

Town of Mammoth Lakes Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study

DRAFT June 24, 2011

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Appendix A: Background Report

Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study
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Executive Summary

A. Introduction

The Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study (SVNDP) summarizes the results of the District Planning process for the Sierra Valley Neighborhood. Through a listening process that actively involved local residents, the study considered key issues, likes and dislikes, and used this input to develop recommendations that address identified issues and concerns.

The SVNDP study is different from other district planning efforts in that it focuses on an established residential neighborhood, where significant land use and other physical changes are not expected or desirable. The neighborhood is unique in the mix and character of its housing and its residents, who are primarily members of the Town's year-round population and its workforce. Many of the issues faced by Sierra Valley's residents center around daily quality of life, safety, and neighborhood character: the recommendations of this study focus on strategies to improve those existing conditions, and to make the neighborhood better for all of its residents.

B. Study Process

The SVNDP Process included four major steps, which were similar to those followed for other NDP's. They included:

1. Framework, including identification of the study area boundary, guiding principles and initial issues.
2. Existing Issues, Opportunities and Constraints.
3. Develop and Review Alternatives.
4. Select Preferred Alternative.

The NDP process was initiated in February 2011, with a public workshop and listening session to identify issues, followed by review and approval of the Framework that considered study boundaries, guiding principles, and preliminary issues for each area. The Framework includes:

- The "study area" reflects the primary area of interest for the study and its main focus; the "sphere of influence" includes surrounding

Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study

Executive Summary

areas that may share issues with, affect, or be affected by the primary study area.

- Guiding Principles were drawn from the character descriptions and other information outlined in the General Plan and relevant planning documents.
- Key Issues were based on a review of existing conditions, previous NDP studies and other relevant information.

Following the Planning Commission and Town Council review of the Framework, which took place in March and April 2011, public workshops were held in late April to review existing conditions and issues, and to discuss ideas and options for the study area.

There were a diversity of issues raised throughout the process, but most focused on items that affect the day-to-day quality of life and experience of living in Sierra Valley. As the process evolved, a consensus began to develop around some key ideas: that residents valued the fundamental character and positive qualities of the neighborhood, and felt these should be protected as much as possible; and that large-scale physical changes and improvements weren't felt to be necessary or desirable.

C. Existing Conditions, Issues, Opportunities and Constraints

Existing Conditions, issues, opportunities and constraints for each district are presented in detail in the Background Report in Appendix A. Key issues for Sierra Valley included:

- Land Use and Housing, particularly issues of neighborhood character, problems caused by a perceived "over-densification" of the neighborhood and particularly an over-concentration of affordable housing. Residents are concerned that projects are adequately planned to avoid parking and snow storage impacts to neighboring properties.
- Mobility, including issues of traffic (speeding and cut-through traffic), pedestrian safety, and lack of connectivity within, to and from Sierra Valley, and snow management.
- Infrastructure, focusing on the adequacy of storm drainage and past episodes of flooding.

- Nuisance, public safety and code enforcement, such as illegal dumping, property maintenance, lighting and building code violations.

D. Alternatives

The Background Report also describes the alternatives and options discussed for the SVNDP. Because of the scope and type of issues, there was not a substantial range of options possible or appropriate to consider, however, a number of ideas were presented at the public workshops and are outlined in the Background Report.

E. Preferred Concept and Recommendations

Chapter 2 of the SVNDP Study provides a description of the concept preferred and related recommendations. Recommendations focus on the issue areas above, and reflect a range of programs, management strategies and physical improvements to address them. Some of the recommendations of the NDP are:

- Improved code enforcement by the Town, including dedication of additional staff to identifying and resolving code compliance issues.
- Traffic calming through signage, striping and other “low impact solutions.”
- Exploring options for new trail connections.
- Strategies to encourage neighborhood investment, such as creating a low-interest loan program for improvements, and encouraging home ownership in Sierra Valley.
- Encouraging additional community involvement and sense of neighborhood pride through organized groups, events, and outreach.
- Working with Mammoth Lakes Housing and through policy development to achieve greater dispersal of affordable housing units throughout the town, rather than concentrating those units in Sierra Valley.
- Improved storm drain maintenance.
- Improved snow management.

F. Conclusions

Completion of the SVNDP Process resolves district planning for an important “locals” neighborhood that has not been the subject of focused planning or substantial investment in the past. A number of issue areas, like storm drainage and traffic are likely to require additional study to determine the scope and cost of potential improvements, and to identify the most appropriate solutions. The concepts and recommendations of this report identify a range of feasible solutions which, although not requiring substantial physical or new infrastructure, will nonetheless require investment of staff, community and other resources to be successfully implemented. Fostering and building a sense of neighborhood pride and a desire for residents to invest in the community will be an important component of bringing about improvement in Sierra Valley, as will partnership between the Town, Police Department, Fire District, Mammoth Lakes Housing, and community members.

Chapter 1. NDP Background and Process

A. Introduction

The goal of the Sierra Valley NDP (SVNDP) is to develop directed and strategic planning and policy recommendations for the Sierra Valley neighborhood, one of the town's core residential districts. Figure 1 in the Background Report shows the boundaries of the study area. It includes all of the properties along Manzanita Road, Mono Street, Lupin Street, Joaquin Road and Callahan Way between Main Street and Meridian Boulevard, as well as properties along Arrowhead Drive and Chaparral Road.

The Sierra Valley NDP followed a similar process to previous district planning, with a Framework review by the Planning Commission and Town Council, and public workshops to review existing conditions, issues, and proposed concepts for the districts. In contrast to other district planning efforts, the SVNDP did not convene a focus group: as a residential neighborhood, local residents and the broader community were seen as the most important source of information to guide the planning process.

Overall, the recommendations for Sierra Valley focus on two major themes: preserving quality of life and positive aspects of neighborhood character, and improving level of service, programs and initiatives to address known issues. In general, solutions requiring substantial physical changes or new infrastructure were not supported by residents, who wished to see more "low impact" changes and improvements.

B. District Planning

District Planning is a concept defined in the General Plan. It recognizes that many areas of the community have special considerations or conditions for which more focused, community-driven planning should be undertaken. District Planning allows for the desired form, function, and character of an area to be defined, setting the stage for future Town actions, such as revised development standards, development of new facilities or improvements, and consideration of development proposals that may come forward.

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Background and Process

Previous NDPs were primarily initiated in conjunction with major development project applications with work funded by applicants and undertaken by third-party planning consultants. Because the SVNDP process was Town-initiated and does not revolve around a specific development proposal, it has been completed by Town staff acting as the “planning consultant.”

C. Sierra Valley NDP Process

Figure 1-1 shows the series of steps that were followed to develop the Preferred Concepts and Recommendations for the SVNDP. The steps follow those outlined in the Town Council’s policy on district planning that was adopted in April 2007, and provides the organizing framework for this report. The process steps include:

1. Framework, including identification of the study area boundary, guiding principles and initial issues.
2. Existing Issues, Opportunities and Constraints.
3. Alternatives Review.
4. Preferred Alternative Selection.

Detailed information on the framework, existing conditions, opportunities and constraints is provided in a Background Report included as Appendix A. Chapter 2 includes a complete description of the SVNDP Preferred Concept and related recommendations.

D. Public Workshops

One of the important goals of district planning is to involve the public and key stakeholders, to ensure that relevant issues and concerns are addressed and that the planning outcomes are based on community consensus to the extent possible. The SVNDP process included a community engagement process, through public workshops and meetings with the Planning Commission and Town Council, and consultation with other agencies, particularly the Police Department and Fire District.

The 2010 Census shows that Mammoth’s Hispanic population is growing, and is a significant part of the community. Many of Sierra Valley’s residents are Spanish-speaking, and so a special effort was made to try and engage this group. Advertisements were published in both English and Spanish, and a special workshop was held in Spanish. Despite this, input from

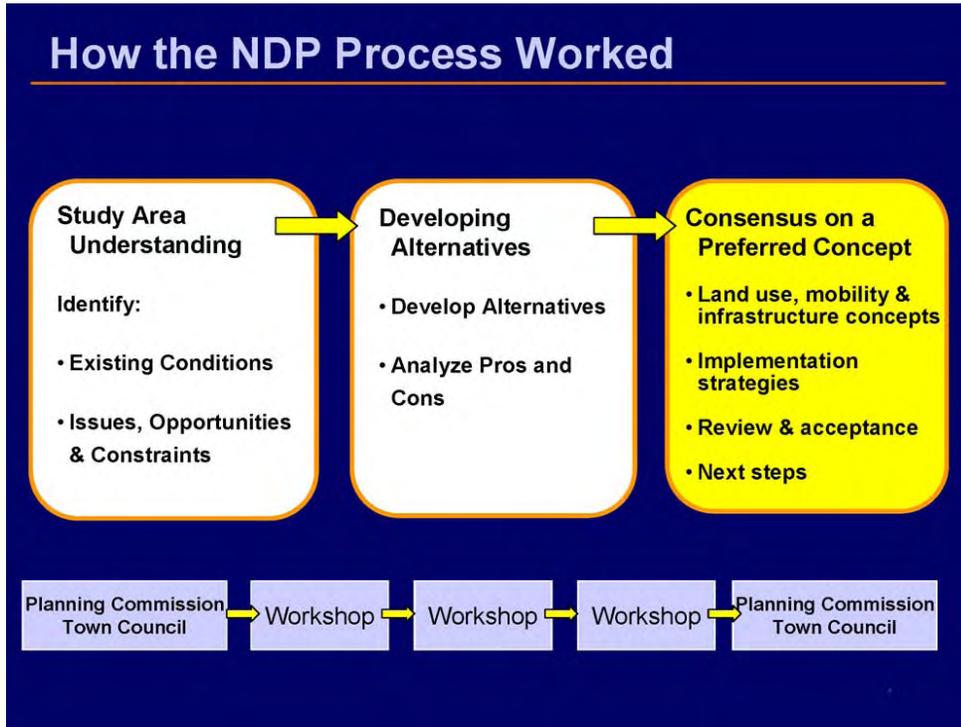


Figure 1-1: NDP Process

the Spanish-speaking community in the NDP process was limited, indicating a continuing need for the Town to make additional and different efforts in the future to reach out to this group.

