

Sitka Historical Museum

Final Report

**Recommendations for Programming for the
Sitka Historical Museum**

**The Foraker Group
Pre-Development Program**

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Executive Summary

Introduction:

A new addition to Centennial Hall for a museum and visitor services is proposed. This offers an exciting opportunity to strengthen Sitka's museum services to the community and to the visiting public, while making space available in Centennial Hall for revenue making meeting spaces. This report suggests museum best practices for space, staffing, and budget. Museum operations include providing collection management, a safe, interesting exhibit area, and educational programs to engage the community and Sitka's visitors. This report identifies the level of services possible with the recommended and sustainable staffing, budget and space.

In Sitka, as in many other Alaskan communities, the collections are owned by the historical society and the City owns the facility. Sitka residents are fortunate that the Sitka Historical Society (SHS), established in 1957, has preserved so many historical objects, and operated a museum for Sitka since 1971. In addition to offering exhibit and educational programs, the Museum currently preserves and documents over 8,000 historical objects/artworks, 25,000 photographic prints/negatives, and 35,000 (110,000 pages) archival materials. Preservation and documentation of collections is an on-going public trust responsibility and the basis of any museum's mission. The City, honoring its 1967 funding requirements, has provided space and utilities. Sitka benefits from this team effort.

Critical Needs:

Despite heroic efforts by the small staff and volunteers, there are several critical needs at this time.

- The Museum has seriously outgrown its space in Centennial Hall. The collections are packed into a 300 sq.ft. on-site dedicated collection processing/storage room, with about 130 sq.ft. of workspace crafted out of the exhibit gallery. Unheated space in the Pulp Mill Administrative Building is free, but with no guaranteed continued use. The U.S. Geodetic Survey White House leased from the USDA Forest Service provides critical work and storage space, but not for irreplaceable museum objects. A museum's public trust responsibility is to care for their collections to last **forever**.
- The exhibit space is not adequate, and the exhibits are old and tired. Staff is taking steps to protect objects from deterioration from light and is slowly revamping the exhibits. They have recently emptied one exhibit to create a small temporary exhibit area. A total redesign of the exhibits is needed.
- Staffing is not adequate to perform basic tasks on a professional level. There is a very large backlog of collection management tasks - perhaps 5 years x 2 FTE to get caught up. The Museum's Curator, summer museum interns, and volunteers focus on collection management as much as possible. Plus, in 2011

- alone, 750 historical objects, photographs and archival materials have been received. Approximately 15,000 acquisitions since 2001! This is a huge number to process with the current staffing, let alone catching up the backlog. It will be critical to have collection information efficiently accessible when designing exhibits for the new space.
- A stable revenue source is needed to attract and retain professional staff.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations for staffing, programming, space and budget are based on museum services offered to the community and the related workload.

- **Space:** A 5,800 sq. ft. dedicated museum space is recommended, located off a visitor services and orientation lobby connection to the new, enlarged Centennial Hall entrance. Designed for efficient, sustainable operation, this size would be adequate for exhibits to tell the story of Sitka's peoples. Museum level environmental controls will ensure the preservation of the collections and enable the Museum to borrow objects and temporary exhibits from other institutions.
- **Staffing** would provide best practices care of the collections, safely open the Museum 7 days a week in the summer and 4-5 days a week in the winter, maintain and change exhibits on a set schedule, and provide educational activities. Staffing is recommended at 4.5 FTE, plus 6-9 months of a museum or archival student intern per year, and volunteer assistance at the front desk, in collections, and other activities. Reliable staffing and employee benefits are crucial to attracting and retaining staff.
- **Budget:** The Museum operating **budget** should be adequate and stable to attract and retain staff and to safely keep the museum open, accomplish interpretive activities (exhibits and educational programs), care for collections, and market the museum services. A balanced budget will require a commitment from the City and from the Society. New exhibits, in a new improved space located off a visitor information lobby should increase revenues dramatically, with appropriate marketing and operation. An operating budget of \$318,000 is recommended.

Planning should start soon. The Museum has already developed a permanent exhibit layout plan including recommended objects approved by their Board of Directors. They will need to refine this plan as the new exhibit galleries are designed. Although Sitka residents should develop the exhibit themes, much of the implementation should be by professional exhibit designers. Staff should gather statistics and surveys to best understand their audience and how to market aggressively and cost effectively.

Introduction & Methodology

Museum History

The Sitka Historical Society was established in 1957. The Society installed a museum operation into the recently constructed Centennial Hall in 1971 when the Society was asked by the City “to provide exhibits of local history in the building.” The U.S. Department of Commerce Grant to construct Centennial Hall stipulated that the building be “...a Civic center, convention and exhibition building.” The 1966 plans show about 2/3 of the building intended for “Exhibits.” A 1967 letter from F. Gaines Sutherlin, the Alaska Centennial Project Officer, to the Mayor and City Council complements the building but expresses a concern about the use of the building:

...I am sure you gentlemen appreciate that your application for construction funds to erect this building was based on the continued use of this building as a convention and community center and to display historical items of significance and interest to the people of the world relating to Sitka and the State of Alaska History...Space is also to be maintained on a continuing basis for a tourist promotion and information office in the building.

Sutherlin letter: August 28, 1967

Society volunteers first operated the Museum. Isabel Miller volunteered as the full-time museum manager from 1972 until 1989. Since 1971, the City has recognized the value of the Museum by providing space, utilities and operational funds, and until last year, janitorial assistance. This has allowed the historical society to focus on their mandated public trust responsibility of preserving the rapidly growing collections, keeping regular open hours for the museum exhibits, providing school tours and educational programs, assisting researchers, providing outreach exhibits, and supporting community historical and cultural events and projects. The Museum’s mission, collections and exhibits focus on the human history of the Sitka area.

The mission of the Sitka Historical Society is to preserve and promote the events, stories and artifacts of the human history of the Sitka area for the inspiration, education and benefit of the public and future generations.

Museum Planning

Sitka is pursuing an exciting vision for a new museum, with a visitor services lobby connecting to the Centennial Hall expansion and remodel. The expansion will offer the opportunity for a more successful and professional museum operation and enhanced visitor services. Museums are a natural pairing with visitor services as museum exhibits provide orientation to new residents and visitors, and a sense of place and pride to Sitka’s residents.

The Foraker Group Pre-Development Program is assisting with planning to insure that the new facility and operation are well-tailored to the community needs, sustainable, based on museum best practices, and provide a sound basis for a long-term successful program. Mary Pat Wyatt of Alaska Cultural Resources was hired in October 2011 to provide museum best practices *recommendations* for:

- facility size, museum space allocations and adjacencies,
- professional staffing levels, and
- a balanced budget.

These recommendations assume that the Museum will be located off a welcoming lobby that will serve as a visitor information and orientation center. The lobby would equally welcome both the lightering side of Centennial Hall and the main entrance coach drop-off area, and allow cruise ship and independent visitor access to vendors located outside. Visitor brochures and an information desk would be located in this lobby. The SCVB has expressed an interest in providing and stocking rack cards, staffing a visitor desk and, if financially affordable, in renting a small workspace or office to provide permanent staffing serving both cruise ship and independent travelers. Self-service information would be available for off-season visitors. It would be wise to pursue this possibility in depth, as the Museum staff could not assume visitor services.

One idea presented to the Sitka Historical Consortium group was the possibility of permanent, built-in exhibit cases in the visitor center lobby that might be rented by non-profit historical and cultural groups and managed by Museum staff. Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka National Historical Park, and the USDA Forest Service have all expressed great interest, and/or have offered to pay for exhibit development and/or installation. A large interactive or three-dimensional map of Sitka would be helpful, but what visitors really like is contact with local residents. The lobby would also access restrooms, Centennial Hall, and the Baranof Arts & Crafts Association (BACA) display/sales room. Ideally the lobby would find a variety of year round uses.

