



2.0 Introduction and Purpose

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The proposed Mammoth Creek Park West New Community Multi-Use Facilities (project) is located within the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town), in the southwest portion of Mono County, on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The project site is located at Mammoth Creek Park West (686 Old Mammoth Road) and is comprised of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 040-140-001-000 and 040-140-002-000.

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The Town is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for the Mammoth Creek Park West New Community Multi-Use Facilities (project) (State Clearinghouse No. 2016062009). This EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.); *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementation of CEQA, as adopted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The principal *CEQA Guidelines* sections governing content of this document include Article 9 (*Contents of Environmental Impact Reports*) (Sections 15120 through 15132), and Section 15161 (*Project EIR*).

The purpose of this EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant effects of the proposed project. For more detailed information regarding the project, refer to [Section 3.0, *Project Description*](#).

This EIR addresses the environmental effects of the project, in accordance with Section 15161 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. As referenced in Section 15121(a) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the primary purposes of this EIR are to:

- Inform decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project;
- Identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects of the project; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to the project.

Mitigation measures are provided that may be adopted as conditions of approval to avoid or minimize the significance of impacts resulting from the project. In addition, this EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the proposed project.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes (which has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the project) and other public (i.e., responsible and trustee) agencies that may use this EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts are not always mitigatable to a level considered less than significant; in those cases, impacts are considered significant unavoidable impacts. In accordance with Section 15093(b) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e.,



significant unavoidable impacts), the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. This is termed, per Section 15093 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a “statement of overriding considerations.”

This document analyzes the environmental effects of the project to the degree of specificity appropriate to the current proposed actions, as required by Section 15146 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The analysis considers the activities associated with the project to determine the short-term and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This EIR discusses both the direct and indirect impacts of this project, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

2.2 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

PUBLIC REVIEW OF DRAFT EIR

In accordance with Sections 15087 and 15105 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this Draft EIR will be circulated for a 45-day public review period, beginning on December 29, 2016. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to comment in writing on the information contained in this document. Persons and agencies commenting are encouraged to provide information that they believe is missing from the Draft EIR and to identify where the information can be obtained. All comment letters received before the close of the public review period will be responded to in writing, and the comment letters, together with the responses to those comments, will be included in the Final EIR.

Comment letters should be sent to:

Town of Mammoth Lakes Community and Economic Development Department
P.O. Box 1609
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Attn: Ms. Sandra Moberly, Community and Economic Development Manager
smoberly@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

FINAL EIR

The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR, revisions to the Draft EIR (if any), and responses to all written comments addressing concerns raised in the comments of responsible agencies, the public, and any other reviewing parties. After the Final EIR is completed, and at least ten days prior to the certification hearing, a copy of the response to comments made by public agencies on the Draft EIR will be provided to the commenting agencies.

2.3 NOTICE OF PREPARATION/ EARLY CONSULTATION (SCOPING)

In compliance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the Town of Mammoth Lakes has provided opportunities for various agencies and the public to participate in the environmental review process. During

preparation of the Draft EIR, efforts were made to contact various Federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments on the scope of the review in this document. This included the distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to various responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties. In addition, a public scoping meeting was held on June 8, 2016 in the Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Council Chambers located at 437 Old Mammoth Road.

Pursuant to Section 15082 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, the Town of Mammoth Lakes circulated an NOP directly to public agencies (including the State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research), special districts, and members of the public who had requested such notice. The NOP was distributed on June 2, 2016, with the 30-day public review period concluding on July 1, 2016. The purpose of the NOP was to formally announce the preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed project, and that, as the Lead Agency, the Town was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. The NOP provided preliminary information regarding the anticipated range of impacts to be analyzed within the EIR. The NOP and NOP comments are provided as Appendix 11.1, *Initial Study/Notice of Preparation and Comment Letters*. The NOP comments included the following:

- Impacts to Native American and tribal cultural resources (refer to Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*);
- Impacts to archaeological resources (refer to Section 5.4, *Cultural Resources*);
- Impacts related to public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities (refer to Section 5.5, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Traffic safety and potential traffic hazards (refer to Section 5.5, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Impacts related to groundwater (refer to Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*);
- Aesthetic impacts and alterations to existing visual character in the project area (refer to Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*);
- A range of reasonable alternatives to the project and to the location of the project (refer to Section 7.0, *Alternative to the Proposed Project*);
- Impacts to biological resources (refer to Section 5.3, *Biological Resources*);
- Impacts related to air quality (refer to Section 5.6, *Air Quality*); and
- Light and glare impacts in the project area (refer to Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*).

