

PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION

INTENT

~~Each year, 83% of Americans visit a local park or recreation facility, contributing not only to their personal well-being but also to the vitality of their communities. Outdoor recreation supports local economies by generating spending, creating jobs, and attracting investment. Parks and recreation also encourage physical activity and foster a connection with nature, leading to improved mental and physical health. These benefits ripple outward, helping to boost property values, attract employers, and enhance overall community well-being and quality of life. More than three-out-of-four Americans participate in active outdoor recreation each year. Americans spend money, create jobs and support local communities when they get outdoors. Simple healthy outdoor activities such as skiing, snowboarding, hiking, biking or camping generate enormous economic power and a far-reaching ripple effect that touches many of the nation's major economic sectors.~~

~~Parks, open space and recreational opportunities in Mammoth Lakes are important to our residents and the success of our tourism-based economy. Public lands within the Urban Growth Boundary (4.5 square miles) must be integrated into the surrounding public lands through polices that promote a system of deeded and guaranteed points of public access to public lands.~~

~~Parks, open space, and recreation create an attractive quality of life and contribute to public health by encouraging physical activity and an appreciation of nature. We emphasize a wide variety of outdoor winter and summer activities as outlined in the goals and policies of this Element. Parks, open space, and recreational opportunities in Mammoth Lakes are critical to our residents and to the success of our tourism-based economy. Lands within the Urban Growth Boundary (4.5 square miles) must be integrated into the surrounding public lands through policies that promote a system of deeded and guaranteed points of public access to public lands.~~

A Town Within a Park

P.1. GOAL: Maintain parks and open space within and adjacent to town for outdoor recreation and contemplation.

P.1.A. Policy: Protect the scenic beauty and natural resources of Mammoth Lakes through a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that includes parks, open space, and a trail system.

P.1.B. Policy: Continue to maintain and upgrade existing parks and recreation facilities that are inclusive, and develop a plan to retrofit existing parks and design all new facilities and meet to ADA standards, to provide for accessibility and enjoyment by physically impaired citizens.

P.1.C. Policy: Upgrade parks and recreation facilities to promote resource and operational efficiency and cost effective maintenance practices.

P.1.D. Policy: Ensure adequate funding for ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and recreation facilities.

P.2. GOAL: Provide additional parks within town.

P.2.A. Policy: Coordinate open space programs and policies with the Inyo National Forest, City of Los Angeles and Mono County.

P.2.B. Policy: Require usable public recreation open space in all master planned developments.

P.2.B.1. Action: Develop a comprehensive and integrated year-round Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

P.2.B.2. Action: Actively seek grant funds for parks, open spaces and recreational activities.

P.2.B.3. Action: Maintain a Master Facility Plan and Development Impact Fee schedule.

P.2.C. Policy: Maximize parks and open space through flexible form-based zoning, development clustering and transfers of development rights within individual districts.

P.2.C.1. Action: Establish zoning districts that allow parks, recreation and ancillary facilities.

P.2.D. Policy: Increase understanding and appreciation of the cultural, natural and historical resources of the region and town through development of programs, facilities and interpretive signage.

P.2.E. Policy: Include interpretive signage in parks, trails and public rights-of-way.

P.2.E.1. Action: Plan, design, manage and implement an interpretive signage program.

P.2.F. Policy: Promote Mammoth Lakes' quality of life with parkland and recreation facility acquisition and development at or above the level of service standards recommended in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

P.2.G. Policy: Provide parks and recreation facilities in a timely manner with existing and planned development.

P.2.H. Policy: Engage continued citizens' involvement in planning parks and recreation facilities, and periodically re-evaluate the provision of these facilities through a needs assessment study or other applicable methods of quantitative or qualitative market research.

P.2.I. Policy: Seek funding from a variety of sources to acquire and develop new parks, and maintain adequate funding for the operation and maintenance of new parks and recreation facilities.

P.2.J. Policy: Design and build parks and recreation facilities to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and natural environment.

P.2.K. Policy: Assure that new parks and recreation facilities are inclusive and comply with ADA standards and, for safe use and enjoyment by physically impaired citizens.

P.2.L. Policy: Develop parks and recreation facilities to facilitate efficient and cost-effective operations and maintenance practices, and to conserve water, energy, and other resources.

Trail System

P.3. **GOAL: Create a Master Plan for an integrated trail system that will maintain and enhance convenient public access to public lands from town.**

P.3.A. Policy: Ensure public routes for access to public lands are provided in all developments adjacent to National Forest lands.

P.3.B. Policy: Coordinate with multiple organizations, agencies and jurisdictions to plan, steward, interpret, promote and sustain trails, public access and outdoor recreation amenities in the Mammoth Lakes region.

P.3.C. Policy: Identify and acquire points of public access to public lands (from within the Urban Growth Boundary to surrounding public lands) through cooperative arrangements including easements, purchase or other means of title acquisition.

P.3.D. Policy: Support the construction of trails to provide public access from Town to public lands.

Recreational Opportunities

P.4. **GOAL: Provide and encourage a wide variety of outdoor and indoor recreation readily accessible to residents and visitors of all ages.**

P.4.A. Policy: Expand recreational opportunities by proactively developing partnerships with public agencies and private entities.

P.4.B. Policy: Provide an affordable and wide range of year-round recreational opportunities to foster a healthy community for residents and visitors. Activities include but are not limited to:

• downhill skiing & snowboarding	• day & backcountry hiking
• cross-country skiing	• walking
• back-country skiing & snowboarding	• interpretive trails & signage
• snowshoeing	• climbing
• sledding	• touring
• dog sledding	• street & mountain biking & BMX
• ice skating	• camping
• snowmobiling	• fishing
• sleigh rides	• fall-color viewing
• tennis	• birding
• swimming	• health & fitness
• soccer	• off-highway vehicles
• racquetball/pickleball	• equestrian activities
• snow play	• BMXarts and culture activities
• skateboarding	• Other forms of recreation

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P.4.C. Policy: Ensure balance of use, enjoyment and separation where appropriate between motorized and non-motorized modes of recreation.

