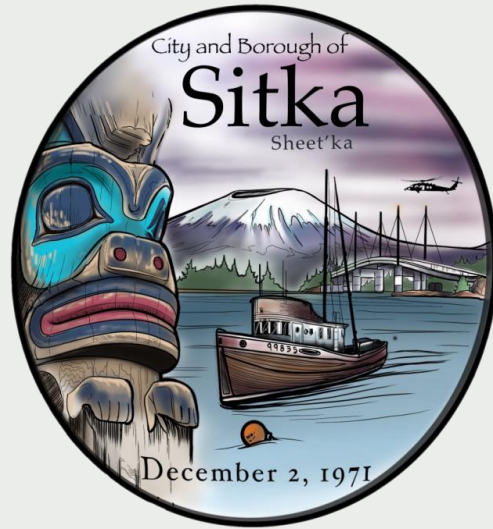


2024 CBS ANNUAL REPORT

John Leach
Municipal Administrator



Good afternoon, everyone—members of the Chamber of Commerce, community members, and guests.

I want to start by thanking the Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event and for inviting me to speak today. It's an honor to be here and to look back on the great things we've accomplished together in the City and Borough of Sitka over the past year. 2024 has truly been a year to remember—full of growth, teamwork, and hard work. Together, we've hit some important milestones that show our commitment and the wonderful spirit that makes Sitka such a special place to live. Each department has played a part in improving life for our residents and sparking engaging conversations in the community.

Today, I want to celebrate how our different departments have worked towards the goals in our strategic plan. From better roads and infrastructure to improved community services, each achievement contributes to making Sitka a better, more vibrant place. As we go through these accomplishments, you'll see how they fit into our shared vision for the future—whether it's boosting our local economy, focusing on sustainability, or enhancing communication.

Let's take a moment to reflect on what we've achieved and celebrate how far we've come in the past year.



Steven Eisenbeisz
Mayor

JJ Carlson
Deputy Mayor

Timothy Pike
Vice Deputy Mayor

Thor Christianson

Kevin Mosher

Chris Ystad

Scott Saline

Mayor and Assembly Members

2024 Annual Report

Let me take a moment to highlight the individuals you see here – our current Mayor and Assembly members, the leaders who guide the City and Borough of Sitka.

The Assembly's structure is designed for stability, with staggered three-year terms that allow for experienced leadership while welcoming new perspectives when terms conclude. However, the voters decided to reelect Mr. Mosher and Mr. Saline in 2024. Complementing this structure is our Mayor, reelected in the 2024 election, who will serve a two-year term.

As we proceed with the presentation, I encourage you to reflect on the enduring leadership and teamwork of this group, which has been essential in achieving the milestones we'll discuss today. Their commitment underscores the strength of Sitka's governance.

Boards, Commissions, Committees

The City and Borough of Sitka extends its gratitude to the dedicated community members who generously volunteer their time and effort as appointed members of our various Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

Animal Hearing Board	Local Emergency Planning Committee
Building Department Appeals Board	Parks and Recreation Committee
Employment Relations Board	Planning Commission
Gary Paxton Industrial Park Board	Police and Fire Commission
Health Needs & Human Services Commission	Port and Harbors Commission
Historic Preservation Commission	Sustainability Commission
Investment Committee	Tourism Commission
Library Commission	Tree and Landscape Committee

2024 Annual Report

This slide highlights an important part of our community's success: the fantastic contributions of our volunteers. While city staff and elected officials are vital to Sitka's operations, the support and involvement of community members are just as important.

Here, you can see a list of our boards, commissions, and committees, all of which are fueled by volunteers who willingly give their time, skills, and enthusiasm. These individuals play a key role in shaping policies and driving projects that help our city thrive.

I want to draw your attention to a recent development: the creation of the Tourism Commission. This commission was established after the Tourism Task Force completed its goals, which included making recommendations for long-term tourism management. They presented their action plan to the Assembly on April 30, 2024, and it was approved on May 16. As of November 2024, the seven-member Tourism Commission was appointed to support the Assembly by developing community-focused strategies that promote the social, economic, and environmental well-being of Sitka and improve the quality of life for its residents.

