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## 3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### 3.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Town of Mammoth Lakes, incorporated in August of 1984, is a mountain resort community located in southwestern Mono County (see Figure 3-1 on page 3-2). The Town is situated on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada mountains. The Town is approximately 300 miles north of Los Angeles, 170 miles south of Reno, Nevada and 35 air miles southeast of Yosemite Valley. Neighboring counties include: Alpine County to the north, ~~Fresno~~ Inyo County to the south, Fresno County to the southwest and Madera County to the ~~east~~ west.

The Town's municipal boundary encompasses approximately 24 square miles. All but approximately four square miles within the municipal boundary are public lands administered by the Inyo National Forest.<sup>4</sup> The Town also includes the Mammoth Yosemite Airport, located southwest of the community is a non-contiguous annexation pursuant to Section 56742 of the California Government Code. The approximately four square miles of developable land within the Town and the Mammoth Yosemite Airport are contained within the Town's adopted Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Other entities with land holdings outside the Municipal Boundary, but within the Town's Planning Area, include the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the City of Los Angeles (LA), Mono County, and the National Park Service (NPS). Figure 3-2 on page 3-3 shows the Planning Area, Municipal Boundary, and UGB.

Regional access to the Town is provided via U.S. Highway 395, a state scenic highway which lies approximately three miles west of town. U.S. 395 is the major surface transportation corridor in the Eastern Sierra region and primary inter-regional route connecting systems across four states. The Town is served primarily by State ~~Road~~ Route 203, which connects U.S. Highway 395 to the Town. State ~~Road~~ Route 203 traverses the developed part of town ending at Minaret Vista, west of the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA). Air access to the Town is also available through the Mammoth Yosemite airport.

### 3.2 EXISTING LAND USE CONDITIONS

Lands within the Municipal Boundary include the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) and the Lakes Basin, which are recreational and scenic resources that contribute to

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<sup>4</sup> *Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) operates their facilities as a permittee of the Inyo National Forest.*

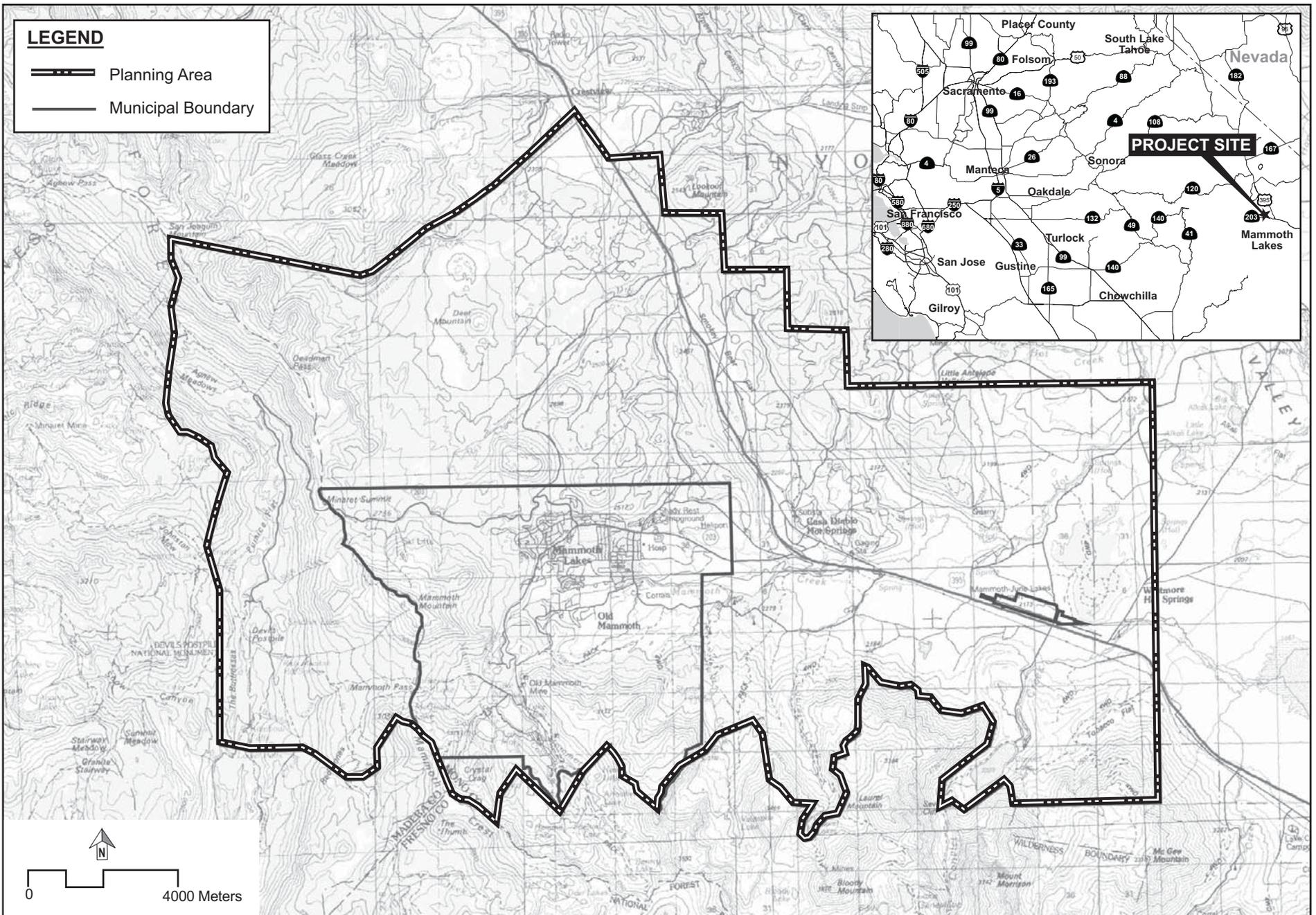
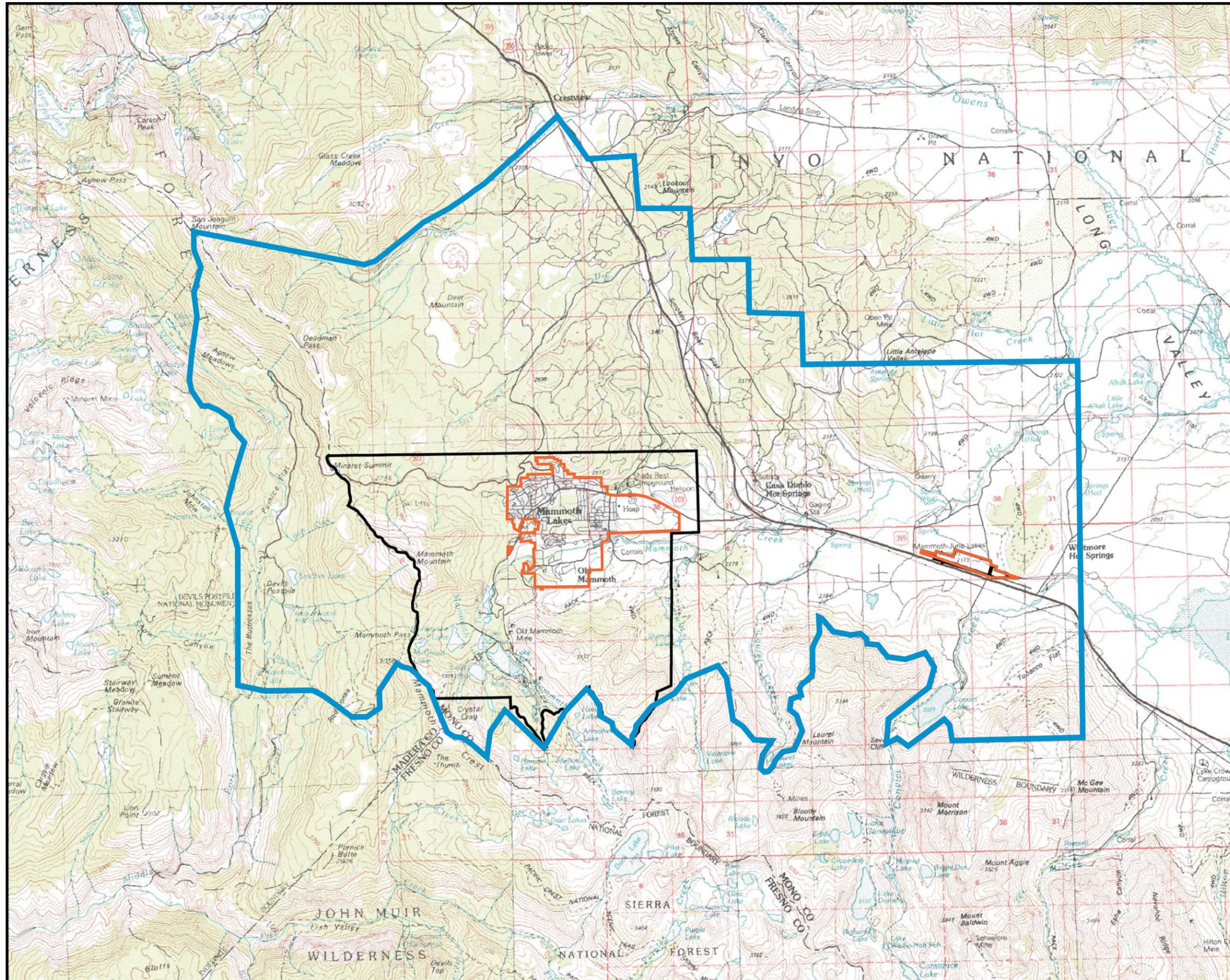


