

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Town Council Strategic Planning Series – Presentation of community survey results and request for public comment

Meeting Date: January 15, 2025

Prepared by: Rob Patterson, Town Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a presentation from staff and provide consensus comments or direction regarding the 2025 Town Council Strategic Planning Series Presentation of community survey results.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On November 6, 2024, the Town Council began the Strategic Planning Series (SPS) 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 major policy, projects, planning efforts and workplan items.~~
- January 15, 2025 – Input from the public to inform the Town Council's Strategic Priorities and Key Objectives for 2025.
- January 22, 2025 - Strategic Planning Workshop to discuss and determine 2025 strategic priorities.
- February 5, 2025 - Presentation of draft 2025 Strategic Priorities and Key Initiatives for refinement
- February 18, 2025 – Final review and adoption

The first session of the Strategic Planning Series on November 6 was the review of public comments received at the Town's 40th Anniversary as part of the Town's visioning exercise where the Council provided comments and recommendations to staff. The visioning exercise was an opportunity for our community to engage directly with the subject matter experts on a range of topics. The discussion topics included Town Economy, Housing and Development, Mobility and Transportation, Parks, Recreation and Trails, Public Safety, Environment and Sustainability, and Land Use and Development. The

comments received in this informal process provided a general direction on community thoughts and desires. This information can serve to inform the Town Council on the development of their next strategic priorities and key initiatives.

The second session was a review of the Town's Core Services on November 20. This session included a detailed overview of the various categories of services, defined as mandated, essential, or important. As the name suggests, mandated services are required by State and/or local laws and policies. Essential services are not legally required but are critical to the operation of the Town and quality of life for its residents. Important services are additional services provided by Town staff that work to support the type of community that we want to provide for our residents and visitors.

The third session of the Strategic Planning Series was a presentation of the existing priorities, and the work accomplished within the last year. The list of achievements was not an exhaustive list of work performed but serves to illustrate how the key objectives serve to shape and guide the Town's work plans. The day-to-day core operations of the Town consume 85% to 90% of staff time and financial resources. This work does overlap with Council priorities, which often emphasizes or expands on core services.

The fourth session of the Strategic Planning Series is to present the results of the Community Survey and request additional comments that will assist the Town Council and staff with work plans for 2025.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

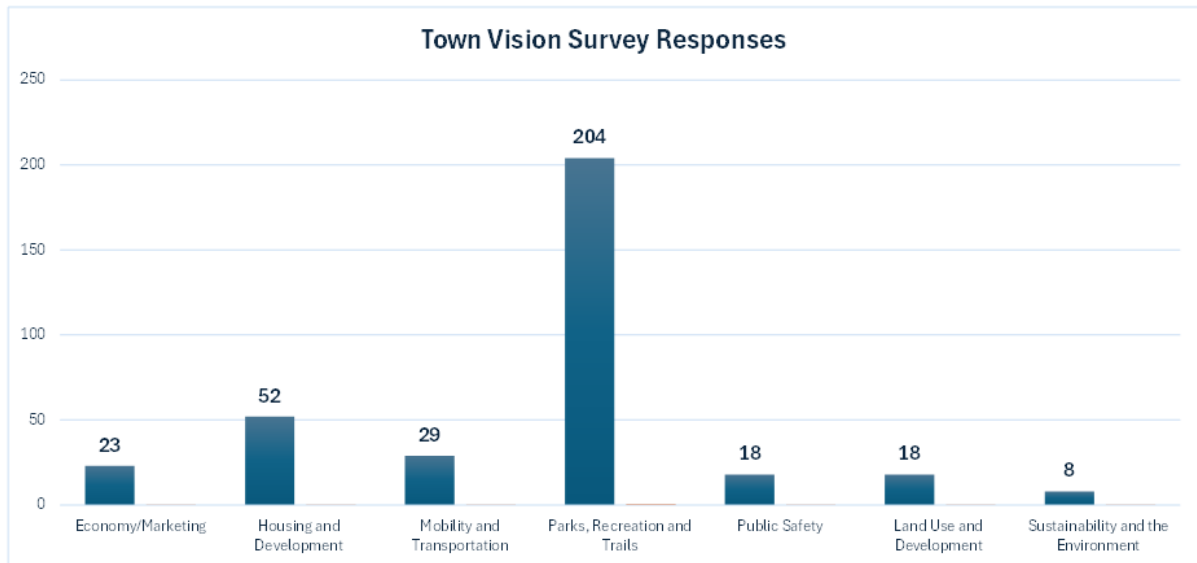
A major part of the strategic planning process is to obtain as much information as possible in working through the planning process. Thus far, the information provided has been staff driven based on existing assignment or planned accomplishments for the coming year. The Town Council has a desire to ensure the community has an opportunity to engage in this strategic planning process for the future. The original plan was to have a public meeting where interested parties could come and provide feedback directly to the Town Council on an agenda item. Understanding that attending a public meeting and providing this input could be difficult for a busy community, staff generated a one-question, online survey allowing all interested people to engage in this planning process.