Sitka is fortunate to have the advantage of other communities' experience. The McDowell Group researched *Alaska Libraries and Museums: A Review* in 2007, comparing several newer museum and library facilities on the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, Aleutians, and Southeast Alaska. The research for this planning document used that publication, plus Foraker recommendations for the Seward Museum and Yupiit Piciryarait Museum in Bethel, and a Foraker Survey on salaries and benefits for non-profits. Recommended spaces for the proposed Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Cordova Center were also studied. Bob Medinger, Museum Executive Director, provided operating and history information on the Museum, and I contacted museums in Cordova, Ketchikan, Juneau, Wrangell, Nome, Kenai and Wasilla to provide comparison statistics found in this report, Appendix A. Special focus was on museums that shared a facility.

Planning and preparation that should start immediately is:

- Assemble a Standard Operating Procedures Manual (See Appendix C).
- Create a Daily Visitor Report. A single sheet would record visitation numbers, special groups, identify special events that affect visitation, record volunteer names & hours, admission revenue and Museum Shop revenue. This will provide valuable statistics to help with staffing and revenue projections, scheduling, budget and grants. (See Appendix B).
- Continue to develop an outline of exhibit themes, and list objects/materials to interpret each exhibit.
- As mentioned, accelerate data entry with photographs into the Museum's PastPerfect collection database. Inventory collections by year and track number of accessions and number of objects/photos/archival received each year to better understand workloads and collection growth needs. That information was not clearly available for this report. Include this data in Museum Annual Reports to create a history of the museum development.

When establishing position salary levels/ranges, careful comparisons were made from information from The Foraker Group 2010 Salary Benefits Survey, The Alaska State Museums the Consumer Price Index from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Museum has been farsighted in applying for and receiving the American Association of Museums' Collection Stewardship Museum Assessment Program (CSMAP) review via funding from a Rasmuson Organizational Improvement grant. This funded the recent CSMAAP visit and report evaluating the museum collections and made recommendations for improvement. Year two of this grant provided \$35,500 to implement the CSMAAP recommendations. Museum staff is currently implementing this phase, which will include:

- A two month intern (Nov/Dec 2011) focusing on collections/exhibits
- Possible archivist funding support
- Temporary exhibit equipment: Milla walls, and pedestals
- UV protection on the windows and lighting
- New Museum Panels
- An object bagging station
- A market/visitor survey
- Archival supplies

Specific planning activities for this report also included information gathering in Sitka in October 24-26, 2011 from a SHS Museum Committee meeting, a Sitka Historical Consortium meeting, and staff at the Museum, Centennial Hall, City, and Sitka Convention and Visitor Bureau, among others. I am working closely with MRV Architects on conceptual space layout and adjacencies to ensure practical application. Their work includes the estimation of facility construction and operating costs.

Current Museum Space Allocations and Operations

Museum Space

The Museum collections are owned and managed by the Sitka Historical Society (SHS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. The Museum exhibits, Museum Shop, office, and some collection processing and storage are located in a 2,161 sq.ft. In Harrigan Centennial Hall, owned by the City and Borough of Sitka (City). The City, via a 1971 agreement, does not charge for rent or utilities. Centennial Hall is open seven days a week in the summer, and six days a week in the off-season, with support spaces, such as restrooms, meeting rooms, mechanical and lobby.

It is difficult to calculate the space the exhibits actually take in the 1,578 sq.ft. public area. This area includes a 75 sq.ft. reception/sales desk, a 230 sq.ft. Museum Shop, about 95 sq.ft. collection work/storage space, which leaves 1,178 sq.ft. for exhibits. A 35 sq.ft. table used for research, receiving donations, and exhibit preparation, also took up exhibit space. The space has no structural interior walls, and the entire exhibit area may be seen from the entrance, which makes it appear small. Removing a permanent exhibit and the large table created a small temporary exhibit space and enlarged video viewing area.

Support space can be found in the **White House**, a 1901 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey house on the National Register of Historic Places. Approximately .30 mile up the hill from the Museum, it was recently leased from the U.S.D.A. Forest Service via a 10-year "Special Use Permit" for \$100 per year, plus maintenance, grounds keeping, insurance, and utilities. The current terms could have the permit withdrawn for one of several reasons, requiring the Museum to vacate. There is a possibility that the property might be secured with more favorable terms. This house serves to process and store archives, photos, art and objects, and exhibit and supplies storage, exhibit production, and as critically important intern housing. Historic objects, plus museum supplies and equipment are stored in the basement, accessed by outside and inside narrow stairs. Archival collections are stored on the main floor back bedroom where an efficient processing area is set up, while the front room is used for exhibit production and meetings. Two rooms on the second floor are used for housing interns and visiting consultants, and the third to be used for exhibit production. The closets in two of the three-bedroom store framed artworks. Collection storage fills 205 sq.ft. (817 cu.ft.).

Two rooms (504 sq.ft.) in the **Pulp Mill** Administration Building basement provide the third dedicated museum space. This space is free, but there is no guaranteed continued use agreement. It has no environmental controls, but it is sprinkled and the doors lock. Museum objects should be covered with sheets and then with visqueen to protect against damage from dust and moisture, and from potential damage if sprinklers go off. Furniture and oversize historic objects including Father Veniaminov's table, a NWC decorated armoire, Bishop Rowe's objects, archival

material, museum equipment and supplies are stored here. Historic collection storage fills 315 sq.ft. (1,265 cu.ft.).

Public Hours and Visitation

The Museum is open daily to the public from 9:00-5:00 from early May to late September. During the winter it is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 to 4:00 and for special events, conventions, and when the ferry is docked. Most cruise ship passengers are either lightered to a dock at Centennial Hall or brought to Centennial Hall from other docks by busses. Shore excursions and vendor booths, plus the popular BACA sales area, are located at Centennial Hall. During the summer, when cruise ships are in port, the Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau maintains an information services desk in Centennial Hall lobby, staffed by CVB paid and volunteer staff. Independent travelers in summer and winter generally have more time to spend in Sitka, and are key visitors to the Museum.

Sitka visitor numbers were supplied by the SVCB. The visitor numbers in the table below are calculated at 80% of cruise ship, 63% of ferry passengers, and 44% of air travelers, based loosely on the 2007 calculations the McDowell Group used for visitors to Juneau for the Juneau Convention and Visitor Bureau. A new Alaska Visitor Statistics Program Report will be published in February 2012, and it is possible for SCVB to purchase a special Sitka report of this more current data.

Year	Cruise Ship Visitors	Independent Travelers By Ferry	Independent Travelers By Air	Total Sitka Visitors	Museum Visitors Actual	Admission/ Shop Revenues
2006	213,620	7,131	33,111	253,862	40,220	\$4411 / \$46,583
2007	187,538	5,515	33,954	227,007	26,848	\$2,469 / \$65,838
2008	239,002	7,486	29,392	275,880	28,562	\$7,316 / \$99,007
2009	175,928	6,145	28,785	210,858	26,648	\$7,515 / \$74,201
2010	117,119	7,131	27,661	151,911	20,886	\$7,201 / \$58,502
2011	98,512	7,000 est.	25,000 est	130,512	22,060est.	\$4,411 / \$46,583
2012	98,500 est.					

It is important to know what percent of Sitka's visitors go to the Museum, and what percent pay admission, in order to understand revenue sources and have a basis for projection. There is no exterior sign identifying that the museum is in Centennial Hall, other than a small fluorescent museum sign in the window. The Museum is about 30-40' down a corridor from the visitor information lobby area in Centennial Hall. Although the museum sandwich board sign may be seen from the lobby, the museum is not well located for visitor traffic. Approximately 10% of the Museum's visitors are estimated to be residents who visit the museum during the winter months when the museum is free, or with relatives in the summer. A new location directly off the visitor information lobby should increase admission and sales by 25 - 50%.

About 14% of Sitka's 130,512 visitors went to the Museum in 2011. Visitors are counted electronically and then the number divided in half, with a few more reduced for staff entering and exiting. It would be smart during the winter to do an actual tally, and compare figures. Admission was by donation until 2009, when a summer admission fee of \$1.00 was instituted, and then raised to \$2.00 in the summer of 2010. The raised admission is appropriate and does not seem to have made much impact on the number of visitors. After a study, visitors were permitted to enter the Museum Store without having to pay the museum entrance fee. The placement of the sales counter near the museum entrance makes high traffic times difficult to manage. Some museum entry fees have apparently been missed. The door counter is recorded nightly. 2011 revenue indicates fewer than 2,200 paying visitors.

