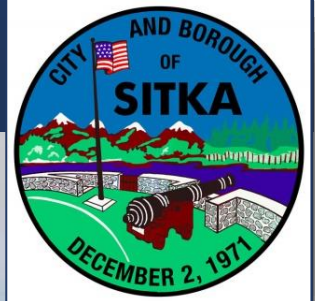


Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030



Technical Plan

Public Hearing Draft
April 4, 2018

Insert Assembly Adopting Ordinance

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Historic Preservation Commission	Police and Fire Commission
Library Commission	Port and Harbors Commission
Local Emergency Planning Commission	

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Apologies to anyone inadvertently omitted.

Cover photo: The morning light touching the Three Sisters, K. Perkins

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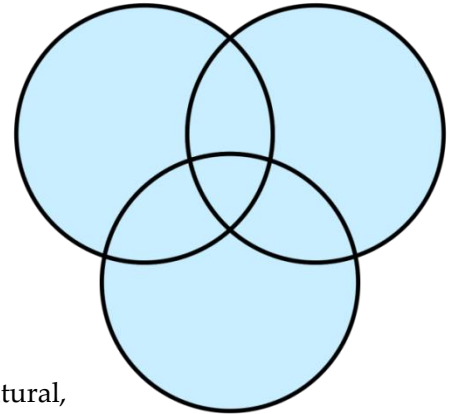
1 Vision

In early 2016 residents used these words to describe Sitka: Home, Community, Tlingit, Beautiful, Close-knit, Unique, Independent, Incredible, Historical, Coastal, Complex, and Vibrant.

Residents also offered ideas during several Comprehensive Plan meetings on their Vision for Sitka's Future. This included identifying Sitka's assets, strengths, and challenges.



Sitkans' words and ideas are pulled together in the Sitka Vision below.

The vision is organized around three types of capital – natural, social-cultural, and economic. Together these three kinds of capital make a “Triple Bottom Line” that Sitka considered as it prepared the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030.







Sitka's Vision for 2030





Natural Capital

-  We live in southern Southeast Alaska on forested land nestled between mountains and ocean.
-  Sitka's natural beauty is profound and enjoyed daily.

Social-Cultural Capital

-  We are proud of Sitka's diverse culture and history; we work hard to understand each other and build a common future.
-  Being isolated teaches both self-reliance and reliance upon each other.
-  We value a community that is affordable, equitable, and fair for all.
-  We have a range of housing for our diverse population including safe and attractive manufactured home parks, apartments and small houses, and dream homes with ocean views.

Economic Capital

-  We are creative and entrepreneurial; we continue to build businesses that take advantage of the bounty offered by Sitka's natural assets – the sea, forest, water, soils, rock, views, and more.
-  Our economy is diversified. Our fisheries, boat building and repair, maritime manufacturing and transportation, visitor-oriented, health care, science, and arts and cultural businesses and non-profits provide services and experiences to the region and beyond.
-  We have a wide variety of industries offering jobs for every skill level.
-  Well-developed community infrastructure and facilities are used and enjoyed by all; work to maintain them is another cornerstone of our economy.

2 Introduction

Shee Atika was first settled by the Tlingit people approximately 10,000 years ago. Shee Atika can be translated to mean “people of the village on the outside of Shee,” or “people of the forest trees outside of Shee.” Sitka is derived from this original name.

Sitka is located in Southeast Alaska on the west coast of Baranof Island fronting the Pacific Ocean, on Sitka Sound. Sitka is one of only two communities in Southeast Alaska that directly faces the Pacific Ocean and Gulf of Alaska.

Sitka was incorporated as a second-class city in 1913 and then in 1920 as a first-class city. The Greater Sitka Borough was incorporated on September 24, 1963. Unification of the City and Borough to a Home Rule Municipality called the City and Borough of Sitka occurred on December 2, 1971. The borough encompasses approximately 4,812 square miles (2,874 sq. mi. land and 1,938 sq. mi. water). There are more than 1,300 miles of coastline within the City and Borough of Sitka.

Land-wise, Sitka is the largest city in the United States.

Most of the land within the City and Borough of Sitka is part of the Tongass National Forest and is managed by the United States Forest Service.

2.1 Plan Purpose and Use

The purpose of the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 is to guide growth over the next 10 to 20 years.

There are two documents that together comprise the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030:

1. The *Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030* lists all Goals, Objectives, and Actions in one chapter for easy review. It also summarizes key data, offers abbreviated versions of issues and challenges to address, and has the Plan’s Future Growth Maps and narrative.
2. The *Technical Plan* includes all plan data, references, sources, maps, and a detailed review of background and contextual material as well as issues and challenges to address. Each chapter includes that topic’s Goals, Objectives, and Actions.

The Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030:

- Describes current conditions
- Reviews challenges and opportunities to address
- Uses the challenges and opportunities to:
 - ✓ Establish broad Goals that set overall direction
 - ✓ Identify specific Objectives, which are the policies to achieve over time, and

*Planning, planning why?
We must think to the Future,
And love today now!*

**Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030
Haiku Contest Winner
Brinnen Carter**

- ✓ Set out Actions to chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.
- ✓ Develop Future Growth Maps and 14 specific Focus Areas to guide future growth, development, and zoning.

The Goals, Objectives, and Actions are found at the end of each chapter.

Comprehensive Plans are the legal basis for zoning¹. Comprehensive Plans are big picture in nature and cover a breadth of topics and issues. It is not unusual after a Comprehensive Plan is done for the community to adopt zoning and other code and regulatory changes to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Topics covered in the Comprehensive Plan include Sitka's people and history; Sitka's physical environment; economic development; housing; historical, cultural and arts resources; borough facilities and services; transportation; parks, trails, and recreation; and current land use and future growth.

This plan focuses on actions that the City and Borough of Sitka can take. However, accomplishing the vision and doing the work outlined will take more than just the efforts of the City and Borough of Sitka Assembly, Planning Commission, and staff. In order for the objectives and actions in this plan to happen, it will require action and help from Sitka residents, land and business owners, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, state and federal agencies, and many Sitka civic groups.

The actions in this plan will take many years to accomplish, but do chart a path to a desired future. Key is determining the community's top or strategic priorities for action every year or two, and then staying the course.

Some of the ways to use the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 are:

1. Review of proposed development projects, issuing local permits, and updating Sitka municipal codes and zoning maps.
2. Set annual priorities.
3. Provide guidance when making day-to-day decisions to help ensure development moves forward on a consistent path.
4. Support grant applications and legislative requests.
5. Help prepare comments and conditions for development plans and permits on proposed municipal, state, federal, and private actions and projects.

2.2 Public Participation Shapes Comprehensive Plan

The City and Borough of Sitka Planning Commission served as the steering committee to oversee development of the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030. They were assisted by municipal staff and by the organizations and individuals who attended meetings, offered comments, and provided

¹ According to AS 29.40.040, a municipality must have a comprehensive plan in place (legally adopted by ordinance) before it adopts land use regulations such as zoning and land use permits. In the Lazy Mountain Land Club v. Matanuska Susitna Borough court case, the Alaska Supreme Court made it clear that before a municipality may implement zoning regulations, it must have a comprehensive plan.

information during plan development. Work on the plan occurred from December 2015 through final Assembly adoption in April 2018.

Public Participation Plan

A sign of the commitment to a varied and diverse process to engage the public in plan development, the Public Participation Plan was prepared to kick-off plan development.

Public participation goals for the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 were to:

- Provide information to assist the public in understanding what a Comprehensive Plan is and why we need one
- Seek early and continuous involvement of the public
- Offer opportunities for the public to provide feedback to staff and elected officials
- Make the process accessible and engaging to the public
- Support community-driven planning
- Use a flexible, phased approach
- Incorporate/consolidate relevant visions, goals, and policies from the existing Comprehensive Plan
- Ensure that Public Participation focus on collaborating with people of diverse opinions
- Involve young people
- Place equal emphasis on both public meetings and internet-based interaction
- Be enthusiastic, engaging, and vibrant

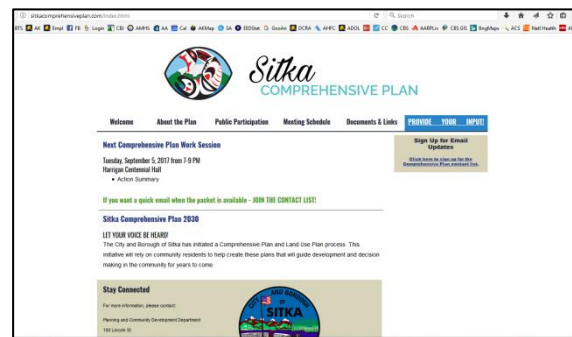


Logo Contest

Another element to kick off the project, personalize it for Sitka, and get creative, was to host a Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 logo contest. The winning logo submission was selected in early 2016.

Project Website

A Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 website – www.sitkacomprehensiveplan.com – was established to provide an easy one-stop site to follow the process, download packets and minutes, and provide comments to support the Comprehensive Plan.



S-Map

S-map is an online mapping tool that allows citizens to show, on a map, where they have experienced or observed land use, transportation, infrastructure, or other matters that need fixing, caused a problem, or are working well. S-map was introduced and offered a few times during plan development. Over 150 comments were entered for consideration and 73 specific locations garnered input.

E-updates, Notices, and Newsletters

Approximately 260 individuals signed up to receive regular project e-updates.

All interested in following progress on the Comprehensive Plan, getting brief reports, and hearing about upcoming meetings were encouraged to sign an online contact list. All who attended meetings were added to the list as well. Constant Contact was used to provide regular notice and updates.

Notices and e-updates were sent to those on the list beginning in 2016 on August 30, September 22, October 26, November 3, November 7, and December 19; and in 2017 on February 4, March 3, April 3, April 4, May 17, June 2, June 7, August 1, August 24, September 1, and December 29.

OPEN HOUSE RESULTS

- Actions, in Priority Order
- How you Spent \$100 City Bucks
- draft Vision Statement

Download the results above [HERE](#)

The Planning Commission will discuss the results above + more at their January 3rd Meeting, 7:00 pm, Harrigan Centennial Hall. **JOIN US!**



**HAVE COMMENTS ON THE PRIORITIZED ACTIONS?**

(or anything else on the developing Sitka 2030 Comprehensive Plan)

Bring your Ideas and Comments to the January 3rd Meeting (or submit them in writing [HERE](#)).

There will be time for public comment!

MEETINGS IN A BOX!

Prefer to offer your comments in a less formal setting?

Who should do Meeting in a Box?
"GROUPS" - that's who!

- This could be your neighborhood, your church group, a non-profit you belong to does during its next meeting, your business, your yoga class, your coffee klatch...and so on...

Pick up a **Meeting in a Box** starting January 4th at City Hall, 1st floor - Planning+Community Development Dept.



Meetings in a Box

Planning staff created “Meetings in a Box” kits as another public involvement opportunity for groups of Sitka residents to gather at a time and place convenient for them to provide individual and group comments on topics such as strengths and assets to build upon as part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, challenges to address in the Comprehensive Plan, and solutions to challenges. This valuable input was integrated into the development of plan chapters and objectives and actions.

The following 10 groups met to complete Meetings in a Box:

1. 20-30 year-old long-time Sitka residents
2. Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce
3. Health Needs Human Services Committee
4. Historic Preservation Commission
5. Local Emergency Planning Committee
6. Parks and Recreation Committee
7. Police and Fire Commission
8. Sitka Conservation Society
9. Unitarians Universalist Fellowship
10. Women Educator’s Society



Social Media (Facebook)

Comprehensive Plan meeting notices were posted on the City and Borough of Sitka Facebook page, and some were shared on Sitka Chatters and other local Facebook sites.

Open House - Community Meetings

A diverse set of activities and opportunities for comment on developing Comprehensive Plan topics, objectives, and actions took place at two well-attended Comprehensive Plan Community Open Houses – one on November 8, 2016, and the other on June 6, 2017.

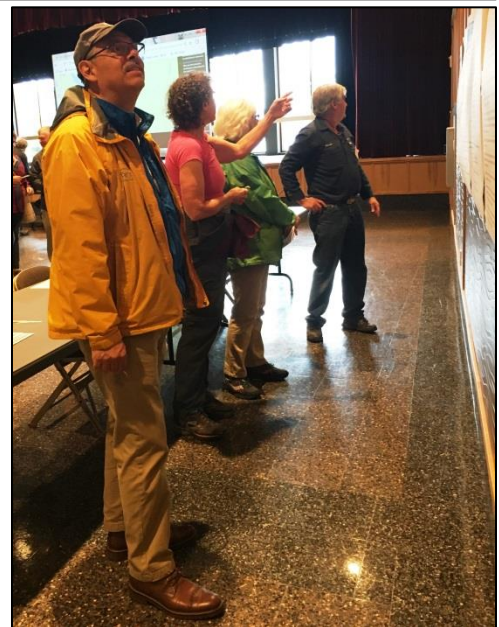
At both events, residents could drop by anytime between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. Both Open House drew 60-80 Sitkans apiece. Many participants at each meeting were new to the Comprehensive Plan process.

At the November 8, 2016, Open House, the topics and activities were:

- Housing Fair - Looking to Rent or Buy Something Affordable? All the Information You Need in One Place!
- How would you spend \$100 City Bucks on services?
- Review and draw on draft Future Growth Maps
- Vote for the Actions you favor for: Lane Use, Economic Development, and Housing
- Grab a Slice of Pizza + Visit with Your Neighbors

At the June 6, 2017, Open House, the topics and activities were:

- Vote for the Actions you favor for: Transportation, History, Culture + Arts, and Parks, Trails + Recreation
- Create a Planning-relevant Haiku with the winner getting a \$100 Gift Card
- Draw "Ideas for a Better Sitka" on an Idea Wall
- Get an "S-MAP" Intro and provide comments into S-Map on place-specific transportation or land use issues
- Get trained to help with a Bicyclist + Walker Count
- Grab a Slice of Pizza + Visit with Your Neighbors.



Meet with High School Students

In May 2016, Sitka Planning and Community Development staff met with the Sitka High School's Government class to gather the ideas and comments of young people. The activity was similar to the Meeting in a Box activity. Staff facilitated one class period consisting of approximately 30 students, and the teacher facilitated an additional three class periods.

Focus Group Discussions

Group discussions were held to discuss broad topics. Approximately 15-20 community members joined the conversations of interest.

1. August 4, 2016 – Transportation
2. August 4, 2016 - Housing
3. October 6, 2016 – Housing
4. July 25, 2017 – Food security
5. August 26, 2017 – Food security

*What is important
to the people of Sitka?
Who knows! Let us ask.*

Planning Commission Meetings/Work Sessions

Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030
Haiku Contest Runner-Up
Max Kritzer

There were 21 advertised Planning Commission meetings/work sessions as part of plan development. Most were at Harrigan Centennial Hall, but as an additional effort to reach citizens, advertised meetings also occurred at the ANB Hall, the Sheldon Jackson Campus, the Fire Hall, and the Swan Lake Senior Center.

Planning Commission meetings (and topics) were on:

1. March 8, 2018 – Approval of the draft Comprehensive Plan and Action Plan
2. January 11, 2018 – Review and discussion of draft Action Plan, Public Hearing
3. September 5, 2017 – Review and discussion of Public Process
4. August 1, 2017 - Review and discussion of Borough Facilities & Future Growth Maps
5. June 6, 2017 - Open House - Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources; Parks and Recreation; Transportation; S-Map; and training for the upcoming bike-pedestrian count
6. April 4, 2017 - Review and discussion of Transportation
7. March 7, 2017- Review and discussion of Parks and Recreation; and of Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources. Exercise to design a park for ages 8 to 80
8. February 7, 2017- Review and discussion of Housing, Land Use, Economics key issues and Goals, Objectives, and Policies
9. January 3, 2017 - Discussion of Open House Results
10. November 8, 2016 - Open House on Housing, the Economy, and Land Use, plus a Housing Fair
11. October 5, 2016 - Review and discussion of Housing
12. September 6, 2016 - Review and discussion of Sitka's Economy, exercise to identify economic goals and challenges
13. August 2, 2016 - Policy for CBS Land Management
14. June 7, 2016 - Policy for CBS Land Management, a mapping exercise
15. May 3, 2016 - Review and discussion of Current Land Inventory and Use, a Visioning exercise
16. April 5, 2016 - Review and discussion of Historical Land Use, a SWOT analysis
17. March 1, 2016 – Overview, process, schedule

18. February 2, 2016 – Marketing plan
19. February 16, 2016 – Marketing plan
20. January 19, 2016 – Scope, schedule, and public participation plans
21. January 5, 2016 – General presentation by staff
22. December 15, 2015 – General presentation by staff

Media Coverage

Daily Sitka Sentinel ran 15 stories on the Comprehensive Plan process, while KCAW Raven Radio ran six stories. (Figures as of September 1, 2017)

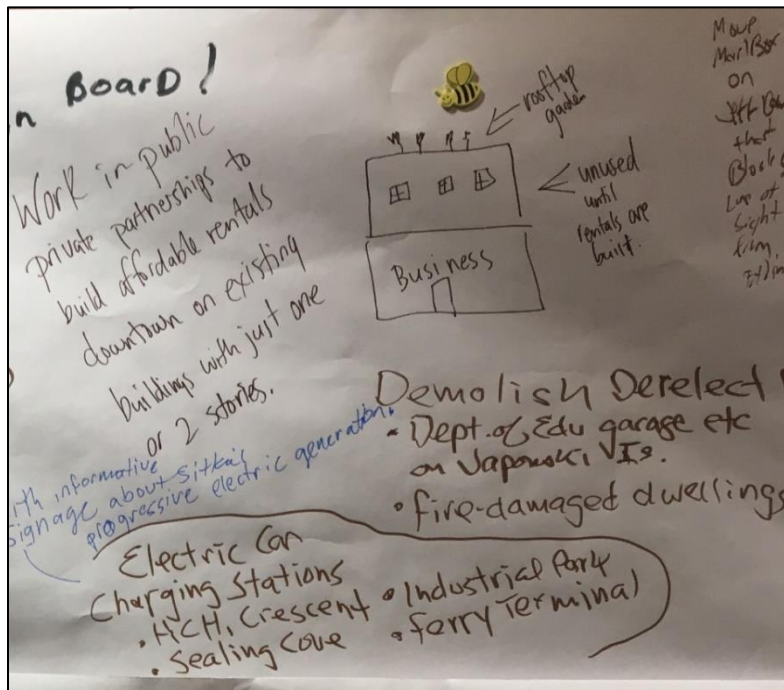
Land Use Code Audit

Through an EPA grant, Smart Growth America provided expert review and recommendation on Sitka's land use codes. Consulting personnel provided a presentation to the Assembly on September 12, 2017, and a full-day workshop on September 13, 2017.

Public Hearings

The Planning Commission recommended formal approval of the Comprehensive Plan and Action Plan at their April 3, 2018 meeting.

The City and Borough of Sitka Assembly considered the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 for adoption at their **April 10, 2018 and April 24, 2018** meetings. The plan was adopted by Ordinance **18-xx**.



Left: Comments written on an Idea Wall during one of the Town Meetings. Top: Author John Straley reviews planning-related haiku submissions after an Open House contest.

3 Community Profile

3.1 History

Shee Atika was first settled by the Tlingit people approximately 10,000 years ago. Shee Atika can be translated to mean “people of the village on the outside of Shee” or “people of the forest trees outside of Shee.” Sitka is derived from this original name.

The Tlingits are an indigenous people of the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America. Their language, Lingit, means “people of the tides.” The Tlingits are a matrilineal society that incorporates moieties of the Raven and Eagle. Clans were based upon a dynamic hunter-gatherer culture. Food not only was harvested or hunted from the natural environment, but methods of mariculture with clams and gardens for produce were also utilized before any settlers arrived and expanded with new crops from explorers. Tlingit society places a strong emphasis on family, kinship, art, spirituality, stewardship of the land and each other, and a rich oral tradition. The original settlements and cultural impacts are major influences in development and land use of Sitka today and for the future.

The Vitus Bering expedition led the Russians to occupy Shee Atika in 1741. Shee Atika was renamed Redoubt Saint Michael in 1799. Alexander Baranof (Baranov), manager of the Russian-American Company, built trading posts and forts. The Russian Czar required that all land patent holders plant vegetable gardens. In 1802, in a stand against Russian control, the Tlingits defended their people and village by burning down the Russian fort and attacking the warehouse. In 1804 the Russians returned with a large force to retaliate for these actions, in an action that would become known as the Battle of Sitka. During this battle, the Tlingits made another large stand against Russian Occupation.

The Russians emerged in control and reestablished New Archangel as the permanent settlement named after Arkhangelsk, a large city where Alexander Baranof was born. With Baranov as its governor, Sitka was declared the capital of Russian America in 1808. Sitka became a major trading port on the North Pacific Coast. Some called it the Paris of the Pacific. Furs were exported to European and Asian markets. Salmon, ice, and timber were exported to western lands such as Hawaii, California, and Mexico. At this time there were Russian forts, buildings, customs, culture, arts, and practices. Also, the first American Pacific Coast boatyard, sawmill, flour mill, and brass and bronze foundries were pioneered in Sitka.

At this time, the Tlingit reestablished their village at the Chatham Strait side of Peril Strait.

The Russian Bishop Innocent came to Sitka in 1840. His home, the Bishop’s House, is still an important historical landmark that has been restored and protected by the Sitka National Historical Park and the National Park Service. Also during 1840, the first Pacific Coast Lutheran Church was built in Sitka. In 1848, the Cathedral of Saint Michael became the seat of the Bishop of Kamchatka, the Kurile and Aleutian Islands, and Alaska for the Russian Orthodox Church. The Original Church burned down in 1966, but was restored to nearly its original appearance. Saint Peter’s by the Sea Episcopal Church was consecrated in 1900 as the Cathedral of Alaska. The development of other

Protestant churches would occur after the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867. Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary, started a Sheldon Jackson College in 1878, which is the oldest institution of higher learning in Alaska. Jackson also began one of the original canneries. The Alaska Purchase and ceremonial transfer of power occurred on October 18, 1867, after Russia lost the Crimean War and was concerned about Britain taking control. U.S. Secretary of State William Seward pursued the purchase as part of the Manifest Destiny to have the United States reach the Pacific Ocean. The purchase price was \$7.2 million. In 1949, Alaska Day was inaugurated to celebrate this event.

In 1891, Dr. Sheldon Jackson lobbied Congress to begin a farm in Sitka. After Congress' action in 1897, the U.S. Department of Agriculture began operating experimental farms in 1898. Led by horticulturalist Charles Georgeson, some notable experiments included the creation of the hybrid Sitka Strawberry and crops of potatoes grown with seaweed as fertilizer.

The early 1900s were an important and active time for Sitka. Sitka would remain the capital of the territory until 1906 when it was moved to Juneau. During the early 1900s, gold and mines led to growth.

In 1912, the Alaska Native Brotherhood was founded in Sitka in order to fight discrimination. In 1914, construction of the first Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall occurred on Katlian Avenue.

Sitka was incorporated as a second-class city in 1913, and in 1921 Sitka re-incorporated as a first-class city.

In the early 1920s, a strong Filipino community was established. It later became institutionalized as the Filipino Community of Sitka in 1981.

World War II led to additional growth and development as the U.S. Navy built an air base and bunker systems on and around Japonski Island. This brought in 30,000 military personnel and 7,000 civilians. The federal government via its War Department exercised eminent domain and seized land from native and other peoples for the war effort. In 1937, the United States Navy established the first seaplane base in Alaska on Japonski Island. In 1941, construction began on Fort Ray, an army garrison to protect the naval air station. Both the Army and Navy remained in Sitka until the end of WWII, when the Army base was put into caretaker status. The Naval station in Sitka was deactivated in June 1944. Some of this land was returned to tribal, state, municipal, and private owners, while other lands remained in federal ownership. Mt. Edgecumbe High School later utilized these war buildings and converted them to use for their Alaska Native boarding school. The U.S. Coast Guard also utilized portions of the air station and other buildings for its facilities.

In 1956, the Alaska Pulp Company, a Japanese corporation, executed a contract with the U.S. Forest Service to harvest 5.3 million board feet of lumber. This facility was one of the most modern pulp mills of its time and led to a major local employment boost that affected the economy, housing, and environment of Sitka. At its peak, the mill employed approximately 450 people before closing in 1993.

The Greater Sitka Borough was incorporated on September 24, 1963. Unification of the City and Borough occurred through the Home Rule Charter of City and Borough of Sitka that was adopted on

December 2, 1971. The John O'Connell Bridge, the first cable-stayed vehicular bridge in the United States, was also completed in 1971 to connect Baranof and Japonski Islands.

Land Use Since Unification - Major Influential Factors, Land Use Maps, and Planning Documents

Pre-1970s

- City townsite held most of the residential and commercial development with exception of ALP mill at Sawmill Cove
- Sawmill Creek Road and Halibut Point Road were not fully developed and residential use was limited in those areas

1970s

- Sitka Indian Village Redevelopment Plan (1970)
- O'Connell Bridge completed in 1971
- Primary 1970 Map Allowed for Mix of Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Growth within most zones
- Secondary influence was strong community resistance to rezoning and desire for predictability
- 1976 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map
- Consistent residential expansion from City Center
- Mixture of Growth on Japonski Island and decrease of activity on military properties on Alice & Charcoal Island
- Residential Complexes on Biorka and Goddard Hot Springs were gone

1980s

- Residential growth along Sawmill Creek Road and Halibut Point Road continued
- Stick built mixed with trailers along waterfront
- Increase in permanent homes on Islands
- Post-bridge construction led to further utilization and development of Japonski Island

1990s

- Closure of Alaska Pulp Company Mill (1993)
- Various Community Comprehensive Plan Processes
- CBS Land Management Program
- 1999 Comprehensive Plan with Goals, Policies, and Land Map Recommendations
- Sitka became a Certified Local Government (historic preservation)

2000s

- Sawmill Cove Master Plan Document (2000)
- Long-term Waste Management Strategies (2001)
- Swan Lake Watershed and Storm Water Plans (2000 & 2002)
- Sawmill Cove Industrial Park Waterfront Development Plan (2002)
- Sitka Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2002)
- GIS Strategic Plan for CBS (2002)
- Indian River Corridor and Watershed Final Master Plan (2003)
- Japonski Island Infrastructure Master Plan (2003)
- Sitka Trail Plan (2003)
- Granite Creek Master Plan (2004)
- Sitka Airport Terminal Master Plan (2005)
- Sitka District Coastal Management Plan (2006-2007)
- 2007 Revision to Comprehensive Plan with Recommended Land Use Map

- Sheldon Jackson College ceased operation as college (2007)
- Sitka Visitor Industry Plan (2007)
- Sitka Housing Report (2007)

2010s

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation names Sitka as one of the “Dozen Distinctive Designations” (2010)
- Zero-lot Line Ordinance (2012)
- Zoning Map of Current Road System (2013)
- Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance (2013)
- Float Homes Ordinance (2014)
- Blue Lake Hydroelectric Expansion Project (2012-2015)
- Financial impacts related to decline of price of oil (2014-2015)
- August 18, 2015 landslides
- Old City Shops transferred to Sitka Community Development Corporation for Affordable Housing Project (2015)
- New Sitka Public Library Built and Opened (2014-2016)
- Licensed Marijuana Business Conditional Use Ordinance (2016)
- Short-term Rentals for Boats in Harbors Ordinance (2016)
- Centennial Hall Remodel (2015-2016)

3.2 Demographic, Migration, and Income Data

3.2.1 Demographics and Projections

Over the last 35 years Sitka’s population has gone up and down, but overall slowly increased. Compared to 1980, there are more than 1,100 more people living in Sitka (Figure 1).

Population peaked in 2014, at 9,084 residents. Then, between 2014 and 2015, the number of residents dropped by 160 to 8,920. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD), Sitka’s population was unchanged between 2015 and 2016.

Based on historic patterns of births, deaths, and in and out migrants to Sitka, ADOLWD is projecting that after a five-year period of steady population – which Sitka is in now – that the population will begin a slow, steady decline (Figure 2). Sitka’s projected population decline is based on two trends:

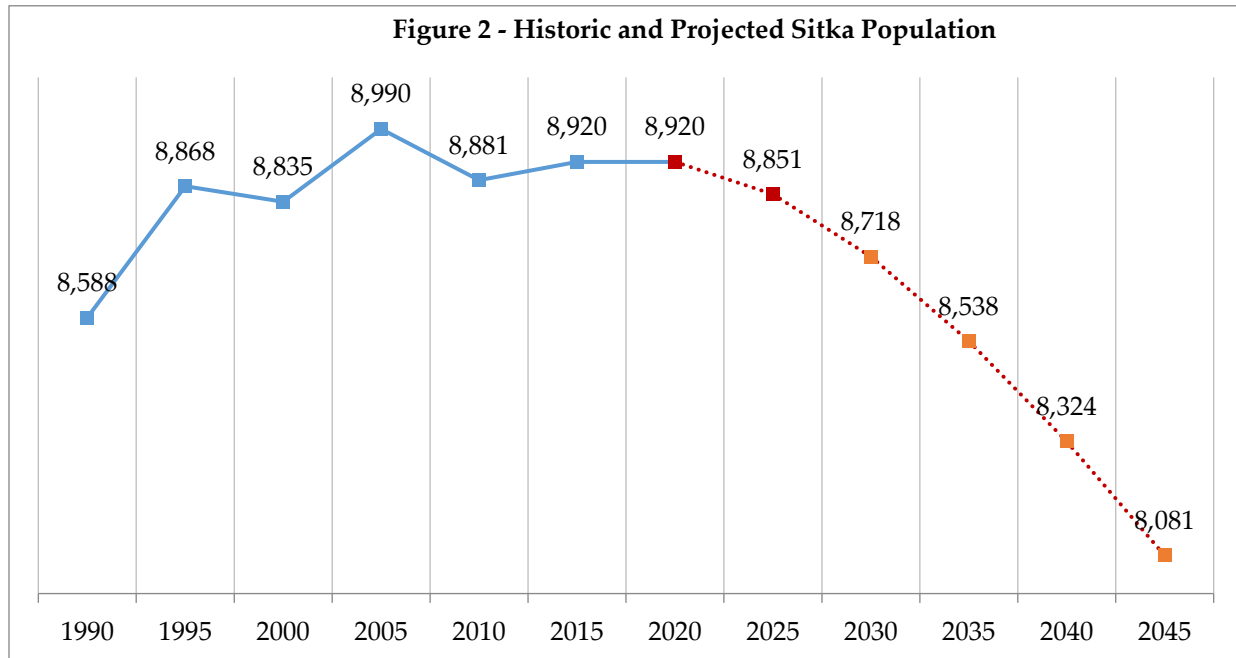
1. A shrinking number of child-bearing age residents and a growing number of older Sitkans, together resulting in more deaths than births in the future.

Figure 1 - Sitka Population

Year	Population
1980	7,803
1985	8,340
1990	8,588
1995	8,868
2000	8,835
2005	8,990
2006	9,043
2007	8,678
2008	8,698
2009	8,730
2010	8,881
2011	9,030
2012	9,068
2013	9,053
2014	9,084
2015	8,920
2016	8,920
Source: ADOLWD Population Estimates	

2. More people are moving away from rather than moving to Sitka.

Figure 2 – Historic and Projected Sitka Population



A closer look at Sitka's age groupings (cohorts) shows that (Figure 3):

1. The number of and percent of the total population who are in the common child-bearing age group from age 20 to 39 is shrinking and is projected to plummet.
 - There were 2,410 Sitkans in this age cohort in 2016; by 2030 Sitkans in this age are projected to drop by 338 people to 2,072; further decline is projected through 2045.
2. The number of and percent of the total population who are under age 19 is shrinking and projected to continue declining (Figure 4).
3. The number of Sitkans age 65 and older, and especially those age 80+, is projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years.
 - In July 2016, there were 1,285 Sitkans age 65 or older, comprising 14% of the total population. The ADOLWD projects that by 2030, this age cohort will peak when there will be just over 2,000 older Sitkans in town who will constitute 23% of the total population. This is almost a 60% increase in this age cohort compared to today.
 - And, those age 80 and older will increase even faster. This population, which often has high medical, care, and mobility needs, is projected to keep increasing through 2045 when it will have tripled compared to today, from 282 people in 2016 to just over 800 Sitkans at least age 80.

Figure 3 – Number and Percent of Each Sitka Age Group, Historic and Projected

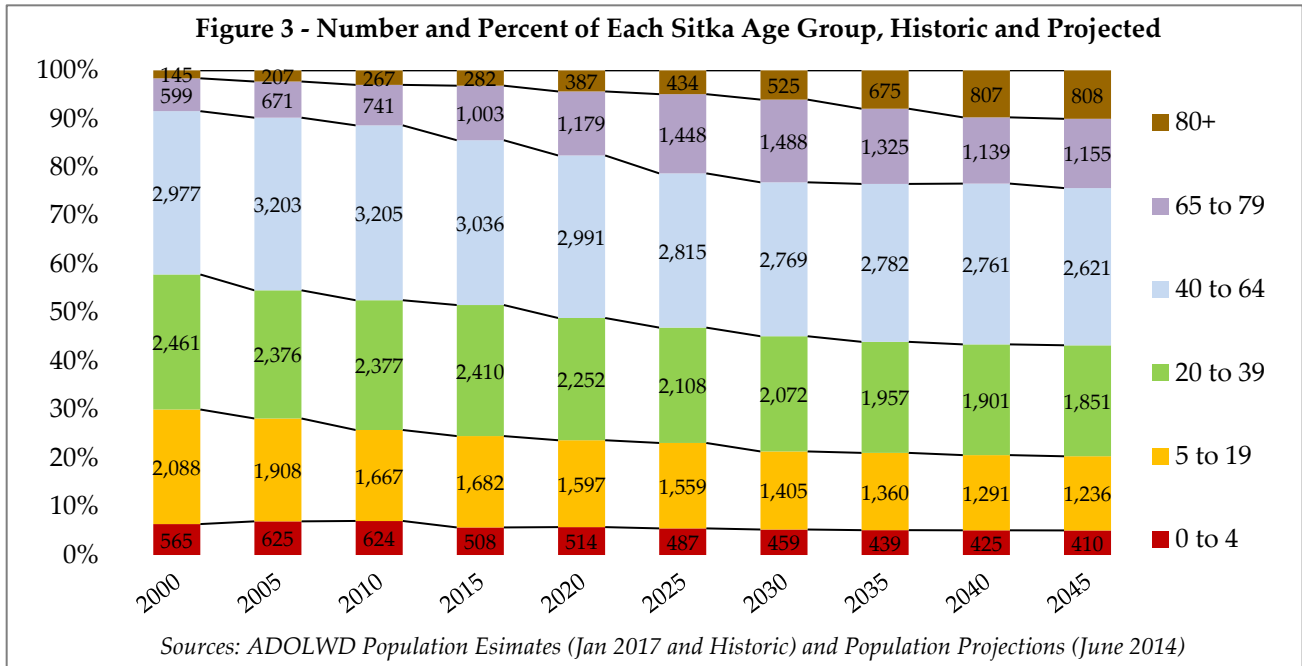
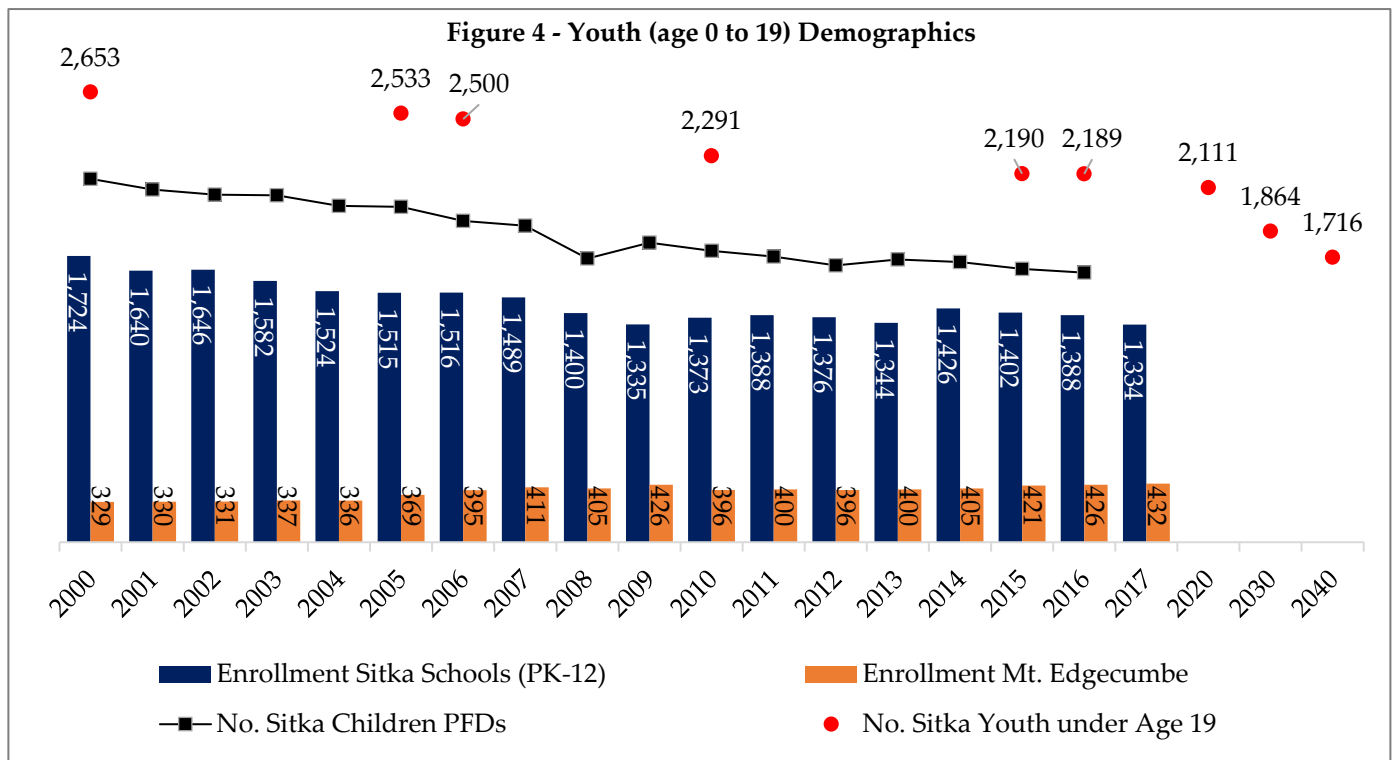


Figure 4 – Youth Demographics (Age 0 to 19)

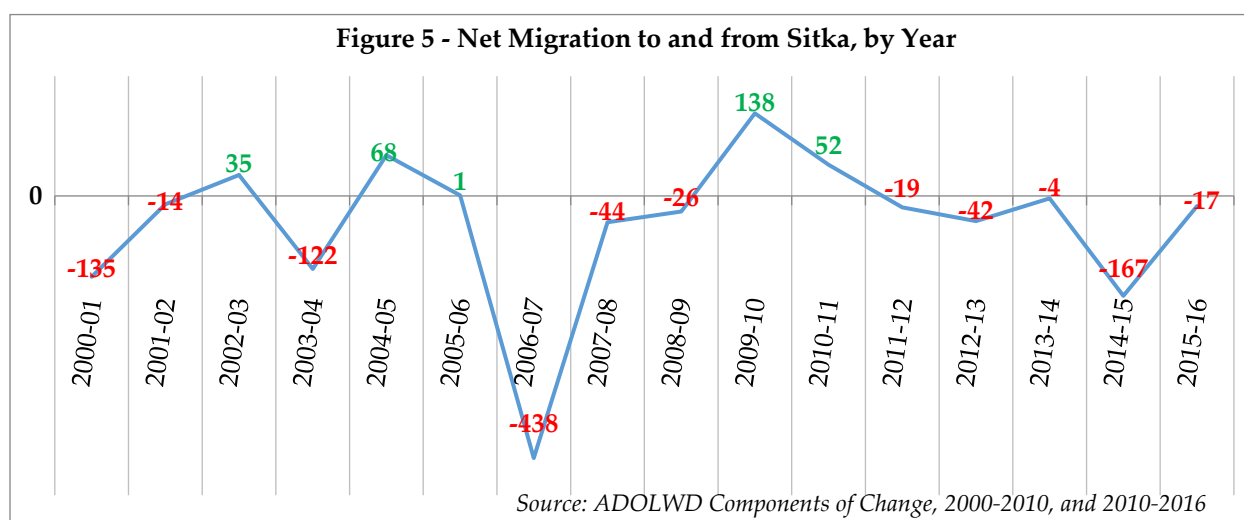


Migration to and from Sitka

ADOLWD uses three different sources of data to track migration: Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) applications, tax returns from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the U.S. Census. The simplest method subtracts deaths and adds births to last year's population - the difference is net migration.

- During the years between 2000 and 2016, a net of 294 residents moved to Sitka, and a net of 1,028 moved away, yielding net migration for this 16 year period of -734 residents (Figure 5). ADOLWD projects this trend to continue.

Figure 5 – Net Migration to and from Sitka, by year



ADOLWD uses PFD data to look at where people are coming from and going to. For Sitka, this information shows that about half of those moving to Sitka from somewhere in Alaska come from others parts of Southeast Alaska, and half come from other places in the state². The same is true for those moving away from Sitka. This PFD-based data also shows that between 80-75% of Sitkans stay put each year, though the percentages have been on the lower end most recently.

Personal Income

Sitka residents earned approximately \$568 million in total personal income in 2015 (Figure 6). This is a 4% increase over 2014 community income of \$545 million.

When all sources of all income are tallied and divided by the total population, Sitka had the 5th highest per capita personal income in Alaska at \$64,122 (2015) (Figure 7). Median household income in Sitka is 12th highest in Alaska at \$70,376 (Figure 11).

² ADOLWD, PFD-based Migration Data to and from Cities and Places 2000-2016

- The majority of Sitka's income, 66%, came from work earnings, wages, and benefits. This included more than \$89 million in earnings to self-employed business proprietors (a 33% jump from 2014's estimated \$67 million).
- Approximately 12% of Sitka's income came from retirement, Medicare/Medicaid, and other benefits. Another 21% of Sitka's total income was generated from dividends, interests, and rents; this is another income category partly associated with retirement income.
- 1% of Sitka's income came from payments from state and federal social assistance programs like SSI and SNAP, and just 0.2% was unemployment benefits.
- Despite high per capita and median household income, an estimated 10-30% of Sitkans struggle to make ends meet (Figure 8).

Figure 6 –Sources of Personal Income, by Community, 2015

Place	Total Income	Source of Income				
		Work*	SSI, SNAP	Unemployment	Retirement and other	Dividends, Interest, and Rent
Alaska	\$41,460,746,000	67%	2%	0.2%	14%	17%
Juneau	\$2,053,591,000	69%	1%	0.2%	11%	19%
Ketchikan	\$866,894,000	67%	2%	0.2%	15%	16%
Sitka	\$568,309,000	66%	1%	0.2%	12%	21%
<i>*This is net earnings by place of residence, which is slightly less than earnings by place of work. Source: BEA, CA30 Economic Profile</i>						

According to tax returns filed in 2014 by those living in the 99835 area code, more than half of the personal income came from the top 17% of Sitka's earners. These tax filers all earned \$100,000 or more per year. Approximately 84% of those filers are married (filed a joint return). One-third (32%) of all Sitka tax filers made only \$25,000 or less; 80% of these tax filers were single.

In the Sitka School District in 2016, 381 students had low enough household income to qualify for free lunch and 130 qualified for reduced fee lunch; together this is 35% of the student body. At Mt. Edgecumbe High School, whose students and faculty are part of the community for significant periods of the year, 75% of students qualify for free or reduced fee lunch.³

Approximately 9% of all Sitkans had income below poverty level in the past 12 months. And, 22% of Sitka American Indians/Alaska Natives had income below poverty level (the margin of error is $\pm 6\%$).⁴

About 10% of Sitkans (the margin of error is $\pm 2\%$) received Food Stamps/SNAP benefits in the last 12 months.⁵

³ Source: ADEED, Free and Reduced Price Meals Report and Eligibility Guidelines. To qualify for a free lunch (using January 2016 federal poverty thresholds in Alaska) a family of four made less than \$39,494, or for a reduced fee lunch, made less than \$56,203. A single parent with one child made less income than \$26,026 to qualify for a free lunch, or made less than \$37,037 to qualify for a reduced fee lunch.

⁴ Source: ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimate, Table S1701

⁵ Source: ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimate, Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 7 – 2015 Income Measures

Borough or Census Area	Per Capita Personal Income	Median Household Income
State of Alaska, All	\$56,147	\$72,515
Aleutians East Borough	\$49,611	\$61,518
Aleutians West Census Area	\$52,569	\$84,306
Anchorage Municipality	\$62,728	\$78,326
Bethel Census Area	\$39,827	\$51,012
Bristol Bay Borough	\$65,769	\$79,750
Denali Borough	\$67,770	\$81,544
Dillingham Census Area	\$51,969	\$54,173
Fairbanks North Star Borough	\$54,185	\$71,068
Haines Borough	\$47,929	\$58,750
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	\$53,956	\$52,419
Juneau City and Borough	\$62,694	\$85,746
Kenai Peninsula Borough	\$52,639	\$63,684
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	\$63,235	\$64,222
Kodiak Island Borough	\$58,162	\$70,887
Kusilvak Census Area	\$29,896	\$38,229
Lake and Peninsula Borough	\$55,385	\$50,781
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	\$46,554	\$72,983
Nome Census Area	\$48,805	\$48,868
North Slope Borough	\$36,883	\$72,576
Northwest Arctic Borough	\$46,918	\$63,648
Petersburg Borough	\$66,323	\$67,935
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	\$40,205	\$48,523
Sitka City and Borough	\$64,122 (5th highest)	\$70,376 (12th highest)
Skagway Municipality	\$78,171	\$69,318
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	\$43,256	\$62,670
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	\$63,236	\$78,810
Wrangell City and Borough	\$47,214	\$48,603
Yakutat City and Borough	\$60,333	\$72,500
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	\$51,496	\$38,491
<i>Sources: 2015 US BEA CA-1 ACS 2011-2015 5-yr. Estimate</i>		

Figure 8- Income Distribution in Sitka

	Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)	Number of Returns			% Total Income	% All Returns
		All*	Joint Filers*	Single Filers*		
TOTAL	\$303,677,000	4,650	1,610	2,500	100%	100%
\$1 under \$25,000	\$17,706,000	1,500	90	1250	6%	32%
\$25,000 under \$50,000	\$41,428,000	1,140	210	730	14%	25%
\$50,000 under \$75,000	\$45,412,000	730	330	290	15%	16%
\$75,000 under \$100,000	\$42,288,000	490	320	130	14%	11%
\$100,000 under \$200,000	\$88,717,000	660	540	100	29%	14%
\$200,000 or more	\$68,126,000	130	120	**	22%	3%
Source: IRS 2014 Tax Returns for zip code 99835 * All includes joint, single, head of household, and other filers						

3.3 Demographic, Migration, and Income Challenges and Opportunities

Migration and an Aging Population

Arguably the most significant issues facing Sitka today are:

- There are a shrinking number of child-bearing age residents and children in Sitka – resulting in more deaths than births in the future.
- More people are moving away from rather than moving to Sitka.
- The number of Sitkans age 65 and older, and especially those age 80+, is projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years.

Why are families and others leaving Sitka? Can the City and Borough of Sitka address any of the drivers of negative migration? What is needed to keep and attract young adults and young families in Sitka?

Research and interviews suggest that family-wage supporting employment is critical, and that young Alaskan adults and families seek affordable housing and food, good schools, access to a diversity of indoor and outdoor recreation, fast internet, and places to gather with people their age/a sense of community.

Seniors serve a role as caregivers, and are an important part of family life. The 2011-2015 ACS reports 147 grandparents live with grandchildren in Sitka⁶.

Older Americans are the source of 70% of all of charitable contributions nationally.⁷ In Sitka in 2015, 12% of all community income, or \$69 million, came from retirement earnings, and another \$119 million, or 21%, came from dividends, interest, and rent according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (Figure 6). When seniors leave they take their retirement and investment portfolios with them, and this is a significant part of Sitka's community income. Further, when grandparents leave, oftentimes their adult children and grandchildren follow; and when grandchildren leave, grandparents may have reason to leave too.

Seniors are invaluable community members in Sitka contributing financially, culturally, and socially. What is needed to allow Sitka's aging residents to comfortably and safely age in place?

Potential Hub for Elder Care

Continue planning and take actions to accommodate the housing, service, medical, transportation, and social engagement needs of its growing senior population.

- To keep these contributing members in Sitka: 1) More accessible, affordable, housing choices are needed; 2) More assisted living and long-term care options are needed; 3) Increased personal care attendants who can assist with the activities of daily living and enable seniors

⁶ The margin of error is ± 55 , thus the range is 92 to 202 grandparents living with grandchildren.

⁷ Rovner, M. 2013 "The Next Generation of American Giving: The Charitable Habits of Generations Y, X, Baby Boomers and Matures." Blackbaud.

to remain in their homes are needed; and 4) More geriatric health care services will be needed.

Equity and Social Justice

Income inequality and poverty is a priority issue for Sitkans; this issue of social and economic justice must be tackled in order to achieve Sitka's values and vision.

- Low personal income, in combination with high cost-of-living, means that many households struggle to make ends meet month to month.
- It is reasonable to expect that low-income Sitkans may be less engaged in the local economy (less buying power) and will be less able or willing to invest in opportunities to improve their prosperity in the long term.
- Low earnings may also affect Sitka's net migration. As income versus costs becomes untenable for more households, one possible outcome is that households will relocate to more affordable communities.

3.4 Physical Environment

This section of the Comprehensive Plan summarizes existing information on Sitka's natural environment. Sources are listed in footnotes at the start of each section.

Understanding the natural environment is important context for comprehensive planning because the natural environment:

- Is the ground upon which the human environment is built
- Creates hazards to which the community must be prepared to respond
- Provides opportunities for Sitka's residents and businesses

3.4.1 Geology and Topography⁸

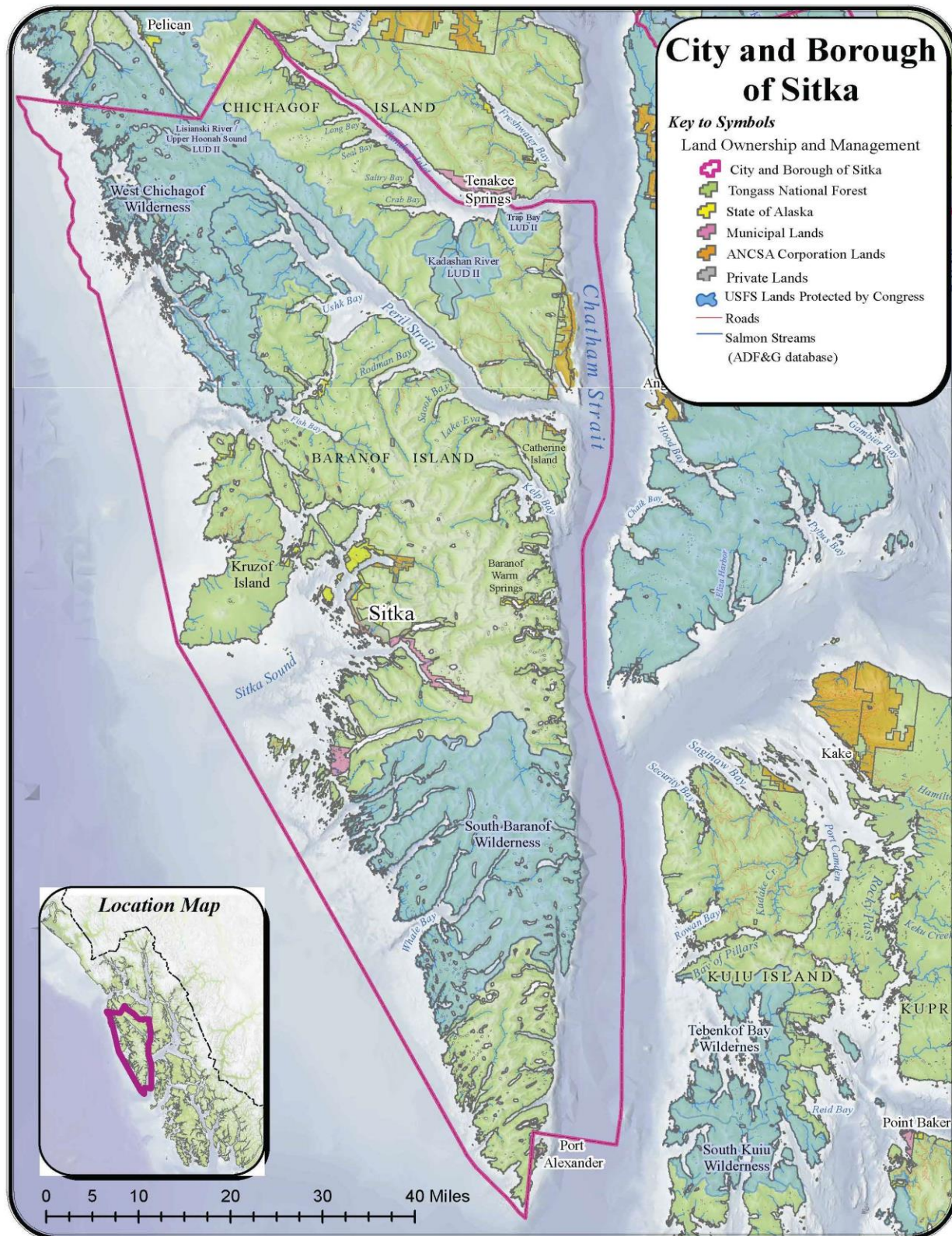
Sitka is located on Baranof Island, one of the most rugged of all the islands in Southeast Alaska with many high peaks and slopes. A location map with generalized land ownership and management patterns is on Figure 9. Baranof Island's outer coast is dotted with numerous small islands. The northern part of the island has soil layers of volcanic ash from past eruptions of Mt. Edgecumbe.

Much of the built environment in Sitka overlies surficial deposits of alluvium, glacial moraines, beach sands, and gravel that have been uplifted. The source rocks for all these deposits are the steep mountains that surround Sitka. The last glacial period ended more than 10,000 years ago, after which isostatic rebound, the upward movement of a land mass responding to the removal of the thick mass of ice from the glacier, occurred. It is estimated that the total rebound to present in the

⁸ Sources: 1) "Sitka geologically separate from rest of Alaska" Ed Schoenfeld, CoastAlaska News, Aug 19, 2015 2) S. Karl, et. al. USGS, "Geologic Map of Baranof Island, Southeastern Alaska", Scientific Investigations Map 3335, 2015. 3) Resources Management Plan, Sitka National Historical Park, 1999. 4) Shannon & Wilson; "South Kramer Avenue Landslide: Jacobs Circle to Emmons Street Sitka, Alaska", February 2, 2016.

Sitka area is approximately 35 feet. Rebound is now occurring in the Sitka area at approximately 0.13 inches per year.

Figure 9 - Location Map and Land Ownership and Management



New field investigations led to a 2015 scientific publication on the geology of Baranof Island. It showed that Baranof Island, and part of its northern neighbor, Chichagof Island, sit atop their own block of the Earth's crust. Baranof Island sits between two long faults in Chatham Strait to the east and the Pacific Ocean's Fairweather Fault to the west. But about half-way up its eastern side, a separate coastal crack, called the Peril Strait Fault, heads west. That fault separates Baranof from just about everything else in the region. Sitka — and the whole island — made a slow slide up the Pacific Coast. "It's separate from Juneau or Ketchikan or any other part of Alaska," according to the publication's primary author geologist Susan Karl. The rocks on Baranof Island consist of Paleozoic to Cenozoic aged volcanic, sedimentary, and intrusive igneous rocks that are part of a volcanic island arc.

A recent review of Harbor Mountain geology showed bedrock of Sitka greywacke, a slightly metamorphosed sandstone (Karl and others, 2015), which is overlain by glacial till. The till is a compact to dense, gray, poorly graded gravel with silt, sand, and cobbles (Yehle, 1974; Golder Associates, 2008). The till is overlain by volcanic ash, a product of eruptions of Mount Edgecumbe. Locally draping these geologic units in places is landslide debris, which is a mixture of the weathered bedrock, till, and ash.

3.4.2 Climate⁹

Sitka falls within the southeast maritime climate zone, characterized by cool summers, mild winters and heavy rain throughout the year. This zone lacks prolonged periods of freezing weather at low altitudes and is characterized by cloudiness and frequent fog. The winters are extremely mild compared to inland areas of similar and much more southerly parallels due to the intense maritime moderation. The relatively mild nights ensure that four months stay above 50 °F which separates inland areas from being boreal in nature.

Based on Sitka weather from 1981 to 2010, as measured at the Japonski Island airport, average seasonal snowfall is 32 inches, falling on 19 days (Figure 10). Average annual precipitation is 87 inches, falling on 233 days. (Note that this single location does not represent the weather throughout the borough.)

- There is a strong annual course in the precipitation, with the maximum observed in fall, when the ocean is still relatively warm while the landmass has been substantially cooled.
- Fall storms bring a large amount of moisture, and maximum precipitation is observed in October, followed by September, and November.
- Maximum monthly rainfall during this 30-year period can be about twice as large as the average.
- There are, on average, 235 days with precipitation of at least 0.01", and in August, 24.4 days of the month report on average rain.

⁹ Sources: 1) G. Wendler, K. Galloway, and M. Stuefer; "On the Climate and Climate Change of Sitka, Southeast Alaska"; Theoretical and Applied Climatology Journal, October 2016, Volume 126, Issue 1–2, pp 27–342) The Alaska Climate Research Center.

Figure 10 - Climate Normals for Sitka, Alaska (Japonski Island), 1981–2010

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F	60	61	61	76	82	85	88	84	77	68	65	65	88
Average high °F	40.5	41.3	43.0	48.2	53.1	57.8	60.4	61.9	57.8	50.5	43.7	41.4	50.0
Daily mean °F	36.4	36.7	38.0	42.5	47.8	52.8	56.2	57.2	53.0	46.1	39.5	37.0	45.3
Average low °F	32.3	32.1	32.9	36.8	42.4	47.8	52.0	52.5	48.2	41.6	35.2	32.9	40.6
Record low °F	0	–1	4	15	29	35	41	34	31	20	2	1	–1
Avg. precipitation, inches	8.38	6.49	6.15	4.35	4.23	2.89	4.12	6.87	11.75	12.95	9.78	8.85	86.81
Avg. snowfall, inches	9.5	8.0	4.9	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	4.7	4.0	32.3
Avg. wind speed, miles per hour*	9.4	8.7	8.9	8.3	7.4	6.9	6.3	6.0	7.2	8.9	9.6	9.6	8.3
<i>Sources: The Alaska Climate Research Center. These are the climate normals from the 30-year time period from 1981-2010, provided by the National Climatic Data Center.</i>													

3.4.3 Changing Climate and Sitka 2011 Climate Action Plan ¹⁰

Sitka residents and businesses have a close relationship to the ocean, both economically and physically. Therefore, Sitka has some vulnerability to ocean and climate changes. Any significant increase in temperature that causes the climate to change in an unpredictable manner could place traditional means of subsistence and Sitka’s natural resource driven economy in jeopardy. These changes will have to be adapted to while mitigation measures are put in place.

To consider this systematically, the City and Borough of Sitka adopted a Sitka Climate Action Plan (SCAP) in 2011. In Section 2 of the SCAP, there is a review of the specific implications of a changing climate to Sitka residents and the local economy. It offers planning suggestions and mitigation measures, many of which have become objectives or actions in this Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030. Specific ways that a changing climate could impact Sitka residents and the local economy are reviewed in the 2011 SCAP, including a) Fishery Impacts and Ocean Acidification, b) Forest and Wildlife Impacts, c) Rising Sea Levels and Tides, d) Increased Storm Intensity and Frequency, and e) Increase in Temperature – Change in Precipitation.

A cornerstone of the SCAP is its Assembly-adopted goal to reduce municipal greenhouse gas emissions by 25% from 2003 levels, by 2020. The SCAP offers several measures to accomplish this. Lists of initiatives with funding and implementation opportunities are located in the SCAP Appendices B & C. Top initial actions are to:

- Review funding and implementation opportunities and options (SCAP Appendix B and C),

¹⁰ “Sitka Climate Action Plan,” Sitka Climate Action Plan Taskforce, 2011

- Implement energy conservation items related to behavior modification (e.g., turning off computers, reducing vehicle idling, etc. See SCAP Appendix A, Table A-1) - these modifications cost little, but save a lot.
- Replace current diesel generators to have the greatest impact.
- Install Sitka High School electric boiler (since parts are purchased and labor is budgeted-see section 3.3.2). *Update: This was accomplished in 2014.*

Eight Climate Change Mitigation/Adaptation Measures for Sitka include (SCAP, 2011):

1. Implement the SCAP and support climate action in other cities, and at the state, national, and international levels.
2. Increase zoning setbacks from mean high tide line for further coastal construction.
3. Conduct engineering study on elevation, composition, and strength of harbor breakwaters and sea walls.
4. Partner with the FAA to explore impacts to the airport and airport operations in regards to runway elevation and sea level change.
5. Implement measures that take into consideration the proximity of residential and commercial properties, as well as critical infrastructure to effects from violent sea action.
6. Ensure emerging businesses/industries are electric energy efficient, or have alternative power/heating means during low power generation periods; encourage continued energy efficient practices by citizens; investigate wind and/or tidal generators.
7. Prepare contingency water conservation plans/practices for Sitka.
8. Investigate zoning changes that encourage non-flammable roofing materials. Work with U.S. Forest Service (FS) to educate the public about firebreaks and clearing underbrush; establish burn bans when necessary; and explore the possibility of maintaining and using a regional fire boat for islands and remote cabin sites as needed.

3.4.4 Vegetation and Soils¹¹

Sitka sits atop soil that is stable when undisturbed but changes to a fluid or jelly when shaken or agitated. The soil contains a considerable amount of volcanic ash from an eruption of the Kruzof Island volcanoes about 10,000 years ago. In stream valleys where ash has been washed away alluvium is present. Sitka also has several low, wet muskeg bogs.

Baranof Island lies within the spruce-hemlock-cedar region of the temperate forest biome, which extends south to include the redwoods of coastal northern California. The temperate rainforest is a unique ecosystem of limited extent. In North America, it occurs primarily in southeast Alaska and British Columbia.

¹¹ “City & Borough of Sitka Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan”, WH Pacific and Bechtol Planning & Development, April 2010, page 12; “Resources Management Plan”, Sitka National Historical Park, 1999; “National Wetlands Inventory,”, USFWS

Vegetation is predominately Sitka spruce and western hemlock. Rapidly growing red alder stands are in open areas. Blueberry, salmonberry, devil's club, and ferns dominate the understory. There are many estuaries and wetland areas in Sitka. Estuaries are dominated by salt-tolerant, flood-tolerant plants. Freshwater wetlands are primarily near Starrigavan and Indian River watersheds, and at the base of mountains where the elevation becomes flatter; most are palustrine, nontidal wetlands with peaty soils and dominated by trees, shrubs, emergents, mosses or lichens.

3.4.5 Wildlife¹²

Immediately adjacent to the Pacific Ocean, many marine mammals frequent the area, including Humpback whales that are often seen feeding in Sitka Sound. Pacific herring spawn in April, with a single fish laying up to 20,000 eggs (roe) in protected intertidal and subtidal areas. All five species of salmon and steelhead trout are in various segments of Sitka's intertidal, lower floodplain channel, and stream systems. Non-anadromous resident fish in the area include rainbow trout, coast range sculpin, and Dolly Varden.

Intertidal and shoreline areas support a large variety of migratory waterfowl and shore birds during spring and fall. Gulls, crows, and ravens scavenge along the tidal flats and the river. Bald eagles are common, especially during the spring herring spawn and fall salmon runs, when eagles feed on fish carcasses in the river and adjacent tidal flats. Local small mammal species include shrews, mice, voles, red tree squirrels, mink, and marten. Common large mammals are brown bears, Sitka black-tailed deer, and mountain goat.

3.5 Natural Hazards¹³

3.5.1 Sitka Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (2010)

The 2010 Sitka Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) provides a broad overview of natural hazards in the City and Borough of Sitka. Topics covered are flood/erosion, earthquake hazard, snow avalanche, tsunami hazard, severe weather, and ground failure. For each topic, location, extent, impact, and probability are identified and a list of mitigation projects is offered. The listed mitigation projects are relevant for permitting and development.

Flood/erosion - Sitka has a *low* probability of flooding (not due to a tsunami) (MHMP, page 39). Seven mitigation projects are identified. Note that FEMA flood mapping work (not adopted) that is more recent than the MHMP is reported on below.

Earthquake hazard - Sitka has a *high* probability of earthquake hazard (MHMP, page 47). Four mitigation projects are identified.

¹² "Sitka Wildlife Viewing Guide," ADF&G; "Resources Management Plan," Sitka National Historical Park, 1999; "Final 2011 Wildlife Investigations Report," Takatz Lake Hydro Project, Bovee, K. July 2012

¹³ "City & Borough of Sitka Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan," WH Pacific and Bechtol Planning & Development, April 2010; "South Kramer Avenue Landslide: Jacobs Circle to Emmons Street Sitka, Alaska," Shannon & Wilson, February 2, 2016; "City and Borough of Sitka, Climate Action Plan," June 2010; "Tsunami Inundation Maps of Sitka, Alaska Report of Investigations 2013-3," E. Suleimani, D.J. Nicolsky, and R.D. Koehler, State of Alaska, DNR, DGGs, 2013.

Snow avalanche - The probability of a snow avalanche in Sitka is *high* (MHMP, page 53). Four mitigation projects are identified.

Tsunami hazard - Sitka has a *high* probability of a tsunami event (MHMP, page 61). Three mitigation projects are identified. Note that a Tsunamis Inundation Study that is more recent than the MHMP is reported on below.

Severe weather - Sitka has a *high* probability of severe weather (MHMP, page 69). Three mitigation projects are identified.

- Extreme weather could result in a critical situation in Sitka. Injuries and/or illness could result from excessive rainfall or snowfall and with high winds cause the shutdown of critical facilities, damage property and isolate Sitka. The *Alaska All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2007* lists severe weather as creating two limited damage events in Sitka. Past Sitka Fire Chief S. Ulmer believed that severe weather is the highest natural hazard risk in Sitka, due to extreme rainfall and high winds.

Ground failure - Due to the voluminous rainfall and the soil types in Sitka, the probability of a landslide in Sitka is *high* (MHMP, page 75). Three mitigation projects are identified. Note that a Shannon & Wilson analysis of the August 2015 ground failure event and the City and Borough of Sitka's Landslide Area Management rules are reviewed below.

In early 2018, CBS began updating and revising the MHMP.

3.5.2 Flood Mapping and Risk Analysis (2013-ongoing)

As part of the Alaska RISK map program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Alaska have been working on a coastal Risk MAP Study in the City and Borough of Sitka that began in 2013. Updated LIDAR photography and detailed analyses have occurred since 2013.

A preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) were released in early 2017 and portions of the mapping were appealed by the CBS and several citizens. The FIRM, which identifies flood zones, base flood elevations, and floodplain boundaries, is used to determine where the purchase of flood insurance is required for properties with federally backed mortgages. In November 2017 FEMA accepted CBS floodplain corrections in the Swan Lake area, establishing the base flood elevation (AE Zone) at -33.1 (from -34.5), which significantly changes the flood zone shape and extent with direct benefit to property owners. FEMA intends to hold a risk map workshop in Sitka in the spring of 2018. At that point, the Assembly will need to decide whether or not to adopt the flood maps and continue taking part in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Tsunami Inundation Study (2013)

The purpose of the 2013 State of Alaska, Division of Geological and Geophysical Survey (DGGS), Tsunami Inundation Study for Sitka was to evaluate potential tsunami hazards for the community of Sitka. It modelled the extent of inundation from tsunami waves generated by near- and far-field tectonic sources. It included modeling of historic events at Sitka, such as the tsunami triggered by the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake, and the tsunami waves generated by the recent 2011 Tohoku and 2012 Haida Gwaii earthquakes.

Results of modeling combined with historical observations in the region are summarized on a Limits of Inundation map (Figure 11). This map can be used as a *guideline* for emergency planning and response action - it is *not intended for land-use regulation*. The map was completed using the best information available and is believed to be accurate; however, its preparation required many assumptions.¹⁴

The Limits of Inundation Map shows that for the worst-case scenario:

- In the northern part of the town, noticeable inundation occurs in the area along Halibut Point Road between its north end, which is close to the delta of Starrigavan Creek, and Kuhnle Drive in the south. The section of the road between the dock and the road's dead end is flooded with flow depths up to 13 feet.
- In the central part of the town, the entire coastline is inundated, according to the composite worst-case scenario. A large section of Sitka downtown adjacent to the Crescent Harbor gets flooded, as well as the area around the Sealing Cove Harbor on Japonski Island, and the buildings for University of Alaska Southeast and Mt. Edgecumbe High School. The maximum flow depths would be along the shores of the northern harbor and in the channel that separates Japonski Island from the mainland.
- In the southeastern part of the town, the area between Sawmill Creek Road and the shoreline next to the Sitka southeast subdivision is completely inundated. Sawmill Creek Road, which follows the shoreline, is flooded in several places, as is GPIIP. The maximum flow depths in both areas reach 16 feet.

Sitka's Landslide Area Management Ordinance and Related Analyses¹⁵

¹⁴ DGGS considered several tsunami scenarios and has provided an estimate of maximum credible tsunami inundation. Actual conditions during a tsunami event may vary from those considered, so the accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Landslide tsunami sources are not included in the current study due to unknown potential impact of such events on Sitka. The limits of inundation shown should only be used as a guideline for emergency planning and response action. Actual areas inundated will depend on specifics of earth deformations, on-land construction, and tide level, and may differ from areas shown on the map. The information on this map is intended to permit state and local agencies to plan emergency evacuation and tsunami response actions in the event of a major earthquake-generated tsunami.

¹⁵ "South Kramer Avenue Landslide: Jacobs Circle to Emmons Street Sitka, Alaska," Shannon & Wilson, February 2, 2016; KTUU News Report

As noted in the 2010 Sitka Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, Sitka is at high risk for both severe weather and ground failure. In August 2015, after two months of double the normal amount of rain, extremely heavy rain fell in a short time period and more than 50 landslides on Baranof Island occurred (Shannon & Wilson). One slide began near the top of the ridge at the southern end of a west-facing slope of Harbor Mountain in an area where the slope is about 85%. The debris traveled 3,000 feet down an unnamed channel into the Benchlands area and Kramer Avenue, and, as it flowed, took three lives, destroyed one home and extensively damaged another. As a result, FEMA and Alaska DGGs, with the borough's support, initiated a community-wide hazard mapping project focused on landslides. The maps will depict areas as low, medium, or high landslide risk. In July 2017 the CBS adopted Ordinance 2017-14 on Landslide Area Management that established rules for developers and property owners in moderate- and high-risk landslide areas.

