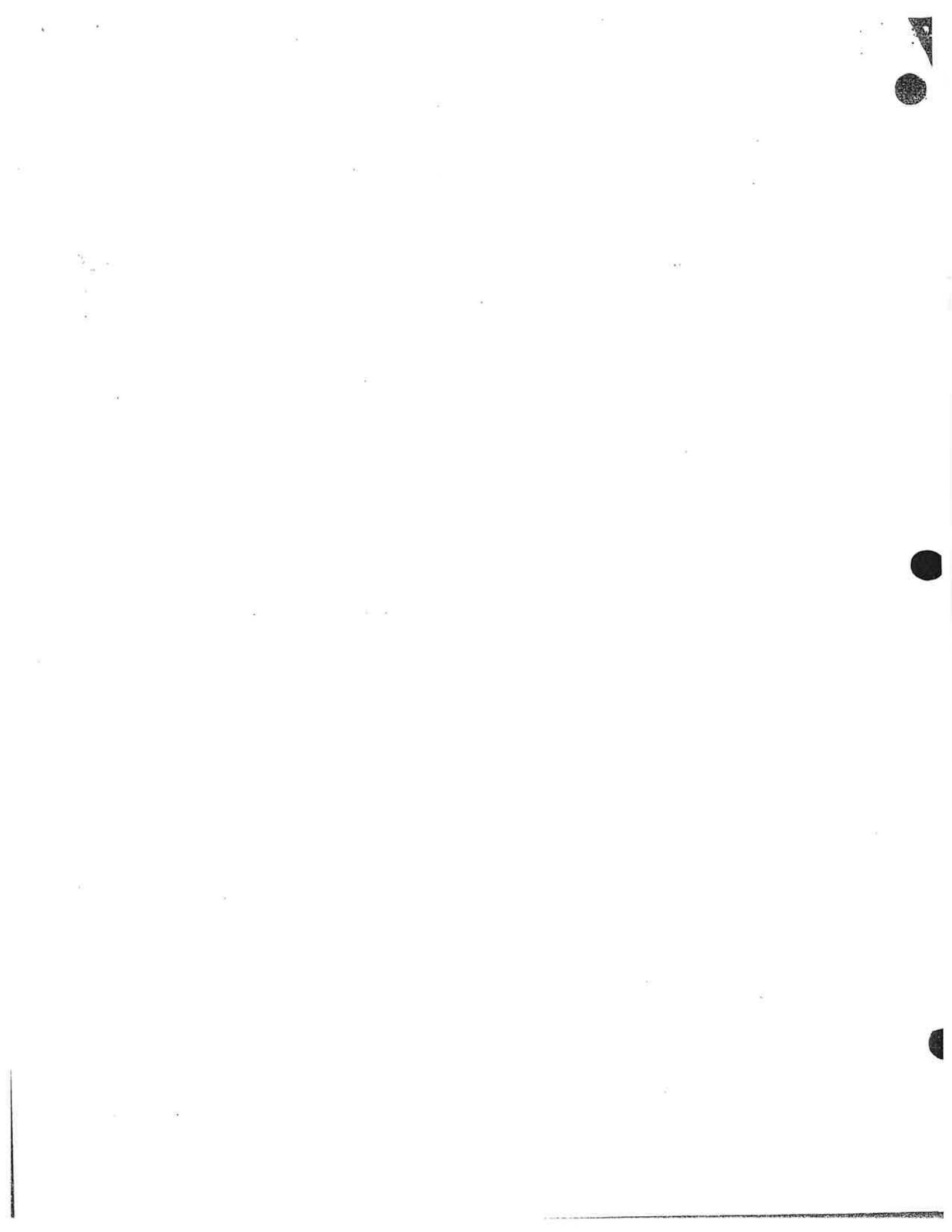


Town of Mammoth Lakes

Vision Statement

December, 1992

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minor revisions
May, 1998



Town of Mammoth Lakes Vision Statement

Mammoth Lakes will be a high quality, destination resort community with year-round recreation opportunities. The natural environment will be the dominant feature in all public policy and development issues, and will coexist with a high quality resort center. The community will be stable, strong, safe, and family oriented. There will be high quality local educational and training opportunities, and a wide range of facilities to support recreational and cultural pursuits. Automobile usage will be minimized due to the efficient pedestrian and transit system.

