

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Initial review of Town planning efforts and introduction of the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process.

Meeting Date: April 16, 2025

Prepared by: Stuart Brown, Parks and Recreation Director
Nolan Bobroff, Community and Economic Development Director
Haislip Hayes, PE Public Works Director

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss the strategy for updating and prioritizing Town-wide plans, direct the Town Manager to publish the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update (PRMP) Request for Proposal (RFP), and provide direction to form a Brown Act Advisory Committee that will function as the Town Council's advisory body for the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update.

BACKGROUND:

The Town Council recently adopted strategic priorities to guide the Town through the next year and beyond, which included conducting a comprehensive review and prioritization of all plans and implementation efforts throughout the organization. Staff have begun an initial review of the Town's planning work and catalogued the relevant documents in Attachment A – Planning Matrix.

Several themes began to appear as a result of the comprehensive review.

- There are several standalone planning documents that need to be incorporated into larger guiding documents.
- There are adopted and accepted planning efforts that are either no longer valid, are outdated, or are irrelevant.
- There are independent documents necessary for certain operations.
- A few documents need updates as the identified work plan items have been completed.
- Some documents are required to be updated on a regular basis by law.
- Some plans, despite being old, are still relevant and do not need updating.

In 2007, the Town completed a comprehensive General Plan revision. In the following years, numerous planning efforts in support of the General Plan were completed. While these efforts provided appropriate guidance at the time, this top-down approach to planning ultimately resulted in a somewhat fragmented series of documents. Staff are proposing a bottom-up approach to revising the Town's plans with the General Plan being the last document updated. This will allow the General Plan to better represent the action items, tasks and guidance generated from the supporting documents.

ANALYSIS:

A comprehensive review of the existing planning work began with a catalog of existing documents. This analysis was organized for review by simply categorizing the types of documents. Each plan was assigned a category and was reviewed for relevance, life cycle, status, and goals for the plan, as well as specifics such as when it was adopted and any legal requirements. This review and cataloging work are ongoing and may change over time as updates to other plans are completed. An additional detailed review of these older plans is necessary to better understand the intent, ideas, and concepts each plan generated, with the understanding that these details will be necessary for incorporation into larger guiding documents. Staff envision a dynamic multi-year process to update the core plans.

To move this effort forward, staff are proposing a framework for updates rather than a rigid schedule. Planning efforts take time to develop and complete. Staff anticipate significant public engagement activities for all the plans. The political landscape is ever changing, and our responsibilities and needs must adapt with policies outside of the control of the Town. This may require us to evaluate plans out of sequence along the way. The proposed framework has four tracks that can occur at the same time. The planning efforts within each track may be dependent on each other but can be independent of other tracks.

- Track 1: **Emergency Operations and Preparedness** Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), Climate Action/Adaptation Plan, Safety)
- Track 2: **Town Infrastructure** begins with land use of Town owned/controlled sites (housing and parks and recreation) which informs connectivity (transit, mobility, trails)
- Track 3: **Economic Development** (Economy, Marketing, Arts, CEDS)
- Track 4: **Regulatory** (Land Use, Community Design, District Character, Resource Management and Conservation, Noise)

Once the tracks are further refined, prioritized and completed, the Town can move forward with the General Plan Update and incorporate these efforts into a comprehensive plan. Additionally, as plans are revised, Staff recommend formally retiring older and superseded plans and incorporating the relevant parts of the plans into the revised documents. This should help to limit confusion in future years as to the validity of older Town plans.

Work on Track 1 is well underway with the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan being developed by a consultant hired by Mono County. The effort is funded fully by grants from CALOES and FEMA. Staff and community partners (i.e., MLFPD, MCWD, USFS) are deeply involved in the development of this plan which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Work is just starting on the CWPP and Staff is discussing how a Climate Action/Adaptation Plan could be developed.

Regarding Track 2, Staff believe the foundation of a bottom-up approach needs to begin with land use planning that is focused on land that the Town can control. The foundation of this effort will be planning for the limited amount of vacant property the Town has to

work with. These parcels are generally set aside for housing and recreation (OS). Understanding the community's desires for development of these lands will help to inform the needed connectivity. This will be key for developing the next iteration of the Mobility Element which needs to incorporate several existing planning efforts that are directly tied to municipal and private development.

