



Town of Mammoth Lakes

2020

Year in Review



437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite 230 • Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov •  TownofMammothLakes • (760) 965-3600

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



2020 was an extremely difficult and challenging year for the Town of Mammoth Lakes, but as Mayor, I am profoundly proud of the way the entire community came together to help each and every person, family, neighbor and business get through this devastating pandemic. Town Council, our dedicated employees, and committed volunteers all worked hard to deliver core services to ensure invaluable emergency response and the highest quality of life for our residents and a great experience for our visitors.” – Bill Sauser, Mayor

REPORT CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Emergency Response	3
COVID-19 Pandemic Response and Management	
Creek Fire Response and Public Outreach	
Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Emergency Generators	
Housing	5
The Parcel	
Continued Housing Work with Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce	
Recreation	6
Shady Rest DiscGolfPark	
Tony Colasardo Scholarship Fund	
Trails	
Trail Host Program	
Capital Infrastructure Projects	8
Deferred Maintenance Projects	
Community Recreation Center (CRC) Update	
Sidewalk Projects	
Mammoth Yosemite Airport Projects	
Municipal Services	11
New 20-Year Solid Waste Franchise Agreement	
Police Services Expanded to 24/7 Coverage	
Building Permits and Construction Activity	
La Sierra Building is Down!	
Fiscal Year 2020-21 Financial Plan and Operating Budget	
Leadership	14
Contact Information	15

INTRODUCTION

The Town's work program and accomplishments in 2020 reflect the shift in priorities due to the demands required to respond to the COVID-19 public health and economic emergency. A substantial amount of work was accomplished in 2020 in light of the global health crisis. This report describes the highlights of our accomplishments this past year and reflects the efforts and dedication of Town employees, managers, and department heads to provide public service. The year was punctuated with an exhausting effort to manage the Town, provide services and support the COVID-19 response. Town staff also provided support in preparing emergency response plans for the Creek Fire. This emergency response effort has taken a toll on the community and Town staff, added stress and stretched our abilities.

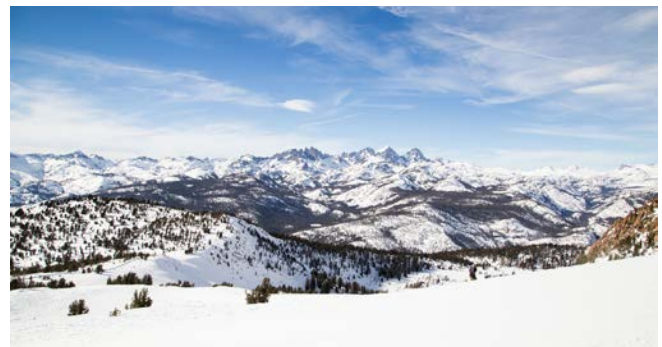
Town Council priorities, goals and key objectives continue guide the Town's work program. We continued efforts to enhance community housing. This included partnerships with Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH) and the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce. The number of deed restricted ownership units was increased and matching roommates and rental housing options gained ground. Town codes were updated. Master planning on The Parcel proceeded, and infrastructure funding for the project was secured.

Investment in our recreational amenities continued with opening of the Shady Rest DiscGolfPark, improvement and reroutes of trails, the use of the trail/community hosts program was fully launched, and hundreds of dead trees removed along trails. Town also furthered the partnership with the Inyo National Forest, enhancing restroom cleaning in the Lakes Basin and Minaret Vista.

Capital investments in deferred maintenance continued with improvements to the Transit/Parks building, improvements at Town parks and Whitmore Pool and the installation of backup generators at Town facilities. Construction of new sidewalks around the Village area was completed. Upgrade of the Town's Public Works equipment included the replacement purchase of new loaders, a snow blower and vehicles.

Key enhancements to Town services were achieved. A new 20-year solid waste franchise agreement was completed. The Police Department staffing adjustments provided for implementation of 24/7 patrol service. The financial position of the Town remains strong with funding of reserves and maintaining an A+ Bond rating from Standard & Poor's (S&P). Agreements with Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) and Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR) were updated. Work with the Inyo National Forest Service to secure a snow storage area was finalized and the preliminary reports to improve the Town and County communications systems were completed.