The following narrative describes what the Mammoth Lakes community has stated it hopes to become in the future.

Maintaining a Strong Community

While residents of Mammoth Lakes appreciate the natural wonder of the area, they make their homes and raise their families here because of the cohesive small town atmosphere and the opportunities for quality education, recreation, and social interaction.

Comprehensive water, energy and environmental policies have enabled development to occur within the carrying capacity of our resources, with careful attention to retaining a high quality of life for residents and visitors. Levels of service for fire, police and health care remain consistently high in conjunction with continued growth.

All residential developments have tried to protect steeper slopes and natural vegetation. Design and site planning techniques promote the preservation of open space and limit amounts of impervious surfaces. Development standards limit mass, guide development on ridges, bluffs and hillsides, and encourage building materials that complement the surrounding natural environment.

The mix of single family homes, apartments and condominiums provide a variety of housing types for families and residents of all income levels throughout the community. High-density neighborhoods are concentrated around activity areas, with lower densities occurring at the periphery of Town.

Of the neighborhoods in the community, Old Mammoth is more rural in nature and densities are lower. Properties along Mammoth Creek and the Bluffs have been especially attentive to design and site planning to protect the view-shed within which they are located. Most condominiums serve visitors and second homeowners who wish to enjoy a more relaxed stay in Mammoth Lakes. Older condominiums have been refurbished improving community aesthetics and contributing to the overall resident housing stock.

Low-income housing and employee housing developments are located throughout town. All sizes and styles of units have been developed to meet the needs of families, singles, and unrelated households. The resorts have provided much of their own housing on-site to accommodate their employees and families they generate. Likewise,

affordable housing has been developed in the center of town to take advantage of the proximity to services, employment and transit. Single-room-occupancies and small apartments have been built within commercial developments in the resorts to bring people closer to their place of employment and provide some vitality to the districts.

The service commercial center is located near Meridian Blvd. and Old Mammoth Road. It contains the most service-oriented business for residents and visitors. Offices, grocery and clothing stores, restaurants, theaters and small businesses are found here. The schools and hospital are nearby. The area is the center of our community's daily lives.

While emphasizing pedestrian circulation, transit serves the district and public and private parking is available near every business. Community activities are frequently held here because of the constant flow of people who come to take care of local needs. Shopping centers have been upgraded with new facades and landscaping. Lodging and residential areas are located between and around the commercial center, providing housing and accommodations near transit facilities and commercial services.

Industrial uses have been relocated from the commercial districts in the community to the Industrial/Business Park at the east of Town. Cottage industries relating to the recreation uses in the area are located here as well as construction-related and heavy commercial uses. Design standards require some screening of uses from surrounding areas.

The Town has continued to expand recreational and educational facilities, commensurate with growth and based upon the resources of the natural environment. New educational facilities have been developed with gymnasiums, learning facilities and recreational facilities available for community use in the South Gateway. Neighborhood parks with easy pedestrian access have been established to complement the community parks. Networks of trails connect most parks, neighborhoods, and the commercial/employment centers.

A recycling center has been provided to meet the needs of the community. Convenient government service is available to citizens.

A variety of art and cultural facilities are available. The indoor/outdoor theater is heavily used for all types of events. Education of and respect for the natural environment is promoted through interpretive exhibits, nature trails, stream viewing chambers, and other public facilities.

Ice skating, golfing, swimming and outdoor activities of all types are available, whether provided by the private sector through dedications or by the public sector through available financing alternatives.

Building a Successful, High Quality Resort

Mammoth Lakes is the hub of recreational opportunities in the Eastern Sierra. Along with the diverse experiences available within the Town, major local and regional recreational attractions are within easy access. Fishing and hiking are also available nearby.