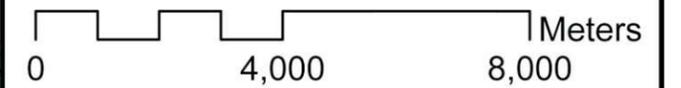
Figure 3-1 Regional and Project Vicinity Map



Town of Mammoth Lakes

Explanation

- Planning Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary



Base Map: Benton Range and  
Yosemite Valley 100k Quadrangles  
Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes  
Updated Plan, 2005

Figure 3-2 Map Showing Planning Area,  
Municipal Boundary and  
Urban Growth Boundary

making the Town a year-round resort community. The Town's current land use designations are shown on Figure 3-3 on page 3-5. The dramatic mountain scenery, rich natural resources, and diverse recreational opportunities attract residents and visitors to the area. Today, the Mammoth Lakes area is enjoyed by skiers, snowboarders, hikers, sightseers, fishermen and other outdoor enthusiasts.

MMSA, one of the nation's leading ski resorts, hosted 1.2 and 1.25 million skier visits during the 2002 and 2003 ski season, respectively. Skier visitors in 2004 and 2005 were 1.43 million and with additional uses including Tamarack X-Country Ski Center, Scenic Gondola Rides and Snowmobile Adventures, MMSA accounted for a total of 1.46 million guests. The Lakes Basin is heavily used for fishing, Nordic skiing, snowmobiling, camping, rock climbing, bicycling, and boating. Public and private recreational facilities such as gymnasiums, tennis courts, swimming pools, skate parks, and softball and soccer fields are located throughout the community. Most facilities are located within Shady Rest Park, which is located outside of the UGB but accessible to the residents of and visitors to Mammoth Lakes.

Visitors to Mammoth Lakes are provided with a selection of resort services and accommodations throughout the Town, including: North Village, Juniper Ridge, Lodestar and Snowcreek. North Village is the most developed full service resort area providing lodging, shopping, restaurants and other amenities that enable visitors to have direct access to Mammoth Mountain and enjoyable stays without the need for essential services beyond the resort. Juniper Ridge, Lodestar and Snowcreek are also intended to be full service resort areas providing diverse lodging opportunities and resort amenities and services. The Juniper Ridge area is largely developed. Snowcreek and Sierra Star are part way through their development programs.

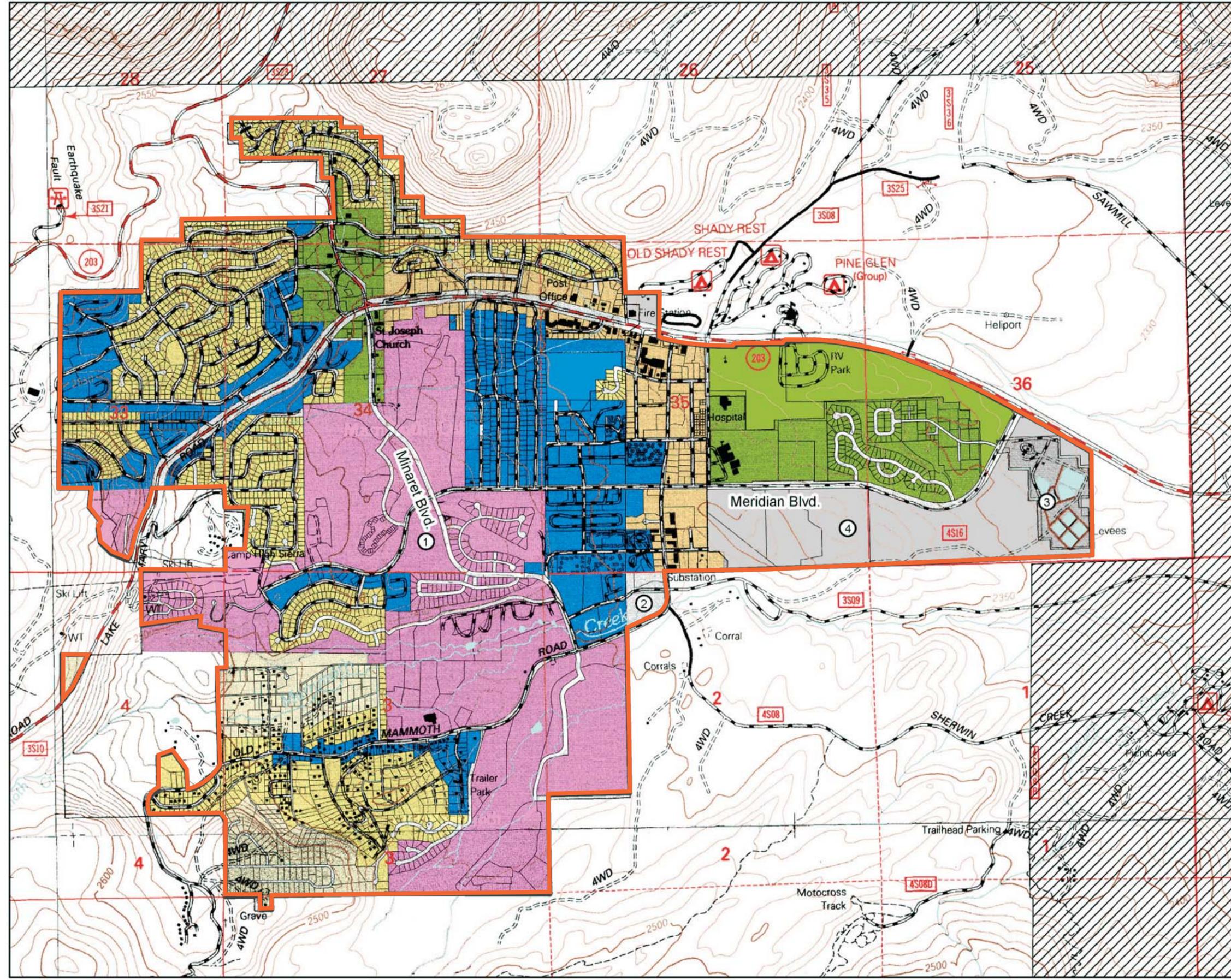
The Town's environment is the dominant feature in all public policy and development issues. While the environment provides the resources for a recreation and tourism based economy, the environment also places constraints on development due to weather, availability of private lands and the carrying capacity of the air, water and wildlife resources.

Today, Mammoth Lakes is the hub of recreational opportunities in the Eastern Sierra. Recreation is the Town's economic engine. Through the promotion of recreational activities, the Town has achieved greater economic stability.

### **3.3 BACKGROUND**

Upon incorporation in 1984, the Town prepared the Mammoth Lakes General Plan and its associated EIR. The timeframe for this plan was 20 years, with updates expected to occur approximately every five to ten years. The existing General Plan was adopted in 1987, and although some of the Town's General Plan Elements have been revised within the past ten years, the existing General Plan has never undergone a comprehensive update since it was adopted.