Work on the elements in Tracks 3 and 4 can occur at any point in the revision process. These plans generally stand alone and provide guidance and establish the regulatory framework in the General Plan. Staff are evaluating when this work could occur, but it is not expected to occur in the near term. The larger efforts in Track 2 will take precedence on Staff resources and time.

At this time, staff are recommending the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update as the first of the Track 2 plans to be initiated and approved. An overview of the parks and recreation master planning efforts is outlined in detail and sequence below.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Development

At the regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission on April 2, 2024, staff presented a summary and update of recommended tasks, programs and proposed recreation amenities as outlined in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan published in 2008 and adopted by Town Council on February 1, 2012. The Plan outlined the vision, goals, and tasks for enhancing parks and recreation for Mammoth Lakes through 2025.

At that time, Town staff recommended the development of a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan that included updated goals and policies, an analysis of the supply, demand and needs for parks and recreation facilities and services within and surrounding the Town of Mammoth Lakes that articulate a clear vision and "roadmap" over the next 10-15 years or longer. The plan would also incorporate conceptual site plans for the Whitmore Recreation Area, Community Center and the Bell-Shaped Parcel.

This recommendation was affirmed by the Commission on March 1, 2025, and since that time, staff have been working to develop a scope of work (Request for Proposals document) based on the Town Council allocation on March 19, 2025 of \$300,000 for the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the implementation plan presented below for Town Council consideration.

Analysis And Discussion:

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) published in 2008 and adopted in 2012, is reaching the end of its relevancy and community-driven list of identified tasks and recommendations through 2025. Based on several public meetings, previous facility needs assessments (2001), and a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey conducted in 2007, the plan presented six goals, provided specific level of service recommendations, and identified five primary tasks. The tasks were as follows:

- A. Maintain and upgrade existing parks and recreation facilities to improve accessibility, usability, and service capacity.

- B. Complete construction of recreation-related projects already underway.
- C. Expand partnerships with public agencies, private organizations, and businesses to share resources in providing facilities and programs.
- D. Design additional park improvements and recreation facilities to meet recreation needs in all seasons
- E. Ensure that the Town’s parks and recreation facilities will become part of an integrated system that encompasses parks, activity centers, trails, and access to public lands around Mammoth Lakes.

Tremendous progress has been made delivering on the recreational needs and expectations of the community these past 16 years. The majority of these goals and tasks have been completed, with some underway, while others require further analysis, funding and appropriate sites for development. The values expressed in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan continue to be relevant, along with the vision and framework to serve the recreation needs of Mammoth Lakes’ residents and visitors. However, the stated goals, level of service recommendations, and primary tasks need to be realigned and reimagined to provide the necessary framework to meet the ever changing and evolving recreation needs and expectations of the community, second homeowners, seasonal workers, and visitors to Mammoth Lakes.