Two community workshops were held for the SVNDP, in addition to meetings held with the Planning Commission and Public Workshop to review the Framework and this Report. Two week advanced notification of each community workshop ensured a broad and inclusive public process.

Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study

Background and Process

Table 1-1: Key SVNDP Meetings and Workshops

Date	Workshop/Meeting	Meeting Subject
February 23, 2011	Planning Commission Public Workshop/Listening Session	Initial community input on issues to be addressed in SVNDP
March 23, 2011	Planning Commission Meeting	Review and Approve Framework
April 6, 2011	Town Council Meeting	Review and Approve Framework
April 27, 2011	Public Workshop: Issues and Options (English)	Review issues and alternatives.
April 28, 2011	Public Workshop: Issues and Options (Spanish)	Review issues and alternatives
June 29, 2011	Planning Commission: Draft Neighborhood District Planning Study	Review and Recommend Acceptance of SVNDP Study
July 2011 (TBD)	Town Council: Draft Neighborhood District Planning Study	Review and Accept SVNDP Study

Chapter 2. Preferred Concept & Recommendations

The Sierra Valley NDP process described in the previous chapters has resulted in the formulation of a “Preferred Concept” for the district. The Preferred Concept includes an overall summary concept, describing the key features of character, place and function that are envisioned for the Study Area, as well as a series of recommendations to guide planning for the district.

A. Concept Summary

Sierra Valley is a safe, attractive and livable neighborhood for Mammoth Lakes’ families, offering a variety of housing choices and convenient access to transit, shopping, schools and services. The existing forested character and narrow streets that characterize the district are retained, giving Sierra Valley the feeling of a neighborhood “in the woods.” Effective traffic calming on the districts narrow streets helps to provide a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists that share the road with cars. Increased code compliance, maintenance, law enforcement, education and outreach efforts help to improve the livability of the neighborhood, and quality of life for all of Sierra Valley’s residents.

B. Recommendations

The following recommendations implement the concept and address issues, opportunities and constraints identified for Sierra Valley.

1. Neighborhood Character

Recommendation 1.1. Preserve the character of Sierra Valley as a safe, diverse residential neighborhood “in the forest” with a mixture of housing types and styles.

Recommendation 1.2. Develop a low-cost loan program to assist property owners with efforts to upgrade residential properties, including: repainting and exterior renovations, landscaping and lighting improvements, and bringing buildings into code compliance.

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Preferred Concept & Recommendations

Recommendation 1.3. Create incentives that encourage owners of larger multi-family properties to upgrade and renovate buildings, such as a streamlined design review or exemption from payment of design review fees.

Recommendation 1.4. Where additional height is permitted with provision of understructure parking, as allowed by the Zoning Code, ensure that building design minimizes shade, shadow and other potential effects on neighboring properties.

Recommendation 1.5. Strictly enforce design review and development standards for all projects, but particularly those built at higher densities, to ensure high quality site planning, adequate parking, dumpster locations and screening, and snow storage.

Recommendation 1.6. Support and facilitate future efforts of community and non-profit groups to improve properties in Sierra Valley that do not meet building code requirements, or have substandard living conditions.

Recommendation 1.7. Support efforts to build community spirit and neighborhood pride in Sierra Valley, through neighborhood events, work with neighborhood representatives, and additional outreach to the Spanish-speaking community.

Recommendation 1.8. Work with Mammoth Disposal and others to dedicate additional resources to Sierra Valley during the annual Town Clean-up Day. Potential ideas include:

- Providing one or more dumpsters and collection points for bulky items within the neighborhood.
- Offering a second clean-up or free dumping day in the fall.
- Mobilizing and assigning additional volunteers to Sierra Valley to assist with clean-up.

2. Housing

Recommendation 2.1. Avoid over-concentrating affordable housing in Sierra Valley by making sure workforce housing programs and

strategies are diverse, spread affordable housing among different neighborhoods in Mammoth as much as possible.

Recommendation 2.2. Invest workforce housing funds in acquisition and re-habilitation of existing units in Sierra Valley and elsewhere so as to upgrade them and secure their affordability.

Recommendation 2.3. Ensure that development projects throughout town provide on-site mitigation for their workforce housing demands, and do not permit off-site mitigation units to be placed in the RMF-1 zone.

Recommendation 2.4. Strengthen the Housing Ordinance to ensure that projects awarded density bonuses for housing, as allowed by State law and the Town, adequately plan for open space, snow storage and parking, and provide livable housing units for residents.

Recommendation 2.5. Work with Mammoth Lakes Housing and others to provide information and education about tenants' and landlords' rights and responsibilities.

Recommendation 2.6. Encourage homeownership in Sierra Valley through strategies such as first-time homebuyer assistance and mortgage subsidies.

3. Mobility

a. Traffic Calming

Recommendation 3.1. Consider designation of Manzanita Road, Mono Street, Lupin Street, Joaquin Road, Callahan Way and Dorrance Drive as "shared streets," meaning that it is assumed that vehicles, pedestrian, and bicycles may all be making use of the right of way. To be successful, the shared street concept should make use of appropriate street signage and/or striping, such as that shown in Figure 2-1 below, and potential reductions in vehicle speed limits to ensure safety of all users.



Figure 2-1: Shared Streets Signage and Striping

Recommendation 3.2. If full implementation of a shared street concept is not feasible, implement other measures to encourage vehicles to calm traffic and reduce vehicle speeds. Such measures should avoid the need for substantial reconfiguration of the existing street, be compatible with winter snow removal, and be able to be implemented at relatively low cost. Options include:

- Installation of signage that indicates the presence of other uses, and establishes slower advisory speed limits.
- Installation of electronic speed signs that advise motorists of their current speeds.
- Improved police enforcement of speed limits.
- Speed tables or speed cushions at strategic locations. Devices that can be removed to accommodate winter snow removal are most appropriate.

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- Addition of marked high-visibility pedestrian crossings with appropriate striping and signage.
- Striping to give the appearance of a narrower travel lane.



High-Visibility Pedestrian Crossing



Speed Table that Can Accommodate Wide-Axle Emergency Vehicles

Recommendation 3.3. Study opportunities for lighting to be installed for pedestrian safety, that would be consistent with the Town lighting ordinance, and would not negatively affect the character of Sierra Valley.

b. Pedestrian Connectivity

Recommendation 3.4. Study opportunities for additional east-west trail connections to be provided within Sierra Valley. Possible options include use of utility easements (storm drain, water and sewer) owned by the Town and Mammoth Community Water District, and negotiation of new public right-of-way easements with willing property owners.

Recommendation 3.5. Implement recommendations of the Trails System Master Plan to provide a formalized series of pedestrian connections from Sierra Valley across the Shady Rest Tract, and through Sierra Star, in conjunction with future development of Master Plans for those areas.

Recommendation 3.6. Improve sidewalks along Meridian Boulevard and Main Street to allow for better pedestrian connectivity to and from Sierra Valley.

c. Snow Management

Recommendation 3.7. Study the costs, benefits and feasibility of an enhanced snow management program (such as blowing and trucking snow), funded through a snow management district, to improve winter safety and conditions in Sierra Valley.

Recommendation 3.8. Improve enforcement of illegal parking along property frontages and in snow storage areas.

Recommendation 3.9. Work with owners of vacant properties to lease property for snow storage during the winter.

Recommendation 3.10. Improve enforcement of Town snow storage permit requirements to minimize illegal dumping of snow on private property by snow removal operators.

Recommendation 3.11. Ensure that all projects provide for adequate snow storage areas or otherwise deal with snow through an approved snow management plan.

4. Storm Drainage and Flooding

Recommendation 4.1. Implement measures recommended in the 2005 Storm Drain Master Plan, and the 2007 Storm Drain Study. Particular items include:

- An increase in the existing culvert located at north Manzanita from 18 inches to 36 inches.
- Improvements to existing culverts and channels to reduce erosion and sedimentation.
- Installation of upstream storm-water control measures such as infiltration basins and trenches.

Recommendation 4.2. Implement an enhanced public works maintenance program for storm drains within Sierra Valley, consistent with the program previously recommended (see Table 2).

Recommendation 4.3. Ensure upstream development minimizes any potential increases in stormwater runoff through appropriate mitigation measures.

5. Public Safety and Code Enforcement

Recommendation 5.1. As Town resources allow, dedicate additional staff resources to enforcement for building and zoning code violations, and nuisance and quality of life issues. This may include designation of a Community Development Department Neighborhood Coordinator for Sierra Valley who would:

- Be a primary source of contact for code compliance and other complaints.
- Work with Police Department (MLPD), Fire District (MLFPD), Mammoth Disposal, and other Town departments as needed to address complaints and issues.
- Conduct quarterly neighborhood meetings to listen to issues and identify solutions for Sierra Valley.

Recommendation 5.2. Provide public information and outreach to Sierra Valley residents on code compliance procedures and processes.

Recommendation 5.3. Continue to support the proactive efforts of the Wildlife Officer to educate and enforce residents about wildlife issues associated with trash storage and leaving food available for bears and other wildlife.

Recommendation 5.4. Work with Mammoth Disposal and Sierra Valley neighbors to identify opportunities to provide shared neighborhood dumpsters for single family home, to minimize the number of dumpsters and trash cans that are susceptible to wildlife raids.

Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study
Preferred Concept & Recommendations

Town of Mammoth Lakes, CA Stormwater Facilities Maintenance Plan and Schedule

Standard equipment required to implement this basic maintenance plan includes a street sweeper and a combination water jet/vactor truck. This maintenance plan assumes maintenance personnel have easy and consistent access to this equipment. Maintenance personnel should keep a log book detailing the inspection/maintenance performed at each facility as well as the date the action was performed. An excel file that serves as a master log should be set up at the maintenance office and should be regularly updated based on the field log books. This master log can be used to keep track of inspections and maintenance activities performed as well as alert Town Staff of upcoming inspections and maintenance.

