

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Agenda Sustainability Commission

Officers: Chair Aurora Taylor, Vice Chair Katie Riley, Secretary Erik de Jong

Members: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope

Staff Liaison: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator

Assembly Liaison: Thor Christianson

Monday, March 3, 2025

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the February 3, 2025 minutes.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda*)

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Approve the Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Goals

VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Approve the Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Document

C. Discussion/Direction/Decision on the Commission's Participation at the Sitka Living Locally Event

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda*)

IX. REPORTS (*Staff, Chair, Assembly, Commissioners*)

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

XI. ADJOURNMENT



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Minutes Sustainability Commission

Officers: Chair Aurora Taylor, Vice Chair Katie Riley, Secretary Erik de Jong

Members: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope

Staff Liaison: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator

Assembly Liaison: Thor Christianson

Monday, February 3, 2025

7:00 P.M.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at approximately 7:22 P.M.

Present: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope, Erik de Jong, Aurora Taylor,
Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: Katie Riley (excused)

Staff: Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator)

Public: Kay Kreiss

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

No changes.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the January 6, 2025 minutes.

Hope moved to approve the January 6, 2025 minutes.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by voice vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda)*

None.

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve the Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Goals

Commissioners discussed the shortlist of goals, and focused on how the Commission could support the development of a municipal solid waste strategy, support electrification of the municipal fleet, and utilize the greenhouse gas emissions inventory for strategic planning. Hope proposed to explore the idea of hosting a sustainability conference in 2026 and further investigation opportunities into hydroelectric projects.

Kay Kreiss commented on the potential impact of the new federal administration on sustainability efforts

**Bagley moved to prioritize operational goals over project-based goals.
Motion PASSED 4-0 by voice vote.**

The discussion ended with the Commission positioned to support sustainable municipal operations. Gabel informed the Commission that she would update the draft work plan to reflect this direction.

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda)*

None.

IX. REPORTS *(Staff, Chair, Assembly, Commissioners)*

Staff: Gabel attended the Alaska Forum on the Environment virtually that week. She announced that the first public Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) Workshop was scheduled for February 13th and provided the Commission with updates on the status of the two items requested from the January meeting regarding youth commissioners and additional telephonic participation.

Chair: None.

Assembly: None.

Commissioners: Hope planned to attend the National Conference of American Indians (NCAI) and was going to explore additional philanthropic efforts between tribes and municipalities.

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

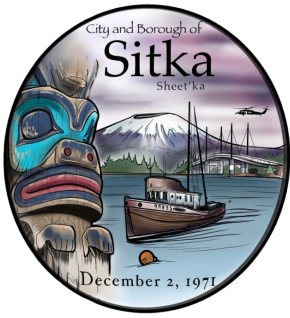
The next meeting was scheduled for March 3, 2025 at 6:00 P.M., in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seeing no objection, the meeting ADJOURNED at approximately 8:39 P.M.


Minutes By: Erik de Jong, Secretary



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: February 28, 2025
Subject: **Approve Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Goals**

Background

On March 26th, 2024, the Assembly [unanimously approved](#) the goals of the [Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Work Plan](#). These goals are:

1. Continue the development of the [Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy](#) (SCRES)
2. Collaborate with City staff on strategic management of municipal solid waste (MSW)
3. Support electrification of the municipal fleet

At the February 3rd, 2025, regular meeting, the Commission unanimously voted to prioritize operational goals over project based goals. With this direction, the staff liaison analyzed the short-list of proposed goals and conducted an analysis for new and continuing goals that summarize the focus, budget, time intensity for City Staff and Commission, and timeframe. This format was originally used in the 2023-2024 work plan but not used on 2024-2025 since all the goals were continued. However, upon review, this was reintegrated as it shows how goals have changed over time.

Analysis

The goals have been categorized into *New*, *Continue*, and *Complete*. There are 3 new proposed goals, 2 continuing goals, and 1 completed goal.

Many actions suggested by Commissioners and requested by the Assembly can support CBS operations under a broad goal. This would allow for flexibility in how the Commission approaches these actions (strategic deliverables) and support other requests from the City as they are made.

Two goals did not clearly fit under this goal, and based on internal review, would likely require additional support and time from both the Commission and City staff to achieve. As such, they have been included as separate goals.

Continuing goals remain largely unaltered but have been reworked to allow for flexibility as the Public Works Department continues to experience staffing shortages with proposed deliverables posed to move forward either independently or as needed. With the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) supported by technical assistance, the Commission has acted in a steering capacity for the project.

The completed goal is the electrification of the municipal fleet. While this does not mean that the entire City fleet has been electrified, the actions taken by the Commission last year have given staff clear direction on electrification and formalized a route for Commission engagement in fleet electrification as needed. Therefore, the continuation of this goal can be considered “as needed” and fits under supporting sustainable municipal operations.

Drafted 2025-2026 Goals Are:

New:

1. Support Sustainable Municipal Operations

- a. Update the Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and analyze progress
- b. Identify sustainability metrics for municipal operations that align with CBS's Strategic Plan.
- c. Develop recommendations and necessary actions to reduce municipal emissions, such as continued support for electrification of the municipal fleet via advisory group.
- d. Integrate sustainability metrics into existing and near future CBS projects.

2. Explore Regional Approach to Sustainability

3. Explore Energy Expansion Options

Continue:

4. Collaborating with City Staff on Strategic Management of Municipal Solid Waste

- a. Develop the Solid Waste Advisory Group Charter and MSW Strategy
- b. Facilitate Public Engagement in the Southeast Alaska Solid Waste Authority Regional Planning Project

5. Supporting and Finalize the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy

Recommendation

Continue discussion regarding the updated draft goals for 2025-2026 and ask any clarifying questions and/or suggest changes to the goals. A motion(s) should be made to formally approve these goals.

