

# Sitka<sup>VISIT</sup>

Special Report June 22, 2021

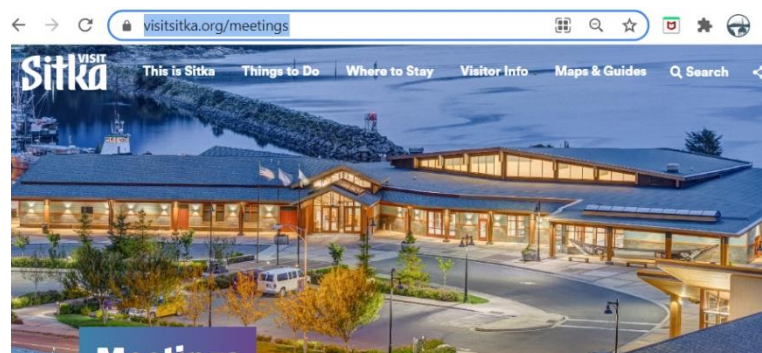
## Meetings & Conventions Guide & Toolkit

Visit Sitka is excited to share newly developed Meetings & Conventions collateral and resources.

Check out the Toolkit at [visitsitka.org/meetings](https://visitsitka.org/meetings).

What's New? The Toolkit features these new pages tools to help planners get the support they need for success!

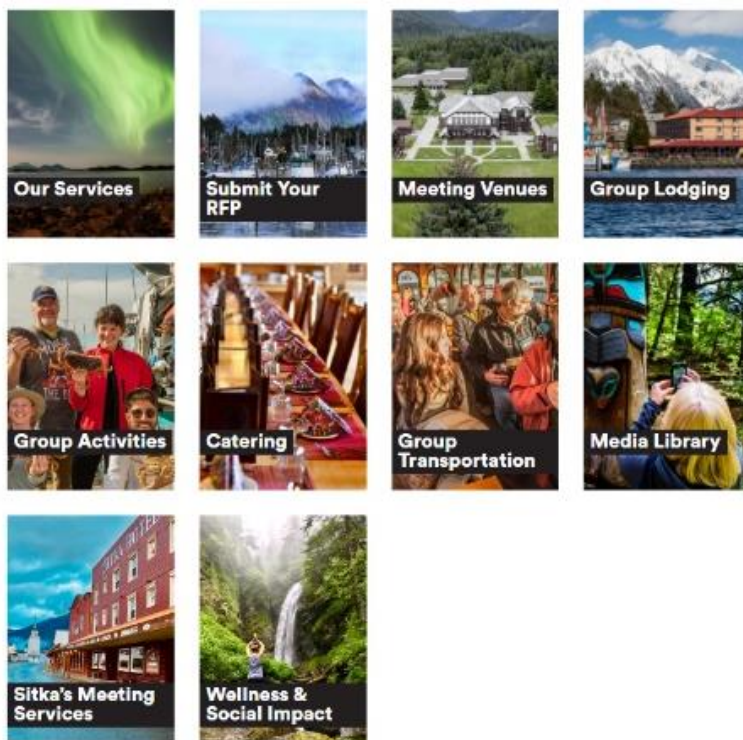
- Online RFP form
  - Allows Visit Sitka to capture event contact information
  - Request assistance with venue selection, room blocks, catering services
- Meeting Venues Page
  - New pages for Large, Small to Mid-Sized and Unique Venues
- Group Lodging Page
- Group Activities Page
- Catering Page
- Group Transportation
- Media Library
  - Logo & Photo Library
  - Promotional Videos
  - Media services
- Sitka's Meeting Services
- Wellness & Social Impact
  - Access to the [Healthy Events Guide](#)



