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, September 8, 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 July 7, 2025 minutes.

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

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on Procurement of Municipal Electric Vehicles

B. Approve Comments for the Alaska Marine Highway System's Regulation Review Request for Information

C. Appoint Commissioners to the Decarbonizing and Rightsizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group

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, July 7, 2025	6:00 PM	Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 P.M.

Present: Aurora Taylor (Chair), Elizabeth Bagley (left at 6:48), Gerry Hope, Erik de Jong
Absent: Katie Riley (excused), Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)
Staff: Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator)
Public: None

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

Hope moved to AMEND the agenda to reorder items and address new business before unfinished business.
Motion PASSED 4-0 by voice vote.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the June 2, 2025 minutes.

Hope moved to approve the June 2, 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. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve of the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) Guiding Principles and Sub-theme Definitions

Gabel introduced the item and explained the purpose of the definitions and how they were being used for qualitative data analysis and inform the development of the transformative scenario narratives. Commissioners discussed and asked questions about the definitions and about how the scenarios were to be used; Gabel clarified that narratives could be used to facilitate deeper discussion of recommendations in the SCRES. Bagley and Taylor offered to assist Gabel in refining the scenario narratives as needed.

Hope moved to approve the SCRES guiding principles and sub-theme definitions as written in the packet and as amended through Commission discussion to include:

- ***Food Security* and *Waste Stream Reduction* as separate subthemes under *Self-Sufficiency***
- ***Waste-to-Energy* under *Innovation***

Motion PASSED 4-0 by voice vote.

B. Consider Contributing to the Alaska Climate Alliance Policy Platform

Gabel introduced the item and explained that she had received a request from the Alaska Climate Alliance to submit projects and/or actions to their policy platform. She added that she had received permission to submit City-led initiatives but sought Commission guidance if they would like to participate. Bagley expressed concern that the group was too outwardly political and saw minimal benefit in submitting publicly available information. Taylor and de Jong expressed similar opinions. Hope requested that a representative from the group attend a future meeting to discuss the opportunity in more detail, if possible.

Hope moved to indefinitely table the item.
Motion PASSED 4-0 by voice vote.

C. Discussion/Direction/Decision on Aligning Sustainability Metrics with the CBS Strategic Plan

Gabel introduced the item and requested guidance from the Commission on how to best proceed with this goal. Commissioners discussed options and provided input and suggested starting with pairing CBS strategic plan goals with the Sustainability Commission's duties.

The meeting automatically ADJOURNED at 6:48 P.M. due to lack of quorum; no further action was taken.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

D. Discussion/Direction/Decision on the 2025-2026 Work Plan

Not addressed due to lack of quorum; postponed to the next regular meeting

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

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, August 4, 2025 at 6:00 P.M., in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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: September 5, 2025
Subject: **Approve Comments for the Alaska Marine Highway System's Regulation Review Request for Information**

Background:

On Friday, August 22, 2025, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) put out a request for information on potential reforms to regulations to the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). Shortly before August 12, 2025, Alaska Marine Lines (AML) issued a notice that it would no longer transport electric vehicles (EV) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles as of September 1, 2025.

Given that AMHS is now the only way to transport EVs, the Municipal Administrator requested that the Sustainability Commission draft comments for CBS to submit regarding how AMHS ability to transport EV impacts CBS's ability to procure EVs as directed by Administrative Policy No. 24-03: Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement, which outlines to procure EVs when feasible.

Recommendation:

Review, amend, and/or approve the comments as drafted.

ENCL:

AMHS Regulation Review Request for Information
Draft CBS Comments
CBS Administrative Policy 24-03

POSSIBLE MOTION(S)

Main Motion:

I MOVE TO approve the draft CBS AMHS Regulation Review Request for Information comments for submission as written in the packet

OR

Open discussion occurs; Mover and Seconder accept discussion points as friendly.

Main Motion Becomes:
I MOVE TO approve the draft CBS AMHS Regulation Review Request for Information comments for submission as written in the packet and modified through Commission discussion.

From: Dapcevich, Sam D (DOT) <sam.dapcevich@alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2025 4:11 PM
To: AMHS Focus (DOT sponsored) <AMHS.Focus@alaska.gov>
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT REQUEST: AMHS Regulation Reform RFI

Dear AMHS Stakeholder,

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is seeking your input on potential reforms to regulations governing the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS), specifically within 17 AAC 70.