Landslide mapping for the majority of the community is ongoing. Following direction set by the 2017 Landslide Area Management ordinance, areas will be restricted to specific uses depending on risk levels. Sitka General Code Title 20 Environmentally Critical Areas outlines requirements for geotechnical investigations and/or waivers.

In September 2017 there was a debris flow that covered the road in the 4300 block area of Halibut Point Road. A media report quotes ADOT&PF as saying that the slide was 120 feet long, 70-80 feet wide, and 20 feet high.

Figure 11 – Limits of Inundation Map from 2013 Tsunami Study
This map is for emergency planning purposes only; it is not for land use regulation.



3.6 Coastal Management¹⁶

Sitka was an active participant in the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP), completing the Sitka Coastal Management Plan (CMP), a Swan Lake Area Meriting Special Attention (AMSA) Plan, a Public Use Management Plan, and an Indian River Corridor and Watershed Master Plan.

In 2011, the State of Alaska withdrew from the federal coastal management program. At that point, municipalities could codify their plan's enforceable policies if they wished to locally implement their coastal plans. The CBS did this, and Sitka General Code Title 20.05 adopts the 2007 Sitka CMP's enforceable policies, boundaries, and definitions, including designated recreation and coastal access areas, and "Special Management Areas and Designated Recreational Use Areas" with maps and management narrative for recreation off the road system. Sitka felt that the plan's enforceable policies were important for ongoing management of critical coastal areas.

Sitka's enforceable CMP policies, and topic each addresses, are summarized below.

If any policies become irrelevant, the adopted appendix should be amended by ordinance. State and federal approval of changes is no longer needed.

Summary of Sitka Enforceable CMP policies referenced in SGC Title 20.05

- Policy 1.1 to 1.5 - Floating facility rules, including float homes
- Policy 1.6 - Priority listed for coastal development along the road system
- Policy 1.7 - Dredging or filling rules in the following designated recreation areas: a) Starrigavan Bay, Estuary and Creek; b) "Old Sitka" Historic Site; c) Granite Creek at Halibut Point Recreation Area and Tidelands; d) Indian River Estuarine Flats; or e) Lower Indian River Corridor.
- Policy 1.8 - Waterfront residential development only where water-dependent or related activities aren't suitable
- Policy 4.1 - Hydroelectric power shall be the highest priority use for the Takatz Lake watershed.
- Policy 8.1 - Incidental removal of coastal sand and gravel that is integral to an allowable project shall minimize adverse changes to littoral processes of sediment erosion, deposition and transport.

The following four policies apply in 13 designated recreational use areas: 1) Whale Park, 2) Indian River Corridor and Estuarine Flats adjacent to the Sitka National Historical Park, 3) Pioneer Park, 4) Moller Park, 5) Crescent Park, 6) Totem Square, 7) Halibut Point Recreation Area and Tidelands, 8) Sandy Beach Tidelands, 9) Starrigavan Bay, Estuary and Creek, 10) "Old Sitka" Historic Site, 11) Swan Lake AMSA, 12) John Brown's Beach, and 13) Makhanati Island Japonski Causeway

- Policy 3.1 - Avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts to the physical features upon which the recreation depends
- Policy 3.2 - Water access

¹⁶ "Sitka Coastal Management Plan", 2007, LaRoche +Associates

- Policy 3.3 and 3.4 - Priority to certain recreational uses in the areas listed above, as described in 1991 Sitka Parks and Recreation Plan, as well as Goddard Hot Springs, and non-federal publicly-owned portion of Baranof Warm Springs north of the river
- Policy 3.5 - In the Indian River Recreational Corridor, new construction, alteration of natural vegetation, excavation, placement of fill, or land clearing are not allowed within 25 feet along either side of the 100-year floodplain.

For the Swan Lake AMSA, policies 13.1 to 13.4 pertain to protect recreational use and natural vegetation:

- Policy 13.1 - Development of permanent structures or land clearing within the 25-feet of the stream banks of Arrowhead and Wrinklneck Creeks and within 50 feet of the lakeshore must avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts to the recreational uses of Swan Lake.
- Policy 13.2 - Cutting or eradication of natural vegetation is not allowed if the activity would detract from recreational uses of Swan Lake.
- Policy 13.3 - Gravel or soils extraction and dredge and fill operations are not allowed unless consistent with Swan Lake Watershed Recovery and Restoration Plan and recreational uses.
- Policy 13.4 - Operation of motorized watercraft or aircraft (not including radio-controlled model craft) on Swan Lake is not allowed except for purposes of authorized fish restocking.

Chapter 5 of the Sitka CMP lists many Special Management Areas on Kruzof Island, West Chichagof Island, East Chichagof Island, North Baranof Island, and South Baranof Island. In the listed and described Special Management Areas, six policies govern:

- Policy 14.1 - Tidelands use
- Policy 14.2 - Protection of sockeye salmon streams
- Policy 14.3 - Managing conflicting uses including a 200-foot protection corridor in certain recreational areas
- Policy 14.4 - Prohibiting uses except for recreation enhancement and subsistence that may conflict with recreational uses
- Policy 14.5 - Maintaining a 100-foot buffer strip adjacent to each side of trail, and
- Policy 14.6 - Prohibiting uses incompatible with public recreation in the tidelands and below Mean High tide in: a) Whale Park, b) State Tidelands adjacent to Sitka National Historic Park, c) Pioneer Park, d) Sandy Beach Tidelands, e) Halibut Point Recreation Area and Tidelands, and f) Starrigavan Bay Cooperative Project

4 Economic Development

GOAL

Increase year-round employment and population in Sitka by:

- **Supporting local businesses;**
- **Attracting new sustainable businesses;**
- **Supporting efforts and enterprises that keep residents' money "local."**

Sitka's current economy and future opportunities and challenges underpin much of the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030. There are many topics covered and this is a large chapter. For clarity in this chapter only, "Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities" follows each topic rather than appearing in a standalone section.

4.1 Municipal Role in Economic Development

Economic development is about understanding conditions in the local economy, understanding which forces shaping the local economy are susceptible to local influence, and identifying strategies to achieve specific development goals.

Local governments are commonly engaged in economic development efforts. This is not surprising given that they depend upon a strong and sustainable economic base and local taxes to support the services, infrastructure, education, and amenities that residents desire.

A recent National Association of Counties (NACo)¹⁷ review shows that more than 90% of county governments engage in economic development initiatives. NACo case studies of 35 county-driven economic development initiatives found that while each addressed a specific challenge, the common thread was increased attention to collaboration.

Eight local government strategies regularly used to stimulate economic activity are:

1. Coordinating and support for economic development programs and services
2. Providing an adequate commercial and industrial land supply
3. Business and entrepreneurship support
4. Infrastructure investment
5. Timely development reviews and business-friendly regulations
6. Maintain quality of life (conducive to business innovation and worker retention)
7. Offering development incentives (tax policy, financing, underwriting risk)
8. Participating in workforce and talent development

¹⁷ "Strong Economies, Resilient Counties: The Role of Counties in Economic Development," National Association of Counties, E. Istrate Research Director, in NACo Why Counties Matter Paper Series, Issue 1, 2014

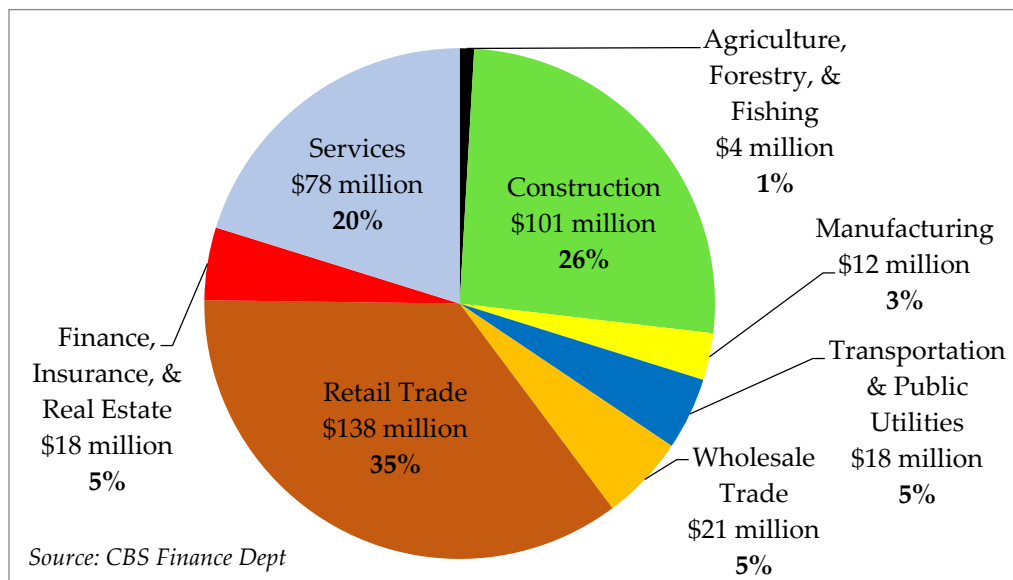
4.2 The Economy and Work: Sitka Profile

Commerce: Gross Business Sales

Sale of local goods and services drives business activity. This section looks at gross sales receipts to understand the primary types of business activity and commerce in Sitka. Keep in mind that this is a review of *gross sales*, not *taxable sales* or *tax revenue*.¹⁸

Commerce in Sitka, as measured by gross business sales, is driven by retail sales, construction, and services. Together, these three accounted for just over 80% of gross business sales in Sitka in 2016 (Figure 12). In FY 2016, gross sales in Sitka totaled \$388 million¹⁹.

Figure 12 - FY 2016 Gross Sales Receipts in Sitka, by Industry (amounts are rounded)



Looking at 4- to 5-year trends in gross sales in Sitka (Figures 13 and 14):

- Gross sales of long-term rentals have been declining.

¹⁸ When a business obtains a Sitka business license or files to pay sales tax, it indicates the primary type of business it is engaged in using standard industry codes. Sitka then aggregates these codes by eight categories that are similar to those which the ADOLWD uses: Agriculture-Forestry-Fisheries, Construction, Manufacturing, Transportation and Utilities, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Finance-Insurance-Real Estate, and Services.

Note that the City and Borough of Sitka combines many businesses into the Services category that the state separates, including health care, education, professional, arts-entertainment-recreation, food, accommodations, and more.

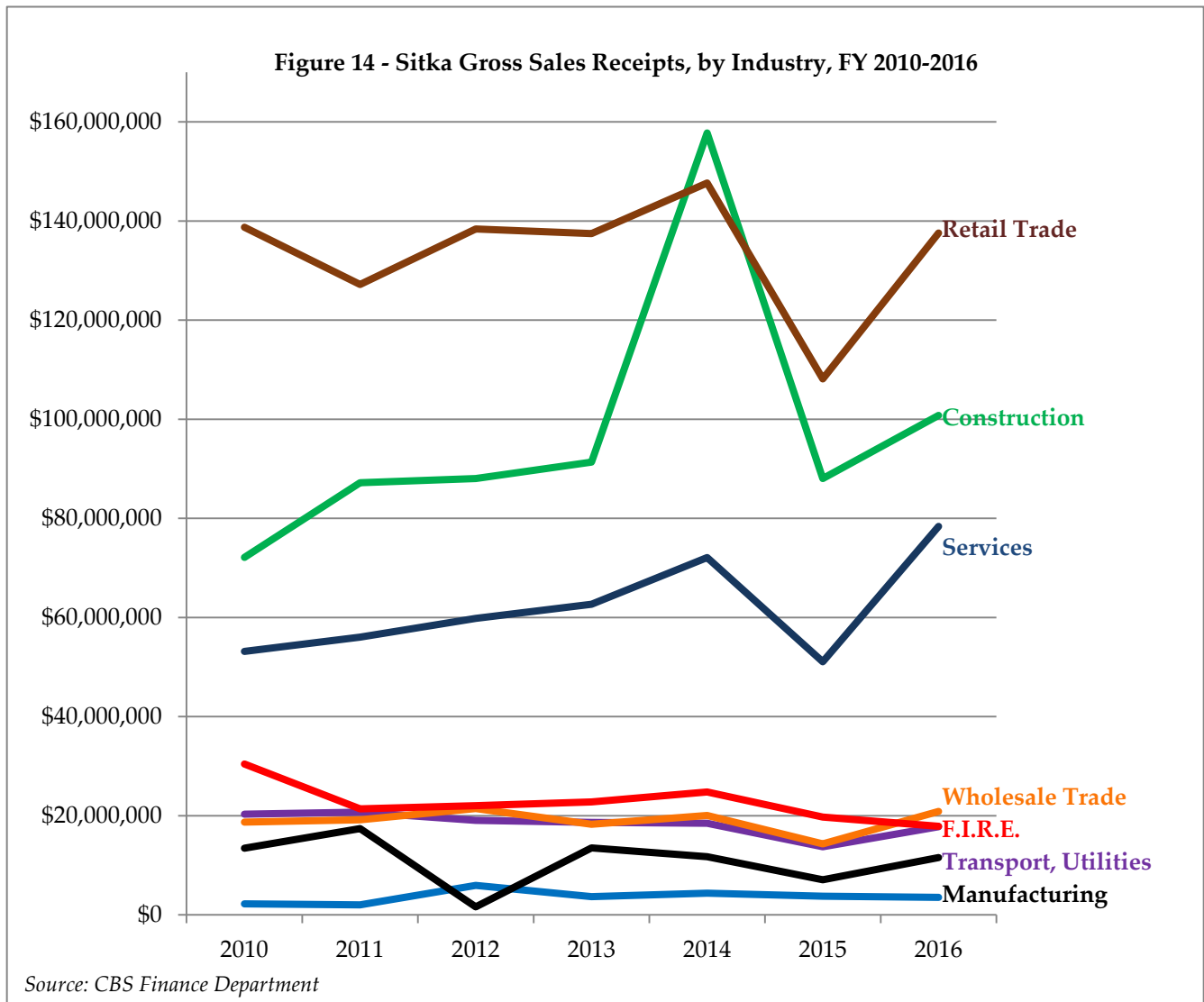
¹⁹ These are business sales; there were an additional \$40 million in sales for City and Borough of Sitka-operated utilities, leases, etc.

- Gross sales by those in fishing have been declining since a 2012 peak (agriculture-forestry-fishing). Sales are down \$2.4 million, or 40%, since 2012.
- Gross sales in Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE) are down over the last five years by \$4 million, or 19%.
- Gross sales for all other industry types have increased over the last five years.

Figure 13 and 14 - Gross Sales of Short- and Long-Term Rentals and Other Industry

	FY 2013	FY 2015	FY 2016
Gross Sales, Short-Term Rentals	\$7,866,619	\$5,515,597	\$10,710,481
Gross Sales, Long-Term Rentals	\$20,749,804	\$18,201,600	\$14,245,783

Source: CBS Finance Department



Sitka's Top Producing Sectors

Supporting, strengthening, and diversifying existing strong sectors is a top economic growth strategy. These existing businesses have figured out how to operate profitably in Sitka.

In the City and Borough of Sitka, when employee (year 2016) and self-employed sole proprietors (year 2015) are considered together:

The **MOST WORKERS** (average annual) were engaged in (Figure 15):

1. Local Government** - 681
2. Health Care & Social Assistance - 636
3. Fishing (part of agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting) - 633
4. Retail Trade - 521
5. Manufacturing (seafood processing, other) - 467

The **HIGHEST OVERALL EARNINGS** to workers came from (Figure 16):

1. Fishing (part of agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting) - \$42.1 million
2. Local Government** - \$36.7 million
3. Health Care and Social Assistance - \$32.5 million
4. Manufacturing - \$20.1 million
5. Construction - \$18.2 million

If maritime was a sector, it would have 1,567 workers and \$83.6 million in earnings. Maritime includes Fishing and part of Manufacturing – see maritime section of this chapter for detail.

Looking *only* at employees (not including self-employed businesses):

The **HIGHEST WAGES** (average annual) go to employees in:

1. Management of Companies & Enterprises (\$84,660/year)
2. Federal Government (\$84,660/year, or including estimated enlisted USGS wages - \$57,936/year)
3. Construction (\$66,960/year)
4. Local Government ** (\$53,952/year)
5. Health Care & Social Assistance (\$52,716/year)

Peak employment was in August (5,127 employees).

Six types of businesses had **AT LEAST 300 EMPLOYEES IN AUGUST**:

1. Food Manufacturing - 813
2. Local Government** - 718
3. Health Care and Social Assistance - 582
4. Retail Trade - 489
5. Food Services and Drinking Places - 369
6. Scenic and Sightseeing - 311

In addition to the list above of *employees*, there were 575 self-employed fishermen (*business proprietors*) also working in the summer.

** Local government includes all City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Community Hospital, Sitka School District, and Sitka Tribe of Alaska employees.

Figure 15 – Sitka Total Workforce, by Sector (includes Employees AND Self-Employed)

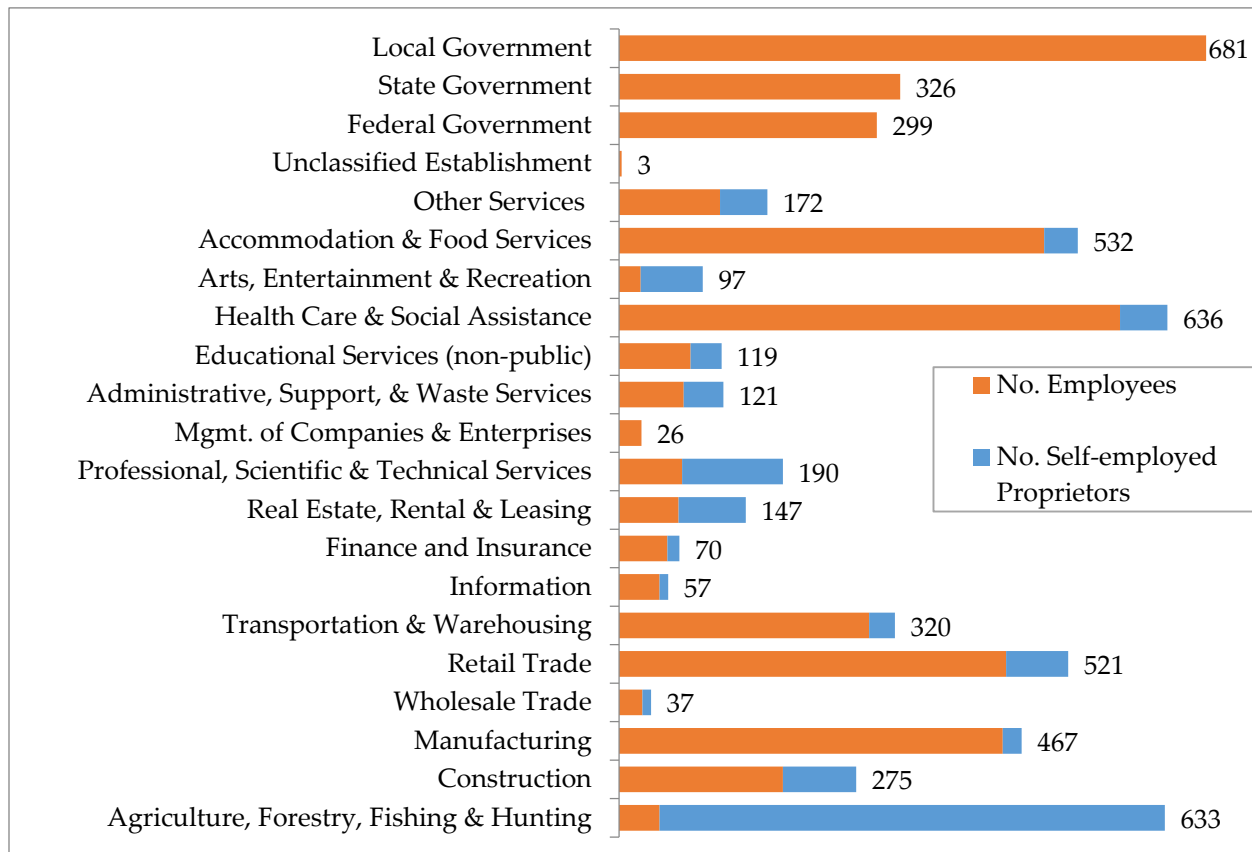
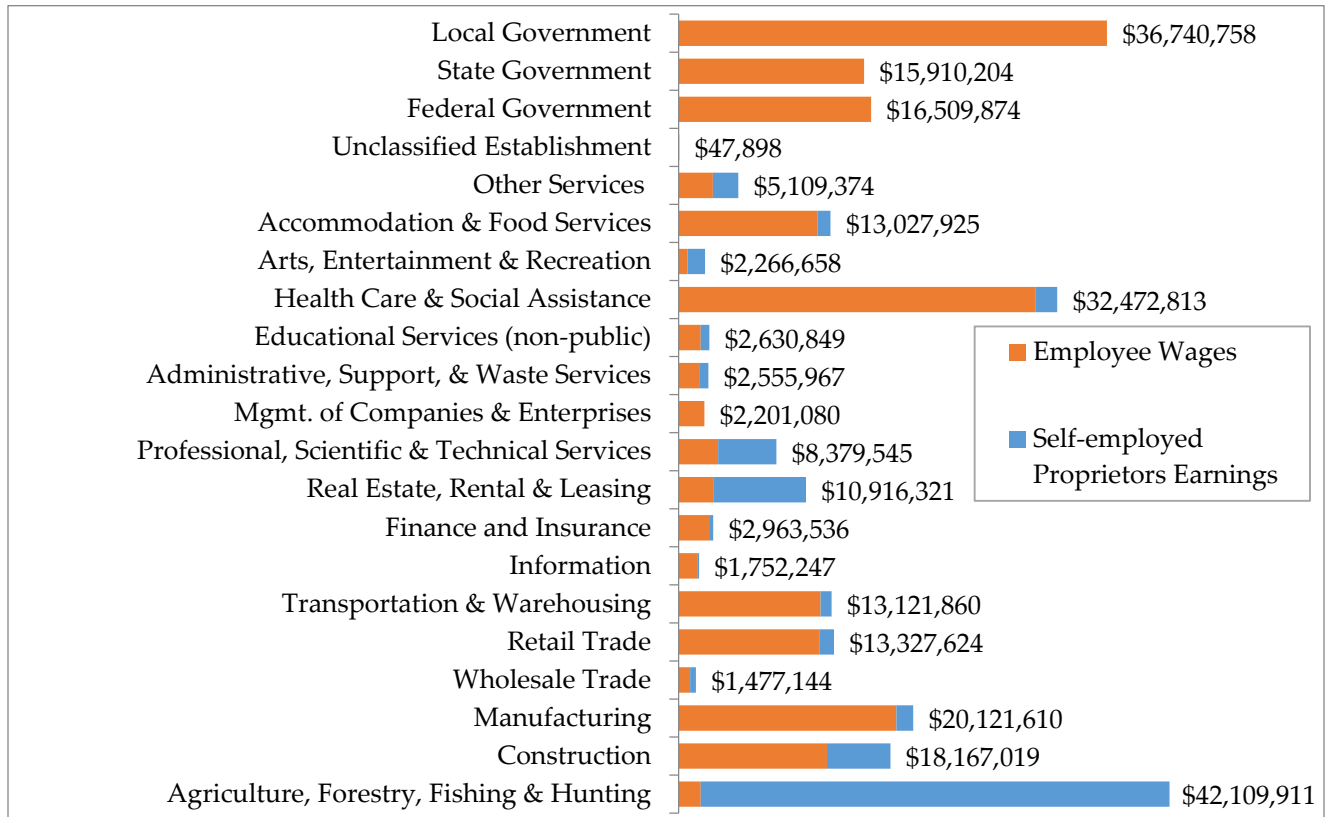


Figure 16 – Sitka Total Work Earnings, by Sector (includes Employees AND Self-Employed)



Sources: ADOLWD QCEW 2016; US Census Nonemployer Statistics, 2015; USCG Air Station Sitka

Work and Earnings

To get an accurate sense of the whole work economy, data from three sources are combined. These are: 1) Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) from 2016 and 2015²⁰; 2) information on wages and employment numbers for enlisted Coast Guard personnel in Sitka provided by Air Station Sitka; and 3) data on the number of sole proprietor small business owners in Sitka and their business receipts from the US Census Nonemployer Statistics for 2015 and 2014 (lags QCEW data by one year). These combined data sets show that:

- Direct work earnings in Sitka totaled \$261.8 million in 2016, which was a decrease of \$6.6 million, or -2%, compared to 2015 (Figure 17).
- Losses in both employee wages and self-employed business proprietor income occurred in 2016 compared to 2015 (Figure 17).
- Sitka's workforce (2016/2015) is 54% private sector, 23% self-employed business proprietors, 6% state government, 5% federal government (civilian + enlisted), and 12% local government (Figure 18).

Figure 17 – Workforce and Earnings, Summary and 1-Year Change 2015-2016

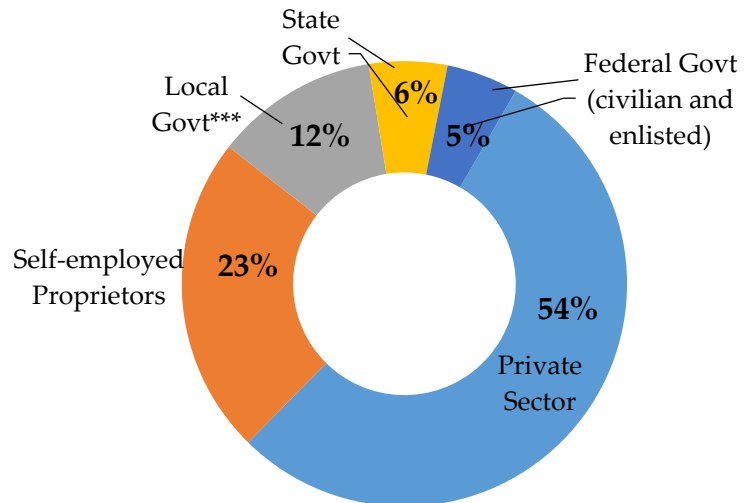
	2015	2016	1-Year Change 2015-2016	
WORKFORCE			No.	%
No. of Employees (<i>average annual civilian and enlisted</i>)	4,461**	4,401	-60**	-1%**
No. of Self-Employed Business Proprietors (2014, 2015)	1,326	1,327	1	-
Combined total	5,787	5,728	-59	-1%
EARNINGS				
Employee Wages (<i>average annual civilian and enlisted</i>)	\$192,012,687**	\$190,544,216	-\$1,468,471**	-1%**
Self-Employed Business Receipts (2014, 2015)	\$76,430,000	\$71,266,000	-\$5,164,000	-7%
Combined total	\$268,442,687	\$261,810,216	-\$6,632,471	-2%
<p>** When ADOLWD QCEW source data on employment and wages for manufacturing in Sitka is reviewed for years prior to 2016, the totals are much higher than 2016. This is because a coding change was implemented in 2016. As a result, 2016 manufacturing data is accurate for Sitka, but prior years manufacturing employment and wages are inflated (too high). Because ADOLWD does not go back and change prior years' data, interviews with affected businesses were conducted to make a correction to this time series for the years 2013 to 2015. <u>The corrected year 2015 estimated employment and wage data is presented on this table. This table also includes an October 2017 update to the number of and estimated wages for USCG enlisted + civilian employment.</u></p> <p>Sources: ADOLWD QCEW 2016 and 2015; US Census Nonemployer Statistics, 2014 and 2015; Pers. Communication with select manufacturers in Sitka; Pers. Communication with USCG Air Station Sitka</p>				

²⁰ ADOLWD QCEW is the most commonly reported labor data. It includes all who work in a place, regardless of their residency. Thus non-residents who work in Sitka are included in this information (see the next section on non-resident workers). QCEW job counts also include both full- and part-time jobs.

Figure 18 – Workforce Composition, Sitka

Sources: ADOLWD QCEW 2016; US Census Nonemployer Statistics, 2015; Personal Communication with select manufacturers in Sitka; Pers. Communication with USCG Air Station Sitka.

***Local government includes all City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Community Hospital, Sitka School District, and Sitka Tribe of Alaska employees.

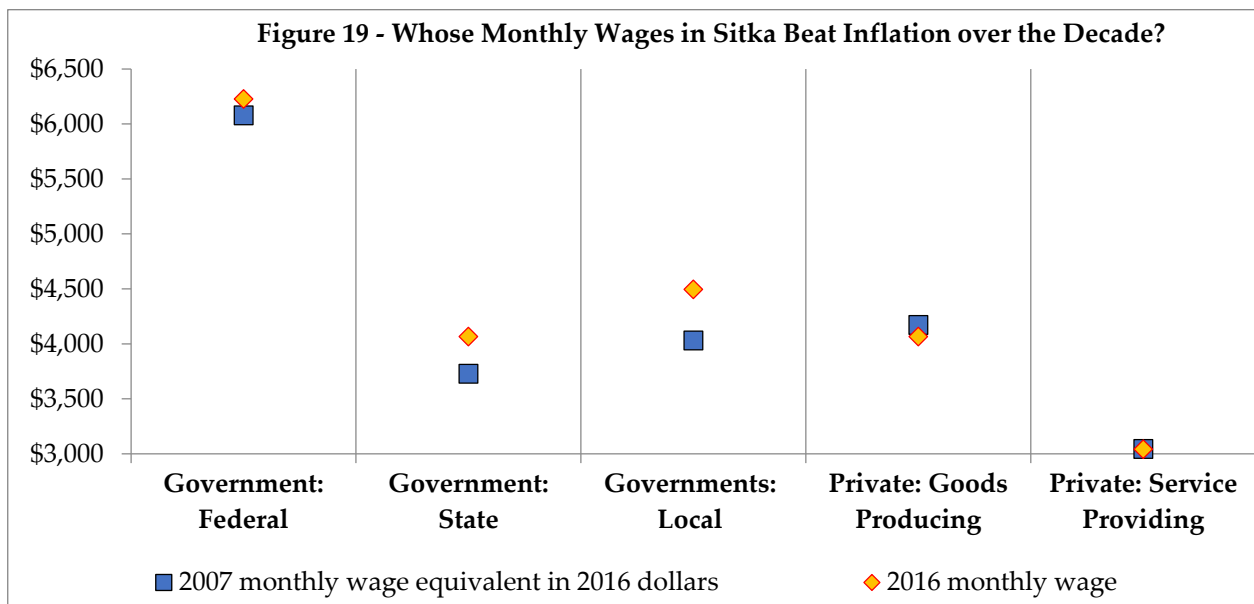


Private Sector Worker's Spending Power is Not Growing

Spending power for government workers in Sitka has increased over the last decade. This has generally not been true for the private sector (Figure 19).

- Wages to Sitkans working for the federal, state, or local government have all beaten inflation over the past decade. In other words, the real spending power of their wages has increased.
- Wages, however, for private sector workers in Sitka have barely kept pace with inflation – their real spending power has not increased over the past decade (Figure 19).

Figure 19 - Whose Monthly Wages in Sitka Beat Inflation over the Decade?

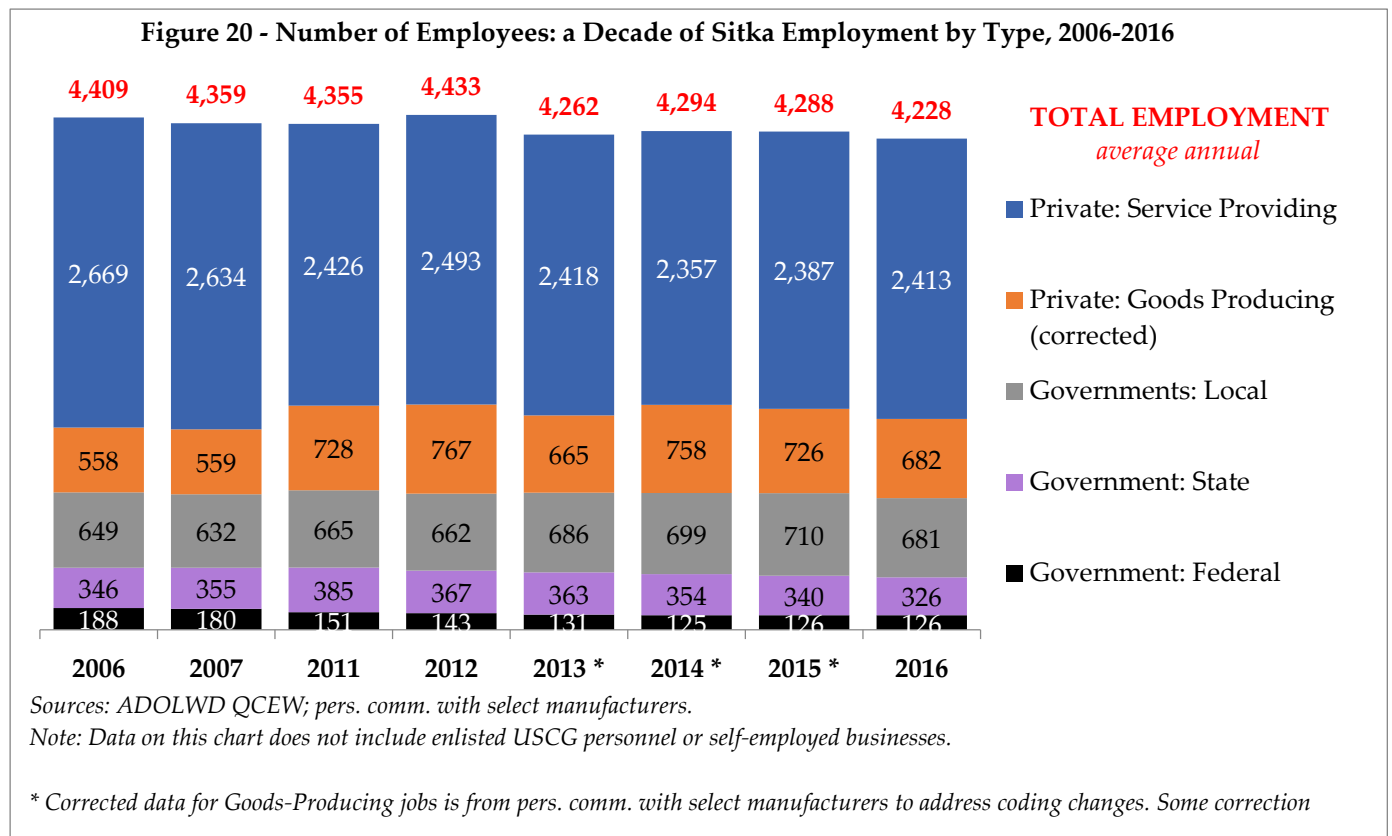


A Look at a Decade of Employment Trends

The total number of employees in Sitka in 2016 has dropped by 131 (3%) compared to 2006 (Figure 20).

- The number of employees increased during this period for private goods-producing work (+123) and local government work (+49).
- The number of employees decreased during this period for federal government (-54 not including enlisted USCG personnel), state government (-29), and private service-providing work (-221).

Figure 20 - Number of Employees: a Decade of Sitka Employment by Type, 2006-2016



Employment Seasonality

In 2016, there were an average annual 4,401 employees in Sitka:

(including USCG enlisted personnel but not including self-employed business owners)

- Employment ranged from a high in August of 5,300 employees to a January low of 3,825 employees.
- Thus, at the employment peak, there are 1,475 more people working in Sitka than during the winter low.
- This creates a significant demand for seasonal summer housing. Part of this need, but not all of it, is met by employer-owned bunkhouses.

Self-Employed Small Businesses

Small businesses without employees (self-employed, mostly sole proprietors) are called nonemployers. Their and other sole proprietors' gross earnings are not reported to the state Department of Labor. Sole proprietor business income is available from the tax returns they file to the Internal Revenue Service, by borough, as reported by the U.S. Census, Nonemployer Statistics.

- There were 1,327 sole proprietor-owned small businesses in Sitka that together generated more than \$71 million in earnings in 2015 (Figure 21). Fishing businesses are the vast majority.
- This \$71 million is significant work-related income into Sitka; for comparison, employees in Sitka made \$196 million in 2015.
- Sitka's sole proprietors made \$5 million less (- 7%) in 2015 than in 2014.
- In 2015 the population over age 20 was 6,730. With 1,327 small business owners, this means that 1 in 5 Sitkan adults had a small business that they owned and worked in full or part time.

Figure 21 – Sitka's Sole Proprietor Owned Small Businesses (years 2012, 2014, and 2015)

Industry	No. Businesses			Business Gross Receipts*			
	2012	2014	2015	2012	2014	2015	Change '14-'15
Totals	1,287	1,326	1,327	\$67,407,000	\$76,430,000	\$71,266,000	(\$5,164,000)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, & hunting (majority are comm. fishing)	591	627	586	\$42,990,000	\$47,393,000	\$40,224,000	(\$7,169,000)
Construction	98	90	85	\$4,538,000	\$4,840,000	\$5,445,000	\$605,000
Manufacturing	22	20	22	\$814,000	\$768,000	\$1,444,000	\$676,000
Wholesale trade	6	10	10	\$248,000	\$272,000	\$487,000	\$215,000
Retail trade	53	60	72	\$1,160,000	\$1,312,000	\$1,230,000	(\$82,000)
Transportation & warehousing	39	32	30	\$1,311,000	\$1,745,000	\$954,000	(\$791,000)
Information	*	9	10	*	\$244,000	\$169,000	(\$75,000)
Finance & insurance	7	9	14	\$276,000	\$456,000	\$282,000	(\$174,000)
Real estate rentals & leasing	75	73	78	\$6,749,000	\$6,735,000	\$7,903,000	\$1,168,000
Professional, scientific, & technical services	96	111	117	\$2,839,000	\$5,117,000	\$4,997,000	(\$120,000)
Administrative & Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services	53	41	46	\$732,000	\$689,000	\$737,000	\$48,000
Educational services	25	37	36	\$245,000	\$720,000	\$747,000	\$27,000
Health care & social assistance	53	49	55	\$1,438,000	\$1,816,000	\$1,843,000	\$27,000
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	60	69	72	\$1,102,000	\$1,262,000	\$1,499,000	\$237,000
Accommodation & food services	36	38	39	\$616,000	\$1,178,000	\$1,136,000	(\$42,000)
Other services (except public admin)	65	51	55	\$2,199,000	\$1,883,000	\$2,169,000	(\$5,164,000)
Source: US Census Nonemployer Statistics, 2012, 2014, 2015							
* Gross receipts are sales minus the cost of producing the goods sold							

Spotlight on Top Industries

Maritime (including Commercial and Sport Fishing)

Statistics typically fragment maritime work and economic activity, dividing it among many different industry sectors. For example, commercial fishing is part of ‘agriculture-forestry-fishing-hunting’, seafood processing is part of ‘manufacturing’, and marine sightseeing and transportation are part of ‘transportation and warehousing’. As a result, the importance of the maritime economy - of work that is dependent on the ocean - is “hidden” as part of other work.

But, understanding maritime work is important to coastal community decision-makers so they can consider it when making strategic land, workforce, and infrastructure investments and decisions.

When “blue” work is aggregated in Sitka in 2016, it accounted for one-third (32%) of all work-related earnings and more than one-quarter (28%) are engaged in work that touches the ocean.

In 2016, the maritime-related average workforce was 1,567, with close to \$84 million in wages and earnings (Figure 22). These totals include employees, government workers, and nonemployer small businesses.

Sitka’s maritime work is anchored by close to 600 commercial fishermen as well as a cluster of seafood processors that at the processing peak in August employed more than 800 workers (363 average annual employees in seafood processing). Processors include Seafood Producers Cooperative, Silver Bay Seafoods, North Pacific Seafood (Sitka Sound Seafoods), and Sitka Salmon Shares. Fishing, processing, and related activity together brought \$57 million in wages and earnings to Sitka (Figure 22).

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Air Station Sitka and other federal, state, and municipal employees whose work is linked to the ocean account for another 213 employees and an estimated \$9.5 million in payroll. About 60 U.S. Coast Guard families live on the base, another 65 live off-base, and all enrich the community in a myriad of ways.

Rounding out maritime work and commerce in Sitka are a diverse group of businesses and employees engaged in fishing charters, fishing guide services, fishing lodges, marine transportation, boat building, boat repair, boat selling, making products for boats, marine construction, marine construction and surveying, manufacturing products from the sea, and scientific-educational-technical work related to oceans.

All this activity has significant economic multiplier effects in town, as it requires purchases of fuel, utility, goods, and services.

In 2017-2018 a state-funded \$6.8 million floating dock is being constructed at Gary Paxton Industrial Park. It is a repurposed 250-foot barge that will be connected to shore with a drive-down ramp. The dock will have lights and power. It will be capable of moving seafood, which will assist current and future tenants of the industrial site. It also will provide tie up space for some commercial fishing vessels to allow in-water work. This will be like Eliason Harbors’ drive down float, but at a much bigger scale.

Figure 22 – 2016 Sitka Maritime Employment and Earnings

Type of Maritime Work/Job	No. of Firms	Total Earnings or Wages	Total Average Annual Employment
Fishing (<i>self-employed, year 2015</i>) ¹	583	\$40,204,000	583
Marine Transportation (<i>self-employed, year 2015</i>) (NAICS 483) ¹	6	\$194,000	6
Subtotal, maritime small businesses	589	\$40,398,000	589
Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging	7	\$15,254,724	363 (813 in August)
Fishing Other ² <i>e.g., employees and payroll for aquaculture, fishing, wholesalers, seafood markets</i>	8	\$1,887,798	48
Water Transportation ² <i>e.g., water transportation, guides, tours, support</i>	23	*	*
Marinas, Boat Dealers, Boat Building ²	5	*	*
Subtotal, Maritime employment	43	\$28,562,886	660
Mixed Marine Leisure & Hospitality ² <i>(e.g. marine museums, marine or fishing guiding services, fish camps with accommodations)</i>	14	*	*
Mixed Marine Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services ² <i>(e.g. fisheries research and development laboratories or services, Oceanographic research)</i>	2	*	*
Mixed Marine Construction, Manufacturing, Education, Boat Repair & Maintenance ²	3	*	*
Mixed Marine Manufacturing ² (<i>e.g. textiles/canvas</i>)	1	*	*
Mixed Boat Repair & Maintenance ²	4	*	*
Subtotal, mixed maritime employment***	24	\$3,838,250***	105
State Maritime Employees ² (ADF&G)	1	\$1,090,211	22
Federal Maritime Employees ^{2,3} (NOAA, USCG civilian and enlisted)	2	\$7,561,358	181
Local Harbor Employees ⁴	1	\$877,374	10
Subtotal, government maritime	4	\$9,528,943	213
Total Sitka Maritime	660	\$83,607,495	1,567
Average Annual Maritime Wage:			\$52,540

* Confidential

*** Total includes only 75% of mixed maritime to account for portions of businesses not linked to the ocean.

Sources:

1 U.S. Census nonemployers statistics, 2015; *Note that earnings listed are gross receipts.*

2 ADOLWD, special data run by C. Bell, 6/14/2017.

3 USCG Air Station Sitka, and ADOLWD QCEW.

4 Sitka FY 17 Municipal Budget and per. Comm. S. Eliason, harbormaster

Data compiled by Sheinberg Associates

Sitka Resident's Commercial Harvest

Sitka is the top commercial fishery port in Southeast Alaska, and 14th most productive in the U.S.

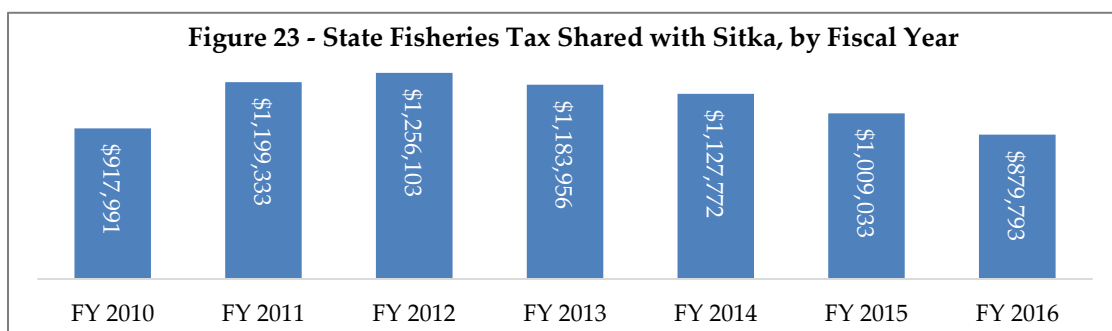
- Sitka was ranked the 14th most productive port for pounds processed in the U.S. and the top port in Southeast Alaska in 2015, according to the NOAA²¹.
- In Sitka in 2015, 78 million pounds of fish were landed at the docks in town that were worth \$59 million (ex-vessel value, which is the money paid to harvesters/commercial fishermen).
 - Reflecting smaller runs, the volume of fish landed in Sitka in 2015 was lower than the 89 million pounds landed in 2014 or the 126 million pounds in 2013.

Sitka Residents are highly successful fishermen. While Sitka only has 1.2% of the state's population, Sitkans earned 6.4% of all gross earnings paid to Alaskans from commercial fishing in 2015, and 2% of all money paid to all commercial fishermen that year. According to the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC), an estimated \$38 million was earned by Sitka commercial fishermen who landed 36.5 million pounds in 2015. This was a drop from 2014's \$44 million earned on 35.7 million pounds landed. 2016 data is still preliminary until late October, when final settlement sheets that reflect bonuses come in. As of September 2016 Sitkans gross earnings were \$35.8 million, for 24.3 million pounds of seafood landed (all types).

Salmon is the "money fish" for Sitkans, typically accounting for between half to more than 75% of pounds harvested, and between 40 and 60% of all gross earnings to Sitka commercial fishermen. The most salmon was harvested as part of Southeast seine fishery (19 million pounds worth \$6.1 million); however for value, the power troll fleet caught a much smaller volume (4.8 million pounds) that earned much more value (\$8.7 million). Sablefish is "number 2" in value for Sitkans. In the last four years it's accounted for 17% to 30% of all Sitkans' gross earnings from commercial fishing. The Halibut harvest ranks number 3 in value.

State Shared Fishery Taxes to the City (Figure 23). Depending upon the type of processing and other factors, the state returns one-half of the 3-5% it collects on the ex-vessel value of fish harvested or landed in Alaska to the place where fish processing occurred. Fisheries tax to the City and Borough of Sitka reflects the size of harvests, amount processed locally, and fish prices. The recent high was in 2012, with \$1.2 million shared with the city due to processing activity. In FY 2016, shared fish taxes brought \$880,000 to the City and Borough of Sitka, near a six-year low.

Figure 23 – State Fisheries Tax Shared with Sitka, by Fiscal Year



²¹ "Fisheries of the US (FUS) Reports," NOAA Office of Science and Technology, 2015

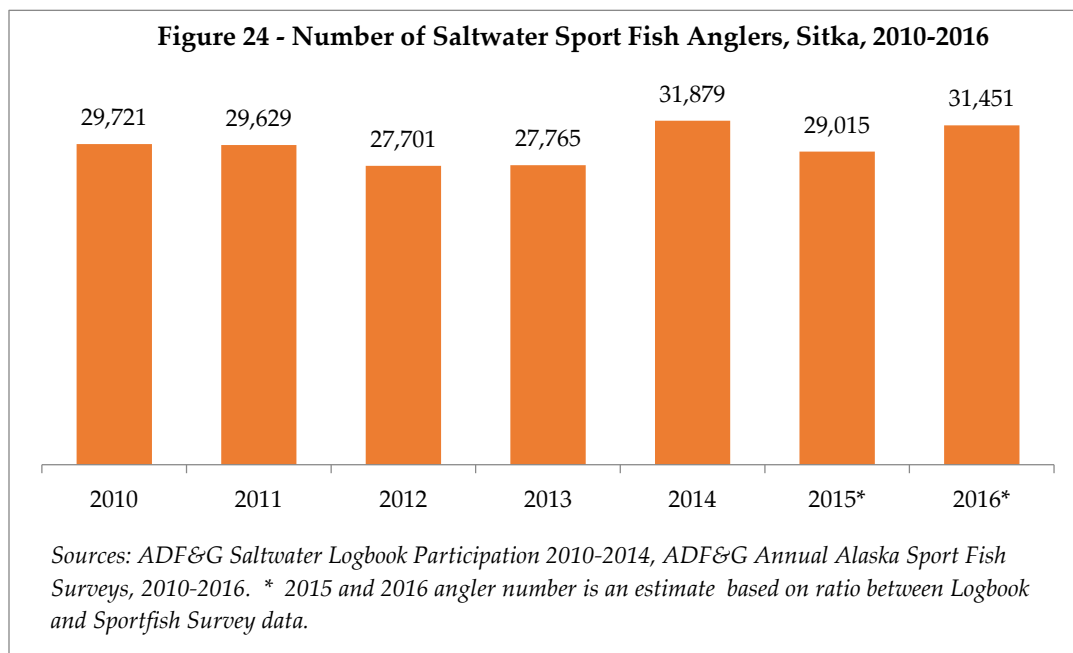
Charters and Sport Fishing

Sport fishing is an important component of Sitka tourism and also a maritime related activity.

Anglers tend to stay at local establishments who employ local crew and guides. Many charter and lodge businesses own, moor, and maintain their vessels locally. Good sport fishing isn't hard to find in Sitka, and there is a busy charter fleet and a number of fishing lodges. A casual internet search using Google shows about 25 local businesses offering to either sport fish guide, charter, or do one of these activities bundled with lodging.

In 2014, ADF&G saltwater sportfish log books show that in Sitka there were 82 businesses and 141 vessels engaged in sport fish charter activity. That year they ran 7,547 vessel trips to sport fish in saltwater, and 97% of anglers were nonresidents.

Figure 24 – Number of Saltwater Sport Fish Anglers, Sitka, 2010-16



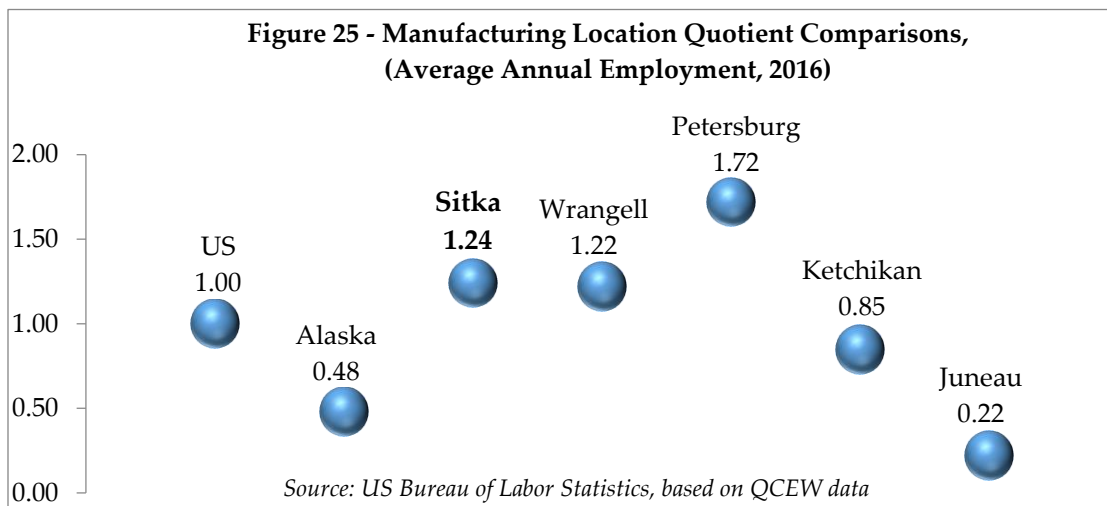
Manufacturing

Sitka was home to 35 manufacturing businesses in 2016.

- For manufacturing businesses in Sitka, 13 were employers with an average annual employment of 445 people (and 889 during the August peak).
 - Several of these employers are seafood processors with high seasonal variation in the number of workers, but at least 144 of these manufacturing jobs are year-round jobs.
- There were an additional 22 small manufacturing businesses in Sitka without employees. These manufacturers produce diverse outputs including seafood, other food, beverages, textiles, transportation equipment, wood products, and chemicals.

When all types of work are considered, Sitka has a higher concentration of manufacturing jobs than does Ketchikan, Juneau, or Alaska as a whole. Figure 25 puts Sitka’s manufacturing industry in context, by illustrating the manufacturing location quotient of various communities. Location quotients are ratios that compare the concentration of a resource or activity in a defined area to that of a larger area or base. In this case, Sitka’s private sector manufacturing location quotient (LQ) is calculated in comparison to the United States as a whole, which is given a baseline concentration of 1.0. Using this scale, Sitka scores a 1.24;²² this is a high value in Alaska, which has a manufacturing location quotient of just 0.48 for number of employees in 2016.

**Figure 25 - Manufacturing Location Quotient Comparisons,
(Average Annual Employment, 2016)**



Sitka’s high share of manufacturing jobs is linked to the amount of seafood processing activity in town (maritime related work), but it goes beyond that. While the seafood processors are arguably the most visible element of Sitka’s manufacturing, they are only one part of this market segment.

Sitka’s Government Workforce

Government jobs are generally year-round jobs with good benefits that provide stability during the swings in private sector employment. Sitka is home to multiple government entities.

- Together, government agencies employ 1,300 people (*includes civilian and enlisted USCG*). In other words, about 14% of the population and 23% of all workers are engaged in public service. Government wages account for 26% of all work-related earnings in Sitka.

The local government workforce of 681 (average annual) employees includes the City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka School District, and Sitka Community Hospital.

²² The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses QCEW wage and employment data to determine Location Quotients. As was explained at the bottom note on Figure 17, Sitka’s manufacturing employment was over-inflated prior to 2016. That is why earlier drafts of the economic chapter reported a higher LQ for Sitka’s manufacturing sector.

Federal government employees total 301 (average annual) and work for the United States Coast Guard (180 civilian and enlisted) and - from most to least employees – U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Homeland Security/TSA, U.S. Postal Service, Federal Aviation Administration, and Rural Housing Service. The federal total does not include the 6 or so U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) workers in Sitka because the USPHS does not breakout the locations of its workers and assigns them all to Anchorage for statistical purposes.

State government employees in Sitka number 326 (average annual) and are employed by – from most to least employees - the Department of Health and Social Services (Pioneers Home), University of Alaska, Department of Education (Mt. Edgecumbe High School), Department of Fish and Game, Department of Transportation, Department of Public Safety, the Court System, and Departments of Administration, Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Legislative Affairs Agency, Law, Corrections, and Environmental Conservation.

Tourism

Tourism is a growing component of Sitka's economy and one of the industries that brings new money into the local economy. Note that tourism activities like whale-watching and charter fishing are also part of maritime-related work.

Visitors to Sitka arrive independently via airplane, ferry, and private vessels and via large and small cruise ships. Sitka has a mature and diverse visitor-oriented sector that is comprised of tour, sightseeing, and wildlife/marine mammal-viewing companies; fishing charters and lodges; public, private, and natural attractions; many businesses offering accommodations from Airbnb rooms in houses to several hotels; multiple annual festivals and events that attract visitors; gift shops, retail stores, restaurants and bars that serve both residents and visitors, and more. Tourism in Alaska has been growing since the 2007-2008 national recession.

Tourism is forecasted to continue to grow due to a robust national economy, low gasoline prices, and increased concern over foreign travel.

In May 2017 the latest Alaska Visitor Statistics Program report was issued.²³ This survey-based analysis discusses Southeast tourism. Highlights of report information about Sitka are that:

- Sitka captures an estimated 9% of Alaska's tourism market with about 158,000 annual visitors.
- Those visiting Sitka came by cruise ship (82%), air (17%) and ferry (1%). Independent boaters were not part of this survey.
- About 36% of those visiting Sitka had been to Alaska before.
- Some 62% of visitors to Sitka used the internet for travel research, and just over half booked their trip via the internet.
- Half the visitors surveyed in Sitka came from western U.S. states.

²³ AVSP 7- Section 12: Summary Profiles – Southeast Region and Communities, McDowell Group, May 2017.

- Southeast visitors spent an average of \$760 per person in Alaska, much lower than the statewide average of \$1,057.
- Visitors to Sitka were coming for vacation or pleasure (94% of all), and almost all (90%) were part of a multi-day package tour.
- For non-cruise ship passengers visiting Sitka on a multiday trip, 91% were going to a fishing lodge, 2% to a wilderness tour, and 2% on an adventure tour.
- Visitors to Sitka were asked about their top activities while in the community or region (Figure 26). Cultural and historical activities were especially popular.

Figure 26 - Top Activities While in Community or Region (Percent)

Activity	Southeast Respondents	Sitka Respondents
Day cruises	38	10
Culture/History	33	39
Museums	15	12
Historical/cultural attractions	12	29
Native cultural tours/act.	12	9
Gold panning/mine tour	6	-
City/sightseeing tours	34	17
Wildlife viewing	27	22
Birdwatching	5	4
Hiking/nature walk	23	17
Tramway/gondola	15	-
Flightseeing	12	<1
Shows/Alaska entertainment	11	1
Dog sledding	8	-
Salmon bake/crab feed	11	1
Fishing	9	12
Unguided	3	3
Guided	6	10
Zipline	5	-
Kayaking/canoeing	4	1
ATV/4-wheeling	3	1
Rafting	2	-
Biking	2	2
Camping	1	<1
Northern lights viewing	<1	-
Hot springs	<1	<1
Hunting	<1	-
Other	2	1
<i>Source: AVSP 7- Section 12: Summary Profiles – Southeast Region and Communities, McDowell Group.</i>		

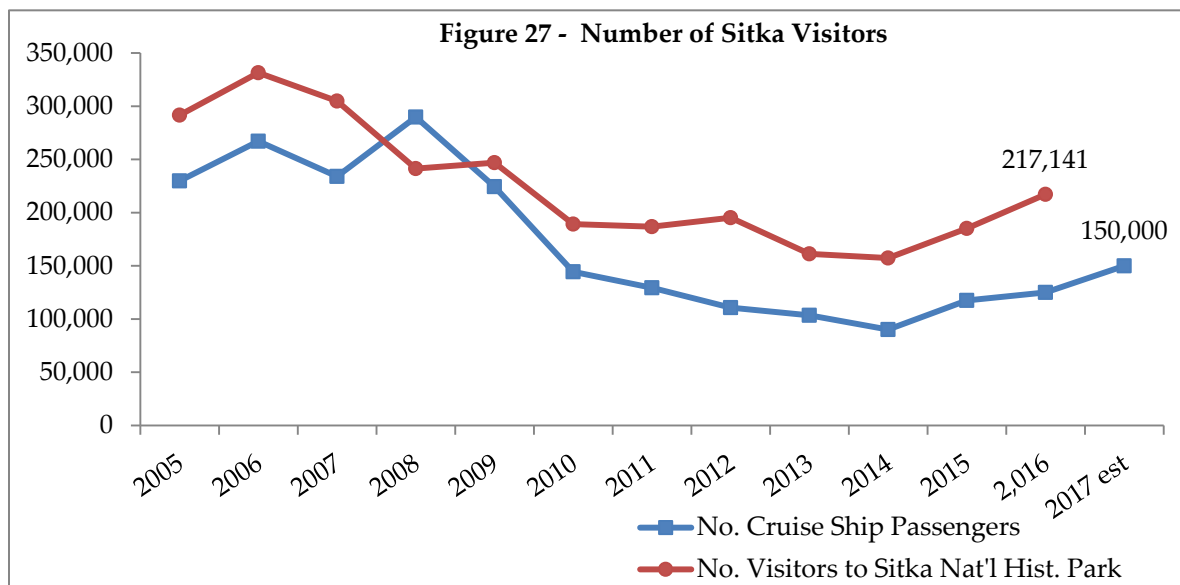
There is no single economic reporting category that is tourism. Visitor businesses include those in Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Accommodations and Food Services; Scenic and Sightseeing Services, and Water Transportation. This does not include retail, even though a good deal of this activity is visitor related. Further, since restaurants and bars serve residents along with visitors, the economic impact due solely to visitors is difficult to isolate for those businesses.

Work in the four visitor-oriented categories above accounted for about 800 workers or 14% of Sitka's workforce in 2016, but only 9% (\$23 million) of total work earnings in 2016.

- During the August peak, there were more than 1,100 workers in tourism – not including retail jobs (approximately 1,000 employees and 110 small business owners).

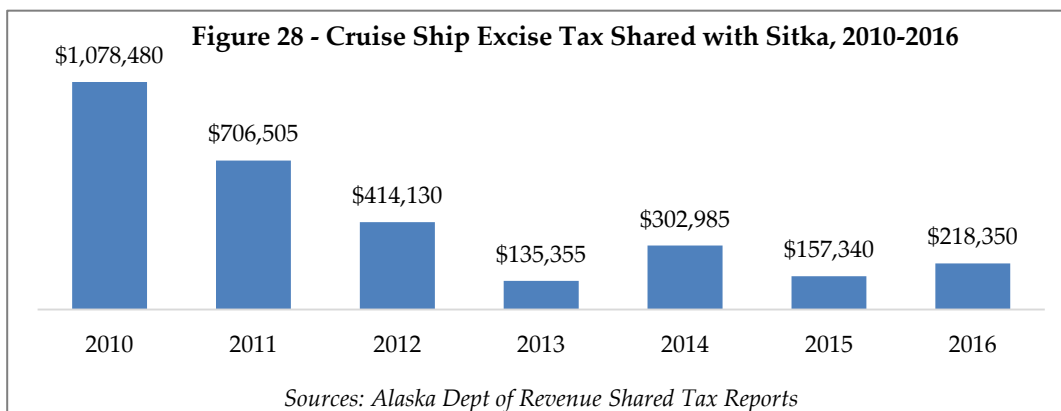
The number of cruise ship passengers visiting Sitka peaked in 2008, while the number of visitors to the Sitka National Historical Park peaked in 2006. Visitation to both declined for several years, bottoming out in 2014. However, since then, due in part to a private cruise dock, the number of cruise and other visitors to Sitka has been increasing (Figure 27).

Figure 27 - Number of Sitka Visitors



Cruise ships pay a Commercial Passenger Vessel excise tax to the state that is shared at a rate of \$5 per passenger to the primary ports the ships visited (this applies to the first seven ports visited). Generally, revenue is received and distributed the following calendar year. In FY 2016, a total of \$218,350 was shared with the City and Borough of Sitka (Figure 28).

Figure 28 - Cruise Ship Excise Tax Shared with Sitka, 2010-2016



Health Care and Social Assistance

Between the Sitka Community Hospital, SEARHC Hospital, and the many private providers and clinics, there are a wealth of health care facilities and services for residents that also serve regional Alaska Native and other clients.

- Health care and social assistance work in Sitka accounts for 636 jobs, or 11% of the local workforce, and \$32.5 million, or 12% of all work-related earnings.
 - These totals include 581 employees and 55 nonemployer small businesses offering health care or social services.
 - These totals do not include Sitka Community Hospital personnel, who are counted as local government workers, or the 95 State Health and Social Services workers, who are counted in state employee totals. These totals also do not include the 6 or so U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) workers in Sitka because the USPHS does not break out the locations of its workers and assigns them all to Anchorage for statistical purposes.

Education, Science, and Arts

This is another grouping of Sitka businesses and activities that defies traditional economic statistic gathering. Sitka has a large number of educational, science-oriented, and arts facilities, businesses, artists, non-profits, and activities. Please refer to Chapter 6 on Historic, Cultural, and Arts for a review. What that chapter does not fully describe is the education and science-oriented component of this synergistic group of activities.

The quality of schools is an important factor in retaining and attracting and retaining families to a community, as well as in training the future workforce. Educational seminars, classes, and training contributes to resident's quality of life and recirculates money in town. Educational activities also bring new money into Sitka, such as when new college graduates come to attend an internship program, researchers come to the Sitka Sound Science Center, or when musicians attend a Sitka Summer Music Festival residency or retreat.

Figure 29 – Education-Related Workers and Earnings in Sitka

Employer or Business	Workforce	Wages or Business Receipts
Educational Services (non-public) (e.g. Sitka Sound Science Center, AMSEA, preschools)	36 self-employed businesses + 83 employees	\$2.6 million
Sitka School District (local government)	207 permanent FTE + 65 temporary FTE	\$6.2 million
UAS and Mt. Edgecumbe (state government)	136 employees	\$6.5 million
totals	527 workers	\$15.3 million
<i>Sources: ADOLWD QCEW 2016; U.S. Census nonemployer statistics 2015; per. comm. Sitka Schools; FY 18 Adopted Sitka School District Budget Book</i>		

Internet

Reliable, high-speed, affordable internet access is a necessity for virtually all government, economic, medical, educational, and other activity today. Current internet bandwidth in Sitka is maxed out and will limit future economic growth if improvements are not made. There have been several recent multiday internet access failures that negatively impacted public agencies, the medical community, and private businesses.

Cost of Living

The cost of living is tied to the prices for everyday goods and services necessary to support a household, including housing, electricity, heat, and food.

- Housing (Figure 30). The price of housing is a driver in cost of living and affordability, and the ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimate shows Sitka has the highest median home prices in Alaska. The median house value in Sitka is 35% higher than the state as a whole.
- Rent (Figure 31). Average adjusted (includes utilities) rent is 6% higher than the state average and higher than other places in Southeast Alaska surveyed except for Juneau. The ADOLWD/AHFC 2017 Residential Rental Market Survey reported a 7.5% rental vacancy rate. Between 2016 and 2017, Sitka was the only place in Southeast Alaska where the vacancy rate got tighter (fell).
- Food (Figure 32). According to the UAF Food Survey, the price of food for a week for a family of four in Sitka was \$289.50. This was 170% higher than in Alaska as a whole, and was the highest of the six Southeast Alaska communities surveyed (Sitka, Petersburg, Haines, Craig, Ketchikan, Juneau).
- Water and Sewer (Figure 32). Utility rates are generally less than those in Anchorage, and is mixed in comparison with other communities in Southeast.
- Electricity (Figure 32). Electricity fees at \$148 per 1,000 kWh residential are higher than many other Southeast Alaska communities surveyed, but significantly lower than what those who rely on Inside Passage Electric Coop (IPEC) power were paying at \$403 for 1,000 kWh even with Power Cost Equalization (PCE).

Figure 30 - Median Home Value

U.S., Alaska, Borough/Census Area	Median Home Value
United States	\$178,600
Alaska	\$250,000
1. Sitka City and Borough	\$338,600
2. Skagway Municipality	\$324,600
3. Juneau City and Borough	\$323,500
4. Anchorage Municipality	\$290,500
5. Ketchikan Gateway Borough	\$252,500
6. Kodiak Island Borough	\$245,400
7. Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	\$233,400
8. Matanuska-Susitna Borough	\$224,900
9. Kenai Peninsula Borough	\$219,100
10. Petersburg Borough	\$218,800
11. Fairbanks North Star Borough	\$218,100
12. Aleutians West Census Area	\$217,500
13. Haines Borough	\$211,400
14. Valdez-Cordova Census Area	\$200,700
15. Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	\$197,300
16. Dillingham Census Area	\$195,100
17. Denali Borough	\$190,200
18. Bristol Bay Borough	\$187,500
19. Wrangell City and Borough	\$171,400
20. Yakutat City and Borough	\$166,000
21. Bethel Census Area	\$165,700
22. Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	\$162,600
23. Lake and Peninsula Borough	\$145,000
24. North Slope Borough	\$141,100
25. Aleutians East Borough	\$126,100
26. Northwest Arctic Borough	\$124,500
27. Nome Census Area	\$123,500
28. Kusilvak Census Area	\$108,000
29. Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	\$88,800
<i>Source 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Est. (US Census)</i>	

Figure 31 - 2017 Rental Housing Costs (all size rentals), Select Alaskan Boroughs

	2017 Median Rent (adjusted)	2017 Average Rent (adjusted)	2017 Vacancy Rate (%)
Kodiak Island Borough	\$1,433	\$1,433	6.9
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	\$1,252	\$1,337	4.7
City and Borough of Juneau	\$1,243	\$1,333	5.7
City and Borough of Sitka	\$1,227	\$1,319	7.5
Municipality of Anchorage	\$1,200	\$1,269	5.1
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	\$1,105	\$1,253	7.6
Fairbanks North Star Borough	\$1,120	\$1,208	12.2
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	\$1,006	\$1,110	9.9
Kenai Peninsula Borough	\$986	\$1,054	11.2
Wrangell-Petersburg	\$886	\$944	12.7
Surveywide	\$1,148	\$1,246	7.3
Both average and median rent are <u>adjusted</u> rent, which includes the price of utilities. Sources: ADOLWD-AHFC 2017 Rental Market Survey; August 2017 DCCED TRENDS			

Figure 32 - 2016/2017 Household Expenses, Select Alaskan Places

	Anchorage	Sitka	Ketchikan	Juneau	Wrangell
Median Adjusted Rent (March 2017, AHFC)	\$1,200	\$1,227	\$1,006	\$1,188	\$886 (Wrg+Ptr)
Week of food for a family of four (Dec 2016)	\$202.10	\$289.50	\$218.80	\$208.50	-
Monthly Electricity for 1,000 kWh (Feb 2017 or 2017 avg)	\$182.85	\$148.52 *, ***	\$107.30	\$128.33 **	\$133.55
#1 Heating Oil (\$/gal) with sales tax (Jan 2017)	\$2.34	\$2.54	\$2.84	\$2.88	\$3.00
Gasoline \$/gal (Jan 2017 unless noted)	\$2.55	\$3.34	\$3.53	\$2.21 (Nov '16)	\$3.47
Water (2017 rates)	\$50.13	\$41.51*	\$52.05	\$35.66	\$34.54
Sewer (2017 rates)	\$44.98	\$56.55*	\$49.98	\$91.61	\$28.93
Median Household Income (ACS 2011-2015)	\$78,326	\$70,376	\$64,222	\$85,746	\$48,603
* Sitka rates are an annual average to account for seasonal sales tax variation. ** Juneau electrical rates are averages since rates vary by season. *** Sitka rates as of Oct 2017: \$186.01 average for year given new seasonal rates.					
Sources - Median Rent: AHFC March 2017 Rental Survey; Median Household Income: ACS 2011-2015 5-Yr estimate; Gasoline & Heating Oil: AHFC Heating Oil, Propane, and Gasoline Surveys; Food: UA School of Natural Resources & Extension, Food Cost Surveys. Electricity: Sitka - http://www.cityofsitka.com/government/departments/electric/RatesandOverview.html ; Wrangell - http://www.wrangell.com/economicdevelopment/utilities-and-services ; Ketchikan - http://www.codepublishing.com/AK/Ketchikan/#!/Ketchikan11/Ketchikan1108.html#11.08 & Kim 907.225.5505; Juneau - *average monthly rate. Residential: peak season .1240 per KWH, off-peak season .1040 per KWH https://www.aelp.com/Rates/ourrates.htm ; Anchorage - https://www.chugachelectric.com/rate-information ;					

Non-Resident Workers²⁴ in Sitka

In 2015, approximately 40% of Sitka jobs and 14% of wages earned went to people who were not Sitka residents (Figure 33).²⁵

ADOLWD occupational data shows that in Alaska in 2015, an estimated 16% of all workers were not residents. Statewide, the highest percentages of nonresidents work in seafood processing, where nonresidents outnumber residents 3 to 1. After seafood processing, accommodations and food service (tourism-related), retail trade, construction, and transportation-warehousing are the industries with the highest percentage of nonresident workers. All these industries generally have one or more of the following: high seasonality, a need for specialized skills, or remote work.