Recreation is the economic engine. Through promotion of recreation activities the town has achieved greater economic stability. While further development to increase recreation options is recognized, it must be in accordance with our setting, natural resources and economic means. An emphasis on the quality of each experience and how it affects the capacity of the natural environment are carefully evaluated.

Mammoth Mountain Ski Area is one of the best ski experiences anywhere. The ski area has expanded to a capacity of 24,000 skiers, which are served from five base lodges. Access to the ski area facilities has been improved with in-town gondolas, and from public transportation which delivers people to any one of the five base lodges quickly and economically from anywhere in town.

Sherwin/Snowcreek Ski Area serves up to 8000 skiers from a base lodge within Snowcreek Resort. While primarily a ski area, the resort provides golfing, tennis, ice skating, and other recreational pursuits.

The Lakes Basin is a heavily used fishing, Nordic skiing, snowmobiling area. Camping, climbing and boating are all experiences pursued by both avid and first-time outdoor enthusiasts. Through a sustained fishing enhancement program and special events, Mammoth Lakes has become a premier trophy trout area.

Throughout the community there are both public and private recreation facilities. Gymnasiums, tennis courts, swimming pools, softball and soccer

fields and other community oriented recreation opportunities are plentiful. Mammoth Lakes has provided the visitor with a selection of four full service resorts, each with its own identity and character, in addition to Mammoth Mountain's accommodations and services. North Village, Sierra Star, Juniper Ridge and Snowcreek provide for over 4000 lodging units combined. Housing and shopping opportunities, as well as numerous amenities are available in each resort making it convenient for visitors, employees and residents to enjoy their stay without the need for services beyond the resort. Easy pedestrian access among all facilities and amenities in the resort make each resort an attraction unto itself. The architecture and sense of scale are different in each to reflect the surroundings of the immediate area.

North Village (Gondola Village) is a bustling, tightly knit pedestrian resort containing many hotels, inns, restaurants and shops. There are many restaurants and shops oriented around a central plaza. Community and cultural activities are planned throughout the year on the plaza and in the meeting halls. The gondola to Mammoth Mountain leaves from the plaza area making North Village a premier winter destination. Parking is understructure and housing is provided on-site for those people wishing to reside closer to work and play.

Lodestar (Sierra Star) is a true four-season resort. Full-service hotels, condominiums, single-family housing and shopping areas front onto lakes and a golf course. Tall trees frame the lakes and hotels offering a secluded outdoor experience. Again, the car is subordinate

to the pedestrian. Golfing, ice-skating, hiking, bicycling, tennis, swimming, strolling and cross-country skiing are activities enjoyed at Sierra Star. Commercial establishments are sufficient to serve Sierra Star and are not community oriented. Conference facilities provide strong activity in the fall and spring.

Juniper Ridge has one of the most spectacular settings in Town. Because it is in such a prominent viewshed, its presence is more subdued, with architecture and scale which blends into the surroundings. A large resort lodge and small supporting shops are the mainstay of this resort. Some amenities are available, including ski-in/ski-out accommodations. Housing is available on-site for renters and owner occupants. Juniper Ridge is a major skier destination, due to the upgraded gondola and base lodge facilities, and the public transit system.

Snowcreek Resort offers a variety of recreational experiences. Skiing, golfing, ice-skating, bicycling, hiking, tennis, and fishing are available. Full-service hotels, an athletic club, conference facilities, inns, shopping centers and restaurants, are found at the base of the Sherwin Mountains in a "village" setting. Condominiums and single family homes about the golf course and the National Forest. Meadows and creeks are preserved and walking or bicycling through the village is commonplace.

Mammoth Mountain has its own high quality accommodations and recreational experiences to offer. It also provides access to the Mountain Bike Park and the Minaret Vista/Devil's Postpile. It

has the unique setting of being surrounded by forests and lakes, yet is close enough to Town to take advantage of the experiences being offered by the Community.