Implementation Plan

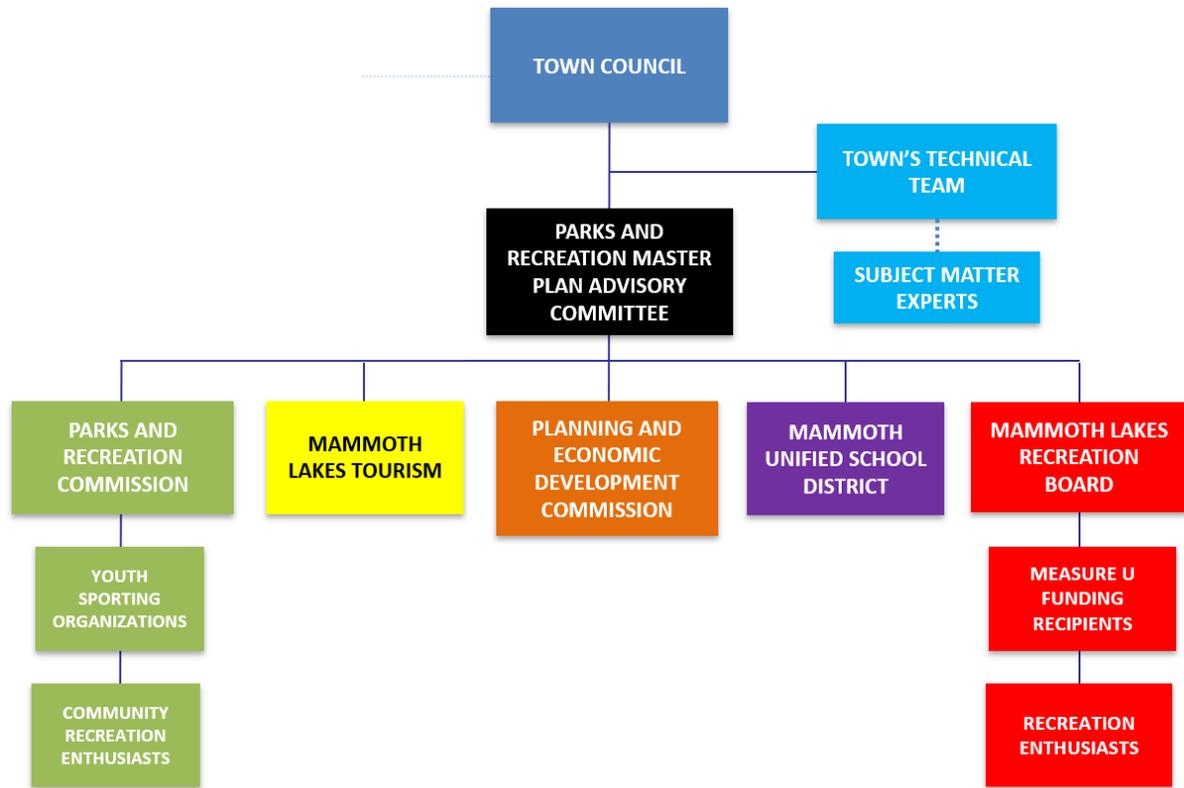
The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be a guiding document for future development and redevelopment of the Town’s system of parks, facilities, and recreation programs and services over the next 10-15 years or longer. The plan will define goals, tasks and prioritized strategies and program and amenity recommendations based on current and future funding, land use and level of service scenarios and standards.

A comprehensive master plan is expected to take 12-18+ months, depending on the desired outcomes and defined deliverables. There are several phases and tasks required to begin the process to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that are outlined below. Prior to the selection of the consultant and finalization of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan outcomes and deliverables, the phases below should be used only as a guide in the process to inform planning efforts.

Phase 1 – Preparation Phase (March – May 2025)

1. Establishment of the Town’s Technical Team
 - a. Composition: Parks and Recreation Director, Public Works Director and Community and Economic Development Director.
 - b. Purpose: Manage the development of the PRMP.
 - c. Responsibilities:
 - i. Manage the RFP process, including the selection of the consultant.
 - ii. Support and staff the PRMP Advisory Committee.
 - iii. Provide technical expertise and coordinate the addition of subject matter experts as needed to support the development of the PRMP.
 - iv. Provide general oversight, expertise and guidance to the consultant.

- v. Support the Parks and Recreation Director as needed in the delivery of the PRMP.
- ~~2. Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR) board (3/18) and Parks and Recreation Commission (4/1) presentation of the DRAFT PRMP Implementation Plan. Includes the proposed timeline, desired outcomes and deliverables, and the proposed formation, composition and purpose of the PRMP Advisory Committee.~~
 3. Town Council presentation and approval of the PRMP Implementation Plan (4/16), including the desired outcomes and defined deliverables, and direction to form a Brown Act PRMP Advisory Committee who will function as the Town Council's advisory body for the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
 4. Formation of the PRMP Advisory Committee
 - a. The composition of the committee is as follows and its relationship with the Town Council is illustrated below in the organizational chart.
 - i. 1 x Town Councilmember + alternate (4/16)
 - ii. 1 x Parks and Recreation Commissioner + alternate (6/3)
 - iii. 1 x Mammoth Lakes Recreation Board member + alternate (5/13)
 - iv. 1 x Planning and Economic Development Commissioner + alternate (5/14)
 - v. 1 x Mammoth Unified School District representative + alternate (TBD)
 - vi. 1 x Mammoth Lakes Tourism representative + alternate (5/21)
 - vii. 3 x Community at Large representatives (application process – selected by Town's Technical Team.