These rules cover vessel operations, tariffs, reservations, and passenger/vehicle transport policies. This initiative is part of Governor Dunleavy's Administrative Order 360, aimed at reviewing and refreshing regulations to enhance clarity, efficiency, and public benefit.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Help modernize regulations to better reflect current industry practices.
- Identify burdensome or unclear provisions that could be revised without compromising safety or federal compliance.
- Improve clarity and usability for passengers, operators, communities, and AMHS staff.
- Support economic resilience and the long-term viability of Alaska's ferry system.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

1. Specific 17 AAC 70 sections you recommend revising or repealing, with the issue and your proposed solution.
2. Ideas for modernizing regulations—think federal alignment, tech, or best practices.
3. Administrative or procedural improvements that might streamline operations.
4. Broader proposals that balance safety, environmental stewardship, efficiency, and economic benefit.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Submit your written recommendations—brief and actionable—by September 15, 2025, 4:00 p.m. Alaska Time, via:

- Email (preferred): dot.regs@alaska.gov (Subject: "2025 AMHS Reg Reform RFI")
- Or by mail:
  U.S. Mail: P.O. Box 112500, Juneau, AK 99811-2500
  Delivery Service (FedEx/UPS): 3132 Channel Drive, Juneau, AK 99801

Please include your name, organization (if applicable), and contact information so we can follow up if needed. Note this RFI is for informational purposes only and will not lead to a contract award. Your input will inform future rulemaking and administrative reforms.

Thank you for helping ensure the Alaska Marine Highway System remains safe, efficient, and responsive to the communities it serves.

Warm regards,
–Sam

Sam Dapcevich
Public Information Officer, Southcoast Region and AMHS
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Office: 907-465-4503 • Cell: 907-500-2100
Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure.

Introduction:

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) thanks the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) for seeking input on potential reforms to regulations governing the AMHS. These comments were drafted by and approved by the CBS Sustainability Commission, and advisory body to the Assembly tasked to work towards catalyzing a healthy community now and in the future by proposing solutions to environmental, social, and economic concerns of the CBS, its partners, and community members[1].

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is a critical component of public travel and rural economic development within Southeast Alaska, the majority of which is off the road system. Citizens of Sitka frequently use AMHS as an affordable way to travel for work, sporting events, school extracurriculars, and to transport freight and goods throughout the region.

Recent and significant efforts from Alaska's federal representatives have successfully brought hundreds of millions of dollars to improve AMHS. The Draft 2045 AMHS Long-Range Plan (2045 AMHS LRP), identifies service, workforce, fleet and terminal infrastructure, financial efficiency and sustainability as key focus areas. Goal 2A: Modernize the fleet and terminals through new builds and renovations, contains numerous subgoals related to supporting the adoption and transport of AFVs both on vessels and on shore[2]. The 2024-2028 Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AK-DOT&PF) Transportation Carbon Reduction Strategy calls for electrification of Sitka's ferry terminal[3] and the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) electric vehicle infrastructure implementation plan includes projects for the communities served by AMHS[4]. Given the priorities and actions within the 2045 AMHS LRP to modernize AMHS and parallel efforts from AK-DOT&PF and AEA, to support safe and effective transportation regardless of drivetrain, it is imperative that operations and regulations are structured to support and accelerate these initiatives and are not a hindrance to these efforts.

Similar directives have been given to the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS). In 2022, the Assembly directed to increase energy independence by electrifying municipal operations where possible by 2030[5]. CBS has begun this process by evaluating and integrating alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) into its fleet when feasible. Sitka is uniquely positioned to support vehicles that can utilize locally sourced power that is far more affordable than conventional fuel and less prone to price volatility. Utilization of electric vehicles (EV) directly supports Sitka's energy independence by utilizing locally generated power by the municipal-run utility.

Pursuant to direction given by the municipal Assembly, the City and Borough of Sitka is invested in continuing efforts to electrify our municipal fleet and support residents in their ability to access

[1] Sitka General Code 2.31 (2022) *Sustainability Commission*
[2] Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (2025) *Alaska Marine Highway System 2045 Long-Range Plan*, Public Review Draft
[3] Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (2023) *Carbon Reduction Strategy, Five-Year Comprehensive Plan: 2024-2028*
[4] Alaska Energy Authority (2024) *State of Alaska Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Implementation Plan FY25*
[5] City and Borough of Sitka Assembly (2022) Resolution 2022–18: Increasing the Energy Independence of the City and Borough of Sitka by Decarbonizing City Operations by 2030

AFVs and the benefits they provide. To improve the safety and accessibility of AMHS as a critical partner in our municipal commitments, please consider the following recommendations:

1: Clarify and maintain that alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) are permitted on AMHS vessels

Applicable Section: 17 AAC 70.020 (2) Classification of traffic - Vehicles

Align the definition of "vehicles", particularly in sections 2.A, C, and D, with the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) definitions for vehicles to remove potential ambiguity and affirm that AFVs fall under provisions for vehicle transport. Similarly, these definitions are inclusive of additional classifications that the ferry is likely to more frequently transport in the near future, such as E-bikes, microtrucks, and other motorized vehicles that are not currently or clearly included. Additionally, aligning definitions with the NHTSA and EPA definitions has the added benefit that many additional regulations that are specific to safety often utilize these definitions and will streamline improvements that are critical regardless of drivetrain or fuel type.