	Storm Water Facility	Inspection	Description	Frequency	Maintenance	Equipment
1	Drop Inlets & Catch Basins	Visual	Check drop inlet and catch basin grates to ensure sediment or trash are not blocking flow	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Remove any sediment and trash	Hand Crew and or Vactor truck
		Visual & Sediment Depth Measurement	Check drop inlet/catch basin sump capacity	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Remove sediment or trash from sump if 1/3 capacity is exceeded	Vactor Truck
		Visual	Ensure grates are in place and are not damaged to the point that they are unsafe	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Repair or replace grates to ensure proper working order	Varies
2	Culverts and Inlet/Outlet Structures	Visual	Check culverts for debris that would limit the capacity of the culvert.	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Jet debris out of culvert and remove	Vactor truck
		Visual	Verify that inlet/outlet structures are in place, not eroding and properly convey storm water into/out of the culverts	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Re-grade if necessary. Fill eroded area and add riprap protection	Handwork or Backhoe
3	Curb and Gutter	Visual	Check curb/gutters for debris buildup	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Clear debris from curb/gutter. Be sure to remove debris and not allow debris to fall into catch basins	Brooms or street sweeper
		Visual	Check for breakdown of curb (from snowplow activities)		Replace failing curb/gutter as required	Varies
		Visual & Erosion Depth Measurement	Check for erosion behind curb if placed at base of dirt cut slope		Repair erosion with road grindings, rip rap or other material if necessary	Handwork or Backhoe
4	Storm Drain	Visual & Sediment Depth Measurement	Check storm drain system for debris buildup	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Jet/Vacuum debris out of storm drain pipe	Vactor truck
		Visual	Check capacity of storm drain	Immediately after significant storm events	If storm drain capacity is frequently exceeded contact the engineering department	Varies
5	Dry Wells & Infiltration Galleries	Visual & Sediment Depth Measurement	Check dry wells for sediment or trash buildup that will limit capacity	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Remove any sediment and trash	Vactor truck or hand crew with shovels
		Visual & Material Test	Ensure grates are in place and are not damaged to the point that they are unsafe		Repair or replace grates to ensure proper working order	Shop equipment
6	Sand/Oil Separators & Water Quality Treatment Vaults	Visual & Sediment Depth Measurement	Pull lids and visually check for sediment buildup in bottom of unit	Twice annually (Spring and Fall) and after significant storm events	Remove any sediment and trash	Vactor truck
		Visual	Ensure nothing is blocking proper operation of the unit		Remove blockage	Vactor truck or by hand. Follow appropriate confined entry regulations
7	Detention, Retention and Infiltration Basins	Please reference attached maintenance recommendations from the Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington published in February 2005 by the Washington State Department of Ecology				
8	Open Channels	Visual	Check to see if debris, garbage, snow or ice is blocking drainage channel	Monthly and after each snow event	Remove debris, garbage, ice and snow	Backhoe and hand crew
9	Problem Areas					
	Areas Subject to Ponding	Visual	Check problem areas to determine if ponding is occurring	After each storm event and daily during spring snow melt	Vactor ponded water or sweep to catch basin	Vactor truck
	Areas Prone to Sediment Deposition	Visual	Check problem areas to determine if sediment is accumulating	After each storm event and weekly during spring snow melt	Remove accumulated sediment with vactor truck, sweeper or hand crew	Vactor Truck, Sweeper or Hand Crew
	Nuisance Water Crossing - Snow Melt - Icing	Visual	Check nuisance areas to determine if snow melt is causing icing problems	Daily during winter and spring snow melt	Deploy deicing material or traction abrasive	Haul truck with spreader or hand crew

Table 2: Recommended Storm Drain Maintenance Program

Recommendation 5.5. Support the work of the MLPD to create a positive working relationship between local law enforcement and neighborhood residents.

Recommendation 5.6. As resources permit, provide additional police patrols of Sierra Valley to create a visible law enforcement presence and deter and deal with crime and nuisance behavior.

Recommendation 5.7. Work with neighbors and the MLPD to form a neighborhood watch group in Sierra Valley.

Recommendation 5.8. Continue to work with MLFPD to monitor and enforce defensible space and other fire safety requirements.

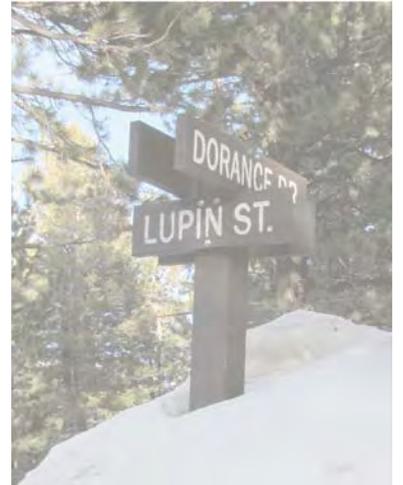
6. Parks and Open Space

Recommendation 6.1. Ensure that future multi-family developments provide the required amount of private and/or common open space areas, or equivalent facilities.

Recommendation 6.2. Support the construction of neighborhood parks within the Shady Rest tract and Sierra Star, in conjunction with development of their respective that are convenient and accessible to Sierra Valley residents.

C. Conclusions

Completion of the SVNDP Process resolves district planning for an important “locals” neighborhood that has not been the subject of focused planning or substantial investment in the past. A number of issue areas, like storm drainage and traffic are likely to require additional study to determine the scope and cost of potential improvements, and to identify the most appropriate solutions. The concepts and recommendations of this report identify a range of feasible solutions which, although not requiring substantial physical or new infrastructure, will nonetheless require investment of staff, community and other resources to be successfully implemented. Fostering and building a sense of neighborhood pride and a desire for residents to invest in the community will be an important component of bringing about improvement in Sierra Valley, as will partnership between the Town, Police Department and Fire District, Mammoth Lakes Housing, and community members.



Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study Background Report

Background Report

This background report provides a summary of the Framework, existing conditions, opportunities and constraints for the Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Planning Study (SVNDP). It also summarizes the alternatives that were reviewed during the NDP process, to arrive at the Preferred Concept and associated Recommendations.

A. Framework

The Framework was reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission on March 23, 2011, and by the Town Council on April 6, 2011. A Public Workshop/Listening Session was held prior to the Framework meetings to gather additional input on issues of importance to local residents.

The Framework includes three major components which together define the scope of work for the planning study:

- Study Area Boundary and Sphere of Influence
- Guiding Principles
- Preliminary Issues

During the framework process, there was some discussion about the appropriate name for the district study. Although the legal name of the subdivision is “Sierra Valley Sites,” there was consensus that “Sierra Valley” was the most appropriate name for the district, avoiding confusion about different names that have been given to the area over the years (e.g. Sierra Valley Estates versus Sierra Valley Sites), and consistent with the label used in the 2007 General Plan. (Naming the district “Sierra Valley” for the purposes of this study has no bearing on the legal status of any official title documents or deeds.)

1. Study Area Boundaries

Figure 1 shows the SVNDP study area, which reflects the primary area of interest for the NDP. A sphere of influence, encompassing a more extensive area to be considered relative to the study area, is also delineated and includes land in the vicinity of each study area that has related or common issues, and that may influence, or be influenced by the study area.



**Sierra Valley
Neighborhood District Plan
Planning Area and
Sphere of Influence**

-  Study Area
-  Sphere of Influence

Figure 1: Study Area and Sphere of Influence

The study area includes all of the properties along Manzanita Road, Mono Street, Lupin Street, Joaquin Road and Callahan Way between Main Street and Meridian Boulevard, as well as properties along Arrowhead Drive and Chaparral Road. Most of the commercial zoned properties fronting on Main Street are not included in the study area, since they were addressed in the Downtown NDP; however, the Manzanita apartments and San Joaquin Villas properties are included, because they share issues in common with the broader Sierra Valley.

2. Sphere of Influence

The sphere of influence for the SVNDP includes a much more extensive area, extending west and south to Minaret Road across the Sierra Star resort; north to include commercial properties north of Main Street; south to include the higher density residential development in the Azimuth Drive/Chateau Road and Holiday Mobile Home Park area; and east to include the Shady Rest site.

B. Guiding Principles

The framework's guiding principles define the key characteristics and concepts to guide planning for the study area. They are based on the applicable Neighborhood and District Character description from the General Plan, and other sources as appropriate, and indicate the key characteristics and concepts that should guide planning for the study area.

The General Plan provides limited guidance as to the desired character for Sierra Valley Sites. However, it was felt appropriate to include guiding principles for a "livable workforce neighborhood" modified from those provided for the adjacent Shady Rest Site, since they also have relevance to Sierra Valley.

The guiding principles developed and accepted as part of the Framework are listed below.

General Plan Guiding Principles

General Plan (Policy L.1.D.2) notes that the District should be the subject of a focused Special Study to:

- *Assess infill design and development standards, land use, and density,*
- *Evaluate "feet first" mobility measures,*
- *Assess traffic and determine suitable traffic calming measures,*

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Background Report

- *Identify appropriate locations for neighborhood parks, pocket parks, linear parks, open space, and connected trails,*
- *Assess safety issues and aesthetics, and*
- *Assess the impacts of seasonal residents.*

Housing Element Policy H.3.C. calls for district planning for Sierra Valley Sites to improve:

- *Livability,*
- *Infrastructure,*
- *Public Safety,*
- *Mobility.*

Livable Workforce Neighborhood Characteristics

A number of guiding principles are in place for the adjacent Shady Rest neighborhood, which shares the important characteristic with Sierra Valley of being a “livable in-town neighborhood for the workforce.” Some additional guiding principles for the Sierra Valley District are proposed below, adapted from among those identified for Shady Rest:

- 1. A livable in-town neighborhood for the workforce, including units at a variety of type, size, scale and affordability.*
- 2. Preservation of community character and a sense of a neighborhood “in the trees.”*
- 3. Sense of neighborhood pride that fosters community involvement.*
- 4. A community-oriented neighborhood:*
 - a. Neighborhood context and connections:*
 - (1) Pedestrian and auto connections to adjoining areas and neighborhoods (e.g. Main Street, Shady Rest, Old Mammoth Road, Sierra Star and Meridian).*
 - (2) Traffic calming and management with adjoining neighborhoods.*
 - (3) Emergency access.*
 - (4) Trail and pedestrian emphasis.*
 - (5) Transit accessible.*
 - (6) Adequate infrastructure.*
 - b. Quality site planning and architectural design for new development:*

- (1) *Accessible to recreation, services and connected to the community.*
 - (2) *Significant tree preservation.*
 - (3) *Unobtrusive, articulated buildings.*
 - (4) *Minimum paving, maximum permeable surface.*
 - (5) *High-quality materials.*
 - (6) *On- and off-site parking.*
 - (7) *Energy efficient design.*
 - (8) *Innovative snow management.*
 - (9) *Appropriate location and screening of dumpsters.*
- b. *Well-maintained and attractive existing properties.*
5. *Accessible to key resident amenities such as:*
- a. *Child care.*
 - b. *Active and passive recreation.*

C. General Plan and Zoning

This section outlines relevant General Plan and Zoning regulations for land within the study areas. Figure 2 shows the Zoning designations for the district.