A comment letter was also sent to the Town Council on October 21, 2015 on behalf of the La Vista Blanc Homeowners' Association, Mammoth Creek Crossing Homeowners' Association, Sunrise Homeowners' Association, and the Chateau Blanc Homeowners' Association. This letter was sent prior to the NOP being released for public review, and was directed to the Town Council's October 21, 2015 hearing where the Town was considering an authorization to proceed with conceptual

design and environmental review for the proposed project. Beyond the comments raised during the NOP period, additional concerns that were raised by the Homeowners' Associations included the following:

- Noise created by the proposed project in the vicinity of the site (refer to Section 5.8, *Noise*);
- Consistency with local planning documentation, goals, and policies (refer to Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*);
- Police and fire protection services and impacts to public safety (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Water quality impacts by the proposed project (refer to Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*);
- Impacts related to storm water collection and treatment (refer to Section 5.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*);
- Impacts related to soil erosion (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*); and
- Impacts related to hazardous materials in the project area (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).

2.4 FORMAT OF THE EIR

The Draft EIR is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1.0, *Executive Summary*, provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- Section 2.0, *Introduction and Purpose*, provides CEQA compliance information.
- Section 3.0, *Project Description*, provides a detailed project description indicating project location, background, and history; project characteristics, phasing, and objectives; as well as associated discretionary actions required.
- Section 4.0, *Basis of Cumulative Analysis*, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative analysis.
- Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, potential project impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and possible unavoidable adverse impacts for a number of environmental topic areas.
- Section 6.0, *Other CEQA Considerations*, discusses the long-term implications of the proposed action. Irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action, should it be implemented, are considered. The project's growth-inducing impacts, including the potential for population growth, and energy conservation impacts are also discussed.

- Section 7.0, *Alternatives to the Proposed Action*, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or to the location of the project that could avoid or substantially lessen the significant impact of the project and still feasibly attain the basic project objectives.
- Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*, provides an explanation of potential impacts that have been determined not to be significant.
- Section 9.0, *Organizations and Persons Consulted*, identifies all Federal, State, and local agencies, other organizations, and individuals consulted.
- Section 10.0, *Bibliography*, identifies reference sources for the EIR.
- Section 11.0, *Appendices*, contains technical documentation for the project.

2.5 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Certain projects or actions undertaken by a Lead Agency require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from other public agencies in order to be implemented. Such other agencies are referred to as Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies. Pursuant to Sections 15381 and 15386 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies are respectively defined as follows:

“Responsible Agency” means a public agency, which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which [a] Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term “responsible agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over the project. (Section 15381)

“Trustee Agency” means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include; The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, The State Lands Commission; The State Department of Parks and Recreation and The University of California with regard to sites within the Natural Land and Water Reserves System. (Section 15386)

Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other entities that may use this EIR in their decision-making process or for informational purposes include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Mammoth Community Water District;
- Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District;
- Native American Heritage Commission;
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan);
- State Water Resources Control Board;
- Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District;
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

2.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with Section 15150 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, which encourages incorporation by reference as a means of reducing redundancy and the length of environmental reports. The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR. Information contained within these documents has been utilized for each section of this EIR. These documents are available for review at the Town of Mammoth Lakes Community and Economic Development Department, located at 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite R, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 and on the Town's website: <http://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov>.