Over the past few years museum visitation has dropped as Sitka visitor numbers have dropped. The large drop seen in museum visitation in 2007 may have occurred when the tour company started dropping off passengers immediately before the New Archangel dance performance, not allowing a 15-20 minute visit in the museum. The Museum does not charge admission in the winter and children are free. The Museum should record visitor numbers 2-3 times a day, daily, and seasonally and periodically conduct visitor surveys to determine if visitors are residents or visitors, how many times they have visited, their favorite display, and ask for constructive criticism.

Admission and Museum Shop Revenues:

The Museum operates on a small budget compared with other Alaska museums. It is in transition from a small museum run by dedicated volunteers, to a museum run by museum professionals. The chart below is a rough allocation of the Society's revenue over the past five years. All revenues are not used for museum operation. The Total Income and Total Expense columns are from the Museum's Profit and Loss Statements.

Year	City Support	SHS Fundraiser	Project Grants	Admission	Museum Shop	Total Income	Total Expense
2007	\$ 36,000	\$ 5,900	\$22,520	\$2,469	\$65,838	\$144,649	\$121,008
2008	\$ 44,500	\$ 6,900	0	\$7,316	\$99,143	\$165,150	\$158,559
2009	\$130,250	\$15,150	\$ 4,594	\$7,515	\$74,201	\$235,869	\$166,102
2010	\$ 78,535	\$15,125	\$21,800	\$7,201	\$58,502	\$203,768	\$208,787
2011	\$120,000	\$25,000+	\$37,501	\$4,411	\$46,582	\$219,408	\$223,530

The Society/Museum has recently changed to fiscal year accounting in order to be more in line with the City, and this has made some of the budget analysis complicated. The Museum's projected annual revenue is \$179,000 for FY2012 (July, 2011 – June, 2012). The main fundraising season has just started, with the following projections:

- Dale DeArmond Art Acquisition Fundraiser \$ 8,500 Oct/Nov 2011
- Wine Tasting/Silent Auction/Concert \$ 9,000 Dec 2011
- 1st Annual Fund Drive Goal \$35,000 Nov/Dec 2011

The Museum Shop, which sells items closely related to the collections and Sitka history, is located near the entrance and the front desk so staff can do both reception and gift shop duties efficiently. It appears quite successful and brings in approximately \$2.50 per visitor.

SHM writes and receives annual Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aids that have funded various projects and equipment. The Museum has not participated in the Rasmuson Art Acquisition fund, but plans to this cycle. However they received a Rasmuson Organization Improvement Grant for \$60,000, and a \$17,000 Rasmuson award for a 2010 Conference Proceeding Publication.

Staffing

Sitka Historical Museum is currently staffed by 3.10 FTE:

- **Museum Executive Director:** 1 FTE, responsible for overall direction, supervision, grant writing, budget management, fundraising, and facility management of the museum space.
- **Curator of Collections and Exhibits:** 1 FTE, responsible technical museum collection management and exhibit design and installation & upkeep tasks, and educational tours.
- **Visitor Services Manager:** .75 FTE, responsible for front desk duties, Museum Shop purchasing/management, oral historical interpretation, and clerical. (Full Time May – Sept; 24 hpw Oct.-April.)
- **Museum Assistant:** .35 FTE, assists with front desk, gift shop, and interpretation duties. (26 hpw in summer, 6 hpw in winter.)
- **Museum Graduate Student Intern:** 10-12 weeks, to primarily help with collections management, but also provide back up during the summer.
- **Volunteers:** Average of 15 hours weekly of collections assistance, plus additional assistance.

Please see Appendix A for a comparison with other museum operations. 3.35 FTE is an average staff for 10 museums in Alaska. Museum best practices indicate that several of these museums appear sadly understaffed.

Collections

The Museum's permanent collections consist of 8,000 historic and fine art objects, about 27,000 historic photographs and negatives, and 35,000+ (110,000 pages) of archival material for a total collection size of 70,000. The collections are augmented

by about 30 loaned objects. Most of these have been accessioned into the old card catalog system and numbered, but this information needs to be transferred into the database and with images. Only 2% of the permanent collections have been entered in the PastPerfect museum management database, and a little over 1% have documentation images entered. Documentation photographs are currently being taken and linked to the records but these tasks are slow. Approximately 65,000 acquisitions are pending entry into the database. 750 objects were acquired this year, primarily through donations. Records need to be updated to understand a five-year trend. Processing 750-1,500 objects would typically occupy 1 FTE one year to process, depending on the completeness of the documentation and the complexity of the objects. Photos and archival material generally are faster than objects to process. Sitka's curator has multiple tasks including collection and exhibit care and maintenance, and education programs.

Some outstanding objects and documents in the collections and on loan should receive better interpretation and display:

- A significant historic painting collection including a 1879 painting of the *Jamestown*, 2 James Everett Stuart paintings of Sitka, 2 Theodore Richardson paintings, and many Dale DeArmond prints and woodblocks.
- An extensive collection of photos and negatives of Sitka and Alaska from 'The Photo Shop,' documenting Sitka history from 1924-1960.
- Captain George Emmons' journal from the *U.S.S. Ossippe*, Oct. 27, 1866-Dec. 31, 1867.
- Artifacts from Vitus Bering's ship *The St. Peter*.
- Gen. Jeff Davis' pistol, 1st American commander in charge of Alaska. (On loan)
- Tobacco mortar attributed to Alexander Baranov. (On loan)
- Mary Willard Chilkat Robe used regularly in local ceremonies.
- Armoire with carved NWC design. (On loan)
- Table reportedly made by Father Veniaminov (St. Innocent).
- 8' x 8' diorama of Russian era New Archangel in 1867.
- Four Russian era ship anchors, one possibly from the *Neva* is owned by the City.
- Bishop Peter Trimble Rowe's traveling organ and medicine trunk. (On loan)

Exhibit Programming

The Museum's interpretive exhibits adhere appropriately to their mission to tell the story of the Sitka area's human history. A small percent of the museum collections are on exhibit, and there are large gaps in the Sitka story, due in large part to lack of space. Given the small 1,178 sq.ft. exhibit gallery in Centennial Hall, recommendations are to regularly rotate exhibited material in order to provide better preservation and also to interpret Sitka's rich heritage and encourage visitation by the local residents. This is very time consuming given the limited staff and other critical duties. A small area is dedicated to viewing a video about Sitka history.

To better serve the public small outreach exhibits have been installed in locations around town including: the Russian Bishop's House, 1st Bank, the Westmark Hotel Lobby, the Pulp Mill Administrative Building Lobby, the Performing Arts Center, the Sitka Airport, and the Dive Shop. In addition, photomurals reproduced from the museum collections are located in Centennial Hall hallways and additional photomurals using the museum collections are being developed and installed by SeaMart in their stores. A State Historic Preservation grant has been applied for to help develop and install an exhibit at the ANB hall in 2012.

Educational Programs

Education programs include themed school tours for about 15-20 visits per year by students from not only the Sitka And Mount Edgecumbe schools, but from many southeast schools and traveling sports and academic teams, and are free of charge with donations accepted. Many museum tours are part of a tour that also includes a visit to other museum and/or historic site. The 1867 diorama is a favorite exhibit.

There are multiple fund raising events for adults. There is a small area in the exhibits where historical videos may be played. In the summer, the video plays continually.

Marketing and Advertising

The Museum has a very small marketing and advertising budget. They rely on both paid and free listings on websites, travel books, and newspaper articles.

- The Museum produces a brochure which can be found in the SCVB brochure racks, and other brochure rack around Sitka in hotels, ferry terminal, etc. They also produce an historic walking map, and has its own website. They are #18 on the SCVB website under "Play", "Attractions" and under "Shopping" which lists contact information, a photo, location on a map and short description. <http://www.sitka.org/play/attractions/>
- They can be found on the City's website by searching under Harrigan Centennial Hall, then Visitors, under Things To Do listing. Unfortunately, this list does not say where any of the "Things to Do" are, nor does it link to the attraction's website. <http://www.cityofsitka.com/visitors/index.html>
- On the web they are mentioned on "Trip Advisor," "Wikipedia," "Via Michelin," "Moon Travel Guides," and some other sites.
- They are also listed in the free "All About Sitka" newspaper guide and the SCVB "Sitka Through 4 Seasons" guide, and the SCVB's Vacation Planner. The last two listings are paid subscriptions totaling about \$800 per year.