ENCL:

Draft 2025-2026 Annual Work Plan (Appendices excluded)

POSSIBLE MOTION(S)

Approve goals individually:

I MOVE TO approve Goal 1. Support Sustainable Municipal Operations and its supporting actions as written in the packet.

I MOVE TO amend Goal 1 by adding/removing/rewording action letter ____.

Repeat with each goal.

Approve all goals as written:

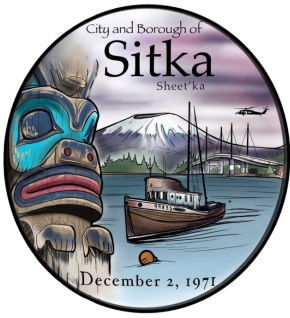
I MOVE TO approve the Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Goals as written in the packet.

Modify goal(s) through discussion by amending the main motion.

I MOVE TO amend the main motion by adding/removing/rewording Goal #/action letter ____.

If amendment(s) pass, main motion becomes:


I MOVE TO approve the Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Goals as written in the packet and as amended.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: February 28, 2025
Subject: **Approve Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Document**

Background

This item has been included to allow the Commission to make edits and request changes to the 2025-2026 work plan draft.

An agenda item request for Assembly review of the 2025-2026 work plan has been requested for the March 11th meeting. A final copy of the plan must be submitted by March 5th at noon.

Recommendation

Please request any edits and/or modifications to the 2025-2026 work plan that help clarify or better reflect the Commission's perspective of the finalized goals. If major modifications should be made, consider requesting a work session.

It is recommended a motion be made to approve the 2025-2026 work plan.

ENCL:

Draft 2025-2026 Annual Work Plan (Appendices excluded)

POSSIBLE MOTION(S)

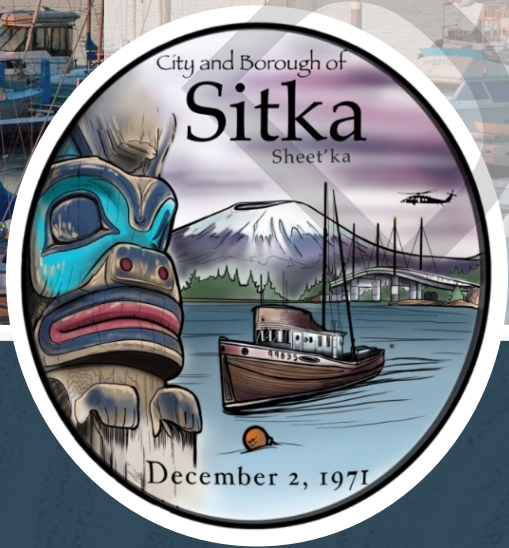
I MOVE TO approve the Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Work Plan as published in the packet.

I MOVE TO approve the Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Work Plan as published in the packet and amended through Commission discussion.

I MOVE TO add/reword/replace/reorder _____ from page #.

City and Borough of Sitka
**SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION**
WORK PLAN

2025-2026



Submitted for Assembly review on
March ##, 2025

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B: Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy Education Modules ##

C: Municipal Solid Waste Strategic Management Policy ##

D: Municipal Vehicle Procurement Policy ##





City and Borough of Sitka SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sustainability Commission acts as an advisory body to the Assembly with the purpose of catalyzing and developing municipal and community-focused approaches that support the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the City (SGC 2.31.010).

2024-2025

NOTABLE ACTIONS

- Drafted comments on the Tongass Management Plan Revision
- Held a public hearing with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska for the Grid Resiliency Formula Grant.
- Recommended use of energy efficiency and conservation block grant (EECBG) funding be used for additional recycling containers and EV chargers for municipal vehicles.
- Recommended approval of the municipal fleet procurement policy and decarbonizing and rightsizing to improve vehicle efficiency (DRIVE) group charter.

2025-2026

NEW GOALS

1. SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

For the upcoming year, the Commission has prioritized working on goals and support CBS's direction to decarbonize city operations by 2030 (CBS Res. 22-18).

To support this goal over the next year, strategic deliverables include:

- Update the Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and analyze progress
- Identify sustainability metrics for municipal operations that align with CBS's Strategic Plan.
- Develop recommendations and necessary actions to reduce municipal emissions, such as continued support for electrification of the municipal fleet via advisory group.
- Integrate sustainability metrics into existing and near future CBS projects.

2. EXPLORE REGIONAL APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

In anticipation of the 2026-2027 work plan, this goal aims to develop the Commission's regional role and explore the possibility of a future sustainability event.

3. EXPLORE ENERGY EXPANSION OPTIONS

To prepare for Sitka's future energy needs, this goal aims to encourage generation expansion opportunities such as a Hydroelectric Project at Lake Takatz.

CONTINUE

4. COLLABORATING WITH CITY STAFF ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)

In the past year, staffing changes have made this goal particularly challenging. Despite this, the Solid Waste Advisory Group (SWAG) was formalized in CBS Public Works policy 24-01-01. **To support this goal over the next year, action items include:**

- Develop SWAG charter and MSW strategy
- Facilitate public engagement in the Southeast Alaska Solid Waste Authority Regional Planning Project.

5. SUPPORTING AND FINALIZING THE SITKA COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGY (SCRES)

With its first year completed, the SCRES is anticipated to be completed mid-2025. The Commission will continue to support the technical team as needed to finalize the SCRES.

THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

PURPOSE | SGC 2.31.010 The Sustainability Commission acts as an advisory body to the Assembly with the purpose of catalyzing and developing municipal and community-focused approaches that support the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the City.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES | SGC 2.31.060 B The commission will act as an advisory body to the Assembly with the purpose of catalyzing and developing municipal and community-focused approaches that support the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the city. **The commission will accomplish this by working towards the following actions:**



Fossil energy use reduction and development of local, renewable energy sources.



Responsible use of natural resources.



Diminution of Sitka's supply-chain fragility.



Food security enhancement.



Sustainable transportation options that leverage Sitka's locally generated, renewable energy sources.