This report provides additional details on some of the Town's major accomplishments in 2020. While the COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the news of 2020, the Town of Mammoth Lakes continues to provide core public services and advance Council goals and key objectives to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitor experience.



Photos: Josh Wray / Mammoth Lakes Tourism

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND MANAGEMENT

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been led by the joint establishment of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) between the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County and Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District on March 15, 2020. A unified command structure including the Mono County Public Health Officer, County Chief Administrative Officer and the Town Manager provides overall direction and strategic objectives to the EOC. The EOC is staffed by County, Town and Fire personnel and contracted staff. Town staff leads the 17-member Joint Information Center (JIC) tasked to deliver timely, accurate, transparent and bilingual COVID-19 information to the residents of Mono County.

The EOC actively participates in the preparation and review of local public health orders and directives, interfacing with state officials, information sharing with neighboring agencies, provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other materials to local businesses in partnership with local chambers and providing support services to individuals impacted by COVID-19. In addition, the EOC assists in coordination of testing, vaccination roll-out and providing ongoing community information.

The Stay-at-Home Orders and other health mitigation measures have severely impacted local businesses. In response, the Town initiated a “Community First” program and in partnership with others have provided food support, housing rental assistance and small business grants. These programs will continue into 2021. The local business community has embraced the #staysafetostayopen campaign. The focus continues to be on physical distancing, wearing a face covering/mask, practicing good hygiene and limiting gatherings outside of your immediate household. The past and current financial management and fiscal health of the Town was critical in assisting in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we move into 2021, efforts to assist our community will continue, planning for recovery and vaccination processes are underway and we will take necessary actions to be prepared for our future.



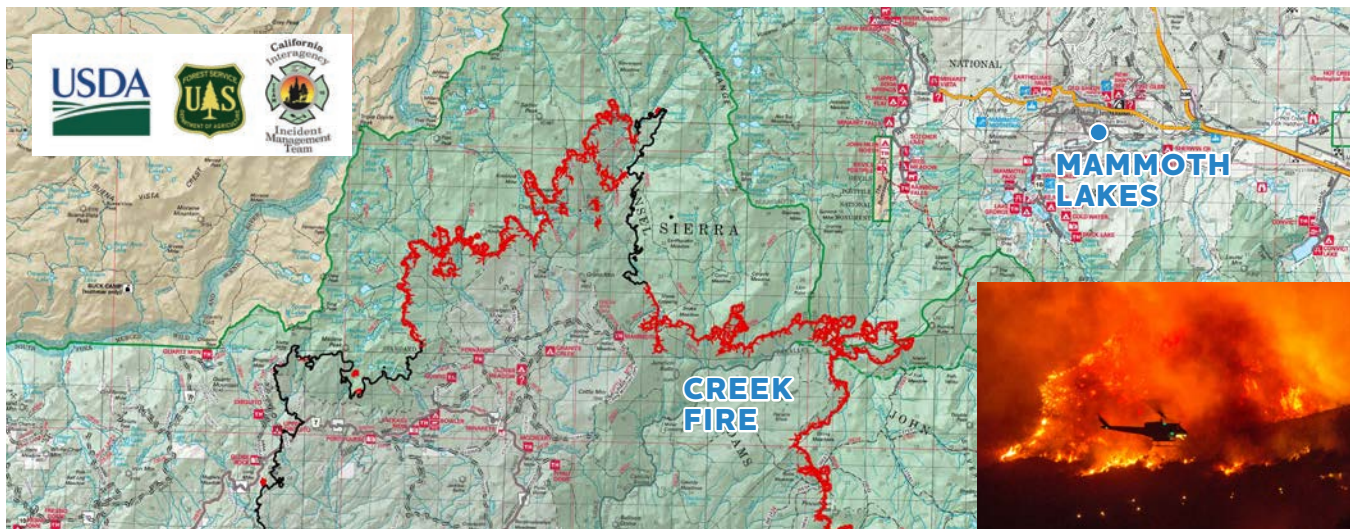
CREEK FIRE RESPONSE AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

After a grueling, suffocating and nail-biting 112 days, the Creek Fire was officially contained on December 24, 2020. The Creek Fire started on September 4 near Shaver Lake, California and burned a staggering 379,895 acres in the Sierra National Forest. The Creek Fire was the fourth-largest wildfire and the largest single source fire in modern California history. It destroyed 856 structures, cost over \$193 million to contain, and perhaps most distressing, came within several miles of Mammoth Lakes.

