

# Grant Approval Memo



**Grantee:** Sitka Homeless Coalition  
**Request Amount:** \$40,710.00  
**Project Title:** Sitka Emergency Winter Shelter  
**Grant Term:** 2/19/2026 to 5/31/2026  
**Fund Source:** FY26 Housing & Home and Community Based Services: Beneficiary Housing Project & Related Services  
**Trust Staff:** Kelda Barstad

## **Requested Motion:**

*The Program and Planning Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve a \$40,710 authority grant to the Sitka Homeless Coalition for the Sitka Emergency Winter Shelter grant. These funds will come from the Beneficiary Housing Project & Related Services line of the FY26 budget.*

## **Staff Analysis:**

- What does this project do?  
Trust funds will contribute funding to support the operation of a seasonal winter shelter in Sitka.
- Who is receiving the funds?  
Sitka Homeless Coalition (SHC) is a nonprofit organization that operates a seasonal emergency shelter, shower and laundry services, a clothing and equipment donation program, and dinner program for the community of Sitka. SHC will also operate Hítx'i Sáani (Little Houses in Tlingit), a 12-unit supportive housing project, primarily serving Trust beneficiaries beginning in December 2025.
- Why is staff recommending this project?  
Trust beneficiaries are overrepresented in homeless and low-income populations, with percentages approaching 100% as people are homeless for 12 months or longer. SHC is a very small organization operating in a small community with limited fundraising opportunities. The opening of Hítx'i Sáani has utilized a majority of resources in 2025, leaving a funding gap for shelter operations for this season. Once the supportive housing project is operating, staffing and fundraising is expected to stabilize for future years.
- Will this be a multi-year project?  
This is a one-time funding request.

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## **Trust Five Year Funding History**

<b><u>Fiscal Year</u></b>	<b><u>Project Title</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>	<b><u>Final Expended</u></b>
Ongoing	Below Fair Market Value Lease: Sitka Homeless Coalition	\$27,300	Active	n/a

## **Comp Plan Identification**

Area of Focus	Objective	Comments
Area of Focus 3: Economic & Social Well-being	3.4 Enhance timely access to basic needs services	

## **Trust Focus Area Connection**

Budget Area	Strategy	Comments
Housing & Home & Community Based Services	HHCBS - Beneficiaries have safe, stable housing with tenancy supports	

## **Project Description (from grant application)**

### Problem Addressed

Winters in Sitka are cold, wet, and dark. For neighbors without housing, sleeping outside or in vehicles brings real risk of hypothermia, injury, and victimization. Sitka has no other low-barrier, overnight adult shelter during winter, so unsheltered adults otherwise rely on unsafe arrangements or public spaces; straining EMS, ER, and law enforcement and disconnecting people from services. Last season, SHC's winter shelter provided 874 overnight stays to 26 unique adults, 22 of whom reported at least one disability: underscoring both the scale of need and the vulnerability of those served.

This winter also marks a major community success: SHC is moving 12 individuals into Hítx'i Sáani, Sitka's first permanent supportive housing community. This was only possible because of the support of the Alaska Mental Health Trust (Trust) and the Trust's Board of Trustees. Standing up this new PSH community has required SHC, a small organization, to dedicate significant operating capacity and dollars to ensure a strong launch. That necessary investment, however, leaves limited unrestricted funds to operate our seasonal, low-barrier winter shelter.

Without dedicated support for January 1–April 1 operations, the remaining unsheltered adults in Sitka, many living with disabling conditions, will have little recourse during the coldest, most life-threatening months. Bridge shelter alongside PSH is essential: it prevents exposure-related harm, stabilizes guests, and connects them to services and pathways like Hítx'i Sáani. Trust partnership made PSH possible; with AMHTA's help on winter shelter, we can ensure that success reaches those still outside this season.

### What We Will Do

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From January 1 to April 1, SHC will operate a low-barrier, nightly Emergency Winter Shelter (approx. 91 nights) hosted at the United Methodist Church of Sitka. Doors open each evening for intake, a warm cot with bedding, restrooms, snacks/hot beverages, and a safe place to sleep. Two trained staff are on site nightly with on-call supervision. SHC staff and volunteers provide de-escalation and harm-reduction support, complete coordinated-entry enrollments, make referrals (health care, behavioral health, benefits), and offer morning exit support and connections to SHC's housing/navigation programs. Activities are tracked in HMIS for accurate reporting and outcomes.