Solid waste consumption, reduction, composting, recycling, and re-use.



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.



Other matters as the Assembly or commission may deem beneficial for the city.

REPORTING | SGC 2.31.060 B Annually, the commission will develop, identify, and present goals to the assembly for approval. The approved goals shall be the Commission's primary focus for the following year. Concurrently with presenting goals to the Assembly, the commission will submit a report to the Assembly on progress towards the previous year's goals and other activities which were approved and directed by the Assembly.





MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP | SGC 2.31.010 The commission is composed of seven members appointed by the assembly and, to the extent deemed advisable by the assembly and possible from the applicants, include at least one individual with background or training as a sustainability professional and at least one individual of Alaska Native heritage with understanding and appreciation of the historical importance of sustainability on Tlingit Aaní. All voting members of the commission shall be at-large members and representative of a diverse cross-section of the community.

TERM(S)

Aurora Taylor Chair Born and raised in Eagle River on Dena'ina Ełhena, Aurora moved to Sitka in 2019 after getting her B.S. in Environmental Science. She works as a fishery biologist and enjoys feeding salmon scraps to her cat, Tundra. 10/22 - 10/25

Katie Riley Vice Chair Born and raised in Sitka and graduated from MEHS in 2011, Katie works in policy and community development at the Sitka Conservation Society, fishes Bristol Bay in the summer, serves on the Planning Commission, and was on the Climate Action Task Force. 10/22 - 10/24
10/24 - 10/27

Erik de Jong Secretary Originally from the Netherlands, Erik permanently moved to Sitka in 2015. He runs a boat charter business that brings scientists and filmmakers to the Arctic and other remote places. Educated as a marine engineer, he has always worked on making ships more efficient. 11/23 - 11/26

Elizabeth Bagley Elizabeth works remotely for Project Drawdown, a climate solutions nonprofit. She uses her experience in education and science to work with community members to find win-win solutions that improve life for Sitkans and generations to come. 10/22 - 10/23
10/23 - 10/26

Gerry Hope Born and raised in Sitka, Gerry is the Government Relations Director at the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and has experience working with numerous local, state, and national organizations and applies decades of experience to the CBS Sustainability Commission. 3/24 - 10/24
10/24 - 10/27

Vacant

Vacant

PREVIOUS MEMBERS

Lilli Garza
Thank you!

ASSEMBLY LIAISONS

Thor Christianson
Kevin Mosher (Alt)

STAFF LIAISON

Bri Gabel
bri.gabel@cityofsitka.org | (907) 747-1856



ONGOING COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the prioritized goals, the Sustainability Commission has ongoing responsibilities that it will continue to enact throughout the year.

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT

- Serve as a resource for city staff, other commissions, boards, committees, and task forces.
- As needed, review sustainability proposals and make recommendations during Sustainability Commission meetings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Engage with community and serve as a liaison for issues, ideas, and proposals, and provide appropriate feedback.
- Cultivate relationships with residents, community groups, businesses, institutions of higher learning, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc. to provide insight on current and future projects.

2024-2025 COMMISSION REQUESTS AND ACTIONS

DRAFTED COMMENTS ON THE TONGASS MANAGEMENT PLAN REVISION

The U.S. Forest Service is currently revising the Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan which governs management activities and priorities of the agency on region. The current plan was last revised in 1997 and many of the conditions and trends of use have changed over the past 27 years. This revision is an opportunity to shift the management paradigm to one that is focused on the economic, ecological, social, and cultural sustainability of the region and the communities within it. The Commission submitted comments as a starting point to represent a broad overview of how the residents and community at large interact with and depend on the Tongass National Forest.

HOSTED A PUBLIC HEARING WITH THE SITKA TRIBE OF ALASKA FOR THE GRID RESILIENCY FORMULA GRANT

At the June 3, 2024, meeting, a public hearing was held to review the criteria and methods for the Grid Resilience State and Tribal Formula Grants program through which the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) had been allocated \$149,979. To utilize these funds, STA must subgrant these funds to an electric utility, CBS, which is required to align proposed projects that meet the criteria co-developed with STA and presented at the meeting.

PROVIDED A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR ALASKA HEAT SMART (AHS)

In 2023, the Sustainability Commission unanimously recommended the Assembly fund this request but failed to find two sponsors to bring the request to the Assembly. AHS has continued to seek funding through other grant opportunities and the Commission unanimously approved a letter of support to support their efforts.



2024-2025

GOAL UPDATES

While the overall objective each goal largely stayed the same from the initial 2023-2024 work plan, the specific approach was refined to reflect updates within CBS and the evolution of the operational and feasibility landscape around each goal in the past year. Similarly, the goals were approached sequentially with the Commission's full effort into the highest prioritized goal until there was a lull. The On March 26th, 2024, Chair Riley presented the 2024-2025 Work Plan to the City Assembly which unanimously approved the goals outlined in the Sustainability Commission's 2024-2025 Work Plan (Item 24-039).

The goals set forth by the Commission included:



1. CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITKA COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGY (SCRES)

CBS was successfully selected as one of nine communities for the third cohort of the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy (DOE) Transition Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) to support the development of the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES). The SCRES aims to establish a shared vision of Sitka's energy future to guide energy-related community decisions by shaping a roadmap for community and policy actions that advance the shared energy vision. The Sustainability Commission defined the scope to include a community-wide greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) inventory, public energy education, the development of future energy scenarios, and a compilation of community actions and policy recommendations based on continuous community engagement throughout the project.

2. COLLABORATE WITH CITY STAFF ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)

The current waste management contract is slated to be renewed in 2032. To ensure that Sitkans' waste is managed sustainably, with lower costs and fewer resulting greenhouse gas emissions, goal was reworked collaboratively with new leadership within the Public Works Department utilized the City's asset management program to strategically approach municipal solid waste, starting with a MSW policy.