On September 18, Mono County Sheriff Ingrid Braun issued a Proclamation of Local Emergency in response to the Creek Fire burning in our adjacent counties of Fresno and Madera that triggered multi-agency coordination between Mono County, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District, the Inyo National Forest and the Creek Fire Incident Management Team (IMT). Included in these preparations was the expansion of the EOC, the acquisition and strategic placement of fire-fighting personnel and resources, evacuation planning for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the rapid escalation of public information. Critical public information included the creation and management of a dedicated Creek Fire web portal; hosting of virtual Community Conversations; distribution of daily Facebook fire updates; email/phone notifications and placement of fire updates, maps and smoke forecasts on notice boards throughout Town.

Affirming the serious and critical nature of the extreme fire conditions, the Forest Service issued an order on September 7, temporarily closing all Southern California National Forests, including the Inyo National Forest, Reds Meadow and the Devils Postpile National Monument.

No evacuation warning was issued for the Town of Mammoth Lakes, but the unrelenting and suffocating smoke, statewide forest closure and omnipresent Creek Fire severely impacted visitation and the economic resiliency of Mammoth Lakes.



PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUTOFF (PSPS) EMERGENCY GENERATORS

The Town was awarded a \$217,551 grant from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) to purchase commercial generators for resiliency of operations at several Town facilities during PSPS events. These facilities include the Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Town administrative offices, Town yard, Community Center and the ESTA/Parks Maintenance building. In addition, to enhance public education and information for emergency preparedness, the Town purchased six free-standing notice boards that can be seen at the Post Office, Vons, Grocery Outlet and Rite Aid.



HOUSING

THE PARCEL

The Town completed a Preferred Conceptual Land Use Plan that was accepted by Town Council in December 2019. In early 2020, the process began to refine and develop a final Master Plan for The Parcel. This included looking at overall land use, density, infrastructure, funding, phasing strategy and livability of the new community. The overarching goal is to meet our long-term need for affordable workforce housing in a project on The Parcel that will be a well-connected, well thought out, livable, sustainable community that is meeting the housing needs of our workforce. On December 9, 2020 the Planning and Economic Development Commission considered the refined Master Plan for The Parcel and recommended approval to the Town Council. The final land use plan and a proposed development strategy for the Master Plan is to facilitate development of approximately 450 affordable workforce housing units with a mix of studio through four-bedroom units. The first phase is expected to include approximately 81 units. The Parcel will include utilities, streets, sidewalks, trails, transit shelters, a park, community space, a daycare center opportunity, open space, snow storage and other items.

Also, in early 2020, a \$20+ million Infill Infrastructure Grant was awarded to the Town, which is available to fund public utilities, streets, sidewalks and related infrastructure for the project. This was an unprecedented award for this type of project in California. The Town also set aside \$1 million in funding to assist in the planning and development of the project.

The Master Plan was approved by the Town Council on January 6, 2021. Additional actions by the Town Council will be required in 2021 to move the project forward. If all of the process and funding elements come together, construction of The Parcel could begin in the summer of 2021, with the first units to be occupied in late 2022 or early 2023. For additional information, please go to the Town's Website: www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/882/The-Parcel.



CONTINUED HOUSING WORK WITH MAMMOTH LAKES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Town and the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce have partnered on creative housing solutions for our local workforce. The Chamber's efforts have focused on a market-based approach to connect local workers looking for housing with owners of units who may be interested in renting them on a longer-term basis. The program included outreach to second-home owners to determine interest along with the establishment of a vetting process for prospective tenants. The Chamber has been able to facilitate 11 matches in 2020. The program started in late 2019 with the launch of a website designed to facilitate connecting owners with prospective renters. The Chamber also conducts background checks on tenants and provides information to owners interested in renting to members of the local workforce. This is just one example of a creative option being pursued by partners to address local housing challenges in our community.