Figure 33 - Nonresident Workers in Sitka, 2014 and 2015

Industry	No. Workers who are nonresidents		Wages to nonresidents	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
Totals	1,591	1,870	\$28,107,543	\$27,255,253
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	44	81	\$777,321	\$1,394,780
Construction	155	72	\$6,178,353	\$1,873,906
Manufacturing	514	816	\$7,447,051	\$10,130,415
Wholesale Trade	3		\$25,866	
Retail Trade	91	90	\$979,740	\$965,085
Transportation and Warehousing	184	192	\$3,003,321	\$3,568,235
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Svs	31	33	\$769,112	\$468,088
Admin. Support, Waste Mgmt., Remediation Svs	60	48	\$1,113,297	\$906,864
Education	82	73	\$276,015	\$237,560
Health Care and Social Assistance	94	110	\$2,964,930	\$3,121,314
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	30	29	\$513,557	\$464,369
Accommodation and Food	243	275	\$3,089,315	\$3,469,753
Other Services	29	29	\$329,341	\$324,382
Other	31	22	\$640,324	\$330,502
<i>Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, Occupational Database</i>				

²⁴ “Nonresidents Working in Alaska: 2015,” Kreiger, K., et. al. ADOLWD, Research and Analysis Section. The ADOLWD Occupational Data is a total count of workers, by occupation, covered by unemployment insurance in Alaska. Workers are assigned to the occupation in which they earned the most money in the given year, so a person will be counted only once, even if they worked in multiple occupations. Because they do not pay into the Alaska unemployment insurance system, the following are excluded from these counts: federal workers, the self-employed, crew of small fishing operations, and owners and officers of companies. Workers are considered Alaska residents if they applied for an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) in at least one of the two most current years.

²⁵ This estimate of 40% mixes data on nonresidents from the Occupational Database which counts unique workers with wage and employment data from QCEW data which counts jobs; so recognize that this is an estimate only, but is a good ‘big-picture’ estimate.

4.3 Economic Challenges and Opportunities

Increase Manufacturing Businesses and Jobs

Manufacturing is a strength of the Sitka economy and it may have potential for further development. More information should be gathered on this sector, with a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities facing businesses. Key learnings from this process should inform city strategy for policy and regulatory interventions in support of a stronger and more productive manufacturing industry, which advances Sitka's triple bottom-line priorities for economy, environment, and cultural prosperity.

Diversify Sitka's Maritime Work

The ocean is Sitka's primary economic driver.

- Protect this resource and improve the opportunities and productivity of blue jobs industries.
- Opportunity areas include: supporting and expanding marine transportation, service, and repair businesses; using more seafood byproducts; harvesting and adding value to additional ocean resources (e.g. seaweed, kelp); reserving parts of the waterfront for maritime commercial and industrial use; providing infrastructure to access and use marine resources with adjacent upland work space; and monitoring and testifying when appropriate on policy and legislation to assure Sitka's fair share of seafood allocations, and to slow ocean acidification and ocean warming.

To support small vessel owners, marine service businesses, and more fully utilize the Gary Paxton Industrial Park (GPIP), the GPIP Board intends to investigate the development of more robust marine service infrastructure at this industrial site.

Another maritime opportunity is to assist in the growth of marine manufacturing, service, and repair businesses. Conversations with marine businesses are needed to determine whether there are any obstacles that the borough can remove, or incentives it can provide, to help current businesses expand. Casual conversations have revealed the following questions:

1. Can boat-related repairs be more spread-out during the year to support year-round work?
2. Is there a need for covered work space with utilities?
3. Is the pricing of local ports, harbors, and haul-outs competitive with other places?
4. Is the cost of complying with local regulations prohibitive for start-up businesses? Are there opportunities for flexibility for seasonal businesses?
5. Is there a lack of waterfront commercial or industrial space for lease or purchase?
6. Does a lack of affordable housing for seasonal workers impact businesses' ability to grow?
7. Are there forums for marine businesses to share information that could help them schedule or work together more effectively? What about joint marketing?
8. Are there forums for marine businesses, the University, and others to share information to spark innovation and creativity that could lead to increased work or business?

9. Too many Sitka and other Southeast Alaska vessel-owners take their boats elsewhere in Southeast Alaska, Port Townsend, or Seattle for marine repairs and service. Given the region's aging vessel fleet, how can Sitka boat repair and build businesses capture more repair and rehab work?

With the largest homeported fishing fleet in Southeast Alaska, and a well-developed suite of boat and engine building and repair services, Sitkans regularly ask, "Why is the City and Borough of Sitka not investing in a publicly owned marine haul-out?" Part of the answer lies in the fact that, similar to Ketchikan, a number of private businesses have invested in marine haul-out facilities in Sitka. There are four private marine haul-outs in Sitka: an 88-ton haul-out at Halibut Point Marine for public use, and at Allen Marine there are three haul-outs that are at times open for public use: 66-ton, 88-ton, and 150-ton travel lifts.

In 2014, Northern Economics (NE) conducted a screening-level assessment on the feasibility of installing large vessel moorage, a vessel haul-out, and a deep-water dock at the Gary Paxton Industrial Park (GPIP).²⁶

NE survey results indicated a significant amount of haul-out activity for smaller vessels of up to 100 tons, but little activity for larger vessels. There was anecdotal support for a larger lift, but insufficient quantitative data was provided to support an analysis as part of this screening-level analysis.

The NE report conclusion was that there was weak to moderate opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels up to 150 tons and a weak opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels over 150 tons. If the private Halibut Point Marine haul-out ceased operation at any point, there would be a moderate to strong opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels up to 50 tons.

Finally, the NE analysis indicated a moderate opportunity for large vessel moorage, which was defined as in excess of 100-foot length overall. Survey results did not indicate demand for a large vessel moorage facility, but anecdotal information collected from interviews, as well as information conveyed to the study team by the CBS Harbormaster, suggests demand from the herring fleet to homeport in Sitka. Vessels in this fleet are in the 100–120-foot range.

Support the United States Coast Guard and Air Station Sitka

A strong relationship between the almost 200 U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) civilian and enlisted personnel in Sitka, the mission they serve and functions they provide, their families, and the City and Borough of Sitka is important.

Alaska Day festivities in 2017 marked the 40th year Sitka has hosted USCG Air Station Sitka, and the celebration included USCG renewal of Sitka's designation as a Coast Guard City.

Air Station Sitka is responsible for the entire southeast region of Alaska, from Dixon Entrance north to central Alaska, and from the U.S./Canadian border west to the central Gulf of Alaska. Air Station Sitka was officially commissioned in 1977. Today, it has three MH-60T Jayhawk helicopters and a complement of officers, enlisted, and civilian personnel with a payroll estimated at more than \$7

²⁶ "Preliminary Screening-Level Feasibility Assessment and Planning for a Marine Center at Sawmill Cove Industrial Park," Northern Economics, March 2014

million. These United States Coast Guard personnel provide national defense, search and rescue, marine environmental and law enforcement response, maintain marine aids-to-navigation, enforce laws and treaties, and do various other missions in cooperation with federal, state, and local government agencies. The Air Station averages 130 Search and Rescues a year, and a typical year also sees some 180 sorties in support of federal and state law enforcement initiatives. Air Station Sitka's aircrews have saved more than 1,800 lives, assisted thousands of others and saved several hundred million dollars in vessel property from the perils of the sea.

The USCG notes that its highest priority is continued excellent support for Coast Guard personnel and families.

- USCG families have the same cost of living, energy, educational, career/job, emergency response (tsunami, etc.) and housing availability constraints as everyone else in Sitka, so their concerns are similar to those of other community residents.
- The Coast Guard regularly works with the municipality for utility service and repair, and depends upon the local police, fire, and EMS to respond to operations, base, and housing emergencies.
- In the future there may be pressure to relocate USCG assets to serve the opening arctic; the City and Borough of Sitka should be prepared to support the presence and importance of Air Station Sitka.

Maintain a Healthy Natural Environment

Sitka is dependent upon the ocean and other natural resources and is therefore vulnerable to global, regional, or local forces that negatively affect them.

Residents desire to use natural resources sustainably and keep Sitka a wild and beautiful place. Forces that could jeopardize local resources range from natural to political.

- Global warming and ocean acidification have the potential to negatively transform the blue jobs sector.
- Sitka natural resources and the businesses and industries that have already developed which depend on them give Sitka a competitive advantage in attracting related business, visitors, and investment.
- Pursue the responsible sale of bulk water, locally and for export.
- Plan and implement development activities in a way that considers and minimizes environmental impact.

A Robust Government Sector

Public service jobs account for almost one-quarter of all work in town. It is important to recognize the economic stability that these stable, well-paying public sector jobs provide to Sitka.

- Sitka's 1,300 government employees are 23% of the local workforce and together earn 26% of all work-related earnings in Sitka. *(Percentages are based on totals that include all civilian and enlisted employees as well as nonemployer small businesses.)*

- Government work is an economic strength – government jobs deliver important services critical to sustaining local industries and health and safety, and they provide stable income that can circulate back into the economy. These are often year-round jobs with family-supporting wages.
- However, a weakness with government work is that federal, state, and local agencies are vulnerable to changes in funding.

Build Economic Development Partnership and Networks

Economic development initiatives very commonly depend on networks of public, nonprofit, and private partners.

In Sitka these partners include but are not limited to the City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Economic Development Association, Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce, Sitka School District, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, University of Alaska, Sitka Sound Science Center, Sitka Job Center, private businesses, and others.

- As objectives and actions are implemented, ask “who else should be at the table” and work to include them will strengthen chances of success.

Diversify Tourism

Sitka tourism has traditionally focused on cruise ship passengers and charter fishing clients.

Support for both activities is important to the economy. Active work to mitigate any negative impacts will help ensure continued support. It is expected that the number of cruise visitors will continue the recent upward trend.

Due to its unique cultural, historical, environmental, and community assets, Sitka is well positioned to expand tourism and attract more independent visitors. Independent visitors stay longer and spend more locally than cruise passengers, and also tend to return.

Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Eco and adventure tourism (camping, kayaking, boating, hiking, wildlife tours, fishing)
- Cultural and historical tourism (Tlingit culture, history, and arts; visual and performance arts, the Sheldon Jackson Museum, the Sitka National Historical Park and Russian history)
- Conference, festival and business travelers
 - For these tourists, Sitka can take advantage of and market its several beautiful venues including Sheet’Ka Kwaán Naa Kahídi Tribal Community House, the historic Sheldon Jackson Campus, the newly renovated Harrigan Centennial Hall, and the Sitka Performing Arts Center. A new 70-room hotel opened in 2017, expanding Sitka’s capacity to host large groups during the busy summer season.
- Marine-based travelers including yachters, sailors, and small cruise ships

The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce should continue its work to find ways to leverage Sitka’s assets to attract more independent tourists including the types listed above. Establishing a

committed multiyear marketing effort will help get more economic benefit from the new state-of-the-art Harrigan Centennial Hall (and other venues) by increasing events and revenue.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) works to nurture a respectful cultural and historical tourism sector. The May 2017 Alaska Visitor Statistics Program data shows that cultural and historical activities are a top attraction for Sitka visitors (see Figure 26, page 42). Expand these opportunities by support for and partnership with STA-led and other cultural and historic-based tourism providers. Investment in cultural assets, traditions and historic building rehabilitation is an opportunity area, particularly when coupled with interpreted tours.

Training and networking that helps to develop and market new eco and adventure tourism businesses is an additional prospect.

Another tool that can be used to leverage value from Sitka's historic assets and culture is the National Trust Main Street Program. Main Street is a 30-year old program that nationally has helped more than 2,000 communities obtain \$49 billion in reinvestment in traditional commercial districts. It leverages local historic, cultural, and architectural assets to obtain funding to revitalize downtowns and business districts.

Capitalize on Sitka's Health Care Strengths and Work to be a Regional Hub for Elder Care

Traditionally, health care activity recirculates money in town and keeps it from flowing outside to non-local health service providers. This is true in Sitka, but in addition, medical services bring new money into town when patients come to Sitka for SEARHC's regional medical services.

Given Sitka's strategic advantage in health care with its many health care providers, facilities, and assets, it has the potential to be a regional hub for elder care. Plan and take actions to accommodate the housing, service, medical, transportation, and social engagement needs of Sitka and the region's growing senior population. To keep these elders in Sitka:

- More accessible, affordable, housing choices are needed
- More assisted living and long-term care options are needed
- Increased personal care attendants who can assist with the activities of daily living and enable seniors to remain in their homes are needed
- More geriatric health care services will be needed

Build upon Sitka's Educational, Arts, and Science Assets

Build on success; several initiatives are already creating jobs, bringing in outside students, and benefiting local youth and adults. Build upon these assets and programs that include, but are not limited to, University of Alaska Southeast Sitka campus, the Sitka Sound Science Center, the Sitka Fine Arts Camp, other programming at the Sheldon Jackson campus, Sitka Whalefest, the Sitka Summer Music Festival, and the Sitka Arts & Science Festival. These opportunities and resources benefit community education and well-being, bring new people to town, and drive economic activity.

Workforce Development & Youth Engagement

Encourage young Sitkans to get involved in the public process and the local economy. Invest in workforce development education and initiatives focused on locally needed skill sets and entrepreneurship.

Investment in Sitka's Internet Capacity

Reliable, high speed, affordable internet access is a necessity for virtually all government, economic, medical, educational, and other activity today.

- Investments in Sitka's technology infrastructure are needed to provide high-speed internet and telecommunications support. This will improve local productivity and will encourage the development of new businesses, tech initiatives, and remote work opportunities.

Cost of Living

Affordability and cost of living are significant challenges for many Sitkans.

- The high cost of living can limit economic engagement and innovation, and risk negative migration from Sitka. Without affordable housing neither the seasonal or full-time workforce can live in Sitka.
- These challenges will not be resolved easily, and will likely be compounded by the state's budget crisis. In addition to strategies to address the high cost of housing, efforts that increase wages and attract/retain higher-wage work will also increase Sitka's affordability.

Convert Some Nonresident Workers to Resident Workers

An estimated 40% of Sitka workers are not Sitka residents (2015).

Some are "prime" candidates to try to convert to full-time residents. It is not surprising to find nonresident workers in seasonal industries such as fishing, seafood processing (manufacturing), construction, and accommodations and food (tourism). In addition, there are more than 80 nonresidents working in education and more than 90 in health care/social assistance.

Many of these nonresident workers are young people, the type of people Sitka must attract and retain if it is to thwart the projected population decline.

Conduct targeted interviews to determine whether there are actions that the City and Borough of Sitka could enact or influence to help these temporary residents become full-time residents.

4.4 Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
ED 1	Objective - Maintain Sitka's Vibrant Downtown			
ED 1.1	Create visitor-friendly walking routes and public spaces.	CBS, AK, AC	MT	U
ED 1.2	Invest in iconic features, outdoor attractions, and placemaking that complements service sectors.	AC, CBS	ST	L
ED 1.3	Encourage off-season window front displays in closed downtown stores.	AC	ST	L
ED 1.4	Encourage revitalization and redevelopment of dilapidated structures and vacant lots.	CBS, PR	ST	L
ED 1.5	Monitor parking needs for commercial uses, set requirements at lowest level to meet needs.	CBS	ST, OG	L
ED 2	Objective - Leverage Natural and Municipal Assets			
ED 2.1	Develop city-owned land management plan.	CBS	MT	L
ED 2.2	Sustainably develop natural resources to create jobs and investments.	CBS, AC, PR, AK, US	OG	U
ED 2.3	Structure utility rates to incentivize high-using businesses to Sitka.	CBS	ST	L
ED 2.4	Support conversions from fuel oil to electric heat.	CBS, AK, US	OG	L
ED 2.5	Install electric vehicle charging stations in municipal parking lots.	CBS	MT	GF
ED 2.6	Encourage public and private sector vehicle fleets to convert to electric.	CBS, PR	OG	L
ED 2.7	Limit amount of residential development in the commercial, industrial, and waterfront zones to preserve economic lands for economic uses.	CBS	ST	L
ED 2.8	Support research and development, for products made from local resources.	CBS	OG	L
ED 3	Objective - Develop Sitka's Workforce			
ED 3.1	Participate in career technical training and mentoring opportunities.	CBS, AC, PR	ST, OG	L
ED 3.2	Strengthen collaboration among entities working on economic development and business initiatives.	CBS, AC	ST, OG	L
ED 4	Objective - Promote Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Partnerships			
ED 4.1	Encourage local start-ups and entrepreneurship.	CBS, AC	ST, OG	L
ED 4.2	Support public-private partnerships to achieve economic objectives and business growth.	CBS, AK, AC, PR	OG	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
ED 4.3	Participate in small business and entrepreneurship networking, events, and education.	CBS	ST	L
ED 4.4	Identify and pursue code edits to encourage the sharing economy among individuals, businesses, non-profits, and government.	CBS	OG	L
ED 4.5	Encourage conduct of a regional freight study and identify initiatives to lower rates (e.g. cost sharing, back haul, and coordination among users).	CBS	ST	L
ED 4.6	Use a Triple Bottom Line approach to prioritize projects, permitting and land sales. Seek a balance among economic, social-cultural, and environmental attributes and return.	CBS	ST, OG	L
ED 5	Objective 5 – Maintain Essential Infrastructure			
ED 5.1	Modernize and expand services at the airport, one of the City’s highest-value economic development assets and essential to almost every business in town.	AK, US, CBS	LT	H
ED 5.2	Position the airport to be a more productive regional hub for passenger and freight services. <i>Cross reference T 1.1</i>	AK, US, CBS	MT	H
ED 5.3	Maintain well-functioning infrastructure upon which commerce and economic activity depend.	CBS, AK	OG	U
ED 5.4	Advocate for faster, more reliable cell and internet services.	CBS	OG	L
ED 6	Objective 6 – Support and Grow Existing Businesses			
Marine Resources				
ED 6.1	Conduct joint planning between the Harbor Commission, city Port and Harbor staff, and the GPIIP board and staff on efficient use and development for city ports and harbors, GPIIP, and the Marine Service Center.	CBS	MT	L
ED 6.2	Provide a range of services to support commercial and charter fishing and marine tourism.	CBS, PR	OG	U
ED 6.3	Develop a Marine Center at Gary Paxton Industrial Park to support Sitka’s fishing and marine transportation fleets and business. <i>Cross reference T 2.1.f</i>	CBS, AK, US, PR	LT	U, GF
ED 6.4	Identify a schedule for future infrastructure investment needed to support growth of maritime industries and businesses as well as provide moorage for Sitka’s permanent and transient vessel fleets. <i>Cross reference T 2.1.h</i>	CBS	MT	L
Tourism				
ED 6.5	Support growth of Sitka’s independent and cruise-related tourism work and enterprises, including heritage tourism. <i>Cross reference HCA 5.1</i>	AC, CBS	OG	L-M
ED 6.6	Market the newly renovated Harrigan Centennial Hall nationwide for conferences and conventions. <i>Cross reference HCA 4.1.a</i>	CBS	ST	L
Manufacturing and Food				
ED 6.7	Support growth of manufacturing businesses that add value to sustainably developed local resources.	AC, CBS	ST, OG	U
ED 6.8	Facilitate discussion on local manufacturing of small homes and/or cabins.	CBS	ST	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
ED 6.9	Support ship building and vessel construction enterprises.	CBS	OG	U
ED 6.10	Enhance local food security; support local food production.	AC, PR, CBS	ST, OG	L-M, GF
History, Culture and the Arts				
ED 6.11	Respect the intrinsic value of the mix of Tlingit, Russian and Alaskan history. Diversity creates economic opportunities.	ALL	OG	L
ED 6.12	Explore policies, programs, and design guidelines that protect historical sites and local character.	CBS	MT	L
ED 6.13	Support arts because they drive economic activity, bring in resources, enhance quality of life, strengthen cultural identity, and educate Sitkans and visitors.	AC	OG	L
Health Care				
ED 6.14	Leverage Sitka's position as a regional healthcare leader by focusing on efficiencies, filling specialty care gaps and preparing for increasing senior population.	AC, PR	OG	U
ED 6.15	Preserve and increase the healthcare workforce.	AC, PR	OG	U
ED 6.16	Expand availability of assisted living and long-term care in Sitka through zoning and development incentives.	ALL	LT	U, GF
Education				
ED 6.17	Increase use of Sitka's educational campuses, facilities, faculty, assets and programs which both enrich our community and strengthen the economy.	ALL	OG	L
ED 6.18	Attract and retain young individuals and families by supporting health care, science, and ocean related research opportunities and programs.	AC	OG	U
ED 7	Objective - Respond effectively to changes in the Economic Climate			
ED 7.1	Monitor economic conditions and respond accordingly to remain flexible, adaptable, and resilient.	ALL	OG	U
ED 7.2	Minimize debt.	AC	OG	U
ED 7.3	Foster a positive business climate with consistent regulations, permitting, and taxes.	CBS	OG	L

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

5 Housing

Goal

Expand the range, affordability, and quality of housing in Sitka while maintaining attractive, livable neighborhoods.

5.1 Current Conditions

Number and Type of Dwelling Units

The best estimate in 2016 is that there are 4,246 dwelling units in Sitka (Figure 36).

Figure 36 – Total Dwelling Units in Sitka

	2016	2011-2015	2010	2000
Total Dwelling Units	4,246	4,119	4,102	3,650
Sources:	AHFC data added to 2010 U.S. census	ACS 2011-2015 5-year estim.	U.S. Census	U.S. Census

A look at the ACS's 5-year (2011-2015) rolling average housing data (Figure 37) estimates that Sitka's housing stock is:²⁷

- 51% single family homes
- 18% multifamily structures (including 3-4 plexes, condos, and apartment buildings)
- 14% duplexes
- 10% trailers or manufactured homes
- 6% townhouses or rowhouses ("1-unit attached")
- 1% boats, RVs, vans

The ACS also identifies the number of occupied dwelling units, which in Sitka is listed as 3,472 (plus or minus 148). Unoccupied units could be for rent or for sale, only occupied seasonally, or be abandoned.

²⁷ The most recent American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate (2011-2015) lists 127 fewer dwelling units than a tally using the 2010 census count and adding in the number of units constructed each year that the city supplies to AHFC. Nonetheless, it is still useful to look at the ACS data for trends.

Figure 37 - Total Dwelling Units in Sitka by Type

Dwelling Units by Type	2011-2015
Total housing units	4,119 ±54
Total occupied housing units	3,472 ±148
1-unit, detached	2,114
1-unit, attached ²⁸	265
2 units	571
3 or 4 units	338
5 to 9 units	207
10 to 19 units	75
20 or more units	113
Mobile home	415
Boat, RV, van, etc.	21
<i>Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-year estimate</i>	

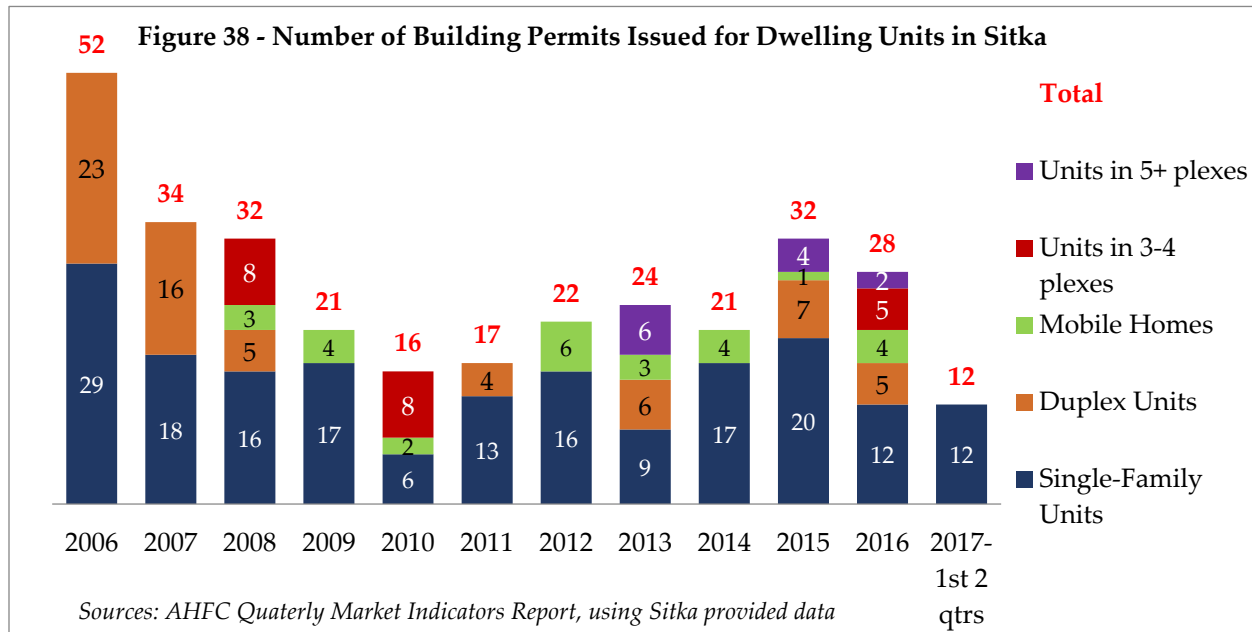
New Construction

Between 2010 and 2016, permits were issued by the city to build 160 new dwelling units in Sitka (Figure 38).

- Most of new building permits since 2010 were for single family dwelling units (Figure 38).
- During this 7-year period when the total housing stock increased by 4%, Sitka's population grew by 48 persons or 1/2% (from 8,881 to 8,929 people) and employment increased 7% (from 4,256 average annual jobs to 4,566).
- Annual building permits issued for housing construction have trended down for a decade, although in 2015 there was the highest construction permitting activity since 2008.

²⁸ These are townhouses and row houses. The ACS defines 1-unit attached structures as those with one or more walls extending from ground to roof separating it from adjoining structures. In row houses (sometimes called townhouses), double houses, or houses attached to nonresidential structures, each house is a separate, attached structure if the dividing or common wall goes from ground to roof.

Figure 38 - Number of Building Permits Issued for Dwelling Units in Sitka



Vacancy Rates

In March of each year the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) conduct a Residential Rental Market Survey in several Alaska communities (Figure 39).

In March 2017 the AHFC-ADOLWD vacancy rate for rentals in Sitka was 7.5%. Between 2016 and 2017, Sitka was the only place in Southeast Alaska where the vacancy rate got tighter (fell). The ACS annual 5-year survey also estimates vacancy rates; for 2011-2015 in Sitka, it estimated rental vacancy rates at 6.1% and for homeowners at 3.6% (Figure 39).

Figure 39 – Sitka Housing Vacancy Rates

	Sitka	Ketchikan (Borough)	Juneau	Alaska	US
Rental Vacancy Rate, March 2017 (AHFC)	7.5%	9.9%	5.7%	7.3%	
Rental Vacancy Rate, March 2016 (AHFC)	8.3%	9.3%	3.3%	5.8%	
Rental Vacancy Rate (ACS, 2011-2015)	6.1%	8.5%	4.4%	6.2%	6.4%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (ACS, 2011-2015)	3.6%	1.9%	1.0%	1.7%	1.9%
Sources: ACS 2011-2015 5-year Estimate; AHFC Annual Rental Market Survey, 2016 and 2017					

Housing Market

At \$338,600, the median value of an owner-occupied house in Sitka was higher in Sitka than anywhere else in Alaska (Figure 40, also Figure 30). This was 35% higher than the state median home price of \$250,000.

Figure 40 - Median Value Owner Occupied Homes

Place	Median Home Value
U.S.	\$178,600
Alaska	\$250,000
Anchorage	\$290,500
Southeast Alaska Boroughs	
Haines	\$211,400
Hoonah-Angoon	\$233,400
Juneau	\$323,500
Ketchikan	\$252,500
Petersburg	\$218,800
Prince of Wales-Hyder	\$162,600
Sitka	\$338,600
Skagway	\$324,600
Wrangell	\$171,400
Yakutat	\$166,000
<i>Source: ACS, 2011-2015 5-year Estimate</i>	

Figure 41 – Distribution of Housing Values for Owner-Occupied Houses, Sitka

Price Range	Number (%) of Units
Less than \$50,000	135 (7%)
\$50,000 to \$99,999	79 (4%)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	55 (3%)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	109 (5%)
\$200,000 to \$299,999	409 (20%)
\$300,000 to \$499,999	964 (47%)
\$500,000 to \$999,999	270 (13%)
\$1,000,000 or more	35 (2%)
Median Price (2015 \$)	\$338,600
Number of Owner-occupied units*	2,056
<i>* This does not include rentals. Source: ACS 2011-2015 5-year Estimate</i>	

There is a brisk market for homes in Sitka. A Multi-Listing Service (MLS) review showed that in 2016, 54 single family homes sold in Sitka at an average price of \$359,866 (Figure 42). Note that properties sold directly by owners are not included in MLS tallies. The average 2016 sales price of a MLS-listed single-family home was similar to, but a bit higher than, the ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimate of median home value of \$338,600.

Sitka's municipal assessor reports that about one-quarter of properties in 2016 sold without any public marketing (so would not be on the MLS), and about one-quarter of home sales were cash sales.

Figure 42 – Single-Family Homes Sold by Realtors in Sitka

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Homes Sold	54	48	47	53	22	46
Average Sale Price	\$359,866	\$404,344	\$353,104	\$301,413	\$394,612	\$323,464
Sales Volume	\$19,972,779	\$19,408,530	\$16,595,890	\$15,974,900	\$8,681,462	\$14,879,345
<i>Sources: Multi-Listing Service (MLS). 2011-2015 data courtesy of Davis Realty; 2016 data courtesy of Baranof Realty</i>						

Rental Market

Median adjusted (including utilities) rent was \$1,227 per month as measured in March 2017 by the AHFC-ADOLWD Residential Rental Market Survey (Figure 43 and Figure 31).

- The median adjusted rent in Sitka was 7% higher than the survey's statewide median, and higher than other places in Southeast Alaska surveyed, except for Juneau.

Another rent measure review is the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) annual calculation of Fair Market Rent (FMR). FMR is the calculated amount of money that a given property would command if it were open for leasing at the moment. FMR is often used to help decide how much to charge for rental units. In Southeast Alaska in 2017, Juneau and Skagway have the highest FMR for all types of rental units, with Ketchikan and Sitka essentially tied for 3rd and 4th place. The lowest FMRs in the region are in the Hoonah-Angoon Census area, Wrangell, and Petersburg (Figure 44).

HUD lists FY 2017 Fair Market Rent (FMR) in Sitka for a one-bedroom at \$989, and for a four-bedroom unit at \$1,984 (Figure 44). FMR in Sitka has been climbing for all sizes of units over the last four years (Figure 45).

- Between fiscal years 2015 and 2017, fair market rent in Sitka jumped 11% for efficiencies. 16% for 1-bedroom units, and 19% for 4-bedroom units (Figure 45).

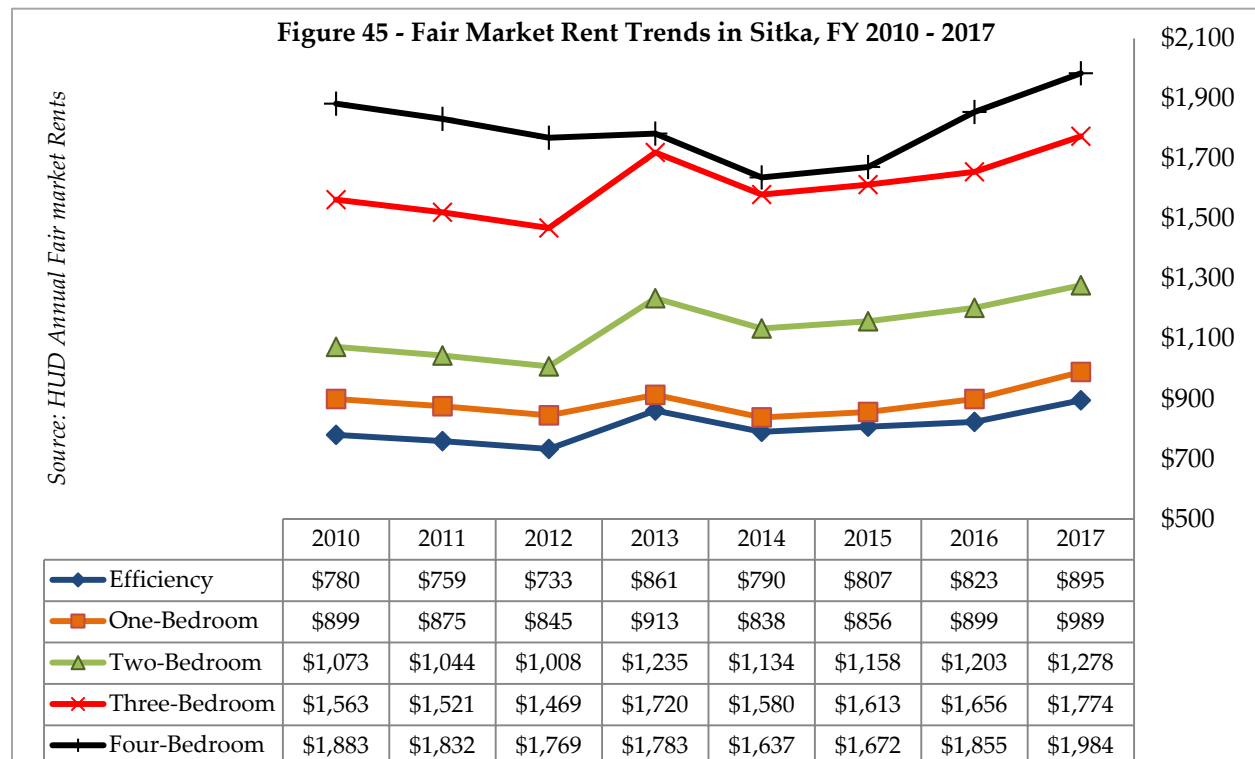
Figure 43 – Measurements of Rent in Sitka and Select Other Locations

	Sitka	Ketchikan	Juneau	Wrangell	Skagway	Alaska	U.S.
Median Rent, all units (includes utilities) <i>Source: ADOLWD-AHFC, Annual Rental Market Survey, March 2017. Alaska rent is for areas surveyed only.</i>	\$1,227	\$1,006	\$1,243	\$886 (Ptr+Wrg)		\$1,148	
Median Gross Rent, all units <i>Source: ACS, 2011-2015 5 year estimate</i>	\$1,057	\$1,033	\$1,188	\$732	\$1,020	\$1,146	\$928
Average Fair Market Rent, 2-bedroom unit (includes utilities) <i>Source: US HUD, FY 17, Annual Fair Market Rents</i>	\$1,278	\$1,317	\$1,466	\$1,010	\$1,414	\$1,256	\$1,103

Figure 44 & 45– FY 2017 Average Fair Market Rents & Trends, Southeast Alaska

	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom
Haines Borough	\$723	\$873	\$1,007	\$1,303	\$1,563
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	\$546	\$674	\$861	\$1,182	\$1,187
Juneau City and Borough	\$930	\$1,103	\$1,466	\$2,109	\$2,348
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	\$836	\$1,006	\$1,317	\$1,722	\$2,280
Petersburg Census Area	\$673	\$798	\$1,060	\$1,326	\$1,461
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	\$822	\$828	\$1,062	\$1,329	\$1,464
Sitka City and Borough	\$895	\$989	\$1,278	\$1,774	\$1,984
Skagway Municipality	\$1,016	\$1,093	\$1,414	\$2,058	\$2,195
Wrangell City and Borough	\$725	\$760	\$1,010	\$1,358	\$1,568
Yakutat City and Borough	\$849	\$926	\$1,182	\$1,479	\$1,835

Source: HUD Annual Fair Market Rents



About One-Third of Sitkans are Cost-Burdened by Housing

The conventional public policy indicator of housing affordability in the United States is the percent of income spent on housing. Housing expenditures – including mortgage, rent, utilities, property taxes, heating and similar expenses – which exceed 30% of household income have historically been viewed as an indicator of a housing affordability problem.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Census, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), and others define a household that spends more than 30% of its income on housing (including utilities) as cost-burdened. [These families] “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.”²⁹

Since the mid- to late 1990s it has been observed that many households whose housing costs exceed 30% of their incomes devote a higher percentage of their income to large amenity-laden homes. Often, these households still have enough income left over to meet their non-housing expenses. For them, the 30% ratio is not an indicator of a true housing affordability problem, but rather a lifestyle choice. However, for those households at the bottom rungs of the income ladder, the use of housing costs in excess of 30% of their limited incomes as an indicator of a housing affordability problem is as relevant today as it was four decades ago.³⁰ A household that pays more than 30% of its income for housing (including utilities, taxes) is considered to be cost-burdened by housing.³¹

Over the last six years, the percent of homeowners in Sitka who are cost-burdened by housing has increased, while the percent of renters who are cost-burdened has decreased (Figure 46).

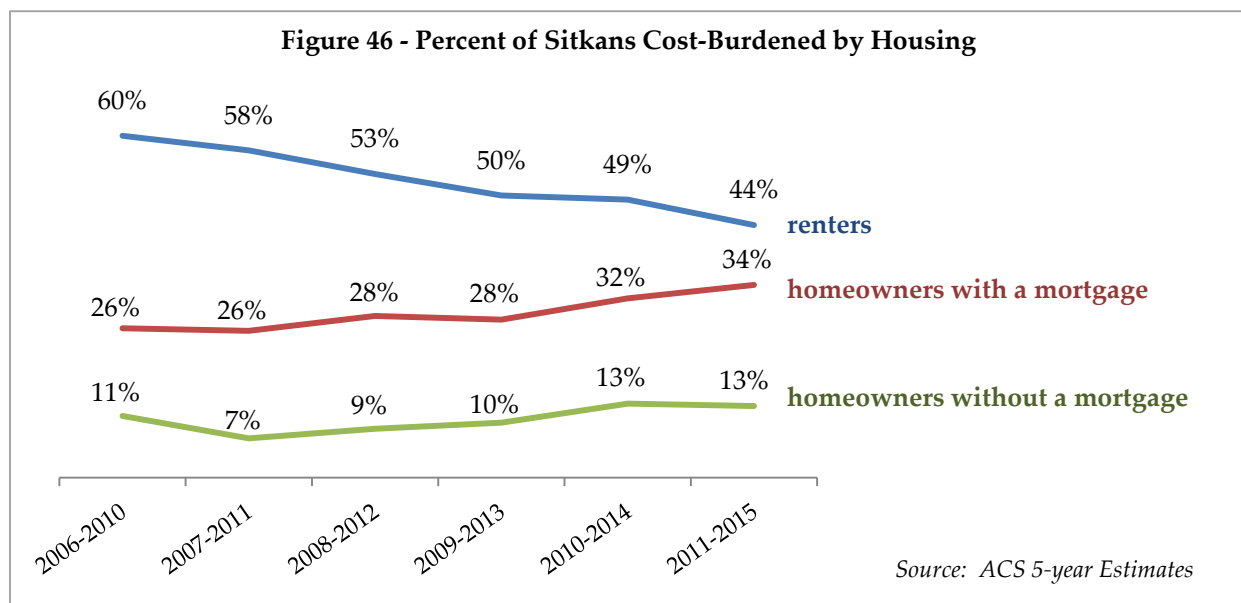
- Approximately 44% of renters and 34% of homeowners with a mortgage pay more than 30% of their income on housing and are thus cost-burdened (Figure 46).
- Those most negatively impacted are Sitkan households at the bottom rungs of the income ladder.

²⁹ “Rental Burdens: Rethinking Affordability Measures,” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development PD&R Edge (an online HUD magazine), September 22, 2014.

³⁰ “Review of Selected Underwriting Guidelines to Identify Potential Barriers to Hispanic Homeownership,” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, March 2006.

³¹ “Housing Affordability: Myth or Reality?” Wharton Real Estate Center Working Paper, Wharton Real Estate Center, University of Pennsylvania, 1992.

Figure 46 - Percent of Sitkans Cost-Burdened by Housing



What Can Sitkans Afford?

It is important to consider whether rent is affordable for young adults and families in Sitka because these are the residents that Sitka must retain and attract to prevent population decline. (Jobs, cost of living, quality of life, and other factors are important too; however, the focus here is finding a place to live.)

If a Sitka resident earns Alaska's minimum wage of \$9.80/hour and works one job full time, they earn \$20,384 (\$510/month).

Based on Fair Market Rents (Figure 44), they could not afford to rent any dwelling unit in Sitka. Calculations show that those earning minimum wage in Sitka must work 78 hours/week or almost two full-time jobs to afford a one-bedroom rental (Figure 47).³²

³² "Out of Reach 2017: Alaska," National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Figure 47 – Rental Housing Affordability

Using Fair Market Rent....	Sitka	Ketchikan	Juneau	Wrangell	Alaska
One-Bedroom Rental					
Work hours per week, at minimum wage, to afford	78	79	87	60	77
Number of full-time jobs, at minimum wage, to afford	1.9	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.9
Income needed, to afford	\$39,560	\$40,240	\$44,120	\$30,400	\$39,226
Wage needed, to afford	\$19.02	\$19.35	\$21.21	\$14.62	\$18.86
Two-Bedroom Rental					
Work hours per week, at minimum wage, to afford	100	103	115	79	99
Number of full-time jobs, at minimum wage, to afford	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.5	2.5
Income needed, to afford	\$51,120	\$52,680	\$58,640	\$40,400	\$50,246
Wage Needed, to afford	\$24.58	\$25.33	\$28.19	\$19.42	\$24.16
<i>Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2017 Report</i>					

Another series of calculations were performed to determine what priced home Sitkans could afford to purchase without becoming cost-burdened. Calculations include:

1. Using several typical Sitka income categories and multiply each by 30% to identify what those in that income bracket can pay monthly without becoming cost-burdened.
2. Determine typical monthly housing payments for the median-priced and a few other homes in Sitka. This was done by using various online mortgage calculators and assuming current interest rates for a 30-year fixed mortgage of 3.8%, a 20% down payment, the borrower has a good credit score, that insurance-taxes-utilities total an additional 15%, and so on (see assumptions listed for Figure 48).
3. Identify what typical rent payments are by using US HUD FMR for Sitka.



Based on the calculations and using the assumptions listed in Figure 48, results show that:

- Households earning Sitka's median household income (\$70,376) can afford the rent on all sized units except a 4-bedroom, and can afford the house payments on a median-priced Sitka home (\$338,600) without becoming cost-burdened.
- For those earning Sitka's average wage (\$42,865), rentals larger than a one-bedroom unit are not affordable without becoming cost-burdened by housing expenses, and homes that cost more than \$225,000 could not be easily afforded.
- For those making \$25,000/year – which is slightly above minimum wage - affordable rent is \$500-\$625/bed.
- Use caution when reviewing Figure 48, and remember that changes to any of these assumptions will change the estimated monthly payment.
 - For example, if interest rates are higher than 3.8%, or a different type of loan is used, or if the down payment is only 5%, then monthly payments increase to the point where those earning the median household income of \$70,376 would not be able to afford payments on the median priced house of \$338,600 without being cost-burdened.
 - As another example, if only 10% could be afforded as a down payment (rather than the assumed 20%), then those earning Sitka's average wage of \$41,865 could not afford to buy a home that cost more than \$200,000.

Some options to address housing affordability for Sitkans making lower income include having more than one wage-earner share a dwelling unit, cutting other living expenses and paying more than 30% of their income on housing, or using savings to supplement monthly earned income.

However, all these options assume that an affordable housing unit can be found to rent or purchase.

Figure 48 – One Set of Examples: Housing Sitkans Can and Cannot Afford**

TO RENT OR BUY 		Rent an eff. (0-BR) @ \$895	Rent a 1-BR @ \$989	Rent a 2-BR @ \$1,278	Rent a 4-BR @ \$1,984	Buy a \$275,000 House	Buy a \$338,600 House	Buy a \$500,000 House
Your Estimated Monthly Payment (Nov. 2017): 								
** Assumptions: a) 20% down payment, b) no private mortgage insurance, c) 30-year fixed mortgage at 3.8% interest, d) a good credit rating, and e) 15% additional for taxes-utilities-insurance.		\$895 *	\$990 *	\$1,280 *	\$1,985 *	\$1,200 **	\$1,500 **	\$2,190 **
IF YOUR ANNUAL INCOME IS:	YOUR MONTHLY PAYMENT WITHOUT EXCEEDING 30% OF YOUR INCOME IS:	IS YOUR MONTHLY PAYMENT 30% OR LESS OF YOUR INCOME?						
\$70,376 <i>Sitka Median Household (HH) Income</i>	\$1,760	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
\$82,376 <i>Sitka Mean HH Income</i>	\$2,060	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
\$42,865 <i>Sitka average annual wage</i>	\$1,072	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
\$20,384 <i>Income if full time at minimum wage job (\$9.80/hr)</i>	\$510	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
\$25,000 <i>Sitkans earning \$25,000 or less per year are 32% of 2014 tax return filers and 15% of all HH</i>	\$625	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
\$50,000 <i>Sitkans earning \$25,000-\$50,000 per year are 25% of 2014 tax return filers and 18% of all HH</i>	\$1,250	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
\$100,000 <i>Sitkans earning \$50,000-\$100,000 per year are 27% of 2014 tax return filers and 37% of all HH</i>	\$2,500	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
* This is FY 2017 Sitka Fair Market Rent								
** <u>Note that changes to any of these variables will change the monthly payment.</u> For example, if interest rates are higher than 3.8%, or a different type of loan is used, or if the down payment is only 5%, then monthly payments increase to the point where those earning the median household income of \$70,376 cannot afford payments on the median priced house of \$338,600 without being cost-burdened.								

Temporary (Transitional) Safe Housing

Approximately 10% of Sitka's population and more than one-third of Sitka's student body qualified for some type of assistance linked to lower income in 2016. Many Sitka residents are just an illness, injury, act of violence, job loss, or other piece of bad luck away from needing transitional (temporary) housing.

Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV) has a transitional living shelter for those experiencing domestic violence. It has a capacity of 24 women and children, consisting of six bedrooms — outfitted with closets, storage and bedding — bathrooms, lockers, a full kitchen, two communal living rooms, a laundry room and a children's playroom. There is no transitional housing in Sitka for those experiencing homelessness.

Transitional or temporary housing's primary purpose is to help residents — including working homeless making insufficient wages to afford long-term housing — become productive members of society and transition into permanent, affordable housing. Some transitional living facilities offer low-cost housing.

5.2 Housing Challenges and Opportunities

Critical Need for More Affordable Homes for Sale and For Rent

Availability of affordable housing is a top issue facing Sitka if the community is to be successful in retaining and attracting young adults and young families.

Sitka has the highest median home prices in Alaska, and higher median rent than most places in Southeast Alaska.

Information in this chapter explained what an affordable home to rent or purchase means for Sitkans. It showed that many Sitkans cannot afford to pay monthly rent or mortgage payments without becoming cost-burdened by housing. Approximately 44% of renters and 34% of homeowners are cost-burdened by paying for housing each month.

Take action to address housing affordability. There are multiple approaches to stimulate construction of affordable housing; some can happen quickly, while others will require more study to ensure the goal is achieved without causing unintended consequences. Actions could include:

- Increase land supply targeted for affordable housing
- Offer incentives for the development of permanently affordable housing
- Reduce lot sizes to reduce the cost of land and facilitate more and smaller home development
- Reduce required residential parking to reduce development costs for some zoning districts, in some areas, or for some types of dwelling unit constructions
- Code changes to encourage construction of smaller home options

- Code changes to make permitting easier, or eliminate the need for permits, for accessory dwelling units
- Zoning code changes or tax incentives to encourage infill on vacant lots and redevelopment at higher densities
- Create a CBS taskforce with mobile home owners and park owners to find options and incentives to encourage park upkeep in a manner that does not cause undue hardship to homeowners
- Zoning code changes or tax incentives to facilitate the revitalization of older mobile and manufactured home parks
- Enact or encourage sweat-equity housing programs

More Year-Round Rentals

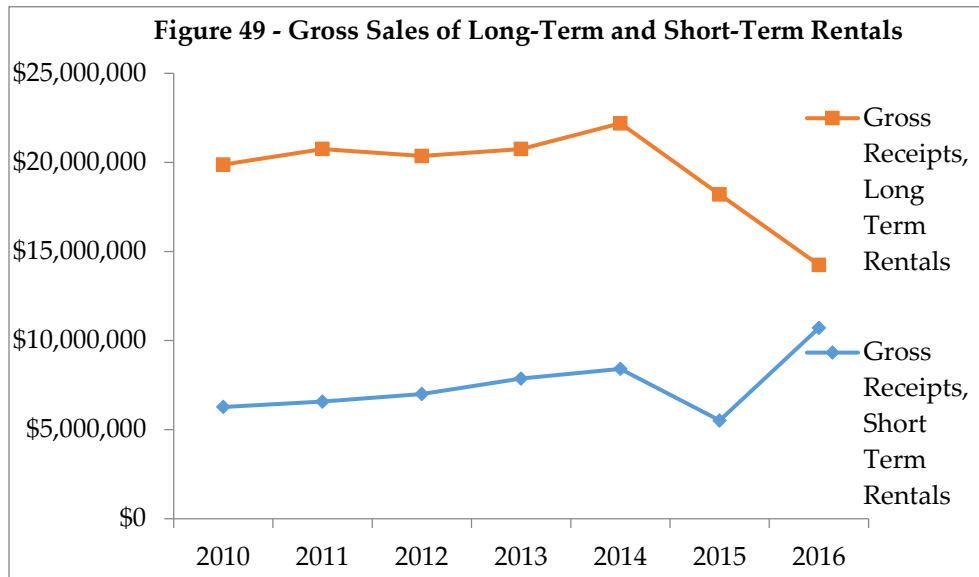
Around the country, both municipalities and rental businesses are evaluating policies on management of short-term rentals. People value and like the so-called sharing economy, but one effect of growing short-term rentals, which includes AirBnB, Vacation Rental by Owner, and private rentals, is that cities are losing affordable housing and rents are rising.

In Sitka, concerns are that short-term summer rentals are so lucrative that homeowners are not renting out their apartments on a long-term basis, and the high price of short term seasonal rentals is artificially inflating the long-term rental market. Based on the increasing short-term rental gross sales and declining long-term rental gross sales, it is clear that shifts are taking place in Sitka (Figure 49). Between FY 2010 and FY 2016, short-term rental sales tax revenue increased 45%, from approximately \$288,800 to \$418,100 (Figure 50).

The free-market way to address these matters is to get more long-term rentals built. When the free market does not respond, some cities are offering market interventions including incentives for development of rentals and affordable housing, and penalties such as restricting where or how many short-term rentals are allowed and prohibiting short-term rental conversions.

To determine appropriate policies, Sitka should first obtain an accurate count of how many short-term and long-term rentals there are. Survey owners/managers to determine how many short-term rentals could instead be long-term rental housing, and what factors could encourage this.

Figure 49 & 50 Gross Sales of LTR and STR & Sales Tax Revenue of STR



**Figure 50
Sales Tax Revenue,
Short-Term Rentals**

Fiscal Year	Sales Tax Revenue
FY 2010	\$288,788
FY 2011	\$384,654
FY 2012	\$325,837
FY 2013	\$354,698
FY 2014	\$372,486
FY 2015	\$411,873
FY 2016	\$418,112

Source Figure 49 and 50:
City and Borough of Sitka
Finance Office, Sales Tax
Division.

Manufactured Home and Home Park Improvements Needed

Manufactured homes are an important part of Sitka's affordable housing stock³³. There are approximately 415 mobile and manufactured homes in Sitka, comprising about 10% of the total housing. Some are on private lots, but approximately 380 are in one of 22 manufactured home parks

³³ **Manufactured Homes** are built AFTER 1976 and should no longer be called *Mobile Homes*. They are built to a higher standard of quality than yesterday's *Mobile Homes*" Manufactured Homes are built entirely in a factory under the federal building code administered by HUD. Manufactured homes generally come in single or two-section units and their dimensions range from 8 feet or more wide and 40 feet or more long. Manufactured homes can be placed on a basement and include multi-wides and expandable manufactured homes. Manufactured homes are NOT travel trailers, motor homes, and modular housing.

Mobile Home is often used interchangeably - but incorrectly - with the term *Manufactured Home*. They actually are quite different. Mobile Home refers to homes built PRIOR to 1976 when the HUD code governing building standards for factory-built homes was instituted, greatly improving quality standards. Mobile homes may be located inside a mobile home park or on an owner's land. These homes typically have steel I-beams which run along the underside of the homes; these I-beams may rest atop concrete blocks, wooden pillars, metal stands, or a permanent concrete foundation.

Modular Homes are manufactured in a production facility and built in two or more sections in a controlled factory setting that are then transported and assembled on location. The assemble process typically uses a traditional concrete foundation (permanent). Unlike a mobile home, a modular home cannot be moved once built. These homes are treated just like a traditional home you'd buy in a neighborhood. They offer outstanding features, a huge assortment of pre-designed homes, and their price per square foot are sometimes lower than the traditional stick built home. Modular homes can be completely customized to meet the home-buyers needs and tastes. Modular homes can look identical to traditional frame site built homes once completely attached. Modular homes are built to either local or state building codes as opposed to manufactured homes, which are built to federal building codes.

(locally called trailer parks) that together occupy 33 acres of land.³⁴ A number of these parks are quite old with utility and other problems and older potentially unsafe mobile homes in them. Loss of this housing would greatly exacerbate affordability issues in Sitka.

Consider creation of a CBS taskforce with mobile home owners and park owners to find options and incentives to encourage park upkeep in a manner that does not cause undue hardship to homeowners.

- Ways to improve homes and park utilities must be found that either do not displace residents or can accommodate their housing needs while improvements occur.
- Improved waterfront property would result in higher assessments and property tax, creating a disincentive for park owners to make property improvements. Solutions are varied. Some municipalities will forgive or defer the increment of increased property tax resulting from improvements for a period of years to remove this improvement penalty. Some municipalities apply for Community Development Block grants (CDBG) or other grant to assist with utility upgrades. Other options include forming park co-ops, and offering low-interest loans for park upgrades.

Rehabilitate Dilapidated Dwelling Units

Sitka's dilapidated housing centers on older mobile homes and some residential structures in the older downtown neighborhoods. No exact count of these dilapidated units exists. One City and Borough of Sitka official estimates that about 175 units, or 4% of Sitka's housing stock, is significantly dilapidated. Other indicators come from the 2011-2015 ACS which reports that in Sitka 2.3% of occupied houses lack complete kitchen facilities, 1.2% lack complete plumbing, and 4.4% of dwelling units were built earlier than 1939.

Identify incentives and disincentives to encourage owners of dilapidated properties to undertake redevelopment at increased densities as permitted by zoning regulations. A property with a structure that is valued at a lower price than the value of the lot itself is a great candidate for redevelopment.

Housing for Sitka's Aging Population

Planning and action is needed to accommodate the housing and other needs of Sitka's senior population. The number of Sitkans age 65 and older, and especially those age 80+, is projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years.

- In July 2016, there were 1,285 Sitkans age 65 or older, comprising 14% of the total population. The ADOLWD projects that by 2030, this age cohort will peak when there will be just over 2,000 older Sitkans in town who will constitute 23% of the total population. This is almost a 60% increase in this age cohort compared to today.
- The percentage of those age 80 and older will increase even faster. These elders, who often have high medical, care, and mobility needs, is projected to keep increasing through 2045

³⁴ During the late 1950s and early 1960s, prior to city and borough consolidation in 1971, a large pulp mill generated housing demand. At the time, the city did not allow mobile home parks; as a result, many of Sitka's mobile home parks were established outside of city limits on easily accessible, flat waterfront land.

when it will have tripled compared to today, from 282 people in 2016 to just over 800 Sitkans age 80 and above.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) surveys and research shows that across the U.S. seniors have expressed a strong desire to age in place, remain in their communities, and continue to dwell in their own homes for as long as possible.

In order to accommodate and keep its aging residents, Sitka has a need for smaller, affordable, dwelling units in walkable areas of the community and near transit stops. This coincides with the needs of young adults and young families.

- Seniors span a wide range of fitness and abilities; however, many eventually experience mobility limitations that necessitate retrofits for universal design features such as ramps, railings, bars, and wheelchair accessibility.
- Homes with stairs, multiple levels, or narrow doorways may become uninhabitable and require an individual to move.
- Even without mobility limitations, many seniors simply wish to downsize to a small, low-maintenance home.
- Seniors of all income brackets need access to a range of housing, prices to accommodate fixed incomes, and a mix of housing types for independent living, including smaller accessible dwelling units that are on transit lines or within easy walking distance to stores and services.
- There will also be increased need for assisted living options and nursing home beds in Sitka.

Temporary (Transitional) Safe Housing

Sitka's service providers will attest to the need for temporary safe housing for homeless persons in Sitka. Police officers are frequently tasked with finding shelter for homeless persons. The police department, and, at times, the officers have rented rooms at local hotels or the hostel.

An appropriate facility to house people experiencing mental health emergencies is needed in Sitka as well. Currently, persons in crisis are detained in the Sitka Jail and are exposed to arrested persons while they await placement in facilities located in Juneau, Anchorage, or Fairbanks.

A safe, clean, and secure place for juveniles in crisis or under arrest must be located. Currently, juveniles are temporarily held in the adult women's side of the Sitka Jail. This could be designed into a new Sitka Jail Facility.

Additionally, adequate detoxification facilities are increasingly needed in Sitka for both youth and adults.

5.3 Housing Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
H 1	Objective 1 - Increase Range of Housing and Affordability.			
H 1.1	Revise zoning codes to:			
H 1.1.a	Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) by right in more zones. Promote through advertising campaigns. <i>Cross reference LU 8.2</i>	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.b	Minimize prevalence of variances by amending development standards, such as setbacks. <i>Cross reference LU 8.2</i>	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.c	Reduce minimum lot sizes. <i>Cross reference LU 8.2</i>	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.d	Reduce residential parking requirements. <i>Cross reference LU 8.2</i>	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.e	Encourage higher density development. <i>Cross reference LU 8.2</i>	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.f	Reduce aesthetic and design standards in float home regulations.	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.g	Develop task force to consider pilot project.	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.h	Allow hostels, boardinghouses, bunkhouses, and co-housing developments as a permitted use with standard conditions in residential zones.	CBS	ST-MT	L
H 1.1.i	Create clear development standards for Planned Unit Developments and Cluster Home Subdivisions, to include density bonuses in exchange for such features as open space and inclusionary zoning.	CBS	ST-MT	L
H.1.2	Encourage and incentivize the development of permanently affordable housing.	CBS, AC	OG	U, Range
H.1.2.a	Define terms to qualify for incentives.	CBS	MT	L
H.1.2.b	Support mechanisms to increase permanently affordable homes, such as deed restrictions, targeted financing programs, and community land trusts.	AC	OG	U
H.1.2.c	Seek or initiate sweat equity housing development programs, such as homesteading and Habitat for Humanity.	AC	MT	U
H.1.2.d	Create an affordable housing advisory group through the Planning Commission.	CBS	ST	L
H.1.2.e	Create an affordable housing fund to offer development incentives.	CBS	ST	L
H.1.2.f	Consider requiring a range of housing options to be provided when disposing of municipal land for development.	CBS	OG	L
H.1.2.g	Increase sales tax on short-term rentals.	CBS	ST	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
H.1.2.h	Seek grant funding to support affordable housing development.	CBS	ST	L
H 1.2.i	Create housing for the homeless through public-private partnerships.	AC	OG	L
H 1.3	Participate in public-private collaborations to design and build developments that include a mix of housing types and target markets.	ALL	OG	H
H 1.4	Increase the number of long-term rentals.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.a	Establish an annual baseline count of the number of short-term and long-term rentals in Sitka so change can be measured.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.b	Identify a desired target number of additional long term rentals.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.c	Support housing development to meet the needs of Sitka's growing senior population.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.d	Support change to state regulations and funding that is preventing full occupancy at the Pioneer Home, a public assisted-living facility.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.e	Identify possible locations for new apartment buildings.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 1.4.f	Identify barriers to apartment building development and determine if city action can reduce or eliminate any obstacles.	CBS, PR, AC	OG	L
H 2	Objective 2 – Promote Housing Quality.			
H 2.1	Collaborate with mobile home owners and park owners to find options and incentives to encourage park upkeep in a manner that does not cause undue hardship to homeowners.	CBS, PR	MT	L
H 2.2	Encourage use of LEED or similar design standards by the public and private sectors. <i>Cross reference LU 5.2</i>	CBS	OG	L
H 2.3	Create programs and partnerships to rehabilitate or replace substandard or unsafe housing units (e.g., small or tiny homes on wheels for certain residential areas, manufactured home parks, etc.).	CBS	MT	M-H
H 2.4	Encourage housing stock rehabilitation.	CBS	OG	U
H 3	Objective 3 – Share Housing Information.			
H 3.1	Use website and Facebook pages to host rental and home sales information. Delete or qualify	ALL	OG	L
H 3.2	Sponsor or co-sponsor annual housing fairs.	ALL	OG	L

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

6 Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources

GOAL

Celebrate Sitka’s historic, cultural, and arts resources, which are:

- **Ethnically, religiously, and racially diverse**
- **Highly valued and essential to defining Sitka and local quality of life**
- **Integral to the economic base of the community**

6.1 Current Conditions

Historic, cultural, and arts resources overlap and strengthen each other. These complementary assets help define Sitka and local quality of life. Here are some Sitkans’ ideas on community strengths during development of the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030:

- “Sitka’s history and culture”
- “Very strong local arts scene”
- “Rich pre- and post-contact history”
- “Arts appreciation and instruction”
- “Our creative and resourceful people, our rich cultures and history”
- “It is a culturally and economically diverse community”
- “Quality of life includes access to subsistence resources and local foods, culture and art, and a variety of healthy activities”
- “Sitka Fine Arts Camp”
- “Sitka is an intellectual and artistic outpost”

This chapter reviews Sitka’s historic, cultural, and arts resources and identifies ways to address challenges and take better advantage of opportunities.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic moments have deeply impacted Sitka far beyond their scope of time. It is hard to imagine a place anywhere in Alaska with a more significant history than Sitka. Historic and cultural highlights are described in the Comprehensive Plan’s Community Profile in chapter 3, as part of History.

Today, attention to and passion for Sitka’s historic and cultural resources is evidenced by the many people, groups, and achievements to recognize, preserve, and celebrate community history. Entities working on this include, but are not limited to (in alphabetical order):

- Alaska Arts Southeast, Inc.
- Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood, Camp No. 1
- Cape Decision Lighthouse Society
- City and Borough of Sitka Historic Preservation Commission
- National Park Service/Sitka National Historical Park
- Sheldon Jackson Historic Site Preservation Society
- Sheldon Jackson Museum, and Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum
- Sitka Historical Society, Sitka History Museum (formerly the Isabel Miller Museum)

- Sitka Maritime Heritage Society
- Sitka Summer Music Festival
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- U.S. Forest Service

The City and Borough of Sitka is a longtime supporter and participant in historic preservation efforts. The threat of demolition of Sitka's downtown U.S. Post Office, built in 1934, led to a grassroots effort to protect Sitka's historic buildings. The City and Borough of Sitka began work and qualified as a Certified Local Government (CLG) in 1994, then prepared its first Sitka Historic Preservation Plan in 1995. Sitka has an appointed 7-member Sitka Historic Preservation Commission, established in 1992, and codified in Sitka Municipal Code Title 2. A 2017 update to the Sitka Historic Preservation Plan was prepared and is out for public review as the Comprehensive Plan goes to print.

Focuses of Sitka's historic preservation efforts are to nurture a practical and purposeful preservation program by:

- Continuing to survey and inventory historic resources
- Focus on education and outreach
- Increase funds for historic preservation, and
- Encourage that Sitka's history and related assets are considered in land use planning and are a part of sustainable economic development

As one of 13 federally Certified Local Governments (CLG) in Alaska, both the city and others in Sitka are eligible for federal Historic Preservation Grants. Since 1995, there have been many federal Historic Preservation Grants (which require a 40% match) awarded to Sitka entities. The most recent awards were in 2015 and 2017 to the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society for work on the Japanski Island Boathouse, support in 2014-2017 for repairs to Sheldon Jackson College campus facades on North Pacific Hall, Whitmore Hall, and Fraser Hall, as well as Fraser Hall's south wall, and 2017 awards to Sitka Sound Science Center to help with architectural plans for the Mill Building.

The Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA), Sitka's tribal government, has long valued and led the way on historic preservation and related efforts. A few important examples:

1972 Sitka Indian Village Redevelopment Plan, adopted by the Sitka Village Planning Council, details area history, inventory, and many excellent redevelopment and zoning ideas which are still relevant today.

1995 Sitka Tribe of Alaska Historic Preservation Plan, was prepared with funding from a Historic Preservation Grant in 1991 and subsequent grants to Sitka Tribe of Alaska. The Sitka Tribes of Alaska 1995 Historic Preservation Plan was the first in the U.S. completed by American Indians, Alaska Natives, or Native Hawaiians. "Through this proposal, the Sitka Community Association [Sitka Tribe of Alaska] intends to carry out the formal development of its Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Program on behalf of its members and the general public, as a continuing memorial to the Native People of Sitka past, present and future." Anyone interested in Sitka's Tlingit history, culture, and arts should review this STA Plan, which includes a thorough and detailed Tlingit ethnography and ethnohistory with an emphasis on Sitka.

1975-2002 Sheet'Kwaan Aani Aya - Sitka Area Native Place Names. "To our Elders—thank you for thinking of our children. Gunalchéesh!" These maps and place names are an invaluable source of local knowledge about the natural and cultural world of Sitka Tlingits. The information on these maps honors and enriches local understanding of area history and culture; they are reproduced, courtesy of STA, at the end of this chapter.

Sitka currently has 21 listings on the National Register of Historic Places (Figure 51), including:

- 13 listed National Historic Places (the official federal government list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation)
- 8 National Historic Landmarks (a much smaller group recognized for their outstanding historical significance)

In addition, there are more than 20 cemeteries and burial sites within the borough, which are sacred places and sites that represent Sitka's heritage and continue to tell the story of longevity in the area.

Figure 51 – National Register of Historic Places and Landmarks in Sitka

HISTORIC PLACES				
Site Name	NR Date	AHRS No.	Period of Significance	Comments
1. Cable House and Station	1977	SIT-00212	1904-1910	Communications Center and Quarters
2. Emmons House	1977	SIT-00258	1895-1899	601 Lincoln Street
3. Hanlon-Osbakken House	1992	SIT-00191	1892-1896	419 Lincoln Street
4. Mills, W. P., House	1977	SIT-00025	1915-1916	1 Maksoutoff Street (Cushing House, Longenbaugh House, Island Home)
5. Mills House	1978	SIT-00189	1911-1938	315 Seward Street (May Mills House, Rose Hill)
6. Murray Apartments and Cottages Historic District	1992	SIT-00447	1911	200, 204, & 206 Seward Street
7. Murray Apartments		SIT-00210	1921-1928	208 Seward Street, contributing to SIT-00447 (Murray Flats, Baranof Apts)
8. See House	1978	SIT-00195	1905	611 Lincoln Street
9. St. Peter's By the Sea	1978	SIT-00029	1899	611 Lincoln Street (St. Peter's Episcopal Church)
10. Sitka Pioneer Home	1979	SIT-00097	1934-1935	120 Katlian Avenue, nomination includes Totem Square
11. Sitka U.S. Post Office and Court House	1997	SIT-00313	1938-1946	100 Lincoln Street
12. U.S. Coast Guard & Geodetic Survey Seismological & Geomagnetic House	1986	SIT-00194	1916, 1929	210 Seward Street (Forest Service House)
13. Sitka National Historical Park	1966	SIT-00012	1804-1910	Sitka National Monument (1910) and Shiske-Nu

HISTORIC LANDMARKS				
Site Name	NR Date	AHRS No.	Period of Significance	Comments
1. Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall	1972	SIT-00001	1912, 1914	Katlian Avenue-ANB Hall, Sitka Camp No. 1
2. American Flag-Raising Site, Castle Hill	1966	SIT-00002	1804, 1806-1867, 1959	Corner of Lincoln Street & Katlian Avenue, (Baranov Castle & Castle Hill, NHL 6/13/62)
3. Old Sitka Site	1966	SIT-00006	1799-1802	Redoubt St. Archangel Michael (NHL 7/1/61)
4. Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses	1986	SIT-00079	1939-1943	Japonski Island and series of smaller islands connected to it by the causeway that terminates at Makhnati Island
5. Russian-American Building No. 29	1987	SIT-00013	1850	202 Lincoln Street (Tilson Building)
6. Sheldon Jackson School	2001	SIT-00026	1910-1944	801 Lincoln Street (Sitka Industrial Training School; Sheldon Jackson Institute; Sheldon Jackson College)
7. St. Michael's Archangel Cathedral	1962	SIT-00010	1844-1966	Totally reconstructed per HABS
8. Russian Bishop's House	1966	SIT-00009	1842-1859	503 Lincoln Street (Russian Mission Orphanage, NHL 6/13/62)
<i>Source: draft Sitka Historic Preservation Plan, February 2017, City and Borough of Sitka Historic Preservation Commission</i>				

Besides the National Register, there are more than 1,000 important cultural resource sites documented in the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey database held in confidence by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Office of History and Archaeology.

Arts and Cultural Resources

Sitka's vibrant, creative, and diverse arts and cultural organizations and facilities include (but are not limited to):

- Harrigan Centennial Hall, owned and managed by the City and Borough of Sitka
- Sheet'ka Kwaan Naa Kahidi Community House, owned and managed by the Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- Sitka Performing Arts Center, managed by the Sitka School District
- Sitka Summer Music Festival, including ownership and restoration of Stevenson Hall on Sheldon Jackson campus
- Sheldon Jackson campus and buildings owned and managed by Alaska Arts Southeast, Inc.
- Greater Sitka Arts Council
- Island Institute
- Individual artists
- Sitka Fine Arts Camp
- Sitka Jazz Festival
- Sitka Monthly Grind
- Sitka Studio of Dance
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- Whale Fest

Arts have had a meaningful role in Sitkans lives and the economy for thousands of years. The totems, canoes, masks, regalia, and architecture of Sitka Tlingit reflect area culture, ancestry, and collective histories as much as they are works of art. Two Sitka, Alaska, Native artists discuss the important, longtime, and spiritual role arts in Sitka have (*see box to right*).³⁵

The Greater Sitka Arts Council is Sitka's umbrella arts organization. It was founded in 1973 and has helped develop and support a year-round, local arts community. The Council's goal is to uplift the cultural life of Sitka through arts programming and support services in education, professional development, visual and performing arts, and folk/traditional arts. Today, Sitka residents and visitors now regularly include downtown gallery walks in their day or evening itineraries; artwork and performances in Sitka have surged; there are diverse arts and cultural classes; performance venues have been constructed and improved; public mural projects were sponsored; there is broad support for arts nonprofits; and arts are integrated into the lives of residents.