### Bring your event to Sitka!

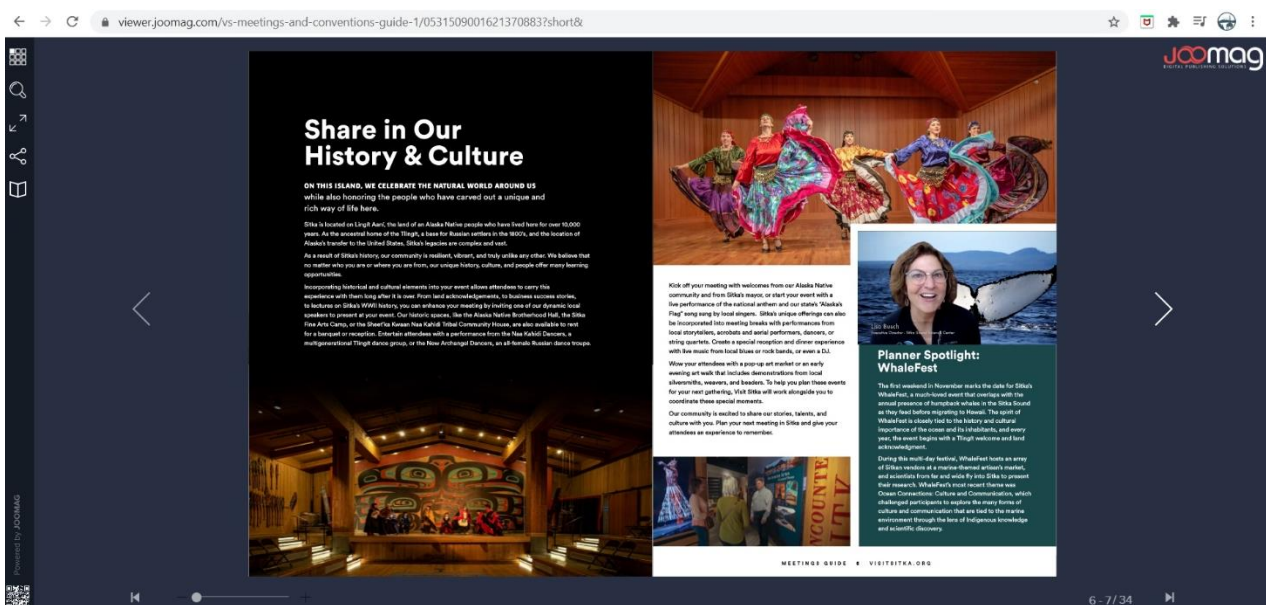
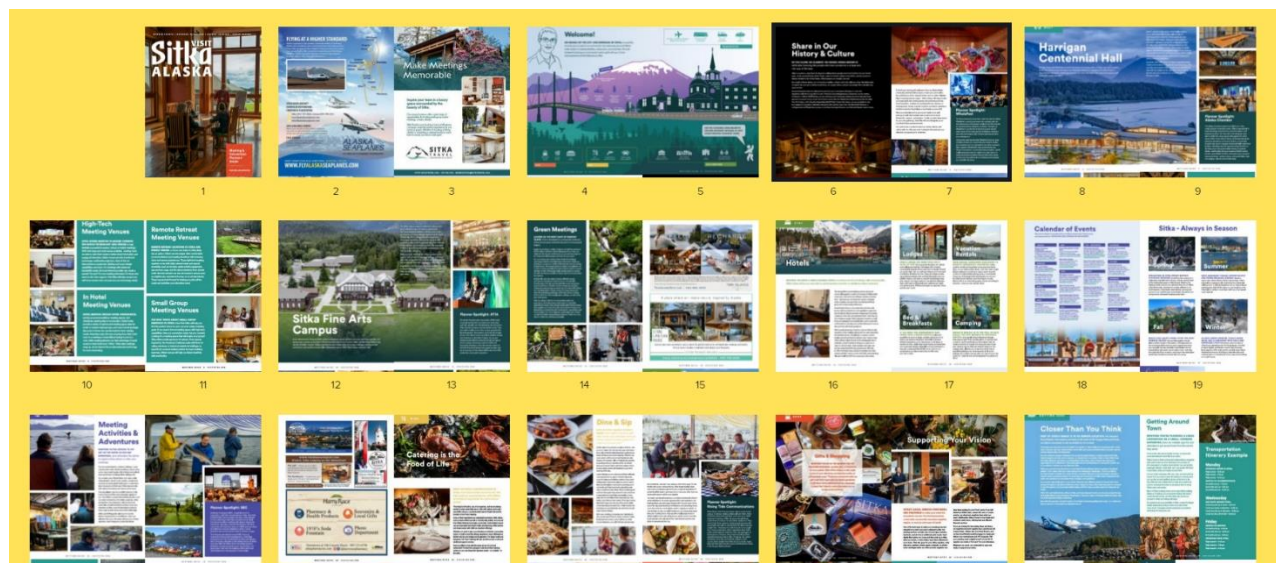
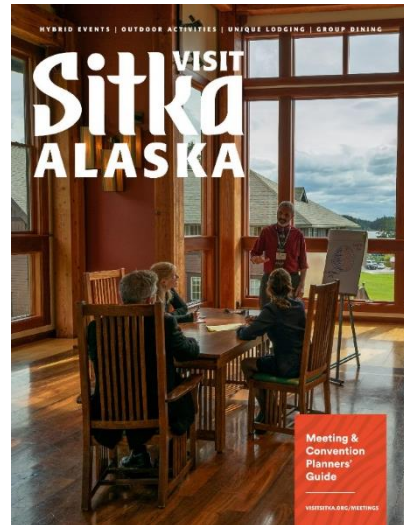
With short travel times from Anchorage and Seattle, Sitka is closer than you think while still feeling like a true getaway. Meeting spaces, lodging, and dining options are all centrally located in a convenient walkable downtown area. When it's time to play, explore historical sites across town, or take a charter out on the Sitka Sound to fish for salmon and see breaching humpback whales. Host your next event in Sitka and enjoy all the modern amenities you'll need to get work done, surrounded by the wild beauty of Southeast Alaska. Browse through our Meeting Planners' Toolkit below to find resources and services for your meeting.