This survey had one simple question:

Please provide your comments or recommendations for Town Council on what the Town should change, build, or improve on, to make Mammoth Lakes a great place to live, work, and play!

The survey was included in the weekly Community eNews, posted on the homepage of the Town's website, distributed on Town social media channels, featured at the Community Recreation Center (CRC) with a large QR code and shared to parents of the Mammoth Mountain Ski and Snowboard team.

In summary, the survey was up for almost a month, and we received 352 responses, all of which were well articulated and thoughtful. It should be noted however, that the responses are not segmented by any demographic filter such as residency (zip code), age, income, gender, or education etc. While we will group and summarize the responses below in the categories defined in the survey, the raw responses as provided are also provided in Attachment A.



Community Feedback for Town Council Strategic Planning Series			
Category	Response	%	Comments
Economy/Marketing	23	7%	
Housing and Development	52	15%	
Mobility and Transportation	29	8%	
Parks, Recreation and Trails	204	58%	highest responses include a Woodward type facility, in-town, year-round aquatics facility and bike park
Public Safety	18	5%	
Land Use and Development	18	5%	
Sustainability and the Environment	8	2%	
	352	100%	

As of 1/9/2025

These responses will be used for several purposes. The first is to inform the Town Council on community and visitor sentiments as we work through the strategic planning process. We also expect some members of the public to provide additional comments to highlight their areas of interest or concern during the meeting. Staff will also use the responses to inform work plans for various departments at the Town. Many of the comments involved

improvement of government best practices and will serve to guide those improvements. Finally, any capital infrastructure or amenity recommendation can inform staff where interest exists for the community and how they may fit into future available funding. In all, the responses were very helpful and many of the respondents were appreciative of our efforts to seek their input. Based on the success of this process, staff is working on a process where we poll the community for input a few times a year allowing the community to provide input on emerging topics and ongoing products and services delivered by the Town. The goal of the future survey is to ensure that it is statistically relevant (representative sample, collect accurate data and have a large enough sample size).

Staff have summarized the responses, capturing those responses that are similar and segmented them in existing Town Council defined Strategic Priorities.

A. Investment in Community Focused Projects

- Implement a beautification program for Old Mammoth Rd
- Solution to the daycare shortage
- Enhance the Dog Park to support year-round operations
- Develop more health care options like urgent care facilities
- Enhance the investment in schools and early childhood development programs.
- Incentivize more businesses to open in Town to provide more options.
- Year-round aquatics facility
- Year-round indoor athletic center to support teams and training for a wide variety of community sports, events and activities
- Build a field house that could provide field sports year-round.
- Work to improve communication infrastructure, phone and internet options
- Install more DC chargers for electric cars. There are not enough non-Tesla charging options
- MUP or sidewalk Minaret between Meridian and Main Street
- Install a roundabout at the intersection of Minaret and Forest Trail to control traffic flow
- Find an effective solution to slow down traffic on Main Street
- Develop parking solutions around The Village and ensure all new development has adequate parking
- Expansion of bike trails, multi-surface, MUP, Gravel etc., grow our world class offerings
- Build more soft surface and multi-use trails. This program has not grown along with other offerings
- Connect our surrounding communities (June Lake & Crowley) with options for bike trails for commute and pleasure
- Develop more sidewalks in our neighborhoods and lighted pedestrian areas
- Develop better parking for trailheads, especially in winter in the Lakes Basin
- Build a pedestrian bridge on both sides of The Village on Canyon Blvd.