3. SUPPORT ELECTRIFICATION OF THE MUNICIPAL FLEET

This goal was revised in 2024-2025 to encompass changes in perspective gained through discussions with the Public Works Department, which indicated a formalized vehicle transition and infrastructure plan was unnecessary. The goal now focused on answering department questions, identifying funding resources, and supporting the implementation of the direction given by the Assembly. This success from this goal informed the development of the 2025-2026 goals. While the work continues, it is no longer considered an individual goal.



2025-2026

WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Since its initial work plan was approved in 2023, the Sustainability Commission's annual goals have largely been multi-year efforts, targeted sequentially as capacity allowed. Now approaching its third year, the Commission has continued to make ground and establish itself as a more experienced advisory body. New commissioners have brought additional skillsets and perspectives along with the challenge of two vacant seats since March and June 2024. With both successes and challenges to learn from, the Commission has identified opportunities to improve its operational flow and better inform the goals within this work plan iteration.

On November 12th, 2024, the Sustainability Commission held a joint work session with the City Assembly to introduce new Assemblymembers to the Sustainability Commission's work and Commissioners, assess Assemblymembers interests and priorities in the Commission's duties and responsibilities, align skillset of Commissioners with Assemblymember interest and priorities to inform this work plan goals.

Assemblymembers largely requested the Commission utilize the greenhouse gas emissions inventory to strategically inform recommendations to further public utilization of Sitka's renewable electricity. A major component of this was specifically more accessible information for the public via the CBS website.

Municipal solid waste was repeatedly flagged by Assemblymembers, with reducing the amount of material brought in as well as streamlining and exploring disposal methods locally and regionally.

Other recommendations/requests were electric vehicle charging infrastructure for both the public and municipality, investigation into tax solutions to support local resource production, ground source heat pumps, and better defining and outlining the "supply chain" to help clarify its purpose and better understand its fragility.

This input was used to further refine a shortlist of potential goals in following meetings. Simultaneously, the Commission began evaluating past goals, reflecting on the progress and current goals, and assessing the capacity of both Commissioners and City Staff. **Upon review, two categories of goals emerged:**



**Project
Focused**



**Operations
Focused**



REFINING THE FOCUS

✂ Project-Focused	⚙ Operations-Focused
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often require some sort of monetary support. • Clearly timebound • Require a significant level of Commissioner and staff time if additional resources are not provided • Generally additive to CBS workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on the development of municipal policy, answering staff questions, and operational documentation. • Generally furthers progress towards Resolution 2022-18. • Can compliment CBS workload but requires staff input
Output	Output
Results may be equipment or a program that will need longevity consideration, like an action plan.	Documents that inform, guide, and support CBS operations.

RESULTS OF PREVIOUS GOALS

2024-2025: 2 of 3 goals were operational-focused

- ✂ **Continue development of Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES)**
Outcome: Sustainability Coordinator has served as project lead with technical support secured through the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) with Commission as steering committee.
- ⚙ **Collaborate with City Staff on municipal solid waste (MSW) asset management process**
Outcome: Moved from project to operations. Developed a MSW policy that called for the development of a strategy.
- ⚙ **Support electrification of the municipal fleet**
Outcome: Moved from project to operations after consultation from public works requested documentation. Results include an EV procurement policy and advisory group charter with specifically requested supporting deliverables to be produced

2023-2024: 3 of 3 goals were project-focused

- ✂ **Develop a community renewable energy strategy**
Outcome: Commission spent bulk of the time securing ETIPP support and scoping project
- ✂ **Analyze opportunities for diversion of municipal waste (MSW)**
Outcome: Proposed a MSW baseline and composition assessment that was unable to get necessary momentum.
- ✂ **Create a municipal fleet transition plan and EV infrastructure plan**
Outcome: As the 3rd priority, this goal did not make much progress initially.

CONCLUSION AND FINALIZATION: Goals that had shifted to be operationally-focused had made more progress than when they were project-focused. Along with new commissioner skills and interests and Assembly input, the Commission's shortlisted new and continuing goals. **At the March 3rd meeting, the Commission voted #-# to approve the following goals for 2025-2026:**



NEW 2025-2026 SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

SUPPORTS:



Fossil energy use reduction and development of local, renewable energy sources.



Responsible use of natural resources



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.

SUMMARY: Learning from the successes of the past two work years, specifically goals that were rooted in the City's asset management program, this goal is meant to position the Commission to support Assembly direction given to decarbonize City operations by 2030 (Res. 22-18). By focusing on ongoing CBS operations and projects, the proposed strategic deliverables are meant to integrate principles of sustainability into the workings of the City, build resources to support long-term change, and create tools to evaluate progress.

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development, Electric, Public Works

FOCUS:

Municipal – Improves existing service

Municipal – Adds new service

Community

FITS WITHIN EXISTING CITY BUDGET:

No

Somewhat

Via grants

Yes

TIME INTENSITY:

Low

Moderate

High

Substantial

CBS STAFF:

During
Post



COMMISSION:



TIMEFRAME:





PROPOSED STRATEGIC DELIVERABLES:

UPDATE THE MUNICIPAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY AND ANALYZE

PROGRESS: Along side the community-wide GHG emissions inventory, the technical team assisting with the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy are compiling an inventory specifically for CBS. This is anticipated to be available mid-2025 and will be used to inform strategic and achievable goals to reduce emissions.

IDENTIFY SUSTAINABILITY METRICS FOR MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS THAT ALIGN WITH CBS

STRATEGIC PLAN: With the municipal GHG emissions inventory and current CBS strategic plan, the Commission will create metrics rooted in environmental, economic, and social equity that can be used to quantitatively track improvements and progress of CBS.

DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS AND NECESSARY ACTIONS TO REDUCE MUNICIPAL EMISSIONS, INCLUDING SUPPORTING THE ELECTRIFICATION OF THE MUNICIPAL FLEET:

To help CBS work towards approved metrics, the Commission will build a comprehensive list of actions to outline steps CBS can take to decarbonize operations as directed in Res. 22-18. This will include recommendations and requests from the 2024-2025 goal: support electrification of the municipal fleet such as:

- **PARTICIPATE IN THE DECARBONIZATION AND RIGHT-SIZING TO IMPROVE VEHICLE EFFICIENCY (DRIVE) ADVISORY GROUP:** As needed, the DRIVE group will advise on vehicle procurement and support the development of strategic deliverables outlined in the group charter (Appx. A).

INTEGRATE SUSTAINABILITY METRICS INTO EXISTING AND NEAR FUTURE CBS PROJECTS:

With ongoing and future capital improvements plans, these metrics are intended to help CBS incorporate long-term principles into the consideration, design, and execution of infrastructure, programs, and other municipal projects.



NEW 2025-2026 EXPLORE REGIONAL APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

SUPPORTS:



Responsible use of natural resources



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.



Other matters as the Assembly or commission may deem beneficial for the city.

SUMMARY: Now entering its third year, the Sustainability Commission will explore opportunities to collaborate with Sustainability initiatives regionally. The goal will be to identify overlap with ongoing efforts within the region and begin early steps to potentially host a conference or similar event in the following year.

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development

FOCUS:

Municipal – Improves existing service

Municipal – Adds new service

Community

FITS WITHIN EXISTING CITY BUDGET:

No

Somewhat

Via grants

Yes

TIME INTENSITY:

Low

Moderate

High

Substantial

CBS STAFF:

During



Post



COMMISSION:

TIMEFRAME:



EXPLORE ENERGY EXPANSION OPTIONS

SUPPORTS:



Fossil energy use reduction and development of local, renewable energy sources.



Responsible use of natural resources



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.

SUMMARY: This goal aims to assess and explore additional generation options for Sitka as it continues to electrify. This will include the review of assessed options such as a hydroelectric project at Lake Takatz and other renewable sources as identified in the initial ETIPP report and final SCRES.

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development, Electric

FOCUS:

Municipal – Improves existing service

Municipal – Adds new service

Community

FITS WITHIN EXISTING CITY BUDGET:

No

Somewhat

Via grants

Yes

TIME INTENSITY:

Low

Moderate

High

Substantial

CBS STAFF:

During

Post

COMMISSION:

TIMEFRAME:

Q2 2025

Q3 2025

Q4 2025

Q1 2026

COLLABORATING WITH CITY STAFF ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE

SUPPORTS:



Solid waste consumption, reduction, composting, recycling, and re-use.



Responsible use of natural resources



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.

SUMMARY: Using the asset management program the City utilizes to strategically approach municipal solid waste (MSW), rather than just staff participating in the process, Sustainability Commissioners from the solid waste working group were also included. Throughout the first half of 2024, the solid waste advisory group (SWAG) developed a high-level municipal policy for the strategic management of MSW (Appx. B).

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development, Electric, Public Works

FOCUS:

Municipal – Improves existing service

Municipal – Adds new service

Community

FITS WITHIN EXISTING CITY BUDGET:

No

Somewhat

Via grants

Yes

TIME INTENSITY:

Low

Moderate

High

Substantial

CBS STAFF:

During

Post

COMMISSION:

TIMEFRAME:

Q2 2025

Q3 2025

Q4 2025

Q1 2025

MILESTONES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RECOMMENDED FUNDING FOR RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE: The Sustainability Commission recommended the Assembly allocate \$60,000 of the \$75,300 funding available through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, to purchase city-owned roll-off recycling containers and new signs for the recycle center. Simplifications made to the recycle center including comingling of plastics #1, 2, and the addition of #5 plastics, and the comingling of newspaper and cardboard in conjunction with the fact that according to CBS data, properly recycled materials cost half of much to dispose of than non-recyclable materials. By streamlining the process and increasing available containers, these improvements are intended to reduce costs to residents as much as possible and enable CBS to collect more materials at additional locations.



FINALIZED MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT POLICY: As the first step SWAG developed 4 strategic priorities to guide the management of MSW. These were formalized in CBS Public Works policy No. 24-01-01 (Appx. C) and include:

1. Municipal solid waste management shall operate efficiently by aligning social, environmental, and financial (triple bottom line) performance frameworks and zero waste principles.
2. Municipal solid waste management shall be a reliable service.
3. Municipal solid waste management shall be compliant with borough, state, and federal requirements.
4. The management of municipal solid waste will be continuously improved.

NEXT STEPS

DEVELOP THE SOLID WASTE ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER AND MSW STRATEGY: As outlined in CBS Public Works Policy 24-01-01, the SWAG will create an MSW Strategy and means to effectively communicate this directive to the appropriate parties, internally within CBS and externally to the public. To begin, SWAG will work on developing a group charter that outlines a working process for collaboration and additional components necessary for strategy development.