Contact our team for one-on-one professional expertise to find the perfect facilities, lodging, and leisure activities for your group. Visit Sitka is here to help make your meeting exceptional!



The Meetings & Conventions Planners' Guide is a digital publication created to encourage decision makers to choose Sitka as their meeting destination and inspire planners to make their convention the best possible by incorporating our community's culture into their schedule and utilizing our business services.

The 34 -page digital guide features scrolling images, Planner Spotlight videos and clickable links throughout. Consistent brand look and feel complete with new innovative concept for the table of contents! Event calendar and Sitka – Always in Season story tells of our year-round ability to host memorable meetings and conventions. [Click here to](https://visitsitka.org/meetings) view the full digital guide.







# DRAFT

## Visit Sitka Operation Update

### General Overview of Sitka Travel Industry – Outlook to 2021

Travel trend research continues to find that general sentiment is that Americans continue to plan to travel as soon as travel restrictions are lifted. VS partners are telling us that independent travelers continue to book trips for 2021 as well as into 2022. Fishing charter operators and accommodations are filling up for the 2021 season.

With the uncertainty of the cruise season, VS has been unable to create a cruise line calendar. We continue to reach out to the small ship companies to receive their schedules as soon as possible. The latest [Sitka Cruise Calendar](#) can be viewed on the live-google calendar maintained throughout the season.

In late February the Alaska Marine Highway released their 2021 summer sailing schedule which covers ferry travel from May through September 2021. The M/V Matanuska will call in Sitka one day per week, alternating Saturdays and Sundays, and remaining at port for approximately 3 hours per port call. On Saturdays the ship will be northbound from Kake to Juneau, and on Sundays it will be southbound from Juneau to Petersburg. With this schedule we could see some ferry visitors who may arrive and stay a week, but it is more likely that independent visitors would create an itinerary with a mix of ferry and plane travel.

### Marketing & Promotion Updates: 1/1-3/31

Visit Sitka (VS) has been focusing on reaching independent visitors who are “dreaming” of travel. In this quarter the Visit Sitka website [visitsitka.org](https://visitsitka.org) had 26,875 visits with 52,249 page-views and 15,648 unique visitors. 55.67% of the website visits were from the United States.