Town of Mammoth Lakes

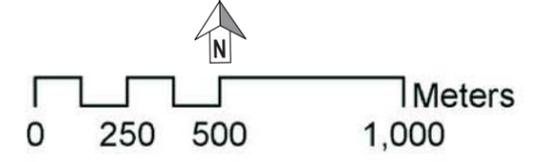


**Explanation**

- Commercial
- High Density Residential
- Institutional Public
- Low Density Residential
- Resort
- Rural Residential
- Specific Plan
- Urban Growth Boundary
- National Forest Lands
- National Forest Lands Outside the Municipal Boundary

**PARCELS**

1. Bell-Shape Parcel
2. Mammoth Creek Park
3. Water District
4. Foundation Parcel



Base Maps: Old Mammoth, Mammoth Mountain, Crystal Crag & Bloody Mountain  
 Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes

Figure 3-3 Existing Land Use Designations

### 3.4 PURPOSE OF THE 2005 UPDATED GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is the primary policy document for the Town and is the basis for all decisions regarding physical development within the Town. It expresses the community's vision for its future and guides both long-term and day-to-day Town actions and decisions. The process of preparing and adopting the 2005 General Plan provided decision-makers and citizens with the opportunity to debate on policies involving a variety of social, economic and environmental issues. The 2005 General Plan is the culmination of over three years of review and debate generated through the following forums:

- Four public workshops, with over 100 attendees per workshop;
- Public Input and Planning Commission Review at over 45 publicly noticed Planning Commission Meetings; and
- Public Input and General Plan Advisory Group Review at over 50 publicly noticed General Plan Advisory Group Meetings.

Overall, the update process included the review of the existing General Plan, reaffirmation and clarification of the community's Vision Statement and supporting guiding principles. The Vision Statement and supporting guiding principles became the basis for all General Plan goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures and land use designations changes.

### 3.5 2005 GENERAL PLAN VISION STATEMENT

As expressed in the General Plan's "Vision Statement," the community envisions Mammoth Lakes, today and in the future, as a community that is:

"Surrounded by uniquely spectacular scenery and diverse four-season recreation opportunities, the community of Mammoth Lakes is committed to providing the very highest quality of life for its residents and the highest quality of experience for its visitors."

It is the intent of the Town to maintain this identity and quality of life throughout the lifetime of this General Plan by maintaining adherence to the following Guiding Principles:

- I The Mammoth Lakes community places a high value on the sustainability and continuity of our unique relationship with the natural environment. As stewards, we support that relationship with visitors as one way of maintaining our high quality of life.

- II Mammoth Lakes is a great place to live and work because it is a strong, diverse yet cohesive, small-town community that supports families and individuals by providing a stable economy, high quality educational facilities and programs, and a broad range of community services including a participatory Town government.
- III Mammoth Lakes has adequate and appropriate housing that its residents and workers can afford.
- IV Mammoth Lakes is a year-round destination resort community based on diverse outdoor recreation and tourism.
- V Mammoth Lakes has limited its urbanized area to protect its environment and to support its small-town atmosphere.
- VI Mammoth Lakes has maintained high standards for development and design while allowing for a variety of styles that are complementary and appropriate to the Sierra Nevada alpine setting.
- VII Mammoth Lakes has a variety of transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to personal vehicle use with a strong pedestrian emphasis.

### **3.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE UPDATED GENERAL PLAN**

The Town of Mammoth Lakes 2005 General Plan has been organized into seven “chapters,” each of which examines and addresses several interrelated issues (see Table 3-1 on page 3-8). These chapters represent not only the seven state-mandated elements, but also the seven guiding principles of the Vision Statement. In accordance with California Government Code Section 65302, the General Plan must contain the following seven “elements”: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety.

Three of the adopted General Plan elements are not part of the current update. These elements include the optional Parks and Recreation Element, the Housing Element and the Noise Element.

Each chapter summarizes pertinent planning issues and contains a set of goals and objectives intended to address and resolve key issues. These chapters are further augmented with specific policies and implementation actions. State law mandates that each general plan element have equal stature, whereby no particular element is considered to supersede another element. The equal stature requirement assures the interdependency of the general plan elements.

**Table 3-1****Organization of the Updated Plan**

<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Elements</b>	<b>Vision Statement Guiding Principles</b>
Land Use	Land Use	Overarching Chapter
Environmental Sustainability	Conservation Element Land Use Element Open Space Element Noise Element <sup>a</sup>	I The Mammoth Lakes community places a high value on the sustainability and continuity of our unique relationship with the natural environment. As stewards, we support that relationship with visitors as one way of maintaining our high quality of life.
Community Health and Safety	Housing Element Conservation Element Open Space Element Safety Element Land Use Element	II Mammoth Lakes is a great place to live and work because it is a strong, diverse yet cohesive, small-town community that supports families and individuals by providing a stable economy, high quality educational facilities and programs, and a broad range of community services including a participatory Town government.
Housing	Housing Element <sup>b</sup> Land Use Element	III Mammoth Lakes has adequate and appropriate housing that its residents and workers can afford.
Destination Resort	Land Use Element Circulation Element	IV Mammoth Lakes is a year-round destination resort community based on diverse outdoor recreation and tourism.
Urban Growth Boundary	Land Use Element Open Space Element Parks and Recreation <sup>c</sup>	V Mammoth Lakes has limited its urbanized area to protect its environment and to support its small-town atmosphere.
Aesthetics	Land Use Element Housing Element Noise Element Safety Element	VI Mammoth Lakes has maintained high standards for development and design while allowing for a variety of styles that are complementary and appropriate to the Sierra Nevada alpine setting.
Transportation and Circulation	Circulation Element Housing Element Safety Element Land Use Element	VII Mammoth Lakes has a variety of transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to personal vehicle use with a strong pedestrian emphasis.

<sup>a</sup> Although additional noise policies have been added to the 2005 General Plan and additional noise analyses have been undertaken as part of this project, the 1997 Noise Element is not being updated at this time. The Town of Mammoth Lakes anticipates adoption of a revised Noise Element in 2006.

<sup>b</sup> Local Housing Elements are required to be updated every five years as prescribed through the State Housing Element Law. The current Town of Mammoth Lakes Housing Element covers the five year period from 2003 to 2008 and has been structured to include formatting consistent with the overall General Plan. However, the content is not being revised at this time. The Town of Mammoth Lakes anticipates adoption of an updated Housing Element during 2007.

<sup>c</sup> Although additional parks and recreation related policies have been added to the 2005 General Plan the 1990 Parks and Recreation Element is not being updated at this time. The Town of Mammoth Lakes anticipates adoption of a revised Parks and Recreation Element in 2006.

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005

The following description summarizes the goals of each General Plan Chapter. Implicit in these goals are objectives, policies and implementation programs which are discussed in detail in the individual environmental issue sections. Impacts of the specific policy implementation actions are discussed in Chapter 4.0 of this EIR.

### **3.7 LAND USE CHAPTER**

The Land Use Chapter has an important role in determining land use and development decisions. Consisting of both text and maps, this element defines the various land uses and designates their distribution, location and extent throughout the Town. It contains standards for residential density as well as building intensity. Residential density is expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre while commercial and industrial building intensity is expressed in square feet.

Land Use designations define residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, public, open space and resort lands. Land use designations were developed based on community desires and in response to the specific characteristics of the General Plan Area. These designations are shown on the Land Use Map (Figure 3-4 on page 3-10).

The proposed Updated Plan consists of a series of objectives, policies, and implementation measures, as well as land use designations that would allow for development with a balance between resort development, environmental sustainability and workforce housing. The following sections describe the land use designations and definitions that would be applied under the project.

#### **3.7.A Residential**

##### **Low Density Residential 1 (LDR-1)**

The LDR-1 category provides for single family detached residential development at a maximum density of two units per gross acre. This density range is typical of residential subdivisions in Old Mammoth. Development standards, including larger minimum lot sizes, increased setbacks, and decreased lot coverage provide for large residential sites, preserve vegetation, scenic values and privacy, respect the varied topography, and protect streams and riparian areas.