FY2012 Sitka Historical Society & Gift Shop Budgets

Museum/Society Income		Gift Shop Income	Downturn
C&B of Sitka	\$120,000	Gross Sales	\$ 48,000
Wine fund Raiser	\$ 5,000		(down 15%)
Entrance Fees	\$ 5,000	Society Transfer	\$ 2,500
Membership Dues	\$ 7,000	Total Income	\$ 50,500
Museum Income	\$ 2,000		
Operating Reserves	\$ 30,000		
Annual Philanthropic Giving	\$ 10,000		
 Total Income	 \$179,000		

Museum/Society Expenses		Gift Shop Expenses	
Advertise (43)	\$ 2,500	Freight	\$ 1,000
Bank Fee	\$ 350	Cost of Goods Sold	\$ 17,500
Conservation/Collections/Display	\$ 10,000	General Expenses	\$ 700
Technology	\$ 2,000	Sales Tax to City	\$ 2,880
Memberships	\$ 500	Shop/Floor Wages	\$ 22,554
Salary & Wages	\$105,186	Payroll Taxes	\$ 1,732
(Director, Curator, .5 Asst. Curator, Clerk)		Benefits: Cafeteria	\$ 4,060
Payroll Taxes (7.68%)	\$ 8,078	Total Expenses	\$ 50,426
Benefits: Cafeteria	\$ 18,934	 Net Income	 \$ 74
Conf/Travel/Lobby	\$ 1,800		
Telephone & Internet (34)	\$ 4,500		
Postage/Web Site	\$ 1,200		
Consulting	\$ 800		
Accounting/Quick Books	\$ 1,000		
Payroll Services	\$ 1,500		
Insurance	\$ 1,402	<i>FY2011 Passengers 146,399</i>	
Library Books	\$ 600	<i>FY2012 Passengers 123,140</i>	
Memberships (sic)	\$ 600	Down 15%	
Newsletter	\$ 400		
Product Dev.	\$ 100		
Publications (38)	\$ 150		
Special Projects	\$ 600		
Volunteer Recognition	\$ 500		
Office Expenses/Supplies	\$ 1,800		
Gift Shop/Staff Transfer	\$ 2,500		
White House	\$ 12,000		
 Total Expense	 \$179,000		

Foundations for Recommendations

Size of a facility depends on the size of the collections to be exhibited and stored, the number of staff that require offices or workstations, and the museum services offered to the community and to the visiting public.

See Appendix A: Comparison Chart page 35

This chart was updated for this report. It compares community size, museum size, ownership of the collections and building, staffing, budget, city financial support, and city facility maintenance of 10 museum operations, including Sitka, in the Alaska with a special emphasis on Southeast museums and museums associated with a larger facility. If there is an asterisk (*) in the column it is discussed here:

- Juneau-Douglas City Museum: Front desk, collection, and docent volunteers and interns *each* equal 1 FTE. The City pays building and grounds maintenance not in the museum budget.
- Dorothy Page Museum: An 800 sq.ft. cabin also serves as visitor center. They manage several cabins on their grounds. They anticipate moving into the adjacent city library when vacated in a few years. The City maintains their building, but their budget is charged for the service.
- Kenai Visitor & Cultural Center: The Center operation is contracted out by the City. 4 positions make up the 1.25 FTE dedicated to museum operation. 1,800 sq.ft is dedicated to museum with a 2,625 non-permanent exhibit space.
- Ketchikan Museums: Two facilities. They anticipate moving into the library portion of their building in 1+ years when the new library is completed. They will then have 24,000 sq.ft. of dedicated museum space.
- Cordova Museum: The new museum space listed is under construction. The Museum receives 95% of its operating budget from the City with the historical society contributing the rest. The City also pays for building maintenance, janitorial, and utilities not in the museum budget.
- Valdez Museum: Maintains two buildings.
- Carrie McLain Museum, Nome: They have funding to construct a new facility of an estimated 10,000 sq.ft., but their current size is 2,264.

This chart shows that Sitka's museum is small in size, staffing and budget. Four museums on this list are anticipating increased space within the next 1-3 years, two museums have moved into new facilities within the past 5-10 years, and two others within the past 25 years. Sitka's museum has been in the same location for 40 years, making it one of the few museums in the state that has not had meaningful improvements to its facility.

An adequate staffing level depends on maintaining the workload and the services offered to the public at a museum best practices level.

Staffing of approximately 4.50 staff, with 12 weeks to 9 months a year of museum and/or archival graduate student intern assistance and some increased volunteer assistance could maintain the workload listed below and the anticipated increase in visitation.

Recommendations in this report are based on:

- a relatively large, rapidly growing collection with a large backlog of work,
- open to the public daily (56 hours per week) in the summer, 20-25 hours week in the winter,
- new permanent interpretive exhibits maintenance, with temporary exhibit changes 5-8 times a year, and securely managed lobby and outreach exhibits,
- 20-30 children's tours/activities and 10-15 adult events per year, focusing on the winter months.

It is anticipated that the exhibits will be designed professionally in the new facility. Designing the exhibits will take about 12 months, with installation requiring two-three months. In order to accomplish this efficiently, it is recommended that planning and preparation start immediately.

Recommended Level of Operation

New Space

The recommended solution would consolidate Museum operations into one environmentally controlled, sustainable space, with some support space off-site in the White House. This would provide the best preservation for the collections and the most efficient staffing. Museum best practices environmental goals are 68 degrees Fahrenheit, and a relative humidity (RH) range of 40-50%, with no more than 3% variation per month. The collection room might be 2-3 degrees cooler. Lighting levels should be low. Use of LED lighting in the galleries and processing area would reduce concerns about deterioration caused by UV and visible lighting levels. A 5,800 sq. ft. proposed museum addition to Centennial Hall is recommended to serve the Museum's needs for 15-20 years of growth. Directly adjacent to the Museum would be the visitor services lobby that ideally would be accessible from the lightering dock and the bus drop-off area in front of a main entrance.

Public spaces (Reception/Exhibit Galleries/Museum Store) should anticipate a 25-50% increase in visitors and revenue the first year, with a 5-10% increase in the following 3-5 years before leveling off. This first increase would be primarily caused by the improved location and new exhibits. This increase would take place within the current hours of operation. The subsequent increases would be caused by smart marketing and understanding and meeting audience needs.

When comparing size with other community museums (Appendix A), Sitka's recommended museum space may seem small. However, many of the museums have space allocated for restrooms, mechanical rooms and lobbies, which Sitka Historical Museum will not need, as it has the advantage of sharing these spaces with Centennial Hall. Interior and exterior signage should be integrated with the redesigned building signage.

Centennial Hall Museum Space	Existing	Proposed
Reception Desk Area	75	150
Museum Store	236	350
Permanent Exhibit Gallery	1,272	2,000
Rotating Gallery	100	500
Collection Storage Room	300	900
Collection Processing/Research	80	400
Exhibit Preparation Room	0	250
Offices	1 @ 200	4 = 570
Storage & Equipment	0	150
Circulation @ 10%		530
TOTAL SPACE	2,161 sq.ft	5,800 sq.ft.

Shared facility spaces the Museum may use, but not listed here, are:

- New Visitor Services Lobby
- Rest Rooms located off the lobby (for public and staff)
- Loading Dock
- Janitorial
- Conference/Meeting Rooms

Museum Public Spaces

Reception Area

- Purpose: To greet and supervise museum visitors, accept admission fees, serve as Museum Store sales counter, store visitor coats/backpacks, and serve as a workstation.

Located in the Museum's entry, immediately off the main lobby behind lockable 8-10' wide doors, a reception desk would be used by staff during open hours, and potentially during closed hours. A window display opening onto the lobby could advertise the museum exhibits and special events. During open hours staff would greet visitors, offer information, take admission, conduct museum store sales transactions, and provide supervision and security of the galleries. A countertop would provide space for guest book, brochures, and convenience for both standing and wheelchair bound visitors without blocking entry/exit circulation. A workstation and security monitors could be hidden behind the counter. If needed as a workstation during closed hours, task lighting would prevent the need for gallery lights, preventing deterioration of the collections and saving electricity. An "L" configuration with space for two individuals is recommended to facilitate admission and sales transactions.