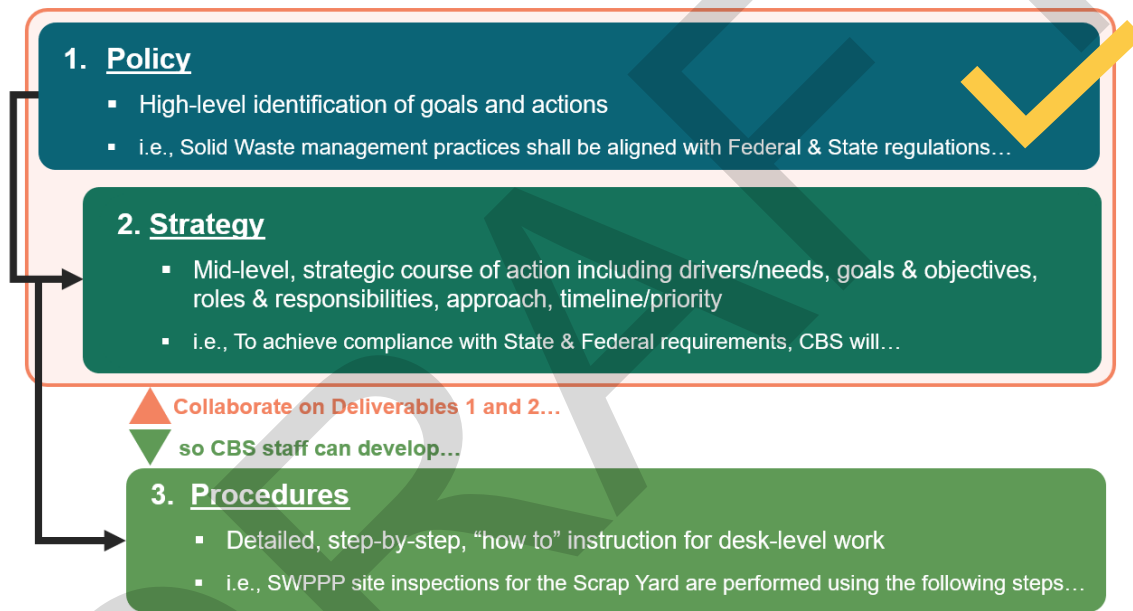


Fig 1: Deliverables of each phase of the strategic management process and how each informs more specific actions. The proposed approach is to collaborate on creating deliverables from Phases I and II to CBS staff can then create procedures for specific aspects of MSW.

This is likely to be a challenging task as staffing changes within the Public Works Department has reduced the ability to coordinate effectively and consistently. Regardless, the Sustainability Coordinator will continue to work to establish relationships with the appropriate staff to facilitate this effort as much as possible.

FACILITATE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE SOUTHEAST ALASKA SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY (SEASWA) REGIONAL PLANNING PROJECT:

In 2024, SEASWA, an authority of 8 communities aimed at reducing the cost of solid waste disposal in the region, received a \$500,000 Denali Commission grant to create a regional solution. Although Sitka is not a member, the Sustainability Coordinator negotiated an MOU to allow for Sitka's participation. As necessary, the Sustainability Commission will collaborate with the Sustainability Coordinator to engage with the SEASWA regional solid waste planning project. Updating the solid waste analysis of Southeast communities is the first step and is anticipated to take place in the summer of 2025.

CONTINUE **SUPPORTING AND FINALIZE THE SITKA COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGY (SCRES)**

SUPPORTS:



Fossil energy use reduction and development of local, renewable energy sources.



Responsible use of natural resources



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.

SUMMARY: CBS was successfully selected as one of nine communities for the third cohort of the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy (DOE) Transition Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) to support the development of the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES). **The SCRES aims to establish a shared vision of Sitka's energy future to guide energy-related community decisions by shaping a roadmap for community and policy actions that advance the shared energy vision.** The Sustainability Commission defined The scope to include a community-wide greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) inventory, public energy education, the development of future energy scenarios, and a compilation of community actions and policy recommendations based on continuous community engagement throughout the project.

This City-led project, heavily supported by the Sustainability Commission, works in collaboration with energy experts, collectively known as the technical team, at the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL), Pacific Northwest National Lab (PNNL) and the Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP). The SCRES is funded through the ETIPP program and the Sustainability Coordinator's time.

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development, Electric

FOCUS:

Municipal – Improves existing service

Municipal – Adds new service

Community

FITS WITHIN EXISTING CITY BUDGET:

No

Somewhat

Via grants

Yes

TIME INTENSITY:

Low

Moderate

High

Substantial

CBS STAFF:

During



Post



COMMISSION:



TIMEFRAME:



MILESTONES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LAUNCHED THE SCRES WEBSITE:

Updates on the project, educational materials, announcements, and other supporting documents can be found at www.cityofsitka.com/SCRES



DEVELOPED ENERGY EDUCATION MODULES: Based on input gathered from the scope of work survey, the Commission drafted key questions and objectives (Appx #) which were then grouped into 8 topic modules. The technical team then created educational materials in various forms. **The energy education modules include:**

- **Sitka's Energy Today**
- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation**
- Energy Independence
- **Sitka's Energy Potential**
- **Sitka's Energy History**
- Reliability and Resilience
- **Energy Economics**
- Sitka's Energy Future*

Bolded modules have active sites. Final module sites are in development.

*Sitka's Energy Future site will be available after the SCRES community engagement is completed.

CONNECT TO SCRES WEBINARS AND LET'S CONNECT ___ TO SITKA'S GRID RADIO SERIES:

The technical team and City Staff hosted and recorded 5 webinars that covered multiple module topics to accompany the materials on the websites. Additionally, to help link topics with less clear connections to energy, Raven Radio hosts, the Sustainability Coordinator, and a special guest connected their expertise to Sitka's grid through a 6-part radio series covering everything from salmon to emergency preparedness. Links to the webinars and radio segments are available on the SCRES site.



