

Process to Prepare the Sitka 2030 Comprehensive Plan

The City and Borough of Sitka Planning Commission served as the steering committee to oversee development of the Sitka 2030 Comprehensive Plan. They were assisted by municipal staff and by the organizations and individuals who attended meetings, offered comments, and provided information during plan development. Work on the plan occurred from February 2016 through final Assembly adoption in January 2018.

Major steps in the development of this Plan were:

1 Preparing a 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 2030 Comprehensive Plan 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
- Public Participation should focus on collaborating with people of diverse opinions
- Involve young people
- Equal emphasis on both public meetings and internet based interaction
- Enthusiastic, engaging, and vibrant



2 Logo Contest

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

3 Project Website



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

When e-updates (see below) went to the project contact list, direct links to download meeting packets were provided, that were well-used by the public.

4 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 in 2017 on September 1, August 1, June 7, June 2, May 17, April 4, April 3, March 3, February 4, and in 2016 on December 19, November 7, November 3, October 26, September 22, and August 30.

5 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

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.

10. Women Educator's Society

6 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.

7 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 each, residents could drop by anytime between 5 pm and 8 pm. Each Open House drew 60-80 Sitkans. Especially gratifying was the fact that many participants at each meeting were new to the Comprehensive Plan process, and were not the typical meeting-goers.

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.

8 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.

9 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

10 Pedestrian and Bicyclist Count

Staff and volunteers conducted a pedestrian and bicyclist count June 13, 2017 at the intersection of Katlian Avenue and Lincoln Street. Two staff and eight volunteers participated.

11 Planning Commission Meetings/Work Sessions

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. October 4, 2017 – Review and discussion of draft Comprehensive Plan
2. September 5, 2017 – Review and discussion of Public Process
3. August 1, 2017 - Review and discussion of Borough Facilities & Future Growth Maps
4. June 6, 2017 - Open House - Historic, Cultural, and Arts Resources; Parks and Recreation; Transportation; S-Map; and training for the upcoming bike-pedestrian count
5. April 4, 2017 - Review and discussion of Transportation
6. 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

7. February 7, 2017- Review and discussion of Housing, Land Use, Economics key issues and Goals, Objectives, and Policies
8. January 3, 2017 - Discussion of Open House Results
9. November 8, 2016 - Open House on Housing, the Economy, and Land Use, plus a Housing Fair
10. October 5, 2016 - Review and discussion of Housing
11. September 6, 2016 - Review and discussion of Sitka's Economy, exercise to identify economic goals and challenges
12. August 2, 2016 - Policy for CBS Land Management
13. June 7, 2016 - Policy for CBS Land Management, a mapping exercise
14. May 3, 2016 - Review and discussion of Current Land Inventory and Use, a Visioning exercise
15. April 5, 2016 - Review and discussion of Historical Land Use, a SWOT analysis
16. March 1, 2016 – Overview, process, schedule
17. February 2, 2016 – Marketing plan
18. February 16, 2016 – Marketing plan
19. January 19, 2016 – Scope, schedule, and public participation plans
20. January 5, 2016 – General presentation by staff
21. December 15, 2015 – General presentation by staff

12 Media Coverage

Daily Sitka Sentinel ran 15 stories on the Comprehensive Plan process, while KCAW Raven Radio ran 6 stories. (Figures as of September 1, 2017)

13 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.

14 Public Hearings

A formal Planning Commission Public Hearing, as part of plan adoption by Resolution 2017-xxxx (will be filled in later), occurred on November 7, 2017.

The Sitka 2030 Comprehensive Plan was introduced for adoption at a City and borough of Sitka Assembly meeting on _____. A Public Hearing, as part of plan adoption by Ordinance 2018-xxxx (will be filled in later), occurred on _____. (blanks will be filled in later)