RECREATION

SHADY REST DISCGOLF PARK

In partnership with the Inyo National Forest, the Town of Mammoth Lakes officially opened the Shady Rest DiscGolfPark in 2019. Designed by Avery Jenkins (2009 Professional Disc Golf World Champion), the pro-level, wooded 18-hole disc golf course aligns perfectly with Mammoth Lakes' vision to be the "best alpine recreation community in the country" offering a new, exciting, affordable and growing form of recreation in the region. Short and long basket positions were installed in 2020 offering greater options for players of all ages and abilities. With fundraising support from the Mammoth Lakes Disc Golf Club, the Town is planning to install short recreational tee pads in 2021, further broadening the playability of the course. In an October 6 blog feature, UDisc characterized the course as extraordinary, and a "mammoth achievement," with over 150 players rating it a 4.5 out of five.



Photo: Jesse Chun

TONY COLASARDO SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In 2020, the Parks and Recreation Department established the Tony Colasardo Scholarship Fund. Tony Colasardo was a long-time Recreation Commissioner who was a passionate advocate for inclusion and social equity and believed that every child regardless of income level, ability, race or gender should have access to the benefits of parks and recreation. The fund provides full or partial scholarships for the many popular camps and recreation programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. Over \$20,500 in donations have been received from generous individuals and families to remove any financial impediment facing a family when deciding to participate in our many camps or programs.



TRAILS

The summer of 2020 was a challenge to say the least, but our trail crew worked through it all to produce great work. Some of the accomplishments include the award of the Shady Rest Inyo Crater (SRIC) Off Highway Vehicle Planning Grant, the installation of the second bridge for the Horseshoe Lake Loop (Community member funded), the Mountain View Trail Reroute and Accessibility Improvements (including bridge), the completion of the Mammoth Rock Trail Reroute and the necessary clearing of hundreds of dead trees utilizing CalFire Crews.



TRAIL HOST PROGRAM

Building on the success of the Winter 2019/20 Trail Host pilot and dynamic Summer 2020 Trail Host pilot, the Town of Mammoth Lakes funded a Winter 2020/21 Community Host program to help residents and visitors have fun safely. Hosts will be assisting people at bus stops, shopping centers, parks and on trails this winter. Thanks to all the amazing partners, staff and volunteers who are making a difference.

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to enhancing recreation amenities utilizing general fund monies, grants and donations to improve the safety, operations and experience for our many recreation enthusiasts. In 2020, the town completed over \$51,000 of deferred maintenance projects. These include the installation of a new tennis shed on an asphalt pad at the Community Center Tennis Courts, a wall mounted water fountain and bottle filling station at Shady Rest Park – donated by the Rotary Club of Mammoth Lakes, installation of more durable and playable infield mix at Whitmore Recreation Area and Shady Rest Park (four ball fields), Whitmore Pool and ball field irrigation enhancements, and upgraded power at both Shady Rest Park and Mammoth Creek Park to meet the increasing demands of special events and family gatherings.



COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER (CRC) UPDATE

For the past several years, the Town has been working to design, build and program a year-round Community Recreation Center (CRC) at Mammoth Creek Park. The CRC is planned be a fabric tensile structure (commonly called Sprung) enclosing an Olympic sized ice rink that will operate in the winter for ice skating, curling, figure skating and youth and adult hockey, with many regional camps, tournaments and leagues hosted indoors on a professionally maintained and refrigerated ice surface. In the summer, the 20,000 square-foot Mammoth RecZone will be the hub for parks and recreation summer camps and programs, while also offering a multitude of court sports, such as futsal, basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, pickleball and many others for our residents and visitors of Mammoth Lakes.

On August 21, 2020, the Town published the third bid package for the CRC and opened six qualified bids on October 16. Since bid opening, staff have been working to complete a comprehensive budget and project analysis inclusive of all of the work completed to date, as well as all of the work needed to complete a viable project that meets the identified programming established by the community and endorsed by the Recreation Commission. Once the analysis is completed, staff will present the item to Town Council for consideration and action to approve or reject the bid. For more information about the CRC visit:

www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/979/CRC.