1,000+
Website Visits



140+
Webinar Views



75+ visitors to
the Blue Lake Project



30
Roadmaps so far

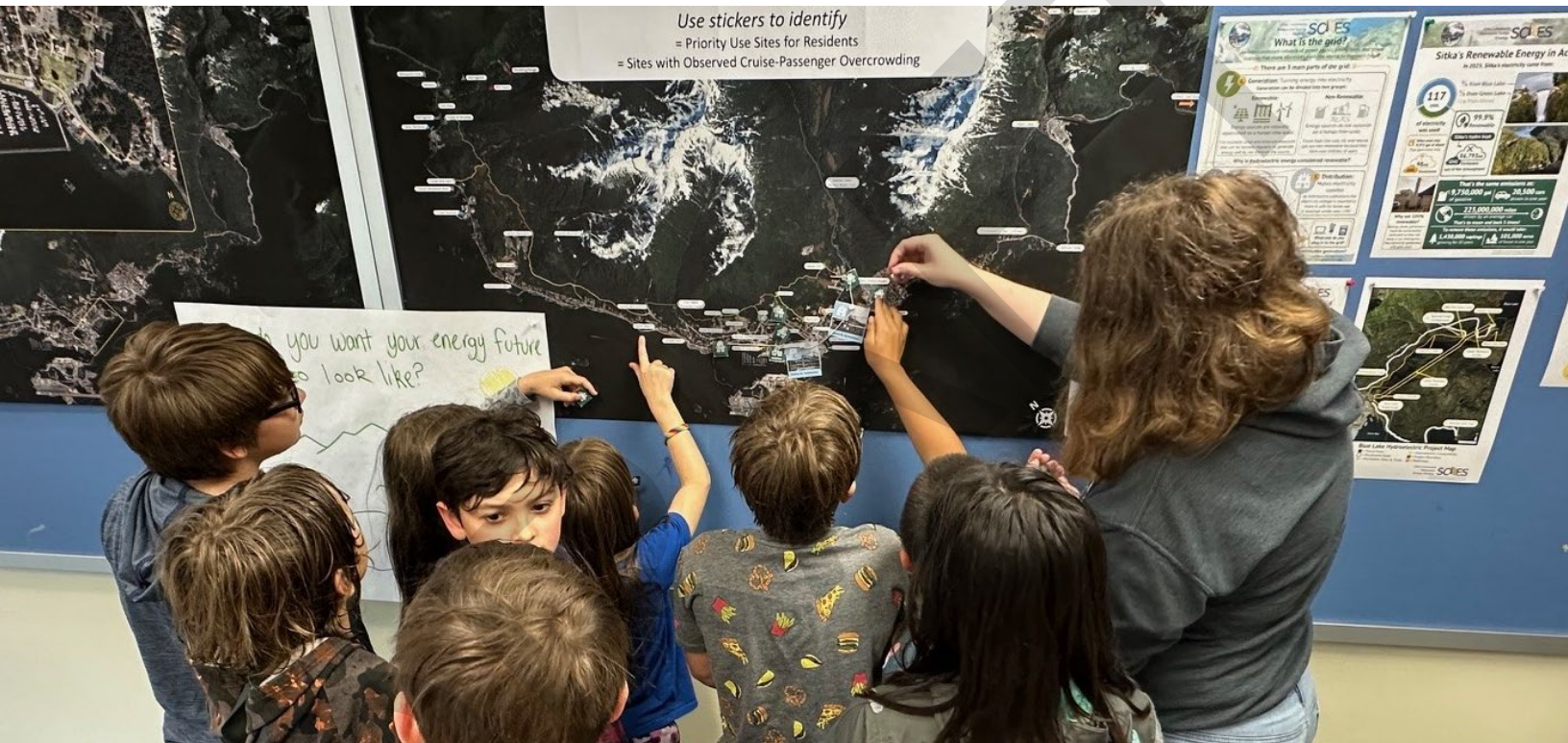
PUBLISHED A DRAFT OF THE COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY:

Throughout the past year, the Sustainability Commission periodically provided guidance on the community-wide greenhouse gas emissions inventory, a document that can be used as a baseline understanding of Sitka's energy landscape and help set and track energy goals. As an islanded community with nearly 100% renewable electricity, inventorying Sitka posed numerous unique challenges not typically seen in standard GHG emission inventory protocols. With the help of the Commission, the technical team created custom metrics to fit Sitka's needs and published a draft in late 2024. The Commission facilitated public comment which received over 40 pages of notes from 16 commenters. Currently, the inventory is being further refined to reflect new information and community insights. The final inventory is anticipated to be published mid-2025.





View of the reservoir behind the Green Lake Hydroelectric Project



The Sustainability Coordinator used SCRES materials at Parks and Recreation's Renewable Energy Summer Camp in 2024. Campers connected their neighborhoods to the electric grid before visiting the Blue Lake Hydroelectric Project.

NEXT STEPS

COMMUNITY ROADMAPPING TO 2050: Currently, community workshops are being held to facilitate the creation of personalized visions and paths to Sitka in 25 years, based on real data available from Sitka's electric grid and needs. The purpose of this exercise is to help understand the community's priorities of what can be electrified by when, and how additional demand can be met if needed. This workshop has been formatted as a boardgame followed by a series of questions and discussion. Public and focused sessions are planned for the first half of 2025.

DEVELOPING SCENARIOS AND SCRES FINALIZATION: Roadmaps created by community members will be analyzed and themes will be identified to develop into scenarios that further detail policies and actions that both the public and municipality can take to further the desired outcomes of the scenarios. The final SCRES document is anticipated to be published late 2025.



SUPPORT THE ELECTRIFICATION OF THE MUNICIPAL FLEET

SUPPORTS:



Sustainable transportation options that leverage Sitka's locally generated, renewable energy sources.



Fossil energy use reduction and development of local, renewable energy sources.



Robust and healthy local ecosystems and natural communities.

SUMMARY: The Assembly passed Resolution 22-18: Decarbonize City Operations by 2030. Integrating electric and hybrid vehicles into the municipal purchasing and procurement schedule as gas/diesel-powered vehicles reach their maximum mileage or age is a required step to achieve this directive. Over the past year, the Sustainability Coordinator collected questions, conducted research, and addressed concerns from City staff and drafted documents to facilitate the assessment of EVs for vehicle replacement and other requirements as indicated by staff to support a mixed-vehicle fleet.

INVOLVED DEPARTMENTS: Planning and Community Development, Electric, Public Works

MILESTONES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE MUNICIPAL FLEET PROCUREMENT POLICY: The Sustainability Commission recommended the Municipal Administrator approve Policy No. 24-03-01 (Appx. D) which outlined direction for evaluation and procurement for an environmentally and fiscally responsible vehicle and equipment fleet, while meeting the needs of CBS current operations. These guidelines include:

1. Reduce consumption of fossil fuels and associated greenhouse gas emissions; and
2. Optimize the fleet size and minimize vehicle size, weight, and other factors affecting fuel use, when appropriate; and
3. Improve department operational and fiscal efficiency by reducing total lifecycle cost of ownership over the lifetime of the vehicle.