- Build a parking garage on the hillside parking lot or at the Community Center
- Build an indoor / outdoor geothermal pool and hot tub facility down by Whitmore
- Build a bike park or pump track to provide alternative options, skill development
- Invest in financial support programs for local residents and workers to grow a sense of community
- Program(s) that will focus on a sense of community we have lost in recent years.
- Building a sense of community within all groups in town
- “The town council should focus on the livability of Mammoth for its residents, and the preservation of our surrounding environment and wildlife.”

B. Enhance Sustainability and Diversity of the Local Business and Tourism Economy

- Develop and implement effective caps on the number of short-term rentals in Town.
- Housing options more suitable for the needs of the community, not all needs are ultra-low income.
- Affordable housing options for various levels of income, include subsidized or controlled rent and home ownership options
- Continue or enhance workforce housing options, incentivize development and business investment in this space
- Provide safe options for people who choose to live in their cars, mitigate the impacts of this on our community and improve safety
- Institute rental caps on mobile home spaces to address unregulated cost increases
- Year-round public restrooms on or near main street to reduce impact on businesses
- Designate a public sledding hill where people can enjoy a low-cost winter activity
- Strategy to increase stores providing clothing and everyday supplies
- Invest in strength and options for local businesses that support our community
- Expand air service to provide year-round service to more destinations.
- Develop more casual, middle income dining options for residents
- Develop a system where locals get more affordable dining options, support needs of businesses
- Implement Town-wide reusable water bottle filling stations
- Fiber optic internet solutions for all businesses
- Develop programs that will mitigate the impact of visitation on our community

- Expansion of the MUP system around Lake Mary
- Encourage development of high-quality dining experiences.
- Focus on improving customer service to improve visitor experience
- Develop a system where locals do not pay Tourism Business Improvement District fees
- Incentivize local businesses to re-invest in the community they can be a big part of our community feel
- Install a digital welcome sign with current events in front of Footloose
- “Housing is the biggest issue in our town and it breaks my heart every time another amazing human leaves this community because of housing insecurity.”
- “The Town should change their focus from low income housing to creating better opportunities for small businesses, so locals can create and sustain small businesses so they could afford to live here.”

C. Environmental Resiliency by Proactive Planning and Project Implementation

- Solutions to address rising costs of Insurance, wildfire risk and other natural hazards
- Develop community programs that focus on wildfire risks, get everyone involved in the solution
- Programs to enhance understanding and protection of wildlife and natural habitat
- Strive to keep open spaces open, do not build too high to effect town character
- Programs to clear forest debris to reduce risk of wildfire / eliminate slash piles in the forest
- The Town should do more to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health around Mammoth Lakes.
- Better master planning throughout town with both public and private coordination.

D. Implementation of Enhanced and Required Municipal Services

- Improve Town process to make it easier for opening businesses or obtaining building permits.
- Restriction on new development that will exacerbate the current workforce problems.
- Public Safety investment to control speeding and other driving issues
- Refined design review and approval process for new development
- Work to provide a long-term solution to snow storage needs of the community.
- Work to improve the Mammoth Disposal Transfer Station to mitigate smell produced by the facility in summertime.

- Improvements to provide more efficiency, reducing cost of government
- Enhance public safety and police enforcement, traffic/parking offenses
- Enforcement of Town Ordinances, education and endorsement when necessary
- Enforcement of leash laws, develop programs to improve pet waste collection
- Enforcement of "dark sky" ordinances to prevent light pollution
- Develop a system that will remove propane tanks from single family residences
- Reduce restrictions on signs, they are too restrictive making them difficult to read
- Develop a multi-agency system to support wildlife through education, advocacy, and capital investment
- Assist the Forest Service in developing a better permit process for filming

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