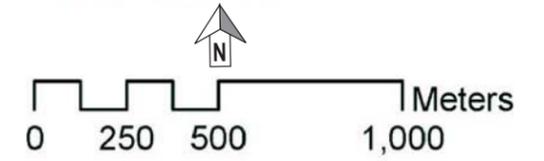
Town of Mammoth Lakes

**Explanation**

- Urban Growth Boundary
- Project**
- Commercial 1
- Commercial 2
- High Density Residential 1
- High Density Residential 2
- Industrial
- Institutional Public
- Low Density Residential 1
- Low Density Residential 2
- Open Space
- Resort
- Specific Plan
- National Forest Lands
- National Forest Lands Outside the Municipal Boundary
- Airport

**PARCELS**

1. Bell-Shape Parcel
2. Mammoth Creek Park
3. Water District
4. Foundation Parcel



Base Maps: Old Mammoth, Mammoth Mountain, Crystal Crag & Bloody Mountain  
 Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes Updated Plan, 2005

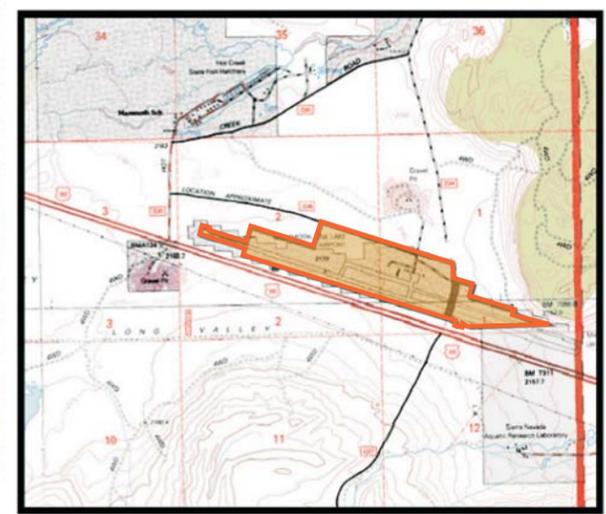
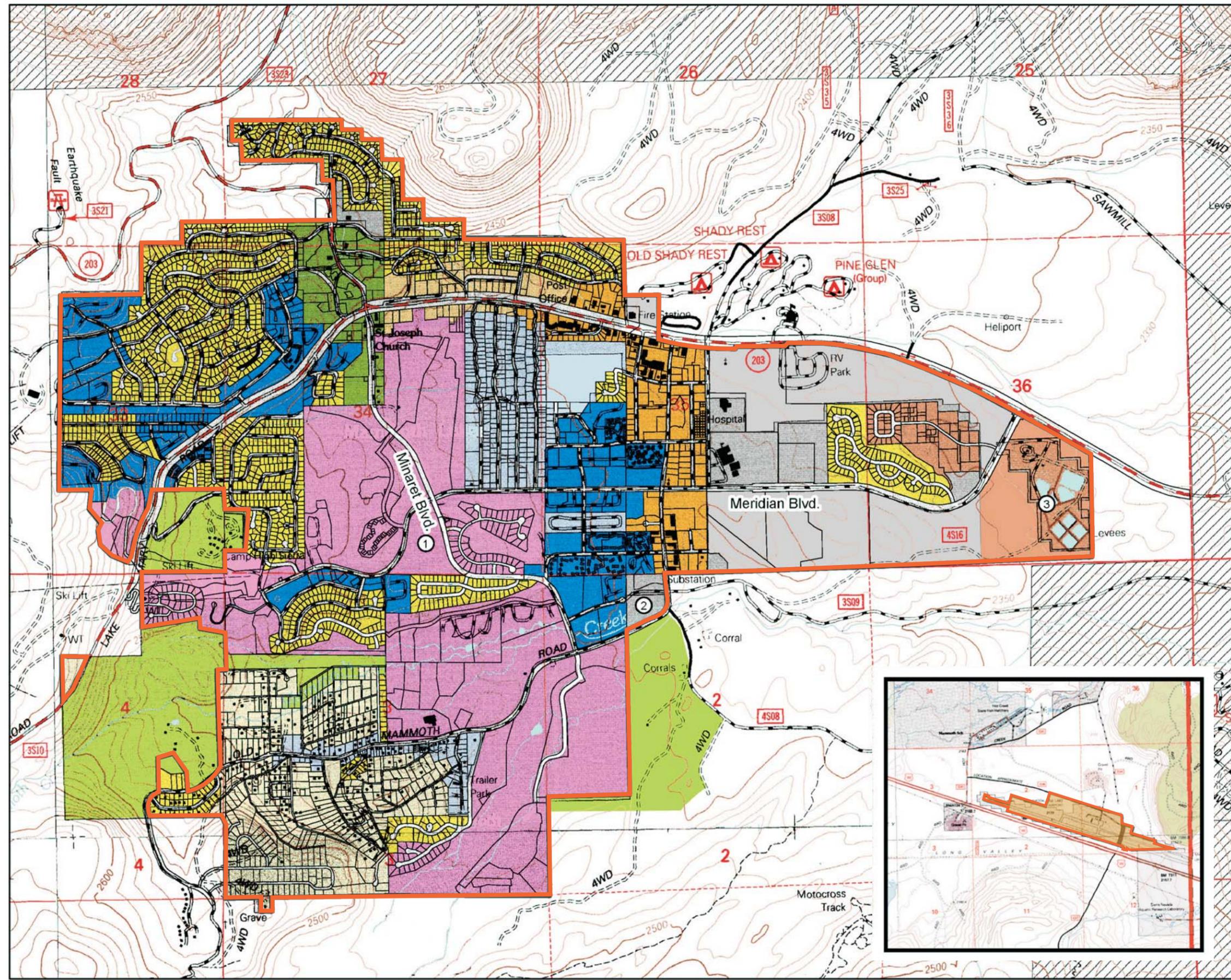


Figure 3-4 Proposed Land Use Designations

### **Low Density Residential 2 (LDR-2)**

The LDR-2 category applies to single-family residential development of four dwelling units per gross acre. This density is typical of residential subdivisions in Mammoth Slopes, Mammoth Knolls and Majestic Pines. Development standards that include setbacks, height, and lot coverage are designed to provide for building separation, useable yards, snow storage, retention of native trees and other vegetation, and limited shading of adjoining parcels by structures.

### **High Density Residential 1 (HDR-1)**

The HDR-1 designation is intended primarily to provide areas for development of multi-family housing at a maximum density of ten dwelling units per acre. These densities would accommodate townhouses, condominiums, and apartments. Density may be increased pursuant to state law or up to double for housing projects where all units are deed restricted for workforce housing pursuant to the provisions of the Housing Element in the General Plan. This designation includes standards that ensure compatibility with adjacent properties; provide adequate recreation space, snow storage, and building separation; and generally provide for well-designed livable developments. Setbacks and lot coverage also provide for preservation of existing trees. This designation applies to portions of Old Mammoth, the Sierra Valley Sites, and the Shady Rest Tract. The HDR-1 designation preserves areas of town for resident housing by prohibiting hotels, motels, timeshares, or other transient occupancies. The Shady Rest Tract is specifically designated for workforce housing.

### **High Density Residential 2 (HDR-2)**

The HDR-2 designation permits transient occupancy and is intended for multi-family style developments including townhouses, condominiums, and apartments. A maximum density of ten dwelling units per acre is permitted. These developments have standards that ensure compatibility with adjacent properties; provide adequate recreation space, snow storage, and building separation; and generally provide for well-designed resort visitor developments. Setbacks and lot coverage also provide for preservation of existing trees.

### **3.7.B Commercial**

#### **Commercial 1 (C-1)**

The C-1 designation<sup>5</sup> is intended primarily to provide small-scale development along Main Street and to provide areas for visitor lodging and commercial services for residents and visitors, as well as accessory affordable and small-scale workforce apartment development. Intensive large-scale development is not appropriate in this designation because of terrain and access issues. This designation is located along Main Street between North Village and Mono Street and is intended to create a transition zone between the intensive retail commercial at the eastern end of Main Street and the resort commercial of North Village. Density of 20 units per acre is permitted; this may be increased up to double for development that provides additional community benefits. Development standards and policies associated with maximum density shall be developed as an implementation measure of the General Plan. All commercial development is encouraged, if not required to provide workforce housing on site. Building setbacks and lot coverage provide for light, trees and landscaping, and snow storage. Where residential uses or mixed residential/commercial uses are developed, development standards shall be appropriate to the specific area.