The policy requires CBS fleet vehicles to be:

1. Fuel-efficient with the lowest emissions within the vehicle class/type; prioritized by engine type with fully electric being the first choice and a conventional engine being the last,
2. Commercially available, practical, and reasonably cost-competitive for the class/type of vehicles needed for specific assignments.
3. Able to perform the job function for which the vehicle is needed, with no diminishment of capabilities or performance.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE DECARBONIZATION AND RIGHT-SIZING TO IMPROVE VEHICLE EFFICIENCY (DRIVE) ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER: The Sustainability Commission recommended the Public Works Director to approve the DRIVE Advisory group charter (APPX A) pursuant to Policy No. 24-03-01 which established an advisory group to support the policy. This charter outlines general expectations of the group, and a series of strategic deliverables required to further support the electrification of the municipal fleet.



CBS's E-Transit van used for janitorial services charges at the Jarvis St. Public Services Complex.

RECOMMENDED THE PROCUREMENT OF AN ELECTRIC TRANSIT VAN FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION :

A primary challenge/barriers identified by P&R is transportation and access to enhanced activities. This gap is impacting a vast array of community members, but is especially felt by low-income households, children whose families have inflexible work commitments and other scheduling issues, and elders. The Sitka Recreation Foundation (SRF), in partnership with CBS, strives to ensure the continued success and growth of P&R. SRF has generously committed to addressing the identified transportation needs of P&R by raising \$75,000 to donate towards the purchase of a Ford Transit 14 passenger van.

The Sustainability Coordinator completed a Conventional Transit vs EV Transit Van Lifetime Cost Analysis. Results showed that both vehicles were within \$0.10 per mile of each other. After discussing the pros and cons of the analysis, **the Commission unanimously recommended the procurement of an electric vehicle.**

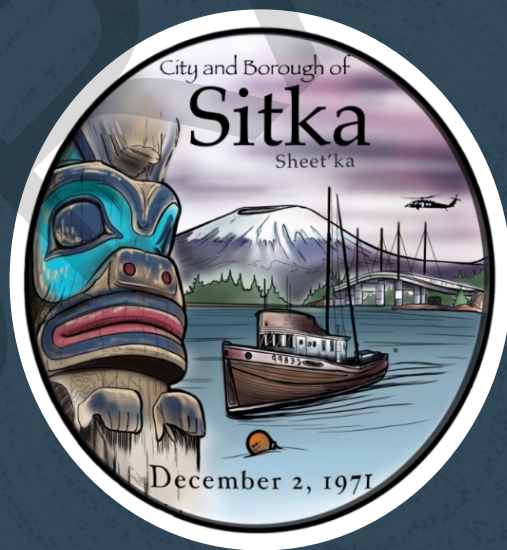
RECOMMENDED FUNDING FOR MUNICIPAL EV CHARGERS: The Sustainability Commission recommended the Assembly allocate \$10,300 of the \$75,300 funding available through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program to purchase 2 level II chargers for municipal EVs.

NEXT STEPS

Since the approval of the Municipal Fleet Procurement Policy, the main purpose of this goal can be considered completed as City Staff have begun evaluation and incorporation of EVs as directed. However, the DRIVE Advisory Group Charter outlines strategic deliverables necessary to further support the long-term operation of EVs in the municipal fleet. Vehicles are a large portion of CBS emissions profile. As such, the development of deliverables from the DRIVE Advisory Group charter better align as a subset of deliverables of Goal 1: support sustainable municipal operations.

CONTINUE TO WATCH THE EV LANDSCAPE AND IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CHALLENGES TO CONVERSION:

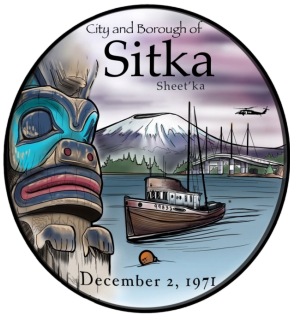
With changes in federal administrative priorities, changes in regulations in response to Lithium-Ion batteries, the vehicle landscape continues to rapidly change. To understand the full cost of conversions and how regulations and availability may influence the pace at which CBS transitions will be critical to avoid unanticipated costs or unforeseen challenges from acquisition to disposal.



MISSION:

To provide public services for Sitka that support a livable community for all.


Service | Integrity | Teamwork | Kindness | Accountability



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: February 28, 2025
Subject: Discussion/Direction/Decision on Commission's Participation at the Sitka Living Locally Event

Background

Transition Sitka will be holding its third annual expo on Saturday, March 29, 2025 and would like to offer the Sustainability Commission the opportunity to reach interested community members by joining us at this event. Previous events in 2023 and 2024 focused on beneficial electrification. The theme for this year is "Sitka Living Locally" and it has three focus areas - food security, energy security, and emergency preparedness. Transition Sitka is providing a limited number of free tables to help organizations to engage even more of the Sitka community. This year they are also hosting panel discussions and a display area for small poster type presentations.

At the January 6th, 2025 meeting the Commission unanimously agreed to attend and participate in the event.

Analysis

With the event now less than one month away, the Commission should decide on representatives for the event and what the participation at the event looks like. If more than three Commissioners would like to participate and/or attend the event, this should be confirmed so staff can provide public notice if necessary.

Recommendation

Commissioners should clarify their ability/intent to attend the event. Consider forming a working group of no more than three Commissioners to represent the Commission that can attend and assist staff in creating materials and/or engage as directed by the Commission. If the commission would like to provide another form of engagement, this item allows for discussion and motions to be made.

No motion is required, but motions can be made to formalize Commission decisions.