b. Purpose: Town Council Advisory for the development, review and implementation of the PRMP's stated outcomes and deliverables.

c. Responsibilities:

- i. Provide general input, guidance and communicate their affiliated organizations recreation interests to the consultant and the Town's Technical Team.
- ii. Participate in regular (quarterly) progress reports scheduled by the Town's Technical Team. Inform their respective organizations as well as provide consensus input/recommendations from their respective organizations to the consultant.
- iii. As needed, support the consultant and Town's Technical Team in the development of the PRMP development plan (i.e. community engagement tactics, public outreach, venue locations, etc.)

Phase 2 – Consultant Appointment (June 2025 – August 2025)

1. Publication and distribution of the Request for Proposals (RFP) document for the development of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- a. RFP published on Thursday, April 24, 2025 with selection in June by the Town's Technical Team.
2. Town Council selection (8/6) of consultant/firm and allocation of additional funding (if necessary) to develop, manage and deliver the new Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
3. Kick off meeting with the consultant and introduction of dedicated Consultant Project Team to the Town's Technical Team, PRMP Advisory Committee and the Town Council. The consultant will present an overview of the process, timeline and how it will develop a clear set of goals, tasks and level of service standards for the community's park system, green space, trails, recreation facilities and program development for the next 10-15 years, if not longer.

***Phase 3 – Community Engagement, Data Collection and Plan Development
(Sept. 2025 – Summer 2026)***

1. Consultant conducts a review of previous documents, an inventory analysis that considers the fair and equitable quantity, distribution, inclusivity, condition, cultural relevancy, connections and proximity of parks, green space, programs, recreation centers and services.
2. Consultant presents the project website and communication channels utilized for community outreach, engagement and information sharing.
3. Consultant presents the community engagement plan, tactics (activities, techniques and formats), strategies and methodology to achieve equitable, inclusive and broad community participation in the PRMP planning process.
4. Consultant presents recommendations for the review of the vision and mission statements, department goals and tasks. Includes a summary of gaps in services and/or amenities identified from extensive public outreach and the needs assessment survey.
5. Consultant presents DRAFT PRMP Master Plan that includes the following elements:
 - a. Written goals, (new vision/mission statements if necessary), tasks, and recommended new/redeveloped recreation services and facilities.
 - b. Financial action plan that includes an asset management plan addressing planned maintenance and on-going investment for existing and future amenities (including conceptual site plans).

- c. Develop conceptual site plans for the following:
 - i. Whitmore Recreation Area
 - ii. Bell Shaped Parcel
 - iii. Community Center Park
 - d. Summary of existing conditions, inventories and utilization metrics, population demographics and outcome metrics. Includes charts, graphs, maps and other data as needed.
 - e. Presentation of Level of Service standards for the life of the plan (approx. 15-20 years). Should include year-round residents, second homeowners, and seasonal worker populations.
6. Environmental review (CEQA) of the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Phase 4 – Approval and Public Presentation Phase (Fall 2026)

1. Town Council approval of a Resolution for a General Plan amendment adopting the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and amending the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element of the Town’s General Plan.
2. Consultant and/or Town’s Technical Team presents the new Parks and Recreation Master Plan to the public, the Parks and Recreation Commission, Mammoth Lakes Recreation Board, Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board, Mammoth Unified School District Board and the Planning and Economic Development Commission.

Phase 5 – Implementation Phase (Fall/Winter 2026/27)

1. Town’s Technical Team drafts and presents the phased implementation plan to the PRMP Advisory Committee and Town Council for review and approval.
2. Town’s Technical Team and assigned staff begin implementation of the community-driven and validated goals, tasks and plan objectives, including the revision of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as necessary.