This area would be large enough to enable individual visitors and classrooms of children to leave their coats, backpacks, and umbrellas in a semi-secure location. This will protect the collections from introduced moisture and dirt, and help prevent accidents to exhibits, while making the museum visitor more comfortable. Windows and/or glass doors would be inviting, therefore a handsome, intriguing space, is desired.

- Current Size: 75 sq.ft.
- Recommended Size: 150 sq.ft.

Museum Store

- Purpose: To generate revenue for the museum operation while offering the visitor an opportunity to purchase quality items relating to Sitka's history and culture. It also provides an opportunity to support, and gain revenue from, temporary exhibits by artists and others.

In the new space the store should continue to be near the entrance/exit to allow one staff member to handle both admissions and store sales and assistance, and to allow visitors to access the store without paying admission. Increased visitation will result in increased sales, and require a larger inventory.

The Store is the big money maker, averaging around \$2.50 per visitor over the past five years. To continue to be a big money maker, the Museum will need an attractive and plentiful inventory that relates to the museum mission and/or collections. Imagine what could happen if the Museum increases paying visitors by 50% the first year of operation, and about 10% for the next five years as projected in the new facility.

Currently a long window wall is along one side, and display cases along another side. A window looking into the space is recommended to entice visitors, but walls are also desirable to display potentially large and dramatic pieces. Storage for sales inventory and display items should be designed into the display cabinet bases. Bulk storage would be in the White House. A slightly larger space is justified.

- Current Size: 236 sq.ft.
- Recommended Size: 350 sq. ft.

Permanent Exhibition Gallery

- Purpose: To be used for long-term exhibition of the Museum's, and borrowed, collections to tell the story of the human history of the Sitka area.

The purpose and intent of the museum galleries, the Museum's primary public space, is reflected in the Museum's mission statement:

The mission of the Sitka Historical Society is to preserve and promote the events, stories and artifacts of the human history of the Sitka area for the inspiration, education and benefit of the public and future generations.

An adequately staffed, environmentally controlled and secure space will allow the Museum to borrow objects from other institutions that help tell Sitka's story. A controlled environment which protects from damage from temperature and humidity fluctuations and excessive light plus staffing to provide a secure display is required by most lending institutions. The Museum should be able to control the temperature in the galleries. Research at the Alaska State Museums' collections documents 365 objects cross-referenced under Sitka. Other Sitka based institutions, including Sitka National Historic Park, the U.S. Forest Service, potential Sitka Tribe of Alaska repatriated objects, and/or private collections, could "fill the gaps" and provide a service to other institutions or collectors through long-term display.

It is difficult to get a size on the current actual exhibit space as it is chopped up with collection management and research spaces, reception area and Museum Store. One

exhibit and a large table were recently removed to make room for a small temporary exhibition space and video viewing area. A 2,000 sq.ft. gallery dedicated to permanent interpretive exhibits, including a small video area seating up to 20 people, would experience heavy use at times during the summer, and could accommodate visiting school groups, Elderhostel groups, and docent tours and yet be comfortably sized for independent visitors. This would almost double permanent exhibit space, and reduce collection storage needs.

Wide (8-10') doorways into the gallery (and into the Museum itself) are necessary to accommodate large objects, exhibits, and exhibit cases. High ceilings, 12-14,' and no windows are recommended. LED lighting is recommended. Design should minimize, or efficiently locate, doors, thermostats, smoke/fire alarms, light switches, and vents to provide uninterrupted walls and flexible space.

- Current permanent exhibit gallery size: 1,178 sq. ft.
- Recommended size: 2,000 sq. ft.

Temporary Exhibition Gallery

- Purpose: To be used for short-term traveling exhibits and 1-3 month exhibits generated in-house or by the community.

Temporary exhibit research, design, installation and de-installation can be very time consuming. But they are an excellent service to the community and increase museum visitation. Sitka museum staff realizes this and are exploring the possibility of establishing temporary exhibit schedule in which approximately three one-month exhibits per year are developed and installed by staff and the community would install another three per year. Thus, a typical schedule could be:

- September: Museum generated Alaska Day exhibit
- October & November: Community/Artist exhibits
- December: Borrowed traveling exhibit
- January, February March: Community/Artist exhibits
- April – September: Museum exhibit geared to school tours & summer visitors

The Museum would develop a temporary exhibit policy and require applications from prospective community organizations and/or artists at the beginning of each new season, perhaps in the spring. Many museums and arts councils have policies and experience to share.

Traveling exhibits come in all sizes, and most are flexible to fit a variety of spaces. The Alaska State Museum has an attractive traveling exhibit program that is free except for shipping costs, with large and small formats to serve a variety of venues. One, "Dale DeArmond: Nondalton Legends" takes only 60 linear feet, and includes a video and player. This would be a natural, which could augment a temporary display

of the Museum's own DeArmond prints. Another, "*Eight Stars of Gold: The Story of Alaska's Flag*," also requires 60 linear feet, might mesh with an Alaska Day exhibit. The size and source of traveling exhibitions depend on the Museum's rental and transportation budget, staff to install it, and the security and environmental controls to meet lenders' requirements. Most traveling exhibits are loaned for 1-3 months and need to be reserved months in advance. Having the schedule set by August of every year would enable producing a season poster.

A 500 sq.ft. temporary gallery was considered a good size by several Consortium Meeting attendees. This gallery could be able to be divided into two smaller gallery spaces, using Milli-Walls or other movable wall systems if needed.

The temporary gallery should be accessible from the museum reception area without going through the permanent exhibit gallery. Some museums prefer the ability to close off the permanent exhibits with a security wall during special events. The gallery space design should minimize, or efficiently locate, doors, thermostats, smoke/fire alarms, light switches, and vents to provide uninterrupted walls and flexible space and yet provide one large door. Ideally, the temporary gallery should be convenient to a receiving area so exhibit crates do not need to go through the main gallery. This may not be possible in Sitka. LED lighting is recommended. High ceilings, 12-14,' and no windows are recommended.

- Current Size: 80 sq.ft.
- Recommended size: 500 sq. ft.

Museum Non-Public Space

Collection Storage Room

Purpose: Secure storage of the museum's permanent object, photographic and archival collections, and potential storage of some loaned collections.

As noted above, the Museum's collection storage room is overflowing. The permanent collections consist of about 8,000 historic and fine art objects, 25,000 historic photographs and negatives, and 110,000 pages of archival objects. The collections are augmented by about 30 loaned objects. An astounding 750 objects were acquired this year, primarily through donations, but records were not available to understand a 5-year growth trend. It appears that many new donations are archival materials and photographs that take relatively little room.

The square foot and cubic foot measurements of stored museum collections in the three storage locations were taken:

- Sitka Historical Museum: 107 sq.ft. 860 cu.ft.

- The White House: 205 sq.ft. 815 cu.ft
- Pulp Mill Administrative Building: 315 sq.ft. 1,265 cu.ft.
- 637 sq.ft. 2,940 cu.ft.

An on-site collections storage room, 900 sq.ft. x 10 feet high, would accommodate compacting storage of approximately 750 sq.ft. x 9 feet high = 6,750 cu.ft., if the room is configured efficiently.

The recommended size of the collections storage room should accommodate 15- 20 years of growth. The size takes into consideration the doubled gallery size, thus more objects will be on exhibit and not in the storage room. Compacting storage is assumed, as this densely packed storage requires about 45% less floor space. If compacting storage is not used, increase size by 350 sq. ft.

It is important that this room have museum best practices environmental controls as mentioned above. The temperature might be kept a couple of degrees lower than the rest of the museum. Lighting should be off when a person is not in the room. A timer may be appropriate to insure that lights are not left on. The doors should remain closed and locked. The Collection Processing room should be adjacent to the Collection Storage Room, and the Collection/Exhibits Curator’s Office near both. Double doors

- Current Size: 3 storage facilities 637 sq.ft. 2,940 cu.ft.
- Recommended Size: 900 sq.ft. 6,750 cu.ft.