2. Increase the number of EVs allowed per sailing and establish a reservation system for EVs to increase booking certainty

As of June 2025, Alaska has 4,911 EVs with 38% of those EVs in areas served by AMHS, with the vast majority of those EVs (30% of total) located in Southeast Alaska[6]. The prevalence is only rising; the region has experienced a nearly 350% increase in EVs since 2020[7]. Since 2022, Sitka has experienced a 75% increase of EVs and is one of the highest adopting communities in the nation[8,9]. As of 2024, with 2.7 EVs per 100 people[9,10], Sitka is only surpassed by Juneau with 2.9 EVs per 100 people who currently leads in Alaska[10,11]. For comparison, Washington State has 1.8 EVs per 100 people[12], while Alaska has 0.6 EVs per 100 people[6]. The prevalence of EVs in Southeast Alaska is related to the region's abundant hydropower, which provides a relatively affordable source of electricity that increases our region's energy sovereignty and economic development opportunities.

The 5-year annual average number of AMHS departures from the Bellingham port is 45[13]. Under current policy of limiting 2 EV's per sailing, this theoretically limits the number of EVs that can be transported into Southeast Alaska to 90-100, depending on the number of sailings in a year. Sitka alone can see at least 75-100 newly registered EVs a year. With the new lack of other transportation options for EVs into Southeast Alaska, this limitation of the AMHS could quickly become a severe bottleneck for the region to acquire AFVs. This policy also limits the intra-regional transportation of goods and people between communities that have high levels of EV

[6] Alaska Energy Authority (2025) *EV Adoption Data*
[7] Alaska Energy Authority (2020) White Paper: *Electric Vehicles and Infrastructure in Alaska*
[8]KCAW interview with Devon Kibby, Alaska Vehicle Association (May 25, 2022) *In the Fast Lane of Electric Vehicle Growth, Sitka Looks for a Place to Install Its First Public Charging Station*
[9] State of Alaska Department of Transportation (September 2024) *Vehicle Identification Numbers in 99835*
[10] Population Statistics by Location from the U.S. Census Bureau
[11] Juneau Electric Vehicle Association (September 22, 2024)
[12] Jeff Desjardins, Visual Capitalist (June 7, 2025) *Mapped: Electric Vehicles Per Capita by U.S. State*
[13] State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (2024) *Annual Traffic Volume Report*

adoption, as passengers wishing to travel with their AFVs within the region will be competing for limited spots on AMHS ferries.

In line with the updated best practices and risk mitigations from the international maritime safety agencies elaborated in the next recommendation, AMHS should seek to increase the number of EVs allowed per sailing. This will help prevent anticipated bottlenecks of the increased EV adoption trends that are occurring across Alaska and make AFVs more affordable for Alaskans citizens.

In addition, creating a reservation system that clearly indicates how many EV spots are available on any given sailing will provide booking certainty for entities like CBS to be able to make timely purchase orders and meet their procurement needs. Other municipalities that have implemented similar procurement procedures for EVs and AFVs will be better served if AMHS is able to increase their certainty and reliability in timing of delivery for these vehicles.

3. Proactively develop operational procedures informed by current best practices to improve utilization of AMHS

An opportunity now exists for AMHS to support the transport of vehicles to Southeast Alaska, especially BEVs and PHEVs, which are no longer transported by the sole private barge operator in the region as of September 1st, 2025[14]. Fortunately, ample and recently updated best practices and risk mitigations are available to improve mixed-vehicle transportation, issued by the International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI)[15] and European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) [16]. These are primarily guided by International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG), which is considered an extension of SOLAS chapter VII, which is further explained in recommendation 4, all of which can be used to inform AMHS-specific practices. It should be noted that many of these risk mitigations do not just improve the safety of AFVs, but also improve safety of all vehicles by reducing the risk of fire regardless of potential source. Rather than waiting for mandates to improve, proactively employ best practices to increase safety immediately and minimize service disruptions to passengers, regardless of vehicle type.