## Target Population & Geographic Area

Primary beneficiaries are unsheltered adults in the City and Borough of Sitka, including individuals sleeping outdoors or in vehicles, those recently displaced by eviction or family conflict, and adults with disabilities who cannot safely remain outside. The shelter also serves people who cannot access other congregate options due to capacity or barriers. While all are welcome regardless of background, many guests are living with disabling conditions and complex health needs.

## Expected Outcomes

### Outputs (seasonal):

Safe, low-barrier overnight shelter nightly from Jan 1–Apr 1 (~91 nights).

Approximately 600–800 shelter stays and 20–30 unique adults served (based on prior-season utilization scaled to the shorter season).

### Outcomes:

Prevent injury and death from exposure by providing reliable, dignified indoor shelter all winter.

Increased connections to services: Coordinated Entry enrollments, benefit applications, and referrals to health/behavioral-health care.

Reduced avoidable ER/EMS and law-enforcement welfare checks associated with overnight survival. Guests report feeling safe and respected during their stay (guest survey target ~100%).

## Community Support & Partnerships

The shelter is hosted by the United Methodist Church of Sitka (space and utilities support), with staffing by SHC and help from trained volunteers. SHC coordinates closely with local public safety, the hospital, behavioral-health providers, the Sitka Public Health Office, and tribal/city partners, with frequent referrals to and from Sitkans Against Family Violence and Youth Advocates of Sitka. Community members contribute supplies and in-kind support, and SHC uses HMIS for data integrity and shared accountability. These partnerships make operations feasible and strengthen pathways from shelter to stability.

## Beneficiary Groups:

Unsheltered adults in Sitka; especially those living with disabilities, adults newly displaced from housing, individuals unable to access other congregate options, and people whose health and safety would be at risk without a low-barrier place to sleep.

## **Performance Measures**

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How much did you do?

- a. Total number (#) of individuals served during the reporting period (unduplicated). estimated 20 to 30.
- b. Number (#) of Trust beneficiaries served during the reporting period, broken down by Trust beneficiary category.
- c. Number (#) of shelter nights in operation during the reporting period. Target 91 nights from January 1 to April 1.
- d. Total Number (#) of shelter stays. Estimated 600-800

How well did you do it?

- a. Provide a narrative describing the timeline, activities, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the project.
- b. Data completeness in HMIS for required fields: target 95 percent.
- c. Number (#) and percentage (%) of nights fully staffed. Target 100%
- d.
- e. Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals served reporting feeling safe and respected while receiving shelter. Target 100%
- f. Number (#) of safety incidents occurring during the reporting period. Of the total incidents, the number (#) and percentage (%) that were successfully de-escalated in-house.

Is anyone better off?

- a. Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals who were connected to community supports as a result of their participation in the shelter program. Target 60%. Provide a list of community organizations to which beneficiaries were referred for community support services.
- b. Number (#) and percentage (%) of individuals exiting to a safer setting (i.e., family reunification, treatment, hotel voucher, transitional housing, or PSH waitlist).
- c. Include any additional relevant participation data available through the Alaska Homeless Management Information System collected during the grant reporting period (i.e., critical incident rate, service connection follow-through)
- d. # of nights spent outdoors during the shelter season compared to the prior month for individuals served.
- e. Two statements from participating individuals describing (in their own words) how their quality of life has been impacted since participating in the program.

## **Sustainability (from grant application)**

Yes. The winter shelter is seasonal and will continue in future years after one-time Trust support. This request is for bridge funding during an unusual year. We are finishing construction, moving 12 residents into Hítx'i Sáani, and running a low-barrier shelter at the same time. That overlap is what strains our small team and budget right now. After this season, we will sustain the shelter with a mix of public and private funds, plus efficiency gains from Hítx'i Sáani. How we will sustain the program after

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Trust funding: Braided funding. We will combine state and local funds when available, foundation grants, city and tribal contributions, business sponsorships, and our annual Shelter Sitka campaign.

Partnership and in-kind support. Congregations and community partners help with space, utilities, linens, and supplies, which lowers cash costs each winter.

Data to secure commitments. We track shelter use and outcomes in HMIS and will use those results to seek multi-year commitments from institutional partners, including health and public safety partners who benefit from reduced ER, EMS, and welfare checks.