Museum Collection Processing and Research

- Purpose: This space is used for receiving, inspecting, cataloging/accessioning, photographing and preserving acquisitions, and preparing collections for storage and exhibition, and for research of collections by staff and researchers.

This size is suitable for 1-3 working individuals. It would have areas for cleaning, photographing, and processing a variety of large and small objects, photographs, and archival materials. Museum objects may be safely stored here for days or weeks waiting processing. Therefore, security is necessary, and admission to this area is restricted to staff, collection volunteers, and staff-accompanied researchers while working on collection projects. General office duties would be accomplished in the offices. A “No Handling” policy is always in place.

One large table would be at one end, separated from the processing area, to be used by researchers. As museum/archival best practices requires that staff be present when researchers are using the collections, a small workstation would allow staff to work while researchers are present. It is possible that the Museum’s reference library could be moved into the research side of this space. Care must be taken that the processing side is off limits to the public.

The Museum Processing Room would include cabinetry, shelving, double sink, large tables, photography/scanner set up, possible fume hood or increased ventilation, five-six 4-drawer file cabinets of collection records, processing and storage supplies, and a small freezer. Bulk supplies would be stored in the White House.

- Current Size: Museum & White House 280 sq. ft
- Recommended Size: 350 sq. ft.

Offices

- Purpose: Private and shared offices for 4FTE employees, plus seasonal interns, and volunteers.

Museum current staffing of 3.10 FTE positions share a single office with three desks, the reference library, copier, supply storage, overflow artwork and the communal coffee station is located in the Museum's one office. Two other workstations are located in the collection room and a space in the exhibit area and in the White House.

This report recommends a permanent, stable, staff of 4.50 FTE, with 6-9 months of a museum studies or archival graduate student intern(s). The four recommended offices below would accommodate two or more workstations/desks per office. These offices could be cut back by one office if the ½-time archivist shared an office with the Collection/Exhibit Curator and intern, and the Program Coordinator shared an office with the visitor Services Manager and volunteers. But, this would not allow room for growth over the next 20 years.

- Executive Director: private office with small conference table suitable for meetings of 4-6 people. Located near the entrance, but not the first office to discourage drop-in visitors. 150 sq.ft.
- Collection/Exhibit Curator: shared office with seasonal Intern, located near the Processing Room. 150 sq.ft.
- Archivist & Program Coordinator: shared office for 2 ½-time positions. Located near the Processing Room. 150 sq.ft.
- Visitor Services Manager: shared office with volunteer desk, copier, coffee, under counter refrigerator, and office and Museum Shop supplies to last 1-2 months. Located near the entrance, ideally buffering the ED's office. 120 sq.ft.
- Museum Assistant: station at the front desk.

No workstations may be located in Collection Storage. However, a compact workstation in the Processing Room and another at the front reception desk is advisable. Collection documentation file cabinets would be in the Processing Room.

- Current Size: 169 sq. ft. (1 shared office)
- Recommended Size: 570 sq. ft. (4 shared offices)

Exhibit Preparation

- Purpose: To assemble museum exhibits, cut and spray-mount labels, make exhibit mounts, and repair/make armatures, etc.

Currently exhibit changes take place directly in the exhibit gallery, obviously disruptive to visitors, in another room in Centennial Hall if available, and/or at the White House. The room would be furnished with hand and power tools, a flammables cabinet for paints and combustibles, a small fume hood or ventilation suitable for spray paints and adhesives, worktables, and storage cabinetry with countertop and sink. It would be large enough to temporarily house an exhibit case and a wheeled cart and be suitable for 1-2 people working at a time. This is where dirty, dusty work such as sanding, sawing, and painting would take place. This activity is not appropriate in the Processing Room. Staff would use this space sporadically, but intensely. This space should be located so exhibit cases can be transported easily to and from the galleries, but not a door directly into a gallery.

- Current Size: None
- Recommended Size: 200 sq. ft.

General Storage

- Purpose: For storing exhibit cases, and exhibit, educational and oversize supplies and equipment that are used on a regular basis such as the Milli-Wall system. Bulky, and long term storage of equipment and supplies would continue to be at the White House

This small room would contain shelving to maximize storage space. It would be used for storing exhibit cases, props, lighting, and building supplies, dollies, larger pieces of museum equipment, furniture, and shipping crates not stored at the White House.

- Current Size: None
- Recommended Size: 150 sq. ft.

Proposed Staffing

Staffing: **4.5 FTE plus interns and volunteer assistance**

As with any small museum, the staff will still job share. Staffing goals are to manage this program efficiently, yet professionally. Adequate staffing to insure a well-monitored museum operation is important for security requirements from lending institutions. I recommend that the Museum never be open without two staff (or one paid staff or intern and one trained volunteer). Volunteers should be recruited, trained and supported to provide about .50 FTE.

- **Museum Director:** 1 FTE, to provide overall direction and supervision, grant writing, budget management, fundraising, and facility management of the museum space. With an increased staff come increased organizational and supervisory duties.
- **Curator Collections & Exhibits:** 1 FTE, with a professional Museum Studies degree, to accomplish technical museum collection and exhibit duties, assist researchers.
- **Museum Archivist:** .5 FTE, ideally with an Archives degree. There is a large backlog and large number of recently acquired archival materials requiring inventory, scanning, and accessioning into the Past Perfect database and re-housing. This position would also assist archives and photo collection researchers. It is possible that after 5 years, when the backlog of collections are accessioned, the position could be eliminated, and replaced by an “Program Coordinator” to assume responsibility for youth and adult activities and events and marketing/advertising.
- **Visitor Services Manager:** 1 FTE, to manage front desk and Museum Store, recruit & schedule front desk volunteers, volunteer appreciation event, and clerical responsibilities including daily visitor statistics and money handling.
- **Program Coordinator:** .5 FTE, to develop and implement museum educational programming, activities, and marketing and advertising. This position would focus their time from September through May.
- **Museum Assistant:** .5 FTE, a summer seasonal employee, would assist with front desk duties full time in summer, 6 HPW in winter.
- **Museum Intern:** .5 FTE, one-two museum studies or archival graduate interns would primarily help with collections records management and preservation assistance. *Budget for six to nine months of assistance.*
- **Janitor:** Contract employee to provide 1-hour, 5 days a week in summer, 1-hour, 2 days a week in winter to vacuum, and to collect and remove garbage on a weekly basis. Museum staff would clean exhibit glass during opening duties. ***It is difficult to hire such a part-time position and it would be ideal if Centennial Hall staff could include this in their duties and budget.***
- **Volunteers:** .5 FTE: 7 3-hour reception desk volunteers in summer, 4 3-hour reception desk volunteers in winter; 2-3 3-hour collection volunteers year round; 2 special event volunteers; 5-8 volunteers for special projects.

Staff deserves benefits. It will be difficult to attract and retain employees otherwise. The scope of this report does not recommend a health benefit plan, but one calculated at 30% of salary. However, "The Foraker Group Salary & Benefits Survey for 2010 offers Data Trends:

The most significant and probably reliable trend is a continuing (from 2002 data) move away from a vacation/sick combination toward a paid-time-off structure with a single leave bank. A single bank is easier to administer and eliminates a number of problems with sick leave in particular. Other movement appears to indicate:

- *Cost shifting makes employees responsible for a larger proportion of premium payments and cost of care.*
- *Employees are paying larger deductibles.*
- *Consistent movement is seen toward a high deductible health care plan paired with a Health Reimbursement, Health Savings or Flexible Spending Account with employers funding part or all of the supplemental account.*
- *Waiting periods for health care coverage may be smaller.*
- *More organizations are offering retirement plans.*
- *More organizations appear to be offering a comprehensive benefits package including dental, vision, life insurance, long-term disability and accidental death and dismemberment.*

Additionally, The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) reports the following projected trends for 2010:

- *Higher out-of-pocket costs*
- *Greater use of incentives to stay healthy*
- *Increase in monitoring spousal or dependent coverage to ensure eligibility*
- *Reduction of health plan options*
- *Growth in consumer-directed health plans*

Data Trends, page T2

Recommended Operation Goals

So what level of services and revenues can you expect from the recommended space and staffing and budget?

Annual Cycle

Museum operation is impacted by distinct seasonal changes, particularly in Alaska where there are wide seasonal fluctuations in visitation. But it is always busy.