"We are the Indigenous people and our Art belongs here, the art that is made for our own people. Art is the language that is common to all humankind. We Native artists are capable of not only bridging our own past with the present, but we are capable of bridging cultures with this common language. In addition to making art for ourselves, Native artists become either tourist artists, to satisfy a tourist market; or gallery artists, to satisfy a gallery market. This is my homeland and my art fits all of the above."

– Sitka Tlingit
Designer and Carver

"The importance of our art and culture is as important now as it was 300 years ago. Seeing the amount of people doing our art – through language, carving, or dance – and keeping our heritage alive and moving is amazing!"

– Sitka Mask Carver
and Cedar Weaver

³⁵ "The Arts Economy of Southeast Alaska," Southeast Conference, 2014.

Sitka's Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources Directly Strengthen the Economy.

Research recently conducted by the American Planning Association (APA) demonstrates that arts and culture (which is defined to include historic resources) catalyze economic vitality.³⁶ An APA research finding is that, "Concentrations of cultural enterprises and creative workers in a geographic area provide a competitive edge, likely by elevating the quality of life, improving a community's ability to attract economic activity, and creating a climate in which innovation can flourish."

This finding could have been written specifically about Sitka. Sitka's historic, cultural, and arts resources not only help define the community but create local jobs, boost spending in town, and are top draws for sustainable tourism. As examples, Sitka's Brand tagline is "Art Meets Wild Alaska," and the Visit Sitka website highlights four broad themes for visitors: Adventure, Culture, Wildlife, Art.

The importance of, and the social and economic benefit to Sitka from historic, cultural, and arts programming and events has been documented by the State's Alaska Visitor Statistics Program (AVSP), the Sitka Fine Arts Camp, and the Sitka Summer Music Festival.

Example: Survey of Sitka Visitors. A total of almost 500 visitors to Sitka (mostly cruise, some independent) were interviewed as part of the May 2017 Alaska Visitor Statistics Program (AVSP, McDowell Group). Of these visitors, 4 in 10 said they participated in a culture or history activity while in Sitka. These types of activities were the most popular in Sitka, and the 39% doing a cultural/history experience in Sitka was a higher percentage than in Alaska as a whole or in any other place in Southeast.

Example: Sitka Fine Arts Camp (SFAC). In 2016, there were 765 unique registrants who paid tuition to attend the Sitka Fine Arts Camp. This included 20% from Sitka, 67% from other places in Alaska, and 13% from out-of-state. In addition to tuition, several foundations support the SFAC. The camp's workforce that year included 17 full-time employees, and 64 local part-time and seasonal employees. More than \$105,000 (self-reported) was spent in the Sitka community by visiting camp parents. More than 1,200 visitors came to town during SFAC summer programs or linked to year-round rentals and programs. Approximately \$19,400 in sales tax was collected and paid to the City. Capital spending in 2016 totaled \$599,900. These are just some of the quantified economic benefits.

"Artists and arts organizations are a key part of the Southeast Alaska economy."

They create products and perform services. They generate spending and attract audiences, who in turn spend money at restaurants, hotels, and other local businesses. Artists impact education, and by positively contributing to the quality of life, they attract young people to the region and help retain those who are here."

- Arts Economy of Southeast Alaska, 2014, Southeast Conference

³⁶ Economic Vitality: How the Arts and Culture Sector Catalyzes Economic Vitality," American Planning Association Briefing Paper, 2011, with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation.

Example: Sitka Summer Music Festival (SSMF). In 2016, the SSMF hosted 13 ticketed events, 23 free public events, and 11 educational presentations in Sitka, reaching a total audience of nearly 3,900 people. In addition to the flagship Summer Festival series, the SSMF is developing educational and residency programs including the Sitka International Cello Seminar. In 2016, 30 students applied for residencies from 17 different states and three countries.

SSMF event revenues and tuition combined total nearly \$80,000; in addition, the SSMF received more than \$85,000 in operating grants from government entities and charitable foundations. These revenues are put back into the city economy in the form of sales and property taxes, plus items and infrastructure to support the SSMF administrative center and staff in Sitka.

In 2016, more than 40% of tickets were sold to independent visitors, many of whom traveled to Sitka specifically for the SSMF and stayed multiple days in hotels or B&Bs and made purchases at local restaurants, shops and on excursions. Similarly, the 20 Festival musicians and 12 seminar students also contribute to the local economy. Previous visitor industry studies have estimated that the Sitka Summer Music Festival brings \$1.5 million in independent tourist dollars to Sitka each year.

The SSMF is also engaged in capital fundraising and spending to purchase and remodel Stevenson Hall, one of the core buildings on the historic Sheldon Jackson campus. Since 2014, SSMF raised more than \$800,000 in capital funds to spend on this capital project. Improvements will enable more year-round programming at Stevenson Hall.

6.2 Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources Challenges and Opportunities

Maintain a Sitka Historic Preservation Plan

The City and Borough of Sitka Historic Preservation Commission looks for ways to invest in heritage assets in order to maintain Sitka's sense of place, its uniqueness as a city, create jobs, and support the visitor industry. A specific list of 10-year priorities is needed. Periodically update the Sitka Historic Preservation Plan.

Increase Awareness of Historic Preservation Opportunities, Tax Incentives, and Grants

Building and property owners of National Historic Places or Landmarks are eligible for federal tax incentives to encourage historic preservation. The incentives range from 10-20% tax credits that reduce dollar for dollar the amount owed to the Internal Revenue Service, to easements that can increase tax deductions and decrease estate and property taxes.

Alaska also allows municipalities to exempt historic sites, buildings, and monuments from property tax [AS 29.45.050 (b)(1)(b)]. And, to encourage rehabilitation of all properties, Alaska allows a 4-year reduction in property taxes by the amount of an increased assessment due to completed improvements that enhance the exterior appearance or aesthetic quality of land or a structure [AS 29.45.050(f)] (note that there are many qualifiers to this section). Sitka would need to enact these programs by ordinance if it wishes to participate.

There are opportunities to obtain National Register Historic District status for Sitka Indian Village (Katlian Avenue area), Sitka Historic Business District (Lincoln Street), and a Mission District (Russian Bishop's House, Saint Gregory's Catholic Church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church). Work on this has occurred at various times over the years. Those most affected should lead these efforts, with the City and Borough of Sitka and others joining in support as appropriate.

Another opportunity under the National Historic Preservation Act may be for Sitka Tribe of Alaska to establish a Traditional Cultural District to help protect subsistence rights over traditional lands. If STA pursues this, collaboration with the borough is recommended.

Strike a Balance on Approach to and Treatment of Historic Resources

Communities like Sitka with many historic and cultural influences and assets need to strike a balance on how to approach and treat historic and culturally important places. The four types of treatment have each been used in Sitka; they are: preserving sites and buildings, rehabilitating them to retain character but make way for changing use and need, restoring sites or buildings to a particular period in time, or reconstruction to recreate a vanished or non-surviving property for interpretative purposes.³⁷ Conversation to accomplish this will include:

- Balance conservation with an acceptable degree of change. Weigh the different values and trade-offs between conservation and development, identify the acceptable level of change and the extent of adaptive reuse.
- Promote a blend of regulation and incentives.
- Dialogue between the public and private sectors. Heritage is a public good and the economic justification for public sector investment is well established.³⁸ But, it is unreasonable to expect the public sector to be the sole investor, and the solution is to have a combination of public and private investment, with a balance between the two, varying depending on the project scheme and context.

Support and Expand Heritage and Cultural Tourism

Due to its unique cultural and historical assets, Sitka is well positioned to expand tourism and attract more independent visitors. Tourism is forecast to continue to grow due to a robust national economy, low gasoline prices, and increased concern over foreign travel.

Continue Return of Tribal Cultural Artifacts to Sitka Tribe of Alaska

While history cannot be undone, returning the remains of ancestors and important cultural objects to Sitka Tribe of Alaska and other native tribes is sacred work. Support efforts to investigate and

³⁷ "Whole Building Design Guide - Historic Preservation," National Institute of Building Sciences, September 26, 2017.

³⁸ Donovan Rypkema; PlaceEconomics

accomplish this as well as to provide support for Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) activities.

Support Sitka Tribe of Alaska efforts to develop a Sitka Tribal Museum. The purpose of such a museum would be to emphasize cultural viability through time. Exhibits and interpretation would focus on tribal choices and efforts at cultural maintenance (e.g., potlatches, funerary customs, clan houses, oral histories) showing the dynamic of Sitka Tlingit culture, accenting the adaptability and strength of Tlingit people and culture through time.

Integrate Tlingit in Community Facilities and Places

Use Tlingit place names and language, drawn from local sources, to help preserve Sitka's history and to keep residents and visitors aware of that history. A recent example is the use of object and room Tlingit names throughout the renovated Harrigan Centennial Hall. Using Tlingit helps to keep the language alive.

Training and Support for Historic, Cultural, and Arts Organizations to Document Social and Economic Contributions to Sitka.

Competition for government, grant, and other funding is increasingly competitive. Documentation of the economic, social-cultural, or environmental effects can enhance success in obtaining funding. Documentation of effects is often required now as part of funding reporting or monitoring. Some Sitka non-profits are already documenting the effects of their efforts, but even those doing it admit additional training, help setting-up reporting systems, and pooling of efforts among Sitka entities could benefit all.

Maintain and Improve Facilities Where Historic, Cultural, and Arts Programming and Performances Occur, are Taught, and Where Objects are Archived, Stored, and Displayed

This chapter reviewed the importance of Sitka's historic, cultural, and arts resources and listed the public, private, and nonprofit facilities where these resources and talents are displayed and performed. It is critical to develop sustainable financing schemes for the operations and maintenance of these facilities in order to continue Sitka's valued historic, cultural, and arts activities.

6.3 Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
HCA 1	Objective 1 – Celebrate Sitka’s Rich and Diverse Heritage.			
HCA 1.1	Acknowledge and celebrate Sitka’s historic, archaeological, architectural, traditional, cultural, and scenic heritage by recognizing and preserving sites, structures, and districts with significant value.	AC	OG	U
HCA 1.1.a	Develop, adopt, and implement a Sitka Historic Preservation Plan.	CBS	ST	L
HCA 1.1.b	Facilitate and support CLG grants to obtain National Register Historic District status for eligible districts.	AC	OG	L
HCA 1.1.c	Coordinate and collaborate with interested parties to compile cemetery information.	AC	ST	L
HCA 1.1.d	Integrate AHRS map into project review.	CBS	ST	L
HCA 1.1.e	Develop a checklist to use in the planning stage of all city projects, and projects needing city approval, to integrate consideration of cultural and historic values.	CBS	ST	L
HCA 1.1.f	Consult with the adopted Sitka Historic Preservation Plan on issues and development that could affect preservation and enhancement of the unique character of downtown Sitka.	CBS	OG	L
HCA 1.1.g	The City and Borough of Sitka supports, as appropriate, efforts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return any future tribal artifact discoveries to Sitka Tribe of Alaska. Support STA, BIHA, and property owners in the rehabilitation of clan houses. 	CBS	OG	U
HCA 1.1.h	Create a memorial and naming policy to integrate place names that are representative of Sitka’s diverse history into community facilities, services, places, and streets. <i>Cross reference T 5.2</i>	CBS	ST	L
HCA 1.1.i	Develop a Master Plan for the Katlian/ Kaagwaantaan area in collaboration with Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Alaska Native Brotherhood & Sisterhood, property owners, and local business owners, and other interested parties. <i>Cross reference LU 3.5</i>	AC	MT	L
HCA 2	Objective 2 - Promote availability of funding for Historic Property Renovation.			
HCA 2.1	Advertise historic preservation opportunities, tax incentives, and grants available to rehabilitate historic properties, sites, and within districts.	CBS	OG	L
HCA 2.2	Look for funding opportunities for downtown revitalization.	ALL	OG	L
HCA 3	Objective 3 - Support visual and performing (V&P) arts in Sitka.			
HCA 3.1	Support development of pop-up shops for local vendors.	CBS, PR, AC	ST, OG	L
HCA 3.2	Encourage public art displays, when appropriate (murals, etc.) and develop temporary use permits to manage these.	CBS	OG	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
HCA 3.3	Work with V&P groups and interested parties in developing community wide V&P events.	CBS. AC	OG	L
HCA 4	Objective 4 –Fully Utilize and Market Arts Performance Facilities.			
HCA 4.1	Maintain and improve community facilities where historic, cultural, and arts programming and performances occur, are taught, and where art and artifacts are archived and stored.	AC	OG	U
HCA 4.1.a	Market and promote use of Harrigan Centennial Hall and Sitka History Museum. <i>Cross reference ED 6.6</i>	CBS	ST	L
HCA 4.1.b	Market and promote the Performing Arts Center. Support agreements and public/private partnerships to diversify financial support and promote use to the highest degree.	AC	OG	L
HCA 4.1.c	Create an historical zoning district or overlay for the Sheldon Jackson Campus allowing for a broader range of uses. <i>Cross reference LU 3.2</i>	CBS	ST	L
HCA 4.1.d	Support efforts to develop a Sitka Tribal Museum.	AC	LT	L
HCA 5	Objective 5 – Promote Cultural Heritage Tourism			
HCA 5.1	Support cultural heritage tourism. <i>Cross reference ED 6.5</i>	AC	OG	L
HCA 5.1.a	Pursue grant funding for cultural and heritage tourism advertising project (maps, guidebooks, etc.).	AC	MT	L, GF
HCA 5.1.b	Install interpretative/historic signage on city and other publicly owned buildings and lands.	AC	MT	M
HCA 5.1.c	Encourage the display of interpretive signs for historic structures through zoning code provisions and other appropriate means.	CBS	ST	L
HCA 5.1.d	Support grants and projects that promote, protect, or educate public on historic, cultural, and arts resources/or promote heritage tourism.	CBS	OG	L
HCA 5.1.e	The City encourages public educational institutions to promote the importance of Sitka’s history and historic landmarks.	CBS	OG	L

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

7 Borough Budget, Utilities, Facilities, and Services

GOAL

Provide desirable community facilities and services in an efficient and cost-effective manner to meet the needs of Sitka’s residents, businesses, and visitors.

7.1 Introduction

The City and Borough of Sitka maintains a complex and well-developed suite of infrastructure and services for its citizens and visitors that includes:

- Drinking water, wastewater, public sewer and stormwater drainage, and electric services and systems
- Oversight of solid waste collection and disposal services
- Roads, sidewalks, and bike lane development, improvement, and maintenance (see transportation chapter)
- Harbor infrastructure and services, a seaplane base, and airport terminal
- Parks, recreation, and trail facilities, services, and programming
- Public safety services (police, fire, emergency medical, search and rescue, animal control)
- Public facilities including a library, civic and convention center, and cemetery
- Building operations and maintenance for a senior center
- An industrial park and marine service center to support economic activity
- Health services through the Sitka Community Hospital
- Education services through the Sitka School District

Municipally owned land and facilities are shown on Figures 52A and 52B and the accompanying table. Local, state, and federal revenue pays for these services and facilities. Revenues are allocated in annual budgets for Sitka’s General Fund, Enterprise Funds, Special Revenue Funds, Capital Improvement spending, and Sitka School District and Sitka Community Hospital budgets. This chapter:

1. Provides an overview of financial trends affecting the City and Borough of Sitka.
2. Looks at the current conditions and identifies challenges and opportunities to address over the next 10-15 years for major municipal services and facilities.
3. Identifies goals, objectives, and actions to accomplish over the next 10-15 years to address opportunities and challenges and thus provide for orderly growth and development in Sitka.

Index for Figures 52A and 52B - Municipal Land and Facility Maps

Acreage (unless noted)	City and Borough of Sitka Land or Facility
0.6	Airport Terminal
0.7	ANB Harbor and parking
4.0	Baranof Elementary School, playground and field
	Benchlands area city land and lots
8.1	Blatchley Middle School, field, pool
0.1	Blockhouse Park
78.3	Blue Lake Reservoir and Dam, Substation, Hydroelectric Facility, and Campground Hydro
0.6	Castle Hill parking lot
0.1	Charteris St. Water Tank
3.6	City Cemetery
0.6	City Hall, parking lot
2.2	City Wastewater Treatment Plant
1.7	City/State Building, parking lot (home to Sitka Police Station & Jail)
27.2	Crescent Harbor, parking area
2.9	Crescent Harbor Playground, Basketball and tennis courts
10,340 feet	Cross Trail (portion from Sitka High School to Kramer Drive)
26.3	Eliason & Thomsen Harbors and parking areas, harbormaster office & parking
	Fishermen's Work float
150	Gary Paxton Industrial Park
5.9	Granite Creek gravel pit
7.0	Granite Creek Recreation Area
Not on map	Green Lake Dam, hydroelectric plant
	Harbor Mountain Bypass Road area
0.1	Harbor Mt. Water Tank
4.3 (does not include parking)	Harrigan Centennial Hall, Sitka History Museum & parking
2.9 miles	Herring Cove to Beaver Lake Trail (clarify city's ownership portion)
56.8	Indian River
0.8	Industrial Park electric substation
4,900 ft	Japonski Island pathway
1.2	Jarvis electric substation
5.6	Jarvis Street City Shops
436 sq ft	Kaisei-Maru interpretative memorial site
10.9	Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School, playground, ballfields
15	Kimsham Recreational Complex
0.6	Kramer Lane electric substation
2,677 feet	Lower Indian River Trail (partially owned by city)
	Marine Service Center, bulkhead
0.1	Marine Street electric substation
N/A	Medevjie Lake trail
	Medvejie electrical substation

Acreage (unless noted)	City and Borough of Sitka Land or Facility
14.9	Moller Park & sports fields
1.0	Mt. Edgecumbe sports field
8,605 ft	Mt. Verstovia trail
0.4	Pacific High School
1,400 ft	Path of Hope
3.4	Pioneer Park
1.7	Sawmill Cove Recycling Center
0.4	Sealing Cove Business Center
8.6	Sealing Cove Harbor, RV and other parking
1.6	Seaplane dock
	Sea Mountain Golf (city land, leased)
0.1	Sitka Animal Shelter
3.4	Sitka Community Hospital
1.4	Sitka Fire Hall
17.1	Sitka High School, Sitka Performing Arts Center
	Sitka Landfill and Biosolids site
0.6	Sitka Public Library
3,500 ft; 1,762 ft more funded	Sitka Seawalk and breakwater spur
19.7	Sitka Sportsman Assoc. Shooting Range
0.6	Sitka Waste Transfer Station
22 (incl lake)	Swan Lake Park
0.2	Swan Lake Senior Center
1.8 miles	Thimbleberry-Heart Lake trails, fishing dock
2.0	Tom Young Memorial Cabin
4.0	Tony Hrebar Shooting Range
3.0	Turnaround Park
0.5	Under O'Connell Bridge parking lot, lightering dock
2.0	Vilandre ballfield
12.0	Whale Park
0.1	Whitcomb Heights Tank

Figure 52A

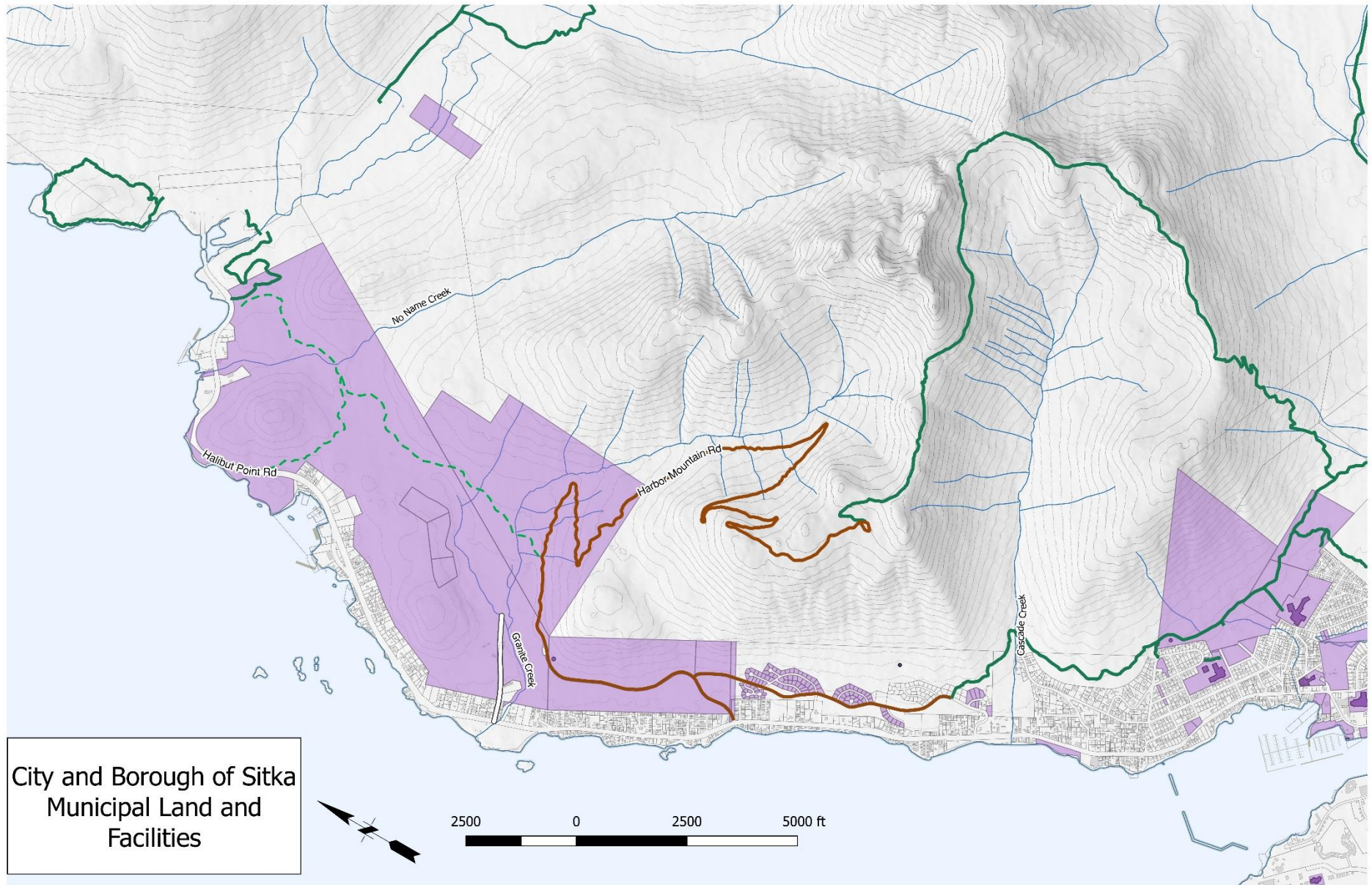
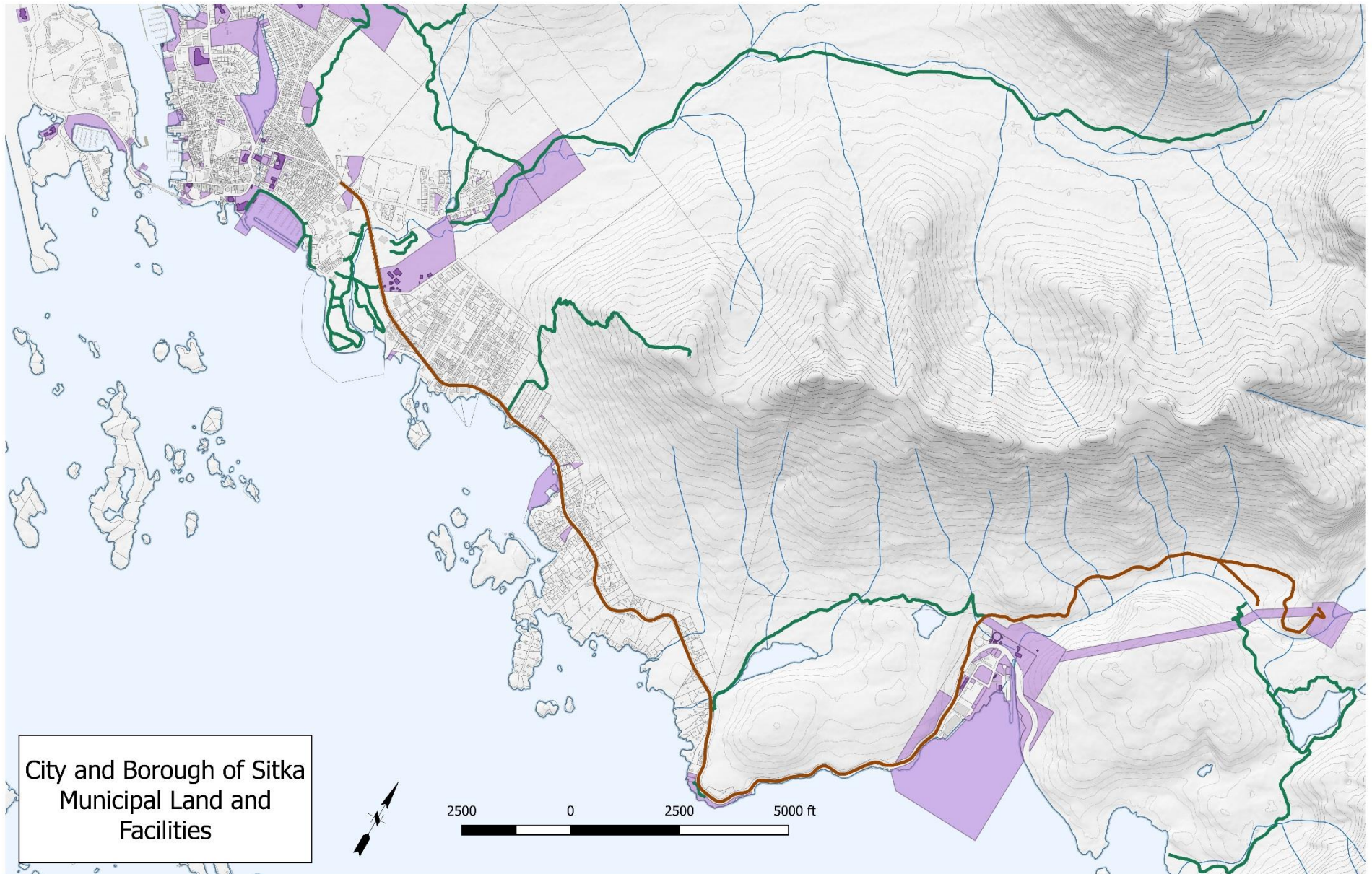


Figure 52B



7.2 Municipal Budget Review

The purpose of this high-level municipal budget review is to provide context.

Available revenue is the backdrop against which the City and Borough of Sitka makes decisions about the community services, maintenance, facilities, and public improvements it provides. Many of the desired improvements, objectives, and actions in this Comprehensive Plan have a cost. In order to make responsible decisions and weigh what to do in an informed manner, it is important to have a general understanding of the borough's fiscal picture.

The major fiscal trends facing Sitka are that over the last five years state and federal revenue has shrunk and state funding that formerly was available as grants is now available primarily as loans. Tighter state and federal revenue is likely to continue for the next decade. At the same time, Sitka's aging infrastructure requires increasing Capital Improvement Funding for repair and replacement. Sitka's municipal strategies to address these pressures are to achieve internal efficiencies; selectively reduce services, personnel, and spending; delay some infrastructure projects, and look for ways to extend use before full replacement is required; increase local revenues (taxes, fees); and carefully increase use of savings.

Statewide and Sitka Budget Context

Between 2004 and 2014, plentiful oil revenue led to just over a 100% increase in the state operating budget. General fund spending was \$2.1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 and \$4.4 billion in FY 2014; inflation increased 30% and population increased 11% during these ten years.³⁹ Then, in 2014, there was a sharp decline in oil revenue to the state. In response, spending has been reduced and savings are being used.

In FY 2015 the state's general fund spending was \$7 billion. For FY 2017, it was reduced to \$5.4 billion, constituting a 22% (\$1.6 billion) reduction over two years. State capital project spending during this period also declined 82% or \$636 billion.

In addition to budget cuts, beginning in FY 2013 the state began tapping its savings (the Constitutional Budget Reserve or CBR) to make up shortfalls in its annual general fund budget. The FY 2017 state budget required \$3.2 billion from the CBR to balance the budget, leaving only \$3.3 billion, or one year of gap-filling, to remain. In 2016, statewide job reductions, led by declines in oil and gas and support industries, resulted in Alaska officially entering a recession.

Lack of state legislative action to enact a long-term fiscal solution has resulted in continued draw-downs of savings, reductions to state operating, capital, and grant funding, and a downgrade of the state's credit ratings (and bond interest rates).

State operating and capital spending are significant primary sources of funding that stimulate a positive multiplier effect. When Alaska's economy is healthy, new money comes into the economy - including to municipal budgets - from primary sources such as the oil industry, mining, tourism, state spending, and other industries. These expenditures contribute to the success of both

³⁹ Alaska Common Ground

municipalities and (via the multiplier effect) to businesses that employ people. In turn, those employees spend in a way that makes other businesses thrive. Conversely when times are tough and state spending and distributions decline, the multiplier effect negatively impacts municipalities and employers.

Other factors compounding state funding declines are the region's shrinking population base and declining number of legislators in southeast Alaska, resulting in difficulty securing allocations for Southeast-oriented infrastructure and services such as the Alaska Marine Highway and other transportation. Recent legislative changes also now allow larger cities to obtain a higher share of the state's Commercial (cruise ship) Passenger Excise Tax.

Significantly less federal capital project spending is coming to Alaska with the elimination of Congressional earmarks. In addition, federal secure rural schools funding and payment-in-lieu-of-taxes funding is continually under threat of being reduced or eliminated, while some recent years have seen no funding. U.S. Forest Service dollars to Alaska are declining as Lower 48 regions receive more funding to fight wildfires. Many factors have compounded to create the perfect storm that municipalities around the region and Alaska now find themselves in financially.

Sitka is not alone in feeling the pinch of reduced federal and state operating, grant, and capital spending, as well as statewide recessionary pressures; however, this does not make difficult choices easier.

Types of City and Borough of Sitka Funds

Like most municipalities, Sitka has several types of funds that together make up its annual budget. Understanding the different types of funds is part of the financial vocabulary. Sitka's types of funds are:

The **General Fund**⁴⁰ and three **Internal Service Funds**⁴¹ together provide funding for regular borough services, infrastructure, and maintenance.

- The General Fund is also used to pay Sitka's General Obligation bond payments, Sitka School District support, and Hospital support. Funding is primarily from local taxes, savings, bond proceeds, and state and federal grants.

Enterprise Funds are run like a business or enterprise.

- Generally, annual revenues – from user fees – should equal annual spending.
- Sitka's eight Enterprise Funds are: water, wastewater/sewer, solid waste, electric, harbors, Gary Paxton Industrial Park, Marine Service Center, and airport terminal. Utility and harbor

⁴⁰ The General Fund pays for day-to-day borough operations, services, and infrastructure. It provides for the salaries and day-to-day costs for the administration and assembly, legal, finance, assessing, planning, police, fire, public works and engineering, streets, stormwater and drainage, recreation, library, centennial building, and senior center. Sitka's bond payments, school support, and hospital support come out of the General Fund. Sitka's three Internal Service Funds provide for services and maintenance that cross department lines and include Management Information Systems, building maintenance, and vehicle maintenance and replacement.

⁴¹ The three Internal Service Funds are Management Information Services, Central Garage (vehicle maintenance and replacement), and Building Maintenance.

user fees (as well as state raw fish taxes and airport passenger fees) are the main funding sources.

Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding is for large maintenance or capital improvements.

- Funding for CIPs comes from a combination of state and federal grants, state loans, municipal bond sales, other municipal borrowing, and money Sitka has been able to save over the years.
- The general fund, internal service funds, hospital, school district, and enterprise funds all need Capital Improvement Projects and have capital appropriations. For example, Sitka uses CIP spending to improve and maintain streets, recreation infrastructure, and buildings and to improve and maintain utility infrastructure, harbors, the Marine Service Center, and the airport terminal.
- Current state and federal spending reductions are resulting in reduced funding for local CIPs.

Special Revenue Funds are separate for accounting purposes and money must be used for a specific project.

- Sitka has approximately 20 Special Revenue Funds. The major fund is the Sitka Permanent Fund. Other larger funds are the Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Tax (funding comes from the state), Sitka Economic Development Association, and Tobacco Excise Tax (a local tax). Bulk water is also a Special Revenue Fund.

The **Sitka Community Hospital** and **Sitka School District** are municipal units with their own budgets and boards.

Trends: Revenue to the City and Borough of Sitka

Revenue to the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) to provide services, infrastructure maintenance, and construct capital improvements comes from four sources:

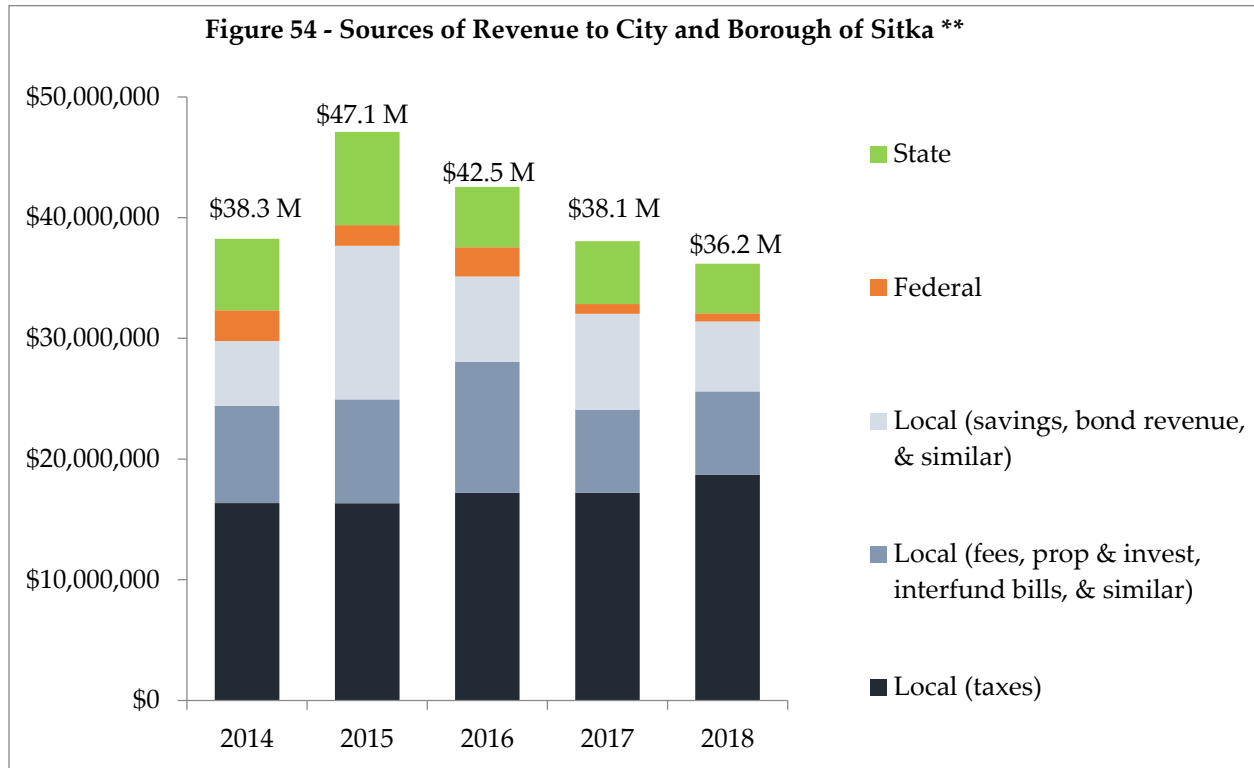
1. Federal (grants and appropriations)
2. State (grants, appropriations, or loans)
3. Local (taxes, fees, investment earnings, and bond sale revenue)
4. Occasionally from non-profit foundations (grants)

Combining all revenues to CBS General Fund, Internal Services Funds, and Special Revenue Funds shows the pinch of reduced federal and state funding (Figures 53 and 54).

- Over the last five years, combined state and federal revenue to these CBS funds declined by \$3.7 million.
- In FY 2014, state and federal revenue accounted for 25% of these funds; by FY 2018 it constituted only 13%.
- As a result, there is a growing dependence on local revenue sources and a focus on being more self-sufficient and sustainable.

Figures 53 & 54 & 55 - Sources of Revenue to City and Borough of Sitka

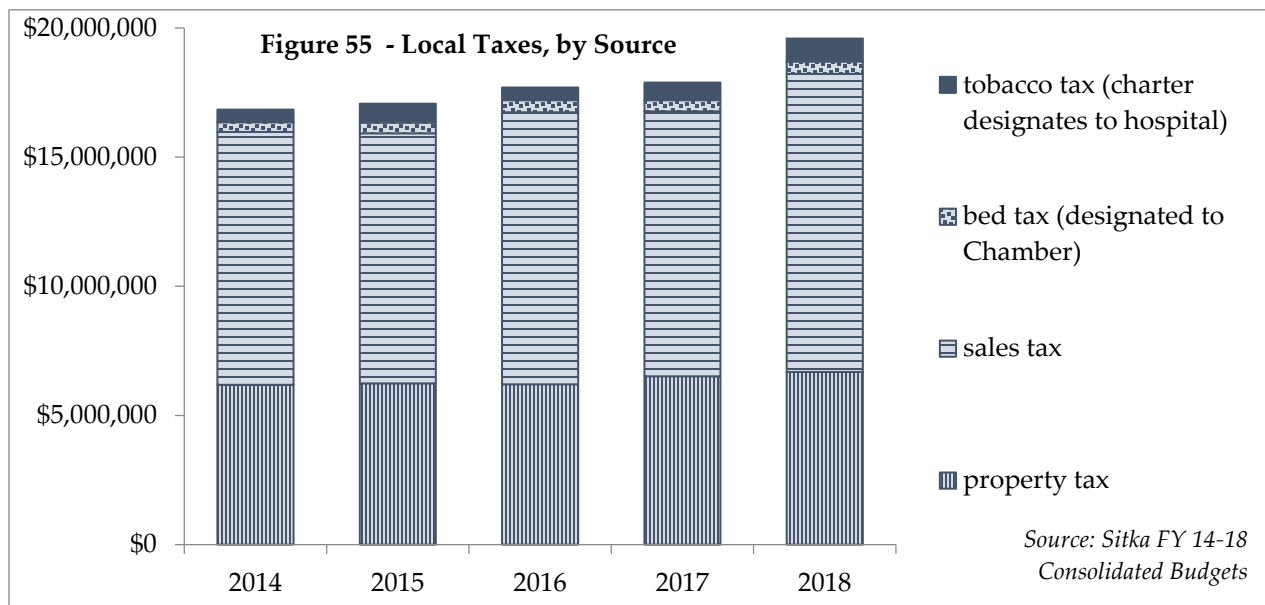
Source	FY 14	FY 18
Total Revenue**	\$38,254,855	\$36,184,211
Federal	7%	2%
State	15%	11%
Local	78%	87%
of local, percent from taxes	43%	52%



*** Figures 53 and 54 include revenue to Sitka's General Fund, its 3 Internal Service Funds, all Special Revenue Funds, and state fisheries taxes. Enterprise Fund and Capital Improvement Fund revenues are not included.
Source: Sitka Adopted Consolidated Budgets, FY14-18.*

Local tax revenue comes from property, sales, bed, and tobacco taxes (Figure 55).

- Revenue collected from property taxes has been relatively flat over the last five years, while the contribution from sales tax has been rising.
- In FY 2018, of the \$18.7 million expected in local tax revenue, 39% is from sales tax, 22% from property tax, 3% from tobacco excise tax, and 2% from bed tax (Figure 55).



Trends: Municipal Spending

The fund types and spending that allows day-to-day municipal operations and services and which most directly impact local tax rates and spending from savings are General Fund + General Fund related Capital Improvements, and Internal Service Fund + Internal Service Fund Capital Improvements (Figure 56).

- Adding spending from these funds together, the FY 2014 total was \$30.5 million while the FY 2018 total is \$31.1 million.
- Over the last five years, the spending high was in 2015. Spending levels have declined by \$4.9 million or -14% since 2015.
- Spending reductions have been achieved through some less frequent services, less capital project spending, elimination (FY 2018) of a full-time police officer, no temporary employees for capital project management, and reductions to training, supplies, and contracted services. This followed the FY 2017 general fund budget that eliminated 4.5 municipal positions.

Figure 56 - Funds that Comprise Sitka Municipal Day-to-Day Operations and Services

Fund	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
General Fund	\$23,603,193	\$29,247,049	\$25,986,400	\$25,866,533	\$25,394,235
Capital Improvements - General Fund	\$2,080,025	\$1,385,020	\$3,458,700	\$1,500,000	\$1,369,500
Capital Improvements - Other, Hospital	\$1,869,873	\$2,260,217	\$247,570	\$419,976	\$935,552
Internal Service Funds	\$2,633,701	\$2,716,389	\$2,885,937	\$2,638,300	\$2,880,156
Capital Improvements - Internal Service Funds	\$312,000	\$342,700	\$1,128,927	\$821,200	\$482,000
Total	\$30,498,792	\$35,951,375	\$33,707,534	\$31,246,009	\$31,061,443

Sources: Sitka FY 14-18 Consolidated Budgets

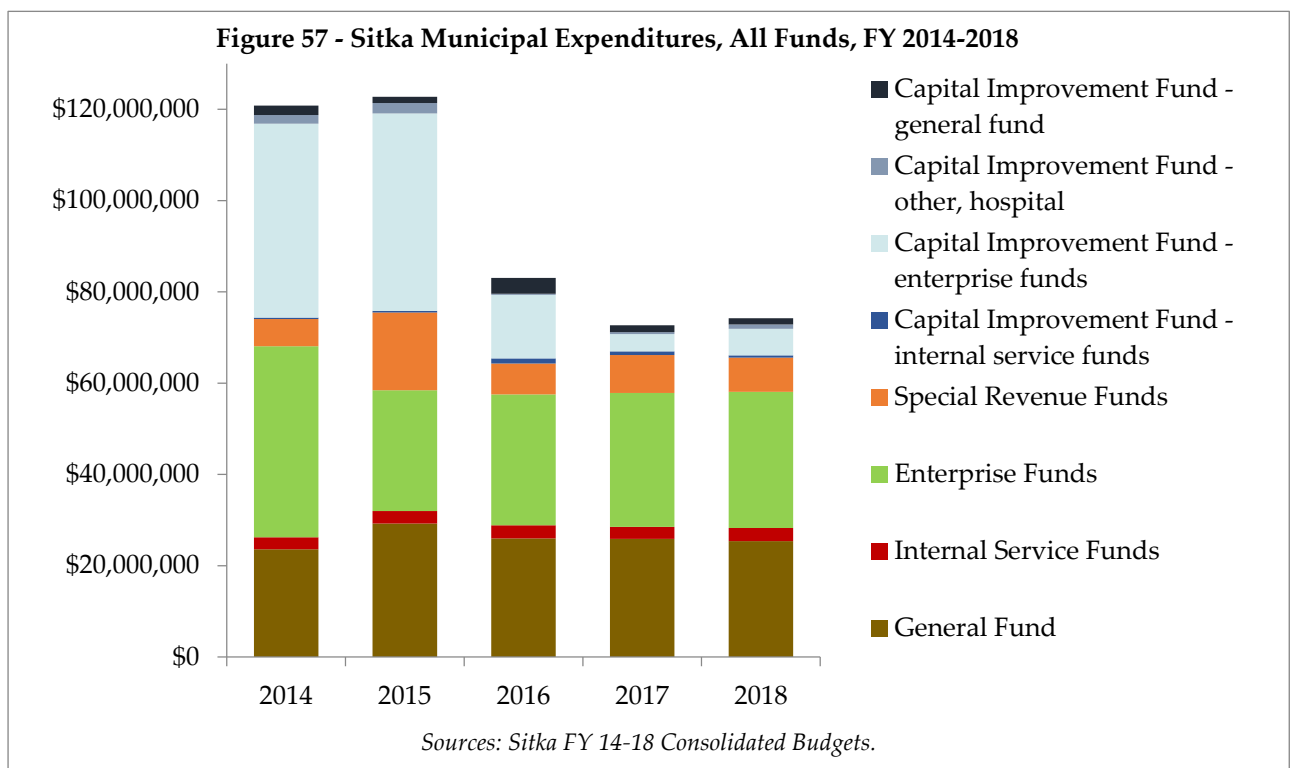
Additional sales tax revenue is expected in FY 2018 due to raising the taxable limit for retail sales from \$3,000 to \$12,000 (effective October 2017). However, given continuing state and federal funding cutbacks, increased repair and replacement demands from aging infrastructure, and community expectations for desired services, challenging decisions for department heads and the Assembly are expected to continue to achieve balanced budgets.

Trends: Spending from All Funds

When most of Sitka's municipal funds are combined, total annual spending over the last five years has decreased from \$121 million in FY 2014 to \$74 million in FY 2018, a drop of 40% (Figure 57). However, rather than reflecting a trend of dramatic decreased spending, instead what this shows is the wide fluctuations in Capital Improvement Project and Enterprise Fund spending. Wide fluctuations in spending from these funds are common because spending on approved projects is high some years (e.g. major road, utility, or harbor construction) and low in other years.

- For example: CIP spending in FY 2015 included \$35 million for the electric enterprise fund's Blue Lake Dam expansion, Special Project spending of \$1.7 million for the Seawalk, and \$10.4 million school bond debt refinancing. The following year the latter two were absent and electric fund bond spending was down to \$3.5 million.

Figure 57 - Sitka Municipal Expenditures, All Funds, FY 2014-2018



Capital Improvement Project Needs and Spending

The state's prior wealth and the fair share of funding acquired by Sitka's legislators paid for much of Sitka's road, sidewalk, bike lane, and seawalk systems, utility infrastructure, docks and harbors, schools, parks, the hospital, public works and civic facilities, as well as recent capital improvements, including the Harrigan Centennial Hall renovation and the Sitka Public Library remodel.

Since about 2010, Sitka has been at a financial crossroads. Sitkans recognize that Sitka is a small town with big town amenities; however, the public infrastructure, which citizens have come to expect and enjoy, is rapidly aging and deteriorating. As has been discussed, state and federal funding for capital project construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure is dropping. Like many places in Alaska that have been dependent on state and federal funding, local taxes, user fees, and available fund balances (savings) are not enough to pay for repair and replacement of infrastructure.

Funding decisions for capital project maintenance and improvements sometimes yields to other priorities. Given current shortfalls, a pattern is developing of deferring capital project maintenance and improvement funding and delaying projects to the next year's budget. However, this is creating ever-growing future capital project shortfalls, thereby avoiding the need to address sustainable capital project spending, and potentially making things more expensive due to inflation and rising interest rates.

- Funding for improvements to the locally owned road network, parks, trails and sport facilities, and municipally owned buildings (see Figures 52A and 52B) primarily comes from the General Fund, as well as available state transportation funding, and revenue from General Obligation bond sales.
- Funding for Sitka's utilities, the harbors and seaplane float, GPIP, and the city's Marine Service Center and bulkhead (all enterprise funds), primarily comes from enterprise fund balances, state loans, the occasional state or federal grant, and proceeds from Revenue Bond sales.

To address these matters, Sitka initiated a General Fund infrastructure sinking fund, and has completed a systematic look at the state of its facilities and infrastructure to determine its capital project funding needs (Figure 58) so it can plan to acquire funding to maintain and improve its infrastructure and facilities. In addition, Sitka has prepared a 5- to 10-year schedule of incremental utility rate increases. All of these measures are designed to spread costs out over time rather than incur unexpected, large, emergency costs to repair catastrophic breaks.

While some capital project funding will continue to come from state and federal sources, a quick review (Figure 58) shows estimated capital project needs at \$89 million through FY 2022, and another \$169 million needed in the long term. When compared to available fund balances (Figure 59), a serious sustainability challenge is evident.

Figure 58 - Estimated Medium and Long-Term Capital Project Funding Needs (\$ millions)

	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23 to FY 37
General Fund	\$5.57	\$1.97	\$2.64	\$8.63	\$41.07
Internal Service Funds <i>(Building Maint. MIS, Central Gar.)</i>	\$1.67	\$2.77	\$1.18	\$0.87	\$2.60
Enterprise Funds					
Electric	\$5.88	\$0.81	\$0.77	\$1.62	\$3.22
Water	\$5.62	\$0.76	\$1.06	\$1.21	\$19.27
Wastewater	\$0.82	\$0.78	\$1.00	\$1.74	\$14.03
Solid Waste	\$0.05	\$0.00	\$0.05	\$0.00	\$0.00
Harbors	\$3.80	\$25.87	\$7.62	\$3.91	\$88.48
TOTALS**	\$23.41	\$32.95	\$14.31	\$17.98	\$168.66
<i>** Note that Capital Project needs for the Special Revenue Funds, like the Hospital and the School District, are in addition to totals here. Sources: Sitka FY 18 Consolidated Budget</i>					

Undesignated Working Capital (Available Savings)

Sitka has positive balances in its funds. On Figure 59, the available undesignated available fund balances are shown. Essentially, these are Sitka's savings accounts.

Some of the totals are already committed through the budget process to capital improvement project funding, match to acquire state or federal funding, and for other purposes.

The totals are healthy; however, the totals must be considered against the backdrop of the need to provide for expected capital improvement needs – the total of which exceeds the fund balances available. For more information on this, see the first few challenges and opportunities listed on page 112.

Figure 59 - Available (Undesignated) Fund Balances

Fund	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18
General Fund <i>(used for general fund capital projects, among other uses)</i>	\$6,108,156	\$6,154,050	\$6,617,375	\$6,271,597
Internal Service Funds (all 3)	\$4,635,052	\$4,539,958	\$5,276,116	\$5,704,754
Enterprise Funds				
Electric <i>(includes unspent bonding proceeds)</i>	\$9,748,894	\$13,441,985	\$11,005,709	\$7,856,907
Water	\$280	\$1,634,218	\$2,358,218	\$2,467,269
Wastewater	\$3,398,748	\$4,379,622	\$5,029,367	\$4,726,195
Solid Waste	-\$132,800	\$229,239	\$874,486	\$569,390
Harbors	\$4,839,635	\$5,651,467	\$7,087,884	\$6,882,081
Airport Terminal	\$407,311	\$567,534	\$548,528	\$902,727
Marine Service Center	\$1,484,742	\$1,639,494	\$1,844,116	\$1,975,276
Gary Paxton Industrial Park	\$914,112	\$968,479	\$830,656	\$839,368
Permanent Fund <i>(balance, only a portion available for spending)</i>	\$22,567,513	\$22,994,581		\$25,138,227
<i>Sources: Sitka Consolidated FY 18 Budget (pg 29); for PFD- CAFR FY 15 & 16; 5/31/18 Permanent Fund Account Statement</i>				

A Review of FY 2018 General Fund Budget and Figures 60 A & B

FY 2018 General Fund Revenues are \$26.4 million (Figure 60 A).

- The vast majority - 69%, or \$18.2 million - comes from local sales and property taxes. A total of 5%, or \$1.3 million, comes from the state and federal government revenue.

FY 2018 General Fund Expenditures (including capital projects) are \$26.76 million (Figure 60 B).

- Almost half of General Fund spending is for two purposes: support for education (\$6.7 million, or 25%), and public safety (\$6.2 million, or 23%). The next largest expenditures are for: administration, assembly, and other department support (\$5.1 million, or 19%), and public works (streets, engineering, and recreation) (\$4.0 million, or 15%).

Figure 60 A - FY 2018 General Fund Revenue

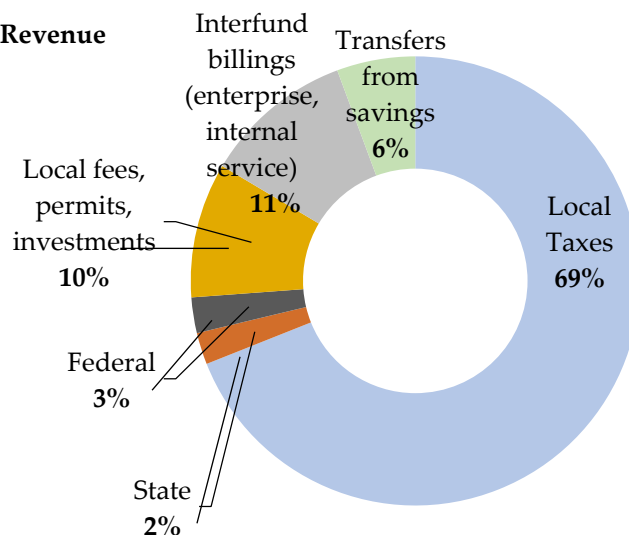
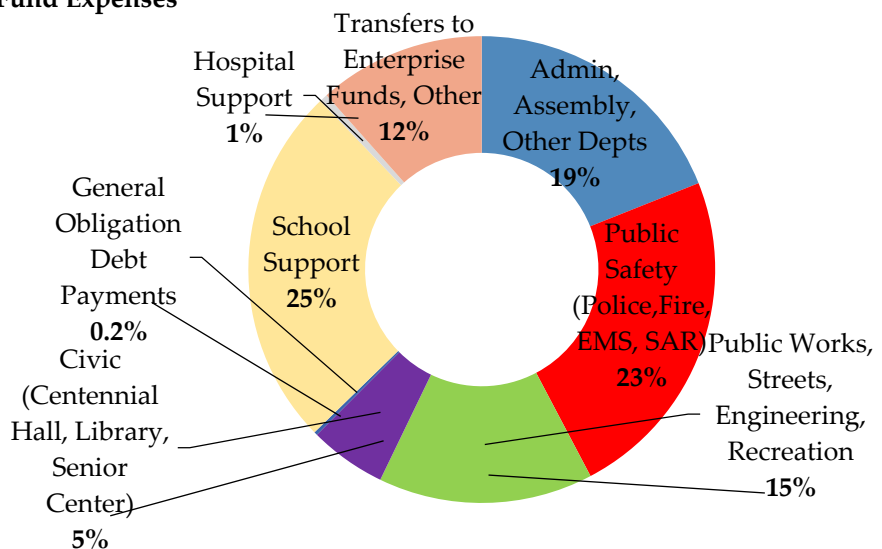


Figure 60 B - FY 2018 General Fund Expenses



7.3 Current Conditions - Borough Utilities

Drinking Water

The City and Borough of Sitka water system has been supplying water to residents of Sitka from the Blue Lake surface water source for more than 32 years, and some sections of the distribution system piping have been in service for more than 50 years. Blue Lake is fed by glacier, snowmelt and rain precipitation, and generally has very high-quality water. Water quality is monitored daily for turbidity, pH, and temperature.

Drinking water is an Enterprise Fund, and as such, annual revenues, primarily from user fees, are to cover annual operating costs as well as create savings to pay for improvements that will be needed over time.

There are five major components to the Sitka water system:

1. Blue Lake Water Source and Treatment Plant (located at Sawmill Cove, with a new (2015) \$9 million ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system that meets the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule.
 - Blue Lake is the community's primary water source and is very clean in its natural state. Sitka anticipates some water quality changes as the lake fills to the new dam elevation. With Blue Lake's watershed and high-quality water, the CBS is not required to filter it prior to disinfection and distribution. Proper disinfection is accomplished by adding a small amount of chlorine to guarantee drinking water is safe from harmful microorganisms. Fluoride is added to increase the natural level of fluoride in drinking water to a level recommended by the Public Health Service and the ADEC. Additional disinfection of Blue Lake's water was required by federal regulations by the fall of 2016. ultraviolet (UV) light was selected as the best and most cost-effective method of providing this additional disinfection. UV disinfection will improve water quality by enhancing disinfection of *Cryptosporidium*, and by providing a second treatment barrier for microbiological contaminants. In May of 2015 the \$9 million UV facility construction was completed and testing of the treatment components began. The UV facility has been operating since then with a few minor adjustments made along the way. Significant state funding was secured for the UV facility.
2. About 48 miles of Water Transmission and Distribution System Piping distributes water to consumers, running from Blue Lake south to power plant and Gary Paxton Industrial Park, and north to the ferry terminal. Over 3,240' of the pipe is asbestos cement pipe that is known to be brittle and susceptible to leaks. About 10,500' of the pipe has been in use for more than 40 years; more than 79,000' of pipe has been in use between 30 and 40 years.
3. Corrosion Control Facility (CCF). Sodium carbonate (soda ash) is added to the drinking water at the CCF located at 103 Jarvis Street. Soda ash slightly increases the pH and alkalinity of our treated water, thereby reducing the leaching of lead and copper from private plumbing systems into your tap water.
4. 2.95 MG of storage capacity in three water storage tanks: 0.75 MG (million gallons) at Harbor Mountain Road, 1.2 MG at Charteris Street, and 1.0 MG at Whitcomb Heights Subdivision.

5. Three water pressure booster pumps to serve the higher elevations, located at Wortman Loop, upper Cascade Street, and higher elevations in the Gavan Subdivision.

According to both the City and Borough of Sitka 2009 Water Master Plan (Carson Dorn) and current Public Works staff, area-wide water system demand has remained relatively constant for more than 10 years and is anticipated to remain stable for the foreseeable future.

Sanitary Sewer (Wastewater) Collection and Treatment

In 2012 Sitka prepared a Sanitary Sewer (wastewater) Master Plan (Dowl HKM) to inventory its wastewater collection and treatment system, look at current and likely future regulations, develop a plan for needed improvements, and assess how to fund those improvements.

There are three major components to the Sitka sanitary sewer (wastewater) collection and treatment system:

1. The Collection System, which collects and treats the sanitary wastewater from nearly 98% of the population consisting of approximately 3,000 residential and commercial customers.
 - It is a combination of gravity and force mains, 41 major lift stations with 19 connected to Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) remote monitoring and control system.
 - The collection system extends nearly 6 miles from the central business district to the north to just past the Alaska Marine Lines Barge Facility, 5.5 miles southeast to Gary Paxton Industrial Park (GPIP), and 2 miles west to the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station. In 2013 completion of the Sawmill Cove lift station allowed connection of GPIP to the system.
 - In total, there are approximately 40 miles of collection system mains of various sizes and materials.
2. The Sitka Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) is located on Japonski Island. It uses a conventional primary treatment process that provides raw sewage comminution, grit removal, and primary clarification prior to discharge to a permitted marine outfall. The treatment system and discharge are monitored under an EPA permit.
 - The current permit allows the plant to discharge primary effluent under Section 301(h) of the Clean Water Act that waives secondary treatment requirements for the system.
 - The maximum federally permitted average flow is 1.8 million gallons per day (mgd) on a monthly basis. The average flow to the WWTF is 1.0 to 1.3 mgd, a decrease from 1.8 mgd in the 1980s. The reduction is due to pipe and system upgrades that remove infiltrating rain and surface water entering the system through leaks and improper connections.
 - There is a regular required schedule of continuous, weekly, and monthly discharge testing for 11 different characteristics ranging from temperature to biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), to fecal coliform, to pH and ammonia, to certain toxics. In 2009, the Sitka WWTF discharge was consistently below maximum daily and

average monthly permitted levels for everything, except in June there was an exceedance for maximum daily allowed BOD.

- Section 4.5 of the 2013 Wastewater Plan assesses future residential development and the likely impact on lift stations. The Mt. Edgecumbe Pool project required the upgrade of one lift station. The existing lift stations should be sufficient to carry the increased load from future development in the vicinity of the Whitcomb Heights Subdivision and Indian River.
3. Biosolid Disposal. Gravity-thickened primary sludge is mechanically dewatered on a belt filter press. Lime is added after the sludge is pressed. The resulting “biosolid” is a dewatered cake that is transported to a permitted facility for land disposal at Granite Creek.

Sewer, Stormwater, and Drainage

Stormwater is the excess surface flow from rain and snowmelt that does not infiltrate soil. Stormwater management is one of the duties of the Sitka Public Works Department’s Engineering and Building Divisions. Improvements typically occur as part of street projects and are funded by the General Fund, General Fund Capital Projects, and, at times, state or federal grants or loans. Public Works has a regular program to clean out ditches and stormwater intake structures, getting to all places approximately once every two years. Since stormwater management is not an enterprise fund, there are no user fees associated with providing this service beyond regular general taxation.

The June 2013 City and Borough of Sitka Stormwater Management Plan (Tetra Tech) evaluated local hydrology, delineated drainage basins, inventoried the drainage management system, identified some problem areas to address, recommended stormwater management best practices, and developed recommendations for 5-10 years of system improvements. Much of the analysis and recommendations in this section come from this plan. The opening paragraph of the stormwater plan explains well the nature of and issues associated with stormwater management.

“Sensible regulation and guidance in the development of stormwater infrastructure will result in conveyance systems that provide a greater level for service and a longer service life with lower maintenance costs. Flooding and erosion caused by poorly designed infrastructure can damage structures and threaten human safety. Conditions are potentially hazardous in Sitka, Alaska, due to steep slopes, unstable soils, poorly infiltrating soils, and freezing weather. Surface runoff can transport eroded sediment and pollutants from the built environment that can be harmful to human health and the greater environment. As the effects of stormwater pollution are more widely recognized, regulation of stormwater quality by state and federal agencies has increased. Municipalities that are proactive in addressing stormwater pollution will improve local water quality conditions and may face less regulation and associated expenses.”

Clear standards prevent poorly designed and constructed infrastructure, and include recommended measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion and sedimentation during and after construction. The aim of a good stormwater ordinance and program is to provide property owners with the guidance to properly, safely, and efficiently design and construct drainage projects. Sitka has a storm drainage code (SGC 15.07), and stormwater hydraulic design standards were adopted when SGC 15.07 was approved.

Solid Waste

At one time, Sitka had an incinerator and a solid waste (garbage) landfill. However, changing regulations and capacity concerns closed them both. The incinerator was closed and site remediated. The landfill was capped and sealed and is now the Kimsham Recreation Complex and Ballfields. Today, Sitka, like many other Southeast Alaska municipalities, contracts out most of its solid waste services including trash collection, weighing and compressing at a transfer station, running a recycling center and scrap yard, and trash disposal. Disposal is via barge to Washington State. Solid waste handling facilities are spread out and include scrap metal at Gary Paxton Industrial Park, a Recycling Center off of Sawmill Creek Road at Jeff Davis Street, a Transfer Station for sorting, weighing and baling on Jarvis Street, and a construction and other debris disposal site at Granite Creek.

Solid waste management and disposal is an Enterprise Fund and as such annual revenues, primarily from user fees, are to cover annual operating costs as well as create savings to pay for improvements that will be needed over time. In order to promote public health and reduce littering and illegal dumping, every residential unit, business, and live aboard vessel within one mile of the Sitka road system is required to pay waste disposal fees.

After more than 10 years with no rate increase, a new rate schedule was adopted in late 2015. Today, most households pay \$51/month for a 96-gallon trash receptacle and \$30/month for a 48-gallon cart. A 2.07% user fee increase is proposed for the Solid Waste Fund in FY 2018. The current solid waste collection contracts provide for an annual inflationary adjustment to contractual charges. Thus, to keep the Solid Waste Fund solvent, annual inflationary adjustments to user fees must be considered.

The contract for Sitka's solid waste collection and disposal is currently held by Alaska Pacific Environmental Services. Solid waste is collected once per week for households, and more frequently for busy commercial and industrial sites. Solid waste is transported to a transfer facility on Jarvis Street near the City Shops where material is weighed, compressed, put in containers and trucked across town to the AML barge landing on north Halibut Point Road. Approximately 7-10 containers per week are barged south to Seattle, and from there shipped to a Republic Services regional landfill.

To reduce solid waste volumes, the city and its contractor encourage recycling. Sitka gets paid for its clean recyclables, and this also reduces the amount of solid waste that Sitka must bale, weigh, ship, and pay for disposal. The voluntary recycling program is free for households and low cost for others. Materials accepted at the recycling center at the corner of Sawmill Creek Road/Jeff Davis Street include cardboard, mixed paper, glass, aluminum, and certain plastics. There are also receptacles at some city facilities. Sitka does not have curbside recycling. Beginning in January 2018, China, the purchaser of most western U.S. recyclables, is set to restrict purchase of contaminated waste streams (e.g. mixed plastics, food thrown in with cardboard) and eliminate purchase of mixed paper. As a result, companies and communities are looking for other purchasers of recycled materials, emphasizing the need to reduce contamination, and researching local or regional uses for recycled materials.

Additional solid waste disposal services are available. Households can drop off up to 200 pounds per month of larger materials for free disposal at the Transfer Station. Each municipal harbor has a green container specifically to store used motor oil for free. The city's Granite Creek site asbestos, asphalt, boats, concrete, and construction debris can be disposed of by appointment, as can brush,

stumps, overburden, green waste, and tree limbs. Metal can be disposed of (aluminum, cars, copper, freezers, refrigerators, steel, tires) at the scrap yard by Fortress of the Bear at Gary Paxton Industrial Park, where it is sorted, baled, and prepared for shipment.

Electricity

Electrical power in Sitka is provided by City and Borough of Sitka Electric Department. System components are:

Generation

- Blue Lake hydroelectric plant and dam (original plant constructed in 1959, dam height extended in 2015 with a new power plant, peak generation is approximately 16 Megawatt MW).
- Green Lake dam and hydroelectric plant (plant constructed in 1982, peak generation is approximately 16 MW).
- A small 1.2 mega-volt ampere (MVA) hydroelectric plant is located at the Campground below Blue Lake.
- A backup diesel generator system at the Jarvis Street location, which includes five total units (peak generation is approximately 22 MW and is used as supplemental or standby).

Transmission

Electricity is moved in bulk via high voltage lines from the generating sources to electrical substations, where power is transformed into lower voltages for distribution. These low voltage lines bring electricity from the substations to homes and businesses:

- Approximately 6 miles of 69 kV transmission line from Blue Lake Powerhouse to Marine Street and Jarvis substations
- Approximately 8 miles of 69 kV transmission line from Green Lake powerhouse to Blue Lake substation
- Marine Street substation supplies power to approximately 80% of Sitka customers
- Jarvis Street substation
- Gary Paxton Industrial Park substation
- Medvejie substation
- Wheeler Substation (future, on the north end of town)
- Low voltage electrical lines run from the substations north to the end of Halibut Point Road, south to Green Lake, east along all streets, west to Japonski Island, and to other islands. There are multiple underwater cables, including to Japonski, as well as a line under the O'Connell Bridge.

The 2015 Lake Dam and turbine project increased electrical generation capacity in Sitka. The project was based on increases in load and high oil prices. A demand forecast was prepared when electric consumption rose rapidly (2002-2008) due primarily to the high price of home heating oil and new electrical users (fish processors). The declining price of oil and other factors resulted in the load demand not materializing as expected at this time. This has resulted in excess electrical generation capacity. As a non-profit organization, the electric rates needed to increase to pay for the loans on the Blue Lake expansion project, and to continue to fund aging infrastructure. However, even with the 2017 electrical rate increase, Sitka's electric rates are still less expensive than in Anchorage and many other communities in Southeast Alaska that are part of the Inside Passage Electrical Energy (IPEC) co-op. Sitka is proud to have clean and environmentally responsible hydro generation

producing nearly 100% of our energy needs. Additionally, the Blue Lake dam has provided the infrastructure to supply the domestic water needs of the Sitka Community.

The CBS Electric Department is a public organization serving the needs of Sitka. Electrical power is provided by an Electric Enterprise fund. In FY 2018, the electric fund revenue will be \$17.8 million of which 95% (\$16.9 million) comes from user fees. Expenditures this year are budgeted at \$17.6 million. Operating revenue takes the April 2017 rate hike into account, which is now 15 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), and will be the same rate for all users (the typical home uses 1,200 kWh/month). A need-based utility bill subsidy program was initiated in 2016. A seasonal rate variation will start on October 1, 2017, with residential rates at 12 cents per kWh in winter and 19 cents per kWh in summer. Residential small commercial users and boat slips qualify, while large commercial users and government facilities do not. Changes in the electric fee structure will allow the CBS Sitka Electric Department Enterprise Fund to meet its approximately \$8 million per year bond payments for the Blue Lake dam project, pay for normal operating expenses, and pay for replacement of some of our aging equipment.

7.4 Current Conditions - Civic Facilities

Community facilities like convention centers and libraries typically require annual subsidies from the community's operating budget. Despite this, many communities have both convention and civic centers and libraries. This is because the purpose of these two types of public facilities are not to make a profit, but rather to provide space for community, cultural, arts, and educational activities, and to generate activity that creates local spending and sustains local businesses and jobs. Similarly, Sitka municipal support to the Swan Lake Senior Center is not about revenue generation. Rather, it is about contributing to needed services important to citizen health, safety, and quality of life.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Sitka's oceanfront Harrigan Centennial Hall (HCH) is Sitka's convention and civic center and hosts the Sitka History Museum, formerly called the Isabel Miller Museum. HCH is a premier Sitka event destination. In addition to conferences, meetings, the Sitka Summer Music Festival, and other arts and cultural events, HCH is often used for guest lectures, banquets, school graduations, weddings, funerals, and other family and community life events.

The facility reopened in early 2017 after a significant renovation that doubled the size to approximately 18,000 square feet. This renovation was funded by the state and the state's commercial passenger excise tax. HCH has a new roof, new HVAC system, state of the art technology, three improved and expanded meeting rooms, a beautiful new lobby, and a significantly bigger kitchen.

With the renovation, space allocated for the Sitka History Museum more than doubled. Scheduled to open in late summer 2017, the 4,000-square-foot space will allow the museum to display and interpret more of its collection.

The number of events and related revenue generated by HCH over the last decade are trending downward (Figure 61). HCH staff note that 2017 will be the first “normal” year since 2012, since both HCH and the adjacent Sitka Public Library are now open post-renovation. The recent updates both to the space and technology should help reverse recent declines. See challenges and opportunities (page 120) for additional ideas to increase use.

