

June 13, 2017

Dear Members of the Assembly and Administrator,

We are bringing this proposal for a downtown people-mover van pilot project before you because of our concern for the vitality of downtown Sitka and are asking for City support. We feel this project would provide valuable information to the Assembly to assist in an upcoming decision regarding the enhancement of visitor experience, and the value of using of CPET funds next year for an expanded version of this project. We are attaching an overview of the proposal, and a letter of support signed by a number of downtown merchants.

We have received positive support from the Sitka Rose Gallery, Refresh Studio, Seasons, Abby's Reflections, Bev's Flowers, Mean Queen Restaurant, Chocolate Moose, Island Artists Gallery, Harry Race Pharmacy, The Fur Gallery, Sitka Tribal Tours, the Russian American Company, I Love Sitka, Fisherman's Eye Gallery, The Artists Cache, Wintersong Soaps,

One downtown business was neutral, stating that they did not feel they would benefit from and would not want to be expected to pay for the service.

We have worked diligently to make this as inclusive a proposal as possible, and at this point there has been no negative feedback. The estimate of cost for this project is \$60/hour during hours of operation. We are attempting to offset some of that cost through advertising and the use of a donated van.

Most of the merchants see the value of self-assessing in return for advertising on the van and we are working on developing that process. However, without some level of support from the City of Sitka, we will probably not be able to get this project in place in time to assess; 1. enhancements in the visitor experience; 2. assistance for persons with disabilities; 3. Improvement in sales for downtown venues; and 4. Increased tax revenues to the city.

We will have canvassed the majority of downtown merchants prior to the June 27th Assembly meeting and will bring updated information and a number of supportive business representatives to that meeting.

Thank you for your attention and we hope you will be able to provide City of Sitka support for this trial proposal.

Pat Kehoe,

Member, Island Artists Gallery

907-738-6620; islandpainter@hotmail.com

June 12, 2017

Downtown Merchants and Assembly members

We, at the Island Artists Gallery are interested in **increasing the summer tourism traffic to the entire downtown area**. We have a larger number of cruise ship tourists this year, and want to explore ways to ensure that visitors truly experience all of vibrant and lively downtown Sitka. We believe a downtown People-Mover van would assist to enhance the cruise ship visitor experience this summer, boost visitor spending and city sales tax revenue.

Visitor arrival location heavily influences downtown traffic patterns. We believe a people-mover will have a positive effect on these patterns as well as increase visitor enjoyment by facilitating connections between cruise ship passengers and merchants located **all throughout** downtown. This is not a replacement for walking our downtown area, rather an added amenity that can provide an overview of downtown Sitka, assist visitors with disabilities, and drive positive revenues to merchants and to the city via sales tax. Our vision to accomplish this includes the following but is open to improvements:

For the remainder of this season, a pilot project will offer free visitor transportation on a 14-passenger van looping from the Centennial Building through downtown. The vans will depart from Centennial Hall every 15 minutes during cruise ship hours with scheduled stops 1) in front of Bayview Building, 2) near Mountain Miss and Seasons, 3) in front of the Russian Orthodox Church, 4) across from Harry Race, then looping around Harbor Drive with 5) a stop near the intersection of Harbor Drive and Airport Way near the Mean Queen, Silver Basin, and Bev's Flowers and 6) back to the Centennial Building. This route would be varied with a loop that completes the Lincoln St. stops and then goes down Katlian St. to the Naa Kahidi in time for the dance shows, before returning to the Centennial Building. Other route variations that improve visitor access to Sitka's downtown may be considered for this pilot.

Downtown businesses would be asked to keep records of the effect of the people mover on their foot traffic and sales. This would provide information about the impact of the pilot and how to improve it, while helping the City make an informed decision about any future use of CPET funds.

We are gathering information on how much it would cost to **immediately implement this initiative for summer 2017**. We will be presenting this proposal to the assembly to keep them involved in the process and possibly to seek economic development funds as a block grant for the pilot. We are working with downtown merchants to self-fund this pilot with participating businesses receiving on-board advertising and coupon book inclusion.