- During the summer, the focus is on daily maintaining a safe, secure and welcoming operation while performing on-going collection management, intern recruitment, research assistance, and planning for fall/winter/spring temporary exhibits, fall fundraising events and Alaska Day activities, and educational programming.
- Shorter public hours in the fall and winter (open 4-5 days a week, 5 hours per day) permit focusing on collection management, coordinating and/or installing temporary exhibits, updating permanent exhibits, professional development, collaborative relationships and projects, designing the next summer's exhibit, offering youth and adult activities, grant writing, recruiting a new intern and marketing. Fall also focuses on school tours, getting advertising for the next summer exhibit to publications, advertising changing exhibits, and participating in the Sitka Purchase celebrations.
- Spring also focuses on school tours, installing the new summer exhibit, ordering and restocking the Museum Shop, training paid and volunteer summer staff, designing, ordering and disseminating brochures and posters, and writing Alaska State Museum and Rasmuson Foundation grants.

Public Hours and Visitation

With the recommended staff of 4.50, the Museum could be open daily, 8 hours a day during the 4 ½ month summer (56 hours per week). During the winter, open 4-5 days a week and 4-5 hours a day to serve the Sitka residents would be possible. Staff would also work when the Museum is closed to the public. The Museum would be able to open for special events such as evening exhibit openings, conventions, ferry dockings, and by appointment. Open hours should be evaluated annually to meet community use. Counting visitors, hours of the day that receive the most visitation, and periodic surveys will help set open hours that best serve your audience.

About 120 staff hours per week in the summer, and 50 hours per week in the winter, are needed to safely and securely open, close, and staff the Museum. There should be two staff in the building when open to the public in case of an emergency. Trained volunteers could be one of those staff, but would not assume the responsibility of operating the Museum. This schedule allows for 15 minutes before opening and after

closing for security checks, secure cash handling, and visitor and sales record keeping. The front desk should be designed to serve as a workstation, greeter's desk and Museum Shop desk to make multi-tasking possible during slow visitation. There should always be a welcoming greeter at the front reception desk.

The Museum and Store attracted about 22,000 visitors, with 2,200 paying visitors in 2011. In 2010 it was close to 3,600 paying visitors, averaged at 3,000. Because of the enhanced, larger new facility in an excellent location off the primary visitor information services lobby, collaborations, actively taking admission (not relying on the honor system), improved exhibits, effective marketing, and quality programming with AV presentations, paid museum visitation is expected to increase by 50% the first year, and by 10-15% for each of the next five years. A reasonable goal after five years should be 20% of Sitka's visitors or approximately 20,000 summer visitors per year, each paying \$4.00. Most visitors come during summer months and to special events. So, if visitation to Sitka does not change significantly, work and plan for 6,000 paying visitors x \$4 = \$24,000 the first year, \$22,500 the second year, \$30,000 the third year, etc. With the increase in visitors will come a significant increase in Museum Shop sales.

Admission and Museum Shop Projections

General Admission in the new space should be raised to \$4.00 per adult, with children free. \$4.00 for admission is common in other Alaska museums of this size. Several options could be considered for Sitka residents' admission including:

- May 15-September 15: \$4.00 adult admission; free for children under 19.
- Free admission for SHS members.
- \$10 - \$20 annual individual or family passes. The Alaska State Museum has interesting annual pass options that should be reviewed.
- Free winter admission sponsored by local businesses, service groups, or individuals. Track admissions/donations per month and average it to get a suggested amount to subsidize admission. An admission sign might read: "ADMISSION IS FREE THIS MONTH THANKS TO _____"
- A donation jar near the front desk might solicit donations for a particular object purchase or cause, for example the purchase of the Bob DeArmond painting.
- Give away something. Offer paying visitors a postcard, the Historic Walking Tour Map, or similar item. The same item would sell for \$.50-\$1.00 in the Museum Store.

Museum Shops range in size from about 70 sq.ft. to 1,074 sq.ft. in six museums studied in the McDowell Group's 2007 *Alaska Libraries and Museums: A Review*. The same study indicated that between 0 - \$45,000 was budgeted to purchase Museum Store merchandise annually and \$20,000 - \$60,000 was earned in revenue. In Kenai, some revenue is from a percentage of the sale of a special summer art exhibit.

Many museums view their Museum Store as an important service to local artists, and an educational extension of their mission.

The location of the Museum Shop near the entrance off the visitor information lobby, with a window display onto the lobby, would be extremely attractive to the summer visitors who congregate there. The front reception desk staff that greet visitors, would also staff the Museum Shop. Quality merchandise that relates to the museum collections and mission is important. A combination of expensive, unique items, possibly on commission, and inexpensive items is recommended. A policy of not underselling local retail stores should be adopted. Other successful museum shops, such as the Alutiiq Museum's, should be queried about their most popular and best revenue making items.

Revenues averaged \$68,000 per year over the past five years, with average visitation of 25,000. But Sitka visitation has declined. Based on sales of \$2.50 per person, and visitation does not decrease substantially, a roughly 50% increase in visitors over 2011 who only come into the Shop could be 30,000, to equal sales revenues of \$75,000 per year. This is an extremely important revenue source.

It will be important to schedule volunteer reception/greeters on cruise ship days to provide backup for staff who would assume very busy Museum Shop duties on those days.

Exhibit Programming

Exhibit gallery space will be over twice as large as the current space. In addition to the museum galleries, integrated photomural displays throughout the Centennial Hall should be continued and labeled with the Museum name and logo, and an invitation to visit the Museum. As attractive as integrating exhibits into other areas of the building might be, focusing the exhibits in the Museum is important to insure maximum revenue. Exhibit interpretation and installation requires research, design, environmental controls, and preservation considerations, plus a firm commitment to present balanced, unbiased interpretation. A visit to Sitka's museum should help the visitor understand Sitka's history and culture, as well as help Sitka's residents, particularly the children and new residents, understand their sense of place and community.

The newly designed **permanent interpretive exhibits**, mostly in new exhibit cases, will continue to focus on and interpret the history and culture of Sitka in the larger exhibit gallery. Although the Museum has already developed a new exhibit plan and layout, professional exhibit designers should refine the layout with new exhibit cases in this gallery. They would need significant assistance with the collections and interpretation and Sitka history themes so that they can also design, plan and install objects in each display, and write and design interpretive material, which should be reviewed by staff and advisors. This will require working closely with the staff

throughout the process. Exhibit design should start about one year prior to opening the completed building. Although these exhibits should be considered long-term installations, they should be designed to accept newly received objects and have interpretive labels that could be reproduced in-house. These exhibits could certainly be phased and completed as money allows, however, a professionally installed exhibit gallery at the opening of the museum will have the biggest impact on visitation and revenues.

A 500 sq.ft. **temporary exhibit gallery** is envisioned for short term traveling exhibits, objects from the collections, local artists, and collaborative exhibits possibly with the school district and/or other organizations. Initially, the Curator of Collections and Exhibits could design and install three exhibits including a special exhibit which would be displayed April through September. The Curator also could coordinate three exhibits designed and installed by the community. Many museums offer their rotating gallery to local artists who hang, label, and take down their own shows following established guidelines, thus reducing staff time. The museums then receive a commission on sales. After a several years, exhibits might increase gradually to seven, if the community participates to keep workloads low.

An exhibit case near the reception desk might feature recent acquisitions, community events, or private collections that could be changed two-three times per year. This could provide an excellent opportunity to engage the community.

Approximately 35% of the Curator's time would be on exhibit design and maintenance: upgrading and maintaining the permanent exhibits, changing exhibit cases, inventorying outreach exhibits and gallery exhibits, and coordinating rotating exhibits.

AV Presentations: The Museum should obtain the rights to show one 15-25 minute video in a small 15-20-seat mini-theater in the exhibit gallery. This would be popular with summer visitors, and advertised as a delightful way to rest their feet! In the summer, these programs should be put on a continuous loop DVD to show on the ½ hour, starting ½ hour after the Museum opens and ending ½ hour before the Museum closes. Age appropriate videos could be a part of a 1-hour museum school tour. Eventually, the Museum may want to commission a videographer to film a 20-minute history of Sitka suitable for 6th grade through adult.