#### **Commercial 2 (C-2)**

This designation is designed and intended to provide areas for commercial services and sales of goods. Development policies promote pedestrian use, reduce vehicular conflicts, and improve the visual appearance of street frontages. Ground-floor street frontage on arterial streets shall be limited to commercial uses to foster the development of a pedestrian-oriented commercial district along Old Mammoth Road and the eastern section of Main Street from Old Mammoth Road to Mono Street. Multi-unit housing is encouraged as an accessory use. Density of 20 units<sup>6</sup> per acre is permitted; this may be increased up to double for development which provides additional community benefits. Development standards and policies associated with maximum density shall be developed as an implementation measure of the General Plan. Development standards support a pedestrian-oriented retail experience while maintaining views and some native trees.

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<sup>5</sup> *Commercial Density was revised from the General Plan Draft circulated in April 2005, Council and Planning Commission direction to not revised densities of the Commercial Designations through the General Plan. Language has been revised to reflect existing density, with the only exception being that doubling of density is not solely linked to understructure parking but for additional community benefits.*

<sup>6</sup> *Studio and one-bedrooms equal to ½ dwelling unit of density.*

### **3.7.C Open Space (OS)**

The OS designation is applied to lands that have significant recreational or environmental values. The OS designation permits development of facilities that support the environmental and recreational objectives of the community. This designation may include environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and streams. It may include recreation facilities such as parks, athletic fields, ski areas, golf courses, and community gathering spaces. This designation includes the patented mining claims located on Sherwin Ridge, the proposed future second nine holes of the Snowcreek golf course, Camp High Sierra, and Town properties along Mammoth Creek.

### **3.7.D Institutional Public (IP)**

The IP designation allows for public facilities and institutional uses. This designation is applied to lands that are anticipated to be used for schools, hospitals, governmental offices and facilities, museums, and related uses. As these uses are among the largest employers within the Town, affordable housing, as defined by the Town, would be permitted on IP lands located south of Meridian Boulevard and east of Old Mammoth Road. For housing development within areas designated IP, the HDR-1 uses and development standards are applicable at a maximum density of up to four units per gross acre. Policies encouraging adequate pedestrian and transit facilities are included to promote alternatives to private vehicle access to places of employment, study, shopping, and recreation.

### **3.7.E Resort (R)**

The R designation is intended to provide mixed uses consistent with a mountain resort community. Visitor lodging, amenities, and services are the primary emphasis. Affordable workforce housing is allowed within the major resort developments. Amenities within resort developments include recreation, meeting spaces, and commercial services that support the resort atmosphere. This designation is generally applied to large parcels capable of providing a complete resort experience as found in Sierra Star, Snowcreek, and Juniper Ridge. New developments are physically connected internally and to all visitor oriented destinations with an integrated system of streets, sidewalks, and recreational paths. The density range for the R designation is a maximum of six units per acre for residential development other than visitor lodging, and up to a maximum of eight dwelling units per acre for visitor lodging. Residential density may be increased pursuant to state law. Most resort development projects are required to provide support commercial within their development area. Resort projects must also demonstrate consistency with the overall community goals and must demonstrate sufficient amenities to make the projects attractive in their own right. Lot coverage is limited to a maximum of 50 percent overall to provide space for outdoor recreation amenities.

### **3.7.F Industrial (I)**

The I designation is designed and intended to accommodate industrial uses needed to support a resort community. Uses allowed by right are generally those that are conducted entirely within an enclosed structure and may include light manufacturing, storage, and maintenance uses. Other permitted uses include heavy equipment storage and maintenance, batch plants, automobile repair and service, and similar uses. Policies require that industrial uses take measures to ensure screening, separation, and overall compatibility with adjacent properties.

### **3.7.G North Village Specific Plan**

The North Village Specific Plan (North Village SP) area provides for the highest intensity uses consistent with a mountain resort community and includes a mix of visitor oriented commercial and visitor lodging. North Village is intended to be the primary visitor attraction in the community due to its access via gondola to MMSA and its commercial village. Total residential and commercial development density in the North Village SP is calculated in terms of rooms. For the purpose of assessment development within this land use designation, commercial development is converted from residential density at a rate of 450 square feet of commercial per room. The maximum density under the North Village SP is 3,020 rooms and 135,000 square feet of commercial (equivalent to 300 rooms). Limited density transfers are permitted within the SP area. Density is not uniform, but rather is allocated by districts as specified in the North Village SP. Within the Plaza Resort district, commercial development is required to support the lodging development and to assure a successful village atmosphere. Residential development under the SP is limited to visitor lodging development and workforce housing to assure a successful village atmosphere. Affordable workforce housing is encouraged to be provided onsite. Total density within the North Village SP area may be increased pursuant to density bonus and density transfer policies or provision of a high level of community amenities and services. The maximum density with increases is 3,800 rooms and 220,000 square feet of commercial. All increased density must be in projects located within 500 yards of the gondola terminal.

### **3.7.H Airport (A)**

The A designation is applied to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Facilities and services associated with aviation including hangars, fueling, and fixed base operator services are permitted. Supporting uses including automobile rental, transient lodging, retail uses, and a RV park may be permitted. The Airport zone is designated for 250 visitor accommodation units and approximately 50,000 square feet of commercial development.

### **3.7.I National Forest (NF)**

The NF designation is applied to lands administered by the Inyo National Forest that are outside the adopted UGB. National Forest Land is not subject to the land use jurisdiction of the Town; however, building codes and other specific Town regulations apply on National Forest land within the Municipal Boundary.

### **3.7.J Population Density and Intensity**

California planning law requires that a General Plan include a statement of population intensity. Table 3-2 on page 3-16 shows the 2004 resident population estimates included 7,569 permanent residents. However, population intensity is more than just permanent residents and includes transient residents and visitors. Therefore, the General Plan uses the phrase “people at one time” (PAOT) to describe population intensity. The average peak population of 34,265 is the total number of PAOT, which represents the average winter Saturday. For the purposes of projecting PAOT, the Town applied a person/unit occupancy, based upon the 2000 census average of 2.4 people per household, for all units occupied by permanent residents and a person/unit occupancy of 4.0 was applied to all remaining visitor, second home, and seasonal resident units. This number was verified by the Town of Mammoth Lakes annual visitor survey and is similar to the unit occupancy factor of 4.1 which was used during the 1987 General Plan.

This number was verified through the following analysis (see Table 3-3 on page 3-16). The permanent population in 2003 was 7,460 as determined by the California Department of Finance. The skier number used was 18,476 (the highest day for the month was 21,630). An estimated 600 skiers from the 93546 zip code reduce this number (MMSA, Thom Heller oral communication). It was assumed that  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the visitors were not skiing (either non-skiers or just not skiing on that day). This is somewhat lower than our peer resorts and is comparable to the ratio that was used in the 1987 population projections. It was also estimated that the Town has approximately 2000 seasonal residents. The sum of these numbers is 33,294 PAOT, which differs from the projection by approximately 3 percent.

### **Future Population Projection Assumptions**

To facilitate the development of policies for the current General Plan update, a comprehensive review has been made of population and housing trends in Mammoth Lakes over the past 20 years, including issues that may impact population and housing in the years ahead. Estimates of future population are based on an analysis of the number of units that could be constructed by the project.

**Table 3-2****Existing Population (2004)**

<b>Units / Population</b>	<b>Permanent Resident</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>	<b>Second Home</b>	<b>Visitor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Units	3,115	566	1,942	4,166	9,871
Population	7,569	2,264	7,768	16,664	34,265 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Population assumes seasonal, visitor, lodging and second home equal four people per dwelling. Permanent resident equal 2.4 per dwelling. 38.5 percent of residential units are permanent, 7 percent are seasonal, 24 percent are second home, and 29.5 percent are visitor. This does not equal 100 percent due to vacancies.

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005

**Table 3-3****Verification Analysis of PAOT as of January 1, 2004**

Skiers on MMSA	18,476
Permanent population	7,460
Locals skiing	-600
Non-skiing visitors/second homeowners	5,958
Seasonal residents	<u>2,000</u>
Total	33,294

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005

Based on the 2005 General Plan, the Town of Mammoth Lakes forecasts the PAOT at build out could reach approximately 60,700 by 2024, an increase of approximately 26,400 from the current PAOT (see Table 3-4 on page 3-17). Figure 3-5 on page 3-18 shows the population density by area within the UGB. This forecast was based upon the land use designations, goals policies and objectives of the 2005 General Plan.