In this quarter, VS's Instagram increased by 765 followers (with a total of 9,271 followers by the end of March) and reached an average of 189,404 unique users monthly. The VS Facebook page maintained a high level of engagement with an average of 10 posts per month. (The highest performing post reached over 97,000 individual users.)

In this quarter VS published the 2021-22 visitors' guide. The guide has a circulation of 20,000 copies, with approximately 5000 copies being drop shipped to visitor centers across Alaska and in Washington.

VS staff attended three virtual trade shows, one event based in Vancouver, one hosted by a travel media planner and one sponsored by Travel Alaska. All events included a live component with direct interaction with consumers, travel planners and media as well as a virtual "trade show booth" with presentations and videos.

### **Meetings & Conventions (M&C) Update: 1/1-3/31**

This quarter Visit Sitka's Alaska Fellow began creating content for the M&C collateral and online toolkit. The new M&C planners' guide will be a magazine format 34-page document that will share success stories of holding meetings and share resources. The online toolkit will dive deeper into the resources and support available for meeting planners. She continues to be instrumental in supporting events in Sitka including the Chamber's virtual Winter Speaker Series and Facebook Live program.

### **Visitor Services Update: 1/1-3/31**

Between January and March, VS visitor center welcomed 80 guests, including visitors from six states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Texas) in addition to local Sitka community members. VS team members provided telephone support services for visitors and locals looking for most up-to-date travel protocols and mandates, and answered 16 email inquiries from visitors. In January, Visit Sitka received recognition as a Covid Conscious Business. VS staff began working regularly in the office during extended Visitor Information Center hours (9:00 am – 4:00 pm) and provided 131 hours of visitor services support.

VS continued to distribute Visit Sitka Magazines by mail, locally and throughout the state including distribution racks at Westmark Sitka Hotel, Totem Square Inn and 2 racks at the Airport. VS also began distributing Visit Sitka Magazines to VS partners and business owners.

VS hosted a Conventions & Visitor Services virtual lunch for VS partners in March, which was attended by approximately 50 attendees. VS leadership also attended monthly Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) COVID support meetings and Southeast Conference Mid-Session Summit. VS also joined the Buy Alaska program to encourage local spending.

## Industry Partner Update: 1/1-3/31

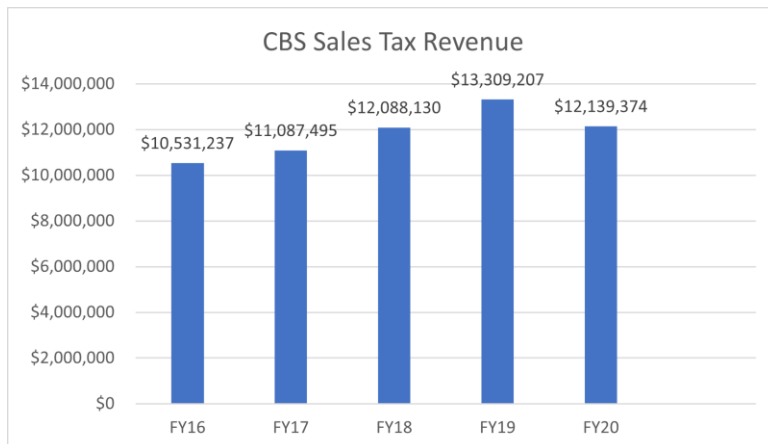
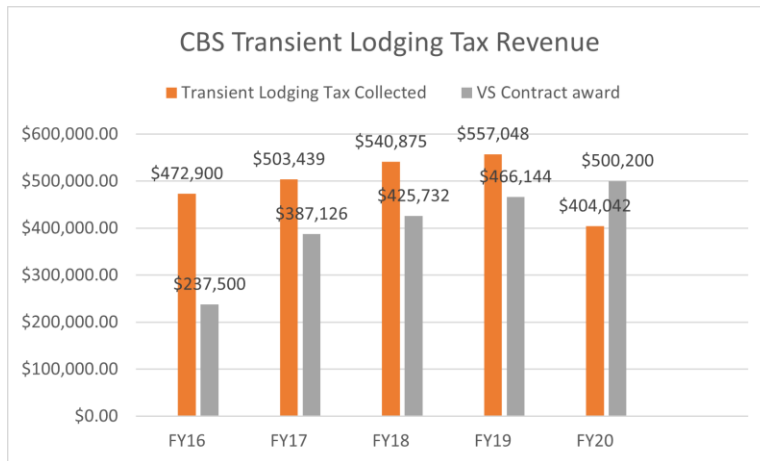
On January 23, VS participated in a work session with the Sitka Assembly.