1. General Plan and Zoning Code

The Sierra Valley study area encompasses four zoning districts:

- High Density Residential-1 (HDR 1): The majority of the Sierra Valley study area is designated HDR 1 in the General Plan, with a corresponding zoning designation of RMF-1. This zone is intended for mixed residential uses (single-family dwellings, apartments and multi-family dwellings), at a density up to 12 units per acre. The RMF-1 zone does not permit nightly or transient rental.

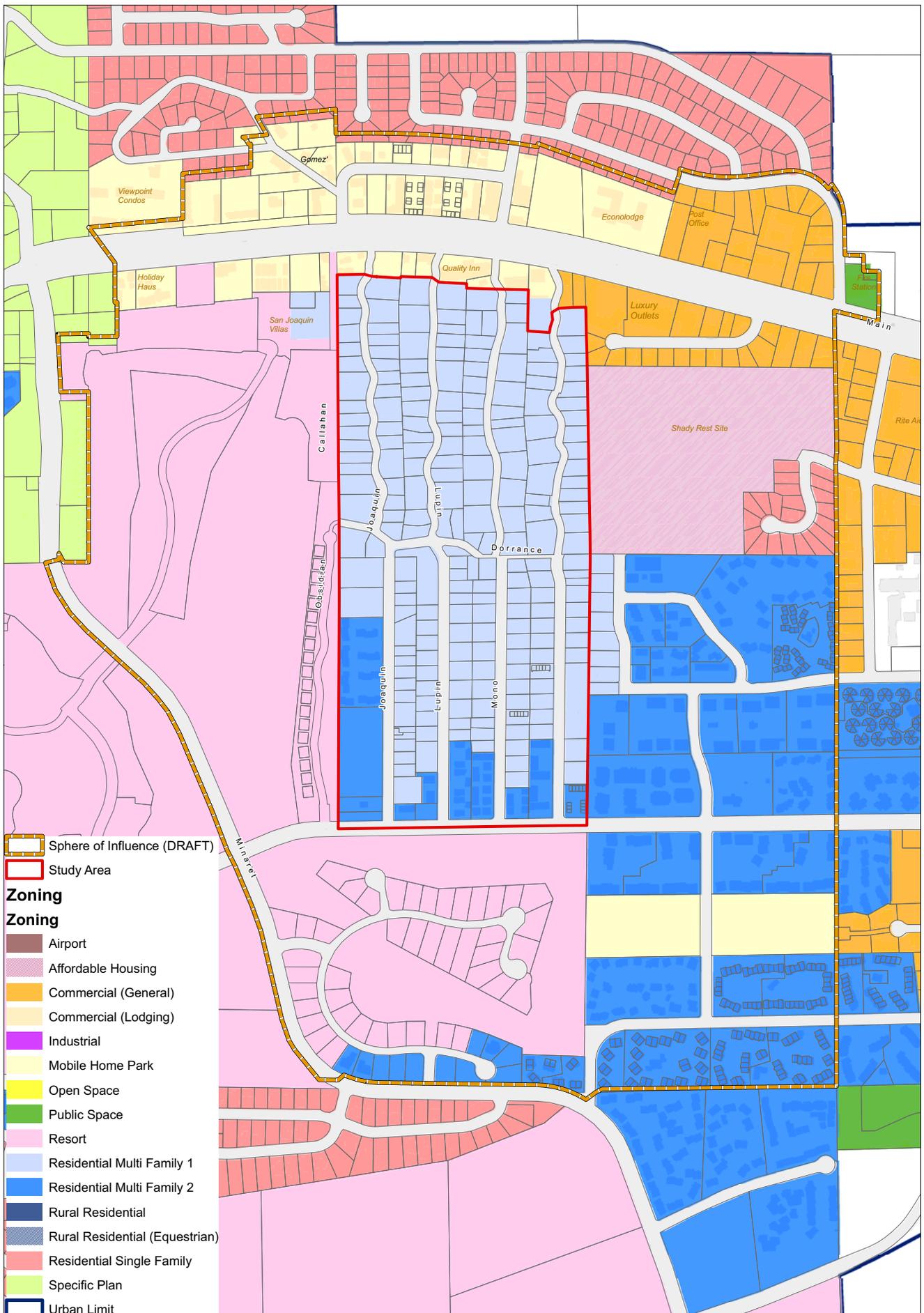


Figure 2: Zoning

- High Density Residential-2 (HDR-2): Properties at the south end of Manzanita Road, Mono Street, Lupin Street and Joaquin Road and along Meridian Boulevard, as well as those along Arrowhead Road and Chaparral Drive are designated as High Density Residential-2 (HDR-2) in the General Plan, with a corresponding zoning designation of RMF-2. This zone permits high density residential and lodging development, at a maximum density of 12 units per acre for residential uses, and 36 rooms per acre for lodging uses. Transient rental is permitted in this zone.
- Commercial 2 (C2) . The Manzanita Apartments at the corner of Main Street and Manzanita Road are located in the Commercial-2 General Plan land use district, and the Commercial Lodging (CL) zone. This zone is primarily intended for lodging and related commercial uses, but also permits high density residential uses.
- Resort (R): The San Joaquin Villas site is designated as Resort within the General Plan, and zoned similarly. This designation allows commercial mixed uses including visitor lodging, amenities and services, as well as workforce housing. Specific uses are to be specified through a development plan which provides detailed land use, performance and environmental standards for the plan area. Accordingly, the Lodestar Master Plan provides more detailed planning guidance, including the identification of the San Joaquin Villas site and a property to the south, as potential sites for affordable housing. San Joaquin Villas was originally developed as a workforce housing project, and a number are deed restricted, with the remainder as market-rate units.

2. Zoning Requirements for Affordable Housing Projects

The General Plan (Policy L.2.D.) and Zoning Code allow that in multi-family residential and commercial zones, projects providing all of their units as affordable housing can achieve up to double density (24 units per acre). This density has been approved for a number of the workforce housing projects built in recent years.

The Town is in the process of updating the Zoning Code, which will continue to include density bonus provisions for affordable housing. However, the updated code will include additional requirements to ensure that units achieving this density bonus are livable, and that site planning

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and other standards are implemented to avoid impacts on neighboring residences. In addition, the current and proposed Housing Ordinance do not allow other projects to mitigate their workforce housing requirements by placing units off-site in the RMF-1 zone, which is the designation of most properties in Sierra Valley (see Figure 2).¹

State housing law is restrictive about how much parking the Town can require for an affordable housing project, and sets ratios that are lower than the Town's typical standards for multi-family residential development. State law also requires the Town to offer some forms of concessions to affordable housing projects, such as reductions in setbacks, needed to make a project feasible.

D. Related Plans and Studies

In addition to the General Plan and Zoning Code discussed above, a number of related documents, studies and plans were referenced during the preparation of the SVNDP. These include district planning studies developed for neighboring districts, as well as town-wide strategic planning documents.

1. Related District Studies

a. Downtown Concept for Main Street (DCMS)

The DCMS was accepted in September 2010. It addresses the entire Main Street corridor from east of Sierra Park Road to the North Village, as well as North Old Mammoth Road and the Shady Rest Tract.

The Preferred Concept presents a long-range vision for the downtown that includes significant change and improvement to physical and design conditions along the Main Street corridor; creation of a walkable, connected downtown focused around the east end of Main Street and North Old Mammoth Road; transportation system enhancements including additional street connections and an emphasis on alternate transportation modes; and focused concepts for major catalyst sites including the US Forest Service property north of Main Street, Town/County property at Sierra Park

¹ Previous affordable housing units built in Sierra Valley were developed as grant-funded projects, and not directly as off-site mitigation.

Road/Main Street; and creation of a livable workforce neighborhood within the Shady Rest Tract.

b. North Old Mammoth Road District Special Study (NOMRDSS)

The NOMRDSS encompasses approximately 48 acres along Old Mammoth Road from Main Street to Sierra Nevada Road. The northerly portion of the North Old Mammoth Road area (from Main Street to Tavern Road) is included in the DCMS study area. The recommendation of the NOMRDSS was for the NOMR area to remain as a mixed-use district with ground floor retail and residential above, public gathering spaces, and feet-first design. The NOMRDSS was accepted by Town Council in November 2007.

c. South Districts NDP (SDNDP)

The SDNDP was initiated in early 2010, addressing three districts: Sierra Star, South Old Mammoth Road, and the East Open Space Stream Corridor District. The Planning Commission made a recommendation to accept the SDNDP on May 25, 2011 and the Town Council will consider the Draft NDP at their **July 6 meeting**. For Sierra Star, the SDNDP envisions buildout of the remaining development areas of the Lodestar Master Plan with resort and residential uses, and improved pedestrian and vehicular connectivity through the property.² The adjacent Bell-Shaped Parcel remains as open space, with minimal improvements. For south Old Mammoth Road, the concept is one of revitalization, focused around infill development along the street and the idea of a South Mammoth Arts and Culture District. In the SDNDP, Mammoth Creek Park is a strong anchor to the South Mammoth district, with a range of new event venues, including both indoor and outdoor locations.