Educational Programming

Goals and scheduling should be worked out carefully, building the program slowly. Staff should develop a prioritized list for educational programming. Educational programming should encompass many aspects to entertain, enlighten and educate adults and youth on historical, fine art, cultural, natural history and social issues. Museum exhibits and educational programming are an excellent way to encourage civic and personal pride and social understanding.

Programming would target local residents and visitors, adults and children. Local groups who might use the space would be a local Girls and Boys Club, community schools, historic preservation groups, and the Sitka Historical Society, among others.

Youth Programming

- Public and private schools and youth groups should be encouraged to bring children to the Museum. Identify teacher needs and develop age and curricula appropriate programs. Components might include a pre-visit introduction via flyer or DVD, a tour of the Museum exhibits, and a follow-up activity for the teacher in the classroom. Prioritize program theme and age groups to develop one new tour a year, maintaining four-five tour offerings for different ages. Aim to get local kids into the Museum on school tours at least three times between kindergarten and 12th grade. Market these offerings with a flyer to the schools each September.
- Coordinate with activities provided at the library, special events such as Alaska Day and Sitka Music Festival and other venues.
- A half-day, one week long children's activity for ages 6-12 might be offered during either spring or winter break. Up to 16 children could be accommodated, possibly with activities happening in the visitor lobby. The museum intern might lead these, with volunteer assistance. The Juneau-Douglas City Museum has offered a summer activity for years. Cost should be comparable to other Sitka children's activities, but for this report calculated at 16 children x \$150 = \$2,250 with a \$250 expense budget for food and supplies.

Adult Programming

- Educational Programs for adults might include exhibit openings, lectures or tours in the winter on selected themes offered by specialists. For example, ask a local or visiting expert or organization to speak, give a tour on an object or exhibit theme in the Museum. Attempt to have a variety of themes, academic and popular. Museum Interns should offer a parting presentation.
- Programs should be designed attract no more than 15 participants per tour. If a seated presentation, plan for room to expand. Budget for travel, housing and honorarium for out of town experts. These programs would be shared with the other organizations, with the Museum's contribution being housing.
- Offer a 3-hour training in the spring to community tourism providers to educate them on local history and culture while introducing them to the Museum. A 3-hour training might include watching a Sitka history video, a guided tour of the exhibits, a Q & A session, a table for brochures from tourism operators, and handouts on Sitka's history and natural history. A \$30-40 fee would cover staff time, printing and refreshments and include a single visit pass to encourage participants to become familiar with the Museum. This might be done jointly with SCVB and their volunteer training.
- Coordinate the management and operations of the various AV presentations.

- Collaborate with other tourism operations such as the railroad and other local venues.

Marketing & Advertising

Marketing and advertising is critical to success. The Museum Director and Board would establish goals and scheduling. Audiences would be identified so that the programs and marketing will be effective.

Marketing for the Museum:

- Create and disseminate an annual brochure/rack card & poster, create articles for travel books, SCVB, other visitor guides, and newspapers, and use the local scanning channel, PSAs, and an enhanced Museum web page, and other local resources. Articles for summer marketing should be sent out by January.
- Fall flyers about youth offerings, school tours, and winter exhibits and lectures would be disseminated through the Parks and Recreation Department, the schools, the Library, SCVB, and using local PSAs, the scanning channel, and the Museum web-page.
- Outreach exhibits and signage should *always* include the Museum name and logo and invitation to visit the Museum. "Visit us in Harrigan Centennial Hall."
- Staff should know who on the Board or on staff belongs to the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and Visitors Bureau, and present at tourism and local civic organizations' functions annually.
- Obtain sponsorship for events and winter admission and have the sponsoring organization's membership promote and attend the event.
- Engage the community. Spring tourism training and special events encourage word-of-mouth promotion.
- Free single and season passes encourage visitation and thank donors.
- Coordinate with the other cultural organizations to consider a group admission ticket possibility.

Signage for the Museum is a very important aspect of successful marketing. Exterior signage should be located on the main sign near the road, as well at exterior entrance(s) leading to the Museum. Directional signs should be located in the lobby, and directly outside the Museum entrance. Use the Museum branding logo. Wayfinding signage for the Sitka Historical Museum and other cultural venues should be located around town, with arrows directing pedestrians and drivers to attractions.

RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Expenses

Personnel Services		Recommended
Museum Exec. Director	1 FTE	\$50,000
Curator Coll.& Exhibits	1 FTE	\$42,000
Archivist	½ FTE	\$20,000
Visitor/ Store Manager	1 FTE	\$30,000
Program Coordinator	½ FTE	\$18,000
Museum Asst	½ FTE	\$12,000
Total Salaries		\$175,000
Total Personnel		\$227,500 w/ 30% benefits

Services and Commodities

Printing & Advertising		\$ 2,700
Summer & Fall Brochure & Poster	\$ 1,200	
Historic Walking Maps	\$ 200	
Newsletter	\$ 400	
Misc. Advertising & Forms	\$ 600	
Exhibit photos, labels, interpretive material	\$ 500	
Subscriptions/Dues		\$ 500
Memberships: MuseumsAlaska \$100, AASLH \$100, Ak. Hist.Soc. \$100, misc. other \$200		
Travel/PerDiem		\$ 2,500
2 staff to Museums Alaska Conf.	\$2500	
Communications		\$ 5,000
Telephone & Internet: Based on FY2011	\$4,500	
Web site maintenance	\$400	
Postage and shipping	\$100	
Training/Education		
Board Training	\$300	
2 Museums Alaska Conf. registrations	\$800	
Professional books	\$200	
Other Special Services		\$ 36,800
Museum Shop inventory & shipping	\$35000	
Bank charges & CC Fees 1700, check printing \$100		
Insurance - Blanket policy for all locations		\$ 5,112
(liability, property, 10 most valuable objects)		
Maintenance & Repairs		\$ 1,000
Collections restoration or preventive care	\$500	
Office & exhibit equipment	\$500	
Contracted Services		\$ 18,300
Accounting/QuickBooks	\$1,500	
Intern Stipend (12 wks x \$250p/w + \$500 travel)	\$3,600	
Intern Stipend (26 wks x \$250p/w + \$500 travel)	\$7,500	
Misc. Consulting (Historical, IT, etc.)	\$ 500	

Sitka Historical Museum Programming
The Foraker Group, Pre-Development
November 30, 2011

Janitorial 5 avg.hpw for museum gallery @ \$20 p/h \$5,200

Museum Acquisitions		\$ 1,000
Purchase of material for the permanent collections.		
Operating Supplies		\$ 5,200
Collections: cleaning, storage, accessioning,	\$ 600	
Exhibits: interpretive materials, paper:	\$ 800	
Programming, reception/event/fundraising food:	\$2000	
Volunteer Recognition:	\$ 500	
Printer/copier ink, toner, paper, pens, filing:	\$1000	
Museum Shop supplies and equipment	\$ 300	
Equip, Furniture, Tools		\$ 1,500
New and replaced equipment and furniture	\$1500	
White House		\$ 11,500
Utilities	\$ 8,400	
Maintenance	\$ 3,000	
Annual Fee	\$ 100	
Total Non-Personnel		\$ 91,100
TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET		\$318,600

Revenues

City Subsidy		\$175,000
Subsidy to cover cost of salaries		
Admissions		\$ 24,500
Individual \$24,000, Season Passes \$500		
Gift Shop Sales		\$ 75,000
Web sales should include charge for postage		
Fundraisers:		\$ 27,500
To fund operational expenses in museum		
Wine Tasting	\$ 7,500	
Annual Fundraiser	\$20,000	
Artist Sales		\$ 200
Membership (based on FY2012 budget)		\$ 7,000
Lobby Exhibit Case Rental		\$ 4,000
Museum coordinates and manages 8 cases in Lobby. \$500 per year x 8 = \$4,000		
Successful Grants		\$ 9,000
To fund operational expenses	\$8,000	
To fund art acquisitions	\$1,000	
Classes & Programs		\$ 3,000
1 ½-day x 5 day Spring or Winter	\$2,250	
Tourism Training 20 participants x \$35	\$ 750	
Misc. Donations		\$ 500
Copy/Research Charges		\$ 100

TOTAL REVENUES

\$325,300