The Draft General Plan Update projects that the Town would be fully built out in twenty years. This projection is based upon the current level of construction activity and the number of units left to be developed. This projection assumes a higher rate of development than the community has seen over the past 20 years, but is justified on the basis of current building permit issuance (730 units in the last year) and the applications submitted for major development projects.

While factors outside the control of the Town, such as macro economic changes and changes in preferences in tourism, may result in a different rate of development, assuming a 20 year development horizon allows the Town to fully assess the interrelationships and impacts of full development and plan for the community's infrastructure and services.

Table 3-4

## Incremental Development for Buildout of the Updated General Plan

Land Use	January 2004 Existing Development Units (Sq. Feet)/Acre	Potential Units at Build-out Proposed General Plan Units(Sq. Feet)/Acre
Single Family Non-transient	2,087 units / 409 acres	2,380 units / 576 acres
Single Family Transient	0	97 units / 24 acres
Mobile Home	136 units / 15 acres	144 units / 16 acres
Multi-Unit Non-Transient	827 units / 60 acres	2,091 units / 119 acres
Multi-Unit Transient	6,821 units / 402 acres	11,998 units / 559 acres
Industrial	296,941 sq. ft. / 36 acres	493,547 sq. ft. / 64 acres
Commercial/Office Uses	1,262,618 sq. ft. / 58 acres	1,365,002sq. ft. / 84.5 acres
Total Units	9,871	16,710
Population (persons)	34,265 <sup>a</sup>	<del>60,727</del> <u>60,700</u>

*Notes:*

*Population assumptions: Seasonal, visitor, lodging & second home = 4 people per dwelling. Permanent resident = 2.4 per dwelling.*

*38.5% of residential units are permanent, 7% are seasonal, 24% are second home, 29.5% are visitor. Does not equal 100% due to vacancy*

*~~Based-Base~~ population calculated utilizing the same assumptions ~~as above~~, except 4 people per unit is assumed for student housing and % of workforce housing.*

*Includes bonus units for all development projects that provide ~~AH~~ affordable housing, state mandated density bonus units, doubling of density provision in existing code and student housing.*

*Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005*

**3.7.K ~~3.7.I~~ Key Land Use Policies**

Although the goals, policies, objectives and implementation measures of all the General Plan Chapters have land use implications these will be discussed under each related chapter. Key policies of the Land Use Chapter are the following:

- Density Transfers, may be permitted between the Resort, Specific Plan, and HDR-2 designations, subject to the development of a density transfer ordinance. Transfers may only occur if vehicle miles traveled is decreased, PAOT does not increase, and benefits are provided to the community by protecting environmentally sensitive sites, providing additional public services and amenities, or providing additional workforce housing.
- Open space in and adjacent to town is preserved and maintained for outdoor recreation opportunities.
- The development of commercial nodes that are interconnected, specialized and distinct in character is encouraged. These nodes include North Village, Snowcreek, Sierra Star, Main Street, Old Mammoth Road and Eagle Lodge.

# TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES UNIT DENSITY DISTRIBUTION

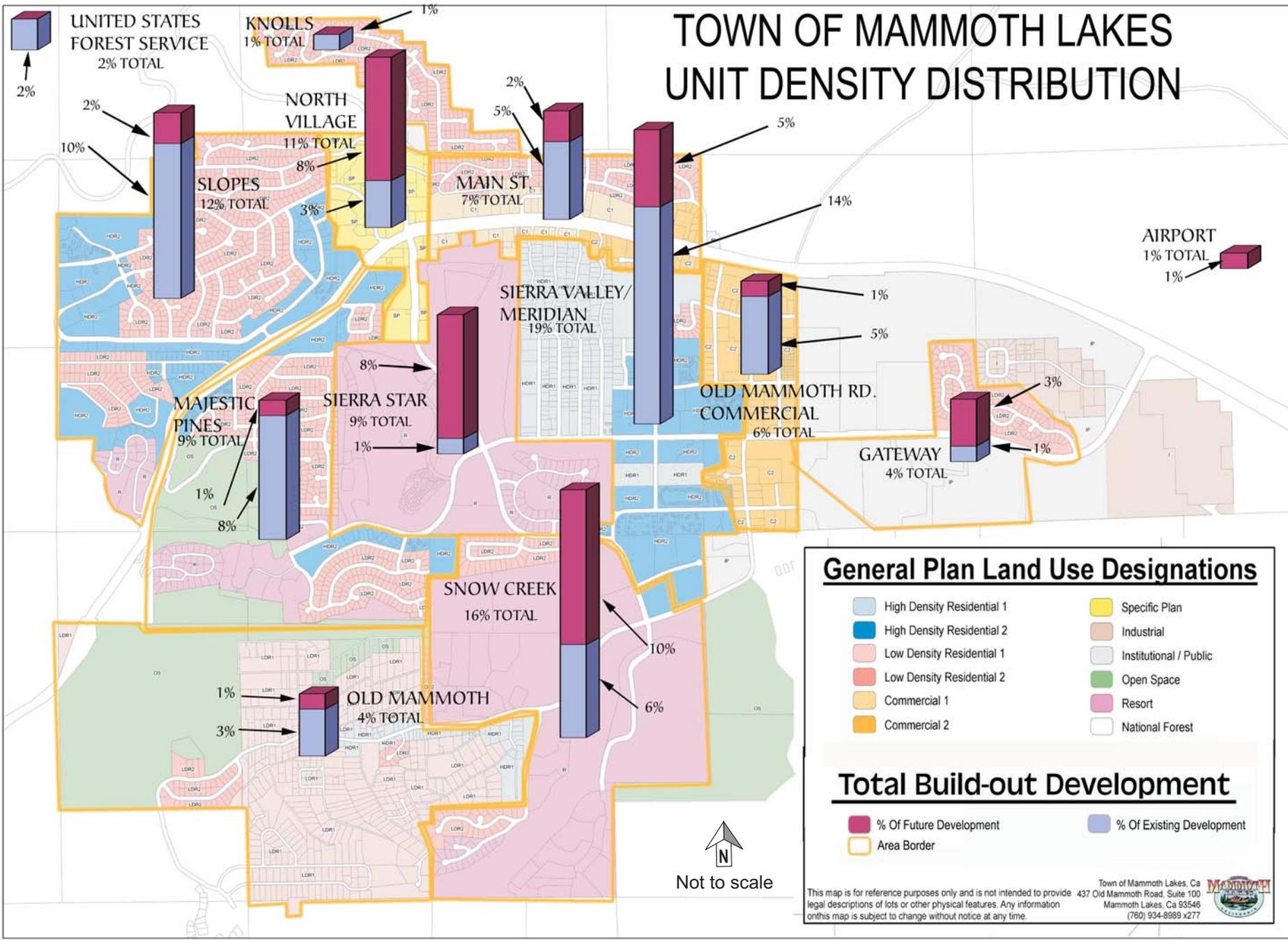


Figure 3-5 Population Density by Area within the UGB

### 3.8 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CHAPTER

The Environmental Sustainability Chapter addresses environmental issues with respect to community-wide resources, both natural and developed. This chapter integrates and updates the following elements from the 1987 General Plan: the Open Space and Conservation Element, the Noise Element and resource issues from the Land Use Element. Integration of these elements is intended to ensure internal consistency of the goals, objectives and policies and fulfill portions of the state Planning Act General Plan requirements (Government Code 65302 (a), 65302 (d), 65302(e), 65302(f)), 65563, 65564).

The Environmental Sustainability Chapter contains 12 individual General Plan Objectives, 24 specific policies and over 70 implementation measures designed to realize and support Guiding Principle I of the Vision Statement and supporting goals:

“The Mammoth Lakes community places a high value on the sustainability and continuity of our unique relationship with the natural environment. As stewards of the natural environment, we support that relationship with our visitors as one way of maintaining our high quality of life.”