SIDEWALK PROJECTS

The Town completed several sidewalk projects in 2020. New sidewalks include Lake Mary Road, Forest Trail and the Hillside Highlands Sidewalk Construction project. The Lake Mary Road Sidewalk Project closed a gap along Lake Mary Road between two sidewalks located on Canyon Boulevard and Minaret Road. Town funding for the project came from State SB1 funds (\$47,166), RSTP State funds (\$94,884), and private funds supplemented that funding (\$29,204). The Forest Trail Sidewalk Rehabilitation consisted of the reconstruction of existing concrete sidewalk, curb and gutter, and storm drain system along the south side of Forest Trail between Hillside Drive and Forest Trail. Funding for the project came from the North Village Benefit Assessment District budget and final construction costs were \$187,638. The Hillside Highlands Sidewalk Project was a private project, which included construction of a sidewalk along Hillside Drive from Magnolia Lodge to Canyon Boulevard, closing the gap between two existing sidewalks. The project was required as a condition of approval for the Hillside Highlands project and was funded completely by private funding.



MAMMOTH YOSEMITE AIRPORT PROJECTS

Reconstruct Town Hangar Taxilane and Taxiway Slurry Seal and Airfield Guidance Sign Relocation

Both of these projects were included in the same Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Grant Agreement, but were bid as two separate projects. Both projects were covered 100% by FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding. The FAA did not require local matches for 2020 projects.

The project consisted of full-depth reconstruction of the taxilane pavement adjacent to the Town Hangar with an area of approximately 40-feet wide by 550-feet long and paint markings. The construction contract amount was \$497,575. The Taxiway Slurry Seal project consisted of the slurry seal of the pavements along Taxiway A and cross taxiways, paint markings, and the relocation of airfield guidance signs. The construction contract amount is \$494,494.

Security Gates and Terminal Area Fencing

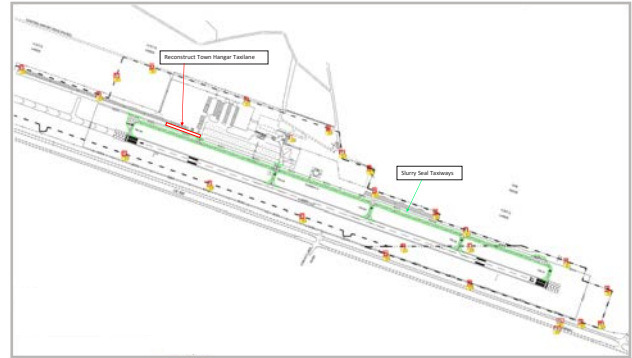
This project included construction of two 20-foot wide single sliding cantilever vehicular gates with operators and controls, a pedestrian gate, 1,730 linear feet of 8-foot high chain link fence in terminal area, and security system with cameras. The project cost was \$557,393. Funding for the project is covered by a FAA Grant Agreement. The project will be covered 100% by FAA Airport Improvement Program funding.

Mammoth Yosemite Airport Environmental Assessment

In 2020, the Town began undertaking National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Proposed Passenger Terminal and Aircraft Parking Apron and an Eight Bay Maintenance Facility at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. The NEPA portion of the project is funded by the FAA Airport Improvement Program in the amount of \$635,708 and by a local match of \$65,492 paid for by Passenger Facility Charges. The CEQA portion of the project is funded by the Town's Airport Capital Reserve in the amount of \$170,000. The Town has been working with the consultants on the project throughout 2020 and it will be completed in 2021.

Mammoth Yosemite Airport Layout Plan

The project includes an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) update including updating ALP drawings and narratives at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport. The project is funded by the FAA Airport Improvement Program in the amount of \$208,518 and by a local match of \$21,482 which is planned to be paid for by Passenger Facility Charges. The Town has been working with the consultants and FAA on the project throughout 2020 and will complete it in early 2021.



MUNICIPAL SERVICES

NEW 20-YEAR SOLID WASTE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Effective October 1, 2020, the Town Council approved a new Solid Waste Franchise Agreement between the Town and Mammoth Disposal Company. The Agreement allows Mammoth Disposal to provide all solid waste collection and processing services on behalf of the Town for 20 years. This includes addressing the disposal of solid waste after the closure of Benton Crossing Landfill at the end of 2022. The new Agreement will provide for increased solid waste disposal services and improved recycling services for Mammoth Lakes customers.

