

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Town Council Strategic Planning Series – Core Services.

Meeting Date: November 20, 2024

Prepared by: Rob Patterson, Town Manager
Pam Kobylarz, Assistant to the Town Manager
Stuart Brown, Parks and Recreation Director | PIO

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive presentation of Town Core Services from staff and provide consensus comments or direction regarding the 2025 Strategic Planning Series.

BACKGROUND:

On November 6, 2024, the Town Council began the Strategic Planning Series with the goal of adopting a one-page statement defining the Council’s Strategic Priorities and Key Objectives for 2025.

The order and outline of the planned Strategic Planning Series are as follows:

- ~~November 6, 2024 – Overview of Strategic Planning Series and review of public comments received from the Town’s 40th Anniversary Visioning Exercise~~
- November 20, 2024 - Town Core Services Update
- December 4, 2024 - Review 2023 Town Council Strategic Priorities and Key Objectives
- December 18, 2024 - Presentation and review of large policy items
- January 22, 2025 - Strategic Planning Workshop to discuss and determine 2025 strategic priorities.

The first session of the Strategic Planning Series was the review of public comments received at the Town’s 40th Anniversary as part of the Town’s visioning exercise on November 6 where the Council provided comments and recommendations to staff. The second session is a presentation and review of the Town’s Core Services.

The Town’s Core Services are categorized as ‘mandated,’ ‘essential’ or ‘important’ and are identified in this report and detailed in Attachment A.

Many of the Town Core Services are mandated, meaning they are required of the Town by State and/or local laws and policies. Some examples of mandated items include preparation and approval of an annual budget, enforcement and maintenance of the Town’s Municipal Code, and processing of payroll. The other services have been identified as either ‘essential’ or ‘important.’

Essential services are not legally required but are critical to the operation of the Town and have value to the community and are important to residents by enhancing quality of life. These include providing year-round recreation programs for all ages and abilities; operating the Community Recreation Center (CRC), Whitmore Pool, new Pickleball Complex, maintaining the Town's multi-use paths; parks; sidewalks and other facilities, and repairing minor street issues including annual restriping.

Important services are additional services provided by Town staff that work to support the type of inclusive and supportive community that we want to provide for our residents and visitors. Important services are things such as winter snow patrol, community events (Halloween, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Easter Egg Hunt) and providing assistance (such as providing sandbags) to the public during severe winter storms.

In this report, Staff have prepared detailed information on the scope and breadth of the existing Core Services. Understanding the commitment of current resources to meet the ongoing operational efforts of the Town is important as the Council looks to define near-term priorities. Balancing the need to provide Core Services and the desire to invest time and additional limited resources in other projects, programs and services is an ongoing challenge for the Council and Staff.

ANALYSIS:

Town Operational Structure:

The Town organization consists of the following departments: Administration, Finance, Community and Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Office of Outdoor Recreation, Public Works/Parks Maintenance, Airport, and Police. Each department is responsible for numerous functions that work to achieve the Town's Core Service categories. All of the Town's functions fall within one of three categories: administrative/internal operations, regulatory compliance, and services and facilities.

A. **Administrative and internal operations** are those functions and services that are required for the Town to function as an efficient and effective organization. These include:

- Employee Support
- Budget and Fiscal Responsibility
- Operational Management
- Town Council Support and Records Management

B. **Regulatory compliance** ensures that the Town is both complying with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations, as well as enforcing its own laws, Municipal Code, and policies. These functions include:

- Municipal Code and Policy Implementation
- Planning and Development

- Regulatory Compliance
- C. **Services and facilities** consist of the public services and facilities that the Town provides and maintains for our residents and visitors. These include:
- Airport
 - Community Services
 - Facilities and Infrastructure
 - Public Safety

Town staff have historically been successful at accomplishing these Core Services and functions, along with numerous additional projects, with existing resources. Although staff is generally able to adjust its workload to accommodate unanticipated or opportunistic work program assignments, this can be challenging and can result in a number of Core Service areas not receiving adequate attention. Some examples of areas that have not had sufficient attention at times are oversight of franchise agreements and the NGO contracts, mandate compliance, deferred maintenance, USFS permit management, inter-governmental relations, community building, police services, and staff leadership development.

Staff are capable of accomplishing tasks as directed by Town Council, provided adequate resources are allocated. All functions require resources, which are finite and limited. As Council reviews the Core Services and works to determine additional priorities, the resources available to work on these items also need to be considered. Resources come in many forms, and a combination of resources is generally required to conduct Town business. Resources can include talented staff, monetary support, time, NGOs, consultants, grants, technology, and equipment.

The Town currently provides a wide range of Core Services and functions. These are listed in detail in Attachment A and a brief discussion of each Core Service category is provided below. These functional areas are defined as necessary to meet the existing operations of the Town thereby being our “Core Services.”

Airport: The Town owns and operates Mammoth Yosemite Airport, which accommodates seasonal scheduled charter air service, as well as general aviation. There are many ongoing work items related to the airport, including safety and grant administration and compliance with FAA guidelines. The Town is also responsible for performing ongoing maintenance duties and maintaining appropriate documentation to maintain Part 139 Certification, which allows the airport to have commercial air service.

Budget and Fiscal Responsibility: To ensure the appropriate use of public funds and government transparency, responsible fiscal and budget oversight is imperative. The Town is responsible for the preparation and administration of an annual budget, which requires participation from every Town department. Prudent financial management practices are developed and implemented, such as setting reserve levels, annual audits, managing ongoing cost increases, leveraging grant funding, and being able to respond to unforeseen needs or emergencies. There are also standard administrative duties, such as accounts

payable, accounts receivable, and daily cash balancing. The Town performs specialized financial duties, including tax collection, issuance of business tax certificates, and enforcement of transient rentals and transient occupancy tax collection.