Figure 61 - Harrigan Centennial Hall - Events and Related Revenue

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*	2016*
Number of Events	1,208	1,177	990	1,078	957	820	855	882	550	n/a
<i>Non-Profit</i>	719	815	597	711	663	529	472	519	n/a	n/a
<i>City</i>	367	266	304	288	238	237	303	257	n/a	n/a
<i>State/federal</i>	96	73	79	58	33	34	33	53	n/a	n/a
<i>Commercial</i>	26	23	29	21	23	18	48	54	n/a	n/a
Gross Total	\$117,809	\$89,818	\$92,390	\$80,684	\$83,309	\$84,223	\$62,403	\$63,462	n/a	n/a
<i>Total Billed</i>	\$68,748	\$64,220	\$61,447	\$65,269	\$62,772	\$56,297	\$51,219	\$55,895	n/a	n/a
<i>Total waived or sponsored</i>	\$27,325	\$25,598	\$30,943	\$15,415	\$20,604	\$27,926	\$11,184	\$7,567	n/a	n/a
<i>Source: Harrigan Centennial Hall</i>										
* closed for renovation all or part of year +grand opening Feb. 2017, est. number of events										

Sitka Public Library

The Sitka Public Library, formerly called the Kettleon Memorial Library, is located at 320 Harbor Drive and is well known for the views of the Eastern Channel of the Sitka Sound and the Pyramids mountain peaks that can be seen from the building’s large windows.

The mission of Sitka Public Library is to provide a collection of informational, cultural, recreational, educational, and local historical resources to meet the evolving needs of its patrons, and to promote reading as an essential element of an informed citizenry. Sitka cemetery records are also held at the library.

The library first opened in 1923. The Sitka Library Association’s volunteers provided library service in Sitka for nearly fifty years. The library is now municipally owned and managed. The existing building was first built in 1967 with a gift from Theodore Kettleon, a longtime Sitka resident. Additional funds came from the Library Services and Construction Act, and gifts from other generous Sitka citizens.

In February 2016, a library expansion/remodel was completed resulting in the current size of 11,680 square feet. The expansion was funded by a \$5.7 million state grant, approximately \$500,000 from community members, and approximately \$500,000 from the municipality’s general fund and Commercial Passenger Excise Tax.

The Sitka Public Library has higher levels of attendance per person and circulation of materials per person than other Southeast Alaska libraries and the state average, and receives more volunteer

hours per year than libraries in Juneau and Ketchikan (Figure 62: In FY 2015, library use was lower than normal due to relocation/renovation. 2017 was the first year of 'normal' use in that both the library and Harrigan Centennial Hall are fully open and operational).

In FY 2018, just over 3% of the city's general fund was allocated for the Library, which has 7.3 fulltime equivalent staff. Several library staff work part-time. In response to recent fiscal belt-tightening, the library budget was reduced in FY 2017, resulting in the loss of one full-time employee, cuts to staff training and travel, and being open 16 fewer hours per week.

The Sitka Public Library has an Alaska collection and local history collection which compliment that of the Sitka Historical Society and Sheldon Jackson Museum. The library also has a collection of materials in Alaska Native languages, Filipino, Russian, Spanish, French, and German.

Figure 62 – Sitka Public Library Use, 2013-2015

	Total Circulation Per Capita			Number of Volunteer Hours Per Year			Annual Attendance Per Capita		
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015*	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015*	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015*
Alaska	7.08	7.45	6.86	60,287	66,401	61,687	5.17	5.43	4.91
Sitka	13.60	13.87	9.56	1,837	2,114	1,580	13.50	16.48	12.55
Ketchikan	10.24	12.13	12.19	310	50	85	8.78	7.06	7.13
Juneau	5.46	5.46	6.56	207	204	250	9.05	8.92	8.20
Source: Alaska State Library, Alaska Public Library Statistics, FY Annual Reports									
* The Sitka Library was relocated to the Sheldon Jackson campus during renovations.									

The library also provides free internet access, bridging the technological divide and providing this critical service to citizens and visitors.

The role of libraries is changing today to strongly focus on programming. Sitka is ahead of the curve in this regard and offers a wide diversity of free usage spaces and programs for children, teens, and adults, including:

- Separate room for children through age 8 with two computer learning stations;
- Meeting room for up to 24 people;
- Study room that accommodates up to six;
- Teen Lab for ages 12-17 to explore, socialize, create, produce, research, and perform in areas such as music-making and recording (with animation, sound recording and Apple technology), reading, drawing, crafting, film-making, or just hanging out;
- Media lab with 12 wired computer stations, printer, microform reader; and a
- Multipurpose reading room

As an example of the library's dedicated staff and commitment to programming and excellence, Sitka's youth services librarian won an Alaska State Library Association public service award in February 2017.

Swan Lake Senior Center

The Swan Lake Senior Center (SLSC) is located at 402 Lake Street. SLSC serves a nutritionally-rich hot lunch for seniors five days a week at the center at 11:30 a.m. Seniors are not charged for meals, although donations for the meals are accepted and appreciated. SLSC provides home delivered meals for seniors recovering from illness or surgery and who are homebound and cannot physically attend lunch in person. The building is open to senior participants from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. The Care-A-Van dispatch office is available from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. In FY 2016, SLSC provided 11,175 meals. The door-to-door Care-A-Van public transportation service operates four paratransit vehicles. This service is available by reservation to assist those age 60 or older, or for those of any age who are disabled. In FY 2016, they provided 13,795 rides.

Funding for SLSC services is primarily provided by Catholic Community Services. Partner agencies include Center for Community, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, City and Borough of Sitka, White Elephant, C.H.A.R.R., Sitka Rotary Club, and Sitka Legacy Foundation.

Sitka Cemeteries

There are more than 20 cemeteries and burial sites within the borough, which are sacred places and sites that represent Sitka's heritage and continue to tell the story of longevity in the area. This includes an old and new city cemetery. Funding for landscaping and maintenance of city owned cemeteries is a parks and recreation/public works duty funded by the General Fund and by about \$2000 annually from the Cemetery Special Revenue Fund.

7.5 Current Conditions - Public Safety

The City and Borough of Sitka provides a full suite of 24/7 public safety services including police, jail, fire, ambulance, and emergency medical service (EMS), search and rescue (SAR), dive team, and animal shelter services. These services are housed in separate fire hall and police department facilities on Lake Street and the animal shelter on Jarvis Street.

Sitka Fire Department (Fire, Emergency Medical, Search and Rescue)

The Sitka Fire Department strives to meet the needs of the diverse community through effective emergency response and community involvement. The Fire Department is made up of four divisions: fire, emergency medical, search and rescue, and a dive division. The four divisions, 8.5 paid staff, and approximately 95 dedicated volunteers, deliver fire prevention and suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, search and rescue, and fire investigative services. There is also a group of about 10 auxiliary volunteers.

The Fire Hall at 209 Lake Street was built in 2004 and is in great condition. The department has two fire engines, one 75- foot ladder truck, three ambulances, two command trucks, and equipment needed to operate its four divisions. The department benefits from the borough's regular vehicle maintenance and replacement schedule through the general fund's central garage fund. Equipment must be well maintained and replaced periodically for effective emergency response, and these ongoing costs are typically met through the regular department budget. CBS also has a response

vessel, which is critical considering the community’s maritime location and the high value of the commercial and charter fleets, infrastructure, and the heavy use of adjacent waterways. The response vessel is operated jointly by the police and fire departments.

The total number of fire department responses has been steady over the last decade, then a jump occurred in 2016 (Figure 63). No single factor was determined to cause the increase; however, the department expects an increase in responses over the next decade as the population ages.

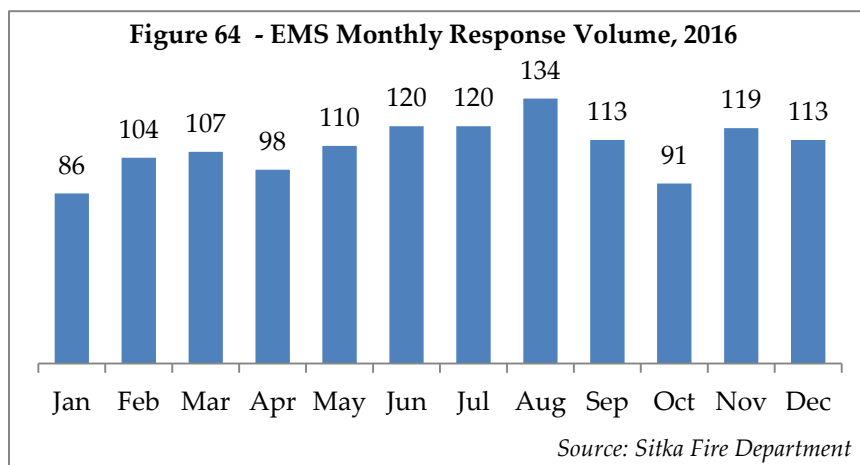
Figures 63 & 64 - Sitka Fire Department & EMS

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Fire Department Runs	1,152	1,167	1,147	1,183	1,205	1,129	1,200	1,164	1,073	1,199	1,436

Source: Sitka Fire Department

Sitka’s EMS division is certified by the State Department of Health and Social Services as a Basic Life Support/Advanced Life Support ambulance service. EMS handles the majority of calls for service received by the Sitka Fire Department. In 2016, 1,315, or 91%, of total runs were EMS related. These figures are about average over the past decade.

Monthly EMS calls for 2016 (Figure 64) show a slightly higher demand in the summer months, but a fairly steady demand all year. Search and Rescue (SAR) has a full Incident Management Team that specializes in land and marine based search management, a K-9 resource that provides track/trail as well as air scent dogs, a fully accredited Mountain Rescue group that specializes in technical rescue, in addition to trained ground searchers.



The Fire Department and Police Department collaboratively share dispatch services operated by the police. In addition, both departments coordinate and conduct joint trainings with the U.S. Coast Guard, which has three search and rescue helicopters stationed in Sitka. CBS public safety personnel and the USCG respond jointly to as many as five or six events per year.

CBS’s Local Emergency Planning Committee consists of a diverse group of members, is staffed by the fire department, and meets monthly. They coordinate and address matters such as community emergency planning and response, pandemics, hazmat response, Red Cross matters, training and drilling opportunities, and equipment needs.

Sitka Police Department

The mission of the Sitka Police Department is to safeguard the lives and property of Sitka's diverse community. Their mandate is to stop crime and enhance the quality of life in Sitka by delivering professional public safety services with integrity, respect, and courage. The police attempt to work closely with business, schools, associations, and civic groups to accomplish its mission. The goal of these collaborations is to make Sitka a safe and enjoyable place to live and visit.

To achieve the ideals outlined in its mission statement, the police department has developed a strategic plan that focuses on four main strategies: community engagement, customer service, organizational development, and problem solving. When there is a problem, the police department proactively seeks the best possible long-term solution by engaging community partners and agencies. For example, in the past, someone committing crimes with mental health issues might simply face repeated arrest and incarceration. Currently, the department will try to work with the individual, assess what is needed for an effective intervention, and then proactively reach out to community partners such as Sitka Counseling to coordinate effective long-term positive change for the individual. This improved approach not only reduces crime, but improves the quality of life of the affected person. In the past, offenders were often sent to the Lemon Creek Correction Center in Juneau, but now regulatory and other changes have resulted in these persons being released back into Sitka more often.

The Police Department provides 24/7 Police, Fire, and EMS dispatch, correctional services through the jail facility, and police protection. The police department has an overall authorized strength of 30 employees. This includes an authorized strength of 16 police officers, including the chief, five jailers, five dispatchers, one animal control officer and a multi services officer to manage department property and the evidence process. The current on-site property room is too small, so the department rents four off-site storage units. Altogether, the department provides services to approximately 9,000 residents and tens of thousands of visitors per year across 4,811 square miles of remote land and sea.

Police records show that as police personnel have been cut, the need for the services exclusively provided by the police department and the jail have continued to increase (Figures 65A - 65C). This demand is expected to increase each year.

Figure 65 A - Sitka Police Department - Basic Statistics

	Calls for Service	Dispatch Reports	911 Calls	Adult Arrest	Juvenile Arrest	Paper Served	Paper Attempt
2010	18,249	1,837	3,308	570	76	953	1,373
2011	26,429	2,033	1,880	581	53	956	1,436
2012	32,221	1,921	4,128	554	59	1,130	1,758
2013	33,119	1,896	4,379	524	102	932	1,302
2014	33,251	1,810	3,940	573	49	814	1,166
2015	34,346	1,698	3,563	553	77	833	1,187
2016	42,905	1,440	3,759	541	8	688	772

Figure 65 B - Sitka Police Department -Vehicle Statistics

	Traffic Stops	Non-Parking Citation	Parking Citations	M/V* Accident	Abandoned Vehicles	Airport Impounds
2010	1,388	991	787	90	67	15
2011	1,113	891	1,029	119	71	20
2012	964	876	897	109	44	10
2013	842	665	576	117	47	26
2014	1,057	707	1,718	115	67	12
2015	1,311	716	1,072	136	53	4
2016	1,441	479	1,068	81	64	1

* Accidents reported to state DMV

Figure 65 C - Sitka Police Department – Incarceration Related

	Days Served in Jail					
	Federal Charge	State Charge	City Charge	Juvenile Holds	Protective Custody	Electronic Monitoring
2010	1	1,616	132	5	184	0
2011	1	1,834	111	2	193	0
2012	6	2,233	91	0	183	0
2013	3	2,002	80	2	241	0
2014	2	2,009	90	1	147	0
2015	6	2,606	45	13	145	0
2016	0	2,033	38	3	165	0

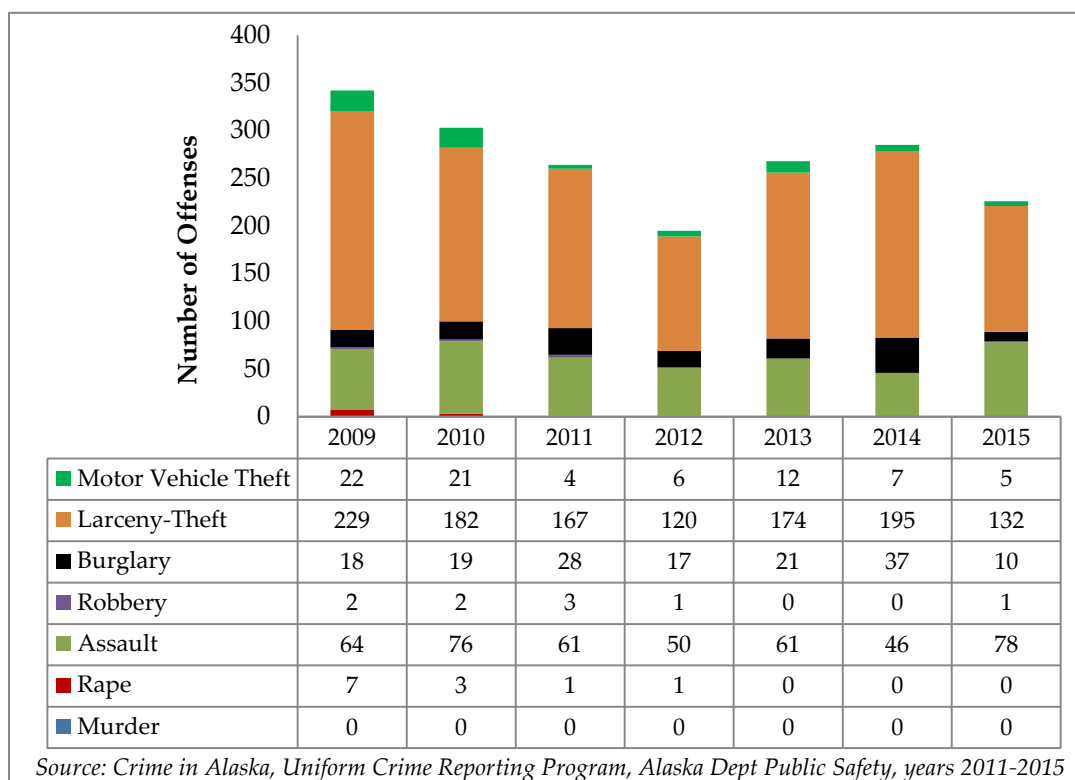
Sitka is a relatively safe community, thanks in part to the police department's efforts. Sitka's rates of overall crime and property crime are well below the statewide figures, as well as those of Juneau and Ketchikan (Figure 66). Sitka's violent crime rate is slightly higher than the state rate, but lower than Juneau and Ketchikan.

Figure 66 - Five Year (2011-2015) Average Crime Rates per 1000 Residents

	Overall Crime Rate per 1000 people	Violent Crimes per 1000 people	Property Crimes per 1000 people
Alaska	34.3	6.4	27.9
Sitka	27.4	6.7	20.7
Ketchikan	31.3	7.9	23.4
Juneau	56.3	22.9	33.4
NOTE: Violent crimes are murder, robbery, assault, and rape. Property crimes are burglary and theft. Source: <i>Crime in Alaska, Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Alaska Department of Public Safety, for years 2011-2015</i>			

Assaults in Sitka jumped to a 7-year high in 2015 (Figure 67). This troubling increase is one reason behind the department's redoubling of a community engagement effort and its emphasis on building relationships by ensuring that all people are treated with dignity and respect. Sitka, like other communities in Alaska and nationwide, is experiencing increased crime and drug overdose related injuries and deaths linked to heroin, meth, and opioid addiction.

Figure 67 - Sitka Reported Crime Incidents, Actual Offenses



The 2014 “General Fund Efficiency Audit & Comprehensive Management Plan” (GFEA) by Municipal Solutions analyzed Sitka services and found that, “dispatch and jail staffing levels are insufficient for continued and effective 24/7 coverage” (pg. 95). This echoes a Sitka Police Department concern.

The GFEA report reviewed police benchmarking data and found that similarly sized communities expend about 40% of their budget on emergency services. In the proposed FY 2018 budget, police expenditures are (16%) and fire department expenditures are (7%) of the general fund budget. Further, the GFEA report documented that similar communities have more police personnel per capita than Sitka (Figure 68).

Figure 68 - Select Police Benchmarks, FY 14

	Ketchikan (City)	Sitka	Wasilla
Population	8,250	9,046	8,456
Police Dept. Budget as a % of Total Operating	30.13%	16.02%	42.05%
Total Public Safety Personnel (Police)	36.3	31	54
Number of Police Officers	25	16	24

Source: Excerpt from Municipal Solutions, General Fund Efficiency Audit & Comprehensive Management Plan, 2014, pg. 95 - Overall number of Sitka police personnel and number of officers have been reduced since the report was published (Chief Ankerfelt 2017)

Sitka Animal Shelter

The police department also runs the Sitka Animal Shelter, located at 209 Jarvis Street. The animal shelter's mission is to improve the quality of life in Sitka by providing safety to citizens and animals, and preserving the health of the citizens and care of the animals. Animal control means not only protecting people from the nuisance of roaming, uncontrolled animals, but also protecting pets and wild animals in their habitats. The shelter offers temporary care for domesticated animals awaiting placement into loving homes. Each year, about half of the impounded animals are subsequently adopted. Although 50-75 animals are euthanized annually, these numbers are decreasing as a result of adoption efforts and spay/neuter education.

The Shelter has one full-time employee and more than 25 volunteers. Volunteers contribute many hours to the shelter by cleaning kennels, walking the animals, and feeding and watering them.

Many Public Safety Partners

Sitkans recognize and value a web of entities that together provide safety and security in the community. When the public identified Sitka's strengths and assets as part of this Plan's development, they said:

"Nonprofit and health agencies that provide a tier of the services and safety nets that might otherwise be the concern of a municipal or county government."

"Nonprofit agencies willing to work-with or without city support -- to better the community and make Sitka a safe, healthful, and culturally rich place to live—also to expand economic opportunity."

"Sitka has a very strong ability to stand together in a crisis. (When it comes to the mundane aspects of running city government, the interest wanes.)"

It is important to recognize that public safety in Sitka is maintained with the assistance and partnership of many entities in addition to borough police and fire. Just a few of the important partners are Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services, Brave Heart Volunteers, the U.S. Coast Guard, Alaska State Troopers, SEARHC and Sitka Community Hospitals, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Easter Group, local churches, Sitkans Against Family Violence, ANB/ANS, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Betty Eliason Child Care Center, and United Way.

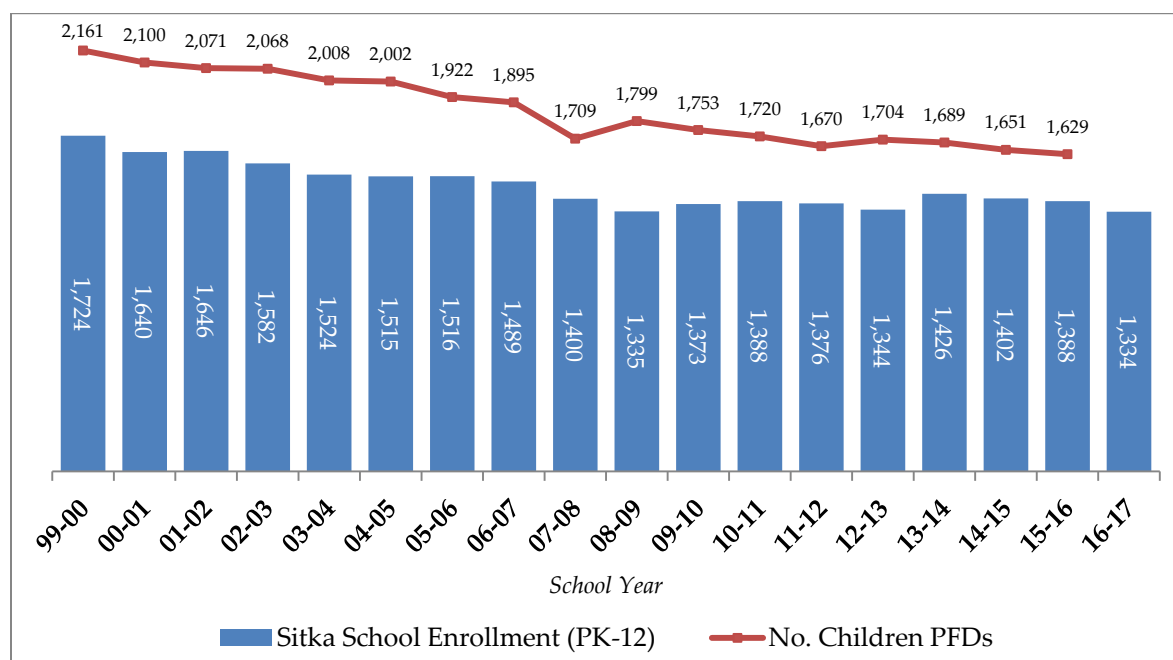
7.6 Current Conditions - Sitka School District

The Sitka School District (SSD) mission is to, “Discover potential, Nurture growth, and Inspire lifelong curiosity. SSD operates six schools (Baranof Elementary, Blatchley Middle School, Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School, Pacific High School, Sitka High School, REACH Home School). The community’s Performing Arts Center is part of the Sitka High School. During the 2016-2017 school year, 1,334 students were enrolled in pre-school through 12th grade. The number of enrolled students has been declining for several years (Figure 69).

Sitka Schools has approximately 207 permanent full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and 65 FTE temporary positions. SSD is Sitka’s 2nd largest employer. About 29% of Sitka School’s staff attended Sitka Schools.

This decline in students corresponds with a declining number of Sitkans who are of child-bearing age (20 to 39). The State Department of Labor projects further declining numbers of this age cohort over the next 20 years, which suggests student enrollment will also continue to drop. There were 2,410 Sitkans in the age 20-39 cohort in 2016; by 2030 Sitkans in this age are projected to drop by 338 people to 2,072. Further decline is projected through 2045.

Figure 69 - Sitka School District Enrollment and Number of Youth PFDs



Over the last seven years, attendance rates at Sitka schools have hovered around 92-93% while graduation rates are around 70% (Figure 70). The last three years show a downward (positive) trend in dropout rates.

Figure 70 – Sitka School District Metrics

School Year	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
11-12	91.5%	72.4%	3.6%
12-13	92.0%	63.0%	3.6%
13-14	92.9%	70.6%	1.9%
14-15	93.1%	67.0%	2.4%
15-16	92.8%	72.3%	1.6%
15-16 Statewide	93.2%	76.1%	3.9%
<i>Sources: Report Card to the Public, Alaska DEED</i>			

There are 56 school districts in Alaska, but www.schooldigger.com only ranks 26 due to their larger size and reliability of reporting. Of the 26 ranked, Sitka was 8th in 2016-17, up from 11th in 2014-15. Out of 83 Alaskan High Schools that www.schooldigger.com ranks based on average standard test scores, Sitka High School ranked 30 and Pacific High was not ranked for 2016-2017.

An Association of Alaska School Board 2016 school climate and connectedness survey found that Sitka students in grades 6-12 noted significant improvements for respectful climate, parent and community involvement, student involvement, high expectations, and caring adults. For staff, there were significant improvements for respectful climate, and parent and community involvement. In 2015-2016, SSD conducted an alumni survey thanks to the efforts of some current and retired teachers. This survey of 125 alumni who graduated between 2004 and 2008 found that 83% had positive comments about the role that Sitka Schools played in preparing them for life. Sitka Schools prepared them for college, career technical education classes were key, they were ‘ready for life’, their teachers made a difference, and activities and athletics were key factors for success.

The SSD regularly leverages its resources through partnerships with Sitkans Against Family Violence (Girls on the Run/Boys Run), Sitka Conservation Society (Tiny House and Mentoring), Sitka Fine Arts Camp (Artists in the Schools, Margaret A. Cargill Grant, Performing Arts Center), Sitka Sound Science Center (Scientists in the Schools), Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and UAS (Dual Enrollment). For example, one outcome in response to a School Board initiative to provide 6 hours/week of culturally appropriate education was that district, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska partnered to combine resources and create the Head Start Program-Wooch.een Yei Jigaxtoonei Preschool Program that now has more than 40 students. Of note, Wooch.een Yei Jigaxtoonei in Tlingit means All Working Together in English.

City and Borough of Sitka Funding to Sitka School District

The Sitka School District is funded by the State of Alaska (primary funding source), the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS), the federal government, and other sources.

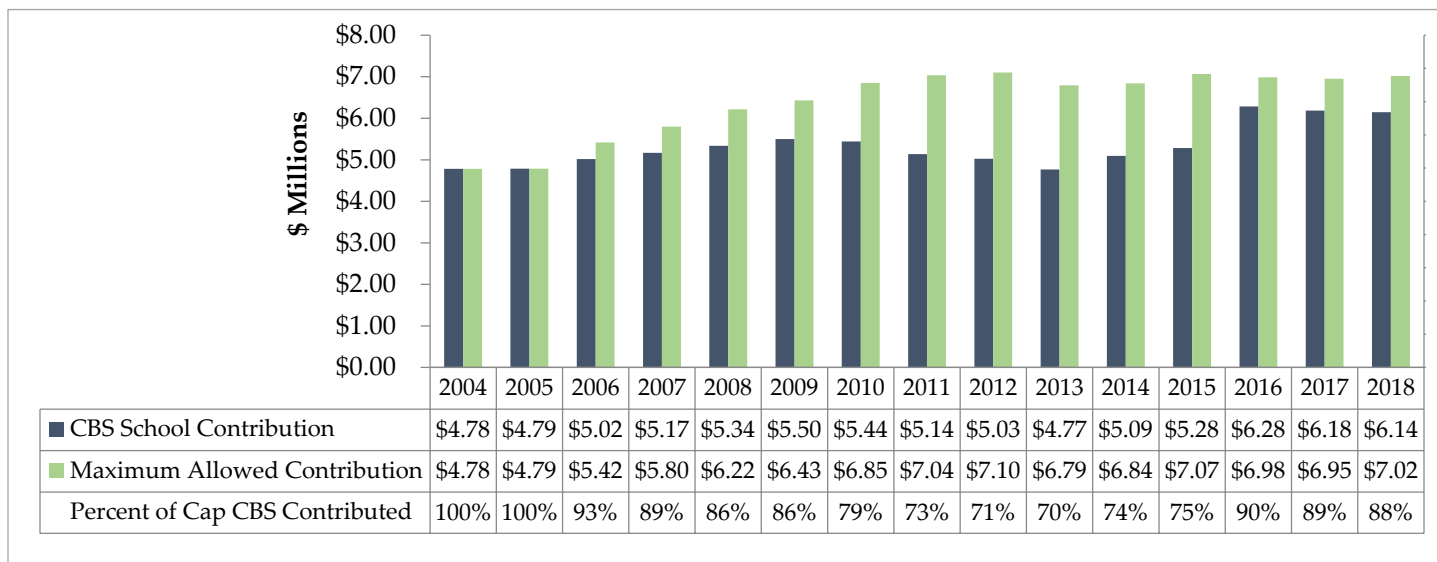
For FY 2016, the School District’s audit shows revenue of \$23.9 million, which includes 26% from the CBS, 63% from the state (including state required PERS/TERS contributions), 1% from federal sources, 1% from earnings on investments, e-rate etc., and 8% from special revenues funds and grants (food service, Title 1-A, IDEA, other). These figures do not include debt service or capital project grants.

As part of the state’s education foundation funding formula, it determines the minimum required and maximum (the “cap”) allowable contribution the CBS can make to support its school district.

From 2001-2005, in the days of healthy state and federal funding, Sitka was able to make a local contribution to support schools near the cap. The cap is roughly equivalent to 0.00265 times the value of assessed property in Sitka.

As finances have tightened, the local contribution to the schools has declined in both nominal and inflation-adjusted dollars (Figure 71) to between 75-90% of the most recent cap. At the same time, the School District has been facing increasing health insurance premiums along with the city and hospital, and (like everyone else) higher fees for electricity, water and sewer, and solid waste disposal. Adding general inflation to the mix, funding is tight.

Figure 71 - Cap (Maximum Allowed Local Contribution) and Local CBS Contribution



Source: Sitka School District

7.7 Current Conditions - Sitka Community Hospital

The Sitka Community Hospital (SCH) is designated as a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) and organized as a component unit of the City and Borough of Sitka. SCH has been serving the community since 1956 and provides a full range of healthcare services.

The five-member SCH Board of Directors is the chief governing body of SCH. The CBS Assembly is the elected body that appoints the board. The board represents the community's interest in the hospital and serves as a fiduciary on behalf of CBS. SCH also has a medical advisory board that does not report to the CEO.

SCH Mission – Restore, maintain, and improve the health of those in our community through competent and compassionate delivery of care.

SCH Vision – Sitka Community Hospital is an integral part of the community where all individuals reach their highest potential for health.

SCH is licensed for 12 acute care beds, all of which are also designated as swing beds.

The SCH Long-term Care Unit is licensed for 15 beds. SCH management has inquired of the State of Alaska whether certain long-term beds can be repurposed as swing beds. A decision is currently pending.

The SCH Home Health Department is a licensed Home Health Agency with the State of Alaska and has both Medicare and Medicaid certification.

CAHs, like SCH, are permitted to offer fewer services than the typical sole community hospital, but are required to provide a basic level of services. To meet expressed community needs and desires, SCH provides many more services than are required by this designation.

SCH lines of service include 24-hour emergency room, cardiac rehabilitation, radiology/diagnostic imaging, infusion center, laboratory, FASD assessment services, surgical services, specialty clinic for visiting expert physicians, daily appointments and walk-in hours at the Mountainside Family Health Care Clinic, as well as rehabilitation services at Oceanside Therapy Center. Rehabilitation services include physical, occupational and speech therapy.

SCH currently employs approximately 207 staff members. The actual number of full-time equivalents was 163 at the end of FY 2017.

After careful thought and deliberation, as well as input from citizens at multiple Town Hall meetings, the CBS Assembly has determined that it is appropriate to seek options regarding a potential sale, lease, partnership, management, or affiliation to ensure the continuation of exceptional local healthcare provided by SCH continues to be delivered. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently published with objectives to (1) increase quality and scope of healthcare provided in Sitka, (2) maintain/expand living wage employment opportunities, and (3) mitigate current and future liabilities to CBS.

7.8 Borough Budgetary, Utility, Facility, and Service Challenges and Opportunities

Budgetary

Sitka Feels the Pinch of Declining Oil Revenue to the State

When revenue to Sitka's General Fund, three Internal Services Funds, and many Special Revenue Funds are combined, the portion funded by federal and state government has dropped by \$3.7 million, from comprising 25% of these funds' total in FY 2014 to 13% in FY 2018.

Capital project funding from the state has also declined. This traditionally helps to pay for General Fund capital improvements (roads and sidewalks, parks and recreation, library, Centennial Hall), and for capital improvements to Sitka's eight Enterprise Funds (water, wastewater/sewer, solid waste, electric, harbors, Gary Paxton Industrial Park, Marine Service Center, and airport terminal). In addition, state funding that formerly was available as grants is now available primarily as loans. Especially challenging is the fact that much of Sitka's infrastructure is older, requiring repairs and replacement typically paid for by capital improvement funding.

The trend of reduced or plateaued state and federal revenue is expected to continue. Budget gaps must be filled by a combination of internal efficiencies: selectively reducing services, personnel, and spending; delaying some infrastructure projects and looking for ways to extend use before full replacement is required; increasing local revenues (taxes, fees); and carefully increasing use of undesignated fund balances (savings).

Fortunately, Sitka's General Fund, Enterprise Funds, and Permanent Fund all have healthy undesignated balances (savings), which provide equity to guarantee loans and bonds, meet the rule of thumb that municipalities have three to six months of operating revenue on hand to prevent crises, and can be used as match to leverage state and federal funding. However, the anticipated need exceeds available fund balances.

Predictability for Capital Project Funding

Predictability is needed by municipal departments in the form of a multi-year capital project spending *strategy* (not a list of needs). Planning and budgeting will benefit by establishing a clear amount of capital project funding the municipality will contribute for each of the next five years.

There is a short- and long-term capital project plan for the general fund and all of Sitka's enterprise funds. However, despite this plan, funding for capital projects sometimes yields to other priorities. Given tight budgets, a pattern is developing of deferring capital projects to the following year's budget. This is creating an ever-growing capital project shortfall into the future, and avoiding the need to address sustainable capital project spending. It can also make things more expensive due to inflation and rising interest rates.

Some capital project funding will continue to come from state and federal sources; however, the short-term capital project list tallies in at about \$89 million, with another \$169 million needed in the long term (FY 22-37).

When compared to available fund balances, a sustainability challenge is evident that requires development of a multi-year capital project spending *strategy* (not a list of needs).

Linkage between Municipal Land Sales and Infrastructure Costs

During development of the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030, there has been interest in the sale of municipal land on the north end of town, particularly to support job growth and housing development.

Given tight budgets, municipal land sales must carefully consider the full municipal costs:

- Recognize that land sales beyond the existing road and utility network require new roads, utility main extensions, possibly a new electrical substation and water storage tank, among other needs.
- Typically, these improvements are paid for by Capital Projects (cost borne by all) and by Local Improvement Districts (LID) (cost borne by users). Municipal land sales must therefore carefully consider what the full municipal cost will be.

These costs are one reason why the Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030 emphasizes infill development along the existing utility and road network.

Drinking Water

Drinking Water Supply and Storage

Sitka should have 4.1 MG of water storage available for emergencies, and is short about 1.15 MG.

- The recommended water storage for municipalities is one day of average water consumption (approximately 3.5 MG for Sitka) plus the maximum fire flow demand, which for Sitka is 3,500 gpm for 3 hours (0.63 MG), according to the 2009 Water Plan.

A secondary domestic drinking water source is needed to protect the community. There is only an 8-hour water storage capability from Blue Lake.

- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requires inspection of the Blue Lake penstock every five years. The hydroelectric facility will need to close the penstock for these inspections, which would leave the CBS without drinking water once the tanks were drained down. A feasibility study is underway which will identify possible options for a dedicated water supply line from Blue Lake, including costs. The study will also compare costs with developing the Starrigavan well field. Once an option is chosen, then the design and construction will get underway. This project is expected to exceed \$5 million.

Water Pressure at Higher Elevations

Constructing a water storage reservoir in association with the existing Hillside Pump Station would address low water pressure issues in the higher elevations of the Lance Drive area, as well as provide needed emergency water storage to improve water system pressures during peak demands in the Sawmill Creek Road area.

- The minimum water system pressure allowed by state regulation is 20 psi under peak flow conditions.
- Most of the distribution system maintains pressure in excess of 20 psi even under peak flow conditions.
- Low water system pressure (less than 20 psi), however, occurs at the higher elevations in the Jarvis Street and Lance Drive areas, and at high points of Sawmill Creek Road under peak flow conditions.

Aging Water Distribution Pipes

There is an ongoing need to improve, repair, and replace Sitka's aging water distribution system pipes to maintain continual service for consumers.

Sitka has prepared a list of short- and long-term Capital Project needs. The goal is to slowly and systematically acquire the funding to accomplish short- and long-term needs in order to maintain and improve this infrastructure. A 5- to 10-year schedule of incremental utility rate increases would spread costs out over time rather than risk large emergency costs to repair catastrophic breaks. Rate increases beyond 10 years will also be needed, as critical infrastructure repairs and replacements will be required over the next decade and beyond. It is anticipated that Sitka will secure low-interest Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) loans every year going forward to pay for planned improvements since state grants are no longer available and the water fund does not have a sufficient undesignated fund balance. To obtain these low interest loans, the water fund must generate acceptable levels of cash flow from operations and not become too leveraged as measured by the debt-to-equity ratio.

For drinking water system repairs and improvements, a 3% user fee increase is being proposed annually from 2018 through 2020, then 3.7% annually from 2021 to 2026.

Sanitary Sewer (Wastewater) Collection and Treatment

New Biosolid Burial Cell Needed

A new biosolid burial cell is needed in the short-term.

- The biosolid burial area is permitted for additional cells; if built, the area can accommodate an estimated 15-20 more years of biosolid disposal. Approximately 20 yards per week of materials is handled.

Aging Systems: Wastewater Collection and Treatment

In 2016 and 2017, there were a number of emergency repairs due to line breaks. The 2013 Wastewater Master Plan lists collection segments in poor condition or at risk of imminent collapse. These pipe segments require significant operations and maintenance time to repair problems. Some repairs have been completed or are underway; those remaining are:

1. Jamestown Drive
2. Wolff Drive

3. Lance Drive
4. Princess Way, Seward, and Barracks Streets
5. Tlingit Way, Marine, and Seward Streets
6. Observatory, Seward, and American Streets
7. New Archangel Sewer Upgrade
8. Kimsham, Tilson, and Peterson Streets
9. Old Harbor Mountain Road
10. Viking Way and Valhalla Drive

The CBS Wastewater Treatment Plant on Japonski Island, replacement of the HVAC system and replacement or upgrade to the building envelope in order to extend useful life and push out the need for a new facility.

Wastewater collection and treatment is an Enterprise Fund so annual revenues, primarily from user fees, are intended to cover annual operating costs and create savings for future improvements.

- To pay for system repairs and improvements, a 4.5% user fee increase is proposed annually for 2018 and 2019; an increase of 6% in 2020; 2.9% in 2021; 3.5% in 2022; 4.3% in 2023 and 2024, then 2.8% annually thereafter.
- As with other Enterprise Funds, the proposed annual increases are directly tied to the capital required to finance the long-term infrastructure plan. Similar to the Water Fund, the Wastewater Fund long-term capital infrastructure plan expects to use low-interest ADEC loans every year going forward as the source of funding to pay for planned improvements. To obtain these low interest loans, the wastewater fund must generate acceptable levels of cash flow from operations and not become too leveraged as measured by the debt-to-equity ratio.

Sewer, Stormwater, and Drainage

Need 1-2 Page Handout on Drainage Requirements and Review Process

Develop a simple 1- to 2-page handout on when a drainage plan is required and what elements it should include. This will assist both developers and CBS staff and help ensure consistent and efficient review of development permits and construction documents. Include information for both small and large development projects. List Best Management Practices on the handout.

Review of proposed stormwater drainage and hydraulic design during development in Sitka occurs either when a grading permit is submitted and reviewed by the Building Department or when Public Works and the Planning Department review larger development projects.

Removing pollutants from stormwater can be difficult due to frozen conditions, poorly infiltrating soils, and large volumes of runoff. Some pollutants cause negative health and environmental effects at extremely low levels. Preventing pollutants from contacting stormwater in the first place can be the most efficient and effective means of preventing pollution. Two broad strategies for controlling pollution in stormwater runoff include source control and stormwater quality treatment; both can be addressed through use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Sitka Stormwater Plan, in chapter 6 and in Appendix F and G, has detailed information on BMPS.

Continue to Inventory CBS Stormwater Infrastructure and Accomplish Improvements in High Priority Areas.

The Sitka Stormwater Management Plan identified high priority areas for improvement; several have been completed.

Work to fund and systematically tackle remaining high priority areas for drainage improvements, including:

1. Hillside Subdivision Drainage System
2. Davidoff Street Drainage System to Halibut Point Road (funding now budgeted)
3. Peterson Avenue Culvert Crossing (funding now budgeted)
4. Barracks Street and Lincoln Street Drainage System Realignment (funding now budgeted)
5. Viking Way and Valhalla Drive Drainage Improvements
6. Shotgun Alley/Rands Drive/Winchester Way Drainage System
7. Tlingit Way - Install New Drainage System
8. Granite Creek Road Detention and Retention Pond Improvements

Solid Waste

Public Education on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Increased and regular public education and training is needed on why and how to recycle and properly sort. Given planned changes to recycling, this is even more important.

Sitka gets paid for its clean recyclables, and this also reduces the amount of solid waste that Sitka must bale, weigh, ship, and pay for disposal. However, beginning in January 2018, the purchaser of most western U.S. recyclables (China) is set to end purchase of contaminated waste streams, of plastics 3-7, and of mixed paper.

As a result, Sitka is changing its recycled collection policies and will no longer collect plastics 3-7 or mixed paper. Contaminated recycling in Sitka is not common, but happens regularly in the spring and early summer (KCAW, August 2014). When contamination occurs (like throwing food in with paper or mixing plastics), the whole load is lost as generally there cannot be more than 1% contamination.

Consolidated Recycle Facility, Efficiencies, and Increased Volumes

Consolidating facilities on a single site on city land would create operational efficiencies, reduce the need to haul materials from site to site to barge landing, and thus reduce fuel costs and carbon footprint.

- This would be a one-site, one-stop consolidated recycling facility for sorting, weighing, consolidating, and baling recyclable solid waste.
- Ensure CBS contracts do not prohibit neighborhood, for-profit, or non-profit groups from establishing curbside recycling pick-up.

- Encourage increased recycling with more recycling receptacles downtown and at public facilities, and a system (funding) to collect and transfer this material. One idea is to incentivize businesses with rewards for non-contaminated recycling and increased recycled volumes.

Electricity

Aging Equipment = Threat of Significant Power Outages

Many elements of Sitka's Electric System are 40 to 60 years old. This includes generation equipment, transmission lines, and distribution systems. Equipment failures have led to many small power outages over the last few years and, if unattended, will lead to long and costly outages which would create severe negative impacts to our community. In a June 2017 press release, CBS Electric Director Bryan Bertacchi said, "These failures are a reminder to the community that our established plans to repair our old infrastructure are important to the success of our City and Borough."

A ten-year capital plan to renew key systems was reviewed and approved by the CBS Assembly in 2016. This list includes approximately \$28.5 million of capital projects over a ten-year period. To pay for the improvements, a combination of about \$22 million in remaining construction funds that will be available over 10 years and existing enterprise fund cash flows likely linked to rate increases will be used.

Some of the major activities in the approved plan include:

- N-1 Project (\$3.9M): This term is used to describe redundancy and emergency backup for the Marine Street Substation which serves about 80% of Sitka citizens and customers. A backup for this substation is imperative and necessary as the existing equipment is now more than 35 years old. A new substation north of town would be ideal (Kramer Avenue area), however the cost was identified as being too high (>\$13M of the available capital would be consumed). Alternatively, the plan is to install a 2nd bay at the existing Marine Street Substation at a cost of approximately \$3.9M. This 2nd bay would still utilize a portion of the older equipment, but the overall cost is substantially lower. This modification would also increase the amount of power that can be delivered from the Jarvis Substation to Marine Street customers in the event of an emergency. While not ideal, this provides the greatest increase in emergency backup at the lowest cost.
- Green Lake Power Plant Overhaul (\$4.8M): The Green Lake Power Plant is a very valuable asset for the community and has not been overhauled since the early 1990's. A major pre-inspection is scheduled for 2018, which will help to further define and identify the costs of a major overhaul. Similar plants have had overhauls in the cost range of \$8M when a full rewind of the generators was required. The current recommendation is a reserve of \$4.8M for this item. Numerous small inspections during the last twelve months have clearly demonstrated specific needs to return this overhaul to the list of required capital items.
- Jarvis Fuel System Repairs/Storage (\$1.5M) & Thimbleberry Bypass (\$3.8M): These two items are directly related. In August 2015, the fuel release demonstrated a need for extensive repairs and redesign to the Jarvis Street fuel storage system. Presently, the system was designed for more than seven days of fuel storage. This period was defined by the time needed to repair the worst case scenario on the electrical transmission line (the Thimbleberry

portion of the transmission line). The existing Thimbleberry portion of Sitka's 69kv backbone transmission line is installed in difficult and dangerous terrain and is subject to outages from fallen trees and extensive degradation of transmission poles. Presently, a repair during winter months has demonstrated to be dangerous and time-consuming (on the order of seven days), thus setting the amount of fuel storage required. This plan proposes to permit and install a bypass to the existing transmission line from the Whale Park area to the Blue Lake Switchyard. This line would be planned on the inside of the roadway to minimize the impacts to the viewshed. This line will reduce the cost of annual diesel fuel burned, reduce the redesign costs of the Jarvis fuel system (\$2M saved), likely eliminate the need to replace the very old diesel generation units at the Jarvis facility (\$10M saved), and eliminate the costly and dangerous maintenance required on the existing transmission line.

- Feeder Improvements (\$1.6M): A host of miscellaneous feeder improvements are planned and required. Extensive aging and environment requires sufficient engineering, planning, inventory, and lead time.
- Blue Lake 3rd Turbine (\$2.48M): A significant host of items are needed to close out this project, and are required for compliance with the FERC permit, including, but not limited to: the dam overlook project, the campground, safety ladders on the dam, rock removal, etc.
- SCADA System (\$230,000): A significant amount of work has already been performed to remove the Electric Department control system from the interface with commercial carriers, thus making the system significantly more secure. Additionally, the Green Lake power house and many of the system field breakers have only very limited control capability, making outages more frequent and longer with extensive personnel overtime. These changes will improve safety and reliability and will bring old systems up to date, significantly extending the life of the equipment (which lowers overall costs).
- Capital for Fuel Conversions (\$1.2M): With the assistance of Siemens Engineering, a number of facilities have been identified for conversion to dual fuel (electric interruptible boilers). These projects have a three-year return on the invested capital and will subsequently improve revenue for the department and reduce the need for rate increases to all citizens.
- Harbor Meters (\$75,000): The revised electric rates will include an increase to the monthly rate for harbor meters, which was reviewed and supported by the Harbor Commission. This increase will generate annual revenue of approximately \$75,000 per year to support the needed replacement of failed harbor meters (currently approximately 75 meters out of service). These capital funds will "kick-start" this program to allow replacement of the first 30 meters. Additional funding will be requested as the revenue is generated.
- Jarvis Electric Storage and Shop Building (previously \$1.2M being reduced to \$85,000): Assembly members previously expressed concern at the older approved capital project (more than \$1.2M) to add a new warehouse to the Jarvis Street Complex. The approval of this project was suspended by the Electric Department last year and has been revised to add a number of new replacement cargo containers and an office trailer adjacent to the existing switchgear room.
- Other items on the list include existing approved capital projects which are being updated to reflect the balance needed for completion. Some additional new items are included for safety, automatic start of backup generators at Blue Lake/Green Lake, and a replacement roof for Green Lake.

Energy Efficiency, Replacing Diesel/Gas with Hydropower, and Increasing Use of Electricity

Weatherization and energy efficiency retrofits are important strategies for managing household and business electrical costs. Conversion to heating with electricity via heat pumps rather than burning oil can reduce overall utility and heating bills (however, electric baseboards are a less efficient system, and, depending on electricity and heating oil prices, could cost more than heating with fuel oil). Heating with electricity rather than fuel oil also keeps money recirculating in Sitka and reduces carbon emissions. The CBS Electric Department has calculated that the cost to heat a 1,500-square-foot home using heat pumps is roughly half the cost of using fuel oil.

The CBS currently offers an annual \$120 energy credit to eligible residential customers with an electric car. As battery life improves, conversion of public and private sector vehicle fleets to electric and hybrid will reduce carbon emissions and increase use of hydroelectric electricity (Sitka Climate Action Plan, pgs. 29-30). During Comprehensive Plan development, there was interest in installation of fast electric charging stations for automobiles in strategic public locations. In Juneau, this has been a part of a strategy to encourage electric cars, raise awareness of related efforts to move tourist and public buses to electric, and position Juneau as an electricity innovator. However, a counter argument in Sitka is that stations are expensive, there is a limited road system, people travel relatively few miles, and a charge lasts about three days even with the heat turned on in the vehicle so public chargers aren't needed.

Sitka has excess hydroelectric generation capacity. Electricity rates will be stabilized and positively affected by increasing the number of electricity consumers and demand, and by increasing the number of businesses that have larger electrical needs. The latter includes seafood processors, manufacturing businesses, marijuana growing, and year-round greenhouses. The former includes increasing population and businesses, switching from diesel to electric heat, and, to a small extent, by use of electric vehicles.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Economic Benefits of Harrigan Centennial Hall, Marketing

Establish a committed, multiyear marketing effort via a part-time or full-time marketing person to increase events and revenue at the newly renovated HCH.

Convention Centers rarely are self-sustaining. Cities invest money into building, operating, and marketing convention centers because convention and meeting attendees rent local hotel rooms, eat at local restaurants, and buy local services and goods. Additionally, the cultural and educational events enrich the community. In its May 2015 *Assessment of a Kenai Conference Center*, McDowell Group notes that for out-of-towners attending conferences in Alaska, research suggests that \$195 per night is a good estimate for attendees' direct local spending. Also, "Communities that invest in marketing personnel, advertising (including collateral materials), and an online presence will ultimately be more successful in attracting meetings and conferences from out-of-town" (pg. 21).

HCH does not have dedicated marketing personnel. This is one of many duties of the Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce. The addition of a part-time or full-time marketing person would help secure more conventions and events for HCH.

Harrigan Centennial Hall Operations and Maintenance

Harrigan Centennial Hall (HCH) has three full-time and two part-time staff, and is open 7 days per week. The building almost doubled in size as a result of the 2016 renovation, yet the staff team has not increased. HCH staff does all maintenance in-house. By comparison, the Sitka Public Library contracts out for this service. CBS is also subsidizing the Sitka History Museum by providing the space at no cost and funding museum utilities from the HCH budget. The Sitka History Museum will, though, provide its own contracted janitorial services. HCH staff suggests that nothing additional can be trimmed if HCH is to maintain the current level of service.

The new HCH was intended to reduce operating costs with increased efficiencies such as LED lighting and heat pumps. However, the facility's operating costs have actually increased due to a combination of increases in utility rates plus the fact that the new energy efficient building is requiring more electricity than before to manage air quality, humidity and temperature.

In 2017, everything in HCH is new; however, within 10 years the HVAC will need to be replaced or updated, and heat pumps will need to be replaced or updated within 15 years. The information technology and audio-visual equipment at the Hall is now state of the art; however, technology must be regularly maintained and have software updates. These maintenance items are financed from the General Fund or one of the CBS three Internal Service Funds.

Increased revenue for HCH, as well as higher sales tax and business throughout town, would be possible with increased capture of conferences that out-of-towners attend. Establish a committed multiyear marketing effort for the new state-of-the-art Harrigan Centennial Hall.

Sitka Public Library

Sitka Library Budget and Technology

Budget reductions for staff training and travel impact the knowledge and service of librarians. Further budget reductions will result in loss of staff and impact library hours, leading to reduced use.

Document visitor and seasonal use in order to explore opportunities for additional revenue.

- In the summer, the library is used by many visitors, cruise ship crew, and seasonal workers. The lobby and sitting rooms are often filled with people relaxing and utilizing the free wireless internet access.

Staying current on technology is critical to a modern, functioning, and productive library. The Sitka Library needs reliable, fast service, must stay current on database subscriptions and access, and must regularly update its software, apps, and hardware. Annual funding to support this is critical to library use.

Swan Lake Senior Center

Swan Lake Senior Center (SLSC) Facility Maintenance and Improvements

The CBS owns and maintains the SLSC building, pays the utilities, and provides fuel and maintenance for the vans. As expected with an older building, there is a schedule of anticipated maintenance needs which includes \$361,000 over the next five years for replacement of three air handling units and dry sprinklers. Longer-term heat pumps and the roof will need to be replaced or updated.

A Growing Senior Population will need Services, and Costs will Increase

As noted in the Demographics section of Chapter 3's Community Profile, the number of Sitkans age 65 and older, and especially those age 80+, is projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years. Those age 80 and older often have high medical, care, and mobility needs. At some point, most seniors and their families, irrespective of income, need services to maintain their independence, age in place successfully, or receive nutrition and transportation support.

Over recent years SLSC staff has observed that more transit clients are less ambulatory, which means that more time per scheduled ride is required. In addition, the number of clients who require meals at home rather than being able to come to the center has increased. Both trends reflect an aging population and are expected to continue.

Sitka Cemeteries

Maintain Local Cemeteries and Facilitate Appropriate Tourist Visits

There are more than 20 cemeteries and burial grounds in Sitka, maintained by a variety of entities including the CBS. There is significant tourist demand to visit certain graves, such as Princess Maksoutoff, E.W. Merrill, and more. A walking map is desired, or perhaps a quality tour of graves, cemeteries, and sacred rocks. There is a catalogue of Sitka graves at the Sitka Library; however, many visitors come to City Hall asking about the location of certain graves and cemeteries.

Sitka Fire Department

Aging Population will Increase Emergency Responses

Sitka's aging population will also increase demand for ambulance and emergency medical response services.

Natural Disaster Response

Recent studies⁴² that modeled earthquakes and possible tsunamis shows minor inundation above mean high water along the waterfront. Multiple megathrusts along the Aleutians Trench could result in flooding about 6 feet above mean high water. Emergency response planners are concerned

⁴² "Tsunamis Inundation Maps of Sitka, Alaska", Suleiman, E., Nicolsky, D., and Koehler, R., Alaska DNR, DGGS, 2013

about planning for tidal surge events, meaning a storm surge associated with low pressure systems and high tide.

Sitka Police Department

New Public Safety Building Needed

There is a critical need for a new public safety building to house the police department and jail. In FY 2018-2019, perform a needs assessment, design, site, and develop a budget plan to construct a new police department and jail that efficiently meets current standards, needs, and expected future needs and regulations.

Currently, the entire police department, including dispatch, patrol, investigations, administration, and the jail, occupy about one-third of the first floor of the city- and state-owned building located at 304 Lake Street. CBS and State of Alaska jointly own the building, which, in addition to the police department, houses the state court, assistant district attorney's office, adult probation, an employment office, and fish and game offices. This building is 40 years old.

- Physically, the location of the jail in an interior portion of the first floor is not optimal. It is small, dark, without windows and inherently unsafe. There is little to no air circulation and a lack of proper equipment to decontaminate infected materials. All of this and other design flaws make for poor working conditions and a less than humane and dignified experience for citizens in police custody.
- The department's break room shares use with evidence processing. Within a small space and on shared surfaces police department staff prepare food and process dangerous substances such as blood and drugs like fentanyl and heroin.
- The projected cost of updates and repairs needed to maintain occupancy of the building are significant and raise the issue of how much money to invest in this facility that is not well designed for public safety needs. Current state agency occupants are interested in these discussions and possible collaboration.
- The cost of some of the deferred maintenance scheduled between FY 2019 and FY 2022 is estimated at \$2.6 million. Updates and repairs needed to maintain occupancy of the building include a new air circulation system, additional restrooms, improvement to existing restrooms, roof replacement, parking lot replacement, a new water heater, emergency generator system, and IT area.

Adequacy of Dispatch, Jail and Police Staffing

The 2014 "General Fund Efficiency Audit & Comprehensive Management Plan" (GFEA) by Municipal Solutions analyzed Sitka services and found that, "Dispatch and jail staffing levels are insufficient for continued and effective 24/7 coverage" (pg. 95). This echoes a police department concern (Figure 68).

The Sitka Police Department believes that to be fully staffed for 24/7 coverage, a minimum of 17 sworn personnel are needed, including three patrol, one detective, and one-two dispatchers per shift. Constant turnover has been a significant and expensive problem for the police department.

- It is the recommendation of the Chief of Police that the police department be allowed to hire at a rate slightly higher than the authorized strength. This higher rate would be based upon the historical rate of turnover and anticipated attrition, and adjusted downward as new hiring and selection practices, a new police building, and a more stable staffing model improve morale and officer retention.

Facilities Needed for Vulnerable and those in Crisis; Absence Makes Police, Treatment, and Help Less Effective and Humane

Adequate detoxification facilities are needed in Sitka for both youth and adults. This is an increasing problem.

An appropriate facility to house people experiencing mental health emergencies is needed in Sitka. Currently, persons in crisis are detained in the Sitka Jail and are exposed to arrested persons while they await placement in facilities located in Juneau, Anchorage, or Fairbanks.

Temporary safe housing for homeless persons is needed. Police officers are frequently tasked with finding shelter for homeless persons. The police department and, at times, the officers have rented rooms at local hotels or the hostel.

A safe, clean, and secure place for juveniles in crisis or who are under arrest must be located. Currently, juveniles are temporarily held in the adult women's side the Sitka Jail. This could be designed into a new Sitka Jail Facility.

Change City Codes and Animal Shelter Role as Raising Animals for Food Increases

As attention to food security and nutritional value has grown in Sitka and other places in Alaska, more residents are interested in raising animals for eggs and meat. This creates issues such as noise, smells, animal welfare, public health, vermin, the need to better define city roles and responsibilities, and the need to update related municipal codes.

Clear definitions of the local issues and concerns are needed, along with a review of other Alaskan municipal codes and roles, and updates as needed to Sitka's codes and procedures.

- The goal is to both encourage local food production and also protect neighborhood health and safety.

Sitka School District

Use of Performance-Based Budget Process

Like others dependent on the CBS for funding, the Sitka School District is challenged by tightening federal, state, and local funding, as well as the lack of predictability at all levels, which makes planning and personnel decisions difficult. To address these budget challenges, a new performance based budgeting process linked to priority initiatives was instituted in 2015. Rather than 'legacy' budgeting that simply rolls over funding per line item each year, the district budget now reflects the input of resources and the output of services for each of one or two top initiatives, with more

narrative explanation. In addition, other expenditures are more consistent through the use of per pupil formulas.

School District Capital Improvement Needs

According to the Sitka School District, a school facilities audit conducted in May 2017 showed that, for the age of its facilities, the schools are generally in excellent condition. The Sitka High School, Baranof Elementary, and Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary will all need various components rehabilitated or renewed in the next 10 years.

The state required 2018-2023 School District Renewal and Rehabilitation (R&R) Plan lists \$34.8 million of improvements primarily at the three schools above and another \$6.8 million needed at Blatchley Middle School. However, these project costs are estimated based on industry standards, which can over-estimate the realistic cost of Sitka School District's capital needs. For example, rather than the industry standard estimate of \$1.6 million for an exterior paint job at Keet Gooshi Heen, the district accomplished this during the summer of 2017 with a local contractor and in-house assistance for less than \$25,000.

Continue work between the Sitka School District and the CBS Finance Office to develop a realistic list of capital needs and costs based on local costs, not the state's industry standards-based Renewal and Rehabilitation (R&R) Plan.

Given the state and municipality's current fiscal climate, the Sitka School District is looking hard at ways to accomplish work in-house, as well as to make less expensive repairs that extend the life of buildings and delay or eliminate more costly replacement. These actions are possible because the Sitka School District has done an excellent job of funding regular maintenance for several years.

Given the state's fiscal situation and its current 5-year moratorium on school capital improvement project funding, it is unclear what the future required local match will be to obtain school capital project funds. This will likely place the fiscal burden on Sitka, which it must meet through general obligation bond revenue, savings, and possibly facility consolidation.

Increase Local Funding to the Cap

The School District's goal is for the CBS to fund education to the maximum it is allowed (the "cap").

- From 2001-2005, in the days of healthy state and federal funding, Sitka was able to make a local contribution to support schools near the maximum ("cap") that the state allows. The cap is roughly equivalent to 0.00265 times the value of assessed property in Sitka.
- As finances have tightened, the local contribution to the schools has declined in both nominal and inflation-adjusted dollars (Figure 71) to between 75-90% of the cap most recently. At the same time, the School District has been facing increasing health insurance premiums along with the city and hospital, and (like everyone else) higher fees for electricity, water and sewer, and solid waste disposal. Adding general inflation to the mix, funding is tight.
- More recently, the CBS has been able to provide between 75-90% of the cap.

The School District notes that, for example in 2017, if Sitka funded to the cap, the extra \$700,000 could provide seven teaching positions or offer or reinstate many other instructional options.

From 2001-2005, in the days of healthy state and federal funding, Sitka was able to make a local contribution to support schools near the maximum (“cap”) that the state allows (the cap is roughly equivalent to 0.00265 times the assessed property value in Sitka). The School District’s goal is for the CBS to fund education to the cap.

Work to Closing the Achievement Gap for Low Income Students

Depending upon the measure used, somewhere between 10-20% of Sitkans are having a very hard time making ends meet. During 2016-2017 academic year, more than one-third (36%) of students in Sitka Schools were in families whose income was low enough that they qualified for a free or reduced fee school lunch.⁴³ As noted in the section on Demographic, Migration and Community Income Data in Chapter 3’s Community Profile, an estimated 10-30% of Sitkans are struggling to make ends meet.

A SSD initiative is to apply resources to close the achievement gap for low income students. The Wooncheen Yei Jigaxtoonei preschool program is part of this effort. These and similar efforts need financial support for success.

Sitka Community Hospital

The Sitka Community Hospital (SCH) is designated as a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) and organized as a component unit of the City and Borough of Sitka. SCH has been serving the community since 1956 and provides a full range of healthcare services.

The five-member SCH Board of Directors is the chief governing body of SCH. The CBS Assembly is the elected body that appoints the board. The board represents the community’s interest in the hospital and serves as a fiduciary on behalf of CBS. SCH also has a medical advisory board that does not report to the CEO.

SCH Mission – Restore, maintain, and improve the health of those in our community through competent and compassionate delivery of care.

SCH Vision – Sitka Community Hospital is an integral part of the community where all individuals reach their highest potential for health.

SCH is licensed for 12 acute care beds, all of which are also designated as swing beds.

⁴³ Families that earned less than 130% of the federal poverty limit (FPL) qualify for a free lunch, and those earning up to 185% of the FPL qualify for a reduced fee lunch. Using the January 2017 federal poverty thresholds in Alaska, this is, for example, a family of four earning less than \$39,975 for a free lunch, or earning less than \$56,888 for a reduced fee lunch. For a single parent with one child, annual income limits to qualify for a free lunch are \$26,377, or \$37,537 for a reduced fee lunch.

The SCH Long-term Care Unit is licensed for 15 beds. SCH management has inquired with the State of Alaska whether certain long-term beds can be repurposed as swing beds. A decision is currently pending.

The SCH Home Health Department is a licensed Home Health Agency with the State of Alaska and has both Medicare and Medicaid certification.

CAHs, like SCH, are permitted to offer fewer services than the typical sole community hospital, but are required to provide a basic level of services. To meet expressed community needs and desires, SCH provides many more services than are required by this designation.

SCH lines of service include 24-hour emergency room, cardiac rehabilitation, radiology/diagnostic imaging, infusion center, laboratory, FASD assessment services, surgical services, specialty clinic for visiting expert physicians, daily appointments and walk-in hours at the Mountainside Family Health Care Clinic, as well as rehabilitation services at Oceanside Therapy Center. Rehabilitation services include physical, occupational and speech therapy.

SCH currently employs approximately 207 staff members. The actual number of full-time equivalents was 163 at the end of FY 2017.

After careful thought and deliberation, as well as input from citizens at multiple Town Hall meetings, the CBS Assembly has determined that it is appropriate to seek options regarding a potential sale, lease, partnership, management, or affiliation to ensure the continuation of exceptional local healthcare provided by SCH continues to be delivered. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently published with objectives to (1) increase quality and scope of healthcare provided in Sitka, (2) maintain/expand living wage employment opportunities, and (3) mitigate current and future liabilities to CBS.

7.9 Borough Budgetary, Utility, Facility, and Service Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
BFS 1	Objective 1 – Enhance Public and Private Cooperation.			
BFS 1.1	Public, private, and nonprofit providers of publicly used facilities, infrastructure, and services are encouraged to cooperate in order to efficiently and effectively enhance the economy and the enjoyment of life for the residents and visitors of Sitka.	ALL	OG	U
BFS 2	Objective 2 – Maintain Communication, Outreach, and Notice to assure awareness of pending borough actions that are significant to community well-being.			
BFS 2.1	Continue to provide easy-to-understand information and opportunities for Assembly and public discussion of Sitka’s utilities, harbors, streets, recreation, and buildings annual operations and maintenance costs and expected Capital Project needs and financing.	CBS	OG	L-M
BFS 2.2	Continue to provide public notice on pending matters and explore new opportunities to increase public awareness and involvement.	CBS	ST, OG	M
BFS 2.3	Make available copies of relevant documents prior to a meeting or event at which a hearing is to be held and a decision made.	CBS	OG	L
BFS 2.4	Maximize government to government relations between the City and Borough of Sitka and Sitka Tribe of Alaska.	CBS, AC	OG	L
BFS 2.5	Include Sitka Tribe of Alaska in City and Borough of Sitka project reviews on relevant matters.	CBS, AC	OG, ST	L
BFS 3	Objective 3 - Develop a Capital Projects Strategic Plan.			
BFS 3.1	Develop a Capital Projects Strategic Plan to provide predictable improvement and maintenance funding for CBS facilities, infrastructure, and utilities. This will assist with department planning, and provide predictable rates for home and business budgeting.	CBS	ST-MT	M
BFS 3.2	Prepare a low, medium, and high revenue forecast and use to identify 3 to 5 year capital project funding levels under each scenario for General Fund maintenance and improvements (street and sidewalk maintenance, paving, and improvements; local trails, parks, ballfields and playgrounds; and city offices). For predictability and planning, consider creating a formula that links funding levels to available undesignated general fund balance and revenue.	CBS	ST	L
BFS 3.3	Continue to regularly update a list of realistic medium and long term maintenance and capital needs with costs.	CBS	LT	L

BFS 3.4	Generate funding for infrastructure development by levying impact review fees that are comparable to similar locales.	CBS	ST-MT	L
BFS 3.5	Base utility rates on an equitable and true assessment of the costs to operate, maintain, and contribute to an equipment replacement fund. Periodically perform rate studies of utility fees and adjust fees as needed based on results.	CBS	OG	L
BFS 3.6	Monitor Legislative and Congressional support for critical revenue sources and lobby for Sitka's fair share of funding (e.g. Harbor Facility Grants, School Debt Reimbursement, PERS/TRS debt support, Secure Rural Schools funding, Payment-in-lieu-of-Taxes (PILT), Federal highway funds and federal transportation legislation, funding to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) etc. <i>Cross reference T 3.5</i>	CBS	OG	L
BFS 3.7	Host an annual Assembly-Enterprise Fund staff/board work session to review and discuss annual operations, revenue, and capital needs.	CBS	ST, OG	L
BFS 4	Objective 4 – Efficiency. Maximize use of existing infrastructure before building new by promoting infill.			
BFS 5	Objective 5 – Capacity. Ensure Sitka's utilities have the capacity to reliability meet the demand for water, wastewater, storm water, solid waste, and electricity.			
BFS 5.1	Improve water pressure at higher elevations such as the Jarvis and Lance Drive areas and at high points on Sawmill Creek Road.	CBS, PR	OG	U
BFS 5.2	Design and construct a secondary water supply.	CBS	MT	H, GF
BFS 5.3	Continue a systematic program to replace aging water pipe infrastructure.	CBS	OG	H
BFS 5.4	Maintain communication with ADEC and EPA to ensure 301(h) waiver for Sitka's waste water treatment remains in place.	CBS	OG	M
BFS 5.5	Continue systematic repair of wastewater collection segments in poor condition including: Jamestown Drive; Wolff Drive; Lance Drive; Princess Way, Seward Street, and Barracks Street; Tlingit Way, and Marine Street; Observatory and American Streets; New Archangel Street; Kimsham, Tilson, and Petersen Streets; Old Harbor Mountain Road; Viking Way and Valhalla Drive.	CBS	OG	H
BFS 5.6	Replace the wastewater treatment facility's HVAC and replace/upgrade the building envelope in order to extend the facility's useful life.	CBS	MT	H
BFS 5.7	Inventory the following larger areas to complete the CBS storm water infrastructure inventory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mills Street and Georgeson Loop (pipe and ditch drainage system). • Edgecumbe drainage basin (trace and survey several large open water and pipe systems across Halibut Point Road to salt water). • Lake Street (near 703 Lake Street, 42-inch CMP crossing). • Cascade Creek Road (pipe and ditch drainage system). • Katlian Street and Olga Street (piped drainage system was partially mapped using infrastructure observed through photographs). • Lake Street and Lincoln Street (piped drainage network was drawn using as-built drawings). • Monastery Street, Baranof Street, Jeff Davis Street, and Park Street (piped drainage systems were drawn partially using as-built drawings, and infrastructure was observed through photographs). 	CBS	ST	L

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japonski Island (piped and open channel drainage systems). • College Drive and Lincoln Street (piped drainage system). • Jamestown Way (piped drainage system). <p>Knutson Drive and Sawmill Creek Road (piped and open channel drainage system).</p>			
BFS 5.8	Monitor available recycling services and community demand.	CBS	OG	U
BFS 5.9	<p>Continue systematic completion of drainage improvements in following high priority areas identified in Sitka Storm water Improvement Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillside Subdivision Drainage System • Davidoff Street Drainage System to Halibut Point Road (funding now budgeted) • Peterson Avenue Culvert Crossing (funding now budgeted) • Barracks Street and Lincoln Street Drainage System Realignment (funding now budgeted) • Viking Way and Valhalla Drive Drainage Improvements • Shotgun Alley/Rands Drive/Winchester Way Drainage System • Tlingit Way – Install New Drainage System <p>Granite Creek Road Detention and Retention Pond Improvements</p>	CBS	OG	H
BFS 6	Objective 6 - Enhance Resilience. Use low impact design, construction, operations and maintenance techniques to reduce air, noise, and water pollution and lower the cost of operations. Cross reference T 8.1 and LU 9.1			
BFS 6.1	Protect water supplies and watersheds from the adverse effects of development.	AC	OG	U
BFS 6.2	Develop a 1-2 page handout for both developers and internal use on when a drainage plan is required and what elements it should include in order to ensure consistent and efficient review of project development permits and construction documents.	CBS	ST	L
BFS 6.3	Increase public education and training on why and how to recycle, how consumers should sort property, and why proper sorting is important.	CBS	ST	L
BFS 7	Objective 7 – Civic Facilities. Maintain and as feasible improve Sitka’s Civic Facilities, which contribute to resident and visitor quality of life and experience.			
BFS 7.1	Ensure use and success of Sitka Public Library, Harrigan Centennial Hall, and Sitka History Museum by protecting onsite parking and ensuring land use in the immediate area is compatible.	CBS	OG	L
BSF 7.2	Institute systematic documentation of seasonal use of Sitka Public Library facilities and internet.	CBS	ST	L
BSF 7.3	Stay current on computer software, hardware, fast internet connection, and digital media subscriptions to ensure use and success of the Sitka Public Library and Harrigan Centennial Hall.	CBS	OG	U
BSF 7.4	Track the number of out-of-town attendees at conferences and other events at Harrigan Centennial Hall to better demonstrate its economic benefit.	CBS	ST	L
BFS 8	Objective 8 – Public Safety. Provide public safety services to Sitka’s diverse community in a fair and equitable manner. This includes police, jail, fire, ambulance and EMS, search and rescue, and animal shelter services.			
BFS 8.1	Plan, site, budget, and construct a Public Safety Facility to replace police and jail.	CBS	LT	H, GF

BFS 8.2	Establish and fund (\$5,000/year) a public safety capital equipment fund for future major equipment purchases by the fire and police departments.	CBS	MT	L
BFS 8.3	Develop a strategy to hire additional staff to reach levels proposed in the December 2014 “General Fund Efficiency Audit & Comprehensive Management Plan” (Municipal Solutions) and as recommended by the Chief of Police. Compared to 2017 levels, this will include: A. Two fulltime employees to perform a variety of essential functions to include, Records Management, Property and Evidence Technician, Crime Prevention and a backup 911 Dispatcher. B. Three new police officer raising the authorized strength to 19. Specifically: an additional Investigator, Patrol Officer, and School Resource Officer. C. One Fulltime Detention Officer	CBS	MT	M
BFS 8.4	Facilitate and partner to create adequate detoxification facilities for both youth and adults.	AC	LT	H, GF
BFS 8.5	Facilitate and partner to create an appropriate facility to house people experiencing a mental health emergency.	AC	LT	H, GF
BFS 8.6	Facilitate and partner to develop temporary safe housing for homeless persons.	AC	MT	H
BFS 8.7	Facilitate and partner to create a safe, clean, and secure place for juveniles in crisis or that are under arrest.	AC	LT	H
BFS 8.8	Facilitate and partner to achieve the following prevention and early intervention programs in order to reduce social problems in the community:			
BFS 8.8.a	Home-based detention programs.	AC	ST	L
BFS 8.8.b	Problem Oriented Policing, which is police recognizing recurring or developing crime and safety issues, and then work with other agencies to resolve the problem.	AC	ST	L
BFS 8.8.c	Enhanced support for counseling, prevention, and treatment services.	AC	MT	L-M
BFS 8.8.d	A School Resource Officer (SRO) who works collaboratively with school personnel to prevent the victimization of school age children.	CBS	MT-LT	M
BFS 8.8.e	Ongoing crime prevention and personal safety education, including bicycle and pedestrian safety programs for children, driver’s education, and crime prevention through community and environmental design.	AC	ST	L
BFS 8.8.f	Comprehensive, integrated health education curriculum in the public schools.	AC	OG	U
BFS 8.8.g	Coordinated domestic abuse prevention and intervention systems.	AC	OG	L
BFS 9	Objective 9 - Educational Excellence. Recognize the link between excellent youth and adult education, a strong economy and workforce, and quality of life.			
BFS 9.1	Partner with Sitka School District to develop a sustainable funding model to collaboratively maximize funding for the school system.	CBS	OG	H
BFS 9.2	Continue to provide diverse and strong educational offerings through partnerships among the Sitka School District, Mt. Edgecumbe School District, Sitka Arts Council, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, Sitka Sound Science Center, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, UAS, and others.	AC	OG	U

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

8 Transportation

GOAL

Sustain an equitable, efficient, and affordable transportation system.