As part of the process, the Town developed new Solid Waste Disposal Charges and Rates for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2026. The Town hired HF&H Consultants, LLC to conduct a third-party review of the rates proposed by Mammoth Disposal. Overall, the rate structure was found to be reasonable. To accommodate future solid waste disposal needs, Mammoth Disposal will be upgrading and constructing a new transfer station for solid waste and Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) for recyclables. The current proposal is to reconfigure the existing site to allow for the new facilities and better circulation through the site. The new facility will be open for business prior to January 1, 2023.



POLICE SERVICES EXPANDED TO 24/7 COVERAGE

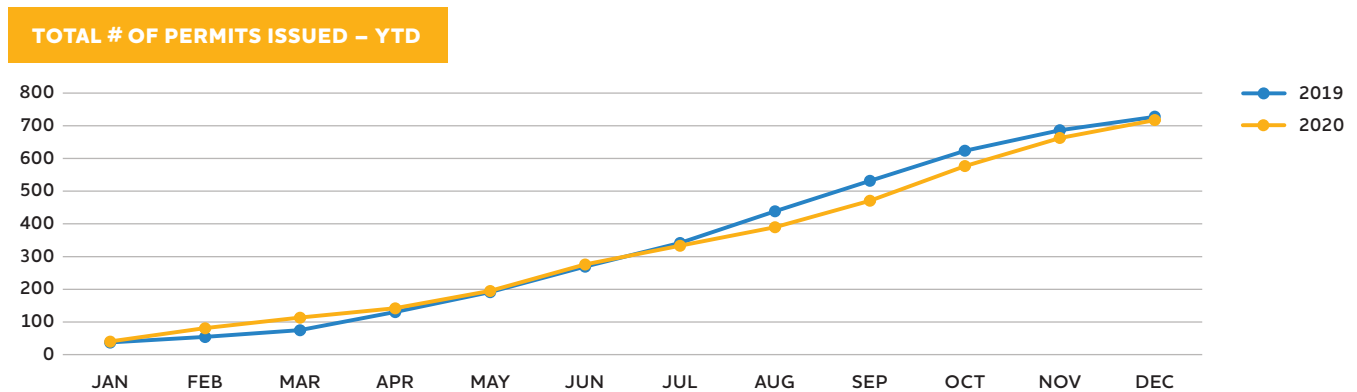
2020 saw some significant changes for the Mammoth Lakes Police Department. Efforts to increase patrol staff in 2019 allowed the Department to transition to a 24/7 schedule in early 2020, providing around-the-clock Police coverage for our community. The addition of a Police Sergeant in mid-2020 increased the depth of supervisory staff providing leadership to our Officers who are in the early stages of their careers, guiding them towards future positions in management.

The addition of a Code Compliance Officer in mid-2020 has allowed the Department to enhance the Town's animal control services while also providing support to the Community and Economic Development Department in their code compliance efforts. An increase in staffing, along with a shift to 24-7 coverage, has provided a much-needed increase in service levels to our community through greater enforcement and enhanced community relations.



BUILDING PERMITS AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Despite the pandemic, the Building Department stayed busy processing permits this year. Building permit activity was on par with 2019, with a total of 718 permits being issued – only 10 fewer than in 2019.



LA SIERRA BUILDING IS DOWN!

The Town of Mammoth Lakes worked closely with the property owners of 3789 Main Street to demolish the former La Sierra building in the Summer of 2020. The building formally known as La Sierra's Restaurant is now completely gone and the site has been restored to the Town's satisfaction. The old building was considered an unsafe structure and had been abandoned for many years, attracting transients and wildlife, until it was successfully demolished this year. This is just one example of code compliance working with property owners to remove blight and keep the Town of Mammoth Lakes a safe and attractive tourist destination for generations to come.



FISCAL YEAR 2020-21 FINANCIAL PLAN AND OPERATING BUDGET

The financial management and health of the Town was critical in assisting in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Town was able to fund its share of the EOC response, the Community First program and to meet service demands and invest in our infrastructure. The basis for the Fiscal Year 2020-21 (FY20-21) budget and financial plan was the product of the past several years. Town Management and Council have taken a conservative approach to budgeting, financial planning, and strategic investment.