P.4.C.1. **Action:** Specifically address use, needs and operations of motorized and non-motorized recreation users in ~~year-round-comprehensive-recreation-plan~~the Strategic Action Plan.

P.4.D. Policy: In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, coordinate planning for compatible recreational facilities on and adjacent to National Forest Land.

P.4.E. Policy: Partner with Mammoth Unified School District to fully utilize existing Town recreation facilities by students, and broaden public use of school facilities ~~after-school-and-during-evenings-and-weekends-during available time periods.~~

P.4.F. Policy: Partner with private organizations to deliver recreation programs and provide and/or operate special purpose facilities.

P.4.G. Policy: Acquire, construct, or upgrade indoor recreation facilities to accommodate desired indoor recreation activities and leisure programs.

P.4.H. Policy: Provide recreation facilities, programs, and classes that are available to all citizens, including people of all ages, abilities, ethnic background, and income levels. Keep programs affordable, and develop program ~~packages—offerings for those with more moderate incomes (including seasonal workers)—that are affordable, accessible and readily available.~~

P.4.I. Policy: Provide parks and recreation facilities that are accessible by a variety of mobility linkages:

- Public pedestrian access to private development projects
- Transit stops within private development projects (private or public roads)
- Public opportunities for parking to access public lands (including ADA parking)

P.4.J. Policy: Develop a reservation and pricing policy for exclusive use of certain facilities.

P.4.K. Policy: Develop a Town Park Management Program.

- The Program could include a ~~host~~Park Ranger or Community Service Officer to monitor and enforce park use and activities
- ~~Park Rangers could help conduct programs~~

P.4.L. Policy: Promote awareness of the Town's parks and recreation facilities, programs, and special events.

P.4.M. Policy: Periodically (every 3-5 years) develop a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) aligned with the Parks, Open Space and Recreation General Plan Elements that can in a more timely manner, respond to changes and opportunities in the community, along with constantly evolving trends in parks and recreation programming.

- The Strategic Action Plan will be anchored by a set of overarching goals, followed by guiding objectives, and implementable actions designed to direct Town staff.
- Implementation actions are well-defined steps that Town staff can take to achieve objectives.
- As actions are completed, objectives go from being goals to actualized outcomes.
- Actions will be categorized into a "Staff Implementation Program" to provide Town staff with a clear path for carrying out the Master Plan's recommendations.

P.4.N. Policy: Periodically develop a Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS) aligned with the Strategic Action Plan (SAP), ensuring responsible financial and service management best practices.

- The Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS) is to be updated in coordination with the Strategic Action Plan.
- The strategy document will include a cost-of-service analysis, a financial assessment, an historical financial trends analysis and the development of performance metrics to enhance operational efficiency and financial performance.

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Connected Throughout

P.5. **GOAL: Link parks and open space with a well-designed year-round network of public corridors and trails within and surrounding Mammoth Lakes.**

P.5.A. Policy: Create open space corridors by combining open space on neighboring properties.

P.5.B. Policy: Design and construct trails as components of a regional and local network for recreation and commuting.

P.5.C. Policy: Require development to incorporate linked public trail corridors identified in the Mammoth Lakes Trail System Plan into overall project site plan.

P.5.C.1. **Action:** Prepare an expanded Master Plan to link trails, parks and open space.

P.5.D. Policy: Design public and private streets not only as connections to different neighborhood districts but also as an essential element of the open space system. Include parks and plazas, tree-lined open spaces and continuous recreational paths in design.

P.5.E. Policy: Design parks and open space to be accessible and usable except when set aside for preservation of natural resources, health and safety.

P.5.F. Policy: Ensure provision of parkland dedications or payment of in-lieu fees through project approvals or development impact fees.

P.5.G. Policy: Identify, zone and procure land for new and expanded parklands including:

- pocket parks
- natural pockets of forest
- community gardens
- greenbelts
- streamside parks
- street way linear parks
- active parks
- open space
- snow play
- festival and special events areas
- passive parks

P.5.H. Policy: Dedicated parkland suitable for active recreation uses shall have a maximum slope of 10%, be accessible to the community, and be free of significant constraints.

P.5.I. Policy: Develop an integrated trail system in cooperation with federal agencies and consistent with the Town's General Plan (Mobility Element), by updating the General Bikeway Plan and Trail System Plan.

P.5.J. Policy: The trail system should accommodate winter and summer use by a variety of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and Nordic sports enthusiasts.

P.5.K. Policy: The trail system should connect parks, schools, other designated activity centers, and trails on public lands adjacent to Mammoth Lakes.

P.5.L. Policy: Create an integrated way-finding system that encompasses trails, parks, and recreation facilities with unified and consistent signage design.

P.6. **GOAL: Provide parks and recreational facilities and programs that foster a sense of community and nurture the emotional connection people have with each other and Mammoth Lakes.**

P.6.A. Policy: Plan parks and recreation facilities and develop recreation programs with public input.

P.6.B. Policy: Distribute parkland within the community to increase walkability from key residential nodes.

P.6.C. Policy: Offer and accommodate events and activities that foster community gathering and celebration.

P.6.D. Policy: Encourage neighborhood district identity and cohesion through events and programs.

P.6.E. Policy: Provide facilities and programs that support togetherness within and among families.