- I.1 Wildlife and the environment are protected.
- I.2 The natural environment is evident throughout town.
- I.3 Public lands, trails, lakes, streams and backcountry are maintained and accessible.
- I.4 The quiet environs of Mammoth’s alpine setting are protected.
- I.5 There continue to be views from town to the surrounding mountains.
- I.6 The ability to view a starry night sky is protected.
- I.7 The quality of the air and water meet or exceed federal and state standards.

The goals, policies and implementation measures contained in this chapter are intended to ensure a balance between the built and natural environments within the Town. Maintaining a balance among the Town’s existing resources is important since failure to do so will result in the disruption of fragile ecological cycles, and the deterioration of the natural alpine character upon which the Town’s local economy is based. The livability and economic viability of Mammoth Lakes largely depends on the Town’s ability to plan for and encourage development that is compatible with the area’s natural resources.

### 3.9 COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY CHAPTER

The Community Health and Safety Chapter contains over 120 individual goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures intended to protect residents and visitors from natural hazards such as floods, snow, seismic, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), geologic and fires. Overall, this chapter covers safety as prescribed by Safety Element provisions of the Government Code, Section 65302 (g). The intent of this section is to describe the scope of these hazards as well as the actions that the Town can take to eliminate or reduce the probability of these hazards leading to a loss of life or property. In addition to the state mandated topics, this chapter also covers optional items that relate to the overall social, physical and economic health of the resident community. These items have been added as a result of the high level of interest gathered from public input during the General Plan update process.

The goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures presented in this chapter are a product of public input and technical analysis. They are designed to help realize the community's Vision and support Guiding Principle II of the Vision Statement and supporting goals:

“Mammoth Lakes is a great place to live and work because it is a strong and diverse yet cohesive small-town community that supports families and individuals by providing a stable economy, high-quality education programs, and a broad range of community services including a participatory government.”

- II.1 Residents can live, work, play, and raise a family.
- II.2 A responsive and accessible government encourages community participation in order to maintain and improve the quality of life.
- II.3 General public safety and related services and facilities are provided.
- II.4 Potential hazards to public safety within the Town of Mammoth Lakes are minimized.

### 3.10 HOUSING CHAPTER

Local Housing Elements are required to be updated every five years as prescribed through the State Housing Element Law. The current Town of Mammoth Lakes Housing Element covers the five year period from 2003 to 2008 and has been structured to include formatting consistent with the overall General Plan; however, the content is not being revised at this time and is not a part of the project. The goals, policies, and implementation measures of the Housing Element are integrated with the General Plan Update and are considered in this EIR. The Town of Mammoth Lakes anticipates the adoption of an updated Housing Element in 2008.

### **3.11 RESORT ECONOMY CHAPTER**

The Town of Mammoth Lakes is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to enhance the Town's resort economy. The strategy fosters a strong and sustainable economy, environment, and community so that the Town can achieve greater success as a destination resort community. The strategy includes achieving a wider range of visitor accommodations with an emphasis on facilities designed specifically for short-term stays; attracting commercial air service to the region; enhancing shopping, dining and nightlife opportunities; providing a variety of arts, cultural, and educational facilities and opportunities; enhancing recreation opportunities; enhancing a strong resident community; and protecting the natural environment. There are over 100 goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures in this chapter, which are a product of public input and designed to help realize the community's vision and support Guiding Principle IV of the Vision Statement and supporting goals:

“Mammoth Lakes is a year-round destination resort community based on diverse outdoor recreation and tourism.”

- IV.1 The economy is strong and stable year round.
- IV.2 There is a variety of facilities and programs that foster an understanding and appreciation of the natural environment.
- IV.3 A wide variety of outdoor and indoor recreation is readily accessible to residents and visitors.
- IV.4 Art and cultural facilities for residents and visitors offer diverse programming.
- IV.5 Open space in and adjacent to town is preserved and maintained for outdoor recreation activities.

### **3.12 URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY CHAPTER**

The Town of Mammoth Lakes adopted an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) policy in 1993. The policy maintains a clear delineation between the developed portions of the community and the surrounding National Forest lands, in order to prevent urban sprawl. The UGB policies provide that no intensive development may take place outside of the UGB and that development intensity and extent are to be the ultimate for the community. The policies specifically restrict the ultimate size and intensity of the community to those areas not designated for open space. The Town's UGB encompasses an area of approximately four (4) square miles including the airport and Pokonobe Lodge in the Lakes Basin.

A key element of the Vision Statement adopted for the General Plan Update states that “Mammoth Lakes has limited its urbanized area to protect its environment and to support its small-town atmosphere.” This Guiding Principle reflects the sentiment, expressed by the public and decision-makers alike, that the physical extent of the Town should be no greater than originally envisioned in the 1987 General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). While true, this is not part of the draft plan.

The supporting goal of this Guiding Principle of the Vision Statement is:

V.1: A compact form is maintained to protect our small-town atmosphere and natural and outdoor recreation resources.

### 3.13 AESTHETICS CHAPTER

Much of the past development of the Town occurred without an overall plan that linked individual developments to common community goals. As a result, parking lots are a prominent part of the streetscape, pedestrian routes do not adequately link adjoining uses, and many structures present unappealing architectural faces to adjoining properties and public spaces. One goal of the Town is to make improvements ensuring that new development will support and enhance the desired community character and improve the functioning and attractiveness of the Town. In order to achieve this goal, the 2005 General Plan includes an Aesthetics Chapter. The purpose of the Aesthetics Chapter is to promote quality design for buildings, structures, paths, districts, nodes, landmarks, natural features and significant landscaping. This chapter does not entail specific design guidelines; rather it provides sufficiently detailed policies that enable its use in the design review process, which determines whether or not a project meets the community’s expectations for design and development quality.

Over 65 goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures presented in this chapter acknowledge the connection between pleasant surroundings in the built environment and the natural beauty of the area. These goals, objectives and policies are a product of public input and are designed to help realize the Community’s Vision and support Guiding Principle VI and supporting goals:

“Mammoth Lakes has maintained high standards for development and design while allowing for a variety of styles that are complementary and appropriate to the Sierra Nevada alpine setting.”

VI.1 The built environment is well constructed, tastefully designed, and supports our community character.

VI.2 The built environment supports small resort-town resort character.

- VI.3 Old Mammoth Road and Main Street are active retail shopping districts and serve as a prominent entrance to town.
- VI.4 Development respects the natural and social resources and enhances the quality of life and experience for residents and visitors.

### 3.14 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION CHAPTER

An efficient and safe circulation system is a primary goal of the community, and is essential to the orderly development of the Town. California State law has, since 1955, required each jurisdiction to prepare a “Circulation Element” as a part of the General Plan. The *California Government Code*, Section 65302(b), states that a Circulation Element shall consist of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals and other local public facilities. These components of the circulation element are directly correlated with the land use element. All of the components required in a Circulation Element by State Law are covered in the Transportation and Circulation Chapter of the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan.

The Transportation and Circulation Chapter discusses not only the movement of people and goods, but also specific transportation facilities such as roads, parking lots, transit facilities and pedestrian paths. The goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures presented in this chapter are a product of public input and technical analysis. They are designed to help realize the community’s vision and support Guiding Principle VII of the Vision Statement and supporting goals:

“Mammoth Lakes has a variety of transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to personal vehicle use with a strong pedestrian emphasis.”

- VII.1 A comprehensive network of roads, parking locations, sidewalks and trails provides accessible, safe and convenient links year-round between recreation, commercial, and residential areas.
- VII.2 Public transit meets the needs of Mammoth's workforce, residents, and visitors and provides a viable alternative to private vehicles year round.
- VII.3 There is a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system providing convenient and safe transportation to the Eastern Sierra region and Mammoth’s visitor markets.