In the long-term vision: a people-moving vehicle looping only the downtown area with scheduled stops essentially as above. We would love to see this be an electric people mover bus painted a lively local design with music, encouraging people to visit and explore downtown, with a reader board map showing current location and surrounding venues listed. Potentially CPET funds could be utilized for this in a manner that enhances the cruise ship visitor experience allowing them to enjoy all of the downtown region's many charms in a way that does not compete with existing transportation, especially aiding visitors with disabilities. Again, this is designed to improve the visitor experience in Sitka and increase traffic to all the downtown venues.

Regards,

Pat Kehoe

Member, Island Artists Gallery,

islandpainter@hotmail.com; 907-738-6620

June 8, 2017

Actions in Support of the Downtown People Mover Pilot Proposal

We are bringing a proposal for a "People Mover" pilot project, before the Assembly on June 13 in the Persons to be Heard slot. If you are in support of this trial project, please assist us with the following:

1. Email the Assembly with your comments prior to the meeting. assembly@cityofsitka.org is the link for all members of the Assembly. If you could also send an email to islandpainter@hotmail.com with your same comments, we can attempt to adjust this proposal to address concerns and benefit as many entities as possible.
2. Sign the following form with your business name, your signature, and a yes/no as to your willingness to self-assess the impact of the people mover on your business
3. If you have any questions or concerns, please email or call Pat Kehoe

Downtown People Mover Pilot Proposal

We want to increase the summer tourism traffic to the entire downtown area. We believe that a people mover will accomplish this by facilitating connections between cruise ship passengers and merchants located all throughout downtown. We don't see this as a replacement for those walking our downtown area, but as an added amenity that can provide an overview of downtown Sitka, assist visitors with disabilities, and drive positive revenues to merchants and via the city sales tax. Our proposal, which is preliminary and open to improvements and suggestions, is as follows.

For the remainder of this season, a pilot project will offer free visitor transportation on a 14-passenger van looping from the Centennial Building through downtown. The vans will depart from Centennial Hall every 15 minutes during cruise ship hours with scheduled stops 1) in front of Bayview Building, 2) near Mountain Miss and Seasons, 3) in front of the Russian Orthodox Church, 4) across from Harry Race, then looping around Harbor Drive with 5) a stop near the intersection of Harbor Drive and Airport Way near the Mean Queen, Silver Basin, and Bev's Flowers and 6) back to the Centennial Building. This route would be varied with a loop that completes the Lincoln St. stops and then goes down Katlian St. to the Naa Kahidi in time for the dance shows before returning to the Centennial Building. These are proposed routes. They can be modified to best meet visitor and merchant needs.

Sponsors providing financial assistance will receive advertising on board the van and other benefits such as inclusion in a coupon book if they choose to participate.

Downtown businesses would be asked to keep records of the effect of the people mover on their foot traffic and sales. This would provide information about the impact of the pilot and how to improve it, while helping the City make an informed decision about potential use of CPET funds to fund a future downtown people-mover system.

At this point costs are estimated for month of July. The van/ vans may be donated; Salary 70-140 hours, \$10-12/hour (tips should be good), fuel?, Insurance ?, fees? Signage?, salary for scheduling/administration ?

Letter in Support of the Downtown People Mover Pilot Proposal

By signing this form, you indicate your support of the Downtown People Mover Pilot Proposal.

Name of Business	Signature in Support of Pilot Project	Would Consider Self-Assessment Y/N
Sitka Flowers & the Chocolate Moose	Angela Vitad	Yes
Bevs Flowers & gifts-	Bev Frost-Wright	Yes
Tongass Threads	manager Amanda Macgregor	Yes
Alaska Pure Sea Salt Co.	Karyn Michener	Yes
Water Colors of Alaska	ASD	yes
Patricia's Bar	BAYVIEW PUB	YES
Island Artists Gallery	yes	yes

see back page

Wintersong Soaps	yes	yes
Abby's Reflections	yes	
Russian American Co	yes	yes
Fur Gallery	yes	yes
Fisherman's Eye	yes	
Artists Cache	yes	
Tribal Tours	yes	
Refresh	yes	yes
Seasons	yes	yes
Harry Race	yes	yes
Robertson's Gallery	yes	