According to our CBS Charter, we have three essential boards: the Planning Commission, the Police and Fire Commission, and the School Board. These boards are crucial for our governance, providing specialized oversight in their areas.

The dedication of our volunteers across all boards and committees showcases the lively spirit and active participation of our community. Their hard work is vital to helping CBS fulfill its mission and vision.


Strategic Plan

History and
2024 Updates to the plan

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA (CBS) STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION
Provide public services for Sitka that support a livable community for all

VISION
CBS is an organization that values everyone and proactively works together to serve the community. We are fiscally sustainable, supporting a diverse economy and well-managed infrastructure. We are innovative in seeking ways to protect and preserve Sitka's natural environment. We are a respected employer where people enjoy their work and provide valued public services.



VALUES

SERVICE

★

INTEGRITY

★


TEAMWORK

★

KINDNESS


★

ACCOUNTABILITY




QUALITY OF LIFE

Preserve the quality of life and affordability for all Sitkans




COMMUNICATION

Improve communications and strengthen relationships within the community




SUSTAINABLE

Align resources and financial and economic policies with CBS' goals for a sustainable community



INFRASTRUCTURE

Plan and Invest in sustainable infrastructure for future generations



SERVICE

CBS is recognized as being a great place to work and excellent service provider to the community

2024 Annual Report

As we kick off the presentation, I want to take a moment to walk you through our Strategic Plan.

This plan is more than just a document; it's our roadmap for moving CBS forward. It lays out clear goals and actions that connect with our mission and values, making sure all departments work together toward a common vision. At its heart, the plan includes actionable steps and measurable outcomes, helping us adapt to the changing needs of our community.

We first adopted the Strategic Plan in September 2022, and it's designed to be a living document that we review every year to keep it relevant. Building on our long-range Comprehensive Plan, it reflects what our community wants over the next five years, shaped by feedback from surveys, focus groups, and community leaders.

Last November, the Sitka Assembly met for a two-day Goal Refinement Retreat. We took this time to celebrate what we've accomplished and refine the focus of our Strategic Plan. As we enter the third year, the plan continues to help Sitka tackle important issues like housing, affordability, infrastructure, and communications.

For 2024, here are some key updates:- ****Update of City and Borough of Sitka Values****: Over the past year, our team has reflected on our house rules and core values. We aimed to create a message that truly resonates with our staff while keeping the essence of who we are. We've combined our house rules into a set of core values that capture our mission: Service, Integrity, Teamwork, Kindness, and Accountability—SITKA.

This update ensures our plan remains in tune with the needs of both our community and our organization, driving CBS toward a bright future.



2024 Annual Report

Quality of Life

Preserve the **quality of life**
and affordability for all
Sitkans

*Pictured here: P&R Sitka
Summer Camp*

Our first goal is to improve the "Quality of Life" for everyone in Sitka. This involves various aspects of well-being and happiness.

For Objective 1.1, we've kicked off a housing land study to find the best opportunities for affordable housing.


In Objective 1.2, we've secured a grant called the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) to help with recycling and going electric. Our staff also submitted a request for a \$1 million incentive through the Hydroelectric Production Incentive Program.

As for Objective 1.3, we formed the Tourism Commission in August and are looking for a Tourism Manager. If you know someone who might be a good fit, please send them our way! We also signed an agreement with SSCT to help manage cruise calls, ensuring that we limit the number of passengers to fewer than 7,000 per day.

For Objective 1.4, our Public & Government Relations Director is joining weekly meetings with the Childcare Now group to improve childcare services and workforce development. We also launched a career pathways program this fall for students in all three high schools, with 30 students enrolled. This program lets them take college courses and earn an endorsement in Early Childhood Education if they want.

For Objective 1.5, we put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to lease a community garden on Jarvis Street, working with Transition Sitka and the Sitka Local Food Network. Plus, we continue to support the Sitka Seed Library, which helps promote self-sufficiency through seed sharing and gardening classes.

These efforts are all about making Sitka a place where everyone can enjoy a better quality of life.