- *Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan 2007*. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Council adopted the *Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan 2007* (General Plan) on August 15, 2007. The General Plan establishes standards, guidelines, and priorities that define the community now and for the future. The General Plan is organized by elements. Each element is introduced with an explanation of the intent of the goals, policies, and actions within that element. The General Plan contains the following elements:
 - Economy;
 - Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Natural History;
 - Community Design;
 - Neighborhood and District Character;
 - Land Use;
 - Mobility;
 - Parks, Open Space and Recreation;
 - Resource Management and Conservation; and
 - Public Health and Safety.

It is noted that the Housing and Noise Elements were not updated as part of the General Plan. However, an updated Housing Element was adopted in 2010, and the 2014-2019 Housing Element Update was adopted in June 2014 and revised in May 2015. Additionally, the Town Council amended the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Element in 2012 with the addition of new policies and one additional goal and revoked the 1990 Parks and Recreation Element.

- *Final Program Environmental Impact Report for the Town of Mammoth Lakes 2005 General Plan Update (May 2007)*. The Final Program Environmental Impact Report (General Plan PEIR) analyzed the environmental impacts associated with the update of the Town's General Plan. This update provided the Town's long-range comprehensive direction to guide future development and identified the community's environmental, social, and economic goals. The General Plan PEIR document was prepared as a Program EIR, which is intended to facilitate consideration of broad policy directions, program-level alternatives, and mitigation measures consistent with the level of detail available for the plan. The General Plan PEIR concluded significant and unavoidable impacts regarding aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, public safety and hazards, noise, public services and utilities, and recreation.



- *Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code (Municipal Code).* The *Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code* (Municipal Code) consists of all the regulatory and penal ordinances and administrative ordinances of the Town of Mammoth Lakes. It is the method the Town uses to implement control of land uses, in accordance with General Plan goals and policies. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Zoning Ordinance, Title 17, of the Municipal Code identifies land uses permitted and prohibited according to the zoning category of particular parcels. The Buildings and Construction Ordinance, Title 15, specifies rules and regulations for construction, alteration, and building for uses of human habitation.
- *Final Mammoth Creek Park Facilities Project Environmental Impact Report (Mammoth Creek Park Facilities Project EIR).* The *Final Mammoth Creek Park Facilities Project Environmental Impact Report* (1999 Project EIR), dated February 1999, addressed the environmental impacts associated with a similar community park project located at the same site as the proposed project. This project proposed year-round recreational facilities included a dual-use ice/in-line skating outdoor (concrete) area, a 10,000 square foot Community Center, and several other recreational amenities (volleyball court, horseshoe area, expansion of the existing children's play area, dual-use basketball court and overflow parking area, expansion of existing on-site restrooms, fire pit area, climbing wall, and picnic area) to provide a recreational and public gathering place for both residents of and visitors to the Town. The 1999 Project EIR determined that soils/topography, geology/seismic, water quality, water supply, biological resources, air quality, housing, population, public services/utilities, health/safety/nuisance, cultural resources, energy and scarce resources and recreation impacts were found to be less than significant. Where potentially significant environmental impacts with land use compatibility, aesthetics/light and glare, traffic, circulation, and parking, and noise were identified, feasible mitigation measures were recommended that would avoid or lessen adverse environmental effects of the project. The 1999 Project EIR concluded that there were no significant and unavoidable impacts that would occur with implementation of this project. Although the Town prepared the 1999 Project EIR, it was not certified and therefore, cannot be tiered from for the purposes of CEQA and the proposed project.
- *Town of Mammoth Lakes Parks and Recreation Master Plan.* The Town of Mammoth Lakes Council adopted the *Town of Mammoth Lakes Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (Parks and Recreation Master Plan) on February 1, 2012 to assess the Town's recreation needs for the future and establishes goals and policies that would guide park improvements. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains an analysis of the supply, demand, and needs for park and recreation facilities and services within the Town, and includes a comprehensive assessment of public and private facilities available in and around Mammoth Lakes. It also recommends implementation strategies to help meet the challenges of providing parks and recreation facilities and a vision for developing parks and recreation within Mammoth Lakes for the next 17 years.



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