4. Align all applicable sections of 17 AAC 70 to better adapt and respond to anticipated updates and safety protocols for transporting AFVs

The regulatory landscape is quickly changing as AFVs, specifically BEVs and PHEVs, become increasingly common. While not the direct the governing entity of AMHS, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) passed updates in 2024 for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) that will take effect in 2026 that will apply to new vessels with some retrospective updates required for existing vessels to be made by 2028, specifically for existing RO-RO/RO-PAX (SOLAS II-2/20) vessels like those in the AMHS fleet[17]. These regulations are interpreted, integrated, and implemented by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) through the Code of Federal Regulations

[14] Alaska Marine Lines (August 12, 2025) *Notice on Electric Vehicles and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles*
[15] International Union of Marine Insurance, (2025) *Risk Mitigation for the Safe Ocean and Short Sea Carriage of Electric Vehicles (EVs)*
[16] European Maritime Safety Agency (2025), *Guidance on the Carriage of AFVs in RO-RO Spaces*
[17] Marine Safety Council (2024) Resolution MSC.550: *Amendments To Chapters Ii-2 And V Of The International Convention For The Safety Of Life At Sea, 1974*

(CFR; specifically titles 46 and 49), and the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) which oversees shipping requirements of hazardous materials. This includes both internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEV) and AFVs like BEVs and PHEVs[18].

17 AAC 70.070.A recognizes that AMHS is subject to the jurisdiction of the USCG. However, specific CFRs are not referenced in the AMHS regulations, nor is the jurisdiction of DOT-PHMSA recognized. This leaves AMHS regulators, staff, and the public with ambiguity about how relevant federal laws/regulations are being interpreted and applied in AMHS operations. Additionally, this lack of clarity has led to inconsistent treatment of AFV transportation among AMHS vessels and routes.

5. Ensure Fare Parity for AFVs

Applicable Section: 17 AAC 70.040. Rates, fares and charges.

While this section of AMHS regulations provides general guidance for setting rates, fares, and charges, it does not ensure impartial treatment between drivetrains which could result in disproportionate financial impacts and negatively affect access to AFVs and other new technologies. Add language to establish impartial treatment of vehicles regarding rates and remove ambiguous language that could allow disparate rates to be applied across drivetrains.

6: Improve public communication with up-to-date information via the AMHS website

Applicable Section: 17 AAC 70.010 - Purpose of the Ferry System.

Timely and accurate communication is essential for travelers, particularly in rural and remote communities that depend on the AMHS. Given frequent changes to sailings and ambiguity on the AMHS website, critical information regarding ferries, specifically with BEVs and PHEVs are not clearly or effectively communicated to passengers. All regulatory and/or policy changes affecting travelers and vehicles should be made timely, clearly, and transparently with explanations and an opportunity for stakeholders to review impacts of said changes and comment as necessary. Consider revising the section to include a statement that comprehensive information, with particular emphasis on changes in regulation and/or policies in addition to seasonal schedules, is regularly published on both the website and in informational brochures.

Conclusion:

Improvements to safety in marine transportation has been a growing need for well over a decade and is driven by multiple, often compounding factors such as increased hazardous weather conditions, aging vessels, and technological advancements that have diversified the kinds of materials transported and associated hazards. Regardless, advancing and implementing safety measures should be a constant task, and the current regulatory landscape is changing quickly as the technology used vehicles and batteries in general, rapidly evolves. It should be noted that safety on ships is not the sole responsibility of one entity, nor should it be. While regulatory

[18] 49 CFR 171.22 includes guidance to utilize IMDG regulations

improvements should be kept in line with technological advancements, it will take time and effort to fill current gaps, and require active collaboration between not only vessel operators and regulators as well as vehicle manufacturers. Additionally, passengers should be well informed of their options to mitigate risks associated with their vehicles, regardless of type, and apply mitigation practices evenly. By sharing knowledge and building capacity between all stakeholders and actively embracing best practices in line with current research, current and future developments in the transportation landscape can be effectively addressed as they arise. Interruptions to critical services, like the AMHS, can be minimized without compromising safety or service.

The mission of the City and Borough of Sitka is to provide public services to Sitka to support a livable community for all. While transportation is a unique service that is not the sole responsibility of CBS, we look forward to collaborating as needed with the AMHS to remain a viable, affordable, and most critically safe, transportation option for Sitkans, Alaskans, and beyond.

On behalf of CBS, thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY NO. 24-03
MUNICIPAL FLEET MANAGEMENT AND PROCUREMENT

PURPOSE

This policy outlines direction for evaluation and procurement for an environmentally and fiscally responsible vehicle and equipment fleet, while meeting the needs of City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) departments and pursuant to Assembly direction given to decarbonize municipal operations by 2030[1].

GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Scope: This policy applies to all divisions and employees of CBS and to all CBS owned or leased rolling stock[2] acquisitions regardless of funding source. Any proposed acquisitions that do not comply with policy will require approval by the Municipal Administrator, who may consult with the Decarbonizing and Right-sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group in evaluating the request.

Non-rolling stock powered equipment, such as push mowers, chain saws and other small engine equipment fall outside the scope of this policy. However, acquisition of these items should follow these replacement guidelines when possible.