2. Draft Facilities Planning Documents

Three draft Town of Mammoth Lakes planning documents are referenced in this report.

a. Draft Trail System Master Plan (TSMP)

The Draft TSMP was published in February 2009. It includes recommendations to achieve an integrated system of infrastructure and programs to support recreation and mobility while connecting various

² The concept of a proposed vehicular connector connecting to Callahan Road has proven controversial, with concerns expressed by neighbors that the road would affect quality of life and have other negative effects. The Town Council will consider this connection and potential alternatives to it at the July 6, 2011 meeting.

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nodes throughout town. The Draft TSMP incorporates MLTPA's GIC points, which are key public access and trail points. Trails planning for internal trails systems within specific districts are deferred to the district planning process. The Town will be undertaking CEQA review of the TSMP in 2010, with a goal of adopting the Plan by late 2011.

b. Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP)

The April 2008 Draft PRMP outlines the vision for developing parks and recreation within Mammoth Lakes for the next 18 years. Once adopted, the Draft PRMP will update the existing Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan.

c. Draft Mobility Diagram

The Draft Mobility Diagram was prepared in 2006 to start looking at opportunities to expand and improve the Town's circulation system, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, parking, and automobile infrastructure. The Draft Mobility Diagram was considered in developing recommendations for the SVNDP study area's circulation system with connectivity to on-site and off-site activity nodes.

E. Existing Conditions

This section describes existing physical conditions within the Sierra Valley district. Sierra Valley was originally developed as a summer cabin tract in the late 1940's. The area north of Dorrance was developed first (as Sierra Valley Sites I) and south of Dorrance Drive (Sierra Valley Sites II) second. The current pattern of land use, street configuration, and infrastructure reflects these historic origins.

1. Land Use, Housing and Urban Design

a. Land Use

The current zoning density of 12 units per acre has been in place since at least the 1970's, prior to the Town's incorporation. The zoning has consistently allowed for a range of residential uses, which has led to the mixture and pattern of use seen today. Although the maximum density has not increased, the zoning has been modified since incorporation to allow for smaller minimum parcel sizes, and to allow for increased lot coverage on individual parcels.

Existing land use patterns within the district are illustrated in Figure 3. As shown in the diagram, there is a mixture of residential uses, including single-family, small multi-family (duplex to four-plex), and larger multi-family developments. Based on GIS data, 50 percent of existing housing units are single family homes, 29 percent are in duplexes or triplexes, and 20 percent in buildings of four or more units. Both rental apartments and condominium units are found within the district.

b. Workforce Housing

Mammoth Lakes Housing, with support of the Town, has built four affordable housing projects in the Sierra Valley Sites area in the past six years; in addition, two MMSA employee housing projects are located on Lupin Street, and the San Joaquin Villas project on Callahan Street was built by Intrawest in 2008. The locations of these projects are indicated in Figure 3.

The housing units within Sierra Valley are built in an eclectic range of styles, from small log cabins and A-Frames to larger and more modern structures. As one of Mammoth's earliest neighborhoods, some of the housing stock in Sierra Valley dates from the 1950's and before, but much of it is more recent than that. Most of the properties south of Dorrance were built in the 1970's or later; a much higher proportion of properties north of Dorrance Drive were built in the 1950's or 60's. Although many properties are well-maintained, others, particularly some of the older rental properties are run down.

c. Density

Based on Town GIS data, there are currently a total of 807 units within the study area; the average density of all developed properties is 9.7 units per acre. At present, there are 31 vacant parcels, totaling 8.2 acres. If all of these vacant properties built to their maximum allowed density, just over 100 new units could be built. While it is unlikely that every property could or would build to the maximum density, there are opportunities for infill and redevelopment that would allow some properties to intensify. Therefore, this estimate is likely not unreasonable for total build out.

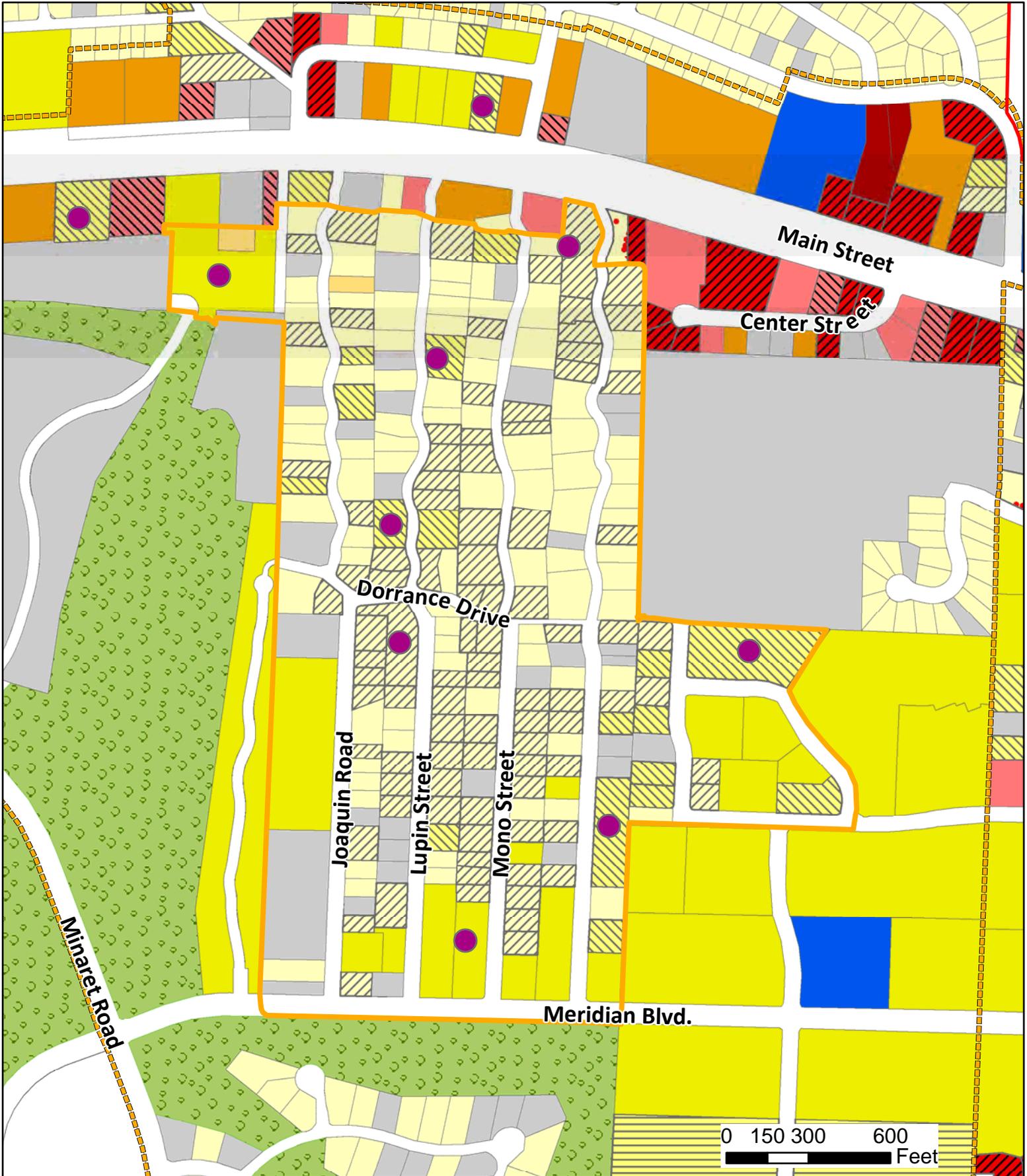


Figure 3

**Sierra Valley Sites
Neighborhood District Plan
Existing Land Use**



d. Urban Design

As described above, Sierra Valley has developed in two major phases. The characteristics of streets south of Dorrance Drive are somewhat different from those to the north. North of Dorrance Drive streets are narrower and more winding, the areas has much denser tree cover and less regular lots than those to the south. There is a higher proportion of single-family homes in this area as well. South of Dorrance Drive, streets are wider and straighter with fewer trees, leading to a more open feeling. Throughout Sierra Valley, buildings are mostly set back from the street, leading to a feeling of a neighborhood in the woods.

e. Code Compliance and Enforcement

The unique pattern of land use, population and environment within Sierra Valley has lead to some negative conditions that, while experienced elsewhere in the town, appear to be particularly significant in this neighborhood. Many of these can be categorized as “code enforcement” or nuisance conditions and issues, which the Town, Mammoth Lakes Police Department, and Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District deals with as needed, but typically on a complaint basis.

Common code compliance issues for Sierra Valley include:

- Fire safety issues, such as maintaining defensible space around buildings for fire safety, storage of firewood, and maintaining lower story windows free of snow.
- Noise and similar nuisance issues, such as public drunkenness, music, and rowdy behavior.
- Illegal dumping.
- Trash storage and related wildlife management issues.
- Zoning and building issues including illegal lighting, overcrowding, building work done without permits, buildings that do not meet current codes, parking, snow storage, etc.

While detailed data on code compliance is not available, anecdotally, a large proportion of the complaints in the town are concerned with properties in Sierra Valley. This is likely because of the larger number of housing units and permanent residents in the neighborhood, as well as number of older properties.

2. Mobility & Circulation

a. Road Network

Sierra Valley is bracketed to the north and south by two major arterials: Main Street and its South Frontage Road, and Meridian Boulevard. Main Street consists of four travel lanes (in addition to the Frontage Road) and a two way turn lane that terminates at Manzanita Road. Meridian Boulevard also has four travel lanes. Both roads, but especially Main Street, carry a high volume of traffic.

Manzanita Road, Mono Street, Lupin Street, Joaquin Road, Callahan Way and Dorrance Drive are all local streets, as are Arrowhead Drive and Chaparral Way. Dorrance Drive, Main Street and Meridian are the only east-west connector roads in the area, causing many locals to cut through private property to shortcut between blocks. Similarly, no official pedestrian connections exist to the west across Sierra Star and to the east across the Shady Rest Tract. Shady Rest in particular has a network of unofficial pedestrian trails that are used as shortcuts to get to Old Mammoth Road and other destinations to the east.

b. Right-of-Way Conditions

The “right of way” is the area legally available for the public to travel; it can include property owned by the Town, or private property on which it has an easement for public access and use. The available right-of-way is not always the same as the paved area of a road and/or sidewalks.