The FY20-21 budget process was difficult due to the unknown impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially given the Town's reliance on transient occupancy tax (TOT) and the tourism industry. The FY20-21 budget was balanced through operational budget cuts, salary savings and reductions, capital project deferrals, the use of reserves, the use of CARES Act funds and deferred payment on an internal loan. The actions taken allowed the Town to meet existing service demands and to provide overall core services with limited and focused reductions.

The establishment and funding of reserve policies, setting aside funding for priority projects, limited use of debt and using a pay-as-you-go plan for capital improvements, strategic management of personnel, and tight fiscal controls positioned the Town to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The structure supports investment in key priority projects such as housing, sidewalks, snow removal equipment, backup power generators and limited deferred maintenance projects.

The strength of the Town's financial planning and budgeting practices was recognized by Standard & Poor's Global Ratings (S&P). The firm reviewed the current bond rating for the Town due to concerns over COVID-19 impacts on tourism-based communities' finances. The Town was one of several municipalities under review. The review resulted in a minor change from an A+ rating with a stable outlook to an A+ rating with a negative outlook. Retaining the A+ rating was secured as S&P recognized the strength of our reserve policies, the proactive and conservative budgeting practices and securing the ability to meet debt service obligations. The Council also set aside \$1.1 million in reserves - an amount equal to 50% of the annual general fund supported debt payments. The dedicated reserve further ensures all debt obligations will be met by the Town. We anticipate another review by S&P within the next year.



Photos: Joel Rathje



LEADERSHIP

TOWN COUNCIL

Bill Sauser, Mayor

Lynda Salcido, Mayor Pro Tem

Cleland Hoff

John Wentworth

Kirk Stapp

Sarah Rea – sworn in Dec. 2, 2020

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Michael Vanderhurst, Chair

Jennifer Burrows, Vice Chair

Greg Eckert

Jessica Kennedy

Paul Chang

RECREATION COMMISSION

Elizabeth “Betsy” Truax, Chair

Laurel Martin, Vice Chair

Christi Constable

Dan O’Connell

Sean Turner, Past Vice Chair

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Daniel C. Holler, Town Manager

Andrew Morris, Town Attorney

Jamie Gray, Town Clerk

Pam Kobylarz, Assistant to the Town Manager

Al Davis, Chief of Police

Grady Dutton, Special Projects Airport Manager

Haislip Hayes, Public Works Director

Rob Patterson, Administrative Services & Finance Director

Sandra Moberly, Community & Economic
Development Director

Stuart Brown, Parks and Recreation Director
& Public Information Officer



CONTACT INFORMATION



Address: 437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite 230 / P.O. Box 1609
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Main Phone: (760) 965-3600

Mammoth Lakes Police Department: (760) 965-3700

Public Information Line: (760) 965-3612 (updated during emergencies)

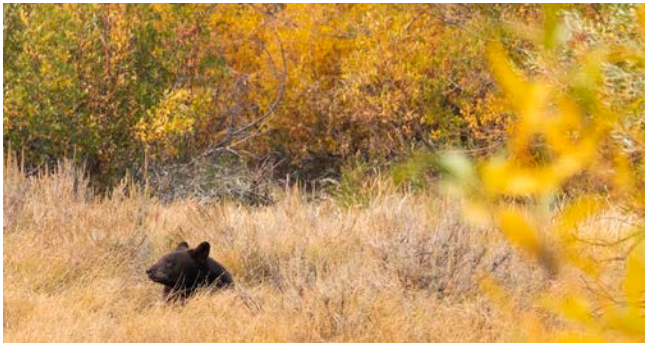
Engage Mammoth Lakes: engage.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

Notify Me: www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/list.aspx

Website: www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

Mono County COVID-19 Portal: coronavirus.monocounty.ca.gov

Email: Initial of first name and last name...@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov
For example John Doe: jdoe@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov



Photos: left - Joel Rathje; right - Todd Robertson / Mammoth Lakes Tourism