B. Authority: The execution of this policy is delegated to the Public Works Director under the general direction of the Municipal Administrator. The CBS Public Works Director maintains the authority granted by the Municipal Administrator, aligned with the Sitka Home Rule Charter and Sitka General Code to order policy and the guidelines and implementation.

C. Effective date: This policy will take effect as of the signing date.

D. Review/Revision Interval: Every 1 year after the effective date.

BACKGROUND

The City and Borough of Sitka Assembly directed CBS staff to decarbonize operations (facilities and transportation) by 2030 through the implementation of clean energy infrastructure for heating, lighting, power, and transportation, and exclude fossil fuel energy sources, except where exemptions are necessary due to reliability and resiliency of resources, technical, or cost infeasibility[1]. Pursuant to this resolution, the intent of this policy is to create guidelines for the purchase and operation of CBS fleet vehicles by through the following 3 goals:

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 & fiscal efficiency by reducing total lifecycle cost[3] of ownership over the lifetime of the vehicle.

It is not the intent of this policy to require a department to take any action which conflicts with local, state, or federal requirements. Nor is it the intent of this policy to mandate the procurement of products that do not perform adequately for their intended use, to exclude adequate purchasing competition, or to require a purchase when a vehicle is not available at a reasonable price.

ACTION

To ensure that the goals of this policy are realized, CBS fleet vehicles will be:

1. Fuel-efficient with the lowest emissions within the vehicle class/type; prioritized by the following hierarchy:
   i. An all-electric vehicle[4]
   ii. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle[5]
   iii. A hybrid vehicle[6]
   iv. An alternative fuel vehicle when and where fuel is readily available[7]
   v. A conventional vehicle powered by gasoline or diesel.

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.

To facilitate the management and procurement of CBS fleet vehicles, CBS staff will:

1. Convene Decarbonizing and Right-sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group that will manage and maintain this policy and implement its goals by developing a municipal fleet procurement and replacement strategy that includes:

    a. A hierarchy of engine and fuel system standards by vehicle class.
    b. An analysis of the municipal fleet composition, evaluating fleet right-sizing and right-typing, motor pooling, and departmental transfers.
    c. Direction for implementing fueling infrastructure.
    d. Continual efficiency and improvement evaluations for fleet replacements.
    e. Appropriate exemptions, if any, to ensure public safety in emergencies.
    f. Recommendations for pursuit of funding to support capital requests.
    g. Recommendations for professional development to support CBS staff's ability to maintain a mixed composition fleet.
    h. Additional deliverables recommended or requested by other CBS departments and approved by the Municipal Administrator.

DEFINITIONS

[2]**Rolling Stock:** Land-operated vehicles or equipment that carries an operator, is self-propelled, or is licensed or registered. Examples include road vehicles such as trucks, cars, trailers and motorcycles; off-road vehicles such as tractors, skid steers, snowmobiles, riding mowers, and all-terrain vehicles. Aircraft, bicycles, boats and boat motors are not considered rolling stock. This policy uses the term "vehicle" or "equipment" to refer to all rolling stock.

[3]**Total Lifecycle Cost:** Total lifecycle cost equals: vehicle capital cost + projected fuel and maintenance costs - projected resale value.

[4]**Electric Vehicle**: A vehicle driven by electric motors and is powered exclusively by onboard battery pack.

[5]**Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle:** A vehicle that is powered by an onboard battery that can be charged from an external power source and has an onboard internal combustion engine.

[6]**Hybrid Vehicle:** A vehicle that is powered by an onboard battery recharged solely through onboard systems and has an internal combustion engine

[7]**Alternative Fuel Vehicle:** A vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine that can run on an alternative fuel, such as propane, biodiesel, natural gas, E85 or hydrogen.

REFERENCES

[1]City and Borough of Sitka Assembly*, Increasing the Energy Independence of The City and Borough of Sitka by Decarbonizing City Operations By 2030,* Resolution 2022-18, Passed May 24, 2022.

John M. Leach Digitally signed by John M. Leach Date: 2024.08.22 11:22:27 -08'00' Date: 08/22/2024

John Leach, Municipal Administrator
City and Borough of Sitka

Document Revision Log		
Date	Author	Description of Changes
07/24/2024	Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator	Original
08/06/2024	Sustainability Commission	None, Recommended Approval

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator
Date: September 5, 2025
Subject: **Appoint Commissioners to the Decarbonizing and Rightsizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group**

Background:
Administrative Policy No. 24-03: Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement established Decarbonizing and Right-sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) advisory group to assist in integrating electric vehicles into the municipal fleet. A charter was drafted which allowed up to three Sustainability Commissioners to contribute. However, shortly after, the Public Works Director position was vacated and left without a permanent replacement. The DRIVE advisory group has not formally convened.