The Main Street Commercial Area is an equally important commercial district. As the primary entrance to Town, it is the focus of Town activities. The Main Street commercial area caters to visitor activities focusing around a visitor's center. Small shops, restaurants, cafes and courtyards front along the pedestrian promenade. People enjoy this "town center" because of the variety of plazas and gathering places available to meet friends and experience the small town atmosphere. Design of buildings and landscaping is compatible, forming an identifiable town center. Public parking is available, but separated from the pedestrian experience. Connection to the commercial uses on the north side of Main Street is safe and convenient. The town's transit routes connect here so access is available to and from all parts of the community. Motels, small chalets and residences surround the "town center".

There are two gateways into town. Until one reaches town from Highway 395 there is only the natural landscape to enjoy. The gateway to Town is marked by the USFS Visitors Center and campground, inviting landscaping and lighting, medians separating east and westbound travel lanes in the highway, pathways for bicycling and walking and the Town center with its "quaint" and cohesive shops and restaurants.

Entering town from Meridian Blvd. one passes by the educational facilities and the well-screened Industrial/Business

Park on the way to the commercial business district.

The resorts have progressed only when market conditions and financing dictate and when water, transportation, drainage and other community services are in place, or are developed concurrent with each resort development. No faction of the community has been forced to sacrifice to allow another element to proceed.

The town has a consistent image and character reflecting the alpine and historic setting. New developments have been designed using the vernacular of the immediate surroundings. Likewise, older developments have been renovated to form a cohesive design throughout the commercial districts.

Traffic flow in the community is variable based upon visitor arrival and departure hours. Once visitors and residents reach their destination, automobile travel is subordinate to transit, pedestrian or cycling.

The comprehensive transportation system includes bus transportation, strategically located parking facilities, reliable air transportation, interconnecting paths and bikeways and improved sidewalks.

Expansion of arterial, collector and local roadways has been discouraged and is only accomplished when other modes of transportation are not capable of serving the community in a convenient and reliable manner.

Travel is improved to all major destination areas, and visitors and residents find that private automobile use is unnecessary in most cases.

The airport has been expanded to provide convenient and reliable air service from major market areas. Terminal and runway improvements have made Mammoth Lakes a featured destination for worldwide travelers. Convenient and economical shuttle service delivers visitors to their selected accommodations.

Maintaining a Sustainable Environment

The environment surrounding Mammoth Lakes is the dominant feature in all public policy and development issues. Not only does the environment provide the resources for our recreation and tourism based economy, it places constraints on development through weather, available private lands and the carrying capacity of the air, water, and wildlife resources.

Protecting environmentally and visually sensitive areas from urbanization has retained the alpine character of Mammoth Lakes. Compact development has occurred leaving the National Forest as the backdrop to the community. Open space has been preserved in areas of wetlands, streams and significant slopes and rock outcroppings within and outside the developed area of Town. Stands of trees remain allowing the forest to penetrate into the community. Vistas have been maintained and buildings are subdued in deference to the landscape.

Fish and wildlife share the resources with the community. Water resources have been protected by using primarily groundwater for public use, leaving surface water for recreation and wildlife.

Conservation has been the norm in construction techniques and in domestic habits. Newfound geothermal resources have been used efficiently for heating and recreational purposes.

Landscaping has taken many forms. Drought tolerant, native or adaptive species are most abundant, accented by small lawns, and gardens. All properties have either retained the natural landscaping or have revegetated to form a cohesive appearance. Erosion control and a high mountain image have benefited from the landscaping efforts of the community.

Restrictions on the use of natural resources are commensurate with community values. Tree management has preserved many healthy trees within private developments. New, native trees have been planted, where appropriate, promising a healthy forest for the future. The community's acceptance of water conserving devices and drought tolerant and native vegetation has reduced the need for water use restrictions.

Achieving Financial Sustainability

Recreation and visitor services are the mainstay of the economy. New business is primarily recreation or resort oriented. Cottage industries, education and non-tourist dependent business have created year-round employment. Commercial and industrial development has occurred commensurate with the population, which can support such business ventures. Opportunities to make a sustainable living are numerous. Residents are able to obtain job skills through local employment and training opportunities. Opportunity for business

growth and expansion are available through support from the Chamber of Commerce and the Town.