Streets in Sierra Valley south of Dorrance have a 60 foot right-of-way, which is sufficient for the vehicle lanes, and could accommodate a sidewalks. For the most part, streets north of Dorrance do not have the Town’s standard right-of-way, with most areas at 40 feet. Although this is technically sufficient room to accommodate vehicle lanes and a sidewalk or path, existing trees, driveways and the meandering nature of the street make this challenging.

c. Non-Motorized and Trails Circulation

There are limited trails and pedestrian facilities within the district. Discontinuous sidewalks or pedestrian paths are found along Main Street and the south frontage road, and along some portions of Meridian Boulevard. A paved Multi-Use path is in place along the south part of Joaquin Road, the Tallus property and Callahan Way. A signed Class

III bike route is signed along Main Street, and Class II bike lanes are provided along Meridian Boulevard.

Because of the limited pavement width on most streets in Sierra Valley, there is no separated path for pedestrians or cyclists, who are forced to share the road with motor vehicles. At night when streets are dark, and during the winter when street widths are further narrowed by snow, pedestrians can feel particularly unsafe. As described below, recorded accident data does not show a high rate of collisions between cars, and pedestrians or cyclists. This is likely because the roads, which are winding and feel narrow because of adjacent trees, are not conducive to speeding, which allows many accidents to be avoided.

d. Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

i. Traffic Volumes and Speeds

A number of traffic studies have been undertaken for Sierra Valley that provide information on current traffic conditions in the district. They include a 2008 survey that included traffic counts and speed surveys. The results of this study are shown in Table 1. As shown in the table, most vehicles travel within the current 25 MPH speed limit. Speeding appears to be more of an issue on the streets south of Dorrance, particularly on Manzanita and Lupin Streets. In the table, the 85th percentile shown is the threshold used by traffic engineers to determine the most appropriate speed limit, and that which is enforceable by law. Current patterns suggest that, for the most part, current speed limits are appropriate.

As also shown in the table, Manzanita Road and Mono Streets have the highest traffic volumes. The results of the Town's recent traffic model suggest that traffic volumes may increase by 25 to 35 percent by 2025 as the Town continues to grow. However, even with this increase, traffic volumes would not exceed the design capacity of the streets in Sierra Valley.

ii. Cut-Through Traffic

Cut-through traffic has frequently been identified as an issue of concern, particularly on Manzanita Street which offers a direct connection between Meridian Boulevard and Main Street. A study in 2008 showed

Table 1: 2008 Speed Survey Results

	Percentage of Vehicles			85th Percentile (MPH)
	ADT*	0-24 MPH	25+ MPH	
Manzanita Rd. (North of Dorrance)	859	91.34%	8.66%	23
Manzanita Rd. (South of Dorrance)	781	65.25%	34.75%	27
Mono St. (North of Dorrance)	680	83.13%	16.87%	24
Mono St. (South of Dorrance)	760	95.39%	4.61%	22
Lupin St. (North of Dorrance)	586	76.44%	23.56%	26
Lupin St. (South of Dorrance)	545	51.92%	48.08%	30
Joaquin Rd. (North of Dorrance)	501	90.34%	9.66%	23
Joaquin Rd. (South of Dorrance)	605	79.11%	20.89%	25

* ADT: Average Daily Trips

that about 25.4 percent of traffic on Manzanita Street is cut-through traffic, representing a 3 percent increase from a similar study done in 2005.

iii. Accident Data

The California State-wide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) is a database of accident information reported by state and local traffic agencies, with reporting by location and accident type. Table 2 summarizes accident data from the SWITRS database for streets in the study area and vicinity, for the period 2000-2010.

As shown in the table, of the 65 accidents reported in the vicinity of the study area there were a total of eight collisions involving a motor vehicle, and either a pedestrian or a bicycle. Most of these occurred on Main Street or Meridian Boulevard. Within Sierra Valley, most accidents were between two vehicles, or involved a motor vehicle collision with a parked vehicle or fixed object.

Table 2: SWITRS Accident Data 2000-2010

Motor Vehicle Collision Type						
	Other Motor Vehicle	Pedestrian	Bike	Parked Vehicle	Fixed or Other Object	Total
Manzanita Rd	3			1	5	9
Mono St	2	1	1	1	1	6
Lupin St	4			2	1	7
Joaquin Rd	3			2	1	6
Dorrance Dr	3				1	4
Main St. (Manzanita to Joaquin)	2		2		1	5
South Frontage (Manzanita to Joaquin)	6	2		3	1	12
Meridian Blvd (Manzanita to Joaquin)	9	1			2	12
Chaparral Way				1		1
Sierra Nevada Rd			1		2	3
	32	4	4	10	15	65

iv. Other Traffic Study Findings

The Town worked with LSC Transportation consultants in 2009 to look at traffic management issues town-wide, including within Sierra Valley.

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Additionally, representatives from the University of California, Berkeley's Institute of Traffic Safety provided a Traffic Safety Evaluation in 2010 that also looked at traffic safety issues and solutions in Mammoth Lakes and Sierra Valley. Both studies noted some, but not severe, instances of speeding, and poor winter visibility for vehicles exiting driveways.

Neither the LSC nor the UC Berkeley Study recommended significant changes or improvements to the streets in Sierra Valley. While the idea of providing a one-way system (and using extra pavement for pedestrians) has been suggested in the past by some local residents, LSC advised against it in their study because it would be likely to increase traffic speeds and congestion on other streets. Both LSC and the UC Berkeley study recommended forms of traffic calming like speed tables (low, wide speed bumps), striping, and signage to encourage slower speeds.

e. Parking

While the extent of the issue has not been quantified, it has been observed that many properties, particularly multi-family developments, don't appear to provide adequate parking, causing overflow parking to occur in the streets, or for front yard areas to be used to provide parking. This problem is most severe in the winter when a higher proportion of units are occupied, when on-street parking is prohibited, and when areas used formally or informally for parking on-site are used for snow storage.

f. Transit

Sierra Valley is fairly well served by transit. The Mid-town Lift provides service every 30 minutes on Manzanita Road, Lupin Street and Main Street; the Old Mammoth Lift provides service every 30 minutes on Meridian Boulevard and Sierra Nevada Road. The Town Trolley service along Main Street is also within a reasonable walking distance of Sierra Valley.

3. Infrastructure

As one of Mammoth Lakes' older neighborhoods, some of the key infrastructure in Sierra Valley, particularly storm drainage, does not meet modern standards.

As shown in Figure 4, the existing storm drain system includes some limited sections of underground storm drainage pipes, but for the most part comprises open channels and culverts. There have been a number of flooding events in Sierra Valley in the past decade, generally associated with spring snowmelt or summer rain-storms. The most significant flooding recent event occurred in 2007, with damage to homes and other property.

A study commissioned by the Town following the 2007 flood found that erosion, resulting sedimentation, and lack of maintenance has contributed to channels and culverts becoming clogged and inefficient at conveying storm flows. Unpaved driveways and parking areas contribute to sedimentation effects. (See Figure 5). The study did not make any substantial new recommendations, except that additional study should be made to determine the extent of issues and potential improvements needed, and that more general town-wide measures to reduce erosion and improve storm-water retention should be implemented.

Recommendations of earlier studies, including the 2005 Storm Drain Master Plan, suggested that an existing 18-inch culvert at north Manzanita Road should be upgraded to a 36-inch pipe, and that an improved maintenance program should be implemented to keep existing drainage channels and culverts clear of debris.

4. Open Space

Sierra Valley is home to numerous families with children. There are no public parks or open space areas within Sierra Valley, and most apartment and multi-unit complexes do not offer secure outdoor open space areas for children to play. In addition, the closest Town park (Mammoth Creek Park) is more than a half-mile away, a considerable distance to walk, especially for children.