Revisions are being made to the DRIVE charter to better align meeting frequency with annual budget cycles, include additional members to the group such as the Electric Utility Director and Asset Manager, and add additional strategic deliverable regarding end-of-life EV options

Given the current circumstances with EV transportation and in conjunction with the Public Works Director position recently being filled permanently, regular DRIVE meetings are needed throughout the fall in anticipation of FY27 budget requests in December.

Analysis:
Currently, three Commissioners have volunteered to sit on DRIVE. However, given that there are two vacancies on the Commission and the possibility that Commissioner Riley is elected to the Assembly, it is recommended that only up to two Commissioners are appointed currently until after the election in October, at which point the Commission's quorum requirement will be clearer.

Recommendation:
Appoint up to two Commissioners to sit on the Drive Advisory Group

ENCL:
DRIVE Advisory Group Charter

PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTING REPRESENTATIVES

1. Move to nominate: "*I move to nominate _____ as a Sustainability Commission Representative on the DRIVE Advisory Group.*"
2. Second of above motion
3. Nominee accepts or declines nomination
4. Commission votes "yay" or "nay", motion passes or fails.

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DECARBONIZING AND RIGHT-SIZING TO IMPROVE VEHICLE EFFICIENCY (DRIVE) ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

Decarbonization And Right-Sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group (herein "DRIVE") Charter with members representing key fleet stakeholders pursuant to CBS Administrative Policy 24-03: *Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement Policy*[1] to support direction given in CBS Resolution 2022-18: *Increasing the Energy Independence of The City and Borough of Sitka by Decarbonizing City Operations By 2030*[2].

1.2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **SCOPE:** This policy applies to all CBS staff and volunteers serving on DRIVE.
2. **AUTHORITY:** DRIVE work will fall within the Public Works Department under the general direction of the Public Works Director. The CBS Public Works Director maintains the authority granted by the Municipal Administrator, aligned with the Sitka Home Rule Charter and Sitka General Code to order policy and the guidelines and implementation of resulting work of DRIVE.

   DRIVE shall be bound by the guidance of the Municipal Administrator, and if directed by the Municipal Administrator, the Municipal Attorney. The Municipal Administrator maintains the authority to approve/reject final deliverables.
3. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** This charter will take effect as of the signing date.
4. **REVIEW/REVISION INTERVAL:** Every 1 year in alignment with review of Policy 24-03 or in alignment with revision changes.

1.3 INSTRUCTION

DRIVE is tasked with development, implementation, and maintenance of the strategy to enhance the operation, cost effectiveness and improved environmental impact of the City and Borough of Sitka's municipal fleet procurement and replacement strategy. The resulting strategy will be in alignment with the objectives and criteria in its establishing Policy 24-03 as follows:

1.3.1 OBJECTIVES

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

1.3.2 CRITERIA

1. Fuel-efficient with the lowest emissions within the vehicle class/type; prioritized by the following hierarchy (see *Definitions* for details):
   - **a.** An all-electric vehicle[3]
   - **b.** A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle[4]
   - **c.** A hybrid vehicle[5]
   - **d.** An alternative fuel vehicle when and where fuel is readily available[6]
   - **e.** A vehicle powered by gasoline or diesel[7]

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.

2. STRATEGY DELIVERABLES

2.1 A hierarchy of engine and fuel system standards by vehicle class tailored to Sitka.

DRIVE shall develop vehicle and equipment standards for the City fleet that considers fuel-efficiency with the lowest emissions that can apply broadly to City vehicles. Said standards shall prioritize according to the hierarchy in section 1.3.2.1. Standards developed shall reflect market availability that is practical and reasonably cost competitive for the class/type of vehicles needed for specific assignments.

2.2 An analysis of the municipal fleet composition, with recommendations evaluating fleet right-sizing and right-typing, motor pooling, and departmental transfers.

It is understood that City departments may use the same equipment, but an individual department's service commitments may require an unequal number of daily miles travelled, relative maintenance costs, and/or shorter service life due to extensive daily use. DRIVE shall review sub-fleets individually to establish custom fleet management goals if necessary. Sub-fleets include but are not limited to Public Works, Electric, Harbors, Police, and Fire Departments.

2.3 Direction for implementing fueling infrastructure and maintenance.

DRIVE will collaborate with necessary City departments to facilitate the installation of charging and alternative fueling infrastructure. Construction and installation of municipal charging or alternative fuel infrastructure or the replacement of existing infrastructure for the City fleet shall be evaluated by DRIVE prior to installation. Charging or alternative fueling stations for public use on municipal property, or the relocation of existing charging fuel stations, may also be evaluated by DRIVE.

