



# City and Borough of Sitka


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*A Coast Guard City*

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

**Thru:** John Leach, Municipal Administrator 

**From:** Amy Ainslie, Planning Director 

**Date:** August 19, 2021

**Subject:** **Zoning Text Amendment for the Recreation District**

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### Background

The intent of the Recreation district is explained in SGC 22.16.150(A): "The recreation district is intended to contain both public and private lands to be used for recreation purposes. Lands designated for this district should be evaluated for long-term public benefits to accrue from the protection offered by this designation."

The recreation zone is essentially a mix of single-family residential, open space, and light commercial uses (though commercial uses are largely conditional, rather than permitted uses).

Currently, lands in the Recreation district are limited to Baranof Warm Springs. If passed, ORD 21-28 would add 4951 Halibut Point Road to the Recreation District.

Per the lease negotiations for 4951 Halibut Point Road, it was discussed that three additional uses (eating and drinking places, amusement and entertainment, and outdoor amphitheater) would need to be added as conditional to the Recreation district. Additionally, the Baranof Property Owner's Association (BPOA) at Baranof Warm Springs has wished to make some alterations to the zoning code as it relates specifically to the Baranof Warm Springs townsite. This ordinance addresses both sets of desired changes to the Recreation zone.

The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the amendments to the Recreation zone as proposed by this ordinance.

## **Analysis**

The changes as proposed by CBS are in part driven by the expansion of the recreation district resulting from the rezoning of 4951 HPR. The following uses are proposed as conditional across the entire zoning district, meaning that each proposal fitting these descriptions in the Recreation zone would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis through the conditional use permit process.

1. Eating and drinking places: The presence of available eating and drinking places can enhance the recreational experience/value of an area. This is recommended as a conditional use to ensure that proposals will be of a nature and scale appropriate for the zone.
2. Amusement and entertainment: Outdoor adventure parks or other attractions are growing in popularity and would be a valuable addition to the possibilities within the recreation zone. This is recommended as a conditional use to ensure that proposals will be of a nature and scale appropriate for the zone.
3. Outdoor amphitheater: This appears to be a mostly natural fit for the recreation zone, but given that there are allowed residential uses in the zone, a conditional use permit process is recommended.

The Baranof Warm Springs townsite is unique in that it is largely a rural, residential neighborhood. Lot sizes are small, meaning that the townsite is dense and there is little buffer between developed properties. Given these conditions, developments within the townsite have the potential to significantly alter the character of the area and create adverse impacts. This is why the BPOA has applied to make the following uses conditional, rather than outright permitted, in the townsite specifically. This is modelled from the General Island district, in which some uses are permitted on unsubdivided island, and conditional on subdivided islands. The townsite is defined by three U.S. Surveys – 3110, 3291A, and 3291B.

1. Resort: Resort is currently undefined in the zoning code. Given that hotel/motel is currently a conditional use, it would follow that resort should also be subject to a conditional use process particularly in the dense townsite area.
2. Utility facilities (transformers, pump stations, etc.): The presence of utility services and facilities can significantly alter the natural setting generally found in the recreation district due to visual and noise impacts, as well as scale of development. In recognition of the dense, rural, residential nature of the townsite, the BPOA proposes such uses be conditional in the townsite.
3. Public water supply facilities: The presence of utility services including public water supply facilities can significantly alter the natural setting generally found in the recreation district due to visual and noise impacts, as well as scale of development. In recognition of the dense, residential nature of the townsite, the BPOA proposes such uses be conditional in the townsite. It is notable that public water supply facilities are prohibited uses in all other residential zones.

**Fiscal Note**

No fiscal notes are associated with this zoning text amendment.

**Recommendation**

Approve the zoning text amendment modifying permitted and conditional uses in the Recreation district.