particular along major drainages, to ensure continued access to the public uplands.

## **2007 Sitka Comprehensive Plan's Historical and Cultural Facilities Goals and Policies**

2.13.37. To preserve and appreciate Sitka's heritage. Sites or structures having significant historic or cultural value should be preserved.

A. Support the reuse of the Japonski Island Boathouse as a WWII and Maritime History Interpretive Center.

2.13.38. To support the management of the Japonski Island Causeway as follows:

- A. Undertake efforts with the managing agencies to have this area retained in the public domain, the long-term objective being the creation of a WWII Memorial Park.
- B. Work with the appropriate agencies to obtain funding for improved boat access.

2.13.39. To produce a long range and coordinated plan for development of the historic downtown area of Sitka. The Sitka Historic Preservation Commission should be consulted on all issues effecting preservation and enhancement of the unique character of downtown Sitka to the extent feasible.

2.13.40. To exercise additional management responsibility and devote more resources to the upkeep of facilities at Goddard Hot Springs and Baranof Warm Springs.

## **2007 Sitka Comprehensive Plan's Arts and Culture Goals and Policies**

Recognize, respect, and appreciate that Sitka's arts, culture, and history is:

- A. Diverse in its ethnic, religious, and racial makeup
- B. Highly valued and essential to defining Sitka and local quality of life
- C. Integral to the economic base of the community

To preserve and appreciate Sitka's heritage. Sites or structures having significant historic or cultural value should be preserved.

2.12.2. A. To maintain and develop ongoing programs devoted to supporting Sitka's artists, students, educators, historians and Native elders in both the development and preservation of their important work.

B. To maintain and develop ongoing programs in which Sitka's artists and culture bearers are available to teach and share their work with community members of all ages.

2.12.3. To continue support of the Arts in the following ways:

- A. By identifying and creating an active list of programs which enrich the cultural life of Sitka, and making this list available to the public.
- B. In the planning stages of all City projects and projects needing city approval, assure that considerations are given to aesthetics, cultural issues, historic values, landscaping and public art.
- C. Assure protection and enhancement of historic places including, but not limited to, cemeteries, historic buildings, landmarks, and public art.
- D. By supporting the creation of an Arts and Culture coordinator in Sitka, whose job it would be to help develop cultural opportunities as well as assisting with the scheduling of public spaces.

2.12.4. To follow all relevant laws pertaining to:

- A. Art in public places.
- B. Cultural resources and archaeological surveys in response to federal and state.

2.12.5. To provide facilities for arts and culture through:

- A. The development of community buildings which would include facilities for theater, concerts, dance, art exhibition, workshops, classrooms as well as facilities for archiving and storing artifacts and historical documents.
- B. The establishment of an appropriate home for the local history museum. C. To support the maintenance and the staffing of such facilities.

2.12.6. In matters regarding arts and culture issues, the Borough shall consult with appropriate organizations such as:

- A. Sitka Historical Society/Isabelle Miller Museum.
- B. The Greater Sitka Arts Council.
- C. Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center.



- D. Sitka Tribe of Alaska.
- E. Sitka Historic Preservation Commission.
- F. National Park Service.
- G. Sheldon Jackson Museum.
- H. Sitka Community Schools.
- I. Alaska Arts Southeast.

2.12.7. Require that a percentage of each public capital project be set aside for art. (e.g. 1% of the project for artwork)

2.12.8. Sitka Native Education Program