2.4 Methodology for continual efficiency and improvement evaluations for fleet replacements

The DRIVE will establish standard operating procedures for municipal vehicle renewal and replacement that ensures that the City sustains maximum operational efficiency. Replacement analysis will include a variety of factors such as total fuel costs over the lifespan of the vehicle, maintenance and repair costs, and resale value to give weight to other factors besides the initial cost of the vehicle. Replacements shall consider operational needs, the City's climate sustainability, and public health goals, and indirect savings through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

2.5 Appropriate exemptions, if any, to ensure public safety in emergencies

Exemptions to this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis by DRIVE, based upon the intended use, application, and/or over-riding cost considerations. Public safety vehicles will be closely monitored as equipment manufacturers provide sustainable fleet alternatives. Fuel economy and vehicle emissions are prioritized when requesting other vehicle types. DRIVE will develop an appeal process if a department does not agree with the DRIVE vehicle recommendation.

2.6 Recommendations for pursuit of funding to support capital requests.

The purchase of policy-compliant vehicles and equipment may be more expensive in the initial years. Departments should estimate the upfront investment required for vehicle purchases and budget accordingly in capital budget requests. DRIVE will make recommendations to CBS staff to take advantage of grant funding to offset the upfront costs of electric vehicles and charging apparatus. DRIVE shall evaluate existing capital requests for vehicles and evaluate opportunities to fund additional upfront costs.

2.7 Recommendations for professional development to support CBS staff's ability to maintain a mixed composition fleet.

A well-maintained vehicle will optimize fuel use and reduce air pollution. Preventative maintenance that ensures optimal vehicle operation shall be performed regularly for each vehicle. While the current staff is skilled at maintaining conventional engines, requirements to maintain alternative vehicles will be necessary. Where applicable, DRIVE will build awareness and identify opportunities to educate its employees regarding responsible vehicle operation and upkeep.

2.8 Additional deliverables recommended or requested by other CBS Departments and approved by the Municipal Administrator.

DRIVE recognizes that the above deliverables do not encompass the entirety of support needed to achieve policy 24-03 objectives and that those objectives can only be met through a collaborative effort across departments. Throughout development, if departments identify additional deliverables, DRIVE will review the request and advise on approval. Additional deliverables will be reflected through amendments to this charter.

3. ORGANIZATION

This section outlines the composition of DRIVE, roles and responsibilities, as well as the individual roles and responsibilities that are specific to each member of DRIVE.

3.1 MEMBERSHIP

DRIVE shall include, at minimum, three principal members: the Public Works Director, Chief Heavy Equipment Mechanic, and the Sustainability Coordinator. To increase public engagement, up to three Sustainability Commissioners may hold membership. Ad hoc membership may be extended to other internal CBS staff with relevant knowledge, skills, or concerns, to help inform the strategy.

3.2 ROLES & RESPONISIBILITIES

Defining roles and assigning responsibilities to those involved in strategy development provides clear directives and expectations that allows for efficient workflows, encourages accountability, ensures longevity and progress, and inspires collaboration among DRIVE team.

3.2.1 ROLE: GENERAL COMMITTEE

The primary role of the DRIVE is to oversee the development, implementation, maintenance, improvement, and integration of the strategy to enhance the operation, cost effectiveness and improved environmental impact of the City and Borough of Sitka's municipal fleet.

General Responsibilities:

- Develops strategic deliverables (see section # for more details).
- Produce an annual report outlining progress made on strategic deliverables and achieving Policy 24-03 objectives.

3.2.2 ROLE: PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

Public Works Director: Oversees and directs by giving input, making decisions, and approvals regarding DRIVE recommendations. Ensures DRIVE remains achievable, realistic, in alignment with CBS strategic goals and Assembly direction.

Chief Heavy Equipment Mechanic: Oversees operations and maintenance of municipal fleet. Facilitates vehicle purchases and communicates with vendors. Identifies challenges and concerns with fleet upkeep. Collects data on fleet usage as requested.

Sustainability Coordinator: Oversees all aspects of DRIVE logistics. Primary communicator and central point of contact for all DRIVE-related activities. Collaborates with principal members to communicate with all internal and external stakeholders. Responsible for ensuring annual report is created and made available.

Principal Member Responsibilities:

- Updates administration and Assembly on DRIVE as needed.
- Navigates and advocates for funding during the budgeting process.
- Ensures DRIVE recommendations align with strategic goals of CBS.
- Maintains internal working DRIVE documents.

3.2.3 ROLE: SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSIONERS

If desired by the Sustainability Commission, up to three Commissioners may serve as members of DRIVE. They serve as the primary source of public input as necessary for strategy development. They provide direction, and support principal members in research and public outreach.

Responsibilities:

- Updates Sustainability Commission on DRIVE as needed.
- Advocates for public engagement opportunities to improve the strategy via the Sustainability Commission.
- Researches, reviews, analyzes, evaluates potential solutions to DRIVE strategy challenges.
- Makes recommendations that assist in the development of DRIVE strategy and necessary capital improvement projects for implementation.