Community Services: The Town provides a wide array of community services that contribute to making Mammoth Lakes a great place to live, work and play. It is well documented that having access to quality parks and recreation services improves physical and mental health, reduces crime and violence, increases access to healthy foods, builds community and boosts economic activity. The fundamental purpose of the Parks and Recreation Department is to deliver on these community values and provide multi-purpose, year-round, indoor, and outdoor recreation opportunities accessible to all residents and visitors.

The Office of Outdoor Recreation (OOR) is tasked with providing accessible, sustainable, and high-quality recreational opportunities for community members and visitors alike with a specific focus on the interface of Town and adjacent public lands. The OOR leverages voter approved Measure R and U funding to maintain and enhance trails along with other recreational infrastructure while implementing the necessary stewardship mechanisms to ensure enjoyment by future generations.

The Police Department provides many services for the community such as a full-time School Resources Officer (SRO), conducts Lakes Basin patrols, offers Livescan services and supports and assists in the implementation of community events and programs.

Employee Support: As with any successful organization, time and energy needs to be committed to supporting and developing employees. This includes recruitment and hiring of new employees, as well as dealing with personnel issues that may arise. It also includes supporting employees when they have questions, processing payroll, and administering the employee contracts and benefits. The Town is required to conduct a variety of mandated trainings as well as focused training on staff education and development.

Facilities and Infrastructure: The Town owns and operates several facilities, including those on Town-managed or leased lands, as well as being responsible for all of the Town's street, sidewalk, and storm water infrastructure. This includes maintenance of public facilities for public use and enjoyment such as parks, ball fields, restrooms, community center, bus shelters, tennis/pickleball courts and trails/MUPs. Maintenance of the Town's operational facilities, including the Community Recreation Center (CRC), Community Center, Police Station, Airport, Town Yard and Town Administrative Office is also required. As the Town continues to add facilities and assets, ongoing maintenance and management of these facilities will add to the Town's required work program. The largest capital investment is in pavement, which requires annual maintenance including rehabilitation and reconstruction of several streets and sidewalks. The construction of new sidewalks and related infrastructure is completed as funding allows.

Municipal Code and Policy Implementation: The Town is responsible for enforcing and implementing its Municipal Code. The Municipal Code governs, among other things, the

Town's Commissions, personnel system, and parks and recreation facilities. Active code enforcement efforts are critical to ensuring compliance with zoning and building requirements, including timely updates to the Municipal Code which was recently completed.

Operational Management: These efforts ensure smooth and efficient operations of the Town. It includes tasks such as supervising employees, ensuring staff has the necessary equipment needed to do their job, and day-to-day administrative office functions. It also includes fostering and maintaining partnerships with other agencies and overseeing contracts for services and the NGOs.

Planning and Development: The Town provides Planning and Development services to the community. This includes the processing of all applications for development, ranging from small home remodels or additions to use permits for large hotel projects and master plans to develop or redevelop larger areas. Plan reviews for compliance with building, fire and Town codes are also conducted. The Town is responsible for long-range planning efforts ranging from special plans directed by Council to updating the General Plan.

Public Safety: The Town provides mandated Police services to the community. This includes the full spectrum of Police services such as traffic and parking control and enforcement, patrol, responding to calls for service, reporting and investigating crimes, and handling wildlife calls. Public safety services also include snow removal and ensuring the streets are safe and passable for our citizens, along with required regulatory signage, signals, and crosswalks.

Regulatory Compliance: In addition to the Town's Municipal Code, there are a number of state and federal regulations that the Town must enforce and comply with. These include the Public Records Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), elections, ensuring Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) compliance, and solid waste mandates to name a few.

Town Council Support and Records Management: Supporting the Town Council, by providing information, preparing reports and agendas, and attending meetings is an important part of Staff's job. The Town is also responsible for maintaining all Town Council agendas, minutes, resolutions, and ordinances, along with many other Town records, consistent with the adopted Record Retention Schedule. Staff also provide similar support to the Planning and Economic Development Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Board of Appeals/Building Advisory Committee. Additionally, Town Staff provide clerking services for a number of our NGO and other local partners.

Between day-to-day operations and the delivery of the Town's Core Services, along with several ongoing major Town projects (The Parcel, construction of Town Hall, Mammoth Arts and Cultural Center (MACC), staff has limited capacity and resources to take on additional functions or projects without additional resources. As Council moves to define

or update its strategic priorities, it should first review the Core Services described in this report.

STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS:

The vast majority of Staff time is spent conducting the Core Services of the Town, as defined in this report. Changes to this list of services may impact Staff's availability to work on other Council priorities, special projects, and assignments. Across departments there is less than 5-10% of time available for any significant level of new work program items. The available capacity is often committed to unanticipated or opportunistic short-term assignments or work programs. Staff continue to identify options to add capacity through operational efficiency, effectiveness in program delivery and innovation, reallocation of existing resources and the defining of additional resources.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Significant financial resources are expended to support the Town providing Core Services. Resources are also needed to complete other items described in this report, and additional Town Council priorities.

CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an outline of the Core Services provided to our community. The ability to deliver those services depends on a balance of effective management, developing a strong cohesive team, and resource availability. Town Council should consider these requirements as they seek to enhance our service to the community through the development of Strategic Priorities and Key Objectives.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Detailed list of Core Services