8.1 Current Conditions

Transportation is the conveyance of people, goods, and materials between one place and another. This chapter covers air, marine, and land transit. The latter includes streets and sidewalks; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle movement as well as the public transit system. Sitka's transportation infrastructure is shown on Figure 73

Transportation systems are essential to the functioning of Sitka and to its well-being and prosperity. Sitka's transportation systems connect people and businesses to goods and services, link them to the region and world, and create access to opportunity. Given its remote island location, Sitka's transportation infrastructure is critical infrastructure that ensures security, public health and safety, unimpeded economic trade, and public confidence. Transportation facilities also play a role in providing civic and recreational opportunities.

This chapter reviews Sitka's air access, marine access, and its motorized and non-motorized network, identified challenges and opportunities to address, then sets transportation objectives and actions to accomplish over the next 10-15 years. It also highlights the successful collaboration between the City and Borough of Sitka and Sitka Tribe of Alaska on transportation matters.

Air Access to Sitka

Air access to Sitka is primarily to and from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) owned Rocky Gutierrez Airport. The terminal building is owned and managed by the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS), on leased state land.

Scheduled passenger air service in 2016 was on Alaska Airlines, Delta Air Lines (SkyWest Airlines), Harris Air, Alaska Seaplanes, and Island Air Express. Unscheduled, itinerant, or charter operations were by the U.S. Coast Guard and other military flights, medevacs via several carriers, and flights by herring spotters, to and from fishing lodges, by helicopter transportation and similar.

Freight and mail was transported by Empire Airlines – which is the contractor for Federal Express, Alaska Airlines, Alaska Central Express, Harris Air, and Alaska Seaplanes. Hageland Aviation Service was an additional freight transporter in 2015.

Seaplane air access is via the CBS-owned seaplane base on Sitka Sound off Kallan Avenue near ANB Harbor, a small state launch ramp on Charcoal Island, and via a CBS seaplane dock at Baranof Warm Spring Bay.

The CBS-owned seaplane adjacent Kallan Avenue was closed in 2016 for repairs after operating for nearly 65 years. In addition to needing substantial repairs, the facility has insufficient capacity and

the inability to expand due to the constraints of the current location, congested sea-lane, and conflicts with boat traffic and birds. Because of these multiple issues, the facility has seen decreasing use over time. Emergency upgrades allowed it to reopen in late 2016; however, the expected lifespan is only about five years. The FAA will not allow rebuilding at this location due to congestion and other factors. A 10-15 year vision for what an improved seaplane facility could provide to the community should be part of rebuilding efforts. There would be significant negative economic impact to Sitka, fly-in fishing and lodge businesses, and surrounding small communities if replacement and regular maintenance does not occur.

Air Traffic By the Numbers & Figure 72

During the six years between 2011 and 2016, the:

- Number of air travelers to and from Sitka rose significantly
- Pounds of freight shipped by air varied and overall was flat
- Pounds of air mail declined

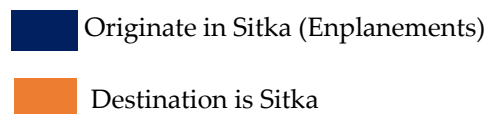
In the six years between 2011 and 2016, the number of airlines passengers arriving to and departing from Sitka grew 22%.

In 2016, a total of 78,784 passengers arrived to and 79,061 departed from Sitka, for a total of 157,845. Part of this increase is linked to new air carriers serving Sitka, some of which now lease counter space in the increasingly full and, at times, congested terminal.

During this same period, the volume of freight passing through the airport went up and down, but the volume shipped in 2016 was essentially the same as it was in 2011. Each year, more freight is shipped from Sitka by air than arrives to Sitka.

The volume of air mail during this six-year period declined. More than twice as much mail originates in Sitka, than arrives to Sitka, every year. Pounds of airmail sent from Sitka declined 18% since 2011, while pounds arriving dropped by 2%.

Figure 72 - Sitka Air Transportation Trends



Source: US BTS T-100 Market Statistics, Nov 2017

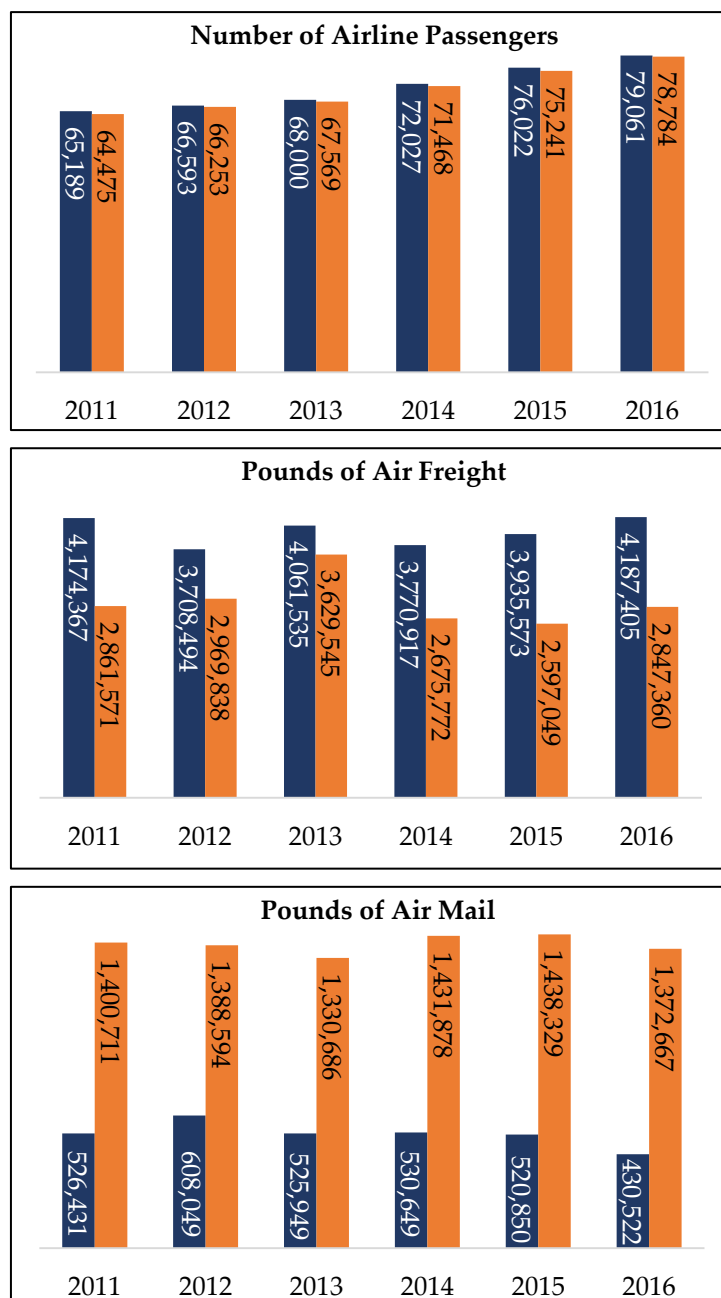
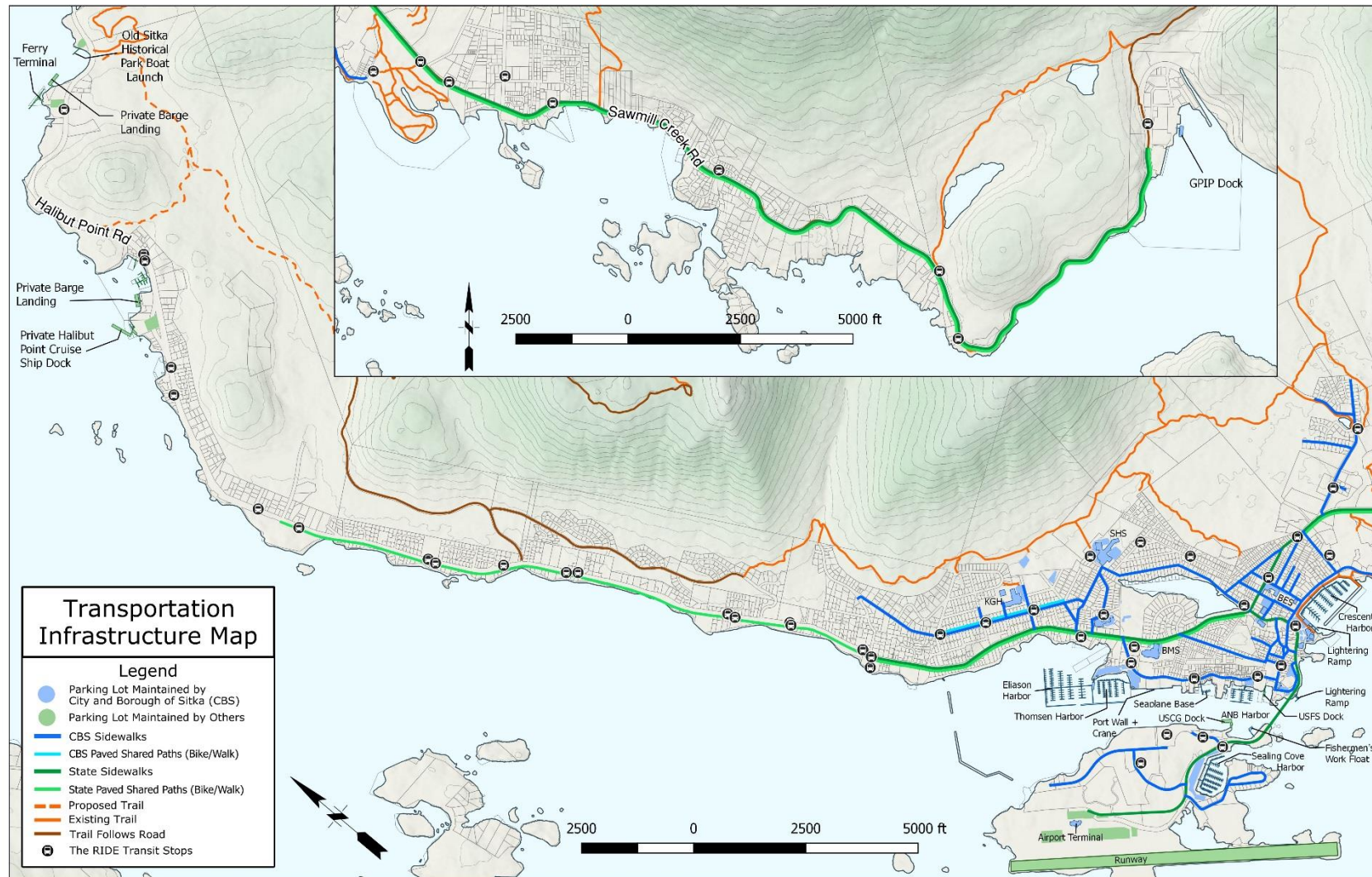


Figure 73



Marine Access to Sitka

Given the dominance of commercial, sport, and charter fishing, whale-watching, visiting yachters, and other marine-related enterprises and work in Sitka, it is no surprise that Sitka's harbors and ports are extremely busy and well-used. In fact, in 2016, Sitka's homeported commercial vessel fleet was the second largest in the state with 645 vessels, according to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (Cordova is the largest with 670 vessels, and Homer is third with 601).

City and Borough of Sitka-Owned Marine Access Facilities

The CBS has five harbors: Crescent, ANB, Eliason, Thomsen, and Sealing Cove, which together have 1,293 boat stalls and 4,380 lineal feet for transient moorage. The harbor supports commercial, sport, and recreational fleets. A few stalls at Crescent Harbor were recently converted to kayak racks to accommodate the growing recreational and tourism demand. Kayakers launch from all the harbor ramps or rented stalls. Most large cruise ships use the privately-owned Halibut Point Marine dock, but, every year, some moor in Sitka Sound close to town, and lighter passengers directly to Crescent Harbor's dock.

Harbor moorage is at 85-90% occupancy and there is a multiyear waiting list for certain size commercial and recreational vessels. There is more demand for commercial fishing workspace than is available.

The CBS also owns and maintains the port wall, a 350-foot dock and bulkhead on the waterside of Katlian Avenue adjacent to the city's Marine Service Center. It has a hoist crane for onloading and offloading goods, though it is undersized for many users. Other CBS-owned wharfs are the net hanging area at Crescent Harbor, a drive-down fishermen's work float under the O'Connell Bridge, and a drive-down work float at Eliason Harbor.

In 2017-2018, a state-funded \$6.8 million floating dock is being constructed at Gary Paxton Industrial Park (GPIP). It is a repurposed 250-foot barge that will be connected to shore with a drive-down ramp. The dock will have lights and power. This will be similar to the drive-down float at Eliason Harbors but on a larger scale.

A new transient float was completed in 2016 to replace an existing facility. The new transient float was funded by the state's Harbor Facility Grant Program and the CBS Harbor Fund. It is parallel to Thomsen Harbor and accessible via Eliason Harbor. Sitka's harbormaster estimates that about 50-60 yachters and independent vessels lease space at CBS marine facilities each month from May through September.

CBS owns and maintains a dock at Baranof Warm Springs. The state provided funding to replace the mooring floats in 2016-2017.

Sitka's harbor and port infrastructure is maintained via the CBS Harbor Enterprise Fund, funded primarily by state-shared raw fish tax, harbor user fees, and Sitka's sport fish box tax. The state's Harbor Facility Grant Program is also a critical funding source.

In 2015, the CBS Harbor Department was awarded the Alaska Clean Harbors certificate and was the first multi-basin harbor certified in the state. To earn this certification a facility must implement best

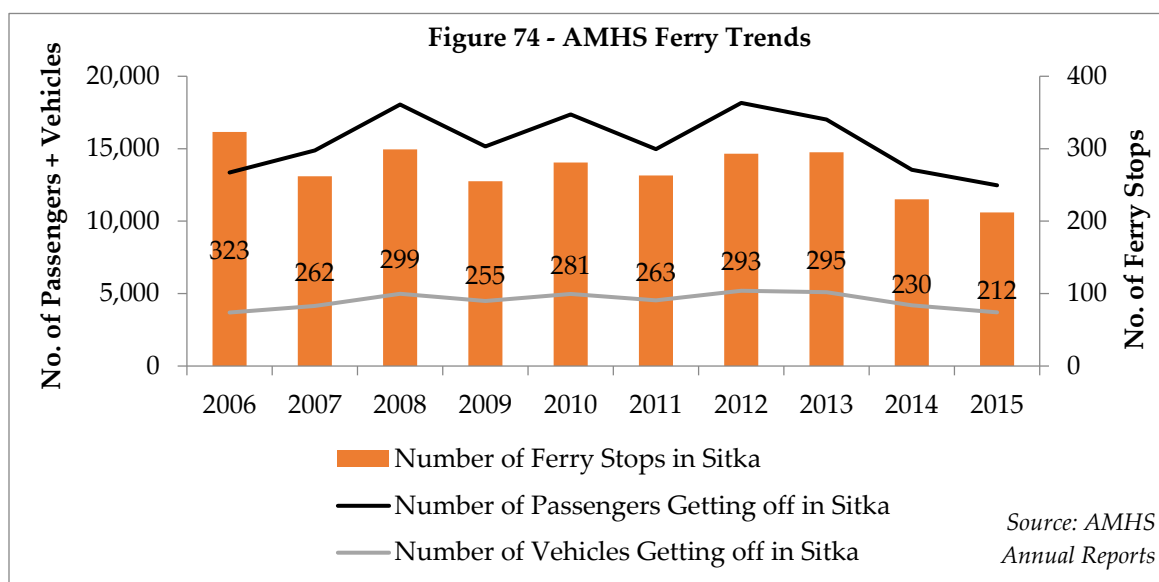
management practices that help to prevent pollution and reduce waste. They must be proactive in communicating with their customers and dedicated to providing services and assistance to their staff and boaters to protect water quality.

Marine Access Facilities Owned by Others

State of Alaska ferries heading north and south call on Sitka and use the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) terminal and ramp on the north end of Halibut Point Road. In 2017 there were approximately 11-13 ferries a month stopping in Sitka; sailing frequency continues to decrease as financial support from the state to the AMHS declines and ferries age.

There is a strong relationship between the number of ferry stops and the number of people traveling to and from Sitka via ferry. The more ferries, the more travelers to Sitka (Figure 74). Decreased ferry service also negatively affects Sitkans' travel and local transport of goods. The aging AMHS fleet is also subject to increasing breakdowns, and the lack of reliability harms local and visitor travel.

Figure 74 – AMHS Ferry Trends



CBS's list of 2018 Legislative Priorities for state funding includes "Highway to Sitka - Provide Equitable Alaska Marine Highway Service" because the AMHS provides a core service critical to the community's economy. Ferry service needs to be increased to the same level as at other mainline ports in southeast Alaska.

In addition to the AMHS infrastructure, the state owns a boat launch at the Old Sitka Historical Park, but no longer maintains it directly since it closed the Sitka Parks and Outdoor Recreation Office in 2015. Since then, the state has been contracting annually for assistance, and a private business has been maintaining the launch to date.

Commercial and charter fishing vessels moor and transfer fish and goods at several private facilities along and adjacent to the city's port wall bulkhead on Katlian Avenue, including at the Marine Service Center, Seafood Producers Cooperative, Fisherman's Quay, Sitka Sound Seafoods, and Silver Bay Seafood's dock at GPIIP.

Tugboats and other private vessels moor at multiple private docks and marinas along the Sitka Sound coast and Sitka road system. These include several in Jamestown Bay (Tyee Maritime, Allen Marine, and others), at the north end of Halibut Point Road (Halibut Point Marine, a privately owned cruise ship dock), another Allen Marine facility, the Alaska Marine Line/Lyndon dock (managed by Arrowhead), and a Samson Tug and Barge dock (where companies receive and ship containerized general cargo and moor company-owned towboats and barges). Fuel transfer occurs at multiple privately-owned facilities.

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) uses a wharf on the southeast shore of Japonski Island, about 1,200 feet northwest of O'Connell Bridge for mooring USCG vessels. About 500 feet northwest of O'Connell Bridge, the U.S. Forest Service has a 140-foot dock for mooring their small craft.

Motorized & Non-Motorized Transportation System

Sitka has a well-developed motorized (roads, transit, parking) and non-motorized (walking, cycling) transportation network.

Road Network

There are approximately 76 miles of roads in Sitka (not including trails):

1. 52 miles of state-owned and maintained roads:
 - The state-owned and maintained roads are the community's larger roads, mostly classified by ADOT&PF as "minor arterials," and include Halibut Point Road, Sawmill Creek Road, Green Lake Road, Eagle Way, Harbor Drive, Lake Street, the Sitka Airport Road, Airport Terminal Access Road, and Old Airport Road, and the access to the Sitka Ferry Terminal.
2. 24 miles of CBS-owned and maintained roads
 - All other streets in town except those owned by state. Most are classified by ADOT&PF as "major or minor collectors" or "local" roads.

Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts

The state periodically puts out counters to document vehicular use. This Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) is an estimate of typical daily traffic (Figures 75 and 76). When reviewing this data, remember that these are only 7-day counts, mathematically averaged to represent the year. Some of the more interesting trends:

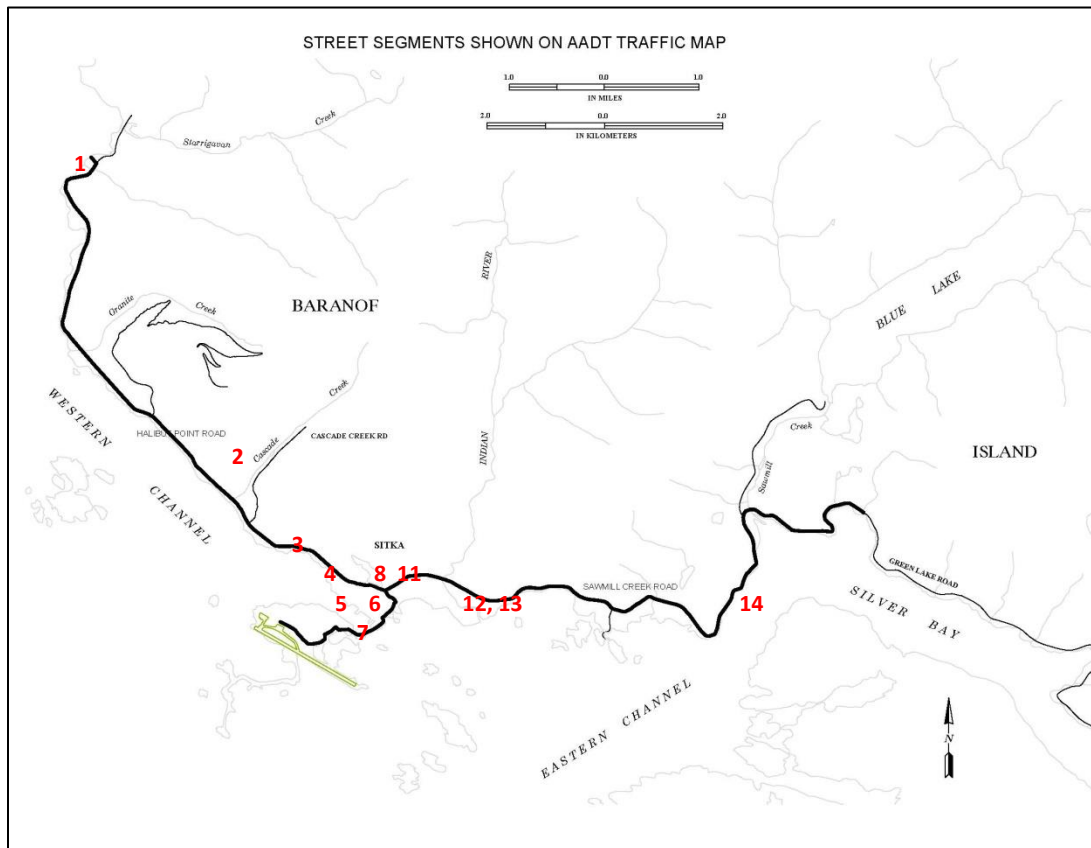
- The busiest road segment in Sitka is Halibut Point Road between Kashevaroff Street and Lake Street.
- Traffic on the O'Connell Bridge has declined 15% since 2011. This decline is not linked to airport use, as passenger travel has risen 9% during this period.
- Traffic on Katlian Avenue past Siginakwa Way has declined significantly since 2011.
- Travel along Cathedral Way is up since 2011, but slightly down on Lincoln Street.
- Traffic along Jarvis Street is down by 161 cars/day, on average, or 9% since 2011.

Figure 75 – Vehicle Traffic in Sitka

Location (street segment, roughly from N to S)	Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)			
	2011	2012	2015	5-Year Change, 2011 to 2015
1. Halibut Point Rd., between Valhalla & AMHS	1,172	1,139	1,105	-67 -6%
2. Cascade Creek Rd.	96	95	95	-1 -1%
3. Halibut Point Rd., between Kashevaroff and Katlian/Moller	11,826	10,931	11,626	-200 -2%
4. Katlian St., just below int. with Halibut Point Rd.	3,774	4,122	4,005	231 6%
5. Katlian St., between Petro Marine and Lincoln St.	3,989	3,026	2,785	-1,204 -30%
6. Lincoln St., from int. with Katlian to int. with Lake St.	6,359	6,295	6,235	-124 -2%
7. O'Connell Bridge	4,211	4,093	3,582	-629 -15%
8. Halibut Point Rd., between Lakeview and the Traffic Circle	10,192	9,898	10,304	112 1%
9. Marine St., between Seward and Erler	808	800	795	-13 -2%
10. Cathedral Way	562	577	625	63 11%
11. Sawmill Creek Rd., between the Traffic Circle and Jeff Davis	7,840	7,586	7,156	-684 -9%
12. Jarvis St.	1,715	1,686	1,555	-160 -9%
13. Sawmill Creek Rd., from Jarvis to Chirikof	5,907	3,846	3,876	-2,031 -34%
14. Sawmill Creek Rd., from Shotgun Alley to GPIIP	817	706	872	55 7%

Source: AADT Reports, ADOT&PF

Figure 76 – Average Annual Daily Traffic Location Map



Sidewalks and Bicycle Paths

Active transport, also called non-motorized transportation and human powered transportation, refers to walking, cycling, and variants such as wheelchair, roller skating, scootering, and similar uses. Some of the benefits of active transportation are cost savings for bicyclist and pedestrian commuters, benefits to bicycle and tourism-related businesses, and individual and community reductions to health care costs.⁴⁴

Children going to and from school especially benefit, as a large study showed that children who walk or cycle to school rather than being driven by their parents have an increased power of concentration that lasts all morning.⁴⁵

The benefits of active transportation cannot be a surprise to Sikans. The percentage of residents that walk or bike to work in Sitka is significantly higher than in the U.S. or Alaska (Figure 77).

Figure 77 - Means of Transportation to Work

	US	Alaska	Sitka
Workers 16 years and over	143,621,171	356,987	4,708
Car, truck, or van	85.9%	80.5%	70.4%
Drove alone	76.4%	67.9%	57.6%
Carpooled	9.5%	12.6%	12.8%
In 2-person carpool	7.3%	9.9%	9.0%
In 3-person carpool	1.3%	1.6%	1.9%
In 4-or-more person carpool	0.9%	1.1%	1.8%
Workers per car, truck, or van	1.06	1.09	1.11
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	5.1%	1.6%	1.8%
Walk	2.8%	7.8%	15.1%
Bicycle	0.6%	1.0%	5.2%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	1.2%	4.5%	2.5%
Worked at home	4.4%	4.6%	5.1%

Source: US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates for 2011-2015

Sitka has 24 miles of sidewalks.

City facilities include 6.8 miles of sidewalk on one side of the road, and another 2.9 miles with sidewalks on both sides.

- State facilities are 5.3 miles of roads with sidewalks on one side of the road, and another 3.1 miles with sidewalks on both sides of the street.

⁴⁴ "White Paper: Evaluating the Economic Benefits of Nonmotorized Transportation," Simmons, E., Kay, M., Ingles, A., Khurana M., Sulmon M., and Lyons, W., US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, FHWA-HEP-15027, March 2015.

⁴⁵ "The Mass Experiment," Science Nordic, November 2012.

Sitka has more than 9 miles of paved bike or bike/walk paths, including 0.6 miles CBS-owned, and 8.9 miles state-owned facilities.

In addition, the Sitka Cross Trail is used for walking, biking, and skiing, transportation between destinations, as well as for recreational use.

Sitka was designated as a national Bike Friendly Community in 2008 and maintains this certification. In 2013, it became Alaska's first Walk Friendly Community, and its bronze-level designation was renewed in 2017. Some of the factors that have contributed to these recognitions are:

- Sitka's compact downtown and the density of nearby homes
- The local emphasis on healthy lifestyles and outdoor recreation
- Infrastructure improvements funded by the CBS and ADOT&PF
- Actions by the Sitka Bicycle Friendly Community Coalition, Sitka Trails Partnership (see parks and recreation chapter), Sitka Health Summit, Walk Sitka, Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL), and others.

Recent and Planned Network Improvements

Both the city and state continue to fund active transportation improvements, though at a slower pace today due to reduced available funding. Partial or full federal funding, through the ADOT&PF, to Sitka is approved for:

1. Cross Trail Multi-Modal Pathway Phase 4 and 5 (\$250,000 for design, environmental clearance, permit, and build).
2. Public Transportation Bus and Maintenance Facility (\$10.7 million for studies, rehabilitation, construction).
3. Sawmill Creek Road Resurfacing and Pedestrian Improvements, from roundabout to Jeff Davis (\$3.5 million to widen sidewalks on north side, narrow travel lanes, add 4-ft. bike lanes, install concrete median to better delineate SCR and DeGroat, resurface, and make connection from existing bike path to the Jarvis crosswalk ADA compliant.)
4. Adding lighting at the Halibut Point Road/Peterson Avenue Intersection, and establishing a 2-stage crossing with a center refuge island to facilitate pedestrian movements.

Significant recently completed projects include:

5. Improved pedestrian walkways were installed on the No Name Creek and Granite Creek bridges (State Project). Sidewalks end on Halibut Point Road north of Seamount; unfortunately a recent rehabilitation project did not extend sidewalks because this was not part of the original design and ADOT&PF estimated it would add \$14 million to the project. Shoulder width along this part of the road is generally six feet wide, and used for both bicycling and walking.
6. Added a 10-foot-wide multiuse path on one side of Edgecumbe Drive for pedestrians and cyclists, near Keet Gooshee Elementary School, and added bulb-outs at school crosswalks and solar-powered, rectangular, rapid-flash beacons to alert drivers to the crosswalk. (City Project)
7. Installed a roundabout near the top of Kimsham Street to replace a five-way intersection. City engineers note that, according to Federal Highway Administration studies, roundabouts reduce collisions by 37% and fatal wrecks by 90% compared to intersections controlled by stop signs. (City Project)

Parking

Parking topics raised throughout the Comprehensive Plan process included the cost of maintaining municipal parking lots, the cost to the city of providing free parking, whether to revise local parking standards, and whether there is the right amount of parking in downtown Sitka.

Between Public Works, the School District, and Harbors, CBS owns and maintains approximately 20.7 acres of surface parking lots (Figure 73), including 5.5 acres around schools and ballfields, 9.7 acres around its harbors, and 5.6 acres around the lots at City Hall, Centennial Hall/Library, Under the Bridge, Castle Hill, the City/State Building, Sitka Community Hospital, the Fire Hall, and at the few city parks not associated with schools. An example of the costs associated with parking lot maintenance, paving at Moller Field is estimated in FY 2019 at \$434,000. Lots that are not paved need periodic grading.

Sitka does not charge for parking in municipal-owned lots. According to an analysis of the CBS property tax roll, the average assessed value in the Central Business District (CBD) is \$78/sf. If a typical parking spot is 10 x 20 feet, this means a typical parking spot in the CBD is worth about \$15,500. With 5.6 acres of surface public parking in or close to the CBD, this yields about \$19 million of value tied up in providing free public parking (or at 6 mills, \$114,000 in foregone annual property tax). This does not mean that Sitka should charge for downtown parking, but it should understand the costs and benefits (subsidies) of its parking policies.

How much parking to require is frequently an issue for engineers and planners. Today, many places are considering establishing *maximum* parking requirements rather than minimum parking requirements.⁴⁶ Sitka has minimum parking requirements, except in its CBD where there is no required parking. Historically, parking requirements have been based on requiring enough parking to meet the peak demand, and, as a result, for much of the time, an oversupply of off-street parking exists.

In Sitka, residential development ranging between one unit to four units requires a minimum of two spaces per dwelling unit. Per dwelling unit, this utilizes 400 sf of space for parking, which, at a local per-sf value in residential areas from \$1/sf to \$46/sf, results in a parking cost of \$400 to \$18,400 per unit. The cost of providing this required off-street parking gets bundled into the price of housing, raising its cost. If, however, the cost of parking was unbundled from the cost of housing, then homeowners would be able to make market-based decisions when they buy a house about whether they want to pay for a space for a second car. A local fee-in-lieu-of parking ordinance and changed parking requirements could help pay for a future parking garage.

Development in the Central Business District (CBD) does not require parking. This has resulted in increased building density and a compact, walkable downtown. Parking in downtown is satisfied either by free parking provided in Sitka municipal lots, free on-street parking, or by eliminating the need to park by taking The Ride, a taxi, walking, or bicycling. Some concern has been raised about the sufficiency of downtown parking and whether a parking garage or revised parking requirements are needed. Sitka should undertake a downtown parking study to quantify the number of private and public parking spaces and tally usage/occupancy at different times of the day and season. This is the quantitative data that city policy makers, planners, and engineers need to make rational decisions about parking changes.

Transit

Transportation is typically the second highest expense in household budgets; thus having good public transit contributes to the affordability of living in Sitka. Transit also reduces parking demand and adds to day-to-day conveniences and community welfare, such as the ability to take the bus to the ferry, to Gary Paxton Industrial Park, and to trailheads. .

In most cities, public transit is operated by the city or borough and paid for by a combination of bus fares, city general funds, tribal government transportation funding, and state and federal transit

⁴⁶ "The Trouble with Minimum Parking Requirements," Shoup D.C., Transportation Research Part A 33 (1999) 549-574. UCLA, Department of Urban Planning.

funding. Since the inception of local transit almost 20 years ago, the City and Borough of Sitka's role has been limited to being a participant in team meetings, helping to plan to keep it going, and very occasionally providing a small amount of funding.

Public transportation in Sitka includes The RIDE Transit and paratransit services, which are organized by the non-profit Center for Community (CFC), the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA), and the non-profit Catholic Community Services (CSS). In FY 2017, the \$1.2 million RIDE and Care-a-Van budget was funded with pass-through federal and state grant funding coming to Sitka via the CFC (59%), STA (23%), CCS (13%), and by user fares (4%).

The RIDE's fixed-route transit stops are shown on Figure 73. Transit service is available during the weekdays from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. It is not available in the evenings or on the weekends. Paratransit service provided by the Care-a-Van (called senior vans until 2012) serves those age 60 and older as well as disabled individuals of any age. It is available weekdays from 6:30 a.m. until 9:30 p.m., and by reservation only on Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Ridership has risen from a reported 66 rides per day in 2002 to 235 riders per day in 2016. In FY 2016 there were 66,586 rides, including 52,791 on the fixed route service, and 13,795 rides on paratransit vans. This is down from a peak in 2014, when, according to Center for Community, free service in April that year helped shatter records and demonstrated that less expensive service and good marketing/public outreach increases demand.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska – Important Transportation Provider and Partner

The Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) and the City and Borough of Sitka signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1998 to recognize areas of mutual concern, establish a framework for cooperative relations, and promote government to government relationships. Transportation is one of several areas of cooperation. In addition to the primary role that STA plays in Sitka's public transit, other cooperative transportation projects and tribal transportation funding are reviewed below.

The Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)⁴⁷ is the largest program in the Office of Federal Lands Highway. It was established to address the transportation needs of Tribal governments throughout the U.S. Nationally, the program received \$465 million in FY 2016, with increases of \$10 million per year to \$505 million in FY 2020, as established in Public Law 114-94, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (the FAST Act).

Sitka Tribe of Alaska's TTP (formerly known as the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) Program) receives formula-based annual funding. Under changes made in Congress's current transportation bill (the FAST Act), provisions for higher funding to support key projects was eliminated, so now STA, like most Tribes in Alaska, does not get enough funding in a year to carry out a project so it must build up its budget for a few years at a time.

A very successful STA-city collaboration (made possible in part by higher funding for a single project that was formerly available) was building the Indian River Road Improvements. After signing a MOA in 2011, \$150,000 of STA's transportation funding enabled the City to complete the Indian River Road Improvement Project. STA was able to use an additional \$500,000 to complete both the pre-construction (environmental, historical, archaeological and design) and the construction of the bus pullout/turnaround and parking lot at the Indian River Trailhead. The land at the trailhead is owned by the City and Borough of Sitka, but STA paid for the project, and the City agreed to take responsibility for maintaining the site after construction was completed.

⁴⁷ The purpose of the TTP is to provide safe and adequate transportation and public road access to and within Indian reservations, Indian lands, and Alaska Native Village communities. A prime objective of the TTP is to contribute to the economic development, self-determination, and employment of Indians and Native Americans. The TTP is funded by contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund and is subject to the overall federal aid obligation limitation. Funds are allocated among Tribes using a statutory formula based on tribal population, road mileage, and average tribal shares of the former Tribal Transportation Allocation Methodology (TTAM) formula.

8.2 Transportation Challenges and Opportunities

Provide Predictability: Prepare a Capital Projects Strategic Spending Plan

A Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Strategic Spending Plan for General Fund-financed infrastructure and services is needed. Current fund balances won't cover the costs for short- to long-term repairs and maintenance.

Predictability is needed by municipal departments. Planning and budgeting would benefit by establishing a clear amount of CIP funding that the CBS will contribute for each of the next five years for transportation infrastructure. Current fund balances won't cover the costs for short- to long-term transportation infrastructure repairs and maintenance.

- Harbor CIP List. Systematic master planning shows that through FY 22, approximately \$17 million in Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for repair and upgrades are needed at the harbors. And, in the long term, another \$74 million of improvements will be needed through 2037.
- Road and Related Utilities CIP List. As of June 30, 2018, the projected undesignated fund balance in the General Fund was just over \$6 million. Yet, maintenance of Sitka's 24-mile locally-owned road system is projected to cost approximately \$19 million (short term) and another \$41 million (through 2037) per the Capital Project list. In FY 19, for example, the CBS CIP list for roads includes \$3.7 million for 26 street-paving projects, \$434,000 for parking lot paving at Moller, and about \$2.4 million for in-street utility improvements. No state or federal grants are expected to fill this need.

Construct More Lease Lots at Sitka's Rocky Gutierrez Airport to Meet Pent-Up Demand

There is demand for more lease lots at the airport, and the lack of lots is holding back economic opportunity.⁴⁸

Acquiring property to add more lease lots has been a need since before the 1999 Sitka Airport Master Plan was completed. Resolving this must be a higher priority for the City and Borough of Sitka, ADOT&PF, and adjacent federal landowners.

ADOT&PF aviation planners report that creating more lease lots and possible apron expansion in Sitka is one of Southcoast Region's two highest priorities, though as noted there has been no progress for years. There are two opportunities for lease lot expansion in Sitka:

1. Acquire the Alaska Department of Education property that was intended to be part of the airport. The parcel abuts both the lease lot and the old airport access road. Relocate the utilities that underlie this property and the vacant lease lot to enable both apron and lease lot expansion.
2. Acquire all or part of Charcoal Island, which is owned by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and fill some or all of the adjacent lagoon (a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

⁴⁸ There actually is one lot available for lease, where the old Civil Air Patrol building was located. However, water and sewer utilities are directly beneath the developable part of the lot, making it essentially unavailable until the utilities are moved.

permit for fill has been issued). Then, level and blacktop to create a taxiway and lease lots. Use the stockpiled rubble on Charcoal Island to fill the adjacent lagoon; a permit to do this has been issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The FY 2018 CBS CIP request to the State Legislature includes \$2.3 million to relocate ADOT&PF and CBS utilities along the old access road to create additional lease lots.

Airport Terminal Safety Improvements and Expansion

The Sitka Airport terminal has operational deficiencies and is undersized based on industry-accepted per enplaned passenger standards. The number of air passengers has increased 22% in the last six years, and, during 2015-2017, at least two new air carriers are using the airport, leaving counter space in the terminal quite limited.

Improvements are needed to address concourse congestion, security queues, fish box processing, baggage claim congestion, departure lounge congestion, tight working conditions in baggage, and baggage-screening deficiencies.

Preliminary and concept plans for improvements have been prepared and a fiscal plan for the estimated \$10.7 million project is currently being assembled (passenger facility charges, TSA grants, rental car fees, etc.). Terminal improvements can be paid for by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved Passenger Facility Charges, other FAA funding, and state matching grants. Some local match will likely be required. The goal is to complete improvements in three phases, during October -April of 2019, 2020, and 2021.

Airport Ownership

Investigate whether Sitka taking full ownership or management of the airport could generate more funding and economic benefit for the community.

Currently, the CBS owns the airport terminal and the State of Alaska owns and operates the rest of the airfield and airport. This is a complicated and often inefficient relationship. Sitka must go through the state for airport funding and competes with projects at most other Alaska airports.

For comparison, the City and Borough of Juneau owns and operates its entire airport, and in Ketchikan the state owns the airport but it is operated by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. These airports work directly with the federal government for funding without the state as an intermediary. A recent analysis showed Juneau's airport is an economic engine for the community and a job creator with an estimated return on investment of 3 to 28 dollars (primarily in federal funding) for every municipal dollar spent.

Replace the Seaplane Base

Replace Sitka's deteriorating seaplane base to maintain and increase the economic and transportation benefits that Sitka residents, businesses, visitors, and neighboring small communities depend upon. This is estimated to cost \$11.6 million, though more than 90% would be funded by the Federal Aviation Administration. This is a CBS Harbor Department responsibility. As part of the replacement effort, develop a vision for what an improved facility could provide over the next 10-20

years to Sitka, surrounding communities, businesses, and aviators. A conservative estimate of a new seaplane base's first year of operation is that \$1.6 million would be earned by Sitka businesses and, of that, 40% would stay in Sitka.⁴⁹

Maintain and Overtime Expand Harbor Infrastructure

Systematic master planning shows that through FY 22, approximately \$17 million in Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for repair and upgrades are needed at the harbors. And, in the long term, another \$74 million of improvements will be needed through 2037.

The highest cost harbor needs over the next four years are replacing Crescent Harbor (\$13.5 million), replacing the seaplane base (see above), replacing the Marine Service Center's port wall bulkhead (\$8.4 million), and Eliason Harbor electrical repairs (\$3.5 million). The Alaska Harbor Facility Grant Program typically provides 50% of needed funding. Continued state funding for Alaska's municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program is critical.

Repairs to the port wall bulkhead, Crescent Harbor's float replacement, and Eliason Harbor's electrical replacement are all on the CBS's list of Priority Legislative requests; however, funding is extremely limited due to state fiscal uncertainty.

Given uncertain state fiscal support, the CBS is opting for short-term projects that extend the time before more expensive replacement is needed. For example, rather than a full \$13.5 million replacement of Crescent Harbor, the CBS is opting in 2017-2018 to extend the life of the floats by putting floating billets under the timber floats for \$50,000. Similarly, the functional life of the port wall bulkhead could be extended by placement of riprap in front of it. More of this type of creative solution will be needed until a sustainable source of repair and replacement funding can be identified.

Demand outstrips supply at Sitka's harbors, evidenced by a 2- to 7-year waiting list for commercial and recreational vessels. This is a lost opportunity for increased harbor moorage fees and higher local purchases of vessel gas, parts, and supplies. Creative ways to meet the demand, given constrained capital improvement spending, are needed.

Finally, facilities no longer needed should be repurposed and put to higher use, such as the grid, O'Connell Lightering dock, and the old seaplane base after it is replaced.

Marine Work Space, Better Coordination between GPIP and CBS Ports and Harbors, and a Vessel Haul-Out

The space available at the Eliason Harbor work float and the Fishermen's work float are not sufficient to meet the demand for work space according to interviews with boat repair business owners, fishermen, and the harbormaster.

The CBS has developed a \$2.5 million plan to upgrade and replace, but not enlarge, the Fishermen's work float near the Coast Guard dock. This is currently scheduled for 2022 pending state funding

⁴⁹ "Draft Economic Impact of a New Seaplane Facility at Sitka," Southeast Strategies, 2016

and available municipal match. A more expensive \$10 million concept would expand the work float; however, this is not on the CIP list due to the cost and funding challenges.

In 2017-2018, the Gary Paxton Industrial Park (GPIP), which is owned by the CBS but managed by an independent board, is constructing a \$6.8 million floating dock with state funding. The new GPIP dock is a repurposed 250-foot barge that will be connected to shore with a drive-down ramp. The dock will have lights and power, and be able to tie up commercial fishing vessels to allow in-water work. This will be like Eliason Harbor's drive-down float, but on a larger scale. The GPIP Board plans to investigate the development of more robust marine service infrastructure at the industrial site to support small vessel owners and marine service businesses.

Does the new infrastructure at GPIP reduce any municipal harbor infrastructure needs? The GPIP location is not adjacent to the harbors as is fisherman's work float, but with tight CIP and maintenance funding Sitka must optimize use of all facilities.

The GPIP Board and CBS Ports and Harbors Commission should conduct joint strategic planning to address Sitka's maritime infrastructure and improvements. There is a need for increased communication, coordination, and planning between these bodies.

Given the largest homeported fishing fleet in Southeast Alaska, and a well-developed suite of boat- and engine-building and repair services, Sitkans regularly ask, "Why is the City and Borough of Sitka not investing in a publicly owned marine haul-out?" Part of the answer is that, similar to Ketchikan, a number of private businesses have invested in marine haul-out facilities in Sitka. There are four private marine haul-outs in Sitka: an 88-ton haul-out at Halibut Point Marine for public rental, and at Allen Marine there are three haul-outs that are at times open for public rental: a 66-ton, 88-ton, and 150-ton travel lift.

A screening-level assessment conducted in 2014 for SEDA found: 1) There was a significant amount of haul-out activity for smaller vessels of up to 100 tons, but little activity for larger vessels; 2) There was weak to moderate opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels up to 150 tons and a weak opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels over 150 tons; and 3) If Halibut Point Marine haul-out ceased operation at any point, there would be a moderate to strong need and opportunity for a haul-out facility for vessels up to 50 tons.

Market to Attract More Independent Boaters

Sitka has many attractions for visiting mariners: the ability to tie up transient vessels up to 200 feet, the many boat repair services available, and extensive tourist and recreational opportunities. During each summer month, an estimated 50-60 large and small yachts, sailboats, and other independent vessels visit Sitka. One way to raise more harbor revenue and sales tax is to increase the number of visiting yachters and cruise ships to Sitka, which requires marketing.

Road Access to East Baranof Island

The ADOT&PF region-wide transportation plan stalled out in 2014 after a draft Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan was issued. That draft called for a Sitka-Warm Springs Bay road, with initiation of planning, environmental, and design in 2033, and construction sometime beyond that. This road to the east side of Baranof Island would allow more frequent ferry service because the ferry could

avoid transit of Peril Strait and outside waters. The distant timing of this Sitka Access project indicates it is a low regional priority. The CBS, STA and others must continue to consistently urge the state to move more quickly on road construction.

Improved AMHS Ferry Service

The number of Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) ferries to Sitka continues to decrease as financial support from the state to the AMHS declines and ferries age. There is a strong relationship between the number of ferry stops and the number of people traveling to and from Sitka via ferry. The CBS, STA and others must continue to consistently urge the state to increase the number of ferry trips to Sitka.

Halibut Point Road 9-mile extension to Katlian Bay

Construction of a state 9-mile, one-lane gravel road from the north end of the road system at Starrigavan is scheduled to begin in 2018. The road extension will provide access for recreation and subsistence, including fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking, and ATV use. There is also the potential that the private lands in Katlian Bay could provide a material source for future development in Sitka.

This \$17 million state project will likely take two years to complete, and will provide access to both Shee Atika Corporation and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land adjacent to Katlian Bay and then up the Katlian River. Most of the former logging roads and bridges in this area have washed out. Future planning and work among the USFS, Shee Atika Corporation, the City and Borough of Sitka, and other interested parties will be needed to address parking, solid waste management, mitigation spending, and projects linked to road construction/wetlands impacts, water access points, and trail and recreation improvements.

Maximize use of Existing Infrastructure before Building New Roads and Utilities for Residential Development

A strategy to prevent adding to Sitka's maintenance backlog and tight fiscal situation is to maximize development along the existing road and utility system before building new. This would occur through infill development, smaller lot sizes, and higher density development. There are many opportunities where this can be accomplished, even in the less developed areas along the road system – both north and south.

Provide Adequate, but not Excessive, Downtown Parking

Questions have been raised regarding the cost of maintaining CBS-owned parking lots, the cost to the city of providing free parking, whether to revise local parking standards, and whether there is the right amount of parking in downtown Sitka. Conduct an initial downtown parking inventory and use count, and subsequent updates. Use this quantitative data to assist in updating parking policies, options, and standards as needed.

Expanded Transit Service

Citizens have asked for expanded transit service. There is a desire for extending weekday service to 11 p.m. to allow more student and worker use, to add Saturday service, and for transit to go to and from the airport. Limitations on funding and the number of buses/vans have prevented these service extensions to date. Another question raised during plan development was whether there could be a larger role for transit to play in transporting cruise ship passengers who do not wish to take organized tours from the Halibut Point Marine dock to and from downtown.

It is laudable that non-municipal entities have found a way to reliably provide public transit in Sitka. However, there are concerns that reductions to federal and state funding to current transit providers/funders could require the CBS to make a higher financial contribution in order to maintain the level of transit service that citizens have come to rely upon.

Adopt a Complete Streets Policy

Sitka is well on its way to having a multimodal transportation system that meets the needs of all users, regardless of age and ability. This is what a Complete Streets approach to transportation infrastructure is about - designing and constructing a transportation network to allow for safe travel by those walking, bicycling, driving automobiles, riding public transportation, or delivering goods, as practicable. As both a nationally recognized Bicycle and Walk Friendly City, Sitka planners and engineers are used to thinking about getting full use of road rights-of-way and the network. There is still work to be done to close the critical infrastructure gaps, but this is true in most communities. Sitka can join other places in Alaska and the U.S., and lead the way in Southeast, by adopting a Complete Streets policy.

Adopt a Complete Streets policy that commits Sitka in future transportation projects to use Complete Streets principles to take into account the needs of everyone using the road right-of-way as early as practicable and throughout the design and construction process.

Complete Streets: 1) Are context-sensitive, 2) Emphasize connectivity, 3) Ensure that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, funded and operated with consideration of safe access for users of all ages and mobility, and all users being equally deserving of safe facilities to accommodate their travel, 4) Encourage the use of the latest and best design standards, 5) Allow flexibility in balancing user needs including maintenance needs and temporary snow storage, 6) Meet performance standards, and 7) Meet implementation steps.

Phase III Sea Walk

Phase III of the Sea Walk project should be from the end of the Phase II extension by Totem Square, to parallel Katlian Avenue, weaving between waterfront and street as appropriate, to Thomsen Harbor.

Narrow Katlian Avenue is heavily used by pedestrians year-round, has many visitors in the summer as well as seafood workers, and has year-round industrial and commercial vehicle traffic. The Sea Walk here would run along the water side of Katlian Avenue where feasible and when necessary would move to a widened sidewalk. Extending the Sea Walk here will better accommodate the pedestrian volume by moving some of it off the street and narrow sidewalks. It will enhance safety for all users, encourage additional walking, and could be part of a larger revitalization project for the area.

Do not widen Katlian Avenue, but reconfigure it. Widening the street would lose the historical character and the sense of place here, and is not recommended. However, reconfiguring the alignments and street to provide a wide sidewalk on one side, with a shoulder to accommodate bike use, and clearly striped pedestrian crossings where needed, is recommended. Specialty treatment of the sidewalks, lighting, and signage to denote and reflect the area's history and character is recommended.

Systematically Tackle Sidewalk and Bicycle System Deficiencies

It is challenging to have safe walking and bicycling when roads are gravel, if road right-of-way width is not sufficient, or where there are gaps in the walking/biking network. Secure proper right-of-way widths on priority routes overtime as properties are redeveloped. For new development, add conditions of approval to permits to require frontage improvements where needed and ensure proper access to accommodate vehicle and pedestrian use. Set connectivity standards to connect walking and cycling paths and thus accommodate both vehicle and walking/biking. Recognize that accomplishing these items could mean higher development costs.

Improve Pedestrian Crossings in School Zones, through Downtown, and at other Key Intersections

Improved pedestrian crossings are desired in school zones, downtown in general, and in certain locations along Halibut Point Road and Sawmill Creek Road. Work with and lobby ADOT&PF to use context sensitive design which will allow more two-stage pedestrian crossings with median islands.

The following places where improvements are currently needed were identified either by citizens during the plan development process or by ADOT&PF during its 2015 Walking and Bicycling Assessment:

1. Crossing at the corner of Halibut Point Road and Peterson Avenue.
2. Corner of Harbor Way and O'Connell Bridge.
3. The corner of Etolin Street and Jeff Davis Street where the mailbox location blocks drivers' views of oncoming pedestrians and cars when pulling out of Etolin Street.
4. The corner of Sawmill Creek Road and Raptor Way. A better crossing for visitors to the Raptor Center is needed. The crosswalk is poorly located, which results in illegal "jaywalking." Directional signage could be improved for bicycle/pedestrian users.
5. The sidewalk is cracked on Katlian Avenue near the Totem Square Hotel bus stop. Many elders and youth walk here.
6. Some non-paved, sloped driveways leave rock debris in the bicycle lane along Halibut Point Road.

Identify Priority Routes for Winter Sidewalk Maintenance

Gather planning, public works, school district, STA, and other parties as needed to identify priority streets and sidewalks for winter maintenance. Publicize this list to manage public maintenance expectations. The list might include, for example, major routes to schools, around the Pioneer Home,

Katlina Avenue, Lincoln Street, and Lake Street, and Sawmill Creek Road to the United States Post Office. Look for partners and ensure equipment is available.

Increase Bicycle Education and Enforcement

Additional covered bike parking sheds in downtown will keep the rain off parked bikes and encourage all-weather bicycle commuting. Regular painting of directional arrows in bike lanes on Halibut Point Road and Sawmill Creek Road is needed to promote safe riding. In addition, more education for bicyclists and drivers about sharing the road and proper biking practices is needed, as is increased enforcement of wrong-way bike riding and the helmet ordinance for kids.

Conduct Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts

Initiating quarterly bicycle and pedestrian counts, will provide needed quantitative data on walking and cycling. Quantitative data increases competitiveness for infrastructure improvements grant funding. A little bit of training to do counts coupled with minimal municipal organization can enable a fun and meaningful citizen engagement effort.

8.3 Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
T 1	Objective 1 - Maintain and improve Sitka's air-based transit infrastructure.			
T 1.1	Position the Sitka Airport to be a productive regional hub for passenger and freight services. <i>Cross reference with action ED 5.2</i>	AC	OG	U
T 1.1.a	Develop more lease lots to address economic and transportation needs and demand.	AC	MT	U
T 1.1.b	Expand the airport terminal to address safety and operational deficiencies and meet current and future passenger and business demands.	AC	LT	H
T 2	Objective 2- Maintain and improve Sitka's water-based transit infrastructure.			
T 2.1	Maintain quality harbor and port facilities and services to support marine commerce and accommodate the needs of the commercial and charter fleets, recreational vessels, transient boats, seaplanes, and cruise ship tenders.	CBS	OG	U, GF
T 2.1.a	Develop a sustainable funding strategy to meet harbors and port maintenance and capital improvement needs.	CBS	ST	L
T 2.1.b	Provide predictable harbor rates to assist with business and home budgeting.	CBS	OG	L
T 2.1.c	Replace Sitka's deteriorating seaplane base to maintain the economic and transportation benefits Sitka residents, businesses, and visitors depend upon. <i>Cross reference with PTR 3.8</i>	AC	LT	H, GF
T 2.1.d	Increase visitor/transient vessels with more aggressive marketing of Sitka's facilities and amenities.	CBS	ST	L
T 2.1.e	Perform critical repairs on the city's bulkhead port wall.	CBS	LT	H, GF
T 2.1.f	Develop a Marine Center at Gary Paxton Industrial Park to support Sitka's fishing and marine transportation fleets and businesses. <i>Cross reference with ED 6.3</i>	AC	LT	H
T 2.1.g	Given the GPIIP drive-down, powered, floating work ramp with transient moorage, conduct joint planning between the city Harbor Commission, city Docks and Harbor staff, and the GPIIP board and staff on efficient use and development for city ports and harbors, GPIIP, and the Marine Service Center.	CBS	ST	L
T 2.1.h	Identify a schedule for future infrastructure investment needed to support growth of maritime industries and businesses as well as provide moorage for Sitka's permanent and transient vessel fleets. <i>Cross reference with ED 6.4</i>	CBS	ST	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
T 2.1.i	Investigate whether a Port Authority to manage Sitka's harbors, airport, the Gary Paxton Industrial Park, the Marine Service Center, and specific municipally owned waterfront parcels would be a more responsive and efficient management structure.	CBS	MT	L
T 2.1.j	Set a fiscally appropriate fee structure at the Baranof Warm Springs dock.	CBS	ST	L
T 3	Objective 3 - Maintain and improve Sitka's land-based transit infrastructure, such as streets and sidewalks.			
T 3.1	Develop a funding formula that allocates a predictable annual baseline amount for street system capital projects that Sitka can maintain. The formula should identify factors that would allow funding above the baseline.	CBS	ST	L
T 3.2	Articulate criteria to prioritize street network maintenance and improvements. Also, identify if there are road segments that do not need pavement, or less frequent paving.	CBS	ST	L
T 3.3	Reduce road wear and tear and enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety by lowering the speed limit from 25 to 20 miles per hour on streets without sidewalks, in denser residential areas, and through downtown.	CBS	MT	L
T 3.4	Encourage increased use of public transit in order to reduce wear and tear on roads.	AC	ST	L
T 3.5	Monitor Legislative and Congressional support for critical revenue sources and lobby for Sitka's fair share of funding. <i>Cross reference BFS 3.6</i>	CBS	OG	L
T 4	Objective 4 – Efficiency. Maximize use of existing infrastructure before building new.			
T 4.1	Maximize development along existing roads and utility lines. <i>Cross reference LU 8.1</i>	CBS	OG	L
T.4.1.a	Support high density residential and mixed use development along transit routes.	CBS	MT	L
T 4.2	Make efficient use of existing infrastructure and reduce vehicle miles traveled through use of cluster and nodal zoning.	CBS	LT	L
T 4.3	Require a fair share of infrastructure and service costs be borne by developers to account for increased public costs linked to private development through such structures as impact fees, local improvement districts, and service areas. Amend development standards and fees as needed to implement. <i>Cross reference LU 8.4</i>	CBS	MT	L
T 5	Objective 5 - Adopt a policy to achieve safer and more useable streets, sidewalks, and multi-modal transportation options for all users.			
T 5.1	Use Context Sensitive Design for street improvements, recognizing that streets are an important part of Sitka's public and civic realm.	CBS, AK, US	OG	H
T 5.2	Create a memorial and naming policy to integrate place names that are representative of Sitka's diverse history into community facilities, services, places, and streets. <i>Cross reference with HCA 1.1.h</i>	CBS	ST	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
T 5.3	Continue to systematically implement the 2003 Sitka Nonmotorized Transportation Plan.	CBS	OG	U
T 5.4	Design and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities to minimize conflicts between transportation modes.	CBS, AK, US	OG	M-H, GF
T 5.5	Maintain and improve Sitka's walking and biking transportation routes.	CBS, AK, US	OG	H
T 5.5.a	Identify criteria to prioritize walking/biking route improvements.	CBS	ST	L
T 5.5.b	Develop a walking/biking path from Moller Park to Lake Street.	CBS	LT	H
T 5.5.c	Urge the State of Alaska to develop multi-use pathways along Halibut Point Road and Sawmill Creek Road, from Katlian Bay to Herring Cove.	CBS	OG	L
T 5.6.d	Support a pedestrian/bicycle underpass at the Indian River Bridge.	CBS	OG	L
T 5.7	Initiate periodic bicycle and pedestrian counts, using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation project methodology to assist with planning and prioritizing improvements and strengthen funding requests.	CBS	ST	L
T 5.8	Continue gravel and snow removal on road shoulders, sidewalks, and bike paths to permit safe use by pedestrians and cyclists.	AC	OG	L
T 5.9	Keep painted lines and signage in good repair. Consider initiating a neighborhood-city partnership for sidewalk/path maintenance.	AC	OG	L
T 5.10	Through partnerships, provide regular education and information about safe bicycle and pedestrian practices for cyclists, walkers, and motorists.	AC	OG	L
T 5.11	Through partnerships, establish and promote a program for reporting of, and responding to, bicycle and pedestrian hazards.	AC	ST	L
T 5.12	Ensure safe visibility at intersections.	AC	OG	U
T 5.13	Revise parking requirements to set standards for bicycle parking spaces and use as part of development parking equations. Require bicycle parking at new multifamily residential, commercial, recreational, and public facilities.	CBS	LT	H, GF
T 5.14	Install covered bicycle parking at all city buildings and parks.	CBS	OG	L
T 5.15	Support programs to increase the number of bicyclists using transit.	CBS, AT	ST, OG	L
T 5.16	Advocate for the installation of electronic speed limit signs for Halibut Point Road north of Seamart to reduce speeding.	CBS	OG	L
T 5.17	Pursue grants to make transportation infrastructure safer, including but not limited to the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program.	AC	OG	GF
T 5.18	Continue timely maintenance and repair of sidewalks, complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act.	AC	OG	U

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
T 6	Objective 6 - Support and promote public transit.			
T 6.1	The City and Borough of Sitka will regularly participate in coalition meetings to develop, manage, and fund Sitka's public transit system. This will ensure that Sitka receives its fair share of public transit operational and capital funding from state and federal agencies.	CBS	OG	L-M
T 6.2	Strive to provide Saturday public transit service and longer weekday hours.	AC	MT	M
T 7	Objective 7- Implement an evidence-based parking strategy.			
T 7.1	Conduct study to explore parking mechanisms that promote and encourage efficient use of existing parking facilities to best meet demand.	CBS	ST	L
T 8	Objective 8 - Enhance Resilience.			
T 8.1	Use low impact design, construction, operations and maintenance techniques to reduce air, noise, and water pollution and lower the cost of operations. <i>Cross reference BFS 6 and LU 9.1</i>	AC	LT	U
T 8.2	Where possible design, build, and maintain vegetation and use bio-swales, wetlands, permeable concrete and similar techniques to reduce storm water runoff and filter pollutants. Consider these during development project reviews as conditions of approval.	AC	LT	U
T 8.3	Consider changes to development standards for road and utility construction to incorporate items listed above, weigh higher construction cost against reduced life cycle costs.	CBS	MT	L-M
T 8.4	Maintain Sitka's Clean Harbors certification.	CBS	OG	L

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

9 Parks, Trails, and Recreation

GOAL

Maintain and expand Sitka's diverse recreational opportunities.

9.1 Current Conditions

Sitka Values Recreation

Sitkans value and work to maintain and improve their parks, trails, and recreation system. As part of developing a vision for this plan, residents said the following about Sitka's values and what is important:

"Quality and easy access to outdoor activities including walking, hiking, kayaking, beaches, parks, playgrounds, camping, hot springs, etc. is a strength."

"I think that the community has a high value for recreation and quality of life and has provided for these ideals well. These are also Sitka's key assets."

"Our outdoor recreation opportunities (trails, fishing, boating) are a secure, long-term asset."

"We are a Tree City and our beautiful downtown with trees and landscaping, greenspace and parks is important."

"Recreational use areas in town (and out of town, accessible by boat) are an asset."

"Quality of life includes access to subsistence resources and local foods, culture and art, and a variety of healthy activities."

These are not new values. Resident surveys as long ago as the 1980s when the Sitka Coastal Management Plan was developed state that, "Proximity to scenic and pristine areas where these forms of recreation [fishing, beachcombing, picnicking, hunting, camping, etc.] can be enjoyed" is one of the principal assets of living in Sitka (pg. 58 Sitka District Coastal Management Program, May 31, 1989).

Sitka's business community also recognizes the importance of recreation and its link to a strong local economy. During adoption of the City and Borough of Sitka's 2012 Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan, the Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce noted that the Plan:

"...addresses two core goals of the Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce: economic growth in the community and quality of life in Sitka. The incredible scenery, rich cultural history, abundant wildlife, recreation opportunities, and community of Sitka offer remarkable experiences for residents and visitors. Recreation and tourism are strong segments of the Sitka economy.... Recreation opportunities improve the quality of life and contribute to overall positive community character. The plan's emphasis on balance contributes to a strong, durable local economy, a vital community, and a healthy natural environment. This plan is right for Sitka because of its attentiveness on building partnerships and setting priorities."

Less “wild” but equally valued are organized recreation and sports programming and facilities provided by the City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka School District, Community Schools, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, and other non-profit organizations, clubs and leagues. This includes two swimming pools, 11 sports fields, three gyms, and softball, baseball, soccer, basketball, wrestling, gymnastics, dance, volleyball, swimming, martial arts, and other programs for youth and adults, as well as numerous fitness classes and access to weights and other fitness equipment. In addition, there are public and private playgrounds for children.

Recreation Standards

As far back as 1914, standards have been in use for the number of recreational facilities per 1,000 people.⁵⁰ Since the 1950s, recreation managers have been using standards of 10 acres per 1,000 population of combined active (playgrounds, playfields) and passive (open spaces, hiking, nature viewing) facilities (Figure 78).

Figure 78 - Type of Recreation Area Standards in Acres, per 1,000 Population

Type	Acres
(Active rec.)	
Playgrounds	1.25
Playfields	1.25
(Total active rec.)	2.50
(Passive rec.)	
Minor parks	2.50
Major parks	5.00
(Total passive rec.)	7.50
All types of municipal recreation	10.00
<i>Sources: American Planning Association, Information Report 194, 1965; Report on Recreation Standards, 1954, Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission.</i>	

However, because every community is different and successful parks and recreation leaders tailor facilities and services to meet the needs of the community, the National Park and Recreation Association (NPRA) no longer promotes or publishes national standards. Instead, it reviews current practices as a place to begin discussion.

In 2016, the NPRA published a review and field report⁵¹ with data from more than 950 park and recreation agencies across the United States gathered between the years 2013 and 2015. Their top line findings for recreation facilities, programming and budgets are on Figure 79.

⁵⁰ American Planning Association, Information Report 194, 1965

⁵¹ “NPRA Field Report: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks,” National Park and Recreation Association, 2016

Evaluating Sitka based on Current Benchmarks

Using the benchmarks on Figure 79 to analyze parks, trails and recreation programming in Sitka yields some interesting findings:

Sitka exceeds the average amount of parks and recreation acreage.

- Using the average of about 10 acres of parks per 1,000 people, Sitka would have 90 acres of parks. Sitka has approximately 100 acres of municipal playgrounds, ballfields, and larger parks, including 22 acres at Swan Lake, 3 acres at Goddard, and another 11 miles of trails and sea walk. In addition, there are about 140 acres of federal and state parks, campgrounds, and recreation sites and trails in town.

Sitka could generate more revenue from its parks, trails and recreation assets.

- Standards show that parks, on average, generate about \$18/per capita in revenue from use fees, rentals, and concessions. Using these averages, Sitka would generate about \$162,000 in revenue. Instead, field and facility rentals bring in an estimated \$20,000 annually. This suggests Sitka should look for additional ways to earn revenue from its park, trail, and recreation assets.

Other places appear to spend more on parks and recreation, but USFS and related Sitka municipal contracting should be included for a full analysis.

- Communities on average spend about \$75/per capita on parks. This would mean spending \$684,000 on parks, trails, and recreation in Sitka. Municipal parks and recreation spending is significantly less than this. However, parks and recreation-related contracting and USFS spending could be included in this tally to get a better estimate of how Sitka measured compared to national averages.

There are far fewer CBS parks and recreation staff compared to other places, suggesting more duties and work than can easily be managed.

- Parks and recreation staffing, on average, is about 7.5 fulltime positions per 10,000 population. Sitka has 2.5 municipal parks and recreation staff who manage more than 50 developed sites with 100 acres of developed parks, grounds, and ballfields, as well as municipal landscaping, trees, and cemeteries. Compared to national averages, this gives an indication of why staff feel like there are more parks and recreation duties than can be well-managed.