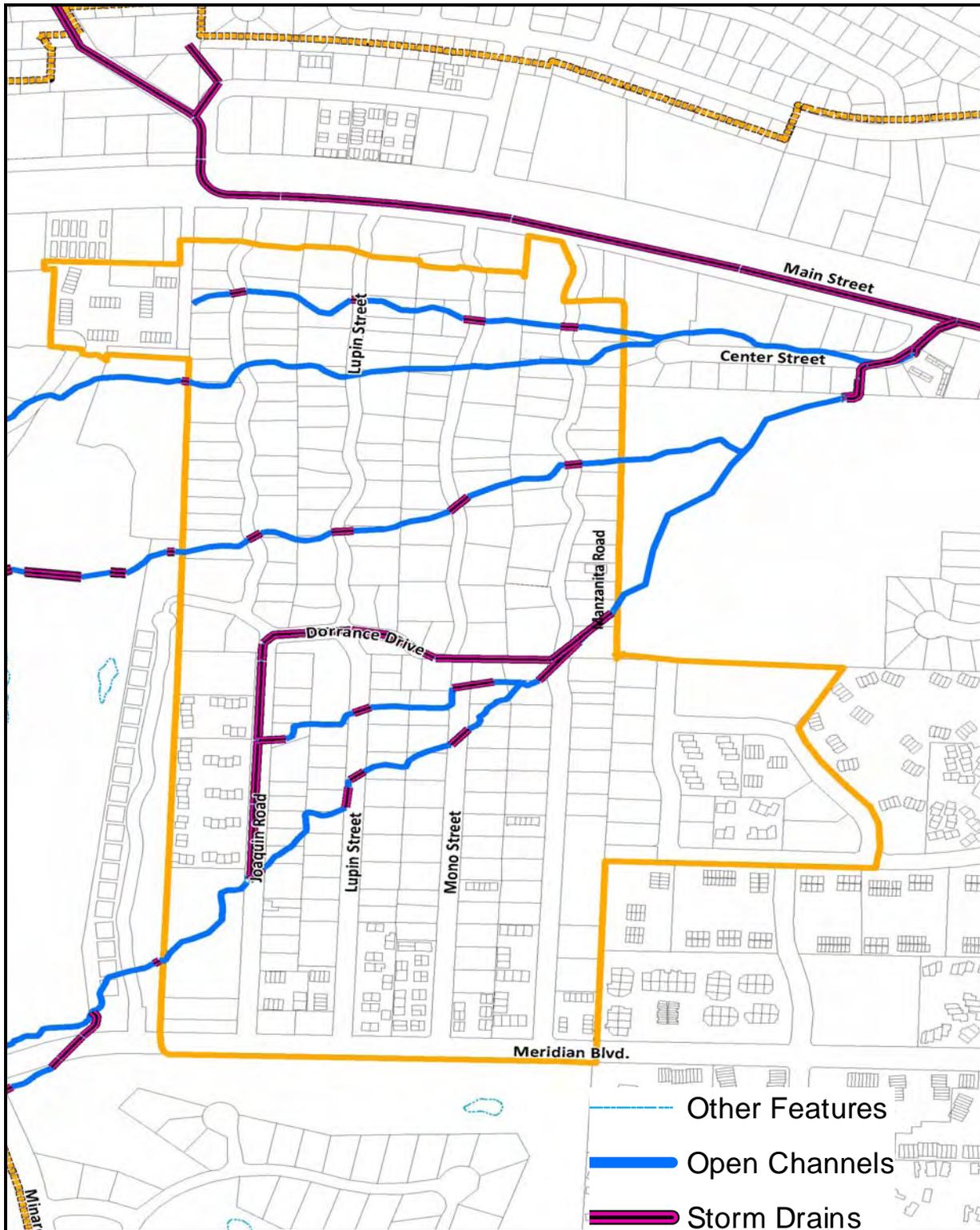


Figure 4: Storm Drain System

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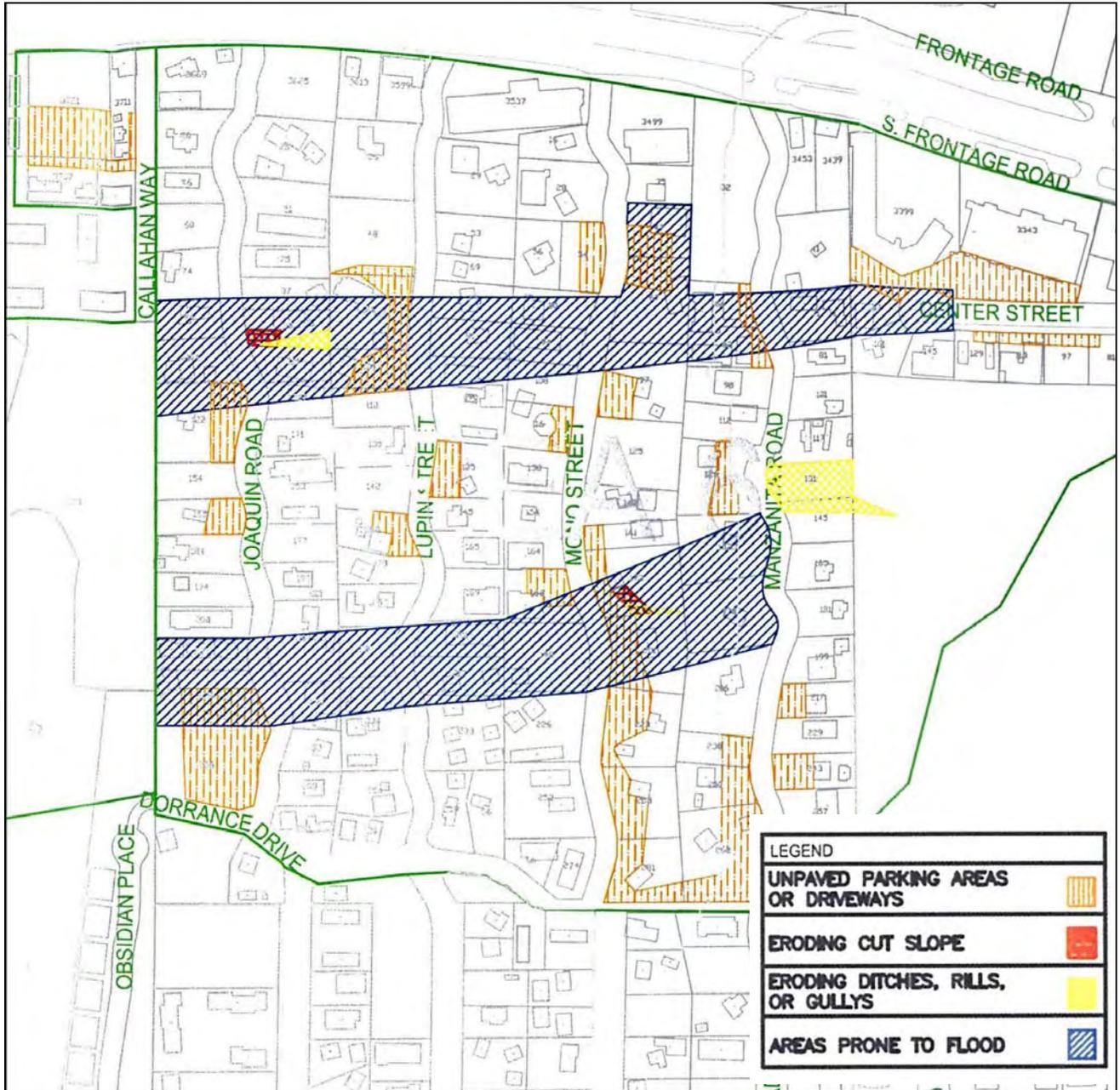


Figure 5: Sierra Valley Drainage and Flooding Issues

F. Key Issues

Key issues for the SVNDP were identified through the Framework process, and were supplemented by input during the early meetings of the Focus Group and public, and during compilation of the existing conditions above.

This process was useful in focusing the scope of the study and in identifying items to be addressed in greater detail. The complete list of issues identified during the Framework process is included in Appendix B, organized by a series of topics that correspond to the elements of the General Plan. Particular issues identified during the framework and public process are outlined below.

1. Neighborhood Character

- Sierra Valley has a unique role as one of Mammoth's true "locals" neighborhoods, with a diversity of residents, and single- and multi-family homes from different eras.
- Narrow streets without sidewalks or street lighting, and large numbers of trees also contribute to the rural character of the neighborhood, but contribute to issues of traffic and pedestrian safety, snow management, and fire hazards.
- Despite some of these issues, residents value the character of the neighborhood, and do not wish to see it substantially change.
- Developing planning solutions that take account of the context of the district as a whole, as well as the different characteristics of Sierra Valley Sites I and II is important to local residents.

2. Housing

- Historically, land prices and housing costs in the neighborhood have been relatively low, making this one of the most affordable neighborhoods for Mammoth's year-round and seasonal working residents.
- The neighborhood is a potentially attractive location for workforce housing because of the lower land costs, but also because the area is centrally-located and convenient to transit, schools, services and employment.

- Mammoth Lakes Housing reports a continued waiting list of families hoping to find affordable rental units, with many of those families citing a preference to live in Sierra Valley.
- Despite the broader benefits of this affordable housing, some feel that there has been an over-concentration of higher density projects in the Sierra Valley, and that development concessions have created parking and snow management issues for neighboring properties.

3. Mobility

Issues of traffic safety, pedestrian mobility and transit are some of the most significant for Sierra Valley. Particular issues and concerns include:

- Cut through traffic and (real and perceived) speeding, particularly on Manzanita Street. A need has been expressed for traffic calming and management that:
 - Does not impede snow removal or emergency access.
 - Does not create unintended issues by diverting excessive amounts of traffic from one street to another.
 - Does not block access to commercial properties on Main Street.
 - Can be enforced and legally implemented per standard engineering and traffic safety standards.
 - Is appropriate to the local character and context.
 - Does not result in unnecessary tree removal or introduction of excessive lighting.
- Lack of mid-block pedestrian routes that lead to cutting across private property.
- A desire for better pedestrian connections from Sierra Valley to shopping areas, transit routes and other destinations.
- Consideration of more dispersed transit that doesn't concentrate bus traffic on just a few streets.
- Winter conditions worsen the situation for all road users, with icy roads, poor visibility for drivers exiting driveways, and narrowing of available pavement area due to snow storage.

4. Infrastructure

As an older neighborhood, the storm drainage system within Sierra Valley is not up to modern standards in many places. Key issues related to infrastructure include:

- Challenging conditions for maintenance of the current mixture of surface drainage channels and culverts is challenging.
- Inadequate storm drainage infrastructure has resulted in a number of significant flooding episodes over the years; some feel that upstream development has resulted in changes to drainage patterns and an increase in runoff that has exacerbated these problems.
- Additional study of the extent of these problems, causes, and solutions is needed to determine their extent, how they can best be addressed, and how improvements could be funded.
- New development upstream of Sierra Valley should not contribute to or worsen drainage conditions within the neighborhood.

5. Nuisance, Public Safety and Code Enforcement

Issues of public safety and quality of life are extremely important to the residents of Sierra Valley Sites. The area's relatively high population density, many older housing units, and unique physical conditions lead to a higher incidence of (and perception of) issues that negatively affect quality of life.

Particular issues identified include:

- Dumping of furniture and other large items, which Mammoth Disposal will currently not remove.
- Ensuring that new development provides for adequate parking and snow storage.
- Improving exterior property conditions and beautifying the neighborhood.
- Dealing with code compliance issues, particularly illegal lighting and trash spills that attract wildlife.
- Substandard living conditions of some rental properties.
- Concerns about "over-densifying" the neighborhood and the concentration of affordable housing units that leads to parking and other issues.

G. Opportunities and Constraints

Based on the above analysis of existing conditions and issues, a list of opportunities and constraints was created:

1. Neighborhood Character and Housing

Opportunity: As an established neighborhood, with a high proportion of local residents, opportunities exist to foster neighborhood pride, encourage investment in the community, and organize neighbors to improve the overall neighborhood and individual properties.

Constraint: Although representing many members of the local workforce, the Sierra Valley also has a large number of transient and seasonal renters, who tend to have a less significant stake in neighborhood improvements.