Shared operations with Hítx'i Sáani. As PSH operations stabilize, we expect shared training and staffing pipelines, coordinated intake and navigation, and lower per-guest costs through bulk purchasing.

New services building. We are developing a services building at the Hítx'i Sáani site that is slated for completion in the latter half of 2026. Once open, it will let us co-locate seasonal emergency services with PSH case management. That reduces setup time each winter and creates durable cost savings. One-time Trust support now helps us bridge this launch year. By next winter, with PSH operations settled and the services building open, we will be better positioned to fund and run both PSH and the seasonal shelter.

## **Who We Serve (from grant application)**

Who is the focus of this project

Unsheltered adults in Sitka who are Trust beneficiaries, including people living with mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and traumatic brain injuries.

The winter shelter gives people a safe, low-barrier place to sleep during the coldest months. That immediate safety and warmth reduces risk of hypothermia, assault, and sleep-deprivation-related crises. While indoors, guests connect with SHC staff for navigation, Coordinated Entry, and referrals to health and behavioral health partners.

Safety and stabilization: Fewer nights outdoors and fewer high-risk encounters.

Navigation to housing: Coordinated Entry enrollments, document recovery, and movement onto pathways like Hítx'i Sáani permanent supportive housing.

Health and behavioral health connection: More kept appointments and starts or restarts of treatment for mental health and substance use disorders.

Functioning and dignity: Better sleep, hygiene access, and a respectful environment that lowers conflict and crisis.

The Trust made Hítx'i Sáani possible by providing Trust land for the site. That PSH resource is the year-round destination for many of the folks we serve. Seasonal shelter keeps people safe now and helps them stabilize long enough to access PSH or other housing opportunities or services that are

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designed for Trust beneficiaries. Together, the winter shelter and Hítx'i Sáani form a practical bridge from crisis to stability in Sitka.

## **Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)**

Mental Illness:	18
Developmental Disabilities:	10
Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias:	2
Substance Abuse	16
Traumatic Brain Injuries:	12
Number of people to be trained	6

## **Project Budget (from grant application)**

Personnel Services Costs	\$33,912.00
Personnel Services Costs (Other Sources)	\$12,491.00
Personnel Services Narrative	<p>Shelter staff wages Description: Two staff on site nightly for a 12-hour shift. Rate: \$225 per staff per night × 2 staff = \$450 per night. Season total: \$450 × 91 nights = <b>\$40,950</b>. Fringe (9.1% on wages) Description: Payroll taxes on shelter wages. Rate: 9.1% of \$40,950. Season total: <b>\$3,726</b>. Total funding requested for staffing: \$44,676. Wages paid for training: <b>\$1,727</b> (estimated time for training for shelter monitors) Total: <b>\$46,403</b> This is the largest and most important component of our shelter operation. We would not be able to effectively and safely provide this service without the people that make it possible.</p>
Space or Facilities Costs	\$4,000.00
Space or Facilities Costs (Other Sources)	\$2,000.00
Space or Facilities Narrative	<p>The Sitka Homeless Coalition partners with the United Methodist Church of Sitka to provide winter shelter services in Sitka, AK. The total cost for the season is \$6000 (all utilities, heating, trash collection services included).</p>
Supplies Costs	\$2,100.00
Supplies Costs (Other Sources)	\$2,534.00
Supplies Narrative	<p>This budget includes costs for safety and cleaning supplies, cot replacements, guest snacks and beverages, and other items as</p>

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	needed (like smoke alarm replacements or linens). These items keep the shelter safe, sanitary, and welcoming throughout the season, with community donations helping stretch this budget.
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Other Costs	\$698.00
Other Costs (Other Sources)	\$700.00
Other Costs Narrative	\$698 -- Maintenance Reserve (to be funded by partnership grant) -- in the case of damaged property (like a window breaking) \$700 -- Staff Training (to be funded by other sources)

### **Other Funding Sources (from grant application)**

HUD: Continuum of Care Rural Budget	\$14,000.00
St. Peters Sitka Grant	\$1,025.00
Small Dollar Fundraising (SHC) (estimate)	\$700.00
In-Kind Community Donations (estimate)	\$2,000.00
<b>Total Leveraged Funds</b>	<b>\$17,725.00</b>