Figure 79 – 2016 Recreation Field Report Benchmarks

Park Facilities	
Residents per Park	There is typically one park for every 2,277 residents.
Acres of Park Land per 1,000 Residents	The typical park and recreation agency has 9.5 acres of park land for every thousand residents in the jurisdiction.
Outdoor Park & Recreation Facilities – Population per Facility	An overwhelming majority of park and recreation agencies have playgrounds (91 percent) and basketball courts (85 percent) in their portfolio of outdoor assets.
Indoor Park & Recreation Facilities – Population per Facility	A majority of agencies offer recreation centers and gyms, while at least two in five agencies offer community centers, senior centers and fitness centers.
Programming	
Programs Offered by Park & Recreation Agencies	Key programming activities include team sports, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education.
Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors and People with Disabilities	Four in five agencies offer summer camps to their residents.
Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Agencies	
Key Responsibilities of Park & Recreation Agencies	Top roles include operating parks and facilities, providing recreation programming and services, and operating and maintaining indoor facilities.
Staffing	
Park & Recreation Agency Staffing	The typical park and recreation agency is staffed with 33 full-time equivalents (FTEs).
Park & Recreation FTEs per 10,000 Residents	The typical park and recreation agency has 7.4 FTEs on staff for each 10,000 residents in the jurisdiction served by the agency.
Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Workers	Responsibilities split between maintenance, operations, programming, and administration.
Budget	
Annual Operating Expenditures	The typical park agency has annual operating expenditures of \$3,459,846.
Operating Expenditures per Capita	The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$76.44 on a per capita basis.
Acre of Park & Non-Park Sites	The median level operating expenditures is \$6,476 per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency.
Operations Expenditures Per FTE	The typical park and recreation agency has \$96,055 in annual operations expenditures for each employee.
Distribution of Operating Expenditures	At the typical park and recreation agency, personnel services represent 55 percent of the operations budget.
Agency Funding	
Sources of Operating Expenditures	Park and recreation agencies derive three-fifths of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support.
Park & Recreation Revenues per Capita	The typical park and recreation agency generates \$18.22 in revenue annually for each resident living in the jurisdiction.
Revenue as a Percentage of Operating Expenditures (Cost Recovery)	The typical agency recovers 29.0 percent of its operating expenditures from non-tax revenues.
5-Year Capital Budget Spending	Park and recreation agencies have a median of \$2.981 million in capital expenditures budgeted over the next five years.
Targets for Capital Expenditures	On average, just over half of the capital budget is designated for renovation while 30 percent is geared toward new development.
Source: 2016 NRPA Field Report: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks, National Park and Recreation Association	

Bike and Walk Friendly Community

Through the efforts of many citizens and local coalitions, Sitka has achieved status as a national Bike Friendly Community and a Walk Friendly Community.

Sitka's sidewalks, bike lanes, and Sea Walk are used for recreation, access to Sitka's multiuse trail system, and for transportation between destinations. Walking and bicycling can be an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Inventory of Sitka Parks, Trail, and Recreation Assets

Figures 80A-B shows Sitka's extensive park, trail, and recreation assets and network on the road system; they are listed below by manager.

City and Borough of Sitka

1. Baranof Elementary School field (0.2 acre)
2. City Cemetery – lawn and trees maintenance
3. Crescent Park (2.9 acres) - tennis courts, basketball court, picnic shelters, walkway, benches, restroom, playground, lawn **
4. Cross Trail (4.2-mile portion from Sitka High School to Kramer Drive owned by CBS; remainder of trail has multiple owners and is managed by CBS and Sitka Trail Works)
5. Granite Creek Recreation Area (7 acres) - 150 ft. x 24 ft. landing strip for remote control planes, golf course on city land but maintained by Sitka Golf Association
6. Herring Cove to Beaver Lake Trail (2.9 miles) (CBS owns parking lot to waterfall)
7. Japonski Island Ballfield
8. Kaisei-Maru Interpretative Site - signage, shelter, picnic table
9. Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School ball fields (2.2 acres)
10. Kimsham Recreation Complex and Ballfields (15 acres)
11. Lower Indian River Corridor (borough, state, private ownership) **
12. Medivije Lake (1 mile) - undeveloped
13. Mt. Edgumbe Field (1 acre)
14. Moller Park and Ballfields (14.86 acres) – turf field, restrooms, parking, playgrounds **
15. Path of Hope (1,400 feet)
16. Pioneer Park (3.4 acres) - shelters, restroom, trail **
17. Sitka Sea Walk and breakwater spur (3,500 ft. with 1,762 ft. addition funded)
18. Swan Lake Park and Area Meriting Special Attention (22 acres with lake) - picnic tables, path, fishing dock **
19. Thimbleberry-Heart Lake Trails (1.8 miles) - fishing dock
20. Tom Young Cabin (2 acres) - pan abode cabin, deck, outhouse, accessible by boat
21. Tony Hrebar Shooting Range (4 acres) – shooting range and shelters, restroom, parking
22. Turnaround Park, Skateboard Park (3 acres) - path, picnic tables, 6800 sf skate park, Rotary Gazebo, fenced dog park
23. Vilandre Ballfields (2 acres)
24. Whale Park (12 acres) – boardwalk trail, gazebos, restroom, parking **
25. Sitka's docks and harbors are used to access water-based recreation, and discussed in the Transportation Chapter.

Sitka School District

1. Baranof Elementary School Playground
2. Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School Playground
3. Blatchley Middle School Swimming Pool

Alaska State Parks (no longer in Sitka)

1. Castle Hill State Historical Park (currently being maintained by annual contract with NPS)
2. Halibut Point Recreation Area (no current maintenance) **
3. Old Sitka State Historic Site and boat launch (boat launch currently maintained by annual contract with NPS and a private party) **

State of Alaska

1. Fort Rousseau/Ray Causeway – Makhnati Island **
2. John Brown’s Beach **
3. Totem Square ** (Sitka Tribe of Alaska is manager)

National Park Service

1. Russian Bishop’s House Unit
2. Sitka National Historical Park Visitor Center and Totem Trail **

USDA Forest Service

1. Gavan Hill to Harbor Mountain Trail, Shelter (6.2 miles)
2. Indian River Trail
3. Mt. Verstovia Trail
4. Sandy Beach day use site and tidelands **
5. Sawmill Creek Recreation Area and Campground
6. Starrigavan Recreation Area ** - campground, cabin, interpretative signage, hiking trails and Starrigavan Valley ATV Trails
7. Herring Cove to Beaver Lake Trail (2.9 miles) (USFS owns from waterfall to Beaver Lake)

Other

1. Sitka Fine Arts Camp - Hames Gym & Wellness Center
2. Private - Spruce Glenn Park
3. Private - Sawmill Cove Apartments
4. Mt. Edgecumbe High School Gym
5. Mt. Edgecumbe High School Aquatic Center (construction 2017)

Primary Remote Recreation Sites within the City and Borough of Sitka include:

1. USDA Forest Service and State of Alaska’s Baranof Warm Springs **
2. City and Borough of Sitka’s Goddard Hot Springs (3 acres) - 2 bathhouses & hot tubs, boardwalk trail, outhouse/cistern **
3. USDA Forest Service’s Mt. Edgecumbe Trail (7 miles)
4. Sitka Ranger District of the USDA Forest Service manages 24 remote cabins, 9 mooring buoys, several dispersed camping areas, and some remote hiking. See next section and also a list and information here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/tongass/recreation/camping-cabins/recarea/?recid=78620&actid=101>
5. Magoun Islands/Port Krestof State Marine Park
6. Big Bear/Baby Bear Bays State Marine Park
7. Sea Lion Cove State Marine Park

** = a designated recreation area in the 2006 Sitka Coastal Management Plan

Figure 80A

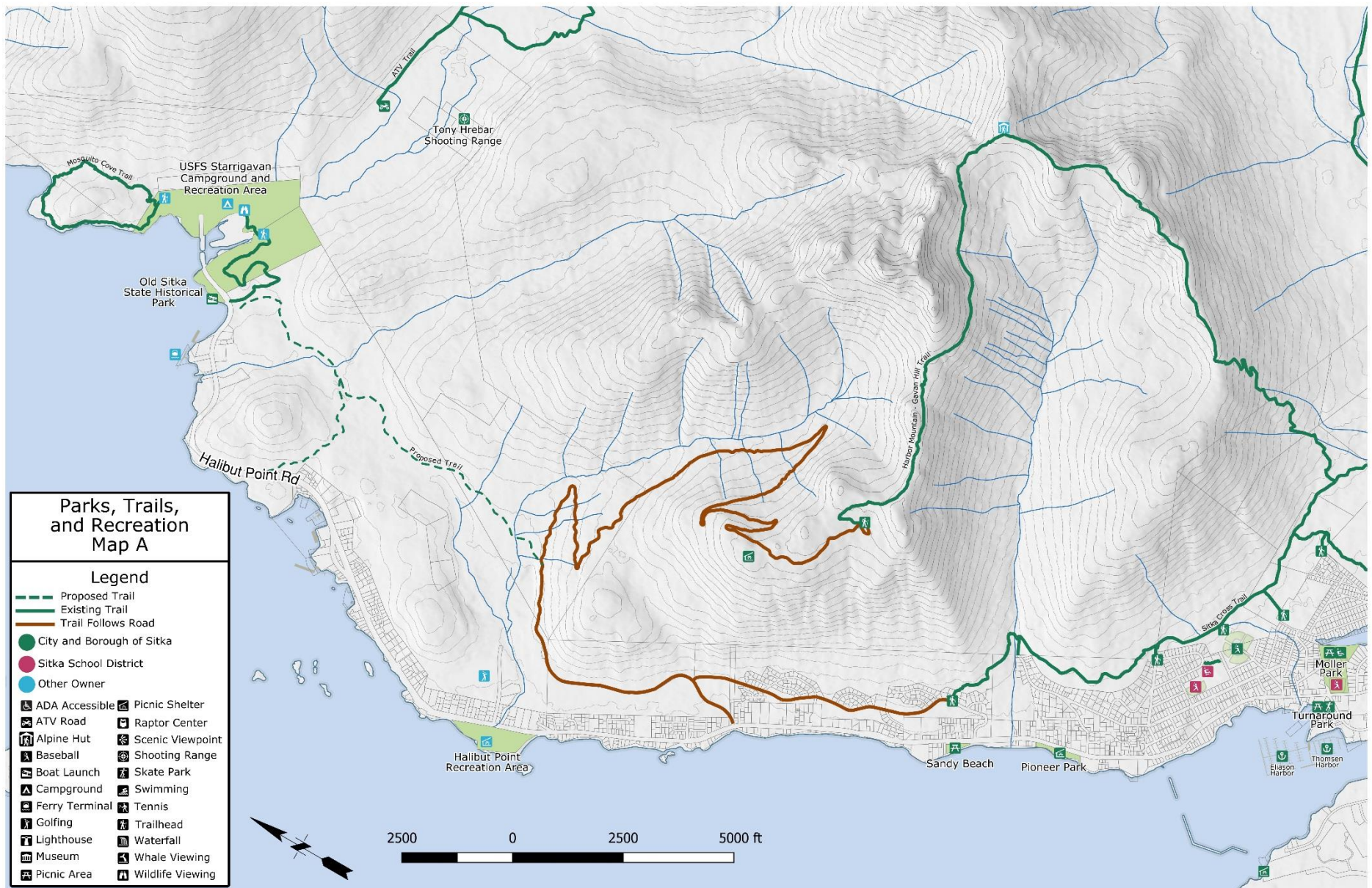
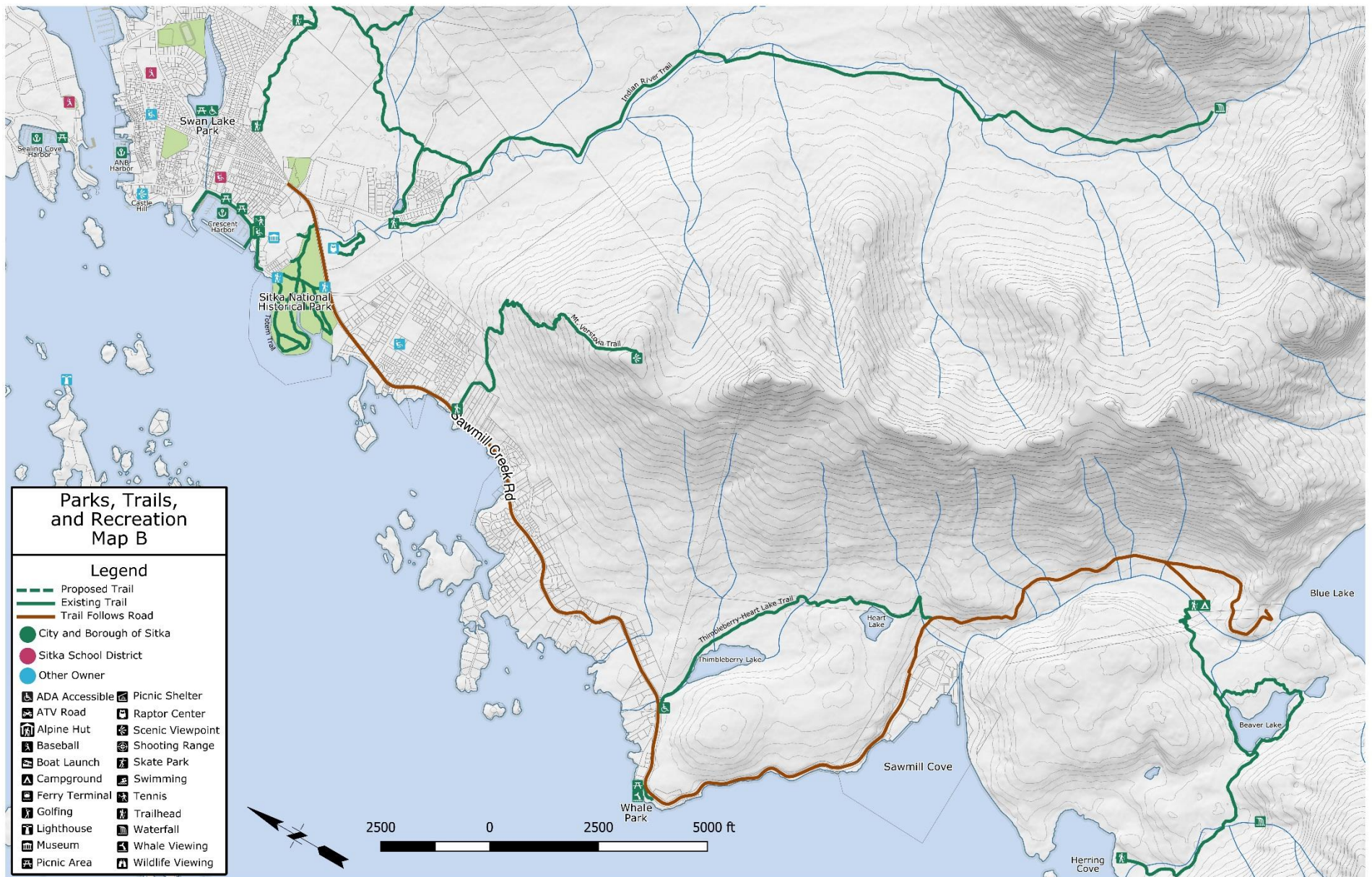


Figure 80B



Relevant Management Plans

City and Borough of Sitka (and others) management of parks, trails, and recreation facilities and activities builds upon management direction set in three documents:

The 2003 Sitka Trail Plan sets clear direction for managing, maintaining, and promoting Sitka trails. Three years in the making, this is the local guide for trail maintenance and development and a key resource for Sitka Trail Works, Inc. Demonstrating the importance of systematic planning and follow-through is the fact that multiple trails identified in this 14-year-old plan have been built.

The 2006 Sitka Coastal Management Plan has sections that designate recreation and coastal access areas, and “Special Management Areas and Designated Recreational Use Areas” with maps and management narrative for recreation off the road system. The latter section is based on a comprehensive 1993 Public Management Plan that focused on recreation and subsistence access. While the State no longer has a coastal management program, Sitka strongly felt that the plan’s enforceable policies were important for ongoing management of critical coastal areas and adopted the policies by reference into municipal code (SGC 20.05.010).

The 2012 Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan uses a “Triple Bottom Line” approach to improve Sitka’s outdoor recreation system, with a focus on filling key gaps in the community’s existing set of trails, parks, day use facilities, maps and other recreation resources. This is the City and Borough of Sitka Parks and Recreation Department’s and the city’s Parks and Recreation Committee’s guiding plan.

Documented Use of Recreational Facilities

Knowing how much local parks, trails and recreation facilities are used is important when considering management, maintenance, and funding priorities.

The USFS issues outfitter/guide permits for commercial use of public forest lands in the Sitka Ranger District. There were 79 permitted commercial outfitter/guides operating in the Sitka Ranger District during 2011-2015. During this period, they collectively led approximately 10,100 clients, on average, annually on commercial trips, according to USFS (LaPalme) estimates.

The USFS also tracks the number of hikers on 10 trails in Sitka, as well as the number of people using and nights occupied for 25 cabins and campgrounds in the borough. Mechanical or laser trail counters were active on some trails only for a month in the summer of 2016, while counters were on other trails for a full year between 2015 and 2016. Therefore, the total hikers figure isn’t that relevant (36,866 recorded); however, the maximum number of hikers per day and the average number of hikers per day does allow a look at trends and some comparisons (Figure 81).

- The highest average number of hikers per day are on Thimbleberry-Heart Lake trail and Herring Cove trail.
- The highest number of users in a single day were on Herring Cove, the Harbor side of Harbor Mountain-Gavan trail, and Thimbleberry-Heart Lake trail.

In 2016, cabins or campground sites in the Sitka area were occupied an estimated 3,095 nights by 6,230 people.

- The number of nights of use and people has been climbing since 2009 to a 2015 peak; 2016 data shows a slight decline, but still up 13% for nights occupied, and 15% for people using these recreation facilities since 2009 (Figure 82).
- The most popular sites, with more than 300 people using each of them in 2016 are: Starrigavan Creek Cabins/Campground, Allan Point Cabin, Samsung Cove Cabin, Brent's Beach Cabin, Piper Island Cabin, and Fred's Creek Cabin.

Figure 81 - Peak Number of Trail Users/Day, and Average Daily Use, 2015-2016

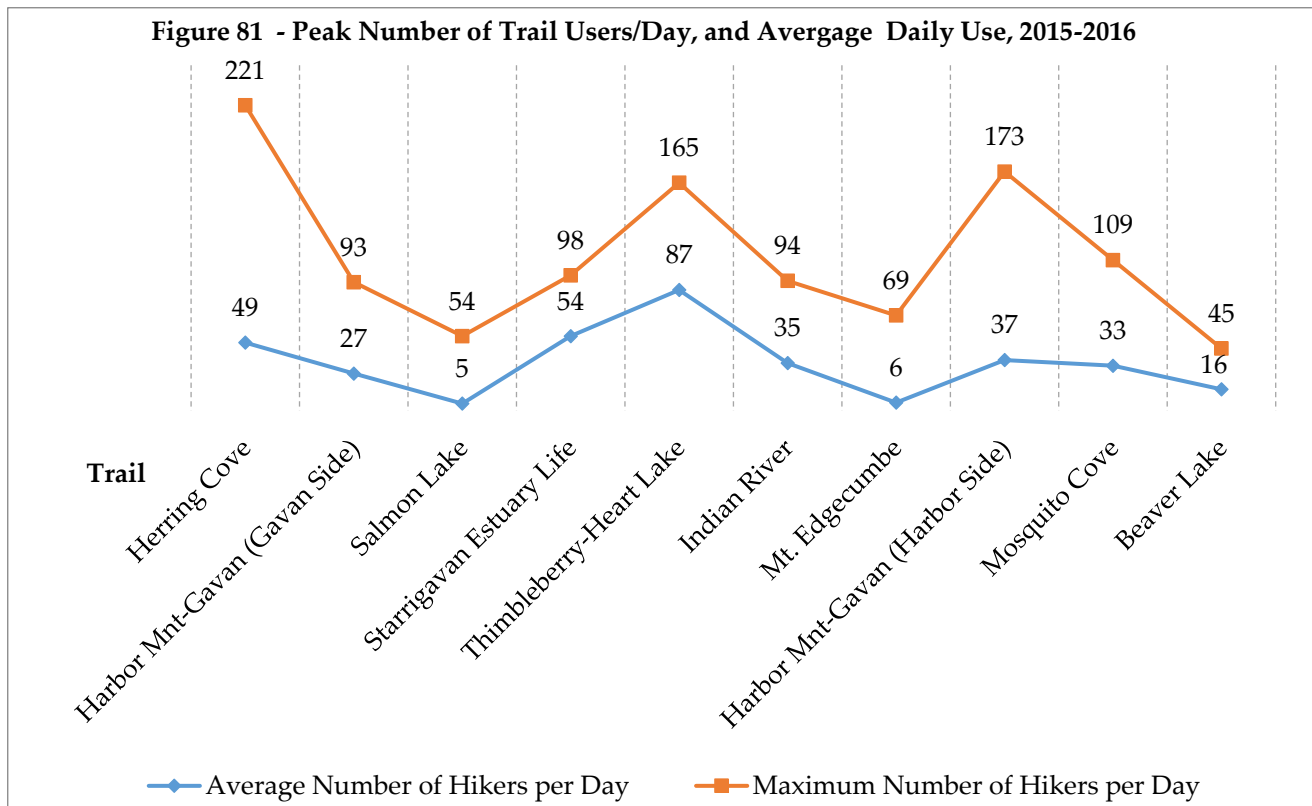
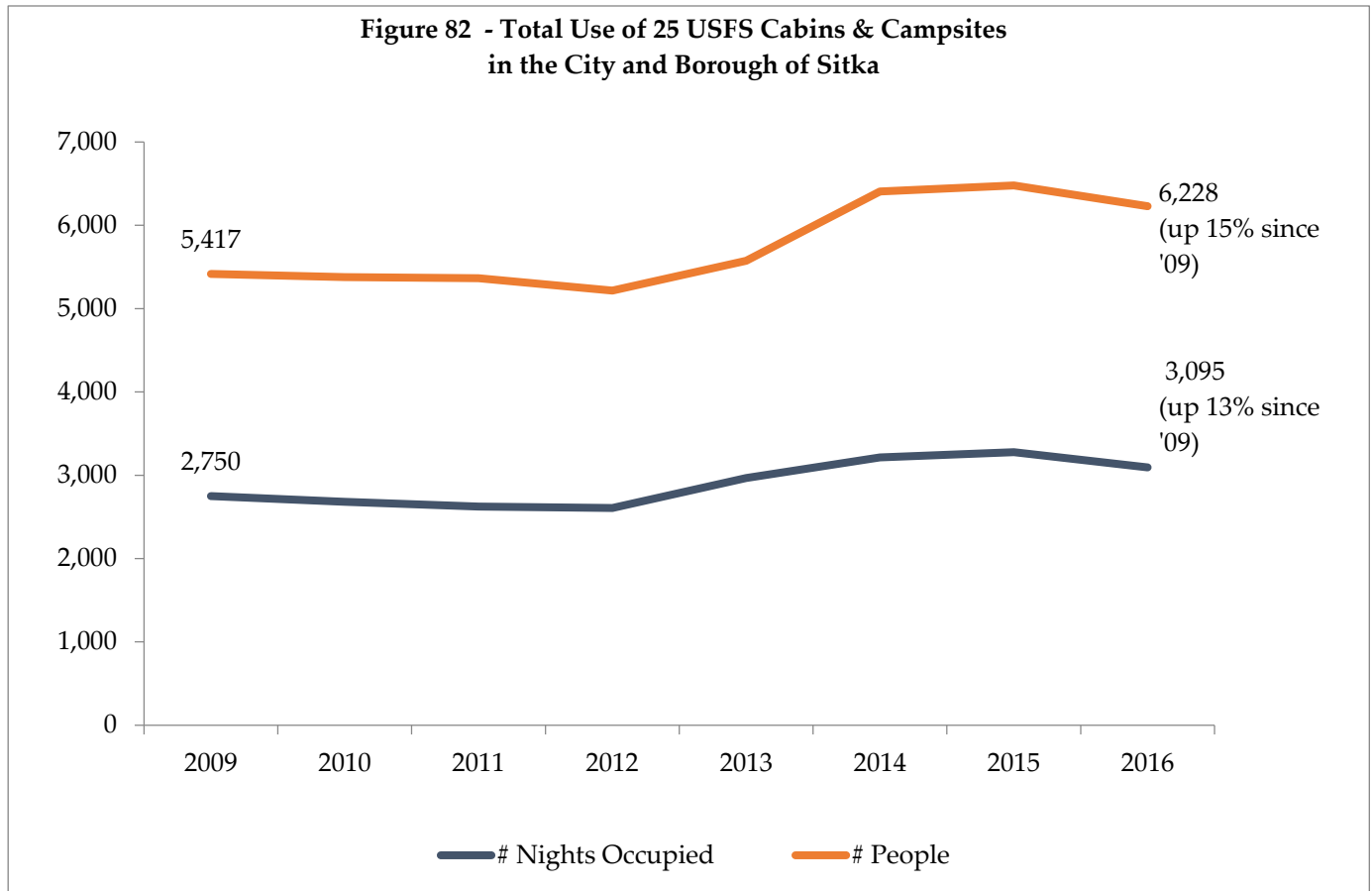


Figure 82 – Total Use of 25 USFS Cabins and Campsites



Sitka Community Schools rents classrooms, a six-stove kitchen/classroom, a gym, and a multipurpose room, and offers recreation classes. Many other businesses and non-profits also offer local recreation programs and use City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) facilities. Groups that use CBS facilities and the number of users and use hours of the facility, and where available, is listed on Figure 83.

Figure 83 – Community Use of City and Borough of Sitka Recreation Facilities (not including school use)

<i>Group</i>	<i>City and Borough of Sitka Facilities Used</i>	<i>No. of Participants in 2016</i>	<i>Approx. Duration in 2016 (Hours)</i>	<i>People use hours</i>
<i>Adult 35+ Open Basketball</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>2,400</i>
<i>Adult Basketball League</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>3,300</i>
<i>Adult League Volleyball</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>4,500</i>
<i>Adult Woodworking</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>384</i>
<i>New Archangel Dancers</i>	<i>Harrigan Centennial Hall</i>	<i>7 per performance</i>	<i>75 min/show 3-4 x/week May-Sept</i>	<i>612</i>
<i>Family Roller Skating</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>4,500</i>
<i>Gym Rentals (through Community Schools)</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>19,200</i>
<i>Introduction to Sailing</i>	<i>Blatchley and Eliason Harbor</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Unreported</i>	<i>Unreported</i>
<i>Alpine Adventure Run</i>	<i>Cross Trail</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>0.25</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Sitkans Against Family Violence</i>	<i>Centennial, Crescent Harbor</i>	<i>440</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>7480</i>
<i>SAIL Inc.</i>	<i>KGH, Moller Field, Crescent Harbor, Swan Lake, Fire Hall, Whale Park, Cross Trail, Thimbleberry-Heart Lake Trail, Sitka Seawalk, Centennial Hall, Library, Pioneer Park</i>	<i>Average of 12 per event, skewed by large picnic and health fair</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>880</i>
<i>Tsunami Wrestling</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>90 (kids and hands-on parents)</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>4140</i>
<i>Youth Basketball</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>6,150</i>
<i>Youth Fall Indoor Soccer</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>550</i>
<i>Youth Open Gym</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>2,800</i>
<i>Youth Outdoor Soccer Camp</i>	<i>Kimsham or Moller</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Youth Outdoor Soccer League</i>	<i>Kimsham or Moller</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>3,000</i>
<i>Youth Roller Derby Class</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>1,050</i>
<i>Youth Spring Indoor Soccer</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>460</i>
<i>Spectators at League Events</i>	<i>Blatchley</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>28,000</i>
<i>Sources: M. Hunter, Sitka Community Schools, other coaches or directors for each activity</i>				

9.2 Parks, Trails, and Recreation Challenges and Opportunities

Better Link the High Value of Recreation to Funding Support

At the beginning of this chapter, the high value that residents place on Sitka's diverse recreational facilities and opportunities is reviewed, as is the economic importance of recreation to local tourism and the economy. Despite this, recreation is often underfunded. The state recently closed its parks and recreation office in Sitka, the City and Borough of Sitka has reduced parks and recreation staff and funding over the last few years, and federal funding is challenged. Yet, recreation is intrinsically linked to why people want to live in and visit Sitka.

National benchmarks suggest that other communities generate significantly more revenue from use of their recreation assets than does Sitka. An opportunity may be found in increased focus on public-private partnerships, particularly those that profit from commercial recreation (tourism). Another suggestion is for the city to hire a grant writer to enable it to better capture funding. In the current era of declining government funding, the local importance of Sitka's diverse recreation opportunities must be considered.

Maintaining Existing Facilities is Top Priority

Surveys completed during the development of the 2012 Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan made clear that the community wants to see new and improved facilities; however, they also understand that resources are finite and any new projects need to be evaluated for the true need and the availability of resources to maintain facilities. Borough parks and recreation staff comments that their top priority is maintaining existing facilities and preparing a comprehensive list to identify future annual needs. Sitka Trail Works, Inc.'s top priorities are trail maintenance, extending the Sitka Cross Trail from Indian River to connect to the Mt. Verstovia Trail, then to the Thimbleberry Lake trail, and to build the Sitka Cross Trail link from Harbor Mountain Trail to Starrigavan.

Think creatively to meet parks and recreation maintenance needs. For example, could the Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee, Sitka Local Foods gardeners at St. Peter's by-the-Sea church, nearby businesses, NPS staff at the Russian Bishop's House, Pacific High School students, and city parks and recreation staff team together to help water and maintain Sitka's downtown public trees and landscaping? Could the Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee, Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka Sound Science Center, and Sitka parks and recreation and harbors staff collaborate on landscaping and basic tree maintenance? Could businesses that lead hikes on USFS and city trails team together to accomplish trail maintenance (in some places there are programs where visitors pay extra to do trail work in order to learn and to make a sweat equity contribution)?

Upgrade Playgrounds to Newer Safety Standards

Maintain what we've got: the playgrounds at Moller Field are now closed because they do not meet current safety standards. Playgrounds are important for all ages of users; they provide free recreation for those without the means to access more expensive off-the-road system trips.

Crescent Playground would close, too, but for the community effort now underway to raise funds to improve it. Demonstrating the continuing importance of partnerships, non-profit Southeast Alaska

Independent Living (SAIL) is coordinating a community-wide effort to raise \$750,000 for safe and accessible upgrades to Sitka's centrally located waterfront playground. Local citizens and businesses have committed to raise \$75,000, and CBS has contributed \$40,000.

Sitka's Urban Forestry Program

Maintain what we've got: part of what makes Sitka's downtown so welcoming to residents and visitors alike is the beauty of its landscaping, flowers, and trees. The trees, landscapes, and open spaces now enjoyed were preserved or planted by individuals, CBS staff, garden clubs, the city's Tree and Landscape Committee members, and youth groups who worked to enhance the livability of Sitka. Sitka is one of eight cities in Alaska that have the Tree City USA designation. Sitka has maintained this designation since 2003 by demonstrating commitment to managing urban tree resources. According to the CBS Urban Forest Management Plan (2013), trees boost property values, sustain fisheries, support retail activity, enhance tourism and visitor experiences, improve municipal health, protect water quality, reduce storm water runoff, counter climate change, and ensure roadway safety.

Tree maintenance has always been the responsibility of the municipal Parks and Recreation Division, and is funded by the CBS general fund; however, there is no dedicated budget for urban forestry and limited arboriculture equipment. The scope and complexity of arboriculture responsibilities currently exceeds the capacity of resources and staff.

Community Forestry Consultants who prepared the 2013 CBS Urban Forest Management Plan noted that Sitka "is critically understaffed with only 3 positions to manage 54 developed sites and 109 acres of developed parks, grounds, and ball fields. Often, urban forestry activities must take lower priority in context of all the maintenance demands. This reality illustrates a major limitation to CBS's overall ability to protect and expand urban tree resources." There are currently 2.5 full-time municipal parks and recreation staff.

Criteria to Evaluate New Projects and Investments

As Sitka diversifies and improves outdoor recreation opportunities in town and the surrounding region over time, follow the Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan's (SSORAP) direction to focus on projects (facilities, programs, information) that are economically sustainable. The SSORAP gives direction for choosing which new recreation projects to pursue, an important consideration in this era of decline in traditional government funding. It identifies 7 criteria that use a "Triple Bottom Line" approach and are based on community input during the project (Figure 84).

Figure 84 - 7 Criteria to Evaluate New Recreation Investments

Guide to Sustainability Criteria	Criteria are aspects of the 3 branches of sustainability: Economic, Environmental, Social.
Benefits Residents	Improves quality of life; opportunities for healthy enjoyable activity; chances for interaction with friends and neighbors; contributes to overall positive community character.
Attracts Visitors	Strengthens reasons for visitors - overnight and day visitors - to spend time and money in Sitka; improves Sitka “brand”; this in turn creates local jobs, business opportunities, & revenue for community services.
Diversification	Expands access in underserved portions of town; expands access to diversity of skill levels, and to range of income levels.
Community Support	Based on public input to date, recommendations of previous plans.
“Bang for the Buck”	Significant positive impact, modest price.
Financially Sustainable	Does the project have a plan for funding? What are the cost/benefits? Are project funds leveraged through partners? Is there a plan for maintenance? Etc.
Minimizes Adverse Impact	Impacts are small, actually positive and/or can be readily mitigated; on community character, natural environment, resident recreational activities.
<i>Source: Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Action Plan, Agnew::Beck</i>	

Providing Recreation Opportunities for Sitka’s Growing Senior Population

The number of Sitkans age 65 and older is projected to grow very rapidly over the next 25 years. Providing opportunities to maintain a healthy senior lifestyle enables Sitkans to stay in their community and with their families. The fitness level of older residents varies; some are able to enjoy trails, while others prefer pool-based exercise like aqua-stretch and aqua-aerobics. As gyms, playgrounds, and fields in Sitka are updated, consider installing courts for pickleball, cornhole, petanque and bocce, and similar games that are easy to learn, growing in popularity, and are physically feasible for people of all ages.

Re-Open Sitka State Parks Office

Budget shortfalls caused Alaska DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to close its Sitka office and lay off employees in 2015. Yet, Sitka is home to three state parks and three marine state parks. One is not maintained and the others are on annual contracts to other entities for maintenance. State Parks should reopen an office to provide management of these facilities.

Access to Future Uplands and Alpine for Recreation

As uplands are developed in Sitka it is important for the city and borough to retain, or, as needed, acquire rights-of-way or easements to provide future access to the undeveloped alpine and Sitka Cross Trail hiking route.

Remote Area Recreation and Land/Waters

Many of the outdoor recreational opportunities in the borough, especially off the road system, are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service and are managed under the guidelines of the Tongass Land Management Plan. Therefore, cooperation among governmental agencies is critical to protect areas for dispersed and wilderness recreation, and to develop facilities such as cabins, mooring buoys, and marine parks. In addition, access to off-the-road sites is most often via boat and kayak launches or floatplanes, most of which are City and Borough of Sitka facilities that require ongoing maintenance.

Under its Coastal Management Program, Sitka designated dozens of Public Use Special Management Areas off the road system on Kruzof, Baranof, and Chichagof Islands. Within these areas, uplands, tideland, and marine uses are to be compatible with the recreational nature of the areas. "Where practicable, all land- and water-based uses that conflict with the recreational use of the Special Management Areas are not allowed within the boundaries of all Special Management Areas ... except for the maintenance or enhancement of the recreation and/or subsistence resources. This policy does not preclude the development of fish enhancement projects, including remote fish release sites, when a need is shown and proper evaluation, including a formal public process, has been completed."

Halibut Point Road 9-mile Extension to Katlian Bay

Collaborative work among the USFS, Shee Atika Corporation (SAC), the CBS, and other interested parties is needed to address water access points, trail and recreation improvements, parking, solid waste management, mitigation spending, and projects linked to road construction/wetlands impacts.

Construction of a 9-mile one-lane gravel road with from the north end of the road system at Starrigavan to Katlian Bay and River will be occur in late 2017-2019. The road will provide access to both Shee Atika and USFS land. The purpose is to increase recreational and subsistence access and use (fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking, ATV), as well as to provide a possible future material source.

9.3 Parks, Trails, and Recreation Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
PTR 1	Objective 1 – Maintenance is Top Priority.			
PTR 1.1	Maintaining existing parks, trails, fields, and recreation facilities is a higher priority than building new.	CBS	OG	L-H
PTR 2	Objective 2 – Access for all Abilities to Recreation Facilities and Programming			
PTR 2.1	Design and operate recreation programs and facilities to accommodate the interests of all ages, abilities, and income levels.	CBS, AK, US	OG	L-H
PTR 2.1.a	Existing facilities should be modified where feasible to provide access to persons of various ages, abilities, and income levels.	AC	OG	U
PTR 2.1.b	Install physical fitness stations at parks.	CBS	LT	H, GF
PTR 2.1.c	Maintain open space.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 2.1.e	Maintain existing and add more dog parks.	CBS	LT	H
PTR 2.1.f	Maintain small pocket parks/green space in neighborhoods and encourage more.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 2.1.g	Allow community gardens in undeveloped municipal park space.	CBS	MT	L
PTR 2.1.h	Ensure sufficient parking at locations regularly used for on and offloading and riding snow machines, ATVs, and motorcycles.	AC	OG	L
PTR 3	Objective 3 - Coordinate and communicate regularly with recreation providers about funding, programming, and maintenance. Parties to include the City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka and Mt. Edgecumbe School Districts, state and federal agencies, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and local non-profits, clubs, and businesses.			
PTR 3.1	Collaborate and seek service efficiencies to keep parks, trails, and recreation sites safe, useable, and well-landscaped. Think creatively.	ALL	OG	L
PTR 3.2	Advocate for State Parks to resume management of the state parks and marine state parks located in the City and Borough of Sitka.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 3.3	Advocate for protection of remote areas for dispersed and wilderness recreation, subsistence access, and to maintain remote cabins, hiking trails, and mooring buoys.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 3.4	Promote new recreation opportunities at Katlian Bay.	AK, US	ST	L

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
PTR 3.5	Advocate and coordinate among Mt. Edgecumbe High School, State of Alaska, the Sitka School District, Barracuda Swim Club, the Sitka Trooper Academy, healthcare providers, and the US Coast Guard to identify sustainable operations funding for the Mt. Edgecumbe Aquatic Center.	ALL	ST	L
PTR 3.6	Collaborate with federal, state, and private entities to ensure provision of appropriate types and quantities of camping facilities.	CBS, AK, US	OG	L
PTR 3.7	Maintain public access to Sitka's remote recreation areas via City and Borough of Sitka's boat launches and fishing piers, harbors, and the seaplane base.	CBS	OG	L-H
PTR 3.8	Pursue funding and grant opportunities for development of a new seaplane base. <i>Cross reference with T 2.1.c</i>	CBS	OG	L, GF
PTR 3.9	Support interagency cooperation to maintain, fund, and improve saltwater and freshwater access facilities (from boat launches and to old log haul outs) and recreation sites including shoreside picnic areas, shelters, and parks (especially near harbors and other public facilities).	ALL	OG	L-H
PTR 3.10	Maintain municipal ownership of waterfront land and tidelands. <i>Cross reference with LU 1.1.e</i>	CBS	OG	L
PTR 4	Objective 4 – High Value on Recreation. Acknowledge the high value Sitkans place on recreation when budgeting for operations and maintenance of city-owned recreation facilities and assets, public trees, and landscaping.			
PTR 4.1	Identify which budget items are part of recreation spending and annually report on the percentage of the city's general fund and capital project spending that is for recreation.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 5	Objective 5 - Recognize the high use of Sitka Trails both for recreation and as secondary routes.			
PTR 5.1	Continue to implement the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan and maintain an interagency Memorandum of Understanding.	ALL	OG	L, GF
PTR 5.2	Support Sitka Trail Works trail maintenance and trail expansions.	CBS	OG	L
PTR 5.3	As subdivision and platting in Sitka occurs, retain rights-of-way, trail access, and easements to provide future access to trails, recreation, and open space.	CBS	ST, OG	L
PTR 6	Objective 6 - Expand and facilitate community use of park, trail, and recreation.			
PTR 6.1	Develop Use permitting procedures for commercial use of recreational facilities, including but not limited to temporary food vendors and recreation equipment rentals.	CBS	ST	L
PTR 6.2	Increase revenue generated by commercial and non-profit use of parks, trails and recreation facilities. Collect fees or in-lieu-of fees, identifying maintenance requirements for commercial use of parks, trails, and recreational facilities.	CBS	ST	L
PTR 6.3	Support efforts by the Sitka School District to jointly develop school-park sites to meet both neighborhood and school recreation needs.	CBS	MT-LT	M-H

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

10 Land Use and Future Growth

Goal

Guide the orderly and efficient use of private and public land in a manner that:

- **Fosters economic opportunity,**
- **Maintains Sitka’s small-town atmosphere and rural lifestyle,**
- **Recognizes the natural environment, and**
- **Enhances the quality of life for present and future generations.**

10.1 Current Land Use and Management

The unified Home Rule City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) encompasses 4,812 square miles (sq mi) of land (2,874 sq mi) and water (1,938 sq mi). There are more than 1,300 miles of coastline within the CBS. Sitka is the largest city, land-wise, in the United States.

Like the rest of Southeast Alaska, most of the land within the CBS is part of the Tongass National Forest, and managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS). Broad land ownership within the CBS is depicted on Figure 9.

In December 2016 the Tongass Land Management Plan was revised including its Land Use Designations (LUD), the framework for how the U.S. Forest Service manages its land. In broad terms, the management intent for much of the Tongass forest land in the CBS is to focus on recreation and tourism-oriented uses. There are several congressionally designated wilderness areas also within the borough. The local demand for timber is primarily from two small sawmill owners, and it is mostly met through timber sales in the Peril Strait and False Island areas within the borough.

One important part of Sitka’s history is that between 1959 and 1993, the Alaska Pulp Company operated a 450-employee (at its heyday) pulp mill in Sitka at the site of the current Gary Paxton Industrial Park, under a USFS contract.

In addition to the USFS, other large public landowners and managers within the City and Borough of Sitka are: the State of Alaska (general state land managed by DNR or ADFG), the University of Alaska (438 acres), the Alaska Mental Health Trust (592 acres), the National Park Service (156 acres), and the U.S. Geodetic Survey (117 acres).

There are 13 non-public landowners within the CBS that each own 20 acres or more (Figure 85).

Figure 85 - Largest Non-Public Land Owners within City and Borough of Sitka

Landowner	Number of Parcels	Total Acres
Coastal Development Company (mining claims)	10	366
Baranof Island Housing Authority	77	191
Andrew Jack (Kadashan Bay)	1	160
Benjamin Rindge (mining claim)	1	85
Dixie McClintock	1	80
Haida Corporation	14	61
Charlie L. Bower III (mining claim)	1	40
Bert K. Stedman (mining claim)	3	38
Avrum Gross (Chatham Cannery)	4	30
Alaska Arts Southeast Inc.	4	24
William Goertzen (Chatham Cannery)	2	22
Paul D. White	1	21
SEARHC	9	21
<i>Source: 2016 City and Borough of Sitka Property Tax Roll</i>		

10.2 Land Use and Future Growth Challenges and Opportunities

During the summer of 2016, Sitka Community Planning and Development staff mapped current land use in Sitka. The differences between how land is zoned and how it is actually being used can help point out where land management and zoning changes are needed. The following land use challenges and opportunities and future growth recommendations were developed from observations made during the land use mapping project, planning commissioner and public comments, review of conditional use permitting issues, research, interviews, and professional knowledge.

Flat or Declining Population

Current ADOLWD population projections for Sitka expect a slow but steady population decline based on historic patterns of births, deaths, and in and out migrants. Reduced numbers of young adults and children are projected. Given uncertainties about future population, this plan takes a conservative approach to residential land development. The most pressing need is for increased affordable housing for sale and for rent.

Supporting Economic Opportunity and Job Growth a Driver for Future Growth Land Use Recommendations

To counter state population projections, a strong local economy is needed, coupled with more families staying in and moving to Sitka. Available and appropriately zoned land for commercial and industrial use is important, as is a stable and business-friendly regulatory environment.

Throughout this plan there is an emphasis on maximizing development along existing roads and utilities before building new to keep capital costs in check and prevent rising operation and

maintenance spending. However, if road and utility extension is required to support job-generating business development, the importance of new jobs must be given extra weight in any cost benefit analysis on infrastructure extension.

R-1 Zoning Has Not Developed as Expected

Most areas zoned R-1 have a mix of housing types and densities. There really are very few true low-density, single-family residential living areas, despite the existence of lots of R-1 zoning districts.

Lot Sizes are Smaller than what the Zoning Code Requires

Many residential areas have lots smaller than what the code calls for as the minimum.

Residential/Light Commercial Uses Mixed in with Heavy Commercial/Industrial

Because commercial and industrial zoning in Sitka allows less intensive uses, residential development is interspersed in commercial and industrial areas. This creates problems when commercial or industrial uses want to expand but residential neighbors object to the potential noise, lights, and similar concerns. These concerns of residential neighbors negatively impact the work environment for the commercial and industrial businesses that become wary of disturbing neighbors and receiving complaints. Future development and zoning patterns should strive to keep residential and light commercial uses and zoning segregated from heavy commercial and industrial uses. When current land use prevents this, heavy buffering between these uses should be required. These issues were observed in many places but especially in the Price-Lance-Chirikof area, in the vicinity of Halibut Point Marine, and around Granite Creek Road.

Manufactured Park and Home Upgrades Needed

There are many older manufactured home parks with many run-down, pre-1976 mobile homes/trailers. This is a life safety issue, it is unfair to mobile home owners, and the prime waterfront location of some of these parks could create demand to redevelop, exacerbating the lack of affordable housing in town and harming current residents.

Barge Landing, Office, and Customers Very Spread Out

The community's freight barge landing is on one side of the road system and the office and yard and many delivery locations are on another end of the road system. This creates a steady stream of heavy truck traffic on Halibut Point Road and beyond, increases fuel costs, adds to road wear and tear, and increases greenhouse gas emissions.

Rock Source Needed

Another municipal rock source needs to be developed.

State Parks Backing Away from Management Responsibilities

Alaska DNR is stepping away from their state park maintenance responsibilities. A long-term solution must be found.

Use Waterfront Land for Water-Dependent Uses

There is a growing demand for waterfront commercial/industrial land both on the north and the east side of Sitka. Waterfront land should be reserved for water-dependent uses. Water-related and dependent commercial and industrial land and businesses are closely linked to jobs and economic opportunity in Sitka. Over time, relocate non-waterfront dependent uses.

Many Vacant and Underutilized Properties in Town

There are many vacant, underutilized, or rundown lots and buildings in downtown, greater downtown, and the Marine Street-Katlian Avenue areas that could be well used for 2-4 plexes, apartments, and condo development. This would create significantly more housing in these areas.

The Land Use-Affordable Housing Connection

There is a pressing need for more affordable housing for sale and for rent. This will be best met through development and redevelopment at higher densities (efficiencies and 1- to 2-bedroom apartments, condos, multiplexes) and smaller homes. Utilizing techniques for all of these dwelling types to allow them to remain affordable will be important (deed restrictions, targeted financing programs, community land trusts, etc.).

10.3 Land Use and Future Growth Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goals set overall direction.

Objectives are the policies the City and Borough of Sitka intends to achieve over time.

Actions chart a path to achieve the goals and objectives.

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
LU 1	Objective - Strategically Manage Municipal Land			
LU 1.1	Prepare a Municipal Land Management Plan to: Include an inventory of municipal land and make recommendations to retain, lease or dispose.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.a	Provide for an adequate supply of land to meet community needs.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.b	Consider social, cultural, environmental, and economic factors to support decisions to retain or dispose of land.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.c	Prioritize acquisition of state lands adjacent to road system, such as Millersville on Japonski Island, North Indian River area, Starrigavan/Katlai Bay, and Seward Avenue.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.d	Outline a process for the annual selection of parcels available for sale and lease. Disposal methods may include competitive bid, lottery, and donation for causes to benefit the public at large.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.e	Protect and retain tidelands and prime waterfront locations in municipal ownership. <i>Cross reference PTR 3.10</i>	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 1.1.f	Require dedication of land for conservation, public and community utilities or facilities, and recreational and open space opportunities in new development areas.	CBS	MT-LT	M
LU 2	Objective - Maintain downtown's Central Business District (CBD) compact and walkable charm.			
LU 2.1	Promote multi-story development in the CBD with retail and commercial uses on lower floors and residential or office uses upstairs.	CBS	OG	L
LU 2.2	Encourage light commercial uses, dining, accommodations, public open space, nightlife, and other community events in the CBD through place-making, private and public partnerships, and financial incentives (e.g. community block grants, rehabilitation grants, tax credits or abatements for certain periods of time, and reduction in permit fees).	CBS	MT	L
LU 2.3	Use regulatory change, private and public partnerships, and financial incentives to promote housing development in the CBD and greater downtown (see future growth focus areas).	CBS, AC, PR	MT, OG	L
LU 3	Objective - Development in Greater Downtown and Beyond (refer to Future Growth Focus Areas)			

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
LU 3.1	Support light commercial-professional services development along Halibut Point Road and Lake Street, from Marine Street to DeGroff Street.	CBS	MT	L
LU 3.2	In the former Sheldon Jackson College campus area, encourage uses that support Sitka's education, arts, and sciences economy, while preserving and enhancing the historic character. <i>Cross reference HCA 4.1.c</i>	CBS	ST, OG	L
LU 3.3	Promote 2-3 story townhomes and multi-family homes along Marine Street to encourage higher density.	CBS	ST	L
LU 3.4	Encourage multi-family higher density mixed use along Seward Street.	CBS	ST	L
LU 3.5	Develop a Master Plan for the Katlian/ Kaagwaantaan area in collaboration with Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Alaska Native Brotherhood & Sisterhood, property owners, local business owners, and other interested parties. Elements may include: A. Recognition and celebration of area cultural and historic resources including interpretive signage, and rehabilitation of some historic structures B. Promoting mixed-use development along Katlian Avenue (commercial on 1st floor, residential in 2-3rd stories) C. High value to connectivity, walkability, and enhancing pedestrian use while allowing slow moving commercial and industrial vehicles D. Phase III of the seawalk (from Totem Square to Siginaka Way) E. Discrete places to reconnect Sitka Indian Village with the waterfront. F. Identification of code changes, discrete development projects, and public infrastructure improvements needed to implement Master Plan <i>Cross reference HCA 1.1.i</i>	ALL	LT	M
LU 4	Objective - Promote Social Interaction			
LU 4.1	Promote social connectedness through activities in public spaces, development of a series of small destinations connected by a network of quality sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use paths, meeting places and social nooks along paths and playgrounds.	ALL	MT	L
LU 4.2	Identify existing multi-modal transportation options, and plan for connection of gaps between key segments and centrally located districts/areas.	ALL	MT	L
LU 4.3	Land use planning and actions will consider and help implement the aspects of other approved plans that promote social interaction and community connectivity.	CBS	OG	L
LU 5	Objective– Maintain Environmental Quality			
LU 5.1	Maintain clean air, water, and soil to support healthy flora and fauna populations.	ALL	OG	L-H
LU 5.2	Create design and development standards that incentivize green building materials and techniques, and other low impact design features such as LEED. <i>Cross reference H 2.2</i>	CBS	MT	M

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
LU 5.3	Preserve natural resources through conservation easements, conditions placed on developments, and designation of open space districts.	CBS	ST	L
LU 6	Objective 6 – Prevent Incompatible Land Use			
LU 6.1	Transition to more harmonious land use in the Price/Smith Street area and Granite Creek-No Name Mountain area. Use zoning map amendments, buffers, screening, setbacks, density, sidewalk development, and transitional zoning, while attempting to remove spot zoning.	CBS	LT	L
LU 6.2	Prevent future incompatible land use between residential, light commercial, heavy commercial, and industrial uses.	CBS	MT	L
LU 7	Objective - Strategically Plan for Future Growth			
LU 7.1	Establish desired future growth patterns and zoning for all developable land in the borough.	CBS, AK, US	MT-LT	M
LU 7.2	Establish a purposeful holding zone with limited uses allowed.	CBS	ST	L
LU 7.3	Identify areas for infill and redevelopment.	CBS	ST, OG	L
LU 7.4	Maintain an inventory of vacant land.	CBS	ST, OG	L
LU 7.5	Seek funding, partnerships, financial incentives (grants, loans, rehabilitation tax credits, tax breaks, etc.) to rehabilitate and revitalize neighborhoods and accomplish Future Growth Focus Area and master plan concepts.	ALL	MT-LT	M, GF
LU 7.6	Periodically review purposes of variance requests to determine if changes to zoning or subdivision codes are warranted to eliminate need for variances.	CBS	ST	L
LU 7.7	Plan for technology-heavy industry and businesses.	AC	LT	U
LU 7.8	Review zoning code to explore changes to allow urban horticultural and agricultural uses more broadly in existing zoning districts.	CBS	ST	L
LU 8	Objective 8 – Efficiency. Maximize use of existing infrastructure before building new.			
LU 8.1	Maximize development along existing roads, utility lines, and transit routes. <i>Cross Reference T 4.1</i>	CBS	OG	L
LU 8.2	Amend development standards to promote affordable development including increasing height, decreasing minimum lot size and width, establishing lot and structure maximums in specific zones, and reducing parking requirements as appropriate. <i>Cross reference H 1.1.a – H 1.1.e</i>	CBS	MT	U
LU 8.3	Cluster and nodal zoning should be developed to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and reduce vehicle miles traveled.	CBS	MT	L
LU 8.4	Require a fair share of costs be borne by developers to account for increased public costs linked to private development. An exaction or impact fee could be for utility infrastructure; a road, sidewalk, or multi-use path improvement; public and community facilities; or open space. Amend development standards and fees as needed to implement. <i>Cross reference T 4.3</i>	CBS	MT	L
LU 9	Objective 9 - Enhance Resilience.			

Number	Action	Responsible Agency	Time Frame	Capital Funds Needed
	Enhancing resilience is multi-faceted. Actions to enhance resilience are found in chapters on economic development, housing, transportation, borough facilities and services, and historic, cultural and arts resources. Actions here focus on the natural environment.			
LU 9.1	Use low impact design, construction, operations and maintenance techniques to reduce air, noise, and water pollution and lower the cost of operations. <i>Cross reference BFS 6 and T 8.1</i>	AC	MT	L
LU 9.2	Maintain an up-to-date Hazard Mitigation Plan that identifies response plans for a variety of disasters and emergencies such as earthquake, tsunami, flood, landslide, and other emergencies.	CBS, AK, US	ST, OG	L, GF
LU 9.3	Anticipate and provide for changes in sea level along waterfront as well as increased frequency/severity of storms.	ALL	MT, OG	L-H
LU 9.4	Investigate pros and cons of geotechnical assessment and mapping of landslide and mass wasting hazards. If pursued, determine whether this information should be included in GIS and other land management tools.	CBS	ST	L
LU 9.5	Conduct a land use study to explore the implications of hazard mapping on current and future development.	CBS	MT	U
LU 9.6	Consider how to best address development in moderate to high risk areas via means such as increased geotechnical analysis, mitigation, and other risk allocation or mitigation measures.	CBS	OG	U
LU 9.7	Identify and disseminate public information resources to assist the public in knowing to the best degree possible the existing risks associated with potential hazards or events that may increase the probability of an occurrence.	ALL	OG	L
LU 10	Objective - Special Focus on Waterfront			
LU 10.1	Protect the working waterfront for marine-dependent industrial and commercial uses and harbors.	ALL	OG	L
LU 10.2	Provide for public waterfront access, enjoyment, and the ocean views that define Sitka's sense of place.	AC	OG	U
LU 10.3	Limit non-water dependent uses along key waterfront locations.	AC	OG	L

Legend		
Responsible Agency: CBS – City and Borough of Sitka AK – State of Alaska US – Federal Government AC – Agency Collaboration PR – Private	Time Frame: ST – Short Term MT – Mid Term LT – Long Term OG – Ongoing	Capital Funds Needed: U – Unknown L – Low – \$0 - \$100,000 M – Mid - \$100,000 - \$1,000,000 H – High - \$1,000,000+ GF – Grant Funded

10.4 Future Growth Maps and Focus Areas

10.4.1 How to Use Future Growth Maps and Focus Area Narratives

The Future Growth Maps and Focus Areas narrative will help guide growth in Sitka over the next 10-20 years.

Preparing the Future Growth Maps and the 14 Focus Area recommendations required deep consideration and synthesis of:

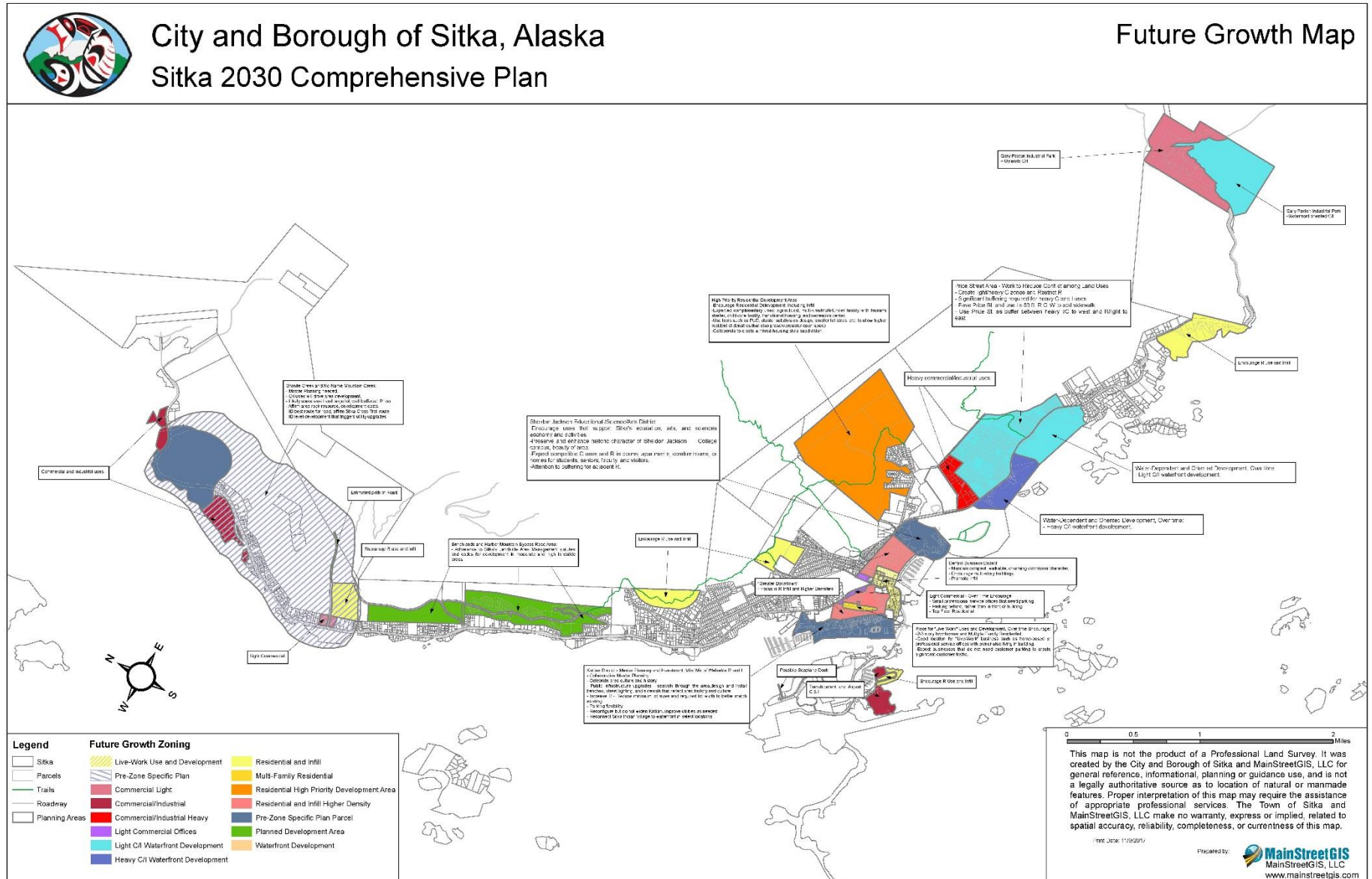
- Issues and trends related to population, housing, economic development, historic and cultural values and assets, borough utilities and infrastructure, the highest and best use of land, and the physical and environmental character of the land base;
- Residents' views and public comments, planning commissioners' ideas and recommendations, landowners' and business owners' perspectives and needs, and borough staff's expertise and suggestions;
- Professional planners' observations during land use mapping and their knowledge of planning principles and best practices.

The Planning Commission and the Assembly will use the Future Growth Maps and accompanying narrative along with other parts of this Comprehensive Plan when they make decisions. Future development projects and permitting, zoning and other code changes, rezoning actions, Capital Improvements, and land sales should be compatible with and follow the direction set out on the Future Growth Maps and in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Growth Maps are areas of emphasis and direction, not regulation or zoning. The Future Growth Maps do not prohibit or allow certain types of development - that is the role of zoning, subdivision, building, and other municipal codes. Proposed development projects, permits, land sales and leases, and capital improvements will be reviewed against the Future Growth Maps and Focus Area recommendations to determine if they are compatible with Sitka's desired future growth direction.

Zoning regulations, zoning districts, subdivision and other codes may be changed in the future to help accomplish the direction shown on the Future Growth Maps, in Focus Area recommendations, and in the Goals, Objectives, and Actions in this Plan. Through this comprehensive planning process the Sitka community's broad public interest is defined and expressed and the rationale established to direct certain types of land uses to (and away from) particular areas. The City and Borough of Sitka also expects that the direction for growth and land use set out here will be implemented by state and federal land owners and regulators as they make use of their land and review leases, their plans, and permits.

10.4.2 Future Growth Area



10.4.3 14 Future Growth Focus Areas

Starrigavan and North

- *Recreational Uses, Access Improvements to Katlian Bay.*

At the north end of Halibut Point Road are the U.S. Forest Service Starrigavan Recreation Area and State of Alaska Old Sitka State Historical Park. Together, this recreational area has numerous trails, a rental cabin, campsites, interpretative areas, parking, a boat launch, picnic areas, and more. A possible aquifer-based secondary drinking water source for Sitka is also in this area.

Due to state budgets cuts, the Alaska DNR Parks and Recreation Office in Sitka closed in July 2015. The Old Sitka State Historical Park is currently maintained by the National Park Service on a year-to-year contract, while a private party maintains the boat launch.

In 2018, the state will begin construction of a 9-mile, one-lane gravel road from the north end of Halibut Point Road at Starrigavan. The purpose of the road extension is to increase recreational access and uses. This \$17 million project will likely take two years to complete and will provide access to Shee Atika Corporation and U.S. Forest Service lands, Katlian Bay, and Katlian River.

Most of the former logging roads and bridges in this area have washed out. Future planning and work among the USFS, Shee Atika Corporation, the City and Borough of Sitka, and other interested parties will be needed to address parking, solid waste management, mitigation spending, and projects linked to road construction, wetlands impacts, and trail and recreation improvements.

Granite Creek and No Name Mountain Area

- *A mix of land uses and development is expected, Master Plan is recommended.*

The municipality owns approximately 800 acres of land between No Name Creek and Granite Creek. The property is surrounded by USFS land on the uphill boundaries and private ownership on the downhill boundaries.

Harbor Mountain Road

Between Granite Creek Road and Harbor Mountain Bypass Road is the blocked off and undeveloped Harbor Mountain Road that intersects with Harbor Mountain Bypass Road. This rough road provides access to about 10 acres of undeveloped CBS land that could be subdivided for residential development. This area could also support agricultural land uses that could serve as a buffer between higher and lower intensity development.

Granite Creek-No Name Mountain Area

Current land use in this area is quite diverse, including quarrying, recreation (golf), light and heavy commercial, storage areas, and residences. Priority development in the area is to support economic opportunity and job growth.

The Granite Creek-No Name Mountain area could be redeveloped for a mixture of uses. A Master Plan is recommended that takes existing terrain into account. Development would happen first where utilities and roads already exist and land was quarried. Later, development that depended on road and utility extensions would occur.

Several future development scenarios and uses in the area are logical, some of which require road and utility extension. The area could support a combination of large lot residential living, a smaller home, clustered development concept, and provide opportunities for homesteading, sweat equity, and lottery programs. Neighborhood commercial, and more intensive commercial development would be here as well, with buffering to protect residential use.

An investigation of municipal rock and gravel resources is needed. This would include identifying a realistic end date for the Granite Creek quarry source. In addition, the amount of rock resource should be quantified on the three parcels (no road access) to the north, along with the development costs and any other alternatives for a city rock source identified (with development costs).

Waterfront between Ferry Terminal and Halibut Point State Recreation area

- *Water-oriented commercial and industrial uses, and state recreational area.*

Between the ferry terminal and the Halibut Point Marine cruise ship dock and boat yard is an approximately 17-acre wooded CBS-owned waterfront parcel. This parcel should be leased or sold to further support the growing water-dependent and oriented commercial and industrial development in this area.

The land could be subdivided into a mixture of lot sizes to support the development of an industrial park and attract a diversity of, water-dependent and related businesses. Another possibility is a land exchange to consolidate area barge and trucking services here, potentially freeing up the existing barge line office and uplands complex off of Sawmill Creek Road for expansion of adjacent marine repair services and boat building businesses.

The 15-acre Halibut Point State Recreation site is along the waterfront across from Granite Creek Road. It has a small office building, waterfront residential apartment, parking lot, and four picnic shelters. The Alaska DNR is interested in finding an entity (veterans, Boys Scouts/Girl Scouts, borough, school, or similar) to take over management of this area, which would include retaining any income generated.

Benchlands and Harbor Mountain Bypass Road Area

- *Adherence to Sitka's Critical Areas statutes and codes for development in moderate and high landslide areas.*

In 2007, the 193-acre Benchlands tract was purchased from the University of Alaska for \$3.5 million for housing development. It included more than 2 miles of 1980s-era pioneering roads developed by the city. Development was proceeding until the August 2015 landslide event significantly impacted the area. As a result, FEMA and Alaska DGGS, with the borough's support, have initiated a community-wide hazard mapping project focused on landslides. The maps will depict areas as low, medium, or high landslide risk. In July 2017, the CBS adopted Ordinance 2017-14 on Critical Areas management that established rules for developers and property owners in moderate- and high-risk landslide areas.

Landslide mapping for the majority of the community is pending. Following direction set by the 2017 Critical Areas ordinance, areas will be restricted to specific uses depending on risk levels. SGC Title 20 outlines the circumstances in which geotechnical investigations and/or waiver requirements must be met.

Eastside of Airport

- *Transshipment-related commercial and industrial development; buffering for nearby residential.*

Higher end residential development around Alice Loop in the last few years is due to the scarcity of developable land close to town with adjacent infrastructure in place and easy water access. This is despite the proximity to the airport and related aircraft noise.

For future growth, the Charcoal Island area is an excellent location for future shipment-related commercial or industrial growth. Encourage the state to move forward with site preparation to make the area available for lease lots. Over time, proximity to the airport could make this a good site for the cold storage to relocate to, which would also free up highly valuable waterfront along Katlian Avenue.

The undeveloped parcel between Charcoal Island and Alice Loop could be a buffer between these differing land uses. The old elementary school is a good site for light commercial uses that complement either the harbor or residences.

Katlian / Kaagwaantaan Area

- *Extend Sea Walk here, increase residential use, celebrate area culture and history, reconnect the Indian Village to the waterfront in select areas.*
- *Catalyze area revitalization. Develop a Master Plan for the Katlian/Kaagwaantaan area in collaboration with Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood, property owners, local business owners, and other interested parties. Make a series of public and private investments to realize the area's potential.*

The opportunity that the Katlian/Kaagwaantaan area offers has been long recognized by Sitkans. For example, in 1972 the Sitka Indian Village Redevelopment Plan was prepared and adopted by the Sitka Village Planning Council. It details area history, inventories the area's structures, and offers many excellent redevelopment and zoning ideas which are still relevant today.

Katlian Avenue and the surrounding area is a major part of the original Sitka Indian Village. It is home to 14 clan houses and the Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall, Sitka Camp No. 1 (ANB), and was built in 1918. The ANB Hall is used daily and is a National Historic Landmark. The area also includes the restored Russian Blockhouse, various historic Native and Russian grave sites and cemeteries, the Baranof Island Housing Authority offices, a diversity of residential structures, commercial businesses, and working industrial waterfront with many seafood processors and related retail.

Current zoning along Katlian Avenue includes Public Lands (P), Central Business District (CBD), Waterfront (WD), Single-Family Duplex (R-1), and General Commercial (C-1).

The Katlian area supports and is interconnected with Kaagwaantaan Street (spelling differs), the ANB Harbor, Thomsen and Eliason Harbors, Lincoln Street, downtown, Marine Street, and Seward Street. This mix of history, industrial, commercial and residential use, as well as the proximity, walkability, and connectivity to downtown and other areas offers exciting opportunities and will require collaborative planning to chart out future growth goals and development projects.

Changes to Development Standards

The current zoning (CBD, WD, C-1, P, and R-1) creates a mix of development standards that range from heights limits of 35 feet to 50 feet, required lot widths from no requirement to 60 to 80 feet, and lot sizes from no requirements to 6,000 to 8,000 square feet. Existing historic buildings and uses generally do not meet current development standards without variances or often insurmountable obstacles. Zoning and development standards should be changed here to reflect historic and current uses, lot sizes, and the area's character to allow affordable and practical commercial, industrial, and residential development.

Most lots do not meet the development standards in some way. To avoid continual reviews of projects that do not meet impractical standards, required lot sizes should be amended to better match historic development patterns. For example, residential lot sizes of 3,000-4,000 sf make more sense than the currently required 6,000 to 8,000 sf. Further study to identify standards that will work for the area is needed to include the desired mix of uses and structures, reduced minimum lot size and width, and increased heights.

Parking is an issue for all uses here. Some residences do not provide onsite parking. Other homes have shared parking that is below current standards. There is little room for increased parking areas as lots are small and access is severely restricted. The area's commercial and industrial uses have either shared parking, minimal on-site parking, or no parking. Overall, parking is mostly not in compliance with existing development standards. Further, existing parking areas also conflict with commercial, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic patterns. The area's compact and walkable natures and its central location make it a good candidate for reduced required parking. Suggestions to address parking include flexible and reduced parking such as shared parking agreements, reduced requirements, and an emphasis on walkability and use of transit.

Mixed-Use Development

The area has a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. A master plan that promotes balance and supports these various uses is needed, including mixed-use development along Katlian Avenue with retail or commercial on the 1st floor and residential above. In other areas, mixed development would promote existing uses and encourage investment while seeking balance and mitigation of impacts to surrounding properties.

Roads and Sidewalks

Recent review of roads, sidewalks, and driveways corroborates prior work documenting that all transportation infrastructure here is in poor condition and creates negative impacts to walkability and vehicle movement. Finding practical solutions to the problems associated with area roads and sidewalks is challenging due to possible impacts to historic properties, limited space, multiple uses, existing structures, and multiple jurisdictions and ownership interests. Solutions need creativity, flexibility, and collaboration.