Opportunity: Sierra Valley is well-located, with lower rental and for-sale housing values, that make it an attractive location for the local workforce to live. The densities allowed in Sierra Valley are also conducive to housing types that tend to be more affordable, like rental apartments and smaller condominium units, whether or not they are specifically deed restricted.

Constraint: An over-concentration of affordable housing units and high density projects places strain on existing resources, and may cause issues for neighboring properties if those projects are not thoughtfully designed, livable, and able to meet all of the parking, snow storage and other project-generated needs on-site.

Opportunity: Existing trees lend character to the neighborhood and provide habitat, even in this densely developed residential neighborhood.

Constraint: The large number of trees in Sierra Valley constrains snow storage opportunities, and opportunities to provide pedestrian facilities. In some instances, if not properly managed, they can present wildfire hazard.

2. Mobility

Opportunity: Sierra Valley is in many ways conducive to pedestrian activity and improved pedestrian connectivity. It is relatively flat, well-shaded, and within convenient walking distance of transit stops, shopping, schools and other services. It sees significant pedestrian activity, suggesting there is a demand for improved pedestrian facilities.

Constraint: The narrow existing roadway width, large number of trees, snow conditions, and desire for residents to maintain the existing character of the neighborhood makes providing a highly structured pedestrian network (such as a new sidewalk network or Multi-Use Path) challenging.

Opportunity: Existing storm drain and utility easements may provide opportunities to create mid-block connectors that would avoid the need for residents to trespass on private property while trying to shortcut between blocks.

Constraint: Use of such easements for pedestrian access would require negotiation with utilities companies, and would need to be carefully considered to avoid creating conflicts with existing uses.

Opportunity: Speed surveys indicate that current speed limits are appropriate. However, there are opportunities to use innovative traffic calming and other strategies to improve pedestrian safety and have vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians “share the road.”

Constraint: Any traffic calming measures must work with winter snow removal, maintain emergency access, be cost effective, and not create other impacts to other streets or neighborhoods.

Opportunity: Enhanced snow management (such as blowing and trucking snow, typically paid for through an assessment district) has been shown to be effective in other neighborhoods which have constrained right of way and heavy pedestrian activity.

Constraint: Enhanced snow management is more costly, and would require property owners to agree to participate financially in a snow management district.

3. Infrastructure

Opportunity: The existing storm drainage system is outdated, providing an opportunity for upgrades to reduce flooding risks. Alternate strategies such as increased maintenance may improve the functioning of the existing system, without substantial physical improvements.

Constraints. Installing new storm drainage infrastructure will be costly, and will need to be balanced with other competing capital projects.

6. Nuisance, Public Safety and Code Enforcement

Opportunity: The Town's contract with the Wildlife Officer provides a unique opportunity to enhance education about human/wildlife issues, and to improve enforcement of regulations.

Constraint: The Town has suffered budget and staffing reductions that have affected the ability to provide proactive code enforcement in a variety of areas.

Opportunity: Existing relationships with Town and other agencies provide an opportunity for partnership and sharing of resources to address quality of life, crime, life-safety and code enforcement issues.

H. Alternatives

The approach to alternatives was somewhat different for the Sierra Valley NDP compared to previous district planning efforts, being considerably less detailed and extensive. This was because of the nature of the issues facing Sierra Valley, and, in many cases, because there were not a significant range of options or alternatives available.

In general, the discussion focused on a menu of strategies and solutions to address particular issues. The options ranged from items involving higher degree of physical change, to options that were more "low impact" focusing on management, improvement enforcement and other similar approaches. In general, it was the consensus of the participants that these lower impact strategies be deployed, and these form the basis of many of the recommendations in the NDP.

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**Sierra Valley Neighborhood District Plan (NDP) Framework
Preliminary Issue Identification**

Element or Topic	Issues	General Plan Summary Evaluation Item
Neighborhood and District Character (Sense of place)	1. How can the districts achieve the character descriptions in the General Plan (see Guiding Principles)? (Also see “Community Design” topic, below)	1. Neighborhood and District Character Element.
Economy (Contribution to a sustainable economy - DRCEDS)	2. Does the district need specific types of housing or other uses that are integral to achieving the character of the district, or better serve the community?	2. Neighborhood and District Character Element
Arts Culture, Heritage and Natural History (Arts and cultural resources)	3. How can the important natural resources of this area, particularly trees and drainage ways be protected, enhanced, and integrated into the broader character of the neighborhood? (Also see “Community Design” and “Resource Management and Conservation” topics, below)	3. Goal A.1., A.2., R.1., R.3.
Community Design (Transect characteristics, design, building height and “village in the trees”)	4. What are the Transect characteristics of the district? 5. How does the district fit within the forest as a “village in the trees?” 6. What special considerations are needed to recognize the diversity of housing types in the district including multifamily and single family residential developments? 7. How can successful transitions between this residential district and the neighboring uses in the broader Sphere of Influence be achieved? 8. How should new safety-oriented lighting that is compliant with Town’s Lighting Ordinance be provided within the district.	4. Appendix B. 5. Goal C.1 and C.2; Policy C.2.V and C.2.X. 6. Goal C.1, C.2 and C.3; Policy C.2.D, C.2.E, C.2.I, C.2.L and C.2.N. 7. Goal C.1, C.2, Policy C.2.D., C.2.I. 8. Goal C.5, Policy C.5.A, C.5.B, C.5.C
Land Use (Mix and types of uses [housing, commercial, retail,	9. What is the relationship of this district to adjoining portions of town and to the Sphere of Influence, including resort development, and residential and commercial	9. Neighborhood and District Character; Goal L.1, C.2, L.6.

<p>etc.], density, PAOT and PIEC)</p>	<p>neighborhoods?</p> <p>10. How are existing accepted NDPs, and other (existing and draft) Plans and Studies related to the Sierra Valley NDP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOMRDSS • Downtown Concept for Main Street • Shady Rest (in Downtown Concept for Main Street) • Draft Sierra Star NDP Study <p>11. How will the district provide for appropriate transitions and/or buffers, particularly between developed and open space areas?</p> <p>12. What is an appropriate density and mix of, types, and location(s) for housing (including affordable/workforce housing), within the district.</p> <p>13. How can workforce housing be better distributed throughout the Town, to avoid overconcentration of affordable units in Sierra Valley.</p>	<p>10. Neighborhood and District Character Element (see Guiding Principles)</p> <p>11. Neighborhood and District Character; Goal L.1, C.2, L.6.</p> <p>12. Goal L.1., L.2., L.3, L.5.</p> <p>13. Goal L.2., Policy L.2.A., L.2.C.</p>
<p>Mobility (Feet-first, park once, way-finding, trails, and pedestrian facilities).</p>	<p>14. How can the high volume of pedestrian traffic in this district be balanced with the need for vehicular circulation and access? What types of traffic calming and/or pedestrian safety improvements are appropriate within the district to deal with issues such as cut through traffic and speeding?</p> <p>15. How can snow be better managed to improve public safety?</p> <p>16. How will these NDPs be tied into the Mobility Study and Trails Master Plan, and to planned circulation improvements within the Sphere of Influence including Shady Rest, Main Street Sierra Star and Meridian districts? What are the street and trails plans for this district?</p> <p>17. How will this district be efficiently and effectively integrated and connected year-round with the town-wide system of trails and nodes?</p>	<p>14. Neighborhood and District Character; Goal M.1, M.3, M.4, M.5, M.6 and M.9.</p> <p>15. Goal M.9., Policy M.9A, M.9.B.</p> <p>16. Mobility Element, Appendix D, and Action P.5.C.</p> <p>17. Goal M.4.,P.3., P.4., P.5</p> <p>18. Goal M.1.</p> <p>19. Goal M.3, M.4 and M.5; Policy M.3.B, M.4.A, M.4.B, M.4.F, M.5.A and M.5.B.</p> <p>20. Policy M.4.A., M.4.B., M.4.C.,M.4.D, C.2.P. and</p>

	<p>18. What wayfinding improvements are needed?</p> <p>19. How does the district achieve “feet-first, transit second and cars last” mobility?</p> <p>20. How can pedestrian safety throughout the Sierra Valley district be improved?</p> <p>21. Is there enough transit capacity for this district, and are transit routes and stops appropriately located?</p> <p>22. How can adequate and convenient parking best be provided?</p>	<p>C.2.S.</p> <p>21. Goal M.5; Policy M.5.A, M.5.B and M.5.C.</p> <p>22. Goal M.5 and M.6; Policy M.6.A, M.6.B and C.2.H.</p>
<p>Parks, Open Space and Recreation (Recreational opportunities and facilities and open space – Parks and Recreation Master Plan).</p>	<p>23. What recreational and open space amenities are appropriate or needed within the district?</p> <p>24. How can connections to adjacent recreation resources with the Sphere of Influence be integrated into the district?</p>	<p>23. Goal P.1., P.4., R.3.</p> <p>24. Goal P.3, P.4, P.5</p>
<p>Resource Management and Conservation (Tree preservation, wetlands and riparian habitat, and sensitive natural resources)</p>	<p>25. What measures should be integrated into the NDP to ensure long term sustainability of environmental resources? (e.g. PIEC analysis)?</p> <p>26. What design practices and alternative energy opportunities will be or can be incorporated (passive solar, geothermal, etc)?</p> <p>(Also see “Arts, Culture and Natural History”; and “Community Character” topics, above)</p>	<p>25. Goal R.1, R.2 and R.4.,R.6.,R.7.,R.8., R.11.</p> <p>26. Goal R.6, R.7 and R.8; Policy R.8.E.</p>
<p>Public Health and Safety (Emergency access, safety, and public services).</p>	<p>27. What improvements are needed to infrastructure and utilities, particularly storm drainage, to maintain public health and safety and mitigate flooding risks?</p> <p>28. Does this district have special public resource needs such as emergency access and egress, fuel-tree reduction and/or limbing, or public services unique to achieving the character of the district, or existing characteristics that could be enhanced to better serve public safety and services needs?</p>	<p>27. Goal S.3., policy S.3.J, R.5.A.1., R.5.A.2.</p> <p>28. Goal S.3, S.4, and M.7; Policy M.7.F, S.3.L, S.3.N and S.4.A.</p>