	<h2>Communication</h2> <p>Improve communications and strengthen relationships within the community</p>
<p>2024 Annual Report</p>	

The second strategic goal focuses on “communication” as a key way to build trust and engage the community.

For Objective 2.1, we’ve created a communications plan to tell our story about the strategic plan and our achievements. This plan aims to keep the community and visitors informed, celebrate our successes, and includes our quarterly newsletter, “CBS News.” We also have plans for educating people about recycling connected to each major Public Works project.

Each department shares quarterly updates with the Assembly, and you can find these reports in the Assembly packet.

On top of that, I regularly join the radio shows each month or every couple of weeks to talk directly with the community.

In Objective 2.2, we support non-profit organizations every year by providing grants from the General Fund.

For Objective 2.3, I want to highlight our partnership with SAIL, where we help connect people to entry-level job opportunities at CBS.

Overall, these efforts are all about making communication a central part of what we do and ensuring we connect with everyone in the community.



2024 Annual Report

Sustainability

Align resources and financial and economic policies with CBS' goals for a **sustainable** community

Pictured here: Scrap Yard Baler

Our third strategic focus is "Sustainability," showing our commitment to building a better future for our community.

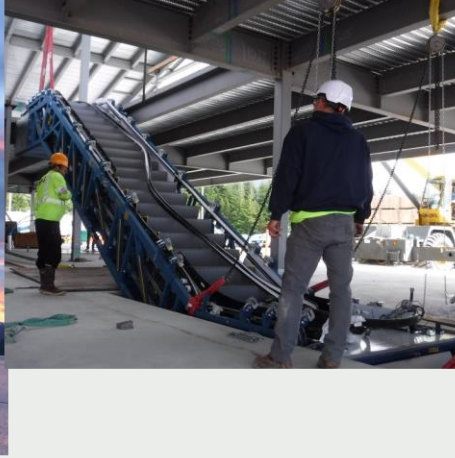
Starting with Objective 3.1, we've set up an asset management program and created a risk matrix to help us with capital planning. This means we're using a risk-based approach to decide how to spend our money wisely.

For Objective 3.2, Public Works has finished checking the condition of all CBS-owned school buildings. These assessments will help us prioritize the most important repairs first and plan for replacing assets before they fail.

Regarding Objective 3.4, the Tourism Task Force put together a recommendation report for the Assembly in April. They presented an action plan in July, and by November, the Assembly agreed to a deal with the cruise terminal that limits the number of passengers to no more than 7,000 each day, with a quiet day weekend limit of under 1,250 passengers.

Also, in October, voters approved a seasonal sales tax of 1% that will go towards maintaining school buildings.

All these steps show our dedication to sustainability, ensuring Sitka thrives today and continues to prosper for future generations.



Infrastructure

Plan and invest in sustainable **infrastructure** for future generations

2024 Annual Report

The fourth strategic goal of our plan is all about "Infrastructure," which is crucial for keeping our community healthy and growing economically.

Under objective 4.1, we've received over \$150 million in federal grants for several important projects, including upgrades to the airport, the Marine Service Center (MSC), the haul-out facility, the Sea Plane Base, and improvements to our utilities.

For objective 4.2, we hired an Asset Manager to help keep our work on track. We're also extending our asset management program to include the utilities and school buildings. We've finished a harbor condition assessment, which will help us decide what repairs or upgrades need to be prioritized. Plus, we wrapped up a study on harbor rates and governance to find new ways to generate income.

In terms of objective 4.3, we've taken on the Blatchley Pool and set up an agreement with the school district for facility maintenance. We've also put a snow and ice management policy in place.

Lastly, for objective 4.4, we're involved in the Tongass Plan Revision to help shape our community's future.



2024 Annual Report

Service

CBS is recognized as being a great place to work and excellent **service** provider to the community

Our fifth goal in the strategic plan is all about "Service." We want to improve the well-being and satisfaction of our community and workforce.

****Objective 5.1:**** We've revamped all job descriptions and created more chances for employees to advance and get certified. We've also focused on training and better recruitment, which has helped us build a stronger team.