Considering practical constraints, prior plans, and working groups' proposed solutions, it appears that the best ideas include a widened sidewalk on one side of the road only, extending the Sea Walk to this area, and road reconfiguration. Expansion of the right-of-way and double-sided sidewalks would not be practical, would lose the historical character and the sense of place here, and are not recommended.

Additional community suggestions include more historical signage and other displays, improved lighting, the addition of seating and bench areas, a bike lane, and clearly marked pedestrian crossings. Specialty treatments that denote this as a special district/place, encourage pedestrian use, and reflect the area's history and character are recommended.

Central Business District

- *Maintain the compact, walkable, charming character of downtown's Central Business District while promoting infill, higher density redevelopment, and more residential multi-story buildings. Encourage more residential development in areas adjacent to town.*

Downtown Character and Successes

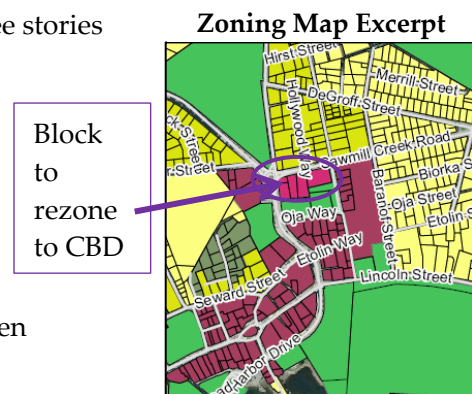
Sitka has a lively, well-used, walkable downtown with unique shops, eating and drinking businesses, accommodations, and apartments. This successful downtown is enjoyed by residents, other Alaskan visitors, and tourists. Downtown development patterns have been achieved through a combination of the Central Business District (CBD) zoning rules; by public investment in complementary parks, green space, parking, waterfront walkways, sidewalks, and attractive civic facilities; and by having a stable population and good economy. Sitka's CBD Zoning District has a 50-foot height limit, no parking requirements, no required setbacks, and no minimum lot size. The public and private investments and zoning rules that helped create and reinforce the CBD's development pattern should be recognized, valued, and continued. Many downtowns today would consider Sitka's CBD to have very progressive zoning for a downtown area.

Higher Densities, more Residential and Commercial Development in CBD

The CBD would benefit from more residential development. Many ask why there is only one multi-story apartment building in the area. If waiting lists and public sentiment are any indication, there is demand for more downtown apartments and condominiums. Conduct an analysis of the obstacles to achieving development by talking with property and building owners, developers, bankers, realtors, and others to identify appropriate remedies, investments, or incentives the CBS could enact to help achieve development of more apartments and condominiums.

Most buildings in the CBD are two-story; very few are three stories or taller. However, there are approximately 13 one-story buildings that underutilize this highly valuable real estate. A goal over time is to encourage redevelopment to multistory buildings that ideally are mixed-use with retail on the bottom floor and a mix of residential units and offices above.

Additionally, the one block south of Sawmill Creek, between Lake Street and Monastery Street, should be rezoned from Commercial-1 to CBD.



More Residential Development, Infill and Higher Densities in “Greater Downtown”

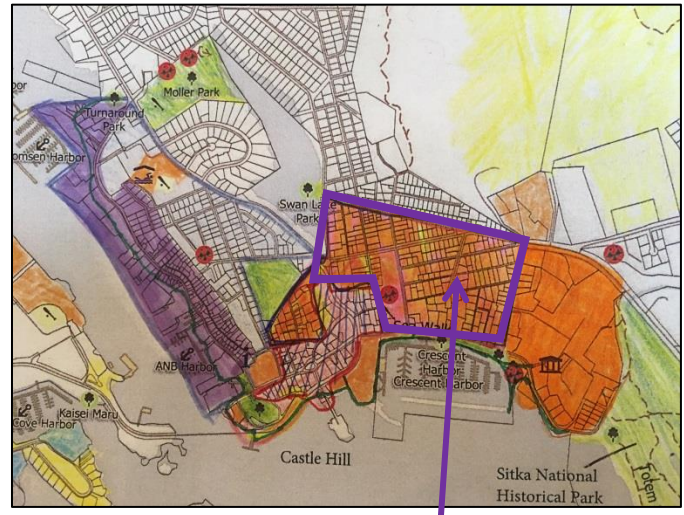
More people living in and near downtown will help make downtown vital and lively on the weekends and evenings year-round. More people translates to more commerce and more activity. More residential also means more “eyes on the street,” which increases public safety. To achieve this, the city’s goals in the “greater downtown” area are to encourage revitalization of rundown structures, infill development of vacant lots, and redevelop at higher densities to include apartments, condominiums, and multiplexes. The CBS may consider an overlay zoning district within which certain incentives, bonuses, or code relaxations could occur, or it may enact zoning code changes to accomplish this goal.

Commercial Development in and around Downtown

- *Rezone to match development patterns; create a Live-Work area.*

HPR along Swan Lake, from Marine Street to DeGroff Street

Despite the Residential-2 zoning here, current land uses are small professional service offices that require parking, such as doctors’ offices, credit unions, insurers, and similar uses. Land for this type of land use convenient to town is needed. Rezoning or other code changes are needed to encourage this land use pattern and support it. Locating parking behind, rather than in front of, buildings should be encouraged, as well as top floor residential use.



“Greater Downtown”

Marine Street – A Place for Live-Work Uses and Development

Marine Street land use is primarily multifamily, with a major CBS electrical substation. This residential street has higher than typical vehicle and pedestrian use, as it is used as a shortcut between town and Halibut Point Road.⁵² Encourage a development pattern of 2-3 story townhomes and multifamily homes to continue over time. This is a good location for Live-Work business such as small home or professional service offices where the business owner also lives in the building. The type of businesses desired would be those that do not need customer parking or create significant customer traffic. Permit approvals should be expected to favor these requests here, and zoning and other codes would support this.

Sheldon Jackson Vicinity - Educational/Science/Arts District

- *Create a Sheldon Jackson area zoning district or zoning overlay that encourages uses that support Sitka’s education, arts, and sciences economy and activity, while preserving and enhancing the historic character of the former Sheldon Jackson College campus.*

Future growth in this area is expected to support and increase education, arts, and sciences activity within the Sheldon Jackson campus and nearby areas.

⁵² Marine Street has an AADT of 795 in 2015 compared to Indian River with 150 AADT-see Chapter 8-Transportation in the full Sitka Comprehensive Plan 2030.

Collaboration is needed among the Alaska Arts Southeast, Sitka Sound Science Center, Sheldon Jackson Museum, the Campus Owners Association group, and others to maintain the historic character and beauty of the area and buildings. CBS supports related construction or renovation in this district that includes compatible commercial uses and residential dorms, apartments, condominiums, or homes for students, seniors, faculty, and visitors. A future rezone or overlay district to implement this vision is expected. An important element of all development will be attention to providing a buffer for adjacent residences.

Indian River

- *High priority CBS housing development area; encourage residential development. Complementary uses include agricultural, and a multiuse/multipartner facility that could include uses such as a tsunami shelter, child and elder day care, recreation center, coffee shop, and co-working space.*

The Baranof Island Housing Authority (BIHA) owns about 200 acres of land in Sitka that is primarily in the Indian River area. Currently, land here has been subdivided into about 100 parcels, most developed with single-family homes. BIHA is the Tribally Designated Housing Entity for Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and was created in 1980 to address housing needs of Tribal citizens and other residents of Baranof Island.

Undeveloped land on either side of Yaw Street and north of Herb Didricksen and Andrew Hope Streets is arguably the most developable land in Sitka today. Roads and utilities are immediately adjacent, the Sitka Cross Trail, sidewalks, and bike paths to town are nearby, the land is relatively flat, and the area has good sun exposure.

Residential development is highly encouraged. A tool (such as Planned Unit Development, cluster subdivision design, smaller lots sizes) to allow higher density development that preserves/clusters around open space will benefit both the environment and economics of utility extension and development. BIHA's mission focuses on providing affordable housing; collaboration with others could result in mutually leveraged financing to create a mixed-housing style subdivision. As an example, USDA infrastructure assistance is available, and market-rate homes could be sold to subsidize affordable housing. For inspiration, the Cook Inlet Housing Authority has accomplished several mixed-use developments like this with multiple partners.

In the late 2000s a tsunami warning resulted in clogged roads, crowds, and congestion as residents all tried to get to a single tsunami shelter at the high school. This highlighted the need for another tsunami shelter in Sitka. This would be a good location for a multiuse/multifunder facility. Among the possible co-located uses are a tsunami shelter, child and elder day care, recreation center, coffee shop, and co-working space.

This is also an area where agriculture and food production is logical, as area wetlands could be a benefit and agriculture use could serve as a buffer between the rock quarry and residential use. There is flat land, good sun exposure, it is close to roads, and the potential for workforce partnership is present.

Finally, as residential development proceeds, consider that the Indian River watershed is used by wildlife, for subsistence, and for the enjoyment of the open space and vistas. These uses should be valued and respected.

Jarvis-Smith-Price-Lance-Chirikov Area

- *Reduce land-use conflicts over time by separating less and more intensive land use, and requiring buffers to mitigate incompatibilities.*

There are more neighbor complaints in this neighborhood than any other in Sitka. This has developed over time due to the mix of zoning districts here and the fact that commercial and industrial zoning districts in Sitka allow residential uses within them. As a result, this neighborhood has both high-end and subsidized dwelling units close to industrial and intensive commercial uses.

Some strategies to address this are:

- a) Amend zoning codes to make a distinction between light versus heavy commercial or industrial zones. Amend the zoning code to reduce residential use in commercial and industrial areas to limit conflicts.
- b) Develop buffering requirements to provide a noise and visual buffer around heavy commercial and industrial uses.
- c) Rezone to encourage a different type of development pattern over time.

The Future Growth Map lays out a desired development pattern to be achieved over time of: residential development east of Lance Drive and north of Vitskari; residential development between Price Street and Lance Street; light/heavy commercial and industrial development between Jarvis and Price Street. Harmony amongst the different uses depends on heavy buffering and development of sidewalks within the Price Street right-of-way.

There are opportunities for residential development on undeveloped privately-owned lots, and on adjacent USFS land on the east end of this area. Contact landowners to identify why these lots have not been developed to see if there are solutions to any identified challenges.

Explore the idea of a land exchange to relocate freight transfer and trucking facilities from this area to municipal waterfront land near the barge landing.

Jamestown Bay Waterfront

- *Focus on water-dependent and oriented development.*

Sitka zoning and other codes should recognize two types of waterfront development: that which is lighter commercial- and tourism-oriented in nature and will likely have some interspersed residential use, and that which is heavier commercial-industrial in nature.

Jamestown Bay is an area where this distinction would be seen over time. On the north (toward town) side of the Jamestown Bay across from Smith Street over to Allen Marine, the heavier commercial-industrial waterfront development is expected over time. The area of the Jamestown Bay across from Chirikov Drive south to the Knudson Drive area is where the lighter commercial type of waterfront development would be encouraged. To accomplish both, relocation of residential uses away from the waterfront would be encouraged over time to facilitate increased water-dependent and oriented activity.

Gary Paxton Industrial Park

- *Continue priority development of GPIP to support economic opportunity and jobs. Site advantages are deep water access; flat, accessible, undeveloped uplands with full road and utilities; and a multi-purpose dock.*

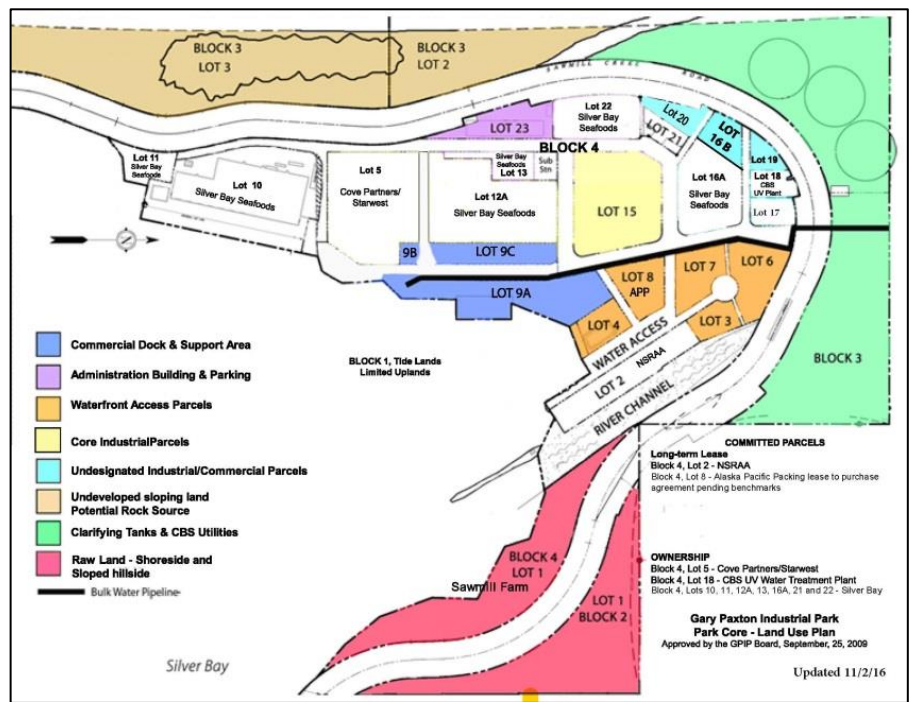
The 30-acre Gary Paxton Industrial Park at Silver Bay is an important part of Sitka's past. Here, the Alaska Pulp Company operated a 450-employee (at its peak) pulp mill in Sitka from 1959 until 1993, under a long-term contract with the USFS.

After mill closure, the CBS acquired this area and entered into a service contract with the Sitka Economic Development Association (SEDA) to manage it. GPIP is a municipal Enterprise Fund, meaning that generally, annual revenues should equal annual spending. GPIP has its own Board of Directors. Its mission is to strategically develop the park in a fiscally responsible manner that maximizes its economic benefit to the community through creation of meaningful jobs in conformance with established community plans and policies. Current anchor tenants are Silver Bay Seafoods, Fortress of the Bear, Cove Partners/Starwest, Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, and CBS utilities. GPIP and adjacent municipal tracts have a special zoning district to provide development flexibility by allowing many uses that are permitted in both the waterfront and industrial zoning districts.

The state reconstructed Sawmill Creek Road to GPIP in 2015 to accommodate increased traffic to and from the industrial site. In 2016, The Ride public transit began regular transit service to and from GPIP. In late 2017/2018, the CBS is constructing a multipurpose deepwater dock, made possible with state funding, making GPIP a true access point for land-to-sea markets.

Guiding GPIP development principles are to:

1. Preserve public access and marshaling areas to the waterfront, as it is the most commercially viable waterfront left in Sitka.
2. Make lease, buy/sell, or other land-use decisions based on the mission of the Park – to create family wage jobs for Sitkans in a financially responsible manner.
3. Consistent with principles 1 & 2, identify and minimize negative cash flows to the City from the operation of the Park.



Remote Municipally-Owned Land

Middle Island

- *Continue to subdivide and sell municipally owned land.*

Middle Island is in Sitka Sound about 1.5 miles west of Halibut Point State Recreation Site. There is no public access to the island; it includes municipal lands and parcels in private ownership. Access to the Island is all private; no public docks exist. CBS management intent for Middle Island is to continue to subdivide and sell municipal-owned land.

Green Lake

- *Continue hydroelectric, aquaculture, and recreational use*

The CBS owns approximately 5705 acres surrounding Green Lake and vicinity. Access is via a road that is a continuation of Sawmill Creek Hwy. The road follows the shoreline of Silver Bay from Herring Cove about 7 miles before turning uphill to end at the shores of Green Lake. The road was built as a service road for Green Lake Dam. Public access is by foot or bicycle only. Many people walk, jog, or bicycle along the road. Restricted access vehicular use is light and is by the Green Lake Hydroelectric Facility and the Medvejie Salmon Hatchery at Bear Cove that is run by the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA). In the winter, the road is often packed snow and ice. A 0.5-mile trail leads from Bear Cove to Medvejie Lake, nestled in a deep valley between Bear Mountain and Cross Mountain. Silver Bay is a cost recovery fishing site for NSRAA.

Goddard Hotsprings

- *Maintain visual beauty, public recreation use, and existing facilities. Area focus is public recreation.*

The City and Borough of Sitka owns more than 800 acres of land in the Goddard Hot Springs area, which is located about 15 miles south of Sitka, to the east of Biorka Island and Hot Springs Bay. The most sheltered anchorage for users is in Kliuchevoi Bay. With the exception of two private parcels in Kliuchevoi Bay, most of the land is municipally owned with a deed restriction that the land is to be used for public recreation.⁵³ The State of Alaska owns 1,070 acres in the vicinity of Big Bay. During the early part of this century, a hotel and 40-room sanitarium were located here and heated by Goddard thermal-spring waters.

Goddard Hot Springs area is one of the most popular recreation areas in central southeast Alaska. In addition to the hot springs, scenic beauty is the main visitor attraction, but fishing, hiking, camping, and hunting are close behind. The area is reached during good weather by small day boats and floatplanes, as well as by fishing boat, which anchor up in the area by the hundreds. There is good bottom fishing in the area, as well as coho, chum, and pink salmon.

CBS built two bathhouses for public use, and these receive intensive use in the summer months. There are also other minor thermal springs located ½ mile east of the bathhouse area. There is a fair-weather anchorage directly in front of the tubs in Hot Spring Bay, and places to camp along the shore. There is also evidence of prior settlement in the area.

⁵³ 2002 State of Alaska Northern Southeast Area Plan

Takatz Lake - Baranof Warm Springs

- *Transportation improvements, energy generation, and maintain residential and recreational uses in Baranof Warm Springs.*

The CBS owns lands surrounding around Takatz Lake and Bay and on the north side of Warm Springs Bay.

Takatz Lake is approximately 20 miles east of the city of Sitka on the east side of Baranof Island. Sitka supports development of a hydroelectric dam, penstock, powerhouse, and turbines on the shore of Takatz Bay, and a transmission line on federal lands here within the Tongass National Forest. The project could provide an estimated 97,100 megawatt-hours (MWh) of firm energy each year.

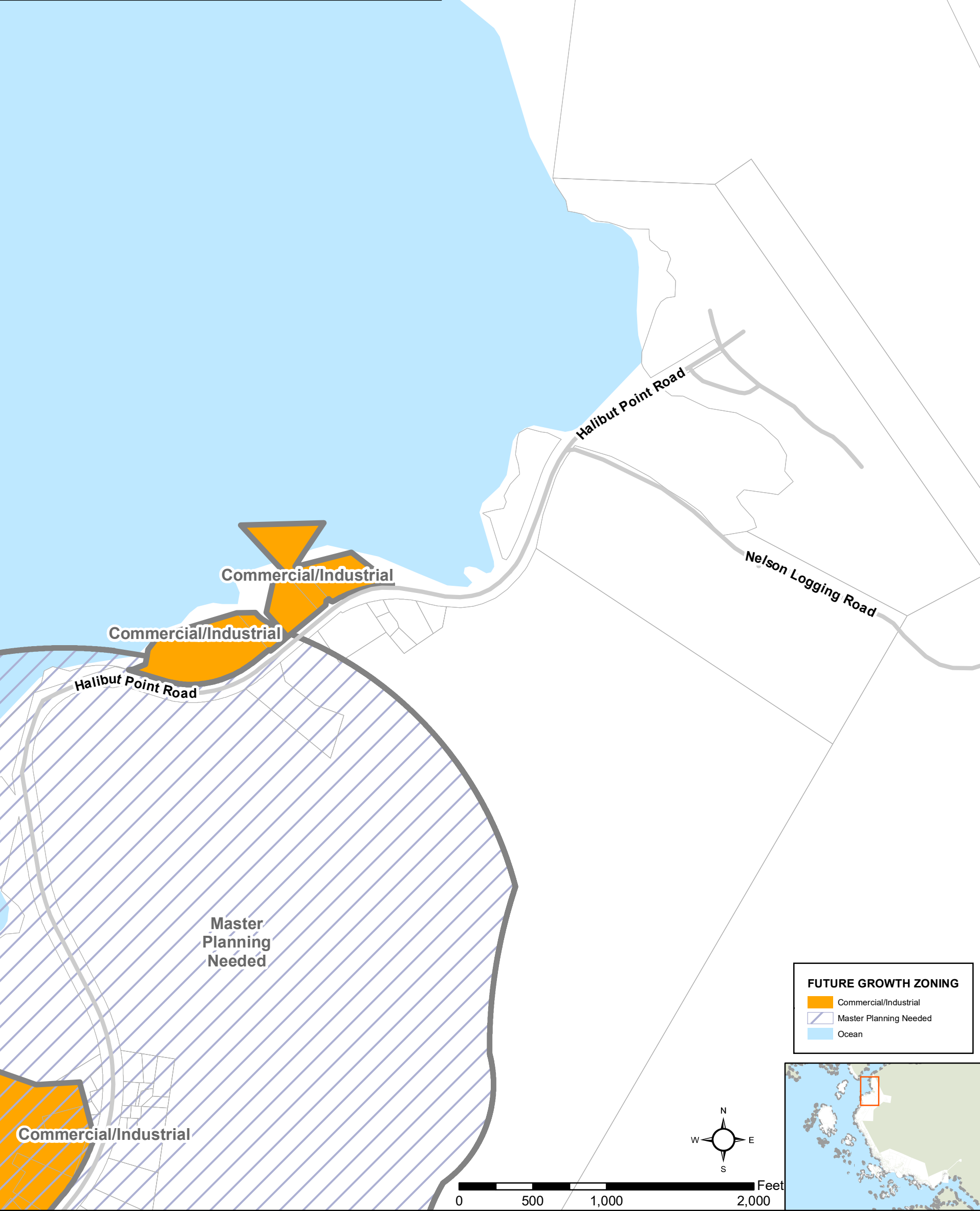
Baranof Warm Springs is a small, primarily seasonally-occupied community on the east side of Baranof Island. There are approximately 15 seasonal homes. There is one commercial enterprise: the Baranof Wilderness Lodge and Resort. Sitka funds maintenance of the boardwalk that serves as the main thoroughfare and a dock for transient vessels. In 2016, state funding helped to install a new dock.

The 2014 ADOT&PF Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan calls for a 2-lane year-round Sitka-Warm Springs Road in the far future (20 years +). When cross-Baranof road routes are evaluated, Sitka Tribe of Alaska noted that the Warm Spring Bay option is least impactful to historical sites. The City and Borough of Sitka is on record as supporting the Warm Spring Bay road and desiring to see it constructed much sooner than proposed by ADOT&PF.

Future Growth Map Starrigavan and North

An area rich in history and resources. A variety of federal, state, and local recreational uses exist in this area. A state 9-mile one lane road will begin construction in early 2018 that will extend access to recreational opportunities and US Forest Service and Shee Atika Incorporated lands.

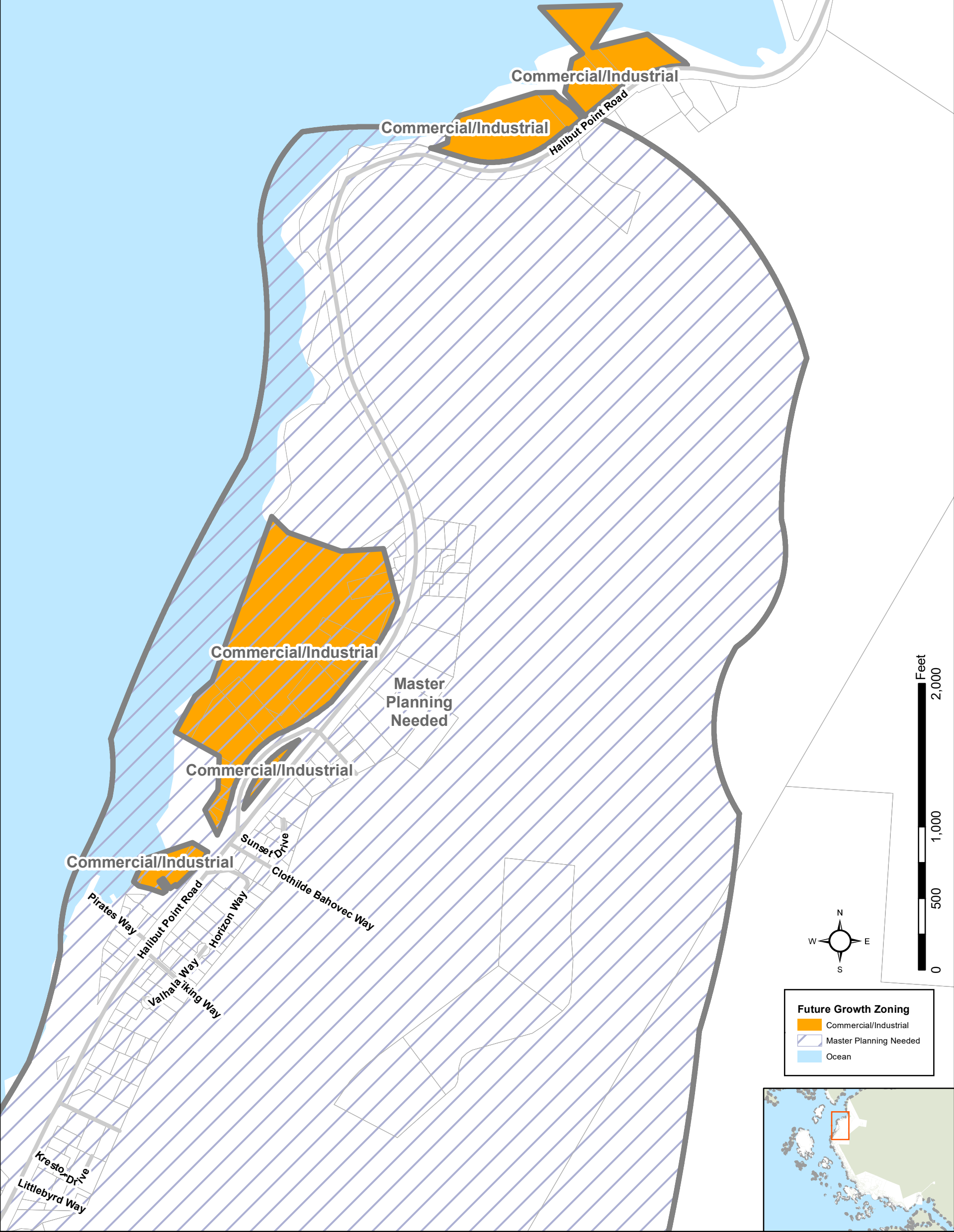
Further planning study and work among the CBS, the USFS, and SAI, and other interested parties will be needed to address parking, waste management, mitigation spending, secondary water source opportunities, and other aspects of development within this area. Access and recreational improvements are the main focus of development here.



Future Growth Map

Granite Creek and No Name Mountain

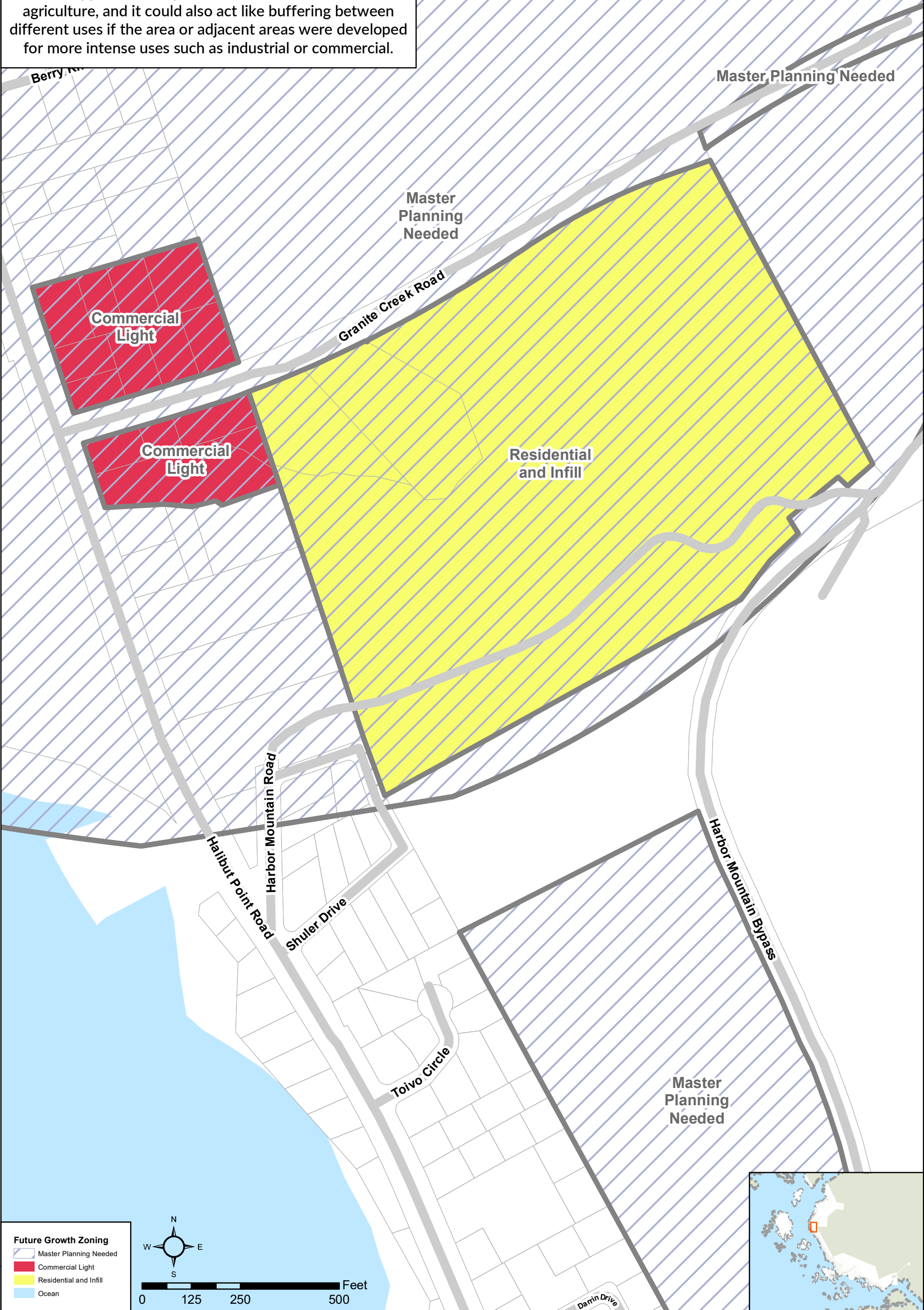
Between Granite Creek and No Name Creek are approximately 800 acres of municipally owned land adjacent to additional federal land. A Master Plan is recommended for options for development. In addition, a master plan could be coupled with a Request for Proposals from commercial developers that could provide a complete development plan for best utilizing the rock resource as well as future use and development. A mix of land uses and development is expected and a Master Plan/RFP is highly recommended to best develop rock and land resources.



Future Growth Map

Old Harbor Mountain Road

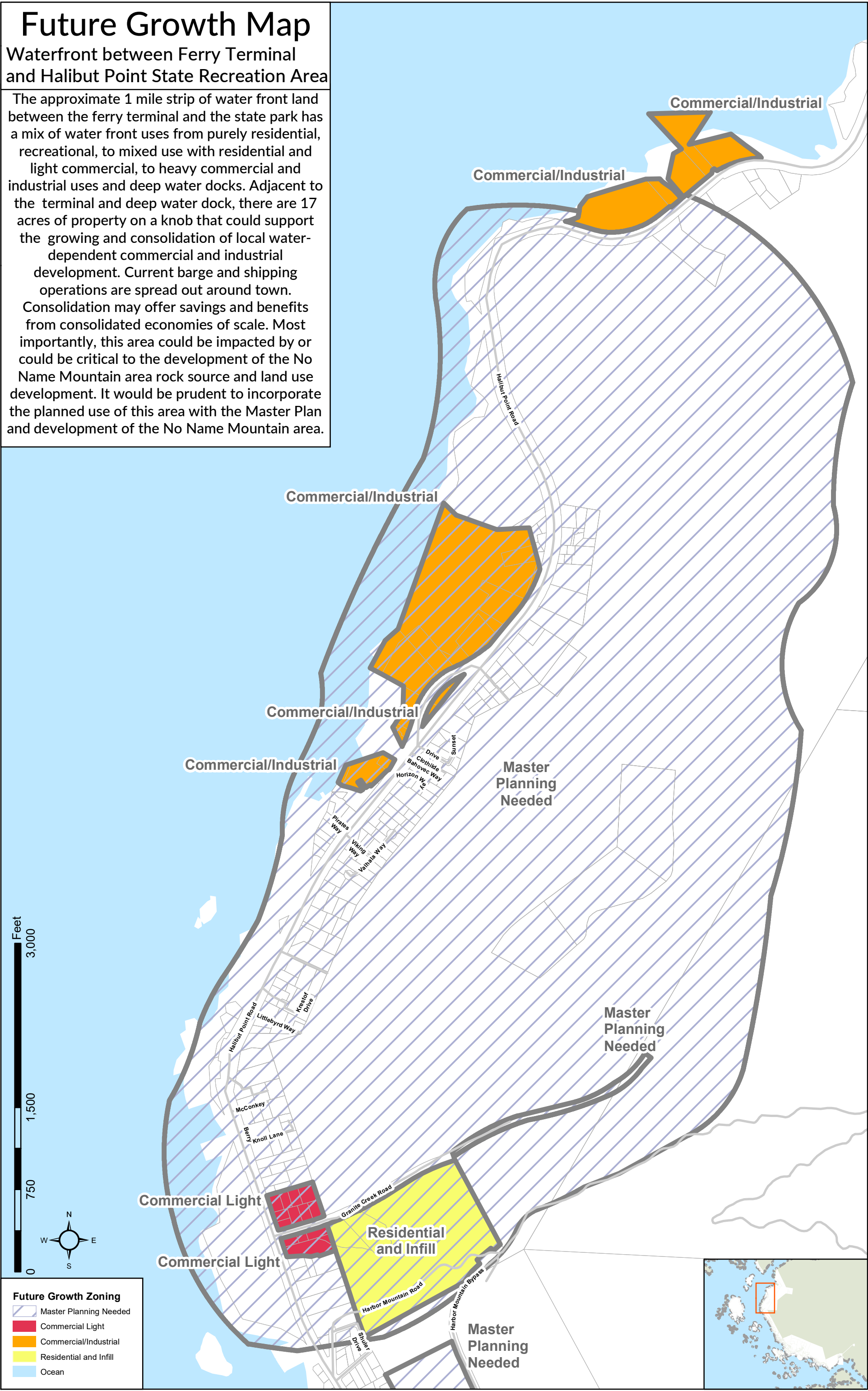
Between Granite Creek and Harbor Mountain Road there is a bypass road near the USFS parking lot that provides access to over 10 acres of undeveloped CBS land. This area could support a variety of uses, such as residential and agriculture, and it could also act like buffering between different uses if the area or adjacent areas were developed for more intense uses such as industrial or commercial.



Future Growth Map

Waterfront between Ferry Terminal and Halibut Point State Recreation Area

The approximate 1 mile strip of water front land between the ferry terminal and the state park has a mix of water front uses from purely residential, recreational, to mixed use with residential and light commercial, to heavy commercial and industrial uses and deep water docks. Adjacent to the terminal and deep water dock, there are 17 acres of property on a knob that could support the growing and consolidation of local water-dependent commercial and industrial development. Current barge and shipping operations are spread out around town. Consolidation may offer savings and benefits from consolidated economies of scale. Most importantly, this area could be impacted by or could be critical to the development of the No Name Mountain area rock source and land use development. It would be prudent to incorporate the planned use of this area with the Master Plan and development of the No Name Mountain area.



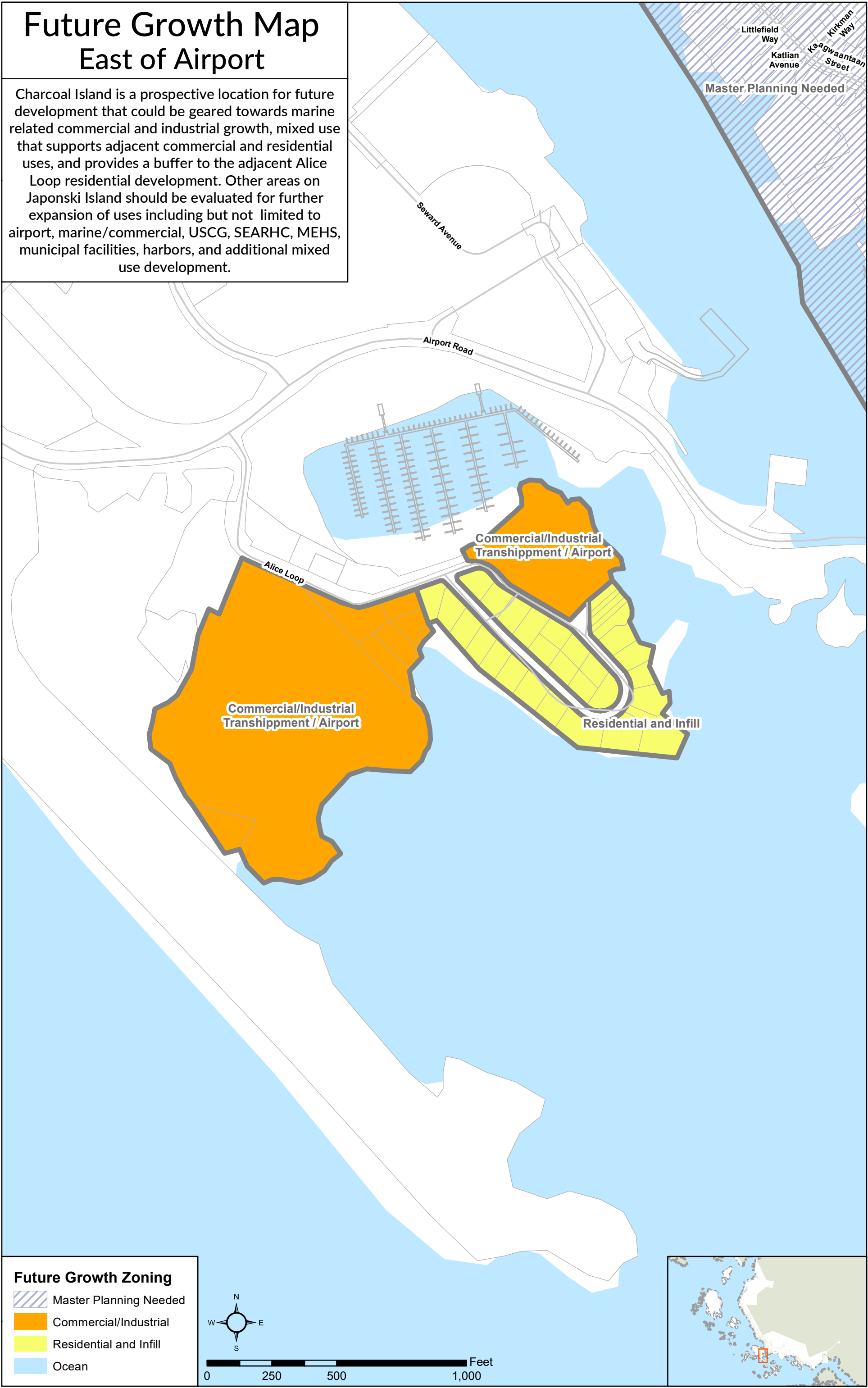
Benchlands and Mountain Bypass Road Area

Further development of this area and mountain bypass area could occur, but should take into account known risks, provide reasonable development opportunities, and cost effective mitigation measures where appropriate. Such development could include low density residential, agriculture, horticulture, open space, trails, and other buffering uses.



Future Growth Map East of Airport

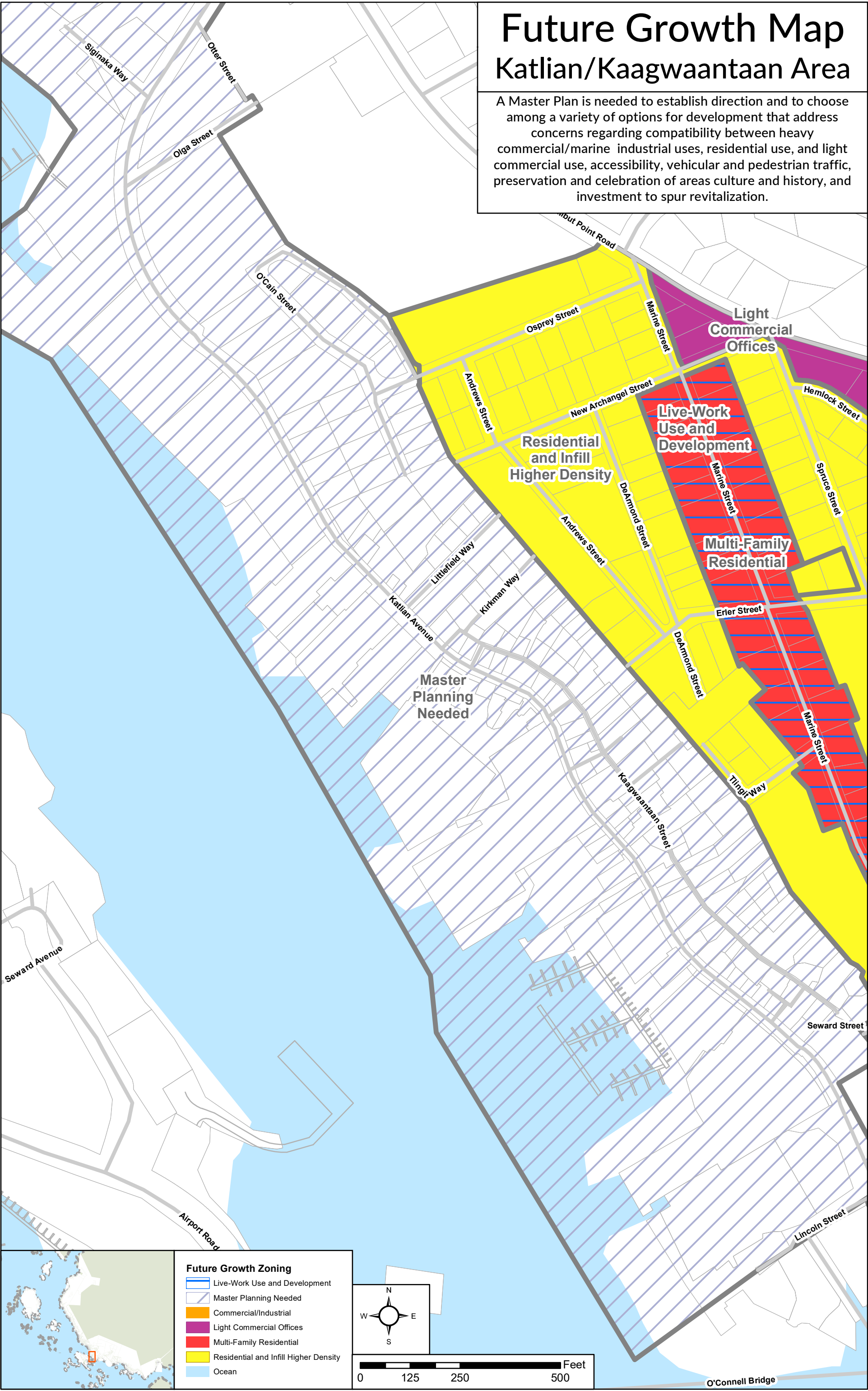
Charcoal Island is a prospective location for future development that could be geared towards marine related commercial and industrial growth, mixed use that supports adjacent commercial and residential uses, and provides a buffer to the adjacent Alice Loop residential development. Other areas on Japonski Island should be evaluated for further expansion of uses including but not limited to airport, marine/commercial, USCG, SEARHC, MEHS, municipal facilities, harbors, and additional mixed use development.

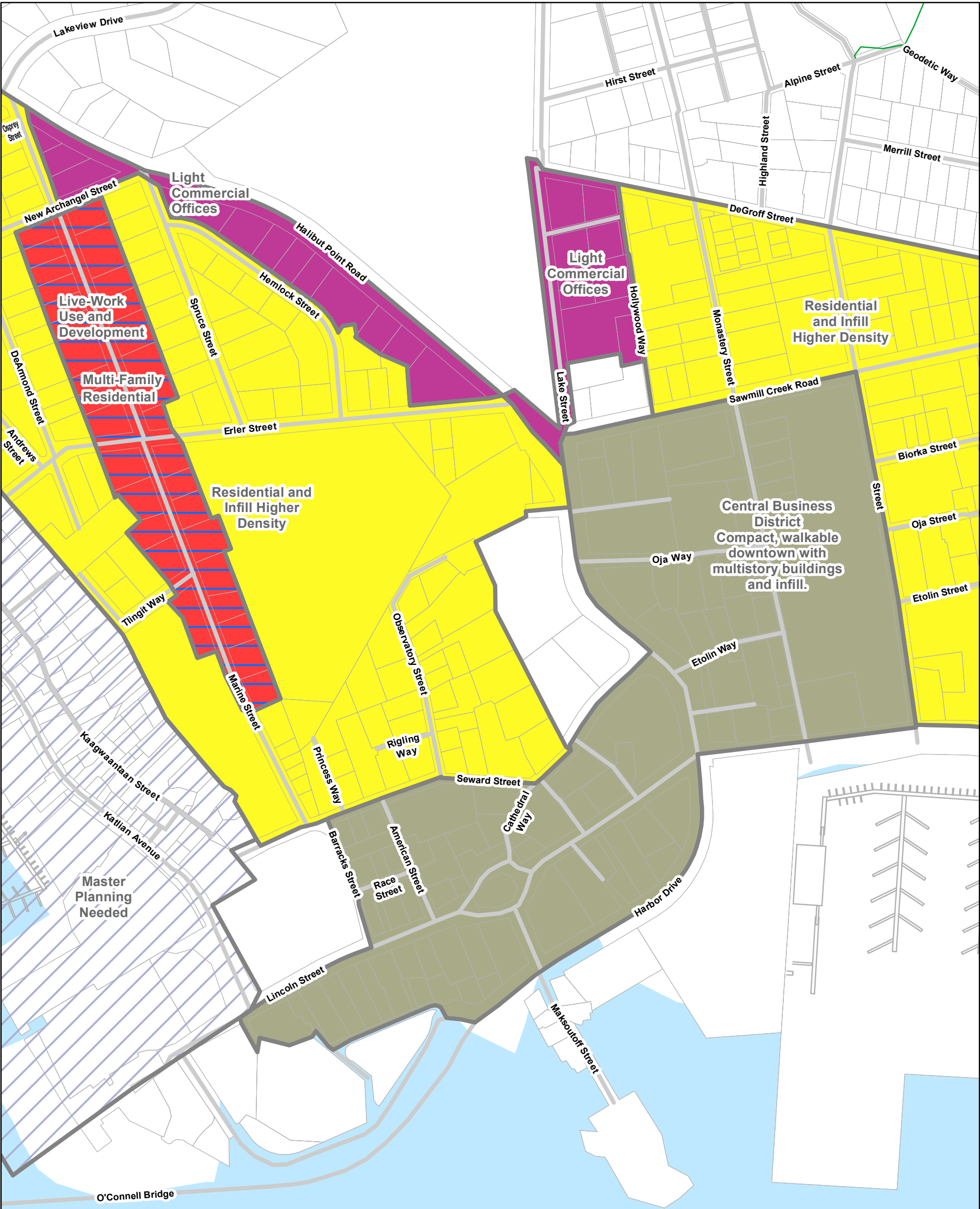


Future Growth Map

Katlian/Kaagwaantaan Area

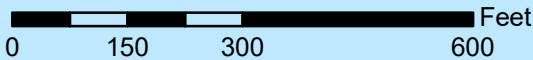
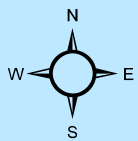
A Master Plan is needed to establish direction and to choose among a variety of options for development that address concerns regarding compatibility between heavy commercial/marine industrial uses, residential use, and light commercial use, accessibility, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, preservation and celebration of areas culture and history, and investment to spur revitalization.





Future Growth Zoning

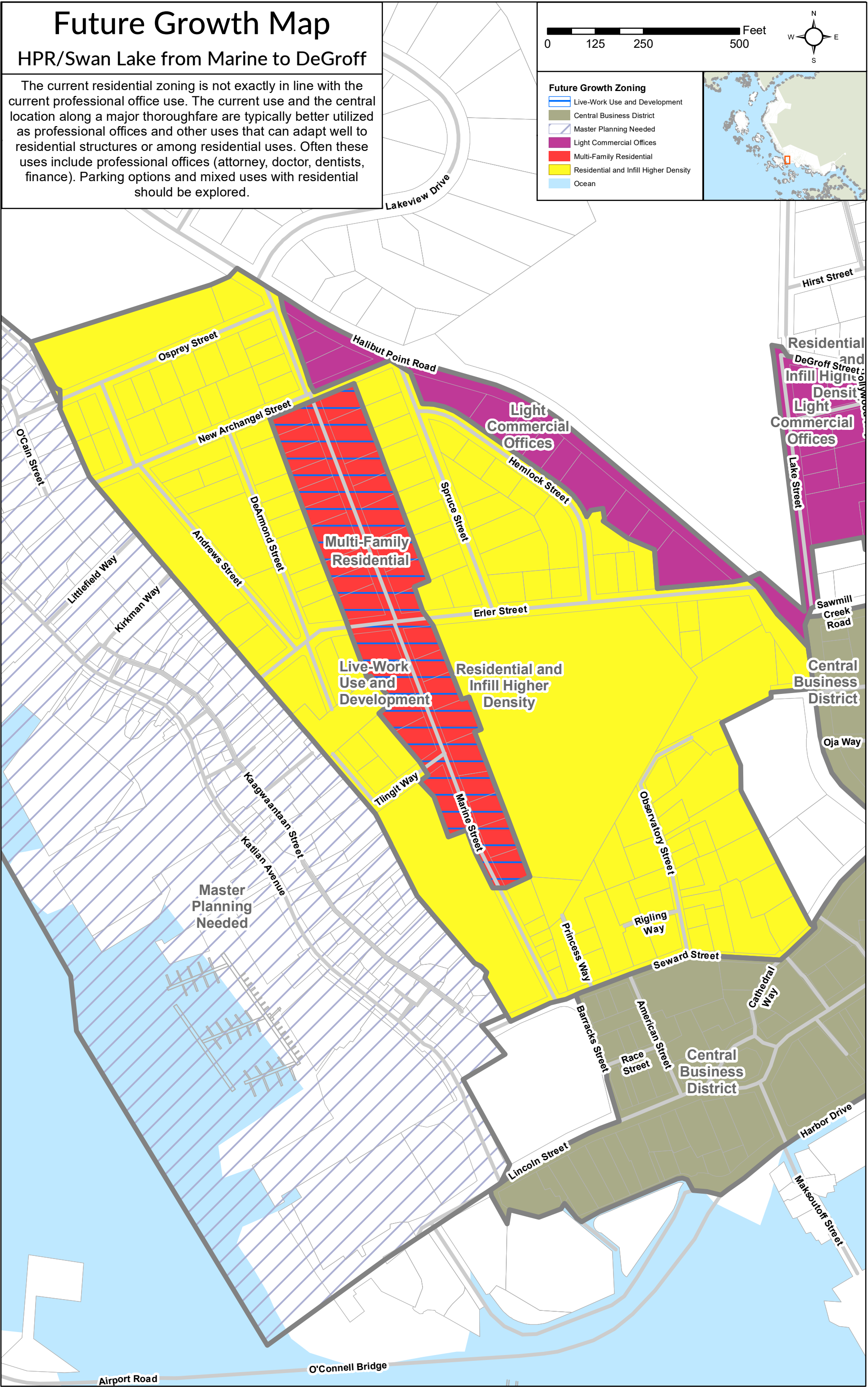
- Live-Work Use and Development
- Central Business District
- Multi-Family Residential
- Master Planning Needed
- Residential and Infill Higher Density
- Light Commercial Offices



Future Growth Map

Central Business District (CBD)

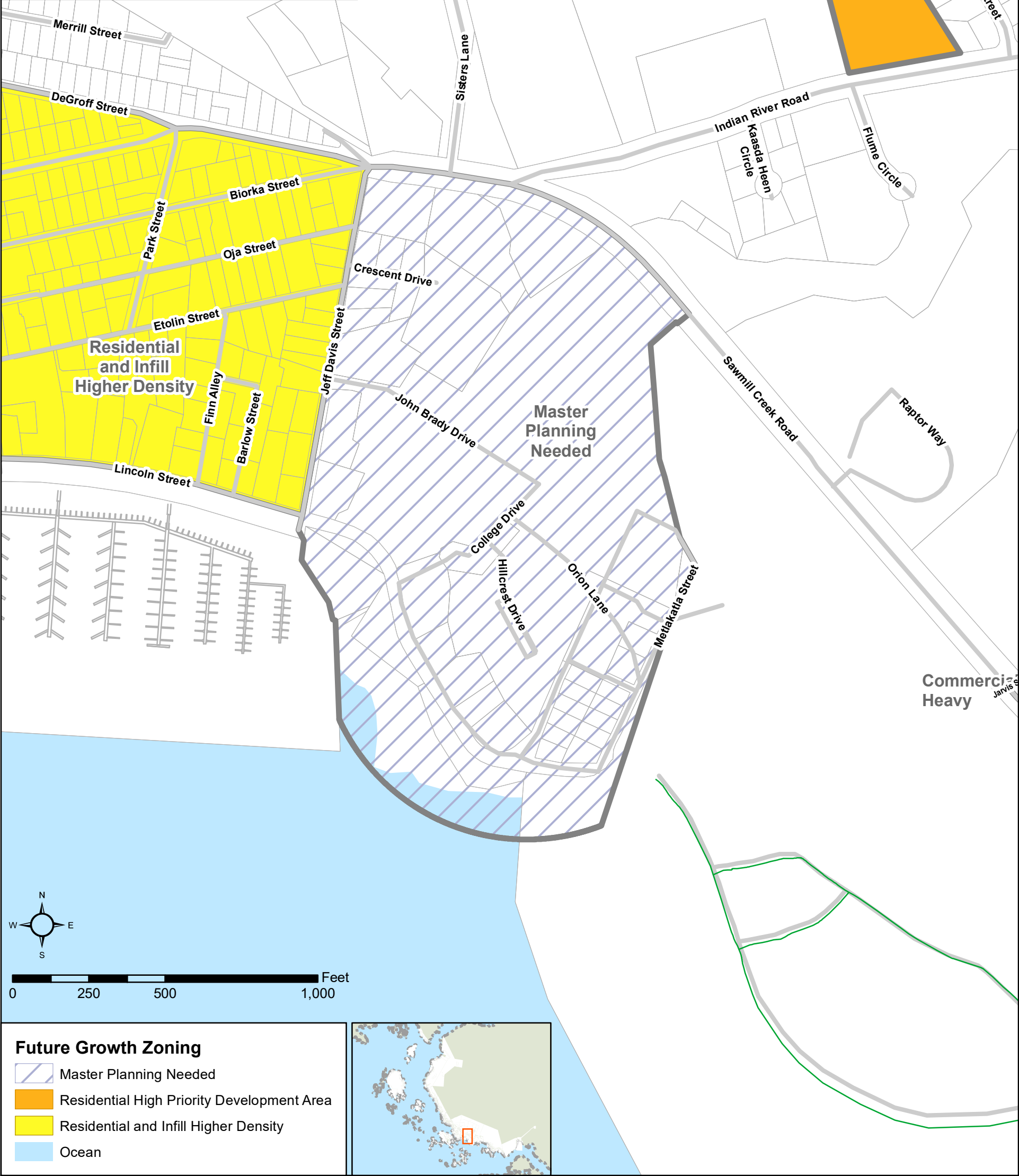
Maintain the compact, walkable, charming character of the downtown’s Central Business District, while promoting infill, higher density redevelopment, and preserving the historical context of the area and key structures. Areas within walking distance are also prime for compact development, infill, and higher density development that would help support and vibrant downtown. Further specific planning should explore options to promote and incentivize historic preservation, rehabilitation, higher density redevelopment, efficient use of area parking, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, use of placemaking along the downtown corridor, signage, visibility, and uses and events that promote a vibrant downtown.



Future Growth Map

Sheldon Jackson Vicinity

The current multi-family residential zoning (R-2) is not in sync with the actual historic and existing use of the land. The historic use of the land was as the Sheldon Jackson College campus and has since evolved into a multi-use of Alaska Arts Southeast, Hames Center, the Sitka Sound Science Center, the Sheldon Jackson Museum, the Sitka Youth Advocates, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, and The Sitka Counseling Association. It could be said the use change from a higher education use with support facilities to a community based educational use with various professional and educational services. In addition, the land and location are important historic, aesthetic, and recreational resources that supplement the local community and neighborhoods.



Future Growth Map

Indian River

This area is a high priority for housing development. Development should encourage residential uses, but may also consider complimentary uses such as agricultural, multiuse, emergency shelters, child and elder care facilities, recreation centers, shared work space, and coffee shops.

Future Growth Zoning

Master Planning Needed

Commercial/Industrial

Commercial/Industrial Heavy


Heavy C/I Waterfront Development

Water Dependent Development

Residential High Priority Development Area

Residential and Infill Higher Density

Ocean



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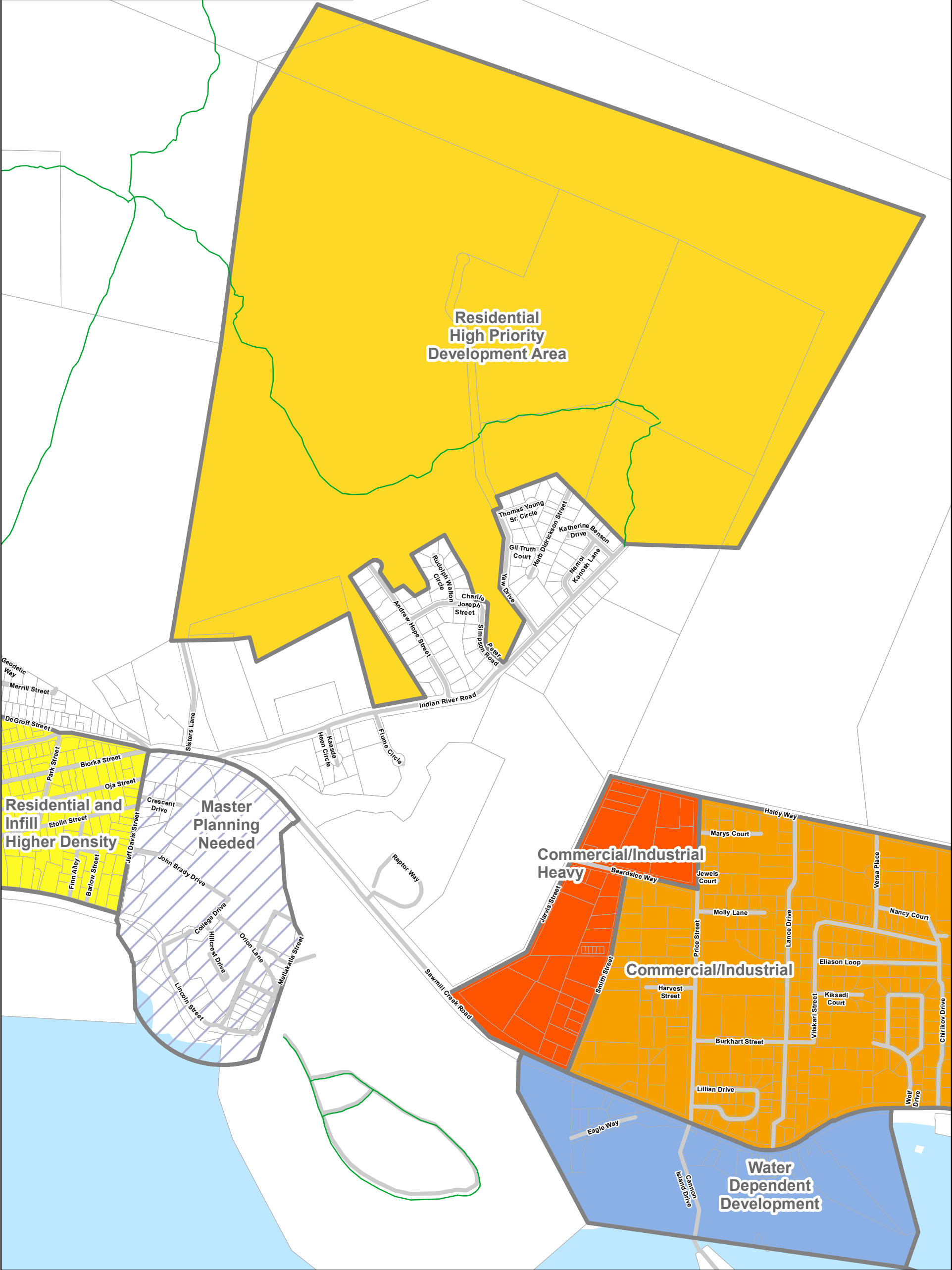
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N

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Future Growth Map

Jarvis/Smith/Price Area

This area has a mix of uses stemming from overbroad land use designations, and the allowable permitted uses, conditional uses, and legal nonconforming existing uses within those zoning districts. The end result is that there is residential next to heavy commercial and other industrial uses that are incompatible and have impacts to all uses. The solution is to perform a Master Plan that takes a look a revising zoning districts, permitted uses and conditional uses allowed in those districts, and other options such as buffers, setbacks, open space, screening, and transition of uses to move the area towards harmony of uses.

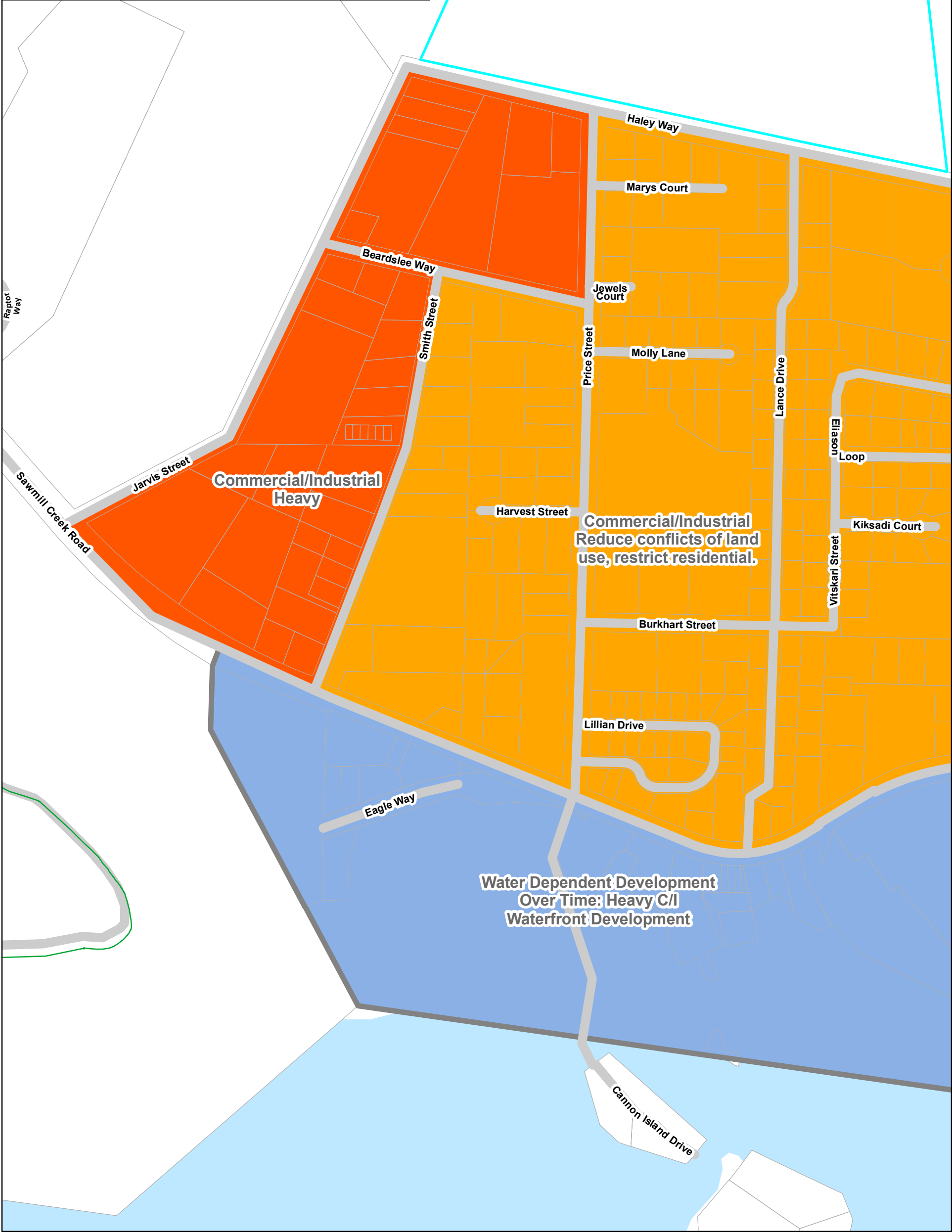
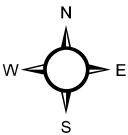
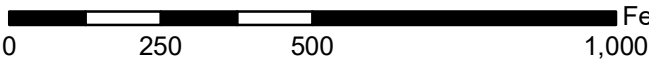
Future Growth Zoning

Commercial/Industrial

Commercial/Industrial Heavy

Water Dependent Development

Ocean



Future Growth Map

Jamestown Bay Waterfront Area

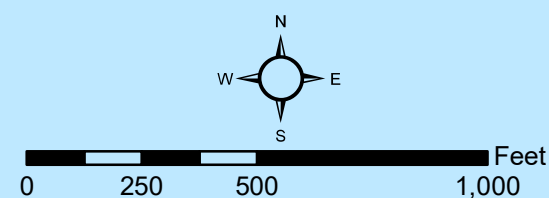
Current waterfront zoning makes no distinction of prioritization between commercial and residential use. The result has been that waterfront areas like Jamestown Bay have a mix of heavy commercial and industrial uses adjacent to residential uses. A potential solution would be to distinguish between a waterfront zoning that allows residential and light commercial uses, distinguished from a second waterfront zoning district that would permit heavier commercial and industrial use that is water-dependent. Overall, there is a loss of land that is available for true water-dependent use and there is a strong need to preserve land for water-dependent commerce as well as preserve all industrial and heavy commercial land.

Commercial/Industrial
Reduce conflicts of land use, restrict residential.

Water Dependent Development
Over Time: Heavy C/I
Waterfront Development

Future Growth Zoning DESCRIPT

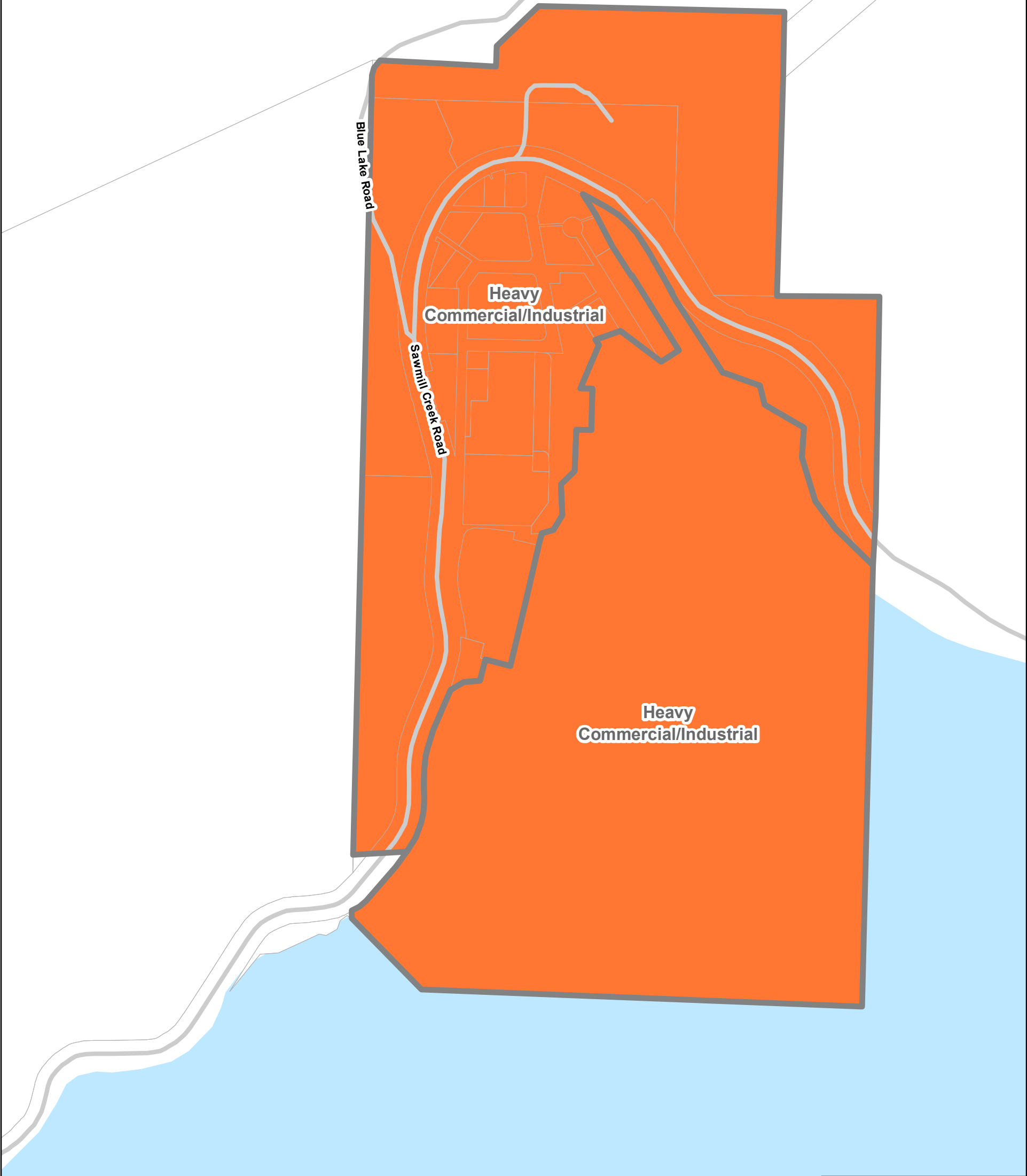
- Commercial/Industrial
- Water Dependent Development
- Ocean



Future Growth Map

Gary Paxton Industrial Park Area

The priority is to continue economic development and job creation at GPIP. The location has competitive economic advantages of deep-water access, access to bulk water, at accessible land, full road and utility access, and a new deep water multi-use dock.



Future Growth Zoning

-  Heavy Commercial/Industrial
-  Ocean