3.2.4 ROLE: AD HOC MEMBERS

If at any point during the development of the DRIVE strategy, existing members lack the necessary relevant knowledge or skills, membership may be extended to CBS staff, such as the Building Official, Asset Manager, public safety staff (Police and Fire), to assist with specific challenges.

Responsibilities:

- Advise, direct, and provide solutions relevant to their areas of expertise.
- Reviews and provides input of potential solutions and/or identifies additional challenges.

4. MEETINGS

The following section outlines details to guide communication within the committee meeting setting to ensure consistency and longevity of the strategy development.

4.1 DRIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The primary form of communication and decision making within the DRIVE shall be in the form of committee meetings. The following section outlines requirements for DRIVE meetings.

4.2. MEETING INTERVAL

DRIVE meetings will be regularly held on a recurring, monthly basis and time as determined by the Public Works Director. At a minimum, committee meetings shall be held once per 60-day period quarter.

4.4 MEETING NOTES

Meeting action items and decisions shall be recorded by the Sustainability Coordinator or other delegated member. These notes shall be reported to all DRIVE members within one week of the meeting's occurrence via email. Meeting notes may be supplemented through feedback from DRIVE members.

4.5 FACILITATION

All meetings shall be facilitated by one of the principal members. Facilitation shall include the development of meeting presentation materials, agenda, and meeting scheduling. Facilitation may be delegated to other members of DRIVE, as needed, by one of the principal members.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

DRIVE shall make recommendations to the Public Works Director and/or Municipal Administrator as appropriate and aims to make recommendations via general committee consensus.

5. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The following section outlines details to guide communication outside of the committee meeting setting, with other internal to CBS employees, to the CBS Assembly, and with external stakeholders.

5.1 Municipal Administrator

The Public Works Director will update the Municipal Administrator on the work of DRIVE as needed.

5.2 Public Works Staff

Communications regarding procedural changes, implementation, or requests for feedback from CBS employees shall be facilitated through the Public Works Director or delegated by the Director to the appropriate Public Works staff.

5.3 CBS Assembly

Communications to the CBS Assembly shall be conducted through the Municipal Administrator as directed or through quarterly departmental updates.

If Sustainability Commissioners are active members, updates may also be included in their annual work plan or in updates to the Assembly as requested by the principal members.

5.4 Sustainability Commission

If Sustainability Commissioners are active members, they may choose to report progress under reports at regular Commission meetings. If members wish to provide a special report to the Commission, they will coordinate with the Sustainability Coordinator. If no Commissioners are active members, the Sustainability Coordinator will provide updates to the Commission as necessary.

5.5 Public Engagement

Any active member of the DRIVE may request an aspect of the strategy deliverables receive more public comment via the Sustainability Commission. The Sustainability Coordinator will collaborate with the requestor to bring the request to the Sustainability Commission for input.

Any active member of DRIVE may request an aspect of the strategy deliverables be communicated broadly with the public to build knowledge and awareness. The Sustainability Coordinator will work with the Public and Government Relations Director on public information efforts.

5.6 Other External Stakeholders

Communications to external stakeholders shall be conducted primarily through the Sustainability Coordinator in collaboration with the Public and Government Relations Director. External Stakeholders include but are not limited to:

- Sitka Tribe of Alaska and other Tribal organizations and entities
- Elected Officials (State & Federal level)
- Business & Non-Profit Partners
- State and Federal Agencies

DEFINITIONS

[3]Electric Vehicle: A vehicle driven by electric motors and is powered exclusively by onboard battery pack.

[4]Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle: A vehicle that is powered by an onboard battery that can be charged from an external power source and has an onboard internal combustion engine.

[5]Hybrid Vehicle: A vehicle that is powered by an onboard battery recharged solely through onboard systems and has an internal combustion engine

[6]Alternative Fuel Vehicle: A vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine that can run on an alternative fuel, such as propane, biodiesel, natural gas, E85 or hydrogen.

[7]Total Lifecycle Cost: Total lifecycle cost equals: vehicle capital cost + projected fuel and maintenance costs - projected resale value.

REFERENCES

[1]City and Borough of Sitka, Administration, *Policy 24-03 Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement Policy*, Approved August 22, 2024.

[2]City and Borough of Sitka Assembly, *Increasing the Energy Independence of The City and Borough of Sitka by Decarbonizing City Operations By 2030,* Resolution 2022-18, Passed May 24, 2022.

Ronald Vinson Digitally signed by Ronald Vinson Date: 2024.08.26 15:45:01 -08'00' Date: 08/26/2024

Ron Vinson, Public Works Director
City and Borough of Sitka

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