VS leadership participated in Southeast Conference Tourism Committee and Economic Development Committee meetings, Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) COVID-19 Return to Cruising Workgroup meetings, Virtual Woonsocket Health Network. They also attended the Western Association of Chamber Executives' Annual Conference, the JEDC Visitor Products Cluster Workgroup, and served on the UAS Sitka local advisory committee.

## Financial Update: 1/1-3/31

The Chamber board of directors selected The Foraker Group as our bookkeeper and began transition of services in January 2021. The Foraker Group will be performing accounting functions and creating financial reports as per the contract. The Chamber operates on a calendar year with budgets and financials reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors.

The following graphs show the Sales Tax and Transient Lodging Tax from FY15 – FY20



**Income Update: 1/1-3/31**

The Profit and Loss statement reflects income from the CBS Contract in the amount of \$125,050, first quarter of calendar year 2021. The Sitka Chamber raises revenues outside the contract through marketing partnerships and sales. Partners of Visit Sitka, which include local tourism businesses and organizations contributed \$59,252 towards the marketing programs. In addition, Sitka Chamber will apply for grants and funding opportunities to support the program goals. In late March, we were approved for a PPP loan through the US Small Business Association COVID relief funds.

**Expense Updates: 1/1-3/31**

In the expense report, you will see all expense related to promotion, advertising, marketing, and operating expenses for Visit Sitka. The full contract amount was expended, in addition to the \$43,166 reflected in the report. This quarter's expenses included the major expense of creating, printing and shipping of the 2021-22 Visitor Guide.

Attachment: Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce  
Profit & Loss by Class- Visit Sitka Contract, January through March 2021

Respectfully,

Rachel Roy, Executive Director

Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce | Visit Sitka

**Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce**  
**Profit & Loss by Class**  
January through March 2021

	<u>Total 200 - Visit Sitka Contract</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4200 · Contract Revenue	125,050.00
Total Income	<u>125,050.00</u>
Gross Profit	<u>125,050.00</u>
Expense	
5000 · Personnel Expenses	
5010 · Salaries & Wages	67,670.05
5012 · Sales Commission	4,192.50
5015 · FUTA	180.52
5020 · Social Security	4,277.33
5025 · Medicare	1,000.37
5030 · ESC	1,448.79
5040 · Worker's Comp Insurance	1,440.00
Total 5000 · Personnel Expenses	<u>80,209.56</u>
6200 · Promotion	
6200 · Promotion - Other	3,100.00
Total 6200 · Promotion	<u>3,100.00</u>
6300 · Occupancy	
6310 · Rent	6,300.00
6320 · Utilities	829.18
6330 · Telephone & Internet	4,592.69
6300 · Occupancy - Other	148.09
Total 6300 · Occupancy	<u>11,869.96</u>
6400 · Professional Services	
6410 · Advertising	43,752.08
6420 · Accounting Fees	3,506.06
6440 · Promotion	835.00
6400 · Professional Services - Other	1,454.95
Total 6400 · Professional Services	<u>49,548.09</u>
6500 · Supplies	
6510 · Office Supplies	1,815.79
6520 · Office Technology	1,174.74
6530 · Postage & Freight	516.73
6540 · Printing and Copying	17,981.00
Total 6500 · Supplies	<u>21,488.26</u>
6710 · Dues & Subscriptions	1,895.02
6730 · Catering	53.20
6790 · Miscellaneous Expense	52.00
Total Expense	<u>168,216.09</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>-43,166.09</u>
Net Income	<u><u>-43,166.09</u></u>

Visit Sitka Unrestricted Revenue 59,252.00