### 3.15 UPDATED PLAN COMPARED TO EXISTING GENERAL PLAN

As shown in Table 3-5 on page 3-25, the anticipated population at build out under the current General Plan is 61,375. The anticipated population at build out from the project is now estimated to be approximately the same as the current General Plan (60,700). (See Table 3-6 on page 3-26 for the projected population under the current General Plan.) Figure 3-4 shows the locations of the various land uses under the project. The proposed Updated Plan that is addressed in this Revised Draft PEIR would:

- Retain the low density residential land use for the Old Mammoth area at two units per gross acre;
- Reduce density in the High Density Residential 1 and 2 land use designation from twelve to ten units per acre;
- Permit a restricted amount of workforce housing development in the Institutional/Public land use designation;
- Increase area being limited to non-transient use, existing properties zone RMF-2 along Old Mammoth and Meridian Blvd, will be designated HDR-1 which will limit future development to resident use only;
- Retain the same area designated Commercial but provides two C designations rather than one. These generally mirror the existing Commercial Lodging and Commercial General zoning designations and the policy direction for the Main Street Commercial District contained in the current General Plan. Three lots on Old Public Rd. (the Frontage Rd. from Manzanita to Joaquin) are added to the C-2 designation from C-1;
- Maintain the existing density of the Commercial designations; expect that doubling of density is no longer contingent on just understructure parking but community defined benefits which is an implementation measure of the GP;
- Maintain the Resort designations with small changes in the boundaries to reflect open space adjacent to the Juniper Ridge Master Plan and along the Mammoth Creek corridor;
- Allow for 6 units per acre for non-visitor lodging development and 8 units per acre for visitor lodging development within the Resort designation. This adds a definition to the existing General Plan density range of 6 to 8 units per acre;
- In addition to the clustering of density within individual resort developments that is already encouraged in the R designation, density transfers from off-site to properties within 500 yards of a ski lift terminus are permitted in the draft plan;
- Establish a new Industrial Designation which was a component of the SP designation;
- Provide for an additional 20 acres of industrial land by the Water District on property currently designated IP;

Table 3-5

## Incremental Development for Buildout of the Proposed Project Compared with the Existing General Plan

Land Use	January 2004 Existing Development	1987 General Plan Build Out	Project Build Out	Incremental Change Between 1987 General Plan and Project
Single Family Non-transient	2,087 units/409 acres	2,400 units/576 acres	2,380 units/576 acres	-20 units/0 acres
Single Family Transient	0 unit/ 0 acres	97 units/24 acres	97 units/24 acres	0 units/0 acres
Mobile Home	136 units/15 acres	144 units/16 acres	144 units/16 acres	0 units/0 acres
Multi-Unit Non-Transient	827 units/60 acres	2,077 units/99 acres	2,091 units/119 acres	14 units/20 acres
Multi-Unit Transient	6,821 units/402 acres	12,678 units/559 acres	11,998 units/559 acres	-680 units/0 acres
Industrial	296,941 sq. ft./36 acres	339,314 sq. ft./44 acres	493,547 sq. ft./64 acres	154,233 sq. ft./20 acres
Commercial/Office Uses	1,262,618 sq. ft./58 acres	1,280,002 sq. ft./84.5 acres	1,365,002 sq. ft./84.5 acres	85,000 sq. ft./0 acres
Total Units	<u>9,871</u>	17,396 §§	<u>16,710</u>	
Population (persons)	34,265*	61,376**	<u>60,700</u>	

Notes:

Population assumptions: Seasonal, visitor, lodging & second home = 4 people per dwelling. Permanent resident = 2.4 per dwelling.

38.5% of residential units are permanent, 7% are seasonal, 24% are second home, 29.5% are visitor. Does not equal 100% due to vacancy

Base population calculated utilizing the same assumptions above, except 4 people per unit is assumed for student housing and workforce housing.

Includes bonus units for all development projects that provide affordable housing, state mandated density bonus units, doubling of density provision in existing code and student housing.

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005

- Provides new designations within the existing SP designation these designations would more accurately identify the existing uses within this designation, these mirror existing zoning;
- Establish a component of the existing SP designation as the North Village Specific Plan Designation, the permitted density under this is currently 3,020 rooms and 135,000 sq. feet of commercial. Under the Updated Plan the density is increased to 3,720 rooms and 185,000 sq. feet of commercial use, however this density is only available as density bonuses for projects which provide a high level of community amenities and services;
- Maintain the basic distribution of land uses;
- Maintain the Urban Growth Boundary;
- Not increase the Town population at build-out;
- Maintain the commitment to transit and pedestrian facilities;
- Utilize the Vision Statement as the basis for the General Plan;

Table 3-6

## Projected Population Under the Current General Plan

<b>Residential Units / Population</b>		<b>Permanent Resident</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>	<b>Second Home</b>	<b>Visitor</b>
Units	4,006	1,542	280	961	1,182
Population	13,396	3,702	1,122	3,846	4,727
Units (State Mandated Bonuses Residential)	660	254	46	158	195
Population	2,614	1,016	185	634	779
Units (State Mandated Bonuses Lodging)	675				675
Population	2,700				2,700
Units (Doubling of Density for AH)	333	333			
Population	800	800			
Units (Student Housing)	125		125		
Population	500		500		
<b>Multi-Unit Transient/ Population</b>		<b>Permanent Resident</b>	<b>Seasonal/ SH/Visitor</b>	<b>Second Home</b>	<b>Visitor</b>
Units	11,597	4,117	7,480		
Population	41,365	26,545	14,821		
Subtotal Population		32,062	16,627	4,479	8,206
Total Population	61,375				

Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005.

- Allow for density to be transferred between properties when it makes the community more efficient and successful;
- Establish height policies as part of the plan;
- Make tree and view preservation policies stronger;
- Aesthetic and design policies are more explicit;
- Provide more policies that support creation of amenities and services;
- Provide more policies that support retention and creation of workforce housing;
- Provide energy efficiency and other environmental policies that are stronger; ~~and~~
- Provide policies ~~which~~ that support resident oriented services ~~have been included~~ (child care, health care, education);
- Re-designate from OS to IP Mammoth Creek Park-; and
- Utilize only one Open Space Designation instead of three. Areas ~~designate~~ designated as Special Conservation Planning and Open Space/Stream Corridor would be designated OS under the Updated Plan. Additional policies and implementation measures have been included in the Updated Plan to ensure the intent of these existing designations are maintained.

Overall, the project would allow for a lesser number of dwelling units than build-out under the existing General Plan and the previously proposed project described in the original DEIR. The changes from the previously circulated version of the EIR and the impacts on overall population are summarized in the Table 3-7 on page 3-27.

**Table 3-7****Population Projections**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Population</b>
Existing Population (Est. as of 2003)	34,269
Existing General Plan	61,375
Version of General Plan that was the project and labeled as the “Project Alternative” in the Previously Circulated PEIR	71,200
Proposed Updated General Plan (the project)	Approx. 60,700

*Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, 2005.*

### 3.16 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Section 15124(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states that the Project Description shall contain “A statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project.”

The underlying purpose of the proposed Updated Plan is to update the existing 1987 General Plan, as it has been amended through the intervening years, and to provide a comprehensive and cohesive set of updated policies to guide land use and other community decisions in a manner that reflects community goals and values for the future of the community. The community goals and values are summarized in a “Vision Statement” and in a list of “Guiding Principles” that correlate to each provision of the Vision Statement. The Updated Plan’s “Vision Statement” responds to key areas of concern that were raised by the community during the General Plan update process. The key areas of concern, combined with the direction given in the Vision Statement, form the underlying objectives of the Updated Plan, and those objectives are summarized below:

- Sustain and protect the unique environmental setting of the Town while supporting the Town’s important economic relationship with visitors so as to maintain a high quality of life.
- Retain and enhance the Town’s strong, diverse and cohesive small-town community character by providing a stable economy, high quality educational facilities and programs, a broad range of community services, and a participatory Town government.
- Provide for adequate and appropriate housing that its residents and workers can afford.
- Enhance Mammoth Lakes as a year-round destination resort with diverse opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism.

- Retain a limited urbanized area so as to protect the surrounding environment and the Town's small-town atmosphere.
- Maintain high standards of development and design while allowing for a variety of styles that are complementary and appropriate to the Sierra Nevada alpine setting.
- Provide transportation options that emphasize connectivity, convenience, and alternatives to personal vehicle use with a strong pedestrian emphasis.

### **3.17 REQUIRED APPROVALS**

Approval of the 2005 Updated General Plan requires review by the Town. Discretionary approvals associated with the proposed Updated Plan may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Certification of Final EIR
- Adoption of Updated Plan
- Zoning Amendments to comply with the Updated Plan
- Code Amendments to comply with the Updated Plan
- Amendments to other documents as necessary (i.e., Master Facility Plan)