****Objective 5.2:**** We've rolled out a new Human Resource Information System (HRIS) that combines payroll, benefits, time tracking, and other HR tasks. This makes things more efficient and organized. We've also introduced a new process for personnel orders that cuts down on busywork and speeds up the time it takes to complete tasks.

****Objectives 5.3 & 5.4:**** We're working on centralizing permitting, and we'll share more about that in 2025, along with news of a new website host.

For Objective 5.4, we kicked off a Work Culture Initiative this spring to boost morale and recognize our staff. We started a "Culture Club" (no Boy George) made up of employee volunteers to help with this effort. We also hold monthly staff meetings to share updates on city projects and celebrate employee achievements.



Before we get into the statistics, I want to take a moment to thank some key teams and organizations that really stepped up during the Great Sitka Outage of 2024.

As many of you remember, the outage began in the last week of August when GCI found a break in the only fiber optic cable connecting Sitka to the outside world. This led to a complete loss of cell service, texting, and internet access. The Sitka Economic Development Association (SEDA) conducted a survey to find out how much this outage affected local businesses, and they estimated the losses to be over \$250,000 during the two weeks.

The city's IT Department did an amazing job by upgrading the data center to keep things running smoothly, making sure the city stayed connected despite the disruptions. Their quick action and smart use of Starlink and bandwidth management really helped us stay online.

They also set up Starlink at the library and Senior Center to help the public regain access to the internet, which was a lifeline for many people in our community.

A big shoutout to the CBS staff, Tlingit & Haida Tidal Network, Sitka Dock Company, and Royal Caribbean Group for their fantastic support. Your teamwork truly shows the strength and resilience of our community. #SitkaStrong

Service Stats

Sitka Police Department

- 24249 total calls received
- 3736 911 calls received
- 13810 calls for service
- 549 Officer reports
- 120 Citations written

Sitka Fire Department

- 1577 calls received
- 1385 EMS
- 192 other including 22 Fire
- 33% calls were non-resident
- Average call time is 40 minutes

2024 Annual Report

When we think about the vital role our first responders play, the numbers from our Sitka Police and Fire Departments really show how dedicated they are to keeping our community safe.

In the past year, our Sitka Police Department handled an impressive 24,249 calls, including 3,736 urgent 911 calls. Officers responded to 13,810 service requests, filed 549 reports, and issued 120 citations.

On the other hand, our Sitka Fire Department responded to 1,577 calls (up by almost 200 from last year) and of those calls 1,385 were EMS related, 192 were other which includes 22 fires. During the tourist season, it was recorded that 33% of the calls were from nonresidents. The average call time was 40 minutes.

These figures highlight the heavy workload our first responders handle every day. It's especially important to keep this in mind as volunteerism decreases across the country and it becomes harder to recruit people for careers in law enforcement. The safety of our community truly depends on their hard work and commitment, so it's essential that we recognize and support them as we move forward.

Other Stats

Sitka Public Library

- 92,810 annual visitors
- 10,697 reference questions answered
- 218,077 online catalog views
- 138 volunteers donating 519 hours at the library
- 10,761 repaired books/DVDs
- 71,605 items checked out
- 137 programs offered
- 4,178 attendance at all programs

Parks & Recreation

- 517 youth registered for programs
- 61 students were awarded scholarships
- 90 players City League Basketball
- Pool usage up 77%

2024 Annual Report

Let's take a moment to look at some really cool numbers from this past year. Starting with Sitka Public Library:

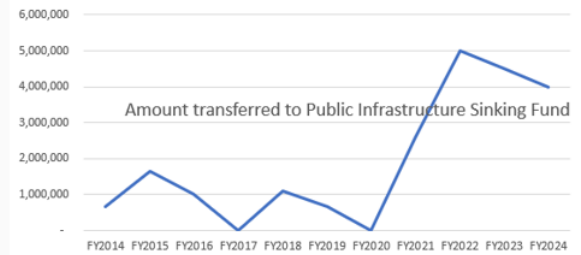
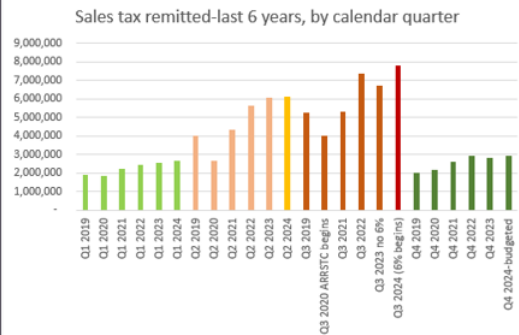
- We had 92,810 visitors come through our doors—wow!
- Our staff answered 10,697 reference questions—so many curious folks out there!
- People used our online catalog over 218,000 times.
- Huge thanks to our 138 volunteers who helped out, putting in 519 hours of their time—that's awesome!
- Behind the scenes, we repaired 10,761 books and DVDs to get them back into your hands.
- Patrons checked out more than 71,600 items, and we put on 137 programs that drew a total of 4,178 attendees.

Now, moving on to Parks & Recreation:

- We had 517 kids take part in our programs—how great is that?
- We were able to give scholarships to 61 students so they could join in on the fun.
- The City League Basketball program saw 90 players hitting the court.
- And guess what? Pool usage is up by 77%. Looks like everyone is excited about swimming again!

These numbers show just how our community comes together to learn, enjoy, and stay active. Great job, everyone!

Sales Tax / Public Infrastructure Sinking Fund



2024 Annual Report

Our Sales Tax revenue has steadied out. With the pandemic behind us and tourism remaining steady from year to year, it looks like we’ve found a new “normal.” There’s still some potential for growth, as businesses in the tourism sector are still getting used to the new number of visitors.

Right now, the funds we’re transferring to the Public Infrastructure Stabilization Fund (PISF) are in a good place, but we’re feeling more pressure on our resources. As we add new services—like our Parks and Recreation program, managing the Blatchley pool, and taking on school maintenance—and filling empty positions, the extra money we used to transfer to the PISF will likely be small. That means we’ll have less funding available for our maintenance needs.

If tourism takes a big hit, our sales tax revenue will likely drop too, which would make it even harder for us to invest in our infrastructure.

What's Next:2025

Projects/Infrastructure



Tourism



2024 Annual Report

This annual update is more than just a routine check-in; it's a promise to ourselves and our community. As we outlined in our roadmap, we want to set meaningful goals and make sure to revisit and adjust them each year to keep them aligned with our shared vision.

Let's take a moment to look at our future roadmap. Recently, on November 6 and 7, we held our annual Strategic Plan update workshop with the Assembly. This important meeting followed our community survey and discussions with various boards, commissions, and staff.

As we move into the third year of our strategic plan, we're ready to embrace change and seize opportunities, turning our ideas into real impact. With our shared vision in mind, we aim to create a legacy that addresses today's needs while paving the way for a better tomorrow.

For Goal #1, we plan to keep working closely with the Childcare Group, finish the housing land study, and explore funding options for affordable housing through state programs. Even with the citizen initiative, we'll continue to look at how tourism affects our community and work on policies based on the recommendations approved by the Assembly in 2024.

For Goal #2, we want to engage more with the community, team up with non-profits, and reach out to those who are often underrepresented.

In terms of Goal #3, we'll collaborate with partners on our responsible tourism initiatives.

For Goal #4, we will expand our Asset Management Plan across different departments and continue our work on the Sitka Renewable Energy Strategy.

Goal #5 is all about making our organization a great workplace and providing top-notch service to the community. We'll do this by investing in training programs to give our staff the skills and knowledge they need to excel and deliver great results.

Every step we take is intentional, every decision has a purpose, and every goal reflects our commitment to supporting and uplifting our community.



THANK YOU

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In closing, I want to extend my thanks to all of you for being here today and the Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event. Together, we've reflected on the milestones of our Strategic Plan, reaffirming our commitments and the actions we're taking to strengthen our community.

I'd like to open the floor for questions. Your perspectives and input are valuable as we guide the City and Borough of Sitka toward a resilient and thriving future. Thank you for your engagement.