

## TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Agreement for Eastern Sierra Transit Authority to provide Maintenance Worker Services to the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Meeting Date: September 7, 2022

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Eastern Sierra Transit Authority to provide Maintenance Worker Services.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) and Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) have both struggled in recent years to hire qualified employees for seasonal work. Challenges related to housing and the general cost of living in the Eastern Sierra makes the unsecure nature of seasonal work less appealing. ESTA's transit operations are seasonal in nature requiring ESTA to hire staffing twice a year. Union and retirement complications make retaining staff difficult as the number of hours available to part-time workers are restricted. These restrictions have proven more and more challenging as the labor pool for qualified drivers is not large and ESTA cannot retain part-time drivers for more than one season. Conversely, ESTA and the TOML have had success in hiring full-time staff members. ESTA and Town Staff met to identify opportunities to hire more full-time ESTA drivers. In an effort to reduce both our dependence on seasonal workers, staff developed a Job-Sharing Program which offers ESTA managed full-time, year-around, employment to local residents. By combining mutual needs to provide both transportation and maintenance in the Town, the program intends to stabilize employment for both partners. The core of the program centers around newly hired full-time ESTA drivers providing contracted maintenance services to the Town during seasonal gaps. These staff members would be hired with the knowledge and understanding that they would be fulfilling TOML maintenance worker duties twice a year. The program would allow ESTA to hire more full-time employees as they would be able to commit to funding the positions. TOML envisions using these staff members in the spring to assist in the opening of various parks and with the monumental task of striping and painting all of the Town roads, crosswalks, and intersections. In the fall these workers would help transition to winter and perform deferred maintenance on TOML owned facilities.

The contract is proposed in one-year increments providing time to evaluate needs and costs. The employees of the program would remain ESTA employees during Town service, and ESTA would invoice the Town for hours worked. The services provided are consistent with the Parks Maintenance Worker and the Public Works Maintenance Worker. Both of these job descriptions were incorporated into the contract. The Town and ESTA will work

together to determine the timing of the contracted labor to ensure there are no impacts to transit service. The contract outlines the management structure in which TOML will direct and manage the contract laborers while performing Town duties. In general, the contract provides both agencies the flexibility that will mutually benefit each other's needs.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The program would require using existing contractual services, seasonal worker, and overtime budgets depending on the department worked. Additional funding may be required if the program is successful. It is projected that ESTA will contract services to the Town for \$34.80/hour. A 16-week program would cost about \$22,000 per worker. Up to four workers is envisioned costing up to \$88,000-\$95,000 depending on the season and the hours worked.